



Archives available at [journals.mriindia.com](http://journals.mriindia.com)

**International Journal on Research and Development - A Management Review**

ISSN: 2319-5479

Volume 14 Issue 01, 2025

## A Study on Impact of Mascots in Branding

Dr. Sumeet V Gaikwad<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Vishal V Gaikwad<sup>2</sup>

MES Garware College of Commerce, Pune<sup>1</sup>

DY Patil ACS College, Pimpri, Pune<sup>2</sup>

### Peer Review Information

*Submission: 17 Feb 2025*

*Revision: 21 March 2025*

*Acceptance: 23 April 2025*

### Keywords

*Brand,  
Consumers,  
Identity,  
Impact,  
Strategy*

### Abstract

A corporate brand encompasses a set of cognitive and physical characteristics as well as beliefs that are connected with its product offerings and services (Simoes, 2001). Seimiene (2012) asserts that demographic characteristics like sex, age, and social class are key components of brand personality. According to (Aaker, 1997), a brand's personality can also be determined by a variety of features, including the brand identity, logo, symbol, advertising styles, advertising budget, and marketing channels. Branding strategy is concerned with the selection of some characteristics of a product as fundamental values in order to channel the process by which customers confidently recall, recognize, and acknowledge these attributes (De Chernatony, 1998). According to Plummer (1985), 41 attractive (strong & likable) personalities help brands stand out from the competition and increase their appeal to consumers.

The identity of a product can be established from these core values. Brands act as ambassadors to represent their respective companies. Consumers usually convert their ideas and beliefs (imagery, feelings, evaluations, and judgments) into their own perceptions about the identity of the brands. (Brown, 2010) has determined, based on his data statistics, that there is a direct correlation between the physiological and psychological distance of a spoke or brand character and its popularity. (Brown, 2010) shows that the most prominent brand characters carry a realistic approach and are portrayed as human beings – for instance, the Michelin Man, Captain Morgan, the Burger King, Uncle Ben, Aunt Jemima, Pillsbury doughboy, Ronald McDonald, Uncle Ben, and so on.

### INTRODUCTION:

It is a plausible notion that a marketing mascot is imbued with both positive and negative human needs, wishes, dreams, desires and motivations as well as human identities, personalities and traits. But in order to truly make imaginary marketing mascots appear as human as humanly possible, developers need to embrace literature.

The study aims to examine the effectiveness of mascot branding as an effective branding tool and whether, does it allow for a stronger relationship between the usage of a brand mascot in advertising and its targeted set of consumers. In the past, a mascot was a stuffed animal or other figure that was thought to bring good fortune when winning athletic events (Cohen, 2014). The role of the sports mascot is to provide fans with a sense of coherence and excitement (Jacobsen, 2013). For

A Study on Impact of Mascots in Branding

instance, the Dutch football team's mascot, "Dutchy," is a fictional lion. In sports, teams and clubs are represented by their mascots. Sports fans display their club support in a visible way by, for example, carrying stuffed versions of the mascot at games or dressing in team colors (Ashforth, 1989) (Jacobsen, 2013)

Therefore, a mascot in sports serves as a tool for identity signaling in addition to being a symbol of good luck. But rather than using brand mascots to bring good fortune, brand managers in marketing employ them to increase sales (Cohen, 2014; Garrett, Spokes-characters: Creating character trust and positive brand attitudes., 2004). Brand mascots have been used in advertising by brand managers across a wide range of industries since the end of the nineteenth century (Garretson, Spokes-characters: Creating character trust and positive brand attitudes., 2004). In the fast food business, Ronald McDonald represents McDonald's; in the movie business, Mickey Mouse represents Walt Disney; in the theme park business, Pardoes represents the Dutch park de Efteling; and in the transportation business, Bibendum represents Michelin. Brand managers are also using brand mascots in the music festival industry. Two examples are the owl that belongs to the company that runs the festival brand Insomniac (Mathew, 2015) and Rapid Razor Bob, which is the mascot of the Dutch festival Lowlands. Research from the past has demonstrated that brand mascots influence consumer behavior in some way. Kraak and Story discovered that because the kids were influenced by the Mascot cartoon characters, they ate more food in the brand mascot condition. According to the same study, children's product preferences are influenced by brand mascots. According to (Elliott, 1998), brands are routinely utilized as symbolic resources in the construction and preservation of identity.

It is people's propensity to spend a lot of time on the internet. Users now utilize brand mascots as an extra component of social capital when interacting with others. By giving their users access to facial expressions, mascots projected by artificial intelligence, such as chatbots or communicators, can bridge the gap between online and offline communication. And undoubtedly, this type of brand mascot can influence consumer's purchasing behaviors. Many financial organizations like ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra, and GEICO have used their mascots to communicate with their customers online, without customers, you don't have a business.

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

The three rhetorical components in the Aristotelian Language of Persuasion are ethos, pathos, and logos. Mascots for brands can serve as

both pathos (emotion) and ethos (credibility). Since many well-known cartoon characters and brand mascots go on to become celebrities, these mascots would have the same level of credibility as real celebrities.

Given that all brand mascots have expressions on their faces, they may also be able to evoke strong feelings in consumers. Mascots are employed in communication to project their facial expressions as a representation of their own emotions. Furthermore, mascots are said to draw more attention to advertisements, boost brand identification and recognition, appeal to recollections, foster character/brand trust, foster a positive brand attitude, and possibly even encourage product purchases (Baldwin, 1982). (Callcott M. F., Observations: Elves make good cookies: Creating likable spokes-character advertising., 1996); Establishing the Spokes-Character in Academic Inquiry: Historical Overview and Framework for Definition, 1995; 1996) [Garretson J. A., Spokescharacters: Developing positive brand attitudes and character trust., 2004] Many companies or brands include children in their ad campaigns to make it touchier and grab the attention of the viewer. Not only the companies selling the products but the companies selling their services have also been using the brand ambassadors or mascots as their marketing tools. Not only private sector but the public sectors are using mascots for endorsing their services or utilities for example Indian railways used "Bholu the Guard" as their brand mascot.

Sometimes the advertisements also appeal the adult audience as well thereby communicating the message perfectly. The brands which are in service sector as well tend to use the mascots to a greater extent, for e.g., Air India, GEICO, ICICI etc, which have used the mascots significantly in the promotion strategies. Having a brand mascot to build up an image of the company has become an extremely popular trend and is being seen on a consistent basis. Having a mascot could prove a brand to be more popular which might act as a good marketing tool to make the people think about your brand as a most favoured one.

Along with private sector, mascots are being used in public sector as well. For instance, the United States Forest Department also has developed a Mascot to spread an awareness among the people about the forest fires, even Indian Railways used 'Bholu' the mascot depicting it as a Railway Guard suggests that public sector too is considering the use of the mascots.

In the case of ICICI Bank, where a Mascot known as Chintamani has also been used, where his appearance is that of an office goer dressed up

formals, a spectacle is also seen to make the mascot a mature one, and this formal look makes the mascot who is someone possessing a reasonable amount of knowledge with the respective domain of financial products. Such Mascots can make the perception of the people to approach the mascot or find the mascot to be more approachable for finding solutions to their issues. Brand managers apply different strategies in order to anthropomorphise a brand (Cohen, 2014).

Millions of fans of the personality will start using the product because their favourite celebrity is endorsing it. But when that celebrity's fame is burnt out or the celebrity becomes aged then these brands spend more money on some other famous personality to promote the products. However, if it is a mascot then there is no need of changing the ambassador again and again and further it will reduce the cost of ad campaign. Moreover, mascots these days are becoming most favoured tools of marketing for instance, Zoo Zoos for Vodafone, Polka girl for Amul or Ronald McDonalds for McDonalds and interesting fact is these mascots are easily recognizable and famous among people of any age.

In this age of digital adoption and social media influencers, some mascots have endured and still produce a powerful recall for various brands while remaining a vital cog in the company's visual and mental imagery. Mascots have managed to be an integral part of the brand as the logo. Celebrities endorsing the brand come and go while some celebrities endorse the brand in multiple ways which creates confusion in the minds of the consumers. They are unable to relate to the brand that the celebrity has endorsed. Developing mascots in the new era is also a growing trend. For instance, Strawberry Steve. Steve is the primary icon for Chunks O'Fruti's promotion efforts. He is placed on the company's website, but basically as an introduction to the brand's social media efforts. The different strategies used by companies such as the sale of mascot merchandise, the use of live mascots, promotion of Mascots through social media have one common objective which is to project the brand with the help of a tool that has established a connection with the audience and would make an impact on the buyers of all age groups.

When using a mascot to advertise, it is preferable to communicate that the mascot is not just an animation, but also relates to the reality of the firm. The product and its benefits should be portrayed clearly, and be tied to the mascot.

This ensures that the mascot and its message is etched into the consumer's mind and makes it future-relatable with the mascot and the brand related to the mascot. A company's decision to

make their mascot more or less anthropomorphic will move it up or down the continuum accordingly. Additionally, it must also be said that this continuum is limited by its simplicity. The manner in which it is represented suggests that the degrees of anthropomorphism are clear cut and follow the particular order presented, but in reality this is not always the case.

Of course, having a brand value holds the key over non-branded products because many people are not aware about the existence of non-branded products in the market. The fact that if people are not aware about any existence of such brand, then the brand will not be able to reach to the desired target audience and that would lead to drop in sales and the brand would not be able to achieve the desired objectives. However, in order to create a brand and customer-based brand equity the consumers firstly need to know the brand (Keller K. L., Understanding brands, branding and brand equity, 2003). After that, the consumers associate the brand with certain characteristics, feelings or thoughts. As indicated in the introduction, these feelings, thoughts or characteristics are the brand associations (Keller K. L., 2001).

## CONCLUSION:

There are multiple brands which have successfully created their brand identity over a period of time like Nike. For many Nike is a synonym to best of the quality and even in the case of Walmart or Big Bazaar where the image of these brands has been projected wherein the consumers would get all the goods at a reasonable price. These kind of branding strategies surely helps in creating a positive mindset about your brand in the minds of the consumers which goes on to concrete the brand's image in the longer run.

Identifying your target audience is a crucial thing for brand building as the strategies or the efforts that have been put by the brands would be unsuccessful or not prove fruitful. A target audience selection is more than knowing about the basic demographics as many brands have a general tendency to think that targeting for a brand is a common process wherein the people would come to buy the product.

## REFERENCE:

- Anderson, J. R. (2014). The place of cognitive architectures in a rational analysis.. In Architectures for intelligence. Psychology Press, pp. 1-24).
- Aro, K. S. (2018). Aro, K., Suomi, K., & Saraniemi, S. (2018). Antecedents and consequences of destination brand love— A case study from Finnish Lapland. *Tourism Management*, 67, 71-81.

Arvidsson, A. (2006). *Brands: Meaning and value in media culture*. . Routledge.

Ashforth, B. E. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. . *Academy of management review*, , 14(1), 20-39.

Asquith, P. J. (2011). Of bonds and boundaries: what is the modern role of anthropomorphism in

primatological studies?. . *American Journal of Primatology*, , 73(3), 238-244.

Balcombe, J. (2010, July Wednesday). Oral Presentations: . *The Arts & Sciences of Human-Animal Interaction*, 27.

Baldwin, R. E. (1982). The inefficacy of trade policy (No. 150). . *International Finance Section*, Department of Economics, Princeton University