# Effects of a guerrilla advertising campaign on brand associations

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Tiivistelmä

Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli selvittää Jyväskylän ammattikorkeakoulun liiketalouden opiskelijoiden suunnitteleman ja toteuttaman sissimainoskampanjan välittömiä vaikutuksia Makulaku-brändin assosiaatioiden vahvuuteen ja haluttavuuteen suomalaisten päivittäistavarakaupan asiakkaiden keskuudessa. Työn toimeksiantajana oli Jyväskylän ammattikorkeakoulu.

Useampi opiskelijaryhmä oli ohjeistettu toteuttamaan sissimainoskampanja koulun yhteistyöyrityksenä toimivalle Makulaku Lakritsa Oy:lle osana markkinointiviestinnän opintojaksoa. Opintojakson opettajan ja yritysten edustajien muodostama raati valitsi opiskelijaryhmien joukosta kaksi parasta markkinointisuunnitelmaa, jotka opiskelijaryhmät toteuttivat kahdessa seudun Citymarketeista. Opinnäytetyön tutkimuskohteena oli toinen toteutuneista kampanjoista.

Opinnäytetyön tutkimus toteutettiin keväällä 2015 Jyväskylän Seppälän Citymarketissa yksittäisen päivän aikana. Tutkimus tehtiin määrällisellä tutkimusotteella kokeellisen tutkimuksen periaatteita myötäillen. Aineisto kerättiin kyselylomakkeen ja haastettelun avulla kahdelta asiakasryhmältä, joista toinen oli nähnyt sissimainoskampanjan ja ollut sen kanssa vuorovaikutuksessa. Kahden asiakasryhmän tuloksia vertailtiin keskenään tulosten saamiseksi. Tutkimukseen osallistui yhteensä 48 asiakasta.

Tulokset osoittivat, että opiskelijoiden sissimainoskampanjalla oli välitön positiivinen vaikutus brändiassosiaatioiden vahvuuteen ja haluttavuuteen.  Suuria eroja sukupuolten tai eri ikäryhmien välillä ei havaittu. Jatkotutkimuksia sissimainonnan tehokkuuteen vaihtelevissa ympäristöissä tarvitaan luotettavien yleistyksien muodostamiseksi.

Avainsanat (asiasanat)
Sissimarkkinointi, sissimainonta, markkinointiviestintä, brändäys, brändiassosiaatiot

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**Effects of a guerrilla advertising campaign on brand associations**

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Description

The purpose of the thesis was to find out what immediate effects a guerrilla advertising campaign planned and carried out by a group of JAMK business students would have on the strength and favorability of the Makulaku brand among Finnish grocery store customers. The thesis was assigned by JAMK.

Several groups of students were tasked with designing a guerrilla advertisement campaign for the partner company Makulaku Lakritsa Oy Ltd. as part of a marketing communications course. Out of all the groups, the two best marketing plans were selected by a jury consisting of the teacher of the course and representatives from the partner company. The two marketing plans were implemented by student groups in two Citymarket department stores in the region. This thesis deals with one of the actualized campaigns.

The study was conducted in spring 2015 at the Jyväskylä Seppälä Citymarket in the course of one day. A quantitative research method following the principles of the experiment research strategy was used. The research data was collected using the combination of a questionnaire and an interview from two groups of customers, one of which had seen the guerilla group advertising campaign and interacted with it. The answers from the two groups were compared to each other. In all, 48 customers participated in the study.

The results of the study show an immediate increase in the strength and favorability of brand associations after being exposed to the students' guerrilla marketing campaign. Meaningful differences between the different genders or age groups were not observed.

For the generalizability of the results, further studies focusing on guerrilla advertising campaigns in various settings are required.

Keywords (subjects)
guerrilla marketing, marketing communications, branding, brand associations

Miscellanous

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# 1 Introduction

Guerrilla marketing is a new branch of unusual, creative and low-cost marketing strategies born to help small-scale businesses tackle the bigger competitors in increasingly tough markets. Recently, more and more companies are starting to utilize guerrilla tactics in their marketing campaigns to reach their customers in creative ways (Levinson 2007, 13-21), but because of the relative newness of the term, the actual benefits of guerrilla marketing and advertising are still somewhat hazy. Only a few studies have been made and the results are varied, so reliable information proving guerilla marketing's effects is hard to find, let alone how it can be used as a tool for branding.

This thesis tackles the subject by studying guerrilla advertising's effects on intangible brand value, also known as brand equity, and more specifically on brand associations formed in the minds of the customers, by examining the effects a single guerrilla marketing campaign has on their strength and favorability. The results are analyzed by examining two groups of customers before and after the campaign and comparing the answers.

## 1.1 Background of the study

The basis and motivation for the thesis comes from the author's personal interest in both guerrilla marketing and branding. Guerrilla marketing as a term is still unknown to many and its potential as a marketing tool has not been widely studied, partly due to the confusion with the term (Prévot 2009, 34). A successful study of a guerrilla marketing campaign could concretize the possible benefits and give material to be used in both education and marketing planning. Also, the partner company could get beneficial information related to their brand to develop their marketing communications and offerings to better reflect the needs and wants of their customers.

The study was conducted in co-operation with a student group of Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences' marketing communications class held in the spring of 2015. The students were split into groups and given an assignment

to plan a small-scale guerrilla marketing campaign for the partner company Makulaku Lakritsa Ltd. The groups presented their plans to the course lecturer and company representatives and two of these groups were chosen to actualize their plans at two separate chain grocery stores. However, only one of these campaigns was chosen as the target for this study due to them being held at the same time in different locations.

**Makulaku Lakritsa Ltd**

Founded in 1994, Makulaku is a Finnish liquorice candy manufacturer based in Porvoo. Among other sweet and savory snacks, they offer several types of innovative high-quality liquorice products for both Finnish and international markets and are constantly developing both their range and offerings.

Three of their new liquorice products were chosen to be promoted in the marketing campaign designed by the students. All of the products shared the same underlying theme: already existing and well-known product Metrilaku offered under a new name and new form. Metrilaku, translated as *meter liquorice*, is a liquorice confectionary known for its long length and highly varied flavor options, often sold at fairs, trade shows and other events. The products introduced by Makulaku offer Metrilaku in an alternative, shorter form and pre-packaged.

## 1.2 Aim of the thesis

The aim of this study was to find out what immediate effects the guerrilla marketing campaign had on the brand in the minds of the customers and so to examine if the campaign can be useful as a marketing tool for the company in question or a worthwhile teaching method for JAMK. The following research questions came up to specify the objective:

- Can inexpensive marketing methods be used to enhance brand image?
- Can guerrilla marketing methods have an immediate effect on brand associations?
- Is guerrilla advertising an effective tool for communicating brand identity?

Based on the former in combinations with the theoretical framework, the main research question that worked as a basis for the study was the following:

- Can guerrilla advertising affect the strength and favorability of a new product's brand associations?

More specifically, the objective of this study was to determine if a single guerrilla advertising campaign promoting a new product and brand can have an immediate positive or negative effect on the strength and favorability of brand associations, not focusing on the types of associations. The key points to study were:

1. Strength of the brand associations: how well do the presented associations fit the brand in question
2. Favorability of the brand associations: how important are the presented associations to the customers in the product category and which they feel are the most important

The study borrowed the ideology of a classic experiment research strategy to study the causal effect of a single guerrilla marketing campaign (see Wilson 2010, 103). The plan was to interview two groups of customers inside the convenience store where the guerrilla marketing campaign was held: those who had seen the marketing campaign and those who had not, and to measure if there is a noticeable change in the answers. Due to the campaign being held at the actual real world location instead of a controlled environment, each customer was interviewed individually, but the answers are grouped based on if they've seen the campaign or not.

## 1.3 Guerrilla marketing campaign

The marketing campaign created by the students was held on Friday 24th of April at a hypermarket sized chain grocery store K-Citymarket Seppälä in Jyväskylä. The campaign stand was set up at a central location alongside the main aisle inside of the store to reach as many people as possible. Since the campaign took place during a single day only, it was held there for the whole day from early morning till evening. As an extra, the students brought the

campaign partly outside of the store by drawing pictures of colorful liquorice pieces with chalk on the pavement close to the entrances.

**Factory stand**

The core idea of the campaign was to introduce new liquorice products by connecting them to an already existing and well-known brand, Metrilaku. The student group built a traditional promotion stand often seen in grocery stores, but put their own twist on it by disguising it as a liquorice factory. To highlight the factory aspect of the stand, the students dressed up in white overalls adorning the logo of Makulaku and had different tasks to perform: delivering Metrilaku to the factory stand in a wheelbarrow, "processing" the liquorice into smaller, bite-sized pieces to be offered to the customers for tasting or walking around the store carrying the Makulaku liquorice packages in an industrial crate.

If a customer tasted the "processed" Metrilaku pieces, the students made the connection to Makulaku by explaining that it was the same product but now available pre-packaged for convenience. Makulaku packages were placed next to the factory stand to highlight the connection and to encourage customers to buy the products.

**Flash mob still**

A second part of the campaign was a flash mob held inside the store. A group of volunteers and the students were gathered at a central location and each participant held a bag of Makulaku liquorice in their hands. One of the students made an announcement about the flash mob on the store's public address system and gave the sing for the flash mob to start and end. A catchphrase "*pysäyttävän hyvä makeinen*", loosely translated as "*a sweet that halts*" was used.

The flash mob was made unique by implementing a still picture aspect in connection with the catchphrase. Each participant took a different pose while holding the liquorice bag and held it for three minutes without moving. The aim was to attract attention at a busy store location by suddenly staying completely still. Customers were allowed to walk among the flash mob to

examine what was happening. As an extra, the store's head manager filmed the flash mob for future marketing material.

## 2  Brand associations as a part of branding

Since the middle of the 1980s, marketing and advertising efforts have shifted focus from detailed product information to abstract mental images. Increased competition has forced companies to invest more and more money towards marketing. Thanks to the rapid growth and changes in the international business environment, brands became a major pawn in business: a part of the company's capital. (Malmelin & Hakala 2007, 26–27.)

But the question remains. What is a brand, what does it mean to the customers and what makes it so important?

There are as many definitions as there are experts on the subject, and it has become a heated discussion to decide who is right. Everybody wants to add their own touch. However, there is no single right answer due to the intangible nature of the subject, but all of the definitions share the same underlying idea: the American Marketing Association's definition of a brand refers to a name, concept, term, symbol or some other characteristic or unique element, which separates the marketer's product(s) or service(s) from competitors' offerings and allows consumers to identify them. This has been widely accepted among the authors as the international, legal definition to the term. (Keller 2008, 2; Kotler & Keller 2012, 263; Malmelin & Hakala 2007, 27; Solomon, Marshall, Stuart, Barnes & Mitchell 2009, 299; Kapferer 2012, 7–8.)

According to this definition, a brand should be built with components that create a unique identity. These different components of a brand, such as name, concept, symbol etc. are also known as brand elements or identities (Keller 2008, 139). These elements create difference via functional, rational and tangible characteristics directly related to the product or service (Kotler & Keller 2012, 263). To ensure that branding strategies are used to their fullest and brand value is created, consumers should be lead to understand the differences between brands described earlier (Kotler & Keller 2012, 265).

Keller (2008, 2) emphasizes, that while brand elements are like the building blocks of a brand, it is also something that affects the marketplace in a less physical manner. It creates and thrives on awareness, generates reputation, seeks prominence and so forth. The differences that separate a single brand from another can also be symbolic, emotional and intangible in a much more abstract way. The main point to understand is the meaningfulness of these differences: marketers need to understand their customers to be able to offer what they are truly looking for. (Kotler & Keller 2012, 263–265.)

> *"Marketers need to teach consumers "who" the product is-by giving it a name and other brand elements to identify it-as well as what the product does and why consumers should care. Branding creates mental structures that help consumers organize their knowledge about products and services in a way that clarifies their decision making and, in the process, provides value to the firm."* (Kotler & Keller 2012, 265.)

By differentiating their products or services with brand building strategies, companies can create strong and lasting relationships with their consumers. In the end, these relationships concretize as financial gain. (Malmelin & Hakala 2007, 27.)

In the end, the basic purpose of branding is to distinguish and differentiate, create identity and awareness, guarantee quality and satisfaction and help with the promotion of the branded product or service. These purposes share the same final goal:  to create new sales by taking market shares from competitors and to encourage repeat sales by building customer loyalty. (Hollensen 2010, 409.)

Understanding the brand as a term brings us to the problem of evaluation. How can branding make one product or service superior to its competitors and how can his be measured? This brings us to brand equity.

## 2.1 Brand equity

As mentioned before, brands have become part of the company capital. This immaterial capital is also known as brand equity, but determining the actual value it brings to the company is another topic of debate. (Kapferer 2012, 7–8; Hollensen 2010, 409.)  Keller (2008, 37) summarizes, that brand equity is what explains the different outcomes between marketing branded and non-branded products.

Building on the same idea, Kotler & Keller (2012, 265) together state that "brand equity is the added value endowed on products and services. It may be reflected in the way consumers think, feel, and act with respect to the brand, as well as in the prices, market share, and profitability the brand commands." In other words, brand equity can be seen as the extra cash flow branded products and services generate with their underlying values (Hollensen 2010, 409).

Several perspectives exist to study and measure brand equity and countless models have been created to help manage it. The two main perspectives are different in how they value the brand: the first one focusing on customer-based value and the relationships they have with the brand, and the second one taking a more financial approach to measure it. The financial perspective is also known as brand valuation. (Kapferer 2012, 7–8.)

Brand equity and brand valuation are often mixed, so it is important to understand the different viewpoint these two terms have. Brand valuation means estimating the total financial value of the brand in numbers while brand equity is an intangible value that's hard to measure in money. (Kotler & Keller 2012, 278.)

Confusion comes from the fact that brand valuation may also be called *corporate* or *firm-based* brand equity (Rossiter & Bellman 2005, 18; Shimp 2007, 33). As mentioned earlier, the viewpoint is completely different. A good example of corporate brand equity is the internationally recognized Interbrand's brand valuation process that involves assessing a brand's

marketing characteristics and converting them into a single monetary value figure (Lindemann n.d.). This kind of brand valuation does not suit smaller brands, because they are individually not big enough for the method. (Rossiter & Bellman 2005, 18.)

**Consumer-based brand equity**

The consumer-based brand equity, first introduced by Keller, focuses on consumers' perspective to understand how they see, read, hear, learn, think and feel about a particular brand over time. It explains how consumer response to the branded product or service changes based on the brand knowledge they have. This equity can be either positive or negative based on the consumers' reaction to marketing efforts made to promote the brand in question. (Kotler & Keller 2012, 265–266; Keller 1993.)

Three key ingredients make up customer-based brand equity (Kotler & Keller 2012, 266):

1. Consumer response: How consumers react to different brands in the same category. If there are no apparent differences in the reaction and response, competition will be based on factors other than the brand, such as price.
2. Brand knowledge: All the thoughts, feelings, images, experiences and beliefs that consumers associate with the brand.
3. Perceptions, preferences and behavior related to the marketing activities of a brand. Favorable reactions towards marketing activities create positive brand equity.

Marketers should aim to ensure that all consumers have the same kind of experience with everything in relation to the brand. This creates coherent brand knowledge (Kotler & Keller 2012, 266). While each individual has their own impression of the brand and what it means to them, brand equity can be built by creating the right kind of positive brand knowledge with the right consumers. (Kotler & Keller 2012, 271; Malmelin & Hakala 2007, 44.)

When looking at the management side of branding, the main parts to consider when building brand equity are the following (Kotler & Keller 2012, 272):

1. Brand elements or identities making up the brand.
2. The actual product or service and all the marketing activities related to them.
3. Other associations linked to the brand from some other entity, such as a person, place or thing.

Two approaches are available to measure brand equity: indirect and direct. The indirect approach focuses on assessing potential sources of brand equity by examining consumer brand knowledge. Direct approach measures the impact that this brand knowledge has on consumers' response to marketing efforts. Both approaches can be used at the same time. This way, marketers can understand the sources of brand equity, how it affects consumer behavior and how the sources and behaviors change over time. (Kotler & Keller 2012, 277.)

**Brand knowledge as a source of brand equity**

As mentioned several times in the chapter, brand knowledge is an essential part of creating value to the brand. It could almost be pictured as the heart of brand equity. While described as all the thoughts, feelings, images, experiences and beliefs that consumers associate with the brand, it can be separated into two main components: brand image and brand awareness. (Kotler & Keller 2012, 266; Keller 2008, 51; Shimp 2007, 34.)

In this thesis, the focus is on brand image and more specifically on brand associations that make up the image.

## 2.2 Brand image and identity

In the minds of the customers, brands are most often seen specifically as visual images (Malmelin & Hakala 2007, 126–127). These brand images are made up by different types of strong, favorable and unique brand associations linked to the brand (Keller 2008, 56), see Figure 3. So rather than buying the product or service only as a commodity, customers buy brands based on the

image they have of it. In some cases, by buying brands with clearly defined images, they are also defining themselves by their possessions. (Mohsin 2009, 97.)
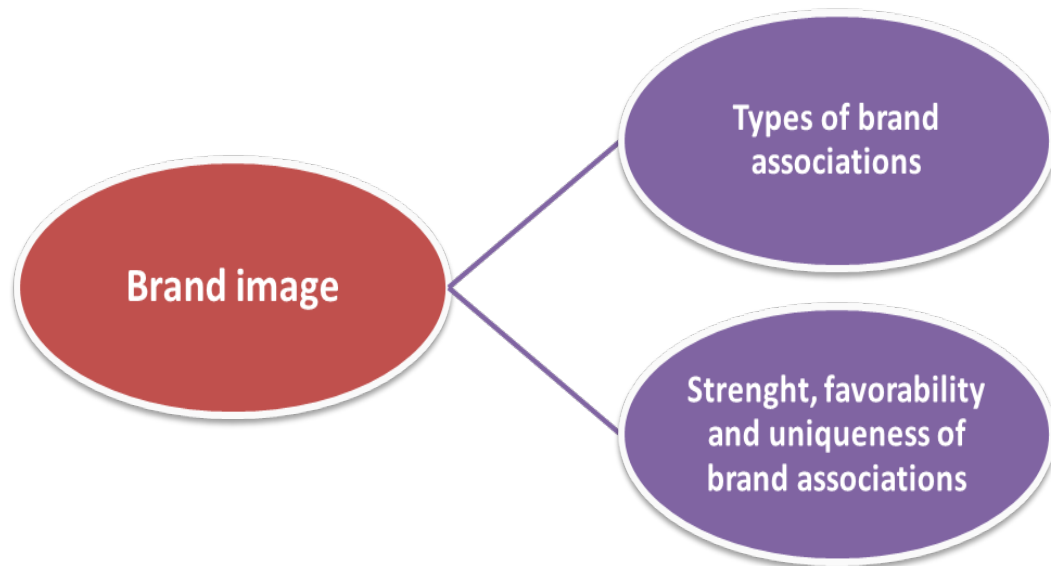
Figure 1. Building blocks of brand image. (Adapted from Keller 1993, 7.)

Several ways of enforcing a brand image exist. The key point is brand experience: how customers receive information about the brand. While advertising is the most obvious and straightforward way of communicating brand image, the brand experience includes all contact the customer has with the brand. Despite investing into massive marketing campaigns and promotions, one bad customer service experience can affect the brand image irrevocably. (Mohsin 2009, 98.)

A simple way of finding out a brand image hidden in the minds of consumers is to ask them to describe the first words or images that come to mind when a particular brand is mentioned. If their responses end up being highly varied or hard to come up with, the brand image is weak and the brand identity has not reached the consumers. Responses referring only to non-image attributes, such as price, are also a signal of a weak brand image. (Mohsin 2009, 98.)

**Brand identity**

Despite often being used interchangeably and while brand identity and brand image are connected, their meanings are very different. Brand identity is how a company identifies itself for the public and their customers, but brand image is the perception of the company by the public and the customers. Identity can be controlled and sent, while image is only received and perceived. (Meenaghan 1995, 24.) Identity appeals to the senses; it can be seen, touched, held and heard (Wheeler 2013, 4). In other words, brand identity is what the company wants the brand to be seen as (Mohsin 2009, 101), and the goal is for identity and image to match (Interbrand/Swystun 2007, 60).

**Consistent brand image**

Due to the abstract nature of brands and branding, one might wonder if it is truly worth the time and money to try and manipulate how various groups of people think and feel about a brand. Because every person has their own, unique way of thinking and seeing the world, is it wise to build just a single brand image that would have to suit everyone? (Gad 2001, 31.)

One thing shared by all leading brands is the feeling of unity. It doesn't and shouldn't mean that every single customer feels the same way about the brand, but the thoughts are similar enough to make the brand consistent. Brands need to have a shared, established image (Gad 2001, 32–33) which forms a so-called "base" for individual thoughts and meanings (Hollis 2010, 13).

A consistent brand image may gather more loyal customers than a competitor, even despite apparent differences in both quality and price. Consumers do not always choose the "best" available product or service. Studies have shown that consumers can be driven to buy another product if it is a well-known brand. They might even feel that the product from a familiar brand tastes or works better than a lesser-known competitor's equivalent. Shortly put, a consistent, properly built brand image can encourage consumers to choose higher priced but lower quality products or services over competitor's offerings. Tests have shown that loyal customers may be willing to pay 20% to

25% more for a familiar product (Kotler & Keller 2009, 151). This is the magic of a brand, so to speak. (Gad 2001, 33.)

## 2.3 Brand associations

A brand image is a set of associations related to the brand and can be broken down into several types of brand associations. They form the overall perceptions customers have of the brand and through positive perceptions, brand image can be enhanced. (Latif, Islam & Mohamad 2015, 96.) These different types of associations can be seen in Figure 4.
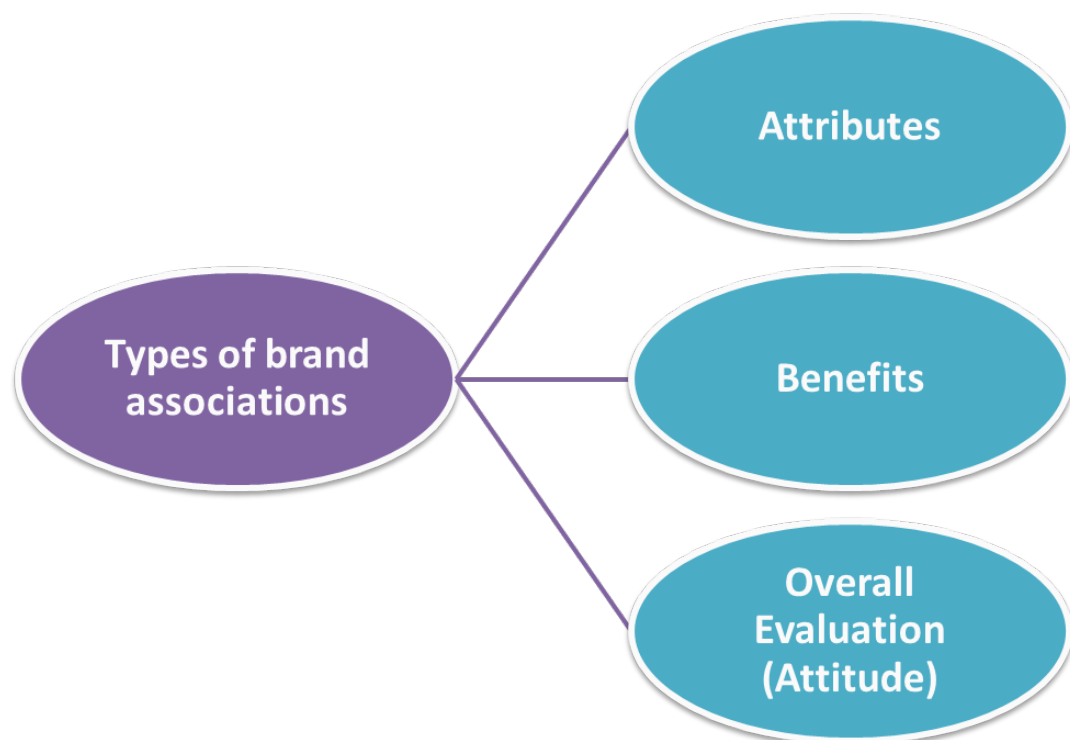


Figure 2. Different types of brand associations. (Adapted from Keller 1993, 7)

A brand association can be anything in a consumer's memory that they directly or indirectly link to a brand and so form the meaning of the brand. These associations cover everything from tangible product attributes to intangible benefits and feelings. (Aaker & McLoughlin 2010, 179.)

While product or service category is also a form of brand association, if the product or service is seen only as a representation of this category with no

other associations to linked to it to separate it from its competitors, consumers will respond as if the there was no distinguishable brand to begin with. A good example of a successful brand understanding the power of associations is Red Bull: the product itself is positioned in the energy drinks category along with many others, but uniquely associated with edgy sports and club culture. (Aaker & McLoughlin 2010, 179.)

Shimp (2007, 37) makes a clever comparison between brand associations and the associations people have about others around them, such as their best friend. When thinking about a particular person, certain features come to mind, both positive and negative. These features separate them from others and affect your opinion about them. In the same way, certain brands can bring up thoughts and feelings linked to them that affect how customers see them.

Brand associations need to be strong, favorable and unique among other competing brands. Forming them takes more than just marketing activities: consumers learn about the brand from direct experiences, commercial and noncommercial media, word of mouth and in some cases via assumptions the consumers themselves make based on everything surrounding the brand. (Keller 2008, 53–56; Shimp 2007, 41.) But not all aspects of association forming can be controlled: someone may recall them as fond childhood memories or indirect observations of the brand. The possible origins of brand associations can be vast as a legion. (Hollis 2010, 10.)

Keller (2008, 67) emphasizes that brands must have strong, favorable and unique associations in that specific order. In other words, no matter how many unique associations a brand has, it doesn't matter if the customers do not favor them. It also doesn't matter how strongly they favor a certain association if it isn't strong enough to be actually remembered and linked to the brand.

**Strength**

The strength of a brand association refers to how well the association fits the brand image in the minds of the customers and how quickly it can be recalled. These associations need to be consistent: something several customers share. The strongest associations are formed via past direct experiences with

the brand, but word of mouth and advertisement can also influence them. (Keller 2008, 56–57.) Strength of brand associations can be increased by exposing the customers to marketing campaigns with clear marketing messages (Till et al. 2011, 93–94).

**Favorability**

To determine what associations would be favorable and positive, companies should analyze the current market situations to find out the hidden needs and wants that consumers have in regards to their offering. Companies who do their homework are able to convince their customers that their product or service can deliver what their desire. Simply put, favorable associations should be desirable to the consumers and the company must be able to deliver on the desired associations. (Keller 2008, 58.)

**Uniqueness**

Uniqueness of the brand associations is the competitive advantage a brand has over other, similar brands. They give customers a compelling reason to buy a specific brand over others. The uniqueness can be communicated by implicitly highlighting it or through comparisons with competitors' offerings. Both product- and non-product-related attributes and benefits can be perceived as unique, but in product categories where the functional differences between brands are few or non-existent, non-product related attributes play an important role. (Keller 2008, 58.) Brand positioning strategies are often used to differentiate via unique associations (Till et. al. 2011, 95).

Neuroscience has been used to examine the effects of the strength, positivity and differentiation of brand associations, which go together with Keller's theory above. The stronger, more positive and different the associations are, the more likely it is for the brand to succeed in standing out among the competitors and to be purchased. In the end, it falls to the marketer to figure out and enforce the unique strong associations and their positivity. (Hollis 2010, 10–11.)

## 2.4 Role of advertisement in branding

While brand management is much more than just advertisement alone, its role in supplying people with brand knowledge must not be undervalued. Hackley (2005, 58) brings up brands known for their advertising campaigns, such as Mercedes-Benz and Marlboro. Countless people have never driven a car, let alone a Mercedes, or smoked cigarettes, but when asked about the brands, many of them are able to give surprisingly detailed descriptions of their values. This clearly shows the importance and potential of advertising on building brand knowledge in consumer. Keeping the requirement for strong, favorable and unique brand associations in mind when creating and managing advertising plans, a brand image can be formed in the minds of the consumers even if they never actually buy and test the product or service.

Advertising is a powerful tool to drive brand identity. According to Meenaghan (1995, 31–32), it has two main functions: to deliver information about the performance of the product or service and to attach human-like, symbolic and emotional values to the brand. But advertising alone is not enough to create a successful brand nor can it sell anything by itself. What it can do is create awareness of brand offerings, create a favorable predisposition towards a brand and explain things about it or to create and tell about the uniqueness of the brand. Advertising can also support other brand-related marketing activities. (Hackley 2005, 66.) It could almost be called the only controllable aspect of brand messaging (Post 2004, 116) and what drives brand value towards the right direction for development (Meenaghan 1995, 28).

To advertise a brand effectively, the strategy of mass marketing by using many marketing channels with no clearly defined target must be forgotten, as it wastes precious resources on non-potential consumers to whom the brand meaning is lost. To make the brand message stick, advertising should be aimed at the right target and repeated after repeating to keep it relevant. (Post 2004, 117–118.)

Goodhart (2015) describes brand advertising as storytelling. A relationship between the brand and a customer requires trust and takes time to build through consistent and repeated positive experiences.

# 3 Guerrilla marketing in building brand equity

Marketing is a complex process of getting people to change their minds to do business with a single company, but also to maintain this mindset. Essentially, it is every contact a company has with the outside world. (Levinson 2007, 1.)

Unlike with many other marketing approaches, guerrilla marketing as a term has a single known creator: Jay Conrad Levinson. His first book on guerrilla marketing was released in 1983 and his definition of the term has remained the same ever since (Parantainen 2008, 12).

Guerrilla marketing refers to unusual, creative and atypical means of marketing to achieve maximum profit for minimal investment (Levinson 2007, 5; Parantainen 2008, 12). Quoting Levinson (2008c) himself, guerrilla marketing is "going after conventional goals using unconventional means" and that "prime investments in guerrilla marketing do not have to be money, it should be time, energy, imagination and information." This explains the name *guerrilla*, a Spanish word for a fighter or a small group of them going against a larger foe by using creative tactics (Levinson, Adkins & Forbes 2010, 26).

Several marketing concepts exist with the same goal of good results with low expenses. Advertising agencies trying to woo customers with innovative ideas are quick to make up new names for the same thing, such as renegade, under-the-radar or covert marketing. In the same manner, marketers from an academic background have worked to develop theories to describe specific marketing tactics like ambush or viral marketing. All of these instruments and terms can be brushed under guerrilla marketing since they all share the same underlying idea of low costs but high profits. To summarize, guerrilla marketing is an umbrella term covering a *combination of methods* to make profit, not a tool in itself. (Hutter & Hoffman 2011; Bigat 2012, 1023.)

## 3.1 Defining characteristics

Guerrilla marketing has several defining characteristics that separate it from traditional marketing.

**Unconventional means**

The guerrilla approach puts the focus on efficient and inexpensive methods to reduce the costs caused by the company's marketing efforts (Levinson, Frishman & Lublin 2008a, XV). In other words, the main point of guerrilla marketing is that instead of deciding on a giant marketing budget and throwing it all wherever it "feels promising" and might reach the biggest audiences, guerrillas rely on much smaller budgets but combine it with vivid imagination, careful investigation and planning while focusing on much smaller audiences. Guerrillas measure performance by the size of their profits, not by sales or responses. If a company is not making a profit, something needs to change. (Levinson 2007, 5–6.) A typical sign of a guerrilla marketer is their use of mind over matter (Parantainen 2008, 11).

To explain this difference in attitude, Parantainen (2008, 27) compares traditional marketers to hunters, whose only tactic is to unload a shotgun into the mist and hope that it hits something or someone. A guerrilla marketer doesn't aim without a reason and shoots only if he knows it hits where it counts.

Due to the need for a low budget and by use of imagination, guerrillas rely on a variety of low cost but high impact marketing weapons to effectively reach their marketing goals.

**Understanding the customer**

Guerrilla marketing aims to focus on their customer in everything they do. Rather than talking about "our company" or "our product", Levinson (2007, 7) advises shifting to "you" marketing, in which everything is about the customer. He also emphasizes the importance of follow-up. Marketing and contact with the customer should never end once a sale has been made. Guerrilla

marketers believe that to achieve superior marketing efforts, intensive focus and dedication to creating new and maintaining old relationships is the key. They are patient and understand that changes do not happen overnight. (Levinson, Meyerson & Scarborough 2008b, 9.)

Nothing in guerrilla marketing happens by chance. All contact with customers is taken into account and planned during the marketing process, such as how customers are received, employees' attire and demeanor, website visuals and navigation, business names and so on. Guerrillas understand that customers may judge companies based on a single aspect of their business and that failing to deliver a positive experience may have long term negative effects. (Levinson et al. 2008b, 8.)

As in traditional marketing, psychology plays a large role in marketing design and decision, but sometimes businesses start relying too much on guessing based on experience. Guerrillas stray away from guesswork and base their decision on the laws of human behavior and psychology to tap into the minds of their customers. They know that customers do not want to be sold things but instead want ways to improve their situation and fulfill their needs and desires. Customers do not want aspirin, they want pain relief. (Levinson et. al. 2008b, 10.)

In all, guerrilla marketing takes an intimate approach to engaging with customers to increase profits in the long run and customers are seen as individuals. Sometimes, guerrilla approach has been called relationship or love marketing to reflect this customer focused mindset. (Margolis & Garrigan 2008, 17.)

**Competition**

Another huge difference between the guerrilla approach and traditional marketing worth understanding is how competition is perceived and handled. Traditional marketing advises companies to determine their current competitors and figure out how to beat or even obliterate them. Guerrillas see competitors as potential allies. They understand the importance of strategic alliances and seek to continually increase their network. To ensure this, they

could even work with their competitors for shared benefit. (Levinson et al. 2008b, 9–10.) If another company happens to have similar prospects or standards, they may be persuaded into cooperation in joint marketing efforts. A good international example of this is the long partnership of McDonald's and Coca Cola. (Levinson 2007, 6–7.)

This doesn't mean that guerrillas avoid or do not have any competition. Quite the opposite, actually, since guerrilla marketing is all about achieving the upper hand against much bigger competitors. Guerrillas research their market for information about what their customers want and what competitors they currently have. Based on this information, guerrillas can develop competitive advantage: something their competition is missing. A competitive advantage should be positive, unique, easily communicated and recognizable. (Levinson & Lautenslager 2014, 24–26.)

**Benefits and risks**

When guerrilla and traditional marketing have been compared, research has shown that guerrilla marketing shines when it comes to increasing brand knowledge. It gives companies and brands a chance to build strong and positive connections with the consumers in unique and memorable ways. At best, guerrilla campaigns may leave an impression that traditional campaign cannot do thanks to guerrillas' ability to break through the barrier consumers may build to block and avoid advertising messages. But rather than completely replacing traditional marketing, guerrilla marketing can be seen as a supplement to a more traditional approach. (Wanner 2011, 107.) Zuo and Veil (2007, 9) refer to Hatch (2005) that a successful campaign can be both high impact and high recall. This means that a guerrilla marketing campaign can leave a long term impression on the consumer that can be recalled long after the campaign has actually been seen.

On the other hand, guerrilla tactics always come with a risk as the results of unconventional marketing methods are not always positive. In 2007, a guerrilla marketing campaign held to promote a new animated Turner Network's TV-series "Aqua Teen Hunger Force" caused a city wide panic as a

battery-powered device with flashing lights and wires was found at a central location in Boston, US. Countless police officers, emergency crews, federal agents, bomb squads and even the US Coast Guard were mobilized to investigate the device suspected to be a terrorist threat. Aqua Teen Hunger Force ended up getting more attention than ever for the price of $2 million dollars paid to cover the costs of the fiasco, not forgetting the ruined reputation in the eyes of many. (Zuo & Veil 2007, 8–11.)

**What guerrilla marketing is NOT**

When discussing the term, most often guerrilla marketing is understood as clever outdoor advertising. Guerrillas are well known for their ability to take control over a street. Their brands may be put out there for passersby to see, smell, touch and sometimes taste (Margolis & Garrigan 2008, 20.) Examples available on countless websites and blogs dubbed as guerrilla marketing are filled with clever marketing campaigns held in even cleverer outdoor locations. They aren't wrong per say, but guerrilla marketing is simply much more than that. Guerrillas use everything available to them for free or for low price and for much more than a single campaign. Guerrilla marketing is a *mindset*. (Parantainen 2008, 49–53.)

## 3.2 Guerrilla advertising aspects

Many effective guerrilla advertising campaigns share the same four characteristics. First off, they're unique in the sense that it has never been done before, they're targeted to the right people in the right place and time, they are cost-effective by spending money on the right channels and people and lastly catch attention by being buzz-worthy, sometimes even press-worthy. In the best case, extra publicity thanks to the press can work as free advertisement on large channels. (Margolis & Garrigan 2008, 19.)

Numerous methods of guerrilla advertising exist, such as ambient, viral, buzz, sensation or ambush marketing (Behal & Sareen 2014, 6; Hutter & Hoffman 2011, 3), but they all share some guerrilla aspects.

**Low cost weapons**

For a campaign to be even considered guerrilla advertisement, it has to be cost-effective. Guerrillas do not focus their small budget into a single marketing channel and hope for the best. They invest time and effort to find and combine several marketing channels best for reaching their customers. Spending thousands upon thousands for a 10-second advertisement on TV and hoping for the best might have worked in the past, but not anymore. (Levinson 2007, 8). The so called "heavy weapons" of marketing, such as TV or newspapers, might be out of reach for guerrillas, but using the vivid imagination they are known for, hundreds of weapons of marketing become available to them. Understanding how to properly choose and utilize those weapons is what makes or breaks a guerrilla marketer. (Levinson 2007, 10.)

**Creativity**

The non-traditional advertising tactics available to guerrillas are numerous and creativity is required to use them effectively (Bigat 2012, 1025). Shimp (2007, 481) brings up that imagination and creativity turn more or less any blank surface into advertisement space. This doesn't mean that by being creative, instant success awaits. Creativity in marketing can be a challenge of its own, since it should be measured based on how it increases overall profitability, not how many awards and recognitions it receives. Humor, which is often seen in guerrilla marketing campaigns, can be a risk and should be used carefully. Repetition helps with marketing but humor can become a hindrance. The aim of creativity in marketing should always be towards motivating sales and increasing status. (Levinson n.d.)

**Emotional appeal**

Guerrilla advertising often utilizes emotionally appealing approaches. It is possible because guerrillas understand the need to know their customers and so put great effort into consumer research and insight to plan effective methods to reach them. Cinnamon (2014, 26) refers to Lukic (2009) and Brown (2009) to pinpoint three distinct emotional approaches: fear, guilt and positive appeal. Fear and guilt can be used in advertisements aiming to change negative behaviors (e.g. neglecting safety regulations, smoking) in

consumers, while positive appeal can be seen in campaigns such as Dove's "True Beauty", which evoked strong feelings of confidence and optimism in its target group to increase the brand's emotional value. (Cinnamon 2014, 26.)

The use of emotional appeal should be carefully considered as it carries its own risks and ethical examination is required. The use of fear and guilt in advertisement can be especially difficult, as they evoke strong reactions, sometimes so negative they may leave the viewer anxious, stressed or upset or may be unintentionally seen by children. (Cinnamon 2014, 26.) If the public dislikes the advertisement, it may reduce both short and long-term effect of the ad. The ethicality of guerrilla advertising is measured by the consequences (Nathwani & Bhayani 2013, 440). Guerrillas should try to amaze their customers, not scare them (Levinson 2007, 50).

**Harnessing technology**

Technology has become an increasingly important platform for marketers to harness. Current trends and latest innovations can be used as a way for marketers to connect with their already existing customers, but also to find and catch the prospective ones. Levinson (2007, 88) believes that online marketing combines all of the important aspects needed in guerrilla advertising, especially interactivity between company and their customers. While internet can be a powerful platform for guerrillas, technology in general is available to them in many other ways to cleverly reach their targets, especially when combined with other methods. (Margolis & Garrigan 2008, 21–22.)

Finally, Levinson (1994, 3) emphasizes the importance of balance. Advertising alone is not a potent weapon, but treated as a part of marketing arsenal and combined with other marketing activities it becomes one of the irreplaceable aspects of guerrilla marketing.

## 3.3  Guerrilla advertising and branding

Guerrilla marketers seek to build strong and positive brand identities that reflects what they really are, not only what they want to be. A positive image in

the minds of their customers, derived from the brand identity, should be clear and free of confusion, consistent and effective at grabbing attention. Guerrillas try to use all aspects of their business to promote their identity because to them it is such a valuable asset. (Levinson & Lautenslager 2014, 92–93.)

Guerrillas specialize in building distinct brands that evoke emotional responses. Since consumers often make decisions based on their feelings, not stone cold logic, guerrillas try to reach them with features and benefits that speak to their emotions. Customers become emotionally tied to the brand and the threshold to refer and recommend gets lower. Brand such as Apple and Harley-Davidson did not become the giants they are today with advertisement alone. They got help from loyal customers spreading the word, gained by guerrilla marketing tactics. (Levinson & Lautenslager 2014, 95–96.)

A study by Dahlén, Friberg and Nilsson (2009, 124) comparing creative guerrilla and traditional media choices shows that brand associations are not perceived more strongly in creative media. This goes against a previous study conducted by Dahlén (2005) which shows that creative media approach yields more positive brand evaluations and enhanced brand associations than traditional media approach (Dahlén et. al. 2009, 121). Because only a few studies have been done to examine the subject, the truth of it is still unknown.

Still, to support guerrilla approach, the study also shows that brand association strength increased by a traditional advertising was lost a week after the media exposure whereas the association strength was as high immediately as after a week from exposure to creative media approach. This suggests that guerrilla advertising could be used to create stronger long-term brand associations. By applying the results to build on the earlier brand association learning theory, creative media can strengthen brand associations and make them more accessible even when consumers were not exposed to the brand but the creative media choice alone. (Dahlén et. al. 2009, 124–128.)

In another study by Prévot (2009, 38–39), guerrilla marketing strategies have a chance to affect brand equity in either a positive, neutral or negative way. A creative guerrilla campaign done right can have a positive effect on brand

equity in the minds of the customers, as positive experiences with the campaign can transfer as positivity towards the brand. An especially creative campaign has a chance to amaze those who see it, and this amazement is part of the intangible value that can be applied to a brand. Neutral effects are a result from the guerrilla campaign falling to deaf ears, as with traditional marketing. If the campaign relies on the power of free publicity, not being covered in the local media is a failure with no consequences. Negative effects are a result from a campaign taken too far and if ethical questions are not considered before launching the campaign. If guerrilla marketing ends up endangering or inconveniencing consumers, the effect on brand equity is negative.

# 4  Research implementation

To examine the causal effect of the guerrilla marketing campaign on brand associations' strength and favorability with the approach of experimental research strategy, the study participants were separated into two groups.

**Group A** consists of customers, who have seen and interacted with the guerrilla marketing campaign. They were asked to participate after seeing the campaign, more specifically once they were leaving the spot.

**Group B** consists of customers, who have *not* seen the guerrilla marketing campaign. These people were asked to participate in the study near the grocery store main entrance to prevent them from seeing the campaign before answering to avoid errors in the results.

Because the research was conducted in an environment that cannot be controlled by the researcher to minimize the effects the environment could have on the respondents, both groups were interviewed in the same grocery store during the same day and at indoor locations close to each other. This ensures that the conditions where the two groups were interviewed were as close to each other as possible.

## 4.1 Quantitative research

Roughly speaking, two research approaches are used to explain and measure a phenomenon: qualitative and quantitative. A qualitative approach is often used to research a topic that is not widely understood and needs more information to explain it as a phenomenon. A quantitative approach can be used to research something that is already known to prove the theory or to find new aspects of it and generalize it. (Kananen 2011, 12.)

Quantitative research is known as a flexible and logical method to provide mathematically analyzed numerical data to explain phenomenon. Large numbers of participants can be collected easily by many different means of data collection methods, such as questionnaires or surveys. (Introduction to quantitative research, 1–2.) To use the quantitative method, the researcher is required to have an understanding of the topic to be able to measure variables affecting the phenomenon. The variables are measured to generalize the phenomenon: this is often done by selecting a sample of participants from a total population, which should represent the population as well as possible. (Kananen 2011, 17.)

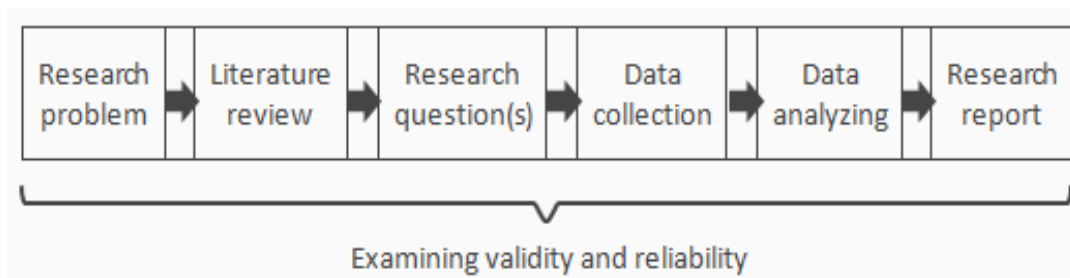The work flow of quantitative study is plainly described in Figure 1 below.



Figure 3. States of quantitative study (Adapted from Wise 2011; Kananen 2011, 119).

This study aimed at finding out how a new marketing approach can affect brand associations of a new product in the minds of the customers. A quantitative research approach was used to get numerical data that could be easily analyzed and reported to show the change in the participants' answers

between two groups. Quantitative research methods have been previously used to measure and explain brand associations successfully (see Keller 2012; Till, Baack & Waterman 2011, 95).

Quantitative data analysis procedures such as frequency distribution, cross-tabulation and classification were used to examine the differences between the two groups' answers. Classification was used to get numerical data out of the responses collected through open-ended questions.

### 4.1.1 Data collection

As quantitative research approach was used, numerical data was collected from the two groups by using a structured survey/ questionnaire. To make sure that the questions were understood properly, each answer filled in correctly and that answering would be as easy and quick as possible for the participants, the survey was led by the researcher. Now, while the data collection method could be considered a questionnaire, research theory states that if the interviewer leads and supervises the survey, it is considered an interview (Wilson 2010, 137). To make the reporting easier and to cut unnecessary workload, the survey was created by using the online questionnaire service Webropol (http://webropol.fi/) and the data was collected on a tablet computer directly to the online service. This removes the need to manually enter the answers to a database that a paper questionnaire requires and ensures that the questionnaire forms never run out while out in the field.

Because no extra interviewers were available to help with the data collection, only the researcher alone collected the answers. This reduced the overall amount of data collected, but in the end ensures that the survey was conducted correctly and that the participants were properly selected to avoid duplicate respondents and "polluted" answers.

**Questionnaire**

Because the study was held in a grocery store where customers could potentially be very busy and tired and may want to make the shopping experience as convenient and short as possible (Seiders, Berry & Gresham

2000), the questionnaire had to be as short and quick to answer as possible to get any respondents at all. Ease of answering and reduction of errors in filling in the answers were some of the criteria for choosing questionnaire/interview lead by the researcher as the data collection method.

The question items on the questionnaire were formed based on theoretical framework and previous studies to reflect and answer the research question, but the specific brand associations presented in the study were discussed and agreed on in co-operation during a phone call focused interview on Thursday 23rd of April with a representative from the partner company Makulaku, Ari Lindroos. The brand associations are based on both their brand identity and the marketing message the campaign was built on (domesticity, happiness, freshness and colorfulness) but three other extra associations related to the product category in one way or another (shelf life, low price and trendiness) were added to see if the marketing campaign could have an effect on associations not specifically communicated by the campaign or brand visuals. Because the company is not widely known and the product was new to the markets, it was also agreed on that while the second group would get to know the brand via the marketing campaign, the other group would be shown a single example product to base their answers on (see Figure 2). This product was also one of the three showcased at the campaign stand.



Figure 4. Picture of the product shown to the second group (Lakupussit, n.d.).

Since the study was conducted in Finland and aimed at local customers, the language of the questionnaire was Finnish. The results are presented and analyzed in English, so for clarity, the translated questionnaire items added to both tables and figures were used in the written results.

The questionnaire had eight different questionnaire items. The first item was to separate the two groups' answers in either Group A or Group B based on if they had seen the campaign or not and was only visible to the researcher. Rest of the questions were read out and explained to the participants as well as given in a paper form to make it easier to understand and answer. The paper version of the questionnaire was slightly modified to ensure that even participants with poorer eyesight could see the questions and choices. (See appendix A to see the web questionnaire used by the researcher and appendix B to see the paper version given to the participants.)

## 4.1.2 Sampling

Sampling techniques can be separated into two categories: probability/random and non-probability/non-random sampling. Random sampling gives every item in the population equal chance of being included in the sample while with non-random sampling, the probability of each item being selected from the population is not known. (Wilson 2010, 194–198.) In quantitative research, having numerical data about the population in question is important in planning the sampling method (Kananen 2011, 65).

Due to the study being conducted at a chain grocery store during a single day, details about the population to be used to select a sample were not available. Getting a truly random sample from the population would be difficult without this information and the sample size gathered during the day would end up too small to make any sorts of generalizations without a large margin of error. Because of this difficulty, the small size of the population and the need to interview a very specific group of individuals (those who have seen the guerrilla marketing campaign and those who haven't) in a short amount of time, a combination of purposive or judgmental and convenience sampling

was used to ensure that the sample size was big enough and that the participants were part of the specific group in question.

Convenience sampling is a non-random sampling strategy where the participants are chosen with ease of access in mind. For example, to interview students from a large university by using convenience sampling, the researcher could choose to stand at the main entrance of the school to invite the passing students to participate in the study. The pros of convenience sampling are low costs, low time requirement to get a sufficient sample and the possibility of conducting a study without having information about the population. On the other hand, convenience sampling suffers from biases, such as under- or over-representation of particular groups and difficulty of determining if the sample is representative of the population, making generalization difficult. (Convenience sampling, 2012.)

Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental sampling, is a group of non-random sampling strategies with the shared purpose of choosing a very specific group of participants to best enable getting the right answers to the research questions. As with convenience sampling, the purposive sample strategy is prone to bias when it comes to representation of the whole population or if the participants have not been chosen according to a very specific criteria. (Purposive sampling, 2012.)

In this study, convenience sampling was used to select participants to both of the study groups, but the strategy of purposive sampling was borrowed to select those specific individuals who visibly saw and engaged with the guerrilla marketing campaign to the second group in the study. Convenience and purposive sampling strategies have also been used in previous guerrilla marketing studies (see Wanner 2011; Dahlén, Friberg & Nilsson 2009).

## 4.2 Reliability and validity of the study

All scientific studies must be evaluated in terms of reliability and validity to ensure that the study is plausible. Especially in quantitative research, assuring that the study is objective and sound is an important step in both planning and

implementation. Validity and reliability both refer to the soundness of the study, but shortly put, validity refers to measuring and studying the right things while keeping the objectives of the study in mind and reliability ensures, that the study can be repeated with same or similar results. (Kananen 2011, 118; Kananen 2010, 128.) Accurate conceptual and operational definitions are the keys to reliability and validity. Without reliability there cannot be validity, but reliability alone is not sufficient (Reliability or validity, 2010).

**Reliability**

Järvinen (2012, 155) quoting Gummeson (1988) states, that reliability ensures that if multiple researchers study the same phenomenon with a similar approach, the results will be approximately the same. The results should not be due to chance alone. In theory, to ensure the reliability of the study, it can be repeated at a later point to see if the results match. Truthfully, in many cases a repeated study would be hard to carry out and in time the phenomenon could change (Kananen 2010, 129). Reliability can be increased by clearly documenting and defining all steps of the study, but by also being accurate in all aspects of the study to reduce the chance of errors and mistakes (Reliability and validity, 2010).

While reliability in research can be hard to accurately prove, all necessary steps involved in making a proper quantitative research were taken during this study. Each step was planned beforehand and documented to ensure, that the study could be repeated as accurately as possible.

**Validity**

A study can be considered valid, if it measures the right thing and the results can be generalized to the specific population used in the sampling (Kananen 2011, 121). Validity can be improved by making sure that the research questions and objectives are defined and understood clearly and that the measure used are related to them (Wilson 2010, 122). In research design, validity can be separated into internal and external validity. Internal refers to the validity of sampling, measurement and procedures used in the study and

external to the possibility of generalization of the results. Without internal validity, there is no external validity (Reliability and validity, 2010.)

Theoretical framework and previous studies were used to form the questions presented in the survey. The study was narrowed down to examine a very specific topic and extra care was taken when forming the questions to make sure that they would give answers to the right thing. The questionnaire was checked by an instructor and adjusted based on their feedback, and tested on several people from both academic and non-academic backgrounds.

To ensure that the participants of the study were not "polluted" by the questionnaire and to get honest, spontaneous answers, each individual participated only once into either of the study groups depending if they had seen the campaign or not, never both.

Due to the low amount of answers collected in combination with the researcher bias from convenience and judgmental sampling, wide generalizations of the phenomenon are not possible. The results are only applicable to the specific store in question. Data about the population of the specific store on a specific day was not available.  A larger study with several marketing campaign in various locations would give better, more valid results to generalize.

# 5  Results

The results are first introduced separately between the two groups and then compared to each other to see if the guerrilla campaign had any effects on the second groups' anwers.

## 5.1 Group A

Group A consists of respondents who saw and interacted with the guerrilla advertising campaign. In all, thirty people participated in the Group A study.

Table 1. Age and gender of Group A participants.

| Ikä (age) N= | Mies (man) 15 % | Nainen (woman) 15 % | Total 30 % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 20-29 | 27 | 53 | 40 |
| 30-39 | 40 | 13 | 27 |
| 40-49 | 13 | 7 | 10 |
| 50-59 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| 60-69 | 7 | 20 | 13 |
| 70-79 | 7 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |

An equal number of men (50 %) and women (50 %) participated in the study. Well over half of all the respondents were between the ages 20 and 39 (67 %). A fifth (20 %) of all the female respondents were over (the age of) 60.

Table 2. Recall of the brand in Group A.

| Onko Makulaku entuudestaan tuttu? Jos on, miten? (Are you familiar with Makulaku? If yes, how?) N= | Mies (man) 15 % | Nainen (woman) 15 % | Total 30 % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ei (No) | 73 | 20 | 47 |
| Kyllä, nimenä (Yes, name only) | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Kyllä, olen kokeillut tuotetta (Yes, I've tried their product) | 13 | 73 | 43 |
| Kyllä, muu, miten? (Yes, other, specify) | 7 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| "Yes, other " response: Metrilakuna tuttu (familiar as Metrilaku) | | | |

For slightly more than a half of all the respondents (53 %) the brand was previously familiar before the study. The brand was especially familiar to female respondents (80 %) whereas a majority of men (73 %) did not know

the brand beforehand. Slightly less than half of all the respondents (43 %) had tried their product beforehand, possibly associating it with Metrilaku as a result of the advertising campaign
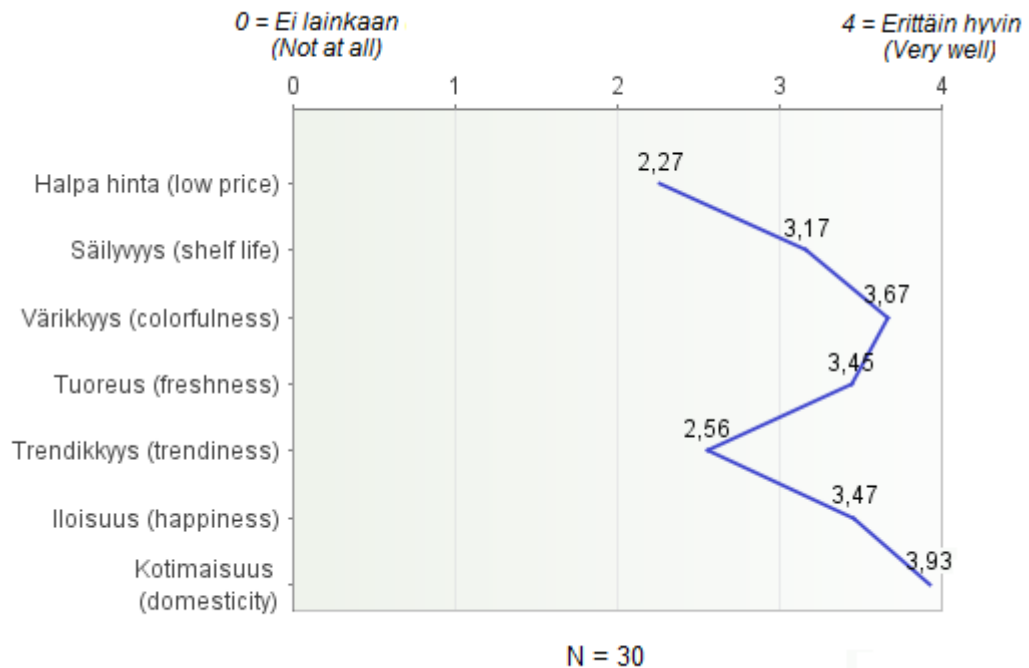
**Brand associations**



Figure 5. Strength of associations, all participants in Group A.

The participants were asked to rate how well the given features describe their image of the brand. Domesticity was rated especially high (3,93), as well as colorfulness (3,67). Freshness (3,45) and happiness (3,47) were also both rated very high. Low price was rated the lowest (2,27) which implies that the brand is seen as more expensive, possibly higher quality. The results show that the strength of all the associations included and advertised in the guerrilla campaign were very high immediately after the campaign.
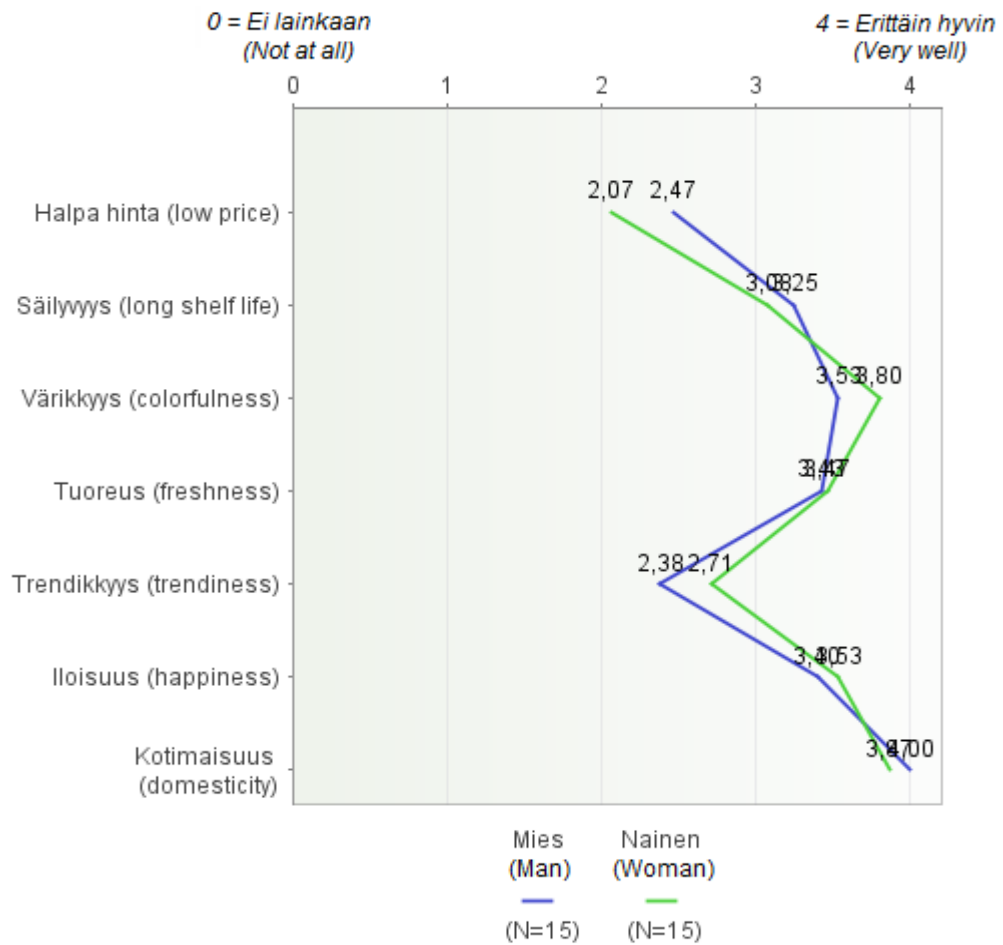
Figure 6. Strength of associations, men and women in Group A.

When it comes to the strength of brand associations between the two genders, no big differences can be seen. The results are very similar to Figure 5. However, the female respondents saw colorfulness, freshness, trendiness and happiness as a slightly better description of their image of the brand, while the male respondents rated low price, long shelf life and domesticity slightly higher.
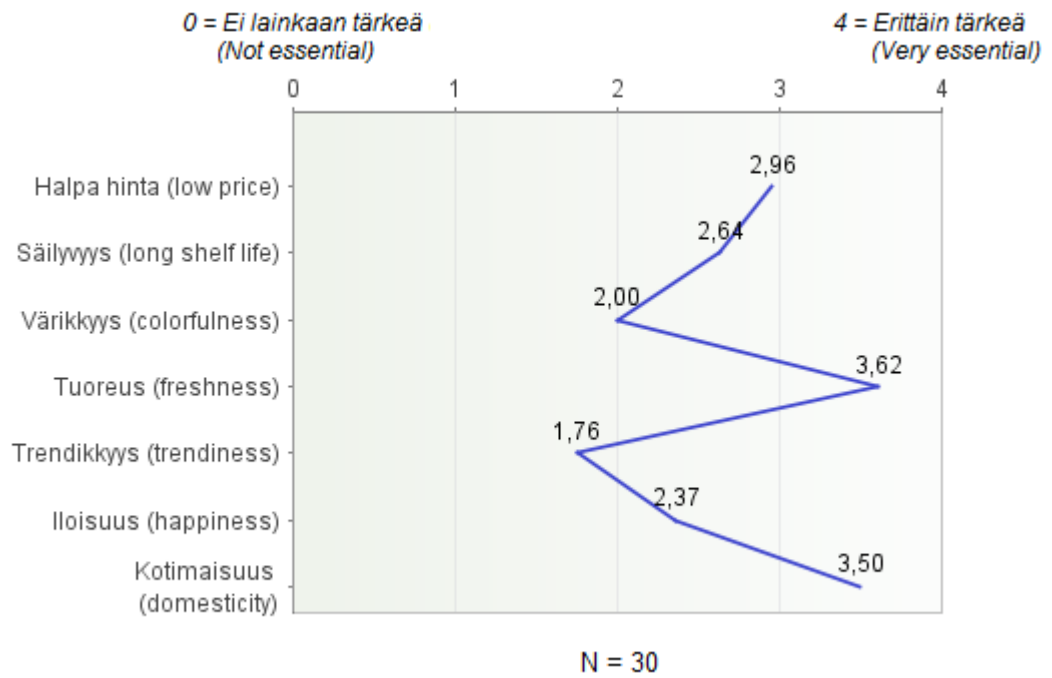
Figure 7. Favorability of associations. all participants in Group A.

For the next question, the participants were asked to rate how important the given features are to them when it comes to selecting and buying liquorice confectionaries. Freshness was rated as the most essential (3,62), followed by domesticity (3,50) which were both rated much higher than the other features. Trendiness was seen as the least essential feature (1,76), somewhat lower than colorfulness (2,00).
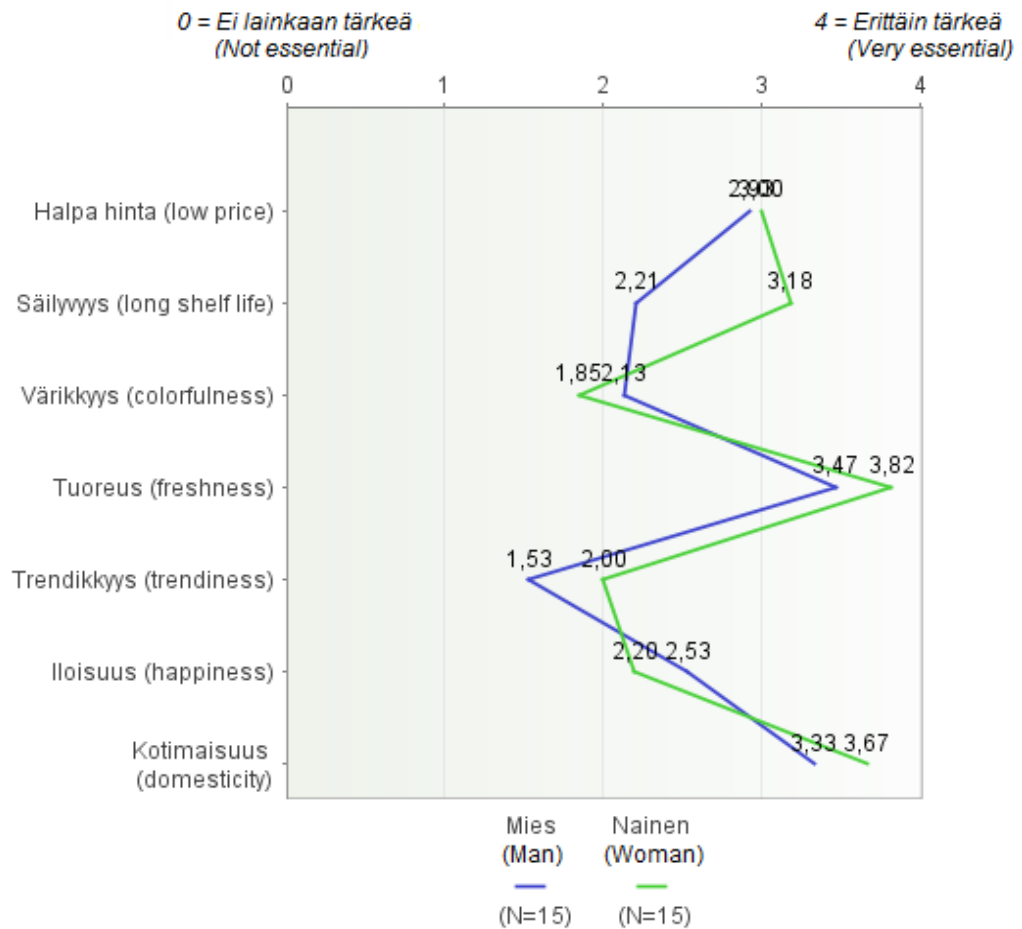
Figure 8. Favorability of associations. all participants in Group A.

For the most part, no great differences between men and women can be seen with the exception of long shelf life. The female respondents rated long shelf life as more essential (3,18) than the male respondents (2,21). This could be due to the differences between genders in how quickly the confectionaries are eaten after purchase or if they are stored for future use.

Table 3. The two most important features in Group A.

| Mitä edellämainituista ominaisuuksista pidät kahtena tärkeimpänä? (Which of the following are the two most important features?) | Tärkein (most important) | Toiseksi tärkein (second most important) |
|---|---|---|
| N= | 30 % | 30 % |
| Halpa hinta (low price) | 23 | 20 |
| Säilyvyys (long shelf life) | 3 | 3 |
| Värikkyys (colorfulness) | 0 | 7 |
| Tuoreus (freshness) | 47 | 37 |
| Iloisuus (happiness) | 7 | 0 |
| Kotimaisuus (domesticity) | 20 | 33 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

The respondents were asked to choose the two most important features of liquorice confectionaries from a given list. Freshness was the top pick for approximately 47 % (n=30) of all the respondents as the most important feature as well as the second most important for 36 % (n=30). Other features seen as important for about a fifth of the respondents were low price and the domesticity of the product (20-33%).

Table 4. Free associations of Group A.

| Categories of words | Amount of words in the category |
|---|---|
| N= | 35 |
| Markkinat ja tapahtumat (trade fairs and events) | 6 |
| Maku (taste) | 8 |
| Kevät (spring) | 5 |
| Metrilaku | 4 |
| Värikkyys (colorfulness) | 4 |
| Kotimaisuus (domesticity) | 2 |
| Iloisuus (happiness) | 5 |
| Muu (other) | 1 |
| Total | 35 |

The respondents were asked to describe the brand with 1-2 words of their own choice. The responses were classified into eight categories that best

described the results. All of the un-categorized responses can be seen in Appendix 3. All of the words given were positive. The largest grouping of words was related to *taste* (8 words, N=35) followed by words describing *trade fairs* and *events* (6 words, n=35). *Happiness* and *spring* are also noted somewhat often (5 words, n=35). All of the un-categorized words from Group A can be seen in appendix 3.

## 5.2 Group B

The respondents in Group B did not see the guerilla advertising campaign, but were shown the brand logo and one of the new products to base their answers on. Eighteen people participated in the Group B study. Lower number of participants resulted from some customers refusing to take part in the study.

Table 5. Age and gender of Group B participants.

| Ikä (age) N= | Mies (man) 10 | Nainen (woman) 8 | Total 18 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % |
| 20-29 | 50 | 63 | 56 |
| 30-39 | 20 | 13 | 17 |
| 50-59 | 0 | 13 | 6 |
| 60-69 | 30 | 13 | 22 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Less age groups are seen in Group B. Male and female respondents are almost half and half (55 % and 44 %, n=18). More than half of all respondents (56 %) are aged between 20 and 29. About a fifth (22 %) are aged from 60 upwards and consist mostly of men (30 %).

Table 6. Recall of the brand in Group B.

| Onko Makulaku entuudestaan tuttu?<br>Jos on, miten?<br>(Are you familiar with Makulaku?<br>If yes, how?)<br>N= | Mies<br>(man)<br>10<br>% | Nainen<br>(woman)<br>8<br>% | Total<br>18<br>% |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ei (no) | 90 | 50 | 72 |
| Kyllä, nimenä (yes, name only) | 0 | 25 | 11 |
| Kyllä, olen kokeillut tuotetta (yes, I've tried their product) | 10 | 13 | 11 |
| Kyllä, muu, miten? (yes, other, specify) | 0 | 13 | 6 |
| **Total** | **100** | **100** | **100** |
| **"Yes, other" response: Metrilakuna tuttu (Familiar as Metrilaku)** | | | |

When asked if Makulaku was previously familiar to the respondents, a large majority (72 %) had never heard of the brand. An especially large part of men were unaware of the brand (90 %) and had never heard of the name while a half of all female respondents (50 %) had heard of it or tried the product before. A very small amount (6 %) associated the product with Metrilaku.
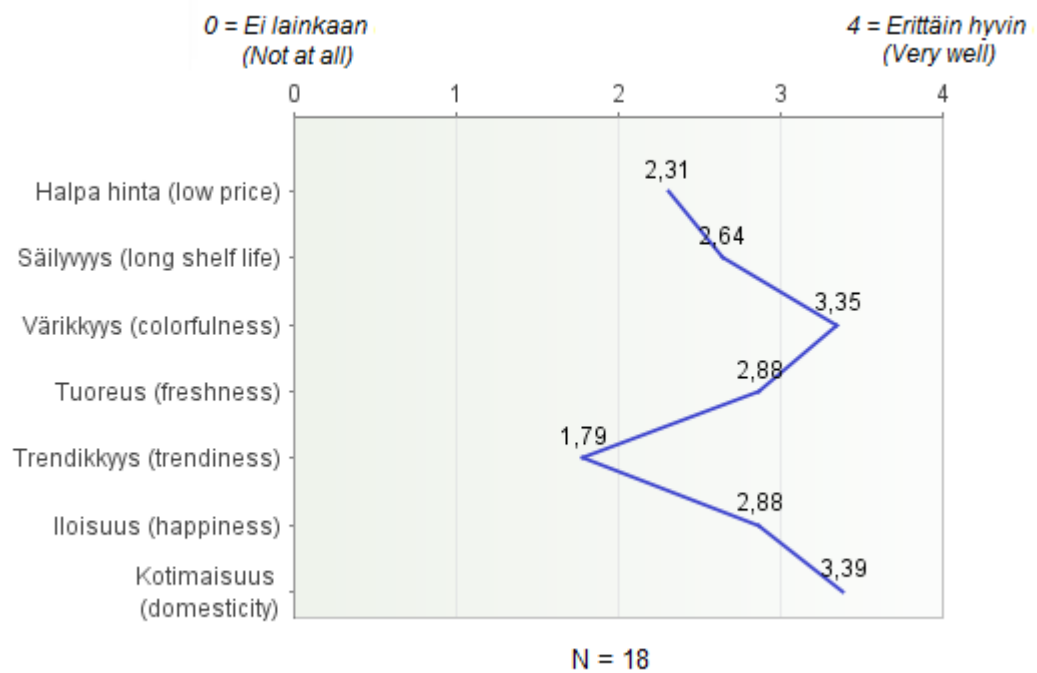
**Brand associations**



Figure 9. Strength of associations, all participants in Group B.

As in Group A, the participants were asked to rate how well the given features describe their image of the brand. Domesticity (3,39) and colorfulness (3,35) were rated the highest. Freshness and happiness (2,88) were also rated as somewhat fitting. Trendiness was rated the lowest at 1,79.
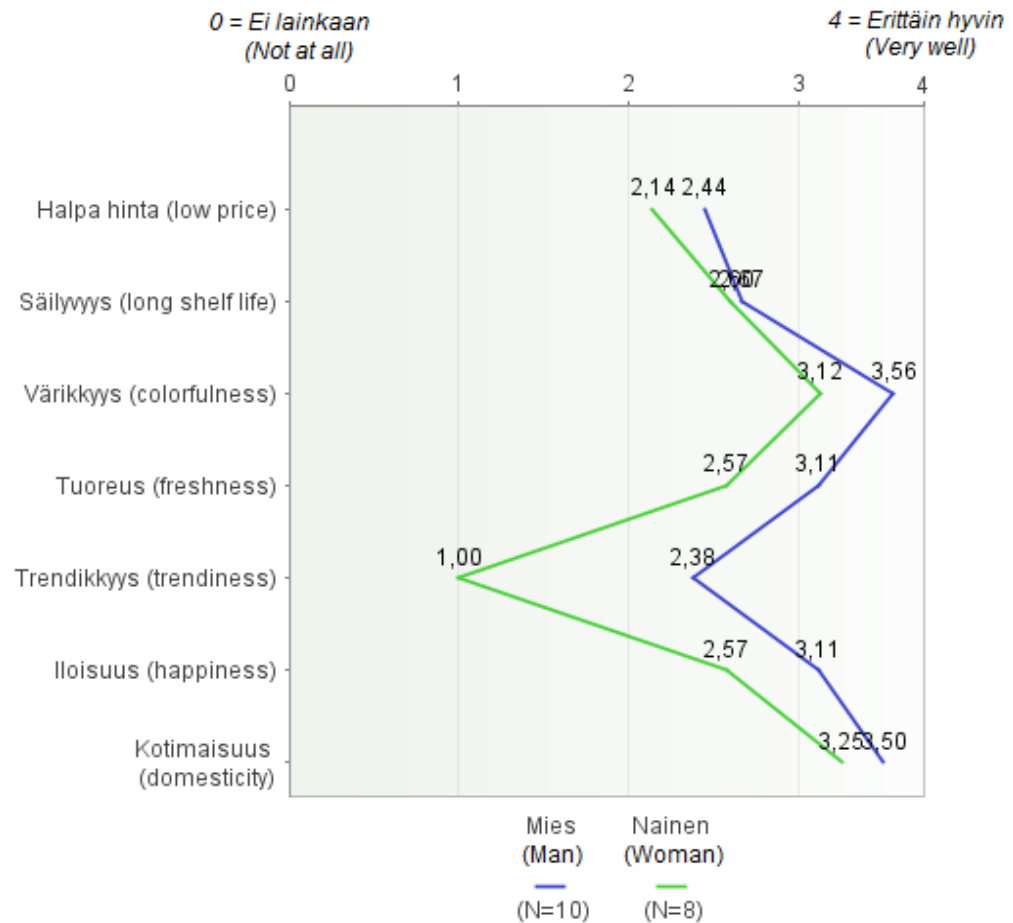
Figure 10. Strength of associations, men/women in Group B.

In Figure 10, some differences between the genders can be seen when judging the strength of the associations. The female respondents of Group B rated all the features lower than men, especially trendiness at only 1,00, which is significantly lower than the male average (2,38). This means that the women saw all the features as less fitting for the brand. The male respondents rated colorfulness (3,56) and domesticity (3,50) both very high, which were also the highest rated features for the female respondents.
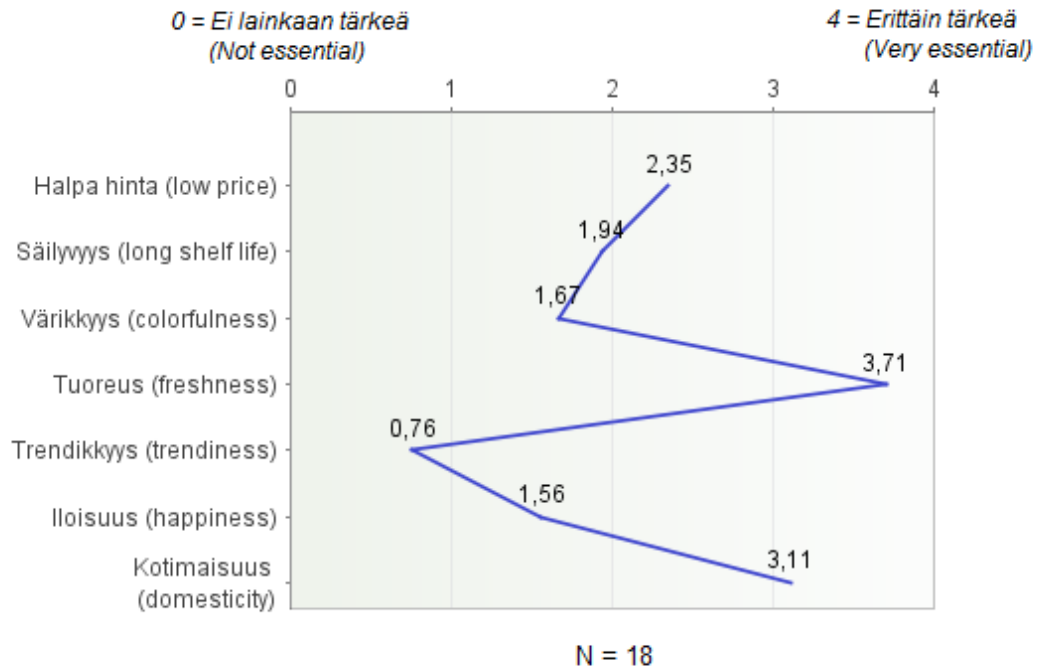
Figure 11. Favorability of associations, all participants in Group B.

Variation in the results can be seen in Figure 11, which shows how essential the given features were when selecting and purchasing liquorice confectionaries in Group B. Freshness was seen as the most essential feature (3,71) while trendiness was rated especially low (0,76). Other than freshness and domesticity (3,11), the overall ratings for the features were very low. This implies that the features were not seen as very desirable.
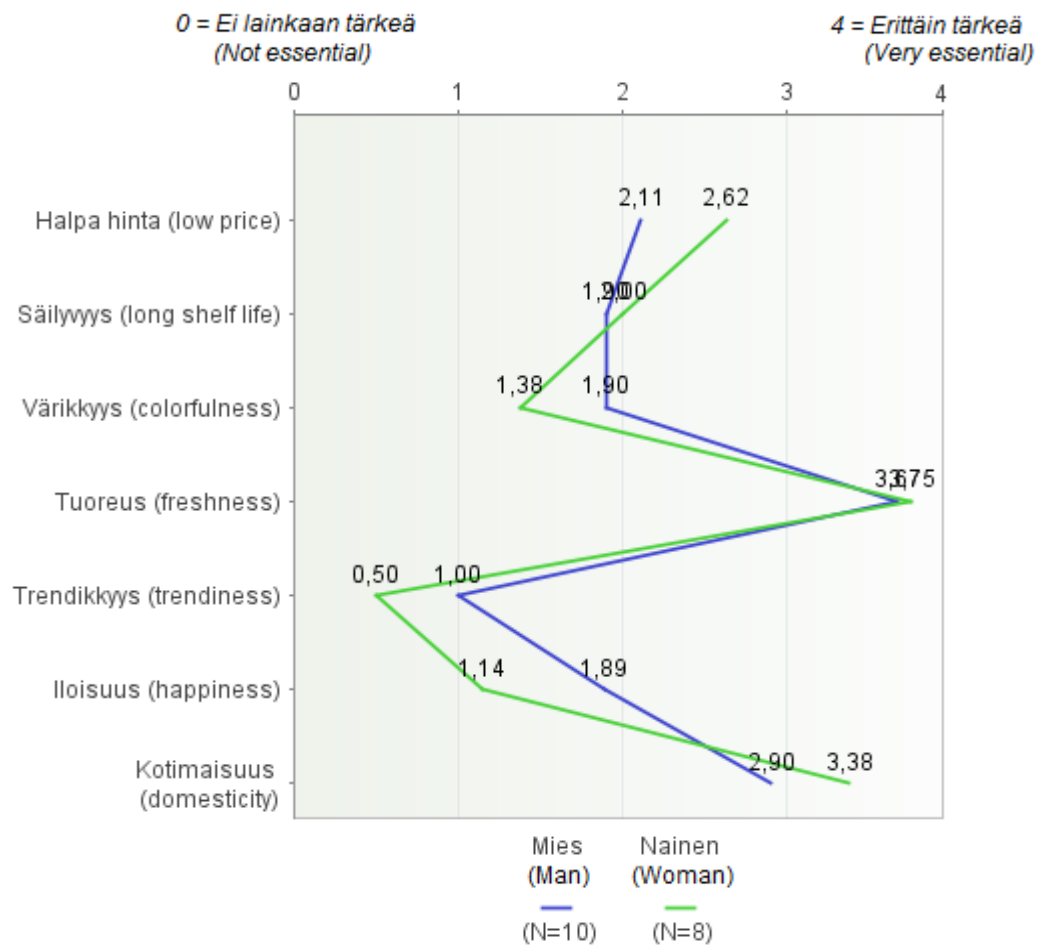
Figure 12. Favorability of associations, men/ women in Group B.

Trendiness was seen as the least essential feature for both genders, but especially women rated it extremely low (0,50). The female respondents rated everything except low price, freshness and domesticity as less favorable than men. Freshness was the most essential feature of liquorice confectionaries for both genders.

Table 7. The two most important features in Group B.

| Mitä edellämainituista ominaisuuksista pidät kahtena tärkeimpänä? (Which of the following are the two most important features?) | Tärkein (most important) | Toiseksi tärkein (second most important) |
|---|---|---|
| N= | 18 | 18 |
| | % | % |
| Halpa hinta (low price) | 17 | 17 |
| Värikkyys (colorfulness) | 0 | 6 |
| Tuoreus (freshness) | 56 | 22 |
| Kotimaisuus (domesticity) | 28 | 56 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

When asked to choose two of the most important features for liquorice confectionaries, responses from Group B had less variability. However, similarly to Group A, over half (56 %) of respondents chose freshness as the most important feature. Similar numbers are seen for domesticity as the second most important feature (56 %). Just a small amount (17 %) chose low price over other features.

Table 8. Free associations of Group B.

| Categories of words | Amount of words in the category |
|---|---|
| N= | 24 |
| Markkinat ja tapahtumat (trade fairs and events) | 3 |
| Maku (taste) | 2 |
| Kevät (spring) | 1 |
| Metrilaku | 4 |
| Värikkyys (colorfulness) | 5 |
| Kotimaisuus (domesticity) | 3 |
| Muu (other) | 6 |
| Total | 24 |

As with Group A, the respondents of Group B were asked to describe the brand with 1-2 words of their own choosing. The words were categorized as with Group A, but due to differences in answers 7 categories out of 8 were used in the table. The group of words related to *happiness* seen in Table 4 describing the results from Group A is completely missing in the answers from

Group B. Some of the words from Group B categorized as *other*, which had the most words out of all other categories (6 words, n=24), had slightly negative connotations (e.g cheap laxative). Compared to Group A, words describing *taste* and *trade fairs* and *events* are very few (2 and 3 words, n=24), while colorfulness is mentioned more often (5 words, n=24). All of the un-categorized words from Group B can be seen in appendix 3.
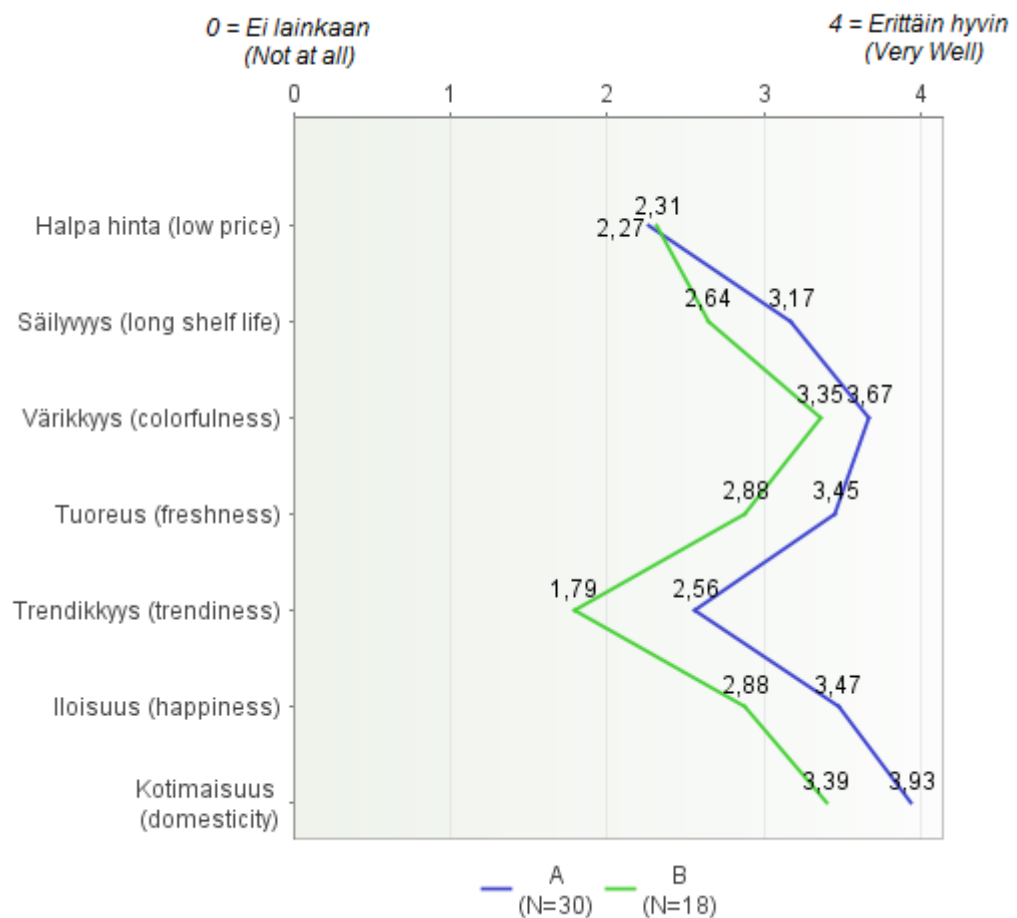
## 5.3 Changes in association strength and favorability



Figure 13. Strength of Makulaku brand associations

Noticeable differences between the two groups can be seen in the perception of how well the brand associations fit the brand. Almost all of the associations are perceived as stronger in Group A with the exception of the low price (2.27), meaning that the brand is seen as slightly more of a premium brand in Group A. Domesticity is the strongest association in both groups, with Group A perceiving it extremely strong (3.93). The biggest difference between the

two groups' answers can be seen in trendiness, where the average has increased by 0.77. The guerrilla marketing campaign clearly had a positive impact on the strength of the brand associations, especially those reinforced by the campaign (domesticity, happiness, freshness and colorfulness).
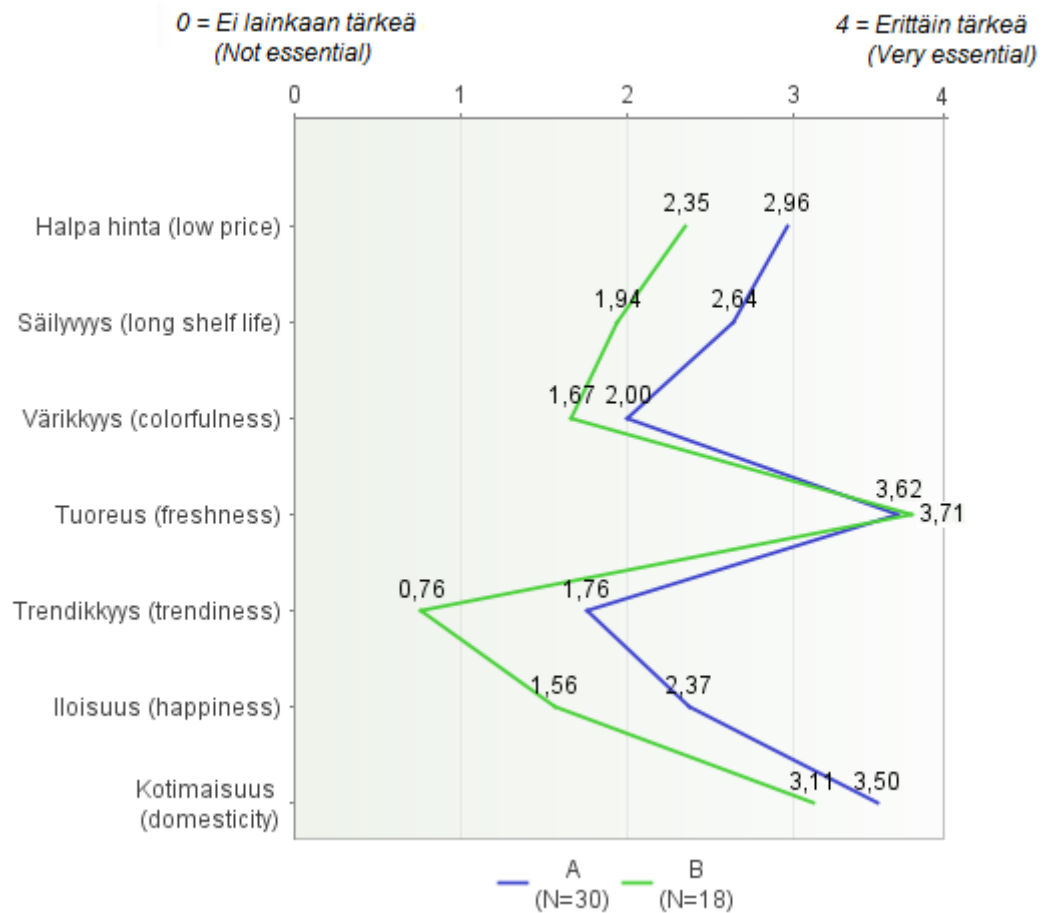


Figure 14. Favorability of liquorice confectionary brand associations.

As with associations' strength, differences between the two groups are also clearly visible in associations' favorability. Both groups judged freshness as an essential feature for liquorice confectionaries with Group B rating it minimally higher (3,71). All the other features were perceived as more essential in Group A, the biggest difference at trendiness (1,00) similarly to Figure 13. The results show that guerrilla advertising campaign also affected the desirability of the associations in the product category in general.

# 6  Conclusions

The study was set out to find if guerrilla advertising could be used to effectively change the strength and favorability of a new brand's associations and whether it could be used as a meaningful teaching tool for students of marketing communications. Not much is known about the phenomenon, as guerrilla marketing is still a relatively new term and its meaning is often misunderstood among marketers.

The results are very promising. When the two groups are compared, almost every association was perceived as significantly stronger and more favorable after the guerrilla advertising campaign, even the associations not directly related to the campaign. The overall positivity of answers was higher in Group A. Free associations in Group A also showed more uniformity and positivity, whereas answers in Group B were more spread out and had slightly negative connotations. All of this supports the earlier studies by Dahlén (2005, 2009) which claim that creative media choices comparable to guerrilla advertising strategies are especially effective in brand association communications, as well as Prévot's (2009) findings about positive effects as a result of a successful and creative campaign.

All in all, the results indicate that the guerrilla advertising campaign had an immediate positive effect on how well the brand associations fit their image of the brand and how important the associations are to them in the product category. The campaign also successfully built a connection between Makulaku and Metrilaku, as more people in Group A associated the brand with words that describe Metrilaku directly or indirectly.

Whether the changes in the associations were affected for only a short moment, or if the campaign had a more long term effect remains unknown. A separate study examining the changes in associations for a longer period of time is needed to prove if the campaign had a more lasting effect on the consumers. Differences could also be found if the study was repeated with a brand that is previously familiar to consumers, unlike Makulaku. Also, further studies in different environments, products or services and with different

guerrilla advertising strategies are required to compare the findings and to reliably generalize the phenomenon.

As the campaign was a success in terms of affecting brand associations and in so brand equity, it could be a motivating task for future students of marketing communications to work on. The group of students working at the campaign put great effort into succeeding and worked hard to achieve results and profit. The study wouldn't have been possible without their co-operation.

For Makulaku, adding creative guerrilla aspects into their marketing mix could prove beneficial in raising the value and awareness of their brand. The low-cost nature of guerrilla tactics is also an additional benefit. Using a positive emotional approach in combination with creative tactics has the potential to communicate the brand values to consumers.

**Discussion**

Conducting the study proved to be a challenge of its own. Data collection was significantly easier for Group A, as the respondents had time to stop both for the campaign stand and the survey questions. Group B had fewer respondents due to a big portion of customers declining the study invitation. This combined with the tight schedule of only one day for gathering answers, collection work done by the author alone and the campaign location being at a grocery store where customers are often tired or busy greatly reduced the overall number of gathered answers. A longer period of time and more interviewers are required to gather more data for a better understanding of the subject and for more reliable results.

As the amount of data is low, wide generalizations cannot be reliably made. The results are only applicable for similar guerrilla campaigns in similar environments. The chance of the environment affecting the results was minimized as best as possible, but cannot be completely removed.

While a guerrilla marketing campaign used as a teaching tool for business students offers a lot of opportunities and potential for highly creative and unique campaigns, due to many different factors such as the location and time

limitations, the Makulaku campaign ended up being closer to a more traditional promotion stand than creative guerrilla advertising. It did not have the emotional impact a creative guerrilla campaign should have. The flash mob part of the campaign had a lot of potential to amaze customers not used to seeing them in a grocery store environment, but because the public announcement failed to be delivered properly across the store systems, it only ended up causing confusion among customers and failed to deliver the message. The results of truly creative advertising could be even more positive and long lasting.

If a similar course exercise is repeated, the subject could be studied again with a different approach. Hopefully by then, the campaigns can be truly creative guerrilla marketing.

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# Appendice

## Appendix 1. Study questionnaire, web version.



**MakuLaku 2015- tutkimus**

**1. A vai B**

A = Sissimainontaa nähneet B = Ei sissimainontaa

○ A ○ B

**2. Ikä ja sukupuoli?**

[ Valitse ▾ ] ○ Mies ○ Nainen

**3. Onko MakuLaku entuudestaan tuttu? Jos on, miten?**

○ Ei ○ Kyllä, nimenä ○ Kyllä, olen kokeillut tuotetta ○ Kyllä, muu [_____]

**4. Kuinka hyvin seuraavat ominaisuudet kuvaavat MakuLakusta saamaasi mielikuvaa?**

**0** = Ei lainkaan  **4** = Erittäin hyvin

|  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | En osaa sanoa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Halpa hinta | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Säilyvyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Värikkyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Tuoreus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Trendikkyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Iloisuus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Kotimaisuus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**5. Kuinka tärkeiksi koet seuraavat lakumakeisten ominaisuudet?**

**0** = Ei lainkaan tärkeä  **4** = Erittäin tärkeä

|  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | En osaa sanoa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Halpa hinta | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Säilyvyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Värikkyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Tuoreus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Trendikkyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Iloisuus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Kotimaisuus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**6. Mitä edellämainituista ominaisuuksista pidät kahtena tärkeimpänä?**

|  | Tärkein | Toiseksi tärkein |
|---|---|---|
| Halpa hinta | ○ | ○ |
| Säilyvyys | ○ | ○ |
| Värikkyys | ○ | ○ |
| Tuoreus | ○ | ○ |
| Trendikkyys | ○ | ○ |
| Iloisuus | ○ | ○ |
| Kotimaisuus | ○ | ○ |

**7. Kuvaile 1 - 2 sanalla mitä MakuLakusta tulee ensimmäisenä mieleen:**

[ Lähetä ]

# Appendix 2. Study questionnaire, paper version.

## MakuLaku 2015 -tutkimus

**1. Ikä ja sukupuoli?**

**2. Onko MakuLaku entuudestaan tuttu? Jos on, miten?**

○ Ei  ○ Kyllä, nimenä  ○ Kyllä, olen kokeillut tuotetta  ○ Kyllä, muu

**3. Kuinka hyvin seuraavat ominaisuudet kuvaavat MakuLakusta saamaasi mielikuvaa?**
**0 = Ei lainkaan   4 = Erittäin hyvin**

|  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | En osaa sanoa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Halpa hinta | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Säilyvyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Värikkyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Tuoreus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Trendikkyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Iloisuus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Kotimaisuus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**4. Kuinka tärkeiksi koet seuraavat lakumakeisten ominaisuudet?**
**0 = Ei lainkaan tärkeä   4 = Erittäin tärkeä**

|  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | En osaa sanoa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Halpa hinta | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Säilyvyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Värikkyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Tuoreus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Trendikkyys | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Iloisuus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Kotimaisuus | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**5. Mitä edellämainituista ominaisuuksista pidät kahtena tärkeimpänä?**

|  | Tärkein | Toiseksi tärkein |
|---|---|---|
| Halpa hinta | ○ | ○ |
| Säilyvyys | ○ | ○ |
| Värikkyys | ○ | ○ |
| Tuoreus | ○ | ○ |
| Trendikkyys | ○ | ○ |
| Iloisuus | ○ | ○ |
| Kotimaisuus | ○ | ○ |

**6. Kuvaile 1 - 2 sanalla mitä MakuLakusta tulee ensimmäisenä mieleen:**

# Appendix 3. Free association results for both groups (in finnish).

| Group A | Group B | Miehet | Naiset |
|---|---|---|---|
| Markkinat | Markkinat | Markkinat | Hyvä maku |
| Markkinat | Messut | Lontoonrae | Lontoonrae |
| Messut | Markkinat | Värikkyys | Eksoottinen ja maukas |
| Rautatieasema herkku | Sokeri | Hyvä mieli | Nam |
| Myyntikojut | Hyvää | Värikkyys | Kesä |
| Metrilakukauppiaat | Kevät | Sokeri | Karkki missä muutkin |
| Hyvä maku | Laku | Värikkyys | Maistuva |
| Maistuva | Metrilaku | Kotimaisuus | Makea |
| Nam | Metrilaku namnam | Metrilakukauppiaat | Kotimaisuus |
| Eksoottinen ja maukas | Markkinoilla myytävät metrilakut | Rautatieasema herkku | Markkinoilla myytävät metrilakut |
| Makea | Värikkyys | Vappu | Maukas |
| Herkullisuus | Keltainen | Messut | Vadelmasalmiakki |
| Maukas | Värikkyys | Metrilaku | Laku |
| Vadelmasalmiakki | Värikäs pakkaus | Hauskuus | Messut |
| Vappu | Pirteä ulkomuoto | Hyvää | Kevät |
| Kesä | Kotimaisuus | Nuoruus | Värikäs pakkaus |
| Kevät | Suomalaisuus | Iloinen | Iloinen |
| Kevät ja vappu | Suomalaista lakua | Myyntikojut | Kevät ja vappu |
| Kevät ja vappu | Tuoreus | Kevät | Kevät ja vappu |
| Metrilaku | Lapset | Metrilaku | Iloinen |
| Metrilaku | Karkki missä muutkin | Markkinat | Herkullisuus |
| Metrilaku | Lontoonrae | Metrilaku | Suomalaista lakua |
| Laku | Lontoonrae | Metrilaku | Pirteä ulkomuoto |
| Värikäs | Halppis laksatiivi | Metrilaku namnam | Suomalaisuus |
| Värikäs | | Halppis laksatiivi | Markkinat |
| Värikkyys | | Markkinat | Värikäs |
| Värit | | Tuoreus | Lapset |
| Kotimaisuus | | Suomalainen | Värikäs |
| Suomalainen | | Keltainen | Värit |
| Hyvä mieli | | Laku | |
| Iloinen | | | |
| Iloinen | | | |
| Iloinen | | | |
| Hauskuus | | | |
| Nuoruus | | | |