A Study of Consumers' Inclinations Sense in Brand Values by ZMET

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Consumers do not purchase a product for the sole purpose of buying the physical content of the product, but also what the product presents socially, how it affects their emotions. These things have become more meaningful. This research tries to find out how to transform an abstract Porter identity into a tangible product. By identifying a company’s attributes, a company can truly conceptualize and further develop a unique style of their own, so consumers can better understand the ethos of the company, their culture and style.

The first step is to find out about the consumer’s profound concept through ZMET (Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique). Then using the MEC (Mean-End Chain) to combine the consumers’ inclinations sense to form the chain-relation as “attributes-result-value”. Further rich connotation gained from MEC and ZMET is then fused into the emotional program of products, to confirm the mode of transaction between the consumer and the product. These deeper values, characteristics and preferences are used to grasp needs that consumers have yet to discover. In-depth interviews are used on a one-on-one basis to find out about the preferences and needs of the consumers. Laddering is used to build the chain of consumer attributes-result-value to understand how consumers transform product attributes into meaningful connotations. Hierarchical Value Map (HVM) is then induced.

By analyzing the brand in terms of the level that it fulfills the needs of consumer value, Porter’s attributes can be categorized in the following three types: (1) At Ease attribute, (2) Convenience function attribute, (3) Fashion superior function attribute

Key Words: ZMET (Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique), Brand Values, Consumers' Inclinations
Introduction

Traditional economy looks at a product in terms of their function, form and price. Modern economic trend are seen from life style and scenarios; creating sensory experiences and recognition of thinking. The consuming behavior has transformed from the simple “product consumption” to “emotional consumption”. An article from Harvard Business Review (B. Joseph pine II & James H. Gilmore) called “Welcome to the Experience Economy” points out that the design trend from experience economy strives for an enterprise as the center of service. Using a product as their material, the consuming behavior strives for emotional appeal and scenarios; creating emotions worth memorizing for the consumers.

In order to understand the needs and thoughts of consumers, the rational side can be satisfied through the function, environment and purposes of a product. The emotional appeal can be created through elements such as design and imagery. Combining these two levels, the consumer can discover the value of a product and create “emotional” consuming behavior. Emotional appeal refers to our inner conscious values; personality, likes, emotion, objects that triggers our emotion. Emotion comes from E (external) + motion (feelings). Once the external elements of a product (E) fulfil specific conditions of the consumer (motion), the (Emotion) will determine the purchase. This is the same as the meaning of emotion. Therefore, if one looks at the emotional program of a consumer and understands the products of a consumer; one can get hold of the inner conscious values. The preference and needs of the consumers are discovered. The aim is to find the products that fulfil the needs and the messages that stimulate the consumer, thereby discovering the consuming elements of the consumers; with the ultimate goal of producing products that fulfils the needs of the consumer.

Moderating role of consumers’ inclinations sense in brand values, and this study take “Porter” as a case. Consumers does not purchase a product for the sole purpose of buying the physical content of the product, but also what the product presents socially, what it makes them feel. These things have become more meaningful.

Emotional engagement is essential, but not sufficient, to qualify a product as New Luxury; it must connect with the consumer on all three levels of a “ladder of benefits.” First, it must have technical differences in design, technology, or both. Second, the technical and functional benefits must combinealong with other factors, such as brand values and company ethos — to engage the consumer emotionally. The Porter package is by the specialized technology of Yoshida & Co. (吉田株式会社), with Mr. Fujiwara Hiroshi’s (藤原ヒロシ) design charm, forms a subculture take Urahara (裏原宿) as the fashion style.

The research tries to find out how to transform abstract Porter identity to a tangible product; how to induce an idea of company product into form can truly conceptualization and furthermore develop a unique style of their own, so consumer understand the ethos of the company, their culture and style. The product sacred meaning — values and preferences of this subculture group can be probed, clarifying how consumer feels towards design value and
brand marketing and providing

Related works

A consumer is a decoder in the process of receiving messages from a product. Through the understanding of how consumers detect, recognize and determine product messages, a better understanding on the inner values of the consumers can be achieved. General manager of YULON 陳國榮 (2002) talked about, “Controlling the cognition of a customer can change the belief of the customer.” Through “cognition” to attract consumers, one can influence their belief and behavior.

Consumer cognition

Cognition is how one processes messages and the way they deal with them. Messick (1976) points out that cognition is the consistent pattern of "organizing and processing information". “Message” refers to what is stored in our memory. “Process” means gaining, storing and using; which are the reactions to preference, data organization and memory storing. From the perspective of cognitive psychology, this illustrates a consumer’s cognitive process. When external stimulation enters, the sensory organs receives them and after stages such as revelation and attention, forms memory or produces purchasing decision for consumers (徐達光, 2004).

The whole cognitive process includes the different layers of feelings and senses; these include the immediate reaction from these external stimulations called sensation. These sensations are as follows: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch; namely our five senses. Perception refers to the fundamental biological sensing organs, transferring stimulation into meaningful messages; which are used to explain or react to our surroundings (張春興, 1991).

The characteristics of perception can be selective or as a whole. Selective refers to a consumer’s selection towards external stimulation and their psychological perceiving. This will include their emotion at that specific moment, expectations or past experiences. These are combined with the traits of the external object to form a composite impression. Therefore, sensation and perception is the initial stage that triggers a consumer’s willingness to purchase a specific product. The external traits are combined with the impression to form their purchasing decision.

Product message and consumer needs

The consumer’s willingness to purchase are often decided upon their perceived acquisition value. When a consumer gains more than what they had paid for, the probability of purchase is higher. Whether a product has the benefit of purchasing is decided by the value it provides for the consumer. In this emotional consuming social structure, a product becomes a medium for the transferring of messages. It’s not just their functions that are considered but also their meaning. The French philosopher and sociologist Baudrillard points out in his book ‘Le
système des objets’, “An object must become a symbol for it to be consumable” (Jean Baudrillard, 1997). From a product’s point of view, the “function” of a product is rooted in one’s heart. The consumer’s selection on a product is base on the added value, the “meaningfulness” of the product.

Newman (1957) said, “Product is a symbol that is formed by its form, size, colour and function. These symbols will have different importance and influence depending on its and others need; as well as its interaction and different correlation with society. Therefore, a product refers to the intentional and unintentional meaning it transmits when one looks or uses it. By analyzing the product in terms of the level that it fulfills the needs of consumer value, a product’s attribute can be categorized in the following three types:

1. Basic function attribute
   This refers to the value that is fulfills the basic consumer needs, which are the basic functions that deals with physical needs and everyday problems. These attributes fulfill the physical needs of the consumer, satisfying them in terms of their senses. A consumer will be satisfied through the possession and usage of the basic functions of the product.

2. Convenience function attribute
   This refers to the attribute that will deal with the basic needs of the consumer as well as giving them a sense of convenience. These attributes fulfill consumer needs on the level of their senses and it is achieved through the convenience it provides when a consumer is using the product.

3. Psychological function attribute
   This refers to the attributes that symbolizes status, which will satisfy the emotional and psychological needs of a consumer. A consumer will reflect their own characteristics onto the product and sees the product as their alter-ego.

Therefore, apart from the using values, a product’s design style becomes a cultural symbolism or living style. It becomes a projection of a consumer’s inner emotion. A symbol can produce consumption to fulfill inner values. Symbol consumption signifies that the society suppresses the average consumption level of just making a living; cultural and emotional elements are added. There is even an irrational tendency of consumption. This shows that symbols are not merely recognition of a product but also personal values and meanings. Through the purchase of a product, personal taste, life-style and personal value are highlighted.

Product attraction and consumption value

Through the above explanation, one can see that the consumption behaviour is created through consumption value. The product must have some value that a consumer can identify with. Baxter (1995) points out that the characteristics of a product needs to have four levels of attraction listed in Tab1. These are the same as the product satisfactory characteristics illustrated by Newman; explaining the abstract values of a product.
Table 1. The four dimensions of attractive products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The four dimensions of attractive products</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The attractiveness of the old knowledge</td>
<td>This is the most obvious level, if the product is a company or brand image, the visual appearance of the product must be clear enough to attract potential customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The attractiveness of the function</td>
<td>If the products to consumers do not have the old knowledge, products must have inspired the look of consumers familiar with the operation of the original function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The symbolic attractiveness</td>
<td>The appearance of the value of products is caused consumers to buy one of the factors, and the product's image is also need to consider the important factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form inherent visual attractiveness</td>
<td>No matter the type of product, the visual appearance is the most fundamental.</td>
</tr>
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Mike Baxter (1995)

Consumption Values
Sheth et al. (1991) proposed five consumption values to explain collectively the buyers’ multiple-facet decision process of purchasing what they wanted. (Fig1.) The first is functional value, which emphasized on the consumption utility of a particular product/service. For example, the properties of horsepower, speed, inner adornment and oil consumption of a new car. Everyone’s preference may differ and usually depend on his/her own budget, and purpose. Secondly, the linking to the buyer will influence his/her purchasing decision. For example, the choosing the wedding banquet may be regulated by the social norms, or should be cohered with the social status. The third is the that reflects the purchasing feeling and enthusiasm surrounding a specific intention, atmosphere or situation. For example, the romantic feeling delivered from a piano or a violin may enhance the dining expense. Fourthly, the matters. The buyer may be eager to purchase the on sale product or service that gives the buyer new knowledge or special consumption experience. For example, the novel, new branded or updating products will attract buyers’ purchasing. Fifthly, the of a particular good/service will promote or restrain the purchasing incentive. For example, the taxi transactions will increase in the raining days, while the ice cream consumption will be lower when it’s snowing. Besides, some technological products are usually used under considering the condition of compatibility or network externality.
Combining the above viewpoints on the satisfactory values of the products on consumers, a product can be valued on its functions, which is the rational perspective. The other value of the product is its symbolism to please; through its aesthetic and fun, this is the experience perspective (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982; 黃盈裕, 1990). A consumer’s decision is highly complex. In the past, the functionality of a product is often emphasized through the “rational perspective” and the “consumer experience” is often ignored; where consumers will gain pleasure from its aesthetic and fun features, namely its “experience perspective”. Woods (1981) feels that a consumer’s purchasing decisive process also includes imaginative, emotional and aesthetic “consumption experience” Ahtola (1985) feels that “consumption experience” is a “entertaining consumption”. This study focuses on the “consumption experience” and discusses the needs of a product’s functionality and emphasizes on a consumer’s reaction on a product’s “senses”, “aesthetics” and “emotions”; investigating the values consumers gains from the consumption of MUJI products.

Method

The research had Means-End Chain as theory basis, using a new ZMET, Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique to analyze the high involvement people thoughts and feelings for MUJI products. According to this method, we could realize the correlation about the products attributes, consuming consequences and ultimate values. The first phase is to find out about the consumer’s profound concept through ZMET. The chain-relation of MEC then forms “attributes-result-value”, so the relation level of consumers on the products’ product attribute, consume result and personal value is gained. Further rich connotation gained from MEC&ZMET is then fused into the emotional program of products, to confirm the mode of transaction between the consumer and the product. These deeper values, characteristics and preferences are used to grasp needs that consumers have yet to discover. Elements that are needed to stimulate needs of the product are then found to conduct a design method that will fit with consumer’s preferences.

Means-end chain

The prototype of Means-end chain is as follows, proposed by Young & Feigi (1975):
Consumers link product attributes with consequence. These consequence are linked with personal value. Attributes, Consequences, values are the three elements that forms the knowledge structure of a consumer’s understanding on a product. The completion of Means-end chain is as follows, proposed by Gutman. MEC is a tool to analyze the link between products and consumers and to gather information on consumers goal structures starting from the analysis of their decision-making processes (Figure2.). It allows to uncover/analyze consumer cognitive structures and decision maps (also referred as
Hierarchical Value Maps), by the utilization of an innovative research method – means-end chain analysis (Grunert et al., 1995; Olson and Reynolds, 1983; Reynolds and Gutman, 1988) – coupled with an in-depth interviewing technique called laddering.

MEC connects relations between A/C/V, it can also analyze the emotion product attributes brings to the consumers, what overall value thinking. The connection is seen in Fig.3.

There are twelve subjects are used on interview. In-Depth Interview is used on a one-on-one basis to find out about the preference and needs of the consumer. Laddering is used to build the chain of consumer attributes-result-value to understand how consumers transform product attributes into meaningful connotations. Hierarchical Value Map (HVM) is then induced.

Laddering helps understand why customers really buy and helps develop key insights that will serve as the platform on which a marketing campaign can be built. Laddering can tap into the set of meanings and associations that differentiate the product from the competition (Reynolds and Gutman, 1984). These findings can then be used for designing marketing segmentation and positioning strategies (Gengler, Howard, Zolner 1995) that explicitly link the attributes and consequences of a product.

There are many studies using MEC to study products and advertisement. (Tab2.) It is often applied on deciding the position of a product, advertisement strategy and segmentation strategy. MEC also explores consumer thinking and behavior in terms of their psychological modes; with the aim of helping designers understand consumer behavior.
Table 2 illustrates some key laddering insights and their implications for the marketing mix.

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<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Key Laddering Insights</th>
<th>Marketing Implications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nike Soccer Shoes and Clothing</td>
<td>Gives me a sense of belonging to a certain group. Makes me more a part of the soccer community. I wish I could live the lifestyle of a professional soccer player.</td>
<td>Sponsor tournament events locally and nationally Put premiere soccer players’ numbers on shoes Buy time in the score box shown on the TV screen during games Offer Nike Soccer newsletters, statistics, and promotions at POP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony Playstation</td>
<td>My friends come over and we spend an evening working together through a game or playing against each other. Challenging games require more critical thinking and decision-making. It feels more like a puzzle rather than a game. Some games are suited to adults only, so I don’t feel like I am playing a &quot;kids’ game,&quot; but taking part in a high quality adult entertainment.</td>
<td>Set up gaming Kiosks in nightclubs in large cities such as LA and New York Get Joey and Chandler to play Playstation on Friends Set up store display away from other game systems and in untapped outlets such as bookstores Target magazines such as Maxim, SI and Playboy with &quot;mature&quot; ads</td>
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</table>

It is divided into Attribute/conclusion/value and the elements are divided in levels. The elements of A/C/V relation matrix decide the main path or the connections of the relation elements. The matrix describes the elements gained or the number of indirect relations. These are made into HVM. Through HVM, the overall structural relation of the product is understood through MEC. The importance of the products is illustrated to provide designers, marketers, creative staff to decide the appropriate product attributes, enhancing the values of the product and decrease errors made by the direction of the product. This study is based on the Means-end chain method to understand the product attribute to the final value of the potential linkage. This is integrated with ZMET to speculate the product attribute that influences greatly on consumer’s consumption and its final value.

Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique

Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique is a mixed non-text language (images) and texts (In-Depth Interview) to study consumers. This new consumer research method is proposed by Prof. Zaltman of the Mind of the Market Laboratory of Harvard University in the 90’s (Zaltman and Coulter, 1995) Our intent is to contribute further to the understanding of consumers’ impressions of advertising and the meanings that they associate with it, as well as to introduce the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET) more formally as a means to conduct advertising research (Zaltman 1997; Zaltman and Coulter 1995). ZMET is a hybrid methodology grounded in various literature, including verbal and nonverbal communication, visual sociology, visual anthropology, literary criticism, semiotics, mental imagery, cognitive
neuroscience, and phototherapy. The method involves semi-structured, in-depth, personal interviews centered around visual images that the informant brings to the interview (Denzin 1989; McCracken 1988).

Because the data are informant-driven rather than researcher-driven, the ZMET interview affords researchers an opportunity to have consumers more freely express and expand on their thoughts and feelings about the topic under investigation. Through ZMET, consumer can express freely what they feel towards a product and fully describe their hidden thoughts. Their values, motives, needs and attitudes is gained, which are valuable information. Recent years, the theory and International corporate such as: Pacific Gas & Electronic · AT&T · Coca-cola · Dupont · technique of ZMET have been applied by many GM · Motorola · American Express · Reebok · SAMSUNG · HP. Mercedes-Bens have also applied this technique to understand what consumers feel about their design on the vehicles.

The main concept of includes metaphor, image analyze and story-telling, using images as a medium, metaphors as a method for exploration tool (Metaphor Analysis). Images expresses the thoughts of an interviewee better. Metaphors is a way of rhetoric, its intention is to use one object to understand another object’s cognition process or thinking mode. This is the understand and experiencing of one object to another (Zaltman & Coulter, 1995). Images can be used to communicate its visual metaphor, as seen in Fig4.

![Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique](image)

Figure4. Metaphor cognitive operation plans
Zaltman & Coulter · 1995

The Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET) is a qualitative technique originally developed by consumer researchers to gain a deeper understanding of consumers images of brands, products, and companies, brand equity, product concepts and designs, product usage and purchase experiences, life experiences, consumption context, and attitudes toward business (Zaltman & Coulter, 1995). Before presenting ZMET in response to the challenges mentioned above, seven underlying premises drawn from the social and biological sciences that support the adoption of an alternate methodology require acknowledgement:
(1) most human communication is nonverbal (Knapp, 1980); (2) thoughts typically occur as non-verbal images even though they are often expressed verbally (Damsio, 1994); (3) metaphors are the key windows/mechanisms for viewing thoughts and feelings (Lakoff, 1987);
(4) senses provide important metaphors. Humphrey (1992) suggests that the senses are the gates and windows to the mind, through which all new information passes, so that there can be no thoughts, ideas, conceptions in our head that do not derive originally from our experience of surface stimuli impinging on our bodies; (5) people have mental models which represent their knowledge and behaviour. In addition, the major processes of memory are the creation, storage, and retrieval of stories, where stories are metaphors for knowledge (Schank, 1990); (6) all humans have relevant conscious thoughts that they need help articulating. Additionally, subjects often have relevant hidden thoughts; ideas they are not aware of possessing but are willing to share once discovered (Weiser, 1993); and (7) it is more accurate and more productive to consider emotion and reason as forces which co-mingle. Hence, as deep thought structures are surfaces, we must consider reason and emotion together rather than stressing one over the other (de Sousa, 1987).

Table 3. The interview followed these ten steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>STORYTELLING – They were asked to describe the content of their photos. I began by placing the scenario instruction sheet on the table (Non-Renao). I took the collection of photos they had taken and shuffled them into a stack. They were then asked to select 8 to 10 pictures that they thought best exemplified the scenario out of the many they had taken. The pictures were then laid out on the table and the respondent was asked to describe the content of each picture. As they chose each picture, I identified its number for the audio recording.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MISSED IMAGES – They were asked which image they did not get but would have liked to include because of the nature of the picture capturing something important they would like to express about the topic. They were then asked to describe those missing images.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SORTING TASK – They were asked to put the pictures into groups that were in some way meaningful to them and to describe those groups. Each group of photos was spread out on the table and photographed and an audio recording stating the group’s title and the identification number of each photo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CONSTRUCT ELICITATION – Using respondent generated photos as stimuli, I elicited basic constructs and their relationships using laddering techniques. All of the groups of the photos were put back into a single pile and mixed up. I randomly selected three pictures and placed them on the table. Interviewees were asked to tell me how two of these pictures are the same and how they are different from the third picture. This is The Kelly Repertoire sorting technique that forces interviewees to create meaningful connections by grouping two images together and separating them from another image in a way that means something to them. For each point the respondent makes, they were asked repeatedly to elaborate on the ideas they bring forth. This is known as the Means-End Chain Analysis and Laddering Techniques. This is done in order to get more and more details using guided conversational techniques commonly used by psychoanalysts. Each metaphor, idea, or descriptive word was written down on one yellow Post-It note for later use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>MOST REPRESENTATIVE PHOTO – They were asked to select the picture that most represents the scenario given to them and to explain why this picture is most representative. Again, each idea presented was followed up as much as possible to get more meaning from this single picture. The picture was identified on the recording for reference purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>OPPOSITE IMAGE – Each interviewee was asked to find any picture that is most unlike or opposite to the given scenario. Again, as many follow up questions were asked as possible to get more meanings from this single picture. It was also identified for the audio recording.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SENSORY IMAGES – Respondents were asked to relate the core idea to their senses.</td>
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They were asked what positive and negative associations they made with regards to taste, smell, touch, sound, color and emotion to the topic being explored. Each idea was explored as much as possible to get at more meaning.

STEP 8 THE MENTAL MAP – They were then shown the Post-It notes of ideas that I collected while they were talking and they were asked to show how these are related to each other by making groups and drawing connecting lines. Respondents made a map or model of the constructs they expressed that were recorded on the yellow sticky notes. They were also given an opportunity to use additional Post-Its to write other ideas they thought were important to the subject. Respondent place the notes on paper A4 paper. They were given a pencil and eraser to ssist them. They were allowed to create more than one map. I asked them to label the apparts if they wished and then to introduce the map to me for recording purposes. I then took a photo of the finished map(s) and made sure the photo was clear.

STEP 9 THE SUMMARY IMAGE - Respondents create a picture collage to summarize their ideas. They were asked to take scissors and cut out parts of any photos to put together a summary image or collage of their feelings about the scenario. Respondents were encouraged to place any pictures on an empty A4 page and cut them up, combine them, and even change any of the pictures using a pencil to draw anything into the collage. When complete, the Summary Image is photographed and I checked to make sure the picture was clear. The respondent then introduced the meaning of the collage.

STEP 10 VIGNETTE – The final step was to create a Vignette. They were asked to think about the scenario and that if they could make a short movie that included their important feelings about the scenario, tell me what that movie would be like. Respondents then described their movie to me.

ZMET provides the compound method of credibility and efficiency, especially image analysis. Many scholars explains the construct elicitation of ZMET has good credibility and efficiency. The study result will produce different forms of information, including The Mental Map, visual and sensory vocabulary and The Summary Image. These visual, multi-sensory feelings, digital images and short papers all helps with the understand of the construct of the interviewees. This will also provide design teams, creative product designers, product planning and other marketing research efficient information (Zaltman & Coulter, 1995) and help the organization to understand multi-facet problems. For example: Corporate Image, product concept and design, product and brand image, brand standing, product usage and buying experience, living experience, internet communication, and advertisements. Therefore, ZMET is not a replacement but a supplement. It can develop non-textual communication channels and induce specific thoughts and feelings of the consumers; displaying the mental modes of the consumers and other insights into the rich inner world of the consumers.

Result and analysis

This subculture is always based on emotions, and consumers have a much stronger emotional engagement with Porter than with other brands. They are willing, even eager, to pay a premium price for remarkable. The Porter’s products and services that possess higher levels of quality, taste, and to thirst for than other goods in the category but are not so expensive as to be out of reach. This will induce the important thoughts and experiences of the consumer’s favorite product, in order to extract the preference and needs of this subculture group.
The criteria for their selective purchases are both emotional and rational (involving project quality management, functional, technical and so forth considerations.) In particular, this subculture shop more selectively. They trade up the premium the Porter product if the value is important to them. If it is not, they trade down to the low-cost or private label brand, or even go without.

The chain of the Porter consumer A-C-V (Attributes) - (Consequences) - (Value) to understand how the Porter consumers transform product attributes into meaningful connotations. Finally reorganizes the HVM- Hierarchical Value Map (Figure 5). In this graph that can by analyzing the brand in terms of the level that it fulfills the needs of consumer value, Porter’s attribute can be categorized in the following three types:

In Fig.5, one can observe the attribute level concept:

(1) At Ease attribute
This refers to the value that is to satisfy the relieved consumer needs, which are the basic functions that to satisfy physiological needs and daily life problems. For instance: the result of plastic leather is that water proof; the result of HEAT(This cotton material is uses for to manufacture the bullet-proof vest) is that long-wearing; the result of laser hallmark card is that quality assurance also after-care service; and other such function.

Therefore, Porter consumer will be satisfied through the possession and usage of the relieved functions of the product.

(2) Convenience function attribute
This refers to the attribute that will deal with the basic needs of the consumer as well as giving them a sense of convenience. For instance: the result of two-way zipper is that swift
open; the result of versatile pocket is that to classified they sundries; the result of and book (B5/A4) size is that use of school day; and other such function.

Therefore, these attributes fulfills consumer needs on the level of their senses and it is achieved through the convenience it provides when a consumer is using the product.

(3) Fashion superior function attribute

This refers to the attributes that symbolizes status of Porter, which will satisfy the emotional and psychological needs of a consumer. For instance: the result of nice quality is that has good sense; the result of design by Fujiwara Hiroshi (藤原ヒロシ) is that qualified as Urahara (裏原宿) style; the result of thirst for than other goods in the category but are not so expensive as to be out of reach is that New Luxury; and other such feeling.

Therefore, Porter consumer will reflect their own characteristics onto the Porter product and sees the brand as their alter-ego.

Further studies

This study provides the following suggestions, to provide further studies:

(一) This study is emphasized on the understanding of the PORTER consumer cognitions. This gains an extensive A-C-V relation linkage of the consumers on MUJI. This is not an exploration on a single specific product; a deeper study might be made if this is done on a single specific product.

(二) This study integrates MEC and ZMET and apply it on product strategy and conceptual development. It can be integrated other marketing, brand imaging methods to discover other

(三) This is a qualitative study, the analysis is objective and systematic, however, if a quantitative method is included, it will definitely add efficiency and credibility to the study.

(四) This study applied the result to the validation of conceptual development and viability of a product. The attributes, result and value are not tested to consumers. Completion of this process will strengthen the relations of construct elicitation on Hierarchical Value Map.

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