Exploring the parameters that define brand success in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG): A case study for a Greek food start-up business

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I hereby declare that the work submitted is mine and that where I have made use of another’s work, I have attributed the source(s) according to the Regulations set in the Student’s Handbook.

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Abstract

This dissertation was written as part of the MSc in Strategic Product Design at the International Hellenic University.

This paper explores the parameters that define brand success for a FMCG product in the Greek market. At first, it reviews the literature for aspects of branding a new business should be aware of, attitudes towards healthy foods and other parameters (brand heritage, health claims and packaging design) that can affect the success of a product. Following, a mixed approach method is used in order to gather quantitative and qualitative data: a) an online survey and b) interviews with producers (5) and brand specialists (2). In the end, the paper attempts to exploit the findings of the research and design a sample case study for a start-up business in the sectors of organic herbs and natural food supplements, which can serve as an informed guidance to people involved in the field of food branding.

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Keywords: branding, business, success, parameters

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15/03/2017
Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, S. Chatzigavriil.
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Introduction

During the long standing Greek economic crisis, Greek entrepreneurship is undergoing a period of striving to thrive. Despite the numerous difficulties, more and more enterprises turn to the primary and secondary sectors of economy. This action seems to be in the right direction, as the country is known to have enormous potential in these fields, due to ideal climate and geographical conditions. But is it enough? Having a great quality product is crucial, but it is only the first step. The key to success is found in later level, when the greatness of the product has to be communicated to the market. And there comes branding.

Branding “creates mental structures and helps consumers organize their knowledge about products and services in a way that clarifies their decision-making and provides value to the firm”, according to Aaker & Keller (1). It includes some sub-concepts which all constitute the branding strategy for the management of the brand. A central concept is brand identity, which is the message the brand sends out (2) specifying brands’ uniqueness and value (4) or as McKinsey practitioners believe, it is “about projecting an image that will remain recognizable, credible, and sustainable over extended periods of time” (3). Kapferer (2008) (4) calls brand identity one of the two essential tools of brand management; the other one is brand positioning. This is “emphasizing the distinctive characteristics that make it different from its competitors and appealing to the public”. Another important concept is brand equity, which, simply put, is the power the brand achieves to build in consumers’ minds. In order to achieve equity, a brand needs first to have a strategy and raise customers’ awareness. This can happen by repeated exposure and by leveraging secondary associations, for both of which, very important tools are advertising and social media. Ultimately, the goal of branding is to achieve brand loyalty: customers’ commitment to the brand and repetitive purchasing.

All the above aspects of branding are covered among others in this paper, which aims to explore the parameters that build brand success in the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry. Special focus is given to the Greek Market in order
to develop a case study of a Greek food start-up business (on the sector of organic herbs and natural food supplements) and apply the results of the research on it. The specific questions to be answered through the research are the following:

- The impact of brand heritage upon the commercial success of a FMCG.

- Does Health actually matter? The impact of health related food benefits upon the commercial success of Greek FMCG products.

- The impact of Design and Packaging Upon the success of a FMCG product in Greece.

- The opportunities and threats dealing within the Greek Market.

The paper is structured as following: first, an in-depth review of relevant literature covers aspects of branding and the research questions at a first level. Following comes the methodology, which is a mixed design approach that incorporates 7 interviews with producers (5), and branding professionals (2) and a quantitative on-line study. The fourth chapter presents the results of the research in detail. The fifth chapter has two parts: a) presentation of the conclusions and b) design of the case study. The final chapter summarizes the important points of the research.

This research attempts to cover some voids in the Greek entrepreneurship and provide useful knowledge to both the academic and the enterprise community, as it is an informed guidance to people involved in the field of food branding.
Literature Review

Brands and Branding

Chernatony and McDonald (as cited in 6) believe that “A successful brand is an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique added values which match their needs most closely”. Similarly, Kapferer (as in 6) defines the brand “the total accumulation of all his/her experiences, and is built at all points of contact with the customer”.

A main role of the brand is to ensure that the consumer experience is the same whenever and wherever the product is bought. For that to happen, there has to precede a thorough research on end – users’ needs, market particularities and trends, high productivity, lower production costs, without compromising quality. However, many brands started by their founders’ willing to create a business, based on a very specific product or service. They became brands only through time, little by little, by building imagery, with intangible benefits, personality and so on. Participants’ involvement has weighty impact on brand building (7).

Branding challenges to develop a set of extensive meanings for the brand (Kotler as found in 2). According to Aaker & Keller, it “creates mental structures and helps consumers organize their knowledge about products and services in a way that clarifies their decision-making and provides value to the firm” (1). Consumers do not passively receive branding, but rather actively interact with it (2). Branding begins from the consumers and tries to identify their needs and values. In that way, it forms the brand’s DNA (4).

“Perception had moved upwards from objects to benefits, from tangible to intangible values” (4). Therefore, branding should focus on building emotional associations, beliefs, values, and feelings that people can relate to the brand. In that way, it “enables the process of transforming functional assets into relationship assets” (6). Functional assets are the most common case in brands’ value propositions and they are based on product attributes that functionally covers customers’ needs. Relation-
ship assets refer to generating to customers positive feelings related to the experience of owning and using the brand (6).

As McKinsey practitioners believe, “branding can be a worthwhile investment for those who get it right. Strong brands typically drive the bottom line, and above-average financial performance strengthens the brand in turn – a virtuous cycle” (3).

**Brand Identity**

In the creation of a brand, there are two essential tools of brand management: brand identity and brand positioning. Identity serves as a base for brand positioning (4). Identity itself is based on a thorough understanding of the firm’s customers, competitors, and business environment and reflects the business strategy (6). In order to form the brand identity, it is important to cover the following aspects: brand’s vision, aim, values, needs that it fulfills, field of competence, signs that make the brand recognizable. The most important aspect to consider is the key message the brand ultimately wants to communicate (4).

Brand identity includes a core and an extended identity. Core identity is the essence of the brand that remains constant as the brand expands to new markets or products. It focuses on product attributes, service, user profile, store ambience and product performance. Extended identity is created by identity elements, which focuses on brand personality, relationships and symbol associations (6). According to Aaker (1996, as found in 6), “one key to successful brand-building is to understand how to develop a brand identity – to know what the brand stands for and to effectively express that identity. Similarly, Mckinsey practitioners believe that “while trends come and go, brand identity is about projecting an image that will remain recognizable, credible, and sustainable over extended periods of time. Best-practice companies build their brands around attributes that set them apart from their competitors”(3).

After identifying what to communicate, the brand needs also to identify how to do it. Choosing symbols and signs of recognition in graphic ways may sound easy, but it is not always the case. It has to make sure that is sends out the right messages and that
they are received. As Kapferer (2008) states, “before projecting an image to the public, we must know exactly what we want to project” (6).

**Brand Positioning**

While identity deals with the giving out message, positioning deals with the receivers of that message. In specific it deals with: the consumer benefit aspect, the target market and the competitive context. Positioning raises two questions: a) what do consumers compare the brand with? and b) what are we offering the customer as a key decision-making factor? (4) Substantially, it is about forming the customers’ perception about a brand by achieving differentiation from competitors and meeting of their needs / expectations (6).

The initial positioning of a new brand has great importance since it is the first contact with the customers, from which they form experiences that will later count for their preference or not to the brand (7). Marketers have serious work to do; they need to have a thorough understanding of consumer behavior and how various things should be combined so as to create the optimal positioning in consumers’ minds (2,6). Upshaw (1995, as found in 6) proposes eight positioning tools that companies use: feature-driven prompts; problem/solution prompts; target-driven positioning; competition-driven positioning; emotional/psychological positioning; benefit driven positioning; aspirational positioning; and value positioning. Temporal (2000, as found in 6) believes that branding should focus more on the psychological positioning and the intangible benefits of the products (emotional associations, beliefs, values, feelings) that consumers can relate to the brand.

The halo effect could also be used here. An example can be found in the food industry: health, ecological impact, responsibility, care for others are things that matter. In that logic, a brand could capitalize on the assumption that consumers will assume that a product that claims to be natural is also healthy, or local, so they are familiar with it; thus better than something that is not. “Typically, consumers process product information heuristically and use mental shortcuts that are sensitive to such halo effects” (7).
**Brand Building**

When it comes to brands, we talk about creation, not just mere launch. “Unlike the product launch, the brand launch is, from the very start, a long-term project. Such launch will modify the existing order, values and market shares of the category” (4). The goal is to make the brand “a name that influences buyers, becoming a purchase criterion” (4).

“Brands emerge over time by (re-)actions both by companies and consumers” (Teichert et al., 2015). This means that consumers will form the brand image in the long run, but producers and partners are responsible for the initial image the brand emits in its beginning (9). This first image of a newly launched brand premises an extensive market research, which should include existing and prospective customers, former customers, industry experts, and intermediaries (6). Ultimately, in order for a brand to gain market share, it should: a) be able to conjure up a big and attractive idea; b) have experienced by people at contact points; c) be activated by deeds and behaviours; d) get communicated; e) get distributed (4).

**Marketing Tools**

In order to enter the consumers in the brand building process, it is highly important to raise their awareness about the brand, through channels of communication and repetitive exposure (2). Advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, sponsorships, endorsements, public relations, Internet and social media are the most known and effective tools to use to do (6).

Advertising traditionally has major power in brand building as it is considered the most popular form of communication. There are numerous opinions on how it should be done. According to Adibi (2012, as in 10), “An advertisement is considered effective if it attracts the customer’s attention, has a memorable impact on the customer, stimulate the customer’s purchase intentions, and affect the customer’s emotions”. Advertising emits the brand image and so, it is highly important to create a positive image using the core values and other assets of the brand so as to establish them in consumers’ minds, according to Aaker (1997, as in 10). Use of emotions in advertising that ap-
peals to consumers’ minds is very important in that direction and results in building emotional relationships with them.

Internet is responsible for a dramatic change in the “brandscape”. This is due to (Cleland, 2000 as in 11):

a. Vertical reduction of information costs
b. Allows direct interactivity
c. It nearly disappears time and space barriers

These three attributes give Internet incredible power from which brands benefit and build interactive relationships with consumers, and deliver their products at low cost (11). According to Vukasović, (11) “the intangible nature of the Internet, and the fact that customers are buying goods that, in most cases, they have never handled or seen (except on-screen) has placed greater importance on trust and security. People only tend to transact with sites they know and trust - sites that provide a wealth of information and make comparison shopping easy, where the user feels a part of, and sites that understand the user's needs and preferences”. Internet offers great level of interactivity, which gives the brands the opportunity to understand well, and meet consumers’ needs, thus, build a strong relationship with them. Brand building must focus on the end-to-end customer experience - from the promises made in the value proposition, to its delivery to the customer (11).

A powerful combination of the two previous attributes is offered by the social media: advertising on the Internet. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social networks, have had huge impact in our lives the last decade and they only continue to have more. They have evolved to unique marketing tools, with low or no cost for the companies, and extremely effective. Viral marketing, or else word-of-mouth, “is a particularly powerful medium, as it carries the implied endorsement from a friend” (11), therefore, social media is the ideal way to do it – never before had it been that easy to spread messages. Now, it can be done fast, with a minimum budget and maximum effect.
**Brand heritage**

A heritage brand is one with a positioning and a value proposition based on its heritage”(12). Heritage is a very important value, as “the early roots add authenticity and differentiation to the brands” (Aaker 2004, as cited in 13). It should not be confused with history; history refers to a solid past, while heritage uses the past for contemporary purposes (12). Corporate heritage brands encompass all timeframes: past, present and future (13,12). Old values are projected in present and invested so as to lay a future. “Heritage brands are distinct in that they are about both history and history in the making” (12).

A brand with heritage stands for authenticity, credibility and trust, which leverage the brand’s perceived value and offers to the brand competitive advantages, as in loyal customers willing to accept higher prices (12,13). Having heritage brings no contradiction with also being a contemporary brand; adjusted identity and core values with a look to the future is a key “a key to the brand’s continuing success and brand equity in the tension between past, present and even the future” (13).

**Brand awareness**

Importance of brand awareness is found in an interesting survey by the agency DDB, regarding the most important brand asset, where it is rated by 65%. Then comes brand positioning (39%), signs of recognition (logo, packaging, codes), and brand loyalty (24%) (4).

Brand awareness consists of brand recognition and brand recall. The first one is the minimum level of brand awareness and refers to “consumers’ ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand” (2), therefore it is based upon aided recall. Recognition is crucial at the point of purchase. Brand recall is unaided and refers to consumers’ ability to retrieve the brand from their memory (2).

Awareness’ role is to a) enter the brand in the consideration set and b) affect decisions in the consideration set.

Building brand awareness is done through repeatedly exposing the brand to consumers and linking it in their memory to strong, favourable associations, in order to
create a positive image (2). These associations are mental linkages to the brand and may include product attributes, customer benefits, competitors, countries of origins, etc. They affect both the awareness and the positioning of the brand; they can differentiate from the competition, provide a reason to buy, create positive attitudes, influence purchase behaviours. Types of associations can be classified in three types: 1) attributes, 2) benefits and 3) attitudes. Product related attributes define level of product performance, while non-product-related attributes can affect purchase or consumption processes but not directly the product performance, such as price, packaging, user imagery (who and when might use the product). Secondary associations have also a significant role; these may be the company, the country of origin, the distribution channels, a celebrity spokesperson of the product or service, or an event (2).

**Brand loyalty**

“Brand loyalty represents a favorable attitude toward a brand resulting in consistent purchase of the brand over time and it is the result of consumers’ learning that one brand can satisfy their needs”, as Assael (2001, as in 6) has stated. Oliver (1999, as in 14) defines loyalty as “a deeply held commitment to repurchase a preferred product consistently over time, despite situational influences and marketing efforts that might have the potential to cause switching behavior”. According to him, the sequential process of loyalty integrates:

- brand performance aspects (cognitive);
- brand likeability (affective);
- wanting to repurchase the brand (conotive); and
- commitment to the action of repurchasing (action) (14).

Customer loyalty strengthens a firm’s brand equity by raising marketing effectiveness, leveraging the brand and minimizing the risk to competitive actions, according to Keller (1998, as in 14).
**Brand equity**

The above mentioned asset dimensions (brand loyalty, associations, awareness, perceived quality based on brand positioning) constitute brand equity. Kapferer (2008, 4) notes that in a strict sense, it is: “the current financial value of the flow of future profits attached to the brand itself. This flow is largely dependent on the brand’s weight in the purchasing decision”. In a wider frame, brand equity also includes intangible features, like proprietary technologies, patents, trademarks, know-how. Plenty of other opinions that have been expressed on brand equity are “generally consistent with the basic notion that brand equity represents the ”added value” endowed to a product or a service as a result of past investments in the marketing for the brand equity” (2).

Except for financial reasons, brand equity should be studied for marketing improvement. It adds value to the consumers by reinforcing purchasing decisions (helping interpreting, creating confidence, increasing customer’s satisfaction through associations). It also adds value to firms by building brand loyalty, leveraging over retailers, distinguishing over competitors (Bagozzi – Rosa – Celly – Coronel 1998, as in 2). It offers strategic benefits to firms; when a product’s life cycle declines, or when there is economic downturn period, brand equity can add life extension. It can also allow higher pricing, especially for major brands – consumers are willing to pay more for quality product they know (so, there is awareness and positive associations behind) (2).

Leveraging brand equity is done in three steps. First, it is being built by creating positive associations with a quality product, secondly, by assigning brand attributes so that there is enough impact on consumer purchase behavior, and thirdly, by developing and maintaining a consistent brand image, which is crucial in forming a relationship with the consumer (2).
**Health in foods**

When it comes to food products, there has been noted a sifting demand in consumers towards healthiness, and other positive attributes (such as freshness, naturalness), according to recent research findings (15). Health problems (like cardiovascular diseases, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes) are increasingly becoming strong motivation for healthier food choices (16,17). Consequently, there is an increasing interest for organic and functional foods, along with a growing emphasis on authentic, local and pure ingredients (17). People are now more willing to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Most researches reveal that female consumers, with high education and income are most likely buyers of those food categories. Middle-aged and elderly are also possible consumers, as they have health worries (16).

Nevertheless, there seems to be a foggy situation around functional food products – products that have been enriched with specific ingredients that promote better health (19). Consumers tend to evaluate them mainly based on their health benefits, motivated by their or their family’s health situation (16). In reality, some companies got into trouble with health claims in their foods, without having based them on thorough research. Of course, functional foods are trendy and successful, as people have a “natural tendency to go for the quick fix rather than cut down on saturated fat, sugar or salt, or eat more fruits and vegetables”, as Sue Davies, chief policy adviser in UK states, and companies study well these consumer trends. However, research has shown that consumers do not always have the knowledge to evaluate right functional claims (16) and they are often misled.

This is why the F.D.A. permits only general claims written in packages about how an ingredient can positively affect the customer’s health (18). European Union has issued strict legislation on nutrition and health claims that was put in force in July 2007 in order not to permit misleading of consumers (19).

Raising consumers’ awareness on these issues and publishing authorized information can lead to effective marketing decisions and increase purchasing intentions, provided that excessive research on consumers’ perception of healthy foods has preceded (16).
Greek consumer’s eating profile

The late trend towards healthy diet and lifestyle has been noted in Greece as well. Three surveys on 2016 only confirm that fact. Research Institute of Retail Consumer Goods (IELKA) recorded increasing interest and caution on Greek consumers’ diet. According to their research (20), Greeks eat less fast food and cook more at home instead. This happens mainly due to their reduced income as a result of the economic crisis, but it has also been reinforced by the numerous TV cook shows (a trend that also came from the Western markets) that promote healthier diet choices and an increasing interest on health in older ages. The same research also recorded that Greek consumers care more about their diet and get informed for the nutritional value of the products they consume. Last but not least, the research showed an increasing interest on foods with beneficial properties (e.g. superfoods) and food with low fat and higher content in fibers.

Another research (21), conducted by the Center of Protection of Consumers reveals similar findings. As it has been found, Greek consumers eat more vegetables, fruits and bread, and less red meat, fried potatoes, fish and soft drinks. The percentage of people not eating fast food has been increased by 12% within five years. Correspondingly, percentages of people eating out have been lessened. What is impressive is that 59,45% in 2016 and 72,16% in 2011 stated that they have changed eating habits. Major causing factors for this transition is health (up to 48,45%) and economic crisis (increased to 27,49%).

The third research (22), conducted and presented by the company TetraPak, focuses on the trends in food market and packaging. The research reveals that Greeks, in their vast majority (90%), care for the new trends in healthy foods. Even higher is the percentage for people who care for the vitamins and the preservatives in the foods they consume. The percentages for those who always read the labels before purchasing products, and those who want to know the route of the product until it reached their plate.
The article in the company’s website (22) also includes some global trends in the food market. Some interesting points are the following:

- 60% of consumers look for products that have proven health benefits.
- 50% of consumers are anxious about vitamin lack.
- Consumers want to know the origin and the intermediate steps until the final product. Critical factors are food safety, country of origin and degree of trust for a brand.
- Fast life rhythms cause the need for “on-the-go” products.

**Packaging Design**

Packaging has evolved to a very significant tool for marketing and branding, with crucial role among all the identity elements; as 73% of purchase decisions are made at the point of sale, it is the “silent salesman” who ensures that a brand stands out (23). It has the potential to catch consumer’s attention and convince him for its product. It has the “power” to build strong brands, by differentiating, creating myth and loyalty and withstand the competition. Especially when it comes to unknown brands, consumers tend to rely on what they see, so packaging is the one to convey them effectively; it is not just a “protector” but a “persuader” (24). For example, in the food industry and in the absence of advertising, consumers acquire expectations about the taste, healthiness, and social connotation associated with a particular food and its ingredients through branding, nutrition information, and/or health claims.

Furthermore, as it accompanies the product, packaging lives in home and potentially becomes an intimate part of the consumer’s life, constituting a type of live experience between the consumer and the brand, and therefore driving to repeating purchasing as well. (25).
Packaging is considered to have become the fifth “P” after the four classic “P”s that marketers usually focus on: Product, Price, Promotion, Place (26). Design in packaging is a crucial factor on which depends the success of the product. It has to have enough shelf impact to stand out among a myriad of packages, catch consumer’s attention and offer him a memorable experience. This is achieved by communicating the product’s Unique Selling Point (USP) (25) and wisely using elements like text, graphics, colors, textile qualities.
Methodology

The methodology for this research was a mixed design approach which included an online quantitative study and interviews with producers and brand specialists for qualitative data. The research focuses on the Greek market, therefore, only Greek people were involved.

The questionnaire was designed in order to reveal attitudes and behaviours of Greek consumers. It was structured in three parts. The first part includes some general questions regarding how open are the consumers to new products and new brand, which criteria influence them and how much interest they show on their health through their diet. The second part focuses on organic herbs and explores attention, perceived product healthfulness and product evaluation, purchase intention and influencing criteria. The third part has similar structure and focuses on natural food supplements.

The interviews for the producers were designed in a way to reveal how they built their branding plan and what opportunities / threats they see in the markets they operate. Four out of five interviews were made with producers of herbs / herbal teas, whereas, only one was with a pharmaceutical company that produces also food supplements, despite the many efforts to reach more similar companies.

The interviews with brand specialists were designed so as to present factors a new brand should bear in mind at its launch, steps to follow and mistakes to avoid. It also brings up opportunities / threats they see in the markets they operate, as well as attitudes of Greek consumers, influencing power of certain criteria (brand heritage, health claims, and packaging design).

After gathering the data, an in-depth statistical analysis is done so as to draw conclusions. At first, the primary data are analyzed and presented in charts that offer visual representation. Following, the results are further analyzed and categorized by age group and sex in order to extract more specific conclusions that might be useful for the design of the case study.
Results

The quantitative study was conducted between 15/02/2017 and 08/03/2017. 143 people participated, of whom 97 women and 46 men, above 18 years old. Below are given the demographic data.

The first part reveals some interesting findings. It seems that brand heritage plays an important role in consumers’ minds in existing brands. The same applies for health claims, way of production and suggestion from familiar person. Things are not so clear regarding packaging design, while repeated advertising seems to not have considerable impact on consumers, according to them.
However, when it comes to new brands, way of production, packaging design and familiar person’s suggestion seem to have heavier impact.

The third question reveals that Greek consumers in their majority (51%) do not mind trying food products of new brands, and in a considerable percentage (37,8%) like trying such products.

The fourth question shows a massive preference on quality over price when choosing a food product.
4. What do you choose in the dilemma "price vs quality" when choosing a food product?

The final general question explores attitudes towards healthy diet. According to the replies, Greek consumers show high interest on their health and their diet.

5. To what extent do you agree with the following:

The second part begins with where the organic herbs would catch the attention of the consumers. Bio products boutique and deli shops seem the most probable places, while hotel boutique seems to not have big chances.

1. To what extent do you believe that organic herbs would catch your attention in:

In the second question, consumers seem to believe that organic herbs are healthy, good for them and have good quality, but they are not so sure about their taste.
2. To what extent do you believe that organic herbs:

![Bar chart showing responses to the belief in organic herbs]

The third question reveals consumers’ attitudes towards purchasing organic herbs. It seems that they are quite positive to try such products, but they are less positive to seriously consider and ultimately buying them.

3. To what extent do you agree with the following:

![Bar chart showing responses to agreement]

The last question explores the criteria that would convince consumers to buy organic herbs. Sampling is by far the most critical factor, while being able to see the product from the package and the design of the package play a considerable role too.

4. What are the criteria that you will need to be convinced to purchase such a product? (possibility to choose more than one option):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>126 (68.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to see the product through the package</td>
<td>64 (44.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging design</td>
<td>47 (32.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5 (3.5%)</td>
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The third part starts with demonstrating how much Greek people consume food supplements. The chart shows that 40% use them over 60% that does not.
Following, the next chart demonstrates that a pharmacy is a much more possible place for the natural food supplements to attract the attention of the consumer over a supermarket self.

The third question explores attitudes towards natural food supplements. Consumers, in their majority, seem to believe that such products are healthy and good for them, but not tasty. They also seem to be indecisive whether they believe that natural food supplements are actually natural.

Regarding purchasing attitudes, the next chart reveals that consumers are equally positive and negative towards trying natural food supplements, and mostly negative towards considering and ultimately buying such products.
The fifth chart shows the criteria that can convince consumers to buy such products. Doctor’s recommendation and health claims are the main criteria, while taste and packaging design are less important to them in order to purchase.

Finally, the preferable forms of natural food supplements are mostly pills, followed by effervescent tablets, liquid and sachets, while powder seems to be the least preferable choice.

In regards to the secondary data that came up after categorizing by age group and sex, the number of the produced charts is almost impossible to be presented in this paper as such, therefore, there has been made a critical analysis and comparison. The most interesting findings are given below.
• People in 45+ age group show much less interest on packaging design. Only 15% answered that they are influenced enough by that, while 39% is neutral and 45% is little or not at all influenced. In the rest groups, the percentages of positive influence fluctuate between 37%-52%.

• Similar finding is noted in health claims influence for a product of a new brand. 45+ people are distributed in 38% influenced enough or very much, 31% neutral and 31% little or not at all influenced. In the rest groups, the percentages of positive influence fluctuate between 59% and 67%.

• 18-25 age group shows less interest (40%) on country of origin for a product of new brand than the rest groups (54%-79%).

• Similar finding in familiar person’s suggestion for a product of new brand; 18-25 group’s positive percentage is 56%, while the others are much higher (65%-77%).

• 30-35 age group is the only group that highly (64%) likes to try food products launched by new brands. The rest groups mostly state that they don’t mind trying such products (54%-62%).

• 18-25 age group chooses quality in smaller percentage (60%) than the rest groups (76-80%) over price over buying a food product.

• 45+ age group is the least (46%) open to try organic herbs group. The rest groups, and mainly 30-35 group are open to a large extent (68%-82%) to try such products. Similar is their attitude towards seriously considering and ultimately buying such products. In those questions, all percentages decrease but yet again, 30-35 and 35-40 groups have the higher percentages.

• Regarding the criteria that are needed for the consumers to be convinced to buy organic herbs, 18-25 group seems to have higher (28%) interest on packaging design than the rest groups (Around 17%).

• Regarding the taste of natural food supplements, percentages of all groups are low; 30-35 group has the highest percentage with 23%.
• 18-25 age group seems again to have higher (14%) interest on packaging design than the rest groups (around 5%), when it comes to criteria that can convince them to buy natural food supplements.

• When it comes to a new product of an existing brand, women get more influenced than men from health benefits (64% vs 52%), way of production (56% vs 38%), country of origin (65% vs 56%), repeated advertising (23% vs 13%), while men get more influenced than women from brand heritage (52% vs 42%), packaging design (43% vs 39%) and suggestion from a familiar person (70% vs 62%).

• When it comes to a product of a new brand, women get more influenced than men from health benefits (69% vs 46%), way of production (63% vs 41%), packaging design (46% vs 41%), country of origin (62% vs 44%), whereas, both are the same influenced by suggestion from a familiar person (68%).

• Men are more open in trying food products of new brands (43%) than women (35%).

• Women focus more on the quality of the food product (79% vs 67%), while men show slightly bigger interest on the price than women (22% vs 17%).

• Women care more for the healthiness of the food and they don’t always eat whatever they like than men (68% vs 57%).

• Men would notice organic herbs in a supermarket more than women (37% vs 29%), while women would be notice them more at a deli shop (49% vs 43%) and a bio boutique than men (75% vs 66%).

• Regarding their attitude towards organic herbs, women would consider (58% vs 48%) and ultimately buy (56% vs 46%) such products more than men.

• Regarding the criteria that are needed to be convinced to buy organic herbs, women choose sampling more than men (53% vs 33%), while men choose more “being able to see the product from the package” (40% vs 28%) and packaging design (25% vs 18%).
Regarding the food supplements, the two sexes show no big differences in their attitudes towards them, except for the forms they prefer. Women show preference to pills (pills 39%, effervescent tablets 25%, sachets 13%, liquid 18%, powder 5%), while men show more equal interest on all forms of supplements (pills 25%, effervescent tablets 19%, sachets 22%, liquid 26%, powder 8%).

The qualitative study included five interviews with producers: four with herbs & herbal teas producers and one with a pharmaceutical company that also produces food supplements. The companies interviewed were: Rhoeco, Δρόγη, Oreanthi, Tzekos Organic Herbs, and Help Pharmaceuticals. The findings are presented below in brief, due to the large size of data.

- **Question 1. What are your products and when did you establish your company?**

  Rhoeco: (April 2016) organic herbal teas.

  Δρόγη: (October 2011) organic dried herbs and herbal teas.

  Oreanthi: (May 2013) herbal teas (not organic).


  Help Pharmaceuticals: (1971) drugs, food supplements (from 2012) and cosmetics.

- **Question 2. In which market(s) do you operate?**

  Rhoeco: mostly in European markets / in a lower percentage in the Greek market/ they reach one by one concept shops

  Δρόγη: mostly in Greece (70-80%) and Europe (20-30%) / HORECA – delicatessen shops
Oreanthi: mostly in Greece (75%) and abroad, which is the goal market 25% (USE, Canada, UK, Germany, France, The Netherlands) / deli shops & high end supermarkets / niche market

Tzekos: mostly in Europe (80%), little in the USA and in Greece (20%) / all kinds of canals – not wholesale – pharmacies (Cyprus) – deli shops with Greek products mostly

Help Pharmaceuticals: in 40 countries (Greece, Western Europe, Middle & Far East) / 30% in the Greek market

- Question 3. What were the steps you followed in the beginning of establishing your brand?

Rhoeco: focus on quality (long time to find suitable producers to collaborate) / research in an exhibition / moral trade (secondary – ecological reuse of their package).

Δρόγη: special focus on the production part / Social media / presentation in seminars / Mainly passive promotion

Oreanthi: 1 year research the internet and shops in the UK

Tzekos: pilot farming around the garden / found land suitable for bio / searched for processing – packaging – site

Help Pharmaceuticals: focus on graphics

- Question 4. Did you have any consultancy in your marketing-branding plan?

Rhoeco: No except for the graphic designers for the visual identity & packaging

Δρόγη: No

Oreanthi: No, because their main jobs are in these fields / hired an English tea mixture specialist to form the mixtures + an advertising company for the packaging
Tzekos: No except for the graphic designers for the visual identity & packaging

Help Pharmaceuticals: No, it was made in-house / it was made ex-house in 2014 during rebranding (with graphic designers).

- Question 5. How did you position your brand at its launch?

Rhoeco: Premium, ethical, eco-friendly/conscious

Δρόγη: Premium

Oreanthi: Premium / contemporary / not pharmaceutical but for wellness and delight

Tzekos: Value for money / nice aesthetics but focus on the quality of the product

Help Pharmaceuticals: There was no launch – they provide façon services for other companies

- Question 6. What did your marketing-branding plan include?

Rhoeco: All kinds of Social Media which brings them in contact with bloggers and magazines.

Δρόγη: Door to door in shops-delicatessen / social media / exhibitions (did not work so far but are now in planning)

Oreanthi: Site / social media (twitter, facebook, google add) / tastings in shops / presentation to reporters in events / exhibitions in Greece & abroad

Tzekos: Facebook – site / publications & interviews in magazines after receiving Great Taste Award

Help Pharmaceuticals: Participation in exhibitions
• Question 7. In scale 1-5, how much did/do you focus on the following factors
[a. brand heritage, b. packaging design, c. organic identity, d. price policy, e. overall quality, f. taste, g. country of origin, h. advertising & other marketing policy]? 

Rhoeco: a.--, b. 5, c. 5, d. 3, e. 5, f. 5, g. 4, h. 5  
Δρόγη: a.1, b. 5, c. 4, d. 5, e. 5, f. 4, g. 5, h. 5  
Oreanthi: a.3, b. 5, c. 1, d. 4, e. 5, f. 5, g. 5, h. 5  
Tzekos: a.--, b. 5, c. 5, d. 5, e. 5, f. 5, g. 4, h. 5  
Help Pharmaceuticals: a.2, b. 4, c. 2, d. 3, e. 5, f. 4, g. 4, h. 3

• Question 8. What customer feedback and reactions did you receive in your first steps (first year)?

Rhoeco: Very positive, especially from abroad | In Greece not so positive due to price and the non-transparent packaging (which, however, is prerequisite for the good quality).  

Δρόγη: Negative feedback for the non-transparent packaging and the price but some recognition from people that know and appreciate / change of minds after tasting.  

Oreanthi: Positive feedback in tastings and for colors of packaging (2 awards for packaging).  

Tzekos: No available feedback from end users – traders (actual customers) asked to them produce more blends and more packages.  

Help Pharmaceuticals: No available feedback from end users.
• Question 9. Based on customer feedback or other data you may have, in scale 1-5, how much have the following factors contributed in the success of your products? [a. brand heritage, b. packaging design, c. organic identity, d. price policy, e. overall quality, f. taste, g. country of origin, h. advertising & other marketing policy]?

  Rhoeco: a.--, b. 5, c. 5, d. 4, e. 5, f. 5, g. 1, h. 5
  Δρόγη: a.--, b. 1, c. 5, d. 2, e. 4, f. 4, g. 5, h. 5
  Oreanthi: a.--, b. 5, c. --, d. 2, e. 5, f. 4, g. 3, h. 3
  Tzekos: a.--, b. 4, c. 5, d. 3, e. 5, f. 5, g. 5, h. 2
  Help Pharmaceuticals: --

• Question 10. What marketing - branding actions proved successful in your plan?

  Rhoeco: Social media / packaging design / personal contact (no intermediaries)
  Δρόγη: social media (facebook) / physical presence
  Oreanthi: tastings / sampling for free / social media for awareness
  Tzekos: exhibitions & awards
  Help Pharmaceuticals: Exhibitions to some point

• Question 11. Did you have any failures in your plan?

  Rhoeco: Not so far
  Δρόγη: Not correct market research (expensive creative designer) / Failed expo participation (expo was cancelled but caused lack of money and resources)
  Oreanthi: failed sponsorship in TV cook show in the USA (caused lack of money and resources)
Tzekos: Not so far
Help Pharmaceuticals: Exhibitions to some point

- Question 12. What difficulties did you have in your route so far?
Rhoeco: The investment and Greek customers are hesitant due to the crisis / Greeks want to see the product through the package
Δρόγη: Not ownership of land / not right choices because of consultancy lack / no person for promotion
Oreanthi: Difficulties mostly until the first production and less in the promotion
Tzekos: Finance difficulties in promotion / hard to enter the market and communicate the product
Help Pharmaceuticals: Lack of experience in that sector / large bureaucracy

- Question 13. Has economic crisis in Greece affected your marketing – branding plan? In what way?
Rhoeco: The investment is hesitant due to the crisis / Greeks may would have not been that hesitant if it weren’t for the crisis
Δρόγη: Difficult to save heading for promotion / fast rhythms don’t allow the salesman to learn more things about the product
Oreanthi: Less money headings to invest on promotion
Tzekos: Crisis has dramatically cut down the budget for promotion
Help Pharmaceuticals: Very big repercussions: the brand name “Greece” now means unreliability -- companies do not want long-lasting contracts, need guarantees to buy, need advanced payments

- Question 14. What threats do you see in the Greek Market for your products?

Rhoeco: Greeks have easy access on herbs that someone gathered from the mountain (and are probably organic) on much lower price / They have learned to see the product through the package.

Δρόγη: Average age of producers / lack of knowledge in farmers / big percentage of herbs businesses is entrepreneurship of need which is threat for the sector / there is bad experience from Greeks abroad – no loyalty / lack of training in the production base

Oreanthi: Quality products are expensive for Greece

Tzekos: Crisis / Greeks have easy access on herbs & they don’t really care if they are organic

Help Pharmaceuticals: No affording capability / difficult and no competitive economic environment

- Question 15. What opportunities do you see in the Greek Market for your products?

Rhoeco: Place in specific shops that address to specific audience, which can understand and accept the product.

Δρόγη: HORECA sector has great potential

Oreanthi: --

Tzekos: Country of origin (Greek) / being a family company
Help Pharmaceuticals: There is consumption in the sector of parapharmaceutical products

• Question 16. What threats do you see in the other markets you operate for your products?
  
  Rhoeco: Competition (this kind of product & this idea of packaging already exists) / hard to see the story behind the product in those kinds of products
  
  Δρόγη: Heavy competition (Turkey & Bulgaria famous for their herbs)
  
  Oreanthi: There is no liability for Greeks from abroad
  
  Tzekos: Need for intermediaries / competition
  
  Help Pharmaceuticals: Country of origin causes big problems in credibility

• Question 17. What opportunities do you see in the other markets you operate for your products?
  
  Rhoeco: Positive disposition on trying new products and new brands.
  
  Δρόγη: Trends towards healthy foods / raw - unprocessed material
  
  Oreanthi: In 2013 they saw opportunity in the sector due to almost no competition and they dreamed of a Greek company that exports quality herbal teas
  
  Tzekos: Demand for healthy alternatives (instead of coffee) and Greek products
  
  Help Pharmaceuticals: Greece is famous for quality products / developing sector
• Question 18. Based on your experience so far, what, would you say, are the most important steps a new brand in the food / health sector should follow in order to establish itself?

Rhoeco: Focus on quality / step-by-step moves / find sellers to talk about the product.

Δρόγη: Ensuring of knowledge in the production part (of major importance) / finding the right collaborating network (consultancy) / market researchers from people that know / correct business plan

Oreanthi: Finding money / taste samplings to convince for taste and quality / good brand identity

Tzekos: Knowing what you are producing and the competition / attention to the production / ensure enough quantities

The interviews to brand specialists (Christos Katsanos & Giannis Sotiriou) gave also some very interesting findings, which are given below.

• Question 1. How do you form the strategy you follow on a new product in the (healthy) food sector?

Katsanos: Finding which audience (characteristics - interests of customers) and markets that show interest for that product.

Sotiriou: Obtaining data for the relation profit-cost and consumer behaviors in that product category (from existing market researches)

• Question 2. What are the steps in order, a brand should follow to establish itself?
Katsanos: Understand what product it has and what need it covers / find audience that could love it / know competition

Sotiriou: Research for price positioning / product development / samplings (most important) / merchandising campaigns

• Question 3. What should a new brand consider for a successful launch?

Katsanos: Being able to attract attention and communicate its added value / enter sampling to demonstrate the product and its use

Sotiriou: Market fit

• Question 4. What are possible mistakes a new brand should avoid in its beginning?

Katsanos: Trying to cover everything (both value for money and premium, entering lots of markets, etc.) / Not having studied the competition / Price policy (need to cover costs and make profit, not just hit the competition)

Sotiriou: Creating products without feedback from the market / Few and big steps

• Question 5. What are possible mistakes a brand should avoid after a successful beginning?

Katsanos: Believing that it can keep the same price forever (if it goes well, competitors will put pressure on it) / not developing more products

Sotiriou: Believing that it would fit forever in the market or fit the same in all markets / not being alert and missing new trends
• Question 6. What should a brand do to build loyalty, even since its first steps?

   Katsanos: Building honesty and reliability

   Sotiriou: Associating the product with everyday habits of customers so as to make it part of their everyday life / sending a clear message about the product and itself

• Question 7. What opportunities do you see in the Greek Market in the herbs sector?

   Katsanos: Trend for healthy foods / especially 40-60 years old groups (they don’t moments instead of a certain lifestyle)

   Sotiriou: Unification in the production base for supplying power in order to cover big retail chains under the example of the Greek yogurt

• Question 8. What threats do you see in the Greek Market in the herbs sector?

   Katsanos: Bigger competitors have moved more quickly already (e.g. Lipton)

   Sotiriou: Fragmented production base which is obstacle for increasing sales

• Question 9. How does brand heritage influence the commercial success of a food product?

   Katsanos: Significantly, provided that customers are positively predisposed to you

   Sotiriou: Significantly, collective memory is really important
• Question 10. How does packaging design of a food product influence the commercial success of a food product?

Katsanos: Significantly and not merely the graphics / quantity & functionality also important

Sotiriou: Very less

• Question 11. How do health claims on a food product influence the commercial success of a food product?

Katsanos: Definitely significantly (consumers believe in the food product instead of the diet)

Sotiriou: Significantly and they will always do

• Question 12. What is the attitude of Greek consumers on organic products and how does branding effect on it?

Katsanos: Almost no interest to organic products in general / high interest on organic herbs

Sotiriou: No data for Greek consumers | In America organics are mainstream already (similar to aspects like sustainable / fare trade) / people want to feel that they contribute to a goal

• Question 13. What are the particularities of Greek consumers, especially when it comes to food products?

Katsanos: The way they consume has always roots in their past / they hardly find new ways of uses for food products

Sotiriou: No data for Greek consumers | In America there is trend for health claims (functional products), convenience products, products on-the-go
Discussion

Conclusions

The analysed results from the research draw the following conclusions regarding the Greek consumers:

- When it comes to new brands, way of production, packaging design and familiar person’s suggestion seem to have heavier impact.

- They mostly have an intermediate attitude towards trying food products of new brands.

- They state that they prefer quality over price when choosing a food product, however, according to the herbs’ producers, they want a combination of the two.

- They seem to care more for a healthy diet, than they used to.

- Organic herbs would attract their attention mostly in deli and bio shops.

- They are quite positive to try organic herbs, but less positive to purchase them.

- In addition to sampling, being able to see the product through the package plays a significant role, as the producers confirm. Packaging design comes later in evaluation.

- They believe that natural food supplements are good for their health, but they don’t believe they are tasty.

- In general, they do not consume food supplements. However, those who do, are positively predisposed in trying and ultimately buying natural food supplements.

- Doctor’s recommendation and health claims are by far the most powerful criteria that would convince them to buy natural food supplements.
Pills are the most famous choice regarding the preferable form of natural food supplements. Effervescent tablets, liquid and sachets are almost equally likeable, as well.

18-25 age group gets less influenced than the rest age groups from the country of origin and familiar person’s suggestion. Regarding the natural food supplements, they get more influenced from the packaging design.

30-35 age group is the most open group in trying food products from new brands, and organic herbs in specific, which they would also consider buying.

35-40 age group would try and consider buying organic herbs too.

45+ age group seems to be more preservative; they are the least among all age groups in trying organic herbs. Also, they seem to not get much influenced from the packaging design.

Men are more open in trying food products of new brands than women.

When it comes to new brands, health benefits, way of production, and country of origin seem to have heavier impact for women than for men, while familiar person’s suggestion is equally important to both.

Women would consider and ultimately buy organic herbs more than men.

Organic herbs is difficult to succeed in Greece, as consumers have easy access on herbs that many people gather from the mountain and sell, and therefore have no big motivation to explore something else. On top of that, they need to see the product through the package and not pay high price (both of which are in accordance of the quality of the organic herbs). However, they seem to highly get influenced from the organic or conventional way of production of the product.

Social media, personal contact, taste samplings, exhibitions and awards proved more successful tools in marketing plans of the producers.

No correct market research is a critical mistake for the brand building.
There is an upcoming trend in the Greek market (following foreign markets) towards healthy food products.

Economic crisis makes it difficult both for the producers to invest more on their sector and the consumers to afford more quality products.

There is a highly negative towards Greece regarding credibility from abroad, due to the crisis, which causes problems to the producers who want to export.

Production base in Greece is fragmented and cannot respond to large quantities.

Steps that a new food brands should follow at its launch: thorough market research to understand the product category and find the audience of the product, what competitors do, the relation of cost-profit in order to position itself / product development with focus on quality / attract attention through samplings and demonstrate its use / develop merchandising campaigns.

Steps that a new food brands should not follow at its launch: cover all categories and markets / thoughtless price policy / not look for feedback from the market / few and big steps, which are harder to get covered in case of mistakes.

Brand heritage and health claims heavily affect the Greek consumers, but packaging has less impact.

Case study

Based on the preceded literature review and the results of the conducted research, this paper attempts to exploit the findings and design a case study for an imaginary start-up business in the sector of organic herbs and natural food supplements. In the frame of this paper, only a plan for the herbs will be designed, assuming that similar planning will be applied for the natural food supplements. This could serve as a model for businesses in the FMCG sector in the Greek market. The case study begins with the category of herbs.
1. Market research

During the economic crisis, a lot of Greek people turned to the primary and the secondary sector of economy. As a result, many start-up businesses in the category of herbs were found. Many of them export in other markets; however, as revealed from the interviews, a considerable amount of their production goes to the Greek market. A few of them are positioned as premium, while most of them as value for money. Also, the majority of them produce organic herbs. Regarding the packaging, there are three usual approaches: a) totally closed cardboard or metal box, b) cardboard bag with some window and c) glass jar (least usual). Those who really emphasize in their quality prefer the first solution, as exposure to light can compromise quality for the herbs. The vast majority of the producers follow the second case, since consumers need to see the product through the package, as it was revealed from the research. The vast majority also has very simple design, which implies the small size of the business and the lack of resources or knowledge. A considerable amount though, has started to care for more attractive packages which is usually translated in graphics. Very few of them have innovative packages: a) a package which contains tea bags and wooden sticks together with the herbs, that gives the possibility to the consumer to participate in the process of making his own tea and b) a package that looks like a pot and contains seeds under the cap, so that after consuming the herbs, the user can plant these seeds in the package and turn it to a pot with his own herbs.

2. Product development

The case study business will produce high quality organic herbs, in North Greece, and sell them in three forms: cooking herbs alone (oregano, thyme, rosemary, sage), cooking blends and tea blends.

3. Price Positioning

According to the research, Greek consumers, although stating that they choose quality over price, the producers state that they complain about the prices and do not easily accept their product, since they have cheaper alternatives (herbs from the mountain that many itinerant salesmen sell). The business will be positioned in the upper levels in value-for-money category. In that way, it uses the anchoring effect: next to the expensive (for the Greek situation) quality products and the very cheap products (which do not imply quality), consumers will possibly to choose to go in the middle and choose a quality product they can afford.

4. Consumer identity

Research showed that 30-35 & 35-40 are the age groups that have the most positive attitude towards buying organic herbs. Also, they are the most probable customers, as they probably do not live with parents, therefore they probably cook and so
they buy herbs. Moreover, researches have shown a significant shift towards healthier lifestyle and diet, and slow living, which refers to cooking rather than choosing fast food in Greek consumers. Lots of people follow these key trends, including people above 40 years old (but generally, not above 60 years old, as people in those ages are more conservative). Therefore, these people will be the focus audience of the business. Three indicative personas are created in order to have a better perception of the audience.

• man 35 years old: Nikos is 35 years old. He lives in Athens and works in an advertising company. He is single and he takes care of himself (he shops and cooks). At work, he mostly chooses salads and light meals or sandwiches for lunch. In his leisure time, he plays basketball and goes out with friends. He generally has interest on healthy lifestyle.

• woman 40 years old: Katerina is 40 years old. She has 2 kids, lives in Volos and works as a trainer in a public school. She shops and cooks for her family. She cares to offer healthy food to her family and has interest on trying new food brands.

• woman 54 years old: Chrysa is 54 years old. She has 3 kids, lives in Xanthi and works as an architect. She shops and cooks for her family. She cares to offer healthy food to her family, has interest on trying new food brands and on design and creative products.

5. Naming (perception)

Looking in the Greek market some other existing names are: Anassa, Oreanthi, Tzekos organic herbs, Rhoeco, Drogi (Δρόγη), Tea Odyssey, Corphes, Sparoza, Delicious Crete, Argoaia (Αρωγαία), Apo gis (Από Γης), Althea, Phytoshphia, Aromateaca, Aegean herbs, Organic Islands, Αγροθέν. The case study business will be named as: Melissa Organics (<Μελίσσα). The idea is to have a functional name that will have reference to an organic herb (Melissa
or else, lemon balm) and so, indication of the category of the products. Also, the name will make use of some strong consonant sounds (M, L, S) so as to be nice sounding.

6. Promotion

As found in literature, brand awareness is the most important brand asset, since it relates to consumers’ ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand at the point of purchase. Therefore, it is crucial for the start-up brand to raise awareness of the consumers. This will happen by using the following tools:

- Massive use of social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn)
- Repetitive use of Google and Facebook adds to capture attention and make the brand familiar to the consumers
- Contact with credible spokespeople (e.g. famous chefs) in order to get mentioned by them
- Use of appealing mood pictures showing product in use in various places in social media & similar use of videos from the manufacturing procedure and the use of the products, in order to demonstrate product benefits (comprehension), which will affect consumer’s liking on the product (conviction) and eventually end up in the buying action (behaviour), according to the hierarchy of effects model, by R. Lavidge and G. Steiner (27), while also establishing rapport by identifying and highlighting common values (interest on healthy lifestyle) (28)
- Public reviews and use of private template for private feedback in Facebook for post-purchase evaluation, which is very important in the decision making process of the consumers in addition to raise awareness by word-of-mouth in consumer-related reference groups
- As research indicated, sampling is very important for Greek consumers to get persuaded to buy organic herbs. In order to reverse the intermediate attitude towards trying food products of new brands, promotional actions in the first launch can include giving free items in exhibitions and other events (e.g. cooking events), as well as in shops for a few days (delicatessen, bio shops), so that the first access to the product becomes easier for the consumers. In that way, we use reciprocity, as in Cialdini’s mechanisms for persuasion, according to which, consumers are more likely to comply with an improved version of an offer (free stuff) they had previously denied. Also, we exploit predictably irrational behaviours (Arielly, 2008) – since free items have no potential loss, they become more appealing to the consumer (28).

7. Involvement

Involvement refers to the personal interest that the consumer shows to a product. Researchers have found that it is the most important to predict purchase behaviours (Evrard & Aurier, 1996, as cited in 29). Martin (1998) identified 10 key attrib-
utes that lead to high involvement: uniqueness, nostalgic value, (high) price risk, association, facilitation, sensory appeal, sign value, quality, personification, interactivity (30).

Following that, the proposed attributes to lead to high involvement will be:

a. Development of distinctive visual identity * (uniqueness)

b. Link with grandmother’s delicious old recipes with herbs (use of nice such images from the past on social media) (nostalgic value)

c. Participation in exhibitions & events which will bring meetings with high involvement and credible spokespeople (e.g. famous chefs) (association with high involvement people, places or events)

d. Emphasize on quality (certifications for organic identity) (quality)

e. Emphasize on sensory appeal [use of appealing images of herbs that incite sight, taste and indicate the special aroma & use of good quality materials in packaging for haptics (special papers)]

f. Offer secondary use of the package (interactivity)

*Visual identity

The following characteristics will be used for the visual identity:

Colors: earth tones (correlating to the earth the herbs come from), combined with white background (contemporary edge) and some small surfaces in vivid colors for the tea blends

Materials: Cardboard texture (giving the sense of eco- sustainable)/ white and color surfaces in smooth matt paper

Typeface: simple – minimal – no serifs

Use of illustrations (hand drawn or photos)

Packaging: Use of cardboard paper for basic series of packages / Use of glass jars for the cooking herbs and metal box for the tea blends as alternative choices for other series (with higher price) of packages, which will offer the possibility of reusing it in the kitchen (eg. for jams and cookies)

Applications: packaging, website, printed material (cards, brochures, letterheads), other material (pencils, cups, etc.), exhibition kiosk

Melissa Organics
8. Exposure (Perception process)

The perception process refers to how an individual selects, organizes, and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world (31). Exposure is the first stage and relates to how the product is presented to the consumers. In that frame, the following actions will be taken: Placement in delicatessen (retail & online) & bio shops and shops of touristic destinations & hotels (this would concern mostly foreign tourists) / Participation in sampling events / Placement in Greek Week (a week focus on Greek products) in very known supermarket / Contact famous chefs in exhibitions and similar events in order to place the products in their TV shows and restaurants or getting a mention by them in relevant magazines.

9. Prospect theory

The Prospect Theory “is a theory of decision making under conditions of risk” (32) and demonstrates that perceived value can be altered by the way in which choices are framed (28). In brief, prospect theory “predicts that individuals tend to be risk averse in a domain of gains, or when things are going well, and relatively risk seeking in a domain of losses, as when a leader is in the midst of a crisis” (33). Framing plays a crucial role as a tool for the brand to provide expectations about how good an experience should or should not be.

The case study business can use the prospect theory in order to stress some issues on the consumers. In specific, it can share videos or pictures (in the adds and the social media) showing people in their 30s – 40s – 50s drinking the healthy teas of the brand, while stressing the question to the consumers if they still follow old habits (like coffee) and miss the chance (loss) to offer alternative solutions for wellness to themselves. This is based on previous findings about the trends for healthier lifestyle in those age groups, which means that people in those categories would care to be involved in such an aspect. In that way, consumers are expected to try to avoid that loss, and therefore, receive the gain the product offer to them. In addition, consumers might feel that they do not want to miss to conform to norms of a group they have common values.

Finally, through those mediums, the brand can send messages emphasizing that gathering herbs (which is common practice) from the mountain is illegal and harmful for the local biodiversity, and that by supporting environmentally conscious agriculture they do something good (gain). In that way, consumers are expected to seek for that gain.
Summary

This paper explores the parameters that define brand success for a FMCG product in the Greek market in order to design an indicative case study of an imaginary start-up business in the sectors of organic herbs and natural food supplements (food category). At first, a thorough literature review is done in order to understand what branding is and what the aspects a business should have in mind are. It also provides some data from recent surveys about the nutrition attitudes of Greek consumers. Following, a mixed approach of research is done. 143 Greek people participated in an online survey for obtaining quantitative data and 7 interviews with producers (5) and brand specialists (2) provided qualitative data. The online survey explores attitudes and behaviours and is divided in three parts: a) towards new brands and healthy diet, b) towards organic herbs and c) towards natural food supplements, while the interviews explore steps that a new business should follow and mistakes to avoid at its launch.

The findings provide answers to the research questions that have been set in the beginning:

a) Brand heritage plays a very important role for food products, especially when consumers are positively predisposed to the brand.

b) Health claims are also very significant in consumers’ minds for food products, especially when it comes to products of new brands. However, EU has issued very strict legislation on that aspect, and businesses of herbs and food supplements, must be very careful on their claims.

c) When it comes to products of new brands, packaging design is important for the consumers; however, it is not a primary aspect for them - way of production (organic or conventional) and familiar person’s suggestion have heavier impact.

d) Greek market struggles to survive within the economic crisis. The biggest threat is the low affording ability of consumers for quality products and the low affording ability of businesses to invest on branding. In addition, Greeks have easy access on
herbs from the mountain from itinerant sellers, which stresses the brands of organic herbs. On the other hand, there is an obvious shift to a healthier lifestyle in the Greek society, which can be considered an opportunity for healthy products.

The paper ends with the design of the case study, which exploits the findings of the research and uses theories of psychology and consumer behaviour so as to provide a more solid and informed outcome. Due to the large size, only the branding plan for the herbs products is presented. The plan for the supplements should follow similar way of development.

This study aims to cover some voids in the Greek entrepreneurship and provide useful knowledge to both the academic and the enterprise community, as it is an informed guidance to people involved in the field of food branding.
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