

Re-Branding Fast Moving Consumer Goods in an International Company in South Africa

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ABSTRACT This paper reports on an exploratory qualitative study of the re-branding ‘process’ at one of the largest Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) company in the world, by shedding light on the decisions and processes which precede and follow, a re-branding exercise. The primary reason for re-branding is to ‘innovate’ and meet consumer expectations, and the marketing team especially the brand managers, are solely responsible for initiating changes to the package design. Furthermore, marketing research is not necessarily conducted before, during or after re-branding, and no attempts are made to assess the impact of re-branding on turnover. The implication of the findings for marketers of FMCGs is that they need to pay close attention to the consumer purchasing behavior post re-branding, by making use of inter-alia, social media and also to integrate re-branding with any package design changes required to comply with legislation.

INTRODUCTION

Today’s Fast Moving Consumer Goods industry is a multi-billion rand sector, which according to Carter (2014) is dominated by well-established brands such as Coca-Cola and the FMCG sector is also one of the most volatile and toughest categories to succeed. Every successful business is also grounded on having an identifiable, appealing and distinctive brand since, not only is branding the company’s symbol, it is also the company’s face to the world (Powell 2010), and through branding a product develops a distinctive identity (Wells et al. 2006: 33). Products are not bought primarily based on their real physical features, but according to the customers’ perception of the ‘package of need satisfying attributes that they possess’ (Botha et al. 2006: 105). A strong brand is one that is able to determine the organization’s success to such a degree that it can withstand competition, to the extent that even when there is a new development in the market, products will still be able to be sold at a premium price. In addition, a strong brand is capable of unlocking new markets especially when the growth of the organization relies solely upon the penetration of new markets (Mohammad 2012: 112).

O’Carroll (2011: 2) asserts that global companies will not “be able to drive sales if we don’t constantly build our brands.” Firms annually spend hundreds of billions of dollars to implement their marketing strategy, and much headway has been made in explaining how these expenditures are enhancing brand performance (Ataman et al. 2010: 866). Kumar et al. (2009: 71) assert that in an effort to meet the diverse needs of today’s highly competitive marketplace, marketers are always experimenting with different strategies to revitalize products and keep them up-to-date, while maintaining consumer brand values.

Several researchers (Botha et al. 2006: 111), concur that in consumer and business markets, branding, packaging and labelling are crucial ‘weapons in the markets arsenal.’ In the face of hasty changes and challenges in the varied markets, marketers endeavour to develop new strategies for re-branding products and creating brand values which are difficult for competitors to replicate. However, in a world where strong brands evoke fierce loyalty, it is no surprise that even the slightest change in a brand stirs up opinions and emotions from its audiences” (Sasser 2009: 55). Since re-branding in particular may affect the profitability of renowned companies and brands, it is the ultimate marketing challenge to carefully plan and proficiently execute strategies with the intention of preserving brand familiarity and loyalty.

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Much has been written about various re-branding strategies (Frederiksen 2014) however, little attention has been paid to re-branding strategies for FMCGs in a competitive market. FMCGs are products that have a quick shelf turnover, at relatively low cost and don't require a lot of thought, time and financial investment to purchase (Online Free Trading 2012). Three of the largest and best known examples of FMCGs companies are Nestlé, Unilever and Procter & Gamble (Online Free Trading 2012).

In light of the 'gap' alluded to in the preceding discussion, this paper reports on an exploratory study which investigated re-branding in one country (South Africa) of the world's largest food and beverage company in the world. An investigation into re-branding in a competitive market will afford marketers of FMCGs the opportunity to understand the various steps which the research company had undertaken successfully to position its coffee and beverage brands over the years, as well as to avoid the mistakes made by this company.

Literature Review

Re-branding is understood as the "process of giving an established brand a new name, logo, slogan or design with the intention of making it more attractive to consumers," (Cant and Van Heerden 2010: 222). With modifications of the visual elements such as colour, packaging and logo in conjunction with various marketing programs, marketers aim to create new brand associations to influence customers' purchase intentions. As a result of re-branding some brands successfully deliver new brand images to their customers, while others simply fail to impress or be accepted by their loyal customers.

According to Aniko (2009: 60), although there are no rules on how often to update a brand or a perfect moment in a company's growth for re-branding its product(s), there are often signs that it's time for a change. Revitalising and re-positioning a brand through gradual, incremental modification of the brand proposition and marketing aesthetics, can be considered a natural and necessary part of the task of brand management in response to changing market conditions (Kapferer 1998). Changing a brand's name, however, suggests the "loss of all the values that the old name signifies which challenges traditional marketing wisdom with regards to brand

equity," (Haig 2003). Nevertheless, rebranding creates countless opportunities for companies to advance brand performance and capitalise on market share, and O' Carroll (2011: 2) argues that companies will not be able to drive sales if brands are not constantly built.

Cant and Van Heerden (2010: 223) define re-branding as "a process utilized by many companies to remain competitive, which entails essential modifications to a brand's, name, logo, image, advertising, features or marketing strategies." Re-branding is seen as a way of invigorating a brand and sometimes it ends in success, other times failure. When done correctly, re-branding can enhance a brand's image, awareness and, in due course their bottom line, and it (rebranding) is also expected to provide a golden opportunity for complete transformation (Kaikati and Kaikati 2003: 17).

However, some researchers (Sasser 2009: 55) caution the "if (rebranding) done incorrectly, the results of re-branding can confuse, aggravate, and even isolate brands and their customers." For example, the failed attempt of the Swissair Group who decided to disguise the 'Swiss' in its name by using the name 'SAir Group.' This strategy backfired and the company had to revert back to its original name shortly thereafter (Kaikati and Kaikati 2003: 18). Notwithstanding the aforementioned example where re-branding 'backfired,' there are numerous examples of well known companies which have re-branded with success. As noted by Keller (2009: 570), when Kentucky Fried Chicken wanted to convey a healthier image in order to remain competitive and current, the company abbreviated its name to KFC and introduced a new logo, which incorporated Colonel Sanders' image as a way to maintain tradition, but also modernize its appeal.

The research company's products are constantly modified in order to remain competitive in the market place and their products are re-branded on mainly three aspects namely, image, advertising features or marketing strategies. However, the brand, logo and image remained consistent over the years. Keller (2009: 35) states that "companies must transcend brands to create trust marks," a name or symbol that emotionally binds a company with the desires and aspirations of its customers and ultimately create "love marks." As a result the founder endowed his company with the symbol derived from his name, along with his family coat of arms 'the

nest,' which represents nourishment, security and a sense of family, ingredients that are essential to life, with a mother bird protecting her young, which became the company's logo and a symbol of the company's care and attitude to life-long nutrition (Vander et al. 2010).

Consumer loyalty is a vital aspect for consideration when deciding on re-branding. In every re-branding attempt, marketers must determine the degree and nature of loyalty conveyed by consumers, as attempts which are not parallel with consumers may result in brand rejection. Re-branding must retain familiarity so that consumers are able to maintain brand loyalty. Kaikati and Kaikati (2003: 19) assert that when Kellogg's decided to change the name of its Coco Pops in 1999 to Choco Krispies, it (Kellogg's) was forced to revert back to its original name due to a drastic decline in sales. A telephone poll revealed that consumers were reluctant to give up the initial well loved brand. From the lesson learnt, Kellogg's decided to incorporate this re-branding failure into a future success by coercing consumers with the help of social media to vote online for brand names which they most preferred.

The FMCG company being studied has a unique way of marketing their products and over the years their brands have evolved tremendously. This study attempts to obtain perspectives from the coffee and beverage marketing teams which would serve to shed light on the re-branding strategies which have contributed not only to local but global success.

Given the above, this paper aims to explore how the beverage brands' packaging evolved during the period 2011-mid 2012 and to examine the type of marketing strategy implemented by the company during 2011- 2012 to reposition its beverage brands. In addition, although there is no direct association between re-branding and turnover, the sales figures of these brands during the period under review will also be reported on.

METHODOLOGY

The research context is provided so that the reader can understand the nature of the organization. The FMCG company being studied is the world's leading nutrition, health and wellness company which sells over one billion products every day to people in 130 countries across the world, and the company also invests approximately US\$1.4 billion in research and development every year (Vander et al. 2010: 18).

Since it a global company and controls international brands, the leadership believe that it is important to use the corporate brand name to effectively market their various products, since the competitive advantage of using a corporate brand name is that a product will obtain instant recognition and thus benefit from the company's existing goodwill (Gomez et al. 2009:18). The company utilizes synonymous brand names on a global scale, to ensure that innovations can be attributed to the existing goodwill of the company.

The Managing Director of the company stated that "as the world's leading Nutrition, Health and Wellness (NHW) company, the company needs to be dynamic, up to date and ready for action in the marketplace, in order to maintain its position and prestige as market leaders," (O'Carroll 2011).

"Good Food, Good Life" sums up the company's philosophy, as it creates inroads with nutrition and health" (Vander et al. 2010: 18). Fisher (1991: 1) asserts that "today the company is the world's largest food company, and its founder would be surprised to know in how many homes his name has become a part of the daily ritual."

The company is home to some of the best-known brands in the world across varied product categories, and its coffee is one of its leading and renowned brands, since it was ranked 25th among the top 100 best global brands in 2009 according to Interbrand, a brand management company (Market Watch 2010:63).

Non-probability sampling, more specifically convenience sampling (Terre Blanche and Durheim 1999: 279) was used to select the sample, which consisted of five brand managers who represented the marketing team, and two managers who represented the packaging department. The marketing and packaging teams were requested to provide details on re-branding of the following products which took place from 2010 to the mid 2012:

Coffee Mixtures: Ricoffy, Ricoffy mild, Ricoffy Caffeine-Free.

Pure Coffee: Nescafé Classic, Nescafé Classic Mild, Nescafé Classic Decaff.

Other Beverages: Nesquik-Chocolate, Nesquik-Strawberry, Nestlé Milo, Nestlé Hot Chocolate.

In addition, various relevant official documents relating to re-branding, such as changes to product names, logo, slogan, colour and de-

sign of packaging, sales figures, as well as the dates that re-branding took place, were scrutinized and the contents analysed. However, the biggest challenge to the aforementioned approach was the confidentiality of certain information, which often restricts the accessibility of critical information (De Vos et al. 2002: 324). Although some official documents were provided, certain limitations were placed in terms of the information that could be divulged, since the company ensures that internal documentation such as research reports, sales figures and strategies remain confidential. This resulted in the sales figures being estimated from the documentation provided.

The questionnaires were e-mailed to the sample, and a four week response period was allowed. Follow up interviews were conducted to clarify any uncertainties, and also probe the respondents. The questionnaire for the Brand Managers attempted to gain insight into the motivation behind re-branding, the importance of market research in re-branding, the marketing teams' involvement in decisions to re-brand, matters concerning packaging when re-branding, the challenges encountered when re-branding, the marketing and promotional strategies which were used following re-branding, and the costs versus the benefits of re-branding. The questionnaire for the Packaging Technologists consisted of nine open and close-ended questions which sought to obtain information on the changes which coffee and other beverages' packaging had undergone from 2011 to 2012.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It became evident that the key reason for re-branding the coffee and beverage brands was to innovate. This view was supported by 50% of the Brand Managers; with 25% indicating that rebranding was undertaken to 'differentiate the products from competitors,' and the rest indicating that this was a 'consumer requirement.' The views espoused by the majority of Brand Managers were in line with what appeared on the company's website, namely that "innovation in new products and technologies enables us to meet present and future needs of our consumers in an increasingly sustainable manner," (Nestlé 2013). The aforementioned is further supported by Haig (2003: 204) who states that "the

most successful brands today retain their prominent position by evolving and updating over time."

The Brand Managers indicated that marketing research 'was only conducted as the need arose,' and not necessarily when the company intended to re-brand coffee and other beverage brands. The chi-square goodness-of-fit test results ($\chi^2(3, N=4) = 12.000, p = 0.016$) revealed that, significantly more of the respondents indicated that market research was conducted only 'as the need arose.'

It also became evident that the Business Unit and Marketing Team, together with the Packaging Technologist and Brand Managers, collectively initiated changes to product packaging. In addition, it became evident from documentation (Nestlé's Packaging Guidelines 2012) that although 'an idea' may emanate from anywhere in the organisation, it is only the Marketing team who may initiate changes to the products' packaging design," since the Brand Manager is the custodian of the brand and also controller of the budget. The Packaging Technologist merely uses the specifications provided by the Brand Manager to develop product packaging samples.

The Brand Managers were required to rate the importance of what the re-branding process entailed on a 5 point Likert Scale ranging from 5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree. Their summarized responses captured in Figure 1 reveal that the re-branding process entailed primarily the following steps:

- ♦ Determining why re-branding is being conducted,
- ♦ Establishing the availability of a budget for the re-branding,
- ♦ Creating strategic goals for re-branding,
- ♦ Launching the new brand, and
- ♦ Providing staff with training and education to ensure that everyone is well equipped to communicate the change.

From Table 1 it is evident that when products are re-branded, consumers are the driving force behind the change, and the product changes are made to "attract different consumers" and to ensure that products remain "relevant," for continued patronage from existing consumers. The aforementioned is also supported by what is appears on company's documents, where it is stated that since "they believe that consumers are at the core of the company's existence, products need to be re-branded regularly to meet

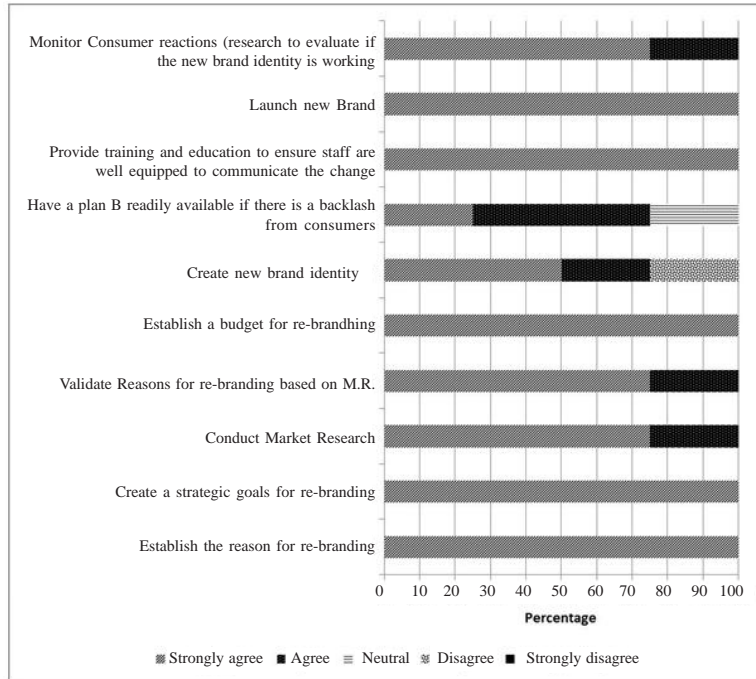


Fig. 1. Steps in re-branding

Table 1: Reasons for re-branding

Brand Manager	Code	Response
Coffee mixtures Other Beverages	A/D	Attract different consumers that represent a significant volume opportunity
	A	When people have the wrong perceptions or associate the brand with the wrong things
	F	When the brand has no awareness or portrays no advantages over
	A/D/E	When you need to highlight new ingredients, new benefits and improvements to the recipe that will persuade the consumer to buy the product
	A/C	When you feel that the packaging is out of date and not relevant to consumers anymore
Milo	A/E	When you want to change the current consumer profile. For example, if it has mature packaging, but you want to target younger consumers, you include brighter colours with bolder and bigger copy, as well as images, for a younger market
	B	Lately, South African legislation has caused many packaging changes due to new restrictions on font size, image usage etc.
	B	To meet regulatory requirements, (e.g. communicating the GDAs on a label as the law of SA requires.
Pure Coffee	E/F	It is to communicating the benefits of brand (e.g. Actigen E, this helps to differentiate the brand from competitors.
	A/C	Consumer research and feedback
	C	Improved technology that will improve existing product but still commercially viable
	A/C	Global alignment to what is happening in other Nestle markets

Coding Key:

- A Consumers
- B Regulatory Requirements
- C Research
- D Sales Growth
- E Communicating the Benefits of the Brand
- F Competitors

consumer needs, reduce complaints and ensure brand loyalty,” (Nestlé Packaging Technologist 2012).

From Table 2 it is evident that point of sale displays, television advertisements and consumer sampling are strategies used to familiarize consumers with the rebranded products.

From Table 3it is evident that the Brand Managers’ greatest challenge in re-branding is the consumers’ reaction to the re-branded product

It also became evident that the vast majority (75%) of the Brand Managers were of the view that it isnot only of utmost importance to retain the Nestlé logo, but also certain aspects of the

Table 2: Promotion that accompanies re-branding

<i>Brand Manager</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Response</i>
Coffee Mixtures	A	Hot chocolate was re-branded to ensure a premium position within the consumers mind and relative to Cadbury. This warrants an additional price for consumers to pay for Nestle.
Other Beverages	B	Due to limited budget, promotions accompanying the re-brand are difficult. Often, simple point of sale, like wobblers or shelf talkers, need to be used to highlight the new packaging.
	B	You could also use the packaging itself as a communicator for updated branding
Milo	C	We have not had marketing support
Pure Coffee	E/B/D	For the Nescafe relaunch we changed the Nescafe classic recipe, we did alot of consumer sampling and we also did alot of TV commercials to communicate the new jar design. We had to create awareness & trial. We had point of sale to create awareness of the changes.

Coding Key:

- A Price
- B Point of Sale Displays
- C No marketing Support
- D Consumer Sampling
- E Commercial Advertising

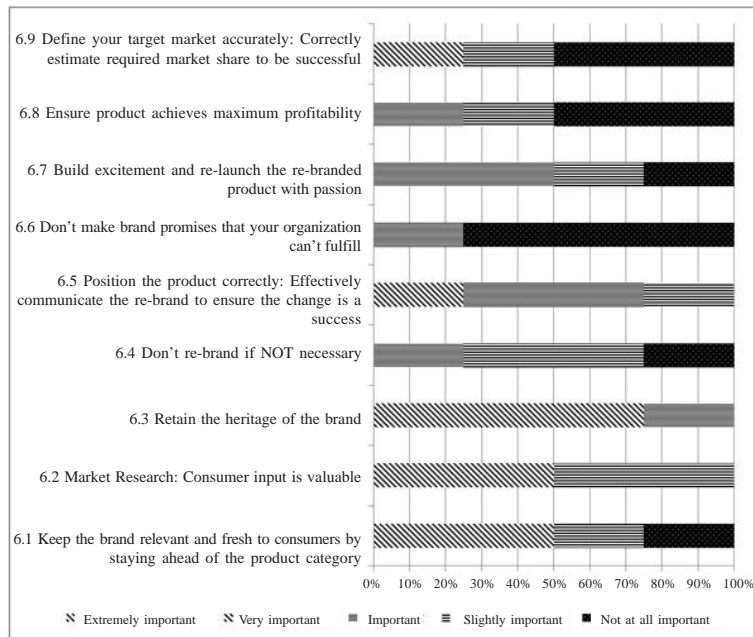


Fig. 2. How re-branding failures are avoided

Table 3: Challenges experienced when re-branding

Brand Manager	Code	Response
Coffee Mixtures	A/C	No re-branded although concerns arise with consumers not understanding or recognising the brand from a packaging perspective or not relating to positioning
Other Beverages	A/C	Ensuring tha package changes aren't too overt as this can push consumers away as they perceive that the product has changed with the packaging
Milo	D	Ensuring that the right cues usexd are relevant to the target market
Pure Coffee	C	The lack of space for regulatory requirements is always a challenge
	B	Ensuring that we launch on time
	A/D	Execution at store level especially if there is till old product instore-need to sell that first
	A	Consumers reaction to the change

Coding Key:

- A Consumers Reaction to the packaging change
- B Product Launch
- C Packaging
- D The right cues are used

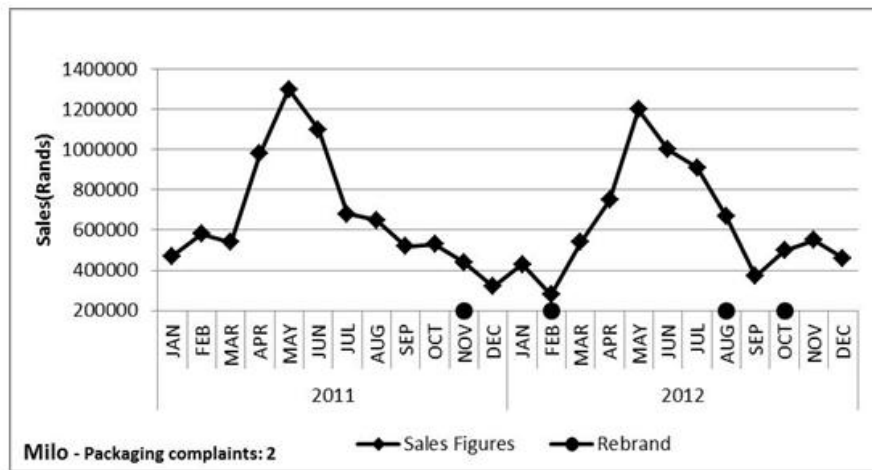


Fig. 3. Milo sales for 2011 and 2012

product must be retained during re-branding. This view concurs with what appears in the company’s documentation, where it is reflected that the logo is crucial to packaging and should be visible for consumers to identify (Nestlé Packaging Technologist 2013). Cohn and Bromell (2013) state that “a logo is an indicator of values, loyalty, and togetherness, and the visual aspects can make or break a brand.” When consumers perceive that a product exceeds expectations, all other products falling under the same brand will automatically “inherit” the same level of appreciation.

It is evident from Figure 2 that the Brand Managers believe that the following five factors assist in avoiding re-branding failures: keeping the brand relevant and fresh in the minds of consumers; positioning the product correctly by effectively communicating the re-brand to ensure that the change is a success; conducting market research since consumer input is valuable; retaining the heritage of the brand and defining your target market accurately, and correctly estimating the required market share to be successful.

Although sales fluctuations may be attributed to various reasons, an attempt was made to

determine if any association could be drawn between rebranding and sales. It must also be emphasized that the sales of coffee and beverages are very seasonal (Nestlé Packaging Technologist 2012). Figure 3 depicts the turnover with regard to one of Nestlé’s famous brands, namely Milo during 2011-2012. In November 2011 rebranding was conducted, and it is evident that sales declined throughout the rest of 2011. In 2012 three re-branding exercises were carried out, and sales peaked in January, but slumped in February although re-branding was conducted during the same month. However, the units sold grew from March to May, but continued to fall from July. In August, a second re-branding exer-

cise was conducted and the units sold declined steadily, whereas in October when the third re-branding exercise was conducted, the sales rose in October and November, but began to fall again in December. Similar conclusions were drawn with regard to coffee and other hot drinks (Figures 4, 5 and 6). The findings confirm that there can be no direct relationship between rebranding and turnover of the rebranded product.

It is evident from Figure 4 that in October, the sales of mixed coffees slumped, whereas in June it peaked, and increased drastically between April and June. Thus different turnover patterns emerged during and after the re-branding, once

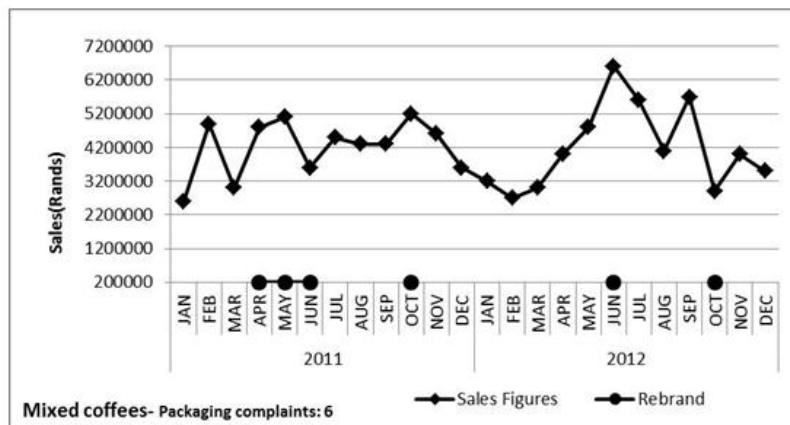


Fig. 4. Sales of mixed coffees

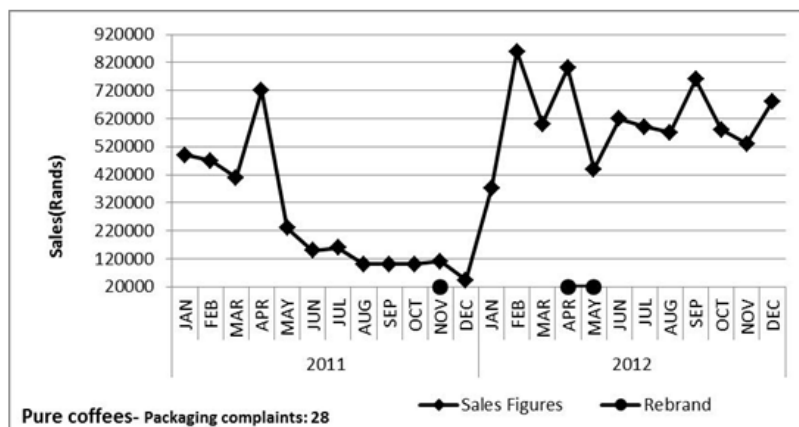


Fig. 5. Pure coffees sales- 2011-2012

again confirming that there is no direct association between re-branding and sales.

The same pattern with regard to what has been reported on the turnover figures reflected in Figures 4-5, is evident from Figures 5-6.

With regard to complaints about the packaging, it is evident that most complaints were associated with the packaging of pure coffee products. Irrespective, it is important for the company to ascertain the nature of the complaint and address the issues, since they may have impacted the sales of these products, post the re-branding.

Table 4 reveals that three of four Brand Managers agreed that the benefit of re-branding outweighs the costs involved.

It became evident that the company’s marketers make a decision to re-brand based on the brand’s popularity in the market, implying that when the product fails to meet the needs of the target market, re-branding is considered. This is consistent with Seth (2009) who suggests that the market place is constantly changing, which gives marketers the responsibility to acclimatize themselves to consumers’ behaviour and consumer adjustment, prior to and post re-branding. Thus, marketers are required to pay close attention to every change in consumer attitude and purchase behaviour, and in turn fine tune their re-branding strategy accordingly.

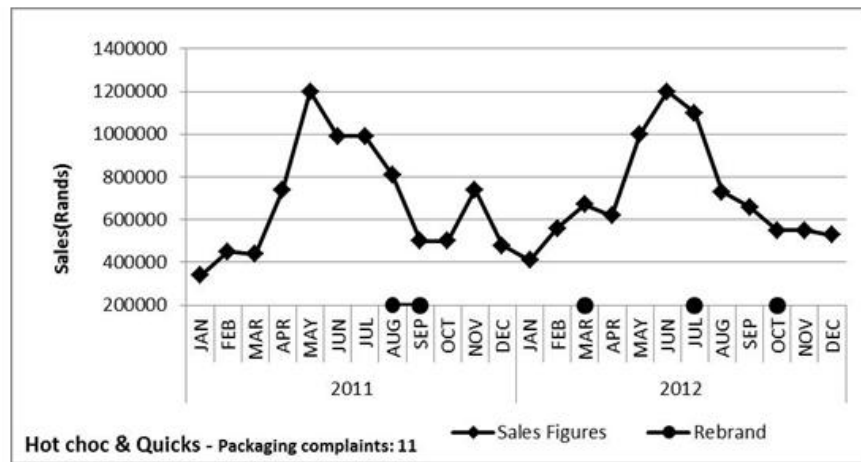


Fig. 6. Sales of hot chocolate and quicks–2011-2012

Table 4: Costs versus benefits of re-branding

Brand Manager	Code	Response
Coffee Mixtures	A/C/D/E	Yes, changes are beneficial to the consumer, whilst maintaining brand integrity it is critical for success & failure relevance of the brand
Other Beverages	A/D	Only if it is big enough to change a consumers’ habit. I don’t believe minor tweaks does benefit the consumers, unless there is a lot of communication and where consumers feel that they are receiving something better
Milo	A/D/E	Yes, the brand remains fresh and relevant to consumers and regulatory in the market place.
Pure Coffee	A/D	Yes the change is important as long as it is in line with consumer needs so that in the long term you get a return on your investment due to project sales.

Coding Key:

- A Yes
- B No
- C Change is important
- D As long as it meets consumer needs
- E It keeps the brand relevant

It was evident that the company altered all its coffee and beverage packaging twice in the period 2011-2012. This is tantamount to partial and full re-branding. The Nestlé 500g sachets were tweaked which included a new look and also consisted of advanced packaging material which allowed for better storage on shelves. This resulted in the brand becoming a huge success as Nestlé was unable to cope with the demand once the re-branded product was launched. Nestlé works on a 60/40 targeted taste consumer preference, which implies that in a sample consisting of 100 respondents, a minimum of 60 respondents should have taste preference for the product being sampled.

This study also suggests that the company faced re-branding failures, since some product's packaging was rejected by the consumers, forcing the company to revert to the original packaging.

It also became apparent that one of the company's key reasons for re-branding its coffee and beverage brands, is innovation. Furthermore, the company conducts market research only when deemed necessary. This finding is supported by Data Monitor (2011: 6) which stated that Nestlé has global research and development centres in five continents, and controls twenty-nine research development and technology facilities worldwide. Moreover, due to having strong research capabilities, the company is able to "renew its product line at regular intervals, while boosting revenue growth" (Data Monitor 2011: 6).

The company has a customized re-branding strategy for each product. Having customized strategies for each product is advisable because different products cater for different segments, hence strategies need to be segment specific. This is supported by Data Monitor (2011:6) which states that "one of Nestlé's key strengths is its ability to customize global products according to consumer preferences in the local market."

It also became evident that the greatest challenge in re-branding is the consumer's reaction to the re-branded product. The change to a product's packaging needs not to be overt so as to push consumers away, yet at the same time packaging needs to be informative and up-to-date. This is consistent with Keller's (2008:167) views, since he states that one of the strongest associations consumers have with a product is inspired by the look of its packaging. In addition an analysis of 26 products and 402 consumers revealed that twice as many people learned about the new

use from the package rather than television advertisements (Keller 2008: 167).

When re-branding, "failure can sometimes be attributed to product problems, at other times to distribution problems, changes to legislations, to bad luck or other bad management" (Hart and Murphy 1998: 10). The results of this study indicated that four factors surfaced which are important in order to avoid re-branding failures: keeping the brand relevant and fresh to consumers by staying ahead of the product category, positioning the product correctly by inter-alia, effectively communicating the (re) brand to ensure that the change is a success, conducting regular market research as consumer input is valuable, preserving the heritage of the brand, by defining the target market accurately and correctly estimating the required market share in order to be successful.

The results reveal that the company is also producing smaller package sizes in order to ensure that consumers are still able to enjoy their favourite products, but in preferred smaller quantities (Nestlé Good Food, Good Life 2013) at a more affordable price. For instance, a Ricoffy 200g pouch is 10-15% cheaper as opposed to the current tin format (Nestlé Good Food, Good Life 2013). However, producing smaller packaging comes with conversion costs to the organisation and success is not always guaranteed.

It also became evident that when re-branding, certain aspects of a product's packaging are retained. The majority of the respondents suggested that the company logo is the most important identifier of the company, and it is therefore always retained on packaging during re-branding. This is consistent with Lake (2013) who states that a logo is a symbol which provides consumers with an instantaneous and powerful recognition of the business and the products it offers.

CONCLUSION

Breaking into the market as a new brand can be a serious challenge, even for well established brands. Rebranding poses both opportunities and threats, and it is therefore important for marketers of FMCGs to understand the decisions and processes which precede, as well as follow a re-branding exercise. Re-branding products is now more challenging than ever, as marketers

have limited budgets to effectively re-brand. In addition, the market place has now become overcrowded; branded goods are now not only competing with lower priced competitors' brands, but private label brands as well. When coffee and beverage brands fall short of meeting the present needs of the target market, re-branding is required to correct the position in the minds of the consumer. Marketing research proved to be a crucial tool in order to effectively re-brand a product. In addition, the benefits that marketers receive from re-branding outweigh the costs involved. Therefore, a re-branding project is a potentially valuable exercise for marketers which allows for the benefits of staying connected and current to the consumer market, to be reaped. Purchasing behaviour and patterns and consumer attitudes have to be closely monitored when re-branding so that strategies are adjusted accordingly.

Re-branding failures of FMCGs can be contained if marketers keep the brand relevant and are a step ahead of competitors in the product category; the product is repositioned correctly and the re-brand is well communicated; regular market research is conducted, the heritage of the brand is well-preserved, and the target market is accurately defined. The greatest challenge marketers face when re-branding is how do consumers respond to the re-branded product. The re-branded product need not be obvious so as to deter consumers from purchasing the product. In addition, packaging needs to be informative, up-to-date, aligned with consumer requirements, differentiated from competitors and still be very appealing to the target market. Finding the right balance is key when re-branding.

RECOMENDATIONS

FMCG marketers are required to ensure that their products are always relevant to consumers by re-branding regularly or in response to market information and intelligence. Furthermore, they need to pay closer attention to their consumers' purchasing behaviour and preference patterns, and to monitor attitudes both before and after re-branding. If changes in behavioural patterns are detected, the re-branding strategies are to be adjusted accordingly. Since marketers are constantly bombarded with new laws and regulations regarding FMCGs packaging, they are advised to explore this as a potential opportunity to not only update the package to comply

with the new regulations, but also re-brand at the same time.

Re-branding failures of FMCGs must be contained through positioning the product correctly and ensuring that the "re-brand" is well communicated; regular market research is conducted, the heritage of the brand is well-preserved, and the target market is accurately defined.

Marketers are advised to monitor consumer responses to their re-branding, since it is cheaper and easier to monitor consumer complaints in real time and to address concerns immediately, so as to avoid competitors using product deficits to win market share and gain a competitive advantage. Marketers need to explore the use of social media as a communication tool to promote re-branded products, as well as to encourage involvement in the re-branding process, since social media marketing is transforming the way consumers engage with brands, and in the course, transforming the way marketing is conducted. It is vital for marketers to understand how their customers interact with brands on inter-alia, Face Book and Twitter in order to acquire crucial information to build brands and create brand loyal consumers, since they use of social networking such as Face Book and Twitter to share their views on a brand at a fast pace.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As with all research, this study has certain limitations, thus the results should be interpreted with caution. Firstly, the sample consisted of only seven, albeit senior, relevant respondents, who are based at one of several sites in South Africa. Considering the fact that the FMCG company in South Africa manufactures many different food products in each of the nine provinces, perhaps a larger sample which includes all FMCGs produced by the company could be used in a future study.

Furthermore, this research focused on re-branding the FMCGs company's products in South Africa only. Considering that this is a global company, a comparative study of re-branding coffee and beverage brands in the same company in other countries, could serve to strengthen the findings and allow for a comparison with what emerges from its other South African branches, as well as lessons could be learnt for re-branding internationally.

Since it emerged that there were no regular patterns of fluctuation in sales post-rebranding, and that the fluctuations may not be directly associated with the re-branding, attempts should be made to “isolate” factors so as to get some understanding of the impact of re-branding on turnover.

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