

Knowledge and main factors of brand success

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In these days, information is not enough for the companies. It is necessary to combine information with critical thinking, which creates knowledge. Knowledge is the competitive advantage for the company. Knowledge has to be implemented to the every area of functioning of the company, from definition of definition to marketing. Company's own brand is created by complete picture of company. Company can create this complete picture by implementation of knowledge about employees, customers and stakeholders. Brand could be a competitive advantage.

1 Knowledge and company

Knowledge management is not about creating encyclopedia of knowledge, but rather about creating such a corporate culture and technology, which will be those who know motivate to share their knowledge (Janovčik 2010).

Knowledge Management is deliberate and systematic process or practice in acquiring, capturing, sharing, creating and productive using of knowledge to improve learning and performance of organizations (Šujanová 2005).

Knowledge management involves the efficient connection of those who know to those who need to know and transformation of personal knowledge to the knowledge of the organization (Truneček 2001).

"Knowledge is a prerequisite for the results of any conscious activity. When the business is a key category of success, being more important than the level of technical and technological security, access to resources and other prerequisites of a successful business (manažment znalostí).

Davenport-Prusak: "Working knowledge examines how knowledge can be nurtured in organizations. Building trust throughout a company is the key to creating a knowledge-oriented corporate culture, a positive environment in which employees are encouraged to make decisions that are efficient, productive, and innovative." (Davenport and Prusak 1998).

They also argue that "the knowledge embedded in routines and practices that the companies transform into valuable products and services." in other words knowledge can be transformed into innovations and then competitiveness (Davenport and Prusak 1998).

The primary goals of knowledge management (using knowledge in company) are: better decision making, faster response to key issues, increasing profitability, improving productivity, creating new/additional business opportunities, reducing costs, sharing best practice, increasing market share, increasing share price, and better staff attraction/retention (Drucker 2007).

2 Brand and company

In these days, brand is the main communication tool for companies. Because of the large supply of goods and services, customers (and also incoming employees) decide while choosing the company (or goods and services) mainly by brand (image of the brand, brand's good will, etc.). Therefore companies have to build brand not only from customer's perspective but also from own and incoming employees' perspective.

Kotler and Keller (Kotler and Keller 2007) argue that creating a brand is conditioned by a process which is known as branding. This process gives the brand its strength ("builds the brand"). This

process is about teaching consumers what the product is, what it does and why they should be interested in it.

The importance of employees is emphasized within the corporate branding literature (Ind 1997; Balmer and Gray 2003; Hatch and Schultz 2001, 2003; de Chernatony 2001; Harris and de Chernatony 2001; Wilson 1997; Wilson 2001). Having distinctive values can be important in an industrial company marketing services and it is a key part of the organisation's reputation. Shared values between stakeholders will help to unify and strengthen the corporate brand (Ind 1997; de Chernatony and Harris 2000). Pringle and Gordon (2001) talk of the importance of alignment between employee's values and their behaviour and the expectations of customers. Both ideas suggest that the way a brand is seen inside an organisation should be similar to how it is seen by customers and that the perception inside will influence the external perception. Hatch and Schultz (2001) argue that the employee and customer views of a company's reputation are causally related. De Chernatony and Harris (2000) consider corporate brand management to be about narrowing the gaps between the components of identity among staff in order to develop a strong, coherent identity. They believe a brand's performance will be stronger, the narrower the gaps are. Davies and Miles (1998) also suggest the importance of identifying gaps between the internal and external perspectives of a brand which may erode reputation. Ambler and Barrow (1996) point out that the personality of a corporate brand should be the same to both internal and external groups, if it is to be trusted. Roper et al. (2002) present evidence that the employee view of the brand causes the customer view of the brand. Chun and Davies (2006) argue that for all service brands the employee view is transmitted to customers through "emotional contagion" by the way they treat the customer and how they manage the customer experience.

4.3 Knowledge and brand

According to the research, which was made at the University of Zilina from January 2011 to May 2012, companies have to implement several factors for the success of the brand. This factors is shown in figure 1 (Rusnáková, Púčková and Graňák 2012). Knowledge is necessary for the right implementation of these factors to the operating of companies.

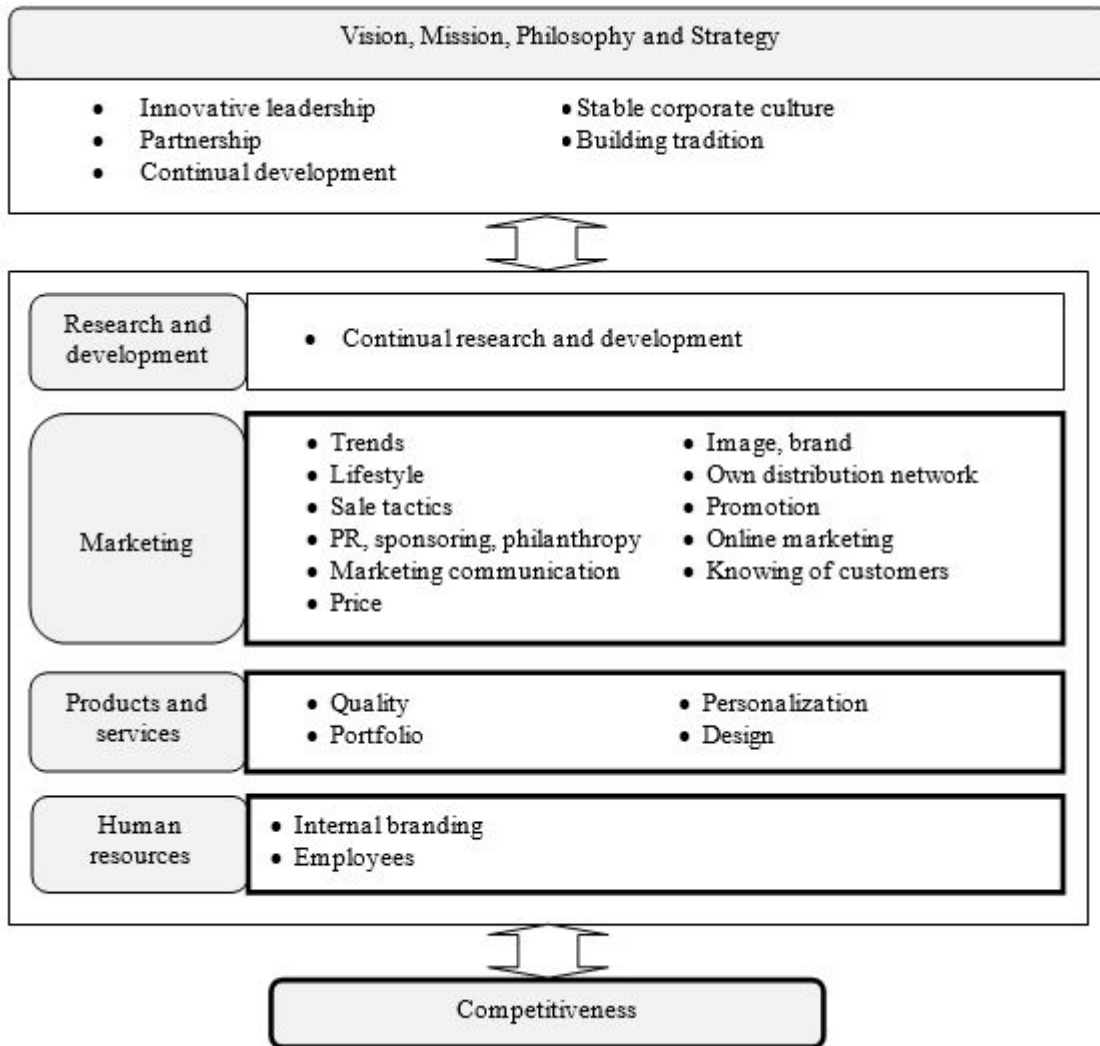


Figure 1: Model of brand successful factors
 Source: Rusnáková, Púčková and Graňák (2012)

Vision, Mission, Philosophy and Strategy

Companies have to consider knowledge during setting the basic pillars of operations of the company. Suitable corporate culture is important for work with knowledge. Because only employees, who are identified with the company, are willing to share knowledge and work with knowledge. Also knowledge of customers, competition and stakeholders is important for setting the basic pillars of company. This knowledge determines the direction of development of the company. Thanks to this knowledge company can improve their research (internal or external) and set up suitable corporate culture. But all of these changes are long-term process and create tradition of company.

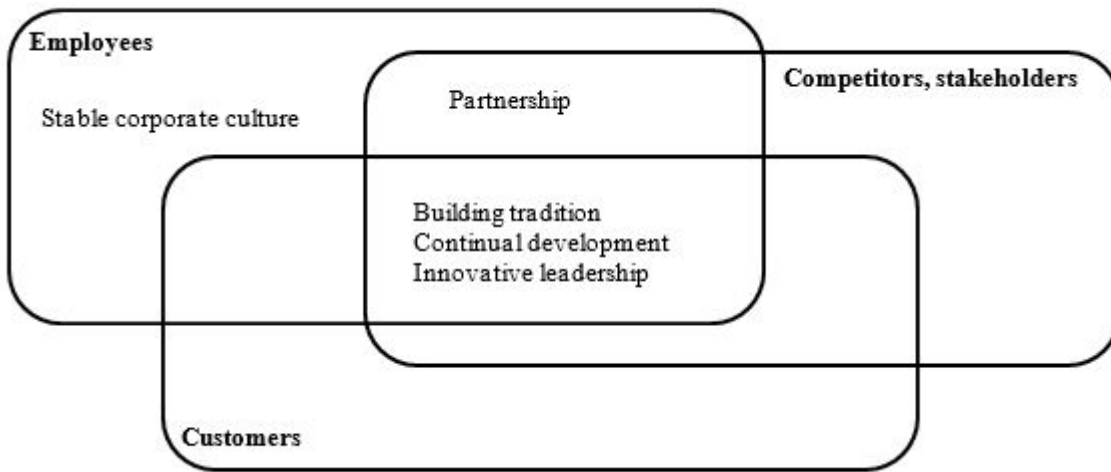


Figure 2: Knowledge and vision, mission, philosophy, strategy

Source: author

Research and development

Base of each ongoing research and development is knowledge. It is important to work with knowledge of all customers, competitors, stakeholders and employees as well as other participants in the market, not only in the field of corporate activities, but also of the global market at all. In this case is not important if company has own research or uses information/knowledge research (results) from external subjects.

Marketing

Knowledge about the costumers - knowing of customers is one of the most important part of marketing. Thanks to this knowledge, company can adapt and create new trends, lifestyle of customers and set up prices, sale tactics, promotions, online marketing and marketing communication. This area is also influenced by competitors and stakeholders of the company. Companies have to engage in sponsorship and philanthropy and thereby build company's image. All these activities can help the company to build its brand.



Figure 3: Knowledge and marketing

Source: author

Product and services

Knowledge is also base for developing of new products. Employees´ knowledge is reflected in the first idea of new product and in the quality of final product. Knowing of customers (needs and expectations) is reflected in creating of portfolio and final design of products. Thanks to combination of customers´ and employees´ knowledge, companies can personalize their products. Nowadays, when supply is above demand, personalization of products is the most important factor for success of the product.

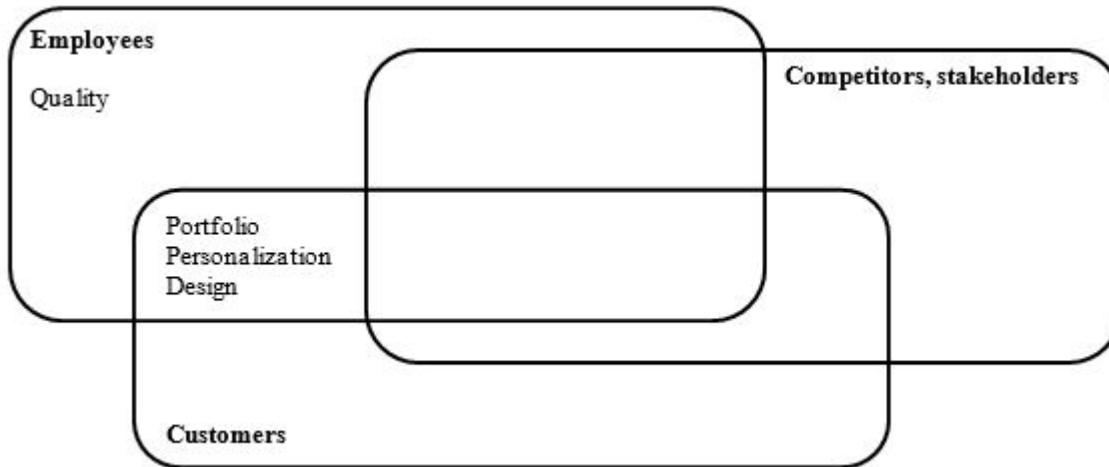


Figure 4: Knowledge and products/services

Source: author

Human resources

Human resources are essential element of knowledge management. Many companies make mistake that their first solution of crisis is layoff. As above mentioned research shows, human resources are a key component of the success of the brand and company at all. Companies should put emphasis on the formulation of appropriate conditions for employees - process of internal branding. Only motivated employee is the company's competitive advantage.

After research of a number of successful brands we can state that their success is not accidental and we can clearly identify factors of success which these companies have in common. The success of brands in the market is contingent by purposefulness and constant progress. The success can be summed up to the idea: "The success will be achieved by those who are constantly working on their development and have deep knowledge about the market, customers and own employees."

This basic idea encompasses all the activities necessary for the success of the brand. These activities are continuous research and development, internal branding, capture and identify (and follow) trends and many other activities. One of the most important factors is called "innovative spirit". We could define it as "not to be afraid to implement new ideas". Therefore, it is necessary not to be afraid of own new ideas. A lot of cases from the past are known, where innovative product created new market, as well as need to use this "innovative" product. The base of innovative spirit and new ideas are employees and their knowledge.

Poznámky/Notes

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Klíčové slová/Key Words

knowledge, brand, corporate culture, employees, customers
znalosti, značka, podniková kultúra, zamestnanci, zákazníci

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Résumé

Znalosti a hlavné faktory úspechu značky

Po preskúmaní mnohých úspešných značiek môžeme skonštatovať, že ich úspech nie je náhodný a identifikované faktory spájajú viaceré z nich. Úspech značiek na trhu je podmienený cieľavedomosťou a neustálym napredovaním. Základ úspechu možno zhrnúť do myšlienky: "Úspech dosiahnu tí, ktorí dlhodobo a neustále pracujú na svojom rozvoji, za predpokladu dôkladného poznania trhu, zákazníkov a svojich zamestnancov."

Táto základná myšlienka v sebe zahŕňa všetky aktivity potrebné pre úspech značky, ide o nepretržitý výskum a vývoj, interný branding, zachytenie a určovanie trendov a mnoho ďalších aktivít. Jedným z najdôležitejších faktorov je tzv. inovačný duch. Mohli by sme ho definovať ako "nemať strach realizovať nové nápady". Preto je potrebné nebáť sa svojich nápadov a nových ideí. Už z minulosti sú známe prípady, kedy inovatívny produkt vytvoril úplne nový trh, ako aj samotnú potrebu produkt využívať. Základom inovačného ducha a nových nápadov sú zamestnanci a ich znalosti.

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