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Abstract

Since branded products have become the most valuable assets for many firms, it becomes crucial to manage the art of brand images or rather to say, brand identities. Especially it is true in the case of selective luxury cosmetic brands.

The objective of the paper was to describe the concept of brand image and mainly to represent a few strategic models for brand image management. Further it aimed to clarify basic psychological constructions linked with the brand image perception. An image survey on luxury cosmetic products was conducted for the use of L'Oréal Finland and its selective cosmetic brands. It intended to track the images of the L'Oréal brands and their competitors. In addition, the aim was to conclude whether the strategic brand images match the outcomes of the survey.

The paper is constructed in seven key chapters. The first one offers an over-all introduction to the topic of brand image paying special attention to the luxury cosmetic brands. Luxury or selective brands have specific features that define them. The second chapter focuses on the theory of image. It proves that it is necessary to familiarize with the psychological mechanisms such as awareness in order to understand the origins of the consumers' perceptions of brand images. The fundamental third chapter deals with the actual management of brand images through theoretical models. Aaker's brand identity planning model offers a broad concept of brand identity system including components from strategic analysis to implementation system. Another brand image management model by Keller gives an addition by summarizing different types of brand associations and dimensions of brand knowledge. The fourth chapter introduces the image survey of L'Oréal Finland, whereas chapter five gives the survey the methodological context. The research design was built on conclusive and descriptive research with a quantitative approach. The quantification of the data enabled necessary frequencies in the chapter number six. Chapter seven concludes the outcomes of the paper and the survey.

The notion of brand image is very conceptual and inconsistent, thus challenging to track. The strategic models offered here work parallel compensating each other and they can be used as additional tools. All the measured data of the brand images was successfully obtained from the survey. However, it was quite complex to find out whether the images match the planned brand identities. Neither did the survey bring any ground breaking outcomes. It served rather as a reinforcing tool for the existing brand identities. Finally, the concept of brand image requires a clear definition and some practical context in order to become concrete and meaningful for brand management to use.

Key words	Brand image, brand identity, selective cosmetics, luxury
Further information	

