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Brands have become increasingly important for consumers and the research concerning brands has been extensive. The current economic situation is an example of the factors that have made consumers long for authenticity and trustworthiness even in their product purchases. Brands that have a heritage have thus started to gain more interest among consumers, making brand heritage an emerging issue in research concerning brands. Concepts and terms related to heritage are scattered and recent research has implied that heritage should be given more emphasis in future brand research. This study aims at responding to these statements, proposing the following research question: How can brand heritage be managed and communicated in consumer goods companies? To answer to this question, the following subquestions are raised: What is brand heritage? How can brand heritage be managed? How can brand heritage be communicated to consumers?

The theoretical framework of the research is divided according to the subquestions of the research. Therefore the first theory chapter investigates how brand heritage is formed, introducing different components of brand heritage and also providing insight on brand heritage in different cultures. The next theory chapter deals with uncovering, activating and maintaining brand heritage, also looking into the management of brand heritage in different cultures. The last theory chapter examines communicating brand heritage concentrating on the communication tool of the store environment.

A qualitative approach was used in this study. Data was collected through themed interviews, short interviews conducted via E-mail, by observing and by collecting secondary data. A case study was selected as an appropriate approach and Finnish consumer goods companies Fazer and Helkama Velox were chosen as the cases. Managing and communicating brand heritage was considered from these companies' perspective. Findings implied that both case companies acknowledged their histories well and consciously used heritage in some current actions depending on the situation. Communicating brand heritage through the store environment was from Fazer's part examined in Fazer's cafés and from the part of Helkama Velox in the bicycle stores of Helkama's retailers. Fazer's brand heritage was quite visibly communicated at least in the flagship café of Fazer, whereas the brand heritage of Helkama Velox was mainly communicated by referring to arguments of being domestic and reliable. The theoretical contribution of this study was mainly in gathering and combining scattered research concerning the phenomenon of brand heritage. Implications for managerial purposes include aspects that need to be considered when making use of brand heritage in consumer goods companies.

Key words	Brand heritage, heritage brands, store environment
Further information	