

Reflection on Usage of Countries as Brands

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

Course

Professor

Date

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Value of Branding Nations

A country presents an image to the global setting through its economic, political, and social organization. When a country is faced with political turmoil, a bad picture is portrayed. The opposite is true. In the evolving world, consumerism is a crucial topic facing marketers. I particularly like how FutureBrand tries to deviate from the usual indicators of a country's image (2019, pg. 1-3). It is agreeable that the world is changing, primarily due to technology.

So, what value can we associate the nation brand to? Well, I can remember an everyday slang which talks about Italian suits, German Machines, Caribbean holidays, Turkish designs, and Italian dishes. Does it mean that suits come only from Italy? No. The meaning of these associated sayings is the brand. According to IPSOS (2019), Germany is the top of the nation brand index. My dream, for example, is getting a German machine, may it be a Mercedes or a BMW. The reason why I associate these consumer products to their nations is brand. The quality achieved by these products attracts consumers and influences perception and preference. Therefore, I think there is value in measuring countries as brands because every consumer closely associates products to a country. A nation needs to understand its position as a brand globally.

Report Methodologies

The three reports try to capture the attention of a reader and direct it towards nation branding. IPSOS report uses a technological methodology. Data is collected using online interviews, which put into consideration demographic factors like age and gender. Results are displayed as a matter of frequencies that places Germany, Japan, and Finland among the best

performing countries in terms of the brand index (IPSOS, 2019). The collection of data comes from countries across the world, including Africa, where Nigeria and Kenya are highlighted to be growing fast.

On another side, Panda and Misra (2014) use the commonly used methodology of statistical analysis to establish a relationship between country of origin and nation brand. The results are conclusive, citing the country of origin as an important factor in branding. Brand awareness, loyalty, and distinctiveness are the chosen variables that show positivity and reliance on the country of origin.

FutureBrand (2019) uses a linguistic analysis methodology to achieve their objective. They first identify six factors that can be used to analyze chosen nations. Secondly, they conduct interactive research by analyzing various countries, including Japan, Canada, Austria, China, and Denmark. The report does not concentrate only on consumer products and services. Instead, factors like migration and environment arise when defining the nation brand.

Overall, I think FutureBrand uses a better methodology than IPSOS, and Panda and Misra. IPSOS uses a frequency methodology to achieve a brand index. Panda and Misra use a regression analysis which, although it is conclusive, does not provide an overall picture. FutureBrand however, uses an interactive approach that tries to explain the importance of country brand and its significance to consumer perception.

Implications

The three reports use different approaches but aim at achieving the same goal. Educating marketing experts is essential when it comes to branding. One implication is informing marketers on the countries where the brand is rapidly growing. For example, a marketer will understand countries like Finland and Slovakia, which are growing fast in terms of

consumer image. It is crucial to also note a position drop from countries like the United States and the United Kingdom.

According to Pandra and Misra (2014), brand loyalty, distinctiveness, and awareness are essential. Companies like Apple, Microsoft, and Toyota achieved their objectives by establishing these factors. Apple phones are unique, customers show loyalty, and the brand is known globally. Another outcome is the highlighted growing countries. Marketers shift their attention towards these countries intending to learn their strategy. In simple terms, what makes the countries achieve the top ten positions?

According to IPSOS (2019) and FutureBrand (2019), the environment is a burning topic that arises from global concern. FutureBrand (2019) captures countries like Japan that have been hit by nuclear disasters, and top companies are implementing strategies to reduce carbon emissions. I can reconcile the two scenarios by discussing how company strategies by a giant like Sony can enhance their brand through environment conservation. Environmental conservation is transforming consumer perception in the same lengths as Corporate Social Responsibility. Therefore, the issue of nation brand can influence countries to adopt environment-friendly measures, which can be implemented by top companies.

Using Report Information

As discussed above, the environment is a crucial topic. Therefore, marketing a new product to countries like Japan, which have strict policies on environmental conservation, requires a strategy that touches on the environment. Consequently, I would introduce a carbon emission strategy to gladden the hearts of Japanese consumers. It would not matter if the product is associated with the environment or not.

According to FutureBrand (2019), Norway is a country that ranks best in quality of life and value systems. Therefore, for a product to gain momentum in the country, a company must engage the citizens on the aspects they are ranked best at. Although these are not the only factors, I believe they are enough to attract consumers from the naturally endowed country. Tourists and businesses underappreciate the quality of life and value systems. Capturing these aspects would place a new product in a better place.

Another potential country to set up a new product in Austria. While people in the country tend to value heritage and culture, I think offering a product that deviates from the already existing brand would attract consumers. One cannot offer bread to a person who is used to bread. The product must touch on a unique line similar to Apple's launch of smartphones.

References

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