

Brand Strategy

SUBMITTED BY: Leya Matthew

SUBJECT(S): Marketing

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

Brand strategy is an extension of branding. It is how companies communicate the ideas associated with a brand to their target customers. To do this, brands use market segmentation and targeted communication in order to trigger social identification cues that lead target segments to identify with a brand. Needless to say, this lesson can be connected to, among other lessons, market segmentation and the marketing mix. In this lesson, the objective is for students to critically analyze their social identifications and understand how marketing affects their individual lives.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Marketing, I. Foundations of Marketing

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“The Secret Life of Internet Trolls”](#)
- [“Super Bowl Advertising and Corporate America’s Message on Diversity”](#)
- [“Roadtrip! A Year of Brand Building and Self Discovery Inside the Wienermobile”](#)
- [“NOMsense Bakery and the Nuances of ‘Dessert Maximalism’”](#)
- [“Lessons in Limited-edition Marketing from the Kids at Kickpin”](#)
- [“Invisible Horse Dance: The Business of ‘Gangnam Style’”](#)
- [“IHOP Flips to IHOb and Gets People Talking about the Business of Burgers”](#)
- [“Get Your Lemonade, Here! And Business Tips from Mikaila Ulmer”](#)

- “Fashion Meets Function: Deepa Gandhi’s ‘New Dawn’ for Handbags”
- “Educator Toolkit: Building Your Brand”
- “Crowdfunding, Creativity and Kickflips Inside a Church in Spain”
- “Corn Flake Innovation and the Battling Brothers Behind the Kellogg’s Brand”
- “Companies Respond to the Tide Pod Challenge”
- “Checkmate: Chess and the Game of Business”
- “Brand, Image and How Pizza Innovators ‘See the World’”

Common Core Standard(s):

1. CCR Standard for Reading: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and make logical inferences from it.
2. CCR Standards for Listening: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on each other’s ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning and use of evidence and rhetoric.
3. CCR Standards for Speaking: Present information, findings and supporting evidence in such a way that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and the organization, development and style are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience.

Objectives/Purposes: Students will analyze the brand strategy of a brand of their choice.

Knowledge@Wharton Article: [“A Young Woman’s Mission to Brand China”](#)

Other Resources/Materials:

Internet Access

Activity:

1. Introduction to concepts (10-12 mins)

The teacher introduces the concept of brand strategy by going over the definition from the Wharton Global Youth Program glossary, which states that: *Brand strategy is a plan for sustaining or building the meaning of a brand in consumers' minds. This includes determining which consumers would most like the brand, and how best to communicate what the brand is all about, and what it can offer to those consumers.*

The teacher explains and illustrates the definition with a specific example to make it more accessible. I chose to analyze how brand “Wharton” was built and sustained over the decades. Since we had access to the premier business school in the country, it seemed like an ideal choice for our class.

Drawing on earlier lessons, students were asked to analyze brand “Wharton” before we looked at how this brand was built or has been sustained. Students wrote down four words that they thought characterized Wharton best. Then the class visited the history wall at the Huntsman Hall to look at how the school was built, and the mission and vision that underlined all the activities of Wharton. These were linked to the brand identity that students had listed earlier. For example, if a student had linked brand “Wharton” to being successful, the analysis highlighted the rich alumni resource that Wharton students had access to, and how having access to business leaders could help a Wharton graduate be successful in the industry.

When a successful brand is created, sustaining it can be equally challenging. In our example, Wharton sustained its brand by anticipating and always moving ahead of other schools to begin new programs and lead the business school community with exciting ventures in collaboration with the business industry.

2. Work with Knowledge@Wharton article (5 mins)

Students are given handouts of the article and asked to read the third and fourth paragraphs of the section titled **Mission Statements and Value Propositions**. These paragraphs give additional insights into branding strategies that companies and institutions use.

3. Work with partners (10 mins)

To move from an institutional analysis to a marketing focused analysis, students are now asked to analyze the branding strategy of a brand of their choice. The criteria of analysis are arrived at from the definition and the article. Students are expected to present the characteristics associated with a brand, and how that image was built and sustained.

4. Presentation, Feedback, Wrap-Up (10-15 mins)

The groups are asked to present their analysis. Other groups are encouraged to provide constructive criticism — What was insightful about the design? Was there anything about the design that you felt was erroneous or misleading?

The idea of branding strategies is further tied to other marketing concepts like customer segmentation, targeting and positioning.

Tying It All Together: According to the Knowledge@WhartonHighSchool glossary: *Brand strategy is a plan for sustaining or building the meaning of a brand in consumers' minds. This includes determining which consumers would most like the brand, and how best to communicate what the brand is all about, and what it can offer to those consumers.* In this lesson, students analyze a brand to unpack the meaning of this definition and to apply the concepts that form this definition.

Practice Outside of the Classroom: The brand analysis activity can also be conducted as a more rigorous project where students do extensive research — online and in the market, to understand how a brand has built and sustained its meaning in consumer minds.

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently: You could do a similar introductory exercise of your school's brand, or of any product or service that your students are familiar with. If you choose to analyze the branding strategy of a product or service, you could analyze the advertisements, commercials, packaging, name/logo, merchandizing and other related marketing processes to explain and illustrate the definition.

