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DEVELOPING A BRAND MANTRA;  
CASE SIAM SAFARI

Degree Programme in International Business  
and Marketing Logistics

2016

# MANTRAN KEHITTÄMINEN KOHDEYRITYS SIAM SAFARIN TAVARAMERKILLE

Sjöroos, Fia

Satakunnan ammattikorkeakoulu

International Business and Marketing Logistics - koulutusohjelma

Tammikuu 2016

Ohjaaja: Pirkanaho, Tapio

Sivumäärä: 37

Liitteitä: 1

Asiasanat: tavaramerkin hallinta, tavaramerkki, mantra, slogan, markkinointi

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Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli esittää tavaramerkin mantran tärkeys sekä ominaisuudet. Tämän projektin tavoite oli havainnollistaa tavaramerkin mantran muodostus sekä miten lopulta yritys voi hyötyä kyseisestä aiheesta. Tähän päästäkseen tämä opinnäytetyö käsittelee tarvittavia markkinoinnin perusteita tavaramerkin mantran aiheen ymmärtämiseksi, mitä tulisi ottaa huomioon tavaramerkin mantraa muodostettaessa ja miksi tämä olisi hyödyllistä ottaa käyttöön. Lisäksi, tämä opinnäytetyö esittelee tavaramerkin mantra-esimerkkejä kohdeyritys Siam Safarille kuten myös ehdotuksia, miten hyödyntää näitä käytännössä. Tuloksena tämä opinnäytetyö tarjoaa laajemman ymmärtämisen aiheeseen sekä tarjoaa ohjenuoran miten muodostaa toimiva tavaramerkin mantran yritykselle.

Tämä opinnäytetyö alkaa aiheen esittelyllä sekä esittäen miksi kyseinen aihe on nykyään ajankohtainen. Opinnäytetyö jatkuu kertoen projektin tehtävät sekä missä rajoissa se on toteutettu. Seuraavat kappaleet käsittelevät teoriaosuuden, joka koostuu kolmesta pääaiheesta; tavaramerkki, tavaramerkin hallinta ja tavaramerkin mantra. Koko teoriaosuus pohjautuu tutkimukseen, joka on suoritettu lukuisia lähteitä käyttäen kuten kirjoja, verkkotietokantoja sekä verkkosivuja tutkien.

Empiirinen tutkimus koostuu teorian avulla muodostetun haastattelukysymysten tuloksista sekä kirjoittajan henkilökohtaisista kokemuksista ja tiedoista yrityksen kanssa. Päämääränä tälle opinnäytetyölle oli muodostaa yhteneväinen ymmärrys aiheesta käyttäen esimerkkinä kohdeyritys Siam Safaria.

## DEVELOPING A BRAND MANTRA; CASE COMPANY SIAM SAFARI

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Degree Programme in International Business and Marketing Logistics

January 2016

Supervisor: Pirkanaho, Tapio

Number of pages: 37

Appendices: 1

Keywords: brand management, brand, mantra, slogan, marketing

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The purpose of this project is to point out the attributes and importance of a brand mantra. The objective of this project was to demonstrate the creation of a brand mantra that ultimately the case company can benefit from. To get to this, this thesis covers the basics of marketing needed to understand the subject of brand mantra, which aspects to consider when creating a brand mantra and why would it be beneficial to take in use. In addition, this thesis represents the actual brand mantra examples for the case company Siam Safari with some suggestions to how to take it in use. As a result, this offers a wider understanding to the topic and gives guidelines how to create an effective brand mantra for a company.

This thesis begins with introducing the subject and representing why this subject is current nowadays. It continues by explaining the project tasks and within what limits it is written. Following chapters handle the theoretical basis for this thesis, which consist of three main topics; brand, brand management and brand mantra. All of the theoretical subjects are based on researches done by various resources such as books, online databases and websites.

Empirical part of the thesis consist of the results of an interview formed with the help of the theory part and combining them with the personal experiences and knowledge that the author has of the company. The aim for this thesis was to form a congruent understanding of the topic by using a case company Siam Safari as an example.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

American Marketing Association (AMA) defines that a brand can be a term, name, symbol, sign or design. To build up a brand, a lot of elements are important such as brand awareness, brand image and brand equity. It is stated that not only brands matter because they identify the source or maker of a product and allow consumers to assign responsibility to particular manufacturer or distributor, but also because brands can have special meanings to consumers. (Website of American Marketing Association)

Nowadays companies might have external connections and co-operations with other companies. In order for external companies to align with the head company's brand and a mission, for example marketing people, it is very important to have a clear guidance in which direction does a company want their brand to lead. It is also critical for a company that their own employees have a consistent image of what their company is about and what it is not. These are the reasons why developing a brand mantra, the heart and soul of a brand, for a company is essential regardless of the size.

In this thesis, brands, brand management and how to build a strong brand is discussed focusing on the importance of a brand mantra. The case company in this thesis, Siam Safari, is a company in Thailand that operates in the field of tourism. A potential brand mantra for the company Siam Safari is defined and emerged from an analysis.

The knowledge about brand mantra was partly new for the author. Instead of choosing a topic, which is already known, it was interesting to work with the subject of "Brand Mantra", which was inspired by a marketing professor Kevin Lane Keller.

## 2 PROJECT TASKS

### 2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this project is to point out the attributes and importance of a brand mantra. This is represented via company's perspective and the research will be focusing on the qualities of a brand mantra, what makes a good brand mantra and how to develop an actual brand mantra.

### 2.2 Project tasks and objectives

To develop a good brand mantra for the case company Siam Safari

- Define a concept of brand mantra
- Explain the attributes for a good brand mantra
- Analyze the values and goals of Siam Safari

The first objective of this project is to gain a good understanding amongst the subject of brand mantra. Second objective is to demonstrate the creation of a good brand mantra, which is represented by developing an actual brand mantra for the case company Siam Safari.

### 2.3 Framework

In this framework the first step is to research theory and to narrow the focus from brands, brand management and how to build a strong brand to the field of brand mantra. The second step is to research the attributes that affect on the operations of the case company. These include the company's values, points of parities (POP) and differences (POD), company's goals and competitors. Points of parities means that a company recognizes what they have in common with their competitors when again points of differences signify that a company identify what is unique for them that competitors do not have. (Mallik, 2009, 260-261) Next, the theory and Siam Safari's attributes will be compared and creative process will be accomplished with the help

of Kevin Lane Keller's framework of good attributes that create a good brand mantra. An analysis of this information gathered will be done, lastly forming the brand mantra for the case company. These are represented in the figure 1.

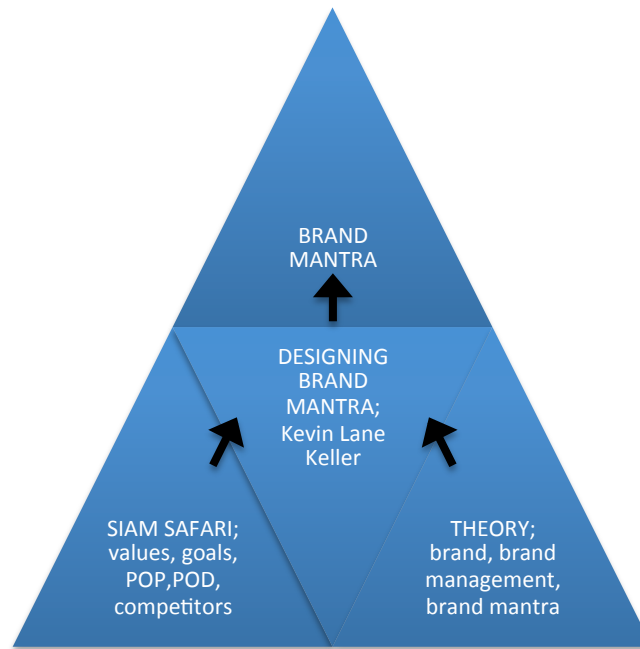


Figure 1. Creation of a brand mantra

## 2.4 Limitations

This thesis will be focusing on the importance of a brand mantra via company's perspective, which means that other marketing, branding or management related issues in will be excluded. This thesis will also exclude issues that Siam Safari may have relating to these subjects mentioned in the previous sentence. Instead, the subject of brands, brand management and how to build a strong brand are discussed as a lead to the main subject - brand mantra.

The focus will also be in the creation of a brand mantra and how the case company will benefit from "the mantra" in the future. In the process of developing the brand mantra for Siam Safari, creative work is to be done, which will not include any scientific calculations in order to validate or explain the process of the creation.



This thesis is not an implementation plan for the company to actually to take in use but a suggestion and an analysis for Siam Safari to be considering how this would assist the company in its future operations and co-operations.

The subject of this thesis faces also limitations when it comes to the process of research and discovering material for the main subject of brand mantra. Since the subject has mostly been represented and researched by a professor Kevin Lane Keller, will the theory representation be limited.

### 3 BRAND

Originally brands have been developed to label an ownership such as name, term, design or symbol. Brand as a word has its origins in the word burn, which brings out the act of producers burning their mark on to their product. This is an ancient practice derived from which was initially used within ranchers to identify their cattle. (Mallik, 2009, 1; Economist books, 2003, 13-14)

#### 3.1 What is a brand?

American Marketing Association defines that a brand is a "Name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers." (Website of American Marketing Association) Keller (2013, 2) opens up this explanation by stating that whenever a marketer creates a new name, logo, or symbol for a new product, he or she has created a brand. He also states that brand can also be more than that, as many practicing managers refer to a brand as something that has created an amount of prominence, awareness and reputation. Mallik (2009, 1) also aligns with the definition composed by AMA. He also indicates that nowadays brands are more than just that, stating that today it is what they do for people, how they reflect and engage them, how they define their aspirations and enable them to do more.

Economist books (2003, 2-3) explains the importance of the brands that even though brands clearly belong to the category of intangible assets of an organization, there are some hard economic evidence that this does not make brands' economic contribution or value any lesser. When combined, the brand element can be around one-third of the total market value, which assures that brand is the most important single asset in a company. However, brands are not only to benefit the economic wealth but also the social effects and social benefits that come along with it. Brands usually outlive most management teams, offices, technological breakthroughs and short-term economic troughs, meaning that brands are the most stable and sustainable assets in business. (Economist books, 2003, 2-3)

### 3.2 Branding

Wheeler (2012, 6) simply explains the act of branding as a disciplined process used to build awareness and extend customer loyalty. Keller (2013) points out that branding is all about creating differences. In other words branding can be described as a combination of ideas, products, and the advertising and marketing efforts of companies that put these ideas and products available for consumers. The goal for branding is to create a name for any given product that signifies its legitimacy and stability. (Mallik, 2009, 55)

### 3.3 Integrated Branding

According to Mohsin (2009, 2) strong brand has to do with every aspect of a company's relationship with its customers and because of that, developing and using a brand must be a companywide aspiration. "When company and product actions and messages are driven by brand, you experience integrated branding." (Mohsin, 2009, 2) In other words, the author explains that integrated branding is an organizational strategy used to drive company and production direction, a strategy, where all actions and messages are based on the value an organization or a company brings to its line of business. Company's strengths and what its customers consider important, creates this value. Integrated branding could also be explained as a promise that company makes to its customers. By understanding company's own brand and operating on

that understanding in every aspect, companies keep their promises. It is very important that this promise is observed by people at all levels working for the company starting from the CEO and all the way to the line worker. (Mohsin, 2009, 2)

## 4 BRAND MANAGEMENT

Brand management is defined as the practice of creating and maintaining a brand, which seeks to increase the product's perceived value to the customer and thereby to increase the brand franchise and brand equity. (Mallik, 2009, 4) Brands are said to be the ones that give companies the primary chance to differentiate one another of their competitor's offerings. As such, brands may be the critical factors for company's success, which is the reason why management of the brands should be approached strategically suggests Wood (2000, 662).

### 4.1 Strategic Brand management

Chunawalla (2009, 118) describes that brands should be treated as a system and their roles should be examined and inconsistencies should be avoided.

Keller (2013, 38) represents four steps that are essential *strategic brand management*, which involves the design and implementation of marketing programs and activities to build, measure and manage brand equity:

1. Identifying and establishing brand positioning
2. Planning and implementing brand marketing programs
3. Measuring and interpreting brand performance
4. Growing and sustaining brand equity

First step of strategic brand management is to define what the brand represents and how it should be positioned so that the company's offer and image creates superiority in consumers mind and that the benefit to the firm is maximized. Ultimately, positioning is about assuring the advantages or points of differences a brand has com-

pared to its competitors. It also often underlines the core brand associations and brand mantra, which will be discussed further on this paper in a section 7. Brand mantra. (Keller, 2013, 38-39)

Second step is a knowledge-based process in order build brand equity by creating strong, favorable and unique brand associations with a sufficient amount of awareness amongst consumers. (Keller, 2013, 39-40)

Third step includes creating a system to measure brand equity, which will provide timely, accurate and actionable information for marketers. This information is valuable when making tactical decisions in the short run and strategic decisions in a long run. (Keller, 2013, 40-41)

Last step is about taking a broader and more diverse perspective of the brands equity in order to expand and sustain it, which can be quite challenging. When growing and sustaining brand equity, marketers have to consider brands within the context of other brands as well as over multiple categories over time and across multiple market segments. (Keller, 2013, 41) “Marketers need to manage their brands carefully to preserve brand equity” (Kotler, Wong & Armstrong, 2005, 556)

#### 4.2 Building a strong brand

McDonald’s CEO argues that he would be able to borrow all the money to replace all the products and facilities if these were destroyed in a natural disaster because of the value of the brand of McDonald’s. This explains how brands are viewed as a major persistent asset for a company, which is the reason why these powerful assets need to be carefully managed and developed. (Kotler, Wong & Armstrong, 2005, 555)

In order to build a strong brand, Keller (2013, 59-60) represents a sequence of steps. Each of these steps are dependent of one another successfully achieving the objects of a previous one:

1. “Ensure identification of the brand with customers and an association of the brand in customer’s minds with a specific product class or customer need”
2. “Firmly establish the totality of brand meaning in the minds of customers by strategically linking a host of tangible and intangible brand associations with certain properties”
3. “Elicit the proper customer responses to this brand identification and brand meaning.”
4. “Convert brand response to create an intense, actively loyalty relationship between customers and the brand.”

#### 4.3 Brand equity

Brand equity can be referred as all of the different value that people attach to the brand, or the holistic value of the brand to its owner as a company asset, as mentioned by Mohsin (2009, 7). The author also explains that brand equity may include monetary value or the amount of additional income expected from a branded product over and above what might be expected from an identical, but unbranded product meaning that the intangible associated with the product that can not be account or features; and the perceived quality attributed to the product independent of its physical features. (Mohsin, 2009, 8)

Unfortunately, the measuring and the conceptualizing of brand equity has still not been agreed amongst marketers. (Keller, 2013) Brand equity may include monetary value or the amount of additional income expected from a branded product over what might be expected from an identical but unbranded product, meaning that the intangible value that associates with the product can not be measured by price or features but with the qualities that are separate from its physical features. In other words according to Kotler, Wong & Armstrong (2005) brands vary in the amount of power and value they have in the marketplace as some brands are largely unknown to most buyers when again other brands may have high degree of consumer brand awareness. Other brands again may enjoy brand preference meaning that consumers may select their brand over the other while others retain high degree of brand loyalty. Kotler,

Wong & Armstrong (2005) explain that high brand equity is a quality of a powerful brand.

#### 4.4 Positioning

As mentioned in the earlier, positioning is an important part of identifying and establishing a brand. The whole concept of finding an identity for your brand will be found through positioning. Brand positioning can be defined as the act where the core idea of a brand that it stands for in the minds of customers, is specified and outlined. (Chunwalla, 2009, 201; Keller, 2013, 98.) Kotler, Wong & Armstrong. (2005) represent the complexity of a brand and what factors to consider and think about when positioning a brand. Five different levels of a meaning are represented; attributes, benefits, values, culture and personality.

Attributes represent the fact that brands first bring to mind certain product attributes, which one or more can be used in advertising. These attributes must be turned into functional and emotional benefits since customers buy benefits and not attributes. If given an example of a car that attribute could be “durable”, the attribute can be turned into a benefit of not needing to buy a new car for every few years.

Kotler, Wong & Armstrong (2005) add that brands also present the values of a buyer. For example if a buyer prefers a luxury car, their values could be in high performance, safety and prestige.

Brands can also represent a certain culture, for example Finnish products can represent the culture of Finland; pure and high quality. Brands also attract people whose self-image or desired self-image is close to what the brand’s image is, referring that the brands project personality.

According to Kotler, Wong & Armstrong (2005), as given the five levels of brand’s meaning, marketers should make decisions to which level or levels they want position the brand and promote brand. The authors also mention that it would be a mistake to promote only the brands attributes.

#### 4.5 Brand image

Brand image is the image that consumers have about a certain brand. Nowadays when most products are identical and copied by one another, consumers may make decisions on buying based on the preference of a brand. This means that consumers have a certain image of a brand that they prefer over another even though the products may be identical. (Chunwalla, 2009, 166-167)

#### 4.6 Brand Identity

As every individual person has identities, brands do have identities also. This identity of a brand consists of brand associations, which can be created by a brand manager meaning that brand is just like a promise to consumers from a company or an organization. Chunwalla (2009, 175) represents four elements of brand identity, which are brand as a product, brand as an organization, brand as a person and brand as a symbol. A single message of a brand is sent out with brand identity and the consumer will feel that they are dealing with one brand. "Brand identity has vision and aim, is different, fulfills a need, has values and signs that make it recognizable." (Chunwalla, 2009, 175)

### 5 BRAND MANTRA

*"Brand mantra, also known as a brand essence ore core brand promise. A brand mantra is a short three- to five-word expression of the most important aspects of a brand and its core brand associations, the enduring "brand DNA" and the most important aspects of the brand to the consumer and the company."* (Keller, 2013, 39)

Urde (2003) explains in his article a sequence about values that sum up the brand. Terms such as brand essence is described as focusing on determination of the innermost core of a brand. Associations like "glue that holds the core identity together" (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000, 45) and "core of the core" (Upshaw, 1995, 25) are

made. For employees and marketing partners who are only connected via a contract, the task for brand mantra is to guarantee the right understanding of which values the company fundamentally wants to deliver and represent. Hence it can be seen as guidance. The influence of brand mantra should affect all decisions made for the company, and acting as a mental filter to prevent actions, which are unsuitable for the brand. (Keller, 1999)

The importance of such brand mantras is established due to the fact that every time a customer or consumer gets in touch with the brand, the brand awareness could change. Brand awareness is one part of the sources of brand equity (Keller, 2013). Aaker (1996) also states that awareness is a part of a set of measurable values for brand equity. Brand equity is defined as the “added value endowed by the brand to the product” (Farquhar, 1989, p. 47).

The importance of brand equity for a company after Yoo and Donthu (2001) is established in the incremental value of a product referring to the name of a brand. Words and actions of employees are a crucial part when it comes to the customers meaning of the brand, misbehavior can badly influence the brand. This significant role of employees as well as marketing partners for the company is explicitly expressed by using, implementing and developing a brand mantra. (Keller, 1999)

### 5.1 Brand Mantra VS. Brand Slogan

The basis of a brand slogan is the brand mantra and the slogan’s character is the translation in a language easier for consumers to understand and so to support the brand’s communication and advertising. Nike’s slogan “Just do it.” is what is used in most of their advertising campaigns and shown to the customers. The brand mantra for Nike, which is used for internally, is called “Authentic, athletic, performance” (Webster & Keller, 2004).

A brand recognizes itself with a slogan as a key element of brand identity and resulting in brand equity (Kohli, Leuthesser & Suri, 2007). Brand mantra is applied for internal use to remind employees and marketing partners of the brand’s heart and spirit while interacting with consumers (Keller, 1999; Upshaw, 1995). A slogan’s



task is to boost the brand image, promote the brand recognition and recall and assist by establishing a different position in the consumer's mind (Kohli, Leuthesser & Suri, 2007). Therefore a slogan is utilized for external interactions with the customers, such as advertisements.

## 5.2 Designing a Brand Mantra

<b>NIKE</b>	<b><i>Emotional Modifier</i></b>	<b><i>Descriptive Modifier</i></b>	<b><i>Brand Function</i></b>
<b>BRAND</b>	AUTHENTIC	ATHLETIC	PERFORMANCE
<b>MANTRA</b>			
<b>SLOGAN</b>	JUST	DO	IT

Figure 2. Brand Mantra Modifiers

For designing a brand mantra, four simple steps are necessary. First of all, the determination of the brand emotional appeal is to accomplish. Therefore it is advisable to reflect in a wide scope about the company's identity and its influence to consumers, customers and partners' experience with the company. It is recommended to construct a list with the company's features, also known as emotional modifiers. Emotional modifiers are the description of how the brand delivers its benefit. Questions about the feeling and benefits when it comes to contact with the brand could be helpful with the aspect of how others would describe the brand. For example Disney's emotional modifier is "fun". (Keller, 2013, 122-123)

Secondly descriptive modifier has to be identified first to clarify the emotional modifier and to determine the target or the target group of the brand. In Nike's case it is "athletic" and points out that Nike's target group is sportive people. Helpful questions to come closer to the descriptive modifier are to ask about the field or industry

the company is or wants to interact and to ask about the words describing the company's work. (Keller, 2013, 122-123)

The brand function is the next step to point out. The word function already describes what it is, what the company does. Questions asking the brand function such as "what is the brand offering to its consumers" and "what makes the brand stand out from the competitors". (Keller, 2013, 122-123)

Finally Keller (2013, 123) recommends collecting associations through all three different steps, after finding combinations into a short, not more than five words sentence.

For implementing a brand mantra Keller (2008) defines three main criteria. The first criteria, "communicate", emphasizes the clearness of the brand's business. The sector where the brand wants to interact and the frontiers of the brand should be clearly defined. Furthermore, the clearness of the brand's unique selling proposition (USP) should be outlined.

The second step is called "simplify" and describes the fact that the brand mantra is effective when it stays in the consumer's mind. Therefore a short, crisp and vivid brand mantra is recommended. The last criteria "inspire" highlights the fact that an ideal brand mantra should be the base for as many employees as possible to be personally significant and relevant. (Keller, 2008)

### 5.3 Challenges

To create a strong brand mantra, the positioning of the brand is important, particularly being the only brand in this position. Capturing the so called "point of difference", which causes the brand uniqueness and difference compared to other competitive brands. By reaching this unique position the company receives a competitive advantage. (Keller, 1999)

The time of developing a brand mantra should be the same as the time of positioning. The product positioning summarizes the perfect core of the brand image from a consumer's perspective. Therefore it is important that a brand mantra shows the brand's

boarders and describes the brand's uniqueness at the same time. Often a definition of a brand mantra consisting of three words is advantageous to foster the brand's position. The core of the image is the associations a consumer should keep in mind and representing the most important aspects of its positioning. Brand mantra shows the internal view of the brand's positioning and enables to clarify them to the firm and especially to the employees to facilitate their behavior. However, the core brand associations exemplify the external view of positioning, ideally this reflects the consumer's perception. (Keller, 1999)

#### 5.4 Examples of brand mantras

Example for a company with a strong brand mantra is Nike. As mentioned earlier "Authentic, athletic, performance" is Nike's brand mantra. All kind of activities and products available for sale have to align with this and therefore support the three words building the brand mantra. (Keller, 1999) Below it shown some popular Brand Mantras collected by Chris Grahams (Website of Newkind).

##### **BMW: *Ultimate Driving Machine***

BMW's brand mantra is remarkable for two reasons. First, it reveals the power of a straddle branding strategy by combining two seemingly incompatible sets of attributes or benefits. The second reason is that it is also a good example of how a brand mantra can be used as a slogan if its description is enough convincing.



Picture 1. BMW logo

**Nike: *Authentic Athletic Performance***

Nike's brand mantra is said to be one of the best ones of all time, which is developed by at the time Nike's own marketing guru Scott Bedbury in the end of the 1980's. It is said that this brand mantra was actually decided by a coin toss. What makes Nike's brand mantra so good is the fact that it does everything that brand mantra should do; it kept Nike's brand on track, it differentiated itself from its main competitor "Reebok" at a time and it truly inspired its employees.



Picture 2. Nike logo

**Disney: *Fun Family Entertainment***

This brand mantra is the result of the brand inventory during the mid 1980's. For example, Disney decided to include "family" because in Europe the brand was designed for the family and not only children.



Picture 3. Walt Disney Pictures logo

**Ritz-Carlton: *Ladies & Gentlemen Serving Ladies & Gentlemen***

This luxury brand has a clear internal and external message, an especially important consideration for services brands. It is simple but applicable in every case that Ritz-Carlton does



THE RITZ-CARLTON  
Picture 4. The Ritz-Carlton logo

**Betty Crocker: *Homemade Made Easy***

Betty Crocker brand mantra is an excellent example of how it staked out three points of differences; quality, family and rewarding baking experience, as well as a crucial point of parity; convenience at the same time.



Picture 5. Betty Crocker logo

## 6 CASE COMPANY; SIAM SAFARI



Siam Safari is a company running nature tours on southern Thailand, mainly concentrated on elephant trekking. The operation of nature tours started on 1989 with just a small café located at the hills of Chalong, Phuket. At a time the nowadays tourist attraction was just untouched rainforest on a natural state with some amazing views and locations that were accessed through curvy dirt roads. Idea of the business started when the nature-loving owners wanted to share the beauty of their home island to growing number of tourists, starting with providing jeep- and canoe safaris. Later the company has developed into the business it is today, providing exquisite insight to Thai culture and rural life. Siam Safari was also the first company that started elephant trekking in Phuket 1994 and since then they have developed their expertise to an internationally award winning company. Besides running nature tours, Siam Safari also practices fund raising alongside of raising awareness of an elephant and education welfare in Thailand. Information shared on this chapter has been gained via the company's website and the interview with Siam Safari's general manager.

Picture 6. Siam Safari logo

### 6.1 General Information

Maintaining high standards in customer service and elephant welfare, having high safety standards and sustainable environmental management of the camp has been the number one goal for Siam Safari from the very beginning. Supporting local communities in ways of buying products to sell on the tours and improving the conditions of unprivileged Thai children within the company's Children's Project and helping Thai elephants by educating visitors and by regular donations to elephant hospitals in Thailand within our Elephant Conservation Project are also very important operations for Siam Safari. Therefore, the mission for Siam Safari is to operate high quality nature tours while preserving the Thai culture to future generations.

Besides Siam Safari, there are 28 other elephant camps in Phuket, Thailand where the company operates. These other camps offer similar activities with a low price, which some tourist groups e.g. Chinese, Russians and Indians, prefer over quality and safety aspects, therefore establishing competition. However, no other elephant camp in Phuket can compete with quality, elephant welfare and safety aspects of the tours of Siam Safari.

When comparing to other elephant camps, Siam Safari is the only camp in Phuket having received several awards due to their efforts on elephant welfare, educational tours, professional guides and environmental aspects. Siam Safari pays attention to detail in all the parts of the tour service and follows international standards since they co-operate with many big overseas agents. Several aspects of the tours, offered by Siam Safari, have nonetheless been copied by other tour-operators in Phuket, but they are generally not able to reach the quality. Also, many of the elephant camps in Phuket offer only elephant trekking. Some of the tour operators combine other activities, often offering different kind of animal shows such as monkey shows and snake shows.

## 6.2 Awards

- Nature tourism recognized by *British Airways* and *PATA (Pacific Asia Travel Association)* by awarding Siam Safari with *Tourism For Tomorrow Award (1997)* and *Gold Environment Award (1999)*.
- A certificate from *Royal Thai Government Livestock Department*: "*Standard Elephant Camps in Thailand*" (2003), which guarantees that Siam Safari's elephants' food, medical care, trainers and living conditions are up to the government standards.
- *Tourism Authority of Thailand's "Best Tour Program Award"* as a proof of the quality of our educational tours. (1996, 2015)
- *Trip Advisor "Certificate of Excellence"* (2011-2015). This award is admitted to the properties that consistently achieve outstanding traveler reviews on TripAdvisor. (Website of TripAdvisor)

- *Tourist Guide Standard (2009)* from the *Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand* for the reason that Siam Safari is providing professional, knowledgeable tour guides on their nature tours.
- In 2014 Siam Safari scored highest points in the evaluation of elephant welfare, safety and sustainability aspects of the elephant camp, such as waste management. This has been awarded by *Department of Tourism from Ministry of Tourism and Sports* as “*Excellent*” standard for elephant camps (2011-2014 and 2014-2017).

These several awards mentioned above represent the quality and standards Siam Safari is offering to its customers. This also indicates the brand of Siam Safari how they want to be seen and experienced as a brand and a company along with the fact how they separate themselves from their competitors.



Picture 7. Awards of Siam Safari

### 6.3 Elephant Conservation Project

The same year Siam Safari was founded in 1989, commercial loggings were banned in Thailand, meaning that many domesticated and trained Thai elephants and their handlers were left jobless. After that the tourism industry in the 90's became an important employer for the elephants and their handlers.

As Siam Safari started elephant trekking in 1994, there were very few vets that were specialized in caring for elephants. Because of that and the fact that elephant welfare had always been the priority for Siam Safari, the owners decided to establish their “Elephant Conservation Project”. Within this project Siam Safari has launched a project “Ivory belongs to elephant” and has helped funding couple of mobile elephant clinics in Phuket, Thailand. Nowadays, the awareness of the situation of the endangered Asian Elephants is spread to the guests visiting the nature tours of Siam Safari. Also, donations to help the government run elephant hospitals in Southern and Northern Thailand are accepted at Siam Safaris elephant camp.

## 6.4 Children's Project

In Thailand, schools and orphanages in rural areas lack resources since many teachers and funds are located in the cities as the living conditions and wages are much better. Poor education in rural areas lead to low paid jobs, which is a cycle that Siam Safari wants to break with their "Children's Project" operations. Over 25 years Siam Safari has been raising public awareness and generate much needed funds for schools and orphanages in Southern and Northern Thailand.

## 7 METHODOLOGY

This thesis provides a ready to use brand mantra for internal purposes for the case company Siam Safari to give guidance inside the company and for the possible external co-operations in the future. Research method used, an interview, gave a small but valuable insight of Siam Safari's values and goals. Also, the author's previous experience of working for this company gives an exclusive advantage when assessing the information gained.

### 7.1 Research methods

**Qualitative research** is a discipline, which aims to understand the in-depth human behavior and the reasons that impact in that behavior. In qualitative research the questions are not just *what*, *where* *when*, but also *why* and *how*. This means that mostly smaller and focused samples are needed for the research instead of large and random samples. Qualitative research has been a remarkable type of research for example in the fields of education studies, social work studies, management studies, human services studies, psychology and other. In qualitative research the data is often categorized into patterns as the primary basis for organizing and reporting results. Typically used methods for gathering information are; *Participant Observation*, *Non-participant Observation*, *Field Notes*, *Reflexive Journals*, *Structured Interview*, *Semi-*



*structured Interview, Unstructured Interview, and Analysis of documents and materials.* (Gillham, 2010, 10-13; Glenn, 2010, 95-96)

”The most common analysis of qualitative data is observer impression. That is, expert or layman observers examine the data, form an impression, and report their impression in a structured, many times, quantitative form. These impressions can be final conclusion of the analysis, or some quantitative methods.” (Glenn, 2010, 97)

**Quantitative research** again can be referred as the opposite of qualitative research. This discipline is commonly used as hypothesis-testing research, to which typical factor is the following common pattern of a research operations in investigating. The differences between quantitative and qualitative researches can be seen for example in sampling. In qualitative research sampling typically is not random but is purposive, meaning that cases are chosen based on the way that are common or are not common for particular characteristics. Also, the role of the researcher is the key in qualitative data, as they need to reflect on their role on the research process and make this clear in the analysis. The data analysis also differs between the two methods as quantitative research analysis involves measurements or other kinds of analysis involving applied mathematics when qualitative data can always not be put into a context that can be graphed or displayed as a mathematical term. (Glenn, 2010, 96)

## 7.2 Population and sample

No survey was conducted while making this study. This interview consisted of 15 questions and was done to gain knowledge of the operations of the case company.

### 7.3 Data collection and analysis

In the theory part, information on brands, brand management and brand mantra, was gathered by researching numerous online databases, academic journal articles, books and Internet. The empirical part of the thesis has been impacted by the fact that the author has past experience of working in the company. Using theory, interview, past experience and benchmarking of successful companies' brand mantras conducted the empirical part of the thesis.

### 7.4 Interview

Qualitative research method used in this thesis was an interview via email. Interview is an adaptive form of data collection, which decreases misconceptions. (Hirsijärvi, Remes & Sajavaara, 2007)

General manager of Siam Safari was interviewed via email. In order to gain a complete overview about Siam Safari, a questionnaire of 16 questions were created. These questions related subjects such as the company's history and values in addition to the questions about the brand of Siam Safari and how they want they brand to be submitted to its consumers.

### 7.5 Reliability and validity

To avoid mistakes in the research, reliability and validity are considered. Reliability refers to the research method's ability to provide same results if the research was to be repeated. The concept of reliability often belongs to the quantitative research method. Validity again refers to the fact that the measurements used in the research measure the exact things that the researcher is expecting them to measure. This means that for example if a questionnaire was used in a research, the people answering the questionnaire should understand the questions the way the researcher has meant in order for the questionnaire to be valid. (Hirsijärvi, Renes & Sajavaara 2010, 231.)

## 8 ANALYSIS

### 8.1 Brand associations

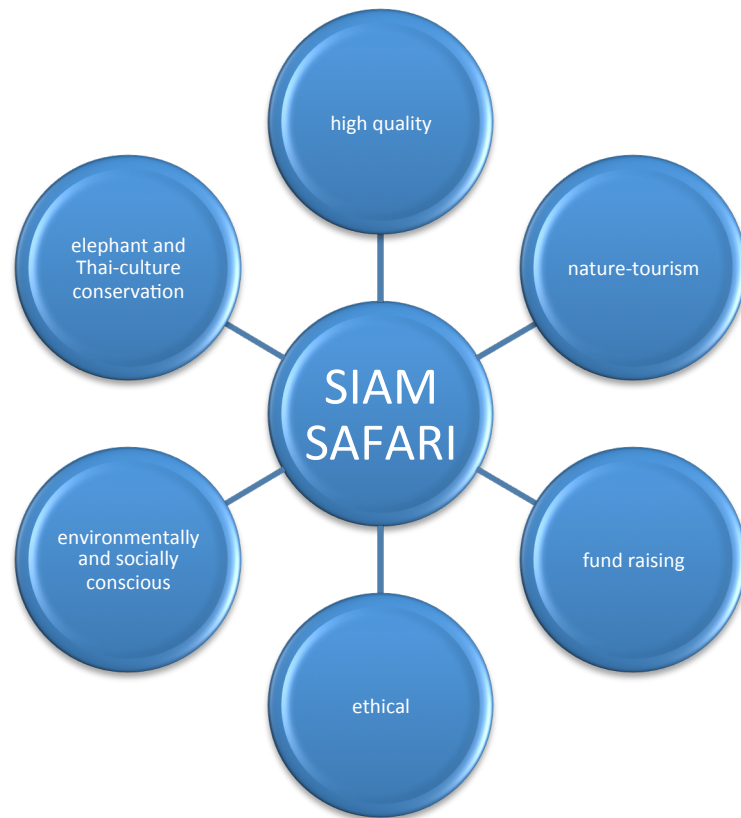


Figure 3. Associations of Siam Safari

In associations, which were collected through brainstorming, analyzing the theory and the interview with the general manager of Siam Safari, possible brand mantras has been created by the author. With these in mind, the author created a mind map from brand associations that the author felt like were associated with the brand of Siam Safari, which is seen on the figure 3. Actual creation of the brand mantra was conducted by following the guidelines of Keller, which were presented on the chapter “BRAND MANTRA”. With the help of figure 4 seen below, this process is partly visualized.

	<b><i>Emotional Modifier</i></b>	<b><i>Descriptive Modifier</i></b>	<b><i>Brand Function</i></b>
<b><i>SIAM SAFARI</i></b>	High quality Safe Educating Ethical Professional Unforgettable Excellent Conscious Caring	Tourism Nature-tours Nature-tourism Cultural	Nature-tours Experience Tours
<b><i>SLOGAN</i></b>	PHUKET'S	ORIGINAL	ELEPHANT TREKKING

Figure 4. Modifiers and brand function suggestions for Siam Safari's brand mantra.

The first step of creating brand mantra was to determine the emotional modifier. On this step, it is important to examine the identity of the company and its influence to its customers and partners. Keller recommends constructing a list with company's features, in other words, the emotional modifiers. Question “How the brand delivers its benefit” can be asked when inventing the emotional modifier for the company.

With this question in mind and examining the interview with Siam Safari's general manager, the words seen in figure 4 were collected. Some words seen in the figure 4 were repeatedly used by the general manager when some were invented by the author. The words invented by the author were the associations that the author understands would best describe Siam Safari's way of delivering its benefit. The words that are suggested to be the emotional modifier are: *High quality, Safe, Educating, Ethical, Professional, Unforgettable, Excellent, Conscious and Caring*.

Next on the creation of brand mantra was a step to clarify the first one, emotional modifier, and to determine the target or the target group of the brand. The descriptive modifier was invented with the questions "what field or industry is Siam Safari in?" and "What kind of industry Siam Safari wants to be in?" in mind. Siam Safari mainly associates in the tourism industry but as seen in the figure 4 under the section "Descriptive modifiers", other words can also be used to describe field that Siam Safari operates in. Suggestions for the descriptive modifiers are: *Tourism, Nature-tours, Nature-tourism and Cultural*. These words are based on the interview with the general manager.

Third step included inventing the brand function of the brand mantra. This is where the questions "What is the brand offering to its customers?" and "What makes the brand stand out from its competitors?" were kept in mind and the words for brand functions "*Nature-tours, Experience and Tours*" were created.

The final step of creating brand mantra that is recommended by Keller, is to collect all these associations through all these steps represented above and combine these into a short sentence.

## 9 RECOMMENDATIONS

As mentioned on the subchapter “5.2 Designing a brand mantra”, three criteria that should be kept in mind are “communicate”, “simplify” and “inspire”. The brand mantra should be something that is clear to the consumer while being a short sentence that is significant and relevant. It should bring out the “heart and soul” of the company. While this in mind, the author has selected two different brand mantras for Siam Safari to take in use. These two brand mantras are represented below.

### 9.1 “High-Quality Tourism Experience”

**High-Quality** was chosen to be the word for the emotional modifier for this brand mantra. Siam safari is a company that strictly follows international standards on safety and welfare of its customers and employees. High-quality is Siam Safari’s main criteria, which is mentioned in the interview and can be proven by the multiple awards that Siam Safari has received over the years, which are presented on the previous chapter “7. SIAM SAFARI”. Siam Safari also focuses on professionalism of their workers while offering its customers friendly and personalized service. It is also important for Siam Safari that its customers can be confident about selecting an ethical company that cares not only the company itself but also the environment around it and in general. In addition they are very active on supporting local people and environment while educating its customers about how is the life in Thailand.

**Tourism** as a word was chosen to be the descriptive modifier of the brand mantra. This explains further the first modifier and defines what industry Siam Safari is operating in. Siam Safari is operating in a tourism industry with tourists as its target group and especially tourists that are conscious about safety, quality and animal welfare.

The word **Experience** as a brand function represents simply what Siam Safari is offering to its customers. Siam Safari is a company offering unique experiences for tourists coming outside of Thailand. They offer professional high-quality tours pre-

senting traditional Thai-living, educating their customers about Thailand in general. Experience is the perfect word to represent everything Siam Safari is offering.

## 9.2 “Ethical Cultural Tours”

The word **Ethical** as the emotional modifier represents the view that all of Siam Safari's actions are considered in. As mentioned earlier, Siam Safari follows persistently the international safety standards and they genuinely care about their workers' and animals' welfare. Sustainable environmental management is also one of Siam Safari's main priorities while supporting local communities. In addition, Siam Safari is an active fundraiser within its own projects Children's Project; helping to improve the conditions of unprivileged Thai children and Elephant Conservation Project; helping Thai elephants by educating people and making regular donations to elephant hospitals in Thailand.

**Cultural** was chosen to be the word for descriptive modifier, for this brand mantra, due to the fact that the main idea on Siam Safari's tour offerings is to represent and educate their customers about Thai-living and Thailand in general. Customers at Siam Safari get to know the primary industries in Thailand, while seeing how these industries have been traditionally been operated. In addition customers learn main cultural habits and manners for example on how to greet people. They also learn about the nature and its creatures and animals such as their main attraction the Asian elephant, which is a very important animal for Thai people.

**Tours** has been chosen to be the word for the brand function. As a word it is simply presenting what the company of Siam Safari is offering to its customers – tours. Siam Safari is offering different types of tours including several various possibilities for tours for the customers to select.

### 9.3 Suggestions for further development

Two brand mantras represented above, have both different aspects, depending on how the company wants to approach and implement the subject. First brand mantra presented “High-Quality Tourism Experience” is more of a general view to be taken. It captures the main characters and what the company is in practice. The second brand mantra presented “ Ethical Cultural Tours” is more of a personal aspect, bringing out the ethical and cultural factors that are very important for the company in many ways.

To take these brand mantras in action does not have to be remarkable. The company can start including the brand mantra preferred to their training programs. They can add this short sentence also into their inside communications such as company news and letters. Brand mantra can also be added in the communication tools that are used while communicating other companies. These suggestions would help all the workers to be reminded about the core and the goals of the company – “the heart and soul” of Siam Safari



## 10 CONCLUSION

This thesis started with a theoretical part of introducing basic knowledge about brands, building a strong brand, brand mantra and the case company. Theoretical part is an important base for the understanding of the subject and before making decisions to the end solutions and analysis. Creation of brand mantra for the company was chosen to be the studied and to be the subject for this thesis in order to understand better the brand mantra as an internal marketing benefit for Siam Safari. The subject of brand mantra has mostly been studied by the professor of Kevin Lane Keller as mentioned earlier but can also be under other titles in different studies made by other researchers.

The purpose for this thesis was to conduct an actual brand mantra for the company lacking it, which was developed by a careful analysis of the theory and the company information. The empirical part contained an interview with the general manager of the company of Siam Safari in addition to the experience that the author has had with the company as well. The actual brand mantra was created with the help of the guidelines represented by Kevin Lane Keller. This outcome of the brand mantra is not an actual necessity for the company to take in use but a suggestion and important information of the benefits to take a brand mantra in place.

Siam Safari was only used as an example for the brand mantra to be created. This thesis was not requested by the company of Siam Safari, but was made with co-operation of Siam Safari. Brand mantra may not be the most important factor while branding and making an implementation plan for marketing but it is very vital for companies who work with co-operations and outsourcing with other companies. It is a tool to keep the company in line from the CEO to line-workers, reminding the main goal of the company and what is its purpose.

This thesis presented positive point of views why it would be beneficial for a company to take a brand mantra in use. This should affect decision-making, whether the company is struggling to keep a clear line inside the company and to clarify their operations and brand to other companies they might work with at the moment or in the

future. To take a brand mantra to use does not make any outstanding efforts but they can be as simple as adding this short sentence at the end of every company letter for example.

This thesis represents the benefits of brand mantra and understanding the subject of brand mantra should be different after reading this thesis. Even though this is not an implementation for the case company or does not include detailed instructions on how to take a brand mantra in use, this should still be helpful in many cases. This thesis helps to keep the “heart and soul” of the company, alive.

## 11 FINAL WORDS

The initial idea for this thesis started during the author’s exchange year when the subject was first introduced in a brand management class. The subject was new and interesting, which is the reason it became an idea of a subject for the thesis for the author. During the author’s second practical training at Siam Safari the idea of using this company as an example of creating the brand mantra to, became relevant. At the moment Siam Safari was lacking a brand mantra so the author introduced the subject for them. Siam Safari agreed on helping offering the information needed to be using them as an example of creating a brand mantra for a company.

Writing process for this thesis begun in the spring of 2015 when the subject and project plan was approved by the supervising professor from Satakunta University of Applied Sciences. After collecting background information for this thesis, the first seminar was held in May 2015. After that, the author completed the research and the theoretical part of the thesis during the summer months and the beginning of the fall. The second seminar was held in the end of September 2015. After the second seminar the author begun analyzing the theoretical part with reflecting the interview and experience the author had with the company of Siam Safari. The author also had to do some creative work to actually develop a brand mantra for Siam Safari. This was

very inspiring for the author to be executing while also learning more about the subject. The third seminar for this thesis was held in the end of November.

This thesis has followed the anticipated schedule quite accordingly. The final touches for the thesis has taken longer than expected due to the authors work. The author has worked fulltime while writing this thesis and in addition has moved between three different countries. These situations has occurred some time management issues to the completion of the thesis since the author has wanted to give proper attention to the writing of the thesis and not rushing to get it done. The whole process has had its challenges but it truly has been an interesting and educating in many aspects that will help the author to understand the subject better in the long term. Even though this project has had its difficulties, the author is happy to the results of the thesis. Lots of time and effort has invested to this thesis by the author and this thesis is finished with a very positive matter.

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**APPENDIX 1**

Interview questions for the General Manager of Siam Safari

1. What are the values of the company?
2. Does the company have a mission? If yes, what is the mission of Siam Safari?
3. Who are the main competitors of Siam Safari?
4. How would you describe this competition?
5. Are there any difficulties for the company to operate? (E.g. rules and/or regulations from the government)
6. What are the unique features of Siam Safari?
7. What does Siam Safari have in common with its competitors? (Values, business idea etc.)
8. How does Siam Safari try to make people feel?
9. How do people benefit from Siam Safari?
10. What words do others use to describe Siam Safari?
11. What field or industry is Siam Safari in or wants to be in?
12. What are the words you would use to describe Siam Safari's work?
13. Who is/are Siam Safari's target audience?

14. What service does Siam Safari have to offer people?

15. What does Siam Safari do that makes it stand out from its competition?