

## BRAND – AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN BUYING DECISION

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*Abstract: Considered a key-element in the definition of a product policy, brand and all its implications have always been a concern for the specialists in the field of marketing because it differentiates a product from the competition's product, it meets basic criteria, it adds value to the product by meeting the consumers' psychological needs determining their trust from the point of view of the product's quality level. Brand represents an important capital, a considerable competition advantage and the strategy a company adopts should ensure the effective development and valorisation of a brand. A brand's attributes reflects the advantages of both consumers and producers since they are the main reasons of a brand's importance in the marketing policy. Brand is an important factor that influences a consumer's decision of buying and, in most cases, the main milestone in the buying decision.*

**Keywords:** product, brand, consumption, market.

### INTRODUCTION

The evolution of the economic life has brought about permanent changes of the needs and, implicitly, of the demand. At the same time, consumption models, because they are intertwined with buying patterns, model, in a certain way, the individuals' consumption behaviour and, implicitly, their demand of goods and services.

In the study of the process of formation of demand determined by the consumer's behaviour, we need to take into account both endogenous (needs, motifs, purchase intents, preferences, opinions, and attitudes) and exogenous (economic situation, demographics, social situation, traditions, and customs) variables. Consumer behaviour is nothing else but an individual's reaction to different endogenous and exogenous variables. In the same person, these variables do not act independently, but in different combinations, with different intensities, and at different times.

### MATERIAL AND METHOD

The methods of investigation of the needs consist in both office and field studies. In their turn, investigation methods can be direct or indirect. If indirect methods study the needs of the population through the prism of consumption, direct methods concern consumer's survey based on questionnaires.

In this study, we used as a research method the quota sampling; the main instrument for data collecting was the questionnaire applied at the entrance to the big supermarkets.

Research relied on a sample of 100 people considered representative from a statistic point of view.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The market of soft drinks is developing because people focus more and more on a healthy and balanced life style. The market of soft drinks includes three types of drinks:

juice – a 100% natural juice; nectar – with 25-99% natural juice; and still drink – with 5-25% natural juice.

The year 2010 was marked by a decrease of the purchase power of the consumers mainly because of the economic crisis. The main goal of the producers on the soft drinks market was to maintain the market quota. The year 2012 brought about the tendency of soft drinks consumers to purchase higher quality soft drinks in higher quality package and from higher quality purchase and delivery chains. Brand was again an important factor that influences a consumer's decision of buying and, in most cases, the main milestone in the buying decision.

Juice is a perishable good that is bought on a current basis. The increasing demand of juice on the market and the proper offer were the factors that contributed to the massive impact of juice on the Romanian soft drinks market.

Based on the questionnaire that we designed and applied to carry out a market study concerning the soft drink market on a sample of 100 people, we obtained the following answers to the following questions:

- *Are you soft drinks buyers/consumers?* All respondents answered they were soft drinks consumers;
- *Do you know the soft drink brand SANTAL?* 98% of the respondents claimed they knew the soft drink brand SANTAL and that they drink it with great pleasure;
- *How often do you purchase/consume the soft drink brand SANTAL?* As for the purchase and consumption frequency, 58% of the respondents claimed they purchase the product one a month, 23% of the respondents said they purchase it once in six months, 17% said they purchase it frequently (every 4-5 days), and only 2% said they drink this brand of soft drink almost daily;
- *Why do you purchase/consume the soft drink brand SANTAL?* The criteria underlying the purchase of this brand of soft drink were brand (42%), price (33%), the package design (11%), and mouth-to-ear recommendations (14%);
- *Do you purchase/consume this soft drink brand alone?* 76% of the respondents claimed they stick to this soft drink brand, 18% of the respondents said they stick to it in a certain measure, and 6% of the respondents pay attention to the brand;
- *Why do you choose to purchase/consume the soft drink brand SANTAL?* In their soft drink purchase decision, most consumers buy the brand SANTAL because it is acid-free (53%), 33% are influenced by the quality: price ration, 12% buy it for its taste, and only 2% buy it because of the advertising;
- *Which assortment of the soft drink brand SANTAL do you prefer?* 40% of the respondents prefer peach, 35% of the respondents prefer orange, and 33% prefer both apple and pear;
- *Do you think this soft drink brand needs improvement(s)?* 73% of the respondents answered "yes" (60% of them wish the soft drink contained more pulp and 80% of them wish it had a more accessible price) and 27% answered "no";
- *Where do you prefer to drink this soft drink brand?* 47% of the respondents mentioned that their favourite place of consumption is "at home, with their families", and 34% of the respondents answered they prefer to consume it on the bar terraces;
- *Are you satisfied with the soft drink brand SANTAL package?* 96% of the respondents claimed they are satisfied with the package;
- *Are you satisfied with the quality: price ratio?* 85% of the respondents answered they are satisfied with the quality: price ratio of the soft drink brand SANTAL;

- *How old are you?* 9% of the respondents are below 20 years old, 47% belong to the 20-40 range, 26% are above 41, and 18% are in the 60+ range of age;
- *What is your gender?* 62% of the respondents are females and 38% are males;
- *Where do you live?* 88% of the respondents live in the urban area and 12% live in the rural area.

## CONCLUSIONS

Knowing the attitudinal structure of consumers is a good opportunity to investigate the causes that determine acceptance or rejection of a product. The most important way is to study consumers' desires.

No matter the research methods used, any market study aims at getting as real and useful information as possible to be able to control consumers' wishes and to know the competition's actions.

Soft drinks have started to be preferred by larger and larger numbers of consumers concerned by healthy nutrition who drink soft drinks containing higher amounts of natural ingredients with a surplus of nutrients (vitamins, minerals, proteins, etc.). Consumers tend to consider a soft drink brand in their choice of such products.

The soft drink brand SANTAL is preferred by Romanian consumers nowadays; it is also available in a wide range of assortments.

Natural juices are perishable goods that are bought on a current basis. The increasing demand for such products and the proper offer has contributed to the massive impact on the Romanian market.

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