

Brand Management
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Now, moment you think of health related issues for senior people, senior citizens. Now, see what are the words that are given here dementia, age, assistance, depression, disease, aging, health, health care, injury, mind, patient, loneliness, nursing, psychology, problems, care, mental, memory. So, so many issues which may not be directly related to your product, you may be a health care professional or a brand manager of a hospital, you may be brand manager of a pharma company, but if you are aware of these so many possibilities that exist in a consumers mind who is a senior citizen and who is suffering from some health issues, these are the associations you must keep in mind when you are creating campaign for your brand. So, you can address any one of these issues and if you understand your own brand well, you can relate it to one or more than one of these issues and make your brand real to your target group in this case senior citizens. So, mining memory network is very important, you need to understand various networks that exist in the memory related to your brand and then you look at all the nodes in the network that is how you must go about. Looking further in the same vein you must look at this network, we are developing that memory network.

So, in this you will see that this is about farm equipments, this is about agriculture and in this picture you can see that there is farm and in the farm you have machines like machines like truck, tractor and various other technologically enabled and non technologically enabled equipments. You also have crops, so sometimes you produce one, sometimes you produce another and then in farm you also have animals different types of animals and then the problems associated with animals, the strengths of those animals and so on. So, you can see that this whole network it is like a memory network if you see remember the previous slide it is a memory network. So, memory network related to agriculture and you will see that every node every point creates a concept.

So, animal is also a concept, animal is not just an entity, it is not just a cow, horse or a sheep it is also a concept. Similarly, farm is a concept, machine is a concept, crop is a concept. So, you have to look at these concepts also when you are looking at memory network and from those concepts multiple meanings will emerge and you will have to look at those meanings and when consumers interact with your brand these meanings become real. They mean these meanings get rooted into visual, verbal, emotional and sensory and that is what you have to understand and explore. So, coming back to this memory network it has two types broadly two types of models.

First model is associative. What is associative? So, which we have just discussed like in previous case senior citizen health issues of senior citizen is generally associated with things like mental health, things like nursing care, things like 24 7 assistance, things like depression and so on. So, these are associative models. Similarly for agriculture associative models we have seen like machine, like animals, like infesting diseases that spoil the crops and so on so forth. So, when you think of agriculture these are the ideas that you associate.

Similarly, semantic model of memory. Semantic model is that which is about words and symbols. When you try to unearth the consumer memory you also think of the certain language that is associated with that area. So, if it is agriculture it is associated with certain lexicon, certain way of expression and it is also associated with certain symbols. So, semantic and symbolic model of memory is also something that you must be aware of that you have to reach consumer memory through associative model and through semantic and symbolic model.

Now, let us move further what we are supposed to do is we have to elicit, we have to extract these deeply held brand associations. And you will see that when you try to extract or elicit these deeply held brand association you will face certain problems. And they are primarily three problems or three challenges that you will face while you try to extract these brand associations. The three primary challenges are access, verbalization and censoring. What do they mean when we say access, verbalization and censoring? When we come to access, now this we have been talking about in this lecture and in previous lectures also that consumers are not able to access their own brand associations.

As you know they are verbal, visual, emotional and sensory and beyond primary associations consumers are not able to go. You ask them that what do you think about my brand say my phone called Samsung, what do you think about Samsung? Most people will say yeah it is good phone, it is sturdy, it is slightly expensive, it lasts long, it has good battery and so on. So, these are the primary associations. But if you ask them something beyond it they are just not able to say anything because they are not able to access what resides in their unconscious about this brand called Samsung. So, in the end they end up saying that which is obvious that which is primary and you have to break that M pass that deadlock, you have to go beyond the primary and already known associations ok.

And how will you do it? One technique often that is used in marketing research and it is related to psychology and that is called word association test. Here what we do is we say that when you think of say brand Samsung which word comes to your mind. You are not supposed to give them lot of time give them about 5 seconds or 10 seconds and the word

that comes to their mind that word will indicate what exactly are they thinking about your brand which is beyond the primary association. So, this you will have to do not with one person, but many people and then you will have to find some kind of pattern in their responses analyze that pattern and that will give you some idea as to what are the secondary associations that people are caring about your brand in this case Samsung. So, this is the first challenge access that consumers are not able to access their own brand experience and therefore, their brand associations.

The second challenge that you face is mobilization. Now, people are not able to even speak, they are not able to give words to their experiences to their brand associations. What they do as I said earlier is that they say what is obvious and they are not able to reach the unconscious association. So, you will have to help them, you will have to enable them so that they are able to verbalize you will have to perhaps give them cues which means that say you want to explore a certain brand called say LG. Now, if LG is a brand, what do you think of when you think of LG TV.

So, you may give them say five options and you ask them to pick anyone. So, that is another way of helping the consumers in helping them in verbalizing, but remember you must not do this for the primary association, you should do this for secondary association because primary associations are easy, they will already and easily tell you, but for the secondary association when they are groping for words, when they are not able to understand their own experiences that is when you should help them with cues and with words so that they can choose. Finally, the third challenge while mining brand association is censoring. What is this censoring? The censoring is that when you are interviewing a consumer when you are talking to a consumer, consumer will think that if I say this what will people think of me and when a person is interviewed he or she becomes very important and he wants to present a very desirable and an ideal view of himself or herself. So, what he or she does he or she wears a mask, you can see an attractive picture in this slide.

So, the consumer wears a mask and he or she responds by wearing that mask of an imaginary ideal person all right and this way he or she censors his responses. So, he or she does not give the real response, he or she gives a desirable response an ideal response. So, this is also a challenge that brand managers or a research researchers face and they have to be aware of this and that is why they should spend some time with the respondent with the consumer and assure them that your responses are confidential, break the ice and make them comfortable with you. So that they are able to show the real self and they are able to give you the real answer, answers to your question and not the idealized or not the desirable answers. So this self-deception that consumers do when they are being interviewed whether it is self-deception or impression they try to manage their impression they want to come across as someone very good and desirable and therefore, they give

responses in a certain way.

So you have to understand that consumers are censoring their responses and you have to make them comfortable and make them or help them reach or give the real answer rather than do impression management while interview is being taken. So, to do mining of these brand associations I am giving you three general principles that you must follow while you try to elicit or extract these deeply held brand associations. Now one of the research tool that we use in qualitative research is focus group discussion. Most of you would be aware what is a focus group discussion. In focus group you identify a group of 8 to 10 respondents and you make them sit in a circle or in a semicircle and then you are the moderator, the researcher is the moderator and then a topic is given and then the group discussion is held where it is a directed or a moderated group discussion where the researcher asks certain questions and then the group is expected to explore the answers of those that question or their own experiences of that question and they build upon each other's responses.

So that is a focus group discussion, but in this case because we are trying to extract deeply held brand associations, deeply held in the unconscious focus group discussion may not be enough because focus group discussions work very well when we are trying to explore the social context where people interact with one another and develop insights. So in this case we are trying to go into the unconscious of the individual rather than a group and that is why instead of focusing on or instead of doing many focus group discussion it would be better if you do long personal interviews. In the long personal interviews you will be able to address all the three challenges of access, verbalization and censoring because if you do long personal interviews people will start getting comfortable with you and then they will not try to hide and they will try to be frank and they will try to be real and give you the answers that they actually they will actually make the effort to reach to their unconscious and give you something real and tangible. Second thing a portfolio of techniques that are complementary with respect to three problems of access, verbalization and censoring must be used. So do not use one technique, use multiple techniques, use portfolio of techniques.

So one technique can be addressing verbalization challenge, another technique can address access challenge, third technique can access censoring challenge. The large number of techniques you must use when you are reaching out to consumers and trying to mine their brand associations. Large number of techniques you can find these techniques anywhere in books of market research, in websites related to psychological research, in marketing these techniques are not difficult. I will also give you a few in this lecture. The responses you must validate those responses.

So you must ask and take permission, you must ask the consumers as to the response they

have given and you say that you are recording it in this manner and you ask them to validate that yes, this is what I have said and you may go ahead and record it in this manner. Because you know in this kind of research what exactly the word means is very important. The sense in which the consumer is using a word and the sense in which researcher is understanding that word may be different. So it is important that you validate the response before you actually use it in your analysis. So these are the three general principles that you may keep in mind when you are trying to elicit brand associations.

Those brand again I repeat verbal, visual, emotional and sensory when you are trying to elicit these associations from the minds of the consumer. Let us move further. I am suggesting some techniques and these techniques you can use while you are trying to mine these brand associations. Now first is include at least one visual technique. Now what really is a visual technique is something that we must understand.

Now for example, you are trying to find out the brand associations held by consumer about a brand called Mahindra. Now Mahindra is known for now its cars. What you can do when you are trying to use visual technique, you give a set of magazines to the consumer and you tell him that when you think of Mahindra brand which images come to your mind you go through the magazine and in the magazine whichever image you think is representing your idea of Mahindra brand you please cut those images out and make a collage of those images. So this is a visual technique. So what consumers are being asked to do is equate in their mind the image that they have of Mahindra brand to various images that are available in any magazine.

So this way what the consumer would do he would identify from one or a set of magazines say 5, 10, 20 images to which they equate Mahindra brand and this way suddenly in front of you, you will have the Torah of images that your consumers think represent Mahindra brand. That is a very powerful technique a visual technique that gives you a large body of raw material to work with. So this is one technique that you can use when you are trying to mind brand associations related to your brand. Second technique is include at least one object projective technique. What does this mean? Now this is a projective technique even visual technique, object project visual technique, person projective and object projective all these are projective techniques.

Projection is a psychological concept where we project ourselves upon another object or another thing. So when I choose something what I am trying to do is I am projecting myself on that object. Now here what you have to do is take another brand say you take a brand called Philips. Now you see that you ask the consumer when you think of Philips which object comes to your mind. So when they think of Philips they may say bulb, they may say health equipments, they may say so these are primary associations but you will have

to go beyond that.

You will have to ask can you think of FMCG object when you think of Philips brand. Philips is not in the FMCG space. So therefore they may say I think of say toothpaste or I think of say soap or I think of say detergent powder when I think of Philips. So when they say that they are representing say one brand Philips through another object you get a sense as to what really consumers are thinking about when it comes to your brand. So that is another technique that you can use when you are trying to mind brand association.

Third probe for relevant situations. Now for example you are trying to find out about Philips. Now which are the situations where you use my brand? Now is it when you switch on the light and the room gets illuminated do you think of Philips brand or when you go to a hospital and you use certain advanced medical equipment at that time you think of Philips brand or when you think of a country called Netherlands you think of Philips brand because Philips has the country of origin as Netherlands. So what is that relevance when you are watching a match where Netherlands is football match where Netherlands is playing that is when you think of Philips brand. So you look for those relevant situations and then you ask the consumer that in this situation what really comes to your mind what how do you relate to when you think of my brand.

So in that situation the brand becomes real and when that brand becomes real consumer will be able to share brand associations that are visual verbal emotional and sensory. So four keywords you must remember from this lecture and previous lecture visual verbal emotional and sensory. Next point probe for secondary association no matter how much we say it is not enough please probe for secondary association. It is the secondary association where you will find rich rich insights and rich raw material. So please go for secondary associations and do not be satisfied with primary association.

Next one use person projective technique this is an exercise I was doing recently and I must share with you in my class I asked a set of students when you think of cafe coffee day which celebrity comes to your mind and when you think of Starbucks which celebrity comes to your mind. And immediate answer was for cafe coffee day the celebrity's name they took was Virat Kohli and for Starbucks the celebrity's name they took was Amitabh Bachchan. Now immediately if you think about it you will see the difference between the two brands the cafe coffee day it is more youthful which means what which means that youth have youth find cafe coffee day accessible because it is not as expensive as Starbucks. It is also considered perhaps more informal because all of us know Virat Kohli is very aggressive he talks very well he is married to another young actress and they are very visible and they are very loud and they are always communicating. So you can see and you also related to CCD's logo where you have inverted comma and it says a lot can

happen

over

coffee.

So this is a place where that excitement of exploring another gender exploring friendship exploring romanticism romantic relationships all that is happening and Virat Kohli is an easy mark for CCD. Similarly when they say about Amitabh Bachchan for Starbucks it means Amitabh Bachchan has reached a certain level in his life and career. So Starbucks has also reached a certain level and it is for such people who have reached a certain level. So it is luxurious it is expensive and it is associated with people who belong to a certain category in society to the upper echelon of society. You can when you are trying to mind deeply held brand association you can use these person projective techniques.

So you ask someone that when you think of my brand which celebrity which person comes to your mind. So this is another technique you can use and finally you must assure confidentiality to your consumers. Consumers must feel confident consumers consumers must be comfortable in responding to you in trusting you with their honest and sincere responses because only if they trust you they will give you real answers and it is that real answer that is of value to you. A superficial answer is of no value to you is something that you must understand. So in today's lecture what we have seen is we have tried to mind brand associations and by mind brand association means we have tried to dig deep as deep as possible in the mind of the consumer to understand what has been his brand experience and brand experience as constituted in product experience shopping experience service experience consumption experience as constituted in thoughts in feelings in fun in fantasies in his responses to tag line brand ambassador color logo in all these how his brand experience is constituted and how does brand experience get ultimately reduced to basic four brand associations called verbal visual emotional and sensory and how they are how they reside deep in the unconscious and consumer memory has to be jogged has to be unearth has to be unraveled to understand these brand associations held inside them.

So we must look at the associative notes consumer memory as applicable in associative form and in semantic form in symbolic form and we understand how the networks are created and how from those networks we can understand what is really happening to brand associations and finally we learnt about the three principles that we must follow which are conducting long personal interviews which are using a portfolio of techniques and not just one or two techniques and that we must validate responses. So these three general principles we must follow in order to overcome the three challenges of access verbalization and censoring so that what we the responses that we receive are real and they are useful and finally we saw that there are several techniques there are more techniques than these here I have given you only a sample here I have given you six techniques that you may use to mine brand associations but there are many more techniques if you look at psychological and sociological research methods if you look at ethnographic research

methods you will find that there are many more techniques that can be used to mine these brand associations that are deeply held in the unconscious but for the time being and at the postgraduate level these techniques are sufficient for you to understand and engage in the activity as brand manager of a company to launch new products new brands strengthen your existing brand and develop your career as a successful brand manager. Thank you very much I hope you enjoyed the session, thank you very much.