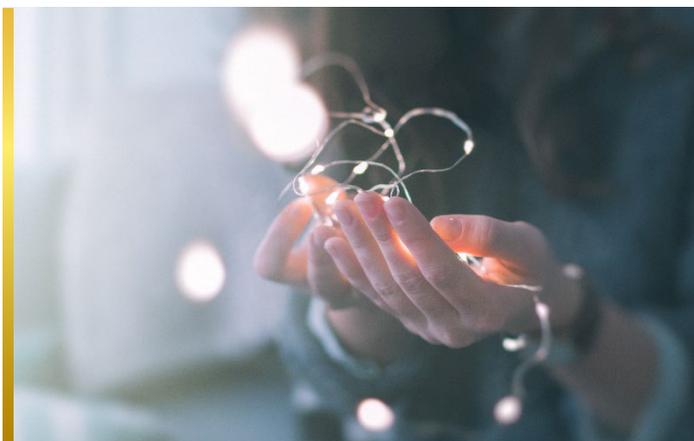


How to crack the code of your brand and ignite growth



The COVID-19 pandemic once again demonstrated that stronger brands recover faster from crisis. They are more robust, stable, possess resilience and show endurance. Even without extraordinary happenings on the horizon, strong brands outperform, innovate and disrupt. They are state-of-the-art, healthier and others look up to them!

Therefore, knowledge about how to strengthen a brand and optimise its potential is highly desired. This is on the agenda of every competitive team out there from board to operational level. Marketers and brand experts strive at trying to understand what is happening under the hood of their brand and purposefully track the developments on a regular basis. The concrete questions to answer are:

what does the brand look like in the mind of the consumer, what does it consist of and how can all this be decoded simultaneously?

Probably you nod while reading these lines, but more importantly – do you know the answers? Where does the power of your brand lie and what role does your brand play in the lives of consumers?

While seeking the answers, professionals across industries often focus primarily on the static brand metrics and by doing so miss the gist in the story or important parts of the puzzle.

They do gather data and they do carry out or delegate research to grasp what subconscious twists and turns the brand does in the mind of the consumer. Nonetheless, some upgrades in the methodology surely lead to better depiction of reality, spotting the right opportunities and seizing the moment.

Based on decades of hands-on experience and millions of research projects around the globe, Kantar has developed a unique Brand Structures Framework that empowers you to step up the game and get more out of your brand, leveraging your business and already making the first step today.

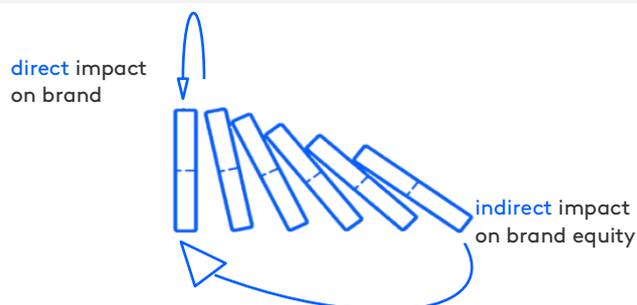
Here some useful tips and tricks of how exactly to do it!

1 Evaluate your brand structure and don't look simply at brand values

Let us start from the very beginning: what is a brand structure and why do we prefer it over e.g., a single brand value?

Brand perceptions are dynamic and not static constructs which co-exist in groups. So, to understand why brand equity has a certain end value, it is important to assess how it is built, what it is connected to and how it can be decomposed into its corresponding individual attributes. We need an analytic framework uncovering what is on your consumer's mind and the best routes to brand equity.

In simple words, **Brand Structures Analysis is a drill down of all associations your consumers have with the corresponding direct or indirect impact on your brand.** Just like in a domino effect. Brand associations are captured by surveyed image attributes either in a continuous brand tracker giving richer input or in single dipsticks capturing a moment in time. In addition, brand awareness, consideration, frequency of purchase, perceived price level, trust, client satisfaction, etc. tied to the business question at hand can be analysed.



2 Don't scratch on the surface but dig into the layers to find levers to pull

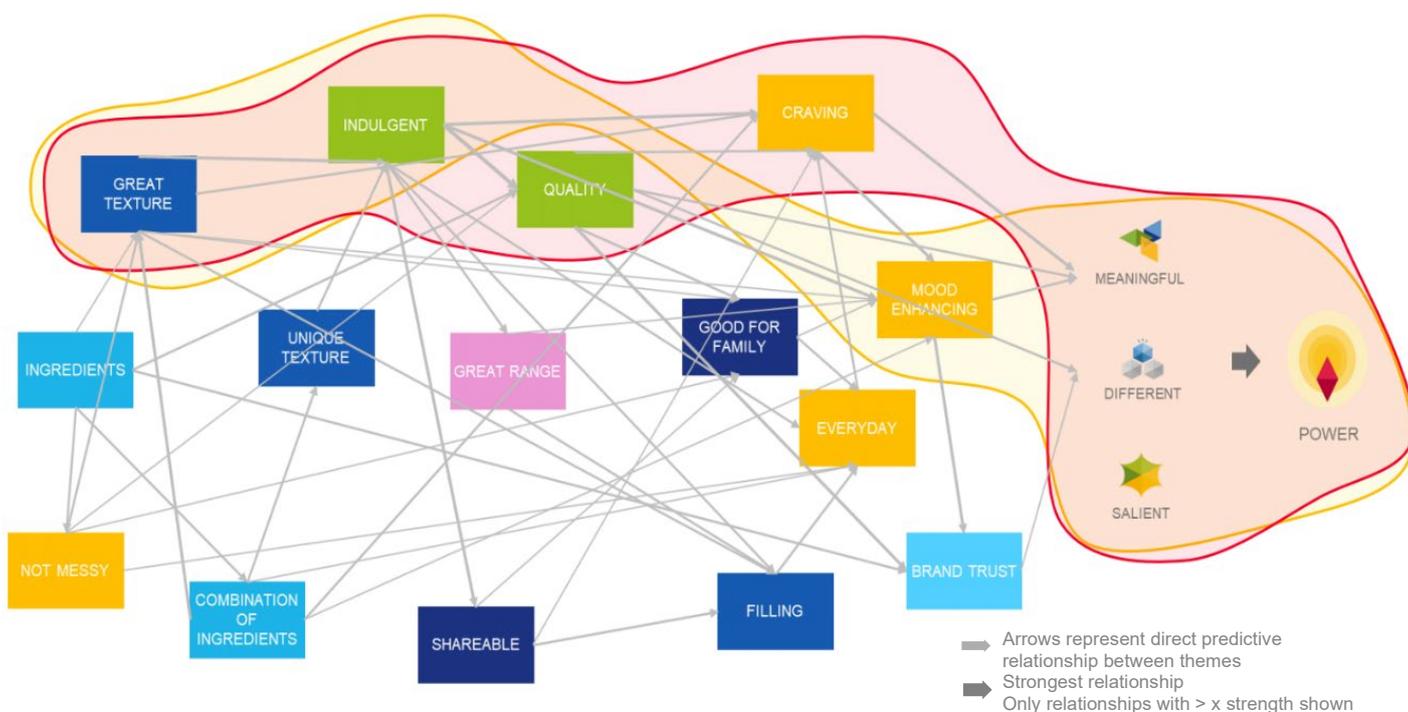
After getting the big picture, we ought to dig deeper. Look at all mental associations about your brand that consumers have in their mind – just like in some sort of a mind map. From there onwards, understand the relationship between your brand metrics and all these associations.

How does that come into place exactly? Take a look at the example below, the equity of e.g., a crisps brand is fed by how meaningful, salient and different the brand is perceived. You might consider driver analysis to understand this mind map, but there only attributes with strongest correlations are left in the equation.

Let's clarify this!

For instance, 'craving' might be dropped off from the analysis if 'mood enhancing' has a stronger correlation with meaningful. That leads to some key potential levers left out and you not getting the full picture. The fancy theoretical term for this is multicollinearity.

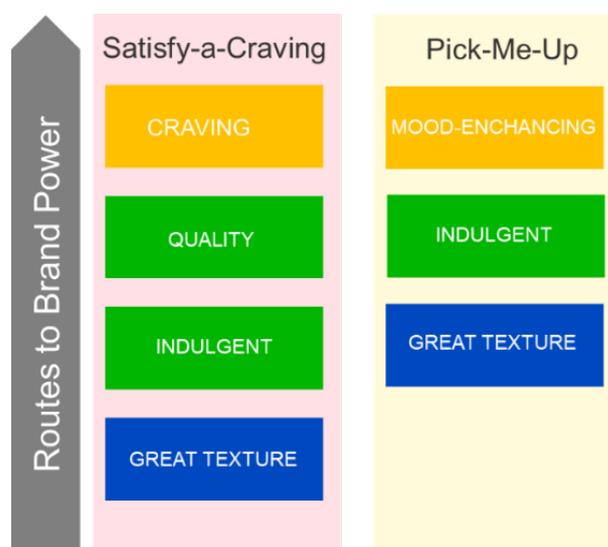
Consequently, when choosing the next brand research, make sure the methodology covers the whole picture.



3 Assess the connections between attributes and not in isolation

On the one hand, it is important to capture all vital themes for the brand structure and on the other, to examine how they are interconnected.

In the example above, it is vital to know what mental steps the consumer makes, what is their path to get to 'craving'. Namely, that it all starts with the sensory evaluation of the 'great texture' of the crisps, which evokes a feeling of indulging into, most likely, what consumers would describe as a guilty pleasure.



The latter is connected surprisingly to 'quality', which is probably some cognitive dissonance mechanism and that leads to the relation with 'craving' and giving 'meaning' to the brand.

That way the mental paths of your brand are elucidated and so the setup or the structure of the brand is revealed to its core.

Knowing this and the exact steps enables you to formulate concrete actions to grow your brand.

4 Don't be satisfied with the status quo, base your next steps on future scenarios

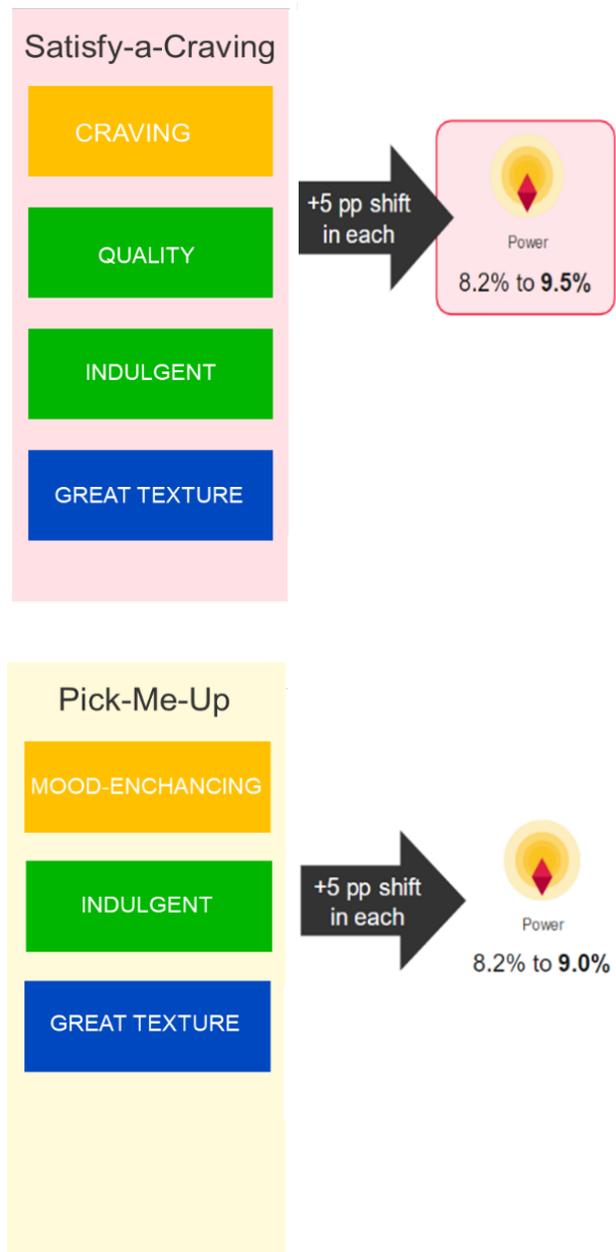
What comes next are the delivered insights. Quite often driver analysis results in a hitlist of attributes for e.g., brand equity. The ones leading the list are typically what marketers take into consideration and emphasise in their communication.

On the contrary, the Brand Structures Framework we developed looks not only at the separate paths which shape brand equity, but also which of these paths have the biggest potential to grow equity.

It is in a way a data-driven crystal ball for looking into the future, which enables scenario simulations to find the most advantageous paths and by doing so to deliver actionable insights ready to be implemented.

In the provided example, if we increased perceptions along these routes by e.g., 5% we would expect a return on Brand Power for each, but the Craving route is more impactful the 'Satisfy-a-craving' path turns out to be way more promising than the 'Mood enhancing' route. Knowing this fact will not only save you time, effort and budget, but will facilitate growing your brand even more.

Additionally, simulations are forecasts which take into account the brand story, current assets to consumers, competitive landscape as well as brand plans and internal view. Or in other words, by simulating scenarios Kantar's Brand Structures Analysis identifies the path that has the optimal potential to ignite growth and so guide companies in the right direction.



5

Apply brand structure learnings throughout your strategy

Truly understanding the brand associations network enables answering questions like which buttons to push to get better results and more value out of the brand overall but also throughout the different steps of the brand building process. **It is, therefore, important to incorporate that knowledge throughout the strategy.**

When you know what levers to pull, use them in the ideation of the creative, in communication to your target group and in the recommended channels.

When you find out how competitor brands are perceived and how their paths are built, grab the potential to grow in that competitive landscape and exploit it! Even new product development or shifts in positioning within the brand portfolio are areas where a deep dive into the brand structure comes well into play.

Finally, a Brand Structures Analysis brings clarity into the decision-making process and foundation for a more solid strategy with practical business implication across areas.



POSITIONING



MESSAGING



PORTFOLIO



COMMUNICATION



TARGETING

WRAP UP

As a takeaway, always keep in mind that your brand is structured in some sort of a system in the mind of your consumer – investigate it, do not miss out important parts or oversee connections between the attributes.

Play with scenarios to get most out of what works for the consumers and apply these learnings throughout your strategy for optimal results.

Ultimately, a stronger brand drives more sales, commands premium and reinforces customer loyalty preventing churn and brand switching.

Does that sound interesting, does it ring any bells? Eager to know more?

Check [our website](#) and get in touch with your Kantar account manager or our Analytics team for a short demo and to discuss your specific business questions.



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