

Publication

Authenticity in branding – exploring antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity

JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)**ID** 4480717**Author(s)** Fritz, Kristine; Schoenmüller, Verena; Bruhn, Manfred**Author(s) at UniBasel** [Bruhn, Manfred](#) ; [Fritz, Kristine](#) ; [Schoenmüller, Verena](#) ;**Year** 2017**Title** Authenticity in branding – exploring antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity**Journal** European journal of marketing**Volume** 51**Number** 2**Pages / Article-Number** 324-348**Keywords** Branding, Brand perception, Brand relationships, Brand authenticity

Purpose Consumer demand for authentic brands is steadily rising. With increased pressure to accommodate this demand, researchers and marketers seek to understand how to influence a brand's perceived authenticity. The purpose of this paper is to build a link between previous research on authenticity and thus gain a deeper understanding of the influencing factors of brand authenticity and its consumer outcomes. Design/methodology/approach Building on an extensive literature review, the authors identify various antecedents of brand authenticity that are closely connected with the brand's past, its virtuousness, consumers' self-identification with the brand perceiver's own self and individuals representing the brand, as well as relational outcomes as consequences of a brand's perceived authenticity. As brand authenticity is a subjective construct, the authors include brand involvement to test for moderator effects. For data collection, they conduct an online survey that generates 509 datasets. To test the hypotheses, the authors use structural equation modeling. Findings The results demonstrate that brand authenticity can be influenced by the identified variables (i.e. brand heritage, brand nostalgia, brand commercialization, brand clarity, brand's social commitment, brand legitimacy, actual self-congruence and employee's passion). Moreover, brand authenticity positively affects brand relationship quality, which in turn positively influences consumers' behavioral intentions. The analyzed relationships do not vary due to consumer-specific characteristics (i.e. brand involvement). Originality/value In sum, the results regarding the antecedents of brand authenticity demonstrate that a company can influence brand authenticity through different approaches, and that it is therefore important to analyze which of the identified antecedents brand management should manipulate to positively impact the perception of the brand's authenticity. In addition, the findings confirm the positive consequences on consumer behavior ascribed to the authenticity concept by marketing literature.

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