Brand driven innovation

fulfilling brand promise through new product development.

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Final Report of the Research Project
to obtain the title of Master of Design Management

Nyenrode University / InHolland, the Netherlands

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www.branddriveninnovation.com

Executive summary

In design management literature and business practice, both branding and product innovation are widely discussed. Both are assigned the role of differentiator: they can create sustainable competitive advantage for the company by differentiating the product offering from that of the competition.

Recently, the concepts of branding and product innovation have been converging. This development is beneficial both for the brand and the product. On the one hand, the brand can benefit from the product because the product has a more direct impact on the consumer than other brand touchpoints, and over a much longer period of time. In its turn, the product can benefit from the brand because it offers a way to differentiate it emotionally.

Combining the two bodies of knowledge presents a problem because there is no framework available for translating brand propositions into new products. Many authors describe the expected benefits of the combination. However, no attempts have been made so far to provide a step by step method for translating brands into products. This method will be valuable to those people involved in designing and managing brands and new products. This research project sets out to develop such a method. It aims to solve the following problem:

How can brand identity be used to generate innovative product concepts that fulfil the brand's promise?

Literature review, interviews with practitioners and academics and an assignment done by 70 Strategic Product Design students have led to the following conclusions:

1. There is a great need to bridge the gap between branding and new product development in a way that helps designers to translate brands into products.
2. There is no method available for this translation.
3. A new Brand Driven Innovation (BDI) method should start from the brand, put this brand in a format that can be used by designers, and then proceed to generate product concepts. Only then a selection should take place on the basis of internal and external criteria.
4. This BDI method requires a new way of defining the company's brand. This new brand format must be a fruitful platform for product innovations, that designers find easier and more natural to work with than traditional brand definitions.
5. Based on the research findings the author proposes a BDI method and a model for defining a new brand format.

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Note to the reader:

Throughout this report, the term 'product innovation' is used. The author has chosen this term deliberately to stress the focus on intensive product development programs incorporating new technologies, new product functionality, new product interaction, and/or new value networks. To some, the term 'new product development' will sufficiently cover this meaning. These readers may substitute the term 'product innovation' with 'new product development'(NPD) at their will.

Abbreviations

BDI   Brand Driven Innovation

IDB   Innovation Driven Branding

NPD   New Product Development

BNDP   Branded New Product Development

FMCG   Fast moving consumer Goods

FFE   The Fuzzy Front End of New Product Development

MDM   Master of Design Management

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Foreword

The report before you covers a research project conducted to obtain the degree of Master of Design Management at Nyenrode University, Breukelen, the Netherlands. The project was conducted in the period of April 2005 to November 2005 and was moderated by Jos van der Zwaal.

The project is called 'Brand Driven Innovation' (BDI), a term coined by the author to indicate innovation based on and derived from brand identity. The area of innovation the project deals with is product innovation, or New Product Development (NPD). The author is especially focussed on durable branded products.

It is well known that branding and product innovation play a vital role in durable product manufacturing. Their respective roles in creating sustainable differentiation advantages for the company have been studied extensively. Recently, the two fields have been converging: the discipline of branding can no longer ignore the product as a major contributor to brand equity, while the discipline of product innovation needs the brand to reach the heart of the consumer.

Although this development is clearly present, relatively little research has been done on the subject. Some case studies go into the subject of connecting branding and product development but a theoretical framework for a practical method is lacking. This is why the author was challenged to unravel at least a piece of this fascinating subject.

The research sets out to look for methods for Brand Driven Innovation in literature and in the field and to distil a coherent and practical method model from the findings. First, the literature research looks for answers to the following questions:

1. What are brand identity and promise and how do they relate to the consumer?
2. What is the role of product innovation in branding and vise versa?
3. What methodology for Brand Driven Innovation is available?

The preliminary answers found in literature are then tested through primary research. They are held against the opinions of branding and product innovation specialists in the field, through 16 interviews. These interviews, combined with the findings in literature, lead to a BDI model. This model describes a working method to derive product innovations from brand identity. The model is meant for use by brand managers, brand designers, design managers, product managers, innovation managers, and product designers dealing with branded durable products.

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Chapter 1: introduction

1.1 The problem field

The problem field this research wishes to address is the point where the paradigms of branding and product innovation touch. In literature and in practice, the two are often treated more or less separately. However, recent developments in business practice show that there are great benefits to be gained by connecting the two. How to make this connection, it terms of process and organisation, is a problem that has as of yet been unsolved.

Traditionally, brands have been focussing on external communication to position themselves in the minds of the consumer (Aaker, 1996; Kapferer, 1992). Since a few years, a paradigm shift can be discerned: internal branding has become a significant part of the brand's domain (Ind, 2001, Funcke, 2005) In this view, the brand is more than a means of external communication. It becomes an internal source for strategic direction. This implies that also the product innovation process will increasingly look at the brand for guidance.

A different development that defines this problem field is the fact that brand managers start to realise that the product is one of the most influential brand touch points (Davis and Dunn, 2002, Peters, 2003). As opposed to expensive and volatile media, the product offers a more durable and direct platform to present the brand's proposition to the consumer. The product can be effective communicator of the brand's aesthetical identity in retail environments. But, more interestingly, in its interaction with the consumer during use, the product has the potential to actually fulfil the brand's promise and thus to establish a durable relationship between the brand and the consumer.

In a parallel line of reasoning, product innovation is mainly driven by external forces. Most New Product Development projects are initiated by the Marketing department (Borja de Morzota, 2003a), which could be seen as an internal source. The author argues however that what this internal source presents to the product innovation department are external drivers: new technologies, competitor strategies, consumer preferences and market trends. What is often missing in lists of innovation drivers is brand identity. If product innovation wants to play a role in fulfilling the brand's promise, it will have to be prepared to look inside, at the brand, for guidance. This new focus will also enable new products to profit from the differentiating power of the brand, in a market where leadership in functionality and/or technology alone can be temporary and fragile (Hamel, 2000, Grant, 1991). Figure 1 shows a number of examples where the product is closely related to the brand it originates from. The author argues that if these products would originate from a different brand, they would not look, feel or function the same.

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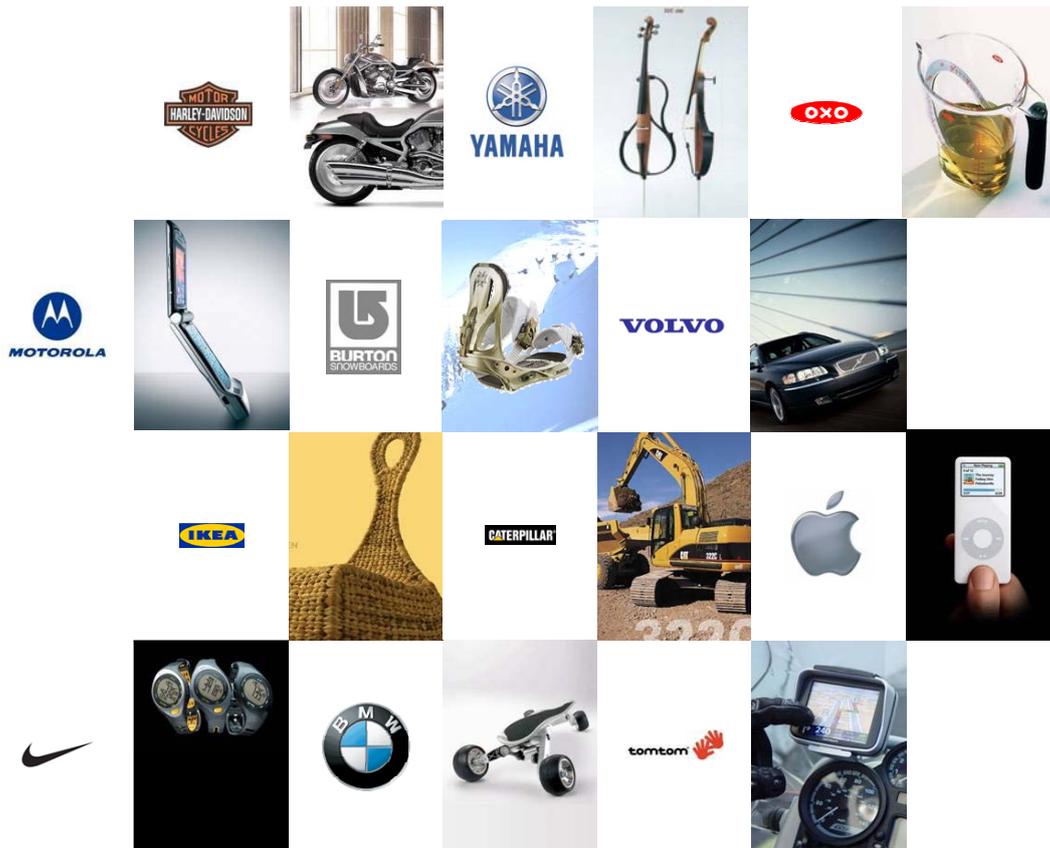
figure 1: examples of products having a strong connection to the brand they originated from.

Michael Porter already knew in 1985 that integration of disciplines creates competitive advantage (Porter 1985, cited by Borja de Morzota, 2003a). Other sources (Montague, 1999; Kapferer, 1992, 2004; Karjalainen, 2004) also suggest that integrating the efforts of branding and product innovation can be most beneficial for the corporation. Sufficient theoretical publications have argued the case for Brand Driven Innovation to take these benefits as given. Although a practical case study to prove that these benefits in fact exist would be of great value to design-, brand- and innovation managers, the author argues that a more process-oriented approach to the problem field is of even higher priority. Once we know that Brand Driven Innovation is of value to brands, products and consumers, the next question should be: *how* can we generate product innovations based on the brand. Insufficient attention has been given to this '*how'* part of the problem field. As such, the problem the author wishes to research is a methodological one.

Concluding: the relationship between brands and product innovation is challenging. Current developments suggest that both disciplines depend heavily on each other, while good tools to manage this interdependency are lacking. It appears that the benefit of close cooperation is clear, or at least intuitively understood. It is especially the methodological aspects of the problem field that require closer research.

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1.2 Statement of the problem

The problem definition the author arrived at, through an initial literature study and choices regarding research focus, reads as follows:

How can the brand be used to generate innovative product concepts that fulfil the brand's promise?

1.2.1 Definitions

In order to gain a clear understanding of the statement of the problem, the terms that are used will be defined.

'Brand' is often defined as the name, logo or trademark of a corporation (futurebrand, 2005) However, as discussed above, the definition of brand the author chooses to work with will have to be much broader, and much more strategically inclined. Such a definition is "the brand is the promise of the bundles of attributes that someone buys and that provides satisfaction" (Ambler, 1992, cited by Ambler and Styles, 1997). A similar definition is "the brand is essentially a seller's promise to deliver a specific set of features, benefits and services consistently to the buyers" (Kotler 2000). Interestingly, both definitions imply a promise, made by the company to the consumer, through the brand. This aspect of brand promise is further explored in the literature review.

Although 'innovation' is still often defined in terms of technological breakthroughs, there is a growing tendency to see innovation more as the creation and implementation of ideas that improve existing situations. Joyce Wycoff, co-founder of the Innovation Network (www.thinksmart.com) defines innovation as "people creating value by implementing new ideas". Eileen Dundon (2002) defines innovation as "the profitable implementation of strategic creativity". In line with these definitions, the author's use of the term "innovative product concepts" in the statement of the problem, can be read as "proposals for products that could add value to the company and that are completely or partly new to the company". Although there are many types of innovation (Larry Keely of the Doblin group distinguishes 10), this research is concerned with product innovation in particular. The author is aware that this is a limited view (see for example Hamel, 2000) but for the sake of focus, it is a valid one.

1.2.2 Research questions

Initial analysis of the statement of the problem leads to a number of questions on which the research has focused. These questions are answered in the course of the primary and secondary research phases of this dissertation. They are:

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1. What is brand and brand promise and how do they relate to the consumer?

   It is this relationship, in which the innovative product is the carrier of the message. Before the exact role of the product can be uncovered, this relationship itself has to be scrutinized.

2. What is the role of product innovation in branding, and what is the role of branding in product innovation?

   Initial research shows that the benefit of Brand Driven Innovation is a two-sided coin. The brand can benefit from the product, and the product can benefit from the brand. The nature of this mutual benefit has to be understood, to be able to make it applicable.

3. What methodology for Brand Driven Innovation is available?

   Are there already methodologies to learn from, and if not, what are corresponding approaches that can be applied to Brand Driven Innovation? This part of the research looks at the state of the art in branding and product innovation methodology to lay the foundations for a designated Brand Driven Innovation method.

1.2.3 The conceptual model

A conceptual model has been drawn, to clarify the forces that occur within the problem area. The model consists of two situations, each describing a company (on the left) and a consumer, on the right. Situation one (figure 2) represents the undesirable situation where the disciplines of branding and new product development are separated, both in- and externally. The separated brand management and new product development departments indicate this situation. They are represented in the model by the separate office and factory, with the red line running between them. All input for both branding and product innovation comes from outside of the corporation. All output from both branding and product innovation goes to the outside of the corporation. The consumer is likely to experience inconsistency between product and brand. The red line indicates this inconsistency, separating the emotional experience (the head experiencing the brand) from the physical experience (the body, experiencing the product).

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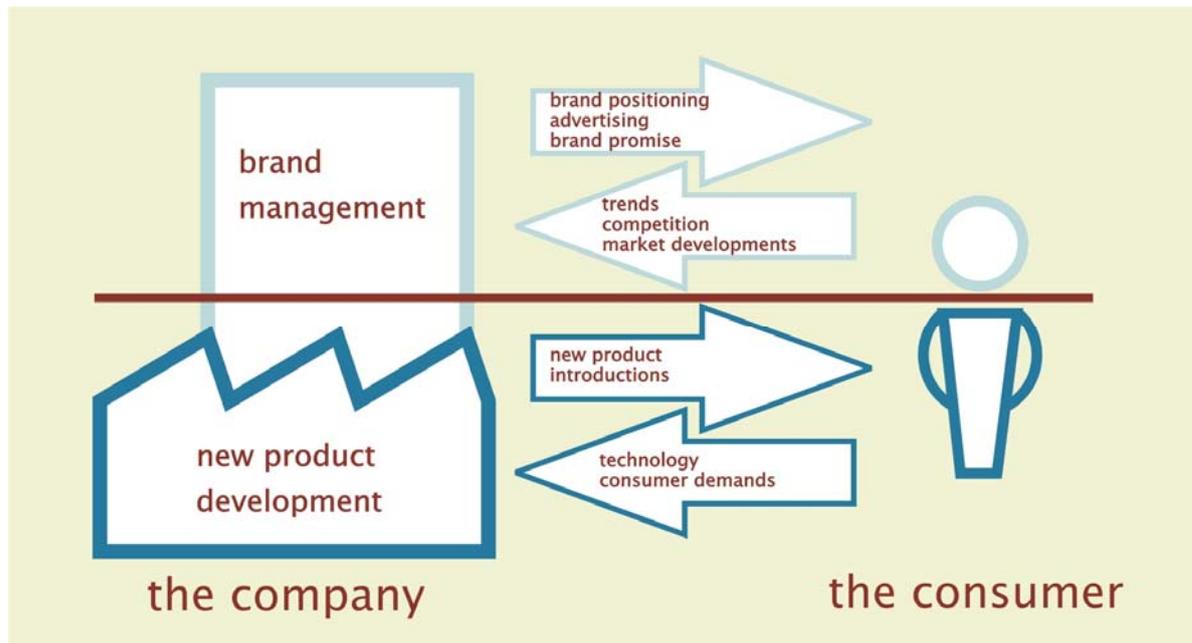
figure 2: the conceptual model, situation 1
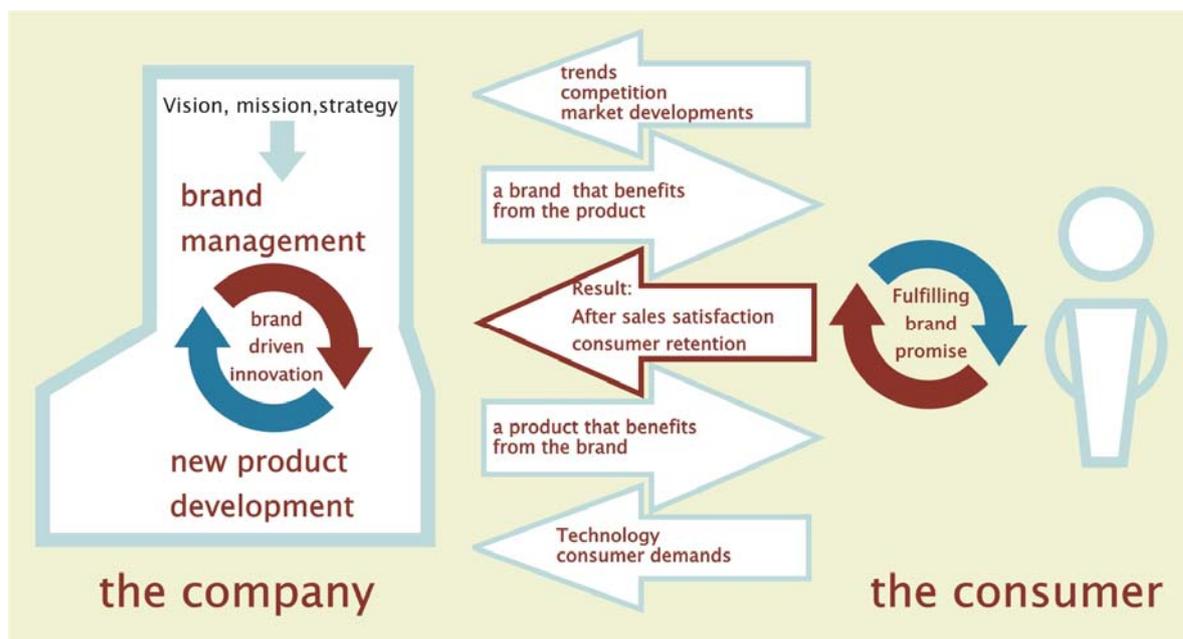
figure 3: the conceptual model, situation 2

Situation two (figure 3) represents the desirable situation: the brand and the product work synergistically, both in- and externally. The walls between factory and office have disappeared; the branding and product development departments can mingle freely. Input for branding comes from outside of the company, from product innovation and from the vision, mission and strategy of the

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company. In turn, input for new product development comes from outside of the company, from branding and from the vision, mission and strategy of the company. Output from branding goes to the outside of the company, but also to product development. Output from product development goes to the outside of the company, but also to branding. The consumer experiences consistency between the product and the brand. The product and brand benefit from each other mutually.

Within this model, the focus of the research is indicated by the two red arrows: the red arrow on the left represents the brand as input for generating new product concepts, the red arrow on the right represents the product fulfilling the brand's promise. The blue arrows indicate the 'other side of the coin': the products developed by the company directly influence its brand. This influence should be managed and used to the brand's advantage. The blue arrow on the left represents this involvement of product design in brand strategy. The blue arrow on the right represents how the brand differentiates the product from the competition and helps it find its way to the consumer.

1.3 Justification for the research

This research project is conducted to shed light on an area of business that has many stakeholders. The relevance of the project depends on the extent to which these stakeholders can use the results to gain insight or facilitate their work. This paragraph looks at the goals of the project and at the relevancy for the intended target group.

1.3.1 Research goals

The goal of this research is to arrive at a BDI method. This method should help in using the brand as input in the product innovation process, so that new product concepts based on the brand can be generated and evaluated. The outcome of the method should be product concepts that fulfil the brand's promise. This implies that their effect on the consumer is not only satisfaction with the product, but also with the brand, because the product meets the expectations set forth by both.

The method should be a practical and applicable tool in day-to-day business, implying an ease of use and accessibility for all the stakeholders involved. This requires the method to be both a process tool and an organisational tool. Process-wise, it should help the people involved organise their workflow and process steps and evaluate their outcome. Organisationally, it should help companies organise brand and product innovation resources in such a way that Brand Driven Innovation becomes possible.

Ideally, the method will help explain the Brand Driven Innovation process, as well as facilitate its implementation and operation. This means that the method should be captured in a model that is insightful, visually clear and attractive, and although broad in its implications, simple and direct at first glance.

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1.3.2 Target group

The target group for this research is twofold:
First, the research is aimed at those involved in developing the body of knowledge around branding and product innovation. These might be scholars, authors, consultants or managers. The research sets out to provide this group with an academically sound argument connecting the body of knowledge of branding to that of product innovation, in a process oriented context.
The research builds on existing literature in the fields of branding and product innovation. The primary research of this project, although exploratory, should satisfy this group through its consistent results and the way these results support the resulting model. The academic field of Brand Driven Innovation (or Branded New Product Development, as professor Jan Buijs MSc of the school of Industrial Design at the Delft University of Technology calls it) is very young. The author hopes to contribute to those involved in the development of the field with a practical tool that connects academic thinking to applicability in a business context.
Secondly, the research is aimed at practitioners in the fields of brand development, brand design, product innovation and product design. These might be brand managers, marketeers, innovation managers, product managers, design managers, brand designers and product designers. The research sets out to provide these people with an easy to use tool that helps them understand the process, organise the workflow, and come to grips with the different steps in going from brand to product concept. In essence, the model should increase the probability that the target group arrives at innovations that fulfil the brand's promise.
But the author also has the ambition to inspire this part of the target group, knowing that one doesn't translate a brand into exiting product concepts that satisfy consumer expectations by just following a step-by-step recipe. Creativity is essential in the creation of brands and products. A method should not aim at replacing creativity; it should provide a platform that inspires it.

A point of attention is the relevance of the project to the field of design management, and practising design managers, since the research was conducted within this context. As the ongoing discourse on the definition of design management (Borja de Morzota, 2003, Design Management Journal, 1998, Cooper and Press, 1995, Beuker 2005) shows, the word 'design' in 'design management' can refer to every possible design discipline. As such, design management ranges from product design to design of communication and environments and even the behaviour of employees (Olins, 2003). Both product innovation and branding largely manifest themselves through design (Journal of Product innovation Management, March 2005 and call for papers may 2005, Design Management Review spring and winter 2005, Peters, 2003), and can certainly benefit from design management. It is the design manager's task to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the design process (Borja de Morzota, 2003, Cooper and

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Press, 1995). The Brand Driven Innovation model can help him/her achieve this goal in the areas of product and brand design.

But the author argues that design management should be concerned foremost with the integration of the various design disciplines. Since most products/services/experiences are born from integrated design efforts, these efforts require a consistent, inspiring and strong design management to align them towards the desired result. Brand Driven Innovation is concerned with the alignment of brand design and product design. As such, it can contribute to the multi-disciplinary design management the author believes to be vital in today's market.

1.3.3 Relevance

This research project is relevant because it is applicable in business practice. Much has been written on the benefits of developing products that fulfil the brand's promise. Very little has been written on how to establish this connection. Thus, the relevance of this project should lie in providing a foundation upon which the benefits one finds in literature can be actually achieved. If the model leads to the desired result, being new product concepts that fulfil the brand's promise, a brand-product synergy would occur, both inside and outside the company. This would increase the credibility and thus the value of the brand (Young&Rubicam,1995): the brand's promise would be fulfilled. In addition to that, the chance for success of the product innovation would increase: it would directly benefit from the brand's ability to position the product emotionally and create preference in the consumer's mind. For the consumer, the interaction with both the product and the brand would be more satisfying and durable. The product offers the potential for emotional attachment through the brand, while the brand's promise is attractively fulfilled in a durable manner through the product. The consumer can build a long lasting relationship with the brand, based on the product as tangible (temporary) intermediary.

As a concluding summary, the relevance of the research project lies in

- the benefits for the two target groups, academics and practitioners, in the field of design management in particular
- increased brand value
- higher product innovation success rates
- higher consumer satisfaction

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1.4 Methodology

This paragraph provides an outline of the research project from a methodological point of view. It aims to provide a solid academic foundation for the course and the results of the project.

1.4.1 Outline of the project

Ffigure 4 illustrates the outline of the project.
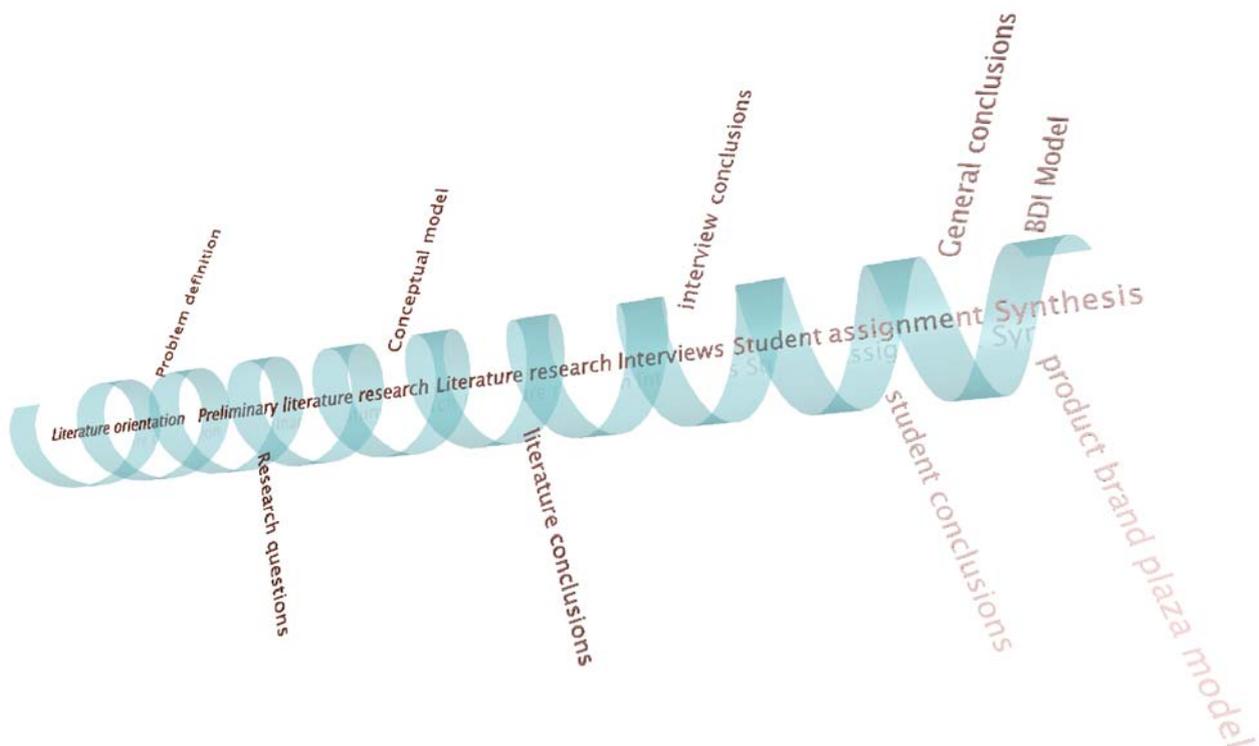
figure 4: the outline of the project

The project launch was based on a literature orientation that led to the problem definition. Subsequently, a more in depth, but still preliminary literature research gave rise to the three research questions mentioned in paragraph 1.2.2. The following extensive literature review in the discourse of branding, product innovation and design management, resulted in the conceptual model in paragraph 1.2.3 and a set of literature review conclusions. The primary research phase consisted of 16 interviews and a student project conducted with 70 master students of Strategic Product Design at the school of Industrial Design at the Delft University of Technology. This series of interviews and the student project have each led to a set of conclusions, culminating in set of general conclusions. Subsequently, a synthesis phase has taken place in which the Brand Driven Innovation method and a Product Brand Plaza model were developed.

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1.4.2 Focus and key assumptions

There is a trade off between the exploratory nature of this research (due to the newness of the subject matter), and the sharp focus required to arrive at relevant results. Because so little has been written about the connection between branding and product innovation, it is very tempting to perform the research in broad strokes of the brush, and to involve every source one can find in the literature review. However, only an in depth study of a small area of the problem field can lead to relevant results. This trade off has been even harder to make due to the timeframe of half a year. The author has narrowed the scope of his research in such a manner that the project is still largely exploratory in nature, but at the same time sharply focussed on the area the author considers the least researched. figure 5 shows the choices in focus that were made.

Research area	Focus 1	Focus 2	Focus 3	Focus 4
brand angle	who?	packaging	B to B	Development
BDI validation	when?	aesthetics	FMCG	Fuzzy Front End
NPD angle	how?	functionality	durable products	Product launch
	why?	interaction	automotive	
	what?	communication	services	
		environment		
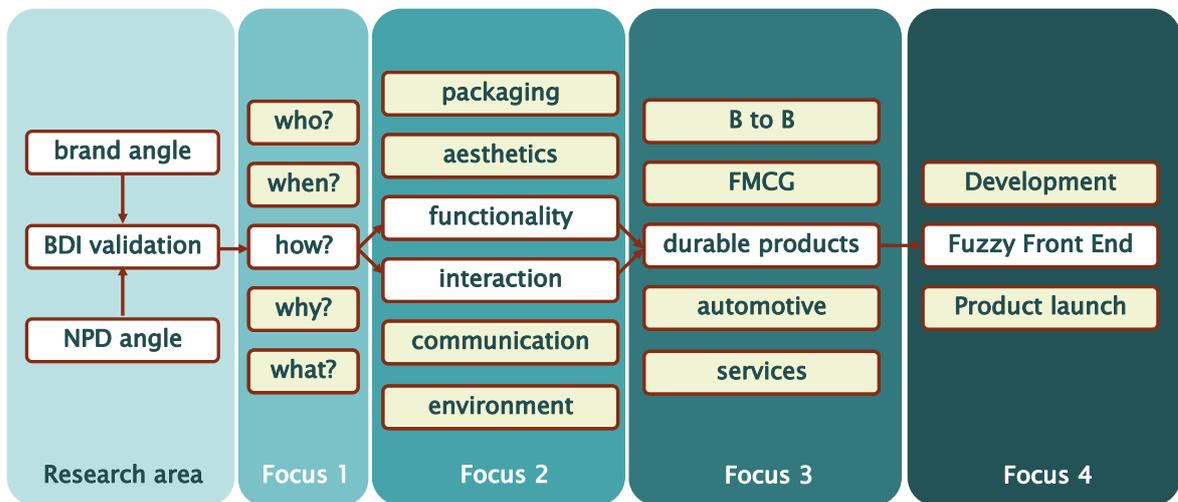
figure 5: the different choices in focus of this research project.

The first choice in narrowing the scope of the project lies in focussing on the 'how' of Brand Driven Innovation, as explained in paragraph 1.1. here, a clear choice has been made to focus on the methodological aspects of Brand Driven Innovation. How should companies go about translating brands into products, and how should a company organise its resources to accommodate this process. This leaves other questions unanswered: why should a company be concerned with Brand Driven Innovation, who should be involved, when and where is it useful (see paragraph 7.4) ? Although some of these questions are at least partly taken into consideration during the course of the project, one major assumption is made: that Brand Driven Innovation is a worthwhile pursuit for any product oriented company where the brand is important. As explained in paragraph 1.1, this assumption has sufficient foundation in existing discourse to be made safely. This is not tot say that more research in this area is not welcome.

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A second choice in narrowing the scope of the research lies in what product attributes the Brand Driven Innovation process should lead to. Here the author has chosen to focus on product functionality and interaction (what does the product do, how does it function, what problem does it solve, how does the user interact with it, how does it feel during use?). This choice has been made for two reasons: first, existing publications focus sharply on product aesthetics and semantics (Karjalainen, 2003, Stompff, 2003, Desmet, 2002). Although the connection between brands and product aesthetics is fascinating, the author has opted for an angle that –to his knowledge- wasn't made before.

Secondly, this choice was made because the author feels that expressing the brand in terms of functionality and interaction will sooner fulfil the brand's promise than evoking the brand's meaning in product aesthetics alone. This is another key assumption the author made, and it certainly merits further research. It falls outside the scope of this research however. Suffice it to say that the Brand Driven Innovation process the author is concerned with should primarily lead to new product functionality and/or interaction. Product aesthetics (and semantics) should by no means be forgotten; the author refers to existing research for this purpose (especially Karjalainen, 2003).

A third choice regarding the focus of this research lies in the sort of new products the Brand Driven Innovation method was developed for. Here, the scope is narrowed to durable products (both consumer and business to business, a focus in this area proved to be unnecessary since both can benefit from BDI). The reason for this choice lies, again, in the fact that this is an area that has not been sufficiently researched before (Buijs and van Leeuwen, 2005). A lot of research concerning the merging of branding and NPD has focussed on Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), where, again, it is mainly involved with product aesthetics (packaging). Durable products offer the advantage of repeated and/or long term user contact. They are the one brand touch point that stays with the user, and that is 'touched' time and again. It is in the area of durable products where Brand Driven Innovation is presumed to be most valuable and most needed. Needless to say, this assumption also merits further investigation.

A fourth choice in reducing the scope of the research is the focus on 'the Fuzzy Front End' (FFE) of the product innovation process. Koen et. al, (2002) distinguish two separate processes within product innovation: the FFE and NPD. The FFE is defined by those activities that come before the well defined NPD process. It is that part of the product innovation process that is involved with idea generation, idea selection, opportunity analysis, opportunity identification and concept and technology development (see

figure 8). The NPD process is the actual product development that follows. Or, as Buijs puts it (2003): all those activities in the product innovation process 'upstream' of the actual product development activities. Buijs distinguishes two fuzzy front end activities, being strategy formulation and design brief formulation (Buijs 2003, 2005).

Only if branding is made part of the FFE of product innovation, it can actually become a source, a driver. If branding's involvement is postponed until the NPD phase, product developers will have no choice but

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to stick to outside manifestations of the brand (product aesthetics, packaging, product graphics). If the brand should lead to functionally new product concepts, it is in essence a part of the FFE.

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter has set the stage for the development of the Brand Driven Innovation method and the research that builds up to it. The statement of the problem is captured in a conceptual model, and has led to 3 research questions that can be tackled within a well defined focus, using a suitable exploratory method. The author has stated clear goals for the project, and has argued that the research is relevant for a specific target group.

Time to get to work!

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Chapter 2: literature review

2.1 Introduction

The goal of the following literature review is to get an understanding of the existing discourse in the problem field. This understanding ensures that the research project is founded upon validated and accepted views regarding the topic. A further result of this understanding should be that the research project adds value to the existing body of knowledge, rather than merely repeating what has been discovered before.

Relevant literature was found in various expertise area's, namely the area of branding, the area of design, and the area of product innovation. Most of the reviewed literature comes from the management sub-disciplines of these expertise areas, being brand-management, design-management and innovation-management. Relevant literature was written by academics as well as practitioners. Most relevant sources are well referenced and researched. For reasons of practical applicability, sometimes more personal opinions of professionals are quoted. The literature review is structured according to the research questions (see paragraph 1.2.2).

2.2 Literature review

2.2.1 What is brand and brand promise and how do they relate to the consumer?

This part of the literature review deals with what it is exactly that should drive innovation in the Brand Driven Innovation proposition. If we want to use the brand as input for a process as vital as product innovation, we must know what the brand is, and what constitutes its essence.

What exactly is the essence of a brand? Literature research shows that there are different views on this. Some call it the brand identity. The concept of brand identity started relatively recently in Europe (Kapferer 1986; cited by Guzman, 2005). Kapferer defines brand identity by describing the identity prism (figure 6).

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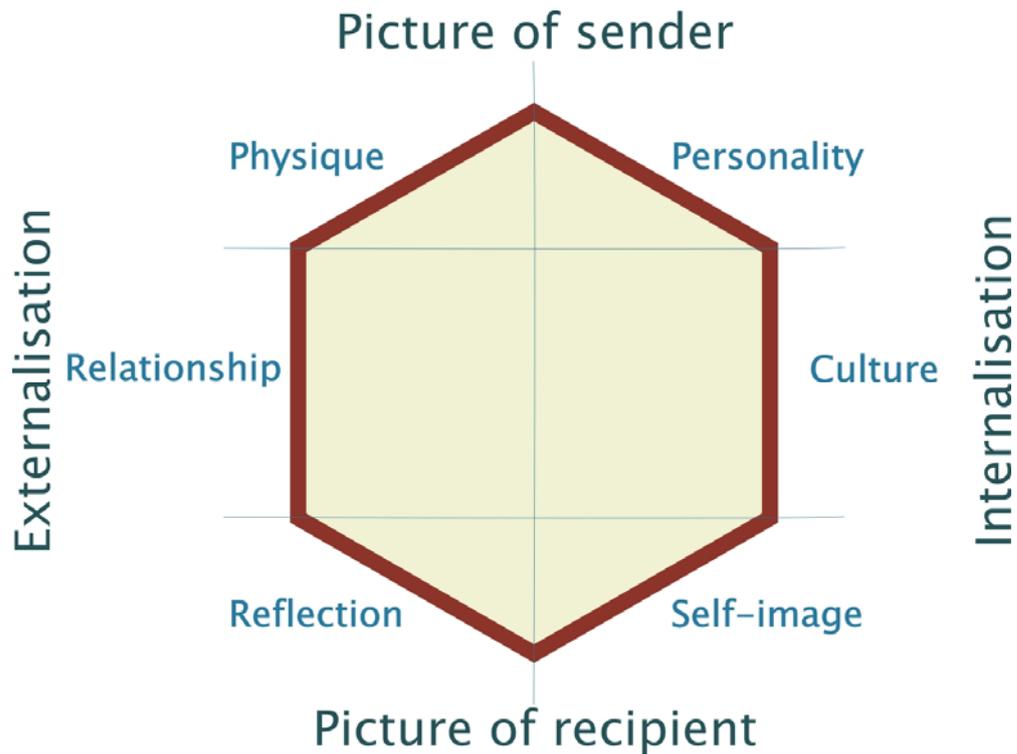
figure 6: the Brand Identity Prism (Kapferer, 1992, 2004)

The brand identity prism represents the brand as having six sides. Each side represents a distinguishable aspect of the brand:

1.   Physique: the physical aspects of the brand
2.   Personality: the character of the brand
3.   Culture: the set of values feeding the brand
4.   Relationship: the mode of conduct of the brand
5.   customer reflection: the outward reflection of the customer the brand addresses
6.   self-image: the target's internal mirror of the brand

The six sides are organized along a hexagon. The hexagon's top part refers to those aspects of the brand which constitute the picture of the sender (the owner of the brand): physique and personality. The bottom part refers to those brand aspects representing the picture of the recipient (the consumer): reflection and self-image. The left half of the hexagon deals with externalization of the brand's identity (reflection, relationship and physique), while the right half deals with internalization of the brand (self-image, culture and personality).

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David Aaker (1996) defines brand identity as "a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain. These associations represent what the brand stands for and imply a promise to customers from the organisation members". It is interesting to note in this context that in Aaker's view, brand identity implies a direct promise to customers.

According to Chernatony (1999), identity "is about ethos, aims and values that present a sense of individuality differentiating the brand" (p. 165). From this point of view, the identity characterizes the brand, just like the identity of a person characterizes him or her. This identity differentiates the brand, suggesting that the presence of a brand identity influences the consumer's choice. The brand is directly connected to the process of purchase and use.

Thus, in the views of Kapferer, Aaker, and Chernatony, brand identity can be considered to be the core of the brand upon which all other elements are built (associations, attributes, benefits, promises).

There are also different views on what the essence of the brand is:

Jennifer Aaker has argued that the term brand personality reflects its essence (Aaker, J. 1997). She defines five personality dimensions along which a brand can be defined. The personality dimensions are: Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, and Ruggedness. Kapferer and Azoulay (2003) however, claim that brand personality is part of the brand's identity, and as such, a derivative of the essence of the brand, which should not be confused with the essence itself.

Ellwood (2000) uses the term brand DNA for the core of the brand. From this DNA stem the brand theme, the brand name and the brand identity, in that order. In this school of thought, the term identity is used as representing the outward appearance of the brand. International branding consultancy Interbrand also sees brand identity as the outer layer of the brand: "brand identity is the outward expression of the brand, including its name and visual appearance. The brand's identity is its fundamental means of consumer recognition and symbolizes the brand's differentiation from competitors". In this definition, brand identity is far from the essence of the brand, it is 'only' the outward expression of it. Borja de Morzota (2003b) also adheres to this school. She sees brand identity as "the outward manifestation of the essence of the corporate, product or service brand or brand environment". In her view, brand personality is part of this identity system. It is interesting to note however that apparently, also in Borja de Morzota's definition, there is a brand essence preceding her definition of identity.

This research project is concerned with this essence, whether it's called brand DNA, personality or identity. Although the author feels that Kapferer's view of brand identity is a very accurate description of the essence of the brand, the confusion about the term 'identity' prevents further use of the term in this context. If identity is seen as the essence of the brand by some (Kapferer, Aaker, Chernatony) but only the outward manifestation of the brand by others (Borja de Morzota, Ellwood, Brandchannel.com), the term is insufficiently well-defined to use. The author has no choice but to stick to the descriptive term

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'brand essence', describing the core of the brand from which all other elements are derived. In Brand Driven Innovation, it is the brand's essence that should drive the innovation. Closely related to this brand essence is a term that is well defined, and that most authors seem to agree on: 'brand promise'. The term is used, amongst others, by Kapferer, Aaker, and Chernatony. All three authors imply that the brand in its essence, makes a promise to the prospective customer. Walter Landor, of international strategic branding consultancy Landor, goes even further: "Simply put, a brand is a promise. By identifying and authenticating a product or service it delivers a pledge of satisfaction and quality". The author considers this brand promise a cornerstone of his research: it is this promise that should be fulfilled. And it might be fulfilled through product innovation.

So, having established that there is a brand essence, and that it implies a promise, how do this essence and its promise relate to the consumer?
The most comprehensive way to describe how brands are connected to the consumer is the Brand Touch Point Wheel (Davis and Dunn, 2002). figure 7 shows this touch point wheel.
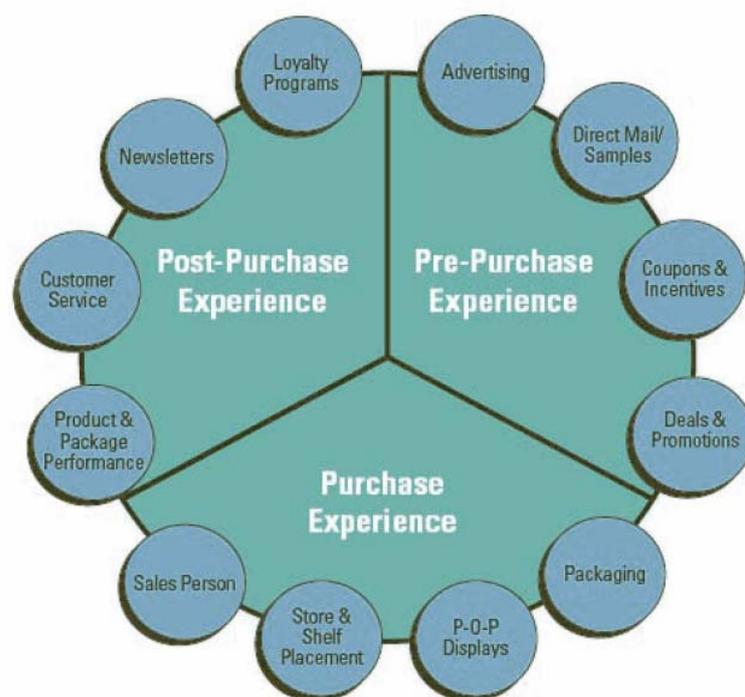
figure 7: the brand touchpoint wheel (Davis and Dunn, 2002)

Although the model is very useful, the author modestly argues that from a product branding point of view it seems rather concise. As can be seen in figure 7, the product is one little cell in the post purchase experience segment of the touch point wheel. But it is clear that the product plays a huge role as brand touch point in all three segments of the wheel. Maybe not in its physical form, but surely present in pre-purchase (product based advertising, word of mouth based on product quality and

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interaction), purchase (trying the product in the store, being attracted by it, comparing it to other products) and post purchase (the product's aesthetics, the interaction with the product, servicing the product etc.).

Wally Olins (1999) establishes the relation between the brand and the consumer through design. He states (like Blaich, 1993, and Cooper 1995, quoted by Österberg, 2002) that there are three design disciplines related to branding: product design, communication design and environment design. These disciplines give the brand its tangible form. In this view, design is the vehicle with which the brand reaches the consumer. Two important conclusions can be drawn from this viewpoint: one is that product design (among other design disciplines) is needed to get the brand across to the consumer, the other is that design management has a vital role to play in the activation of brands. It is the design manager who has the overview of the different design disciplines, enabling him to optimise the design mix to get the brand's essence across, to the mutual benefit of the company and the consumer (Bachman, Fricke, Kelley, 1998). The author concludes this part of the literature review by saying that Brand Driven Innovation is –in the same line of reasoning- a typical Design Management activity: it is aimed at brand activation, and it essentially connects the two design disciplines of communication and product design into an effective and convincing design mix.

2.2.2 What is the role of product innovation in branding and vise versa?

For a long time, the brand was treated as being part of the product. (Urde 1999; cited by Guzman, 2005). The product was the hero of the brand's story and its technical (rational) performance was the key element of the advertising and marketing (Ellwood, 2000). As technology became commoditised, it became harder and harder for the consumer to distinguish between brands, and for brands to position themselves based on technology. Lee Clow, chairman and Chief Creative Officer of TBWA is quoted saying "people bought Nike not because of what they made but because of who they were" (Clifton and Maughan, 2000; cited by Webster, 2003). A different development was the post-war emergence of the service industry, where the product delivered was no longer tangible.

As such, the focus shifted to the brand itself, which encompasses much more than just the product (Ambler and Styles, 1997). This more holistic approach defines a brand as "the promise of the bundles of attributes that someone buys and that provides satisfaction" (Ambler, 1992). Brands became abstract constructs existing separately from the product; the brand became a promise. Interestingly, this shift from product to promise did not lead to differentiation on the shelf. Many product categories worked according to similar product propositions that lacked differentiation (Webster, 2003). At the turn of the twenty first century, branding has homogenized products rather than differentiated them. The Naomi Klein (2000) school of anti-brand sentiments is partly based on this phenomenon. But Klein also argues that brands need more and more advertising and marketing budget to sustain them. A spiral that can't be stopped, and that, according to Klein, leads to a cacophony of

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advertising. This cacophony has two downsides: one is that brands are no longer able to distinguish themselves from competition through advertising, and the other is that consumers become immune to the very brands that try to reach them. Add to this the rise of the internet, facilitating the consumer's quest to look behind the cacophony for facts and figures, and compare products based on personal criteria.

The result is what Lewis and Bridger (2000, cited by Webster, 2003) have baptised the 'new consumer'. The new consumer is independent, informed, and distrustful of anything that does not ring true. This consumer is turning away from the brand, and turning towards the product (Webster, 2003, Lewis and Bridger, 2000, Koene 2003). And brands realise this: the most powerful way for a brand to position itself in the mind of the consumer is the product itself (Koene, 2004, Kapferer, 2004, Peters, 2003). And thus, we have come full circle, with the product in a new lead role: not only does it need to perform (functionally, emotionally, and as a tool for self expression, Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000) but it also needs to support the brand. It makes the brand credible by delivering on its promise, and it captures the brand identity in a tangible form. As such, brands have become two-legged value added systems, where brand and product need each other to be sustainable (Kapferer 2004)

Why do brands need to innovate, and why do they need product innovation?
There is much agreement among scholars on the need for brands to innovate. Kapferer (1992, 2004) considers innovation a durable success factor for brands. It captures the mind of the prospective buyer by presenting "a real, strong expectation which had gone unheeded until then" (Kapferer 1992, 2004: 176). It keeps the brand interesting and fresh by renewing old products, it creates desire in saturated markets and it is a source of competitive advantage.

According to Larry Keeley of the Doblin group (2001), brand excellence comes principally from customer relevance. Relevance is the degree to which the brand has somehow managed to find a dimension of everyday life that some people care about deeply. This suggests that there is a reason for the brand's promise to be delivered, and this reason lies in the wishes and demands of the consumer. From this point of view, the brand needs to innovate to keep its promise to the consumer.

Alexander Koene (2003) is firm in his belief that brands should innovate: "you'd better make sure you're better than your competition, or become better fast.....otherwise you will become relatively worse and your company will eventually perish"(Koene 2003:8).

Österberg even statistically establishes a significant correlation between R&D spending and brand value for 24 sample companies in durable consumer goods (2002)

The author concludes that although much is written on why brands should innovate, it remains unclear how they should go about doing this.

How can brands be innovation drivers?
A closer look at innovation drivers in literature might shed light on this question. Various sources in NPD literature were consulted: According to Ambler and Styles (1997), technology, competition, and

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consumer trends or needs are the traditional drivers for product innovation. Changes in one or several of these dimensions cause the company to react by means of product innovation. This view tends to stigmatize product innovation as a very reactive discipline. Everything around the company changes, so it has to innovate to stay relevant. Roozenburg and Eekels (1998) also name external and/or internal changes as the main drivers for product innovation. In their model however, the search for these changes and their translation in ideas for new products is described as an active process, that's part of NPD methodology. Crawford and Di Benedetto (2006) talk about opportunity identification as the process of scouting for direction in product innovation. This implies a more proactive attitude towards innovation drivers: scouting for opportunities, rather than reacting to inevitable changes. Crawford and Di Benedetto name various examples of what could drive innovation: customer needs, technological breakthroughs, decreasing margins/sales, environmental issues, changes in regulation, underutilized or new resources, emerging trends, etc. (pg. 58, 59).
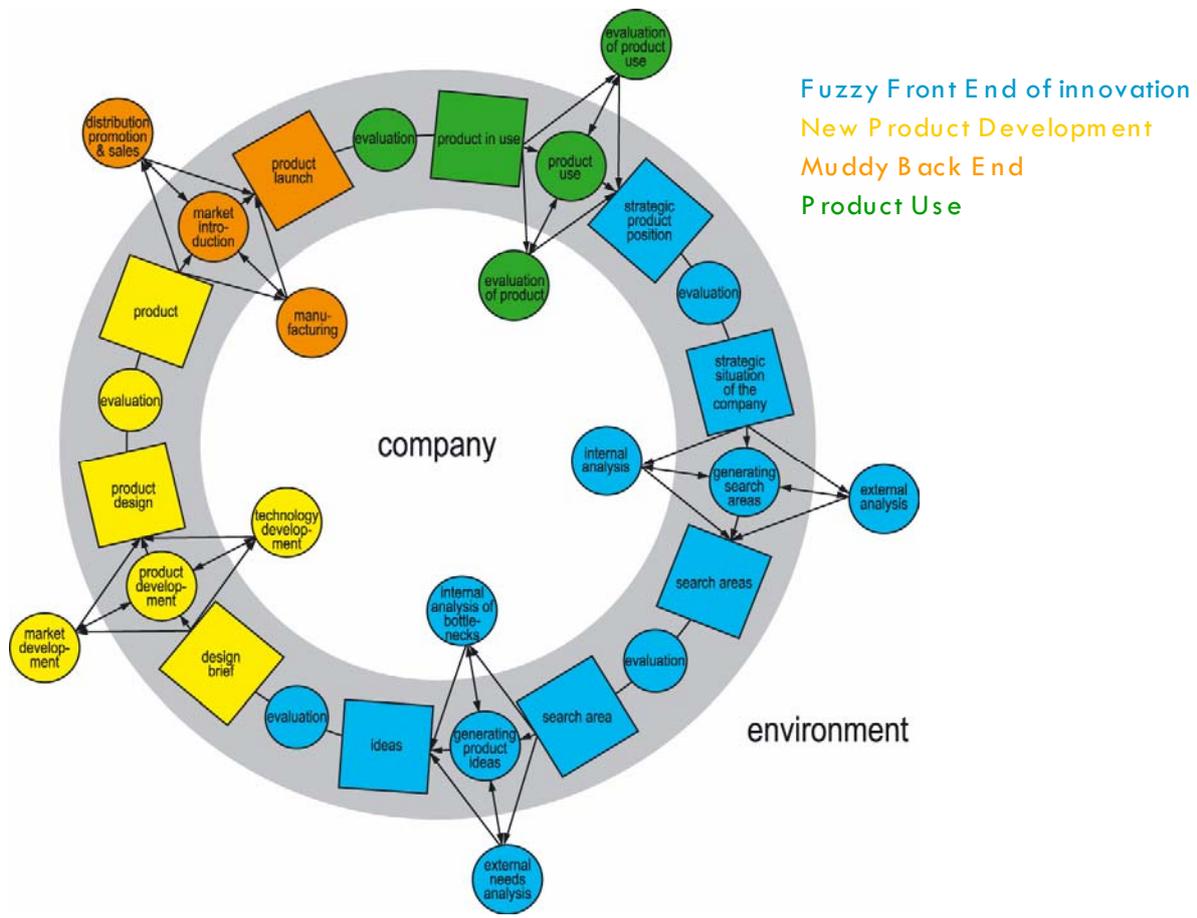

figure 8: the Delft Innovation Model, Buijs and Valkenburg, 2005

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Buijs and Valkenburg (2005) have an even more proactive view on what drives innovation. In their Delft Innovation Model (figure 8), they distinguish a discrete (first) phase in the NPD process, being the phase called 'setting the course'. Through internal and external analysis and synthesis (Buijs talks about SWOT synthesis rather than analysis) a company creates 'search areas' in which opportunities for innovation can be found. This conscious creation of opportunities is an essential and proactive part of Buijs and Valkenburg's model. Thus it can be concluded that a proactive attitude towards opportunity creation is gaining ground in the discourse on what drives innovation. Companies who merely react to changes will be doomed to be market followers. But would it not be logical in increasingly competitive marketplaces to let unique internal strengths be the driver for innovations, rather than external opportunities and threats that are more or less the same for your competitors? Would the brand –in this line of reasoning- not be the perfect proactive innovation driver? To the author's knowledge, no explicit mention is made of the brand being put to use in this way (although Montague (1999) comes close by introducing a model where brand and product are developed side by side, mutually driving each other).

An interesting view of want drives product innovation is posed by Schultz and Hatch (2003), and earlier by Abratt (1989). Here, NPD is seen as an effective tool to bridge the gap between the company's identity and its image. Ideally, this gap is as small as possible. The company conveys its identity to its consumers by means of products, people, places and communication (Kapferer, 2004). What the consumer perceives is influenced by the presence of competition and noise. The image in the consumers mind will be different form the identity set forth by the company. Or, as Franzen and Bouwman (2001) put it, there is a gap between the ideal internal image and the real external image. NPD can bridge this gap: it can alter the image the consumer has of the brand by confronting him with new products. If this process is managed well, the company can guide the image by which it is perceived towards its ideal internal identity.

The author concludes that this places the product between the identity and the image, connecting the two, and pulling them together. But this in turn suggests that there are in fact two gaps (based on Schultz and Hatch 2003): one between the identity and the product, and one between the product and the image. Figure 9 shows what both these gaps mean and why they should be as small as possible.

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identity–product gap and
image–product gap: bad news

identity–product match but
image–product gap: product
not in line with consumer
expectations

identity–product gap but
image–product match: product
not in line with corporate culture
and resources

identity–product match and
image–product match: product
in line with corporate culture
and resources, and consumer
expectations

figure 9: NPD closes the image identity gap

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2.2.3 What methodology for Brand Driven Innovation is available?

The search for existing methodology describing how brand essence should be translated to product innovations has not led to concrete findings. Some knowledge can be gained from case studies: in a case study of Indian watch manufacturer Titan Industries (Bhat, Bowonder, 2001), the experience of interweaving brand reputation, organisational and technological innovation is discussed. The authors stress that brand reputation and innovation influence each other in a 'virtuous cycle' (somewhat comparable to that of Montague (1999). They also discuss how brand reputation and innovation work together across the value chain (Porter, 1985; cited by Bhat, Bowonder, 2001).

A different case study discusses how brand and product development work together at Master Lock (Zaccai and Heppner 2002). In this case study, the development of reliable products is clearly seen as fulfilment of the brand promise. Also interesting is how innovation is seen as essential part of the brand identity: the brand is innovative in its essence, and therefore it innovates.

The author concludes that although existing case studies like this offer a great opportunity to see how innovation and branding are approached by real life companies, they don't offer sufficient insight in underlying methodologies. In itself, they don't lead to a useful generalisation concerning Brand Driven Innovation.

Vossoughi (1999) describes a process of building a brand by developing a design language for the brand's products. The process starts by understanding the brand's attributes. It then goes on to translate this understanding into visual and physical forms. The third step is to extract common principles and translate these into design guidelines. This translation of abstract values into physical attributes leading to design guidelines will help designers, albeit only in the aesthetical part of their work.

Of a completely different nature is the approach called Comprehensive Brand Presentation (CBP) (Haynes, Lackman and Guskey, 1999). This approach links with Total Quality Management efforts to generate a quality improvement process. This process is aimed at "what the firm says as well as what the firm does": it tries to minimize the discrepancy between the two. "The result should be that communications to and from the marketplace are reflected in the physical products and services delivered by the business". (Haynes et al. 1999: 300) "With CBP, every exposure the customer has with that product, through either actual experience or messages received, reinforces the brand image that the company intends to achieve" (Haynes et al. 1999: 287). What's very interesting about this method is:

a. that it is an actual method: it provides a complete and workable framework, and as such it is unique in this field, at least to the author's current knowledge.

b. It provides a theoretical foundation for the concept of brand consistency: it tries to align the company's identity with the image it chooses to portray and the image it actually portrays at the

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consumer. The authors are clear on the product's role in this process, and as such, they support the notion that 'the product should fulfil the brand promise'.

The article offers a framework for the way the brand is presented to ensure a consistent image. Although the authors establish that there should be a strong relationship between what the product 'does' and what the brand 'promises', they do *not* provide clarity on how to connect the two in practice. We will have to look further.

In theory, line and brand extensions could offer some interesting discourse with regard to the subject at hand. An extension of a brand is in fact a form of Brand Driven Innovation: the brand drives an active step towards a new product (category). Although the goal is not fulfilling the parent brand's promise through the new product, but rather leveraging the parent brand's added value in new categories, in terms of process there are striking similarities with BDI: as is the case with BDI, one has to consciously translate the brand's essence into new product ideas that match this essence and follow logically from it. A brief research of some writing on brand extensions follows:

First some definitions: brand extensions involve the use of an established brand name to enter a new product category (Aaker and Keller, 1990). Line extensions, in contrast, involve the use of an established brand name for a new offering in the same product category (Reddy et al., 1994; cited by Ambler and Styles 1997).

Aaker and Keller (1990) mention the 'fit' between the brand and the extension. This concept of 'fit' is interesting: it describes how a certain brand (identity) matches with a certain product. It appears that if this match is absent, the new product is less successful (Sunde and Brodie, 1993; cited by Ambler and Styles 1997). But what exactly is this 'fit'? What determines what kind of new products a brand can credibly match with? And if these determinants have been discovered, how can they be put to use to actively generate matching new products for existing brands? These questions remain unanswered by Ambler and Styles (1997), although their article is of great use for gaining insight in the process of brand extension decisions.

Other authors on the subject of brand extensions (Broniarczyk and Alba, 1994, Park et al., 1991, Aaker and Keller, 1990, Loken & Roedder John, 1993, Bhat and Reddy, 2001, Glynn and Brodie 1998) diligently describe and measure after-the-fact phenomena such as consumer perception of brand extensions and perceived fit between the parent brand and the extension. Or they describe the do's and don'ts of brand extension purely in terms of desired brand attributes and qualities needed to successfully extend a brand. There is no process description in brand extension literature known to the author, in which it is explained how one can arrive at a new product category starting from an existing brand. As such, no new insights can be gained in this corner of the field, other than a repeated confirmation that the product and the brand must 'fit' and that they mutually benefit from each other.

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2.3 Preliminary conclusions based on literature review

1. A brand has an essence upon which derived elements of the brands are founded. The nomenclature for the essence and is derivatives differs from author to author (brand identity, brand DNA, brand personality).

2. Frequently associated with this brand essence is the concept of brand promise. The brand promise can be seen as the consumer expectation that the company explicitly or implicitly triggers through the brand.

3. The fulfilment of brand promise is a *sine qua non* in modern branding. Various macro-economic developments have led to this. Successful brands look for ways in which to fulfil their promise to the consumer.

4. In literature, the potential of products to fulfil the brand's promise is frequently mentioned. What's more, products are often cited as the number one medium through which the fulfilment of brand promise can be realised most successfully.

5. This implies that companies that develop new products should keep in mind that these products should fulfil the brand promise. They should even make this fulfilment of brand promise a number one priority. The author refers to the process of developing new products based on the brand's essence as Brand Driven Innovation.

6. Brand Driven Innovation is a design management activity. It bridges the gap between strategy and design, and it connects various design disciplines.

7. Brand Driven Innovation as a subject for research and academic publications is new. As such, existing literature is mainly focussed on describing expected benefits. Some case studies are available, also mainly focussing on benefits. Several articles on brand extensions (a form of Brand Driven Innovation) measure the effect of new products on the brand and vise versa, but not how to gain these benefits.

8. To the author's knowledge, no Brand Driven Innovation methodology has been published yet.

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Chapter 3: Primary research methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the primary research phase of the project. It aims to shed light on the chosen methodology, and to connect this choice to the outcomes of the literature review. When this connection is established, the chosen method is described in more detail.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 primary research goal

The literature review has provided valuable insights in what branding and innovation is, and how they are connected. Looking at the goals for this project (paragraph 1.3.1), what is clearly missing in the literature is a clear step by step method to help the target group (paragraph 1.3.2) develop product innovations that fulfill the brand's promise. The goal of the primary research phase can thus be described as follows:

To disclose whether a method for Brand Driven Innovation exists in business practice, and if not, to gather sufficient relevant information to develop such a method.

3.2.2 primary research method

The author chose a dual method for his primary research:

1.   16 interviews. These interviews took place in the period from June 15th 2005 to November 16th 2005, at various locations in the Netherlands. 13 persons were interviewed in a one on one personal setting, three were consulted over a longer period of time, during close cooperation on a project or course (Mellina Zevenhuizen, Jan Buijs and Guido Stompff).
2.   a practical student assignment by 70 Industrial Design students, in the first year of their Master of Strategic Product Design at the Delft University of Technology.

3.3. Justification of the research method

From the statement of the primary research goal it can be concluded that the nature of the information resulting from the primary research should be practical. It sets out to either find or develop a method that can be used in business practice. This has led the author to consult sources in business practice. More specifically, he has consulted sources who are involved in either branding, product innovation or

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both. It can also be concluded from the goal that the primary research is in essence the search for a method. This has led the author to consult several sources in the methodologically strong academic field of new product development, and several sources in the world of NPD and brand consulting. Finally, it can be concluded from the goal that the primary research is exploratory in nature, but at the same time aspiring to result in a concrete, workable method. In this sense, the research is initially very broad (is there a method?), after which it focuses sharply (what should a useful method look like?). This shift in focus requires flexibility on the researcher's part. While consulting the primary sources, the questions asked depend largely on the flow of the conversation and the answers given. This has led the author to choose the medium of personal one to one interviews.

A fourth choice in primary research methodology is not so much based on the research goal as on serendipity: during the course of the research project, the author was given the opportunity to teach a class of 70 master students at the school of Industrial Design, Delft University of Technology, under professor Jan Buijs MSc Phd. The course focuses on what Buijs calls Branded New Product Development. It describes the strategic relationship between branding and new product development, and trains students to understand the workings of these two poles. The primary research part the author was allowed to use was the final assignment of this course.

3.4 Sample of companies and people

The interviewees are from different parts of the corporate world, with different demographic backgrounds and different functions. The statistics are as shown in table 1:

Professional environment:	Academic 29%	Business 71%
Nature of business:	Consulting 33%	OEM's 67%
Size of business (employees):	‹100 50%, 100-1000 33%, ›1000 17%	
Gender:	Male 75%	Female 25%
Nationality:	Dutch 94%	Finnish: 6%
Average age:	38	
Original area of expertise:	Product development 56%	Branding 44%
Function: professor:	13%	
Function: assistant professor:	13%	
Function: design manager:	31%	
Function: marketing manager:	19%	
Function: Design manager/partner	19%	
General manager:	6%	

table 1: interviewee statistics

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The statistics show a well balanced palette in the most important areas: professional environment, nature of business, original area of expertise and function. More large businesses will have to be involved in further research.

The students that have done the assignment are less varied in their demographics, although they are from all over the world: nationalities are Dutch, German, Turkish, Brazilian, Colombian, Swedish, Danish, Australian, Chinese, and Indonesian. The statistics are shown in table 2:

Bachelor background:	Industrial design 70%	other 30%
Average age:	21	
Gender:	Male 45%	Female 55%
Nationality:	Dutch 65%	other: 35%

table 2: student statistics

3.5 The research questions in the interview context

The research questions that were presented in the introduction chapter (paragraph 1.2.2) have been refined to accommodate the findings of the literature review and the goal of the primary research. Thus, the interviews revolved around a new set of questions, that were however closely related to the initial research questions:

3.5.1 What are brand and brand promise and how do they relate to the consumer?

In the interviews this question was rephrased as follows:
1. how is your brand defined (by use of a model, a manual, persona's and such)?
2. do you use an explicit brand promise?
3. how do you go about getting the brand across to your consumer?
4. how do you go about fulfilling the brand promise?
5. In later interviews, it appeared to be useful to also acquire information on the position of the brand in the organization. Who 'owns' the brand, who is responsible for its development and its relationship with the consumer, is the brand a tool or a source?

In a condensed form: In your company, how is the brand defined, and how is it used?
This research question was aimed at the business practitioners within the group of interviewees.

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3.5.2 What is the role of product innovation in branding and vise versa?

In the primary research context this question was rephrased as follows:
1. are branding and product innovation connected in your company?
2. If so, how? Is brand an input to the innovation process?
3. How do employees with a brand oriented task cooperate with employees with an NPD oriented task?
4. How is NPD organized within your company (departments, responsibilities, reporting structure etc)?
5. how is brand development and brand management organized within your company (departments, responsibilities, reporting structure etc)?

In a condensed form: In your organization, how are the disciplines of branding and NPD organized, and how do they co-operate?
This research question was also mainly aimed at the business practitioners within the interviewee group, although from a more theoretical point of view the academics certainly contributed to the insights regarding this question.

3.5.3 What methodology for Brand Driven Innovation is available?

In the primary research context the question was rephrased as follows:
1. Do you know of any methods regarding Brand Driven Innovation (either in literature or in practice)?
2. How do you go about the process of product innovation?
3. Where and how does brand come into this process?
4. How do you go about the process of brand development?
5. Where and how does NPD come into this process?
6. What would you require of a method for Brand Driven Innovation?

In a condensed form: what methods for BDI do you know of or use?
This question was asked to check the validity of the author's findings in the literature review. As such, the question was aimed at the academics within the group of interviewees. But it was also asked to find out whether best practice methods (i.e. non-research based, non-published methods) were available and used in a business context. In this form the question played a strong role in the business interviews.

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3.6 the research questions in the student assignment context

The 70 Strategic Product Design master students were given the following assignment by the author:

1. Gather models from NPD and branding literature (Kapferer, 2004 and Crawford and Di Benendetto, 2006 were compulsory books)
2. Choose one branding model and one NPD model you find relevant.
3. Find explanations for the terms used in the models, in literature
4. Prepare a short presentation on the models you chose, in which you argument your choice, and explain the relevance of the models.
5. Present your chosen models to the group and critically assess them.
6. In pairs, discuss your models and their applicability, and how the four models could be integrated into one BNPD model.
7. Integrate (the ideas behind) the four models into one new Branded New Product Development model.
8. Apply the model on a product brand of your choice, and describe how the model would help to come to a strategic BNPD advice for this brand.
9. Present the model and the case in a 10 minute presentation.

The students formed 33 teams with which they had 5 weeks to work on this assignment. The most interesting results are shown in appendix 3.

As can be seen in the assignment, the students weren't specifically given the task to find a model for BDI. For reasons of educational interest, their quest was defined in a broader sense: to connect the discourse on branding with that on NPD. However, to assure an interesting focus and the relevance for this research project, two constraints were given:

1. By asking the students to show their insights by means of a model, their design skills, visual thinking and sense of metaphor were triggered. In a special workshop, the students were trained in the value of modeling, and especially in the development of inspiring and 'user-friendly' models. A distinction was made between descriptive models (describing a situation, the model being a tool for understanding) and prescriptive models (mapping a process, the model being a tool for action). In light of the research project, a preference for prescriptive models was communicated to the students. This way, the author hoped to stimulate the students to come with BDI models explaining working processes.
2. By asking the students to apply the model to a case, they were challenged to develop a model that was applicable. The case study helped the students translate insights regarding branding and NPD into strategic advice.

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This kind of student assignment is especially interesting as a research tool because the students are very capable of thinking 'out of the box'. Their lack of practical experience translates in a complete disregard for disciplinary boundaries. They don't see why branding and NPD *shouldn't* be connected. As industrial design students, this course was their first encounter with branding. Their fresh approach and natural curiosity led to some fine models and refreshing insights (see also appendix 3 and paragraph 4.3)

Summarized, the research question regarding the student assignment was: what insights and methods will the students discover by combining models from branding and NPD literature into a new model?

3.7 Limitations of the research method

The main disadvantage of the chosen research method is that it doesn't provide for a rich collection of detailed practical BDI case studies. Such a collection of case studies would be highly valuable for the discourse on BDI: it would be firmly grounded in practice, it would describe full processes, from brand development to product introduction, it would filter out the individual's viewpoint, it would gain a more integrated understanding of the BDI process, and it would gain insight in the extent to which different processes are successful.

Based on this thought, if more time were available, a different methodological approach would have been chosen, namely the Grounded Theory Methodology developed by the two sociologists Glaser and Strauss (1967; cited by Amber and Styles, 1997). Simply put, the method is aimed at finding underlying regularities in a set of different cases (Yin, 2003).

The reason that, within the context of this half year project, a different approach was chosen, is twofold:

1. Good comprehensive case studies are hard to come by. Although it appears that BDI is more firmly rooted in practice than in theory, not very many companies explicitly involve the brand's essence in the NPD process yet. And if they do, it is in a rather intuitive manner. Many cases would be needed to yield applicable results.

2. Performing many case studies is a time consuming business. Within the half year time frame of this research project, only a few could be examined sufficiently in-depth.

Most interviews with business practitioners are case based to the extent that actual product/brand examples were discussed. Although no full BDI processes were revealed in case study format, the interview methodology enabled the author to at least grasp the essence of the different cases. Within the 6 month time frame, a broad exploration of many viewpoints was preferred to an in depth study of only a few cases.

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3.8 Conclusion

The primary research phase has a specific goal that stems from the result of the literature review. The research questions and methodology were tailored to suit this goal. Although the chosen methodology isn't perfect, within the constraints of this project, it is the best available. It leads to insight in how BDI is tackled in business practice, and in how inexperienced students with a 'healthy lack of tradition' in the subject, come to grips with linking branding and product innovation.

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Chapter 4: Analysis of the primary research data

4.1 Introduction

An account of the 16 interviews can be found in appendix I. This chapter draws relevant conclusions from the interviews and organizes these conclusions according to the primary research questions (see paragraph 3.5)

4.2 Analysing the interview data

4.2.1 Interview findings on research question 1

In your company, how is the brand defined, and how is it used?

1. The most important interview conclusion with regards to this question is the following: the way the brand is defined determines to a large extent how easy it is for product designers to develop product innovations that fulfil the brand's promise. It may not be the design manager's task to change the content of the brand, but he can certainly work on the way it is captured and presented to the product designers. Some interviewees did some interesting suggestions regarding this new brand format (bundled in chapter 6).
2. Another important insight is the fact that people who have to work with the brand need to feel a form of co-ownership of the brand. This sense of co-ownership can be stimulated by involving people (in the case of BDI: product designers) who have to work with the brand in the brand development, or at least in the process of tailoring the brand to their specific needs (tailoring its format, see conclusion 1)

The full set of conclusions concerning this first research question is listed in appendix 2.

4.2.2 Interview findings on research question 2

In your organization, how are the disciplines of branding and NPD organized, and how do they co-operate?

1. Brand Driven Innovation presupposes the strategic placement of the brand *before* the product. The brand in this view is derived directly from corporate strategy (see figure 10). This holds true for non-corporate brands as well, if one replaces the word company with the word brand, and the word brand with the word sub brand.
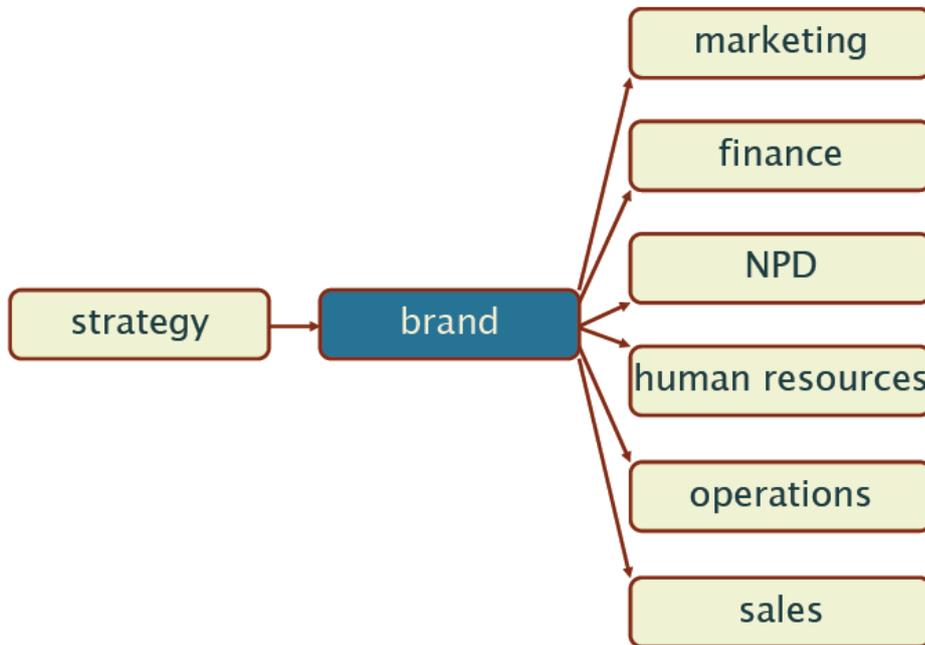
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figure 10: the position of the brand in the organisation.

2. In companies where brand is placed in such a central, strategic position, the brand is often a merging of the company's strategy with its vision, identity (heritage and such) and consumer insights (see figure 11).
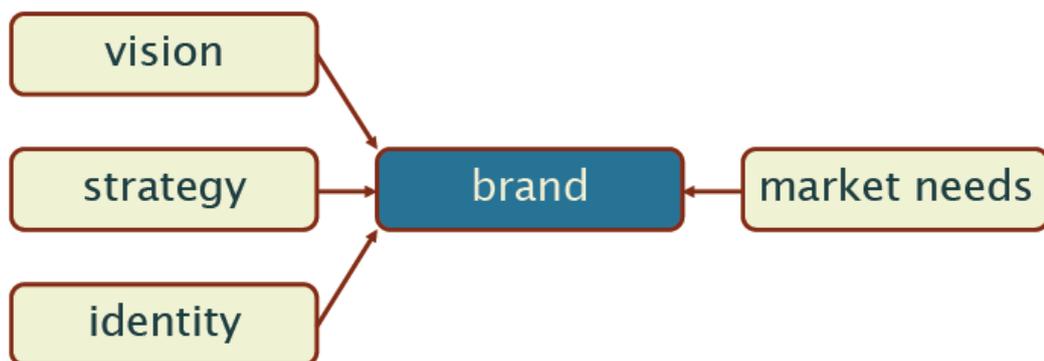
figure 11: the brand as derived from vision, strategy, identity and market needs

Not every company places the brand in such a central position. Whether this is a bad thing or not is not relevant to this research project. Suffice it to say that for Brand Driven Innovation the brand has to be given a leading role in which it can in fact sensibly drive product innovation.

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3. The organization of the brand and new product development are important. Putting the two
    disciplines together very early in the NPD project (at the FFE) helps brand people and product people
    work together, thus making BDI possible. Brand and NPD have to be close together in the
    organization. They have to have the same 'agenda'. If they are managed by the same person, who
    also embodies the brand and infuses the organization with a culture that is aligned with the brand,
    BDI could become a very intuitive and logical way of working.

The full set of conclusions concerning this second research question is listed in appendix 2.

4.2.3 Interview findings on research question 3

What methods for BDI do you know of or use?

1. A BDI project could start by briefing the product designers on the basis of the brand alone. This can
    lead to a large collection of concepts, that can subsequently be filtered through more practical
    criteria (can we make it, can we distribute it, etc). This is a reversed order compared to classic NPD
    process (Roozenburg & Eekels, 1998) where a full program of requirements is drafted before the
    idea generation starts.
2. No complete methods were mentioned but a lot of techniques were. What these techniques had in
    common was that they put effort in making the brand (as it existed in the organization) more
    concrete, usable or inspiring for product designers. These techniques are listed in figure 12.

Use a bull's eye, to work from the brand's
essence to product ideas

Start generating product ideas with only
The brand in mind: no constraints

Focus on solving those
concerns that align with your brand

Use signature design elements with
brand related functionality

Use character boards and mood
boards, not only for aesthetics.
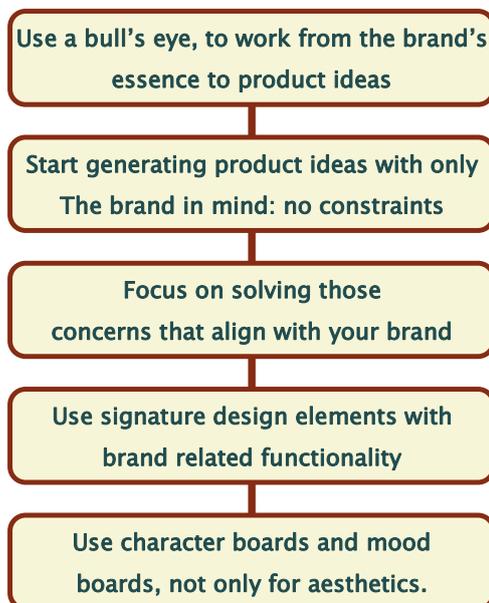
figure 12: techniques for Brand Driven Innovation

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3. BDI is only half of the process, Innovation Driven Branding (IDB) being the other half. IDB is the process where new products are developed to influence the brand's position in the market, image or content. Both processes play a vital role in product companies. A process model for Brand Driven Innovation could also work (the other way around) for Innovation Driven Branding (see appendix 5).

The full set of conclusions concerning this third research question is listed in appendix 2.

4.3 Analysing the student work

Looking at the student work in general, a number of things are worth discussing:

1. Many models focused on describing the concept of branding and the position of the product or NPD therein. Apparently, the subject matter was so new to the students that the relationship between the brand and the product was enough of an insight to them to base their model on it. These models are interesting, but not relevant in the search for a method for BDI.
2. Many other models focused on brand positioning through NPD. Apparently, the students were fascinated by the fact that NPD can be used to reposition the brand. Rightly so, but they were not sufficiently focused on the method *behind* this use of NPD, to be valuable to this research.
3. Yet other models revolved around the notion that NPD can close the 'image-identity gap', i.e. the difference between intended identity and perceived image. Again, describing the fact that NPD is capable of closing this gap is interesting. But the real unanswered question is *how* one should go about doing this.
4. Overall, many models existed of a collection of specific branding and NPD models, with arrows between them indicating the 'new' connection. These models typically look very complex and cluttered. It is clear that although this approach may lead to a working method, it will not lead to an easy to use insightful tool that will inspire brand and product designers.

The author made a selection of the student work that gave the most new insights regarding BDI. Looking at this work (see appendix 3) a number of conclusions can be drawn.

1. The models show a rather holistic approach to the Branding/NPD realm (Adank/Beekman, Del Castillo/van Oeveren). The students tend not to focus on a specific part of the problem field. An advantage of this holistic approach is that it sheds light on the various roles and relationships of the different actors in the field. This leads to models that are highly inspiring and insightful, and as such, are very useful at project start up, or at break out sessions. They do not however prescribe how to change or influence these relationships. The lack of focus of some models will thus prevent them from being used in daily branding and NPD decision making.

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2. The students feel the need to rephrase the brand before it is used as input for NPD (Wuts/Pratama, Del Castillo/van Oeveren). This rephrasing is very comparable to the need for a new 'brand format' that was uncovered during the interviews (Hoekstra, Stompff, Koene etc, see appendix 1). The students are very adept at finding inspiring ways to present the brand to the organization, especially Wuts and Pratama offer a convincing brand format.

3. The students present their insights with the help of great metaphors (Iliopoulos/Sundberg, Beekman/Adank). Although the author stimulated visual thinking and the use of design skills during the construction of the models, he did not quite expect this metaphoric virtuosity. There is a risk of not being taken seriously with these models in a business situation, however imaginative they are. A good model strikes the right balance between simplicity, straightforwardness and imaginative qualities.

4. Three models actually hint at a possible method for BDI. (Bonsel, Del Caro Secomandi/Streubel/Delfgaauw and Del Castillo/van Oeveren). The three approaches are completely different however. Bonsel arrives at innovative concepts by looking at incremental form/need/technology shifts within a product portfolio. Not truly brand driven, but very appropriate for filling product portfolio gaps. Del Caro Secomandi, Streubel and Delfgaauw approach the innovative product concept form two sides: brand values and consumer values. The product is the tangible manifestation of the junction of these values, and is arrived at by an intelligent step by step translation of the values. This approach is applicable as a BDI method model, although it needs more precision in the consecutive steps. Del Castillo and van Oeveren first 'rephrase' the brand into sensory qualities. Buijs' NPD process (2005) is then organised around this sensory brand, infusing each NPD stage with internal and external information that is filtered through this brand. Although sometimes a bit fuzzy and complex, the model does provide designers with a workable tool. Especially the sensory translation of the brand will help designers to generate innovative product concepts that fulfil the brand's promise.

5. As a general conclusion, it must be remarked that out of 33 student teams, only 3 developed a BDI method model. (for one of those 3, Bonsel, this method aspect was a side effect). The author refrains from concluding that BDI is the least interesting aspect of the brand-product relationship, and prefers to hint at the possibility that BDI is rather advanced for these students: one has to come to grips with the players in the field first. Only then can one start to influence these players in such a way that they produce manageable results.

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4.4 Preliminary conclusions based on primary research

Adding the results of the interviews and the student assignment, the following general primary research conclusion can be drawn:

Although the search for a well defined and applicable working method for BDI has yielded no results, the primary research has proved to be very fruitful in terms of yielding ingredients for such a method. An overview of these ingredients will be discussed in chapter 5.
Furthermore, the primary research has shown both the relevance and the practical complexity of Brand Driven Innovation. Connecting the fields of branding and NPD is a very young phenomenon. Actually basing product innovations on brand essence is taking place purely intuitively, if at all.

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Chapter 5: conclusions and implications

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the two research phases will be combined. The research questions will be answered one by one, after which a general conclusion regarding the research problem is drawn. Because this section is central to the entire research project, it is kept concise. For a more elaborate discussion of the research results, the reader is referred to chapters 2 and 4 and appendix 2.

5.2 Answering the research questions

5.2.1 Answering research question 1

The first research question reads as follows: what is brand and brand promise and how are they related to the consumer? For the primary research this question was rephrased as follows: In your company, how is the brand defined, and how is it used?

The 'Brand 'in Brand Driven Innovation stands for brand essence. This essence is described in different ways in literature and practice. One common attribute can be distinguished: the brand essence implies a promise to the consumer. It is the fulfilment of this promise BDI sets out to accomplish.

The brand is not uniformly defined in literature nor in organisations. One common problem with the brand within the organisation is that it is frequently defined in such a way that it suits only the purposes of marketing and communication. Different functions in the organisation 'use' the brand in a different way, and expect different things from it. This holds true for NPD especially: for product designers to be able to use the brand as input for the NPD process, the brand must be redefined using a format suitable for that specific purpose.

5.2.2 Answering research question 2

The second research question was: what is the role of product innovation in branding and vise versa? For the primary research this question was rephrased as follows: In your organization, how are the disciplines of branding and NPD organized, and how do they co-operate?

The brand traditionally finds its way to the consumer through the company's communication efforts. But more and more, the product becomes the carrier for the brand values. The product takes on the role as the medium through which brand identity is sent and brand image is established. A such, New Product Development plays a vital role in closing the image-identity gap.

The place of the brand in the organization varies widely. The brand can be found in the marketing department, where it is used as a communication tool, it can be found among the many tools to implement strategies, or it is found at the core of the organization, at boardroom level or even on the

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work floor, where it functions as the guiding principle behind everything the company does. In the case of BDI, where the brand drives NPD, it has to occupy a central role in the organization.

It is very important that the functions of branding and NPD -traditionally separated in the organization- get together at a very early stage in the BDI process and keep working together. Product designers must help define the new brand format: In order to be able to work with the brand as *input*, one must work with the brand *itself* first. But by the same logic, it is essential to involve brand designers in the later NPD process. Only through this personal involvement a true synergy between the branding and NPD disciplines can be established.

Traditional brand managers or innovation managers miss the overview and tools required to manage this merging of disciplines BDI addresses. Design management, in its capacity to link design disciplines and connect them to corporate strategy, is highly suitable to manage the BDI process.

5.2.3 Answering research question 3

The third research question was: what methodology for brand driven innovation is available? For the primary research this question was rephrased as follows: what methods for BDI do you know of or use?

The research has shown that there is no well defined and applicable working method for BDI. There are however many promising techniques that could contribute to the development of such a method. The most promising techniques are:

1. Start the NPD process with just the brand, involve other requirements later
2. Use a step by step method to guide the designer from the abstract brand to the tangible product
3. Find a new format for the brand that inspires and helps product designers.
4. Involve brand and product designers early on in the process and keep them involved.
5. Generate product concepts based on fulfilling the promise implied in the new brand format.
6. Filter these fulfillment concepts using traditional NPD selection criteria.
7. Realize that the process works both ways: the brand influences the new product (BDI) but the new product also influences the brand (IDB).
8. Realize that BDI is only relevant if the brand is relevant and answers real consumer needs.

5.3 Overall conclusions

Lets us first repeat the statement of the problem this research has set out to solve:

How can the brand be used to generate innovative product concepts that fulfil the brand's promise?

In short, the research has yielded the following answers to this question:

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1. The brand must be defined in terms of its essence, and in terms of the promise from the company to the consumer that is implied in the brand essence. This promise must be made explicit, because it is this promise that BDI sets out to fulfill.

2. To be able to fulfill this promise, a new brand format is required. This new brand format should be defined by brand designers and product designers, coached and facilitated by a design manager.

3. This new brand format should have the following attributes:
   a. it should be understandable for product designers
   b. it should make the brand's promise explicit
   c. it should invite and inspire brand and product designers to come up with new product interaction concepts
   d. it should invite and inspire brand and product designers to come up with new product functionality concepts
   e. it should in general increase brand usability for all the people working with the brand.

4. The position of the brand within the organization must be central and leading for it to be used as input for the NPD process. This means the brand must be based on the company's vision, identity, strategy and market insight, and that it must be actively endorsed by management in every day working practice.

5. Early and continuing involvement of both the branding and NPD disciplines is essential, preferably in the form of designers from both disciplines, since designers have the ability to think visually and to bridge the gap between abstract and concrete. An important step in the BDI process is the involvement of product designers in the definition of the brand's new format.

6. After having defined a new format for the brand, designers must be involved in extensive brainstorming to generate product concepts in which the brand's promise is fulfilled through product interaction and functionality

7. The 6 research answers mentioned above constitute the diverging part of BDI. A next step should be to filter the generated product concepts to arrive at a selection that is viable. This selection process is common in NPD processes, and implies the definition of a set of criteria to which the concepts must comply.

8. The selected product concepts enter the 'normal' NPD process, to be developed in to products and launched on the market. This part of the process is extensive and important, but falls outside of the scope of this research.

9. Brand Driven innovation generates products that fulfill the brands promise. BDI is based on the brand purposely influencing the nature of the product. But the opposite is also valid: one can use the development of a new product to purposely influence the brand. NPD is a great tool to change a brand's direction. The author has called this process Innovation Driven Branding, or IDB. This process is explained in appendix 5.

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10. BDI is a design management activity in that it connects branding and product innovation to corporate strategy, and it merges the disciplines of product design and brand design.

11. There is no known method for BDI at this point but intelligent use of the techniques mentioned in paragraph 5.2.3 and the research answers mentioned above are likely to lead to an effective and fruitful BDI process. In fact, as is shown in chapter 6, sufficient valuable insights have been gathered to suggest a BDI method model to be tested in professional practice.

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Chapter 6: synthesis

6.1 Introduction

The previous five chapters have led to a series of conclusions that, in itself, offer a possible solution to the problem as stated in chapter 1. One can 'use the brand to generate innovative product concepts that fulfil the brand's promise', by adhering to the guidelines and research answers of the previous chapter. This however leaves the author, being a designer himself, somewhat unsatisfied. A grocery list does not make a great meal: it takes creative effort to put the ingredients together in such a way that value is generated.

The list of conclusions of the previous chapter, although very promising and based on thorough research, is, in fact, such a grocery list: it does not add up to a working method.

The author has taken the liberty in this sixth chapter to add an epilogue of synthesis to the previous data analysis phase. This synthesis phase is no longer strictly based on primary or secondary research data. It is a creative effort, and a personal interpretation. It is the author's attempt at dealing with the data like a designer, visualising it into a workable model that sets out to actually inspire designers rather than to merely provide them with a list of things to keep in mind.

The author has encountered a lot of processes that hint at BDI. The next challenge is to define a BDI *method*. The difference between method and process is that the former tries to generalise and provide a guideline at the beginning, while the latter is the physical manifestation of a sequence of activities, sometimes based on a method but more often not. There is always a process in a sequence of activities, but not always a method (based on a discussion with Norbert Roozenburg, October 2005).

6.2 the Brand Driven Innovation method

While the conclusions to the research were taking shape, a visual metaphor of the BDI process started to develop in the author's mind. In essence, the visual metaphor captures two essential elements of the BDI process:

1. that BDI is an incremental, step by step process, starting with the brand and ending with the new product concept.
2. that the BDI process always works the other way around as well: the new product concept influences the brand. This influence is purposely used in Innovation Driven Branding.

This step by step, two way motion is captured with great clarity in the desk gadget featuring the row of polished stainless steel balls on nylon strings (see figure 13). When a ball is lifted and dropped, the impetus is mysteriously transferred –obviously through the middle ones, there is no other way- and the last one jumps out, almost as high as the first one was lifted. On its way back, the last ball becomes the first, and the magic trick is repeated in the opposite direction. On and on in a magical symmetry that is

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fascinating and elegant. The sequence seems to be endless but this is an illusion: in due time, new energy is required to lift the first ball.

Each ball represents a stage in the process, the first ball being the brand, and the last ball being the new product concept. When the first ball is lifted and let loose, the BDI process is set in motion. But as the last ball is propelled outward, it returns and becomes the first. Or, if one chooses, one can lift the product ball first to set in motion the Innovation Driven Branding process (appendix 5).
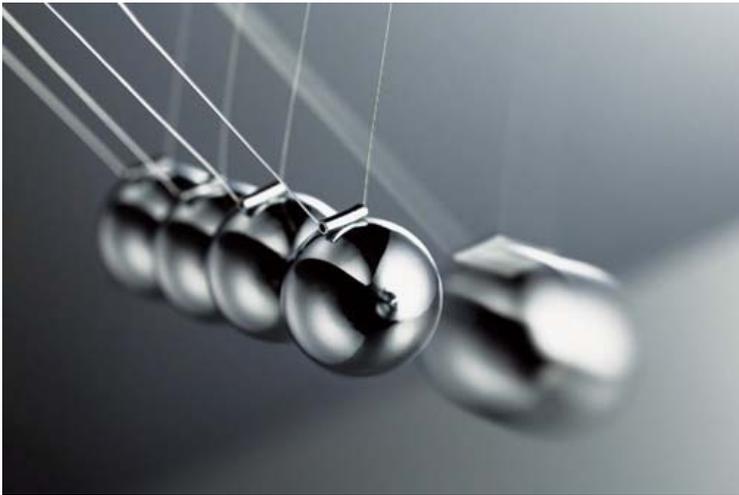

figure 13: the desk gadget featuring the metal clicking balls

In the BDI model, the balls represent stages described in the following section. A BDI case study for an imaginary brand can be found in appendix 4. the model is shown in figure 14.
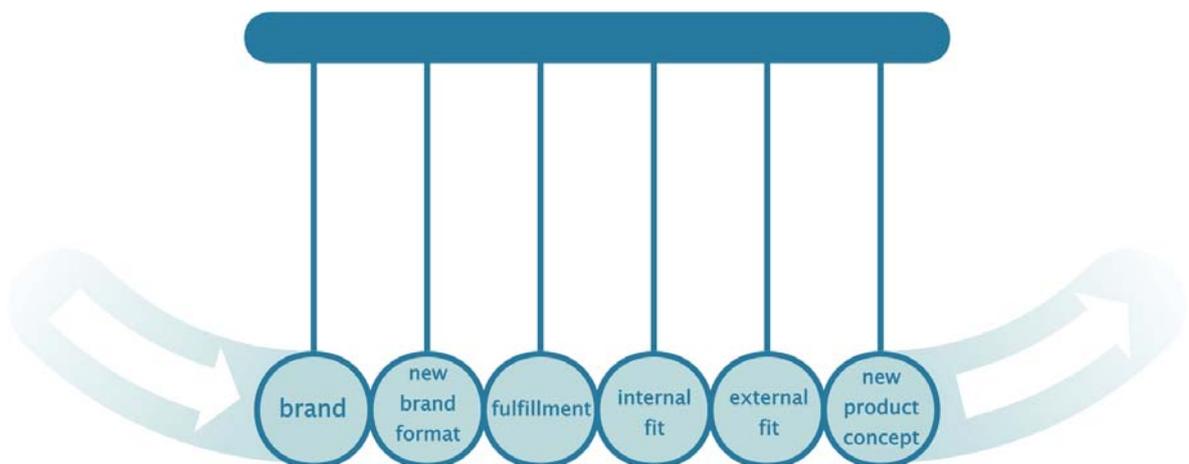

figure 14: the Brand Driven Innovation model

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1. The first ball that is lifted is the brand. It is lifted purposely, with two objectives:

   For companies that are mostly product oriented: to use the brand proactively as input for the new product development process (instead of being driven by –and thus merely reacting to- external factors such as technology, market developments, competition and consumer trends).

   For companies that are mostly brand oriented: to transfer the brand's contents to the product so that the brand's values land directly in the hands of the consumer, and the brand's promise is fulfilled in a manner more tangible than marketing or communications could ever accomplish.

   The first ball represents the brand as it is present in the organisation. Research has shown that the form in which the brand is defined (referred to as the brand's format throughout this report) can vary greatly. At this first stage of the process, this form is not important. What counts is the lifting of the ball: the realisation within the organisation that the brand's promise must be fulfilled and that NPD is a great way of doing this. This first stage of the process is organisationally important: it should get the brand and product people (designers and managers) around the table, to set a common goal: to use the brand to inspire the development of new products that fulfil the brand's promise. The first ball should be lifted by everyone involved, in full understanding of the value of BDI, its potential for the organisation and the customer, and the rationale behind it.

2. The brand ball hits the second ball, called 'new brand format'. This ball stands for a thorough X-raying of the brand as it is present in the company. It aims not to change the content of the brand. It is presumed that the brand's essence, values, personality, identity, promise etc. are well defined in terms of content. What the second ball must accomplish is a new way of phrasing this content, of capturing it new words or images. The new brand format must

   a. be easy to understand: no complicated words, no distant abstractions, no meaningless associations.

   b. inspire new product ideas concerning product functionality and interaction: it must ask questions or pose problems to be solved (wouldn't it be great if we could….), it must challenge the product designers to generate fresh ideas (how can we stimulate…., how can we help…., how can we generate….?).

   c. open the brand up to its users. The brand's users in the BDI context are the company, the consumer and the product. The brand could be like an open platform for these users to leverage the brand to their own benefit and to interact freely with each other. This open brand architecture defies traditional category boundaries and static definitions. It is defined in terms of possibility rather than identity. It says not: "this is who we are", but "this is what we could do together".

This second ball forms the essence of the BDI method model. Research has shown that if this new format is captured in the right way, BDI can become a very natural and flowing process. If the new format lacks clarity, inspiration or usability, BDI will most likely fail, or become very hard work.

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Because of its importance, special attention has been given to this new brand format. The author has developed a form for it which he proposes in paragraph 6.4. But of course, users of the BDI model are free to fill in the new brand format to their own wishes, keeping in mind the three criteria mentioned above.

3. The third ball represents the most diverging, creative stage: it is aimed at fulfilling the promise as it is captured in the new brand format. Without any limitations: anything goes. Receiving its impetus from the second ball, the fulfilment ball resonates with creative energy. It is a stage of creative dreaming, where product concepts are created that fulfil the brand's promise, regardless of their exact nature, category or feasibility. The product concepts don't have to be flawless or real, as long as they are challenging, promising and irresistible. And as long as they do what the brand promises. It is the 'what if' stage.

4. the fourth ball receives its impetus from the third. In this stage, the cloud of wild ideas of the previous stage undergoes a reality check. It is filtered through the internal reality surrounding the brand: it filters the concepts through the internal reality of the company, encompassing such things as culture, intellectual property, technology, manufacturing capacity and resources. The internal filter filters out those ideas that are too far away from home, that are better left to the competition, or that can be picked up in a next innovation cycle.
It is very important at this stage to realise that internal factors can be changed. If a very good product concept doesn't pass the internal filter, maybe the filter should be changed. If something inside your company prevents you from delivering on your brand's promise, you don't sit back and pout: you find out what it is that's preventing you and you do something about it.

5. The fifth ball is hit. It is also a reality check, but an external one: what market are we in, what are our competitors doing, how is our supply chain organised, what about our distribution network, who are we targeting? The filter reduces the cloud of product concepts to an even smaller but even more realistic pile. And again, the discussion about the external fit of the product concepts should include questioning the external factors, not only the product concepts. Although they might be are harder to change than internal factors, the rewards may be equally high. And it's the discussion that counts the most: "why are we stuck to this distribution network, if for fulfilling the brand's promise a different distribution would be much more effective?"

6. The magic has happened: the sixth ball jumps out of the queue, apparently out of its own. It is the product concept, born form the brand's identity, but checked against the reality of the market and the company. It is ready to fulfil the brand's promise, and must be evaluated as such. If it's up to its task, the BDI method has successfully helped generate brand based innovations that fulfil the brand's promise by tangibly offering the consumer what it hoped it would get. A user experience is created that is derived from the brand's essence.

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6.3 the Product Brand Plaza model

As promised in paragraph 6.2, in this paragraph the author proposes a new brand format that will be of value in the BDI method. The proposed new brand format is captured in a model called the 'Product Brand Plaza'. It is developed based on this project's research findings and on the author's own professional experiences and needs. It aspires to answer the three basic needs for the new format mentioned in paragraph 6.2 namely:

1. it is easy to understand
2. it inspires new product ideas
3. it opens the brand up to its users

It is not meant to change the brand in terms of content. What it does is offer a different way of looking at the brand, talking about it and capturing it on paper and in images.

The model works as follows (see figure 16):
The model is based on the metaphor of the city square. A city square has a unique strong identity, defined by its surface and the buildings surrounding it. However, this identity is only fully unveiled when it is used by the city's inhabitants and visitors for various activities. A good square enables these activities and invites its users to participate in them. But it does this in a way that is completely unique to the square. No city square is the same, each has its own identity (figure 15).

figure 15: No city square is the same, each has its own identity.

The Product Brand Plaza model captures the brand so that it enables activities and invites its users to participate in them, just like a city square does. While providing this inviting and enabling platform, the Product Brand Plaza has a very strong and unique identity, again just like a city square does.

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So the first accomplishment of the Product Brand Plaza is that it defines the brand in terms of what it can do for its users rather than what it is, without losing its specific identity. The brand's users in this context are the company (or more specifically in the BDI context, the designers), its products and the consumer.

figure 16: the product brand plaza

On the Product Brand Plaza, the users of the brand should feel enabled to do their own thing, and invited to participate in activity. The three users mentioned above each require something different form the brand. But the brand should remain true to its essence. The Product Brand Plaza offers a way of defining the brand so that it is open to different kinds of usage, but also true to is essence. Just like a city square invites a very specific reaction, the Product Brand Plaza triggers the brand's users in a very specific way. Their activity will therefore be unique to the brand.

In the context of the BDI model, the main interest is finding those dimensions of this activity that inspire or invite new product development. The author has found four such dimensions:

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1. Behaviour: the brand enables and invites its users to behave a certain way, also in relationship to each other.

2. Performance: the brand enables and invites its users to perform a certain way, also in relationship to each other.

3. Interaction: the brand enables and invites its users to interact with each other a certain way.

4. Satisfaction: the brand enables and invites its users to derive satisfaction form each other in a certain way.

Product Brand Plaza sessions revolve around the question: what kind of behaviour, performance, interaction and satisfaction does our brand invite and enable? By defining the brand along the lines of these dimensions, rather than focussing on a 'fixed' brand identity and personality, it is expected that the brand becomes much more directly inspiring to designers. The reason for this is that the four dimensions are both brand related and product related. Appendix 4 shows a case study example of the BDI method, explaining how the Product Brand Plaza could help generate product ideas for an imaginary snowboard brand.

What is illustrated in this example is that the expected result of the Product Brand Plaza will be:

1. a new brand definition that is understood by all designers involved
2. a brand definition that inspires and invites NPD
3. a brand definition that is open for change and innovation.

The brand is geared towards enabling its 'users', and innovations become tangible manifestations of this enabling character.

6.4 Conclusions and implications

the BDI method model and the Product Brand Plaza models are, to the author's opinion, a very promising synthesis of the research results. Both offer visual metaphors that aim to be attractive, inspiring easy to understand.

The BDI method offers a step by step guideline taking designers from brand to product concept. Of course, a product concept needs further development. It goes into the NPD stage of Buijs' innovation model (figure 8). This phase is not incorporated in the BDI model because it is not where the true BDI challenge lies. Once a product concept is born form the brand, it is a matter of good design and good design management to keep its relationship to the brand intact during further development. The author however was especially interested in *creating* this relationship. (see also paragraph 1.4.2).

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The Product Brand Plaza model offers a concrete example of how the most vital element of the method, the 'new brand format' could be achieved. The model is created to make the brand usable for designers. It is not known at this stage whether this new brand format also provides a solid basis for brand communications. It is expected however that this will be the case: all users benefit from an open, inspiring and enabling brand, also communication designers and the consumers towards whom the communication is directed.

The case study in appendix 4 shows how the models could work in practice. The author wishes to stress at this point that both models are to be tested with real brands to be refined and optimised. Only then can they prove their value. In that sense, what the author puts forward in this synthesis chapter is no more than a rough sketch, to be filled in and detailed through real life applications.

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Chapter 7: implications and recommendations

7.1 Implications

In this final chapter the implications of the research conclusions and the proposed BDI method are discussed, from 4 points of view: implications for theory, implications for branding, implications for product innovation and implications for design management. The chapter ends with a discussion of implementation issues and suggestions for further research.

7.1.1 Implications for theory

The literature underlying this research project is mainly focused on describing the brand, the role of the product in the brand and vise versa, and NPD processes. The development of an actual BDI method, or the ingredients thereof, could not be based on the theoretical body as proposed in this literature. It is mainly derived from primary research findings.

The author believes strongly that BDI is a field that merits further theoretical exploration. It is surprising to notice how many theoretical treatises ignore the 'how' question. To the author's modest opinion, too many theorists are overly concerned with showing the benefits of a certain phenomenon, without giving a hint as to how the phenomenon can be attained. It has been written countless times that the product must fulfill the brand's promise. No theorist –to the authors knowledge- has given attention to the question *how* this must be done. Let this work be a first careful step in this unexplored territory.

But apart form this burning *how* question, around which this project has revolved, there are many other areas of research concerning the merging of branding and product development that merit the theorists attention. One could call this field of study Branded New Product Development (after Buijs, 2005). Brand Driven Innovation would then be that part of BNPD that is concerned with actively generating innovative product concepts based on brand essence. BNDP would be the larger field of study containing Issues such as product brand extensions, product- and brand portfolio management, branded product aesthetics and semantics, packaging design, retail environment design etc. In short, the study of all those issues where the brand and its tangible manifestations are intertwined.

7.1.2 Implications for branding

There are three main implications for the discourse on branding worth mentioning at this point:

1. It appears that existing brand definition models (models capturing the brand essence with a certain format) are either very theoretical, or mainly geared towards use in marketing and communications. The former models lead to general misunderstanding and vague definitions (even Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism suffers from this, the author noticed in the student assignment), the latter to a brand

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that is of very limited use in the organization. During this research project, it was discovered that brand *usability* is a very valuable concept. Brand usability is the extent to which each person in the organization can use the brand for the benefit of his or her work. If one wants to build a 'brand driven business'(Davis and Dunn, 2002), one should start by worrying about brand usability. Of course, within the context of BDI, the author was interested in the use of the brand for NPD purposes. But it is equally interesting to look into what is required from the brand by Sales (the brand should help me convince a prospect), HR (the brand should help me hire the best person), Finance (the brand should help me build equity and reduce risk) or Operations (the brand should help me motivate a culture of quality). It is very likely that this would yield a separate brand format for each of these disciplines, all based on the same source: the brand essence. The Product Brand Plaza provides a format that is of use to develop brand based products. In a parallel line of reasoning, for example a Sales Brand Plaza may be developed to help brand based sales.

2. It proved difficult to find a clear theoretical explanation on how the brand is positioned in the organization. The function of the brand, and its capability to drive processes is entirely dependent on this position. There are two main trends, each defining one end of the spectrum, as was discovered during the primary research:

    a. Brand cynicism: A typical brand cynic would say: "the brand is just a tool, no more, no less. There is way too much hype around it. In the end, what you buy is the product, not the brand".

    b. Brand idolization: a typical brand idolizer would say: "the brand is the ultimate core of the organization, it is the end all and be all of corporate life. It is the company's right to exist. Everything the company does should come form the brand".

BDI presupposes a position of the brand that tends towards the second end of the spectrum. But it has not become entirely clear if this second trend is dominant, and if so, what this implies to the organization of the brand. A theoretical background on the position of the brand in the organization would be very welcome to shed light on these issues.

3. At this point, the author sees no reason why the BDI method could not be used to develop brand extensions. Of course this would require some adaptations of the model: internal and external fit may not be as important for band extensions. Better selection criteria will be found in brand extension literature, as referred to throughout this report (e.g. perceived fit with the parent brand, Aaker and Keller, 1990, Park et al. 1991). But the essence of the process is the same, namely to find new products that are supported by the brand.

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7.1.3 Implications for product innovation

In parallel with this project, the author encountered the work professor Jan Buijs is doing at the Delft university of Technology, school of Industrial Design Engineering. In the development of BNDP theory and case studies, and the courses Brand and Product Strategy and Design Strategy Project, Buijs appears to be at the forefront of a movement in product innovation thinking where the brand is incorporated in the NPD process. Signs of the development of this new BNDP field can be found in articles, books, case studies etc. But more interestingly, the author encounters in practice: no self respecting product design agency completely disregards the brand. What's more, most agencies incorporate the brand in their working models, and claim to play an important role in brand development through NPD. Surprisingly, there is no evidence that this phenomenon also works the other way around: branding design agencies are hardly ever involved in product design (save a few very large multi disciplinary agencies such as Fitch:worldwide and Pentagram). Based on this research project, the author predicts that a further merging of the two disciplines will happen in the coming years. It will be the product design agencies paving the way, with product innovation theorists like Buijs covering the academic spectrum of BNPD. The author hopes that brand theorists will join soon.

7.1.4 Implications for design management

As can be gathered from design management literature (Cooper and Press 1995, Borja de Morzota 2003 etc.) the opinions on what design management actually is differ widely. It is the author's opinion that the core of design management is to get the best out of design by
1. linking it to corporate strategy.
2. merging the efforts of the various design disciplines into one consistent effort.
The ingredients for a Brand Driven Innovation method as described in paragraph 5.2 and 5.3 and the description of such a method in chapter 6 suggest that BDI fits the realm of design management in both these aspects. Since the brand in BDI is very closely connected to corporate strategy, BDI as a process is as well. And, as mentioned earlier, BDI is concerned with merging the design disciplines of branding and new product development.
It is of course also a brand management and innovation management tool, but in its essence it is concerned with inspiring *designers*. For the field of design management, BDI offers a practical and inspiring method to align the efforts of branding and NPD, in implementing and activating corporate strategy. What BDI does require however, is a special type of design manager: one who is willing to think of design entirely outside of traditional disciplinary boundaries. It is the author's hope that this breed of design manager is growing, slowly taking over the wheel form those design managers who are still secretly attached to their original design discipline, putting it central regardless of the actual business situation.

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7.2 Recommendations for implementation

A number of recommendations can be made with regards to the implementation of the results of the research of chapter 5, and the BDI method as proposed in chapter 6:

1. When it has been decided that a BDI process should be initiated, it is recommended that a design manager with product and brand design experience is appointed the task of project manager. The management style of this design manager should not be overly directive. His main role is to facilitate the process of inspiring designers, and −in the background- to guard the quality of the consecutive steps.

2. As mentioned before, it is recommended that both product designers and brand designers are involved in the BDI process. Next to that, involving higher management will help to create support for BDI in the organization.

3. At the converging stage of the BDI method, the internal and external fit, it is very important to find the right balance between selection and opportunity creation. If a certain idea requires a certain type of machine that is not present in the factory, one could drop the idea. But one could also see it as a perfect opportunity to buy the machine or to partner up with a party who has a machine like it. It is vital that the quality of the product concept, with regards to how it fulfils the brand's promise, is put central in this phase.

4. Before the BDI process is started, it is recommended that all people involved get a clear understanding of the BDI method. It is expected that this will increase the quality of each BDI step, and increase the motivation of the people involved to work with the method and adapt it to their needs. There should be a BDI booklet or website, illustrating the method and giving case examples.

5. Although design managers and designers were the target group for the method, it is of great importance that general management believes in it, and is willing to allocate resources to it. The focus of the research has been very much on the 'how' of BDI, accommodating the needs of the target group. General managers however will be much more interested in the 'why' of BDI. To build a strong case for BDI implementation, design managers will have to have an understanding of this 'why'. The literature that is referred to in this report may help to create this understanding.

6. BDI should not be isolated from other branding and NPD techniques and methods. No method or model tells the entire truth. No carpenter works with only a hammer. True mastery of the design process requires the ability to play with different models and methods and the realization that they are just tools. The goal is to facilitate designers to create great innovations, not to be confined to one method.

7. Basing product innovation on the brand does not mean one should ignore the market. First and foremost, the brand has to be relevant to the consumer. A relevant brand will lead to relevant

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products. The Product Brand Plaza is, in this sense, also a tool to increase brand relevance, because it actively involves the users of the brand. Secondly, the BDI method should be combined with market insight and an intuition for the consumers needs. Preferably, this insight and intuition are present in every designer working with the BDI method.

8. Although the author focused on durable products, design managers are by no means discouraged to use the BDI method for FMCG companies, or even service companies (see paragraph 7.4).

9. Since BDI is a new method, the implementation of it should involve continuous monitoring of the results so the method can be improved where necessary.

7.3 Limitations

The main limitation of the research result is that, although it is based on practice, the method has not been tested yet. The author hereby states the ambition to apply the method in practice as soon as possible, and use the findings to refine and optimize it.

A second limitation of the research result and the proposed method has been mentioned before: it is the requirement that the brand is in fact in a position to drive NPD within the organization. For companies where the brand is merely a communication tool, BDI is possible, but less interesting: the results will not be as strategically influential as would be the case with a centrally placed brand.

A third and last limitation is the fact that design is always the work of human beings. A model or method will never substitute creative ingenuity. The outcome of the BDI method depends to a large extent on how well the design manager facilitates the process, and how creatively the designers fill in the new brand format and generate product concepts that fulfill the brand's promise. It is the design managers greatest challenge to make sure designers feel inspired by the model and not confined.

7.4 Suggestions for further research

The Brand Driven Innovation research conclusions and proposed method stem from a clear focus on the 'how'. The author suggests the following research to follow up on this 'how' question:

1. Why is BDI necessary? What are the exact benefits of BDI in terms of for example customer retention, potential price premium, brand equity, competitive strength, and consumer satisfaction? Each of these would constitute a research project in itself. It would be fantastic to build up a database of cases with sufficient data to support this kind of research. (The 'why' question.)

2. Who should be involved in BDI? How should a company that is focused on BDI be organized? What should the management structure be, and how should the design department be organized? What sort of people should be involved in the process, what should their leadership style be and what kind of team roles should they play? (The 'who' question.)

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3. What are successful examples of Brand Driven Innovation? As indicated before, a very valuable research project would be to gather a large number of product examples that were developed from the brand, and to see what parallels the processes that led to these products reveal. (The 'what' question.)

4. When is BDI relevant? In what cases, for which companies and in which markets? (The 'when' question.)

During the course of this project, the author was frequently tempted to branch off in other directions, to explore all those fascinating areas of research that surround this topic. But the necessity to reach the project's deadline somewhat in tact has forced a sharp focus on what was strictly relevant to the research. This last paragraph is the author's chance at sharing with his reader all the new questions that were born during this quest:

1. The position of the brand in the organization merits further research. What do different positions of the brand in the organization imply in terms of benefits, problems, organization, brand equity and brand 'usability'? Where do successful companies place their brand and what is the correlation between brand position and their success?

2. Can the Brand Driven Innovation train of thought be expanded to incorporate other disciplines? What would Brand Driven Sales, Brand Driven Procurement, Brand Driven Manufacturing or Brand Driven Human Resources look like? Can the Product Brand Plaza thought be expanded into the Sales Brand Plaza etc?

3. Can the BDI method be adapted so that it can be used to successfully develop brand extensions? What kind of adaptations would be necessary and especially, what would selection criteria for possible extensions be?

4. Can the Brand Driven Innovation method be used for service companies? What kind of adaptations to the model would be needed, and what kind of designers would be ideally suited for New Service Development (NSD)?

5. This research has focused on functional innovation, leaving the process of capturing the brand in the product's aesthetics to other authors. It would be very interesting to research the difference between brand based product functionality and brand based aesthetics in terms of how they affect the consumer and the brand. The author believes brand based functionality is the most effective. An that application of the BDI method will prove his point.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 : the interviews

This section contains brief minutes of the various interviews, plus the most revealing insights the particular interview gave regarding the research questions.

Interview 1: Drs Erik Jan Hultink PhD, Delft University of Technology, School of Industrial Design Engineering

Date:June 21st 2005
Function: professor of New Product Marketing, head of the Strategic Product Design Master, contributing editor of the Journal of Product Innovation Management (JPIM)
Reason for interview: Hultink had just issued a call for papers for JPIM on the subject of the relationship between brands and product innovations.

Content of the interview: Hultink has no knowledge of explicit method for BDI, and confirms that more research highly needed. The call for papers was issued for that reason, but the deadline is too early to enter the author's research. Referred to other sources within and outside of the School of Industrial Design Engineering (PDMA tool book, Nicole van Leeuwen, Lisanne Bouten)

Interview 2: Louk de Sévaux MBA, Qua Associates

Date: June 22nd 2005
Function: managing director
Reason for interview: Qua is good at 'brand environment design': translating brand identities into physical environments. The interview focuses on the question whether there is a method underlying their work, and whether this method is also suitable for product innovation.

Content of the interview: Brand & product both address the consumer. Design has the ability to link the two, to provide a common language (see figure 17). It appears that BDI is mostly suitable for 'created brands', those brands that were conceptualized first and supported by products later. 'Product brands' (brands that have evolved from products) have a more natural synergy between the brand and the product.
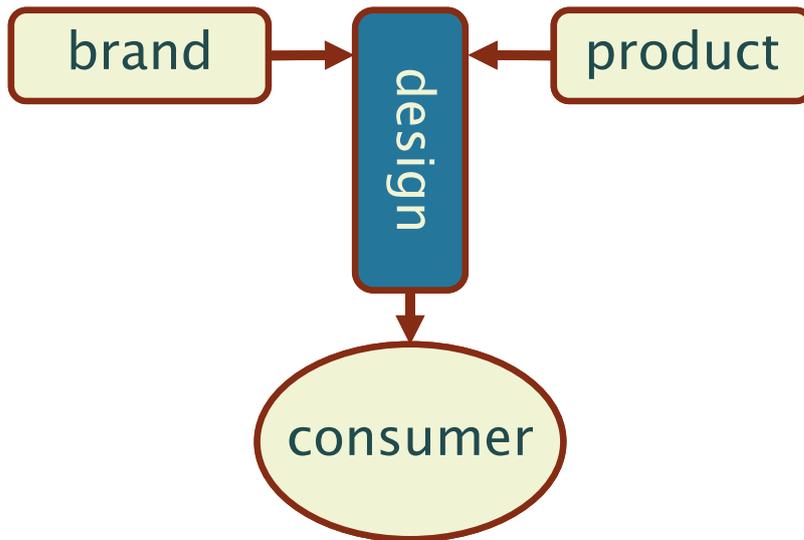
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figure 17: design provides the common language for brand and product to reach the consumer.

Porsche showroom case study: based on a reinterpretation of the Porsche car brand in NL after the introduction of the Cayenne, Qua developed the interior for the importer's showroom, later to be rolled out in dealership showrooms as well (see figure 18).

figure 18: the Porsche importer's showroom in Leusden, the Netherlands © qua associates

The case shows a number of discernable steps:

1. in a session with all the stakeholders, the brand was interpreted in 80 words.
2. Qua combined the 80 words with pictures expressing them.

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3. 80 picture/word combinations reduced to 12 by selection and by clustering them in three groups: brand, product, user. The result is what Qua calls a 'value board' (see figure 19)
4. the next step was the creative, intuitive design phase. It is based on the assumption that consumer behavior is guided by the surroundings. The design assignment was thus not to translate the value board into something pretty. It was to translate it into the desired behavior. Since this behavior should be related to the brand, the surroundings were designed based on the brand (through the value board).

From this case study two important things are concluded:

1. No matter how well you model the process, the design phase is always creative and intuitive. There is always a gap between abstract brand and concrete product that can only be bridged by creativity.
2. *If the brand is created well, its manifestations (communication, environments, products) follow* more automatically. Extending this line of reasoning: how easy BDI is for product designers depends on how the brand is defined in the organization.

figure 19: the Porsche value board. © qua associates.

Conclusions: For the author, this interview has led to the insight that the BDI model should not try to fill in the creative effort that bridges the gap between brand and product. It can however give this creative phase a place in the method, and it can provide suitable input for this phase.

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A question that remains is whether the character board solution for Porsche would work as well for product functionality and interaction design as it did for designing the aesthetics and materialization of the Porsche Showrooms.

Interview 3: Jos Oberdorf, NPK industrial design

Date: June 30th 2005
Function: partner
Reason for interview: In a lecture for the Master of Design Management, Jos Oberdorf had shown methodology where the product development process starts with strategic marketing considerations. NPK works with leading brands.

Content of the interview: It is very clear that there is a great discrepancy between the brand promise and the product offering at many companies. The benefit of BDI is clear.
Although it is not the product designer's task to develop brands, the NPD process is often a cause for questions that weren't asked before. The brand can be laid bare by these questions, and this can be a painful but very useful process. Try to visually map the brand, one can use mood boards, mapping along two axes, user analysis with regard to the perception and use of brands. In the NPD triangle (need, form, technology, see figure 20) see what the role of the brand is in these factors. You have to go from language to imagery.
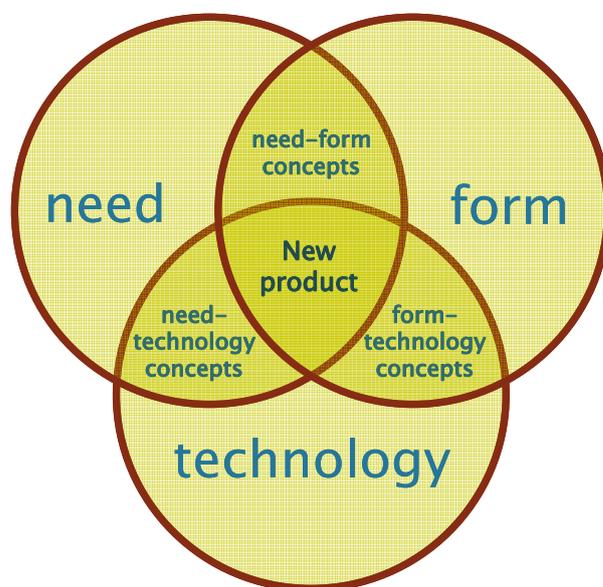
figure 20: the new product concept, or NPD triangle, Crawford and Di Benedetto, 2006

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The end goal of NPD projects often changes in the course of the project. What starts as a simple product design assignment may end in a strategic repositioning of the brand through the design of various new products. In that sense, with many clients you move up the strategic ladder in figure 21, starting in the bottom left corner and moving up to the right.
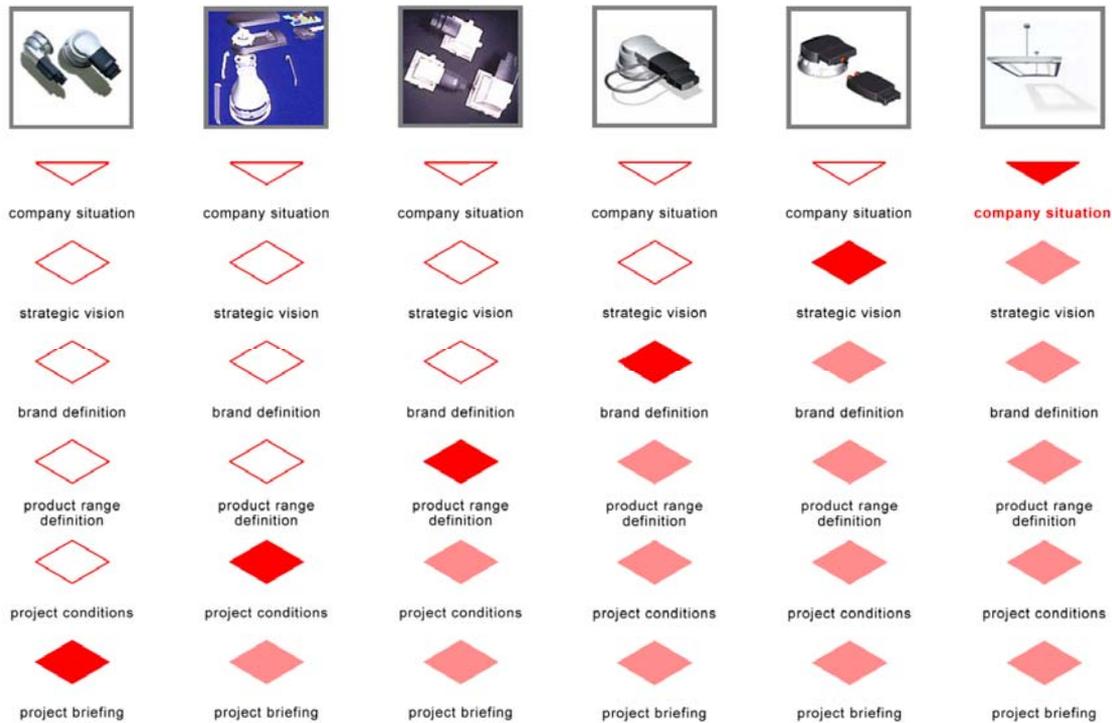
figure 21: NPK's strategic ladder, ©NPK Industrial Design

The briefing for an NPD project for a brand owner should be based on the project conditions. These, in their turn should be based on the brand portfolio, which in its turn stems from the strategic brand conditions.
A tool has to be very flexible because every situation is so different. It can't be a very directive process tool, it has to leave a lot of space for inspiration and improvisation.

Conclusions: Not many NPD project assignments will start as BDI project. They might evolve that way over time though. In those cases the product designer can have a significant influence on the brand. Product development itself impacts the brand. But it is also impacted by helping the client answer the questions that are generated through the initiation of NPD projects (why does your brand need this product?; how does this product match your brand?; if this is what you stand for, shouldn't we develop this product?).

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Interview 4: Jan Hoekstra, Royal van Kempen en Begeer

Date: July 1st 2005

Function: Designer, Design manager

Reason for interview: Hoekstra had just been managing the complete overhaul of the Royal VKB brand, including the development of a collection of new products.

Content of the interview: The overhaul of the Royal VKB brand was very much a strategic decision, based on declining sales due to far east competition. The overhaul was captured in a model, called the 'brand house'. The difference with Unilever's Brand Key model, according to Hoekstra, is that it offers a more concrete, functional and tangible way to define the brand. From a product development point of view, this results in a more 'usable' brand. The brand house was mainly defined through language with some imagery of example products accompanying it.

The next step was to develop personas. Personas are imaginary persons representing the brand. These personas were defined (in terms of character, activities, emotions, etc) so that they matched the brand house and invited product development (what would you, as a designer, develop for this persona?). These personas were then combined with other inspiring elements (new materials, the 'wheel of food', competitor products) and some constraints (price point) into a various product development briefings. Next, these briefings were communicated to a group of invited designers that intuitively matched the brand and were sufficiently empathic to make the brand their own. In a parallel process, the designer of the new corporate identity was briefed, based on the same brand house and the same personas.

The 10 designers came back with 80 product ideas, that were screened using a screening and evaluation method developed by Alessi. The screening method is confidential; the interesting thing to note here is the order of things. The brand is created first, then a large group of product concepts is generated based on this brand, and then this group is filtered through a set of criteria to select the ones that are most suitable for production and marketing. 10 products were brought to market in the 2005 collection (see figure 22)

It is too early to tell whether this process of brand and product development will be a success commercially. It certainly has helped manage, guide and inspire the development process, and it will also help to monitor and explain success or failure of the various products.

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figure 22: a selection of the Royal VKB 2005 collection. © Royal VKB

Conclusions: The brand's content was captured in a format suitable for future product development. Not so much what the brand stands for (what it says), but how this is captured (how it is said) determines whether designers can work with it.

The product development brief was very brand oriented. It did not describe the specific product that was to be developed. This led to a wide variety of ideas that had one thing in common: they matched the brand. Filtering these ideas through a set of more practical criteria was done afterward. In more traditional NPD processes, one starts with opportunities and strengths, to later add some brand 'flavor' to the styling of the product. The Royal VKB process is very interesting in an BDI context, because the order of process steps is the other way around.

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Interview 5: Lisanne Bouten, Delft University of Technology, School of Industrial Design Engineering

Date: July 12th 2005

Function: writing a PhD Thesis on co-branding

Reason for interview: Lisanne Bouten was recommended by Erik Jan Hultink because of her extensive literature study on brand extensions. The author considers brand extensions a form of Brand Driven Innovation, and hoped to get tips on literature regarding BDI methodology.

Content of the interview: Bouten has provided me with much literature on brand extensions. This literature is discussed in the literature review section of this report (chapter 2). The results are a bit disappointing: much research on brand extensions is based on measuring the effects of extensions afterwards. Although this can lead to insights regarding what works and what doesn't, it is purely deductive: it does not provide an inductive method to create extensions based on existing brands.

Interview 6: Nicole van Leeuwen, Delft University of Technology, School of Industrial Design Engineering

Date: July 12th 2005

Function: assistant to professor Jan Buijs and teacher of the master course Brand & Product Strategy.

Reason for interview: Nicole van Leeuwen was recommended by Erik Jan Hultink because of the course she teaches: Brand & Product strategy focuses on the fuzzy front end of NPD, where brand strategy and innovation strategy come together to form the input for NPD projects.

Content of the interview: van Leeuwen has provided me with access to the lectures that were given during the course, plus a large body of literature and cases that were gathered by the students in the two years the course was taught. Since van Leeuwen had accepted a marketing position in the business world, the author offered to take over her teaching position on a part-time basis. This has led to the involvement of student work in the primary research phase of this project (see paragraph 4.3)

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Interview 7: Fedde Talsma, Volvo Car Corporation

Date: August 12th 2005
Function: Platform Chief Designer (S40, V50, C70)
Reason for interview: Mr Talsma is the chief designer for the S40/V50/C70 platform at Volvo. He is responsible for the translation of the brief into an exterior and interior car design.

Content of the interview: Although Mr. Talsma's responsibility is very much on the product design side, and not on the brand strategy side, he recognizes the importance of a working model for Brand Driven Innovation (the brand strategy of Volvo is developed by a team lead by Sven Desmet). Talsma is a great believer in the Volvo for life brand identity: the brand offers an inviting promise, that is meaningful in a wide range of interpretations, giving credibility to a consistent product portfolio.

The way the brand is incorporated as a driver in the product design process is as follows:
At the initiation of the design of a new model, a number of key people from different disciplines meet. Typical disciplines would be brand design, project management, communication, market intelligence, brand strategy, product design, and strategic design.

The team uses a working model, called 'the bull's eye' (figure 23). (See also interview 10 with Guido Stompff).

figure 23: the Volvo bull's eye

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At the center of the model is the brand and the brand promise, Volvo -for life. Around this core, a first shell is defined. This shell is divided in a number of segments, each representing an essential part of the company's offering. In Volvo's case, the segments are

1. product
2. image and emotion
3. strategic and commercial position

These segments are filled with content, regarding what the brand means to that specific segment, in the context of the new model. For example, Volvo-for life in the 'product' segment means clean air, in- and outside the car (among many others), in the image and emotion segment: new luxury, and in the 'strategic and commercial position': a product portfolio that can retain a customer for life.

A next shell is added around this first shell. Again, the team works to fill this shell with content. But now, the content is more product related. The team is asked for example what 'clean air inside and outside the car' means to the new model. Thus, the second shell represents choices regarding the way the brand actually comes to life in the new model.

The brand strategy director steps out of the process as soon as the bull's eye is complete. The business project leader becomes responsible for keeping the design results in line with the bull's eye model during the course of the project. As such, the brand content driving the new product design is owned by the development team, not the branding strategists.

Mr. Talsma is content with the applicability of the model, and with the effect of the multi-disciplinary kick-off meetings. The model works like a filter, filtering out those aspects of the brand that are meaningful to the project. It helps the team to reach consensus during decision making processes. And since the model is used for each new car design, the model 'soaks in': it becomes part of the team's vocabulary. Thus, also in later stages of the process, it gives the design team a common starting point to refer to and on which design decisions can be based.

Conclusions: The bull's eye model is interesting: in effect, the model represents a transformation in two steps. First, the brand promise is transformed into project specific stakeholder benefits. Secondly, the project specific benefits are transformed into tangible, project specific product features.
It is also interesting to note how the responsibility for the brand's tangible manifestation passes from the brand strategist to the business project leader (who is responsible for the NPD project).

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***Interview 8: prof. dr. Jan Buijs MSc PhD, Delft University of Technology, School of Industrial Design
Engineering***

Date: From August 12th to October30th 2005
Function: Professor of Strategy and Organization of Product Development
Reason for interview: Buijs is a specialist in strategic product development, innovation process
methodology, creativity and Branded New Product Development.

Content of the interview: No one on one interview has taken place. Teaching the Strategic Product
Design Master course Brand & Product Strategy together with Jan Buijs has given the author the
opportunity to have several discussions on BDI with Buijs, and to attend his classes.
Buijs has developed the cyclical Delft Innovation Model (figure 8, paragraph 2.2.2). This model is
interesting because it shows that the innovation process involves much more than strict product
development. Part of the model covers the 'fuzzy front end of NPD' (FFE, see paragraph 1.4.2 for a
definition). In this FFE, 'suchraum' (Brankamp 1971, quoted by Buijs, 2005) or search areas are
defined, based on strategic analysis. This analysis can for example take the form of a SWOT matrix. The
past 2 years, Buijs has been researching the involvement of the brand in the FFE. This involvement is
clearly present in the development of durable consumer goods, but it has hardly been researched. Buijs
has called this new field of study Branded New Product Development (BNPD). BNPD is slightly different
from what the author calls Brand Driven Innovation in that the former talks about the involvement of
branding in strategic product development, where the latter talks about actually starting the NPD
process from the brand. In that sense, BDI can be considered a specific manifestation of BNPD. The
results of Buijs' study are not yet available. His publications are discussed in the literature review.

Conclusions: BNPD and BDI are new fields of research, even according to someone as experienced in
the field as Buijs. The brand plays an important role in providing strategic direction in the FFE. What this
role is exactly is unclear. It is Buijs' ambition to provide some guidelines on this, based on further case
study research. See also recommendations for further research, paragraph 7.4.

Interview 9: Mellina Zevenhuizen, Rucanor

Date: from August 17th to October 30th 2005
Function: Marketing manager
Reason for interview: Zevenhuizen has managed the overhaul of the Rucanor brand, and is now
managing the process of infusing the organization with the new brand. The author was hired to help
with this process, with a focus on the new brand's consequences for the product portfolio and NPD.

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Content of the interview: No one on one interview has taken place. Data gathering has taken place while working together with Zevenhuizen on the Rucanor project.

The brand's overhaul is not only a change in brand content. It also involves a repositioning of the brand within the organization (see figure 24).
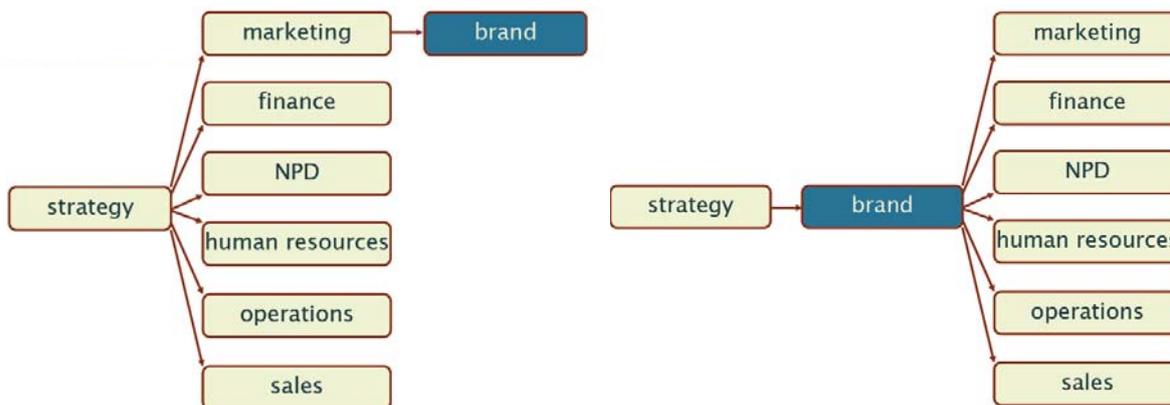

figure 24: repositioning the brand: from communication tool towards inspirational source

From being a communication tool for the marketing department, the brand is transformed to being a source of inspiration and guidance to all departments. Zevenhuizen is encountering quite a challenge in making everyone in the organization work with the 'new' brand. The tool that is available for this, a brand manual developed by the advertising agency that did the overhaul, is perfect for the marketing department. But is not useful for people from departments such as purchasing, sales, or development. It might help them understand the brand, but it does not guide them in using the brand for their own work. It appears that a different way of representing the brand's content, a different format is in order. The brand's new content has given rise to a host of new developments, including a redefinition of the vision and mission of Rucanor, a new strategic marketing plan, and the ambition to focus more on new product development in the future.

Conclusions: For a brand to function as driver, as source of inspiration and guidance, it has to be captured in a certain format. This specific format will help product designers develop new products based on the brand. But it might also help people from other departments derive inspiration and guidance from the brand. Whether one format would work for all departments, or each department requires its own 'translation' is uncertain.

The place of the brand in the organization is important. This place determines how the brand is used. For Rucanor this use is shifting from use as a communication tool towards use as a guiding source.

Interview 10: Guido Stompff, Océ

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Date: September 15th 2005

Function: Product Designer

Reason for interview: Stompff has written a Design Management Journal article on the relationship between brand identity and product design. He also taught a guest lecture at the Brand & Product Strategy course. He also hosts the practical second half of the course, to give the students an opportunity to work on BNPD in practice.

Content of the interview: No one on one interview has taken place. Data gathering has taken place during a lecture and the following discussion for the Brand and Product strategy course. Stompff believes that in branding insufficient attention is given to the medium through which the sender sends its message to the recipient (see figure 25)
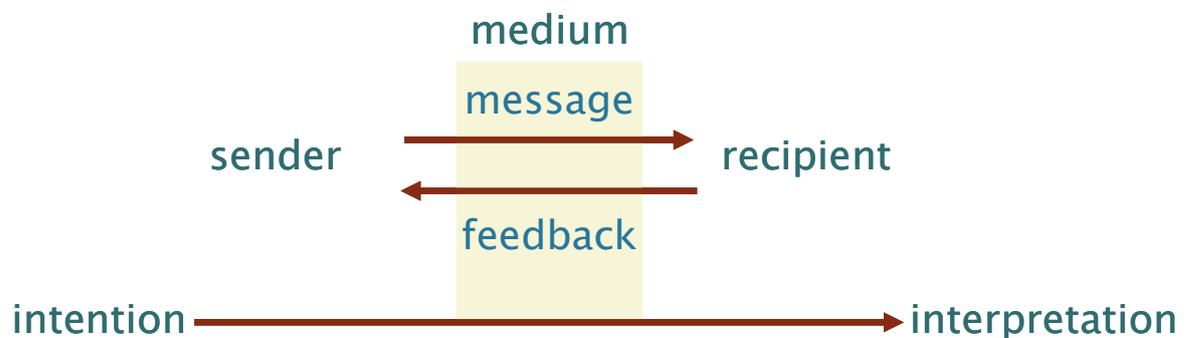
figure 25: the medium through which the sender sends its message to the recipient

This medium can be the product. He quotes Tom Peters saying "the most basic marketing tools are products -and they communicate" (Peters, 2003). Stompff focuses on the aesthetic design language of products communicating the brand identity. This potential of products is underestimated. Stompff shows how the development of such a design language took place for Océ.

The process contains three steps;

1. Translating abstract terms into designers' language
2. Creating a brand design identity
3. Creating signature design elements

Step one involved working with Ingeni, the Ford motor company's design house. Ingeni used the same bull's eye model as was used by Volvo (see interview 7, Fedde Talsma). Considering that Volvo is owned by Ford, it is no coincidence that both Ingeni and Volvo use this tool.

For Océ, the bull's eye model was applied in a slightly different manner than at Volvo. By brainstorming on many questions about the brand and its stakeholders, the Bull's eye is filled with words (figure 26).

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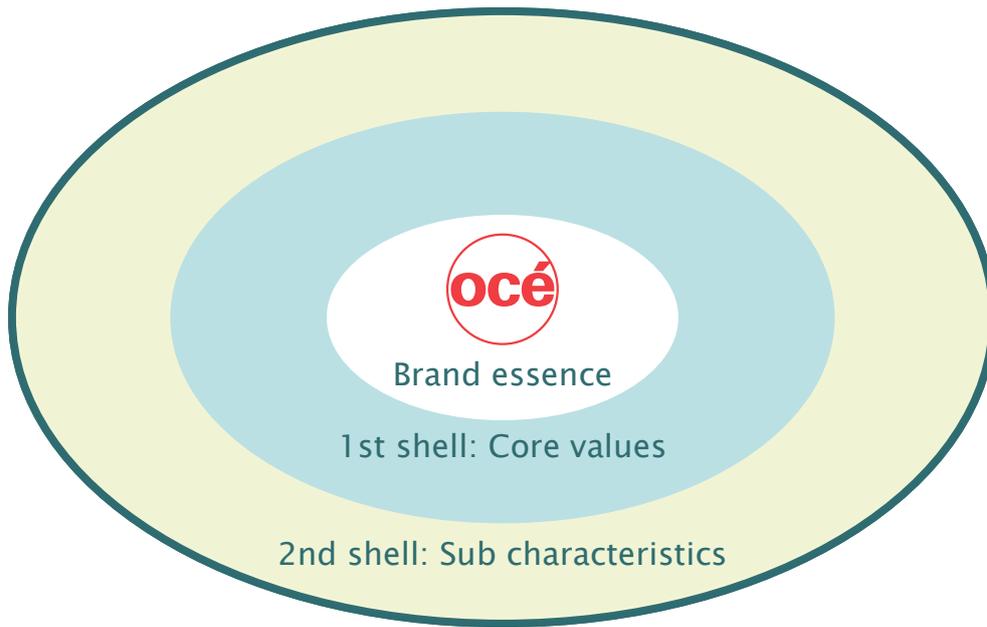
figure 26: the Océ bull's eye, © Océ / Ingeni

figure 27: aesthetic language before (left) and after (right) the bull's eye workshop.

The words are arranged in three layers around the bull's eye;

1. the center represents the brand's essence

2. the layer around it represents the core values

3. the outside layer represents sub-characteristics

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In a next session, pictures are added to the words, the rationale being that this makes the bull's eye easier to use for designers. Finally material mood boards are added to the bull's eye. These mood boards show materials and colors that reflect the visual content of the bull's eye.

Step two, the creation of a brand design identity, focuses on 'designing values'. It revolves around finding common concerns your users have, and then solving those concerns that are most in line with your brand's values. This means that Océ focuses on concerns that have to do with the brand's essence, being "professional, independent, human, and reliable". These terms each have their reflection on Océ design solutions, sometimes quite literally, and sometimes more indirect.

Step 3, the creation of signature design elements, is a good way to provide each product with a brand 'signature'. For Océ, the signature design element is the way the User Interface, is laid out. Thus, the signature element connects the product to the brand, but it is also a manifestation of the brand in itself (the user interface adds reliability to the machine) (see figure 27).

Conclusions: Again the bulls' eye is used to capture the brand in a 'designer friendly' way. The focus for Océ was less on concrete features and more on imagery, compared to Volvo.

Focusing on solving concerns that align with your brand is a nice way of capturing the brand in the product's functionality. This is a welcome suggestion, given the fact that most branded products only use aesthetic design elements to represent the brand.

Although the creation of signature design elements connects the product to the sender (BMW's kidney's, Volvo's hips) the element in itself often has no connection to the content of the brand (what connects the kidney shape to BMW specifically, what is BMW-like about it?). Océ adds brand related functionality to the aesthetic signature, which gives it a lot more impact.

Interview 11: Alexander Koene, Positioneringsgroep

Date: September 20th 2005
Function: Partner
Reason for interview: Koene wrote on the need for brands to innovate. He values the potential products have to communicate the brand essence.

Content of the interview: In brand positioning projects, Koene is in favor of a parallel approach involving brand development, product development and strategy development. Companies increase their impact by involving these different disciplines at a very early stage of their positioning.

Koene is researching the theory of categorization: how does the brain categorize what it perceives, and what does this categorization do to the value we attach to what we perceive? His hypothesis is that very strong brands create a new category in the brain. They do this by being unique, or by merging two or more existing categories (is Ikea a furniture store or an entertainment park?). The result of establishing

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your own new category is that there are no defined rules for the category: anything is possible (Harley Davidson can sell wedding gowns under the HD brand). As such, a brand that occupies its own category in the brain (Apple) has far more potential to innovate than a brand that shares its position with many others (Toshiba, BenQ, Acer etc). The brand becomes an open platform where exiting things can happen. These brands are open ended, inspirational, unique and more or less owned by the consumer.

Conclusions: Koene has given me a very inspirational insight: for BDI to succeed it is not only a question of translating the brand essence into product innovations, it is foremost a question of capturing the brand in such a way that it *inspires* innovation. This means (in Koene's line of reasoning) creating an open brand architecture that allows new things to happen, rather than sharply defining the brand in every detail and trying to pin it down. It also implies thinking about the brand as an inspirational platform where the exact definition of the brand depends to an extent on how consumers interact with it. Ikea for example can be your furniture supplier, your entertainer, your babysitter, your decorator or your restaurant. In each case the brand has a different connotation, although the platform stays the same.

Interview 12: John Venneman, Gispen

Date: October 4th 2005
Function: Manager Creating & Marketing
Reason for interview: Venneman manages the department at Gispen that combines the disciplines of research & development, design, marketing, and communication. This combination at least organizationally fosters a climate wherein BDI could thrive.

Content of the interview: The Gispen brand used to be very much connected to the product and its manufacturing. Creating & Marketing has become more market driven in the past few years, and less product oriented. This means a shift has taken place from selling what you make to making what you sell. Outsourcing production is a natural consequence of this shift. Working with outside designers is as well. Now, some products are developed to attain a shift of image in the market.
Through the organization of Creating & Marketing, there is a very close cooperation between design management, product management and communication. This ascertains a close involvement of the brand in new product development. Ideally, the brand is a filter that lets brand consistent product concepts through (even inspires their development) and holds concepts that are not aligned with the brand. In practice, a company can't work from the brand alone; there are always outside incentives one has to take into account.

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A different way of making sure the brand is involved in NPD is making it a part of everyday culture, and defining it in an understandable, inviting way. The Gispen brand rests on 4 columns, that are defined according to the order in which a prospective consumer is touched by the brand:

1. first the prospect encounters the company's *image*: in communication or word of mouth.
2. next, the prospect will hear about the company's *vision* from a salesperson
3. then the prospect will hear about the company's *working method*
4. and finally, the prospect will encounter the company's *products and services*

Each column has its own content. Gispen is very active in communicating this 4 legged brand system internally, to make sure every employee can work with it and communicate it. This means continuously making the abstract concrete. It is Venneman's job to create a unique culture that is aligned with the brand. If this succeeds, working with the brand becomes natural.

Conclusions: for BDI not only the process is important but also the organization. Brand and NPD have to be close together in the organization. They have to have the same 'agenda'. If they are managed by the same person, who also embodies the brand and infuses the organization with a culture that is aligned with the brand, BDI could become a very intuitive and logical way of working.

Interview 13: Hanne Österberg, Tom Tom

Date: October 7th 2005
Function: Marketing manager personal devices
Reason for interview: Österberg did a Design Management MBA at University of Westminster. In her graduation work she established a connection between R&D investments, profitability and brand value of 24 sample companies. In addition to that, she works as a marketing manager for Tom Tom, a strong brand with a small product portfolio: an exiting future case client for BDI!

Content of the interview: Österberg's research results are included in the literature review. Österberg states that the success of Tom Tom is due to the fact that it created a new category (see also interview with Alexander Koene). Navigation used to have either a serious, professional connotation (military) or an outdoorsy natural connotation (sailing). Tom Tom introduced navigation into the urban scene, and combined it with fresh and young design aesthetic. The Tom Tom brand is about finding. The fact that Tom Tom occupies its own category enables it to approach the concept of 'finding' quite widely. So it can be about finding people, places, things, as long as it fits Tom Tom's young and urban character. Internally, the brand is defined in quite elaborate persona's; there is one persona for each product group.

New Product Development projects are initiated by forming a core team with people in it from product development, brand management and marketing management. In establishing directions for new

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developments, Marketing is leading. However, in the research for finding plausible new directions, the core team is involved in an early stage. Because there is so much collaboration on project level, the brand people and the product development people are quite close.

Still, it's a challenge to make everyone work with the brand. Österberg states that if you want all employees to work with the brand, co-ownership of the brand is essential. This means treating the brand as a living thing, and reshaping it and re-inventing it, together with those people who will work with it.

Conclusions: Österberg's thoughts on how having your own category opens up the brand for new developments closely resembles Alexander Koene's point of view. An open brand seems to invite innovation.

Again, the organization of the brand and new product development are important. Putting the two disciplines together very early in the NPD project (at the FFE) helps brand people and product people work together, thus making BDI possible.

To be able to work with brand (e.g. use it as a source for product innovation), the people involved in using it will have to make the brand their own. Without necessarily changing the contents of the brand, it might be necessary to rephrase it, to use a different format.

Interview 14: Aart Jan van der Meijden, Trespa International

Date: October 18th 2005
Function: Marketing Manager
Reason for interview: Through working with van der Meijden, the author has come to know him as a marketeer with a keen eye for the product. He is responsible for the Trespa brand, but is also closely involved in NPD projects. The latest project the author did for Trespa was very strategic and brand driven.

Content of the interview: van der Meijden stresses that the applicability of BDI depends to a large extent on the position of the brand in the organisation. To him, the brand is one of the tools available to implement a strategy, along with NPD, human resources, finance, sales, operations etc. (figure 28). Even then, it is important that the brand and the product are aligned, but they drive each other. For Trespa, brand image is very much influenced through NPD, and very consciously so. The brand image is a result of positioning new products in the market. One could speak of Innovation Driven Branding (IDB) in this situation, where new products drive the position of the brand (see appendix 5).
Van der Meijden mentions that consumer intimacy (Treacey & Wiersema, 1997) should be one of the main drivers for brand and product development: your brands and products have to be relevant to reach the consumer. And the only way to be relevant is to know your consumer inside and out. Van der

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Meijden agrees that for a brand to be relevant, the product offering must fulfil the brand's promise. But the promise itself has to be relevant as well.

Conclusions: BDI is only half of the process, IDB being the other half. Both processes play a vital role in product companies (see also literature review, chapter 2, paragraph 2.2.2). It would be very interesting to see whether a process model for Brand Driven Innovation would also work (the other way around) for Innovation Driven Branding. This process model working in two directions is especially important when the brand and NPD are both seen as tools for strategy implementation, and occupy a similar position in the organisation.

figure 28: the brand as one of several strategic tools.

Interview 15: Matthijs van Dijk, KVD

Date: November 9th 2005
Function: Managing partner, KVD, and professor of Design at the Delft university of Technology, School of industrial Design Engineering
Reason for interview: van Dijk is one of the founding fathers of the 'Vision In Product design' (VIP) research program and design method. ViP has similarities with BDI that are interesting to discuss.

Content of the interview: Van Dijk explains the ViP (Vision in Product design) method (Hekkert and van Dijk, 1997). The method helps the designer step back from the product, to come to more innovative and inspiring design solutions. A leading thought behind the method is that a problem is hardly ever solved in a truly innovative manner within its own problem space. This breaking out of the original problem space ('destructuring') takes place in three steps: from product to interaction to context. Once arrived at

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the 'destructuring' of the context level, a new context is constructed. Congruency within this context leads to vision. This vision is an inspirational platform for the designer, as well as a guiding principle in the synthesis phase of the design process (Roozenburg and Eekels, 1998). From the context, the designer takes his insights back through the interaction level towards the product level. The ViP method offers a new way of approaching a design problem: from solving a problem within a given problem space, the approach evolves into generating solutions based on vision as an inspirational source. The benefits are twofold: the designer will meet more opportunities for innovation, and his efforts will be more coherent with a meaningful source.

The author and van Dijk discuss the similarities with the BDI method (chapter 6). The role of the brand in this method is comparable to that of the vision developed in the context level. It can be a part of this vision. Like in the BDI method, the brand is not only a guiding principle (more or less restrictive) but also an inspirational platform. Thus, the true similarity between VIP and BDI lies in the belief that a big idea (Jones, 2000), be it a vision or a brand, can help designers arrive at more meaningful solutions, that fulfill a promise or make a vision tangible.

Conclusions: BDI and ViP are comparable in terms of underlying ideas. They are different methods though. BDI uses the brand essence to create a new context for product design. In that sense, BDI can work as part of the ViP method. It can be a very good way to involve the brand in the new context. The author is interested in this kind of integration, where the BDI method becomes a tool within a larger toolbox.

Interview 16: Alex Edelman, the Nomad Company

Date: November 16th 2005
Function: General manager, the Nomad Company
Reason for interview: the Nomad Company is in the very brand driven outdoor equipment and apparel business. The author has worked for Nomad, advising them how to translate their brand into products.

Content of the interview: Alex Edelman, the last interviewee, has also been present when the very first seed for this project was planted: in 2002, Nomad revitalized their brand. The author was hired by Edelman as interim senior product manager to translate the new brand insights into a new product portfolio. Part of the job was to capture the new brand insights into a format the product managers could work with. Another part was to develop new products based on the new brand, and to coach other product managers in doing so. This project was carried out on the basis of intuition, experience, trial and error and learning on the spot. It challenged and motivated the author to such an extent that it resulted in this research project 3 years later.

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The interview with Edelman started with evaluating the 2002 project. The Nomad brand was revitalized with the use of Unilver's Brand-Key model. (see figure 29)

1. competitive environment
2. target
3. insight
4. benefits
5. values and personality
6. reason to believe
7. discriminator
8. essence

base: external factors
key hole: brand factors
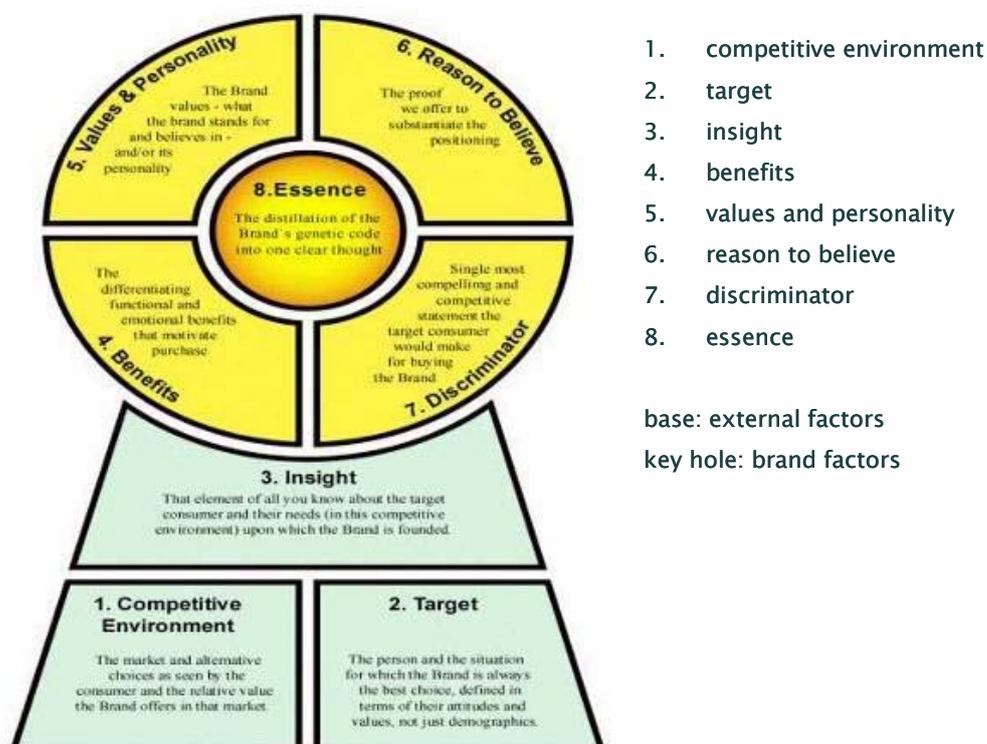
figure 29: the Brand-Key Model

Working on the model was a group process, with people form sales, marketing, product management, communications and general management present. The one-day session certainly led to many insights and valuable brand content. But it did not lead to what the author now refers to as 'brand usability': product managers weren't able to brief new products based on the brand as it was captured in the Brand-Key model. To solve this problem, the author translated the new brand content in a new format. This format involved capturing the brand in a set of unique user benefits, that were related to the brand and proposed an inviting promise to the user. There were five categories of benefits, ranging from themes such as 'prepared for the unexpected' to 'share the experience'. These themes did in fact inspire NPD. On product feature level, a great deal of innovation was accomplished based on these themes (figure 30).

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figure 30: products that were developed based on the new Nomad Brand

The themes did not succeed in triggering more break through innovation. This was in part due to the lack of NPD capacity in the organisation at that time. But, in hindsight, it was also due to the too literal and confining nature of the benefit categories. They were, as Edelman and the author see it now, too directive to truly invite Brand Driven Innovation.

In 2004, Edelman and his crew had a follow up session, again looking at the brand, updating it to new internal and external conditions. This time, the session started with filling a very basic triangle, consisting of the three questions who are we, what do we do, and how do we do it? (The author notes the absence of the 'why' and 'for whom' questions). Answering these questions with the team led to a very clear focus on the core business, core strategies, the core market and the core qualities of the brand. It was a more strategic business approach to the brand, and less a marketing / communications approach. This has led to a situation where the brand is in fact able to guide the different corporate functions (see figure 10). As such, the brand 'usability' has increased significantly. However, the subsequent new Brand Key session and implementation of the new insights did not lead to product innovations based on the brand. It led to new design aesthetics, and it changed the structure of the product portfolio, but it did not trigger the development of new product functionality. Edelman states that design aesthetics based on the brand are a 'table stake', required to enter the market, and no longer a unique selling point.

Edelman stresses that not mastering a BDI process is a problem for Nomad, but he also stresses the other side of the coin: one has to respond to market demands first of all. Healthy opportunism is required is required in the outdoor market. To combine a sharp intuition for the market with a strongly brand driven business (including BDI) would be the best combination.

Conclusions: The outdoor equipment and apparel market is very brand driven. There are many players, the industry is closely connected to the fashion business and product lifecycles are short so NPD budgets are low. Therefore, it is very logical for a company like Nomad to incorporate the brand in everything it does, and to place it centrally in the organisation. This creates the potential for Brand Driven Innovation, if the right creative designers are involved and the process is kept lean and agile.

A brand that has a high usability in driving strategic decisions does not necessarily have a high usability in driving innovation. Apparently, the brand format has to be geared towards the future user of the brand.

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Appendix 2: an overview of the interview conclusions

Research question 1: In your company, how is the brand defined, and how is it used?

- ⌘ For BDI to succeed it is not only a question of translating the brand essence into product innovations, it is foremost a question of capturing the brand in such a way that it *inspires* innovation. This means creating an open brand architecture that allows new things to happen, rather than sharply defining the brand in every detail and trying to pin it down. It also implies thinking about the brand as an inspirational platform where the exact definition of the brand depends to an extent on how consumers interact with it.

- ⌘ Without necessarily changing the contents of the brand, it might thus be necessary to rephrase it, to use a different format, suitable for future product development. Not so much what the brand stands for (what it says), but how this is captured (how it is said) determines whether designers can work with it.

- ⌘ This new format might also help people from other departments derive inspiration and guidance from the brand. Whether one format would work for all departments, or each department requires its own 'translation' is uncertain and falls outside of the scope of this research.

- ⌘ A brand promise is sometimes used explicitly, but more often not.

- ⌘ In some companies, brand and NPD are both tools for strategy implementation, and occupy a similar position in the organisation. In these cases, brand and NPD still have to be aligned, but they 'drive' each other rather than the brand driving the innovation.

- ⌘ To be able to work with a brand (e.g. use it as a source for product innovation), the people involved in using it will have to make the brand their own. The brand needs to be co-owned by all employees working with it. A way to achieve this is to involve these employees in the development of the brand.

- ⌘ The bull's eye model is sometimes used to capture the brand is a 'designer friendly' way. The focus can be on concrete features or more on imagery. In both cases, the brand becomes less abstract, and thus more 'useable' for designers.

research question 2: In your organization, how are the disciplines of branding and NPD organized, and how do they co-operate?

- ⌘ The organization of the brand and new product development are important. Putting the two disciplines together very early in the NPD project (at the FFE) helps brand people and product people work together, thus making BDI possible. Brand and NPD have to be close together in the organization. They have to have the same 'agenda'. If they are managed by the same person, who also embodies the brand and infuses the organization with a culture that is aligned with the brand, BDI could become a very intuitive and logical way of working.

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- The place of the brand in the organization is important. This place determines how the brand is used. Sometimes the brand is strictly a communication tool, placed inside the marketing department. In other cases the brand is a tool to implement strategy, placed next to other 'tools' like NPD, sales, HRM etc. In yet other cases, the brand is positioned within the organization as a source for all departments/functions (see figure 8).
- The product designer can have a significant influence on the brand. New products themselves impact the brand. But also the process of NPD has a large impact: it raises specific critical questions regarding the brand; the process of answering these questions and discussing them (with NPD people and brand people) often has a great effect on the positioning and contents of the brand.
- The brand plays an important role in providing strategic direction in the FFE. What this role is exactly merits thorough further research.
- In some cases, responsibility for the brand passes from brand management to product development in the course of NPD project.

research question 3: what methods for BDI do you know of or use?

- BDI is only half of the process, Innovation Driven Branding (IDB) being the other half. IDB is the process where new products are developed to influence the brand's position in the market, image or content (see appendix 5). Both processes play a vital role in product companies. A process model for Brand Driven Innovation could also work (the other way around) for Innovation Driven Branding.
- Focusing on solving concerns that align with your brand is a way of capturing the brand in the product's functionality.
- The use of signature design elements can connect the product to the sender. This works especially well if brand related functionality is added to the aesthetic signature.
- The BDI method should not try to fill in the creative effort that bridges the gap between brand and product. It can however give this creative phase a place in the method, and it can provide suitable input for this phase.
- Character boards and mood boards are a good way to translate the brand's essence into a design aesthetic. It is doubtful if they would work as well to translate the brand into product functionality and interaction, the focus of this research.
- A BDI project could start by briefing the product designers on the basis of the brand alone. This can lead to a large collection of concepts, that can subsequently be filtered through more practical criteria (can we make it, can we distribute it, etc). This is a reversed order compared to classic NPD process (Roozenburg & Eekels, 1998) where a full program of requirements is drafted before the idea generation starts.
- The bull's eye model can also be a process model: in this case it represents a transformation in two steps: first, the brand promise is transformed into project specific stakeholder benefits (deduction:

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what does this promise mean to the specific stakeholder, in this specific situation). Then, the project specific benefits are transformed into tangible, project specific product features (Induction: how do we create features that fulfill the promise?)

⌘ BDI is a new field of research, even according to experienced scholars in the field of NPD.

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Appendix 3: selected student work from the Brand & Product Strategy Assignment

Model and case 1: Alejandro Del Castillo and Robbert-Jan Van Oeveren

Author's note: Although the explanation of the model is a bit fuzzy, the thinking behind it is not: First the brand is re-defined in terms of sensory perception. Next, this sensory redefinition of the brand is used as inspirational input for each stage of the NPD process. In each stage, the sensory brand associations are translated into tangible product attributes, while at the same time, external inputs to the process are internalized by filtering them through the sensory brand.

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Alejandro Del Castillo C IO1231324
Robbert-Jan Van Oeveren IO1064673   November 3 2005

SUNFLOWER DEVELOPMENT MODEL
_____

The following is the description of the criteria of how the sunflower development model was conceived. The model starts with a simple inquiry. How can you enhance your brand by means of using senses? (senses as in touch, smell, feel, see, taste and emotions)

We used three models for our final model.
- The brand identity planning model (Aaker, Building strong brands, 1996)
- NPD Model (Jan Buijs)
- Sensory Brand Pyramid (Martin Lindstrom / Brand sense)

The NPD model concerns the general activities, from the fuzzy front end until the muddy back end including product development. Input is generated from two sides: from within the company and also from external analysis (see fig 1). A simplification of the model was made and it lead into the main activities that happen to do a new product development.

Concerning the model of Aaker (Fig 3), the main focus was to use the values that define the brand identity of the company. The central point of a company is it's core. It states the characteristics that state the meaning of the brand. This can for example be "making profit". But you communicate your brand identity. A brand identity is how you want the brand to be perceived by the public. Your brand image is the way a brand is actually perceived. However there can be a gap between the brand identity and the brand image. Our model provides 12 dimensions to close the gap between the brand identity and the brand image. These dimensions are divided into 4 perspectives; product, organization, person and symbol.
 When it was simplified, a circle can be seen on two different levels, the brand identity in the centre, and the brand image as the external point, which is the users perception of the brand.
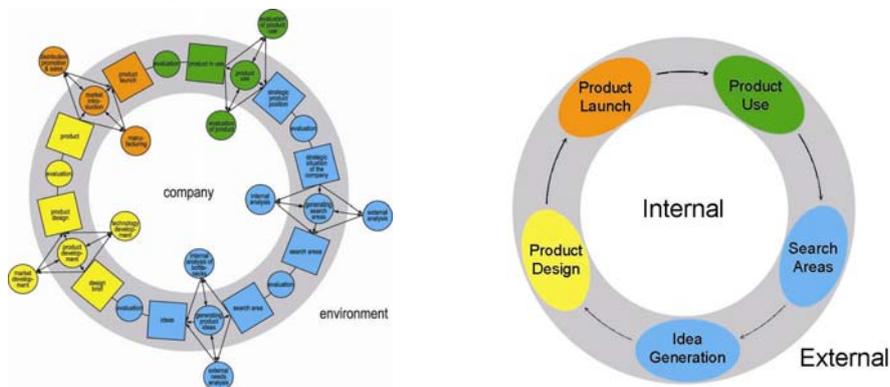
Fig 1&2 NPD model and simplified version
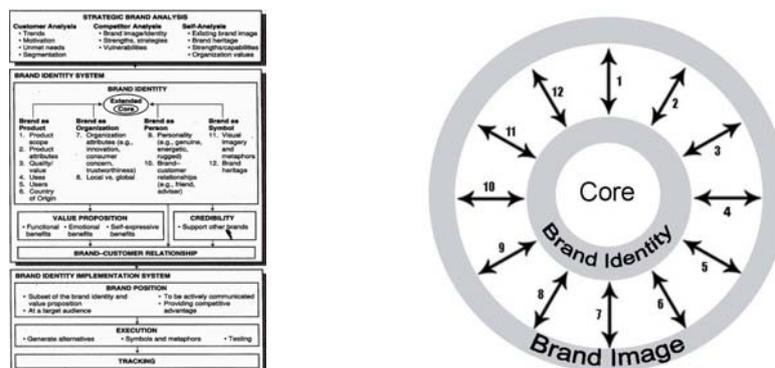
Fig 3 & 4 Brand identity planning model & new version

Our third model, the sensory brand pyramid model starts with the idea of smashing your brand (fig 5), which can be translated to a set of associations (most of them related with senses) that when taken out still make your brand a recognizable brand in the market. The more implications you can take out from the model and still be recognizable for users, the better your brand is within the market. (Smashability is high)

Then the pyramid states that when you want to increase loyalty and the smashability resistance of your brand, stimulating is the first step, by Then you enhance, this means that a unique characteristic(s) is placed upon the product, which makes it unique and the users recognize and see this as something unexpected, and the last level means bonding, which causes users to choose a product even without having to consider other alternatives.
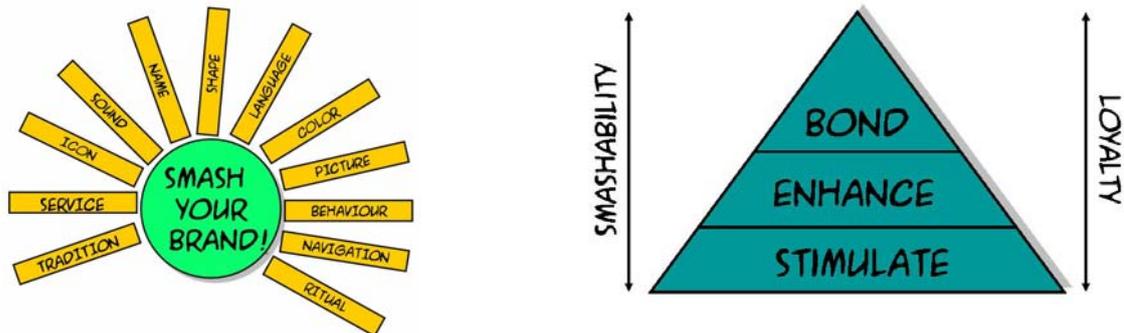
Fig 5 & 6 Smash your brand model & Sensory pyramid

The Sunflower model

When we combined the three models we obtained this image (fig. 7):

In the centre we can find the brand identity supported by the core values of the brand; it is what the whole flower stands upon Then there are the 12 key steps to transmit the core values into the brand image that the public is going to perceive. Each leaflet represents a NPD phase. The small red arch's shows the brand association barrier or what we call a "sense barrier", where we ask ourselves how to stimulate senses and how to translate the information obtained from external or internal analysis from a brand specific association-view to convert it into tangible product definitions.
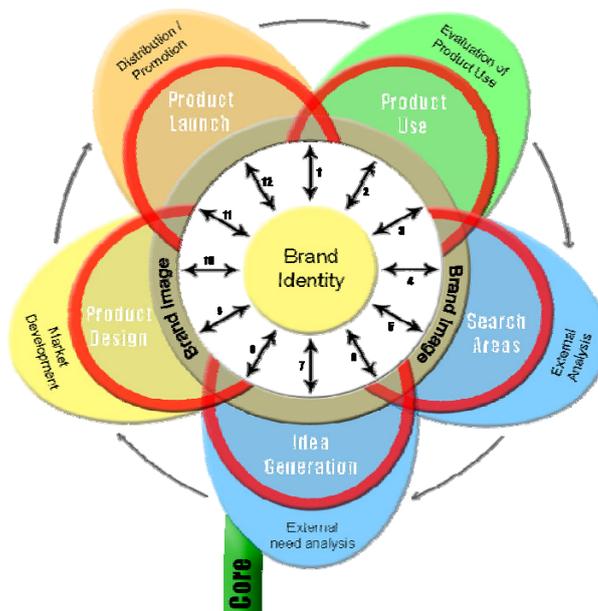
Fig. 7 Our Branded New Product Development Model

It is necessary to take into account that sense is just a part in the whole Branded new product development model, but it plays a key role because it helps a company look for specific associations that could at a first stage enhance their product (a smell, a sound) and
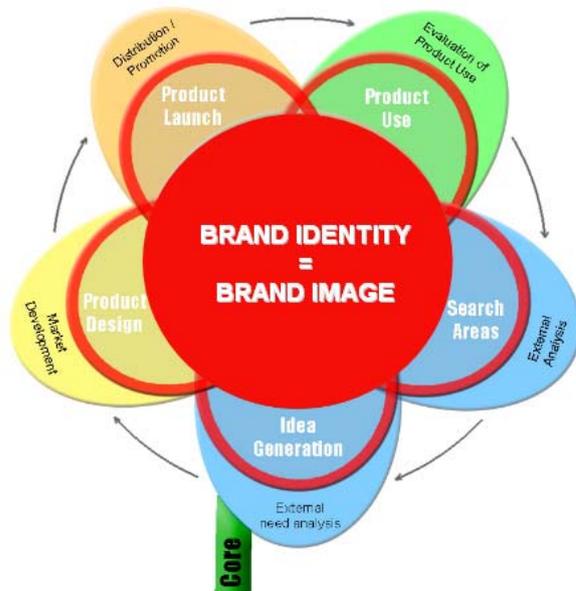
Fig 8. The ideal situation in our BNPD model

then make it unique (a totally unique taste, a special effect in the packaging) and this causes that the user perceives the same brand identity that the company wants to send in their propositions. This will make the final and most hard level to obtain, which is making the user bond to the brand, because they understand and appreciate the propositions made by the company which is reflected in the product or service.

This stage is in our model the ideal situation and is stated in the fig. 7; there is no gap between the brand identity and the brand image.

Brand Extension

Because we are talking about new product development and branding, we are actually talking about brand extensions. So we did a little research in Brand Extension literature and came up with a well-known and accepted theory; The brand association theory of Broniarczyk and Alba (1994). It says that brand specific associations are attributes or benefits that differentiate a brand from competing brands.

If a brand extends into a product category in which the brand can keeps the same brand associations, the extension is evaluated more favorably.

We implement this theory into our branding model. So we created a red line around all the NPD phases in the model. It represents a barrier which is focused on the brand specific associations of the mother brand and the enhancing of senses. For the internal part, it has to comply with the brand identity and brand image. Everything that's externally is filtered through our "brand association – sense barrier". In this way we focus on the brands characteristics during the new product development: branded new product development!

BEN & JERRY'S case

Take a moment to imagine a brand that makes delicious tasting ice creams, with a set of different custom flavours and those customers pay a high price for them but still they get a top quality product.

How can they develop a new product that offers all of these benefits to the customer and that still uses the senses associated with this brand to make the brand even stronger?

For us it was important at first to obtain information about the user's perception of the brand. So we asked a small sample of 10 students to come up with a series of general associations that characterize the brand:

American	Exclusive
Expensive	Funny Names
Happy	Whole chunks
Playful	Unique
Watching film	Packaging
Speciality Stores	Colourful
Taste	Good ingredients
Quality	

Then we started categorizing this comments in the different areas of the NPD model, and at the same time, we looked for sensorial relationships that could match within these words. The process starts around the area of the fuzzy front end within the search area.
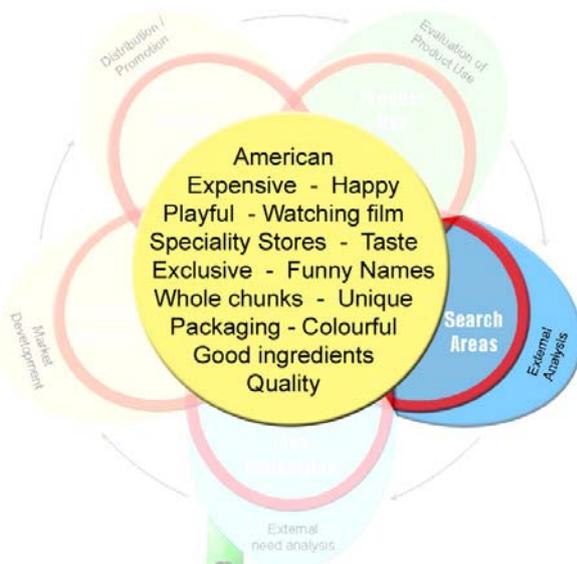
The words that came out from this first area were: American, unique, colourful, happy. Then we tried to give a meaning to these words to a sensory context, the interpretations can be used to deliver some design outlines in every stage of the process. And at the same time as an outcome for a next phase, a market is starting to take shape; in this case we defined a consumer beverage market.

The process continues in the other stages always looking in the external information, but also on the internal, to then filter through the sense barrier, and then along the second stage
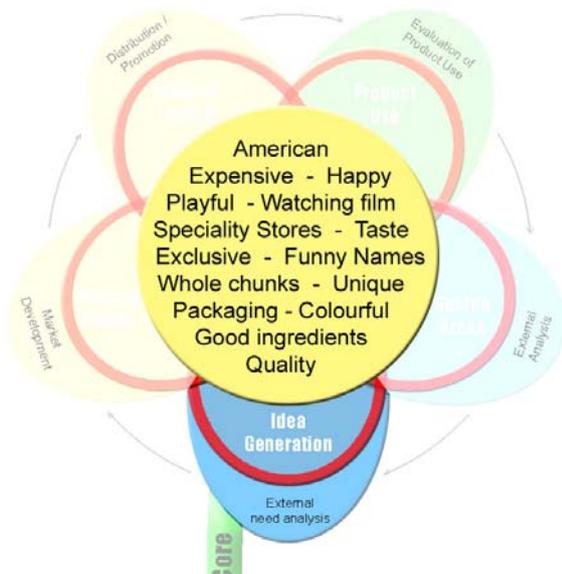
The items that were grouped in this stage were:

- Good ingredients
- Taste
- Whole chunks
- Playful

Then a new set of conclusions came up and we thought of developing frozen cocktails, we recognized that conclusions like these need much more analysis, but still they are useful as guidelines, and serve as a way of making a more complete branded new product development model.

The third stage focuses on the area of the product design. Each step uses the result from the previous one to make it more complete. In here we can find words like

- Whole Chunks
- Unique
- Packaging
- Colorful
- Quality

Example: Frozen Cocktail with chunks of fruit, a unique tastes and in a special package
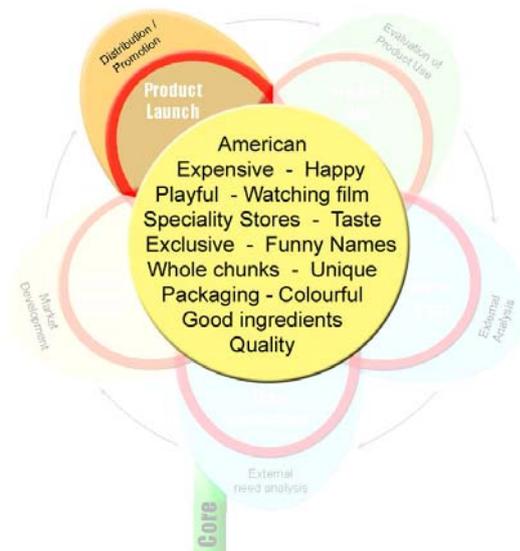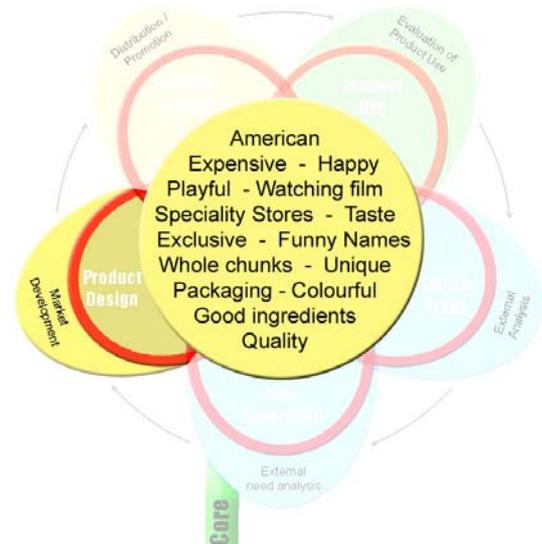
The fourth stage focuses on the product launch aspect of the development, and in this case it

- Expensive
- Specialty Stores
- Exclusive
- Funny Names

Example: Premium priced frozen cocktail available in specialty stores.
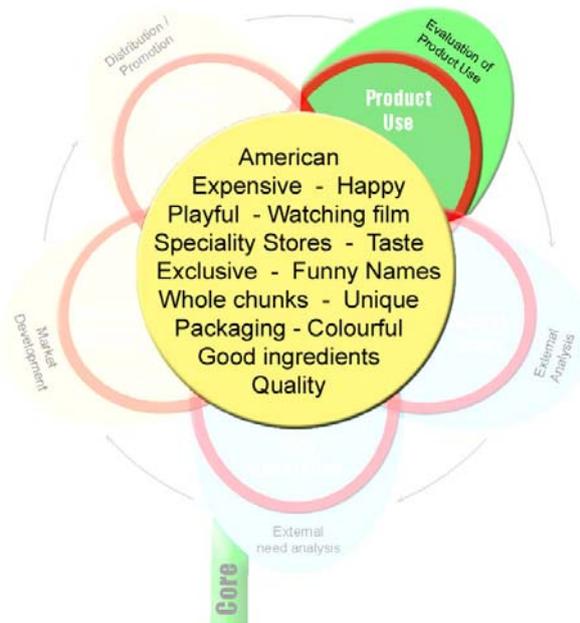
The last stage encompasses the aspect concerning the product evaluation, but we can also see this as a good moment to evaluate the complete process and determine the correct and incorrect steps that could have been taken during the development.

In an external evaluation you gain insight in your new brand image. Is it the image you wanted? How did your image change through this new product? Does it still comply with your brand identity?

Example: The brand is now not associated with playful anymore.

Our advice for B&J is to develop a product that could offer to the customer a new experience of having ice cream, and at the same time reminding them of all the previous unique characteristics the product offers. This kind of products are not only a matter of good taste, but also of presentation, smells, and sounds that could make a customer have much more of what he/she could expect from ice cream

Because we had little time to work out a complete case, we did only little research and the case discussed here is just to show how the model could be implemented in the different stages of the product development process.

Conclusion
As like the NPD model, the proposed sunflower model can be seen as a complete circle that can be repeated over and over again, the important fact is that we are trying to show the important of stimulating, enhancing and creating ways at the end of "bonding" customers, to the product or service based on the use of senses. This approach alto takes into account the 12 brand identity values and the main objective at the end is not only attaching customers, but also to make them perceive the bran identity the company proposes.

Model and case 2: Quiel Beekman and Joep Adank

Author's note: The pinball metaphor is brilliant. In developing great branded products a certain amount of luck is always welcome. Admitting that shows wisdom. Metaphor models have the tendency to become a bit corny. This one doesn't, because the metaphor is kept up in a consistent and imaginative way. It is a very holistic model, describing how NPD, branding, company, market and consumer relate to each other in this intricate game of pinball. It may not prescribe a working method, it certainly is a positive way of looking at things.

Note the students' referral to the author's BDI model as presented in chapter 6. The students first saw the model in a rather preliminary stage, and referred to it as such.

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Choose of our models

Brand models

Quiel

I can see myself applying *Aakers' Brand Identity Planning model.*

The purpose is to help consider different brand elements and patterns that can help clarify, enrich and differentiate an identity.

Aaker makes a four-fold distinction between brand as a product, as an organization a person and a symbol. A more detailed identity will help guide implementation decisions.

It is also very helpful in articulating what the brand should stand for in the customers mind. It is definitely a brand equity model.

His opinion is: A larger extended identity means a stronger brand

I moderated the model, in my opinion the examples were redundant and made the model much more complex.
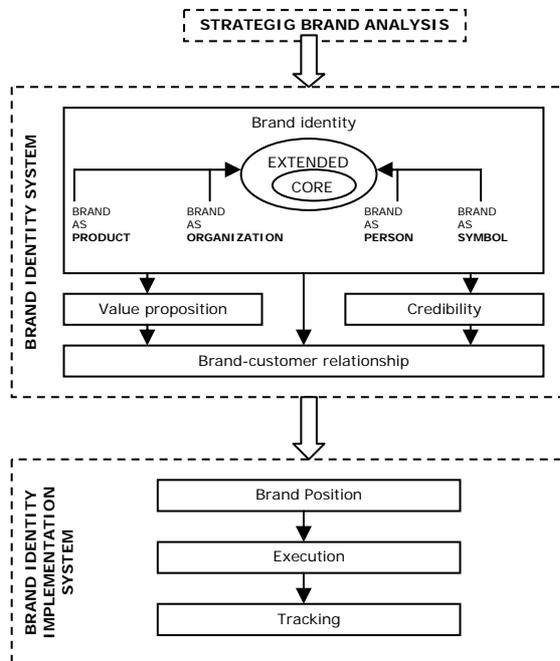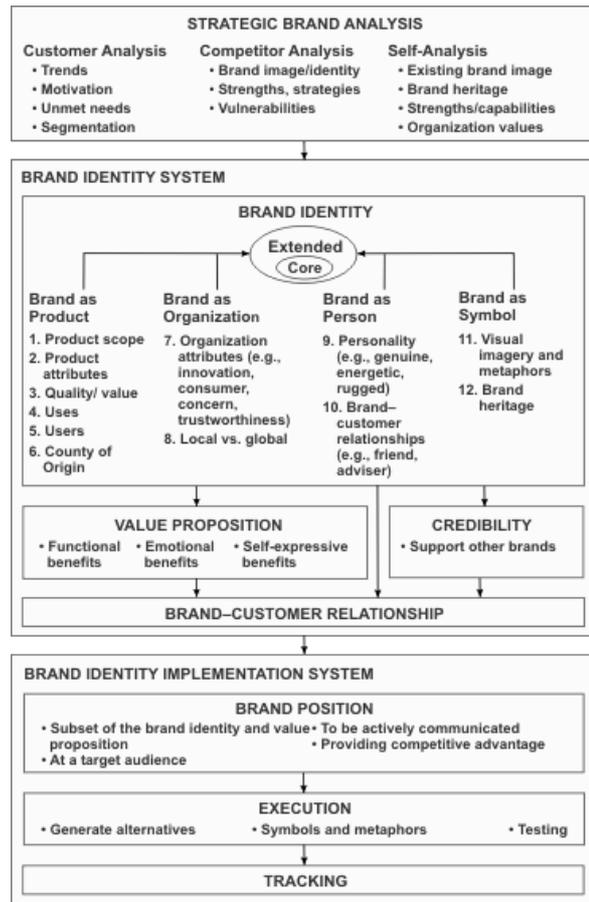
Joep

When I first saw this *Roscam Abbing 2005 model* it inspired me. I agree with the fact, as shown in this model, brands and products always depending on each other and never stop moving when they are in a good environment.

- Brand: In whatever form it's present in the organisation
- Promise: What the brand can do, and what it means to the consumer
- Fulfilment: Functions and interactions capturing competences and benefits in product scenario's
- External fit: Product market positions matching product scenario's to market, target group, distribution network and partners- or visa versa
- Internal fit: Matching product market positions with culture, technology, manufacturing capacity, and resources- or visa versa
- Product: Innovation
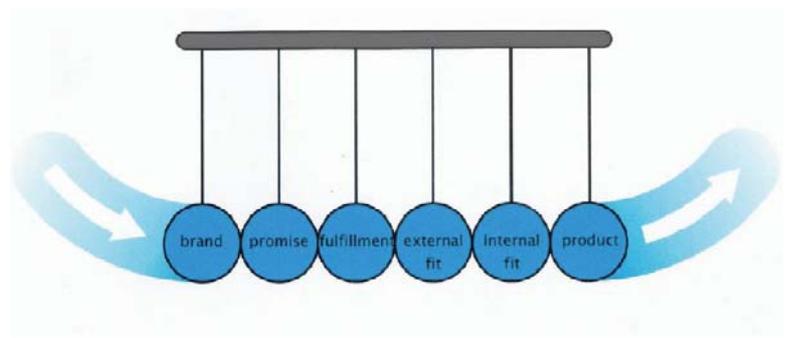
Roscam Abbing 2005

This model shows that you have to put energy in the process. Starting at the brand or the product maintenances less energy then starting at the fulfilment.

In a very clean environment this process will go on for ever. In my opinion they is never a perfect environment, so one day the process as shown will end (die). The only way of saving the brand and the product is putting more energy in the process.

New Product Development Model

Quiel

In earlier design processes I always apply *Roozenburg and Eekels' model of the basic design cycle.* It is a fundamental model, from function to design, of the problem-solving process in design. During the iterative trial& error process, the knowledge about the problem and the design increases.

The model always worked out for me. I think it is based on the VDI approach model, you can recognize the four phases and the iteration. A lot of NPD models are similar but often look complicated. If you put all the models of the New Product Management book together, you get the real complete development process. But it seemed a bit too extensive to explain.

ANALYSIS
The function is every technical, psychological and economical aspect the design needs to accomplish.
General solutions will be generated.
SYNTHESIS
Generating a tentative design, a preliminary design.
The whole is not just the sum of the parts.
The sub-solutions aren't simply gathered.
EVALUATION
Testing the quality or value of the design.
Feedback to the earlier made objectives.
SIMULATION
Trying to forecast the quality, features and the value
of the product by making models and simulations.
DECISION
Proceeding the development of the design
or generating a new idea? Back to the synthesis
or analysis?
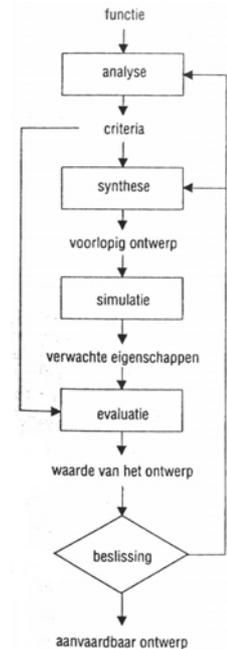
Joep

As a NPD model I like *the "Battle" model as viewed by a New Product Manager*. The model is focusing on the manager, but I think the same model can be used for new product development.

The model shows that a new product manager not only has to deal with the company and the product, but also with a system in between. In this case the manager has to convince the critics within the firm, the federal legislators, the Legislators in the states, the regulators at all levels and the individuals before launching a product at the consumers and the public.

A new idea must be very strong and it must be very convincing. The critics within the firm have to be satisfied before launching the idea to the market.
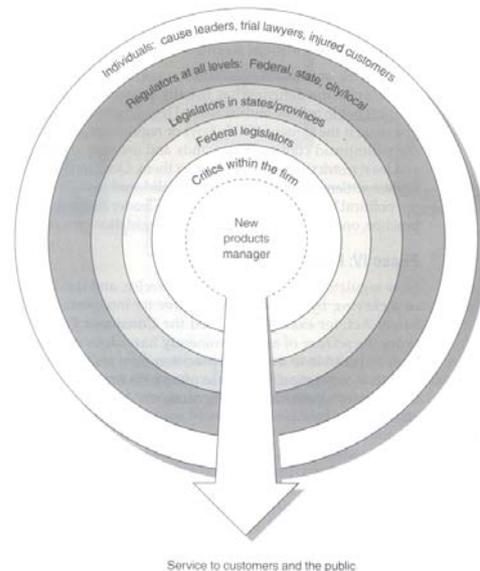
Key features existing models

Advances

- Roozenburgs' and Eekels' NPD model is separated in four phases.
    - Analysis
    - Synthesis
    - Simulation
    - Evaluation
- Roozenburgs' model is an iterative trial and error model, similar to reality.
- Roscam Abbings model is a dynamic model. The NPD process is also dynamic.
- The "battle" as viewed by a new product manager (from the product managers point of view) shows a struggle of the new product manager. For a new product it is similar to the new product manager

Disadvances

- Most brand and NPD models are static, while we think the brand and the product development are always in movement.
- A lot of NPD models are comparable but often look complicated
- People with no design background or education can't understand the models. Only by examining the models they can be interpreted correctly.
- There are no models combining the band and the new product development
- There are no models describing a " strategic hole in the market"

The new BNPD model

Before creating a new BNPD model some demands made.

Design objectives

- The four development phases mentioned by Roozenburg' and Eekels' must be in the model. It is typical for developing a product.
- It must be a dynamic model.
- The gap between the brand image and the brand identity should be as small as possible. This needs a smooth communication between the consumer and the company.
- Every person must understand the model without examination even people without a design background.
- The product only stays on the marked when company keeps investing in the product. If the company stops putting in credits the product it will disappear.
- A product sometimes launched at the market and fills a "strategic gap in the market".
- The life cycle of a product always starts with a development and after that it is launched at the market.
- Competitors always affect the chances at market.
- A successful product not only can be subscribed to good insight, predictions and control but there is also a small bit of luck needed to find the strategic gap in the market.

The new BNPD model

We both think very visual, so we tried to develop a model that can easily be understood by a lot of people and doesn't need a lot explanation. We found a metaphor almost everyone is common with. The BNPD metaphor should include control, but also a bit of luck. So we decided to pick an pinball machine.
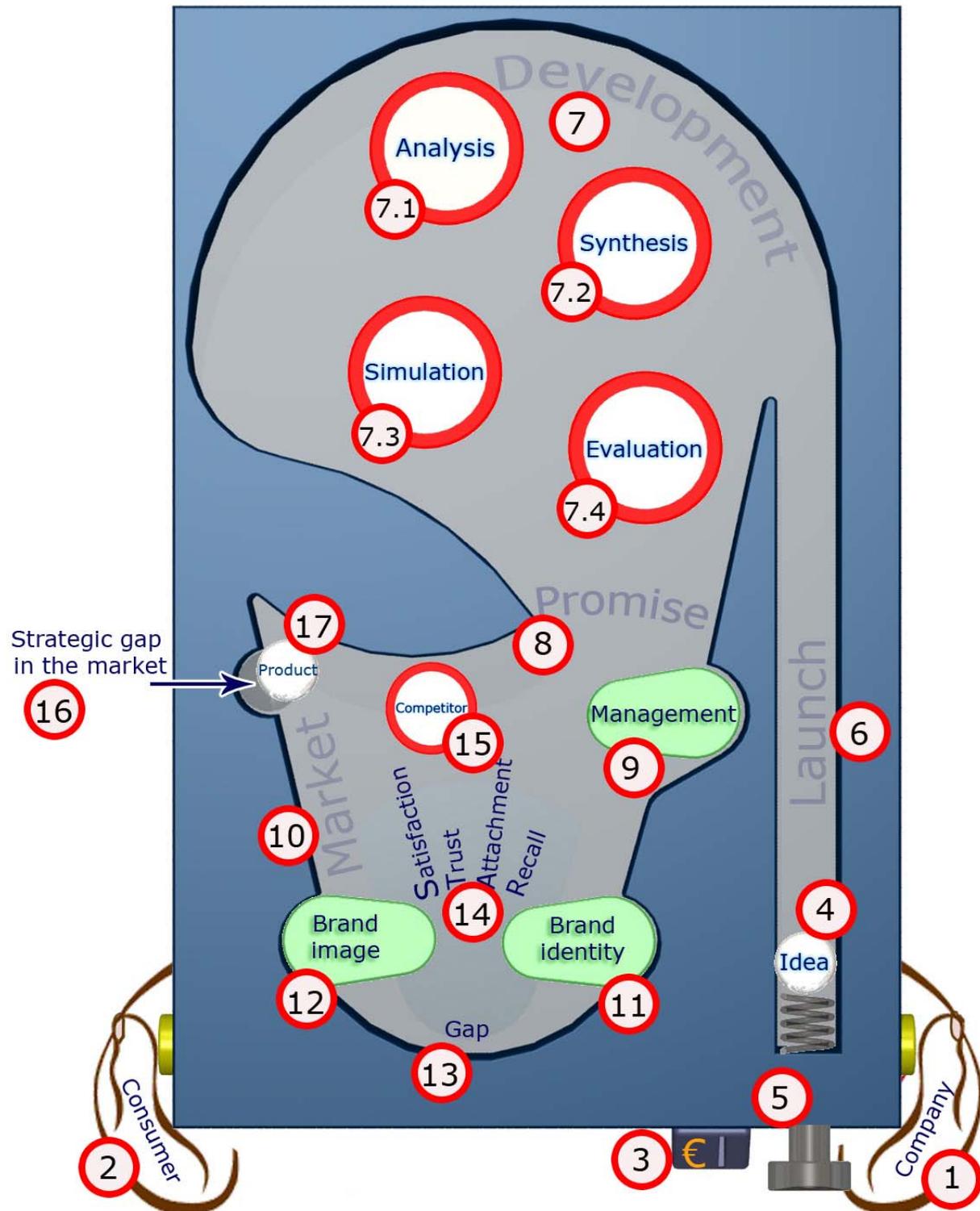
3D Pinball model
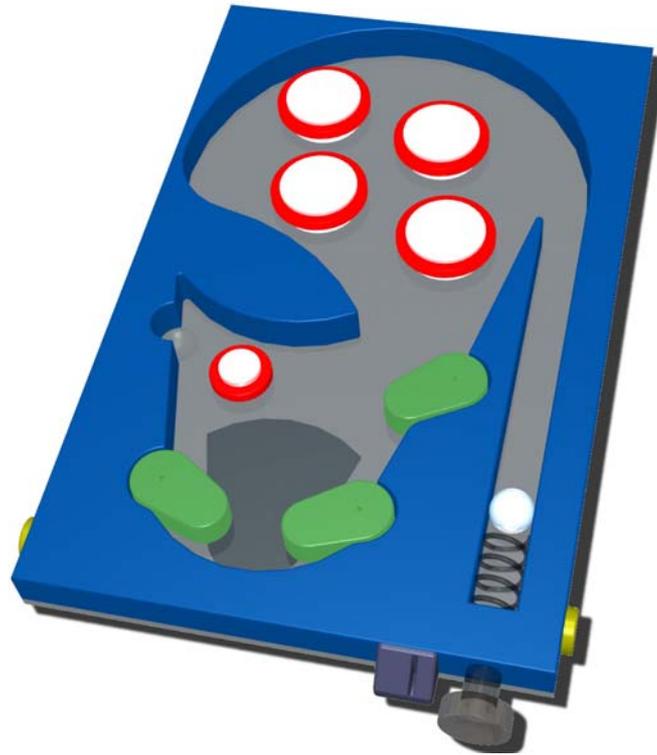
The Adank and Beekmans' Star Pinball model
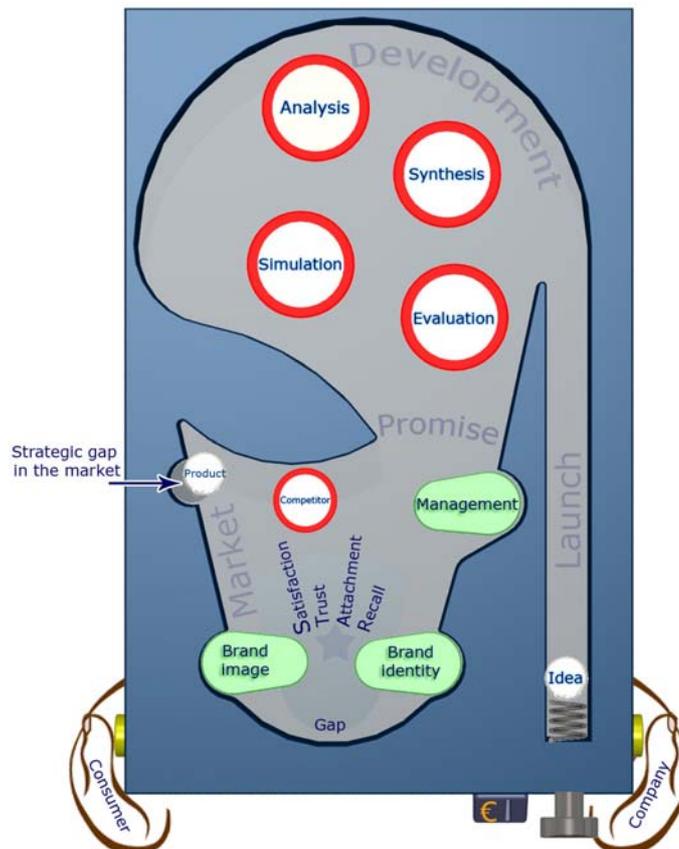
Explanation

To explain our model we describe every step in the model. The number are corresponding with the explanation at the next pages.

1. Company: The company defines the brand identity, puts the credits into a idea and decides the strength of the launch. The management is a part of the company, it has control over which ideas will complete the development and enter the market.

2. Consumer: The consumer is responsible for the brand image. How do they interpret what the company wants to tell? If the brand identity matches the consumer needs, the gap between brand image and identity is very small. In case the company doesn't listen to the consumer and doesn't answer consumer needs, the ball will slip away through the gap.

3. Credits: Without credits or money no investment.

4. The idea: When an idea is born it has a long way to go to go into the development. After the development it will transform into a product.

5. Trigger: The strength of the launch decides how the idea gets launched. How convincing is the idea and will it survive development? Will it go to the analysis phase or directly to the synthesis phase? This is totally in the hand of the company. A product will go directly into the synthesis phase when for example a new visual variant of a product is developed.

6. Launch: Idea get launched by and in the company (right hand) into the development phase.

7. Development: In this area the idea will go to several phases, the analysis, the synthesis, the simulation and the evaluation phase. It depends of the idea and external factors as new technologies how long the product will stay here.

7.1 Analysis: Analysis from the product the technology or the competitor. The function is every technical, psychological and economical aspect the design needs to accomplish. General solutions will be generated.

7.2 Synthesis: Generating a tentative design, a preliminary design. The whole is not just the sum of the parts. The sub-solutions aren't simply gathered.

7.3 Simulation: Trying to forecast the quality, features and the value of the product by making models and simulations.

7.4 Evaluation: Testing the quality or value of the design. Feedback to the earlier made objectives.

8. Promise: The idea will go further in the pinball and will transform into a product, but only if the management of the company is satisfied with the promise. The promise is what the company owes the consumer. Can the company fulfill their promises? In case they fail, they loose all the thrust of the consumers. When the company isn't satisfied the product will be send back in to the development. The management could also decide to let the ball through and launch it to the market.

9. Management: Management is control. It decides or the product is ready for the market or it has to be sent back in the development phase. Is the market ready for the product?

10. Market: The market is where it all happens. A lot of things influence what happens on the market as brand identity, brand image, competitors, S.T.A.R etc. For every product there is a different market.

11. Brand identity: The brand identity is controlled by the company. It represents where the company stands for.

12. Brand image: The brand image is controlled by the consumer. It is how the consumers think about the brand. It is their perception and their opinion. It is like a person; does the consumer like to be associated with the brand?

13. Gap: There is always a gap between the brand identity and the brand image. When the brand identity and the brand image are not working together the product will fall in this gab and disappears from the market. In the ideal situation there is a balance. The consumer's perception is equal to what the company wants to be or say.

14. S.T.A.R
The star analysis stands for the equity of the brand.
S stands for satisfaction. Is the consumer satisfied, does he have good memories of the products earlier used of the same brand?
T stands for thrust. When the consumer buys the brands products, he spends his well earned money and he expects the product to work well. So he will put thrust into the company.
A stand for attachment, is the consumer attached to similar product or products of the same brand?
If one or more of this terms are related to the consumer, he will recall the brand name when he wants to buy a new product. It can be a replaceable product but also a new product never bought before. And that is where the R stands for. In case the consumer thinks in positive way about your brand and your brand is the first he recalls, you have a strong brand. Your brand answers the consumer's needs.

15. Competitor: The competitor is an insecure factor on the market. While the product is on the market competitors' reaction is unpredictable. It could influence the product in a different ways. It is an uncontrolled factor. The competitor can change direction: so better control is needed and better cooperation and communication between consumer and company. And maybe the product must go back into development or you have to invest more.

16. The strategic gap in the market: When a product is launched on the market and the environment is good, the brand image and brand identity are working smooth together it could happy that the product will enter the strategic gap in the market. A product could stay there for a non decided time. It's very difficult to forecast when the ball comes out.
In the meanwhile the the company earns extra credits. They can launch sometimes a second product without losing lots of energy. But they can also sit back and use the credits for later.
Of course the product couldn't stay in the strategic gap forever so it will come back at the market and needs further considering and maybe improvement. And the company can decide to let it go and put no further energy and credits in it.

17. Product: The result of the development of the idea.

Pinball model feat. Senseo

1. **Company:** For this example two companies worked together and created Senseo.

2. **Consumer:** People how are in a hurry and want to drink only one cup of café.

3. **Credits:** Both companies, Philips and Douwe Egberts invested in the new idea of making café.

4. **The idea:** To make one cup of café very fast.

5. **Trigger:** The idea of making one cup of cafe very fast is a new concept so the companies have to pull the trigger to launch the idea into the development.

6. **Launch:** The idea is launched into the development.

7. **Development:** When the idea arrives the development the product goes through the different phases. The analysis, synthesis, simulation and evaluation phase.

8. **Promise:** The idea has got a promise and when the management agrees with it the idea will transform to the product. In this case; Philips has a reliable image, so they promise you by launching the Senseo and putting their name on the product, the product is reliable.

9. **Management:** We suppose: After the evaluation phase they wanted feedback from the objectives. When they got that they let the product entering the market.

10. Market: The company responds on the consumer needs. The consumers trusts Senseo.

11. Brand identity: It is satisfied and attached to earlier Philips and DE products.

12. Brand image: Consumers love the product and buy the Senseo.

13. Gap: The brand identity and the brand image collaborate fine, so the product won't fall into the gap.

14. S.T.A.R: Maybe the consumer drunk DE coffee and bought a Senseo because they **trust** DE. In case they are **satisfied** about the Senseo, maybe they'll buy a Philips water boiler when they need one in stead of a Bosch. Because they got **attached** to the Senseo. So they will **recall** the brand name Philips when they need new home appliances.

15. Competitor: At the beginning there were no real competitors on the market.

16. The strategic gap in the market: So no competitors and a lot of content customers, this leads to the strategic gap in the market where the product will stay of a while. In the meanwhile Philips and DE developed variants and launched them on the market, to keep the consumers interested and aware.

17. Product: Nowadays they are different Senseo' s on the market..

Comment: The Senseo won't stay forever in the strategic hole of the market. When it comes out Philips and DE has to deal with more products or maybe a wider product range. (as they did with the bigger water reservoir) To keep the products on the market good communication and control is necessary. The gap between image and identity must be closed. If there is a balance between them, the consumer will stay satisfied and puts his trust in the company or cooperation and will be able to recall the brand. And that exactly is what makes a strong brand.

Model and case 3: Rik Wuts and Irwan Pratama

Author's note: Wuts and Pratama take the inspirational approach. Their reasoning is that if the brand is sufficiently inspirational for everyone working with it, it will become a driver. The brand will drive product innovation if it inspires product designers. This model helps to define the brand in such a way that all the people in the company understand it and are inspired by it. The visuals of the model are wonderful. The students rightfully refer to the author's Product Brand Plaza as presented in chapter 6. It is based on the same train of thought, but focuses on inspiring product and brand designers.

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Brandvertigo

When we started this exercise, it was clear to both of us that our model shouldn't be yet another scientifically correct flowchart. We don't like them, and we don't think they belong with something as emotional as a brand. In fact we really believe that brand is an affective, passionate, and loveable thing. It is more about experience than about theory. We had all these ideas, but we could not condense the brand thing into one simple sentence. And we found it very hard to incorporate NPD into it, as we thought there isn't much to add to existing models. So we decided to define some goals, as to which our model should allude:

> to fuel genuine understanding of the company's brand
> to *unfuzz* the concept of a brand to those not directly involved
> to help inspire people, starting from the brand.

We believe in the brand plaza concept which also goes along with our thought. The brand must be everywhere in the company, in every muscle and fiber. This means that everyone in the company oozes the brand, lives the brand, and breathes the brand. We think that if you have all your people infused with all that your brand has to offer they will sort of automatically 'do the right thing'. That goes for designers too; we expect a great brand to incubate ideas that fit it. So getting to know your brand will help NPD as well. This, of course goes provided that the company already has some sensible way doing NPD. As mentioned before, existing theory on the design process should suffice.

So the company has to make an effort to get everyone on the bandwagon, and fire the same understanding and inspiration within all their employees. That effort is at the heart of our model. We believe that good brands represent what a company has to offer and what it can be. That's important, because to actually live the brand, everyone on the team has to walk the walk. So we need something to explain the brand to all the people in the company. That way the brand can actually serve as a sort of common consciousness. So our model is a **tool** to get to know and experience the brand. It's about asking (yourself) a lot of questions about the brand, and learning in the process.

The model

The main idea behind this model is that you can sort of (mentally) enter the model, immerse yourself in it. Hopping along the steppingstones back and forth and let the symbols inspire thought about the brand. The 5 icons are symbolic to what we believe is important about a brand; they are abstractions to facilitate thinking out of the box. There is an idea behind each of them which we will explain in more detail now.
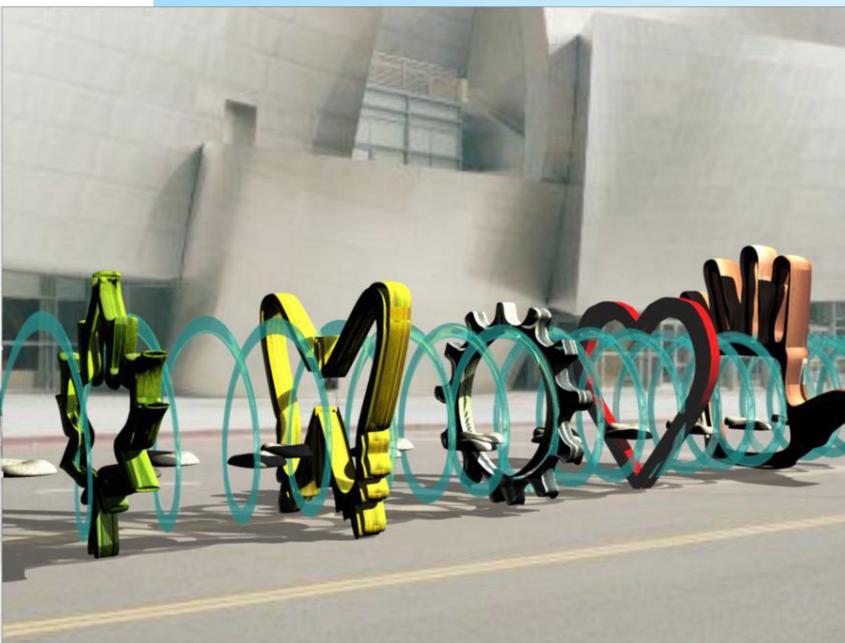
Leaves are about growth. It is about using solar energy to build trees and plants. The extraordinary process of photosynthesis. What's your solar energy?

Butterflies pop out of their cocoon and fly out into the world with all sorts of beautiful colors and shapes. Just like ideas do. Where do the ideas come from? Where do they take you?

Sprockets churn forever, they carry energy around. They wear and tear, and have to be replaced over time. One cog puts another one in motion. How does your brand work to incite a chain reaction?

Hearts are, of course, about love. It's also what makes us tick. What's the really basic thing about the company? What about it makes people really fond to be where they are?

Your hand is used to feel things, pick them up and touch your friends. You make connections, and get a lot of information in the process. How does your brand connect to the outside world?

Together, these things should give quite an impression what the brand is all about, even maybe what it should be about. It should inspire a way of thinking. You can have your boss tell you what the brand is, and what it should say ('we want to be blahlahblah') but it's just not the same. YOU have to come to the right conclusions yourself in order to understand and believe, and act accordingly. This, is inspiration!

People need inspiration, they need something to get up at 6:30 every morning to get to work. Inspiration is the key. And of course it is also the key to great design, good food, nice movies and such. It is what makes your customers experience something your competitors can't offer. And that goes for everyone in the firm. But it's especially important to the design staff, so that they will create products and experiences that aren't generic, but match the brand, and make its appearance stronger.

Case study: Nike

Background

Nike is a sports brand. They started out making slick running shoes because of the founders' passion for running. It didn't start out like the big brand it is right now. It kind of grew on them, because they felt they had something special going on, the conviction to do something new, something better. That's the big issue here: by just building on their heritage, Nike became the most successful sports brand in all of history.

Let's get into the early days of Nike, when things were still simpler than they are today. The first employee was Jeff Johnson, who was a running enthusiast also, and he got what Nike was all about. When asked to sell the first shoes, he sat down with athletes to gather their thoughts. He then went on to set up a shop that was totally into what runners wanted and needed. Sounds like a nice place to start. Or a nice place to get running shoes. Eh?

Nike's conviction to helping athletes along has sprung from their minds a storm of innovations. Here are some really great examples: Nike Free, shoes that follow the shape of your feet, to loose the feeling of constraint. Or Maxsight, lenses that enhance sight in specific sports conditions. Then there's Nike golf, it took golf away from the 'old guys' like Callaway and made it a mainstream thing with great emphasis on the user. How about creating a division that focuses completely on women and all their special needs (in sports that is)? And on top of all that they manage to connect to urban culture with the Nike ID thing that lets you create your own shoes.

Application of our model

Arguably all of these concepts just mentioned are both branding and product inventions. But we think all of them exist in fact because people at Nike are completely up to par with everything their brand has to offer, and walk their walk. Using our model, we tried to answer the questions that it evokes and tried to create an example that really captures the intention. We took all the knowledge we know about Nike from customers' point of view and try to explain it through our model.

Leaves
Nike obviously feeds on what the people do with their products. The energy that people get from using their gear is partly Nike's to play with. Ordinary people that make extraordinary things happen. It is a drive to go beyond what's been done before.
From the early beginning with the runner Steve Prefontaine, Nike had build up a clear relationship with its major user (the athlete). Nike gives what athletes need in achieving the maximal result in their fields. And the athletes give the energy to Nike to grow up more in a mutual symbiosis. Just like just like leaves give food for the tree which in turn makes the leaves themselves grow.

Butterflies
Nike's ideas come from incredible knowledge. Research in unconventional areas. Don't rely on others seems a red line throughtout: they maintain a scientific research lab in the physiology of sports. This offers new points of view, and leads to great concepts. Go figure.

Sprockets
One thing made another. Their succes with the brazilian footbal team got them credibility. This extended quite a bit: today they are endorsed by some of the world's best athletes and work together with them. And they give a lot in return: Nike energy is carried by their role models, they serve as an example of what's possible with conviction, talent and Nike gear.

Heart
Pitch, court, green, track or whatever you call it are the places the Nike people love and know by heart. It's where their inspiration and conviction comes from. It's all about the experience. It's about competition, doing what your best at. And winning!

Hands
Ask yourself. Would golf enjoy the same popularity it does today if it weren't for Nike? How come their sneakers appeal to youth culture so well? Why do kids want high performance sneakers to go to school with? Nike communicates in many languages to give information about its brand to a broad audience. It doesn't seem to be matter whether they are men, women, kids, or adult. The campaign against racism with the "speak up stand up" slogan also shows how well the brand is intertwined in today's culture.

We hope this explained our rather fly-high model a bit. Some last words of consideration are appropriate: we're aware of the limited immediate applicability of this model. However, as mentioned in the classes, by now we've probably contributed on the theory on BNPD. We feel that 'brand thinking' has a lot of yet uncharted places left, and most of it won't be all too eager to be captured in lines and boxes. Hence, we think this approach is very viable, and that it offers a good way of viewing the brand from a 'workfloor perspective.' The only way to tap all of branding's potential, in a world where branded communication and advertising is losing most of it's impact, is to use it as a launching pad for entire companies.

Model and case 4: Alexandros Iliopoulos and Oliver Sundberg

Author's note: Again a great metaphor that is kept up consistently and with humor. Brand Driven Innovation is interpreted as brand extension. The 'quality' of the brand determines the solidity and height of the bridge pylon. The higher the pylon, the further the NPD bridge deck can reach. But: you need solid corporate ground to anchor the brand pylon, or it all collapses before you've reached the other shore. The model does not describe how to develop products from brands, but it does show very well what variables and conditions are in play. And it introduces NPD as a vital part of brand extension, a notion that is ignored by most writers on extension theory.

Iliopoulos and Sundberg interestingly state that the more abstract and intangible the brand is, the better it is able to foster extensions with large product dissimilarities. Thus, defining a brand on a more abstract level should lead to more innovating products. If the designers still understand the brand that is.

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The Suspension Bridge Brand Extension Model

Goals

Our model seeks to depict the relationship between the New Product Development process that is being used to create a successful brand extension, and the effect that the brand itself has upon the successfulness of the extension.

The model is based upon our personal vision that the brand should be a determining factor in the decision to create brand extensions. As such, our model begins after a strategic decision to extend has been made.

Model Overview

The model should be understood from left to right and consists of two pieces of land connected by a suspension bridge. The left piece of land represents the parent brand that has decided to make an extension. The soil of the parent brand is depicted as being sandy, dry and unfertile. This is to show the saturated market situation that the parent brand is situated in. Although this might not always be the real reason for an extension, we feel that the metaphor of fertile and unfertile soil is a god illustration in general.

The right hand side of the model represents the brand extension. Here the soil is pictured as being moist, dark, and fertile. We have even added a palm tree to give this land the feeling of a luxurious place to be (oasis). There might be several attractive places for the parent brand to extend to, these could have been represented as different extension islands, but to avoid unnecessary confusion we have chosen only to picture the successful brand extension soil as one piece of territory. The distance between the two territories is meant to symbolize the product dissimilarity between the parent brand products and the extension products.

Although not pictured on the model, the inhabitants of the parent brand territory represent the company. The objective of these people is to exploit the fertile soil of the brand extension territory.

They are prevented from swimming or sailing to the other side, by the terrible deep see monster, lurking in the great depths of the unknown. The sea monster and deep water represents the abyss and the difficulties that lay in the way of the decision of the brand to extend.

The NPD

The mean of transportation from the left territory to the right one, will be provided by the New Product Development Process. This process describes the steps that the company has to undertake to create, generate, produce and launch the new brand extension. However the process is not sufficient on its own to cross the water. If the deck of the NPD is not suspended on pillars, it will end up in the water.

Brand Extension Foundation

This is where the synergy between the brand and the NPD process becomes obvious. The company's brand lays the foundation for the brand extension, but also determines how far from the original product the extension product can be.

To build a bridge for the crossing, a solid foundation is essential. We have pictured this as large block of concrete established deep in the parent brand soil. This block represents the company's foundation in terms of basic skills such as: Technology, Resources, Finance, Personnel and etc…

The Type of Brand

The foundation supports the giant pillar of the bridge. The pillar represents the different dimensions that a brand can achieve. The higher the pillar, the more the brand attributes are based upon intangible attributes such as values, personality, etc. The height of the pillars determines how far the span of the bridge can be, and thus also the range of the brand extension. A brand that is value-based has high pillars, and therefore is able to make extensions with great product dissimilarities, whereas brands that are based on know-how cannot.

4

Effects of the Extension to the Parent Brand

Since the bridge has to be built from one side only, the strings that suspend the bridge deck will have to be anchored on the parent brand land. The larger the bridge, the further inland the anchoring point will have to be. The distance between the anchoring point and the bridge pillar, represents the scale of the effects that the brand extension has on the parent brand. Effects that can be potentially fatal to the parent brand if not realized before making the extension.

Where is our model useful?

Besides describing the relations between the brand and NPD process in a spectacular way, we feel that our model is useful when trying to determine whether a potential brand extension is a good venture, or not. It forces the analyst to think of the effects of the extension to the parent brand, before the extension is created.

The Business Case

Abstract

In this paper we are focusing on the application of the Suspension Bridge Brand Extension Model on the brand of Google, in an attempt to evaluate and provide recommendations concerning a hypothetical brand extension to the children's toys market.

The Google Brand

The Google brand is considered a very strong brand, due to its ability to convincingly transform itself and become more tangible, more experiential and thus more real. The Google brand has a very good parent product, delivers a fun logo and name and can inspire very high user loyalty. Google is about simplicity; about information delivered; about making things easy and uncomplicated. But there is one aspect of the Google brand that has changed since its creation, a carefully orchestrated broadening of the term "search" from purely internet-bound browsing, to the power of information, made easily available– regardless of how this is delivered. The company's statement explains this very specifically:

"Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful"[1]

These factors combined together with our love and devotion to the Google brand, led us to choose Google for our business case to test our model.

In a survey contacted and published in Forbes[2], Google is one of the 10 strongest brands according to consumer research. In that research the consumers also choose 5 desirable extension products for their favourite brands. One of the extensions for Google was children's toys. The rest were Instant Messaging Service, Dating Network and Video Games. We chose the first one, since it's the most dissimilar one from Google's current products.

Model application and results

As we apply the values of the Google brand to our model, we can immediately observe the weaknesses that the toy extension would bring. First of all we concentrate on the bridge foundation. They will have to be reinforced, in order to withstand the build of the extension to the toys' market. Specifically, changes will be required in the Technology, the

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[1] http://www.google.com/corporate/business.html

[2] http://www.forbes.com/home/ebusiness/2005/06/16/google-ebay-apple-cz_kb_0615brands.html

Knowledge and the Structure of the company. Google will have to adapt to the requirements and standards of the new market it will try to enter. A serious problem is the lack of skills and knowledge of the Google personnel. This problem can be addressed by: re-educating the staff, new staff members, or buying of experience from the competition.

Shifting our attention from the foundation to the pillar of the bridge, where the Brand is depicted, we can observe that the Brand is very strong. Google has tall pillar since it's a high valued brand. It can withstand the weight of the extension, since it has a broad range for extending.

At last the bridge model also indicates major implications on the parent brand, due to the extension to the children's toys market. For a start, the mission statement of the company will need to be altered in order to accumulate the new extension, which is not relevant to the "information-provider" mentality, of the Google brand thus far. Moreover it is fundamentally important for the brand to redefine its core values and vision (unless the extension is made as a strategic way of fulfilling that vision). Google will also need to address issues of consumer responsibility and personality, through a change in its marketing policy.
This can be realized by the simple truth that the Brand is shifting from a free consumer-services provider to a consumer goods producer, which will have to charge for its products. This will result in a change of the targeted market and also in a very possible change in consumer's perception of the Google brand.

Conclusion and Business Advice

Concluding we need to stress out that a brand extension should not be made if the product that will enter the market is of a lesser quality or function than the products that competitors already have on the market.
The extension of Google in the toys' market, although possible because of the strength of the Google brand, is not advisable. It will result in a complete reorganization of the brand's values, personality and resources. This will lead to products, which are not guaranteed to bring extra value, in comparison to the competing brands in the market of children's toys.

*Model and case 5: Fernando Del Caro Secomandi, Marion Streubel and Ruth Delfgaauw*

Author's note: a very elegant model describing with great precision how the product is staged at the junction of brand and consumer values. Especially the two-directional nature of the model (one can start at either end) is interesting. It assures product relevance both in terms of fulfilling the brand's promise and in terms of fulfilling a genuine consumer need. And it can be used for defining new products as well as evaluating existing products. The rotation that takes place in the case-study leaves us curious as to what other purposes the model might have (brand positioning, portfolio management?).

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The new BNPD model explained

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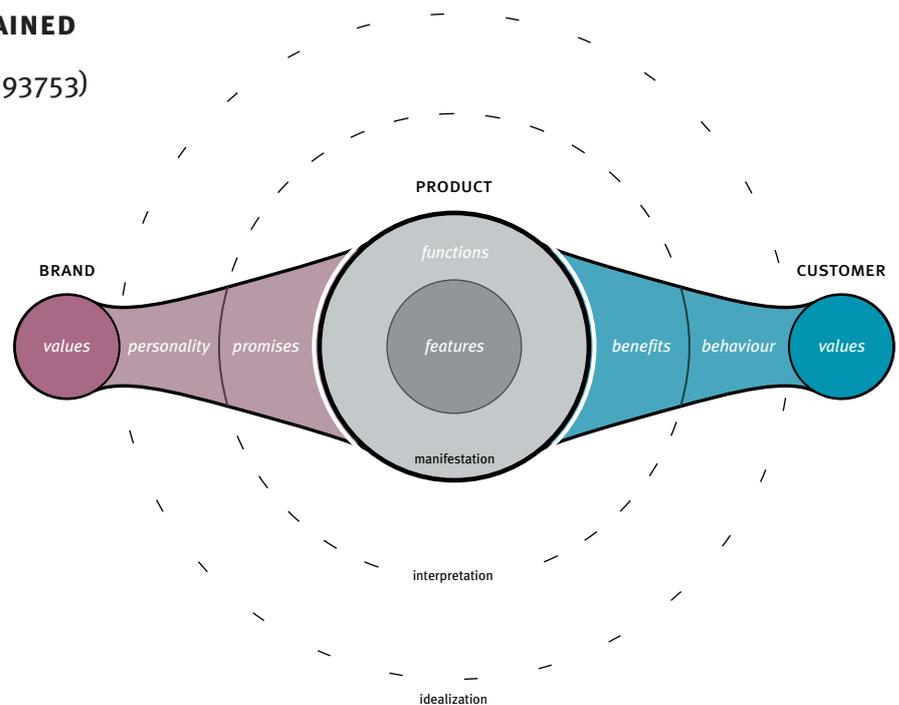
Introduction

In our modern environment, customers face a product range with mainly identical functions and similar features. They must choose, and therefore face the risk of not selecting the best or most appropriate alternative. Brands reduce this risk by facilitating choice through their known messages and positioning (Kapferer, 2004/ p28). Another interesting point of view is the relation between Maslow's Need Hierarchy (Solomon, 1992/ p77) and people living in our materialistic world. People want to add meaning to their consumption and "only brands that add value to a product and tell a story about its buyers, or situate their consumption in a ladder of immaterial values, can provide that meaning" (Kapferer, 2004/ p1).

Our goal was to better understand and model the rich relationship between products, brands, and customers. We aimed at designing a model where the product itself could bridge the gap between the brand's intention and the real experience people have while using it. This whole process can be seen as a transposition of values from the brand side towards the customer side, and the other way around.

Main sources of information

We studied branding literature, in order to understand the driving forces behind a brand, which guide the development of new products. Further, we used insights gained from New Product Development (NPD) books about the attributes describing/forming a product. In addition to that, we also focused on gathering information related to the interaction between products and user, from a psychological point of view.

Main characteristics of the model

What it is

The model shows a 'snapshot' of the customer-brand relationship, and how it is connected to the tangible attributes of a product (manifestation area). During this contact the model establishes an abstraction hierarchy that shows the different levels of relationships (interpretation area) between the product and the brand (left side), and the product and its customers (right side). These distinct aspects are the result of the transformation that occurs when transposing brand and customer's values (idealization area) to products, and vice-versa.

Terminology used in the model

Values The brands vision, mission and related values, its purpose or reason for being

Personality The self-image, behaviour and way of communication in an environment

Promises The proposed benefits and the positioning of the brand in the market

Features The concrete information, such as dimensions, color, price, material etc.

Functions The goal-oriented property of an entity, carried by a process

Benefits The direct and indirect results gained when using the product

Behaviour The actions or reactions of the user, usually in relation to the environment

Values The beliefs, desires and expectations of a specific target group

The purpose of the model

The proposed model helps project managers and other stakeholders involved in the (Branded) NPD process to better understand the complex relationship between brands, products and customers and to base their actions on the gained insights.

The model can be used on various phases of the complex BNPD process, such as:

- Analyze the gap between brand identity and its image, concerning a particular product

- Help build up brand's values, personality and promises by focusing on a particular successful product and its relationship to customers

- Monitor brand's perception by customers and possible conflicts within its product portfolio

- Understand the differences of the relationship between brand and product when more than one distinctive customer groups exist (for example, the user and the buyer)

- Guide the definition of a product's unique characteristics, when designing for new customers and/or new markets

- Inspire the product development team, by providing a shared mental model of what the brand, the product, and the desired customers are like – this woul help building effective teams

Further developments

Although the model looks at first impression very promising, we would like to emphasize that further extensive testing must be done, before it becomes an effective working tool. An advanced idea would be to see the model as a tool where the different elements, like personality or promise, are not only filled by words, but also by visual material representing the verbal information.

Furthermore, we believe the basic functioning concept of the model could also be used for analysing the brand-customer relationship in respect to any other contact point, such as advertising, contact with dealers, sponsorship, and more.
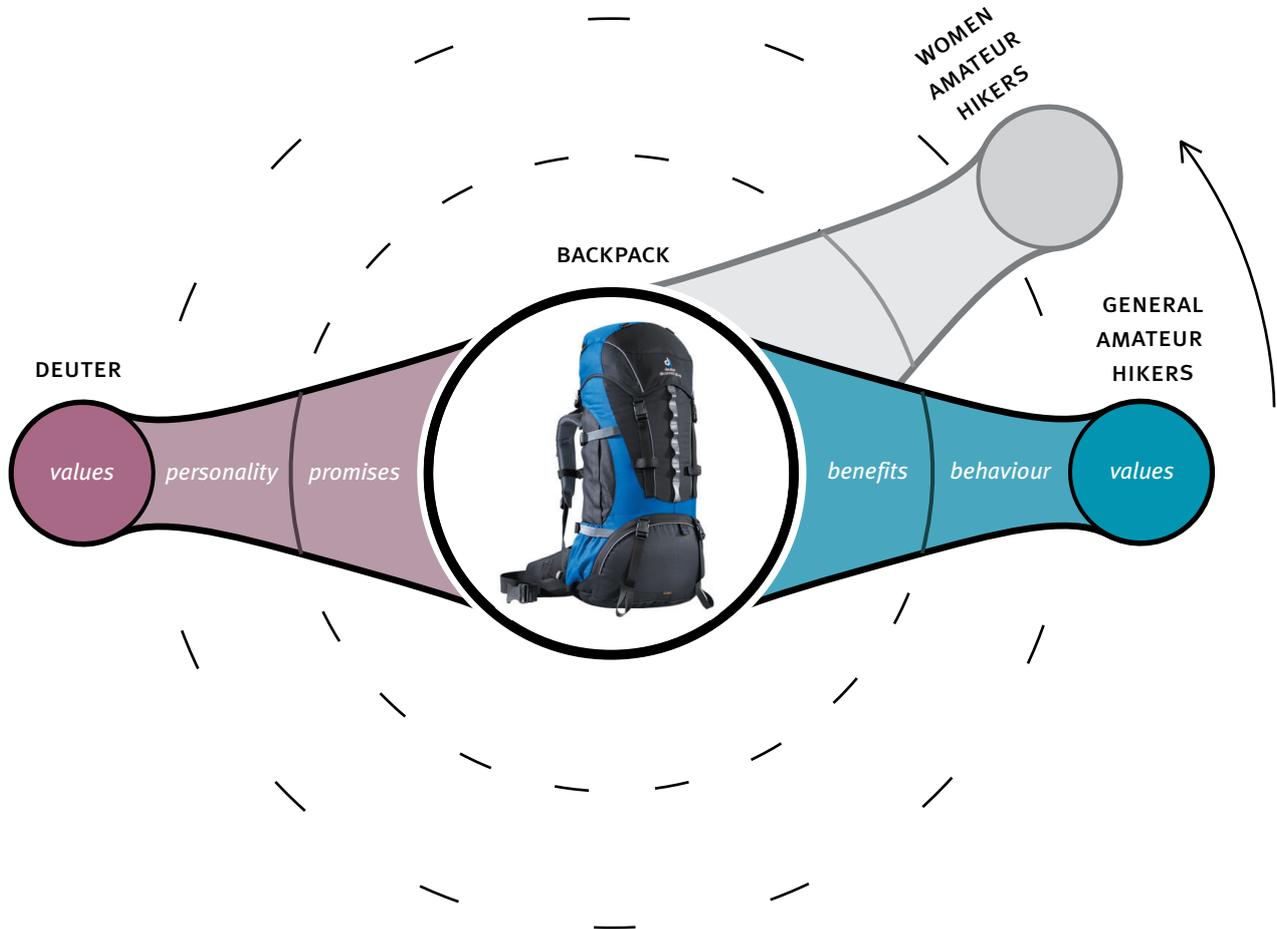
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A CASE STUDY OF MODEL APPLICATION

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WOMEN AMATEUR HIKERS

BACKPACK

GENERAL AMATEUR HIKERS

DEUTER

values — personality — promises

benefits — behaviour — values

Deuter is well-known for its flagship products, the backpacks, in the outdoor equipment scene. The company was established in 1898 and is now the largest producer of backpacks, luggage and multi-purpose bags in Germany, selling its products worldwide.

Deuter aims to serve the demands of people who need to carry a load, which basically includes clothes, water and other necessary equipment, during their outdoor activities. The targeted activities range from extreme to leisure activities. Deuter connects itself to its customer groups by proposing innovation, quality and reliability. Furthermore, to stay in tune with the customers the company sponsors high achievers in the various segments of extreme sport, scans the market for emerging sports or speciality demands of its customers, e.g. the need for carrying infants.

In order to ease the understanding of how the model works, we chose the innovation value to demonstrate its transformation within the different stages. Our goal is to illustrate the overall functioning of the model by choosing only this one aspect. Additionally, we would like to mention that the transformation of the chosen value is based on our own thinking for the time being. To undertake a comprehensive analysis of the Deuter case more aspects must be considered. Furthermore appropriate methods and tools could provide deep insights into the brand's personality, competencies, as well as customers' behaviour and needs.

	DEUTER			AIRCOMFORT50		GENERAL AMATEUR HIKER
values	*personality*	*promises*	*features/ functions*	*benefits*	*behaviour*	*values*
innovation	up-to-date R&D material/ technology	provide the best comfort	Aircomfort system better ergonomics	feel fresh go longer maintain health keep fit enjoy walk carry more	need to have strictly necessary things	basic suvival enjoy life

As already mentioned, one of Deuter's highest values is innovation. Continuous innovation requires a wide range of actions, which also include the way the company interacts with the environment, its customers, and competitors. For this example, let us assume that the major aspect defining personality (in respect to its 'innovation' value) is to be up-to-date through continuously investing in R&D of new materials and technologies. As a result Deuter consecutively comes up with new inventions that are applied to their products.

Taking the backpack as an example, two innovative features were introduced: the Aircomfort system, with the main function of allowing air circulation while carrying the backpack, and an ergonomic construction that leads to appropriate back support. By including both features into their product, the company aims to provide 'the best comfort' regarding backpacks. Finally, considering the relationship between this backpack and the customer (here defined as 'average amateur hiker') we get the complete picture of the product-user interaction.

We assumed that survival would be the highest value or motivation of a customer travelling in rural areas, followed by the motivation of having a good time and enjoyment. The person must behave in a certain way in order to achieve these end goals. This can be expressed by the way they relate to the products they carry. In other words, they must first carry belongings that are strictly necessary, things that guarantee survival, like sleeping bag or rain clothes. As these survival gear takes already quite a bit of volume we can assume that the additional things, which allow enjoyment, are also of mainly functional nature, such as a 'second' shirt, a camera or a notebook.

The answer to the question on how to carry these items the customers (planning to hike) will almost always choose a backpack. Choosing between many similar looking bags the customer comes across the backpack promising an air system and better ergonomics. By using the backpack, the average amateur hiker can easily spot its direct benefits. First, hikers feel fresher although carrying the backpack over a long period of time. This is due to the improved/better circulation of the air in comparison to other backpacks. Second, because of the better ergonomics, the hiker's back receives a good stabilisation and where the weight is handled better. In addition to that, hikers do not become exhausted so fast. Following from this, as an indirect benefit, the hiker can keep going longer. A second indirect benefit would relate to being able to enjoy the surroundings, even stop to take pictures while carrying the still heavy backpack. Even the indirect benefit of daring to carry more things which might not be strictly necessary but would enrich the trip is possible.

Deuter discovered the special demands female traveller have regarding their backpacks. This new construct can also be integrated into the model. Reflecting the demands of 'women amateur hikers' we are able to illustrate how a change in a customer group might affect the product attributes.

values	personality	promises	features/functions	benefits	behaviour	values
innovation	up-to-date R&D material/ technology	provide the best comfort	Aircomfort system better ergonomics more divisions	(idem) better organization easy to reach belongings secure feel	need to have strictly necessary things plus additional objects	basic suvival enjoy life

We still assume that women amateur hikers have the same main values as the general hikers, but as we will see, the way these are manifested in products is different. The observation of women behaviour reveals that they are more likely to carry items with which they form emotional bonds. They, of course, also need everything the average travellers need which guarantees survival. But in regards to enjoying the trip in the best possible way, women tend to focus on cosmetics and clothes which are not primarily functional. They might even want to take a small hair dryer with them, just in case.

If we translate this behaviour into backpack attributes, a new requirement arises: the need for more pockets or the opportunity to divide the volume into separate units. The additional items are often fragile and need carefully handling. Furthermore, by using this new backpack, women have the direct benefits of organizing their belongings in a better way which also enables them to reach for them more easily. Indirect benefits evolve from this, as women feel organized, secure and well prepared.

Although they share the other benefits of carrying a Deuter backpack, like the air system, with the general hikers, the way they manifest themselves into products might still be different. We can assume that, in order to 'maintain health', the backpack's overall dimensions must be adapted to the women's body measurements, thus the air system must be redesigned to fit this new requirement.

The process described above is part of an ongoing activity, involving brand, products, and customers. If we would continue, we might now want to understand how the insertion of this new backpack for the new target group, will affect the brand's promises, personality, or values and even redefine them.

Model and case 6: Lisa Nilsson and Antonno Versteeg

Author's note: The 'foldbupc' model, despite its name, provides clarity about the relationship between the product, the brand, the company and the user. Indeed, these four players often appear on the BDI stage, and their roles are certainly interesting. What's fascinating about the model is that it sets out to explain relationships between phenomena, rather than the phenomena itself. This kind of cross border thinking leads to valuable insights a lot sooner than staying 'within the box'. The tool can be used in any process step related to branding and product development. Again, a rather holistic approach, but useful in its clarity, ease of use and integrative qualities. Nilsson and Versteeg were asked by the author how the opposing phenomena (brand and product, company and user) related to each other, the model only describing the neighbouring phenomena. Their answer was simple and clever: brand and product relate to each other through the company and the user. Company and user relate to each other through the product and the brand.

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November 2005

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.Explanation of the .FOLDBUPC model

.Introduction

The .FOLDBUPC model is a combination of certain NPD and brand strategy models to give designers a combination model for implementing strategies for innovation and branding in their product design. It gives the user of the model the possibilities to choose for them selves how far they will dig in some direction. By folding open one part of the model the user gets more information about this part. In this part there is information about the subject itself (for example 'Product') and about the nearby subjects (for example 'User' and 'Company'). By opening one of these nearby subjects there will be the possibility to open up another level, the combination level. In this level 2 subjects are combined. Important questions to ask your self while designing or planning are mentioned here.

.NPD

This NPD part of the model is based on a NPD model based on the book "Managing Innovation" (Tidd et al, 2000) and the New Product Concept model out of "New Products Management" (Crawford et al, 2006).

"Managing Innovation" gives the reader an overview of strategies, cases, background information and researches about innovation in (mostly) large firms. In the book no model is given that may be used in a company to get more innovative. As a whole the book gives guidelines and information so the user can make its own strategy to follow. By applying several tips and using some lists of possibilities that a company can have a model was made that may be used for New Product Development. This model exists of a central placed company position and several paths to follow. Paths like 'Technological Changes', 'Opportunity Searching' and 'Alliances' and etcetera.
   This model will be helpful for a company that's looking for a way to expand or change its type of products. The model gives information about what to do but without guiding. It should be in the back of the mind while making a schedule for the process of innovation.

The New Product Concept is a way of identifying the three inputs to the creation process of new products; Form, Technology and Need/Benefit. The model is a graphical way of illustrating the three different kinds of concepts that can derive from these inputs, and also implies in which order these inputs is better to be regarded. The model claims that if any

of these three inputs are missing, there can not be product innovation. Since the New Product Concept is very simplified, it is a good illustration of innovation, but lacks important factors like the company and the market.

.Brand strategy

The Brand part of the model is based on the Brand Identity model proposed in "Building Strong Brands" (Aaker 1995) and the Brand Identity Prism out of "The New Strategic Brand Management" (Kapferer, 2004).

Aaker introduces in his book the viewpoint of viewing the brand as several 'identities'. A brand is not only a logo; a brand is more than that. Building a strong brand will consist of building a consistent image through all the parts of the brand, like the product, the company, the artwork, the image in the heads of the users of the brand etcetera. Another part of the identity model is the importance of asking: "what kind of person should the brand be if it was a person?" By answering this question the image of the brand will get clear. This image is the way the brand is looked at through the eyes of the users. The brand identity is the way the brand should be looked at. Combining all this gives us a model with a lot of information about how to build a brand. The model of Aaker isn't a step by step model which you may follow but it gives important insights in brands.

In the description of the Brand Identity Prism, Kapferer argues that Aaker's 'brand personality scale' does not measure brand personality in the strictest sense, but some intangible and tangible dimensions that corresponds to other facets of a brand's identity. To become, or stay, strong, brands have to be true to their identity, and Kapferer thinks that this identity could be represented by a hexagonal prism. The prism consists of two dimensions and six facets. The prism is strictly descriptive, in order to be able to identify and analyse a brand, but has no prescriptive facets. By combining the models of Aaker and Kapferer, both a thoroughly analysis of the brand could be drawn, and insights about what to do.

.Integration of models

All the keywords and the questions used in the different levels of the model stem from the models mentioned above. By combining and interpreting in such a way that integration was possible, keywords and questions could be sorted in 2 levels and within the 4 subjects. These were checked on consistency and on usability within this concept.

.How to work with the .FOLDBUPC ?

The .FOLDBUPC is designed to integrate several models in the field of NPD and Brand Strategy. Its goal is to help people with different backgrounds. A designer will need information about the product that has to be designed but also wants information about the brand, about the user and such. A strategist is more focussed on the brand and the company but also the user. These different people work sometimes even not in the same company. Till know these people used different models, NPD models, Design Methodology models, Brand Strategy models and etcetera. With this new model every person busy within one project, one company or one brand can have the same model but can within the model go different paths.

The model is by purpose not a step by step model, there are better models for that. This model will help the user during the whole process to keep several important things in mind; to give consistency within the company or project and also to give a basis for communication within teams.

The model consists of 3 levels. Level-zero is the model closed. It shows the four important subjects of the model: Company, Product, User and Brand. By opening the model at one of these subjects you enter level-one. This level gives at the top several keywords associated with this subject. At the bottom there are several keywords associated with the corresponding side, like on the left of Product the keywords are related to Company and on the right related to User.

Opening another subject gives the user the opportunity to enter level-two. This level 'asks' the user questions about the combination of the two subjects it lies within. These questions let the user think about what choices to make.

Brands or companies can even decide to change this model to their own identity. By inserting several answers to the questions on level-two it's possible to lead people in the same direction but still give them the opportunity to be creative.

.Appendix

.The .FOLDBUPC model
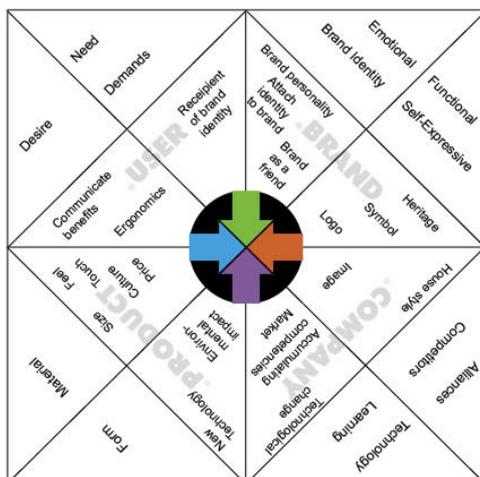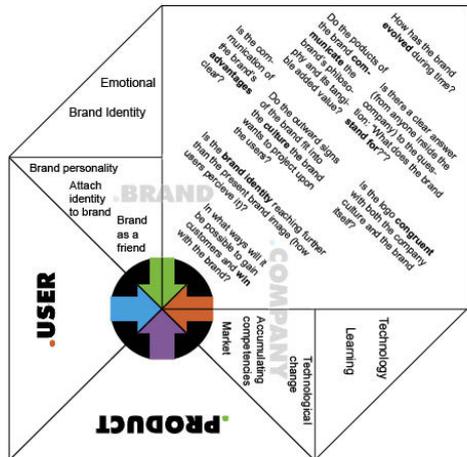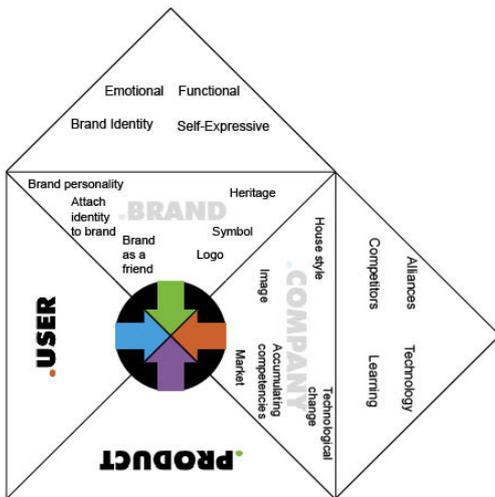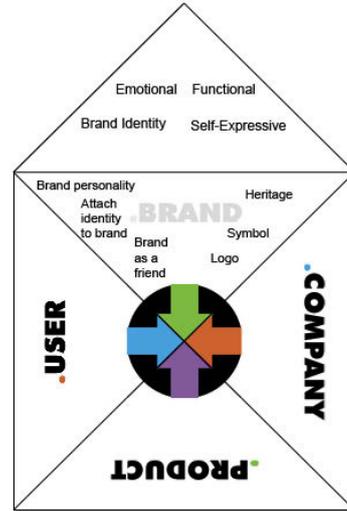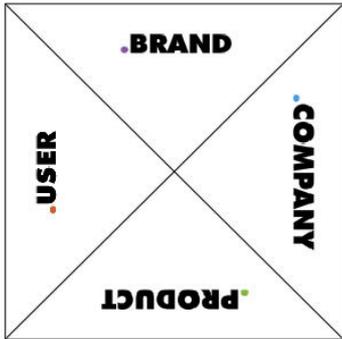
.A hypothetical case study of using the .FOLDBUPC model

.Introduction of Silva

Silva has developed, produced and marketed compasses and instruments since the beginning of the 1930s. Silva started with producing a new type of compasses, the Silva 1-2-3 system, based on the needs from the growing orienteering sport. The brand was extended with marine compasses, and today the products are divided into Marine, Outdoor and Orienteering. Also there is a division of Premium Gifts, marketed towards companies who want to give their customers or relations an outdoor instrument.

The company is founded in Sweden, but has expanded and has subsidiaries in UK, France, Germany, Far East and North America. The core activities of the company are design, development, manufacture of compasses for land and sea and sales of compasses, GPS and outdoor instruments, headlamps, binoculars and other electronic navigation equipment. Their vision is to enhance personal joy and performance in marine and outdoor leisure activities. This will be achieved by maintaining a dominant position in Compasses and challenging market leaders in
GPS, Mobile Lightning, Optics, Outdoor Instruments and Marine Electronics.

.Application of the .FOLDBUPC model

Silva has had for certain years a committed customer base. Their clients buy the brand because of their reliable products for reasonable prices. The products are focussed on the task at hand, and are most used in though circumstances like sailing on the ocean, travelling on the South Pole and the like. All these products are divided in 4 product lines; marine, outdoor, orienteering, and premium gifts. These lines have a sort of overlap but the first 3 of them are focussed on the more professional market. The premium gifts department is directed at companies to give these products to their clients, relations and so on.

Within the company Björn Johansson, a 45 year old managing director who is responsible of the premium gifts department, has started a research to check if it will be possible to aim several products of the premium gift department directly to consumers. He wants to focus on people living in large cities who are not involved in the outdoor sports.

People involved in outdoor sports may already be familiar with the Silva brand and products. To get fast results and a satisfying result he decides to use the .FOLDBUPC model. In bringing together some other people he formed a team consisting of 3 members, Björn himself, focussing on the managing part and consistency with the other lines of Silva, Ingegerd Lundberg a 28 year old product designer who just started on Silva, and Fredrik Magnussen, a Danish 41 year old usability expert working the last 10 years at Silva on the outdoor department.

This team started on this project known within the company as 'Silva for Sillies' with a briefing on the 20th of October 2005. In this briefing Björn gave every member of the team a tangible version of the .FOLDBUPC model. He told the team they were going to use this model to communicate with each other and help them through the design process. The team members discussed this and decided to start with the user. Fredrik, who had the most experience with users and the usability of products, was made the supervisor of this step. He gave Ingegerd the task to focus on the product-user interaction and Björn was going to work on the brand-user side of the design process. Because every member of the team is working at the same premises, communicating with each other will most of the time be face-to-face in several meetings during the week.

In the first week Fredrik is using the .FOLDBUPC model at the user side. Desire, Need and Demands are the keywords in this section. He tries to define the user group by researching results of interview sessions Silva did 2 years ago. By inspecting the model on the user-brand level-two he found several questions that needed to be checked out. These questions were "What is the relationship between the customer and the brand like?" and "Which is the target group that defines your brand position?" among others.

   Because the product was aimed at a still not very defined user group that was not familiar to the Silva brand, Fredrik realized that is was very important to know what kind of aspects the Silva brand name was communicating to its consumers. And also; should these aspects also be communicated to the new user group. He decided to talk as soon as possible to Björn about this.

At the same time Ingegerd was investigating the possible ways a new product aimed at city-people could be used. She used the .FOLDBUPC model to guide her on this process. She decided that focussing on the needs of city people and the touch and feel was a nice way to begin with. By using brainstorming and brainwriting she came up with several new products that would be useful to this type of people. To focus these ideas on the type of user she opened the user-product level-two and checked every product concept on the questions on this level. Ingegerd realized that to make a decision of which type of product

would be useful for the city people she had to know more of the needs and the composition of the user group.

After the start of the project Björn went to the strategy department of the company and asked the director of this department to answer some questions about the brand identity. He brought with him the .FOLDBUPC model to guide the interview. After this interview it was clear to Björn that the identity Silva was communicating at this moment would not totally fit the new product line. The main keyword of the answer to the question "What kind of a personality would the brand have if it was a human?" was "professional". So this new product line would require a different approach. Björn taped the whole session and made 2 versions of the user-brand level for himself; one that was filled in by the strategy director and one that was filled in by what this new line could be like. Filling in these questions he did after acquiring the information he got from Fredrik about the user groups. It was soon apparent that by combining these two sources gave a nice view of possible directions to take in the user-brand relation.

In the next meeting Ingegerd used the .FOLDBUPC model to show Fredrik that she had some trouble with the user side. She had lots of ideas of possible products for city people but needed a more thorough base of user information. Björn showed the other team members his version of the user-brand level-two. In the following weeks Ingegerd was using this part of the model as a guideline for approving of disapproving several ideas. If they would not fit into the brand-user 'picture' they were put aside.
   In the meantime Fredrik was working on the ergonomics of the concepts and giving boundaries to Ingegerd. Combining the knowledge of Fredrik about users and usability with the drawings and ideas of Ingegerd produced within a short time several possible concepts, fitting the user-brand profile.

As the deadline of the project, the 10th of January 2006, came closer, Björn was more and more communicating with the production staff. Several concepts were showed to the production staff and checked on producing ability, possible materials and techniques and so on. Using the .FOLDBUPC model Björn was trying to make the new product fit into the corporate identity of a safe, reliable product, but at the same time focussing on the new user group by giving it some innovative technology and communicating this also in the design. The production personnel were asked questions from the company-product level like "What did the company learn from the last innovation?", "What is the most extreme that could be done that still fits into the company strategy?" and so on.
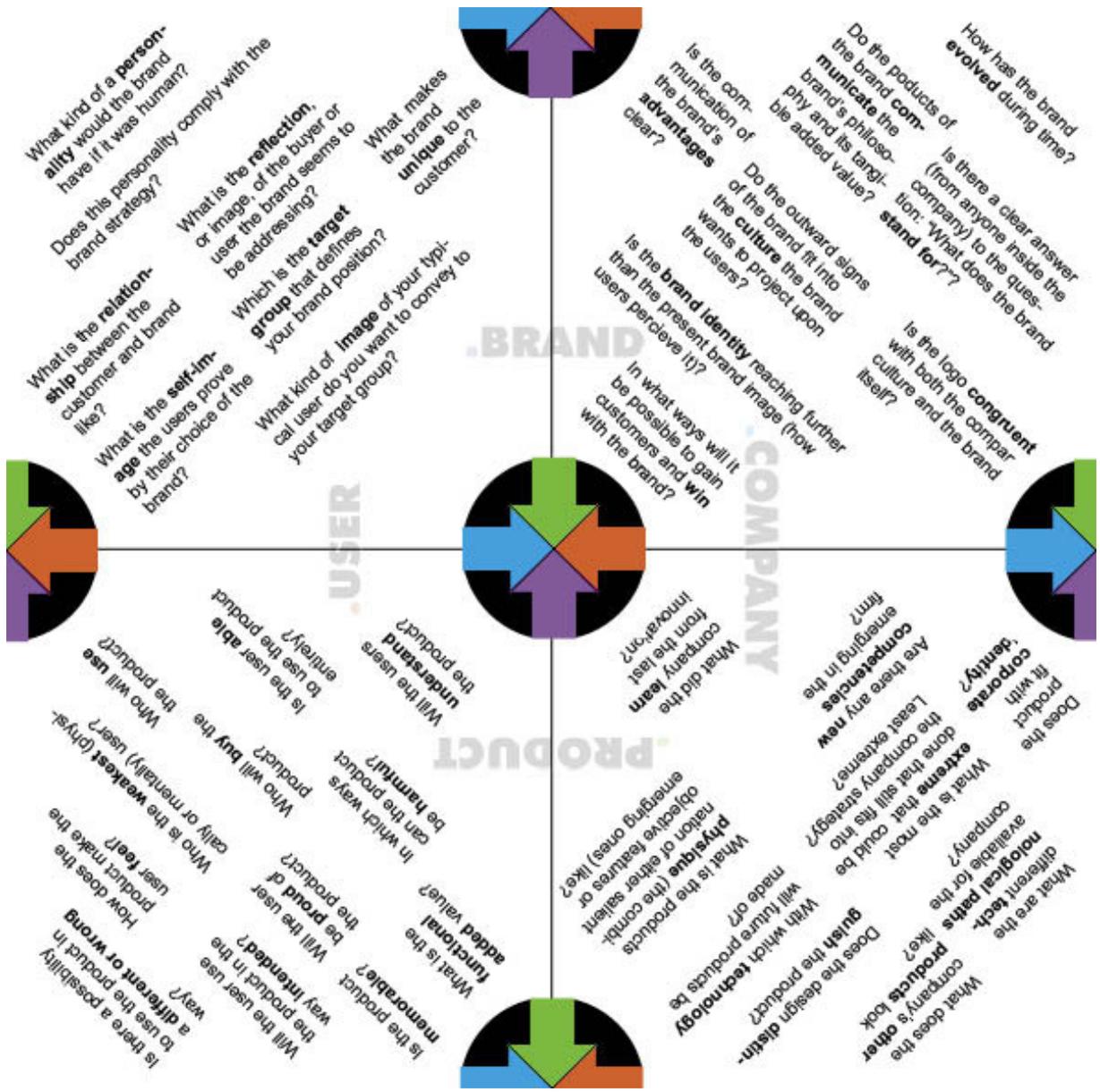   At the beginning of December 2005, a decision was made on a meeting with the design team and several members of the strategy

department and the production staff. It was now possible to answer almost all the questions from the .FOLDBUPC model for this one final concept. During the last month of the project, several more designers and strategists joined the team of Björn, Fredrik and Ingegerd. Based on the filled-in .FOLDBUPC model they all know in which direction they should work and also within which boundaries they have to create the final product-concept.

On the 10th of January 2006 a very proud team presented to the board of directors of Silva the new product. This new product, called the Loc-egg-tion, is an egg-shaped tool with a soft rubber-like finish. It has a colour lcd display in the centre and gives the user the possibility to locate himself or herself on every map available. For 'seeing' and interpreting the map a small camera is placed at one end of the egg, also a laser is built-in on this side. By bringing a map with you it is possible to still have the same tourist experience people love to have, like wandering through a city and using those nice tourist maps. But the moment you are lost you take your Loc-egg-tion which will show you where you are. Also it is possible to direct you by means of the colour display to another place on the map you want to go to.

Concluding; by working with the .FOLDBUPC the team members, with their different backgrounds, were able to focus in the same direction. The model could also be used later on for marketing the product.
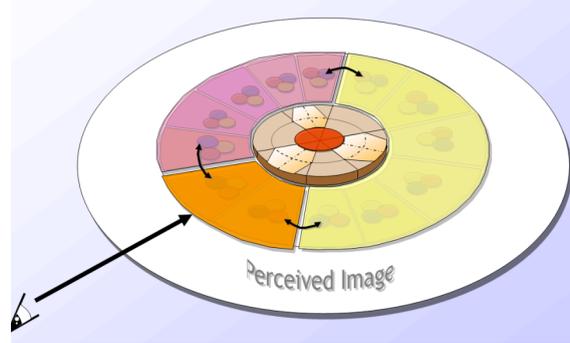

The concept of the Loc-egg-tion

BRAND

What kind of a **personality** would the brand have if it was human?

Does this personality comply with the brand strategy?

What is the **reflection**, or image, of the buyer or user the brand seems to be addressing?

What makes the brand **unique** to the customer?

Which is the **target group** that defines your brand position?

What is the **relationship** between the customer and brand like?

What is the **self-image** the users prove by their choice of the brand?

What kind of **image** of your typical user do you want to convey to your target group?

COMPANY

Is the communication of the brand's **advantages** clear?

Do the products of the brand **communicate** the brand's philosophy and its tangible added value?

How has the brand **evolved** during time?

Is there a clear answer (from anyone inside the company) to the question: "What does the brand **stand for**"?

Do the outward signs of the brand fit into the **culture** the brand wants to project upon the users?

Is the **brand identity** reaching further than the present brand image (how users percieve it)?

Is the logo **congruent** with both the company culture and the brand itself?

In what ways will it be possible to gain customers and **win** with the brand?

What did the company learn from the last company **innovation**?

Are there any new **competencies** emerging in the firm?

Least extreme: done that will fit into the company strategy?

What is the most **extreme** that could be done that will fit its into the company strategy?

Does the product fit with **corporate identity**?

With which technology will future products be made of?

Does the design **distinguish** the product?

What are the different **technological paths** available for the company?

What does the company's other **products** look like?

PRODUCT

What is the products **physique** (the combination of either salient objective ones) like?

Will the users **understand** the product?

Is the user able to use the product emptily?

Who will **use** the product?

Who will **buy** the product?

In which ways can the product be **harmful**?

What is the **functional added value**?

Will the user be **proud** of the product?

Is the **memorable**?

Will the user use the product in the way **intended**?

USER

Who is the **weakest** (physically or mentally) user?

How does the product make the user feel?

Is there a possibility to use the product in a different or wrong way?

Model and case 7: Rutger Bonsel

Author's note: Although Bonsel's model is fairly complex, he does offer us a remarkable insight: innovations that match the brand must have a form/need/technology congruency with the rest of the product portfolio. This insight leads on the one hand to a portfolio management tool. But on the other hand, it could lead to a BDI method tool: if the designer could define a brand related form/need/technology scope, and then incrementally change the form/need/technology characteristics of products within the existing portfolio, product innovation concepts could be generated that match the brand and that are congruent within the portfolio.

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Rutger bonsel: The Brand Product Portfolio Wheel of Fortune

The BPP Wheel of Fortune is a model for BNPD, consisting of different layers and serves the BNPD process in different ways:

- It serves as a guideline for a company how to use the assets of Form, Need and Technology in the development of a New Product, within the perceived image of an existing Brand.
- It serves as a tool to manage a brand's product portfolio.
- It may serve as a guideline for the development of New Products that can fill the cap of different perceived images of the brands' different product categories.
- In particular cases, it may serve a company in the decision phase under which brand to commercialise a new product, thus which brand the product fit best.

Briefly the different layers of the model will be explained. For this layers some models are being used, that are described earlier.
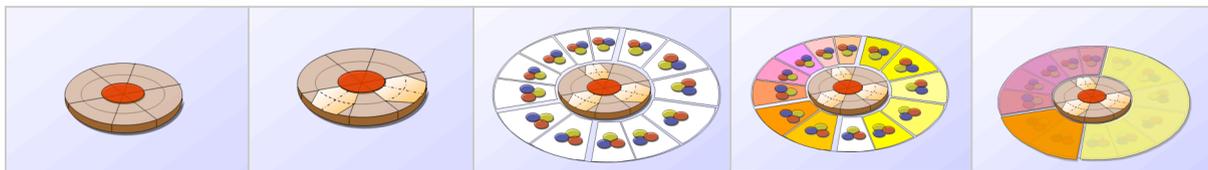
A company consists of a kernel: the values a company stands for. This kernel is the heart of the company and a brand is built around it. The brand has different shelves in which it is free to develop and grow without changing the brand.	Within this brand the company can give one brand slightly different identities. Some products of the brand might evoke a different relationship with consumers, although the culture side will stay the same, pointed towards the company's core.	Around this brand a company has created a portfolio of products. Each of these products contains the assets Technology, Needs and Form.	Due to some difference in form, technology and needs, every product has his own identity at makes them unique.	However, due to similarities in form, technology or need, some product categories can be made. Categories that more or less contain the same products, based on one or more of the 3 product assets.

At this point it is for the perceived image of the brand very important that the different product categories share some aspects that will bind them. If not, a consumer that looks to the brand from one category will have a complete other brand image than one who sees the product from another category.
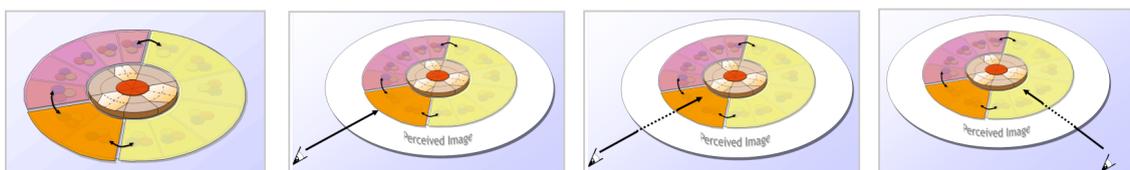
Thus, the complete line of products becomes more or less a filter how the consumer perceives the original brand identity and thus forms the image that the consumer has of the brand. This might be very tricky: If a product category caries complete other values and assets than another product category under the same brand, the consumer still wants to apply those of one category on the other. If this is not the case, a consumer may feel a deception and the brand will be less convincing, credible and trustworthy. Thus also less persuasive, one of the main functions of branding!

The Bosch und Siemens Hausgeräte Case.
Applying the Brand Product Portfolio Wheel of Fortune.

The BSH group is a company that design and produces products for the two multinational companies Bosch en Siemens. Most of the products are electronic durables, white goods and kitchen appliances. The group has invented a new product; a machine that irons shirts automatically. Both Siemens and Bosch have commercialized the product, although under a different name: the Siemens Dressman and the Bosch Shirtmaster.

(for more information see: http://www.bsh-group.com , www.nooitmmeerstrijken.nl ,
http://www2.siemens.nl/huishouden/CPWebsite/highlights/dressman)

De **Bosch** Shirtmaster:
Nooit meer strijken!

If we have a look on the assets Form,
Technology and Need of this machine,
It is possible to have the following findings:

A small, non-representative research (15 students, mainly male) has led to the idea that people do not see the product as a typical Bosch product, although it fits in the image that they have from Siemens: innovative, reliable, modern, slick, multi-purpose, high-tech, diverse and German.
Bosch is more connected with power tools, green, solid, reliable, German, mid-end, quality and do-it-yourself.

Although a much deeper research should turn out if this is the overall opinion of both brands, at this point it is plausible to conclude that the Dressman/Shirtmaster fits Siemens better and the product is more convincing as Siemens product than as a Bosch product.
By taking the BPP Wheel and apply both brands by filling in their current products, the overall perceived image of the brands can be obtained.

Both brands contain very diverse products: For Bosch these are power tools, automotive components, security appliances, heating elements, white goods and smaller kitchen appliances. Siemens is even broader: From factories, trains, medical appliances to white goods and smaller electronically appliances.

However, if we put category layers on both wheels, we will see that the wheel of Bosch won't turn around. It has gaps between the categories which lead to a non-consistent perceived brand image.
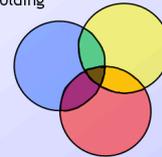
The overall Siemens image has assets which fit with the perceived assets of the Dressman, while the Bosch brand even lacks an overall agreement on the assets.
Consequently, the Dressman fits easier under the Siemens brand.
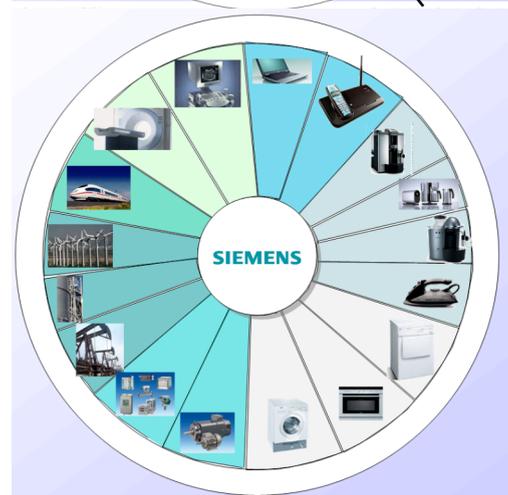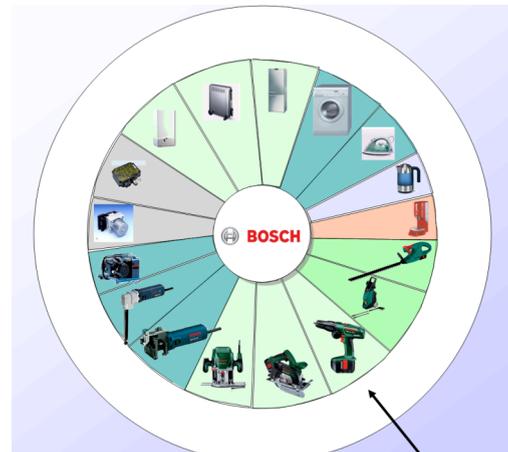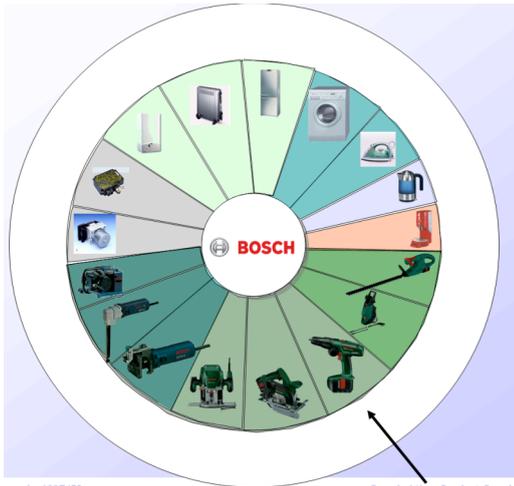
The bottom part shows a clear consistency. Although changing in need from gardening to professional working tools and in form from green to blue green. The consumer powertools form a good connection in this group.
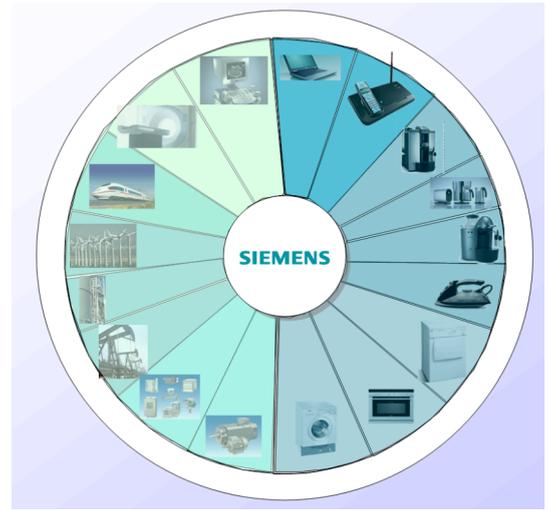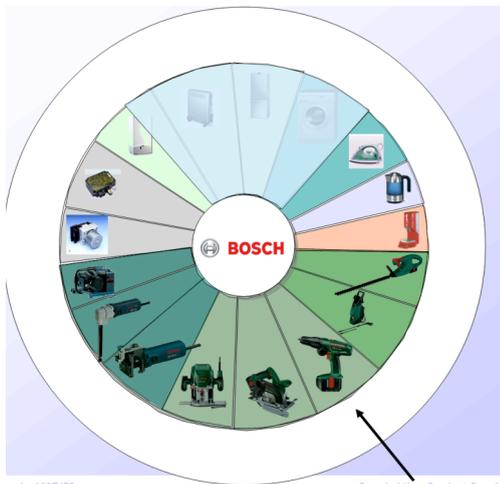

Applying layers of need: Consumer and Business products. Groups are connected by form and their wide needs.

Also the white goods and heating systems show some overlap.
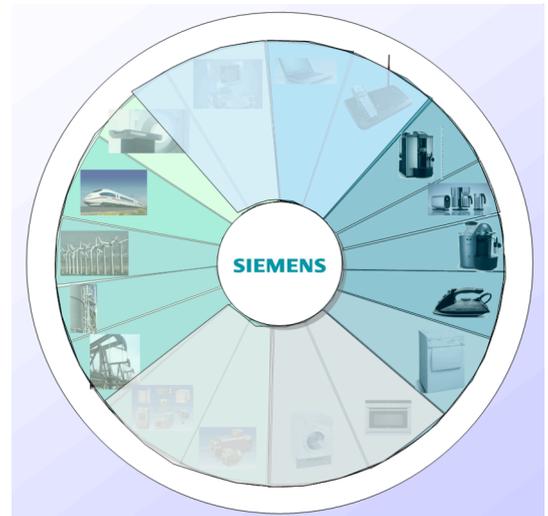
Applying layers of technology, Electronics and mechanical motor-driven
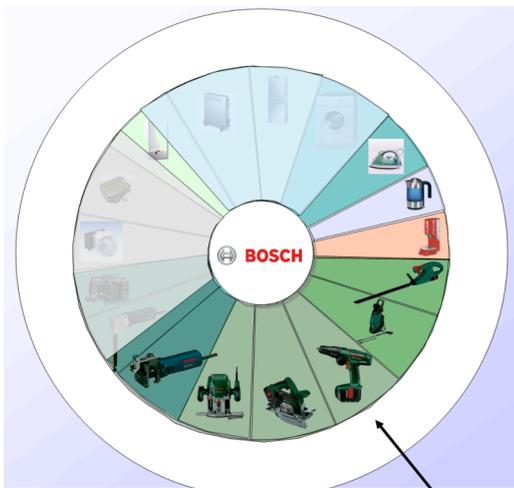
But also when a technology layer is been put on the consumer and business products, a gap in the consumer segment remains...
It is not clear for the consumer what the identity is, and the image is perceived in different ways.
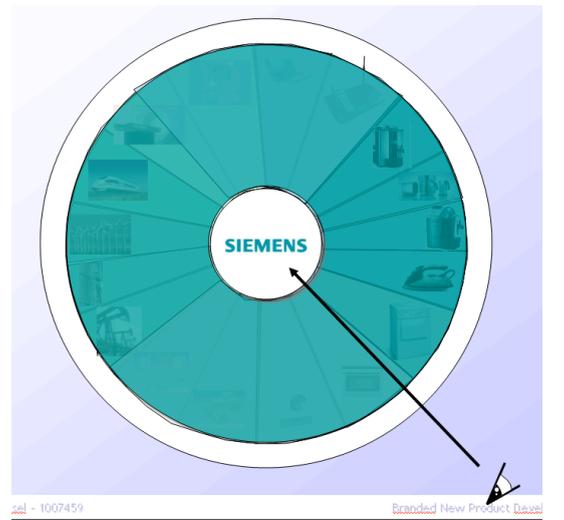
Even in form Siemens products share elements, an overall layer is created, and therefore the perceived image of Siemens equals its identity

Appendix 4: an example case for the BDI method and Product Brand Plaza model.

'Jake' is an imaginary snowboard brand. The snowboard market is very brand oriented. Products in this market (snowboards, boots, bindings, accessories, clothing) don't differ fundamentally from competitor to competitor, in terms of functionality or interaction with the user. Manufacturers mainly compete on brand communication and on product aesthetics. Innovation is largely incremental and not brand related. All players move in the same direction.

Jake wants to break free from this predicament, by offering product innovations that fulfil the brand's promise, thus distinguishing the brand from competitors. Jake appoints a design manager who will be responsible for product development and brand development. This design manager decides to use the Brand Driven Innovation method and the Product Brand Plaza model (figure 31) to achieve the company's new ambition.
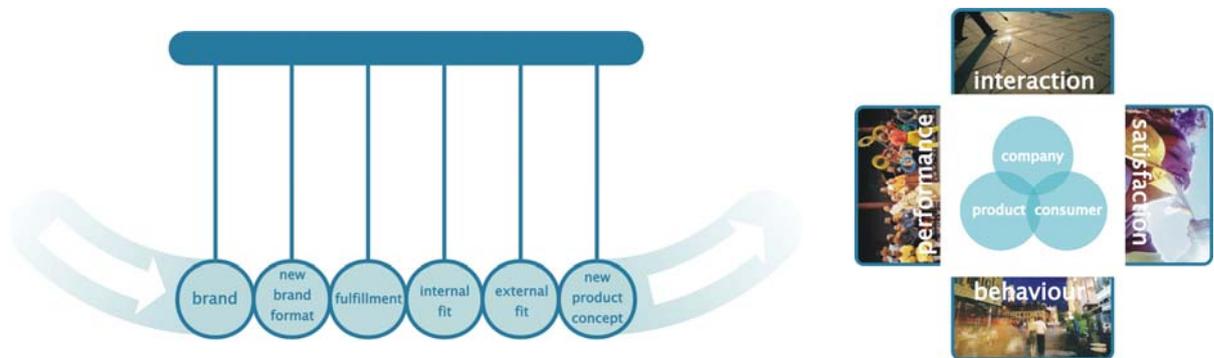

figure 31: the BDI method model and the Product Brand Plaza model

In the first session, the design manager gathers a group of product designers, brand designers, the brand manager, the NPD manager and the general manager around the table in Jake's design centre. He presents the BDI method, its pitfalls and benefits, and the ambition to dedicate the coming year to work on product innovations with brand and product designers. The method is discussed, he team is formed, tasks are divided, a plan is drafted, and support and budget from general management are secured. The first ball, the brand, is lifted up to set in motion the BDI process.

The 'new brand format' ball is hit. The design manager decides to use the Product Brand Plaza model to develop this new brand format. The team is divided in three groups, one group for each brand user. Each group is given the task to explore what the existing Jake brand means in terms of performance, behaviour, interaction and satisfaction for this specific user. After three weeks, the three groups present the results in mood boards, movies etc. After much discussion and comparing and clustering of the results, for each of the four Product Brand Plaza dimensions a theme emerges. The following table 3 is a summary of the results:

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Brand user →	company	consumer	product
Brand dimension ↓			
Performance: speed	Speed for the company: Time to market, speed of service, reaction to new developments, flat organisation, quick approval of NPD budgets, short meetings	Speed for the consumer: The rush of fast boarding, control, agility, quick on the slopes, no hassle, fast learning, comfortable speed, easy choice in store, quick delivery, fast service.	Speed for the product: Fast board base, low friction, bindings quick on and off, boots quick on and off, safety for speed, comfort for speed, measuring speed.
Interaction: inclusive	Inclusive for the company: Equal opportunity employer, motivation of initiatives, no hierarchy, no strict job description, all employees may learn to ride, learning programs, charity programs enabling disabled to snowboard.	Inclusive for the consumer: Snowboarding with friends, teaching each other, mixed groups of boarders, enjoying each other's tricks and moves, easy to learn, helping each other, rescuing each other, broad target group.	Inclusive for the product: Design for all, equipment that enables everyone to ride, ease of use, comfort of use, customisation options, binding + board packages, integrated functionality, adaptability, focus on ergonomics.
Behaviour: curious	Curious for the company: Innovative, on the look out for opportunities, initiatives are rewarded, know your competitor, give weird ideas a chance, always ask what can be better	Curious for the consumer: Wanting to learn, wanting to explore, off the beaten track, open for innovation, pushing the limits, interested in other boarders, interested in mountain wildlife	Curious for the product: Pushing the limits, finding new archetypes, out of the box, open ended products, co-development, consumer involvement in NPD, easy to try out, motivating practice.
Satisfaction: flow	Flow for the company: Relaxed working environment, concentration and focus, open work places, no closed doors, organic growth, not only seasonal developments, long term ambition, open career opportunities	Flow for the consumer: The enjoyment of fresh powder, the kick inside, no bragging, silent enjoyment, emotional attachment to sport and product, respect for nature, modesty, pride, long term experiences, reward for hard work	Flow for the product: Comfort, calm aesthetics, back country boarding, products give confidence, soft touch and feel, product serves experience, clean lines, not distracting, self explanatory, durability, serviceable.

table 3: the results of the Product Brand Plaza sessions.

The team is happy with their efforts: what they have created through the Product Brand Plaza sessions is a solid base for product innovation. The brand plaza is captured in images, an example is given in figure 32.

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figure 32: Jake's Product Brand Plaza, captured in images

The third ball, fulfilment, is set in motion. Now the team is divided in four teams, one for each brand dimension. During a number of brainstorm sessions a large list of innovation opportunities is generated. table 4 gives a summary of the findings of these sessions:

Brand dimension	Product concepts
Performance: speed	quick release bindings and boots, new ceramic base material, special learn to ride equipment, electronic dampening system for high speed, in store choice facilitation tool, local service centres, on line ordering and shipping, a speedometer on the board, quick adaptability for binding position (rental market)
Behaviour: inclusive	Special learn to ride tool, how can snowboarding be made easier, special boards/boots/bindings for special target groups, duo-board, integrated video camera in board, board/binding integration, focus on comfort, remote control release of bindings, rescue equipment, first aid kit, avalanche rescue system (Recco) integrated
Interaction: curious	Special back country equipment, special learning/feedback equipment, Jake binocular, new snow sports, extensions to water and land, how can we increase the possibilities of snowboards?, board without bindings, paint your own board, shape your own board, open factory days, feedback on snowboarding technique
Satisfaction: flow	Special powder boards, focus on soft touch, soft operation, reduce sound of bindings and board, sign your own board online (I-pod), GPS recording of a days snowboarding + pc software to replay the route on map of area, new form language, integration of parts

table 4: a summary of the result of the fulfilment phase

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As can be seen in table 4, a great many ideas are born from the Product Brand Plaza. It is now time for selection.

The fourth ball, internal fit, is set in motion. This leads to the postponement of those ideas having to do with 'embedded technology' like speedometers, integrated video, electronic dampening and GPS tracking. Jake has no knowledge of these systems, so it has to partner up with a specialist first. The ambition is to start innovating in this area next year, when a good partner has been found.

The fifth ball, external fit, is set in motion. This leads to the cancellation of those ideas that involve the integration of board and binding systems. Retailers are known to dislike this idea. Online ordering and shipping is also cancelled, as well as on-line consumer customisation: the relationship with retailers is vulnerable, and Jake can't risk putting it in jeopardy at this point. To compensate for the decrease in consumer knowledge open factory days and consumer involvement in NPD are initiated.

The sixth ball, the new product concept, jumps out of the queue: the following ideas will be explored further to see if they can be taken into development and market introduction:

1. A learn to ride tool that makes snowboarding easier and more fun to learn.
2. A back country line of products, including special boards, boots and bindings, but also rescue equipment, avalanche beepers etc.
3. A redesign of existing binding operation, focussing on soft touch or even remote control (so you don't have to bend so awkwardly to release your bindings).
4. A new speed base material, making use of ceramics and Teflon.

These products all carry the brand within them: they convey speed, inclusiveness, curiosity and flow. This is the direct result of the Brand Driven Innovation method and the Product Brand Plaza model.

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Appendix 5: the Innovation Driven Branding model

As the sixth ball of the BDI method bounces out into the market to reach the consumer, it sets in motion a process that is more or less the same as the BDI process, but opposite in direction. The product influences the perception of the brand (the Porsche cayenne makes the Porsche brand more family oriented and more rugged). This new perception, in the end, will influence the brand itself.

It is important for design managers to reach an understanding of how new products influence the brand, so that desired changes in the brand can be consciously directed by introducing new products. A good way to generate this understanding is to reverse the BDI model and analyse the different steps from product to brand.

The essential difference between the BDI model and the IDB model is that the former is based upon a given brand, while the latter is aimed at changing the course of a brand. The IDB model is useful in two applications: it can predict the effect of a new product introduction on the brand, and it can help to find the right product to generate a certain desired effect on the brand. The balls in the IDB model represent the following steps (from right to left in figure 33):
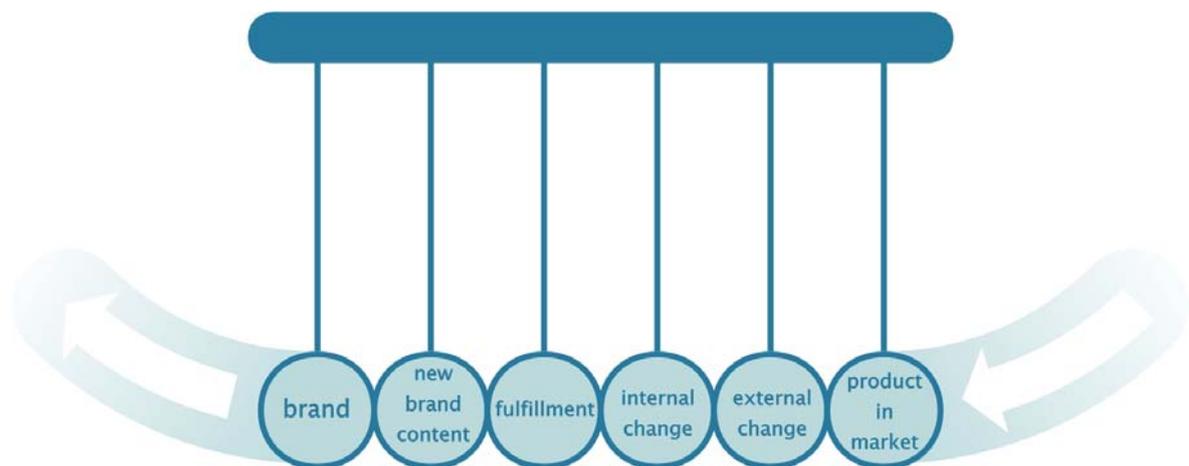

figure 33 : the Innovation Driven Branding model

1. Ball 1 represents the product concept. It has been introduced in the market, and is used by consumers. It bounces back towards the organisation, meaning that it influences it. How can this influence be mapped?

2. Ball 2 stands for the external change the product can initiate in a number of different but related ways: the brand itself will be perceived differently through the product, the product may open up new distribution channels, it may change the field of competition of the company (Since the introduction of the Cayenne, Porsche competes with Jeep), it may change the target group the company addresses. These changes, set in motion by the product, can offer great opportunities to the company if managed well, but they can pose significant threats if ignored.

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3. Ball 3 represents the internal change the product can initiate on a number of levels: new technologies can be mastered, patents may be developed or acquired, new resources may be tapped, and new specialized personnel (designers) may be hired or trained. The product can also cause cultural changes: people may be proud of the new product, stimulating them to develop new skills, interests, networks or ideas.

4. Ball 4 represents new fulfilment: the external and internal changes set in motion by the new product, will slowly but inevitably change how the product fulfils the brand promise. To get a grip on this change, it is necessary to analyse what the new product offers to the consumer. The Porsche Cayenne no longer offers the classic Porsche proposition of enabling the self-made man to reward himself with what he's been dreaming of since he was eight. It offers something new: the Porsche lifestyle and performance without compromising on the necessities of family life. The product offers a new fulfilment. But more has changed: in the Cayenne example, it being the first car in the family rather than the third or fourth like the 911, customers expect faster service, and a replacement car with every service job. Adapting to these internal and external changes can also be seen as a new fulfilment.

5. Ball 5: this new fulfilment can only be supported by the brand in a credible way if the brand promise is adapted as well. The brand must promise what the product fulfils, in much the same way the product must fulfil what the brand promises. This adaptation must be a careful process, on the one hand respecting the original brand promise and on the other hand accommodating the new product. The new brand promise leads to new brand content. It should be considered carefully if this new brand content is indeed desired. If not, a different new product introduction must be considered.

6. Ball 6 stands for the 'new' brand. The new product has changed the brand by adding a new angle to it. It is an important design management task to incorporate this new angle in to the brand, and to integrate it in all the brand's touchpoints. The 'new' brand bounces away from t he 5 previous balls to find its way into the organisation and be used by all stakeholders. And if all is well, it will bounce back to set in motion a Brand Driven Innovation process as described in paragraph 6.2.

So at this point there may be three parallel processes going on:

a. A Brand Driven Innovation process, deliberately working form the brand to develop new products

b. An Innovation Driven Branding process, deliberately developing new products to change the brand

c. The bouncing back and fourth of branded products already in the market, influencing the brand and initiating new product development processes in a continuous flow.

Processes a and b are about proactive design management and the initiation of new products and new directions for the brand. Process c is an automatic ongoing process that happens whether it is managed or not. It therefore needs careful evaluation and supervision, to make sure the brand isn't changed involuntary, and new products aren't based on the wrong presumptions.

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