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Rebranding through CSR:
Case Company Neste

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Oil corporations have had to revolutionize their business ventures not only to abide by the pressure of responsible conduct but also to stay competitive within their industry.This thesis aims to give a thorough, look on the topics of CSR, branding and the various factors that contribute to the public's perception of a brand.

The core objective of this thesis is to study how the case company Neste has managed to integrarte CSR into its brand identity, and most importantly how its rebranding is perceived by its social media followers. The research was prompted by Neste's campaign, Pre-order the Future, launched in 2016 with aims to communicate the corporate's activities and engagement in the matter of CSR.

The quantitive research part's survey aims to firstly determine the current perception of the corporation; whether there is public awareness on the company's efforts to venture in the renewable energy sector, and most importantly their thought and sentiments on the matter.

The key findings of the conducted research indicate Neste's audience to perceive the brand in a positive light overall. However, the research also reveals the brand's shortcomings. The success, in terms of creating engaging content that speaks to the target audience, lacks however in terms of brand recognition and recall and not successfully being linked with the content later on.

Key words; CSR, Branding, Neste, Digital Branding, Rebranding, Social Media

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1   Introduction and Background

The growing pressure for corporations operating in the oil industry to perform in an environmentally friendly manner is at an all-time high. The challenge of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) within the industry tests the organization's brand identity and consequently modifies the manner in which a corporate communicates with its public ultimately affecting their brand image and public perception. The efforts that go into displaying an immaculate corporate citizenship and simultaneous efforts for profit maximization in theory appear to be inconsistent with one another. However, the work that is set towards renewable energy and their current results confirm the fact that renewable energy sources have surpassed fossil fuels for the first time (Bloomberg, 2016). This exemplifies that oil corporations have had to revolutionize their business ventures not only to abide by their responsible conduct but also to stay competitive within their industry.

Considering the aforementioned outlines, this thesis will give insight on the efforts that the case company Neste may need to consider in order to integrate CSR into their branding processes as well as its effects on public perceptions.

2   Purpose of the thesis with background

The core objective of this thesis is to study the company has managed to transform its brand identity, and most importantly how its rebranding is perceived by its social media followers. The research is composed with the support of TBWA/Helsinki, the advertising agency that is in charge of its social media and traditional advertising arrangements.

The research is prompted by Neste's recent rebranding campaign, Pre-order the Future, launched in 2016. The campaign aims to communicate the corporate's activities and engagement in the matter of CSR. The project is a reflection on the on-going development of Neste's move towards renewable energy

based products and research for sustainable alternatives to fossil fuels. The Pre-order the Future campaign's core message is to depict the future of the planet and remind the audience that its future needs to be planned thoroughly in order to be able to preserve it. The campaign is also the first project in which Neste has ventured out to utilize online influencers. Spoken word artist, and YouTuber, Prince Ea is the projects figurehead. Prince Ea, deemed as a Futurologist, is shown to be hands on with the project and vocally challenges the way Neste has been working in the past (Pre Order The Future, 2017).

2.1 Theoretical approach

The dynamic world of branding is a field that prevails continuous research in order to optimize its processes and gain maximum value. In the digital age branding has gained various opportunities for improvement and challenged its traditional concept of pushing products for consumers. In the world of unlimited options to choose form, consumers look for brands to connect with and relate to.

Theories regarding the surrounding topics are explored to elaborate on the criteria which are needed in the strategy implementation process in order to pursue a strong brand. Classic theories such as Carroll's (1991) approach to CSR and Keller's (2000) brand equity continue to be relevant amongst branding scholars.

Aaker's brand identity model and Kapfere's brand identity prism sum up the root of the factors which go into the groundwork that goes into the branding process. Empirical research conducted by organizations such as GlobeScan, CONE and The Futures Company are also reviewed in order to gain insights regarding consumer behavior.

The books "Connective Branding" by Fisher (2010) "Corporate Reputatution" by Burke (2011) and "Age of Responsibility: CSR and the New DNA" by Visser (2011) were the pillars of the reviewed theories.

2.2   Research approach

The quantitative research aspect was conducted in the form of a survey,which purpose is to uncover the opinions and the perceptions that have been obtained through the methods applied with the communication that is namely conducted on its social media platforms. The crucial part is to disclose the potential reasons behind the opinions as well as the current communication practices that are aligned with the company's intended goals and determine the future communication model to achieve them.

The quantitive research part's survey aims to firstly determine the current perception of the corporation; whether there is public awareness on the company's efforts to venture in the renewable energy sector, and secondly their thought and sentiments on the matter.

2.3   Research questions

The thesis gives a comprehensive look on various aspects that go into branding and the concept of CSR. The research highlights for which it aims to acquire answers to are the following:

- o   What are the factors that go into corporate CSR integrated rebranding ?
- o   Which are the components that affect consumer perception of a brand?
- o   What kind of recommendations should be developed in order to adjust or further positively effect consumer perception of Neste's current brand?

2.4   Framework of thesis

The thesis consists of five consecutive parts, which give an overview of the various components that go into the concepts of branding through CSR and its impact on corporate reputation.

The first part is the introduction, in which the overview of the thesis is covered. This part is to disclose the thesis' purpose, theoretical approach, research questions and its famework to further expound on the approach of its conception.

 The second part is the theoretical framework, in wich literature regarding Corporate Social Responsibility is examined thoroughly. The purpose is to gain knowledge in various CSR practices and their roles in the current corporate setting. This part also elaborates on the concept of branding from its groundwork of brand idenitity and brand differention, all the way to its formation of brand image. The communication part tackles the way to branding practices in today's digital setting, specifically with the emergence of social media has taken place. The reputation part cocludes the theory section by showcasing how all the aforementioned concepts play a key role in consumer brand perception and brand reputation as a whole.

The third part consists of the research research approach. This part discloses the research methods, data collection and validity and reliability of the thesis. The purpose of this part is to clarify the way the research has been conducted and the credibility of its outcomes.

The fourth part reveals the case company Neste's CSR activities as well as its rebranding through the Pre Order the Future campaign. This part reports the research results and the analysis of the gathered data.

The last part summarizes the research's outcome and conclusionts that can be inferred from the anylyzed data. This part also gives the case company recommendations based on the reviewed theoretical framework
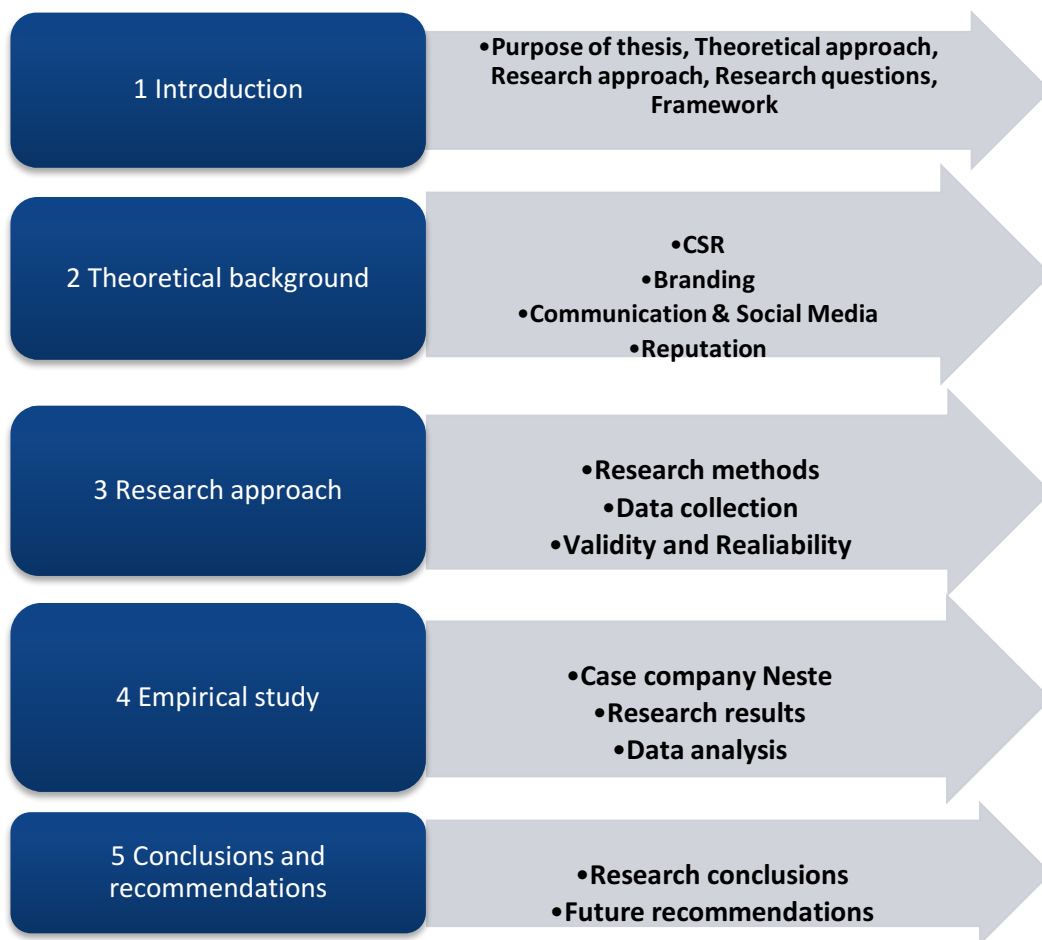
Figure 1: Thesis framework

3 Theoretical background

3.1 CSR -Corporate Social Responsibility and oil companies

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by definition refers to the efforts that a company or an organization does towards operating in an environmentally and socially conscious way (Visser, 2011). Oil companies have long been held as the culprits of environmental irresponsibility. Consequently, in this age of digital transparency, many corporations, regardless of their industries, are incorporating CSR practices in their organizational operations ,and more importantly, in their communication.

Essentially, CSR activities strive for responsible corporate governance, improving environmental aspects, in which the organization operates in, while sustaining economic development throughout. In other words, CSR is an integrated, systematic approach by businesses that builds, rather than erodes or destroys, economic, social, human and natural capital (Visser, 2011).

3.2 CSR in the oil industry –a paradox?

Due to the oil industrie's nature as organizations, which run on the extraction of nonrenewable energy sources, the message to strive for a green business is often seen as a paradox. The topic stirs up controversy within the industry as well; the industry seems to be divided in two. The first party consists of those who believe in investing in CSR activities in order to generate long term profit and its result in future success. The opposing party views CSR activities as distracting companies from their bottom line, referring to generating economic profit for its stakeholders (Sun et al., 2010). Nonetheless, the concept of moving towards a sustainable future and directing the organization's efforts towards environmentally conscious activities is nowadays an industry standard referred to as the triple bottom line.

Figure 2 : The Triple Bottom Line

The Triple Bottom Line –approach combines the general concept of CSR with balancing the organization's economic and social responsibilities all as one enitity. The concept addresses the three aspects of well-being, which are continuously measured (CSR Ambassadors, 2017).

Comprehensively, companies that have incorporated CSR into their business model and garnered positive attention from consumers. The organization's have generally managed to build a positive reputation, which has been built on trust, commitment towards environmental actions and consistency. The way in which the organization's CSR initiatives determine its success is through differentiation and building its brand identity and brand image (Piirto, 2015).

3.3 Dimensions of CSR in practical execution

Researchers have worked towards categorizing the various aspects of Corporate Social Responsibility in order to identify the different forms, which companies practice CSR. The traditionally accepted model is Carroll's four dimensions, which derives from a company's Economic Responsibilities, Legal Responsibilities, Ethical Responsibilities and lastly its Philanthropic responsibilities (Paetzold, 2010).

The Economic Responsibilities, refer to the previously mentioned economic bottom line in which companies aim for maximizing their profits. Legal Responsibilities point out the juridical obligations which the organization has towards the society as a whole. Ethical Responsibility specify the obligation that a company has to maintain its moral compass throughout its business ventures. Lastly, the Philanthropic Responsibilities refer to the activities in which the organization strives to improve the wellbeing of its employees, local community and fundamentally society itself. In practice it is showcased through charity work within its community (Carroll, 1991). Philanthropic Responsibility essentially also aids in the company's competitive edge within its industry by gaining

a positive reputation amongst its stakeholders and consequently results in higher profitability (Paetzold, 2010).

Carroll also specifies that all of the aforementioned dimensions all stem from the external demands which are placed on the organization as opposed to arising from the company's internal driving forces (Carroll, 1991).

As of recent, the environmental aspect is carried out in practice through investments in renewable energy sources. The four oil majors - Shell, Exxon, BP and Chevron spent almost US$ 500 million between themselves in 2006 alone in CSR initiatives (Frynas, 2009).

3.4   CSR –The public's expectations

The overall CSR movement is heavily based on the expectations that the public has placed upon corporations. With the increase of environmental and climate literacy, the corporates are expected to be held accountable for their actions. A global study conducted by GlobeScan revealed the large majority of the respondents stating that corporates are "completely responsible" for the safety of their products, fair treatment of their employees, and most importantly, not harming the environment. These aspects are viewed as components, which are fully under the control of the organization. A surprising addition, which the general public also felt that organization should be involved in is being "completely responsible" for improving education and skills in communities and responding to the public's concerns (GlobeScan, 2014).

3.5   Green consumers

A study conducted by the consultancy company, The Futures Company, showcases the purchasing behavior, in regards to green products, amongst consumers. Their findings suggest that consumers as a whole do not hold environmental protection as a deciding factor or as a priority in their purchasing, but more as one of the influences in the purchasing process amongst

others such as products quality and price. The Futures Company also conducted an international survey, from which they identified six consumer groups based on their views and engagement for the topic of sustainability. The six identified groups were Pioneers, Adopters, Strugglers, Confused, Passives and Sceptics (The Futures Company, 2010).

The Pioneers are the top engaging group, which are already inclined to the green lifestyle and interested in CSR products but need to be convinced through factual information on the brand's products and services (The Futures, Company, 2010).

The Adopters are also engaged in environmental protection. However, this group differs from pioneers mainly due to the social pressure that initiates their interest and engagement in the matter. Rather than being inclined to a green lifestyle through their own convictions they simply aim to do so in order to come across as "green" for personal image purposes (The Futures Company, 2010).

The Strugglers are logically and emotionally convinced on the benefits of using green products and services. However, this group often opts out from the actual purchasin process with the explanation of its impracticality. The Strugglers prioritizes accessibility and ease of buying (The Futures Company, 2010).

The Confused poses the understanding and a slight motivation. However, their views tend to be indecisive due to being influenced by various contradicting information, which leads them to think that their contribution would have a null effect. This group needs to be addressed with clear and concise messages through factual and concrete information (The Futures Company, 2010).

The Passives have an impartial approach to green consumerism. Their consumption of green products is only limited to the idea that it serves a personal gain (The Futures Company, 2010).

The Sceptics is the group that are not engaging in environmental activity due to their belief that environmental protection is unnecessary and the fact that global warming is non-existent (The Futures Company,2010).

In the light of these findings, an organization's communication strategy needs to be tailored for the specific groups that make up the organization's online community. An approach that caters to all the aforementioned groups is to include informative and concrete information about the organization's products in order to convey their distinct green benefits for both the environment and the consumer (The Futures Company, 2010).

3.6   Corporate branding

Corporate branding refers to the process in which a company builds a separate identity from its products and creates its own entity. The focal point in corporate branding is promoting the brand name as opposed to its specific product or service offering. A strong corporate brand centers around the attention, interest and activity the stakeholders bring to a corporation (Vallaster, 2004).

The aim in building a corporate brand is to garner the consumers' attention and awareness as well as the legitimacy for a credible brand which the consumers can build a relationship with (De Chernatony and McDonald, 2003). The challenge in corporate branding is taking the corporate's acclaimed values to properly resonate with its core audience in order to accomplish its visions and goals for the future. The core task in this point is matching the corporate's values with those of its target group (Hatch, 2001). Aligning the values seamlessly is directly dependent on how they are incorporated into the corporate communication strategies.

This approach opposes building a brand solely based on the company's product attributes or creating an image to a lifestyle, which the corporate assumes its target audience aspires towards. Instead, it builds lasting connections through focusing its branding efforts towards value alignment for lasting impressions

with key stakeholders. Furthermore, the critical factor in the strategy's success is dependent on the consistency of the corporation's actions with its brand promise. The connected environment in which corporates operate today the aforementioned values are constantly being challenge through the anti-corporation's mindset, which means that companies work daily through their content to re-establish and strengthen the bond with their key stakeholders with their activities and communication efforts (Hatch, 2001).

3.6.1 Corporate Brand Identity

3.6.2 Dimensions of brand identity

Aaker's comprehensive take on corporate identity shows the twelve dimensions which he determined as key parts that go into building a solid brand identity. The twelve dimensions are categorized into four main divisions that represent their functions. The divisions are made up of the following categories: Brand as a product, Brand as an organization, Brand as a person and lastly, Brand as a symbol (Aaker, 2000).

Brand as a product entails six of the dimensions; product scope, product attributes, quality/value, users, country of origin. These attributes are important to acknowledge, since the brand's products are directly linked to fulfilling the consumer's needs as well as their eventual product experience which determine their overall satisfaction on the brand's offering (Aaker, 2000).

Brand as a person contains two dimensions; Personality, referring to the adjectives it can be described as; and brand-customer relationships, which refers to the role that the brand takes on when it communicates with the consumer. This humanizes the brand and makes it more approachable, understandable and relatable to the consumer (Aaker, 2000).

Brand as a symbol consists of the brand's visual imagery and metaphors; and the brand's heritage. Brands utilize symbolism as a powerful tool to convey a

form of recognizability and spark a feeling of trust in the consumers (Aaker, 2000).

Aaker's model (2000) explains that the aforementioned dimensions and their categories all lead to the forming of a brand identity that is an umbrella term for its three key factors; brand essence, core brand identity and extended brand identity (Aaker, 2000).

The brand essence is what encompasses the brand's core values, its visions and goals. A brand's essence is not a concept that is dependent on a specific time period in order to be understood or explained, instead it is abiding by its attributes. According to Aaker, the brand's essence is the quality that summarizes and interconnects the other brand identity elements together (Aaker, 2000).

Figure 3: Aaker's Brand Identity Model

The brand core identity embodies the brand essence and makes these qualities durable to stand the test of time. Moreover, the brand's core identity also adds the uniqueness and value attributions to the brand's essence.

Lastly, the brand's extended brand identity completes the brand's identity. The extended brand's role is to facilitate the path which the brand projects its behavior towards. The brand's extended identity is susceptible to the zeitgeist of

the brand since it is the part that is constantly evolving throughout the brand's lifetime. (Aaker, 2000).

3.6.3 Brand Idenitity Prism

Another tool that has been used to decipher the notion of brand identity is Kapferer's (2012) Brand Identity Prism. In his model, Kapferer defines the six angles to which a brand's main characters can be compartmentalized in and analyzed in different perspectives. Similar to Aaker's X brand's extended iden-tity, these characteristics are also susceptible to time and are constantly evolv-ing throughout the course of the brand's life. Kapferer's six identity prisms are defined as:

●   Brand Physique

The external elements such as the color, shape, logo or the likes of those that are visible to the outside examiners. These qualities make up the skeleton of the brand to which other deeper elements are added to during the branding process (Kapfere, 2012).

●   Brand Personality

The character of a brand which carries the qualities conveyed to the brand's stakeholders. These qualities make up the brand's core spirit and personality which is ultimately dependent on the consumer's perception of the brand (Kap-ferer, 2012).

●   Brand Culture

The deeper set of values and principles to which the brand's personality is built from. These set of values are the ones utilized in the process of differentiating the brand from its competitors and incorporated throughout its organizational behavior from product/service development to its marketing and communica-tions activities (Kapferer, 2012).

●   Brand Relationship

The way the brand communicates with its key stakeholders and how it communicates with them. This also refers to the way the brand behaves and relates with its consumers and connects with them (Kapferer, 2012).

- Brand Reflection

The way the brand's consumer relates to the brand. This differs to the consumer's brand perception in the sense that it refers to the way a consumer utilizes the brand as an asset to how they would be perceived as by others when they become the brand's consumers (Kapferer, 2012.

- Brand's Customer's Self Image

The way the customer experiences the brand, and their direct relationship with the brand and how they perceive themselves through after being a certain brand's consumer (Kapferer, 2012).

The overall purpose of Kapferer's X lähde Brand Identity Prism is to manage how the brand positions itself and how it should take its brand identity into account when planning its market entry strategy. The Brand Identity Prism also plays a crucial role in a brand's communication strategy; the better self-awareness the brand has the more effectively it can communicate and relate to its key stakeholders. The Brand prism could also be utilized as a benchmarking tool to compare the brand's identity to its market competitors and evaluate its attributes with that of its competitors.

Kapferer also went on to simplify his proposed brand identity prism into a pyramid which contains the three main layers of the brand identity. The first tier of the pyramid, the brand kernel, referring to the core of the brand's identity. The second tier, the brand style, refers to the brand's personality and how it relates to its key stakeholders. The thirds and last tier, the brand themes, refers to the way the brand expresses itself all the way from its behaviour to its product lineup. Kapferer also specifies that each of the tiers consecutively convey the freedom of flexibility. The purpose of flipping the brand identity prism

into a form of a pyramid is to group the connected layers which ease the process of differentiated change management (Kapferer, 2012).
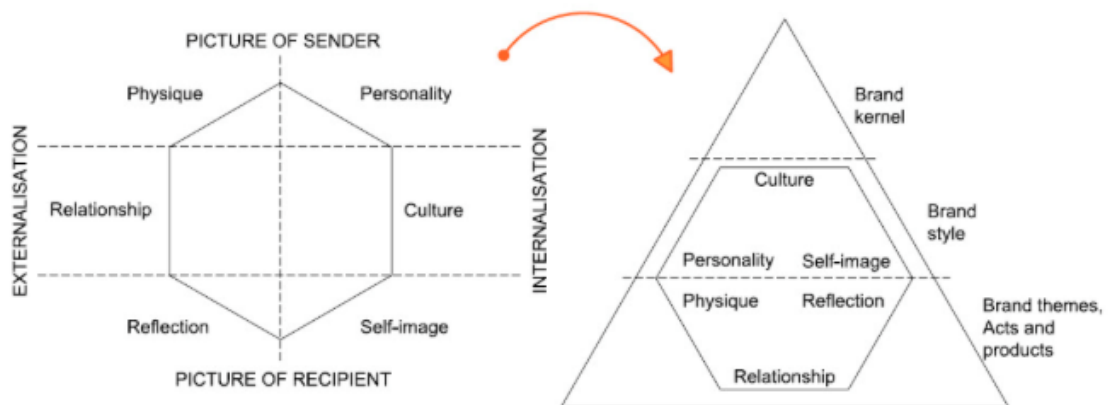

Figure 4: Kapfere's Identity Prism

In summary, the purpose of a clear brand identity is essentially unifying the brand's various attributes as one. This is important because it helps consumers perceive a brand as one entity as opposed to confuse them. Brand identity takes the brand's vision and goals, its uniqueness, its purpose and its values and wraps into visible traits that are recognizable for the consumers.

Balmer and Greyser also elaborate that brands should especially take into account their overall corporate strategy when discussing their brand strategy- It is crucial that the two are aligned with each other, in order to ensure consistency (Balmer and Greyser, 2006).

3.6.4 The difference in brand identity and brand image

Brand identity is a deeper concept than brand image and brand perception. The latter two are interrelated in the sense that both are dependent on each other. The success of the brand image is completely dependent on the perception that the consumers attain after its being projected, thus it is connected with the associations that consumers get from its past communication efforts. Corporate brand identity is a long term concept that takes into account the future of the

brand. Brand identity entails various qualities that are not depicted in a brand's image (Chunawalla, 2008). Although the brand's image and how it is perceived by consumers is known by the corporate's decision maker, it is still their assessment that determines the corporate's identity (Bartel et al, 2015).

Balmer and Greyser describe brand identity as a concept that represents the organization as an entity and what it offers to the market it operates in (Balmer and Greyser, 2002). The brand identity is visible for stakeholders through the superficial aspects such as its name, product and service offering, logo, slogan, employee conduct and the various planned communication efforts it conducts (Siegert et al, 2004). Moreover, corporate identity is studied to be moving towards a so called "vision driven approach. This refers to the process where the corporate identity is managed through the unique mix of its mind, soul and voice. In practice, the mix is conceptualized through visual concepts into strategic communication deliveries (Balmer, 2001).

3.6.5 Brand Image

Brand image is not to be confused with brand identity. The brand's image is based on the consumer's perception of the brand and is an external experience, whereas the brand's identity is what the brand aspires to be and is formed by the brand's internal processes. The goal of brand identity is in fact to result in the consumer's to experience the brand's image with similar attributes defined for its brand identity (Keller, 2001).

Brand image is principally dependent on brand perception. When there occurs a change in brand perception, brand image changes consequently. Perceptions reflect the various associations that the consumer makes about a brand. It is also important to remember that brand image is not always the outcome of brand communication or marketing efforts, although it can be influenced through modifying the brand's communication strategy accordingly. (Keller, 2001).

Weighing in on the topic of brand image, Kotler identifies two errors that can occur. The first potential error is to communicate the same brand image on every communication platform without tailoring the message to fit its audience diversely. The second is to continuously change the brand and its core identity in all the markets it operates in. This leads to consumers not recognizing the brand to be the same one and getting confused to what it stands for. It is natural for brands to grow and evolve throughout their brand lifecycle, however, it is important to not stray away from the brand's core identity (Kotler, 2003).

3.6.6 Brand differentiation

The manner in which organizations communicate their core values is through a consistent story. The story's function is to fuse its various marketing and advertising techniques into one unified and consistent storyline, which not only differentiates them from competitors but most importantly creates the brand identity as it becomes recognized through it by stakeholders (Fisher, 2010). In addition to core values, brands also produces added values during its marketing efforts. These added values aid in the strengthening of the brand also by differentiating it from other competitors. Consumers view the brands as personalities, a strong brand personality resonates with its target audience (Chunawalla, 2008).

3.6.7 The disruption concept

In order to properly discuss the branding differentiation strategy that Neste has taken on its course to integrate CSR into its branding communication strategy we need to evaluate the source of its origin. The advertising agency TBWA is known for their approach to advertising which utilizes the famous disruption strategy.

Brand differentiation, which refers to the communication efforts done to distinguish a brand from its competitors (Balmer and Greyser, 2002) . The term

disruption has went on to gradually form a concept that refers to the tech innovations that enter markets at a lower price point and garner market place and replacing previous established solutions. However, in this context, we will refer disruption as the concept proposed by TBWA's Jean-Marie Dru.

Jean Marie Dru, patented the term in 1992 and published a book based on the concept, "Disruption: Overturning Conventions and Shaking Up the Marketplace" in 1996. The term has ever since spread widely as a concept in the advertising world. As of recent, Dru wrote an updated version of the book, "The Ways to New:15 Paths to Disruptive Innovation" (2015), where he addresses how the term disruption has become hackneyed in the industry. The term is meant used to describe a methodology and concept of a three step method of Convention, Vision and Disruption (Dru 1993).

Convention   Disruption   Vision

Figure 5: Dru's disruption concept

 Convention refers to a widely accepted way of thinking. This step is where marketers recognize and understand the conventional practices of an industry (Dru, 2015).

Disruption refers to utilizing the mentality of change. It is the tool for taking those conventions and working out a new methodology and philosophy in order to challenge those conventions and overturning them. The disruption part is

meant to be used as a means to discover new visionary concepts and angles for conventions (Dru, 2015).

The last stage, vision, refers to the outcome of the process, in which the conventional thinking has been disrupted and revolutionized. The vision is the projection of the path the client is going to be moving towards and the identity it will inspire to (Dru, 2015).

This is the concept that TBWA agencies worldwide continue to use as a tool for rebranding older brands that are set in their ways and creating new brands entering the market. It is important to note that the reason why the disruption concept is utilised in branding as a whole and not limited to solely for the marketing and communication aspects of the brand is because it covers the deeper levels and the business core, its brand identity, as well. Furthermore, the disruption concept skews from viewing the general public as "consumers" but refers to them as the "audience". The assumption that the public is seen as willing to consume does not automatically apply, whereas understanding behavior and earning their attention and willingness to consume through brand narrative is the goal of the concept of disruption (Dru, 2015).

3.6.8 Brand value/ brand equity

Why is all of the aforementioned theories important? They all contribute to brand value which transfers as brand equity. The classical view of brand equity introduced by marketing professor Keller views brand equity from a brand-consumer relationship point of view. Keller divides consumers' brand knowledge into favorable and unfavorable. Brand knowledge is derived from the combination of brand awareness and brand image. The brand knowledge refers to the perception that the consumers acquire and their understanding of the brand's communicated values. Brand image, consequently, refers to the consumer's interpretation of the brand's features. Both of these components together work to determine the brand's equity (Keller, 2001).

In order to build brand equity, Keller discusses the process of building brand awareness and managing brand associations. Brand awareness can be assessed through the consumers' brand recognition, their past involvement with a particular brand, and brand recall, their ability to remember a specific brand. Keller stresses the importance of brand associations in the consumer's perception of brand image. The basis of this is to take into account that a brand, as a whole, cannot be thought of as tangible, but as an intangible entity that triggers feelings, visualizations and opinions in the consumer's mind when an encounter with the brand's name and logo occurs. Keller also notes that strong brands are the ones that spark favorable associations with consumers, have strong brand associations, are unique and can be used as leverage (Keller, 2001).

Brand equity is highly dependent on public brand perception. According to scholar Fisher, the key components of brand equity stem from building a strong foundation of an emotional connections with the brand's target audience and delivering the brand's promises in its actual brand experience through its products and services. Fisher refers to the use of concept of these key components as connective branding (Fisher, 2010).

By having these key components laid out as strong foundation, brands build their strength and are eventually resistant to the market's turmoil. The researcher states that aligning delivery on promise with the acquiring the strength with its engagement with consumer are the core of the concept of connective branding. In order to achieve this, Fisher recommends stripping the brand from unnecessary misalignments that do not represent the brand's core identity. The more defined the brand's identity is the more trustworthy, authentic and credible it is perceived as, which in turn increases its brand equity. Moreover, Fisher encourages brands to continuously engage both internal and external stakeholders through conversation and transparent corporate conduct (Fisher, 2010).
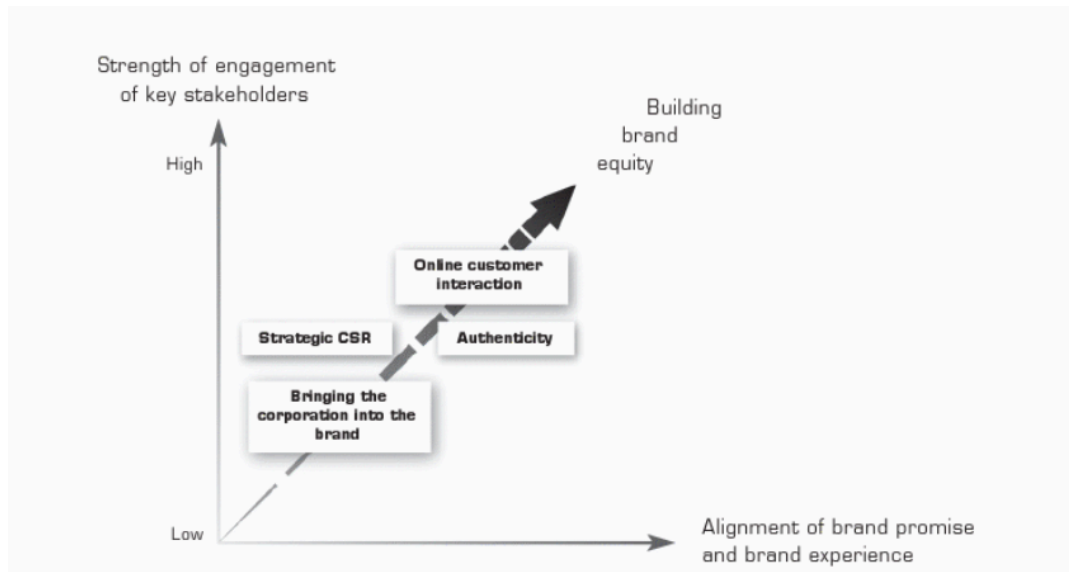
Figure 6: Fisher's Brand Equity Model

In order to build brand equity, Fisher stresses the importance of continuous optimization for positive brand experiences are to be placed in a role of importance (Fisher, 2011).

The goal of corporate branding is to build a case of brand equity. Brand equity is the competitive advantage that a brand gains and it translates into an asset of value which derives from share of mind, share of heart and perceived quality. The purpose of aiming for brand equity is to gain competitive advantage. By having a high brand equity, it consequently means that the brand has successfully built an emotional connection with its stakeholders that is hard to duplicate by other brands (Fisher, 2010). Fisher emphases that the main factors that drive connective branding are improving the brand alignment and building deeper engagements with consumers. Moreover, these two key factors need to be continuously measured in order to optimize the brand's relationship with its stakeholders, which will work towards building a strong brand. The measuring metrics used to achieve this are prescribed in Fisher's measuring and monitoring figure, featured below (Fisher, 2010).
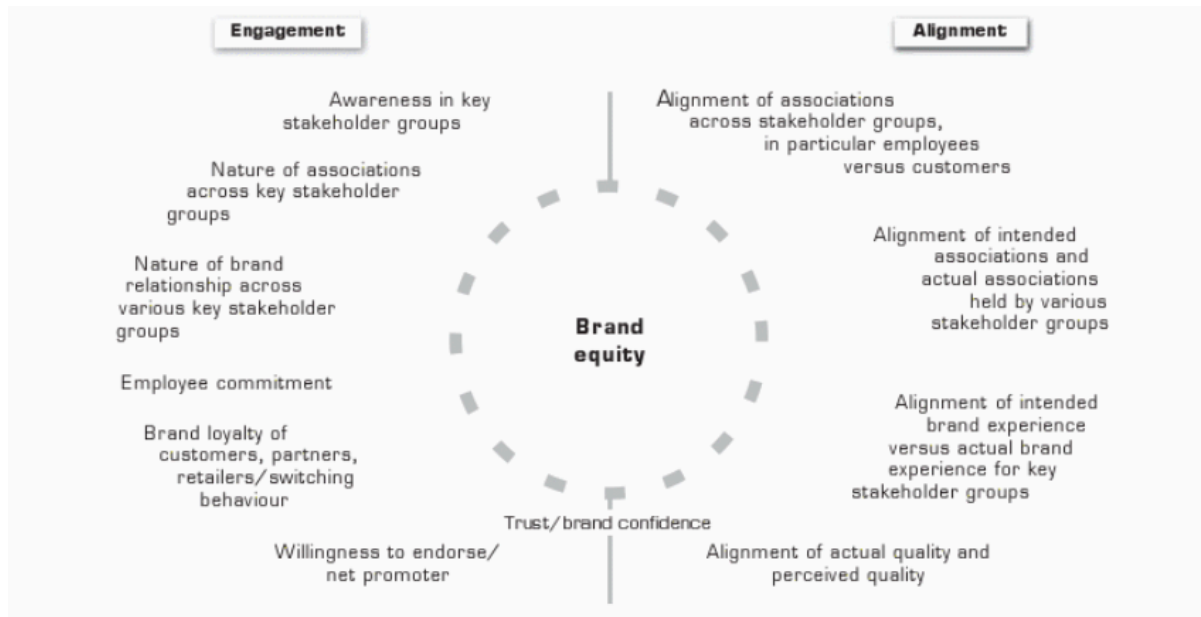
Figure 7: Fisher's components of brand equity

3.7 Coporate communication & Social media

3.7.1 CSR and social media

Social media's emergence in the media scene has brought up a new dimension to today's corporate communication. Companies have had to integrate their overall marketing strategies to fit not only their public relations approach but also incorporate social media into the mix. As a platform which works as a megaphone and has tremendous possibilities in terms of reach, brands have to also consider the various pitfalls that social media entails when entered with a lack of strategic planning. Granted that companies get to communicate directly with their target audience, the difference especially when it comes to CSR practices, is that companies are under bigger scrutiny and held accountable on their environmentally unethical actions immediately. This in turn has a greater impact on the company's reputation, which is an important determinant in its success or failure (Fisher, 2010).

Along with the general increase in environmental advocates, online activism has also followed suit. The Internet's accelerated broadcasting abilities, potential of reach and a plethora of consumers in both national and international settings, financially inexpensive nature, and most importantly around the clock visibility and accessibility. The two-way conversational aspect of social media allows for companies to create online communities, share information on the issues it advocates and open a dialogue for its viewers to engage in. According to the Economist social media has also given a platform for a new form of CSR advocacy by the general public called online activism and even went as far as coined a term "hashtag activism" (Economist, 2016).

3.7.2 CSR and social media

In order to measure and keep track of their CSR efforts, corporates measure their CSR communication on social media by evaluating the amount of engagement received. Engagement rates are critical in the evaluation of how their CSR initiatives are received and whether or not they are perceived and accepted as socially responsible. Furthermore, corporates also report their CSR activities in a formal report in order to track their CSR activities and set goals (Adi et al, 2015).

According to a study conducted by CONE Communications, a public relations and marketing agency based in the United States, where 10 000 people in 10 countries participated in the research, digital communication is a significant factor in the perception that consumers gain about companies' behavior in terms of responsibility. The results showcase that 93% of the respondents are happy to patronize a company that is socially responsible, and 87% take into account the way a conducts itself before purchasing products or services from a company. Moreover, nine out of ten of the respondents specified readiness to boycott companies that operate in a socially, ethically or environmentally irresponsible way. An important observation is that 62% of the participants informed that the channel they get their information on corporate behavior is in fact social media (CONE, 2013).

3.7.3 Engaging the consumers

Since the oil companies' involvement in CSR is often viewed as a paradox, it is important to note how this has to be taken into account in their social media communication efforts. According to a Danish research conducted by professor Schultz, the challenge that companies have when they want to communicate about topics regarding CSR and their efforts in the matter, they are often threading a thin line and have to be considerate about their approach. Schultz emphasizes that companies need to proceed with a correct and balanced approach. The research also indicates that although consumers expect companies to be actively involved with CSR efforts, a loud and an explicit communication approach leads consumers to become wary and suspicious. In addition, companies that are viewed as the most active are the ones that get monitored the most by consumer groups and the media. Another interesting fact discovered by the Danish research is the "Americanization" of European CSR activities. Research indicates that companies based in the US have a bolder, outspoken approach when it comes to their CSR communication, whereas European based companies have a softer approach. This is due to the consumers' higher expectation when it comes to social commitment, which is rated higher in the US than in Europe (Schultz, 2008).

The proposed correct and balanced approach developed by Schultz based on the aforementioned research is through the following techniques and approaches. The first approach Schultz suggests is an "inside-out" method. This refers to engaging the company's personnel and involving them in the company's CSR practices. The goal of the inside-out method is to obtain employee commitment in order to project a credible CSR communication. This method, essentially, is the groundwork that needs to be accomplished before communicating with the external audience. The inside-out method builds on with the groundwork of getting an organization's internal stakeholders on board, then moves on to the external ones gradually from local communities, to a national

scale before eventually reaching an international level. Schultz also recommends a mix of both a direct and an indirect approach for CSR communication strategy to garner a maimum effect. With a direct approach, Schultz refers to direct approach by advising companies to not be targeted towards the general public with grand advertising productions, but instead to target selected groups with greater influence, for instance journalists, politicians and decision makers. The reason behind this approachis to get these influential parties to carry out the indirect communication part through word of mouth and retain the public's awareness in an organic manner. By applying ths method, companies gain credibility since influential impartial parties carry out their message (Schultz, 2008).

3.7.4 Connective branding in the digital age

Branding as such cannot be examined in a similar manner in the digital setting. Branding, which originally refers to the act of a company differentiating itself for its competitors is still very much applied in the digital context as well. However, the main difference between traditional branding and digital branding is the connective aspect. Connective branding refers to the conversational way brand connect with consumers. It goes from the traditional product centric differentiation approach to the emotional profit the consumer gains from the brand interaction. Connective branding relies on those emotional bonds and taps into them through communication efforts such as advertising (Fisher, 2011).

The brave new digital world has given rise to the concept of digital identity. The traditional notion of branding has been challenged with corporate communication no longer being one sided. The internet's role in digital branding is challenging due to the lack of control. The information that circulates could have a damaging effect on a company's image even when it is later proven to be false (Fisher, 2011).

The lack of control also makes crisis management difficult which could lead to further distrust and negative perception by the key stakeholders due to the amount of vulnerability the company is in the context. The addition CSR to digital branding creates added potential pitfalls and require additional measures of control in order to not risk corporate reputation (Fisher, 2010). Brands' CSR initiatives are promises which they are delivering to their key stakeholders. The emergence of the digital environment holds the brand accountable to any empty claims, inconsistencies, and misconduct are spotted and could always potentially lead to the destruction of the brand's equity. Furthermore, the digital platforms also have to deliver a consistent message for all the separate fractions within its target groups, and tailoring the message for each group is less different due to the transparency of social media. The transparency of the digital platforms also ultimately results in making the brand accountable to keep its brand promise (Fisher, 2010).

3.7.5 Social media & branding

The emergence of social media exemplifies the conversational aspect that it brings to connective branding. Social media facilitates platforms where consumers can build more intimate and community based relationships with brands (Fisher, 2010). In addition to being a call card to a business nowadays, branding communication in the age of social media has become a force that has made corporate communication to be cohesive and consistent in each sector. Whether it be targeted for businesses or for consumers directly (B2B or B2C), the presence of social media has blurred the lines between the two. The current communication is being conducted in the so called human to human manner. However, since the message that corporates project to these audience needs to remain cohesive and resonate with the variety of the group's, value based branding entered the branding scene. Communicating by introducing company values to its target audience stems for the goal to avoid superficial fleeting relationships with consumer that only last for a short time period only to be remembered as a fad. Value based branding aims to create a deeper long lasting connection   and   eventually   become   a   meaningful,   part   of   the

stakeholders'lifestyle, brand (Fisher, 2010). Furthermore, by basing their branding and essentially their relationship to the organization's core values instead of its products' or services' attributes enhances its chances for longevity. Basing customer relationships on brand values that the consumers share leads to brand loyalty and steers away from product or service attribute, since these are elements which are always improved; another superior product will always come to market.

3.7.6 CSR & Social Media

How CSR comes into play with social media is the nature of communication on the platfroms, which is a great alternative to tradition media communications and advertising. Coombs and Holladay (2012) discussed in their research about the CSR promotional communications dilemma, which refers to the event where stakeholders reject the communications efforts of a brand and create a so called boomerang effect. The boomerang effect stems from audiences perceiving the brand's communication as greenwashing, which refers to the concept of corporates communicating CSR related contents without any intentions or measures taken in realizing CSR in practice. This is done solely for the purpose of being perceived as a responsible company when in reality there might not be any efforts done on the matter whatsoever. Consequently, consumers whom sense that a company's words are not aligned with its actions is also not relating with its communications content and the company's message is not reasonating in the desired manner. What social media does is soften the brand's communication and and speaks to the stakeholders on their level. It approaches the stakeholders with a subtle approach. Furthermore, social media is a low cost alternative to paid advertising. These factors according to Coombs and Holladay help brand's overcome the two hurdles in CSR communication boomerang (Coombs and Holladay, 2012).

3.7.7 Content marketing

Content marketing is the visible part when it comes to social media's role in digital branding. Content marketing refers to creating engaging content, which is of interest of the brand's community and relative to their needs and desires on the concept of CSR. Content marketing's primary aim is to provide value apart from the brand's product offering (Rowles, 2014).

The digital platforms allow content marketing to be delivered directly to the desired audience as well as conceptualize it in a creative and tailored manner. In order to gain their target audiences attention and keep it in a world filled with various advertising content and information overload marketers have been transitioning from one off advertising outputs to content marketing. Successful content marketing requires use their online platfroms as a field where they apply their strategies for maximum effect through valuable content. Content marketing specialists Tanton and Jefferson argue that successful brands owe their success to valuable content marketing strategies. Valuable in this context refers to useful, focused, clear and compelling, high quality and genuine. Quality content does not contain direct sales messages. The purpose is to engage their stakeholders with topics they are interested in and build a relationship and trust throughout. Valuable content is also built on clear messages, which requires a comprehensive understanding of the audience as well as insights on what engages them. Moreover, generosity and the quality of the content makes a brand unique and valuable to its consumers. Genuine, creative and well-produced content differentiates brands from their competitors (Jefferson & Tanton 2013).

3.7.8 Importance of content type

Researching the type of content, which reasonated best with the desired target audience is crucial in order to achieve successful corporate communication through social media.

According to research conducted by Diehl and his reseach team, putting factual evidence first in corporate CSR communication, the core message reasonates with consumers cognitively. It has also been proven that a cognitive approach has been successful in various cases. This occurs due to the understanding consumers gain by being educated about environmental issues. Furthermore, clear and concrete information surpasses ambiguous claims, encourage purchasing decisions in favor of green products and have a positive effect on brand perception (Diehl et al., 2017). However, it is important to note that the study also found that consumers with opposing views on environmental issues do not connect with green advertising. Instead the group's preconceived notions permit them to react defensively to the information provided by a brand due to their possible prior knowledge on the matter regardless of their accuracy. This prior knowledge weakens the brand message's credibility and affects their perception of the brand negatively (Diehl et al., 2017).

3.8   Reputation

By definition, reputation in the corporate setting refers to the perceptions, attitudes and behavior by the general public. It stems According to Zyglidopoulos (2001) it is "the set of knowledge and emotions held by various stakeholder groups concerning aspect of a firm and its activities". Reputation ultimately refers to the result of what a brand's actions, a brand's communication efforts say about the brand's overall personality and the way the general public thinks and says about it(Zyglidopolous, 2001).

Corporate reputation is dependent on the past and prospective future conduct and how it appeals and demand within its key stakeholders' views compared to its competitors. Reputation combines both factual attributes such as its financial performance and consumer perception (Hemphill, 2006). Highhouse et al discuss corporate reputation as having two distinct elements that have their individual set of threats that can possibly harm the corporation's overall reputation; an internal and an external one. For the internal factors, substantive and symbolic attributes such as lack of product development and

failed advertising, public relations efforts and also a negative corporate social responsibility. External elements on the other hand refer to the negative word of mouth and negative media exposure (Burke et al., 2009).

There are several theories on corporate reputation. The main theories which have been accepted by scholars are the following; Institutional theory, signaling theory, stakeholder theory, social identity theory, game theory, social cognition theory, economic theory, mass communication theory, impression management theory, and transaction cost theory (Carroll, 2013).

The recurring subject in the scholar's various takes on corporate reputation is that it is fundamentally in the hands of stakeholders. The stakeholders determine whether or not a corporate's actions grant it a corporate its reputation. Furthermore, stakeholders are firmly aware of the corporation's strategic approach to build their reputation. Moreover, stakeholders especially take into account character traits such as trustworthiness and reliability when determining their attitudes towards a corporation which eventually leads to its reputation (Gottschalk, 2011).

3.8.1 Dimensions of Reputation

There are various components that go into evaluating an organization's overall reputation. The Reputation Institute has assigned the following dimensions for corporate reputation measurement; the pulse measure, referring to the positive feeling, respectability and trustability of an organization amongst its stakeholders. The institute also states that trust is the key indicator of corporate reputation. Moreover, the institute issues in its surveys for a performance rating, which entails financial, innovative (both in products as well as in business conduct), products and services (their quality and reliability), leadership (whether it is visible to the public), citizenship (CSR), workplace (employee satisfaction) and lastly governance (transparency) (The Reputation Institute, 2017).

The Reputation Institute's Pulse dimension, which refers to the overall reputation an organization has amongst its stakeholders is its carrying force. There also seems to be a correlation between the Pulse dimension and CSR index scores in a multitude of global studies. There is a direct effect on an organization's CSR and its overall reputation; the general public tends to rate an organization with a high CSR score when they trust, admire and respect the organization. Contrarily, the consumers whom have a lesser opinion and lack trust and respect for and organization are given lower CSR scores, which proves that these have a strong correlation with one another, although the Institute does clarify that these components do not have a clear one-to-one correspondence every time (The Reputation Institute, 2017).

3.8.2 Rebuilding Corporate Reputation

In the case of rebranding, especially when it includes incorporating CSR activities it is probable that corporate reputation is on the line. Since the core activity in oil refining companies such as Neste is financially profiting mostly on their oil products that are fossil based and non-renewable energies as such, CSR activities and all communication that is driven by them is at risk to be perceived as not genuine and lack credibility.

Rebuilding corporate reputation requires first action and transparency with its corporate behavior. According to Bonini, building a positive corporate reputation is based on its actions as opposed to only incorporating it in its communication strategies. Furthermore, the communication about its actions need to be convincing and engaging to its key stakeholders in order to rebuild its reputation successfully. Moreover, Bonini discusses how in addition to engaging in the traditional communication and PR efforts, companies need to incorporatecredible spokespersons that have an influence within its key stakeholders (Gottschalk, 2011). Furthermore, Dowling (2006) also weighs in on rebuilding corporate reputation is done successfully through storytelling that conveys corporate values, morals and overall behavior in order to lay a solid foundation for a positive reputation.

3.8.3 Reputation management

Managing corporate reputation differs from product management mainly due to its formation from external factors. Consumer perception is its main cause and it is constructed from various sources instead of their portrayed image by the company (Keller, 2001). Brand familiarity has also a role in managing brand reputation (Delgado-Ballester et al, 2012).

Due to globalization, emergence of social media and various cultural, economic and linguistic factors reputation management is increasingly important. Especially in business expansion, it is important for companies to note that their CSR programs expand as a consequence also. Taking into account the new business territories' customs and practices, along with values is critical.In order to navigate through the complexities and avoid misunderstandings that could be detrimental to the organization's reputation, it is crucial for the organizations to implement reputation management.

3.8.4 Reputation improvement

Burke et al suggest an approach to improving corporate reputation through implementing a step by step plan for integrating CSR activities into its management. The first step Burke suggests is to identify the corporate's target market and most importantly its key stakeholders. By starting off with this, corporates can evaluate the approach, the relevance of content and the overall investment strategy that should be applied for maximum efficiency. This step would also help to determine the views and attitudes towards CSR, and how it is visible in their purchasing intentions. As previous researches have shown, about 40% of consumers are reported to boycott products that are produced by companies that do not comply in CSR activities. In addition to this, the consumers who have made the previous statement are more prevalent in countries such as Finland and Scandinavia as well as South Korea (The Reputation Institute, 2017).

The next step is to frame and have a clear understanding of the expectation that a corporate has when entering its market. The relevant information about the market that it plans to enter, its CSR practices and an authentic and precise understanding of the views and opinions of its target consumers.

The following step is to take into account the company's vision and values and evaluate how to incorporate those in its CSR initiatives. Although the actions that a company needs to consider when evaluating its strategy and taking into account the public's views, expectations and demands it is also important to project the company's internal values and use those in aligning them together with the public's wishes. The technique in which an organization utilizes both internal visions and goals and intertwines them together with the public's vote results in a conversational strategy referred to as enterprise branding (Hatch 2009).

Following the previous step, it is also crucial to identify the company's potential performance gaps. One key to improving CSR performance and reputation is to locate and address gaps between expectations and performance. This can serve as a "wakeup call" for example about a loss of trust or confidence in business in select regions. Or it can signal, more specifically, CSR challenges in entering into new markets or not keeping pace with changing expectations in established ones (Hatch, 2009).

After identifying the potential performance gaps, it is important the take strategic action in order to reduce the gaps. Incorporating CSR into an organization's brand identity and reputation requires transparency within the organization, in order to align the company's internal activities with its external communication strategy for a consistent output. It is especially crucial to take into account the cultural framework in which a company operates in, in order to ensure an authentic and credible approach that creates a positive reputation amongst the public. If special attention is not placed on these, the could risk

to be perceived to be "greenwashing" and carrying out empty PR by the public and the media monitors (Burke et al, 2010).

Lastly, the final step in the model is to continuously measure, assess and adjust their CSR efforts throughout the organization's performance. The follow up activities are just as important in communication as the actual communication strategy. Incorporation data tracking tools for CSR performance needs to also be adjusted to different markets, in order to accurately assess the performance in each market by virtue of differences in values and views on CSR in various markets. Since CSR has proven to have a direct impact on a corporate's reputation, and reputation has an economic value from 4 to 8 percent of its overall market value, it is important to place its CSR activities on the same importance level as other performances.

3.8.5 Corporate reputation and CSR

A study conducted by the Reputation Institute revealed that a corporation's CSR actions determine 42% of its overall reputation. In addition, stakeholder's perceptions of a corporation's CSR actions are also linked to its Net Promoter Score, which refers to the question if a person would have recommended the company in question to another person (Carroll, 2013). Furthermore, scholars also depict that if a corporate is under fire for its CSR actions its reputation as a whole is also threatened. Conclusively, the role of CSR and its neglect leads to damaged reputation (Caroll, 2013).

3.8.6 Credibility in reputation management

It is important to mention that although the previous steps are a great foundation for reputation management, but the crucial part lies in the organization's credible communication strategy. Today's digitally savvy public consumes enormous amount of media on a daily basis and pays attention to the CSR performance of companies in an increasing amount (Fleishman-Hillard, 2007).

A survey conducted in 2007 by the National Consumers League and Fleishman-Hillard discovered that 54% of US consumers "sometimes" look for information regarding the CSR activities of organizations. The research also revealed that the main source that the consumers use to gain their information from is the Internet, more specifically consumer watch groups and other independent or impartial third party websites which contain the relevant information. The consumers also rated the credibility of independent websites to that of company websites and the latter were found to be less credible with a score of 29% credibility than the 43% of the independent ones. Nonetheless, consumers cited the most credible sources of an organization's CSR activities stem from personal experience, scoring a staggering 60% credibility rate, and word of mouth, scoring 56% (Fleishman-Hillard, 2007).

3.8.7 The role of a good brand reputation

Overall, the purpose of good corporate reputation is to build consumers' brand loyalty, the company equity and attract financial investors. A good reputation is not only related to the success of a corporation's relations with its B2C audience with new product or service introductions but additionally it adds leverage in its B2B operations such as trade channels. Most importantly a good reputation amongst key stakeholders provides a corporate to recover from an event of a reputational crisis (Burke, 2009).

Einwiller brought up how resource-based theory, which refers to the strategic way in which a company's competitive edge is determined by its ability to correctly apply its useful resource arsenal in an effective and efficient manner (Business Dictionary website). According to Einwiller, this theory also explains the manner that external communication platforms, such as the news, have a substantial impact on corporate reputation. A corporate's key stakeholders source in terms of a company's actions and CSR conduct can be attained through traditional media such as the news and have a direct effect on their perception of the company in question. However, in the cases where key stakeholders are

susceptible to direct interaction through experience with a company, the role of media outlets in forming reputational perceptions are less important (Carroll, 2013).

In addition to forming corporate reputation perception with consumers, reputation is also proven to be an influencer in consumer behavior and purchasing intentions (Gottschalk, 2011). The way in which this comes to play is through the key components in purchasing intention; trust, customer identification and commitment. The theory was put into practice and conducted an empirical study that revealed the correlation of a positive reputation and the aforementioned key components (Gottschalk, 2011).

3.9   Summary of theory

The theories presented regarding the aspects that go into rebranding and aspects that effect consumer perception through various theories. This gives a thorough understanding to what goes into integrating CSR into branding and its communication to the company's stakeholders and its effects on the reputation.

The gained insights for the reviewed theory is the Triple Bottom Line, which indicates that CSR has become significant enough to be part of today's company's performance measurements. Furthermore, insights given on how consumers expect companies to be active in CSR. However, the current situation is also that consumers whom are into green consumption, only perceive brands positively if their values are aligned with theirs. Moreover, the brands whom do have similar values need to communicate with facts and tangible, such as superior sustainable products, and intangible, such as social media content, that provide them beneficially.

The reviewed branding theories show insights on how branding needs to commence on solid grounds. By integrating CSR into the corporate's brand identity, the corporate can affect on how their brand image emerges amongst

the consumers. In addition, using the brand differentiation's disruption concept shifts the conventional ways a brand is perceived, into the desired market leader.

The company's reputation is essentially in the hands of the consumers, However, all of the aforementioned ground work ultimately goes into the way the brand is perceived, which are all factors that the brand can improve and take measures that either revolutionize or evolutionizethe brand as an entity.

4   Research approach

Reasearch refers to the process of discovering answeres to hypotheses and questions regarding a specific topic through the application of scientific procedures. The aim is to gain expertise, portray the characteristics involving a specific topic. Moreover, the research reveals whether or not the preconcieved ideas that held place prior withheld with prior to the research process (Kothari, 2009).

The research process is imprompted by a desire to solve a problem or concern along with gaining insight to a specific topic. The process is initiated not only in order to have a comprehensive understanding of a topic, but to also optimize specific business process throughout (Kothari, 2009).

4.1   Quantitative and qualitative research methods

Research methods refer to the process of gathering information in order for it to be analyzed along with the theorical framework. There are a variety of research methods that can be utilized. The main research approaches are categorized as Descriptive vs. Analytical, Applied vs. Fundamental and Quantitative vs. Qualitative.

Quantitative research focuses on the measurement of certain aspect that can be expressed in terms of quanitity. Quantitative research is applied to test out

hypotheses and specific research questions. The method tackels the proposed hypotheses through numerical data, which is then analysed thoroughly with an uninvolved objecitve stand point. The resulted data samples are used to generalize results in order to gain insight to readjust business focuses and to be applied to other situations (Kothari, 2009).

Qualitative research refers to the in-depth non-numerical data collection that gives insight to the reaserch process. This data gives researchers an understanding to the reasons and motivations that support the analysis of research outcomes and the overall research hypotheses. Qualitative research is commonly conducted through interviews and case studies (Kothari, 2009).

4.2   Data collection

Data collection refers to the process in which information is gathered from vaious sources in order to study a specific topic. Data collection includes gathering images, numers, words and variables (J.K.,2008). The two main approaches to data collection are primary and secondary sources.

Primary data refers to the fresh data collected by the researcher for a specic purpose. The data is collected for the first time and can be useful for the current purpose as well as for future purposes. A variety of primary data examples include surveys, observations and or interviews (J.K, 2008).

Secondary data refers to the information acquared through previous studies conducted regarding similar purposes or that can be used in the context on the current purpose. This data can be found in annual reports, nespapers and articles as well as books on the required topics.Secondary data can be utilized to the research part that is the main purpose without going through the process of gathering similar data (J.K.2008).

4.3 Methodology

The quantitative research was conducted with a survey method. The target group selected to part take in the survey were found through Neste's official webpage's discussion board where their email addresses were registered, as well as contacted through direct messages from all the social media platforms, namely Facebook, Twitter and Instagram where Neste is currently active on. A total of 2100 people were contacted and 106 of them successfully filled out the survey in its entirety. The survey is enclosed in the thesis for further examination.

4.4 Reliability

Reliable research is successful when the research has the exact same outcome when repeated under similar conditions. In adittion, reliable research is credible and backed up with relevant reliable sources. The validity of the conducted research is linked to the relativity of the conducted quantitative part's data collection with the primary purpose of the thesis.

The purpose of this thesis has been expresessed and its research process has been kept relevant in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the various components connected to the research topic. In order to gain the desired data samples, the survey questions were outlined after careful study of the research topic and algning them with research objectives.

The possible limitations of the thesis could be that the findings might represent only the views of the specific target group within the corporate's online community and not the communty as a whole. Furthermore, the target group might not be familiar with the company prior to the thread, but have an opinion on the topic pruposed that they might have encountered unintentionally on their social media feeds. However, since the part of the target group could potentially be the new comers of the community, in which case their opinions are especially valuable since early stages of getting acquainted in the community

and finding content that speaks to them is crucial in order to attain the new audience and keep them interested with content that is catered towards their wants and needs.

The stated requirements are fulfilled; the conducted research is reliable based on the performance of Neste's Pre-Order the Future on social media as well as the gained insights from TBWA\Helsinki.The results also fulfill the requirements for the validity of results by virtue of being targeted towards a specific group. Neste's social media followers and a snapshot of the current perception. The survey's objective is defined and clearly stated as well as the obtained results cater to those exact objectives.

5 Empirical study

5.1 Neste CSR – The Only Way Is Forward

The case company Neste, started moving towards finding clean fuel solutions and investing in renewable energy alternatives. The corporation went on to focus its business ventures on providing cleaner strategies towards the future of the fuel industry. Along with the corporates new direction, the image also experienced significant changes. A noteworthy change is visibly the company's name change. Neste Oil omitted the word "oil" from its name and adopted the name Neste Corporation, Neste for short, as its official label. Neste's CEO Matti Lievonen communicated the reasons behind the name change was to illustrate the internal changes that took place and the efforts to seek growth outside conventional oil refining operations (Lievonen, 2015). The corporation's steps towards operating in the renewable energy sector had become a substantial part of its operations and the word "oil", conventionally understood to represent fossil crude oil, no longer was an accurate representation of the company's current operating model. Furthermore, Neste's efforts towards offering its customers solutions to replace fossil fuels and reduce emissions was seen as the company's main focus. "—For example, we are the world's largest company producing renewable fuels from waste and residues, and we are seeking growth

as a producer of other renewable products, such as bio-based products for the chemical industry", explains Lievonen. (Neste, 2015)

Figure 8: Neste: The Only Way is Forward

Responsibility, beside cooperation, innovation and excellence; is one of Neste's the four key values and essential component of the cleaner traffic strategy. The program comprises of three headings: Economy, Society and Environment which encompass six main areas: cleaner solutions, Neste's people, society, climate and resource efficiency, safety and responsible supply chain. (Who we are, 2017)   Neste also became the world's largest producer of renewable fuels from waste and residues in 2016 (Who we are, 2017)

Figure 9: Neste's 2016 sustainability highlights

Neste's current operations for example in its 2017 Earth Day's Environmental and Climate Literacy campaign. Neste's campaign showcases the exact transition from theory by applying an Earth Day Environmental and Climate Literacy Teach-In toolkits to promote environmental education and cater to its community's needs. In Neste's words: "Education is the foundation for progress. We need to build a global citizenry fluent in the concepts of climate change and aware of its unprecedented threat to our planet. We need to empower everyone with the knowledge to inspire action in defense of environmental protection. Environmental and climate literacy is the engine not only for creating green voters and advancing environmental and climate laws and policies but also for accelerating green technologies and jobs." (Neste, 2017).

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5.1.1 Neste's rebranding through disruption

5.1.2 Pre Order the Future

The disruptive model behind Neste's Pre-Order the Future campaign consisted of the following:

Convention	Disruption	Vision
"Oil companies have a bad impact on the environment."	*"Pre-Order the Future by making sustainable choices today."*	*"Creating responsible choices everyday."*

Figure 10: Neste's Pre-Order the Future disruption model (TBWA, 2016)

Neste's Pre-Order the Future Campaign was launched with the efforts of the advertising agency TBWA\Helsinki's disruption live team. The aim for the projecy was to change the public perception of the oil company, and get on the radar of the B2B market segment through B2C engagement (Widerholm, 2017). The objective was to put Neste on the map of companies active in CSR as well as an innovative thought leader in its industry. The challenge of the rebranding strategy was to change public perception on Neste's former brand as well as deviate from the stigma oil companies generally have, as explained in the concept of the paradox between sustainability and oil refining. The Pre-order the Future campaign launched a disruptive thinking, which prompted people to enviosion a world where sustaible choices could be made daily.

The project started out with the intent to engage the general public and especially Neste's online community of social media followers to take part into the project by submitting innovative ideas and explaining how their conceptualization could have a positive impact on the planet's future. The audience engagement resulted in over 1000 submitted ideas, that were examined by Neste's jury. The jury was made up by Neste's CEO Matti Leivonen, Neste's marketing director Kaisa Hietala, a Color and Material Design Professor

Jaana Beidler, an elementery school student Veera Vihmo and the face of the campaing, futurologist/ YouTuber Prince Ea.

The company started the campaign with the collaboration with the spoken word artist and Youtuber Prince Ea, who's role in the project is to work as a Futurologist, challenging Neste's working methods and giving his insights. The content Prince Ea created for Neste's Pre-Order the Future campaing included three Spoken Word videos that challenged the current status quo in the world regarding environmental issues. The Spoken Word trilogy; "Everybody Dies, But Not Everybody Lives", "I Just Sued the School System" and "The Future I Believe In" the campaign's social media content, which aimed to spark the conversation and inspire people for a better future in all aspects and not only environmental issues. The videos have been embraced by news and popular Facebook Pages and are currently among the most shared Facebook videos globally. Throughout the campaign TBWA\ Helsinki's team reacted to triggers that inspired the creation of a range of content from articles to social media posts.

Through influencer marketing and strategic retargeting the Pre-Order The Future campaign received visits from Fortune500 companies including Boeing, GE, Walmart, Shell and industry leaders such as Google, Microsoft, Unilever, Tesla. Even Neste's competitors such as Shell, Exxon and Chevron came to see what was happening.
The campaign resulted in:
- 55 547 voters (12% of all website visits)
- 1061 user generated ideas
- More than 300 000 000 views on the videos
- 3 billion people reached throughout all channels.
- 1 product prototype to be launched in 2017 (EduCycle, the environmental learning game) (TBWA\Helsinki, 2017)

5.2 Analysis of the survey results

A total of 2100 people were contacted and 106 of them successfully filled out the survey in its entirety. The survey is sectioned off to four parts; an introductry part, the Neste brand and attitudes towards Neste's activity in CSR, respondents attitude towards environmental responsibility in general,respondent's use of communication platforms and Neste's social media communication and its visibility on those platforms.

The introductory part is aimed to discover the demographic information on the respondents. Their age group, country of residence and gender.

Q1 Are you a male or a female?

Answered: 106   Skipped: 0

Male
45.28% (48)
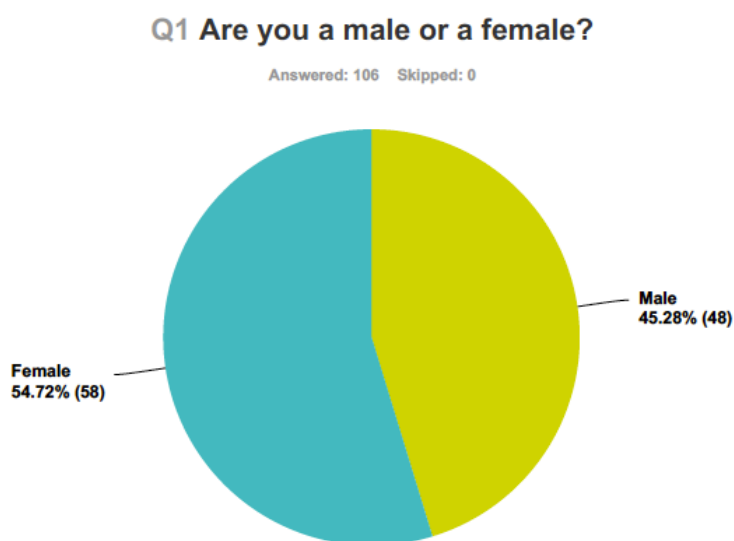
Female
54.72% (58)

Figure 11: Question 1 Gender of respondents

Among the 106 respondents. 54% (58) were female and 45% (48) were male. The result indicates that the majority of the repondents were female. However, we cannot constitute that the majority of Neste's online followers are females, because there were only 106 repondents whereas Neste's total online following constitutes of over 42.634 followers in total.

Q2 What is your age group?

Answered: 106   Skipped: 0
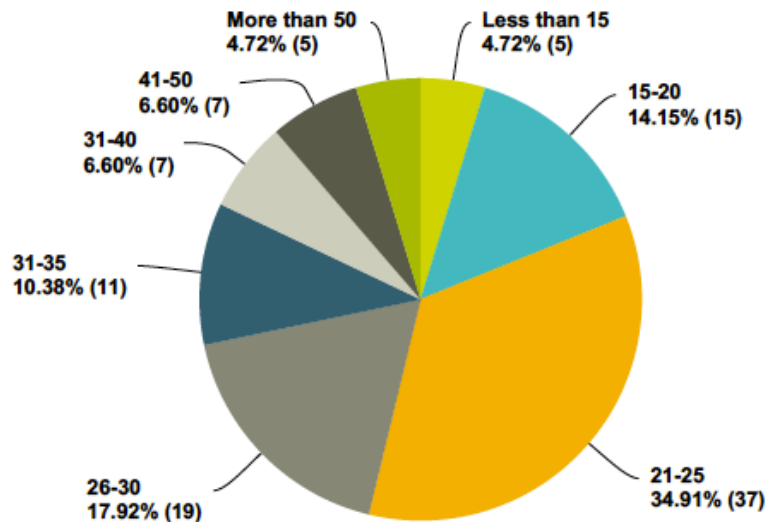
Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 15	4.72%	5
15-20	14.15%	15
21-25	34.91%	37
26-30	17.92%	19
31-35	10.38%	11
31-40	6.60%	7
41-50	6.60%	7
More than 50	4.72%	5
Total		106

Figure 12: Respondent age groups

Among the 106 respondents, the most dominant groups represented 34.91%(37) of 21-25 and 17.92% (19) constituted of the age group 26-30 year olds. This indicates that the majority of Neste's social media followers could be relatively young millenials and that the outcome of the surveys and opinions stated are representative of that demographic.
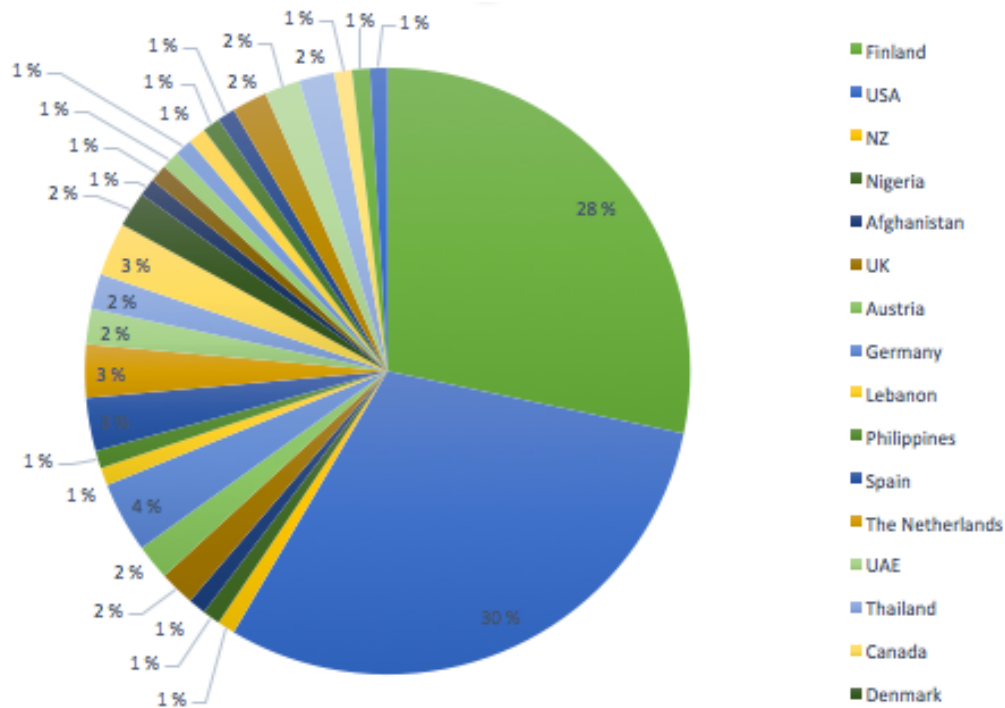
Figure 13: Respondents' country

The purpose of this question was to find out the countries to which Neste needs to tailor its social media content. The vast majority were from The United States with 30% (33) and Finland 28% (30).

The second section of the survey dives into the respondent's familiriaty with the Neste brand and their attitudes towards its CSR activities. In order to keep the reliability of the survey in tact, those whom were not familiar with the brand were automatically requested to skip the questions related to Neste.

Q4 Prior to this questionnaire, have you heard of Neste?

Answered: 106   Skipped: 0

No
27.36% (29)

Yes
72.64% (77)
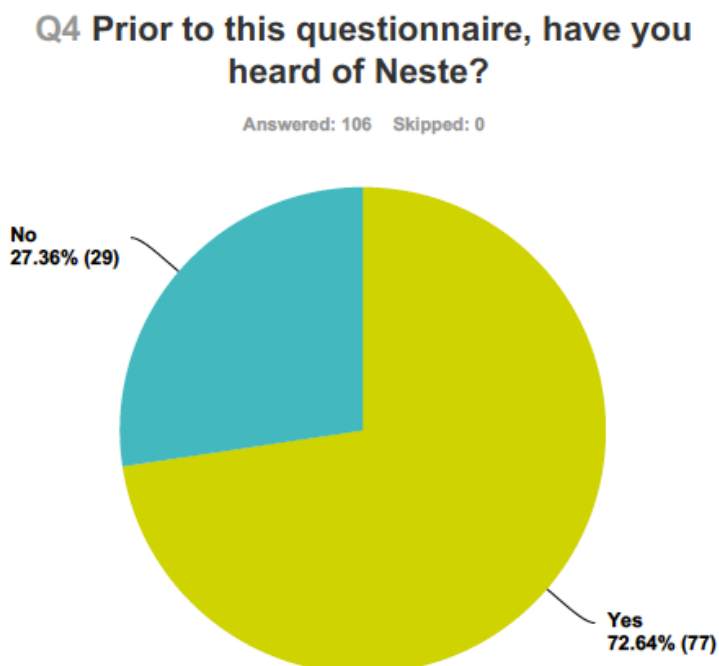
Figure 14: Respondent's familiarity with Neste's brand

The majority of the respondents, 72.64%(77) were familiar with the Neste brand and 27%.36%(29) were not. The puropose of this question was to test the brand recall in order to see if the brand had had an impact. The respondents that answered in this case do not recall the brand, but have in fact heard of it. Since the questionnaire was sent out only to those who are either following Neste in one or multiple of its social media channels and to those that participated in the discussions prompted by Prince Ea's Spoken Word content, which directed viewers to participate in the discussion and provided links to the dicussion board. This could be a viable reason to why they cannot recall the brand although they have been introduced to its content prior to the survey.

Q5 Please rate your opinion on the following statements:

Answered: 77   Skipped: 29

- 1 (Fully disagree)
- 2 (Slightly disagree)
- 3 (Impartial)
- 4 (Moderately agree)
- 5 (Fully agree)
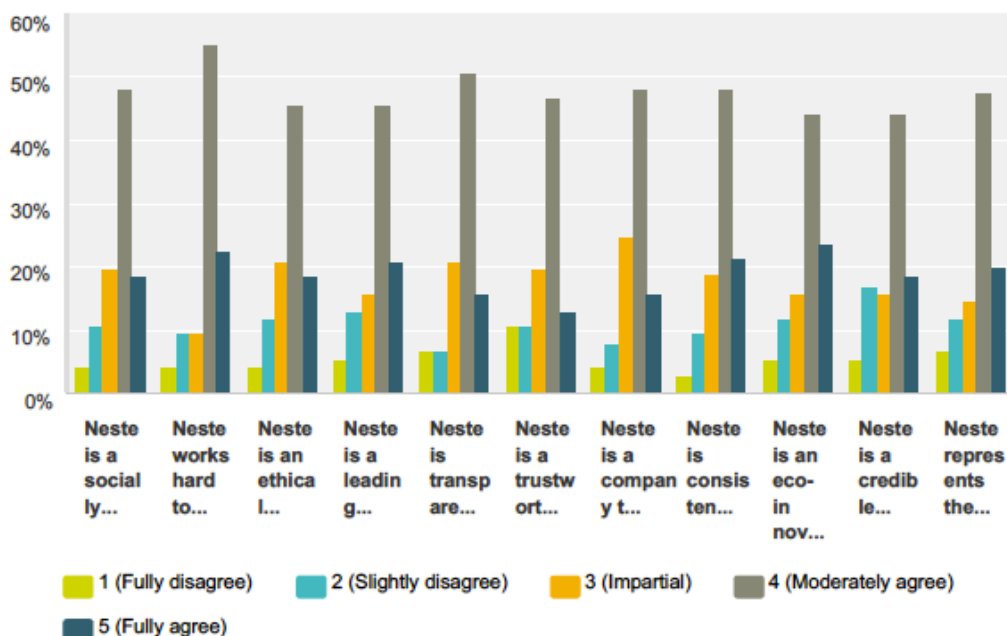
	1 (Fully disagree)	2 (Slightly disagree)	3 (Impartial)	4 (Moderately agree)	5 (Fully agree)	Total	Weighted Average
Neste is a socially responsible company	3.90% 3	10.39% 8	19.48% 15	48.05% 37	18.18% 14	77	15.66
Neste works hard to find renewable energy solutions	3.95% 3	9.21% 7	9.21% 7	55.26% 42	22.37% 17	76	15.83
Neste is an ethical company	3.90% 3	11.69% 9	20.78% 16	45.45% 35	18.18% 14	77	15.62
Neste is a leading company in environmental responsibility within its field	5.19% 4	12.99% 10	15.58% 12	45.45% 35	20.78% 16	77	15.64
Neste is transparent in its actions towards environmental issues	6.49% 5	6.49% 5	20.78% 16	50.65% 39	15.58% 12	77	15.62
Neste is a trustworthy company in terms of environmental protection	10.39% 8	10.39% 8	19.48% 15	46.75% 36	12.99% 10	77	15.42
Neste is a company that has integrity	3.90% 3	7.79% 6	24.68% 19	48.05% 37	15.58% 12	77	15.64
Neste is consistent with its actions	2.67% 2	9.33% 7	18.67% 14	48.00% 36	21.33% 16	75	15.76
Neste is an eco-innovative company	5.19% 4	11.69% 9	15.58% 12	44.16% 34	23.38% 18	77	15.69
Neste is a credible company	5.19% 4	16.88% 13	15.58% 12	44.16% 34	18.18% 14	77	15.53
Neste represents the values of an environmentally conscious company	6.58% 5	11.84% 9	14.47% 11	47.37% 36	19.74% 15	76	15.62

Figure 15: Respondent's ppinions on Neste CSR activities

The purposes of the statements and asking the respondents to rate them determine the current brand image they perceive of Neste.This question was aimed only toward the respondents whom said they are familiar with Neste as a brand. These were deemed as the ones with enough information, contect and experiences with the brand to be able to rate the statements, as opposed to including the respondents whom do not recall the brand. This is the determining question to the research hypothesis. The highest rated statement was tied between "Neste is a company that has integrity" with 48. 05% (37) voting as 4 = "moderately agree", " Neste is a socially responsible company" with 48.05% (37) voting 4 = "moderately agree". The highest rating goes to "Neste is an eco-innovative company" with 23.38% (18) voting 5= "Fully agree". The most popular voting was with 4 "moderately agree". It is also noteworthy to mention that the statement which got the most 1 "Fully disagree" votes was "Neste is a trustworthy company when it comes to CSR" with a vote of 10.39%(8).

The third section of the survey aims to discover the respondent's general attitude's towards environmental issues and CSR. The question was created to discover whther there are factors deterining the opinion on Neste's CSR performance based on their values and attitudes as consumers. The perception of a company as either positive or negative is highly dependant on how important the respondent deems envrionmental and social responsibility to be. In this light, we are prompted to find out whether a respondents who answers that CSR is not a high priority nor do they engage in green consumerism, their answer to perceiving Neste positive, would be based on lower standards than those whom consider themselves as green consumers.

Q6 Please rate the following statements related to environmental consciousness:

Answered: 106   Skipped: 0
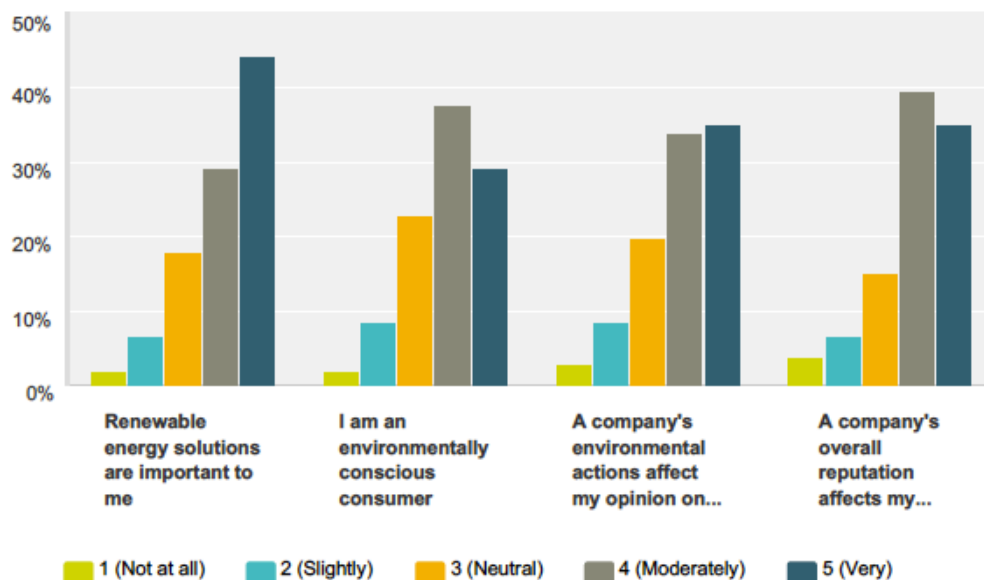
	1 (Not at all)	2 (Slightly)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Moderately)	5 (Very)	Total	Weighted Average
Renewable energy solutions are important to me	1.89% 2	6.60% 7	17.92% 19	29.25% 31	44.34% 47	106	8.63
I am an environmentally conscious consumer	1.89% 2	8.49% 9	22.64% 24	37.74% 40	29.25% 31	106	8.55
A company's environmental actions affect my opinion on the company	2.83% 3	8.49% 9	19.81% 21	33.96% 36	34.91% 37	106	8.55
A company's overall reputation affects my opinion the company	3.77% 4	6.60% 7	15.09% 16	39.62% 42	34.91% 37	106	8.60

Figure 16: Respondent's green consumer profiling

The purpose of this question is to figure out the level of engagement in green consumerism amongst Neste's social media followers. The most popular vote went for finding renewable energy solutions with the score of 44.34% (47) with a vote of 5 = very. The overall results indicate that the majority of the

respondents have a poitive attitude towards environmental consumerism and supporting sustainability with companies active in CSR. The majority of the votes went to either being 4 = Moderately or 5 = Very on all aspects of consumer opinions in sustainability.

The third part consists of the communications aspects. The respondents are asked to rate their prefered platforms to gain information from regarding oil companies. Furthermore, this part dives into the content and the visibility of Neste's social media activities. The general questions regarding the respondent's preferred platforms and importance of social media are open to all the respondents. However, those regarding specifically Neste's brand, are only for those that respondent to the prior question, being familiar with them. Therefore, the results would stay truthful to the objective.

Q7 How important are each of the following communication platforms as an information source on oil companies to you?

Answered: 106   Skipped: 0
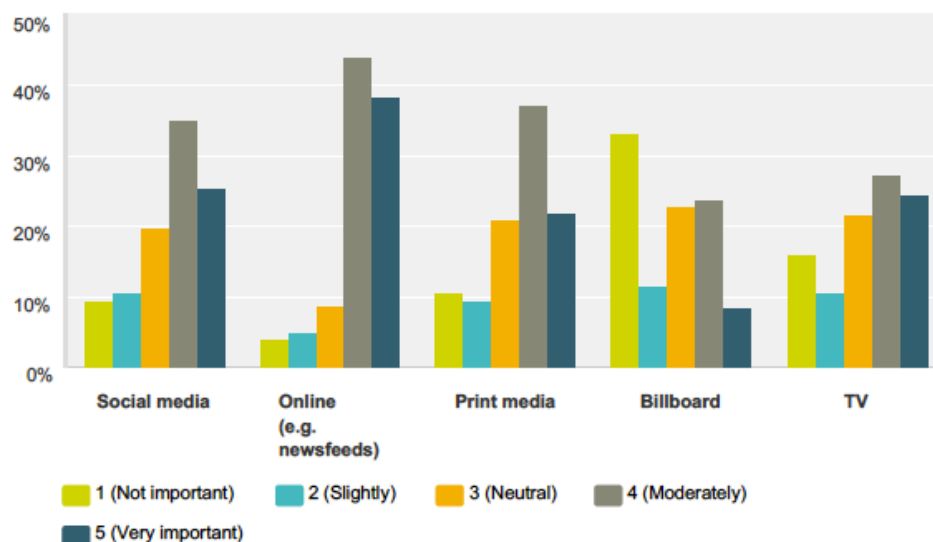
	1 (Not important)	2 (Slightly)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Moderately)	5 (Very important)	Total	Weighted Average
Social media	9.43% 10	10.38% 11	19.81% 21	34.91% 37	25.47% 27	106	3.57
Online (e.g. newsfeeds)	3.92% 4	4.90% 5	8.82% 9	44.12% 45	38.24% 39	102	4.08
Print media	10.48% 11	9.52% 10	20.95% 22	37.14% 39	21.90% 23	105	3.50
Billboard	33.33% 35	11.43% 12	22.86% 24	23.81% 25	8.57% 9	105	2.63
TV	16.04% 17	10.38% 11	21.70% 23	27.36% 29	24.53% 26	106	3.34

Figure 17: Importance of information mediums

The purpose of this question was to determine the main communication platfroms from which consumers seek information on oil companies in general. The respondents seem to prefer online media the most with a 38.24% (39) vote of 5 = Very important. The least important medium seems to be billboards with a 33.33%(35) vote of 1 = Not important.

Q8 How important are the following social media platforms to you as an information source on oil companies?

Answered: 106 Skipped: 0
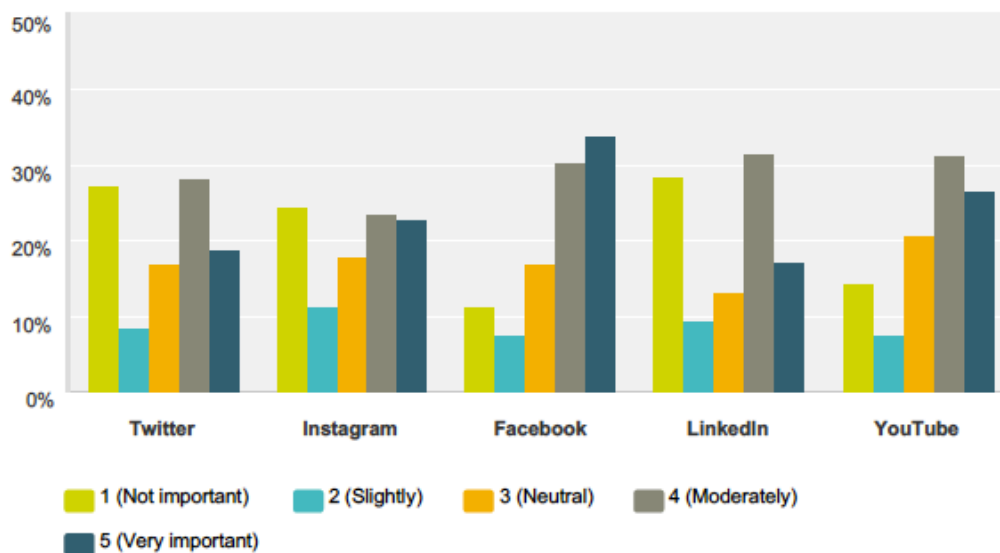
	1 (Not important)	2 (Slightly)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Moderately)	5 (Very important)	Total	Weighted Average
Twitter	27.36% 29	8.49% 9	16.98% 18	28.30% 30	18.87% 20	106	8.84
Instagram	24.53% 26	11.32% 12	17.92% 19	23.58% 25	22.64% 24	106	8.86
Facebook	11.32% 12	7.55% 8	16.98% 18	30.19% 32	33.96% 36	106	9.34
LinkedIn	28.57% 30	9.52% 10	13.33% 14	31.43% 33	17.14% 18	105	8.82
YouTube	14.15% 15	7.55% 8	20.75% 22	31.13% 33	26.42% 28	106	9.22

Figure 18: Importance of social media platfroms

The purpose of this question was to find out the most important social media platform for the respondents in terms of gaining information about oil companies. All the social media seem to be relative equal. The popular vote with a staggering is Facebook with a 33.96% (36) vote of 5 = Very important. The least popular social media platform amongst the respondents seems to be LinkedIn with a 28.57% (30) vote of 1 = Not important.

Q9 Please rate Neste's visibility in the following channels:

Answered: 106 Skipped: 0
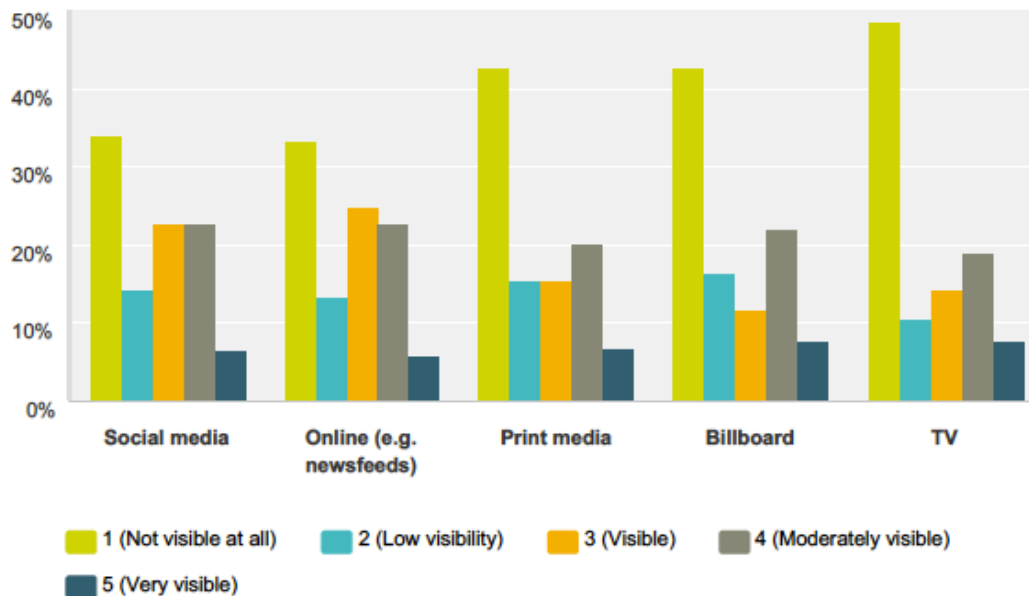
Figure 19: Neste's channel visibility

	1 (Not visible at all)	2 (Low visibility)	3 (Visible)	4 (Moderately visible)	5 (Very visible)	Total	Weighted Average
Social media	33.96% 36	14.15% 15	22.64% 24	22.64% 24	6.60% 7	106	2.99
Online (e.g. newsfeeds)	33.33% 35	13.33% 14	24.76% 26	22.86% 24	5.71% 6	105	3.02
Print media	42.86% 45	15.24% 16	15.24% 16	20.00% 21	6.67% 7	105	2.68
Billboard	42.86% 45	16.19% 17	11.43% 12	21.90% 23	7.62% 8	105	2.69
TV	48.57% 51	10.48% 11	14.29% 15	19.05% 20	7.62% 8	105	2.60

Visibility in channels outside of social media is important in order to gain consumer interest and spread brand awareness. Amongst the respondents, the most visible channels are both Billboard 7.62%(8) and TV 7.62% (8) equally. The alarming statistics show that most respondents seem to generally not see Neste's brand often, since the majority of the answeres lean towards 1= Not visible at all, with 48.57%(51) voting this rate for TV exposure.

Q10 Please rate Neste's visibility on the following social media platforms:

Answered: 106   Skipped: 0
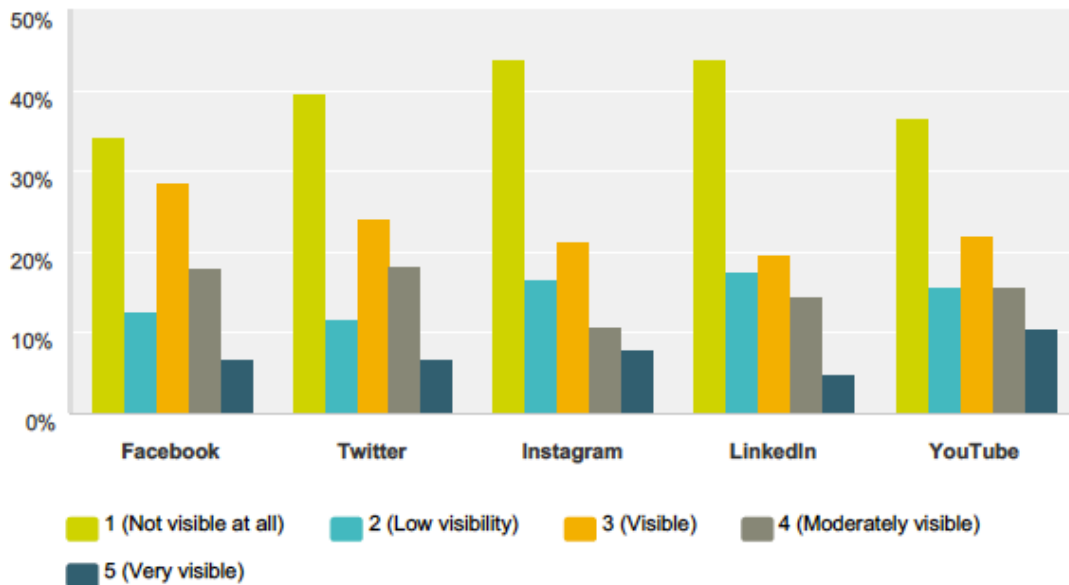
	1 (Not visible at all)	2 (Low visibility)	3 (Visible)	4 (Moderately visible)	5 (Very visible)	Total	Weighted Average
Facebook	34.29% 36	12.38% 13	28.57% 30	18.10% 19	6.67% 7	105	2.50
Twitter	39.42% 41	11.54% 12	24.04% 25	18.27% 19	6.73% 7	104	2.41
Instagram	43.69% 45	16.50% 17	21.36% 22	10.68% 11	7.77% 8	103	2.22
LinkedIn	43.69% 45	17.48% 18	19.42% 20	14.56% 15	4.85% 5	103	2.19
YouTube	36.54% 38	15.38% 16	22.12% 23	15.38% 16	10.58% 11	104	2.48

Figure 20: Neste's visibility on social media platforms

The importance of figuring out Neste's vsibility on social media is directly relative to the hypotheses. By being exposed to Neste's content in a regular and frequent rate, the respondents could aid in the development of the contant to be tailored towards their needs and desires. The results indicate that Neste has relatively low visibility overall. The lowest visibility rate 1 = Not visible at all was given to two platforms; Instagram 43.69% (45) and the same amount to LinkedIn. This could be due to both channels being the kind where consumers would have to actively been interested in Neste as brand in the first plave to

start following it on their newsfeeds daily. The highes visiblity rate 5 = Very visible was given to YouTube with a 10.58 (11) score. This could be the result of Neste's collaboration with YouTuber and Pre-Order the Future Futurologist, Prince Ea. Since the content of the Spoken Word trilogy went viral, it is more likely that the respondents came across the videos without being subscribed to the Neste YouTube channel, giving it more opportunities to be significantly more visible than other social media platfroms.

Q11 What do you think Neste's core message in its social media channels should be?

Answered: 106   Skipped: 0
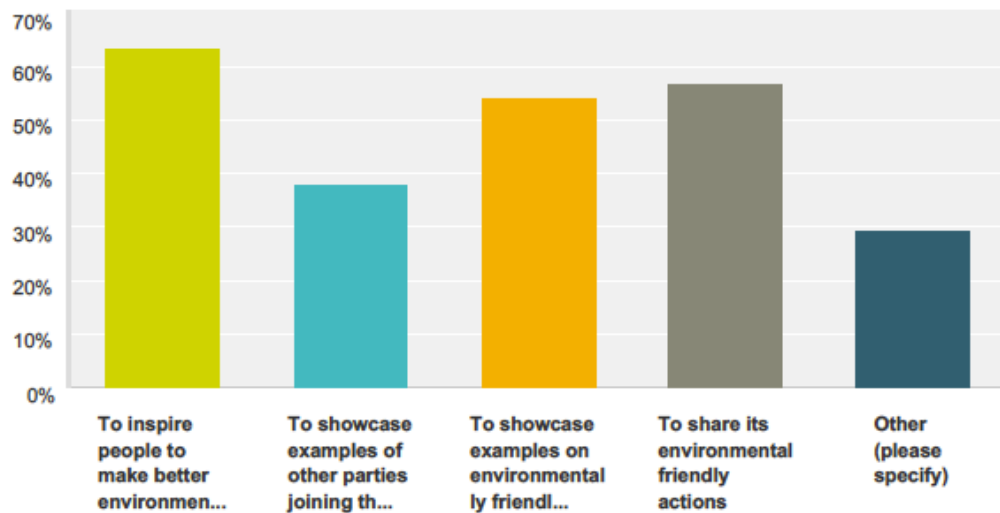
Answer Choices	Responses	
To inspire people to make better environmental choices	63.21%	67
To showcase examples of other parties joining the renewable energy movement	37.74%	40
To showcase examples on environmentally friendly innovations	53.77%	57
To share its environmental friendly actions	56.60%	60
Other (please specify)	29.25%	31
Total Respondents: 106		

Figure 21: Neste's social media content

The content created by the brand determines whther or not cosumers are willing to engage with it and create any sort of report with the brand in the future. The purpose is to find out the reposndent's perception on the current Neste content; "To inspire people to make better environmental choices" refers to the on-going theme that Neste uses with the hashtag #BetterChoices series. "To showcase examples of other parties joining the renewable energy movemen" refers to the #BetterCities, #BetterStates, #BetterCountries and #BetterCompanies series that is also already in motion. "To showcase examples of environmentally friendly innovations" refers to the #ThrowForwardThursday series, which introduces a futuristic innovative concept, that either uses renewable energy in an innovative manner or introduces new eco-thinking. And lastly, "To sare its environmenal friendly actions" refers to Neste's own CSR activities broadcasted directly to its followers.

The survey results indicate that the content provided by neste is what its followers want to see. The most popular vote 63.21% (67) goes to the #BetterChoices series. The least popular seems to be the other parties joining the renewable energy movement with a 37.74% (40) vote. Respondents also got a change to express the type of content they would be intereted in seeing and the answers were the following:

- *"To show how bad when we don't have energies in this earth."*
- *"To give case studies on their environmental actions."*
- *"Talk about its products."*
- *"Asking more about the opinions of the followers and conversating."*
- *"Giveaways or competitions."*
- *"Educate."*

Q12 How interesting is Neste's social media content to you on the following social media platforms?

Answered: 77   Skipped: 29
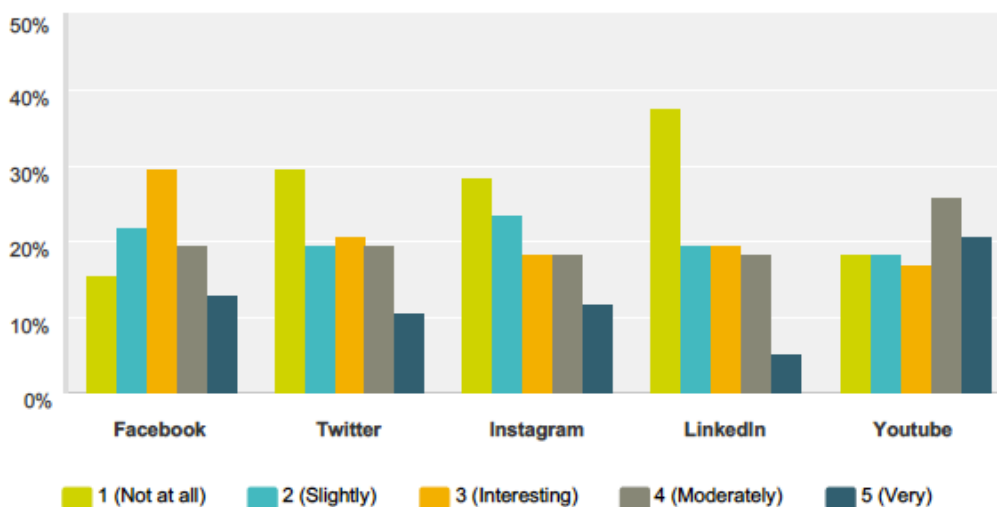
	1 (Not at all)	2 (Slightly)	3 (Interesting)	4 (Moderately)	5 (Very)	Total	Weighted Average
Facebook	15.58% 12	22.08% 17	29.87% 23	19.48% 15	12.99% 10	77	2.92
Twitter	29.87% 23	19.48% 15	20.78% 16	19.48% 15	10.39% 8	77	2.61
Instagram	28.57% 22	23.38% 18	18.18% 14	18.18% 14	11.69% 9	77	2.61
LinkedIn	37.66% 29	19.48% 15	19.48% 15	18.18% 14	5.19% 4	77	2.34
Youtube	18.18% 14	18.18% 14	16.88% 13	25.97% 20	20.78% 16	77	3.13

Figure 22 : How interesting Neste's social media content is to its followers

The purpose of this question is to allocate the platform in which the followers like the content and would want to see more. Moreover, this permist to see which platforms are the least interesting and shift their current content to match the viewer's desires, with the assistance of the previous question's results and suggestions. Amongst the respondents only the ones familiar to Neste's social media content prior to the survey were eligible to answer, in order to get an accurate current status. The ost popular vote went for the content found on Youtube with a 20.78% (16) vote of 5 = very interesting. The least interesting seems to be LinkedIn with a 37.66% (29) vote of 1 = Not interesting at all. The results indicate that the Youtube content with the

influencer Prince Ea, seems to reasonate with followers, whereas LinkedIn content of pure facts and no entertainment factor is less sough after.

Q13 What is your overall impression of Neste?

Answered: 106   Skipped: 0
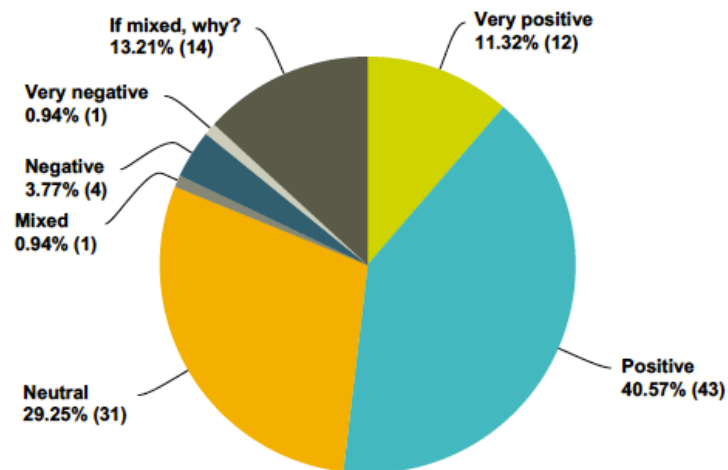
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very positive	11.32%	12
Positive	40.57%	43
Neutral	29.25%	31
Mixed	0.94%	1
Negative	3.77%	4
Very negative	0.94%	1
If mixed, why?	13.21%	14
Total		106

Figure 24: Overall impression of the Neste brand

This question reflects on the overall impression that the respondents have acquired through their experiences with Neste. The question pertains the answer to the hypothesis as well. The results show that the majority, 40.57%(43) to be excat, have a positive impression on the Neste brand. The second largest group is made of 29.25%(31) respondents that have a neutral perception of the brand.

6   Data analysis summary

By going through the survey results, it is clear that the current situation regarding the respondents' perception of Neste is overall positive. However, there are various components that need improvement.

Starting off with the demographic of the respondents. Since the gender question seems to have a relatively equal percentage, with females a bit higher (54%) than the males with (45%) we can conclude that gender does not play a key role in Neste's social media follower base, and the content does not need to be considerate of that particular factor.

We can point out a trend in the respondents age group and determine that it seems to be consistent with millenials aged between 20-30. This is a factor to be considered in the content creation. The age group needs to be inferred through the respondents' engagement in green consumerism; since the vast majority of the respondents is representant of this age group, the question regarding attitudes towards green consumerism acquired a a majority vote of either very or moderately with queastions "renewable energy is important to me", "I am an environmentally conscious consumer", "a company's environmental actions affect my opinion on the company", and "a company's overall reputations affects my opinion". This tells us that to all of the mentioned questions, the key age group thinks are important and deciding factors in their perceptions of a brand.

We need to also point out that since the large ajority of the respondents were either from Finland or the United States, there factors to e considered in the content creation. The tone of voice for the target countries needs to be aligned in order to gan maximum engagement for the social media content created.

We also see that the preferred platforms continue to be the classic TV broadcast in gaining information on oil companies, but the emergence of the digital and

especially social media have surpassed the print media and billboard's role in consumer communications. Therefore, we can state that the respondents in the millenial age group that are either residents of Finland and USA, are highly engaged with digital and TV as sources decision making regarding oil companies.

The telling part, however, regarding Neste's visibility on the aforementioned platforms are in a highly critical state. With the respondents sating that Neste's visibility is leaning towards not visible at all and moderately visible is alarming. The respondents claiming they have not heard of Neste are the ones aswering that Neste's visibility is non-existentn on neither of the channels nor on the social media platforms. This is contradictory due to the fact that they have engaged in Neste's content or follow Neste on social media in the first place. This tells us that although Neste's content on social media has been highly engaging and successful regarding its reach and engegability among their audience, however, it has not been successful enough in integrating its brand and making it memorable to consumers, which is the objective in the first place.

This is further validated with the followed question regarding what the respondents think Neste's social media content should entail. The choices are all based on the current content and all gained a popular vote amongst the respondents. This indicates that the content is perceived positively and also voted in the category "interesting", however that brand is gone unnoticed.

The preferred platform amongst the respondents seems to be Youtube with a clear vote of 25% moderately interesting and 20% of very interesting compered to the other platforms which all have a relatively same level of interest. This indicates that the respondents relate to the storyline of a better and sustainable future, improving the society as a whole and being inspired more than factual information provided more on the other platforms.

For the last question regarding perception of the brand, the respondents were asked to give reasons if their impression was mixed or if they wanted to elaborate on their impression. Their answers were the following:

- *"Why pick your company over more older regional energy suppliers?"*
- *"I don't know enough about it"*
- *"Oil company can never be good to the environment"*
- *"I think its funny how an oil company is trying to make the environment better"*
- *"Their product is expensive but good but i don't like this environment thing you already see it everywhere"*
- *"Good gasoline but ads very cliche and look like they lie"*
- *"I like their content but its still an oil company at the end of the day"*
- *"Do they really want to find environmentally friendly fuel options or are they just greenwashing?"*
- *"Truly, it is little what change they make here on Africa. I think Neste isn't international enough to reach parts of Africa."*
- *"Because we could have changed to renewable energy decades ago, companies stop it for profit."*
- *"I own a car and own a k-plussa card, so it's practical for me to buy the petrol from Neste, but what comes to the environmental responsibility of Neste, it's not credible. The core of their business is exactly the opposite of environmentally friendly, so all they try to promote seems very much like greenwashing."*
- *"I love the company and what they stand for. I would love for others to crop up and follow in their footsteps."*

7 Conclusions and recommendations

To conclude and give closure to the research questions stated at the beginning of the thesis, answers to the questions have been laid out separately.

- What are the factors that go into corporate CSR integrated rebranding?

The key factor in incorporating CSR into corporate rebranding is to incorporate it into the company's brand identity. In Neste's case, this is successfully implemented through Dru's (1993) disruption model.

o   Which are the components that affect consumer perception of a brand? On the basis of the literature review, we can state that consumer perception is dependent on the company's reputation. The factors that make up the reputation are the respectability and trustability of an organization amongst its stakeholders. In addition, performance in terms of financial, innovation and thought leadership, citizenship and transparency are key components. In Neste's case we can infer from the results that thought leadership and transparency should be improved in order to gain the audience's trust.

The research results indicate that the respondents prefer are overall relatively young and interested in environmental issues. Furthermore, the majority are either from Finland or The United States of America. Their perception of Neste as a brand seems to be in line with Neste's communication intentions, and they regard the brand as either "very" or "moderately" green as well as themselves as green consumers.

o   What kind of recommendations should be developed in order to adjust or further positively effect consumer perception of Neste's current brand?

Online platforms and especially social media is seen as an important tool to communicate with the respondents. In particular visual aspects such as YouTube's video platform seems to be popular amongst respondents. However, it is important to note that there seems to be a contradictions with about 30% of the followers whom stated that they have not heard of Neste prior to the survey. This shows that although Neste's content is what got them to become the brand's content consumers in the first place, the brand itself has not

managed to make enough of an impact to be recalled later. The Spoken Word videos created with the influencer Prince Ea seem to have had a compelling and resonating message with the public and been enough to get them to engage through likes, comments and shares. However, the brand has not been placed in enough in the forefront of these contents. Visibility seems to also be an issue, which could be solved both by targeting the channels the respondents deemed as important as well as create content in which the brand name is more prominent.

The contents have been suggested to be more educating and engaging throughout. This could be conceptualized through adding series with giveaways and comptetions as well as sparking conversation based on factual information.

Neste could also invest in its content marketing positioning itself as a thought leader. This could help build reputation, strengthen follower relationships and drive new business. In practice, Neste could start with a novel point of view, create content around it and distribute it in the right channels.

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List of figures

Appendix

Neste is an oil refining company from Finland. As of recent, the company has refocused its business into investing in renewable energy fuel solutions. The purpose of this survey is to assess the public's current perception about the company's mission for a cleaner sustainable future.

* 1. **Are you a male or a female?**

◯ Male

◯ Female

* 2. **What is your age group?**

◯ Less than 15

◯ 15-20

◯ 21-25

◯ 26-30

◯ 31-35

◯ 31-40

◯ 41-50

◯ More than 50

3. **In which country do you live in?**

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* 4. **Prior to this questionnaire, have you heard of Neste?**

◯ Yes

◯ No

5. **Please rate your opinion on the following statements:**

	1 (Fully disagree)	2 (Slightly disagree)	3 (Impartial)	4 (Moderately agree)	5 (Fully agree)
Neste is a socially responsible company	○	○	○	○	○
Neste works hard to find renewable energy solutions	○	○	○	○	○
Neste is an ethical company	○	○	○	○	○
Neste is a leading company in environmental responsibility within its field	○	○	○	○	○
Neste is transparent in its actions towards environmental issues	○	○	○	○	○
Neste is a trustworthy company in terms of environmental protection	○	○	○	○	○
Neste is a company that has integrity	○	○	○	○	○
Neste is consistent with its actions	○	○	○	○	○
Neste is an eco-innovative company	○	○	○	○	○
Neste is a credible company	○	○	○	○	○
Neste represents the values of an environmentally conscious company	○	○	○	○	○

* 6. Please rate the following statements related to environmental consciousness:

	1 (Not at all)	2 (Slightly)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Moderately)	5 (Very)
Renewable energy solutions are important to me	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am an environmentally conscious consumer	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
A company's environmental actions affect my opinion on the company	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
A company's overall reputation affects my opinion the company	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

* 7. How important are each of the following communication platforms as an information source on oil companies to you?

	1 (Not important)	2 (Slightly)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Moderately)	5 (Very important)
Social media	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Online (e.g. newsfeeds)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Print media	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Billboard	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
TV	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

* 8. How important are the following social media platforms to you as an information source on oil companies?

	1 (Not important)	2 (Slightly)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Moderately)	5 (Very important)
Twitter	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Instagram	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Facebook	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
LinkedIn	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
YouTube	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

9. Please rate Neste's visibility in the following channels:

	1 (Not visible at all)	2 (Low visibility)	3 (Visible)	4 (Moderately visible)	5 (Very visible)
Social media	○	○	○	○	○
Online (e.g. newsfeeds)	○	○	○	○	○
Print media	○	○	○	○	○
Billboard	○	○	○	○	○
TV	○	○	○	○	○

10. Please rate Neste's visibility on the following social media platforms:

	1 (Not visible at all)	2 (Low visibility)	3 (Visible)	4 (Moderately visible)	5 (Very visible)
Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
LinkedIn	○	○	○	○	○
YouTube	○	○	○	○	○

11. What do you think Neste's core message in its social media channels should be?

☐ To inspire people to make better environmental choices

☐ To showcase examples of other parties joining the renewable energy movement

☐ To showcase examples on environmentally friendly innovations

☐ To share its environmental friendly actions

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

12. How interesting is Neste's social media content to you on the following social media platforms?

	1 (Not at all)	2 (Slightly)	3 (Interesting)	4 (Moderately)	5 (Very)
Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
LinkedIn	○	○	○	○	○
Youtube	○	○	○	○	○

13. What is your overall impression of Neste?

◯ Very positive

◯ Positive

◯ Neutral

◯ Mixed

◯ Negative

◯ Very negative

◯ If mixed, why?