



Investigating the impact of re-branding on consumer perception and behavior as an international marketing strategy

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ABSTRACT

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Using a comparative case study of two well-known telecom companies, Nokia and Ericsson, this thesis explores the strategic effects of corporate rebranding on consumer perception and behaviour. Both businesses have significantly changed their brand identities in recent years, moving from consumer-focused (B2C) to enterprise-driven (B2B) markets. Analysing the goal, communication strategies, customer reactions, and changes in brand identity related to these rebranding initiatives was the main goal of this study.

Combining secondary data from official press releases, firm annual reports, media coverage, and easily accessible case studies, the study used a qualitative technique. While Ericsson's branding evolution concentrated on 5G leadership and corporate services, Nokia's 2023 rebranding prioritised digital transformation, network infrastructure, and enterprise innovation. The study found significant variations in stakeholder engagement, communication execution, and rebranding phase timing through comparison analysis.

The study concludes that rebranding is an effective tool for market realignment rather than just a cosmetic alteration. It emphasises how crucial it is to match outward message with internal competencies in order to guarantee an integrated brand change. Along with outlining prospects for further study, such as gathering primary consumer data and doing a longitudinal examination of brand equity following rebranding, the thesis also provides helpful suggestions.

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	6
1.1	Background of the study.....	6
1.2	Problem Statement	10
1.3	Research Objectives	12
1.4	Research Questions.....	14
1.5	Significance of the Study.....	16
1.5.1	Contribution to Academic Literature	17
1.5.2	Practical Implications for Businesses	17
1.5.3	Guidance for Marketers	18
1.5.4	Benefits for Stakeholders	18
1.6	Scope and Delimitations.....	19
1.6.1	Study Scope	19
1.6.2	Study Delimitations.....	19
1.6.3	Limitations and Future Research Directions	20
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	22
2.1	Introduction to Re-branding.....	22
2.1.1	Definition of Re-branding.....	22
2.1.2	Types of Re-branding	22
2.1.3	Motivations for Rebranding.....	24
2.1.4	The Re-branding Process.....	25
2.1.5	Significance of Re-branding.....	25
2.2	Consumer Perception and Behaviour	26
2.2.1	Theories of Consumer Perception	26
2.2.2	Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour.....	27
2.3	Re-branding and Consumer Perception.....	29
2.3.1	Understanding Consumer Perception in the Context of Re-branding.....	30
2.3.2	The Impact of Re-branding on Consumer Perception	31
2.3.3	Challenges in Managing Consumer Perception during Re-branding.....	32
2.3.4	Case Studies: Successful Re-branding and Consumer Perception.....	32
2.4	Re-branding as an International Marketing Strategy	33
2.4.1	Global Branding vs. Local Branding	33
2.4.2	Case Studies of Successful Re-branding	35
2.5	Theoretical Framework.....	36
2.5.1	Brand Equity Theory.....	36

2.5.2	Consumer Behaviour Theories	37
2.5.3	Marketing and Branding Models	40
2.5.4	Cross-Cultural Consumer Behaviour	42
2.5.5	Integrative Framework	44
3	Research Methodology	45
3.1	Introduction	45
3.2	Research Design.....	46
3.3	Research Approach	46
3.4	Data Collection Method	47
3.4.1	Financial Reports.....	47
3.4.2	Press Releases and News Articles.....	47
3.4.3	Industry Reports	47
3.5	Sampling and Data Sources.....	48
3.6	Data Analysis	48
3.6.1	Thematic Analysis	48
3.6.2	Descriptive Analysis	48
3.7	Ethical Considerations.....	49
3.8	Limitations of the Study	49
4	Findings and Analysis	50
4.1	Data collection of Nokia rebranding	50
4.1.1	Nokia Rebranding Purpose.....	51
4.1.2	Nokia's rebranding communication strategy.....	52
4.1.3	Consumer perception and response.....	54
4.1.4	Brand identity shift.....	56
4.2	Data collection on Ericsson rebranding"	58
4.2.1	Ericsson Rebranding purpose	58
4.2.2	Ericsson's rebranding communication strategy	59
4.2.3	Consumer perception and response.....	61
4.2.4	Brand Identity Shift	62
5	Comparative Analysis	64
5.1	Overview of Nokia and Ericsson Rebranding	64
5.2	Comparison of Rebranding Goals and Purpose	64
5.3	Comparison of Communication Strategies	65
5.4	Comparison of Consumer Response and Perception	65
5.5	Comparison of Brand Identity Shift.....	66
5.6	Recommendations	67
6	Conclusion	69
6.1	Summary of Findings	69
6.2	Managing the research in Thesis	71

6.3 Struggles Encountered during the Thesis	73
6.4 Suggestions for Future Research.....	74
References.....	75

1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the key elements of rebranding and brand identities, as well as the factors to consider when putting them into practice, ranging from a visual identity to a brand book. Several aspects of branding are covered in the thesis, and in the end, a comparative study is done of Nokia and Ericsson rebranding. Initially, the plan was only to do the case study of Nokia and study the consumer perception on rebranding, but due to Nokia's privacy policies, the data could not be published. So, it was decided to do the comparative analysis of rebranding with other companies in the same industry.

For a business, having a visual identity is crucial. A unique visual identity can make a big difference in a customer's decision when they are searching for new services.

A brand is essentially made up of marketing, a core message, and a visual identity. These components all significantly impact how consumers perceive the business. Companies must think about client feedback on a daily basis, and a brand identity can help with that. It is advisable to periodically verify that the company's brand identity satisfies the necessary requirements in order to ensure that it remains relevant to its client.

Understanding consumers and meeting their needs is essential to developing a strong brand identity. As a result, marketing is now a crucial component of rebranding. As a result, a designer must be able to comprehend how marketing and brand identification are complementary to one another. This guarantees the organisation will meet its objectives.

This thesis consists of case study. The case study serves as an illustration of how to apply all the knowledge in this thesis and to try out the new skills. The case study's task was to rebrand a Finnish company, Nokia Solutions and Networks.

1.1 Background of the study

In the modern, competitive business world, branding has become a vital part of marketing plans for businesses all over the globe. In addition to helping a business stand out from the competition, a strong brand is essential for establishing a distinctive personality, generating client loyalty, and developing an emotional

bond with customers. But even well-known businesses can run into problems that call for a strategy transformation as markets change and consumer preferences do too. Re-branding, which entails major alterations to a brand's identity, including its name, logo, design, and general image, is a common way that this transition manifests itself.

Rebranding is a strategic move that businesses make for a variety of reasons, including market positioning changes, acquisitions and mergers, modifications to the competitive environment, and the desire to breathe new life into a flagging brand. Enhancing the brand's relevance and appeal is the main objective of rebranding, but there are significant risks involved as well. Inadequate implementation of a rebranding strategy may result in loss of brand equity, misunderstanding, and alienation of current customers (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). On the other hand, a well-executed rebranding campaign may revitalise a company, draw in new markets, and solidify its place in the industry (Aaker, 2009).

The effect of rebranding on consumer perception and behaviour is one of the most important factors. While consumer behaviour includes the choices and actions that customers make about the acquisition and usage of goods and services, consumer perception describes how consumers see and understand a brand's identity and offerings. Rebranding has a big impact on these two aspects since it can affect how people associate, feel, and remain loyal to a company by changing its identity.

Rebranding takes on even greater complexity and diversity when considered in the context of global marketing. Businesses that operate in international markets must traverse a variety of cultural, economic, and regulatory contexts, which can impact how well rebranding initiatives are received and how successful they are. International rebranding tactics frequently necessitate striking a careful balance between responding to local market preferences and upholding a consistent worldwide brand image. This emphasises how crucial it is to comprehend how rebranding affects customer perception and behaviour in various international marketplaces.

Rebranding is usually motivated by the need to maintain relevance and competitiveness in a market that is always evolving. Technology has revolutionised customer interaction and value delivery, for example, with the emergence of digital platforms and social media. Numerous businesses have rebranded because of these modifications to better reflect the expectations of modern consumers and

technology advancements. Additionally, brands have been forced to reassess their identities and marketing due to changes in consumer awareness and social values around sustainability, diversity, and ethical practices.

Several well-known rebranding examples highlight the variety of results and difficulties that come with using this tactic. Global brands such as Apple, McDonald's, and Pepsi, for instance, have effectively repositioned themselves to strengthen their market positions and appeal to both current and potential consumers (Lane Keller, 2013). Figure 1 shows how Apple rebranded itself over the period. Figure 2 shows the evolution of McDonald's logo from 1937 till today. Figure 3 shows the evolution of Pepsi logo from 1898 till today. On the other hand, some companies have had failures. For example, the 2010 redesign of the Gap logo was met with strong criticism from consumers and was later changed back to the old version (Hatch & Schultz, 2008). Figure 4 shows how the GAP changed its logo from 1990 to 2010 and then changed back to its original logo in late 2010.

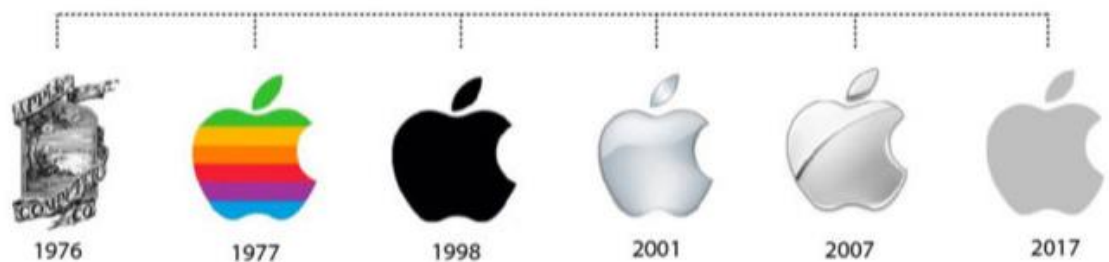


Figure 1: Apple rebranding over time (www.bopgun.com, 2017)

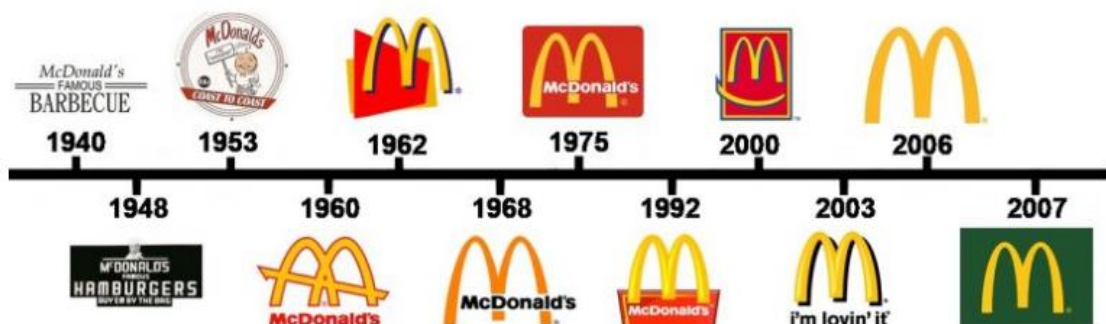


Figure 2: Evolution of McDonald's logo (www.bopgun.com, 2017)



Figure 3: Evolution of Pepsi logo (/www.zenbusiness.com, 2025)



Figure 4: GAP logo change (www.thebrandingjournal.com, 2021)

A thorough understanding of their target markets is essential for organisations to adopt a strategic approach, as rebranding has a substantial impact on consumer perception and behaviour. This requires carrying out in-depth market research, interacting with customers to learn about their preferences and viewpoints, and carefully organising the rebranding procedure to guarantee a seamless change-over. Furthermore, ongoing monitoring and assessment are crucial for determining the success of rebranding initiatives and making the required modifications.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how rebranding affects consumer perception and behaviour in relation to global marketing strategy. Through an analysis of diverse case studies, consumer feedback, and market dynamics, the study aims to offer significant insights into the elements that facilitate prosperous rebranding endeavours and the possible hazards to be overcome. The results will contribute to a better theoretical understanding of rebranding and provide actionable advice for business executives and marketers seeking to successfully negotiate the challenges of brand transformation in an international marketplace.

1.2 Problem Statement

In a time of swift technology progress, increased worldwide connectivity, and evolving consumer inclinations, businesses are consistently looking for methods to stay competitive and hold relevance in the industry. Businesses can now use re-branding as a strategic strategy to reposition themselves, revitalise their brand image, and adjust to these developments. Rebranding carries risks and obstacles despite the possible rewards, especially when it comes to how it will affect consumer perception and behaviour (Lane Keller, 2013).

The challenge is figuring out how rebranding campaigns affect customer attitudes, loyalty, and purchase decisions. Rebranding is the process of changing a company's name, logo, tagline, and general image, among other aspects of its identification. These modifications have the potential to alter the current customer-brand relationship, which could result in consumer uncertainty, resistance, or even backlash. Furthermore, the complexity rises when it comes to international marketing because businesses must take into account various cultural, economic, and regulatory contexts. This poses several important queries:

How does consumer perception change in various international markets as a result of rebranding? A major factor in determining a brand's success is consumer perception. It includes the perceptions, attitudes, and connections that customers have with a particular brand. Modifications to branding components have the potential to positively or negatively impact these impressions. It is crucial to comprehend the after effects of how rebranding affects consumer perception in diverse cultural contexts in order to develop global marketing strategies that work.

How do consumers react behaviourally to initiatives for rebranding? Consumer perception of the brand has a direct impact on their behaviour, including their tendency to buy, loyalty to the brand, and advocacy. Rebranding has the potential to alter customer loyalty and change established purchasing habits (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Customers' reactions to rebranding can be analysed to find possibilities and hazards related to brand transformation initiatives.

What elements influence whether rebranding as an international marketing approach succeeds or fails? A thorough grasp of consumer expectations, competitive challenges, and market dynamics is necessary for a successful rebranding (Aaker, 2009). Companies trying to navigate this difficult process can learn a lot by identifying the main errors and crucial success elements in rebranding initiatives.

How do businesses, when rebranding, strike a balance between local market adaptability and worldwide brand consistency? International brands frequently struggle to balance local market preferences with preserving a consistent worldwide character. For rebranding campaigns to be successful, the proper balance between standardisation and localisation must be achieved. Examining how businesses maintain this equilibrium can help identify optimal methods for global rebranding initiatives.

Rebranding is becoming more and more common as a strategic tool, but thorough studies that examine its complex effects on customer perception and behaviour in a global setting are hard to come by. The majority of previous research concentrates on individual examples or particular affects of rebranding, creating a vacuum in our comprehensive knowledge of its consequences. By offering a thorough examination of how rebranding affects customer perception and behaviour in several foreign marketplaces, this study seeks to close this knowledge gap.

The main issue that this study aims to solve is the absence of a precise and workable framework that enables companies to successfully manage rebranding initiatives in a way that positively affects customer perception and behaviour. Through an examination of several case studies, consumer feedback, and market dynamics, this research aims to formulate a set of recommendations and optimal methodologies for businesses contemplating or implementing re-branding initia-

tives. By maximising the potential benefits and minimising the dangers of re-branding, businesses will be able to adapt their brands more successfully in the global marketplace.

In conclusion, the research problem statement emphasises the importance of comprehending the intricate connection, particularly in an international setting, between rebranding and consumer perception and behaviour. Solving this issue would benefit organisations looking to achieve effective rebranding results by adding to the body of knowledge on branding and marketing from an academic perspective as well as by offering useful advice.

1.3 Research Objectives

Examining how rebranding affects consumer perception and behaviour in the context of global marketing strategy is the main goal of this study. This study intends to offer insightful analysis and useful suggestions for companies thinking about or implementing rebranding initiatives by examining multiple facets of rebranding and evaluating its impacts on consumers in diverse cultural and economic contexts. The following are the precise research goals:

To Analyze the Effect of Re-branding on Consumer Perception

Understanding how rebranding influences consumer perception is crucial to determining whether a plan is successful. Finding out which crucial facets of a brand's identity are most affected by rebranding efforts is the aim. As part of this, it is necessary to examine how changes to these elements affect consumer perceptions of perceived quality, brand awareness, brand trust, and brand relationships (Aaker, 2009; Keller, 2013). In addition, it's critical to look at how consumer perception differs in various international markets while taking cultural, economic, and legal differences into consideration.

To Analyse Consumers' Behavioural Reactions to Rebranding

Consumer behaviour, such as advocacy, brand loyalty, and purchasing decisions, is directly influenced by their opinion of a brand (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Assessing the impact of rebranding on consumer willingness to interact with the brand and purchasing behaviour is the main objective. It also entails an-

analysing the effects of a rebranding campaign on customer loyalty and brand retention. Finally, it examines how rebranding affects word-of-mouth marketing and customer advocacy in different market contexts.

To Identify Common Rebranding Pitfalls and Key Success Factors

Rebranding is an uncertain and even hazardous project. This purpose seeks to uncover the factors that make rebranding initiatives successful, such as stakeholder participation, effective communication, and alignment with market trends (Hatch & Schultz, 2010). Recognising typical roadblocks and mistakes that might jeopardise rebranding initiatives is also crucial. These include inadequate market research, poor execution, and an inability to establish a connection with target customers. In addition, the goal aims to offer a collection of guidelines and best practices that businesses can utilise to organise and execute rebranding campaigns successfully.

To Assess the Equilibrium Between Local Market Adaptation and Global Brand Consistency

Keeping true to their global identity while satisfying local customers' tastes is a critical challenge for multinational businesses. This goal is to investigate how companies, when rebranding, manage to balance the need for localisation with the need for worldwide brand consistency (Kapferer, 2012). It also aims to examine the strategies used by prosperous multinational companies to adapt their rebranding efforts to different cultural and economic environments. The final objective is to provide recommendations for global rebranding projects that aim to achieve the best possible balance between localisation and standardisation.

To Create a Whole Framework for Successful Rebranding in a Global Setting

Building on the understanding gained from the earlier objectives, the research aims to create a thorough framework detailing the steps and components of an effective re-branding in a global setting. This framework will provide practical instruments and techniques for conducting market research, getting feedback from stakeholders, and evaluating the accomplishment of rebranding projects. It will also give businesses useful guidance on how to lower risks and maximise the benefits of their rebranding initiatives. The findings will not only contribute to a better theoretical understanding of branding and consumer behaviour, but they will also be a great help to businesses attempting to negotiate the potential and difficulties of rebranding in an increasingly globalised economy.

1.4 Research Questions

The purpose of this study's research questions is to direct the examination of how rebranding affects consumer perception and behaviour in the framework of international marketing strategy. These investigations will provide a methodical investigation of all aspects of rebranding and its impact on customers in different marketplaces. The following are the research questions:

What impact does rebranding have on how consumers are perceived in various foreign markets?

Understanding how a rebranding strategy influences consumer perception is necessary to evaluate its success. Finding out which elements of a brand's identity—like its name, logo, or tagline—are most affected by rebranding attempts is the aim of this investigation. It also aims to investigate how changes to these elements impact customers' perceptions of brands, including perceived quality, reliability, and brand awareness. Additionally, the research attempts to comprehend how different legislative, cultural, and economic circumstances affect consumers' opinions.

How do consumers react in terms of behaviour to rebranding initiatives?

Consumer behaviour, such as advocacy, brand loyalty, and purchasing decisions, is strongly influenced by their opinion of a brand. The aim of this investigation is to get additional insight into the ways in which rebranding influences the willingness of consumers to engage with the brand and their purchasing patterns. It also aims to comprehend the evolution of a rebranding initiative's influence on customer retention and brand loyalty. Finally, the study intends to investigate how customer advocacy and word-of-mouth marketing are impacted by rebranding in diverse market environments.

What elements influence whether rebranding as an international marketing approach succeeds or fails?

Rebranding is an uncertain and even hazardous project. This investigation aims to identify the critical components of success that contribute to the success of

rebranding campaigns. It also seeks to pinpoint common issues and mistakes that could cause rebranding campaigns to fail. Additionally, the study will investigate how companies may get past these challenges to successfully execute brand makeovers.

How do companies, when rebranding, strike a balance between local market adaptability and worldwide brand consistency?

Retaining their global essence while satisfying local consumers' preferences is one of the main problems facing global companies. Businesses must balance global brand consistency with the need for localisation in their rebranding campaigns. This investigation aims to comprehend the strategies used by successful multinational companies to adapt their rebranding initiatives to different social, cultural, and political environments. It also seeks to determine the most effective methods for global rebranding initiatives that strike the right balance between localisation and standardisation.

What are the enduring consequences of rebranding on the attitudes and actions of consumers?

Maintaining rebranding campaigns requires a strong understanding of brand sustainability. The purpose of this investigation is to find out how rebranding campaigns affect consumers' perceptions and behaviours over time. Additionally, it investigates how these adjustments may affect brand equity and market positioning in the long run. The study will also look at how companies can evaluate the long-term results of their rebranding initiatives.

What part does digital media play in rebranding efforts to influence consumer perception?

In the digital age, media channels are very important in forming consumer perceptions. This investigation looks at how consumer views during rebranding initiatives are affected by social media and digital media platforms. It specifically looks at the strategies companies may use to successfully rebrand their brands

using digital media. It also investigates how consumer feedback in conventional media varies from that on digital channels.

What effects do rebranding initiatives have on various demographic groups?

Depending on demographic characteristics, consumer reactions to rebranding can differ greatly. This investigation focuses on the ways in which various demographic traits—like age, gender, income, and cultural background—influence consumers' responses to rebranding. Additionally, it looks at the particular rebranding tastes and expectations of different demographic groups. The investigation also looks into how companies might modify their rebranding tactics to more effectively appeal to and target specific demographic groups.

The study aims to understand a thorough comprehension of the influence of rebranding on customer perception and behaviour in the framework of international marketing strategy by tackling these research enquiries. The knowledge acquired will enable companies to reduce the risks involved in rebranding and optimise its possible advantages, which will ultimately result in more effective brand makeovers in the international market.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study's importance stems from its thorough examination of re-branding as an international marketing strategy and its influence on consumer perception and behavior. In a progressively competitive global market, understanding the complexity of re-branding can offer significant advantages to businesses, marketers, and scholars. This study fills a crucial void in the existing literature by delving into re-branding from a multi-dimensional perspective, concentrating on both theoretical and practical aspects (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006; Miller & Merrilees, 2013). The significance of this study can be illustrated as follows:

1.5.1 Contribution to Academic Literature

This study adds to the field of marketing and branding studies by providing a thorough examination of rebranding procedures and results. It improves theoretical knowledge in a number of important domains. Firstly, by studying how rebranding influences consumer attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours, it adds to the database of knowledge on consumer perception and behaviour (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004; He, Li, & Harris, 2012). Second, by identifying crucial success elements and typical difficulties in rebranding initiatives, the study offers insightful information on brand management that helps create more efficient brand management procedures (Gotsi & Andriopoulos, 2007; Kapferer, 2012). Finally, it contributes to the field of global marketing strategy by addressing the differences and difficulties associated with applying rebranding strategies in foreign markets (Singh, 2012; Holt, Quelch, & Taylor, 2004).

1.5.2 Practical Implications for Businesses

Businesses can use the knowledge gathered from this study to make more informed decisions and enhance the effectiveness of their rebranding campaigns. Improved brand equity is one of the practical consequences, since a company's competitive positioning and brand equity can be strengthened by knowing how rebranding affects consumer perception (Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Furthermore, businesses can create strategies that increase client advocacy and loyalty by recognising the elements that impact consumer behaviour during rebranding (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004; Aaker, 2014). In addition to providing firms with advice to prevent errors and minimise risks connected with brand transformation, the study helps mitigate risks by exposing typical obstacles and mistakes in rebranding (Gotsi & Andriopoulos, 2007). Finally, the study offers guidance on finding a balance between local market adaption and global brand consistency, assisting multinational corporations in developing rebranding plans that appeal to a variety of customer bases while preserving a consistent corporate identity (Kapferer, 2012; Singh, 2012).

1.5.3 Guidance for Marketers

Through a deeper comprehension of the complexities involved in rebranding, marketers can acquire useful insights from the study's findings. This involves strategic planning since the study provides a framework for organising and carrying out rebranding projects, assisting advertisers in creating ads that successfully convey the brand's new image (He, Li, & Harris, 2012). Furthermore, by understanding how various demographic groups react to rebranding, marketers can better adapt their communication tactics to meet the demands and preferences of a wide range of customer groups (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Furthermore, by examining how digital media influences customer perception, the study offers marketers tactics for effectively utilising online channels for rebranding initiatives (Labrecque, Markos, & Milne, 2011).

1.5.4 Benefits for Stakeholders

The results of the investigation are important to different parties. Investors can make better decisions regarding their investments in companies undergoing brand change when they are aware of the possible risks and returns linked with rebranding (Kapferer, 2012). Workers gain as well, since a strong, unified brand identity that they can identify with and be proud of can boost morale and engagement through effective rebranding initiatives (Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Meanwhile, as companies create rebranding strategies that better satisfy customers' requirements and expectations and result in better goods and services, consumers benefit (Aaker, 2014). Furthermore, the research offers information to policymakers and regulatory authorities regarding the ways in which rebranding interacts with cultural and economic aspects in various locations, thereby facilitating the creation of rules that foster equitable and efficient marketing practices. (Holt, Quelch, & Taylor, 2004; Singh, 2012).

To sum up, this study has importance in various areas such as academia, business, marketing, stakeholder relations, and policymaking. Through offering a thorough insight into how re-branding influences consumer perception and behavior on a global scale, this research presents valuable findings that can improve both theoretical understanding and real-world applications in the branding and marketing field (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006; Gotsi & Andriopoulos, 2007).

1.6 Scope and Delimitations

1.6.1 Study Scope

The purpose of this study is to investigate in detail how, within the framework of worldwide marketing strategy, rebranding affects consumer perception and conduct. The objective is to obtain a thorough grasp of how consumer perceptions, loyalty, and purchasing decisions are impacted by rebranding in various cultural and economic contexts. The research covers the following important topics:

- **Consumer Perception:** This involves investigating the effects of alterations in brand identity components such as name, logo, and overall image on consumer perceptions, such as perceived quality, brand awareness, brand associations, and brand trust.
- **Consumer Behaviour:** Analysing customer reactions to rebranding projects, including shifts in advocacy, brand loyalty, and purchase behaviour, is necessary to achieve this.
- **International Context:** This section examines how rebranding affects different international markets while taking cultural, economic, and legal variations into account.
- **Critical Success Factors:** It attempt to identify the aspects that contribute to the success or failure of re-branding efforts, including effective communication, stakeholder participation, and alignment with market trends.
- **Balancing Global and Local Strategies:** This involves evaluating how businesses strike a balance when rebranding between preserving a consistent worldwide brand identity and adjusting to local market preferences.
- **Digital Media Influence:** The impact of social media and digital media on consumer perceptions during rebranding projects is examined in this area.
- **Demographic Variations:** This section looks into how various demographic groups react to rebranding initiatives and how tactics may be adjusted appropriately.

1.6.2 Study Delimitations

While the goal of this study is to provide a thorough examination of re-branding and how it affects customer perception and behaviour, to keep things focused

and manageable, some boundaries must be set. The following are the study's boundaries:

- **Geographical Scope:** The report provides a thorough investigation of the consequences of rebranding by concentrating on certain foreign markets. Even if the markets that were chosen to span a wide variety of cultural and economic contexts, it's possible that the conclusions won't apply to all international marketplaces.

- **Industry Focus:** The study focusses mostly on consumer products, technology, and retail—industries where rebranding is frequently used as a strategic strategy. This concentration enables a deeper analysis of rebranding strategies and their results in these industries.

- **Time Frame:** To guarantee that the conclusions are current and relevant, the study considers rebranding activities that are implemented within a certain time range. This time period, which is restricted to the last ten years, captures current rebranding trends and tactics.

- **Consumer Segments:** The study is concentrated on major consumer groups that are most pertinent to the chosen markets and sectors, even if it intends to examine responses across various demographic categories. Although this method offers focused insights, it might not account for all potential demographic variances.

- **Data Sources:** The study uses a mix of original data gathered through annual reports, social media, company's official website, case studies, and secondary data from already published literature. To guarantee feasibility and manageability within the study's time and budget restrictions, the scope of primary data gathering has been restricted.

- **Case Studies:** To demonstrate how rebranding affects customer perception and behaviour, a few case studies are examined. The conclusions may not be as broadly applicable as they may be because these case studies were selected according to their applicability and the availability of thorough data.

1.6.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions

While the delimitations help in maintaining the focus and feasibility of the study, they also present certain limitations that need to be acknowledged:

Generalizability: The findings of the study may not be applicable universally across all contexts due to the geographical, industry, and demographic focus. To enhance the scope, future research could encompass a wider range of markets, industries, and consumer segments (Ghauri & Cateora, 2010).

Long-term Effects: The primary goal of the study is to examine how rebranding affects customers' perceptions and behaviours in the short and long term. Further research might examine the long-term effects of rebranding initiatives to have a deeper understanding of their resilience and long-term impact.

Quantitative Analysis: The study utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data, but in the future, it may be beneficial to utilize more comprehensive quantitative methodologies to validate the results and enable statistical generalization (Bryman, 2016).

Technological Advances: As digital media and technology advance, their effect on rebranding tactics and customer behaviour may also change. Future studies might examine the impact of digital trends and developing technology on rebranding initiatives (Labrecque et al., 2013).

In conclusion, this chapter clarifies the parameters of the study, providing us an organised structure for the investigation and acknowledging its inherent limits. The study aims to provide accurate insights and practical recommendations by outlining the boundaries and areas of concentration. It also lays the framework for future research to build on its discoveries.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to Re-branding

Re-branding is a strategic process by which a company changes its corporate image, name, logo, design, or other brand elements with the intention of altering the perception of the brand in the minds of consumers, stakeholders, and the market at large. This process can be a powerful tool for businesses looking to refresh their image, stay competitive, and align their brand with evolving market trends and consumer preferences (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). The purpose of this chapter is to provide an in-depth understanding of re-branding, its types, motivations, processes, and its significance in the modern business environment.

2.1.1 Definition of Re-branding

Re-branding can be defined as the creation of a new look and feel for an established product or company. The objective is to influence the audience's perception, establish a differentiated market presence, and drive growth (Kapferer, 2012). This strategic initiative may involve changes to the brand's logo, name, legal names, image, marketing strategy, and advertising themes. Re-branding can occur at the corporate, business unit, or product level and can be partial (modifying some brand elements) or complete (overhauling the entire brand) (Goi & Goi, 2011).

2.1.2 Types of Re-branding

Re-branding initiatives can be broadly categorized into two types, proactive and reactive re-branding.

Proactive Re-branding: Rebranding can often be driven by market expansion, since businesses may do so to target new consumer categories or penetrate new markets, matching their brand with growth objectives (Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Innovation and relevance are also quite important; in the face of technology breakthroughs and changing consumer tastes, brands frequently rebrand in order to remain relevant. In order to represent innovation and current trends, the brand must be updated (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2003). Rebranding is a differentiation strategy

that helps a business establish a distinct character and set itself apart from rivals in competitive marketplaces (Muzellec et al., 2003). Figure 5 illustrates an example of proactive rebranding. The rebranding of Starbucks over time from 1971 to 2011 is shown in the figure below. In 2011, Starbucks rebranded with a new logo got rid of words “Starbucks Coffee” and put the emphases only on the icon. Initially, Starbucks was only serving the coffee beans and then later they rebranded themselves to serve beyond coffee such providing a wider range of products.



Figure 5: Starbucks rebranding (www.logodesignteam.com, 2018)

Reactive Re-branding:

Rebranding is frequently done for crisis management, where businesses need to do so to recover their reputation and trust after experiencing a crisis like bad press, legal troubles, or product failures (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004). Rebranding is frequently required after mergers and acquisitions to synchronise the brand identity and clearly convey the goals and objectives of the newly formed company (Schultz & Hatch, 2003). To revive consumer interest and market position, a company may decide to rebrand in response to a decrease in market share or relevance (Goi & Goi, 2011).

Figure 6 shows an example of Reactive rebranding of Facebook. Facebook's move to "Meta" in October 2021 is a famous example of reactive rebranding in recent years. The company's handling of customer data, false information, and other concerns sparked growing criticism and scandals, which prompted this re-naming.

The announcement of Facebook's rebranding to "Meta," which signals a new path centred on creating the "metaverse"—a virtual reality arena where users may interact in a more realistic environment—was made in an attempt to solve these problems and change public opinion. This action was taken to highlight the parent company's larger goals outside of social media and to remove it from the negative

associations with the Facebook platform. There is ongoing discussion on how well this reactive rebranding restored public trust.



Figure 6: Facebook rebranding to Meta (www.alioze.com, 2021)

2.1.3 Motivations for Rebranding

Rebranding decisions are usually the result of several strategic considerations. Rebranding may be necessary to stay relevant and competitive in the face of changing market conditions, such as the entry of new rivals, changing customer preferences, or developments in technology (Goi & Goi, 2011). Rebranding is frequently necessary to match the brand with a new strategic direction when corporate strategy changes, such as growth, refocusing on core strengths, or worldwide expansion (Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Furthermore, enhancing or changing the brand image to more accurately represent the company's goals, values, and mission can be a powerful motivator for reaching new markets and revitalising the brand (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2003). Rebranding could also be required for compliance to legal and regulatory obligations, like modifications to advertising restrictions or trademark conflicts (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Finally, firms may need to rebrand in order to stay culturally relevant and appeal to modern customers as society norms and cultural values change (Schultz & Hatch, 2003).

2.1.4 The Re-branding Process

Usually, rebranding follows to a set procedure. To evaluate the present brand perception, pinpoint areas in need of development, and investigate market potential, a brand audit and research are first carried out (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004). The next step is strategy development, when a precise rebranding plan is created to fit the objectives of the business, the state of the market, and consumer insights. This includes creating the new brand identity, positioning, and messaging (Goi & Goi, 2011). The second stage, known as design and execution, entails working with designers, marketers, and other stakeholders to create the new brand elements, including the logo, tagline, colour scheme, and overall visual identity (Kapferer, 2012). Afterwards, the start of communication and launch efforts involves the formulation of an all-encompassing communication strategy aimed at introducing internal and external audiences with the branding via marketing campaigns, public relations, and stakeholder engagement (Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Ultimately, assessment and modification occur, whereby the rebranding's influence is tracked via metrics and input, enabling ongoing assessment and modifications to guarantee the rebranding achieves its goals (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006).

2.1.5 Significance of Re-branding

In the competitive and dynamic business world of today, rebranding is essential for companies. Improved market positioning can help businesses draw in more clients and grow their market share. Rebranding can also create an increase of consumer interest, increasing brand advocacy, engagement, and loyalty. Additionally, it guarantees that the brand is in line with the business plan, enabling it to faithfully convey the organization's current goals, values, and vision while strengthening its entire identity. Rebranding is a crucial strategy for crisis recovery during times of crisis since it helps to reestablish confidence and restore the brand's reputation. Additionally, rebranding can increase a company's worldwide reach by promoting greater cultural harmony and market penetration in many geographical areas.

In summary, rebranding is a calculated move that can have a big impact on a company's ability to succeed in the marketplace. Careful planning, execution, and

ongoing assessment are necessary to make sure that the new brand identity connects with customers and advances the goals of the business. Rebranding is still an essential strategy for companies looking to achieve long-term growth and sustainability as they negotiate the complexity of today's marketplaces.

2.2 Consumer Perception and Behaviour

Understanding consumer perception and behaviour is vital for any firm, particularly when executing re-branding tactics. While consumer behaviour relates to the activities and decision-making processes of individuals when making purchases of goods or services, consumer perception refers to how customers view and interpret a brand and its offerings. The theories of consumer perception and the several factors influencing consumer behaviour are covered in this chapter, giving readers a theoretical framework for evaluating how rebranding affects these factors.

2.2.1 Theories of Consumer Perception

Consumer perception is shaped by a variety of psychological processes and theories. The following are some key theories that explain how consumers perceive and interpret brand-related information:

Gestalt Theory: Gestalt psychology emphasises that people view objects as complete beings rather than just as a sum of their components. According to this notion, a brand's entire presentation—which includes components like logos, colours, and packaging—forms how people perceive the company (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). This means that, in terms of branding, a powerful, united perception can be created in the minds of consumers by a well-designed and integrated brand identity. This is especially crucial when rebranding because any discrepancies could break the gestalt and confuse customers (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2019).

Perception Process Theory: According to this idea, perception occurs in four stages: exposure, attention, interpretation, and retention. As per the notion, a brand needs to be shown to consumers first, after which they need to pay attention to it, understand its message, and lastly, remember it (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Effective rebranding methods in the branding context must guarantee that

new brand elements grab customer attention and are simple to understand and recall. This can be accomplished by using powerful imagery, understandable copy, and constant brand reinforcement (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Selective Perception Theory: The process through which people filter information according to their experiences, beliefs, and interests is known as selective perception. Information that confirms preexisting opinions is more likely to be noticed and retained by consumers (Hoyer, MacInnis, & Pieters, 2018). This means that when it comes to branding, rebranding initiatives should consider the preexisting beliefs of the target audience and design the new brand identity to either positively or negatively challenge these perceptions. By doing this, you can lessen opposition to the new brand identity and increase acceptance of it (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2019).

Social Judgment Theory: According to the Social Judgement Theory, people assess new information considering their preexisting beliefs. This idea states that information outside of a person's "latitude of acceptance" may be rejected, whereas information inside the range is likely to be viewed favourably (Sherif & Hovland, 1961). This means that, in the context of branding, in order to promote a favourable perception and reduce negative feedback, it is critical to implement modifications during rebranding that are within customers' latitude of acceptance (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015).

Expectancy-Value Theory: According to the expectation-value theory, customers build their opinions about a brand based on both their expectations and how valuable they believe it to be. Positive perceptions are probable for a brand that fulfils or exceeds these expectations (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This suggests that in the context of branding, rebranding initiatives should concentrate on raising the brand's perceived value and making sure that newly introduced brand aspects meet consumer expectations. This strategy aids in creating a favourable opinion of the brand (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

2.2.2 Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour

Consumer behaviour is influenced by a number of factors that can be broadly categorized into psychological, social, cultural, and personal factors. Understanding these influences is vital for designing effective re-branding strategies.

Psychological Factors: The main factors influencing consumers' purchase decisions are their wants and preferences. By highlighting how the new brand identity meets certain customer demands, rebranding can successfully tap into these reasons (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Furthermore, perception is a key factor in customer behaviour, and a successful rebranding initiative can have a beneficial impact on consumers' perceptions of the brand's relevance, quality, and value (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Consumer behaviour can also be influenced by prior experiences and knowledge. Rebranding might involve educating consumers about the new brand to change the way they learn and interact with it (Hoyer, MacInnis, & Pieters, 2018). Rebranding must attempt to strengthen positive ideas and attitudes or address and change negative ones because consumers' views and attitudes towards a brand have an important effect on their purchasing decisions (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2019).

Social Factors: Rebranding initiatives can focus on family dynamics and values to appeal to this crucial group, as family members have a substantial influence on customer behaviour (Solomon et al., 2016). Friends, coworkers, and other social circles are examples of social groups that influence purchasing decisions. Rebranding that is successful can increase its popularity by utilising social proof and endorsements from prominent members of the group (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Furthermore, a consumer's brand choices may be influenced by their status and roles in society or organisations. According to Solomon et al. (2016), rebranding can therefore seek to match the brand with the aspirational roles and status of its target audience.

Cultural Factors: The most extensive impact on consumer behaviour comes from culture, which includes common standards, values, and beliefs. In order to effectively resonate with a varied range of audiences, rebranding must take cultural sensitivities and preferences into account (Hofstede, 2001). Subcultures inside these larger cultures also influence consumer behaviour; these subcultures are based on things like ethnicity, religion, and geographic location. Rebranding can be made to appeal to particular subcultures by using visuals and messaging that are specifically chosen (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Social class also af-

fects the tastes and buying habits of consumers. Rebranding tactics should therefore be in line with the goals and values of the intended social class (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Personal Factors: According to Solomon et al. (2016), rebranding must take into account the shifting demands and preferences of various age groups and life phases because consumers' choices change as they get older and reach different stages of life. The purchasing habits of an individual are also greatly influenced by their economic level and line of work. Rebranding initiatives have the potential to strategically position the brand to appeal to particular economic or occupational groups (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). A person's lifestyle, which includes their activities, passions, and beliefs, is also very important. To create an attractive and appealing brand identity, rebranding should be in line with the target market's lifestyle plans (Hoyer, MacInnis, & Pieters, 2018). In addition, customers frequently select brands that align with their tastes and perceptions of themselves. Making a brand personality that appeals to the target audience can therefore be a part of rebranding.

In conclusion, the key to any effective rebranding campaign is an awareness of consumer perception theories and the variables influencing consumer behaviour. Using these findings, companies may create rebranding campaigns that successfully grab consumers' attention, change their attitudes, and encourage good behaviour all of which lead to the accomplishment of strategic marketing goals.

2.3 Re-branding and Consumer Perception

Rebranding is a planned and complex process that completely alters the way that customers view a company. This chapter examines the connection between rebranding and consumer perception, highlighting the ways in which alterations to a brand's identity can affect the views, opinions, and behaviours of customers. Businesses can effectively manage rebranding activities to ensure good consumer responses and accomplish intended marketing goals by recognising this link (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006).

2.3.1 Understanding Consumer Perception in the Context of Re-branding

The process by which people choose, arrange, and interpret data to create a meaningful image of the world including companies and their products is referred to as consumer perception (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Consumer perception is a critical factor in determining the success of a rebranding campaign. Customers' views and purchasing decisions can be greatly influenced by how they interpret changes in a brand's identity (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2019).

A technique named perceptual mapping is used to show how customers view a brand in relation to its rivals based on a variety of characteristics (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). In the context of rebranding, companies can make perceptual maps both before and after the change to gauge how customer perceptions have changed and to pinpoint places where the change has successfully improved the positioning or distinguished the brand (Hoyer, MacInnis, & Pieters, 2018).

There are various important phases in the consumer perception process. Consumers first come into contact with the new brand elements during the exposure phase. To make sure that the target audience is aware of the rebranded identity, it is essential to implement efficient communication and marketing methods (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Attention is required after exposure, which means that customers must concentrate on the new brand components. According to Solomon et al. (2016), innovative and captivating designs, messaging, and advertising have the power to draw in customer's interest in the rebranding. The following phase is interpretation, during which customers make assumptions about the new brand components based on their preexisting knowledge, charges, and expectations. Customers are more likely to accurately comprehend the desired brand image and values when messaging is clear and consistent (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Consumer's ability to recall the new brand identity is the final component of retention. The new view can become stronger with repeated exposure and reinforcement through different touchpoints (Hoyer, MacInnis, & Pieters, 2018).

2.3.2 The Impact of Re-branding on Consumer Perception

Rebranding can have a significant effect on how people perceive a brand, affecting their opinions about its relevance, quality, and credibility. By conveying stability and reliability, keeping the old and new brand aspects consistent helps increase the confidence of the brand. On the other hand, sudden modifications without of a clear justification may cause misunderstandings and erode confidence (Aaker, 2012). Since customers value honesty and are more inclined to support rebranding initiatives, transparent communication about the rationale behind the change and its advantages can increase consumer trust and acceptance (Daly & Moloney, 2004).

Rebranding can indicate changes in the quality of a product or service, especially if the new identity places an emphasis on innovation, improved features, or higher performance (Kapferer, 2012). Modern logos and eye-catching packaging are examples of upgraded visual components that can improve the perceived quality of a brand and increase consumer attractiveness (Moore & Reid, 2008).

Rebranding can assist a company in maintaining its cultural relevance by bringing it into line with the current trends, values, and consumer preferences. To appeal to modern customers, this may involve revising the brand's visual language, tone, or message (Ries & Trout, 2001). Furthermore, by better aligning their brand with the requirements and preferences of a new or changing target audience, businesses can re-engage current customers and draw in new ones through rebranding (Gotsi & Andriopoulos, 2007).

Rebranding offers a chance to build or reinforce favourable relationships with the brand in terms of brand associations. Merrilees (2005) suggests that prioritising features like sustainability, creativity, and social responsibility can help attain this goal. By emphasising distinctive value propositions and distinctive brand features, rebranding can also help set a company apart from rivals (Hatch & Schultz, 2003).

2.3.3 Challenges in Managing Consumer Perception during Re-branding

Rebranding has many advantages, but it also has drawbacks when it comes to controlling customer perception. Rebranding initiatives must be effective if these issues are recognised and addressed. Consumer opposition is a significant obstacle. Businesses must strike a balance between innovation and familiarity to facilitate the transition and keep loyal consumers because long-time customers may be resistant to changes to a valued brand (Wiedmann, Hennigs, Schmidt, & Wuestefeld, 2011). Furthermore, customers could respond poorly to rebranding if they think it's a marketing scheme or inauthentic. Accuracy and sincere advancements are essential for winning over customers.

Gaps in communication are another major problem. Confusion and misunderstanding can result from poor or unclear communication regarding the motivations behind and advantages of rebranding. Effective communication requires clear, consistent messaging across all platforms (Daly & Moloney, 2004). In addition, as their support is essential for a seamless transition, involving all relevant parties in the rebranding process is essential for guaranteeing alignment and support. These parties include partners, customers, and workers.

Ensuring consistency in the new brand identity across all touchpoints, from advertising to customer service, is crucial for reinforcing the new perspective. Rebranding initiatives can be hindered by any inconsistency (de Chernatony & Harris, 2000). A thoughtful, phased rollout strategy can aid in the efficient management of consumer perception since it permits consumers to adjust to changes while upholding the consistency of the brand.

2.3.4 Case Studies: Successful Re-branding and Consumer Perception

Examining real-world examples of successful re-branding initiatives provides valuable insights into how consumer perception can be positively influenced.

Apple Inc.: Under Steve Jobs' direction, Apple rebranded the company in the late 1990s, which resulted in a dramatic change in how the market saw it. Apple changed from being viewed as a failing computer maker to becoming one of the industry leaders in consumer electronics innovation (Elliott & Percy, 2007). A number of crucial tactics propelled this change. A major part was played by the release of the iMac, which was followed by the release of well-known items like

the iPod, iPhone, and iPad. Further altering consumer attitudes were Apple's emphasis on simple, elegant design and constant message about innovation and quality. These initiatives have paid off, and Apple is today known for being a high-end, creative, and design-focused brand with a devoted following and a potent market presence.

McDonald's: McDonald's re-branded to address growing concerns about health and sustainability (Morsing & Schultz, 2006). The company changed the architecture of its restaurants, added healthier menu alternatives, and prioritised sustainability through a number of initiatives in order to accomplish this goal. The goal of these initiatives was to bring the brand into line with modern environmental and health ideals. Consequently, McDonald's was able to sustain its attraction to its core customer while simultaneously successfully enhancing its brand perception (Roper & Fill, 2012).

In summary, there is a close relationship between consumer perception and re-branding. Businesses may effectively negotiate the complex dynamics of re-branding campaigns by understanding the theories and processes driving consumer perception and addressing the inherent challenges of re-branding. A stronger market position can result from managing consumer perception during a rebranding effort in a way that improves brand trust, quality, and relevance.

2.4 Re-branding as an International Marketing Strategy

As an international marketing tactic, rebranding is shifting a brand's posture to better meet the needs of a worldwide market while preserving or boosting its relevance and attractiveness. This procedure can maintain competitive advantage, adjust to local market conditions, and meet the changing needs of a variety of consumer bases. This section provides case studies of effective rebranding initiatives along with an exploration of the distinctions between local and global branding strategies.

2.4.1 Global Branding vs. Local Branding

Businesses must choose between adopting a local branding strategy, a global branding strategy, or a hybrid approach that combines aspects of both when they expand internationally. The selection is influenced by several factors, including

market conditions, cultural differences, and the company's business objectives, each of which brings significant advantages and problems (Kapferer, 2012).

The goal of global branding is to keep a consistent brand identity in every market. Because consumers around the world perceive the brand in a same way, strengthening its fundamental image and values, consistency contributes to improved brand recognition, trust, and loyalty (Keller, 2013). Additionally, businesses can take advantage of economies of scale in marketing, distribution, and production through the use of global branding. Using standardised branding materials and campaigns ensures a consistent message across all locations at a lower cost (Douglas & Craig, 2011). The control it gives businesses over their brand image and messaging is another benefit of global branding. Centralised decision-making contributes to maintaining the brand's identity and basic principles in every market (De Mooij, 2010).

Global branding does present a unique set of difficulties, though. Due to cultural differences, a one-size-fits-all strategy would not always be well received by local audiences, which could cause miscommunication or even backlash (Schuiling & Kapferer, 2004). Furthermore, a global brand may face difficulties if it is unable to sufficiently satisfy local wants without a certain amount of adaptation. This is because different markets have different preferences, degrees of competition, and regulatory regimes (Johansson, 2009).

On the other hand, local branding modifies brand identification and messaging according to the unique customs, tastes, and cultures of a given area. This strategy frequently strengthens ties with customers and increases brand loyalty (Levitt, 1983). In addition to allowing for quicker adaptation to local market conditions and more effective response to competitors, local branding also gives businesses the freedom to develop and personalise their offerings (Czinkota et al., 2009). But this adaptability can also cause problems with consistency because it can be confusing to maintain a brand's core principles while catering to local tastes in various areas (Kotler & Keller, 2015). Furthermore, because each market requires its own marketing campaigns, product modifications, and distribution plans, local branding usually entails greater expenses (Hollis, 2008).

Many businesses choose a hybrid strategy known as "glocalization," which blends local adaptation with global uniformity (Friedman, 2005). The goal of this strategy is to combine the best elements of local and global branding. McDonald's is a well-known example of glocalization; it keeps its worldwide brand identity

while customising its menu and marketing tactics to suit regional preferences and cultural differences. This harmony maintains the company's worldwide reputation while enabling it to connect with customers locally (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1989).

2.4.2 Case Studies of Successful Re-branding

Analysing the outcomes of successful rebranding campaigns offers insightful information on how businesses can successfully negotiate the complexity of global marketplaces. Coca-Cola is a well-known example, having continuously maintained its market dominance through intentional rebranding initiatives. Coca-Cola has adjusted its marketing campaigns to appeal to local cultures while concentrating on reiterating its basic principles of pleasure and refreshment. The brand's global presence has been maintained by initiatives such as culturally sensitive advertising campaigns and personalised Coke bottles with local names. Coca-Cola has been able to maintain its position as a leading player in the global beverage business by managing to strike a balance between local relevance and global consistency (Pendergrast, 2000).

Another striking illustration of a good rebranding is provided by Nike. To remain relevant in a very competitive and dynamic business, Nike has changed the way people perceive their brand. The corporation has embraced social media and digital transformation as a means of reaching younger audiences worldwide. Ads like "Just Do It" have been customised to represent regional goals and societal concerns like race and gender equality. Nike has been able to maintain a consistent worldwide identity while strengthening its brand equity and appealing to a variety of consumer bases thanks to this strategic strategy (Katz & Sugiyama, 2006).

Global consumer goods giant Unilever has made significant efforts to rebrand its products in order to better reflect the ideals of modern consumers and meet environmental targets. The corporation has integrated sustainability into the branding of its products through initiatives like the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan. In their marketing strategies, companies like Dove and Lifebuoy have placed a strong emphasis on social and environmental responsibility. According to Rangan, Chase, and Karim (2015), Unilever's dedication to sustainability has

greatly improved its reputation as a worldwide brand and earned the trust of consumers.

Another remarkable example of a successful rebranding is Burberry, which aimed to transform its reputation from that of a traditional British heritage brand to that of a cutting-edge, premium fashion icon. In order to interact with a younger, worldwide audience, the corporation embraced digital innovation and made use of social media. Its brand and market presence were updated via partnerships with modern designers and influencers. Burberry became a major luxury brand with widespread appeal throughout the world as a result of its rebranding efforts, which restored its reputation in the fashion business (Moore & Birtwistle, 2004). In conclusion, knowledge of local and worldwide market dynamics is necessary for rebranding as an international marketing approach. Businesses can successfully re-brand to improve consumer perception, encourage participation, and achieve sustainable growth by carefully balancing consistency with cultural relevance. The case studies demonstrate how a well-considered and well-executed rebranding may result in substantial market success as well as a more robust and long-lasting brand identity.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Understanding the relationships between rebranding, customer perception, and conduct in the context of international marketing strategy is made possible by the theoretical framework. This section covers the fundamental theories and models that supports the study, enabling a conceptual structure to examine and explain the influence of rebranding on customer behaviour.

2.5.1 Brand Equity Theory

According to brand equity theory, customer perception, which is determined by a number of important characteristics, such as perceived quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and brand associations is what essentially determines a brand's value. This concept is essential for comprehending how rebranding might affect consumer perceptions, which in turn affects the brand's total equity (Aaker, 1991). The degree to which customers are able to identify and are familiar with a brand is known as brand awareness. One of a company's main goals when it rebrands

is frequently to increase brand awareness by adding fresh, unique, and engaging components. Redesigned logos, revised slogans, or updated product packaging are a few examples of how to do this with the goal of increasing brand awareness and consumer recall (Keller, 1993).

On the other hand, brand associations relate to the associations that customers have in their minds regarding a certain brand. These associations could be with particular experiences associated with the brand, colours, logos, or features of the product. These associations are reshaped by a well-executed rebranding process to better reflect the company's intended brand positioning. For example, a brand might use fresh visual elements or message to update its image or change consumers' perceptions of its goods (Aaker, 1996).

Another important component of Brand Equity Theory is perceived quality. Customer's assessments of the brand's overall quality in relation to its rivals are reflected in it. Rebranding initiatives frequently indicate quality improvements by emphasising fresh product features, improving visual appeal, or improving marketing messaging. Through these initiatives, the brand is perceived by consumers as being better or more desirable within its category (Keller & Lehmann, 2006).

Last but not least, brand loyalty describes the level of a customer's dedication to a brand, which is frequently shown through repeated purchases. Reinforcing the trust and satisfaction consumers have with the brand is one way that a good rebranding can enhance brand loyalty. Over time, a stronger emotional bond and long lasting loyalty may result from a rebranding plan that successfully meets consumer expectations (Aaker, 1991).

2.5.2 Consumer Behaviour Theories

Assessing how rebranding affects consumer perception and conduct requires an understanding of consumer behaviour. This relationship can be better understood by utilising several consumer behaviour theories.

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB):

By emphasising three crucial elements—attitude, subjective standards, and perceived behavioural control—the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) offers a framework for comprehending how rebranding might affect consumer behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). This idea aids organisations in anticipating consumer reactions to

changes in brand identification, which is crucial in forming strategies throughout a rebranding process.

Consumer behaviour is greatly influenced by attitudes, which are shaped by perceptions of the qualities and advantages of a brand. Rebranding initiatives try to change negative perceptions by presenting the brand in a more positive way. Companies can enhance the way consumers view their brand by modifying their perceptions, which can have a favourable effect on consumer purchase behaviour. A more positive attitude towards the brand, for example, might be created during rebranding by altering perceptions of product quality or brand values (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Consumer acceptance of rebranded identities is significantly shaped by subjective standards, or social factors. Consumer reactions to a brand's shift might be influenced by peer perceptions, cultural trends, and societal expectations. More customer acceptance and adoption of the new brand image can be facilitated by rebranding initiatives that align with dominant cultural norms or are supported by prominent personalities (Ajzen, 1991). The significance of matching rebranding initiatives with the ideals and expectations of the intended audience is highlighted by this social component.

The degree to which customers may readily adjust to the rebranded identity is known as perceived behavioural control. Customers may oppose the rebranding if they think it will be very difficult to interact with. Simplifying the transition, thus, can improve favourable customer reactions. This can be achieved by clear information, sensible design modifications, or phased adoption. Customers are more likely to embrace and support the new brand identity when the rebranding process is seamless and gives them a sense of control (Ajzen, 1991).

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM):

A framework for comprehending how consumers absorb persuasive information is offered by the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which is highly relevant to rebranding tactics. ELM states that there are two main channels via which consumers might be impacted: the central and peripheral routes of processing. Depending on how deeply the customer engages with the brand message, each pathway offers different ways to influence attitudes and behaviour.

When customers carefully analyse brand-related messaging, this is known as central route processing. This kind of processing is more common when the rebranding initiative offers significant data that solves issues or needs raised by customers. When a company is rebranding, for example, and highlights innovations, sustainability efforts, or product improvements, and presents this information in a detailed way, customers are more inclined to carefully consider the message. The resulting attitude shift is more likely to last and be resistant to counter-persuasion when central route processing is used (Hu, X., et al., 2023). On the other hand, peripheral route processing is motivated by surface-level strategies like the utilisation of celebrity endorsements or the rebranding's visual attractiveness and requires less cognitive work. By taking this approach, consumers might not fully absorb the brand message; instead, they might be influenced by eye-catching packaging, memorable slogans, or the influence of well-known personalities. Although using these peripheral cues for rebranding might result in rapid, transient changes in consumer perceptions, the results are frequently less long-lasting than when using central processing.

By knowing which path customers are most likely to take, marketers can adjust their rebranding efforts appropriately. It is more efficient to concentrate on central route processing and provide relevant information while attending to customer problems in order to achieve long-term effects. However, appealing peripheral strategies like eye-catching images or influencers might be helpful for quick attention and results (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

Cognitive Dissonance Theory:

According to the cognitive dissonance theory, when consumers come across conflicting information, beliefs, or perceptions, they become psychologically uncomfortable. This concept becomes particularly important when it comes to rebranding because it can make customers uncomfortable if the new brand identity contradicts their previous opinions of the company. Cognitive dissonance may arise, for example, if a company that people have traditionally associated with traditional values suddenly adopts a modern, edgy image. The unease comes from the difference between the consumer's prior perception of the company and the updated identity being showcased by the rebranding initiative (Festinger, L., 1957).

Customers are motivated to balance the conflicting information to overcome this dissonance. They frequently accomplish this by changing their beliefs or attitudes to reflect the new brand identity. Being able to communicate effectively is essential to helping this change. Companies may facilitate consumer's transition by offering clear, consistent messaging that highlights how the new identity still reflects essential brand values and explains the logic behind the rebranding.

Although the discomfort at first, smoother customer adoption and long-term brand loyalty can result from successful rebranding initiatives that predict and resolve any cognitive dissonance.

2.5.3 Marketing and Branding Models

Several branding and marketing models provide frameworks for studying how rebranding affects customer behaviour and perception.

AIDA Model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action):

Attention: The goal of rebranding is to draw in customers by using distinctive and interesting brand aspects.

Interest: Generating attention by emphasising special qualities, advantages, and principles connected to the new brand identity.

Desire: Creating desire with customers by emotional connection and attending to their wants and goals.

Action: Using appealing calls to action and promotions, companies can persuade customers to take an action, like making a purchase or interacting with the brand (Kotler, P., Keller, K. L., Goodman, M., & Hansen, T. 2022).

Keller's Brand Equity Model (Customer Based Brand Equity- CBBE):

The Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model, which is another name for Keller's Brand Equity Model, offers a framework for comprehending the ways in which rebranding may affect consumer perception and brand loyalty. Establishing brand importance, or making sure the rebranded identity is instantly recognisable and comes to mind in relevant situations, is the first phase in this strategy. This requires using strategic marketing and design to implant the new brand identity firmly in consumer's minds so they can quickly recall it when making judgements about what to buy (Keller, 2001).

The next crucial elements in Keller's framework are brand performance and visuals. Providing the performance aspects of the new brand, such as innovation, quality, and dependability, facilitates consumers' comprehension of the concrete advantages of the rebranding effort. In addition, building a positive brand image through associations, messaging, and visual components enables the company to emotionally and aspirationally connect with customers, which is essential for a successful rebranding effort (Aaker, 1991).

Creating favourable brand perceptions and emotions is yet another crucial component of Keller's strategy. Good consumer perceptions of the brand's dependability, authenticity, and quality are vital to the rebranding process. Furthermore, generating positive emotional reactions like happiness or ease can strengthen the rebranded identity and increase customer loyalty (Keller, 2003).

Building brand resonance, the state in which customers form a close bond with the brand is the final objective of Keller's CBBE model. At this point, customers demonstrate brand loyalty and a sense of connection, making repeat purchases and serving as brand ambassadors. Rebranding tactics that are successful seek to develop this strong psychological bond with customers in order to create a competitive advantage and enduring brand loyalty (Keller, 2008).

Brand Resonance Model:

After a rebranding effort, the Brand Resonance Model sheds light on how strongly customers relate to a brand. If the rebranding is successful in reinforcing trust and happiness, behavioural loyalty which measures the degree of repeat purchase behaviour towards the rebranded product may rise (Keller, 2001).

Attitudinal attachment, in which customers form an emotional bond with the rebranded identity, is another crucial component. This attachment develops when the brand's new ideals or imagery strongly connects with the goals of the customer, strengthening their sense of personal connection with the brand (Aaker, 1991).

The approach also emphasises the significance of a feeling of community, in which customers identify with other people who have a similar love for the rebranded product. Shared beliefs and experiences, which are frequently heightened by social media and brand events, can foster a strong feeling of community (Keller, 2003).

Ultimately, the willingness of consumers to commit time, funds, and effort to the rebranded identity is reflected in their active involvement. In addition to being devoted customers, highly engaged ones frequently grow to be brand ambassadors, spreading the word about the company through numerous interactions (Keller, 2008).

2.5.4 Cross-Cultural Consumer Behaviour

In the context of international marketing, cross-cultural consumer behaviour theories are vital to understanding how re-branding impacts diverse consumer groups.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions:

The Cultural Dimensions framework by Hofstede is an essential tool for developing rebranding tactics that operate in a variety of cultural settings. The degree to which less powerful individuals of a community accept unequal power distribution is one factor known as "power distance." Rebranding initiatives may need to stress authority, tradition, and hierarchical norms in high power distance cultures in order to meet customer expectations (Hofstede, 2011).

The duality of individualism and collectivism is another crucial factor. Rebranding tactics in individualistic cultures should emphasise accomplishments on a personal level as well as independence and self-expression. Nonetheless, as collectivist cultures promote unity and the well-being of the group as a whole, the focus should be on interpersonal connections, community, and harmony within the group (Hofstede, 1980).

The masculine vs. femininity dimension is a reflection of the priorities of society. Rebranding tactics that emphasise accomplishment and ambition are necessary in masculine cultures that place a strong value on achievement and competition. Re-branding should take into account the softer values of feminine cultures, which place a higher importance on nurturing, care, and quality of life in order to establish a closer connection with customers (Hofstede, 2001).

The degree to which people are afraid by ambiguity and uncertainty is measured by their avoidance of it. Rebranding should emphasise stability and security and minimise risks in cultures where there is a high level of uncertainty avoidance in order to comfort customers (Hofstede, 1991).

Short-term vs. long-term orientation refers to the structural focus of a culture. Rebranding initiatives should provide a strong emphasis on sustainability and future growth since long-term-oriented cultures value determination and rewards in the future. On the other hand, cultures that are short-term oriented prioritise instant pleasure and rewards, which have to be mirrored in the brand's language and products (Hofstede, 2011).

Finally, indulgence vs. restraint explains how cultures respond to urges and desires. Rebranding should emphasise the freedom, happiness, and self-satisfaction that indulgent societies value most. Rebranding should be in keeping with norms of moderation and careful desire management, as restrained cultures place a high importance on self-discipline and control (Hofstede, 2011).

Schwartz's Theory of Basic Values:

Connecting to customers who value engagement and self-direction becomes crucial when rebranding with an openness to alter value. Since these people are drawn to originality, creativity, and fresh experiences, it is critical for rebranding initiatives to emphasise the brand's forward-thinking attitude and flexibility (Schwartz, 2012). Companies who portray themselves as dynamic and forward-thinking are likely to align with this orientation of values.

Conservation, on the other hand, is a reflection of values like tradition, security, and conformity. Customers that place a high priority on these principles typically prefer consistency in addition to long-standing customs. In this situation, rebranding should concentrate on persuading customers that the brand's integrity and essential character would not alter. To keep customers loyal, the messaging should emphasise consistency and stability (Schwartz, 2012).

Power and achievement are two ideals that are involved in self-enhancement. Customers who are motivated by these principles are probably going to react favourably to rebranding that emphasises accomplishment, prestige, and status. Rebranding tactics ought to highlight the brand's accomplishments, its position as a market leader, or its capacity to provide customers a feeling of empowerment and success (Schwartz, 1994). This strategy can establish a strong bond with customers who place a high value on recognition and upward mobility.

On the other hand, transformation includes ideals that put social responsibility, diversity, and consideration for others first, such as universalism and kindness. Rebranding a company with a focus on global well-being, environmental responsibility, and social issues is likely to resonate well with customers who respect

self-transcendence. Building a deep emotional bond with these customers can be facilitated by expressing a commitment to social justice and moral behaviour (Schwartz, 1992).

2.5.5 Integrative Framework

By integrating these ideas and models, we may develop an analytical framework for examining how rebranding affects customer behaviour and perception. This framework takes into account:

- The elements of perceived quality, awareness, associations, and loyalty that make up brand equity.
- The dynamics of consumer behaviour (attitudes, arbitrary standards, and perceived behavioural control).
- Branding and marketing models, such as Brand Resonance, Keller's CBBE, and AIDA.
- Cross-cultural factors (values of Schwartz, Hofstede's dimensions).

Businesses can create rebranding strategies that successfully affect consumer perception and behaviour across a variety of international marketplaces by implementing this integrative approach. This methodology guarantees a thorough comprehension of the elements influencing consumer reactions to rebranding and facilitates the creation of focused and culturally appropriate rebranding campaigns.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Using Nokia and Ericsson as case studies, this chapter describes the research methods used to investigate how rebranding affects consumer perception and behaviour. Both businesses are appropriate for comparison since they have switched from business-to-consumer (B2C) to business-to-business (B2B) strategies. The study only uses data that is readily available to the public, such as press releases, financial reports, industry analyses, and media stories. Because conducting surveys or interviews within Nokia is restricted, this secondary data strategy is ideal.

Nokia and Ericsson were chosen as case studies because of their similar histories, positions in the market, and current strategic moves towards business-to-business branding. Both companies are well-known for being world leaders in telecommunications, and they have significantly changed their brand identities to reflect changing market conditions. Nokia purposefully shifted its focus from consumer-facing mobile devices to digital transformation and enterprise solutions with its 2023 rebranding. By making investments in IoT infrastructure, private 5G networks, and cutting-edge digital services, Ericsson has likewise strengthened its standing as a technology partner for businesses and governments.

A strong comparative framework for examining how legacy telecom brands control customer perception during rebranding initiatives targeted at new markets is provided by examining these two businesses concurrently. Their comparable Nordic heritage, rivalry throughout history, and concurrent strategic realignment provide a controlled yet perceptive foundation for research. Additionally, both businesses are in the same sector and deal with comparable global issues like market saturation, B2B demand, and digitalisation, which makes them appropriate for comprehending the wider ramifications of corporate rebranding.

In the context of rebranding in global B2B marketing, this study is better positioned to uncover common difficulties, best practices, and stakeholder responses by looking at Nokia and Ericsson.

3.2 Research Design

The influence of Ericsson's strategic repositioning and Nokia's 2023 rebranding on consumer and market perceptions is investigated using a comparative case study design. The rebranding experiences of the two businesses and their impact on market dynamics can be compared according to this design.

A key component of this research is the qualitative analysis of secondary data. The study uses publicly accessible materials, including press releases, news stories, and yearly financial reports, to learn more about the rebranding tactics used by both businesses. Without the requirement for primary data collecting, this method enables a thorough analysis of the business's performance, market positioning, and customer responses following rebranding.

3.3 Research Approach

This study uses a qualitative and descriptive methodology based on secondary data analysis because original data collection via surveys and interviews is restricted in Nokia. Company websites, financial records, media coverage, and third-party industry reports are among the publicly accessible sources that are used to obtain information about Nokia and Ericsson's rebranding initiatives. By analysing these sources, the study seeks to answer the following key questions:

Purpose of Rebranding: Why did the company rebrand? What were the goals?

Communication Strategy: How was the rebranding communicated to the public?

Consumer Reaction: How did consumers perceive the rebranding? Was there any backlash or positive feedback?

Brand Identity Shift: How did the company's brand identity change post-rebranding?

External Perceptions: What are the external perceptions of the rebranding efforts, as reported by media outlets and industry analysts?

3.4 Data Collection Method

The study uses secondary data from the following sources because primary data collecting is not practical:

3.4.1 Financial Reports

Important information about Nokia and Ericsson's performance after rebranding may be found in their financial reports. According to their quarterly and annual reports, Nokia has focused on the 2023 rebranding. These reports offer information on market share, revenue, and profitability—all of which show how the rebranding has affected company performance. In the same way, the impact of Ericsson's shift to B2B markets will be examined through an analysis of its financial statements.

3.4.2 Press Releases and News Articles

Press announcements describing their rebranding plans have been released by both companies. To learn how Nokia and Ericsson informed the public about their rebranding initiatives, these materials will be examined. External viewpoints on how the market and consumers have responded to these changes can be found in news articles and industry reports from reliable sources like Reuters and Bloomberg.

3.4.3 Industry Reports

Further information about how the rebranding initiatives have affected Nokia and Ericsson's competitive position within the telecom sector may be found in third-party industry reports from experts like Gartner and IDC. These studies frequently present a comprehensive picture of the market environment, which is helpful for comprehending the wider effects of rebranding.

3.5 Sampling and Data Sources

As this study only uses secondary data, the sampling process entails picking relevant reports and papers with care. The following criteria were used in this selection: To ensure that the dynamics of Nokia and Ericsson before and after the rebranding are captured, the timeline is limited to documents released between 2020 and 2024. Only reliable sources are taken into account, including official financial records, news statements from businesses, and respected media and industry studies. Furthermore, the chosen data must have an immediate effect on the businesses' financial results, public impression, or rebranding initiatives.

3.6 Data Analysis

3.6.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis will be used to examine the qualitative information found in news articles, press releases, and financial reports. Insights into how the market and customers have reacted to these initiatives, the strategic changes associated in their moves from B2C to B2B models, and the reshaping of brand identities through rebranding for both Nokia and Ericsson are important topics to be investigated. This thematic analysis will assist in identifying trends in the way the rebranding has been seen by the public and industry experts on the outside as well as internally within the companies.

3.6.2 Descriptive Analysis

Key parameters including revenue growth, market share, and profitability will be compared before and after the rebranding using a descriptive analysis of the financial data. This will assist in calculating the financial effects of the rebranding tactics used by Ericsson and Nokia. For example, examining the financial outcomes of both businesses during their rebranding periods will reveal how these changes have aided in long-term expansion.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

There aren't many ethical issues because this study just uses secondary data. However, by eliminating the use of proprietary or confidential information, the study makes sure that all data sources are reliable and openly accessible. Additionally, the study prevents data falsification and ensures integrity in reporting.

3.8 Limitations of the Study

The absence of primary data resulting from limitations on conducting surveys or interviews within Nokia is the primary constraint of this study. This makes it more difficult to get personal information about how consumers perception. To make up for this, the study uses extensive secondary data, such as industry reports, financial records, and media sections, which provide a robust foundation for the analysis.

The dependence on public financial performance and external impressions, which might not adequately reflect the complex internal difficulties and achievements of the rebranding initiatives, is another drawback.

4 Findings and Analysis

The results of the examination of Nokia's and Ericsson's rebranding initiatives are shown in this chapter. This chapter examines the rebranding strategies of both companies using secondary data from industry reports, press releases, annual reports, and media articles. The results are compared according to a number of criteria, including the rebranding's purpose, communication strategy, consumer response, market impact, and brand identity shift. To contextualise the success of the rebranding efforts, the findings are framed using theoretical models like Aaker's Brand Identity Model and Keller's Brand Equity Model.

4.1 Data collection of Nokia rebranding

Through company 2023 rebranding, Nokia made a calculated move to change its image from that of a legacy mobile phone manufacturer to that of a provider of technology and business-to-business solutions. The company's new tagline and logo, "Unlocking the Exponential Potential of Networks," represented its shift away from the consumer sector and towards network solutions, cloud services for companies, and 5G infrastructure (Nokia, 2023; Laine, 2023). Figure 7 shows the new and old Nokia logo.

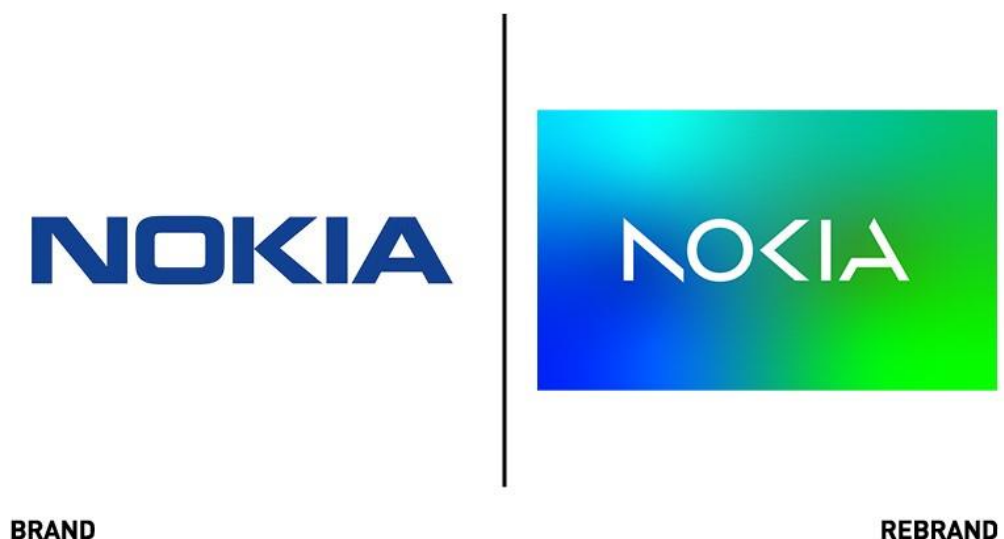


Figure 7: Nokia's old and new logo (www.transformmagazine.net, 2023)

4.1.1 Nokia Rebranding Purpose

Realigning the company's image with its current business aims and specifically targeting B2B clients across a variety of industries was the main objective of Nokia's 2023 rebranding. Pekka Lundmark, the CEO of Nokia, stated that the brand makeover was necessary to make clear that the firm is a premier supplier of network technology and digital transformation solutions rather than a consumer electronics manufacturer. With a strong focus on collaborations that propel cutting-edge technologies in 5G, AI, and cloud computing, the rebranding initiative emphasised Nokia's objective to promote digitalisation across industries (Maistre, 2023).

To better match its exterior identity with its internal mission—leading digital transformations that improve connection and productivity globally, Nokia undertook a purposeful rebranding. A press release states that Nokia's mission is to provide safe, dependable, and effective digital infrastructure that helps businesses and government agencies accomplish their digital objectives (Nokia Press Release, 2023). The rebranding additionally opened the way for Nokia's goal of using its knowledge of cloud-native technologies to establish itself as a major force in a market that is changing quickly and where digitalisation is becoming essential to corporate success.

Nokia's key values of trust, innovation, and technological leadership were communicated through the redesigned logo and visual identity, which was intended to appeal to business clients. Together with the new tagline, the elegant, modern logo symbolises Nokia's shift from hardware-focused solutions to integrated, software-driven services. The rebranding is anticipated to increase Nokia's competitive advantage in the network infrastructure industry, especially as it enters the 5G and AI-integrated solutions markets, according to the company's 2023 annual report (Nokia Annual Report, 2023).

Executive interviews with Nokia shed more light on the strategic goals guiding the rebranding. The rebranding is in line with Nokia's shift to a "technology company" image, CEO Lundmark stressed. "Our rebranding is not just a cosmetic change but a reflection of our commitment to digital transformation and network innovation," Lundmark said in a Forbes interview (Lundmark, 2023). According to industry observers, this action not only repositions Nokia but also helps it break away

from its past affiliation with mobile phones, allowing it to establish a unique brand in the business-to-business (B2B) market (Laine, 2023).

4.1.2 Nokia's rebranding communication strategy

Nokia's 2023 rebranding included a communication redesign in addition to a visual and strategic change to better align stakeholder perceptions with the company's renewed emphasis on business-to-business (B2B) technology solutions. Nokia aimed to communicate its transition from a traditional consumer electronics brand to a leading technological partner in digital infrastructure, cloud solutions, and network connection through a multi-channel, focused strategy (Nokia, 2023; Lundmark, 2023).

Three pillars supported Nokia's rebranding communications strategy: engagement, consistency, and transparency. Each of these components was created to make sure that the messaging was impactful and clear across a variety of media and that Nokia's business-to-business audience found it appealing.

Transparency: Nokia's communication efforts were highly dependent on transparency, especially when it came to setting itself off from its previous image and focusing on enterprise markets. According to Lundmark (2023), Nokia is dedicated on offering revolutionary network solutions rather than consumer electronics. This strategy reaffirmed Nokia's emphasis and reassured clients and investors on its long-term business-to-business commitment (*Nokia Rebrands, Seeking to Raise Its Enterprise Profile | RCR Wireless News*, n.d.).

Consistency in Messaging and Visual Identity: For Nokia's rebranding messages to reach consumers worldwide without ambiguity, consistency was essential. From a redesigned logo to a unified colour scheme and motto, "Unlocking the Exponential Potential of Networks," the business adopted a standardised approach to its new branding materials. All digital and print marketing materials, as well as Nokia's website and social media accounts, adopted this new visual identity. Figure 8 shows the website of Nokia after rebranding. Nokia's 2023 Annual Report states that the goal of the rebranding was to emphasise the company's dedication to its business-to-business (B2B) purpose by projecting a consistent image across all touchpoints (Nokia, 2023).

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Quantum-safe networks →
Making critical infrastructure quantum-safe.

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Figure 8: New Nokia website after rebranding (<https://www.nokia.com/>, 2025)

Stakeholder Engagement and Direct Communication: Nokia prioritised stakeholder involvement through industry conferences, interviews, and press releases, among other direct communication channels. In order to communicate with B2B clients, partners, and investors directly, Nokia organised webinars and conferences to make its goals and values clear, according to a news statement. The business also took part in important B2B events and technology forums, which gave executives the chance to talk with experts in the industry about Nokia's technological advancements and goals (Nokia Press Release, 2023; Laine,

2023). Nokia was able to respond to stakeholder enquiries about the rebranding and build trust through this open communication approach.

Nokia made the most of digital media for the rebranding campaign in keeping with its digitally forward-thinking image. To reflect the new corporate identity and include information on the company's goals, technological developments, and business-to-business (B2B) partnerships, the main Nokia website was redesigned (Nokia, 2023). Figure 8 shows the redesigned Nokia's website. With targeted postings and videos meant to engage a global audience of business clients and tech enthusiasts, social media sites like LinkedIn and Twitter were important in promoting Nokia's rebranded image. Nokia's social media approach was intended to be "both informational and inspirational," according to Laine (2023), to bring in new business-to-business clients and strengthen the company's position as a technology partner.

Nokia conducted interviews with executives and partnered with industry magazines to reach an even wider audience. Nokia was able to successfully spread its message about its goal to modernise network infrastructures thanks to this multi-layered media outreach, which also helped to consolidate Nokia's position in the digital transformation area (Laine, 2023).

Even though its rebranding campaign was successful, Nokia still faced several obstacles, such as changing public opinion and getting over long-standing connections to its previous consumer electronics. Analysts have observed that it is challenging to reinterpret Nokia's legacy due to its lengthy experience in the consumer market. Nonetheless, the story has advanced thanks in large part to Nokia's marketing strategy of precise, focused communications (Laine, 2023).

Nokia's next communication initiatives will probably entail more attempts to support its B2B transformation by exhibiting collaborations, successful projects, and advancements in digital infrastructure. Maintaining momentum and enhancing Nokia's standing as a B2B technology leader will need the company to keep up its clear, transparent updates and interact with enterprise-focused stakeholders.

4.1.3 Consumer perception and response

Both nostalgia and a slow acceptance of Nokia's new B2B-focused identity were visible in the early consumer reaction to the company's rebranding. A survey conducted in 2023 by the market research firm Brand Finance found that a large

number of former Nokia customers continued to identify the brand with its history of mobile phones, creating a disconnect between the company's present position and public opinion. Some customers were disappointed by Nokia's departure from the consumer market as a result of this "legacy effect," and social media conversations revealed a sentimental attachment to the company's previous reputation as a household name in mobile phones (Brand Finance, 2023).

Nokia CEO Pekka Lundmark responded to these consumer impressions by acknowledging the legacy difficulties. In a media interview, Lundmark said, "We recognise the emotional attachment people have to our mobile phone heritage, but we are now focused on innovating in B2B technologies and enabling the digital transformation of enterprises" . In response, Nokia reaffirmed its dedication to cloud computing, network solutions, and 5G infrastructure with the goal of redefining its brand identity for both enterprise and consumer customers (Maistre, 2023).

The rebranding of Nokia also exposed differences in how general consumers and targeted business-to-business clients are perceived. Due to residual meanings with the brand's prior consumer focus, general customers were slower to embrace Nokia's new identity (Brand Finance, 2023). Tech-savvy consumers and B2B clients, on the other hand, reacted more favourably to the rebranding since they saw it as a step towards greater innovation and digital transformation.

According to the company's annual report, enterprise clients gave Nokia excellent feedback, praising its brand's connection with next-generation technology and the openness of its strategic aims. According to Lundmark, "our clients have been very responsive to our new brand identity, especially in industries where digital transformation is crucial" (Nokia Annual Report, 2023). The difference in customer perception highlights Nokia's difficulty in coordinating its internal goals with its external image.

The perceived brand value of Nokia has significantly changed as a result of its transformation. The rebranding helped change the industry's impression of Nokia from a heritage consumer brand to a modern provider of technology solutions, emphasising the company's dedication to the B2B market. Industry evaluations indicate that this change has strengthened Nokia's position as a competitive player in the digital infrastructure sector, especially among enterprise clients who are concentrating on digitalisation (Laine, 2023). The good response from business clients who see Nokia as a feasible technological partner is credited with

the minor increase in Nokia's brand value, according to Interbrand's 2023 research (Interbrand, 2023).

But there have been difficulties with the shift. As seen by responses on social media sites like Twitter and LinkedIn, where users criticised the company's exit from the consumer technology sector, some analysts warn that Nokia's rebranding runs the risk of losing established consumer segments (Laine, 2023). According to industry experts, Nokia may need to further engage public opinion in order to fully recalibrate its image, even while its strategy enhances its B2B brand.

Nokia's future brand perception plan proposes more public interaction and the use of digital platforms to present its business-to-business developments and social initiatives. In order to establish Nokia as a "pioneering force" in global digitalisation, the company's communications team has revealed plans to further address the public's sentimental attachment to the brand (Nokia, 2023). According to Lundmark, Nokia intends to improve public awareness and acceptance of its B2B focus by holding informative webinars and publishing case studies that highlight its proficiency in cloud and network technologies.

To demonstrate its technological leadership, the corporation also hopes to use high-profile initiatives and collaborations, such its participation in 5G and AI integration. In a recent interview, Lundmark stated, "We're committed to showing the public that Nokia is still a name they can trust, even as we shift our focus to technologies that drive digital transformation" (Lundmark, 2023). It is anticipated that this interaction strategy would help consumers better comprehend Nokia's identity and boost the company's development as a business-to-business brand.

4.1.4 Brand identity shift

Nokia's 2023 rebranding was a dramatic change in the company's identity with the goal of re-establishing Nokia as a pioneer in B2B technologies and network infrastructure. Nokia changed its logo, slogan, and visual identity to represent its focus on facilitating the digital transformation of sectors, departing from its previous status as a manufacturer of mobile phones (Nokia, 2023). This chapter examines the components of Nokia's rebranding, the business case for these modifications, and the ways in which the change in brand identity is having an impact on important markets.

Introducing a revised logo that discarded the recognisable blue, bolded "Nokia" typeface in favour of a more abstract and dynamic design was the first significant step in Nokia's brand identity transformation. The new logo's simple form symbolises Nokia's position as a versatile, adaptable B2B partner, while its modern, modular lines imply connectivity (Nokia Press Release, February 2023). "This is no longer about phones," stated Pekka Lundmark, CEO of Nokia. According to Forbes (2023), Nokia is now focused on networks and digital solutions that unlock the potential of enterprises of the future. The tagline, "Unlocking the Exponential Potential of Networks," which highlights Nokia's dedication to using network technology for commercial innovation, served as a signal for the change.

Nokia's strategic choice to withdraw from the consumer sector and concentrate only on business-to-business (B2B) solutions is reflected in the rebranding. Nokia's primary business currently centres on digital infrastructure, such as cloud networking, enterprise software, and 5G, as stated in its 2023 Annual Report. Building strong digital ecosystems and establishing itself as a major facilitator of digital transformation across industries are the goals of Nokia's strategy realignment. Nokia wants to become an "essential partner for industrial-grade digital infrastructure," according to their investment materials (Nokia Annual Report, 2023).

Market conditions and the quick uptake of 5G and other digital technologies in industries including manufacturing, logistics, and healthcare served as the driving forces behind this focus. Nokia wants to differentiate itself from rivals that primarily target the consumer market by strengthening its value proposition for enterprise clients by matching its brand identity with these opportunities (IDC, 2023). Nokia's rebranding is an example of how to change long-held beliefs while going in a risky new strategic direction. As a leader in B2B technology, Nokia has repositioned itself by integrating its brand identity with a forward-thinking strategy focused on digital infrastructure. Even though consumer nostalgia won't go away right away, Nokia is in a strong position to be seen as a crucial partner in the digital age because to its communication and strategy.

4.2 Data collection on Ericsson rebranding

In this section, we are going to analyse the same parameters which we did for Nokia for example Ericsson's rebranding purpose, rebranding communication strategy, consumer perception and response and finally the brand identity shift.

4.2.1 Ericsson Rebranding purpose

The company's move to become a leader in enterprise solutions by utilising cloud, IoT, and 5G technology is reflected in Ericsson's rebranding initiatives. This section explores the goals and reasoning behind Ericsson's rebranding, looking at how the business is putting itself in the global digital infrastructure market to increase its value for both present and future customers.

The rebranding objectives complement Ericsson's larger objective to evolve from a telecom-focused business to a flexible supplier of digital infrastructure. By providing essential infrastructure for 5G and IoT applications, this shift aims to place Ericsson at the cutting edge of enterprise digitalisation. According to their 2023 Annual Report, Ericsson's rebranding intends to strengthen its position in developing industries by emphasising durable network solutions and sustainable technology, which will enhance global connectivity and facilitate digital transformation across industries (Ericsson, 2023).

The rebranding brings Ericsson's identity into line with its dedication to developing strong and long-lasting network technologies. According to their Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility Report, the corporation aims to solve issues including operational scalability in telecom and digital networks and the impact on the climate. Ericsson hopes to promote sustainable business models and strengthen their corporate social responsibility by incorporating eco-friendly methods into their goods (Ericsson, 2023).

The goal of Ericsson's rebranding is also to meet the growing need for private network solutions, particularly in industries like logistics, healthcare, and manufacturing. According to a Gartner case study, Ericsson's increased offers in safe, scalable network solutions, such as private 5G networks for industrial applications are directly related to the company's brand change. It is anticipated that this

strategy will enhance Ericsson's market uniqueness by supporting crucial applications that demand the lowest latency and highest dependability (Gartner, 2023).

Ericsson utilised a multi-platform strategy that included industry events, investor briefings, and press releases to convey its rebranding objectives. Ericsson leaders emphasised the company's dedication to innovation in the domains of network security, data privacy, and sustainable technology when launching the branding at international gatherings like the Mobile World Congress. The company's image is in line with the high standards of business clients thanks to this positioning approach, which also guarantees Ericsson's visibility as a forward-thinking technology provider.

Ericsson used webinars, interviews, and private business briefings to communicate with its current clients in addition to communicating with the outside world. By outlining how its enlarged suite of products would provide value across several industries, this focused outreach helped to clarify Ericsson's new brand (Mobile World Congress, 2023; Ericsson Official Press Release, 2023).

The goal of Ericsson's rebranding is to reposition the company as a cutting-edge, environmentally friendly technology supplier that can satisfy the needs of a world that prioritises digitalisation. Ericsson hopes to differentiate itself in a competitive market by refocusing its mission and product offerings and positioning itself as a crucial enterprise digitalisation partner. Ericsson's overall goal of using cutting-edge technology to promote a connected, sustainable future is reflected in this strategy change.

4.2.2 Ericsson's rebranding communication strategy

Redefining its identity as a technology corporation with a business-to-business focus has been made possible in large part by Ericsson's rebranding communications strategy. Ericsson has used a variety of channels to make sure that its new brand strategy appeals to investors, enterprise clients, and industry stakeholders, departing from a consumer-focused past.

Press releases, digital material, international conferences, and social media campaigns are all part of Ericsson's multi-platform communications plan for its rebranding. The main goal of these initiatives is to inform various businesses, such

as manufacturing, healthcare, and logistics, about the company's shift to 5G enterprise solutions and private network technology. Ericsson's 2023 Annual Report, which highlights the company's focus on altering network capabilities to satisfy industry-specific needs, underlined this strategic move (Ericsson, 2023). Ericsson wants to increase its impact in the digital infrastructure industry and fortify its relationships by focusing on business-to-business (B2B) clients.

Ericsson's website, which regularly posts updates, including case studies and partnerships with important industry players, has been one of the most effective platforms for its rebranding. In keeping with its rebranding's central theme of innovation for enterprise solutions, Ericsson recently highlighted in a news release its collaboration with numerous international businesses to develop 5G infrastructure. Additionally, the website features articles and analysis of market trends that inform and involve its business-to-business audience with the technical worth of Ericsson's products (*5G Business Solutions for Enterprise Business*, n.d.).

Top officials at Ericsson, especially CEO Börje Ekholm, have played a key role in explaining the rebranding's strategic objectives. Ekholm has established Ericsson as a progressive, sector-specific network solutions supplier through interviews with prominent magazines like *Forbes* and industry gatherings like Mobile World Congress. He frequently highlights the necessity for creative methods to connectivity in difficult situations and Ericsson's role in digital transformation for sectors that depend on private networks (Forbes, 2023).

A fundamental component of Ericsson's communications has been thought leadership content, with executives often sharing their perspectives on cutting-edge topics like AI-driven networks, sustainable connectivity, and the effects of 5G on industrial productivity. By bringing the company's rebranding narrative into line with corporate requirements and worldwide technological advancements, this material enhances its reputation as a pioneer in enterprise networking solutions (Ericsson Official Press Release, 2023).

Ericsson uses regional conferences and industry gatherings like the Mobile World Congress (MWC) to showcase its B2B capabilities. Ericsson showcased 5G and private network developments at MWC 2023 that are intended to increase industry data security and operational efficiency. Through live demonstrations and expert panels, these events provide a venue for Ericsson to showcase its technology to prospective customers, the media, and analysts, which strengthens its new brand identity (Mobile World Congress, 2023).

Additionally, Ericsson interacts directly with its target audience through webinars, workshops, and online forums. The organisation is able to inform industry stakeholders about the technical details and advantages of its products through these interactive meetings. By using this tactic, Ericsson is able to build a relationship of confidence with customers looking for trustworthy partners for their digital transformation projects.

Ericsson uses social media platforms like YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn to spread the word about its rebranding. Ericsson targets business executives and industry experts while reaching a worldwide audience through regular blogs, case studies, and video material. For instance, Ericsson's credibility in the business world is increased by LinkedIn articles that highlight customer success stories, collaborations, and white papers.

Ericsson's YouTube page features a number of videos describing how its technologies help industries including manufacturing, mining, and healthcare in order to support its rebranding agenda. These movies make complicated technical knowledge interesting and approachable for a wide range of viewers by using real-world examples that highlight Ericsson's dedication to B2B solutions (Ericsson Official YouTube Channel, 2023).

The goal of Ericsson's rebranding communications strategy is to change how people see the company in order to better meet its business-to-business goals. Through the deployment of a strong, multi-channel strategy that incorporates industry events, digital engagement, and thought leadership, Ericsson effectively conveys its new positioning as a B2B technology leader with an emphasis on cutting-edge network solutions for businesses. By using this strategy, Ericsson has been able to support its long-term commercial objectives by increasing its brand recognition and reputation in important industries.

4.2.3 Consumer perception and response

Customers and industry observers have differing opinions on Ericsson's rebranding approach, which was mainly intended to establish the company as a leader in enterprise technology and 5G solutions. Although the company's emphasis on enterprise networks specifically 5G, cloud, and IoT technologies resonated favourably with several business sectors, its adoption by the general public was delayed.

Following its rebranding, Ericsson focused on its advanced technology and superior network infrastructure to engage with consumers and business clients. Ericsson's message about improved 5G connectivity and digital solutions for sectors like manufacturing, logistics, and healthcare was well received by consumers, especially in the telecom sector. However, the majority of responses were filtered through the eyes of businesses rather than individual customers because Ericsson shifted its focus away from the general consumer market. Accordingly, 5G user experiences in places like India, where Ericsson played a key role in the deployment of infrastructure, had a favourable impact on the brand's dependability and network performance, which raised customer satisfaction and loyalty among 5G users (Ericsson, 2023).

By providing reliable network support for vital applications like telemedicine and real-time industrial monitoring, the company also made progress in indirectly educating consumers about the benefits of 5G through its enterprise clients. According to Ericsson Consumer Lab surveys, business clients were more satisfied with the brand's rebranding because they valued its move to address the complex technical needs of industry-grade networks. Customer's perceptions have gradually changed as a result of quicker download speeds, higher-quality streaming, and dependable connectivity in areas with infrastructure supported by Ericsson. In conclusion, enterprise clients responded favourably to Ericsson's rebranding because they appreciated its knowledge of cutting-edge networking and 5G infrastructure. Although there was little direct consumer interaction, the brand's emphasis on enabling reliable 5G and IoT solutions helped to improve its standing with customers, especially in regions like North America and India where 5G adoption is significant. The brand's reputation as a reliable and creative provider of networking solutions is probably going to grow as Ericsson develops its 5G products further and enters new business segments.

4.2.4 Brand Identity Shift

To better reflect the company's strategic move towards digital connectivity and enterprise-focused services, Ericsson underwent a significant rebranding. This rebranding primarily brought about design modifications that emphasise digital readability and flexibility. This change was carried out by Stockholm Design Lab,

who improved Ericsson's brand and logo to make it more suitable for digital platforms. This is important because the corporation prioritises digital solutions above conventional physical goods. As part of the update, a new custom typeface called "Hilda" was created specifically for screen clarity, allowing for consistent brand presentation across digital interfaces and improving brand identification in the telecom and tech industries (Trendhunter).

In order to convey the company's dedication to technology that is focused on the future, Ericsson's new brand identity placed a strong emphasis on a minimalist and digitally oriented design. Additionally, this change signified a shift away from conventional hardware and towards digital, enterprise, and 5G services. The re-designed brand seeks to appeal to a more corporate and business-to-business market while capturing the importance Ericsson focuses on innovation and connection. Ericsson aimed to provide a smooth and recognisable experience for digital clients by improving their logo and design system, signifying their readiness to lead in digital network solutions for multinational corporations (Red dot design, Red hunter). Figure 9 shows the Ericsson's logo before and after rebranding.



Figure 9: Ericsson's logo before and after rebranding
(www.underconsideration.com, 2018)

5 Comparative Analysis

5.1 Overview of Nokia and Ericsson Rebranding

Nokia's and Ericsson's rebranding initiatives serve as an example of how two prominent companies in the sector manage the shift from consumer-focused brands to enterprise-focused organisations. To clarify how rebranding can change public image and redefine brand relevance in the IT industry, this comparative research looks at each company's objectives, communication tactics, customer responses, and changes in brand identity.

5.2 Comparison of Rebranding Goals and Purpose

With a particular emphasis on 5G, IoT, and enterprise solutions, Nokia and Ericsson both rebranded to better reflect the changing needs of the digital age. But they had different underlying motivations. The goal of Nokia's 2023 rebranding was to abandon its previous reputation as a maker of mobile phones and instead establish itself as a supplier of enterprise solutions and network technologies. Nokia's shift to digital transformation services and commitment to technological growth were highlighted by the new logo and motto, "Unlocking the Exponential Potential of Networks" (Nokia Corporation, 2023).

Ericsson's rebranding, on the other hand, was more about expanding its position in the digital and enterprise connectivity area than it was about leaving a previous image. Ericsson improved its logo and typeface to represent a clean, modernised identity that prioritises its digital offerings, with an emphasis on optimising its brand for digital readability. This modification complemented Ericsson's goal of keeping a simple brand that appeals to its business customers and supports a worldwide digital strategy (Trendhunter, 2023). Ericsson's rebranding highlighted continuity with improved digital alignment, demonstrating an intelligent response to changing market demands, while Nokia's rebranding focused on a break from the past.

5.3 Comparison of Communication Strategies

Ericsson and Nokia used different communication techniques to spread their re-branding messages. In order to convey its move towards enterprise solutions and network capabilities, Nokia's communication strategy was widely distributed throughout social media, press releases, and international events. Nokia's messaging emphasised its contribution to next-generation technologies, with a focus on how it helps companies embrace digital transformation, automation, and 5G. Their attendance at trade shows and their focused advertising of new services on their official channels, such as press releases and executive interviews, demonstrated this. (Company Nokia, 2023)

Furthermore, Ericsson's strategy aimed to communicate the brand's digital-first philosophy. Ericsson used its brand change to strengthen its identity in enterprise networks and digital connections by focusing on digital platforms including its official website, YouTube channel, and LinkedIn. Business clients and important telecom industry stakeholders were the main targets of this marketing strategy. The stylish logo and digital-friendly typography used in Ericsson's rebranding were created to blend in well with digital platforms, boosting the company's modern image and attracting its business-minded audience. (Ericsson, 2023).

5.4 Comparison of Consumer Response and Perception

Customers have differing opinions on Nokia's rebranding. Some people felt that the new branding was successful in making clear Nokia's role as a network infrastructure leader and diverting focus from its history as a maker of mobile phones. However, because the consumer market had historically connected Nokia with personal mobile devices, there was a lack of awareness among consumers about the precise advantages of the company's new enterprise focus (Brand Finance, 2023). Refocusing consumer expectations to view Nokia as an enterprise solutions supplier rather than merely a mobile phone brand was a problem for the company.

However, Ericsson has already distanced itself from the consumer market, allowing for a more smooth shift in perspective. Since telecom operators and businesses make up the majority of Ericsson's audience, industry circles responded

favourably to its rebranding, especially those who are interested in 5G and Internet of Things applications. The target audience responded favourably to Ericsson's focus on sustainability and effective digital transformation, appreciating the company's commitment to environmental responsibility and operational efficiency (Ericsson ConsumerLab, 2023). According to customer feedback, Ericsson's rebranding strengthened its position in enterprise connectivity by reinforcing preexisting beliefs, but Nokia's rebranding called for a change in consumer association.

5.5 Comparison of Brand Identity Shift

While it took different forms, Nokia and Ericsson's brand identity changes both emphasised their strategic objectives. Nokia's rebranding was a significant shift from its previous image and featured a completely new corporate colour scheme and logo design. By highlighting its emphasis on enterprise solutions and cutting-edge network infrastructure, this modification sought to establish Nokia as an ally in the digital transition.

In order to interpret the brand's visual language and appeal to business clients, the rebranding also included aspects that reflect current tech aesthetics, such as a geometric logo and bold typography (Company Nokia, 2023).

Ericsson's brand change placed a higher priority on digital alignment, demonstrating the business's ongoing dedication to its key competencies. The recognisable three-bar Ericsson logo was kept in the makeover, although it was modified for digital clarity to provide uniform visibility on all platforms. The brand's identity became more unified across digital spaces thanks to Ericsson's custom "Hilda" typeface, which further strengthened the digital-native style. This strategy guaranteed a seamless brand experience for its enterprise target across all platforms and demonstrated Ericsson's dedication to digital innovation. Trendhunter (2023)

A thorough understanding of how big telecom firms handle changing market demands can be gained from a comparison of Nokia and Ericsson's rebranding initiatives. With the goal of completely changing its public image to better line with enterprise solutions and digital transformation services, Nokia undertook a revolutionary rebranding. Ericsson's rebranding, on the other hand, was a modernisation that strengthened its well-established identity in enterprise connectivity and digital. Both businesses aimed to change people's opinions, but Ericsson's

rebranding strengthened its current advantages in the business-to-business sector, whereas Nokia's efforts required a significant shift in consumer associations. With Ericsson reiterating its digital identity and Nokia trying to inform consumers of its new position, the two situations highlight how rebranding may have a big impact on consumer image. Even though rebranding tactics are executed differently, this comparative study shows that they are essential for positioning brands to satisfy the needs of the digital era.

5.6 Recommendations

Several suggestions can be made for businesses conducting or considering rebranding campaigns based on the findings of this thesis, particularly in the technology and telecommunications sectors:

- **Develop a Clear and Unified Brand Vision:** During rebranding, Nokia and Ericsson both showed how crucial it is to match internal objectives with external messaging. It is advised that businesses create a thorough brand vision that outlines their intended position in the market going forward. To prevent misunderstandings among consumers and business clients, this vision needs to be conveyed consistently across all channels.
- **Invest in Transparent and Frequent Communications:** It is essential to communicate openly about the reasons behind the rebranding, the anticipated advantages, and the modifications to the services being offered. For example, Nokia encountered difficulties as a result of residual customer opinions about its mobile phone heritage. To promote acceptance and trust, businesses must aggressively educate their audiences through interviews, press releases, and corporate websites.
- **Prioritize Digital Branding Strategies:** A strong, flexible online brand identity is crucial in today's digital-first world. Following their rebranding initiatives, Ericsson and Nokia both placed a strong emphasis on digital consistency. To appeal today's consumers, future rebranding plans should place a high priority on digital storytelling, responsive site design, and a robust social media presence (Trendhunter, 2023; Stockholm Design Lab, 2023).
- **Engage both external and internal stakeholders:** Effective rebranding requires internal staff participation in addition to external marketing. As brand ambassadors, employees must be understood and supported in

order to provide customers and clients with consistent brand experiences (Kapferer, 2012). Regular updates, leadership development, and internal workshops can all aid in this process.

- **Continuously monitor consumer perception:** After launch, post-rebranding initiatives shouldn't end. Businesses must put in place systems to track customer impression over time via feedback platforms, social media listening, and surveys. Businesses can maintain the rebranding momentum and make the required adjustments by routinely assessing consumer sentiment (Aaker, 1996).
- **Plan for long-term brand evolution:** Rebranding should be considered a long-term strategy for brand evolution rather than a one-time occurrence. Ericsson and Nokia have progressively changed their brands to keep up with emerging technologies like enterprise networking, 5G, and artificial intelligence. As the market and technology change, businesses should prepare for continuous brand adaption (Nokia Annual Report, 2023; Ericsson Newsroom, 2023).

6 Conclusion

6.1 Summary of Findings

The thesis provided a thorough examination of the rebranding initiatives of two major telecom companies, Nokia and Ericsson. In order to meet the changing needs of the digital and business-to-business markets, we looked at how each company's rebranding goals, communication plans, consumer attitudes, and brand identity changes demonstrate a strategic shift from a consumer-centric focus to enterprise-oriented solutions.

This study emphasised that rebranding requires preserving key brand characteristics while concurrently reinventing brand perceptions, particularly in the quickly changing technology sector. With an emphasis on 5G networks, automation, and the cloud, Nokia's 2023 rebranding aimed to replace its legacy image as a consumer phone brand and establish itself as a partner for digital transformation for businesses. With its new tagline and logo, "Unlocking the Exponential Potential of Networks," Nokia made a clear shift away from its traditional customer base and towards a business-to-business (B2B) market. Ericsson, on the other hand, improved its current brand image to maximise digital interaction and solidify its position as a leader in digital connection. Stockholm Design Lab was in charge of its design revisions, which focused more on improving the consistency of the brand for digital platforms than on transforming it.

The comparative study showed how each business customised its rebranding strategy to fit its own history, place in the market, and goals for the future. Given the long-standing relationship with its previous mobile phone name, Nokia's revolutionary rebranding faced the task of educating users and changing views. On the other hand, Ericsson's rebranding was well received by its current B2B customers, enabling it to capitalise on a strong brand while adapting to technological developments.

Rebranding was an international strategy employed by both businesses to reposition themselves in the market. To match its name with network solutions, cloud infrastructure, and other corporate technologies, Nokia underwent a rebranding that highlighted its intention to become a leader in digital transformation solutions. The corporation must turn away from the consumer market and focus on B2B services in order to make this change. However, the goal of Ericsson's rebranding

was to update and strengthen its brand identity to meet the increasing expectations of enterprises for cutting-edge connectivity solutions and digital advancements. These objectives highlight the companies intention to prepare their brands for the future of digital infrastructure by anticipating and responding to developments in the industry.

Nokia and Ericsson communication methods further demonstrated their rebranding goals. Nokia's approach made use of a variety of channels, including executive interviews, industry events, press releases, and social media, to reach a wide audience. This strategy was to bring attention to Nokia's enterprise skills and forward-thinking technological solutions, as well as its new identity and solutions in next-generation networks and digital transformation. Ericsson, meanwhile, took a more focused strategy, focusing on enterprise systems and digital channels. Its rebranding messaging focused on a digital first identity and was aimed mostly at business clients. Ericsson was able to successfully convey its brand message to its professional and enterprise audience by focusing on digital readability and brand consistency across online platforms.

A key factor in each rebranding initiative's success was consumer reaction. Some customers found it difficult to connect the brand with its new B2B identity, which delayed Nokia's shift from a consumer to an enterprise brand. But Nokia's rebranding initiatives also brought to a slow acknowledgement of its strengths outside of mobile phones, especially in the business sector. In contrast, there were fewer issues with consumer perception with Ericsson's rebranding. Ericsson's rebranding strengthened its reputation as a creative and dependable partner for telecom operators and businesses, as it had previously separated itself from the consumer electronics industry. Ericsson was able to preserve its competitive advantage and strengthen its brand positioning in the telecom industry because to this consistency in brand perception among its target audience.

Redefining each company's conceptual and visual perceptions was made possible in large part by the changes in brand identification. In order to convey a contemporary, technologically advanced image, Nokia underwent a comprehensive redesign that included a new logo, colour palette, and typography. Nokia was able to transform itself as a B2B IT leader and break away from its consumer heritage thanks to this daring move. Although softer, Ericsson's brand identity change was centred on enhancing digital coherence and clarity. Its well-known logo was highlighted in the makeover, along with a unique typeface called "Hilda"

that was created especially for digital media. Ericsson's dedication to continuity and digital complexity was demonstrated by this strategy, which made sure that its brand identity flowed naturally with the demands of its business clients.

The comparative study provides insightful information about how big telecom firms handle rebranding in order to adjust to shifting market conditions. Nokia's rebranding is a prime example of a transformative strategy, indicating a shift away from its consumer heritage and into a new market niche. In contrast, Ericsson's strategy emphasises a forward-thinking adjustment inside a well-established market identity, strengthening its current brand strengths and increasing its digital appeal. These strategies highlight how rebranding in the tech sector may be used both as a transformational and sustaining strategy.

In conclusion, the rebranding tactics of Ericsson and Nokia show how businesses may use rebranding to improve brand perception, redefine their market relevance, and match their identities with upcoming prospects. With its rebranding, Nokia made an intentional departure from its history and established itself as a provider of enterprise solutions with an eye towards the future. Although less revolutionary, Ericsson's rebranding strengthened its position as a leader in digital connectivity and matched its identity with its position in the telecom infrastructure of the future.

This comparative analysis offers a framework for comprehending rebranding as a complex tactic that includes modifications to consumer perception and brand messaging in addition to visual adjustments. Rebranding is a difficult but necessary process for big telecom firms like Nokia and Ericsson. It helps them deal with changes in the business, adjust to new technology, and guarantee their position in the future of digital connection.

6.2 Managing the research in Thesis

Utilising Nokia and Ericsson as case studies, this study was carried out utilising a systematic and structured strategy intended to fully meet the thesis objective: examining the effect of rebranding on consumer perception and behaviour.

Firstly, theoretical foundations of rebranding, consumer perception theories, brand equity models, and strategic marketing frameworks were first established through a thorough literature review. The assessment methodology was greatly

aided by important models like Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism (Kapferer, 2012) and Aaker's Brand Equity Model (Aaker, 1996).

Secondly, as it was difficult to obtain primary consumer surveys and internal company data, secondary data collecting was used as the main study approach. Official business websites (Nokia, 2023; Ericsson, 2023), annual reports, press announcements, executive interviews, and case studies from reputable websites such as Forbes, Ericsson ConsumerLab, and Trendhunter were among the trustworthy and easily accessible sources that were chosen.

Resources for Nokia were examined, including the company's 2023 Annual Report, press statements on the rebranding initiative, and CEO Pekka Lundmark interviews (Nokia Corporation, 2023). Press releases, ConsumerLab 5G Value Reports, the Ericsson Annual and Sustainability Report 2023, and CEO Börje Ekholm interviews were among the items that were rigorously analysed for Ericsson (Ericsson, 2023).

Both companies were carefully examined using the same framework using a comparative case study approach:

- Rebranding goals and purpose
- Communication strategies
- Consumer responses and perceptions
- Brand identity shifts

Insights into how legacy telecom businesses handle extensive rebranding initiatives to shift from consumer-focused brands to enterprise solutions providers were provided by the similarities and variances identified through this comparative perspective.

Triangulation, which involves cross-checking results from several data sources to guarantee correctness and depth, was the last method used in critical analysis. Accessible references were given first priority in order to preserve openness and enable readers to independently confirm the information.

Therefore, the research successfully met its goals through the cautious selection, thorough analysis, and methodical comparison of reliable secondary data sources, even in the face of limitations on primary data collecting.

6.3 Struggles Encountered during the Thesis

- **Limited access to primary data:** The prohibition on conducting primary research, particularly surveys or interviews within Nokia and Ericsson, was one of the biggest obstacles. Corporate confidentiality and the recent history of Nokia's rebranding (2023) made it impossible to gather first-hand customer feedback directly related to the rebranding. In the same way, the Ericsson's internal strategic materials were not publicly available.
- **Scarcity of Public case studies and detailed reports:** At first, it was expected that in-depth case studies or reports on Nokia and Ericsson's rebranding initiatives would be accessible. However, rather than being compiled into comprehensive case studies, a large portion of the secondary material that was available was scattered throughout annual reports, brief news statements, and fragmented interviews. It took a long time to collect, validate, and compile trustworthy information for this.
- **Difficulty in Finding Authentic and accessible references:** Many referenced sources, such as Interbrand rankings or Brand Finance studies, were either hidden behind paywalls or did not thoroughly discuss Nokia's or Ericsson's rebranding efforts. Only publicly available and reliable sources, such as the official websites of Ericsson and Nokia, Forbes articles, Trendhunter analysis, and public ConsumerLab reports, have to be used.
- **Comparative Study Complexity:** There was also the challenge of comparing two companies at various phases of their rebranding. Ericsson had been making the shift for a while, but Nokia had just lately changed its name to reflect a business-to-business operation. Thus, careful interpretation and framing were needed to synchronise their dates and strategic focuses for a fair comparison.
- **Managing Research scope and consistency:** It was challenging to maintain a balance between offering a deep analysis and staying within the focused scope of the research. Determining precise parameters for research without sacrificing depth was a continuous effort because rebranding includes a variety of elements, including visual identity, strategic communication, consumer perception, and market repositioning.

6.4 Suggestions for Future Research

Although this study offers insightful information about Nokia and Ericsson's rebranding strategies, it also creates a number of new research directions.

First, primary data collection techniques like structured interviews or extensive surveys with customers and business stakeholders could be used in future studies. This would give academics more detailed information about how rebranding impacts customer perception, trust, and loyalty, particularly when switching from B2C to B2B business models.

Second, the long-term impacts of rebranding on market performance and brand equity could be investigated through longitudinal studies. Future studies could examine the market results and brand strength of these firms over a number of years, providing more thorough trend analysis, given that Ericsson's change is more extensive and Nokia's rebranding is more recent.

In order to assess if comparable B2B rebranding strategies yield consistent results across various geographic or cultural markets, comparative studies might also be extended to include other multinational telecom or IT firms like Huawei, Cisco, or Samsung.

Finally, future studies might look at how AI-driven marketing and digital platforms can help manage brand changes. Given the popularity of sentiment analysis, real-time consumer engagement platforms, and automated branding tools, it would be beneficial to evaluate how these technologies affect consumer perception both before and after rebranding.

In addition to expanding knowledge of rebranding dynamics, this research would give businesses useful frameworks for implementing brand changes in complicated, quickly changing marketplaces.

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