

**SERVICE BRAND IDENTITY:
DEFINITION, MEASUREMENT,
DIMENSIONALITY AND INFLUENCE ON
BRAND PERFORMANCE**

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Abstract

Creating and maintaining brand identity is regarded as a formative brand building step with the benefits contributing to the creation of valuable brands. Consequently, research that provides brand identity management insights has the potential to be of considerable academic and managerial interest.

Several brand identity frameworks have been published in the brand marketing literature. However, a reliable, valid and parsimonious brand identity scale has yet to be developed. This has restricted the academic community and practitioners from obtaining an empirically informed understanding of the construct's dimensionality and influence on brand performance. Furthermore, the generic nature of these frameworks does not account for a specific goods or services context. Informed by these issues, a valid, reliable and parsimonious *service* brand identity scale was developed to reveal the construct's dimensionality and assess its influence on brand performance in the UK's IT service sector.

A quantitative research design was employed to gather primary data with 421 senior executive working in the UK's IT service sector. Following a series of pretests and a pilot study, Cronbach's α and exploratory factor analysis were used to purify the measure. Confirmatory factor analysis then helped verify the exploratory factor structure and establish the psychometric properties of the scale. These analyses find support for a service brand identity scale comprising of five dimensions: employee and client focus, corporate visual identity, brand personality, consistent communications and human resource initiatives. The service brand identity scale is then incorporated into the full structural model to assess the construct's influence on brand performance. Across the calibration, validation and full samples service brand identity has a

positive and significant ($p < 0.001$) influence on brand performance.

The discussion outlines how these findings provide partial support for the dimensionality implied by existing conceptual brand identity frameworks. Furthermore, the data provides encouraging results for those that wish to invest in brand identity given the construct's positive and significant influence on brand performance. Concluding remarks highlight theoretical and managerial implications with limitations and directions for future also being noted.

Dedication

Nicolas Chamfort (1741 – April 13, 1794) the French philosopher and writer once wrote “The most completely wasted of all days is that in which we have not laughed.” This is good advice I took to heart during the depths of a PhD. Thank you Nicolas!

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1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis outlines how a valid, reliable and parsimonious service brand identity scale was developed and applied to assess the construct's influence on brand performance. The aim of this chapter is to lay the foundations and provide the context for subsequent chapters. It is structured as follows. The chapter opens by providing the research background. This leads to the development of four research questions that underpin this research. The following section provides a justification for this research which is followed by an overview of the quantitative research methodology employed. Next, the structure of, and rationale, for each section of the thesis is provided. The penultimate section delimits the research scope. The concluding section reiterates key points addressed during the chapter and highlight how this chapter paves the way for the literature review and subsequent chapters of this thesis.

1.1. Background to the Research

Since the early 1990's brand identity has been subject to increased academic interest (Aaker, 1991; 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Alsem and Kostelijik, 2008; de Chernatony, 1999, 2001, 2006; Kapferer, 1997, 2004; Keller, 1998, 2003; Madhavaram et al., 2005). The reason being organisations that present a cohesive, distinctive and relevant brand identity can create preference in the market place, add value to their offer and command premium prices (Schmitt and Simonson, 1997). Building brand identity also fosters trust and facilitates differentiation (Ghodeswar, 2008). Consequently, research providing brand identity management insight has the potential to be of considerable academic and managerial interest.

Several brand identity frameworks have been published in the academic literature (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004). These frameworks have helped the research community develop a formative understanding of what brand identity is whilst providing a valuable platform for subsequent research. However, these scholars' work tends to operate within conceptual rather than empirical research domains. This has prevented brand marketers developing an empirical understanding of what dimensions constitute brand identity. The applicability of these conceptual frameworks in B2B, B2C, product or service markets also remains unclear. Similarly, in the absence of a psychometrically developed scale assessing the construct's influence on brand performance has yet to be established. Consequently, even a cursory view of the current brand identity literature highlights a paucity of empirical research (e.g. Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004).

Brand performance is of considerable interest to management (Ambler, 2003; de Chernatony et al., 2004; Farris et al., 2008; Kim et al., 2003b; Rubinson and Pfeiffer, 2005; Schultz, 2005). Several factors have brought about this interest. These include the desire for greater marketing boardroom 'clout' (Ambler, 2003; Munoz and Kumar, 2004), investor pressures to demonstrate marketing returns (Clark, 1999), a greater appreciation, that business performance is, amongst other factors, influenced by brand performance (Aaker, 1996a; Ambler, 2003; de Chernatony, 2006; Doyle, 2000; Hoeffler and Keller, 2003b; Kim et al., 2003a; Rubinson and Pfeiffer, 2005; Srivastava and Shocker, 1991) and the need for greater marketing accountability (Farris et al., 2008). Indeed, the need for greater marketing accountability is one of six topics the Marketing Science Institute prioritised between 2008-2010. As a result, brand

metrics has become a hot topic for academic research. However, whilst several scholars have highlighted the positive influence brand related constructs such as brand equity have on performance-related outcomes (Aaker, 1996b; Kim et al., 2003b; Park and Srinivasan, 1994) as of yet no research has highlighted the positive influence brand identity has on this dependent variable.

The 'service' sector accounts for 75.2% of the UK's GDP (ONS, 2008). With a GDP of £1.275 trillion in 2008 this accounts to for £959 billion of the UK's GDP. The UK's Office for National Statistics categorisation for 'services industries' and their associated GDP contributions is as follows; distribution, hotels, catering and repairs (14.8%); transport, storage and communications (7.5%); business services and finance (29.9%), government and other services (22.9%). Consequently, it can be seen how within this sector 29.9%, or approximately £370 billion of the UK's GDP in 2008 was accounted for by the Business Services and Finance category. Consequently, research that focuses on this notable element of the UK's economy should interest both academics and practitioners alike.

Consequently, brand identity and performance in the service sector provides a particularly topical and relevant area for academic research. However, there is an absence of empirical research that explores brand identity's dimensionality and the construct's influence on brand performance in any sector, let alone the burgeoning service sector.

1.2. Research Problem, Statement and Questions

There is a dearth of empirical brand identity-related research. Of particular note was how a validated brand identity scale has not been developed. This has prevented both the academic community and practitioners from building an empirically informed understanding of brand identity dimensionality and the construct's influence on brand performance. The growing importance of marketing accountability and the service sector in the UK's economy was also noted (Section 1.1). Collectively, these developments constitute the research problem and resulted in the following research statement:

This research aims to develop a valid, reliable and parsimonious service brand identity scale and to assess the construct's influence on brand performance in the UK's IT service sector.

As the above research statement indicates, this thesis develops a service-specific brand identity construct that extends the existing brand identity literature. This construct is referred to as *service* brand identity and is intended to be cognizant of the view that services and goods branding is different (Berry, 1980; Kim et al., 2003a; Low and Lamb, 2000). For instance, several scholars (Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2009; de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008) have noted the particularly important role employees play for service brands which constitutes a unique characteristic.

To focus and operationalise the above research statement it was filtered into four research questions that underpin this thesis:

- What is service brand identity?

- What are the dimensions of service brand identity?
- How do we measure service brand identity?
- Does service brand identity have a positive and significant influence on brand performance?

Consequently it can be seen how the research background (Section 1.1) provides the context and rationale for the research problem articulated above. A research statement was then developed which was broken down into four research questions. Gathering data in line with the research questions was intended to facilitate solving the research problem (Emory and Cooper, 1991).

1.3. Justification for the Research – Why Do We Need a Service Brand Identity Scale?

The justification for this research is informed by four points. These span both academic and practitioner fields. First, despite its longevity there is a dearth of empirical brand identity-related research (cf: Section 1.1). Unfortunately, by operating within a conceptual domain the research community has been unable to, empirically, establish the construct's dimensionality. In simpler terms, scholars have been unable to empirically articulate what brand, let alone service brand identity is. This is a direct result of the research community failing to develop a valid, reliable and parsimonious brand identity scale which would empirically reveal the construct's dimensionality. The absence of a psychometrically sound scale has also prevented scholars from assessing the construct's influence on performance-related measures. Consequently, developing

and applying the service brand identity scale helps both academics and practitioners? address such pressing issues.

Second, although current brand identity frameworks have been widely referenced in the academic literature these have been generically developed without an explicit concern for brand context. This could encompass goods, services, B2B or B2C markets. For instance, the applicability of these conceptual frameworks in a goods or services context remains unclear. This is particularly important given several scholars have noted how service and goods marketing is different (Berry, 1980; Kim et al., 2003a; Low and Lamb, 2000). As the literature review highlights, some frameworks may have elements of service brand applicability. However, in their entirety they do not account for the distinctive challenges service branding brings. Additionally, as noted earlier (Section 1.1) the service sector constitutes a significant and growing component of the UK's GDP. For this reason it was considered important to develop a *service* brand identity measure cognisant of this sector's unique characteristics, notably, the pivotal role human resource plays in service brand delivery (Ashford and Mael, 1996; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2006; Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2009; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Hulberg, 2006; Kennedy, 1977; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2006).

The relevance of current brand identity frameworks in B2B markets is also unclear. This is important for two reasons. Primarily, extant frameworks do not account for the unique brand marketing challenges a B2B context presents with the importance of personal relationships being

of particular note (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006b). Secondly, the value of B2B vis-à-vis B2C markets in developed markets is notable (Slater, 1999). For instance, the value of B2B markets in the UK is £11.34 billion (Keynote, 2008). For these reasons developing a framework cognisant of B2B environment is important. Whilst it is encouraging to observe formative brand identity development in the B2B literature (Beverland et al., 2007a; Beverland et al., 2007b) numerous issues materialise with these scholars' work. These encompass oversimplification of construct domain in addition to confusing brand identity with related but distinct constructs such as brand positioning. These issues are explored later in this thesis (Section 2.5.6). Consequently, current brand identity frameworks do not appear to be sensitive to context and those that are have notable shortcomings. This provides the underpinning logic for developing a service brand identity construct in a B2B context.

Third, the operationalisation of current brand frameworks presents numerous practical challenges. As will be highlighted in the literature review, it is unclear how some dimensions could be scaled given they are so broadly conceived. Also, it is debatable if some dimensions are activities or constructs with the former being unsuitable for scaling. Consequently, the suitability of current and more conceptually orientated brand identity frameworks for scale development is questionable.

The previous points justifying the need for a service brand identity scale tend to be more academically orientated. From a practitioners' perspective the development of a service brand identity scale will enable brand managers to understand what service brand identity is (its dimensions) and what activities (dimensions' items) need to take place in order to operationalise

the construct. Developing a scale will also allow managers to audit and monitor their brand identity which can provide the basis for remedial action. Similarly, application of the scale will enable managers to demonstrate the extent to which service brand identity drives performance with the latter being previously highlighted as an area of notable managerial interest (Section 1.1). Application of the service brand identity scale should not be restricted to brand related research. Human resource scholars may wish to assess the influence service brand identity has on employee turnover or job satisfaction (cf; employer brands) whilst those conducting finance-related research will be able to assess the construct's effect on a range of variables such as return on investment (ROI) or earnings before interest tax depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA). Once a scale has been developed, its application will enable practitioners in these areas to assess the influence service brand identity has on outcomes of particular interest in their field. As will be highlighted in the conclusions chapter, such points constitute this thesis' main managerial contributions.

Informed by the above rationale, the development of a psychometrically sound service brand identity scale and establishing the construct's influence on brand performance is justified on both academic and practical grounds.

1.4. Methodology

To develop a service brand identity measure and assess the construct's influence on brand performance a quantitative research design was used. The scale development procedures were

primarily guided by the extant scaling literature (Churchill, 1979; DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003). Initially, this entailed developing a 'preliminary' service brand identity definition which was grounded in the existing brand identity literature. These helped specify the domain of the construct. Guided by the literature based definition, items were generated from the literature that sampled the domain of service brand identity. These items were then subject to an expert panel review (Churchill, 1979). A series of pretests and a pilot then followed before the final survey was administered via postal mail to senior 'marketing' executives working in the UK's B2B IT services sector.

The completed sample (n=421) was randomly split into calibration (n=211) and validation (n=210) samples (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Cudeck and Browne, 1983). Initial data analyses involved, item to total and scale reliability estimates to assess the internal consistency of the scale and remove 'garbage' items (Churchill, 1979). The calibration sample was then subjected to exploratory factor analysis. Using AMOS V16.0, confirmatory factor analysis helped verify the exploratory factor structure. With satisfactory levels of fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999) the measurement model was re-estimated using the validation sample and once more demonstrated satisfactory levels of fit. Next, the psychometric properties of the scale in the form of composite reliability (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and construct validity (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955) were established. The dimensions identified were used to augment the preliminary service brand identity definition so the construct could be defined. Finally, service brand identity was reconceptualised as a second order construct and estimated as part of the full structural model to assess the influence service brand identity has on brand performance in the UK's IT service sector.

1.5. Summary of Findings

The research questions outlined above (Section 1.2) will be used to structure summary findings. The first question concerned defining service brand identity. This involved augmenting the preliminary literature based definition with dimensions that emerged from the quantitative analysis. Based on this research, service brand identity is defined as:

“The strategists’ vision of how a service brand should be perceived by its stakeholders which is made manifest via the organisation’s brand personality, corporate visual identity, consistent communications, human resource initiatives and by developing an employee and client focus.”

The second research question concerned establishing service brand identity dimensionality. As outlined above, the dimensions of service brand identity that emerged from the data were: *brand personality, corporate visual identity, consistent communications, human resource initiatives* in addition to an *employee and client focus*.

The third question related to the measurement of service brand identity. This question is addressed via the development of a valid, reliable and parsimonious 15 item scale which demonstrated psychometrically sound properties across the calibration, validation and full samples (Chapter 5).

The final research question assessed the influence service brand identity has on brand performance. When the service brand identity scale was incorporated into the full structural

model, service brand identity had both a positive and significant ($p < 0.001$) influence on brand performance across the calibration, validation and full samples.

1.6. Main Contributions

Guided by the above research questions, this thesis makes four main contributions to the branding literature. These relate to developing or defining the service brand identity construct, identifying the construct's dimensionality, validating a psychometrically sound scale which is then applied in the context of brand performance. The scale development is considered this thesis' primary contribution. Application of the scale is considered a secondary contribution. Adopting this approach is consistent with Churchill's (1979) seminal work where scale development precedes application in order to establish norms.

Beyond these four main contributions other theoretical and managerial contributions have been made and have been expanded upon in the Conclusions chapter (Sections 7.3 and 7.4)

1.7. Thesis Outline

This thesis consists of seven chapters and is structured as follows. Chapter 2 reviews a broad range of relevant literature. This chapter helps clarify this thesis' interpretation of key conceptual terms such as brand and identity (brand, corporate and organisational), elucidate a gap in the current brand identity literature and provide theoretical guidance with brand performance measurement. Reviewing the existing brand identity literature also helps develop a preliminarily

service brand identity definition. This provides parameters for exploring the domain of service brand identity in the theoretical framework chapter.

Chapter 3 develops a preliminary service brand identity framework which is predominantly grounded in the brand identity literature. The rationale for developing this framework is four fold. First, to help bridge the literature review and the empirical research that follows. Second, to distil the relevant literature. Third, to inform and structure subsequent scale development procedures by postulating a preliminary construct domain. Finally, to provide a conceptual apparatus that guides the overall research effort in pursuit of answering the research questions.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodology employed to gather data which facilitated testing of the preliminary service brand identity framework. This process was primarily guided by the scale development (e.g. Churchill, 1979, Anderson and Gerbing, 1988a) and survey design (e.g. Dillman, 2000) literature.

Chapter 5 analyses the data. During this chapter a range of statistical techniques are employed to reveal service brand identity dimensionality and assess the psychometric properties of the scale. The measurement model is applied in the context of brand performance to assess the influence of the former on the latter.

Chapter 6 discusses the data analysis in the context of the literature. The chapter is structured around the four research questions. Consequently, at this stage in the thesis issues of

service brand identity definition, dimensionality, measurement and influence on brand performance are addressed.

The final chapter draws conclusions from the preceding chapters. This encompasses theoretical and managerial implications with limitations and directions for future research also being noted.

1.8. Delimitations of Scope

The scope of this thesis was delimited in four ways as conceptualised in Figure 1. This related to location (y axis), B2B markets (x axis), sector (z axis) and service brands (z axis).

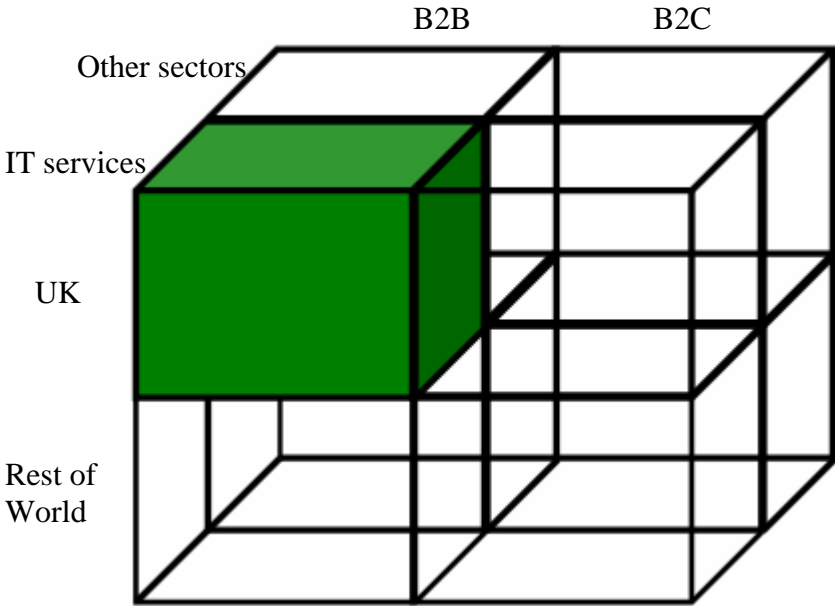


Figure 1 Conceptualising Delimitation of Research Scope

First, the study was conducted in the UK. This is represented by the y axis in Figure 1. Consequently, scholars drawing on the results or applying the scale within different cultural milieu should be cognisant of this fact. This country was chosen, primarily for data access and language reasons.

The second and third delimitations relate to the z axis in Figure 1 which simultaneously considers organisational sector and type of brand. In terms of organisational sector, the unit of analysis the sample wanted to generalise was *IT Service organisations* (based in the UK). IT services includes a broad range of activities such as IT consulting, software development and support, hardware maintenance support, integration and development services. Key organisations in this market include brands like IBM Global Services, Hewlett Packard and Computer Sciences who between them only account for 24% of the global market (Datamonitor, 2007). With 76% of the market being accounted for by other organisations this implies a highly competitive market structure. Although data could not be obtained for the UK IT services market, it is assumed a similar market structure would exist in the UK. Such a structure places an emphasis on organisations to develop informed brand marketing strategies to differentiate their offer in a market which offers largely undifferentiated (i.e. standards based technical protocols) services.

Third, this thesis focuses on *service brands*. A service brand can be defined as “a holistic process beginning with the relationship between the firm and its staff and coming alive during the interaction between staff and customers” (Dall’Olmo Riley and de Chernatony, 2000: 138). Arguably, the term stakeholders as opposed to customers may be more preferable given the increasing concern organisations’ have with wider audiences. However, notwithstanding this point, Dall’Olmo Riley and de Chernatony’s (2000) research, consistent with numerous other

scholars highlights the central role employees play at service brands. However, this should not imply employees do not play an important role for goods-based brands. Merely, the saliency of their role in making service brand values manifest is greater due to the pivotal role humans play for service brands. Hence, the goods and service distinction may be more appropriately conceptualised as a matter of degree and not absolutes (Rathmell, 1966; Shostack, 1977). Earlier in this chapter the significant GDP-generating role of the service sector in the UK was noted. This provides a rationale for focusing on this sector in conjunction with the previously stated logic for focusing on the IT service brands.

Finally, this thesis focuses on IT service organisations operating in *B2B markets*. For clarity, B2B markets involve the acquisition of goods and / or services to use in the production of other goods and / or services which are sold, rented or supplied to other businesses (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006b). A B2B focus was motivated by a paucity of B2B brand literature (Han and Sung, 2008). More specifically, Robert and Merrilees (2007) note the particularly sparse nature of B2B *service* based research despite the sectors' recent growth due to extensive IT outsourcing. Additionally, conducting research of this manner which assess the impact of brand on performance-related outcomes also answers Sheth and Sharma's (2006) call for more "brand effects" (p. 425) related research in a B2B context.

With regards to points three and four it should be noted there is a primary (service brand) and secondary (B2B) research context. Hence, the research does not major on B2B but is an example of service brand identity research in a B2B context. The relative importance of service and B2B markets is reflected in this thesis' title by focusing on *service* brand identity.

Consequently, given the above, within the context of the UK's IT B2B service sector the data and conclusions of this research should apply. However, outside those boundaries the generalisability of the results should be treated judiciously (cf: Leone and Shultz, 1980).

1.9. Conclusion

This chapter has laid the foundations for this research. Initially, a background to the research was provided. This highlighted a notable empirical gap in the existing brand identity literature, the importance of brand performance and the burgeoning importance of the UK's service sector. Together these issues helped provide the research context in addition to articulating the research problem, statement and associated research questions. The rationale for the research was then justified, findings summarised, thesis structure outlined with delimitations being stated. With these foundations laid, the literature can now be reviewed in order to theoretically ground this thesis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter laid the foundations for this research. This was achieved by outlining the research context, identifying a notable gap in the brand identity literature and articulating four research questions that underpin this research. The thesis structure and delimitations were also noted.

This chapter reviews several key literature streams. By doing this the chapter aims to clarify this thesis' interpretation of key conceptual terms, explicate the gap in the brand identity literature and obtain theoretical guidance with regards to brand performance measurement. Furthermore, “common sense dictates that we should start any problem-solving activity by establishing what we know already” (Baker, 2005: 1). Consequently, the literature review also looks to acknowledge previous scholars' efforts whilst charting the depth and breadth of existing knowledge.

To review the literature, this chapter is structured as follows. Guided primarily by de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley's (1997) taxonomy, the opening section reviews brand from input, output and evolutionary perspectives. This provides a theoretical foundation for the development of an integrated and holistic brand definition which augments previous literature. The corporate branding literature is also reviewed given its pervasiveness at service brands. The second section considers how the goods and services literature has evolved from a dichotomous mindset to a comprehensive marketing paradigm where the co-production of value and service marketing

principles provide dominant logics (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a). The following section reviews the 'identity' literature in the form of organisational, corporate and brand identity in order to distinguish brand from corporate and organisational identity. The penultimate section of the chapter reviews the brand performance literature to develop a theoretically grounded position with regards to this research's endogenous variable. The concluding section comprises a review of key points made during this chapter and highlights how the literature reviewed provides a theoretical grounding for the theoretical framework that is developed in the next chapter.

2.2. Brand

'Brand' is this thesis' central construct and so will be discussed before service, identity and brand performance. This section of the review considers brand from input, output and evolutionary perspectives (de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley, 1997). An 'integrated' definition of brand is then forwarded which augments key elements from definitions that have been reviewed. An overview of corporate branding then follows given its pervasiveness in the service sector.

2.2.1. Defining Brand

There are diverse interpretations of brand in both the literature (Davies and Miles, 1998; Strizhakova et al., 2008) and amongst managers (de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998, 1999). Indeed, Kapferer (2004) outlines how one of the largest areas of disagreement between experts, paradoxically, relates to defining brand. However, given the central importance of brand to this thesis, it is important develop a clear understanding of what a brand is.

Guided by their literature review, de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley (1997) identify nine brand themes under three perspectives (input, output and evolutionary) to categorise viewpoints with regards to brand. This taxonomy will be used as a framework to introduce views on brand and is summarised in Table 1:

Table 1 A Taxonomy for Brand Perspectives (de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley, 1997)

Input Perspective	Output Perspective	Evolutionary Perspective
Legal instrument	Image	Evolving entity
Logo	Personality	
Company	Relationship	
Identity	Adding value	

From an 'input' perspective a brand is conceptualised as something the marketer creates where the brand is: a *legal instrument* (e.g. '™' or '®'); a *logo*; a *company* (e.g. British Airways) or an more holistic *identity system* in terms of how the organisation wants to be perceived by consumers - an area this chapter covers in detail later. The American Marketing Association first published a brand definition in the 1960s which considered a brand as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors”. The most recent AMA definition draws heavily on this definition where a brand is:

“a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers. The legal term for brand is trademark. A brand may

identify one item, a family of items, or all items of that seller. If used for the firm as a whole, the preferred term is trade name” (AMA, 2009).

Although this definition has been criticised for being goods centric (Crainer, 1995; Jevons and Gabbott, 2009), this claim is debatable given it explicitly considers both goods and services, whilst other elements of the definition such as name, design, symbol or trademark have equal applicability to service brands. However, it could be contended the AMA’s definition overemphasises visible manifestations of brand at the expense of customer(s) or stakeholders. It could also be argued the AMA perspective fails to account for the powerful role emotion plays in brand development (Keller et al., 2008). Other scholars’ work follows the AMA’s position. For instance, Farquhar (1989) defines a brand as “a name, term, design or mark that enhances the value of a product beyond its functional purpose” (p.25). Similarly, Kotler (1991) considers a brand as:

“a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or groups of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.” (p.442)

Once more a concern for organisational nomenclature could be interpreted as oversimplifying the complexities that surround brand. The reason being, whilst a name, term, symbol and so forth play an important role in brand development they could be regarded as physical manifestations of the emotional bond brands look to develop with the latter being notably more important than the former. In a similar manner, Doyle (2002) considers brand as a specific name, symbol or design which is used to distinguish a particular product in terms of functional needs but

also psychological needs e.g. status. Whilst Doyle's (2002) view highlights the psychological dimension of brand, considering the construct merely as a name, logo or other outward symbols (as does Kotler, 1991) can be regarded as something of an oversimplification (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; Keller et al., 2008).

From an 'output' perspective a brand is considered as existing in the consumers' minds where brands can be considered as: the *image* in the consumers' minds (cf: Martineau, 1958); as a way of *adding value* to the purchase; a *personality* where the brand is perceived as having quasi-human qualities; and; a *relationship* between the consumer and the brand.

It has been argued relationships form an increasingly important part of marketing's dominant 'logic' (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a), where if brands are personified, consumers form relationships with them as if they were human beings (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker, 1997; Blackston, 1992; de Chernatony, 2006; Fournier, 1995; Kapferer, 1997). Several authors consider brand in the context of a relationship (Aaker, 1995; Aaker et al., 2004b; Agarwal, 2004; Fournier, 1998, 2005; Kapferer, 1997) whilst in the context of building brand identity, Aaker (1996a) considers relationships as the "bottom line" (p.103). Adopting a rather functional perspective, Kapferer (2004) regards brands not as legal but economic "quasi contracts" (p.40) where the brand's 'side' of the contract include factors such as retaining its identity but continuously enhancing its relevance, being loyal to its mission and clients whilst the consumer's 'side' of the 'contract' relates to being brand loyal. In this sense brands take on the form of a psychological and implicit covenant between the brand owner and consumer through which shared expectations are set and (to varying extents) met. Fournier (1998) argues for the relevance of extending interpersonal relationships into the brand domain where

brand–consumer relationships consist of facets such as love, commitment and interdependence whilst Aggarwal (2004) notes how norms of assessment used in personal relationships extend to judgements about brands. However, metaphoric transfer from the human to brand domain has been subject to debate. The reason brands are inanimate and so cannot think or feel as humans do (Bengtsson, 2003; O'Malley and Tynan, 2000) with Bengtsson (2003) arguing elements of a human relationship such as the reciprocation of emotions such as love are “qualitatively different” (p.155) for brands and humans. For instance, I love my VW Beetle is different to I love my partner. Hence, the issue arguably lies not so much with the fact that conceptually ‘relationships’ between brands and consumers cannot be developed but more the discourse used insofar as the vocabulary, that is, the word relationship, connotes humanity for both sides of the brand-stakeholder connection. This potentially creates inaccurate associations when considering relationships in the context of brands (Bengtsson, 2003). However, it could be argued the initial metaphorical use of relationship has been taken too literally. Consequently, Aggarwal (2004) outlines how humans can have relationships with brands but that they may not have the same “richness and texture” (p. 88) human relationships have. This is an important caveat insofar Aggarwal (2004) appreciates the different context of a brand-consumer dyad but that it is not unreasonable for some consumer-brand ‘connection’ to exist in the way it does between humans (albeit under the term ‘relationship’). Drawing on the work of Shultz and Shultz (2004), who note how brands bring a buyer and seller together, Veloutsou and Moutinho (2008) refer to brand relationships in the context of a *bond*, be it financial, physical or emotional, which may represent more appropriate language. Finally, it could be argued considering ‘relationships’ from a brand-consumer dyad may be too narrow in focus. This perspective excludes broader organisational stakeholders that encounter the brand such as shareholders, employees, local communities and so forth. The importance of this perspective has also been amplified by the

growing role corporate social responsibility where broader stakeholder management is key. Hence, the output perspective makes it clear a brand is more than a logo, name or symbol whilst the notion of a ‘covenant’ or quasi contract gives rise to mutual expectations being formed between the brand / organisation and its stakeholders in the context of a relationship that may be more appropriately conceptualised as a ‘connection’ or ‘bond’.

Finally, more evolutionary perspectives on brand “perceive brands as evolving from an input to an output perspective” (de Chernatony and Dall’Omo Riley, 1997:90). Here, brands are a more fluid and dynamic entity which ‘evolve’ or ‘develop’ from a brand owner to consumer focus. Goodyear (1996) conceptualised brands as evolving, or metamorphosing, through sequential stages where, in the final stage, ‘customer driven marketing’, the brand becomes “meaningful symbols for whole sectors of society”(Goodyear, 1996:112). Following Goodyear (1996), Kunde (2000) noted how brands are not static but evolve over time. In this sense branding moves from being something the brand owner does *to* the consumer to something the consumer does *with* the brand (Lannon, 1992; Senior, 2008). This could include forming a relationship or enabling the communication of his / her self concept (Rosenberg, 1979; Sirgy, 1982) or to provide a forum where a given stakeholder can interact with the brand. Organisations such as Nike have become particularly competent in this respect with their street football skills tournaments and so forth. Hence, as the brand evolves, the brand-consumer ‘interface’ develops into more of a dialogue as opposed to the consumer merely responding to stimuli generated by the brand owner. In this sense the consumer is no longer a ‘gullible dupe’ (Marchand, 1985) who could be swayed if product claims were inflated. This position is consistent with Holt (2002) who argues consumers treat brands as a cultural resource, within a “dynamic dialectical relationship” (p. 80), which emancipates

them from the control or domination of brand communications. Such a perspective also has similarities with the wider ‘science of relationships’ literature which outlines how “relationships are not to be considered static entities, but as dynamically linked in a continuous process of creation” (Hinde, 1995: 5).

de Chernatony and Dall’Olmo Riley (1998) enlarged their literature review of 1997 by considering a brand also as a *shorthand device* that facilitates the recall of brand benefits from memory, a *risk reducer* with increasing brand familiarity and as *value systems*, that is a system or “cluster of” (p. 442) values which represents the brand. Such additions can be considered as ‘input’ interpretations of brand (i.e. something the marketer creates). Expanding on de Chernatony and Dall’Olmo Riley’s (1998) work, de Chernatony (2006) also considered brands in terms of *positioning* so the brand is instantaneously associated with a certain benefit in relation to its competitors and a *vision* which provides brand direction, focus and purpose. Finally, viewing a brand as an identity system was now referred to a brand as a *cluster of values*. The latter can be regarded a more of a self explanatory title than de Chernatony and Dall’Olmo Riley’s (1997) work.

The view that brands are concerned with values has been central to de Chernatony’s (and co-authors’) work. For instance, a brand is considered “a complex multidimensional construct whereby managers augment products and services with values” (de Chernatony and Dall’Olmo Riley, 1998 :436) or more simply as “..a cluster of functional and emotional values” (de Chernatony and Segal Horn, 2003:1100). Once more, de Chernatony (2006) considers values as being central to defining brand where “a successful brand is an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique, sustainable added values which match

their needs most closely.” (de Chernatony, 2006:13). This is consistent with de Chernatony’s (2009) more recent work where a brand is defined as “a cluster of values that enables a promise to be made about a unique and welcomed experience” (p. 104). Consequently, it can be seen how values form a pivotal role of de Chernatony’s conceptualisation of brand. The logic being values are important given they inform behaviour (Hardaker and Fill, 2005, Meglino and Ravlin, 1998, Rokeach, 1973) with the latter being concerned with a variety of organisational stakeholders.

Several points should be noted from the above. For instance, the work of de Chernatony’s (with other stated authors) provides a useful framework for considering perspectives on, and interpretations of, brand. Furthermore, by considering these perspectives it becomes apparent a brand is more than an image or logo. Here, Davidson’s (1998) metaphorical representation of brand as an iceberg (Figure 2) is useful which highlights how considering a brand as a name or logo is

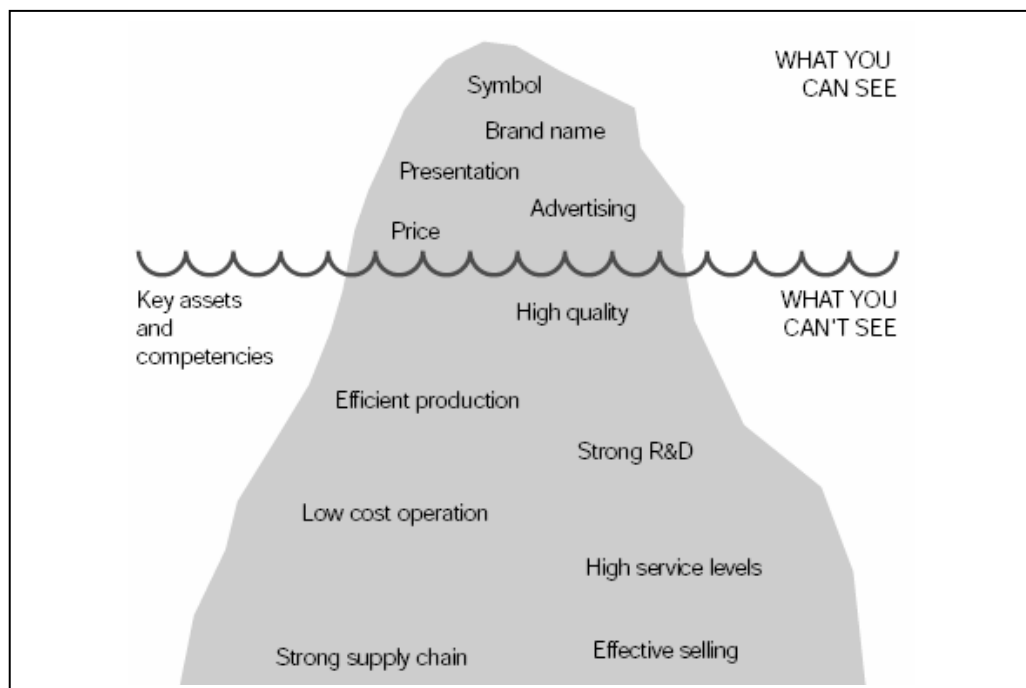


Figure 2 Conceptualising Brand as an Iceberg (Davidson, 1998: 376)

merely the 'tip' of the iceberg. Whilst it is true names play an important brand role (e.g. Virgin's name signifies a new or 'virgin' and atypical corporate market approach), to truly understand and capitalise on a brand it is necessary to go beneath the 'surface' and consider factors such as values, culture, norms etc. However, the input-output-evolutionary taxonomy does not account for the view that brand can be conceptualised in terms of promises. Whilst de Chernatony's (2009) work does refer to a promise, values are pivotal to this scholar's position. However, Ambler and Styles (1996) consider a brand as "the promise of a bundle of attributes that someone buys....the attributes that make up a brand may be real or illusory, rational or emotional, tangible or invisible" (p.10) whilst Brodie et al (2006b) conceptualise a 'service brand' in terms of 'making', 'enabling' and 'keeping' promises. Similarly, Berry (2000) focuses on services by outlining "a strong service brand is essentially a promise of future satisfaction" (p.129). Hence, such views of brand have similarities with Bitner's (1995) work where marketing is conceptualised in terms of selling, enabling and delivering 'promises' as opposed to being concerned with 'exchange' (Bagozzi, 1975; Houston and Gassenheimer, 1987).

From the preceding section, it becomes clear various perspectives on brand exist. However, it could be argued that, to date, an integrated and holistic view of brand has yet to be developed that captures the breath of construct as outlined above. Whilst it is appreciated all aspects of brand cannot possibly be considered in one statement, current definitions tend to gravitate around one central theme such as values, relationships, nomenclature or promises. Whilst such factors can be viewed as important perspectives on brand the inclusion of one should not necessarily result in the exclusion of another.

Based on this review of the brand literature it is now appropriate to develop an integrated view or definition of brand. Such an approach aims to augment the various positions outlined above. Consequently, brands can be considered as: a *construct* that helps with the delivery of brand-related promises made by the seller / corporation to its stakeholders; facilitating the formation of a mutually beneficial and evolving *bond* between the seller / corporation its stakeholders; being guided by functional *and* an emotional element. Combining these points leads to an ‘integrated’ definition of brand where a brand is *a construct that delivers marketing promises to facilitate the formation of a mutually beneficial and evolving bond between the seller (or corporation) and its stakeholders based on functional and emotional values.*

Consequently, this definition can be seen as an attempt to augment several views outlined above. The definition has been conceptualised in Figure 3 where brand is developed as part of a dialectical brand-stakeholder process (Holt, 2002) and so is couched within the evolutionary school.

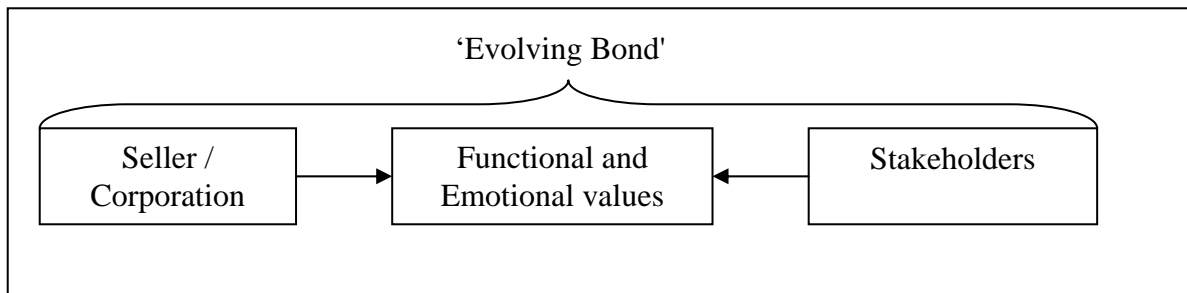


Figure 3 Conceptualising a Definition of Brand – An Integrated Perspective

2.2.2. Corporate Branding

Given this thesis' service brand focus, it is appropriate to consider corporate branding given its pervasiveness in the service sector (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Berry, 2000; Berry et al., 1988; de Chernatony, 2001; Diefenbach, 1987; Pina et al., 2006). Indeed, scholars such as King (1991) note the close links between corporate and service branding with scholars such as de Chernatony and Segal-Horn (2004) using the terms interchangeably. However, it is important to note that whilst corporate branding tends to predominate at service brands, this should not imply goods based brands do not also adopt a corporate branding approach with Nestle, Unilever or Ferrari providing illustrative examples.

Einwiller and Will (2002) define corporate branding as:

“a systematically planned and implemented process of creating and maintaining favourable images and consequently a favourable reputation of the company as a whole by sending signals to all stakeholders by managing behaviour, communication and symbolism.” (p.101)

Several points should be noted from Einwiller and Will's (2002) definition. First corporate branding, in a similar manner to product branding, is a planned and strategic process. It is not a tactical activity the organisation can conduct on an ad hoc basis. Furthermore, corporate branding is concerned with placing the organisation's brand name in the consumer's mind and so is concerned with forming an image and reputation (please note the distinction between image and reputation will be made in Section 2.6.2). Consequently, in the case of corporate or service branding, the

organisation's name dominates branding activity (Argenti and Druckenmiller, 2004; Berry, 2000; Berry and Seltman, 2007; de Chernatony, 2006; Hardaker and Fill, 2005; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Keller, 2003; Kim et al., 2003a; Low and Lamb, 2000). Conversely, for goods-centric marketing the product is the primary brand (Berry, 2000; Berry and Seltman, 2007).

Einwiller and Will (2002) also makes reference to behaviour, communications and symbolism. At service brands it is particularly important employees' behaviour is consistent with how the organisation wants the brand to be perceived (de Chernatony, 1999; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; Hulberg, 2006; Keller et al., 2008). Consequently, employees play a central role in enacting the brand as part of the corporate branding process (Ashford and Mael, 1996; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2009; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Hulberg, 2006; Kennedy, 1977). This places increased importance on marketing and human resources functional alignment for service brands (Balmer, 1995; Davies and Chun, 2006; Davies et al., 2003; de Chernatony, 1999, 2006; King, 1991; McDonald et al., 2001; Wilson, 2001; Zeithaml et al., 2006). To promote brand consistent behaviour across multiple interfaces various human resource 'mechanisms' exist which service brand marketers' can look to utilise. These include recruitment, induction, training (de Chernatony, 2006; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; Farnfield, 1999; Heskett et al., 1997; Lovelock et al., 1999; McDonald et al., 2001), internal marketing (Burmam and Zeplin, 2005; Dibb and Simkin, 2000; Free, 1999; Greene et al., 1994; Hardaker and Fill, 2005; King, 1991; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006a; Piercy and Morgan, 1990, 1991; Van Riel, 1995) and culture (on the assumption culture can be managed), or more accurately cultures (Balmer and Greyser, 2003). Consequently, corporate branding can be regarded as more 'multi' or 'inter' disciplinary in scope than traditional product based branding

(Balmer, 2001a) given the need for marketers' at corporate brands to engage with human resource activities that foster employee behaviour to propagate the brand.

Next, Einwiller and Will (2002) outline how corporate branding is concerned with marketing communications. Of particular note is how for corporate brands, who need to manage several interfaces, marketing communication is simultaneously aimed at multiple stakeholders (Balmer and Greyser, 2003, Hulberg, 2006, Ind, 1997, Muzellec, 2006, Hallawell, 1999, Balmer, 2001a, King, 1991). The objective of external marketing communications is to reflect or make manifest the organisation's values to those outside the organisation (Hulberg, 2006). Conversely, internal communications aim to engage employees in the branding process given the pivotal role this stakeholder group plays at such organisations (de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; McDonald et al., 2001).

Finally, Einwiller and Will (2002) note the role symbolism plays in corporate branding. This could be in the form of the brand logo, typeface or premises an organisation occupies. The logic being such visual cues provide a way for a service brand to convey its otherwise largely intangible offering in a more concrete and tangible way (Keller, 2003; Levitt, 1981; Zeithaml et al., 2006). However, regarding a corporate brand as synonymous with organisational nomenclature is an oversimplification (Balmer, 2001a; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; de Chernatony, 2006). The reason being the corporate brand is a way for the organisation to project its inner identity (Muzellec, 2006) or defining values (de Chernatony, 2006, Ind, 1997, Kay, 2006, Hatch and Schultz, 2003) to all its stakeholders (Ind, 1997). As a result, symbolism needs to be considered in synchrony with communications and employee behaviour which help reflect and enact the organisation's values respectively (Hulberg, 2006).

Consequently, it can be seen how a ‘monolithic’ (Aaker, 1996a, Ind, 1990, Olins, 1989, Olins, 1995, Van Riel, 1995) or corporate approach to branding contrasts with classical line branding (Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; McDonald et al., 2001). With the latter, a product line or product is the primary brand (Berry, 2000; Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2006a), branding tends to focus on consumers (Balmer, 2001a), employee interaction with customers is less notable (de Chernatony, 1999; Lovelock, 1998) whilst values tend to be enacted via advertising, distribution, user imagery (McDonald et al., 2001) or the physical product and its packaging (de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; 2001; McDonald et al., 2001). However, in the context of corporate branding values are largely enacted via employee behaviour (Bostrom and Isberg, 2009; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004) to a broader range of *stakeholders* (Balmer and Gray, 2003; King, 1991). This should not imply such ‘goods-based’ factors do not also play a role at service brands. For instance, the packaging or presentation of your insurance policy when received by post helps convey brand attributes or values (cf: symbolism). However, the role such tools play for service brands tends to be less notable due to the prominence of the customer encounter. Furthermore, it could be argued with the advent of corporate social responsibility, product based brands are paying increased attention to stakeholder and not just consumer communications which may blur such a dichotomous view of goods and services branding.

2.2.3. Brand – Summary

This section of the thesis has reviewed various definitions of brand. Based on the literature, an ‘integrated’ definition of brand was presented where a brand is: *a construct that delivers marketing promises to facilitate the formation of a mutually beneficial and evolving bond between the seller (or corporation) and its stakeholders based on functional and emotional values*. The characteristics of corporate branding were then discussed due to the pervasiveness of this branding approach for service brands with particular note being played to the role symbolism, communications and behaviour place for corporate brands (cf: Einwiller and Will, 2002). Now that brand has been reviewed, the service literature will be considered given this provides the primary context for this research.

2.3. Goods and Services

The previous section of this chapter clarified this thesis’ interpretation of what a brand is. This was achieved by developing an integrated definition which augmented current definitions from the literature. This section of the chapter reviews the development of the ‘service’ literature to contextualise this research. This is structured around the literature evolving from a goods / service dichotomy to a continuum and ultimately to a new service dominant marketing ‘logic’ (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a). Concluding remarks highlight how, given the widespread academic support for the new service dominant logic, the rationale for this thesis’ service focus becomes stronger.

2.3.1. Towards a Service Dominant logic for Marketing Exchange

Early services literature tended to focus on the difference between goods and services with the implications they had for marketers being explored (Vargo and Lusch, 2004b, Zeithaml et al., 1985). Judd (1964), for example, offers a service definition via the logic of 'exclusion' where a service is "a market transaction by an enterprise or entrepreneur where the object of the market transaction is *other than* the transfer of ownership (and title if any) of a tangible commodity" (Judd, 1964: 59). Whilst this approach helps articulate what a service is not it has the limitation of not actually stating what a service is. Developing Judd's (1964) work, Rathmell (1966) makes a clear distinction between a good and service where "to consider a good to be a noun and a service a verb – a good is a thing and a service is an act...the former is an object...whereas the latter is a deed, performance or effort" (Rathmell, 1966; 33). In subsequent work, Rathmell (1974) eloquently outlines how "goods are produced, services are performed" (p.58) whilst Berry (1980), drawing heavily on Rathmell's (1966), work defines a good as "an object, a device, a thing" (p. 25) and a service as "a deed, a performance, and effort." (p. 25). However, to date, there is still no widely accepted definition of service (Gummesson, 2000). Vargo and Lusch (2004b) argue this is a function of goods and services not being mutually exclusive.

Considering goods and services in terms of degree aligns with the influential work of Shostack (1977) who looked to help services marketers "break free" from product marketing. In a similar manner to Rathmell (1966), Shostack (1977) highlighted how a goods-services continuum may be a more appropriate conceptualisation in terms of tangible or intangible dominant 'entities' and argued "it seems that there are really very few, if any 'pure' products or services in the

marketplace” (Shostack, 1977: 74). This thinking echoes Levitt (1972) who believed any distinction between goods and services was spurious; “there are only industries whose service components are greater or less than those of other industries” (p. 41). Consequently, Shostack (1977) and Levitt (1972) moved marketing beyond an ‘either / or’, that is, goods or services approach, to marketing where conceptualising in terms of degree and not absolutes may be more appropriate. This perspective finds more recent support from the Nordic school. For example, Gummesson (2000) considers “the distinction between goods and services has become a burden” (p. 121). In a similar manner, Gronroos (2000a) contended a goods and services divide should no longer exist and points towards their convergence with service principles dominating.

Such a line of thinking leads to the influential work of Vargo and Lusch (2004a) who argue a new dominant marketing ‘logic’ centred around service is emerging. Here, service is defined as “the application of specialised competencies (knowledge and skill) through deeds, processes and performances for the benefit of another entity or the entity itself” (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a: 2). More recently, this definition has been refined to consider service as the application of resources (Vargo and Lusch, 2006) or competences (Maglio et al., 2009) for the benefit of another.

The more traditional goods-centred logic can be distinguished from the burgeoning service dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a) in several ways. Primarily the former is centred on a good, or more generally a ‘product’ which includes both tangibles (goods) and intangibles (services) as units of output. In this context intangibles are considered specific types of goods, that is intangible units of output or as an augmentation of goods to enhance value (Maglio et al., 2009). Consequently, the goods dominant logic regards services as inferior to goods (ibid) and treats services as a special kind of intangible product, or in other words, what goods are *not* (Vargo and

Lusch, 2008). Furthermore, in comparison to the goods-centred logic, within the service dominant logic “exchange is fundamentally, primarily about the intangible rather than the tangible” (Lusch and Vargo, 2008: 91).

The service dominant logic also represents something of a paradigm shift given it is applicable to applicable to *all* marketing offerings (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a). The reason being within the domain of this logic, all organisations, markets, and society are primarily concerned with exchange of service (Vargo et al., 2008). This implies service is exchanged for service, all organisations are service organisations, all markets focus on the exchange of service and all economies are service based. The result being *all* marketing theory and practice should be informed by service logic principles and theories. In other words “service is *the* dominant logic for marketing” (Ballantyne and Varey, 2008: 11) or service is the common denominator of the exchange process (Vargo and Lusch, 2008).

Consequently, within the service dominant logic, the principal units of exchange are now operant (e.g. competencies) not operand (e.g. goods) resources (Maglio et al., 2009; Vargo et al., 2008). Goods are no longer the source of value creation (Maglio et al., 2009), merely a tool or “appliance” (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a: 7) or “distribution mechanism” (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a: 14) in the value creation process. In this sense products are a means to an end with the end being benefit the customer receives from consuming the service (Lusch et al., 2007). More specifically goods are service-delivery vehicles (Vargo et al., 2008). This position is consistent with Gummesson (1995) who highlighted the pervasive nature of service across the good / service divide by noting how both activities and things (i.e. goods) *render* service. Such logic echoes Kotler’s

(1977b) view where the value of physical goods does not lie in the good itself but in the services they render. Within the service dominant logic, the customer is not viewed deterministically or an operand resource. Marketers no longer do things *to* customers (cf: Lannon 1992). Customers are now voluntaristic and an operant resource given their active role in *co creating value with* the organisation (Lusch and Vargo, 2008; Vargo and Lusch, 2006). Hence, value is no longer imbued in the good during production. It is perceived and determined by the consumer (or other beneficiary) via application of their operant resource in the context of their lives to value propositions the organisation makes (Ballantyne and Varey, 2008; Lusch et al., 2007; Vargo and Lusch, 2004a,b). In this sense, the organisation cannot deliver value but only offer value propositions (Vargo et al., 2008). Such value propositions focus on value creating *process* which are perceived by consumers (Gronroos, 2000a; Vargo and Lusch, 2008; Vargo et al., 2008) so they can, via co-production, create value for themselves by using their physical and mental effort (competencies) in collaboration or dialogue *with* the organisation (Lusch and Vargo, 2008; Maglio et al., 2009). For instance, an IT company may offer its database services to a retailer so they can develop deeper behavioural customer insights. The IT company's value proposition is database competence and the retailer applies their knowledge of the retail market to configure data requirements and how the database will be interrogated in order to obtain the desired customer insights. Consequently, mutual benefit arises from *exchange* (Vargo et al., 2008) or *value in use* (Vargo and Lusch, 2008) as opposed to *value in exchange* (i.e. buying the database). Hence, this element of the service dominant logic paradigm moves marketing from a transactional to a relational or interactive perspective. In many respects this echoes Holt's (2002) position where brands aim to engage in dialogue with their stakeholders.

Vargo and Lusch's (2004a) work raises several important points. For instance, within this new marketing logic, service forms a central role as does the consumer and relationship marketing. The focus has moved from tangible (operand) to intangible (operant) resources with the service rather than a good being the primary focus of marketing exchange (Maglio et al., 2009). Consequently, "S-D logic inverts the role of goods and services by making service superordinant to goods" (Lusch et al., 2007: 8) with service becoming the backbone of the organisation's competitive advantage (Lusch and Vargo, 2008; Lusch et al., 2007; Vargo and Lusch, 2004a,b; Vargo and Lusch, 2006). Consequently, the growing support for this burgeoning logic provides a strong rationale for service based research.

Furthermore, it should also be acknowledged how several literature "tributaries" (Day, 2004:18) (see Bolton et al., 2004) flow into the service dominant paradigm. For example, marketing orientation (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990, Narver and Slater, 1990, Slater and Narver, 1994), relationship marketing (Gronroos, 2000b, Gronroos, 2000a, Gummesson, 1998, Gummesson, 2002) / networks (Coviello et al., 2002, Achrol, 1991, Webster, 1992, Achrol and Kotler, 1999), services marketing (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996; Zeithaml et al., 1985), strategic management (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990) and supply chain management are unified by the holistic service dominant logic Vargo and Lusch (2004a) forward. This development facilitates the advancement of an integrative marketing theory which Gummesson (2004) (see Bolton et al., 2004) argues is particularly helpful given the fragmented nature of current "textbook theory" (p. 20). As Aitkin et al (2006:276) note, Vargo and Lusch's (2004a) work does not merely restate current literature but brings such thinking together in a new way which Ballantyne and Varey (2008) consider as a challenge to current marketing orthodoxy.

Whilst the service dominant logic draws on an eclectic range of literature, some of its literature 'tributaries' are not without controversy. For example, the marketing concept (Drucker, 1954; Levitt, 1960), which is enacted by a marketing orientation, has been subject to criticism due to its strong normative elements which marketers have tended to dogmatically follow (Brownlie and Saren, 1992). Furthermore, marketing may be more concerned with the avoidance of competition (Houston and Gassenheimer, 1987), dominance of markets (Dickenson et al., 1988), product push (Kotler, 1972), influencing demand (Galbraith, 1967) in addition to meeting *both* internal (organisational) and external (customer) needs (Brownlie and Saren, 1992). Also, Day (1999) notes how being too market orientated can be disastrous as the goods or services customers demand may not fit with the organisation's competence. Such views are almost diametrically opposed to concept of customer sovereignty which is central to a marketing orientation. Indeed, guided by the service dominant principle of co-creation, Gummesson (2008) has called on marketers' to move away from a customer centric (Lusch and Vargo, 2008) position to balanced centricity with the latter also focusing on suppliers. The reason being suppliers create the value propositions that customers actualise and so play an active role in the value creating process. Furthermore, as previously noted it is questionable if consumers can or want to have relationships with brands or organisations (Bengtsson, 2003; O'Malley and Tynan, 2000) whilst Coviello et al (2002) highlighted how both transactional and relational marketing can co-exist within the same firm. This questions whether organisations need to move, entirely, to a relational approach. Consequently, such debates need to be revisited so an academic consensus can be reached on some of the service dominant logic's literature tributaries.

The scope of the service dominant logic is also quite ‘inclusive’. Consequently, it is difficult to appreciate what marketing is *not* and how marketing managers can prioritise scarce resources if they are to incorporate this paradigm into their marketing activities. As Levy (2006: 61) states “the most successful dominant logics are those which are embraced by both managers and scholars.” Currently, the service dominant logic resides mainly in the academic domain with limited empirical research in order to validate it being conducted (Palmer et al., 2006). As a result it could be argued parameters need to be placed around this burgeoning paradigm. For instance, more recently, Lusch and Vargo (2008) have incorporated the notion of symmetry into their logic. This involves not misleading customers and treating partners equitably (Lusch and Vargo, 2008). It is questionable whether it is marketing’s place to provide such moral guidance and so is the paradigm going too far? Finally, the development and management of brand constitutes a strategic marketing activity (Keller, 2003). However, it is surprising to note the scant attention paid to brands within these authors’ work (Brodie et al., 2006b). Collectively, these points simultaneously highlight the authors’ appreciation of, and concerns with, Vargo and Lusch’s (2004a) seminal work.

2.3.2. Goods and Services – Summary

This section of the chapter has outlined how it may no longer be appropriate to consider goods / services dichotomously. A more informed approach may be to regard service as superordinate to goods in the context of an emerging service dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a). Of particular note is how the service dominant logic presents a revised paradigm for marketing exchange. A central tenet of this burgeoning paradigm concerns the co creation of value

(Lusch and Vargo, 2008; Vargo and Lusch, 2006). However, other key characteristics of this logic's 'mindset' (Lusch and Vargo, 2008) include a primary concern for the exchange of intangibles, the predominant use of operant resources (competences or knowledge) and a relational focus. Consequently, this amplifies the importance of academic research in the service domain and so provides a stronger rationale for this thesis' focus.

2.4. Identity

Now the brand and service literature have been reviewed it is appropriate to consider the 'identity' literature. From a terminological perspective, Balmer and Greyser, (2003) outline how the identity literature is disorganised and taxing. Indeed, Balmer (2001a) goes as far to say that "the identity concept, in its various facets, is ubiquitous, but it can be used with reckless permissiveness among practitioners circles, and, to a lesser degree amongst scholars." (p. 251)

Despite the view that the identity literature is reaching maturity (Balmer and Greyser, 2003) one only need look at the literature to find persistent examples of liberal terminological use. For example, Van Rekom (1997: 413) in developing an operational measure on *corporate* identity actually draws on Albert and Whetten's (1985) seminal work on *organisational* identity. In a similar manner, Illia and Lurati (2006: 301) refer to Balmer and Greyser's (2002) AC²ID model in the context of *organisational* identity whilst the model has been developed in the context of *corporate* identity. Furthermore, when referring to Gioia and Thomas' (1996) reservations regarding Albert and Whetten's (1985) view that *organisational* identity is enduring, Balmer (2001a: 280) actually refers to *business* identity, which itself consists not only of organisational, but also corporate and

visual identity, and so is a new perspective on identity. This has resulted in the identity literature being shrouded in ‘fog’ (Balmer, 2001a) or being represented by the mythical ‘Tower of Babel’ (Hatch and Schultz, 2000). Balmer and Greyser (2003) cite several reasons for the confusion that surrounds identity. These include the practitioner / scholar divide, disciplinary research silos and divisions accentuated by geography, language and culture.

However, despite recent work that aims to crystallise the ‘identity’ literature (e.g. Balmer, 2008) an array of identity types and related terms have continued to emerge. Of particular interest to this research is how the identity literature has evolved to encompass corporate brand identity. This is particularly intriguing given Balmer (2008) defines “corporate brand identity” in terms of a “covenanted identity” which is then defined as “the covenant that underpins a corporate brand” (p. 898). Arguably, it is still rather challenging to understand what corporate brand identity is given a clear explanation should potentially follow a term in order to define it. Consequently, it is debatable if the fog has cleared or, unfortunately, descended once more on the identity literature.

Given this context, this section of the chapter aims to clarify this terminological confusion and is structured as follows. The first three sections review the organisational, corporate and brand identity literatures. This helps distinguish brand identity from the other *major* forms of identity that can be found in the marketing literature. Brand identity is then considered in the context of corporate identity and corporate branding to highlight how these constructs are related yet distinct. Next, the case for brand identity being considered as an identity orphan is made. This paves the way for justifying why the corporate identity’s interdisciplinary school potentially provides the brand identity orphan with a suitable theoretical home. Finally, current conceptual frameworks of brand

identity are reviewed to explore construct dimensionality which will be drawn on to ground this thesis' *service* brand identity theoretical framework (Chapter 3).

2.4.1. Organisational Identity

In their seminal paper Albert and Whetten (1985) define organisational identity as “the shared understanding of the central, distinctive and enduring character of an organisation” (p. 265) whilst Hatch and Schultz (1997) consider the construct as “a collective shared understanding of the organisation’s distinctive values and characteristics” (p. 357). In what Cornelissen et al. (2007) consider a primary or common definition, organisational identity refers to the “the shared meaning that an organisational entity is understood to have that arises from its members’ (and others’) awareness that they belong to it” (p. S3). Consequently, organisational identity can be seen as a “system of shared meanings” (Cornelissen et al., 2007: S3).

At a philosophical level, organisational identity researchers and organisational behaviourists (Ashford and Mael, 1996; Dutton and Dukerich, 1991; Dutton et al., 1994; Gioia et al., 1998), are concerned with addressing the question of “*who are we?*” as an organisation (Hatch and Schultz, 2000: 15) or “*what kind of organisation is this?*” (Albert and Whetten, 1985: 292). Hence, answering these questions helps reveal the identity of the organisation by considering the ways organisational members perceive, think and feel of themselves as an organisation (Hatch and Schultz, 1997; 2000). Consequently, organisational identity is concerned with understanding organisational members’ affinities to, or identification *with*, their employing organisation (Ashforth

and Mael, 1989; Dutton et al., 1994; Hatch and Schultz, 1997). This process of identification with the organisation, organisational identification, has been defined as “a cognitive linking between the definition of the organisation and the definition of self” (Dutton et al., 1994: 242) and is based on a cognitive connection or alignment between the employee’s self concept and his / her employing organisation (Dutton et al., 1994). Stuart (2003) refers to this as “person-organization fit” (p. 33) where this fit is perceived through a given individual’s cognitive frame (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991; Dutton et al., 1994) or perceptual lens (Gioia et al., 2000; Gioia and Thomas, 1996). In this context, identity is conceptualised from an (internal) employee perspective via the relationship between employees and their employing organisation (Balmer, 2008; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Hatch and Schultz, 1997) which results in organisational identity being “held in organisation members’ minds” (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991 :547). As a result the organisational identity literature draws heavily on Social Identity Theory (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Tajfel and Turner, 1986) with scholars such as Haslam (2001) contending social identity is a form of organisational identity. Distinctions aside, Social Identity Theory outlines how individual actors associate *with* certain group, which King and Whetten (2008) refer to as a categorical reference group, and so hold a favourable bias or attitude towards it. An outcome is ‘positive distinctiveness’ where people’s self concept is defined in terms of ‘we’ rather than ‘I’(Cornelissen et al., 2007). It is also worth noting the organisational identity perspective has been particularly important to North American scholars (Balmer, 2001a; Balmer, 2008; Balmer and Greyser, 2003).

2.4.2. Corporate Identity

The corporate perspective on identity has been particularly important to scholars on mainland Europe, the UK and the British Commonwealth (Balmer, 2008; Balmer and Greyser, 2003). In comparison to organisational identity, corporate identity has more of an external / customer focus in addition to being influenced by a managerial and practical background (Balmer, 2008). Conversely, organisational identity tends to have more of an internal / employee focus and richer theoretical foundations (Balmer, 2008). From a philosophical perspective, corporate identity scholars, in comparison organisational identity scholars are more interested in answering the question of “*what are we?*” as opposed to *who are we?* (Balmer and Greyser, 2003).

However, reaching a consensus of opinion with regards to defining corporate identity has proven challenging (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006b). Potential reasons for the continuation of this issue relate to the multidisciplinary nature of the literature (Balmer, 1998; Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar et al., 2005b) and the construct having different meanings for different stakeholders (Melewar et al., 2005c). Earlier scholars’ definitions tended to focus on the visual aspects of corporate identity. For instance Carter (1982) defined corporate identity as “the logo or brand image of a company and all other visual manifestations of the identity of a company” (p. 5) whilst Dowling (1994) considered the concept as “the symbols an organisation uses to identify itself to people” (p.40). Abratt’s (1989) seminal work, which regarded brand personality as an antecedent of corporate identity, defined the latter as “as assembly of visual cues physical and behavioural by which an audience could recognise the company and distinguish from others” (p. 414). Hence, this

can be seen as an evolution of the literature beyond a visual domain. Taking more of a behavioural perspective, Van Riel (1997) regards corporate identity as “the self presentation of an organisation, rooted in the behaviour of individual organisational members, expressing the organisation’s “sameness over time” or continuity, “distinctiveness” and “centrality”” (p. 290). Consequently, it can be seen how Dowling (1994) and Van Riel’s (1997) work has similarities with elements of Abratt’s (1989) work by considering visual and behavioural elements respectively. Olins’ (1991) perspective focused on communications where corporate identity was defined as “everything that the corporation does, in every way it communicates” (p. 34). By considering visual, behaviour and communication elements the emergence of the corporate identity mix (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997), as will be discussed later, started to take root.

In what appears to be a development of Thomas and Kleyn’s (1989) work, who regard corporate identity as ‘what the organisation really is’, Baker and Balmer (1997) refer to corporate identity as “what an organization is” (p.368). However, such a view tends to veil the complexity and debate that has surrounded the construct. Other scholars (Bernstein, 1984; Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar et al., 2005b) have developed this interrogative-based line of thinking to consider corporate identity in terms of ‘what the organisation is’, ‘what it stands for’, ‘what it does’, ‘how it does it’ and ‘where it is going’. In a similar vein, albeit adopting a semiological perspective, Olutayo and Melewar (2007) pose several probing questions to reveal corporate identity by considering “where the firm is going”, “how the firm is different”, “what the firm does” and “how the firm carries out its business” (p. 428). Whilst this approach provides questions it, unfortunately, does not appear to answer the question of what corporate identity is.

In a “more generic but all-encompassing definition of corporate identity” (Balmer et al., 2007: 8) Gray and Balmer (1998) define the construct as “the reality and uniqueness of the organisation” (p. 696). Drawing on the work of several authors (Fombrun, 1996; Margulies, 1977; Olins, 1989, 1995), Hatch and Schultz (2000) regard corporate identity as the “central or distinctive ideas of the organisation and how this idea is represented and communicated to a variety of audiences” (p. 13). Hatch and Shultz’s (2000) work bears some resemblance to Marwick and Fill (1997) where corporate identity is defined as “the organisation’s presentation of itself to its various stakeholders and the means by which it distinguishes itself from all other organisations” (p. 397). Hence, corporate identity appears to be concerned with understanding how the organisation’s central or distinctive attributes (i.e. its differentiating factors), can be communicated to a broad range of stakeholders (Alvesson, 1990; Balmer, 2001a; He and Balmer, 2007b; Olins, 1995; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). Based on in-depth interviews, Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006b) offer an operational definition where “corporate identity is the presentation of an organisation to every stakeholder. It is what makes an organisation unique and it incorporates the organisation’s communication, design, culture, behaviour, structure, industry identity and strategy. It is thus intrinsically related to both the corporate personality and image” (p. 864). This definition has the benefit of being empirically informed whilst the operational orientation nature of the definition also provides clear guidance in terms of what corporate identity is. Finally, Zinkhan et al. (2001) consider corporate identity as representing “the ways a company chooses to identify itself to all the publics.” (p. 154).

As can be seen from the above, a range of corporate identity definitions have been advanced in the literature. Whilst general themes appear to concern making internal organisational attributes

manifest, outlining what the organisation stands for in addition to stressing the construct’s strategic nature, it is still challenging to define, per se, what corporate identity is. The problematic nature of defining corporate identity led to the formation of the International Corporate Identity Group (ICIG) which moved away from developing a corporate identity definition in favour of a broader view referred to as the ‘Strathclyde Statement’ (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). This statement looks to capture and articulate the multidisciplinary nature of the construct which definitions are arguably unable to do (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997) via the corporate identity mix’s tenets of communications, symbolism and behaviour as part of an interdisciplinary school (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997) . The Interdisciplinary School will now be reviewed in the context of two approaches that have used to structure the corporate identity literature.

Van Riel and Balmer (1997) identified three paradigms which have helped to structure the corporate identity literature (Figure 4).

Corporate Identity School / Paradigms	Graphic Design Paradigm	Integrated Communications Paradigm	Interdisciplinary Paradigm
	Logos, nomenclature, typeface etc	Consistency of communications	Behaviour, communication and symbolism

Figure 4 Corporate Identity Schools (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997)

The ‘*graphic design*’ paradigm, which focuses on organisational nomenclature, company name, logos, trademarks and so forth (Margulies, 1977, Carter, 1982, Olins, 1989, Bernstein, 1986,

Ind, 1990, Pilditch, 1970) focuses on identity structures (Hatch and Schultz, 2000) that help organisations' present elements of their identity as a separate line or business. For example, several authors (Melewar et al., 2005b; Melewar et al., 2005c; Olins, 1989, 1995; Van Riel, 1995) refer to monolithic identity where the organisation consistently uses its name and style across the organisation (e.g. Virgin); endorsed identity where the brand is associated with subsidiaries (e.g. Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn Express); and branded identity where product are differentially branded (e.g. Pantene and Wella at the Procter and Gamble Corporation). However, Olins (1979) noted this categorisation is more widely reflected in the literature than organisational reality whilst Balmer (2001a) regarded such a system as being too simple to capture the complexity of subsidiary relationships.

The second and third paradigms within Van Riel and Balmer's (1997) conceptualisation relate to the integrated communications and interdisciplinary paradigms respectively. The '*integrated communication*' paradigm is concerned with consistency in formal brand communication and execution (Bernstein, 1986; Schultz et al., 1994). The '*interdisciplinary*' paradigm (Abratt, 1989; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Birkigt and Stadler, 1986; Olins, 1978a; Van Riel, 1995) focuses on "marshalling" the corporate identity mix (Birkigt and Stadler, 1986). The corporate identity mix reveals corporate identity via its three tenets of behaviour, communication and symbolism to both internal and external audiences. Behaviour relates to the organisation's or, more accurately, its employees' actions, communication concerns verbal or visual messages whilst symbolism relates to visual cues that indicate what the brand wishes to stand for (Van Riel, 1995). Within the interdisciplinary school there is an increasing awareness that an organisation's unique characteristics are grounded in its employees behaviour (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). Indeed, Van

Riel and Balmer (1997) emphasise the multidisciplinary nature of this schools work via the “Strathclyde Statement” which advocates marshalling the corporate identity mix as discussed above. Consequently, at this early stage, the interdisciplinary school may be particularly relevant to this service brand research given its explicit consideration of behaviour, symbolism and communication. The reason being these three tenets were also salient to the corporate branding literature (cf: Einwiller and Will, 2002) which itself is pervasive at service brands (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Berry, 2000; Berry et al., 1988; de Chernatony, 2001; Diefenbach, 1987; Pina et al., 2006). The interdisciplinary school also places importance on stakeholder communication which, as previously outlined, is particularly important at service brands.

In an alternative framing of the literature, Balmer (1995) identified seven corporate identity schools of thought Figure 5.

Balmer (1995)	Strategic Visual School	Visual Behavioural School	Strategic Communications School	Design as Fashion School	Corporate Communications School	Strategic School	Behavioural School
	Strategic change via visual means	Communicate organisation's culture visually	Communicate organisations mission and philosophy visually	Keep visual cues modern	Enact mission / philosophy via formal corporate communications	Focus on corporate mission and philosophy	Nurture distinctive culture

Figure 5 Corporate Identity Schools (Balmer, 1995)

The four ‘design’ or ‘visual’ schools comprise of the ‘*strategic visual*’ school where strategic change is driven visually; the ‘*visual behaviour*’ school where visual communications concentrate

on the organisation's distinct culture; the '*strategic communications*' school which visualises the organisation's mission and vision (and so seems very similar to the communications school) and the '*design as fashion*' school where visual elements of identity are kept contemporary and fashionable. The '*corporate communications*' school concentrates on enacting mission and vision via formal corporate communications, the '*strategic*' school considers identity as being linked with articulating the organisation's central idea, mission and philosophy (Fombrun, 1996; Olins, 1989, 1995; Van Riel, 1995). Finally, the '*behavioural*' school places an emphasis on developing a distinctive organisational culture as part of identity.

Whilst the above scholars' taxonomies (Balmer, 1995; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997) help to structure the corporate identity literature, in many respects they could be regarded as overlapping and indeed providing support for the interdisciplinary paradigm (Figure 6).

Balmer (1995)	Strategic Visual School	Visual Behavioural School	Strategic Communications School	Design as Fashion School	Corporate Communications School	Strategic School	Behavioural School
	Strategic change via visual means	Communicate organisation's culture visually	Communicate organisations mission and philosophy visually	Keep visual cues modern	Enact mission / philosophy via formal corporate communications	Focus on corporate mission and philosophy	Nurture distinctive culture
Van Riel & Blamer (1997)	Graphic Design Paradigm			Integrated Communications Paradigm	Interdisciplinary Paradigm		
	Logos, nomenclature, typeface etc			Consistency of communications	Behaviour, Communication Symbolism		

Figure 6 Overlap and Integration of Corporate Identity Schools of Thought.

Figure 6 outlines how Balmer's (1995) Visual Schools are similar to the Graphic Paradigm (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997), which itself can be considered as being represented by the symbolism tenet within the Interdisciplinary School. The Communications School (Balmer, 1995) is similar to the Integrated Communications Paradigm (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997) which is also represented by the Interdisciplinary Schools communications tenet (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). Finally, the Strategic and Behavioural Schools (Balmer, 1995), which could be considered as inextricably linked given mission and philosophy guide culture, are reflected in the Behaviour tenet of the Interdisciplinary School. Consequently, this argument strengthens the case for considering these scholars' respective schools as a function of the Interdisciplinary School. This line of thinking follows Olutayo and

Melewar (2007) who note how these two taxonomies in addition to the work of other scholars (Cornelissen and Harris, 2001; He and Balmer, 2007a; Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1997) can be distilled to the three tenets of the corporate identity mix that constitute the interdisciplinary school (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). This, Olutayo and Melewar (2007) argue is a function of the interrelated and converging nature of these scholars' schools of thought, paradigms and perspectives (p. 420).

It should be noted numerous corporate identity frameworks have been developed in the literature concerning the construct's formation and management (Alessandri, 2001; Baker and Balmer, 1997; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2002; Markwick and Fill, 1997; Melewar, 2003; Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006b; Melewar et al., 2005b; Stuart, 1998, 1999; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005; Van Riel, 1995; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). However, these frameworks will not be drawn on for two reasons. First, Melewar and Jenkins (2002) note the lack of consensus regarding defining the corporate identity construct has only fuelled conceptual confusion. Consequently, it is contended here greater definitional clarity is needed before subsequent corporate identity conceptual development can proceed. Second, this thesis wishes to explore, develop and contribute to the brand, as opposed to the corporate identity literature, in a service context. For these reasons, corporate identity framework will not be reviewed here.

2.4.3. Brand Identity

Several brand marketing academics have contributed to the brand identity literature (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2001, 2006; Kapferer, 1997, 2004) whose conceptual frameworks will be reviewed later in this chapter (Section 2.5). However, it is important to consider how these authors' define brand identity for several reasons. Primarily, these authors' definitions will be drawn on to provide a theoretical grounding for developing a preliminary, literature-based *service* brand identity definition. Furthermore, developing such a literature-based definition provides a starting point for specifying the domain of the construct (Churchill, 1979) and subsequent scale development procedures (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Finally, the literature-based definition will then be augmented later in this thesis once service brand identity dimensionality has been empirically established to provide a specific *service* brand identity definition (Chapter 6). For these reasons current brand identity definitions will be reviewed.

Drawing on the work of Hatch and Shultz (2000), de Chernatony (2006), considers brand identity as "the distinctive or central idea of a brand and how the brand communicates this idea to its stakeholders" (p. 45). By considering stakeholders, de Chernatony's (2006) work has the benefit of taking a strategic perspective and being particularly relevant to service brands. However, this definition bears some resemblance to Hatch and Shultz's (2000) *corporate* identity definition (Section 2.4.2) which itself is problematic given has been predominantly informed by *visual* identity scholars such as Margulies (1977) and Olins (1989, 1995). As subsequent sections will highlight brand identity encompasses more than visual identity.

When considering brand identity Kapferer (2004) defines the construct as “specifying the facets of the brands’ uniqueness and value” (p. 95). Whilst this definition encourages brand marketers to think about developing a distinctive brand identity, what constitutes ‘uniqueness’ or ‘value’ could be considered somewhat abstract. Arguably, this results in a definition that is challenging to understand.

Aaker (1996a) regards brand identity as “...what the organisation wants the brand to stand for in the customer’s mind” (p. 25) or “how strategists want the brand to be perceived” (p. 71). Aaker’s (1996a) work raises several points. First, brand identity emanates from the ‘organisation’. It is not a consumer or client side construct (cf: brand image). Second, within the organisation, the “strategist” plays a pivotal brand identity role. Whilst it is not entirely clear who this person is, one would assume the strategist holds a senior position within the organisation such as the Marketing Director or Marketing Vice President. However, it is not inconceivable the strategist is the Chief Executive Officer or Managing Director. The reason being this individual is ultimately responsible for executing organisational strategy of which brand identity plays a crucial part. Third, brand identity is visionary or more colloquially as the “dream it [i.e. the brand] wants to sell” (Roy and Banerjee, 2007: 142). Considering the construct as visionary is consistent with scholars such as Alsem and Kosteljik (2008) and de Chernatony (2006). Similarly, Joachimsthaler and Aaker (2000) regard brand identity as the “vision of how that brand should be perceived by its target audience” (p. 27) or more succinctly as “...what the organisation wants the brand to stand for” (p. 40). This implies the company should make its own choice for what it wants to stand for (Alsem and Kosteljik, 2008). However, several issues materialise from Aaker and Joachimsthaler’s (2000) definition. For example, these authors refer to a “vision” but do not elaborate on whose vision this

actually is. This is a benefit of Aaker's (1996a) work insofar the vision lies with the "strategist". Furthermore, it may be more appropriate to define brand identity in the context of stakeholders and not a target audience. The latter implies a myopic concern for a specific target market as opposed to a broader range of groups the organisation should actively engage with. Expanding the scope of the construct's definition in this way overcomes a limitation of Aaker's (1996a) work which also appears to be customer centric. Adopting this logic is consistent with the literature review (Section 2.2.2) which outlined how for corporate brands, which are especially pervasive in the service sector (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Agarwal, 2004; Berry, 2000; Berry et al., 1988; de Chernatony, 2006; Diefenbach, 1987; Pina et al., 2006), considering multiple stakeholders is particularly important (Balmer and Greyser, 2003, Hulberg, 2006, Ind, 1997, Muzellec, 2006, Hallawell, 1999, Balmer, 2001a, King, 1991).

In line with other scholars (de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004), Keller and Kotler (2008) make the distinction between brand identity and brand image:

"Identity is the way a company aims to identify or position itself or its product. Image is the way the public actually perceives them. For the right image to be established in the minds of consumers, the marketer must convey brand identity through every available communication vehicle and brand contact. Identity should be diffused in ads, annual reports, brochures, catalogs, packaging, company stationery, and business cards. If "IBM means service," this message must be expressed in symbols, colors and slogans, atmosphere, events, and employee behavior." (p. 288)

This view echoes Keller (2003) who notes “an image is how you are perceived, and an identity is how you aspire to be perceived” (p. 763). Hence, it can be seen how Keller (2003) and Keller and Kotler’s (2006a) work not only helps demarcate the construct but clearly aligns with other scholars where brand identity is considered as emanating from the organisation (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004). This is consistent with the position that identity is an organisational “input” (de Chernatony, 2006).

When brand identity is considered as an input, scholars such Taveira de Barros and Martins (2007) have criticised these authors’ work on the grounds that it is introspectively conceived. However, as will be outlined later (Section 2.5), authors such as Kapferer (2004) and de Chernatony (2006) regard relationships as a dimension of brand identity whilst those that do not, such as Aaker (1996a) and Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), note how relationships play an important role in the brand identity building process. Subsequently, it is debatable if a relationship can be developed without a concern for the external party the brand wishes to engage in a relationship with. In order for a ‘relationship’ to exist both parties need to be cognisant of and respond to the others’ needs’ or it will inevitably disintegrate. Consequently, whilst brand identity emanates from the organisation it is questionable if any brand identity scholars thought of brand identity in such an inward looking way. Second, if organisations did not have a vision for their brand’s identity that was guided by a strong internal conviction it is conceivable that all brand identities in a given market would be variations on the same theme. The reason being such organisations would be following the same strategy of strictly following customers’ needs. This, potentially, results in a circular logic where a key objective of brand identity building to facilitate differentiation may not actually be achieved.

Based on the above, Aaker (1996a) and Aaker and Joachimsthaler's (2000) work was considered a particularly useful starting point for developing a preliminary service brand identity definition. This logic was primarily guided by the clear, concise and unambiguous language these scholars use which helps specify the 'domain' of the construct (Churchill, 1979). Furthermore, Aaker's (1996a) work provides some sampling frame guidance in the form of the brand "strategist", who one could reasonably assume to be a senior marketer. Consequently, guided by this rationale and these authors' work, service brand identity is *preliminarily* defined as:

The strategist's vision of how a service brand should be perceived by its stakeholders.

This definition represents an initial step towards developing a service brand identity definition. However, this literature-based definition should be considered as a theoretical starting point for defining service brand identity which will be augmented to incorporate the construct's dimensions once they have been revealed after data analysis (Chapter 5).

2.4.4. Brand identity, Corporate Identity and Corporate Branding – Distinct but Related Constructs.

The previous sections reviewed the organisational, corporate and brand identity literature to make the distinction between these constructs. This section will now provide the logic for considering brand identity, corporate identity and corporate branding as distinct but related constructs. Figure 7 conceptualises this section’s discussion.

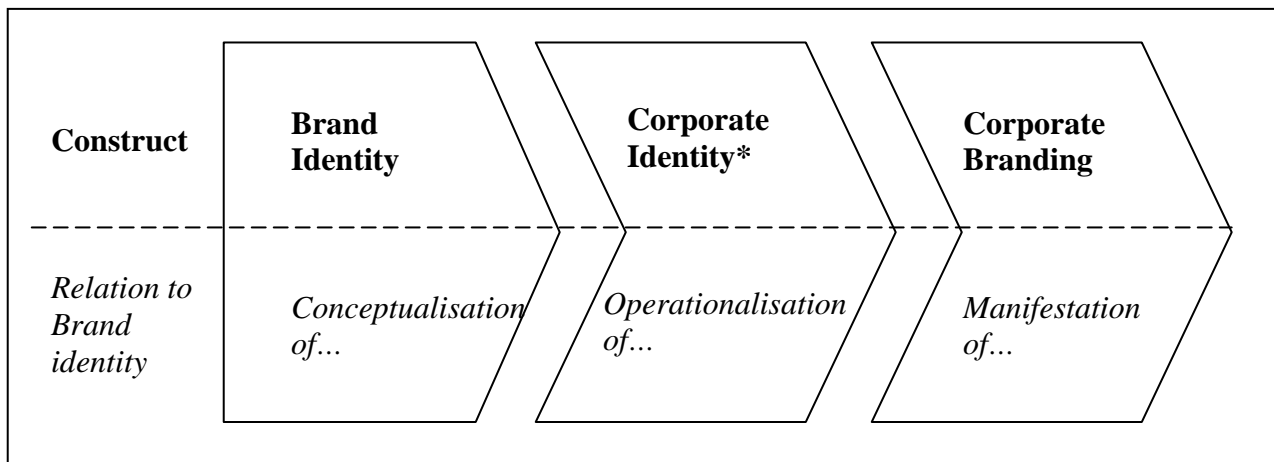


Figure 7 Conceptualising Brand Identity, Corporate Identity and Corporate Branding
*With tenets of behaviour, symbolism & communications

First, the relationship between brand identity and corporate identity will be considered. The brand identity literature highlighted how this construct is concerned with the strategist’s vision for how they want the brand to be perceived by its stakeholders (cf: Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000). Hence, brand identity relates to the *conceptualisation* of brand identity and is psychologically focused. Furthermore, the unit of analysis is a person (i.e. the strategist) as opposed to an organisation which is the case for corporate identity and corporate branding. It is

suggested here that corporate identity provides some, but not all of the ‘apparatus’ or ‘tools’ for *operationalising* the strategist’s vision for how they want the brand to be perceived by its stakeholders. In the context of corporate and brand identity this is achieved via the tenets of the interdisciplinary school which are behaviour, symbolism and communications. This position is consistent with He and Mukherjee (2009b) who note how corporate identity is the starting point for developing the corporate brand (in addition to an organisation’s reputation). However, as will be highlighted in the next chapter, whilst these tenets help operationalise brand identity, they are not the only ways in which brand identity is made more tangible with brand personality and the management of client relationships providing relevant examples. This shares the author’s view on why brand identity and corporate identity can be considered distinct but related constructs.

In terms of corporate identity and corporate branding, Balmer and Greyser (2003) make several useful distinctions. Firstly, corporate branding has more of an external focus and aims to achieve profile vis-à-vis identity. Second, corporate brands can be financially valued / amortised in a way corporate identity cannot. For example in 2002, Coca Cola’s brand accounted for 61% of the organisation’s market capitalisation (Hatch and Rubin, 2006). Finally, corporate identity helps underpin corporate branding (Balmer, 1995) insofar that corporate branding is a way of *manifesting* corporate identity (Balmer and Greyser, 2003). For these reasons corporate identity is considered an antecedent of corporate branding.

To summarise, brand identity is made manifest via corporate branding with the latter being facilitated by, amongst other constructs (as will be highlighted in the next chapter), the tenets of corporate identity. If brand identity was not made manifest in this way it would remain merely a

psychological or cognitive construct within the strategist's mind given its focus on the strategists' vision.

2.4.5. Brand Identity – An Identity Orphan?

Earlier sections in this chapter made the distinction between organisational, corporate and brand identity. This section develops the literature from the theoretical perspective to highlight how brand identity is something of an identity orphan without a theoretical home.

Balmer and Greyser (2003) outline how the disciplinary roots of identity originate from three main areas: marketing / corporate communications (Abratt, 1989; Balmer, 1998; Cheney and Christensen, 1999; Van Riel, 1995; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997), organisational behaviour (Albert and Whetten, 1985; Ashford and Mael, 1996; Dutton and Dukerich, 1991; Hatch and Schultz, 1997) and graphic design (Napoles, 1988; Olins, 1995; Pilditch, 1970). Hatch and Schultz (2000) develop this point further by noting how organisational identity has primarily been influenced by organisational studies (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991, Dutton et al., 1994, Gioia and Thomas, 1996, Gioia et al., 1998, Albert and Whetten, 1985), corporate identity by marketing literature and consultants / practitioners (Abratt, 1989; Balmer, 1998; Bernstein, 1986; Olins, 1989; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997) whilst the fields of strategy (Gray and Smeltzer, 1985) and communication (Cheney and Christensen, 1999, Markwick and Fill, 1997) have contributed to both. More recently Balmer (2008) notes how the marketing and organisational behaviour literatures have played a particularly important role in developing the corporate identity literature.

Intriguingly, given marketing's input into the corporate identity literature, the brand identity literature (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 1997, 2004) receives at best little, if no reference, within the corporate identity literature. Furthermore, the development of brand identity schools of thought has not occurred. Consequently, brand identity can be regarded as being something of an identity orphan in terms of the broader identity literature given it tends to be somewhat isolated and does not have a theoretical home. This is problematic given it is important academic research adopts a theoretical perspective that informs subsequent theorising and academic research. In response to this issue, two academic opportunities arise. First, brand identity schools of thought could be developed. Second, the marketing roots of corporate identity could be drawn on to identify a school which has relevance to this service brand identity research. In this sense, a corporate identity school could act as a proxy for a service brand identity school given the former's relevance to this service brand identity research. As of yet, the brand identity literature appears to be insufficiently developed to form schools of thought given the limited research that has taken place in this area. Consequently, this thesis will adopt the second approach with the rationale being discussed next.

2.4.6. Finding a Theoretical Home for the Brand Identity Orphan

In the absence of brand identity schools of thought, this section provides the logic for this thesis aligning with the corporate identity literature's interdisciplinary school and proceeds as follows. Initially, the shortcomings of aligning with certain schools as outlined in Balmer's (1995) and Van Riel and Balmer's (1997) taxonomies will be outlined which simultaneously provides the logic for aligning with the interdisciplinary school. The section closes by noting how

interdisciplinary school alignment does not necessarily negate the importance of organisational identity in the context of service brand identity research. The reason being this literature stream feeds into the development of this thesis' service brand identity conceptualisation via the interdisciplinary schools behavioural tenet.

Balmer (1995) presented seven schools of thought (Figure 5) whose suitability as a theoretical home for brand identity will now be considered. Firstly, the management of visual imagery or graphics can be regarded as part of, but not the complete representation of identity (Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Olins, 1978a). Whilst symbolism helps make intangible brand promises more concrete (Berry, 2000; Keller, 2003), the communication of symbols or visual imagery alone does not make an organisation more effective (Grunig, 1993). This point is of amplified importance given this thesis' service focus and central role employees' play in such industries (Ashford and Mael, 1996; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2006; Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2009; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Hulberg, 2006; Kennedy, 1977; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2006). The reason being service brand employees mediate the brands values at the service encounter (Bostrom and Isberg, 2009). Consequently, this limits the utility of focusing purely on the visual / design school in the context of service based research.

Whilst communicating with both internal and external stakeholders plays a critical role in executing brand identity, it is contended here that utilising communication in isolation is inadequate for building service brand identity. In a similar manner to the visual school, the importance of this

point is amplified in the service sector given this school fails to account crucial role human play at service brands. Consequently, this limits the utility of aligning with a communications school.

Finally, the behavioural school (culture) can be regarded as a function of the strategic school (vision, mission and philosophy). Whilst factors such as advertising, leadership, office location, social responsibility programs and so forth mobilise, support or help reinforce the vision, mission and philosophy of an organisation, these three constructs will both inform, and to a large extent (but not entirely), be enacted by organisational culture (behaviour). Consequently, a more informed approach may be to consider these two schools as one given they appear to be inextricably linked (cf: Section 2.4.2). Whilst it is clear from the literature behaviour plays a central role in service brand delivery, it is contended here that brand consistent behaviour alone will not facilitate informed service brand identity building. The reason being symbolism, communication and other activities that will be outlined in the next chapter need to be considered as part of a holistic service brand identity building process.

In terms of Van Riel and Balmer's (1997) taxonomy, the utility of the graphic and integrated communications paradigms can be questioned on the above grounds. However, by drawing on behaviour, symbolism and communication the interdisciplinary school appears to be particularly appropriate for this service based research. Behaviour is critical for service brands given the role employees play in enacting the brand. Communication needs to occur with a variety of brand stakeholders in order to allow brand identity to be more than a psychological construct whilst symbolism helps tangibilise the otherwise largely intangible brand promise service organisations make. Adopting this interdisciplinary position is consistent with numerous other marketing scholars

(Abratt, 1989; Balmer, 2001a; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Hatch and Schultz, 2000; Markwick and Fill, 1997; Melewar et al., 2006; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997) who see corporate identity research being multidisciplinary in nature as not just as being concerned with visual imagery alone.

Interestingly, other branding scholars such as Keller and Richey (2006) when developing a view on corporate brand personality have also noticed parallels between their work and dimensions of the Corporate Identity Mix.

Whilst the above provides this thesis' logic for aligning with the corporate identity literature's interdisciplinary school, the role organisational identity plays in making service brand identity manifest should not be understated. The reason being employee identification is a behavioural precursor. In other words, the extent to which organisational members' identify *with* their employing organisation will influence the (brand) behaviour customer's experience (Stuart, 2003). Consequently, it is critical service-based brand identity research is cognisant of this internal context and so the organisational studies literature given organisational members influence external stakeholders' perceptions (Ambler, 2003; Chandon et al., 1997; Dowling, 1986; Grunig, 1993; Heskett et al., 1997; Kennedy, 1977; Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). This position appears to be finding more recent support in the corporate identity literature. For instance, scholars such as He and Mukherjee (2009b) argue organisational identification, which plays a central role in organisational identity, acts as an antecedent to behaviours such as loyalty and commitment. Similarly, Balmer (2008) notes "it would appear that a consensus is gradually emerging that both traditions (including reference to the concepts of corporate identity and organisational identity) are complementary and , therefore mutually enriching" (p. 881). Consequently, these scholars' views reiterate the position that organisational and corporate identity are connected (Stuart, 2003). The logic for adopting this

combined position can be grounded in the view that the more employees identify with an organisation the more likely they are to show a supportive attitude towards it (Mael and Ashford, 1992) and so make decisions consistent with the organisation's objectives (Littlejohn, 1993). As a result of adopting this perspective an organisational and corporate identity dichotomy may be somewhat diluted where organisational identity becomes an integral element, or antecedent, of corporate identity via the behavioural tenet of the interdisciplinary school. Figure 8 conceptualises this.

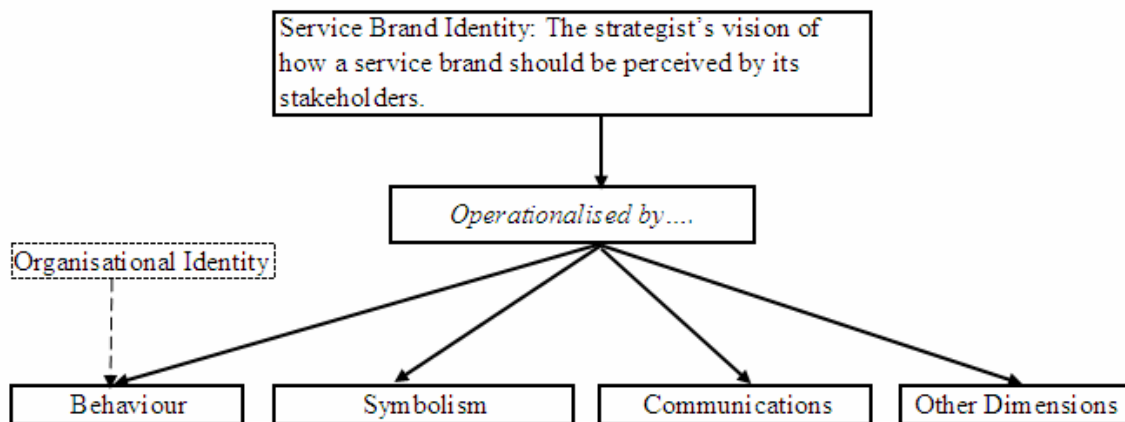


Figure 8 Reconceptualising the Corporate, Organisational and Brand Identity Literature

Once more, the point should be reiterated that whilst the tenets of the interdisciplinary school help operationalise service brand identity (cf: Section 2.4.4) they are not the only dimensions that make the construct manifest as will be highlighted later in this research. Developing such an amalgamated line of thought is consistent with other scholars (Cornelissen et al., 2007; Hatch and Schultz, 1997; 2000) who regard the organisational and corporate identity (and in the case of Cornelissen et al, 2007a organisational and social identity) boundaries as becoming increasingly blurred, overlapping or interconnected. It is also interesting to note that similar cross disciplinary

developments appear to be taking root within the brand identity literature. For example, Burmann and Zeplin (2005) regard employee identification with the brand as an essential prerequisite for consistent and supportive brand identity behaviour. Consequently, such developments echo Baker's (1999) view where marketing draws on a range of other disciplines such as economics, sociology, psychology and strategy to name a few to develop a body of marketing knowledge. Hence, in this section has outlined, how in the absence of theoretical schools of thought being developed within the brand identity literature, for now, the Interdisciplinary School provides a suitable proxy in order to guide subsequent, more theoretically orientated service brand identity research which is interdisciplinary in nature.

2.5. Models of Brand Identity

The previous sections of this chapter have reviewed three main 'types' of identity in detail in order to see through the proverbial fog and develop a preliminary service brand identity definition. The relevance of the Interdisciplinary School as a proxy theoretical home for the brand identity orphan was also noted. This thesis will now focus on brand identity by introducing and evaluating related frameworks that have been published in the literature. The objective of this section is to explore theoretical dimensions of brand identity which can be incorporated into the theoretical framework developed in the next chapter and highlight why current frameworks could not be holistically operationalised in this research. Practitioner based models such as Upshaw's (1995) work will not be reviewed in detail as they tend not to be subject to rigour of theoretical models.

2.5.1. Kapferer's (2004) Hexagonal Identity Prism

Kapferer's (2004) Hexagonal Identity Prism model conceptualises brand identity along six facets.

These are *physique*, *personality*, *relationships*, *culture*, *self image* and *reflection*, Figure 9.

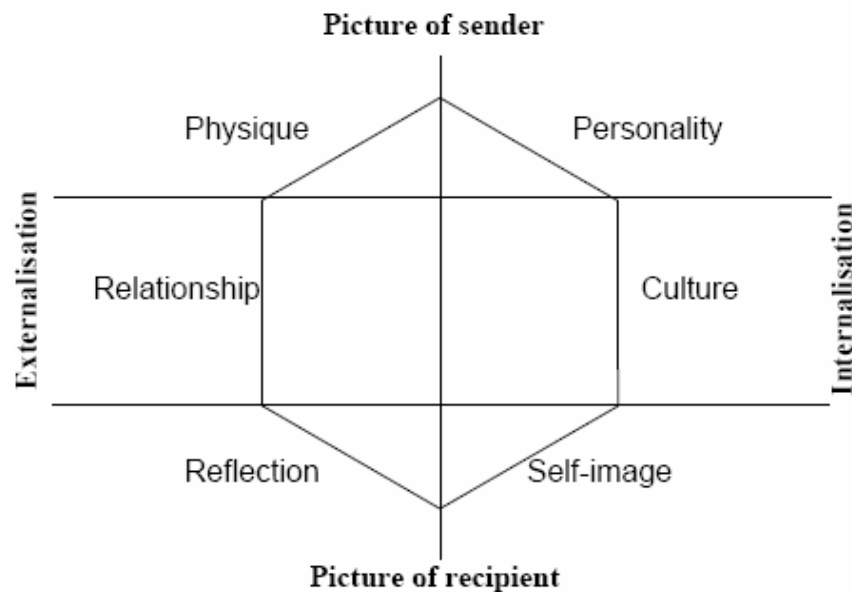


Figure 9 Hexagonal Identity Prism Model (Kapferer, 2004)

Physique relates to the concrete, tangible or objective features of the brand encompassing product features, symbols and attributes. These are considered the basic purpose of the brand in terms of what the brand is, what it does and how it looks. Whilst not explicit in Kapferer's (2004) work it is not unreasonable to interpret *physique* as having service branding applicability. For example, the minimal offices, table football, computer consoles and so forth contribute to the creative and artistic brand identity many advertising agencies wish to build. This position is consistent with scholars such as Dowling (1994) who regard physical cues such as premises, architecture, location, interior décor and so forth as contributing to the organisation's visual identity.

Personality considers how brands can be ‘humanised’ through ‘traits’ and so reveals the brand’s character and attitude in a more emotionally orientated manner. Developing brand personality entails addressing questions such as if this brand was a person what type of person would it be. A brand may be considered rugged and masculine (Marlboro). Hence, this facet of Kapferer’s (2004) model draws heavily on Aaker’s (1997) seminal brand personality work. *Culture* relates to the fundamental values the brand and / or organisation stand for in addition to the norms that guide employees’ behaviour to facilitate brand identity building. Considering identity in terms of a *relationship* takes a brand beyond a purely functional domain given that emotions are an intricate part of any relationship. A relationship could be characterised as caring e.g. Fairy or as providing status e.g. American Express. *Reflection*, relates to the brand being an instrument for the individual to make a statement about their actual or desired self (cf: Sirgy, 1982). Consequently, marketing communications reflecting the brand being used by a certain *type* of individual in a certain way plays a particularly important role. The reason being such communications allow customers to imagine themselves using the good or service in a particular way or at a particular time. *Self image* relates to how the brand is viewed introspectively by the customer in terms of a personal brand evaluation.

As Figure 9 highlights, Kapferer’s (2004) model considers the six brand identity facets from four perspectives. First, the sender and receiver of brand identity. Second, an internal and external perspective. Physical appearance and personality are controlled by the sender whilst consumer reflection and self-image are concerned with the receiver. Culture and relationships link the sender and the recipient and so in this sense act as a common denominator between the brand (the sender) and the consumer (the receiver). In terms of internalisation and externalisation, elements to the left

of the model such as physical appearance, relationship and consumer reflection are social, provide brand with a form of external expression and are visible. Conversely, the facets to the right, that is, personality, culture and consumer self-image are connected with the inside of a brand and its ‘soul’.

2.5.2. Aaker’s (1996) Brand Identity Planning System

To provide structure to an organisation’s brand identity building efforts Aaker (1996a) advances a Brand Identity Planning Model (Figure 10)

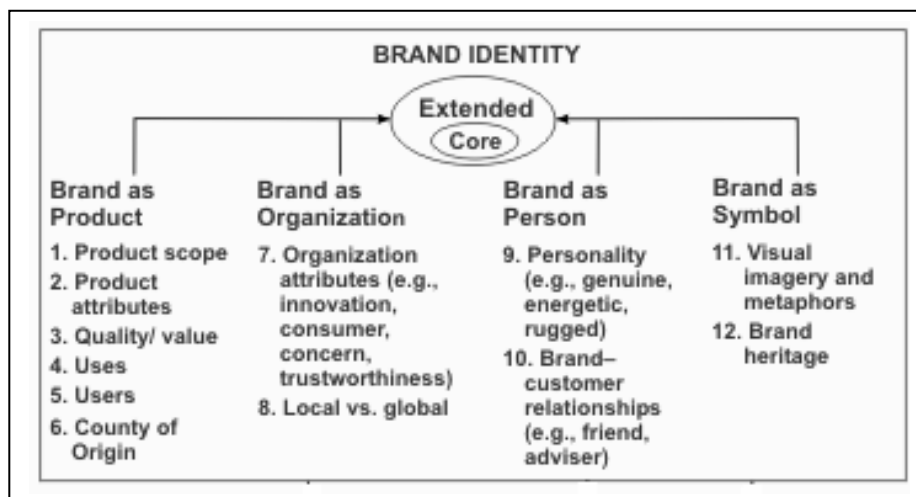


Figure 10 Brand Identity Planning Model (Aaker, 1996a)

Aaker’s (1996a) model advocates brand strategists consider brand from four perspectives. These are brand as a *product*, an *organisation*, a *person* and a *symbol*. By considering each of these four perspectives, Aaker (1996a) argues this approach helps brand strategists consider different brand elements which clarify, distinguish and add depth to a brand identity.

The brand as a product perspective concerns developing brand associations within a specific product class (Oracle and database software). Aaker (1996a) outlines how the important point is not for a brand to be recalled when a brand in a class is mentioned but for customers to recall a brand when there is a need in relation to a given product class. The brand as an *organisation* perspective focuses on organisational attributes or associations (e.g. 3M and innovation, Body Shop and ethics) instead of a specific good or service. Aaker (1996a) considered the organisational perspective particularly important given it is more durable and resilient to competitive threats. Through the brand as a *person* perspective, Aaker (1996a) suggests brands can embody a more human form by displaying traits such as being ‘entrepreneurial’ (Skype) with the outcome being a richer and more interesting brand than if just a product perspective was employed. Aaker (1996a) develops this point noting how brand personality facilitates building stronger brands in three ways. He argues personality helps consumers express their own personalities, provides a foundation for customer-brand relationships whilst enabling a brand convey product attributes which contributes a functional brand benefit. The final perspective of Aaker’s (1996a) model concerns the brand as a *symbol* which helps, at a glance, stimulate brand associations that other brand marketing activities have looked to induce (the Michelin Man suggests a tire with strength, durability and energy). Aaker (1996a) contends symbols that capitalise on visual imagery, metaphors and brand heritage play a particularly important role in driving brand awareness as part of an overall equity building effort. It should be noted that when utilising the model, Aaker (1996a) advocates organisations consider all four perspectives but only use those which are helpful in terms of articulating the brand in the consumer’s mind. In the case of service brands, the product dimension is a potential candidate for consideration but not for explicit inclusion.

Aaker's (1996a) model also encompasses a core and an extended brand identity. The core identity encapsulates the timeless brand essence which is built and sustained over time. It is pivotal to both the central meaning and success of the brand whilst developing associations that are likely to remain constant if the brand moves into new products and / or markets. The extended identity includes elements that provide texture and completeness to the core identity by adding details that help reveal what the brand stands for.

2.5.3. Aaker and Joachimsthaler's (2000) Brand Leadership Model

Aaker and Joachimsthaler's (2000) Brand Leadership Model augments Aaker's (1996) work via the inclusion of *brand essence* and *elaboration of brand identity*. Firstly, at the heart of the core and extended identity, the *brand essence* should be considered as "a compact summary of what the brand stands for" (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; 40) or "a single thought that captures the soul of the organisation." (p. 45). The brand essence looks to communicate the brand's identity in a compact and inspiring way (Kotler and Keller, 2008).

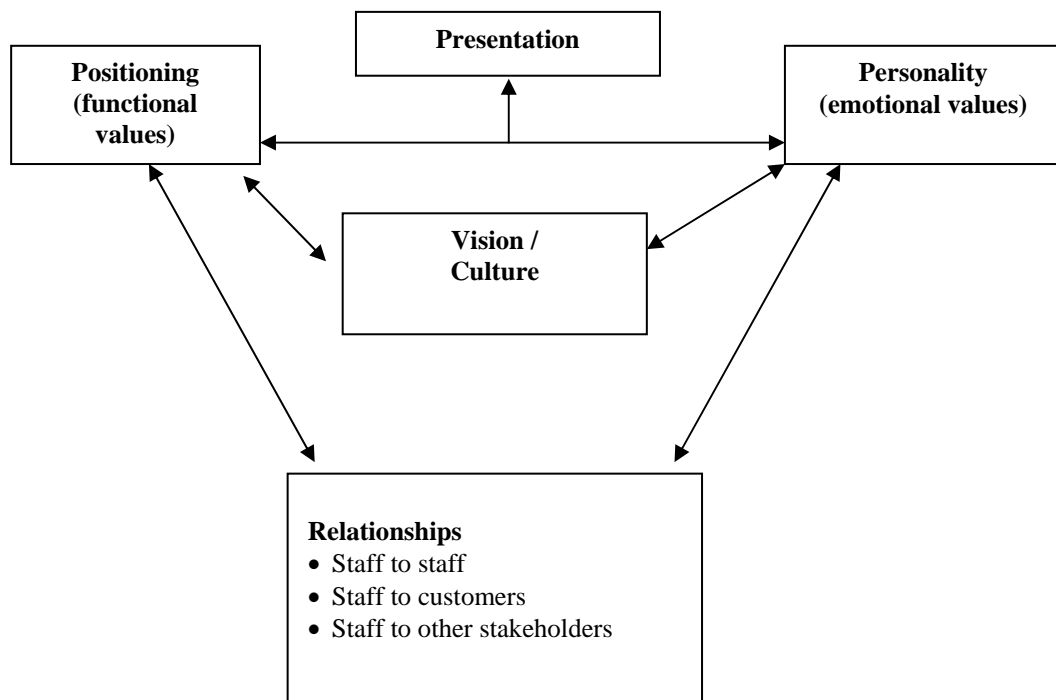
The objective of *brand identity elaboration* is to provide the identity with greater clarity and distinctiveness whilst reducing the ambiguity, brevity or "terseness" (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000: 65). Elaborating the brand identity consists of several activities which are informed by an *identity audit*. As part of brand identity elaboration, the brand strategist needs to identify *internal and external brand identity role models* to communicate the identity to their respective audiences. From an internal perspective, this individual must have visibility of, and authority to influence brand related-decisions within the organisation. In essence, this individual becomes a brand identity

champion who promotes and drives brand identity-related initiatives forward. Externally, role models whose personalities align with the desired brand identity need to be identified so associations, consistent with the desired brand identity, can be created in consumers' minds. Brands frequently employ actors or sports celebrities to transmit the brand identity in this way. The use of *metaphors* to make the identity a more distinctive and striking also facilitates elaboration of the brand identity. This practice is particularly notable in the financial services sector where organisations such as Citi Group use an umbrella as a metaphor for protection and security. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) also outline how it is important to *prioritise* the *brand identity* elements which will be central to brand positioning. This activity provides focus and direction to the brand building effort.

2.5.4. de Chernatony's (2006) Components of Brand Identity.

Building on earlier work (de Chernatony, 1999) de Chernatony (2006) proposes a model for considering components of brand identity (Figure 11).

Figure 11 Components of Brand Identity (de Chernatony, 2006)



Working from the centre of the model out, at the heart of any brand is a *vision* which provides the brand with strategic direction and guidance. For this vision to be realised, a *culture* that supports brand consistent behaviour needs to be developed. Such a culture requires staff who believe in the brand's values in addition to managers that hold congruent views concerning market characteristics and so how their brand should be developed within it. The next stage is for the brand

to become more tangible via its *positioning* and *personality*. In this model, positioning is concerned with manifesting functional values whilst personality relates to making emotional values more animate. To support the positioning, personality and vision / culture, staff need to have a clear understanding of, and manage their *relationships* with, colleagues, customers and other stakeholders in order to enact the brand's values in a manner congruent with the desired brand identity. The result of considering these dimensions which manifest in a unified form of internal behaviour is the effective and consistent *presentation* of the brand which "differentiates the brand in a manner which stakeholders welcome." (de Chernatony, 2006: 46).

2.5.5. Frameworks of Brand Identity – Critical Evaluation

The previous section of this chapter reviewed grounded brand identity frameworks. These frameworks have helped the research community develop a formative understanding of what brand identity is whilst providing a valuable platform for subsequent research. However, they were not the subject of this research for several reasons.

Primarily, although only a small number of frameworks have been developed, an eclectic range of dimensions have been advanced in the literature. Whilst this makes explicit the multidimensional nature of the construct it also makes developing a common understanding of what constitutes brand identity challenging. For example, Aaker (1996a) does not consider 'relationships' or 'culture' whilst for de Chernatony (2006) and Kapferer (2004) they are both key. This issue is

compounded by the conceptual nature of these frameworks which makes it difficult to determine which scholars' work is the most plausible and so warrants subsequent empirical research.

From a scale development perspective, the current frameworks are problematic. For instance, it could be argued some frameworks, such as Kapferer's (2004) identity prism, are too abstract to be operationalised. More specially, it is unclear how some dimensions such as 'product' or 'organisation' (Aaker, 1996a) could be scaled given they are so broadly conceived. Also, it is debatable if some dimensions such as 'elaboration of brand identity' (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000) or 'presentation' (de Chernatony, 2006) are activities or constructs with the former being unsuitable for scaling. This presents the academic community with the challenge of how to scale such frameworks and so prevents researchers from applying scales in order to address questions such as: does brand identity drive performance? If so, which dimensions of brand identity are particularly important in driving performance or do they play a relatively equal role?

The logic underpinning some frameworks is also open to discussion. For example, Kapferer (2004) considers self image and reflection facets of brand identity. However, these consumer based constructs seem to be at odds with the consensus of opinion that brand identity is an input (cf: de Chernatony, 2006).

Finally, these frameworks appear to have been generically conceived. For example, several scholars have noted how service and goods marketing are different (Berry, 1980; Kim et al., 2003a; Low and Lamb, 2000). Whilst de Chernatony (2006) and Aaker's (1996) work may have some service brand applicability as they account for internal stakeholders and the organisation / symbol

respectively these frameworks, in their entirety, do not account for the distinctive challenges service branding brings where human resource plays a pivotal role (Ashford and Mael, 1996; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2006; Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2009; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Hulberg, 2006; Kennedy, 1977; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2006).

Current frameworks are not cognisant of a B2B context. As a direct result their applicability in B2B markets, which present unique marketing challenges (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006b), remains unclear.

For these reasons it was considered more appropriate to build on these scholars' conceptual thinking to develop the domain of service brand identity as opposed to operationalising one of their frameworks in isolation.

2.5.6. Brand Identity in the B2B Literature

In the B2B literature embryonic brand identity research is starting to emerge (Beverland et al., 2007a; Beverland et al., 2007b). For instance, Beverland et al. (2007a) draw on Aaker and Joachimsthaler's (2000) Global Brand Leadership Framework to postulate an Industrial Global Brand Leadership Framework which is intermittently referred to as brand identity. These scholars

contend brand identity is built around five capabilities. These are *relational support, coordinating network players, leveraging brand architecture, adding value* and *quantifying the intangible*.

Underpinning these capabilities were the five organisational level capabilities termed *entrepreneurial, reflexive, innovative, brand supportive dominant logic* and *executional abilities*.

Whilst making an interesting contribution to the field these scholars' work was not incorporated into this research for two reasons. Primarily, brand identity was regarded as "the key words or phrases that sum up the core values of the brand" (p. 1086). As the previous section outlined, considering brand identity merely in terms of words or phrases simplifies the construct's complexity whilst detracting from its rich and multidimensional nature. Articulating brand identity in this way also makes the logic underpinning the authors subsequent construct dimensionality questionable. The reason being the proposed dimensionality extends beyond the parameters of the definition provided (cf; Churchill, 1979). Second, Beverland et al. (2007), on numerous occasions (p. 1083; 1085; 1088) amalgamate brand identity and positioning or refer to the constructs interchangeably. As noted earlier these two constructs although related are theoretically distinct (cf; Kapferer, 2004).

In subsequent work, Beverland et al's (2007b) refer to "identifying key attributes that business marketers can use to build a strong brand identity" (p. 394) as the purpose of their paper. These attributes include *product, services, logistics, adaptation* and *advice* which are referred to as the "basis" (p. 395), "forms" (P. 397) or "pillars" (p. 397) of brand identity. However, it is contended such an approach confuses brand identity building and brand positioning. The reason being these scholars do not consider building brand identity (the means) per se but the positioning

(the ends) of brands around *product* benefits, levels of *service* or by being *adaptive* and providing *advice*. Indeed, unlike the frameworks outlined above (Section 2.5), advice on how to realise these “forms” (or more accurately execute such brand positioning strategies) of brand identity is, unfortunately, not provided. Informed by this logic it is contended these authors are not referring to attributes marketers’ can use to build brand identity but brand positioning options with the latter being made manifest via the former (cf: Kapferer, 2004). For these reasons it was not considered plausible to incorporate Beverland et al’s (2007a; 2007b) work into this research as it is regarded terminologically inconsistent and incongruent with the view of brand identity adopted herein as highlighted in Section 2.4.3.

2.5.7. Identity – Summary

This section of the chapter has introduced and explored organisational, corporate and brand identity. The objective has been to see through the proverbial fog shrouding the metaphorical Tower of Babel and so clearly articulate the type of identity which is of interest to this thesis. In order to develop a preliminary service brand identity definition this thesis drew on the work of Aaker (1996a) and Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000). This helped specify the domain of the construct (Churchill, 1979) and pave the way for subsequent scaling procedures (DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003). The relationship between brand identity, corporate identity and corporate branding was also explored.

Of particular note is how the brand identity literature has yet to develop schools of thought in the way the corporate identity literature has. The logic for aligning with the corporate identity interdisciplinary school was then provided. Notably, this literature has been informed by *marketing* scholars and consultants whilst its tenets are particularly relevant to service branding research. This results in the interdisciplinary school potentially providing a suitable theoretical home, by proxy, for the brand identity orphan whilst providing an interdisciplinary logic for subsequent theoretical development in this area.

A review of the brand identity frameworks then followed. This highlighted how brand identity is a multidimensional construct but agreement on dimensionality does not exist. Furthermore, numerous limitations with current frameworks were noted. This provided the rationale for this thesis extending the current literature to develop a service brand identity framework as opposed to operationalising a given author's work in the next chapter.

2.6. Brand Performance

The previous sections of this chapter reviewed the brand, service and identity literature. This section considers how this thesis' endogenous variable, brand performance, has been operationalised in the literature. Reviewing this literature also provided theoretical guidance with regards to the brand performance measure employed later in this research.

Brand metrics have become an area of increasing brand management interest in recent

years (Kim et al., 2003a; Rubinson and Pfeiffer, 2005; Schultz, 2005). Amongst others, several factors have been cited in the literature as driving this interest. These include the need for greater marketing accountability (Ambler, 2000a,b; Doyle, 2000; Farris et al., 2008; Rust et al., 2004a), the desire for greater marketing boardroom 'clout'(Ambler, 2003; Munoz and Kumar, 2004) and credibility (Rust et al., 2004a), investor pressures (Clark, 1999), today's cost cutting environment will no longer accept a no measurement culture (Ambler, 2003) and a greater appreciation, that business performance is, amongst other factors, influenced by brand performance (Aaker, 1996a; de Chernatony, 2006; Doyle, 2000; Hoeffler and Keller, 2003b; Ittner and Larcker, 2003; Kim et al., 2003a; Rubinson and Pfeiffer, 2005; Srivastava and Shocker, 1991).

This section of the chapter opens by reviewing approaches to brand performance measurement along financial, customer and employee dimensions. Adopting this approach results in the emergence of four 'clusters' of literature (financial focusers, customer carers, brand brokers and balanced branders) which are then evaluated. The following section develops a theoretically grounded brand performance measure with the rationale for excluding, and including, certain measures being provided. This section closes by reiterating the importance of taking a balanced approach to service brand measurement and that no single measure fully captures the depth of brand performance (Farris et al., 2008; Lehmann et al., 2008).

2.6.1. Approaches to Measuring Brand Performance

Within the marketing literature, it has been noted that a universal brand performance measure does not exist (Ambler, 2003; de Chernatony et al., 2004; Lehmann et al., 2008; Schultz, 2005). This can be regarded as a function of the environment / organisation's strategy (Ambler, 2003; Day and Nedungadi, 1994), department (Deshpande and Webster, 1989b), market / sector (Ambler, 2003; Oktemgil, 2003), different managerial mental models (de Chernatony et al., 1993) or more simply because no single metric is likely to be perfect (Farris et al., 2008).

As this section outlines, a broad range of measures have been used to operationalise brand performance. Consequently, to organise, introduce and evaluate the brand performance literature this thesis needed to develop a framework. This framework is structured around customer, financial and employee dimensions. The importance of a customer has been central to marketing since the advent of the marketing concept (Kotler, 1967). Furthermore, marketing theory and practice have become increasingly customer driven over the last 40 years (Vavra, 1997) with constructs such as marketing orientation becoming central to the discipline (Ambler, 2000b, 2003; Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Narver and Slater, 1990; Slater and Narver, 1994). Of particular interest is how developing a market orientation has been shown to have a notable effect on the performance of service brands (Cano et al., 2004) whilst the centrality of customers within the widely embraced service dominant logic has amplified their importance in recent years (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a). Several scholars have highlighted the importance of financially based brand metrics (Aaker, 1996a; Doyle, 2000; Munoz and Kumar, 2004; Schultz, 2005, 2006) and the growing role they play in justifying marketing expenditures (Ambler, 2003). Given the prominent role financial play at

organisations (Schultz, 2006) and the relevance they have to senior executives (Rubinson and Pfeiffer, 2005) it is challenging to envisage a brand performance measure that does not incorporate financial metrics. Finally, the corporate branding literature review revealed the pivotal role employees play for service brands (Ashford and Mael, 1996; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2006; Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2009; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Hulberg, 2006; Kennedy, 1977; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2006) whilst de Chernatony et al. (2004) note “most business performance measures have tended to evolve from goods, rather than service-centred organisations, overlooking services’ distinctive characteristics” (p.17). Consequently, the inclusion of employee based measures is intended to address these issues.

Consequently, ‘customer’, ‘finance’ and ‘employees’ emerge as key service brand dimensions as so will be used to organise, introduce and evaluate the brand performance literature. Figure 12 summarises authors’ ‘clusters’ of thought along these dimensions, Table 2 outlines authors that constitute each cluster and provides details on the measures respective authors have used. Consultancy models such as those provided by Young and Rubican (BrandAsset® Valuator), WPP (Brandz™), Interbrand (Brand Valuation Method) or Millward Brown (Optimor) have not be reviewed given they are proprietary and so full access would have been unlikely.

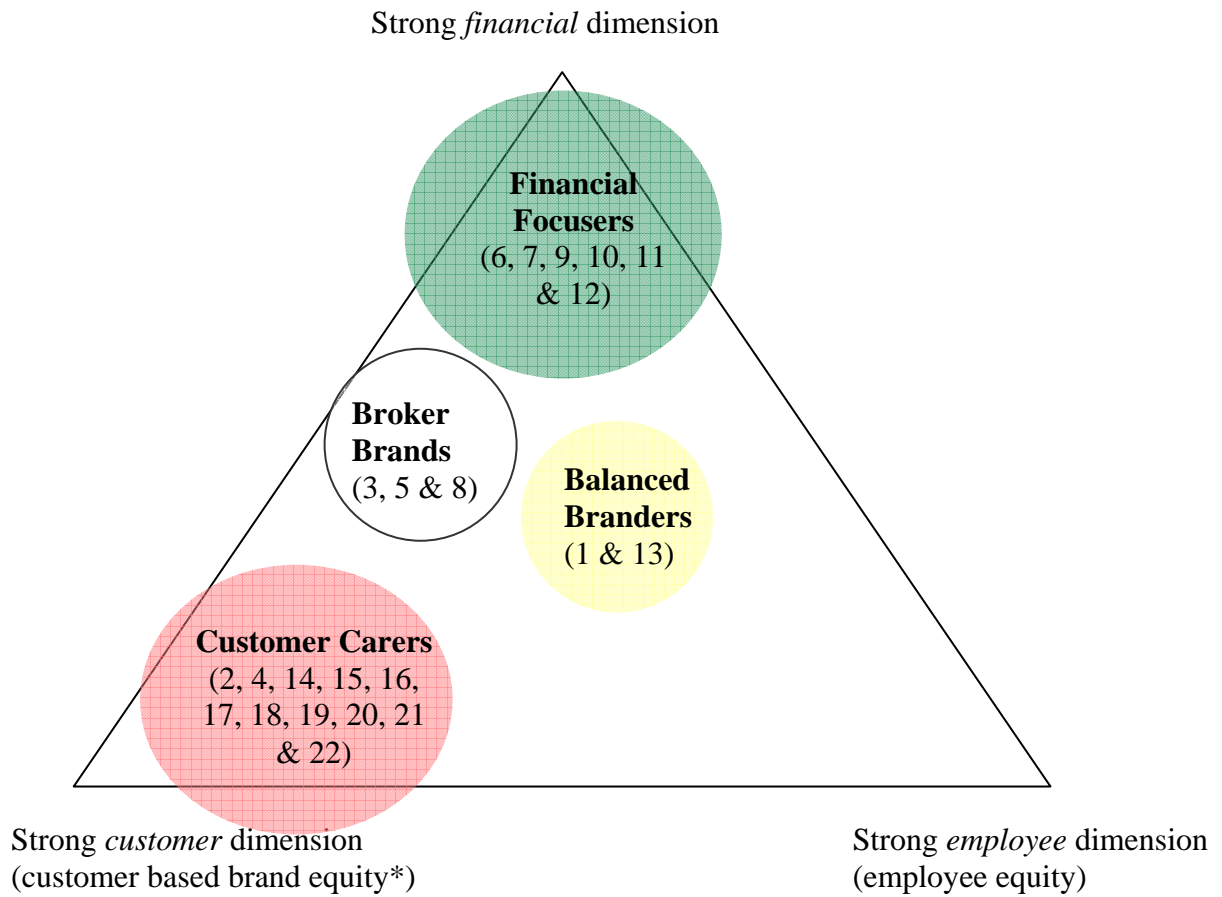


Figure 12 Clustering the Brand Performance Literature Along Financial, Customer and Employee Dimensions

Table 2 Authors' that Constitute Each Cluster within the Brand Performance Literature

Number	Author(s)
1	Ambler (2003)
2	de Chernatony et al.(2004)
3	Fitzgerald et al.(1991)
4	Egan and Guilding (1994)
5	Munoz and Kumar (2004)
6	Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001)
7	Chaudhuri (1999)
8	Ehrenberg et al.(2004)
9	Roth (1995b, , 1995a)
10	Ghosh et al.(1995)
11	Weerawardena et al. (2006)
12	O'Cass and Ngo (2007a)
13	Oktemgil (2003)
14	Aaker (1991)
15	Keller (1993; 1998; 2003)
16	Sharp (1995)
17	Berry (2000)
18	Yoo & Donthu (2001)
19	Kim et al (2003a)
20	Shocker and Weitz (1988)
21	Pappu et al (2005)
22	Yasin et al.(2007)

		Market Share (Note 1)	Cash Flow / Liquidity	Relative Price	Shelf Facing Space	Profit	Sales / Revenue (Note 2)	Overall performance	Return On Investment	Loyalty (conative / behavioral) / relationships*	Relative Satisfaction (affective)	Reputation*(Image+)/Associations(&) / Meaning (#) / Personality(^)	Perceived Quality (cognitive)	Innovation	Level of Service	Differentiation	Awareness	Brand Penetration	Availability	Freedom to fail	Quality of Employment	Employee Satisfaction	Commitment to Brand	Employee Loyalty (Retention)	Resource Adequacy	Appetite for Learning	
NB: (V)= validated scale		Financial Measures						Customer Based Measures										Employee Measures									
Financial Focusers	Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001)	x		x																							
	Chaudhuri (1999)			x	x																						
	Roth (1995a, 1995b)	x																									
	Ghosh et al (1995)	x				x																					
	Weerawarden et al (2006)	x					x	x																			
	O'Cass and Ngo (2007)	x					x	x																			
Customer Carers	de Chernatony et al (2004) (V)								x	x	x (*)																
	Pappu et al (2005) (V)								x		x(&)	x					x										
	Yasin et al.(2007)								x		x(&)	x					x										
	Egan and Guilding (1994)											x	x	x	x												
	Aaker (1991; 1996a)	x		x			x		x	x	x(&/^)	x						x									
	Keller (1993)											x(+)						x									
	Sharp (1995)									x*		x(+)						x									
	Berry (2000)											x(#)						x									
	Yoo and Donthu (2001) (V)									x			x					x									
	Kim et al (2003) (V)									x		x(+)	x														
Shocker and Weitz (1988)									x		x(+)																
Broker Brands	Fitzgerald et al.(1991)	x	x			x	x							x	x												
	Ehrenberg et al. (2004)	x							x									x									
	Munoz and Kumar (2004)	x	x				x		x	x			x			x	x										
Balanced Branders	Ambler (2003)	x				x	x		x	x		x					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Oktemil (2003)	x				x	x		x	x							x							x			

Note 1: The only authors to specify how share was calculated were Ehrenberg et al. (2004) as volume of purchases/purchases in the category %. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) mentioned 'Sales' but did not specify further. Unfortunately, all other authors merely referred to market share without further explanation. Note 2: Overall performance was assumed to be financially focused given the orientation of the other measures these scholars' employed.

Figure 13 Conceptualising Brand Performance along Financial, Consumer and Employee Based Dimensions

As can be seen from Figure 13, there is a tendency for the literature to cluster in four. In the spirit of segmentation these shall be referred to as Financial 'Focusers', Customer 'Carers', 'Broker' Branders and 'Balanced' Branders.

2.6.1.1. Financial 'Focusers'

As the title suggests, financial focusers measure brand performance via financial metrics alone. When researching the influence of loyalty and trust on brand performance, Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) regarded the latter in terms of market share and relative price. When assessing the direct / indirect influence of brand attitudes and brand loyalty had on brand performance, Chaudhuri (1999) measured performance in terms of shelf space and relative price. Whilst relative price could be considered a brand related measure (and so falls within the Customer Carer's cluster) it is regarded as a financial measure here. The reason being price multiplied by units sold equals overall revenue and so is considered a more financially orientated measure. When assessing the influence industry structure, organisational learning and innovation had on performance, Ghosh et al. (1995) considered brand performance via market share and profitability. Weerawardena et al. (2006) defined performance in terms of relative market share, sales growth and the 'overall' performance whilst O'Cass and Ngo (2007a) used consumer measures of overall perception of the performance, market share and sales growth rate in the context of balancing external adaptation and internal effectiveness. Finally, Roth (1995a,b) considered market share as a proxy for performance when researching the influence of global marketing conditions on in this endogenous variable.

A financial focuser's perspective could be regarded as an oversimplified and short-termistic approach to brand performance (Barwise et al., 1990; Brignall and Ballantine, 1996; Egan and Guilding, 1994). Consequently, adopting this perspective is inconsistent with the view that brand building is a strategic activity (Kapferer, 2004; Keller et al., 2008). Whilst financial measures help with the analysis of previous marketing initiatives, decisions based on such data in isolation are retrospective and not strategic or forward looking (Rust et al., 2004a). Whilst brand managers need to be guided by past performance, strategic brand decisions cannot be informed by historical data in isolation. Previous sections of this chapter have highlighted the pivotal role employees' play for service brands. However, financial focusers' fail to incorporate employee-based equity measures into their measure. Finally, several scholars incorporate market share as a measure of brand performance (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; O'Cass and Ngo, 2007a; Roth, 1995a,b; Weerawardena et al., 2005). However, these authors fail to outline if share is based on units of sale, revenues of sale or number of customers which makes it challenging to determine which approach should be used. Consequently, financial focusers contribute to, but do not offer, a complete brand performance picture. Indeed purely financial methods are regarded as being inadequate for justifying marketing investments (Rust et al., 2004a) and measuring its performance (Clark, 1999).

2.6.1.2. Customer 'Carers'

Customer carers' tend to focus on consumer-based brand performance measures. For instance, when developing a consumer based measure for financial service brands, de Chernatony et al (2004) outline how "brand loyalty, consumer satisfaction and reputation

constitute the brand performance measure” (p. 15) which results in a brand performance measure “akin to consumer based brand equity” (p. 16). Whilst not brand performance measures per se, several approaches to measuring consumer based brand equity have been developed in the literature (Table 3). This is consistent with the view that a range of brand equity conceptualisations exist (de Chernatony et al., 2004, Mackay, 2001, Vasquez et al., 2002, Ambler, 2003, Schultz, 2005, Yoo and Donthu, 2001). Given these authors customer focus this thesis regards it as appropriate to consider these authors in the context of customer carers.

Table 3 Perspectives on Measuring Consumer Based Brand Equity

Aaker (1991, 1996b), Pappu et al. (2005), Yasin et al.(2007)	Keller (1993; 1998; 2003)	Sharp (1995)	Berry (2000)	Yoo & Donthu (2001)	Shocker & Weitz (1988)	Kim et al. (2003a)
Brand Awareness	Brand Awareness	Company / Brand Awareness	Brand Awareness	Brand Awareness / associations		
Brand Associations	Brand Image	Brand Image (or company / brand reputation)	Brand Meaning		Brand Image	Brand Image
Brand Loyalty		Relationships with customers / customer franchises		Brand Loyalty	Brand Loyalty	Brand Loyalty
Perceived Quality				Perceived Quality		Perceived Quality

Note 1: Aaker’s (1991, 1996b) work could potentially be considered within the broker brands category. The reason being it includes financial measures such as sales and share based on sales (on the assumption sales were based on revenue – this was not specified in this scholar’s work). However, Aaker’s (1991; 1996b) work is more frequently referred to in the brand literature in the context of consumer based brand equity and so is considered here. A fifth dimension of Aaker’s brand equity conceptualisation relates to patents and trademarks. As these relate to firm and not consumer based equity they are not included here.

Note 2: Yoo & Donthu’s (2001) work draws heavily on Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993).

Finally, building on Doyle's (1989) work, Egan and Guilding (1994), develop an interdisciplinary (marketing / management accounting) perspective on brand performance by theorising that perceived quality, innovation, superior levels of service and degree of differentiation are central to brand metrics.

Several points should be noted from the 'Customer Carers' work. For instance, earlier conceptualisations of brand equity such as those developed by Aaker (1996b) or Keller (1993) provided the platform for subsequent empirical research (de Chernatony et al., 2004; Kim et al., 2003a; Yoo and Donthu, 2001). However, it is questionable if brand marketers' would employ a range of metrics that did not incorporate financial measures. Furthermore, failing to consider employee based measures can be regarded as a potential shortcoming of 'Customer Carer's' research in the context of service brands. It would, retrospectively, be rather unfair to lodge such criticism against brand equity measures as they were not conceived as 'broader' brand performance metrics. More specifically, de Chernatony et al. (2004) informed by their adoption of the MSI definition of brand equity, discount awareness on the grounds it does not drive market share, a view which is contrary to previous empirical research (Agarwal and Roa, 1996; Mackay, 2001). This is an interesting position given Ambler (2000b, 2003) found awareness was the most widely used metric in the UK (78% of firms used it). The inferential logic being that if it is widely used it must have practical use. Finally, Egan and Guilding (1994) intended to develop a marketing / accounting perspective (i.e. 'Broker Brands'). However, their work does not outline which financial measures should be used. Furthermore, these authors appear to be more customer / marketing focused than marketing / accounting. Hence, in theory or 'spirit' their work is balanced but in practice it is more customer-focused. Consequently,

in a similar manner to financial focusers, customer carers contribute to the brand performance literature. However, such a viewpoint fails to take a holistic perspective which is required when measuring the performance of service brands.

2.6.1.3.Brand 'Brokers'

The third cluster of researchers, 'Brand Brokers' combine consumer and financial brand measures. For example, Munoz and Kumar (2004) consider the importance of perception metrics which relate to factors such as awareness, perceived quality and differentiation in addition to performance metrics which are concerned with customer satisfaction, retention/loyalty, revenue per customer and return on investment (ROI). Together these measures span customer and financial measures. Munoz and Kumar's (2004) third dimension, financial metrics, is concerned with market share, cash flow, overall revenue (nature of measurement unspecified) and so appears to be akin to their performance measures. Ehrenberg et al.(2004) outline how their Dirichlet model, which has been developed in both goods and services markets, helps audit brand performance. These scholars' conceptualisation of brand performance consists of size related measures such as market share and penetration, loyalty related measures which are concerned with annual number of purchases whilst the final measure focuses on annual switching (and so appears to be akin to loyalty). With a specific service focus, Fitzgerald et al. (1991) forward six dimensions of service business performance. Two measure results of competitive success (compositeness measures and financial measures) and four measure determinants of competitive success (equality, flexibility, resource utilisation and innovation). Figure 14 illustrates these dimensions.

Dimension of performance	Types of measure
<i>Results</i>	
Financial performance	Profitability Liquidity Capital structure Market ratios
Competitiveness	Relative market share and position Sales growth Measures of the customer base
<i>Determinants</i>	
Resource utilization	Productivity Efficiency
Quality of service	Overall service indicators: Reliability Responsiveness Aesthetics/appearance Cleanliness/tidiness Comfort Friendliness Communication Courtesy Competence Access Availability Security
Innovation	Performance of the innovation process Performance of individual innovations
Flexibility	Specification flexibility Volume flexibility Delivery speed flexibility

Figure 14 Dimensions of Brand Performance (Fitzgerald et al. 1991)

As noted previously Aaker's (1991, 1996b) work could be considered under brand brokers. The reason being it encompasses measures of a financial nature such as share / sales (on the assumption these are measured in monetary not unitary value) and price premium. However, given Aaker's (1991, 1996b) work is more frequently referred to in the context of consumer based brand equity it is included within the Customer Carer cluster.

The strength of the Brand Brokers' work lies their consideration of both long (customer) and short term (financial) measures. This compensates for the inadequacies of only adopting a consumer or financial perspective (Kim et al., 2003a) and is consistent

with the perspective that employing only short term financial measures mitigates brand development (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008). However, in a similar manner to Customer Carers, Brand Brokers overlook employees. This potentially limits the utility of their approach in a service brand context.

2.6.1.4. 'Balanced' Branders

The final segment of researchers consists of 'Balanced' Branders who to amalgamate financial, employee and consumer based measures. Ambler (2003) reports "best practice in marketing performance measurement" (p.2) from the Marketing Leadership Council's research and suggests measuring brand performance from three financial and six non financial (brand equity) measures. Table 4 illustrates how such financial measures can be considered internally (year on year) or externally (in relation to competitors).

Table 4 Financial Measures of Brand Performance (Ambler, 2003)

Actual Metric	% Compared with plan and / or prior year	% Compared with competition i.e. relative
1) Sales	Volume / value	Market Share
2) Marketing Investment (that builds brand equity)	Period Costs	Share of Voice
3) Bottom line	Economic Profit	Share of Profit

The non financial measures Ambler (2003) proposes relate to brand equity as a marketing asset which, in this context consists of brand awareness, brand penetration, what customers think of the brand (perceived quality, i.e. a cognitive measure), what customers feel about the brand (relative customer satisfaction, i.e. an affective measure), brand loyalty (probability of buying the brand next time, i.e. a behavioural or conative

measure) and availability (distribution of the good or service). Of particular interest is Ambler's (2003) employee based brand equity which consists of awareness of brand goals, perceived calibre (quality) of the employer vis-à-vis competitors, relative employee satisfaction with employer, commitment to brand goals, employee retention (loyalty), perceived resource adequacy, appetite for learning and freedom to fail.

Oktemgil (2003) considers brand performance in terms of four financial (return on investment, brand sales volume, brand market share and profit) and four intangible (brand awareness, customer loyalty, number of new customers attracted and employee retention) metrics. Consequently, the intangible elements of this work can be considered as comprising of elements of consumer brand equity and employee brand equity.

Both Ambler (2003) and Oktemgil's (2003) views on brand performance satisfy the criteria outlined earlier in this section. This relates to considering financial, employee and consumer based dimensions. However, given the small sample size (n=121) and working paper status of Oktemgil's (2003) work, Ambler's (2003) approach merits closer attention.

Ambler's (2003) work makes several contributions that are of particular interest to this research. Primarily, Ambler's (2003) work is underpinned by empirical research with the Marketing Leadership Council. This provides a clear indication of which measures are being employed by practitioners. Consequently, this facilitates the identification of metrics participants are more likely to be familiar with and so provide plausible responses to. Furthermore, the balanced approach Ambler (2003) advocated encompasses financial, non financial (brand equity) and employees measures. This allows brand metrics to progress

from the mindset of using financial measures alone. Such a perspective could be regarded as both short-termistic and outdated (Brignall and Ballantine, 1996; Egan and Guilding, 1994; Ittner and Larcker, 2003; Rust et al., 2004a) whilst being counter productive to building strong brands (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008). This perspective has been reiterated by Lehmann et al. (2008) who encourages those who measure brand performance to measure both the means and the ends. The reason being Ambler's (2003) approach encourages employee and customer measurement (i.e. the means) which help maximise shareholder value (i.e. the ends). More specifically, the inclusion of employee based measures is also particularly relevant to this research given the central role human resource plays in service brand delivery (Ashford and Mael, 1996; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2006; Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2009; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Hulberg, 2006; Kennedy, 1977; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2006). Indeed studies at organisations such as Compaq, Nortel Networks, BP highlight how employee based brand equity, that is what employees carry in their minds, is an important driver of brand performance (Ambler, 2003). Finally, by considering customer satisfaction, Ambler's (2003) work finds support from the brand identity literature which outlines how satisfaction is a particularly powerful measure at service brands where satisfaction is a function of experiences (Aaker, 1996a).

However, issues should be noted with Ambler's (2003) work. For instance, validated scales have not been developed for several of the proposed employee based measures. This dearth of employee-related measures potentially highlights the infancy of this area in the brand performance literature. This point is corroborated by personal correspondence with Amber (17th April 2007) where data for the percentage of

organisations that use employee based measures was not available. Consequently, this infers such metrics may not be widely used, participants did not have them available or did not wish to share them as part of the research. Finally, it is questionable if brand managers would, even within the context of confidential research, be happy to share such commercially sensitive information with the research community as Ambler's (2003) work requires.

2.6.2. Developing a Grounded Brand Performance Measure

The approach this thesis adopted to brand performance measurement was developed in two stages. Initially, the logic for ruling out certain performance metrics will be provided. The rationale for the measures this thesis used is then provided.

From a financial perspective, cash flow (Fitzgerald et al., 1991; Munoz and Kumar, 2004) is a too short term measure to be considered in the context of brand performance. Relative or premium price (Aaker, 1996b; Chaudhuri, 1999; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001), shelf space (Ghosh et al., 1995) and overall performance (O'Cass and Ngo, 2007a; Weerawardena et al., 2005) will not be used due to their limited salience in the literature, retail focus or being broadly conceived respectively. Whilst return on investment (ROI) has been used in the marketing literature (Rust et al., 2004b) and advocated by certain scholars to measure brand performance (Munoz and Kumar, 2004; Oktemgil, 2003), authors such as Ambler (2003) have expressed concerns over the use of this metric. The reason being, marketers' have a tendency to *divide* return by investment as opposed to *subtract* investment from return as authors such as Farris et al. (2008) suggest.

Intriguingly, Rust et al (2004a :79), where Ambler is a co-author, calculate ROI as “discounted return (net of discounted expenditure), expressed as a percentage of the discounted expenditure” and so divides not subtracts as Ambler (2003) suggests. Hence, there appears to be an implicit danger in using ROI due to the inconsistencies with regards to how this metric is calculated. Also, from a practical perspective it would also be challenging for survey respondents’ to generalise across multiple marketing activities to provide a credible ROI figure. Finally, sales / revenue (Aaker, 1991, 1996b; Ambler, 2003; Fitzgerald et al., 1991; Munoz and Kumar, 2004; O’Cass and Ngo, 2007a; Weerawardena et al., 2006) constitutes part of market share (by revenue) metric that will be obtained as will be discussed later.

From a customer perspective (i.e. ‘brand equity’), perceived quality (Egan and Guilding, 1994; Munoz and Kumar, 2004) will not be used. This metric may be difficult to measure for service brands due to their characteristics [i.e. being high on experience and credence values in comparison to ‘tangible’ products (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996)]. Indeed, Rundle-Thiele and Bennett (2001) noted how such cognitive measures are particularly unstable and sensitive in service-based research. This raises questions about the robustness of the perceived quality measure whilst Ambler’s (2000b) research highlighted it was one of the less frequently used measures. Innovation (Egan and Guilding, 1994; Fitzgerald et al., 1991), level of service (Egan and Guilding, 1994; Ehrenberg et al., 2004), availability (Ambler, 2003) and differentiation (Egan and Guilding, 1994; Munoz and Kumar, 2004) will not be used as they were not prominent in the brand performance literature. Finally, brand penetration (Ambler, 2003; Ehrenberg et al., 2004) can be regarded as providing similar insights to the data that will be obtained in the form of market share.

From an employee perspective, perceived quality of employment will not be considered for the reasons discussed above. Furthermore, some of the employee equity variables appear too subjective or abstract to research. Appetite for learning, freedom to fail, resources to carry out work and commitment to brand all provide relevant examples. This position concurs with Ambler (personal correspondence, 16th April, 2007) who appreciated these are the more “unusual” measures of employee-based brand equity.

The above shares the author’s logic for excluding certain brand performance measures. Informed by the rationale used to introduce and structure the brand performance literature (financial, brand and employee dimensions) the key measures of brand performance this thesis will use are presented in Table 5. Following numerous scholar’s advice (Farris et al., 2008; Munoz and Kumar, 2004) a range of brand performance measures was used. Furthermore, consistent with The Marketing Leadership Research Council work, eight measures were used given between eight and ten metrics was regarded as the ideal number of metrics (Ambler, 2003). Hence, these findings have been considered when developing an approach to brand performance measurement.

Table 5 Brand Performance Measurement Used in this Research

	% of companies using measure (Ambler 2000)	Rank (Ambler 2000)	Relevant Literature
Financial Measures			
Market Share (<i>based on revenue and so i) accounts for revenue based figures ii) is financially focused</i>)	78%	#5	(Aaker, 1996b; Ambler, 2003; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Ehrenberg et al., 2004; Fitzgerald et al., 1991; Ghosh et al., 1995; Munoz and Kumar, 2004; O'Cass and Ngo, 2007a; Roth, 1995a,b; Weerawardena et al., 2005)
Profit (net)	91.5%	#1	(Ambler, 2003; Fitzgerald et al., 1991; Ghosh et al., 1995)
Customer Measures (Brand equity)			
Loyalty ('churn')	64%	#13	(Aaker, 1991; Aaker, 1996a; Ambler, 2003; de Chernatony et al., 2004; Ehrenberg et al., 2004; Kim et al., 2003a; Munoz and Kumar, 2004; Pappu et al., 2005; Shocker and Weitz, 1988; Yasin et al., 2007; Yoo and Donthu, 2001)
Satisfaction (relative)	68%	#9	(Ambler, 2003; de Chernatony et al., 2004; Munoz and Kumar, 2004)
Awareness	78%	#4	(Aaker, 1991, 1996b; Ambler, 2003; Berry, 2000; Keller, 1993, 1998, 2003; Munoz and Kumar, 2004; Pappu et al., 2005; Sharp, 1995; Yasin et al., 2007; Yoo and Donthu, 2001)
Reputation / Image / Associations / Meaning	54%*	NA	(Aaker, 1991, 1996b; Berry, 2000; de Chernatony et al., 2004; Keller, 1993; Kim et al., 2003a; Pappu et al., 2005; Sharp, 1995; Shocker and Weitz, 1988; Yasin et al., 2007)
Employee Measures			
Employee Satisfaction	NA	NA	(Ambler, 2003)
Loyalty (Retention / labour turnover)	NA	NA	(Ambler 2003)

The logic for not including certain measures was outlined above. Now the rationale for including the measures in Table 5 will be discussed.

From a financial perspective, market share data was obtained due to its salience in the brand performance literature (Aaker, 1996b; Ambler, 2003; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Ehrenberg et al., 2004; Fitzgerald et al., 1991; Ghosh et al., 1995; Munoz and Kumar, 2004; O'Cass and Ngo, 2007a; Roth, 1995a,b; Weerawardena et al., 2005) in addition to be regarded a key competitive indicator (Farris et al., 2008). Furthermore, several empirical studies have outlined how share drives profit (Buzzell et al., 1975; Buzzell and Gale, 1987; Chu et al., 2008; Gale and Branch, 1982; Goddard et al., 2005; Martin, 1988; Szymanski et al., 1993). This view is grounded in: efficiency theory (Demsetz, 1973) where high share enables firms to spread fixed costs and so enjoy larger profits; market power theory (Schroeter, 1988; Staten et al., 1988) where brands with larger share enjoy greater market power in the form of raw material negotiation, channel influence and so forth; product quality assessment theory (Smallwood and Conlisk, 1979) where buyers use market share as a proxy for superior quality.

Whilst the brand performance literature is replete with examples of market share use, it is not always clear how this metric has been calculated. For example, Ehrenberg et al.(2004) clearly calculates share based on units sold, Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) refer to sales but do not specify monetary or unit-based calculations whilst numerous scholars (Ghosh et al., 1995; Munoz and Kumar, 2004; O'Cass and Ngo, 2007a; Roth, 1995a,b; Weerawardena et al., 2005) refer to market share without providing details on how the figure is calculated. Given limited literature guidance market share data based on revenue was obtained for the following reasons. Primarily, the suitability of calculating market

share by unit sale *or* revenue has been noted in the literature (Farris et al., 2008).

Furthermore, share based on revenue is a headline metric that is more challenging to be 'creative' with, in comparison to profit-based share. Also, revenue-based share is a metric frequently incorporated into managerial dashboards. Therefore, it was considered a metric participants' should be relatively familiar with and so be able to provide responses to. Indeed, due to the widely available nature of such revenue figures via Companies House etc., it was anticipated this would facilitate managers' willingness to divulge such information. It should also be noted how share based on figures such as subscribers are subject to the vagaries and idiosyncrasies of organisational measurement. For example, Vodafone UK's subscriber based shrank overnight from 14m to 11m in 2006 when they had to reconsider subscribers as being active in the last three months and not six. Finally, given this research's service brand focus, unit based share in the form of mainframe computers or servers sold is not appropriate. For these reasons share, based on revenue, was used.

In terms of net profit, Milton Friedman (1982) famously stated the sole purpose of an organisation is to make profits for its shareholders, albeit, within the bounds of the law. Whilst profit maximisation alone can be regarded as a relatively narrow conceptualisation of an organisation's marketing purpose (Webster, 1992) it is hard to contend profit is not a critical business metric given the frequency with which it is used (Ambler, 2003) and the importance it holds with financial markets. Furthermore, net profit provides an indication of how efficiently an organisation is managing their resources. Finally, gross profit could have been obtained. However, this figure was not collected due to the importance of

understanding bottom line figures (Ambler, 2003). For these reasons revenue-based share and net profit data were obtained to capture more financially orientated metrics.

From a customer or brand equity perspective the dimensions selected emerged from a parallel process. This involved considering the logic for eliminating dimensions as outlined above and assessing the value certain dimensions bring when developing a brand performance measure. This process resulted in relative customer satisfaction, loyalty, reputation and awareness data being collected. The justification for including these measures now follows.

In terms of relative customer satisfaction, Aaker (1996a) noted how satisfaction was “an especially powerful measure in service businesses” (p. 323). Similarly, Rust and Chung (2006) highlight that “customer satisfaction should receive considerable attention in service research” (p. 570). The reason being levels of customer interaction and so the opportunity to satisfy the customer is more frequent with service brands. Furthermore, higher levels of consumer satisfaction bring several organisational benefits. These include a willingness to pay premium prices (de Chernatony et al., 2004), loyalty (Farris et al., 2008), positive word of mouth (Farris et al., 2008; Srivastava et al., 1998) and enhanced financial performance (Yeung and Ennew, 2000). The logic being such outcomes should encourage senior executives to gather and be familiar with satisfaction data. However, it is important to look beyond satisfaction figures. The reason being consumers may claim to be satisfied but switch whilst others claim to be unsatisfied but stay (Ambler, 2000a). For example Gale (1994) noted that although Cadillac’s customers were satisfied, their competitors were satisfying their customers better and so moving to them. Similarly, Sajeev and Rust (1997) noted:

“Earlier studies of customer satisfaction focused on measuring the satisfaction levels of the sponsoring firm's customers alone. The emphasis has gradually shifted to measuring the satisfaction levels of the firm's customers relative to those of its competitors.” (p.14)

Consequently, satisfaction research appears to have evolved to incorporate a measure *relative* to a key competitor (Sajeev and Rust, 1997). Consequently, for these reasons *relative* satisfaction data was collected.

The next consumer based measure related to brand loyalty and was included as a dimension of brand performance for several reasons. For instance, loyalty was a salient measure in the brand performance literature (Aaker, 1991; Aaker, 1996a; Ambler, 2003; de Chernatony et al., 2004; Ehrenberg et al., 2004; Kim et al., 2003a; Munoz and Kumar, 2004; Pappu et al., 2005; Shocker and Weitz, 1988; Yasin et al., 2007; Yoo and Donthu, 2001). This point is reflected in Aaker's (Aaker, 1996a) comment where it was noted how loyalty is a “core dimension of brand equity” (p. 105). Similarly, de Chernatony et al. (1998) cited loyalty as the most frequently used consumer based measure when appraising brand success. Furthermore, the benefits of building customer loyalty have been noted in the literature. These include greater channel leverage (Aaker, 1991), increasing customer resistance to competitive offerings (Dick and Basu, 1994), erecting as a barrier to entry (Aaker, 1996b), delivering higher profit margins (Reichheld, 1996; Reichheld and Sasser, 1990), providing defence against competitor's initiating price wars (Aaker, 1996b), in addition to driving growing market share (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). In a similar manner to the relative satisfaction data, the logic being such outcomes should encourage

senior executives to gather and so be able to share (within the context of confidential research) loyalty data. Thus, brand loyalty is a justified inclusion.

The rationale for collecting reputation-related data requires a more involved discussion. Although image (Keller, 1993; Kim et al., 2003a; Shocker and Weitz, 1988) and 'reputation' (de Chernatony et al., 2004; Sharp, 1995) have been included in the brand performance literature it is important to make a distinction between the constructs. In the literature, reputation, in comparison to image, is regarded as being formed over longer periods of time (Balmer, 1998; Bick et al., 2003; de Chernatony, 2006; Fombrun, 1996; Fombrun and Van Riel, 1997; Walsh and Beatty, 2007) in addition to being more stable (Dowling, 1986; Kennedy, 1977; Melewar and Jenkins, 2002) and durable (Melewar et al., 2005b). Consequently, considering reputation as being built over time is consistent with the strategic brand perspective this research adopts. Furthermore, image tends to be more consumer centric (de Chernatony et al., 2004) whilst reputation adopts a more balanced stakeholder perspective (Mitchell, 2001; Veloustou and Moutinho, 2008). Again, this view is aligned with the definition of brand developed earlier in this chapter in addition to being more akin with a corporate branding perspective which predominates for service brands. Indeed, given this research's service focus, reputation plays an important role in terms of reducing the intangibility of the brand (Davies et al., 2003; Fombrun, 1996). The positive influence reputation has on other organisational outcomes has also been noted. These include greater loyalty (Hall, 1992; Walsh and Beatty, 2007), instilling trust (Walsh and Beatty, 2007), attracting customers (de Chernatony et al., 2004), attracting higher calibre employees (Fombrun and Shanley, 1990; Van Riel, 1995), reducing perceived risk (Bauer, 1960) and price sensitivity whilst a strong reputation has also been found to positively correlate with market share (Bharadwaj and Menon, 1993) and customer satisfaction

(Walsh and Beatty, 2007). Similarly, reputation has competitive benefits. For example, company reputation is an intangible asset that contributes to the organisation's success (Hall, 1992) and driving competitive advantage (Melewar et al., 2005b; Melewar et al., 2005c) whilst a strong and favourable reputation is hard to duplicate (Sharp, 1995). Finally, since the 1990s increasing academic attention has been placed on reputation as opposed to image (Balmer and Greyser, 2003).

At a more detailed level, reputation could be regarded as an 'umbrella' construct for other brand equity related constructs such as associations (Aaker, 1991, 1996b; Pappu et al., 2005; Yasin et al., 2007), brand meaning (Berry, 2000) and perceived quality (Aaker, 1991, 1996b; Ambler, 2003; Egan and Guilding, 1994; Kim et al., 2003a; Pappu et al., 2005; Yasin et al., 2007; Yoo and Donthu, 2001). Associations relate to a node linked to a brand in memory (Keller, 1993) where such an association could relate to the brand's reputation (Fombrun et al., 2000). Similarly, 'brand meaning', which relates to "the customer's dominant perception of the brand" (Berry, 2000: 129) could be regarded as manifesting in the perceived reputation a stakeholder has about a given brand. In terms of perceived quality, Nguyen and Leblanc's (2001) research highlighted how consumers infer quality via reputation. In a similar manner, (Veloustou and Moutinho, 2008) state how "[R]eputation is one of the primary contributors to perceived quality of the products carry the brand name" (p. 315). Hence, closer inspection of several distinct brand equity measures can, arguably, be considered as being closely related, if not synonymous with reputation. Collectively, these points provide the rationale for considering reputation.

The final customer related dimension of brand performance relates to brand awareness. Primarily, brand awareness has been extensively used to measure brand

performance in the literature (Aaker, 1991; Ambler, 2003; Berry, 2000; Keller, 1993, 1998, 2003; Munoz and Kumar, 2004; Sharp, 1995; Yoo and Donthu, 2001). Furthermore, if a stakeholder is not aware of a brand, it will not enter a given stakeholder's consideration set when evaluating alternative brands (Baker et al., 1986; Nedundadi, 1990).

Furthermore, awareness reduces perceived risk in addition to creating barriers to entry (Sharp, 1995) that can deliver incumbency benefit (Kay, 1992). It is debatable if awareness could be considered as part of reputation. However, this research has kept the two constructs distinct. The reason being awareness is concerned with the brand being in the consumers' memory whilst reputation is a subsequent step where an opinion / view is formed about the brand based on what is held in memory over a period of time.

The final dimension of brand performance considered employee based measures. The Methodology chapter (Section 4.5.6) outlines how, based on the survey pretesting, employee satisfaction and employee loyalty measures were included.

Collectively, the above shares the authors' logic for the dimensions of brand performance this research used.

2.6.3. Brand Performance – Summary

This section of the chapter has introduced and evaluated the brand performance literature along financial, customer and employee dimensions. The logic for using these dimensions to structure the brand performance literature was outlined in this chapter (Section 2.6.1). This multi-measure and multidimensional approach was also informed by

the view that a universal brand performance measure does not exist (Ambler, 2003; de Chernatony et al., 2004; Lehmann et al., 2008; Mackay, 2001; Schultz, 2005; Vasquez et al., 2002; Yoo and Donthu, 2001).

Obtaining financially related data is important as today's organisations run on financial measures (Schultz, 2006). Furthermore, incorporating a financial dimension enhances the metrics' relevance to senior managers (Rubinson and Pfeiffer, 2005) whilst, from a practical perspective, it is hard to imagine a brand performance dashboard without financial measures.

The objective of incorporating customer based, or brand equity, measures into a brand performance metric was to eliminate short term tendencies (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker, 1996b). The reason being such measures account for the 'lag' that occurs between investment in, and returns generated by, brands (Ambler, 2000a; Egan and Guilding, 1994; Schultz, 2006). Consequently, from a metaphorical perspective brand equity represents a reservoir (Ambler, 2000b, 2003; Rust et al., 2004a) behind a dam where brand equity represents latent value which has yet to be translated into financial returns. Such a position is consistent with scholars such as Farris et al. (2008) who note how brand marketing measures serve as leading indicators for future financial performance.

Finally, incorporating employee based measures into brand performance makes explicit the pivotal role employees' play in service brand delivery. This answers the literature's call for a more balanced service branding approach (de Chernatony et al., 2003; de Chernatony and Segal Horn, 2003; Zeithaml et al., 2006). This approach also helps avoid an 'external perspective trap' which fails to account for employees as part of the

brand identity building process (Aaker, 1996a). Furthermore, paying particular attention to employees overcomes the issue that most metrics have tended to emanate from goods based brands (Brignall and Ballantine, 1996; de Chernatony et al., 2004) with the result being that service specific factors tend to be overlooked.

2.7. Conclusions

This chapter has reviewed the brand, 'identity', service and brand performance literature. Reviewing this literature clarified this thesis' interpretation of key conceptual terms, contextualised this research and provided theoretical grounding for subsequent chapters.

The review of brand was guided by de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley's (de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley, 1997, 1998) and de Chernatony's (2006) taxonomy of brand perspectives. This resulted in an 'integrated' view of brand being forwarded that embodied a more integrated and holistic brand perspective by augmenting previous scholars' work. The corporate branding literature was then reviewed given the salience of this branding approach in the service sector (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Agarwal, 2004; Berry, 2000; Berry et al., 1988; de Chernatony, 2006; Diefenbach, 1987; Pina et al., 2006).

The evolution of the goods and services literature was then considered. This outlined how this literature stream has evolved from conceptualising goods and services dichotomously to a burgeoning the service dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a). At

this point it was noted how the service dominant logic represents something of a paradigm shift within marketing thought. The reason being within the domain of this logic, organisations and consumers are co-producers of value whilst all organisations, markets, and societies are primarily concerned with exchange of service as opposed to goods. Consequently, *service* becomes the dominant logic. The latter point is of particular relevance given it contextualises this research and provides a stronger rationale for this service based research.

The ‘identity’ literature review then paid particular attention to the terms organisational, corporate and brand identity. At this stage, guided by the literature, service brand identity was preliminarily defined as *the strategist’s vision of how a service brand should be perceived by its stakeholders*. The distinction and relationship between brand identity, corporate identity and corporate branding was then conceptualised to clarify how these constructs are distinct but related. This was followed by a discussion of how, in the absence of brand identity schools of thought, the corporate identity’s interdisciplinary school may provide a suitable theoretical home for the brand identity orphan that can guide subsequent theoretical development of brand identity related research which is interdisciplinary in nature. Current brand identity conceptual frameworks were then reviewed which revealed sparse conceptual development and a paucity of empirical research.

The final section of the chapter reviewed the brand performance literature along financial, consumer and employee dimensions. Informed by these dimensions four ‘clusters’ of brand performance literature were identified. These were referred to as Financial Focusers, Brand Brokers, Consumer Carers and Balanced Branders. The

justification for why certain measures were and were not used then followed. This resulted in a balanced brand performance approach being adopted which spanned financial, consumer and employee-based measures.

Now the relevant literature has been reviewed it is possible to build on this chapter to develop this thesis' theoretical framework in the next chapter.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the brand, service, ‘identity’ (corporate, brand, organisational) and brand performance literature. This helped clarify this thesis’ interpretation of key conceptual terms, provide a broader research context insight, highlight issues with current brand identity frameworks and supply theoretical guidance with regards to brand performance measurement. In particular, reviewing the brand identity literature facilitated the development of a preliminarily service brand identity definition. Developing such a literature-based definition allows this research to move towards addressing its first research question whilst providing parameters for exploring the domain of service brand identity in this chapter.

Informed by the preliminary service brand identity definition developed in the previous chapter, this chapter draws on the literature to postulate dimensions of service brand identity and develop a hypothesis outlining the construct’s positive influence on brand performance. Consequently, this chapter allows this research to move towards addressing the second research question of ‘What are the dimensions of service brand identity?’ Exploring the construct’s dimensionality also provides the foundation and conceptual apparatus for subsequent chapters where a service brand identity measure is developed and applied in the context of brand performance. Therefore, this chapter also helps address the third and fourth research question of ‘How do we measure service brand

identity?’ and ‘Does service brand identity have a positive and significant influence on brand performance?’ respectively.

This chapter opens by justifying why the scale development literature, in particular Churchill’s (1979) paradigm, was utilised to develop the service brand identity measure. Informed by this paradigm, the following section considers the domain of service brand identity to explore preliminary construct dimensionality. This involves drawing on both the brand and broader identity literature in the context of the previously developed definition (Churchill, 1979). Guided by the literature review and previous sections of this chapter, a preliminary service brand identity framework is then presented. The following sections engage with the literature to postulate dimensions of service brand identity and so substantiate the preliminary dimensions that were postulated. A hypothesis outlining the positive influence service brand identity has on brand performance is then developed. The penultimate section of the chapter evaluates the preliminary service brand identity framework in the context of Suvatjis and de Chernatony’s (2005) criteria or guidelines for ‘model’ development. At this stage the potential for dimension interactions is highlighted. This is acknowledged as being a function of moving from construct conceptualisation to operationalisation. Concluding remarks highlight the logic for developing a preliminary service brand identity framework, reiterate key points made during the chapter and outline how this chapter lays the foundation for the Research Methodology chapter.

3.2. Developing a Preliminary Service Brand Identity Framework

To develop a preliminary service brand identity framework, this thesis was guided by the extant scale development literature (DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003) which, for the most part, has been informed by Churchill's (1979) seminal work. Employing Churchill's (1979) paradigm served to help this thesis identify initial dimensions of service brand identity. These dimensions then fed into the development of a preliminary service brand identity framework which provided structure to subsequent measurement model development and application in the context of brand performance.

The logic for following Churchill's (1979) paradigm was as follows. Primarily, Churchill's (1979) work provides an academic paradigm that facilitates, structures and guides the scale development process. Furthermore, this practice has been extensively followed by other scholars when developing measures for latent marketing constructs. These include market orientation (Deng and Dart, 1994), brand associations (Low and Lamb, 2000), reputation (Fombrun et al., 2000), brand performance measure for financial services (de Chernatony et al., 2004) and consumer-based brand equity (Vasquez et al. 2002; Yoo and Donthu 2001). Moreover, Churchill's (1979) work requires scholars to draw on the literature to develop theoretically grounded items that will later constitute construct dimensions. Consequently, greater academic rigour underpins the scale development process than if the items used to scale each dimension were not grounded in the literature. Next, drawing on the domain sampling model (Nunally and Bernstein, 1994), the scale development literature requires the domain of each dimension has been exhaustively sampled. Adhering to this advice improves a scale's content validity (Netemeyer et al. 2003). Similarly, expert panel review of the initial item pool enhances

the scale's face validity (Ibid). Furthermore, expert panel members are encouraged to comment on current items or suggest new items. Once more this enhances the face and content validity respectively. For these reasons the scale development procedures as outlined in the extant literature was followed.

It should be noted if Churchill's (1979) paradigm was to be strictly followed a qualitative stage utilising focus groups or exploratory interviews would have complemented the literature based item generation. Indeed, several scholars have conducted focus groups to generate items at the item generation stage (Lytle et al., 1998; Simoes et al., 2005; Walsh and Beatty, 2007). The rationale for not pursuing a qualitative stage is outlined in the methodology chapter (Section 4.4.2).

This section of the chapter has shared the logic for how this research intended to explore the domain of service brand identity and so relates to the second research question. This process was predominantly guided by Churchill's (1979) paradigm. The first step in this process involves exploring the domain of service brand identity in the context of the previously developed construct definition. This step is important because it informs what does and does not constitute the construct and so sets parameters for subsequent scaling procedures. This step is considered in the next section.

3.3. Preliminary Service Brand Identity Dimensionality

This section of the chapter outlines how the 'identity' literature was drawn on to explore and subsequently postulate the domain of service brand identity. This process

encompassed two activities. First, considering current brand identity dimensionality in the context of the service brand identity definition developed in the literature review (cf: Churchill, 1979). Second, dimensions the author considers important, based on broader *identity* reading that are not included in the *brand* identity literature are considered. Communications provides an example. The latter draws on the Literature Review (Section 2.4.6), which outlined how it is appropriate for service brand identity to draw on other identity literatures. Again, the second step was influenced by the construct's definition and so is consistent with Churchill's (1979) paradigm. These two activities then fed into the development of a theoretical framework (preliminary service brand identity framework) which would guide quantitative analyses. Each will now be discussed.

When following the first step of Churchill's (1979) paradigm it is necessary to define the domain of the construct "in order to be exacting in delineating what is included in the definition and what is excluded" (p. 67). It is important to follow this step so the parameters for operationalising constructs are set. Table 6 summarises the brand identity dimensions from the extant literature and highlights their relevance in the context of the service brand identity construct developed in this thesis. Each will now be discussed.

Table 6 Evaluating Current Brand Identity Dimensions in a Service Brand Identity Context

Brand Identity Dimension	Kapferer (2004)	Aaker (1996a). Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000)	de Chernatony (2006)	Relevance to Postulating Dimensions of Service Brand Identity?
Vision		√	√	Synonymous with service brand identity (cf; Section 2.4.3) Consumer based construct so not included Consumer based construct so not included Consumer based construct so not included Implicit / part of Consistent Communications and Corporate Visual Identity Systems dimensions . Included by default due to service brand/ corporate branding overlap (Cf; Section 2.2.2) Considered via Client Relationship Management dimension Considered via Brand Personality dimension Considered via Marketing Culture dimension Considered via Corporate Visual Identity Systems dimension
Reflection (external)	√			
Self Image (internal)	√			
Positioning			√ (functional aspects)	
Presentation			√	
Organisation		√		
Relationships	√		√	
Personality	√	√	√ (emotional aspects)	
Culture	√		√ (& vision)	
Symbol		√		

In terms of vision, the literature review outlined how this thesis' service brand identity conceptualisation aligns with an 'input' perspective where the brand identity emanates from the organisation (de Chernatony, 2006). Consequently, this thesis' position with regards to service brand identity is consistent with the work of several brand identity authors (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; Keller,

2003; Kotler and Keller, 2008) whose views embody a *managerial perspective* which relates to the strategist's vision for his or her brand. Hence, this thesis does not consider vision as being a dimension of brand identity, more that vision is synonymous with service brand identity, that is, service brand identity is concerned with making manifest the brand strategist's vision (cf: Section 2.4.3).

Given the input or managerial perspective this thesis adopts, several *consumer based* dimensions from the brand identity literature fall outside the domain of service brand identity. These relate to self image, reflection and positioning. Self image and reflection (Kapferer, 2004) are ruled out given they are consumer and not managerially based constructs. They are grounded in the consumer behaviour literature's self concept (Belk, 1988; Rosenberg, 1979; Sirgy, 1982). Drawing on Reis and Trout's (1972) seminal work, positioning can be regarded as creating a position in the "prospects mind" (p. 181). Whilst, organisations try to position their goods or services, strictly speaking, the brands position vis-à-vis its competitors, resides with the consumer and not the organisation. In this sense, positioning can be regarded as more akin to image (Abratt, 1989, Boulding, 1956, Dowling, 1986, Grunig, 1993, Kennedy, 1977, Martineau, 1958, Poiesz, 1989, Worcester, 1986) or reputation (Argenti and Druckenmiller 2004; Chun 2005; Davies et al. 2003; Dowling 1994; Fombrun 1998; 1996; Fombrun and Shanley 1990; Fombrun and van Riel 1997; Fombrun et al. 2000; Haywood 2005) than brand identity given it resides in the stakeholders, not the brand strategist's mind (cf: output perspective). It is also important to make the distinction between positioning and brand identity. For instance, Kapferer (2004) notes how positioning is regarded as the manifestation of a 'facet' of brand identity in relation to competitive offerings as opposed to being a part of brand identity per se (p.

222). Additionally, in comparison to positioning “[i]dentity is more stable and long lasting, for it is tied to the brand roots and fixed parameters.”(Kapferer, 2004: 102). Hence, it is contended here positioning lies with the consumer. Furthermore, whilst positioning and brand identity are related, the former is not a dimension but a consequence of the latter.

de Chernatony (2006) noted the importance of “presenting the brand to stakeholders with a design and promotional support that differentiates the brand in a manner which stakeholders welcome” (p. 46). As will be discussed later in the chapter, this thesis considers presenting the brand as being an integral part of, indeed as synonymous with communication and symbolism. Both of these areas are included in the preliminary service brand identity framework.

With regards to ‘product’ / ‘physique’, given this thesis service focus, these dimensions were not regarded as central. However, as will be discussed later, physique can play a role in symbolism, or more accurately corporate visual identity systems (Melewar, 2001; Melewar et al., 2005a; Melewar and Saunders, 1998; 2000; Melewar et al., 2001; Van den Bosch et al., 2005, 2006a; Van den Bosch et al., 2006b), in the form of logo, premises, clothing, vehicles and so forth which is considered via the inclusion of symbolism, or more accurately corporate visual identity, as will be highlighted later. Finally, given the similarities between corporate and service branding (Section 2.2.2), it is argued that by default the brand is the ‘organisation’ which results in this dimension being accounted for.

Consequently, guided by the first stage of Churchill's (1979) paradigm, this thesis was able to 'trim' redundant dimensions from the current brand identity literature. These were vision, self reflection, self image, positioning, presentation and product / physique whilst the symbolism, relationships, personality and culture dimensions remained. Consequently, it can be seen how adopting this approach is consistent with Netemeyer et al (2003) who noted "the construct's definition and content domain determine theoretical dimensionality" (p. 9).

Exploring the domain of service brand identity also draws on the author's understanding of the broader 'identity' literature. As the literature review (Section 2.4.6) outlined this encompasses incorporating corporate identity dimensions (and so indirectly organisational identity literature) as part of this thesis' service brand identity conceptualisation. Specifically, this relates to the view that in a service brand context, the Interdisciplinary School with its tenets of behaviour, symbolism and communications provided both a pertinent theoretical home for the brand identity orphan and particularly relevant dimensions. The relevance of the Interdisciplinary Schools 'behaviour' and 'symbolism' tenets has already been explicitly considered above via the brand identity literature. As will be discussed in later this chapter, 'communication' can be regarded as critical to mobilising service brand's identity. If the service brand identity is not communicated both internally and externally it merely remains a psychological construct within the brand strategist's mind. It is appreciated de Chernatony's (2006) 'presentation' dimension alludes to communications. However, the communications dimension of the corporate identity mix was regarded as being relevant given this thesis' desire to draw on the wider identity literature and the need to make explicit this construct's importance to

service brand identity. In terms of the organisational identity literature, employee identification with the organisation was discussed in the literature review as influencing behaviour (cf: He and Mukherjee, 2009) which itself is a manifestation of culture (Balthazard et al., 2006) and so has already been included as a dimension.

Consequently, although this thesis' conceptualisation of service brand identity has been primarily informed by brand identity authors, the way in which service brand identity is made manifest via its dimensions draws on brand, corporate and organisational identity literature (cf: Section 2.4.6).

This section of the chapter has outlined why certain dimensions were included and excluded when developing a preliminary view on service brand identity dimensionality. Consistent with the scaling literature, this process was guided by the earlier stages of Churchill's (1979) paradigm which involved defining and then specifying the domain of the construct. Taking this step involved distilling the brand, corporate and organisational identity literatures. Now the preliminary dimensions of service brand identity have been considered this chapter's attention will turn to presenting a preliminary service brand identity framework which will then be justified.

3.4. A Preliminary Service Brand Identity Framework

Figure 15 presents a *preliminary* service brand identity framework. The development of this framework was informed by the literature review and the extant scaling literature where construct definition informs construct domain. Representing the construct visually also aims to clarify the author's thinking and facilitate reader comprehension (Whetten, 1989). The previous section of the chapter postulated dimensions of service brand identity to be marketing culture, corporate visual identity systems, client relationships management, brand personality and integrated marketing communications.

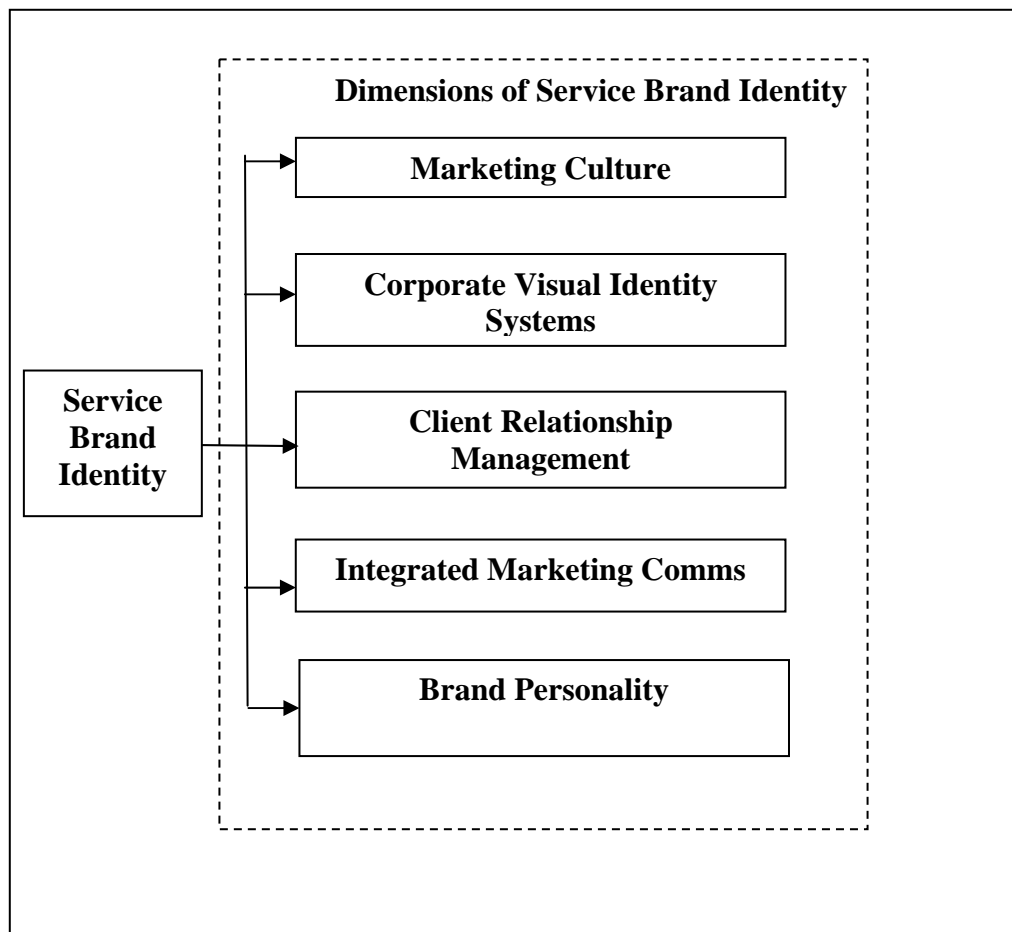


Figure 15 A Preliminary Service Brand Identity Framework

At this stage it should be noted how the ‘identity’ literature tends to refer to *categories* of constructs such as ‘culture’, ‘symbolism’ and ‘communications’. However, only constructs and not categories of constructs are unsuitable for scaling procedures (DeVellis, 1991). The reason being each category represents a pool of latent variables which themselves are suitable for scaling procedures (DeVellis, 1991). For instance, culture encompasses constructs such as corporate culture, learning culture, marketing culture to name a few. Given this issue, a specific construct, within a category was chosen. For example, marketing culture within the culture category. Similarly, corporate visual identity systems relates to symbolism. The detail of these specific constructs will be explored later in this chapter.

It should also be noted the preliminary service brand identity framework only considers the focal construct, that is service brand identity. Service brand identity’s antecedents are not considered. The reason being service brand identity is a new construct and so is not embedded within a nomological network (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955). Consequently, it was not possible to consider antecedents at this stage given they do not exist. However, as Section 7.6 outlines once the dimensionality of the construct has been established, considering service brand identity’s wider nomological net provides a fruitful avenue for subsequent research.

3.5. Postulating the Domain of Service Brand Identity

The previous sections of this chapter, guided by the extant scaling literature, drew on the identity literature to propose five dimensions that constitute the domain of service brand identity. These were marketing culture, corporate visual identity systems, integrated marketing communications, client relationship management and brand personality.

Before this chapter's justifies the proposed dimensionality of the preliminary framework (Figure 15) it is important to outline why dimensions were postulated and not hypothesised. The decision to postulate dimensions was the function of three factors. Primarily, this approach is consistent with previous scale development literature which postulates as opposed to hypothesising dimensions (Bennet et al., 2005; Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Lings and Greenley, 2005b; Simoes et al., 2005; Sin et al., 2005a; Venable et al., 2005; Walsh and Beatty, 2007). Furthermore, guided by the extant scale development literature (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003), which augmented Churchill's (1979) seminal work, previously established scaling procedures were followed. This entailed employing exploratory factor analysis prior to confirmatory factor analysis. The exploratory nature of the former means initial dimensions infrequently remain at the confirmatory factor analysis where a hypothesis could be formally tested. Consequently, the more exploratory language and approach of postulating as opposed to hypothesising dimensions was employed. Finally, service brand identity is a holistic second order construct. The logic for considering the construct holistically is grounded in dimension interactions outlined later in this chapter (section 3.7.3). As a result of this perspective it was not appropriate to hypothesise individual dimensions. The reason being

this approach would not consider the construct, that is the whole, but only the parts. For these reasons, it was considered more appropriate to postulate than hypothesise dimensions. Now that the rationale for the terminology employed has been shared the inclusion of each service brand identity dimension will be justified.

3.5.1. Marketing Culture

The literature review highlighted the salient role 'culture' plays in both the brand (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004) and corporate (Balmer, 1995, 1998; Olins, 1978a; Van Riel, 1995) identity literatures. The literature review also noted how organisational identity (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991, Dutton et al., 1994, Gioia et al., 1998, Ashford and Mael, 1996, Albert and Whetten, 1985) is a behavioural antecedent (He and Mukherjee, 2009a) which itself is a manifestation of culture (Lepak et al., 2006). Consequently, this provided an early indication that culture should fall under the domain of service brand identity.

However, the culture literature is rich and diverse (Ogbonna and Harris, 2000). Consequently, in order to structure this section the organisational or corporate literature is initially introduced. The marketing culture literature Webster (1990, 1993, 1995), which is a specific form of organisational culture, is then reviewed. It is important to review the broader organisational culture literature given the influence it had on Webster's marketing culture work.

Deshpande and Webster (1989a) define organisational culture as “the unwritten, the formally decreed, and what actually takes place, it is the pattern of shared values and beliefs that helps individuals understand the functioning of the firm and thus provides them norms for behaviour in the firm” (p. 4). Two points should be noted from this definition. Firstly, culture focuses on the informal or ‘latent’ forces within the organisation. These can potentially influence behaviour to a greater extent than formal mechanisms (Appiah et al., 1999; Deshpande and Webster, 1989a; Schneider and Rentsch, 1988; Webster, 1995; Wilson, 2001). Secondly, values play a central role in the development of culture. Values are important because they inform or guide behaviour (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008; Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Kotter and Heskett, 1992; Rokeach, 1973). Behaviour is of particular relevance to this service based branding thesis given ‘stronger’ cultures, with commonly held pervasive values, facilitate behavioural consistency across the organisation (Gordon and DiTomaso, 1992; O’Reilly and Chatman, 1996; Sorensen, 2002), in other words, norms of organisational behaviour. The relevance of this point is reiterated by Olins (1995) who outlined how consistent employee behaviour is particularly important for service brands. Similarly, Chan et al.(2004) suggest organisational culture is a particularly valuable resource for service companies. Focusing on service brands, Webster (1995) outlines “[d]ue to the unique characteristics of services (i.e. intangibility, insuperability of production and consumption, perishability and variability) the nature of the culture of a service firm is particularly important and worthy of attention” (p. 7). However, as noted in the literature review, consistency is a particularly acute challenge for service brands due to the human element (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996; Zeithaml et al., 2006). Consequently, culture can be regarded as providing employees with a cognitive ‘schema’ or ‘logic’ which enables them to not only behave in a manner consistent with the desired brand identity but

also respond to unfamiliar situations in a way which is consistent with the desired brand identity.

Following from Schein's (1991) work, Sorensen (2002) notes how organisational culture provides employees with a "framework" (p. 70) for responding to the environment and so culture can be regarded as providing behavioural direction (Van de Post et al., 1998). Indeed, O'Reilly and Chatman (1996) note how culture helps with "defining appropriate behaviours for organisational members" (p. 160) whilst Harrison (1972) outlines, in rather simplistic terms, how organisational culture signifies the 'do's and don'ts' of behaviour in the organisation. Rashid et al. (2003) follow a similar logic to these scholars by considering, rather autocratically, culture as "the structural and control system to generate behavioural standards" (p. 711). This position is consistent with other authors such as Wilkins and Ouchi (1983) who also regard culture as a control apparatus. Consequently, building on Deshpande and Webster's (1989a) work, culture can look to provide implicit rules or norms that act as control mechanisms with regards to expected and acceptable behaviour. The logical extension to this argument being such behaviour plays an important role in service brand identity execution.

Consequently, the above literature outlines how culture provides a way the brand owner can *try* to promote or encourage behaviour which is aligned with its brand values and desired identity. The word 'try' has been used intentionally. The reason being employees may not passively react to their values being massaged so they align with the brand. However, in the context of this research, this thesis aligns with the integration paradigm (Deshpande and Webster, 1989a; Schein, 1984) where culture is something the organisation *has* which can be managed as an independent variable. This contrasts with

the differentiation paradigm where culture is something the organisation *is* (Meyerson and Martin, 1987). The reason being, consistent with the service brand identity definition developed earlier this thesis adopts a managerial perspective, that is, service brand identity is a construct that can be managed.

de Chernatony (2006) focuses the debate on culture and brand identity by noting:

“When an organisation has its different departments aligned with a desired culture, there is a more unified identity presented to different stakeholders and greater likelihood that staff will act in a more consistent manner.” (p. 158)

The notion of an ‘aligned’ culture implies that norms have been established which promote consistent behaviour across the organisation. This perspective echoes Kotter and Heskett’s (1992) Theory I of a ‘strong’ corporate culture where “almost all managers share a set of relatively consistent values and methods of doing business” (p. 15). However, Kotter and Heskett (1992) outline how considering cultures merely from a ‘strong’ perspective may be an oversimplification. Strong cultures are not always beneficial and can sometimes become dysfunctional. The reason being they can stifle creativity and innovation (Nemeth, 1997) and encourage ‘groupthink’ (Kim et al., 2004; Lee and Yu, 2004). Such a situation can be a function of successful financial performance where the development and reinforcement of strong cultures which were initially, but are no longer, suitable for the organisation’s environment were developed. Consequently, Kotter and Heskett (1992) forward Theories II and III of corporate culture. The former focuses on the notion of a strategically appropriate culture which ‘fits’ with the organisation’s context or environment *at that time*. For, example, a brand striving for cost leadership would be well

served to develop an organisational culture built around strict financial control, accountability and operational efficiency. A criticism of Theory II is that the culture-context fit may no longer be appropriate for the environment / market due to change. Consequently, it could be regarded as engendering a short to medium term perspective. Theory III relates to leaders / managers ability to adapt adjust the organisation's strategy in light of *all* 'constituencies' (customers, shareholders and employees) changing needs via an adaptable corporate culture. Hence, with Theory III, the change occurs in order to retain an *ongoing* fit between the organisation and its constituencies, whereas Theory II relates to a culture / environment fit which is more static in nature. Consequently, Kotter and Heskett's (1992) work, especially Theory III can be regarded as a evolution of the culture literature given it encompasses more of a dynamic and fluid perspective where culture has to change in response to the organisation's environment.

This section so far has concentrated on the 'broad' or high level construct of organisational culture. However, several scholars have noted there can be a 'type' of culture within an organisation. For example, Deshpande and Farley (1999) refer to competitive, entrepreneurial, bureaucratic and consensual cultures whilst Denison (1990) refers to participative and involvement cultures. One type of culture that is of particular interest to this service based research is Webster's (1990, 1993, 1995) marketing culture.

Webster (1990, 1993, 1995), building on the work of Deshpande and Webster (1989a), advances a marketing culture which is regarded as a "component of the firm's overall culture"(Webster, 1995 :7). Marketing culture was defined as "the unwritten, the formally decreed, and what actually takes place in a marketing context, it is the pattern of shared values and beliefs that helps individuals understand the marketing function and thus

provides them with norms of behaviour in the firm.” (Webster, 1993: 113). In a similar manner to Deshpande and Webster (1989a) the latent power of culture and the important influence values have on developing norms of behaviour are emphasised in this definition, albeit with a marketing focus. Hence, it can be seen that a marketing culture refers to the importance placed on the marketing function (Webster, 1995) which, in its turn, provides a unifying and customer-centric organisational focus.

Webster (1993, 1995) operationalised a marketing culture via six dimensions. ‘Service quality’ is concerned with the organisation’s commitment to meeting the customers needs’ whilst ‘interpersonal relationships’ consider the way managers interact with their employees and how the latter are treated by the organisation (Webster, 1993, 1995). The role employees play is particularly important in that a marketing culture considers frontline employees as strategic partners (Karatepe et al., 2005) as opposed to an organisational resource whose feelings are not accounted for. ‘Selling task’ refers to the organisation’s human resource practices such as recruitment and training. ‘Organisation’ is concerned with the creation of a suitable work environment, effective time management, professional appearance and so forth (Appiah et al., 1999) whilst ‘internal communication’ allows employees to better understand the vision and mission of the organisation (Karatepe et al., 2005). Finally, ‘innovation’ relates to the organisation and employees receptiveness / responsiveness to change.

The marketing culture literature is of particular relevance to this research for several reasons. First, as the name implies, the marketing culture literature was developed specifically with a marketing focus in mind. The logic being that a stronger marketing, that is a culture which scores highly on the Marketing Culture Scale (Webster, 1993;

1995), fosters an internal environment conducive to implementing marketing initiatives (Appiah et al., 1999). In the case of this research service brand identity is the marketing initiative of interest.

Second, whilst more product orientated brands can also look to proactively manage their organisation's culture, the marketing culture literature was developed specifically with service brands in mind. Consequently, this perspective accounts for the pivotal role humans play in service brand delivery (Lovelock et al., 1999). As a result, developing a supportive marketing culture literature, in comparison to previous (standardisation or process driven) service branding approaches which resulted in mechanical responses to atypical customer needs, was regarded as a more effective way of managing the variability humans bring to service brand delivery (Karatepe et al., 2005). This position is consistent with other scholars (Appiah et al., 2000; Pascale, 1984; Velliquette and Rapert, 2001) who noted how effective use of culture is critical for service brands due to the employee-customer interaction. Third, Webster's work was driven by a customer focus. Given the centrality of the customer to the marketing literature (cf: Marketing Concept / Orientation) this increases the construct's relevance to this research. Fourth, in line with the organisational culture literature, Webster (1995) notes how a marketing culture "refers to unwritten policies and guidelines which provide employees with behavioural norms" (p.6). The logic being that such behavioural norms support the desired service brand identity via greater behavioural consistency (Olins, 1995; Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996; Zeithaml et al., 2006) at the 'service encounter' (Bowen et al., 1990). It could be argued Webster's work incorporates the more complex issues of an adaptable or Theory III 'type' culture (Kotter and Heskett, 1992). A marketing culture is particularly adaptable insofar it aims to develop

and inculcate values which make the organisation receptive and responsive to change via the 'innovation' dimension. Finally, a marketing culture also considers two of the three constituencies (i.e. customers and employees) whilst human resource practices aim to recruit / develop employees whose values are aligned with, and so help perpetuate a marketing culture. Consequently, a marketing culture was regarded as a particularly relevant culture 'type' in the context of this service based research.

This section opened by outlining the salient role culture plays in the identity (brand, corporate and organisational) literature. The influence of 'organisational' culture in guiding and shaping employee behaviour was then noted (Deal and Kennedy, 1982) with two points being of particular note. First, culture plays a pivotal role in directing employees and management towards the same goal (Deshpande and Webster, 1989b; Webster, 1990). Second, culture helps promote consistent behaviour across the organisation (de Chernatony, 2006; Gordon and DiTomaso, 1992; O'Reilly and Chatman, 1996; Olins, 1995; Sorensen, 2002). The latter has been noted as providing particular challenges for service brands due to the variability humans bring (Zeithaml et al., 2006; Zeithaml et al., 1985) with culture has been proposed as one way of addressing or managing this issue (Gordon and DiTomaso, 1992; Karatepe et al., 2005). The marketing culture literature was then reviewed (Webster, 1990, 1993, 1995) given it was regarded as being particularly relevant to this research's primary context. Of particular note was how a marketing culture looks to create an environment conducive to developing, nurturing and supporting marketing activities whilst being developed with service brands in mind and promoting the development of a culture which is 'adaptable' to change (Kotter and

Heskett, 1992). Consequently, for these reasons a marketing culture is considered a dimension of service brand identity.

3.5.2. Corporate Visual Identity Systems

The literature review highlighted how, due to their characteristics, service brands frequently try to ‘tangibilise’ their offering through the use of ‘symbolism’ (Berry, 2000; Bitner, 1990; Levitt, 1981; Miller et al., 2007; Shostack, 1977; Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996; Zeithaml et al., 1985). Of particular note was Shostack’s (1977) seminal paper which outlined how intangible dominant entities needed to use tangible ‘evidence’ to make their offering more concrete.

However, the term ‘symbolism’ encompasses a variety of related disciplines and topics including semiology (Chandler, 2007; Noth, 1995), symbolic consumption (McCracken, 1988) and symbolic interactionism (Schenk and Holman, 1980) to name a few. Due to the broad nature of this term, the corporate visual identity systems literature (Melewar et al., 2005a; Melewar and Saunders, 1998; 2000; Van den Bosch et al., 2006a; Van den Bosch et al., 2006b) will be drawn on. The reason being this literature will help focus this thesis’ theoretical contribution whilst providing relevant literature with regards to the more tangible or concrete elements associated with developing service brand identity. This approach is consistent with authors such as Baker and Balmer (1997) who regard corporate visual identity as being synonymous with the ‘symbolism’ tenet of the corporate identity mix.

Van den Bosch et al. (2004) outlined how the corporate visual identity literature can be conceptualised as operating at the three levels. The strategic level focuses on corporate choices with regards to brand structure, that is a monolithic, endorsed or a branded approach. The operational level is concerned with corporate visual identity processes and systems whilst the design level concentrates on logos, names, slogans and typography. This research focuses on the design level of corporate visual identity given its pervasiveness in the identity (brand and corporate) literature and the important role such physical cues play for service brands. Guided by this view, corporate visual identity consists of name, symbol and / or logo, typography, colour and slogan (Dowling, 1994; Melewar and Saunders, 1998; 2000; Olins, 1986; Simoes et al., 2005; Topalian, 1984; Van den Bosch et al., 2005, 2006a) and is transmitted through buildings, vehicles, clothing, marketing collateral and so forth (Melewar and Saunders, 2000). In combination such visual cues provide means through which the organisation can project consistent visual identity to its 'publics' (Henrion and Parkin, 1967). Consequently, whilst a logo is an important part of corporate visual identity, the construct relates to more than the logo alone (Van den Bosch et al., 2005).

Within the brand identity literature, authors tend to use the term 'symbol' or 'symbolism' and 'logo' interchangeably. For instance, Aaker (1996a) outlines how "a strong symbol can provide cohesion and structure to an identity and make it much easier to gain recognition and recall.....it just takes a glance to be reminded of the brand" (p. 84). Developing this point further, Aaker (1996a) outline how brands that use symbols (i.e. logos) to harness their metaphorical power are particularly effective in conveying key aspects of their brand identity. For example, Citigroup's umbrella signifies shelter and

protection. In a similar manner, the strategic value of symbolism / logos is echoed by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) who argue logos are most important when they create a visual metaphor that simplifies the process of communicating complex brand benefits. The metaphorical value of brands has also been noted outside the brand identity literature. For instance, focusing on services, Levitt (1981) highlights the metaphorical value of logos by noting how they “become surrogates for the tangibility that cannot be provided or experienced in advance” (p. 97). Similarly, Biel (1993b) argues the “visual metaphor can provide a powerful set of symbols that are particularly important in service categories, where there is no tangible product per se” (p. 73). The logic underpinning this perspective is grounded in the view that humans tend to incorporate new stimuli and information into existing knowledge structures via association with other metaphorical objects (Jonassen, 1995).

The importance of a brand’s objective and tangible elements is also raised in Kapferer’s (2004) work via the ‘physique’ facet of the Identity Prism. Whilst not explicit in his work, it is not unreasonable to extend the physique logic to service brands via organisational name, nomenclature, vehicles, employee clothing and so forth all of which contribute to a brand’s visual identity. For example, a boutique strategy consultancy will reinforce this desired brand identity via a prestigious address and opulent offices. In a similar manner, flight attendants uniforms are intended to visually reinforce the desired brand identity with Singapore airlines being both a pioneer and exemplar in this respect.

In a similar manner to the brand identity literature, corporate identity scholars tend to use the terms symbolism and corporate visual identity interchangeably. The latter constitutes a tenet of the corporate identity’s interdisciplinary school (Van Riel and

Balmer, 1997) and draws heavily on earlier and more visually orientated scholars' work such as Carter (1982) and Dowling (1994). In the context of corporate identity, when considering symbolism, Van Riel and Van den Ban (2001) outline how logos are an 'efficient management tool' which can be used to express the desired features the organisation wishes to express to its stakeholders. Linking personality and symbolism, Marwick and Fill (1997) regard symbolism as the element of the corporate identity mix which helps communicate the organisation's personality to its various stakeholders. This view is consistent with Van Riel and Van den Bosch (2001) who outline how organisational symbolism such as its logo has the potential to help organisations express their characteristics. More recently Balmer (2008) noted how symbolism can help communicate the quintessence of a corporation including its values, standards and distinctiveness. Melewar et al. (2006) make a similar point when referring to the Co-operative bank's visual identity which aims to reflect the ethically orientated values and goals of the organisation. Hence, in a similar manner to the brand identity literature, corporate identity scholars consider visual identity as playing an important role in making the underlying aspects of their brand or organisation manifest. This position is consistent with other services marketing scholars (Berry et al., 1988; Miller et al., 2007) who note how logos can be used to express desired service features, benefits or attributes. Similarly, Legg and Baker (1987), albeit more philosophically, note how symbols help service brands in particular to convey their central brand meaning in terms of what the brand wants to stand for. For example, Virgin's slanted typography signifies it is an atypical corporate organisation. Such an approach is in sharp contrast to large professional services companies such as Accenture and KPMG for example. Consequently, it can be seen how the logo or other visual identity cues become an apparatus for conveying or expressing the

brand or organisation (Schultz et al., 2000). As outlined above this could include values, standards, service features or personality to name a few.

The important role visual identity plays in brand differentiation has been acknowledged by several scholars. For instance, Boyle (1996) highlights how the brand's visual identity helps overcome the issue intangibility creates in terms of consumers being able to differentiate between brands. In a similar manner, de Chernatony (2006) outlines how, for service brands, physical cues such as the logo, clothes employees wear, premises and so forth can help distinguish a brand. This point has been reiterated by other authors (Aaker, 1996a; Onkvisit and Shaw, 1989; Park et al., 1986) who stress how intangible cues, such as the brand name and logo, provide a powerful means of service brand differentiation. This position is consistent with Melewar et al.'s (2001) empirical research which highlighted how for industrial, service and consumer brands, corporate visual identity can be used to differentiate an organisation from its competitors.

From a consumer decision making perspective, services are high on experience and credence values (Sharp, 1995; Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). Consequently, it can be challenging for customers to assess competing (intangible) offers before they make a purchase due to service brands lacking physical differences (Legg and Baker, 1987; Sharp, 1995; Zeithaml, 1981). Therefore, consumers frequently base service brand evaluations on factors that are not directly related to the service itself (Keller, 2003). Visual cues such as logo, employee dress and premises frequently being used as surrogate 'evaluation variables' (Hansen, 1972). Hence, visual identity plays a particularly important role by making the abstract nature of service more concrete (cf: Shostack, 1977).

Within the B2B literature only a limited number of scholars have embraced corporate visual identity from a broader perspective as initially developed in the B2C literature (Dowling, 1994; Melewar and Saunders, 1998; 2000; Simoes et al., 2005; Van den Bosch et al., 2005, 2006a). For instance, Blomback and Axelsson (2007) acknowledge the role of premises and employees whilst Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006a) consider the efficacy of metaphor as a vehicle for conveying brand values, attributes or personality. The importance of symbolism and other forms of visual identity to communicate and reinforce brand values has also been noted (Jackson and Tax, 1995) whilst Keller and Lehman (2006) consider the importance of names, logos, symbols, packaging and slogans. These authors tend to be the exception with the majority of B2B scholars focusing on brand name.

A range of perspectives have emerged from the B2B literature in the context of brand name. Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006a) consider brand names as a shorthand for everything that is being offered, be it reliability of delivery or value for money whilst Shrimp (1993) notes how brand names can evoke feelings of trust, confidence, security, strength, durability, speed, status and exclusivity (cf: connection with emotion in B2B branding). Consistent with the view that brand names have emotional loadings, Hutton (1997) notes individuals make more emotionally informed decisions based on name instead of price when failure of the purchased brand could have adverse affects for the buyer and / or their organisation. This is consistent with van Riel et al. (2005) who found the influence of brand names is amplified under conditions of increased perceived risk. The role brand name plays in building brand equity (Low and Blois, 2002) and realising corporate success (Mitchell et al., 2001) have also been noted in the B2B literature.

In comparison to the B2C literature, limited scholarly work has been published concerning logos. Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006a) outline how logos help reflect corporate values and characteristics of a brand in addition to facilitating stakeholder-brand connection given humans tend to be more receptive to images and symbols than text. In the context of B2B markets, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) note the particularly important role logos play in B2B markets where complex functional benefits need to be portrayed in more vivid and memorable ways.

As the above outlines, in comparison to the B2C literature, the B2B corporate visual identity literature is at an embryonic stage in terms of considering the breadth and depth of factors that comprise the construct with the majority of scholars focusing on brand name and to a lesser extent logo.

This section has highlighted the critical role corporate visual identity plays for service brands and drew on the brand, service marketing, brand identity and the corporate identity (visual element) literatures. Of particular note was how service brands need to tangibilise the intangible (Levitt, 1981) due to their inherently invisible nature (Van den Bosch et al., 2006a) and that visual identity plays a particularly powerful role when used in a metaphorical manner (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Biel, 1993b; Levitt, 1981). The use of corporate visual identity to facilitate service brand identity differentiation was also noted. Notwithstanding this point, it is also appreciated corporate visual identity plays an important role in branding tangible dominant entities (Shostack, 1977) or tangibles (Levitt, 1981). However, in line with the above literature, it is contended the role of visual cues such as logo, name, premises and so forth is particularly important for service brands (Berry et al. 1988; Bitner 1990; Levitt 1981; Van Riel 1995;

Zeithaml and Bitner 1996; Zeithaml et al. 2006). The reason being such cues become a way, vehicle or apparatus for the brand to convey or visually express itself. This is consistent with Keller (2003) who noted that, due to service intangibility, ‘symbols’ can be used by the brand owner to convey the brand identity in a more *concrete* and *real* manner. The particularly important role aspects of corporate visual identity such as name and logo play in B2B markets was also noted. Consequently, for these reasons corporate visual identity systems is considered a dimension of service brand identity.

3.5.3. Client Relationship Management

The importance of brands developing relationship with customers has been noted in a broad range of literature. This includes the service dominant logic (Lusch and Vargo, 2006; Lusch et al., 2007; Vargo and Lusch, 2004a), marketing (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995; Webster, 1992), relationship marketing (Gronroos, 2000b; 1994, 1995, 1998), service marketing (Berry, 1983, 1995; Bitner, 1995), brand (Aaker et al., 2004b; Agarwal, 2004; Bengtsson, 2003; 1992, 1993; 1995, 1998, 2005) and brand identity (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; 1997, 2004) literature. These will now be discussed.

A key tenet of the burgeoning service dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a) concerns the co-creation of value with customers in the context of a ‘relationship’. Value is created by consumers in collaboration or dialogue with the brand via application of their operant resources to the organisation’s value proposition (Lusch et al. 2007; Vargo and Lusch 2004b). The fervour with which this new order has been adopted in academic circles

highlights the importance of conceptually moving marketing research from a transactional to relational or dialectical (Holt, 2002) perspective. Hence, it is important marketing research considers relationships.

Several scholars highlight how a relational approach is particularly important for service brands. The reason being service are particularly interpersonal and variable in nature (Berry, 1995; Dall'Olmo Riley and de Chernatony, 2000) . Such a perspective is consistent with scholars such as Rust et al. (2000) who note how services are more relationships based. In a similar manner, Ang and Buttle (2006) highlight how service companies tend to have a higher propensity for relationship-building than non-service companies. The reason being due to their intangibility and variability, perceived risk associated with service brands may be higher which can be reduced by building relationships based on trust.

The importance of developing a relational approach has been noted in several marketing literature streams. For instance, Webster (1992) notes the importance of a marketing paradigm which “binds actors together in ongoing relationships” (p. 10) whilst Day (1992) reiterates this point by highlighting the strategic importance of customer and organisation relationships. In a similar manner, relationship marketing (Gronroos, 1990, 1991, 2000b; Gummesson, 1994, 1995, 1998) service marketing scholars (Berry, 1983, 1995; Bitner, 1995) have also noted the importance of developing relationships is amplified in the case of service brands due to the high level of employee and customer contact.

Focusing on the brand identity literature, Aaker (1996a), considers the brand-customer relationship as the “bottom line” (p. 103) which helps drive and enhance brand identity programs. The reason being relationships help build a stronger emotional bond than if just functional aspects of the brand are developed. The result of this stronger emotional attachment is greater brand loyalty (Aaker, 1996a). Building on Aaker’s (1996a) work, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) note how relationships form an integral part of brand identity where “one goal of the brand should be to create a relationship with its customers” (p. 50). When considering Kapferer’s (2004) Brand Identity Prism, one facet highlights how brands are “often at the crux of transactions and exchanges between people” and that “service is by definition a relationship” (p. 10). de Chernatony’s (2006) Components of Brand Identity framework outlines the importance of relationships staff have with each other, customers and other stakeholders as a dimension which “underpins” (p. 46) brand identity. Consequently, this view appears to be grounded in Stakeholder Theory (Donaldson and Preston, 1995) which outlines how “organisations have responsibilities to a broad range of audiences and must, as best possible, draw stakeholders into relationships with the organisation” (p. 79). de Chernatony’s (2006) stakeholder perspective on brand relationships is of particular relevance to this service based research. The reason being the literature review (Section 2.2.2) highlighted how for corporate brands, which is a pervasive brand structure in the service sector (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Berry, 2000; Berry et al., 1988; de Chernatony, 2001; Diefenbach, 1987; Pina et al., 2006) a broader stakeholder concern is particularly important.

The important role building and managing client relationships plays, that is relationships with upstream channel partners, has been noted by several scholars in the

B2B literature. Consistent with Kotler and Keller (2006b), Malaval (2002) highlight how relationships perform a crucial role for B2B brands due to the interpersonal nature of the market and selling process whilst Bentsson and Servais (2005) argue brand may be a relationship prerequisite. van Riel et al. (2005) outline how in markets where products are complex or high in value, as is frequently the case in B2B markets, buyers expect value-adding relationships. Similarly, Ford et al. (2003) note how B2B markets are characterised by stability and enduring relationships. This is consistent with de Chernatony and McDonald (1998) who contend buyer and seller relationships form an important characteristic of B2B markets. Lynch and de Chernatony (2004) augment these scholars' views suggesting meaningful relationships in B2B markets are built on both functional and emotional values which themselves help drive competitive advantage.

Drawing on a broad range of literature this section has discussed how developing relationships or 'bond' between the seller / corporation and buyer (cf: Section 2.2.1) plays a critical role not only within the brand identity, but several 'marketing' literature streams. However, from a terminological perspective two points should be noted. First, 'customers' tends to be the language employed within B2C markets. Given this research's secondary context is B2B markets, the term 'client' was considered more appropriate given its widespread use in B2B markets. Second, given the managerial perspective this research embodies, referring specifically to the management of client relationships as opposed to customer relationships was regarded a more accurate reflection of the position this research adopts. For these reasons the language of client relationship management has been employed. Consequently, client relationship management is considered a dimension of service brand identity.

3.5.4. Integrated Marketing Communications

The literature review highlighted how ‘communications’ was a tenet of corporate identity’s interdisciplinary school (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). Although this facet of the corporate identity ‘mix’ is referred to as ‘communications’, it is clear authors from this literature stream are aware communications need to be ‘integrated’ (Balmer, 2001a; Melewar et al., 2001). Hence, this thesis adopts the position communications is concerned with integrated marketing communications which can be defined as “an audience-driven business process of strategically managing stakeholders, content, channels, and results of brand communication programs.” (Kliatchko, 2008: 140)

Kliatchko’s (2008) definition draws attention to several points such as integrated marketing communications being an audience-driven process, results focused and delivering marketing messages or content via communications programs and channels. However, two points are of particular note. First, consistent with Kliatchko (2008) and other scholars (Holm, 2006; Madhavaram et al., 2005; Schultz and Schultz, 1998), it is contended here integrated marketing communications requires the *strategic* and not tactical mindset. The reason being IMC necessitates symbiotic orchestration of the communications mix over a sustained period of time. This cannot be achieved if a tactical mindset is adopted. Hence, in a similar manner to brand identity, integrated marketing communications is considered a strategic and not tactical construct. Secondly, the span of integrated marketing communications encompasses organisational stakeholders and not just customers. This logic is consistent with the view that service brands need to engage with a broader range of stakeholders as outlined in the literature review (Section 2.2.2).

In terms of the corporate identity literature, Marwick and Fill (1997) note how marketing communications should be used to express the organisation's distinctive qualities. This is a point echoed by Gray (1995) who argues marketing communication is the means by which a brand conveys its brand meaning to stakeholders. Van Rekom (1997) highlights how the purpose of marketing communications is to develop a desired corporate image with target groups whilst Balmer (1995) stresses ineffective communications "may result in key groups holding erroneous and negative perceptions of the corporate brand" (p. 35). Hence, integrated marketing communications play a key role in organisational expression and image formation with the latter being conceptualised in the literature as the 'receivers' interpretation of the 'senders' brand identity (Kapferer, 2004).

Whilst several brand identity scholars outline the important role marketing communications play in mobilising brand identity, integrated marketing communications was not explicitly identified as a dimension of brand identity. However, in order for service brand identity to be successfully 'mobilised' integrated marketing communications is essential and so should constitute a dimension of service brand identity. The reason being if the service brand identity is not communicated, it merely remains as a psychological construct residing with the brand strategist in the form of his or her vision for their brand. Furthermore, communications play a pivotal role with regards to other dimensions such as corporate visual identity and brand personality which were acknowledged in the brand identity literature. Hence, it is contended here that by default integrated marketing communications can be regarded an essential dimension of service brand identity. Adopting this logic appears to be consistent with the brand identity

literature. For example, Aaker (1996) considers communications as critical to brand identity in terms of its “execution” (p.186) whilst Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), when providing guidance on how to elaborate brand identity, note “a key step in implementing a brand identity is communicating it to organisational members and partners” (p. 89). Consequently, Aaker and Joachimsthaler’s (2000) work makes explicit the need for organisations to communicate with both internal and external stakeholders. In a similar manner the final dimension of de Chernatony’s (2006) model considers “presenting the brand to stakeholders with a design and promotional support that differentiates the brand”. Hence, in this context it is reasonable to consider ‘presentation’ as being synonymous with or constituting ‘marketing communications’. Finally, in developing a theoretical framework and research propositions, Madhavaram et al.(2005) highlight how integrated marketing communications play a critical role in the brand identity building process.

Adopting a more balanced perspective, , Fill (2002) stresses how service brands need to utilise internal communications due to the pivotal role employee play at such brands. This is a point reiterated by several other authors who outline how achieving internal and external consistency is vital to conveying coherent service brand messages (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Kennedy, 1977; Simoes et al., 2005). In line with these scholars, several brand identity authors note the importance of internal communications at service brands (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; de Chernatony, 2006). For instance, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) outline how “internal communication programs to employees and firm partners, can be vital to creating the clarity and culture needed to deliver on the identity” (p. 317). Hence it can be seen how from Aaker and Joachimsthaler’s (2000) perspective, communication relates to both external and internal audiences. Adopting this perspective implies the integration of

marketing communications needs to occur along two dimensions. One relates to the integration of external activities. The second concerns the integration or alignment of internal and external communications. This is of particular importance for service brands given the need for such organisations to “take their employee with them”.

The important role marketing communications plays in B2B markets has been noted in the relevant literature for some time (Gilliland and Johnston, 1997) with Mudambi (2002) highlighting how to leverage the potential of B2B brands, business marketers must understand and effectively communicate the value of their brands in the market place.

More specifically, the literature outlines how B2B marketing communications tends to focus on stakeholders and the organisational. For instance, Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006a) note B2B encounters are complex interactions affected by multiple stakeholders who organisations need to communicate. Similarly, Bendixen et al. (2004) recommend marketers consider all stakeholders that might influence a customer's perception when devising their communications strategy. Bendixen et al.'s (2004) position is consonant with Lynch and de Chernatony (2004) who encourage synchronised internal and external communication of brand values.

In terms of communication focus, B2B brands tend to concentrate on the organisation and not specific product lines. Bendixen et al. (2004) contend this is a function of extensive brand lines most B2B organisations have. Consistent with Bendixen et al. (2004), Han and Sung (2008) suggest to create brand value, B2B organisations need to develop marketing communications that augment their corporate brand as opposed to focusing on a range of line brands. Blomback and Axelsson (2007) elaborate on this point

by emphasising how B2B communications should look to convey organisational abilities and opposed to focusing on a given brand line's benefits.

This section opened by acknowledging how communication, as a construct, is more explicit in the corporate than brand identity literature. However, this should not imply brand identity scholars have neglected its importance as this section has outlined. Consequently, building on both corporate and brand identity literature the role communications play in mobilising, expressing and executing service brand identity was highlighted. The role communications plays in B2B markets was also outlined. Consequently, for these reasons integrated marketing communications is considered a dimension of service brand identity.

3.5.5. Brand Personality

The literature review highlighted how brand 'personality' was *the* salient dimension of several brand identity frameworks (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004) whilst several corporate identity scholars (Abratt, 1989; Marwick and Fill, 1997; Olins, 1978b, 1995) have drawn on the personality metaphor to reveal corporate identity.

Brand personality can be defined as "the set of human characteristics associated with the brand" (Aaker, 1997: 347). Two points should be noted from this definition. First, the branding literature considers brands having a personality in a metaphorical and not literal sense (Aaker, 1995). The logic for adopting such an approach is three fold.

Primarily, utilising a metaphor capitalises on human's natural tendency to anthropomorphise non human things and events (Freling and Forbes, 2005b; Zentes et al., 2008). Furthermore, such an approach provides a way of accessing and exploring a complex construct such as brand in a more comprehensible and familiar manner (Davies et al., 2001). Finally, personification makes brands appear more familiar, comfortable and less risky (Haigood, 1999). As a result, brands are frequently imbued with 'typical' user personality traits (Helgeson and Supphellen, 2004; Plummer, 1985). For example, a brand may be sporty or youthful (Aaker, 1997) or modern or exotic (Keller, 1993). Second, Aaker's (1997) definition highlights how brand personality is concerned with symbolic brand *associations* (Zentes et al., 2008). As indicated above, a brand could be associated with sporty or youthful connotations.

Initially, it is important to make a distinction between the use of the personality metaphor in the brand and corporate identity literatures. The brand identity literature regards personality as a *dimension of* brand identity whereas several corporate identity frameworks tend to consider personality as *being* synonymous with corporate identity. For example, Van Riel (1995), adapting the work of Birkigt and Stadler (1986), regards corporate identity as being concerned with corporate personality which is made manifest via the tenets of behaviour, symbolism and communication (cf: The Interdisciplinary School). In a similar manner, Marwick and Fill's (1997) Corporate Identity Management Process Model regards personality as "a means by which the substantive essence of an organisation is revealed" (p. 401) whilst Stuart (1999) considers corporate identity as the expression of personality via Corporate Strategy and the Corporate Identity Mix. Olins' (1978b, 1995) viewed corporate identity as the manifestation of an organisation's personality whilst Balmer (1995) considers corporate identity as an outcome of personality

with the latter being influenced by corporate philosophy and mission. Consequently, it can be seen how corporate and brand identity scholars utilise the personality metaphor in different ways. However, it does appear more recent corporate identity literature has moved away from a personality-centric to a more multidisciplinary approach.

In terms of the brand identity literature, Aaker's (1996a) 'brand-as-person' perspective "suggests a brand identity that is richer and more interesting than one based on product attributes" (p. 83). Aaker's (1996a) continues to outline how developing a brand personality allows consumers to express themselves (cf: Belk 1988) via the brand, provides the basis for a meaningful 'relationship' and enables the brand owner to communicate key product attributes. de Chernatony (2006) highlights the role personality plays in brand identity by outlining how brand personality "brings the brand's emotional values to life" (p.46). The logic being that anthropomorphisation enables customers to better appreciate and connect, or bond, with the brands' emotional values due to it taking on, in theory, a more human nature. As part of the Identity Prism, Kapferer (2004) also considers personality as a key identity facet given it "shows what kind of person it would be if it were human" (p. 108). Kapferer's (2004) line of thinking appears to have been developed more recently by Roy and Banerjee (2007) where brand personality "creates a human face of a brand to nurture the brand identity" (p. 143). As part of their Brand Leadership Model, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) note the strategic importance of developing a brand personality by arguing if a brand identity has been developed without personality it has been too narrowly conceived. Consequently, it can be seen how brand personality plays a salient role in brand identity scholars' thinking.

In terms of the broader brand literature, the personality metaphor has been extensively researched. For instance, numerous authors outline the important role brand personality plays in providing the basis for brand-customer relationships (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Aaker, 1995; Aaker et al., 2004b; Blackston, 1993; de Chernatony, 2006; de Chernatony and McEnally, 1999; Fournier, 1998; Ghodeswar, 2008; Phau and Cheen Lau, 2000; Smit et al., 2007; Swaminathan et al., 2008a; Sweeney and Brandon, 2006). The logic being making a brand less inanimate, via brand personality development, increases the likelihood of a human being able to develop an emotional bond with a brand. Furthermore, Keller (2003) outlines how it is important brands have personality traits, especially in markets that are reaching parity or service markets. The latter point is consistent with Berry (2000) who contends service companies with strongest brands make a “conscious effort to carve out a distinct brand personality” (p. 131). Moreover, Hoefller and Keller (2003a) note how brand personality enables the brand to convey much richer and contextually based information than if a brand personality was not developed. Consequently, it can be seen how brand personality provides a basis for developing a brand-stakeholder bond which, due to their nature, is particularly relevant for service brands.

The relationship between brand personality and ‘self’ has also been explored in the literature where brand personality helps augment the symbolic and self expressive meaning a brand holds for the consumer (Allen and Olsen, 1995; Belk, 1988; de Chernatony and McEnally, 1999; Levy, 1959; Swaminathan et al., 2008a). Consequently, brand personality takes brand beyond merely utilitarian or functional benefits (de Chernatony and McEnally, 1999) by providing a basis for enabling consumers to utilise the brand in a way that helps

them express their definition of self (Mulyanegara et al., 2009b; Swaminathan et al., 2008a), be it actual, social, ideal or social ideal (Sirgy, 1986).

Other scholars such as Smothers (1993) and Landon (1974) stress how brand personality can help to enhance the emotional aspects of the brand (cf: de Chernatony, 2006). Acknowledging the important role personality plays in engendering emotion is consistent with other authors who outline how personality can strengthen emotional attachment to the brand (Belk, 1988; Biel, 1993a) whilst facilitating the diffusion of emotional benefits (Olgivy, 1983). Indeed, Aaker (1996a) argues developing 'emotion' is the backbone of a successful brand identity and is of increased importance in today's business environment where it is difficult for brands to retain competitive advantage based on functional or utilitarian benefits alone (de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley, 1997; Freling and Forbes, 2005a; Van Rekom and Jacobs, 2006). Consequently, by developing brand personality organisations look to compete not only on the grounds of *what* the brand is or does but *who* it is (Keller and Aaker, 1998; Lannon, 1992).

In terms of the B2B literature, authors such as Keller (2003) contend brand personality development tends to be less important for organisations operating in B2B markets than for those operating in B2C markets. The reason being their clients have, unlike consumer markets, comparatively fewer psychological and social needs. In a similar manner, de Chernatony and McDonald (1998) outline how emotionally influenced decisions are rare in industrial markets. This perspective is grounded in the logic that organisational buying behaviour is informed by a rationale decision making process (Bendixen et al., 2004; Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004; Voss, 1990; Wilson, 2000).

This rational perspective is contrary to an increasing body of knowledge outlining the salient role emotional in addition to functional aspects of branding play in B2B markets (Bennet et al., 2005; Davis et al., 2007; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006b; Lamons, 2005; Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004, 2007; Malhotra, 2005). Emotions relating to trust, confidence and comfort (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a) in addition to pride, peace of mind, security, reassurance, reputation and responsiveness (Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004) provide relevant examples. This more balanced perspective acknowledges decisions are made by humans, not machines, who have individual preferences, orientations and dispositions with regards to their decision making processes (Kotler and Keller, 2006b). For instance, Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006a) outline how “A brand is emotional, has a personality and captures the hearts and minds of its customers” (p. 4).

The role emotion plays in decision making has evolved more recently in the B2B literature. Blomback and Axelsson (2007) outline how earlier parts of the decision making process are influenced by first impressions from sales representatives, trade fairs and so forth. This is followed by functional or practical (price and functionality) factors and with a mixture of emotional and functional factors characterising the final stage of the process. Lynch and de Chernatony (2004), who adopt more of a contextual approach, note the influence of emotion depends on a range of organisational and individual factors. These include product type and purchasing situation in addition to personal characteristics and the individual’s level of involvement in the decision. Consequently, the importance of developing an emotional connection via brand personality appears to be extending from consumer to business markets and obtaining increasing scholarly support.

This section opened by distinguishing between the use of ‘personality’ in the brand and corporate identity literatures. Noticeably, the former regards brand personality as a dimension of, as opposed to being the sole manifestation of the construct. The important role personality plays in relationship building, facilitating expression of self and driving competitive advantage in addition to mobilising or generating emotion was then noted. The growing academic interest in the role of emotion in B2B markets was also outlined. Based on this literature and consistent with the *brand* identity literature, this thesis regards brand personality as being a dimension of service brand identity. It is contended here that regarding service brand identity as being synonymous with brand personality oversimplifies the construct and fails to account for its multidimensional nature. Consequently, for these reasons brand personality is considered a dimension of service brand identity.

3.6. Service Brand Identity and Brand Performance

The previous section of this chapter reviewed a broad range of literature to justify the domain of service brand identity as portrayed in the preliminary framework. The preliminary framework consisted of five dimensions. These were marketing culture, corporate visual identity, client relationship management and brand personality. This section will now look to justify a research hypothesis stating the positive influence service brand identity has on brand performance. Consequently, this section looks to unify the ‘identity’ and brand performance literature reviewed in the previous chapter. Figure 16 conceptualises this process:

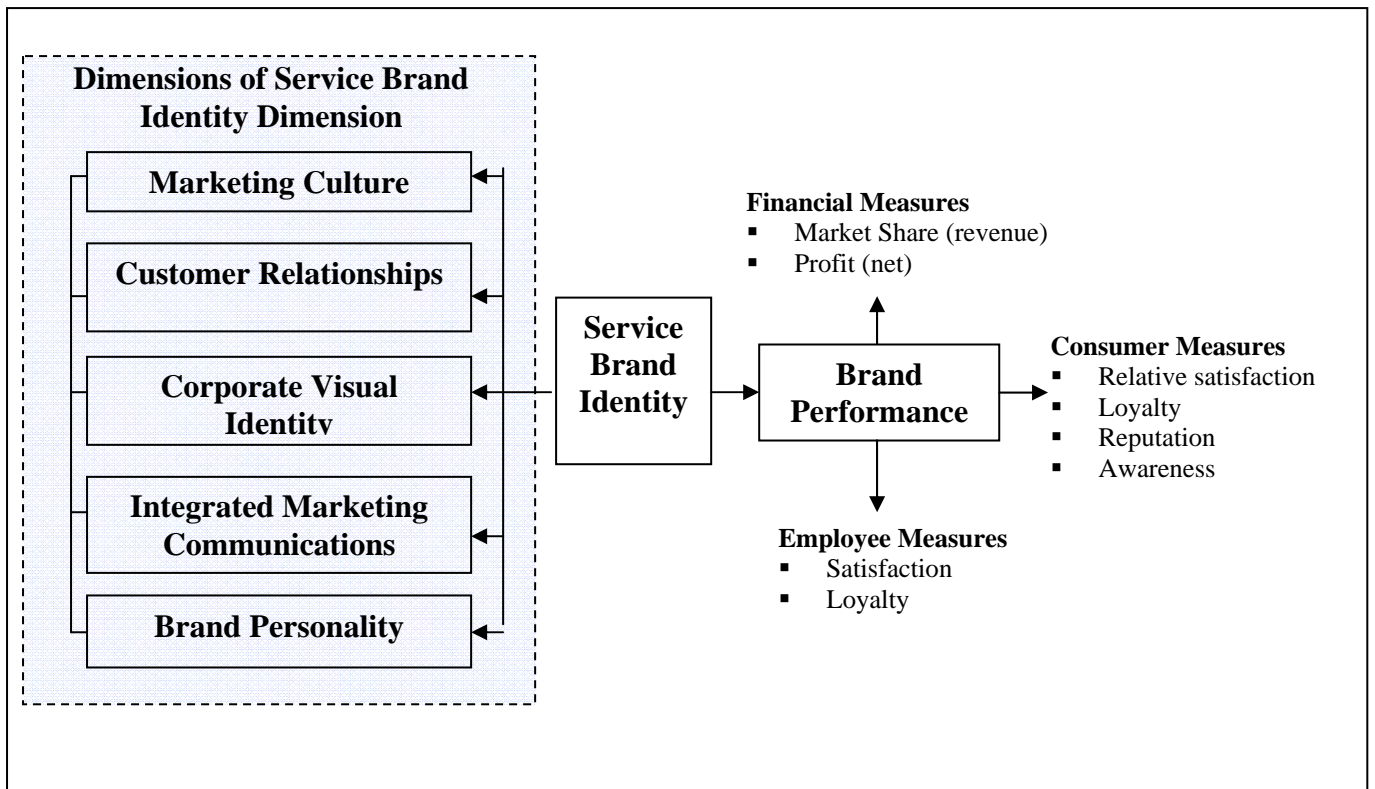


Figure 16 Conceptualising the Positive Influence Service Brand Identity has on Brand Performance

At present empirical research that assesses the influence brand identity has on brand performance has not been conducted. Consequently, a theoretically informed body of knowledge does not exist which this thesis can use to ground a brand identity-performance hypothesis. However, it was still regarded possible to hypothesise:

H₁: Service brand identity has a positive and significant influence on brand performance

The logic for this approach was underpinned by three rationale. First, the relationship between other brand related constructs such as brand equity and performance has already been established (Aaker, 1996b; Kim et al., 2003b; Park and Srinivasan, 1994).

Second, the previous sections of this chapter explored the domain of service brand identity. In order to develop this hypothesis, this section will outline how, in isolation, the literature indicates that each dimension has a positive impact on performance. Third, later in this chapter (Section 3.7.3) the potential for positive dimension interactions will be highlighted. Consequently, given previous brand equity research, positive dimension interactions and literature highlighting the positive influence each dimension, in isolation, has on brand performance it was not considered unreasonable to hypothesise service brand identity, which is made manifest via these dimensions, should have a positive influence on brand performance.

Adopting this approach is consistent with former Journal of Marketing Editor Varadarajan (1996) who, when reflecting on JM submissions during his time as an editor noted:

“[T]hat little prior theorizing exists to lay the foundation for a sound conceptualizations does not exempt the researcher from the responsibility for developing at least a preliminary framework or model that would provide insights into the phenomenon of interest. For instance, an author could present a logically reasoned explanation of why a certain relationship may be true.”

(p. 4)

Now the logic underpinning the development of the service brand identity-performance hypothesis has been shared, it is necessary to address the second point above. This relates to reviewing literature that outlines the positive influence each dimension, in isolation, has on performance.

3.6.1. Marketing Culture

In a similar manner to the marketing culture dimension (Section 3.5.1) the broader organisational culture and performance literature will be reviewed before the marketing culture and performance literature. The reason being the marketing culture literature is grounded in the organisational culture literature. Consequently, the latter is regarded as relevant to the former.

Several authors have noted the positive influence culture has on organisational performance (de Chernatony 2006; Deal and Kennedy 1982; Denison 1990; Denison and Mishra 1995; Hofstede 1980; Kanter 1989; Peters and Waterman 1982; Wilkins and Ouchi 1983). From this early literature, Hofstede (1998) outlined how “there is little doubt that organizational culture affects performance” (p. 16). Similarly, Kotter and Heskett (1992) note “despite differences in initial research focus, terminology, and methodology, the fundamental conclusions were very similar and very dramatic: all firms have corporate cultures, although some have much stronger cultures than others, these cultures can exert a powerful effect on individuals and on performance” (p. 9). Kotter and Heskett (1992) continue to outline how such benefits are a function of enhanced informal *social* control within the organisation as opposed to using bureaucracy which stifles motivation, improved goal alignment and increased employee motivation due to feelings of commitment or loyalty.

In a similar manner to Kotter and Heskett’s (1992) Theory I cultural type, de Chernatony (2006) postulates how stronger cultures, with consistent values (and so behaviour) promote employee motivation, commitment and loyalty which in their turn

enhance brand performance. This thinking is borne out in Figure 17 where de Chernatony (2006) postulates how a strong culture motivates staff, ensures coherent staff behaviour which in its turn enhances consistency and so brand trust with the outcome being enhanced brand performance.



Figure 17 How a Strong Culture Contributes Towards Brand Performance (de Chernatony 2006:142)

Interestingly, de Chernatony (2006) outlines how the culture-performance literature is mainly anecdotal. However, several empirical studies exist. For instance, adopting a trait-based approach, Peters and Waterman (1982) identified a positive relationship between a particular type of “strong culture” and superior performance. In a similar manner, other pioneering authors (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Denison, 1984; Kilmann et al., 1985) outlined how a strong culture has a major influence on organisational performance. The logic that underpinned these scholars’ work was grounded in the view that adopting certain traits would drive performance (Lee and Yu, 2004). In subsequent

work, Kotter and Heskett's (1992) research indicated a positive, albeit statistically weak, relationship between a 'strong' culture (i.e. where there are a shared set of relatively consistent values) and organisational performance. The empirical work of McGivern and Tvorik (1997) identified that organisational culture was a significant 'determinant' of organisational performance (return on assets, return on sales and return on invested capital) whilst Denison (1990) found that stronger organisational cultures, which had a consensus on organisational values, demonstrated superior organisational effectiveness. Building on earlier work, Denison (1990) and colleagues (Denison et al., 2004; Denison and Mishra, 1995) highlighted how a range of strong cultural types (high involvement, consistent, adaptable and mission / vision focused) positively related to organisational effectiveness. In a similar manner to Denison and Mishra (1995), Rashid et al.'s (2003) empirical research highlighted how, based on Deshpande and Farley (1999) typology of corporate cultures, all four culture 'types' (competitive, entrepreneurial, bureaucratic and consensual) had a positive influence on return on asset and return on investment (profitability ratios), but not liquidity. Consequently, the early hypothesis seemed to be a strong culture drives organisational performance.

However, it may not be possible to generalise the relationship between a 'strong' culture (i.e. an organisation with widely shared, homogenous and pervasive values) and performance. For example, Sorensen (2002) highlights how in more volatile markets a 'strong' culture may adversely affect organisational performance whilst organisations operating in more stable environments who have a 'strong' culture demonstrated superior performance. The logic being that strong cultures are less able to adapt to change (cf: Kotter and Heskett's Theory I). Furthermore Wilkins and Ouci (1983) highlight how a

strong, pervasive, pan-organisational culture may not be as effective as ‘clans’ which can better respond to local environmental change.

In a similar manner, scholars such as Kim et al. (2004) note that, overall, the early literature which assessed the influence of a ‘strong’ culture (i.e. a culture with common / consistent values and strong behavioural norms) on performance literature generally provided a weak evidence for the influence of the latter on the former. The reason being there were organisations with ‘strong’ cultures that both performed well and poorly (Kotter and Heskett, 1992). With a few exceptions (Denison and Mishra, 1995; Gordon and DiTomaso, 1992) such views do not appear to have considered the influence of strategically ‘appropriate’ or ‘adaptable’ cultures (Kotter and Heskett, 1992). Kotter and Heskett’s (1992) empirical research found firms with cultures that were guided by adaptable values could respond to changes in the external environment and so outperformed firms that did not have those cultural traits (cf: Theory III). Subsequent authors’ research (Collins and Porras, 1994; De Geus, 1997) provides support for this position insofar that cultural flexibility and adaptability was regarded a key determinant of organisational success in the form of longevity and financial success. In a similar manner, Gordon and DiTomaso’s (1992) noted that cultural adaptability was also predictive of short term financial performance. This finding was important as it introduces the concept of ‘fit’. Furthermore, Van der Post et al. (1998) found organisations who regularly reviewed their values in the context of the external environment and adapted them accordingly, financially outperformed those that did not whilst Ogbonna and Harris (2000) found that an innovative culture, characterised by flexibility, dynamism and an external orientation, exerted a direct and positive effect on organisational performance. Similarly, Kim et al.’s

(2004) research highlighted that “strong cultures are only valuable if they exhibit adaptive and learning qualities” (p. 356). Consequently, a large body of empirical research points to the positive influence an adaptable culture has on performance-related outcomes.

However, a more mixed picture has started to emerge from the literature in recent years regarding the adaptable culture-performance effect. For instance, Xenikou and Simosi (2006) found that an adaptive cultural orientation had a negative and significant influence on performance. However, it should be noted performance was measured in financial terms. The authors note how an adaptive orientation may be a better predictor of long term performance and so these findings should be treated with caution. Furthermore, Ngo and Loi (2008) note how an adaptable culture drives both human resource (e.g. morale, retention etc) and market (e.g. turnover, net profit) related performance. However, the influence of cultural adaptability on market-related outcomes became non significant when mediated by human resource-related outcomes. Conversely, O’Cass and Ngo (2007b) found an innovative culture, characterised by employee flexibility, adaptability and spontaneity, had a positive and significant influence on brand performance. Having considered the above discussion it appears that, for the most part, the literature indicates how an adaptable culture, informed by values that encourage flexibility, appear to have positive influence on performance-related outcomes.

Given the literature supporting the influence an adaptable culture has on performance, much of the earlier organisational culture and performance literature may be regarded as something of an oversimplification in that “the statement, strong cultures create excellent performance appears to be just plain wrong” (Kotter and Heskett, 1992 :21). The notion of adaptability once more leads to the marketing culture literature which

emphasised how, via its innovation dimension, an organisation and its employees need to be accepting of, and responsive to change. Furthermore, scholars such as Daft (2007) note how an adaptable culture is “characterised by strategic focus on the external environment through flexibility and change to meet customer needs” (p. 368) which, it could be argued, relate to the marketing culture’s service quality dimension. For these reasons, it is argued here, the marketing culture – performance literature findings are of particular value to this service focused thesis.

Several empirical studies have highlighted the positive influence a ‘strong’ marketing culture can have on marketing-related performance variables. For example, Webster (1993) concluded “that a significant relationships exists between the importance placed on marketing culture and the profitability of a firm” (p.120). Drawing on Kotler’s (1977a) work to define marketing effectiveness in terms of operational efficiency, customer philosophy, marketing information, strategic orientation, Webster (1995) highlighted how “[e]ven when the possible effects of firm size and geographical scope are removed, the relationship between [marketing] culture and effectiveness remains significant” (p. 16). Applying Webster’s (1993) marketing culture scale, Appiah et al.(1999) found “that service firms which give greater attention to the development of organisational variables such as service quality, innovation, interpersonal relationships, internal communication, organisation and selling generally exhibit relatively higher levels of performance in of customer satisfaction, customer retention and profitability” (p. 166). In subsequent work, Appiah et al. (2000) found a “moderately strong relationship between marketing culture and customer retention” (p. 95) with the logic being it is more profitable to retain than have to gain customers (Fornell and Wernerfelt, 1987, 1988; Heskett et al.,

1994; Karatepe et al., 2005; Reichheld and Sasser, 1990; Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995; Vavra, 1995). Consequently, several empirical studies highlight how marketing culture helps drive a range of performance measures.

At a more detailed level, several dimensions, within a marketing culture merit closer attention. As outlined above, the innovation dimension encourages organisations to be more accepting of, and responsive to change. This position is consistent with Kotler and Heskett's (1992) Theory III or more adaptable organisation which outperformed those organisations that did not display such cultural traits. However, service quality, internal communications and selling task all play a role in driving performance and will now be considered. The service quality dimension encourages a customer-centric approach and so is consistent with the philosophy of enacting the marketing concept. Whilst operationalisation of the marketing concept via a market orientation has been subject to some criticism (Brownlie and Saren, 1992) numerous empirical studies have highlighted how a market orientation can enhance organisational performance (Day and Nedungadi, 1994; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Narver and Slater, 1990; Pelham and Wilson, 1996; Slater and Narver, 1994; Vorhies et al., 1999). Internal communications looks to engage employees and align this stakeholder group with the organisation's vision. Several scholars have highlighted the positive influence developing an internal market orientation, that is a mindset cognizant of the value internal marketing, can have on performance-related outcomes. For instance, Lings and Greenley (2009) identified how an internal market orientation drives an external market orientation with the benefits of the latter being outlined above. Furthermore, Lings and Greenley (2009) found a strong internal market orientation positively influenced employee motivation, which enhanced customer satisfaction and ultimately financial performance. Hence, an internal

orientation appears to be indirect antecedent of financial performance (which constitutes an element of this research's brand performance measure). Similarly, an internal market orientation has also been suggested to improve employee motivation (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991), increase employee satisfaction (Piercy, 1995) and foster employee commitment (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991), all of which could be logically hypothesised as having a positive impact on performance.

The selling task dimension focuses on human resource practices such as recruitment and training. This is of particular relevance to this research due to the pivotal role employees' play in service brand delivery. There is a vast human resource literature outlining the influence informed HR practices have on organisational performance (Arthur, 1994; Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Guest et al., 2004; Hitt et al., 2001; Huselid, 1995; Huselid and Becker, 2000; Paauwe, 2009; Paauwe and Richardson, 1997; Pfeffer, 1994). For example, Pfeffer (1994) noted the top five performing firms (based on return from shares) from 1972-1992 differentiated themselves via the way in which they proactively managed their workforce whilst Becker and Gephart (1996) outlined how human resource activities have "an important and unique influence on organisational performance" (p.779). Huselid's (1995) cross sectional study "found considerable support for the hypotheses that investments in such practices [recruitment, training, appraisals etc] are associated with lower employee turnover, greater productivity and corporate financial performance" (p.667). In a similar manner, Delaney and Huselid (1996) found "positive associations between human resource management (HRM) practices, such as training, staffing selectivity, and perceptual firm performance measures" (p. 949). Terpstra and Rozell (1993) found a statistically positive link between extensiveness of recruitment / formal selection procedures and profit whilst Russell et al.

(1985) demonstrated a positive relationship between the use of training programs and financial performance. The logic being training provides employees with good technical brand knowledge and so better places them to provide accurate information and consistent experience to all stakeholders (de Chernatony, 2006). More recently, Combs et al. (2006) found an increase of one standard deviation increased return on sales by 4.6%. Hence, it can be seen from the above, the view that internal factors ultimately have a positive impact on financial performance concurs with the broader view in the services branding literature (Heskett et al., 1994).

This section of the chapter has drawn on a broad range of literature to consider the influence 'culture' has on performance. It was noted how support for the early view that a 'strong' culture has a positive influence on organisational performance appears to be somewhat weakening. The reason being a strong culture-performance link may be an oversimplification as this perspective fails to take into account the importance of an aligned or adaptable culture (Kotter and Heskett, 1992). Given this position, the marketing culture and performance literature was reviewed given the emphasis this construct places on an organisation being receptive and responsive to change via the innovation dimension. This is encouraged via the 'innovation dimension'. The influence of specific marketing culture dimensions, notably, service quality, internal communications and selling task on performance related measures was also noted. This only serves to reinforce the position that marketing culture drives performance.

3.6.2. Corporate Visual Identity Systems

The value of the brand's name and logo, as visual cues, has been noted as an important driver of brand awareness by a number of scholars (Aaker, 1991; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Berry, 2000; Berry et al., 1988; Keller, 2003; Melewar and Saunders, 1998; Miller et al., 2007; Van den Bosch et al., 2005). The reason being visual stimuli such as logos are more effective in terms of brand recall because they are learned faster and remembered for significantly longer periods of time than verbal cues (Henderson et al., 2003; Miller et al., 2007). MacInnis and Price (1987) refer to this phenomena as the 'picture superiority effect'. James' (1990) empirical research highlighted how the organisation's new visual identity helped convey a strong sense of organisational purpose and increased brand awareness by 30%. In a similar manner, the visual identity programme of TRW doubled brand awareness amongst the brand's target business (Hartigan, 1987). Henderson and Cote's (1998) empirical research outlines how logos can facilitate brand awareness whilst favourably influencing brand selection and company evaluations. These findings are corroborated by Henderson et al. (2003) who found a positive relationship between logo design characteristics and recognition in addition to perceptions of quality the logo connoted. In a similar manner, Lancaster and Corte-Real's (2007) empirical work found how figurative brand names and logos such as Apple enjoyed better recall and recognition. Such findings substantiate the views of earlier scholars (Carter, 1982; Peter, 1989; Pilditch, 1970) who note how the organisation's visual identity help facilitate brand recognition. As the literature review highlighted, brand awareness is a salient brand equity dimension (Aaker 1996b; Aaker 1996a; Berry 2000; Keller 1993; Sharp 1995; Yoo and Donthu 2001) which itself has been noted in the literature as, amongst other things, as

having a positive influence on business performance (Aaker, 1996b; Kim et al., 2003b; Park and Srinivasan, 1994).

It is worth noting how research indicating the positive influence visual identity elements, such as brand name and logo have on brand awareness ignores the intervening influence of brand associations. A consumer may be aware of a brand but the association may not be what was intended. In other words, awareness may be contrary to the intended association (Van Riel and van den Ban, 2001). Consequently, the above awareness-related findings must be treated with some caution. The importance of brand association is raised by de Chernatony (2006) who outlines how brand nomenclature should evoke the correct consumer associations with a cluster of brand values. As noted in the literature review, values are important as they influence behaviour (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008; Hardaker and Fill, 2005; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Rokeach, 1973) with the desired behaviour in this case being selecting service the brand owner is offering. In this sense visual identity ‘mediates’ or unifies both brand and customer values. This is conceptualised in Figure 18.

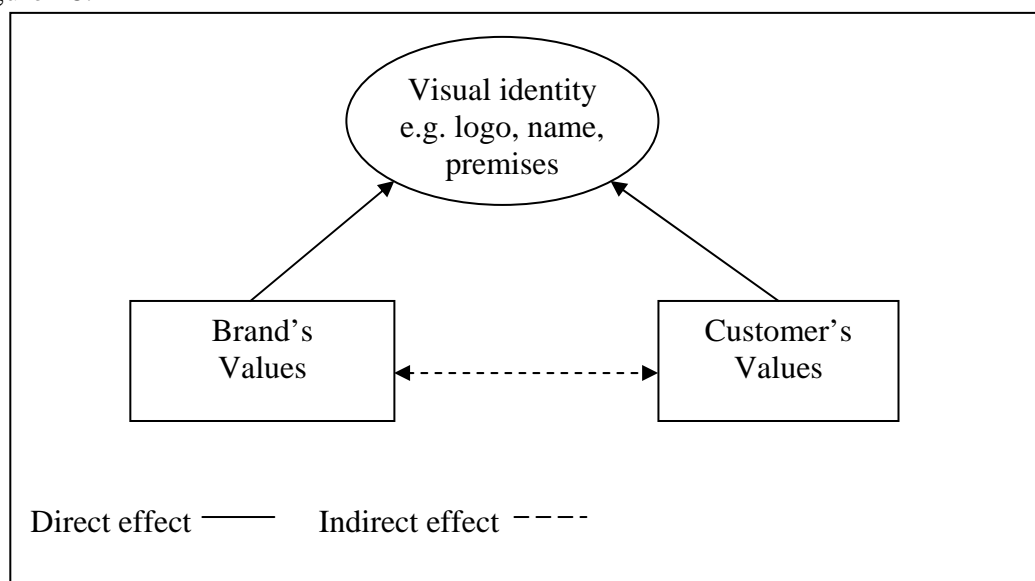


Figure 18 Visual Identity Mediating Brand and Customer Values

For example, a consultancy may build its brand identity based on ethical values. These may be made manifest via green typography, ecologically developed premises, use of a logo which has natural or organic metaphorical connotations in the form of a tree. Such cues provide the customer with an indication of what the organisation stands for and the extent to which its core values (e.g. ethical concerns) are aligned with theirs. A similar point is made by Van Riel (1995) who regards 'symbols' in the form of brand logo, brand name and so forth as having 'emotional loadings' that can influence consumer behaviour.

As the literature noted, employees play a crucial role in service brand delivery. Consequently, it is appropriate to consider employee based related benefits with regards to visual identity which have been noted in the literature. These relate to employee recruitment and identification with the organisation. Several authors (Carter, 1982; Gray and Smeltzer, 1987; Melewar et al., 2005a; Olins, 1990; Sorrell, 1997; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997) have outlined how visual identity helps attract qualified employees. This point has been empirically proven by other scholars (Balmer and Stotvig, 1997; Belt and Paolillo, 1982; Melewar and Saunders, 1998; Melewar et al., 2001). The logic being that more able employees will be able to contribute better to brand performance. Visual identity has also been noted as way of engendering a sense of company pride (Carter, 1982; Olins, 1989) and employee identification with the organisation (Van den Bosch et al., 2006b). Hence, this point draws heavily on the organisational identity literature (Ashford and Mael, 1996, Dutton and Dukerich, 1991, Dutton et al., 1994, Albert and Whetten, 1985, Gioia et al., 2000, Gioia and Thomas, 1996). In this sense, symbols become a concrete manifestation of the brand's identity which employees use as a salient cue or shorthand prompt to identify with the organisation. Drawing on the work of Hinkle et al.(1989), Van Riel and Van den Ban (2001) make a similar point by noting " logos implicitly contribute

to an increased degree of [employee] identification with the organisation” (p. 438). The logic being that stronger employee identification with the brand or organisation results in greater alignment with, commitment towards and support of the brand’s values which in its turn drives brand performance (cf: de Chernatony, 2006).

Several other organisational benefits that emanate from effective corporate visual identity management have been noted in the literature. For instance several authors (Baker and Balmer 1997; Berry et al. 1988; Olins 1989; Simoes et al. 2005) found visual identity helps drive competitive advantage which itself is associated with superior organisational performance (Barney, 1991; Chan et al., 2004; Porter, 1980). Furthermore, Van Riel and Van den Ban’s (2001) found that logos have “added value in the creation and maintenance of a favourable corporate reputation” (p. 439). The view that visual cues have a positive influence on a brand’s reputation is consistent with other scholars (Baker and Balmer, 1997; Green and Lovelock, 1983; Olins, 1989; Schultz et al., 2000; Van den Bosch et al., 2005). Please refer to brand performance section in literature review for organisational benefits of reputation (Section 2.6.2). Melewar and Saunders’ (1998) research which spanned consumer, industrial goods and services outlined how a more standardised visual identity had a positive impact on sales, consumer goodwill, awareness, market share and executive recruitment. Although focusing solely on products, Klink’s (2001) research highlighted how brand names / symbols which convey the product-related information were better ‘liked’ and positioned more strongly in consumers’ minds. More recently, Jun et al.’s (2008) demonstrated how a favourable logo attitude positively and directly influenced both attitude towards the company and purchase intentions, which were themselves causally related. Finally, Bitner’s (1990) research outlined how components of visual identity such as design, décor and employee presentation transmit tangible hints or

clues that influence customer satisfaction which itself increases the likelihood of word of mouth, reduces service switching and enhances service loyalty (Magin et al., 2003).

Consideration of corporate visual identity systems in the B2B literature tends to focus on the influence brand name has on a range of brand-related outcomes. Of particular note is how brand names can influence brand choice (Bendixen et al., 2004; Walley et al., 2007), facilitate premium pricing (Bendixen et al., 2004; Firth, 1997; Mudambi et al., 1997), enhance loyalty (van Riel et al., 2005; Walley et al., 2007), drive brand awareness (Davis et al., 2007; Mitchell et al., 2001), facilitate differentiation (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a; Shrimp, 1993) and build brand equity which has been noted as a valuable organisational asset in B2B markets (Bendixen et al., 2004; Davis et al., 2007; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a). Whilst not capturing the breadth of corporate visual identity systems this indicates that within the B2B literature, elements of the construct have been noted as driving performance related outcomes.

This section of the chapter has reviewed a range of literature to highlight how corporate visual identity drives a variety of performance-related variables. Of particular note was how corporate visual identity helps improve brand awareness, employee identification, recruitment and reputation in addition to driving competitive advantage which have been noted in the literature as having a positive effect on a range of organisationally-related performance outcomes. The specific role brand name, in the context of the corporate visual identity systems construct, in B2B markets was also highlighted. For these reasons corporate visual identity, as a dimension of service brand identity is regarded as having a positive influence on brand performance.

3.6.3. Client Relationship Management

The performance related benefits that can be derived from developing and managing relationships have been widely documented in the academic literature. For instance, the seminal work of Reichheld and Sasser (1990) highlighted some of the organisational benefits brand-customer relationships can bring to organisations. These include the cost of acquiring customers can be five times greater than retaining and satisfying current customers [NB Peppers and Rogers (1993) argue this ratio can be in the order of six to nine whilst Kotler (1997) also thought a ratio of five was more accurate], a 5% reduction in customer defection which can increase profit by 25%-85% (depending on the industry) and that customer profitability tends to increase with time due to reduced 'servicing costs'. However, some of Reichheld and Sasser's (1990) findings have been disputed (Carroll, 1991, 1992). These arguments are based on the fact that customer costs are mostly fixed. Notwithstanding these scholars' arguments, the frequency with which Reichheld and Sasser's (1990) findings are quoted in the literature *tends* to add to their credibility. They also align with the view that it is more profitable to retain rather than have to gain customers (Berry, 1995; Fornell and Wernerfelt, 1987, 1988; Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995; Vavra, 1995).

The view that a relational approach is more profitable obtains empirical support from Izquierdo et al.'s (2005) research where loyalty had a positive affect on revenue and profitability. It has also been argued a relational approach enhances marketing productivity (Buttle, 1996; Rust and Chung, 2006) by making marketing more 'effective' (e.g. individual customer needs are better addressed) and 'efficient' (e.g. reducing untargeted

marketing expenditures, customer retention etc.) (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995). Several scholars (Heskett et al., 1994; Izquierdo et al., 2005) have noted how the cost of servicing clients also tends to reduce with time as the organisation knows how to better meet their customers' needs with overall effect being improved profitability (Sharma et al., 1999). In a similar manner, Sin et al's (2002) empirical research outlined how a relational orientation has positive outcomes such as sales growth, customer retention, return on investment and overall performance (the average of the other four measures).

Other organisational benefits emanating from a relational approach have been highlighted in the literature. These include enhanced share price (Fornell et al., 2006), greater channel leverage (Aaker, 1991), creating a barrier to entry (Aaker, 1996b), positive word of mouth (Buttle, 1996; Heskett et al., 1994; Ranaweera, 2007), loyalty (Roberts et al., 2003) in addition to helping to build market share (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001) / sales volumes (Buttle, 1996), all of which can be logically hypothesised as contributing positively to brand performance. Furthermore, other authors have noted how a relational approach facilitates competitive advantage (Berry, 1983; Gronroos, 1991; McKenna, 1991; Ray et al., 2005; Roberts et al., 2003; Vavra, 1995) or competitiveness (Richards, 1998; Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995) given the intangibility of a relationship is not easily duplicated and take time to build. From a Stakeholder Theory perspective, Jones (1995) reiterates this point outlining how "the firm will gain competitive advantage if it is able to develop relationships with its stakeholders based on mutual trust and cooperation" (p 424). The logic being such organisations will enjoy reduced transaction, production, warranty etc., costs that drive their competitive advantage. Consequently, it can be seen how a range of literature highlights the positive influence a relational approach can have on a performance-related outcomes.

At this stage, customer relationship management (CRM) literature merit closer inspection for three reasons. First, this thesis adopts a managerial position with regards to service brand identity and so the *management* of relationships is important. Second, CRM and relationship marketing are frequently used interchangeably (Parvatiyar and Sheth, 2001). Finally, authors such as Hendricks et al. (2007) regard CRM as an amalgamation of current relationship marketing principles and so the relationship marketing literature can be regarded as providing a theoretical foundation for CRM-related research. For the most part, the CRM literature acknowledges how nurturing customer relationships provides the organisation with a valuable asset that enhances retention, lowers costs and so boosts profitability (Blattberg, 2001; Ryals and Knox, 2001; Ryals and Payne, 2001; Sheth and Sisodia, 2001). In a similar manner, other scholars have noted how CRM can drive profitability by providing deeper customer insights with regards to understanding and predicting behaviour, habits needs and trends (Chen and Popovich, 2003; Kalakota and Robinson, 2000). More specifically, Sin et al. (2005b) highlight how a greater emphasis on CRM correlated with both marketing (trust and customer satisfaction) and financial measures (return on investment and sales) whilst Coltman (2007) highlights how superior CRM capability can drive performance (measured in terms of ROI, reduced transaction costs, new product revenue and sales growth). In a similar manner, Jayachandran et al.'s (2005) research revealed that organisations which leveraged more relationally orientated information services tended to have more satisfied and loyal customers. Furthermore, Reinartz et al. (2004) found that within their CRM conceptualisation, relationship 'initiation' and 'maintenance' significantly influenced performance whilst 'termination' did not. The authors postulated the insignificant influence of termination may be a function of a Type II error where companies are reluctant to terminate unprofitable

company relationships (p. 302). More recently Elmuti et al. (2009) highlighted how CRM increased a range of performance related outcomes including customer satisfaction and responsiveness, organisational productivity in addition to enhancing market share. Consequently, a considerable body of knowledge is developing which indicates the positive influence informed CRM practices can have on a range of performance-related outcomes.

However, developing such a relationship and performance mantra could be an oversimplification. For instance, scholars such as Hendricks et al. (2007) found that CRM did not have a significant affect on share price or profitability. Similarly, the view that a relational approach drives performance-related outcomes has also been challenged by some scholars. For instance, Ranaweera (2007) noted “the premise that having long-term satisfied customers is the best predictor of having profitable customers was shown to be too much of a generalisation” and “that such a view could be tenuous” (p. 119). This concurs with Reinartz and Kumar (2000), who based on data from a non-contractual setting, found longer term customers are not necessarily the most profitable. Furthermore, in subsequent research Reinartz and Kumar (2003) noted the presence of both high and low profitability amongst short and long term customers. Consequently, it can be seen how some empirical studies question the positive influence a relational approach has on performance-related outcomes.

As with the B2C literature, the B2B literature suggests several brand-related benefits can emanate from building and managing client relationships. These include developing favourable brand associations (Beverland et al., 2004), creating barriers to entry (Wilson, 1995), enhancing customer satisfaction (Han and Sung, 2008), increased

customer willingness to pay a premium price (Bendixen et al., 2004), greater brand loyalty (Bennet et al., 2005; Beverland et al., 2004; Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004), reduced technical uncertainty (Mudambi et al., 1997) and enhanced overall brand equity (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a) which has been shown to as an organisational asset in B2B markets (Davis et al., 2007).

In a similar manner to the 'culture' literature unanimous agreement with regards to a relationship-performance effect does not exist. However, based on the above literature, the general consensus of opinion appears to be that building and managing customer-brand relationships has a positive influence on a broad range of performance-related outcomes. This position spans both B2C and B2B literature. Whilst 'performance' has generally related to financial measures, this is a dimension of brand performance this thesis has considered. Consequently, the management of relationships, which constitutes a dimension of service brand identity is considered as playing a noteworthy role in driving brand performance.

3.6.4. Integrated Marketing Communications

Several authors have outlined how integrated marketing communications plays an important role in building and maintaining both customer relationships and brand equity (Ambler et al., 2002; Duncan and Moriarty, 1998; Jones and Blair, 1996; Keller, 2003; Madhavaram et al., 2005; Naik and Raman, 2003; Rust et al., 2004a; Schultz et al., 1994). Please refer to the literature review (Section 2.6.2) and earlier in this chapter (Section 3.6.3) for details concerning the positive influence consumer-based brand equity and

customer relationships have on performance-related outcomes. The view that integrated marketing communications provides organisational benefits finds support from authors such as Schultz and Schultz (1998) and Kitchen et al. (2004) who regard IMC as a way of improving brand performance. Similarly, scholars such as Srivastava et al. (2000; 1998) and Hom (2006) note how integrating marketing communications can help provide the basis for competitive advantage, which itself drives superior financial performance (Barney, 1991; Chan et al., 2004; Porter, 1980). More specifically, Lee and Park (2007) note that integrated marketing communications campaigns create brand awareness and foster favourable brand attitudes whilst Peppers and Rogers (1994) outline how greater communication integration drive behavioural responses and results such as retention and sales respectively. These views are consistent with other others such as Schultz et al. (1994) and Kliatchko (2008) who highlight how the impact of communication increases if all elements are orchestrated synergistically.

Several empirical studies outline the positive affect greater integration of marketing communications can have on brand performance. For instance, Low's (2000) research in the USA highlighted how a greater level of integrated marketing communications enhanced market performance (growth in share, sales and profit) with Reid et al.'s (2001) work in the Australian wine market corroborated these findings. In subsequent research, Reid (2003) highlighted "a positive relationship between brand-related (sales, brand strength, customer loyalty) performance and IMC" (p. 245). This point is supported by later research (Reid, 2005) which illustrated how "there was a strong main effect indicating a positive relationship between the IMC process and brand outcomes" (p. 47) with brand outcomes being defined as (relative) sales performance, customer satisfaction and brand advantage (awareness, premium price and channel support offered). Adopting a case study

guided by grounded theory principles, Dewhirst and Davis (2005) note how integrated marketing communications helped Players cigarettes build brand equity and increase shareholder value in the Canadian market. Consequently, it can be seen how a number, albeit small, of empirical studies highlight the positive influence a greater degree of marketing communication integration can have on performance.

In a similar manner to the B2C literature, benefits that emanate from marketing communications have been noted in the B2B literature. Effective stakeholder communication increases trust and commitment in business relationships (Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004; Wren and Simpson, 1996), reduces perceived risk and uncertainty faced by buyers (Bendixen et al., 2004) whilst facilitating the building of stronger buyer / seller relationships (Cretu and Brodie, 2007). Lynch and de Chernatony (2004) outline how the utilisation of different communication channels plays an important and continuous attitude formation role. This is consistent with the view communication facilitates and influences choice during the selection process (Blomback and Axelsson, 2007). Blomback and Axelsson, (2007) highlight how communication helps build brand image which facilitates brand preference. Finally, de Chernatony and McDonald (2003) contend brand communication that considers the psychological concerns of B2B buyers is an important means of differentiation in markets dominated by a functionality focus.

To date there have been a limited number of empirical studies which support the view that a greater level of integration with respect to marketing communications positively effects organisational / brand performance (Cornelissen, 2000; Low, 2000). This is a point reiterated by Reid (2003) who noted the “intuitively appealing but empirically

thin relationship between integrated marketing communications and higher levels of brand performance” (p. 245). Whilst the evidence presented is an anecdotal and empirical mixture, the general consensus points towards the positive effect integrated marketing communications has on brand performance.

3.6.5. Brand Personality

The branding literature outlines how several performance-related benefits may emanate from developing a brand personality. These include: facilitating relationship building (Blackston, 1993; Fournier, 1998; Meenaghan, 1995; Swaminathan et al., 2008a), providing a source of sustainable competitive advantage (Haigood, 1999; Keller and Richey, 2006; Sherrington, 2003), engendering a greater willingness to pay premium prices (Freling and Forbes, 2005b; Smothers, 1993), facilitating brand extension (Batra et al., 1993; Freling and Forbes, 2005b), fostering greater brand loyalty (Biel, 1992; Fournier, 1994; Freling and Forbes, 2005b; Magin et al., 2003; Smothers, 1993; Zentes et al., 2008) and increasing purchase likelihood (Swaminathan et al., 2008a) whilst Ramaseshan and Tsao’s (2007) empirical work outlines how if the brand personality is consistent with brand positioning, perceived quality can be enhanced. The positive influence of brand personality on brand preference and usage has also been noted by several scholars (Aaker, 1995; Aaker, 1999; Biel, 1993a; Biel, 1993b; Siguaw et al., 1999; Sirgy, 1982; Sirgy et al., 1997; Sweeney and Brandon, 2006).

The differentiating role brand personality plays has been highlighted by numerous scholars (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker, 1997; Biel, 1993a; Biel, 1993b; Crask and Laskey, 1990;

de Chernatony, 2006; Farquhar, 1990; Freling and Forbes, 2005b; Ghodeswar, 2008; Gwinner and Eaton, 1999; Haigood, 1999; Keller and Richey, 2006; Meenaghan, 1995; Murphy et al., 2007; Plummer, 1985; Roy and Banerjee, 2007; Sweeney and Brandon, 2006; Van Rekom and Jacobs, 2006). The rationale being a differentiated offering provides a compelling reason to buy a given brand vis-a-vis a competitor (Aaker, 1982; Ries and Trout, 1972) and that personality based features are more difficult to copy than functional features (Ghodeswar, 2008). This view is consistent with de Chernatony and McEnally (1999) who note that “[T]o differentiate their brands, marketers focus on incorporating emotional values into their brands, portraying this through the metaphor of brand personality” (p. 9). Indeed, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) regard differentiation as being increasingly important to brands that wish to ‘burst out of the clutter’, with brand personality development being considered a particularly effective way of doing this.

Other scholars such as Siguaw et al. (1999) and Haigood (1999) highlight how brand personality plays a particularly influential differentiating role when little or no functional distinction can be made between competing brands. Harris and Fleming (2005) develop this point by noting the important role brand personality plays in the service sector given the predominantly intangible nature of service brands can make distinguishing between such brands challenging. This perspective is consistent with Freling and Forbes (2005b) who outline how:

“A strong, favourable brand personality may have less of an impact on consumer preferences for products predominantly characterised by *search* attributes (which consumers can fully evaluate prior to purchase) and be relatively more important to consumers for products that are predominantly characterised by *experience* or

credence qualities (which can only be evaluated after the purchase, if at all), when information about a brands' personality may reduce consumers' perceived risk." (p. 159)

Consequently, the differentiating role of brand personality appears to take on greater importance for service brands. The reason being it can act as a surrogate for the brand's intrinsic attributes which may otherwise be difficult to evaluate prior to purchase (Freling and Forbes, 2005a).

The positive influence brand personality has on brand attitude has also been highlighted by several authors (Aaker, 1999; Freling and Forbes, 2005b; Haigood, 1999; Helgeson and Supphellen, 2004; Sirgy et al., 2000; Sirgy et al., 1997). Indeed, Freling and Forbes' (2005a) empirical research concludes:

"subjects exposed to stimulus materials containing information about the brand's personality – regardless of the dimension [based on Aaker's personality scale] - had significantly more favourable brand attitudes than those exposed to stimulus materials containing no information about the brand personality" (p. 408).

The rationale being attitudes are important because they lead to intentions which in their turn result in actual behaviour (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975), which, in this case is purchasing the brand. Echoing Haigood's (1999) work, Freling and Forbes' (2005a) research highlights the salient role of brand personality:

“[T]his effect (i.e. the BP effect) occurred regardless of which brand personality dimension was experimentally manipulated, suggesting that (for the stimulus product) *any* brand personality, so long as it is perceived as being strong and favourable, is likely to be associated with positive consequences” (p. 409)

Hence, it appears developing a brand personality, irrespective of type, which has strong and favourable associations has a positive influence on performance-related outcomes.

The literature review chapter highlighted the critical role dimensions of consumer based brand equity play in enhancing brand performance (Section 2.6.2). Brand personality has also been noted as playing an important equity building role (Aaker, 1991; Biel, 1993a; 1992, 1993b; Keller, 2003). For example, albeit researching a more tangible product in the form of bottled water, Freling and Forbe’s (2005a) research presents some illuminating findings with regards to the ‘brand personality effect’, that is, the influence of brand personality on brand equity by concluding:

“A strong, positive brand personality also leads to more brand associations that are favourable, unique, strong and congruent – thus enhancing brand equity.” (p. 409)

Furthermore, Freling and Forbe’s (2005a) also noted that “a significantly greater proportion” (p. 409) of brand personality-present subjects, that is subjects whose stimulus material was imbued with a brand personality (spanning all five of Aaker’s, 1997, personality types), were able to recall the correct brand name. In a similar manner, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) note how brand personality can help raise brand awareness,

which itself is a central brand equity dimension (Aaker, 1991, 1996b; Berry, 2000; Keller, 1993, 1998, 2003; Pappu et al., 2005; Sharp, 1995; Yasin et al., 2007; Yoo and Donthu, 2001) with the organisational benefits being highlighted in the literature review.

Whilst the literature outlining the positive influence brand personality can have on brand performance is somewhat limited, this section has drawn on the available (anecdotal and empirical) literature to highlight how, despite this paucity, several organisational benefits emanate from augmenting a brand with a strong and favourable personality. These include facilitating relationship building, engendering more positive attitudes, a willingness to pay premium prices, greater purchase likelihood and enhanced brand loyalty. The important role brand personality plays in service brand differentiation was also noted. Consequently, as a dimension of service brand identity, brand personality can be considered as contributing to the construct's positive influence on brand performance.

3.7. Evaluating the Preliminary Service Brand Identity Framework

Grounded in a broad range of literature, the previous sections of this chapter postulated how service brand identity is a multidimensional construct comprising of five dimensions. The dimensions were marketing culture, corporate visual identity systems, client relationship management, integrated marketing communications and brand personality. The construct's positive influence on brand performance was also hypothesised.

Now the preliminary framework has been developed it is necessary to evaluate it in two steps. First, the framework is evaluated in the context of Suvatjis and de Chernatony

(2005) criteria for ‘model’ development. Second, the potential for dimension interactions is acknowledged.

3.7.1. Guidelines for Developing a Theoretical Framework

To guide evaluation of the preliminary service brand identity framework, Suvatjis and de Chernatony’s (2005) criteria for building a “useful and valid” framework (p. 810) was employed. Whilst these criteria were developed in the context of corporate identity, the literature review highlighted how corporate and brand identity intersect (Simoes et al., 2005). Furthermore, these criteria provide useful conceptual apparatus for directing the evaluation process. For these two reasons before the suggested criteria are applied they will be introduced here.

Visual clarity relates to the framework being “pictorially clear and stimulating” (Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005 :811) with the objective being preventing the need for further explanation. In particular the use of metaphors in order to convey the framework’s meaning is of particular importance. This requires frameworks that are visually engaging to promote their usefulness within non academic circles (Leeflang et al., 2000; Lilien et al., 1992). For example, Kapferer’s (2004) Identity Prism can be regarded as being visually distinctive and clear.

Ease of interpretation is concerned with making frameworks simple to understand. This point reiterates Naert and Leeflang’s (1978) view that “a model must be simple, complete, adaptive and robust” (p. 322). A robust model is one that is “hard to get absurd

answers from” (Little, 1970 :446) or makes it “difficult for a user [of the framework] to obtain bad answers” (Leeflang and Wittink, 2000 :108).

Logical sequence relates to the rational flow between one construct and another. As noted in the literature review, this is strength of de Chernatony’s (2006) and Aaker’s (1996a) work. These author’s frameworks provide clear guidance on where to start and how to proceed with the brand identity building process.

Adjustment and adaptability is associated with a framework’s ability to cope with unexpected factors in the business environment (Naert and Leeflang, 1978). Little (1970) makes a similar point insofar frameworks need to be adaptive so they “can be adjusted as new information is acquired” (p. 466). Laurent (2000) argues more effective frameworks have greater flexibility and adaptiveness in terms of describing the model’s relationship with, or “representation of reality” (Leeflang and Wittink, 2000 :109) whilst Little (1970) notes how it should be possible to update frameworks as and when new data becomes available or new factors become important.

Production of synergies relates to the model’s dimensions interacting in unison or symbiosis. In particular Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) note how internal and external dimensions need to be taken into account. This is strength of both Kapferer (2004) and de Chernatony’s (2006) work which advocate a balanced approach to branding.

Employee operationalisation enables the framework to be ‘put into practice’. Whilst operationalisation by *employees* as important, it is argued that it should also be possible for framework’s to be operationalised by other groups such as consultants,

research students and so forth. Explicit consideration of this factor would help overcome Naert and Leeflang's (1978) concern point regarding many framework's being built whilst in practice few are used.

Ease of memorising results in a framework acting as a "mnemonic device" (Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005 :814) which can help stimulate dialogue, focus thinking, provide a structure for problem solving whilst highlighting relationships between dimensions.

The *effectiveness* of the framework is concerned with the extent to which it aids strategy formation, priority setting and dealing with a dynamic environment (Cameron and Whetten, 1983; Drucker, 1964; McFarland, 1979). Lunn (1978) also outlined how the effectiveness of a framework can be judged by the extent to which it depicts the relationship between its dimensions.

Leeflang and Wittink (2000) note how *modularity* means "the end result is obtained by putting together a set of submodels or modules" (p.108). Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) outline how modularity implies a framework can be broken up into distinct components in order to prevent "bottlenecks" whilst allowing "flexibility in the assembly of the component units" (p. 815). Modularity also enables more complex issues to be addressed by breaking a large problem into simpler tasks, which once addressed can be re-amalgamated as a final solution. Little's (1975) BRANDAID marketing mix model is an example of a modular based approach where, promotion, for example can either be added or removed from the model at the user's discretion.

The final criterion, *proactivity*, helps focus the efforts of those using the framework on articulating and achieving goals (Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005).

To summarise, Suvatjis and de Chernatony's (2005) present ten criteria for building a "visual, clear and workable model" (p. 811). This provided useful guidance for developing this thesis' theoretical framework. However, the ten criteria are not without their limitations. For instance, it may be ambitious to incorporate all ten criteria into the development of a theoretical framework. Compromises may be required. For example, developing a framework which has both 'logical sequence' and 'modularity' is challenging. If a dimension or 'module' is removed from a framework the sequence which the model *intends* to convey will be affected. For example, Suvatjis and de Chernatony's (2005) corporate identity model appears to be modular due to its 'stations'. However, it is more of a sequenced model due to flow each stations follows. If one of the stations is removed the logical sequence of the model is altered. Furthermore, whilst in theory useful, in reality the value of a sequential model may be limited. In the constantly changing external environment rarely does reality unfold in this way. Additionally, it should be noted how several of the criteria are particularly subjective. For example, visual clarity is a matter of personal opinion. Some may regard a framework as visually engaging whilst others consider it to be overly complex. It is challenging to see how such 'particular' criteria help assess a framework. It could also be argued the criteria fail to provide guidance in terms of priority. Is ease of interpretation more important than modularity? Moreover, the criteria offered appear to omit advice on whether models should operate at the construct or process level. For example, Berry's (2000) brand equity model clearly operates at the construct level whilst Suvatjis and de Chernatony's (2005) model appears to

incorporate constructs (e.g. visual identity and mission) in addition to processes such as communication and aligning sub-cultures. Finally, Suvatjis and de Chernatony's (2005) use of the word 'model' appears to be somewhat liberal. These authors tend to draw mainly on statistical or econometric literature to develop their 'model' criteria. Notwithstanding the value of these criteria in the context of this research, it is contended that theoretical frameworks and models should be distinguished from each other. Theoretical frameworks refer to visual flows that pictorially represent the construct and the relationships between its constituent dimensions. Models tend to be concerned with statistical or measurement models which quantitatively validate and underpin relationships outlined in a given theoretical framework.

This section of the chapter has outlined how Suvatjis and de Chernatony's (2005) criteria for model development provide useful guidance for the development of theoretical frameworks. With these criteria in mind, the next section of this chapter presents a preliminary service brand identity framework.

3.7.2. Evaluation of Preliminary Service Brand Identity Framework

The previous section of this chapter introduced Suvatjis and de Chernatony's (2005) criteria for evaluating models, which it was argued have applicability to the evaluation of theoretical frameworks. This section of the chapter will now assess the preliminary service brand identity framework in the context of these criteria.

In terms of *visual clarity* the service brand identity framework aims to encapsulate service brand identity in a simple, clear and logical manner. However, as outlined above, visual clarity is a subjective criterion and so this criterion tends to rest in the ‘eye of the beholder’. Notwithstanding this issue, it is hoped the framework needs limited explanation to make clear the multidimensional nature of the construct. Additionally, whilst it is important this thesis visualises the postulated relationships via a theoretical framework, this merely provides structure and guidance for the development of the underlying measurement model. The measurement model is the mechanism that will enable this thesis to identify what dimensions constitute service brand identity and whether the construct has a positive influence on brand performance. Consequently, whilst visual clarity was important, at this stage of the research process it was considered as a means to an end with regards to the stated research questions.

The model’s *ease of interpretation* has been facilitated by rigidly adhering to a managerial perspective. This provides focus and so ensures the model does not try to become ‘all things to all people’ by considering both managerial and consumer based constructs. The model also makes clear what constitutes service brand identity via its dimensions. This is intended to reduce the likelihood of obtaining ‘absurd’ answers (Little, 1970).

The *logical sequence* of the framework emanates from the literature where the starting point for brand identity is brand vision (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006). Service brand identity is realised via its postulated dimensions. Currently, a logical sequence for service brand identity dimensions has not been presented

insofar dimensions are represented as simultaneous 'tools' the brand strategist can orchestrate when executing their intended service brand identity. Consequently, logical sequence may be a weakness of the preliminary service brand identity framework. However, as noted previously, it must be questioned if a logical sequence reflection the reality of business markets which are represented by fluidity and uncertainty as opposed to chronology.

The *adaptability* of the model relates to how each service brand identity dimension used can be employed to different degrees in line with how the brand strategist's aims to realise his / her desired service brand identity. For example, a greater emphasis on corporate visual identity may be required to reduce the perceived risk associated with a new service whilst the personality of the brand may be emphasised to endanger a deeper emotional bond. Kentucky Fried Chicken, with Harland Sanders has used this strategy from a visual and emotional perspective. Furthermore, each dimension can be adapted if necessary. Kentucky Fried Chicken again provides a relevant example where the name was abbreviated to KFC to reduce the unhealthy connotation of fried food (cf: corporate visual identity systems). Consequently, within the postulated framework, service brand identity can be adjusted at a second (service brand identity) or first order (dimension) level.

The model encourages *synergistic* thinking as the dimensions of brand identity should not be regarded as mutually exclusive but as integrated and reinforcing. For example, corporate visual identity systems and integrated marketing communications should support brand personality which itself may play an important role in developing the client relationship. At this stage, it was hard to evaluate the extent to which the model can

be *operationalised* by employees. This can only be assessed once the framework has been used over a period of time.

The progression of the framework from left to right is intended to facilitate the ease with which the model is *memorised* (at least in the western world). Furthermore, humans' cognitive processing abilities are limited to approximately seven pieces of data (Miller, 1956). The current preliminary framework contains five dimensions. This reduces the cognitive 'load' of the framework and so should facilitate the ease with which the model can be memorised. Again, it is challenging to objectively assess the framework against this criterion until the framework has been used.

In terms of the *effectiveness* of the framework, 'strategy formation' is facilitated by service brand identity being regarded as the brand strategist's vision for his / her brand (cf: Aaker, 1996; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000). This is consistent with the strategy literature where vision is regarded as one of formative stages in strategy development (Benis and Naus 1985; Collins and Porras 1996; Collins and Porras 1991; Hamel and Prahalad 1989; Johnson and Scholes 2002). Next, the framework helps with 'priority setting' via brand vision. Based on the strategist's brand vision certain dimensions of service brand identity may or may not be prioritised. Finally, in terms of dealing with a dynamic environment, it is important to reiterate service brand identity is a strategic construct and not tactical tool. Consequently, the framework's value in terms of 'dealing with' environmental changes may be limited. The reason being service brand identity should be considered in conjunction with broader strategic and not tactical issues that

respond to short term market changes. If an organisation's service brand identity was to continuously change it would be challenging to execute a given vision consistently.

Modularity presents a challenge. As noted above, it is hard for a framework to meet both the modularity and logical sequence criteria. However, the framework presented here aims to span both criteria by presenting a (limited) logic sequence (as outlined above) with each dimension of service brand identity being modular. Managers, in line with their vision, could prioritise and utilise specific dimensions they think are particularly important to realising their intended service brand identity. For example, in the early years of a brand, the brand strategist may use marketing communications to emphasise functional and then at a later date emotion benefits. Taiwanese original equipment manufacturers (OEM) such as Acer and HTC have aptly done this. Furthermore, the framework can also be considered modular given it breaks service brand identity into more manageable dimensions. Consequently, there is flexibility in the arrangement of the dimensions in terms of how they could be utilised.

Finally, as a result of incorporating the brand vision, the framework provides the brand owner with the opportunity to *proactively* consider how he / she would like to articulate and deliver the desired service brand identity. This is achieved via strategically planning how each dimension can contribute to supporting the brand identity.

Collectively, the above points provide an evaluation of the preliminary service brand identity framework. Now the framework has been evaluated it is important to consider how dimension interactions exist. Taking this step acknowledges how, in reality, a more complex picture emerges than the preliminary framework paints.

3.7.3. Service Brand Identity Framework – Dimension Interactions

The final element of evaluating the preliminary service brand identity framework relates to considering the interactions between the postulated dimensions. As the preliminary theoretical framework evolved it became apparent interactions between the service brand identity dimensions exist. Table 7 summarises how the broader marketing literature has considered certain dimensions as being related.

Table 7 Acknowledging Dimensions Interactions

Dimensions	Literature
Corporate visual identity and Integrated Marketing Communications (Notes 1 & 2)	(Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Balmer, 1995; de Chernatony, 2006; Henderson and Cote, 1998; McCracken, 1988; Melewar and Saunders, 1998; Melewar and Saunders, 2000; Schechter, 1993; Simoes et al., 2005; Van den Bosch et al., 2005, 2006a; Van Rekom, 1997; Van Riel, 1995; Van Riel and van den Ban, 2001)
Brand Personality and Integrated Marketing Communications	(Aaker, 1996a; Aaker, 1997; Birkigt and Stadler, 1986; Harris and Fleming, 2005; Keller, 2003; Van den Bosch et al., 2006a; Van Riel, 1995)
Brand Personality and Customer Relationships	(Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Aaker, 1995; Aaker et al., 2004b; Blackston, 1993; de Chernatony, 2006; de Chernatony and McEnally, 1999; Fournier, 1998; Ghodeswar, 2008; Phau and Cheen Lau, 2000; Smit et al., 2007; Swaminathan et al., 2008a; Sweeney and Brandon, 2006)
Brand personality and corporate visual identity (Note 1)	(Aaker, 1996a; Aaker, 1995; Birkigt and Stadler, 1986; de Chernatony, 2006; Van den Bosch et al., 2005; Van Riel, 1995)
Integrated marketing communications and customer relationships	(Anderson and Narus, 1990; Duncan and Moriarty, 1998; 1997; Keller, 2001, 2003; Kliatchko, 2005, 2008; Lee and Park, 2007; Morgan and Hunt, 1994)
Culture and brand personality <i>Note 2</i>	(Aaker, 1996a; Birkigt and Stadler, 1986; de Chernatony, 2006; Keller and Richey, 2006; Van Riel, 1995)
Communications and (a) internal and (b) external relationships	a) (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Berry, 1983, 1995; Duncan and Moriarty, 1998; 1997; Hutton, 1996; Reid, 2005) b) (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Duncan and Moriarty, 1998; 1997; Keller, 2001, 2003; Morgan and Hunt, 1994)
Culture and corporate visual identity (Notes 1 & 2)	(Balmer, 1995; Schein, 1984; Van den Bosch et al., 2004)
Culture and integrated marketing communications	(Van Riel, 1995)
Customer relationships and integrated marketing communications	(Gummesson, 1994)

Note 1: Authors tended to use the term symbolism, symbol or logo to refer to what is now generally referred to corporate visual identity.

Note 2: Authors tend to refer to the term 'culture' generically. It is assumed here that most authors are referring to organisational culture which Webster's (1990, 1993, 1995) marketing culture work drew on, in particular Deshpande and Farley (1999).

Consequently, the constructs are considered related.

By uncovering these interactions, it is clear how researchers have to impose and accept potential research constraints when moving from construct conceptualisation to operationalisation. This is consistent with the logic that it may be impossible for the marketing constructs of interest to accurately represent reality in its entirety (Keon, 1991).

To help address this issue, Leeflang and Wittink (2000) note how the best frameworks are developed with specific objectives in mind. Consequently, whilst these interactions have, and should be acknowledged, they will not be the subject of this research's statistical analysis for two reasons. Primarily, they do not directly relate to the research objectives, or more accurately research questions given the approach this thesis adopts. Furthermore, incorporating so many interactions into statistical analyses at this formative stage of service brand identity development would make the research overly complex given service brand identity construct dimensionality had yet to be established. Indeed, Ehrenberg et al. (2000) note making models too complex at formative stage of development is a common problem within the marketing literature. Consequently, at this stage in the process developing a clearer *empirical* understanding of what dimensions constitute service brand identity is considered more important than exploring the relationships between those dimensions. However, the final service brand identity framework presented later in this thesis will incorporate dimensions interactions. This was decision was directly influenced by an awareness of interactions as per Table 7 and that fact that it is unrealistic to expect dimensions to not correlate (Conway and Huffcutt, 2003; Costello and Osborne, 2005; Hair et al., 1998).

This section of the chapter has introduced and evaluated a preliminary service brand identity framework. The logic for acknowledging but not incorporating dimensions

interactions into the research has also been considered. Now it is appropriate to justify why the dimensions outlined above constitute the domain of service brand identity.

3.8. Conclusions

This chapter, informed by an empirical gap in the brand identity literature, developed a theoretically grounded preliminary service brand identity framework. The rationale for developing this framework was four fold. First, to bridge the literature review and the empirical research that follows. Second, to distil the extensive but relevant literature reviewed in the previous chapter. Third, to inform and structure subsequent scale development procedures by postulating a preliminary construct domain. Finally, to provide a conceptual apparatus that guides the overall research effort in pursuit of answering the remaining research questions which relate to dimensionality, measurement and construct influence on performance. In summary and to use Adams and White's (1994) language, developing the preliminary framework this prevented this research from becoming a "mindless theoretical wasteland" (p. 566) that did not focus on specific research questions.

This chapter opened by justifying why the scale development literature, and in particular Churchill's (1979) paradigm, was followed to develop a service brand identity measure. Informed by preliminary service brand identity definition developed in the literature review (Section 2.4.3), certain brand identity dimensions were considered as falling outside the domain of service brand identity. This resulted in preliminary construct dimensionality emerging. At this stage the relevance of the broader 'identity' literature to this thesis service brand identity conceptualisation was also highlighted. Building on the

previous section, a preliminary service brand identity framework was presented. The preliminary service brand identity framework comprised of five dimensions. These were marketing culture, corporate visual identity, client relationship management, integrated marketing communications and brand personality which were then justified in the subsequent section. With a preliminary service brand identity framework presented, the next section of the chapter developed a hypothesis highlighting the construct's positive influence on brand performance. Due to the lack of directly relevant literature this hypothesis was grounded in the view that other brand related constructs such as brand equity have been shown to drive performance-related outcomes, individual dimensions have a positive influence on performance and that dimensions interactions exist. Based on this logic, it was considered plausible to hypothesise service brand identity had a positive influence on brand performance. The penultimate section of the chapter evaluated in the model in the context of Suvatjis and de Chernatony's (2005) criteria and acknowledged how dimensions interactions may exist.

This chapter has built upon a broad range of literature to postulate a preliminary service brand identity framework and hypothesise a service brand identity–performance effect. This lays the foundations for the next chapter where the methodology employed to develop a valid, reliable and parsimonious service brand identity scale is outlined.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

Guided by the literature review, the previous chapter introduced the preliminary service brand identity framework. The construct was considered as comprising of marketing culture, corporate visual identity systems, integrated marketing communications, client relationship management and brand personality. A hypothesis outlining service brand identity's positive effect on brand performance was also developed.

This chapter outlines the methodology used to obtain data that will enable the domain of service brand identity and the construct's influence on brand performance to be established. The chapter consists of four sections which are summarised in Figure 19.

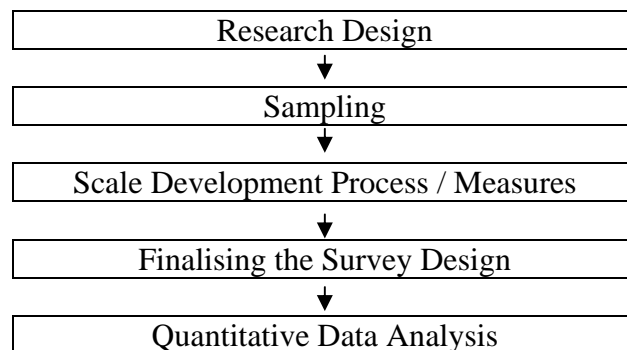


Figure 19 Methodology Chapter Structure

The first section provides an overview of the quantitative research design employed. This is followed by a description of the sampling technique used. Next, the scale development process, which is principally guided by Churchill's (1979) paradigm, is outlined. The fourth section describes how the survey was finalised. Issues surrounding survey structure, question format, bias and the use of subjective performance measures and

pretesting / piloting are discussed at this stage. The penultimate section of the chapter reviews the quantitative methods used to analyse the data. Concluding remarks reiterate how this chapter has been informed by the scaling (Churchill, 1979; DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003) and structural equation modelling (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988) literature whilst facilitating collection of the data required for the next chapter – Analysis.

4.2. Research Design

As chapter one outlined the focus of this research lies with establishing service brand identity dimensionality and the construct's influence on brand performance. In order to address these research questions a quantitative research design employed. The reason being qualitative methods such as case study or in-depth interviews would have not enabled such research questions to be addressed. Overall the research was conducted in three stages, which themselves contained respective phases.

The first stage was guided predominantly by Churchill's (1979) paradigm and subsequent scaling literature (DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003). This involved defining the construct of interest, that is, service brand identity, and developing a pool of items to scale each dimension. These items were then subject to expert panel review which resulted in the number of items being reduced to a more manageable level.

The second phase of the research involved writing a covering letter and finalising the final survey in line with Dillman's (2000) principles. Consequently, following the expert panel review in stage 1 the items were subject to a series of pretests in addition to a

pilot being conducted. At this stage considerable thought was also given to a sample size versus number of mailings dynamic. In other words, is one large mailing preferable to two or more smaller mailings? Based on this literature, the final survey was administered by postal mail to a random sample of senior executives working in the UK's IT service sector. The reasons for not conducting a follow up mailing are provided later in this chapter (Section 4.5.7).

The third and final stage of the research design involved data analysis. Following Churchill's paradigm item-to-total correlations, Cronbach's α and exploratory factor analysis were initially used. However, consistent with subsequent authors (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Gerbing and Anderson, 1988) who augmented Churchill's (1979) paradigm confirmatory factor techniques were used to verifying the factor structure, establish the scale's psychometric properties and assess the influence of service brand identity on brand performance as part of the full structural model.

4.3. Target Population, Sampling Frame, Sample and Completed Sample

Now that the survey design has been outlined it is appropriate to clarify the sampling procedure that was used.

The target population consisted of all UK based IT service organisations that could be obtained. These comprised the units which this research's data intends to generalise to. Sampling from this sector was considered appropriate for two reasons. First, this thesis is focused on service brands operating in a B2B market (Section 1.8). Based on these two

criteria, IT service organisations provide a highly relevant market. Second, the IT services market is highly competitive with over 75% of market share (by value) being pursued by non top four organisations (Datamonitor, 2007). This places an emphasis on organisations to differentiate their proposition, via branding, in a market which offers largely undifferentiated (i.e. standards based technical protocols) services.

The sampling frame consisted of named senior ‘marketing’ executives working in the IT services sector. A total of 3241 contacts were returned when a “marketing executive” database search was performed. The sampling frame was obtained from the ONESOURCE database hosted at the British Library. This was preferred to the University hosted FAME database for the following reasons. First, it is possible to search by functional title (i.e. marketing) whilst ONESOURCE provided a larger sampling frame of 3241 (vs. 1820 organisations from FAME). Furthermore, the ONESOURCE database provides a Business Description search facility which has been cross-validated with Experian data. This provides the benefit of more accurate lists than if SIC-based lists (as does FAME) had been used. The reason being SIC are taken in good faith by Companies House when companies submit their accounts.

When a marketing contact was not provided the CEO / MD was selected. Whilst this thesis’ definition of brand identity is concerned with the “strategist”, CEO / MD’s were also accepted for five reasons. First, obtaining data from organisations’ most senior personnel is consistent with how this thesis has defined service brand identity, that is, as a senior management construct. Second, managing service brand identity is a strategic activity. Executives are regarded as the most knowledgeable sources for this type of information (Cycyota and Harrison, 2002; Norburn and Birley, 1988). Third, such

individuals should have a clear vision for how their brand should be perceived by its stakeholders. Fourth, CEO / MD's should have signed off a document outlining the service brand identity strategy as articulated by the 'brand strategist' and so be engaged with the brand identity building process. Fifth, it has been noted in the corporate identity literature (Balmer, 1995), which feeds into this thesis' conceptualisation of service brand identity, that senior management play a critical role in the 'identity' building process and so are well placed to give their opinion on such issues. Consequently, the most senior marketing (or CEO / MD) contact was selected.

A random sample of 2150 (2200 including 50 pilot surveys) executives was drawn from the sampling frame using MS Excel's Random Generator. The final survey was sent to these individuals. The logic for 2200 is as follows. With, 50 items (before psychometric analyses began), calibration and validation samples of 250 were required. This is based on a participant to item ratio of 5:1 (Floyd and Widaman, 1995; Nunally, 1967). Hence, a completed sample of at least 500 was required. As a ratio of 5:1 is the minimum, a slightly higher target sample of 600 was aimed for. Guided by Cychota and Harrison's (2006) meta analysis of executive research which yielded an average response rate of 28% a sample of 2200 was required (allowing for a pilot of 50) i.e. $N \times 28\% = 600$ (NB this gives 2143 to be precise).

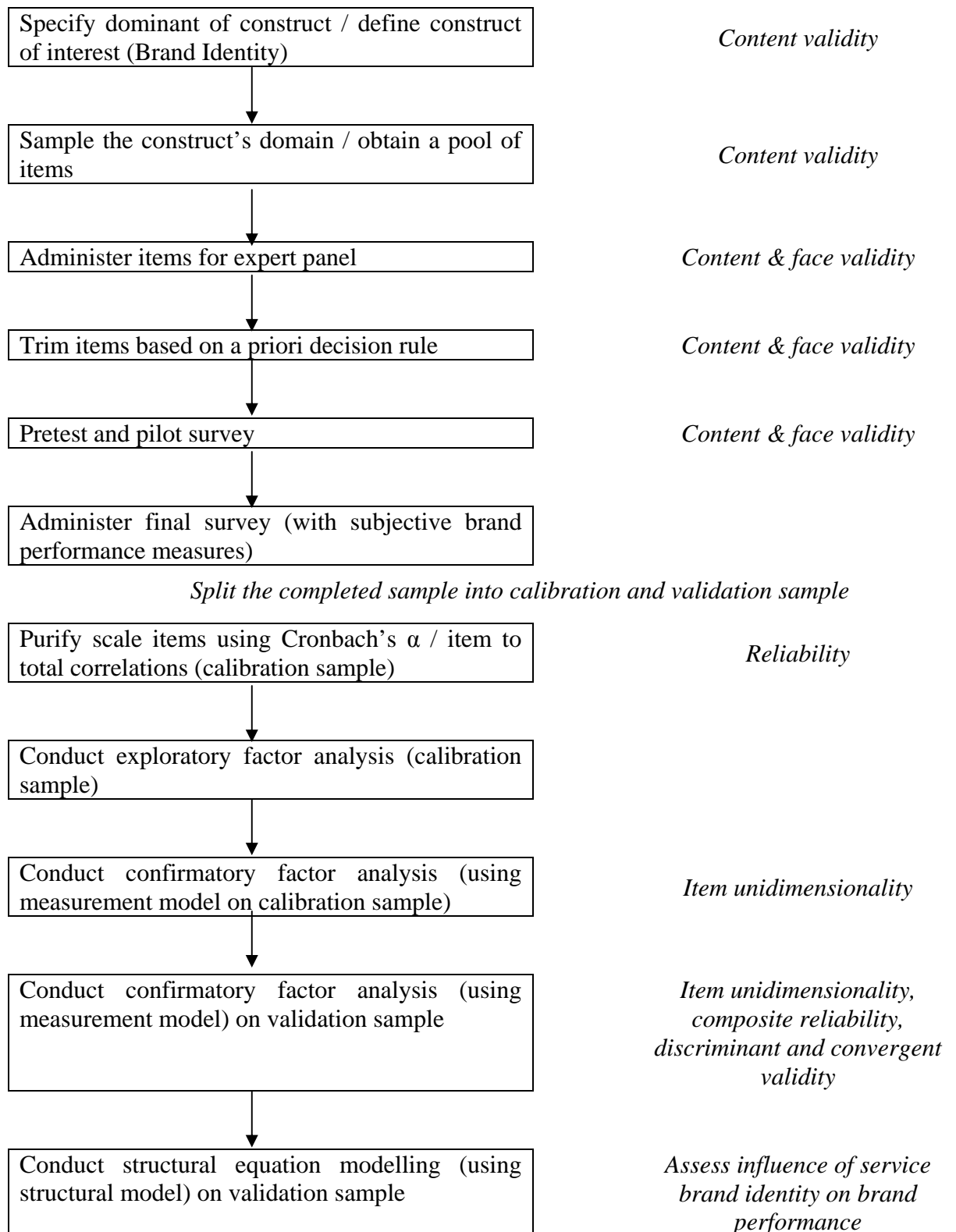
Finally, the completed sample (N=421) was the list of executives that actually responded to the survey on the 12th May 2008. This represented a 19% response rate. Whilst this is lower than Cychota and Harrison's (2006) expected 28%, based on

discussions with scholars who have conducted similar research a 20% response rate was , retrospectively, more realistic.

4.4. Scale Development Process

To develop and validate the scale, this thesis was guided by Churchill's (1979) paradigm, which has been subsequently enlarged to incorporate confirmatory factor analysis (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Gerbing and Anderson, 1988). The logic for following this process was two fold. First, such scale development procedures are widely endorsed in the scaling literature (Clark and Watson, 1995; DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003; Nunally and Bernstein, 1994). Second, this paradigm has been extensively used in the marketing literature (de Chernatony et al., 2004; Simoes et al., 2005; Sin et al., 2005b; Walsh and Beatty, 2007; Yoo and Donthu, 2001). Table 8 summarises the scale development process that was followed. The psychometric property of interest during each stage in the process is also highlighted.

Table 8 Scale Development Process



Sources: (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Churchill, 1979; DeVellis, 1991; Gerbing and Anderson, 1988; Netemeyer et al., 2003)

4.4.1. Specify Domain of the Construct

The first step of Churchill's (1979) paradigm involves specifying the domain of the construct where "the researcher must be exacting in delineating what is included in the definition and what is excluded" (Churchill, 1979 :67). Influenced by the work of several brand identity scholars (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Keller, 2003), this thesis regards service brand identity as a managerial, not consumer construct. The literature review (Section 2.4.3) provided this thesis' rationale for defining service brand identity as:

The strategist's vision of how a service brand should be perceived by its stakeholders.

Consequently, the literature enabled this thesis to develop a preliminary service brand identity definition which in its turn helped specify the construct's domain and provide early dimensionality guidance (DeVellis, 1991). As noted in the theoretical framework chapter, the domain of service brand identity was postulated as consisting dimensions of marketing culture, corporate visual identity systems, integrated marketing communications, customer relationship management and brand personality. Hence, beginning scale development with clear construct definition is consistent with Netemeyer et al's (2003) approach where "the process of scale development starts with a thorough review of the literature in which a solid theoretical definition of the construct and its domain is delineated and outlined" (p.9).

4.4.2. Generate a Pool of Items

With service brand identity defined and a priori dimensionality postulated, it was necessary to generate a pool of items that measured each dimension. Within the scaling literature such dimensions are referred to as latent variables (DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003) because they are elusive abstractions which cannot be observed or measured directly (DeVellis, 1991). In order to operationalise latent variables, items are required that ‘tap’ or ‘scale’ the domain of the construct (Netemeyer et al., 2003).

To scale each latent variable multiple items were generated with the logic being four fold. First, multiple items “allow the most unambiguous assignment of measuring to the estimated constructs” (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988: 415). Second, multi item scales enhance scale reliability (Churchill, 1979; Peter, 1979) as measurement errors cancel each other out (Peter, 1979). Third, no single item is likely to be adequate in measuring a construct (Churchill 1979; Clark and Watson 1995; DeVellis 1991; Netemeyer et al. 2003). Fourth, it is difficult to assess the psychometric properties of single item measures (Diamantopoulos, 1999).

In order to generate items for each latent variable two approaches were used. The first involved ‘culling’ or adapting items from existing scales (Table 9). A full list of items, their source and the stage of elimination can be found in Appendix 1.

Table 9 Source of Scale Items

Dimension	Measurement focus	Items culled / adapted from:
Marketing Culture	<i>Importance placed on marketing culture.</i>	Webster (1995; 1993; 1990) Kotter and Heskett (1992)
Corporate Visual Identity Systems	<i>Importance placed on Corporate visual identity.</i>	Simoes et al.(2005) Stuart (Stuart, 1999) Melewar (1998; 2000) Van den Bosch et al (2006a) Baker and Balmer (1997)
Integrated Marketing Communications	<i>Degree to which marketing communications is integrated</i>	Reid (2005) Duncan and Moriarty (1997) Ewing and de Bussy (2000) Low and Lamb (2000)
Customer Relationship Management	<i>The quality of the customer-brand relationship management</i>	Fournier (1994) Roberts et al (2003) Iacobucci et al.(1995) Sirdeshmukh et al.(2002) Aaker et al. (2004b) Boon and Holmes (1999) Sin et al.(2005b)
Brand Personality	<i>The strength, favourability and uniqueness of the brand personality association.</i>	Keller (2003)

For the brand personality dimension it was not possible to adapt or cull items from previously published scales. The reason being the brand personality literature has tended to focus on measuring personality type (Aaker 1997; Davies et al. 2004; Davies et al. 2001; Plummer 1985; Sweeney and Brandon 2006), assessing the value of current personality type scales (Austin et al., 2003; Azoulay and Kapferer, 2003), the pervasiveness of certain personality types in specific sectors (Siguaw et al., 1999), the importance of brand personality congruity with self (Aaker, 1999; Mulyanegara et al., 2009a; Sirgy, 1986; Sirgy et al., 2000; Sirgy and Su, 2000; Swaminathan et al., 2008b) or product personality (Govers and Schoormans, 2005) and the practical relevance of anthropomorphisation

(Bengtsson, 2003; Bromley, 2001; Caprara et al., 2001; Cornelissen and Harris, 2001; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). Indeed, Freling and Forbes (2005) note how the brand personality literature “generally diagnoses the nature of a brand’s personality – not its impact on brand performance” (p. 405).

Consequently, Keller’s (1993) types of brand association, as dimensions of brand image within his brand equity conceptualisation, were used to operationalise brand personality. The logic being three fold. Primarily, brand personality *is* an association (Aaker, 1995, 1997; 1999; Batra et al., 1993; Freling and Forbes, 2005a; Haigood, 1999; Johar et al., 2005; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006b). For example, Singapore Airlines and Shangri-La are associated with sophistication and charm (Ramaseshan and Tsao, 2007). Indeed, Freling and Forbes (2005b) draw on spreading activation theory (Collins and Loftus, 1975) to note:

“Brand personality fits into this conceptualisation (i.e. spreading activation theory) of brand knowledge because it is one of potentially many brand associations that contribute to the meaning of the brand for consumers” (p. 151).

Furthermore, Keller’s (1993) work is theoretically grounded and extensively referenced in the branding literature. This provides academic credibility to these association ‘types’. Finally, in the absence of a previously validated scale, the scaling literature advocates utilising theory to develop theoretically grounded items (Clark and Watson, 1995; DeVellis, 1991). Collectively these points provide the rationale for drawing on Keller’s (1993) work in order to measure brand personality as an association.

At this stage, three additional personality items were included for two reasons. First, with only three items the final personality measure may not have had multiple items. Second, the scaling literature encourages item redundancy earlier in the scale development process (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Given the generally weak polarisation of the survey items, stronger item wording was used to increase response variability (Lam and Stevens, 1994; Wyatt and Meyers, 1987). For example, “The associations making up our brand personality are *extremely* positive”.

Consistent with Churchill’s (1979) paradigm several scholars have included a qualitative item generation stage when developing a scale (Lytle et al., 1998; Simoes et al., 2005; Walsh and Beatty, 2007). Such a qualitative stage takes the form of focus groups or exploratory interviews and aims to augment items grounded in the literature. It is appreciated a qualitative stage adds to items’ richness, contextual relevance whilst enhancing face and content validity. However, such a stage was not employed for several reasons.

Primarily, it was noted from the literature how published scales, in journals such as the Journal of Academy of Marketing Science (Baker and Sinkula, 2005a; Guiry et al., 2006), Journal of Business Research (Sin et al., 2005a), Journal of Service Research (Lings and Greenley, 2005b) or those focusing on B2B research such as Industrial Marketing Management (Bennet et al., 2005; Cretu and Brodie, 2005) did not always employ a qualitative item generation stage. Furthermore, whilst Churchill’s (1979) work is seminal and has had an extensive impact on measuring latent constructs it should be acknowledged how this paradigm is over 30 years old. Specifically, it could be regarded as

epistemologically inconsistent to adopt both an inductive and deductive approach simultaneously. Similarly, although Churchill's (1979) research suggests a qualitative stage more recent scale development literature e.g. Netemeyer et al (2003) does not incorporate a qualitative stage but stresses the importance of reviewing relevant literature to generate theoretically grounded items.

A qualitative item generation stage was not included for other reasons. The researcher had concerns surrounding the practicality of administering a large number of items (n=119) to the expert panel. Such a large number of items had the potential to adversely affect the quantity and quality of expert panel participation. Informed by these reservations the experience survey was sent to five senior marketing executives at leading IT service organisations who agreed to review the document in terms of logic, length and format. During follow up telephone interviews all five executives voiced concerns over the length of the experience survey and advised against adding more items via a qualitative stage. This decision was later substantiated, as will be highlighted the next chapter (section 4.4.4). Several panel members initially agreed to complete the experience survey but on receipt refused to do so citing length of time required as the sole reason. Members of the expert panel were also invited to modify current or suggest new items. Unfortunately, this did not result in additional qualitatively generated items being developed. Once again this suggested completing the experience survey, in its current length, was a time consuming task. It could also imply the expert panel may have considered the current pool of items a comprehensive representation of the construct's domain. Finally, as Table 9 indicates an abundance of items already existed in form of extant scales and literature. For these reasons the value of a qualitative stage was acknowledged and incorporated to an extent by giving expert panel members the

opportunity to add or modify items but not employed as a formal stage within the item generation stage.

4.4.3. Item Wording

In parallel to developing a pool of items it was necessary to consider the issue of item wording. Churchill and Peter (1984) found the level of item difficulty did not adversely affect scale reliability. However, this tends to be at odds with the broader scaling literature in terms of items that have ‘good’ characteristics (Clark and Watson, 1995; DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003). Consequently, care was taken to ensure the items were clear (DeVellis, 1991; Nunally and Bernstein, 1994) and unambiguous (Alreck and Settle, 1995; Johnson et al., 2004) whilst avoiding specialist jargon (Baker, 2003), double barrelled (Alreck and Settle, 1995; DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003) or double negatives (Payne, 1980). This approach is consistent with the logic that simplifying items will enhance reliability (Peter, 1979).

In order to address the above wording issues six second year Business School PhD students (three marketing and three non marketing but aware of scaling procedures) and one research member from Centre for Research in Brand Marketing at the Business School were asked to complete the questionnaire and report any issues. The main change related to the initial rewording of Webster’s (1993) marketing culture (semantic differential) scale items. Initially, each item incorporated “(It is important)” before the item but several participants said this was confusing and untidy. Making such modifications at this stage in the scaling process is consistent with other brand related scale development (Vasquez et al., 2002; Yoo and Donthu, 2001). Subsequently, only minor grammatical changes were

made and this version of the experience survey was regarded as final (please see Appendix 2).

4.4.4. The Experience Survey

An initial pool of 119 items resulted from the literature review and constituted the experience survey (Churchill, 1979). This was intended to be over and not under inclusive to ensure the construct had been adequately sampled (Clark and Watson 1995; DeVellis 1991; Loevinger 1954; Nunally and Bernstein 1994). The logic for this approach was two-fold. First, it is easier to remove than add items at subsequent stages (Clark and Watson, 1995). Secondly, adopting this approach increases the probability that all dimensions are adequately represented which enhances content validity (Netemeyer et al., 2003).

The experience survey looked to obtain three pieces of information. The first concerned asking for expert panel members' views on service brand identity items generated from the literature. Expert panel members' views were assessed via the extent to which they thought each item 'represented' the domain of service brand identity (cf; Zaichkowsky, 1985). Second, expert panel members were invited to modify the more theoretically grounded items that had been developed based on the literature to enhance the scale's face validity. Finally, the experience survey also encouraged expert panel members to suggest items they felt had been overlooked to improve content validity.

The survey consisted of two parts. First, each panel member was asked to outline the extent to which each item 'represented' the domain of service brand identity on a three point Likert scale. The points were anchored as "not representative", representative",

“clearly representative”. A ‘compact’ three-point scale was used and an equivocation statement not provided for three reasons. First, Hardesty and Bearden’s (2004) review outlines how three categories have been frequently applied at this stage in the scaling process [e.g. Netemeyer et al (1996), Bearden et al (2001), Zaichkowsky (1985) and Sin et al (2002)]. However, unlike these scholars ‘Somewhat representative’ was replaced by ‘Representative’ given ‘somewhat’ is regarded as ambiguous (DeVellis, 1991; Dillman, 2000). Second, given the number of items, the author did not want the item rating process to be overly arduous by making the number of scale points too granular. Initial feedback from the group of Business School PhD candidates that completed the experience survey (see above) indicated the task took between 20-25 minutes to complete. Finally, the objective of the exercise was to retain or remove items, that is, to make a decision. A smaller number of categories can help with this process by avoiding excessive deliberation. Following Netemeyer et al.’s (2003) suggestion, the panel was also asked to comment on each scale item. This related to item clarity or conciseness, terminology etc. Given a qualitative stage had not been employed to generate scale items each panel member was also invited to comment on or modify individual items. As noted above, this was driven with face validity considerations in mind.

The final part of the experience survey invited participants to suggest additional items they thought had been omitted. The objective being to ensure the domain of the service brand identity construct had been comprehensively ‘tapped’. This was intended to compensate for any potential shortcomings in the generation of scale items given a formal qualitative stage in the form of focus groups or exploratory interviews (cf: Churchill, 1979)

had not been conducted. At this stage no additional scale item suggestions were made which might suggest that the domain had been adequately sampled.

4.4.5. The Expert Panel

The next stage in the scale development process entailed the initial pool of service brand identity items being reviewed by the expert panel. Collecting this data was intended to assess the extent to which the service brand identity items generated from the literature represented the domain of construct. Once reviewed, these items would then form the service brand identity-related questions in the survey administered to the sample. These questions would then be subject to quantitative data analysis consistent with established scale development to establish the scale's psychometric properties procedures (DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003).

Potential expert panel judges were contacted based on one of two criteria 1) they had published widely in the brand identity field or 2) they were brand identity practitioners at 'leading' brand consultancies. 'Leading' brand / advertising agencies were identified from Campaign's Marketing Advertising League (Campaign, 2007).

A panel of six experts completed the expert survey. This is consistent with Netemeyer et al. (2003) who suggest five or more judges as a practical rule of thumb is suitable for an expert panel. Three panel members were academics at leading Universities (one in Germany and two in the US) who also consulted widely on branding issues. Due to

the length of the survey a well respected UK based branding academic commented on the items but did not complete the survey. The remaining three panel members were senior practitioners working at leading global brand consultancies.

4.4.6. Item Retention

Hardesty and Bearden (2004) note how inconsistent item retention criteria have been used. These, generally guided by Zaichkowsky's (1985) seminal work include: at least five of the six judges agree the item "tapped the domain" of the construct (Shimp and Sharma, 1987), all judges regarded the item as at least "somewhat representative" (Netemeyer et al., 1996), items were, on average, at least regarded as "somewhat representative" (Bearden et al. 2001) or that all items should be regarded as "somewhat applicable" to the domain of the construct (Sin et al., 2005, Walsh and Beatty, 2007).

Given the consistency of language, Netemeyer et al. (1996) and Bearden et al.'s (2001) approach was considered particularly relevant. However, the former's decision rule resulted in all items being deleted. This was considered too severe at such an early stage in the scaling process. Conversely, Bearden et al.'s (2001) 'average' decision rule, that is, three or more panel members regarding the item as being representative (or clearly representative) reduced the number of items to 89. Based on experience gained from administering the experience survey to the expert panel this was considered too long. Hence, guided by the literature and practical judgement, Bearden et al.'s (2001) rule was adapted so that the item was, on average, "clearly representative". This reduced the number of items from 119 to 68 (41% of items were removed) which was considered more feasible

given the executive level target population. This percentage is slightly lower than the average reported in Hardesty and Bearden's (2004) literature review where, on average, 51% of items were removed. Figure 20 shows the frequency distribution of scale items before and after the expert panel review.

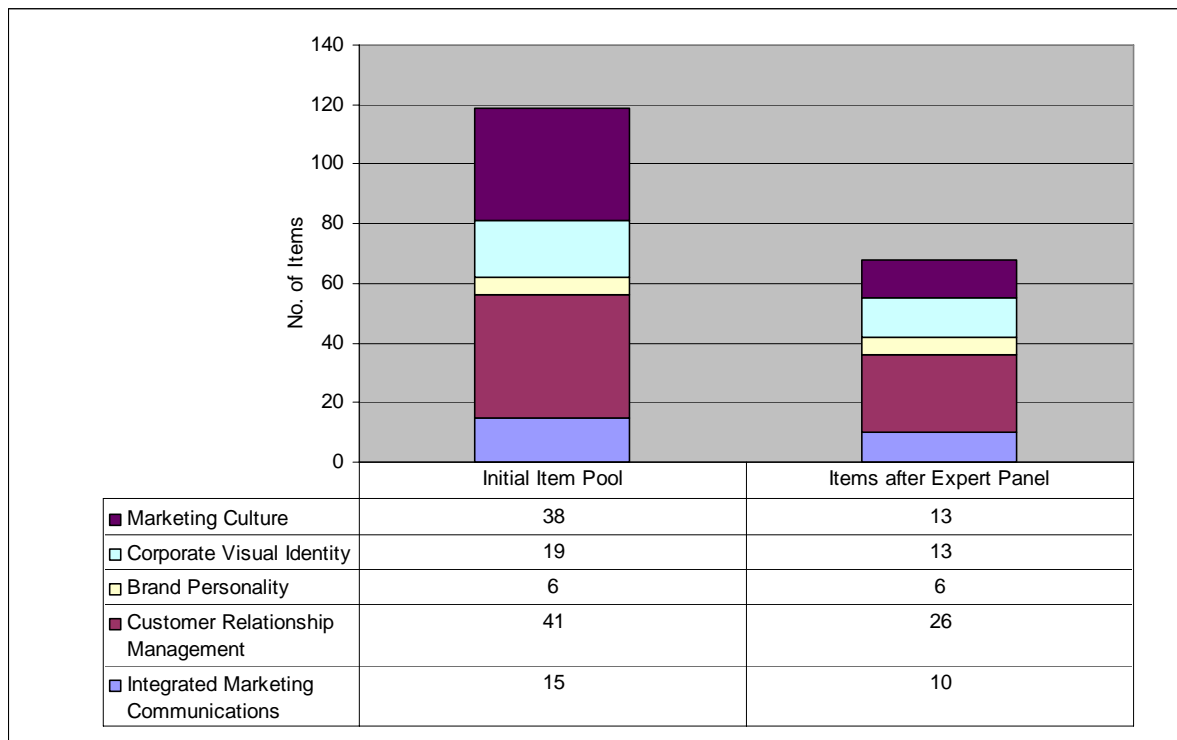


Figure 20 Frequency Distribution of Scale Items by Dimension Before & After Expert Panel

4.5. Finalising the Survey Design

The previous section of this chapter outlined how, guided by the scaling literature, 68 brand identity items remained after expert panel review. The next stage of the methodology involved finalising the survey (please see Appendix 3 for final survey and accompanying covering letter). At this stage decisions regarding survey structure, response format, bias, justifying the use of subjective brand performance measures, pretesting / pilot

and response rate enhancing techniques were made. However, before these issues are discussed the rationale for using a postal survey is provided.

4.5.1. Rationale for Postal Survey

The self completed postal survey is a well recognised marketing research data collection method (Dillman, 1978; Falconer and Hodgett, 1999) and was used for several reasons. Primarily, for deductive research, survey is considered the most appropriate method for obtaining data to test hypotheses (Baker, 2001). Hence, it was necessary to match the method to the problem and not vice versa (Creswell, 2003). Furthermore, survey facilitates the economical collection of large amounts of data whilst being consistent with specifications of scientific research e.g. being logical, deterministic, general and parsimonious (Hart, 1987). Moreover, the versatile, flexible, efficient and comprehensive nature of survey provide major benefits vis-à-vis qualitative methods (Alreck and Settle, 1995; Fox et al., 1988) whilst Klassen and Jacobs (2001) note how surveys are particularly suitable when investigating concepts (cf: what is service brand identity?), testing theory (cf: what are the dimensions of service brand identity?) and analysing / measuring relationships (cf: does service brand identity have a positive influence on brand performance?). Finally, surveys can provide participant assurance with regards to confidentiality (Leong and Austin, 1996) which is often a major executive concern (Falconer and Hodgett, 1999).

The market research literature highlights several benefits web based surveys have in comparison to mail surveys. These include reduced costs (Ilieva et al., 2002),

eliminating the need for data input (Ilieva et al., 2002; Kaplowitz et al., 2004), quicker response times (Jobber and O'Reilly, 1998; Schaefer and Dillman, 1998) and, apparently, having superior completion rates (Klassen and Jacobs, 2001). However, web based survey was not used for several reasons. Primarily, it was not possible to obtain a list of senior brand / marketing executives' emails without purchasing them (at some expense). Furthermore, Sills and Song (2002) note how managers are frequently inundated with emails that are in danger of being treated as 'spam'. Sending a postal letter was regarded as a way of differentiating the research. Also, several empirical studies have highlighted how response rates from web based surveys tend to be lower than postal survey (Fricker and Rand, 2002; Kaplowitz et al., 2004; Klassen and Jacobs, 2001; Saunders et al., 2007; Schaefer and Dillman, 1998) whilst unsolicited email tends to be treated with disdain due to its more personal nature with the outcome potentially being a reduced response rate. Finally, given the ease that an email can be sent with, such an approach reduces the overall value in the context of social exchange (Homans, 1958) which underpins the survey response process (Dillman, 2000).

4.5.2. Survey Structure

The survey consisted of three sections. The first contained service brand identity items. Earlier items were intended to be simple (Baker, 2003), non threatening (Gendall, 1998) and immediately associated with the subject matter (Dillman, 2000). Consequently, a small number of corporate visual identity questions were initially asked. The rationale being logos and organisation nomenclature are frequently (and incorrectly) regarded as being the brand (cf: AMA definition). In order to reduce pattern response the items were

not grouped by dimension (Brace, 2006). The second section of the survey consisted of eight subjective brand performance measures along financial, customer and employee based dimensions. The source of items for each dimension was outlined in the literature review (Section 2.6.2). Finally, descriptive data such as position, number of employees, age and so forth was obtained at the end of the questionnaire for two reasons. First, the researcher did not want participants to ‘break off’ due to what could be perceived as personal (Baker, 2003) or irrelevant (Brace, 2006; Dillman, 2000) questioning early in the survey. Second, if respondent fatigue became an issue, the most critical data had already been obtained (Brace, 2006).

4.5.3. Format of Survey Questions

Given the need to measure the strength and direction of participant’s attitudes the Likert scale format was used in the main survey. Strictly speaking, Likert scales are ordinal, however there is a general consensus of opinion that interval based techniques such as exploratory factor analysis and structural equation modelling can be applied to Likert scales (Clark and Watson, 1995; DeVellis, 1991). The reason being the psychological distances on a Likert scale are not equal but very close (Kennedy et al., 1996). The treatment of (ordinal) Likert scales as interval also finds wider support in the marketing research literature (Aaker et al., 2004a; Hair et al., 2006).

In terms of the number of scale points, Garland (1991) outlines how this is essentially a matter of personal preference whilst other scholars (Cox, 1980; Moors, 2007) note how the ideal number of response categories has yet to be established. Several

scholars (Cox, 1980; Green and Rao, 1970; Matell and Jacoby, 1972; Weng, 2004) consider between six and seven as optimal number of points in order to provide a reliable and consistent participant response. After consulting the extensive number of scale points literature (Andrews, 1984; Brace, 2006; Churchill and Peter, 1984; Clark and Watson, 1995; Coulthard, 2004; Cox, 1980; Dawes, 2008; Fabrigar et al., 1999; Garland, 1991; Green and Rao, 1970; Krosnick and Fabrigar, 1997; Matell and Jacoby, 1972; Moors, 2007; Netemeyer et al., 2003; Saunders et al., 2007; Smith, 1993; Weng, 2004) a seven point Likert scale was used for several reasons.

First, Malhotra and Birks (2006) note statistical techniques such as exploratory factor analysis require seven or more scale points. Furthermore, scales with more than seven points do not tend improve validity or reliability (Dawes, 2008). Moreover, if an even number of points is used participants may feel uncomfortable about being 'forced' into providing a response (Cox, 1980). This could be considered unethical. Additionally, an odd number of responses is preferable when participants have a legitimate reason for adopting a neutral position (Brace, 2006; Cox, 1980), as they may well do with this research. Finally, the absence of a mid point could be problematic as it may reflect the participant's true opinion (Brace, 2006; Krosnick and Fabrigar, 1997; Smith, 1993, 1995). Consequently, for these reasons, a seven point Likert scale was used.

The final scale issue related to the use of scale labels and numbers. Scale labels were used as this "enables participants to conceptualise and respond in spatial terms" (Cox, 1980: 420) whilst Weng (2004) concludes a scale with each anchor label clearly specified should be preferred to achieve consistent and stable participant responses" (p. 970). The mid point was labelled 'not sure' as opposed to 'don't know' given the as the former is

regarded less threatening (Saunders et al., 2007). Numbers and labels were used as this approach is advocated in the literature (Krosnick and Fabrigar, 1997; Netemeyer et al., 2003) with Schwarz et al. (1991) noting the use of numbers and labels helps “disambiguate” (p. 577) scale points more than if just one was used.

Consequently, a seven point Likert scale anchored from ‘Agree Very Strongly’ to ‘Disagree Very Strongly’ with a midpoint of ‘not sure’ was used. Following Dillman (2000), an agree-to-disagree scale direction was used.

4.5.4. Considering Bias as Part of Survey Design

Due to the survey nature of this research it was necessary to contemplate bias as part of the research design. Socially desirable, acquiescence and non response bias were considered as part of the survey design.

4.5.4.1. Socially Desirable

Socially desirable responding is concerned with a participants tendency to answer questions in a manner consistent with favourable cultural norms (Mick, 1996; Nederhof, 1985). Social desirability bias was considered important for two reasons. First, as subjective brand performance measures have been used an individual *may* wish to provide answers that enhance his / her status or self esteem. The results being distorted or exaggerated responses (DeVellis, 1991). Furthermore, the importance of socially desirable

responding in self report survey research is frequently understated (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Consequently, this thesis was mindful of this issue.

Authors such as Crowne and Marlowe (1960) in addition to Strahan and Gerbasi (1972) have developed scales that assess the extent to which socially desirable responding constitutes a research issue. However, they were not used for several reasons. Primarily, the incorporation of such scales would result in additional items and so amplify parsimony concerns. Furthermore, using self administered questionnaires reduces socially desirable responding tendencies (Brace, 2006; Fricker and Rand, 2002; Nederhof, 1985). This is consistent with Richman et al. (1999) who found participants tended to respond in more socially desirable ways when they were with other people. Finally, empirical research has highlighted how socially desirable responding tends not to be an issue with executives (Cycyota and Harrison, 2002). Consequently, the issue of socially desirable responding was acknowledged but not considered as an issue in the context of this executive focused research.

4.5.4.2.Acquiescence

Acquiescence bias, or “yea-saying”, relates to a participant’s tendency to agree with a statement regardless of whether it is positively or negatively phrased (Billet and McClendon, 2000; Brace, 2006; Johnson et al., 2004). To avoid acquiescence, several scholars (Baumgartner and Steenkamp, 2001; Churchill, 1979; Nunally, 1967) advocate the use of both negatively and positively worded items. However, mixed items were not used for six reasons. First, Cycyota and Harrison (2002) and Baker’s (2003) research highlighted how acquiescence bias was not an issue with executives or those that had higher education levels respectively. Secondly, negatively worded statements can be more

difficult to process or confusing (DeVellis, 1991; Johnson et al., 2004; Netemeyer et al., 2003; Patten, 1998) given they increase the number of cognitive operations required (Swain et al., 2008) . Consequently, participants have “to concentrate more on how to respond correctly than on the substance of each question” (Dillman, 2000: 129). Third, a mixture of negatively and positively worded statements tends to adversely affect factor structure (Schmitt and Stults, 1985) insofar that items tended to load onto factors in line with question ‘polarity’(Herche and Engellend, 1996). The reason being an item phrased positively and negatively phrased is not necessarily symmetrical. Fourth, Herche and Engellend (1996) found mixed items adversely affect item unidimensionality. Fifth, negatively phrased items have been found to increase misresponse even when acquiescence and inattention were not issues (Swain et al., 2008). Misresponse occurs when respondents select responses on the same side of the neutral response irrespective of whether the item is positive or negative and so constitutes a form of systematic measurement error. Finally, the influence of mixed statements on reliability has provided inconclusive findings. Whilst Churchill and Peters (1984) found no evidence that mixed statements adversely affect reliability more recent research has tended to find the opposite (Eisenbach and Schriesheim, 1995; Johnson et al., 2004; Netemeyer et al., 2003). Mindful of these issues, all questions were phrased positively.

4.5.4.3.Non Response

Non response bias is concerned with determining if respondents and non respondents provide significantly different answers (Dillman, 2000) and can be an issue when response rates are less than 100% (Armstrong and Overton, 1977). Following the “interest hypothesis”, which assumes that non-respondents are like late respondents

(Armstrong and Overton, 1977), early and late respondents' scores are subject to a independent t-test (on interval data) and a χ^2 test (on nominal / categorical data) to assess if there was a significant mean difference between early and late respondents. If late respondents' answers differ from those that have responded unprompted there is an increased chance the model will be biased. This can be identified by a statistically significant test statistic (i.e. $t < 0.05$) (Saunders et al., 2007).

However, the survey was only administered on one occasion. Consequently, it was not possible to objectively determine early or late respondents objectively from a first or second wave. Whilst the completed sample could have been chronologically split at a given point in time, it is contended this arbitrarily split would only increase and not help assess bias.

4.5.5. Measuring Brand Performance

The previous section of this chapter focused on the process for the service brand identity scale development. This helped address this thesis' second research question that concerned uncovering service brand identity dimensionality. This section now considers the endogenous variable of brand performance in two steps. The first section provides a justification for employing subjective measures whilst the second outlines why a single brand performance measure was used.

4.5.5.1. Justifying the Use of Subjective Brand Performance Measures

The literature review (Section 2.6.2) shared this thesis' rationale for conceptualising brand performance along financial, consumer and employee based dimensions. However, within the literature performance is viewed from two perspectives (Sin et al., 2005b). The first relates to objective measures. These are based on absolute figures such as gross margin, total sales (Cronin and Page, 1988) or data from the PIMS database (Chakravarthy, 1986). The second approach relates to subjective measures. These are concerned with the participants' view on a given measure vis-à-vis their organisation's competitors.

The marketing literature is replete with examples of subjective measure use. For example, Golden (1992) measured market share relative to other providers whilst Lings and Greenley (2005b) consider dependent variables such as employee and customer satisfaction in the context of competitors. In addition to using objective (dollar market share) data, Kohli and Jaworski's (1993) seminal paper used judgemental measures "which asked informants for their overall assessment of the business and its overall performance relative to major competitors, rated on a 5-point scale ranging from "poor" to excellent" (p. 60). Indeed, 41 of the 58 marketing orientation studies completed between 1990-2004 used only subjective performance measures (Cano et al., 2004). Numerous other examples of subjective measures can be found in the marketing (Baker and Sinkula, 2005b; Greenley, 1995; Lings and Greenley, 2009; Matear et al., 2004; Reid, 2005), human resource (Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Denison and Mishra, 1995; Harris and

Ogbonna, 2001; Ngo and Loi, 2008) and strategy (Pearce et al., 1987; Robinson and Pearce, 1988) literatures.

However, subjective measures are not without issues. These include a susceptibility to random error due to participants' inability to remember figures or confusing accounting periods which can result in a Type II error (false negatives). Furthermore, Type I errors (false positives) may occur as a result of systematic bias (Wall et al., 2004) such as social desirability bias (see Section 4.5.4.1 for how this issue was considered as part of the methodology) which can result in artificially inflated responses (Cano et al., 2004). From a more practical perspective, the literature notes how marketing and human resource functional overlap should be greater at service brands (Gronroos, 1984; Heskett, 1987). However, the reality may be that less well informed senior brand managers may not be in a position to comment on human resource based issues. This presents a challenge to the use of subjective employee based measures employed in this research.

Guided by the above, this thesis' logic for using subjective measures is as follows. First, previous literature highlights a close association between objective and subjective performance measures (Bommer et al., 1995; Dess and Robinson, 1984; Guthrie, 2001; Han et al., 1998; Pearce et al., 1987; Venkatraman and Ramanujam, 1986) with Wall et al. (2004) concluding "[T]he relationships of the use of the management practices with subjective performance are no greater than those with objective performance" (p. 111). Second, the target sample for this research is the most senior marketing / brand manager. Subjective measures are generally directed at such respondents who should have a good knowledge of broader strategic issues (Wall et al., 2004). Third, some organisations may not have (objective) financial, brand or employee based data widely available. Even if it is

available they may be reluctant to share it for commercial reasons (Dess and Robinson, 1984; Venkatraman and Ramanujam, 1986). Consequently, an estimate in relation to the organisation's main competitor can be considered the next best alternative. Fourth, objective performance figures may not always be truly objective. Fraudulent or creative accounting can result in tax being offset or assets depreciated at various rates to boost cash flow in years of poor financial performance. Consequently, such data cannot be assumed to be error free (Dess and Robinson, 1984; Wall et al., 2004). Fifth, subjective measures have been noted in the literature as being of particular use with non economic dimensions (Dess and Robinson, 1984) which in the case of this research relate to customer and employee based measures. Sixth, survey participants prefer questions that ask for opinion as opposed to fact (Greer et al., 2000). Seventh, subjective performance measures have the benefit of being relative to a nearest competitor. This is important because it could be argued a performance measure used in isolation has limited meaning (Coltman, 2007). Finally, the use of subjective measures also finds support in non-academic research. For example, Deloitte's Marketing in 3D Benchmark has used industry level subjective performance measures. Consequently, this research adopted a subjective approach for the reasons outlined above.

In terms of wording the subjective brand performance items, previously used subjective measures (Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Dess and Robinson, 1984; Matear et al., 2004; Wall et al., 2004) were referred to for guidance. For each of the performance measures, participants were asked (to rate on a seven point scale):

“On average, over the past three years, our organisation's performance in the following areas has been significantly better than our main competitor (if it is hard to recall, your best estimate is fine)”

Several points should be noted from this statement. First, a seven point scale was employed to retain consistency with the service brand identity items. Second, the term ‘on average’ (Baker, 2003; Dillman, 2000) was used in order to overcome the annual variation and recall issues e.g. year one being notably better than years two and three. Third, the earlier subjective performance literature tended to use a five year time frame with Dess and Robinson’s (1984) research providing a illustrative example. However, given the fluid nature of the IT services market, a five year window was regarded as too long. For example, five years ago Orange would not have envisaged Virgin or Skype (on certain mobile phones) as competitors. Consequently, consistent with more recent literature e.g. Matear et al. (2004) a three year timeframe was used. Finally, given the difficulty participants’ may have with this question, the caveat of “Your best estimate is fine” was added to limit non response issues (Dillman, 2000).

4.5.5.2.Using a Summed Brand Performance Measure

The eight brand performance item scores were summed to provide an overall brand performance measure. Whilst the literature highlights how it is preferable not to collapse multi item scales (Iacobucci et al., 2007), summed scores were used to measure performance for six reasons. First, from a psychometric perspective, several of the selected brand performance dimensions were essentially headline summaries of other multi

dimensional multi item measures (as per Section 2.6.2 of the literature review). For example, brand awareness consists of recognition and recall (Keller, 2003) whilst reputation has been empirically validated as a multi dimensional construct (Walsh and Beatty, 2007). By using indicators for each (third order) dimension the number of scale items would become increasingly unparsimonious. Second, the development and validation of a brand performance scale was considered beyond the scope of one PhD thesis. Third, when alternative approaches to using the eight performance measures were used, such as summing each dimension, levels of fit in the structural model were very poor. This was to be expected given the performance items' psychometric properties had not been assessed. Fourth, culling items verbatim became increasingly unpractical when a subjective approach was adopted. For example, employee satisfaction from Berson and Linton (2005) included "Our employees feel our organisation is a greater place to work" or "Our employees really like the type of work they do". It is questionable whether respondents would be able to answer such granular questions when phrased subjectively. Fifth, Iacobucci et al.(2007) note how when conducting SEM research (albeit with more complex models that incorporate mediating constructs) that obtaining multi item measures for the dependent variable is less critical than for the exogenous or mediating variable (p.146). Finally, as part of the scale development process dependent variables have been summed in previously published studies (Walsh and Beatty, 2007). For these reasons a summed measure was used.

4.5.6. Pretesting and Piloting the Survey

The previous sections of this chapter have outlined how Churchill's (1979) paradigm guided the development of service brand identity items. The steps involved with finalising the survey design were also discussed. However, before the survey could be considered final several pretests and a pilot were conducted (Baker, 2003; Converse and Presser, 1986; Deng and Dart, 1994; Vasquez et al., 2002). The objective was to reduce the systematic element of overall measurement error in the form of participants misunderstanding a question. Such an approach aimed to calibrate the research instrument. The pretest / pilot proceeded in four stages.

First, the survey was distributed to eight PhD candidates at Birmingham Business School. This approach follows that of scholars such as Walsh and Beatty (2007). At this stage, small presentation and typographical changes were made. Several colleagues noted the idealistic nature of several client relationship items. For example, participants questioned if brands can be dependable (Boon and Holmes, 1999), respect the customer (Fournier, 1994) or whether clients do feel emotionally attached to brand (Roberts et al., 2003). Concerns over survey length were also voiced during the second stage. Second, six MBA students from the Business School who held senior marketing positions at IT service organisations completed the survey. This group was selected as they held similar positions to the target population (Clark and Watson, 1995). Four of the MBA students completed the survey. Recommendations on some item wording, sector activities and a preference for using year of birth (as opposed to age) were incorporated into the survey. Again, comments regarding several relational items were made. In particular, concepts such as honesty and

trust were considered as something of an ideal given they were perceived as commercially unrealistic. Two of the six participants agreed to participate in cognitive interviews (Dillman, 2000) where participants read the questions out loud and verbalised their feelings / thoughts. No issues materialised at this stage in terms of understanding the questions. During the third stage, three senior managers (two Marketing Managers and one Managing Director) at IT service companies the researcher knew also commented on the survey. Follow up phone calls explored the relational items in addition to completion times. Again, the realities of the commercial world indicated that such terms may be considered naïve whilst survey length was a recurring issue. Given these issues, relationship marketing-related items were removed from the scale. This left eight items from Sin et al.'s (2005b) CRM scale. Figure 21 outlines the number of items, by dimension, after the pilot stage.

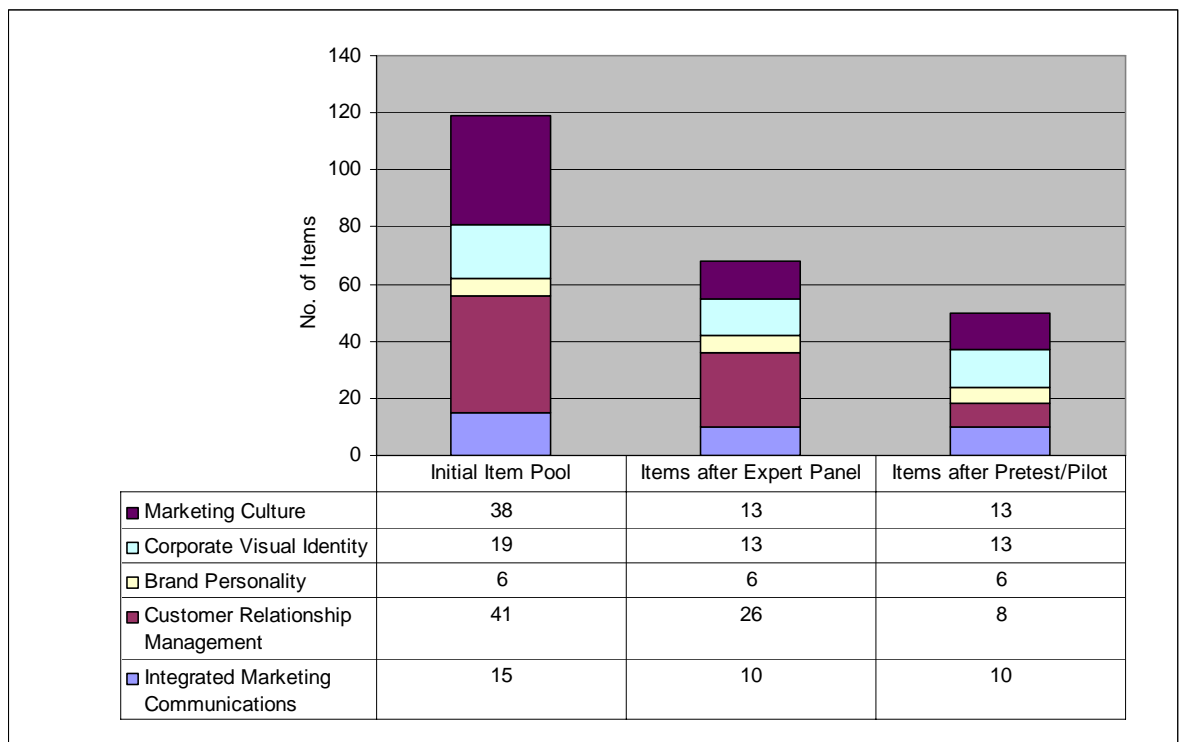


Figure 21 Frequency Distribution of Scale Items by Dimension Before Expert Panel, after Expert Panel and after Pretest / Pilot

The resultant 50 item scale reduced the survey to three pages which helped address the recurring issue of survey length. At this stage the survey was considered as ready for a small population pilot study (Dillman, 2000) which constituted the fourth stage of the survey development process. A group of 50 participants were randomly selected from the sampling frame, sent the survey by postal mail and removed from the main survey mailing. The objective of this exercise was not to conduct statistical analysis but to obtain response rate estimates and essentially 'test run' the survey process e.g. mail merge etc. Furthermore, participants were purposefully selected from the sampling frame as, ideally, they would have a similar profile to those contacted in the final survey (Nunally, 1978). Of the twelve responses, ten were useful. One company was a retailer (inaccurate mailing list) and one company had gone out of business. Hence, a 19% response rate was obtained. At this stage the survey was considered final.

It should also be noted how the second and third stages of the pretesting followed also helped with the selection of employee based measures. As highlighted in the literature review chapter (Section 2.6.2) the majority of Ambler's (2003) employee based equity measures were rather abstract. However, two measures relating to relative employee satisfaction and employee loyalty were discussed with executive MBA students at the University of Birmingham's Business School and senior executives working in the IT services sector the researcher knows to assess their suitability (i.e. phases two and three of the pretest). These discussions revealed most participants would be able to provide estimates for these questions. Guided by these discussions and the view that employees play a pivotal role in service brand delivery employee satisfaction and loyalty measures were included as part of the overall brand performance measure.

4.5.7. Response Rate Enhancing Techniques

Due to inconsistent findings, several scholars (Bednar and Westphal, 2006; Roth and BeVier, 1998) have called for the response rate enhancing literature to develop a stronger theoretical orientation to direct subsequent research. Guided by this view, Helgeson et al.'s (2002) Hierarchy of Effects Model provides a useful framework. In a similar manner to Dillman's (2000) Tailored Design Method, Helgeson et al.'s (2002) model is grounded in Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958) with its tenets of reward, cost and trust. The Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) also underpins Helgeson et al.'s (2002) model insofar respondents pass through a casual attitudinal to behavioural survey-response decision making process. Stages of this process are attention, intention, completion and return with each stage being subject to cost / benefit analysis by the respondent.

Table 10 highlights how this research has drawn on Helgeson et al.'s (2002) model to structure the response rate enhancing techniques employed and move respondents through the decision making process.

Table 10 Application of Helgeson et al's (2002) Mail Response Model

Attention	→ Intention	→ Completion	→ Return
University Affiliation (Bartholomew and Smith, 2006; Dillman, 2000; Jobber and O'Reilly, 1998; Larson and Poist, 2004; Schneider and Johnson, 1995).			
Personalised letter (Dillman, 2000; Greer et al., 2000; Hair et al., 2006; Tomaskovic-Devey et al., 1994; Yammarino et al., 1991)			
Salience of Research Topic (Baker, 2003; Cycyota and Harrison, 2006; Greer et al., 2000; Larson and Poist, 2004; Roth and BeVier, 1998; Tomaskovic-Devey et al., 1994)			
Non Monetary Incentive (summary findings) (Bednar and Westphal, 2006; Dillman, 2000; Jobber, 1986; Larson and Poist, 2004; Tomaskovic-Devey et al., 1994),			
	Confidentiality (Dennis, 2003; Dillman, 2000; Hair et al., 2006; Larson and Poist, 2004)		
	Identification Number (Claycomb et al., 2000; McKee, 1992; Roth and BeVier, 1998)		
	Concise Questionnaire (Bednar and Westphal, 2006; Greer et al., 2000; Yammarino et al., 1991)		
	Stamp addressed Envelope (Dillman, 2000; Greer et al., 2000; Jobber, 1986; Jobber and O'Reilly, 1998; Larson and Poist, 2004; Yammarino et al., 1991)		Stamp addressed Envelope (Dillman, 2000; Greer et al., 2000; Jobber, 1986; Jobber and O'Reilly, 1998; Larson and Poist, 2004; Yammarino et al., 1991)

The response rate enhancing literature frequently cites prenotification, monetary incentives and a follow up mailing as being useful response rate enhancing techniques. The reasons for not using these methods are discussed below.

Pre notification by mail (Cycyota and Harrison, 2002; Dillman, 2000; Roth and BeVier, 1998; Yammarino et al., 1991) was not used due to inconsistent (Cycyota and Harrison, 2006; Jobber and O'Reilly, 1998) or unfavourable (Dennis, 2003; Greer et al., 2000; Larson and Poist, 2004) findings, budget constraints and the view that multiple contact could become irritating. Prenotification by phone (Dillman, 2000; Jobber and O'Reilly, 1998) to over 2000 marketing / brand executives was considered beyond the practical and financial feasibility of doctoral research.

Whilst financial incentives have been found to increase response rates in business samples (Fox et al., 1988; Jobber, 1986; Jobber and O'Reilly, 1998; Larson and Chow, 2003; Saunders et al., 2006; Yammarino et al., 1991) they were not used for three reasons. First, financial incentives are not widely used in *executive* level research (Cycyota and Harrison, 2006). Indeed, when used amongst executive samples positive (Bednar and Westphal, 2006) and negative (Greer et al., 2000; Larson and Poist, 2004) response rate effects indicate mixed results. Secondly, when conducting executive level research under the auspices of a University, incentives can have a detrimental response rates effect. Schneider and Johnson (1995) note insulting the participants' generosity and the perception that universities should not 'stoop' to offering financial incentives as reasons. Third, the widely quoted US \$1 bill equates to a 'heavy' 60 pence whilst the lowest paper denomination of £5 in the UK was beyond the resources of this project.

Finally, a follow up mailing was carefully considered but not pursued. With the exception of Dennis' (2003) (small business owners) and Larson and Chow (2003) (purchasing "professionals"), support for follow up mailing has been found in general population / consumer employee (Church, 1993), consumer and employee (Fox et al., 1988; Yammarino et al., 1991; Yu and Cooper, 1983), "industrial" (Roth and BeVier, 1998) or middle manager (Jobber, 1986; Jobber and O'Reilly, 1998) samples. However, consistent with Larson and Poist's (2004) work (transportation executives) and Greer et al's (2000) research (industrial Vice Presidents and CEOs), Cychota and Harrison (2002, 2006) outlined how sending a follow up mailing to *executive* populations had a statistically *insignificant* effect on response rates. Consequently, the most relevant and recent literature questioned the value of this method. Indeed, Dillman (2000), who consistently advocates follow up use, notes how one contact can actually have higher (23%) response rates than two or more contacts (20%).

4.6. Quantitative Data Analysis

The previous sections of this chapter discussed the research design, sampling procedures, scale development process and how the survey was finalised. This section of the chapter outlines the quantitative data analysis techniques used. Before quantitative data analysis began the completed sample (n=421) was randomly split using MS Excel's Random Generator into a calibration (n₁=211) and validation (n₂=210) sample (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Churchill, 1979; Cudeck and Browne, 1983; Hair et al., 1998; Iacobucci et al., 2007; MacCallum, 1995). The calibration sample was used to develop the

scale whilst the validation sample was used to verify the scale dimensionality and establish its psychometric properties.

4.6.1. Reliability Analysis

Following Churchill (1979) the first quantitatively orientated step in the scale development process involved assessing the internal consistency or reliability of subscales. A scale is considered reliable when it gives similar or repeatable results in different applications or with different samples (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Hence, the notions of internal *consistency* (Field, 2005; Hair et al., 1998; Peter, 1979) or *repeatability* (Netemeyer et al., 2003) are at the heart of a reliable scale.

Coefficient Alpha (Cronbach, 1951) is a widely used internal reliability measure (Deng and Dart, 1994; DeVellis, 1991; Hair et al., 1998; Malhotra and Birks, 2006) with Peter (1979) considering alpha the “most useful formula for assessing the reliability of measures in marketing research” (p. 9). The alpha statistic assesses the extent to which the items intended to measure a given construct are *interrelated* and whose variance is derived from a *common* source (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Consequently, highly correlated items suggest these items are measuring the same latent variable.

Robinson et al. (1991) advocate an alpha score of 0.8 for a new scale whilst DeVellis (1991) considers 0.7-0.8 as respectable, 0.8-0.9 as very good whilst greater than 0.9 should result in the scale length being reduced. Clark and Watson (1995) concur with Nunally (1978) who considers 0.7 as a minimum figure of acceptability with 0.8 and above

adding little to the scale's reliability. Indeed, Churchill and Peter (1984) note how very high levels of reliability adversely affect construct validity. This is consistent with Loevinger's (1954) 'attenuation paradox' where:

“..increasing the internal consistency of a test beyond a certain point will not enhance its construct validity. One reason for this is that strongly intercorrelated items are highly redundant. Once one of them is included in the scale, the other(s) contribute virtually no incremental information.” (p. 316).

This point is of particular importance given calls in the literature from authors such as Churchill (1979) to select items that maximise reliability (Gerbing and Anderson, 1988). Consequently, in line with several of the above authors (Clark and Watson, 1995; Nunally, 1978) an alpha in the region of 0.7 was required for a subscale to be considered reliable.

4.6.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis

The next stage in the scale development process involved using exploratory factor analysis to reveal early construct dimensionality. Exploratory factor analysis helps achieve this by assessing the extent to which the scales' items could be represented by a smaller underlying group of items which are referred to as 'factors'.

It is important to note how reliability estimates were deliberately obtained prior to exploratory factor analysis. The reason being conducting factor analysis on a pool of unreliable items results in a “garbage-in-garbage out” scenario and tends to result in

conceptually irrelevant dimensions being identified (Churchill, 1979). Consequently, exploratory factor analysis built on initial reliability analyses and helped 'pool' items into underlying factors. However, exploratory factor analysis can only suggest, not confirm, dimensions (Churchill, 1979) whilst scale unidimensionality can only be established via confirmatory factor analysis (Gerbing and Anderson, 1988).

4.6.3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Gerbing and Anderson (1988) widened the initial scale development paradigm based on Cronbach's α and exploratory factor analysis (e.g. Churchill, 1979) to include confirmatory factor analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis differs from exploratory factor analysis insofar that prior to statistical analysis a factor structure is specified (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Floyd and Widaman, 1995) which should be grounded in theory (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988).

4.6.3.1. Why Use SEM and Not OLS Regression?

From a construct dimensionality perspective it was necessary to employ confirmatory factor analysis for several reasons. First, to verify (or refute) the postulated construct dimensionality as indicated by exploratory factor analysis (Floyd and Widaman, 1995). Second, to establish each sub scale's unidimensionality (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Gerbing and Anderson, 1988) which is a prerequisite for construct validity (Clark and Watson, 1995; Gerbing and Anderson, 1988). Third, to trim redundant items (DeVellis 1991; Floyd and Widaman 1995; Hair et al. 1998; Netemeyer et al. 2003; Shimp

and Sharma 1987). Fourth, to assess the scale's psychometric properties in the form of convergent / discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998) and composite reliability (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and so forth. It would not be possible to conduct these activities with regression.

To assess the influence of service brand identity on brand performance ordinary least squares regression could have been used. However, regression was not used for four reasons. First, ordinary least squares regression makes no allowance for measurement (random and systematic) error (Baron and Kenny, 1986; Cheng, 2001) given it is subsumed into the overall measurement term for each factor / construct (Baron and Kenny, 1986). However, structural equation modelling attenuates for measurement error by including such an error term for each item whether it be a residual (indicator) or disturbance (construct) term. Furthermore, by using multi item measures, structural equation modelling results in higher levels of reliability (Iacobucci et al., 2007). Third, by not summing each dimension, more consistent structural estimates between latent constructs, that is service brand identity, and its dimensions can be obtained because measurement error has been not been ignored (Jarvis et al., 2003). Finally, measuring each item, as opposed to taking a single figure such as the mean or sum (as with regression) results in more accurate population estimates due to smaller standard errors (Iacobucci et al., 2007).

4.6.3.2. Formative and Reflective Indicators

Following Mackenzie et al.'s (2005) advice, before estimating the measurement and structural models careful consideration was given to construct causality for two reasons. First, model misspecification adversely affects fit indices such as χ^2/df (Diamantopolous et al., 2008) and RMSEA (Mackenzie et al., 2005). Second, model misspecification can result in an overestimation of structural parameters (Jarvis et al., 2003), or in some cases, significant parameter estimate being presented when this is not the case had the model been formatively specified (Mackenzie et al., 2005). Consequently, such misspecification can adversely affect the interpretation of structural model relationships (Diamantopolous et al., 2008).

Guided by Jarvis et al.'s (2003) criteria for model development, the service brand identity measurement and full structural model that incorporated brand performance were estimated with reflective indicators for three reasons. First, service brand identity was made 'manifest' via its postulated dimensions with these dimensions being made 'observable' via their respective indicators (Edwards and Bagozzi, 2000; Jarvis et al., 2003). Hence, changes in the construct caused changes in the indicator and not vice versa (Bollen, 1989). Second, the indicators for each construct shared a common theme in terms of content (Jarvis et al., 2003). Third, covariation was theoretically expected at both second and first order levels in the model. At the second order level, there were theoretical reasons for expecting the dimensions to be positively correlated (please see Section 3.7.3 in the Theoretical Framework chapter). At the first order level, there were also theoretical grounds for expecting items to be positively correlated given they were sampled with the

intention of measuring the same construct. The analysis chapter outlines how these theoretical grounds were empirically substantiated via dimension correlations (Section 5.3.2 of the Analysis chapter) and satisfactory Cronbach α results (Section 5.3.1 of Analysis chapter). Modelling service brand identity with formative indicators would only be suitable if the dimensions / indicators were not correlated (Diamantopolous et al., 2008; Diamantopoulos, 1999; Edwards and Bagozzi, 2000; Jarvis et al., 2003). Collectively, these points provide logic for conceptualising brand identity as a reflective, not formative, construct.

In a similar manner to service brand identity, brand performance was modelled as a reflective measure for three reasons. First, an increase (decrease) in the performance score was made manifest or reflected by an increase (decrease) in the summed performance (which itself consisted of eight items). Second, conceptualising performance reflectively is consistent with previous structural equation modelling applications such as Sin et al.'s (2005b) CRM conceptualisation and scale development. Finally, all performance measures expected to be positively and significantly correlated (Please see Appendix 4 which supports this view).

4.6.3.3. Model Fit

With the formulation of the measurement and structure model considered, the a priori service brand identity model was estimated and assessed for fit (cf: Hu and Bentler, 1999). In order to assess fit between the observed covariance data and implied (theoretical) covariance data fit (Netemeyer et al., 2003) a series of indices exist. A commonly used goodness of fit measure is the χ^2 (chi square) statistic where smaller /

statistically insignificant rather than larger / statistically significant values indicate good fit (Stapleton, 1997). However, the χ^2 's susceptibility changes in sample size (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Floyd and Widaman, 1995; Hair et al., 1998; Kelloway, 1998; Lei and Lomax, 2005) has resulted in the development of other goodness of fit indices during the 1980s such as the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI). Whilst such indices have been found to behave consistently across estimation methods (La Du and Tanaka, 1989; Sugawara and MacCallum, 1993) GFI and AGFI have received criticism for being susceptible to sample size increase (Anderson and Gerbing, 1984; Bollen, 1990; Hu and Bentler, 1995, 1998; La Du and Tanaka, 1989; Marsh et al., 1988a; Netemeyer et al., 2003). Consequently, GFI and AGFI should not be relied on in isolation when assessing fit (Netemeyer et al., 2003).

Steiger's (1990) RMSEA (root-mean-square-error-of-approximation) has received greater empirical attention in recent years. The reason being it aims to overcome χ^2 sample size vulnerability (Netemeyer et al., 2003). However, Chen et al. (2008) highlight how model rejection rates, based on RMSEA (albeit using normal data) decrease as sample size increases. Furthermore, whilst some scholars note stability of RMSEA across estimation techniques (Sugawara and MacCallum, 1993) others outline how, when estimated via Generalised Least Squares, RMSEA tends to provide more (biased) optimistic fit (Olsson et al., 1999).

Comparative or incremental fit indices include the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) / Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) and Incremental Fit Index (IFI). The IFI is regarded as being especially useful with non normal

data (Hoyle, 1995). Several scholars note that NNFI / TLI is particularly resilient to sample size (Anderson and Gerbing, 1984; Bollen, 1990; Hu and Bentler, 1995, 1998; Marsh et al., 1988b) whilst this tends not to be the case for NFI (Bearden et al., 1982; Hu and Bentler, 1998; La Du and Tanaka, 1989; Muller, 1996). Interestingly, Sugawara and MacCallum's (1993) research highlighted the erratic behaviour of comparative indices, in comparison to absolute indices, across estimation methods (ADF, MLE, GLS and OLS) and their tendency to inflate results vis-a-vis other estimations methods (cf: GLS and ADF).

Consequently, a spectrum of fit indices exist which, to varying extents, have certain limitations. Guided by the above fit issues and the confirmatory factor analysis literature (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Byrne, 2001; Chen et al., 2008; Fan and Sivo, 2005; Hair et al., 1998; Kelloway, 1998; Markland, 2007; Mulaik, 2007; Steiger, 1990; Stevens, 1996) several indices (with the exception of NFI) were used. The objective being to make an informed decision about model fit based on a range of indices.

4.6.4. Validating the Measurement Model

4.6.4.1. Cross Validation of the Measurement Model

All prior statistical analyses were conducted on the calibration sample (n=211) to develop the scale. To assess the stability of the scale, the measurement model was re-estimated on the validation (N=210) and full samples (N=421) with a range of fit indices being used to assess model fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

4.6.4.2. Construct Validity

Churchill (1979) notes how Cronbach's Alpha and exploratory factor analysis produce an *internally consistent* or *internally homogenous* set of items (p. 70). However, this approach does not take into account the external psychometric scale properties in the form of construct validity. Reliability is necessary, but not alone sufficient in terms of indicating construct validity (Churchill, 1979; Clark and Watson, 1995; DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003; Nunally, 1978; Peter, 1979, 1981). Following Peter (1981), Netemeyer et al (2003: 8) note construct validity "is an assessment of the degree to which a measure actually measures the latent construct it is intended to measure." In this sense, the measurement scale 'behaves' in the way it is expected to with respect to the construct it is measuring (DeVellis, 1991).

Content, face, convergent, discriminant, criterion and nomological validity are the most widely accepted forms of construct reliability (Hair et al., 1998; Peter, 1981). Hardesty and Bearden (2004) note how face and content validity are frequently (and incorrectly) used interchangeably with Hair et al. (1998: 117) and Ping (2004:130) illustrating this point. Content validity is concerned with how adequately a latent variable's items 'sample' the construct's domain (Haynes et al., 1995). Hardesty and Bearden (2004) use the analogy of a dart board having darts only in one half as not having content validity. Face validity relates to the items being relevant to the measured construct (Hardesty and Bearden, 2004). Using Hardesty and Bearden's (2004) dart board analogy, face validity is represented by a dart hitting the board. If the dart does not hit the board, the item does not represent the intended construct. Convergent validity refers to the degree of agreement or 'convergence' between two or more measures of the same construct

(Churchill 1979; Netemeyer et al. 2003; Sin et al. 2005). Discriminant validity is concerned with the extent conceptually distinct constructs do actually differ (Hair et al., 1998) or as Peter (1981: 136) states “discriminant validity is determined by demonstrating that a measure does not correlate very highly with another measure from which it should differ”. Criterion validity relates to how well the new measure correlates with a pre-existing measure (Haynes et al., 1995). Nomological validity is concerned with the scale’s ability to behave as expected with regards to other constructs it is theoretically related to (Campbell, 1960; Netemeyer et al., 2003). Cronbach and Meehl (1955) referred to this as the model’s ‘nomological network’.

4.7. Conclusions

This chapter has outlined the methodology used to collect data so the domain of service brand identity and the construct’s influence on brand performance could be established. The first section of the chapter provided an overview of the predominantly quantitative research design. The second outlined the sampling procedures that were employed. This was followed by an overview of the process followed to develop the service brand identity measure that was principally guided by Churchill’s (1979) paradigm. The fourth section discussed how the survey was iteratively developed and finalised. This involved considering issues such as survey structure, question format, bias, the rationale for using subjective measures in addition to conducting several pretests and one pilot. The quantitative analyses used to analyse the data were then considered in the chapter’s penultimate section. This related to the use of Cronbach’s α and exploratory factor analysis to purify the measure whilst confirmatory factor analysis was employed to

verify the factor structure, assess unidimensionality and evaluate the scale's psychometric properties. With the data collection complete it was possible to analyse the data.

5. ANALYSIS

5.1. Introduction

Building on the literature review, the theoretical framework chapter postulated a preliminary service brand identity comprising of five dimensions. These were marketing culture, brand personality, integrated marketing communications, corporate visual identity systems and client relationship management. The positive influence of service brand identity on brand performance was also hypothesised. The methodology chapter then outlined how data was collected in order to test the preliminary framework and service brand identity-brand performance hypothesis. This chapter analyses the data gathered during the methodology enabling this thesis move towards answering its research questions. Noticeably, to understand service brand identity dimensionality and the influence this construct has on brand performance.

The chapter consists of four sections. The first explores the raw data via descriptive statistics, missing value analysis and a normality test. Guided by the scaling literature (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Churchill, 1979; DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003) the second section uses a calibration sample to develop the scale. Using a validation sample, the third section uses confirmatory factor analysis to verify the scale's dimensionality and assess its psychometric properties. The final section of the chapter applies the scale to assess service brand identity's influence on brand performance. Concluding remarks reiterate the multidimensional nature of service brand identity and the positive influence the construct has on brand performance.

5.2. Exploring the Data

Initially the data was explored graphically (histograms and box plots), via frequency distributions and descriptive statistics (mean, variance, kurtosis and skew). This helped familiarise the researcher with the data, provide early normality indications, check for data entry errors e.g. values outside scale limits, identify outliers and so forth.

5.2.1. Descriptive Statistics

As part of the data collection a range of descriptive statistics were obtained. Please see Table 11 to Table 18 for details. From an organisational perspective, the sample were predominantly involved in IT consultancy (23%), were less than ten years' old (53%) whilst approximately 85% of the organisations were SMEs i.e. 249 or less employees (European Commission, 2005). In terms of the respondents, approximately 38% had at least 11 years' marketing experience, were predominantly male (76%) and held the position of Marketing Director / VP level or above (80%). Hence, overall, the sample tended to consist largely of male senior executives at small and relatively young organisations. Please see Table 11 to Table 18 for descriptive data details.

Table 11 Main Activity within IT Services Sector

Activity	N	%
IT Consultancy	97	23.0
Software Development	88	20.9
Other	71	16.9
Technical Support	48	11.4
IT Managed Services e.g. data centers	39	9.3
Networking	37	8.8
Infrastructure Management	32	7.6
Security	8	1.9
Total	420	99.8
Missing	1	.2
Total	421	100.0

Table 12 Organisational Age

Age Category (years)	Frequency	Percent
1-10	223	53.0
11-20	123	29.2
21-30	44	10.5
31+	11	2.6
Total	401	95.2
Missing	20	4.8
Total	421	100.0

N=401, Min=1, Max=150, Mean=13.15, SD=12.11.

Table 13 Number of Employees at Respondent's Organisation

Number of Employees	Frequency	Percent
1-5	143	34.0
6-49	155	36.8
50-249	58	13.8
250 or more	27	6.4
Total	383	91.0
Missing	38	9.0
Total	421	100.0

$N=383$, $min=1$, $max=4200$, $mean=277^+$, $SD=2297.8$

⁺ This figure should be treated with caution given the small number of very large organisations that bias the mean and inflate the standard deviation (Field, 2005). These data were not removed as they were considered valid and the researcher did not wish to adversely affect sample generalisability to the population (Hair et al., 1998)

Table 14 Respondents' Marketing Experience (Number of Years)

Number of Years Marketing Experience	Frequency	Percent
0	30	7.1
1-10	140	33.3
11-20	118	28.0
21-30	33	7.8
31+	8	1.9
Total	329	78.1
Missing	92	21.9
Total	421	100.0

$N=329$, $Min=0$, $Max=40$, $Mean 12.32$, $SD=8.35$

Table 15 Respondents' Position in the Organisation

Position	Frequency	Percent
CEO/MD	263	62.5
Marketing Director / VP	73	17.3
Marketing Manager	40	9.5
Other	45	10.7
Total	421	100.0

Table 16 Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	319	75.8
Female	89	21.1
Total	408	96.9
Missing	13	3.1
Total	421	100.0

Table 17 Respondents' Age (Years)

Age Category	Frequency	Percent
20-30	22	5.2
31-40	103	24.5
41-50	153	36.3
51-60	102	24.2
61+	19	4.5
Total	399	94.8
Missing	22	5.2
Total	421	100.0

N=399, min=23, max=71, mean=45, SD=9.60

Table 18 Respondents' Highest Educational Level.

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percent
A-Level / Post GSCSE e.g. BTEC	111	26.4
Undergraduate Degree	126	29.9
Postgraduate Degree (MBE, PhD etc)	81	19.2
Professional Qualification	62	14.7
Other	21	5.0
None	5	1.2
Total	406	96.4
Missing	15	3.6
Total	421	100.0

5.2.2. Missing Value Analysis

Overall, missing data for scale-related items was not regarded a critical issue given their low percentage. The reason being any given question or item had fewer than 10% missing values (Roth and Switzer, 1995). Please see Appendix 5 for missing values by item and question. However, the logic for calculating missing values using the expectation maximisation algorithm (EM) (Dempster et al., 1977) was four fold. First, the measurement model could not be estimated (using MLE, GLS, ADF, UWLS) or bootstrapped samples obtained if data were missing. Second, missing values reduce statistical inference power and adversely affect the accuracy of estimation due to an increase in variance (Fichman and Cummings, 2003; Roth and Switzer, 1995). Third, other missing value remedies such as listwise deletion, mean imputation or regression require the data to be missing completely at random (MCAR) (Hair et al., 1998: 51). Data is MCAR when any variable observation is equally likely to missing. Little's MCAR test revealed the data was not MCAR given $p=0.00$ which was less than the required 0.05 (Little, 1998). However, expectation maximisation does not require MCAR data (Little and Rubin, 1987).

Even if the data was MCAR, such remedies create numerous issues. For example, substituting missing values with the mean distorts the actual distribution of real values with the imputed mean values (Hair et al., 1998) in addition to biasing standard errors (Howell, 2008). Regression estimates are unconstrained and so a 7 point scale may have a regressed value of 8 (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Churchill, 1979; Hair et al., 1998). Descriptive statistics on the EM-based data set revealed all values fell in the Likert scale range. Furthermore, if all cases were deleted listwise, the sample size at N=176 became perilously small for confirmatory factor analysis (structural equation modelling sample size issues are discussed later in this chapter). Fourth, EM provides several distinct benefits such as being particularly suitable for non normal data whilst providing mean variance and covariance estimates with very low levels of bias (Brown, 1994). Finally, post EM data analysis revealed the influence of the method had, at most, had marginal affect on the data (Appendix 6) and so indicated that missing values did not constitute a major data issue. Consequently, all subsequent analysis was conducted on a complete data set once the expectation maximisation algorithm had been used.

5.2.3. Non Response Bias

As discussed in the previous chapter (Section 4.5.4.3) late response bias was not calculated. The reason being only one wave of mailing was conducted and so any split in the received questionnaires would have been purely arbitrary.

5.2.4. Testing Assumptions of Parametric Data

Field (2005) outlines how statistical techniques such as exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis are based on parametric data. Three tests were conducted on the brand identity related items to check parametric data assumptions.

5.2.4.1. Normally Distributed Data

The normality assumption for each brand identity item was tested via inspection of histograms in addition to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk (S-W) tests. Given that a histogram is quite subjective the latter two tests were regarded as necessary. The Shapiro-Wilk test was also employed as a cross check for two reasons. First it is less susceptible to providing significant results than the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and so is considered more accurate (Field, 2005). Second, the K-S test is regarded as a less powerful normality test than the S-W test (Barnes, 2001). As Table 19 outlines all items, for both tests, were significant i.e. $p < 0.000$. This indicates the scale items were not normally distributed. This data was consistent with the Normal Q-Q plots for all 50 items where the actual (observed) values did not follow the straight line, that is expected (normal) values (Hair et al., 1998).

Table 19 Assessment of Data Normality using Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S)

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	<i>df</i>	Sig.	Statistic	<i>df</i>	Sig.
Item 1	0.240	421	0.000	0.881	421	0.000
Item 2	0.331	421	0.000	0.629	421	0.000
Item 3	0.219	421	0.000	0.865	421	0.000
Item 4	0.273	421	0.000	0.797	421	0.000
Item 5	0.216	421	0.000	0.867	421	0.000
Item 7	0.200	421	0.000	0.893	421	0.000
Item 10	0.226	421	0.000	0.791	421	0.000
Item 13	0.258	421	0.000	0.746	421	0.000
Item 14	0.256	421	0.000	0.754	421	0.000
Item 15	0.197	421	0.000	0.878	421	0.000
Item 28	0.192	421	0.000	0.870	421	0.000
Item 34	0.225	421	0.000	0.845	421	0.000
Item 35	0.286	421	0.000	0.679	421	0.000
Item 39	0.313	421	0.000	0.769	421	0.000
Item 40	0.221	421	0.000	0.810	421	0.000
Item 41	0.132	421	0.000	0.946	421	0.000
Item 42	0.203	421	0.000	0.915	421	0.000
Item 44	0.147	421	0.000	0.945	421	0.000
Item 45	0.219	421	0.000	0.906	421	0.000
Item 46	0.185	421	0.000	0.936	421	0.000
Item 47	0.226	421	0.000	0.840	421	0.000
Item 49	0.220	421	0.000	0.807	421	0.000
Item 51	0.228	421	0.000	0.788	421	0.000
Item 53	0.184	421	0.000	0.910	421	0.000
Item 55	0.211	421	0.000	0.871	421	0.000
Item 57	0.202	421	0.000	0.902	421	0.000
Item 58	0.201	421	0.000	0.910	421	0.000
Item 59	0.180	421	0.000	0.888	421	0.000
Item 60	0.177	421	0.000	0.926	421	0.000
Item 61	0.173	421	0.000	0.915	421	0.000
Item 62	0.165	421	0.000	0.931	421	0.000

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	<i>df</i>	Sig.	Statistic	<i>df</i>	Sig.
Item 63	0.166	421	0.000	0.926	421	0.000
Item 91	0.260	421	0.000	0.700	421	0.000
Item 93	0.190	421	0.000	0.900	421	0.000
Item 94	0.209	421	0.000	0.860	421	0.000
Item 97	0.234	421	0.000	0.800	421	0.000
Item 98	0.235	421	0.000	0.832	421	0.000
Item 99	0.234	421	0.000	0.859	421	0.000
Item 101	0.237	421	0.000	0.833	421	0.000
Item 102	0.245	421	0.000	0.787	421	0.000
Item 106	0.206	421	0.000	0.884	421	0.000
Item 107	0.194	421	0.000	0.890	421	0.000
Item 108	0.179	421	0.000	0.939	421	0.000
Item 109	0.123	421	0.000	0.946	421	0.000
Item 110	0.206	421	0.000	0.933	421	0.000
Item 112	0.195	421	0.000	0.922	421	0.000
Item 114	0.182	421	0.000	0.914	421	0.000
Item 117	0.216	421	0.000	0.866	421	0.000
Item 118	0.171	421	0.000	0.900	421	0.000
Item 119	0.203	421	0.000	0.905	421	0.000

Although the scale items did not follow a normal distribution several points should be noted. Primarily, numerous authors (Clason and Dormody, 1994; Malthouse, 2001; Nunally, 1978) outline how it is unusual for Likert scales to follow a normal distribution. Furthermore, scholars such as Browne (1984), Bentler and Yuan (1999) note “real data sets in practice seldom follow normal distributions” (p. 184) whilst Cudeck (2001) states “Virtually no variable follows a normal distribution” (p. 80). Additionally, it is not uncommon to obtain significant results in large samples when only small normality deviations exist (Cudeck, 2001; Field, 2005). The current sample is 421 with Hair et al (1998:23) considering samples in excess of 200 as ‘large’. Finally, both exploratory factor

analysis and confirmatory factor analysis, in practice, are relatively robust against violations of normality (Gorsuch, 1983).

5.2.4.2.Interval Data

The Methodology Chapter (Section 4.5.3) highlighted that whilst, strictly speaking, a Likert scale is ordinal, interval based statistical techniques such as exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis can be applied to Likert scale data (Clark and Watson, 1995; DeVellis, 1991). Indeed, Kennedy et al.'s (1996) empirical research demonstrated the psychological distances on a Likert scale are not equal but very close. Hence, consistent with number marketing scholars (Aaker et al., 2004a; Hair et al., 2006) the scale was assumed to be interval.

5.2.4.3.Independence

One respondent per organisation was contacted. Hence, all responses were considered independent.

5.3. Developing the Service Brand Identity Scale

The previous section of this chapter outlined how the raw data was explored, missing values were managed and parametric data assumptions considered. Before scale development began the completed sample (n=421) was randomly split using MS Excel's Random Generator into a calibration (n₁=211) and validation (n₂=210) samples (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Churchill, 1979; Cudeck and Browne, 1983; Hair et al., 1998;

Iacobucci et al., 2007; MacCallum, 1995). The calibration sample used Cronbach's α , exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses to develop the scale whilst the validation sample was used to verify the scale and establish its psychometric properties.

5.3.1. Reliability Analysis

The first scale development step involved calculating item to total correlations and coefficient alpha (Churchill, 1979). This analysis was conducted for each of the five subscales with the objective being to purify the measure by removing 'garbage' items. Items with a correlation of lower than 0.3 on the hypothesised factor were candidates for deletion (Hair et al., 1998; Nunally, 1978). The more stringent criteria of 0.5 employed by scholars such as Netemeyer et al (1996) was not used at such an early stage in the process. The reason being it was preferable to retain items and remove them at subsequent stages if they consistently had an adverse affect on the scale's psychometric properties. Table 20, Table 21, Table 22, Table 23 and Table 24 show the subscale item analysis for marketing culture, corporate visual identity systems, brand personality, client relationship management and integrated marketing communications respectively. Coefficient alpha figures are also included to provide early reliability estimates.

Table 20 Marketing Culture – Item Analysis

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 1	25.72	84.07	0.35	0.90
Item 2	27.22	84.06	0.66	0.88
Item 3	26.24	80.60	0.55	0.88
Item 4	26.78	83.85	0.64	0.88
Item 5	26.32	81.09	0.61	0.88
Item 7	26.24	83.07	0.59	0.88
Item 10	26.81	84.21	0.60	0.88
Item 13	26.89	80.67	0.69	0.88
Item 14	26.94	80.81	0.77	0.87
Item 15	26.09	80.18	0.56	0.88
Item 28	26.34	85.19	0.52	0.88
Item 34	26.63	83.13	0.60	0.88
Item 35	27.11	83.84	0.67	0.88

Cronbach's α for marketing culture = 0.889

Table 21 Corporate Visual Identity Systems- Item Analysis

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 39	33.51	111.22	0.36	0.88
Item 40	33.03	98.055	0.75	0.86
Item 41	31.13	105.98	0.31	0.89
Item 42	32.21	103.99	0.50	0.88
Item 44	31.65	96.117	0.61	0.87
Item 45	32.35	104.77	0.49	0.88
Item 46	31.94	99.88	0.62	0.87
Item 47	32.75	97.82	0.65	0.87
Item 49	32.92	103.55	0.54	0.87
Item 51	33.03	101.18	0.64	0.87
Item 53	32.22	96.97	0.60	0.87
Item 55	32.59	95.91	0.80	0.86
Item 57	32.45	101.22	0.61	0.87

Corporate visual identity systems Cronbach's α = 0.882

Table 22 Brand Personality– Item Analysis

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 58	14.74	17.476	0.75	0.76
Item 59	14.99	18.982	0.71	0.78
Item 60	14.55	20.460	0.44	0.83
Item 61	14.80	19.248	0.60	0.80
Item 62	14.50	19.439	0.57	0.80
Item 63	14.48	18.851	0.52	0.82

Brand personality Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.825$

Table 23 Client Relationship Management – Item Analysis

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 91	15.55	26.613	0.63	0.80
Item 93	14.55	26.170	0.43	0.83
Item 94	14.83	26.822	0.47	0.82
Item 97	15.40	26.685	0.60	0.80
Item 98	15.14	25.034	0.69	0.79
Item 99	15.06	27.053	0.44	0.82
Item 101	14.96	23.812	0.64	0.80
Item 102	15.23	25.068	0.59	0.80

Client relationship management Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.828$

Table 24 Integrated Marketing Communications – Item Analysis

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 106	27.72	72.90	0.41	0.87
Item 107	27.60	71.13	0.51	0.86
Item 108	26.97	68.08	0.65	0.85
Item 109	26.25	68.05	0.49	0.86
Item 110	27.05	67.39	0.62	0.85
Item 112	27.39	69.72	0.61	0.85
Item 114	27.23	68.48	0.49	0.86
Item 117	27.65	69.81	0.69	0.85
Item 118	27.53	68.10	0.69	0.85
Item 119	27.43	66.23	0.74	0.84

Integrated marketing communications Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.866$

Based on the above decision rule no items were removed. Early scale reliability estimates were, on one hand, encouraging given they exceeded 0.7 (Clark and Watson, 1995; Nunally, 1978). However, the marketing culture subscale ($\alpha=0.889$) was perilously close to exceeding 0.9 (DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003). This potentially indicated a level of item redundancy within this subscale cf: attenuation paradox (Loevinger, 1954).

5.3.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Cronbach's alpha was intended to remove 'garbage' items which displayed low levels of internal reliability (Churchill, 1979). Next, exploratory factor analysis was used to obtain early construct dimensionality estimates.

Before exploratory factor analysis could be conducted the suitability of the sample size was considered. The literature provides varied exploratory factor analysis sample size guidance. Some scholars advocate sample sizes of 300 (Kass and Tinsley, 1979; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001) or 200 (Gorsuch, 1983; Hoelter, 1983). Nunally (1978) recommends having a participant to items ratio of 10:1, Hair et al (1998) consider a minimum ratio of 5:1 whilst Kass and Tinsely (1979) consider between five to ten items per respondent up to 300 as appropriate . Hence, with 50 items and a sample size of 211 the data set was considered on the whole suitable for exploratory factor analysis. This decision that was corroborated by subsequent exploratory factor analysis tests.

First, an R-Matrix was produced (Appendix 7) to identify items with consistently high (multicollinearity) or low (singularity) correlations. Spearman's correlation coefficient was used due to the non normal nature of the data. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed items 1 (marketing culture), 41 (corporate visual identity), 46 (corporate visual identity) 109 (client relationship management) had consistently low, that is, less than 0.2 (Davies et al., 2004; Floyd and Widaman, 1995; Walsh and Beatty, 2007) and insignificant correlations with a large number of other items (more than fifteen). Given the high reliability estimates obtained these items were removed from subsequent analysis. No items had a correlation in excess of 0.9 (Davies et al., 2004; Field, 2005) and so multicollinearity was not considered an issue. The literature advocates using the R-Matrix Determinant to assess multicollinearity or singularity (Field, 2005). However, this statistic was not used given SPSS V16.0.1 exploratory factor analysis correlation output is based on Pearson's correlation coefficient which assumes parametric data.

Second, the suitability of the dataset for exploratory factor analysis was assessed by running Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and the calculating the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) statistic on the 50 items. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity provided a significant χ^2 value of 6248.8 ($p < 0.000$, $df = 1035$). The KMO for the overall data set provided gave a result of 0.908 which can be regarded as 'meritorious' (Kaiser, 1960) or 'superb' (Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999). This indicated item correlations were compact and so factor analysis should produce distinct and reliable factors. As an additional check, the anti-image correlation matrix was analysed to assess *individual items'* sampling adequacy. All diagonals exceeded the required 0.5 (Field, 2005). Inspection of the off diagonals revealed the vast majority of item correlations were below 0.1 which again indicated the suitability of the data for exploratory factor analysis. Consequently, both the KMO and Barlett test indicated the suitability of the data for exploratory factor analysis.

Once the suitability of the data set for factor analysis had been determined (via correlation matrix and the above two tests) the third step involved selecting the most suitable factorial method. Two main types of factor analysis exist. These are Principal Components Analysis (PCA) or Common Factor Analysis. PCA is mainly concerned with *data reduction* (Floyd and Widaman, 1995; Netemeyer et al., 2003). Common factor analysis methods, such as principal axis factoring, unweighted least squares or maximum likelihood, is more concerned with uncovering construct *dimensionality* (Conway and Huffcutt, 2003; Costello and Osborne, 2005; Floyd and Widaman, 1995). The use of common factor analysis is advocated in the scaling literature because it only analyses shared (common) variance and not unique variance (Conway and Huffcutt, 2003; Floyd and Widaman, 1995; Hair et al., 1998; Netemeyer et al., 2003). However, common factor-based results were not used for two reasons. First, several factors contained fewer items

than subsequent factors (unweighted least squares, generalised least squares, maximum likelihood and principal axis factoring). Second, several theoretically uninterpretable factor structures were presented in the form of cross loading items. The PAF findings were of particular note given the literature's support for this method with non normal data (Costello and Osborne, 2005; Fabrigar et al., 1999). Consequently, for these reasons, the calibration sample was subject to principal components analysis.

The factors were then rotated to improve factor structure interpretability (Floyd and Widaman, 1995; Netemeyer et al., 2003; Stevens, 1992). Initially, oblique (PROMAX and Direct Oblimin) rotations were conducted with factor loadings of 0.4 (Hair et al., 1998; Stevens, 1992), 0.5 (Bearden et al., 2001) and 0.67 (Shimp and Sharma, 1987) i.e. $\sqrt{0.4}$. These were regarded appropriate factor loadings given the comparable sample sizes of these authors work with this research. Furthermore, examining multiple factor solutions is encouraged in the literature at the 'exploratory' factor analysis stage (Hair et al., 1998). Informed by these analyses, an oblique rotational method (PROMAX) with factor loadings >0.67 gave the preferred solution, that is, the most interpretable factor structure. This decision was guided by several theoretical and practical rationale. First, unlike orthogonal methods such as VARIMAX, oblique methods such as PROMAX allow factors to correlate (Floyd and Widaman, 1995; Gorsuch, 1983). Indeed, Gerbing and Anderson (1988) advocate the use of oblique methods "because it more accurately reflects the underlying structure of the data than that provided by the more restrictive orthogonal solution" (p. 189). As noted in the theoretical framework chapter, interactions may exist between the postulated dimensions (Section 3.7.3). This provides theoretically grounded logic for using oblique rotation (Field, 2005). Second, orthogonal methods may not suit

confirmatory factor analysis as forcing zero correlation may result in model unidentification (Kelloway, 1998; Netemeyer et al., 2003). Third, several scholars (Conway and Huffcutt, 2003; Costello and Osborne, 2005; Hair et al., 1998) contend orthogonal rotation forces unrealistic solutions as it is unlikely factors will not correlate. Finally, consistent with Conway and Huffcutt (2003) oblique rotation gave the most interpretable solution.

From a practical perspective, Direct Oblimin was not used for two reasons. First, factors with a smaller number of items were not always found towards the end of the rotated matrix (all factor loading levels). Second, the final factors contained only two or one item(s) at factor loadings of 0.5 and 0.67 respectively which may result in a single item scale after confirmatory factor analysis. Conversely, PROMAX (at factor loading of 0.67) contained three items. This approach is consistent with Ding et al. (1995) who advocate the final factor should have no fewer than three items because this increases the chances of obtaining infeasible solutions whilst Hair et al. (1998) note reliability estimates can only be obtained if the latent variable has two or more indicators.

Multiple decision rules were used to identify underlying factors (Conway and Huffcutt, 2003; Ford et al., 1986). First, factors needed eigenvalues greater than 1 (Kaiser, 1960). This rule was suitable given the number of items was not less than 50 (Hair et al., 1998). However, this criterion was not used in isolation given it tends to produce too many factors (Gorsuch, 1997). Second single items factors were eliminated given the need to develop multi item measures (DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003). Third, the number of factors extracted should account for 50%-60% of the variance explained (Hair et al.,

1998; Streiner, 1994). A scree plot was not used because, as Figure 22 indicates the number of large factors made interpretation too subjective (Netemeyer et al., 2003).

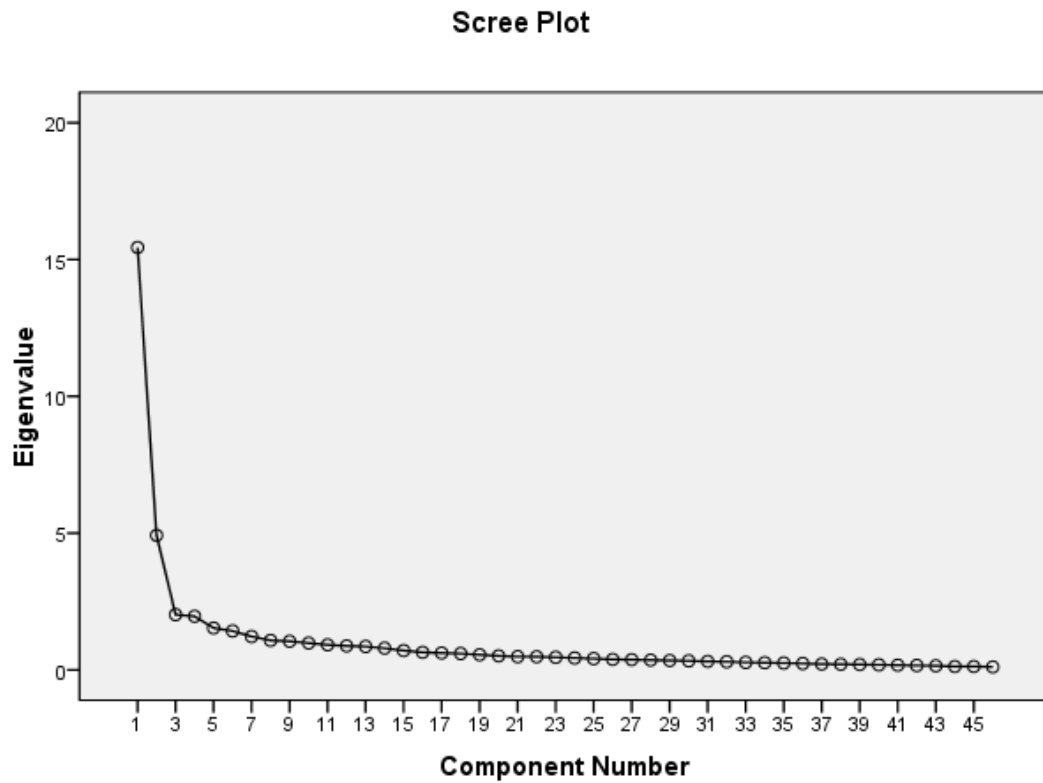


Figure 22 Scree Plot for Exploratory Factor Analysis

From the initial pool of 50 items the resulting exploratory factor analysis produced a nine factor solution accounting for 66.9% of the variance. However, the final four factors were represented by single items. Consequently, a five factor, 20 item solution was selected which accounted for 56.2% of the variance (Table 25).

Table 25 Exploratory Factor Analysis Factor Loadings, Eigen Values, Variance Extracted and Cronbach's Alpha (Calibration Sample, n=211)

	Factor Loadings					Communalities
	E&CF	CVI	BP	CC	HRI	
IT 97. Our employees will help clients in a responsive manner	0.85					0.68
IT 91. Our organisation makes an effort to discover our clients' needs	0.82					0.67
IT 35. Our organisation responds to our clients' needs	0.82					0.69
IT 2. Our top management is committed to providing quality service	0.81					0.74
IT 10. Our employees as essential part of organisation	0.79					0.67
IT 4. Our employees focus on clients' needs, desires and attitudes	0.75					0.73
IT 98. CRM -Our organisation fully understands the needs of our key clients by learning from them	0.69					0.75
IT 14. Our organisation places an emphasis on hiring the right people	0.68					0.71
IT 53. The font we use is an important part of our visual identity		0.96				0.69
IT 47. Our logo is an important part of who we are		0.80				0.73
IT 55. The corporate visual identity is helpful in making our organisation recognisable		0.79				0.77
IT 61. The associations making up our brand personality are extremely positive.			0.84			0.68
IT 62. Our clients have no difficulty describing our brand personality			0.79			0.56
IT 59. Our brand personality has favourable associations			0.79			0.68
IT 107. The people managing the communications program for our organisation have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of all major marketing communications tools				0.81		0.70
IT 118. Our organisation's advertising, PR and sales promotion all present the same clear consistent message to our stakeholder				0.76		0.71
IT 94. Our organisation has established clear business goals related to client relationship management				0.72		0.62
IT 93. Our employee training programs are designed to develop skills required for acquiring and deepening client relationships					0.88	0.71
IT 15. Our organisation provides skill based training to front-line employees					0.84	0.76
IT 3. Our organisation regularly monitors employees' performance					0.80	0.68
Eigen Value	14.44	4.92	2.02	1.96	1.53	
% of Variance	33.57%	10.69%	4.39%	4.2%	3.33%	
Cronbach's α	0.91*	0.78*	0.78*	0.75*	0.81*	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization. *no item to total correlations <0.3.

As Table 25 indicates, items from both marketing culture and client relationship management loaded onto Factor 1. This was labelled employee and client focus (E&CF) given the salience of these stakeholders. This factor had a very high alpha ($\alpha=0.91$) which indicated potential item redundancy. However, at this stage such a high alpha may be a function of (sub) scale length (Netemeyer et al., 2003) as opposed to item quality per se. Factor 2 only contained items from the corporate visual identity systems literature. It was labelled corporate visual identity (CVI) and not corporate visual identity systems given the latter is reflected by more than three items (Dowling, 1994; Melewar and Saunders, 1998; 2000; Olins, 1986; Simoes et al., 2005; Topalian, 1984; Van den Bosch et al., 2005, 2006a). Factor 3 contained items from only the brand personality literature and so was labelled BP. Items from both integrated marketing communications and client relationship management loaded onto Factor 4. This factor was labelled consistent communication (CC) given the items gravitated around branding / business communication. Finally, Factor 5 contained a customer relationship management and two marketing culture items. This was labelled human resource initiatives (HRI) given the training and employee monitoring focus.

All item communalities, that is the amount of variance each item can explain after rotation, were above 0.5. Given the sample size ($n=211$) this confirms the calibration sample was suitable for exploratory factor analysis (MacCallum et al., 1999). Finally, the decision to use an oblique rotation was corroborated by the final component correlation matrix which indicated the factors were positively and significantly correlated (Table 26).

Table 26 Factor Correlations (Obtained from SPSS Output)

Factor Correlation Matrix					
Component	E&CF	CVI	BP	CC	HRI
E&CF	1.00				
CVI	0.16*	1.00			
BP	0.50**	0.50**	1.00		
CC	0.37**	0.49**	0.53**	1.00	
HRI	0.43**	0.38**	0.49**	0.54**	1.00

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 (two tailed)

Figure 23 outlines the number of items, by dimensions and content domain that were retained after each stage of the scaling process up to and including exploratory factor analysis.

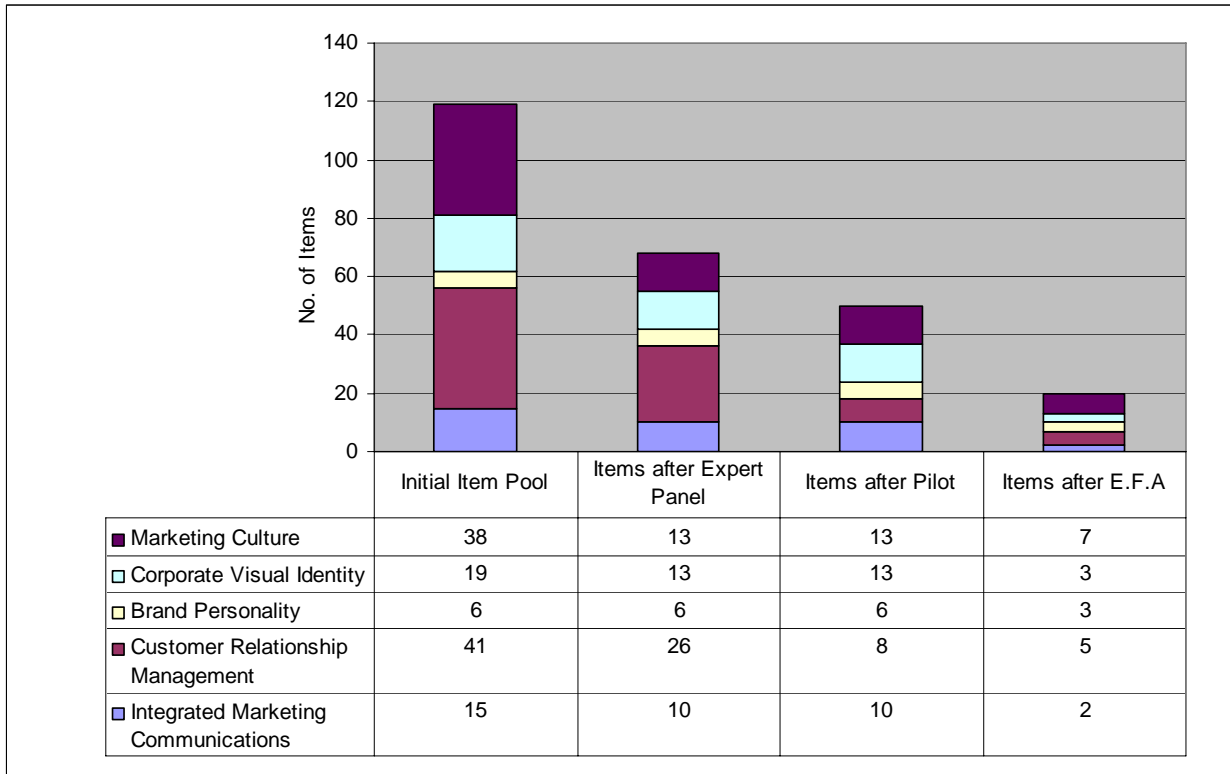


Figure 23 Frequency Distribution of Scale Items by Dimension up to the Exploratory Factor Analysis stage (Calibration Sample, n=211).

5.3.3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The previous exploratory factor analyses highlighted how five dimensional service brand identity solution emerged from the data. Before it was possible to confirm whether this five factor solution ‘fits’ the data it was necessary to consider confirmatory factor analysis sample size.

Echoing the exploratory factor analysis literature an eclectic range of opinions exist for a suitable confirmatory factor analysis sample size. Kelloway (1998) considers around 200 as appropriate whilst Anderson and Gerbing (1988) suggest 150. More recently Lei and Lomax (2005) suggest a “Sample sizes of 100 or more are recommended for accurate parameter estimates”(p.1) whilst Mulaik (2007) considers 200 as the minimum for publishable research. Consequently with calibration and validation samples of 211 and 210 respectively the data set was considered adequate for confirmatory factor analysis.

5.3.3.1. Selecting a Method of Model Estimation

Model estimation was considered carefully given the impact it has on fit indices (Hu and Bentler, 1998; La Du and Tanaka, 1989; Sugawara and MacCallum, 1993). Maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) was used for six reasons. First, several scholars note how MLE is the most widely used confirmatory factor analysis estimation technique (Bentler and Yuan, 1999; Hair et al., 1998; Kelloway, 1998; Netemeyer et al., 2003; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003; Sugawara and MacCallum, 1993). This implies a general consensus of opinion that this is a

suitable estimation method. Second, MLE has been employed in the branding literature for previous scale development with scholars such as Yoo and Donthu (2001) providing an illustrative example. Third, whilst concerns have been voiced over the performance of MLE with non normal data (Bentler and Yuan, 1999; Curran et al., 1996; Hu et al., 1992; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003) numerous scholars have highlighted how, under conditions of non normality, MLE provides robust parameter estimates (Boomsma and Hoogland, 2001; Chou and Bentler, 1995; Curran et al., 1996; Hu and Bentler, 1998; McDonald and Ho, 2002; Muthen and Muthen, 2002). Fourth, Hu and Bentler (1998) conclude ML based estimates are preferable to those obtained via GLS and ADF given they perform more accurately under conditions of model misspecification, varying sample size and distributions. Fifth, ML based estimates provide better theoretical fit than empirical (atheoretical or data specific fit) fit in comparison to GLS (Browne, 1974; Ding et al., 1995; Olsson et al., 1999) given the latter tends to distort parameter estimates (Olsson et al., 1999). Finally, the bias in GLS based estimates is often substantial for smaller sample sizes (<300) in comparison to ML estimates (Olsson et al., 1999). For these reasons MLE was the preferred estimation method.

Alternative methods of estimation such as ADF (Asymptotic Distribution Free) which is sometimes referred to as Weighted Least Squares (WLS), ULS (Unweighted Least Squares) and GLS (Generalised Least Squares) were not used for several reasons. The use of ADF has been advocated with non normal data (Browne, 1984; Curran et al., 1996). However, the calibration sample was not large enough for AMOS to estimate via ADF (cf: Curran et al, 1996; McDonald and Ho, 2002). Furthermore, the difference between estimated parameter values and the true parameter values when ADF is used in comparison to MLE or GLS has been empirically questioned (Olsson et al., 2000). In a similar manner, Schermelleh-Engel et al. (2003) conclude

ML estimation with or without correction for non normal data (by using bootstrapping) performs better than ADF. Unweighted least squares (UWLS) output did not provide key indices such as IFI, TLI / NNFI, CFI or RMSEA. In a similar manner, to MLE, GLS is based on normal theory (Bentler and Dudgeon, 1996; Gerbing and Anderson, 1984; Hu and Bentler, 1998; McDonald and Ho, 2002; Olsson et al., 1999). However, unlike MLE, empirical support for using GLS with non normal data is scarce.

Given the non normal nature of the data, in conjunction with MLE, bootstrapping (Bollen and Stine, 1992; 1993; Yung and Bentler, 1994) was used to obtain the Bollen-Stine p-value for all estimated models (measurement and structural). This statistic aims to provide less biased estimates (Byrne, 2001) and increase the power of the statistical tests (Iacobucci et al., 2007).

5.3.3.2. Model Estimation

Based on the prior analyses (Cronbach's α and exploratory factor analysis) a five factor measurement model consisting of 20 items was estimated using MLE in AMOS 16.0. Following Anderson and Gerbing (1988) all five dimensions within the measurement model were allowed to covary (Figure 24).

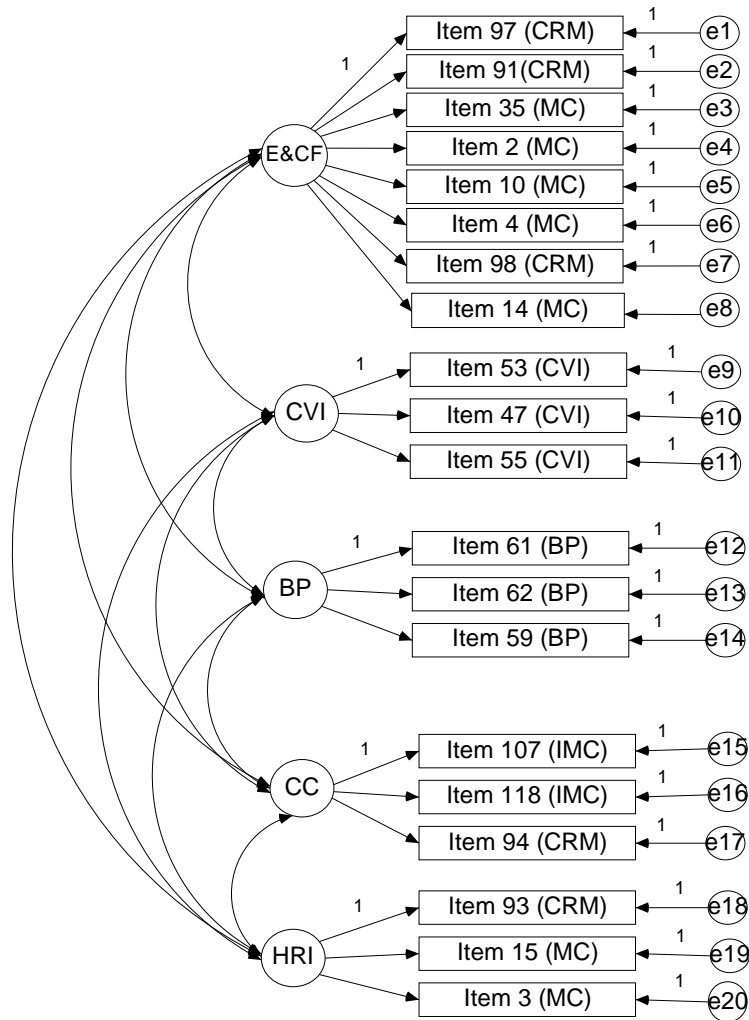


Figure 24 Service Brand Identity Measurement Model 1

In terms of fit, Service Brand Identity Measurement Model 1 provided the following statistics. $\chi^2=302.23$, $df=160$ ($\chi^2/df=1.89$). The significant value ($p=0.03$) Bollen-Stine statistic indicated poor model fit and so suggested the model could not be accepted i.e. $p<0.05$. However, this statistic, in a similar manner to χ^2 is adversely affected by sample size (Byrne, 2001) and so should not be used in isolation. GFI and AGFI were 0.88 and 0.84 respectively. IFI, TLI / NNFI, CFI were 0.93, 0.92 and 0.93. Hence, the model produced marginally

acceptable fit indices (Hu and Bentler, 1999). The RMSEA was acceptable at 0.07 (90 percent confidence interval of 0.05-0.08) (Browne and Cudeck, 1993).

5.3.3.3. Model Respecification

Whilst the fit indices were not entirely unsatisfactory (cf: χ^2/df , and RMSEA) most indices (cf: Bollen Stine p, AGFI, GFI, IFI, TLI, CFI) indicated there was room for model fit improvement. Consequently, confirmatory factor analysis was used in an exploratory or post hoc manner (Byrne, 2001). Scholars such as Cudeck and Browne (1983) have criticised this process for reducing the impact and importance of confirmatory factor analysis. Conversely, other scholars such as Tanaka and Huba (1984) argue such an approach still holds value as long as the researcher is aware of the exploratory nature of their work. In a similar manner, Anderson and Gerbing (1988) observe how, in practice, such an approach is frequently necessary whilst MacCullum (1995) notes this approach is tenable as long as the model is validated on the new data set.

Consequently, model respecification proceeded in an iterative manner. The reason being removing items simultaneously may affect other parts of the model (Segars and Grover, 1993). Decisions to remove parameters were based on both the data (modification indices / standardised residuals) and theory. Modification indices were analysed to identify cross loading items (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1988; Sin et al., 2005b; Yoo and Donthu, 2001) whilst if 5% (Hair et al., 1998) or more of the standardised residuals had values of greater than 2.58 (Hair et al., 1998; Joreskog and Sorbom, 1988) items would have been considered candidates for removal.

However, if the data indicated an item should be removed a decision was made in tandem with theory (Hair et al., 1998; McDonald and Ho, 2002). Making decision in conjunction with theory prevented sample specific modifications being made that could capitalise on chance (Byrne, 2001; MacCallum, 1995; MacCallum et al., 1992; Markland, 2007). The consequence being a model that is not defensible from a theoretical perspective (Hair et al., 1998; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003), generalisable to the wider population (Hair et al., 1998) or content valid (Ping, 2004).

Guided by the above rationale items 14 (E&CF), 98 (E&CF), 4 (E&CF), 94 (CC) and 15 (HRI) were removed. Following several authors' advice (MacCallum, 1995; McDonald and Ho, 2002) the logic for removing each item is provided. Item 14 cross loaded onto HRI and EC dimensions whilst modification indices indicated freeing this parameter would reduce χ^2 by 70 (the largest amount). Item 98 was one of four items that measured clients' needs (items 91, 35, 4 and 98) in addition to being the most frequent modification indices given it accounted for 6 of the 20 suggested modifications (Byrne, 2001). Hence based on the data and parsimony concerns item 98 was removed. Item 4 occurred frequently as a modification indices i.e. 4 of 12 which is indicative of a problematic item (Byrne, 2001). Item 4 was also one of three items measuring clients' needs (items 91, 35 and 4) was removed based on parsimony concerns. Item 94 cross loaded onto consistent communication and human resource initiatives, was included in a high number of modification indices (5 of 15) in addition to being a theoretically inconsistent item given it was accompanied by two IMC items in Factor 4 (consistent communications). The final item to be removed was 15. The reason being it was one of two training items (15 and 93)

within the HRI dimension and so item redundancy was regarded a potential issue. Removing either training item (15 or 93) improved overall model fit, at best, marginally (Table 27).

Table 27 The Influence of Removing Items 15 or 93 on Model Fit

	Retain items 15 and 93			Retain item 15 and remove item 93			Retain item 93 and remove item 15		
	C	V	F	C	V	F	C	V	F
B-S p	0.378	0.020	0.020	0.483	0.065	0.030	0.328	0.070	0.025
GFI	0.93	0.90	0.94	0.94	0.92	0.95	0.94	0.92	0.95
AGFI	0.90	0.86	0.92	0.91	0.87	0.92	0.90	0.88	0.93
TLI	0.96	0.93	0.95	0.97	0.94	0.95	0.96	0.95	0.96
CFI	0.97	0.94	0.96	0.98	0.95	0.97	0.97	0.96	0.97
RMSEA	0.05	0.07	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.05

(C) = Calibration sample, n=211, (V) = Validation Sample, n=210 and (F) = Full Sample, n=421) and B S p = Bollen Stine p value.

Item 93 was retained in favour of 15 due to its strategic nature and B2B (relational) focus whilst item 15 had more of a B2C connotation. Hence, this decision was guided by the data, research context and practical concerns. With the above parameters freed, Service Brand Identity Measurement Model 2 was estimated (Figure 25).

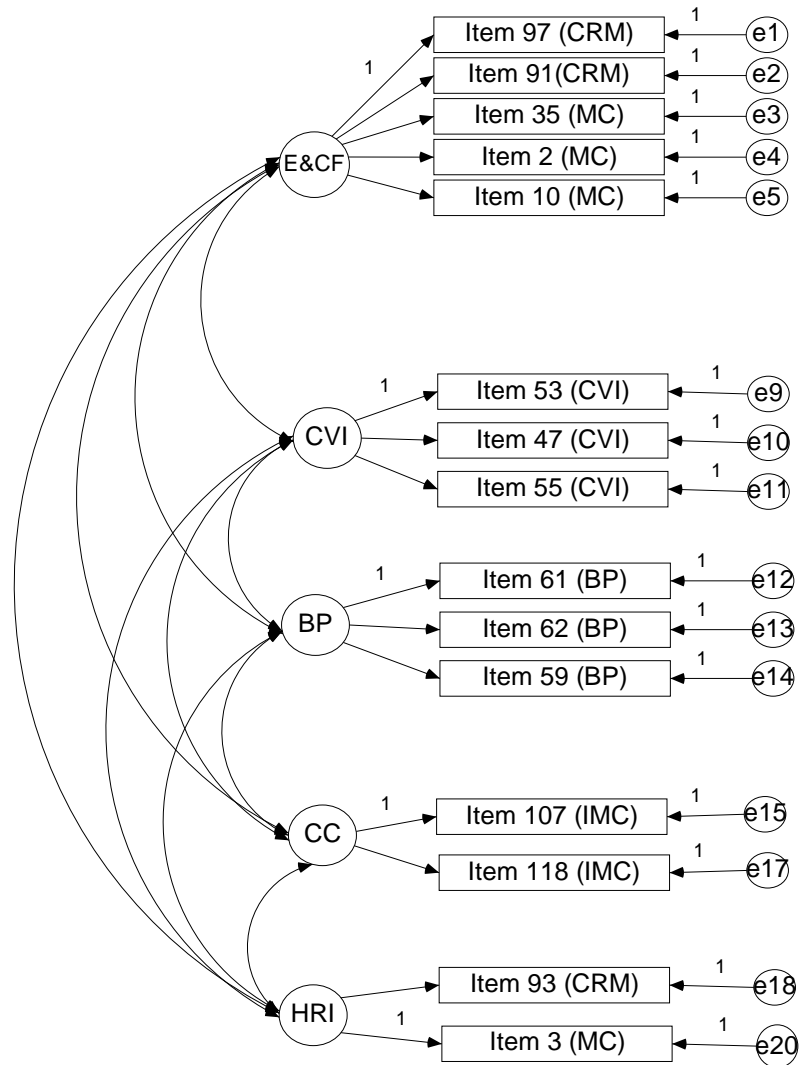


Figure 25 Service Brand Identity Measurement Model 2

Service Brand Identity Measurement Model 2 demonstrated a noticeable improvement in fit over Measurement Model 1. $\chi^2=127.27$, $df=80$ ($\chi^2/df=1.59$). The Bollen-Stine statistic was insignificant ($p=0.159$). This indicated good model fit and so suggested the model could not be rejected. GFI and AGFI were 0.93 and 0.90 respectively. IFI, TLI / NNFI, CFI were 0.96, 0.95 and 0.96. Hence, the model indicated acceptable fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999). The RMSEA was acceptable at 0.05 (90 percent confidence interval of 0.04-0.07) (Browne and Cudeck, 1993).

At this stage no substantive meaning could be derived from the modification indices or standardised residuals whilst each dimension was clearly interpretable. Consequently, Service Brand identity Measurement Model 2 was regarded as the best model (in terms of fit and theoretical interpretability) based on calibration sample analyses. Standardised item loadings on their postulated dimensions ranged from 0.62 to 0.95 (Table 28) whilst the smallest t-value was 7.74 ($p=0.001$) which indicated highly significant item loadings (Table 29).

Table 28 Standardised Item Loadings (Calibration Sample, n=211)

Item		Dimension	Estimate
IT97	<---	Employee & client focus	0.80
IT91	<---	Employee & client focus	0.73
IT35	<---	Employee & client focus	0.77
IT2	<---	Employee & client focus	0.77
IT10	<---	Employee & client focus	0.71
IT53	<---	Corporate visual identity	0.63
IT47	<---	Corporate visual identity	0.62
IT55	<---	Corporate visual identity	0.95
IT61	<---	Brand personality	0.74
IT62	<---	Brand personality	0.63
IT59	<---	Brand personality	0.84
IT107	<---	Consistent communication	0.69
IT118	<---	Consistent communication	0.77
IT93	<---	Human resource initiatives	0.77
IT3	<---	Human resource initiatives	0.78

Table 29 Unstandardised Item Loadings – Coefficients, Standard Errors and t-Values
(Calibration Sample, n=211)

Item		Dimension	Estimate	S.E.	t value	p
IT97	<---	Employee & client focus	1.000			
IT91	<---	Employee & client focus	0.888	0.081	10.919	***
IT35	<---	Employee & client focus	1.001	0.086	11.673	***
IT2	<---	Employee & client focus	0.980	0.085	11.472	***
IT10	<---	Employee & client focus	0.973	0.093	10.479	***
IT53	<---	Corporate visual identity	1.000			
IT47	<---	Corporate visual identity	0.889	0.114	7.812	***
IT55	<---	Corporate visual identity	1.248	0.143	8.733	***
IT61	<---	Brand personality	1.000			
IT62	<---	Brand personality	0.858	0.102	8.401	***
IT59	<---	Brand personality	1.035	0.099	10.411	***
IT107	<---	Consistent Communication	1.000			
IT118	<---	Consistent Communication	1.071	0.127	8.461	***
IT93	<---	Human resource initiatives	0.869	0.112	7.740	***
IT3	<---	Human resource initiatives	1.000			

p<0.001

Figure 26 outlines the number of items, by dimensions and content domain, which were retained after each stage in the scaling process up to and including confirmatory factor analysis.

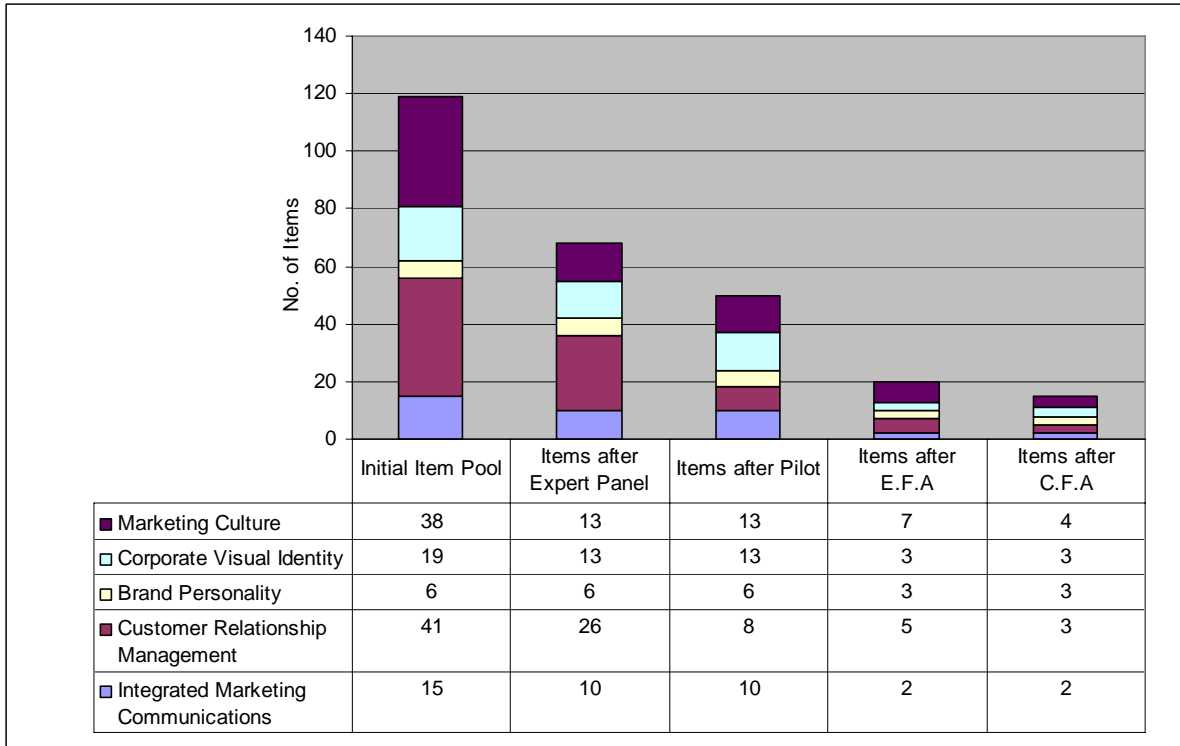


Figure 26 Frequency Distribution of Scale Items at Each Stage of the Scaling Process

Please see Appendix 1 for a full list of the initial items and their associated elimination stage.

5.4. Scale Cross Validation and Psychometric Properties

The previous section highlighted how, guided by theory and the data, a service brand identity measurement model was iteratively developed with the calibration sample and demonstrated adequate levels of fit (cf: Hu and Bentler, 1999, Browne and Cudeck, 1993). In order to verify the ‘post hoc’ confirmatory factor analysis, factor analysis was used in a purely confirmatory mode on the validation sample (n=210) (Byrne, 2001).

5.4.1. Model Fit

When estimated using the validation sample the measurement model showed satisfactory levels of fit (cf: Hu and Bentler, 1999). $\chi^2=133.96$, $df=80$ ($\chi^2/df=1.68$). The model's Bollen-Stine was non significant ($p=0.08$) and indicated the model fit could not be rejected. GFI and AGFI were 0.92 and 0.88 respectively. IFI, TLI / NNFI, CFI were 0.96, 0.95 and 0.96 whilst the RMSEA was 0.05 (90 percent confidence interval of 0.04-0.07). Standardised item loadings on their postulated dimensions ranged from 0.50 to 0.98 (Table 30) whilst the smallest t-value was 6.7 ($p=0.001$) which indicated highly significant loadings on the postulated factors (Table 31).

Table 30 Standardised Item Loadings (Validation Sample, n=210)

Item		Dimension	Estimate
IT97	<---	Employee & client focus	0.71
IT91	<---	Employee & client focus	0.82
IT35	<---	Employee & client focus	0.77
IT2	<---	Employee & client focus	0.83
IT10	<---	Employee & client focus	0.82
IT53	<---	Corporate visual identity	0.60
IT47	<---	Corporate visual identity	0.56
IT55	<---	Corporate visual identity	0.98
IT61	<---	Brand personality	0.78
IT62	<---	Brand personality	0.50
IT59	<---	Brand personality	0.82
IT107	<---	Consistent Communication	0.72
IT118	<---	Consistent Communication	0.80
IT93	<---	Human resource initiatives	0.93
IT3	<---	Human resource initiatives	0.60

Table 31 Unstandardised Item Loadings – Coefficients, Standard Errors and t-Values (Validation Sample, n=210)

Item		Dimension	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
IT97	<---	Employee & client focus	1.000			
IT91	<---	Employee & client focus	1.431	0.129	11.054	***
IT35	<---	Employee & client focus	1.428	0.136	10.515	***
IT2	<---	Employee & client focus	1.545	0.138	11.184	***
IT10	<---	Employee & client focus	1.638	0.148	11.082	***
IT53	<---	Corporate visual identity	1.000			
IT47	<---	Corporate visual identity	0.899	0.126	7.142	***
IT55	<---	Corporate visual identity	1.438	0.166	8.642	***
IT61	<---	Brand personality	1.000			
IT62	<---	Brand personality	0.630	0.094	6.703	***
IT59	<---	Brand personality	1.067	0.093	11.483	***
IT107	<---	Consistent Communication	1.000			
IT118	<---	Consistent Communication	1.035	0.104	9.918	***
IT93	<---	Human resource initiatives	1.462	0.206	7.087	***
IT3	<---	Human resource initiatives	1.000			

*** p<0.001

As final check the measurement model was estimated with the full sample (n=421) and demonstrated excellent levels of fit. $\chi^2=162.36$, $df=80$ ($\chi^2/df=2.03$). A significant Bollen-Stine ($p=0.015$) indicated the model could not be accepted. However, this statistic can be adversely affected by sample size and so is prone to Type 1 errors (Byrne, 2001). GFI and AGFI were 0.95 and 0.93 respectively. Whilst acceptable, GFI / AGFI were treated with caution given their susceptibility to sample size (Anderson and Gerbing, 1984; Bollen, 1990; Hu and Bentler, 1995, 1998; La Du and Tanaka, 1989; Marsh et al., 1988a; Netemeyer et al., 2003). IFI, TLI / NNFI, CFI were 0.97, 0.96 and 0.97. The RMSEA was 0.05 (90 percent confidence interval of 0.04-0.06). Standardised item loadings on their postulated dimensions ranged from 0.55 to 0.97 whilst the smallest t-value was 10.42 ($p=0.001$) which indicated highly significant loadings ($p=0.001$) on postulated factors.

5.4.2. Composite Reliability

Composite reliabilities were estimated to assess the internal consistency of the five Service brand identity subscales with the validation sample. As, Anderson and Gerbing (1988) note:

“after the unidimensionality of a set of scales has been acceptably established, one would assess it’s reliability. Even a perfectly unidimensional scale will not be useful in practice if the resultant scale score has unacceptably low reliability.” (p. 191).

For each dimension, the relevant AMOS output was substituted into Fornell and Larker’s (1981) composite reliability formula:

$$\text{Composite Reliability} = \frac{(\text{Sum of Standardised Loadings})^2}{(\text{Sum of Standardised Loadings})^2 + \text{Sum of indicator Measurement Error}}$$

Direct substitution from AMOS output resulted in the subscale’s composite reliabilities being calculated (Table 32).

Table 32 Composite Reliabilities for Service Brand Identity Dimensions

Employee & client focus	Standardised Factor Loading		Indicator Measurement Error
Item 97	0.71	Item 97	0.50
Item 91	0.82	Item 91	0.33
Item 35	0.77	Item 35	0.40
Item 2	0.83	Item 2	0.32
Item 10	0.82	Item 10	0.33
Σ Standardised Factor Loading	3.94	Σ Error	1.88
Σ (Standardised Factor Loading) ²	15.56		
Composite Reliability	0.89		
Corporate visual identity	Standardised Factor Loading		Indicator Measurement Error
Item 53	0.60	Item 53	0.64
Item 47	0.56	Item 47	0.69
Item 55	0.98	Item 55	0.03
Σ Standardised Factor Loading	2.14	Σ Error	1.36
Σ (Standardised Factor Loading) ²	4.60		
Composite Reliability	0.77		
Brand personality	Standardised Factor Loading		Indicator Measurement Error
Item 61	0.78	Item 61	0.39
Item 62	0.49	Item 62	0.76
Item 59	0.82	Item 59	0.32
Σ Standardised Factor Loading	2.09	Σ Error	1.48
Σ (Standardised Factor Loading) ²	4.36		
Composite Reliability	0.75		
Consistent Communication	Standardised Factor Loading		Indicator Measurement Error
Item 107	0.72	Item 107	0.48
Item 118	0.80	Item 94	0.36
Σ Standardised Factor Loading	1.52	Σ Error	0.84
Σ (Standardised Factor Loading) ²	2.31		
Composite Reliability	0.73		
Human resource initiatives	Standardised Factor Loading		Indicator Measurement Error
Item 93	0.93	Item 93	0.14
Item 3	0.60	Item 3	0.65
Σ Standardised Factor Loading	1.52	Σ Error	0.78
Σ (Standardised Factor Loading) ²	2.32		
Composite Reliability	0.75		

As Table 32 shows, all reliabilities were above the recommended level of 0.6 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) whilst not being in excess of 0.9 which would indicate scale item redundancy (Netemeyer et al. 2003).

5.4.3. Construct Validity

Construct validity is concerned with ensuring the scale behaves as expected (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955; Peter, 1981) and is regarded as a necessary condition for theory testing and development (Peter, 1981). Netemeyer et al (2003) note how the scope of construct validity encompasses is widely disputed with content, face, convergent, discriminant, nomological and criterion related validity being considered its main components.

5.4.3.1. Content Validity

By clearly defining the domain of the construct, exhaustively reviewing relevant literature, culling items from published scales, administering the experience survey to practitioners and leading academics the domain of the construct has been adequately sampled. Consequently, whilst being subjective in nature, the scale was regarded as content valid.

5.4.3.2.Face Validity

In order to assess the relevance of the items two steps were taken. First, pre-tests with PhD colleagues, members of academic staff and personal contacts that work in the IT Services sector were conducted. Secondly, as part of the experience survey branding experts (both practitioners and academics) were contacted in order to assess the scale items' relevance (Section 4.4.5). Guided by these two steps the scale was considered face valid.

5.4.3.3.Convergent Validity

Evidence of convergent validity was obtained in three ways. First, via the variance extracted for each factor. As Fornell and Larcker (1981) note “the researcher may conclude the convergent validity of the construct is adequate, even though more than 50% of the variance is due to error” (p. 46). It was necessary to substitute AMOS output into Fornell and Larcker's (1981) formula:

$$AVE = \frac{\text{Sum of Squared Standardised Loadings}}{\text{Sum of Squared Standardised Loadings} + \text{Sum of indicator Measurement Error}^*}$$

*Please see composite reliability estimates for calculation.

Via substitution of AMOS output Table 33 highlights how the AVE for each sub scale was calculated.

Table 33 Average Variance Extracted for Service Brand Identity Subscales
(Validation Sample, n=210)

Employee & client focus	Squared Standardised Factor Loading
Item 97	0.50
Item 91	0.67
Item 35	0.60
Item 2	0.68
Item 10	0.67
Σ Squared Standardised Loadings	3.12
Average Variance Extracted	0.62
Corporate visual identity	Squared Standardised Factor Loading
Item 53	0.36
Item 47	0.31
Item 55	0.97
Σ Squared Standardised Loadings	1.64
Average Variance Extracted	0.55
Brand personality	Squared Standardised Factor Loading
Item 61	0.61
Item 62	0.24
Item 59	0.68
Σ Squared Standardised Loadings	1.52
Average Variance Extracted	0.51
Consistent Communication	Squared Standardised Factor Loading
Item 107	0.52
Item 118	0.64
Σ Squared Standardised Loadings	1.16
Average Variance Extracted	0.58
Human resource initiatives	Squared Standardised Factor Loading
Item 93	0.86
Item 3	0.35
Σ Squared Standardised Loadings	1.22
Average Variance Extracted	0.61

As Table 33 illustrates, all AVE's are greater than 0.5 which indicates the scale's convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

The second convergent validity test involved “determining if each indicator’s estimated pattern coefficient on its posited underlying construct factor is significant (greater than twice its standard error)” (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988: 416). In other words, convergent validity can be provided by the t-value for each item being significant (i.e. >1.96). The smallest test statistic for each (item) regression coefficient was $t=6.7$ ($p=0.001$). This, again, supports convergent validity.

Finally, all standardised factor loadings were greater than 0.5 (Table 32) which again indicates convergent validity (Steenkamp and Trijp, 1991) .

5.4.3.4.Discriminant Validity

Evidence of discriminant validity was assessed in three ways. First, Fornell and Larcker (1981) highlight how pairwise correlations between factors obtained from the final model are compared with the average variance extracted estimates for each possible pair of dimensions. Discriminant validity is obtained when variance extracted estimates are greater than the square of the correlations for each pair of dimensions (Sin et al., 2005b; Venable et al., 2005).

Table 34 Discriminant Validity Test 1 - Dimension Correlations (Squared) & AVE for Pairs of Correlation (Validation Sample, n=210)

Dimensions			Correlation Estimate	Squared pairwise correlations	Lowest AVE for Dimension Correlation
CVI	<-->	HRI	0.46	0.21	0.55 (CVI)
CVI	<-->	CC	0.69	0.48	0.55 (CC)
E&CF	<-->	CC	0.62	0.39	0.58 (CC)
BP	<-->	CC	0.83	0.69	0.51 (BP)*
BP	<-->	HRI	0.65	0.42	0.51 (BP)
CVI	<-->	BP	0.67	0.44	0.51 (BP)
E&CF	<-->	CVI	0.40	0.16	0.55 (CVI)
E&CF	<-->	HRI	0.63	0.39	0.61 (HRI)
CC	<-->	HRI	0.65	0.42	0.58 (CC)
E&CF	<-->	BP	0.64	0.41	0.51 (BP)

As Table 34 highlights the brand personality / Consistent Communication dimensions indicated potential discriminant validity issues. These were explored further in subsequent discriminant validity tests.

Anderson and Gerbing (1988) provide two further methods for assessing discriminant validity. These constitute the second and third discriminant validity tests. First, by constraining correlation parameters between constructs to 1.0 and then performing a χ^2 difference test on the values for both the constrained and unconstrained model. Evidence of discriminant validity exists if the χ^2 for an unconstrained model (with more factors) is significantly lower than the χ^2 of each constrained model i.e. models with fewer factors. As Bagozzi and Phillips (1982) comment “a significantly lower χ^2 value for the model in which the trait correlations are not constrained to unity would indicate that the traits are not perfectly correlated and that discriminant validity is achieved” (p. 476).

Table 35 Discriminant Validity Test 2 - Comparison of Competing Models

	BS p	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	Δdf
One Factor Model	0.005	502.09	90.00	5.58	NA
Two Factor Correlated Model: φ BP/CC/CVI=1; φ E&CF/HRI=1	0.005	306.84	89.00	3.45	195.25 ^w
Three Factor Correlated Model: φ BP/CC/CVI =1	0.005	233.97	87.00	2.69	268.12 ^w 72.87 ^x
Four Factor Correlated Model: φ BP/CC=1	0.04	149.21	84.00	1.78	352.88 ^w 157.63 ^x 84.76 ^y
Five Factor Correlated Model:	0.08	133.96	80.00	1.67	368.13 ^w 172.88 ^x 100.01 ^y 15.25 ^z

Note:

^w Chi-square difference over one-factor model,

^x Chi-square difference over two-factor model (BP, CC and CVI combined; E&CF and HRI combined)

^y Chi-square difference over three-factor model (BP, CC and CVI combined)

^z Chi-square difference over four-factor model (BP and CC combined)

E&CF=employee and client focus, CVI=corporate visual identity, BP=brand personality, CC=consistent communication, HRI=human resource initiatives.

As Table 35 highlights the five factor model provides the lowest χ^2 and only non significant Bollen Stine p value (p=0.08) at the 5% level. This provides support for the final scale's discriminant validity.

The sequencing of dimensions for the second discriminant validity test followed a two-fold logic. Firstly, the four-factor model collapsed the brand personality and consistent communication dimensions to assess whether previous discriminant validity issues reoccurred. The four factor model's χ^2 was higher than the postulated five factor model in addition to having

a significant Bollen Stine ($p=0.04$) which indicated the discriminant validity of these two dimensions may not be an issue. Second, the difference between the squared dimension correlations and the AVEs for brand personality / corporate visual identity and Consistent Communication / Corporate visual identity were the smallest (0.07 in both cases) as indicated in Table 34. Hence, the three factor model subsumed corporate visual identity into the brand personality / Consistent Communication amalgam to assess the impact on fit. This resulted in a higher χ^2 than the five factor model and a highly significant Bollen Stine value ($p=0.005$).

The final discriminant validity test involved analysing the confidence interval for all the possible construct correlations. If the estimated confidence interval (+/- two standard errors) does not contain the value 1 this provides addition evidence of discriminant validity (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Hair et al., 1998). AMOS V 16.0.1 did not provide correlation confidence intervals. Consequently, to obtain the standard error estimates required to calculate approximate (95%) confidence intervals for the correlation coefficients, Fisher's (1915) z' Transformation was used:

$$SE z' = \frac{1}{\sqrt{n-3}}$$

Where n = sample size i.e. 210 (validation sample). Via substitution:

$$SE z' = \frac{1}{\sqrt{207}} = 0.07. \text{ Therefore } 2*SE = 0.14$$

Table 36 provides approximate 95 % confidence intervals for the correlation coefficient, r.

Table 36 Discriminant Validity Test 3 - 95% Confidence Intervals for Dimensions
Correlation Coefficients (Validation Sample, n=210)

			Correlation Estimate	Lower 90% CI	Upper 90% CI
CVI	<-->	HRI	0.46	0.32	0.60
CVI	<-->	CC	0.69	0.55	0.83
E&CF	<-->	CC	0.62	0.48	0.76
BP	<-->	CC	0.83	0.69	0.97
BP	<-->	HRI	0.65	0.51	0.79
CVI	<-->	BP	0.67	0.53	0.81
E&CF	<-->	CVI	0.40	0.26	0.54
E&CF	<-->	HRI	0.63	0.49	0.77
CC	<-->	HRI	0.65	0.51	0.79
E&CF	<-->	BP	0.64	0.50	0.78

As Table 36 indicates, no confidence intervals crossed the number one. This, once more provides evidence of scale's discriminant validity.

Hence, two of the three tests support the discriminant validity of the scale. However, four points should be noted at this stage. First, the five-factor model demonstrates a χ^2 improvement over the four factor model. Second, the five-factor model provides an insignificant Bollen Stine value (at the 5% level) whilst the four-factor model does not. Hence, points one and two imply that forcing the items measuring brand personality and consistent communications into one dimension resulted in a deterioration of model fit. Third, there are theoretical reasons for accepting brand personality and communications are distinct but correlated. The Conceptual Framework chapter highlighted the potential for dimension interactions (Section 3.7.3). Finally, there are no theoretical reasons for assuming brand personality and marketing communication-related items should be combined. For these reasons the scale was considered as possessing discriminant validity.

5.4.3.5. Nomological Validity

Nomological validity assesses the extent to which the measure behaves in a way as predicted by theory (Campbell, 1960; Churchill, 1995; Netemeyer et al., 2003). It was not possible to assess the scale's nomological validity as service brand identity is a new construct and so has yet to be embedded in a nomological network (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955). Whilst, it is appealing to assume brand identity *should* have a positive impact on brand performance, no such theoretical body of knowledge exists. Hence, assessing nomological validity based on these grounds has limited utility. The reason being disconfirmation of the theory could be a function of theoretical shortcomings rather than those of the scale (Peter, 1981).

Some scholars have regressed (Lings and Greenley, 2005a) or correlated (Sin et al., 2002; Walsh and Beatty, 2007) construct *dimensions* and performance-related dependent variables with significant and positive coefficients indicating nomological validity. It is suggested here such an approach does not constitute a test of nomological validity. By breaking a construct into dimensions researchers are no longer considering the construct *per se* but its dimensions in *isolation* which themselves are not the subject of the nomological test. Furthermore, such a fragmented approach ignores the symbiotic effects dimensions may have when treated as a *collective* entity. Such a position is consistent with Sin et al (2005b) who, when assessing the nomological validity of their CRM scale, conceptualised CRM as a second order construct and estimated the structural model against two performance variables. The positive coefficients between CRM and the performance measures indicated nomological

validity given a previous body of knowledge indicated the positive relationship between CRM and performance.

5.4.3.6. Criterion Validity

It was not possible to assess the scale's criterion validity, that is, the new measure's correlation with a pre-existing measure of the same construct (Ping, 2004). The reason being a validated brand identity measure *in its entirety* did not exist. Validated measures for some dimensions exist such as marketing culture (Webster, 1993), integrated marketing communications (Duncan and Moriarty, 1997; Reid, 2005), corporate visual identity systems (Simoes et al., 2005; Van den Bosch et al., 2006a) but not for service brand identity (or any brand identity models).

5.4.3.7. Predictive Validity

Predictive validity is concerned with the scale's ability to predict something it should theoretically be able to predict. As will be demonstrated in the next section, as hypothesised, brand identity had a positive and significant influence on brand performance. This is an indication of the scale's predictive validity.

5.4.4. The Final Service Brand Identity Scale

With reliability and validity of the scale established Table 37 presents the dimensions and items for what is considered this thesis' final service brand identity scale.

Table 37 Final Service Brand Identity Scale

Dimension	Item Number	Items
Employee & client focus	10	Our organisation treats each employee as an essential part of the organisation
	97	Our employees will help clients in a responsive manner
	91	Our organisation makes an effort to discover our clients' needs
	35	Our organisation responds to our clients' needs
	2	Our top management is committed to providing quality service
Corporate visual identity	53	The font we use is an important part of our visual identity
	47	Our logo is an important part of who we are
	55	The corporate visual identity is helpful in making our organisation recognisable
Brand personality	61	The associations making up our brand personality are extremely positive
	62	Our clients have no difficulty describing our brand personality
	59	Our brand personality has favourable associations
Consistent communications	107	The people managing the communications program for our organisation have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of all major marketing communications tools
	118	Our organisation's advertising, PR and sales promotion all present the same clear consistent message to our stakeholders
Human resource initiatives	93	Our employee training programs are designed to develop skills required for acquiring and deepening client relationships
	3	Our organisation regularly monitors employees' performance

5.5. Service Brand Identity and Brand Performance

The previous sections of this chapter developed the service brand identity scale (calibration sample) and established its psychometric properties (validation sample). This section will use the full structural model to reveal the influence of service brand identity on brand performance. Such a two-step approach is consistent with the structural equation modelling literature where the measurement model precedes the structural model (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Bagozzi, 1981; Bollen, 1989). Hence, the measurement model is concerned with auxiliary theory (measures to constructs) whilst structural model is concerned with substantive theory (between constructs) with this approach being seen as the best way of minimising erroneous conclusions (Edwards and Bagozzi, 2000). Before the structural model could be estimated, it was necessary to consider how brand identity was conceptualised and the causality of the model's indicators. Each will now be discussed.

5.5.1. Service Brand Identity as a Second Order Construct

Prior to the full structural model being estimated, service brand identity was conceptualised as a second order construct for three reasons. First, it was not possible to estimate the final measurement model with brand performance given endogenous variables should not be correlated in a structural model (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Byrne, 2001). Secondly, exploring a higher order conceptualisation was warranted because of the positive and highly significant factor correlations (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988) (Table 38).

Table 38 Service Brand Identity Dimension Correlations Obtained from AMOS Output (Validation Sample, n=210)

Factor Correlation Matrix					
Component	CVI	E&CF	BP	CC	HRI
CVI	1.00				
E&CF	0.40**	1.00			
BP	0.67**	0.64**	1.00		
CC	0.69**	0.62**	0.83**	1.00	
HRI	0.46**	0.63**	0.65**	0.65**	1.00

**p<0.01 (two tailed)

Third, following Law et al's (1998) advice:

“In contrast to a set of inter-related unidimensional constructs, the dimensions of a multidimensional construct can be conceptualised under an overall abstraction, and it is theoretically meaningful and parsimonious to use this overall abstraction as a representation of the dimensions.” (p. 741)

Hence, given service brand identity is a multidimensional it was considered appropriate to conceptualise it as a second order construct. As Figure 27 outlines, the first order constructs relate to the measurement model (factors / indicators) whilst the second order construct is service brand identity.

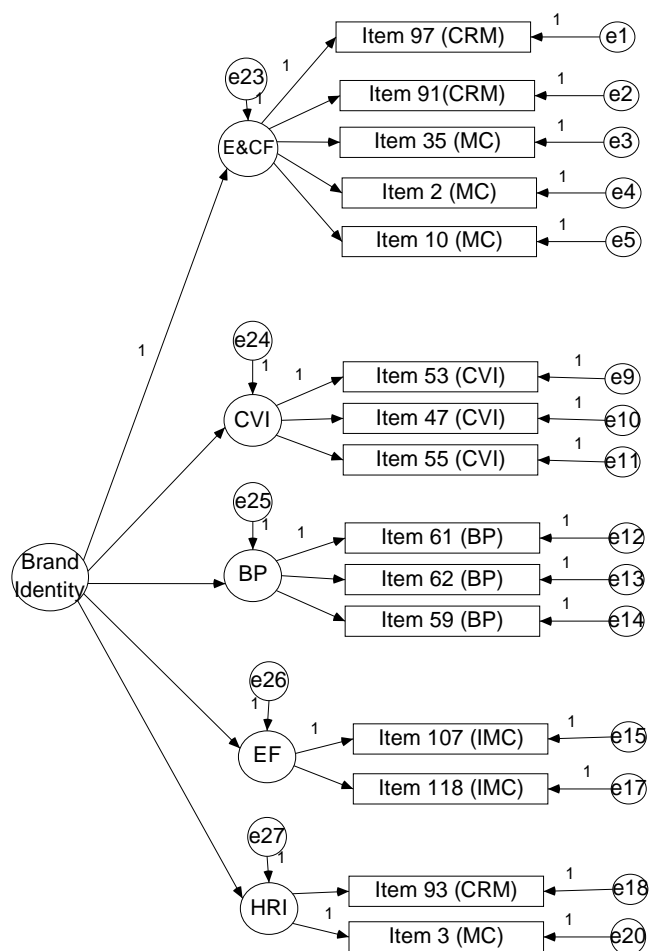


Figure 27 Conceptualising Service Brand Identity as Second Order Construct

Prior to incorporating the second order model into the full structural model, fit indices were obtained for the calibration, validation and full sample (Table 39).

Table 39 Fit Indices for Brand Identity as a Second Order Construct

	χ^2	<i>df</i>	χ^2/df	Bollen Stine p	GFI	AGFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA (90% CI)
C	142.03	85	1.67	0.129	0.92	0.89	0.96	0.95	0.96	0.06 (0.04-0.07)
V	149.59	85	1.76	0.065	0.91	0.88	0.96	0.95	0.96	0.06 (0.04-0.08)
F	187.25	85	2.20	0.010	0.94	0.92	0.96	0.95	0.96	0.05 (0.04-0.06)

C= Calibration Sample (n=211), V=Validation (n=210) and F= Full Sample (n=421).

Two points should be noted from Table 39. First, when conceptualised as a second order construct service brand identity provides acceptable levels of fit. Second, the second order model's fit indices are largely consistent with the first order model across all three samples (Please see Section 5.3.3.3 and 5.4.1).

5.5.2. The Influence of Service Brand Identity on Brand Performance

The full structural model in Figure 28 was estimated using Maximum Likelihood Estimation with fit indices being obtained for the calibration, validation and full sample Table 40.

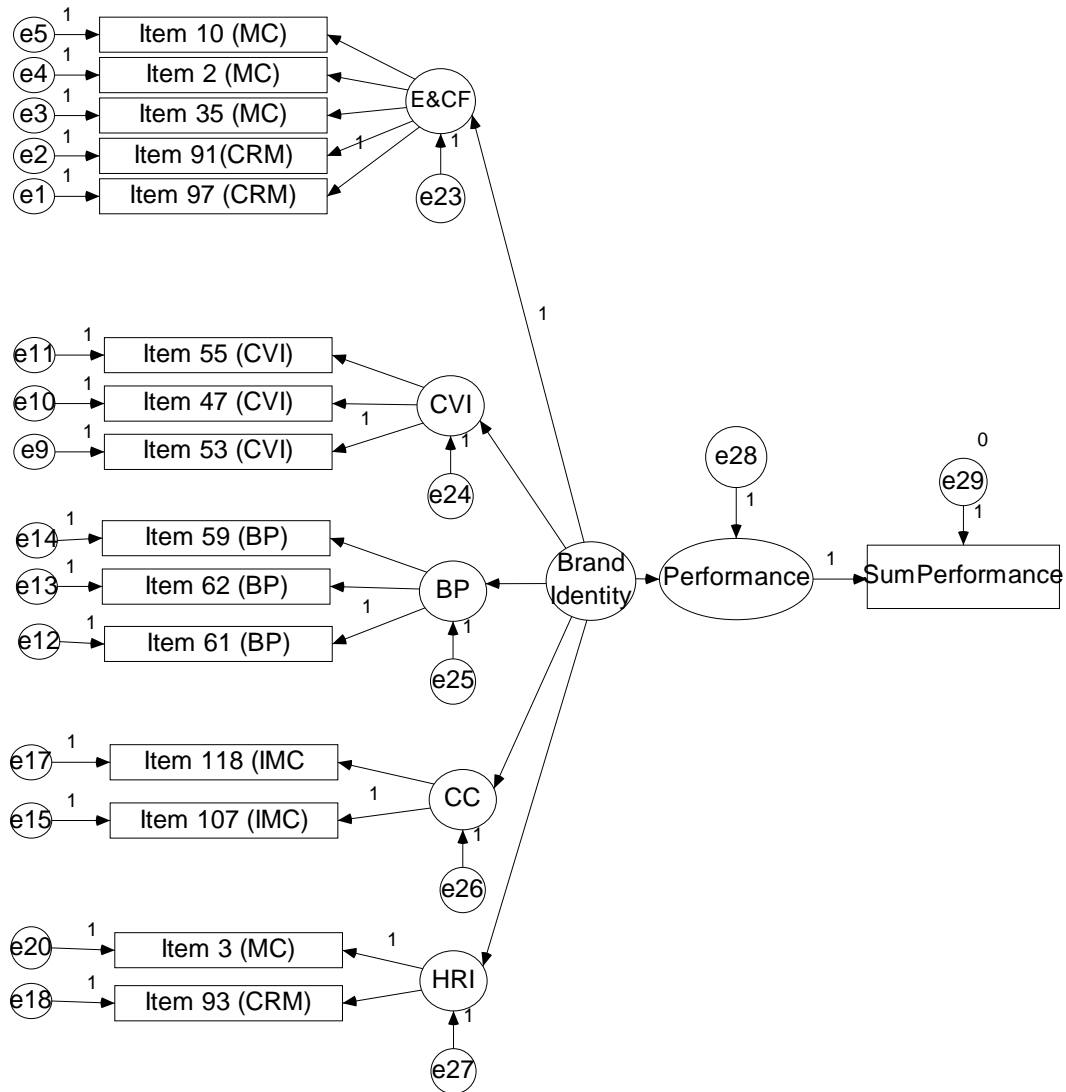


Figure 28 Service Brand Identity and Brand Performance - The Full Structural Model

Table 40 Fit Indices for Full Structural Model Incorporating Brand Performance

	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	Bollen Stine p	GFI	AGFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA (90% CI)
C	193.55	99	1.95	0.03	0.90	0.86	0.93	0.92	0.93	0.07 (0.05-0.08)
V	207.57	99	2.10	0.01	0.89	0.85	0.93	0.91	0.93	0.07 (0.06-0.08)
F	280.77	99	2.83	0.01	0.92	0.90	0.94	0.92	0.94	0.07 (0.06-0.08)

C= Calibration Sample (n=211), V=Validation (n=210) and F= Full Sample (n=421).

The fit between the measurement and structural model degraded slightly. In particular it was notable how the Bollen Stine p value degraded when service brand identity was reconceptualised as a second order construct.

However, overall the structural model provided broadly satisfactory levels of fit (Browne and Cudeck, 1993; Hu and Bentler, 1999). Indeed, more recent literature notes that whilst golden rules have been advocated for model fit by scholars such as Hu and Bentler (1999) in addition to Browne and Cudeck (1993), decisions made in line with these indices are essentially subjective given models have varying degrees of freedom, levels of complexity, sample sizes and data distributions (Markland, 2007). Chen et al. (2008) make a similar point with regards to specified acceptability for RMSEA. Hence, achieving such fit indices may be considered somewhat elusive or implausible (Fan and Sivo, 2005; Marsh et al., 2004; Yuan, 2005). Several modification indices highlighted areas where model fit could be improved. These were not implemented because changes in the structural model can produce changes in the parameter estimates for the measurement model, which in its turn would affect the empirical meaning of the constructs as outlined in the measurement model (Ping, 2004). Consequently, from an overall perspective, the structural model fit indices were considered acceptable and so the coefficient and significance levels for the influence brand identity had on performance could be reviewed (Table 41).

Table 41 The Influence of Service Brand Identity on Brand Performance

	Unstandardised Estimate	Standard Error	t-value	Significance
C	6.96	1.34	5.19	p<0.001
V	4.54	1.32	3.44	p<0.001
F	5.59	0.94	5.93	p<0.001

C= Calibration Sample (n=211), V=Validation (n=210) and F= Full Sample (n=421).
p<0.001

As Table 41 indicates service brand identity has a positive and significant influence on brand performance across the calibration, validation and full samples.

5.5.3. The Contribution of Each dimension to Service Brand Identity

With the positive and highly significant influence service brand identity has on performance established the next stage was to identify the relative contribution each dimension made to driving brand performance. Table 42 , Table 43 and Table 44 illustrate the relative contribution each dimension makes to brand identity in the calibration, validation and full sample respectively.

Table 42 Unstandardised Factor Loadings for Dimensions of Brand Identity
(Calibration Sample, n=211)

			Estimate	Standard Error	t-value	Significance
Employee and Client Focus	<--	Brand Identity	1.00			
Corporate visual identity	<---	Brand Identity	1.30	0.26	4.95	***
Consistent communications	<---	Brand Identity	1.87	0.30	6.29	***
Human resource initiatives	<---	Brand Identity	1.69	0.30	5.69	***
Brand personality	<---	Brand Identity	1.68	0.26	6.41	***

p<0.001

Table 43 Unstandardised Factor Loadings for Dimensions of Brand Identity
(Validation Sample , n=211)

			Estimate	Standard Error	t-value	Significance
Employee and client focus	<--	Brand Identity	1.000			
Corporate visual identity	<---	Brand Identity	1.39	0.25	5.51	***
Consistent communications	<---	Brand Identity	2.01	0.29	7.02	***
Human resource initiatives	<---	Brand Identity	1.52	0.27	5.54	***
Brand personality	<---	Brand Identity	1.96	0.26	7.50	***

p<0.001

Table 44 Unstandardised Factor Loadings for Dimensions of Brand Identity
(Full Sample, n=421)

			Estimate	Standard Error	t-value	Significance
Employee and Client Focus	<--	Brand Identity	1.000			
Corporate visual identity	<---	Brand Identity	1.42	0.19	7.48	***
Consistent communications	<---	Brand Identity	2.00	0.21	9.35	***
Human resource initiatives	<---	Brand Identity	1.65	0.21	7.95	***
Brand personality	<---	Brand Identity	1.86	0.19	9.72	***

p<0.001

From Table 42, Table 43 and Table 44 two points should be noted. First, all dimensions make a positive (as one would expect) and highly significant contribution to brand identity. Secondly, it appears that all dimensions make a comparable contribution to operationalising the construct. With the exception of the calibration sample, brand personality and consistent communications tend to play a marginally more influential role than human resource initiatives and corporate visual identity. However, given the significance levels and small coefficient

difference this would not be considered a substantive finding. Data could not be obtained for employee and client focus as this parameter was constrained to one.

5.6. Conclusions

By analysing the data gathered during the methodology this chapter has helped this thesis move towards meeting its research questions. These were concerned with defining, dimensionalising and measuring service brand identity dimensionality in addition to assessing construct's influence on brand performance. These research questions will be addressed in the next chapter.

The first section of the chapter explored the data via descriptive statistics, missing value analysis and normality tests. Using the calibration sample, the second section developed the scale via the use of Cronbach's α , exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. As a result of these analyses a five dimensional, fifteen item scale emerged from the data which was then verified using the validation sample (n=210). At this stage the psychometric properties of the scale were established in terms of composite reliability and construct validity. The final section of the chapter applied the service brand identity scale via the structural model to demonstrate the positive and highly significant influence brand identity had on brand performance. The largely uniform role each dimension played in operationalising brand identity was also noted at this stage.

With the data analysed it is now appropriate to discuss these analyses in the context of the literature and this thesis' research questions.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1. Introduction

The previous chapter focused on data analysis. These analyses revealed how, in the UK's IT services sector, service brand identity is a multidimensional construct comprising of corporate visual identity, consistent communications, brand personality, human resource initiatives in addition to an employee and client focus. The positive and significant influence brand identity has on brand performance was also demonstrated.

This chapter discusses the analyses (Chapter 5) conducted on the data collected (Chapter 4) in the context of the literature (Chapter's 2 and 3) with the latter being informed by the research questions (Chapter 1). Consequently, the objective of this chapter is to draw out and discuss, as opposed to quantitatively recapitulate, key findings from the previous analyses in relation to the relevant literature.

The Introduction (Chapter 1) established four research questions which have guided this thesis. These were:

- What is service brand identity?
- What are the dimensions of service brand identity?
- How do we measure service brand identity?
- Does service brand identity have a positive and significant influence on brand performance?

As these research questions provide the rationale for this thesis they will be used to structure the majority of this chapter. Consequently, the first section presents a service brand identity definition. This augments the literature-based definition developed in the literature review (Section 2.4.3) via the incorporation of service brand identity dimensionality (Chapter 5). The second section of the chapter elaborates on the first by discussing the domain, or dimensionality, of service brand identity in the context of the literature. At this stage dimensions that were postulated as falling under the domain of service brand identity but did not materialise are also discussed. The third research question concerning service brand identity management is implicitly addressed during the second section given the measure reveals dimensionality and so is the means to the end. With the definition and domain of the service brand identity discussed, the influence the service brand identity has on brand performance is discussed. The balanced nature of the construct, in the context of performance, is also considered. The penultimate section of the chapter goes beyond the initial research questions to discuss the service brand identity framework's applicability in B2B markets. The concluding section reiterates the key points made in during this chapter. Notably, this is the first study to empirically establish that service brand identity is a multidimensional construct which has a positive and significant influence on brand performance.

6.2. What is Service Brand identity?

The literature review (Section 2.4.3) shared this thesis' logic for, preliminarily, defining service brand identity as:

The strategist's vision of how a service brand should be perceived by its stakeholders

Guided predominantly by the work of Aaker (1996a) as well as Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) this literature-based definition was regarded as a providing a theoretical grounding and platform for developing a service brand identity definition. Now the construct's dimensionality has been revealed during data analysis, it is possible to augment this literature-based definition by incorporating this research's findings to define service brand identity as:

The strategists' vision of how a service brand should be perceived by its stakeholders which is made manifest via the organisation's brand personality, corporate visual identity, consistent communications, human resource initiatives and by developing an employee and client focus.

As a result of developing the literature-based definition several points should be noted. Primarily, this definition can now be considered as a *service* specific and not generic brand identity definition for two reasons. First, this definition incorporates dimensions that have emerged from this service sector-based research. Second, the initial dimensions were developed bearing in mind the unique characteristics service brands have and the specific challenges brand marketers at such organisations face (cf: Berry, 1980; Low and Lamb, 2000). Of particular note

here is the central role employees' play in service brand delivery. Consequently, this definition builds on the extant brand identity literature to develop a service brand identity definition which is cognisant of the research's service context.

6.3. What are the Dimensions of Service Brand Identity?

This thesis' second research question is concerned with understanding what dimensions constitute service brand identity. To address this research question, the Theoretical Framework chapter, guided by the literature, initially considered the domain of service brand identity as consisting of marketing culture, corporate visual identity systems, integrated marketing communications, client relationship management and brand personality (Section 0). The analysis chapter outlined how service brand identity was a multidimensional construct made manifest via five dimensions. These were corporate visual identity, human resource initiatives, consistent communications, brand personality and by developing an employee and client focus. Each dimension will now be discussed in the context of the literature.

6.3.1. Corporate Visual Identity

A dimension that contained only corporate visual identity system items emerged from the analysis (Section 5.3). This factor was labelled corporate visual identity and not corporate visual identity *systems*. The reason being the domain of the latter is greater than reflected by the former (Melewar and Saunders, 1998; 2000; Van den Bosch et al., 2005; Van den Bosch et al.,

2006b). Furthermore, from a parsimony perspective, it is questionable if a large enough number of corporate visual identity systems items could have ever materialised from the analyses in order to form such a dimension in the final scale.

Couched within the above logic, regarding corporate visual identity as a dimension of brand identity corroborates the view that the use of symbolism in the form of logos, typeface etc., play an important role in the brand identity building process. This position supports several scholars' work. For example, Aaker (1996a) outlines how the use of logos provides brand identity with greater cohesion which facilitates recognition and recall (p. 84) whilst Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) note how symbolism helps create a visual metaphor which acts as a vehicle for communicating complex brand benefits. Similarly, Kapferer's (2004) 'physique' facet, which is associated with the more concrete and tangible aspects of a brand, could also be understood as relating to the development of brand nomenclature such as the logo and typeface. Hence, this research also substantiates Kapferer's (2004) work. Likewise, these findings are consistent with Keller (2003) who outlines how the use of an organisation's logo and other brand symbolism can help convey the brand identity for a service brand in a more concrete and real manner than if such visual cues were not used .

The emergence of a visually orientated service brand identity dimension also provides support for the wider service branding literature. For example, it has been widely noted in the literature how the effective use of logos helps tangibilise predominantly intangible service offerings (Berry, 2000; Bitner, 1990; Keller, 2003; Levitt, 1981; Miller et al., 2007; Shostack, 1977; Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996; Zeithaml et al., 1985) whilst several scholars have outlined

how the use of visual cues plays a particularly important role in differentiating service brands (Aaker, 1996a; Boyle, 1996; de Chernatony, 2006; Onkvisit and Shaw, 1989; Park et al., 1986).

The conceptual framework chapter highlighted how brands operating in B2B markets tend to focus on brand name and to a lesser extent on brand logo (Section 3.5.2). The findings presented in the previous chapter support the prevailing view that names and logos constitute an integral part of a B2B brand. More specifically, this corroborates the position of numerous B2B scholars who note the salient role brand name (Hutton, 1997; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a; Low and Blois, 2002; Shrimp, 1993; van Riel et al., 2005) and brand logo (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a) play in B2B markets. However, in line with more B2C orientated literature to unlock the full value of visual identity management, B2B brand marketers should consider the full range of activities that span the domain of the construct such as stationery, facilitates, vehicles, employee clothing and other organisational nomenclature as outlined in section 3.5.2.

Based on this finding and consistent with Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006a) B2B brands would be well served to consider metaphoric transfer via visual identity to convey their brand values, attributes or personality. Such an approach would facilitate receipt of brand related benefits such as premium pricing (Bendixen et al., 2004; Firth, 1997; Mudambi et al., 1997), enhanced loyalty (van Riel et al., 2005; Walley et al., 2007), higher brand awareness (Davis et al., 2007), brand differentiation (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a; Shrimp, 1993) and enhanced brand equity (Bendixen et al., 2004; Davis et al., 2007; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a).

Consequently, these findings support the view that ‘visual identity’ plays an important brand identity building role. Moreover, these findings are consistent with the broader service branding literature which outlines how organisations that provide predominantly service orientated offerings need to pay particular attention to visual cues such as logo design and font in order to make their brand more recognisable.

6.3.2. Consistent Communications

A dimension emerged from the data which consisted purely of integrated marketing communications items (Section 5.3). This was labelled consistent communications and not integrated marketing communications. The reason being the domain of integrated marketing communications, as outlined in the literature (Reid, 2005; Reid et al., 2001; Schultz et al., 1994), is represented by more than the two communication items included in the final scale. Whilst integrated marketing communications could not be considered a dimension of brand identity two points should be noted. First, based on parsimony grounds alone, it was not reasonable, retrospectively, to expect all (or at least a sizable number of) items that constituted the domain of integrated marketing communications to be included in a multidimensional scale of which IMC was a part. Second, the two consistent communication items make it clear that organisations need to *integrate* across the communications mix when developing their brand identity. Hence, the concept of integrating marketing communications is salient to this dimension.

The theoretical origins of the integrated marketing communications dimension were grounded in the corporate and not brand identity literature. Of particular note was how this research drew on The Interdisciplinary Schools Corporate Identity Mix with its elements of *communications*, behaviour and symbolism (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). Consequently the emergence of this communication related dimension provides support for the multidisciplinary approach this thesis has adopted which attempts to bridge the schism between the brand, corporate and organisational identity literatures (Section 2.4.6 of the Literature Review) and provide interdisciplinary direction for subsequent brand identity research.

Although marketing communications has not been identified in the relevant literature as a dimension of brand identity, several scholars have outlined the important role communication plays when building brand identity. For example, Aaker (1996a) regards communications as critical to brand identity “execution” (p. 186) whilst Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) outline how communication facilitates brand identity implementation. Hence, these scholars believe communication plays a crucial role in terms of making service brand identity, that is, the strategists’ vision for his or her brand, manifest. In a similar manner, de Chernatony’s (2000) model made reference to brand identity ‘presentation’ which the conceptual framework chapter argued could be considered as being synonymous with communications. Consequently, the emergence of this dimension provides support, albeit indirectly, for these scholars’ views.

In terms of the broader service branding literature, the literature review highlighted the important role that employees play in service brand delivery (Balmer, 1995; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Berry, 2000; Biel, 1993b; Bitner, 1990; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; Dall’Olmo Riley and de Chernatony, 2000; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Kennedy, 1977). To engage

employees in the branding process the use of internal marketing at service brands has been advocated in both the B2C (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; de Chernatony et al., 2003; Fill, 2002; McDonald et al., 2001) and B2B literature (Bendixen et al., 2004; Lannon, 1992; Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004). However, the final scale did not measure internal marketing / communications (cf: Reid, 2005, Duncan and Moriarty, 1997). This finding was not anticipated given the need for service brands to take a balanced approach to branding by considering both internal and external stakeholders (Balmer, 1995; Balmer, 2001b; Blackston, 1993; de Chernatony, 1999; de Chernatony et al., 2003; de Chernatony and Segal Horn, 2003; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Lamons, 2005; Zeithaml et al., 2006).

The emergence of a communications dimension corroborates the position that communication plays an important role in B2B markets (Gilliland and Johnston, 1997; Mudambi, 2002). Of particular note is how the communication should have an organisational and not line brand focus. This supports the position numerous scholars adopt (Bendixen et al., 2004; Blomback and Axelsson, 2007; Han and Sung, 2008). The target for the communications focuses in a broader range of stakeholders and not just on customers. This reinforces the view that if marketing communications are customer-centric they have been too narrowly conceived (Bendixen et al., 2004; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a).

The emergence of a communications dimension supports the view that marketing communications play an important service brand identity role. Consequently, when organisations look to build brand identity it is essential those responsible for marketing communications understand the relative strengths and weaknesses of various communications

tools at their disposal. By carefully orchestrating advertising, PR, sales promotion and so forth the organisation will be better placed to deliver a consistent brand message to its stakeholders and diffuse the desired brand identity more effectively. However, whilst it is possible internal marketing communications may be an antecedent of service brand identity, based on the previous analyses, internal communications are not reflected in the final scale.

6.3.3. Brand Personality

The previous chapter (Section 5.3) highlighted how, based on empirical and theoretical grounds, brand personality is a dimension of service brand identity. Empirically, a dimension that consisted purely of brand personality items emerged from the data. From a theoretical perspective, the methodology chapter (Section 4.4.2) outlined the logic for employing Keller's (1993) dimensions of brand association within his brand equity conceptualisation to measure brand personality. The main reason being brand personality is an association (Aaker, 1995, 1997; 1999; Batra et al., 1993; Freling and Forbes, 2005a; Haigood, 1999; Johar et al., 2005). Whilst the final three items did not contain all three brand association adjectives of 'strong', 'favourable' and 'unique' (cf: Keller, 1993), it was clear different aspects of brand personality have been measured via a brand personality being 'positive' (strong), 'favourable' or having 'no difficulty in being described' (unique).

The emergence of a brand personality dimension supports several brand identity scholars who noted the important role brand personality plays when developing brand identity (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 1999, 2006; Kapferer, 2004). For

example, Aaker (1996a) outlined how brand personality results in a “a brand identity that is richer and more interesting than one based on product attributes” (p. 83) whilst de Chernatony’s (2006) noted how brand personality “brings the brand’s emotional values to life” (p.46). In a similar manner, Kapferer (2004) considered personality as a facet of his Brand Identity Prism while Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) argued that if a brand identity has been developed without personality it has been too narrowly conceived.

From a broader branding perspective, this finding appears to be at odds with authors such as Keller (2003) who argue the development of a brand personality for organisations operating in B2B markets tends to be less important than those in B2C markets. The reason being B2B organisations’ clients have, unlike consumer markets, comparatively fewer psychological and social needs (Keller, 2003). This finding also contests the view that emotionally influenced decisions are rare in industrial markets (de Chernatony and McDonald, 1998).

Conversely, the findings that brand personality is a dimension of service brand identity in the UK’s IT service sector supports an increasing body of knowledge which outlines the important role emotional aspects of branding play in B2B markets (Bennet et al., 2005; Blomback and Axelsson, 2007; Davis et al., 2007; Kotler and Keller, 2006b; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006b; Lamons, 2005; Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004, 2007; Malhotra, 2005). Consequently, when building brand identity, the brand strategist would be well served to build an emotional element into their identity which is made manifest via brand personality. This emotional element could take the form of trust, confidence, comfort (Kotler and Pfoertsch,

2006a), pride, peace of mind, security, reassurance, reputation or responsiveness (Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004)

Consequently, this finding adds credence to the brand identity literature which highlighted the salient role brand personality plays when building brand identity. The emergence of this dimension also highlights that when developing their brand identity, organisations operating in the UK IT Services sector should endeavour to create an emotional connection via the development of positive, favourable and unique brand personality associations.

6.3.4. Human Resource Initiatives

A new dimension that emerged from the data was labelled human resource initiatives. This factor consisted of one marketing culture and one client relationship management item. As the title indicates this factor was concerned with human resource activities, notably to administer training programs that provide employees with the skills to acquire and deepen client relationships in addition to monitoring employee performance on a regular basis. Although human resource initiatives had not been identified in the relevant literature as a dimension of brand identity, the content of this dimension reiterates the central importance employees play in service branding (Balmer, 1995; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Berry, 2000; Biel, 1993b; Bitner, 1990; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; Dall'Olmo Riley and de Chernatony, 2000; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Kennedy, 1977).

The first item, “Our employee training programs are designed to develop skills required for acquiring and deepening client relationships” was of particular note for several reasons. Initially, this item made explicit the critical role that investing in human resource initiatives such as training play in the brand identity building process at service organisations. Whilst not directly related to the brand identity literature, this supports the work of numerous scholars who noted the salient role human resource activities such as training play in promoting behaviour consistent with the brand’s values (de Chernatony, 2006; Farnfield, 1999; Heskett et al., 1997; Lovelock et al., 1999). With human resource initiatives playing an important part in building service brand identity, it is increasingly important that marketing and human resource departments develop stronger cross functional ties. This is consistent with the view that with corporate brands, whose branding structure tends to predominate in service markets, there is a greater need for functional alignment between marketing and human resource (Balmer, 1995; Davies and Chun, 2006; Davies et al., 2003; 1999, 2006; King, 1991; Wilson, 2001; Zeithaml et al., 2006). Additionally, this item elucidates the important role client / brand relationships play as part of the brand identity building process and so provides indirect support for several scholars’ work (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004). Finally, the language of the item alludes to the strategic nature of building service brand identity. This reinforces the view that branding identity building is a strategic and not tactical activity (Aaker, 1996a; de Chernatony, 2006).

In the context of the B2B literature, the importance of proactively managing human resource initiatives has been highlighted by several scholars. Davis et al. (2007) note that in the context of Keller’s (2003) brand equity conceptualisation, image played a more important brand

equity building role than awareness for B2B service brands. Based on this finding these scholars advise organisations to allocate greater resource to image supportive activities such as employee training as opposed to costly brand awareness exercises such as above the line advertising. This is consistent with the view clients make assessments on the company based on employees' skills, attitudes, behaviours and communication (Gordon et al., 1993) and that mass communication can be used to a much lesser extent in B2B than B2C markets (Ohnemus, 2009). Consequently, B2B brands would be wise to train their human resource so brand consistent behaviours can be inculcated and subsequently demonstrated when they interact with clients. The importance of employee training was specifically highlighted in the employee and client focus dimension of the scale (item 93). This places an emphasis on employee training which facilitates the acquisition and deepening of client relationships (cf; Section 6.3.5 for Employee and Client Focus). Taking a broader perspective, Beverland et al. (2007a) suggest B2B brands should develop internal brand ownership, or a brand supportive dominant logic, via reward, training and hiring policies, which again fall under the domain of human resource initiatives.

Consequently, the emergence of this dimension highlights how marketers who are responsible for building brand identity in service brands need to develop a more considered approach to human resource management. In particular, this relates to organising training that focuses on the development of client relationships in addition to regularly monitoring of employees' performance.

6.3.5. Employee and Client Focus

In a similar manner to the human resource initiatives, developing an employee and client focus was a new dimension to emerge from the data. As the title intimates, this factor consisted of items which paid particular attention to employees and clients' needs. It comprised of three client relationship management and two marketing culture items. Each component of the dimension will now be discussed in the context of the B2C and B2B literature.

The employee related element of the dimension was concerned with treating each member of staff as an essential part of the organisation. Developing such an employee focus in service organisations supports the work of numerous scholars who outlined the pivotal role employees' play in service brand delivery (Balmer, 1995; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Berry, 2000; Biel, 1993b; Bitner, 1990; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; Dall'Olmo Riley and de Chernatony, 2000; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Kennedy, 1977).

In terms of the B2B literature Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006a) consider *employees*, in addition to customers and the company as playing a central role in B2B brand success. The reason being employees help differentiate the brand, enhance the brand experience and facilitate reputation building due to the pivotal role they play in conveying the brand in B2B markets (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a). This point is consistent with Beverland et al. (2007a) who advocate those responsible for B2B brands actively engage organisational employees in the branding process. Adopting a broader perspective, Webster and Keller (2004) encourage a top down and bottom up approach to B2B brand building. This entails clear senior management direction and active employee involvement in the brand building process. Finally, the

emergence of an employee component in this dimension provides support for the view that employees play a central role building corporate brand equity at B2B brands (van Riel et al., 2005). This position aligns with the considerable body of knowledge highlighting the pivotal role employees play for corporate brands (Ashford and Mael, 1996; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2006; Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2009; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Hulberg, 2006; Kennedy, 1977; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2006).

The client related element of the dimension was concerned with helping clients in a responsive manner in addition to discovering and responding to their needs. Developing such a client focus is consistent with the marketing orientation literature (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990, Narver and Slater, 1990, Slater and Narver, 1994) which looks to foster a pan organisational mindset that focuses on meeting current and potential customers' needs. However, given this thesis' B2B focus, the language of 'clients' as opposed to 'customers' has been used although the same principles apply, that is, a concern for identifying and meeting customers needs that runs through the organisation. Indirectly, the importance of a client focus also provides support for the service dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a) which encapsulates the marketing orientation literature as part of its burgeoning paradigm (Section 2.3.1).

The client component of the employee and client dimension corroborates the view that clients form, as one would hope, an integral part of the B2B branding process. Kotler and Keller (2006a) contend the nature and complexity of B2B markets requires closer customer support vis-à-vis B2C goods or services where relatively little or no expertise is required. This

perspective is consistent with Beverland et al. (2007a) who advocate B2B brands adopt a customer focus whilst Golder and Tellis (1993) contend placing customers' wants and needs at the heart of B2B brands drives differential advantage.

In terms of the dimension overall, by considering both employees and clients this thesis' view on brand identity answers the call from the literature for a more balanced approach to service branding where both employees and customers / clients are considered as part of brand marketing initiatives (Balmer, 1995; Balmer, 2001b; Blackston, 1993; de Chernatony, 1999; de Chernatony et al., 2003; de Chernatony and Segal Horn, 2003; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Zeithaml et al., 2006).

Consequently, an employee and client focus that was not initially considered a distinct service brand identity dimension emerged from the data. The contents of this dimension highlight the need for organisations to be aware of and meet their clients' needs but also to appreciate the role employees' play in making their brand identity manifest.

6.4. Discarded Dimensions of Service Brand Identity

The conceptual framework chapter drew on a broad range of literature to explore the domain of service brand identity. As the previous sections outlined the construct consists of five dimensions. However, two dimensions, notably a marketing culture and client relationship management did not materialise from the data analyses.

6.4.1. Marketing Culture

Based on analyses conducted in the previous chapter (Section 5.3) a marketing culture dimension did not emerge from the data. Whilst this indicates a marketing culture is not a dimension of service brand identity several points should be noted. For example, the brand identity literature (de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004) outlined how ‘culture’ was a dimension of brand identity. However, the Theoretical Framework chapter (Section 3.7.2) noted how ‘culture’ is a category of constructs and not a construct per se with the former being unsuitable for scale development (DeVellis, 1991). Consequently, a marketing culture was justified as a dimension of brand identity with the rationale being provided in the Theoretical Framework chapter (Section 3.7.2). On one hand, support for these authors views’ (cf: de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004) may never have been achievable given the range of categories that fall under the term culture. However, even if these scholars meant *organisational* culture, this construct was encapsulated, albeit indirectly, within the domain of a marketing culture given the latter built on Deshpande and Webster’s (1989b) seminal organisational culture work. This only serves to strengthen the argument that a marketing culture is not a dimension of brand identity. Second, Webster’s (1993, 1995) marketing culture scale consisted of 34 items which spanned six dimensions. From a practical perspective it was unlikely, retrospectively, that a large enough number of items would emerge from the data in the form of a meaningful marketing culture dimension. Third, from the final 15 item scale, four items were sampled from the marketing culture domain. These items measured senior management’s commitment to service quality, the frequency of employee performance monitoring, the extent to which each employee was treated as an essential part of the organisation in addition to assessing how well the organisation responds to clients’ needs. The

relatively high number of marketing culture items indicates that whilst this construct did not form a dimension per se, this literature stream played a notable role in operationalising brand identity. Finally, other items that were tangentially related to the marketing culture literature were included in the final scale. For example, Webster's (1993, 1995) scale contained training related items. The final service brand identity scale also included a training item, albeit drawn from the domain of client relationship management.

Consequently, although a marketing culture dimension did not emerge from the data, to consider the development of a culture, which promotes more market-focused behaviours as unimportant to brand identity represents a cursory interpretation of the data. A more informed approach may be to consider marketing culture as an antecedent of brand identity as opposed to a dimension in its own right.

The identity literature tends to conceptualise culture as a dimension of its respective constructs (cf; de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). This position contrasts with other literature where culture is considered as an antecedent as opposed to a dimension for the focal construct of interest. For example, Orlando et al.(2009) outlined how organisational culture influences the types of psychological contracts employees wish to enter with their employing organisation. Bate (1984) highlighted how culture influences employee orientation to organisational change whilst Cabrera et al. (2001) noted how culture affects organisational process and behaviour in the context of technology driven change. The role of culture in driving innovation and creativity was outlined by Martins and Terblanche (2003) whilst Lok and Crawford (2004) found innovative and supportive cultures (in addition to a

considerate leadership style) had a positive effect on both job satisfaction and commitment. Informed by the logic underpinning this literature, it was considered appropriate to consider marketing culture as an antecedent of service brand identity and so potentially constitute part of the focal construct's nomological net (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955). As the conclusions chapter highlights (Section 7.6) exploring the nomological net for service brand identity could be considered an avenue for future research.

6.4.2. Client Relationship Management

Based on the analyses conducted in the previous chapter (Section 5.3) a client relationship management dimension did not emerge from the data. Consequently, this finding is at odds with several brand identity scholars who outline the important role relationships, which need to be managed, play in building brand identity. For example, Aaker (1996a) considers brand relationships as the “bottom line” (p. 103) when developing brand identity whilst Aaker and Joachimsthaler regard relationships as an integral part of the brand identity building process. In a similar manner, relationships represent a facet of Kapferer's (2004) identity prism whilst relationships underpin de Chernatony's (2006) brand identity conceptualisation.

The absence of a relational dimension is also at odds with several authors who note that relationships play a particularly important role in B2B markets (de Chernatony and McDonald, 1998; Ford et al., 2003; Kotler and Keller, 2006b; Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004; van Riel et al., 2005). These scholars views were grounded in the logic that the interpersonal (Kotler and Keller, 2006b) and complex (van Riel et al., 2005) nature of the buying process necessitates a

more relational approach. However, the findings from this data suggest relationships do not form a dimension of service brand identity.

However, to say the views of the above brand identity and service marketing scholars have limited value represents a fleeting interpretation of the analyses. In a similar manner to the marketing culture dimension, four of the 15 items in the final scale were drawn from the relationship management literature. Hence, the importance of considering a relational approach as part of brand identity building should not be underestimated. Furthermore, one of the human resource initiative items focuses on the importance of training employees in order to acquire and deepen client relationships. Whilst this item's primary focus or means was concerned with training, the objective or end was to "acquire and deepen" client relationship management. Consequently, the importance, albeit indirectly, of relationships is apparent.

A client relationship management dimension did not materialise from the data. Consequently, in a similar manner to a marketing culture, it may be more appropriate to consider the management of client relationships as a potential antecedent of service brand identity as opposed to a dimension in its own right given the salience of the construct's items in the final scale.

6.5. Does Service Brand Identity Have a Positive and Significant Impact On Brand Performance?

In order to address the fourth research question the theoretical framework chapter (Section 3.6) hypothesised:

H1: Service brand identity has a positive and significant influence on brand performance

As the Analysis chapter (Section 5.5.2) indicated, service brand identity had a positive and significant influence on brand performance. Consequently, the brand identity-performance hypothesis could not be rejected. There is no previous literature outlining the positive influence brand identity has on performance. Thus, this finding represents an original contribution to knowledge made by this thesis. However, unlike the earlier sections of this chapter concerned with construct dimensionality it is not possible to discuss this finding in the context of a previous body of knowledge. The only tangentially connected literature relates to brand equity where the positive influence on performance has already been established (Aaker, 1996b; Kim et al., 2003b; Park and Srinivasan, 1994). Consequently, it is hoped this finding provide both a platform and point of reference for subsequent brand identity-performance research.

The data analysis also highlighted the relatively equal factor loadings each service brand identity dimension had in the context of brand performance (Section 5.5.3). This indicated that, when considered in unison with brand performance, brand identity not only has a positive influence on performance but that the influence of each dimension is comparable. This gives rise to service brand identity being conceptualised as a balanced construct. Furthermore, when the balanced nature of the construct is considered in conjunction with the finding that all dimensions

are positively and significantly correlated this indicates service brand identity should be considered holistically and not atomistically. Such a logic follows that of de Chernatony (2006) who advocates a holistic approach to brand building.

6.6. Does the Service Brand Identity have Specific B2B Applicability?

Distinctions between B2B and B2C markets have been highlighted in the literature (de Chernatony and McDonald, 1998; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a). Conversely, some scholars outline how the characteristics of B2B and B2C markets are not necessarily mutually exclusive (Beverland et al., 2007a; Webster and Keller, 2004). Although the service brand identity framework was developed in a B2B market and with B2B markets in mind it is contended the latter group of scholar's position is particularly valid for several reasons.

The brand personality dimension encourages B2B brand marketers to look beyond functional values and incorporate more emotionally orientated values into service brand identity building initiatives. This draws directly on several scholars' work from the B2B literature who advocate such an approach (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a; Lannon, 1992; Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004). However, the use of personality and more emotional branding has also been advocated, and indeed originated, in the B2C literature (Aaker, 1995, 1997; Blackston, 1993; Fournier, 1998; Keller and Richey, 2006; Venable et al., 2005).

The consistent communication dimension entails coherent brand identity execution across the communications mix. Numerous scholars have outlined the important role communication plays when building brands in B2B markets (Bendixen et al., 2004; Blomback

and Axelsson, 2007; Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Gilliland and Johnston, 1997; Han and Sung, 2008; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a; Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004; Mudambi, 2002; Wren and Simpson, 1996). In a similar manner to the B2B literature a notable number of scholars have also outlined the important role brand related communications play in B2C markets (Kliatchko, 2005; Low, 2000; Reid, 2005; Reid et al., 2001; Schultz, 2006).

The visual identity dimension concerns making service brand identity more tangible and manifest via font, logo and other visual cues. The importance of visual imagery has been noted in both the B2C (Melewar and Saunders, 2000; Van den Bosch et al., 2006a; 2006b) and B2B literatures (Bendixen et al., 2004; Davis et al., 2007; Firth, 1997; Hutton, 1997; Jackson and Tax, 1995; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a; Mudambi et al., 1997; Shipley and Howard, 1993; Shrimp, 1993; van Riel et al., 2005; Walley et al., 2007). Consequently, the salience of the construct to brand building initiatives spans both literature streams.

The employee and client focus dimension encapsulates and elucidates the important role of these two stakeholder groups play when building service brand identity. The importance of both stakeholders has been found in both the B2B and B2C literature. In terms of the B2C literature, a concern for employees (Ashford and Mael, 1996; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2006; Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2009; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; de Chernatony and Cottam, 2008; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Hulberg, 2006; Kennedy, 1977; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2006) and customers (Baker and Sinkula, 1999; Baker and Sinkula, 2005b; Deng and Dart, 1994; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; 1996; Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Slater and Narver, 1994) has been highlighted. Similarly, the importance of employees (Beverland et al., 2007a;

Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a; van Riel et al., 2005; Webster and Keller, 2004) and clients / customers (Beverland et al., 2007a; Golder and Tellis, 1993; Kotler and Keller, 2006a) for B2B brands has been noted in the relevant literature.

The previous discussion highlighted how B2B and B2C overlap may exist when applying the service brand identity framework. Notwithstanding these points, elements of the framework could be regarded particularly pertinent in B2B markets. For instance, personal selling is considered especially important in B2B markets given the interpersonal and relational nature of the buying process (Bendixen et al., 2004; Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Davis et al., 2007; Lynch and de Chernatony, 2004; van Riel et al., 2005). Whilst not an item per se, the scale encourages brand marketers to consider *all* elements of the marketing communications mix, of which personal selling forms a part (item 107). When devising a communications strategy, several scholars (Bendixen et al., 2004; Han and Sung, 2008) advocate B2B marketers' consider all stakeholders that might influence a customer's perception. This point is considered as part of the consistent communications dimension (item 118) in addition to the employee and client focus dimension which encompasses three important stakeholder groups (employees, clients and senior management). Following Bendixen et al. (2004), Han and Sung (2008) note how B2B marketing communications focus on the organisation and not the various product lines given the extensive range most B2B organisations have. This is consistent with the scale which measures communication at the organisation and not individual service level (items 107 and 118).

In terms of human resource initiatives, the scale encourages those responsible for building service brand identity to equip employees with skills that facilitate the acquisition and deepening of organisation-client relationships via training (item 93). As the conceptual

framework chapter highlighted (Section 3.5.3) the relational nature of B2B purchases makes such a bond particularly important with client-facing employees playing a pivotal role in such relationships. The reason being client loyalty often lies with both the brand and the channel members employed to deal with clients (Quiston, 2004) . The salience of this ‘human factor’ is also made clear via employee element of employee and client focus dimension of the scale.

From a broader perspective, Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006a) note how B2B marketing requires a holistic approach. Whilst the discussion above makes reference to individual dimensions, it is clear that interactions exist which are represented by service brand identity network (Figure 29 The Service Brand Identity Network). For this reason the rationale underpinning the framework is considered consistent with that advocated in the B2B literature.

As the preceding discussion intimates, it may be an oversimplification to consider applicability of the service brand identity framework within B2B markets alone. Guided by this logic, adopting a position of degree and not absolutes may be more appropriate. The reason being it is conceivable all five dimensions have, to varying extents, applicability in a B2C service context. As the conclusions chapter highlights, exploring the magnitude or influence each of dimension in a range of markets provides a useful avenue for future research.

6.7. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the data analyses in the context of the literature. It has been structured by the four research questions outlined during the introductory chapter of this thesis.

The first section of the chapter built on the construct dimensionality established in the previous chapter to advance a service brand identity definition. This represented an augmentation of the preliminary definition developed in the literature review (Section 2.4.3) which was principally informed by the extant brand identity literature (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006). By incorporating dimensions that emerged from this service specific research into the literature based definition it was argued a specific *service* brand identity definition had been developed.

With the construct defined, the second section of the chapter elaborated on the first to discuss the domain of service brand identity which consisted of five dimensions. These were corporate visual identity, brand personality, consistent communications, human resource initiatives in addition to an employee and client focus. Of particular note was how the first three of these five dimensions, albeit with slightly shortened or amended forms, were expected to fall under the domain of service brand identity whilst human resource initiatives and employee and client focus were not. At this stage considering a marketing culture and client relationship management as potential antecedents of service brand identity as opposed to dimensions was noted due to the salience of these constructs' items in the final service brand identity scale. This section, by default, has also addressed the third research question insofar service brand identity measurement is the means to establishing the construct's dimensionality.

The penultimate section of the chapter discussed the positive and significant influence brand identity has on performance. At this stage the paucity of brand identity and performance research was acknowledged. Consequently, the brand equity and performance literature was

considered a suitable surrogate given the pioneering nature of this research's findings. At this stage the relatively equal influence each service brand identity dimension had on brand performance was also noted as were the correlated dimensions. This led to the position that service brand identity should be viewed as a holistic and balanced construct.

The final section of the chapter considered service brand identity framework applicability in the context of B2C and B2B markets. At this stage it was recommended the framework be considered in terms of degree and not absolutes. The reason being all dimensions of the framework may have, to varying extents, more or less applicability in either market. This was also highlighted as a potential avenue for future research.

Now that the analyses have been discussed in the context of the literature it is appropriate to draw conclusions from this research in the next chapter.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

7.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed data analyses in the context of the literature and was guided by the four research questions presented in the introduction. Consequently, the discussion was concerned with service brand identity definition, measurement, dimensionality in addition to assessing the construct's influence on brand performance.

The objective of this chapter is to draw conclusions from this research and is structured as follows. The opening section revisits the rationale and content of each chapter in order to consolidate the research. The next section outlines the theoretical contributions this research makes and is followed by managerial implications that materialise from this research. As with all research, limitations exist. These are acknowledged before avenues for future research are suggested. The final section of the chapter makes concluding remarks and reiterates this thesis' major contributions. Notably, that service brand identity is a multidimensional construct which has a positive and significant influence on performance in the UK's B2B IT services sector.

7.2. Thesis Review – Content and Rationale

At this stage in the thesis it is helpful to revisit the previous chapters in terms of content and rationale. The objective being to consolidate and unify this research before implications, limitations and avenues for future research are considered.

The introduction chapter provided the foundations for this research. This was achieved by outlining the research context and identifying a notable gap in the brand identity literature. The former is associated with growing practitioner and academic interest in research that explores the role brands play in driving business performance in addition to the paucity of B2B service-based research. The latter relates to the existing brand identity literature operating primarily in conceptual rather than empirical research domains whilst the generic nature of current frameworks does not accounting for a specific goods or service context. Guided by these issues four research questions were formulated which have underpinned this research:

- What is service brand identity?
- What are the dimensions of service brand identity?
- How do we measure service brand identity?
- Does service brand identity have a positive and significant impact on brand performance?

With the context of the research considered and research questions developed the next chapter reviewed the relevant literature. This helped clarify this thesis' interpretation of key

conceptual terms such as brand and identity (brand, corporate and organisational), highlight issues that exist with current brand identity frameworks and provide theoretical guidance with brand performance measurement. By reviewing the existing brand identity literature it was also possible to develop a preliminary service brand identity definition which provided parameters for exploring the domain of service brand identity in the theoretical framework chapter.

Grounded predominantly in the brand identity literature, the theoretical framework chapter enabled this research to progress in four ways. First, the theoretical framework helped bridge the literature review and the empirical research that followed. Second, it helped distil the relevant literature. Third, the framework informed and structured subsequent scale development by postulating a preliminary construct domain. Finally, the framework provided a conceptual apparatus that guided the overall research effort in pursuit of answering the research questions.

In order to test the theoretical framework, the methodology chapter outlined how the research instrument was developed and used to gather primary data. This process was primarily guided by the scale development (e.g. Churchill, 1979, Anderson and Gerbing, 1988a) and survey design (e.g. Dillman, 2000) literature. The result of this process was a postal survey being administered to senior executives at organisations offering IT services in the UK.

With data collection complete, data analysis could proceed. The analysis chapter outlined how a range of statistical techniques was employed to reveal service brand identity dimensionality and assess the psychometric properties of the scale. These analyses highlighted how service brand identity consisted of five dimensions. These were brand personality,

corporate visual identity, consistent communication, human resource initiatives in addition to developing an employee and client focus. Application of the scale demonstrated the positive and significant influence service brand identity had on brand performance in the UK's IT service sector. The balanced nature of the construct, in the context of brand performance, was also noted at this stage.

The next chapter discussed the data analysis in the context of the literature. To structure the discussion the four research questions presented in the introductory chapter were revisited. Initially, a service brand identity definition, which augmented the literature based definition with this research's empirical findings was presented. Next, the domain of service brand identity, and by default its measurement, in addition to the construct's influence on brand performance were discussed. Consequently, it was at this stage within the thesis that the original research questions were addressed.

Having revisited the overall structure of the chapter, the managerial and theoretical implications of this research, its limitations and outlining opportunities for future research can be considered.

7.3. Theoretical Contributions

Whetten (1989) encourages scholars to address six interrogatives when trying "to communicate the necessary ingredients of a theoretical contribution" (p. 490). The interrogatives of primary concern are *what*, *how* and *why*. *Who*, *where* and *when* are considered to a lesser

extent. *What* relates to the variables or constructs of interest. *How* is concerned with the relationships between constructs and brings sequence to the conceptualisation. *Why* relates to the underlying logic or justification linking the *what* and the *how*. *Who*, *where* and *when* are concerned with contextualising the research within a set of boundaries. Consequently, these six interrogatives will be used to structure the theoretical contributions this thesis has made.

7.3.1. The ‘What’ of a Theoretical Contribution

This research makes several original ‘*what*’ contributions. These relate to paradigm advancement, construct definition, measurement and dimensionality. Adopting a multidisciplinary approach and advancing the brand performance literature via the adoption of a balanced approach are also considered original theoretical contributions of this kind

Principally, this research has challenged and advanced the existing research paradigm (Kuhn, 1996). This specifically relates to the extant *brand* identity paradigm where more conceptually orientated models predominate (Aaker, 1996a; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; de Chernatony, 2006; Kapferer, 2004). For the first time, this research moves the *brand* identity research paradigm from a conceptual to an empirical domain in the form of a more specific construct, that is, service brand identity.

Guided by the earlier stages of the scale development literature, this thesis presented a preliminary service brand identity framework. This was subsequently augmented with theoretically grounded and empirically derived dimensions to define service brand identity.

This is the first study to define a *specific type of brand* identity cognisant of its research context informed by both theoretical and empirical considerations. This research context is also intended to be cognisant of a B2B service market, although this may be more suitably considered in terms of degree and not absolutes (cf: Section 6.6).

This study is the first of its kind to follow a rigorous and grounded approach to developing a parsimonious, valid and reliable service brand identity scale. However, the scale is a means to an end, with the end being the more significant contribution of revealing service brand identity dimensionality in the UK's B2B IT service sector. In simpler terms this relates to articulating what service brand identity is with a specific concern for a B2B service context. Guided by the domain sampling model and the existing scaling literature this research has, for the first time, empirically shown that, in the UK's B2B IT service sector brand identity is a second order construct comprising of five dimensions.

The literature review highlighted how theoretical schools of thought for brand identity have yet to be developed (Section 2.4.5). Consequently, to focus this thesis' theoretical contribution the rationale for supplementing the brand identity literature by drawing on the tenets of the corporate identity literature's interdisciplinary school (Abratt, 1989; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Birkigt and Stadler, 1986; Olins, 1978a; Van Riel, 1995) was provided (Literature Review Section 2.4.6). At this stage the overlap between the organisational identity literature and the behavioural tenet within the interdisciplinary school was also noted. Consequently, the domain of service brand identity, as outlined in the Theoretical Framework Chapter was grounded in the corporate, organisational and brand identity literatures. This approach has attempted to unify

the identity literature and reduce schisms that currently exist. Drawing on such an eclectic range of disciplines to dimensionalise service brand identity highlights the multidisciplinary approach this thesis' has adopted which extends previous brand identity research. For instance, the final scale draws on the semiology (Chandler, 2007; Noth, 1995); organisational studies (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991, Dutton et al., 1994, Gioia and Thomas, 1996, Gioia et al., 1998, Albert and Whetten, 1985), marketing culture (Webster, 1990, 1993, 1995), marketing communications (Cheney and Christensen, 1999, Markwick and Fill, 1997), relational (Sin et al., 2005b) and anthropomorphisation (Aaker, 1997; Freling and Forbes, 2005a,b) literatures. This approach also attempted to bridge the schism between the organisational, corporate and brand identity literature streams. This is considered an original contribution to knowledge because it is the first time academic research has unified the three previously discrete identity literature streams under the umbrella of service brand identity in the brand literature, let alone the B2B brand marketing literature.

Finally, it is contended this thesis makes a nascent theoretical contribution to the brand performance literature. By drawing on the financial, brand and human resource based literatures the aggregated performance measure employed in this research facilitated a more balanced approach to brand performance measurement (Ambler, 2003). Whilst it is appreciated the dimensionality of the brand performance was not psychometrically assessed, measuring brand performance in this tri-dimensional manner brings together previously discrete financial, brand and human resource literature streams and so makes a theoretical contribution to the literature in terms of articulating brand performance.

7.3.2. The 'How' of a Theoretical Contribution

'How' theoretical contributions are concerned with the relationships between constructs or variables (Whetten, 1989). From this perspective several points should be noted. Primarily, application of the service brand identity scale revealed the positive and significant influence the construct has on brand performance in the UK's IT service sector. This represents a original contribution to knowledge and is considered a preliminary step towards a theory of service brand identity and performance, that is, building service brand identity drives brand performance.

The scale was applied in the context of a holistic and balanced brand performance measure during this research. However, brand marketing researchers are now in a position to assess the influence service brand identity has on specific variables such as brand loyalty, brand awareness or premium pricing. Hence, the scale can be applied in more focused brand marketing research contexts than applied here. However, application of the scale for theoretical development should not be restricted to scholars conducting brand or marketing research. For example, human resource researchers could assess whether service brand identity has a positive influence on endogenous variables such as employee satisfaction or labour turnover. Similarly, those working in finance will be able to assess the extent to which service brand identity drives financially orientated metrics such as return on investment (ROI) or earnings before interest tax depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA). Consequently, the scale's application extends beyond brand related research.

The previous chapter indicated that service brand identity is a balanced (cf: relatively equal unstandardised factor loadings) and synergistic (cf: positive and significant correlations) construct. Therefore, based on the data (Section 5.5.1) and guided by previous literature (Section 3.7.3) it was considered more appropriate to reconceptualise brand identity as a holistic and integrated construct driven by symbiotic dimension relationships. This represents a paradigmatic shift from the piecemeal or list-like manner conceptualisation initially by the preliminary service brand identity framework (Section 3.4). By evolving from a list of boxes to a series of *relationships* between boxes the framework progressed into the domain of theory (Whetten, 1989). Figure 29 represents this thesis' reconceptualisation of service brand identity. This is referred to as the Service Brand Identity Network.

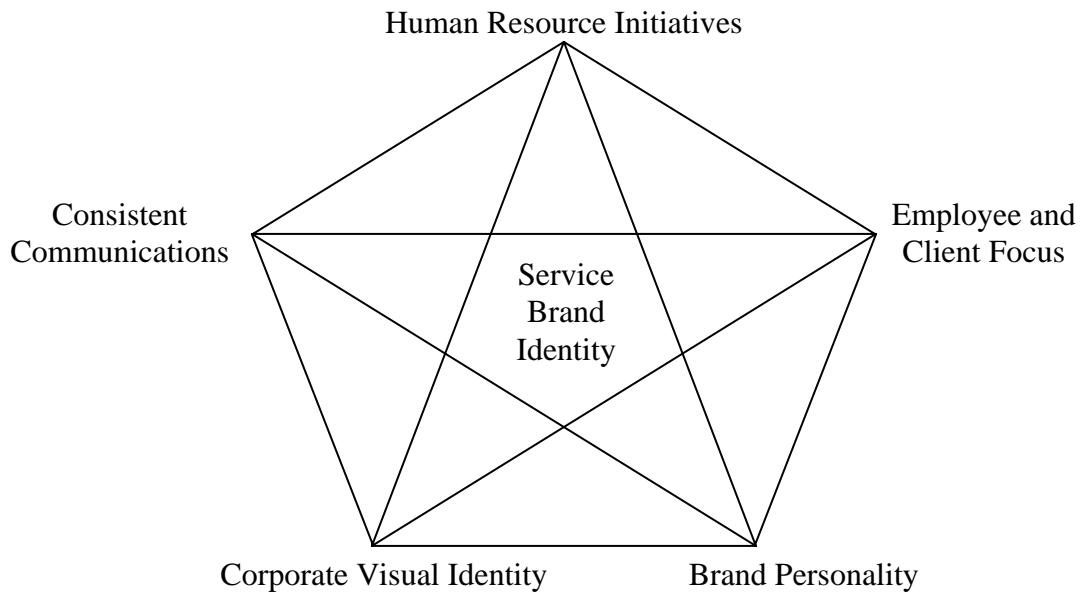


Figure 29 The Service Brand Identity Network

When considered in isolation the ideas expressed in this framework may be familiar to most marketers. However, it is argued this framework makes an original theoretical

contribution by postulating dimensions of service brand identity and bringing these dimensions together in a way that has not been done before.

Several points should be noted when service brand identity is conceptualised in this way. For instance, service brand identity is the central or higher order construct. The first service brand identity building step requires the brand strategist to articulate the vision he or she has for their brand. Not until this issue has been addressed can the brand strategist look to mobilise their vision via all five dimensions. Furthermore, service brand identity should be considered as a whole and not as parts. This logic is based on the positive / significant dimension correlations and relatively equal factor loadings that emerged from the data. The framework represents these dimension interactions along the perimeter and internal lines of the framework with the key point being that all dimensions interact with each other. This is consistent with the view that a holistic approach to brand marketing should be pursued in B2B markets (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006a). It is also important to appreciate the service brand identity framework integrates both internal (employees, managers) and external (clients, upstream members of supply chain) perspectives. This answers Alsem and Kosteljik's (2008) call for the marketing paradigm to follow strategy scholars such as Srivastava et al. (1998) and Sharma (1999) by reflecting internal and external orientations in their work as opposed to focusing on the former. Finally, a potential shortcoming of this framework may be the initial visual similarity it shares with Kapferer's (2004) identity prism. However, unlike Kapferer's (2004) prism, it is contended the inclusion of lines within the framework amplifies the importance of dimension interactions which Kapferer's (2004) prism does not appear to make. Similarly, Kapferer's (2004) framework has not been empirically validated.

Finally, the development of the service brand identity framework has been couched within the broader service dominant logic paradigm (Vargo and Lusch, 2004a). Whilst a central tenet of this burgeoning paradigm concerns the co creation of value (Lusch and Vargo, 2008; Vargo and Lusch, 2006) this research has dovetailed with several characteristics key to the service dominant ‘mindset’ (Lusch and Vargo, 2008), notably a primary concern for the exchange of intangibles, the predominant use of operant resources (competences or knowledge) and a relational focus. To the best of the author’s knowledge, this is the first time the brand identity literature has been considered in the context of this growing paradigm.

7.3.3. The ‘Why’, ‘Who’, ‘Where’ and ‘When’ of a Theoretical Contribution

The Theoretical Framework chapter (Section 3.6) provided the rationale for hypothesising that service brand identity drives brand performance (i.e. *why*). The *who*, *where* and *when* elements of Whetten’s (1989) work play a less pivotal role in terms of this thesis’ theoretical contributions. However, executive level research (i.e. *who*), tends to be sparse given the issues surrounding access and adequate response rates (Cycyota and Harrison, 2002, 2006). Similarly, the paucity of B2B service branding research has been noted in the literature (Roberts and Merrilees, 2007). This research can be regarded as making a novel theoretical contribution to this field in terms of the *where*.

7.4. Managerial Implications

The previous section of this chapter outlined the theoretical contributions this research has made. A number of managerial implications materialise which will now be discussed.

7.4.1. Dimensions of Service Brand Identity

Before managers can build and manage service brand identity they need to know what dimensions make the construct manifest. This research provides clear guidance on what constitutes service brand identity (dimensions) and what activities (items) comprise those dimensions. Consequently, as a result of understanding what brand identity is, when managers embark on a service brand identity building programme they need to bear in mind a broad range of activities. Considering brand identity as being synonymous with visual identity alone would be an oversimplification. Therefore, in *no particular order* (due to the relatively equal factor loadings) managers need to pose and find answers to questions such as: Are we focusing adequately on our employees' and clients' needs? What type of brand personality do we wish to develop? How consistent is our marketing communications? How can we use the font, logo and other visual identity aids as part of our overall brand identity? What human resource initiatives do we have in place to support our desired brand identity? Consequently, the framework's dimensionality provides managers with the conceptual apparatus to delineate service brand identity whilst the underlying scale provides managers with specific activities to structure and mobilise their early thoughts around each dimension.

7.4.2. The Nature of Service Brand Identity

When building service brand identity, managers need to consider the symbiotic and balanced nature of the construct. The positive and significant dimension correlations indicate how dimension symbiosis exists. Whilst such correlations highlight how dimensions synergistically ‘feed’ off one other it is important managers consider the adverse effect of correlated dimensions. The reason being a neglected brand identity dimension could act as a millstone and burden other dimensions. It is also important managers acknowledge, in the context of driving brand performance, that each dimension makes a positive, significant and relatively *equal* contribution to making the brand identity manifest. This implies service brand identity is a balanced construct where each dimension should receive equal attention and resource. Consequently, more informed brand managers will adopt a holistic rather than atomistic brand identity approach due to the construct’s synergistic and balanced properties. Therefore, those responsible for managing service brand identity need to carefully orchestrate all five dimensions to drive brand performance. This calls for managers to plan for the sum and not just the parts when building service brand identity.

7.4.3. Service Brand Identity Audit

The scale can be used by managers as a brand identity audit or diagnostic tool. Such an approach brings several benefits. For instance, using the scale in this way enables brand managers to answer the rudimentary question of “where are we now?” by assessing their current brand identity profile. Also, by identifying the current identity profile managers can assess how

far away they are from their desired service brand identity, or, in other words ‘where would we like to be?’ Figure 30 conceptualises these two points by illustrating how a hypothetical organisation needs to improve all areas of its service brand identity management if it is to reach its desired profile and in particular develop more of an emotional connection by developing a unique, positive and strong brand personality.

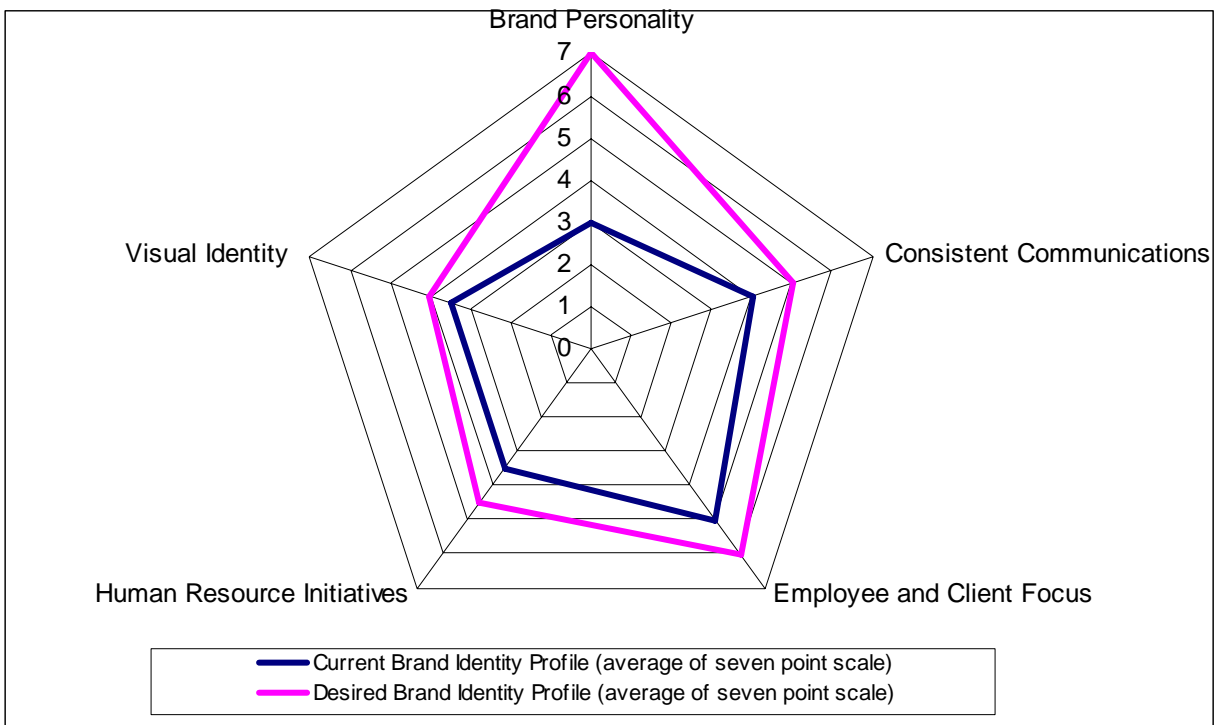


Figure 30 Profiling Brand Identity – An Illustrative Example

By using the scale in a diagnostic manner, managers will be able to track service brand identity dimension movements over time. This allows those responsible for brand marketing to develop an understanding of how employees perceive the organisation’s brand identity. Such longitudinal research can then provide a starting point for objectively-based corrective action such as internal marketing to raise levels of service brand identity and awareness.

Consequently, the scale can be used to explore the organisation’s current brand identity profile

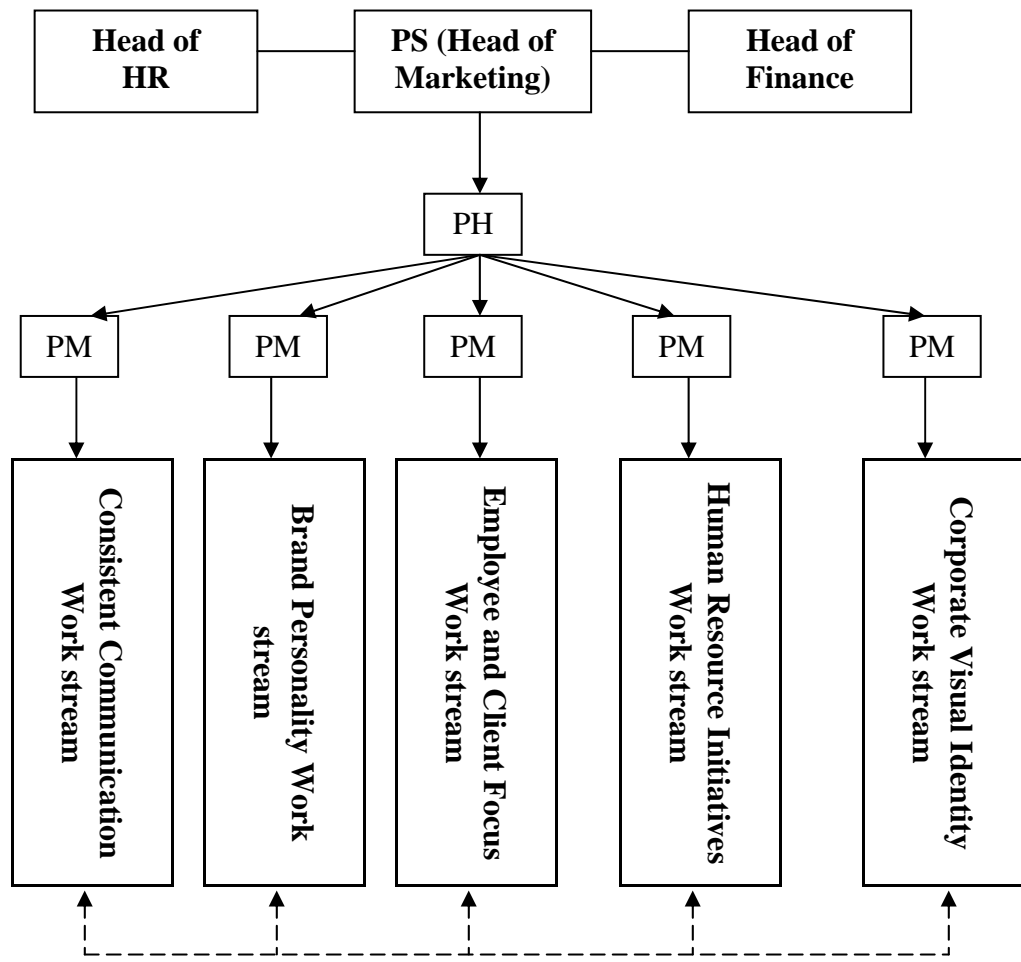
in the context of strategic objectives whilst providing an impartial foundation for brand identity change. The parsimony of the scale is intended to facilitate such practical applications.

The previous section outlined how the scale could be used to audit an organisation's service brand identity. However, such an approach could be regarded as introspectively focused. Potentially, a third party that specialises in brand measurement could independently track brand identity profiles for key brands. This would allow the organisation to benchmark their brand identity management against its competitors. However, obtaining such benchmark data could be problematic. For instance, measurement would need to take place on the assumption that all organisations consider brand identity in a similar way so comparisons could be made. This could be counter productive given brands (Hoeffler and Keller, 2003b) and more specifically brand identity (Ghodeswar, 2008) aim to differentiate an organisation's offer.

7.4.4. Brand Identity Implementation

In order to implement brand identity managers should, amongst other things, consider organisational structure, human resource implications and management of change.

When building service brand identity, senior managers need to ensure they have a suitable structure in place to allocate and marshal resources effectively. Figure 31 provides a potential, albeit somewhat simplified, example.



- PS Head of Marketing / Service Brand Identity Sponsor
- PM Programme Manager
- PH Programme Head
- ↔ Formal Line of Command
- - - Task Force
- ↔ Daily communication

Figure 31 Potential Organisational Structure for Implementing Service Brand Identity

Initially, work streams for each service brand identity dimension should form a programme of work. Each programme of work requires a programme manager who is a

member of the (brand) marketing department. This programme manager is responsible for the management of all work streams within that dimension ranging from strategic to operational issues. Whilst Figure 31 may appear somewhat bureaucratic, it should be noted daily communication between members of each programme of work should be encouraged to facilitate activity alignment and consistent service brand identity execution. This is indicated by the dotted line between each programme of work. For instance, those responsible for consistent communications should ensure their work conveys the visual identity and brand personality in accordance with colleagues' views from the relevant departments. This is intended to bring the holistic nature of service brand identity to life in an operational way as was indicated by the previous analysis (Table 38).

Next, a task force should be formed comprising of all programme managers that report to a programme head who has overall responsibility for managing the task force. The task force needs to attend all service brand identity related meetings, irrespective of dimension focus, to ensure a group of people have, at all times, an overview of service brand identity building activities. Finally, this task force programme head should report to the head of (brand) marketing, or another marketing project sponsor that has board level access, to ensure the execution of each programme is consistent with the desired and envisioned service brand identity. If information needs to be communicated to the service brand identity team it should be disseminated via the programme head to the programme managers who in their turn share the information within their allocated dimension with intra-dimension employee communication on more operationally-orientated issues being encouraged as outlined above. By adopting this approach the task force should have an overall view of each service brand identity dimension

work stream whilst being in regular contact, via the programme head, with the ultimate brand identity sponsor. The project sponsor should also collaborate closely with other departmental heads to ensure strategic and functional alignment. For illustrative purposes, Figure 31 refers to HR and Finance due to the pivotal role they play in service brand identity development and measurement respectively. This should not imply marketers should not communicate with other departmental heads who may have accountability for other areas such as quality compliance or procurement for example.

This structure should not be regarded as temporary, but as an ongoing strategic activity where the work stream deliverables are fine tuned in accordance with the desired service brand identity. It is appreciated that in smaller organisations this type of mildly bureaucratic structure may not be appropriate. However, similar principles apply insofar senior management should allocate work streams in line with dimensions in addition to establishing clear channels of communication and accountability between those delivering the tasks and senior management. Finally, this structure should not operate in a vacuum. As the brand performance section of the conceptual framework chapter highlighted, a balanced approach to service brand identity management is advocated by this research. This necessitates strong cross functional ties between the project sponsor and his or her equivalent within finance and human resources department to facilitate functional alignment. Consequently, Figure 31 could be extended to incorporate a dotted line between the project sponsors his or her finance and human resource peers.

From a service brand identity implementation perspective, several human resource-related managerial implications arise from this research. The reason being human resource initiatives constitute a dimension of brand identity in addition to employees forming a salient

component of another dimension which were labelled employee and client focus. Whilst marketing and human resource functional overlap is common for service brands (Gronroos, 1984; Heskett, 1987), human resource managers tend to be comparatively unaware of strategic marketing activities (Harris and Ogbonna, 2001). Consequently, if organisations opt to build a service brand identity as guided by the above framework, it is crucial service brand marketers take the initiative to build stronger cross functional ties with their human resource colleagues. Adopting this approach provides support for Webster's (1992) view where marketing decisions will be increasingly related to other functional areas. More specifically, brand marketers should encourage human resources to recruit individuals who hold values consistent with the desired service brand identity. The reason being values inform behaviour (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Rokeach, 1973). Recruiting potential employees with brand-congruent values should help propagate the desired brand identity. Identification of values can potentially be obtained via group based exercises, in depth interviews and psychometric profiling. However, the importance of marketing and HR alignment does not end with recruitment. Indeed, the vision for the organisation's brand (i.e. service brand identity), should be conveyed to all new employees as part of their induction. Furthermore, the five brand identity dimensions should act as the basis for new and current employee training so that employees' skills sets continue to support the desired service brand identity. For example, graphic designers may need training on how to deliver a consistent brand experience across emerging media platforms (cf: visual identity). Additionally, to encourage behaviour that is consistent with the desired service brand identity it is important reward and employee behaviour are aligned. This position is consistent with Ginsburg and Miller (1992) who argue for the value employees deliver to be assessed through reward. Similarly, Bostrom and Isberg (2009) noted how for corporate brands there should be

consistency between employee performance evaluation and behaviour. Demonstrating brand identity-consistent behaviour is particularly important for service brands and could be monitored via questions such as “Please provide examples of when you have focused on meeting our clients’ needs? How have your behaviours supported our [trait] brand personality?” at annual performance reviews. Consequently, if organisations aim to implement and manage a brand identity as guided by the above framework it is crucial brand marketers build strong working relationships with their human resource colleagues. Such relationships will allow brand marketers to proactively engage in human resource initiatives that support the desired service brand identity ranging from recruitment to performance appraisal. The development of such cross functional ties calls for senior managers to recruit and train marketers so they develop a deeper understanding of human resource initiatives at their organisation with vice versa applying. This point is consistent with the view that for corporate brands, which predominate in service markets, functional alignment between marketing and human resources is particularly important (Balmer, 1995; Davies and Chun, 2006; Davies et al., 2003; de Chernatony, 1999, 2006; King, 1991; Wilson, 2001; Zeithaml et al., 2006).

If managers move towards a more metric-based branding approach, resistance to such a change may materialise from some employees. The reason being measurement equates to accountability. For example, if human resource initiatives or visual identity consistently score poorly on the scale they may be prioritised for corrective action. Hence, managers would be well served to consider informed human resource strategies that facilitate change such as involvement, participation, delegation and so forth. At a more fundamental level, such change may require a senior management effort to inculcate values consistent with a measurement

culture so such behaviour can take root within the organisation. Once more, recruitment, training and appraisal play a crucial role in mobilising and reinforcing this change.

7.4.5. Service Brand Identity and Brand Performance

The previous chapter highlighted the positive and significant influence service brand identity has on performance. This empirical finding supports the anecdotal and intrinsically appealing notion that service brand identity drives brand performance. Consequently, by investing in brand marketing activities that span all five service brand identity dimensions, organisations should experience enhanced brand performance.

Whilst some managers may wish to assess which dimensions of brand identity have the most significant impact on performance and then allocate resources accordingly, such an approach is not advocated here for the reasons outlined above. Notably, service brand identity is a highly symbiotic, and in the context of performance, balanced construct. By focusing on certain dimensions at the expense of others, managers may fail to capitalise on the construct's synergistic characteristics. Whilst in isolation a given dimension may not have a positive influence on performance it may be positively correlated with all other dimensions which creates an argument for considering this dimension (cf: Hair et al, 1998). Consequently, as outlined earlier, to maximise brand performance a holistic management approach is advocated.

7.4.6. Nature of Measuring Brand Performance

Managers responsible for predominantly service-based brands would be well served to take a balanced approach to brand performance measurement. This approach encompasses, but is not limited to financial, brand and employee based measures. Whilst financial measures are useful for analysing previous activities they are retrospective and brand managers cannot be guided by history alone. Conversely, brand related measures are strategically orientated and provide an indication of future cash flows (Ambler, 2003). Employee based measures are particularly relevant to service brands due to the pivotal role employees play in service brand delivery (Ashford and Mael, 1996; Balmer, 1995, 1998; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Berry and Seltman, 2007; Brodie et al., 2009; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2004; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Hulberg, 2006; Kennedy, 1977). Consequently, such an approach can be considered ‘balanced’ from three perspectives. One relates to the use of hard (financial) and soft (brand / employee) metrics, another concerns internal (employee) and external (brand and financial) measures whilst the final element relates to short (financial) and long term (brand / employee measures). This position is consistent is broadly consistent with de Chernatony and Cottam’s (2008) advice, who when discussing measurement at financial service brands, note “managers are advised to avoid this trap [i.e. focusing purely on financial measures] by ensuring their organisational goals encompass a variety of both soft and hard, short- and long-term targets, reflecting a more holistic approach to organisational success” (p. 20). As a result of taking a broader, balanced and more strategic approach to brand performance measurement service brand managers can develop deeper market insights than if shorter term financial measures were used in isolation.

Whilst this research advocates a balanced approach, the metrics that have been employed during this research should not be considered a panacea. Organisations will require, at differing moments in time, contextually relevant measures that align with their organisation's strategy and objectives (Ambler, 2000b, 2003). This is consistent with Aaker (1996b) who outlines how different measures work for different organisations. Consequently, the decision to use certain metrics should be guided by a balance of practicality and organisational objectives.

7.4.7. Strategic Marketing

The final managerial implication relates to broader strategic issues surrounding service brand identity. For example, application of the scale may reveal a given organisation scores consistently well with regards to its brand personality. This could provide a platform for an organisation to reach out to their clients with a strong emotional message as the basis for brand differentiation. Such an emotionally orientated differentiation could be utilised and built upon in subsequent brand marketing activities or even brand extensions. Consequently, once an organisation understands its service brand identity profile via application of the scale, managers could use these findings to dovetail the brand identity building effort with broader strategic marketing initiatives. Finally, in terms of broader portfolio management, organisations could use the scale to identify the extent to which certain SBUs are aligned with the wider organisational perception of brand identity. Once established, this could provide the basis for corrective action in the form of recruitment, training or performance appraisal.

7.5. Limitations

The opening section of this chapter revisited the content and rationale for the preceding chapters. The theoretical contributions and managerial implications of this research were then outlined. As with all research, limitations exist which should not be ignored (DeVellis, 1991). Consequently, potential limitations of this research will now be discussed in two parts. The first group of limitations relates to brand identity, brand performance and brand identity-performance whilst the second is concerned with research philosophy and methodological issues.

7.5.1. Brand Identity, Brand Performance and Brand Identity-Performance

The analysis chapter highlighted how service brand identity is a multidimensional construct which has a positive and significant influence on brand performance in the UK's B2B IT services market. Figure 32 highlights how this research has focused on the UK's B2B IT services market.

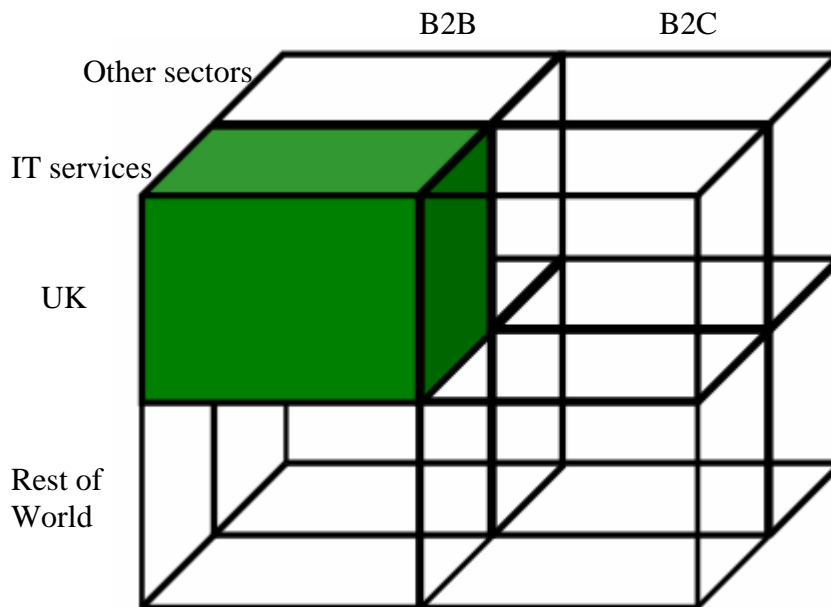


Figure 32 Conceptualising the Research Context

However, further research in other sectors is needed before these findings can be generalised to other contexts (markets, sectors or countries). Questioning the plausibility of generalising this research’s findings is consistent with Leone and Shultz (1980) who outline the elusive nature of marketing generalisations by noting “There are no universal generalizations in marketing” (p. 12). Consequently, caution should be exercised if these findings are generalised beyond the UK’s B2B IT services sector.

In terms of the scale, the Analysis chapter (Section 5.4.3.4) highlighted how a potential brand personality and consistent communications discriminant validity issue may exist. However, as Section 5.4.3.4 outlined there is no theoretical reason for assuming these two constructs are not distinct but that the issue may lie with the items used to scale them. Furthermore, two other tests provided empirical evidence that the two constructs are discrete.

Consequently, guided by theoretical and empirical rationale, this issue was acknowledged but considered a minor discriminant validity problem.

The scope of the final service brand identity scale could also be considered quite restricted. For example, functional aspects of brand (Barwise and Meehan, 2004; de Chernatony, 2006; Jones, 2000) have not been considered. These could relate to the more practical elements of service brand delivery such as consistency, responsiveness, meeting service level agreements and so forth. Whilst such elements may not form an explicit part of service brand identity, an organisation's inability to effectively manage such 'hygiene' factors could escalate and prevent clients from experiencing the more emotional aspects the brand is built around if they are to disengage from the branding process at an early stage. For example, a software development house associated with quality and sophisticated functionality could soon harm such an association if its software continuously froze and clients could not obtain prompt support.

From a brand performance measurement perspective, it should be acknowledged the subjective and summed approach employed by this research has inherent limitations. Whilst previous literature highlights the strong association between objective and subjective measures (Dawes, 1999; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Pearce et al., 1987; Robinson and Pearce, 1988; Venkatraman and Ramanujam, 1986) subjective scales are particularly susceptible to Type I errors which can artificially inflate responses (Cano et al., 2004). In terms of a summed performance measure, aggregation can result in less precise population estimates due to smaller standard errors (Iacobucci et al., 2007). Furthermore, Jarvis et al (2003) noted summed measures can result in "inconsistent structural estimates of the relationships between the construct and other latent constructs because it ignores the effect of measurement error" (p.

202). Whilst the logic for employing a subjective and summed approach was provided (Sections 4.5.5.1 and 4.5.5.2 respectively) the brand identity-brand performance finding should be couched within the context of these specific limitations.

B2B markets formed the secondary context of this research. However, the literature used to ground this research was based on B2C research given the paucity of B2B (Han and Sung, 2008), let alone B2B services branding literature (Davis et al., 2007; Roberts and Merrilees, 2007). This may raise questions about the suitability of the literature used to ground the conceptual framework (Chapter 4) given the unique characteristics of B2B markets (Cretu and Brodie, 2005; Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006b). However, this approach was grounded in the logic of Elaboration Theory (Lee, 1999) which involves the application and extension of existing theory in new settings or contexts. Adopting this approach is consistent with Webster and Wind (1972) who suggested modifying consumer research models for the business to business sector. Given this background, the paucity of B2B literature available to ground this thesis' framework was regarded as causing a limitation as opposed to the approach itself.

The literature review highlighted the positive influence each dimension, within the domain of brand identity, had on brand performance. However, two of these five dimensions did not emerge from the data. This could question the theoretical roots of this hypothesis given 'like and like' are not being compared.

In terms of brand identity-performance, these research findings imply causality from the latter to the former. However, this can only be inferred but not unequivocally stated as longitudinal data was not used. As a result, this research, strictly speaking, poses the question of

“Does an increase in service brand identity enhance brand performance or vice versa?”

Consequently, the results provided here cannot be regarded as proof of causality but as lending preliminary empirical support for potential brand identity → performance causality.

Furthermore, the statistical nature of the results still prevents managers from addressing key board level issues that plague marketing professionals. For example, what level of return will be delivered from a given level of service brand identity investment?

Finally, it could be argued several of the measures used in this research, with the exception of customer satisfaction, are organisational and not client centric. Metrics that measure how effective the organisation has been at helping clients save time, money or effort in addition to simplifying the decision making process may be more insightful (Mitchell, 2007). The majority of the measures employed in this research tend to be concerned with the organisation’s needs and so can be considered somewhat narcissistic (Mitchell, 2008a,b) . Do net profit, market share (by revenue), loyalty and brand awareness *really* matter to clients? This approach, paradoxically, mitigates the cornerstone of the marketing discipline in the form of the marketing concept which has an overriding need of meeting customers’ needs. Wouldn’t it be better to measure the cause (e.g. time saved) and not the effect (e.g. net profit)?

7.5.2. Research Paradigm and Methodology

Several limitations materialise as a result of the research paradigm adopted and methodology employed. For example, the current research approach has resulted in a predominantly deterministic service brand identity framework. Such an ontological position fails

to account for the interactive nature of brand where consumers do things *with* brands (Lannon, 1992). This view echoes Holt (2002) who considered brand in an iterative and dialectical context and those of Vargo and Lusch (2007; 2004a) where value is co-created. However, the framework developed here fails to account for this plausible perspective. Furthermore, the positivistic position adopted by this research has inherent philosophical limitations. For instance, it is debatable if observations that are not 'theory laden' be made (Connelly, 2004; Gill and Johnson, 2002) whilst it is doubtful whether reality is external to the mind, objective and measurable (Hudson and Ozanne, 1998). Similarly, the plausibility of imposing the external logic of natural science laws on social science phenomena *who* have their own internal logic and decision making processes is contentious (Gill and Johnson, 2002). Finally, considering human beings as passive or reactive to a given stimulus could be considered somewhat unrealistic (Hudson and Ozanne, 1998). As Gill and Johnson (2002) note "People perceive, interpret and attach meaning to various stimuli they might experience." (p. 62). Consequently, the philosophical assumptions that underpin this research could be challenged on a number of epistemological, ontological and axiological grounds.

From a methodological perspective, this research may have benefited from employing qualitative methodologies at certain stages. For example, a qualitative stage could have been used to generate additional items when sampling the domain of service brand identity. Adopting this approach could potentially have reduced measurement error. As Ping (2004) notes "...focus groups can reveal the specific language the study population uses to communicate regarding these constructs. This information is then used to improve the phrasing of the item stems, and thus reduce measurement error." (p.134). Consequently, adopting such an approach

would have facilitated more accurate instrument calibration. However, this step was not taken for the reasons outlined earlier in this thesis (Section 4.4.2). Notably, epistemological concerns surrounding this element of Churchill's (1979) paradigm in addition to the large number of items (n=119) that had already been culled from existing scales and literature which may have affected the quality and quantity of expert panel response. Finally, whilst the process followed in this research is largely consistent with the existing scaling literature (DeVellis, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2003), it is debatable if quantitative methods alone can really provide insightful findings. As Blackston (1993) outlines:

“In the development of scales via Factor Analysis, for example, outlying statements are systematically eliminated; what remains are statements which represent a sort of lowest common denominator. Using this process, we must often discard the very things that would allow us to see what makes a brand really different or unique.”

(p. 114)

Hence, by using only quantitative methods some research richness may have been lost.

Finally, from a sampling perspective, a list of all UK based IT service organisations could not be obtained. These included sole traders, organisations missing from the sampling frame. Such coverage 'error' (Dillman, 2000) or sample selection bias may compromise population inferences (Tomaskovic-Devey et al., 1994). However, it is contended here this is a practical limitation that all research operates within.

Consequently, it can be seen how several limitations surround this research. However, these should not detract from the significance of the findings but provide a platform for future research.

7.6. Future Research

The opening section of this chapter reviewed the content and rationale of previous chapters to consolidate this research. The theoretical and managerial contributions made were discussed with potential limitations being highlighted. The final section of this chapter will explore opportunities for future research.

The service brand identity scale provides the platform for longitudinal studies within the same research context (sector, market and country). In terms of service brand identity dimensionality, such replicative studies would enable researchers to assess the stability of the proposed scale and whether service brand identity is a balanced construct as this research has indicated. Furthermore, subsequent research could explore whether cultural and relational items form a notable part of the final scale as they have done in this study. This would reveal whether such constructs can be considered antecedents of service brand identity as highlighted in the Discussion chapter (Section 6.4). Such research would facilitate a deeper understanding of the focal construct's, that is, service brand identity's nomological net (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955). Longitudinal studies could also determine service brand identity and brand performance causality and so establish if the former drives the latter. Consequently, longitudinal research would overcome several limitations of this study (Section 7.5).

Scholars may also wish to broaden the scope of this research by looking to replicate the findings beyond the current research context. The reason being replication of empirical research plays an important role in developing robust and generalisable brand marketing explanations (Kocak et al., 2007). Figure 32 (p. 355) conceptualised this research as being focused on IT services organisations operating in the UK B2B markets (dark cube). This context could be extended in a number of combinations along sector, market or country dimensions via application of the service brand identity scale. This relates to different cubes within Figure 32. By replicating the findings, small steps towards the holy grail of marketing ‘generalisations’ may be taken. This approach is consistent with Leone and Schultz (1980) who note:

“replication is the key to generalization for without it, in the broadest sense, we have no corroboration of research results. We are left with one-shot studies that represent historical facts. Only by extending findings to other data sets do we perceive the generality of marketing relationships” (p. 15).

Hence, replication of the current study in different research context is regarded as a step towards assessing the generalisability of the scale’s dimensionality and the service brand identity–performance effect. Simultaneously, such research would assess the extent to the current service brand identity definition generalises to other sectors as a result of the dimensions that emerged from the data. However, it is crucial subsequent research validates the scale using exactly the same procedures. The same exploratory factor and structural equation modelling estimation methods should be used given the range of findings different estimation methods produce.

Within the organisational identity literature calls have been made (Brown et al., 2006), and to an extent, small steps been taken, to initiate debate surrounding organisational and corporate identity literature cross fertilisation (Balmer, 2008; Cornelissen et al., 2007; He and Mukherjee, 2009b). However, no such steps have been taken within the brand identity literature. As a result, subsequent brand identity scholars could look to adopt, as this research has done, a more multidisciplinary approach which draws on both the organisational and corporate identity literatures. This may result in an end for the brand identity orphan and provide a fruitful ground, and indeed encouragement, for subsequent theoretical brand identity development that is interdisciplinary in nature.

In order to develop this research, future studies could control mediating variables as part of the structural model. Following the strategy literature, potential variables could include organisational structure (Burns and Stalker, 1961), resources (Barney, 1991), regulatory restrictions (Denison and Mishra, 1995) and industry structure (Porter, 1980). Incorporating such variables into the model would allow researchers to assess the stability of the scale and the influence service brand identity has on brand performance under a range of conditions. It would also create a more realistic context for the model to be estimated within.

This research has developed a model which provides adequate levels of data fit (cf: Hu and Bentler, 1995; Browne and Cudeck, 1993). However, within the structural equation modelling literature alternative models may provide equally acceptable fit (Bollen, 1989). An alternative model may consider dimension causality. Consequently, considering the relationship between service brand identity dimensions could provide a fruitful avenue for future research. For example, do consistent communications help transmit brand personality? Do human

resource initiatives feed into or facilitate an employee and client focus? Currently it is unclear if the dimensions are related in this causal way. If such relationships are explored it is essential they are grounded in theory to prevent the findings from capitalising on data set chance (Byrne, 2001; MacCallum, 1995; MacCallum et al., 1992; Markland, 2007). Identifying such causality would help managers sequence the development of their brand identity building programmes and understand the formative drivers of service brand identity.

Whilst the research has focused on service brand identity scale development, subsequent research could develop a valid, reliable and parsimonious brand performance scale. Consistent with the logic that has guided this research, a more balanced approach to brand performance measurement is advocated. Consequently, such research would build upon Ambler's (2003) view who encouraged the use of financial, brand and employee based measures and the logic that no single measure fully captures the depth of brand performance (Lehmann et al., 2008). In a similar manner to service brand identity the causality of brand performance could also be causally explored. For example, do employee measures drive both brand and financial performance with brand also driving financial measures? Figure 33 conceptualises this approach which Ittner and Larcker (2003) refer to as Value Driver Maps. Please note, consistent with the scaling literature, each dimension would have multiple indicators.

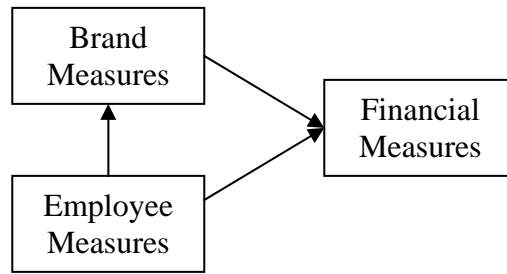


Figure 33 Brand Performance – Illustrative Example of a Value Driver Map

Consequently, this kind of research answers Farris et al.’s (2008) call for marketers’ to explore relationships that exist between metrics and follows other scholars equity-based metric research that outlined dimension causality (Lehmann et al., 2008; Netemeyer et al., 2004). Hence, in a similar manner to service brand identity, a more informed research approach would explore relationships, and not just correlations, that exist between brand performance dimensions. Such research would enable managers to focus on cause (e.g. brand or employee) and not just effect (e.g. finance) metrics. Furthermore, by understanding relationships that exist between brand performance dimensions, managers could obtain a glimpse of the business’s progress before financial measures are announced (Ittner and Larcker, 2003). This would place marketers’ in a stronger position to anticipate and take pre-emptive action against the deterioration of ‘effect’ measures or at worst explain why such results have materialised and what corrective action is planned. For example, if financial performance has deteriorated, managers could look at which indicator(s) within the brand or employee dimensions have experienced the largest decline. Such indicators could then be prioritised in order to drive financial measures. Consequently, a sequential structure may exist between the core dimensions of brand performance that subsequent researchers may wish to explore.

Scholars such as Burmann and Riley (2008) suggest the need for brand identity and image to be aligned. The logic being a brand that is aligned or in synchrony with its target audiences should perform better than one that is not. As a validated measure of brand identity has been developed by this research, such work can potentially proceed. However, due to the internal orientation of the service brand identity scale, existing items would need to be rephrased in a client focused brand image way. Table 45 illustrates this point for the employee and client focus dimension.

Table 45 Rephrasing Service Brand Identity Items as Brand Image Items

Current ‘brand’ side scale items (Brand Identity)	Proposed ‘client’ side scale items (Brand Image)
Our employees will help clients in a responsive manner	→ <brand X> helps clients in a responsive manner
Our organisation makes an effort to discover our clients' needs	→ <brand X> makes an effort to discover our needs
Our organisation responds to our clients' needs	→ <brand X> responds to our needs
Our top management is committed to providing quality service	→ <brand X’s> top management is committed to providing quality service
Our organisation treats each employee as an essential part of the organisation	→ <brand X> treats each employee as an essential part of the organisation.

If this research is pursued several issues must be considered. For instance, when current service brand identity items are rephrased in this way, participants external to the organisation may not be able to answer some questions. The final question from Table 45 illustrates this point. Furthermore, the psychometric properties of the brand image items would need to be assessed and there is no guarantee the same factor structure would emerge from the data. This creates the following dilemma. Is it possible to mirror brand identity / image research in a psychometrically sound way or should researchers proceed with a potentially flawed brand image measure? Additionally, the rationale for conducting this research must be considered. Is

alignment really that important? For instance, it is debatable if Burberry's brand marketing team appreciate their caps and scarves being 'de rigour' for 'chavs'. This position has been borne out by the brand withdrawing these products from the market (Marketer, 2009). However, this does not appear to have adversely affected their brand's premium brand image, or more accurately reputation, given it has been built over a period of time. Finally, whilst it is important marketers' incorporate clients' needs into their brand identity building efforts, if a brand strictly follows customers' needs it is possible they may develop a brand identity similar to their competitors. This results in a circular logic where the aim of building brand identity defeats itself. Such a position is consistent with Alsem and Kostelijik's,(2008) who argue for a new 'balanced' marketing paradigm that encompasses, in a similar manner to the strategy literature (Sharma, 1999; Srivastava et al., 1998), both the organisation's internal competence and vision (i.e. brand identity) in conjunction with market needs as opposed to focusing primarily on the latter. This view also finds wider support in the literature where scholars such as Baker and Sinkula (1999) note "breakthroughs do not always come from reacting to the market as it is" (p. 1999). O'Cass and Ngo (2007b) make a similar point where market-driving or innovative cultures were identified as having a significantly stronger effect on brand performance than market-following or market orientated behaviours. Consequently, the paradigm of following and meeting clients' needs at the expense of following an internally orientated market vision may need to be revisited, or at least, the balanced re-addressed in the light of these scholars' perspectives.

Recent developments within the literature point to the growing importance of full sensory branding. For example, Lindstrom (2005) notes how brands tend to focus on sight and sound whereas those that focus, synergistically, on all five senses have the greatest opportunity

to develop an emotional connection. Similarly, Goldkuhl and Styven (2007) note the particular valuable role scent plays in tangibilising, enhancing and differentiating service based offerings whilst scholars such as Bartholme and Melewar (2009) are considering auditory identity management. Consequently, future brand identity research that looks to encompass such innovative perspectives would be welcome.

The importance of culture, in its various forms within the B2B literature was highlighted in the literature review. It was notable how such theoretical development or research has yet to occur in the B2B literature. Subsequent scholars may wish to explore what types of culture facilitate the development and execution of service brand identity in addition to forms of culture that drive brand performance in B2B markets. The relative importance of types of culture supporting B2B service or goods brands could also be explored.

From a methodological perspective, opportunities for subsequent scale development research exist. For example, comparative fit indices were particularly sensitive to different estimation methods (cf: Sugawara and MacCallum 2003; La Du and Tanaka, 1989; Hu and Bentler, 1998). This raises the question of ‘were the lower GLS comparative fit indices a function of under estimation vis-a-vis MLE or vice versa?’ In a similar manner the susceptibility of indices such as the Bollen Stine p value (Byrne, 2001) and AGI / GFI (Anderson and Gerbing, 1984; Bollen, 1990; Hu and Bentler, 1995, 1998; La Du and Tanaka, 1989; Marsh et al., 1988a; Netemeyer et al., 2003) to sample size have been noted. Consequently, the development of indices that are more robust to estimation method or sample size would be welcome. Furthermore, the scale development procedures used in this research

are grounded on the domain sampling model (Nunally and Bernstein, 1994) which entails the researcher exhaustively sampling the domain of the construct to generate scale items. However, research that provides guidance on the optimal item pool size has the potential to provide valuable insights. The reason being there may be diminishing returns from increasing the number of items beyond a certain point if other commitments force expert panel members to hastily complete their answers. This would move the literature from a quantity to quality paradigm.

Finally, subsequent research could explore this research's findings qualitatively. For example, Blaxter et al. (1996) note:

“You may follow up on a survey with some interviews, in order to get some more detailed perspectives on the issues raised. The telling anecdote may be much more revealing and influential than almost any amounts of figures.” (p. 77)

Consequently, qualitative research could help assess the face validity of the proposed brand identity dimensionality. Supplementing this quantitative research more qualitatively would add richness and depth to the findings which, arguably, the data has not been able to do.

7.7. Concluding Note

The opening section of this chapter consolidated and unified this research. This was achieved by reviewing the content and logic of the preceding chapters. At this stage, it was

noted how the introductory chapter laid the foundation for this research and formulated the research questions. The literature review and theoretical framework chapters provided the theoretical grounding and conceptual apparatus for this thesis respectively. Next, the methodology chapter outlined how the research instrument was developed and data gathered in order to test the theoretical framework. The following chapter, guided predominantly by the scaling literature, shared the results of the quantitative data analysis. These analyses revealed how service brand identity is a multidimensional construct that has a positive and significant influence on brand performance. The penultimate chapter, structured by this thesis' research questions, discussed the findings in the context of the literature.

With the content and rationale for each chapter considered, theoretical and managerial implications were discussed. Guided by Whetten's (1989) criteria, the theoretical contributions mainly concerned scale development, establishing construct dimensionality and tentative support for a brand identity-performance effect. At this stage the initial model outlined in the theoretical framework chapter (Section 3.4) was reframed in a more dynamic manner as a Service Brand Identity Network (Section 7.3.2). Managerial implications focused on the need for practitioners to orchestrate all service brand identity dimensions whilst noting how service brand identity appears to drive brand performance.

The penultimate section of the chapter highlighted potential research limitations. These included reservations about the feasibility of generalising these findings beyond the current research context, concerns about brand identity-performance causality and issues surrounding the research paradigm that underpinned this thesis.

The final section of the chapter considered potential avenues for future research. These included opportunities for replicating this research to assess the stability of the scale and brand identity-performance causality, developing a psychometrically sound brand performance measure in addition to exploring causality that may exist within the brand identity or brand performance constructs. It hoped subsequent brand marketing scholars will take the opportunity to validate and build on this research.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Complete Item Pool with Respective Removal Phase in Scaling Process

Appendix 2 - Experience Survey for Expert Panel

Appendix 3 - Covering Letter and Final Survey

Appendix 4 – Correlation of Brand Performance Measures

Appendix 5 – Missing Values (Frequency Distribution by item / question)

Appendix 6 - Expectation Maximisation Data Results

Appendix 7 - R-Matrix

Appendix 8 – References

APPENDIX 1: COMPLETE ITEM POOL WITH RESPECTIVE REMOVAL PHASE IN SCALING PROCESS (IF APPLICABLE)

		ITEM	ITEM ELIMINATION PROCESS	SOURCE
Marketing Culture	IT1	Our organisation specifically defines what exceptional service is	Removed at correlations matrix stage	Webster (1993)
	IT2	Our top management is committed to providing quality service	Retained	Webster (1993)
	IT3	Our organisation regularly monitors employees' performance	Retained	Webster (1993)
	IT4	Our employees focus on clients' needs, desires and attitudes	Removed at CFA	Webster (1993)
	IT5	Our employees believe their behaviour reflects the brand's image	Removed at EFA	Webster (1993)
	IT6	Our employees meet our organisation's expectations of them	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT7	Our organisation places an emphasis on employees' communication skills	Removed at EFA	Webster (1993)
	IT8	Our employees pay attention to detail in their work	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT9	Our organisation is considerate of employees' feelings	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT10	Our organisation treats each employee as an essential part of the organisation	Retained	Webster (1993)
	IT11	Our employees feel comfortable giving opinions to senior management	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT12	Our managers have an 'open door' policy	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT13	Our managers interact with front line employees	Removed at EFA	Webster (1993)
	IT14	Our organisation places an emphasis on hiring the right people	Removed at CFA	Webster (1993)
	IT15	Our organisation provides skill based training to front-line employees	Removed at CFA	Webster (1993)
	IT16	Our organisation encourages creative approaches to selling	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT17	High achievers in selling are recognized at our organisation	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT18	Our employees enjoy pursuing new clients / accounts	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT19	Our organisation rewards employees better than our	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)

		competitors with incentives to sell		
	IT20	Our employees aggressively pursue new business	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT21	Our employees are well organised	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT22	Careful planning is characteristic of each employee's daily routine	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT23	Our employees prioritise their work	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT24	Each employee's work area is well organised	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT25	Each of our employees' manages his / her time well	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT26	Our organisation has an approved set of policies / procedures which is made available to every employee	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT27	Our organisations' supervisors clearly state their expectations of others	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT28	Each employee understands the mission and general objectives of the organisation	Removed at EFA	Webster (1993)
	IT29	Our management share financial information with all employees	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT30	Our organisation's management encourage front-line employees to become involved in standard setting	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT31	Our organisation motivates employees	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT32	All of our employees are receptive to ideas for change	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT33	Our organisation keeps up with technological advances	Removed at expert panel stage	Webster (1993)
	IT34	Our organisation is receptive to change	Removed at EFA	Webster (1993)
	IT35	Our organisation responds to our clients' needs	Retained	derived from Kotter and Heskett (1992)
	IT36	Our organisation responds to our employees needs	Removed at expert panel stage	derived from Kotter and Heskett (1992)
	IT37	Our organisation responds to our shareholders needs	Removed at expert panel stage	derived from Kotter and Heskett (1992)
	IT38	Our organisation has strong leadership	Removed at expert panel stage	derived from Kotter and Heskett (1992)
CORPORATE VISUAL IDENTITY	IT39	The name of our organisation is part of our brand identity	Removed at EFA	adapted from Simoes et al 2005
	IT40	Our corporate symbols (logo / slogan, colours, visual style, signage) are part of our brand identity	Removed at EFA	adapted from Simoes et al 2005
	IT41	Our premises are part of our brand identity	Removed at correlations matrix stage	adapted from Simoes et al 2005; Melewar and Saunders 1998

	IT42	Our employees understand the meaning of our visual branding	Removed at EFA	adapted from Simoes et al 2005
	IT43	Our employees are dressed in a manner that helps project our brand identity	Removed at expert panel stage	adapted from Simoes et al 2005
	IT44	We have formal (visual) brand guidelines	Removed at EFA	adapted from Simoes et al 2005
	IT45	Our brand is consistently presented through our facilities, equipment, personnel and communications material	Removed at EFA	adapted from Simoes et al 2005
	IT46	Our visual identity creates the intended brand associations	Removed at correlations matrix stage	Based on Lesle's feedback cf: awareness i.e. you could be aware but that's of no use if you have the wrong brand associations!
	IT47	Our logo is an important part of who we are	Retained	Stuart 1997
	IT48	Our organisation can be summed up by our logo	Removed at expert panel stage	Stuart 1997
	IT49	Our stationery forms part of our brand identity	Removed at EFA	Melewar and Saunders 1998
	IT50	Our vehicles are part of our brand identity	Removed at expert panel stage	Melewar and Saunders 1998
	IT51	Our marketing collateral (brochures, letterheads, tenders, forms, documentation etc) is part of our brand identity	Removed at EFA	Melewar and Saunders 1998
	IT52	Everyone in our organisation complies with our visual identity guidelines / rules	Removed at expert panel stage	van den Bosch et al. 2006
	IT53	The font we use is an important part of our visual identity	Retained	Melewar and Saunders 2000 / Balmer and Baker 1997
	IT54	It is important to apply the corporate visual identity	Removed at expert panel stage	van den Bosch et al. 2006
	IT55	The corporate visual identity is helpful in making our organisation recognisable	Retained	van den Bosch et al. 2006
	IT56	The guidelines for our corporate visual identity are up to date	Removed at expert panel stage	van den Bosch et al. 2006
	IT57	Within our organisation it's easy to get information on the corporate visual identity	Removed at EFA	van den Bosch et al. 2006
PERSONALITY	IT58	Our brand personality has strong associations	Removed at EFA	Keller (1993)
	IT59	Our brand personality has favourable associations	Retained	Keller (1993)
	IT60	Our brand personality has unique associations within its category	Removed at EFA	Keller (1993)
	IT61	The associations making up our brand personality are extremely positive.	Retained	Additional item for redundancy

	IT62	Our clients have no difficulty describing our brand personality	Retained	Additional item for redundancy
	IT63	Our brand personality is completely different from our competitors	Removed at EFA	Additional item for redundancy
RELATIONSHIP MARKETING NG RELATED SCALE ITEMS	IT64	Our clients feel very loyal to our organisation	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Fournier (1994)
	IT65	Our clients stay with our organisation through good times and bad	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Fournier (1994)
	IT66	Our clients know we appreciate them	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Fournier (1994)
	IT67	Our clients know we respect them	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Fournier (1994)
	IT68	Our clients know we regard them as being valuable to our organisation	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Fournier (1994)
	IT69	Our organisation shows a continuing interest in our clients	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Fournier (1994)
	IT70	Our clients know a lot about our organisation	Removed at expert panel stage	Fournier (1994)
	IT71	Our clients understand our organisation	Removed at expert panel stage	Fournier (1994)
	IT72	We are honest about problems	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Roberts et al (2000)
	IT73	We are trustworthy	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Roberts et al (2000)
	IT74	We are an organisation of high integrity	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Roberts et al (2000)
	IT75	Our organisation is concerned about our clients' welfare	Removed at expert panel stage	Roberts et al (2000)
	IT76	Our clients confide in our organisation	Removed at expert panel stage	Roberts et al (2000)
	IT77	We always consider how our actions will affect our clients	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Roberts et al (2000)
	IT78	Our clients feel emotionally attached to our organisation	Removed at expert panel stage	Roberts et al (2000)
	IT79	Our clients like being associated with our organisation	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Roberts et al (2000)
	IT80	Our clients continue to deal with us because they genuinely enjoy their relationship with us	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Roberts et al (2000)
	IT81	We keep promises made to clients	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Iacobucci et al (1995)
	IT82	We resolve problems our clients experience with our service	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Sirdesmukh et al (2002)
	IT83	We are dependable and reliable	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Boon and Holmes (1999)
	IT84	Our clients would remain loyal to our brand if we let them down once or twice	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Aaker et al (2004)
	IT85	Our clients are comfortable sharing confidential data with us	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Aaker et al (2004)
	IT86	We understand our clients' needs	Removed at pretest / pilot stage	Aaker et al (2004)

	IT87	Our clients are familiar with the range of services we provide	Removed at expert panel stage	Aaker et al (2004)
	IT88	Our clients are knowledgeable about our organisation	Removed at expert panel stage	Aaker et al (2004)
CLIENT RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT	IT89	Through ongoing dialogue, we work with clients to tailor our offering	Removed at expert panel stage	Sin et al (2005)
	IT90	Our organisation provides customised services to our clients	Removed at expert panel stage	Sin et al (2005)
	IT91	Our organisation makes an effort to discover our clients' needs	Retained	Sin et al (2005)
	IT92	When our clients wish to modify the service received our organisation makes a coordinated effort to do so	Removed at expert panel stage	Sin et al (2005)
	IT93	Our employee training programs are designed to develop skills required for acquiring and deepening client relationships	Retained	Sin et al (2005)
	IT94	Our organisation has established clear business goals related to client relationship management	Removed at CFA	Sin et al (2005)
	IT95	Employee performance is measured and rewarded based on meeting clients needs and successfully serving the client	Removed at expert panel stage	Sin et al (2005)
	IT96	Our organisational structure is meticulously designed around our clients	Removed at expert panel stage	Sin et al (2005)
	IT97	Our employees will help clients in a responsive manner	Retained	Sin et al (2005)
	IT98	Our organisation fully understands the needs of our key clients by learning from them	Removed at CFA	Sin et al (2005)
	IT99	Our organisation provides channels that enable ongoing, two-way communication between our clients and us	Removed at EFA	Sin et al (2005)
	IT100	Clients can expect prompt service from our employees	Removed at expert panel stage	Sin et al (2005)
	IT101	Our organisation has the right IT software to serve our clients	Removed at EFA	Sin et al (2005)
	IT102	Our organisation has the right IT hardware to serve our clients	Removed at EFA	Sin et al (2005)
	IT103	Individual client information is available at every point of contact	Removed at expert panel stage	Sin et al (2005)
	IT104	Our organisation maintains a comprehensive client database	Removed at expert panel stage	Sin et al (2005)

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS	IT105	Our organisation's media plan is a strategic balance between mass media and one-to-one media	Removed at expert panel stage	Reid (2005) / Duncan and Moriarty (1997)
	IT106	At our organisation the process of managing the brand's reputation is the responsibility of all departments and employees	Removed at EFA	Reid (2005) / Duncan and Moriarty (1997)
	IT107	The people managing the communications program for our organisation have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of all major marketing communications tools	Retained	Reid (2005) / Duncan and Moriarty (1997)
	IT108	Our organisation does an excellent job of internal marketing e.g. informing all areas of the organisation about our brand objectives	Removed at EFA	Reid (2005) / Duncan and Moriarty (1997)
	IT109	Our major communication agencies (e.g. advertising) have (at least) monthly contact with each other regarding our brands communication strategy	Removed at correlations matrix stage	Reid (2005) / Duncan and Moriarty (1997)
	IT110	We regularly review our marketing plan to ensure relevance and consistency of brand messages / brand positioning	Removed at EFA	Reid (2005) / Duncan and Moriarty (1997)
	IT111	Our major promotional theme is conceptually broad enough to allow for different sub campaigns aimed at all key stakeholder groups	Removed at expert panel stage	Reid (2005) / Duncan and Moriarty (1997)
	IT112	Our organisation carefully coordinates the brand message being sent by all its operations to ensure brand positioning consistency	Removed at EFA	Reid (2005) / Duncan and Moriarty (1997)
	IT113	A SWOT analysis is used to determine the strengths and opportunities we can leverage and the weaknesses and threats we need to address our brand's marketing communication planning	Removed at expert panel stage	Reid (2005) / Duncan and Moriarty (1997)
	IT114	There is consultation between business units and the board of directors regarding our brand identity	Removed at EFA	van den Bosch et al. 2006
	IT115	Different marketing communications tools for our service are planned by the same manager	Removed at expert panel stage	Low (2000)
	IT116	The elements of the marketing communications programme for our service are strategically consistent	Removed at expert panel stage	Low (2000)
	IT117	Our marketing communications delivers a common brand message	Removed at EFA	Low (2000)
	IT118	Our organisation's advertising, PR and sales promotion all present the same clear consistent	Retained	Ewing and de Bussy (2000)

		message to our stakeholders	
	IT119	Our organisation has a common strategy that unifies our advertising, public relations and sales promotion	Removed at EFA Ewing and de Bussy (2000)

Appendix 2: EXPERIENCE SURVEY FOR EXPERT PANEL

This survey represents the first step in developing a valid and reliable service brand identity scale. In the context of this research, ‘service’ relates to brands operating in sectors such as advertising, air travel, financial services, consulting, tourism and teaching. Please consider these 'types' of brands when rating the below items.

For each statement please indicate the extent you believe the following items *represent* the domain of service brand identity. This can be achieved by checking the box underneath each statement within MS Word. (For the final survey a seven point Likert Scale will be used). Additional comments or suggestions are welcome. These can be provided in the space to the right of each statement. Comments could relate to item clarity / conciseness or the need for alternative wording.

Finally, at the end of the questionnaire please note any items you feel should be included or any other points you wish to make. All responses will be treated in confidence. Thank you for assisting with this research. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on dac643@bham.ac.uk / +447773280770. Regards, Darren

SECTION 1: SERVICE BRAND IDENTITY - ITEMS

IT 1	(It is important) Our organisation specifically defines what exceptional service is			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 2	(It is important) Our top management are committed to providing quality service			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 3	(It is important) Our organisation regularly monitors employees' performance			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 4	(It is important) Our employees focus on clients' needs, desires and attitudes			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	

IT 5	(It is important) Our employees believe their behaviour reflects the brand's image			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 6	(It is important) Our employees meet our organisation's expectations of them			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 7	(It is important) Our organisation places an emphasis on employees' communication skills			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 8	(It is important) Our employees pay attention to detail in their work			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 9	(It is important) Our organisation is considerate of employees' feelings			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 10	(It is important) Our organisation treats each employee as an essential part of the organisation			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 11	(It is important) Our employees feel comfortable giving opinions to senior management			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 12	(It is important) Our managers have an 'open door' policy			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 13	(It is important) Our managers interact with front line employees			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 14	(It is important) Our organisation places an emphasis on hiring the			Comments

	right people			
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 15	(It is important) Our organisation provides skill based training to front-line employees			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 16	(It is important) Our organisation encourages creative approaches to selling			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 17	(It is important) High achievers in selling are recognized at our organisation			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 18	(It is important) Our employees enjoy pursuing new clients / accounts			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 19	(It is important) Our organisation rewards employees better than our competitors with incentives to sell			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 20	(It is important) Our employees aggressively pursue new business			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 21	(It is important) Our employees are well organised			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 22	(It is important) Careful planning is characteristic of each employee's daily routine			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 23	(It is important) Our employees prioritise their work			Comments

	Not representative 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Representative 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly representative 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 24	(It is important) Each employee's work area is well organised			Comments
	Not representative 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Representative 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly representative 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 25	(It is important) Each of our employees' manages his / her time well			Comments
	Not representative 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Representative 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly representative 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 26	(It is important) Our organisation has an approved set of policies / procedures which is made available to every employee			Comments
	Not representative 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Representative 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly representative 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 27	(It is important) Our organisations' supervisors clearly state their expectations of others			Comments
	Not representative 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Representative 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly representative 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 28	(It is important) Each employee understands the mission and general objectives of the organisation			Comments
	Not representative 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Representative 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly representative 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 29	(It is important) Our management share financial information with all employees			Comments
	Not representative 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Representative 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly representative 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 30	(It is important) Our organisation's management encourage front-line employees to become involved in standard setting			Comments
	Not representative 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Representative 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly representative 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 31	(It is important) Our organisation motivates employees			Comments
	Not representative 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Representative 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly representative 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 32	(It is important) All of our employees are receptive to ideas for change			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	

	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 33	(It is important) Our organisation keeps up with technological advances			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 34	(It is important) Our organisation is receptive to change			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 35	Our organisation responds to our clients' needs			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 36	Our organisation responds to our employees needs			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 37	Our organisation responds to our shareholders needs			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 38	Our organisation has strong leadership			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 39	Our organisation's name is part of its brand identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 40	Our corporate symbols (logo / slogan, colours, visual style, signage) are part of our brand identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 41	Our facilities / premises are part of our brand identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 42	Our employees and staff understand the meaning of our visual branding			Comments

	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 43	Our employees are dressed in a manner that helps project our brand identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 44	We have formal (visual) brand guidelines			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 45	Our brand is consistently presented through our facilities, equipment, personnel and communications material			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 46	Our visual identity creates the intended brand associations			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 47	Our logo is an important part of who we are			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 48	Our organisation can be summed up by our logo			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 49	Our stationary is part of our brand identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 50	Our vehicles are part of our brand identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 51	Our marketing collateral (brochures, letterheads, tenders, forms, documentation etc) is part of our brand identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	

IT 52	Everyone in our organisation complies with our visual identity guidelines / rules			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 53	The font we use is an important part of our visual identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 54	It is important to apply the corporate visual identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 55	The corporate visual identity is helpful in making our organisation recognisable			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 56	The guidelines for our corporate visual identity are up to date			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 57	Within our organisation it's easy to get information on the corporate visual identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 58	Our brand personality has strong associations			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 59	Our brand personality has favourable associations			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 60	Our brand personality has unique associations			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 61	Our clients feel very loyal to our organisation			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	

	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 62	Our clients stay with our organisation through good times and bad			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 63	Our clients know we appreciate them			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 64	Our clients know we respect them			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 65	Our clients know we regard them as being valuable to our organisation			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 66	Our organisation shows a continuing interest in our clients			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 67	Our clients know a lot about our organisation			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 68	Our clients understand our organisation			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 69	Our organisation is honest about problems			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 70	Our organisation is trustworthy			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 71	Our organisation has high integrity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 72	Our organisation is concerned about our clients' welfare			Comments

	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 73	Our clients confide in our organisation			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 74	We always consider how our actions will affect our clients			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 75	Our clients feel emotionally attached to our organisation			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 76	Our clients like being associated with our organisation			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 77	Our clients continue to deal with our organisation because they genuinely enjoy their relationship with us			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 78	Our organisation keeps promises made to clients			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 79	Our organisation resolves problems our clients experience with our service			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 80	Our organisation is dependable and reliable			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 81	Our clients would remain loyal to our brand if we let them down once or twice			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	

IT 82	Our clients are comfortable sharing confidential data with us			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 83	Our organisation understands our clients' needs			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 84	Our clients are familiar with the range of services we provide			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 85	Our clients are knowledgeable about our organisation			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 86	Through ongoing dialogue, we work with clients to tailor our offering			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 87	Our organisation provides customised services to our clients			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 88	Our organisation makes an effort to discover our clients ' needs			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 89	When our clients wish to modify the service received our organisation makes a coordinated effort to do so			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 90	Our employee training programs are designed to develop skills required for acquiring and deepening client relationships			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 91	Our organisation has established clear business goals related to client relationship management			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	

	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 92	Employee performance is measured and rewarded based on meeting client needs and successfully serving the client			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 93	Our organisational structure is meticulously designed around our client			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 94	Our employees help clients in a responsive manner			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 95	Our organisation fully understands the needs of our key clients by learning from them			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 96	Our organisation provides channels that enable ongoing, two-way communication between our clients and us			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 97	Clients can expect prompt service from our employees			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 98	Our organisation has the right software to serve our clients			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 99	Our organisation has the right hardware to serve our clients			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 100	Individual client information is available at every point of contact			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT	Our organisation maintains a comprehensive client database			Comments

101	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 102	Our organisation's media plan is a strategic balance between mass media and one-to-one media			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 103	At our organisation the process of managing the brand's reputation is the responsibility of all departments and employees			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 104	The people managing the communications program for our organisation have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of all major marketing communications tools e.g. direct mail, PR, sales promotion and advertising.			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 105	Our organisation does an excellent job of internal marketing e.g. informing all areas of the organisation about our brand's objectives and marketing programs			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 106	Our major communication agencies (e.g. advertising) have (at least) monthly contact with each other regarding our brands communication strategy			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 107	We regularly review our marketing plan to ensure relevance and consistency of brand messages and strategic brand positioning			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 108	Our major promotional theme is conceptually broad enough to allow for different sub campaigns aimed at all key stakeholder groups			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	

	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 109	Our organisation carefully coordinates the message being sent by all of its operations to ensure consistency of brand positioning			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 110	A SWOT analysis is used to determine the strengths and opportunities we can leverage and the weaknesses and threats we need to address our brand's marketing communication planning			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 111	There is consultation between business units and the board of directors regarding our brand identity			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 112	Different marketing communications tools for our service are planned by the same manager			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 113	The elements of the marketing communications programme for our service are strategically consistent			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 114	Our organisation's marketing communications used for our service focuses on a common message			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 115	Our organisation's advertising, PR and sales promotion all present the same clear consistent message to our target audience(s)			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	
	1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
IT 116	Our organisation has a common strategy that unifies our advertising, public relations and sale promotion			Comments
	Not representative	Representative	Clearly representative	

	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please note additional items or comments you feel are important when measuring service brand identity (use as much space as required):				
Thank you for your time, Darren				

Appendix 3 – Covering Letter and Final Survey

<<Date>>

«Prefix» «Firstname» «Surname»
«Executive_Title»
«Company_Name»
«Address_Line_1»
«Address_Line_2»
«Address_Line_3»
«City» «Postal_Code»
Reference: «Reference»

Dear «Prefix» «Firstname»,

Re: Branding Activities and Brand Performance In the IT Services Sector - PhD Research.

I am writing to ask for your help with my PhD research by completing the enclosed survey. The topic relates to strategic branding in the IT Services sector. The answers you provide will help me identify which brand marketing activities have the most significant effect on brand performance in the IT Services sector.

Given the senior position you hold at «Company_Name» you were identified as a particularly suitable respondent. Your contact details were obtained from the ONESOURCE database hosted at the British Library.

By collecting data from senior executives the research ultimately aims to identify where brand marketing resources can be best allocated to maximise brand performance.

As a token of my appreciation, I would like to offer you executive summary findings. Please provide your email at the end of the survey. If you do not have time to complete the survey but would like to receive summary findings please return the uncompleted survey with your email address (at the end) in the enclosed stamp addressed envelope.

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your responses will be treated in confidence and analysed at an aggregate, not individual level.

I would be grateful if the completed survey could be returned in the stamp addressed envelope provided by <<15 days>>. If you have any questions please contact me at



Thank you for your help. I look forward to receiving your completed survey.

Yours sincerely,
Darren Coleman

SURVEY

SURVEY

SURVEY

**APPENDIX 4 CORRELATION MATRIX FOR BRAND PERFORMANCE
MEASURES USING SPEARMAN'S RANK CORRELATION COEFFICIENT
(FULL SAMPLE, N=421).**

Spearman's Correlation Coefficient	Market Share	Net Profit	Customer Loyalty	Customer Satisfaction	Organisation Reputation	Brand Awareness	Employee Loyalty	Employee Satisfaction
Market Share	1							
Net Profit	0.88**	1						
Customer Loyalty	0.43**	0.41**	1					
Customer Satisfaction	0.37**	0.34**	0.68**	1				
Org. Reputation	0.37**	0.32**	0.55**	0.62**	1			
Brand Awareness	0.50**	0.46**	0.35**	0.31**	0.30**	1		
Employee Loyalty	0.20**	0.20**	0.35**	0.38**	0.39**	0.30**	1	
Employee Satisfaction	0.29**	0.26**	0.46**	0.53**	0.45**	0.33**	0.77**	1

** p<0.01 (two tailed)

APPENDIX 5 – MISSING VALUES (FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION)

Item	N	Missing Values Count	Missing Values %
IT1	421	0	0
IT2	421	0	0
IT3	414	7	1.7
IT4	419	2	0.5
IT5	420	1	0.2
IT7	417	4	1
IT10	419	2	0.5
IT13	413	8	1.9
IT14	421	0	0
IT15	416	5	1.2
IT28	417	4	1
IT34	421	0	0
IT35	420	1	0.2
IT39	421	0	0
IT40	421	0	0
IT41	421	0	0
IT42	418	3	0.7
IT44	416	5	1.2
IT45	421	0	0
IT46	417	4	1
IT47	421	0	0
IT49	421	0	0
IT51	421	0	0
IT53	414	7	1.7
IT55	418	3	0.7
IT57	418	3	0.7
IT58	420	1	0.2
IT59	418	3	0.7
IT60	419	2	0.5
IT61	418	3	0.7
IT62	419	2	0.5
IT63	421	0	0
IT94	414	7	1.7
IT97	417	4	1
IT91	421	0	0
IT93	413	8	1.9
IT98	421	0	0
IT99	419	2	0.5
IT101	421	0	0
IT102	421	0	0
IT106	419	2	0.5
IT107	421	0	0

IT108	414	7	1.7
IT109	398	23	5.5
IT110	419	2	0.5
IT112	419	2	0.5
IT114	410	11	2.6
IT117	419	2	0.5
IT118	412	9	2.1
IT119	419	2	0.5
Brand Awareness	418	3	0.7
Customer Loyalty	418	3	0.7
Customer Satisfaction	418	3	0.7
Employee loyalty	415	6	1.4
Employee Satisfaction	415	6	1.4
Market Share	416	5	1.2
Organisation Reputation	417	4	1
Organisation Market	420	1	0.2
Organisation Age	401	20	4.8
Employee Numbers	383	38	9
Position	421	0	0
Marketing Experience	329	92	21.9
Educational Level	406	15	3.6
Birth Year	399	22	5.2
Gender	408	13	3.1
Age	399	22	5.2

**APPENDIX 6 - ESTIMATED STANDARD DEVIATIONS AND MEANS BEFORE
AND AFTER EXPECTATION MAXIMISATION ALGORITHM WAS USED.**

Summary of Estimated
Standard Deviations

Items	All Values	EM Based Values
Item 1	1.536	1.536
Item 2	1.053	1.053
Item 3	1.414	1.414
Item 4	1.04	1.043
Item 5	1.321	1.321
Item 7	1.181	1.18
Item 10	1.129	1.128
Item 13	1.187	1.185
Item 14	1.15	1.15
Item 15	1.466	1.462
Item 28	1.205	1.204
Item 34	1.183	1.183
Item 35	1.044	1.046
Item 39	0.805	0.805
Item 40	1.288	1.288
Item 41	1.683	1.683
Item 42	1.359	1.357
Item 44	1.624	1.62
Item 45	1.248	1.248
Item 46	1.261	1.274
Item 47	1.428	1.428
Item 49	1.34	1.34
Item 51	1.285	1.285
Item 53	1.52	1.532
Item 55	1.305	1.302
Item 57	1.338	1.337
Item 58	1.222	1.221
Item 59	1.124	1.122
Item 60	1.201	1.203
Item 61	1.16	1.162
Item 62	1.177	1.176
Item 63	1.336	1.336
Item 91	0.99	0.99
Item 93	1.282	1.286

Summary of Estimated Means

Items	All Values	EM Based Values
Item 1	3.08	3.08
Item 2	1.63	1.63
Item 3	2.6	2.61
Item 4	2.04	2.03
Item 5	2.48	2.49
Item 7	2.57	2.57
Item 10	2.04	2.03
Item 13	1.91	1.9
Item 14	1.91	1.91
Item 15	2.68	2.68
Item 28	2.53	2.53
Item 34	2.23	2.23
Item 35	1.72	1.73
Item 39	1.69	1.69
Item 40	2.17	2.17
Item 41	4.06	4.06
Item 42	3.07	3.07
Item 44	3.59	3.59
Item 45	2.86	2.86
Item 46	3.24	3.26
Item 47	2.42	2.42
Item 49	2.32	2.32
Item 51	2.22	2.22
Item 53	2.93	2.94
Item 55	2.57	2.58
Item 57	2.82	2.82
Item 58	2.94	2.94
Item 59	2.66	2.66
Item 60	3.15	3.15
Item 61	2.82	2.83
Item 62	3.22	3.22
Item 63	3.12	3.12
Item 91	1.75	1.75
Item 93	2.76	2.78

Items	All Values	EM Based Values	Items	All Values	EM Based Values
Item 94	1.151	1.155	Item 94	2.51	2.52
Item 97	0.888	0.888	Item 97	1.85	1.85
Item 98	1.109	1.109	Item 98	2.15	2.15
Item 99	1.137	1.137	Item 99	2.26	2.26
Item 101	1.342	1.342	Item 101	2.31	2.31
Item 102	1.262	1.262	Item 102	2.06	2.06
Item 106	1.367	1.366	Item 106	2.67	2.66
Item 107	1.324	1.324	Item 107	2.72	2.72
Item 108	1.394	1.389	Item 108	3.42	3.42
Item 109	1.705	1.692	Item 109	4.04	4.04
Item 110	1.441	1.439	Item 110	3.31	3.31
Item 112	1.333	1.331	Item 112	3.04	3.04
Item 114	1.63	1.626	Item 114	3.05	3.06
Item 117	1.217	1.216	Item 117	2.74	2.73
Item 118	1.265	1.261	Item 118	2.82	2.83
Item 119	1.374	1.374	Item 119	2.96	2.97
MS	1.379	1.378	MS	3.58	3.57
NP	1.245	1.244	NP	3.44	3.43
CL	1.078	1.078	CL	2.28	2.28
CS	1.024	1.023	CS	2.22	2.22
OR	1.073	1.072	OR	2.35	2.35
BA	1.323	1.334	BA	3.4	3.41
EL	1.206	1.218	EL	2.29	2.3
ES	1.16	1.169	ES	2.53	2.54

MS=Market Share, NP= Net Profit, CL=Customer Loyalty, CS=Customer Satisfaction, OR=Organisation Reputation, BA=Brand Awareness, EL=Employee Loyalty & ES=Employee Satisfaction

Appendix 7 – R Matrix

**TO BE INSERTED
ON A3 SHEET**

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