

Title: Managing media brands: avoiding multiple personality disorder

Abstract

Media brands have personalities, but how are these personalities managed across a brand architecture that consists of a network, channels, programmes and programme talent? This paper examines the issue of media brand management through the lens of brand personality. It argues that an effective brand management strategy needs to ensure coherence across the multiple brand personalities present within the brand architecture.

The research on media branding has become increasingly prominent to the extent that it is now a distinct and quickly evolving discipline (Ots, 2008; Chan-Olmsted and Kim, 2010; Siegert *et al* 2015). Whilst this research adds to our understanding of brands that exist in a media context, we also believe that our findings could lay the foundations for generalizability on how to manage multiple brand personalities within a broader architecture.

Our research draws on the seminal work of Aaker (1997) and her conceptualisation of brand personality as the human characteristics associated with a brand. We also argue that multiple personalities, within a brand architecture, need to be coherently managed in order to successfully engage audiences who tend to endorse brands that are consistent with their own notion of 'self' (Forster, 2015).

Our paper will present the findings from a large scale survey of audience members who were asked to classify human characteristics associated with personalities within a branded house architecture (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000) consisting of the BBC (network), BBC2 (channel), Top Gear (programme) and Chris Evans (programme talent). Descriptive and inferential statistics will be used to examine our theoretical framework and we will conclude that the management of multiple brand personalities will be more effective when the personalities 'fit' with each other and that the ineffective management of these brand personalities will ultimately lead to multiple personality disorder.

Key words: Brand Personality, Brand Architecture, Brand Management, Audience Engagement, Media Brand, Media Management.

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