
The Influence of the Brand Name to Brand's Success

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Abstract

Many questions related to the contribution and the role of the name of the Brand as a company asset, have not been explicitly answered through empirical research. This specific study attempts to provide some answers to these questions.

Through the hypotheses tested, we came to the conclusion that the name is perceived by the executives as the most important defining element of the Brand (among others specified) and that the contribution of the Brand name to particular criteria of Brand success is significant according to all those aspects. Along these lines managerial insights into these findings could lead to a new role for the name in the context of the Strategic view of Brand building oriented to Brand Success.

Keywords: Marketing, Brand Management, Brands, Brand name.

JEL Classification: M31

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Abstract

What does the name do for the brand? What is its role in the context of consumer behavior? Can the name of the Brand make the difference that is needed so that the brand becomes the consumer's choice? How should it be treated by the executives in the development of their Strategies? In the end, what is the contribution of the name in the Brand's success, and in relation to which parameters?

Most of these questions that relate the role of the name of the Brand and its contribution to the Brand as a company asset, have not been explicitly answered through empirical research.

Despite the fact that significant brand-related research has been addressed to the customers/consumers, what needs further elaboration, is the way that the executives perceive the brand elements and their roles in Brand decisions, because the knowledge of their perceptions is necessary in explaining their strategic decisions and directly related to the way that they handle and manage the various elements of the Brands.

This specific study attempts to provide some insights into these perceptions by tapping the opinions of executives that are involved in brand strategy decisions.

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More specifically, through the hypotheses tested regarding the role of the Brand name as a defining parameter of the brand and the contribution of the name to the success of the brand according to specific criteria, we came to the conclusion that the Brand name plays a very important role in relation to all these aspects. This importance of the name as a brand element, reflects the strategic view of Brand building oriented to Brand success.

Introduction

Selecting a name for his cars was probably easy for Henry Ford, but the marketers of 'Pepsi' or 'Kleenex', it must have been a much more difficult exercise.

As L. Collins, (1978) points out in her article "A name to conjure with" (European Journal of Marketing, 11,5, pp. 340):

'A name is a simple thing; it is a label. But there is also something mysterious and magical about a name. If we give something a name, which did not have a name before, it is like bringing that thing into existence for the first time. It is part of the act of creation of the thing itself....'

From these words alone, it becomes obvious that the definition that one chooses to describe the name, implies the dimensions, limitations, capabilities, and contribution that one sees in it.

Insights from the Literature: Brand elements and Brand Success

Since the 80's, when the economic importance of the brands was recognised (Murphy 1992), the building of brands attracted special research interest among the academics (Shocker, Srivastava & Ruekert, 1994) and the 'practitioners' (Macrae, 1997). Most of these approaches considered the relationship of the brand with the consumers and only few dealt with the handling of the brands by the companies, that is with brand management (Kapferer, 1997; Aaker, 1996). With reference to the terminology used, it must be noted that the 'success' of the Brand has been expressed through various terms and the 'successful Brands' are described as 'powerful', 'strong', or 'established Brands'.

Talking about Brand success, it must be noted that various studies have been conducted referring to strategies for Brand success (ie. McBurnie & Clutterbuck, 1988) without unanimously arriving at a concrete set of criteria on which these strategies should be based, whereas in other cases, the suggested strategies tend to overlook the long term implications of the criteria they utilise.

Nevertheless and regardless of the point of view adopted in approaching the issue and the relevant criteria of Brand success, research conducted by Murphy, (1990); Aaker, (1991); de Chernatony & McDonald, (1992) as well as Ph. Hankinson & Gr. Hankinson, (1999), leads to the conclusion that the strong Brands are the result of long term strategic development and sufficient investments.

Criteria for defining a strong Brand have been searched for, not only among consumer related parameters but also among parameters internal to the firm. On the other hand, success cannot be defined in terms of a certain group (e.g. shareholders)

without defining success in terms of other groups, such as the Brand's target group and/or the trade. Using the firm as a point of reference, Faulker & Bowman (1992) and Harkness (1992) distinguish between criteria internal and external to the firm, the latter being related to the consumers and / or the competitors.

What is important to note is that there is an open issue regarding the relationship between the external and the internal criteria of success that is central to the discussion of brand success.

Furthermore, in describing 'Brand Power Dimensions', four factors have been suggested (N. Kochan, 1996, p.153), namely 'Weight' (dominance), 'Length' (stretch), 'Breadth' (franchise) 'Depth' (commitment), leaving open the question of the necessity of simultaneous satisfaction of all four criteria, for a brand to be considered successful.

Following, another approach, Tilley (1999, p.182- 183), claims that 'leading' brands have seven distinguishing characteristics, split into three themes, i.e. 'What they do', 'How they do it' and 'Their societal role', providing 'a living template of how to act, what to do for the best and how to move into the future'.

Of course, since success is defined in terms of the goals set, the success of the Brand is considered to be directly related to its achievements in the market, without giving a single dimension to these achievements. So, without excluding other internal goals, the success of the Brands is defined, among others, in terms of parameters such as 'Sales', 'Market Share', and 'Awareness'.

Some other very important issues that arise concerning Brand success are whether success is considered by the executives as a static or as a dynamic process, the extent to which it is determined by external factors or it is the result of an internal focus of the firm and the definition of success along a short or long term perspective

Switching focus from the Brand to the consumer, and considering quality as the cornerstone of brand power, Farquhar (1989) emphasizes as dimensions of 'powerful' brands, the positive evaluation of the Brand by the consumers, the accessibility and consistent image, together with brand resiliency and the ability of the brand to survive difficult times. In an effort to measure Brand success, Harkness (1992) postulates that subsequent measurements of consumers' perceptions are adequately reliable measures. As for the consumer perceptions measurements, Doyle, (1989); Pitta & Katsanis (1995); and Stephens, Hill & Bergman, (1996) suggest that they should be defined along the parameters of 'Brand awareness', 'Brand image', 'Brand identity', 'Brand Personality', and 'Relationship' which effectively influence and shape consumers perceptions.

Referring to criteria, Faulker & Bowman (1992), and Buzzell & Gale, (1987) distinguish between 'business – based' and 'consumer-based criteria' of Brand success. The main characteristics of the business - based criteria is that they cannot be defined by consumers, but instead they include economic factors or marketing factors that are handled by Marketers in their Strategic planning, referring to the profitability and Sales of the Brand, along with values added to the shareholders. Along these lines Rubinstein (1995) and Ambler (1995), agree that, being just a single and static element at a certain point of time, sales should not be considered to be a defining element of brand success and another criterion is needed that encompasses the long term dimension of success.

In an effort to provide an integrated approach to brand success, Hankinson and Cowking (1997) suggest nine criteria, namely Brand Awareness, Sales, Profit, Penetration, Brand Share, Position in category, Image / personality rating, Trade distribution and Ability to price-up.

As for the consumer-based criteria, apart from Brand awareness, the business based market share is also considered as an indication of consumer preferences together with the Brand associations, the Perceived Differential Advantage and Added Values (Pitta & Katsanis, 1995).

Concerning the perceived differential advantage and the added values, de Chernatony & McDonald (1994) give emphasis to the importance of added values as a basic characteristic of successful Brands.

Furthermore, Doyle (1989), and de Chernatony & McDonald (1994), who are referring to the competitive advantage as a vehicle of achieving Brand success, suggest that success comes only when the Brand's competitive advantage is difficult to be imitated by competition for a certain period of time.

In this sense, the competitive advantage should be related to the image and reputation of the Brand as a result of high quality and offered services and reliability of the product, i.e. not necessarily tangible product features and characteristics. In search of a competitive advantage, Kapferer (1997) focuses on 'Brand loyalty' as the main prerequisite of achieving Brand success.

Along these lines, expressing the more recent Marketing approach of Relationship Marketing, Stephens, Hill & Bergman, (1996), put forward the long term relationship of the Brand with the consumers as an important success criterion that implies the development of strong and unique brand personality.

Combining 'theory and practice', research that was conducted by de Chernatony, Dall Olmo Riley & Harris, (1998, p. 776) among 20 consultants in the Marketing area having common characteristics their seniority and involvement in branding issues, showed that 15 of them stressed the importance of the 'consumer based' criteria as defined by: 'Loyalty', 'Consistent, crisp, well understood Perceptions (by consumers)', 'Functional performance', 'Perceived as having added value', 'Personality perceived', 'Relationship', 'Distinctive / differentiated' together with others like 'Brand Awareness', 'Strong imagery'.

What is important to note in this piece of research, is that that all 20 experts were also mentioning a wide diversity of business-based criteria, with 'Profitability' the most frequently cited, followed by 'Long-term perspective', 'Meeting Strategic objectives', 'Survival', 'Market share', and 'Innovation' (p.774).

Given this situation, the pursuit of a balanced consideration of the brand has been initiated giving more emphasis on brand building from the companies' viewpoint (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Balmer, 1995), something that consists the viewpoint of this research.

On the basis of the above review which is by no means exhaustive, it is quite safe to conclude that the brand success is a multi-dimensional concept that it is of utmost importance and calls for further empirical investigation, not just because of the significant economic implications that it carries, but also because it is a starting point in the development of Brand Strategy.

What also very quickly becomes obvious is that the various models of brand success proposed so far, do not make explicit reference to the brand name and its relevance in brand strategy dimensions.

Coming now to the name and considering that languages offer practically infinite options, assigning a name to a brand is always a difficult and important exercise given the objective of maximising positive consumer associations, along the lines of consumer based criteria.

The discussion of the name starts with the realisation that in a sense, brands as evolving entities are co-created by firms and consumers and can be examined through their component parts. In this sense, the name is not a 'stand alone' concept, but it exists and 'works' in the context of the brand, and it is nothing less than an element of the brand.

In fact, according to the American Marketing Association, the name is one of the four brand defining elements (name, logo, trademark, design and packaging). Along these lines the characteristics and the role that name plays for the Brand are approached from various points of view in the context of different sciences, such as semiotics, linguistics and psychology.

The definition of the Brand by the American Marketing Association (AMA, 1960), has been generally adopted by researchers (Aaker, 1991; Kotler, 1991, 1996;) despite some criticisms for one sided and strict approach (Arnold, 1992; Crainer, 1997) and for ignoring synergistic effects among the elements.

Focusing on the name as brand element, it has been repeatedly argued that the role and contribution of the name of the Brand in terms of its communicational function, is very significant. The reasoning behind this argument is based on the name's semantic and verbal communicational abilities (Collins, 1978).

On the other hand, considering the various viewpoints about the relative importance and the particular role of each defining element of the Brand, the holistic approach suggests that these elements must be treated by the managers handling them as very important, without underestimating any of them. Of course considering the generally limited marketing resources, the question of the relative importance of the elements is open not only for theoretical but also for practical reasons.

Finally, it must stressed that the various 'models' of brand success proposed so far, do not make explicit reference to the brand name and its relevance in brand strategy and more specific brand success dimensions, thus leaving considerable space open for research.

More specifically, what seems readily open for investigation is the relative importance of the name as component factor of the brand, and an influencing factor of brand success. Furthermore, it is interesting to examine how the name is related to specific criteria of brand success.

Research Aim and Methodology

As the literature review suggests, there is considerable room for research on brand name, as it relates to brand success in general and consumer based criteria of success as perceived by executives, in particular. Thus, the research undertaken aims at investigating the relative importance of the name as a brand element and

its contribution to the brand success along specific (consumer based) criteria. Nevertheless, considering that brand decisions are made continually, what this research attempts to investigate is the opinions of the executives involved in these decisions on the issues put forward.

The focus of the research on these issues stems from the realisation that despite the increasing strategic role of the brand in current business practice, the necessary theoretical background for decision making is not sufficient. Consequently, based on the conclusions of previous research (Shipley et al. 1988, Hardie 1994, Reddy et al. 1994, Dacin & Smith 1994, de Chernatony 1998), this study aims at contributing towards Strategic Brand management decision making by putting forward and testing the following hypotheses:

H₁: 'The name is the most important defining element of the brand, among the elements name, symbol, design, packaging'
and

H₂: 'The name can contribute to the success of the brand, according to specific consumer-based criteria of success'

In order to test these hypotheses, the sample was composed of executives working for companies that have the following characteristics:

1. They are both Greek owned and multinationals.
2. They belong to the group of Companies with the largest advertising expenditures in Greece and as such they are listed in the reference Publications (Directory of the Largest Advertisers in Greece)

The first criterion of choice was considered as being important, since it was interesting to assess the situation in Greece in relation not only to Greek but also to international corporations operating in the Greek Market. With regard to the adoption of the second criterion, it was considered that when a company has made an advertising investment large enough to be one of the largest advertisers, it is reasonable to assume that, on one hand it adopts basic Marketing principles and Strategies, and on the other, the company is committed to the success of its products and Brand in the market. As for the product categories that the companies in the sample cover, as indicated by the respondents themselves, they include fast moving and durable consumer products, services, as well as industrial products.

In order to verify the criteria to be used in the survey and the applicability of the scales chosen, exploratory in depth interviews were conducted and pilot questionnaires were used.

Furthermore, since the methodology utilized expert opinions, the executives to whom the questionnaire was addressed were approached as being involved in the subject area.

The sample thus defined offers a large degree of internal homogeneity in the sense that all respondents are involved in sophisticated brand management environments and decisions.

More specifically, on the basis of an 'average organisational structure', it was considered realistic that there was the possibility of approaching (approx.), five

persons in each company. So, from the 130 companies included in the Directory, a total of 645 persons, occupying positions ranging from Product to Commercial and General Managers, were approached and a total of 110 valid questionnaires were collected.

In order to avoid 'consultation' and influence of higher rank executives, each executive received a personal letter along with the questionnaire. Additionally, a personal approach was adopted by making 'reminder phone calls' to each executive.

Finally, as already said, it was decided to probe into the executive's personal convictions, opinions and expertise and avoid, as much as possible, the influence of specific characteristics of the company or situational factors. This was ensured through appropriate wording of the questions and the introductory instructions. Of course this approach does not completely exclude the risk of bias of the executives to the extent that they can draw or exchange views before or during the completion of the questionnaire.

In addition, in order to ensure that the conclusions are generally applicable, it was checked whether respondents provided expert opinions and were not influenced by their current involvement in particular product categories, their position, and the nationality of their company.

Going back to the hypotheses and regarding H₁, i.e. 'The name is the most important defining element of the brand, among the elements name, symbol, design, packaging', it was decided to adhere strictly to the four elements of the brand as bases for comparison in order to avoid possible comparability problems that could arise if respondents were allowed to add other brand elements which could have some conceptual overlapping with any of the proposed four elements.

More specifically, in order to test the first hypothesis, respondents were asked to allocate 100 points to the four elements according to their relative importance as determining elements of the brand.

Coming to H₂, i.e., 'The name can contribute to the success of the brand, according to specific consumer-based criteria of success', the distinction between consumer based and business based criteria was generally followed during the initial stages of the questionnaire development, but as the exploratory interviews showed, Price and Distribution, as perceived by the consumers, were considered as playing a role in brand success and were included in a question for investigating the impact of the name on them.

Thus, all success criteria isolated and put forward for relating to the name were in a sense consumer based in nature. The decision to tackle only consumer based criteria by no means negates the relevance and importance of the business-based criteria such as profit and sales, market share etc., that generally and in comparison are more readily quantifiable. The reasons for putting beyond the scope of this paper the business based criteria was to avoid reference to success criteria that are affected by parameters characterised by considerable volatility. For example profits depend on production and logistics costs, market share is vulnerable to competitive pressures and shareholders equity is widely open to Stock market volatility in many cases. This viewpoint was also confirmed during the exploratory interviews together with the realisation that execu-

tives were quite at ease expressing conceptual relationships between the name and the proposed consumer-based criteria. In this sense, since each criterion was 'one to one' related to the name, H₂ is effectively composed of a set of independent hypotheses, relating the name to selected criteria.

Regarding the criteria of success, that were selected on the basis of the literature review, they were separated into two sets as follows:

Communication medium	Product characteristics
Image	Quality
Competitive advantage	Price
Buying decision	Distribution
Loyalty	Positioning

The reasoning underlying this separation was that 10 criteria were rather too many to be included in one question as pointed out during the exploratory interviews.

Considering that the criteria were equally understood and conceptualised, it was decided to use two different but compatible scales in order to offer respondents a wider conceptualisation frame and scope and avoid repetitive format and thinking. Regarding the verbalisation of the concepts, it was considered necessary to use familiar to the respondents and straightforward terms as well as self explanatory statements in order to avoid misconceptions and hence validity problems. More specifically, question 2 included the following semantic differential statement scales:

- "The name of the brand is weak - strong communication medium"
- "The name of the brand plays an insignificant - very significant role in building its image"
- "The name does not have - has the power to attribute competitive advantage to a brand"
- "The role that the name of a brand plays in the consumer's buying decision is unimportant - very important"
- "The contribution of the name of a brand in creating loyal customers is very small - very large"

Question 3, contained the following five statements which were answered on a 5 point Likert scale (fully disagree, partly disagree, neither disagree nor agree, partly agree, fully agree):

- "The name of a brand can attribute or imply specific product characteristics"
- "The name of a brand can have quality implications for the product"
- "The name of a brand can justify higher price for the product"
- "The name of a brand can imply a specific type of distribution (e.g. selective - intensive) of the product"
- "The name of the brand can assign a particular image on the product"
- "The name of a brand can position the product in the consumer's mind in a specific position regarding the benefits it offers relative to competition"

Regarding the different scales used in the two questions, it must be noted that since each criterion was directly and separately related to the name and no comparison between them is attempted, the scales difference is assumed to pose no validity problems.

In the statistical processing of the data, correlation coefficients and non-parametric tests of hypotheses were used, since the population's distribution was unknown, the sub-groups were, in some instances, small, and the data were ordinary scaled.

The non-parametric tests used were, the χ^2 test, the Fisher test (when necessary) as well as the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Besides, we proceeded with k-means clustering. All analyses were performed with SPSS and STATISTICA 6.0 statistical software.

Respondents' Profile

In order to put the results of the survey in the perspective of the sample, before proceeding with the analytical presentation, it is interesting to refer to the profile of the executives who responded. (s. Figures 1 – 6 at the end of this article).

The educational level of the respondents (Figure 1) was generally very high, since 74,5% held postgraduate degrees and 83% were graduates of foreign Universities.

As for the positions they occupied (Figure 2), 26,4% were Marketing Managers, 17,9% Product Managers, 15,1% Group Product Managers and 11,3% Commercial Directors. The remaining 29,3% were divided mainly between Sales Managers (7,5%) and General Managers (7,5%).

In terms of working experience (Figure 3), over 50% had more than 8 years, 22% 4-6years and 11% of the respondents have 6-8years working experience, while the rest of them have even less than 4 years experience.

The company loyalty picture shows (Figure 4) that 28% had been working for their company more than 8years and 28% had done so for 1-3years. The rest 44% have had 4-8 years with their company, and only a 13% are 'new comers' (less than 1 year), while another 13% are quite 'loyal' working 6-8 years for the same company.

At the same time 54,3% of the respondents were working for Multinational companies and the rest (45,7%) for Greek companies (Figure 5), while 64,5% of the responses represent Fast Moving Consumer Goods, 12,4% Durable goods, 7,4% Industrial products and 15,7% Services (Figure 6).

It can therefore be deduced that the majority of the respondents have both theoretical knowledge and practical experience, whilst both company types are covered (Greek and multinational) over the four product groups with emphasis of course to Consumer goods, where branding finds wider application.

The relative importance of the name as a defining element of the Brand

As far as the first Hypothesis is concerned, the results show (Table 1), that H_1 is accepted. More specifically, in question 1, respondents were asked to allocate 100 points to the four defining elements of the Brand, according to the relative importance that they recognise for each element regarding its ability to define the Brand of a product or service.

The results indicate that, compared to the symbol, design and packaging, the name is perceived as the most important defining element of the Brand. On the other hand, packaging was not recognized at all as defining element, by a sufficient number (22) of respondents.

Apart from the mean score of each element, we proceeded with the comparison of those scores in a paired basis. Given that the answers regarding all four elements are built on the same sample-basis, i.e. the same respondents, the paired t-test is applicable. Besides, given that we have no reason to assume that the data are normally distributed, which is a prerequisite for the use of the t-test, the non-parametric Wilcoxon test was also used.

As the statistical analysis of the results shows, the name scores significantly higher than the other elements. More specifically, as the application of the T-Test and Wilcoxon test proves, compared to each of the other three elements, the name is assigned significantly more points as being perceived much more important than the other three elements, thus confirming H_1 .

(The results of both tests are presented in the Tables 2 and 3, in the appendix).

So, the results clearly reflect the well-established significance of the name in terms of its greater importance as a determining element of the Brand, according to the executives who participated in the survey.

The Contribution of the name to the Success of the Brand along consumer based criteria

Coming to the second hypothesis, Tables 4A-4D show that all the independent hypotheses effectively comprising H_2 , can be safely accepted. As already mentioned, the data were generated from semantic differentials and Likert scales, and were analysed in terms of frequencies.

Based on the distribution of respondents across the scales, it is observed that the clear majority of respondents are selecting the positive "side" of the scales (options 4 and 5).

Closer observation of the frequency tables indicates that even for those statement scales that the majority of respondents select the "4" in the 5-point scales, there is a tendency for "5" to attract the second largest frequency, thus indicating consistently positive opinions. (The only statement scale, where this pattern is not supported, is the one referring to "Distribution").

More specifically, the statement scale "the name of the Brand is strong / week communication medium" seems to be the one with the highest percentage of agreement among executives (55,5% of the respondents are choosing the option "5" of the scale, while another 34,5% the option "4").

The statement scales referring to "the role of the name of the Brand in building its image" as well as the one referring to "the role that the name plays in consumer's buying decision", are following with the major concentrations in option "4" (52,7% for "image" and 50,9% for "buying decision") while another 33,6% and 30,9% of the respondents chose option "5".

The frequencies observed in the two other statements and respective scales, i.e. the one regarding "competitive advantage" and the other regarding "loyalty",

are again quite high, since around 40% (in both cases) of the respondents select option "4" while another 33,6% and 21,8% respectively, are choosing the option "5". Analytically, the results are presented in TABLE 4A.

Table 4A: Frequency Distribution Table regarding the Contribution of the name to the Success of the Brand along consumer based criteria

1. "The name of the Brand..."

... is weak communication medium»	1	2	3	4	5	%	... is strong communication medium»
	1	1	9	38	61		
	.9%	.9%	8.2%	34.5%	55.5%		



2. «The name of the brand ...

... plays an insignificant role in building its image»	1	2	3	4	5	%	... plays a very significant role in building its image»
	0	2	13	58	37		
		1.8%	11.8%	52.7%	33.6%		



3. «The name of the brand ...

... does not have the power to attribute competitive advantage to a Brand»	1	2	3	4	5	%	... does have the power to attribute competitive advantage to a Brand»
	3	6	17	47	37		
	2.7%	5.5%	15.5%	42.7%	33.6%		



4. «The role that the name of the Brand plays in the consumer's buying decision is...

... unimportant»	1	2	3	4	5	%	... very important»
	1	5	14	56	34		
	.9%	4.5%	12.7%	50.9%	30.9%		



5. «The contribution of the name of the brand in creating loyal customers is ...

... very small»	1	2	3	4	5	%	... very large»
	5	8	28	45	24		
	4.5%	7.3%	25.5%	40.9%	21.8%		



Looking at the total of positive replies by adding the percentages which are referring to the two options in the positive side of the scales, we observe the following aggregate frequencies (TABLE 4B):

Table 4B: Aggregate frequencies regarding the a.m. statements

Statements	Aggregate frequencies In positions "4" and "5"
Statement 1:	90%,
Statement 2:	86,3%,
Statement 3:	76,3%,
Statement 4:	81,8%,
Statement 5:	62,7%.

Concerning the next set of criteria and respective statements, the "Image", which was covered by the statement: "The name of the brand can assign a particular image to the product" exhibits, among the statements, the highest concentration of respondents that "fully agree" (at a level of 60%) and it is supported by another 31,8% who "partly agree". The statements regarding "Positioning" and "Quality" are following, presenting a slightly higher percentage on "fully agree" in comparison to "partly agree". (Positioning: 46,4% fully agree and 42,7% partly agree and Quality: 43,6% fully agree and 42,7% partly agree). The statements regarding "Product characteristics" and "Price" are showing the highest percentages on the 'partly agree' option (55,5% for "Positioning" and 40,9% for "Price") whereas the "fully agree" option received 34,5% and 35,5% respectively.

"Distribution", presents the lowest percentages on the positive side of the scale, (15,5% fully agree and 31,8% partly agree) but still, the majority of the respondents locate themselves in the positive options of the scale.

More precisely, TABLE 4C, presents the Frequency distribution among the scales for each statement:

Table 4C: Frequency Distribution Tables regarding examined Statements

	Fully Disagree	Partly diagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Partly agree	Fully agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	
* 1(6). Product characteristics	2	1	8	61	38	
	1.8%	.9%	7.3%	55.5%	34.5%	%



«The name of the Brand can attribute or imply specific product characteristics»

	1	2	3	4	5	
* 2.(7) Quality		3	12	47	48	
		2.7%	10.9%	42.7%	43.6%	%



«The name of the Brand can have Quality implications for the Brand»

	1	2	3	4	5	
* 3.(8) Price	6	6	14	45	39	
	5.5%	5.5%	12.7%	40.9%	35.5%	%



«The name of the Brand can justify higher price for the product, by creating added value to the Brand»

	1	2	3	4	5	
* 4.(9) Distribution	14	16	28	35	17	
	12.7%	14.5%	25.5%	31.8%	15.5%	%



«The name of the Brand can imply a specific type of distribution (i.e. selective – intensive) of the Brand»

	1	2	3	4	5	
* 5.(10) Image		2	6	35	67	
		1.8%	5.5%	31.8%	60.9%	%



«The»

	1	2	3	4	5	
* 6.(11) Positioning	2	3	7	47	51	
	1.8%	2.7%	6.4%	42.7%	46.4%	%



«The name of the Brand can position the product in the consumer's mind in a specific position regarding the benefits it offers, relative to competition»

Based on “polarisation” of the respondents views in a “agreement” vs. “disagreement” base, i.e. adding the results of the two positive positions as well as those of the two negative ones, and focusing on the “positive” side, it is observed that “Image” remains in the first position with a score of 92,7%. Product characteristics” (with 90%) and “Positioning” (89,1%) are following with scores that are slightly lower. “Quality” scores quite close (86,3%), and “Price” follows with 76,4%, “Distribu-

tion” is the only criterion that does not sum up to a majority, since only 47,3% of the respondents are selecting positive options, as shown in Table 4D.

Table 4D: *Aggregate Frequencies of the examined Statements*

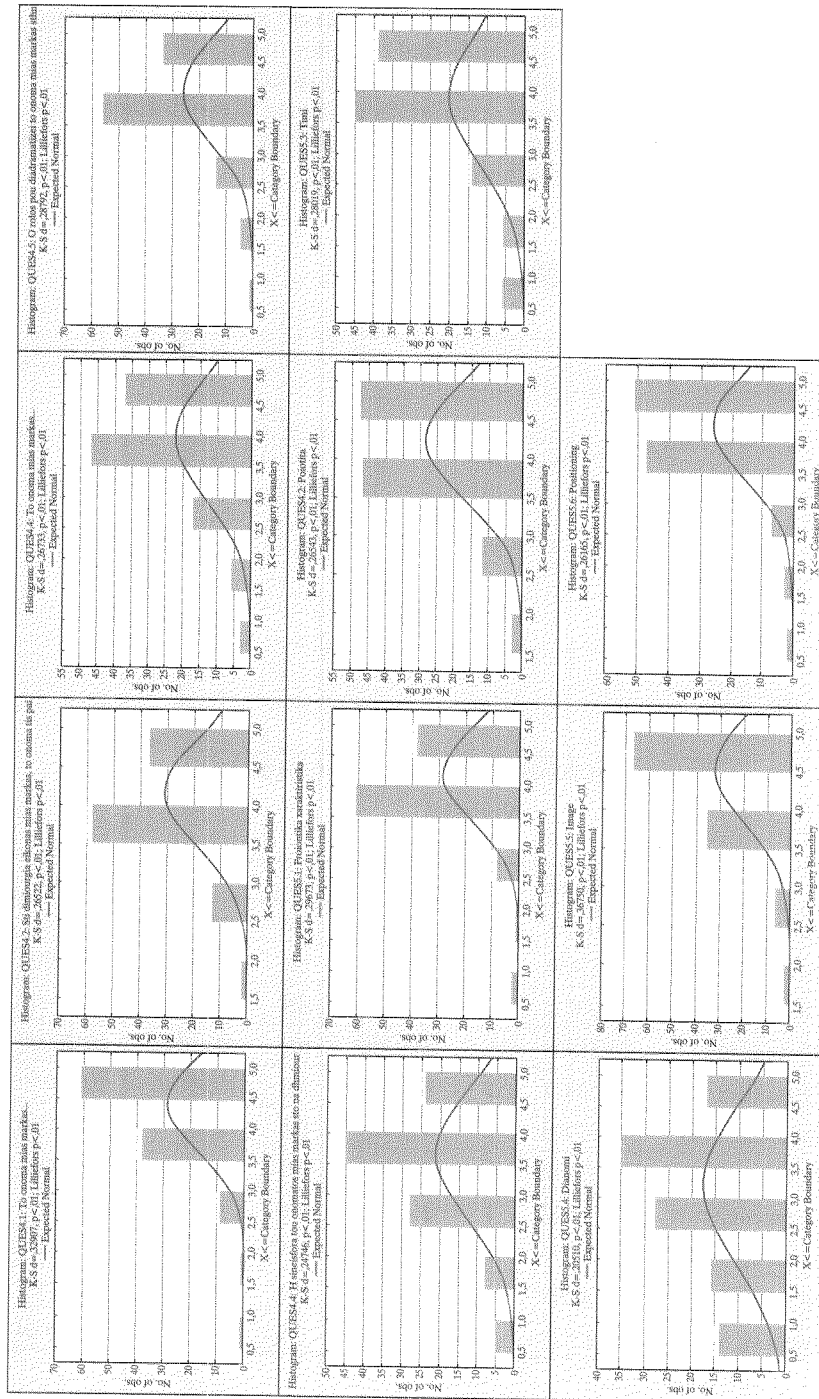
Statements	Aggregate Frequencies ‘partly – fully agree’
1 Image	92,7%
2 Product characteristics	90,0%
3 Positioning	89,1%
4 Quality	86,3%
5 Price	76,4%
6 Distribution	47,3%

Evaluating all the frequencies further, under the scope of the normal distribution, we can see that the values of the skewness and kurtosis estimations for all the statements (Table 3, below) clearly showed that there was significant tendency / influence in the way respondents perceive the statements. Furthermore, in certain cases the distribution of their answers was almost bimodal. In all instances the distribution of the answers deviated significantly from the expected normal distribution. Pertinent diagrams are given below (TABLE 5).

All analyses regarding the distribution were performed with STATISTICA 6.0 statistical software.

Table 5: *Normal distribution Analysis of the Statements*

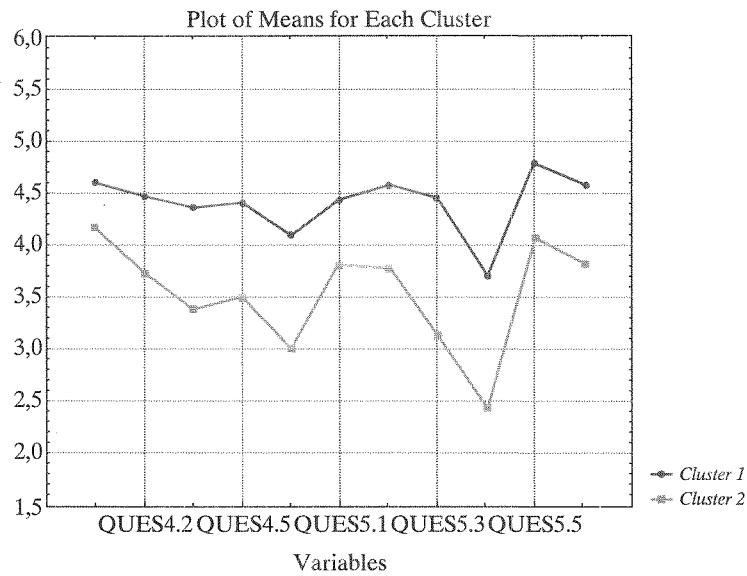
	Valid N	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness	Kurtosis
Statement 1	110	1,000000	5,000000	-1,53899	3,25382
Statement 2	110	2,000000	5,000000	-0,59197	0,31860
Statement 3	110	1,000000	5,000000	-1,04911	0,98081
Statement 4	110	1,000000	5,000000	-0,97861	1,29452
Statement 5	110	1,000000	5,000000	-0,72258	0,24516
Statement 1 (6)	110	1,000000	5,000000	-1,48936	4,47191
Statement 2 (7)	110	2,000000	5,000000	-0,88533	0,45645
Statement 3 (8)	110	1,000000	5,000000	-1,18859	0,97639
Statement 4 (9)	110	1,000000	5,000000	-0,35588	-0,82964
Statement 5 (10)	110	2,000000	5,000000	-1,44899	2,06556
Statement 6 (11)	110	1,000000	5,000000	-1,60535	3,42306



In conclusion, as the statistical analysis of the results shows, it is safe to accept H_2 , and therefore it is beyond any doubt that the name of the Brand has the ability of a significant contribution to the proposed Brand success criteria.

Moreover, K-means clustering revealed the existence of two distinct groups of respondents (Table 6), those expressing a stronger positive opinion, and those with a more reserved positive approach to the statements.

Table 6: K-means Clustering



	Between	df	Within	df	F	signif.
Statement 1	4,61426	1	58,3039	108	8,54728	0,004216
Statement 2	13,37694	1	40,9867	108	35,24826	0,000000
Statement 3	25,27732	1	79,7136	108	34,24700	0,000000
Statement 4	21,58396	1	54,9706	108	42,40572	0,000000
Statement 5	31,58422	1	86,2794	108	39,53546	0,000000
Statement 1 (6)	10,35910	1	53,2409	108	21,01360	0,000012
Statement 2 (7)	16,11440	1	47,7038	108	36,48254	0,000000
Statement 3 (8)	44,76222	1	86,0105	108	56,20616	0,000000
Statement 4 (9)	40,79577	1	128,5224	108	34,28152	0,000000
Statement 5 (10)	13,56028	1	37,9034	108	38,63799	0,000000
Statement 6 (11)	14,22522	1	64,4657	108	23,83166	0,000004

Conclusions

The objective of this research was twofold as it was expressed by the two Hypotheses tested and confirmed, i.e. to examine the relative position of the name among the particular determining elements of the Brand, and following this to evaluate this particular element through its influence and contribution to specific parameters of Brand's success.

The results presented earlier clearly indicate that the name is the most significant defining element of the Brand, particularly in comparison to the symbol, design and packaging.

This argument can be supported by the realisation that of all the brand elements, the name is the most difficult to change. Even in cases that re-naming a brand has been selected as a strategy, co-branding in the sense of simultaneous appearance of the old and the new name, is usually effected for some time (Datsun – Nissan in Greece).

Furthermore, what the results suggest is that there is considerable evidence that the contribution of the name to various consumer-based criteria of Brand success is significant.

Of particular interest in this study was the contribution of the name to certain dimensions of Brand Equity, as suggested by Aaker. So, dimensions like Image, Loyalty, Quality, and Product related characteristics, were included in our survey in order to examine the influence that the name can have to each of those elements. In addition, we introduced some other dimensions, particularly those of "Competitive Advantage" and "Buying Decision", but also "Price" and "Distribution" since from the initial personal interviews we conducted with executives, it came out that these parameters presented interest for further investigation. As it has been proved, the name does contribute to all the proposed criteria thus becoming a key contributor to brand success.

Discussion and Managerial Implications

This study adds to our understanding of brand management by bringing forward the name as the most crucial element not only in defining the Brand but also in contributing significantly to its success along specific criteria.

The research has both theoretical and practical implications, since the modern, sophisticated Brand approach is dealing with 'Brand Gestalt', that is the collection and maintenance of a sum of tangible and intangible values that shape a unique identity for the brand. The art of successful branding lies with the selection and harmonisation of all those elements that form a uniquely attractive proposition to the consumers and affect decisively their buying decision. At the same time, the long-term relationship of the brand with the consumers is based on those unique values that it possesses in their eyes.

Along these lines the roles of the brand elements must be identified and managed carefully, particularly so the name, which as this piece of research shows, has the ability to contribute in many directions to the success of the brand it represents. However, despite the greater importance of the name, in the wider perspective of

Brand Strategy, all the brand elements should be treated in a manner that maximises their synergistic effect and optimises the exploitation of all capabilities of each element.

Particularly today that assigning a meaning to the Brand has become a very important strategic goal, the role of all these elements, as expressed through their symbolic dimension, becomes increasingly important.

Given this realisation, the executives that are involved in brand management and strategic decisions must develop and apply 'brand naming models' that will enhance not only the short but also the long-term equity of their Brands.

In doing so, they must be more looking inward to the personality they want to shape for their brands instead of being continually and obsessively focused on the market environment, looking for a name through the stimuli that their competitors are also receiving.

Directions for further Research

As this research suggests through the testing of both Hypotheses, the name can and should be researched further in an effort to develop an integrated brand-naming model. In this direction the relationship of the brand to business based criteria can be investigated to provide a more holistic view of the contribution of the brand name to brand success.

Furthermore, work towards such a model could include the linking of name typology to consumer and business based criteria.

APPENDIX

Figure 1
Respondent's split by "Education"

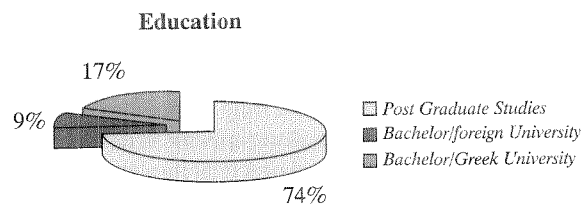


Figure 2
Respondent's split by "Position in the Company"

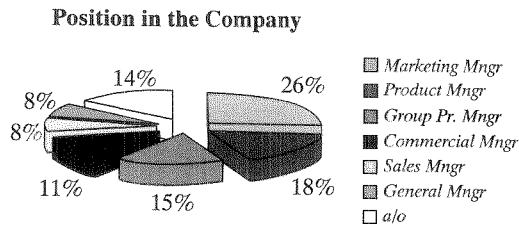


Figure 3
Respondent's split by "Working Experience"

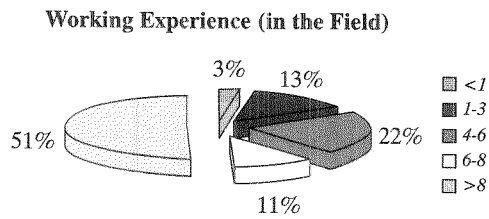


Figure 4
Respondent's split by "Co-operation with the Company in Years"

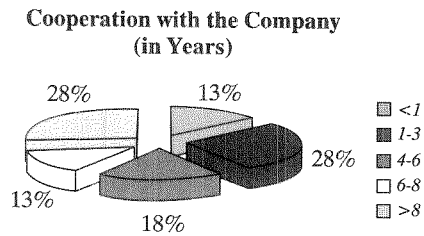


Figure 5
Respondent's split by "Nationality of the Company they are working with"

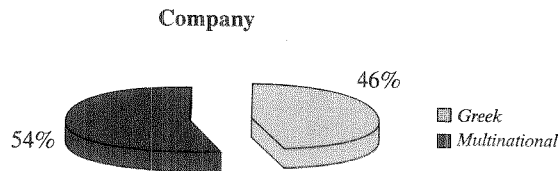


Figure 6
Respondent's split by "Company's products"

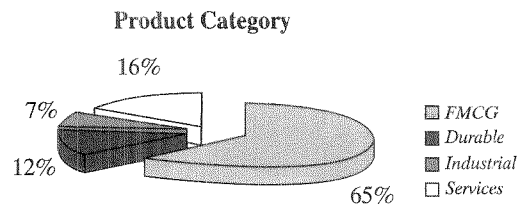


Table 1: The relative importance of each element regarding its ability to define the Brand of a product or service (Hypothesis 1)

	Mean Scores	Name	Symbol	Design	Packaging
N	Valid answers	105	104	105	88
	Missing	5	6	5	22
	Mean Scores	42.12	20.78	21.33	18.59

Table 2 --3: Statistic tests regarding the significance of the name in terms of its importance as a determining element of the Brand

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Name	42.05	104	15.85	1.55
	Symbol	20.78	104	9.43	.92
Pair 2	Name	42.12	105	15.79	1.54
	Design	21.33	105	10.13	.99
Pair 3	Name	40.28	88	15.28	1.63
	Packaging	18.59	88	8.68	.93
Pair 4	Symbol	20.78	104	9.43	.92
	Design	21.15	104	10.01	.98
Pair 5	Symbol	20.37	87	9.27	.99
	Packaging	18.69	87	8.68	.93
Pair 6	Design	20.53	88	8.69	.93
	Packaging	18.59	88	8.68	.93

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation Coefficient	Sig.
Pair 1	Name & Symbol	104	-.394	.000
Pair 2	Name & Design	105	-.563	.000
Pair 3	Name & Packaging	88	-.540	.000
Pair 4	Symbol & Design	104	-.061	.536
Pair 5	Symbol & Packaging	87	-.230	.032
Pair 6	Design & Packaging	88	.188	.080

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Name - Symbol	21.27	21.40	2.10	17.11	25.43	10.137	103	.000
Pair 2	Name - Design	20.79	23.07	2.25	16.33	25.25	9.235	104	.000
Pair 3	Name - Packaging	21.69	21.26	2.27	17.19	26.20	9.570	87	.000
Pair 4	Symbol - Design	-.38	14.17	1.39	-3.13	2.38	-.270	103	.788
Pair 5	Symbol - Packaging	1.68	14.09	1.51	-1.32	4.68	1.111	86	.270
Pair 6	Design - Packaging	1.94	11.07	1.18	-.40	4.29	1.646	87	.103

*NPar Tests**Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test Ranks*

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Symbol - Name	Negative Ranks	77(a)	45.01	3465.50
	Positive Ranks	7(b)	14.93	104.50
	Ties	20(c)		
	Total	104		

Design - Name	Negative Ranks	81(d)	48.42	3922.00
	Positive Ranks	11(e)	32.36	356.00
	Ties	13(f)		
	Total	105		
Packaging - Name	Negative Ranks	69(g)	40.64	2804.00
	Positive Ranks	7(h)	17.43	122.00
	Ties	12(i)		
	Total	88		
Design - Symbol	Negative Ranks	38(j)	32.66	1241.00
	Positive Ranks	34(k)	40.79	1387.00
	Ties	32(l)		
	Total	104		
Packaging - Symbol	Negative Ranks	39(m)	37.03	1444.00
	Positive Ranks	32(n)	34.75	1112.00
	Ties	16(o)		
	Total	87		
Packaging - Design	Negative Ranks	34(p)	27.71	942.00
	Positive Ranks	22(q)	29.73	654.00
	Ties	32(r)		
	Total	88		
a Symbol < Name				
b Symbol > Name				
c Name = Symbol				
d Design < Name				
e Design > Name				
f Name = Design				
g Packaging < Name				

h Packaging > Name
i Name = Packaging
j Design < Symbol
k Design > Symbol
l Symbol = Design
m Packaging < Symbol
n Packaging > Symbol
o Symbol = Packaging
p Packaging < Design
q Packaging > Design
r Design = Packaging

Test Statistics(c)

	Name - Symbol	Name - Design	Name - Packaging	Design - Symbol	Packaging - Symbol	Packaging - Design
Z	-7.511(a)	-6.954(a)	-6.969(a)	-.416(b)	-.963(a)	-1.201(a)
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.677	.336	.230

a Based on positive ranks.

b Based on negative ranks.

c Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

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