

ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF BRAND AS A SYSTEM

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1. Introduction

Success of produced products on the market can be assessed with its sales figures (indicator). Sales growth is impossible, if users do not have information about the company's products (brands) on their characteristics and advantages. The proper management of brand is very important for modern companies. Brand is presented as a complex system of interconnected elements.

It is very important for our country, Georgian products to be presented not only in the domestic market, but also to increase its exports. Significant place in the country's total export is held by Georgian wine, mineral water, alcoholic beverages, carbonated soft (nonalcoholic) drinks and etc... (National Statistics Office of Georgia, 2016).

It should be noted that branding was applied in Georgia in certain form in the past as well. There existed lots of Georgian-made consumer products, which had the benefits from their high reputations between consumers not only in Georgia, but also in abroad (Ten Oldest Georgian Brands).

The tasks of this research was: to determine consumer evaluations at Tbilisi (the capital of Georgia) consumers market about Georgian brands; to find out the attitude of consumers to the advantages of Georgian brands. Based on the results of the research to determine weaknesses which prevent Georgian brands from success. In the conclusive part of the work are given research results, conclusions and some recommendations.

2. Literature review

In the modern marketing systems attached great importance to human aspects. This is revealed in the fact that the first place was awarded to the customers in some companies. Successful marketing

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companies invert the chart, in which at the top are customers; next in importance are frontline people who meet, serve, and satisfy customers; under them are the middle managers, whose job is to support the frontline people so they can serve customers well; and at the base is top management, whose job is to hire and support good middle managers. Managers at every level must be personally involved in knowing, meeting, and serving customers. With the rise of digital technologies such as the Internet, increasingly informed consumers today expect companies to do more than connect with them, more than satisfy them, and even more than delight them. They expect companies to listen and respond to them (Kotler & Keller, 2012, p. 124).

Branding plays an important role in creating loyal customers. Satisfied buyers can purchase the product again which they like without excessive risk. Loyalty demonstrated towards brand could cause the readiness even for the payment of higher prices (Kotler & Armstrong, 2015, p. 258).

Customer assessments of product performance depend on many factors, especially the type of loyalty relationship the customer has with the brand. Consumers often form more favorable perceptions of a product with a brand they already feel positive about (Kotler & Keller, 2012, p. 128).

Building brand equity depends on three main factors: (1) The initial choices for the brand elements or identities making up the brand; (2) the way the brand is integrated into the supporting marketing program; and (3) the associations indirectly transferred to the brand by links to some other entity (the company, country of origin, channel of distribution, or another brand) (Kotler & Keller, 2012, p. 268).

To maintain the success for a long time the company's management should realize well the importance of this issue. They should consider in brand development the following aspects: consistency, clarity, constancy, awareness, originality (Kotler & Pfertch, 2007, pp. 220-353).

Brand strength depends on what customers think about it (brand). The brand equity is very important strategic bridge between past and future. This is the accumulation of values associated with product (service) by consumers. These associations can further increase brand value, than it was in the past. They can be found with the help of Keller CBBE (Customer-Based Brand Equity model) (Kotler & Pfertch, 2007, p. 222).

Successful brand is a system, which consisting of certain components: high quality goods, differential characteristic and additional values. (Doyle & Stern, 2007, pp. 216-223). Thus, successful brand contains broad and profound meaning.

3. Methodology

In the work there are used the concepts of marketing theories, data analysis statistical methods, results of the carried out research, information existing on web-pages of certain Georgian organizations, etc. Most marketing research projects do include some primary-data collection (Todia & Urotadze, (2013), pp. 8-12). As an object of the research was selected consumer market of Tbilisi, the attitude of consumers to Georgian brands and marketing aspects related thereto. In February – March 2016 we carried out the research using quantitative method of the marketing research, questionnaire survey.

4. Findings

As a result of the research, the most recognizable Georgian brand at Tbilisi consumer market is Barambo (sweets :chocolate, candy, ice cream) -25% of respondents; 9% of respondents named _ Borjomi (mineral water), 9% of respondents named Nikora (meat foods), 8% _ Natakhtari (lemonade, beer), 7% _ Kula (fruit juice), 10% _ Georgian wine brands, etc. Although "Barambo" is no brand with long time history, it was able to gain high brand recognition (awareness) on Georgian market rather quickly (Official web page of company "Barambo").

As our study (research) showed, one of the high-profile Georgian brand is Borjomi (mineral water). Unlike Barambo, Borjomi has a long history. It was very popular in the past and now it is known in Georgia as well as abroad, especially in the post-Soviet countries. "Borjomi" is unique as long as the

nature itself gives it to people and its composition makes it special. Special features of “Borjomi” are specified at the web-page of Sakpatenti. Among them we can read: “Unlike many sodium bicarbonate waters, Borjomi spring water does not have time to cool before reaching the surface at a temperature of 38-41°C. On its journey upwards, the rocks of the Caucasian mountains enrich the water with over 60 different mineral compounds.”... The mineral spring of Borjomi water is located in Georgia, in narrow gorge along the river Mtkvari in Borjomi town... The natural pressure of carbon dioxide pushes Borjomi water to the surface from a depth of 8- 10km.” (Sakpatenti, 2013).

10% of respondents named various Georgian wine products, as the most recognizable Georgian brands. It should be noted that Georgia is considered as one of the oldest wine-producing country (The National Wine Agency, 2014). The most well-known Georgian wine brands are: Teliani Valley and Badagoni.

The Brand’s awareness is stimulated by the correct and effective selection of the brands elements (the color, the symbol and etc.). So, for example, 77% of Barambo’s consumers remembered the brand-related colors correctly, while they were asked to remember the colors related to the “Georgian Brand”. To the following question: Do you remember a Georgian Brand’s TV-commercial or any other type of an advertisement, including its slogan? – 36% of the Barambo’s consumers were able to remember the slogan correctly, while the others (64 %) were not (Seturi M.(2016b). p.132).

The image of the brand emerges by the psychological satisfaction of the buyer. As a result of the research it was found out that the majority of respondents, who had named some concrete brands as the most recognizable for them, buy these brands in most cases and are their consumers. To the question: “If you do not buy famous Georgian brand you have named, what is the reason?”, - respondents named:

- high price as compared with foreign analogues;
- low quality as compared with foreign analogues (Seturi M.(2016a), p.216).

The brands can be considered successful, if consumers think they have different and distinctive features or even unique characteristics from the other similar products. As the research has revealed, despite, “Barambo” has a high awareness, with above mentioned indicators it lags behind other Georgian brands. 37% respondents of (This is about the respondents, for whom the brand “Barambo” is the most well-known Georgian brand) think that “Barambo” has not different and distinctive characteristics from other similar brands. As for any unique features or positions, 89% of respondents think it is not characterized by this brand.

As Uniqueness and exclusiveness of the brand, users are given the highest assessments of Georgian wine brands: Teliani Valley and Badagoni. Respondents believe that these Georgian wine brands have not only different, but also unique features as well.

5. Conclusions

Thus, the marketing approaches of considered Georgian brands are characterized by a number of shortcomings. To overcome them we have following recommendations:

- Consumers can’t often see the difference between particular Georgian brand and its similar products. Therefore, it is necessary companies to give and add to their brands some specific features and advantages characteristic only for this particular brand. And then to demonstrate its advantages with advertising and other marketing activities;
- Georgian companies operating on the consumers market should pay much more attention not only to brand management, but also give greater role and significance to marketing in their organizations, which has no place nowadays. The importance of consumers is on the first place in modern organizations. It’s very important to gain and then maintenance consumers trust and confidence,

which positively effects to maintain customers from company's side. Organizations can't implement it unless they stop false promises and do not justify expectations of consumers.

- From our point of view, the systematical methods of approach and the complex use of recognized principles deserve a very high attention in branding, and all of it has to foresee and be in accordance with the changes that take place in the constantly mobile market environment.

Keywords: *Brand; Branding; Brand image; Marketing Research.*

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