



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

# **The value of brand values.**

**An empirical research study about how brands can generate value for consumers.**

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## Abstract

As the society is changing due to technology, the markets are emerging into becoming more homogeneous. The consumer behaviour is changing, and with that, the value of brands. This thesis aims to investigate how consumers interpret brand values and how brands can generate value for the consumers'. In order to achieve knowledge in this, known research in the field of brand management and consumer behaviour will be used in the theoretical framework.

The study will contain a semi-quantitative method, using a digital-based survey to reach the sample group. Through using a semi-quantitative method, both methods advantages might be used: the quantitative advantages of distribution and allowance of larger sample groups and the qualitative possibilities for open comments, allowing the respondents to formulate their own answers.

The data result shows that well-tried theories do apply to the sample group, with some additional factors that generate value for the consumers, for example the factors of ethics and environment are increasing in the consumers' conscious. The findings also regard the notion of image, indicating that image is a side effect from brand characteristics, rather than a characteristic itself. Implying that other values and characteristics build the ground for creating a certain desired image.

*Keywords: Brand values, brand equity, consumers' interpretation of brand values, consumer behaviour, brand management, engagement, brand sensitivity, brand knowledge, brand association, added value, brand loyalty, brand image.*

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# 1. Introduction

*The introduction chapter will present the problem statement of the thesis. It will contain terms and concepts of previous research, leading to delimitations and the formulation of research questions. Followed by the aim of the research and ending with a disposition of the thesis structure.*

## 1.1 Problem statement

Brands are an accepted phenomena in today's society. It is a term that we come in contact with every single day, through television, advertisement and even when we talk to each other. Frans Melin (2008) claims that a strong company brand often is the company's most valuable asset. Furthermore, he explains that because of this and the brand's ability to create value, branding has lately become a very important strategic step and even a question of management. This is because brands have become a huge competitive advantage.

Schultz and de Chernatony (2002) confirm this theory of brands being a competitive advantage. They claim that this is because it is a pan-company process, which indicates that it affects both functional and business units within the company. Furthermore, they agree that this takes the branding process from being marketing communications controlled, into being a strategic framework, which provides companies with a basis for a competitive advantage.

Brands as a competition tool have a history of research within marketing management tradition, meaning regarding the brand as a tool to increase sales, often through the well-known "marketing mix" (Melin, 1999). The marketing mix traditionally involves four attributes: product, price, place and promotion, whereof the brand traditionally falls within the category of product. The idea is that through mixing these four attributes to create a strong competitive brand. However, newer research claims brands to be separate from the attribute of product, and approaches the notion of brand as a separate competitive advantage, a term that sometimes is called "strategic brand management". (Melin, 2008)

Melin (2008) explains that there are two main fields within the research of branding: brand management and consumer behaviour. Brand management means the internal perspective of the brand and the consumer behaviour stands for the external perspective from the consumer's point of view.

In connection with the issue of brands being a means of competition, the term “brand equity” is central in the explanation. Brand equity is important because it can be viewed upon from both a corporate and a consumer’s point of view. It has contributed to the increase of the brands availability as a valuable asset. (Melin, 2008)

Melin (2008) explains that during the 1990s scholars in both brand management and consumer behaviour carried out extensive research about the term brand equity. He emphasises that the term can involve both qualitative and quantitative research methods, and that this might be a reason for why the term was so extensively developed within both viewing points.

Schultz and de Chernatony (2002) argue that the research about corporate branding, both internal and external, might look to our future perception of corporations and how we act together with them. This is of course of high relevance from both the brand management’s and consumer behaviour’s point of view, since it will not only affect the company’s growth and development, but also the consumer’s consumption.

Brown and Dacin (2002) via Dacin and Brown (2006) present potential research questions within branding, through four viewpoints: Who are we as an organisation? What does the organisation want others to think about the organisation? What does the organisation believe others think of the organisation? And what do stakeholders think of the organisation? All these questions are important and interesting, but none of them touch upon what kind of values that stakeholders or consumers value. The last question mentioned did come close, but it would be interesting to research the “what” even further, to discover what the consumers value as important in a brand, in order to form an opinion and perceive an organisation in a certain way.

In the first paragraph of this section, I mentioned that Melin (2008) claims that strong brands are a valuable asset to companies, but he also claims that there is no satisfying explanation for whereby these values in brands lie, and they are created. I therefore wish to explore the field of values in brands and investigate where these values lie.

## 1.2 Delimitations

To be able to achieve the aim of the study, the following delimitations of the research area need to be determined.

### *1.2.1 Culture*

Cultural aspects are of great impact for the consumer's behaviour and how they evaluate brands. However, scholars believe that technology and communication have started a process where an alteration of the international society as we know it, is taking place. The development of technology has altered the international markets into becoming more homogeneous, which has led to affecting the consumer's perception and in the end change the consumer's behaviour (Mitry and Smith, 2009).

This implies that the markets are getting more similar to each other because of easier access through technology and this has had an impact on the consumption in the different markets and therefore also on how the consumers evaluate brands and values. With this in mind, this study will focus on branding as a global homogeneous process.

### *1.2.2 Product categories*

This thesis's main focus is on consumer's perceptions of brands, from the notion that organisations can create and maintain a successful brand. In doing so, I chose to exclude any specific product categories, as the study will focus on how organisations can achieve a successful brand through understanding the consumer's behavioural process. Therefore the category itself is not relevant in this study, as it is the value of the brand that will be the major issue, not their particular products.

With this knowledge in mind and based upon previous research, the next section will present the research questions and the aim of the study.

## 1.3 Research questions

*What do consumers value in a brand?*

> With this research question the goal is to find out how consumers tend to interpret brand values and the brand itself - Which values are important for consumers when evaluating and consuming a brand? - Which values are considered more important than others?

*How does the consumer perceive the branding process?*

> With this research question the goal is to find out whether the consumers act as the branding process presented in the theoretical framework claims they do. Also, if the model is accurate - If all steps are used, or if the model could be adjusted in order to be more accurate. Also,



through this research question the six steps of brand management building can be tested whether the brand owners' efforts of building a brand reached out to the consumers as they intend to or not.

#### 1.4 Aim

The aim of this study is to find out what kind of values consumers value in a brand and why. I aim to research what characteristics are the most important and essential in a brand, which hopefully will serve as guidance for organisations in maintaining and the building of new successful brands and a deeper understanding for the consumer's behaviour.

#### 1.5 Disposition

This thesis consists of eight parts. In the first chapter the problem statement was presented, the research questions that the study intends to answer through data collection, and the aim of the thesis. Chapter two regards the relevance and justification of the study, the delimitations and definition of relevant terms. In chapter three the theoretical framework is presented, which will act as the foundation stone of the empirical study and the analysis of the result. Chapter four deals with the method being used in this study and the approach of the data collection. Chapter five presents the data result of the study, through tables and text. Chapter six contains the analysis based upon the theoretical framework combined with the empirical data result. In chapter seven the conclusions answering the research questions will be presented, and in chapter eight there will be a brief reflection over the study, and suggestions for future research.

## 2. Background

*This chapter will present the relevance of the study and explain main concepts that are essential in understanding the field that the thesis lies within.*

### 2.1 Relevance of the study

As mentioned earlier in the problem statement in section 1.1, brands got a new meaning during the explosion of research in the field in the late 1980s and early 1990s. It was during this period that well-known theories were developed and this research is still to this day current and well cited in research literature. However, since the 90s technology has emerged and become an important and central part in the society. Messages and word of mouth reviews about brands can now be spread through social media - such as facebook, twitter and blogs - considerably easier and faster, which makes it relevant to execute this empirical study from a more modern point of view, where technology permeates our society.

### 2.2 Definition of terms

This section will present relevant definitions of central concepts and key terms for this study.

*Brand:* A brand is, according to the American Marketing Association (AMA), a “name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group and to differentiate them from those of competition” (Lane Keller, 2008:2).

As Lane Keller and the AMA imply, a brand is a competitive tool that organisations use in order to differentiate themselves from the competitors. It is what makes them unique compared to the others, and a brand can include many different characteristics in order to do so.

*Brand versus Product:* It is important to mention the line between brand and product, which might seem hard to draw. However, Lane Keller (2008) explains that a brand is more than a product, because it is the brand that adds value and can differentiate the products from similar products on the market, which aims to satisfy the same need for the consumer.

### 3. Theoretical framework

*The theoretical framework presented in this chapter will serve as a basis for the empirical study and the coming result analysis. A brief review of the main research areas within brands is presented - brand management and consumer behaviour - and their relevance in connection to the term of brand equity. This is followed by brand management strategies, exploring the understanding for organisation's part in branding, and ending with the main theory, consumer behaviour, generating knowledge in how consumers interpret brands.*

#### 3.1 Motivation for choice of theoretical model

The theory that is being used as the main theory is Melin's (2008) six steps in the consumer's brand building process. The argumentation behind this decision is that each of those steps included in Melin's six-step-process are well-known terms and concepts within the research field of consumer behaviour. For example, Lane Keller (2008) writes about brands in general and the importance of a well functioning brand. Riezebos et al (2003) also writes a lot about the concepts in Melin's model, and will also be referred to during the theoretical framework. However, Melin has in a pedagogic way brought together the concepts into an unambiguous model where the connections between the different concepts are clear, and where the concept's importance for the branding and building of brand values in the consumers mind are clear. Therefore this theory is the one that will act as a base for the theoretical framework. Still, additional research will be added to create a nuanced and accurate study.

#### 3.2 Brand management and consumer behaviour – understanding branding

In order to understand the consumer's opinion about brands, and how they perceive their values, it is of importance to also study the brand management aspect. These two terms are the main research areas within branding (Melin, 2008) and represent the internal respectively external perspective of brands. To understand the consumer's perspective, one must take into consideration what the consumer has to form an opinion about, which is what the management of the brand is responsible for, which will be presented briefly in the following section.

Brand management, Melin (2008) explains, is the internal perspective where the brand owners are in focus. The term can involve two different disciplines, a classical or contemporary approach. The classical discipline involves a focus on either marketing or organisation, while

the contemporary discipline rather focuses on finance or accounting (Melin, 2008). The development of the contemporary discipline could have a connection with the development and exploitation of brand research during the 1980-1990s. During this time Melin (2008) means that the branding process moved from being a marketing communication task, to being a strategic management step, during which time the contemporary discipline might have emerged with its strategic approach to finance and accounting. Together these two disciplines create the brand management, which involves the brand owner's creation, maintenance and distribution of the brand. (Melin, 2008).

Consumer behaviour is the external perspective, where consumers choose between different brands depending on their opinion and perception, based on their individual taste and values (Melin, 2008). This is a critical element for companies to understand the consumers as their target group. Melin (2008) explains that consumers' behaviour can be influenced by individual factors such as: geography, demography, and socio-economics, but also through the brand's meaning in the consumer's decision-making process. Similar to Melin, this study will focus on the latter aspect of consumer behaviour. Melin (2008) stressed that the consumer purchases a brand, not a product and he refers to the quote describing both brand and consumers' reasoning about brands:

*–“A product is something that is made in a factory, a brand is something that is bought by a customer. A product can be copied by a competitor, a brand is unique. A product can be quickly outdated, a successful brand is timeless” (King, 1984:3).*

### 3.3 Brand equity – the brand as capital

Just as added value (see section 3.5.5) is what the brand means to the consumer, in a way brand equity is what the brand means to the organisation. The brand has a huge importance for the brand owners, and a successful brand itself is seen as an irreplaceable asset. Brand equity implies the value that the brand has for the organisation, and it includes financial, strategic and management's aspects (Riezebos et al, 2003). The term implies that a brand is a form of capital, just like money, for the organisation and Melin (2008) even refer to brand equity as brand capital.

Rangaswamy explains the concept and its importance further:

- *“A Coca-Cola executive once commented that if the company were to lose all of its production-related assets in a disaster, the company would have little difficulty in raising enough capital to rebuild its factories. By contrast, however, if all consumers were to have a sudden lapse of memory and forgot everything related to Coca-Cola, the company would go out of business. It is precisely the well-established representation for Coca-Cola in the minds of the consumers and the trade that provides equity for the brand name Coke.”*

(Rangaswamy et al, 1993:63)

Brand equity is present in discussions for both the brand management and consumer behavioural perspective. This is according to Melin (2008) based on the notion that if a brand creates value for a consumer, this in return will create value for the brand owners. Therefore it is a concept that affects both perspectives, and it is of high importance to understand both conditions in handling and evaluating the brand.

### 3.4 Brand management strategies

In order to create brand equity and generate a capital out of the brand, the brand owners need to create a strong and successful brand. Melin (2008) claims that there are six steps to take in achieving this.

#### 3.4.1 Attributes

First, a brand itself cannot have its own value, but it is when the brand is connected to a certain product that the brand can become a competitive brand product (Melin, 2008). Melin mentions following attributes as relevant in building a brand: product protection, product quality, package design and visual identity.

Product protection involves the possibilities to protect the brand against competitors copying it. In order to do so, the product needs to have a high degree of innovation, meaning new ideas that stands out from previous products on the market. With a higher degree of innovation for the product, the brand owner can get legal protection and therefore secure all rights reserved (Melin, 2008).

The product quality is important and should be consistent. Melin (2008) explains that the product quality can be both visible and invisible, but if the strong quality is invisible, it should be made visible from a marketing point of view, because the very quality is important for the

consumers when they evaluate different brands and it helps the brand to differentiate itself from competitors. Another essential attribute of the product is its package and design. The package acts as a first impression for the consumers and Melin (2008) explains the packaging as being an extended arm of the product itself. Furthermore, Melin (2008) explains the last attribute to be visual identity, which brand owners can achieve through the package design being significant for the very particular brand.

The consumer will compare different brands during their decision-making process, through comparing the brands attributes. But the consumer will also compare different attributes within one brand to each other, deciding which attribute is the most important. (Riezebos et al, 2003) The fact that consumers view certain attributes more important than others implies that some attributes generate more value for the consumer than others do.

#### *3.4.2 Brand identity*

Brand identity is immaterial and therefore harder for the competitors to copy because of its uniqueness. This makes a brand's identity a strong competitive tool (Melin, 2008). Included in the process of brand identity, Melin stresses that it is important to not only protect the product itself (see section 3.4.1) but also the brand itself. For example, a register trademark gives the brand owners rights to the features that identify a particular product. Making it not impossible, but harder, for the competitors to copy the brand product.

In the process of creating and maintaining a brand identity, there are different aspects that Melin (2008) calls identification carriers that are the best representatives to bring out what the brand stands for. According to Melin these identification carriers include: the brand name, logotype, packaging, symbol and marketing communications. These are the strategic tools that the brand owners have to work within the branding process and depending on how well they present them, they might create a unique and strong brand identity. The brand identity is important to consider from an early state in the development of a brand. This is because of the possibilities of expansion, and for example the choice of a brand name, as an identification carrier, can either hinder or help the brand to succeed in a broader international market. Melin (2008) presents examples of Swedish brands that because of their Swedish name never could expand into an international market. Also, through determining in an early stage *what* the

identity of the brand should be and to *whom*, the brand owners can already from the start open up the possibilities of expanding the brand.

Finally, Melin (2008) stresses that a brand identity needs to undergo a constant development, in order to appeal the target group.

#### *3.4.3 Core values*

The brand attributes and identification carriers are important for the brand owners to analyse in order to determine which of these factors might generate long-term differentiation advantageously for the organisation. Melin (2008) means that this is supposed to form the brands core values. According to research and case studies that Melin (2008) mentions, a common denominator for core values is that the consumer and his or her needs have been central in the choice of brand values. Through satisfying the consumer's needs, the organisation creates value.

#### *3.4.4 Positioning*

Positioning is when the brand owners try to create a unique place for the brand in the consumer's conscious, and through this they achieve a strong market position (Melin, 2008). The positioning process is often based on the core values combined with communicated brand identity, resulting in a unique selling proposition (Melin, 2008). The mental position, the one in the consumer's conscious, does not have to be connected to the market position, however, in most cases it is. It is to prefer for the brand owners to have a balance between the two of them, since merely a mental position won't generate capital, and merely a market position will not matter within consumers being aware of the brand and purchasing it.

Riezebos et al (2003) argues that there are two ways for the brand owners to position a product, through price dimensions or intrinsic dimension. Positioning through the price dimension means that the brand owners choose the product's position on the market through the chosen price level of the product. The price level has a psychological impact on the consumers, as it affects their perception about the brand and what it represents. For example, a high price is most likely to be interpreted as a luxurious product, rather than a low price on the same product would generate (Riezebos et al, 2003). Also, the price position that the brand owners decide on will help them define the target group for the brand, as the price level sets the conditions for who can and will purchase the product.

The second way to position a product is through intrinsic dimension, meaning either through functional approach where the position is determined based on the products function, or through an expressive approach where consumers via branded products state which social groups they belong to. (Riezebos et al, 2003)

#### *3.4.5 Marketing communications*

When the brand owners have identified all the above steps in the branding process, they need to communicate it to the consumers. This is where the marketing communications come in. Because of modern technology the amount of information flow has sharply increased, creating a “noise” of information (Melin, 2008). This amount of information flow creates challenges for the communication to reach the consumer, as the receiver is forced to filter out certain information. To stop the communication from getting filtered away or disappear in the “noise”, Melin (2008) emphasises three aspects to consider regarding the marketing communications: share of voice, share of mind and share of market. Share of voice is the brand owners total cost of advertisement, during a certain period of time and in a given product category. Share of mind Melin claims is rather the degree of brand and product knowledge that the consumers have about the brand. This knowledge is something generated in the consumers mind thanks to the share of voice – the time the brand has in the spotlight. Brand knowledge is a condition for future brand loyalty, which could lead to the last aspect according to Melin (2008), share of market. With loyal costumers the brand might secure a strong market share. Melin also stresses that the brands core values are the communicative link between the brand owners and the consumers, and that it is essential for the brand owners to permeate all communication with these core values in order to create synergy.

#### *3.4.6 Internal brand loyalty*

In order for the consumers to experience brand loyalty, the brand owners first need to create internal brand loyalty within the organisation. According to Melin (2008) this can be achieved through trademark management, identity, and image and loyalty management. Trademark management is the factor that falls under law, since it is a matter of protecting the brand against threats that might affect the brand. Internal threats against the brand could be misusing the brand; not keeping the policies to maintain a consistent brand (Melin, 2008). Therefore it is important to make the trademark management a collective responsibility. Furthermore, identity management regards the building of the brands unique identity.



Meaning that the organisation needs full access and all rights reserved to coordinate the identity on the different markets (Melin, 2008). The goal with image management is that the consumers' perception of the brand should be mirroring what the brand owners want the brand to represent, and that the two perspectives should agree as much as possible. Regarding the loyalty management Melin (2008) claims that this is the process whereby the brand owners manage the trust capital that the brand represents for the consumers. It is the precautions that the brand owners take to maintain the broad group of brand loyal consumers.

#### *Reasoning for the use of the brand management model in this study*

Finally, Melin (2008) explains that the brand owners main purpose is to create brands that are attractive to a broad target group and that appeal to their demands and wishes. Therefore, in regards to research question two - "*How does the consumer perceive the branding process*" - it is important to also consider brand management in order to find out if the consumers lack anything in Melin's branding model. Something that brand management could handle differently or that should be added to the model. Also, the steps within brand management in creating a brand are a precondition for the consumer behaviour field, as in what the brand management plans and creates is what the consumers have to base their decision on when evaluating a brand.

The next section will present the perspective of consumer behaviour, and the decision-making process that consumers go through when evaluating different brands.

### 3.5 Consumer behaviour

Through understanding the consumer's decision-making process, the brand owners can understand how brands creates value for the consumers and what this weighs in the consumers' brand building process. According to Melin (2008) this process consists of six steps through which a brand will result in brand equity, or brand capital as Melin also refers to it.

I will use Melin's steps in the branding process as a base (see figure 1) and apply relevant additional research onto the different concepts, in order to create a broad theoretical framework for how a consumer evaluates brands.

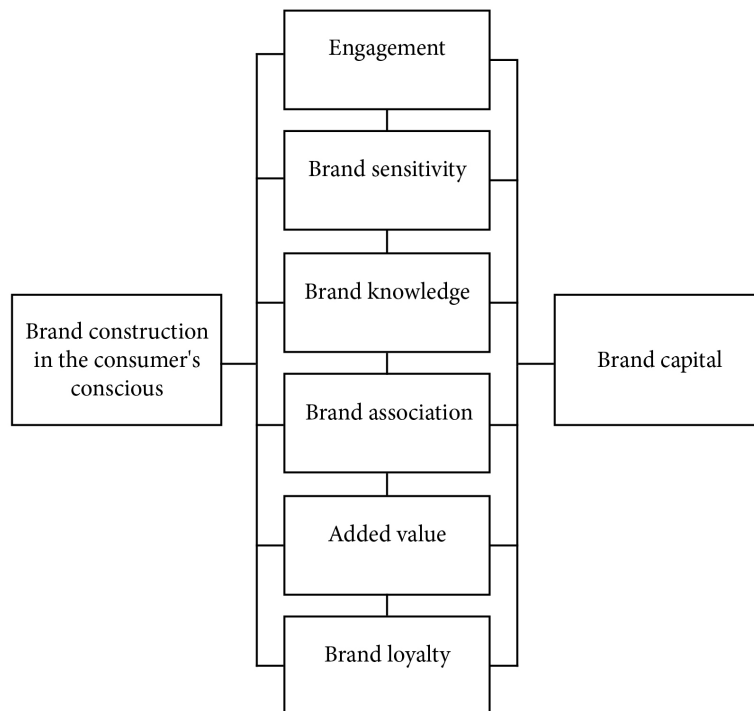


Figure 1. Illustration of the brand process, by which consumers create value in a brand. (Melin, 2008, *Varumärkesstrategi. Om konsten att utveckla starka varumärken*. p.50)

### 3.5.1 Step one – Engagement

Through building up a high degree of engagement, the consumers might eventually become loyal to the brand (Melin, 2008). This of course makes the engagement step a crucial step to achieve. Melin explains that this engagement often emerges through the company's focus on the individual consumer, and his or her needs. Furthermore, he explains that the degree of engagement could lead to an increased uptake of information from the consumer, which in long-term hopefully will lead the consumer to the step of brand knowledge. This high degree of engagement makes the consumer a so-called active consumer (Melin, 2008), who actively searches for information about the products in order to make the best decision.

There is also the so-called passive consumer, who can be hard for the companies to reach out to, since they feel a low degree of engagement, Melin (2008) explains that products generating this low degree of engagement could be things like everyday-products, for example milk or toilet paper.

Melin (2008) claims factors influencing the degree of engagement to be personal interest, pleasure value and perceived risk – which are the unclear consequences that might come with the consumer's purchase (Verhage et al, 1990).

Melin also claims symbolic values to be influencing the degree of engagement in a brand (2008). Symbolic values can be when individuals, through a socialization process, agree to mutual symbolic meaning for example, an object, but also to develop own interpretations of these agreed symbolic meanings (Wee, 2002).

### *3.5.2 Step two – Brand sensitivity*

Melin (2008) explains that a brand sensitive customer uses the brand as a guide and source of information in the selection of brand products. The higher the degree of brand sensitivity the better, because this implies that the consumer uses this particular brand as a preference when dealing with branded products, which indicates a future strong brand loyalty. Melin (2008) also stressed that an increased degree of brand sensitivity involves a decreased price sensitivity, meaning that the brand start weighing more than the price of the product.

Brand sensitivity is influenced by two factors: whether the consumer believe the product will meet his or her expectations and the extent to which a product gives the consumer a certain identity (Riezebos et al, 2003).

### *3.5.3 Step three – Brand knowledge*

It is important for the brand owners to make the consumers aware of the existence of the brand. The challenge with this is to reach out to the consumers and make them see their brand instead of all the other brands available on the market, and to inform them about the unique characteristics of the brand. Also, the increased amount of media noise complicates the process through which the consumers filter away certain information to avoid an information overload. (Melin, 2008).

Brand knowledge is a precondition for the next step, brand association, and therefore very important. It is also important because a lot of consumers do believe that a well-known brand is equal to a good brand. So through creating knowledge about the brand, a certain association might begin to take place. (Melin, 2008).

Research shows that in the choice between several equal products, consumers choose the most well known brand above the others, even though they are equivalent (Melin, 2008). In order

to create brand knowledge, Melin (2008) emphasises that the brand must create a positive brand association for the consumers. Melin continues by stating that this indicates that the brand cannot only be well known, but the importance lies within *what* it is known for. If the consumers do not experience any significant difference between brands, the price then will play a crucial part in the choice of product.

#### *3.5.4 Step four – Brand association*

According to Melin (2008) brand association could be explained as even though a consumer has not yet tried a certain brand product, it is still common that the consumer already has a perceived opinion about the brand. Furthermore, Melin (2008) explains that one of the most important brand associations is perceived quality, which is the consumer's subjective perception of the quality of the brand. Melin stresses the difference between perceived quality, and the objective actual quality. The brand owner can achieve this perceived quality, through transforming the actual quality into what is expected of the brand's quality, through the brand product's characteristics and design.

According to Melin (2008) the factors that can affect the consumer's perceived brand product's quality are the actual quality of the brand products, the design through the brand products name and packaging. Also, Melin (2008) claims that a product with an intense marketing campaign is by the consumers associated with high quality.

A luxurious product name and a high price can also, according to studies (Melin, 2008), help creating a high-perceived quality for the consumers towards the brand.

These perceived quality associations above indicate on the product's functionality and functional values. Melin also explains that brand association can be developed through emotional values, such as performance, lifestyle or geographical origin. All together brand association should create a positive, strong and competitive image of the brand for the consumer's perception.

#### *3.5.5. Step five – Added value*

The added value for a brand product is what determines whether a consumer chooses to purchase a certain brand product or not. It is what makes the brand products more than just a

product for the consumers (Riezebos et al, 2003), and it is the consumer's perceived meaning that set a particular brand apart from another (Melin, 2008).

Added value can be defined accordingly: "*Brand-added value is the contribution of the brand name and its related connotations to the consumer's valuation of the branded article as a whole*" (Riezebos et al, 2003:69). This is also the definition that will be used in this study.

This added value is what might make consumers pay an extra cost in order to get the particular brand. The brand is perceived to be superior to similar products on the market, and the consumers are willing to make an extra effort in order to get it. (Melin, 2008). Furthermore, Riezebos et al (2003) claims that added value is influenced by three components: perceived performance, psychosocial meaning and the extent of brand-name awareness. These components are in line with Melin's notion of brand association and brand knowledge, where the consumer's perception of the brand name, and associations are in focus.

Psychosocial aspects for added value can help the consumers to express themselves through brands. These expressions can involve who they believe they are or who they wish to become. Furthermore, products that have a high degree of psychosocial aspects are easier to create added value for consumers with the sensitivity for these needs. An example of this might be German cars that often are associated with social prestige, and therefore consumers that tend to perceive themselves like this tend to create added values for these brand products. (Riezebos et al, 2003).

#### *3.5.6 Step six – Brand loyalty*

Brand loyalty is in the academic field a very debated concept, with several different definitions. According to Melin (2008), it is the final step in the consumer's decision-making process – and what the brand owners wish the consumer to experience in order to gain a steady market demand and financial security. The different definitions include aspects as how frequent the consumers purchase products and purchase behaviour (Melin, 2008).

Melin (2008) claims that there are different degrees of brand loyalty. The lowest degree is where the consumer does not pay that much attention to the certain brand in the decision-making process, maybe rather price and availability. Whereas consumers with a high degree of

brand loyalty experience a strong personal identification with the brand, and feel like protecting it against opponents (Melin, 2008).

Riezebos et al (2003) stresses the distinction between brand loyalty, and repeated purchase behaviour. A repeated purchase behaviour might be seen as similar to brand loyalty, but it is simply a repeated purchase without any psychological reasons. However, brand loyalty is a kind of repeated purchase behaviour but involves a deeper reason – commitment. The consumer feels committed to the brand, through for instance brand image and added value, and therefore acts upon these psychological factors.

Furthermore Riezebos et al (2003) stresses the importance of brand loyalty since it has a huge impact on the brand's success.

## 4. Methodology

*This chapter will cover the method being used in the study, starting with an argumentation over method form approach, the structure of the research chronological order of the study. Followed by the discussion of quantitative and qualitative methods and their part in the study. Followed by a statement about the researcher's part in the survey, and the pursued objective approach. The survey's construction and choice of question-forms will be presented, followed by the decision of sample group and how to reach them and distribute the survey. The chapter will end with a brief reflection of reliability and validity and their part in this study.*

### 4.1 Method discussion

#### 4.1.1 A deductive process

In the argumentation of choice of method, the discussion of induction, deduction and abduction is relevant to consider. An inductive method means in general observations as method, and then drawing of conclusions and relating them to relevant theories based on those observations (Treadwell, 2011). A deductive method on the other hand, consists of a theory that follows an empirical data collection or observation to test the theory. The deductive process might according to Bryman and Bell (2005) be described through following steps: 1) theory 2) hypothesis 3) data collection 4) result 5) hypothesis confirmed or rejected 6) theory revised. The main difference between the two processes could be explained like this: In an inductive process the theory is a final product from the result/observations, while during a deductive process the results/observations are a final product of the theory (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Thirdly, there is the abductive method, which revolves around the notion of an effect or phenomena, and from there, tries to reason for an underlying explanation for this effect (Treadwell, 2011).

This study has undergone a deductive method process, since there already exist theories that were tested during the empirical data collection. The consumer behaviour is a broad field and sometimes difficult to concretize, since there already is a lot of knowledge about this subject – therefore previous research is helpful in generating new empirical research, and to test it to see if the theories have developed and if there is anything that could be added to the already existing theories.

#### *4.1.2 Choice of method*

This thesis aims to conduct research from a consumer's perspective, and to find a result that can represent consumer's behaviour in relation to brand values in general. Therefore, when collecting the data in the study, a quantitative data method was used, as statistic numbers might represent the "truth" of the sample group (Treadwell, 2011).

As this thesis aims to represent consumers in general, it was important during the data collection to have a broad sample group, as Treadwell above suggests the quantitative methods will allow. There is no particular answer to the question on how large a sample group ought to be, it is an issue of a combination between factors such as time, money and the need of precision (Bryman and Bell, 2005), and was therefore complicated to predict and plan in this study. However, the ambition with the choice of this method in this study was to reach out to a sufficient large number of respondents, and help create a clear picture of the mutual value of brands.

A qualitative data collection, on the other hand, could help to create a deeper understanding of why consumers feel as they do (Treadwell, 2011) but then there are more aspects, as for example subjectivity, that have to be taken into consideration when constructing and analysing the study, because of the respondents previous experience and preconditions.

The quantitative method was conducted through an online survey (See appendix 1). Surveys have many advantages and disadvantages, but in this case a survey served the aim of the thesis well. According to Treadwell (2011) surveys might reach some of the result, that one as a researcher aims to find, however it might sometimes be hard to achieve insight in the full extent of the result, as the survey does not allow the respondent to answer freely, but rather for example multiple choice to answer the question. This is something that was prevented in this study by not only containing multiple choice-questions, but also Likert's scale and open questions. This allowed the respondents to answer more freely and to air their opinion about the subject, resulting in an insight for the researcher how the consumers feel about the topic.

Furthermore, a huge known problem with surveys is to find respondents willing to participate in the study. Respondents have increasingly become resistant against this kind of research as



they stamp it as marketing rather than science, and therefore the request for them to participate often gets filtered away (Treadwell, 2011).

Other critique also directed towards the method of web-based surveys is the notion of the clarification. In an interview, the researcher can help the respondent to answer as honest to the question as possible, through clarifying terms, introductions and definitions (Brace, 2008).

This is not possible to add during a web-based survey.

However, a survey also allows a larger intake of respondents and it is easier to distribute than a qualitative research. This also leads to that researchers can generalize to a greater extent, since it allows access to a bigger sample group and more respondents, compared to a qualitative method (Treadwell, 2011). This aspect of allowing greater generalization will help in answering the research questions as the study aims for a general view of consumers within social media at the notion of brand values.

The sum of this argumentation of methods is that this study consists of a semi-quantitative method, mixed with elements of the qualitative method as well. In this way, the study takes part of both method's advantages: the quantitative distribution, larger number and representative sample group of respondents plus the qualitative open questions allowing an individual formulation of answers.

#### *4.1.3 The researchers part*

As a researcher I aim to maintain an objective part in the study, in order to be able to conduct a neutral and representative result. The survey was constructed based on already existing theory and prevented my eventual prejudices and predictions as a researcher to influence the survey, avoiding angled questions, which otherwise might affect the answers. Furthermore, to answer the research questions about brands in general, the survey was constructed to be objective and not favouring any particular brands. This was ensured through a statement in the instructions for the survey, where the respondents were asked to focus on brands in general and not a particular brand - meaning the survey does not describe any particular brands, which otherwise also might have affected the result in a negative way, through the values that that particular brand stands for.

## 4.2 The survey

To achieve the aim of the study, the survey questions were based upon the theoretical framework presented in the theory chapter. The questions were divided according to Melin's six steps in the brand building process, into six themes. This was to simplify the process for the respondents and to facilitate navigation of the survey. Also, calling the different steps for actual steps would have implied that they are in fact connected. Through instead calling them themes, and not state that they are connected, the survey allows leading to an independent understanding for the six concepts, and also achieving an answer to research question number two, that aims to investigate how the consumers evaluate the brand building process. This also gave opportunities to investigate whether the brand management's six steps presented in the theoretical framework could be adjusted into fitting the needs of the consumers better.

## 4.3 Approach

### *4.3.1 Sample group*

When determining the sample group, there are two main paths to choose from. The probability sampling, where the selection of sample units is handed over to external resources, such as mechanisms, where the researcher has no subjective saying in the decision. This way the researcher makes sure that the sample group does not share too many similar thoughts and ideas as him or she, since otherwise this might be a problem in the selection of sample group (Treadwell, 2011).

On the other hand, there is the non-probability sampling method which strong advantages are the convenience and simplicity of it (Treadwell, 2011). This is the method that was used to select the sample group during this study. I used network sampling, also commonly known as snowball sampling because this allows a strong and broad distribution and assurance of finding respondents willing to participate in the study. Snowball sampling involves networking to find respondents, the researcher turns to networks to connect with respondents that in its turn can find more respondents in their own networks (Treadwell, 2011). The sampling becomes a snowball, generating a chain effect of respondents, allowing me as a researcher to use the respondents available in my surrounding to participate in the study (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

The sample group does not contain any preferences when it comes to gender or age of the respondents. This is because of what was said in section 1.2.1 about the increasingly

homogenous society caused by technological innovations. As the argumentation in section 1.2.1 suggested, the technology has started an alteration of the international market as we know it, offering new opportunities and altering the consumers' ability to evaluate brands. The consumers' interpretation gradually becomes more similar to each other because of the technology - changing their behaviour of consumption. Therefore this study instead focuses on, and investigates the consumers using these technological channels. However, important to mention is that even though there is no particular age limit in the study, it still contains a potential age range because of the age limit to create a Facebook account, which is 13 years old, and the previous knowledge of the potential age range of my Facebook connections. Based on these aspects the estimated age range of the respondents undertaking this survey is between 18-60 years, with emphasises on the age range 18-30 years.

#### *4.3.2 Data collection*

The survey was sent out to the sample group via Facebook, where the respondents were being asked to participate in the research and forwarded to an external link, an approach that Bryman (2012) emphasizes to be appropriate when reaching a sample group online. The survey was based upon the platform of Google docs, offering the respondent multiple choices to answer the stated questions. The survey also included open questions where the respondent had the opportunity to reflect and air their opinions about brands. This will serve as a basis in understanding the consumer's value of brand values. Some questions also included Likert's scale where the respondents were asked to put out their degree of agreement on a scale for example between most important to least important (Treadwell, 2011).

Before the survey was distributed to the sample group, a pilot test was conducted, it was sent to a group of friends and my supervisor in order to test the function and usability of the survey. After some modifications the final survey was sent out to the sample group, along with instructions. When the survey had been online for ten days a reminder was sent out to the sample group, encouraging them to answer the survey. After 12 days online, the survey was closed down for further respondents, resulting in 97 replies.

The result from the survey will be presented in the result chapter. In order to create tables with the total ranking for questions 10 and 12, I have recoded the assigned values from the

respondents in those questions collected data, to create a more reader-friendly table with a clear overview.

#### *4.3.3 Motivation for questions*

The survey includes six themes, that all are based upon Melin's six steps of the branding process that are presented in the theoretical framework. Instead of the steps, that clearly indicate that it is in fact a process, they were presented as separate themes. This is in order to avoid informing the consumers that they are looking at an actual process, which might have affected their way of thinking. To be able to test if the model was accurate, it was essential that it was not presented as one in the survey, to avoid affecting the respondents' replies. This reasoning is also stated in section 4.2.

The questions also aimed to find out if there was something lacking in the model, something that the brand management's six steps could add to the branding process for the consumers. Therefore the questionnaire involved open questions where the consumer could air their own opinions. These open comments will hopefully serve as a deeper understanding in the consumers' interpretation, as it allows their own chosen words and explanations. To try to prevent a potential drop of respondents due to language barriers, the instructions in the survey did inform the respondents that it is accepted to answer the open question in either English or Swedish. Besides the open questions, the survey also contained multiple choices, and Likert's scale-questions. The scales contained of 5 different degrees, 1 being the most agreeing, 5 being the least agreeing. This implies that number 3 then becomes a so-called "neutral" answer, as it is in the middle of the two extremes. This was a conscious decision; a five-point-scale was chosen to give the respondent the possibility to a neutral answer, as a neutral answer also is a statement. It might imply that none of the variables were important enough for the consumers, and hence the aspect itself not relevant in their brand building process.

The survey consisted of 23 questions in total, 19 of them being mandatory. All the mandatory questions except one were multiple choice-questions or Likert's scale-questions. The decision to have the most open questions optional was to avoid a drop of respondents. I feared that if all open questions were mandatory, the respondents might lack time and patience to write their own answer and instead maybe not undergo the survey at all.

## 4.4 Reliability and validity

### 4.4.1 Reliability

Reliability is essential in research. It is what makes the study trustworthy and declares the results as a fact, rather than guesses. Reliability can be measured through making sure that a researcher would reach the same result through executing the same study at different occasions. This implies that the result is consistent and it would be the same result even when another researcher used the same tools at a different time to accomplish the study (Treadwell, 2011).

Reliability has in this study been approached through a clear empirical study with theoretical roots. The survey was based on already known and reliable research within the field, and did therefore use the same definitions of terms and concepts – creating a consistent expression. In practice this was implemented in the study through relevant questions in relation to the theory and sufficient means of answering for the consumers. The open questions provided an opportunity to collect comments from the consumers, using their own words in the study.

### 4.4.2 Validity

Validity means that the researcher investigates what he or she set out to study (Treadwell, 2011). Fulfilling the aim and research questions of the study. Treadwell explains it as: “A 100% reliable instrument that measure the wrong thing is 100% useless” (Treadwell, 2011, p.80).

The measure instrument that was used in this study is the online survey distributed to the respondents. This was the active tool in collecting reliable data using validated means, permeated by the study's research questions and aim, ensuring that the survey researched what it was supposed to. These validated means were practically implemented in the survey through themes that permeates both the survey and theory, making sure the theory is included in the empirical data collection. And through this increasing the validity.

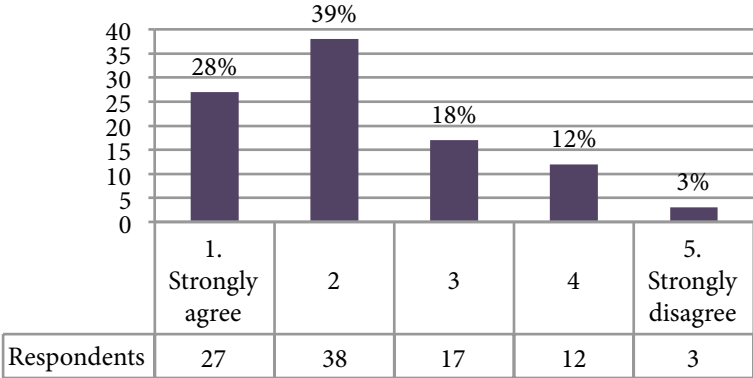
## 5. Data result

*This chapter will present the collected empirical data. The result will be divided into themes as mentioned in the methodological chapter and according to the structure of the survey, in order to create a consistent and clear expression. The multiple choice-questions and the Likert's scale-questions will be reported as tables, while the open questions will be reported rather as qualitative data, in form of a compiling of the throughout present themes aired by the respondents.*

### 5.1 Theme: Engagement

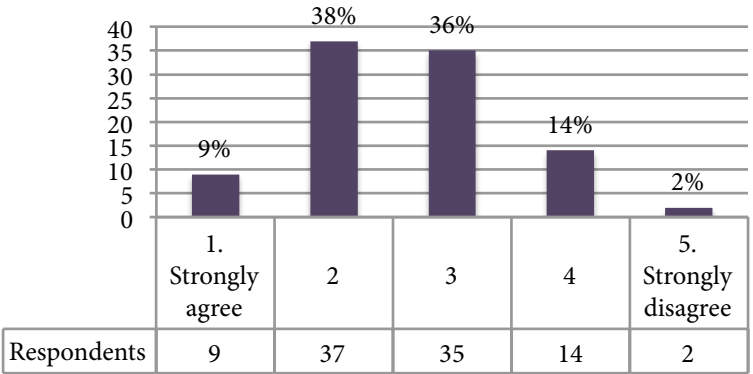
This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. 27 (28%) of them strongly agreed on that their personal interest in a certain brand played a part in their purchase decision. 38 (39%), the majority of the respondents, stated that they agree. 17 (18%) respondents say that they are neutral in the matter. 12 (12%) respondents disagree, and the minority 3 (3%) strongly disagree with the statement.

1. You feel that your personal interest in certain brands play a part in your purchase decision.



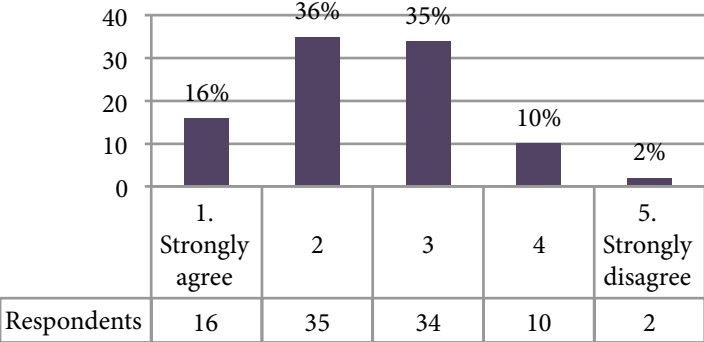
This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. 9 (9%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The majority 37 (38%) of the respondents agreed. 35 (36%) were neutral in the statement. 14 (14%) disagreed, and the majority of 2 (2%) respondents strongly disagreed.

2. You feel that the perceived risk with a brand affects your choice of brand.



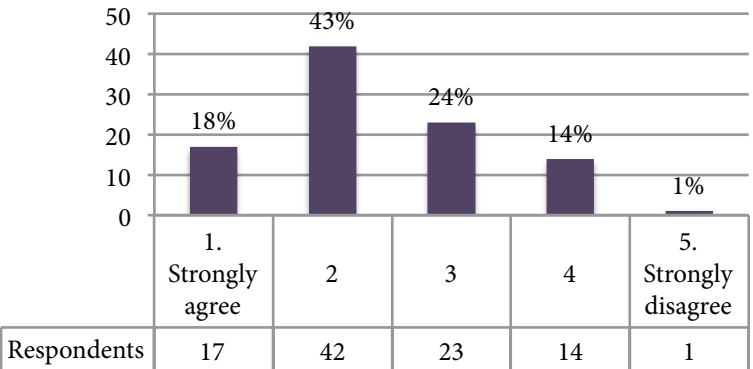
This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. 16 (16%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The majority of 35 (36%) respondents agreed. The neutral variable differed with one respondent from the majority, with 34 (35%). 10 (10%) disagreed. 2 (2%) strongly disagreed with the statement.

3. You feel that the symbolic value of a brand is of importance when evaluating a brand.



This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. 17(18%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The majority of the respondents, 42 (43%) agreed. 23 (24%) were neutral in the matter. 14 (14%) disagreed, and only one person (1%) strongly disagreed.

4. You feel that the pleasure value of a brand is of importance when evaluating a brand.



5. Are there any other aspects that get you involved in brands?

This was an open question, and not mandatory. 35 (36%) respondents answered this question, leading to a drop of 62 (64%) respondents that did not answer the question. Below is an extraction of the comments, for a full view of all the comments made by the respondents, see appendix 2.1.

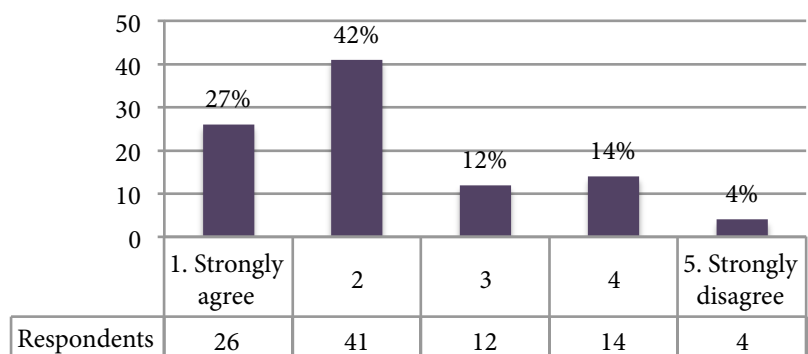
- > *“Fair trade, environmental friendly production etc.”*
- > *“Their track record on social responsibility and absence of misbehaviour by employees of the firm and their brand”*
- > *“If it is up-to-date, price and CSR-aspects such as not testing cosmetics on animals, ecological or pro fair trade and working conditions.”*
- > *“A nice logo, good reputation, recommendations from friends/family”*

- > *“This might be linked to the first question, but when I know that there is a nice story behind the brand (the way it started, interesting founders) then I might buy it more often. Another thing is that I would often buy local brands if I know their quality is just as good as the products of foreign brands. By this I feel that I support my country's economy.”*
- > *“I imagine that marketing eventually influences me, as does word of mouth.”*
- > *“Quality, ethics, price.”*
- > *“Prestige, branding things as your business card, corporate social responsibility of some strong brand (and you also feel like buying that things you take part in social support.”*
- > *“Always prefer young, adventurous and yet undiscovered brands.”*
- > *“I do not really care for the brand itself or what it may project on me, but I like other things, that in a way boosts a brand, like packaging design, design of the product, product quality. Like if i can choose between to packages of salt, I choose the prettier one, which afterwards reflects good on the brand, not the other way around.”*
- > *“Environmental, fair-trade, ecology, place of production, chain of production”*
- > *“It might get me involved if I know that the a certain brand is known for it's quality in the aspect that the product will have a longer lifetime and in that way save me money, even though the product cost me much money in the time of the purchase.”*
- > *“Ethical values: If they have an environmental friendly approach, if they use child labour etc.”*
- > *“Peer Pressure”*

## 5.2 Theme: Brand sensitivity

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. 26 (27%) strongly agreed with the statement. The majority of 41 (42%) agreed, while 12 (12%) remained neutral. 14 (14%) stated that they disagreed with the statement, and 4 respondents (4%) strongly disagreed.

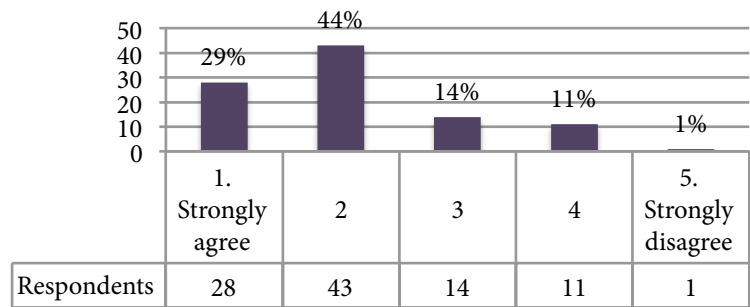
6. You tend to use a certain brand as preference and as a source of information when you choose between several different brands.





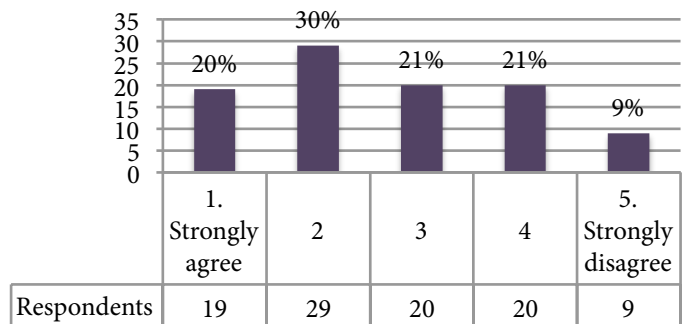
This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. 28 (29%) strongly agreed with the statement. The majority of 43 (44%) respondents agreed, while 14 (14%) remained neutral. 11 (11%) respondents disagreed, and 1 (1%), being the minority strongly disagreed.

7. You feel that the achieved expectations of a brand influences you choice of brand.



This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The response rate per variable was relative even. 19 (20%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement, while the majority of 29 (30%) respondents agreed. 20 (21%) were neutral, and the same number of respondents disagreed. 9 (9%) strongly disagreed.

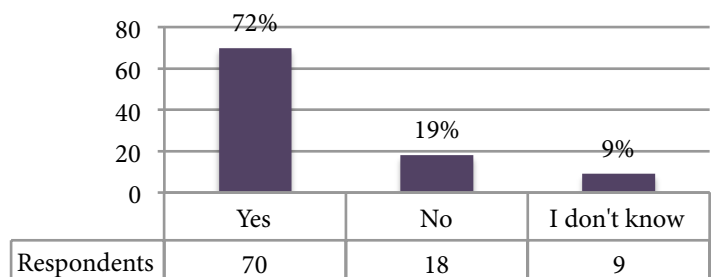
8. You feel that through purchasing a brand, the brand adds to your identity/image.



### 5.3 Theme: Brand knowledge

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. A clear majority of 70 (72%) respondents answered yes on the question. 18 (19%) answered no, and 9 (9%) stated that they didn't know.

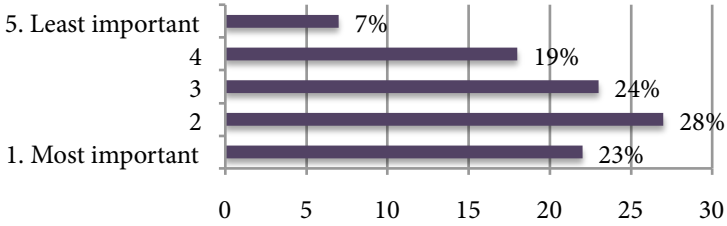
9. Does it ever happen that you choose a brand that is well-known and has a good reputation, rather than choosing a brand for its unique characteristics?



Following question, question 10, was presented in the survey as a grid, asking the respondents to assign the value from most important, to least important, of five different characteristics. These results will first be presented as five separate tables, and then based on the assigned value from each respondent to each characteristic; a table presenting the total rank will work as an overview of the respondent’s opinion regarding the characteristics.

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The characteristic of price was ranked as following: 22 respondents (23%) considered it to be most important and assigned it the value of 1. 27 respondents (28%) being the majority assigned the characteristic of price the value of 2, important. 23 (24%) respondents were neutral and assigned the characteristic the value of 3. 18 (19%) respondents assigned it the value of 4, being not so important, and the minority of 7 (7%) respondents consider price as least important, with the value of 5.

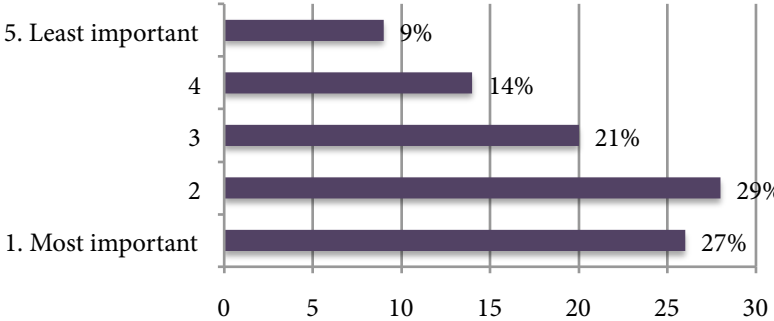
10. Assign following categories of characteristics for the brand, in the order from most important (1) to least important (5). - PRICE



	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
Respondents	22	27	23	18	7

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The characteristic of design was ranked as following: 26 respondents (27%) considered it to be most important and assigned it the value of 1. 28 respondents (29%) being the majority assigned the characteristic of design the value of 2, important. 20 (21%) respondents were neutral and assigned the characteristic the value of 3. 14 (14%) respondents assigned it the

10. Assign following categories of characteristics for the brand, in the order from most important (1) to least important (5). -DESIGN

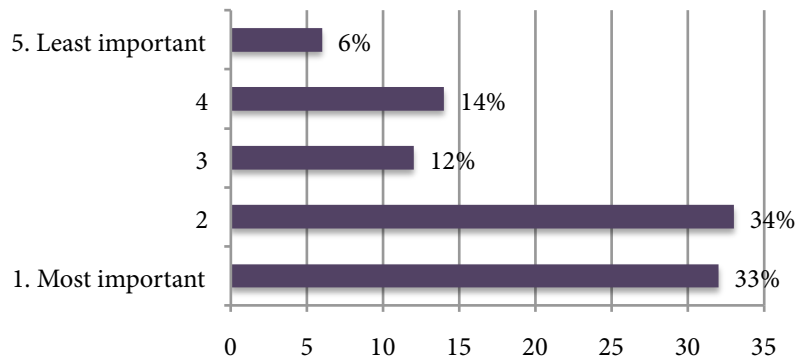


	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
Respondents	26	28	20	14	9

value of 4, being not so important, and the minority of 9 (9%) respondents consider design as least important, with the value of 5.

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The characteristic of function was ranked as following: 32 respondents (33%) considered it to be most important and assigned it the value of 1. 33 respondents (34%) being the majority assigned the characteristic of function the value of 2, important. 12 (12%) respondents were neutral and assigned the characteristic the value of 3. 14 (14%) respondents assigned it the value of 4, being not so important, and the minority of 6 (6%) respondents consider function as least important, with the value of 5.

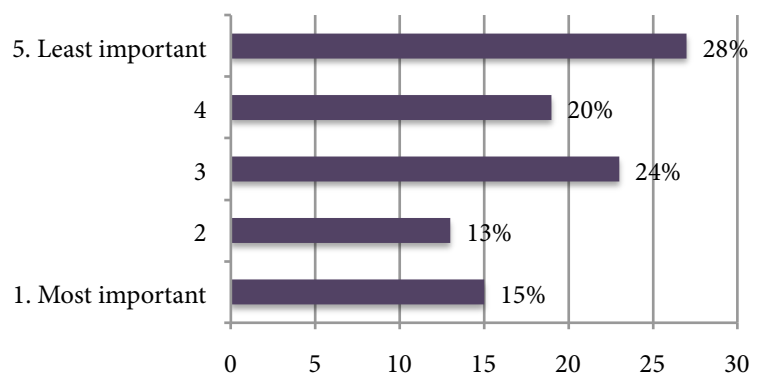
10. Assign following categories of characteristics for the brand, in the order from most important (1) to least important (5). - FUNCTION



	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
Respondents	32	33	12	14	6

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The characteristic of image was ranked as following: 15 respondents (15%) considered it to be most important and assigned it the value of 1. 13 respondents (13%) being the minority assigned the characteristic of image the value of 2, important. 23 (24%) respondents were neutral and assigned the characteristic the value of 3. 19 (20%) respondents assigned it the value of 4, being not so important, and the majority of 27 (28%)

10. Assign following categories of characteristics for the brand, in the order from most important (1) to least important (5). - IMAGE



	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
Respondents	15	13	23	19	27

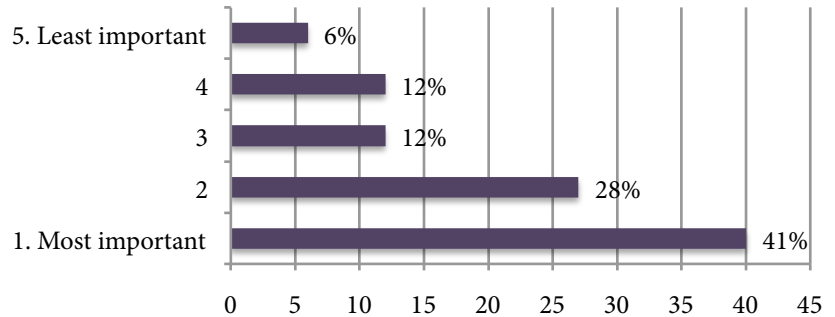
respondents consider image as least important, with the value of 5.

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it.

The characteristic of quality was ranked as following: the majority of 40 respondents (41%) considered it to be most important and assigned it the value of 1. 27 respondents (28%) assigned the characteristic of quality the value of 2, important. 12 (12%) respondents were

neutral and assigned the characteristic the value of 3. 12 (12%) respondents assigned it the value of 4, being not so important, and the minority of 6 (6%) respondents consider quality as least important, with the value of 5.

10. Assign following categories of characteristics for the brand, in the order from most important (1) to least important (5). - QUALITY

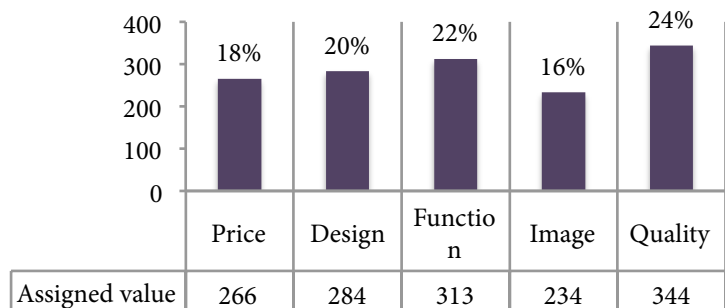


	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
Respondents	40	27	12	12	6

When calculating all values assigned by the respondents, following result summarises the characteristics importance for the respondents.

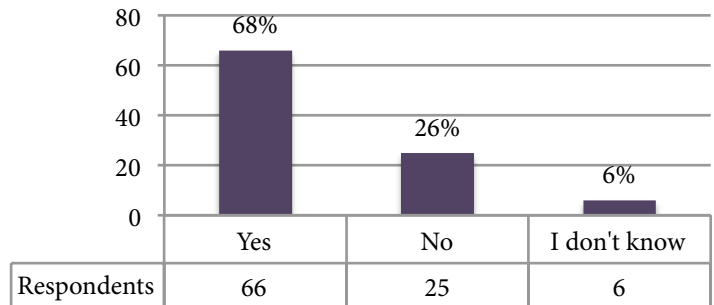
Price got assigned 266 (18%) in relation to the other characteristics. Design were according to the respondent the most neutral characteristic with 184 score (20%). Function were with the score of 313 (22%) the next most important characteristic in relation to the others. Image got a score of 234 (16%) being the least important characteristic. Quality got 344 (24%) of the assigned value, being the most important characteristic in relation to the others.

10. Assign following categories of characteristics for the brand, in the order from most important (1) to least important (5). - ALL



This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The majority of 66 respondents (68%) answered yes on the question. 25 (26%) answered no, and the minority of 6 respondents (6%) answered that they didn't know.

11. Do you feel like the price of a brand product affects your perception of the brand itself?

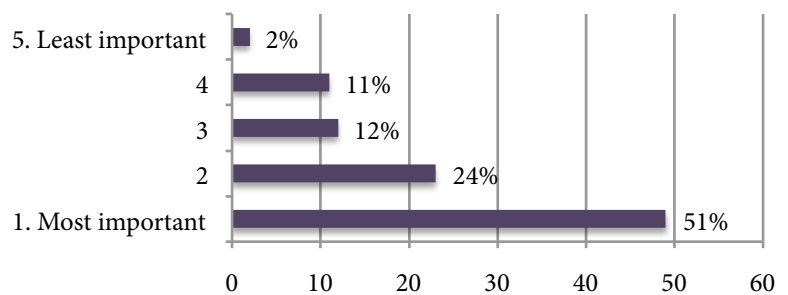


#### 5.4 Theme: Brand association

Following question, question 12, was presented in the survey as a grid, asking the respondents to assign the value from most important, to least important, of five different characteristics. This result will first be presented as five separate tables, and then based on the assigned value from each respondent to each characteristic; a table presenting the total rank will work as an overview of the respondent's opinion regarding the characteristics.

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The characteristic of the consumer's perceived quality of the brand was ranked as following: the majority of 49 respondents (51%) considered it to be most important and assigned it the value of 1. 23 respondents (24%) assigned the characteristic of the perceived quality the value of 2, important.

12. A brand's image can contain several characteristics, please assign following in order from most important (1) to least important (5). - YOUR PERCEIVED QUALITY OF THE BRAND

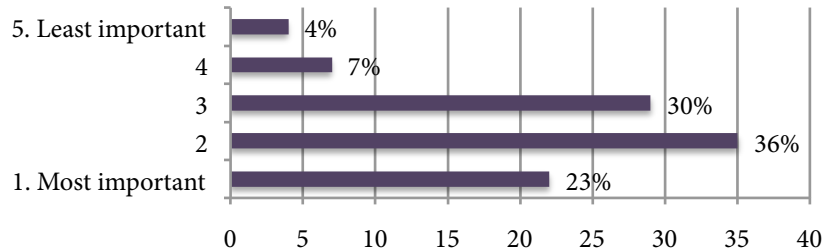


	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
Respondents	49	23	12	11	2

12 (12%) respondents were neutral and assigned the characteristic the value of 3. 11 (11%) respondents assigned it the value of 4, being not so important, and the minority of 2 (2%) respondents consider it as least important, with the value of 5.

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The characteristic the design of the brand was ranked as following: 22 respondents (23%) considered it to be most important and assigned it the value of 1. The majority of 35 respondents (36%) assigned the characteristic the design of the brand the value of 2, important. 29 (30%) respondents were neutral and assigned the characteristic the value of 3. 7 (7%) respondents assigned it the value of 4, being not so important, and the minority of 4 (4%) respondents consider it as least important, with the value of 5.

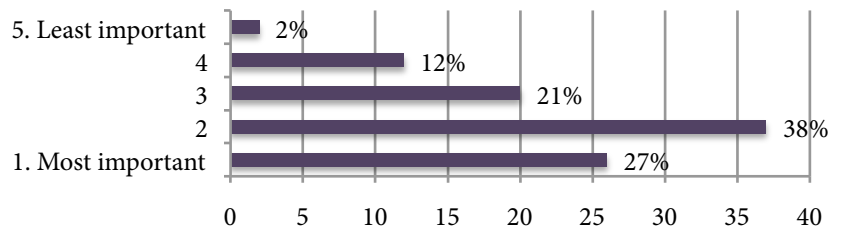
12. A brand's image can contain several characteristics, please assign following in order from most important (1) to least important (5). - THE DESIGN



	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
Respondents	22	35	29	7	4

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The characteristic of performance of the brand was ranked as following: 26 respondents (27%) considered it to be most important and assigned it the value of 1. The majority of 37 respondents (38%) assigned the characteristic the performance of the brand the value of 2, important. 20 (21%) respondents were neutral and assigned the characteristic the value of 3. 12 (12%) respondents assigned it the value of 4, being not so important, and the minority of 2 (2%) respondents consider it as least important, with the value of 5.

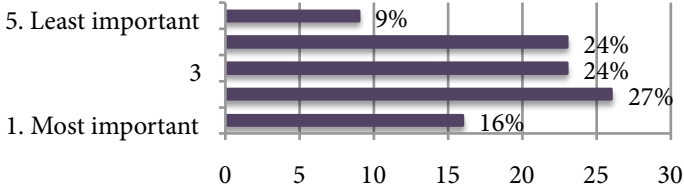
12. A brand's image can contain several characteristics, please assign following in order from most important (1) to least important (5). - PERFORMANCE



	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
Respondents	26	37	20	12	2

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The characteristic of the lifestyle of the brand was ranked as following: 16 respondents (16%) considered it to be most important and assigned it the value of 1. The majority of 26 respondents (27%) assigned the characteristic the lifestyle of the brand the value of 2, important. 23 (24%) respondents were neutral and assigned the characteristic the value of 3. 23 (24%) respondents assigned it the value of 4, being not so important, and the minority of 9 (9%) respondents consider it as least important, with the value of 5.

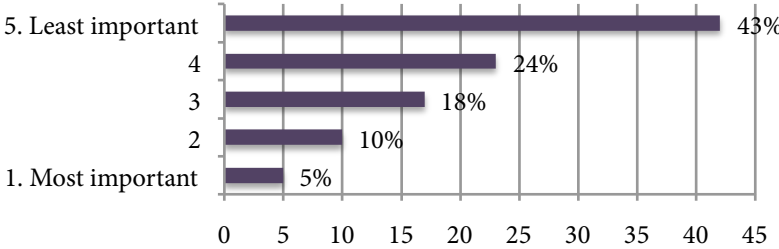
12. A brand's image can contain several characteristics, please assign following in order from most important (1) to least important (5). - LIFESTYLE



	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
Respondents	16	26	23	23	9

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The characteristic of the geographical origin of the brand was ranked as following: the minority of 5 respondents (5%) considered it to be most important and assigned it the value of 1. 10 respondents (10%) assigned the characteristic the geographical origin of the brand the value of 2, important. 17 (18%) respondents were neutral and assigned the characteristic the value of 3. 23 (24%) respondents assigned it the value of 4, being not so important, and the majority of 42 (43% respondents consider it as least important, with the value of 5.

12. A brand's image can contain several characteristics, please assign following in order from most important (1) to least important (5). - GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN

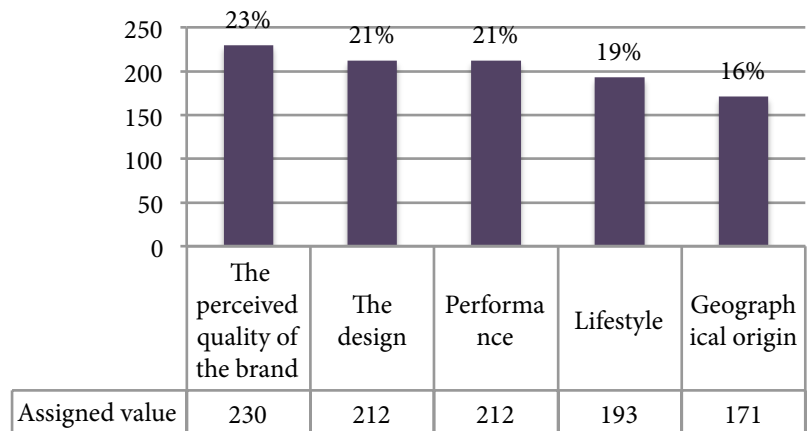


	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
Respondents	5	10	17	23	42

When calculating all values assigned by the respondents, following result summarises the characteristics importance in relation to each other for the respondents.

The perceived quality of the brand got assigned 230 (23%) and therefore being the most important in relation to the other characteristics according to the respondents. The design of the brand got assigned a score of 212 (21%). The performance got the same score of 212 (21%). The lifestyle got 193 (19%) and the geographical origin got a score of 171 (16%), meaning in relation to the other characteristics least important according to the respondents.

12. A brand's image can contain several characteristics, please assign following in order from most important (1) to least important (5). - ALL



13. Please motivate your choice to organise the characteristic in question 12 the way you did.

This was an open question, and not mandatory. 45 (46%) respondents answered this question, leading to a drop of respondents of 52 (54%) that did not answer the question. Below is an extraction of the comments, for a full view of all the comments made by the respondents, see appendix 2.2.

> *“First comes the quality because in the end this remains the crucial characteristic, otherwise you would not buy it at all. The performance is highly correlated with the quality, so that one comes second. Lifestyle is third because it is secure and good to belong to your innercircle who use the same stuff. Origin is only important when making a choice is hard. And design is less important for me, because with a lot of product the design does not matter at all for me.”*

> *“I care most about that a brand’s image match my own image. Where it comes from is not as important, also since everything is so global today. Quality is not so important in general, it really depends what kind of product it is about.”*

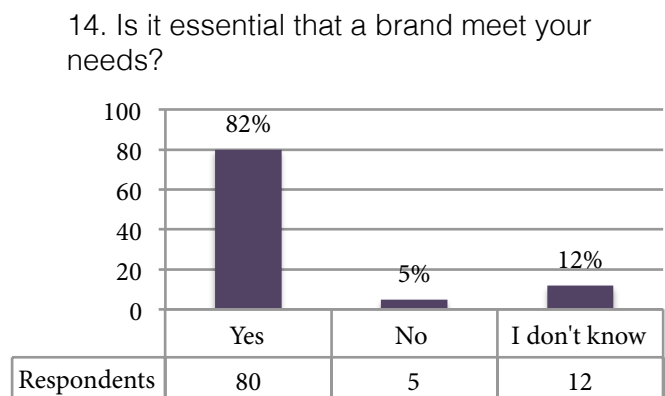
> *“The quality of a product and its performance are in my opinion the most important aspects, however design is rather a luxury, but not essential (e.g., Apple-computers would probably still work even if they were uglier...).”*

> *“I would be most opinionated about a brand in relation to its quality/performance. They would influence how I perceive it, and the design would also affect me until I got my hands on it.”*



- > *“Quality and performance (where applicable) are the key factors. Image and "lifestyle" much less important, if at all.”*
- > *“Quality and lifestyle are the most important, design and performance are in the middle, but I think that geographical originality can be realized through design.”*
- > *“Design is as important as function”*
- > *“Design, price, lifestyle, nothing is anything without a good performance”*
- > *“A slightly more expensive brand feel like it has a better quality....design is according to me is the basis for why a certain brand even from the start gets desired, and it’s the best in its original design and not in any copy”*
- > *“I am placing "My perceived quality of the brand" in the middle, since this is often influenced both from my own (or friends) previous experiences with the brand and from f ex adverts.”*
- > *"Storytelling is nice, but not final in my decision.”*
- > *"I keep quality high and like to buy Swedish products, or at least avoid buying products that I know have been manufactured under the dodgy quality of life."*

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The majority of 80 (82%) respondents said yes to the question. 5 (5%) respondents said no. 12 (12%) didn't know.



15. If you answered “no” on question 14, please explain why.

This was an open question, and not mandatory. 6 (6%) respondents answered this question, leading to a drop of respondents of 91 (94%) that did not answer the question. Below is an extraction of the comments, for a full view of all the comments made by the respondents, see appendix 2.3.

- > *“I would answer yes if I could afford to pick and choose from all brands for all products - the phrase "beggars can't be choosers" comes to mind here.”*
- > *“Brands can create needs and not necessarily based in the previous needs.”*

- > *“Since it is more important to buy eg. A pair of converse rather than a “brand-less” ergonomic shoes, all my choices does not meet my needs. I rather hurt my feets than walking around in ugly shoes”*
- > *“It’s not the brand, it’s the product. In some cases a brands quality comes bundled in all its products. Then the brand guarantees quality. Ref. Apple Inc....”*
- > *“It’s important that I believe that it meets my needs. If it’s true is of less import ants.”*

## 5.5 Theme: Added value

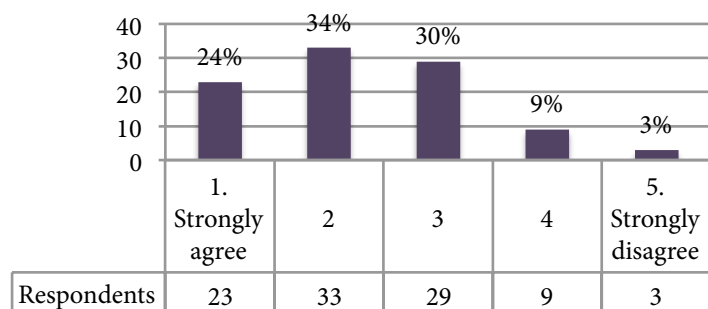
16. What makes a brand superior to other brands?

This was an open mandatory question. 97 respondents answered this question. Below is an extraction of the comments, for a full view of all the comments made by the respondents, see appendix 2.4.

- > *“Its awareness of things apart from profit”*
- > *“Reputation”*
- > *“Proved quality, reputation, what it stands for”*
- > *“if its well known”*
- > *“High quality products”*
- > *“Live up to your expectations when it comes to both price, quality and performance.”*
- > *“Consolidate image”*
- > *“Image, quality, public opinion, lifestyle aura”*
- > *“Quality, image and reach of target audience via campaigns and peer group associations.”*
- > *“A complete package - from design, presentation and ads.”*
- > *“That that particular brand is “right” and trendy, and contains status symbol through being used of for example a model/bloggers/celebrity.”*
- > *“ image and that little extra”*

This was mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. 23 (24%) respondents strongly agreed with the question. 33 (34%), being the majority, agreed with the question.

17. Do you experience that the advertisement about particular brands reflects the brand's values, what the brands stands for?

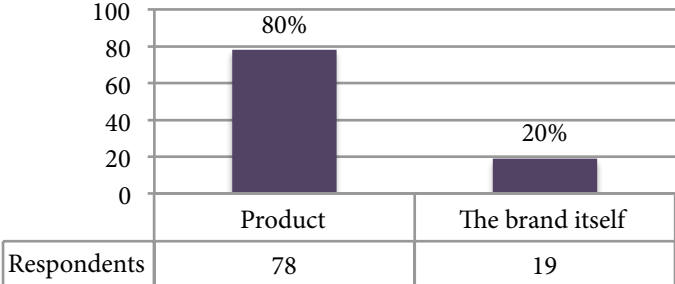


29 respondents (30%) remained neutral in the matter. 9 (9%) stated that they disagreed with the question, and the minority of 3 respondents (3%) strongly disagreed.

5.6 Theme: Brand loyalty

This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The majority of 78 respondents (80%) answered that the product is crucial in their purchase decision, while 19 (20%) respondents answered that the brand itself was the base for their decision.

18. When you're purchasing a brand, do you base your decision upon product or the brand itself?



This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The majority with 36 respondents (37%) answered that the biggest reason for repeated purchase was that they identify themselves with the brand. 29 (30%), being the minority, answered that the biggest reason was a reasonable price. 32 (33%) respondents stated that there was another reason.

19. What is the biggest reason for why you purchase the same brand repeatedly?



20. Imagine a brand that you consider yourself being loyal to, what would you say is the biggest reason for this?

This was an open mandatory question, 97 respondents answered this question. Below is an extraction of the comments, for a full view of all the comments made by the respondents, see appendix 2.5.

- > *“Suits my image”*
- > *“It has something extra. Not only good price or nice design. It matches me and gives you some sort of satisfaction or fulfills a need.”*
- > *“Neutrogena, since the products (bodylotion, handlotion) have very good quality, the advertisement is good plus my whole family uses it.”*

> “Quality versus price”

> “My previous experience with the brand (the products work fine for me), my knowledge about it - that it provides high quality and good customer service as well as the price is relevant to the products quality.”

> “There are two brands that suppose I am loyal to (that pop in my head, there are probably more...) they are both brands that have credibility in design, and echo a particular lifestyle. However, they are both efficient at what they do. I think efficiency is the most important aspect - if these things were pretty, considered "cool", and cheap, but continually failed, I would lose faith in the brand.”

> “It never lets me down and what you see is what you get!”

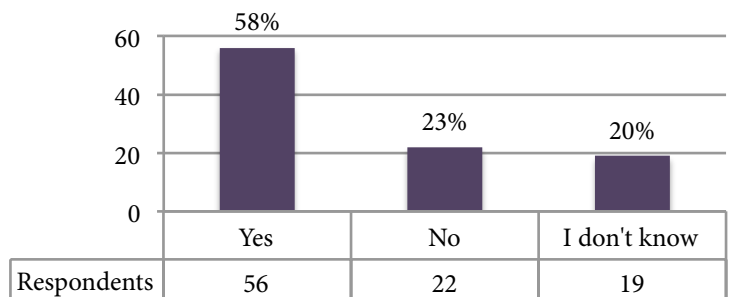
> “In that they have never disappointed me with a product, or other standpoint, be it ethical or other.”

> “Above all, that my brand always gives me what I expect”

> “Repetitive satisfaction”

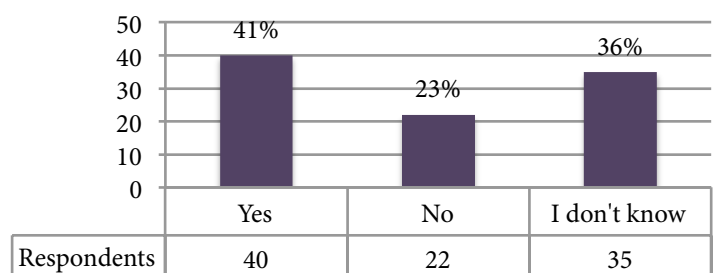
This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The majority, with 56 respondents (58%) answered yes on the question, while 22 (23%) respondents answered no. 19 respondents (20%) answered that they didn't know.

21. Is it important for you that the brand you are loyal to, and purchase repeatedly, represents the same values that you believe in?



This was a mandatory question, 97 respondents answered it. The majority of 40 respondents (41%) answered yes on the question. 22 (23%) answered no, and 35 (36%) respondents answered that they didn't know.

22. Do you feel in general that your perception of brands is similar to the image that brand-owners (the organizations owning the brand) want to perceive the brand?



## 5.7 Final comments

23. What do you think is the best way for organizations to generate value for a brand?

This was an open question, and not mandatory. 58 (60%) respondents answered the question, leading to a drop of 39 (40%) respondents. Below is an extraction of the comments, for a full view of all the comments made by the respondents, see appendix 2.6.

> *“Firms who own the brand should take their time to build brands and keep consistency in the communication. Besides that they have to choose the values that the brand really stands for, so do not choose the values of your target group, but convince the target group of your values.”*

> *“Being honest about production and support for example fair trade and fair labour conditions - I think this has changed a lot during the last years, a new thing that brands need to think about. And then also basic things like bringing out a proper price for the quality (that not always have to be high).”*

> *“Probably through consistency - sticking to core values, a certain logo, certain colours, certain advertisements that represent this and not changing all these aspects all the time.”*

> *“Probably write down it's real values, then doing research about the values of it's target group and try to compromise between these two.”*

> *“To begin with, produce efficient products. Then, targeting 18-35 year olds for marketing is a range that everyone is interested in. Within this marketing strategy, if possible, espousing company values and an implied lifestyle will generate buzz and value.”*

> *“Never promise more than they can keep”*

> *“Awareness and consciousness.”*

## 6. Analysis

*This chapter will connect the data result of the study with the presented theoretical framework, resulting in an analysis that will serve as answer to the research questions and aim of the study in chapter 7. The analysis will be presented according to the themes used in the construction of the survey, and in the result chapter. As the main focus lies on the consumer behaviour, these are the themes that will be presented first. The chapter will end with a brief discussion about brand management in relation to the result of the study.*

### 6.1 Engagement

As mentioned in section 3.5.1, Melin (2008) claims factors that influence the degree of engagement to be personal interest, pleasure value, and perceived risk. This was measured in the survey, and the result shows that this, for the most part, is accurate. However, the result implies that the perceived risk and the symbolic value of the brand are not necessarily of that big importance for the consumer. In table 2 and 3 (see section 5.1) the neutral middle choice is the second highest ranked, which might indicate that the respondents do not pay that much attention to these aspects. On the question of perceived risk, only 9% strongly agree of its importance, and when asked for the symbolic value, only 16% strongly agree. Still, the majority of the respondents do consider these aspects as important. In addition to these aspects that were mentioned in the theoretical framework, the respondents were asked to add, in their own words, what makes them engaged in brands. Among many other interesting comments, there was a recurring theme, showing that ethical and environmental aspects - such as good work environment, child labour and use of organic materials - were something that the respondents experienced as engaging them in brands. The comments made by the respondents also confirm that the attributes mentioned in brand management, (see section 3.4.1) such as package design and quality indeed are relevant in the consumers' decision-making process.

This shows that the perceived risk and the symbolic value of a brand might very well belong within the step of engagement, but that their part might not be as outstanding as the personal interest in a brand is. Also, the aspect of environment and ethic plays a bigger part in the consumers' conscious, and it might be relevant to add these aspects to the Melin's step of engagement, as it is a growing concern.

## 6.2 Brand sensitivity

As presented in section 3.5.2, Melin (2008) explains that a brand sensitive customer uses the brand as a guide and source of information in the selection of brand products. The result in the survey confirms this, with 27% of the respondents strongly agreeing, and 42% agreeing. Furthermore, Riezebos et al (2003), in the same section, claims that brand sensitivity is influenced by two factors: whether the consumer believes the products will meet his or her expectations and the extent to which a product gives the consumer a certain identity. This was also measured in the study and the result shows that the question on whether the brand meets the consumer's expectations, there is a clear majority that agrees. However, on the question on whether it adds to the consumer's identity, the answers are divided. Even though most respondents' state that they are on the agreeing side of the scale, it seems like it is not an obvious aspect in the matter of brand sensitivity. This might imply that the added value to the consumers' identity might not belong under the model's aspect of brand sensitivity.

## 6.3 Brand knowledge

As stated in section 3.5.3, research shows that in the choice between several equal products, consumers choose the best well-known brand above the others, even though they are equivalent. To measure to which degree this is accurate, the respondents were asked the question whether they ever choose a brand for its reputation and being well-known, rather than for its unique characteristics. 72% of the respondents answered yes on this question. As also stated in the section, brand owners must try to make the consumer experience positive associations when thinking of the brand, and that it is important for the brand not only to be well-known, but what it is well-known for. To measure this, the survey processed a number of common characteristics that the brand owner has to work within the construction of these positive associations through brand knowledge. The research shows that consumers prioritize quality in a brand, closely followed by the characteristic of function. Price was the second least important, which confirms Melin's notion of price playing a smaller part in decision making if the characteristics in the brand are seen as unique compared to other brands. One interesting aspect during the study was that in the open comments, many of the respondents do at some point mention image in some way, but when asked to assign image a value in measuring brand knowledge, it came up as least important among the five stated characteristics. One explanation behind this might be that image is something that grows out of the other characteristics, almost as a side effect. A brand that is known for its quality for example might

eventually generate an image that suits the consumers that are attracted of maintaining that kind of image.

All this might indicate that the characteristics that the organisations should focus on developing in order to create brand knowledge and to make the brand well-known are primary the quality and the function of the brand. Price is still important for the consumers, the result shows that the majority of the respondents agree, and 68% of the respondents claim that the price of a brand does affect their perception of the brand itself. However, in comparison with all the mentioned characteristics, the study confirms Melin's brand knowledge theory – which is that price does play a crucial role for the consumer if they do not experience any significant differences between brands, but if they do, the price is not as relevant anymore.

#### 6.4 Brand association

In section 3.5.4 the theory of brand association was presented, along with how it is created. The main characteristics supposedly influencing this process are the perceived quality, design, performance, lifestyle and geographical origin of the brand. The survey tried to measure whether this applies or not in the context of the study. The result suggests that these characteristics indeed do have an essential role in creation of brand association. The majority of the respondents agree, and assigned a relative high value as most important for all characteristics. When comparing the different characteristics the results show that, once again, the quality is essential for the consumers. Important to remember though, is that the survey contained the question of perceived quality, not the actual quality, so it is the respondents' subjective opinion of the quality that stands out in the result. However, the rest of the characteristics follow shortly after and confirm their importance for brand association.

The comments from question 13 indicate that images is seen as a positive characteristic, but not a necessity, rather more a luxury. One respondent explains this thought through *"Apple-computers would probably still work even if they were uglier."* Regarding the characteristic of geographical origin, the main reasoning behind it is that the consumers want to purchase local brands in order to support brands for their own countries. The result also shows that geographical origin creates associations for the consumer regarding the quality of the brand. Through knowing the origin, the consumers draw their own subjective conclusion whether this



particular brand will meet their expectations regarding the quality of the brand. Some respondents also mean that the geographical origin might be deduced in the design and package of the brand product. The recurring theme about this characteristic though, shows that it is not of that much importance for the consumers when they form an opinion about a brand, “*storytelling is nice, but not final in my decision*”, as one respondent expressed it.

## 6.5 Added value

The comments about added value from the respondents confirm the definition in section 3.5.5. The respondents emphasize the uniqueness of a brand that sets it apart from other brands. The brand needs to stand out in order to be perceived as superior to other brands. A recurring theme in the data result chapter about added value is the brand’s ability to actually live up to the expectations of the consumers, and not to promise more than the brand owners can keep. If a brand purporting to be for example of high quality, the consumers expect this when purchasing the brand. This might serve as a confirmation of the theoretical framework regarding perceived performance. It is the outcome of the meeting expectations that results in a perceived performance for the consumers.

The psychosocial meaning, also presented in section 3.5.5, was confirmed and developed further through the result in this study. The survey provided comments from the respondents regarding peer pressure being a part in the creation of a superior brand. It might not be directly that well connected with the aspect of added value, but it is one aspect that generates psychosocial meaning for the consumers. The study also shows that the consumer’s own experience and friend’s recommendations are valued high of the respondents when choosing a brand. The matter of status and symbolic status is also something that contributes to the added value, for example if a celebrity uses the brand, or if it is considered to be trendy at the moment.

Regarding the aspect of brand-name awareness in relation to added value, the result shows that the consumers do indeed get affected by marketing communications. The result clearly shows that the brand management perspective of marketing communications, see section 3.3.5, reaches through to the consumers, and that it is an important tool in generating value for the consumers towards a brand. This will be discussed further in section 6.7.

Other aspects in the result show that respondents value being “*understood*” by the brand owners. A recurring theme in the comments regarding this is “*meet my needs*”, “*understand me*”, “*understand the target group*” and so on. And the result points out that a clear target group, and the consumers knowing about it generates added value. This might be the result of a combination between a good marketing campaign and clear core values.

## 6.6 Brand loyalty

Melin (2008) claims that, see section 3.5.6, brand loyalty involves the consumer to strongly identify him- or herself with the brand and if they do not, that is when factors such as price and availability start increasingly to matter in their decision-making process. The result in this study shows that the majority of 80% of the respondents base their purchase decision on the brand product, rather than the brand itself. This suggests that brand owners should work hard on implement the brand values in each product, since that is what many consumers base their decision upon.

The result in the study shows that the respondents had divided opinions on their reasons for repeated purchase-behaviour 37% claimed that the main reason was that they identify themselves with the brand, 30% claimed that a reasonable price was the main reason and 33% claimed it was for other reasons. This result could partly help to confirm the theory of low and high degree of brand loyalty. Which according to Melin is high degree equal to identify yourself with the brand, and low degree being consumers that is rather focus on price and availability.

The result shows that brand loyalty is indeed a commitment, as acknowledge in section 3.5.6. The respondents confirm that it is important for them to trust the brand, and that they “*almost feel proud*” of the brand, as one respondent expressed it. In addition to this, the study also shows that the consumers’ feel a need for the brand to maintain continuity in order for them not to lose faith in the brand. The commitment that the theories about brand loyalty mention, this research shows, are not a one-way commitment. But the consumers emphasize that it is a mutual commitment, where they trust the brand to not let them down.

Repeated factors that the respondents mention as being important in their trust in a brand are amongst others: ethic, quality, design and honesty.

## 6.7 The model of brand management

This section will briefly discuss the perspective of brand management in relation to the study. A clear majority of respondents undertaking this survey show that it is essential that the brand meet the consumer's needs. This is something that can be controlled by the brand owners when they are creating the core values for the brand. Making sure that the brand satisfies the target group's needs will ensure a larger amount of loyal customers in the end. The research also shows that an increasing amount of consumers start to value the values of ethics and environmental aspects of a brand, something that organisations might work with in their brand building process. According to the result in this study, the first step in the brand management model by Melin namely "attributes" is not as important to the consumers as core values are. The consumers seem to not be able to distinguish the two terms apart, which might indicate that attributes might not be as important in the brand building process as claimed in previous research.

Just as the theoretical framework in section 3.4.2 suggests, a brand must constantly undergo a development in their brand identity, in order to attract the target group. The result confirms this, as comments made by the respondents' claims that it is important that the organisations understand them.

The concept of positioning works as a tool within brand management that can help the brand owners to find a position for the brand in the consumer's conscious. Riezebos et al (2003) stresses that this is possible through two ways, through either price or intrinsic dimensions. The respondents undertaking the survey confirm the approach of price dimensions, as the majority of 68% states that they experience that the price for a brand product affects their perception about the brand itself. Combined with comments found in for example question 13, the result shows that a higher price might very well give the illusion of the brand to be of higher quality, similar to that a low price might imply a lower quality. The intrinsic dimension however, Riezebos et al (2003) claims to be more focused on social and functional aspects. This is something that partial agrees upon within the result, but the consumers do also express their attention to design.

The respondents affirm the theory of share of voice, share of mind and share of market (see section 3.4.5), through their response in the survey. For example, we can tell from the result that consumers intercept the message of brand values in the advertisement sent by the brand owners. But according to the result in question 17, there are still 30% of the respondents that remain neutral in the question whether they experience the brand values through advertisement or not. This might imply that brand management could, and should, work even harder with implementing the brand values into the marketing communications material. This is their opportunity to share the values with the consumers and an opportunity to attract loyal customers. As stated in section 6.6, the respondents expressed a loyalty to products rather than brand. This is also connected to marketing communications and core values, since if the core brand values were stronger integrated in the marketing communications, maybe the brand loyalty rate, rather than product loyalty, would rise.

The final step in Melin's model of brand management, internal brand loyalty, is something that is hard to measure from the consumers' point of view, and will therefore not be relevant to discuss further in this study.

As a final section in this brief discussion on brand management, and how it could improve to attract the consumers through brand values, the respondents were asked to explain with their own words how organisations could generate value for a brand. A recurring theme among these comments concerns the very goal of brand management, which is achieving brand loyalty from the consumers. The respondents repeatedly mention uniqueness, the importance for the brands to be consistent and sticking to core values and so on. One respondent says *“Never promise more than they can keep (the organisation), consumers are too smart and will see through a false promise immediately“*.

## 7. Conclusions

*This chapter will present the conclusions through answering the thesis research questions based on the data result and analysis of this study.*

*What do consumers value in a brand?*

How consumers value a brand is a process, which could be explained in the model of consumer behavioural, presented in this thesis. It is important to think about the fact that consumers tend to base their purchase decision on the branded product, rather than the brand itself, and it is therefore of high importance for the brand owners to implement brand values into the products. Characteristics of brand values that are assumed to be important for the consumers are amongst others: quality, function, design, price and image. Quality is still a top candidate in the notion between different brand values, shortly followed by function. But the result in this study also shows that ethical and environmental factors are increasing and are now becoming more and more of a strong actor in generating value for the consumers.

*How do the consumer perceive the branding process?*

The result from this study indicates that consumers indeed do act as the branding process presented in the theoretical framework claims they do. But there are some additional aspects to consider in the branding process. As mentioned above, factors such as ethics and environment are increasing in the consumers conscious and therefore something that might be allowed to take more space in the step of added value. Also, the result from the study shows that image, which traditionally has been looked upon as a characteristic itself, might rather be a side effect generated out of various characteristics. Meaning that other values and characteristics build the ground for creating a certain desired image. Also as mentioned in the previous section in the answer to research question one, brand loyalty is a crucial step but consumers tend to interpret the brand product more than the brand itself. Therefore, in order to create a strong brand loyalty the product itself need to express a strong consistent front, representing the brand through the brand values. Within brand management there are some factors that distinguish from previous research, for example, the steps of attributes seem to be not as important or visible to the consumers as the other steps. The core values that the brand owners work with are something that the consumers notice and are influenced by when evaluating a brand, but attributes are something that they equate with core values, indicating that it might not be as important in their decision-making process.

## 8. Reflections

*This chapter will contain reflections made during the study and end with suggestions for future research.*

### 8.1 Deficiencies in the research

There are reflections to be made whether the research could have been improved to achieve the aim even better. The decision to allow comments in both Swedish and English in the survey was made. This was to avoid a drop of respondents due to language barriers. Afterwards, reflections could also be made whether the survey itself including the multiplied and Likert's scale questions should be available in both languages, to maximize the frequency of responses. However, the final number of respondents is still a trustworthy number, but might have been increased with the double option of language.

### 8.2 Future research

A suggestion for future research might be to apply a more strict qualitative method on the research field. With for example a focus group, the respondents could then develop their reasoning even further, leading to a greater understanding in the process where brands generate value for consumers.

The research in this thesis has aimed to achieve an overall opinion from the respondents in the sample group of consumers using technological channels such as facebook. By using a qualitative method, and the possibility of follow-up questions, future research could act as a complement, deepening the research in the aspects of social media and its effect.

Also, regarding the findings of image as a side effect could be further developed through qualitative focus groups, allowing respondents to reason about the term and the researcher to asked follow-up questions to deepen the knowledge.

## Reference list

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# Appendix

## Appendix 1. The survey

### Theme one – Engagement

#### 1. You feel that your personal interest in certain brands play a part in your purchase decision. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree						Strongly disagree

#### 2. You feel that the perceived risk with a brand affects your choice of brand. \*

- Perceived risk implies the unclear consequences of your purchase of a brand. For example how the quality of the brand/product turn out is hard to predict, and might be a perceived risk.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree						Strongly disagree

#### 3. You feel that the symbolic value of a brand is of importance when evaluating a brand. \*

- Symbolic value implies an agreed mutual symbolic meaning of for example an object.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree						Strongly disagree

#### 4. You feel that the pleasure value of a brand is of importance when evaluating a brand. \*

- Pleasure value implies for example the degree of entertainment you get from a brand.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree						Strongly disagree

#### 5. Are there any other aspects that gets you involved in brands?

### Theme two – Brand sensitivity

#### 6. You tend to use a certain brand as preference and as a source of information when you choose between several different brands. \*

- For example, when deciding what brand to purchase, do you use another certain brand to compare them with?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree						Strongly disagree

#### 7. You feel that the achieved expectations of a brand influences you choice of brand. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree						Strongly disagree

#### 8. You feel that through purchasing a brand, the brand adds to your identity/image. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree						Strongly disagree

### Theme three – Brand knowledge



**9. Does it ever happen that you choose a brand that is well-known and has a good reputation, rather than choosing a brand for its unique characteristics? \***

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**10. Assign following categories of characteristics for the brand, in the order from most important (1) to least important (5). \***

	1	2	3	4	5
Price					
Design					
Function					
Image					
Quality					

**11. Do you feel like the price of a brand product affects your perception of the brand itself? \***

- For example, does it make you believe a higher price is equal to higher quality etc?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**Theme four – Brand association**

*“Your opinion about a brand, even though you might not have any personal experience from it”*

**12. A brand’s image can contain several characteristics, please assign following in order from most important (1) to least important (5). \***

	1. Most important	2	3	4	5. Least important
You perceived quality of the brand					
The design					
Performance					
Lifestyle					
Geographical origin					

**13. Please motivate your choice to organise the characteristic in question 12 the way you did.**

**14. Is it essential that a brand meet your needs? \***

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**15. If you answered “no” on question 14, please explain why.**

**Theme five – added value**

*“What makes a brand superior to other brands”*

**16. What makes a brand superior to other brands? \***

**17. Do you experience that the advertisement about particular brands reflects the brand’s values,**

**what the brands stands for? \***

	1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree					Strongly disagree

Theme six – brand loyalty

**18. When you're purchasing a brand, do you base your decision upon product or the brand itself? \***

- Product
- The brand itself

**19. What is the biggest reason for why you purchase the same brand repeatedly? \***

- You identify yourself with the brand
- Reasonable price
- Övrigt:

**20. Imagine a brand that you consider yourself being loyal to, what would you say is the biggest reason for this? \***

**21. Is it important for you that the brand you are loyal to, and purchase repeatedly, represents the same values that you believe in? \***

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**22. Do you feel in general that your perception of brands is similar to the image that brand-owners (the organizations owning the brand) want to perceive the brand? \***

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Final comment

**23. What do you think is the best way for organizations to generate value for a brand?**

Appendix 2. The respondents' comments

*2.1 Question 5: Are there any other aspects that get you involved in brands?*

"Fair trade, environmental friendly production etc."

"Their track record on social responsibility and absense of misbehaviour by employees of the frim and their brand"

"If it is up-to-date, price and CSR-aspects such as not testing cosmetics on animals, ecological or pro fair trade and working conditions."

"A nice logo, good reputation, recommendations from friends/family"

"This might be linked to the first question, but when I know that there is a nice story behind the brand (the way it started, interesting founders) then I might by it more often. Another thing is that I would often buy local brands if I know their quality is just as good as of the products of foreign brands. By this I feel that I support my country's economy."

"Not any that I can think of."

"I imagine that marketing eventually influences me, as does word of mouth."

"Quality, ethics, price."

"nope"

"Prestige, branding things as your business card, corporate social responsiblity of some strong brand (and you also feel like buying that things you take part in social support."

"Longevity, brands that have a strong track record over a period of time"

"Rykte om ett varumärke. Jag kan gå igång på personal som säljer ett varumärke - huruvida de bemöter mig - de representerar ett varumärke - och betar de sig illa kan det bli så att jag avstår från att handla ett varumärke. Ex apotek hjärtat - servicen är så otroligt dålig på detta apotek att jag vägrar gå in i någon utav deras affärer.."

"Always prefer young, adventurous and yet undiscovered brands. "

"I do not really care for the brand itself or what it may project on me, but I like other things, that in a way boosts a brand, like packaging design, design of the product, product quality. Like if i can choose between two packages of salt, I choose the prettier one, which afterwards reflects good on the brand, not the other way around. "

"No"

"Environmental, fair-trade, ecology, place of production, chain of production, "

"It might get me involved if i know that the a certain brand is known for it's quality in the aspect that the product will have a longer lifetime and in that way save me money, even though the product cost me much money in the time of the purchase."

"Recommendations from friends, family, media. "

"the history of the brand (what have it done before).  
Design of the product make me involved with the brand.  
If its good quality, looks good and is cheap.  
I get involved with brands that have a more quiet approach (don't want it in my face all the time)"

"Environmental aspects"

"No"

"For example when I wanna make something special (food for nice event/friends), or when for example certain trends (sunglasses) are set by a brand"

"Priset"

"Ethical values: If they have an environmental friendly approach, if they use child labour etc."

"When I buy a special brand, I expect something. For example that trousers last longer or the original taste of a brand e.g. Nutella"

"Ease of use, ability to think out of the box, design factor and price."

" – Att det är ett svenskt märke.  
– Märkets rykte. "

"Etik och moral spelar in tycker jag för vissa varumärken och även hållbarhet. "

"Not that I can think of right now. "

"touch, feel, smell."

"Recommendations."

"What the brand stands for. The personality of the brand and how well the image of the brand agrees with my own image as a person. My personal brand. "

"Reklam och marknadsföring av produkten."

"Peer Pressure"

## *2.2 Question 13: Please motivate your choice to organise the characteristic in question 12 the way you did.*

"First comes the quality because in the end this remains the crucial characteristic, otherwise you would not buy it at all. The performance is highly correlated with the quality, so that one comes second. Lifestyle is third because it is secure and good to belong to your innercircle who use the same stuff. Origin is only important when making a choice is hard. And design is less important for me, because with a lot of product the design does not matter at all for me."

" I care most about that a brand's image match my own image. Where it comes from is not as important, also since everything is so global today. Quality is not so important in general, it really depends what kind of product it is about. "

" The quality of a product and its performance are in my opinion the most important aspects, however design is rather a luxury, but not essential (e.g. Apple-computers would probably still work even if they were uglier...)."

" A brand with a good image on quality is for me important. Just as the performance of the product. "

" When I buy products I always pay attention to the quality: e.g. when buying clothes I would always check the materials they're made of as well as how is the finishing of the clothing, but for me it is not exactly connected to the brand's image - I do it with every brand, as I know that good brands do also produce things that are not of highest quality and worth the money. I like interesting design, that's why I put it as no.2. I also pay attention to the functionality of a product and my previous experience with similar things, that's why I put performance as no.3. I

don't know exactly what is meant by lifestyle, if it is the lifestyle that the brand is associated with I don't pay too much attention to that, I care much more about the quality and design as it should fit my lifestyle. I seldom pay attention to the country of origin when buying clothes that I took as an example. But when I choose e.g. cosmetics or food I always look for good local brands to support brands from my own country."

"I would be most opinionated about a brand in relation to its quality/performance. They would influence how I perceive it, and the design would also affect me until I got my hands on it."

"If I buy something I choose the thing which is my style. And I always check where it is from, and which material it is. For example, if I'm about to buy a shirt, I check if it's cotton and it has to be made in Turkey, India or Bangladesh. Not China."

"Quality and performance (where applicable) are the key factors. Image and "lifestyle" much less important, if at all."

"Quality and lifestyle are the most important, design and performance are in the middle, but I think that geographical originality can be realized through design."

"Performance and quality are important. The image / lifestyle implications aren't important. I want something that will last and does what it is designed to do."

"För mig är alltid en hög kvalite viktigt om det utlovas - vet man däremot att ett varumärke (ex kläder på Gina Tricot) inte håller en lika hög kvalité, förväntar man sig inte det och då är det ok. Därför tycker jag det är en viktigt fråga."

"My perceived quality of the brand is the most important because it builds on everything I know about the products of the brand, tests, user comments and so on.

Design comes in third because the performance/function is more important - what the thing can do is more interesting, and is what I use to be able to compare products. If the performance is the same, then the design kicks in. Lifestyle? I guess you mean how it suits my lifestyle. Yeah. In fourth place.

Geographical - If I would have to take this into my calculation, it would become impossible to design which product to choose."

"The design always comes first and performance can be compromised on if this area scores highly. Geographical origin makes no difference to the attractiveness of the brand."

"I believe lifestyle, origin, performance are factors I think about but design always come first. Geographical origin influence my opinion of the quality. For example: danish furniture or swedish china, french wine."

"Perceived quality: I trust myself.

Lifestyle: I prefer healthy things, green thinking, natural materials and I like to use those brands that comply with that.

Design: I like beautiful things. Design is as important as function.

Geography: a country itself adds or minimises value of a product (in some cases). E.g., I prefer buy something that is made in England or Scandinavia than in China. Or if I'm searching for a good knife for fishes and I'll see a commercial of Norwegian sailors who use some certain knives, it will influence my believe that Norwegian knives are good. Even if the brand will be different."

"The image or lifestyle of a brand is less important to me. What matters is what it does for me, not what it says to other people. For example good quality or what it looks like, so it looks good on my shelf (or somewhere else) whenever I look at it :)"

"Design, pris, livsstil, allt, är inget utan en bra prestation."

"I feel that design and quality are two of the most important things in a brand."

"TO me the most important is how well a brand's product can perform. Where it is from and how it is perceived is of low importance to me I just want a product that works and looks nice."

"A brand produced in a country with good working-conditions is more interesting than a cheaply produced brand from another country. A product with a good environmental and fair-trade aspect is more interesting, regardless the price."

"Kvaliteten spelar enligt mig roll beroende på vilket märke av klädesplagg/skor/möbel osv man väljer. Ett lite dyrare märke känns som det är av bättre kvalitet.

Designen är enligt mig grunden till varför just ett märke från första början blivit åtråvärt och är bäst i sin originaldesign och ej i någon kopia.

Utförandet känns mindre viktigt, en jacka som är snygg är enligt mig viktigare än en som är ful och billig/märkeslös.

Ens Livsstil/personlighet speglas i det man klär i/äger och ett märke erhåller ett visst statusmoment och visar på "god smak".

Geografiskt ursprung är tyvärr ingen jag reflekterar speciellt över. Tyvärr.

Känns som att speciellt kläder är svårare att hitta ekologiskt/fair trade osv, det mesta är liksom "made in china."

"My belief is that design and performance is closely linked together, but will still choose performance over design any day. I am placing "My perceived quality of the brand" in the middle, since this is often influenced both from my own (or friends) previous experiences with the brand and from f ex adverts. For me personally, the geographical origin has very low value, compared to the no 1, 2 and 3. I don't consider myself having a "clear" and outlined "Lifestyle", so the products I choose could probably be placed in several types of "Lifestyles". Hence this was of least importance."

"Just answered the question based on my gut feeling"

"The organisation speaks for itself. I like quality and design, lifestyle and origin kdoes not matter that much."

"Quality and performance are most important, you have to believe in the brand. Thereafter design and lifestyle are valued-adding factors in the opinion about a brand."

"Hard to choose there. Some stuff goes hand in hand. And I believe all should go hand in hand."

"It is important the the brand reflect who I am and who I want to me, geographical origin have little importance since I feel all brands nowadays have quite similar origin and don't differ that much anyway. Storytelling is nice, but not final in my decision."

"Can't explain it, just feel that way."

"I just buy brands, when I totally convinced by the design and when the quality is good. Otherwise i am not interested in brands. I would never buy a certain brand just for lifestyle."

"Rankning 1-2. För mig är det viktigt att produkten är ekologisk, har inga, få eller lite tillsatser och/eller är av god kvalitet samt produkten fungerar som lovat.

Rankning 3. Ovan kriterier kan ofta utläsas på varumärket, eller för att produkten kommer från ett företag med ovan nämnda kriterier."

"Its simply like that. But geograhical origin is becoming more of a factor lately."

"Jag håller kvaliteten högt och köper gärna svenska produkter, eller i alla fall undviker att köpa produkter som jag vet har tillverkats under taskiga levnadsförhållanden."

"no"

"Jag är själv student, men vill helst köpa kläder med bra kvalitet, som håller längre, mycket hellre än att köpa en topp för 50 kronor som sedan går sönder efter en tvätt. det dyra plagget blir oftast billigare i längden då det håller längre. Däremot är jag som sagt student och ibland får jag lov att köpa billigare kläder med sämre kvalitet även om jag hellre skulle vilja spendera lite mer på kvaliteten. Designen på ett plagg är ytterst viktigt då det är därför jag köper ett plagg, det måste tilltala mig estetiskt. Annars är jag ingen modeslav utan köper det jag tycker är snyggt och bryr mig inte så mycket om vad som är inne eller inte, köper inte kläder för att skapa en image utan förstärker min image med kläder jag gillar."

"Jag måste säga att kvaliteten av ett varumärkes produkt är det jag går efter och vad kritikerna säger om det. Vart det kommer från spelar minst roll eftersom det jag köper vill jag att det ska vara värt pengarna och fungera. Vet inte riktigt hur jag på annat sätt ska motivera mina val."

"Quality and performance is for me obviously the most important cause it reflects the real use of the brand. The brands I buy then automatically reflects my lifestyle a bit so it gets number three. Design and geographical origin is for me not that important unless I'm buyin something from a specific culture. But in my general purchases they influence my choices the least.

Hade svenska varit ok förresten? :)"

"Quality is important. Origin is not important, but working conditions are. Too bad it wasn't an option."

"It was really difficult and the organizing could have been different. In my opinion the five characteristics are intertwined"

"Im not really sure how to motivate my choice here.

I just put in what feels right but I dont have a special thought about it."

"Jag är mer intresserad av att ha en snygg, högkvalitativ produkt än vart den kommer ifrån."

"I think how I perceive the brand as a whole and the actual performance of the brand are the most important.

Depending on what kind of product/service it was would determine whether geographical origin was important. For a lot of products this would not be as relevant but it could play a large part."

"Det spelar ingen roll vart produkten är ifrån så länge kvaliteten är bra. Det viktigaste är kvaliteten och att den fungerar som den ska. Designen måste ju passa in med livsstilen."

"I choose a brand based on if the lifestyle of the brand, is it the same as the image I as a person would like to have."

"Ordningen på egenskaperna beror mycket på vilket produkt eller tjänst som jag vill köpa. Exempelvis är träning viktigt för mig, skor är väldigt viktigt att det är bra kvalitet. Vanliga kläder behöver inte stå för så mycket kvalitet det viktiga är designen.

Lifestyle inkluderar flera av de andra värdena och blir därför viktigast för mig. Exempelvis så tycker jag att miljön är viktig då väljer jag ett varumärke som står för detta, det kan till exempel vara att produkter är närproducerat och därför kommer geografiskt ursprung med här.

Performance tänker jag som utförande och det hänger tätt samman med min livsstil. Dvs att jag känner och upplever att ett varumärke "ingår" i min livsstil.

Viktningen mellan kvalitet, design och geografiskt ursprung beror på typ av produkt/tjänst."

" I think, performance is the most important characteristic, because it makes me getting interested in the brand and creates an image. I only pay attention if i like what i see. It correlates with the second point, the design. Quality is an determining factor, because it is a basic requirement on a product. Maybe it is not a good attitude, but for me its less important where the brand produces its products. I wont buy a product just because it is ethical correct but i dont like it. Less important is the lifestyle, because i like traditional things and do not follow every trend or movement."

### 2.3 Question 15: If you answered "no" on question 14, please explain why.

" I would answer yes if I could afford to pick and choose from all brands for all products - the phrase "beggars can't be choosers" comes to mind here."

" Brands can create needs and not necessarily based in the previous needs."

" Om märket söker sig till att möta mina behov eller ifall deras produkter möter mina behov.

Om märket söker sig till mig och mina behov så absolut inte.

Om en produkt söker sig till mina behov (uppfyller ett behov) så Ja."

" Eftersom det är viktigare att köpa tex ett par converse än ett par "märkeslösa" fotriktiga skor, möter mina val inte alla mina behov. Jag har hellre ont i foten än går runt i "fula" skor. "

" Its not the brand, its the product. In some cases a brands quality comes bundled in all its products. Then the brand guarantees qyality. Ref. Apple Inc...."

" It's important that I believe that it meets my needs. If it's true is of less import ants. !

### 2.4 Question 16: What makes a brand superior to other brands?

om det står ut och är unikt
De måste stämma överens med min image. Märket ska utstråla rock!
Its awareness of things apart from profit
indispensability
Price, if it is known to me or not.
Reputation
Quality
Quality
funktionen och kvalitén
proved quality, reputation, what it stands for
It stands out
if its well known
Quality
If the brand is unique
if i like the brand, then i like the brand cause its probably a good brand for me
High quality products.
Quality
The design and function
A mixture of quality & reliability
Live up to your expectations when it comes to both price, quality and performance.
it has to be my style, nothing special criteria.
Quality - especially long term
the best quality
Marketing, quality.
quality and design
consolidate image
Quality, price
Quality
Quality, design
Image, quality, public opinon, lifestyle aura

att varan håller förväntad kvalité och det den utlovar sig att vara. varken lovar mer eller mindre som den kan hålla.
The perceived quality of the brand
Quality, image and reach of target audience via campaigns and peer group associations.
A complete package - from design, presentation and ads.
1) my personal experience or friends' recommendation; 2) design
If it suits my needs in every way.
Quality
image
quality feeling
långvarig kvalite
Price, quality, design
Uniqueness
fills the need in the best way
depends what kind of brands it is. Quality, design
Design and Quality
kvalitet hållbarhet
see above
Att just det märket är "rätt" och "inne" och innehåller statussymbol eftersom det kanske ex. använts av någon modell/bloggare/kändis.
Quality and price
Quality and performance
image och "det lilla extra".
Loads of different factors
Quality and characteristics
the quality of the product
Quality
Design
Quality
The quality
The quality and the price are the biggest factors in my opinion.
Quality, performance, image, expectations
It's different and have a new interesting way of talk.
that it gives me something special. Almost makes you feel proud over it.
The historical factors of that brand
the status you get from wearing that certain brand
How well known it is.
Consistency
1) Great work with the target group. If it makes me feel like "the chosen one" i will love it forever. 2) If it is better than expected - and amazingly good looking, I will love it forever. 3) If it does something good "to the world", I will love it forever.
image
staus
Trust in that brand, a lot of commercial 'hammers' it into the mind and makes it more present
Utseendet
quality
Good price and high quality
price, supplied products
Dees smaker och/eller kvalité
Quality and design.
Gott rykte, bra marknadsföring, väl utvecklad design.
design
?

kvalitet, udda design och även bra basplagg
marketing, better quality and value
Att det faller just mig i smaken.
Standout design. Low price for a good product.
commercial
Quality and image
i dont know
Innovation
It makes me feel good
For me its the price, the design and often the brands commercial.
Image and quality
touch and feel ex. apple
Honesty. a brand communicating ideas that it cannot meet is always disappointing.
Kvalité och design
Lifestyle image, if it reflects what I want to be or become. The promise of something better that I value. Iam always impressed with brands that know there target group. The brand that has the best knowledge of their target group there wishes and dreams usually are the most successful ones.
Förmågan att uppfylla de förväntingar som jag har på varumärket.
kvalité
uniqueness

2.5 Question 20: *Imagine a brand that you consider yourself being loyal to, what would you say is the biggest reason for this?*

produkterna är bra
Det passar in bra på min image.
I don't have one.
I'am loyal to Coca Cola, because I really believe that their coke is by far the best one, it gives the best value for money proposition, and besides that I share their brand values (hapiness, freedom, America) a lot.
It has something extra. Not only good price or nice design. It matches me and gives you some sort of satisfaction or fulfills a need.
Neutrogena, since the products (bodylotion, handlotion) have very good quality, the advertisement is good plus my whole family uses it.
Okay price compared to the quality
Once again, quality. But, price and design can be important as well.
Kvalitet kontra pris
That's it's different, not mainstream, image of being indistructable.
Quality in every area
u like it
Fits my needs, quality, reasonable price range
IKEA, ICA, H&M, LOREA 'L Always buy candles on IKEA, they are the best. Always buy make up at H&M, always buy silverschampo from LOREA 'L and food from ICA.
i know the brands products
My previous experience with the brand (the products work fine for me), my knowledge about it - that it provides high quality and good customer service as well as the price is relevant to the products quality.
Quality
Mostly because of the design.
There are two brands that suppose I am loyal to (that pop in my head, there are probably more...) they are both brands that have credibility in design, and echo a particular lifestyle. However, they are both efficient at what they do. I think efficiency is the most important aspect - if these things were pretty, considered "cool", and cheap, but continually failed, I would lose faith in the brand.
It never lets me down and what you see is what you get!
good quality for good price.



In that they have never disappointed me with a product, or other standpoint, be it ethical or other.
That it suits me and makes me feel good.
Quality and lifestyle.
Design and identity
I just love it.
The previous products from this brand have shown high quality. You know that when you purchase something it will work as intended
i
Price
Nike - good quality, good design, the price is set perfect.
Hög kvalitet, jag har alltid fått det jag förväntat mig - och ja, jag antar att ju mer man köper ett märke så identifierar man sig med det - så blir det ju efter ett tag - men framför allt att mitt märke alltid ger mig det jag förväntar mig.
It appeals to me and I have used it with good experience.
A brand that produces goods that are of interest and desire. Could be lifestyle products or anything from electronics to nutritional products. A brand that is innovative in all its approaches towards the consumer and finds a gap in the market. A brand that I associate positively and perceive to bring an added element of pleasure to my everyday activities.
If it's reliable. Ethical, environmental, honest!
Nice design, brand's showed lifestyle (my interpretation of their commercials and slogans)
Good previous experiences.
Mostly that the product has a good quality, but also if it has a nice design or an ethical approach, for example fair trade or ecological.
style
Quality and good reputation
Kvalite och värderingar.
Good quality, reasonable price and original design.
Repetitive satisfaction
consistently good quality in it's products, and fills the need, for a reasonable price
Quality price and design
The brands I am loyal are ones where I believe the price quality ratio is more than reasonable. That the product often have a certain level of design and finally good customer relationship.
passar mina behov och ett lagom pris-
see above
Att det var följtsamt i utvecklingen av nya trender och stilar och att det fick mig känna mig bekväm i det/med det.
Helst av allt skulle jag egentligen vilja att det fanns goda tankar bakom märket, människor som arbetar för hållbart mode osv. Finns för få sådana i dagens samhälle, åtminstone som "syns"/uppmärksammas.
Good quality and it suits my needs.
Consistent quality and keeping up to pace with product development (with regards to materials, hardware, software, ergonomics and environmental issues f ex)
att jag uppskattar det som varumärket står för, både när det kommer till design och image. Priset påverkar ju självklart också.
Nice design. The brand stands for something i like. In example being sporty/qualitative.
Quality and something that i usually use
i know what i get.
It has had high quality and has lived up to my expectations.
Price and design
Because i like the quality and price.
I think the brand i am most loyal to is Converse and in this case i think it is mostly the brand itself that is the most important. It just feel better to have a pair of real "all star converse" shoes and not a nameless copy and no more extended rational thinking behind this, just the feeling.
I would say I have used the particular brand for a long period time and have rarely been disappointed.

Delivers according to expectations in terms of quality, design, price, etc.
I feel like I'm apart of it.
because I purchased it before, was happy with it, and therefore know what I'll get for the money. Kind of trust in a brand.
...
Because it makes me feel better about myself because the brand gives me higher status
Because of prior content with the brand.
High and consistent quality of product (or service) and always meets expectations. Different reasons for loyalty for different brands... for instance if I buy earphones I always choose the brand that gives the highest quality for lowest price and it is not always the most famous brand who does this. I bought Phillips earphones once and their quality was way lower in comparison with Excibel even though the price and brand awareness was higher. Because of this I think brands should always live up to expectations and never have a higher price than competitors if the product fails to deliver. Today, I don't buy anything from Phillips anymore.
- I've never been disappointed (or at least not disappointed enough) - It really feels like "me" (and fits my image).
Because of the lifestyle (the brand has a certain image) and also because of the outstanding quality status related
That I have a feeling of 'treating/granting' myself with that product (even if it's more expensive).
Levererar snygga och tåliga kläder
it fits my lifestyle or represents a lifestyle that I perceive as attractive.
Again, good price and high quality
comfortable, good looking, reasonable price, good quality
For example Asics running shoes - God kvalité & bra stötdämpning, har sprungit i Nike tidigare, aldrig igen. YES diskmedel - Det enda som är riktigt fettlösligt. Maria Åkerberg (kosmetika) - Ekologiskt smink som inte är överprisat och håller bra. Tropicana (juice) - Juicelover som smakat sig igenom allt. Tropicana har alltid bästa appelsinsmaken, tex. så upplever jag att Brämhults kan till tider vara sur. Zoega - Bäst smak.
Se prev answer
Levi's - Jag har köpt deras byxor så länge jag kan minnas. Har flera gånger provat andra märken i butik, men i slutändan känns Levi's-byxorna alltid bäst.
nice clothes
Design
Som jag skrivit tidigare, kvalitet, design och i vissa fall bra priser, måste inte vara en lågbudgetkedja men bra priser och ändå håller kläderna kvaliteten. Sedan tycker jag att det är viktigt att företagen går ut med om dem är miljömedvetna, inte använder barnarbete och försöker hålla så bra arbetsförhållanden som möjligt för sina arbetare.
Apple, the quality and its user oriented services.
För att det passar mig och att det signalerar hur jag vill uppfattas.
They meet my needs and I feel secure buying those brands.
good quality
I trust the quality of their products and been satisfied with them for a long period of time. Then I like to be able to afford them as well.
i dont know
It suits me well.
It sort of communicate something about me and my life.
I would say that the brands offer is the biggest reason Im loyal to it. If the price and design is right and I feel comfortable with the brand, thats also a good reason. In some cases I think its important to know where the brand/company stands in different questions, like environment or slave labour.
Hög kvalite och användarvänlighet
usability, design, touch & feel, lifestyle
Again it would be the quality. If a product or brand has proven that it performs consistently well then I will

go back to that brand or products again.
För att jag varit nöjd med produkten och vet därför vad jag har att förvänta mig av den. Design och funktion som jag tycker är praktisk.
Meets my expectations or i best case precedes (överträffar). Added value, costumer care. CRM, costumer relationship marketing, that they know me and let the me know that they value me as a costumer. Most people are vain and want to be seen.
Jag kan lita på att jag får det jag behöver.
Pris
That i feel really good with the products, they are useful and have a good quality

## 2.6 Question 23: What do you think is the best way for organizations to generate value for a brand?

Att hålla fast vid det som gör det speciellt.
Making everyone benefit from what they produce and sell.
Firms who own the brand should take their time to build brands and keep consistency in the communication. Besides that they have to choose the values that the brand really stands for, so do not choose the values of your target group, but convince the target group of your values.
Being honest about production and support for example fair trade and fair labour conditions - I think this has changed a lot during the last years, a new thing that brands need to think about. And then also basic things like bringing out a proper price for the quality (that not always have to be high).
Probably through consistency - sticking to core values, a certain logo, certain colours, certain advertisements that represent this and not changing all these aspects all the time.
Focus on a specific image and therefore specific target market.
Probably write down it's real values, then doing research about the values of it's target group and try to compromise between these two.
Probably by communicating their values and what their brands stands for by TV-commercial etc.
To begin with, produce efficient products. Then, targeting 18-35 year olds for marketing is a range that everyone is interested in. Within this marketing strategy, if possible, espousing company values and an implied lifestyle will generate buzz and value.
Having a long term goal. To keep constant quality focus.
Good marketing and quality.
It depends on what kind of value it's nessasarily to increase. IN general it can be realized if a brand will create a kind of mental universe around itself.
Not sure really. Probably not advertising, but more getting involved and establishing a reputable name for itself in their field. For example, a sporting brand having its products used in high - demand sports and living up to expectations.
kl
Lifestyle compatible products. And if it's not lifestyle compatible - make it.
Aldrig lova mer än de kan hålla. Konsumenter är för smarta och genemoskådare ett falskt löfte direkt. Jag tror oxå att tillgänglighet och bra service är viktigt (om det nu inte är ett varumärke som lovar att inte så många andra använder just denna produkt :))
Using word-of-mouth more in their target audience, this could possibly be done by paying someone off :) giving key players (in social life) the opportunity to use the brand in everyday life and so on.
Defining the correct target audience and not simply providing a product or a service to the masses. Green values and an eye for detail. Never compromising on the customer experience.
Awareness and consiousness.
Create the main vaules and ideas what they stand for. Lifestile, story. People like to be inspired by things.
By being in tune with the wants and needs of consumers and catering to this.
Good quality, transparency and good values. Nobody likes a villain.
Style and image
Skryt inte om något du inte har, visa upp istället det du faktiskt har och dina (märket eller personliga) värderingar och låt värdet i produkten skapa värdet för märket. Vi vill ju inte sluta upp som Hipsters.
keep telling the truth. Saying something is the best, when it easily breaks down or disappoints you will

generate distrust. By saying something might not be the best, but still does what it does really good, for a comparatively reasonable price is a very good argument for the customer to buy it.
It all depends on what is your audience for the kind of products you sell. The most important is to find a niche of customers and respond to certain needs that those customers feel have to be considered. If a brand does that than it will be valuable for the customers it is targeting.
Following international or EU criteria based on i.e reports from WWF, Greenpeace etc
Att synas i "rätt" sammanhang med "rätt" personer. Det känns som att kunder vill ha ett mervärde, en sorts "historia" kring märket, varför det är bättre än ändra och varför man ska välja just det.
Consistent quality of the goods and price to reflect that quality, wether it is high or low quality goods. Worst thing ever is to pay top prices for low quality goods, but I have now problem paying less money for low quality goods. Simply put - I want my moneys worth...
genom att kommunicera ut en enhetlig bild av varumärket. Synas på rätt ställen som passar varumärket och fokusera på kvaliteten.
A clear target group and a large amount of research of that group
I think that the new Way to do comercial about à brand is to tell the trough about the product.
To connect a certain lifestyle with the brand and i think that a good way for a brand to survive is to try hard to live up to the pronounced expectations.
Happy consumers, recommendations through word of mouth, a long-term strategy for how the organisation wants the brand to be perceived, consistency, true to brand values.
Keep it simple. Just show the brand/product of what it is, nothing more.
Being consistent, true and clear. Also think the graphic layout of the brand is important. It feels like a tacky logotype = tacky brand/product
...
Keep track on the entire product portfolio so that every product with the brand name consistently meets expectations.
good advertisement
Hip commercials, try outs (food in supermarkets), hit the 'trend spot'
To get people that represent a certain lifestyle, like celebrities and "opinion leader"-type of people, to buy and use their products. This will create a feeling that the brand is trustworthy and attractive.
good quality but also reasonable price
Ha en logotyp som motsvarar deras värden. Spela på dessa värden i hemsidan, reklamfilm, övrig information på förpackning.
Honesty, humbleness and loyalty to its customer base. No cheating. Adhere to decisions by organisation like ARN if customer has had problems with the products.
Jag tror att bra marknadsföring är nyckeln till ett starkt, omtyckt varumärke.
nice price and nice design
Top quality and user-friendly services
Find their own way. Dont copy. And dont try to please everybody.
honesty
Be consistant for a long period of time and choose a perception which is easy to grab for the public.
I believe true value can only be generated by true products, and not just commercials. Superior product will sooner or later be acknowledge, with or without advertisement.
Strong ethos and capacity to listen to customers.
A strong and well done commercial that makes people understand what the brand is about. Maybe to create a good value of the brand they could take part of something they also believed in, such as a special campaign (Röda Bandet, Rädda Barnen).
Folk vill ha ett märke som man ser att många andra har och som annonseras mycket. Detta skapar en tro om att det är en kvalitativ produkt och ökar intresset.
know your consumers before they know themselves
Honesty, creativity and unique qualities.
Kundundersökningar. Lyssna på vad kunderna vill ha och inte förmedla massa bullshit. Man vill ha bra saker och inte köpa saker som produceras bara för att tjäna pengar.
Knowing their costumers, dreams and lifestyle. Communication this to the target group and always stay true to their brand values. Working consistent with the brand values and never ever do anything that stands in

conflict with that. Always finding ways to add value to your brand that is appreciated by the target group.

Hålla vad de lovar! Skapar ett trovärdigt och starkt varumärke!

To really touch the needs of the people with products in a moderate to high price level.