

Creating a brand identity for a new mattress brand

Case: Napsie by Studio Moderna

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<p>Description</p> <p>The aim of this thesis was to study the concept of brand identity and its elements in order to outline a basic brand identity for the case brand. The study was conducted for the case company Studio Moderna and the case brand Napsie. The aim of the research was to study the concepts of brand, branding and brand identity. Furthermore, the research aimed at examining managerial tools and techniques that are used in brand identity creation process. Another aim of the research was to discover how a strong brand identity can contribute to brand awareness and success of the brand. The research questions were the following: What is brand identity and what are its main elements? Which tools and techniques can be used to create brand identity? How brand identity can help to increase brand awareness? What is a basic brand identity of a Napsie brand?</p> <p>The literature review consists of theory on concepts of brand, brand identity, brand personality. The research was qualitative with action research as a primary data collection method and interviews as source of primary data. Secondary data was collected through benchmarking. Miles and Huberman's three steps flow model was used to analyse the data.</p> <p>The results of the research provide an outline for basic brand identity of the case brand. The basic brand identity was presented with Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism model. Brand personality was outlined with Aaker's Brand Personality Scale Model and Mark & Pearson's Brand Archetypes System. Brand verbal identity was established and presented as a guideline for brand tone of voice and brand vocabulary. Based on the results and research findings, recommendations for future research on brand image have been made.</p>		
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1 Introduction

The world of marketing is changing dynamically, creating challenges for managing brands in new, transforming conditions. "Branding has become a top priority for companies due to the realization that brands are one of the most valuable intangible assets a company can have" (Keller & Lehmann 2006, 2). According to the definition, brand is "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition" (Keller 2003, 3). A brand is a marketer's promise to deliver a consistent set of features, benefits and services to the customer. Individual brand elements mentioned in the definition can be referred to as brand identities that serve to identify and differentiate the brand. (Keller, 2003.)

Building brands is a challenging process nowadays due to internal and external pressure and barriers such as consistency across markets and media, price competition and a rapid increase of players in various product categories. Although building a brand is not easy, by developing a brand identity that conveys the essence of the brand, building a strong brand is very possible. (Aaker,1996.)

According to David Aaker (1996, 68), brand identity is "a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain. These associations represent what the brand stands for and imply a promise to customers from the organization members". The purpose of brand identity is to establish relationships between the brand and its customers by generating a value proposition that consists of functional, emotional or self-expressive benefits. Creation of brand identity is considered as the first step towards building a strong brand because "it provides strategic direction, purpose and meaning for the brand" (Aaker 1996, 68). A strong brand identity helps companies to set their brands apart from competitors; it enables customers to connect to the brand both visually and emotionally and overall makes the brand memorable and identifiable (Aaker, 1996). By fueling recognition,

brand identity helps to raise brand awareness and customer loyalty, which in turn helps to make the company more successful and profitable over time (Wheeler 2012, 11).

This thesis aims to investigate the concept of brand identity and its elements. The author will study managerial tools and methods for that are commonly used in brand building process. What is more, the author will provide examples of competitors' brands with strong identities and examine the impact of brand identity on brand awareness and success of the brand. The reader shall get a comprehensive insight into the concepts of brand, branding, brand identity and basic understanding of the process of building strong brands. The data collected during the research will then be analyzed and used to outline a basic brand identity for the case brand. The company can then use the data and author's suggestions in further stages of brand building process of the case brand.

1.1 Introduction to the case company and case brand

The company for which the study was conducted is Studio Moderna. The brand which is a focus of this study is Napsie. According to company's official web-site, "Studio Moderna is a leading omnichannel, multi-brand and direct-to-consumer electronic retailer in Central & Eastern Europe" (Studio Moderna, 2016). Studio Moderna operates in 6 channels and boasts over 120 e-commerce web-sites, offering a wide choice of brands and products and convenience of multiple shopping possibilities for its customers. Company's advanced marketing platform and latest technologies help to assure outstanding user experience across all the channels.

Studio Moderna's multichannel philosophy is incorporated in marketing and sales activities as well as customer care and service and all other business areas. Studio Moderna creates brands and builds relationships with customers. Company manages world-wide known and trusted brands such as Dormeo, Delimano, TopShop, LiveActive, Walkmaxx, Rovus, Wellneo and Kosmodisk (Studio Moderna, 2016).

This thesis will focus on Studio Moderna's newest sleep brand Napsie. Napsie offers only one product – a mattress that is expertly designed and engineered to be a

perfect fit for virtually anyone. Napsie aims to bring a change to mattress industry by eliminating the pain points from mattress shopping experience, making the purchase process simple and keeping the price fair by selling online directly to the customer (Napsie, 2016). The pure-play business model behind the brand has been becoming extremely popular in the USA since 2014 and is rapidly spreading across geographies. By introducing Napsie in Central and Eastern European markets, the company aims to become the first and the biggest player in the field. What is more, the company seeks to appeal to younger population with innovative product design, unconventional marketing and simplified purchase process. The more detailed presentation of the brand will be provided in the next chapters of this thesis.

1.2 Definition of the management decision problem for the company

Before the research process can be started, management decision problem of the case company has to be defined. It is important to develop a clear definition of the management decision problem as it helps to understand the context or environment within which the problem has occurred (Malhotra & Peterson 2006, 45-46).

As Napsie is company's youngest brand, no studies have been conducted concerning its brand identity. However, developing a strong and compelling brand identity shall not be disregarded in the process of launching new brand. It is the first and the most important step in branding as it provides purpose, direction and meaning for the brand (Aaker 1996, 67-70).

Studio Moderna was interested in collecting data about the concept of brand identity, brand management tools and theories that can be applied for building brand identity. The company has conducted prior research about Napsie's target audience and its consumer behavior. The main target audience is millennial population between 25 and 35 years of age. People over 35 years of age constitute a large target audience for the brand in addition to millennial population. This age group mainly represents families and single employed individuals, who have stable income and might be considering buying a new mattress. Studio Moderna was interested in obtaining data about how to create a brand identity, which would

resonate with Napsie's target audience and help to increase brand awareness. The company was also interested to examine competitors' brands and their brand identities in order to get an understanding of how a strong brand identity can affect brand growth and awareness.

The management decision problem of the company was to clarify how to build a strong brand identity that would raise the level of brand awareness and contribute to the growth of the brand in long term. Based on the management decision problem there was a need for brand identity research. Therefore, this research aimed at examining the brand identity concept, its elements and managerial tools and methods for its creation, has been initiated.

The choice of the subject for this thesis was also influenced by the author's work project and personal interest in the field of branding. The author is a member of Napsie brand management team and has been working on building the brand from the very start. The author embraced the opportunity to conduct the research around the topics of branding and brand identity that would contribute to better understanding of these concepts within the project team and give valuable insights for the process of building compelling identity for the brand.

1.3 Research problem

After the management decision problem is defined, it can be transformed into marketing research problem. A clear definition of marketing research problem guides the process of the research and allows to obtain all the information needed to address the management decision problem. An appropriate research approach can then be developed based on the definition of marketing research problem (Malhotra & Peterson 2006, 45-47).

In order to be able to build a strong brand identity for Napsie brand, the company needs to obtain more information about the concept of brand identity, its elements, managerial tools and methods that shall be applied to build a brand identity. Based on the management decision problem, the research aims at investigation of brand

identity concept and the process of its creation. Therefore, the main research problem is the investigation of the above-mentioned concepts and development of identity for the case brand based on the acquired knowledge and theoretical background.

The objective of the research is to generate better understanding of the concept and to present the brand management tools and theories which can be used to create a brand identity. The theoretical framework formed during the research will serve as a base for empirical part of the research. The objective of empirical part is to give suggestions for building brand identity, which would resonate with brand's target audience. Furthermore, the objective of empirical part is to create a basic identity for Napsie brand. Based on research results the company will be able to implement the required marketing and branding actions and allocate efforts and resources efficiently. The basic brand identity outlined in the empirical part of the thesis can be either employed by the company or be further enhanced or modified according to company's vision on how Napsie brand should be perceived.

1.4 Research questions

Research questions are refined statements of specific components of the problem. Research questions ask for specific information required to address each component of research problem. Research questions that successfully address the problem components will provide valuable information for the company's decision makers (Malhotra & Peterson 2006, 50)

Based on the outlined research problem, research questions that this study aims to answer are:

- What is brand identity and what are its main elements?
- Which tools and techniques can be used to create brand identity?
- How brand identity can help to increase brand awareness?
- What is a basic brand identity of Napsie brand?

The author will conduct a research to develop an understanding of the concepts of brand and branding. The author will provide a brief overview of history of branding. It is important to get a basic insight into the history of brands because it helps to understand why certain companies and brands that have been established decades ago maintain strong positions even today. "Brand" is a multidimensional concept and this thesis will examine it from three different aspects: brand identity, brand image and brand personality. The author will then focus on the most common brand management tools and techniques that are used in brand building process and can be applied to the case brand. The author will introduce examples of other brands and provide insights into how a strong brand identity and efficient brand management can help to increase brand awareness and gain strong position in the market. Using competitors brands as examples will support statements of the thesis and will provide some useful insights into practices and strategies that can be employed by Napsie brand management team. Finally, the author will outline a basic brand identity for Napsie brand using the theoretical framework developed during the research.

Considering the nature of research questions, the most appropriate research design and method were chosen. Qualitative research was seen as the best approach to gain a deep understanding of the concepts, to answer research questions and to solve the research problem of this thesis.

2 Literature review

2.1 History of branding

The word 'brand' comes from the ancient Norse 'brandr', which means 'to burn'. Craftsmen stamped their goods with hot iron in order to mark ownership. However, these were not only crafts that got branded. Cattle and even humans were marked. "Slaves were branded to mark ownership, criminals were branded with disgrace. During World War II, victims of Nazi persecution who were interned in concentration camps were branded with numbers" (Landa 2005, xx). This negative aspect of

branding has gone in the past, however the purpose of brand remains the same even today: to establish the ownership, to distinguish among competitors and to facilitate the choice between variety of products in the same category (Landa 2005, xx).

The earliest visual forms of branding appeared as symbols that were painted on clay pots in ancient Greece and Rome. The potter painted his own mark on the bottom of the pot to identify the ownership. In ancient China branding was used in a similar way as it is used now. Chinese utilized a variety of painted lanterns, pictures, signboards as forms of branding and advertising. “The high quality of and the great interest in painting – and the known printing technology – allowed the Chinese to create these early forms of brand identification and advertising” (Landa 2005, xxi)

The first newspaper ad appeared in England in 1625. Early newspaper advertisements appeared as simple announcements and were limited in length to one short section of the newspaper. Later on, ads started to repeat throughout the pages of newspaper as lines of copy – the same way as they do today. In the beginning of the 18th century, trademarks and brand stamps became a common practice. European governments encouraged the issue of copyright laws and patents in order to facilitate the development in science, technology and arts. Similar to as it is today, first trademarks were meant to identify and distinguish goods and services and ease purchasing decisions by citing origin, thus quality (Landa 2005, xxi).

The Industrial Revolution, which began in England in the middle of 18th century and reached the USA by the beginning of 19th century, impacted the future of branding and advertising by shifting to the mass production of goods in a cost-effective way. The first advertisements were aimed at spreading the information about products and their quality, arousing interest and boosting demand (Landa 2005, xxii)

Before the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865), products weren't sold under brand names. Instead, people bought commodities from barrels and open containers. Triggered by economy conditions, the development in technology led to the shift from bulk commodities sold out of barrels to packaged goods, which promised higher quality and freshness. It became a necessity for companies to establish 'brand names' for

their products and promote them through recognizable visual identities and attractive packaging in order to reach the mass audiences. The success of selling packaged goods depended on the attractiveness of the package, added information and advertised brand name. The brand name differentiated the product from other products in the same category and enabled buyers to assess its value before buying (McDonough & Egolf 2003, 755). The identification of a brand name along with the recognizable logotype, packaging and advertising materials aimed at attracting attention of the target audience and boosting sales. The rise of mass media along with the inventions in technology such as photography, print and typewriters stimulated advertising and facilitated the success of brands. People shifted preferences towards brand names, which offered high quality and freshness of the product, which were both reliable and trustful as well as impressive and attractive (Landa 2005, xxii).

By the beginning of the 20s century, branding became a common phenomenon as the US economy was prospering and industry was rapidly growing. The number of new brands has increased dramatically by the middle of the 20s century, when more and more households had extra money to spend not only on necessities but also on desired branded goods. The further growth of mass media stimulated the rise of a 'brand world' and consumer desire for brands. Radio advertisements had a great power to affect the minds of consumers; they conveyed the notion that brands improve the quality of living, and in general make life brighter and happier by bringing in an additional value. For instance, a branded soap would not only clean clothes better than an unbranded one, but also had a paid broadcast radio program that was informative and entertaining. With the invention of television, brands got their next big advertising venue. Companies started to invest in television commercial spots. Television advertisements offered limitless opportunities to go beyond brand identities towards corporate identities (Landa 2005, xxii-xxvi). A comprehensive image created by a consistent and professional visual advertising would represent the corporation behind the certain brand. This visual identity would

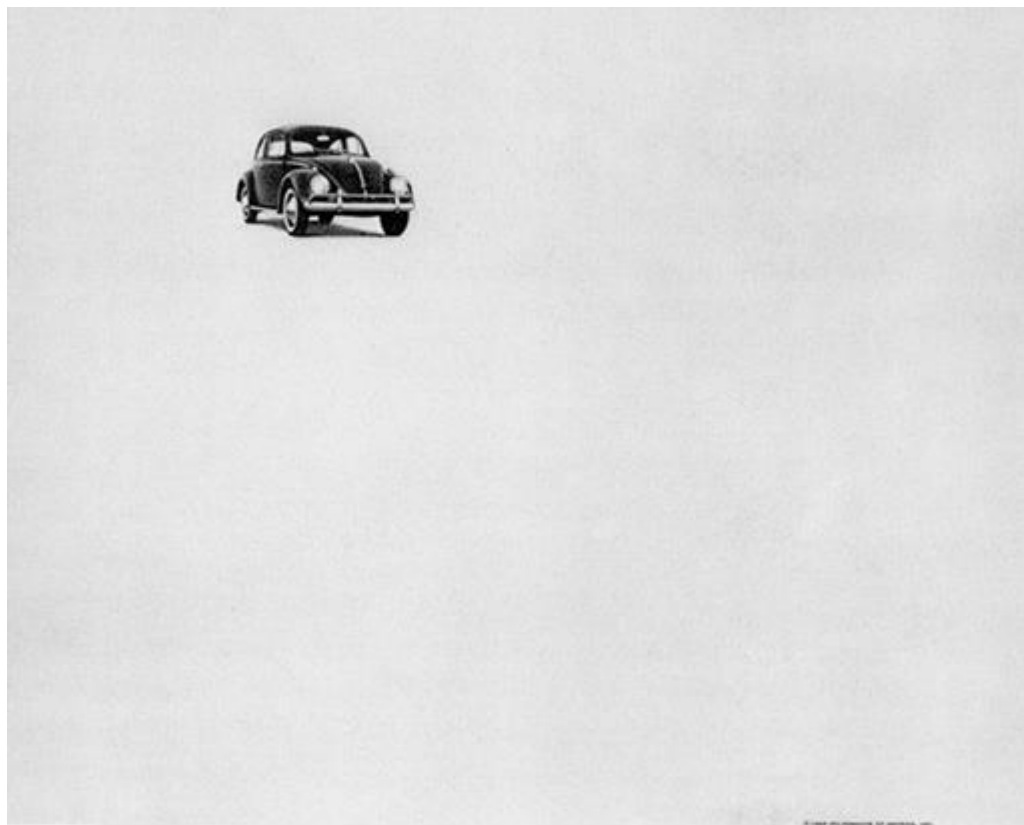
create a certain style, 'look', personality and a general image of the company in minds of its customers (McDonough and Egolf, 2003).

The so-called 'Mad Men' era of the 1960s symbolizes the explosion of brands in all product categories – from soap to cars. During those times, most of today's 'foundational brands' were born such as Pizza Hut, Dunkin Donuts, Holiday Inn and many others. The period from 50s to 60s can be marked in history as a golden age for branding and advertising. Because of the rise in number of products in the same category, the quality between similar products started to become more and more standardized. Thus, companies experienced an urge for smart marketing and efficient branding activities to stand out among the competitors. Companies like Procter and Gamble, General Foods and Unilever were among the first ones in consumer packaged goods industry to develop the discipline of brand management. Similar to as it is today, a brand manager would be the one responsible for creating an identity for the product, which would distinguish it in the crowd of nearly same products. By understanding the target audience, a brand manager would come up with 'brand proposition' that assigns emotional value to the product on top of its functional value. For the company, emotional value of its product or emotional bond with consumers would create a strong advantage over the competitors with same functional quality of products. In the times when the majority was making sales, the successful companies invested in marketing and branding activities. Over the time, their brands became the 'foundational brands' which we all know and acknowledge nowadays (Arons, 2011).

Probably one of the most famous examples of print ad campaigns from 1950s is Volkswagen's "Think Small" campaign. In 1950, Volkswagen set out to bring a revolution to automobile ads. In the times between 50s and 60s cars became more than means of transport. They were fashion statements, reputation boosters and served as an ultimate way to brag about one's social status. The best and the most desired cars were built spacious, fast and stylish. This imposed a great challenge for Volkswagen and any advertising agency that would take over the case. The Volkswagen Beetle was a small, slow, funny and overall ugly-looking car named after

a bug. It was known as a post-World War 2 German car, 'the people's car', manufactured in factories built by Nazis and developed in cooperation with Adolf Hitler himself. So how did it become iconic to the generation of post-war Americans? The answer is in genius marketing and great ad design developed by the DDB agency. DDB produced a print campaign focused on the Beetle's form, which was extraordinarily small. The print ad presented the image of Beetle surrounded with a huge amount of white space. This was meant to emphasize its simplicity and minimalism and encourage the viewer to think about Beetle from a different perspective. It no more appeared as an ugly foreign car among the fashionable American vehicles, but as a revolutionary design statement with a personality behind. Supported by a headline "Think small", the whole ad appeared as a paradox, bold and shocking. The ad copy below the visual was expressively honest about how slow Volkswagens actually are. It started with the headline "Presenting the America's slowest fastback" and continued into a discussion about how fancy the fastback cars are and how the VW can't even go over 72 mph. The ad told why the Volkswagen car wasn't anything like an ideal car and how this was a good thing. By turning the drawbacks into benefits, this ad revolutionized consumer perception about owning a VW. Smart, not fast – this was something an average person could identify with and find desirable to own (Johnson, 2012).

This Beetle ad not only boosted Volkswagen sales and brand loyalty, yet it set the start for the creative revolution in the world of advertising. "The ad, and the work of the ad agency behind it, changed the very nature of advertising--from the way it's created to what you see as a consumer today" (Odgen, 1999). With this radical ad, Volkswagen went beyond common information-based advertising. It created an emotional bond with consumers and presented product benefits in a way an average consumer would find relevant to real, everyday life. "Ads before it were either information-based and lacking in persuasion, more fantasy than reality, or relied on the medium's ability to deliver repeated exposure." (Odgen, 1999)



Think small.

Our little car isn't so much of a novelty any more.
A couple of dozen college kids don't try to squeeze inside it.
The guy at the gas station doesn't ask where the gas goes.
Nobody even stares at our shape.
In fact, some people who drive our little

flivver don't even think 32 miles to the gallon is going any great guns.
Or using five pints of oil instead of five quarts.
Or never needing anti-freeze.
Or racking up 40,000 miles on a set of tires.
That's because once you get used to

some of our economies, you don't even think about them any more.
Except when you squeeze into a small parking spot. Or renew your small insurance. Or pay a small repair bill. Or trade in your old VW for a new one.
Think it over.



Figure 1. Volkswagen "Think Small" campaign (DesignHack, 2012)

Digital technology started a new era in advertising and marketing. Nowadays consumers are willing to share their experiences with brands and to generate content that shapes public perceptions about brands. Although internet-based companies can not fully control their brand image, the value of loyal, engaged customers is extremely high. User-generated content has a significant value for companies because it enables their brands to reach wider audiences without spending huge budgets on advertising activities (Shadel, 2014).

Based on personal work experience, the author agrees that internet has established a direct communication between brands and consumers, allowing a constant

dialogue and exchange of information with both parties being involved. Consumers are now able to reach brands on Facebook and chat with people behind the brand just like they chat with their friends. Before brands were main content creators and mediums of its distribution. Nowadays customers are generating content based on their personal experiences with the brand and actively share it with their friends. Customers who engage with the brand and spread the word about it are one of the most valuable assets for the company because they help to promote the brand, increase its brand awareness and attract new audiences to the brand.

In order to support the above statements, the author provides an example of a perfectly executed Evian's Baby&Me marketing campaign from 2013. Evian wanted to run the campaign in 143 countries all over the globe, but the budget allowed to broadcast a 30-second TV spot created by BETC Paris only in 15 countries. Digital advertising was a solution. In order to increase brand awareness globally, Evian launched a 76-second long Youtube video that collected 20 million views in first two days and 100 million views in about two months. The video won four awards at Cannes, triggered worldwide brand recognition and record-breaking engagement rates. Inspired by the "Live Young message" from Evian, the video shows a group of people seeing the 'baby-version' of themselves in a shop window. Testing the reflection, they start to dance to see if the baby will move together with them. This campaign conveys the brand message "unleash your inner baby" and emphasizes Evian's main differentiation over its competitors – the water's purity. (Think With Google, 2013.)

The Baby&Me digital campaign has gained impressive popularity and enabled the brand to deepen its relationships with the audience. Funny dancing, cheerful music and amazing special effects made the video go viral in a matter of few days after launch and helped Evian to establish a powerful emotional engagement with its audience. The video campaign was supported by an app, which allowed users to create baby versions of their faces. The app generated over 25 million baby faces.

With Baby&Me campaign Evian not only increased brand awareness and sales globally, yet reinforced brand's characteristics of youth, playfulness and closeness (Macleod, 2013).



Figure 2. Evian's Baby&Me campaign (The Inspiration Room, 2013).

2.2 The concept of brand

Brands have existed for decades, developing and growing in significance over time. According to the earliest definitions by The Pocket Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1934), brand is "a piece of burning or smouldering wood, torch, (literary); sword (poet.); iron stamp used red-hot to leave an indelible mark, mark left by it, stigma, trade-mark, particular kind of goods (all of the best bb.)" and "a stamp (mark, object, skin), with b., impress indelibly (is branded on my memory)". The later definition by The Oxford American Dictionary (1980) describes brand as "a trade mark, goods of a particular make: a mark of identification made with a hot iron, the iron used for this: a piece of burning or charred wood". By comparing these two definitions above we can clearly see how the primary use of the word 'brand' has been changing over time and got its commercial application in the nowadays world.

The main purpose of the brand remained the same even today: to distinguish separate products from number of choices in the marketplace. According to Keller (2003, 3), The American Marketing Association defines a brand as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition". It can be assumed that when a seller creates a new name, symbol, term or product, he or she has established a new brand. However, this is just a technical part of building a brand. A brand is more than just that and can be better defined in terms of having created a certain amount of awareness, reputation, prominence and so on in the marketplace (Keller 2003, 3-4).

Keller (2003, 3) explains that individual components such as name, logo, symbol, slogan or package that identify the brand and differentiate it from competitors are referred to as brand elements or brand identities. According to the further explanation by Keller (2003), brand elements shall meet the following criteria: memorability, meaningfulness, likeability, transferability, adaptability and protectability. Memorability is essential for achieving a high level brand awareness. Brand elements shall be memorable and catch customers' attention to facilitate recall or recognition. This is extremely important in purchase or consumption processes. Brand elements shall also be meaningful. A well-designed brand element shall provide the general information about functions and benefits of the product or convey specific information about unique attributes or benefits of the brand. Likeability describes the extent to which consumers like aesthetics of the brand element. Creative, descriptive and persuasive brand elements contribute to higher brand awareness among consumers. It is important that brand elements capture the essence and intangible assets of the brand especially in case of less concrete product benefits. Transferability refers to the ability of the brand to transfer across categories or markets. Less specific brand names are always better because they can be easily transferred to other cultures. Brand elements shall be adaptable, flexible and easy to update. Consumer values and opinions change over time and in order to appear modern and relevant, brand elements shall be updated from time to time. Brand

elements shall be legally and competitively protectable. Well-designed brand elements contribute to brand awareness, convey favorable and unique brand associations and evoke positive feelings about the brand (Keller 2003, 175-180).

2.3 Role of brands

It is important to get an insight into the concept of brand in order to be able to understand why brands matter for consumers and for companies. Brand is one of the most important assets to the company as it help to identify and differentiate the product from the competition. However, brands are much more than this. Brands create awareness, associations and establish relationships with customers. Brands perform many important functions that make them valuable both for consumers and organizations (Keller 2003, 34-35). The author will now take a look at the roles that brands play for the two parties.

2.3.1 Role of brands for consumers

To consumers, brands provide many valuable functions. Brands distinguish products among the mass of similar products. Brands identify the maker and the origin of the product, thus create a perception about product quality and allow consumers to assign responsibility to a certain manufacturer. From the past experiences with the product, consumers identify which brands satisfy their needs and which do not. Therefore, brands ease the choice between products and enable customers to make informed purchase decisions. If consumers recognize the brand and know about quality and characteristics of its product, the decision does not require that much of additional thought, processing of information and looking around for options. As long as consumers gain satisfaction from the product and benefit from purchasing a certain brand, they are likely to continue buying it (Keller 2003, 34-35).

Kevin Roberts (2005) gives an interesting insight into brand-consumer relationships and emotional bonds that brands can create. Brands that establish loving relationships with consumers and provide deep meaning are called "lovemarks". Lovemarks-thinking is based on the notion that humans are driven by emotions, not

by reasons and the strongest connections in life are built on love. It is important for the brand to be respected. However, even more important is to establish emotional connection and loving, sensual relationship with the consumers. As for companies, lovemarks are all about tapping into this powerful human emotion and getting exclusive benefits from it. Lovemarks enable companies to set higher prices for their products because of having strong relationships with consumer based on love. These relationships are much more powerful than the ones based only on trust and respect (Roberts, 2005).

2.3.2 Role of brands for companies

As for companies, brands are a powerful source of competitive advantage. According to the early definition by Keller (1998, 5), a brand is “a set of mental associations, held by the consumer, which add to the perceived value of a product or service”. This definition provides an understanding why companies invest in building strong brands and what are the mechanisms that trigger consumer perceptions and behaviors. Brands create unique associations and meanings for the products that differentiate them from other similar products. Brand has a certain credibility and conveys product quality. Satisfied consumers are likely to choose the product again, showing their loyalty to the brand. Consequently, brand loyalty secures the demand for the company and creates barriers for other companies to enter the market. Although certain brand elements can be easily copied by competitors, impressions and associations with the brand in minds of consumers that are based on years of experience with the product and its marketing, can not be easily reproduced. From this perspective, brands can be seen as means for securing competitive advantage for the companies (Keller 2003, 36).

It is important to understand that brand is not the same thing as a company. Brand represents the essence of what company stands for. Brand is a concrete representation of company's vision and promise to its customers. Consumers interact with brands, but brands do not interact with consumers by themselves. Brands are manipulated by companies – they are characters played by companies and are aimed directly at consumers. Manipulations are guided by corporate identity

– a multidimensional concept that acts as a guideline for company's internal and external communications. Brand communications and brand identity can be informed by corporate identity, however these are not the same things (Wally 1978, 119-121).

Brand is a complex concept and this thesis does not cover all the concepts and aspects of it. The term "brand" is examined with three different aspects: brand identity, brand image and brand personality. In the next chapters of this thesis, the author will explain the term "brand identity" to address the topic of designing brand identity, the term "brand personality" to describe the content around brand personalities and the term "brand image" to describe factors which affect consumers' perceptions about the brand. This thesis focuses on the concepts that are commonly used in brand building process and are relevant to address the research problem of this study.

2.4 Brand identity

2.4.1 Insight into Brand Identity

To analyze how a brand identity is created, it is important to understand what a brand identity is. One of the most common definitions describes brand identity as "a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain" (Aaker 1996, 68). Aaker explains brand identity by comparing it to person's identity: it is what provides a person (or a brand) direction, purpose and meaning. It is true that brand identity is a personal representation of the brand, reflection of its essence. It is how the brand projects itself to the audience and communicates its values. Brand identity generates value proposition involving functional, emotional and self-expressive benefits and therefore helps to establish a relationship between the brand and the customer (Aaker, 1996).

According to Brand Identity System by David Aaker (1996), brand identity consists of core identity and extended identity. Core identity represents the timeless essence of the brand and reflects strategy and values of the organization/ brand. Core identity is

important for meaning and success of the brand as "it contains the associations that are most likely to remain constant as the brand travels to new markets and products" (Aaker 1996, 86). Because of this, core identity includes elements that make the brand unique and valuable in a market perspective. Core identity follows from the answers to the following questions: what is the soul of the brand, what are the fundamental beliefs and values that drive the brand, what does the organization behind the brand stand for and what are its core competencies? Core identity of the brand is closely connected with values and culture of the organization behind it. (Aaker 1996, 85-87.)

According to Aaker (1996), elements that are not included in core identity constitute extended identity of the brand. These elements add texture and completeness to the brand. Moreover, extended identity contains useful details that help to portray what the brand stands for, such as brand personality and basis for brand-customer relationships. Extended brand identity contributes to stronger brand by making it memorable and interesting to the customer (Aaker 1996, 87-89). Brand personality is the most powerful element of extended brand identity. According to the definition by D. Aaker (2010, 141), "brand personality is a set of human characteristic, which are associated with the brand". Brand personality enables consumers to express their own personalities through the brand. Brand personality can communicate certain feelings and emotions that arouse at the point of interaction with the brand. These feelings resonate with consumer personalities and therefore are part of self-expression (Aaker 1996, 155). Personality enables brands to make a statement and differentiate from competitors: "it can define not only the brand but the product-class context and experience" (Aaker 1996, 151). Thus, it is logical to assume that a stronger extended brand identity contributes to a stronger brand (Aaker 2010, 153-154).

Brand identity vs brand image

Brand identity drives brand image and associations. However, it is crucial to understand the difference between the two concepts. Brand identity represents the way marketers want the brand to be perceived. Brand image reflects how the

audience actually perceives the brand. Brand communicates a message to its audience through its brand identity. The audience interprets the message and forms a perception about the brand. The ultimate goal of branding activities is to match brand identity with brand image. With efficiently and correctly done branding, brand image represents the same values as brand identity does. It means that the brand has achieved its communication goals and is perceived by its audience exactly in the same way as it wants to be perceived (Kapferer, 2008).

	Brand Identity	Brand Image
1	Brand identity develops from the source or the company.	Brand image is perceived by the receiver or the customer.
2	Brand message is tied together in terms of brand identity.	Brand message is untied by the customer in the form of brand image.
3	The general meaning of brand identity is "who you really are?"	The general meaning of brand image is "How market perceives you?"
4	Its nature is that it is substance oriented or strategic.	Its nature is that it is appearance oriented or tactical.
5	Brand identity symbolizes firms' reality.	Brand image symbolizes perception of customers
6	Brand identity represents "your desire".	Brand image represents "others view"
7	It is enduring.	It is superficial.
8	Identity is looking ahead.	Image is looking back.
9	Identity is active.	Image is passive.
10	It signifies "where you want to be".	It signifies "what you have got".
11	It is total promise that a company makes to customers.	It is total customers' perception about the brand.
Focus on shaping your brand identity, brand image will follow.		

Figure 3. Difference between brand identity and brand image (Management Study Guide, 2012).

2.4.2 Creation of unique brand identity

In order to create a unique brand identity, the company should focus on the unique selling propositions (USPs) of their offer. This should be something that only a particular company can offer to its target audience. Identity should have three main components for standing out among competitors: configuration, taxic and functional

components. Configuration component represents the product itself: materials that are used in its manufacture and the way it is manufactured. Taxic component reflects unique traits of the product, which make it stand out among the similar products. Functional component relates to the use of the product and its functionalities (Floch, 2001). In case of Napsie, configuration component is the mattress that is built with the highest quality materials available on the market. The technology that is used to manufacture the mattress is a result of 15 years of research, development and cooperation with a leading Belgian sleep laboratory. Mattress manufacture takes place in Poland and meets the highest standards of quality and compliance. Taxic component is a unique adaptability of the mattress that is achieved through innovative construction and unique combination of layers. The mattress can precisely adapt to the body no matter of weight, shape or sleeping position. It is never too firm or too soft, it always feels as “just right”. Breathable, hypoallergenic construction of the mattress together with its removable, washable cover offer valuable benefits for customers who suffer from allergies or tend to sweat a lot during the night. Together with unique benefits offered by the smart combination of layers, antibacterial and thermoregulative properties of the mattress make it stand out in the market. Functional component is simple – to provide consumers with a good night’s sleep. Moreover, mattress design is minimalistic yet stylish. It fits in any bedroom and adds a modern touch to any interior (Napsie, 2016).

Building a strong brand requires strategic and tactical attitudes. It is important to know the history of branding, however history books will not help too much because nowadays many things might not work same well as they used to work before. Creating a brand identity is a first and a very important step in branding. However, it is not only about the creation part – it is more about living the brand according to its brand identity. Brand identity shall be fully planned and written down in the beginning of a brand building process. If brand identity is vague and incomplete, it will not provide sufficient guidance for consistent brand communications via different mediums. Also, companies shall have a vision of future development of brand identity. If decisions related to brand identity are guided by company’s past

actions, brand identity will drift over time and the brand risks to become diffused and meaningless (Aaker 1996, 340-341). Companies usually have a brand book which acts as a guideline for brand management. Brand book contains detailed description of the brand and its elements. Brand book is an important asset for the company as it facilitates brand management and maintainance. It also provides guidelines for brand communications that are aligned with brand identity and are consistent and coherent across all mediums. This thesis will not provide Napsie's brand book. However, it will give insights into design of brand identity elements.

2.5 Brand Personality

According to the most common definition, "brand personality is a set of human characteristic, which are associated with the brand" (Aaker 2010, 141). Brand can convey certain characteristics of the human personality thus appear as a certain person to its audience. If a brand was a human, a few examples of its characteristics would be: honest, casual or formal, playful or serious, spontaneous or rational and so forth. These personality traits can be used by the customer to express themselves or they can be used to communicate product attributes to the customer, thus giving it a functional benefit as well as an emotional one (Aaker 1996, 83-84). Another definition of brand personality further describes it as "a set of human personality traits that correspond to the interpersonal domain of human personality and are relevant to describing the brand as a relationship partner" (Sweeney & Brandon 2006, 645).

Kapferer (1997) suggests that by communicating its personality, a brand eventually constructs a character, which in turn clarifies which kind of a person a brand would be if it was a human being. Kapferer explains that brands are involved in transactions between people and can represent certain relationships between individuals (Kapferer, 1997). Consumers choose which brands to buy similar to how they choose with whom to socialize. As personality of brand and consumer come together, value is created in the form of self-expression for consumer (McEnally & Chernatony, 1999). According to Kim (2001), the attractiveness of brand personality not only

depends on its distinctiveness, but also on the self-expressive value for the consumer. Consumer might see a brand as a human or even as a companion when similarities occur between brand personality and consumer's self-expression (Kim et al., 2001). Consumers are looking for brands that offer them the opportunity to express who they are or who they want to be. Before making a choice in favor of a certain brand, consumers examine its identity and evaluate if the self-expressive benefits are satisfying. We can assume that building an attractive brand personality requires a deep understanding of target audience's preferences, lifestyle, attitudes and behavior (Aaker 2010, 99-101).

2.5.1 Dimensions of brand personality

Jennifer Aaker (1997, 347-356) introduced a framework for measuring and structuring brand personality in her research work "Dimensions of Brand Personality". The framework consists of five core dimensions, each divided into set of facets. Brand Personality Scale helps to describe personality of a brand by using an analogy with a human being. Five core personality dimensions and their facets are: sincerity (down-to-earth, honest, wholesome, cheerful), excitement (daring, spirited, imaginative, up-to-date), competence (reliable, intelligent, successful), sophistication (upper class, charming) and ruggedness (outdoorsy, tough). Each facet is further measured by a set of traits. Traits are rated using a five-point scale (1 = not at all descriptive, 5 = extremely descriptive) according to the extent to which a certain trait describes a specific brand. This framework can be used to examine a current status of a brand and to describe its desired future position.

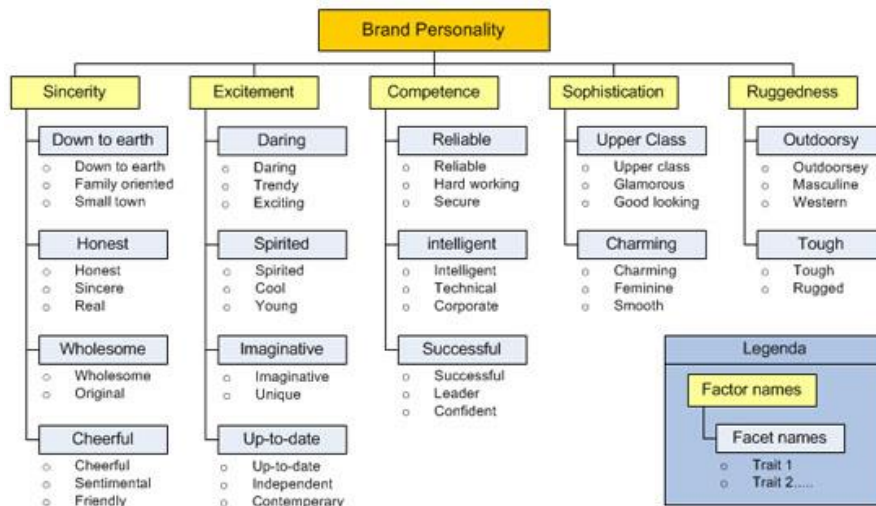


Figure 4. Brand Personality Scale (Aaker 1997, 354).

2.5.2 Brand personality drivers

Brand personality establishes the interaction between the brand and its consumers. Consumers’ perception of brand personality is affected by nearly everything associated with the brand. Aaker (1996, 145-146) has outlined the two groups of brand characteristics that affect perceptions of brand personality: product and non-product related.

Product- related characteristics	Non-product related characteristics
Product category	User imagery
Package	Sponsorships
Price	Symbol
Attributes	Age
	Ad style
	Country of origin
	Company image
	CEO
	Celebrity endorsers

Figure 5. Brand Personality Drivers (adapted from Aaker 1996, 146).

Product-related characteristics can be primary drivers of brand personality as well as brand personality itself can represent and reinforce a certain attribute. Non-product-related characteristics such as imagery, advertising style, country of origin and even company's CEO affect brand personality (Aaker 1996, 145-146). User imagery is "a defined set of human characteristics associated with a typical user of the brand" (Aaker 1996, 170). User imagery directly affects consumers' perception about the brand. There are two types of users: typical users (the ones who use the product) and idealized users (the ones from advertisements). The exposure of typical users as idealized users in advertising materials is an extremely effective way to build brand awareness and perception because the brand has then physical appearance that the user can be combined with (Aaker 1996, 145-147). Brand imagery has strategic value to the brand as it enables the brand to address specific groups of users without disturbing brand identity and brand personality (Aaker 1996, 170-173).

Brand personality contributes to stronger brand in many different ways. First, brand personality enables consumers to express their own identity through the brand. If a brand has a strong personality, consumer self-expression is then a personality that is being expressed. Second, brand personality suggests certain relationships between the brand and its consumers that are similar to person-to-person relationships. Last, brand personality reflects certain attributes and functional benefits of the product. Brand personality is also a sustainable point of differentiation for the brand. It is almost impossible for competitors to copy brand personality. Therefore, brand personality helps to develop brand identity, brand communication and even provide guidelines for marketing programs (Aaker 1996, 174).

2.5.3 Brand archetypes

One method to define brand personality is through brand archetypes developed by Margaret Mark and Carol Pearson (2001) in their book "The Hero and the Outlaw: Building Extraordinary Brands Through the Power of Archetypes". Brand archetypes system consists of twelve personality types: hero, outlaw, magician, sage, explorer, innocent, caregiver, creator, ruler, joker, everyday person, lover. Brand archetypes give a personal touch to the brand and convey a meaning that enables consumers to

identify with the brand and establish relationship with it as if the brand was a real person. In order to understand the concept of brand archetypes, we need to consider them as different segments of human psyche. Each individual's psyche has a piece of above-mentioned twelve archetypes. When a brand has dominance in a certain archetype, it resonates with that particular part of human psyche and creates a connection with brand's target audience. Brand archetypes provide meaning to customers and help them connect and identify themselves with a certain brand. Brand archetypes provide structure and help to determine how the brand can effectively convey its meaning to its target audience (Mark & Pearson, 2001).

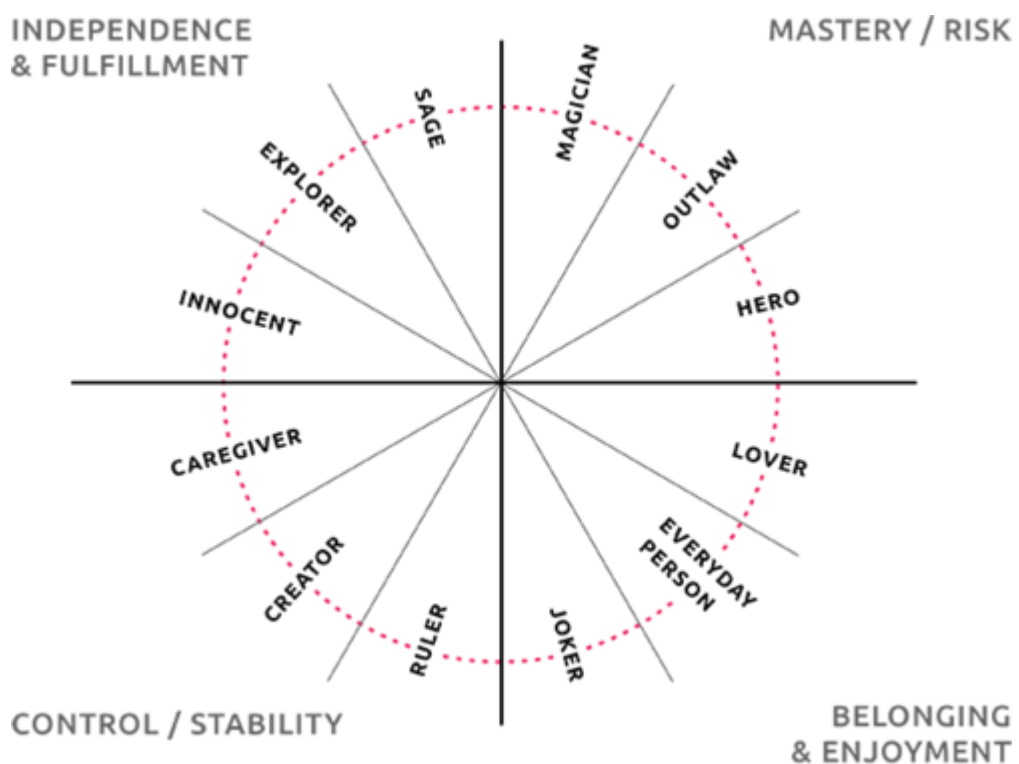


Figure 6. The Brand Archetypes (Laurencedessart, 2015).

2.6 Kapferer's brand identity prism

The Brand Identity Prism is a model first introduced by Jean-Noel Kapferer in 1986. The Prism identifies 6 facets of brand identity, which characterize the brand. These facets are: physique, personality, culture, relationship, reflection and self-image. Facets are divided into two dimensions: the picture of the sender (brand identity)

against the picture of the receiver (brand image) and internalization versus externalization. According to Kapferer, brands do not only represent their products but also communicate through them. Brands are perceived as sources of products, services and satisfaction. Brand Identity prism is a great brand management tool as it helps managers to relate to and understand the brand by using the six facets (Kapferer 2008, 182-183).

The first dimension, the picture of the sender (constructed source) is based on brand's physical and personality facets. The second dimension, the picture of recipient (constructed receiver) is based on brand's reflection and self-image facets. The brand can be characterized by its physique and personality. The picture of recipient is a combination of brand's externalization (physique, relationship and reflection facets) and internalization (personality, culture and self-image facets). A brand has aspects that define how it is expressed externally as well as aspects that are incorporated in the brand and define its internal essence. Strong brands are capable of weaving all six facets into an effective whole resulting in a clear, concise and appealing brand identity (Kapeferer, 2008).

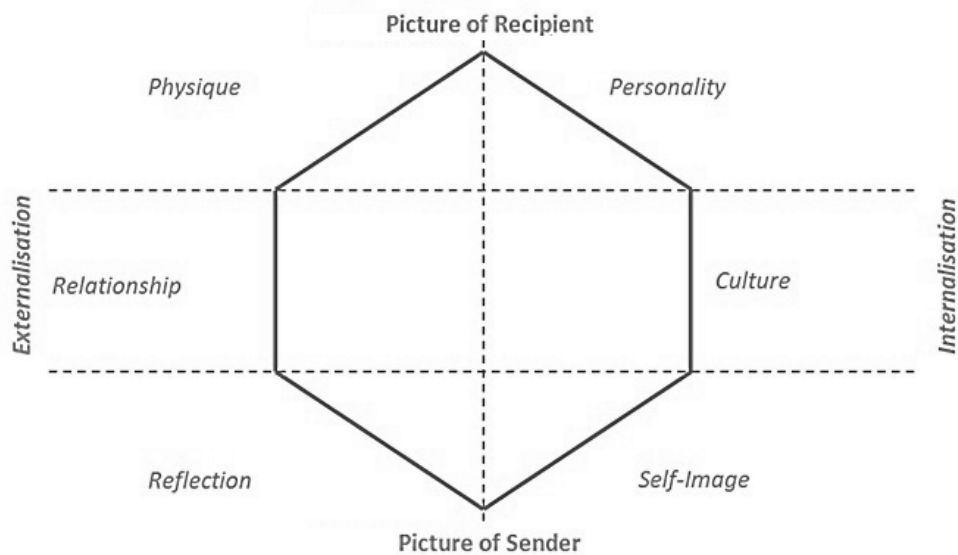


Figure 7. Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism Model (Kapferer 2008, 183).

The first facet, physique, represents the physical features and qualities of the brand, which are evoked in people's minds when the brand name is mentioned. Kapferer (2008) explains that brand physique is a first and important step to take when developing a brand identity. It shall be considered as the basis of the brand. The physical aspect of the brand reflects what the brand does, how it looks like and which brand qualities are conveyed through its products. Kapferer states that no brand is able to succeed without drawing attention to its material benefits. Even strong image brands such as Dior, Lacoste or L'Oreal have to express in their advertising that they are selling clothes and/or cosmetics (Kapferer, 2008).

Personality facet represents the character behind the brand. The way in which the brand communicates and behaves with its audience shows what kind of a person it would be if it was a human. By using a certain style of writing and speaking, certain consistent design elements (color schemes, patterns, fonts and so forth) brands can literally bring their characters into being. Many brands use celebrities and well-known people to vitalize the brand. Some of the well-known examples include George Clooney for Nespresso, Michael Jordan for Nike, and David Beckham for H&M. The use of celebrity endorsers helps to humanize the brand by matching it with a certain type of real, well-known personality. Celebrity endorsers help to differentiate a brand or a product from competitors, generate a higher appeal, attention and increase in sales (Kapferer, 2008).

Brand culture is a set of values and basic principles that are expressed through brand's products and communication. Brand culture is based on culture, values and mission of the organization. Thus, culture is a link between brand and its organization. Culture differentiates and separates similar brands from each other (Coke vs Pepsi). Brand can be associated with the country of origin. For example, Coca-Cola represents American values, Ikea introduces simplicity and functionality of Swedish design, Audi appeals to German values of technological innovation, modern design and long-term durability (Kapferer, 2008).

Relationship facet represents communications between the brand and its customers. For example, Lexus literally gives its customers a red carpet treatment and thus, clearly sets itself apart as a luxurious car brand. The relationship aspect is even more important for service brands as services involve human-to-human interactions and are based on relationships with customers. A brand can also symbolize certain relationships between people. For example, a brand can stand for careful and loving relationships between mother and child (Kimberly Clark). Relationship facet requires a brand manager to be able to depict and express the relationship that the brand stands for (Kapferer, 2008).

Reflection facet identifies the reference to stereotypical consumer of the brand and is the source of identification. Kapferer (2008) explains that reflection should not be confused with target. Target represents brand's potential buyers or users. Reflection describes how customers wish to be seen as a result of using a brand.

Thus, there is no need to make a realistic presentation of the target group in brand's advertising materials. More important is to reflect a person or a group that will appeal to brand's target audience. An assumption of brand's typical user can often be a stereotype such as BMW drivers racing on roads or people who buy dairy products keep up a diet. The brand needs to know the real customer reflection and be able to control it, otherwise it might negatively affect brand's image and weaken the brand (Kapferer, 2008).

The last facet is self-image. It represents how consumers see themselves through the brand. Consumers might think that others perceive them in a particular way because of the use of a certain brand. Kapferer provides Porsche brand as an example. He states that many Porsche owners just want to prove themselves and the others that they can afford to have a luxurious car. When developing brand identity, brand managers should consider self-image. The understanding of consumers' intrinsic drivers can enhance success of marketing campaigns and give a real boost to the brand. Another example is provided by Lacoste brand. Kapferer explains that according to studies, Lacoste buyers inwardly see themselves as members of sports club even if they do not actively practice any sports (Kapferer, 2008).

Brands grow and develop over time in a certain direction. Thus, it is crucial for brand managers and organization as a whole to understand key brand drivers to manage and balance identity changes across the facets in a planned and desired direction (Haaften, 2013). The six facets of the prism are closely connected to each other to express coherent identity of the brand. The prism allows brand managers to identify strengths and weaknesses of the brand in each of the six facets and thus to outline the plan and boundaries for future brand development. The prism can as well be used to evaluate consumers' perceptions about the brand and to adjust marketing and branding strategies accordingly (Kapferer, 2008).

3 Research Methodology

Research methods and research data are traditionally divided into two categories: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research is aimed at explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed with mathematically based methods, in particular statistics (Creswell, 1994). Quantitative research typically starts with a hypothesis which the researcher then seeks to test. The main goal of quantitative research is to provide decision makers with specific facts that can be used to make accurate and reliable predictions about relationships between certain variables. Researcher shall possess sufficient skills in questionnaire design, sampling and statistical data analysis as well as to be able to interpret numerical data. Quantitative research seeks explanations and correlations and its main concerns are validity and reliability of data (Hair et al., 2006).

Qualitative research, as opposed to quantitative, focuses on gaining a deep understanding of reasons and motivations and getting insights into research problems. In-depth information is gathered by asking questions or observing behaviors. Researcher uses open-ended questions or specific observational techniques to collect responses from sample of respondents and to observe their behavior. Qualitative data is especially useful in understanding and resolving certain business problems. Qualitative research methods allow researcher to collect

information about specific problems and theories related to the research subject. Collection of qualitative data is a relatively quick process due to small sample sizes and a non-structured format of questions (Hair et al. 2006, 173). Qualitative research is aimed at providing meaningful interpretation of collected data in order to describe and understand certain phenomena. Research methods for collecting qualitative data are observation, documents and audiovisual materials, interviews, action research and case studies (Creswell, 2007).

For this thesis the author wanted to get an understanding of the concepts of branding and brand identity. More specifically, the author wanted to examine the importance of brand identity and its impact on growth and success of the brand. The author wanted to get a general understanding of how a compelling brand identity can improve brand recognition and differentiate the brand among other brands in the same category. The author wanted to get an insight into methods, tools and techniques that are used in brand identity creation process. The purpose of studying these aspects was to gain information about how to build a brand identity for a new brand. By researching existing theories about concepts of branding and brand identity, brand managements tools and methods that are used in brand building process, the author could gather valuable information and build a theoretical framework for further research. The author examined competitors' brands and could identify what aspects shall be taken into consideration in brand identity creation process. The author was able to get an understanding of how a strong brand identity contributes to success of the brand.

The author realized that quantitative research methods would not provide the author with the type of data needed for the purposes of the research. Quantitative research is focused on collecting numerical data that is further analysed to identify relationships between variables (Creswell, 1994). The author wanted to discover and develop an understanding of the concepts, tools and methods related to the topic of the study. The author feels that qualitative approach is the most appropriate choice for this kind of the research. Qualitative approach allows for a deep perspective and

an extensive understanding of a given phenomenon within a particular context. This type of approach is useful for comprehending and interpreting individuals' stories. Qualitative research focuses on answering the questions of "how", "what is going on" and "why" (Silverman 2011). Specific observational techniques, interviews and unstructured style of qualitative research methods enable researcher to collect in-depth data about attitudes, beliefs, opinions and concerns of the respondents regarding the topic of the research (Hair et al. 2006, 174-175).

The above-mentioned characteristics of qualitative research perfectly describe the exploratory nature of the research that the author wanted to conduct. The author chose individual unstructured interviews and action research as qualitative research methods for gathering primary data. The author believes that the unstructured nature of individual interviews provides in-depth data around the topic of this research. By conducting individual interviews the author feels that she can gain valuable information and insights related to the subject which will be crucial for answering the research problem of this thesis. Discussing the subject in individual interview helps to establish a detailed, in-depth conversation about the subject, thus providing the researcher with comprehensive data for the study. In the next chapter, the author will go through the data collection methods that were chosen for this research in more details, while also justifying the choice of these particular methods.

3.1 Data Collection

The data collected for answering the research questions can be divided into primary and secondary data (Burns & Bush, 2008). Primary data represents raw data and data structures that have been collected by researcher and haven't yet been interpreted in a meaningful way. Primary data is collected to solve specific research problem by conducting exploratory, descriptive or causal research project.(Hair et al., 2006.) In primary data collection, researcher collects data using a range of collection tools such as interviews, observation and questionnaires, that makes data unique to researcher's study (Wilson 2010, 135-136). Secondary data represents data that have been already collected by someone else than the researcher and are available for use. Secondary data can be of internal or external nature. Internal secondary data

are those that are available within the organization. Internal data for example are sales reports, accounting data, budgets, data from previous studies and so forth. External secondary data are those available from national governments, organizations and publishing houses. The main advantage of using secondary data is that it enables the researcher to obtain information quickly and at a minimal cost (Neelankavil, 2007).

For this study the author used both primary and secondary data sources. A study design whereby the researcher utilises multiple cases, informants or methods of gathering data is called triangulation. Triangulation involves collection of data from multiple sources to obtain diverse views of the studied phenomenon with the purpose of enhancing validity (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The author collected primary data through action research and unstructured interviews with members of the organization. Secondary data was collected from online publications, company web-site, brand web-site, internal researches and benchmarking.

Action Research

Action research was selected as a qualitative data collection method for this study. Action research focuses on addressing issues and finding solutions for practical problems through the action. In action research it is common that the researcher is a part of the organization being researched (Kananen 2008, 9). This type of research is aimed at studying the organization and collaborating with its members in order to bring the desired change and solve problems at hand. Co-learning is a primary aspect of the research process because collaboration between the researcher and members of organization is essential for accomplishing common goals (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

In action research, researcher is working within the research situation, through the perceptions of members of the organization in order to enhance operational practice. Action research enables researcher to get a comprehensive insight into research situation by being an internal participant of the research. The main difference of action research from other research types is the focus on turning people involved in the process of research into researchers themselves. This enables

to describe research phenomenon from the perspective of the whole research team, rather than just the researcher. Researcher makes no attempt to stay objective and openly communicates any bias to other participants. Action research makes a full use of knowledge generated from inside the organization and enhances it with external expertise of the researcher. This research approach promotes collaboration between researcher and members of organization in order to diagnose the problem and develop a solution based on the diagnosis (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

Action research is widely used in business for addressing and solving certain business-related problems. This research type is practical and its results are actionable. It encourages members of the organization to be open to changes and helps to establish a favourable working culture during the process of research. Action research is one of the most attractive research types for organizations and is often times used as a management instrument for assisting the progressive change. By combining research with action steps, action research approach helps to reduce costs and improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency (Nykiel 2007, 75-77).

Interviews

Qualitative methods, such as interviews, are known to provide a 'deeper' understanding of social phenomena than would be obtained from purely quantitative methods such as questionnaires. Interviews allows for gaining in-depth information around the topic (Silverman 2000). For the purpose of the study the author chose unstructured interviews as one of the sources of primary data. Unstructured interviews do not use predefined questions, however it does not mean that interviews are random and do not have any direction. Unstructured interviews require knowledge of the subject and prior preparation to gain deep insights into people's experiences and opinions. Unstructured interviews are similar to conversations. The difference is that in unstructured interview the interaction between the participant and the researcher targets the interests of the researcher. This is not always the case during the conversation. Unstructured interviews, compared to other types of interviews, are more flexible and possess comparatively few guidelines. Unstructured interviews give researcher freedom to cover different

aspects and topics related to the interests of researcher. Unstructured interviews evolve during the process and result in gathering comprehensive information about researcher's topic of interest as well as other relevant and useful topics (Bailey, 2007).

The author conducted unstructured interviews with members of the organization during the process of action research to gather primary data for the research. The author herself is a member of the organization, thus the interviews were conducted during the daily work activities. Unstructured interviews were very similar to conversations as the topic of interest is closely connected to author's work activities and responsibilities. The author did not make any interview transcripts except for field notes to capture the main topics and clusters of information that are useful for the purposes of the research and author's nature of work. The author was interested in gathering information relevant to the topic of the research. The author asked questions that helped to collect information about the Napsie brand. In particular, collected information provided insights into Napsie brand mission and vision, values, promise and brand elements. Information generated during the unstructured interviews provided the author with insights into Napsie branding and marketing strategies as well as company's vision for the future of the brand. The participants of the interviews were members of Napsie brand management team. Due to the ethical reasons and confidential nature of the collected data no field notes or participants' names can be disclosed in this research. The information discussed and shared with the author is highly confidential and is not subject to disclosure. The insights gathered by the author were used to support the content of the thesis and provide answers to the research question: what is a basic brand identity for Napsie brand?

Benchmarking

Benchmarking was one of the secondary data collection methods for this study. Benchmarking is the process of identifying the highest standards for products, services or processes. Standards are then used as a point of reference for evaluating performance or level of quality and making necessary improvements to reach those

(Ross 1995, 235). Benchmarking is more than just a process of gathering data on competitors' performance. It is a method of identifying new ideas and new ways of improving processes in order to meet customers' expectations (Omachonu and Ross, 1994). Benchmarking can be used as an improvement tool as it helps organizations to learn from other organizations that are more successful in certain areas.

Benchmarking helps to identify practices employed by other organizations that make them successful. The same practices can be then adapted by the organization to improve its own performance (Stapenhurst, 2009).

There are four different types of benchmarking: internal benchmarking, competitive benchmarking, functional or industry benchmarking and process or generic benchmarking. The choice of type depends on what the company needs to benchmark. Competitive benchmarking was selected as the most appropriate benchmarking type for this study. The goal of competitive benchmarking is to compare firm's processes, practices, services or products with those of its most successful competitors (Finch and Luebbe, 1995). For the purpose of the study, the author identified 3 competitors and analyzed their practices, products, services and activities that contributed to success and superior performance of their brands. Benchmarking helps to identify the gap between where the company (or brand in case of this study) would like to be and where it actually is (Finch and Luebbe, 1995). The acquired information can be then used to compare the case brand to its competitors, to determine areas of improvement and to provide possible solutions for each area.

3.2 Ethical issues

An access to company data suggests a considerable responsibility for handling the data in ethical manner. Researcher shall be highly conscious about what can be reported and how the reporting should be done. The author has respected confidentiality, which plays an important role in this study. Ethics is usually connected to the perception of what is right and what is wrong. Ethics is always present in everyday life because there are certain written and unwritten laws,

regulations and rules that steer behaviors in the society (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 62-63).

When conducting a business research, researcher shall be concerned about ethics during the whole process and be careful about matters that go beyond the ethics. Researcher shall be aware of ethical principles and design actions in order to avoid disclosure, fraud, causing harm or risk. It is important to respect other members of the organization and remain unbiased even if the results of the research are not agreeable (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 62).

3.3 Data Analysis

According to the definition by Ereaut (2002, 3), analysis is "a specific type of intensive work done on data collected from fieldwork." It is a practical and intellectual process that is essential for drawing conclusions in qualitative research. The purpose of data analysis is to transform data into information (Nair 2009, 121).

The data analysis process for this research was done with Miles and Huberman's flow model that consists of three steps: data reduction, data display and conclusion development. Data reduction is a process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming interview transcripts and raw data. Data reduction occurs throughout the research till the final report is completed. Before researcher starts to collect data, anticipatory data reduction occurs as researcher selects appropriate conceptual framework, research questions and data collection approaches. Data reduction is used during the process of data collection as researcher writes summaries, teases out topics, makes clusters and so on. The second step of data analysis is data display. Data display refers to organized, compressed information that allows to draw conclusions and to take actions. Data displays such as graphs, charts, figures or diagrams assemble organized information into a compact form that allows researcher to understand what is happening and either to take action or to proceed with analysis. Conclusion development is the last step of data analysis process. This process takes place as researcher starts to collect data and point out certain patterns, explanations, causal flows and propositions.

Conclusions made during data collection process are taken lightly as researcher maintains openness and skepticism and are verified as the analysis proceeds. Conclusion development requires a review to consider the meaning of analysed data and its implications for the study's aim and research questions (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Primary data for this research was collected through unstructured interviews during the process of action research. The interviews data used for analysis were interviewer's field notes made during the interviews . Sources of secondary data included previously done researches that are available in the company and are relevant to the topic of this research. Secondary data was also obtained from news articles and internet publications, case company's web-site, case brand's web-site, competitors' web-sites and during the process of benchmarking. Collected data was then sorted out and organized under several topics and reduced to the most relevant matters to the research. The author then generated themes and patterns that helped to analyze the data, interpret findings and draw conclusions. Finally, the author conducted a review of analysed data to consider its meaning, validity and implications for solving the research problem and providing answers to research questions.

3.4 Validity and reliability

Every research shall be designed in order to produce valid and reliable knowledge in ethical manner (Saharan 2014, 209). This research was carried out in ethical manner. The author collected, analysed and interpreted data with a concern about validity and reliability. Scientific statements about the studied phenomena should be both reliable and valid because "validity is not possible without reliability" (Herbst & Coldwell 2004, 17). Validity and reliability of the research can be examined in two ways. First, research method shall be discussed and confirmed to be appropriate to answer research questions. Second, research results and conclusions need to be reviewed and considered from the perspective of validity and reliability (Herbst & Coldwell, 2004).

Validity is divided into internal and external. Internal validity refers to the synergy between the hypotheses and available evidence. Internal validity measures whether data has implications for research objective or not. External validity considers if research findings can be generalized and applied to other similar contexts and situations. (Herbst & Coldwell 2004, 17.) Reliability is closely connected with consistency. The instruments used to measure phenomena shall be reliable to produce consistent results. In other words, if the same instruments used by another researcher to measure same phenomena produce same results, the measuring instrument is considered as a reliable one. In this case scientific statements are reliable and valid (Herbst & Coldwell 2004, 17).

Internal validity is an important aspect of qualitative research. For the purpose of the study, the author conducted interviews with higher management and members of the project team. The author did a "respondent validation" in order to confirm that no misinterpretations of interviews have been made. When findings of interviews have been summarized and organized under themes, the author gathered respondents' feedback to check whether the findings are complete, valid and free from any misinterpretations.

Reliability of this research shall be considered in different aspects. The author examined theoretical aspect of brand identity and the process of its creation. Action research involved author as an active participant in the situation under study. As an action researcher and employee of the organization, the author studied the situation and collaborated with other members of the organization in order to bring the desired change and solve the problem in place.

The author analyzed the findings and outlined suggestions for creating strong brand identity for the case brand according to the verbal instructions, data collected during the benchmarking process, interviews and support of the theoretical background. However, it shall be mentioned that implementing something in real-life situation can be quite different from what the theory says about the topic. Each brand is different and thus the practical part shall be tailored to brand's specific features,

characteristics, target audience and so on. The author has utilized reliable data sources to meet the principles of brand identity and the process of its creation. However, being a member of the organization, having access to internal data and conducting interviews with other members enabled the author to tailor final suggestions according to organisation's needs. The author can assume that if another researcher uses same measuring instruments to test the statements about the same phenomena, the end results will be similar. However, as it was already mentioned before, the author tailored final suggestions according to organization's needs and if the same research is conducted for another organization with slightly different needs, the results might be quite different as well. It is important to mention that there may be some different choices for benchmarking as the number of brands in the same category is growing rapidly on the European market. The choice also depends on what researcher wants to benchmark.

As for validity of this study, it is obvious that data has implications for solving research problem and providing answers to research questions. To repeat, the research problem of this study was to examine the concept of brand identity and to outline how to create a strong brand identity for a new brand. The end goal of this study was to present brand management tools and techniques that can be applied for creating brand identity for the case brand. The author presented personal suggestions for identity of the case brand that the company can either employ immediately or develop further. Findings of this research can be generalized and applied to other similar situations. However, much depends on the company behind the brand and the industry as brand identity is a vague concept and it shall be addressed from the perspective of each individual company separately. It should be mentioned that brand identity has to be unique for each brand and can not be just copied from the competitors'. However, tools and methods for its creation outlined in this study are universal and can be employed by different companies for the purpose of building unique, strong brands.

4 Competitors of the case brand

The empirical part of the thesis focuses on creating a brand identity for the case brand Napsie. This part of the thesis has been designed in cooperation with the company Studio Moderna, where the results will help the company to create a clear vision for the brand and to design marketing and branding efforts in line with brand identity. The brand identity developed in this part of this thesis can be either employed by the company or be further worked out according to the company's vision on how Napsie brand shall be perceived. This part of thesis will present examples of competitors' brands and their brand identities in order to illustrate how a well-designed brand identity can raise brand awareness and help the brand achieve "the next level".

4.1 Overview of the competitor

Nowadays many industries are experiencing a change since the amount of new companies and new offerings is growing rapidly on daily basis. Consumers are exposed to numerous number of choices and the competition is high, that is why companies need to come up with innovative approaches to their products, services and branding activities to catch attention of their audiences. Mattress industry is not an exception and a number of online mattress companies has come into play during the past few years.

For a long time mattresses were sold only in traditional showrooms where consumers are exposed to a variety of similar-looking mattresses and technical jargon. The amount of different mattresses in the store leaves consumers in confusion over which model to choose, as everything except for the price seems to be completely the same. Finding the perfect mattress in retail store is a time consuming process and is anything but a pleasant customer experience. Customers have to try out numerous options and to spend about 5-10 minutes laying down on each mattress. In most cases people end up buying a mattress that is not suitable for them because a showroom trial can not compare to the actual sleep experience. Customers had to waste their time and money with no guarantess of being satisfied

with the purchase. In the era of digital technologies when most products can be bought with a couple of clicks, mattress industry was lacking innovation. However, many startups embraced the opportunity to utilize technologies and slick branding to offer more convenient ways of shopping for a mattress. According to the projections, the global mattress market is expected to reach \$24.65 billion by 2017. Therefore, there is no surprise so many new mattress companies enter the industry with their innovative offerings (Li, 2016).

The mattress startups that were among the first ones to bring a change to the industry are Tuft and Needle, Casper, Leesa, Yogabed and Eve. They turned an unpleasant mattress shopping experience into an easy and hassle-free process. The pure-play business model enabled those start-ups to cut the number of confusing options and to sell their products online, directly to the customers. Most of these players offer their products at a lower price than industry's average and provide customers with outstanding services such as free shipping and in-home trial. It might seem that not so many people would be willing to purchase a mattress online instead of doing it in a traditional store because of the perceived risk of such a decision. However, the facts show that it is not the case. The first online mattress startup in the industry Tuft and Needle hit the \$1 million in sales during its first year after it was launched in 2012 (Park, 2016). The second startup Casper that was launched in 2014 made \$1 million in revenues in its first 28 days (Parr, 2016). The success of Casper has led to the increasing number of new mattress companies entering the industry with a similar business model. However, the key to success of biggest online mattress companies was not only in their innovative product and services, but also in strong identities of their brands that helped to stand out in the crowded marketplace.

In the following chapter of this thesis the author will examine brand identities of two US- based competitors of Napsie – Casper and Tuft and Needle. The author will also study the case of Eve, a UK-based mattress brand, which occupies strong position in British online mattress market. The analysis of competitors' brand identities will help to understand the strategy behind their branding activities. It will also provide examples of how a well-designed brand identity can raise brand awareness and

contribute to success of the brand. The identified practices used by these companies might be applicable to the case brand.

4.2 Tuft and Needle

Launched in 2012 in Phoenix, Tuft and Needle was one of the first online mattress start-ups in the industry. JT Marino and Daehee Park, software engineers from Silicon Valley, founded the brand. The business idea came from founders' personal unpleasant experience with mattress shopping and the fact that mattress industry was driven by marketing and less by the customer. Prices for mattresses were too high and were not necessarily justified by the quality of the product. The two co-founders set out to bring a change to the industry by creating a high-quality mattress and selling it online directly to customers, keeping the price fair (Gottesman, 2014).

From the very beginning, Tuft & Needle has been advocating transparency in their business and a better customer experience. The goal was to introduce a fresh approach to mattress selling without the preconception of just another mattress company in the market. T&N business model is centered on customer feedback and constant improvement. According to the words of Daehee Park (2014), "we're not about being a mattress that just sells online. We want to be branded as an honest company that opens up the transparency of this industry. . . And because we interact with our customers so much, they appreciate our willingness to be so open and transparent. They've truly helped us grow as a company." T&N focuses on listening to its customers and taking immediate actions to improve the product. Being a direct-to-consumer company is a great advantage of T&N since the majority of mattress companies never deal with their customers as they are doing business with the retailer (Gottesman, 2014).

The company was started with only \$6,000 of capital. The budget was too tight to hire an external agency to help with branding and strategy. Thus, the founders set out to develop the brand by themselves from the scratch. Their mission was simple - to change the way people shop for mattresses. This set the tone for everything they worked towards. T&N founders worked on each element of the brand, including the

web-site design, logo, fonts, imagery and so forth. According to the words of Park (2016), “website was a single page without any fancy or clever language—straight to the point, hooking our visitors with the problem we’ve identified and then describing our solution to it”. Visuals on web-site were purchased from stock as the company couldn’t afford more at the time. Icons and diagrams were illustrated by Daehee Park himself (Park, 2016).

After the revenues started to come in, T&N founders considered outsourcing professional to build a brand identity that would resonate with the customers. However, they hacked it before on their own. Powerful aesthetics, the cool factor that would set T&N apart from competition and deliver brand’s message more clearly was missing (Park, 2016). T&N paired up with GrandArmy, a New York-based creative agency that shares similar vision and values in doing business. GrandArmy became T&N’s strategic partner to uplift the brand and to help the mattress achieve a number one position on Amazon. Together with T&N, GrandArmy enhanced the brand strategy, positioning, voice and identity. Branding was extended with new designs of packaging, stunts and web-site, which reflect the most recent trends that resonate with the audience. The brand voice got expressed through social media, print, billboard and TV advertising. Minimalistic and sleek design of T&N’s branding and advertising materials make brand’s message clear and easy to understand (GrandArmy, 2016).

T&N’s values of honesty and transparency are incorporated in company’s operations: “We believe in quality craftsmanship without the gimmicks. We work with the best to get the best. And then we sell the best, for exactly the price it should cost. It’s the very simple system at the heart of everything we make.” (T&N, 2016). The identity of the brand is based on company’s values and serves as a guideline for branding activities. As explained by Park (2016), “whatever branding we do needs to be an enhancement of our roots, and not displacing us into foreign territories that represent something we are not. Our customers care most about the core—our values, people and history. That needs to come first as a foundation”. Aesthetics are

important, but not as much as the values, which constitute the core of the business (Park, 2016).



Figure 8. The cost of average mattress (Tuft and Needle, 2016).

T&N establishes emotional connection with its target audience by communicating strong rational benefits of the product and service. T&N understands the common frustration about mattress shopping, high prices, unfair markups and number of mattress options. If T&N was a person, it would appear as someone who listens with empathy to every complaint and shares a similar disrespect to sales tricks and too high mattress prices. By understanding the main problems of its target audience, the company is able to deliver a strong emotional impact that is backed up with strong rational justification (Sukonek, 2016).

Emotional versus rational decision-making

Creating emotional connection with the audience is important. However, it is critical to remember when people consider buying a certain product they first make an emotional decision about the brand and a rational decision second (considering product features, benefits and price). This is why it is important to support emotional impact with strong rational justification (Sukonek, 2016). Bart Schutz, Chief Psychology Officer at Online Dialogue, explained the phenomena in more details. Shultz (2016) introduced the idea that “consumers have a dual processing brain” and

make decisions based on emotional impact and rational justification. According to the explanation, there are two parties that govern decision-making process inside the human brain: the rational king and the emotional queen. The rational king makes decisions based on logic, rules and laws. He is convinced that he controls decisions; however, it is the queen who actually does. The queen is irrational - she makes decisions based on emotions and a sense of intuition. Shultz (2016) refers to the earlier findings of psychologists Keith Stanovich and Richard West, who introduced the terms "System 1" and "System 2". The "System 1" (the queen) governs emotional aspect of decision-making: "It works on the basis of intuition, emotions, habits, prejudices and "heuristics". It functions completely automatically outside of consciousness and processes enormous amounts of information with seemingly little or no effort, and without the feeling of voluntary control" (Shultz, 2016). The "System 2" (the king) controls the rational behaviour: "it is a rational, conscious, logical and rules-based system. It uses scarce mental energy to focus on effortful mental activities like complex calculations, long-term decisions and impulse control."(Shultz, 2016).

"System 2" can be described as the "reflective, explicit, rational, systematic or central system."(Shultz 2016). According to the further explanation, people have illusion that they control the decision. However, the rational system (the king) tends to be inactive when most of decisions are being made. People prefer to let the emotional system (the queen) make a decision whenever possible, even in the situations when rational consciousness shall be used first. The rational system (the lazy king) does as little as possible, leaving the subconscious system (the emotional queen) to do the job. After the decision was made, people start to rationalize the behavior that led to the decision. This phenomenon is defined as "a post-decision rationalization" (Shultz, 2016). Post rationalizations do not determine behavior - these are the made-up reasons, the lies that are comforting to consciousness. People often ask each other for reasons that can explain a certain decision. For instance, why did someone choose shoes of a red color? The person most likely does not have a rational back up

for this decision, so the answer would give a comforting reason for this decision: "Red will go very well with the color scheme of the party." (Shultz, 2016).

Usually marketers and sales people think long and hard about the rational reasons (the so-called USPs) that would trigger customers to buy the product. Most times these reasons are not the ones that shall be presented first because they are made up for reassurance afterwards (rationalization of decision). Without the emotional trigger and sub consciousness involved, people would most probably not be able to make decisions (even the rational ones). However, it is wrong to assume that decisions are based only on emotions. Sometimes the emotional system of brain encounters problems with processing information. In this case it needs help of the rational system with more detailed processing that can solve the problem. The two systems of brain complement each other in function (Shultz, 2016).

The above-explained phenomenon is very useful in the world of marketing and advertising. Marketers should be able to understand that emotional impact delivered by advertising has to be backed up by sufficient rational justification (Shultz, 2016). For instance, the powerful advertising of Tuft and Needle triggers emotional system of the brain and encourages people to learn more about the product. It resonates with the audience on emotional level and arouses interest to the brand. The audience then starts to consider the purchase and thus, to look for rational benefits of the product such as its features, price, quality and so forth.

Tuft and Needle understands their target personas - the needs, wants, desires and real problems that can be solved with the product. Thus, the company is able to deliver the right kind of emotional impact to the right audience.



Figure 9. T&N Billboard (Breakthrough Brand, 2016).

T&N educates customers on the topic of mattress shopping. They reveal the truth about the industry and touch on the main pain points : “Part of our mission is to educate our customers on this black box. We’re not about being a mattress that just sells online. We want to be branded as an honest company that opens up the transparency of this industry.” (Daehee Park, 2015). Before T&N, mattress industry marketing has established a common perception that price and product complexity equate quality. Seasonal sales and promotions has always been a natural thing in the industry. However, T&N reversed the market’s conditioning by educating customers on industry gimmicks and sales markups. With T&N there is no concept of discount because the mattress has already been priced fairly. “If we were to offer discounts, it would be for the sole purpose of increasing sales. For the record, we’d love to increase sales. But adhering to the core values of our brand takes the highest priority.(...) At T&N, we’ve adopted a pricing strategy of fairness. This means we charge enough money to cover our costs, pay our employees well and allow our company to grow.”(Tuft and Needle, 2015). T&N’s pricing strategy is based on the idea that every customer shall pay the same price for same product.T&N is a

company with empathy to its customers, thus the price of mattress is the same for everyone all year round. T&N sees discounts as manipulation. The company does not try to trick customers into buying a mattress, rather to purchase one whenever they feel like it. When customers are attracted by a discount, there is a lower chance they are interested in the brand. Customers who buy from referral are engaging with the brand and are more likely to recommend the product to their friends and share their experiences, promoting the brand through the word of mouth. T&N's goal is to earn customer loyalty through the life time, not just at the point of sale (Tuft and Needle, 2015).

T&N brand archetype

To determine Tuft and Needle brand archetype the author used the "Brandality" quiz by Kaye Putnam (2016). The quiz is based on names and definitions of the archetypes outlined by Dr. Carol S. Pearson and Margeret Mark (2001). To answer questions of the quiz, the author used the knowledge about Tuft & Needle brand identity, brand history, values and mission. The author reviewed the web-site, communication tone, brand activities on social media and overall made an intuitive evaluation of the brand personality. The author chose the answers which felt to be the most right and relevant to the brand. The result might be subjective due to the fact that the author is not a representative of the company, rather an external researcher doing evaluation based on the collected data about the brand.

According to the results of "Brandality" quiz, Tuft and Needle's brand archetype is Sage. "The Sage believes the path to happiness is paved with knowledge and that by seeking out the truth and sharing it with others, we can make the world a better place. The Sage shuns ambiguity, misinformation, misleading claims, and ignorance, whether in itself or in others. Sage brands generally have high levels of consciousness and intelligence." (Putnam, 2016). The Sage brand can be described as an expert, advisor, thinker or investigator. Sage brands communicate their messages with a faithful, factual and decisive voice. They often use minimalistic and noble marketing materials, free from gimmicks and fluff. Some of these brands aim to challenge the

status quo and make people see things in a different way. Sage brands often stick to neutral color palette such as gray, beige, navy or white for their logo, website and brand elements designs (Smith, 2016). The description of the archetype resonates with Tuft and Needle's values and mission: "we started Tuft & Needle because we learned the truth about the mattress industry, and we think you deserve to know the truth too." (Tuft and Needle, 2016).

The author contacted T&N team in order to confirm the hypothesis about brand archetype. The author received an answer from Shanda Horn, Customer Support agent. The answer included the following information: "T&N doesn't adhere to an outside archetype. Our brand is more based on the thoughtful decisions we make internally as a company". According to the brand TV commercial launched in 2016, T&N position themselves as "Fixers" : "We are a nation of fixers. Big things. Little things. We fixed things people thought never could be fixed. But a good idea goes nowhere without a good night's sleep. We saw the mattress industry was broken. We didn't rest till we fixed it."

Based on the collected data, the author can assume that T&N brand archetype is a mix between the Sage, the Outlaw and the Creator. As it was already described above, Sage brands are motivated by the desire to seek the truth and share it with others. The Outlaw brands set out to bring the change and challenge the status quo. As any other archetype, the Outlaw has several aspects, one of which is the Reformer. The author believes this aspect resonates with T&N characteristics of the brand that aims to uncover the truth about the industry and change it for the better: "The Reformer seeks to find ways to improve the existing system rather than destroy it completely." (Smith, 2016). The last archetype, the Creator, seeks for freedom and can be characterized by desire to realize a vision into something of enduring value (Smith, 2016). Based on the collected information, the author can make an assumption that the three archetypes possess the attributes that resonate with T&N brand personality. Thus, the author can conclude that "Fixer" characteristic of T&N evolved as a mix between the Sage, the Outlaw and the Creator archetypes and company's internal values, mission, vision and culture.

4.3 Casper

Getting the audience to know and engage with the brand was an important part of Casper's strategy from the very beginning. The start-up did not have a sufficient advertising budget to compete against the giants in the industry, thus it had to find an alternative way to compete for customers' attention (Huston, 2015). The best possible solution was to create a compelling brand identity that would appeal to brand's target audience and help to grow brand awareness. For this purpose, start-up paired up with Red Antler before launching the brand in 2013 (Faw, 2015). Red Antler is a Brooklyn-based advertising agency that helps companies with branding and strategy. Founded in 2007 by advertising industry professionals Emily Heyward and JB Osborne, Red Antler did rebranding of such start-ups as Birchbox and Foursquare (Winfrey, 2015). Together with Casper they teamed up to develop Casper's quirky brand identity, including branding strategy, e-commerce web-site and product packaging (Red Antler, 2016). According to Emily Heward, branding and design specialist and co-founder of Red Antler: "Casper's strategy is to think about traditional mattress advertising and to do the exact opposite" (Faw, 2015).

Casper brand elements

The brand building process started with the design of brand elements: brand name, brand logo, product packaging and so forth. The first step was to choose a name for the brand. Among the hundreds of potential brand names, the winning "Casper" was chosen. The name "Casper" has a personality, because it is a person's name. This brand name does not sound like a product or an organization, thus achieves a certain level of identity. It reminds of a cute character, a friendly ghost, well-known by everyone since the childhood (Wheeler, 2015). According to the words of Emily Heward, "it's a positive association, it's nostalgic, and it's soft and white". The logo of the brand was designed in minimalistic style. However, it features a curious-looking design element - a curl on the letter "C". This little detail attracts customer attention and makes the logo eye-catching and memorable. Emily Heward commented the

following about Casper logo design: “I see the mattress unfurling from the box, but other people say they see the neck and head of someone sleeping on a pillow.” (Whinfrey, 2015).

The product, the Casper mattress, has nothing in common with traditional mattress design. The mattress looks clean and beautiful with its white surface, minimalistic grey border and a little logo tag on side. The mattress is packed in a stylish white-blue box that is small and compact enough to be delivered by bike. Every Casper mattress comes with welcome kit, which includes a booklet, set-up instructions and a safety blade for opening the vacuum package. In addition to this, every customer receives a hand-written thank you note from the Casper team and a book of fairy tales. Red Antler designed every touchpoint to reflect Casper’s personality and establish a loving relationship with the customer (Red Antler, 2016).



Figure 10. Casper Brand items (Red Antler, 2016).



Figure 11. Casper Brand items (Red Antler, 2016).

A Lifestyle brand

Red Antler built Casper into a lifestyle brand, with a strategy centered not on the product but on the idea that better sleep leads to a brighter life. Most mattress brands talk to people who are in a search for a mattress. They talk about product features, correct spine alignment, pressure relief and other medical issues. Casper did the totally opposite. The company assumed that customers did not care too much about complicated diagrams showing layers of foam inside the mattress. Casper educates customers about the importance of good night's sleep. The brand gets people to think about how much more productive, more creative they would be, how their memory would improve and how more energetic and positive they would feel if they were getting a good sleep every night. According to Emily Heyward, "People want to get a good night's sleep because it facilitates all the other things that they want to do in the time that they're awake (...). That was how we framed Casper as more of a lifestyle brand than a mattress brand." (Winfrey, 2015).

Brand Imagery

Red Antler created a unique visual language for Casper to position it as a brand that stands for good night's sleep. Casper's imagery features real couples interacting with a mattress in real settings. Photos capture emotional benefits of a good night's rest and communicate Casper's playful, quirky personality, which stands out in the industry full of technical specs and confusing jargon (Red Antler, 2016).



Figure 12. Casper Imagery (RedAntler, 2016).

Marketing activities

Casper had to persuade consumers that their mattress is suitable for everyone. The company decided to do the totally opposite of conventional mattress advertising. Together with illustrator Tomi Um, Red Antler designed Casper's "The Perfect

Mattress” campaign, which appeared on subways, taxis and billboards all over the New York City and the United States. The series of eye-catching hand-drawn ads feature a variety of characters from humans to animals and fictionary creatures. These characters demonstrate many types of personalities for whom Casper is a perfect mattress (Red Antler, 2016). Minimalistic and eye-catching ads deliver brand message in a witty and humorous way in contrast to the conventional sales-oriented mattress ads saturated with discounts and pushy headlines. As Emily Heyward explained it, Red Antler wanted to present the brand in a humorous and unexpected way. The goal was to surprise the audience, to catch the attention and by this, to attract people to the brand (Winfrey, 2015).

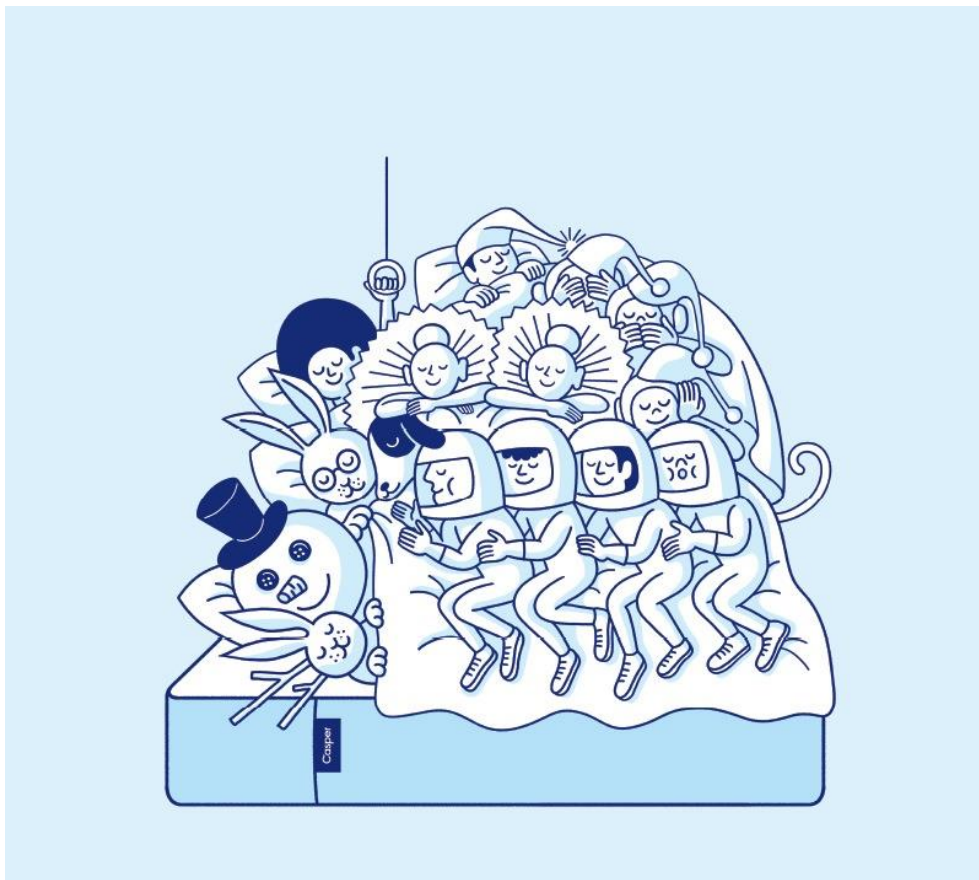


Figure 13. Casper subway ad (Red Antler, 2016).

Web-site design

Casper’s web-site features a clean and stylish design with dark-blue and white color combination. Color is one of the most powerful elements of web design as there is a

certain psychology behind each color. Colors have power to evoke certain emotions and affect customers' behavior. Colors of the web-site reflect characteristics of the brand, thus it is important for companies to consider the psychology behind each color. The web-site of the brand shall be designed in color scheme that supports the feelings that the brand wants to convey to its customers (Cetinkaya, 2014).

Casper's dark blue and white color scheme communicates trust, peace, transparency of the brand and perfection of the product. Blue is used in web-design to create a sense of calmness, trust, friendliness and brand loyalty. Darker shades of blue evoke greater feelings of security. For e-commerce store trust and security are very important especially when it comes to online payments (Coffin, 2013). In sleep industry blue is used to convey peace and calmness of a person having a good night's rest. White is the color of perfection. It is associated with purity, innocence, cleanliness and transparency. The use of so-called 'white space' helps to enhance the web-site design and to point attention to certain elements on page. This neutral color is a great choice for an ecommerce store as it is fresh and inviting (Andrew, 2015).

Casper created a good color match between visuals, content and buttons on their web-site. The visual harmony of Casper's web-site evokes desired emotions and feelings, communicates the brand message and overall contributes to the strong identity and recognition of the brand.

Web-site copy and functionality

Casper's simple and well-structured web-site changes the major perception about mattress buying process. It combines fun, catchy marketing messages with comprehensive information about the product, its features, benefits and reviews from real Casper owners. The company says their mattress is "human tested and approved" and it features unique springiness that "provides a helping hand to indoor sports" (Casper, 2016). Most people believe that it is important to try several mattresses before buying one, while in fact, lying down for 5 minutes on each mattress in a store does not help to make the right choice (Red Antler, 2016). Casper offers a free, 100-night trial with each mattress, making people more comfortable

and safe with making such a major purchase online. By offering the only one mattress option, Casper makes it easier for customers to make a decision. Customers just need to pick the size of the mattress, provide their data for delivery, pay for the order and get the mattress delivered straight to their door within a 1-hour window of their choice. By making the purchase process easy and convenient, Casper eliminated the majority of reasons why people do not shop online. The reasons are presented in the graph below.

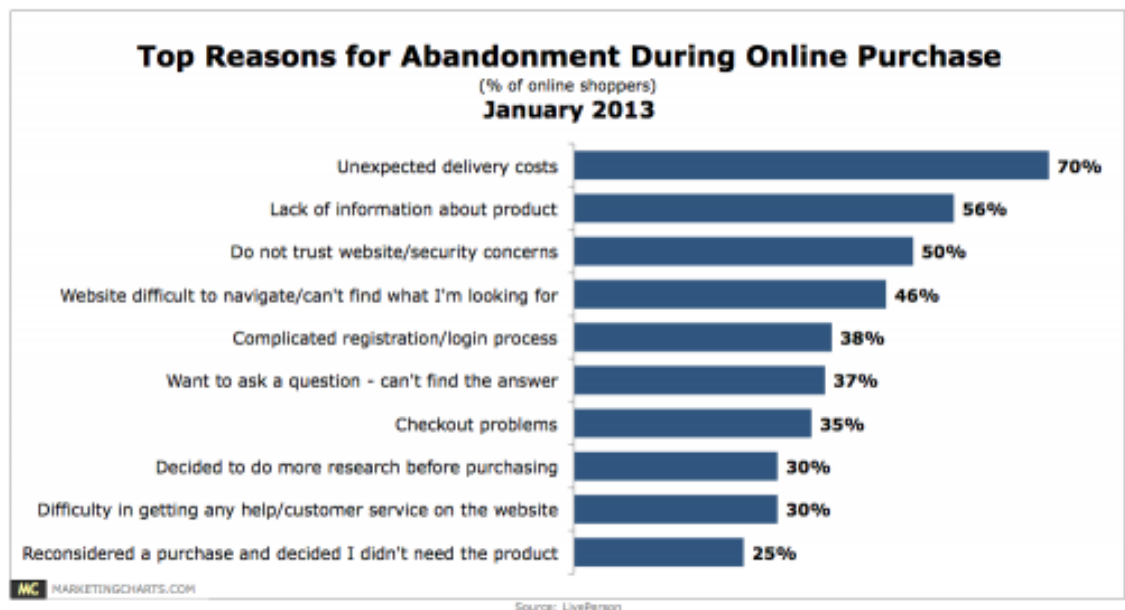


Figure 14. Top Reasons for Abandonment During Online Purchase (Marketing Charts, 2013).

Building relationships with customers

Red Antler helped Casper to position itself more than just a mattress company. Casper focuses on creating relationships with existing/potential customers and does not push their audience to make an immediate purchase. Casper has a fun social media strategy centered around the topics of sleep and bedtime. Social media enables Casper to establish a dialogue with its customers. The company instantly replies to comments, visitor posts, inbox messages and discussions on its brand Facebook page. According to the CEO Philip Krim, the company takes its business

seriously, however it does not take itself too seriously (Huston, 2015). Casper focuses on creating a positive customer experience before and after the purchase. The commitment to delivering customer value is genuine. The feedback from customers is highly positive - people are willing to share experiences with the brand by posting photos and videos featuring their new Casper mattress. Jeff Chapin, a Chief Product Officer at Casper commented the following: "I think it's partly driven by the fact that people want to share a positive experience from an internet transaction. They've gambled on a web purchase, and they feel like they've won. We're all about renewing trust." (Quito, 2015).

The example of Casper clearly illustrates that in today's competitive market it is no longer enough to offer just a functional product. It is more about delivering a surprise and delight to the customers and creating a superior experience which customers would be willing to share. Brand shall be able to challenge existing status quo and transform something what is odd and boring into fun and exciting. By designing the brand that stands out in the crowd of similar brands, companies can effectively compete for customer's attention and grow their brands over time.

4.4 Eve

Launched in early 2015 by Jas Bagniewski, Joe Moore, Kuba Wierczorek and James Fryer, Eve was one of the first online direct-to-consumer mattress companies in the UK. All co-founders have background in e-commerce, with Moore and Fryer being experts in mattress industry. Eve was started with a mission to create a great mattress that would be affordable for everybody. The start-up turned over £1 million during its first six weeks in business. In 2015 Eve entered German and French markets in 2016 and plans to launch the brand in the US in the nearest future (Burn-Callander, 2015).

Product & brand elements

Eve's essence of freshness and vitality is clearly expressed through its product and branding elements. The brand identity was created by Silas Amos, a designer with over 25 years experience in the field. The brand name "Eve" was one of many

possible names on the list. The company's belief in a perfect start has set the direction and helped to choose the right name of the brand."Every great day starts the night before" (Eve, 2016). The company wanted to set the brand apart from the competition. Instead of branding Eve as sleepy or dreamy, the company decided its brand should look playful, wide-awake, fresh and bright-eyed. The name "Eve" was chosen because it communicates "the start of things". Brand's vibrant yellow logo represents the rising sun. It is bright and playful with the two E's facing each other. The mattress design is beautifully simple with its white top cover and yellow side panels that make a statement. Eve is the only mattress company among the competition that offers a custom design of the mattress, featuring various famous quotes about the morning, the sun and waking up. Silas Amos (2015) commented the following about design of the mattress: "Nobody uses words – we could tell stories on a mattress, and be less boring. This set the template for all the limited edition work we went on to produce." (Eve, 2016).



Figure 15. The Eve mattress (Eve, 2016)

The white mattress box features a minimalistic look with brand's sunny logo on sides. The internal flap features the famous quote on the theme of waking up that further conveys the brand message. The mattress box was designed to look great on the trailers of bike couriers delivering the mattress around London and at customers'

doorsteps, especially in contrast to rainy and grey weather typical for London (The Dieline, 2015).

The first mattress prototype was built back in 2009. According to the words of Jas Bagniewski, CEO of Eve, the company wanted their mattress to be developed by people for people, rather than a group of scientists and engineers. It took 3 years of prototyping, customer feedback and constant improvement to design the final product. Eve wanted its product to be phenomenal, thus it was launched only after the company was sure the mattress was perfect. The Eve mattress was created with a thought that most people are not interested in technical details such as foam layers and mattress densities. The more important is how the layers are put together and complement each other in function. It is also important to emphasise that Eve keeps seeking for customer feedback and is constantly improving its product to match the needs and wishes of its audience. "Affordable luxury" - this is how the company describes its mattress. The mattress is manufactured in England, using only the highest quality materials. And it is sold at an affordable price of 700£ for the King size (160x200), what is significantly lower than industry average. The company simplifies the purchase process for its customers and offers a superior quality mattress available to everyone at a fair price (Eve, 2016).

Unique branding

A huge number of online mattress start-ups has emerged since 2012. Their offers are similar - only one mattress option, free in-home trial, free delivery, easy returns. It is quite hard to stand out among the competition. Eve differentiates itself with unique branding that focuses on the positive feelings after good night's sleep, rather than on sleep itself. Eve is about vitality and freshness. As explained by company's co-CEO and Head of Brand, Kuba Wiczorek: "Eve is striving to differentiate itself by focusing on the benefits and positive feelings after a great night's sleep as opposed to the sleep itself. We almost think of ourselves as an energy brand as opposed to a sleep brand. While the rest of the industry is saying, 'Good night,' we're saying, 'Good morning.'" Eve positions itself as a lifestyle brand, being all about feeling great after the well-slept night. This is also the reason why brand's color scheme is bright and

yellow, just like a morning sun, as opposed to traditional industry's shades of blue. Yellow is perceived as about being vibrant, full of life, happy and cheerful. Eve's yellow communicates the feeling of being well-rested after the night of good sleep. Such a differentiation helps to improve brand recognition and stand out in the crowd of nearly identical competitors (Li, 2016).

Experiential marketing

Unlike many other online companies who promote themselves via traditional channels such as Facebook and Google, Eve goes one step ahead and employs experiential marketing campaigns to grow its brand and communicate to the audience. After conducting the survey and learning that over 10.000 of Londoners experience lack of sleep, the company took the initiative and launched its "Nap Station" at The Old Truman Brewery in the center of London. The place is equipped with Eve beds, inviting visitors to take power naps and rest for a while. According to the words of Wieczorek, consumers are confused by the growing number of companies that offer only one mattress, deliver it in a box and give an in-home trial period, thus "It boils down to the experience that you give the customer and the strength of the brand" (Li, 2016).

Eve offers a discount coupon at The Nap Station, which can be used to make the purchase either at the place or online. Visitors who come to the Nap Station already know the brand and might be considering making a purchase. These potential customers might have doubts about making the purchase online without having any physical experience with the product, thus they come to the showroom to test the mattress. Offering a discount on a product that is normally full-priced not only creates a sense of urgency to purchase and prevents consumers from looking for other options, but also boosts their happiness. A study commissioned by Coupon.com and led Dr. Paul J. Zak (2012), professor of Neuroeconomics at Claremont Graduate University, revealed that coupons impact consumers' levels of happiness and stress. Those who receive coupons feel more relaxed and less stressed compared to those who do not. Consumers who receive an exclusive offer

experience the feelings of joy and delight. Often this is caused by an unexpected offer from a brand that rarely or never runs discounts (Nielsen, 2012).

Brand voice

Eve stands out on social media with its unique brand voice and visual content. Consistent brand message and design elements communicate unique brand personality and differentiate the brand amongst dozens of others. Eve has its own style conveyed through a clean and simple web-site with yellow, grey and white color combination. The same visual elements are used on brand's Facebook page. A consistent template is used for "quote" series of posts with the same font family and color scheme as on web-site. Eve brand logo is used as a background wallpaper (Macarthy, 2016).



Figure 16. Eve Sleep Facebook post (Eve Sleep Facebook page, 2016).

Eve knows that a catalogue photo of a mattress does not make for an engaging social media content. Eve imagery shows the mattress from different linear angles that are eye-catching, abstract and more visually appealing than plain product photos. Images often convey a story of a person or animal interacting with a mattress. Eve not only promotes its mattress, but also shares quirky photos, relevant quotes and stories

from the web. Brand colors and its core message about happy mornings and sunlight are sought out to feature in status updates (Macarthy, 2016).



Figure 17. Eve Sleep Facebook post (Eve Sleep Facebook page, 2016)

Eve is an example of a brand that does excellent content marketing by generating and sharing content that attracts new customers and is relevant and valuable for brand's audience. Eve mastered the art of communicating with existing and potential customers without explicitly selling the mattress. Instead of pitching the product or service, brand delivers consistent content that is interesting and valuable to the audience. This content strategy helps to attract potential buyers, build strong customer loyalty and keep social media audience engaged with the brand.

5 Results

The purpose of this thesis was to provide the case company with the information about the concept of brand identity and managerial tools and techniques that are

commonly used in brand building processes. The author also investigated the concepts of brand and branding to generate a better understanding of the topic of the research. The study then focused on investigating examples of competitors' brands and their brand identities in order to get an understanding of how a strong brand identity can contribute to brand awareness and success of the brand. The author then used the information acquired during the research process and the theoretical background generated from literature review to outline a basic brand identity for the case brand. The case company can then use the findings of the research and the basic brand identity presented by the author to develop Napsie into a stronger brand.

The author would like to mention that it is wrong to say that Napsie did not have a brand identity before just because it was not clearly defined. All brands have a base level identity even if it is not encrypted. Napsie has already achieved some certain brand identity, thus brand's advertising materials, web-site, imagery and other brand assets were a good source to proceed with brand development process further.

5.1 Napsie Brand Identity Prism

Napsie's core brand identity and brand values were defined with Kapferer's brand identity prism model. Although the prism model is a powerful tool for analyzing already existing brand identities, it can also be used in a brand creation process. The six facets of the model were defined to achieve a better understanding of the brand and get an in-depth insight into elements of brand identity.

Napsie's physique facet is a product itself – the mattress. Napsie offers only one mattress in five standard dimensions. However, there are significant details that distinguish the product from other products in the same category. Stylish design of the mattress sets it apart from the competition. The mattress features a white cover with a modern pattern and a solid black base. Yellow zipper running along the sides and light blue logo tag woven on the front right corner of the mattress make product design truly unique and attributable exclusively to Napsie. No similar design can be found in any other product in the same category.

The personality facet is expressed through brand imagery, specific communication tone and advertising materials. Napsie wants to be perceived as a playful and young brand whose products support millennial lifestyle. Many other brands in the same category have only generic imagery and rendered product images. Napsie imagery features young people in their daily routines of waking up in the morning, having breakfast in bed, relaxing, reading, watching movies, making bed etc. Notably, photos do not feature models, rather ordinary-looking people that consumers can identify with. One of the trends in advertising today is consumer-generated advertising that allows common people to participate in commercials. Average-looking people that look like ourselves are easier to connect and identify with. Moreover, they seem to be more inviting, welcoming to the brand (Lindstrom, 69). That is the main reason why common people have been invited to participate in Napsie photo shootings. Young people of millennial age group are attractive but do not look like super-models. Also, interiors were created to look more like what an average consumer would have at home, rather than like a picture from housing magazine. Interiors are nice and neat, yet look real and most important, affordable.

Napsie's culture is based on the notion that better sleep makes for better quality of life. Napsie is powered by innovation and desire to improve its products and services because brand's main mission is to help everyone achieve their best, well-slept self. Napsie designed one mattress that meets the needs of almost everyone and sells it online that makes mattress shopping easy and hassle-free. The passion and knowledge of people who have worked in industry for years is the power driving innovation, constant research and product development in order to deliver the best possible sleeping products and help people sleep better. Studio Moderna puts customer experience at the heart of every operation and runs its business with integrity for customers, suppliers and employees.

The next facet, self-image reflects how Napsie's customers see themselves through the brand. The mattress has been designed by experts in the industry, the company that has been selling mattresses for over 20 years and is well-known for its latest technologies, high quality products and excellent customer service. Napsie mattress

is a result of years of research and development in cooperation with a leading sleep laboratory. The mattress is built with innovative technology that allows it to be a perfect fit for the vast majority of body types, sleeping positions and preferences. Thus, the mattress is suitable for all kinds of sleepers. Napsie makes a fashion statement with its product design that is stylish and fits to any interior. The price of the mattress is much lower compared to mattresses of similar construction. Napsie is a mattress for those who appreciate innovation in design and who can stand out with their personality expressed through the choice of products. The young, playful personality of the brand resonates with millennial age group and appeals to older audience. The most probable reason for this is that mid-aged population can indulge in feeling themselves younger and being in line with modern trends through interaction with the brand. However, since the brand is yet very young, there has not been much research done and data available to analyze consumers' experiences of the brand. As soon as data is available, Napsie will be able to get an insight and outline a strategy how to develop the brand further.

This also affects the next facet, reflection. It is nearly impossible to identify how people see typical Napsie's consumers without any research done. People in advertising materials shall represent a group that can appeal to the majority of members within brand's target group. Napsie imagery features various personalities and lifestyles, representing the diversity of people to who Napsie is perfect. What all people from Napsie photos have in common is a fresh, energetic look after a good night's sleep. People are smiling, they look happy and full of life. The desired reflection is that Napsie customers are seen as energetic, healthy, happy and creative people who enjoy their fresher, brighter self and are able to get the most out of their time awake.

The next facet is relationship. Brands often involve with transaction and exchange between people, especially in the sphere of services and retail companies. This facet represents the behavior that is identified with brand; it refers to the relationship between people that a brand might symbolize: mother and child, two friends, teacher and student, etc. Relationship aspect is determined by the fact how brands

influence and provide services in connection to their customers. Brand is a voice that customers should be able to hear as brands exist in the market because of communication, such as advertising and direct consumers' communication.

Establishing relationship with consumer is crucial for building trust. When a strong relationship between consumer and the brand is created, it further ensures trust, attachment and commitment to the brand (Kapferer, 2008). Napsie creates personal relationships with its customers by being a brand that provides everyone with a better quality of sleep. Napsie is more than just a mattress – it is the best sleeping partner and life companion. By supporting any lifestyle, Napsie aims to make each and every new day brighter and full of positive energy after the night of great sleep. Brand promotes personal, friendly, trustworthy relationships and treats customers as friends. Napsie is always happy to answer customer questions or chat about sleep in general.

Brand Identity Prism takes into account internal and external aspects of the brand. This tool not only defines the brand's Essence, but also the Position. Essence is the internal aspect of the brand, a fundamental idea that drives the brand, its growth and success. It is most useful for brand managers as it gives focus and helps to align actions with what the brand essentially stands for. Position refers to external brand communications, the brand voice. It is about what brand communicates to its customers through advertising, PR and so on. Position clarifies how the brand makes difference, who it is targeted at and why its audience should consider choosing it over competitors' brands. Brand Identity Prism brings Essence and Position together in a simple, concise framework that is used by brand managers to define their brands and align marketing efforts with core brand identity (Kapferer, 2008)

BRAND IDENTITY PRISM

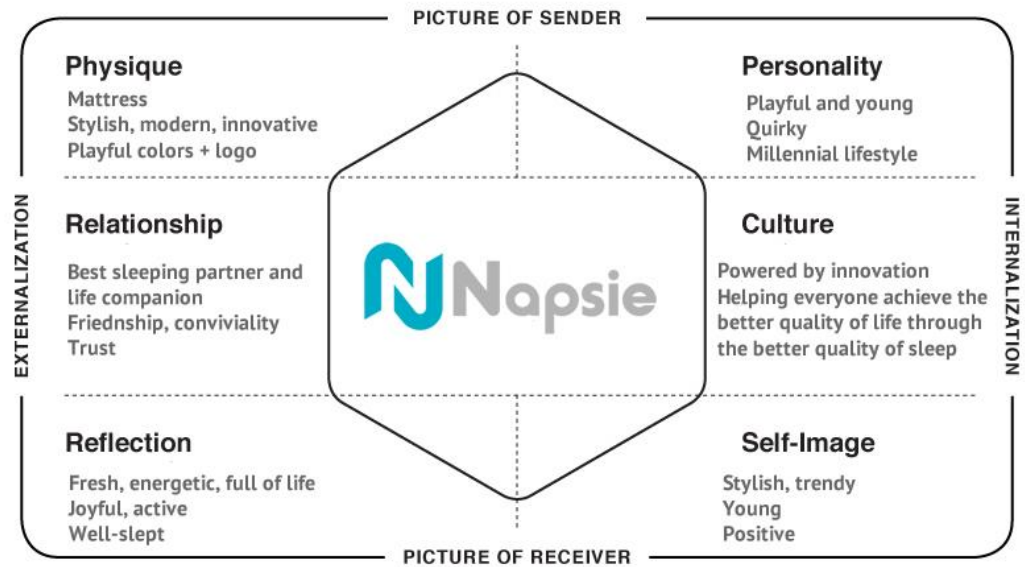


Figure 18. Napsie Brand Identity Prism (adapted from Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism Model, 2008)

Creating brand identity for Napsie is a process of defining the brand and creating consistent content for it. It is aimed at establishing the desired brand image and identifying what kind of brand identity will be effective to deliver brand's message to its consumers so that they would perceive the brand correctly. Napsie will use specific kind of language and imagery in its marketing, advertising and web-site materials. People from images are those who can be perceived as typical consumers of the brand; those who brand's target audience can easily identify and connect with. Napsie will be able to achieve the desired brand image among the consumers with a consistent and coherent communication across all mediums.

5.2 Napsie brand personality

As it was identified in Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism, Napsie is a brand with young and playful personality that fully supports and resonates with millennial lifestyle. According to Jennifer Aaker's Brand Personality Model (1997), Napsie's personality

can be described as exciting. It is daring as the product design is totally different from other products in the same category and it is something what many people do not have. Napsie is imaginative as it creates its magic world of sleep and dreams and emphasises the importance of good night sleep by telling the stories about characters that sleep on Napsie and thus, wake up fresh and full of energy for the upcoming day. Imagination can be seen in the product design – it is unique and stylish yet functional. The mattress features certain small details that set it apart and appeal to the customer - yellow zipper, small blue logo tag, white cover with a special pattern that provides a gentle feeling of massage. Napsie is up-to-date with current industry trends and customer demands and puts the maximum effort to deliver the product that would satisfy the majority of sleeping needs and eccentricities. Napsie sells its product online at a maximum convenience for the customer. Nowadays consumers put the benchmark high not only on the quality of products, but also services. Napsie does everything to match expectations and to create the best experience possible. Customer comfort and satisfaction is what brand cares about the most.

Napsie brand personality has not been officially encrypted in brand book. Instead, it is expressed through imagery that is used in advertising and other brand materials. Imagery is an important asset of the brand that communicates its personality and establishes connection between the brand and its consumers. Napsie uses specific kind of images in its advertising and marketing materials. Brand imagery is designed to deliver brand identity and to communicate desired brand image to consumers. As it was explained earlier in this thesis, Napsie imagery features young people of millennial age group that brand's target audience can identify and connect with. Images communicate the joy of brighter days that come from the well-slept nights. Brand imagery as well serves as a guideline for new photo and video shoots, content for PR placements or offline branding campaigns.



Figure 19. Napsie brand imagery (Napsie, 2016)

The choice of other imagery such as images used in social media is guided by Napsie brand identity. Napsie uses consistent visual design elements in its social media marketing materials such as colour, fonts and composition. A consistent template is used for “quote” series of posts - a dark blue background, white border and brand logo in the bottom of the image. Images of the product taken from different angles make for an eye-catching piece of social media content that is much more visually appealing than a plain catalogue photo of the mattress. When Napsie is not promoting its mattress, its brand colors and core idea of the brighter days from better sleep are communicated through interesting, catchy photos that brand shares in its status updates. The correct combination of colors that are similar to the ones used on site combined with the theme of the image that is closely connected to brand’s core message enables Napsie to deliver similar atmosphere as it does with its brand imagery. Napsie widely uses illustrations to communicate its brand message and reflect the playful, quirky aspect of the brand. The below illustration was used by the brand on its Facebook page to announce the International Friends Day, to generate engagement and to connect the event with the product. The message communicated together with illustration was the following: “Happy International Friends Day! And who are your best friend(s)? Tag them in the comments – on our Napsie party there is room for ALL your friends. The more, the merrier. ;)!”

every new day. Napsie creates the magical world of dreams with a mattress as a center of it. The brand tells stories about its imaginary characters that interact with a mattress. The core message of the brand is communicated by the characters that get a good night sleep on the Napsie mattress and live their lives more active and energetic. Stories are expressed through quirky, catchy illustrations that reflect the personality of the brand and communicate its message in unusual, remarkable way.

5.4 Napsie verbal identity

Brand's verbal identity refers to the way brand communicates with its audience. It is a specific style of communication that the recipient of the message is able to sense. Verbal identity includes every word released by the brand. Verbal identity is important as it helps to differentiate the brand and to create a certain brand image in minds of customers. The choice of words and tone are the two key factors used to create verbal identity. Word choice is a vocabulary used in advertising and marketing messages, while tone refers to the way in which product is presented and what kind of atmosphere it delivers. Strong brands speak with one distinctive voice and communicate a memorable, identifiable message that is unified across all channels. The most effective brand messages distill the essence of product or service while being accessible and meaningful to customers (Cummings, 2014).

A tone of voice is an expression of brand's personality and set of values. It is about people behind the brand, their way of thinking and what they have to share with the world. Carefully chosen words and specific tone of voice can be used to persuade the audience and to breed certain feelings. It also helps to build trust as writing becomes familiar to the customer hence more likely to be perceived as credible. Brand's tone of voice is built based on the core values of the company, the purpose of communication and what it has to tell to the world. A clear mission that justifies brand's existence and its core values shall be asserted. These will give direction for the style of writing and shape the copy (Cummings, 2014).

When defining Napsie’s brand vocabulary and tone of voice, it is important to align it with brand identity otherwise the brand might be perceived incorrectly. Napsie’s tone of voice is informal, friendly and down-to-earth. The choice of words presented below provides guidelines for brand communication so that messages are coherent in different mediums. It is important to take into account that Napsie is present in several countries across Europe and will continue its expansion in the nearest future. Therefore, brand messages shall be translated to local languages. It is crucial to preserve the overall feeling in the messages and this is why translation shall not be literal. However, some social media content can be written in English as brand’s target audience is young and speaks the language. This is especially relevant for jokes, quotes and sayings that make sense only in English.

Based on the slogan, mission and promise of the brand, the author outlined the characteristics of brand voice and prepared a basic guideline for brand vocabulary and the choice of words for brand messages. The guideline is presented as a table below.

Brand Slogan	The perfect mattress for better sleep	
Brand mission	To bring the joy of brighter days through the better quality of sleep	
Brand promise	Innovative sleeping solutions that meet highest quality standards and will help our customers sleep better. Outstanding customer service and easy purchase process.	
Characteristics of brand voice		
Quirky (Irrevent) “We are not afraid to express ourselves and challenge the status quo.	Friendly “We are talking to our customers as we would talk to our friends who we	Simple “We use everyday language to explain technical details and

<p>We are playful, unexpected and use illustrations in our communication. We do not take ourselves too seriously, however we are serious about our product”</p>	<p>respect and appreciate. We do not use formal language. We avoid using too much slang and jargon. We are personal and unassuming”.</p>	<p>features of the product. We leave only the terms that are familiar and understood by the majority of the audience. The copy shall be naturalistic, clear and easy to understand yet not too casual. We avoid marketing jargon and superlatives”.</p>
Brand vocabulary		
<p>Purpose of the message (characteristic of the tone)</p>	<p>Undesired vocabulary</p>	<p>Desired vocabulary</p>
<p>Addressing our customers. (Highlighting a friendly aspect of the brand and giving a more personalized touch. Addressing customers as friends who we respect)</p>	<p>Read more about Napsie mattress</p>	<p>Get to know the Napsie mattress</p>
	<p>Thanks!</p>	<p>Thank you, John (it is always better to address customer by name to make the message more approachable and respectful)</p>
	<p>We appreciate you contacted us</p>	<p>Hi! Thanks for reaching us out!</p>
	<p>Follow us on social media</p>	<p>Let’s keep in touch! (being inviting and not bossy)</p>
	<p>Call us</p>	<p>Let’s have a talk</p>
	<p>Leave a message</p>	<p>Let’s chat</p>

Establishing emotional connection to the customer and showing that Napsie cares about the needs of each customer	Designed to be a perfect fit for everyone	Designed with your needs in mind
Highlighting the benefits of the product	The mattress is built with latest technologies	The mattress is built with innovative technologies (making accent on the innovative aspect of the product)
	Our top memory foam layer will make you feel like you are sleeping on a cloud	Our top memory foam layer relieves pressure and provides deep comfort (avoiding superlatives)
Highlighting the benefits of service	Free delivery	Free courier delivery straight to your door (implying on simplicity of purchase process)
	101-night free trial	101-night risk-free trial and returns for full refund (explaining trial in more details. Highlighting the risk-free aspect of purchase)
Encouraging to take an action and promising something new, valuable and exciting to the customer	Check out our new offer	Discover(Explore) our limited offer (Implying that offer is time limited and creating an urge to take advantage of it)

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6 Discussion

The thesis and the brand identity research conducted by the author provide essential information for Napsie brand management team about how to build an identity for a new brand. The research questions were answered and the answers are valuable for company's next steps in brand building process. The research can inform decisions concerning branding and marketing strategies. The study also gives a valuable base for further research about Napsie brand and its development.

The thesis has a clear purpose - to provide the company with insights into brand building process and to outline a basic identity for Napsie brand that can be further developed in next steps of brand building process. The thesis has a clear continuity and logical structure. First, it provides an insight into the history branding and explains what a brand is so that the reader gets an understanding of these concepts. The thesis introduces brand management tools that are used by companies to build strong brands. The author presents an overview of competitors' brands and their identities in order to explain how a strong brand identity contributes to growth and success of the brand. Competitors' brand identities were benchmarked to illustrate examples of how other companies are building brands in the same product category and which practices can potentially be employed for the case brand. In the end the author uses data collected during the research to introduce a basic identity for the Napsie brand.

The thesis examines the brand through the three main concepts: brand identity, brand personality and brand image. The research and theoretical background are mostly based on the works of well-known authors in the world of branding such as David and Jennifer Aaker, Jean-Noel Kapferer and Kevin Lane Keller. These authors have introduced key branding concepts and tools that are still widely used in modern branding such as Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism Model, Brand Personality Scale by

Jennifer Aaker and David Aaker's Brand Identity System. The author thinks that these concepts complement each other and together with a theoretical background give a clear understanding about brand building and brand management processes. David Aaker's Brand Identity System and Kapferer's Prism Model are mostly focused on brand's core identity while Jennifer Aaker's Brand Personality Scale and Archetypes System by Mark & Pearson focus on establishing a personality for the brand that would efficiently convey its meaning and help to match brand identity with brand image. The end goal of branding activities is to achieve a maximum correlation between the projected brand identity and customer's perception of the brand.

Napsie is a new brand, therefore one of the main concerns for brand management team is how to differentiate it from competitors. In today's global market every day new brands and products are being launched and the competition is very high. Therefore, companies strive to differentiate from the others by focusing on building unique and memorable brands. Strong differentiation in product, service as well as in branding activities is necessary to build a powerful brand that will not vanish within its first few years of existence. It is important to have a compelling offer, innovative product or service that captures attention of the target audience. However, it is equally important to build a unique brand identity that will help to differentiate the brand among its rivals. The author believes that insights provided by this thesis will help the company to build a compelling identity for the Napsie brand that will contribute to the growth and success of the brand in the future.

7 Suggestions for future research

The creation of brand identity requires actions from brand management team as well as from the whole organization. The author recommends that brand management team uses insights provided by this thesis to enhance and further develop the identity of the Napsie brand. It is advisable to conduct a comprehensive research about existing customers and reasons behind their purchase decision. The insights will help to understand buying habits and motives of the target audience. The data

can be used to create customer segments and adjust communication according to the profile of each target group. This is especially important in the world of digital advertising where competition is strong and customers are exposed to endless number of choices on daily basis. Establishing emotional connection to the customers by communicating rational benefits that match the needs and interests of certain target audience is crucial to attract new customers to the brand. This phenomenon of rational and emotional decision-making process was explained in previous chapters of thesis and can provide valuable information for designing branding and marketing materials. The author also recommends conducting a brand image research to examine customers' perceptions of the brand and the extent to which Napsie brand image corresponds to its identity. The findings can be used to adjust marketing and branding strategies accordingly.

As far as the company plans to expand the brand across the markets, researches shall be conducted for each market specifically. It is important to know competitors and their offers as well as specific traits of each culture. Brand communications should be adjusted according to the cultural differences of each country. This is especially relevant for the brand that employs humor in its communications because the perception of what is funny varies across cultures. Napsie aims to be perceived as a lifestyle brand, therefore it is important to get insights into local way of living as well as values and attitudes that prevail in certain culture.

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