

Brand Personality and Brand Engagement

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Many brand theorists argue that a brand's personality plays an important role in generating consumer engagement with the brand. Although anecdotal evidence and logical arguments support this assertion, researchers have published few empirical studies to verify it. The present study used data from a survey of 132 U.S. college students to show that, indeed, personality dimensions perceived to be characteristic of the North Face brand of clothing do seem to increase engagement with this brand. The consumers viewed North Face as characterized by several positive dimensions, but the most crucial appeared to be that it is not ordinary and that it is a responsible brand. These results not only support the claimed importance of brand personality, but also imply that North Face managers could stress these characteristics of their brand in their promotions to enhance its appeal to engaged and profitable consumers.

INTRODUCTION

Branding is a crucial managerial task and consequently a major dimension of marketing theory and practice. Two important aspects of branding are: (1) brands have personalities or human-like characteristics that distinguish them from each other, and these personalities are important to consumers; (2) consumers become "engaged" with brands, meaning that they feel special emotional and symbolic connections with certain brands. Consequently, the topics of brand personality and the relationships that consumers form with their brands attract the attention of both managers (Birkner, 2011) and academic researchers (Aaker, 1997) who share an interest in understanding why and how consumers form relationships with brands (Grisaffe & Nguyen, 2011; Consumer Brand Relationship Colloquium, 2011). The nature of the brand personality/brand engagement relationship, however, has been little studied by researchers.

Two related concerns motivated the present study. The first is, if brands have personalities, how can these be reliably and validly operationalized? Researchers have proposed self-report scales to measure brand personality (e.g., Aaker, 1997), but none is universally accepted. Thus, we sought to determine empirically if a newly developed measure of brand personality (Geuens, Weijters, & DeWulf, 2009) could provide a unique profile of a brand with which some consumers are engaged. Second, managers and researchers think of brand engagement not only as engagement with a specific brand but also a global individual difference variable that distinguishes the extent to which consumers tend to become engaged with brands in general (Sprott, Czellar, & Spangenberg, 2009). We conceived the present study to test Geuens et al.'s (2009) brand personality scale by assessing its factor structure and relationship with

engagement for a specific brand, i.e., North Face clothing. Our goals were to test the usefulness of the scale, verify empirically the personality/engagement link, and perhaps provide valuable insights to North Face managers. Our working hypothesis was that aspects of brand personality are associated with brand engagement, although we cannot predict precisely which aspects are because they should vary by brand. Measuring these associations gives valuable information to brand managers. We also sought to determine whether Sprott et al.'s (2009) global brand engagement scale is related to engagement with this specific brand. If so, this finding provides evidence for the validity of the global brand engagement scale and helps empirically distinguish between these two related ways to conceptualize brand engagement. Failure to do so can lead to both managerial and theoretical confusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Management and Consumer Engagement

Branding is important for both companies and consumers, but for different, complementary reasons. Firms use brands because, according to Kotler (2000, p. 408), brands facilitate order processing and tracking, give legal protection to unique product features, make product extensions easy, and target different markets. Moreover, managers develop brands and brand strategies to accomplish five related goals: (1) to distinguish their product from competitors and prevent it from being a commodity, (2) to give the product an image or personality, (3) to give the brand an identity, (4) to bolster the company's image and reputation, and (5) to facilitate relationships with consumers that lead to long term value. When these goals are accomplished successfully and consumers see brands as similar to themselves (Malar et al., 2011) brands accumulate equity. Brand equity can be thought of as the marketing and financial value of a brand to the company arising from consumer awareness, their loyalty, quality perceptions, and other associations (Aaker, 1991, p. 17; Ferrell & Hartline, 2005, p. 177). Equity in turn leads to long run profitability and consumer advocacy of the brand to others.

Consumers contribute to the success of brand strategy and brand equity because brands are important to them. First, consumers use brands to distinguish a company's offering from those of other companies; (2) this information allows them to make efficient judgments of quality, suitability, value and can prompt quick purchase; (3) consumers use brands to create and display self-image and identity; (4) consumers can interact with the brand and even co-create it; (5) consumers form relationships with the brand and consequently the company that they find satisfying; (6) brand help consumers establish and maintain social relationships (see Haugtvedt, Herr, & Kardes, 2008; Maehle, Otnes, & Supphellen, 2011; Walker, 2009). At the heart of the process by which managers create brand strategies and consumers participate in them, yielding a brand identity, brand equity, long term relationships, and perhaps brand advocacy, is the interaction of the brand's personality and the consumer's engagement with it (Goldsmith, 2011). Although how consumers invest brands with human-like characteristics is understood (Maehle et al., 2011), empirical links between brand personality and consumer brand engagement are few. It is important to show that the effort invested by managers and consumers into brand personality leads to the greater brand engagement that both parties desire.

Brand Personality

The concept of brand personality features prominently in influential descriptions of brand management and brand theory (e.g., Aaker, 1996; Keller, 2003; Haugtvedt et al., 2008). Brand personality is argued to play an important role in brand positioning (van Rekom, Jacobs, & Verlegh, 2006) and to play an essential role in brand attachment because consumers seek brands that reflect their self-images (Malar et al., 2011). Consequently, researchers have proposed self-report scales to measure brand personality as a set of aspects or dimensions (e.g., Aaker, 1996; Geuens et al., 2009). These scales differ in terms of the number and choice of adjectives they use. Although the fifteen-item Aaker scale is the most prominent, Geuens et al. (2009) critique it for its loose definition of brand personality and the non-generalizability and the non-replicability of its factor structure. In its place they propose a new, parsimonious brand personality measure consisting of 12 adjectives to operationalize personality

dimensions (see Table 1). A search by Google scholar yielded 13 citations to this paper, none of which used it to assess relationships between brand personality and brand engagement, so the present study is one of the first studies of this topic. To verify the notion that brand personality is related to brand engagement and to partially validate the Geuens et al. (2009) scale, we propose the first hypothesis.

H1: Aspects of the brand personality scale are related to engagement with a specific brand (North Face), providing a profile of how the brand is viewed by engaged consumers.

Brand Engagement: Global and Specific

Consumers relate to brands in a variety of ways, and scholars use different terms for these relationships, such as brand resonance, brand love, brand commitment, brand loyalty, and brand involvement (Consumer Brand Relationship Colloquium, 2011). Keller (2001) makes brand engagement a key component of his Customer-Based Brand Equity model. Building systematically from the basic concept of brand salience, his model proposes that managers can take specific steps to create brand equity by connecting with customers and making their brands relevant to their customers' lives. The final goal is an intense, active relationship between the brand and the customer, part of which is engagement with the brand expressed as customer eagerness to talk about the brand, learn about it, and exhibit its use (Goldsmith, 2011). The brand management literature is replete with recommendations and exhortations telling managers to encourage their consumers to become engaged with specific brands (e.g., Sullivan, 2009). Being engaged with a single brand, however, might also indicate a general tendency to engage with other brands. Sprott et al. (2009) describe this general tendency and propose a multi-item self-report measure. We reason that being engaged with one brand is just one instance of this tendency, part of a larger pattern for some consumers. This link between single-brand engagement and global brand engagement has not been investigated, so we propose the second hypothesis, a positive (albeit weak) relationship between single- and global-brand engagement.

H2: Engagement with a specific brand is positively related to brand engagement in self-concept (global brand engagement).

METHOD

Procedure and Participants

We collected the data using an online survey of college students enrolled in Human Sciences classes at a large southeastern U.S. university. Although this is a convenience sample with considerable demographic homogeneity, the participants are members of the target segment for this brand, have good experience purchasing their own clothing, and represent both current and future customers for North Face. Walker (2009, p. 103) reports that teens, not far in age from our sample, have roughly 145 conversations about brands a week. Although the nature of the sample limits the generalizability of the point and interval estimates, the focus was on theory testing and not providing a description of the target segment, and so constitutes a realistic source of data (Highhouse & Gillespie, 2009).

The students were directed by email to an online survey site where they completed the questionnaire for extra class credit. Anonymity was guaranteed by not associated their identity with their responses. The focal brand was North Face clothing. We chose this brand after discussions with students determined that it was widely recognized, suitable for both men and women, and reasonably priced so as not to be seen as too cheap or too expensive to be a realistic clothing choice. The questionnaire contained an item asking how familiar the participants were with North Face. The majority reported that it was either Very Familiar (27%) or Somewhat Familiar (52%), which only 13% reported that it was Somewhat Unfamiliar and only 8% said it was Very Unfamiliar. Interestingly, we asked the participants to record their most favorite brand, second most favorite, and third most favorite brand of clothing, and counted a total of 366 responses. Not a single participant reported North Face among the many different brands mentioned. Free

People, Forever 21, and BCBG placed the most mentions across the three categories. Apparently, North Face is a well known brand with a unique personality, but not a favorite among this sample of consumers.

The sample consisted of 126 women and 6 men, reflecting the demographics of the students in this college. The effective sample size of 132 yielded at least 10 observations per independent variable in the main regression analysis and provided sufficient statistical power to detect a bivariate correlation of at least .20 with $p < .05$. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 34, with a mean of 20.9 years (SD = 2.3) and a median of 20 years.

Measures

We designed the study to assess the relationship between brand personality and brand engagement. We used existing scales to operationalize the constructs (see Table 1). To test H1, the dependant variable, engagement with the North Face brand, was measured by a six-item scale described by Keller (2001). A 7-point Likert response format was used where 1 = Strongly Disagree and 7 = Strongly Agree. The principal independent variable, brand personality, was measured using the 13 adjectives proposed by Geuens et al. (2009) as a parsimonious, comprehensive measure. Survey participants evaluated North Face for each adjective using 7-point response format where 1 = Not characteristic for the brand at all and 7 = Very characteristic for the brand. If the adjectives in Geuens et al. (2009) brand personality scale are not related to engagement with a specific brand, it is hard to see how it validly operationalizes a concept (i.e., brand personality) in a way that is useful to either managers or researchers. To measure global-brand engagement and test H2, we used the Brand Engagement in Self-Concept (BESC) scale developed by Sprott et al. (2009). BESC describes an individual difference variable that represents how much consumers use brands to form and project their images of self (Sprott et al., 2009). We were interested in how engagement with a specific brand is related to engagement with brands in general.

TABLE 1
ITEMS USED TO OPERATIONALIZE THE VARIABLES

Brand Personality (Geuens et al., 2009)

The North Face brand is:

. . . down to earth	. . . stable	. . . responsible
. . . active	. . . dynamic	. . . innovative
. . . aggressive	. . . bold	. . . ordinary
. . . simple	. . . romantic	. . . sentimental

North Face Engagement (Keller, 2001)

1. I really like to talk about North Face with others.
2. I am always interested in learning more about North Face.
3. I would be interested in merchandise with this brand's name on it.
4. I am proud to have others know I use this brand.
5. I like to visit the website for North Face.
6. Compared to other people, I closely follow news about this brand.

Brand Engagement with Self-Concept (Sprott et al., 2009)

1. I have a special bond with the brands that I like.
2. I often feel a personal connection between my brands and me.
3. I feel as if I have a close personal connection with the brands I most prefer.
4. I can identify with important brands in my life.
5. There are links between the brands that I prefer and how I view myself.
6. My favorite brands are an important indication of who I am.

(Five-point Likert scale.)

Clothing Involvement (Mittal & Lee, 1989)

1. I have a strong interest in clothing.
2. Clothing is very important to me.
3. For me, clothing does NOT matter.

(Five-point Likert Scale)

Shopping

I like to shop: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

I think shopping is: 1 = very bad, 2 = bad, 3 = neither, 4 = good, 5 = very good

My skills as a shopper are: 1 = well below average, 2 = below average, 3 = average, 4 = above average, 5 = well above average

In addition, we included in the survey two additional scales. The first, a three-item clothing involvement scale (Mittal & Lee, 1989), measures a potential influence on the primary relationships between brand personality and brand engagement. Our reasoning was that the more consumers were involved with (excited by, interested in) clothing as a category, this influence might account for their engagement with North Face. Finally, we created a three-item scale to measure a variable we call "attitude toward shopping" so that we could assess its relationship with North Face engagement so as to reinforce the notion that specific-brand engagement (and this scale operationalizes this concept validly) is important to managers. To describe shoppers involved with North Face as highly involved with clothing and as frequent shoppers gives managers important insights for developing strategies to reach these consumers by revealing broader characteristics that could guide media selection and advertising themes. If not related, this is valuable information as well.

RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis

The first step in the data analysis was to purify the scales, evaluate their internal consistency, and assess discriminant validity. We used AMOS with maximum likelihood estimation to perform a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the four multi-item scales: North Face brand engagement, clothing involvement, BESC, and shopping attitude. This initial model did not fit the data well owing to highly correlated errors for two BESC items. We removed these two redundant items and repeated the analysis. The results showed a model that did not have an outstanding fit, but was adequate to permit further analysis. This outcome was likely because of the relatively small sample size. The model fit statistics were: χ^2 on 129 df = 233.7, $p < .0001$, $\chi^2/df = 1.81$, NFI = .834, IFI = .918, TLI = .901, CFI = .917, SRMR = .077, and RMSEA = .079. Item loadings ranged from .486 to .977 with all t-values greater than 4.0.

The Construct Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and coefficient alpha coefficients (see Table 2) indicated adequate internal consistency with the exception of the attitude toward shopping scale, which is not involved in the hypotheses tests and so should still be adequate to indicate the managerial usefulness of the other findings. The correlations among the constructs appear in Table 2. The squared correlations are all smaller than their AVE's, indicating good evidence for discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) as do the 95% confidence intervals around the construct correlations, which did not contain unity. Consequently, we summed the items for each construct to form composite scores (see Table 2).

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF NORTH FACE ENGAGEMENT, BESC, CLOTHING INVOLVEMENT, AND SHOPPING

Variable	Mean	Std Dev	CR	Alpha	NF	BESC	Cloth	Shop
North Face	20.21	8.1	.90	.90	(.60)	.07	.03	.09
BESC	21.8	4.6	.90	.89	.26**	(.60)	.07	.18
Involvement	13.6	1.9	.83	.81	.18*	.26**	(.64)	.22
Shopping	13.5	1.5	.67	.65	.30**	.34**	.47**	(.42)
Age	20.9	2.3			-.15	-.24**	-.33**	-.17**

Note: CR = Construct Reliability. Correlations in the lower triangle, AVEs on the diagonal, squared correlations in the upper triangle. * $p < .05$.

In the absence of a more strenuous test for common method bias, we used the Harman One Factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003) by running an exploratory factor analysis on all the individual eighteen indicators and examined the un-rotated factor solution. Four factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were extracted and one factor did not account for the majority of the covariance among the measures, providing some evidence for the absence of common method variance in the data.

Hypotheses Tests

We tested our first hypothesis, that aspects of brand personality are related to engagement with a brand, by correlating the North Face brand engagement scores with the 12 brand personality adjective ratings (see Table 3). Eleven of these are statistically significant at $p < .01$, although moderate in size. These results suggest that, as H1 hypothesized, differences in consumer perceptions of brand personality are associated with engagement with it. The results show that these consumers feel that North Face has a personality described as *responsible, not ordinary, sentimental, romantic, active, dynamic, bold, aggressive, simple, stable, down to earth, and innovative*. All these personality perceptions potentially promote engagement with the brand. Moreover, this information can inform promotional strategies for North Face.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CORRELATIONS OF NORTH FACE PERSONALITY WITH NORTH FACE ENGAGEMENT

Variable Name	Mean	SD	Median	Range	Correlation
Responsible	4.83	1.4	5.0	1 - 7	.51**
Ordinary	4.68	1.6	5.0	1 - 7	-.31**
Sentimental	3.00	1.5	3.0	1 - 7	.37**
Romantic	1.91	1.2	2.0	1 - 7	.26**
Active	6.05	1.3	7.0	1 - 7	.30**
Dynamic	4.20	1.7	4.0	1 - 7	.43**
Bold	3.71	1.6	4.0	1 - 7	.39**
Down to Earth	5.24	1.4	5.0	1 - 7	.30**
Aggressive	3.48	1.6	4.0	1 - 7	.32**
Simple	5.41	1.3	6.0	1 - 7	-.10
Stable	5.42	1.4	6.0	1 - 7	.33**
Innovative	4.29	1.6	4.0	1 - 7	.41**

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

To determine the multivariate association of the adjectives with North Face brand engagement, we regressed the latter across the 12 adjective ratings (see Table 4). The results show that only three of the personality dimensions, *responsible*, *not-ordinary*, and *sentimental*, have a statistically significant ($p \leq .05$) association with brand engagement when all 12 adjectives are considered at the same time ($R^2 = .46$). Thus, these three aspects of brand personality dominate engagement with North Face. This finding is also apparent when examining the part (semipartial) correlations in the regression analysis (see Table 4), which report the "unique" contribution of an independent variable to explaining the variance in a dependent variable. The squared semipartial correlation tells how much R^2 will decrease if that variable is removed from the regression equation. In this analysis, the adjectives responsible and ordinary account for the majority of R^2 , indicating their unique contribution to explaining variance in North Face engagement. Scatter diagrams did not suggest any non-linear relationships between the adjectives and North Face engagement. A plot of the studentized residuals against the standardized predicted residuals showed that the analysis did not violate the homoscedasticity assumption because this plot was symmetrical about 0.0, indicating that the assumption was met; and no residual was larger than 3.0, indicating an absence of outliers.

TABLE 4
REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Independent Variable	B	t	<i>p</i>	Part ^a
Responsible	.318	3.28	.001	.222
Ordinary	-.290	-3.65	< .001	-.246
Sentimental	.170	1.98	.05	.134
Romantic	.102	1.26	.21	.085
Active	.098	1.04	.30	.070
Dynamic	.093	1.00	.32	.068
Bold	.074	.777	.44	.052
Down to Earth	.061	.677	.50	.046
Aggressive	-.053	-.61	.54	-.041
Simple	.046	.439	.66	.030
Stable	-.005	-.05	.96	-.003

Note: $R^2 = .457$, $_{Adj}R^2 = .402$, $df = 119$, $F = 8.33$, $p < .001$. ^a The part coefficient shows the unique effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

To test the second hypothesis, that Brand Engagement with Self-Concept is positively related to engagement with North Face, we correlated BESC with engagement with North Face. These results (see Table 2) show that H2 is supported by the positive correlation ($r = .26$) between BESC and North Face Engagement. Both variables were negatively skewed, but data transformations did not change the results of the analysis. The modest size of the correlation, however, supports the notion that being engaged with a specific brand is not that same as being engaged with brands in general as a means of forming and expressing self-concept. The one concept should not be substituted for the other either in applied or theoretical studies.

Subsequent Analyses

T-tests comparing the mean familiarity scores of the 104 participant who were very or somewhat familiar with North Face with the 28 who were somewhat or very unfamiliar with it showed that the former group reported a significantly higher level of North Face engagement ($M = 21.3$, $SD = 8.1$) than the latter ($M = 16.1$, $SD = 6.8$): $t_{(130)} = 3.1$, $p = .002$, Cohen's $d = .55$. The correlations in Table 2 of North Face engagement with clothing involvement and attitude toward shopping provide evidence for the

importance of understanding specific brand engagement. These results help profile the engaged North Face buyer as one who is familiar with the brand, holds a specific image of the brand, but only mildly involved with clothing as a category ($r = .18$) and who likes to shop ($r = .30$).

Finally, we factor analyzed the 12 adjective ratings using principal axis factor analysis followed by an oblique rotation. This analysis produced a three factor solution in contrast to the five-factor solution reported by Geuens et al. (2009). Our results showed that the adjectives *ordinary* and *simple* loaded on a unique factor labeled "simplicity" by Geuens et al., as did *sentimental* and *romantic* (labeled "emotionality"), but that the remaining adjectives formed one factor instead of the two labeled by Geuens et al. as "responsibility" and "activity," and the adjective *aggressive* cross-loaded almost equally on both these factors, positive on the responsibility/activity dynamic factor and negatively on the emotionality factor. It is possible that the small sample size used here compared with the large sample used by Geuens et al. could have accounted for our failure to replicate their structure exactly. Alternatively, this contradictory finding suggests that the structure of a brand's personality may vary from brand to brand so that the search for a "stable" factor structure across brands is not likely to have a final answer.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to assess empirically the association between brand personality and brand engagement that so many branding researchers propose (e.g., Aaker, 1997; Geuens et al., 2009; Grisaffe & Nguyen, 2011; Maehle et al., 2011). To test this hypothesis we measured brand personality and brand engagement for the North Face clothing brand. The results confirm that aspects of brand personality are related to brand engagement, confirming the hypothesis. We found that 11 of 12 adjectives comprising the Geuens et al. (2009) brand personality scale were significantly associated with a measure of brand engagement for North Face. Of these, two in particular, *responsible* and *not ordinary* were the most important in differentiating levels of brand engagement. We feel these findings have important theoretical, managerial, and methodological implications.

Theoretically, the results confirm the proposed association between brand personality and brand engagement that is felt to be an important explanation for how consumers become attached to specific brands. The argument is that because in so many product categories brands are manufactured to have equivalent quality standards and provide similar levels of utilitarian benefits, marketers must rely on their brand images to distinguish them from each other and to attract consumers to specific brands. Managing brand personality is a principal way in which they do this (Grisaffe & Nguyen, 2011). Consumers seem to prefer brands with distinct personalities, probably because they can identify with the brand and use it to express their own personality (Maehle et al., 2011). By showing specifically which aspects of the North Face brand are associated with engagement, this study demonstrates this psychological linkage. Note, however, that we did not measure the individual self-images of our consumers and so must only assume that those who are more engaged with North Face do so because they find similarities between its personality and their own personalities and values. Qualitative studies (Maehle et al., 2011) suggest that the human-like characteristics marketers imbue into their brands do lead to emotional bonds with consumers. In the absence of an experimental study, however, we cannot definitely conclude that the differences in brand personality we assessed cause differences in brand engagement.

Managers should benefit from these findings in general because they demonstrate the usefulness of the Brand Personality Scale as a way to determine how consumers view their brand and use the findings to promote brands that play to the strengths of a brand's personality. For example, in the case of North Face, promoting it through advertising, sponsorships, event marketing, and cause brand alliances in ways that highlight the responsible and non-ordinary character of the brand should reinforce engagement with it. The results also suggest to North Face managers that their brand scores very high on the adjectives, active, stable, simple, and down to earth. This constellation of aspects gives a very distinctive and positive platform on which to build and extend the brand's image. It is interesting to note that the two most determinant aspects of the brand's personality, responsible and not ordinary (Table 4), were not the most

highly rated characteristics of it (Table 3), suggesting that North Face might benefit from making additional efforts to associate these characteristics with the brand.

Finally, from the methodological perspective, ours is one of the first studies to use the Geuens et al. (2009) scale. The findings clearly support its usefulness in assessing this brand's personality, suggesting further use in both theory testing and managerially focused studies. Its ease of use and simplicity recommend it, as does the coherence of its results. Thus, we accomplish the first goal of contributing to the validity of this new scale. However, the failure to reproduce the same factor structure suggests further studies are needed.

The secondary purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between a specific measure of brand engagement and a general measure in order to assess whether these two concepts are distinct although scores on one scale should be correlated if only weakly with scores on the other. General brand engagement, in this case Brand Engagement in Self-Concept (Spratt et al., 2009) was related weakly to engagement with North Face, verifying the second hypothesis and the concepts' discriminant validity. Both measures of these concepts proved to have good psychometric characteristics and should prove useful to future research.

Our study is limited in several ways. Although our convenience sample was appropriate for the purpose of the study, it was small and homogeneous, obviating the ability to generalize its point and interval estimates to a larger population. The study focused only on one brand, thereby limiting the generalizability of the findings to other brands, suggesting that future studies need to verify the principle using different brands. The conclusions cannot be expressed in causal terms because they derived from survey and not experimental data. The next step in this research program should be to use experiments to test rigorously the hypotheses for their causal validity.

In conclusion, the study successfully showed that brand personality is related to brand engagement for a specific brand. The results contribute to the overall investigation of this topic and suggest avenues for future study. The personality profile of each brand is different. The cumulative findings of many similar studies, however, should greatly enrich our understanding of the use of marketing strategy to create these unique profiles. More attention should be given to understanding how consumers interact with marketing strategy to co-create the brand's personality, identity, and meaning. This understanding will improve the effectiveness of branding theory overall, lead to more and better long term relationships, to increased profitability, for firms, and to individual consumer satisfaction, all worthy goals. .

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