

## Brand identity co-creation of Hailuodon Panimo

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<p>This qualitative case study explores brand identity co-creation of a Finnish craft brewery Hailuodon Panimo with the aim to identify core values of Hailuodon Panimo and related associations held by various stakeholders, and compare intended and enacted brand identities between founders, employees and customers.</p> <p>First the broader context of co-creation is shortly introduced before focusing on branding. Relevant branding concepts are explored in their classic meanings and through co-creation, which is a modern school of brand management combining views of identity and image schools. In the co-creational view, brand identity is set by the organization but cannot be controlled by it. Brand identity is fluid and evolves. A theoretical framework for brand identity co-creation is presented and applied in the deductive study, yet the process itself is not the focus. In the framework personal values of founders lead to the formation of foundational brand identity which then evolves due to behaviours, actions and communication by the company and various stakeholders. Brand identity is constantly being adjusted to the changing environment, which is the essence of co-creation. The theoretical framework presents brand identity co-creation as a linear yet iterative process.</p> <p>Data was collected through 15 semi-structured phone interviews with founders, employees and customers who had visited the brewery. Results showed that the foundational brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo includes core values of being sustainable and genuine which are connected to the island of Hailuoto. Various interconnected associations reflecting the foundational brand identity were detected. Founders had brand associations connected to all three aspects of foundational brand identity. This intended brand identity was enacted similarly, but employees enacted aspects focused on sustainability and customers those on being genuine.</p> <p>Based on the empirical part multiple brand identities co-exist reflecting the foundational brand identity. This differs from the linear view presented in the theoretical framework. There were indications that individuals view the Hailuodon Panimo brand through personal values, but this calls for future inquiries as the process and reasons why were not the focus in this study. It was identified that external stakeholders view the Hailuodon Panimo brand through visible and evident cues – outside in – and internal stakeholders through deeper characteristics – inside out – which calls for notice in communication done by the company.</p> <p>This publication excludes one confidential appendix and the reflection of learning.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Co-creation, branding, brand identity, brand management	

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# 1 Introduction

Managing Brand Image, the topic of my bachelor's thesis in 2004 portrayed thinking of the time. Yet the world and businesses along have developed immensely, the notion from the past can still be recognised today. In the traditional view, a strong brand is stable, unchanging, and *controlled* by the organization. Image reflects identity and if not corresponding to it, measures are taken for people to mirror the desired image.

Internet has enabled people to connect, network and share information. Yet many classic theories and definitions still give understanding to branding, new views are needed to connect with the world of today. Co-creation is one of them. Co-creation was first used to describe value creation in our changed world (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004) and has been linked to services, innovation and more. In branding co-creation means that the first form of brand identity is created by the organization but from there the brand begins to evolve. The company can direct the brand but cannot control it.

By reading this thesis, an understanding will form of what co-creation is both in essence and related to branding. In the changed world some concepts become less of relevance and new ones emerge. In modern discussion brand identity gets new forms such as intended and enacted brand identity making brand image perhaps less important due to its passiveness. Stakeholders are not passive; they are active and have an impact. They co-create brands by interacting with brands and with each other in smaller and bigger networks both online and offline. Brands impact stakeholders, stakeholders impact brands and stakeholders impact each other. This also changes the view to strong brands. In an ever-changing world a strong brand is flexible.

This study will tackle co-creation of brand identity through a relatively young craft brewing business by examining the foundational brand identity and its' co-creation with different stakeholders. Most importantly, there is no single brand identity but multiple ones that continue to develop.

## 1.1 Case company

Hailuoto is an island in the Bothnian Bay about 55 kilometres and a 30-minute ferry ride away from Oulu. The island has been inhabited for more than 1,000 years and today has some 1,000 residents. As shown in Figure 1 traditional buildings, glorious nature with beautiful shorelines and sand dunes can be found on the island. Hailuoto is one of the National Landscapes of Finland. (Municipality of Hailuoto s.a.a.)



Figure 1. Images from Hailuoto (Adapted from following sources, map: Google Maps 2020; pictures on top and bottom rows: Municipality of Hailuoto s.a.b; pictures on middle row: Kaukonen 2017)

Hailuodon Panimo, located on the island, is a craft brewery producing organic, German style beers. The company was founded in 2017 and employs 8 people. There are some 14 products in the current selection and the annual production is approximately 100,000 litres. Hailuodon Panimo is the first organic craft brewery in Finland. The island's ground water used in production is highly suitable for German style lager beers. As shown in figure 2, beers are packed in 0.75 litre, traditional style cap bottle. Prices in retail are just above or below 10 € and cost 7 € at the brewery store. Products can be found throughout the country in selected retail stores, bars and restaurants, but the Oulu region forms a significant part of sales. As a result of the change in legislation, Hailuodon Panimo opened a pub and store at the brewery premises in 2018 providing a point of direct interaction with customers. (Hailuodon Panimo 2020a.)

The difference between a microbrewery and a craft brewery is in annual production (Finnish Tax Administration 2019) and Hailuodon Panimo fills the criteria of a craft brewery. Setting aside production quantities, Hailuodon Panimo is a microbrewery according to the CEO, as the company does not find itself practising craftsmanship.

# HAILUODON PANIMO



Figure 2. Images of Hailuodon Panimo (Hailuodon Panimo 2020b)

Being sustainable and supporting the local community has been important for the company since its very beginning and these values derive from the founders themselves. The company does not want to be overly commercial and has not systematically built its brand yet thought and precision has been put in visual details and products, and the company has a consistent representation of its brand, due to the background and skillset among founders. As theory will later explain, at first founder values a core part of brand identity from which identity begins to evolve. Hailuodon Panimo wants to develop its communications and marketing in a non-commercial manner. The company has not so far examined how stakeholders perceive the brand and after three years of business an internal and external review of the brand is relevant. It serves as a basis for development of communications and marketing.

## 1.2 Objectives of this study

The main objective of this study is to *explore the brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo from a co-creative perspective* with multiple stakeholders and collect information that inspires future development. Focus will be on core values and related central and distinguishing attributes from the viewpoints of different stakeholders. The aim is to understand the intended and enacted brand identities. The outcome is a description of the brand identity elements in terms of core values and related attributes in the co-creational context that can be used in the company in several ways for example: to better engage with stakeholders, deepen brand identity through storytelling, positioning purposes and future marketing strategies. During the process it is likely that differentiating factors of the Hailuodon Panimo brand will be identified. In addition, based on exploring brand identity co-creation, suggestions will be given how co-creation can be continued with in the company.

The main research problem is: *What is the co-created brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo?*

The sub-questions helping to solve the main research problem are:

- 1) What are the identified *core values* of Hailuodon Panimo?
- 2) What are *brand meanings* and *associations* that *enrich* core values through co-creation?
- 3) What is the *intended* brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo?
- 4) What is the *enacted* brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo?

### **1.3 Scope and limitations**

This thesis generates understanding how the Hailuodon Panimo brand is viewed by founders, employees and the consumer group of brewery visitors. Additional stakeholder groups exist such as shareholders, suppliers, b2b customers and retail consumers. Reasoning for the selected stakeholder groups will be returned to in Data collection and sample, and the theoretical part also gives understanding why these groups were chosen. In short, research questions, existing timeframe and available human resources impacted which stakeholder groups were chosen for this study.

*Founders* and *employees* were essential to be included but alone insufficient to answer research questions. External stakeholders needed to be involved to understand the enacted brand identity. Consumers are a valuable stakeholder group for Hailuodon Panimo. As the thesis project needed to be reasonably sized as was carried out within a limited timeframe, there was reason to narrow and further define the type of consumers to be involved. Numerous factors supported the choice of *brewery visitors*. As previously mentioned, the brewery pub and store in Hailuoto is an important sales channel for the company and growing in significance. Customers visiting the brewery are a reachable group compared to retail and restaurant or pub customers throughout the country. Furthermore, the brewery as a place is a unifying aspect to founders, employees and brewery customers, which helps designing the study and evaluating its validity and reliability.

The study might reveal insights on the process of co-creation yet the process itself is out of scope. Neither is this thesis about co-creative brand management yet to form brand identity, you need to look inside and outside of the company which forms the first phase of co-creative brand management (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 113-116). Furthermore, as brand

identity is a broad concept, it is reminded that the focus in this study is to understand core values and related central and distinguishing attributes.



## 2 Theoretical background

The theoretical background will begin by exploring co-creation in brief. This insight is a foundation when moving into examining relevant branding concepts, which each are first explained as they are and then through the view of co-creation. Finally, the essence of brand identity co-creation is discussed, and a theoretical framework is presented.

### 2.1 Co-creation

The term co-creation was introduced in 2004 by Prahalad and Ramaswamy in their article Co-creation experiences: The next practice in value creation. Co-creation was defined as “the joint creation of value by the company and the customer... allowing the customer to co-construct the service experience to suit their context” (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004, 8). Similar to the original article (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004, 9) in a later book, Ramaswamy and Gouillart (2010, 5-7) describe how the essence of co-creation is in the *interaction* between individuals inside and outside an organization through which learning, new insights and innovation take place.

The difference between a traditional enterprise and a co-creative one is in the way value is created. For a traditional company, stakeholders are passive receivers of actions done by the company on the company’s terms. In a co-creative organization, on the contrary, stakeholders personally and actively engage in value creation through their own lived and anticipated experiences. (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004, 7-8; Ramaswamy & Gouillart 2010, 5-7.)

Many things have been labelled under co-creation such as mass collaboration, crowdsourcing, social networking with customers or enabling customers to personalise products. Disagreement exists whether these are examples co-creation to begin with (Ind, Iglesias & Schultz 2013, 9) but the way in which individuals are engaged is seen to unify the listed concepts as focus is on experiences the individual has not the company’s own products and services (Ramaswamy & Gouillart 2010, 5).

The following two definitions sum up how the concept of co-creation has evolved from a single occasion to a process, to *creating* something *new*, and that yet value creation has endured, it now includes *others*, not just an individual stakeholder. The following two definitions form the foundation through which co-creation is viewed in this thesis. Ind et al. (2013, 9) define co-creation as “an active, creative, and social process based on collaboration between organizations and participants that generates benefits for all and creates value for stakeholders.” Ind and Coates (2013, 92) view co-creation as a “process

that provides an opportunity for on-going interaction, where the organization is willing to share its world with external stakeholders and can generate in return the insight that can be derived from their engagement.”

The relevance of co-creation is embedded in the intensified competition in addition to the networked and connected people who want to have an impact on businesses and brands. Organizations co-create for example to engender deep understanding of customers and their desires, to innovate, manage brands, reduce risks, reduce costs or to achieve competitive advantage (Ind, Iglesias & Markovic 2017, 310; Ind & Schmidt 2019, 83). People co-create to be empowered, participate, learn, experience something unique and influence others and brands (Ind, Fuller & Trevail 2012, 156).

Co-creation can occur in various ways online and offline for example in workshops and communities involving from a few to hundreds of participants (Ind et al. 2013, 5). Yet co-creation is seen to suit various types of businesses and stakeholder relations from suppliers to consumers (Ramaswamy & Guillard 2010, 6), the importance and benefits of co-creation in innovation, maintaining customer relationships and differentiation are seen to depend on the type of brand in question (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 230-232 & 270).

Ind et al. (2017, 310-312 & 316-317) express two ways in which organizations can use co-creation: tactical or strategic. These concepts are explained to understand development ideas and discussion in this thesis. As the authors clarify, one approach is not better than the other. Most co-creation is tactical according to their research. It means that co-creation is used to connect with customers but as a market research tool in which internally created concepts are validated externally with stakeholders providing a source for opinions and deeper insight than traditional market research methods deliver. The authors recommend companies to begin with tactical co-creation. As there is more experience and confidence, and if the organisational culture is supportive, co-creation can be used more strategically, and focus moves from outcome to the process itself.

In strategical co-creation stakeholders are involved in all areas of co-creation beginning from idea generation, not just giving their opinions on what the organisation has generated. Ind et al. (2017, 310-312 & 316-317) remind that when creating something new, the outcome is uncertain. Strategical co-creation involves more risks and might require new ways of working such as involving managers and employees cross business divisions and teams, sharing knowledge with participants and, especially in technical fields, believing in the competence of customers to innovate. Therefore, some organizations prefer to remain in tactical co-creation. (Ind et al. 2017, 310-312 & 316-317.)

## 2.2 Branding

Branding is often seen to be limited to communications and marketing but for a brand to truly differentiate from others, the organization needs to be involved in large (Kapferer 2012, 31). Relevant branding related concepts regarding the context of this thesis are explained in this section, and key models and frameworks are presented to support understanding. Not all presented models and theories are directly applied in the empirical part but are included to build relevant understanding on branding in the scope of this thesis. Each concept is first defined and then viewed from the point of co-creation bringing new perspectives to definitions when such a connection exists.

### 2.2.1 Brand identity

Before looking into brand identity, it is relevant to shortly view what a brand is. At its simplest a brand can be defined as “a distinguishing name and or symbol intended to identify the goods or services of one seller from those of competitors” (Aaker 1991, 110 in Kapferer 2012, 11). This definition is clear in terms of differentiating something from something else but is limited to *goods* and *services* of a *seller*. As pointed out in many publications (de Chernatony 2012, 20; Ind & Schmidt 2019, 7; Kapferer 2012, 87-94), people such as celebrities, politicians or bloggers are considered brands as well as places such as countries, cities or art museums. Kapferer (2012, 12) tackles these limitations with the definition of a brand as “a name that symbolizes a long-term engagement, crusade or commitment to a unique set of values, embedded into products, services and behaviours, which make the organization, person or product stand apart or stand out.” ISO brand standards (The American Marketing Association 2020) give a clear definition to a brand by stating it is an “intangible asset that is intended to create distinctive images and associations in the minds of stakeholders, thereby generating economic benefit/values.”

The shift from the service economy to the experience economy has made visible that functional and emotional values, which are seen to characterize brands to some extent, have been means for organizations to build brands representing an input perspective. Successful brands, however, take an output perspective aiming to deliver unique and desired experiences. From this new view “a brand is a cluster of functional and emotional values that enables a promise to be made about a unique and welcomed experience.” (De Chernatony 2012, 17.)

The context of co-creation brings an additional perspective. From the co-creational view a brand is fluid (Iglesias, Landgraf, Ind, Markovic & Koporcic 2020, 33) not static.

Traditionally brands are seen to be defined and controlled by the company and stakeholders are receivers of a brand. From the co-creational view, stakeholders impact brands and brands impact stakeholders. A brand is an experience supporting our own identities and how we want to be seen (Ind, Fuller & Trevail 2012, 21-22). It is unnecessary to choose between definitions as also the traditional views bring understanding and reasoning to the meaning of a brand. De Chernatony (2012, 73) concludes well after evaluating different views to brands by explaining that brands are a mixture of interpretations and the different views should not be found contradictory but serving as “building blocks” to understanding brands.

Brand identity is “the brand's meaning, aim and self-image” (Kapferer 2012, 151) and it captures both tangible and intangible characteristics of the brand – everything that makes the brand what it is and without which it would be something different (Kapferer 2012, 154). Brand identity is defined when there is understanding of the following: the vision and aim of the brand, differentiating factors, need(s) the brand fills, values of the brand, field of competence and signs in addition to the graphic representation making the brand recognizable (Kapferer 2012, 154).

Aaker (2010, 68) defines brand identity as “a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain” and continues (Aaker 2010, 70) that it should “reflect the soul and vision of the brand, what it hopes to achieve.” Brand identity is seen to comprise a core and extended identity. The core brand identity remains stable over time and captures central values that make the brand valuable and unique. The extended brand identity describes the brand profoundly. (Aaker 2010, 68-70.)

The brand system (Kapferer 2012, 33) and the brand identity prism (Kapferer 2012, 158) are two complementing and interesting models giving understanding to brands and brand identity. According to Kapferer (2012, 32-34) most brands can be viewed through the brand system of a triangle or “pyramid” which comprises of six levels. The tip of the triangle is the brand’s vision and purpose stipulating its reason of existence. After the second level of core brand values, the third level represents the unique character in which the brand communicates verbally and non-verbally. The fourth level is the brand’s positioning, the way the brand wants to be seen in the eyes of customers. In essence, it is four or five attributes communicating the vision of the brand. Physical signature, the fifth level, articulates how the positioning comes across in the product, communications and activities. The broadest and lowest level represents the positioning of individual products under the same brand, in their representative segments. What is interesting is the difference of perspectives. Where the organization views the brand from top to bottom, the

customer has the opposite perspective seeing the tangible and evident first. Brands should be built from top down bearing in mind the customer perspective. (Kapferer 2012, 32-34.)

The components of brand identity (de Chernatony 2012, 54) has similarities to the brand identity prism by Kapferer (2012, 158-164) but the latter is presented as it is more comprehensive. The brand identity prism presented in Figure 3 is a hexagon comprising of six interrelated aspects or “facets”: physique, personality, culture, relationship self-image and reflection. Physique and personality represent the organization view namely “picture of sender,” and reflection and self-image the customer view namely “picture of recipient.” Physique is the physical and visual appearance of the brand in terms of products and their designs. Personality depicts what kind of person the brand would be and the way it would communicate. From the six facets of brand identity, culture is considered most significant by Kapferer (2012, 159). The brand’s vision, its heritage and core values are embedded in its culture. Relationship is how the brand connects with its customers through its service, for example. Reflection is often misinterpreted to represent the ideal target of the brand and yet reflection aims to mirror the customer or an image of them, in fact relevant is the way the customer “wishes to be seen as a result of using the brand” (Kapferer 2012, 162) and the type of people would describe the brand to be for. Self-image is on the opposite side from reflection. It is the way the person feels about himself or herself because of using the brand. The view a person holds of a brand impacts the self-image of that person.

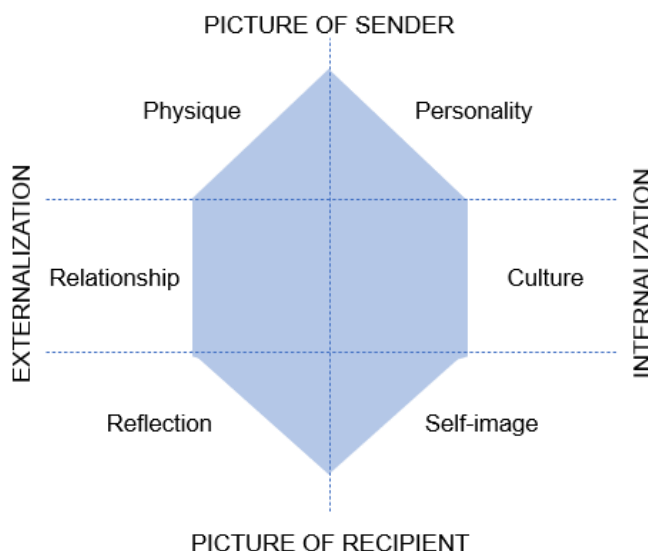


Figure 3. Brand identity prism (adapted from Kapferer 2012, 158)

Yet the brand identity prism is not applied in the empirical part of this study, it is a widely used model and builds understanding on brand identity. Co-creational brand identity models that the student has found focus on the *process* of brand identity co-creation. Considering the scope of the thesis, it is justified to also present *factors and components* of brand identity and not assume the reader is familiar with them. Therefore, relevant models and theories in the scope of this thesis are presented to have sufficient understanding on brands and branding yet not all presented models and theories are directly applied in the empirical part.

As with the earlier definition to a brand, traditional and co-creational views differ in how stable brand identity is and who defines it. Traditionally brand identity has been seen to be defined by the company, expressing meaning from the sender's side and then communicating it to internal and external stakeholders (Aaker 2010, 68; Kapferer 2012, 151; Da Silveira, Lages & Simões 2013, 28). A consistent, clear and coherent brand identity has been pursued to stabilize the brand in changing markets. Today markets are increasingly dynamic and competition has intensified. Brand identity still expresses the uniqueness of a brand, differentiates brands from other brands and is a tool for brand management but marketing is now focused on relationships requiring consumer participation and involvement for value creation (Da Silveira et al. 2013, 28).

Paradoxically, an enduring brand identity now requires being dynamic and flexible not static as seen before (Da Silveira et al. 2013, 28-29). Even from the co-creational view brand identity is created inside the company (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 192) and is often based on the values and beliefs of its founders. Employee actions and communications influence the development of brand identity (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 192). Brand identity evolves over time and it is a dynamic process to which not only brand managers but also other social constituents, such as customer communities impact (Da Silveira et al. 2013, 35). Evolvement continues as, independently from the organization, consumers have emotions and relations with the brand, and online or offline brand communities are created (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 170). Relevant stakeholders impose (enact) their own identity and concurrently co-create the brand. Brand identity is defined as “an ever-evolving connotation, rooted in a brand's history, philosophy, practises and ambitions but subject to constant mediation an re-interpretation as its meaning is co-created by a brand's stakeholders” (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 170).

The foundation for modern co-creational views on brand identity have been laid down half a century ago. Da Silveira and his colleagues (2013, 31-32) review what (personal) identity is from a sociologist perspective and draw to work of Goffman from late 1950's

and 1960's. Identity is seen 1) as a performance, 2) as socially constructed 3) a dynamic process and 4) self-identity aims to "balance the expressions the individual gives and the expressions the individual gives off". An individual person's identity comprises of the self-perception identity, the person they would prefer to be (intended identity), and the "self they wish others to perceive" (desired image). The role the individual chooses for himself becomes in the end the identity. (Da Silveira et al. 2013, 31.)

Individuals reflect their identities into the brands they use, and individual identities are impacted by those of brands. The impact to a brand's identity is not limited to contributions from brand managers and customers only, it is impacted by "competition, industry and environmental conditions, and partners' actions". The authors also draw upon a framework on brand identity based on this. (Da Silveira et al. 2013, 33-35.) As Da Silveira et al. (2013, 33) discuss the various views of brand identity, they capture an excellent definition that not only reflects what is central about traditional definitions, such as core values of the brand, but also include understanding of the ever changing brand that is defined by multiple parties.

Brand identity is a dynamic concept that originates among brand managers, and that further develops through mutually influencing inputs from managers and other social constituents (eg. consumers); this development involves distinguishing, central and enduring attributes, where enduring takes a dynamic meaning – core values maintain consistency over time while other dimensions vary, when needed, to adjust to the environmental context. (Da Silveira et al. 2013, 33.)

This definition describes in essence what co-created brand identity is and how it is understood in this thesis.

## **2.2.2 Brand image**

The heading for this section could also have been named intended and enacted brand identity. At this point the theoretical part is somewhat complex. It discusses both brand *identity* and brand *image*. Intended brand identity, enacted brand identity and brand image are connected and overlap. Complexity also derives from the crossing of co-creational and traditional views. When the framework for brand identity co-creation is discussed in 2.3.1, the terms of intended and enacted brand identities will be returned to. This section begins by viewing the concept of brand image before tackling intended and enacted brand identity.

In the traditional view brand image mirrors brand identity and is defined for example as the "result and interpretation of brand identity" (Kapferer 2012, 151) and a reflection of "current perceptions of a brand" (Aaker 2010, 180). "Brand image is on the receiver's side" and is a result of decoding signals originating from the brand offering and brand

communication (Kapferer 2012, 151). De Chernatony (2012, 56) makes an excellent remark when stating that “people do not react to reality but to what they perceive to be reality” that justifies the customer-centred approach to brands as image. De Chernatony continues that the direct and indirect experiences the customer has with a brand creates a set of associations over time. Different people can see similar characteristics in a brand but are unlikely to hold a precisely similar image as everyone has their own, differing experience. Understanding customer perceptions allows more successful communications since the message the company wishes to communicate might be differently understood. (De Chernatony 2012, 56-57.)

Intended and enacted brand identity are terms which are brought into equation in the modern discussion of brand identity. In quantity, however, discussion on these novel concepts is still limited. Intended and enacted brand identity are two sides of brand identity (Kornum, Gyrd-Jones, Al Zagir & Brandis 2017, 432-433). Intended brand identity is formed as a result of a deliberate and strategic process by management of the organization which is then enacted by multiple stakeholders in a network of interactions and relationships leading to the co-creation of brand identity (Kornum et al. 2017, 432). Ind and Schmidt (2019, 190-193) also find intended and enacted brand identity to express the co-creation of brand identity. A brand can have an enduring brand essence – intended brand identity – but even for a well-defined brand, its meaning – the enacted brand identity – is not fixed (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 191).

At first enacted brand identity and brand image appear similar especially through the earlier pointed views of brand image by de Chernatony (2012, 56-57). Some (Kornum et al. 2017, 433) find brand image and enacted brand identity equivalent. Brand identity and brand image should overlap as much as possible and so should intended and enacted brand identities (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 224). However, as it is interpreted in this thesis, brand image is slightly different from enacted brand identity. Brand image can be seen a passive impression of brand identity. Enacted brand identity is, on the contrary, actively constructed and the person’s own identity and interactions with various other stakeholders impact enacted brand identity. Brand image mirrors brand identity but image does not necessarily lead to impacting brand identity. Enacted brand identity is more than a reflection, it is co-creation.

### **2.2.3 Brand management**

Simply put brand management is how the company organizes teams and people and the strategies it takes to attain brand equity. Brand equity, on the other hand, is about the value of the brand but it is not limited to financial value. Many branding concepts



presented in this thesis have evolved. Widely used definitions for brand equity, however, have been prominent for decades. The official Marketing Science definition of brand equity (Leuthesser 1988 in Kapferer 2012, 13) is “the set of associations and behaviour on the part of a brand’s customers, channel members and parent corporation that permits the brand to earn greater volume or greater margins than it could without the brand name.” In the early 1990’s Keller (1993, 2) introduced the term customer-based brand equity which still used to today.

There are differing views into what entities brand equity can be divided into. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2002, 17) divide brand equity into four dimensions of brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and brand loyalty. Kapferer (2012, 14) divides brand equity into three parts: 1) brand assets, 2) brand strength and 3) brand value (financial equity). Brand assets include awareness, reputation, personality, values, image, preference, patents and rights. Brand strengths comprise market share, leadership, penetration, growth rate, loyalty rate, price premium. Brand value (financial equity) refers to the earlier notion of the additional margin the company earns due to the brand.

Brand management is promise management if drawing from the former view of the experience economy and the output view to brands explained by de Chernatony (2012, 17.) in 2.2.1. (page 8). With this perspective both internal and external brand management is required. Internally staff needs to be provided with skills and knowledge to deliver functional values of a brand, but emotional brand values are strengthened through employee behaviour. This requires hiring people who genuinely believe in the brand and have aligning values. External brand management requires meeting customer expectations. Brand management is enabling a unified internal process to gather competencies and values of the organization to “deliver an authentic and welcomed experience.” (De Chernatony 2012, 24.)

Agreeably there are different schools of brand management. However, here are differing views how to categorize and name them. Hedning, Knudtzen and Bjerre (2020) identify seven complementing, rather than supplementing brand approaches applied since the mid 1980’s namely the Economic, Identity, Consumer-based, Personality, Relational, Community and Cultural. Ind and Schmidt (2019), on the other hand, examine brand management from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards identifying five main schools of Image, Behavioural, Strategic, Identity and Co-creative yet note that more exist. Ind and Schmidt (2019, 17) find three most important schools of thought when viewing the context of co-creation namely: Image, Identity and Co-creation.

*The image school* focuses on forming a clear and attractive positioning in the minds of external stakeholders, mainly consumers. Brands are in the minds of consumers and built by recognizing functional and emotional consumer needs, designing the brand to meet these very expectations and finally communicating the benefits through advertising to build the image of the offering and differentiate from others. The foundation of the image school derives from strong consumer brands at the time of strong economic growth and accelerated demand for consumer goods. (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 16-17.)

*The identity school* is related to corporate branding. The brand is seen to be built inside out and the aim is at one sustainable identity. The brand has a precise identity carrying a promise that needs to be consistently and coherently communicated to multiple stakeholders. The core character of the brand is represented through symbols and brand associations. Brand management begins by identifying distinctive features and core proficiencies and then expressing them consistently in an engaging and persistent way. Values and the value proposition are key. As multiple stakeholders are involved and employees are among them, both internal and external communications, HR and change management with trainings and incentives are among marketing tools. Increased competition in consumer goods, company mergers and globalization are among reasons why corporate brands became more important. The development of service brands such as hotels and airlines, the development of some strong industries such as the automotive sector and even public sector branding represent the progressing of the identity school. (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 16-19.)

*The co-creative school* has features from both the image and identity schools. As prosperity rose in the Western World, competition became fiercer and fiercer. The supply of products and services exceeded that of demand. Consumers were longing for experiences over products and services. Internet connected consumers ravishing the idea of who holds control. A new way of looking into brand management evolved. The co-creational school finds that brand management offers direction, but brand meaning is co-created through the reflection of internal and external stakeholder's mindset about the brand. Brand management is not an internal activity solely initiated by the company and the brand is not a result of advertising. The interactivity of social media, demand for customized products, interconnected networks of stakeholders results in co-created value. The organization can design intended associations and messages internally. The meaning of those messages, however, takes place independently from the organization and often involves communities created by consumers. Different from the identity school, brand and its meaning are seen to continuously evolve. The company needs to adapt and balance internal and external brand views. (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 16-19.)

### 2.3 Co-creation of brand identity

Research implies that “brands are dynamic, social processes and branding is a cultural phenomenon” and that the company centric view of brand management has shifted to a co-creative perspective involving managers, employees, consumers and other stakeholders (Black & Veloutsou 2017, 416). In their article Iglesias, Ind and Alfaro (2013) explain how brand meaning is ongoingly negotiated with multiple stakeholders and for that reason providing purpose and a sense of direction is more relevant for an organization than trying strictly to define brand identity and aiming to control it.

Brand identity cannot be controlled, and it is constantly evolving. Consumers impact each other’s perceptions of the brand through communicating in brand communities, and it further impacts their direct interactions with the brand. Even if the company would have a clear brand identity which is consistently communicated, stakeholders are able to divert it and force the company to reconsider its identity. Companies should identify key external stakeholders and invite them to participate in the brand building process to understand various meanings different stakeholders attach to the brand. Sharing as much information as possible with outside stakeholders is core since the greater the shared information, the better individuals can contribute to the process of brand-building in a way that it is relevant and aligned with their expectations. It requires managers to being humble and open. (Iglesias et al. 2013, 681-683.)

There are several models visualising the co-creation of brands. The organic view of the brand (Iglesias et al. 2013, 677-678) presented in Figure 4. The organic view of the brand (adapted from Iglesias et al. 2013, 678) visualises how brand value is created in a conversational space through planned and unplanned interactions between consumers and frontline employees of the organization and other crossing points between the brand and consumer. Experiences and perceptions vary between individuals and, therefore, brand meanings are subjective, fluid and ongoingly negotiated. Brand interactions can be shared in many ways. If willing, the organization can absorb information from brand interactions and learn to identify customer desires to *try* to influence future brand experiences. It cannot, however, control them. Consumers can share experiences of brand interactions with other consumers and stakeholders in addition to taking part in communities of which some are unreachable from the organization.

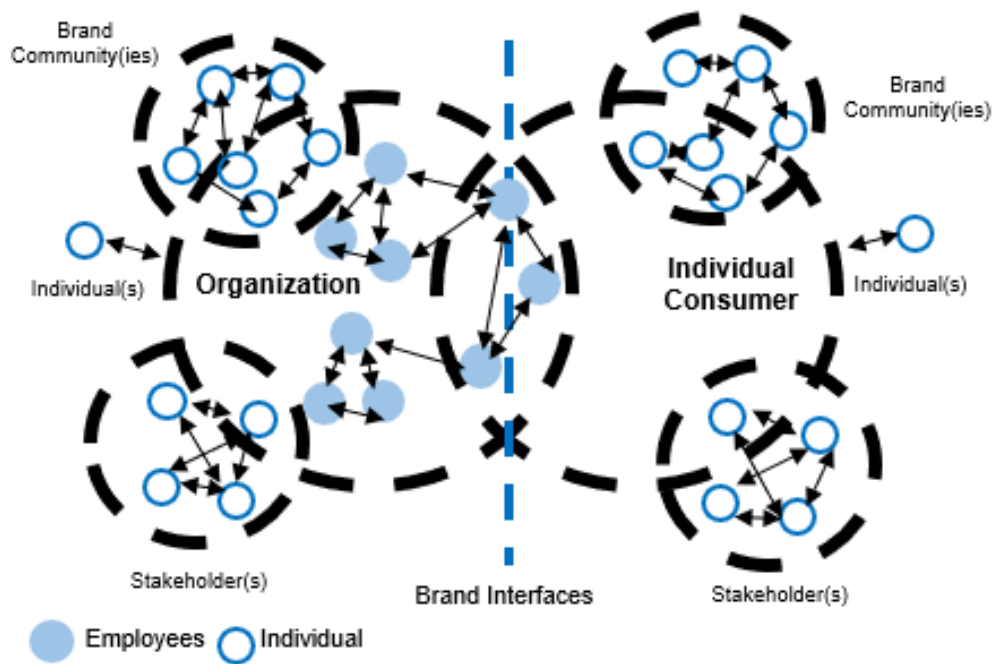


Figure 4. The organic view of the brand (adapted from Iglesias et al. 2013, 678)

One model alone can be sufficient but familiarizing with more adds to the understanding. Two points presented in A co-creative brand model (Ind et al. 2012, 22-23) should be applied when viewing Figure 4 as models are visually similar. First, the view is from above, not from left to right as if the organization would deliver the brand to the consumer. The customer and organization are connected to begin with. Secondly, images of a brand or company can be held by both customers and non-customers and, therefore, people can share and impact brand identities without being customers. Additional models of interest are How organizations and individuals interact (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 44) visualising how influencing, listening and learning take place, The co-creation space (Ind et al. 2013, 10) focusing on the essence of co-creation, and Emergence and Outcomes of Participation (Ind et al. 2013, 20) presenting how co-creation and learning evolve. Individual and brand community identity (Black & Veloutsou 2017, 419 & 425) is a simple model visualising how identities of individuals, brands and brand communities influence one another.

Brand associations express the brand, but also reflect how the person sees and feels him/herself and, furthermore, imply characteristics of members of the brand community, company employees and external stakeholders involved with the brand. Voyer, Kastanakis and Rhode (2017, 400) give an example of what the reciprocal process of co-creation is. When a consumer involves in online discussions on Apple products, expressing thoughts and delight about “sophisticated” and “trendy” Apple products, not only do these adjectives mirror the Apple brand but also reflect what the brand community

and its' members represent. The brand associations of sophistication and trendiness then come alive in the performance of Apple staff. Employees living the brand not only strengthen brand associations but can also trigger new ones that reflect to the identities of consumers, brand community and themselves (staff). As other stakeholders such as suppliers or universities also are proud about co-operation with Apple, the associations are further reflected to organizational and even personal identities. In this process the brand spirit of Apple is strengthened. (Voyer et al. 2017, 400.)

Co-creation is a two-way, reciprocal process that applies not only to individuals such as customers and employees but also brand communities, corporate brand identity and other collective stakeholders (Voyer et al. 2017, 400). Co-creation is about broad views, triumphing limitations and diminutions of perspectives and interests. Co-creation is often done in direct interaction with stakeholders, but it is not a prerequisite. It is possible to replicate various stakeholder perspectives step by step by company members across business divisions and positions if deep knowledge of stakeholders exists (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 290).

In the following a *framework for brand identity co-creation* is presented (Figure 5). It is based on a recent study by Iglesias, Landgraf, Ind, Markovic and Koporcic (2020, 32-43). Their study focused on the process of *corporate* brand identity co-creation in *b2b contexts*. Authors suggested testing the model also in b2c corporate brand contexts (Iglesias et al. 2020, 42). Hailuodon Panimo, the case company of this thesis, is mainly a b2c brand but can be compared to a corporate brand since individual products all are under the company brand through which also communications are done.

Corporate brand identity was found volatile and even vague during the first years of a company's operation. Without a well-articulated corporate brand identity, the values of founders are reflected into corporate values. As time passes and business develops, also the corporate brand identity evolves into new versions. In the process brand identity clarifies but core values can also shift from the original intentions, yet managers may want to stay rooted to the foundational core values. Stakeholders, however, give broader and additional meanings to core values. Corporate brand identity is not seen static but constantly evolving. The process is co-creative and iterative including several internal and external stakeholders comprising founders, managers, employees, customers and other external stakeholders. (Iglesias et al. 2020, 34.)

The co-creational process has four phases namely *communicating*, *internalizing*, *contesting* and *elucidating*. In the first phase, communicating, the core identity is being communicated to various stakeholders through actions and media, such as brochures,

company web pages, blogs, social media etc. When communicating core values of the company, the example founders and managers pose through their behaviour and actions is considered central. In the second phase, internalizing, the brand is being lived by employees and depicted through daily routines and behaviours that align with corporate brand identity. In the third phase, contesting, the perceptions of brand identity are being compared with what oneself holds to what others do. This phase can reaffirm brand identity or contest it if there is a gap between the perceived and communicated brand identity. In the final phase, elucidating, views on how the brand identity should develop and change are expressed by different stakeholders. (Iglesias et al. 2020, 38-40).

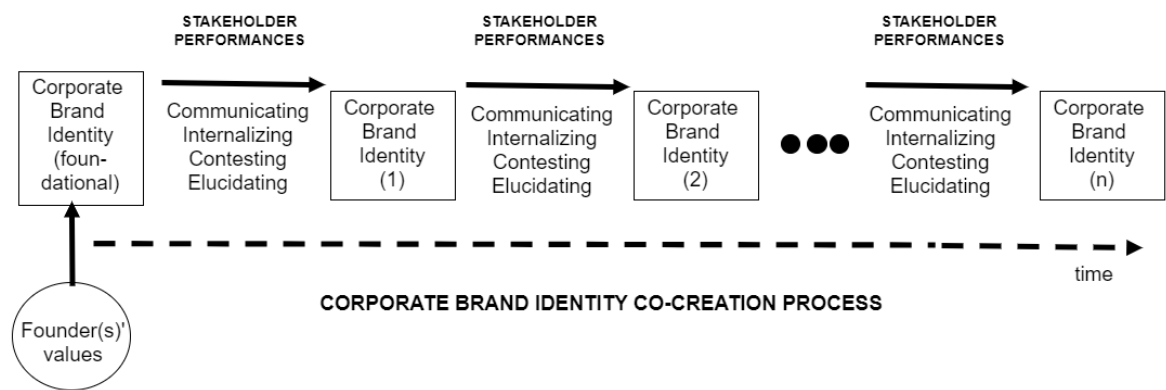


Figure 5. Original corporate brand identity co-creation process (adapted from Iglesias et al. 2020, 40).

Many brand management models are based on the plan-do-check-act (PDCA) or plan-do-check-adjust models (Ind & Schmidt 2019, 110). Establishing clear and measurable goals (plan), implementing them (do), reviewing if goals are reached (check) and then making necessary adjustments (adjust or act). Drawing from this, communicating, internalizing, contesting and elucidating – the terms used in the corporate brand identity co-creation process – can be simplified. Communication is clear term and needs no revision. The internalizing phase, however, can be described as doing. To give more specification to what is being done, this phase could be clearly named as “lived by employees.” In the original model contesting is about comparing as various stakeholders are evaluating intended and enacted brand identities. It relates to reviewing if goals are reached equivalent to checking. In the brand identity co-creation process it could be simply described with one word *evaluated* but wording it “evaluated by various stakeholders” is more descriptive. Finally, as the identity develops, it is in fact being adjusted which is a simpler word than elucidating. Furthermore, brand identity co-creation is an ongoing process. Figure 6 presents the student’s view of a clarified brand identity co-creation

process which derives from the original corporate brand identity co-creation process presented Figure 5 by Iglesias et al. (2020, 40). Furthermore, the student's view is generalised to *brand identity* for the context in this case study compared to the original model being on *corporate* brand identity.

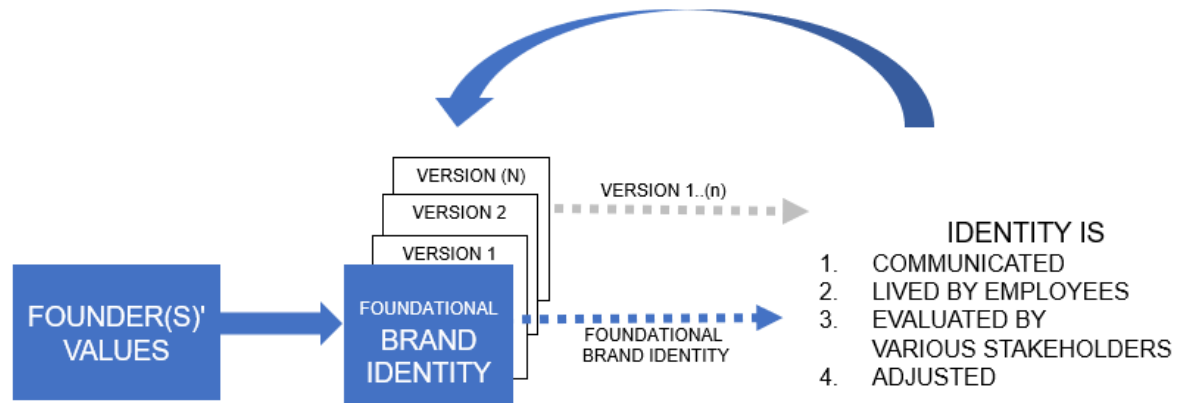


Figure 6. Clarified brand identity co-creation process by student

Now it is time to return to the concepts of intended and enacted brand identity discussed in 2.2.2. As seen in this thesis, founders' values and foundational brand identity form intended brand identity visualised in Figure 7. Intended brand identity

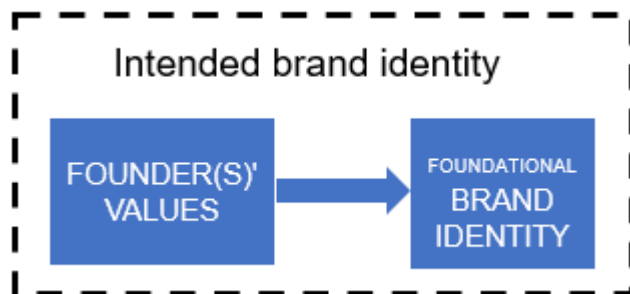


Figure 7. Intended brand identity

Enacted brand identity is the co-created brand identity evolving from the intended brand identity as a result of the four steps of shown in Figure 6.

## 2.4 Summary of theoretical part

The theoretical part has explored changes in branding by examining traditional views and those of co-creation. First the concept of co-creation was introduced as a participatory, social process between organisations and participants in which value is created for stakeholders and insight is generated to the organisation (Ind et al. 2013, 9; Ind & Coates 2013, 92).

Then, relevant branding concepts were examined in their classic sense and through co-creation. The definition of brand identity by Da Silveira et al. (2013, 33) on page 12 is in essence the view of co-created brand identity in this thesis. In short, brand identity is initiated by the organisation but begins to evolve. Core values uphold but various distinguishing attributes generate and continue to develop in accordance to the changing environment. Brand identity cannot be controlled by the organisation.

Finally, the process of corporate brand identity co-creation was described through the original model of Iglesias et al. (2020, 40) in Figure 5 and then clarified by the student in Figure 6. Founder values are the basis of foundational brand identity that together are seen to form the *intended* brand identity in this thesis. The intended brand identity begins to evolve through four steps of communication, living by employees, evaluated by various stakeholders and adjustment. That evolving, the co-created brand identity is what is meant by *enacted* brand identity in this thesis.



### 3 Conducting the study

This chapter presents the chosen methodology, means and phases of collecting data, sampling and data analysis used to answer research questions in this thesis.

#### 3.1 Methodological approach

Research strategy refers to the entity of choices that are made regarding methodological approaches, and these choices depend on the research problem and the reason for the study (Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara 2007, 128). This study aims to solve *what* is the co-created brand identity of *Hailuodon Panimo*. This is a qualitative case study with a deductive approach and reasoning for these choices is given in the following.

Common research strategies are experiment, survey, and case study (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 130). Where *experiment* strategy examines the impact of one variable to another and often includes testing hypothesis, *survey* aims to describe, compare and explain a phenomenon with a questionnaire or structured interview through a sample from a population (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 130). A *case study* is an empirical inquiry that examines “a contemporary phenomenon in depth within its real-life context” (Yin 2009, 18; see also Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 130-131). An individual, group or community can be the focus in the case study and data is often gathered through several methods such as ethnography, interviews and examining documents (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 130-131). Experiment strategy was not found suitable for answering research questions of this study. Survey and case study were, however, both considered options.

As Yin (2009, 10) explains the type of research question is the most significant condition for the appropriate research method and requires examining the *content* and *meaning* of the research question – the *question word* alone such as what, how or why does not justify the choice. The research problem and all research questions listed in 1.2 on page 4 are *what* questions. Yin explains (2009, 10) that what questions can be *exploratory* or about *prevalence* and continues that for exploring prevalence, a survey strategy is suitable but for an exploratory question experiment, survey and case study are all suited. In this study, brand meanings and associations that enrich core values of Hailuodon Panimo through co-creation are examples of research questions that need to be answered. These are exploratory questions justifying both survey and case study as a research strategy. The choice of case study was found more appropriate for this study. Survey strategy could be insufficient to solve a *contemporary phenomenon* of brand identity co-creation. Furthermore, where founders and employees were clear groups to

draw possible samples from, it was unclear *who exactly* form the population of consumers visiting the brewery.

Quantitative or qualitative inquiry or the mixture of both can be used in case studies (Yin 2009, 19). Often quantitative and qualitative inquiry are presented as opposite methods but should be viewed complementary (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 131-133). Differentiation between quantitative and qualitative inquiry is needed and some core questions help choose between two. As Hirsjärvi et al. (2007, 157) explain, a qualitative study is used when describing a real-life phenomenon and when aiming to describe that phenomenon holistically which is the case when exploring brand identity co-creation of Hailuodon Panimo. Furthermore, the authors continue (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 157) that characteristic to a qualitative study is the aim to discover or reveal existing facts rather than proving claims or hypothesizes, which is also well suited for this study.

Qualitative methods in gathering data are favoured when views and “voice” of interviewees are addressed (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 160). This is required to solve both intended and enacted brand identities of Hailuodon Panimo and to gain understanding of core values. Qualitative studies often use inductive analysis to reveal unexpected factors through examining the data holistically and in detail (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 160). This study, however, uses an existing theoretical framework as a basis to answer research questions and is, therefore, deductive.

### **3.2 Data collection and sample**

The phases of data collection are presented in table 1. Academic articles and books were used to grasp the theoretical setting. A preliminary understanding of the brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo was formed through several sources. Internal company material was read, and a semi-structured interview held with the CEO using the questions of the co-creative corporate brand identity study for b2b companies (Iglesias et al. 2020, 41). Questions were also tested for their suitability for collecting primary data. Furthermore, examining public information such as articles, web pages and social media channels added to the preliminary understanding of Hailuodon Panimo brand identity. Customer feedback was gathered at the brewery among pub, store and brewery tour visitors between 25.7.-20.8.2020, which is secondary data, but contacts for interviews were received in this phase. The theoretical setting and preliminary understanding of brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo were the basis for designing the questionnaire specifically formed for the purpose of this study.

Table 1. Phases in data collection

Action	Aim	Timeline
Literature review	Familiarizing with areas of co-creation, branding and methodology.	June-October 2020
Reviewing secondary data	Familiarizing with company through web pages, internal presentations, social media channels, articles available online and customer feedback to form preliminary understanding of brand identity	June-August 2020
Survey at brewery	Content (feedback) is out of scope but used as secondary data.  In scope: contacts for interviews with background information (age, gender, city of residence, first visit or not). Result: 48 interview permissions from 88 responses.	July-August 2020
Semi-structured interview	Interviewing CEO. Deepening understanding of brand identity. Using questionnaire (Iglesias et al. 2020, 41) and testing suitability for primary data collection.	August 2020
<b>FORMING PRELIMINARY VIEW OF BRAND IDENTITY</b>		
Semi-structured interviews	Interviews with founders, customers and employees with a specifically formed questionnaire to answer research questions.	October-November 2020

Several aspects were considered regarding data collection and sampling. Using *interviews* for this qualitative case study was clear. As Hirsjärvi et al. (2007, 200) explain, interviews have been the main method for data collection in qualitative studies compared to other data collection methods due to the benefits of adjustability of themes and questions in accordance with the situation, and the ability to clarify and deepen responses with additional questions.

The *selected stakeholder groups* for the study were shortly described and reasoned in 1.3. Scope and limitations. Answering research questions in this thesis required

understanding views of various stakeholders. To form an internal understanding of the brand, including both founders and employees was relevant. Considering the limited timescale and the fact that interviews would be carried out by solely one person, selection on external stakeholder groups was needed. Consumers were chosen because they are a significant stakeholder group. Choosing customers who have visited the brewery was justified since it is reachable compared to customers buying products in various retail stores and because the brewery forms a significant sales channel for Hailuodon Panimo. Furthermore, when also customers have the experience of the brewery as a place, it is a unifying aspect for all interviewees both internally and externally, which brings clarity to conducting the study, analysing results in addition to evaluating reliability and validity.

### **3.3 Semi-structured interviews**

Primary data was collected through 15 semi-structured phone interviews among internal and external stakeholders with the questionnaire found in Appendix 1. Questionnaire in Finnish Questions were open ended apart from one multiple-choice question included in the questionnaire. Customers visit the brewery from all over the country. It would have been possible to carry out some of the interviews face to face but in order to make interviewing conditions similar for all participants in addition to the safety concerns posed by COVID-19, the choice of phone interviews was justified.

The questionnaire was carefully designed. Precision was given on terminology since phone interviews require clear question formulation and interviewees were not marketing professionals. The length of the interview needed to be restricted timewise to increase interest for interviewees to participate in the first place and, therefore, thought was put into carefully selecting most relevant questions in the questionnaire. Questions needed to be worded so that they could be posed similarly to various types of stakeholders from founders to customers to clearly understand similarities and differences in intended and enacted brand identities.

The designed length for interviews with customers was 15 minutes and 20-25 minutes for employees. Actual interviews lasted between 13 and 22 minutes with customers, from 21 to 27 minutes with employees and from 59 to 62 minutes with founders. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Interviews were carried out in Finnish apart from one which was held in English. Interviews are time-consuming to design and prepare for and, therefore, Hirsjärvi et al. (2007, 201) question interviews as a data collection method if answers to a research problem are so simple that sufficient information can be gathered withing a discussion of less than 30 minutes in length. Answering the research questions,

however, required utilizing the earlier mentioned benefits of interviews such as specifying and deepening what the interviewee said and, therefore, interview was found a suitable method for data collection.

Interviewees comprised in total 15 people of which two were founders, four were employees and nine were customers. Hailuodon Panimo was founded by four people: two founders with the original business idea and two co-founders. In this thesis, the term founder refers to the two people with the original business idea who are now the CEO and brewer in the company. Terms internal people and internal stakeholders used in this study refer to founders and employees as one entity. In this study employees comprise *frontline* people with customer contacts doing sales and communications for Hailuodon Panimo. Not all frontline employees were interviewed since some are season workers. Hailuodon Panimo also has employees working in production. If human resources and time would have been plentiful, it would have been interesting to interview all employees but focus on frontline employees was relevant in terms of the theoretical setting and the fact that brewery visitors were the external stakeholder group included in the study with whom frontline employees interact. Some employees interviewed had multiple roles in the company such as being a co-founder or shareholder. Because the company is small, interviewed employees are not further described to secure their anonymity. Customer interviewees were selected in the manner presented in **Error! Reference source not found.**



Figure 8. Process of selecting customer interviewees

Customer feedback was gathered at the brewery among pub, store and brewery tour visitors between 25.7.-20.8.2020 and contacts for follow-up interviews were requested. Customer feedback *per se* is out of scope of this project and it had not been decided at the time of gathering customer feedback if contacts for follow-up interviews would be also be used for the purpose of this thesis or solely for company purposes. 88 people gave feedback at the brewery from which permission for follow-up interviews was given by 48 individuals with a diverse profile in terms of age, gender and city of residence. It was also known if the brewery visit was the first or second or whether there had been several visits to the premises before.

Permission was given by people with a diverse profile. The age scale varied between 18 to 65 years of age, division between women and men was relatively equal, people were visiting from all over the country with focus on those living in Oulu or Northern Finland, and it was the first visit to the brewery for more than a half. As interest in a follow-up interview was addressed by people with a diverse profile, the aim was to form a similar sample of interviewees including both women and men, various ages and many first-time visitors but also some regulars with focus on those living in the Oulu region. The profile of interviewees is shown in table 2.

Interviews were carried out between 23.-29.10.2020. Customers were contacted by email for the purpose of this thesis and suggested times for interviews within the following days. A promotional item worth 10 € was promised as a compensation for the interview. No reminder email was sent. Contacting interviewees and carrying out interviews occurred simultaneously in small lots of two to three customers. This was a manageable process for the student and appeared easy for customers to find a suitable interview time within upcoming days. All together 14 customers were contacted. One address did not work, and four people did not respond. If a customer did not respond in two days, a customer with a similar profile in terms of age and gender was contacted. The profile of the external stakeholders interviewed is presented in table 2.

Table 2. Profile of interviewed customers

	CITY/AREA	GENDER		AGE					BREWERY VISITS		
		F	M	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	1st time	2-3 t	3+
1	Oulu region		x		x					x	
2	Oulu region		x				x				x
3	Uusimaa	x					x		x		
4	Oulu region	x					x				x
5	Päijät-Häme	x				x			x		
6	Oulu region		x	x					x		
7	Lapland		x			x					x
8	Lapland	x		x						x	
9	Oulu region	x			x				x		

The profile of people who were contacted but did not respond is presented in table 3. It might be a coincidence but all of them had visited the brewery only once. It is not known if these people even saw the email.

Table 3. Profile of customers who did not respond to email

CITY/AREA	GENDER		AGE						BREWERY VISITS		
	F	M	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	55-64	1st time	2-3 t	3+
Oulu region		x					x	x	x		
Oulu region		x			x				x		
Uusimaa	x			x					x		
Oulu region	x		x						x		
Oulu region (email address failed)	x		x						x		

The process of contacting customers and carrying out interviews was repeated until the point of saturation was reached. In this study it meant that no more brand meanings accumulated, and the enacted brand identity was clear. There was confidence that research problems could be answered. The point of saturation was reached after nine customer interviews.

### 3.4 Data analysis

Transcribed interviews were first coded and then categorized. Excel was used in data analysis. Given the number of interviewees, the amount of questions in the questionnaire and their linkages to theory in addition to the clear descriptions used by respondents, the usage of excel was appropriate. Codes capture short phrases or single words, and coding is considered analysis because it is a means to interpret and reflect the collected data deeply (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña 2014, 72). Categorizing is considered a simple way to organize data and, interestingly, as a form of *quantitative* data analysis (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, 105-107).

Answers were categorized through groups of founders, employees and customers. Similarities and differences were examined between the groups separately but also regarding internal and external views.

The collected data was used to resolve the following steps.

1. *Defining foundational brand identity* based on interviews with two founders.
2. *Defining brand identity and related associations*: core values and the words used to describe the brand. This was done by counting words, grouping them, possibly regrouping, and renaming groups. Looking between linkages between groups.
3. *Describing what is the internal view* of the brand identity. Internal view was examined through founders and employees separately and jointly.
4. *Describing what is the customer view of brand identity*. Explaining differences and similarities between views.

## 4 Findings

This chapter focuses on main findings connected to research questions. Direct quotations are presented to support findings in this chapter. If the quotation used has been translated to English, the original expression can be found in the footer of that page. Core values of Hailuodon Panimo and associated brand meanings are explained, and findings are visually supported. Then, the intended brand identity by founders is presented and compared with enacted brand identities by employees and customers. Factors found to differentiate Hailuodon Panimo support understanding of brand identity and are, therefore, addressed. After that, some remarks on findings that rose during analysis are tackled. Finally, each research question is separately answered.

### 4.1 Identified core values

When discussing values of Hailuodon Panimo, being *ecological* and *organic* came forth among all respondent groups. In addition to being ecological and organic, *founders* described values as sustainable, communal, authentic and down to earth. Additional values *employees* saw were responsible, fair and nature friendly – which could be categorized together with ecological or organic. As for *customers*, additional values that came forth were respectful towards nature, traditional, high quality, local, customer-friendly and human centric.

When examining these values and how interviewees described the company, most of the mentioned values were interconnected and most qualities related in one way or another to sustainability. Another entity built around being authentic or genuine. In Finnish both can be translated as *aito*. Communal or community is a value that founders linked to the company, but employees or customers did not mention. This value could be considered as an entity of its own but also deriving from sustainability or being genuine and down to earth. Table 4 visualises all mentioned values of Hailuodon Panimo by each respondent group. Words local, traditional and high quality of which none were mentioned internally, are presented in the same entity with communal yet they can also be seen linked to sustainability. Similarities between groups are marked with blue.



Table 4 Values described by founders, employees and customers

Founders	Employees	Customers
Ecological Organic Sustainable	Ecological Organic Nature friendly Responsible Fair	Ecological Organic Nature friendly
Authentic (Genuine) Down to earth		Human-centric Customer-friendly
Communal		Local Traditional High quality

In the process of data analysis, core values of Hailuodon Panimo were crystallized. Values of being ecological and organic connect to the bigger theme of sustainability which forms one of the core values. The second one is being genuine. Founders used terms genuine and authentic, which translate the same in Finnish, but many warm and emotional attributes attached to the company, which will be later described, relate better to the word genuine. Choosing genuine as a core value was supported by findings on other questions in the study. Marketing and images were uncomfortable topics as both founders stressed several times how they are not trying to build an image of any kind, that being authentic is important to them.

Basically we are not reaching for an image. That we are trying to be something. I think the image should be like how we are. In that way the image should be authentic. You should think of how [founder A] and me are and, also the other people in the brewery, and this should transport.<sup>1</sup>

We are not thinking about marketing and images like what you are asking now. We do what we think is good. We don't look too much to other breweries. All these things you are asking are things we are not really thinking. And I think that's the good point about us.<sup>2</sup>

As theoretical frameworks of this study imply (see figures 5 and 6), also in the case of Hailuodon Panimo core values are based on personal founder values. It was clear to founders that they want the company to be as ecological as possible and have organic products. Founders described how company values have not been invented but are self-evident deriving from them as people.

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1 & 2 English was the original language of the interview

At the heart of these values and connected to them is the island of Hailuoto with all its diversity from nature to the community and its history. The original reason why the two founders begun the brewery was to do good for Hailuoto. They do not believe to have started a brewery if not living on the island. The desire to do good for Hailuoto and the community has several dimensions such as using local produce and supporting local food production; having a place that brings islanders together and a brewery to be proud about; valuing traditional building style on the island; and renewing old rather than building new. Organizing production as environmentally friendly as possible is also connected to the island of Hailuoto. Figure 9. Foundational brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo visualizes the two crystallized core values, which are namely being sustainable and genuine. These values are centred around the island of Hailuoto representing its nature, history and people. All three words are interconnected as shown in the figure.

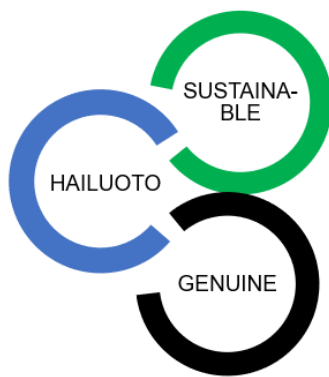


Figure 9. Foundational brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo

#### 4.2 Brand meanings and associations

When analysing data, brand meanings and attributes that enrich these core values were revealed when founders, employees and customers described products, the company and brewery premises, desired image and interactions between internal and external stakeholders. These brand meanings and associations could be linked to the core identity of being sustainable and genuine and the island of Hailuoto yet these words were rarely precisely used. Beers, for example, were described tasty, traditional, high quality and ecologic by all groups yet employees and customers used a broader range of expressions giving understanding of how attributes are interrelated. For instance, traditional was also described as German style and linked to the method of brewing; high quality as being produced with precision and for some customers high quality was equivalent to craft style beer. As one long-time customer described:

Quality. I understand that they invest in that. Not being experimental but using a recipe that has been proven to be good to guarantee quality. And perhaps being traditional comes with it, too. There are no big surprises.<sup>3</sup>

Words used to describe beers are presented in table 5. Similarities between groups are marked in blue.

Table 5. Description of Hailuodon Panimo beers

Founders	Employees	Customers
Tasty	Tasty Balanced Full-bodied For many tastes	Tasty Diverse Easily approachable
Traditional, Classic  High quality	Traditional German style  High quality Produced with precision	Traditional Authentic Special Distinctive (bottle, label and place) High quality Craft beer
Ecologic	Organic, pure	Ecologic Organic, pure
	From Hailuoto	Exotic

Associations and brand meanings derived from various questions. When describing the image, employees and customers linked the word organic to nature more than in any part of the interview. It is difficult to find the right terms in English but to shortly describe the context in Finnish language, the word nature is *luonto* in Finnish and organic is *luonnonmukainen* which is mostly used in its short form *luomu*. When describing the desired image, the long version of the word organic was chosen which implies living according to nature or living with nature. Also, the words pure and close to nature were both used. *Honesty* was another word that was given more meanings by customers and employees. It was about being righteous, responsible and fair but also respectful and *equal*. Sustainability, responsibility and durability were connected as was honesty and the size of the company.

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<sup>3</sup> Laatu. Siihen ne käsittääkseni panostaa. Ei ruveta kikkailemaan, vaan pyritään hyväksi koetun reseptin käyttämiseen ja laadun takaamiseen. Ja ehkä se perinteinen tulee tässä myös. Ei tule mitään hirveitä yllätyksiä.

Environmental friendliness and being organic are taken into account in every matter, such as production solutions or invoicing. And responsibility is visible to both employees and customers. In sales, which I also do, it is big thing for me that we act in a way that you can look the customer in the eye. That it's honest and equal.<sup>4</sup>

I don't know their business that well but it seems that they are doing things with a small group of people. The company and production is not run in a random place by faceless people but locally where all actors are fairly compensated. And sustainability is also about durability because the bottles are really durable (laughter) and we have reused them home. And all bottles are the same (high quality) standard.<sup>5</sup>

Figure 10. Attributes related to foundational brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo presents the entity of associations described in this study, their interrelations and connection to the foundational identity of Hailuodon Panimo. The figure is thought to help the reader to understand the entity before moving into explaining intended and enacted brand identities.



Figure 10. Attributes related to foundational brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo

4 Ympäristöystävällisyyttä ja luonnonmukaisuutta pyritään ottamaan huomioon joka asiassa, kuten tuotannon ratkaisuihin tai laskutuksessa. Ja vastuullisuus näkyy sekä työntekijöille että asiakkaille. Kun hoidan myyntipuoltakin, niin on erittäin iso asia, että toimitaan niin, että voidaan katsoa asiakasta silmään. Että se on rehellistä ja tasapuolista.

5 En tunne toimintaa kauheasti, mutta ainakin vaikuttaa siltä, että pienellä porukalla toimivat. Että ei ole missään tuntemattomassa paikassa, missä jotkut nimettömät ihmiset hoitaa, vaan se hoidetaan siellä paikallisesti. Ja siellä saa kaikki tarvittavat toimijat korvauksen. Vaikka niin kuin ne pullo henkii kestävyttä. Kun ne on kestäviä (nauraa) ja me ollaan käytetty niitä kotiviiniin pullotukseen. Ja ne on kaikki sitä samaa (laadukasta) standardia.

### 4.3 Intended and enacted brand identity

Revealing the intended and enacted brand identities was a complex task. Answers were embedded in several open-ended questions, used expressions were broad and highly interconnected. The multiple-choice question was of great help in analysis. Interviewees first selected *three* most suitable attributes describing Hailuodon Panimo from the list of nine attributes: ecological, communal, German style, from Hailuoto, local, traditional, down to earth, relaxed, genuine. The list derived from the preliminary understanding of the Hailuodon Panimo brand identity that was based on secondary data. Choosing *two* best suiting attributes was easy for interviewees but several people found difficulties in choosing the third attribute because all words were found to be descriptive. Interviewees then ranked chosen attributes in order of importance. First analysis was done through all three chosen attributes. Concentrating on *two most descriptive*, which were also easiest to choose for interviewees, revealed interesting differences. Tables are found in Appendix 2. Main findings presented in tables

On a very high level intended and enacted brand identities were very similar. All included brand meanings linked to being genuine, sustainable and Hailuoto. The *intended brand identity* held by founders was balanced around the Hailuodon Panimo foundational brand identity as visualised in Figure 11. Intended brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo The intended brand identity included being sustainable, ecologic, honest, genuine, down to earth, communal, quality and easily approachable. Employees enacted a very similar identity to that of founders, but focus was on environmental aspects connected to sustainability, yet no one used the very word sustainable. Customers enacted the brand very similarly, but expressions focused on the entity of being genuine.

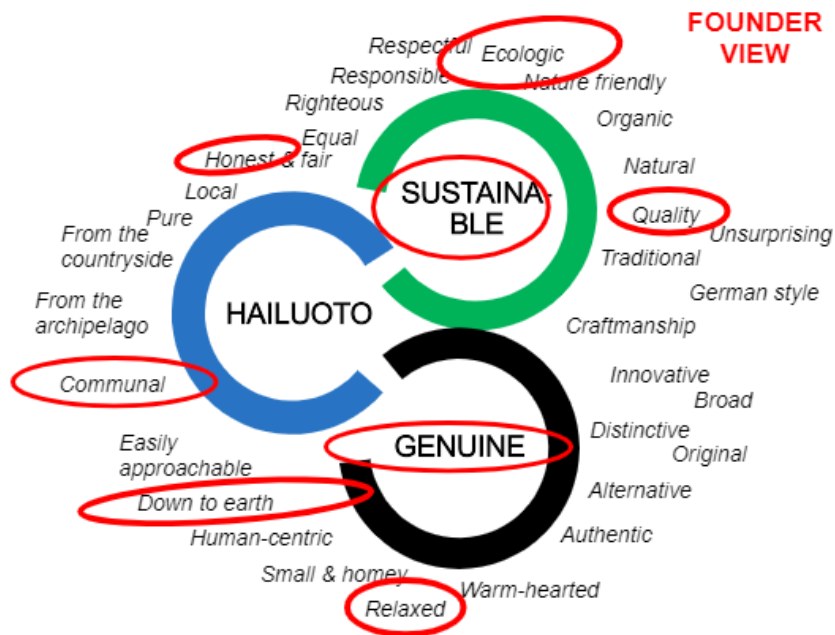


Figure 11. Intended brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo

Additional differences in perceptions were revealed through analysis and relate to the following expressions: being communal, ecological and local and the usage of the words genuine and traditional. These are addressed in more detail in the following.

Being *communal* was not spontaneously mentioned by employees or customers. In the multiple-choice question, where a ready defined list of attributes was expressed, one employee and one customer drew attention to the term. It is by chance the sample included a customer from mainland who only consumes Hailuodon Panimo beers at the brewery and never buys them from a store. For him being communal was the third most descriptive attribute for Hailuodon Panimo from the list of nine attributes. These remarks were made through discussion that spurred from the multiple-choice question.

Secondly, being *ecological* was strongly present among founders and employees as it was mentioned by *everyone* but enacted, only by *some* customers. When discussing company values most customers linked ecological values to Hailuodon Panimo but internally the term was used to describe the company more holistically. This was seen through several open-ended questions and was especially clear in the multiple-choice question in how answers were divided between internal and external stakeholders.

*Locality* was relevant to consumers but not given such attention internally. Internally ecological aspects drew attention. For customers, however, locality was meaningful and

mentioned through several contexts beyond brand image. Locality was found to describe the company and was a reason why customers chose Hailuodon Panimo products.

Being originally from Lapland, I prefer the Northern microbreweries. I like quality myself, and when it comes nearby, it's kind of nice.<sup>6</sup>

Locality was also related to competition. Most customers found other Finnish and especially local craft breweries as competitors to Hailuodon Panimo and some listed breweries by name from Oulu or Lapland depending on where they were originally from or currently living. Because of the co-operation among Finnish craft breweries and the dominance of big breweries, founders found it difficult to consider other craft breweries as competitors. Some employees also mentioned the dilemma but still believed customers consider other craft breweries as competitors.

Internally, both with founders and employees, words *authentic* and *genuine* were found to describe the company, desired image and values. Customers, however, preferred the expression *down to earth*. The division between internal and customer views was clearly shown also through the multiple-choice question. These words are connected but it is good to acknowledge the difference in perspective between customers and employees.

Finally, *traditional*, which was part of both intended and enacted identities, had many interrelated concepts of which *German style* was used internally and *distinctive* and *craftmanship* by customers. Whether being a craft brewery or not is part of the discussion on intended and enacted brand identity and relates to being traditional. Customers described Hailuodon Panimo also as a craft brewery (in Finnish käsityöläispanimo) but founders did not believe to be practising craftmanship. Furthermore, founders described the brewing philosophy of a craft brewery experimental and as Hailuodon Panimo beers are traditional, yet some with modern twists, defining Hailuodon Panimo as a craft brewery was not found fully suiting by founders.

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<sup>6</sup> Koska olen Lapista lähtöisin, suosin pohjoisen pienpanimoita. Tykkään laadusta, ja kun se (olut) tulee läheltä, niin se on jotenkin mukavaa.

#### 4.4 Factors differentiating the brand

It was expected that factors differentiating the Hailuodon Panimo brand would be revealed in the study. *Bottle size and appearance* and the *brewery as a place* were mentioned by most customers. The brewery as a place was also found to build the brand. Several customers described how prior to visiting the brewery they had no image of the company or it was based on the product alone. It was described how the image was either formed or strengthened at the brewery. The brewery builds the image of being genuine or authentic together with a homey, warm-hearted and close feeling. The impact of the place in image formation was also described by two employees from which the other explains:

Before being involved in it, you only know the product and what you see on top. Now I know a bit more how things work below the surface. It has been really nice to be part of this and learn new. At it has been really interesting to be part of the brewing process and arrange brewery tours. The more you know, the more you can tell customers. And I really enjoy that.<sup>7</sup>

Visiting the brewery was also linked to the increased knowledge visitors got of the company and its products which were then strengthened through interactions with internal people at the pub, store or during a *brewery tour*. One brewery visitor, who did not consider herself as a customer because of the preference of sour type beers, described how the *appreciation towards the brand* increased because of visiting the brewery and taking the brewery tour. Another customer described how knowledge about the company justified the higher price point of a big 0.75 litre craft beer bottle or pint in the bar compared to smaller in size and lower-priced products.

The fist touch (to Hailuodon Panimo beers) at the festival was that they are just some products available in the beer tent. And that it is more expensive beer that I cannot afford (as a student). Now that I have visited the place and gotten to know it, I now have a feeling that this is genuine stuff that I can pay more for.<sup>8</sup>

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7 Ennen kuin siinä on itse mukana, siitä ei oikein tiedä muuta kuin tuotteen ja mitä näkee päällepäin. Nyt tietää vähän enemmän miten asiat toimii pintaa syvemmillä. On ollut mukavaa olla osa tätä ja oppia uutta. Ja on ollut tosi mielenkiintoista päästä mukaan oluentekoprosessiin ja pitää panimokierroksia. Mitä enemmän tietää, sitä enemmän pystyy eteenpäin asiakkaille kertomaan. Ja se on tosiaan mukavaa.

8 Ensikosketus siellä festareilla oli, että ne on jotain tuotteita siellä kaljatellassa. Ajattelin, että tossa on tota kalliimpaa kaljaa, tota mä en voi ostaa (koska olen opiskelija). Nyt, kun on käynyt siellä paikan päällä ja tutustunut, niin on tullut sellainen olo, että tämä on sellaista aitoa tavaraa, että kyllä tästä voi maksaakin enemmän.



Being traditional was also seen to differentiate Hailuodon Panimo beers from competition, and this feature was linked to the style and taste of traditional Central European beers, the bottle size and the brewery as a place.

Internally views were similar with one clear difference. Being organic was believed to differentiate Hailuodon Panimo from competition by everyone, both founders and employees, and yet this factually differentiates the company from rivals, only a couple of customers made that remark. All differentiating factors are presented in Appendix 2.

#### **4.5 Remarks on findings**

To summarize, internally Hailuodon Panimo is seen above all *organic, ecological* and *genuine*. These words are seen to describe the company and brand holistically by founders and employees. Customers, on the other hand, describe Hailuodon Panimo *local, down to earth* and *distinctive*.

Some interesting observations were made during analysis of which some are in scope and others out of scope of this study. *Why* Hailuodon Panimo was described in the manner it was is out of scope, but three remarks drew attention. The first relates to the different perspectives through which the Hailuodon Panimo brand is viewed.

Internally, Hailuodon Panimo is known to founders and employees and, therefore, described with deeper characteristics in an inside-out manner. Customers view Hailuodon Panimo through what is evidently present, the products and brewery, which can be described an outside-in manner. The difference is logical and can also be drawn from the brand system by Kapferer (2012, 33) presented earlier in this study (page 9) yet wording in it is different. The difference in internal and external viewpoints can also explain why being local was merely mentioned internally but was found very descriptive by customers. The difference in perspectives can also explain why internally the brand was described authentic or genuine whereas customers used the expression down to earth, or that customers see the brand as a craft brewery whereas founders do not.

The second remark is how customers viewed the Hailuodon Panimo brand *through their own values*. This remark is supported by theory for example by Da Silveira et al. (2013, 33-35) tackled on pages 11 to 12. For example, those customers who enacted ecological and organic aspects of the brand beyond company values, were two individuals who expressed the personal importance of ecological values. It may be of chance but calls for notice.

For me the organic value (of Hailuodon Panimo) is important, and the fact that it is a small producer is also an important thing.<sup>9</sup>

Personally, I like to support local and nearby producers. Organic produce produced nearby is at least something that often gets me to buy.<sup>10</sup>

A third remark is the important role of employees in branding. It has been mentioned in the theoretical part for example in 2.2.3. (page 14) how employee *knowledge* builds functional benefits and employee *behaviours* emotional benefits of the brand. (De Chernatony 2012, 24). These points were clearly shown. The relaxed and down to earth feeling, interest in customers and warm-heartedness is built through employees as is the factual knowledge of products and brand.

The last remark that drew attention relates to the process of co-creation. In the original model by Iglesias et al. (2020, 40) presented in Figure 5. Original corporate brand identity co-creation process (adapted from Iglesias et al. 2020, 40), yet described to be an iterative process, is presented *linear* and in a manner that one brand identity exists at a given time. The student presented a clarified model of the original one in Figure 6. Clarified brand identity co-creation process by student in terms of simplifying terminology compared to the original model. By chance the clarified model was not presented in a linear manner but still displayed one brand identity at a given time. However, the notion rose in the empirical part that there are *multiple co-existing* brand identities held by different stakeholders. This acknowledgement can be of interest beyond this case study and is visualised when answering research questions.

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9 Mulle (Hailuodon Panimossa) luomuarvo on tärkeä ja että on pientuottaja, niin se on tärkeä asia.

10 Itse tykkään tukea paikallisia ja lähiseudun tuottajia. Lähellä tuotettu luomu on ainakin itselle sellainen asia mikä saa monesti ostamaan.

## 4.6 Answers to research questions

This qualitative case study explored co-creation of brand identity in the case of Hailuodon Panimo, a craft brewery founded in 2017. The theoretical part laid a foundation to understanding co-creation and relevant branding terms in addition to providing a framework for the process of brand identity co-creation. Primary data was collected through 15 semi-structured phone interviews with Hailuodon Panimo founders, employees and customers visiting the brewery. In this chapter findings were presented in the light of research questions. Now, findings are shortly summarized through each research question separately, after which the main research problem is answered.

1) What are the identified *core values* of Hailuodon Panimo?

Several values were identified and found to be connected on two entities: being sustainable and genuine. Furthermore, the island of Hailuoto was found fundamental to the very existence of the company. The core values of sustainability and genuine together with Hailuoto form the foundational brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo visualised in Figure 9. Foundational brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo

2) What are *brand meanings* and *associations* that *enrich* core values through co-creation?

Experiences stakeholders have with the Hailuodon Panimo brand accumulate brand meanings, associations and attributes. The process of co-creation is out of scope of this study but experiences relate to e.g. products, premises, web pages, social media channels and the interactions between various internal and external stakeholders. Based on experiences new attributes develop and others become irrelevant. This is an ongoing phenomenon (Iglesias et al. 2020, 37). Multiple, interconnected brand meanings and associations connected to the foundational brand identity were revealed through semi-structured interviews with founders, employees and customers. These attributes were listed and visualised in Figure 10. Attributes related to foundational brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo presenting the fluidness of Hailuodon Panimo brand identity.

3) What is the *intended* brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo?

In this study founders were seen to represent the intended brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo. The intended brand identity was balanced reflecting attributes from all three parts (sustainable, Hailuoto, genuine) of the foundational brand identity and key words were visualised in Figure 11. Intended brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo

4) What is the *enacted* brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo?

The enacted brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo was found similar to that of the intended brand identity. However, employees especially enacted brand meanings connected to sustainability. Customers, on the other hand, reflected brand meanings connected to being genuine. Enacted brand identity is the co-created brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo.

The main research problem is: *What is the co-created brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo?*

By answering sub-questions the main research problem can be answered, which is supported with the theoretical framework of Iglesias et al. (2020, 40) presented in Figure 5. Original corporate brand identity co-creation process (adapted from Iglesias et al. 2020, 40).and with the version by the student in Figure 6. Clarified brand identity co-creation process by student

The co-created brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo derives from the foundational brand identity and is enriched with multiple attributes and brand meanings based on stakeholder experiences. The foundational brand identity endures time whereas attributes evolve. In this study it is seen that co-created brand identity is equivalent to enacted brand identity. There are multiple co-existing brand identities of Hailuodon Panimo that evolve. The co-created brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo is presented in Figure 12. Co-created brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo

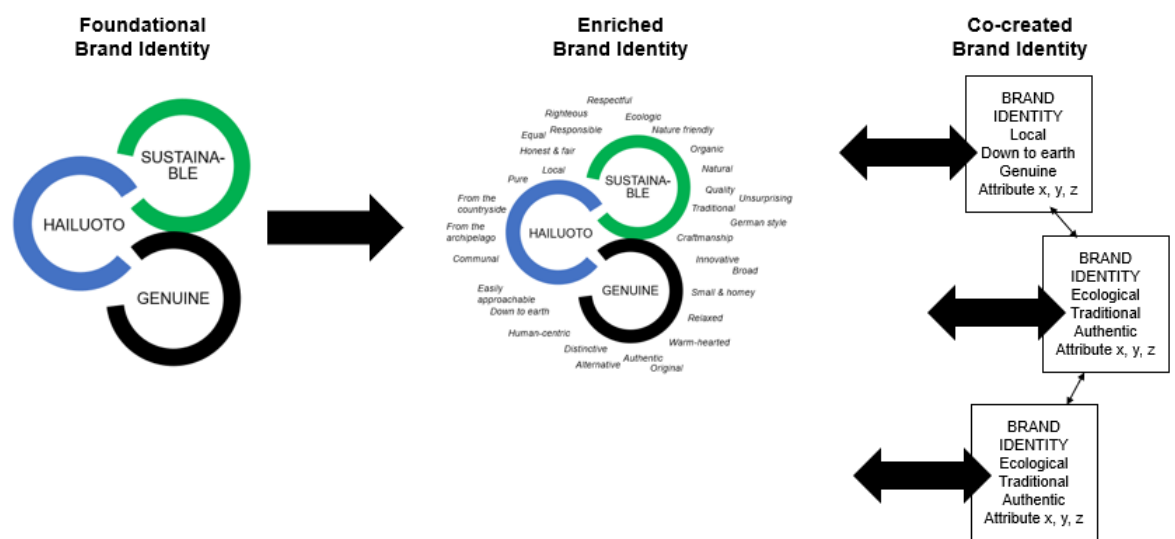


Figure 12. Co-created brand identity of Hailuodon Panimo

## 5 Development ideas

In this chapter development ideas are suggested for Hailuodon Panimo based on findings of this study. Suggestions focus on communications and co-creation. Ideas are presented in order of relevance or easiness to implement. Some points include several alternative ways of implementation. This chapter differs visually from other chapters as text is highlighted to a greater extent compared to other chapters. Furthermore, phrasing is directed to the company.

1. Use **brand meanings** in communications that **stakeholders relate to** such as being down to earth and distinctive. As locality is important to customers and Hailuodon Panimo is local, communicate it. Acknowledge the inside-out – outside in perspectives to the Hailuodon Panimo brand. Yet the brand is built inside-out, it is viewed outside-in. A short simple example from everyday life given. If a person was to describe herself, she might begin with characteristics of her personality. Someone who does not know her very well would probably begin by describing her through physically evident characteristics like gender, height and body build. The person in question might not even include these obvious features in her description of herself. Both internal and external views are, however, true and complete the total picture. **Take notice in aspects that seem self-evident to the company.** It might be the customer view. It is relevant to use terminology in communications that customers relate to the brand.
2. The **brewery as a place** builds the image of Hailuodon Panimo. Consider showing it even more in current communications and **consider using video content** in addition to still pictures already in use.
3. Core values and brand meanings have been identified. Consider using them for **storytelling purposes**. Tell the **company story in terms of purpose – why it exists** and **stories of each product**. All in all, **share as much information as possible**. This will help customers to know you better and build the Hailuodon Panimo brand in the manner that is “relevant and aligned” with customer expectations (Iglesias et al. 2013, 672; 681.)

For **products**, explain details about the **recipe** and its’ **origin**, the **inspiration for producing it**. Explain for example why the colour is what it is, what smells and tastes should one experience. Furthermore, it might also be of interest to know what kind of people usually like the product (eg. people who like sour beer like this product) and if

there is something special to know about the specific product. **For inspiration, ask** some **customers**, new ones and regular visitors, what they would like to know about products. Consider **co-creating content with them**.

Stories, whether company produced or co-created, could first be simply **available in writing at the brewery** for customers to read. Ask for feedback and evaluate if stories need to be revised or completed. Then, descriptions could be **available online** and content could be used both on company web pages and in social media. Through a **QR code**, for example, product descriptions could be even **linked on bottle labels** enabling customers to read about details prior to purchase. Some interviewees mentioned in the study how the big bottle size was a barrier to buying Hailuodon Panimo products in stores especially if the product is unknown. It might be easier to try a new product if there would be more details available about the product at the store through the product label.

As a next phase, presentations could also be in a **form of a video**. The brewery builds the Hailuodon Panimo brand and the warm-heartedness is linked not only to the premises but also the people working there. It would give a personal touch if founders would present products, but staff and even customers could appear on videos. Next, if there would be comfort in stepping into the spotlight “meet the brewer” type of **live streams** about the **brewery and products** could be held in social media for direct interaction with customers.

4. As being communal is important for Hailuodon Panimo, communicate it for stakeholders see it. It also relates to **style of communications**. Be aware that it is in a **participatory manner** versus one way. For example, using social media does not necessarily mean that communication is participatory (as a general comment, not necessarily referring to Hailuodon Panimo).
5. Return to core values when thinking of possible product extensions and additional services. Are they compatible with core values?
6. Take special notice in the **role of employees**. Findings draw focus to their role in co-creation and enacted brand identity. The significance of staff in branding is also recognized in more traditional branding views (de Chernatony 2012, 24). Findings show how Hailuodon Panimo employees strengthen emotional aspects of the brand such as warm-heartedness and deliver facts about the company and its products. Remember that employees are key in delivering **knowledge** and **behaviours** – the

functional and emotional benefits of Hailuodon Panimo. This calls for recognition internally **to keep the current style that supports the Hailuodon Panimo brand** and address special notice in information employees have. The more they know about the company, the better they can communicate.

7. Be reminded that Hailuodon Panimo **cannot control its brand**. Customers can have differing views also in the future. Review the brand regularly to be aware of how it evolves.
8. **Co-create**. It can be a means to bringing the **communal aspect** to the Hailuodon Panimo brand. Try co-creation in product development, storytelling, sparring communications – anything! Start small by involving a customer or two. Following tips are *applied* from the book Co-creating brands by Ind and Schmidt (2019, 93-97).

Co-creation can be done in the following manner: asking a couple of customers to join ideation. First explain the situation for example as follows: “We’d like to tell our customers more about our products and the way we make them. We’d love to hear what you’d like to know about our products and what you find interesting about them. Also, we’d love to hear where and how the information should be available.” In co-creation it is relevant that the right people are involved but do not be afraid of this the first times. It is said that anyone can be creative if the setting is right.

The task must be such that **people really can have an impact**. If everything is decided beforehand, there is not point to co-creation. There needs to be some idea what the **purpose** of co-creation is but there needs to be **freedom to explore** and be creative. Have a relaxed workshop at the brewery one evening for example. Be involved in discussion. Listen to customers and reflect. There might be ideas that you find uncomfortable, against your philosophy but try to **keep an open mind**. When people are given a chance to **ideate without boundaries and a strict outcome**, they will be **more creative**. **Ask for feedback** after ideation. What did the customers think and how did they feel? **Remember to tell which ideas are taken forward** and also communicate afterwards **how the generated ideas were utilized**. The last point is of importance!

As experience on co-creation grows, **keep diversity**. Do not fall in the trap of developing with fans because co-creation is about **diversity and broad views**. Co-creation requires being humble and open and this comes natural to Hailuodon Panimo

and its people. By increasing participation and involvement with customers and learning together with them, the communal side, that currently is not enacted, can flourish.



## 6 Discussion

This was the first study for Hailuodon Panimo that examined how the brand is perceived by stakeholders. Both internal and external views were explored. As a result of this study Hailuodon Panimo now has crystallized core values and foundational brand identity, and they are presented in a visualised form (Figure 9). Yet Hailuodon Panimo was aware of its values on a general level prior to this study, now values are *crystallised* into a *clear entity* of three words. This helps with communications both internally and externally.

Furthermore, various brand meanings and attributes have been identified through interviews with founders, employees and customers visiting the brewery, and there is understanding how the brand is viewed by these groups. Brand meanings and attributes have also been visualised with the foundational brand identity (Figure 10). This type of representation is helpful in communications for Hailuodon Panimo but can be of inspiration for other marketers, as well.

This study examined the intended and enacted brand identities of Hailuodon Panimo. The enacted brand identity is only applicable for the very setting in this case study. However, the *means how* to reveal intended and enacted brand identities through the questionnaire posing same questions to different stakeholder groups is valuable beyond this case study. It can be applied by the company to examine additional stakeholder groups but is of interest to other similar businesses and possibly applicable to other business fields.

In addition to answering research questions, factors distinguishing Hailuodon Panimo and the relevance of the brewery as a place in branding were identified. Together, various findings in this study form a foundation from which various actions can be taken. These include but are not limited to developing internal and external communication, staff training, product development, storytelling purposes and segmentation.

Findings inspired development suggestions which were presented in a practical manner in the previous chapter to help Hailuodon Panimo develop communications and begin experimenting with co-creation. These ideas can be of inspiration to other craft breweries but also other small producers and businesses with a contact point with customers wanting to develop their business.

Segmentation is an interesting area that this study could serve as a basis for. Some notions of possible segments were signalled yet need further examination. These were not presented in findings because they are out of scope and the sample of nine people is very small. Nevertheless, the following signals can serve as a basis for future studies. The

list is *not* an order of importance: 1) “ecological consumers” who value locality and sustainability and want to support these values when making purchases, 2) “support local” who value locality but it does not have an environmental connotation; 3) “traditional beer drinkers” are experimental within the German and Belgium style beers and, therefore, choose Hailuodon Panimo, 4) “new experiences” who visit the brewery out of interest and may very well value the brand yet will not continue to consume the product, 5) “tourists” of which some are passing by chance and others have planned the visit. A point of interest is that people in one segment can be of various backgrounds. For example, “ecological consumers” recognised in this study included a young male student from the north and a middle-aged woman (with family) from the south.

## **6.1 Discussion of co-creation theory**

Looking from a broader perspective, this study has discussed co-creation and branding with the attempt to address occurring changes. The core issue is that of control. In the very first article on co-creation experiences, Ramaswamy and Prahalad (2004, 11) addressed how co-creation shifts control away from the organization. In terms of brands and brand identity, modern co-creational views find that organizations can attempt to direct brands but cannot control them (Iglesias et al. 2020, 41; Ind & Coates 2013, 87; Kennedy & Guzmán 2016, 313; Iglesias et al. 2013, 671; Voyer et al. 2017, 403). Giving up control can be very difficult for organisations and it is present also in co-creation which was shortly addressed in thesis when discussing tactical and strategic co-creation (see page 7).

This thesis has addressed both traditional and co-creational views on branding and shortly introduced co-creation in general. It serves as a basis to move to co-creating, first in a tactical manner and then strategic. Table 6. presents the student’s view of this thesis in relation to a broader context. This thesis has focused on the level marked in blue yet tackled traditional branding views and presented development ideas of tactical co-creation. Moving down to the next level requires changes in thinking in the organisation – in general or in the case of Hailuodon Panimo. The student hopes theory and the empirical part in this study to be of use for Hailuodon Panimo but for any marketer or organisation wishing discover co-creation.

Table 6. This study in the context of co-creation

		<b>Organisational thinking</b>
BRANDING	Traditional	We control our brand.
	Co-creational	We can direct our brand, but not control it.
CO-CREATION	Tactical	We don't know everything, let's ask customers.
	Strategic	We are equal with customers, learning and creating new together.

*Definitions* on intended and enacted brand identity and the connection between that of enacted brand identity and brand image call for specifications by researchers. Existing definitions leave room for interpretations. Therefore, the student decided that in this study founder values and foundational brand identity comprise intended brand identity as presented in Figure 7. The student acknowledges that with this view it could be argued that as time passes, and founder views are impacted by co-creation, intended identity is that of the past and there are only differing enacted brand identities. This is likely not what has been meant with intended brand identity.

Intended brand identity has been defined as the *desired state* of brand identity by the organization (Kornum et al. 2017, 433). The desired state could be seen to be held solely by founders or shared by founders and employees. Employees could, therefore, be representing intended or enacted brand identities depending on interpretation. In this case study views of employees were compared with founder and customer views to find similarities and differences. Employees were considered part of the internal view but enacted brand identity. This point could also serve as a basis for future studies.

Finally, in this thesis the theoretical model by Iglesias et al. (2020, 40) was applied. The original model was for b2b corporate brands and this study showed that the model is applicable also to a b2c corporate brand. However, in this study the empirical part drew attention that co-creation is not a linear process as presented in the original model by Iglesias et al. (2020, 40).

## **6.2 Validity and reliability**

By discussing reliability and validity, the objectivity and quality of the study and findings are evaluated. As Hirsjärvi et al. (2007, 226) explain, reliability refers to the ability to produce similar results when repeating the study. The authors continue by giving examples that if similar findings are made by two separate researchers or the same

interviewee gives similar answers in two separate interviews, results of the study are reliable. Both reliability and validity derive from the *quantitative* inquiry (Miles et al. 2014, 313; Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 227) and some researches find discomfort in applying the terms in qualitative contexts. The argument has been linked especially to case studies and studies using interviews as method of data collection due to the uniqueness of each interview and case (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 227). Nevertheless, even in qualitative studies it needs to be somehow evaluated whether findings make sense, which is the essence of validity (Miles et al. 2014, 312; Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 227) and this will be addressed in the following.

This is a case study that used qualitative inquiry and, therefore, results apply to this case and setting. Brand related associations were generated by multiple stakeholder groups. For this setting, the results are found reliable as will be later reasoned. As for enacted brand identity by customers, there is reason to believe views will vary in accordance to interviewees. Associations do reflect the foundational brand identity, and in this sense are valid and reliable, but the emphasis of ecological associations, for example, depends on the individual. Therefore, differing enacted brand identities can be reached with a different sample.

The validity of a qualitative study can be improved through transparency (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 227). Examples of this are specifically explaining how the study has been carried out and analysed (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 227). Interviewing conditions of this case study have been described in 3.2 data collection and sampling and 3.3 data analysis and will be completed in this section. Furthermore, the student has openly expressed how findings were reached by explaining connections between attributes, presenting tables of them through Table 4, Table 5 and additional material in Appendix 2, and supporting findings with interview quotations. Additional areas adding validity to the study are if research questions are clear, areas of uncertainty have been identified and that the role and status of the researcher has been clear in the study (Miles et al. 2014, 312).

A comprehensive description with 26 tactics related to 13 different means to test or confirm findings is given by Miles et al. (2014, 293-310) followed by concrete steps how to evaluate the quality of conclusions (2014, 311-315). Some examples from these are given first through *representativeness*, *researcher effect* and *triangulation*. Evaluating representativeness relates to assessing whether the sample has included nonrepresentative participants and results have been generalized from these nonrepresentative participants (Miles et al. 2014, 295).

As for employees, it is reminded that interviewees were those with connections to customers since interviewed external stakeholder groups were customers. In this context the point of saturation was reached. Answers repeated themselves. Additional perspectives might accumulate if interviewing production people. Furthermore, if new employees join the company involved in customer service, new views might emerge. As for employees, the sample is found to be representative to people currently involved with customers.

For customers, the aim was to have a sample with a diverse profile to get broad views on attributes and values. All customers interviewed had visited the brewery, but none were living on the island of Hailuoto. The point of saturation was reached after interviewing nine customers who had visited the brewery in July and August. The sample is not representative to *all consumers* buying Hailuodon Panimo beers. Neither is it representative to *all external stakeholder* views as many groups are excluded such as suppliers and b2b customers. In terms of *enacted* brand identity, results will likely depend on the sample and different results can be reached with a different set of interviewees. In the light of the results it can depend on personal values but also depending on having visited the premises or not. Furthermore, differing results can also be found if reviewing additional stakeholder groups. In addition, the intended communal aspect which was not enacted might have come forth if including islanders in the sample.

*Researcher effect* (Miles et al. 2014, 296) implies on the effects the researcher has on the case and the effects of the case has on the researcher. The student is related to the CEO. Apart from the CEO the student is not acquainted with or met any of the interviewees. All interviews were confidential and anonymity was guaranteed. It is possible both employees and customers would have spoken differently if the study would have been conducted by a research agency. However, the topic is not sensitive and, therefore, there is reason to assume interviewees have spoken freely. As the interviews were held by phone, the expressions and other non-verbal cues were not seen. However, this can also enable people to speak without restraint.

*Triangulating* (Miles et al. 2014, 299) is a common means to confirm findings in qualitative studies. Miles et al. (2014, 299) continue to explain that in essence it means that “three independent measures” on the minimum agree with findings or at least do not reverse it. They give examples of such measures as *data source* (e.g. people, times, places), *method* (e.g. interview document, observation), *researcher* (several people conducting or analysing data), *theory* and *data type* (e.g. quantitative data, audio/video recordings, qualitative data).

Each stakeholder group was relevant for this study and it would have been less of value if one of the three groups of founders, employees or customers would have been excluded. Different views complemented each other but were not contradictory and, thus, supported main findings especially on the generated attributes. Moreover, secondary data was used to form preliminary understanding of brand identity, which was crystallized in one multiple-choice question in the questionnaire for collecting primary data. When collecting primary data, spontaneous descriptions of the Hailuodon Panimo brand included all attributes listed in the multiple-choice question. Thus, findings from primary data support that of secondary data. Thirdly, several connections to theory were made from findings. These include but are not limited to connections with the theoretical framework by Iglesias et al. (2020) presented in Figure 4. The organic view of the brand (adapted from Iglesias et al. 2013, 678) and the main definition for brand identity by Da Silveira et al. (2013, 33) presented on page 12. As Miles et al. (2014, 313) quote, findings should be “clear, coherent and systematically related” and it was reached in this study.

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## Attachments

### Appendix 1. Questionnaire in Finnish

PERUSTAJA: Miksi Hailuodon Panimo perustettiin?

TYÖNTEKIJÄ: Miten tulit mukaan Hailuodon Panimon toimintaan? Milloin tämä tapahtui?

ASIAKAS: Miten tutustuit Hailuodon Panimoon?

1. Miten kuvailisit Hailuodon Panimon oluita?
2. Mitä ajattelet, miksi asiakas valitsee Hailuodon Panimon oluen?
3. Millaista mielikuvaa Hailuodon Panimo yrityksenä tavoittelee?
4. Mitkä ovat Hailuodon Panimon kilpailijoita, jos mietitään kaupan hyllyä? Entä baaripuolella?
5. Millä tavoin Hailuodon Panimo mielestäsi eroaa kilpailijoista?
6. Kun asiakas tekee valintaa eri pienpanimo-oluiden välillä, mitkä asiat mielestäsi vaikuttavat ostopäätökseen?
7. Kuvaile Hailuodon Panimoa adjektiiveilla - millainen Hailuodon Panimo on?
8. Entä mitkä ovat mielestäsi Hailuodon Panimon arvot?

*Kahdessa ensimmäisessä haastattelussa tämä kysymys esitettiin ”Luettelen seuraavaksi sanoja -kysymyksen jälkeen”. Kysymystä aikaistettiin tähän, jotta vastaaja kertoo spontaanisti arvot eikä annettu adjektiivilista toimi ohjaavana tekijänä sanavalinnoille.*

9. Miten mielestäsi arvot näkyvät Hailuodon Panimon toiminnassa? (entä sisäisesti, entä ulkoisesti?)

*Tätä kysymystä ei esitetty ensimmäisessä asiakashaastattelussa. Ensimmäisessä henkilökuntahaastattelussa toiminnan sijaan käytettiin ilmaisua sisäinen ja ulkoinen kanssakäyminen. Muissa haastatteluissa sanamuoto oli, kuten kysymyksessä 9. on kirjoitettu.*

10. a) Luettelen seuraavaksi sanoja. Mitkä kolme niistä kuvaavat parhaiten Hailuodon Panimoa? *Ekologinen, yhteisöllinen, saksalaistyyppinen, hailuotolainen, paikallinen, perinteinen, maanläheinen, rento, aito.*

- 10 b) Entä mihin järjestykseen sanat laittaisit (kysytään, kun ensin kertonut sanat)

11. Millä tavalla mielestäsi asiakkaat vaikuttavat tai ovat vaikuttaneet Hailuodon Panimoon?

*Ehdotetaan muutettavaksi jatkossa muotoon: Millä tavalla asiakkaiden tulisi mielestäsi voida vaikuttaa Hailuodon Panimoon?*

12. [EI ASIAKKAILTA] Millä tavalla mielestäsi työntekijät vaikuttavat tai ovat vaikuttaneet Hailuodon Panimoon?

13. Hailuodon Panimo on ollut toiminnassa nyt reilu kolme vuotta. Millä tavalla mielikuvasi Hailuodon Panimosta on muuttunut tänä aikana?

14. Miten sinä kehittäisit Hailuodon Panimoa? Voit ottaa kantaa mihin tahansa.

15. Onko jokin panimoalan yritys, jota arvostat? Mitä siinä arvostat?

16. Tuleeko sinulle mieleen jotain mitä haluaisit vielä kertoa tai lisätä? Tai palautetta, jota haluaisit Hailuodon Panimolle antaa?

## Appendix 2. Main findings presented in tables

### 1. Factors differentiating Hailuodon Panimo from competition by founders, employees and customers

Founders	Employees	Customers
Organic	Organic	Organic
Bottle size	Bottle size Bottle labels	Bottle size Bottle labels
Brand	Place (brewery)	Place (brewery)
Beer is an entity Quality	Quality through limited selection Equal standard  Traditional	Full-bodied taste Traditional Central European beer style

### 2. Expressions describing Hailuodon Panimo by founders, employees and customers

Founders	Employees	Customers
Genuine (Authentic)	Genuine From the archipelago From the countryside Easily approachable Close to customers Warm Nice	Genuine  From the countryside Easily approachable  Warm-hearted Nice Local Homey Small
	Responsible  Ecological	Fair  Organic Close to nature Natural
	Traditional  Innovative	Traditional Craftmanship Innovative Broad

3. Desired image as seen by founders, employees and customers

Founders	Employees	Customers
Genuine (authentic) Easily approachable	Genuine	Genuine Easily approachable Down to earth Relaxed Not mainstream Warm-hearted
Organic	Organic Ecological Close to nature Pure (clean)	Organic Ecological Close to nature Pure (clean)
Honest	Fair Justice	Fair
Quality	Traditional (brewing method)	Traditional (brewing method) Craftmanship Local From Hailuoto Small producer

4. Multi-choice question: top 2 choices by internal people (founders and employees) and customers.

	INTERNAL N=6			CUSTOMER N=9		
	1st choice	2nd choice	TOTAL	1st choice	2nd choice	TOTAL
Ecological	1	2	3	2	0	2
Local	1	0	1	2	3	5
Genuine	1	0	1	1	1	2
Down to earth	0	1	1	1	3	4
Easy going	0	1	1	1	0	1
Traditional	1	1	2	1	1	2
German style	0	1	1	0	1	1
Communal	2	0	2	0	0	0
From Hailuoto	0	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	6	6	12	9	9	18