

Analysis of Psychological Aspects of Lovemarks Formation

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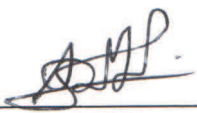
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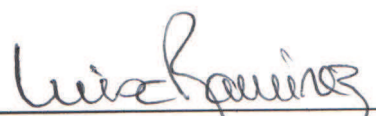
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Abstract

The present review aims to be a theoretical contribution to the understanding of underlying psychological processes of Robert's Lovemarks concept that, in the marketing field, replaces brands as we know it. The first section provides a brief story of branding evolution from a marketing and consumer psychology perspective. In the second section, Kevin Roberts Lovemarks theory is explained and its components, the love/respect axis and mystery, sensuality and intimacy characteristics are analyzed. In addition, other branding literature authors and several successful applied cases are presented to support the theory. The third section is about the identification and analysis of the psychological aspects and processes that are relevant in Lovemarks formation: perception, memory, individual and social motivation, and emotion. The fourth and last section is about the review conclusions and implications in a consumer-brand relationship.

Keywords: Lovemarks, consumer-brand relationship, brand romance, consumer psychological processes, marketing.

Resumen

El presente trabajo es una revisión de literatura que busca contribuir al entendimiento de los procesos psicológicos subyacentes en la Teoría de Roberts sobre Lovemarks que, dentro del campo del marketing, ha buscado reemplazar la idea que se tienen sobre las marcas. La primera parte proporciona una introducción de lo ha sido la evolución de las marcas desde una perspectiva psicológica y de mercadeo. En la segunda parte se explica la teoría de Lovemarks haciendo énfasis en sus componentes: el eje amor/respeto, las características de misterio, sensualidad e intimidad. Adicionalmente, se soporta esta teoría a través de literatura complementaria y casos de aplicación exitosos. La tercera parte, corresponde a la identificación y análisis de los procesos y aspectos psicológicos que explican la formación de un Lovemark: percepción, memoria, motivación individual y social y emoción. La cuarta y última parte contiene las conclusiones e implicaciones en la formación de la relación entre el consumidor y una marca.

Palabras clave: Lovemarks, relación marca-consumidor, romance por la marca, procesos psicológicos del consumidor, mercadeo.

What is a Lovemark?

Lovemarks is a marketing concept that, for Roberts (2004), replaces brands as we know them. They are formed by the emotional connection with consumers, that added to the value of respect, makes them act with “loyalty beyond reason” (Roberts, 2004, p. 2). In addition, there are three dimensions that have been considered in a Lovemark formation: mystery, sensuality and intimacy. The purpose of the present manuscript is to analyze, through a literature review, all these aspects in a psychological optic in order to explain how can brand love, loyalty and respect can be developed and how they deeply influence consumer’s experience and his decision making process. The present review aims to be a theoretical contribution to the understanding of underlying psychological processes of consumer’s emotional experience, which can be used as a framework for further empirical studies about the Lovemark concept which had gained attention in the dynamic marketing world and in empirical research.

From brands to Lovemarks: The evolution of products

The consumer product market has passed through a constant evolution and so do enterprises’ marketing strategies in order to win a place in it. Sheth & Parvatiyar (1998), states that marketing passed from being a merely transactional and exchange field to become a relational process, as producers started to be in contact with consumers. For Roberts (2004), at first, products were not that different from each other, however, when the market started to widen its boundaries, to evolve and competition began to grow, companies had to find a way to differentiate and to protect themselves (Roberts, 2006). For that reason the strategy of trademarks was developed, giving not only legal protection to companies but also the trust of the consumers. Nevertheless, just holding a trademark didn’t guarantee successful differentiation even though they reached the trust of consumers (Roberts, 2004). Actually, at one point, some trademarks became generic. Perhaps, they did not focused in establishing a relational bond with consumers. As a result, the strategy had to evolve once again.

As consumers were more informed and aware of the possible choices of the market, companies started to develop brands focusing in how a relationship could be constructed. They started to develop brands, wrapped with “anthropomorphous

characteristics” (Bengtsson, 2003, p. 1). A brand is “a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers (American Marketing Association [AMA], 2007, p.1). It’s more than a package and a logo. In fact, they contain attributes that normally show the characteristics of the company (Edwards & Day, 2005).

Progressively, communication strategies were developed in order to win the battle for consumer’s mind. The result of this effort is known as *Brand Positioning* (Trout & Ries, 2000). Additionally, advertisers and marketers constantly measure this variable with another concept that also gained importance in the last decades, *top of mind* (Pérez-Acosta, 1999). This concept is defined as the first brand that comes to mind when a consumer is asked an unprompted question about a category. Therefore, the brand positioning corresponds to the highest percent of consumers that recall the name of certain brand (Paul, Bendle, Pfeifer & Reibstein, 2010).

Still, for Roberts (2005), the problem of branding started when brands became overused, non-creative and the strategy didn’t get to connect emotionally with target consumers despite of their attributes. Maybe a brand showed the product benefits and qualities, is distinctive and easy to recognize, however, if it can’t understand and get into the affective side of the contemporary consumer, who is in daily contact with thousands of other brands, it might not last longer.

Oliver Talavera (2009) explains consumer market evolution in a brilliant way: “The monologue turned into dialogue. Promises turned into experiences. The only exchange currency is ideas that attract consumers. We are talking of a new consumer idiosyncrasy..., a new era, the *Attraction Economy*” (p. 25). In this contemporary economy, human emotions are the funds, and as they are so rich in complexity, effective strategies are needed to nail them down. “What counts is being responsive to what people value and desire. No one wants to be part of an industry that force-feeds people stuff they don't need” (Roberts, 2007a, p. 2).

Roberts (2007b) explained that there are ten principles within attraction economy. The first one is that “emotion attracts action” (p. 1). It had been demonstrated that decision making process and action are influenced by emotions not reason. Another principle refers to the senses and how they attract consumer’s emotions. Marketers and advertisers that integrate senses in offering unique and

memorable experiences are more likely to attract consumers. On the other hand, Roberts states that empathy is a main factor in creating attraction. It's necessary to discover what consumers' values and desires are in order to understand who they really are and what they like. Attraction economy is consumer-based.

Furthermore, mystery is an important principle of the Attraction Economy than is actually so important in Lovemarks theory. For Roberts (2006), it keeps attraction alive, surprising consumers every day. As known, attraction is not and static attitude, so in order to reach consumers commitment, marketers need to add interactivity to the marketing strategy. That means that they have to be noticeable and present enough to constantly create transactions and communication with consumers.

Another important principle is the use of stories to "attract memories" (Roberts, 2007b, p. 2). Humans remember stories more, and if they are interesting, emotional and touchy enough, brand can be better recalled. The seventh principle, *entertainment*, is about offering funny experiences that generate engagement and attraction. One source of entertainment is through music, an art that had always been in the presence of human life. One advantage of music is the capacity of recalling and its emotional aspect. Lastly, communication strategies in marketing, are created to move masses, not individuals, so another principle is to focus on community in order to "attract loyalty" in a collective way (Roberts, 2007b, p. 2).

Fortunately, there are some companies that are conscious enough and invest millions on research and development looking forward to create a brand that gets into consumers heart and emotions, following in one way or another those principles. For Roberts (2004), those companies are the ones that become or can become into Lovemarks, brands that create within consumers "loyalty beyond reason" (p. 65).

Lovemarks attracts what Roberts calls *inspirational consumers* (2006) "people who act as advocates, community members and brand owners" (p. 56). There are four characteristics that describe this kind of consumers. They "are articulate" (p. 57), they connect easily their lives to Lovemarks, and say what they feel about it. That is why they don't "keep Lovemarks all to themselves" (p. 57) but they share stories and promote them to others. That means that they truly get involved and immersed, they actively participate in Lovemarks image formation.

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The structure of Lovemarks

“The Lovemarks of this new century will be the brands and businesses that create genuine emotional connections with the communities and networks” (Roberts, 2004, p. 9). Actually, he was not the first to talk about this effective marketing strategy. In branding literature, emotional connection in consumer-brand relationship was already considered. For instance, Ahuvia (1993) carried out an empirical study about love relationship between a person and products and Fournier (1998) developed a framework to understand the different type of relationships between consumers and brands. However, what Kevin Roberts, worldwide CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi did was to give it a name, a structure and a deeply description of its characteristics, showing how to put the strategy in action giving real life evidence of its effectiveness in the marketing world. For the author, *like* is not enough. It’s all about love and “love is about action. It’s about creating a meaningful relationship. It’s a constant process of keeping in touch, working with consumers, understanding them, spending time with them” (Roberts, 2004, p. 86).

There are important differences between a brand and a Lovemark. First, a brand gives information to consumers through statements while Lovemarks looks forward to create a relationship with them by telling stories, love stories. Secondly, in a brand, there are always defined attributes like quality and professionalism, while a Lovemark is wrapped by *mystery*, *sensuality* and *intimacy*. For a Lovemark, quality is not enough; it is not an added value it’s just necessary in order to compete and survive in the market. A brand can be managed by an advertising agency but what makes the difference between and brand and a Lovemark agency is its high level of creativity, innovation and passion that makes their clients consumers build loyalty relationships beyond reason (Roberts, 2005). That is the reason why they transcend common brands. Lastly, Lovemarks are rarely replaceable because they are part of consumers’ life. There are several examples of Lovemarks around the world: Apple, Coca-Cola, LEGO, Google, McDonald’s, for numbering a few.

Saatchi & Saatchi (2013a) holds a website, www.lovemarks.com, in which consumers can express their reasons to consider a brand a Lovemarks. This is actually

a good strategy to create emotional consumer-brand relationship. It aloud consumers to share their personal stories, experience, feelings, etc. using writing and audio visual channels, so they can get more involved with a brand, its evolution and its lovers community. For instance, regarding Apple, a successful technology company, people refer to the enterprise, the founder Steve Jobs, and their products as “easy to love” and with phrases like “biggest inspiration”, and “technology in our hands” (p. 1). In the same way, LEGO consumers expressed to it as “the perfect toy”, “was and still is magical”, and as “a little piece of me” (Saatchi & Saatchi, 2013b, p. 1). Lastly, McDonald’s lovers had mention that the brand is “very unique and fun”, “brings back childhood”, “always my favorite, all the time” (Saatchi & Saatchi, 2013c, p. 1).

It can be noticed that all these three brands have different missions, targets and products. But what do they have in common? What specifically makes a Lovemarks be one? Roberts (2004), explains that the first thing a brand has to accomplish is winning consumer’s respect and love. The author described this statement with an axis model.

Love/Respect Axis

Figure 1 shows Roberts love/respect axis. He states that brands need to gain consumers’ respect in order to build a long lasting relationship and they achieve it by good performance, innovation, consistency, reputation and quality. Specifically, brand respect is “a positive perception consumers have towards a particular brand, based on evaluation of brand performance (Roberts, 2004 cited in Cho, p. 9). Even though this attribute doesn’t warrantee consumer’s love, but it does with his attention and trust (Roberts, 2004).

On the other hand, love formation is about understanding consumers’ needs and aspirations, is about involving them in the brand’s evolution, inviting them to a new emotional experience. It is about giving them priceless moments that connect them with the brand without thinking in the price, or the competition. Some other authors support the concept of brand love by describing it as “a deep emotional attachment” (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006 as cited in Cho, 2011, p. 9). Indeed, companies that reach this connection, emphasize emotional qualities, mix senses and create intrigue within consumers as part of their branding strategies. In order to explain his model, Roberts (2004), had built the *love/respect axis*, classifying different products,

brands, services in four quadrants: bottom left –*commodities*-, bottom right –*fads*-, top left –*brands*- and top right –*Lovemarks*-.

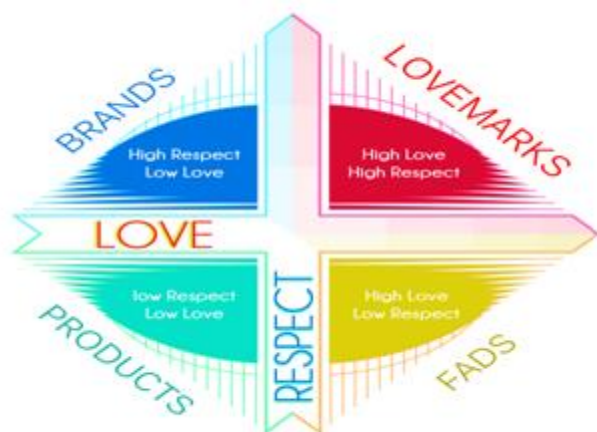


Figure 1. Robert's Love/Respect Axis. Adapted from: Roberts (2004). *Lovemarks: the future beyond brands*. New York: Power House books. Credits: Johnathan Dos Santos

Commodities refer to brands that have “low respect and low love” (p. 11). They are products or services people don't deeply desire but they are needed anyways. Public utilities, sugar and eggs are examples of them. It's hard to build an emotional relationship with them, to make them care more about the brand, and they can be easily replaceable. Commodities market companies are actually more concern with how to manage “storage limitations, convenience yield and seasonality effects” (Giot & Laurent, 2002, p. 3) than with establishing an emotional relationship with people.

Fads, on the other hand, refer to those products or services that inspire low respect but high love. Earlier literature describes this phenomenon as transitory collective behavior (Abrahamson & Fairchild, 1997). Recently, a fad is considered “any form of behavior that develops among a large population and is collectively followed with *enthusiasm* for some period, generally as a result of the behavior's being perceived as novel in some way (Kornblum, 2007). *Trends* are a good example, since one day they are in everyone's mouth and hearts but there is not a long-lasting relationship going on. Indeed they start to fade when that novel sensation is no longer perceived. It often happens with fashion and technology. Let's put the case of *Blackberry* mobile phone. Recently, they had been added to the CNN forgotten gadgets' top list (2013). Few years ago, everyone wanted one but soon other products

like Samsung mobile phones and Apple's iPhone replaced them. Earlier literature states that

In contrast, *brands* are referred to those products and services that had won all the respect of consumers but without building an emotional relationship with them. Their attributes, product design, packaging and communication strategies are not emotional but rational-related and can be measured. Companies in this quadrant try hard to improve themselves offering better, faster, stronger products than competitors; however, they stay in the rational field (Roberts, 2006). In order to survive in the market, brands have at least to be placed in this quadrant (Roberts, 2009). Google Plus, LinkedIn are some example of brands.

Finally, Lovemarks appear when there's not only high respect but also high love and loyal relationship. As explained above, Lovemarks reach an emotional, empathic connection, making consumer feel passionate and involved with the brand and its company. Mickey Mouse and Toyota are some examples. Even though, they are different products with different targets, they all have reached their consumer's heart by awakening three important emotional aspects in them: mystery, sensuality and intimacy.

Mystery

Saatchi & Saatchi (2013d) explains that if consumers know everything, there would be nothing left to wonder at. That's what mystery is all about, an added value that, using the past, the present and the future, creates stories that roll consumers in a world of "metaphors, dreams and symbols" (p. 1). Creating mystery within consumers is really a challenge since they are so well informed. It's not about informing consumer but it's about inviting him to have a mythical and unique consumer experience, create relevant connections and "loyalty beyond reason" (Roberts, 2005, p. 9)

In branding literature, this concept can be related to *storytelling* strategy. For Mossberg & Nissen-Johansen (2006) storytelling is "the foundation medium by which we speak, think, develop our self-image and understand each other (p. 7). This is a powerful communication strategy since consumers like stories and tend to remember them. Stories in branding usually express the values and vision of the company. Nowadays, it's used by marketers because of its ability of creating intellectual,

emotional and spiritual connection with people (Sole & Wilson, 1999). At the end, “what makes a company unique is thus a unique story” (Ågren & Ölund, 2007, p.15)

Several companies had used *storytelling* to get people’s heart and create a loyalty and love consumer-brand relationship. This strategy has been recently used because of its influence on consumer’s memory, likability and emotions toward a brand. The role of emotion in marketing and advertising has been widely considered. Zajonc (1980) argued that emotions “function independently of cognition and can indeed override it” (McDuff, 2012, p. 3) in a decision making process. That is why a story, even if it’s fictional, can induce emotional responses and associations that enhance purchasing and reinforce consumer-brand relationships. According to the National Association of Storytellers (2013, p. 1) is an “interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener’s imagination.”

Storytelling in marketing refers to “conversations between consumers and brands on both unconscious and conscious levels of thinking” (Zaltman, 2003, as cited in Woodside, Sood, and Miller, 2008, p. 97). Consumer Psychology’s theory explained that storytelling is effective because of several intrinsic characteristics of the human mind: “people naturally think narratively rather than argumentatively or paradigmatically” (Hiltunen, 2002; McKee, 2003; Weick, 1995, as cited in Woodside, Sood, and Miller, 2008, p. 98). Also, experiences, incidents, person to person interactions are better stored and retrieved from memory.

In Lovemarks’s formation, this strategy is often used because companies want to be more than products, they look forward to offering consumer meaningful experiences. They also want the viral power of word-of-mouth, and want to be a part of their audience’s life story, creating an emotional consumer-brand connection (Lovemark Campus, 2013).

One example of mystery usage in a brand is Disneyland. They influence people of all ages emotionally in such a unique way. They invite every single person to a great story and a wonderful experience of dream and joy passing through the past, the present and the future.

Sensuality

On the other hand, sensuality invites consumers to the world of senses. “Sight,

hearing, smell, touch, taste, new textures, intriguing scents and tastes, wonderful music” (Saatchi & Saatchi, 2013d, p. 1) are necessary to build this emotional consumer-brand relationship. For Roberts (2004), when a brand is surrounded by the combination of different senses, the results are “unforgettable” (p. 109). Depending on the company strategy goal, senses can be used to create associations in consumers mind and heart transporting them into the past, present and future. The important role that senses play in memory can explain this phenomenon, specially the scent, as the olfactory system is directly connected to the limbic system (Emsenhuber, 2009). For instance, some smells, drive us immediately into past experiences, like our childhood.

In branding literature, there is some interesting information about this topic. First, regarding hearing, Yorkston and Menon (2004), emphasize *sound symbolism* that “provides cues about how the brand may perform on particular attribute dimension” (p. 43). They studied phonemes and theorized that if brands use those that can represent consumer’s desire, he or she would have more positive attitude toward a brand, even if it’s out of consumer’s awareness. Secondly, regarding scent, there is actually the term *scent marketing* (Emsenhuber, 2009) that “uses scent to manipulate consumer behavior by unconsciously raising emotions and consequently manipulating purchase decision” (p. 28). They can even evoke autobiographical memories, which can ease emotional consumer-brand connection. Many stores use a unique scent in order to create associations in consumer’s mind, providing a pleasant environment and buying experience. One example of it is a new car aroma. It doesn’t smell like a metallic machine, instead of it, it has a particular pleasant unique fragrance.

Emsenhuber (2009) explains that there is a connection between scent and vision and companies take advantage of it to reach more memorable connections within clients. This effect is called *Proust phenomena*, She states, for instance, that pink color is associated with sweet fragrances, yellow with flower fragrances, and green with fresh aromas.

Scent is deeply connected to taste as well, and food industry companies that are aware of it, develop different strategies to create combined-senses experiences within their clients. Others simply work with scent creating impressive effect just by the essence of the products. That’s the case of coffee shops and bakeries.

There is another important sense taking into account in the Lovemarks

formation: touch. A product can be distinguished from others by using a particular shape, surface, material, texture, temperature, etc. Nevertheless, “in the world of sensory marketing, touch is perhaps the most underutilized (Williams & Ackerman, 2011, p. 1). But the truth for this authors is that the act of touching and holding products may “create a sense of psychological ownership, driving must-have purchase decisions” (p. 1).

Finally, all this considerations and strategies helped a new business discipline to emerge, *sensory marketing*, that “applies analytical techniques to amalgamate the use of sensory stimuli...to develop strong brands that are more memorable for costumers than conventional visual branding techniques alone” (Lippincott, 2013, p. 2). There may be some who consider it as a way of manipulating consumers’ unconsciousness (Emsenhuber, 2009); however, for Roberts (2004), it’s a way of connecting emotionally with people and to create long-lasting relationships.

Intimacy

“Intimacy means empathy, commitment and passion” (Saatchi & Saatchi, 2013d, p. 1). Empathy is about understanding consumer’s emotions and needs. Commitment is necessary in order to build long-lasting relationships. Passion, on the other hand, “brings the spark” in that relationship. Further branding literature defines *brand passion* as “a primarily affective, extremely positive attitude toward a specific brand that leads to emotional attachment and influences relevant behavioral factors”(Bauer *et al.*, 2007, p.2190 as cited in Albert, Merunka & Valette-Florence, 2011).

Even if there are differences between consumer-brand relationships and interpersonal relationships (Aaker, Fournier & Brasel, 2004), this Lovemark characteristic has several anthropomorphic and social implications. Earlier literature describes intimacy as “a relationship between loving people whose lives are deeply entwined” (Traupmann & Hatfield 1979, p. 106). It’s about intensity, deep information exchange, lengths in relationships and the exchange of different and valuable recourses. The mayor effect of intimacy is turning a *you and me* relationship into a *we* relationship, fulfilled by interdependence and reciprocity (Levinger, 1974; Traupmann & Hatfield, 1979).

On the other hand, in recent marketing literature, intimacy is considered one

of four components than form consumer *engagement* (Haven & Vittal, 2007). “Intimacy includes opinions, passion and costumer’s feeling about the brand”(p.5). It can be evidenced in sentiments and opinions expressed by costumers in blogs, services calls or in surveys. Intimacy is more that involvement, interaction and influence (Haven & Vittal, 2007). For Roberts (2004, 2006) a brand that reaches this deep connection and relationship with persons wins loyalty beyond reason. In this particular aspect, it’s important to have knowledge about cultural and local customs, even knowing how the interpersonal intimacy development can help to build the consumer-brand relationship.

All this three aspects, mystery, sensuality and intimacy reflect what Cho (2011) consider the *brand image*, “a consumer’s perceptions and feelings towards a brand shaped by direct/indirect brand experiences, which captures cognitive, sensory, and emotional aspects” (p. 9). Indeed, Lovemarks image are shaped by the feelings, motivations, emotions of consumers. For this reason, changing a brand in shape, flavor, values, etc., is such a delicate thing, as they are telling a story which consumers are identified and connected to. It may produce critical and negative effects on loyalty and respect. But if they hear what consumer had to say and they protect their emotional connection, they can transform a brand and the product characteristics in order to create more attachment and commitment within consumers because they will consider themselves part of the brand.

Finally, Lovemark theory describes different processes and concepts that have important psychological implications: emotion, motivation, love, commitment, passion, respect formation, intimacy, and loyalty. However, how consumers are able to develop all of them toward a brand? How can identification be possible? Is it about an individual or a collective process?

Yet, why and how is this connection created? Which are the psychological aspects that enable Lovemarks formation? This manuscript looks forward to answering these questions and giving validity to Roberts’ Lovemarks theory in the scientist-practitioner field. In addition, it aims to be a theoretical contribution to further empirical studies and literature about Lovemarks theory and consumer-brand relationship.

Lovemarks related research

In the search of establishing and analyzing consumer-brand emotional relationship, several qualitative and empirical researches have been developed. The results helped Robert's Lovemarks theory validity.

In 2001, *Lovemark*TM was created. It's a measurement tool for Saatchi & Saatchi based on Kevin Roberts' theory of Lovemarks. It was developed by Cooper & Pawle from QiQ International, a company that develops instruments for quantitative and qualitative marketing research. This instrument measures emotions, mystery, intimacy, sensuality, respect and love. The research was focused on "diagnosing how to achieve emotional connections by obtaining an in-depth understanding of the Brand-person relationship" (Roberts, 2006, p. 201). To achieve it, they developed the Brand Pathway Model (Figure 2), that analyze if a brand strategy is rational or emotional, and according to that, the level of respect and/or love can be measured. Additionally, they develop an instrument in which companies can place its brand and competitor's brands on the Love/Respect grid.

Finally, they found that there are functional factors that influence Respect variable: trust and performance; and that a *passionate relationship* influence Love, in addition to Mystery, Intimacy and Sensuality.

Bradley, Maxian, Laubacher & Baker (2005), through an empirical study with 54 college students, determined that brands behave as emotional stimuli that can become into virtual extension of the consumers themselves. In this identification, consumers tend to enhance and be loyal to the brand in order to gain a positive self-image. For the researchers, this strong identification is the key variable in order to become a Lovemark, and what justify loyalty beyond reason.

Letiche & Hagemeyer (2004) examined how objects are valued by social and cultural constructions that go further their material properties. Actually, advertising is the best imaginary constructor, it can confer symbols, illusions, fantasy, status and specific messages to a brand in order to build and establish an emotional consumer-brand connection.

Maxian, Siegrist, Wise, Freeman, Altman and Bradley (2006) through another empirical study, made the participants watched brand logos for 34 advertised brands

(from 17 product categories) while physiological data was collected. Pleasantly, the results of this research matched most with Roberts' (2005) idea of individual level Lovemarks. It means individuals' physiological responses are indicative of an emotional connection to their own single set of loved brands (Lovemarks). Apparently these relationships are powerful links that engage the consumer at the most primitive level. This is what it seems to be connections of the heart. They appear to be a lot like love and consequently, connections beyond reason.

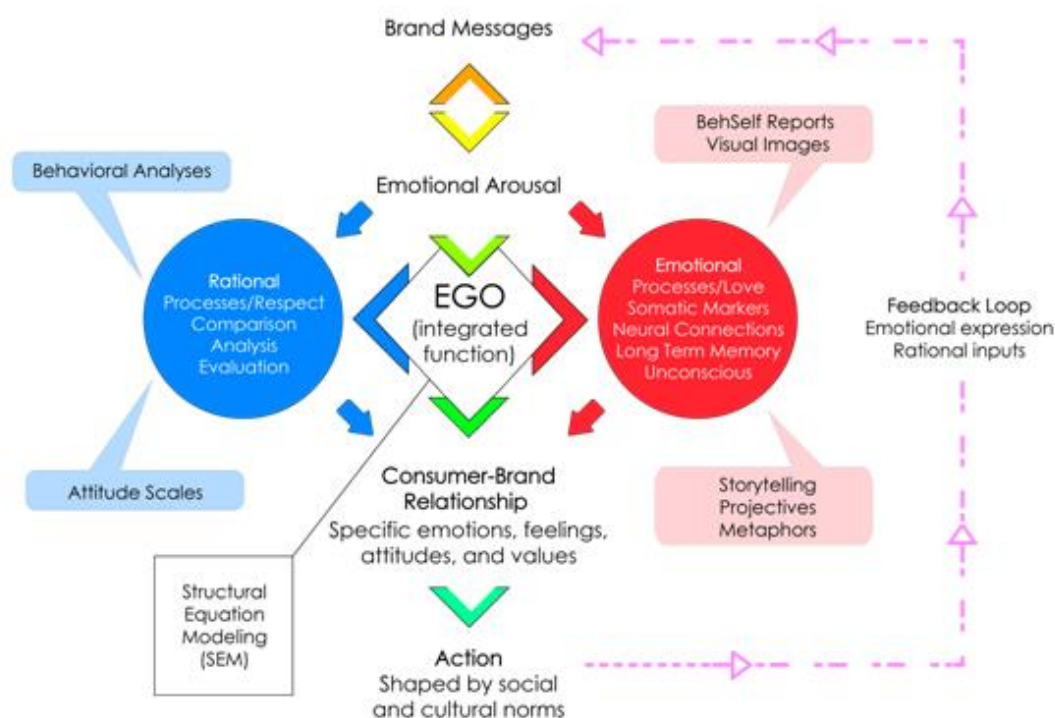


Figure 2. QIQ Lovemark pathway model Credits: Johnathan Dos Santos

Successful worldwide cases of Lovemarks

Several important companies focused their marketing and communication strategies to win consumers heart, since it appears to be the new advertising paradigm. One example was the challenge of Guinness to get in the African market. The biggest market was in Nigeria but the company wanted to expand through Kenya, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Tanzania, etc. In order to do that, they developed a campaign called *Michael Power*, an adventurer that fights evil, helps and rescues the innocents and after all the tough challenges, he always comes out triumphantly with a bottle of Guinness close to him.

This man demonstrated that Africans could achieve greatness as well and he became a “beacon of hope and inspiration to millions of people” (Sheeman, 2013, p. 30). The campaign lasted about seven years and sales volume rose twice before it was expected. These commercials could engage people through mystery, sensuality and intimacy because the ad agency got into African countries and towns, talk to different people in order to discover society’s values, history, myths and culture.

Another challenge in getting to people’s heart was to achieve UNICEF awareness with the Chinese government. In China, kids, especially from street are seen in a bad way and are mistreated by the Chinese community. An ad with “kids in the classroom, receiving medical treatment” was not enough in order to generate an impact and awareness in this community. So they developed an ad with no children, but adults, with the message “Someone else’s child” (Sheeman, 2013, p. 35). These adults were once children and now are creating an impact in the world. Reaching this kind of intimacy with the spectator changed the way they thought about children. Finally, the commercial was shown on over 300 Chinese TV stations and won the Asian Marketing Award.

The third example is about one Toyota Camry campaign “getting emotional the unemotional” (Sheeman, 2013, p. 46). In research, Saatchi & Saatchi, Toyota’s agency, found that Camry consumers do not have an emotional tie to the car. Nevertheless, in order to create a Lovemark, emotions are required. So they developed *The Camry effect*: a media space and forum in which consumers of that car model could share stories. But Camry drivers are not exhibitionists so at first, this site had not a single person in it. At the end, they came out with the idea of having a space in which Camry was reviewed through the stories and experiences of its consumers.

The advertising was launched at the Super Bowl and results were: over 100.000 stories shared; over 14.4 million people watched the ad and the real world-interest in the car jumped 800%. Finally, the Camry Effect reinforced intimacy between its consumers by the storytelling. Those stories expressed sensuality, comfort, luxury, and those that engage the past, present and future of the Brand, shown a mystery relationship. Nowadays, Camry is the best-selling car in the USA.

The last example is about Skol, a Brazilian beer that gained the battle for consumer’s heart with its media strategy. It is known that for Brazilian, carnival is an

emblematic event and everyone prepares for it. Skol developed a campaign for 2011 Carnival called “Operation SKOL” that was spread through social networks, television, prints, etc.

This campaign involved and engaged consumers while they were asked to create party troop in the fan page, complete missions, and invite other to join the network. The winner and friends were invited to the most important carnival celebrations and they were transported by private jet and boat and had a private party in a hotel suite with his own Skol troop. According to Pasculli, planning manager on F/Nazca Saatchi & Saatchi, “it was a previously unimaginable experience” for consumers. They became number one, won a place in consumer’s “top of mind”, and became an “undisputed Lovemarks”.

They mixed sensuality by using Brazilian style on commercials music; ads were visually attractive and memorable, and taste because of the intrinsic property of the product. They played with mystery and intimacy, because people were involved in the game and they were expecting results looking forward to win the prize and have such a great experience. Skol knew exactly how to get to consumers’ heart when they decided to offer that once-in-a-life experience.

Finally, all these qualitative and empirical studies and cases are evidence of the Lovemarks’ theory impact worldwide, that proves that psychological processes related to emotions are the most effective pathway through consumer decision making.

Psychological processes involved in the Lovemarks formation

Perception

Perception in Consumer Psychology is a fundamental process in the brand-consumer relationship. Several related terms like «quality perception» or «price perception» are used to measure products performance. For Sun, Sridhar & O’Brien (2010) consumers’ perception of *product value* is also a key stage in the process of bringing a product or service into life and to the market. Nevertheless, it is not just about design and packages itself. A product strategy must consider consumer needs

and the target psychographics in order to offer them meaningful and emotional experiences around the brand.

Some techniques have been developed to achieve this goal. Atmospherics is one of them. It's defined as the efforts to design buying environments to produce a specific impact on consumer's behavior and emotional effects that enhance purchase probability (Kotler 1978, as cited in Grebosz and Wronska, 2012).

Grebosz and Wronska (2012) state that consumer-focused marketing is more effective than product-focused marketing. The first one can be defined as "sense and respond" while the second one is just about "making & selling". So the future in marketing is in the sensory branding. The authors analyzed the impact of some senses like sound, smell, touch and sight on consumer behavior. For them, the sense that creates the most emotional responses on consumers is smell and it is related to "happiness and hunger" (p. 69). When a particular pleasant smell is perceived consumer expressed more intention to return to the store (Spangerberg, Crowley and Henderson 1996, as cited in Grebosz and Wronska, 2012).

Furthermore, Armstrong (2005) in his book *BRAND Sense: Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound* stated that the most successful brands are those that establish "sensory synergy" across product lines and across the senses" (p. 105). This kind of strategies of creating meaningful connections between Brand and the consumer using senses is known as *Sensory Branding*. He described some example of how companies develop unique smells, shapes, icons in order to create associations on consumer's mind and be easily remembered. Hershey's Kiss, Coca Cola and Absolut bottles, Singapore Airlines smell, are some of them.

One stream of research on ambient scent investigates its effects on memory and attention. Here, research confirms that our sense of smell is the strongest sense in relation to memory, finding that we are 100 times more likely to remember something that we smell than something that we see, hear, or touch (Vlahos 2007). Herz (1998) stated that scents evoke more emotional memories. Nevertheless, this is not the only strategy to get on consumers' memory.

Memory

In two empirical studies Rebeca Trump (2010) provided evidence that consumers' mental representations of loved brands, which may be perceived as relationship partners, overlap the psychological self in memory. I refer to this as self-brand overlap. The psychological self refers to the individual's own cognitive representation of him/herself in memory. If it is the case that brands, like people, serve as relationship partners, this line of research should properly extend to cognitively examining the relationships between consumers' psychological selves and their mental representations of brands.

The conclusions about these studies were: the more one elaborates on a stimulus, the more personally relevant it becomes. Specifically, the spreading activation model of memory (Anderson 1983) suggests that the more one cognitively elaborates on a stimulus, the more associated nodes in memory are activated. Thus, increasing cognitive elaboration on a loved brand could increase the accessibility of its personal relevance, in the form of self-brand overlap in memory (Trump, 2010).

Motivation

Attachment Theory has been extended to explain the emotional attachment to brands. This is, consumers become attached to some brands because they are dependable, consistent and "always there for you" when you need them. Consumers take comfort in the familiar; the primary motive for the attachment is security and safety (Patwardhan and Balasubramanian, 2011).

Another kind of attachment results when the primary *motive* is stimulation. Individuals looking for stimulation may look out a partner who provides innovation, excitement, and arousal. Repeated interactions with such a partner may result in an attachment that is characterized as attraction. This relationship presents new experiences, insights and perspectives, just like a developing romantic relationship where the members progressively discover each other, and long to be together (Patwardhan and Balasubramanian, 2011p. 298).

The search for stimulation is fundamental in consumers' shopping behaviors. Consumers perceive some brands as providing opportunities for discovery and

stimulation; they cause longing, and offer pleasure from use. For Patwardhan and Balasubramanian (2011), the consumer's mental state about a brand can reflect excitement, intense pleasure and arousal. Their research extends recent prior work by exploring a relationship motivated by stimulation needs. It described the relationship as being characterized by attraction, and proposed the existence of a mental state similar as the one experienced by partners in romantic relationships.

Social Motivation and Brand Community

The consumer's social context influences his motivation and loyalty to a brand. Social motivations are drives that results from cultural influences. Forgas, Williams and Laham (2005) stated that almost all of them are automatic, spontaneous at the point that many of the people don't even know the reason of their social behavior.

Social identity theory can explain the motive of being loyal to a brand: consumer's sense of identification. It also can be driven by two kind of motivation orientation, intrinsic and extrinsic. When a consumer adopts an intrinsic motivation orientation toward a brand, means that they find a reward simply by getting involved with it. On the other hand, when a consumer adopts an extrinsic motivation orientation, implies that the brand relationship serves as a means to a social goal (Forgas, Williams & Laham, 2005).

The social environment can influence and drive us to build a relationship with a brand and not only with it, but with an entire community of consumer's that are loyal to them, this is known as its *brand community*. The motivation of a person to have a relationship with this brand in that way goes beyond the product itself, is about the values, the social community behind it, or the imaginary of what that brand may represent for their social goals.

Emotion

Emotions in consumer research have been reflected by the following concepts: affection, mood, feelings, and emotion.

But maybe there is not a clear differentiation in utilizing them in advertising. In 1997, Richins defined emotions as "A valenced affective reaction to perception of situations"; and Damasio (2003, p.86) defined feelings as "the perception of a certain state of the body along with the perception of a certain mode of thinking and of

thoughts with certain themes.”

In the 60’s it was believed that the thoughts were the most important aspect, that “if we understood what we were thinking we understood everything”.

But psychologists like Zajonc & Bornsteing in the 80’s discovered the primacy of emotions over reason and thoughts because emotional responses can be created without a conscious process or a conscious knowledge of the stimuli that caused it. Also, Damasio (1994) showed how emotions influenced our decision making process.

All these advances on understanding how human brains works, influences the way advertising works today.

Nowadays, we know that within a consumer-brand relationship emotion is a very important aspect, not only reason. In their daily lives, consumers don’t act 100% conscious of all the stimulus of the environment. Actually, they are not paying attention to every detail, they use to focus their attention when there is something that they love or has an emotional meaning for them. (Pawle & Cooper, 2006). That means that brands that are able to create this emotional bond with consumers may have a stronger relationship with them than brands that only have rational strategies in their communications. That also means that emotion has a stronger influence over consumer decision making than reason. For Heath (2001, as cited by Pawle & Cooper, 2006, 40), “We are physically incapable of making decisions based on purely rational thinking.”

Nevertheless, emotions towards a brand, as towards a person can be positive or negative depending of their valence. For example, a brand can be perceived as warm, friendly, loved, or as disgusting, distant, offensive, etc. (Taute, McQuitty and Sautter, 2011), so marketers need to be cautious about what kind of emotion are generating. In a study of the same authors, it was found that utilizing positive emotion increase empathy and enhance consumer purchase decision, while negative emotions “reduce empathic responses to emotional ads” (p. 31).

But how do we measure consumer’s emotion? There are several techniques that have been developed to measure them: self-report, autonomic measures and fMRI, etc. However, the problem with fMRI is that it is so expensive and it required

qualified professionals to manipulate and analyze the outcome. So many studies were developed to understand how emotions work. In this paper three will be described.

The first one was developed by QIQ and Saatchi & Saatchi (2005). The purpose was to measure emotions.

The outcome of this research identified not only Lovemarks and their emotional, unconscious effects, but a conscious and rational effect. Additionally, the role of the social and cultural aspects was taken into account because they interact with both rational and emotional processes.

They used quantitative and qualitative techniques in order to understand and measure the role of emotion in a consumer-brand relationship. In the qualitative technique, a projective method was used and analyzed by a psychologist. In the quantitative research they used a virtual questionnaire. Finally, the outcome was a model called *The Pathways Model*, and it states that in the consumer-brand relationship formation there are both a rational and an emotional pathway that interconnect through the executive function of the ego. The emotional pathway is influenced as well by sociocultural aspects.

This model helps us to determine which rational or emotional aspect needs to be reduced or enhanced within a Brand in order to become a Lovemark. It also proves that there is a positive correlation between emotions and Lovemarks formation and repurchase decision making.

On the other hand, they used the technique of storytelling to understand the emotional bonds in the Lovemark formation. Respondents were asked to tell a story about a specific brand and it turns out that some of those stories contained meaningful experiences about the role that a brand had in their daily life. They also permitted respondents to express their inner emotions towards brands. This helped researchers to understand how consumers felt about their brands. The surprising thing is that some of them were perceived as a father, or a friend, or a special person but they are definitely not treated as an object or just a product. They can even be “symbol of deep emotions that can evoke psychological symptoms of attachment, regression, projection, etc.” (p.13). It means that Lovemarks, can not only be seen as any person

but as a person that helps them to fulfill some psychological needs or gaps in their lives”.

At the end they discovered that Lovemarks that can be seen as a brand with high love and high respect have a strong positive correlation with future purchase probability.

Finally, the outcome showed that 90-95% of the respondent purchase decisions were made was influenced by emotions. They also found out that the most important emotional trigger for a Brand is intimacy,

So the challenge of a brand in order to become a Lovemark is to be relevant, memorable and familiar for consumers. The second challenge is to create mystery, to tell meaningful stories and to become an icon. Finally, they have to work with sensuality, offering multi sensorial experience.

The study concluded that the love/respect axis is not as orthogonal as proposed by Roberts but it depends on the Brand category. It's also important to notice that the increase of love and emotional connection toward a brand may increase respect as well, so these two axis are also correlated with each other.

The second study was developed by Sarkar (2011). It was about brand love. He studied the theoretical antecedents and consequences of romantic consumer-brand love identified. "Brand love as a whole is a romantic and internal feelings of an individual for any brand". It includes components as passion for the brand, attachment to the brand, positive evaluation of the brand, positive emotions in response to the brand, and declarations of love for the brand. Brand Love has two theoretical dimensions: brand *intimacy* and brand *passion*, aspects that were also mentioned by Roberts (2004). "Brand intimacy refers to the emotional liking for the brand, while brand passion refers to the feelings of arousal after coming in contact with the brand or brand related stimuli". The level of arousal will mostly depend on the quality of brand experiences evoked. Therefore, marketing strategies play a key role in this aspect (p. 89).

The third one was developed by Carroll and Ahuvia's (2006) and empirically shows that emotional and passionate love with a brand is a predictor of *brand loyalty*. So, in order to be loyal to them, we need to love them first. Consequently, marketers must try to motivate and entice consumers to love a brand so this represents a war between marketers and the price is a consumer-brand romance.

Patwardhan and Balasubramanian (2011) have defined brand romance as a state of emotional attachment (evoked in response to the brand as a stimulus) that is characterized by high arousal caused by the brand, strong positive affect toward the brand, and a tendency of the brand to dominate the consumer's cognition. However, brand romance is subject-specific, different consumers may enjoy different levels of romance in relation to the same brand.

In conclusion, consumers can love a brand and literally have a romance with them, as if they were persons. So marketers must be able to some brand specific and individual specific variables while developing the marketing strategies to enhance the target's brand love. This relationship will result in prolonged loyalty, and even in the intention to pay premium price for them, and to spread positive word-of-mouth. Consumers, who are in real love with a brand, will stick to it in order to avoid *separation distress* (Sarkar, 2011).

Conclusions: What makes Lovemarks transcend brands?

In this paper, Lovemark's theory was analyzed as well as the psychological processes that take place in a Lovemark formation. They are perception, memory, motivation and emotion.

In order to become a Lovemark, brands need to establish a love/respect relationship with consumers. This includes the creation of: intimacy, sensuality, mystery without leaving behind quality, reliability and an excellent performance in order to build a long lasting bond.

To achieve an important place in the consumer's mind and heart, brands must go beyond functional benefits and focus on providing a meaningful and inspirational value proposition, creating emotional connections and engagement that will finally enhance consumer's purchase decision.

It is important to notice that multisensory experiences with a brand, is the perceptual gateway to stimulate other psychological processes during a Lovemark formation like memory. Actually, several studies stated that olfactory experiences are the most effective way to stimulate sensorial memory and achieve remembrance.

There are two types of motivation toward a love development with brands. The first relates to internal reasons where the Lovemark become consumers' ultimate goal. On the other hand, when the reasons are extrinsic, Lovemarks become a mean to other ends like social status or peer approval.

Each of these drives create different emotions on consumers that finally can lead to the action of approaching toward brands, discover their story, be involved and engaged with their values enhancing the product purchase.

Finally, brands can produce such an impact on consumers' life through communication strategies that they can become extensions, a part of them, or even become an archetype representation or a love object. All these psychological processes take place unconsciously so it can be said that love for the brand is a predictor of loyalty to it, but a loyalty beyond reason, because "reason lead to conclusions but emotions lead to action".

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