Product and Brand Management
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Lecture 58
Brand Revitalization and Repositioning

Welcome back, friends, let us go ahead with a discussion on revitalization and repositioning. We talked about reinforcement, we talked about extension, and many interesting elements in between, while using examples, which could suggest, how it is done, and why the need for such things or such steps gets evolved, that is the most important part.

While discussing these aspects, strategies, I sometimes wonder that should I be using the term 'strategy' when I talk about brand revitalization because if I say strategy, then a dilemma comes to my mind and it is a thought process, which I am sharing with you because strategy is a well thoughtful path, we have to take for a longer-term technically or fundamentally. Then we talked about brand architecture.

So, if we have a robust architecture in our mind, then should we be thinking in terms of the need for revitalization someday? Yes, we must, and strategy does not mean that it is a fixed path, there are so many external forces, and there are so many external elements, which keep on coming our way, and that is the intelligence of marketers or brand managers.

Who foresees those adjusting their pathway, and then going for extending their benefits, and developing equity or further strengthening equity and, should I say, multiplying that? So, that is an important element which we must keep in mind at this stage. Let us see what brand revitalization is all about.

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BRANDS REVITALIZATION In virtually every product category are examples of once prominent and admired brands that have fallen on hard times or even completely disappeared. Some of these brands manage to turnaround and come back. For e.g., Readers Digest, Cuticura, Kelvinator etc., Brands sometimes have to return to their roots to recapture lost sources of equity. Brand revitalization is the strategy to recapture lost sources of brand equity and identify and establish new sources of brand equity. This may include product modification or brand repositioning.

In virtually every product category, there are examples of once prominent and admired brands that have fallen on hard times, or gone through tougher times and may have completely disappeared also. The name would be somewhere it is still alive in many cases. Yet, products or brands in that form are not there anymore.

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Now, some of these brands have managed to turn around. I talked about product turnaround or revitalization earlier. Here is brand revitalization. There is a consonance between these two. In product revitalization, there can be so much, which can be done in terms of product innovation, technological infusion and putting up strength in terms of marketing programs, and those kinds of things.

Yet when you say that a product has a name, which has a diminishing trend, I will be talking about this in BLC as well, briefly, which has a diminishing name, that means somehow the trust, justice, let us focus on trust, so, somehow trust is being lost, somehow there is a reduction in terms of the trust.

If somehow it is going on, then how to revitalize that, and that is where this is in relation to the revitalization of that trust element. So, now some of these brands, for example, Reader's Digest, did it well. They were going well then somehow, there was a fluctuation but they did well. Kelvinator, for example, we have seen that. I have taken this from a source Andrew D. 'Brand,

Revitalization, and Extension Brands'. So, this is the name of the source from where we have taken these examples and the details.

Now, brands sometimes have to return to their roots to recapture lost sources of equity as the author says. Brand revitalization is a strategy to recapture lost sources of brand equity, and identity and establish new sources of brand equity. It is interesting, because we have been focusing upon, sort of strengthening the sources identifying first identification, and then strengthening the sources of brand equity.

This is the point that has been a concern for us, but here when we are trying to revitalize the trust, obviously, we have to look for that. What were those factors which created that kind of level of trust amongst our customers? So, there is the focal point that is, focusing on the sources which generated the brand equity we enjoyed. And finding newer ways to revitalize those sources or new sources of brand equity. This may include product modification or brand repositioning at large, and I will be talking about repositioning later on.

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Brands on the comeback trail need revolutionary changes rather than evolutionary changes, as the author says. So, brands most likely to respond to revitalization efforts are those which have clear and relevant values that have been left dormant for some time. They still have a lot of brand equity left in them and that is fair valuation comes in, that is where the judgment factor comes in, that is where understanding what customers think in terms of our brand comes in. So, that makes

us understand what kind of brand equity we had, what we have, and what kind of potential in terms of gaining brand equity.

That is how revitalizing deals with such brands which are old, but if redirected may have plenty of life. This can be substantially less costly and risky than introducing a new brand. Every time we are thinking in terms of reinforcement, revitalization, or repositioning. One thought which is accompanying us all together, is related to the fact that because the name has been living, that name would have lost financial value associated with it, it has been living, that is it persists in the minds of the customers. There is an emotional aspect to it, and there is a loyalty aspect to it as far as the name goes, and that is where this loyalty perspective comes in.

If it is there, then it is better to go for it and since the time of expansion, we have been thinking in terms of this kind of choice, should we be going for everything new, or should we be thinking in terms of utilizing the strength of the name, the brand and the equity we have.

Whichever way even if it is there, just in the form of the name, and it has lost its equity in terms of value or financial value for that matter, definitely still it is an asset too. I would not go into the accounting details of how it is, but still, we must remember that at this juncture for choice, it is important for us to think of our brand this way. Now, as in the case of, reinforcement strategies.

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Let us look at revitalization strategies. The first aspect is to refresh old sources of brand equity, and the associated element is to create new sources of brand equity. So, there are two aspects to it. When we look at them with combined elements, let us retain the old sources, and refresh them while creating new sources of brand equity.

Depth and breadth; we have talked about earlier in terms of the product also, in terms of product brand metrics also. Again, the second element is improving the strength, favorability and uniqueness of brand associations. A similar kind of context was observable in reinforcement strategies as well. But here, a revitalization is bringing it back, is the point of concentration.

In terms of expansion of breadth and depth, and expansion of depth and breadth of awareness, and use it your brand, there are two elements more; increase quantity of consumption, that is how much and the second is an increased frequency of consumption, how often. Then in the case of improving the strength, favorability and uniqueness of brand association, there are three elements: bolster fading associations, neutralize negative associations, and it is important to neutralize negative associations and create new associations.

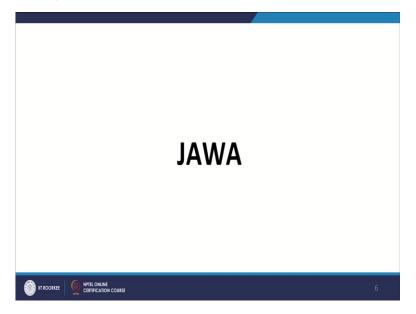
It is not that technical, we are trying to revitalize a name along with its connotation and the product, it would represent now, or it would have represented till now. So, either we are bringing the product in a similar kind of form, or we are changing something in the product constitution

composition, but we are living up to the name. So, we have to think in terms of creating new associations and neutralizing negative associations.

That can be done through a marketing program. Designing a marketing program, where product management, integrated marketing communication management, pricing management, and place management in terms of distribution management has to be a point of concern for us. So, we have to structurally think of that, and then when we talk of increasing the frequency of consumption. So, it again traverses into two aspects, wherein identifies additional opportunities to use the brand in the same basic way as it had been, and then identifies completely new and different ways to use the brand.

Then, in terms of the other three elements of bolstering fading associations, neutralizing negative associations and creating new associations combined. All elements emanate from there, that is retaining vulnerable customers, recapturing lost customers, identifying neglected segments and attracting new customers. It is strategic, it is action-based, it can be systematic. So, that is where we are reaching, we are revitalizing through systematic efforts.

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JAWA is a wonderful example of all of this. It is a motorcycle, you all know, it is back on the streets now. You would find riders enjoying the same kind of pleasure that it used to give a long time back. So, we find this as a living example, in terms of revitalization, not different avenues of brand revitalization.

Identifying additional or new usage opportunities, for example, making the use easier (Indulekha Oil, and Indica Hair dye shampoo), provide incentives then, there can be an element of, position for frequent/regular usage. For example, Clinic shampoo and sachets we have talked about earlier as well, the shampoos in sachets, even here oil in sachets, that has been a very good, strategic progression as far as not specifically in terms of revitalization, but that was again a marketing strategy. Increase the quantity used by your insurance customers, rewind it to cover more items or insurance getting associated with mutual funds and so on.

Entering new markets and new target segments is also an avenue. The target market for a particular brand may not come to comprise all the market segments. If the firm may not have other brands for these target market segments, then these become potential areas for the brand to expand. For example, LG entered the portable AC market, small refrigerators and so on. Van Heusen to women's clothing as such. There can be several such examples in due course of time to try to find.

But the point is that, here we are trying to talk about examples related to entering new markets and new target segments. Then comes in, talking of different avenues of brand revitalization.

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Identifying new and completely different ways to use the brand. For example, Milkmaid, Mayonnaise. So, Milkmaid definitely has done a wonderful job. And that is the intelligence of brand managers, who somehow find those avenues kind of repositioning the brand. A common problem for marketers of established mature brands is to make them more contemporary by creating relevant usage situations, a more contemporary user profile or a more modern brand personality.

Updating a brand may require some combination of new products, new advertising, new promotions and new packaging. For example, Brylcreem Gel launched, a clear gel with newer packaging to impress the younger audience. Here when I am talking of brand revitalization, I have mentioned repositioning, so I will be talking about repositioning altogether, in a fresh mode, but remember this is a constant part of this.

Here I must add to this discussion that reinforcement, revitalization, and repositioning may have an overlap in terms of marketing programs or strategic orientation, and many times, actions and activities or one may constitute a part, one may be a constituent part of the other in terms of strategy. Then again, there is another avenue for brand revitalization by changing brand elements.

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Changing Brand Elements One or more brand elements are changed either to convey new information or to signal that the brand has taken on new meaning because the product or some other aspect of the marketing program has changed. Brand name is typically the most important brand element. It is easier to change other brand elements especially if they play an important awareness or image function. Source: Keller, K. L. (1999). Managing brands for the long run: Brand reinforcement and revitalization strategies. California management review, 41(3), 102-124.

One or more brand elements are changed either to convey new information, for example, you slightly reorient the slogan. To convey new information or to signal that the brand has taken on new meaning, because the product or some other aspect of the marketing program has changed.

The brand name is typically the most important brand element. It is easy to change other brand elements especially if they play an important awareness or image function, and many times people start with slogans. If slogans are the reason for brand extension, then you may not get away from those, for example, Thanda Thanda Cool Cool. So, you would not be willing to go away from that so easily. So, you may think in terms of other elements and so on. Now, then, there is an avenue in terms of retiring the brands.

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Now, the first step in retrenching a fading brand is to reduce the number of its product types, this reduces the cost of supporting the brand and allows it to concentrate on its strengths. So, it can more easily hit profit targets. There is an aspect of retiring a portion of the products being represented by that brand, but it does not mean that the brand has to be retired, somehow.

But again, this is one of the avenues which is a constituent part of revitalization as such. So, there is a plant and there is a leaf which is wilting, so you just pluck it off, probably in a similar kind of fashion. Although it is very hard and tough. Then, there are elements of adjusting the brand portfolio, there is a brand migration strategy as an avenue.

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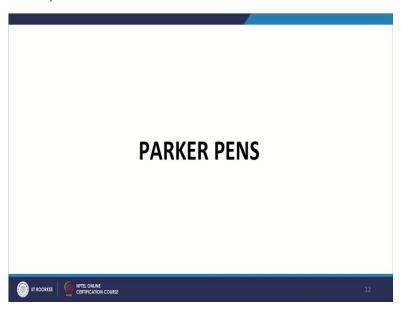


It helps consumers to understand how various brands in the portfolio can satisfy their needs, as they change over time, or as the products and brands themselves change over time. For example, IBM created its Iconic, "ThinkPad" brand and advertising employed both the IBM and Lenovo logos with IBM in the lead. However, by the end of the two-year migration, the IBM name was removed making room for "Think" in ThinkPad to transfer IBM's brand equities to Lenovo.

So, this is how in a transit tree manner, it was done brand migration strategy acquiring new customers is again consequent avenue firms must proactively develop strategies to attract new customers, especially younger ones. The marketing challenge lies in making a brand seem relevant to vastly different generations and cohort groups or lifestyles. Challenge is greater when the brand has a strong personality. Some marketers have attempted to cut loose from the past to deal with marketing across generations, for example, Tommy Hilfiger.

These are examples taken from text basically, there are many observations which authors have made in due course of time. Although, for marketing managers, brand managers, people who live with the brands themselves, it is very difficult for them to shelve off the names. They have been nurturing the brand values, and associating a value with values, so value with 'S'.

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Now, PARKER PENS is a wonderful example of revitalization. It is one of my favorites. They brought in Mr Bachchan. And they sort of revitalize that, while repositioning it, and I use repositioning as an avenue in revitalization in my earlier discussion. So, just think in terms of Parker pens, and you would realize that it was a high-priced pen earlier.

Then, they vitalized the whole target segment in terms of the range of pens they have, and then they re-rationalized the prices, according to the target segment. They repositioned that while bringing in Mr. Bachchan on as far as their integrated marketing communication goes, and that is how they rejuvenated the whole scenario. So, now probably they are reinforcing themselves and so on, let us talk of brand repositioning at this juncture.

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Brand Repositioning

- Brand positioning has been defined by Kotler as "the act of designing the company's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market". [1]
- Brand repositioning, in simple words, is the act of intentionally switching the way your brand is perceived by customers. If customers already have an opinion about your brand, brand repositioning is how you adjust perceptions, so they better reflect your brand's true mission, style, promise, and purpose.

Source: [1] Philip Kotler, and Kevin Lane Keller, Marketing Management 15th edition, Pearson, 2016

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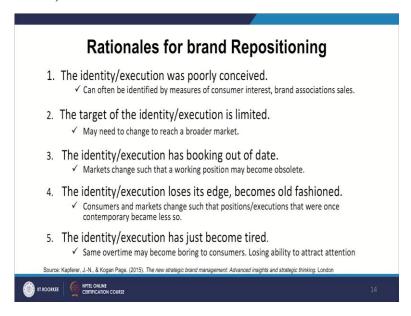
Brand positioning has been defined by Professor Philip Kotler as "the act of designing the companies offering an image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market." This we have taken from Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller's 'Marketing Management' fifteenth edition, Pearson, although one more edition after this has come up.

Now, brand repositioning in simple words is the act of intentionally switching the way your brand is perceived by customers. If customers already have an opinion about your brand, brand repositioning is how you adjust perceptions, So, they better reflect your brand's true mission style, promise and purpose.

I have talked about this earlier, it is a difficult thing to do. See, look at the definition of positioning, where designing the company's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market. Now, you want to reposition or you want to create a new distinctive place for that matter, somehow.

So, there can be a continuum in terms of positioning and repositioning in terms of the distinction, you want to dismantle and create a new distinction that can be but it is a very difficult thing, believe me. So, there are rationales for brand repositioning.

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For example, the earlier execution was poorly conceived, and can often be identified by measures of consumer interest, brand association sales. You have attempted to position it somehow and it has not been working. So, if you want to reposition, it is a logical thing. Here, it would not be so difficult to dismantle that original positioning because you would like to do that and customers would not dislike that.

That is a point, but if the customer would dislike that, then it would be a difficult point, so the target of the identity/execution is limited, and may need to change to reach a broader market. Then the third element is that identity and execution lose its edge, becoming obsolete due to market change.

So, that is the rationale for brand new positioning. Up till this stage, customers would not dislike it and then the identity or execution loses its edge and becomes old fashion. Now, here there are many loyal customers whose hearts would be broken, if you want to reposition the product so that is a very delicate kind of thing to be done, because you would not like to lose your brand ambassadors, who have been promoting your product for ages now.

So, just because your product is becoming old-fashioned, it is probably better to work on the innovation of the product, and innovation of the marketing process, and to restrengthen, reinforce your positioning, or revitalize your positioning probably. Repositioning here might not be so easily accepted by the customer. Here, consumers and markets change such that positions and or

executions that were once contemporary became less so but that should not be the only motivating factor to do that.

Then there is another rationale, which says that the identity and execution have just become tired. Now, some overtime may become boring to consumers losing the ability to attract attention. Here also, even if it is getting boring for the customers to use the same product time and again with the same kind of brand orientation and brand positioning perspective. But you have to find out why it is happening and probably before repositioning, you must try reinforcement revitalization.

Much before that, you should foresee, when that kind of stagnation in the thought of the customers would come because you understand the substitution alternatives which are coming your way, or the kind of life cycle progression/growth your brand is going through. So, one must foresee, and that is what brand management is all about.

Here I wish to imply that brand repositioning should not be a desirable aspect, if you are foreseeing well, if you are working well, if you are planning well then there are so many aspects, which you should be thinking in terms of as far as the whole scenario goes. There are several kinds of orientations associated with repositioning, for example.

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Segment-oriented repositioning

This strategy is useful when a brand wants to change the segment to which it is currently marketing the brand.

For e.g., Sunny was a two-wheeled 60cc scooterette (a cross between a moped and scooter in India), which was initially positioned for teenagers.

The brand was endorsed by a well-known sports celebrity and the initial positioning was through a novel product (scooterette) and the glamour brought in by a celebrity who had the charisma to appeal to the target segment.

The product did not, however, have significant success in the market. The brand was repositioned as Sunny Zip and its engine power was upgraded to 75cc.

The target segment for the repositioned product was women: housewives and college girls. The repositioning exercise involved upgrading the product, changing segments and creating a sub-brand (Sunny Zip).

Source: Kumar, S.R. (2003), "Branding strategies in a changing marketing environment", The Journal of Brand Management, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 48-61



17

Types of Repositioning strategies:

Brand enhancement and segment-oriented repositioning

This strategy is useful when a brand uses imagery (possibly even a celebrity) to strengthen its association and tries to enter a new segment based on the strength of that imagery.

For Example,

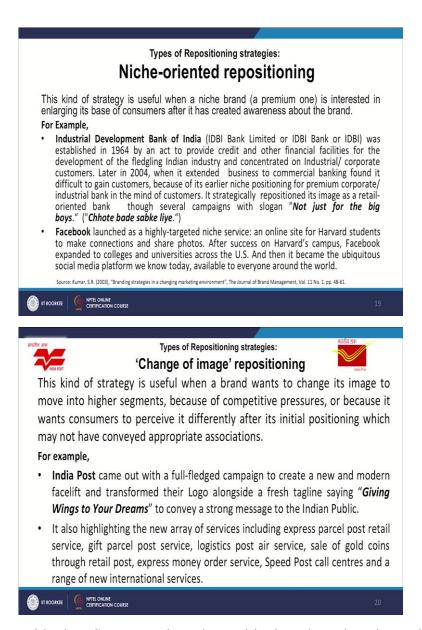
Kaun Banega Crorepati emitted an aspirational value, targeting the Indian psyche of achieving goals & dreams.

Source: Kumar, S.R. (2003), "Branding strategies in a changing marketing environment", The Journal of Brand Management, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 48-61.





18

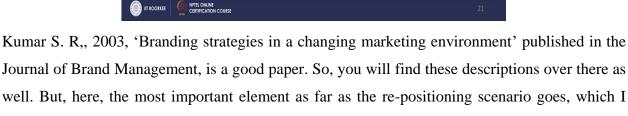


Value-oriented repositioning, Segment oriented repositioning, then, there is an element of Brand enhancement, and segment-oriented repositioning, there is a Niche oriented repositioning and there is a Change of image-associated repositioning for several kinds of expressions or research which have been done on these, there are several authors who have written on this. So, there is the textbook which we have been referring to, and for example, there is a good paper to which you can refer for several kinds of repositioning for that matter.

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Reference Paper

 Kumar, S.R. (2003), "Branding strategies in a changing marketing environment", The Journal of Brand Management, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 48-61.

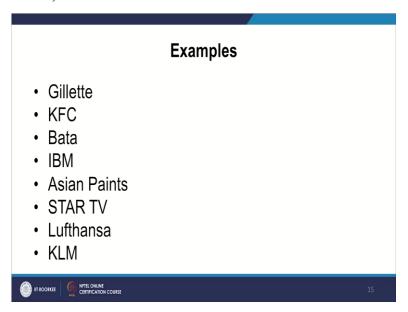


want to summarize in terms of examples. Should I say repositioning, if it has to be done with a perspective that neither the sentiments of the older customers should be hurt, nor the belief of the future customer about what your brand meant, should be dismantled because, ultimately, we are

thinking in terms of brand loyalty and brand equity.

You see, rejuvenating sales is not the only objective when we think in terms of brand management. Generating brand equity, brand loyalty, and subsequently, the sales associated with all the products, and particular brand is the main important key. As I said, I would be using examples to summarize or express this culmination which I have just mentioned in front of you, for example, Gillette.

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Now, Gillette, when they came up with Gillette guard, they sort of repositioned themselves without saying that they are repositioning themselves, and that is an important thing. You see, did we realize that? No, they retain their older customers or sentiments of the older customers and did not dismantle the belief of the customers which they have gained now, that they are Gillette and that is where branding intelligence comes in.

For example, KFC, went for veg offerings in Gujarat which is an interesting thing. Bata, they have to revitalize, reposition itself, and a whole lot of stories have come up in a big way. Now IBM, as we all know, I have just mentioned, Asian paints, has sort of converted itself into a paint solutions company rather than just a paint company. They are now a companion in terms of, should I say painting your houses, painting your properties?

Star TV, entered and established then they made inroads into the roots of our country. Lufthansa; they have done it successfully KLM has done it successfully. And there can be an N-number of examples of that. I am leaving you with this thought. We will be coming back to you in my last segment, the last two sessions. One of those would be focused on the aspect of rebranding. As I said the demise or death of brands and why it should not happen, how we may not let it happen along with a conceptual framework or discussion on the brand lifecycle.

After that, I will be summarizing a whole lot of the discussion that we have gone through, through a larger case or an example, to emphasize or establish the relationship of all the elements

which we have gone through in due course of time. It would become more interesting in the last two sections. Keep going along. I will be seeing you back. Goodbye.