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**Title:** Building a sustainable nation branding framework through brand identity and brand essence: A case of "Malaysia Truly Asia"

**Authors:** Yusniza Kamarulzaman, Marlia Marzuki and Thinaranjney I Thirumoorthi

**Abstract:** Within the fast pace of globalisation, a healthy competition between countries emerged in getting the attention of tourists around the world. Hence, the importance and the need for nation branding (also known country branding) has ended up more noticeably. Branding would be a fundamental instrument to stake out and communicate to the audiences as it creates a reputation and builds a strong brand of the nation. As nation branding is about the perceptions of the country, it is crucial to identify what is the national brand identity and essence from the perception of global tourists. One of the most prominent cases in Asia is Malaysia's long-running tourism campaign called 'Malaysia Truly Asia' (MTA), which is often cited as a classic case of successful country branding. The MTA campaign was crafted in the year 2000. Since then, the government agencies and tourism players have been exploiting the slogan and campaign attracting foreign tourists to visit Malaysia while contributing to the country's economy. The MTA slogan has taken its deep roots in the society and its echoed across the world as an expensive advertising and marketing campaign funded by the government. This study aims to develop a sustainable nation branding framework linking the brand identity and brand essence based on the MTA case. This study examined the elements of brand identity and brand essence of Malaysian nation branding based on online community perceptions. Besides, it also explored the sentiments of online reviews towards the branding of Visit Malaysia 2020 under MTA campaign, which was suspended due to the global pandemic. The data was collected via conversations and reviews from a few popular online platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Web Community, Reddit and Tripadvisor. From a total of 1132 online conversations and reviews, 648 reviews were from Malaysia while 484 reviews were from abroad such as Singapore, Indonesia, United Kingdom, Australia, United States of America, New Zealand, India etc. Through this qualitative study, it is proven that Malaysia has all the unique features to build a strong nation brand. The study revealed that most of the elements of the brand identity and brand essence of Malaysia had been perceived very positively by the online community, which support a sustainable MTA tourism campaign for years to come. Elements such as architecture, landscape, art and food received voluminous of positive comments from the online participants. However, the political regime element is the only element that received a negative perception. Even though Malaysia's political regime did not get good perceptions, other features associated with contemporary cultures such as music, literature, language, and sports will help counterbalance the perception of the tourists. As for the brand essence, the study disclosed that Petronas Twin Tower had been recognised as an iconic building that is synonym to Malaysia. Sports events such as MotoGP encourage more tourists to come and show positive impacts on sports tourism. Folklore stories like Puteri Gunung Ledang and Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa have a significant effect on the growth of the younger generation in understanding the right values from their ancestors. While the Penang Peranakan Mansion; The Stadthuys and A'Famosa of Malacca; and Georgetown World Heritage have been recognised as most visited historical buildings by the tourists that is full of heritage elements with irreplaceable identity and authenticity that impressed the visitors. It is expected that the proposed Nation Branding framework would offer some insights to tourism practitioners and stakeholders globally in the effort to improve their countries' competitiveness, reputation, image and uniqueness while strengthening the resilience of the tourism businesses.

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**Title:** Sustainable branding strategy via celebrity corporate brand

**Authors:** Anisah Hambali, Sharifah Faridah Syed Alwi and John Balmer

**Abstract:** Celebrity endorsement has received academic attention since the 1970s and it has widely been used by companies in their marcom (marketing communications) activities as an effective strategic tool to promote their brands, companies, products and services. Instead of only being appointed as endorsers, this new phenomenon sees how celebrities have changed their roles as human brands and are now better known as celebrity brands. Celebrities, as they are known today, are progressively becoming brands in their own right (i.e. celebrity brand), have their own value, owning their own products and/or services and businesses/companies (i.e. corporate brand), and endorsing other corporate brands too. Companies use celebrity endorsements to position and communicate their individual/product brand image to consumers at large. However, due to the changing marketing environment (from traditional to digital marketing) and in particular, during the pandemic time, companies are finding that their communication through celebrity endorsements have become costly and less efficient when trying to project a coherent corporate image and reputation across various audiences. Rather, the new trending phenomenon of celebrity chefs may achieve the desired effect. Unlike other human brands such as CEOs, athletes or artists, which roles limit to either personal or corporate roles, celebrity chefs are unique

as they encompass both. Furthermore, they also endorse other brands and corporate brands simultaneously, enabling them to project their own personal and corporate brand as well as the brand they are endorsing.

Hence, this study's novelty lies in the exploration and development of the celebrity chef concept at both the product and corporate brand level of their 'own' and 'endorsed' activities (termed as celebrity corporate brand or CCB in this study); and operationalises the CCB concept. The study aims to investigate whether a change in the celebrity brand roles by addressing both traits (human personality) and states (brand personality) and by associating it at the corporate brand level, given the best contextual setting, is one of the possible ways to strategically use celebrity brand beyond endorsement in marcom activities. The study has three objectives, which are: 1) to explore the concept of celebrity brand at a corporate brand level, known as Celebrity Corporate Brand – CCB; 2) to investigate the impact of CCB on attitudinal (identification, image and reputation) and behavioural (loyalty) outcomes (termed as corporate brand enhancement); and 3) to develop a holistic conceptual model to understand the consumers attitudinal and behavioural response and association impact of celebrity brand at corporate brand level named as Celebrity Corporate Brand Association Impact on Corporate Brand Enhancement Model.

The study uses population-based survey experiments - covering samples selection from the United Kingdom and Malaysia. In particular, the study follows a strict process of developing scales with pre-test, pilot and main data collection process with final and usable responses 423. A two-step structural equation modelling was utilised to test all developed hypotheses. The study finds that CCB represents and carries his Personal Brand, Product/Service Brand and Corporate Brand. CCB Product Brand refers to the celebrity chefs own developed products and services which are their foods, cookbooks, kitchen utensils. CCB Corporate Brand refers to the celebrity chefs' businesses, corporations and companies such as their restaurants, colleges and programs. The study tested hypotheses, relating CCB construct with CCB Id, CCB Image, CCB Reputation on the endorsed corporate brand image; and attitudinal and behavioural outcome on both CCB own and endorsed corporate brand loyalty.

The result shows that CCB represents and carries his Personal Brand, Product/Service Brand and Corporate Brand. CCB Product Brand refers to the celebrity chefs own developed products and services which are their foods, cookbooks, kitchen utensils. CCB Corporate Brand refers to the celebrity chefs' businesses, corporations and companies such as their restaurants, colleges and programs. CCB is further conceptualised through the CCB's Authentic and Functional Quality, CCB's Cognition and CCB's Personal Quality. The CCB's Philosophy also projects the celebrity's own corporate brand and endorsed activities. CCB Personal Brand refers to the celebrity chefs' traits such as their interpersonal skills and quality, symbolic value and authenticity; and their and their personality states such as enterprising and technical quality.

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Theoretically, the research is novel in four different ways: 1) it offers a fresh insight to scholars and practitioners in celebrity endorsement, human or celebrity brand, into how to address the new phenomena of changing consumer and celebrity roles by going beyond the celebrity endorsement concept (i.e. via CCB); 2) it explores, develops, defines and provides measures for the newly developed CCB concept; and 3) it extends the nascent literature on celebrity brand, which explores mainly at product brand level, to corporate brand level (celebrity with personal brand also owning corporate brand), and 4) it test CCB empirically and further investigates its relationship in terms of both attitudinal and behavioural outcomes in an effort to enhance corporate brand (corporate brand enhancement process). Previously, studies on celebrity endorsement only look at the use of celebrity as an endorser and discussion in this area is made based on the Source Model which only discusses the personality traits of the celebrities. In addressing the changing roles of celebrities (having personal brands, product brands and corporate brands), this study defines CCB by including both the celebrity brand personality traits and states and researching its impact on corporate brand enhancement. Furthermore, this study looks at both the attitudinal and behavioural outcome of the CCB on multiple stakeholders (celebrities, consumers and endorsed corporate brands).

Methodologically, the study contributes in two ways: (1) a new context (celebrity chefs) is chosen to add new insights to celebrity branding literature; and (2) the inclusion of multiple stakeholders as the samples. The study proposes marketers to select a new type of celebrity: one that has a personal brand, product brand and/or corporate brand to increase the promotional marketing campaign success. Both parties need to work together to build upon their brand strategy to ensure that the consumer identifies closely with them, thereby enhancing their image and reputation and subsequently increasing

brand loyalty to the advantage of both parties. Interestingly, once CCB has built upon reputation, this guides the business and marketers to carefully select them in the hope of enhancing its corporate brand. It is essential to address various audiences in this new era by designing an appropriate positioning and communication strategy. The results will assist businesses and organisations in the context of defining and developing strategy alongside celebrity chefs (as the CCB) with their businesses and the endorsed corporate brands.

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**Title:** Examining the antecedents of luxury brands engagement: A study of the young Indian Consumer

**Authors:** Ankur Srivastava and Purva Sharma

**Abstract:** Luxury consumption motivation is centered on the social comparison theory and believes that people use luxury brands to adhere to social standards. This is rooted in a feeling of satisfaction and preference for luxury brands. One's self-concept also drives the preference for certain categories of luxury consumption. Given the presence of a myriad of reasons, consumers purchase luxury items for individual reasons, and extensive studies have been done in the past to investigate the same. This study focuses on the motivations of luxury customer engagement by young consumers using a qualitative method for analysis. 61 respondents were interviewed based on four aspects- functionality, emotions, social factors, and other factors. The transcribed responses were analyzed using content analysis. Electronic products were selected for emotional reasons, whereas watches were functionally and socially motivated. The findings could help managers formulate their communication strategies.

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**Title:** Retailers, why don't you take into account what I feel and how I behave in crowd conditions?

**Authors:** Nesrine Tmimi, Hamida Skandrani and Kaouther Kooli

**Abstract:** The store atmosphere issue has become of a major interest for academicians as well as for practitioners. Indeed, with the large development of the retailing sector and the growing competition between retailers, the management of store atmosphere variables is considered as an important source of differentiation since these later are found to be key marketing tools that influence consumer behavior (Kotler, 1973-1974). This recognition fostered the interest of several marketing academicians to more thoroughly understand the atmospherics concept and to identify its components and their impact mainly on consumer attitude and behavior, but rarely on employees ones (Skandrani et al. 2011) despite the theoretical acknowledgment by some scholars of that impact (Bitner, 1992). This study investigates the impact of the crowd on the employees' emotional and cognitive responses in a hypermarket. Pursuing this objective could be very helpful in managing the store atmosphere variables in more efficient way. More specifically, this may help uncover the reasons behind some employees' attitudinal and behavioral responses such as satisfaction/dissatisfaction, arousal, excitement, mood, cooperation, interaction with consumer, stress, task performance, under crowd conditions (Bitner, 1992; Skandrani et al., 2011). It may allow learning more about how do employees perceive crowd (opportunity or source of discomfort), how do they deal with crowd conditions, and how do they react to consumer enquiries in these circumstances

A qualitative approach was adopted to uncover employees' emotional and cognitive responses under crowd condition. Semi structured interviews and storytelling techniques were used to collect data in behalf 43 employees. 20 of them participated to the storytelling study. Besides, 43 consumers were interviewed to take into account the consumer point of view and to ensure the validity of our study results. Data gathered in this study were analyzed using content analysis. For data analyses two methods were adopted: the comprehensive analysis approach is used for story telling analysis. And the thematic analyses approach to identify the salient themes and sub themes.

Employees identified two main representations of the crowd. 1-the economic oriented representation; crowd is seen as an opportunity to make profit. 2- the social oriented representation; crowd is a huge number of people. Also, these representations are closely related to a time period. Moreover, crowd is found to have a dual influence (negative and positive influences). First, crowd seems to have a negative impact on the attitudinal and behavioral responses in so far as some employees declared having experienced overload, felt humiliation and panic. But for some of them it is a source of excitement. As to the physiological responses, crowd could yield to energy loss, suffocation, headache and agoraphobia/ochlophobia. Besides, crowd seems to encourage employees working more but it could lead them to lower their effort. Second, the results revealed that crowd might be harmful to some ambient factors' functions. Indeed, under