

# The Importance of Corporate Branding in School Management

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## Abstract

Corporate branding in school management is a relatively new term. The basic element of the marketing process of education makes the service itself, i.e. employees in education. This paper analyzes the role of employees in the construction of a brand that is specific to the school management. We describe a model for managing brands through brand identity, image and corporate reputation. The models that were used are The ACID Test of Corporate Identity Management, The Corporate Identity Mix and Keller's CBBE model. We analyzed the service from the aspect of creating the brand, which is based on Kapferer's brand metaphor connecting the role of employees as providers and promoters of corporate identity. Finally, we review brand perceptions as key factor in building corporate performance in school management. The importance of corporate image, corporate reputation and communication is crucial for creating Communicated identity. Furthermore, we indirectly achieve desired identity based on the creation of communication identity of the organization.

## Keywords

Brand, corporate branding, school management, Corporate Identity Mix.

## Introduction

The brand is not only the character or reputation. Long term brand regarded as a static product segment which in its integration of images, characters and symbols goes beyond today's understanding of the brand. The brand is a complex set of intangible and tangible characteristics that project the emotional and social benefits to consumers. Brand in its essence must have added value because it increases the expected value. Intangible brand equity participation in the company's value and such value is constantly increasing. It should be noted that intangible value of brands account for 80% of success, although they account for only 20% of the cost (de Chernatony & McDonald, 2003, p.8). The brand becomes a "living organism" (Kapferer, 2008, p. 12) that depends on the consumer's perception, emotion and experience. The brand represents an upgrade of the product and provides added value that is not inherent in competitive brands. Because of the above, it is possible to build a unique association from the brand.

Corporate brand includes a much wider range and requires coordination of a number of elements that influence the outcome. Also, a plurality of brands companies is a reflection on the creation of brand personality (Aaker, 1997, p. 352). The brand represents the promise that eventually develops in corporate reputation. Therefore, the corporate reputation is becoming the most important assets in modern management. An important strategic decision for every business entity is the way how to mark the brand (Kotler & Keller, 2007, p. 296). Brand image interactively affects the consumer's self-images. The symbol that represents the brand is viewed through the context of symbolic value. The brand is perceived in the context of the image, i.e. the model of associations and images. Such perceived structure of attitudes and opinions, beliefs and prejudices, represents the image in its widest sense of the word.

## 1. Methodology

The methodology of Kapferer's hexagon brand (Kapferer, 2008, p.183) and Balmer's corporate identity model C<sup>2</sup>ITE (Balmer, 2001a, pp. 248-

291) were used for the research of the corporate brand in non-profit organizations. Keller CBBE model (Keller, 2001, pp. 15-19; Keller, Aperia, & Georgson, 2008, pp. 42-87) and the theory of brand personality (Aaker, 1997, pp. 347-357) were also implemented. Models were researched with comparative method, the method of analysis, synthesis, deduction and deconstruction. The role of the employees in school management was analyzed. We explained the model of brand personality, identity and image, and showed the correlation method ACID test (Balmer & Soenen, 1999, pp. 69-92). From the aspects of school management, the identity of brand corporation was analyzed by C<sup>2</sup>ITE, elements of brand corporations (Hatch & Schultz, 2001, p. 133) and construct of brand personality corporation (Davies, Chun, de Silva, & Roper, 2004, pp. 125-146). Deconstruction of the brand depends on the customers' impressions and is implemented in methodology of Aakers brand personality construct, which was compared with other models.

The paper analyzes the brand companies within the school management from the point of creating a brand that is based on metaphors. We used the interpretive methods, methods of deduction, analysis and deconstruction. Phenomenological and discourse analysis were used for the metaphor of the brand. We also used hermeneutic spiral and theoretical triangulation method. Inductive approach, holistic perspective and synchronic-diachronic context were used according to methodology of qualitative research.

## 2. The role of brand

The brand is a very complex symbol. For its positioning, it is necessary to observe the brand through complete marketing mix benefits that is called proposed equity (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007, p. 208). Suggested brand equity was perceived through consumer intangible category. The brand represents the promise that the company provided and it that must be fulfilled. The brand goes beyond the basic value and refers to the consumer's satisfaction and added value. Analysis of competition depends on a number of factors, and decisions about the target market we look at in terms of competing points-of-parity (Kotler & Keller, 2007, pp. 312-314):

- a) Points-of-parity
- b) Points-of-difference
- c) Points-of-parity versus Points-of-difference

Points-of-differences include features or benefits that consumers associate with the brand and have expressed positive connotations to the brands they believe. According to the model of points-of-differences, consumers are developing positive and unique associations that may be based on tangible and intangible values. Points-of-differences represent positive emotional and rational impressions according to brand. The points-of-parity represent associations that are not always related to a specific brand, but can occur in competing brands. The appearance of points-of-parity is manifested through two modules: the competition and categories. Similarities include competitive negative association against competitive brands, while categorical points-of-parity indicate significant association to consumers against competitive categories. Points-of-parity function according to the principle of recognizing and brand recall, while the role of the association reflects the real image of the brand positioning in the market.

It must be a certain number of consumers who will believe that the selected consumer brand is superior to achieve points-of-parity versus points-of-difference. It is interesting that such consumers perceive the brand as superior, even though it does not have to be of higher quality. It is crucial that they are based on the emotional brand impressions, ignoring rational. Since the brands by their nature reflect certain distinctiveness, with existing typical utility such as recognition, identification and assurance, we conclude that the key positioning is not in the points-of-difference, although it looks like because of positive associations that consumers develop, but just in points-of-parity.

It is possible to build a unique association of brand, which is based on the foundations of semiotics. Kapferer's brand as a "living organism" consists of three categories (Kapferer, 2008, p. 12): the product, the name and the concept of brand. The concept of brand includes tangible and intangible values and its title includes the name of the brand and the meanings that this name evokes in the consumer's awareness. Finally, the service itself indicates the concept of experience with the brand (de Chernatony & McDonald, 2003, p. 647). The concept of brand identity has attracted the interest of the field of brand management, the theory of consumer behaviour (Khan, 2006) and marketing strategy. The precondition of building a successful brand is the creation of an appropriate brand identity. Brand identity can be seen as a

vision beyond the brand with its values, promised benefits, diversity and uniqueness to which the consumers react.

**2.1. Brand identity**

Brand identity is a unique set of associations located in the impressions of consumers and other interested stakeholders (Aaker, 1996, p. 27), and constitutes one of the key factors of brand architecture. Brand identity is understood as a vision followed by the brand with its values, promised benefits and uniqueness to which the consumers react. The components of the brand identity in strategic terms (de Chernatony, 2002, p. 47) were seen as models of construction, which Aaker calls architecture brand (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000). Brand identity is observed through six aspects which Kapferer calls brand identity prism. At first it begins with physical characteristics that are perceived as tangible value, and end on consumer’s self-image. Brand image reflects the current perception of the brand; therefore it includes three distinctive communicative features (Aaker, 1996, p. 180):

- a) augmented image
- b) reinforced and exploited
- c) softened and diffused

Augmented image refers to the situation where the brand identity does not match with the brand image, which is often the case in the demographic segmentation. Unlike the extended image, reinforced and exploited image includes some added associations that consumers develop. However, the brand image should not be assigned position in the market. Reinforced image improves brand personality (Aaker, 1997, pp. 347-357). Softened and diffused image is opposite to enhanced and utilized image. A combination of consumer segments shows that the image is not always well integrated in marketing communication. Such relocation of consumer categories is common, because the consumer trends change so that the brand image must adapt. Table 1 presents the models of brand associations in school management.

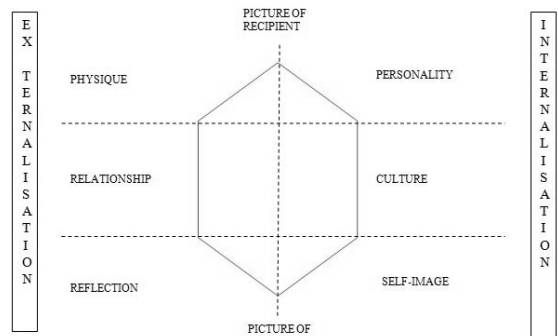
**Table 1** Strategies of brand association in school management

Strategy	Perception	Example
Attributes	technical or technological characteristics	ICT in schools, e-diary

Features	offered needs or benefits	preparing state graduation
Opportunity	place, time and opportunity to us	summer and winter workshops
Users	new segments of users	education of adults
Activities	special, specific activities	LiDraNo
Famous persons	personalization of fame brand personality	A. G. Matoš
Competition	benchmarking	gymnasiums, private schools
Class	brand goes beyond the original class product	college, university

Source: The author

As can be seen, associations in school management have been conceived as a strategic form of creating a school culture, and building brand according to the model of corporate reputation (Urde, Greyser, & Balmer, 2007, p. 11). Figure 1 shows the identity of the brand, i.e. six models which together form the brand identity prism.



**Figure 1** Brand hexagon  
Source: Kapferer, 2008, p. 183

Each of the six characteristics of brand identity is crucial in certain elements of building the brand (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003, p. 146), and the characteristics of brand personality, self-images and culture are extremely important for the development of brand companies as associated image, personification of brand and reflection identification. Physical properties represent the amount of the basic characteristics and predispositions of products or services, such as schools look and behaviour of employees.

Attributes represent contemporary technical features that make schools distinct from competition, such as e-journal, e-book and virtual notebooks. Association of users and celebrities can be combined in one model because they complement each other, as well as new segments of users, training of adult learners, summer camps and

promotion of employees, and services through famous former participants. Also, some authors (Balmer, 1995, p.p 24-46; Keller et al., 2008, p. 58; Urde et al., 2007, p.11) emphasize the importance of brand culture heritage and personalization of celebrities in brand awareness. Places of brand origin tells us about the quality of education from a certain region, a comparison with better and represent the brand that goes beyond the original brand services, i.e. when the school management develops from high school to higher education level.

Below is brand personality, the perception of brand properties identification with the personification of animals or people (Epley, Waytz, & Cacioppo, 2007), model according to model from the brand heritage. The third element of identity is culture and it is closely related to the model of culture of the organization, and refers to the set of values, inspiration, and building brand essence as opposed to relationships that make up the intangible exchange between brands and consumers. The last two elements of identity are a reflection of the self-image, and they reflect the consumer's image and become part of the identification. Brand identity includes the message that the brand transmits through the name, visual and sound elements and advertising. The image includes beliefs and emotions according to specific brands or consumer's impression.

## 2.2. CBBE model

The main contribution to theory of brand building is provided by Keller's model (Keller, 2001, pp. 15-19), which introduces the concept CBBE (Customer-Based Brand Equity) and inaugurates the hierarchy of the brand. Figure 2 shows CBBE model that looks at building a brand as input of series of steps, from bottom to top, or from the visibility and identity to relationships or resonance. Brand resonance is defined as the conceptual strength or depth of the psychological connection that the consumer has with the brand, as well as the level of activity elicited by this connection (Kotler & Keller, 2007, p. 280). Customer-Based Brand Equity is defined as the way in which knowledge of the brand influences the reaction of consumers in relation to the presentation of the brand (Keller et al., 2008, p. 57). These steps set the foundation for building a framework of fundamental strong brands. CBBE model represents the way in which knowledge of the brand influences the reaction of consumers in relation to the presentation of the brand (Keller et

al., 2008, p. 57). The brand has a positive CBBE when the consumer is more likely to choose products that are presented to the market.

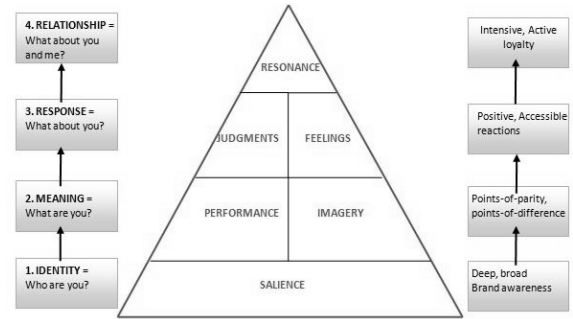


Figure 2 Brand resonance pyramid

Source: Keller et al., 2008, p. 57

But the brand can have a negative CBBE when the consumer is less favourable to products which are under the same conditions presented in the market. Exactly that experience of the brand makes corporate management, since the holders of services in school management are employees. Brand resonance pyramid includes four steps: a) ensure the identification of the brand with consumers, b) determine the overall significance in the minds of consumers, c) encourages appropriate response of consumers according to identify and signification of the brand, d) changes the response to the brand to create a strong relationship between customer loyalty and brands.

According to this model Keller establishes the so-called six building brand blocks with consumers. These steps set the foundation for building a fundamental framework for strong brands. Brand building includes the initial stage of development of the brand identity, while hierarchically climbs to the top, i.e. brand resonance that represents the relationships and a strong and active brand loyalty. It is important to point out that Keller emphasizes hierarchically display and warns that the progress on the "branding ladder" creates a model of building brand that determines the specific stages.

## 3. Corporate branding

Corporate brand is specific construct which was created according to the theory of brand personality (Aaker, 1997, pp. 347-356). Although the concept of brand personality is associated with the products or services of the brand and the corporate brand, there are very significant differences in the consumers' impression. Furthermore, the model C<sup>2</sup>ITE (Balmer, 2001a, pp. 248-291) is five

characteristic features of corporate brand, a brand associated with the brand personality. Table 2 shows characteristics of the model of corporate brand C<sup>2</sup>ITE through five key concepts, starting from cultures which includes "cultural roots" (Balmer, 2001a, pp. 248-291; Balmer, 2001b, pp. 11-21; Balmer, 2001c, pp. 1-17; Balmer & Gray, 2003, pp. 972-997), i.e. emphasizes the value of corporate culture, sub-culture environment, regionalism and nationalism.

**Table 2** Model C<sup>2</sup>ITE

Characteristics	Performance
Cultural	"cultural roots"
Intricate	multidimensional
Tangible	brand architecture
Ethereal	emotional response
Commitment	corporate image

Source: Balmer, 2001c, p. 3

Corporate brand personality is based on the behaviour of employees (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007, p. 59), i.e. corporate culture. The construct of corporate brand personality reflects the values represented by the company and is projected through the activities of the organization itself. The specificity of the construct is based on the relationship between culture and reflection on identity (Kapferer, 2008, p. 183) non-profit organizations such as the characteristic of the school management. If a core value within the strategy of school management is to provide a service (knowledge) and taking care of customers (Hooley, Saunders, & Piercy, 2004, p. 26), then the qualities of caring and responsibility should be implemented in the corporate brand personality, like Aaker said in her theory of brand personality (Aaker, 1997, pp. 347- 356).

Corporate brand increases company's visibility, recognition and reputation. Table 2 shows the model C<sup>2</sup>ITE which clearly shows the characteristics of the corporate brand. The concept of corporate branding consists of five characteristics: cultural, intricate, tangible, ethereal and commitment. Therefore, the cultural characteristics include strong cultural roots of the corporation, or start from the strong loyalty of employees in the brand. Then they include connection and commitment of all employees with the vision of the corporation. By doing so, the tangible and intangible values of

the brand are correlated with the employees' values. In order to create a corporate image, employees must be linked to the performance of the organization. Brands are closely associated with the employees in the service sector, especially in school management. School management should be aware that their image is projected through the employee's interactions with clients, stakeholders and consumers. In order to build positive brand personality (Saucier, 1994, pp. 506-516) is important for school management to have a vision of the company's development.

In Table 3 brand identity was analyzed according to Kapferer's methodology. It is obvious to have all six segments mutually intertwined and connected, but it is also indicative that the last two segments: reflection and affirmation represent the final consumer. We should point out that the school system in terms of marketing communications is the least in the central part, in segments of culture and brand relationships with consumers.

**Table 3** Corporate identity in school management

Physique	The layout of the building, hall, library, projects
Brand personality	Reputation employees, specialization, mentoring
Culture	The attitude of employees towards consumers
Relationship	CRM
Reflection	Customer satisfaction, customer loyalty
Self-image	The trust, tradition, awards

Source: The author

Unsatisfied and unmotivated employees damage the reputation of the organization, and prevent the development of the central part of hexagons brand identity. School management cultivates only the left part of hexagons, or part of the externalization of the sender, precisely only visual features. All other dimensions are not used, but the most important segments, i.e. the employees are continuously marginalized. School climate here is understood as a metaphor that characterizes the individual characteristics of non-profit organizations, and it can be perceived as a complete emotional impression (Owens, 2004, p. 183). The concept of cultural roots in school management, in contrast to the sub cultural roots and nationality or reputation (Urde et al., 2007, p. 11), here is based on the values, symbols, phrases and ceremonies. In particular, school culture is not a static characteristic because it constantly creates and forms, and the most developed through the rela-

relationship with employees. In fact, all the elements of a school model C<sup>3</sup>ITE are build on elements of the brand companies (Hatch & Schultz, 2001, p. 133) and dimensions of CBBE model (Keller et al., 2008, pp. 47-81).

Corporate identity is necessary to create the reputation of the company (Motion, Leitch, & Brodie, 2003, p. 1082) and the quality of service is crucial to the strategic approach to the success of the organization. School management is a young discipline of managing non-profit organizations which in its essence is one of the segments of management in education. Marketing in school management is defined as a set of activities that develops the planning, implementation, distribution and communication. The school management has a complex management model (Bush & Glover, 2003, pp. 37-160), and the basic premise of the marketing of non-profit organizations, like schools, is based on service users. Also, the dominance of non-economic objectives further complicates evaluation of objective attitudes of business success. Marketing in schools in terms of service providers is a key factor in enterprise value. Therefore, the classification of services is classified as pure services since it offers a high level of intangible elements. Figure 4 shows a model of school management by which we can build a corporate brand. As it can be seen, the key elements are employees.



**Figure 3** Model three circles in school management  
Source: The author

The basic marketing elements of the education process are: instructional processes, technology and teaching staff. The quality of school usually depends on a systematic concern and motivation of teachers and providing autonomy to work. Characteristics of a climate within a given school stem from the interaction forms, i.e. it is possible and inevitable impact on any person and any other group. Therefore, the role of employees in education is crucial. Model of three circles inaugurated by Adair (Adair, 1983, p. 4) represents the key

factors that can be compared in the case of non-profit organizations like schools in the purpose of its improvement. In the first place Adair points out the duties and responsibilities of school management, then teams or groups of employees such as assets or associates and individuals within teams, i.e. individual employees.

In such an understanding, it is clear that inspiration is a very important component, not only interpersonal skills but also of certain leadership styles. Employees who are not motivated lead to lower productivity, avoid liability, bad service, leaving the organization and ultimately, to the new cost of the institution itself. We will analyze a model of corporate identity with Corporate Identity Mix method and the ACID test.

Corporate Identity Mix consists of three models (Balmer & Soenen, 1999, p. 74): Soul, Mind and Voice. Soul core model includes values, cultures, and internal images and employee's affinity. Mind comprises vision, strategy, product or service performance, corporate performance, brand architecture and corporate ownership. Finally, a model includes Voice-controlled communication, non-controlled communication, symbolism, or corporate employee behaviour and indirect communication. Corporate Identity Mix represents three dimensions of corporate personalities that comprise the core values and history Corporation or its culture and preferences of employees. The school management is about values and employee motivation and organizational culture. This model Balmer called the Soul because it makes the essence of creating corporate identity.

Also, the vision of the corporation, providing services and performance represent model Mind. Finally, model Voice makes symbolism, indirect marketing communications, i.e. creating a brand. As it can be seen, a model can be compared with Figure 3, which shows model of three circles in the school management because it highlights the positive environment of the organization, employees and the provision of services. At the same time, a model of Corporate Identity Mix confirms the theory of identity brand can be seen from Table 3 where all six of the features included in the model of Soul, Mind and Voice. To verify the importance of corporate identity and corporate branding and school management, we will use the method Acid Test (Balmer & Soenen, 1999, pp. 82-85). As it can be seen in Table 4, the model of ACID test includes four types of identity: Actual Identity, Communicated Identity, Ideal Identity and Desired Identity. The highest point of corpo-

rate identity management is achieving a dynamic congruency between the four types of identity (Balmer & Soenen, 1999, p. 82).

**Table 4** ACID test in school management

Identity	Performance	School management
Actual	what the organization is in reality	poor management, unmotivated staff, weak principals
Communicated	how the organization is perceived by its publics	representation in the media, success in competitions, reputation managers
Ideal	the optimum positioning in markets	positioning at national level, social responsibility, fidelity
Desired	wish to acquire	desire to be the best school in the region, the best results


Source: The author

Model Actual Identity represent values based on the management, it is a real, true picture of the organization. Also, the first model includes performance of the organization and the services provided, and even the behaviour of employees. The school management it is very difficult because employees are unmotivated, interpersonal communication is very weak, and the directors are bad managers. Communicated Identity is a dual concept that refers to corporate reputation and overall corporate communication. In particular, in the school management it represents a success at school competition, media coverage, reputation managers and school success. Ideal Identity represents the positioning of the organization in the market. It is ideal identity that is realized by CBBE model and model of Kapferer's brand identity or personality of the brand and loyalty according to brands. Finally, Desired Identity construes vision of the corporation, the organization's mission. It is equivalent to brand resonance pyramid.

## Conclusion

The brand represents the promise that eventually develops in the reputation of the corporation. Corporate brand can supply sustainable advantage to companies if it is understood as a form of corporate identity. In order to achieve corporate branding, it is necessary to pay attention to organizational behaviour that is evident at all levels, especially in the interaction with clients and stakeholders. Successful corporate brand is formed between the strategic vision, brand image

and organizational culture. The success of the brand is closely associated with the behaviour of employees, and corporate reputation represents image evaluation that is retained in the consumers. Corporate brand reflects the values and work of the employees individually and collectively.

Since the employee motivation is the subject of management research, and in correlation with the corporate image and brand management, analysis of brand architecture was seen holistically. To research the corporate brand we have used different models of the most important theorists of brand architecture: building brand identity (Aaker, 1996), hexagon brand (Kapferer, 2008, p.174), model CBBE (Keller et al, 2008, p.57), the brand personality (Aaker, 1997, p.347-357) and model of C<sup>2</sup>ITE (Balmer, 2001c, p.3). Brand image and the image of the corporation are based on the consumer's perception, therefore, the role of associations, and consumers' perception of itself as the primary analysis in the building brand corporate in the school management. Brand image and the image of the corporation is based on the consumer's perception, therefore, the role of associations, and consumers' perception in the analysis of corporate brand building in the school management sets as primary. Corporate identity is necessary to create the reputation of the company. Model ACID test confirms the hypothesis model of three circles in the school management as well as CBBE model. 

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