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**Development of a marketing concept for a Low Price Point  
BOSCH lawnmower, based on the identification of Critical  
Success Factors influencing brand personality in the competitive  
German and UK lawnmower market**

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Targeted objective and problem definition

The current European lawnmower market has started to go through a change in terms of its products and pricing. Whereas petrol lawnmowers have been successful in the market for decades, there is a switch to modern technology leading to a growing demand for corded and battery-powered lawnmowers.<sup>1</sup> This market development is also influenced by a high focus on low prices by consumers.<sup>2</sup> All in all, this results in a growing number of products and high volumes in the Low Price segment, especially in the German and UK lawnmower market.<sup>3</sup> The high demand for low priced products does not only affect product portfolio actions but also represents an instability factor for companies. Low priced products lead to a strong focus in terms of costs and result in a limitation of features and design which makes it hard for companies to differentiate their branded products from other brands or private labels. A strong brand personality therefore becomes the only differentiation factor. Creating a suitable brand personality as well as maintaining an existing brand personality, though, is not just a simple short-term marketing action. This is because a brand personality shines through every part of a company's policy and needs to be considered as part of its overall strategy.

*“You now have to decide what ‘image’ you want for your brand. Image means personality. Products, like people, have personalities, and they can make or break them in the market place.” **David Ogilvy***

### 1.2 Goal and approach

This paper incorporates the mentioned influence factors and aims at applying these to the German and UK lawnmower market. In this context, a company's focus is to provide price-optimised lawnmowers without creating a negative effect on the brand personality. In order to ensure this, the paper defines Critical Success Factors (CSF) in the market that are influenced by the 4 P's, which divide market-

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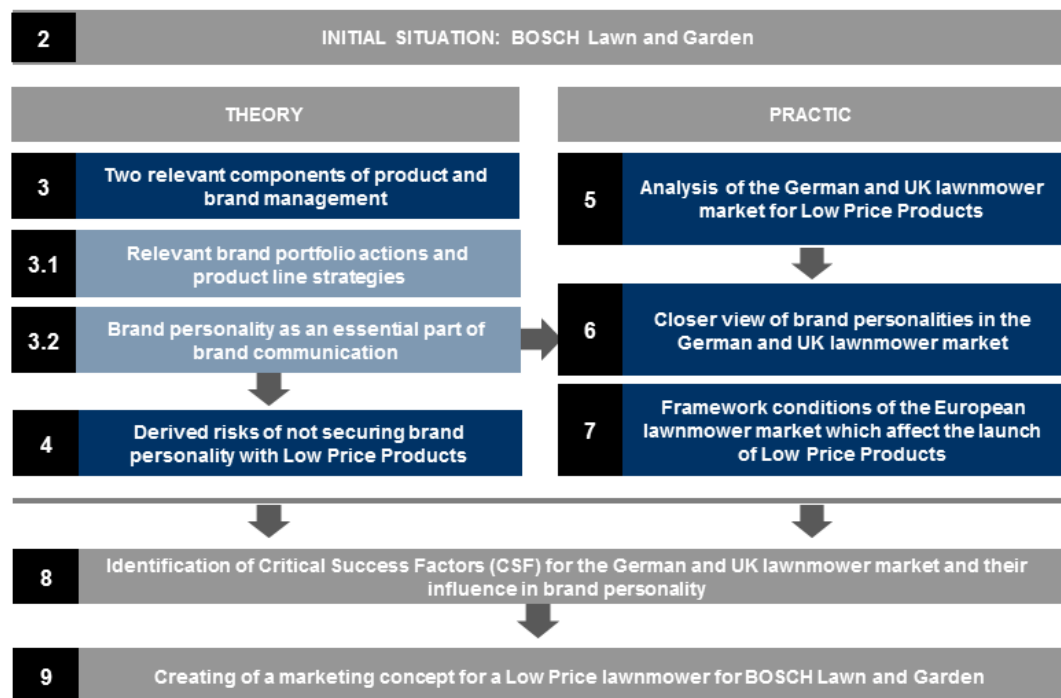
<sup>1</sup> Cf. BOSCH Lawn and Garden Ltd. (2008a), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. UK survey in appendix 13.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. appendix 8 and 9: Low Price market figures of Germany and UK 2010.

ing activities in four relevant factors: Product, Price, People and Place. The 4 P's in this paper focus on showing their links to brand personality. The result will be a suitable marketing concept for a new BOSCH branded lawnmower model which uses the knowledge gained.

### Illustration 1: Structure of this paper



Reference: compiled by author.

The paper, as shown in Illustration 1, starts with *chapter 2* which gives an insight into BOSCH Lawn and Garden and its product and pricing strategy which also sets the foundation for this paper. The following *chapter 3* gives an overview of possible product portfolio actions and product line strategies. The chapter also includes a detailed examination of the term ‘brand personality’ and its impact on companies’ policy. The theoretical part is completed by *chapter 4* which analyses the derived risks for companies when they do not focus on brand personality.

After providing the relevant brand and product-related knowledge the next step is to define the German and UK lawnmower market. *Chapter 5* contains an analysis of products, market figures and market participants, leading to a classification of BOSCH’s relevant competitor brands in the German and UK lawnmower market. Five lawnmower brands are illustrated in *chapter 6* in order to describe their personality traits, including three main competitor brands to BOSCH. These descrip-

tions of brands and their personality traits are then used in order to have suitable examples to discuss when analysing the Critical Success Factors. This chapter also includes a 'Brand Steering Wheel' applied to BOSCH Lawn and Garden which shows the present brand strategy.

Based on the relevant markets and brands for this paper the next step is to show how these are influenced by market changes. *Chapter 7*, in this context, examines framework conditions of the German and UK lawnmower market which are likely to influence the sought product characteristics and product expectations of price-optimised lawnmowers. *Chapter 8* then unites the gained cognitions about brand personality with the market environment and framework conditions to result in seven Critical Success Factors which are applied to the 4 P's of a marketing concept. They point out the chances and risks of developing low priced lawnmowers whilst considering brand personality. *Chapter 9* is the optimal adaptation of these Critical Success Factors in order to create a suitable marketing concept for a price-optimised BOSCH branded lawnmower which uses current opportunities in the market and eliminates the stated risks. Finally, *chapter 10* contains a conclusion for this paper and gives an insight into potential future market development.

## 2 Profile of BOSCH Lawn and Garden

### 2.1 BOSCH Lawn and Garden in general

Founded in 1995 with the acquisition of the traditional lawnmower producer Atco-Qualcast Ltd. the BOSCH Group managed to use its expertise to set up the affiliated company BOSCH Lawn and Garden Ltd. in order to create a strong subsidiary which is now well-known for producing lawn and garden equipment in Europe and became the market leader for electric garden tools in 2009. Tools produced and supplied include lawncare, hedge/shrub care and treecare, supplemented by high pressure washers for outdoor cleaning.<sup>4</sup> The head office of BOSCH Lawn and Garden Ltd. is located in Stowmarket, United Kingdom, with plants in Sebnitz (Germany), Miskolc (Hungary) and Hangzhou (China). The BOSCH Group itself, which celebrates its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011, is successfully present in the Automotive Technology, Industrial Technology and Consumer Goods

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<sup>4</sup> The complete product portfolio can be found in appendix 1.

## 2.4 The current target groups

BOSCH Lawn and Garden's customer structure consists of three target groups which can be found below. These target groups do not differ throughout the garden products, which lowers the risk of inconsistency when it comes to product development and branding. BOSCH customers could be described as belonging to the upper middle class and seem to build a unit as there are no target groups which are contradictory. There is also an orientation on customer life stages, as all three target groups apply to different age groups.

### Illustration 4: The target groups of BOSCH Lawn and Garden Ltd.

	<p><b>Gardening pensioners</b></p> <p>Male / female, over 55 years old  <b>High garden interest / low physical agility</b>            Deeply concerned about product weight            Favour products that are lightweight, easy to use, ergonomic and comfortable            Likely to visit more stores and look at their ranges of tools</p>
	<p><b>Tidy uppers</b></p> <p>Predominantly female, low garden interest  <b>Convenience-driven</b> when buying and using garden tools            First time buyers: ease of use            Highly safety conscious            Are more brand seekers than feature seekers</p>
	<p><b>Keen gardeners</b></p> <p>Predominantly male, 35–55 years old            High garden interest / seek more product features            Easier to persuade <b>to trade up to premium products</b> / 'toys for boys' attitude            Favour products that are strong, powerful, fun to use and offer features            Take an interest in garden tools even when not buying</p>

Reference: Robert BOSCH GmbH (2007), p. 2.

The next chapter will now form the basic knowledge for this paper by defining actions and strategies when it comes to products and branding, including a detailed definition of 'brand personality'.

## 3 Two relevant components of product and brand management

### 3.1 Relevant brand portfolio actions and product line strategies

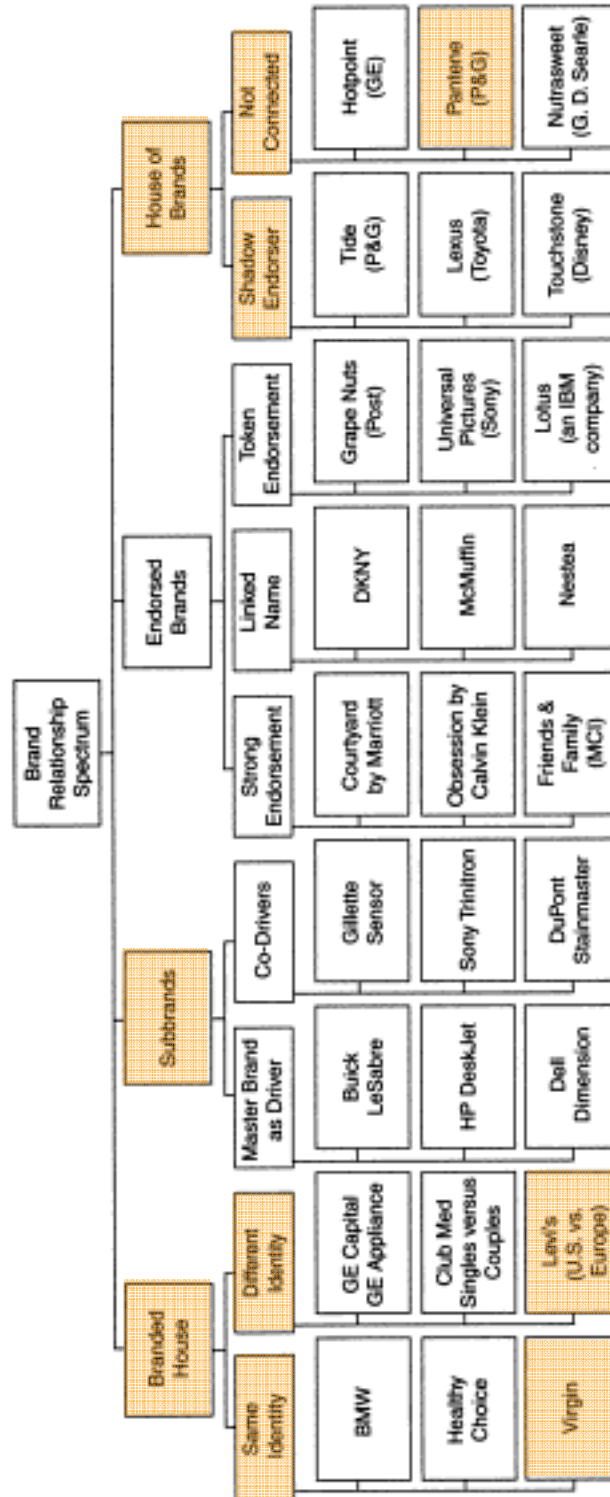
#### 3.1.1 Overview and focus

Illustration 5 shows Aaker's and Joachimthaler's brand relationship spectrum which gives an overview of what strategies companies can pursue when it comes to their brand portfolio. The chapter will use this classification and mindset, but



will only look at the strategies which are of importance for the paper.<sup>17</sup> Brand extensions apply when products within one brand are added, so they represent product line strategies which are not part of the brand relationship spectrum.

**Illustration 5: The Brand Relationship Spectrum**



Reference: Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), p. 105.

<sup>17</sup> See the orange marked strategies and examples in Illustration 5.

### 3.1.2 One Brand strategy

Pursuing a ‘one brand’ strategy reduces a company’s brand portfolio to only one brand and therefore represents the easiest way of brand management. Aaker and Joachimsthaler, though, say that it limits the actions of a brand. When looking at all opportunities of other product line strategies, having only one brand means a missing possibility to differentiate in markets, target groups and product categories. Companies, though, can define different brand identities for the brand to enable this. But this most certainly leads to a weak brand, as there is no real visible orientation on how a company wants its brand and products to be seen. What companies with this strategy are advised to do is create different identities which differ but altogether form a reasonable unit.<sup>18</sup>

### 3.1.3 Subbrands and Branded House

Aaker and Joachimsthaler describe subbrands as the strategy to “stretch the master brand<sup>19,20</sup> by enabling a company to fit its brand to other categories, competence fields or price levels. What companies do is use the master brand name and complement it by adding an additional brand name. Intel for example introduced ‘Pentium’ as a subbrand, making it ‘Dell Pentium’. When looking at brand personality in particular, subbrands can load brands and their products with further associations. Would BOSCH offer prams and pushchairs under a subbrand called ‘BOSCH Babies&Kidz’ its brand personality of technological advancedness could be complemented by child friendliness. But not only the master brand benefits from it. When subbrands are linked to a strong, known master brand this reduces the risks for actions, be that pricing, positioning or the chosen product category itself. Master brands and their subbrands take advantage of each other’s image and associations. This, though, is also seen as the disadvantage, because they are then both highly interlinked. The action of one brand can affect the other brand accordingly. There is also a limited freedom for subbrands to create a certain image, as it highly depends on the master brand’s image.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), p. 119.

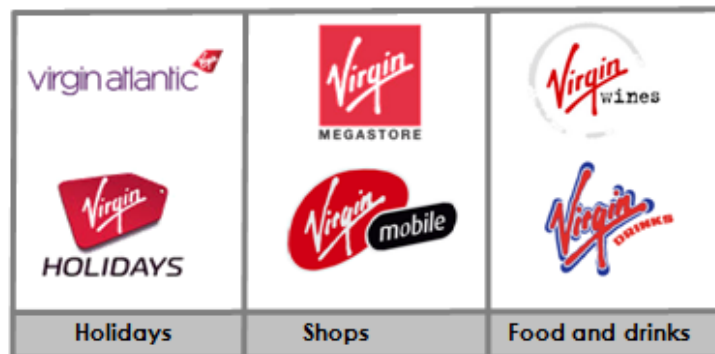
<sup>19</sup> A synonym for ‘core brand’. Both terms will be used in this paper.

<sup>20</sup> Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), p. 115.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), p. 115.

When a company only uses one master brand with corresponding subbrands for its overall products it is called a ‘branded house’, because the product line strategy orientates on one superior brand only which keeps all other brands together. The ‘branded house’ of a company can consist of subbrands which differ in their identity or uses one single brand identity throughout the brand portfolio.<sup>22</sup>

#### Illustration 6: Selected Virgin brands divided in product categories



Reference: own classification.

Information from: Virgin.com Limited (URL2)

The Virgin Group may be one of the best case examples of how a wide number of subbrands can still work long-term. With more than 300 companies, it became one of the best-known brands in the world, using a simple strategy: All founded brands use the trademark core brand ‘Virgin’ in their names and logos, completed by a corporate design with recognition effect (see Illustration 6 above).<sup>23</sup> Being aware of the fact that a single mistake in one of the companies can have far-reaching consequences for the core brand, the Virgin Group tries to reduce the risks mentioned by taking many factors into account and asking the right questions. “When we start a new venture, we base it on hard research and analysis.”<sup>24</sup>

#### 3.1.4 House of Brands and Shadow Endorser

A ‘house of brands’ contains brands which have no connection to each other. One example could be the company Procter&Gamble which has three shampoo brands: Head&Shoulders, Pert Plus and Pantene. The benefit companies gain from it is that “(...) each independent stand-alone brand maximizes its impact on a mar-

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), p. 106.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Virgin.com Limited (URL1); Virgin.com Limited (URL2).

<sup>24</sup> Virgin.com Limited (URL2).

ket.”<sup>25</sup> In Aaker’s and Joachimsthaler’s opinion companies can set a different positioning and different market segments for each of their brands to generate a clearly defined market position, because there is no master brand image which can stand in the way. This, though, makes the benefits of 3.1.3 not applicable, where master brand and subbrands can support each other in many kind of ways. So Aaker and Joachimsthaler suggest that companies should only consider the ‘house of brands’ strategy when the products they want to offer do not fit to the existing brand(s).<sup>26</sup> ‘BOSCH Babies&Kidz’ which was used before is a good example for this. The potential subbrand could also be considered as being launched under a new brand, for instance ‘Boobie’, when the company thinks that the product category does not fit the BOSCH brand and should therefore not be linked to it in any way. A new brand can also create a bigger effect with new products, as it does not link to any previous products of the company’s other brands and in this case can stand out a lot more. A brand name can be used which suits the product better as well as different sales channels.

Rather than isolating every brand within the brand portfolio it is also possible to have brands which differ in name, positioning and market segment, but can be recognized as belonging to a certain company. The master brand acts as a ‘Shadow Endorser’. Many consumers know that Toyota as a company is producing the Lexus. The company, though, does not explicitly mention it. This special ‘house of brands’ strategy combines the benefits of independent brands and subbrands, so that the company can act as a supporting factor, but stays in the background.<sup>27</sup>

### 3.1.5 Brand extensions

#### *The division of brand extensions in category and line extensions*

A brand extension is taking place when an existing brand name is used for a new product. Category extensions indicate that the new product belongs to another category and is therefore not (highly) linked to the previous product portfolio, whereas line extensions mean the launch of products which belong to the same

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<sup>25</sup> Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), p. 106.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), pp. 106-108.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), pp. 108f.

product category. Products of line extensions, in most cases, only differ in colour, ingredients or the packaging.<sup>28</sup>

It is often not clearly definable whether a new product indicates a category or a line extension. Is Nivea shower gel in the same category as Nivea creme as they are both care products or is there enough gap to say that it is another category, resulting in Nivea shower gel being a category extension? There is simply no right or wrong answer.

### *The benefits and drawbacks of brand extensions*

Many companies choose product line policy as an instrument to improve their product portfolio. Especially when products lose importance in portfolio due to slow growth or are in the last life cycle phases it is an easy way to revitalise the brand.<sup>29</sup> In this way companies can increase sales and skim the market they are in.

Brand extensions in particular are often used instead of creating new brands which normally take years to establish and are associated with high investment.<sup>30</sup> So generating and/or increasing market shares with a new product/in a new market is easier and more efficient.<sup>31</sup> Line extensions on the other side allow companies to fill all gaps when it comes to customer needs by providing a large range of (similar) products.<sup>32</sup> That is why we have Coke, Coke Light and Coke Zero. Both extension types on the one hand have the simple advantage of fast implementation and reduced costs. When the same brand name is used, companies can take advantage of the existing brand knowledge to launch new products, reducing the marketing measures that are normally necessary to introduce it to the consumers<sup>33</sup>. It also reduces the risk that customers might not accept the product as they will transfer the attributes of the parent brand to it. The quality of the product is assumed to be of a similar quality as the other products of the parent brand, making customer more willing to buy the product.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Kotler and Keller (2009), p. 296.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Dooley (URL).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Rother (1994), pp. 50-52.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Ellwood (2002), p. 39.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Hardie et al. (URL); Kotler and Armstrong (2010), p. 266.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Kotler and Armstrong (2010), pp. 266f; Hardie et al. (URL); Kilian (URL).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Juda (2007), p. 2. As quoted in: Bloomhead (2007).

Line extensions together with brand extensions, though, are connected to high risk. “We call line extension the 'hockey-stick effect.' Short term, you get the blade and score a few goals. Long term, you get the shaft.”<sup>35</sup> says Al Ries, chairman of an American marketing strategy firm. Especially in the current market environment and climate, many companies try to stay competitive by excessively expanding their product range to increase their shelf space.<sup>36</sup> That is also what Ferrari did with its brand. Ferrari sells licenses to different manufacturers, who can put the brand name on their products. That is why you can find their products in different shops and departments, be that watches, games or toiletries. The effect on the core brand is therefore unpredictable.<sup>37</sup> If a brand is linked to so many product categories, how can it control its brand personality? And is it really reasonable to be in all these product categories when looking at the core brand and what it stands for? On the one hand the brand core becomes blurred, so the customers forget what the brand should stand for originally. On the other hand the high amount of products and brands in general which appear on shelves confuses them and make them look at the price, not the product itself. No brand can really win there and as a result brand loyal customers disappear.<sup>38</sup> A suitable example, Starbucks’ current brand extension measure, is discussed in appendix 19.

### 3.2 Brand personality as an essential part of brand communication

#### 3.2.1 Brand identity and brand image

##### *Definition and importance of brand identity*

Brand identity is often reduced to visual elements such as logos, symbols and colours.<sup>39</sup> But it is much more. Upshaw describes it as “(...) a brand’s unique fingerprint that makes it one of a kind.”<sup>40</sup> Kapferer, author and brand management expert, also sees brand identity as not limited to its visual dimensions. The meaning of a brand defines the messages it wants to send/the way it wants to be seen and

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<sup>35</sup> Ries (URL).

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Anandan (2009), p. 181.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Cotton (URL).

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Hardie (URL).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Parameswaran (2008), p. 140.

<sup>40</sup> Upshaw (1995), p. 13.

the visual elements it needs to use.<sup>41</sup> Perry and Wisnom also give a good definition in saying that it is the controllable part of a brand.<sup>42</sup> Brand identity defines the picture of the company that it portrays to the consumers. It defines how a company's products are seen, combining objective attributes like product features and subjective attributes like quality. But it also goes deeper by defining the company itself: its values and mindset through to its ideas<sup>43</sup> visions and aims<sup>44</sup>.

It is controversial, whether the brand identity refers to what the company sends out to the consumers or if it is seen from the view of the consumer. Upshaw, on the one hand, is of the opinion that a brand's identity is defined by the consumer, not the company itself. It is how they think a company wants to be seen. A company therefore has to send the right signals out and know consumers' way of thinking to meet their expectations.<sup>45</sup> De Chernatony and Kapferer, on the other hand, believe that brand identity is set by the company. Companies and their brands, though, may be perceived differently by consumers which leads the focus to brand image.<sup>46</sup> In Olins' opinion, when a company knows itself, "(...) what its business is, what its priorities are, how it wants to conduct itself, how it wants to be perceived, its identity falls fairly easily into place."<sup>47</sup> De Chernatony, Kapferer and Olins thus clearly indicate that brand identity is to be defined as a picture a company reflects to its outside world. Upshaw's mindset orientates more on applying a company's brand identity to the outside world, indicating an outside-in thinking. This however applies to brand image which will be discussed next. Brand identity as an 'inside-out' instrument is the basis for this paper.

### *Definition and importance of brand image*

The understanding of the meaning 'brand image' has gone through many changes since its first mention, resulting in many different definitions. Dobni and Zinkhan give a good overview of different brand image definitions in their paper "In Search of Brand Image: A Foundation Analysis".<sup>48</sup> A clear definition, though, is

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. Kapferer (1997), pp. 92f.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Perry and Wisnom III (2003), p. 5.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Temporal (URL); VanAuken (URL).

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Kapferer (1997), p. 92.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Upshaw (1995), p. 13.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. De Chernatony (2006), p. 47; Kapferer (1997), p. 94.

<sup>47</sup> Olins (1978), p. 60.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Dobni and Zinkhan (1990), pp. 110-119.

difficult to find, as brand image is known under different terms, depending on the individual mindsets and focuses in the field of marketing. People who see brand image as something tangible may say it is “the symbols by which we buy”<sup>49</sup>. Others see it as the message companies send to the consumers by their products<sup>50</sup> or “everything the people associate with the brand”<sup>51</sup>. By putting all definitions together, Dobni and Zinkhan come to the conclusion that brand image in its core is “(...) the concept of a brand that is held by the consumer.”<sup>52</sup>, which goes further than the physical product attributes. It is defined by the words that come to consumer's minds when asking them about a brand. And these words are influenced by every consumer contact with the product, from customer service to adverts. It goes further than the brand identity the company itself sets, because it encloses more factors. Therefore it is the uncontrollable part of a brand's perception.<sup>53</sup>

The reason for the high impact of brand image lies in the fact that consumers feel associated with brands. When they buy products, they also buy a picture which was created around it. Often they see themselves as part of a community, according to the motto ‘what you consume is what you are’.<sup>54</sup> How else could one explain the success of the Apple iPod, as there are so many MP3 players on the market that can be considered as having a better price-quality ratio.<sup>55</sup> The picture of a brand changes over time and also includes experiences of individuals with products, which is also the reason why a brand image can be seen differently from consumer to consumer.<sup>56</sup> A strong brand is able to create an aspirated image in the consumer's head by analysing the consumer touch points and optimizing its approach. So if you ask people what Apple stands for, most of them will say the same – ‘cool’, ‘innovative’ and ‘easy’.<sup>57</sup>

“(...) brand image is not something you have or you don't!”<sup>58</sup> Companies have to be aware that creating and controlling a brand image by marketing activities is important from day one, as otherwise consumers will do this job and the organisa-

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<sup>49</sup> Levy (1958), pp. 409-16. As quoted in: Dobni and Zinkhan (1990), pp. 110-119.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Swartz (1983), pp. 59-64. As quoted in: Dobni and Zinkhan (1990), pp. 110-119.

<sup>51</sup> Herzog (1963), pp. 76-86. As quoted in: Dobni and Zinkhan (1990), pp. 110-119.

<sup>52</sup> Dobni and Zinkhan (1990), pp. 110-119.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Perry and Wisnom (2003), P.7; Anandan (2009), p. 131.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. White (URL1).

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Which? (URL); Lanxon (URL).

<sup>56</sup> Cf. De Chernatony (2006), p. 39.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. The Financial Brand (URL).

<sup>58</sup> N.U. (URL3).



tion's brand image becomes uncontrollable. As far as brand identity is concerned, it also defines the company's character and its aims in the eye of the consumer. With this it creates a better focus on specific markets and actions towards the target groups. It sets how a company can position itself in the market. A positive, stand-out brand image influences the purchase decisions of consumers significantly as it creates brand preferences.<sup>59</sup>

To make a conclusion, brand identity can be seen as 'inside-out', i.e. something a company tries to set up, and brand image as 'outside-in', i.e. reflecting how companies are perceived from the outside. Kapferer advises companies to first look at the brand identity and then create a suitable brand image. "Before projecting an image to the public, we must know exactly what we want to project."<sup>60</sup>

The impact of brand identity and brand image on brand personality is the next subject that will be discussed.

### 3.2.2 Brand personality

#### *General definition and importance of brand personality*

"Brand personality is the way a brand speaks and behaves."<sup>61</sup> Consumers like to think of brands as people as they make them feel more human and therefore easier to understand.<sup>62</sup> Companies can use this fact by associating their brands with human traits which differentiate them from the competition. In product categories where products seem very similar to one another, the unique brand personality is how a brand can create a position where they stand out in the market.<sup>63</sup> This is also underlined by the fact that, according to Kotler and Keller, consumers often choose the brand whose personality fits theirs best.<sup>64</sup> For instance in the tobacco market, Marlboro stands for 'masculine', whereas Virginia Slims is being seen as more feminine.<sup>65</sup> But a brand can also be young or mature, shy or outgoing.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Cf. BrandConsultant (URL).

<sup>60</sup> Kapferer (2008), p. 174.

<sup>61</sup> N.U. (URL4).

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Franzen and Moriarty (2009), pp. 229f; The Financial Brand (URL).

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Batra, Lenk and Wedel (n/a), p. 2.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Kotler and Keller (2009), p. 198.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. The Financial Brand (URL).

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Parameswaran (2008), p. 122.

More and more companies start to switch their strategy focus towards brand personality. In the past it was enough to do traditional marketing to be successful in the market and to create loyal customers. Tom Dorresteijn, a brand and design strategist who wrote a book about Visual Branding, thinks that this has now changed as products become ever more similar and consumer behaviour loses predictability. He uses the example of politicians to make this point clear. In politics it is all about the right views, which should be the essential criteria in votes. Tony Blair as a prime minister may have had the right political views, but all in all his personality combined with his political views made him successful.<sup>67</sup>

### *The lack of clarity in defining brand personality*

Reading definitions of brand personality can be confusing as many common brand words are still not clearly defined. Franzen and Moriarty point out that brand image, brand identity and brand personality are sometimes used to describe the same thing, whereas the relation between these three cannot really be made tangible.<sup>68</sup> Tom Dorresteijn thinks that brand personality should be defined by two sides. On the inner side it is the company's identity which we already defined as set by the company. The outer side is how consumers (want to) see the company, so it is all about brand image.<sup>69</sup> In an article about Category Personality, Batra, Lenk and Wedel express the opinion that brand personality is linked to brand image. The brand image itself goes further than simple product-based associations.<sup>70</sup> These simple product-based associations can be interpreted as brand identity. Aaker defines brand personality as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand"<sup>71</sup>, agreeing with Keller that it goes further than the product itself.<sup>72</sup>

All these definitions are trying to communicate the same thing, but do so with different words. In its core, brand personality can be seen as influenced by brand image on the one side and brand identity on the other. It is the same as with humans. Their identity is formed by their background, opinions and mindsets as well as demographics and influences how they act in their environment. How they are

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Dorresteijn (2007), pp. 1f.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Franzen and Moriarty (2009), p. 230.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Dorresteijn (2007), p. 2; Larson (URL), p. 1.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Batra, Lenk and Wedel (n/a), p. 3.

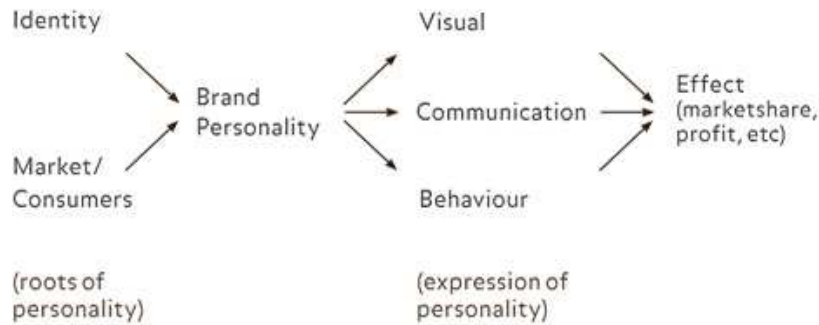
<sup>71</sup> Aaker (1997), p. 347.

<sup>72</sup> Further than product-based attributes – could be seen as brand identity.

seen by others, though, can differ. The personality is the result of putting these factors together.

### *Influencing Brand Personality*

#### **Illustration 7: The concept of brand personality**



Reference: Dorresteijn (2007), p. 3.

Illustration 7 above shows Dorresteijn's compiled influence factors and the effects of creating and controlling a brand personality. Aims such as 'increasing market shares' require that every action of the company (= every expression of personality) is defined and guided by brand personality, regardless of whether it is advertising, customer service or, in this paper, product development. Brands like Starbucks managed to create a strong brand personality by focusing all of their actions on it, which helps to advance to a higher level and bind consumers in an emotional way.<sup>73</sup> Starbucks tries to offer an individualized service for customers by writing their names on paper cups. It works, because, as Neumeier says, "(...) in a society that's information-rich and time-poor, people value feeling more than they value information."<sup>74</sup>

### *The importance of a matching brand image and brand identity for brand personality*

Branding policy may not work when there is an inconsistency between a company's brand identity and brand image. Companies need to find a middle ground to align these two to define their brand personality.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Gonzalez (URL), p. 2.

<sup>74</sup> Neumeier (2003), p. 19.

For this purpose, Scott White, leader of the marketing communication company Brand Identity Guru Inc., uses the example of Volvo vs. Volkswagen in his blog. Volkswagen used an advertising clip in which it wanted to indicate the high safety standard of its cars by showing a real accident whilst using stuntmen.<sup>75</sup> But it is Volvo whose brand identity stands for safety, which is also reflected by its image. Had Volvo used this clip, it could have had a positive effect on consumer's perception of the brand, as it would have fit to the brand image. But according to Scott White that does not apply to Volkswagen, so it had no (positive) effect on the brand.<sup>76</sup> Consumers who see the commercial may not share White's opinion, because it puts a focus on one of the car's most important benefit: safety. When looking at different forum entries,<sup>77</sup> consumers are more likely to be thankful for having their eyes opened to safety issues rather than having a negative attitude to it. According to an article, VW's sales of the Jetta line increased by 17%. Volkswagen may have also validated its brand image with it. Everyone knows Volkswagen as a trustworthy, established brand and this image can be strengthened by making a commercial which shows a dangerous everyday situation.<sup>78</sup> Nevertheless, you can still find consumers saying "(...) I'm not sure VW should be the one delivering the message. Should be Subaru or Volvo."<sup>79</sup> If you pretend to be one way, but behave the other way, consumers will get confused or may get your message wrong.

#### *Aaker's five dimensions of brand personality*

To go a step further, Aaker introduced her five dimensions of brand personality in 1997, trying to apply human personality traits to brands to find out how and to what extent consumer purchase decisions are influenced by them. The dimensions she worked out are shown in Illustration 8. The first three dimensions can be applied from human traits, whereas Sophistication and Ruggedness often represent a desired, but not present personal trait. Brands like Mercedes use sophistication to make consumers think of them as an upper-class brand.<sup>80</sup> However, the consumers may not be upper-class themselves.

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<sup>75</sup> Cf. fsamuel (URL).

<sup>76</sup> Cf. White (URL2).

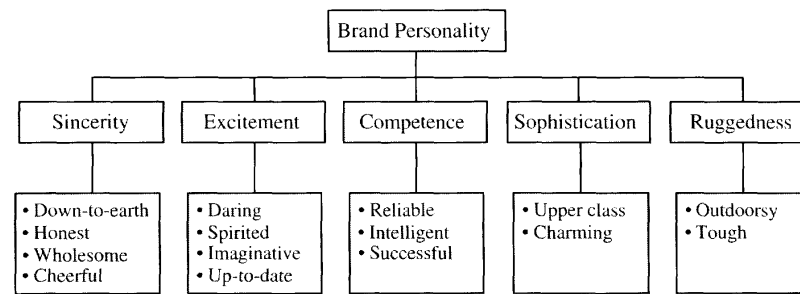
<sup>77</sup> E.g. Focaljet (URL)

<sup>78</sup> Cf. N.U. (URL5).

<sup>79</sup> Focaljet (URL). User comment by: 'P-51'.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Aaker (1997), p. 353.

### Illustration 8: Aaker's five dimensions of brand personality



Reference: Aaker (1997), p. 352.

This mindset of Aaker acted as a basis for the survey about brand personalities of selected lawnmower brand whose results will be analysed later on. A further classification of Aaker's brand personality dimensions can be found in appendix 3. Another model which refers to brand personality is the Brand Steering Wheel.

#### 3.2.3 Influencing brand personality: The Brand Steering Wheel

The ICON Brand Steering Wheel is an instrument used in brand policy to find out how a brand is seen by consumers<sup>81</sup>. Its aim is to give advice on how to create the corresponding brand identity by customising communication policy. The Brand Steering Wheel divides consumer's associations with a brand in two parts, corresponding to cognitions in brain research. All dimensions look at different aspects, but are also likely to influence each other.<sup>82</sup> The considered version in this paper is the original division of ICON Brand Navigation consisting of:<sup>83</sup>

- a) the left, objective part with brand competence and brand benefits/reason why
- b) and the right, emotional and subjective part with brand tonality and brand iconography.

A good overview of all four dimensions can be found on the next page (Illustration 9). The chapter will give a full description of these by using the mindset of Prof. Dr. Franz-Rudolf Esch.<sup>84</sup>

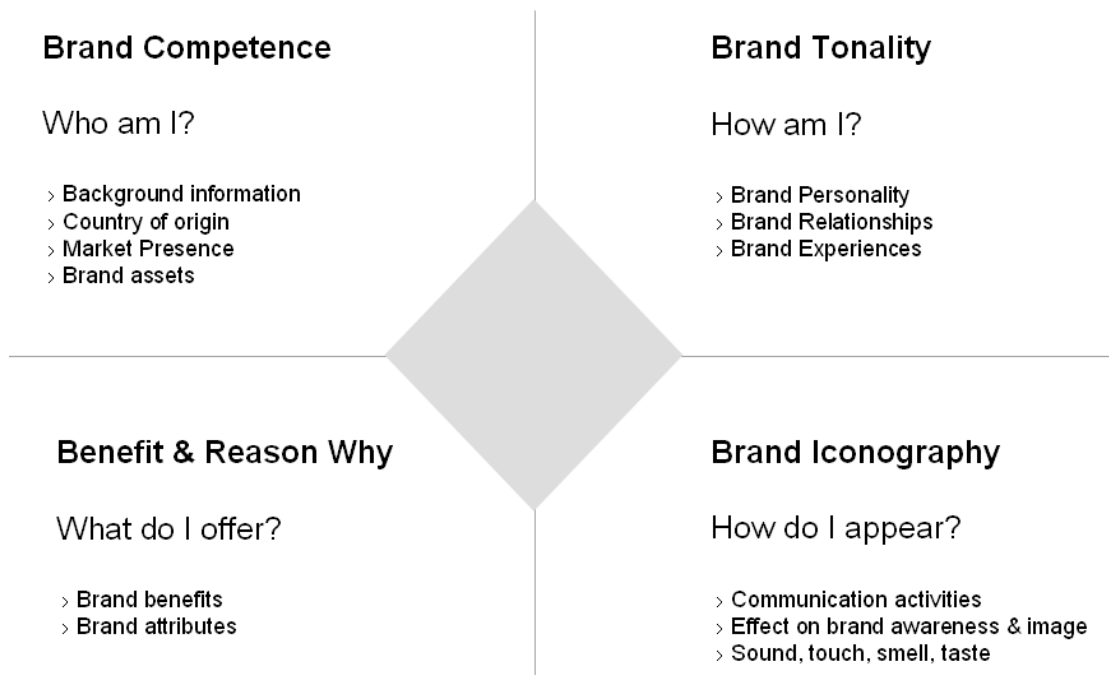
<sup>81</sup> Can be interpreted as brand image.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Esch (2008), pp. 64f.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Esch, Kiss and Roth (2006), p. 63.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Esch (2008), pp. 66-69.

### Illustration 9: The Brand Steering Wheel



Reference: compiled by author.

Adapted from: Esch, Kiss and Roth (2006), p. 63.

#### *Brand competence – ‘Who am I?’*

Brand competence asks a company’s basic question of ‘Who am I?’. The elements of brand competence illustrated by Esch are

- a) The general background information about the company itself, e.g. the company’s history and time in market.
- b) The country of origin, as countries often indicate certain attributes like quality
- c) The market presence, as brands with strong market positions are more trusted and viewed differently by consumers than their small competitors
- d) Brand assets, for example strong research and development orientation or innovation strength

#### *Brand benefit (and Reason Why) – ‘What do I offer?’*

Brand benefits are the second rational part of the Brand Steering Wheel and have to be differentiated from pure attributes. Brand benefits are the important part for consumers, because they show the real added value they have by attributes when

they buy a brand's product over other brands.<sup>85</sup> "Benefits can only be generated when there are qualities behind it – deriving from the company, its people, or the attributes of the product."<sup>86</sup> Attributes are therefore linked to the brand benefits. If one changes, the other one changes too.

*Brand tonalities – 'Who am I?'*

Brand tonalities refer to the emotional perception of a brand, so brand personality is part of it. Another part is the relationship between brand and consumers which asks the brand to play an active role in consumers' life. Considering that, it is important to know how a company perceives its customers and the other way round. Someone who uses the London Underground every day has a permanent relationship with it, whereas tourists do not, which may result in different perception of the same service. Naturally, this also depends on the expectations of a consumer. Commuters may expect higher standards such as comfortable seats and a lower noise level as they spend more time in tubes. The consumers' experience with the product is the third part in defining brand tonalities, as it also leads the focus away from purely rational benefits to feelings which have a higher impact. Therefore, companies like Singapore Airlines think through all of the contact points with customers, to optimize the consumer experience.

*Brand iconography – 'How do I appear'*

The brand iconography defines the appearance of a brand and is directly linked to brand awareness and image. It is influenced by communication activities and includes everything that is influenced by visual attributes, sound, touch, smell and taste of a brand's products such as the jingle, the logo or the corporate design.<sup>87</sup> Coca Cola's original bottle for instance has a high recognition value.

As this paper aims at linking companies' product policy to brand personality focus, it is necessary to also emphasize the effects of Low Price products on brand personality. Thus chapter 4 will make out the risks which have an influence on brand personality.

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. Esch, Kiss and Roth (2006), p. 64; Griese and Broehring (2011), p. 152.

<sup>86</sup> Esch (2008), p. 67.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Esch, Kiss and Roth (2006), p. 69.