

entrepreneurs can enhance their ability to navigate foreign markets and forge successful international relationships.

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### PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF BRANDING ON CONSUMER CHOICES

In today's competitive market, establishing a strong brand identity is crucial for success in marketing and sales. For a product to launch successfully and its brand identity to be recognisable, customers' perception and their decision-making processes are needed to be analysed.

The purpose of our study is to explore psychological effects of branding on consumer choices and to understand how they influence consumer perceptions, preferences, and purchasing behaviour.

Linked to emotions and personal values, brand identity consists of the visual, verbal, and experiential components that define your brand and shape and the way customers perceive it. A large number of consumer psychological factors help brand to differentiate itself in a competitive market [1].

Human brains are naturally inclined to make swift judgments, often based on first impressions. A thoughtfully crafted narrative can inspire trust, reliability, and emotional connections, forming the basis for consumer loyalty.

Colors have a powerful impact on emotions and can affect behavior. Brands intentionally use color psychology to communicate particular messages. By grasping the

cultural and psychological implications of colors, brands can establish a subconscious connection with their target audience.

As social beings, humans often base their decisions on the actions of others. Customer reviews, testimonials, and endorsements foster a sense of community and validation, reassuring potential buyers that they are making a smart choice by choosing the brand.

Strong branding fosters trust and credibility. Consumers are more likely to choose brands they recognize and perceive as reliable. A consistent brand presence creates a sense of stability. When consumers can anticipate and depend on a brand's actions, it builds trust, which is essential for establishing long-term relationships between the brand and its customers.

Familiar brands are easier for consumers to process, leading to a preference for products that feel more familiar. This can result in quicker decision-making and less cognitive effort.

Brands that align with consumers' values and beliefs can significantly impact decision-making. Consumers are more inclined to support brands that reflect their ethical or lifestyle choices.

The results of the survey that has been conducted among students indicate that 98% of respondents would repurchase a product that meets their needs, highlighting the importance of customer satisfaction. Additionally, 62% believe that first impressions can influence future brand loyalty, while 70% prefer established brands over new ones. Color associations with successful brands show that red is the most prominent choice. Lastly, 55% of respondents do not prioritize exclusivity in products, suggesting a broader acceptance of non-unique offerings.

Consumers make purchasing decisions based on a hierarchy of needs, as described by Maslow. At the foundation, basic needs like food and shelter influence initial buying choices. As individuals move up the hierarchy, their focus shifts to safety, social belonging, esteem, and ultimately, self-actualization. Aligning your brand messaging and offerings with these essential needs can create a more meaningful connection with customers [2].

The consumer decision-making process comprises several distinct stages: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. Brands play a crucial role at each stage, impacting consumers through targeted marketing, providing easy access to information, and fostering positive experiences after a purchase. By comprehending this decision-making process, marketers can tailor their strategies to effectively meet consumer needs and address concerns at every step. This approach not only enhances the likelihood of building brand preference but also fosters long-term customer loyalty [3].

In conclusion, our research indicates that strong branding profoundly impacts consumer choices by cultivating trust and emotional connections through well-crafted narratives and resonant visual elements, thereby fostering brand loyalty. Furthermore, a comprehensive understanding of the consumer decision-making process enables brands to effectively guide potential buyers at every stage, allowing for personal experiences

that address consumer needs and enhance engagement, ultimately reinforcing branding as a crucial aspect of consumer identity and community.

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### ADAPTING PRODUCT PACKAGING AND BRANDING FOR DIFFERENT MARKETS

In today's world every company faces the challenge of adapting packaging to diverse preferences. If they fail, the clients will rely on the price as the main criterion in making a decision. On this basis, the goal of the research is to evaluate the role of a well-designed and attractive packaging as a powerful marketing tool that can attract consumer's attention, distinguish a product from its competitors and become a key to success.

There is quite a lot of research on this topic. One of them is an investigation by German neuroeconomist Peter Kenning. He conducted research of brain activity in a situation of choice: when a interviewee's favourite brand appeared in the photo, the choice was made instantly, as recognition of this brand caused cortical inhibition of critical thinking and logical analysis. The experiment proves that strong brands are perceived by system 1 and weak brands activate only system 2, in other words, consumers reflect on the purchase.

Another research conducted in the 1960s in the United States investigated consumer behaviour when choosing a product. It took a shopper no more than 6 seconds to figure out which product to choose. As people interested blinked more often, their heart rate increased and they were ready to make an impulsive purchase.

Based on these two investigations, we can conclude that we choose goods on autopilot, provided that we like them and they are familiar to us, but if we do not see a familiar product, we will have to switch from autopilot to just a pilot and begin to study this product. Due to the mechanism of intuitive decision-making the customer approaches the counter and makes his choice in a fraction of a second.