

## Sensory Brand: Studying Relationship between 5 Senses and Brand Value at World's 100 Top Companies

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**Abstract:** 5 senses play key role at human life and upon ever-growing increase of products with different brands, applying senses for establishing brand has great importance. Available brands in market attract current and potential customers on sensory basis. According to importance of this issue, this article studies sensory branding i.e. senses applied at world's top brands in the year 2010 like Interbrand Company and its relationship with brand value. Statistical universe of this research is 100 top firms introduced by Interbrand company in the year 2010 and with respect to Cochran formula the volume sample is calculated as 49 brands and data was collected by using a questionnaire consisting of 25 questions and research hypothesis is tested by using Pearson Correlation coefficient. On the contrary of expectation, research findings reject correlation between 5 senses and brand value.

**Key words:** Sensory Branding, 5 Senses, Sensory Brand, Brand Value

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### INTRODUCTION

Brands are one of the most important tools in today's global business. They have a value of nearly one third of the world's wealth. (Winter and et al 2009). In the realities of today's economy, people are overloaded with options and conflicting information regarding just about everything. Additionally, much of the information looks the same. It's difficult for people to identify the "best" choice. This new marketplace has made people confused, frustrated, tired and more cynical than ever before. Since people know that they can't rationally cope with all of this choice in their lives, they're making purchase decisions based upon *how they feel*. (Lytle 2010). 5 senses play key role at human life and according to ever-growing increase of brands, more application of senses for establishing brand has great importance. Sensory brands assist to solve advertisement problems which create a powerful sensory relationship with customers. Sensory branding has suitable influence on effective marketing communication in future (Lindstrom 2005). For consciousness to become aware the senses of sight, taste, smell, touch, and hearing are used to sample the world and ultimately the cosmos. In fact, senses are gift of God for physical body of human. Input to our mind and brain for being analyzed are originated from 5 senses. Our perspective toward world, sensory input and interpretation of them is limited to mind. Having experience of world depends on quality of senses, their performance and consciousness of person. In fact, senses are like Gods ruling over human and are able to promote our awareness and consciousness (Clayton 2010). 5 senses of human play key and complicated role for discrimination to select a brand. Meanwhile, advertisement and business relationship exclusively concentrate on what we observe and hear and is not interested to apply another 3 senses (Lindstrom 2007). The topic of sensory branding is a recently established discussion at commercial management that by applying 5 senses of human, attempts to create powerful sensory relationship between brand and consumers to improve status of brand in today's competitive world full of different advertisements and by using sensory branding, to prevent from imitation of rivals (Lindstrom 2005). All senses are completely ignored for business of establishing brand. Advertising and marketing communities have clamored for our auditory attention on the radio; they have directed our visual attention to store shelves, billboards and television. In recent years, advertisers and marketing communities have used sensory branding to bombard our other senses of smell, taste and touch, luring us into trying over 1,000 new brands each year (West 2009). In this hypercompetitive environment, all other things being equal, it is the emotional aspects of products and services which drive consumer purchase. This can be achieved through products and brands which engage consumers on the level of the senses and emotions, how they come alive and forge a deep and long lasting connection with consumers. "people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel"-Maya Angelou, Author, poet, civil Right Activist. (Murray 2011). According to the importance of topic, this research studies 5 senses among world's top brands in the year 2010.

### **Research Concepts and Hypothesis:**

#### **Brand Value:**

Brand value is financial value of brand i.e. net current value of financial benefits as a result of brand. Brand value is specific brand value for selling brand (Chandon 2004). Scientific association of marketing defined brand value in the year 1989 as: an added value obtained from better marginal profit or market share for product; in which this added value by using customers and other members is regarded as financial asset and set of appropriate relations and behaviors. As Kapferer author of famous book "The New Strategic Brand Management" states, Brand value is the ability of brands to deliver profits. A brand has no financial value unless it can deliver profits. (Kapferer 2008: 14). Another definition of brand value is the value which a brand would be given if represented on a company balance sheet.(www.marketresearchteams.com, 2011).

#### **Sensory Branding:**

Senses are among vital section of human life. Nearly we understand everything in world through our senses. Researches show that existence of more senses in products creates better experience of brand (Djurovic 2008). Product experience is a multi-dimensional user-product interaction, which includes the user's emotional aspects (Karahanoğlu 2008). According to Schmitt (1999) and Lindstrom & Kotler (2005), a customer is often attracted towards a brand based upon its sensory experience. Lindstrom & Kotler further stresses that almost our entire understanding of the world is experienced through our senses. Our senses are our link to memory and can tap right into emotion. (Isacsson & Alakoski 2009). Using senses and their effect on understanding of consumer paves the way for enriching experience of brand, discriminating their personality, more interest, preference and loyalty of customer (Djurovic 2008). Emotional branding or sensory branding is the marketing strategy that is investigating the emotional relationships between consumer and the brand. The term 'emotional branding' first came into prominence with the book of Gobe (2001) and continued to be used by others (Karahanoğlu 2008). Kahn Consulting describes it as the purposeful design and deployment of the interaction between the senses in order to stimulate a consumer's relationship with a brand; and to foster a lasting emotional connection that optimizes brand loyalty. (Isacsson & Alakoski 2009).

**First Hypothesis: There is significant relationship between using 5 senses and brand value:**

#### **Sight Sense at Branding:**

Eye is the most important component of sight. Each eye creates a 2 dimensional image of visible objects, turn it into visual image then brain changes this image and enables us to see 3D image of objects, this sensation is called sight (Batema 2011). This is the sense we use most frequently. In fact, we use it all day every day, every second that we're awake (Redmond 2009). Sight is the most relied upon and important sense for most humans and often drives a first impression. For this reason, creative directors have long worked to create images, messages, and calls to action that are appealing and easily understood. (Lefebvre 2010). Eye enables us to communicate with others by different methods, for example a quick double person communication when looking each other (Swedberg 2010 CEO Jorgen Appelqvist, Founder and owner of the Swedish fashion retailer Gina Tricot, points out the significance of a strategy for the sight sense: "what the eyes see is extremely important. I say that the eyes buy 70 or 80 percent of what people buy. This is enormously, enormously important to bear in mind." The sight sense and visual system let us discover changes and differences when we see a new design, a different package or a new shop interior. Sight is generally held to be the most powerful of the human senses, and it is also the most seductive (Hulten, Broweus, Dijk 2009). More than 80% of brand communication is through sense of sight and we are living in a world that consumers receive daily 10,000 visual messages (Lounge Group 2011). Simon Faure Field (2009) stated that 83% of marketing budget is allocated for sight sense to have commercial communication. Observation is a strategy of sense of sight for being aware of brand and creating an image of brand which improves sensory experience of customer (Hulten, Broweus, Dijk 2009). Experience of brand begins with visual identification: logos, slogans, signs, emblems, writings and etc are still continuing as different forms of communication (O' Neil 2005). According to the study of Millward Brown (2003) in relation to 5 senses and attracting brand, when all senses enter into market they do not have same importance, rather the most important sense is sight and then smell, sound, taste and touch fall with next ranks of importance respectively (2008). Research of Lindstrom and Kotler (2005) shows that sight plays 58% role branding in comparison to other senses. Generally, many researches and literature have dealt with issue of sense of sight (Isacsson & Alakoski 2009). Researches of Hakuhodo advertising company (2006) in Japan shows that consumers insist on sense of sight for 60% and non sense of sight as 40%. When they asked respondents about the most important sense, exactly 61.9% of respondents selected sense of sight and nearly 38.1% of respondents selected other senses. According to their research 67.5% of men pay attention to visual priorities; meanwhile, 44.3% of women attention to visual priorities (Hakuhodo 2006). An example of sensory brand is Apple with beautiful and unique design of computer like, designing iPod with flat surface (Chapman 2009). Another instance is McDonald as the best world's fast-food that stimulates sense of vision by the curve

of its arches and without observing its name, the brand of MacDonald is recalled in mind of people (Wyatt 2009).

**Second Hypothesis: There is significant relationship between sense of sight and brand value**

***Sense of Sound at Branding:***

Ears are body organs for entering sounds and creating of sense of hearing. Human's ear is able to diagnose minimum 16 to 28000 cycles per seconds (Batema 2011). Most companies are completely aware that sound is regarded as strategy for improving identity and image of a brand. If sound is consciously applied, company has great opportunities for creating a sound to distinguish its brand (Hulten, Broweus, Dijk 2009). Sound influences on our judgments and comments in relation to product and service that we intend to purchase, in fact sound influences on behavior and habit of purchase (Lindstrom 2005). Sound is able to recall our memories and emotions (Lindstrom 2002). Sound by using emotions creates specific modes and behaviors. Sound may be either exciting or relaxing. For example London subway stations generally broadcast classic music on mornings to decrease stress of passengers. In addition, sound is able to remember logo of a specific company for us (Kennedy 2008). Sound plays key role for distant communication. In fact, 40% of people assume that sound of a telephone is more important than its design (Kennedy 2008). A specific sound of mobile phone announces that there is Nokia or Motorola mobile phone around us or while loading Windows with specific sound, it indicates that this operating system is purchased from Microsoft or Opel Co. (Tischler 2005). Sound plays key role at branding process and sound is very powerful stimulant (Lindstrom 2005). According to the researches of Lindstrom and Kotler (2005), sense of hearing has the 3<sup>th</sup> rank with respect to share of branding that is equivalent to 41% (Isacsson & Alakoski 2009).

**Third Hypothesis: There is significant relationship between using sense of sound and brand value**

***Sense of Smell at Branding:***

Smell is the most important sense for making purchase decision and brand loyalty of consumers; since, it has quick effect on limbic cortex system (part of brain in charge of controlling emotions and memory) (Harrop 2007). Sense of smell is very close to our emotions and perfumes have great influence on our emotions, in fact smelling scent is sometimes accompanied with our emotional experiences and remember memorable images in mind of customer and create image of brand either for short term or long term. This event can happen through short term marketing activities which shows role of scent for paying attention to product or brand or long term strategies that turns perfume as important element for determining identity of a company (Hulten, Broweus, Dijk 2009). Probably scents are the most important environmental factors for marketers (Grohmann & Thomas 2005). Specific scents and smells can remember memory of several decades ago (Redmond 2009). Krishna, Lewin and Morrin (2010) within their research announced that smell of product is very effective at increasing remembering product and even information related to product (Roberts 2011). Ford, Chrysler and Cadillac are among automobile brands having their specific perfumes (Lindstrom 2005). Within a sensory marketing, perfumes are applied for identity of brand, image of brand and marketing tactic for advertising a product (Rodrigues, Hulten and Berito 2011).

**Fourth Hypothesis: There is significant relationship between using sense of smell and brand value**

***Sense of Taste at Branding:***

Using taste is the most difficult sense for marketers. Taste of tee is applied for increasing involvement. When Royal Post in England observed great decrease in their letters, this company attempted to merge a sense for increasing effectiveness of its brand. Therefore Royal Post sent personal letters with a piece of chocolate for its customers and result of this action was extraordinarily excellent and people by inspiring experience of sending chocolate, again sent letter. In fact for food companies, sending sample of product is an excellent method for experiencing taste (Lefebvere 2010). According to the statement of Martin Lindstrom, nearly 16% among total 1000 fortune companies had added tasting to their brand. An instance of sensory brand is Colgate which is among top brands for applying different tastes at toothpaste. Specific taste of this toothpaste has distinguished this brand so that customers are able to find this brand even without visual or written emblem (Lindstrom 2005). Taste of Colgate toothpaste is outstanding just like Bang and Olefson remote control machine, digital sound of Intel and white and red color of Coca-Cola. A common point for all of these brands is entering third aspect of 5 senses to brand (Biricik 2006). According to research of Lindstrom and Kotler (2005) sense of taste has 4<sup>th</sup> rank of branding that is equivalent to 31% (Isacsson and Alakoski 2009).

**Fifth Hypothesis: There is significant relationship between using sense of taste and brand value**

***Sense of Touch at Branding:***

Most companies still do not understand the importance of human senses for permanent marketing; however, brands depending on experience of touching, generally increase probability of sudden purchase. Experience of touching has importance with respect to purchase and consuming service. In fact, companies applying this sense

obtain appropriate opportunities for creating an identity and good image of their product i.e. they apply from touching marketing. Brands are distinguished through sense of touching, for example, generally heavy objects have high quality. For improving physical contact with customers, company requires to physically access its products to all customers. In fact, customers should be able to touch, press, turn on and reversing different products. Encouraging for touch product attracts attention of customer to purchase products that already were neglected. Researchers found out that buyers who touch a product are more probable to purchase it and ability of touching a product increases our trust for quality of that product. Therefore, if packaging prevents from having access to product (like sealed packaging of a pair of socks) retailers should find a solution for increasing access of consumers to product (Hulten, Broweus, Dijk 2009). The original Coca-Cola bottle is a lean sample of shape marketing (Hulten, Broweus, Dijk 2009). In fact Coca-Cola bottle due to its delicate curves creates pleasant feeling for holding it in hand of consumers. Special design of Coca-Cola bottle is so that even it is completely recognized when touching it at complete darkness (Biricik 2006). Nearly 59% of consumers prefer to drink Coca-Cola within its glass bottle rather than plastic bottle i.e. sense of touching is very important (Lindstrom 2005). Sense of touch (contact with hand) is received less attention at psychology literature and consumer's behavior; however, this attention is increasing (Krishna, Elder and Kaldara 2010). In spite of having less marketing consideration to material of brands; however, this sense is necessary for growth and development of companies (Kennedy 2008). According to the study of Lindstrom and Kotler (2005) sense of touch fall within fifth rank and has 25% share at branding (Isakson and Alakoski 2009). 35% of consumers believe that touching a mobile phone is more important than looking at it and sense of touch is undeniable powerful stimulant (Lindstrom 2005). Touching and feeling specific products play key role at making purchase decision, for instance, when touching knife and fork and purchase them based on size and weight or when purchasing an automobile we pay attention to size, comfort of its chairs and steering wheels. Sense of electronic products of Bang & Olufsen is a unique sense of attraction due to its design (Chapman 2009). Digital technology produces a touching experience through pressure and simulated shaking, for example through airplane, automobile and video games (Hulten, Broweus, Dijk 2009). Using sense of touching for obtaining information of a product creates a positive sense and appropriate attitude toward that product. Materials, temperature, weight and form assists to experience of sense of touch on positive basis and improves customer loyalty (Rodrigues, Hulten and Berito 2011). When people touch a product they acquire sense of ownership and are more probable to purchase that product (Hulten, Broweus, Dijk 2009). Sense of touch is the main reason of failure for on-line clothes stores; since people are not able to touch clothes. Amazon Co. solved this problem; since, generally people neglect from touching and sensing a book and insist on its contents. Clothes should be tested with respect to material, size and etc. Physical closeness to a product is an effective item for making purchase decision and purchase behavior depends on this factor (Lindstrom 2002).

**Sixth Hypothesis: There is significant relationship between sense of touch and brand value**

**Research Methodology:**

Statistical universe of this research is world's top 100 brands in the year 2010 introduced by Interbrand. In order to determine volume sample it is applied from cochran formula as 49 and simple random sampling method. To collect information it is applied from electronic questionnaire (Internet based questionnaire) consisting of 25 questions compatible with research hypothesis. Level of alpha for 10 sample pretests is 0.861 which is acceptable and appropriate level.

**Research Findings:**

Among total 49 companies, the highest frequency relates to early application products with 9 brands equivalent to 18.4% and the lowest frequency relates to clothes industry, computer software and trading service each with 2 brands equivalent to 4.1%. Table 1 shows percentage and frequency of respondent companies.

**Table 1:** Distributing frequency of respondent companies based on type of industry.

| Cumulative Percentage | Percentage | Frequency | Industry          |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 6.1                   | 6.1        | 3         | Automobile        |
| 10.2                  | 4.1        | 2         | business service  |
| 24.5                  | 14.3       | 7         | Electronic        |
| 38.8                  | 14.3       | 7         | Financial service |
| 57.1                  | 18.4       | 9         | FMCG              |
| 65.3                  | 8.2        | 4         | Luxury            |
| 69.4                  | 4.1        | 2         | Media             |
| 77.6                  | 8.2        | 4         | Restaurants       |
| 81.6                  | 4.1        | 2         | Computer software |
| 85.7                  | 4.1        | 2         | Apparel           |
| 93.9                  | 8.2        | 4         | Internet service  |
| 100                   | 6.1        | 3         | Beverages         |
| Sum                   | 100        | 49        |                   |

Among 49 respondent companies only 26.5% of total industries apply from all 5 senses in their branding. The highest frequency relates to applying 3 senses from total 5 senses equivalent to 34.7% and the lowest frequency relates to applying 2 senses equivalent to 7%.

**Table 2:** Distributing frequency of senses applied at branding.

| Cumulative Percentage | Percentage | Frequency | Number of Senses |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|------------------|
| 14.3                  | 14.3       | 7         | 2                |
| 49                    | 34.7       | 17        | 3                |
| 73.5                  | 24.5       | 12        | 4                |
| 100                   | 26.5       | 13        | 5                |
| Sum                   | 100        | 49        |                  |

Level of Pearson correlation coefficient for sum of senses (test of first hypothesis) and each of the senses at level of 0.05% is calculated in the following table separately. The highest correlation coefficient is for sight, sound, touch, smell and taste respectively.

**Table 3:** Table for Pearson correlation test related to all hypotheses.

| Hypothesis No | Independent Variable | Dependant Variable | Pearson Correlation Coefficient | Significance Level | Result   |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| 1             | Sum of senses        | Brand value        | 0.036                           | 0.806              | Rejected |
| 2             | sight                |                    | 0.163                           | 0.263              | Rejected |
| 3             | sound                |                    | 0.157                           | 0.283              | Rejected |
| 4             | Smell                |                    | -0.028                          | 0.848              | Rejected |
| 5             | Touch                |                    | -0.035                          | 0.812              | Rejected |
| 6             | Taste                |                    | -0.026                          | 0.86               | Rejected |

Upon rejecting hypothesis 1 to 6 for total industries, this hypothesis is tested for each industry separately and significant correlation coefficient and level of significance for each of the industries (industries that relationship between independent and dependant variable is confirmed) is offered in the following table.

**Table 4:** Significance correlation coefficients separate by industries.

| Industry         | Sense of sight and brand value |                    |          | Sense of hearing and brand value |                    |          | Sense of touch and brand value |                    |          | Sense of smell and brand value |                    |          |
|------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------|
|                  | Correlation coefficient        | Significance level | $\alpha$ | Correlation coefficient          | Significance level | $\alpha$ | Correlation coefficient        | Significance level | $\alpha$ | Correlation coefficient        | Significance level | $\alpha$ |
| Business service | +1                             | 0                  | 0.01     | -1                               | 0                  | 0.01     | -1                             | 0                  | 0.01     |                                |                    |          |
| Software         | -1                             | 0                  | 0.01     | +1                               | 0                  | 0.01     |                                |                    |          |                                |                    |          |
| Media            | -1                             | 0                  | 0.01     | -1                               | 0                  | 0.01     |                                |                    |          |                                |                    |          |
| Internet service |                                |                    |          | -0.965                           | 0.035              | 0.05     | 0.951                          | 0.049              | 0.05     |                                |                    |          |
| Apparel          | +1                             | 0                  | 0.01     | -1                               | 0                  | 0.01     |                                |                    |          | -1                             | 0                  | 0.01     |

According to the table 4, there is relationship between using sense of sight, hearing and touch and brand value with certainty level of 99% at business service. There is relationship between using sense of sight, hearing and brand value with 99% certainty at media industry. There is relationship between using sense of hearing and brand value with 95% certainty at industry of Internet service. There is relationship between using sense of sight, hearing and smell with 99% certainty at apparel industry.

**Conclusion & Recommendation:**

According to the present research, there is no relationship between 5 senses and brand value which is due to nature of different industries with respect to using different senses in their branding. Due to separating industries at sample, result of Pearson correlation test for different senses is performed separately that according to research findings, there is relationship between using sense of sight, hearing and touch and brand value at industry of business service, there is relationship between using sense of sight, hearing and brand value at media industry, there is relationship between using sense of hearing and touch and brand value at Internet services, there is relationship between using sense of sight, hearing and smell at apparel industry.

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