

Importance of Brand in Brand Extensions

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Brand Extension like Brand equity is a much debated topic. In India and much more so abroad, we see growing trends towards brand name in one category to enter other categories. Earlier, we used to take of a "distinct brand identity" on the philosophy of "one product, one brand name" of a brand being a 'single, indivisible, unique entity' to us this habit of slapping on the same brand name to a host of products is somewhat disturbing. Yet this is accelerating. The extensions need not to be a trap. They can be effectively managed by understanding the perception of the consumer. The present article is an attempt to focus on the issues like need for brand extension. Its pros and cons, and image fit between the parent and the extensions.

INTRODUCTION

The most distinctive skill of professional marketers is their ability to create, maintain, protect and enhance brands. Branding is the art and cornerstone of marketing.

The American Marketing Association defines 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."

Branding is essential for product and planning. Brand plays an important role in Brand extension. Marketers have long recognized that strong brand names that deliver high sales and profits i.e. those that have brand equity) have the potential to work their magic on other products. A brand identifies the seller or maker. Brand differs from other assets such as patents and copyrights, which have expiration dates. A brand can convey up to six levels of meaning viz. attributes, benefits, values, culture, personality & user.

Reason for Branding:

- ◆ Branding facilitates the introduction of similarly branded productions.
- ◆ Encourages repeat purchases.
- ◆ Aids segmentation strategies.
- ◆ It specifies the customers status needs.

Ripps approach to branding formula for branding a product:

- R- Easy to remember and easy to recall at the time of purchases.
- I- Image, right type of image in mind of consumers.
- P- Pronounce, no difficulty in pronouncing it.
- P- Protectible, secure legal protection through registration.
- S- Short, easier for the consumer to remember.

If we consider all these things in branding than the product/service would be a successful brand and such type of brand can aids in Brand Extension.

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BRAND EXTENSION

According to Prof. Subroto Sengupta – Brand extension refers to using an existing brand name to enter another product market (category) altogether. For e.g., Dettol antiseptic liquid and Dettol soap.

Brand extension, the use of a brand name established in one product class to enter another product class, have been the core of strategic growth for a variety of firms, especially during the past decade. A company may decide to use an existing brand name to launch new products in other category. Honda uses its company name to cover such different products as automobiles, motorcycles, snowblowers, lawnmowers, marine-engines and snowmobiles. This allows Honda to advertise that it can fit “six Hondas in a two- car garage”.

Several specialty clothing retailers, such as the Gap and Ann Taylor are extending their brands in to the bath and body products arenas. Gap stores throughout the United States now feature its name on soap, lotion, shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, bath salts and perfume spray.

Taking advantage of brand equity of the Keo- Karpin Brand, the company decided to extend its activities into allied categories, such as: Hair problem solver category with Keo- Karpin. Brand extensions are a natural strategy for the firm looking to grow by exploiting its assets.

Types of Brand Extensions:

Brand Extensions are of two types:

- (i) Extension into related categories.

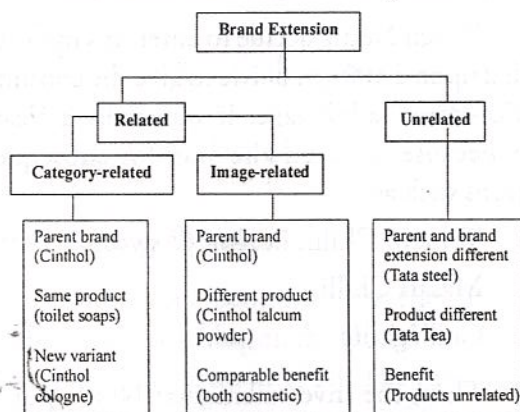


Fig 1

- (ii) Extensions into unrelated categories.

In related categories is the example of Cinthol soap launching a lime fresh/ cologne fresh version or becoming a talcum powder.

In unrelated categories is the name Tata being used for both steel and tea. There is nothing common to steel and tea yet, Tata as a brand name established itself successfully in both the categories and hence called an unrelated extension.

Related extensions could further take two routes:

- (i) Extension into the same product category (Also called category- related extension).
- (ii) Extension into a category that is different but similar in benefits, association and appeal to the parent brand (Also called image- related extension).

The relationship between the parent and the various types of brand extensions are as follows:-

Brand & category- related- Products have same use, slightly different benefit, same or different set of customers. e.g. Cinthol soap launching its lime fresh/ cologne fresh/spicy fresh version. Here the product has not been changed but stretched to accommodate variety. Both Cinthol (old) and Cinthol lime Fresh are soaps. This could be called category- related extension.

Brand & Image- related- A relationship that transfer the emotional benefits and image of the parents to the extension. Example is of Cinthol from toilet soap to becoming a talcum powder. Though products are different, they are linked by the appeal they hold for customers. Both are cosmetics. This has been labeled as image- related extension.

Brand & unrelated- Almost no relationship expect brand name.

Example Reliance brand name being used for both Petrochemicals and Telecommunications and hence called anunrelated extension.

Psychological Principle explaining Brand Extension

According to classical conditioning theorists, learning depends not only on repetition, but also on the ability of individuals to generalize. Ivan Pavlov, a Russian Physiologist found, that a dog could learn to salivate not only to the sound of a bell but also to the somewhat similar sound of jangling keys. If we were not capable of stimulus generalization – i.e. of making the same response to slightly different stimuli- not much learning would take place.

Stimulus generalization explains why imitative “me too” products succeed in the market place: consumers confuse them with the original product they have seen advertised. Brand extensions strategy works on the principle of stimulus generalization i.e. the practice of using the brand name of an already established brand. Because it is significantly cheaper for marketers to associate a new product with a known and trusted brand name than to try to develop a totally new brand, brand extensions offer a good alternative.

Need for Brand extension

The cost of establishing a new brand especially in the international market is enormous. It is also a known fact that about one in ten products launches meet with success. This makes the proposition of launching a new brand risky. Marketers view brand extension as risk minimization exercise. The following reasons could be added for brand extension:

- ◆ **Energizing a brand:** A brand wants to increase visibility. It extends into more various. e.g. Pond’s Dream Flower Talc extends to Pond’s magic.
- ◆ **Expanding core promise to new users:** A brand name might mean a salient idea or a core promise. Godrej shaving cream was extended into a shaving cake to accommodate the price- sensitive buyers.

◆ **Blocking or inhibiting competition:** Sometimes when competition is necessary to cover every niche. E.g. Surf has been extended to Surf Easy Wash & Surf Ultra and Ariel into Supersoaker.

◆ **Managing a dynamic environment:** A new trend brought in by competition. If ignored, might fundamentally alter the market. When such an outcome is feared, a product similar to the competitors is launched as a brand extension. E.g. Close-up created a new segment in the toothpaste market namely the Gel segment. Colgate had to launch Colgate Gel to protect its turf.

BRAND EXTENSION IN THE INDIAN SCENARIO

In Indian scenario number of examples of Brand Extensions are available. Some of them are:

Maggi Ketchup & Sauces

By the time the 2- minutes noodle was firmly established as brand “maggi” Nestle was working on a brand extension an area where they thought they might be able to leverage the brand & make same money. They then, decided to enter the ketchup market with the brand “Maggi”.

Finally in 1985, when Maggi Noodle, had already notched a 4000 ton business (that’s a lot of 100 gm packets); and thus ensured the establishment of the brand ‘Maggi’, Nestle launched their Maggi ketchup.

When Nestle decide to enter this market, it decided upon a 400 gm bottle to give the consumer a “Price-Point” advantage. It was really a clever move because it paved the way for subsequent additions such as:

- ◆ Tomato Chilli, i.e. hot & sweet,
- ◆ Masala Chilli,
- ◆ Chilli garlic.

Thus, the investment that Nestle put in, for establishing the “Maggi” brand through its 2

Minute noodles, paid handsome dividends through its extension in Maggi Ketch- Up and Sauces.

Dettol

Dettol was first used in a leading U.K. maternity hospital in early 1930s and played a major role in reducing by half the mortality rate in women suffering from puerperal fever.

In India also Dettol has been at the forefront of providing the best in antiseptic protection for the people.

Dettol Liquid

Liquid Dettol is synonymous with the liquid antiseptic market. It commands a market share of 83.5% of this market. Savlon, which was, re-launched by Johnson & Johnson in 1993, only has 13.5% share of the market.

Dettol Soap

When company analyzed the success of the mother brand, i.e. Dettol liquid, The company realized that the brand had been promoted over the year, on the dual platform :

- (a) Emotional: i.e. "Love & Care"- Mother's love & care in treating any wound suffered by a love one.
- (b) Functional: i.e. Antiseptic.

Today, Dettol soap is the number two (after Liril) in the premium soap market.

Dettol Plaster

The company realizes that the concept of dettol protection does fit in very nicely with this product in order to dislodge the brand leader Band-Aid.

Dettol Shaving Cream

One other product that the company launched; piggy-backing on the Dettol brand equity is dettol shaving cream in 1998. The introduction of this product is really an extension of that concept. The shaving cream market is relatively small,

approximately Rs. 80 crores, within a short period, the product has notched up a brand share of 6.5%.

Brand Extension: The Amul's way

Amul currently at Rs.2258 crore, The Gujrat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation, has grown leaps & bounds in its last 50 years of existence. The following products bear the brand name Amul.

- AMUL
- Butter
 - Ice Cream
 - Chocolate/Confectionery
 - Curd
 - Liquid Fresh Milk
 - Dairy Whitener
 - Cheese
 - Cottage cheese (Paneer)
 - Milk Additives
 - Pizza

Horlicks Brand Extensions

Elaichi Horlicks

Horlicks was only product in mid 1972. A product, which has tremendous brand equity. So company thought why make use of the tremendous brand equity of Horlicks and thus Elaichi Horlicks was introduce.

Horlicks Biscuits

Company was still looking for a product which could successfully capitalized on the strength of the Horlicks brand as a brand extension. One such product thought about was Horlicks Biscuits.

Junior Horlicks

The rationale behind this extension is to catch targeted consumers when they are young so that as they grow, so does the brand. The nutritional value of the product has been further enhanced by adding the ingredients suitable for children between the ages of 1-3. Since introduction this extended

brand has performed well, and today its sale is approximately 10% of the mother brand horlicks.

Mother's Horlicks

Special nutritional ingredients necessary for mothers have been added to make this brand more suitable for her. The brand today had 30% of the pregnant supplement market.

Chocolate Horlicks

Originally this brand was introduced by adding chocolate flavor mainly to compete with Complan Chocolate brand.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Branding is one of the most effective competitive tools and in a way represent a "Face in the crowd" strategy. It is therefore important for the marketer to nurture it and avoid any disasters. Despite this, it is unfortunate to observe how many of the brands go "down the hill", and how brands which have enjoyed leadership are not able to maintain it. There has been a growing interest in this area of branding. More so because, brand represents good will of the firm, and incorporate takeovers or mergers, often the value offered to buy out a firm is much more than the book value of its land, plants and machinery, inventory of finished and semi-finished products and the market value of its shares.

Finally, a marketer has to consider the issue of extending the brand name to other products. In deciding to extend or not, the marketer should consider whatever the new product, will it enhance the core brand's equity and whether the brand aids the extension process? (Saxena, 1998).¹

Building strong brands, helped managers to develop brand strategy in three ways-

- 1) It introduces the construct of brand identify of vision to guide, brand-building process.
- 2) It analyzes how to make multiple brands worked together as part of a system that create synergy, clarity & leverage across brands.

- 3) It discuss how brand equity should be measured, especially across products & countries. (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2002).²

Historically, branding works has focused on the external communication and support of the brand, creating the image, and delivering the promises, in a relatively stable business environment that usually worked Organization had time to figure out how to consistently deliver on there brand promise, adjust to change in the marketplace, or correct errors. However, in an environment where changes is the norm, and time to respond or recover is very limited, internal branding requires the same attention as external branding (Donald et al., 2001).³

For many companies, their most valuable assets are their brand name, because of the escalation of new product costs and high rate of new product failures, many companies prefer to leverage their brand equity through brand extensions, rather than risk launching a new brand (Schiffman & Kaunuk 1999).⁴

The term brand equity refers to the value inherent in a well known brand name. from a consumer's perspective brand equity is the added value bestowed on the product by the brand name (Chan & Srinivasan, 1994).⁵

Sony maintained its lead at the top of the best brands in Asia survey in the last update, with Cathay Pacific, Singapore Airlines, at the top branding. Other brands receiving strong backing to move up the ranking this update include Malaysia's Royal Sclangor & resorts (www.brandingasia.com).⁶

A brand that has been existent in the market for sometime may lose touch with consumers because consumer's need may have changed. Thus it is possible that a brand is fundamentally sound and yet is not in sympathy with the consumer's current corners. This explains the extensions from ivory soap to ivory shampoo, from dettol antiseptic to dettol soap from pond's dream flower talc to Pond's Dream flower soap, from North Star shoes to North star apparels (Sengupta, 1998).⁷

Brand extension refers to the use of a successful brand name to launch a new or modified product in a same broad market. A successful brand helps a company enter new product categories more easily, e.g. fairy (owned by Unilever) was extended from washing up liquid brand to become a washing powder brand too. The lucozade brand has undergone a very successful brand extension from children's health drink to an energy drink & sports drink (www. Turor2u.net)⁸

The brand extension involves using an existing brand name to launch a product in a different category. In the extensions, product category remains constant whereas in brand extension product category is a variable. Ponds> ponds cold cream-> ponds toilet soap-> ponds shampoo-> ponds tooth paste->ponds moisturizing lotion->ponds talc (Verma 2002).⁹

Brand extension involves extending the product or range brand into an Umbrella brand-sometime referred to as a over brand or banner brand. Here the process consists of taking the functional values of the brand and identifying other product in any category where the consumer seek the same values (Hart & Murphy 1998).¹⁰

Brand extensions, bearing an already known brand name do not require the huge budget, otherwise required to launch a new brand name, companies use line extensions not only to reduce the costs of launch a new brand name, but also to boost acceptance and trail, because a well known name on the new product should presumably reduce the level of risk to consumer and to the retail trade (Business week 1991).¹¹

The benefits of brand extensions are many. The most important benefits seems to be the facts that from both consumers, side and the producers' side, risk is minimized. The second advantage is the cost of extension involved. This is much less in case of extensions than in new brands. However, there are contrary viewpoints as well. Extensions rarely expand category demand and retailers cannot

provide more shelf space to a category just because there are more variants (Moorthi, 1999).¹²

Brand extension strategy offers a number of advantages. A well regarded brand name gives the new product recognition and earlier acceptance. It enables company to enter new product categories more easily. Sony puts its name on most of its new electronic products and instantly establishes a conviction of the new product's high quality. Brand extension saves considerable advertising cost that would normally be required to familiarize consumers with a new brand name. Like line extension, brand extension also involves risks. The new product might disappoint buyers and damages their respect for the company's other products. The brand name may be inappropriate to the new product. The brand name lose its special positioning in the consumer's mind through over- extension (Kotler, 1996: Kotler & Keller 2006).¹³⁻¹⁴

Brands like Sony and 3M covers a brand array of products, other like Coca-Cola are limited to a narrow product category. The Colgate brand has a somewhat broader catchments areas covering toothpaste, toothbrushes and antiplaque mouthwash. However. One can hardly imagine this brand being extended to cove foodstuffs of household cleaning products. The simple principle here is that the longer a brand has been the prisoner of single category, the more difficult it is to extend that brand's reach into other product categories. The wider the potential domain, the greater is brand's value in creating a predisposition to buy (Khurana, & Ravichandran).¹⁵

Brand extensions are a natural strategy for the firm looking to grow by exploiting its assets. Indeed, the most real and marketable assets of many firms are the brand names that they have developed. Thus, one strategic growth option is to exploit that asset by using it to penetrate new product categories or to license it to others for use therein. Another option is to acquire a firm with a brand name which can provide a platform for future growth via brand

extension (Aaker, 1991; Kotler & Armstrong, 2006).¹⁶⁻¹⁷

Conventional product differentiation strategies prescribe distinguishing a product or brand from that of competitors on the basis of an attribute that is relevant meaningful and valuable to consumer. However many marketers also successfully differentiate their brands on an attribute that appears valuable but on closer examination is actually irrelevant to creating the benefit (Carpenter et al., 1994)¹⁸

Procter & Gamble (P&G) was built on the strength of its many individual brands in the same product category (e.g. laundry detergents & cleansers). Now, however, it has begun to focus on the category wise benefits of its products, using the combined weight of its brands to come up with a more powerful message directed against competitive products. To effectively manage this strategy, P&G moves from brand management to category management (Warner 1995).¹⁹

Prior research on brand extension emphasizes the importance of brand affect and category similarity. The research provides strong evidence for the importance of brand specific associations. A variety of brand-specific associations were shown to moderate the effect of brand affect and product category similarity across several product categories. Moreover, the impact of brand-specific associations was found to be so influential that it dominated brand and product category similarity (Broniarczyk, et al., 1994).²⁰

Similarly, the growing use of brand extensions gives rise to a subtle risk in the form of lost opportunities to develop new brands, which might enhance the long-term value of a firm by building its brand portfolio. To the extent that we are able to identify conditions where the brand-extension-new brand differential is slight, we can define opportunities for launching new brands rather than unnecessarily risking an established brand.

Finally, many brand extensions are based on licensing agreements between the company that

owns the brand and a company that seeks to extend it into a new product area. A fundamental issue in negotiating such agreements is determining the license fees, which, in turn, reflect the efficiencies both firms believe will arise from using the establishment name versus developing a new brand. Unfortunately, interviews with senior marketing managers and advertising executive suggest that estimates of the brand-extension-new brand cost differential are typically based on little more than arm-chair guesses (Smith & Deniel, 1992).²¹

Taking advantage of brand equity of the Keo-Karpin brand, the company decided to extend its activities into allied categories, such as :

1. Hair problem solver category, with Keo-Karpin hair vitalizer.
2. Skincare, through, launch of body oil leveraging the non-sticky property of oil.

Hence, this is a perfect example of a brand where, extension helped in giving the company returns for the investment it made on the mother brand. Thus, ultimately, is a power of "Brand Equity" (Choudhary, 2001).²²

There is the view that an extension's failure need not necessarily damage the parent's image, Parle Agro's Frooti orange was a failure. This didn't affect Frooti Mango, the best selling tetrapack. In other words, a failure is rarely noticed if the present brand continues to perform (Lakshman, 1993).²³

When any brand extension is failed, behind this there is one reason that the new product might not "fit" very well with some of the association of the "Mother brand". Thus Clorox, identified with bleach did not work as a brand name on the new Clorox detergent extension, because consumers thought it might be "too strong" and damage clothes. Another reason is that even if the old brand name "fits" well, it may lack the leverage or distinctiveness to be a competitive strength: the line extension may simply be seen as a "me-too" entry by consumers. The irony is that when brand names unique and strong, highly leverageable, associations,

(such as Hershey's with chocolate), it may reduce the "fit" less well (Aaker & Biel, 1993).²⁴

Another way to leverage brand with extensions is to use it to enter and create advantage in another product category. The good, bad & ugly issues involved in making a brand extension decisions are as follows:

- ◆ **Good** :-The brand's associations, perceived quality & awareness/ presence help the extensions.
- ◆ **More good** :- The extensions reinforces the association and awareness of the brand.
- ◆ **Bad**:- The name does not add value to the extension or even has negative associations.
- ◆ **Ugly**:- The core brand name is damaged or diluted by the extension, or the brand franchise is cannibalized.
- ◆ **More Ugly** : The opportunity to develop another brand name is foregone.

This analysis, though, assumes only an adhoc decision to extend a brand to another product class (Aaker, 1996).²⁵

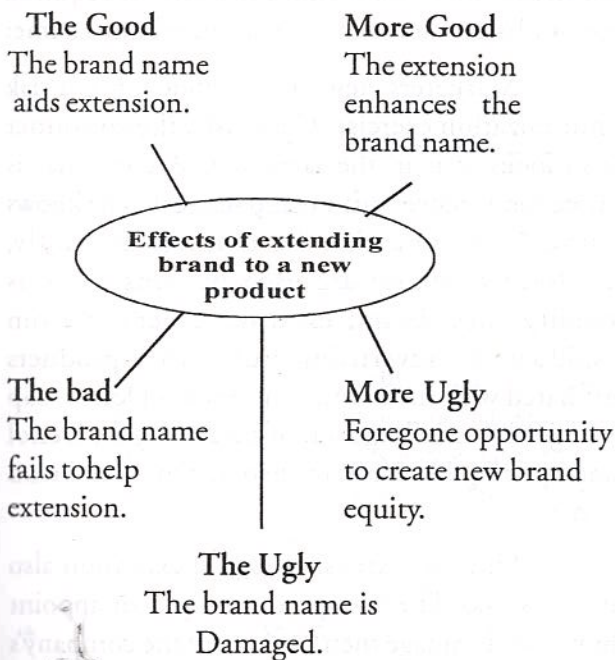


Fig 2

(Adapted from David Aaker's "Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name," *Free Press Publication*, 1991 p. 209)

For buyer, brands effectively perform the function of reduction. Brands help buyers of identify specific products, thereby reducing search costs and assuring a buyer of a level of quality that subsequently may extend to new products. This reduces the buyer perceived risk of purchasing the product. In addition, the buyer receives certain psychological reward by purchasing brands that symbolizes status and prestige thereby reducing the social psychological risks associated with owing and using the "wrong" Products (Berthen, et al., 1999)²⁶.

Clearly, consumers would agree to sample, enjoy and repurchase the offshoot brand products but at what expense? if it is at the expenses of the original product price it is brand cannibalization, not extension (Marconi, 1999)²⁷.

Brand extensions have become an increasingly popular option for firms launching new products in the marketplace. As the financial risk and promotional costs have increased for introducing new products, firms have renewed their efforts to capitalized on the goodwill associated with existing brand names by launching brand extensions. Well over one-half of all the new brands introduced in the 1980s were extensions marketed under existing brand names. Capitalizing on brand equity through brand extensions has truly become the "guiding strategy of products" (Tauber 1998;²⁸⁻²⁹

Brand extension is on the increase, when the companies wish to enter market from which they have been absent. More and more companies do so using the name of one of their existing brands, rather than using a new brand created for that purpose. Why extended the brand:

- ◆ Companies now understand that being a brand involves something more than just a communication or graphic packaging exercise, it is a real mode of behavior.

- ◆ A second major factor is the cost of advertising.
- ◆ Brand extension is the only way of defending a brand at risk in a basic market.
- ◆ Brand extension gives access to an accumulating image capital.
- ◆ Extending the brands enable the reinforcement of the image capital of the bands.
- ◆ Brand extension enables the brand to break away from the mono-product (Kapferer, 1997).³⁰

It might be interesting to speculate the impact of the failure of an extension on the parent's well being, views on this are varied. Inadequacies in Apple computer's Newton Machine cast a doubt on the core competencies of the company. This notwithstanding, consumers are often willing to forgive strong brands when they stumble. What's more failed extensions are withdrawn sooner than later (Harvard Business Review, 1994).³¹

The image of a brand arguably drive its equity. Conventionally wisdom suggests that advertising is invariably the source of brand images. But infact brand extension can fundamentally change the image of the parent brand. If the fit is inappropriate the extension can do substantial harm. Well managed, however, it can be an enormous benefit.

Brand extension is a double-edged sword even a successfully extension can damaged its parent's image. However, the strategic use of extension can also help reshape the image of the parent brand (Harvard Business Review, 1999).³²

The costs of over extension can hidden. Siddharth Sen, marketing Advisor for Hindustan levers is of the opinion that world wide, whenever there is a new category, there is a new brand because

pioneering work is often done by a new brand. Marketing pundits Al Ries and Jack Trout opine that a brand can be used for only one product. They opine, "IBM is identified with computers, whatever else it might do. No brand extension ever became a leader. Hence it is better to start a fresh with a new brand" (Deb Sandipan, June 1994).³³

Loyal consumers- those who have a strong commitment to a brand, a service, or retail store- show strong residence to counter- persuasion attempts. A syndicated research company reported the 74 percent of its respondents resists promotional efforts by rival brands once they find with which they are satisfied (Crispell & Brandenburg, 1993)³⁴

RELEVANCE OF STUDY

Brand- extension strategy offers a number of advantages. A well- regarded brand name gives the product instant recognition and earlier acceptance. It enables the company to enter new product categories more easily. Sony puts its name on its new electronic products and instantly establishes a conviction of the new product's high quality. Brand extension saves considerable adverting cost that would normally be required to familiarize consumers with a new brand name:

Marketers view brand extension as a risk minimization exercise. Curiously, the consumer also looks at it in the same way. A consumer is more comfortable with a brand name that he knows rather than one that he doesn't. Secondly, established brands are used by consumers as quality cues. Brand extensions benefit from "spillover of advertising from other products affiliated with the brand. This means Dettol soap will get some mileage out of advertising for Dettol antiseptic liquid because the two bear the same brand name.

Like line extension, brand extension also involves risks. The new product might disappoint buyers and damage their respect for the company's

other products. The brand name may be inappropriate to the new product. So, the study of importance of the brand in brand extension becomes very relevant.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- ◆ Thus the most important thing for the success of a brand extension is that the consumer should see something good in it and something common with its parent.
- ◆ It seems to point to that fact that any brand that has about half the market will find it difficult to be extended to other categories because it will be generically identified with the parent category. Even when extended the brand can be stretched only to those product categories that are very close to the parent.
- ◆ Brand extensions might be successful more because products have been managed well rather than on account of commonality of brand name. Reasons for success might lie in better management at the individual product level rather than at the brand level.
- ◆ Even in totally unrelated businesses, brand extensions can be successful if the organization is committed to the success of the extension. Unrelated brand extensions will build image for the brand name.
- ◆ There is high probability of success for an image-related extension provided the 4Ps (product, price, place promotion) of the extension are managed well.
- ◆ In image-related extensions, it is difficult to imagine either the product category that is in line with the values of the parent or the level of abstraction at which the consumer sees the relationship between the parent and the extension.
- ◆ The parent brand should be strong enough to help the extension. Otherwise, the

extension may not be able to borrow vitality from the parent.

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