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Lecture - 25

So, today's session will be on brand strategies. Brand strategies in a way encompass many of the strategic ideas we have discussed in this course from a marketing perspective segmentation, targeting, positioning, customer relationship, customer loyalty, competitive advantage, different types of competitive actions; all of these that we have discussed before can be sort of summarized structured and actualized in the marketplace under the banner of brand strategy.

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So, as you see therefore, on top we have put two interactive issues brand and offering. We have discussed this concept of offering before and now we would like to emphasize that marketing success strategic success in the marketplace is very, very closely related with the strength of brand and offering. As we have discussed before, offering is actually a kind of a broad umbrella concept which encompasses tangible elements of the product and services as well as intangible elements. So, when it talks about tangible elements it is the things that we normally associate with product in the 4Ps or marketing mix; that means the shape, color, size, weight, features, benefits, all of those very tangibly definable aspects of the product that the service is done.

On the other hand, there are intangible elements of the offering which are things like the emotional evocation from the product that the presence the sense of presence of the product or the service and all of those. We will discuss it in a little bit more detail and intangible also includes a kind of a new concept which we have not discussed before but which we call agility. Basically, it signifies that how resilient is the product with respect to new additions to it as well as how the product is resilient to withstand a negative development or market downturns and so on and so forth; we will discuss it in a little bit more detail. So, we of course therefore offering will include packaging issues, different storekeeping units that SKU's as we call them; that means in how many different sizes or different shapes, colors, etc the product is available in the marketplace.

Related services the name that is associated or the logo or the symbol which are associated with the brand and the warranties, guarantees, etc that are represented by that brand offering or product offering these are all part of the broad concept of offering. So, that as you can see therefore, some authors feel that brand therefore is a major constituent of the broader concept of offering. Of course, some people would like to deal these two concepts separately. It really does not matter as per as our today's discussion is concerned, the fundamental point is that the strength of your offering and the evolving strength of the offering or the evolving strength of the offering strategy. Brands actually help both buyers; so therefore, brand has a positive correlation with buyer's benefits and it also has positive correlation with marketers. So, marketer's advantages; so buyer's benefits and marketers advantages.

Buyers benefits because if we remember the earlier model that we have discussed of the buying process that is attention, interest, desire and finally the purchase action, attention, interest. These are the tasks that we want to the major tasks of marketing activity to create awareness, attract attention of the intent of the targeted buyers, create interest in their mind and create desire and finally cause purchase action. Now a brand helps in enforcing or rather shortening the time in attracting attention creating awareness and creating interest. So, it reduces for the buyer search time or information gathering time, time as well as in some way cost. So, if you introduce a strong brand preference for Nokia and if the buyer is looking for a new phone then today there are so many different varieties of mobile phones that are available in the marketplace.

If the buyer has a strong affinity towards the brand of Nokia or Samsung or Apple, then in a way his or her search time, search costs get reduced. It also for the buyer signifies a reduced risk perception which comes from his or her previous experience or experience of his friends, relatives; that means the referral inputs which actually reduces the risk perception and it also has this effect of cumulatively building emotional comfort. So, a brand also therefore gives some kind of emotional comfort to the buyer that his or her decision is on the right track is in the right direction; obviously therefore, these are building blocks of long term relationship with the customer as we will see. Therefore, the brand salience or the brand dynamics has extremely significant contribution towards building long-term relationship with the customer consumer that we have discussed before the importance of that in the strategic sense.

The brand also represents some advantages for the marketer in terms of better conversion rate from this AI stage that is a attention awareness and interests stage to desire an action stage because ultimately this is what contributes to our top line growth, this is what the purchase action, this is what brings revenue growth, brings profit growth. So, ultimately we are interested in this conversion from awareness and interest to desire and finally purchase action and this is facilitated accelerated as strengthened this transition from awareness and interest to desire an action is strengthen and accelerated by the brand strength or branding strategy. So, there is a better conversion rate; that is an advantage from a marketer's point of view and it also helps to reduce the risk in launching new products or line extensions which we will see.

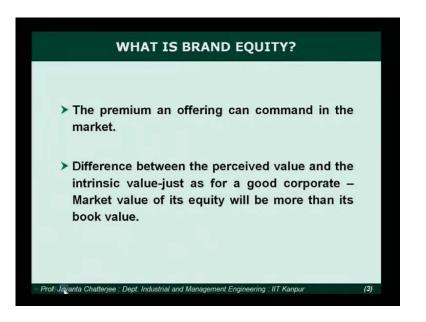
So, if Dove has a very strong brand connotation in the consumers mind that it is moisturizing, it helps during winter for the demoisturization that is caused by the weather. So, if dove has that connotation that it is soft, it is moisturizing, etc, etc, then from soap which was the original offering from that Dove brand stable they can go into shampoos, conditioners. So therefore, because of that strong brand imagery they have this advantage of reducing the risk in launching a new sort of related product. So, that is an advantage which a strong brand brings to the marketer. It also helps in continuously creating the distinctiveness that is so important today in the cluttered marketplace.

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So, strong brand with a strong association projects immediately a distinctive image in the customer's mind perception in the customer's mind. So a brand, what is a brand? There are many definitions but the American marketing association definition and few of its derivatives are pretty good at this moment for us to start with that a brand is the name, it is a is set of short terms, it is a sign, it is a symbol, it is a design, all have that combination which kind of helps us to identify and differentiate an offering from the rest of those in the market is this thing about distinctiveness in the cluttered market that we were talking about.

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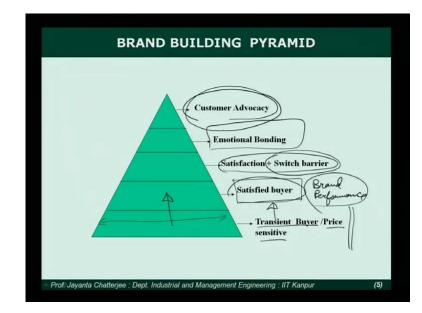


The other term which is important for us to look at this moment is brand equity and brand equity is in a way is the premium that an offering command in the market with respect to the other products in that category. And in a way just as in the share market an equity valuation signifies the difference between the market value of that stock with respect to the booked value. So, obviously better stocks which have better equity represents a higher differential between market value and the booked value; we often call it also the market value add or MVA. In the same way, the brand equity signifies the perceived value that the difference between the intrinsic value of the brand and the value in customers mind and what does that signify how do we measure that we will discuss today.

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So, when a band has hire equity then the company can have more leverage with channels a market channels, distributors, suppliers and can obtain direct as well as indirect premium on their offering. So, it is a kind of a defense against price erosion. If there is a strong brand it is often not that affected by market down turn because it has a loyal course. So, there is a strong association between a certain Glycerin soap brand. So, come winter customers will go and buy that product and therefore their volume growth is not that affected by if there is a market down turn. So, other soap sort products in that category may get to have upswing and downswings depending on the disposable income available but one can see that some of these products continue to do well. So, they are relatively stable, they are growth is more predictable and so on. So, and in the same way because they have that predictability in terms of growth and strength, the distributors will be interested in that product and also because of the continuous steady stable growth in the volume you can command better terms from the suppliers. And of course, as we were discussing that case of Dove that because it has this strong association brand position with respect to created by its moisturizing soap which was kind of a different connotation it created very successfully in the customers mind. So, they have been equally successful in distinctively positioning their shampoo or their conditioner or their skin lotion and so on and so forth. So, therefore higher brand equity helps us in creating new products in that same category what we call brand extension. It gives us more leverage with channels both in terms of suppliers and distributors and it obviously creates a defense against price erosion.



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So, this is a very important model, we are presenting this right in the beginning and we will present a more enhanced version of this pyramid towards end of the session. So, it is very easy to understand that at the right at the bottom and this is actually the higher number, this is whatever we have created through our promotion and other marketing mix activities, we do get at least some buyers to start with but these buyers are usually in the beginning they are transient buyers and obviously they are very price sensitive because some of these buyers might be a person who is looking at your new offering or your new product as possibly just to experiment one time buy in preference to some other brand. So, you can through the traditional marketing activities like promotional

activities over different media, if you go in a kind of an advertising blitzkrieg you can get some buyers in the store looking for your product. But then only if we are able to deliver to the promise that has been encapsulated in the promotion we can turn the transient buyer into a satisfied buyer.

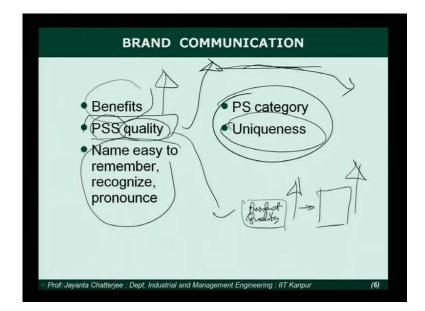
So, we often call this as the level of brand performance. So, a certain percentage of the transient buyers if your brands does deliver to the promise can be converted to satisfied buyer, but today we understand there was earlier literature we really focused on how to convert the transient buyer to the satisfied buyer. But today we understand that with the increasing level of competition in every kind of market just satisfying the customer is not enough we need to go beyond that. So, first thing that is important is to create a barrier against switching or we often call it inconvenience of switching. The inconvenience of switching obviously is created by the convenience that you offer to the customer beyond what is the cost benefit of the offering. So, you may be offering more value compared to the price that has been paid by the customer. So, your product therefore causes a satisfaction at different level, but in addition to that you have to focus on various kinds of transaction costs which are part of your acquisition cost of the customer.

So, many of those are invisible. They are not directly reflected on the price that is printed on the product. They are like the time it takes to access your product, the travel expenses to access your product, the ease of parking at in front of your retail outlet and so on and so forth. So, there are many invisible elements in the so called transaction costs. So, reducing the transaction costs, reducing the transaction hassle, in a way builds barriers against switching. So, you have to create satisfaction and to retain that satisfaction you have to continuously focus on this ease of access basically continuously reducing all cost and hassle of the transaction of the purchase process. But if this is where actually very few I mean as you can see as the pyramid becomes narrower after satisfaction and the barrier against switching or rather ease of transaction. If we do many other activities, if we focus in terms of marketing all these brand building activities, then only we create emotional bonding.

So, here we are talking about moving from the cognitive factors in consumer behavior to the effective factors from the rational reasons for buying your product or service to the emotional reasons arising out of the bond with the customer which cause the buying repeat buying and referral buying and so on. And lastly this is the prime target of today's marketers is to co-opt the customer in the marketing process is to have the customer as your partner. In a way therefore, the strongest promotion today is the word of mouth and reference from the customer through the customer advocacy; that means the customer becomes part of your marketing team. If you have been able to achieve this level, then your brand really become salient, your brand becomes then a power brand.

So, whether your brand is a power brand or not depends on how many of your customers voluntarily endorse, promote, talk about your product. So, many times therefore to understand this customer advocacy today because social media is so active, the brands that are strongly endorsed on the social media platforms where one customer talks freely to another customer and sort of gives the positive points and maybe sometimes constructive criticism create a buzz which is infinitely valuable for the marketers to create the strategic competitive advantage. So, therefore this brand building pyramid today guides the marketing strategy in many different ways as we will see just now.

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So, the communication strategy to build the brand to progress along that pyramid that we just saw; obviously, we will have to start with increasing benefits. These benefits will also include reducing hassles and indirect costs, transaction costs, etc, the products service system quality which means that you not only should think in terms of continuously enhancing the product quality, but you should also look at all the services that are associated. So, you might be able to bring out a fantastic refrigerator which

actually scores highly in terms of performance and in terms of other aesthetics, etc compared to the other offerings in the marketplace. But if you have not associated with it, the installation service, the customer problem-solving service, the continuous monitoring, so that the customer gets optimum value from your product. If those have not been also made equally effective then this quality pyramid is not complete.

So, the sense of total quality approach in the marketing sense today must include the presales services where you help customer by providing information to make choices, then the quality of the product itself or the service itself and then also the post-consumption support and problem solving support, the so-called warranty service, the guarantee issues, all of those must be included to create a complete the quality initiative that should be part of your brand communication and that is something that you must deliver; what you promise you must deliver and that therefore becomes an important part of rising through this pyramid. And then of course that is very common sense elements that a good brand has an easy to remember, easy to pronounce, easy to recognize name and then of course, in the category of that product and service combination the uniqueness also should be part of the strong communication that is important for the first step to go from the transient buyer to the satisfied buyer.

And in a way it also helps a strong communication strategy that is based on reality is a way to climb through that pyramid. The other building blocks of that gradual strategy in enhancing the brand equity are based on the taglines and some of those taglines have remained famous and have continued to strengthen. So, when Nirma talked about washing powder Nirma with a particular jingle and which was widely promoted through the radio and television and so on. So, it kind of created a very strong position that what is Nirma and it is of course a debatable question that whether when Nirma came up with salt a table salt whether that strong brand position washing powder Nirma helped or actually in a way did not help the promotion strategy of the salt. So, that is something that you can think about and discuss.

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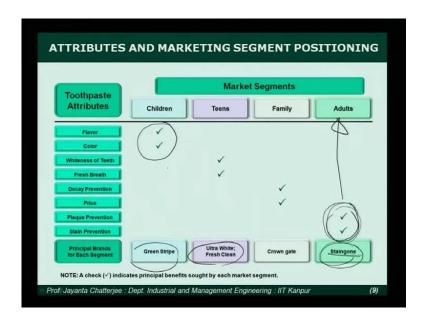
So taglines, slogan, the distinctive color scheme, symbols and logos, these are all part of the brand association which again are important for the brand communication strategy and important for this first three steps in the brand building pyramid. The other very common and well-known brand building strategy is to use brand ambassadors. You see the celebrity endorsements are involving top stars, top players in either creating a new brand or creating a distinctive position. So, therefore of course sometimes the celebrities are overused and one can question the effectiveness that whether the same person can endorse and create the same kind of brand imagery in the consumer's mind from cement to fountain pen to some perfume.

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And all kinds of diverse portfolio can a particular celebrity's imagery sustain all of that from a pain reliever to fountain pen to a cement brand and all of that can be whether. But one can see sometimes like for example, recently we have seen Sahara group they have launched a chain of retail format, the Q store and the entire Indian cricket team is endorsing this brand and they are already brand ambassadors because of the contract they have with the Sahara group. So, we see in all cricket matches they have very prominently the name Sahara and now Sahara is leveraging on that that ambassador strength to launch this brand new activity which is quite distinct from whatever they have done before in launching this retail store.

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So, now we can see how exactly this thing happens in the marketplace. This is as you can see we are looking at toothpaste and we are looking at these different market segments children, young adults or teams, family adults and we are looking at these various attributes. So, some people will be interested in the flavor and color and some people will be some customers will be interested in the plaque prevention or stain prevention, smokers and so on. So, with that you can create these are imaginary brands like stain gone or ultra white or fresh clean or green stripe and so on. And therefore is you can see in this name you create an imagery which is closely associated with this stain prevention and plaque prevention and by the name itself, it is sort of related to the target segment and in its packaging of values offered. And in the communication strategy, this will be highlighted as opposed to, say, flavor and color and therefore, as you can see all these become building blocks of the brand projection.

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So, to summarize therefore the brand is therefore, some kind of a direction, how the marketing strategy will unfold, it encompasses purpose and it is based on identity schema and meaning, creation in customers mind. On the other hand the brand equity is in a way the way to measure brand value and it will be measured in terms of by measuring loyalty, familiarity; I am not putting them in exact order; obviously, familiarity will precede loyalty and cognitive, affective and cognitive behavioral aspects or association. So, all these go in to creating the so called. So, as you can see both brands as well as brand equity are multilevel concepts. So, they have a sort of a tangible aspect and below-the-line sort of invisible many intangible aspects. So, it represents a kind of a pyramid or a multilevel structure which we often call the brand architecture.

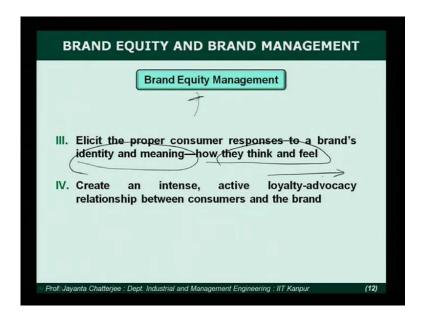
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So, the brand equity management as a part of your marketing strategy obviously will be to develop the positive brand awareness and link it with a product class to create a distinctive identity. So, when you say MakeMyTrip.com, it is a very clear positioning or Yatra.com. As you can see in all those names, they try to create an awareness and category positioning relation in the customer's mind quite distinctly that what they are for, what is their purpose. So, as we discussed in the previous one therefore, the identity and purpose must be closely related in the brand equity management first step and of course, creating the strong relationship because it is a multilevel concept.

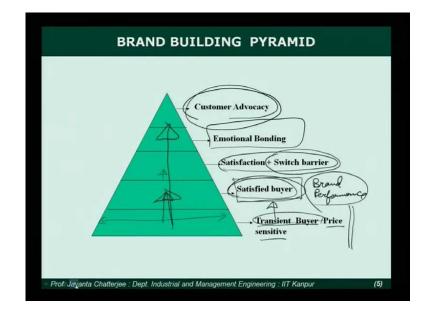
So, the tangible part and the intangible part; that means relating the cognitive as well as effective parts, the rational and the emotional imageries in the customers mind must be closely related and evoked through your brand building strategy and that can be done through your promotional through the drama that is brought into those 30 seconds TV spots. Therefore tell a story, create a situation that actually brings together this. So, if you watch anyone of those when you look at this various shampoo ads whether when you look at the various kinds of skin treatment products that are now flooding the market and you can see therefore, how they are evoking a imagery that strongly links the subliminal messages as well as the so called overt and covert messages that are being displayed.

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And in the brand equity management when we give this promotions, in that 30 seconds when we trying to relate in the customer's mind the cognitive and rational as well as the affective and emotional issues and trying to relate it very strongly with a possible need that the customer may have or you may try to create. You must simultaneously continue to monitor that whether this identity and meaning are getting really reflected in the thinking and feeling in the customer's mind and you have to also continuously measure as a part of your brand equity that whether you are moving from loyalty to the advocacy level.

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That means the pyramid that we had seen that this progress must measuring that whether you are progressing from satisfied buyer to and a customer who is your advocate partner in your marketing process, this needs to be continuously monitored, measured through various kinds of service and so on.

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So, therefore at this stage we would like to say that successful brands provide organizations with financial benefits because they have an economic value as an intangible asset which is created through a combination of tangible and intangible values, cognitive and effective reason that we offer, persuading the customer to buy the product or the service. That creates a competitive advantage and obviously therefore it creates earnings and cash flow in excess of the return on the tangible assets. So, all the expenses that you incur in enhancing brand equity, in getting a celebrity to talk about your product on TV, you spend crores of rupees in doing that.

But that investment in building that brand equity is only valid is only part of a good marketing strategy when it brings you that superlative earning and cash flow in excess of the return that would have happened otherwise. So, in branding strategy we aim to derive different benefits in terms of product clustering, product service integration as well as in launching new products or expanding a relationship. So, there are different benefits that we can derive from a good branding strategy.

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Some of them are namely, say, multiproduct branding. In this approach, we use the same name for all the products in a class or related category set of categories. So, like I was using the example of Dove. So that is used for soap, that is used for shampoo, that is used for conditioner, that is used for skin lotion and so on and so forth. So, you therefore continue to focus on building the association between Dove and softness, moisturizing, winter care and so on and so forth. So, for example we have very strong association between Nivea and winter and winter care skincare. So, if Nivea therefore wants to come up with a deodorant, then one can argue that that strong association with skincare and winter and so on maybe in a way a liability or a hindrance until and unless they are able to create distinctly different evocation for the same name which is difficult.

So, that is why sometimes when a company like, say, Unilever or Proctor and Gamble, when they have number of different fast moving consumer goods in their offering basket, they equally strengthen or maybe perhaps spend more in developing this multi branding strategy; that means each product or product line is given a distinct name and reinforce. So, whether it is a Pepsodent, whether it is Ariel, whether it is Surf, whether it is. So, all of these are different categories that are created they may all come from the same company or companies competing in the same marketplace and you create therefore. So, sometimes you may not know that who is the manufacturer of Ariel or who is the manufacture of Colgate toothpaste and so on and so forth. So, because the marketer is

focused more on building the product brand or the service brand rather than the corporate brand.

Private brands are often way of enhancing your revenue because you use the same facility to create products which may not be sold under your brand but will be sold by different marketers. So, there are in the field of consumer electronics or even professional electronics like computers, tablets, mobile phones, there are number of manufacturers who manufacture for several marketers and when you get the product you associate through the brand name from where it has come. So, you may not have any idea who is the original manufacturer of Lava or Micromax and so on because they are more known by the brand. And of course, also in the consumer a fast moving consumer goods many of the top retailers like Big bazaar or Pantaloon or More or Reliance fresh, they will have their own brands where they have their suppliers and who agree to supply with the store brand.

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So, multiproduct branding is also called sometimes family branding or corporate branding and it is aimed at creating the dominance in that offering class and one thing that is helpful is that as we were discussing the case of Nivea or Dove. So, they have their strong brand equity which is related to winter, which is related to skincare and therefore if they come up with a new variant then it helps. So, as you can see for example, Ponds or Nivea they have different types of similar products. So, something maybe for very harsh or the shampoos often use it also that you have the same shampoo and you, say, create four variants leveraging the same brand awareness that something which is for oily hair, something which is for dry hair, something which is for hair fall, something which is for dry scalp and so on and so forth. So, your promotion cost comes down because the customer is attracted to that particular brand of shampoo and then maybe more pleased when he or she finds these other variants which kind of aims at customization.

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Multiproduct branding on the other hand because it is a brand marketed under the same name in many countries, it therefore kind of creates a global strength and of course it obviously needs a lot of investment to create that global borderless image as enjoyed by Colgate or Coke or Pepsi or McDonald's and so on. So, it does need huge investment, but sometimes this multiproduct branding can dilute the meaning of the brand in the mind of the customer. So, some people are now arguing that whether Pizza hut now trying to get into pasta in trying to get into various other kinds of Indian variant or Asian variant is whether that is strengthening the market position of Pizza hut or it is diluting the original proposition of Pizza hut which is actually to be a leader in the pizza market.

So, in a way the current marketing strategy of Pizza hut appears to be that they are trying to cover a wider range of fast food and their promotion strategy in India which has been in a way successful in promoting Pizza hut as family dining out place almost close to

fine dining as it is called in that category of restaurant service compared to the drive-in and drive-out type of fast food image that Pizza hut has in U.S or in some other countries can be examined in terms of that whether a multiproduct branding is helpful or is a hindrance in terms of brand strength.

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There are possibilities of course to create sub-brand that it combines a family brand with. So, it take it can be like, say KFCs salsa or KFC some new promotion that is going on that it is a multi flavored dip associated with the original KFC proposition of fried chicken. So, you can see that sometimes it may be very successful; sometime on a price quality continuum, it allows the company to occupy different position, but there is a limit to this multiproduct branding and one can see how, say, coffee Cafe day who though associated strongly with coffee but also try to create associated offerings which items snacks that go with coffee and whether they will be successful in creating that strong image or success in selling, say, coffee beans or coffee making machines or their cookies and their brownies and all that. So, sometimes this can be very successful this multiproduct branding, but if it is carefully executed, continuously monitored, continuously evaluated in terms of customer's perception.

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The multi branding as we discussed is useful strategy when each brand is meant for a different market segment and though maybe associated like Unilever or Procter, and Gamble, they are able to manage multiple brands something that is for detergent, something; that is for toothpaste, something that is for soap, something that is for shampoo and obviously this kind of company for their growth. And for their relationship building with the customers entire lifestyle activity in that kind of; that means washing, cleaning. So cleaning of teeth, cleaning of clothes are all these because they come from related technologies in their operations. So, they created these different brands which can leverage their technological and operational core competency and can create different value stream. So, it is a good strategy from that perspective. Sometimes of course, it happens because companies acquire for their growth.

Some growth happens what we call organic growth; that means the natural way in the marketplace from their offering but sometimes inorganic growth; that means companies grow through acquisitions and mergers and that sometimes create this multi branding opportunity as well as sometimes multi branding challenge, because earlier those two brands might have been competing in the marketplace. And now if you put this two brands and their customer base together, whether you should kill one brand or you should retain both brands, whether you can manage to retain both types of customers will be very involved strategy that cannot be prescriptive but has to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. So, there are examples when post-acquisition the both brands have been

kept alive because one brand might have had a very strong position in Europe and the other brand might have had a strong position in Japan and therefore you retain both brands. So, sometimes customers are not even aware that at the backend they are owned by the same corporate group.

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So, brand growth strategy finally is we present this simple two by two metrics that you can have existing brands as we have discussed in ANSOFF matrix. So, existing brands in the existing product class is you can actually do line extension. So, if you have Lux soap then you can create some new variant within Lux soap. So, this is what we call line extension but you can also take existing brand and go to a new product class, so you may like to create a Lux shampoo or like we discussed Dove. So, Dove can create different flavors in the Dove soap category, but if they come to Dove shampoo, then they are actually doing what we call brand extension because they are coming into a new product class.

So, it is the existing brand in the new product class, but it could be also a new brand in a new product class which means that the same company Procter and Gamble can perhaps now get into, say, deodorant. So, it has really speaking no correlation we assume that, that therefore it is a completely new product class, it is a completely new brand. So, at that stage as you are putting the name of Colgate or Dove or Ariel, etc to a deodorant will not be; obviously, it has to be a new brand needs to be created because the imagery,

the identity, the package of benefit promised in Dove or Nivea or Colgate or Ariel is not same as what it needs to be created here for, say, deodorant.

So, sometimes of course a new brand needs to be introduced in the existing product class because you need to create some kind of a fight or a response to your competitive offering. So, if Pepsodent is now coming up with a new type of innovative toothpaste which combines the features of a cleaning properties of a toothpaste, the mouth freshening properties of a mouthwash and the dental floss activities of which is needed for older customers. If all that can be combined in one product and they create a unique position and if that product becomes very successful, then competing products will have to competing companies will have to come up with a response. So, therefore they may have to then introduce a new brand in that existing product class.

In case of Pepsodent they have actually used in the existing brand they are creating a new product class. So, this is their brand extension strategy, but the response from another manufacturer might come here because they may like to position it based on their current strength on mouth wash as opposed to their current strength on. So, Listerine might now come up with a new variant in the tooth paste category and therefore then that becomes they may not like to use the name of Listerine because it is so closely associated with mouth wash. So, they may decide to use another name, another value proposition; even it can come in another format. So, it may not come in a paste format; it may come in a gel format and it can therefore try to combine the both virtues of the mouthwash category and the toothpaste category. So, the brand growth strategies therefore can be thought of in terms of this variant of the ANSOFF matrix.