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Unravelling Branding Systems

The Perceived Usefulness of Branding Constellations

ISBN 978 90772 90 132

NUR 770

First edition: 2010, November 2

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Unravelling branding systems – The perceived usefulness of branding constellations

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www.theconstellationcompany.com

www.brandingconstellations.com

Printed by: CPI Koninklijke Wöhrmann, Zutphen, The Netherlands

Cover design: Sparkgarden, Tim Barrance

Layout: Sabine Leijgraaf

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Unravelling Branding Systems

The Perceived Usefulness of Branding Constellations

*This academic essay in Management Sciences
was also published as Doctoral Thesis
to obtain the degree of doctor
from the Radboud University Nijmegen,
defended in public on Monday November 1, 2010.*

Acknowledgements

This thesis benefited from the inspiration and assistance of many people. I am especially grateful to:

- First and for all, my promoters Prof. Dr. Hans Doorewaard and Prof. Dr. Josée Bloemer of the Radboud University Nijmegen who taught me ‘to do in Rome as the Romans do’; without their encouraging longitudinal support and coaching I could not have finished this thesis
- My employer, the Open University of the Netherlands, for the time I was allowed to work on my PhD and its financial support to organise branding constellation workshops
- The facilitator for his respectful facilitations of the branding constellations in these workshops and his feedback on the final thesis draft
- The branders for unravelling their branding systems by branding constellations to identify their branding problems, for filling out questionnaires, for sharing their experiences in later workshops, and for their feedback on thesis drafts
- The marketing experts for attending these branding constellation workshops, for filling out the questionnaires, and for their feedback on thesis drafts
- The student managers who performed independent case studies on the branding constellations of these branding constellation workshops as part of their Masters theses at the Open University of the Netherlands and the Open University student managers who studied other branding constellations; and for their feedback on thesis drafts
- The facilitators of these other branding constellation workshops for their feedback on the final thesis draft
- The seven systems constellation facilitators for attending the 2002 workshop, for returning the questionnaires, and for their feedback on the thesis drafts
- The academics, marketing experts, systems constellation experts, and ‘uninvolved’ who did not attend these workshops for their feedback on thesis drafts
- The English readers of the drafts for their textual improvements in several stages of the thesis development

- The designer of the cover pointing to the main perception of marketing experts of branding constellations as a projection technique in contrast to earlier studies on systems constellations
- The DTP-specialists and the printer for their assistance in realising the deadline
- The publisher for publishing this thesis
- And last but not least my partner, Hanna ten Zijthoff, for her support in working on this thesis, her camera work, and her feedback on thesis drafts.

I have enjoyed every part of this study: from studying accumulated knowledge on branding problem identification and systems constellations, to developing a classification model of ‘perceived usefulness’, collecting, and analysing the perceptions of branders and marketing experts, and presenting the findings on the perceived usefulness of branding constellations.

Enjoy reading,
Wim Jurg,
May 5, 2010.

I dedicate this thesis to

- My parents Rien Jurg and Lucy Visser
- My sister Marina Jurg and my brother Gert Jurg
- My partner Hanna ten Zijthoff and
- Our children Daniel and Jessica Jurg.

Summary

Introduction

The identification of branding problems is an important subject in marketing, which could benefit from a systems perspective. The systems perspective studied in this thesis is the *branding constellation*. This is a new application of the systems constellation technique employed to identify branding problems. The assumption underlying branding constellations is that people a brander sets up as personified representations of the elements of a branding system are capable of unravelling the implicit relationships between these elements in the brander's mind. These personified representations -who know nothing about the branding problems to be identified- are called *stand-ins*. For this study, branding constellation workshops were organised in 2002, 2003, and 2004, in which seven branders conducted branding constellations to identify their branding problem in the presence of 81 marketing experts, employing some of them as stand-ins. These branders and marketing experts filled out questionnaires by hand directly after each branding constellation in the workshop and by email after the branding constellation workshop. The workshop questionnaires differentiated the marketing experts invited by the brander to function as stand-ins (named *stand-in marketing experts*) from the marketing experts not invited to be stand-ins (named *audience marketing experts*).

Thesis problem

A *thesis problem* consists of an objective, a main question, and a number of subquestions. The objective of this thesis is to describe and assess the perceived usefulness of branding constellations in the identification of branding problems for *branders* and marketing experts. Branders are managers of companies in charge of branding decisions who conducted branding constellations to identify branding problems. *Marketing experts* include marketing academics and marketing practitioners (researchers, consultants, and managers) who attended the branding constellation workshops. The main question of this thesis is: What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations in the identification of branding

problems for branders and marketing experts? This main question includes six subquestions.

1. How can 'identification of branding problems from a systems perspective' be conceptualised?
2. How do branding constellations compare to other problem identification techniques?
3. How can 'perceived usefulness' be conceptualised?
4. What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders?
5. What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for marketing experts?
6. How does the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders compare with that for marketing experts?

1. Identification of Branding Problems from a Systems Perspective

Branding problems are situations in which branders perceive gaps between their brand's current value and its possible value, but do not know which whether a marketing programme decision they have in mind will close this gap. This thesis unravels branding problems from a systems perspective. This systems perspective approaches branding systems as *metaphors* (ways of thinking) rather than real systems that should be examined externally and objectively. More specifically, the focus is on an *organism metaphor* rather than a machine metaphor: brand thinking in terms of brands-as-persons in an environment rather than brands-as-causal-objects. Within this systems perspective, a *branding system* consists of a considered marketing programme option, brand identifiers, consumers, internal environment, micro environment, and macro environment. The *identification of branding problems from a systems perspective* means unravelling positive and/or negative feedback loops between the branding and environmental elements in this branding system.

2. Branding constellations versus other problem identification techniques

Branding constellations differ from other problem identification techniques by their combination of a holistic perspective and an emotional approach.

A *holistic* perspective focuses on the elements and relationships emerging from the whole rather than decomposing problems into the basic elements that form the core of the problem. An *emotional approach* includes bodily experiences, feelings, and intentions as well as spontaneous verbal ‘outbursts’ based on these emotions rather than a logical (vertical) verbalisation and an encouragement to employ grounded arguments. The holistic perspective differentiates branding constellations from brainstorming, lateral marketing, psychodrama, projections, and the Zaltman Metaphorical Elicitation Technique (ZMET), whereas the emotional approach differentiates them from cognitive mapping, lateral marketing, and the Soft Systems Methodology.

3. Conceptualisation of perceived usefulness

A study on the ‘perceived usefulness’ concept in marketing and social science methodology literature showed that four dimensions should be taken into account: relevance, validity, reliability, and precision. The ‘relevance’ dimension includes insight, emotion, system, and awareness. The ‘validity’ dimension covers truth and completeness. The ‘reliability’ dimension consists of coherence and (facilitator) bias. The ‘precision’ dimension comprises verification and unambiguity.

4. Perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders

Branders are very positive about the insight, emotion, system, and awareness components of the relevance dimension of usefulness. In addition, they are very positive about the truth component of the validity dimension, but moderately positive about its completeness component. They are also moderately positive about the coherence and bias components of the reliability dimension. Finally, they are very positive about the verification component of the precision dimension, but moderately negative about its unambiguity component. Thus, overall branding constellations are perceived as useful by branders, except for their ambiguity.

5. Perceived usefulness of branding constellations for marketing experts

Marketing experts are also very positive about the components of the relevance dimension. Concerning the truth and completeness components of the validity dimension they are moderately positive. They are also moderately positive about the coherence component of the reliability dimension. The marketing experts are very positive about the bias component in the stand-in questionnaire, but moderately positive in the email questionnaire. They are ambivalent about the verification and unambiguity components of the precision dimension. Thus, overall branding constellations are perceived as useful by marketing experts, except for their precision. Interestingly, the stand-in marketing experts are more positive about insight and especially bias than the audience marketing experts.

6. Branders versus marketing experts

Branders perceive branding constellations as more useful than marketing experts, with the exception of the unambiguity component of the precision dimension: both branders and marketing experts perceive branding constellations as ambiguous. Both branders and marketing experts think that the same branding constellation may generate different insights for different observers. However, both groups do not think that these insights will be competitive. The differences, however, are limited, except for the verification component of the precision dimension. Whereas the branders are extremely positive about the opportunities to test their insights empirically, the marketing experts are ambivalent. Interestingly, the stand-in marketing experts are more positive about bias than the branders: they have unanimously the impression that the facilitator did not bias their statements.

Limitations

These findings have five limitations.

1. The number of branders conducting branding constellations to identify their branding problems was limited to seven
2. The branders and marketing experts were volunteers who were selected on their preference for techniques having a holistic perspective and an emotional approach

3. (The identifications of) branding problems are perceptions by branders and marketing experts rather than facts
4. The comparison of the perceptions of branders and marketing experts is troubled by the fact that the first-person perception of branders is different from the third-person perception of marketing experts
5. The perceptions on usefulness lack calibration: the perceived usefulness of branding constellations is not directly compared with the perceived usefulness of other problem identification techniques.

Evaluation

The major theoretical implication is that the classification model of usefulness that has been developed is helpful for further studies on problem identification techniques, especially as there are no classification models of usefulness yet. A follow-up study may cover a comparison between the usefulness of branding constellations and brainstorming, lateral marketing, or cognitive mapping. The major practical implication is that taking part in such follow-up studies seems especially worthwhile for branders and marketing experts who appreciate both a holistic perspective on and an emotional approach to problem identification. The power of the combination is that the emotional approach turns the holistic perspective into something that can be felt, and at the same time allows branders to decide on the most relevant elements and to maintain an overview.

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1 Introduction

The identification of branding problems is an important subject in marketing research, which can benefit from employing a systems perspective. The systems perspective studied in this thesis is named *branding constellations*: a new application of systems constellations employed to identify branding problems. The objective of this thesis is to describe and assess the perceived usefulness of these branding constellations in the identification of branding problems for branders and marketing experts. Section 1.1 embeds the thesis subject: the identification of branding problems by branding constellations. Section 1.2 introduces the branding constellation procedure and section 1.3 specifies the thesis problem: the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for the identification of branding problems. Section 1.4 presents the outline of this thesis.

1.1 Identification of branding problems

This section covers the identification of branding problems. Subsection 1.1.1 examines the function of problem identification in marketing research. Subsection 1.1.2 addresses branding problems and the relevance of the systems perspective to identify these problems, while subsection 1.1.3 points to two basic systems perspectives that need to be distinguished.

1.1.1 Position of problem identification in marketing research

Marketing literature includes many -explicit and implicit- definitions of market and marketing research. Box 1 presents the 2009 definition of the American Marketing Association (AMA) that is often referred to.

AMA definition of marketing research

"Marketing research is the function that links the consumer, customer, and public to the marketer through information - information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process. Marketing research specifies the information required to address these issues, designs the method for collecting information, manages and implements the data collection process, analyzes the results, and communicates the findings and their implications."

According to the AMA definition, marketing research has four functions:

1. Identify and define marketing problems and opportunities
2. Generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions
3. Monitor marketing performance, and
4. Improve understanding of marketing as a process.

This thesis focuses on the first function of marketing research: the identification and definition of marketing problems and opportunities.

Problem identification is defined as becoming aware of the problems that must be attended to (Wilson, 2003) and *problem definition* as identifying a clear-cut statement of a problem (Zikmund, 2003). Neither the AMA web dictionary nor most marketing authors explicitly distinguish between problem identification and problem definition, probably because becoming aware of problems and formulating them are part of the same process. Problem identification and problem definition are two subprocesses that can be distinguished but are difficult to separate.

Marketing problems and opportunities are situations in which marketers perceive gaps between 'what is' and 'what may, could, or should be' (Gibson, 1998). According to Gibson, the difference between problems and opportunities is psychological rather than logical. Whereas problems are perceived as negative gaps, opportunities are experienced as positive

challenges. This thesis employs the term *problem identification* to refer to this first function of marketing research: the identification and definition of problems and opportunities.

‘Problem identification’ is not only the first function of marketing research. It is also its first stage: marketing research starts with problem identification. (Marketing) research generally covers five stages: problem identification, research design, data collection, data analysis, and research report. However, there are many variations found in (marketing) research literature. Box 2 presents the seven stages in marketing research distinguished by Wilson (2003).

Box 2 Seven stages in marketing research (Wilson, 2003: 21)

“Seven stages in marketing research

1. Identification of problems and opportunities
2. Formulation of research needs or research brief
3. Selection of research provider or agency and creation of research design and choice of research method
4. Collection of secondary data
5. Collection of primary data
6. Analysis of data
7. Preparation and presentation of research findings and recommendations.”

Butler (1995) concludes that problem identification is considered the most important and most difficult stage in a marketing research process. It also attracts interest in the general management field rather than in the marketing field. Although marketers know that marketing research should start with proper identification of problems and that its success depends on the quality of this identification, most problem identification processes in marketing practice are ad hoc, and do not follow a systematic procedure. Marketers -like most managers- are generally poor problem identifiers, who tend to think within implicit narrow-bounded subsets of possible solutions when facing problems rather than explicitly including the broader picture (Santanen et al., 2004). They tend to tackle only the easy, salient symptoms

rather than paying attention to problems that lie beneath the surface. But unless marketing problems are well-identified, it is likely that the research will be a waste of time and money (Gibson, 1998) or more bluntly: “garbage in, garbage out” (Gummesson, 2000). Poor problem identification exposes marketing research to a range of undesirable consequences, including incorrect research designs, and the collection, analysis, and presentation of irrelevant data.

As a consequence of the limited attention given to problem identification, there is also limited attention given to problem identification techniques and their validation. There is no generally accepted way to validate new problem identification techniques, and there is a substantial lack of valid research into the usefulness of problem identification techniques (Easterby-Smith et al., 2004). Problem identification techniques are developed in practitioner communities for commercial purposes rather than in academic communities for scientific purposes (Rickards, 1999). The commercial proponents of specific techniques employ their own research findings as part of their marketing promotion rather than openly sharing their knowledge (De Ruyter and Scholl, 2003). The names of the techniques are often protected, and many different modifications of the original versions are practised. This practice suits creative ‘artists’ who prefer to be free to use any technique variation required by a specific problem owner or situation (Nijs and Peters, 2006). However, it creates major difficulties for concise research on problem identification techniques, because such a research requires systematic stimuli, stimuli that are the same for every research element rather than different versions based on -often implicit- personal requirements (Segers, 1983).

1.1.2 Identification of branding problems

Branding problems are an important subcategory of marketing problems (Aaker, 2004). Ries and Ries (1998: 2) even refer to *marketing* as “building a brand in the mind of the prospect”. Although the importance of brands is well-acknowledged, the identification of branding problems is one of the major knowledge gaps in marketing (Yakimova and Beverland, 2005). In this thesis, the term branding refers to marketing decisions made to improve the unique brand position in the consumers’ minds in order to increase the

brand's value. The value to the company of Coca-Cola, the number one brand since 2000, was estimated at 69 billion dollars in 2009 (Interbrand, 2009). Box 3 illustrates the difficulties in the identification of branding problems with the well-known story of New Coke (Haig, 2004).

Box 3 New Coke story (Haig, 2004)

New Coke story

In 1983 the Coca-Cola Company decided to study the termination of its most popular soft drink in America, and to replace it with a formula it would market as New Coke. Four million dollars and two years of research were spent on extended blind product tests, consisting of 190,000 Canadian and American consumers. The blind tests showed that 55% of the respondents preferred the taste of New Coke over the taste of the current coke and the following open tests showed an even bigger difference of 61%. But as Coca-Cola brought New Coke to the market on 23 April 1985, the 'real' Coke-drinkers wanted 'their product' back, and Coca-Cola was sued for neglecting the American legacy. The Company had to decide to bring back the original Coke formula under the name Coca-Cola Classic. 'We have heard you' apologised CEO Goizueta for The Company in the six o'clock news on 11 July 1985.

The Coca-Cola Company identified the declining market share as a stand-alone flavour problem. However, changing the flavour problem contradicted the cultural meaning of Coca-Cola communicated in slogans such as 'The original', 'Always Coca-Cola', and 'The real thing'. The last word people associated with Coca-Cola was 'new': proudly hiding a 'secret formula' in a safe for a century conflicts with pompously announcing that this formula will be revised. The change in taste was experienced by the Coca-Cola fans as a betrayal of what Coca-Cola -and America- stood for. According to the Coca-Cola Company, there is a lack of problem identification techniques to prevent these kinds of embarrassing failures (Allen, 2001).

The New Coke story illustrates that branding research requires a systems perspective: brands stand for more than the sum of their elements (Aaker, 2004). A change in one element should not only fit the separate branding

elements, but also their emergent elements and relationships revealed from the whole, such as the brand's cultural meaning in the New Coke story: the American dream. *Brand systems* are sets of interrelated brand elements in which the condition and behaviour of the brand system cannot be traced back to the specific properties of any of the individual elements (Franzen and Moriarti, 2009). The focus is on understanding positive and/or negative *feedback loops*: the positive and/or negative reactions of elements on the reactions of other elements. Only a small change is necessary to initiate positive and/or negative feedback loops in a system. The *systems perspective* to identify branding problems covers the study of brand patterns that are mapped and modified using the notion of a network rather than a path. Its main idea is that a whole is more than a sum of its parts, and that a part is more than a fraction of a whole.

1.1.3 Two branding systems perspectives

Aaker (2004) and Franzen and Moriarti (2009) refer to brand systems as real systems that can be examined externally and objectively. On the other hand, authors such as Hanby (1999), Zaltman (2003), and Van der Vorst (2004) argue that brand systems should be thought of as *metaphors*, ways of thinking, assisting well in problem identification because they stimulate creativity. This thesis approaches brand systems as metaphors, because it focuses on problem identification and refers to them as branding systems as this thesis focuses on the identification of branding problems. The referral to 'branding systems' rather than 'brand systems' is in line with Aaker (1996) and Van der Vorst (2004).

Callingham and Baker (2001) report that marketing literature differentiates two systems metaphors with respect to brands: the machine metaphor and the organism metaphor. The machine metaphor is the historical metaphor, where brands are perceived as causal, machine-like objects. In the 1970s the organism metaphor developed as brand thinking grew in terms of the brand-as-a-person in an environment. According to Callingham and Baker, the machine metaphor is most useful when thinking about brands at the aggregate market level. At the individual branding level the organism metaphor should be preferred.

1.2 Branding constellations

The organism metaphor applied in this thesis is named 'branding constellations'. *Branding constellations* are systems constellations employed to identify branding problems. Because these systems constellations are unfamiliar in the marketing field, this section presents the general procedure of the branding constellations as they were conducted in the workshops organised for this study. The branding constellation procedure generally covered five phases. In this thesis they are named:

1. Introduction phase
2. Projection phase
3. Intervention phase
4. Vision phase
5. Debriefing phase.

1.2.1 Introduction phase

The branding constellations started with a short and focused dialogue between the brander and the facilitator in the presence of marketing experts. The *brander* was a manager of a company in charge of branding decisions who conducted a branding constellation to identify a branding problem. The facilitator guided the branding constellations, and was experienced in the guidance of systems constellations in general. Only basic 'public' branding problem facts was mentioned. Interpretations were kept to a minimum. Neither the facilitator, nor the marketing experts present had any background information prior to the branding constellation. In five out of seven branding constellations the brand name was not even mentioned before or during the branding constellation. In this dialogue, the branding problem was generally reframed as an optional change in the marketing programme. Also discussed were the elements of the branding system that may be affected by this change. These elements could be both abstract elements like the brand name and the advertisement campaign, or real actors like directors and target groups. Display 1 pictures the dialogue between a brander and the facilitator during the introduction phase.



Display 1 Introduction phase

The introduction finished with the identification of the core elements of the branding system and the specification of an optional change in the marketing programme.

1.2.2 Projection phase

In the projection phase systems thinking in terms of the brand-as-a-person was applied literally: branders selected people from the present marketing experts to take the role of the core branding and environmental elements in their branding problems mentioned in the introduction phase, such as the brand name and the consumers. The selection of the elements is called the *element projection* because the branders project their associations with these elements onto the selected people (see Display 2a). These element projections revealed, for instance, that a brander thought of his subbrand as a cool, hip, contemporary 25-year old and of its parent brand as an intellectual, conservative, older man. The selected people who personified these elements are called *stand-ins*. The brander positioned the stand-ins in relation to each other in the open space in the middle of the group, without any further communication or intervention by the facilitator (see Display 2b). The positioning of these stand-ins is called systems projection (see Display 2c).

Display 2 Projection phase



2a. Element projection 2b. Element positioning 2c. Systems projection

These projections evoked emotions in the stand-ins. The facilitator questioned the stand-ins on these emotions and asked for instance, how they felt about their position, to whom they felt attracted, and from whom they would like to move away. This emotional feedback was assumed to reveal relationship patterns between the core branding elements. The expressed emotions were employed by the facilitator as systems metaphors stimulating branders to identify branding problems.

1.2.3 Intervention phase

During the intervention phase the facilitator deepened the systems metaphor by conducting interventions to identify and improve the relationships between the stand-ins of the branding and environmental elements in the constellation in three ways.

- (1) Repositioning stand-ins to reveal the emergent patterns that he identified
- (2) Initiating the expression of implicit emotions of stand-ins that he identified (called *process work*), and
- (3) Introducing emergent elements which the brander did not consider being core elements, but which seemed important to help the brander understand the revealed patterns, according to the facilitator.

Display 3 shows an example: the facilitator turned the woman in Display 2c around and introduced the man on her right in the branding constellation as an emergent element: a specific consumer group the brander had not thought of before. The introduction of a stand-in of this consumer group changed the stand-in for the trainers of this company from 'feeling lost' and 'standing in the way' to 'feeling proud' and 'the prototype of behaviour to improve the branding system'.

Display 3 Intervention phase



1.2.4 Vision phase

During the vision phase the brander set up a stand-in for an optional change in the marketing programme. Next, the ways in which this stand-in triggered positive and/or negative feedback loops between the other stand-ins were examined by further repositionings, process work, and introductions of emergent elements. The aim of this phase was to reveal configurations with positive and/or negative feedback loops. The final configuration is called the *vision constellation*. If the facilitator thought it helpful to do so, the brander was asked to take the positions of some of the stand-ins. Display 4 shows the brander who replaced the stand-in of herself as director (the brander is the third person from the left).



Display 4 Vision phase

1.2.5 Debriefing phase

In the debriefing phase, the facilitator asked the branders to reveal the brand and the branding problem situation to the attending marketing experts, and reflect on their experiences and on the insights gained from the branding constellation. This phase closed the branding constellation procedure.

1.3 Thesis problem

Section 1.1 covered the merits of the systems perspective when identifying branding problems, and section 1.2 introduced branding constellations as a problem identification technique from a systems perspective. This section addresses the thesis problem. Subsection 1.3.1 establishes the thesis objective and main question, and subsection 1.3.2 introduces the subquestions.

1.3.1 Thesis objective and main question

The systems perspective studied in this thesis is *branding constellations*: a new application of systems constellations employed to identify branding

problems. The perceived usefulness of new applications of techniques can be described and assessed by applying them on real-life problems (Gummesson, 2000). This allows a study of the perceptions of the people involved (De Groot, 1966). This thesis describes and assesses the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for two groups of people. The first group consists of branders. In this thesis, *branders* are managers of companies in charge of branding decisions who conduct branding constellations to identify branding problems. The second group consists of *marketing experts*: both marketing academics and marketing practitioners (marketing researchers, marketing consultants, and marketing managers). The perceptions of this second group offer a third-person perspective, besides the first-person perspective of the branders (Bradbury and Bergmann Lichtenstein, 2000). *Perception* is “the way we see the world” (De Bono, 1977: 63). It is the “ability to know what is ‘out there’, rather than just ‘what is happening to me’” (Cohen, 1996: 45). It involves building up a symbolic internal representation of a stimulus that can be interpreted and called to mind long after it has disappeared. Display 5 presents the objective of this thesis and its main question.

Display 5 Thesis objective and main question

Thesis objective

To describe and assess the perceived usefulness of branding constellations in the identification of branding problems for branders and marketing experts.

Main thesis question

What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations in the identification of branding problems for branders and marketing experts?

1.3.2 Subquestions

The main thesis question is: What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations in the identification of branding problems for branders and marketing experts? The main question includes six subquestions. The first three subquestions cover theoretical concepts: identification of branding

problems from a systems perspective, branding constellations versus other problem identification techniques, and the conceptualisation of ‘perceived usefulness’. The next three subquestions describe and assess the perceived usefulness of branding constellations in problem identification for branders and for marketing experts, and compare them. Display 6 presents the six subquestions of this thesis.

Display 6 Thesis subquestions

Thesis subquestions

1. How can ‘identification of branding problems from a systems perspective’ be conceptualised?
2. How do branding constellations compare to other problem identification techniques?
3. How can ‘perceived usefulness’ be conceptualised?
4. What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders?
5. What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for marketing experts?
6. How does the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders compare with that for marketing experts?

In answer to the first subquestion, this thesis develops a theoretical model of branding problem identification from a systems perspective. This model differentiates branding elements and clarifies the meaning of the systems perspective in the identification of branding problems. This model further allows a classification of the branding elements that were employed by the branders in the branding constellations to identify their branding problems. The second subquestion compares branding constellations to other branding problem identification techniques. This provides understanding of their core similarities and dissimilarities, and positions branding constellations in relation to these techniques in order to reveal the unique combination of branding constellations: a holistic perspective and an emotional approach. The third subquestion examines the conceptualisations of (perceived) usefulness in marketing research and social science methodological literature as well as their operationalisations. This offers understanding of the

dimensions and components of the 'perceived usefulness' concept examined, as well as of the way they were operationalised in the questionnaires. The fourth subquestion covers the perceptions of the branders on these usefulness dimensions and components. In answer to the fifth subquestion, this thesis deals with the usefulness perceptions of the marketing experts: academics, researchers, consultants, and managers. The sixth and final subquestion compares the perceptions of the branders and marketing experts on these usefulness dimensions and components, and assesses the similarities and differences. In this way the main question of this thesis is answered: What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for the identification of branding problems?

1.4 Overview

Chapter 2 covers the answer to the first subquestion on the identification of branding problems from a systems perspective. It develops a systems theoretical branding problem identification model. It assumes that when branders identify branding problems they -explicitly and/or implicitly- think in terms of branding elements and the relationships between these elements as presented in this theoretical model.

Chapter 3 deals with the second subquestion. It compares branding constellations to other problem identification techniques. First, two dimensions are derived from the literature: a holistic versus a reductionist perspective and an emotional versus a rational approach. Second, branding constellations are analysed on these two dimensions by evaluating academic studies on systems constellations. Third, the three main problem identification techniques are analysed on these two dimensions: brainstorming, lateral marketing, and cognitive mapping. Fourth, Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) is reviewed as it may occupy an important role in marketing problem identification from a systems perspective. Fifth and finally, three well-known qualitative marketing research techniques that resemble branding constellations are also taken into account: psychodrama, projections, and Zaltman Metaphorical Elicitation Technique (ZMET).

These three techniques are also occasionally employed to identify branding problems.

Chapter 4 addresses the third subquestion on the conceptualisation of 'perceived usefulness' to examine problem identification techniques. It deduces a classification model of perceived usefulness for this thesis. Its four basic dimensions are relevance, validity, reliability, and precision. The relevance dimension includes the components insight, emotion, system, and awareness. The validity dimension covers the components truth and completeness, while the reliability dimension contains coherence and bias. The precision dimension includes verification and unambiguity.

Chapter 5 provides the methodology of the empirical part of the thesis. Three branding constellation workshops were organised in which a total of seven branders volunteered to conduct a branding constellation to identify their branding problem in the presence of a total of 81 marketing experts. This chapter provides an overview of the data collection and analysis, and the rigour (construct validity, external validity, and reliability) of the findings.

Chapter 6 examines the fourth, fifth, and sixth subquestions on the perceptions of the branders and marketing experts concerning the usefulness of the branding constellations, and the similarities and differences between the branders and the marketing experts. This chapter provides an overview of the empirical findings.

Chapter 7 closes this thesis with an evaluation of the major findings: the conclusions drawn, a discussion of these conclusions, their limitations, and their implications. This chapter assesses the meanings of the findings.

2 Branding problem identification from a systems perspective

The first chapter concluded that the identification of branding problems benefits from the application of a systems perspective. This chapter provides an answer to the first subquestion: How can ‘identification of branding problems from a systems perspective’ be conceptualised? It introduces a theoretical model of branding problem identification from a systems perspective to improve understanding how branders -explicitly or implicitly- think in terms of branding elements and the relationships between these elements. Section 2.1 covers brand and branding conceptualisations. Section 2.2 introduces a generic branding problem identification model from this systems perspective and section 2.3 specifies the model by introducing core branding elements.

2.1 Brands

Although there is general agreement on the importance of brands to companies and consumers, brand and branding definitions abound (Keller, 1998). This section presents the conceptualisations in marketing literature of brands and branding. But first, subsection 2.1.1 gives a short historical overview of brands. Subsection 2.1.2 explores conceptualisations of ‘brand’, and subsection 2.1.3 conceptualisations of ‘branding’.

2.1.1 Brand history

Marks are found on early Chinese porcelain, on pottery jars from ancient Greece and Rome, and on goods from India dating back to about 1300 BC (Keller, 1998). Brick makers in ancient Egypt used marks to identify the bricks they made to avoid any blame if a building collapsed caused by a poorly made product. In medieval times, these potters’ marks were joined by printers’ marks, watermarks on paper, bread marks, and the marks of various craft guilds. Marks also came to be used to identify both thieves and cattle by a clipping in their ears. It takes the name ‘brand’ from the Old English verb *bearnan* (to burn), and refers to the burning of maker marks on the barrels of liquor in Elizabethan England to distinguish them from those of rival

no-name distillers. Branding quite literally began as the act of burning into place a company's name as a kind of identification stamp.

When Europeans began to settle in North America, they brought the practice of branding with them. During the industrial revolution in the second half of the nineteenth century, powerful national manufacturer brands emerged such as Coca-Cola in North America and Philips in the Netherlands. Together with the introduction of these brands came the trade mark registration. Branding was mainly connected with the field of advertising. Because it was directed at persuasive copy and slogans, it led to regulations and laws, and to the rise of pressure groups against advertising. Consumer brands dominated the mass markets until the Great Depression. From 1929 on, the 'pendulum of power' swung more and more in the direction of retailers. After World War II, the demand for US quality brands led to an explosion of marketing and sales.

It was not until 1973 that the first book in English on branding from a marketing perspective was published: *Developing new brands* by Stephen King. In 1987 the first Dutch book on branding from a marketing perspective was published: *Het merk* ('The brand') by Franzen and Holzhauser. In practice, the value of brands emerged from the sharp increases in premiums above the stock market value that were paid in acquisitions of brand-owning businesses. In 1988, Nestlé, for instance, acquired Rowntree -home to, for example, Kit Kat, After Eight, and Polo mints- for 4.5 billion dollars, more than five times their book value, including intangibles as goodwill and patents. The brand phenomenon exploded from the 1990s onward. It entered the academic agenda, and virtually any entity on the planet with an ability to sustain an attraction became practically treated as a brand. These included celebrities, churches, cities, companies, countries, football teams, movements, and political parties.

The first Germanic book on branding from a marketing perspective had already been published in November 1939: *Die Gewinnung des öffentlichen Vertrauens* ('How to win public faith') from Hans Domizlaff. This book did not reach the Anglo-American marketing academics, but underpins

the Germanic branding literature (Brandmeyer and Deichsel, 1999). It took until 1999 before the first Dutch translation of a Germanic book on brands was published (*The magic of the brand – How brands differentiate* by Brandmeyer and Deichsel) because Dutch marketing science has been Anglo-American-oriented since the Second World War.

2.1.2 Brand conceptualisations

Stephen King (1973) suggested that brands are complex cognitive entities created by consumers in reaction to their total set of experiences. In his first book on brands, Aaker (1991), who is generally regarded as the leading author on brands (Keller, 1998), conceptualised a *brand* as a distinguishing name or symbol -such as logo, trademark, or package design- intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors. The American Marketing Association (AMA) still has a similar definition on its website in 2009. It is presented in Box 4.

Box 4 AMA definition of brand (AMA-website 2009, January 1)

AMA definition of brand

"A name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers. The legal term for brand is trademark. A brand may identify one item, a family of items, or all items of that seller. If used for the firm as a whole, the preferred term is trade name."

However, few marketing authors follow this AMA definition. An exploratory study revealed six categories of brand conceptualisations, as shown in Display 7.

The first 'identification' conceptualisation category comes directly from the brand name origin, and is law-oriented. It is often referred to as the product-plus conception (product plus name or symbol) because it treats the brand as an extended product that can be decomposed into its elements without

Display 7 Brand conceptualisation categories

Brand conceptualisation categories	Authors
1. Identification of a product or service	Aaker 1991.; Brandmeyer and Deichsel, 1999; Groenhaug et al., 2002; Boer, 2003; Davies and Chun, 2003; Strijp and De Witte, 2003; Blacket, 2004; Clifton, et al., 2004; Lum and Lum, 2005; De Chernatony, 2006; Zhang, 2008; Franzen and Moriarti, 2009
2. Icon of a culture	Randell, 1997; Mark and Pearson, 2001; Lory and McCalman, 2002; Chandler and Owen, 2003; Hill, 2003; Neumeier, 2003; Ryder, 2003; Van der Vorst, 2004; AMA, 2008
3. Trust object in the consumers' mind	Domizlaff, 1992; Otte, 1993; Davis, 2002; Jackson, 2003; Strijp and De Witte, 2003; Brymer, 2004; Clifton et al., 2004; Smith, 2004; De Chernatony, 2006
4. Clear promise to consumers	Davis, 2002; Lory and McCalman, 2002; Boer, 2003; Jackson, 2003; LePla et al., 2003; Meyers, 2003; Ryder, 2003; Yan, 2003; Brymer, 2004; Smith, 2004; De Chernatony, 2006; Burk Wood, 2007; Franzen and Moriarti, 2009
5. Network of associations in the consumer's mind	Blackstone, 1992; McWilliam and Dumas, 1997; Keller, 1998; Ries and Ries, 1998; Brandmeyer and Deichsel, 1999; Von Brachel, 1999; Franzen, 2000; Lory and McCalman, 2002; Strijp and De Witte, 2003; Maathuis et al, 2004; ESOMAR, 2008
6. Dissipative, self-organising system	Domizlaff, 1992; Otte, 1993; Hanby, 1999; Chandler and Owen, 2003; Wheeler, 2003; Franzen and Moriarti, 2009

loss of meaning (Hanby, 1999). The next three conceptualisations -culture, trust, and promise- are sociological. They are directed at consumers-as-group. The fifth 'network of associations' characterisation is psychological, and focuses on the consumer-as-individual. The sixth depiction as 'dissipative, self-organising system' is based on the organism metaphor. *Dissipative* means that these systems need energy from the environment to stay alive and that structural changes develop from positive feedback loops.

Many authors also combine several of the six basic conceptualisations. For instance, Davis (2002: 3) conceptualises brands as follows: "In part, a brand is a set of promises. It implies trust, consistency, and a defined set of expectations. The strongest brands in the world own a place in the consumer's mind, and when they are mentioned almost everyone thinks of the same things." In line with the sociological conceptualisations, it is not

surprising that in practice there is little disagreement whether something is a brand: brands are implicitly shared cultural phenomena. Brands are legally owned by companies, but sociologically and psychologically they are owned by consumers.

Because the problem identification technique of branding constellations addresses branding systems as an organism metaphor, this thesis follows the sixth conceptualisation category of *brands* as self-organising systems that need energy from the environment to stay alive. The identification, icon, trust, promise, and network conceptualisation categories of brands fit in well with this definition.

2.1.3 Branding conceptualisations

Similar to marketing that is derived from market, branding is derived from brand. Aaker uses the word ‘branding’ regularly, but he does not explicitly define the term. However, the titles of his four books on branding make it is implicitly clear what he means by it: *Managing Brand Equity* (1991), *Building Strong Brands* (1996), *Brand Leadership* (2000), and *Managing Brand Portfolio Equity* (2004). *Brand equity* is the “set of brand assets and liabilities linked to brands which add to -or subtract from- the value provided by product or services to customers” (Aaker, 1991: 15). Managing brand equity is the main task of branders (Aaker, 1991). Display 8 presents the branding definition categorisation from the exploratory literature review.

The first conceptualisation category of branding as ‘positive contribution to the branding system’ is in line with ‘building strong brands’ (Aaker, 1996). The second conceptualisation of branding-as-mind position is similar to the general definition of positioning in marketing literature (Ries and Trout, 1986). It specifies the aim of branding. The third and fourth conceptualisations of branding as ‘managing the presentation and influencing the perception’ and ‘labelling’ do not explicitly take the positive effects of the management into account as do the first and second conceptualisations of branding. The fifth conceptualisation of branding as ‘identification device’ is specifically linked to the first conceptualisation category of brands as ‘identification of a product’.

Display 8 Branding conceptualisation categories

Branding conceptualisation categories	Authors
1. Operations that contribute positively to the branding system	Chandler and Owen, 2003; Strijp and De Witte, 2003; Van der Vorst, 2004; ESOMAR, 2008
2. Improving the unique position in the consumers' minds	Domizlaff, 1992; Jackson, 2003; Strijp and De Witte, 2003
3. Strategic process that manages the presentation and influences the perception of the brand	Franzen, 2006; Strijp and De Witte, 2003; Franzen and Moriarti, 2009
4. 'Labelling' a product through brand elements e.g. brand name, logo, or symbol	Keller, 1998; ESOMAR, 2008
5. Device to identify and differentiate a producer's offering	De Chernatony, 1991; Franzen and Moriarti, 2009.

The first conceptualisation category of branding matches with the systems perspective taken in this thesis. Furthermore, it fits the main task of branders as increasing the brand's value. Therefore, *branding* is defined in this thesis as conducting operations that make a positive contribution to the branding system. In this thesis, a positive contribution refers to marketing programme decisions made to improve the unique brand position in the consumers' minds in order to increase the brand's value.

2.2 Simplified branding problem identification model

Although branders are generally well able to list a large number of elements and relationships in a certain problem area, they appear to have considerable difficulty in deciding on the relationships between the branding elements (Gummesson, 2000). It is often helpful to develop a *model* (a simplified representation) of the dynamic and complex problem in order to make specific judgments (Daniels et al., 1994). Before introducing the specific branding problem identification model from a systems perspective (subsection 2.2.2), subsection 2.2.1 introduces the elements of the branding system.

2.2.1 Branding modelling

Branding problems are *dynamic and complex problems* with multiple causes and effects which are far apart in space and time (Zikmund, 2003). One of the basic characteristics of the systems perspective is the identification of the elements and their relationships regarding a problem out of this multiplicity. *Elements* are the smallest parts of the branding system that branders want to examine (De Man et al., 1995a). Graham and Jahani (1977) describe *modelling* as the creation of simplified abstractions of reality that capture the core elements of the situation, and a *model* as a set of related elements in which some can be controlled. Modelling allows the evaluation of inconsistencies in marketing programmes, and the prediction of how things may go in the future (De Chernatony, 2006). Models are characterised by depiction, reduction, and pragmatism (Franzen, 2006). *Depiction* implies that the model is always a representation of an original. *Reduction* means that models do not encompass all elements and relationships of an original, but only those that are definable and relevant to the model builders. *Pragmatism* signifies that a model is a representation of someone's perception of a situation at a certain moment in time for a certain cause.

In this thesis, the branding problem identification model from a systems perspective follows Van der Vorst (2004). Van der Vorst has construed a branding theory based on the organism metaphor. He conceptualises a *branding system* as a network of branding components that develops as an emergent, self-reproducing system based on the ideas of Luhmann (2002). He reports that branders employ a normative, implicit model to regulate their branding operations: the Brand Identity Model. The key of this model is the elements employed and their relationships. The branders create their own boundaries by deciding what does and what does not belong to the model, selecting from a huge potential of possibilities. They are aware that for every choice a different one could be made, and that it is difficult to determine whether it was right or wrong. Van der Vorst's branding model is based on Ackoff's (1978) idealised systems design. Ackoff, among others, distinguishes between controllable and uncontrollable elements.

Controllable branding elements are those factors of the branding problem system that branders can decide on: the *marketing programme* (Yakimova and Beverland, 2005). This marketing programme is generally approached from the 4P-perspective: brand-related activities (Product), price-related activities (Price), channel-related activities (Place / Physical distribution), and communication-related marketing activities (Promotion) (Kotler and Tria des Bes, 2003). The 4Ps of Product, Price, Place, and Promotion are the tangible embodiment of the marketing strategy. Each of these elements can also be thought of as a subsystem of interrelated elements, and so on.

Uncontrollable branding elements are those factors that branders are not in control of, but which affect the outcomes of a change in the marketing programme. The uncontrollable branding elements include the brand identifiers and the branding environment (Yakimova and Beverland, 2005). *Brand identifiers* are branding elements that have a major impact on other branding system elements and reflect the brand's essence: its enduring qualities, what makes the brand unique and valuable. Understanding the probable effects of a change in the marketing programme on the brand's identifiers is the core of branding (Aaker, 2000). The *branding environment* has traditionally been focused on consumers, but also includes the network of other stakeholders that the brand relies on (De Chernatony, 2006). The stakeholder model is one that reflects well the modern understanding of brands as integrated in -rather than separated from- the company, the market, and society. Based on Franzen and Moriarty (2009), this thesis differentiates four environmental elements: consumers, internal environment, micro environment, and macro environment. The *consumers* include the people who engage in the consumption process. The *internal environment* covers the influences of elements such as the company structure, the company culture, the strategic planning process, the company functions or departments, and the financial, commercial, technical, and personal resources; the *micro* (or *meso*) *environment* consists of all the specific stakeholder groups that the brand is dependent on such as the competitors and the market technology; the *macro environment* comprises situations and trends in society as a whole that influence the degree to which the company

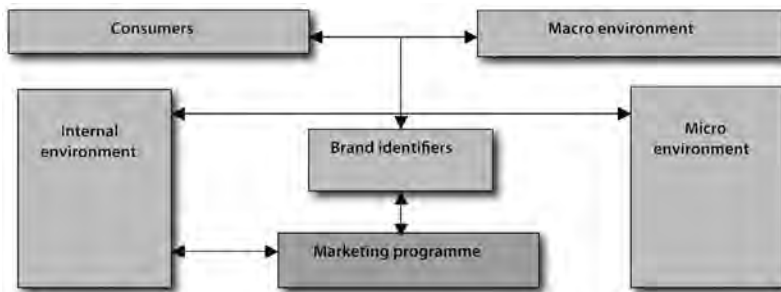
can reach its branding goals such as the political, economic, technological, and social factors.

One of the complications in branding problem identification is that the marketing programme influences the internal environment not only indirectly through the brand identifiers, but also directly (Aaker, 2004). For instance, leaving the dealers out turns the account managers into history. In addition, the micro environment may alter as a consequence of a change in the internal environment (Keller, 1998). For example, a new product may generate a new group of stakeholders. Thus, the internal environment has a core position in the branding environment.

2.2.2 Simplified branding problem identification model

The resulting simplified version of the branding problem identification model from a systems perspective is presented in Display 9.

Display 9 Simplified branding problem identification model from a systems perspective



The simplified version of the branding problem identification model represents a system of interrelated branding elements. Branders -explicitly and/or implicitly- identify branding problems in terms of the branding elements presented in this model. Branders redesign a marketing programme (the controllable element of the branding model) to contribute positively to the branding system as a whole. They base this redesign on an -explicit and/or implicit- analysis of the possible effects of the redesigned marketing

programme on the more or less uncontrollable elements of the branding system: the brand identifiers and through them the consumers, the internal environment, the micro environment, and the macro environment.

The next section takes a closer look at the core elements within these six branding categories.

2.3 Branding system elements

Section 2.2 has presented the branding system elements that together form the branding problem identification model. This section elaborates these six elements. Subsection 2.3.1 covers the brand identifiers and subsection 2.3.2 deals with the marketing programme. The next subsections analyse the four environmental elements: consumers (2.3.3), internal environment (2.3.4), micro environment (2.3.5), and macro environment (2.3.6).

2.3.1 Brand identifiers

Aaker (1991) argues that brand identifiers may be nearly anything including shapes, packages, logos, people, scenes, and cartoon characters. According to Keller (1998), the prominent brand identifiers are brand names, logos, symbols, characters, slogans, jingles, and packages, depending on their strength, favour, and uniqueness. This subsection covers eight possible brand identifiers; three general identifiers (names, stories, and rites) and five identifiers that developed from marketing programmes and were mentioned by Keller: symbols, characters, slogans, jingles, and packaging.

Names

‘Nomen est omen’: the name is the core indicator of the brand, the basis for both consumer awareness and branding (Aaker, 2004). Aaker distinguishes a brand name spectrum going from company names (Disney), through company endorsement (Gillette Mach 3 Turbo Gel) to individual, unique, distinctive brand names (Ariel). Changing the name of a brand is a move with great financial consequences. An example of failure is the Royal Mail Group -the postal service in the UK- that changed its name to Consignia, but retreated after two years when employees and consumers rejected the

new name. A successful example is the change from 'Blue Ribbon Sports' -founded in 1963- to 'Nike' in 1978, the Greek Goddess of victory (Morris and Lawrence, 2001).

Stories

Another potential identifier is the brand story (Aaker, 2004). Brands are frozen success stories transforming their users to heroes. Aaker refers to the historical success story of the screw-in-studs on Adidas soccer boots that aided the German soccer team in winning the 1954 World Cup by beating the 'invincible' Hungarians in the final. Often the origin of the brand -the brand heritage- develops into a story that expresses the brand's soul, its basic values. Many brands are named after their founders, and their founders' stories generally still characterise the brands. The heritage is also connected with the bigger system including the brand such as beer from Germany, wine from France, and clothing from Italy (Ries and Ries, 1998).

Rites

Rites are the expression of shared beliefs and social belonging to a 'tribe' (Cova and Cova, 2001). Rites visualise the 'us' versus 'them' perspective that creates the characterising passionate solidarity between its tribe members and a potent collective sense of difference by projecting to 'them' all that 'us' is not (Atkin, 2004). A major example is the Harley tribe cultivating the 'warrior' rites. Rites are especially important identifiers for brands used at national and religious holidays, birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and other ceremonies (De Chernatony, 2006). It is often said that Mother's Day is the greatest holiday Hallmark ever invented (Vincent, 2002).

Symbols

Symbols are the badges of tribal membership (Vincent, 2002). They include specific associations in addition to their obvious everyday meaning, such as diamonds to express love (Jensen, 1999). Symbols are things that stand for something else (Mariampolski, 2001). Three types of visual brand symbols are generally differentiated: logos, icons, and avatars (Atkin, 2004). *Logo* is short for logotype, a design-speak for a trademark made from a custom-lettered word such as Coca-Cola's script; a *brand icon* is a name or visual

symbol that identifies the brand such as Coca-Cola's distinctive hourglass bottle; and an *avatar* is the modern icon that can move, morph, or otherwise operate freely as the brand's alter ego such as Google's Internet script (Neumeier, 2003). Logos have a long history as a means to indicate origin and ownership; for example, families and countries have employed logos for centuries to visually represent their names. There are many types of logos, ranging from corporate names or trademarks written in a distinctive form to entirely abstract logos completely unrelated to the corporate name and activities. An example of a brand with a strong logo that has no literal connection to the brand name is the Nike swoosh; a strong logo that is a literal representation of the brand name is, for instance, the Apple logo. The Apple logo is an apple with a bite out of it – a friendly symbol of both knowledge and anarchy, contrasted to IBM and the PC-world (Wheeler, 2003).

Characters

Brand characters are symbols that take on human characteristics (Keller, 1998). The human aspect of brand characters can help to create perceptions of brands that reinforce the reliability of the communicated benefits. Some characters are animated whereas others are live action figures. An animated character is the exuberant Monsieur Bibendum -the 'Michelin Man'- and a live action figure is the 'Marlboro cowboy'. Aaker (2004) argues that Bibendum's enthusiastic personality suggests a tyre with strength and energy. Further, he mentions idealised users as characters portrayed in advertising or elsewhere. Aaker (2000) reports of celebrity endorsement as another character variation: using well-known and admired people to promote the brand such as the apparently gravity-defying Nike basketball player Michael Jordan in the mid-1980s.

Slogans

Slogans are short phrases that communicate the brand essence (Keller, 1998). Slogans typically appear in advertising as taglines to summarise the information conveyed by the ads. They also play a role in packaging and in other components of the marketing programme. Slogans function as useful hooks to help consumers grasp the meaning of a brand in terms of what the

brand is and what makes it special. They can develop into *brand mantras*, short three- to five-word phrases that capture the irrefutable essence or spirit of the brand (De Chernatony, 2006). A major successful long run slogan is Nike's 'Just do it', moving consumers to get physical (Aaker, 2000). It was launched in 1987, was supplemented for a short time in 1997 by the 'I can' slogan, but then re-launched shortly afterwards.

Jingles

Jingles are musical messages written around or employed by a brand (Keller, 1998). Even more than symbols, they go in 'under the radar'. The modern term is 'sonic branding' (Jackson, 2003). *Sonic branding* is the creation of brand expressions in sound and the consistent strategic usage of these properties across touch points. There is a rich history of brands using sound in their communications. In 1971 Coca-Cola had the greatest hit in history: "I'd like to buy the world a coke" that was released by the New Seekers as "I'd like to teach the world to sing (in perfect harmony)". Today's major example is Intel. The 'Intel Inside' branding strategy from 1989 on would clearly have been less memorable without its four-tuned sound bite (D flat, G flat, D flat, and A-flat) after an atonal 'hit' of 20 different sounds.

Packaging

Packaging involves the design of containers for the brand product (Aaker, 1996). The importance of packaging is reflected in the fact that many marketing authors refer to it as the '5th P' of the marketing mix. Packages have a long history, starting from the early humans who used leaves and animal skin to carry food and water. Today, packaging also identifies the brand and conveys information ('the silent salesman'). Packaging has an important aesthetic component too, related to its size, shape, material, colour, text, and graphics. It has a major influence on the touch and smell of the product, which are often brand identifiers (Gobé, 2001). An example of a package transformation is the change of the famous Coca-Cola hourglass bottle to tins. A more recent example is the Pringles tube that changed the idea that crisps need to be sold in plastic bags (Taylor, 2003).

2.3.2 Marketing programme

This subsection covers in more detail the ‘controllable’ marketing programme, approached from the 4P-perspective: brand (product) programme, price programme, channel (place / physical distribution) programme, and communication (promotion) programme.

Brand programme

The *brand line* consists of all the products sold under the same brand name (Keller, 1998). Most attention in the brand programme generally goes to *brand extensions*: the application of the brand name in another product class such as Harley Davison perfume. Brand extensions have been the core of strategic marketing efforts since the origin of brands, increasing both the visibility and vitality of the brand. The extension trap is *cannibalisation*, selling a new product at the expense of existing ones. Looking at brand as stand-alone silos is generally a recipe for sub-optimisation. Aaker conceptualises the *brand portfolio* as including all brands and subbrands of the company, and argues that the synthesis of these brand and subbrands is one of today’s main branding problems. *Brand portfolio analysis* concerns two basic questions: ‘How many brands do you need?’ and ‘How many brands can you feed?’ An *over-branded portfolio* is a situation where several brands are going for the same needs; and an *under-branded portfolio* is a situation where the brand portfolio does not include all core needs. A prominent example of perceived over-branding is Unilever. In 2000 Unilever announced a five-year strategic plan termed ‘Path to Growth’ to reduce the 1,600 brands under its management to 400 and a core of 40 brands.

The *brand architecture* involves the organising structure of the brand portfolio that specifies the relationships between legally owned brands. Three brand architectures are generally differentiated: *monolithic brand architectures* have a strong, single master brand around which every branding activity is unified; *subsidiary brand architectures* include two or more different brands with a comparable company contribution; and *endorsed brand architectures* have a dominant master brand which is supporting the subbrands (Wheeler, 2003). The combination of two main brands of different companies, such

as the Philips Alessi line of small household appliances, is called *co-branding* (Keller, 1998).

Price programme

Price premiums are one of the most important benefits of creating strong brands (Aaker 2000). Price is the only revenue-generating element of the marketing mix that gives it a special position. Setting the right price is a difficult process. People do not want to buy cheap products, but they do want to buy them cheap. They often have strong beliefs regarding the connection between price and value of brands, and they often organise their brand knowledge in terms of price tiers. Aaker argues that an important aspect of price is *switching cost*, the cost for consumers to change brands. In case of extensions two strategies are differentiated: penetration and skimming (Keller, 1998). With *penetration pricing*, initial margins are minimised in an attempt to capture market share. With *skimming*, on the other hand, initial margins are maximised in an attempt to extract as much short-term profit as possible.

Channel programme

The *channel programme* involves the design and management of the channels to improve the brand's strength (Keller, 1998). Channels are sets of interdependent companies involved in the process of making a product or service available for use. Keller distinguishes between direct and indirect channels. *Direct channels* refer to selling through personal contacts from the company to prospective consumers by mail, phone, electronic means, in-person visits, and so on. *Indirect channels* involve selling through third-party intermediaries such as agents, broker representatives, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, or dealers. Generally, a *pull and a push strategy* are differentiated, where marketing efforts are directed at consumers or retailers, respectively. A successful channel programme example is Microsoft (Aaker, 2004). In 1981, Bill Gates managed to negotiate a non-exclusive license with IBM to develop a new Disk Operating System for them. This DOS quickly became the dominant operating system in the category of personal computing. Microsoft controlled it, back in 1981 with only a handful of employees. Another prototypical channel programme example is Dell that

was founded in 1984 on a 'simple-as-Dell' concept: selling computers based on industry standards, assembled to order, directly to consumers, leaving the dealers out. Dell is currently using some dealers again like Walmart in the US. One of the main strengths of Coca-Cola is its careful distribution; for example during World War II all US soldiers could buy coke for five cents, wherever they served (Allen, 2001).

Communication programme

Marketing communications are the ways by which companies attempt to inform, persuade and remind consumers, directly or indirectly, regarding the brands that they sell (Keller, 1998). In addition to the already mentioned identifiers (logos, symbols, characters, slogans, jingles, and packages), the promotion programme includes advertising, personal selling, promotions, publicity, sponsorship, and the Internet. "We race on Sunday to sell on Monday" to quote Henry Ford (Jensen, 1999: 58). According to Ries and Ries (1998), the brand communication should focus on one key word in the mind of the consumer and try to own this, such as '(the real) cola' for 'Coca-Cola and '(the ultimate) driving' for BMW as the brain capacity of the public is limited. The Internet is probably the most promising branding medium of our time (Aaker, 2000).

2.3.3 Consumers

This subsection covers the consumer category in the branding problem identification model. Marketing is essentially about engaging with consumers and from a sociological perspective consumers should be approached by 'tribal marketing' rather than be segmented in descriptive consumer classifications (Cova and Cova, 2001). *Descriptive classifications* relate to kinds of persons or companies. They can be divided into, for instance, demographic classifications such as age and gender, and into psychographic classifications such as activities, lifestyle, values, opinions, and attitudes (Keller, 1998). Tribal marketing prefers *behavioural classifications* that refer to how consumers think of or use the brand, for instance, user status, usage rate, usage occasion, and loyalty. Within the business-to-business market, typically five specific roles within the Decision Making Unit are differentiated: users, influencers, deciders, buyers, and gatekeepers

(De Chernatony, 2006). Prototypical examples regarding the problems to identify potential consumers are SMS, Red Bull, and Post-It (Wipperfurth, 2005). SMS (Short Message Service) was first directed at businessmen with little success, whereas later the volume for SMS reached more than three hundred billion messages a year because teenagers took over; Red Bull was a complete failure with consumer testers; and Post-It glue was initially laughed at because it did not stick, but later turned out to be perfect for temporary stickers.

2.3.4 Internal environment

Branding is also an internal process and should be based on the businesses, missions, philosophies, goals, and distinctive competencies of their companies (Aaker, 2000). Unless CEOs and employees (especially the frontline staff) 'live the brand' and 'walk the talk', all money spent in creating a new logo is a waste. Nike, for instance, hires people who share the passion for sports and offers great sport facilities to their employees. Employees should feel proud to be associated with the brand. Aaker illustrates the internal brand building process with the Saturn brand. The initial advertising -with the slogan 'A Different Kind Of Company, A Different Kind of Car'- showed Saturn employees as people with personalities and a deep emotional commitment to both quality and the teamwork approach. The 'Homecoming' organised after three years made 45,000 thousand owners drive to the Saturn plant. However, they failed to avoid the envy of the other GM brands that turned the initial Saturn success into an ultimate failure.

2.3.5 Micro environment

Coping with fast-changing markets starts with understanding the key drivers in the market (Aaker, 2004). This subsection addresses two subcategories in the micro environment that influence brand category: competitors and new technologies.

Competitors

In positioning, the frame of reference is the competition (Aaker, 1991). The choice of the strategy depends on the market position. It is often better for brands to be the 'number 1' in a small category rather than to be 'number 3'



in a larger one. The 'number 2' position can offer specific opportunities as illustrated by the famous Avis positioning communication strategy "We're number two, we try harder", indicating that number 1 Hertz was so big that they did not need to work hard. Another successful positioning example is 7-Up. This soft drink was for a long time perceived as a mixer beverage, despite marketing efforts to emphasise its 'fresh, clean taste' and 'thirst-quenching' properties, until it successfully positioned itself as 'the Uncola', the logical alternative to the colas.

New technologies

Technological innovations deserve special attention as the decision to pursue new technologies is particularly tricky for a market leader that has a vested interest in the old technology (Aaker, 1991). The Gillette experience of the early 1960s illustrates this. Gillette resisted the stainless-steel blade technology, because the product's durability would mean that people would need fewer blades, and the cost to change its manufacturing and marketing efforts would be high. As a result a small British 'stainless' innovator, Wilkinson, and their American rivals Eversharp and Schick, made major and permanent inroads into Gillette's market share and profits. Gillette's market share fell from 70% to 55%, and their return on investments from 40% to below 30%.

2.3.6 Macro environment

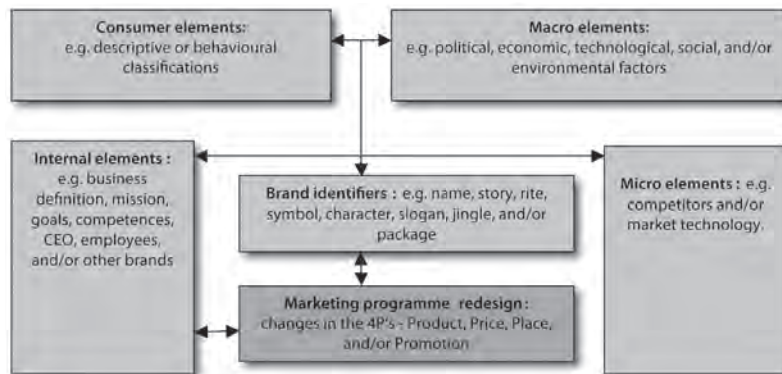
Kotler et al. (1997) differentiate demographic, economic, social, technological, ecological, and political changes in the macro environment. Nearly every market place is undergoing macro environmental changes that are often more dramatic and rapid than expected (Aaker, 1996). For instance, social associations may become more or less favourable in the course of time: Federal Express changed its name to FedEx because 'federal' was at that time connotated unfavourably to 'militaristic' and 'bureaucratic'. Forecasting trends is difficult, illustrated by for instance Adidas that missed the running craze in the 1970s, whereas Nike in its turn did not perceive the fitness and aerobics hype in the 1980s, and was overtaken by Reebok. Gregory (2004) describes the high influence of the macro environment on Harley-Davidson's development. World War I was a boom for the motorcycle

industry, because demand increased for lightweight, manoeuvrable transportation on the battlefields. But only a few years later, the Great Depression almost killed off the entire industry.

2.4 Overview

Branders identify branding problems by -explicitly and/or implicitly- thinking in terms of branding elements and the relationships between them. Display 10 presents the elaborated version of the simplified branding problem identification model from a systems perspective as shown in Display 9.

Display 10 Elaborated branding problem identification model from a systems perspective



The elaborated version of the branding problem identification model represents a system of interrelated branding elements. Branders -explicitly and/or implicitly- identify branding problems in terms of the relationships between the main elements. Branders redesign a marketing programme (the controllable element of the branding system) to contribute positively to the branding system: improving the unique brand position in the consumers' mind in order to increase the brand's value. The optional changes in the marketing programme cover traditionally the 4Ps of Product, Place, Price, and Promotion. Branders address the effects of these optional changes in the marketing programme on the more or less uncontrollable variables: the



brand identifiers such as name, stories, and rite; the current and potential consumers; the internal environment such as CEO and employees; the micro environment such as competitors and market technology; and the macro environment such as political and economic developments. The brander's basic branding problem identification question from a systems perspective is: 'Does a change in the marketing programme contribute positively to the branding system as a whole, covering the main brand identifiers and the core elements of the internal, micro, and macro environments?' This model represents a *kaleidoscope*: its constellation of elements will shift according to the branding problem being identified.

This chapter introduced a theoretical model of branding problem identification from a systems perspective to improve understanding how branders -explicitly and/or implicitly- think in terms of branding elements and the relationships between them as an answer to the first subquestion: How can 'identification of branding problems from a systems perspective' be conceptualised?

The next chapter provides an answer to the second subquestion: How do branding constellations compare to other branding problem identification techniques?

3 Positioning of branding constellations

This third chapter provides an answer to the second subquestion: ‘How do branding constellations compare to other branding problem identification techniques?’ It positions branding constellations in relation to the original versions of other problem identification techniques. After the introduction of the positioning procedure, the problem identification techniques are analysed and positioned. First, branding constellations are classified. Second, three well-known problem identification techniques are reviewed: brainstorming, lateral marketing, and cognitive mapping (Rickards, 1987). Third, Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) is reviewed as it could and should occupy an important role in marketing problem identification, according to Driver and Louvieris (1998). Fourth, three well-known qualitative marketing research techniques are taken into account, which are also occasionally employed to identify marketing problems: psychodrama (Carnabucci, 2002), projections (Chandler and Owen, 2003), and the Zaltman Metaphorical Elicitation Technique (Zaltman, 1997b).

3.1 Positioning procedure

Problem identification techniques can be compared on their different perspectives and approaches to the problems to be identified. In comparing systems constellations to roleplay and gaming, Van der Valk et al. (2007) use, among others, two dimensions in problem approaches:

- (1) Holistic versus reductionist perspective and
- (2) Emotional versus rational approach.

The differentiation between the holistic and the reductionist perspective is based on the two systems metaphors introduced in chapter 1. The *holistic perspective* focuses on the elements and relationships that emerge from the whole, and is based on the organism metaphor (Callingham and Baker, 2001). The *reductionist perspective* is based on the machine systems metaphor, and decomposes problems into basics that decrease the level of difficulty so much that the solution imposes itself (Aaker, 1996).

The distinction between the emotional and the rational approach stems from the ancient Greeks (Ledoux, 1998), and is well-known in the analysis of branding problems (Gobé, 2001). *Rational approaches* concentrate on logical verbalisation (Toulmin et al., 1984). VanGundy (1988: 21) defines the *quality of a decision* as the “extent to which one solution [...] is likely to be more rational than another”. Zaltman (2003) argues that the importance of emotions has been underestimated in science for a long time. Cognitive science, for instance, although often described as ‘the science of mind’, has only recently developed an interest in the study of emotions (Ledoux, 1998). However, especially problem identification is based on and motivated by emotions (Overskeid, 2000). *Emotions* are the end result of information processing that occurs subconsciously (Ledoux, 1998). *Emotional approaches* include the whole of bodily experiences, feelings, and intentions (Ledoux, 1998) as well as *free associations* (Ferguson, 1970): the spontaneous verbal ‘outbursts’ based on these emotions.

The format of the comparison of branding problem identification techniques is presented in Display 11. It presents the two classification dimensions: the holistic versus reductionist perspective and the emotional versus rational approach.

Display 11 Classification format of branding problem identification techniques

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional		
Rational		

3.2 Branding constellations

This section classifies branding constellations: the application of systems constellations to identify branding problems. Subsection 3.2.1 describes the two forms of systems constellations that have been studied academically: family and organisation constellations. Subsection 3.2.2 addresses the classification of branding constellations.

3.2.1 Origin of branding constellations

The family constellation is the first form of systems constellations (Franke, 2003). It developed in the 1980s as a procedure within group therapy from the combination of family systems therapy and psychodrama. In a *family constellation*, clients portray their inner picture of their own family system including key family members and abstract concepts such as ‘the inheritance’ with the help of the group members. The original term was ‘family positioning’. Family constellations are based on the organism metaphor, according to Franke. Box 5 presents the family constellation procedure as described by Franke (2003: 29/30).

Box 5 Family constellations (Franke, 2003: 29/30)

Family constellations

“At the outset, the therapist holds a short preliminary interview during which the significant identities of the persons and relevant facts are derived from a client’s family history. Following this, the client chooses people from a present group to represent family members as well as her self. The persons selected as representatives are placed around the room, led by the client to ‘the’ proper place according to the client’s intuition. After this, the representatives take turns describing their feelings, their physical perceptions, and their relationships within the family. Often, some representatives do not feel comfortable in their positions. Following the comments of the representatives and the therapist’s ideas about order, the therapist changes the positions of the representatives so that in the end, each person is standing in a place that feels better or right. In order for this to happen, it is often necessary for the representatives to correct things between each other as well as in relation to the client. The client participates actively at the end of the session by taking her representative’s place.”

In family constellations, *representatives* are independent group members set up by clients in an embodied representation of the persons and abstract concepts in their problem situation. The innovative assumption of family constellations is that these independent group members are capable of perceiving and expressing the subconscious emotional relationships between these persons and abstract concepts. This phenomenon is called *representative*



perception. These independent group members ‘offer’ their bodies as perception organs for the relationships between elements in systems that are unfamiliar to them.

This thesis uses the term ‘stand-ins’ rather than ‘representatives’, based on Veenbaas and Goudzwaard (2002), to avoid the association of ‘representatives’ in the marketing field with ‘salesmen who visit potential consumers to inform them on the products of the company, and who are also responsible for the merchandising and the service’ (Verhage, 2001).

Family constellations focus on the awareness of *entanglements*: the client is, for instance, thought to be identified with the fate of a family member from a previous generation who has been excluded from the family because of displayed behaviour that was resented by the other family members. However, the client is neither aware of his loyalty to this family member nor the resented behaviour. The generic solution is the individuation of the client by the acknowledgment of this family member’s fate (Franke, 2003).

The concept of family constellations originated in Germany. The first book on family constellations was published by Weber (1993). Five years later the first edition of the German journal *Praxis der Systemaufstellung* appeared (‘Practice of Systems Constellations’) and the first English book on family constellations was published. The technique then spread rapidly around the world (Franke, 2003). In 2000 the first edition of the first English journal ‘Systemic Solutions Bulletin’ was published; in 2005, its name was changed to *The Knowing Field - International Constellations Journal* as “Field theory is the most appropriate term for describing the phenomena which are informing and guiding facilitators in systems constellations” (Morgan, 2005: 2).

In the 1990s, the application to managerial rather than personal problems was developed, which was called *organisation constellations* (Lehmann, 2006). Box 6 presents the procedure of organisation constellations as described by Gminder (2005: 1).

Organisation constellations

"A person with a problem ('client') clarifies his situation in an interview with a facilitator. They define a problem system and its elements. As elements persons are chosen. They get placed by the client in a room. By doing this the client visualises his inner picture of the situation. He makes his implicit 'tacit' knowledge explicit. But it is more than a picture: the persons which have roles as elements talk, interact, feel and change places in a process. Options, solutions, decisions can be stimulated in a lively manner. This process is guided by a trained facilitator and leads to conclusion or even solution picture. In the end the client steps into this picture and can reverse the explicit solution to implicit knowledge."

Gminder (2005) called the form of system constellations he studied *management constellations* to denote that he employed members of the management team involved as stand-ins rather than independent people from outside the company who know nothing about the problem. In line with Franke, he argues that organisation constellations are based on the organism metaphor.

Gminder (2006) is the only academic study so far in which systems constellations are employed to identify branding problems. However, references to systems constellations to identify marketing problems can also be found in Francis (2005) and Kohlhauser and Assländer (2005). Francis (2005) reported that he had employed systems constellations to understand what was preventing a creative company from bringing a successful new product to the market, and to improve the brand through rebalancing certain elements in the communication portfolio, such as websites and mail shots. Kohlhauser and Assländer (2005) stated that systems constellations are employed in marketing by companies such as Microsoft.

In the Netherlands, systems constellations were introduced at the start of the 21st century (Van der Valk et al., 2007); the first Dutch conference on

family constellations took place in 2001 and on organisation constellations in 2005.

3.2.2 Classification of branding constellations

Branding constellations are applications of systems constellations to identify branding problems. Academic research consists of a number of studies on family constellations (e.g. Franke, 2003; Höppner, 2001; and Cohen, 2008) and organisation constellations (e.g. Schlötter, 2005; Gminder, 2006; Lehmann, 2006; and Roevens, 2008).

Academic studies on family constellations have employed different methodological designs. Franke (2003) carried out a qualitative case study on family constellations in individual therapy workshops. Höppner (2001) carried out a quasi-experimental design with seven validated psychological questionnaires regarding the clients' self-image and psychic state. Using a narrative case study approach, Cohen (2008) examined the emotions, meanings, and outcomes experienced by prisoners. Franke (2003), Höppner (2001), and Cohen (2008) reported that family constellations provide clients with a clear picture of the emergent relationships between the elements of the represented systems and that the clients were profoundly emotionally involved. Thus, family constellations are based upon a holistic perspective and an emotional approach, according to these studies.

In the academic studies on organisation constellations, the holistic perspective and the emotional approach are evident too, according to Schlötter (2005), Gminder (2006), Lehmann (2006), and Roevens (2008). For example, Lehmann (2006) examined the perceived usefulness of organisation constellations, concluding that systems constellations help to identify complex managerial problems through their holistic perspective and emotional approach. Further, she deduced a generic model including seventeen categories of systems perspectives. Lehmann concludes that systems constellations are most closely connected with the *systems approach of Luhmann* (2002): systems are not something presented to problem owners from the outside, but systems are metaphors to think about the relationships between elements by problem owners. Lehmann concludes that the

perceived usefulness of the systems perspective is specifically in the emergent feedback loops between the systems elements that were set up.

Based on the characteristics of family and organisation constellations as presented in the academic research above, branding constellations are classified as having a holistic perspective and an emotional approach. Display 12 presents the position of branding constellations within this classification format.

Display 12 Classification of branding constellation

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional	Branding constellations	
Rational		

3.3 Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a creative session producing a checklist of ideas that serve as leads to problem solutions to be evaluated and further processed later on (Tauber, 1975). Within the branding field, brainstorming has been employed to identify several kinds of branding problems (De Chernatony, 1991; Sutton and Hargadon, 1996; Kohli and Labahn, 1997; Von Brachel, 1999; Hatch and Schultz, 2001; Vanderveer, 2004; and Lum and Lum, 2005). For example, Lum and Lum (2005) employed brainstorming to assist Martha Stewart Omnimedia in dealing with the personal scandal in which the Martha Stewart brand was involved.

Brainstorming was developed in the 1930s by Alex Osborn (Tauber, 1975). Osborn (1963) introduced brainstorming in the field of advertising based on his experience that status and insensitive behaviours reduce the contributions of all but a few dominant participants in creative meetings. Box 7 presents the four rules in the structured, classical form of brainstorming as described by Osborn (1963: 156).

Box 7 Four rules in classical brainstorming (Osborn, 1963: 156)

Four rules in classical brainstorming

1. "Criticism is ruled out: adverse judgment of ideas must be withheld until later
2. Free-wheeling is welcomed: The wilder the ideas, the better; it is easier to tame down than to think up
3. Quantity is wanted: The greater the number of ideas, the more the likelihood of useful ideas
4. Combination and improvement are sought: In addition to contributing ideas of their own, participants should suggest how ideas of others can be turned into better ideas; or how two or more ideas can be joined into a still another idea."

Brainstorming is characterised by a free association of wild ideas and the postponement of rational criticism rather than logical verbalisations. Thus, brainstorming is classified as an emotional technique. In addition, it is not the intention of brainstorming to present the whole picture of a problem or to focus on relationships. Brainstorming results in fragmented ideas that bring to the surface specific aspects of problems. Thus, brainstorming can be classified as having a reductionist perspective. Display 13 positions brainstorming in relation to branding constellations.

Display 13 Positioning of brainstorming

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional	Branding constellations	Brainstorming
Rational		

3.4 Lateral marketing

Lateral marketing consists of introducing a new possibility inside a logical sequence of thought to allow the brain to make new connections (Kotler and Trias de Bes, 2003). It is a special application of lateral thinking developed by De Bono (1995) to marketing. Within the branding field,

lateral marketing has not yet received much attention regarding identifying branding problems. However, lateral marketing is useful in marketing as the identification of marketing problems requires creativity rather than logical thinking, according to Kotler and Trias de Bes. Box 8 presents the three steps of lateral marketing (Kotler and Trias de Bes, 2003: 104).

Box 8 Three steps in lateral marketing (Kotler and Trias de Bes, 2003: 104)

Three steps in lateral marketing

1. "Choose a focus where we want to generate a lateral displacement
2. Provoke a lateral displacement for generating a gap
3. Think about ways to connect the gap."

A *lateral displacement* is a rational interruption in the middle of a logical sequence of thought. For instance, in the short-lifetime problem situation of flowers from 'flowers die' to 'flowers that do not die', generating the idea of 'artificial flower'. Thus, lateral thinking can be characterised as a rational approach.

Like brainstorming, lateral marketing does not focus on the whole picture itself, but builds its line of reasoning from a reductionist perspective. The fractioning of elements in lateral marketing allows restructuring a problem situation by putting some of the fractions together in a new way, such as 'flower' and 'die' in the example above. The purpose of this fractioning is to break up the solid unity of a fixed pattern such as 'flowers die' rather than to provide a full descriptive analysis of the limited-lifetime problems of flowers. It does not matter if the fractions do not cover the whole problem situation. Therefore, lateral marketing can be classified as having a reductionist perspective. Display 14 positions lateral marketing in relation to branding constellations.

Display 14 Positioning of lateral marketing to branding constellations

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional	Branding constellations	
Rational		Lateral marketing

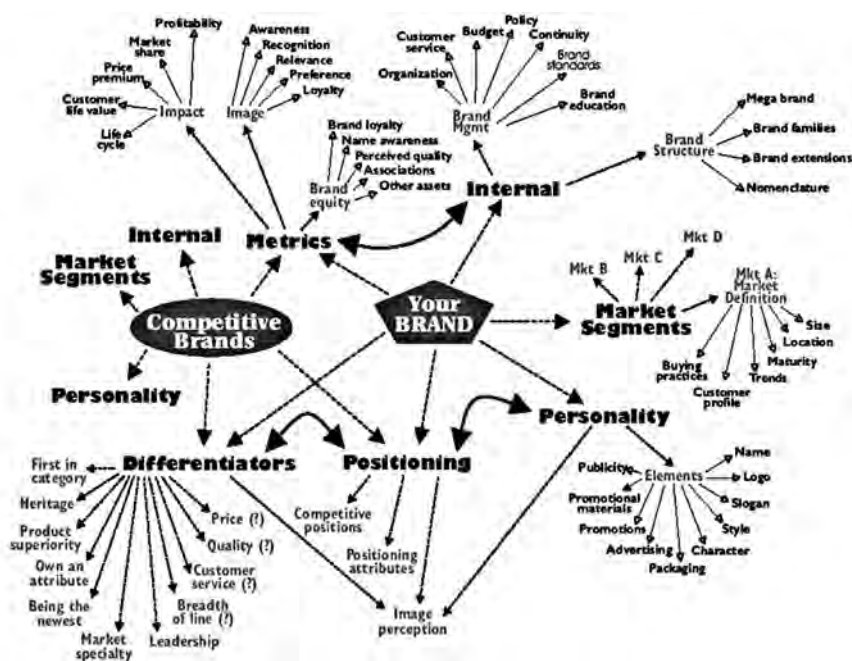
It should be noted that the origin of lateral marketing, lateral thinking, would be positioned as an emotional technique rather than a rational technique. De Bono (1995) contrasts lateral thinking to the traditional rational type of thinking that he names vertical thinking. *Vertical thinking* deliberately seeks out relevant information and proceeds logically from one state of information to another. It is analytical, continuous, and generative. Vertical thinking is looking for answers. *Lateral thinking* is provocative, discontinuous and selective. It is looking for the right questions. It welcomes chance intrusions, because it is difficult to change an old perspective from within itself. It uses information to bring about change and creativity. Lateral thinking is meant to break out of the prison of old ideas. It tries to restructure an old information pattern by putting things together in a different way. The purpose of the rearrangement is to find a better, more effective pattern. Fractioning of elements allows restructuring a problem situation by putting the fractions together in a new way. Since the purpose of fractioning is to break up the solid unity of a fixed pattern rather than to provide a rational descriptive analysis, it does not matter if the fractions do not cover the whole situation. For the same reason, it does not matter if some of the fractions overlap. Thus, lateral thinking is characterised by an emotional approach and a reductionist perspective, while lateral marketing is characterised by a rational approach and a reductionist perspective.

3.5 Cognitive mapping

Cognitive mapping is a graphical representation of a particular problem that allows for deeper and more integrative understanding (McGivern, 2006). Cognitive mapping was created in the 1960s by Tony Buzan (McGivern, 2006), and is registered as Mind Mapping (Buzan and Buzan, 1996). It is based on the notion that the knowledge that people have is stored in their

minds in the form of holistic cognitive maps. Although cognitive mapping is a major tool in quantitative (consumer) branding research (John et al., 2006) and has been employed to identify strategic problems (Mingers and Rosenhead, 2004), it has not received much attention in identifying branding problems. However, Aaker (1996) argues that cognitive mapping should be applied in problem identification by rationally drawing a mental network of brand identity elements with links between them to make their patterns visible.

Box 9 Cognitive mapping on brands (www.signaturestrategies.com/Branding/brand_audit/brand_audit.html; 2007, May 10)



Box 9 presents an example of such a rational, holistic mental network in branding that also illustrates the complexity of the branding system. Cognitive mapping is employed by managers to model complex problems holistically, to externalise implicit thoughts, and to balance the elements involved. Once something is externalised it is possible to look at it, study it,

change it, perfect it, and at the same time learn important things about oneself. Box 10 presents the four essential characteristics of cognitive mapping, according to Buzan and Buzan (1996: 59).

Box 10 Four characteristics of cognitive mapping (Buzan & Buzan, 1996: 59)

Four characteristics of cognitive mapping

- 1. “The subject of attention is crystallised in a central image.
- 2. The main themes of the subject radiate from the central image as branches.
- 3. Branches comprise a key image or key word printed on an associated line. Topics of lesser importance are also represented as branches attached to higher level branches.
- 4. The branches form a connected nodal structure.”

The essence of cognitive mapping is the holistic, rational thinking process as presented in the four characteristics. Cognitive mapping uses key words and images, each of which are intended to trigger specific memories, and encourages new thoughts and ideas. Every key word is *multi-ordinate*, which means that it forms a little centre with many hooks. Thus, cognitive mapping can be classified as having a rational approach and a holistic perspective. Display 15 positions cognitive mapping in relation to branding constellations.

Display 15 Positioning of cognitive mapping to branding constellations

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional	Branding constellations	
Rational	Cognitive mapping	

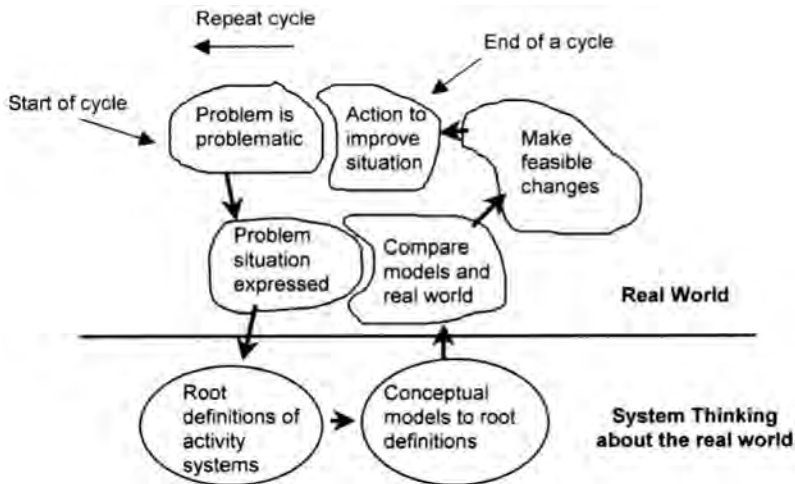
3.6 Soft Systems Methodology (SSM)

The notion of the *Soft Systems Methodology* (SSM) is that the systems metaphor is useful to identify soft problems; as a particular way of expressing problem owners’ thoughts on a problematic situation (Driver and Louvieris, 1998). In soft problems both “What is the problem?” and ‘How is the

problem to be solved?’ are unclear (Christis, 2005). SSM could and should occupy an important role in marketing problem identification, according to Driver and Louvieris (1998).

SSM is one of the methodologies that have been developed to deal with soft problems within the field of operations research since the 1960s, and is the leading example of research contribution to the field of real-world problem identification (Mingers and Brocklesby, 1996). Today, SSM has a strong position in operations research (Mingers and Rosenhead, 2004), and is well-established in information and management science (Al-Karaghoulis and Alshaw, 2005). SSM originated at Lancaster University (UK) from the work of Professor Checkland and a team of systems analysts (Checkland and Scholes, 2005). SSM has been described in various ways throughout its existence. The 7-stage model is an early presentation, but remains the most useful for explaining the methodology (Checkland and Scholes, 2005). Box 11 presents a pictorial overview of these seven stages as framed by Presley et al. (2000).

Box 11 SSM seven-stage model (Presley et al., 2000: 382)



The 7-stage model includes seven interacting, spiral states suitable for a rational but holistic description of a problem: (1) perceived problem, (2) expressed problem, (3) definition of relevant system, (4) conceptual model, (5) real-world comparison, (6) definition of change, and (7) implementation of change.

From the SSM perspective, these seven stages form a rational line of reasoning in which one stage follows the other logically. Stage 1 covers the problem owners' definitions of a situation perceived as problematic, and stage 2 as their rational expressions of the problem. Stage 3 involves a systematic naming and defining by the problem owners of the perceived concise elements that encapsulate the relevant systems. The root definitions of these systems are formulated on the basis of six key factors on the same resolution level, easily recalled in SSM by using the CATWOE mnemonic: Customers, Actors, Transformation, 'Weltanschauung', Owners, and Environment. Box 12 summarises the CATWOE root definitions.

Box 12 SSM root definitions (Presley et al, 2000)

CATWOE subsystems	Root definitions of the relevant elements
1. Customers	People affected by the system
2. Actors	People performing activities in the system
3. Transformation	Transformation carried out by the system
4. Weltanschauung	Viewpoints held of the system
5. Owners	Persons with the authority to decide how (and if) the system will be carried out
6. Environment	Larger system within which the system under consideration exists and operates.

In stage 4 the problem owner rationally constructs these root definitions into a conceptual model, generally by applying some kind of cognitive mapping. Stage 5 compares the findings of this model with the real world, while stage 6 specifically covers the systems effects of the possible actions to handle the problem. Finally, stage 7 chooses an action or sets up a new round if the problem perception has been changed by the SSM process. "Being a

systems approach, SSM takes a holistic view in studying problem situations”, according to Patel and Patel (2003: 285). However, in its rational approach SSM has undervalued the role of emotions, according to Wang and Ahmed (2003). Display 16 positions SSM in relation to branding constellations.

Display 16 Positioning of SSM to branding constellations

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional	Branding constellations	
Rational	SSM	

3.7 Psychodrama

In qualitative marketing research, *psychodrama* is described as an emotional technique where people are asked to create and act out brand scenarios in order to portray some part of a real or imagined situation (Gordon and Langmaid, 1988). These scenarios may, for instance, involve the interactions between brands. Carnabucci (2002) argues that marketing consultants employ psychodrama in their work with companies to identify market opportunities by revealing their emotions towards these opportunities. However, psychodrama is more familiar in qualitative consumer research than in problem identification (Chandler and Owen, 2003). Ernest Dichter, the father of qualitative marketing research, routinely employed psychodrama to create a rich picture of a brand’s emotional associations (Aaker, 1996). Dichter asked for instance: ‘You are Ivory Soap. How old are you? Are you masculine or feminine? What type of personality do you have? What magazines do you read?’ According to Gordon and Langmaid, this kind of technique works well for personal products such as perfumes, health foods, and shampoo where consumers often imagine some fantasised end result that may guide their purchasing, but about which they can or dare not speak rationally. Thus, psychodrama can be classified as having an emotional approach. As it does not intend to cover the whole situation, but rather a rich picture of the situation, psychodrama is reductionist in nature rather than holistic.

Psychodrama was developed in the 1920s by Moreno as the first group therapeutic technique in which the client was the hero rather than the patient (Gordon and Langmaid, 1988). Moreno (1987) portrayed troublesome scenes on a stand using props and group members. These scenes served as an opportunity to experiment with new behaviour rather than revealing the roles of clients in the systems in which they participate as in systems constellations. The principle underlying psychodrama was as-if: everything was possible in psychodrama, from talking to deceased persons to pouring it all out on the current boss. In the logic of psychodrama the ghost of Hamlet’s father was just as real, and permitted to exist as Hamlet himself. This as-if reality was called *surplus reality*. It was the concretisation of the possible, of what did not happen but could have happened, or what was not happening but may happen. The aim was emotional catharsis -the release from tension and anxiety caused by this surplus reality- rather than experiencing the role in the greater whole. Thus, also the origin of psychodrama can be classified as having an emotional approach and a reductionist perspective. Display 17 positions psychodrama in relation to branding constellations.

Display 17 Positioning of psychodrama to branding constellations

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional	Branding constellations	Psychodrama
Rational		

3.8 Projections

Projections -also called projective techniques- in qualitative marketing consumer research involve the presentation of ambiguous emotional stimuli, and asking respondents to make sense of them (Boddy, 2005). Thus, projections can be classified as having an emotional approach. The rationale underlying projections is the *projective hypothesis* (Lilienfeld, 2000). According to this hypothesis, respondents project aspects of their personalities in the process of disambiguating unstructured test stimuli. According to Boddy (2005), projections are useful when respondents

have difficulty expressing some brand-related emotions, and researchers need some way of accessing these from within the respondents' minds. But it is considered vitally important that the respondents themselves make the interpretations (Gordon and Langmaid, 1988). The marketing research examples presented in the previous subsection –such as the Ivory soap example– are also found as examples of projections in the marketing literature, because psychodrama is often referred to as a projection technique in marketing research theory (McGivern, 2006). '*Personification*' is an example of a projection technique that comes close to psychodrama. It entails that respondents imagine that the brand is a person, and then describe demographic or status-driven attributes emotionally associated with his or her personality; for example, 'If Nike were a person, would it be a male or a female?' (Mariampolski, 2001). A well-used variation on personification in marketing research is the *personal analogy* in which managers or consumers are asked to identify with brand elements, and are, for instance, asked how it feels to be these elements (Chandler and Owen, 2003). These projections do not intend to cover the whole picture of interrelated elements, but focus on one or two core branding elements, such as 'brand' and 'gender' in the Nike example. Thus, projections can be classified as having a reductionist perspective.

It should be noted that projections are applied differently in marketing research than in psychology. The term 'projection' stems from the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud (Gordon and Langmaid, 1988). In psychoanalysis, *projection* is a defence mechanism in which people subconsciously attribute to others their own unacceptable thoughts or emotions (Grant and Crawley, 2006). In contrast to the modest role of the facilitator in marketing research, the role of psychoanalysts is to confront clients with their own sensitive interpretations: verbal interventions through which the analysts make clients consciously aware of their subconscious projections. Psychoanalysis is directed at allowing reason to control emotion.

The dominant psychoanalytic thought in the UK is the *Object Relations School* (Scharff and Scharff, 2000). Here, *objects* are thought of as subconscious memory traces of experiences rather than subconscious physical

drives as Freud taught. The Object Relations School refers to *projective identification* rather than projection: the subconscious process of splitting off some parts of the self, projecting them on to people. The subconscious identification by the projectee with the projections is called *introjective identification*. The mature form of subconscious projective identification is empathy: putting oneself in someone else's shoes (Stadter, 2004: 12). Box 13 presents the projective identification process in a schematic way as described by Ogden (2005).

Box 13 Three steps in projective identification (Ogden, 2005: 12)

Three steps in projective identification

1. "Unconscious fantasy of projecting a part of oneself into another person and of that part taking over the person from within.
2. Then, there is a pressure exerted through the interpersonal interaction such that the recipient of the projection experiences pressure to think, feel, and behave in a manner congruent with the projection.
3. Finally, after being 'psychologically processed' by the recipients, the projected feelings are re-internalized by the projector."

Ogden argues that projective identification is useful to master undigested emotions. It is not intended to reveal the full picture on a problem. Thus, the projective identification process in psychology would be positioned similarly to branding constellations as projections in marketing research. However, the role of the facilitator is much more modest in marketing research than in psychoanalysis. Display 18 positions projections in relation to branding constellations.

Display 18 Positioning of projections to branding constellations

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional	Branding constellations	Projections
Rational		

3.9 Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique

The *Zaltman Metaphorical Elicitation Technique* (ZMET) is a research tool that employs visual and sensory images to assist in understanding the meaning of brands to consumers because people think in images and metaphors (Zaltman, 1997b). It uses several qualitative methods, among others projections, and psychodrama. ZMET uses semi-structured, in-depth, personal interviews centred on the visual images that the informant brings to the interview. In the late 1990s, ZMET was also employed to identify marketing problems (Zaltman, 1997b). However, this application is only occasionally employed as marketers do not enjoy applying these techniques on themselves (Zaltman, 2005 personal communication). Box 14 presents the eight major steps in the managerial variation of ZMET.

ZMET takes an emotional approach, because it is based on free associations rather than logical thinking. ZMET covers a number of reductionist marketing techniques, which do not intend to cover the whole situation. Although ZMET has some focus on mental models, it also does not intend to reveal the dynamic interactions between the elements that play a role in these mental models. Thus, ZMET can be classified as having an emotional approach and a reductionist perspective. Display 19 positions ZMET in relation to branding constellations.

Display 19 Positioning of ZMET to branding constellations

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional	Branding constellations	ZMET
Rational		

Box 14 Eight steps in ZMET (Zaltman, 1997b)

Eight steps in ZMET

1. **Storytelling:** Participants are asked to describe the salient content of each picture they bring to the interview.
2. **Missed images:** Because pertinent pictures may not be available within the time period of the assignment, participants are asked to describe pictures they wanted to find but could not
3. **Sorting:** Participants are invited to bring between twelve and fifteen images.
4. **Construct elicitation:** The interviewer randomly selects three of a participant's pictures and asks how any two are similar and yet different from the third with respect to their relation to the research topic.
5. **Metaphor elaboration:** A participant might then be asked to imagine widening the frame of one of the pictures in any direction or dimension and to describe what would enter the picture that would reinforce -or sometimes contradict- its meaning for them.
6. **Sensory images:** In this step, participants are asked to use non-visual senses to convey what is and is not representative of the concept being explored.
7. **The vignette:** In this step participants are asked to imagine a short movie that describes their thoughts and feelings about the topic.
8. **The digital image:** In the final step the participant creates a summary image or montage that expresses the topic under study. The focus of this process is to help the participants express their thinking, rather than to develop an image that is aesthetically pleasing.

The vignette of step 7 is a short psychodrama, usually one single scene (Djuric et al., 2006).

3.10 Overview

Display 20 presents the overall positioning of branding constellations in relation to other problem identification techniques. This positioning is based on the original sources while many different modifications of these versions are practised as reported in subsection 1.1.1.

Display 20 Positioning of branding constellations to other problem identification techniques

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional	Branding constellations	Brainstorming, Psychodrama, Projections, and ZMET
Rational	Cognitive mapping and SSM	Lateral marketing

Branding constellations differ from other problem identification techniques by their combination of a holistic perspective and an emotional approach. They share a holistic perspective with cognitive mapping and the Soft Systems Methodology (SSM). Furthermore, they share an emotional approach with brainstorming, psychodrama, projections, and the Zaltman Metaphorical Elicitation Technique (ZMET).

This chapter answered the second subquestion: How branding constellations compare to other problem identification techniques. The next chapter focuses on the third subquestion: How can ‘perceived usefulness’ be conceptualised?

4 Perceived usefulness

This chapter focuses on the third subquestion: How can ‘perceived usefulness’ be conceptualised? Section 4.1 deduces a generic definition of perceived usefulness employed in this thesis based on relevant descriptions of usefulness and perceived usefulness in marketing research and social science methodology. Subsequently, this section unravels the generic definition into four dimensions: relevance, validity, reliability, and precision. Section 4.2 distinguishes a number of components for each dimension leading to definitions of these dimensions. Section 4.3 closes this chapter with an overview of the dimensions and components of the concept ‘perceived usefulness’ in its dimensions and components.

4.1 Definition of perceived usefulness

This section examines the generic conceptualisations of (perceived) usefulness (subsection 4.1.1) and its dimensions (subsection 4.1.2).

4.1.1 Usefulness conceptualisations

In marketing research and social science methodology literature, the concept of (perceived) usefulness is conceptualised in many different ways. Display 21 presents five categories of conceptualisations reported in this literature.

Display 21 Usefulness conceptualisations

Usefulness Conceptualisations	Authors
1. Rationale for making decisions	Shrivastava, 1987; Swanborn, 1993; Armstrong, 2004; Blomstermo et al., 2004
2. Representational fit	Habermas, 1973; Johnson and Hudson, 1996; Gminder, 2006
3. Significance of the findings	Swanborn, 1993; Barab and Squire, 2004
4. Potential for usage	Swanborn, 1993; Blomstermo et al., 2004; Burton, 2005; De Man, 2007
5. Complement to individual's perception	Ackoff, 1978; Johnson and Hudson, 1996.

The first conceptualisation category focuses on the appropriateness of a set of rational arguments that assist in making decisions. The second assesses the fit between reality, and the models and concepts employed to describe this reality. The third restricts the concept of usefulness to indicate the level of relevance of the findings for the problem owner. Conceptualisation number four focuses on the immediate applicability of the employed techniques in practice. The fifth conceptualisation indicates the degree to which techniques assist in improving one's perception of reality.

Because this thesis focuses on the perception of the usefulness of a specific branding problem identification technique in a real-life setting, this thesis follows the fifth conceptualisation of (perceived) usefulness. Display 22 presents this generic definition of perceived usefulness.

Display 22 Generic definition of perceived usefulness

Generic definition of perceived usefulness

Perceived usefulness is the degree to which the respondents perceive problem identification techniques as improving their initial perception of the problem.

4.1.2 Dimensions of perceived usefulness

The further conceptualisation of concepts by their dimensions and components is a standard procedure in scientific research (De Leeuw, 1994). The way this unravelling takes place depends on the objective of a research project. This thesis benefits from an unravelling procedure that matches the generic definition of perceived usefulness presented in Display 22. This subsection deduces the dimensions of perceived usefulness from studies in the fields of marketing and social science methodology: Coulter and Zaltman (1994) and Zikmund (2003), and De Leeuw (1993) and De Man (2001), respectively.

Coulter and Zaltman (1994) report that the usefulness of the Zaltman Metaphorical Elicitation Technique (ZMET) was examined on three dimensions: relevance, validity, and reliability. *Relevance* refers here to the insights gained, “not only about people’s initial thoughts [...] but also about the deeper meaning of a topic” (1994: 507). Concerning validity and reliability they refer to mainstream research methodology, and state that ZMET meets these demands of validity and reliability, because the qualitative marketing research techniques on which ZMET is based meet these demands. Shocker and Zaltman (1977: 406) refer to *validity* as “the extent that differences in scores among objects reflect true differences of the objects on the characteristic (construct) which the instrument tries to measure” and to *reliability* as “consistency”.

Zikmund (2003) uses, among others, three dimensions to decide whether marketing information is useful for marketers: relevance, completeness, and quality. According to Zikmund (2003: 24), information is *relevant* “if it clarifies the questions the decision maker faces”; *complete* information denotes that it has “the right quantity of information”; *quality* information means that it is “valid, reliable, and accurate”. *Validity* is “the ability of an instrument to measure what it is intended to measure” (: 232) and *reliability* is “the degree to which a measure is free from random error and therefore yields consistent results” (: 231). Accuracy is not defined by Zikmund.

De Leeuw (1993) and De Man (2001) refer to usefulness as ‘the combination of relevance and validity’. They further refer to *relevant* knowledge as ‘needed and new’, and to *valid* information as ‘true, consistent, and precise or falsifiable information’. According to De Man, information is *true* ‘when it is in line with the available facts’; *consistent*, ‘when it does not contain internal contradictions’; and *precise*, ‘when it can be verified or falsified’. Display 23 presents an overview of the dimensions mentioned in the literature above.

Display 23 Usefulness dimensions

Coulter and Zaltman (1994)	Zikmund (2003)	De Leeuw (1993) and De Man (2001)
Relevance	Relevance	Relevance
Validity	Completeness	Validity (including truth, consistency, and precision)
Reliability	Quality (including validity, reliability, and accuracy)	

To realise the objective of this thesis, the relevance, validity, and reliability dimensions are included as was done by Zaltman (1994) in his study on ZMET. A precision dimension is addressed additionally, because Zikmund (2003) refers to it separately. However, he terms it ‘accuracy’ rather than ‘precision’. But the two terms are similar, according to Peter (1977). Furthermore, De Leeuw (1993) and De Man (2001) refer to precision as part of validity. This thesis includes truth and completeness in the validity dimension following Gummesson (2000) and Miles and Huberman (1994), respectively. ‘Consistency’ is part of the reliability dimension, according to Shocker and Zaltman (1977). In this way, all the usefulness dimensions reported in Display 3 are taken into account in a way that creates four mutually exclusive dimensions of usefulness: relevance, validity, reliability, and precision. A comparison of the different conceptualisations of these four dimensions leads to a set of definitions for the dimensions of the concept ‘perceived usefulness’ examined in this thesis.

‘Perceived relevance’ is the first dimension of perceived usefulness in this thesis. Coulter and Zaltman (1977) refer to *relevance* as the ‘insights gained both on a surface and on a deeper level’, and Zikmund (2003) as ‘clarifying problems’. The conceptualisation of De Leeuw (1993) and De Man (2001) of relevance as ‘needed and new knowledge’ does not add something here, because insights entail “the ability to combine, synthesize, or reshuffle previously unrelated phenomena in such a way that you get more out of the emergent whole than you have put in” (De Wit and Meyer, 2005: 286). Thus, ‘insights gained’ include ‘needed and new knowledge’. Therefore, *perceived relevance* is defined as ‘the degree to which problem identification

techniques generate insights -on a surface and a deeper level- and clarify the problems in the perception of the respondents’.

‘Perceived validity’ is the second dimension of perceived usefulness.

Zikmund (2003) and Shocker and Zaltman (1977) refer to validity as the ‘ability of an instrument to measure what it is intended to measure’, whereas De Leeuw (1993) and De Man (2001) refer to *valid* information as ‘true, consistent, and precise or falsifiable information’. This thesis follows De Leeuw (1993) and De Man (2001) as it fits the objective of this thesis better than the conceptualisation of Zikmund (2003): to present the perception of respondents on branding constellations rather than to measure its effectiveness. As argued above, consistency is considered part of the reliability dimension, and precision is treated as a separate dimension in this thesis.

True information is information that is ‘in line with the available facts’, according to De Man (2001). This thesis further considers completeness as part of validity. *Completeness* is defined as “the right quantity of information” by Zikmund (2003: 24). Thus, in this thesis *perceived validity* is defined as ‘the degree to which problem identification techniques generate true and complete information in the perception of the respondents: in line with the available facts and the right quantity of information’.

‘Perceived reliability’ is the third dimension of perceived usefulness. Shocker and Zaltman (1977: 406) refer to *reliability* as “consistency” and Zikmund (2003: 231) as “the degree to which a measure is free from random error and therefore yields consistent results”. Thus, the conceptualisation of Zikmund incorporates that of Shocker and Zaltman. Furthermore, in this way the ‘consistency’ indicator of the validity conceptualisation by De Leeuw (1993) and De Man (2001) is taken into account. Thus, this thesis follows Zikmund, and defines *perceived reliability* as ‘the degree to which problem identification techniques are free from random error and therefore yield consistent results in the perception of the respondents’.

‘Perceived precision’ is the fourth dimension of usefulness. De Leeuw (1993) and De Man (2001) refer to *precision* as ‘the generation of verifiable or falsifiable information’. Zikmund does not conceptualise the similar

concept ‘accuracy’. Thus, this thesis follows De Leeuw and De Man, and defines *perceived precision* as ‘the degree to which problem identification techniques generate verifiable or falsifiable information in the perception of the respondents’.

Display 24 summarises the definitions of the four dimensions of perceived usefulness that are distinguished in this thesis: perceived relevance, perceived validity, perceived reliability, and perceived precision. For ease of reading, these are referred to as relevance, validity, reliability, and precision.

Display 24 Definitions of perceived usefulness dimensions

Dimensions	Definitions of perceived usefulness dimensions
1. Relevance	Degree to which problem identification techniques generate insights -on a surface and a deeper level- and clarify the problem in the perception of the respondents
2. Validity	Degree to which problem identification techniques generate true and complete information in the perception of the respondents: ‘in line with the available facts’ and ‘the right quantity of information’
3. Reliability	Degree to which problem identification techniques are free from random error and therefore yield consistent results in the perception of the respondents
4. Precision	Degree to which problem identification techniques generate verifiable or falsifiable information in the perception of the respondents.

4.2 Components of perceived usefulness dimensions

This section deals with the constellation of the components of each of the four perceived usefulness dimensions deduced in the previous section.

4.2.1 Relevance components

In subsection 4.1.2 *relevance* is defined as ‘the degree to which problem identification techniques (1) generate insights -on a surface and a deeper level- and (2) clarify the problems, in the perception of the respondents’. The explicit relevance conceptualisations reported in the marketing and the social science literature are limited. The literature revealed two other conceptualisations. The first conceptualisation is reported by, for example, Ackoff (1978: 101): “significantly related to what we do”. This

conceptualisation does not fit this study, because this would involve a longitudinal study of the perceptions of the branders about whether the branding constellations are related to the branding actions taking place in the future. The second is reported by Bohm (1998: 42): “To lift into attention”. This second conceptualisation will be dealt with further on in this subsection as ‘improved awareness’.

Regarding the insight component, *insights on a surface level* are operationalised as ‘insights into the submitted branding problem’, and *insights on a deeper level* are operationalised as ‘insights into the displayed branding system’ (see appendix A1.1). The ‘problem clarification’ indicator has been elaborated in three different ways. First, some researchers, such as Overskeid (2000), indicate that problem clarification should focus on the clarification of emotions experienced in connection to the problem. In this thesis, *emotions* refer to the whole of bodily experiences, feelings, and intentions as indicated in subsection 3.1. A second group of researchers such as Lehmann (2006) consider problem clarification from a systems perspective, and focus on the identification of the relationships between the core elements as indicated in subsection 3.2.2. Third, Wilson (2003: 21), for example, states that *problem clarification* is “becoming aware of the problems that must be attended to” as indicated in subsection 1.1.1. *Awareness* includes three aspects that Lehmann (2006) has categorised as: knowledge, feelings, and intentions. The ‘improved awareness’ component of relevance is similar to the ‘lifting to attention’ conceptualisation of relevance reported by Bohm (1980) reported in the introduction of this section.

In addition to the insight component of the relevance dimension, the three above mentioned components of problem clarification are included in the relevance dimension. The *emotion* component of the relevance dimension is defined as ‘the degree to which emotions are expressed that contribute to the identification of the branding problem in the perception of the respondents’. The *system* component of the relevance dimension is defined as ‘the degree to which the relationships between the core branding elements are clarified in the perception of the respondents’; and the *awareness* component of the relevance dimension is defined as ‘the degree to which implicit branding

knowledge, feelings, and intentions are made explicit in the perception of the respondents’.

To sum up, the differentiated components of the relevance dimension are: (1) insight, (2) emotion, (3) system, and (4) awareness. Display 25 presents the definitions of these four components.

Display 25 Definitions of components of relevance dimension

Components	Definitions of components of relevance dimension
1.1 Insight	Degree to which insights are gained into the submitted branding problem and into the branding system in the perception of the respondents
1.2. Emotion	Degree to which bodily experiences, feelings, and intentions are expressed that clarify the branding problem in the perception of the respondents
1.3 System	Degree to which the relationships between the core branding elements are clarified in the perception of the respondents
1.4 Awareness	Degree to which implicit branding knowledge, feelings, and intentions are made explicit in the perception of the respondents.

4.2.2 Validity

Validity is defined in subsection 4.1.2 as ‘the degree to which, problem identification techniques generate true and complete information in the perception of the respondents: in line with the available facts and the right quantity of information’. Both the truth and the completeness conceptualisations are found regularly in marketing (e.g. Gummesson, 2000) and social science methodological literature (e.g. Argyris and Schön, 1973). The validity conceptualisation that is found most often in this literature is the one referred to by Zikmund (2003: 232): validity is “the ability of an instrument to measure what it is intended to measure”. As argued in subsection 4.1.1, this conceptualisation is not helpful in a study that focuses on the perceptions of the respondents regarding the usefulness of a problem identification technique rather than trying to measure its usefulness. Another validity conceptualisation reported in the literature refers to precision (e.g. McGivern, 2006). In this thesis, precision is included as a separate dimension of usefulness (subsection 4.2.4).

Thus, in this thesis validity includes two conceptualisation categories: truth and completeness. *True information* is specified in subsection 4.2.1 as: ‘information that is in line with the available facts’, based on De Man. *Information* is operationalised as ‘insights’ in this thesis. *Completeness* is defined in subsection 4.2.1 as ‘the right quantity of information’, based on Zikmund. In this thesis, this is interpreted as ‘elements lacking’, because only insights can be gained about the relationships between the branding elements that are displayed. Branding elements that are not taken into account but should have been, may lead to a situation where the ‘right’ insights are not being gained. Display 26 presents the definitions of the two components.

Display 26 Definitions of components of validity dimension

Components	Definitions of components of validity dimension
2.1 Truth	Degree to which insights are gained that are in line with the available facts in the perception of the respondents
2.2 Completeness	Degree to which the right branding elements are lacking in the perception of the respondents.

4.2.3 Reliability

Subsection 4.1.2 defined *reliability* as ‘the degree to which branding constellations are (1) free from random error and (2) yielding consistent results, in the perception of the respondents’.

Regarding the first part of this reliability definition (free from random error), it should be noted that many authors on marketing and social science methodological literature such as Zikmund (2003) do not explicitly differentiate between (random) error and (systematic) bias. Others, such as Remenyi et al. (2005), explicitly distinguish between these two. They refer to *bias* as systematic mistakes and to *error* as random mistakes: mistakes as a consequence of methodological and chance factors, respectively. Likewise, some authors such as Riege (2003) focus on ‘free from biases’ in their conceptualisations of reliability, whereas others such as Proctor (2003) focus on ‘free from random errors’, and still other authors explicitly include both systematic and random mistakes in their conceptualisations such as Peter (1977).

The reliability dimension of this thesis focuses on biases rather than on errors, because biases are more important than errors in the scientific study of problem identification techniques as science focuses on systematics rather than coincidences (De Groot, 1966). The bias that forms the core of scientific studies on services is the person who provides the service, because this person is sometimes more important than the actual service itself (Keller, 1998). Likewise, the bias issue of the facilitator is generally recognised in problem identification techniques (Proctor, 2004), qualitative marketing research techniques (Imms and Ereaut, 2003), as well as systems constellations (Gminder, 2006). Thus, *bias* is operationalised in this thesis as ‘the degree to which the statements of the stand-ins are systematically affected by the facilitator in the perception of the respondents’.

On consistency, two conceptualisation categories were found in marketing and social science methodological literature: external consistency or repeatability, and internal consistency or coherence. The repeatability conceptualisation is not helpful in a thesis that focuses on the perception of the respondents regarding one-time branding problem identifications. In addition, it is a ‘contradiction in terms’ in the sense that problem identification techniques cannot be repeated to identify the same problem. Thus, the second component of the reliability dimension in this thesis is *coherence*, operationalised as ‘the degree to which the statements by and between the stand-ins are consistent in the perception of the respondents’.

Another reliability conceptualisation reported in marketing and social science literature refers to what in this thesis is included in precision (e.g. Peter, 1977). This conceptualisation is not included here, on the grounds of defining exclusive categories. Another major conceptualisation of reliability in this literature involves the intersubjective agreement of the findings, for instance, reported by Kerlinger and Lee (2000). This conceptualisation is dealt with in the sixth subquestion: How does the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders compare with that for marketing experts? Display 27 presents the definitions of the components concerning the reliability dimension.

Display 27 Definitions of components of reliability dimension

Components	Definitions of components of reliability dimension
3.1 Coherence	Degree to which the statements by and between the stand-ins are consistent in the perception of the respondents
3.2 Bias	Degree to which the statements of the stand-ins are systematically affected by the facilitator in the perception of the respondents.

4.2.4 Precision

Subsection 4.1.2 defined *precision* as ‘the degree to which verifiable or falsifiable information is generated to identify branding problems in the perception of the respondents’. *Verification* means that “the information can be checked” (Schocker and Zaltman, 1977: 405), whereas *falsification* means that “the information can conflict with possible observations” (Popper, 1997: 64). Regarding the difference between verification and falsification, Gorman (1986) argues that in the early validation stages of problem identification techniques verification may be a useful emphasis, whereas in later stages falsification takes precedence. In addition, the combination of verification and falsification statements is called *empirical statements* (Stewart and Mickunas, 1990). Therefore, the conceptualisation categories ‘verification’ and ‘falsification’ are regarded as similar components of the precision dimension and are taken together under the label of ‘verification’ as this study is a first validation.

In addition, the marketing and social science methodological literature reported another indicator of precision (e.g. Kerlinger and Lee, 2000): unambiguity. This indicator is taken into account too. Kerlinger and Lee (2000: 697) conceptualise an *ambiguous statement* as “one that permits or invites alternative interpretations”. Similar to the reliability definitions, *unambiguity* is operationalised in this thesis as the ‘degree to which the statements of the stand-ins provide unambiguous information in the perception of the respondents: statements that do not permit or invite alternative interpretations’.

Another indicator of precision reported in the literature is ‘truth’, for instance by Gergen (2005). This indicator is included in the validity dimension.

Thus, it is not included in the precision dimension on the ground of defining exclusive categories. Finally, *precision* is conceptualised in quantitative research as “the range of the confidence interval” (Proctor, 2003: 19). This conceptualisation is not helpful in a qualitative study on the perception of respondents. Display 28 presents the definitions of the components concerning the precision dimension.

Display 28 Definitions of components of precision dimension

Components	Definitions of components of precision dimension
4.1 Verification	Degree to which the statements of the stand-ins provide verifiable and/or falsifiable information in the perception of the respondents: the information can be checked or can conflict with possible observations
4.2 Unambiguity	Degree to which the statements of the stand-ins provide unambiguous information in the perception of the respondents: statements that do not permit or invite alternative interpretations.

4.3 Overview

Display 29 presents the definition of perceived usefulness employed in this thesis.

Display 29 Definition of perceived usefulness

Definition of perceived usefulness

Perceived usefulness is the degree to which the respondents perceive problem identification techniques as improving their initial perception of the problem.

Display 30 presents an overview of the definitions of the dimensions and components of perceived usefulness deduced from the literature for this thesis.

Display 30 Definitions of perceived usefulness dimensions and components

Dimensions and components	Definitions of perceived usefulness dimensions and components
1. Relevance	Degree to which problem identification techniques generate insights -on a surface and a deeper level- and clarify the problem in the perception of the respondents
1.1 Insight	Degree to which insights are gained into the submitted branding problem and into the branding system in the perception of the respondents
1.2 Emotion	Degree to which bodily experiences, feelings, and intentions are expressed that clarify the branding problem in the perception of the respondents
1.3 System	Degree to which the relationships between the core branding elements are clarified in the perception of the respondents
1.4 Awareness	Degree to which implicit branding knowledge, feelings, and intentions are made explicit in the perception of the respondents.
2. Validity	Degree to which problem identification techniques generate true and complete information in the perception of the respondents: in line with the available facts and having the right quantity of information
2.1 Truth	Degree to which insights are gained that are in line with the available facts in the perception of the respondents
2.2 Completeness	Degree to which the right branding elements are lacking in the perception of the respondents
3. Reliability	Degree to which problem identification techniques are free from random error and therefore yields consistent results in the perception of the respondents
3.1 Coherence	Degree to which the statements by and between the stand-ins are consistent in the perception of the respondents
3.2 Bias	Degree to which the statements of the stand-ins are systematically affected by the facilitator in the perception of the respondents
4. Precision	Degree to which problem identification techniques generate verifiable and unambiguous information in the perception of the respondents
4.1 Verification	Degree to which the statements of the stand-ins provide verifiable and/or falsifiable information in the perception of the respondents: the information can be checked or can conflict with possible observations
4.2 Unambiguity	Degree to which the statements of the stand-ins provide unambiguous information in the perception of the respondents: statements that do not permit or invite alternative interpretations.

Thus, the perceived usefulness of problem identification techniques should be examined on four dimensions: relevance, validity, reliability,

and precision. The relevance dimension should include four components: insight, emotion, system, and awareness; the validity dimension truth and completeness; the reliability dimension coherence and bias; and the precision dimension verification and unambiguity.

Note that the dimensions of perceived usefulness cover perceptions, and should be read as *perceived* relevance, etc. For ease of reading, the four dimensions are referred to as relevance, validity, reliability, and precision. The same counts for its components.

This chapter covered the third subquestion: How can ‘perceived usefulness’ be conceptualised? The next chapter covers the methodological approach to the empirical part of this thesis.

5 Methodology

This fifth chapter covers the methodological approach to the empirical part of the thesis. Section 5.1 examines the research strategy. Section 5.2 considers the composition of the two groups of respondents: branders and marketing experts. Section 5.3 deals with the data collection, and section 5.4 with the data analysis. Section 5.5 closes this chapter with a reflection on the rigour (construct validity, external validity, and reliability) of the findings.

5.1 Research strategy

Subsection 5.1.1 examines the descriptive, qualitative research strategy employed in this study and subsection 5.1.2 the multiple-case-study design.

5.1.1 Descriptive qualitative research strategy

This thesis focuses on the perceived usefulness of branding constellations to problem identification of Dutch branders and marketing experts. As presented in chapter 4, this thesis investigates the concept of perceived usefulness as a construct consisting of four dimensions and ten components derived from marketing and social science methodological literature. This means that this study follows a deductive, descriptive research strategy rather than an inductive, explorative research strategy. Following Miles and Huberman (1994), this study uses the construct of perceived usefulness as a template to select those dimensions and components of this construct that are relevant in this study. The qualitative strategy is adopted owing to its ability to describe perceptions (Mason, 2002). The study includes a small number of branders who were suited to conduct branding constellations, and who were able and willing to share their perception regarding the usefulness of branding constellations. In addition, the perception was collected of a group of marketing experts who indicated that they were willing to share their perceptions on the perceived usefulness of branding constellations.

5.1.2 Multiple-case-study design

This qualitative research strategy included a case study-design because of the newness and complexity of branding constellations, and the lack of control

over the branding problems presented and over the branding constellations executed, based on Yin (2003). According to Yin, case studies are especially useful in analysing new applications of techniques. The case study design fits the real-life character of this study. It further fits the descriptive qualitative research strategy because of its limited number of selected respondents, its labour intensive approach, and its focus on depth rather than breadth. *Cases* are defined as real-life sets of events from which data are drawn.

More specifically, this thesis adopts a multiple-case-study design to allow comparison of the individual case studies, and improve the reliability of the findings (Yin, 2003). Multiple case studies are an important research tool for business and management researchers according to Yin. Based on the multiple case study approach, three branding constellation workshops were organised, in which two or three branders were selected who conducted branding constellations to identify their branding problems. The multiple case studies were *progressively focused*; that is, the dimensions, their components, and their operationalisations were allowed to change as the study moved along (Stake, 2006). In Stake's terms, this thesis is an *instrumental* multiple-case study rather than an intrinsic case study, because the purpose of the case study is to go beyond the cases, rather than an enduring interest in the cases themselves. The three criteria for case selection were based on Stake: (1) 'Is the case relevant?' (2) 'Do the cases provide diversity across contexts?', and (3) 'Do the cases provide good opportunities to learn about the complexity and contexts?'

5.2 Selection of respondents

Subsection 5.2.1 covers the selection of branders and subsection 5.2.2 the selection of marketing experts.

5.2.1 Selection of branders

Based on the principles of qualitative research, theoretically relevant selection criteria were employed rather than statistical representative selection criteria (Mason, 2002). The branders were selected by the marketing experts rather than the researcher to improve the objectivity of the study. They had to

meet the four basic systems constellation requirements to be relevant. First, the branders had to be responsible for the identification of the branding problem. Second, they had to be in the position -jointly with others- to decide on the marketing programme option. Third, they had to appreciate a holistic perspective and an emotional approach in line with the positioning of branding constellations. Thus, the branders were selected on their possible affinity with branding constellations based on De Groot (1966), who refers to this kind of selection of respondents as a *strong start*. Fourth, they should have the permission of the other brand team members to conduct a branding constellation. In addition, as part of the study, they had to agree beforehand to fill out the workshop and email questionnaires, and to present their perception on the usefulness of their branding constellation in a later workshop. These five requirements were also discussed with the branders before the branding constellation workshop. These requirements did not cause any selection problems.

In addition, *reputational case selection* was employed. This means that branders of well-known brands were given priority to participate and conduct branding constellations over less well-known brands, because there is little dispute about the brand status of well-known brands, and marketing experts already have perceptions about these brands to which they can compare their perceptions regarding the branding constellation. Furthermore, problem identification of well-known brands is more interesting to marketing experts, and will involve them more compared with branding problems of 'brands' with which they are unfamiliar.

Following the principles of qualitative research and in line with the systems constellations studies of Franke (2003), Gminder (2006), Lehmann (2006), and Cohen (2008) as well as the ZMET studies (Zaltman, 2003), the branders were explicitly told of their right to withdraw from the study at any time or to request that the material concerning their branding constellation be destroyed. No brander exercised this right.

Three branding constellation workshops were planned for, consisting of a total of seven branding constellations. In each of these workshops branders

and marketing experts explored whether branding constellations were useful to identify the branding problems. The three workshops took place at the study centre of the Radboud University in Nijmegen, the Netherlands. The 2002 workshop was designed as a pilot test to reveal the adequacies and inadequacies of the methodology.

In the first workshop in 2002 three branders were invited to conduct a branding constellation: a brand manager of a global Baby Food brand, the KPN Mobile marketing manager, and the Dutch marketing director of a global Franchise brand. In each of the next two workshops in 2003 and in 2004 two branders conducted a branding constellation; the marketing manager of an Online Broker brand and the Sigma Paints brand manager in 2003; and the chief editor of a Magazine brand and the director of a Consultancy brand in 2004. Display 31 presents the brands on which branding constellations were conducted in the workshops.

Display 31 Overview of branders' brands in branding constellations workshops

Year	Brands of branders
2002	'Baby Food', KPN Mobile, and 'Franchise'
2003	'Online Broker' and Sigma Paints
2004	'Magazine' and 'Consultancy'.

5.2.2 Selection of marketing experts

The choice of marketing experts was based on *purposive selection* in the sense that marketing experts were selected for their suitability and ability to provide insights that would be relevant to the research objective (Carson et al., 2001). Therefore, they were selected on their affinity with a holistic perspective and an emotional approach. In addition, a *snowball* strategy was employed in which marketing experts, who indicated they would attend, were asked to invite marketing colleagues and branders who fulfilled the theoretical conditions mentioned in subsection 5.2.1. In January 2002 a website on branding constellations was launched (www.brandingconstellations.com). Every marketing expert who applied was welcome to attend the workshop. One exclusion criterion for attendance

of marketing experts was employed. For ethical reasons, no marketing experts were allowed to attend the workshops, who were direct or indirect competitors of the branders' brands; for instance, Vodafone managers and consultants involved with Vodafone were asked to attend another workshop rather than the workshop in which the KPN Mobile brander conducted a branding constellation. This criterion was also explicitly requested by most branders.

The target number for the yearly marketing expert group was 30, based on Yin (2007). The 2002 branding constellation workshop was attended by 24 marketing experts, the 2003 branding constellation workshop by 26 marketing experts, and the 2004 branding constellation workshop was attended by 31 marketing experts. Display 32 presents the numbers of marketing experts attending the branding constellation workshops organised in 2002, 2003, and 2004.

Display 32 Numbers of marketing experts in workshops

Year	Numbers of marketing experts
2002	24
2003	26
2004	31
<i>Total</i>	<i>81</i>

Because marketing experts with different interests may have different perceptions, six categories of marketing experts were differentiated. First, marketing academics and marketing practitioners were distinguished (Rickards, 2003). The marketing practitioners were further divided into three subgroups: marketing researchers and marketing managers (Moorman et al., 1993), and marketing consultants (Gummesson, 2000). Furthermore, the category 'users' was differentiated, because Roevens (2008) reports that there is a significant difference between the insights gained in organisation constellations by managers who have conducted organisation constellations themselves, and those who have only observed organisation constellations. *Users* are persons who attended a branding constellation workshop in the role

of marketing expert, but had conducted a branding constellation in the past in the role of brander. Also attending the 2003/4 workshops were marketing managers who had conducted -or intended to conduct- a case study on branding constellations as part of their master thesis at the Open University of the Netherlands; these marketing managers are named *student managers*. The marketing managers who attended and were not studying at the Open University are named *general managers* in the 2003/4 findings. Display 33 presents the numbers for each marketing expert category in the three branding constellation workshops.

Display 33 Numbers of marketing experts per workshop and category

Year	Users	Academics	Researchers	Consultants	General managers	Student managers	Total
2002	3	8	5	4	4	-	24
2003	5	6	3	4	3	5	26
2004	6	2	6	8	-	9	31
Total	14	16	14	16	7	14	81

5.3 Data collection

This section covers the questionnaires (subsection 5.3.1) and the response analysis (subsection 5.3.2).

5.3.1 Questionnaires

The study employed questionnaires, because they are a powerful tool for generating information in an efficient manner (Gummesson, 2000), especially where it concerns perception studies (Swanborn, 1993). *Questionnaires* are fixed sets of questions intended to be completed by some group of respondents (McQuarrie, 2006). Questionnaires are thought to improve transparency, reliability, and speed, and to reduce time and cost compared with interviews. In line with the systems constellations study of Lehmann (2006), the perceptions were elicited through professionally designed,

self-completion questionnaires during the workshops for each branding constellation separately, as well as after the workshops by email for the two or three workshop branding constellations together.

The workshop questionnaires allowed the respondents to report their perceptions directly to maximise the chance of getting an accurate recollection. The extra email questionnaires are in line with brainstorming studies, which argue that it often takes time to generate insights (Osborn, 1963), and that the respondent may think differently in response to different question forms, times, and contexts (Hoadley, 2004). In addition, it allows for more questions because respondents feel more obliged to answer second questionnaires when they have already taken time and effort to answer earlier questions (Wilson, 2003).

The study employed a *compositional method* (Steenkamp et al., 1994) in the sense that branders and marketing experts presented their perceptions on the usefulness of branding constellations, according to the dimensions and components presented in chapter 4. In addition, a *respondent orientation* (Segers, 1983) was employed in the sense that this study used two different questionnaires: one for the branders and one for the marketing experts reflecting the different reference frame of these two groups. The brander questionnaires included open questions focusing on the relevance dimension in order to stimulate the creative process.

The marketing expert questionnaires focused on the other perceived usefulness dimensions, because the relevance dimension generally could be evaluated only limitedly by the marketing experts as they generally were only limitedly familiar with the branding problems. Within the marketing expert questionnaires administered during the workshop, a difference was made for the role of the marketing experts in the branding constellations as the inside-view may be different from the outside-view (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Thus, different workshop questionnaires were developed for the audience and the stand-in marketing experts, leading to role-ordered matrices in the analysis. The stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaire focused on the experiences as stand-in, on the insight and the emotion component of

the relevance dimension, on the completeness component of the validity dimension, and on the bias component of the reliability dimension, whereas the audience marketing expert workshop questionnaire included all the other perceived usefulness dimensions and components.

The email questions were the same for audience and stand-in marketing experts. The marketing expert email questionnaire employed a funnel-approach, starting with four generic open email questions on the general usefulness of the branding constellations: one question on what they perceived as good or beneficial about the branding procedure, and one on what they perceived as poor or harmful about it; a third question on the most preferred branding constellation and a fourth question on the least preferred branding constellation that permitted an analysis of the theoretically derived dimensions and components of perceived usefulness.

The 2003/4 questionnaires changed the last two questions of the 2002 email questionnaire: one question on what they perceived as good or beneficial about the brander reflections to improve their understanding of the usefulness of branding constellations, and one on what they perceived as poor or harmful about it. The 2003/4 measurement of the dimensions and components further included a multidimensional assessment in which the marketing experts were asked to score their perceptions on the email questions regarding the components of relevance, validity, reliability, and precision dimensions on a 10-point scale based on Lehmann (2006).

Appendices A1 and A2 present detailed information about the questionnaires; appendix A1 covers the connections between the perceived usefulness dimensions, components, and questions; appendix A2 links the questions of the brander and marketing expert questionnaires to the dimensions and components.

5.3.2 Response analysis

All branders filled out all the workshop and email questionnaires. However, one audience marketing expert workshop questionnaire and four marketing expert email questionnaires are missing. The total of 81 marketing experts

filled out more than 260 questionnaires, ensuring that the marketing expert questionnaires have a high response rate: only 5 questionnaires were missing on more than 260 questionnaires. The non-response seemed a matter of busy agendas rather than less positive perceptions towards branding constellations based on the non-respondents' perceptions reported in the questionnaires they did fill out. Thus, the non-response does not seem to have influenced the findings.

5.4 Data analysis

Data analysis consists of examining, categorising, and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address the dimensions and components of a study (Yin, 2003). It is meant to reduce the large quantity of data to a core that will answer the thesis questions. The data of this study are the perceptions of the branders and marketing experts on the usefulness components as they reported in the workshop and email questionnaires. The purpose of the analysis is to transform these data into thesis information: the classification of the answers on the open questions designed to interpret the perceptions reported by the branders and marketing experts regarding the usefulness of branding constellations. Cross-case analysis dominated this thesis. The cases were analysed within and across the three branding constellation workshops, and the findings and interpretations were separated. The cases were analysed in chronological order. The open questions were analysed using separate data displays for each of the four perceived usefulness dimensions and for each of their components. Separate displays were constructed for the branders and marketing experts, and for the branding constellation workshops. These displays were designed in this way to permit inferences and detect similarities and differences between the perceptions reported by the branders and marketing expert groups by branding constellation. The perceptions reported by the marketing experts who attended the workshops were analysed for each differentiated category: users, academics, researchers, consultants, general managers, and student managers.

The qualitative perceptions reported by the branders and marketing experts on the open questions were rated on an ordinal bipolar five-point scale: from

‘-2’ to ‘+2’ (McGivern, 2006). Positive and specified perceptions regarding the insight components of the relevance dimension were rated ‘+2’ in the analysis; fairly positive but generic perceptions ‘+1’; ambivalent or neutral perceptions were rated ‘0’; negative, generic perceptions were rated ‘-1’; and negative, specified perceptions were rated ‘-2’. Regarding the emotion component of the relevance dimension, two or more reported emotions were rated ‘+2’; one reported emotion was rated ‘+1’; unclear answers were rated ‘0’; no emotions were rated ‘-1’; and emotions that were not connected to the role were rated ‘-2’ such as wanting to leave because of the interventions by the facilitator. The first section of chapter 6 explicitly presents and explains the deduced ratings.

The 2003/4 marketing expert questionnaires administered by email concerning the relevance dimension included scoring questions on a unipolar 10-point scale regarding its insight, emotion, system, and awareness components that could be analysed directly, without interpretation by the researcher. On the perceived insights and on the stand-in emotions reported in the 2003/4 workshop questionnaires ratings were deduced on a bipolar five-point scale (-2; +2). These workshop questionnaires did not include questions regarding the system and awareness components, and thus no ratings could be deduced therefrom. The unipolar 10-point ratings were based on the whole workshop, whereas the bipolar 5-point ratings were differentiated by branding constellation and by branding constellation phase: introduction dialogue, projection, intervention, and vision phases.

Regarding the truth component of the validity dimension, positive and specified perceptions reported by the branders and the marketing experts were rated ‘+2’ in the analysis in line with the relevance ratings; fairly positive but generic perceptions ‘+1’; ambivalent or neutral perceptions were rated ‘0’; negative, generic perceptions were rated ‘-1’; and negative, specified perceptions were rated ‘-2’. Regarding the completeness component of the validity dimension, perceptions indicating that no elements were lacking, were rated ‘+2’; perceptions that included perceptions that elements may have been lacking, were rated ‘+1’; ambivalent or neutral perceptions were

rated '0'; perceptions reporting one element lacking were rated '-1'; and perceptions indicating that two or more elements were lacking, were rated '-2'. The coherence component of the reliability dimension was rated in line with the relevance and the validity ratings: positive and specified perceptions reported by the branders and marketing experts were rated '+2' in the analysis; fairly positive but generic perceptions '+1'; ambivalent or neutral perceptions were rated '0'; negative, generic perceptions were rated '-1'; and negative, specified perceptions were rated '-2'. The bias component of the reliability dimension denoted the degree to which the stand-in marketing experts reported that their emotions were fully taken into account by the facilitator; 'yes without comments' was rated '+2'; 'yes, but ...' was rated '+1'; ambivalent or neutral perceptions were rated '0'; 'no, but ...' was rated '-1' and 'no' was rated '-2'.

The verification and unambiguity components of the precision dimension were rated in line with the relevance, validity, and reliability ratings: positive and specified perceptions were rated '+2' in the analysis; fairly positive but generic perceptions '+1'; ambivalent or neutral perceptions were rated '0'; negative, generic perceptions were rated '-1'; and negative, specified perceptions were rated '-2'. The 2003/4 marketing expert workshop questionnaires did not include questions on the unambiguity component as this perception was questioned in the 2003/4 marketing expert email questionnaires.

The 2003/4 marketing expert questionnaires administered by email included scoring questions on a unipolar 10-point scale for all components of the validity, reliability, and precision dimensions, except for the completeness component of the validity dimension as this perception could hardly be asked in general.

When the respondents did not answer questions, no ratings were given; except for the questions on the insight component of the relevance dimension, where no answer was interpreted as a 'negative specified perception', and thus rated '-2'.

The components and dimensions ratings were analysed by using weighted means to allow comprehensive comparison between the central tendencies of the 2002 and 2003/4 brander and marketing expert ratings, respectively. The overall 2002/3/4 mean 5-point ratings and 10-point scores of the relevance dimension were based on the means of the 2002/3/4 component ratings and scores rather on the 2002 means and the 2003/4 means of the ratings and scores.

The scores regarding the coherence and bias components of the reliability dimension could not be summed directly, because a high score on coherence indicated a positive perception concerning the reliability dimension, whereas a high score on bias indicated a negative perception concerning the reliability dimension. Thus, the bias scores had to be reversed to enable direct comparison. However, changing, for instance, a '7' on bias into a '3' on non-bias did not seem to be in line with the meanings of this 10-point score and the other component 10-point scores. Therefore it was decided not to reverse the scores, and not to count the summed means for the reliability dimension.

Although ordinal scale levels do not allow counting weighted means statistically (Dehue, 2006), it is common practice in marketing research to act as if ordinal findings are at an interval level (Remenyi et al., 2005). These means were interpreted with care, and they were basically employed to guarantee a non-biased approach to the interpretation of the most relevant brander and marketing expert perceptions. Display 34 presents the standard interpretations regarding the rating and scaling means based on Mrayyan (2006). The interval ratings include equal intervals. The scaling intervals on the other hand include wider intervals at the extremes as the respondent scores in these intervals included fewer different perceptions by the respondents.

The limited number of seven branders enabled the brander ratings to be presented in the thesis, which was not possible for the 81 marketing experts. In the discussion, the term *many marketing experts* indicates that at least ten of the 81 marketing experts report this perception, whereas no marketing experts reported inconsistent perceptions; the term *some marketing experts*

indicates that at least three marketing experts reported this perception, whereas at least one marketing expert reported an inconsistent perception. The situation where more than three but less than ten marketing experts reported a similar perception, without other marketing experts reporting an inconsistent perception, did not occur.

Display 34 Standard interpretation of rating and scaling means

Interpretation	Interval rating means (-2; +2)	Interval scaling means for questions formulated positively (1; 10)	Interval scaling means for questions formulated negatively (1; 10)
Very positive	+1.2 - +2.0	7.5 - 10.0	1.0 - 4.5
Moderately positive	+0.4 - +1.2	6.5 - 7.5	4.5 - 5.5
Ambivalent	-0.4 - +0.4	5.5 - 6.5	5.5 - 6.5
Moderately negative	-1.2 - -0.4	4.5 - 5.5	6.5 - 7.5
Very negative	-2.0 - -1.2	1.0 - 4.5	7.5 - 10.0

A detailed description of the first branding constellation regarding the Baby Food brand in appendix A3 elucidates the proceedings and the interpretations of the branders and marketing experts. The ratings regarding the 2002 marketing experts are presented in the Displays in appendix A3.9, A3.10, and A3.11 regarding the Baby Food branding constellation on the two components of the 2002 relevance dimension: insight and emotion. Furthermore, appendix A3 describes the Baby Food branding constellation process and the insights gained by the Baby Food brander.

5.5 Construct validity, external validity, and reliability of the findings

In line with the multiple-case-study design (Yin, 2003) and the systems constellation study of Cohen (2008), the rigour of the findings was examined using three indicators based on Yin (2003): construct validity, external validity, and reliability. Subsection 5.4.1 covers the construct validity of the

findings and subsection 5.4.2 evaluates the external validity of the findings. Subsection 5.4.3 closes this section with the reliability of the findings.

5.5.1 Construct validity

Construct validity is defined by Yin (2003: 34) as “establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied”. This is interpreted in this thesis as ‘the degree to which the reports of the respondents regarding the dimensions and components of perceived usefulness represent a correct review of their perceptions’. This subsection addresses seven general qualitative research construct validity issues and five study-specific construct validity issues. These issues may also have been treated as limitations and have been positioned in chapter 7. They are included in this section because this section shows how the study dealt with these issues.

The first general qualitative research issue regarding the construct validity of the findings is the limited number of seven cases. The small number of branders, branding problems and thus branding constellations leave the findings open to ‘chance deviations’. Thus, the seven Dutch branders do not stand for the population of branders. In the analysis of the findings, this was taken into account: for instance, the explicit descriptions of the seven cases in the findings enable deviations to be identified. However, overall the findings were similar, which may be considered an indication of their construct validity. In addition, the perceptions of the seven branders were compared with the perceptions of 81 Dutch marketing experts. Moreover, no matter how ambitious, studies on branders and their branding problems cannot be all-inclusive. There are simply too many different kinds of branders, brands, and branding problems. In addition, (branding) problems are perceptions and thus relative since what may be a gap for some persons may not be a gap for others (subsection 1.1.1). However, the three criteria for case selection reported in subsection 5.1.2 were met: (1) ‘Is the case relevant? (2) ‘Do the cases provide diversity across contexts?’, and (3) ‘Do the cases provide good opportunities to learn about the complexity and contexts?’ First, all seven cases provide valuable information about the perceived usefulness by the branders and marketing experts. Second, the cases present much diversity in branding problems. Third, the cases offer good opportunities to learn about



the complexity and contexts of branding constellations. Thus, this small number of cases does not make the findings insignificant.

The second general qualitative research issue regarding the construct validity of the findings is the development of the questionnaires. The development of the questionnaires improved the generation and clarification of the branders' and marketing experts' perceptions regarding the dimensions and components of perceived usefulness. However, these improvements in the questionnaires in the workshops systematically affected the comparisons of the 2002 and the 2003/4 brander and marketing expert perceptions. Therefore, the analysis of their comparisons were performed with care, and focused on the questions that were similar in the 2002, 2003, and 2004 questionnaires. Appendices A1 and A2 explicitly present these differences in the workshop and email questionnaires to make them transparent.

The third general qualitative research issue regarding the construct validity of the findings is the differences in amount and intensity of the perceptions reported as a result of the open questions: some people are more reflective than others. Moreover, answers on open questions are often thought to be coincidental, subject to forgetting, and to salience biases (McGivern, 2006). These are inherent features of open questions in qualitative research. In the analyses, all perceptions reported were taken into account equally to avoid long answers dominating the findings. On the other hand, the open questions assured the construct validity of the findings, because the branders and marketing experts were allowed to express their perceptions in their own words (Segers, 1983). In addition, ratings were employed to prevent interpretation bias.

The fourth general qualitative research issue regarding the construct validity of the findings is that perceptions may be biased by e.g. desirability of the outcomes, social desirability, effort justification, post-rationalisations, and acquiescence response sets. The acquiescence response sets were dealt with explicitly by questioning the bias component in the opposite direction to the other components. This enabled the questionnaires to avoid having all the questions in the same direction. It turned out that the direction of

the question did not influence the findings, and thus that there was no indication that the generally positively phrased questions may have induced perceptions that are too positive because the marketing experts went along with the direction of the question. The disadvantage of this 'opposite direction' question was that the reliability dimension means could not be counted, as the reverse of, for instance, a '7' on a 10-point scale on bias did not seem to have the same meaning for respondents as a '3' on a 10-point scale of non-bias.

The other biases were dealt with by presenting questionnaires both at the workshop and in the natural situation of the respondents and to compare these perceptions. In addition, the 2002 and 2003 branders were asked to present their perceptions in later workshops to the marketing experts, and compare these perceptions too. Furthermore, the marketing experts were asked general questions on the perceived usefulness of branding constellations. In addition, they were asked to share their perceptions spontaneously during the 2002 evaluation round. The comparisons revealed that there were no major differences between the perceptions reported in the evaluation round and the perceptions reported in the questionnaires. Thus, if the findings include biases such as desirability of the outcomes, social desirability, effort justification, post-rationalisations, and acquiescence response sets, these biases were inherent parts of their perceptions. In addition, studying perceptions fits marketing studies on problem identification: problems are perceived gaps between what is and what may, could, or should be (subsection 1.1.1).

The fifth general qualitative research issue regarding the construct validity of the findings is that perceptions have access, censoring, and construction interpretation issues. Whereas the marketing experts perceived few access problems, the branders reported severe problems in verbalising their perceptions. This made the debriefing phase much shorter than it was intended to be, which frustrated many marketing experts. According to Gminder (2005), the verbalising problems are attributable to the *direct knowing* characteristic of systems constellations: knowing through direct encounter, empathy, and resonance. In addition, Gminder argues that the

verbalising problems are caused by the fact that constellations show the developments of the relationships between many elements at the same time whereas language is linear. In line with this, the branders reported that the insights they filled out in the questionnaires were only a fraction of the insights they gained. Thus, the insight component of the relevance dimension seems undervalued.

The censoring issue was dealt with by creating an open atmosphere with the branders. However, a clear censoring bias could be distinguished in the public communication by branders in the later branding constellation workshops. Not surprising, for instance, the 2002 Baby Food brander did not report to the marketing experts in the 2004 workshop about the product recall that was revealed in the Baby Food branding constellation. Likewise, the 2002 KPN Mobile brander did not report to the marketing expert in the 2003 workshop about the competitor agreements that were revealed in the KPN Mobile branding constellation, and the 2002 franchise brander did not report about the problems with the franchisers in the 2004 workshop.

The construction issue was dealt with by focusing the respondents in the questionnaires on their emotions, and from their emotions to their cognitions. Analysis shows that the reported emotions and cognitions were coherent. However, every act of perception remains an act of construction; a comparison by the brain based on earlier experiences illustrated by Popper (1997: 75): “When you are hungry you differentiate between eatable and non-eatable things, when you are fleeing between roads to run and places to hide.” This seems especially true for the branders: their reported insights can be linked easily to their own branding problems (see appendix A3).

The sixth general qualitative research issue regarding the construct validity of the findings is the selection of branders and marketing experts based on their possible affinity with branding constellations, which De Groot (1966) refers to as a *strong start*. This means that they are selected on their possible affinity with branding constellations as described in section 5.2. Based on chapter 3, *possible affinity* was operationalised as having a favourable attitude towards the combination of a holistic perspective and an emotional approach

to identify branding problems. This does, however, not mean that they will be inclined to have favourable perceptions towards branding constellations because their expectations will be higher than those of non-volunteers. In the interpretation of the findings this 'strong start' is taken into account. In addition, the perceptions of the marketing experts were analysed by category (subsection 5.2.2) to avoid the aggregation of inhomogeneous perceptions.

The seventh and final general qualitative research issue reported here regarding the construct validity of the findings is that perceptions are interpretations of the things as they are in a setting: the place, day, and time. The place was the study centre of the Radboud University of Nijmegen (www.kun.nl/soeterbeeck), a former nunnery, which gave the setting dignity. The day was Friday, and the time was 10:00 to 17:00 hours; a day and time that fits branders and marketing experts best. This setting allowed the respondents to attend, and to take the branding constellations seriously. But, of course, even when the brander and 90% of the marketing experts report similar perceptions, these need not be true; or reversely, if 10% of the marketing experts report a different perception, it may not be wrong. However, in general it will be. For instance, some marketing experts perceived the KPN Mobile branding constellation as incoherent, because the competitors did not behave competitively as they should according to them. However, in February 2003 five Dutch telecom companies were convicted by the NMA for making price agreements in 2001 (Adformatie, 2003). This suggests that the general perception of the competitors as a 'pack of wolfs', may have been truer than the KPN Mobile brander was (understandably) apt to admit. Therefore, chapter 6 on the findings is explicitly limited to the presentation of the respondents' perceptions of the branding constellations' usefulness. In chapter 6 no attempt is made to explain why the respondents perceived what they perceived. The aim of this chapter is simply to recount what the respondents reported having perceived.

In addition to these seven general qualitative research issues regarding the construct validity of the findings, this section presents five specific issues that have to do with this study.

The first specific issue regarding the construct validity of the findings has to do with the classification model of perceived usefulness. Such a model has to fulfil three category conditions: mutual exclusiveness, exhaustiveness, and internal homogeneity (Segers, 1983). The dimensions were formed on the basis of mutual exclusiveness in chapter 4. Thus, the other two conditions did not play a role in the development of the classification model. Regarding exhaustiveness, the criteria -explicitly and/or implicitly- employed by the marketing experts in the general questions on perceived usefulness in the questionnaires and in the 2002 evaluation round were compared with the dimensions and components of the classification model. This analysis was done with the qualitative research programme *Kwalitan*, and showed two criteria which were not included in the prestuctured theoretical design of the classification model of perceived usefulness: the stand-in bias and the order in which the branding elements were set up. Furthermore, the coherence component of the reliability dimension was not mentioned spontaneously in the 2002 evaluation round. Regarding internal homogeneity, the perceptions on the components of the four dimensions were homogeneous, except for the branders' perceptions of the verification and unambiguity components of the precision dimension. Thus, the correctness of the operationalised dimensions and components was assured, with the exception of (1) the exhaustiveness of the components where 'stand-in bias' and 'element order' were lacking; (2) the coherence component of the reliability dimension, which was not referred to spontaneously; and (3) the internal homogeneity of the precision dimension: the verification and unambiguity components were perceived differently. The questions on the questionnaires were well-formulated in the sense that they provided the information required, except for the brand question on the bias component of the reliability dimension. This question might have been more in line with the marketing expert question on this component.

The second specific issue regarding the construct validity of the findings has to do with the difference between data precision and technique precision (Arndt, 1985). *Data precision* focuses on the precision of the stimuli, whereas *technique precision* concerns the precision of the outcomes. As the precision dimension of perceived usefulness in this thesis focused on the statement of

the stand-ins, the focus of this study was on data precision rather than on technique precision. The same applies to the reliability dimension, where the components also included the stimuli rather than the outcomes. The focus on data precision is questioned by the Soft Systems Methodology (Checkland, 2000), the lateral thinking perspective (De Bono, 1995), and social constructivists (Gergen, 2005). However, the 'data' can be perceived, whereas the outcomes cannot be perceived. In this way the correctness of the operationalised dimensions and components was assured.

The third specific issue regarding the construct validity of the findings is the expert concept. *Expertise* is the degree to which people have relevant knowledge and skills (Maathuis, et al., 2004). Because the attending marketing experts generally reported to be unfamiliar with other problem identification techniques, one may question their expertise as some marketing experts did themselves. The low familiarity of marketing experts with problem identification techniques was also reported by Higgins (1994). However, it may also be a matter of modesty: one cannot question their knowledge and skills regarding the marketing field in general. The third-person perspective of the marketing experts as external observers is unable to directly experience the branders' first-person perceptions. On the other hand, the third-person perspective was precisely meant to provide an 'objective' perspective next to the 'subjective' perspective of the brander. In addition, Perry and Ianni (1998: 993) argue that observers can reasonably infer defensive operations in an individual of which the individual himself or herself is unaware.

The fourth specific issue regarding the construct validity of the findings includes the projections by the presented 'stimuli': the branders could only project their branding elements onto the attending marketing experts. However, the effects of this issue seem limited as the branders could choose from about thirty different marketing expert 'stimuli'.

The fifth and final specific issue regarding the construct validity of the findings concerns the lack of comparison of the perceived usefulness of branding constellations with the perceived usefulness of other problem

identification techniques. However, this was not the goal of this study. In addition, hardly any studies have been conducted yet, which compare the perceived usefulness of problem identification techniques. What has been done in this thesis -in chapter 3- is a clear positioning of branding constellations to other branding problem identification techniques.

In summary, the seven general qualitative research issues regarding the construct validity of the findings may leave one sceptical of the usefulness findings of problem identification techniques displayed by perceptions, because they are connected to explicit perceptions which may be different from the implicit perceptions. However, the explicit perceptions of the branders and marketing experts are in line, and the differences are explainable. The five specific issues regarding the construct validity of the findings show that the correctness of the operationalised dimensions and components was assured, with the exception of four issues: (1) the internal homogeneity of the verification and unambiguity components of the precision dimension, (2) the limited attention for brand identifiers, (3) the expert role regarding problem identification techniques, (4) the limited 'stimuli' and the comparison with other problem identification techniques. Overall, it seems that the perceptions reported regarding the dimensions and components of perceived usefulness represent a correct review of the brander and marketing expert explicit perceptions.

5.5.2 External validity

External validity was defined by Yin (2003: 33) as "establishing the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized". It is often divided into population validity and ecological validity (Gill and Johnson, 2005).

Population validity concerns the extent to which it is possible to generalise from the sample of respondents involved in the research to a wider population. Because of this limited number of cases and their volunteer bias, the findings of this study are restricted to the attending Dutch branders and marketing experts, and do not go beyond them. *Ecological validity* is the extent to which it is possible to generalise from the context in which the research has taken place to other contexts. This is also a general issue in qualitative marketing research.

A specific ecological validity issue of this study is the bias caused by the involvement of the marketing experts, because expert audiences influence findings (Sutton and Hargadon, 1996). This issue was explored by comparing the findings of this study concerning the 'marketing-expert forum' context to a further study including three other types of contexts: the peer, the lay-forum, and the marketing-facilitator contexts.

In the first type of comparative context only branders and brand consultants who wanted to identify a branding problem by branding constellation attended. This context was selected as it is the regular context in psychodrama (the precursor of systems constellations, see subsection 3.2.1). It was called the peer context because all attendants had a similar notion for joining: identification of their branding problems rather than passively experience branding constellations. In the second type of comparative context, branders conducted their branding constellations in the presence of a lay marketing forum: people who wanted to experience systems constellations, but who did not have much interest in marketing.

The third type of comparative context was a workshop facilitated by a marketing advisor who had worked for seventeen years as a marketer at firms such as Coca-Cola and Bayer. However, as a facilitator she was rather inexperienced as she had only recently finished her systems constellation training with the primary facilitator. This context was selected as marketing theory states that services -and thus branding constellations- depend more on the person who provides the service rather than on the actual service itself (Keller, 1998). In other words, does the perception of usefulness depend heavily on the presence and selection of marketing experts, and on the selection of the facilitator?

The comparisons between the four contexts indicate that the brander perceptions presented in this thesis concerning the four usefulness dimensions are similar to the perceptions in the other three contexts, except for the insight component of the relevance dimension. The branders were more positive about the insight component of the relevance dimension in

the marketing-expert context than in the other contexts. This may have to do with the positive role of marketing experts as stand-ins. Another explanation may be that the branders who were conducting branding constellations in the expert-forum contexts were different from the other branders, attributable to the context or the workshop location. To conclude, it seems that the presence and selection of marketing experts and the selection of the facilitator had little influence on the usefulness perceptions of the branders, except for the insight component of the relevance dimension. Thus, the findings of this study seem ecologically valid rather than population valid.

5.5.3 Reliability

A case study is defined by Yin (2003: 33) as *reliable* if “the operations of a study -such as the data collection procedures- can be repeated with the same results”. *Such as the data collection procedures* was specified in this thesis as ‘data analysis procedures’. This subsection addresses the specific reliability issues in this study regarding the data collection and analysis.

The first specific research issue regarding the reliability of the data collection is the control over the contexts and the questionnaires in which the perceptions were gathered. The reliability of the branders’ and marketing experts’ data collection was assured by the controlled workshop contexts and the standardised questionnaires that were employed. In contrast to the PhD theses of Franke (2003), Gminder (2006), and Cohen (2008) -but in line with Höppner (2001), Schlötter (2005), and Lehmann (2006)-, the roles of researcher and facilitator were separated to improve the objectivity of the data collection. In contrast to Gminder (2006), this study included branders from different companies, whereas Gminder’s study was limited to one company. The presence of ‘objective’ experts distinguishes this study from all previous system constellation studies. To be able to evaluate whether the branding constellation workshops were comparable, marketing experts were allowed to attend two branding constellation workshops which ten marketing experts did. A specific analysis on these marketing expert perceptions on the experienced branding constellations showed that these perceptions were very similar, except for the facilitator bias component of the reliability dimension of perceived usefulness: the ten returning marketing

experts appeared to perceive slightly less bias in the second workshop they attended than in the first workshop they attended.

The second specific research issue regarding the reliability of the data analysis was the way the perceptions of the branders and the marketing experts were analysed. The reliability of the branders' data analysis was assured by the 'low-inference descriptions' of the branders' perceptions including the verbatim accounts of what they reported rather than the researcher's reconstruction of the general sense of what they said. The reliability of the marketing experts' data analysis was assured by a separate analysis of the 'low-inference descriptions' of the marketing experts' perceptions by category, by component and by dimension in a separate document that can be requested by future researchers.

Thus, the transparency of the brander findings is higher in this thesis than the transparency of the marketing expert findings that had to be presented more anecdotally as a result of the limited number of 7 branders compared to 81 marketing experts, which does not allow for the same kind of analysis. Appendix A3 presents some verbatim accounts regarding the Baby Food branding constellation to improve the transparency of the marketing expert analysis. Furthermore, the reliability of the ratings may be questioned. Therefore, marketing thesis students rated the brander and marketing expert perceptions on the usefulness dimensions and components independently from the researcher. It turned out that they came to similar findings. The deviations in the partial ratings were limited from about 5% to 15% depending on the branding constellation and the researcher. In addition, the deviations were always limited to one level of degree such as '0' or '+1' instead of, for instance, '0' and '+2'. Overall, there were hardly any different ratings.

The third research issue regarding the reliability of the data was the way in which the data were interpreted. The reliability of the data interpretation was first assured by respondent validation. Drafts of this thesis were presented to the branders and the marketing experts for feedback. Six of the seven branders (the Online broker brander did not respond) and 50 of the 71

attending marketing experts (81 in total of which ten attended twice) provided feedback on (relevant parts of) the thesis, and consented to the interpretations made in chapter 7. In addition, six of the seven systems constellations facilitators who attended the 2002 workshop presented feedback. These six branders agreed with the findings. Also fifteen marketing experts who attended other branding constellation workshops and ten systems constellation facilitators who did not attend these workshops reported that they perceived the thesis findings as plausible.

Furthermore, triangular verifications and falsifications were gathered to assure the reliability of the interpretations of the brander perceptions. For instance, the three 2002 branders and one of the two 2003 branders reviewed their branding constellations in a follow-up workshop, while the other branders reviewed their perceptions by email about two years after their branding constellations. It turned out that they reported similar perceptions on the usefulness of their branding constellation in these reviews as they did in their questionnaires. Behavioural verifications and falsifications were also gathered. These indications provide a further indication of the reliability of the interpretations on the perceived usefulness of branding constellations by the seven branders. For example, the 2002 Baby Food brander asked the researcher to show the video recordings of her constellation to her commercial and financial directors. This was done in January 2003. The video generated an intense dialogue regarding the product recall about ten years before, and the impact it had had on the company. It was clear that the product recall has been a big trauma for the company, and all three were astonished that the branding constellation had brought this up without the brand manager's conscious awareness. Finally, apart from the questionnaires, an evaluation round took place at the end of the 2002 branding constellation workshop, where marketing experts were invited to express their perceptions on the usefulness of branding constellations spontaneously. These evaluations were in line with the perceptions reported on usefulness as shown by an analysis with the qualitative research programme *Kwalitan*. In addition, two returning marketing experts who write books about branding and refer to these branding constellations report similar perceptions in their books, in the questionnaires, and in the evaluation rounds.

To conclude, the reported findings seem fairly reliable in the sense that the data collection and analysis procedures allow a repetition resulting in similar findings.

This chapter covered the methodological approach to the empirical part of the thesis. The next chapter displays the empirical findings.

6 Findings

This chapter covers the fourth, fifth, and sixth subquestions of this thesis. Section 6.1 presents the 2002 brander findings and section 6.3 presents the 2003/4 brander findings regarding the fourth subquestion: ‘What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders?’ Section 6.2 covers the 2003/4 marketing expert findings and section 6.4 covers the 2003/4 marketing expert findings regarding the fifth subquestion; ‘What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for marketing experts?’ Section 6.5 closes this chapter with a comparison of the brander and marketing expert findings and covers the sixth subquestion: ‘How does the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders compare with that for marketing experts?’

6.1 2002 Branders on the usefulness of branding constellations

The 2002 brander questionnaire focused on the relevance and validity dimensions of usefulness. As explained in subsection 5.2.1, the 2002 brander questionnaire did not include questions concerning the reliability and the precision dimensions. Subsection 6.1.1 reviews the 2002 brander perceptions concerning the relevance dimension and subsection 6.1.2 reviews the brander perceptions concerning the validity dimension. Subsection 6.1.3 summarises these findings.

6.1.1 2002 Branders on the relevance dimension

This subsection covers the 2002 brander perceptions regarding the first two components of the relevance dimension: (1) insight and (2) emotion. Display 35 presents the insights by the three branders as reported in the brander questionnaires administered during the workshop and the ratings deduced therefrom.

Display 35 2002 Brander relevance workshop findings: insight (ratings -2; +2)

Branders / Questions	Baby Food brander [ratings]	KPN Mobile brander [ratings]	Franchise brander [ratings]
Submitted problem	Are the new concept and the new campaign the right way to approach the target group?	Can the brand KPN Mobile exist next to KPN?	What is the match between brand name and offered service according to the franchiser and the customer?
Primary branding problem insight	There are quite a few relationships that need improvement such as the relationship between the concept and the campaign; also what to do with the product? [+2; positive and specified]	It can [+1; positive but generic]	Brand name is fine, but the offered services need to be extended [+2; positive and specified]
Primary branding systems insight	Confirmation that the concept fits with the product and understanding how the product and the concept should deal with the old campaign [+2; positive and specified]	How the consumer reacts to the developments [+1; positive but generic]	Same [not taken into account in the ratings].
<i>Means</i>	+2.0	+1.0	+2.0

The Baby Food and the Franchise branders were very positive about insight in the workshop questionnaire, while the KPN Mobile brander was moderately positive. The Franchise brander could not distinguish between the insights on the branding problem and the insights on the branding system.

Display 36 presents the insights by the three 2002 branders as reported in the subsequent brander questionnaires administered by email and the ratings deduced therefrom.

Display 36 2002 Brander relevance email findings: insight (ratings -2; +2)

Brander / Questions	Baby Food brander [rating]	KPN Mobile brander [rating]	Franchise brander [rating]
Secondary branding problem insight	I have received insight as to what was wrong with the product; the confirmations that the old and the new target group, the concept, and the product go together well; and reconsideration on the old campaign. [+2]	It is clear that it helped to identify my branding problem; it does not provide answers, but can be applied to feed other research; it offers an emotional basis for complex problems. [+1]	The uncertainty of the franchisee and his request for help from the franchiser on the products and services. [+2]
Secondary branding system insight	Small things we suspected but did not know, such as the power of the concept for the current product and the power of the old campaign for the old target group. [+2]	The focus was clear. The danger is that one can steer the constellation by not making clear choices regarding the branding systems elements [+1]	The brand is not a name, but a concept in the mind of the customer. [+2]
<i>Means</i>	+2.0	+1.0	+2.0

The Baby Food and Franchise branders were also very positive about insight in the email questionnaire, while the KPN Mobile brander was moderately positive. The KPN Mobile brander took more of a helicopter view and worried about the impact of the choice of the branding elements.

Display 37 presents the emotions reported by the three 2002 branders in the workshop questionnaires and the ratings deduced therefrom by phase: introduction, projection, intervention, vision, and debriefing phases.

The KPN Mobile and Baby Food branders were very emotionally involved in their branding constellations and the Franchise brander moderately. In contrast to the Baby Food and KPN Mobile branders, the Franchise brander did not report any emotions regarding the projection phase. The emotions experienced during the different phases were quite different for the three branders.

Display 38 summarises the three 2002 brander component mean ratings concerning the relevance dimension of perceived usefulness.

Display 37 2002 Brander relevance workshop findings: emotion (ratings -2; +2)

Branders / Branding constellation phases	Baby Food brander [rating]	KPN Mobile brander [rating]	Franchise brander [rating]
Introduction phase	Fairly nervous [+1]	Quiet, positive, inclination to explain (too) much [+2]	Relaxed, confidence in the process [+2]
Projection phase	Uncertain, would have liked to see it from above [+1]	At ease, identification with customers [+2]	None [-2]
Intervention phase	In the beginning a little anxious, during the repositionings ever more curious and a positive tension, especially on the confrontation between harmed customers and their children [+2]	When the competitors came to the floor [+1; this is an indication of an emotion]	The positioning of the new name [+1; this is an indication of an emotion]
Vision phase	Unanswered question I have to think about [0]	Loss of power, when KPN Mobile and KPN moved apart [+1]	Comfortable [+1]
Debriefing phase	Fine, curious tension, energy, fun, openness, surprise; inclination to go on, to do something [+2]	Heartbeat, arousal, tension, and questions; concentration and agitation; inclination to go somewhere to think [+2]	Fun, ease, surprise about the relationship between franchiser and franchisee; inclination to leave it and see how it will sort itself out. [+2]
<i>Means</i>	+1.2	+1.6	+0.8

Display 38 2002 Brander relevance component overview (ratings -2; +2)

Branders / Components (sources)	Baby Food brander	KPN Mobile brander	Franchise brander	Mean
Insight (workshop and email)	+2.0 (2.0 and 2.0)	+1.0 (1.0 and 1.0)	+2.0 (2.0 and 2.0)	+1.7
Emotion (workshop)	+1.2	+1.8	+1.0	+1.3
<i>Means</i>	+1.6	+1.4	+1.5	+1.5

Overall, the three branders were very positive about the insight and emotion components of the relevance dimension, except for the Franchise brander who was moderately positive about emotion.

6.1.2 2002 Branders on the validity dimension

This subsection covers the 2002 brander perceptions regarding the truth and completeness components of the validity dimension. Display 39 presents the perceptions of the branders regarding the truth component of the relevance dimension as reported in the brander workshop questionnaire as well as the ratings deduced therefrom.

Display 39 2002 Brander validity workshop findings: truth (ratings -2; +2)

Branders / Questions	Baby Food brander [rating]	KPN Mobile brander [rating]	Franchise brander [rating]
Key-element truth	Product in old situation felt misplaced, preferred to be the centre / leader of the system. [+2]	Role of KPN, especially as seen at the end of the constellation. [+2]	Restlessness and haste of the franchisee. [+2]
Recognised element emotions	Company, relationship between product and old target group. [+2]	History, new, young and dynamic; KPN Telecom clearly present at the end.[+2]	Franchisee unhappy, no link with the services. [+2]
Non-recognised element emotions	Product has opened my eyes. [+2]	Passive, long existing. [-1]	Customer. [-1]
Overall constellation truth	I think so. Product has always stood in the centre and the relationships between e.g. target group, campaign, and product were recognisable. [+2]	Yes, especially the behaviour and reaction of the consumer. [+2]	Yes, fairly so. [+1]
Means	+2.0	+1.3	+1.0

The Baby Food and the KPN Mobile branders were very positive about truth and the Franchise brander moderately in their workshop questionnaires. The Baby Food brander even reported that the non-recognised emotions on the product ‘opened her eyes and made her reconsider her opinions’.

Display 40

2002 Brander validity email findings: truth (ratings -2; +2)

Branders / Questions	Baby Food brander [rating]	KPN Mobile brander [rating]	Franchise brander [rating]
Recognised statement of 1st element	Product: 'I feel unstable and do not dare to look at the target group.' We are still trying to understand and study this. [+2]	Role towards competitors and how consumers see the brands. Specifically, Consumers: 'Mobile is no traditional KPN.' [+2]	Brand-Name: 'I feel good.' [+2]
Recognised statement of 2nd element	Company: 'Product wants to be in the centre and to push me out of it.' The company was -and some departments still are- very product-oriented. [+2]	KPN-Telecom: 'KPN is big and reliable, but far away.' [+2]	Customer: 'Name is less important than the relationship with the franchisee.' [+2]
Recognised statement of 3rd element	Old-Target-Group: 'I do not feel the need to be closer to Product or Campaign.' [+2]	KPN-Mobile is market leader; KPN-Telecom and KPN-Mobile are seen as one. [+1]	No memory of Current-Services. [0]
Recognised statement of 4th element	Old-Campaign: 'I would like to have more contact with Target-Group.' We had not expected that it would be that strong. [+2]	No memory of Competitor1. [0; Ben]	Franchisee: 'I feel uncertain, help me.' [+2]
Recognised statement of 5th element	No memory of Harmed-Customers. [0; chosen and placed by facilitator]	No memory and little recognition of Competitor2. [0; Vodafone]	Franchiser: 'Come on'; clearly a sense of restlessness and haste. [+2]
Recognised statement of 6th element	No memory of Former-Manager. [0; chosen and placed by facilitator]	No memory of Competitor3. [0; O2 and Dutchtone]	No memory of New-Services. [0; chosen and placed by facilitator]
Recognised statement of 7th element	No memory of Children-of-the-Harmed-Customers. [0; chosen and placed by facilitator]		New-Brand-Name: no improvement, or fairly unimportant. [+1; placed by facilitator]
Recognised statement of 8th element	New-Concept: 'I feel good close to Product.' [+2]		
Recognised statement of 9th element	New-Target-Group: 'I feel fine next to Old-Target-Group.' [+2]		
Recognised statement of 10th element	New-Campaign: 'I feel good; I want contact with the Target-Groups.' [+2]		
Means	+1.4	+0.8	+1.3

Display 40 presents the truth of the constellation proceedings as reported by the three 2002 branders in the email questionnaires as well as the ratings deduced therefrom.

The Baby Food and Franchise branders were also positive truth in their email questionnaires, and the KPN Mobile brander moderately positive. The Baby Food brander was very specific even though she answered the questionnaire after three months and before watching the video. The KPN Mobile brander did not remember any statements of the competitors. The three 2002 branders reported no memories of the emergent elements chosen and placed by the facilitator. Display 41 presents the answers regarding completeness as reported by the three branders in the 2002 questionnaires administered during the workshop as well as the ratings deduced therefrom.

Display 41 2002 Brander validity workshop findings: completeness
(ratings -2; +2)

Components / Branders	Baby Food brander	KPN Mobile brander	Franchise brander
Elements lacking	Maybe competitors [+1]	Brand values, more consumers [-2]	None [+2]

The Franchise brander was very positive about completeness and the Baby Food brander moderately positive, whereas the KPN Mobile brander was very negative. The Franchise brander did not report any elements that were lacking and was positive without any qualifications. The Baby Food brander reported that representing the competition may have given her more insights, but that she was satisfied about the represented elements. The KPN Mobile brander indicated that visualising more consumers and the brand values may have improved his branding problem identification. Display 42 summarises the three 2002 brander component ratings concerning the validity dimension of perceived usefulness.

Display 42 2002 Brander validity component means overview (ratings -2; +2)

Branders / Components (sources)	Baby Food brander	KPN Mobile brander	Franchise brander	Mean
Truth (workshop and email)	+1.7 (2.0 and 1.4)	+1.1 (1.3 and 0.8)	+ 1.2 (1.0 and 1.3)	+1.3
Completeness	+1.0	-2.0	+2.0	+0.3
Means	+1.4	-0.5	+1.6	+0.8

Overall, the three branders were moderately positive about the validity dimension. However, the Baby Food and Franchise branders were very positive, whereas the KPN Mobile brander was moderately negative as a result of his very negative perception of completeness.

6.1.3 Review of 2002 brander perceptions

Display 43 summarises the 2002 brander findings concerning the 2002 perceived usefulness dimensions.

Display 43 2002 Brander means overview on usefulness dimensions
(ratings -2; +2)

Branders / Usefulness dimensions	Baby Food brander	KPN Mobile brander	Franchise brander	Means
1. Relevance	+1.6	+1.5	+1.5	+1.5
1.1 Insight	+2.0	+1.2	+2.0	+1.7
1.2 Emotion	+1.2	+1.8	+1.0	+1.3
2. Validity	+1.4	-0.5	+1.6	+0.8
2.1 Truth	+1.7	+1.1	+1.2	+1.3
2.2 Completeness	+1.0	-2.0	+2.0	+0.3

The three branders were very positive about the insight and emotion components of the relevance dimension, although the Franchise brander was only moderately positive about the emotion component. The Baby Food and Franchise branders were also very positive about the validity dimension. The

KPN brander was moderately negative about the validity dimension due to his very negative perception of completeness.

6.2 2002 Marketing experts on usefulness

This section deals with the 2002 marketing expert perception ratings concerning the perceived usefulness dimensions. The first four subsections cover the ratings concerning each dimension, relevance (6.2.1), validity (6.2.2), reliability (6.2.3), and precision (6.2.4). Subsection 6.2.5 closes this section with a comparison with the 2002 brander ratings. The marketing experts who personified the branding elements and experienced the branding constellation ‘subjectively’ from within are called *stand-in marketing experts* in this thesis, while the marketing experts who observed the branding constellation ‘objectively’ from outside are called *audience marketing experts*.

6.2.1 2002 Marketing experts on the relevance dimension

This subsection covers the 2002 marketing expert perceptions as well as the ratings deduced therefrom regarding the first two components of the relevance dimension: (1) insight and (2) emotion. Display 44 to present the ratings regarding the insights gained into the branding problems by the 2002 marketing experts by category: users, academics, researchers, consultants, and managers. Display 44 presents the ratings regarding the audience marketing experts, Display 45 regarding the stand-in marketing experts and integrates them. The audience and stand-in marketing expert ratings are presented separately to show their differences. It should be noted that one marketing expert could only attend the first branding constellation and seven marketing experts only the first two, which they indicated before attending the workshop. Thus, the total number of marketing expert perceptions is 24 in the Baby Food branding constellation, 23 in the KPN branding constellation, and 17 in the Franchise branding constellation.

Display 44 2002 Audience marketing experts: insight (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N*)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	Managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Baby Food	+2.0 (3)	+2.0 (7)	+1.0 (4)	+1.0 (1)	-0.7 (3)	+1.3 (18)
KPN Mobile	+2.0 (2)	+0.3 (6)	+0.6 (5)	+1.5 (2)	+1.8 (4)	+1.0 (19)
Franchise	+2.0 (2)	+1.7 (4)	+2.0 (1)	+2.0 (2)	-1.0 (1)	+1.6 (10)
<i>Weighted means</i>	+2.0 (7)	+1.3 (17)	+0.9 (10)	+1.6 (5)	+0.5 (8)	+1.2 (47)

N= Number of respondents per marketing expert category.

Overall, the audience marketing experts were very positive about insight. They were most positive about the Franchise branding constellation and least positive about the KPN branding constellation. The users were most positive, while the managers were least positive.

Display 45 2002 Stand-in marketing expert relevance: insight (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	Managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Baby Food	- (0)	+2.0 (1)	+2.0 (1)	+2.0 (3)	+2.0 (1)	+2.0 (6)
KPN Mobile	+2.0 (1)	+1.0 (2)	- (0)	+1.0 (1)	- (0)	+1.3 (4)
Franchise	- (0)	- (0)	+2.0 (4)	+2.0 (1)	-2.0 (1)	+1.3 (6)
<i>Weighted means</i>	+2.0 (1)	+1.3 (3)	+2.0 (5)	+1.8 (5)	0.0 (2)	+1.6 (16)

The stand-in marketing experts were also very positive about insight. They were especially positive about the Baby Food branding constellation.

The main insight by the marketing experts into the Baby Food branding problem was that the product may need adaptation in line with the

interpretation by the Baby Food brander. With respect to the KPN Mobile problem, their main insight was that the KPN Telecom should take the role of endorser in line with the email interpretation by the KPN Mobile brander. In the case of the Franchise branding problem, the marketing experts' main insight was that the name did not need to change, but that the relationship between the franchiser and the franchisee needed improvement.

However, the marketing expert insights into the branding problems were generally broad, although not competitive as can be seen in appendix A3.9 concerning the Baby Food branding constellation. Their insights were especially coherent with their perceptions of these problems: these perceptions of the problems were about as broad as the insights gained by the branding constellations into these problems. Display 46 presents the deduced ratings regarding the emotion component of the relevance dimension as reported by the stand-in marketing experts in their workshop questionnaires.

Display 46 2002 Stand-in marketing expert relevance: emotion (ratings -2; +2)

Phases / Branding constellations (N)	Projection phase	Intervention phase	Vision phase	Means
Baby Food (6)	+1.8	+1.3	+1.3	+1.5
KPN Mobile (5)	+2.0	+1.4	+0.6	+1.3
Franchise (6)	+2.0	+0.5	-0.2	+0.8
<i>Weighted means (17)</i>	+1.9	+1.0	+0.6	+1.2

The stand-in marketing experts were very emotionally involved in the Baby Food and the KPN Mobile branding constellations and moderately in the Franchise branding constellation. They were very emotionally involved in the projection phases, but moderately in the intervention and vision phases. The same pattern can be seen in appendix A2.9 for the Baby Food branding constellation, although the stand-in marketing experts reported more emotional involvement in the vision phase of the Baby Food branding constellation than in the KPN Mobile and Franchise branding constellations.

Display 47 summarises the 2002 ratings regarding the insight and emotion components of the relevance dimension by branding constellation.

Display 47 2002 Marketing expert relevance component overview
(ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Components (sources)	Insight (audience)	Insight (stand-ins)	Insight (overall)	Emotion (stand-ins)	Means insight (overall) and emotion
Baby Food	+1.3	+2.0	+1.5	+1.5	+1.5
KPN Mobile	+1.0	+1.3	+1.0	+1.3	+1.2
Franchise	+1.6	+1.3	+1.5	+0.8	+1.2
<i>Means</i>	+1.2	+1.6	+1.3	+1.2	+1.3

Overall, the marketing experts were very positive about the insight and emotion components of the relevance dimension. The Baby Food branding constellation scored highest on the relevance dimension. The stand-in marketing experts scored higher on insight than the audience marketing experts.

6.2.2 2002 Marketing experts on the validity dimension

This subsection covers the 2002 marketing expert ratings regarding the (1) truth and (2) completeness components of the validity dimension deduced from the 2002 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaires. They included four phases: introduction, intervention, and vision phases, and the whole. The 2002 marketing expert workshop questionnaires did not include questions regarding the projection phase. The truth component of the validity dimension included two questions: one question regarding the *vision truth*, the perceived truth of the vision constellation; and one question regarding the *process truth*, the perceived truth of the whole branding constellation. Display 48 presents the ratings regarding the vision truth question by the marketing experts in the brander's problem as deduced

from the audience marketing expert workshop questionnaires for the three branding constellations by marketing expert category.

Display 48 2002 Audience marketing expert validity: vision truth (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	Managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Baby Food	+2.0 (3)	0.0 (7)	+1.0 (4)	+1.0 (1)	+0.3 (3)	+0.7 (18)
KPN Mobile	+2.0 (1)	+0.3 (6)	+0.4 (5)	+1.5 (2)	0.0 (4)	+0.5 (18)
Franchise	+1.5 (2)	0.0 (3)	-2.0 (1)	+1.0 (2)	-1.0 (1)	+0.2 (9)
<i>Weighted means</i>	<i>+1.8 (6)</i>	<i>+0.1 (16)</i>	<i>+0.4 (10)</i>	<i>+1.2 (5)</i>	<i>0.0 (8)</i>	<i>+0.5 (45)</i>

Overall, the audience marketing experts were moderately positive about vision truth in the workshop questionnaires. The users were very positive, whereas the academics, researchers, and managers had ambivalent perceptions. However, many academics reported that ‘it is not a useful question’. Display 49 presents the ratings regarding the process truth question by the audience marketing experts in the branders’ problems as deduced from the workshop questionnaires for the three branding constellations by marketing expert category.

Display 49 2002 Audience marketing expert validity: process truth (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	Managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Baby Food	+1.7 (3)	0.0 (7)	-0.3 (4)	+1.0 (1)	+0.7 (3)	+0.4 (18)
KPN Mobile	-1.0 (1)	+0.8 (6)	+1.0 (5)	+1.0 (2)	-1.3 (4)	+0.3 (18)
Franchise	+2.0 (2)	+0.7 (3)	-2.0 (1)	+1.0 (2)	-1.0 (1)	+0.6 (9)
<i>Weighted means</i>	<i>+1.4 (6)</i>	<i>+0.4 (16)</i>	<i>+0.2 (10)</i>	<i>+1.0 (5)</i>	<i>-0.5 (8)</i>	<i>+0.4 (45)</i>

Overall, the marketing experts were moderately positive about process truth. The users were very positive, whereas the managers were moderately negative. Whereas the users were more positive about the truth of the Baby Food than the KPN Mobile branding constellation process, the perceptions of the academics and researchers were reversed. This may have to do with the characteristic that the KPN Mobile was a *branded* branding constellation -in which the brand name was mentioned-, whereas the Baby Food branding constellation was *blind* in the sense that the brand name was not revealed here. Display 50 presents the ratings regarding the completeness component of the validity dimension deduced from the audience and stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaires for the three branding constellations by marketing expert category.

Display 50 2002 Marketing expert validity: completeness (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	Managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Baby Food	-1.3 (3)	-0.5 (8)	-0.8 (5)	0.0 (4)	-0.8 (4)	-0.7 (24)
KPN Mobile	+1.0 (3)	-1.1 (8)	0.0 (5)	-1.0 (3)	-1.3 (4)	-0.5 (23)
Franchise	0.0 (2)	+1.3 (4)	+0.8 (5)	-0.7 (3)	-1.5 (2)	0.0 (16)
<i>Weighted means</i>	-0.1 (8)	-0.1 (20)	0.0 (15)	-0.6 (10)	-1.2 (10)	-0.4 (63)

The marketing experts had ambivalent perceptions about completeness, indicating that core branding elements were often perceived as lacking. They specified a broad range of branding elements that were lacking for all separate categories in the branding problem identification model described in chapter 2. The exception is the KPN Mobile branding constellation where most marketing experts agreed that 'a (young) consumer group' was lacking. Overall, the managers and consultants were less satisfied with the branding elements that were set up than the users, academics, and researchers. No specific differences between audience and stand-in marketing experts were reported.

Display 51 summarises the 2002 marketing expert ratings regarding the truth and completeness components of the validity dimension by branding constellation.

Display 51 2002 Marketing expert validity overview (ratings -2; +2)

Components / Branding constellations	Truth (audience; email)	Completeness (audience and stand-ins)	Means
Baby Food	+0.6 (+0.7; +0.4)	-0.7	-0.1
KPN Mobile	+0.4 (+0.5; +0.3)	-0.5	-0.1
Franchise	+0.4 (+0.2; +0.6)	0.0	+0.2
<i>Means</i>	+0.5 (+0.5; +0.4)	-0.4	+0.1

Overall, the marketing experts were ambivalent concerning validity. They were moderately positive about truth and moderately negative about completeness.

6.2.3 2002 Marketing experts on the reliability dimension

The reliability dimension of perceived usefulness includes two components: coherence and bias. Display 52 presents the marketing expert ratings deduced from the 2002 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaires regarding the coherence component for the three branding constellations by marketing expert category.

Overall, the audience marketing experts were moderately positive about coherence. The most negative judgment (-2 by the user on the KPN Mobile branding constellation) concerned the perception that the competitors did not behave competitively in the KPN Mobile branding constellation as competitors should. This perception reveals the carefulness with which perceptions need to be interpreted as reported in 5.1.1.1.

Display 52 2002 Audience marketing expert reliability: coherence(ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	Managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Baby Food	+1.0 (3)	+0.1 (7)	+0.8 (4)	+1.0 (1)	+0.3 (3)	+0.5 (18)
KPN Mobile	-2.0 (1)	+0.3 (6)	+0.3 (5)	+0.5 (2)	+0.8 (4)	+0.3 (18)
Franchise	+1.0 (2)	+0.7 (3)	0.0 (1)	+0.5 (2)	0.0 (1)	+0.6 (9)
<i>Weighted means</i>	+0.5 (6)	+0.3 (16)	+0.5 (10)	+0.6 (5)	+0.5 (8)	+0.5 (45)

Display 53 presents the stand-in marketing expert ratings regarding the bias component of the reliability dimension deduced from the stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaires: the degree to which they received enough attention from the facilitator to allow them to express their evoked emotions.

Display 53 2002 Stand-in marketing expert reliability means: bias (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations	Bias ratings (N)
Baby Food	+2.0 (6)
KPN Mobile	+1.5 (5)
Franchise	+1.6 (6)
<i>Mean</i>	+1.7 (17)

The stand-in marketing experts were very positive about bias in the sense that they generally had the impression that the facilitator did not bias their statements (15 out of 17). One academic (stand-in for a competitor of KPN Mobile) reported that he felt he was not allowed to follow his evoked movements and one researcher (stand-in for New-Services in the Franchise branding constellation) reported that the facilitator should have asked her about her idea to set up New-Clients fitting the New-Services she was representing. Display 54 summarises the 2002 marketing expert ratings regarding coherence and bias.

Display 54 2002 Marketing expert reliability means overview (ratings -2; +2)

Components / Branding constellations	Coherence (audience)	Bias (stand-ins)	Means
Baby Food	+0.5	+2.0	+1.3
KPN Mobile	+0.3	+1.5	+0.9
Franchise	+0.6	+1.6	+1.1
<i>Means</i>	+0.5	+1.7	+1.1

The marketing experts were positive about the reliability dimension. The audience marketing experts were fairly positive about coherence and the stand-in marketing experts were very positive about bias, meaning that they did not perceive their statements as systematically affected by the facilitator.

6.2.4 2002 Marketing experts on the precision dimension

Display 55 presents the ratings regarding the verification component of the precision dimension for the three branding constellations by marketing expert category deduced from the audience marketing expert workshop questionnaires. The 2002 marketing expert questionnaires did not include the unambiguity component of this dimension.

Display 55 2002 Audience marketing expert precision: verification (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	Managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Baby Food	-0.3 (3)	0.0 (7)	0.0 (4)	-1.0 (1)	-1.0 (3)	-0.3 (18)
KPN Mobile	+2.0 (1)	+0.3 (6)	+0.4 (5)	+0.5 (2)	-0.3 (4)	+0.3 (18)
Franchise	-1.5 (2)	+1.0 (3)	-2.0 (1)	0.0 (2)	0.0 (1)	-0.2 (9)
<i>Weighted means</i>	-0.3 (6)	+0.3 (16)	0.0 (10)	0.0 (5)	-0.5 (8)	0.0 (45)

The audience marketing expert perceptions were ambivalent regarding verification. The difference between the verification rating of the KPN

Mobile branding constellation and the ratings of the other two constellations seems a consequence of the explicit naming of the brand in the KPN Mobile constellation in contrast to the Baby Food and Franchise branding constellations where the brand name was only revealed afterwards.

6.2.5 Review of 2002 marketing expert perceptions

Display 56 reviews the 5-point ratings on the perceived usefulness dimensions and its components of the marketing experts deduced from the workshop questionnaires. It should be noted that the emotion component of the relevance dimension and the bias component of the reliability dimension ratings were based on the stand-in marketing expert perceptions, whereas the other ratings stem from the audience marketing expert perceptions.

Display 56 2002 Marketing experts on usefulness (ratings -2; +2)

2002 Usefulness dimensions and components	2002 Marketing experts
1. Relevance	+1.3
1.1 Insight	+1.3
1.2 Emotion	+1.2
2. Validity	+0.1
2.1 Truth	+0.5
2.2 Completeness	-0.4
3. Reliability	+0.8
3.1 Coherence	+0.5
3.2 Bias	+1.1
4. Precision	0.0
4.1 Verification	0.0
4.2 Unambiguity	not asked

The marketing experts were very positive about the relevance dimension and moderately positive about the reliability dimension, while they were ambivalent about the validity and precision dimensions.



6.3 2003/4 Branders on the usefulness of branding constellations

The 2003/4 brander questionnaires again focus on the relevance and validity dimensions, but they also include some questions concerning the reliability and precision dimensions. This section covers the 2003/4 brander perceptions concerning the dimensions of relevance (6.3.1), validity (6.3.2), reliability (6.3.3), and precision (6.3.4). Subsection 6.3.5 closes this section with an overview of the 2003/4 brander findings.

6.3.1 2003/4 Branders on the relevance dimension

This subsection covers the perceptions reported by the 2003/4 branders regarding the four components of the relevance dimension: (1) insight, (2) emotion, (3) system, and (4) awareness. Display 57 summarises the findings regarding insight and the ratings deduced therefrom as reported by the 2003/4 branders in the workshop questionnaires on the four phases: introduction, projection, intervention, and vision phases.

The branders were very positive about all the phases of the branding constellations regarding insight, except for the Sigma brander who did not report any insights on the vision phase. Display 58 compares the perceptions regarding the insight component of the 2003/4 branders as reported by email about one week after the constellation: new insight.

Display 57 2003/4 Brander relevance workshop findings: insight (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellation phases/ Branders	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander
Problem question	Can I strengthen the position of the paint brand by certain positioning decisions?	Which target group fits the new product best?	What is the effect of our change in policy and is there a need for further changes?	How do the internal market groups relate to the brand?
Introduction phase insight	The elements which are important in the system. [+1]	The opportunity to clarify the subconscious [+1]	The element 'decision making' has an important role; the position of the editors; the current readers feel locked in and neglected; that the 'History' demands respect as does the new magazine, but that the new magazine is really a whole new system. [+2]	The relationships between the market groups and the board; the power of the brand. [+2]
Projection phase insight	Insights gained from the positioning of the elements 'proposition' and 'select dealership' and the elimination of the element 'selective distribution'. [+1]	What is my own position in the system? [+1]	The editors and the 'old' readers feel locked in. I was not aware of this, but this is definitely correct. [+2]	Good picture of the involved parties. [+1]
Intervention phase insight	More insight in the complexity and the connection between Histor and Sigma. [+2]	A choice has to be made. [+1]	Regarding my own position and the one of the decision makers. [+1]	The new has attraction power; the new market group is a good intervention. [+1]
Vision phase insight	More insights gained during whole process than specifically on the vision constellation. on the vision constellation the vision constellation. [-1]	The target groups can accept the new product after some additions. [+2]	'New' appears to be a kind of subsystem. [+2]	The old values can be anchored at the board instead of the market groups. [+2]
Means	+0.8	+1.3	+1.8	+1.5

Display 58 2003/4 Brander relevance email findings: insight (ratings -2; +2)

Question/ Brander	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander
New insight	In hindsight I think the Sigma brand has little charisma by itself and does not have an own role within the Do-It-Yourself company. In addition, the roles of Histor and Sigma became clearer later on. [+2]	Especially how the company works. [+1]	I had not realised that the position of the editors and the decision makers could play a role in the branding question. [+2]	The brand and the board are solid on their own and I can make the connection to the market groups by moving closer to them. Concerning market group 3, I should fulfil my promise. I can defend the values of the past so that market group 3 does not have to do that. The energy is on the renewal and eventually market groups 1 and 3 will connect too. The brand does not decide, but it is strong. It can and should support the market groups from a distance. [+2]

The Sigma, Magazine, and Consultancy branders were very positive about 'new insight' in the email questionnaire and the Online Broker brander was moderately positive. All branders mentioned new insights in the email questionnaire. This indicates that 'incubation' indeed creates new insights in line with the general experiences with creative techniques (subsection 5.3.1). Display 59 presents the emotions reported by the 2003/4 branders as well as their ratings on the four main phases of the constellation: introduction, projection, intervention, and vision phases. Note that in the first question regarding the emotion component in the introduction phase, the question was divided into physical experiences, feelings, and intentions, whereas the further phases included only one question regarding this component.

The branders were positive about emotion in the sense that they were emotionally involved, except for the Sigma brander. However, the Sigma brander was very emotionally involved during the introduction and the intervention phase. During the introduction phase the four branders felt tense and during the projection phase doubt. During the intervention phase, their emotions differed from agitation to relaxation. During the vision phase, the Online Broker and the Consultancy branders felt connected, whereas the Sigma and Magazine branders did not.

Display 59 2003/4 Brander relevance workshop findings: emotion (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellation phases/ Brander's	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander
Introduction phase	Faster heartbeat and a kind of pressure in the beginning. After that, a kind of rest and curiosity. Sometimes the inclination to give more information. [+2]	Pain in my right eye. I felt heavy and tough. Inclination to end this part quickly. [+2]	At first cold and tense. After a while more relaxed, open, and surprised. Inclination to leave the elements to the facilitator. [+2]	Little nervous and red ears. Concentration. Inclination to leave it to the facilitator. [+2]
Projection phase	This constellation was different than planned; inclination to interpret it from my own perspective. [-2]	In doubt, confused. Inclination to do it all over again. [+2]	Thought it difficult to position the elements, felt like keeping everything open. [+2]	I felt strong, but the constellation looked awkward and heavy. [+2]
Intervention phase	Faster breathing; feeling of confirmation. Inclination to scream. [+2]	Agitation. Inclination to participate. [+2]	Inclination to position the editors in their old place, until the stand-in said the new one was better. [+1]	Relaxation. [+1]
Vision phase	None. [-2]	Recognition, understanding. Inclination to go on. [+2]	None. [-2]	This is good, I feel the connection. [+1]
Means	0.0	+2.0	+1.3	+1.5

Display 60 presents the perceptions of the 2003/4 branders regarding the emotion component of the relevance dimension as reported in the 2003/4 marketing expert questionnaires administered by email, as well as the ratings deduced therefrom.

Display 60 2003/4 Brander relevance email findings: emotion (ratings -2; +2)

Brander/ Question	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander
Emotional experience	Very clearly [+2]	The coherence was evident [+2]	Certainly [+2]	Yes and I wanted to participate. [+2]

The branders were unanimously very positive emotion in the email questionnaire in the sense that they valued the emotional experience. Display 61 presents the perceptions reported by the 2003/4 branders in the email questionnaires regarding the system component of the relevance dimension as well as the ratings deduced therefrom.

Display 61 2003/4 Brander relevance email findings: system (ratings -2; +2)

Question/ Brander	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander
Relation- ships between elements	It has made clear the mutual relationships attributable to the systems approach; if one element changes, the whole constellation changes as a result of it. [+2]	The most interesting is that the non-visual connections are becoming clear; the things that you do not see; things are subconsciously activated and this will improve awareness later on. [+2]	Especially between the readers and the magazine. But also the relationship 'old' – 'new' is interesting. [+2]	The relationship between market group 3 and the board; the heaviness of market group 1 close to the director, the brand and the board. I need to offer them more space. The close relationship between brand and board feels strong even if I go with the market groups and create the distance they need in their positioning. The brand is then almost the supervisor of the brand communications by the market groups. [+2]

The branders were unanimously very positive about system in the sense that they valued the new systems perspective on their branding problems. Display 62 compares the 2003/4 brander perceptions regarding explicit problem awareness by the branding constellation as reported in the email questionnaires, as well as the ratings deduced therefrom.

Display 62 2003/4 Brander relevance email findings: awareness (ratings -2; +2)

Brander/ Questions	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander
Explicated branding knowledge awareness	Yes, especially the mutual relationships of the elements and the role of the different brands within the company; and the relatively vulnerable position of the Sigma brand. [+2]	Yes, especially concerning the company. [+2]	Yes, certainly. [+1]	The internal connection with the brand is stronger than I thought. [+2]
Explicated branding feelings awareness	Yes, that the energy for the brand is lost in the internal struggle. [+2]	Yes, but more concerning the company and the brand together. [+2]	Yes, I was relatively unaware of how I felt; also my personal attitude concerning 'new' and 'old'. [+2]	My love for the brand is not new; comforting that 'I am the brand' also when I am further away from the brand. That is good. [+2]
Explicated branding intention awareness	On one side, the 'loneliness' of the brand and on the other side its dependence; the brand is 'stuck in the middle'. [+2]	To stop working for this employer as I do not agree with their way of creating and their subconscious management. [+2]	Yes. [+1]	Perhaps I want to take too much responsibility and to be too much on top of it, whereas I should develop it more together with the market groups. [+2]
Means	+2.0	+2.0	+1.5	+2.0

The branders were very positive about the explicated awareness of their implicit knowledge, feelings, and intentions towards their branding problem. The Magazine brander was less specific than the other three branders. Display 63 summarises the four 2003/4 brander component mean ratings concerning the relevance dimension of perceived usefulness.

Display 63 2003/4 Brander relevance component means overview (ratings -2; +2)

Components (sources)/ Branders /	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander	Means
Insight (workshop; email)	+1.4 (+0.8; +2.0)	+1.2 (+1.3; +1.0)	+1.9 (+1.8; +2.0)	+1.8 (+1.5; +2.0)	+1.6
Emotion (workshop; email)	+1.0 (0.0; +2.0)	+1.0 (+2.0; +0.0)	+1.7 (+1.3; +2.0)	+1.8 (+1.5; +2.0)	+1.4
System (email)	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0
Awareness (email)	+2.0	+2.0	+1.5	+2.0	+1.9
<i>Means</i>	+1.4	+1.5	+1.8	+1.8	+1.7

Overall, the branders were very positive about the four components of the relevance dimension. They were most positive about system and awareness. The Sigma brander was fairly negative about emotion in the workshop questionnaire, but very positive in the email questionnaire and the Online Broker brander the other way around.

6.3.2 2003/4 Brander on the validity dimension

This subsection covers the 2003/4 brander perceptions regarding the (1) truth and (2) completeness components as well as their ratings. Display 64 presents the findings regarding the truth component of the validity dimension as reported in the 2003/4 brander questionnaires administered by email on unverifiable truth, verifiable truth, and marketing research coherence.

The 2003 Online brander was very positive, while the other three branders were moderately positive about truth. They generally considered the insights they gained into the branding problems to be true and coherent with marketing research findings; both the verifiable as well as the unverifiable information. However, the Sigma brander reported that part of the branding constellation information was hardly comparable to marketing research findings.

Display 64 2003/4 Brander validity email findings: truth (ratings -2; +2)

Questions/ Branders/	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander
Verifiable truth	Yes. [+1]	Yes. [+1]	Yes, I think so; at least part of reality. [+1]	That has to be demonstrated. [o]
Unverifiable truth	Yes, the information matches with the feeling I had about it. [+1]	Yes, certainly. [+2]	Yes. [+1]	The feeling is right, although I cannot name it on all points. I feel confident to use the non-verifiable information. [+1]
Marketing research coherence	Partly it matches. However, a part is intangible and based on feelings that are hard to gather from research. [o]	Yes. [+1]	Yes, partly so. [+1]	It matches the change process we initialised. [+2]
<i>Means</i>	+0.7	+1.3	+1.0	+1.0

Display 65 presents the 2003/4 brander perceptions regarding the completeness component of the validity dimension as reported in the email questionnaires, as well as the ratings deduced therefrom.

Display 65 2003/4 Brander validity email findings: completeness (ratings -2; +2)

Question / Branders	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander
Completeness	If you look at the choices afterwards, the elements could have been different and more important elements such as the internal organisation. [o]	This was good. [+2]	The elements were good and sufficient. Fine that editors and decision makers were represented; I had not expected this up front. [+2]	It gave a complete picture. Doubt, whether the concept should have been involved. [+1]

The Online Broker and Magazine branders were very positive about completeness in the sense that they were very satisfied with the represented branding elements, whereas the Sigma brander was ambivalent. The Sigma

brander reported that the internal elements added by the facilitator turned out to be more important than the external elements set up initially. Summarising, Display 66 presents an overview of the four 2003/4 brander component ratings concerning validity.

Display 66 2003/4 Brander validity component means overview (ratings -2; +2)

Branders/ Components	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander	Means
Truth	+0.7	+1.3	+1.0	+1.0	+1.0
Completeness	0.0	+2.0	+2.0	+1.0	+1.3
<i>Means</i>	+0.4	+1.7	+1.5	+1.0	+1.2

The Online Broker and Magazine branders were very positive about validity. The Sigma brander was moderately positive about truth, but ambivalent about completeness.

6.3.3 2003/4 Brander on the reliability dimension

Display 67 presents the perceptions of the 2003/4 branders regarding the coherence component of the reliability dimension and the ratings deduced therefrom and Display 68 presents the bias component of this dimension.

The four branders were all moderately positive about coherence (display 67).

The 2004 Magazine and Consultancy branders were moderately positive about bias, while the 2003 Sigma and Online Broker branders were ambivalent. However, bias did not seem an issue for the four branders as the question did not evoke a response on bias or maybe it should have been formulated more directly.

Display 67 2003/4 Brander reliability email findings: coherence (ratings -2; +2)

Question/ Brander	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander	Mean
Coherence	Yes, the stand-ins generally visualised a logical picture, except for the consumer at the end where also the propositions were difficult to follow [set up by the facilitator] and the reactions were low (I realise that this may be attributable to the propositions themselves) [+1]	Yes [+1]	Yes [+1]	Not logical, but coherent. The whole had meaning and connected with my brand question. I could not understand the element 'Ambition' added by the facilitator, but the others were clearly connected. [+1]	+1.0

Display 68 2003/4 Brander reliability email findings: bias (ratings -2; +2)

Question/ Brander	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander	Mean
Bias	A bit with disbelief, because of the large quantity of information that was revealed with so little information. [0]	There was too little time to conduct the constellation. As a result I did not get the answer I wanted. I think you need a whole day as what you intend to study is never the real issue. It is always something else. It takes time to find this and when you do time is up. [0]	Fine, he is quiet and thoughtful, and has a sharp view. He poses the right questions and quickly understands the situation. He knows how to reach the core issue. I really admire his abstract thinking. [+1]	Fine, a feeling of surrender and connection. He follows my energy and has a professional contribution. Good that I could go into the constellation myself. [+1]	+0.5

Display 69 summarises the 2003/4 br ander findings regarding the coherence and bias components of the reliability dimension.

Display 69 2003/4 Brander reliability email mean findings overview
(ratings -2; +2)

Branders/ Component	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander	Means
Coherence	+1.0	+1.0	+1.0	+1.0	+1.0
Bias	0.0	0.0	+1.0	+1.0	+0.5
<i>Means</i>	+0.5	+0.5	+1.0	+1.0	+0.8

The four branders were moderately positive about reliability, but the 2003 Sigma and Online Broker branders were ambivalent about bias.

6.3.4 2003/4 Brander on the precision dimension

Concerning the precision dimension, Display 70 presents the perceptions reported by the 2003/4 branders regarding the verification component and Display 71 regarding the unambiguity component.

Display 70 2003/4 Brander precision email findings: verification (ratings -2:+2)

Branders/ Question	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander
Verification	Yes, concerning the proceedings of Select Dealership and giving up Selective Distribution. [+2]	Yes, concerning which target group is dependent on what. [+2]	Yes, in the sense that I could ask my colleagues and readers. [+2]	The power of the brand and whether I should move closer to the market groups; the attraction of market group 2 to the renewal and to the market groups 1 and 3 can be tested in a year. Falsifiable is also whether market group 3 is bothered by something. [+2]

The four branders were very positive about verification in the sense that they perceived many statements as verifiable or falsifiable.

Display 71 2003/4 Brander precision email findings: unambiguity (ratings -2; +2)

Branders/ Question	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander
Unambiguity	Partly; the proceedings concerning the propositions are ambiguous. [0]	It is ambiguous. There are many subsystems that demand attention. The session is really about: What is the most important question? This was also the question with Sigma. At the end it is about something else. [-2]	It is unambiguous, although I received so much information that I want to watch the video to obtain a better view. [+2]	It is ambiguous. I can interpret the information in several ways. Unambiguous for me is the powerful energy in the vision constellation. [-2]

The Magazine brander was very positive about unambiguity, whereas the Online Broker and Consultancy branders were very negative in the sense that they perceived their branding constellations as multi-interpretable. The Sigma brander was ambivalent. Display 72 summarises the 2003/4 brander ratings regarding verification and unambiguity.

Display 72 2003/4 Brander reliability email mean findings overview (ratings -2; +2)

Branders / Component	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander	Means
Verification	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0
Unambiguity	0.0	-2.0	+2.0	-2.0	-0.5
Means	+1.0	0.0	+2.0	0.0	+0.8

The branders were very positive about verification, whereas they were ambivalent about unambiguity. The Online Broker and the Consultancy branders were very negative about unambiguity, whereas the Magazine brander was very positive.

6.3.5 Review of 2003/4 brander perceptions

Display 73 summarises the 2003/4 brander ratings concerning the perceived usefulness dimensions and components.

Display 73 2003/4 Branders on usefulness dimensions and components
(ratings -2: +2)

Branders / Usefulness dimensions + components	2003 Sigma brander	2003 Online Broker brander	2004 Magazine brander	2004 Consultancy brander	Means
1. Relevance	+1.6	+1.7	+1.8	+1.9	+1.8
1.1 Insight	+1.4	+1.2	+1.9	+1.8	+1.6
1.2 Emotion	+1.0	+1.0	+1.7	+1.8	+1.4
1.3 System	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0
1.4 Awareness	+2.0	+2.0	+1.5	+2.0	+1.9
2. Validity	+0.4	+1.7	+1.5	+1.0	+1.2
2.1 Truth	+0.7	+1.3	+1.0	+1.0	+1.0
2.2 Completeness	0.0	+2.0	+2.0	+1.0	+1.3
3. Reliability	+0.5	+0.5	+1.0	+1.0	+0.8
3.1 Coherence	+1.0	+1.0	+1.0	+1.0	+1.0
3.2 Bias	0.0	0.0	+1.0	+1.0	+0.5
4. Precision	+1.0	0.0	+2.0	0.0	+0.8
4.1 Verification	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0
4.2 Unambiguity	0.0	-2.0	+2.0	-2.0	-0.5

The branders were very positive about the relevance and validity dimensions, while they were moderately positive about the reliability and precision dimensions. Concerning relevance, the branders were especially positive about system and awareness, but they were also very positive about insight and emotion. Concerning validity, the Online Broker branders was very positive about truth and completeness, whereas the Sigma brander was moderately positive about coherence, but was ambivalent about completeness. With respect to reliability, the 2004 Magazine, and Consultancy branders were more positive than the 2003 Sigma and Online Broker branders as a result of their ambivalent perception regarding bias. Finally, concerning precision, the four branders were very positive about verification, but they were overall moderately negative about unambiguity.

However, the Magazine brander was very positive, while the Online Broker and Consultancy branders were very negative.

6.4 2003/4 Marketing experts on usefulness

Subsection 6.4.1 covers the 2003/4 marketing expert perception ratings concerning relevance, subsection 6.4.2 validity, subsection 6.4.3 reliability, and subsection 6.4.5 precision. Subsection 6.4.5 closes this section with a comparison to the 2003/4 brander perception ratings concerning the four perceived usefulness dimensions.

6.4.1 2003/4 Marketing experts on the relevance dimension

This subsection covers the 2003/4 marketing expert perception ratings regarding the four components of the relevance dimension: (1) insight, (2) emotion, (3) system, and (4) awareness. Display 74 to Display 77 present the audience marketing expert ratings regarding insight by phase: introduction, projection, intervention, and vision phases. Display 78 summarises the audience marketing expert ratings about insight by phase and branding constellation and Display 79 presents the 2003/4 stand-in marketing expert ratings about insight by phase and branding constellation.

Display 74 presents the ratings regarding the introduction phase insight question deduced from the 2003/4 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaires for the four branding constellations on the differentiated six marketing expert categories: users, academics, researchers, consultants, general managers, and student managers.

Display 74 2003/4 Audience marketing expert relevance: introduction phase insight (ratings -2:+2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	General managers (N)	Student managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Sigma	+1.0 (3)	+1.7 (3)	+2.0 (1)	+1.3 (4)	+1.0 (2)	+1.8 (4)	+1.4 (17)
Online Broker	+1.7 (3)	+0.5 (2)	+2.0 (2)	+1.0 (1)	+1.5 (2)	+1.0 (5)	+1.1 (15)
Magazine	+1.0 (5)	+0.5 (2)	+0.7 (6)	+1.0 (6)	- (0)	+0.5 (6)	+0.8 (25)
Consultancy	+0.7 (6)	-1.0 (1)	+1.8 (5)	-0.7 (3)	- (0)	+0.9 (9)	+0.8 (24)
<i>Weighted means</i>	+1.0 (17)	+0.8 (8)	+1.4 (14)	+0.7 (14)	+1.3 (4)	+1.0 (24)	+1.0 (81)

Overall, the audience marketing experts were moderately positive about insight. They reported having gained insights in the introduction phase, but were more positive about the introduction phases of the 2003 Sigma and Online Broker branding constellations than about those of the 2004 Magazine and Consultancy branding constellations. The researchers were most positive and the academics least positive. For instance, one 2003 academic remarked that 'The 2003 Sigma introduction phase clarifies that underlying the formulated positioning problem is a distribution problem' and a researcher reported that 'The Sigma introduction phase clarifies that the underlying Sigma branding problem has to do with respect for the history of the Sigma brand portfolio'. Regarding the 2004 Consultancy problem this academic reported no insights gained into the branding problems, whereas all five researchers reported that it was an internal problem rather than an external one. These quotes illustrate that the reported insights were broad, covering many different but not competitive insights.

Display 75 presents the ratings regarding the projection phase insight deduced from the 2003/4 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaires for the four branding constellations regarding the differentiated six marketing expert categories.

Display 75 2003/4 Audience marketing expert relevance: projection phase
insight (ratings -2:+2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	General managers (N)	Student managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Sigma	+0.7 (3)	+1.3 (3)	+2.0 (1)	-0.8 (4)	0.0 (2)	+1.3 (4)	+0.5 (17)
Online Broker	+2.0 (3)	-0.5 (2)	+0.5 (2)	+2.0 (1)	-1.0 (2)	-0.2 (5)	+0.3 (15)
Magazine	+1.0 (5)	+2.0 (2)	+0.7 (6)	+0.5 (6)	- (0)	+1.8 (6)	+1.1 (25)
Consultancy	+0.3 (6)	-1.0 (1)	+1.0 (5)	+1.0 (3)	- (0)	0.0 (9)	+0.4 (24)
<i>Weighted means</i>	+0.8 (17)	+0.7 (8)	+0.9 (14)	+0.3 (14)	-0.5 (4)	+0.6 (24)	+0.6 (81)

Overall, the audience marketing experts were moderately positive about insight in the projection phase. They reported the most specific insights on the Magazine problem. The marketing academics and the student managers were very positive on the Magazine problem, reporting clear insights such as the distance between the original and the renovated version of the magazine.

Display 76 presents the 2003/4 audience marketing expert ratings deduced from these questionnaires regarding the insights gained by the interventions from the facilitator.

Overall, the audience marketing experts were very positive about insight in the intervention phase. They were most positive about the Sigma branding constellation. Especially the marketing academics and the student managers reported clear insights on the Sigma problem, such as the conflict between General-Manager and Former-Histor-Manager, and the outside position of Consumer.

Display 76 2003/4 Audience marketing expert relevance: intervention insight
(ratings -2: +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	General managers (N)	Student managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Sigma	+1.0 (3)	+2.0 (3)	+2.0 (1)	+1.0 (4)	+1.0 (2)	+1.8 (4)	+1.4 (17)
Online Broker	+1.7 (3)	+1.0 (2)	+1.0 (2)	+1.0 (1)	+1.0 (2)	+0.8 (5)	+0.9 (15)
Magazine	+0.8 (5)	+2.0 (2)	+0.7 (6)	+1.3 (6)	- (0)	+1.3 (6)	+1.1 (25)
Consultancy	+1.8 (6)	+2.0 (1)	+1.2 (5)	+1.7 (3)	- (0)	+0.9 (9)	+1.3 (24)
<i>Weighted means</i>	+1.3 (17)	+1.8 (8)	+1.0 (14)	+1.3 (14)	+1.0 (4)	+1.1 (24)	+1.2 (81)

Display 77 presents the 2003/4 audience marketing expert ratings regarding the vision phase insight deduced from these questionnaires.

Display 77 2003/4 Audience marketing expert relevance: vision phase insight
(ratings -2: +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	General managers (N)	Student managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Sigma	+0.7 (3)	+0.7 (3)	-2.0 (1)	+1.3 (4)	+1.5 (2)	+2.0 (4)	+1.1 (17)
Online Broker	+1.7 (3)	+1.5 (2)	+1.0 (2)	0.0 (1)	0.0 (2)	+1.2 (5)	+0.9 (15)
Magazine	+1.8 (5)	+2.0 (2)	+0.3 (6)	+1.2 (6)	- (0)	+1.7 (6)	+1.3 (25)
Consultancy	+2.0 (6)	+2.0 (1)	+2.0 (5)	+1.7 (3)	- (0)	+1.3 (9)	+1.7 (24)
<i>Weighted means</i>	+1.7 (17)	+1.4 (8)	+0.8 (14)	+1.3 (14)	+0.8 (4)	+1.5 (24)	+1.3 (81)

Overall, the audience marketing experts were also very positive about insight in the vision phase. Especially on the Consultancy problem, they reported specific insights, such as ‘The brand should serve the company rather than the other way around’, ‘The focus on the customer is lost’, and ‘The

Consultancy brander should be supportive rather than controlling towards the internal departments'. Display 78 summarises the 2003/4 audience marketing expert ratings regarding insight by branding constellation and marketing expert category deduced from Display 74 to Display 77.

Display 78 2003/4 Audience marketing expert relevance overview: insight (ratings -2:+2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	General managers (N)	Student managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Sigma	+0.3 (3)	+1.7 (3)	+1.0 (1)	+1.3 (4)	+1.0 (2)	+1.5 (4)	+1.2 (17)
Online Broker	+1.7 (3)	-0.5 (2)	+1.5 (2)	+1.0 (1)	+1.5 (2)	+1.2 (5)	+1.0 (15)
Magazine	+0.6 (5)	+1.0 (2)	+1.0 (6)	+1.0 (6)	- (0)	+1.0 (6)	+0.9 (25)
Consultancy	+1.0 (6)	-2.0 (1)	-0.4 (5)	+1.0 (3)	- (0)	+0.4 (9)	+0.4 (24)
<i>Weighted means</i>	+0.9 (17)	+0.5 (8)	+0.6 (14)	+1.1 (14)	+1.4 (4)	+0.9 (24)	+1.0 (81)

Overall, the audience marketing experts were moderately positive about the insight component of the relevance dimension in the workshop questionnaires. The main insight in the Sigma branding problem was that the integrated branding of the two brands was limited by internal struggles; the main insight in the Online Broker branding problem was that the relationship between the brander and the directors needed improvement; the main insight in the Magazine branding problem was that the connection of a scientific and a popular approach within the Magazine was an illusion; and finally, the main insight in the Consultancy branding problem was also that it was connected to internal struggles rather than external ones. However, again the reported insights were broad, but not competitive. The marketing experts were more positive about the overall insight regarding the 2003 branding constellations than regarding those in 2004.

Display 79 presents the 2003/4 stand-in marketing expert ratings regarding findings regarding insight by phase and by branding constellation deduced from the stand-in marketing expert questionnaires.

Display 79 2003/4 Stand-in marketing expert relevance: insight (ratings -2;+2)

Phases / Branding constellations (N)	Projection phase	Intervention phase	Vision phase	Means
Sigma (13)	+1.5	+1.5	+0.9	+1.3
Online Broker (11)	+0.7	+1.5	+2.0	+1.4
Magazine (7)	+1.0	+1.3	+1.9	+1.4
Consultancy (8)	+0.3	+0.8	+2.0	+1.0
<i>Weighted means (39)</i>	+0.9	+1.3	+1.6	+1.3

The stand-in marketing experts were also very positive about insight. They were most positive about the vision phase and least positive about the projection phase. The reported insights were again generally different but not competitive. Next, Display 80 presents the ratings regarding the emotion component as deduced from the 2003/4 stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaires.

Display 80 2003/4 Stand-in marketing expert relevance: emotion (ratings -2; +2)

Phases / Branding constellations (N)	Projection phase	Intervention phase	Vision phase	Means
Sigma (13)	+1.9	+1.6	-0.1	+1.1
Online Broker (11)	+1.9	+1.6	+1.8	+1.8
Magazine (7)	+0.8	+0.9	+1.3	+1.0
Consultancy (8)	+1.9	+1.1	+1.8	+1.6
<i>Weighted means (39)</i>	+1.7	+1.4	+1.1	+1.4

The stand-in marketing experts were very positive about emotion. The projection phases generally evoked most emotions, except for the Magazine branding constellation which was also emotionally least involving. The vision phase in the Sigma branding constellation was perceived ambivalently

regarding emotion by these stand-in marketing experts. This was clearly caused by the two hours that it took; evidently too long, according to all marketing experts. Display 81 presents the 2003/4 marketing expert scores regarding the components of the relevance dimension by category on a 10-point scale as reported in the email questionnaires.

Display 81 2003/2004 marketing expert email findings: relevance (scale 1; 10)

Components / Categories (N)	Users (5/4)	Academics (4/2)	Researchers (3/6)	Consultants (3/9)	General managers (3/0)	Student managers (6/7)	Weighted means (24/28)
Insight	8.3 / 7.4	7.3 / 5.5	7.3 / 6.8	9.3 / 7.7	6.3 / -	9.0 / 8.1	8.1 / 7.4
- Problem insight	8.5 / 8.0	7.8 / 5.0	7.3 / 7.2	9.3 / 7.8	6.3 / -	9.3 / 8.1	8.3 / 7.6
- Option insight	8.0 / 6.7	6.8 / 6.0	7.3 / 6.3	9.3 / 7.5	6.2 / -	8.7 / 8.1	7.8 / 7.2
Emotion	8.6 / 7.3	9.0 / 6.5	8.7 / 8.2	10 / 8.3	7.7 / -	8.8 / 8.6	8.8 / 8.1
System	8.2 / 7.8	7.8 / 7.0	7.5 / 7.6	9.3 / 8.1	6.7 / -	9.0 / 9.0	8.2 / 8.1
Awareness	8.4 / 8.0	8.4 / 8.0	8.0 / 8.1	8.7 / 8.1	7.3 / -	7.1 / 8.8	7.9 / 8.3
<i>Means</i>	8.4 / 7.6	8.1 / 6.8	7.9 / 7.7	9.3 / 8.1	7.0 / -	8.5 / 8.6	8.2 / 8.0

The marketing experts were very positive about relevance. The student managers, consultants, and users were, however, more positive than the researchers, academics, and general managers.

Display 82 summarises the 2003/4 marketing expert workshop findings regarding the insight and emotion components, and the 2003/4 marketing expert email findings regarding insight, emotion, system, and awareness components of the relevance dimension.

Display 82 2003/4 Marketing expert means overview: relevance

Relevance components	Weighted means audience marketing expert workshop questionnaires (-2; +2 ratings)	Weighted means stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaires (-2; +2 ratings)	Weighted means marketing expert workshop questionnaires (-2; +2 ratings)	Weighted means marketing expert email questionnaires (-1; 10 scales)
Insight	+1.0	1.3	+1.2	7.8
Emotion		1.4	+1.4	8.5
System				8.2
Awareness				8.1
<i>Means</i>	+1.0	1.4	+1.3	8.1

The marketing experts were very positive about the insight and emotion components of the relevance dimension, but they were more positive about emotion in the email questionnaire than in the workshop questionnaire. It should be noted here that the workshop questionnaire was employed to rate the level of emotions evoked in the stand-in marketing experts, whereas the email questionnaire examined whether the marketing experts perceived that the emotions experienced assisted branders to identify their branding problems.

6.4.2 2003/4 Marketing experts on the validity dimension

This subsection covers the 2003/4 marketing expert perceptions regarding the (1) truth and (2) completeness components of the validity dimension. Display 83 presents the ratings deduced from the 2003/4 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaires regarding the truth component for the four branding constellations by the differentiated five marketing expert categories.

Display 83 2003/4 Audience marketing expert validity: truth (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	General managers (N)	Student managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Sigma	+2.0 (3)	+2.0 (3)	+2.0 (1)	+2.0 (3)	+2.0 (2)	+2.0 (3)	+2.0 (15)
Online Broker	+1.7 (3)	+2.0 (2)	+2.0 (2)	+2.0 (1)	+2.0 (2)	+2.0 (3)	+1.9 (13)
Magazine	+1.4 (5)	+2.0 (2)	+2.0 (5)	+2.0 (4)	- (0)	+2.0 (3)	+1.8 (19)
Consultancy	+0.5 (4)	0.0 (1)	+1.5 (5)	+1.3 (3)	- (0)	+0.3 (8)	+0.8 (21)
<i>Weighted means</i>	+1.3 (15)	+1.8 (8)	+1.8 (13)	+1.8 (11)	+2.0 (4)	+1.2 (17)	+1.4 (68)

Overall, the audience marketing experts were very positive about truth, but they were only moderately positive about truth regarding the Consultancy constellation. Several marketing experts also expressed that branding constellations were too complex to be called 'true' or 'not true'. Display 84 presents the ratings regarding the non-truth question deduced from the marketing expert workshop questionnaires: a negative rating indicates that marketing experts thought the branding constellation proceedings were inconsistent with marketing theory.

Display 84 2003/4 Audience marketing expert validity: non-truth (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	General managers (N)	Student managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Sigma	0.0 (3)	-0.3 (3)	+1.0 (1)	-1.0 (3)	-2.0 (2)	0.0 (3)	-0.5 (15)
Online Broker	-2.0 (1)	+1.0 (1)	+2.0 (1)	- (0)	+0.5 (2)	+1.0 (3)	+0.6 (8)
Magazine	+0.3 (4)	-2.0 (1)	-0.3 (6)	+1.0 (3)	- (0)	+0.3 (4)	+0.1 (18)
Consultancy	0.0 (3)	- (0)	-0.5 (3)	-1.0 (2)	- (0)	+0.6 (7)	0.0 (15)
<i>Weighted means</i>	-0.1 (11)	-0.2 (5)	0.0 (11)	-0.2 (8)	-0.8 (4)	+0.5 (17)	+0.1 (56)

Overall, the audience marketing experts had ambivalent perceptions regarding the non-truth question, indicating that they have their doubts about whether branding constellations can be evaluated as inconsistent with marketing theory. The student managers were most positive, whereas the general managers were most negative. Display 85 presents the scores regarding the truth component in the marketing expert questionnaire administered by email.

Display 85 2003/2004 Marketing expert validity: truth (scales 1; 10)

Categories (N 2003/2004)	Users (5/4)	Academics (4/2)	Researchers (3/6)	Consultants (3/9)	General managers (3/0)	Student managers (6/7)	Weighted means (24/28)
Truth	8.6 / 7.5	4.3 / 4.5	4.8 / 6.5	6.2 / 7.8	6.0 / -	8.5 / 8.1	6.8 / 7.3

Overall, the marketing experts were moderately positive about truth in the email questionnaires. However, overall the academics were very negative. Their scores represented a wide range of perceptions: whereas some academics scored '9', '8', or '7', other academics scored '1' or '2' commenting that the branding constellation events cannot have anything to do with reality. Display 86 presents the ratings regarding the completeness component as deduced from the 2003/4 audience and stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaires.

Overall, the marketing experts were moderately positive about completeness. Most positive were the student managers, whereas the researchers were most negative. On the Online Broker constellation the least core branding elements were reported to be lacking. There was no consensus between the marketing experts as to which elements should have been included, except regarding the Consultancy constellation. Here, thirteen out of sixteen marketing experts -who mentioned one or more elements that were lacking- referred to the two customer elements that were chosen by the Consultancy brander but were not set up. The consensus regarding the elements that were lacking in the Consultancy branding constellation resembles that

Display 86 2003/4 Marketing expert validity: completeness (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations/ Categories	Users (N)	Academics (N)	Researchers (N)	Consultants (N)	General managers (N)	Student managers (N)	Weighted means (N)
Sigma	+0.5 (6)	+2.0 (6)	0.0 (3)	-0.7 (3)	0.0 (3)	-0.2 (6)	+0.4 (27)
Online Broker	+0.2 (5)	+0.2 (6)	-1.0 (3)	+1.5 (2)	+2.0 (2)	+1.3 (6)	+0.9 (24)
Magazine	-0.5 (8)	-1.0 (2)	-0.5 (6)	+0.1 (8)	(0)	+2.0 (8)	+0.2 (32)
Consultancy	+0.7 (7)	-1.5 (2)	-0.7 (6)	+1.6 (8)	(0)	+0.3 (9)	+0.4 (32)
<i>Weighted means</i>	+0.2 (26)	+0.5 (16)	-0.6 (18)	+0.7 (21)	+0.8 (5)	+0.9 (29)	+0.5 (115)

regarding missing elements in the 2002 KPN Mobile branding constellation where the marketing experts generally had the impression that ‘a young consumer group’ was lacking. Surprisingly, the marketing expert perceptions regarding the completeness component did not differ for the Sigma branding constellation, although the Sigma brander had the impression that the elements were not well-chosen. Display 87 summarises the 2003/4 marketing expert workshop findings regarding the truth and completeness components of the validity dimension.

Display 87 2003/4 Marketing expert means overview: validity

Validity components	Weighted means workshop questionnaires (-2; +2 ratings)	Weighted means email questionnaires (1; 10 scales)
Truth	+0.7	7.1
Completeness	+0.5	
<i>Means</i>	+0.6	7.1

Overall, the marketing experts were moderately positive about validity. It should be noted that many marketing experts reported that it was difficult to say something sensible about the truth of branding constellations, because branding constellations were too complex: they involved too many relationships needing to be perceived at the same time.

6.4.3 2003/4 Marketing experts on the reliability dimension

This subsection covers the 2003/4 marketing expert perceptions regarding the coherence and bias components. Display 88 presents the stand-in marketing expert ratings regarding bias deduced from the 2003/4 stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaires.

Display 88 2003/4 Stand-in marketing expert reliability: bias (ratings -2; +2)

Branding constellations / Bias	Ratings (N)
Sigma	+2.0 (12)
Online Broker	+2.0 (11)
Magazine	+2.0 (7)
Consultancy	+1.3 (10)
<i>Weighted means</i>	<i>+1.8 (40)</i>

The 2003/4 stand-in marketing experts were very positive about bias in the sense that they generally felt that the facilitator did not bias their statements. Comparable to the 2002 findings, only the stand-in marketing experts who had experienced systems constellations before did not always perceive that their statements were taken fully into account by the facilitator. Display 89 presents the scores of the marketing expert categories regarding coherence and bias as reported in the 2003/4 marketing expert email questionnaires. Note that a high score regarding the bias component indicates that marketing experts perceived the branding constellations as systematically affected by the facilitator. The reliability dimension means have not been calculated here since a high reliability score regarding coherence goes along with a low score regarding bias.

Overall, the perceptions of the marketing experts were moderately positive concerning reliability. The marketing expert reliability scores in 2003 and 2004 are fairly consistent, except for the bias score by the academics which was '8.0' in 2003 and '5.0' in 2004. This is the result of (1) the perception of the returning academic changed regarding the bias component between 2003 and 2004, and (2) only one other academic attended in 2004 who was fairly positive regarding the bias component in contrast with the three

Display 89

2003/4 Marketing experts: reliability (scales 1; 10)

Components/ Categories 2003/4 (N)	Users 2003/4 (5/4)	Academics 2003/4 (4/2)	Researchers 2003/4 (3/6)	Consultants 2003/4 (3/9)	General managers 2003/4 (3/0)	Student managers 2003/4 (6/7)	Weighted means 2003/4 (24/28)
Coherence	7.1 / 6.5	5.5 / 6.5	7.2 / 6.5	4.7 / 6.3	6.0 / -	6.5 / 7.5	6.3 / 6.7
Bias	6.8 / 6.5	8.0 / 5.0	6.3 / 7.1	5.7 / 6.4	7.7 / -	8.0 / 7.0	7.2 / 6.6

2003 academics who attended -in addition to the returning academic- and reported ambivalent perceptions. The consultant mean score regarding the coherence component is clearly more negative in 2003 ('4.7') than in 2004 ('6.3'). This is caused by a returning consultant who scored '1' for coherence on the 2003 questionnaire, whereas he did not score the 2004 questionnaire regarding this component; both times he argued that he could not say what was 'logically consistent' as the branding constellations were about emotions and not about reason. Therefore, these findings should be interpreted with care to ensure that the marketing expert perceptions reported are clearly understood.

Regarding coherence, the users, researchers, and student managers were moderately positive referring to the consistency of the statements by and between the stand-ins. The academics, consultants, and general managers had ambivalent perceptions. Especially within the academic category the perceptions on coherence varied widely: whereas two 2003/4 academics scored '9' for coherence, two other academics scored '4' and '3'; another academic scored '6', commenting that 'branding constellations are projections, with all the rumblings and thunderings that are connected with it'.

Regarding bias, the student managers and the general managers were very negative, reporting that the facilitator had a profound influence. The perceptions reported by the academics and the marketing researchers diverge. Whereas the 2004 academic attending for the first time scored '2' stating that he did not perceive the facilitator as having systematically affected the

statements of the stand-ins, the returning academic scored ‘10’ in 2003 and ‘8’ in 2004. In the 2003 questionnaire the returning academic commented that the facilitator dominantly influenced the expressed emotions in the stand-ins and in the 2004 questionnaire he commented that this influence could be seen as both strength and as weakness. Likewise, a returning researcher argued both in 2003 and in 2004 that the effectiveness of the facilitator was in his sensitivity, intuition, empathy, and analytic abilities to exploit the statements of the stand-ins.

6.4.4 2003/4 Marketing experts on the precision dimension

Display 90 presents the scores of the marketing expert categories regarding the verification and unambiguity components of the precision dimension in the 2003/4 email questionnaire.

Display 90 2003/4 Marketing experts: precision (scales 1; 10)

Components/ Categories (2003/4N)	Users 2003/4 (5/4)	Academics 2003/4 (4/2)	Researchers 2003/4 (3/6)	Consultants 2003/4 (3/9)	General managers 2003/4 (3/0)	Student managers 2003/4 (6/7)	Weighted means 2003/4 (24/28)
Verification	6.4 / 5.3	4.5 / 5.5	6.7 / 6.5	7.3 / 6.4	5.0 / -	6.0 / 7.4	6.0 / 6.5
Unambiguity	5.0 / 6.7	3.5 / 3.0	5.3 / 4.8	4.3 / 6.0	4.5 / -	7.3 / 7.3	5.2 / 6.0
Means	5.7 / 6.0	4.0 / 4.3	6.0 / 5.7	5.8 / 6.2	4.8 / -	6.7 / 7.4	5.6 / 6.3

The marketing experts had ambivalent perceptions about precision. The student managers were most positive and the academics were least positive. Regarding verification, the 2004 academic attending for the first time scored ‘5’ on the 2004 constellations, reporting that ‘only conducted changes can be verified’. The returning academic scored ‘1’ in 2003 whereas he scored ‘6’ in 2004, commenting in 2004 that ‘some statements of the stand-ins were clearly open to verification’. The 2004 academic attending for the first time scored ‘5’ for unambiguity, stating that ‘the overall line is clear, but the details are not’; the 2003/4 returning academic scored ‘1’ for unambiguity in 2003 and 2004, commenting that ‘branding constellations are a very

subjective process'. The confusion of 'ambiguity' with 'subjectivity' indicates that the scores must be interpreted carefully to ensure that the respondents' intentions are clearly understood: in the researcher's opinion one can be very subjective, but still very clear on what one is trying to say.

6.4.5 Review of 2003/4 marketing expert perceptions

Display 91 reviews the 5-point ratings on the perceived usefulness dimensions and its components deduced from the 2003/4 marketing expert workshop questionnaires and the scores reported by the 2003/4 marketing experts.

Display 91 2003/4 Marketing experts on usefulness dimensions

2003/4 Usefulness dimensions and components	2003/4 Marketing experts (ratings -2; +2)	(scales 1; 10)
1. Relevance	+1.3	8.1
1.1 Insight	+1.2	7.7
1.2 Emotion	+1.4	8.4
1.3 System	Not asked	8.1
1.4 Awareness	Not asked	8.1
2. Validity	+0.6	7.1
2.1 Truth	+0.7	7.1
2.2 Completeness	+0.5	Not asked
3. Reliability	+1.8	
3.1 Coherence	Not asked	6.5
3.2 Bias	+1.8	6.8
4. Precision		5.7
4.1 Verification	Not asked	5.9
4.2 Unambiguity	Not asked	5.5

The 2003/4 marketing experts were very positive about the relevance and the reliability dimensions, while they were moderately positive about the validity dimension, and ambivalent about the precision dimension. They



were, however, more positive about the bias component of the reliability dimension in the stand-in workshop questionnaire than in the email questionnaire in the sense that the marketing expert stand-ins had the impression that their statements were not systematically affected by the facilitator.

6.5 Comparison of 2002 and 2003/4 branders and marketing experts

This section compares the 2002 and 2003/4 brander findings (subsection 6.5.1), the 2002 and 2003/4 marketing expert findings (subsection 6.5.2), the 2002 brander and marketing expert findings (subsection 6.5.3), the 2003/4 brander and marketing expert findings (subsection 6.5.4), and the 2002/3/4 brander and 2002/3/4 marketing expert findings (subsection 6.5.5).

6.5.1 Comparison of 2002 and 2003/4 brander perceptions

Display 92 compares the 2002 and 2003/4 brander findings concerning the four perceived usefulness dimensions and their components. It should be recalled that the 2002 branders were not asked about the system and awareness components of the relevance dimension and also not about the reliability and precision dimensions. It should further be noted that the overall means of the relevance dimension are based on the means of the insight, emotion, system, and awareness components rather than on the 2002 and the 2003/4 means of relevance.

Overall, the branders are very positive about the relevance dimension of perceived usefulness and moderately positive about the validity, reliability, and precision dimensions. There are no major differences between the 2002 branders and the 2003/4 branders concerning the perceived usefulness of branding constellations, except for the completeness component of the validity dimension that is more positively perceived by the 2003/4 branders than by the 2002 branders.

Display 92 Comparison of 2002 and 2003/4 branders on usefulness dimensions and components (ratings -2; +2)

Branders / Usefulness dimensions and components	2002 Branders	2003/4 Branders	Means
1. Relevance	+1.5	+1.8	+1.8
1.1 Insight	+1.7	+1.6	+1.7
1.2 Emotion	+1.3	+1.4	+1.4
1.3 System	Not asked	+2.0	+2.0
1.4 Awareness		+1.9	+1.9
2. Validity	+0.8	+1.2	+1.0
2.1 Truth	+1.3	+1.0	+1.2
2.2 Completeness	+0.3	+1.3	+0.8
3. Reliability	Not asked	+0.8	+0.8
3.1 Coherence		+1.0	+1.0
3.2 Bias		+0.5	+0.5
4. Precision	Not asked	+0.8	+0.8
4.1 Verification		+2.0	+2.0
4.2 Unambiguity		-0.5	-0.5

6.5.2 Comparison of 2002 and 2003/4 marketing expert perceptions

Display 93 compares the 2002 and 2003/4 marketing expert findings concerning the four perceived usefulness dimensions and their components. The rating scores are based on the workshop questionnaires whereas the scale scores are based on the email questionnaires. The overall mean ratings on the reliability dimension are based on the means of the coherence and bias components. The insight ratings include the marketing expert insights into the branding problem deduced from the workshop questionnaires, whereas the insight scores include the insights by the branders as perceived by the marketing experts in the email questionnaires. A high score by the marketing experts on the 10-point scale in the email questionnaires regarding the bias

component of the reliability dimension indicates that marketing experts perceive branding constellations as biased.

Display 93 Comparison of 2002 and 2003/4 marketing experts on usefulness dimensions and components

Usefulness dimensions and components / Marketing Experts	2002 Marketing expert ratings (-2; +2)	2003/4 Marketing expert ratings (-2; +2)	2003/4 Marketing expert scores (1; 10)	Mean marketing expert ratings (-2; +2)	Mean marketing expert scores (1; 10)
1. Relevance	+1.3	+1.3	8.1	+1.3	8.1
1.1 Insight	+1.3	+1.2	7.7	+1.3	7.7
1.2 Emotion	+1.2	+1.4	8.4	+1.3	8.4
1.3 System			8.1		8.1
1.4 Awareness			8.1		8.1
2. Validity	+0.1	+0.6		+0.4	
2.1 Truth	+0.5	+0.7	7.1	+0.6	7.1
2.2 Completeness	-0.4	+0.5		+0.1	
3. Reliability	+0.8	+1.8		+1.0	
3.1 Coherence	+0.5		6.5	+0.5	6.5
3.2 Bias	+1.1	+1.8	6.8	+1.5	6.8
4. Precision	0.0		5.7	0.0	5.7
4.1 Verification	0.0		5.9	0.0	5.9
4.2 Unambiguity	Not asked		5.5		5.5

Overall, the marketing experts are very positive about the relevance dimension, moderately positive about the validity and reliability dimensions, and ambivalent about the precision dimension. The 2003/4 marketing experts are more positive than the 2002 marketing experts about the validity and reliability dimensions.

6.5.3 Comparison of 2002 brander and marketing expert perceptions

Display 94 compares the 5-point ratings on the perceived usefulness dimensions and its components of the 2002 branders with those of the 2002 marketing experts deduced from the 2002 workshop questionnaires. It should be noted that the emotion component of the relevance dimension and the bias component of the reliability dimension ratings are based on the stand-in marketing expert perceptions, whereas the other ratings stem from the audience marketing expert perceptions.

Display 94 2002 Branders versus marketing experts on usefulness
(ratings -2; +2)

2002 Branders versus marketing experts / Usefulness dimensions and components	2002 Branders	2002 Marketing experts
1. Relevance	+1.5	+1.3
1.1 Insight	+1.7	+1.3
1.2 Emotion	+1.3	+1.2
2. Validity	+0.8	+0.1
2.1 Truth	+1.3	+0.5
2.2 Completeness	+0.3	-0.4
3. Reliability	not asked	+0.8
3.1 Coherence		+0.5
3.2 Bias		+1.1
4. Precision		0.0
4.1 Verification		0.0
4.2 Unambiguity		not asked

The three 2002 branders were more positive about the relevance and validity dimensions and components than the 2002 marketing experts. The completeness component of the validity dimension was rated lowest, both by the 2002 branders and by the 2002 marketing experts.

6.5.4 Comparison of 2003/4 brander and marketing expert perceptions

Display 95 compares the ratings deduced from the 2003/4 branders with those of the 2003/4 marketing experts and with the scores reported by the 2003/4 marketing experts.

Display 95 2003/4 Branders versus marketing experts on usefulness dimensions and components

Branders vs Marketing experts Usefulness dimensions and components	2003/4 Branders (ratings-2;+2)	2003/4 Marketing experts (ratings -2; +2) (scales 1; 10)	
1. Relevance	+1.8	+1.3	8.1
1.1 Insight	+1.6	+1.2	7.7
1.2 Emotion	+1.5	+1.4	8.4
1.3 System	+2.0	Not asked	8.1
1.4 Awareness	+1.9	Not asked	8.1
2. Validity	+0.9	+0.6	7.1
2.1 Truth	+1.0	+0.7	7.1
2.2 Completeness	+0.8	+0.5	Not asked
3. Reliability	+0.8	+1.8	
3.1 Coherence	+1.0	Not asked	6.5
3.2 Bias	+0.5	+1.8	6.8
4. Precision	+0.8		5.7
4.1 Verification	+2.0	Not asked	5.9
4.2 Unambiguity	-0.5	Not asked	5.5

The 2003/4 branders were more positive on the usefulness of branding constellations than the 2003/4 marketing experts, except for the bias component of the reliability dimension. Whereas the 2003/4 branders were moderately positive about bias, the 2003/4 stand-in marketing experts were very positive in the sense that they do not have the impression that the facilitator biased their statements.

6.5.5 Overall comparison of brander and marketing expert perceptions

This subsection covers the sixth subquestion: ‘How does the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders compare with that for marketing experts?’ Display 96 compares the 2002/3/4 branders and 2002/3/4 marketing expert findings concerning the perceived usefulness dimensions and its components. Again, note that a high score on the 10-point scale by the marketing experts on the email questionnaires regarding the bias component indicates that branding constellations are perceived by them as biased. This was caused by the way the acquiescence response set was dealt with in this study: explicitly questioning the bias component in the opposite direction than the other components.

Display 96 Brander versus marketing experts on usefulness dimensions

Respondents/ Usefulness dimensions and components	2002/3/4 Brander (ratings -2; +2)	2002/3/4 Marketing experts (ratings -2; +2)	2003/4 Marketing experts (scales 1; 10)
1. Relevance	+1.8	+1.3	8.1
1.1 Insight	+1.7	+1.2	7.7
1.2 Emotion	+1.4	+1.3	8.4
1.3 System	+2.0	not asked	8.1
1.4 Awareness	+1.9	not asked	8.1
2. Validity	+1.0	+0.3	7.1
2.1 Truth	+1.2	+0.6	7.1
2.2 Completeness	+0.8	+0.1	
3. Reliability	+0.8	+1.0	
3.1 Coherence	+1.0	+0.5	6.5
3.2 Bias	+0.5	+1.5	6.8
4. Precision	+0.8	0.0	5.7
4.1 Verification	+2.0	0.0	5.9
4.2 Unambiguity	-0.5	not asked	5.5

The branders are more positive about the usefulness dimensions than the marketing experts, with the exception of the unambiguity component of the precision dimension on which they are both ambivalent. The stand-in marketing experts are very positive about the bias component of the reliability dimension in the workshop questionnaire, whereas the marketing experts report ambivalent perceptions regarding bias in the email questionnaires.

This chapter covered the fourth, fifth and sixth subquestions of this thesis: 'What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders?', 'What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for marketing experts?', and 'How do branders' and marketing experts' perceptions of the usefulness of branding constellations compare?' The next chapter evaluates these findings.

7 Evaluation

This chapter assesses the perceived usefulness of branding constellations in the identification of branding problems for branders and marketing experts by evaluating the findings. *Problem identification* is becoming aware of the problems that must be attended to. The identification of branding problems in the marketing field seems to benefit from a systems perspective. The systems perspective applied in this thesis is *branding constellations*: systems constellations employed to identify branding problems. Its assumption is that the people a brander sets up as personified representations of the elements of a branding system are able to express the implicit relationships between these elements in the brander's mind.

This chapter presents an overview of the conclusions (7.1). It also discusses the brander and marketing expert perceptions on the usefulness dimensions and their components (7.2), and addresses the limitations of this study (7.3). This thesis concludes with the implications of this study (7.4).

7.1 Conclusion

The main thesis question is: What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations in the identification of branding problems for branders and marketing experts? This section describes the answers to the six subquestions that together answer this question. Subsection 7.1.1 addresses the conceptualisation of the identification of branding problems from a systems perspective, the first subquestion of this thesis. Subsection 7.1.2 deals with the second subquestion comparing branding constellations to other problem identification techniques. Subsection 7.1.3 covers the findings on the conceptualisation of 'perceived usefulness', the third subquestion. Subsection 7.1.4 summarises brander perceptions of the usefulness of branding constellations, the fourth subquestion. Subsection 7.1.5 covers marketing expert perceptions of the usefulness of branding constellations, the fifth subquestion. Subsection 7.1.6 closes this section with a comparison of the branders' and marketing experts' perceptions, the sixth and final subquestion.

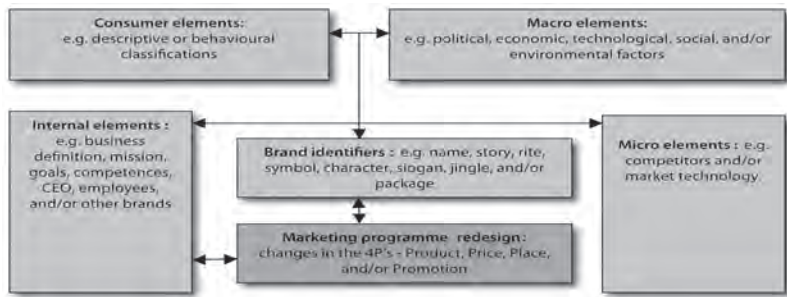
7.1.1 Branding problem identification from a systems perspective

This subsection covers the main findings on the first subquestion of this thesis: How can ‘identification of branding problems from a systems perspective’ be conceptualised?

In this thesis, *branding* refers to marketing (programme) options to improve the unique brand position in the consumers’ minds in order to increase the brand’s value. *Problems* are situations in which branders perceive gaps between their brand’s current value and its possible value, but do not know whether a marketing programme option they have in mind will close this gap. Problem identification is the first stage in marketing research.

This thesis approaches branding systems as metaphors (ways of thinking) rather than real systems that should be examined externally and objectively. More specifically, the focus is on the *organism metaphor* rather than on the machine metaphor: brand thinking in terms of the brand-as-a-person rather than brand-as-causal-object. The identification of branding problems from this *systems perspective* means that branders employ an (explicit and/ or implicit) model to identify a marketing programme option and analyse the expected influence of this option on the brand identifiers and the four environmental elements (consumers and the internal environment, micro environment, and macro environment). *Branding modelling* is the creation of simplified abstractions of the branding reality that captures the core brand elements of this situation. The brander’s basic problem identification question from a systems perspective is: ‘Does a change in the marketing programme contribute positively to the branding system as a whole?’ Display 97 presents the elaborated version of the branding problem identification model from a systems perspective.

Display 97 Elaborated branding problem identification model from a systems perspective



7.1.2 Branding constellations versus other problem identification techniques

The second subquestion is: How do branding constellations compare to other problem identification techniques?

Branding constellations differ from other problem identification techniques by their combination of a holistic perspective and an emotional approach. A *holistic perspective* focuses on the elements and relationships emerging from the whole rather than decomposing problems into the basic elements that form the core of the problem. An *emotional approach* includes bodily experiences, feelings, and intentions as well as spontaneous verbal 'outbursts' based on these emotions rather than a logical verbalization and an encouragement to employ grounded arguments. Branding constellations share a holistic perspective with cognitive mapping and Soft Systems Methodology (SSM). Furthermore, they share an emotional approach with brainstorming, psychodrama, projections, and the Zaltman Metaphorical Elicitation Technique (ZMET).

The emotional approach differentiates branding constellations from cognitive mapping, lateral marketing, and SSM, whereas the holistic perspective differentiates them from brainstorming, lateral marketing, psychodrama, projections, and ZMET. The combination of a holistic perspective and an emotional approach makes branding constellations a unique problem identification technique.

Display 98 presents the overall positioning of branding constellations in relation to other problem identification techniques.

Display 98 Positioning of branding constellations to other problem identification techniques

Approach / Perspective	Holistic	Reductionist
Emotional	Branding constellations	Brainstorming, psychodrama, projections, and ZMET
Rational	Cognitive mapping and SSM	Lateral marketing

7.1.3 Perceived Usefulness

The third subquestion is: How can 'perceived usefulness' be conceptualised?

For this question, a classification model of perceived usefulness was developed covering four dimensions: relevance, validity, reliability, and precision. The *relevance* dimension includes insight, emotion, system, and awareness; the *validity* dimension covers truth and completeness; the *reliability* dimension consists of coherence and bias; and the *precision* dimension comprises verification and unambiguity. Display 99 presents an overview of the definitions of the dimensions and components of perceived usefulness.

This classification model of perceived usefulness covers four specified dimensions with specified components which are clearly defined.

Display 99 Definitions of perceived usefulness dimensions and components

Dimensions and components*	Definitions of perceived usefulness dimensions and components
1. Relevance	Degree to which problem identification techniques generate insights -on a surface and a deeper level- and clarify the problem in the perception of the respondents
1.1 Insight	Degree to which insights are gained into the submitted branding problem and into the branding system in the perception of the respondents
1.2 Emotion	Degree to which bodily experiences, feelings, and intentions are expressed that clarify the branding problem in the perception of the respondents
1.3 System	Degree to which the relationships between the core branding elements are clarified in the perception of the respondents
1.4 Awareness	Degree to which implicit branding knowledge, feelings, and intentions are made explicit in the perception of the respondents
2. Validity	Degree to which problem identification techniques generate true and complete information in the perception of the respondents: in line with the available facts and having the right quantity of information
2.1 Truth	Degree to which insights are gained that are in line with the available facts in the perception of the respondents
2.2 Completeness	Degree to which the right branding elements are lacking in the perception of the respondents
3. Reliability	Degree to which problem identification techniques are free from random error and therefore yields consistent results in the perception of the respondents
3.1 Coherence	Degree to which the statements by and between the stand-ins are consistent in the perception of the respondents
3.2 Bias	Degree to which the statements of the stand-ins are systematically affected by the facilitator in the perception of the respondents
4. Precision	Degree to which problem identification techniques generate verifiable and unambiguous information in the perception of the respondents
4.1 Verification	Degree to which the statements of the stand-ins provide verifiable and/or falsifiable information in the perception of the respondents: the information can be checked or can conflict with possible observations
4.2 Unambiguity	Degree to which the statements of the stand-ins provide unambiguous information in the perception of the respondents: statements that do not permit or invite alternative interpretations.

* The dimensions and components cover perceptions, and should be read as perceived relevance, etc.

7.1.4 Perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders

The fourth subquestion is: What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders?

Branders are managers of companies in charge of branding decisions who conducted branding constellations as part of this study to identify branding problems. These branders are very positive concerning the insight, emotion, system, and awareness components of the relevance dimension. Concerning the validity dimension, they are very positive about the truth component and moderately positive about the completeness component. Concerning reliability, they are moderately positive about the coherence and the bias components. Concerning the precision dimension, branders are very positive about the verification component and moderately negative about the unambiguity component. Overall, the branding constellations are perceived as useful by branders, with the exception of the unambiguity component of the precision dimension.

7.1.5 Perceived usefulness of branding constellations for marketing experts

The fifth subquestion is: What is the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for marketing experts?

The study of the marketing expert perceptions adds a third-person perspective to the branders' first-person perspective. *Marketing experts* include marketing academics and marketing practitioners (researchers, consultants, and managers) who attended the branding constellation workshops that were organised as part of this study. These marketing experts are also very positive about the insight, emotion, system, and awareness components of the relevance dimension. Concerning validity, they are moderately positive about truth and ambivalent about completeness. Concerning reliability, marketing experts are moderately positive about coherence and bias. However, stand-in marketing experts are very positive about bias in the sense that they do not perceive their statements in the role of stand-in as affected by the facilitator.

Concerning precision, they are ambivalent about verification and moderately negative about unambiguity.

7.1.6 Comparison of brander and marketing expert perceptions

The sixth subquestion is: How does the perceived usefulness of branding constellations for branders compare with that for marketing experts?

Branders perceive branding constellations as more useful than marketing experts on every dimension and component, with the exception of the bias component of the reliability dimension and the unambiguity component of the precision dimension. Here, stand-in marketing experts are more positive than branders and do not perceive the facilitator as biased. Furthermore, both branders and marketing experts are moderately negative on the ambiguity component of the precision dimension and perceive branding constellations as generating different (although not competitive) insights for different observers.

7.2 Discussion of perceived usefulness

This section discusses the conclusions concerning branders' and marketing experts' perceptions regarding the four dimensions of perceived usefulness: relevance (7.2.1), validity (7.2.2), reliability (7.2.3), and precision (7.2.4).

7.2.1 Discussion of perceived relevance

Both branders and marketing experts are very positive about the insight, emotion, system, and awareness components of the relevance dimension.

Regarding the insight component of the relevance dimension, the positive perceptions are in line with previous systems constellations findings (Gminder, 2006). Branders gain insights that clearly help them perceive their branding problems differently than before. The branding constellations are especially appreciated for their ability to identify new branding questions and perspectives that guide branders to rethink their branding options. Previous studies on systems constellations did not pay attention to the broad scope of insights gained into the problems by observers, due to the fact that



perceptions are constructions: comparisons based on earlier experiences (subsection 5.5.1).

Regarding emotion, the second component of the relevance dimension, all branders and marketing experts agree that the identification of branding problems is based on, and motivated by emotions. They also agree that these emotions are often implicit and unclear, and that unravelling these emotions is important to identify branding problems, especially since brand associations are emotional impressions rather than verbal cognitions. In line with the findings of Höppner (2001), it turns out that the stand-ins were emotionally involved and that the emotionally tuned information has a high impact on branders. Brander report that they clearly remember their branding constellations when reading the thesis draft, six to eight years after they conducted their branding constellations. In addition, all branders and marketing experts agree that the emotion component of branding constellations allows branders to decide on the relevant branding elements, which overcomes the overwhelming problem of current holistic techniques.

The positive perceptions regarding the emotion component of relevance indicate that branding constellations are consistent with the current *emotional branding paradigm*, which argues that branding should be about relationships, sensorial experiences, and imagination (Gobé, 2001). They also fit the current attention to *emotional intelligence*: “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (Salovey and Mayer, 1990: 189). Many marketing experts report that ‘emotionally intelligent’ branders seem more able to gain insights from branding constellations than emotionally less intelligent branders. In addition, they have the impression that emotionally intelligent stand-ins seem more able to verbally express their emotions consistent with their apparent physical symptoms.

All branders and marketing experts are positive about ‘system’, the third component of the relevance dimension. Branding constellations allow branders to experience the relationships between the branding elements and the emergent elements and the relationships revealed by the whole, such as

the product recall in the Baby Food branding constellation. Furthermore, experimentation with marketing programme options in the branding system seems to improve the understanding of their effects. With reference to the organism metaphor that is supposed to underlie branding constellations, some marketing experts report that there are also other useful systems metaphors fitting branding constellations such as the hologram systems metaphor referring to Morgan (1997). The *hologram systems metaphor* implies that the qualities of the whole are presented in all its parts, like a cut-up magnet where each part still is a complete magnet. In line with this metaphor, many marketing experts report that branding constellations may be especially useful for developing more integrated branding.

Branders and marketing experts are also very positive about 'awareness', the fourth and final component of the relevance dimension. This is in line with Franke's findings (2003). Branders are thought to have much implicit knowledge, feelings, and intentions regarding the effectiveness of the marketing programme options being considered, which are difficult to put into words. Awareness is the end result of a selection process at a lower level of consciousness which we are not aware of (Franzen, 2000). Branding constellations seem to enable branders' implicit knowledge, emotions, and intentions to emerge from the statements of the stand-ins and the supplementary verbal interactions with the facilitator. However, some marketing experts question the legitimacy of the implicit knowledge revealed in public. Especially, the implicit knowledge that branders would have preferred not to share, such as the cooperation between the competitors in the KPN Mobile branding constellation and the difficult relationship between the franchiser and the franchisee in the Franchise branding constellation. This legitimacy is also a general issue in projective techniques (Catterall and Ibbotson, 2000).

To conclude, the insight, emotion, system, and awareness components of the relevance dimension are interconnected. Branding constellations seem to identify branding problems by making branders more aware of their implicit knowledge, emotions, and intentions. The insights generated seem based on the explications of this implicit knowledge, emotions, and intentions.

The emotions allow the brander to choose the most relevant elements and to prevent the model from becoming overwhelming as in the cognitive mapping example in Box 9 of section 3.5. However, the unravelling of the brander's implicit branding system insights, emotions, and awareness in public is a delicate process.

7.2.2 Discussion of perceived validity

Branders are very positive about the truth component and moderately positive about the completeness component of the validity dimension, while marketing experts are moderately positive about truth and ambivalent about completeness.

The very positive brander perceptions regarding truth are in line with the findings of Gminder (2006). Many marketing experts, however, report that the branding constellation proceedings are not really comparable to marketing theory. First, too many relationships are perceived at the same time to speak of 'the' truth of branding constellations. Second, 'the' truth in marketing theory does not exist because marketing literature includes many different views from many different perspectives. These marketing expert perceptions conflict with Gminder's findings (2006), who concluded that the constellation findings are in line with corporate sustainability theory.

Many marketing experts refer to the expression that 'intuition is sometimes wrong but never in doubt'. They perceive branding constellations as entailing an *observer-created reality*; a reality that branders naturally believe in since they create it themselves. These images are powerful, and may make branding constellations true in their consequences, according to these marketing experts. They worry that branders may forget that 'the map is not the territory'. Branding constellations are metaphors and therefore approximations of reality that emphasise some features at the expense of others.

Many marketing experts further note that the perceived truth of branding constellations also depends on the truth of branders' own cognitive maps and on their openness. The truth may not be welcomed and thus denied

if it conflicts with branders' preferred construction of reality. Especially, because branding constellations also reveal implicit knowledge that branders probably would prefer not to share such as the product recall in the Baby Food branding constellation and the troublesome relationship between the marketing manager and the directors in the Online Broker branding constellation.

Some marketing experts report that these cognitive maps are not photocopies of the branding environment, and that brand memories are not stored in the preciseness of the video recordings of the branding constellations. Others argue that 'the truth' does not exist, because brand meanings are socially constructed; still others think that all reality is observer-created, that 'truth' is about what is directly perceived, and that in this respect branding constellations are clearly true. Finally, there are marketing experts who argue that from De Bono's (1995) lateral thinking perspective the truth of the stimulus (branding constellation) is irrelevant: our brain will make sense of the happenings anyway and this is exactly what makes branding constellations useful.

Regarding completeness, the second component of the validity dimension, branders are moderately positive whereas marketing experts are ambivalent and perceive that often key branding elements are lacking. This is hardly surprising because branders select the elements. There is one exception: the KPN Mobile brander. He does not think that the branding elements in his constellation were well-chosen as a result of a lack of thorough preparation on his side. All branders are clearly aware that they create their own system boundaries by deciding which elements belong to the branding problem and which do not, and that they select them from a large number of possibilities. No specific differences are found between the audience and stand-in marketing experts regarding the completeness component.

Some marketing experts question the focus on 'elements lacking' and consider it caused by the scientific paranoia of omission rather than oversimplification; especially because the questionnaires did not include questions about elements included in the branding constellations that

could have been left out. Furthermore, some marketing experts argue that the order of bringing the elements to the floor seems to have an important influence on the branding constellation proceedings, which did not seem to receive enough attention, neither from the facilitator in the branding constellations nor from the researcher in the questionnaires. In addition, many marketing experts report that often more elements are brought to the floor than branders seem able to handle and that the number of elements should be limited to six stand-ins, because the number of relationships increases exponentially with each stand-in. Addressing too many elements at the same time is perceived as confusing, especially by marketing experts. In understanding, more is less. Simplification seems both a strength and weakness of branding constellations. This is consistent with the expression that 'The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook' to which some marketing experts referred. This is, however, a general issue in problem identification (VanGrundy, 1988).

To conclude, the validity dimension of branding constellations includes two paradoxes: (1) to create a believed branding reality and at the same time realising that this may be an observer-created reality, and (2) knowing which branding elements to overlook and at the same time realising that the elements overlooked may result in missing potentially important insights.

7.2.3 Discussion of perceived reliability

Branding constellations are perceived by branders and marketing experts as moderately coherent. Furthermore, they are perceived as moderately biased by branders and marketing experts in the email questionnaires, while stand-in marketing experts are very positive about bias in their workshop questionnaires.

Coherence is of major importance in branding (Yakimova and Beverland, 2005) and thus it is surprising that marketing experts do not mention this indicator spontaneously, as reported in subsection 5.5.1. Branders are more positive than marketing experts about coherence. The brander and marketing expert findings are in line with Franke (2003), who reports that interventions bring about coherent responses in systems constellations. This coherence is

not surprising according to many marketing experts, because mental images form a coherent model of meaning. In addition, systems findings show that even large systems with random interconnections are perceived as exhibiting coherent behaviours (Varela et al., 1993).

The different findings between branders and marketing experts are in line with Gminder (2006) who reports that the coherence of the proceedings is often clearer to the client than to the audience. Some audience marketing experts perceive the coherence in branding constellations as due to the explicit manipulation by the facilitator in the form of initiating expressions of 'implicit' emotions of stand-ins (called process work in systems constellations) and his implicit manipulation of stand-in statements by his explicit nodding. This is in line with the critics of systems constellations (Schlee, 2003). However, none of the stand-in marketing experts perceived this kind of manipulation. Other marketing experts argue that incoherence may also be a result of the inconsistencies in the cognitive maps of branders or in the brands rather than the inconsistencies of the stand-in statements. They further argue that these inconsistencies may indicate the value of branding constellations. Furthermore, they state that brands can be considered as syntheses of theses and antitheses. Thus, incoherence rather than coherence may be a sign of usefulness. Finally, they argue, that it is hardly possible for outsiders such as themselves to tell whether the incoherence is in stand-in statements in the cognitive maps of branders or in brands.

Regarding bias, branders are moderately positive. The stand-in marketing experts are even very positive in the stand-in questionnaires, but surprisingly they report ambivalent perceptions in the email questionnaires. In addition to the unappreciated manipulation by the facilitator reported on the coherence component, many marketing experts reported in the email questionnaires that the focus of the facilitator was on the introduction of emergent elements which the brander had not considered before rather than on the optional change in the marketing programme identified by the brander beforehand in the dialogue. The optional change generally did not receive the attention it deserved according to marketing experts. Many



marketing experts also disliked the introduction ‘dilemma’: the facilitator questioned branders on their branding problem, while they were asked not to reveal their brand. Finally, they thought that the debriefing should be the start of a ‘brainstorm’ on the branding problem displayed rather than a ‘thank you to the facilitator’.

The very positive stand-in marketing expert findings are in line with Gminder (2006), who reports that the facilitator is merely a host creating circumstances in which something can be revealed. The brander and email marketing expert perceptions are in line with the findings of Kohlhauser and Assländer (2005), who report that the quality of systems constellations is dependent on the education, experience, and personality of the facilitator. That the stand-in marketing experts are more positive about bias in the workshop questionnaire than in the email questionnaire may have been caused by their involvement as stand-ins, according to many marketing experts who reviewed the thesis draft. Another explanation they provide is that it is easier to be open for something completely different in a workshop context than in daily reality.

Many marketing experts also report that the facilitator focused on general management issues rather than branding issues as a result of his background as a management consultant. Not by chance the facilitator introduced himself in the three workshops as ‘someone who knows something about systems but nothing about brands’. The facilitator was selected on his experience in the guidance of systems constellations in general rather than his expertise in marketing. Of course, this is inherent to new applications. However, management consultancy literature generally acknowledges that consultants need to have expertise in the manager’s problem field (Block, 2006). It irritated many marketing experts, for instance, that the facilitator did not differentiate between consumers, customers, and target groups. The facilitator focused on emergent internal elements (6 times) rather than emergent brand identifiers (2 times) and emergent marketing programme options (2 times).

Furthermore, many marketing experts doubt the naming of the emergent branding elements and think that the danger of reification is great: it is easy to name an emergent branding element and then to believe there is a reality behind the name, such as the product problem in the Baby Food branding constellation. But giving an emerging element a name does not give it reality. Names of emergent elements are merely attempts to characterise the essence of the emergent elements. They are always tentative, subject to later verification and falsification. It may be no coincidence that many systems constellation facilitators name the emergent elements abstractly, such as 'that which has not been seen', to avoid preliminary naming and unjustified reification.

Other marketing experts, however, argue that the facilitator's focus on internal elements is in line with the current notion in marketing literature that branding involves the whole company rather than solely the brand manager's perception of the branding reality. It fits the need for attention to the branders' role as spiders -or flies- in branding decision webs. Furthermore, they argue that this disadvantage may just as easily be seen as an advantage, because his limited brand knowledge allows him to play the role of 'naive outsider'. His 'branding naiveté' makes the facilitator less threatening to branders, and the absence of threat is a necessary condition for learning and open communication, according to these marketing experts. Thus, marketing experts do not only have ambivalent perceptions regarding the influence of the facilitator on the proceedings, but also regarding the notion of influence itself. Whereas most marketing experts thought that this influence should be minimised, others thought that it was the facilitator who produced the branders' insights rather than the branding constellation proceedings.

To conclude, the reliability components contain a paradox. Incoherence may be a result of inconsistencies in the statements of the stand-ins, but it may also be due to human perception, to an inconsistent cognitive map of a brander, or to inconsistencies in a brand. The systematic influence of a facilitator (bias) may be seen as inappropriate or as a deliberate attempt by the facilitator to allow the brander to make new associations.

7.2.4 Discussion of perceived precision

Branders perceive branding constellations as very verifiable, while they are moderately negative about their unambiguity. Marketing experts are ambivalent about verification and moderately negative about unambiguity.

Regarding verification, the positive brander perceptions are in line with the findings of Franke (2003), whereas the negative marketing expert perceptions are in line with the critics of systems constellations (Schlee, 2003).

Branders especially appreciate the falsification and elimination of options that probably will not work, which help them to escape from 'illusory' perceptions. Marketing experts who are negative about verification generally argue that 'the future cannot be verified'. The branders and some marketing experts have the impression that the number of testable claims which may be induced from branding constellations depends on the extent to which branders and facilitators demonstrate verification or falsification testing behaviour by their specifications of the branding elements. This means that the degree of verification is mainly created by the branders' definitions of the branding elements rather than by the technique itself.

Other marketing experts argue that the notions of verification and falsification may block creative thinking, in line with De Bono (1995) who states that verification and falsification are the basis of logical, vertical thinking. They are logical judgment devices employed to reject certain arrangements of information, crystallised in the words 'YES' and 'NO'. Creative thinking, on the other hand, is about escaping from the rigid patterns established by previous experiences. In lateral thinking it is crystallised in the word PO standing for 'Provocation Operation'. PO implies, 'Do not look for the reason behind this. Let us go forward and see what the effect is'. PO serves to take branders out of the comfort zone of an existing pattern. Thus, (creative) problem identification may conflict with verification and falsification behaviour.

Regarding unambiguity, the moderately negative brander and marketing expert perceptions are in line with the general notions about projections. By definition, projections involve the presentation of ambiguous emotional

stimuli, and asking respondents to make sense of them. Our brain forces us to see only one thing at the time shown by, for instance, the duck-rabbit picture (Zaltman, 2003): one cannot see the duck when one sees the rabbit, and vice versa. This feature is not coincidentally named *ambiguity*: “cases in which the pattern we ‘see’ in one image appears to change before our very eyes, alternating between two possibilities” (Cohen, 1996: 99). Some marketing experts argue, however, that the ability to tolerate ambiguity is the core of creativity as described by De Bono (1995). Similarly, Kelly (1955) states that a person using tight constructions may be productive but cannot be creative. Tight constructions cannot produce anything that has not already been blueprinted. However, just as branders who use tight constructions exclusively cannot be creative, branders who use loose constructions exclusively cannot be productive. They will never get around to setting up a hypothesis for crucial testing. Branders must have the important capacity to move from loosening to tightening. This is one of the major paradoxes facing modern managers: they need to combine a high tolerance of ambiguity and openness to competing views with the need to create a ‘closure’ that allows to go forward in a positive way (Morgan, 1997). On the other hand, some marketing experts argue that the core of scientific interpretations of ambiguous stimuli in projections is in their unambiguous interpretation.

To conclude, the precision dimension of the perceived usefulness of branding constellations includes two paradoxes: (1) its verification component depends on the tightness of the constructions of the branding elements, while creativity requires branders to avoid tight constructions, and (2) branding constellations are perceived by marketing experts as projections, which are ambiguous by nature; thus, trying to avoid ambiguity is to deny the core of branding constellations in the perception of these marketing experts; on the other hand, without a univocal interpretation of the statements of the standards their scientific value is limited.

7.3 Limitations

Subsection 5.5.1 covered the limitations of this study regarding its construct validity, external validity, and reliability, and the way in which this study dealt with them. This section takes a closer look at three specific limitations. Subsection 7.3.1 analyses the systems perspective employed to identify branding problems. Subsection 7.3.2 reflects on the perceived usefulness concept. Subsection 7.3.3 closes this section with an examination of the case selection.

7.3.1 Branding problem identification from a systems perspective

This subsection analyses the identification of branding problems using the systems theoretical branding elements introduced in chapter 2 (section 7.1.1). Display 100 presents the different branding problem elements set up by the brander in the projection phase.

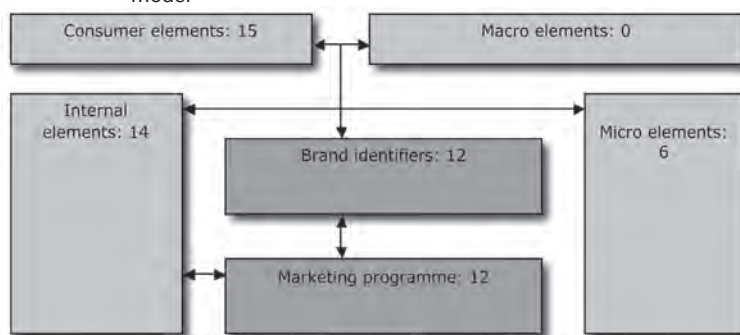
Display 100 Branding problem identification from a systems perspective

Branding constellations/ Categorisation	Identifiers	Marketing programme	Internal elements	Consumer elements	Micro elements	Macro elements	Total
2002 Baby Food	1	3	1	2			7
2002 KPN Mobile	2			1	3		6
2002 Franchise	1	2	2	1			6
2003 Sigma	2	4	2	1	3		12
2003 Online Broker	2	2	2	5			11
2004 Magazine	3	1	2	3			9
2004 Consultancy	1		5	2			8
<i>Total</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>49</i>

The elements displayed in the branding constellations are fairly evenly divided over the first four branding elements in the model: identifiers,

marketing programme, internal elements, and consumer elements. The 2002 KPN Mobile and the 2004 Consultancy branding constellations did not include a marketing programme option. The micro elements and especially the macro elements are set up less frequently, as indicated by the numbers per category in Display 101.

Display 101 Set up branding elements per category in problem identification model



Branders focus on identifiers, marketing programme, internal elements, and consumer elements rather than micro and macro elements.

7.3.2 Perceived usefulness definition

Although the terms ‘useful’ and ‘usefulness’ are generally employed to qualify instruments, methodologies, methods, techniques, or tools, they are almost always referred to in a common-sense superficial manner, without regard to empirical evidence. Very few scientific authors who use the terms define them. In addition, there are no generally accepted ways to explore the usefulness of problem identification techniques, and substantial research into the usefulness of these techniques is lacking. The usefulness of techniques is considered to be dependent on what is done with them (Osborn, 1963) and the list of quality criteria is paradigm based (Gummesson, 2000). In addition, the conceptualisations of the dimensions and components of usefulness found in marketing and social science methodological literature were broad and overlapping, as reported by Peter (1981). Furthermore, the often used terms ‘helpful’ and ‘powerful’ seem to have similar connotations as ‘useful’.

Most marketing experts do not question the validity of the term 'usefulness', although some marketing experts mention that the term 'effectiveness' is preferred for brainstorm studies. However, no thorough brainstorm studies on 'effectiveness' were found. Probably for the same reason that this thesis did not study the effectiveness of branding constellations: this requires an experimental, longitudinal design that is beyond the reach of most studies on problem identification techniques. In addition, many different interpretations of 'effectiveness' were found. Other marketing experts argue that studying 'effectiveness' needs to go along with studying 'efficiency', 'efficacy', 'ethicality', and 'elegance', referring to Checkland (2000). Still others argue that branding constellations are and should be 'fun and involving', important characteristics of projection techniques in general (Catterall and Ibbotson, 2000).

As reported in subsection 1.1.1, there are many other different dimensions and components on which to evaluate problem identification techniques. For instance, De Leeuw (1996) and De Man (2007) add 'efficiency' to their criteria comprising 'usefulness'. As reported in subsection 4.1.2, Zikmund (2003) uses -among others- three dimensions to decide whether marketing information is *useful* for marketers: relevance, completeness, and quality. His other dimension is timeliness. *Timely* information means that "the information is provided at the right time" (Zikmund, 2003: 24). This timeliness dimension was not considered relevant for the objective of this thesis because the perception that branders are on time or late to identify their branding problems cannot be attributed to the problem identification technique employed. In addition, problem identification techniques generally can be employed at short notice. Thus, although the timeliness of problem identification in market research is crucial, it is not an important indicator to distinguish the perceived usefulness of problem identification techniques.

Further, for instance, Kim and Mauborgne (1991) employ the label 'created value', and examined this in regard to five dimensions: price, ease of use, optional features, speed, and accuracy. In this thesis, the first four of these dimensions did not receive attention. In addition, one may

argue that the most important criterion for embodied metaphors such as branding constellations may be the *physical validity* (Hafkamp, 1996), also called *sympathic resonance* (Brand and Anderson, 1998): whether the basic pattern is immediately understood, and physically felt as valid. It cannot be concluded from this study whether some dimensions or components of perceived usefulness are more important than others.

As reported in subsection 5.5.1, the classification model of perceived usefulness developed in this thesis seems to fit the implicit conceptualisations of perceived usefulness held by marketing experts, with the exception of the exhaustiveness of the components of the perceived usefulness dimensions and the internal homogeneity of the precision dimension. Regarding 'exhaustiveness', the marketing experts perceive the stand-in bias and element order as lacking. In addition, the coherence component of the reliability dimension is not referred to spontaneously. The 'element order' is addressed in subsection 7.2.2; the 'coherence' is addressed in subsection 7.2.3; and the internal homogeneity issue in subsection 7.2.4. The next paragraph briefly addresses 'stand-in bias'.

Because the 2002 marketing experts perceived the stand-in bias indicator of usefulness as necessary, the 2003/4 marketing experts were questioned on this indicator. Most marketing experts report that the choices of stand-ins by branders are projections, and in that sense the stand-ins by definition cannot be biased. This perception conflicts with Schlötter's findings (2005) that the experiences of stand-ins are profoundly determined by their positions, and not by their personalities. In addition, some marketing experts perceive stand-ins as biased in the sense that their cognitive interpretation of the branding problems from the introduction dialogue seems to have affected their statements in the branding constellation proceedings and to have dominated their sensory reports, especially the branded branding constellations, by name the KPN Mobile and the Sigma branding constellations. In the *branded* branding constellations the brand names were known and explicitly mentioned during the branding constellations. This doubt on the validity of stand-ins on branded branding constellations is also reported by Gminder (2006). The 'pureness' of the stand-ins is also an issue

in systems constellation literature (Weber, 1998): facilitators are supposed to check the stand-in reports by comparing the body language of the stand-ins with their statements.

To conclude, although the label ‘useful’ is generally employed to qualify problem identification techniques, it is almost always referred to in a common-sense superficial manner, without regard to empirical evidence. This study challenges marketing researchers to use a perceived usefulness classification such as developed in this thesis to study problem identification techniques.

7.3.3 Case selection

This subsection focuses on the limitations as a result of the branders’ personal characteristics, and the diversity of the branding problems being presented. Display 102 presents the participating brands, and four characteristics of their Dutch branders: gender, age level, education, and function.

Display 102 Brands and characteristics of their Dutch branders

Brand	Gender	Age level	Education	Function
Baby Food	Female	30-40	Masters	Brand manager
KPN Mobile	Male	30-40	Bachelor	Marketing manager
Franchise	Male	30-40	MBA	Marketing director
Sigma	Female	20-30	Masters	Brand manager
Online Broker	Male	30-40	Masters	Marketing manager
Magazine	Female	30-40	Masters	Chief Editor
Consultancy	Female	40-50	Masters	Director

In general, the branders were between 30 to 40 years old, had a Master’s degree, and functioned on the level of brand or marketing manager. There were four women and three men.

The case selection includes brand managers (Baby Food and Sigma branders) and marketing managers (KPN Mobile, Franchise, and Online Broker

branders) rather than CEOs (Consultancy brander). According to the Dutch Journal of Marketing (2004), Dutch CEOs do not take as much responsibility for the company's brands as they should. Likewise, Aaker (1996) argues that responsibility for brands is still mostly located at a lower level in the company. This may also explain why the facilitator focuses on the internal environment, as indicated in subsection 7.2.3. Display 103 presents an overview of the branding problem questions that were submitted for identification in the workshops.

Display 103 Submitted branding problem questions

Brander	Submitted branding problem questions
2002 Baby Food brander	Are the new concept and the new campaign the right way to approach the target group?
2002 KPN brander	Can the brand KPN Mobile exist next to KPN?
2002 Franchise brander	What is the match between brand name and offered service, according to the franchiser and the customer?
2003 Sigma brander	Can I strengthen the position of the paint brand by certain positioning decisions?
2003 Online Broker brander	Which target group fits the new product best?
2004 Magazine brander	What is the effect of our change in policy, and is there a need for further changes?
2004 Consultancy brander	How do the internal market groups relate to the brand?

The submitted branding questions are fairly diverse. This limits the comparison of the findings. In addition, the submitted questions do not always include branding options, such as the questions of the KPN Mobile, the Franchise, and the Consultancy branders.

7.4 Implications

This section closes this thesis with theoretical (7.4.1) and practical implications (7.4.2) of this study, and suggestions for future research on the identification of branding problems. Of course, these are tentative as this study includes only seven cases.

7.4.1 Theoretical implications

This study shows that the perceived usefulness of a problem identification technique can be described and assessed by analysing four dimensions (relevance, validity, reliability, and precision) and ten components (insight, emotion, system, and awareness; truth and completeness; coherence and bias; and verification and unambiguity). This classification model of perceived usefulness fits marketing and social science methodological theory as well as the explicit and implicit conceptualisations of perceived usefulness held by marketing experts.

The academic marketing field has done very little to formalise problem identification techniques. However, concise research on problem identification techniques demands a formalisation of their procedures, while problem identification technique facilitators are often creative ‘artists’ who prefer to be free to use any technique variation required by a specific problem owner or situation. Marketing academics should take the lead in formalising problem identification techniques. This thesis has made a first step in the formal documentation of branding constellations and the description and assessment of their perceived usefulness.

More specifically, techniques to identify branding problems require a holistic rather than a reductionist perspective. A *holistic perspective* focuses on the elements and relationships emerging from the whole rather than decomposing problems into the basic elements that form the core of the problem. However, a major difficulty of current holistic problem identification techniques -such as cognitive mapping and the Soft Systems Methodology- is that the number of elements is generally overwhelming, because of the absence of a way to select the most important elements. This issue is solved by *branding constellations*, a new application of systems constellations. They combine a holistic perspective with an emotional approach to identify branding problems. An emotional approach refers to the inclusion of bodily experiences, feelings, and intentions that are included as well as spontaneous verbal ‘outbursts’ based on these emotions rather than a logical verbalisation and an encouragement to employ grounded arguments. This emotional approach allows branders to select the most relevant elements

from their point of view, because the intensity of the brander's emotions involved indicates the relative importance of these elements.

Lastly, branding constellations fit the current emotional branding paradigm which argues that branding research should cover relationships, sensory experiences, and imagination. The holistic perspective of branding constellations distinguishes them importantly from other emotional problem identification techniques, such as brainstorming, lateral marketing, psychodrama, projections, and the Zaltman Metaphorical Elicitation Technique. Thus, branding constellations offer the opportunity to integrate a holistic perspective in the identification of branding problems within the emotional branding paradigm.

7.4.2 Practical implications

It should be clear to every brander that marketing research on branding problems is important for branders, and that it benefits from good problem identification from a systems perspective. The key to branding from a systems perspective is modelling. Modelling branding problems improves the understanding and prediction of the consequences of redesigning marketing programmes. Branding constellations offer branders a useful tool to model this reprogramming, unravels their branding problem, stimulates their sense of control, and increases their confidence in coping with these branding problems. Modelling is characterised by depiction, reduction, and pragmatism.

(1) *Depiction*: Branding constellations are externalisations of the implicit perceptions of branders' branding reality. They allow branders to unravel their branding problems, and become more aware of their branding problem identification model and the way they identify these problems. Branding constellations mirror their implicit thinking. Furthermore, they assist branders in gaining new questions on their branding problems from a systems perspective. In addition, branding constellations make the branding system come to life, allow branders to experience it from within, and realise what a branding option implies. For instance, many branders realised that the brand name feels best close to the consumers rather than close to the

company, where the brand name was most often positioned in the systems projection phase.

(2) *Reduction*: Branding constellations do not encompass all branding elements of this perceived branding reality, but only those that are most relevant to branders in identifying their branding problem. This unravelling improves the awareness of branders of what matters most, and to 'put first things first'. For instance, naming their brand identifiers turned out to be a really challenging business for branders. But being aware of the brand identifiers is the core of branding. In addition, this reduction allows them to improve their understanding of the relationships between these branding elements. Furthermore, branding constellations allow emergent branding elements and patterns -of which the brander had not thought explicitly before- to be unravelled, to be named, and to become part of the explicit branding model of the brander.

(3) *Pragmatism*: Branding constellations fit branders well. To project branding elements on people and position them towards each other is in line with the brand-as-a-person metaphor, the key in systems thinking at the individual branding level (1.1.3). Branding constellations allow branders to simulate considered changes in their marketing programmes, and experience their effects on the branding systems. Simulating marketing programme options in the branding system improves the understanding of their leverage effects: the positive and/or negative feedback loops in the branding system due to this reprogramming. Especially the improved understanding of these leverage effects allows a systems perspective on branding that other problem identification techniques do not offer. It is not by chance that there is a saying "If you want to understand a system, try to change it". In addition, branding constellations offer branders an opportunity to unravel their implicit feelings, cognitions, and intentions. They allow branders to falsify and eliminate marketing programme options that probably will not work, and to escape from 'illusory' perception such as the Franchise brander from the need to change his brand's name.

However, branders should realise that 'the map is not the territory'. Branding constellations are metaphors, and have to be verified or falsified on their level of observer-created reality in the later stages of marketing research, however convincing they may seem. In addition, branders should realise that branding constellations not only show what they cannot express verbally, but also what they may prefer not to express. Branding constellations do not fit problem identification carried out to verify existing opinions, due to the unpredictability of the branding constellation events. On the other hand, branding constellations may evoke an exciting dialogue on branding problems beyond the explicit branding knowledge of the brand team members caused by the revelation of their implicit knowledge. In political contexts, the process of good problem identification starts with understanding the problem perceptions of the people involved (Van Zanten, 2000b).

7.4.3 Future research

The conceptualisation of perceived usefulness by a classification model covering four dimensions and ten clearly defined components allows further studies on branding constellations and other problem identification techniques. These studies are important for marketing research, because problem identification is the first and most important step in marketing research. The fact that branders perceive branding constellations as useful allows further studies on the identification of branding problems in which branding constellations are compared on their perceived usefulness to other problem identification techniques. However, the respondents should be well-informed that branding constellations seem to unravel their implicit branding system insights, emotions, and awareness. In addition, they should be allowed to withdraw from the study at any time or to request that the material concerning their branding constellation be destroyed.

A follow-up quasi-experiment may cover a group of branders assigned to, for instance, four treatment groups within the experiment. One experimental group of branders may have one or two hours to conduct a branding constellation, while a second group may brainstorm, a third group may exercise lateral marketing, and a fourth group may fabricate a cognitive



map. Then, the perceptions concerning the usefulness dimensions and its components can be compared by means of interviews, questionnaires, or behavioural indications, preferably involving a longitudinal study. Of course, perception is only the first validation step. The second validation step needs to cover clear measurements on the four dimensions. For instance, the ratings of the verification component of the precision dimension of branding constellations may be measured by the degree of verification of all stand-in statements, and the ratings on the truth component of the validity dimension by the degree of truth of these verifiable stand-in statements, according to the brand team. The third and final step would be a longitudinal study on the effects of branding constellations on brand equity, the ultimate branding goal. For instance, a longitudinal field experiment, in which branding constellations are conducted for a number of brands monthly, while brands with similar market shares function as control group.



Because Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) is thought to have undervalued the role of emotions, and because this is considered to have drawbacks due to the limited awareness of the processes involved (Siam and Tan, 2004), the perceived usefulness of using branding constellations within SSM may be studied as a variation of using cognitive mapping. Especially, since branding decisions are team decisions rather than individual brander decisions (McWilliam and Dumas, 1997). Each brand team member often has different cognitive models, according to their role and function. The general practical problem is how to deal with these different models rather than identifying one model. A follow-up quasi-experiment may cover an experimental group of branders having one or two hours to conduct branding constellations, while the control group conducts cognitive mappings. Then, the perceptions of the brander(s) and the marketing researcher(s) concerning the usefulness dimensions and its components can be compared by means of interviews, questionnaires, or behavioural indications, preferably directly after the presentations of the SSM findings. A second validation step may compare the branding elements revealed in branding constellations by two different brand team members with similar groups of stand-ins at the same time.

Future research may also cover the information gap between brander and marketing researchers due to the lack of transference of the implicit branding knowledge from branders to these marketing researchers. Marketing researchers generally base their research on explicit branding problem information provided by branders, while the greater part of branders' branding knowledge is implicit (Zaltman, 2003). The importance of implicit knowledge is underestimated in scientific marketing literature because people are only aware of the conscious part of their brains (Dijksterhuis, 2008). Since many marketing researchers are convinced of the usefulness of branding constellations, and lengthy verbal discussions may not be the best way to arrive at new creative ideas (Desai, 2003), it may be interesting to study branding constellations with one of their agencies in the briefing meeting: the formulation of the final research brief by the brander and the market researcher together, which for instance Wilson (2003) differentiates as a separate stage in marketing research. This means asking branders to conduct branding constellations rather than to talk about their branding problems. A follow-up quasi-experiment may cover an experimental group of branders having one hour to conduct branding constellations during this meeting, while the control group would have a regular briefing meeting. Again, the perceptions of the brander(s) and the marketing researcher(s) concerning the usefulness dimensions and its components can be compared by means of interviews, questionnaires, or behavioural indications.

Future research may further focus on the connection between branding constellations and emotional intelligence. Research on problem identification and emotional intelligence is interesting but limited (Bastian et al., 2005). Further study may include whether branding constellations with emotionally intelligent branders and marketing expert stand-ins score higher on usefulness than branding constellations with less emotionally intelligent branders and marketing expert stand-ins. The degree of emotional intelligence may, for instance, be measured by using the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (Vakola et al., 2004). The Problem Solving Inventory may also be useful for further study: a self-report measure assessing perceived problem solving skills and behaviours (Bastian et al., 2005). This may be combined with the study of perceived usefulness of branding



constellations in brand teams, as high emotional intelligence coincides with successful brand teams (Moriarty and Buckley, 2003).

Future research may also cover branding constellations with consumers in focus groups in line with the development of the Zaltman Metaphorical Elicitation Technique (ZMET). It turned out that ZMET was especially valued in consumer research because most branders do not enjoy being the subject of study, and prefer consumers to be the subject. An example of a consumer branding constellation in systems constellation literature reveals the impact of car brands on partner relationships (Hellinger, 2002). Branding constellations with consumers may cover the testing of marketing programme decisions such as new slogans. A follow-up quasi-experiment may cover an experimental focus group having one hour to conduct branding constellations, while the control

To conclude, this thesis has described and assessed the perceived usefulness of branding constellations in the identification of branding problems for branders and marketing experts. It has shown that branding constellations are new in their combination of a holistic perspective and an emotional approach to identify branding problems. The power of this combination is that the emotional approach turns the holistic perspective into something that can be experienced by branders and at the same time allows them to decide on the most relevant elements and maintain an overview. The classification model of usefulness offers many opportunities for future studies on the perceived usefulness of branding constellations and other problem identification techniques that are important in the development of marketing research.

Appendix A1 Dimensions, components, and questions

This appendix covers the questions regarding the components of the four dimensions of usefulness according to the branders: relevance (subsection A1.1), validity (subsection A1.2), reliability (subsection A1.3), and precision (subsection A1.4). Further, it covers the questions regarding the components of the four dimensions of usefulness according to the marketing experts: relevance (subsection A1.5), validity (subsection A1.6), reliability (subsection A1.7), and precision (subsection A1.8).

A1.1 Brander questions on relevance dimension

The relevance dimension includes four components as shown in subsection 4.2.1: (1) insight, (2) emotion, (3) system, and (4) awareness. The 2002 brander questionnaires focused on the first two components of the relevance dimension: (1) insight and (2) emotion.

First, regarding the insight component of the relevance dimension, the 2002 brander questionnaire administered during the workshop included two questions: one question on the branding problem insights and one question on the branding system insights as indicated in subsection 4.2.1. The 2002 brander questionnaire administered by email included also two questions regarding the insight component of the relevance dimension: secondary branding problem insights and branding system insights. The 2003/4 brander questionnaires administered during the workshop were extended with questions regarding the insights for each branding constellation phase described in subsection 1.2.4 regarding the introduction, projection, intervention, and vision phases. The intervention phase included questions regarding the most and least valued intervention by the facilitator, based on De Ruyter and Scholl (2001). No questions were included regarding the debriefing phase, because this phase already consisted of a brief evaluation of the branding constellation. The 2003/4 brander questionnaires administered by email included two questions regarding the insight component of the relevance dimension based on Lehmann (2006): clarification of the current branding reality and clarification of the branding vision.

Second, regarding the emotion component of the relevance dimension, the 2002 brander workshop questionnaire included the emotions experienced during the five phases of each branding constellation: introduction, projection, intervention, vision, and debriefing phase. The 2003/4 brander workshop questionnaires excluded the question on the debriefing emotions, because the emotions reported during the debriefing phase were very connected with the emotions of the vision phase. In addition, it turned out that the branders were hardly able to express their experiences in the debriefing phase. Furthermore, the emotion labels in the 2003/4 brander workshop questionnaires were adapted based on additional emotions that were mentioned by the 2002 branders in these questionnaires. Finally, a question was included on emotional experience.

Third, the 2003/4 brander email questionnaires included one question regarding the system component of the relevance dimension: the relationships between elements, based on Lehmann (2006).

Fourth, the 2003/4 brander email questionnaires included three questions regarding the awareness component of the relevance dimension: implicit knowledge, feelings, and intentions that were made explicit (Lehmann, 2006).

Display A1.1 presents an overview of the 2002 and 2003/4 brander questions administered during the workshop and by email concerning the relevance dimension. The specific question numbers are indicated between brackets and can be found in appendix A2 Questionnaires. The numbers in the 2003/4 questions refer to the 2004 questionnaires. The letters denote the following: w = workshop; e = email; b = brander; and q = question.

Display A1.1 Brander questions on components of relevance dimension

Components	Questionnaires	2002 Questions	2003/4 Questions
Insight	Workshop	Branding problem insights and branding system insights (wbq9/11)	Branding insights per phase (wbq2/6)
	Email	Branding problem and branding system insights (ebq1/2)	Secondary branding insights (ebq1)
Emotion	Workshop	Emotions by phase (wbq1/7)	Emotions by phase (wbq2/6)
	Email		Emotional experience (ebq19)
System	Email		Systems perspective (ebq14)
Awareness	Email		Explicated branding knowledge, feelings, and intentions (ebq16/8).

To conclude, the questions regarding the insight and emotion components of the relevance dimension were similar in 2002 and in 2003/4. The system and awareness components of the relevance dimension were only included in the 2003/4 brander questionnaires administered by email.

A1.2 Brander questions on validity dimension

The validity dimension is specified by two components in subsection 4.2.2: (1) truth and (2) completeness.

First, regarding the truth component of the validity dimension, the 2002 brander workshop questionnaire included four questions; on key-element truth, recognised element emotions, un-recognised element emotions and overall truth, respectively. These questions were based on the systems constellation research project of Beaumont and Franke (Franke, 2003). Because this research project was cancelled in 2003, the 2003/4 email brander questionnaires included questions on three theoretically validated components of truth (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003): non-verifiable information truth, verifiable information truth, and marketing research coherence.

Second, regarding the completeness component of the validity dimension, the 2002 brander workshop questionnaire included one direct question regarding branding elements lacking. This question was transposed to the 2003/4 brander email questionnaires.

Display A1.2 presents an overview of the 2002 and 2003/4 brander workshop and email questions concerning the validity dimension. The numbers in the 2003/4 questions refer to the 2004 questionnaires. The letters denote the following: w = workshop; e = email; b = brander; and q = question. The specific formulations of the questions can be found in appendix A2.

Display A1.2 Brander questions on components of validity dimension

Components	Questionnaires	2002 Questions	2003/4 Questions
Truth	Workshop	Key-element, (un-) recognised element emotions, and overall truth (wbq11/4)	
	Email	Recognised statement per element (ebq5/)	Verifiable (ebq12) and unverifiable insight truth (ebq14), and comparison to marketing research findings (ebq15)
Completeness	Workshop	Elements lacking (wbq16)	
	Email	-	Elements lacking (ebq3).

To conclude, the brander questions regarding the completeness component of the validity dimension were comparable in 2002 and 2003/4, while the brander questions regarding the truth component of the validity dimension were fairly different in 2002 and 2003/4.

A1.3 Brander questions on reliability dimension

The reliability dimension of usefulness includes two components as defined in subsection 4.2.3: coherence and bias. The 2002 brander questionnaires did not include any questions regarding the reliability dimension, as mentioned in subsection 5.3.1. The 2003/4 questionnaires included one

question regarding the coherence component and one question regarding the bias component.

Display A1.3 presents an overview of the 2002 and 2003/4 brander workshop and email questions concerning the reliability dimension. The numbers in the 2003/4 questions refer to the 2004 questionnaires, when different: a = audience; e = email; and q = question. The specific formulations of the questions can be found in appendix A2.

Display A1.3 Brander questions on components of reliability dimension

Components	Questionnaires	2002 Questions	2003/4 Questions
Coherence	Email	-	Coherence (ebq7)
Bias	Email	-	Bias (ebq6).

To conclude, the 2002 brander questionnaires did not include any questions on the reliability dimension, while the 2003/4 brander questionnaires administered by email included one question each on the coherence and bias components of the reliability dimension.

A1.4 Brander questions on precision dimension

The precision dimension includes two components: verification and ambiguity (see subsection 4.2.4). The 2002 brander questionnaires did not include any questions regarding the precision dimension of usefulness, while the 2003/4 brander questionnaires included both components.

Display A1.4 presents an overview of the 2002 and 2003/4 brander workshop and email questions administered concerning the precision dimension. The numbers in the 2003/4 questions refer to the 2004 questionnaires. The letters denote the following: e = email; b = brander; and q = question. The specific formulations of the questions can be found in appendix A2.

Display A1.4 Brander questions on components of precision dimension

Components	Questionnaires	2002 Questions	2003/4 Questions
Verification	Email	-	Verification (ebq10)
Ambiguity	Email	-	Ambiguity (ebq8).

To conclude, the 2002 brander questionnaires did not include any questions regarding the components of the reliability dimension, while the 2003/4 brander email questionnaire included one question regarding each component of the reliability dimension.

A1.5 Marketing expert questions on relevance dimension

The relevance dimension includes four components as shown in subsection 4.2.1: (1) insight, (2) emotion, (3) system, and (4) awareness. Like the 2002 brander questionnaires, the 2002 marketing expert questionnaires focused on the first two components of the relevance dimension: (1) insight and (2) emotion.

First, regarding the insight component of the relevance dimension, the 2002 audience and stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaires included one question regarding insights gained into the brander's problem. In addition, the 2002 marketing expert email questionnaire included one question regarding the brander's insights.

Second, regarding the emotion component of the relevance dimension, the 2002 stand-in marketing expert in questionnaire included the experienced emotions in the projection, intervention, and vision phases; the three phases that involved them as stand-ins. In addition, the emotion labels in the 2003/4 marketing expert workshop questionnaires were adapted based on the emotions that were mentioned by the 2002/3 marketing experts. The marketing expert workshop questionnaires regarding the insight and emotion components were similar in 2002 and 2003/4. In line with the changes from 2002 to 2003/4 in the brander email questionnaires, the 2003/4 marketing expert email questionnaires were expanded with questions regarding the

insight, emotion, system, and awareness components of the relevance dimension. The insight component included two questions in the 2003/4 marketing expert email questionnaires: the problem and the option insight. Display A1.5 presents an overview of the 2002 and 2003/4 marketing expert workshop and email questions concerning the relevance dimension, and it compares them with the brander questions. The numbers in the 2003/4 questions refer to the 2004 questionnaires. The letters denote the following: w = workshop; e = email; a = audience; s = stand-in; m = marketing expert; and q = question. The specific formulations of the questions can be found in appendix A2.

Display A1.5 Brander and marketing expert questions on relevance dimension

Components	Questionnaires	2002 Brander questions	2002 Marketing expert questions	2003/4 Brander questions	2003/4 Marketing expert questions
Insight	Workshop	Branding problem and branding system insight (wbq9/10)	Branding problem insight (amq14, smq10)	Insights by phase (wbq2/6)	Branding problem core insights by phase (amq2/7, smq2/7)
	Email	Branding problem and branding system insights, (ebq1/2)	Branders' insight score (ems12)	Secondary new insight question (ebq1); reality and vision clarification (emq13,15)	Reality and vision clarification (emq12/3)
Emotion	Workshop	Emotions by phase (wbq1/7)	Emotions of stand-ins by phase (smq1/5)	Emotions by phase (wbq1/7)	Emotions in stand-ins by phase (smq3/6)
	Email			Emotions (ebq19)	Emotions (emq17)
System	Email			Systems perspective (ebq14)	Systems perspective (emq15)
Awareness	Email			Explicated knowledge, feelings, and intentions (ebq16/8)	Explicated brander's knowledge awareness (emq16).

To conclude, there were differences between the brander and marketing expert questions regarding the insight and emotion awareness components concerning the relevance dimension in the 2002 questionnaires and the 2003/4 questionnaires, while the questions regarding the system and components concerning the relevance dimension were fairly similar.

A1.6 Marketing expert questions on validity dimension

The validity dimension includes two components as indicated in subsection 4.2.2: (1) truth and (2) completeness. First, regarding the truth component of the validity dimension, the 2002 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaire asked whether the audience marketing experts considered their insights into the branding problems to be true; both overall (called process truth) and on the vision constellation (called vision constellation truth). In 2003/4 these questions were adapted to indicate whether the marketing experts considered the insights gained into the branding problems true or not true in the sense of being or not being in line with marketing theory. In addition, the 2003/4 marketing expert email questionnaire included one question on truth that was not included in the 2002 marketing expert email questionnaire.

Second, the completeness component of the validity dimension in the 2002 and in the 2003/4 marketing expert workshop questionnaires included one question on elements that were lacking.

Display A1.6 presents an overview of the 2002 and 2003/4 marketing expert workshop and email questions concerning the validity dimension and compares them with the brander questions. The numbers in the 2003/4 questions refer to the 2004 questionnaires; the letters denote the following: w = workshop; a = audience; s = stand-in; e = email; m = marketing expert; b = brander; and q = question. The specific formulations of the questions can be found in appendix A2.

Display A1.6

Brander and marketing expert questions on validity dimension

Components	Questionnaires	2002 Brander questions	2002 Marketing expert questions	2003/4 Brander questions	2003/4 Marketing expert questions
Truth	Workshop	Key-element, (un-) recognised element and overall truth (wbq11/4)	Process and vision constellation truth (amq10, 15)		Truth and non-truth (amq8/9)
	Email	Recognised statements by element (ebq5/)		Verifiable (ebq12) and unverifiable insight truth (ebq14), and comparison to marketing research findings (ebq15)	Truth (em8)
Completeness	Workshop	Elements lacking (wbq16)	Elements lacking (amq16; smq8)	-	Elements lacking (amq16; smq8)
	Email	-		Elements lacking (ebq3).	

To conclude, the differentiation in the 2002 questionnaire regarding the truth component of the validity dimension was made differently in the 2003/4 questionnaire. In addition, the differentiation of the truth questions in the brander questionnaire was not made in the marketing expert questionnaire, as this difference was based on the more knowledgeable position of the brander. The questions regarding the completeness component of the validity dimension were the same in the 2002 and in the 2003/4 marketing expert questionnaires and similar to the 2003/4 brander questions regarding the completeness component. There are minor differences between the marketing expert questions of 2002 and those of 2003/4.

A1.7 Marketing expert questions on reliability dimension

The reliability dimension of usefulness includes two components as shown in subsection 4.2.3: (1) coherence and (2) bias. The 2002 marketing expert email questionnaire included questions regarding the coherence of the statements and movements of the stand-ins. Bias was indicated by the degree to which stand-in marketing experts considered to have had enough attention from the facilitator in expressing their emotions as denoted in the stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaire. The 2003/4 marketing expert email questionnaires added one question on bias. The components of the reliability dimension included only one question each.

Display A1.7 presents an overview of the 2002 and 2003/4 marketing expert workshop and email questions concerning the reliability dimension and compares them with the brander questions. The numbers in the 2003/4 questionnaire refer to the 2004 questions; the letters denote the following: w = workshop; a = audience; s = stand-in; e = email; and q = question. The specific formulations of the questions can be found in appendix A2.

Display A1.7 Brander and marketing expert questions on reliability dimension

Components	Questionnaires	2002 Brander questions	2002 Marketing expert questions	2003/4 Brander questions	2003/4 Marketing expert questions
Coherence	Workshop	-	Coherence (amq12)	-	Coherence (amq6)
	Email	-		Coherence (ebq7)	-
Bias	Workshop	-	Bias (smq6)		Bias (smq10)
	Email	-	-	Bias (ebq5)	Bias (emq10).

To conclude, the 2002 brander questionnaire did not include any questions concerning the reliability dimension, while the 2003/4 brander email

questionnaires included two questions concerning the reliability dimension. The 2002 marketing expert questionnaires included two questions concerning the reliability dimension, while the 2003/4 marketing expert email questionnaire added one question regarding the bias component.

A1.8 Marketing expert questions on precision dimension

The precision dimension includes two components as indicated in subsection 4.2.4: (1) verification and (2) ambiguity. The 2002 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaire included one question regarding the verification component of the precision dimension. In 2003/4 this question was moved to the marketing expert email questionnaires and extended with a question regarding the ambiguity component of the precision dimension.

Display A1.8 presents an overview of the 2002 and the 2003/4 marketing expert workshop and email questions concerning the precision dimension and compares them with the brander questions. The numbers refer to the 2004 questionnaires; the letters stand for: a = audience; s = stand-in; b = brander; e = email; and q = question. The specific formulations of the questions can be found in appendix A2.

Display A1.8 Brander and marketing expert questions on precision dimension

Components	Question-naïres	2002 Brander questions	2002 Marketing expert questions	2003/4 Brander questions	2003/4 Marketing expert questions
Verification	Workshop	-	Verification (amq11)		
	Email	-	-	Verification (ebq10)	Verification (emq8)
Ambiguity	Email	-	-	Ambiguity (ebq8)	Ambiguity (emq7).

To conclude, the 2002 brander questionnaire did not include any question concerning the precision dimension, while the 2003/4 brander email questionnaire included one question regarding each of the two components of the precision dimension. The 2002 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaire included one question regarding the verification component of the precision dimension, while the 2003/4 marketing expert email questionnaires included one question regarding each of the two components of the precision dimension.

Appendix A2 Questionnaires

Section A2.1 describes the questionnaires used in 2002 and section A2.2 the questionnaires used in 2003/4.

A2.1 2002 Questionnaires

Section A2.1.1 presents the 2002 brander questions concerning the relevance dimension and section A2.1.2 the brander questions concerning the validity dimension. Section A2.1.3 presents the 2002 marketing expert questions concerning the relevance dimension; section A2.1.4 the marketing expert questions concerning the validity dimension; section A2.1.5 the marketing expert questions concerning the reliability dimension; and section A2.1.6 the marketing expert questions concerning the precision dimension. Section A2.1.7 presents the 2002 marketing expert questions on the usefulness dimensions. Each subsection first presents the workshop questionnaires, followed by the questions of the email questionnaire.

A2.1.1 2002 Brander questions on relevance

Subsection 4.2.1 deduces four components of the relevance dimension: (1) insight, (2) emotion, (3) system, and (4) awareness. Subsection 5.3.2 indicated that the 2002 brander questionnaire was limited to the first two components: (1) insight and (2) emotion. Display A2.1 presents the 2002 brander workshop questions. Display A2.2 presents the 2002 brander email questions, and Display A2.3 presents an overview of the number of questions per component in the 2002 brander questionnaires.

In this appendix, question items refer to the subjects of the questions in the questionnaires.

Display A2.1 2002 Brander workshop questions: relevance

Nr.	Question	Item	Component
1	Did you experience any physical sensations such as heart palpitation, in(de)creased heart rate or pulse, coldness or warmth, feeling restless/less, relaxed or agitated, perspiration?	Debriefing physical reaction	Emotion
2	Did you experience any emotions such as fear, anxiety, gladness, anger, concentration, hurried, lightness, superiority, inferiority, indifference, openness, pain, enjoyment, peace, surprise, desire, wonder, joy, revulsion, rage and/or heaviness?	Debriefing feelings	Emotion
3	Did you experience any intention to do something, to turn around, to laugh or cry, to shout or remain silent or to go somewhere?	Debriefing intention	Emotion
4	Which physical sensations, feelings and/or intentions did you experience during the introduction phase, if any?	Introduction phase emotion	Emotion
5	Which physical sensations, feelings and/or intentions did you experience during the projection phase, if any?	Projection phase emotion	Emotion
6	Did your physical sensations, feelings and/or intentions noticeably change at any particular point? If so, what changed and at what point did this happen?	Intervention phase emotion	Emotion
7	Which physical sensations, feelings and/or intentions did you experience during the vision phase, if any?	Vision phase emotion	Emotion
9	Describe the answer or solution to your research problem that this branding constellation provided	Primary branding problem insight	Insight
10	Did the branding constellation lead to any further insights regarding your (branding) question? If so, which?	Primary branding system insight	Insight.

Display A2.2 2002 Brander email questions: relevance

Nr.	Question	Item	Component
1	What insights regarding your branding question did you gain from the constellation?	Secondary branding problem insight	Insight
2	Did the constellation provide any insights in the branding system displayed?	Secondary branding system insight	Insight.

Display A2.3 2002 Brander question overview: relevance

Component	Number of questions in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Insight	2	2	4
Emotion	7	-	7
System	-	-	-
Awareness	-	-	-
<i>Overall</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>11</i>

A2.1.2 2002 Brander questions on validity

Subsection 4.2.2 differentiates two validity components: (1) truth and (2) completeness. Display A2.4 presents the brander workshop questions concerning the validity dimension.

Display A2.4 2002 Brander workshop questions: validity

Nr.	Question	Item	Component
11	Can you give an example of a key insight obtained from a participant reaction that cannot be explained from any information provided by you?	Key-element intuitive truth	Truth
12	From what brand elements do you recognise the most physical sensations, feelings and/or intentions?	All-element intuitive truth	Truth
13	From what brand elements do you not recognise the most physical sensations, feelings and/or intentions?	All-element intuitive non-truth	Truth
14	In your view, did the branding constellation provide a valid representation of reality? If so, why? If not, why not?	Constellation intuitive truth	Truth
16	Were any brand elements lacking in the constellation? If so, which?	Completeness	Completeness.

Display A 2.5 presents the brander email questions concerning the validity dimension.

Display A2.5 2002 Brander email questions: validity

Nr	Question	Item	Component
5	Thinking back to your branding constellation, do you remember any specific behaviour or statement of 'the first element'? Have you recognised this behaviour or statement since then?	First, etc. element intuitive truth	Truth.

Display A2.6 presents an overview of the number of questions per component in the 2002 brander questionnaires.

Display A2.6 2002 Brander question overview: validity

Component	Number of questions in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Truth	4	About 10 (dependent on number of elements)	About 14
Completeness	1	-	1
Overall	5	About 10	About 15

A2.1.3 2002 Marketing expert questions on relevance

Subsection 4.2.1 deduces four components of the relevance dimension: (1) insight, (2) emotion, (3) system, and (4) awareness. The 2002 marketing expert questionnaire was limited to the first two components: (1) insight and (2) emotion. Display A2.7 presents the 2002 audience marketing expert workshop question concerning the relevance dimension.

Display A2.7 2002 Audience marketing expert questions: relevance

Nr.	Question	Item (= component)
14	What is the answer to the brander's problem question based on the branding constellation?	Insight.

Display A2.8 presents the 2002 stand-in marketing expert workshop questions for describing and assessing their perceptions on relevance.

Display A2.8 2002 Stand-in marketing expert questions: relevance

Nr.	Question	Item	Component
1	Did you experience any physical sensations on your first position such as breathlessness, tightening in the chest, heart palpitations, slower or faster pulse, coldness or warmth, feeling restless/less, relaxed or agitated and/or perspiration?	Physical reaction in projection constellation	Emotion
2	Did you experience any feelings on your first position such as fear, anxiety, gladness, anger, concentration, hurried, lightness, superiority, inferiority, indifference, openness, pain, enjoyment, peace, surprise, sadness, desire, wonder, joy, revulsion, rage and/or heaviness?	Feelings reaction in projection constellation	Emotion
3	Did you experience any intention on your first position to do something, to go somewhere, to hold your breath, to turn around, to fall, to stand on your toes, to laugh or cry, to shout, or to leave?	Intention reaction in projection constellation	Emotion
4	Did you experience a specific moment in which your physical sensations, feelings and/or intentions changed significantly?	Emotion in intervention constellation	Emotion
5	Which physical sensations, feelings and/or intentions did you have in the final constellation?	Emotion in vision constellation	Emotion
9	What is the answer to the brander's problem question based on the branding constellation?	Insight	Insight.

Display A2.9 presents an overview of the number of questions per component in the 2002 marketing expert questionnaires.

Display A2.9 2002 Marketing expert question overview: relevance

Component	Number of questions in audience workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in stand-in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Insight	1	1	-	2
Emotion	-	5	-	5
Overall	1	6	-	7

A2.1.4 2002 Marketing expert questions on validity

Subsection 4.2.2 differentiates validity into two components: (1) truth and (2) completeness. Display A2.10 presents the audience workshop questions to the marketing experts concerning the validity dimension. The 2002 marketing expert email questionnaire did not include questions concerning validity.

Display A2.10 2002 Audience marketing expert questions: validity

Nr.	Question	Item	Component
10	Do you feel that the branding constellation provided valid information? Can you explain this feeling?	Process truth	Truth
15	Do you agree with this answer? If so, why? If not, why not?	Vision constellation truth	Truth
16	Were any brand elements lacking in the constellation? If so, which?	Completeness	Completeness.

Display A2.11 presents the 2002 stand-in marketing expert workshop question used to describe and assess the perceptions of the 2002 stand-in marketing experts concerning the validity dimension.

Display A2.11 2002 Stand-in marketing expert question: validity

Nr.	Question	Item (= component)
8	Were any brand elements lacking in the constellation? If so, which?	Completeness.

Display A2.12 presents an overview of the number of questions per validity component in the 2002 marketing expert questionnaires.

Display A2.12 2002 Marketing expert question overview: validity

Component	Number of questions in audience workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in stand-in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Truth	2	-	-	2
Completeness	1	1	-	2
<i>Overall</i>	3	1	-	4

A2.1.5 2002 Marketing expert questions on reliability

Subsection 4.2.3 refers to reliability as covering two components: (1) coherence and (2) bias. Display A2.13 presents the 2002 audience marketing expert question concerning reliability and Display A2.14 the stand-in marketing expert question concerning reliability. The 2002 marketing expert email questionnaires did not include questions concerning reliability.

Display A2.13 2002 Audience marketing expert question: reliability

Nr.	Question	Item (= component)
12	In your view, did the branding constellation provide consistent information? If not, can you give an example of inconsistency?	Coherence.

Display A2.14 presents the stand-in marketing expert question concerning reliability.

Display A2.14 2002 Stand-in marketing expert question: reliability

Nr.	Question	Item (= component)
13	Did the facilitator give you adequate opportunity to provide your input on the constellation? If not, what would you have liked to add, and when would you have liked to do so?	Bias.

Display A2.15 presents an overview of the number of questions per component in the 2002 marketing expert questionnaires.

Display A2.15 2002 Marketing expert question overview: reliability

Component	Number of questions in audience workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in stand-in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Coherence	1	-	-	1
Bias	-	1	-	1
<i>Overall</i>	1	1	-	2

A2.1.6 2002 Marketing expert questions on precision

Precision is considered in subsection 4.2.4 as covering two components: (1) verification and (2) ambiguity. The 2002 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaire only contained one question concerning precision. This question is presented in Display A2.16. The marketing expert email questionnaires did not include questions concerning precision.

Display A2.16 2002 Audience marketing expert question: precision

Nr.	Question	Item (= component)
11	In your view, did the branding constellation result in falsifiable information? If so, can you give an example?	Verification.

Display A2.17 presents an overview of the number of questions per precision component in the 2003/4 marketing expert questionnaires.

Display A2.17 2002 Marketing expert question overview: precision

Component	Number of questions in audience workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in stand-in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Verification	1	-		1
Unambiguity	-	1		1
<i>Overall</i>	1	1		2

A2.1.7 2002 Marketing expert questions on usefulness dimensions

Display A2.18 presents the open 2002 audience marketing expert workshop questions used to check the usefulness dimensions.

Display A2.18 2002 Audience marketing expert workshop questions: usefulness dimensions

Nr.	Question	Item
17	In your view, does the branding constellation add value to the existing methods and techniques of branding research? If not, why not? If so, what is the added value for this branding problem?	Complementary usefulness
18	What made the most impression in this branding constellation?	Critical incident.

Display A2.19 presents the open questions in the 2002 marketing expert email questionnaire.

Display A2.19 2002 Audience marketing expert email questions: usefulness dimensions

Nr.	Question	Item
1	Is there anything that you found satisfying in last Friday's branding constellations?	Satisfiers
2	Is there anything that you found unsatisfying in last Friday's branding constellations?	Dissatisfiers
3	Which of the three branding constellations did you appreciate most, and why?	Most valued constellation
4	Which of the three branding constellations did you appreciate least, and why?	Least valued constellation

A2.2 2003/4 Branding constellation questionnaires

Section A2.2.1 presents the 2003/4 brander questions concerning the relevance dimension; section A2.2.2 concerning the validity dimension; section A2.2.3 concerning the reliability dimension; and section A2.2.4 concerning the precision dimension. Section A2.2.4 covers the marketing expert questions concerning the relevance dimension; section A2.2.5 concerning the validity dimension; section A2.2.6 concerning the reliability dimension, and section A2.2.7 concerning the precision dimension.

Section A2.2.8 closes this appendix with the general 2003/4 marketing expert questions on the usefulness dimensions. In each subsection the 2004 workshop questions are presented first, followed by the 2004 email questions. The -minor- differences with the 2003 questions are shown in the Tables.

A2.2.1 2003/4 Brander questions on relevance

Subsection 4.2.1 deduces four components of the relevance dimension: (1) insight, (2) emotion, (3) system, and (4) awareness. Display A2.20 presents the 2003/4 brander workshop questions and Display A2.21 the email questions. Opposed to the 2003 brander questionnaire, the 2004 brander questionnaire asked the emotion questions before the insight questions, since emotions are thought to come before the insights (Zaltman, 2003). The order in the 2003 brander questionnaire was based on the cognitive perspective, which states that thinking generates emotions (Beck, 2005).

Display A2.20 2003/4 Brander workshop questions: relevance

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item	Component
2a	During the introduction dialogue, did you experience any physical sensations such as slower or faster pulse, coldness or warmth, feeling restless/less, relaxed or agitated, and/or perspiration? If so, which?	Similar to 2003 nr. 2d	Introduction dialogue physical reactions	Emotion
2b	During this interview, did you experience any particular intentions, such as immediately wanting to set up the branding elements, provide more information, remain silent, leave things to the facilitator, ask questions to the facilitator and/or leave altogether? If so, which?	Similar to 2003 nr. 2c	Introduction dialogue intentions	Emotion
2c	During the interview, did you experience any emotions such as fear, anxiety, gladness, anger, concentration, hurried, lightness, superiority, inferiority, indifference, openness, enjoyment, peace, surprise, desire and/or heaviness? If so, which?	Similar to 2003 nr. 2b	Introduction dialogue feelings	Emotion
2d	Did the interview result in particular insights into your branding problem? If so, which?	2003 before, 2004 after emotion questions	Introduction dialogue insight	Insight

3a	Did you experience any physical sensation, intention and/or feeling during the setting up of the stand-ins? If so, which?	Combination of 2003 nr. 3b, 3c and 3d	Projection constellation emotions	Emotion
3b	Did your own projection constellation provide any insights into your branding problem? If so, which?	2003 before, 2004 after emotion questions	Projection constellation insight	Insight
4a	Which facilitator intervention during the constellation was most valuable to you?	None	Most valued intervention emotions	Insight
4b	Did you experience any physical sensation, intention and/or feeling during this intervention? If so, which?	Combination of 2003 nr. 4c, 4d and 4e	Most valued intervention emotions	Emotion
4c	Did this intervention provide any insight into your branding problem? If so, which?	2003 before, 2004 after emotion questions	Most valued intervention insight	Insight
5a	Which facilitator intervention during the constellation was least valuable to you?	None	Least valued intervention emotions	Insight
5b	Did you experience any physical sensation, intention and/or feeling during this intervention? If so, which?	Combination of 2003 nr. 5c, 5d and 5e	Least valued intervention emotions	Emotion
5c	Did this intervention provide any insight into your branding problem? If so, which?	2003 before, 2004 after emotion questions	Least valued intervention insight	Insight
6a	Did you experience any physical sensation, intention and/or feeling during the vision constellation? If so, which?	Combination of 2003 nr. 6b, 6c and 6d	Vision constellation emotions	Emotion
6b	Did the vision constellation provide any insight into your branding problem? If so, which?	2003 before, 2004 after emotion questions	Vision constellation insight	Insight.

Display A2.21 presents the 2003/4 brander email questions concerning the relevance dimension.

Display A2.21 2003/4 Brander email questions: relevance

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item	Component
1	Did the branding constellation result in any further, unreported, insights? If so, which?	Similar to 2003	Post-constellation insight question	Insight
2	What do you think of your branding problem in retrospect?	Similar to 2003 nr. 4	Problem reflection question	Insight
14	Did the branding constellation increase your understanding of the relationships between the represented branding elements? If so, what relationships in particular?	Similar to 2003	Branding system relationships question	System
16	Did the branding constellation make you aware of any implicit branding knowledge?	Similar to 2003 nr. 18	Knowledge awareness question	Awareness
17	Did the branding constellation make you aware of any implicit feelings regarding your brand?	Similar to 2003 nr. 19	Feelings awareness question	Awareness
18	Did the branding constellation make you aware of any implicit intentions toward your brand?	Similar to 2003 nr. 20	Intention awareness question	Awareness
19	In the branding constellation did you 'personally experience' that your brand is a coherent entity in which the elements are connected and continually influence each other?	Similar to 2003 nr. 21	Emotional experience question	Emotion.

Display A2.22 presents an overview of the number of questions per component in the 2003/4 brander questionnaires.

Display A2.22 2003/4 Brander question overview: relevance

Component	Number of questions in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Insight	5	2	7
Emotion	9	1	10
System	-	1	1
Awareness	-	3	3
Overall	14	7	21

A2.2.2 2003/4 Brander questions on validity

Subsection 4.2.2 shows that the validity dimension includes two components: (1) truth and (2) completeness. Display A2.23 presents the 2003/4 brander email questions concerning the validity dimension. No questions were asked in the brander workshop questionnaire concerning the validity dimension.

Display A2.23 2003/4 Brander email questions: validity

Nr.	Question	Change 2003/4	Item	Component
3	What do you think in retrospect of the choice of your brand elements?	Similar to 2003 nr. 5	Completeness	Completeness
9	Do you feel that the unverifiable information from the constellation is valid?	Similar to 2003 nr. 13	Unverifiable truth question	Truth
11	Do you see the verifiable information from your constellation as consistent with reality?	Similar to 2003 nr. 12	Verifiable truth question	Truth
14	Is the information in line with the findings of earlier market research?	Similar to 2003 nr. 15	Marketing research coherence	Truth.

Display A2.24 presents an overview of the number of questions per component in the 2003/4 brander questionnaires.

Display A2.24 2003/4 Brander question overview: validity

Component	Number of questions in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Truth	-	3	3
Completeness	-	1	1
<i>Overall</i>	-	4	4

A2.2.3 2003/4 Brander questions on reliability

Subsection 4.2.3 refers to reliability as covering two components: (1) coherence and (2) bias. Display A2.25 presents the 2003/4 brander email questions.

Display A2.25 2003/4 Brander email questions: reliability

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item (= component)
6	What do you think in retrospect of the facilitation of your branding constellation?	Similar to 2003 nr. 8	Bias
7	Did you experience the statements and the behaviour of the brand element stand-ins as logically coherent?	Similar to 2003 nr. 9	Coherence.

A2.2.4 2003/4 Brander questions on precision

In subsection 4.2.4, precision covers two components: (1) verification and (2) ambiguity. The brander workshop questionnaire did not include any questions concerning the precision dimension. Display A2.26 presents the 2003/4 brander email questions regarding the precision dimension.

Display A2.26 2003/4 Brander email questions: precision

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item (= component)
8	Can you unambiguously interpret the information received from your branding constellation?	Similar to 2003 nr. 10	Ambiguity
10	Did you receive any new, verifiable information from your branding constellation?	Similar to 2003 nr. 11	Verification.

A2.2.5 2003/4 Marketing expert questions on relevance

Subsection 4.2.1 deduces four components of the relevance dimension: (1) insight, (2) emotion, (3) system, and (4) awareness. Display A2.27 describes the audience marketing expert workshop questions concerning the relevance dimension and Display A2.28 presents the 2003/4 stand-in marketing expert workshop questions and Display A2.29 the 2003/4 marketing expert email questions.

Display A2.27 2003/4 Audience marketing expert workshop questions: relevance

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item	Component
1	In your view, what was the branding problem presented by the brander?	None	Problem	
2	In your view, did the constellation help the brander to better understand the branding problem? Why (not)?	None	Problem insight	Insight
3a	Did the introduction dialogue provide you with any insight into the branding problem? If so, which?	None	Introduction dialogue insight	Insight
4a	Did the projection constellation by the brander provide you with any insight into the branding problem? If so, which?	None	Projection constellation insight	Insight
5b	Did the most valuable intervention provide you with any insight into the branding problem? If so, which?	None	Most valued intervention insight	Insight
6b	Did the least valuable intervention provide you with any insight into the branding problem? If so, which?	None	Least valued intervention insight	Insight
7a	Did the vision constellation provide you with any insight into the branding problem? If so, which?	None	Vision constellation insight	Insight.

Display A2.28 2003/4 Stand-in marketing expert workshop questions: relevance

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item	Component
1	In your view, what was the branding problem presented by the brander?	None	Problem	Insight
3d	Did the projection constellation provide you with any insight into the branding problem? If so, which?	None	Projection constellation insight	Insight
4c	Did the most valuable intervention provide you with any insight into the branding problem? If so, which?	None	Most valued intervention insight	Insight
5c	Did the least valuable intervention provide you with any insight into the branding problem? If so, which?	None	Least valued intervention insight	Insight
6b	Did the vision constellation provide you with any insight into the branding problem? If so, which?	None	Vision constellation insight	Insight.

Display A2.29 2003/4 marketing expert email questions: relevance

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item	Component
12	To what degree do you believe that branding constellations can help branders to better understand the actual reality of their brand?	Similar to 2003 nr. 11	Secondary problem insight	Insight
13	To what degree do you believe that branding constellations can help branders to develop a better vision of their brand?	Similar to 2003 nr. 12	Secondary option insight	Insight
15	To what degree do you believe that branding constellations can help brand managers to better understand the relationships between the key brand elements?	Similar to 2003 nr. 13	Brand relation	System
16	To what degree do you believe that branding constellations can help brand managers to become aware of their implicit branding knowledge?	Similar to 2003 nr. 17	Knowledge awareness	Awareness
17	To what degree do you believe that branding constellations enable the problem presenter to 'personally experience' that their brand elements are connected and continually influence each other?	Similar to 2003 nr. 23	Brander's branding system experience	Emotion.

Display A2.30 presents an overview of the number of questions per relevance component in the 2003/4 marketing expert questionnaires.

Display A2.30 2003/4 Marketing expert question overview: relevance

Component	Number of questions in audience workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in stand-in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Insight	6	2	2	10
Emotion	-	-	1	1
System	-	-	1	1
Awareness	-	-	1	1
Overall	6	2	5	13

A2.2.6 2003/4 Marketing expert questions on validity

Subsection 4.2.1 differentiates validity into two components: (1) truth and (2) completeness. Display A2.31 presents the 2003/4 audience marketing expert workshop questions and Display A2.32 presents the 2003/4 stand-in marketing expert workshop questions. Like the brander questionnaire, but in contrast to the 2002 and 2003 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaires, the 2004 audience marketing expert workshop questionnaire asked the emotion questions before the insight ones.

Display A2.31 2003/4 Audience marketing expert workshop questions: validity

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item	Component
8	In your view, are there any insights resulting from the constellation that seem valid according to marketing theory? If so, which?	None	Marketing-theoretical truth	Truth
9	In your view, are there any insights resulting from the constellation that do not seem valid according to marketing theory? If so, which?	None	Marketing-theoretical non-truth	Truth
10	Were any key elements lacking from the constellation? If, which and why?	None	Completeness	Completeness.

Display A2.32 presents the 2003/4 stand-in marketing expert workshop question concerning the validity dimension.

Display A2.32 2003/4 Stand-in marketing expert workshop question: validity

Nr.	Question	Change 2003/4	Item (= component)
11	Did you miss any key elements in the constellation? If, which and why?	Similar to 2003 nr. 8	Completeness.

Display A2.33 presents the 2003/4 marketing expert email question concerning the validity dimension.

Display A2.33 2003/4 Marketing expert email questions: validity

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item	Component
8	To what degree did you intuitively experience the information from both constellations as valid?	None	Intuitive truth	Truth.

Display A2.34 presents an overview of the number of questions per validity component in the 2003/4 marketing expert questionnaires.

Display A2.34 2003/4 Marketing expert question overview: validity

Component	Number of questions in audience workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in stand-in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Truth	2	-	1	3
Completeness	1	1	-	2
<i>Overall</i>	3	1	1	5

A2.2.7 2003/4 Marketing expert questions on reliability

Subsection 4.2.3 refers to reliability as covering three components: (1) coherence and (2) bias. Display A2.35 presents the 2003/4 audience marketing expert workshop questions regarding these two components.

Display A2.35 2003/4 Audience marketing expert workshop questions: reliability

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item (= component)
6	To what degree do you believe that the statements and behaviour of the brand elements stand-ins were logical and coherent?	Similar to 2003 nr. 5	Coherence
10	To what degree do you believe that the facilitator personality influenced both constellations?	Similar to 2003 nr. 9	Bias.

Display A2.36 presents the 2003/4 stand-in marketing expert workshop question on bias.

Display A2.36 2003/4 Stand-in marketing expert workshop question: reliability

Nr.	Question	Change 2003/4	Item (= component)
10	Did the facilitator give you adequate opportunity to provide your input on the constellation? If not, what would you have liked to add, and when would you have liked to do so?	Similar to 2003 nr. 7	Bias.

Display A2.37 presents an overview of the number of questions per reliability component in the 2003/4 marketing expert questionnaires.

Display A2.37 2003/4 Marketing expert question overview: reliability

Component	Number of questions in audience workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in stand-in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Coherence	-	-	1	1
Bias	-	1	1	2
<i>Overall</i>	-	1	1	3

A2.2.8 2003/4 Marketing expert questions on precision

Precision is considered in subsection 4.2.4 as covering two components: (1) verification and (2) ambiguity. Display A2.38 presents the 2003/4 marketing expert email questions concerning the precision dimension and Display A2.39 presents an overview of the number of questions per precision component in the 2003/4 marketing expert questionnaires.

The marketing expert workshop questionnaires did not include questions concerning precision.

Display A2.38 2003/4 Marketing expert email questions: precision

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item (= component)
6	To what degree do you believe that the information received from the two branding constellations can be interpreted unambiguously?	Similar to 2003 nr. 5	Ambiguity
7	To what degree do you believe that the information received from the two branding constellations is verifiable?	Similar to 2003 nr. 6	Verification.

Display A2.39 2003/4 Marketing expert question overview: precision

Component	Number of questions in audience workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in stand-in workshop questionnaire	Number of questions in email questionnaire	Overall
Verification	-	-	1	1
Unambiguity	-	-	1	1
Overall	-	-	2	2

A2.2.9 2003/4 Marketing expert questions on usefulness dimensions

Display A2.40 presents the questions of the audience marketing expert workshop questions and Display A2.41 the 2003/4 marketing expert email questions used to check the usefulness dimensions.

Display A2.40 2003/4 Audience marketing expert workshop questions: usefulness dimensions

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item
12	Was there anything in this constellation that particularly impressed you? If so, what?	None	Critical incident question
13a	Did this constellation provide any insight into the usefulness of the branding constellations methodology? If so, which?	None	Usefulness insight question
13b	Do you experience any emotion or intention regarding the branding constellations methodology at this moment? If so, which?	None	Usefulness emotion question.

Display A2.41 2003/4 Marketing expert email questions: usefulness dimensions

Nr.	Question	Changes 2003/4	Item
1	Is there anything in the two constellations that particularly appealed to you?	None	Satisfiers
2	Is there anything in the two constellations that you were dissatisfied with?	None	Dissatisfiers
3	Which of the two constellations appealed to you most/least?	Not asked in 2003	Most valued constellation
4	Is there anything in the reflections of the five participants on their branding constellation that particularly appealed you?	Similar to 2003 nr. 3	Most valued in reflection
5	Is there anything in these reflections that you were dissatisfied with?	Similar to 2003 nr. 4	Least valued in reflection.

This section presented the questionnaires employed in 2002 and in 2003/4.

Appendix A3 2002 Baby Food branding constellation

The Baby Food constellation is described rather extensively in this appendix to enhance understanding and to capture the dynamic unfolding of the branding constellation phenomenon.

Subsection A3.1 explains the structure of this appendix and subsection A3.2 describes the Baby Food brander's motivation. Subsection A3.3 covers the branding constellation introduction dialogue, subsection A3.4 the projection constellation, subsection A3.5 the critical intervention, and subsection A3.6 the vision constellation. Subsection A3.7 covers the overall description of the branding constellation. Section A3.8 presents the findings of the Baby Food branding constellation to the brander on relevance, and Subsection A3.9 closes this section with the relevance findings concerning the marketing experts.

A3.1 Introduction

The extensive description of the branding constellations' proceedings is limited to one: the Baby Food branding constellation. As the brander preferred to keep the name of the brand hidden, the name *Baby Food brand* is used in the description. Like Gminder (2006), every case was analysed using a similar protocol, in which three constellation moments were differentiated: the opening (projection) constellation, the critical intervention by the facilitator and the final (vision) constellation. This procedure is in line with the description of narrative play (Mook, 1998). Like Gminder, graphics were used to represent the spatial configurations. (Partial) descriptions of the Baby Food branding constellations were published by the researcher in the Dutch Journal of Marketing (2003), the German *Praxis der Systemaufstellung* (2003), and the English *The Knowing Field* (2007). In addition, (partial) descriptions can be found in Stam (2004/6), the facilitator of the constellation, and in *OnderwijsInnovatie* (the external magazine of the Open University of the Netherlands) by the journalist Obbink (2002) who attended the 2002 workshop. Display A3.1

shows the protocol of the extensive branding constellation description based on the case study approach.

Display A3.1 Protocol extensive branding constellation description

Aspects	Questions to be answered
1. Motivation	How did the brander come to do a constellation?
2. Introduction dialogue	What is the brander's problem and what are key elements in it?
3. Projection phase	How did the brander project these elements on people and how did the initial constellation look?
4. Critical intervention	What intervention by the facilitator made the most impression?
5. Vision constellation	How did the constellation end?
6. Brander on relevance	Which insights were gained by the brander?
7. Marketing experts on relevance	Which insights were gained by the marketing experts?

A3.2 2002 Baby Food brander's motivation

The Baby Food brand is one of many brands owned by a multinational company, which develops, produces, and sells a broad assortment of dairy and fruit brands to consumers, professional users and industrial customers. For almost sixty years, the Baby Food brand range has consisted of three milk products; one for babies from newborn until six months old, one for babies from six months to approximately a year and one for babies over a year old. The female brand manager - who joined this company in 2001 - was worried by the results of recent marketing research, which indicated that mothers lacked an emotional connection to the brand. In October 2002, the Baby Food brand's range was extended to cover pot food and porridge. While the brand manager developed a new advertising campaign to address this extension, she felt uneasy. Her financial manager, who was informed about the branding constellation thesis by the researcher, indicated to her the opportunity of doing a constellation on her advertising campaign. As this idea appealed to her, she joined the 2002 branding constellation workshop.

A3.3 2002 Baby Food brander's introduction dialogue

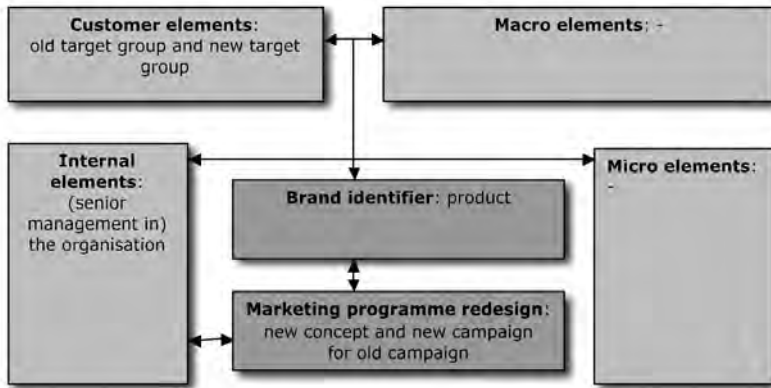
The facilitator and the workshop participants did not have any background information on the case at their disposal prior to the constellations. The technique was explained to the brander before the workshop by the researcher, mostly by email for transparency purposes. In the introduction dialogue the facilitator and the brander agreed that she would only mention the fact that her company produced baby food products; she did not bring up the baby food brand's name, to prevent the facilitator and the marketing experts from developing personal ideas on the branding problem.

The dialogue closed with the 'contract' question: "Will the new advertising campaign be a success? In other words, will it succeed in communicating the new extended position on the brand and improve the emotional connection of mothers to the brand?" As current key elements of the brand, they agreed to include stand-ins for: the (senior management in the) organisation, the product(s), the old target group (mothers), and the old campaign. Note the terminology of the brander: old target group and old campaign; especially, the stand-in of the old campaign did not like to be called 'old'; a more open terminology could have been 'current' campaign and 'current' target group.

They also agreed to add to the constellation later on: the new campaign, the new branding concept, and the new target group. Note that the brander did not make a difference between the 'old' milk products for babies and the new baby pot food for preschoolers, which would have been more in line with the other elements chosen. Note further that she did not take a stand-in for the 'old concept'. Display A3.2 presents the (implicit) Baby Food brander branding problem identification model.

Display A3.2 shows that the Baby Food brander did not include micro or macro elements in her branding problem.

Display A3.2 Baby Food brander's problem identification from a systems perspective



A3.4 2002 Baby Food branding constellation: projection phase

The projection phase of branding constellations consists of two parts as described in the main document in subsection 1.1.4:

1. *Element projection*: imbuing persons, objects, events or other elements with characteristics or meanings supposed to be derived from implicit emotions
2. *Systems projection* addressing the relationships between these elements by positioning them in the room opposite to each other.

Display A3.3 presents the element projection using four categories: marketing expert category, gender, age, and formality. Only gender is an accepted category in systems constellation literature (Lukesch, 2003).

Display A3.3 shows that all categories were involved as stand-ins. The brand manager chose a man for Organisation, Old-Campaign, and Product; and a woman for Old-Target-Group, New-Target-Group, New-Concept, and New-Campaign. All new elements were female while in the old situation only Target-Group was female. This is in line with her feedback that she thought that the old approach to the mothers was too male-oriented. Concerning age, most women participating in the 2002 workshop were in their thirties, so hardly any conclusions can be drawn here. Portraying Organisation, Product and Old-Target-Group as older than Old-Campaign,

Display A3.3 2002 Baby Food brander's element projection

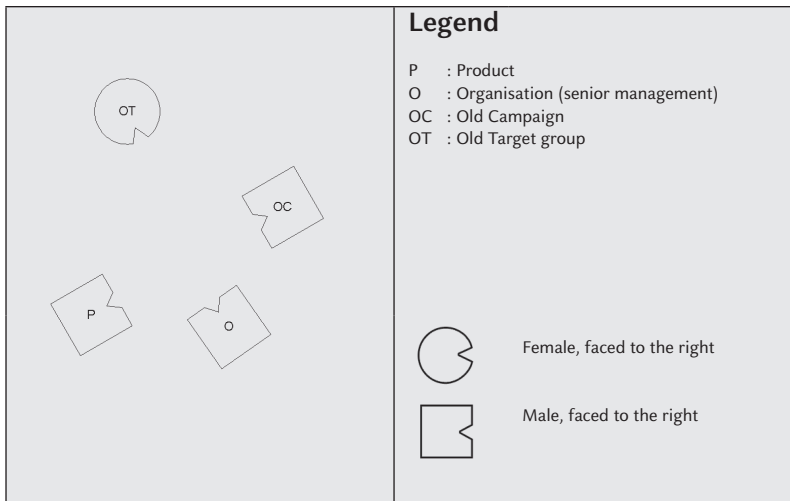
Element / Characteristic	Category	Gender	Age in years	Formality
(Senior management of) Organisation	Manager	Male	40 - 50	Very formally dressed
Product	Trainee	Male	40 - 50	Casually dressed
Old-Target-Group	Consultant	Female	40 - 50	Casually dressed
Old-Campaign	Consultant	Male	30 - 40	Moderately formally dressed
Concept	Trainee	Female	30 - 40	Moderately formally dressed
New-Target-Group	Researcher	Female	30 - 40	Very formally dressed
New-Campaign	Academic	Female	30 - 40	More formally dressed

seems rather logical as these elements have a longer history than Old-Campaign. The brander addressed Organisation and Old-Campaign as more formal than Product and New-Target-Group, and New-Campaign as more formal than Concept and Old-Target-Group. There is a gender difference between Old-Campaign and New-Campaign, and a formal disparity between Old-Target-Group and Product on one side and New-Target-Group on the other side.

Concerning the systems projection, the brander first set up four stand-ins: Organisation, Product, Old-Target-Group, and Old-Campaign. As she noticed that she put Organisation with his back to the others and this seemed to cause tension in the constellation, she turned him around. This move made Organisation feel better. Small movements on Product did not improve stability and thus the brand manager left it that way.

Display A3.4 presents the initial positions, within the thesis referred to as the *systems projection*.

Display A3.4 2002 Baby Food brander's systems projection



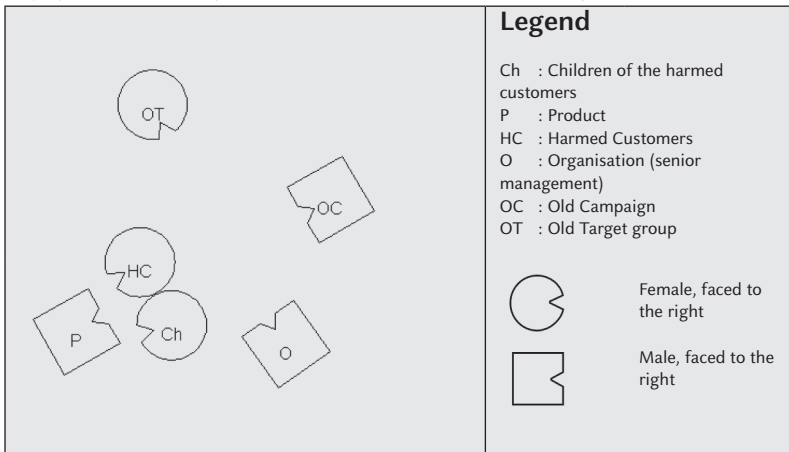
In the systems projection constellation shown in Display A3.4, Organisation had the feeling that Product wanted to stand in the middle and push him away. Product did not feel good and did not dare to look at Old-Target-Group. After taking a step backwards at the instigation of the facilitator, Product felt better and Organisation felt less threatened by Product. Product felt connected to Old-Campaign, while Old-Campaign wondered why he did not feel connected to Old-Target-Group, which he cognitively supposed to be logical. Old-Target-Group felt strong and felt like saying something like “Come on”, but ‘as nothing was coming,’ she preferred to do a step backwards.

A3.5 2002 Baby Food branding constellation’s critical intervention

Then, the facilitator asked the brander about the age of the product. Hearing the brander answer ‘about fifty to sixty years,’ Product reflected that he felt much older and wiser than the others. Next, the facilitator asked whether anything unfortunate had happened to the product in the past. As the brander stated that she did not know, the facilitator set up with her consent: Harmed-Customers. For a short moment, the facilitator brought Former-

Manager to the stage to say “Sorry” to the Harmed-Customers, but he could only say “I didn’t know”, which did not change much. The situation changed after the facilitator introduced Children-of-the-Harmed-Customers in the constellation. The intervention with the Harmed-Customers was considered critical by the brander as well as by the most marketing experts. Display A3.5 presents the core configuration of this critical intervention by the facilitator.

Display A3.5 2002 Baby Food Brander’s critical intervention configuration



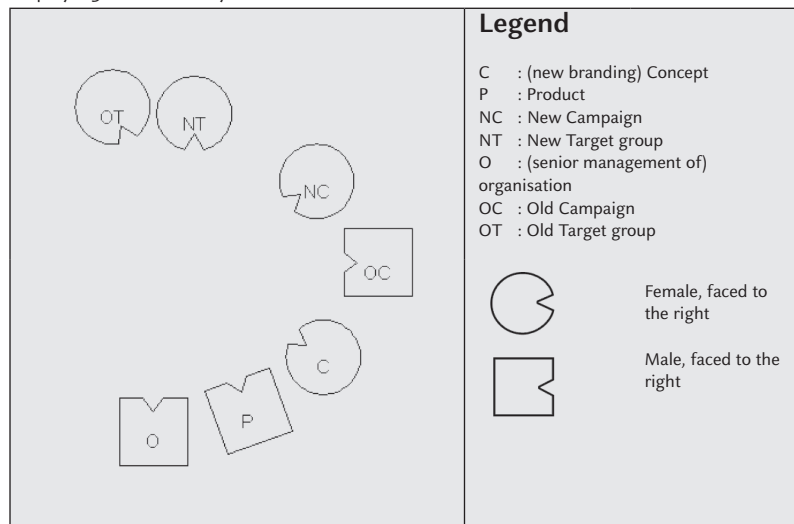
In Display A3.5, Harmed-Customers felt important and wanted to teach Product how to behave properly. Old-Product began to feel energy after the Children-Of-The-Harmed-Customers stated “We are OK. What arrogance to think that our health only depends on you.” This statement opened Product’s mind.

A3.6 2002 Baby Food branding constellation: vision phase

The process thus far had taken about an hour, including the introduction dialogue. Next, the brander set up Concept, New-Target-Group, and New-Campaign. The brand manager had trouble persuading Old-Campaign to sit down as he -as well as the other constellated elements- did not feel that he should leave the constellation. Organisation was willing to welcome

New-Campaign, but only if Old-Campaign could stay as well. Organisation wanted to have Concept close to him. Concept felt best when she was positioned next to Old-Campaign. New-Campaign felt strong and wanted to make contact with New-Target-Group, but to do this she needed a more firm Product. Product was a bit afraid of the new elements because they were more demanding than the old ones. Old-Target-Group liked New-Campaign as she brought new energy into the constellation. Old-Target-Group and New-Target-Group felt best next to each other and they were happy to see Old-Campaign behind New-Campaign, but they would prefer a firmer Product too. In the facilitator's view New-Product was missing. However, there was neither time nor energy left to set up this element. Furthermore, constellating New-Product would extend the branding constellation beyond the contract question according to the facilitator. Display A3.6 illustrates the final configuration, the *vision constellation*. 'Vision' is placed here between quotes as an optimal configuration was not reached.

Display A3.6 2002 Baby Food 'vision' constellation



On Display A3.6, the brander reported that the constellation had brought up many new questions for her to deal with and an idea of the direction in

which she could take action to resolve her branding problem; she finished by saying that she felt “confused, but at a different level.”

A3.7 Baby Food branding constellation description

Display A3.7 presents the Baby Food branding constellation description based on the video transcription and the stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaires to enhance understanding of the findings.

Display A3.7 2002 Baby Food branding constellation description

Baby Food branding constellation description

The Baby Food brand manager questions whether the new brand concept, the new target group, and the new campaign will enhance the brand that she is responsible for. As current core elements in this question, she selects (the senior management of the) Organisation, Product, Old-Target-Group and Old-Campaign. She positions them in a kind of star formation, with the Old-Target-Group at the far end. Organisation is initially positioned with his back to the others. As the brander notices that this does not feel right for Organisation, she turns him around which improves the situation for Organisation. Product does not feel well either, but as several small attempts at repositioning do not change this, she leaves it this way. Old-Target-Group would like to make contact but the others are too far away. Product feels wiser than the others. As the facilitator gets the impression that something important has happened to Product in the past, he asks the brand manager about this. When she does not know, he positions Harmed-Customers and Children-of-the-Harmed-Customers. When Product hears Children-of-the-Harmed-Customers say that they are OK and that they rebuke him for his arrogance in making himself too important in their health process, he becomes more humble and begins to feel energy for action. Next, the brand manager places the new elements: Concept, New-Campaign, and New-Target-Group. It turns out that it is difficult for her to get Old-Campaign out of the constellation. Also all positioned elements, including Old-Campaign, report that he should stay. Organisation wants to have Concept close to him and is willing to welcome New-Campaign if Old-Campaign can stay as well. New-Target-Group feels best next to Old-Target-Group and is happy to see Old-Campaign behind New-Campaign. Product is a bit afraid of the new elements as they are much more demanding than the old ones. Concept feels best when she stands close to Old-Campaign. Old-Target-Group is happy with New-Campaign as she brings new energy into the constellation. New-Campaign feels good and wants to make contact with the target groups, but to do this well she needs a firmer Product.

Display A3.7 shows that New-Concept, New-Target-Group, and New-Campaign fitted rather well into the configuration of Organisation, Product, and Old-Target-Group. However, Old-Campaign was too powerful to be removed from the branding constellation. In addition, the branding constellation asked for a former Old-Product. However, Old-Concept and New-Product seemed to be lacking unjustly in the branding constellation.

A3.8 2002 Baby Food brander on the relevance dimension

In the brander workshop questionnaire completed directly after the constellation, the Baby Food brander stated that she had an answer to her question but that there were some conditions that needed improving, such as the relationship between the concept and the campaign. Furthermore, she was unclear what to do with the product. She felt confirmed in her belief that the concept fitted the product, which she had been unsure about before the constellation. She was unsure how the product and the concept related to the old campaign. She concluded that the product felt misplaced in the old situation and would have preferred to be the leader in the system. She especially valued the holist perspective and the emotional approach complementary to the regular reductionistic perspective and rational approach, and the combination of getting confirmation on certain relationships and new questions on others.

In the main document, subsection 6.1 goes deeper into her insights and compares them to the other 2002 branders. Display A3.8 presents her one-minute reflection at the end of the 2002 workshop, which is in line with the statements on the questionnaires.

Display A3.8 shows that she valued the constellation. She most appreciated the opportunity to simulate new elements in the branding system.

Baby Food brander's one-minute reflection in 2002 reflection round

I always have had a kind of internal paradox, between being very interested in the woolly, free-floating soft approach - like the branding constellation - and the quantitative one, because it is also nice to be able to name things, measure them, remeasure them and find exactly the same thing. Thus I started with the personal question 'Will it make me feel good about the soft approach or not?' I experienced the constellation as very good. As a marketing person, I think branding constellations are relevant not for proving things or making choices, but for developing new questions and new insights, which enable you at a later stage to make better choices. Someone has already asked: 'What does it mean for marketing research?' I think it has complementary value leading to better decisions. That is how I see it. What I would like to do with it is indeed something like the constellation that took place this morning. Many things happened of which I thought "Yes, that's it exactly." such as the uneasy feelings I had about the distance between the consumer and the product in the old situation. What struck me was the possibility of adding a new element that would create a situation of greater closeness without excluding anything. That I really liked. What bothers me now is what happened in the past. When I go back now, will I talk about this with my colleagues? Certainly. In the future, I would like to do another constellation and bring a colleague, because I believe that one should value looking at various situations and questioning how they came to be that way, so we can act preventively. Overall, I found the branding constellation very challenging.

On January 3rd 2003 she stated in the brander email questionnaire that the branding constellation especially generated new questions, confirmations, and reconsiderations, such as:

- Could there be something wrong with the product?
- The old and the new target group can stand next to each other in the same way as the concept and the product.
- Should the old campaign really be terminated?

She further felt confirmed in her belief in the power of the new marketing concept for the current product and also in the power of the old campaign in relation to the old target group. The constellation made her think beyond figures and marketing research results, and made her aware that she herself was part of the branding system. She felt like going on with the new campaign but with some important new questions.

Display A3.9 presents the five-minute-reflection of the brand manager two years later on the 2004 November marketing expert workshop.

Display A3.9 Baby Food Brander's five-minute reflection in 2004

Baby Food Brander's five-minute reflection in 2004

Two years ago I worked for a big dairy factory in Holland. We were about to re-launch the brand, and more specifically a new campaign. The question we had was: Is the new campaign likely to reach the new target group? I did a constellation that concerned many elements, such as: the product, the company, the old campaign, the new campaign, the old users, and the new users. And it turned out there was a kind of secret of which I did not know. There were really very many insights. Many things evoked questions that made me think: 'What can I do with that?' As far as I am concerned there were four very important insights that have stayed in my mind over the past two years. The first was the large distance between the product and the users' group. Despite what changed in the constellation that distance remained. For me, this is still something that occupies me and it makes me want to do something about it. The brand is about baby food, and you can imagine that the distance between the product and the user group should be small, smaller than with every other user group you might analyse. This still keeps me busy. The second insight was that the new campaign was repressing the old campaign, which was not acceptable for the old campaign. In hindsight, I think the old campaign was somewhat right as the new campaign has taken on many characteristics of the old campaign in the last two years. We had gone a little astray with the new campaign. So, this was a valuable retrospective insight. The third insight was that the stand-in for the senior management in the organisation was standing in the centre during the whole constellation process, repeatedly demanding a central role. I can't do much with this, apart from keep it in mind. The fourth and last insight has impressed me most. The secret started apologizing to the users' group for the fact that she was a secret. I think that this is something that happened in the past and is no longer bothering us nor asking for action, and that is that as far as I am concerned. So in total, there were four insights of which the distance between product and the users' group is still open and needs to be resolved. What I notice every time I am discussing this is that the picture of their distance keeps coming back to me. I find that remarkable. That is what I wanted to say about my reflections on my insights.

Display A3.9 shows that after two years the brander still valued her branding constellation. Many constellation pictures remained in her mind and

influenced her branding strategy over the last two years. However, there were also many images that she still could not understand.

Comparing the reflection two years after the constellation to the description based on the transcription of the video recording, they seem to match well. The brander's precise recollection of her constellation is an indication of the impression it made on her. It is understandable from her position as a brander that she did not refer to the product recall in her public reflection and called it 'a secret that has been dealt with adequately in the past'. The Baby Food branding constellation was analysed by Harrewijn (2006) as part of her marketing thesis at the Open University of the Netherlands to enhance the reliability of the branding constellation thesis findings. Display A3.10 presents the part of the reflection of the brand manager in which she reflects on her branding constellation.

Display A3.10 Baby Food brander's email reflection in 2006

Brander's email reflection in 2006

Although 'impact' is not a factor/parameter taken into account, I think this could be grounds for further research. The impact to me was very high. Almost 4 years have passed since the constellation and I still remember most of the insights I gained. Unfortunately, it is too late for me to use these in my daily work, as I am no more a brand manager for this company. The added value lies within the emotional way of approaching brand problems and solutions. I am convinced that emotion in branding is crucial, and I thus think that the constellation can increasingly be used as a tool for brand managers to use in their marketing methods.

Display A3.10 shows that also after four years, the brander still values her branding constellation. She thinks that its impact was high and that the impact is a neglected criterion in this study.

A3.9 2002 Marketing experts on the relevance dimension

This subsection covers the insights gained by the marketing expert regarding the Baby Food branding constellation and the emotions evoked in the stand-ins. As indicated in subsection 5.5.2, five categories of marketing experts were differentiated: users, marketing academics, marketing researchers, marketing consultants, and marketing managers. Display A3.11 presents the insights by the four users, the branders who did a branding constellation themselves and the deduced ratings therefrom.

Display A3.11 User relevance ratings: insight component (-2; +2)

Users	Brander's question perception	Insight
Baby Food brander	Are the new concept and the new campaign the right way to approach the target group?	There are quite a few relations that need to be improved such as concept and campaign; also what to do with the product?
KPN Mobile brander	Do I dare to go for a new campaign; does the management dare this?	Yes, management was committed [+2]
Franchise brander	Do I need to change my communication message?	Yes, but reconsider the match between product and market [+2]
Cake brander	Can I intensify the relationship with the target group?	Through the new concept, the new campaign can obtain a more realistic relationship with the target group. [+2]
Mean		+2.0

The users were very positive about the insight component of the relevance dimension. However, their perceptions of the Baby Food brander's problem question and the branding constellation answer were broad, although not competitive with the interpretation by the Baby Food brander. While the Baby Food brander reported that her question was 'Is the new concept and the new campaign the right way to approach the new target group?', the KPN brander questioned the courage to start a new campaign (in line with his question to go on or stop with the sub brand KPN Mobile (appendix A3), the Franchise brander thought of the problem as a change in communication message (in line with his question to change the brand



name logo; see also appendix A3), and the Cake brander wondered about intensifying the relationships with the customers (in line with his branding constellation on the special position of the cake fans). Overall, the branding constellation insights by the users of the Baby Food branding constellation were consistent with their formulation of the Baby Food branding problem that some conditions need improvement such as the relationship between the concept and the campaign and what to do with the product. However, one might argue that ‘What Peter says about Paul, says more about Peter than it does about Paul.’

Display A3.12 presents the insights regarding the Baby Food branding problem of the eight marketing academics that filled out the audience marketing expert workshop questionnaire and the deduced ratings therefrom.

Similar to the users, the marketing academics were very positive about insight. The marketing academic perceptions of the Baby Food brander’s problem question and the reported insights were broad but not competitive with the Baby Food brander’s perception. Like with the users, their overall insights were more consistent with their perceptions of the branding problem than with the insights gained by the other marketing academics.

Display A3.12 Marketing academic relevance ratings: insight component (-2; +2)

Academics	Brander's question perception	Insight
Baby Food brander	Are the new concept and the new campaign the right way to approach the target group?	There are quite a few relations that need to be improved such as concept and campaign; also what to do with the product?
B	Searching for a new target group, which covers the old and the modern conceptualisation	Degree of overlap between the old and the new target group was not taken into account [+2]
C (New-Campaign)	How do I reach the target group I want to reach?	New, different product; adapt the product [+2]
F	To what degree does the new campaign harmonise with the past?	I doubt this, too little resonance [+2]
M	Testing the insights about the repositioning	You should not really change anything [+2]
P	Match old/new target group and concept-brand-product-company? What has to be taken into account in the transition of the old to the new brand position and how to deal with this?	'Find a balance', the new target group does not fit in. [+2]
R	How do I get all elements in harmony to make my policy into a success?	Which elements do I have to adapt in what direction [+2]
S	Positioning of the new campaign in the direction of the new target group?	Take the sensitivities into account [+2]
T	What will be the effect of the new campaign on the target group and the organisation/product?	A good effect when the old values are valued and a product change / renewal take place. [+2]
Overall mean		+2.0
Audience mean		+2.0
Stand-in mean		+2.0

Display A3.13 presents the insights into the Baby Food branding problem of the attending five marketing researchers and the deduced ratings therefrom.

Display A3.13 Marketing researcher relevance ratings: insight component
(-2; +2)

Researchers	Brander's question perception	Insight
Baby Food brander	Are the new concept and the new campaign the right way to approach the target group?	There are quite a few relations that need to be improved such as concept and campaign; also what to do with the product?
A	Do the values representing the brand product accord with the values that play a key role in the mother-child relationship?	I do not know the new concept, but it is clear that the old concept/positioning still do [+2]
De (stand-in New-Target-Group)	Can I reach the new target group (solely) with a new campaign?	To reach the new target group, power is needed: a strong campaign and a strong branded product [+2]
H	How should the new campaign look?	Parallel to the old campaign or a new product [+2]
L	Does the new concept reanimate the current proposition?	No, the new concept does not really match the current product. [+2]
V	Is a repositioning of the current brand needed?	Which brand elements play a role in a possible repositioning? [-2]
Overall mean		+1.2
Audience mean		+1.0
Stand-in mean		+2.0

The audience marketing researchers were moderately positive about insight, while the stand-in marketing researcher was very positive. Like with the users and marketing academics, their insights were more consistent with their perceptions of the branding problem than with the insight gained by the other marketing researchers.

Display A3.14 presents the insights of the attending four marketing consultants and the deduced ratings therefrom.

Display A3.14 Marketing consultant relevance ratings: insight component (-2; +2)

Consultants	Brander's question perception	Insight
Baby Food brander	Are the new concept and the new campaign the right way to approach the target group?	There are quite a few relations that need to be improved such as concept and campaign; also what to do with the product?
Do (stand-in Old-Target-Group)	We have a new concept, a new campaign, a new target group, but what does this mean for our positioning?	New questions: product differentiation, new company divisions? New target group and new campaign are very welcome. [+2]
G	How to underpin our new strategy?	There is something going on a deeper level that has not been seen yet. [+1]
S (stand-in Old-Campaign)	I want to focus on a new target group, am I in the right direction with my current ideas?	No, the system shows that you have to work from the existing strengths and work integrally. [+2]
W (stand-in Harmed-Customers)	Is the tune of the new campaign right?	I am happy that the new concept is a hit; the new campaign needs a closer look [+2]
<i>Overall mean</i>		+1.8
<i>Audience mean</i>		+1.0
<i>Stand-in mean</i>		+2.0

Similar to the marketing researchers, the audience marketing consultant was moderately positive about insight, while the stand-in marketing consultants were very positive. Their insights were in line with those of the users, marketing academics, and marketing researchers. Interestingly, three out of the four marketing consultants were invited to be stand-ins, while the other marketing consultant was invited to be stand-in in the KPN Mobile branding constellation.

Display A3.15 presents the insights into the Baby Food branding problem of the four attending marketing managers and the deduced ratings therefrom.

Display A3.15 Marketing manager relevance ratings: insight component (-2;+2)

Managers	Brander's question perception	Insight
Baby Food brander	Are the new concept and the new campaign the right way to approach the target group?	There are quite a few relations that need to be improved such as concept and campaign; also what to do with the product?
D	How can I fill out my repositioning optimally?	New concept closer to the product and maybe adapt the product. [+2]
H (stand-in organisation)	To what degree does the new campaign reach the new target group?	Be relative about the role of new campaigns and take the old values into account. [+2]
V	Repositioning the brand	No unambiguous answer. [-2]
W	How do I reload the brand?	- [-2]
<i>Overall mean</i>		0.0
<i>Audience mean</i>		-0.7
<i>Stand-in mean</i>		+2.0

The audience marketing managers were moderately negative about insight, while the stand-in marketing manager was very positive. Two of the three audience marketing managers did not report an insight into the branding problem. The insights reported by the other two marketing managers were in line with the insights reported by the users, and the marketing academics, researchers, and consultants.

Display A3.16 presents a review of the insights by the stand-in marketing experts and the deduced ratings therefrom.

Display A3.16 Stand-in marketing expert relevance ratings: insight component (-2; +2)

Stand-in marketing experts	Brander's question perception	Insight
Baby Food brander	Are the new concept and the new campaign the right way to approach the target group?	There are quite a few relations that need to be improved such as concept and campaign; also what to do with the product?
H (Organisation)	To what degree does the campaign reach new target groups?	Be relative about the role of new campaigns and take the old values into account. [+2]
S (Old-Campaign)	I want to focus on a new target group, will this work?	No, the system shows that you have to work from the existing strengths and work integrally. [+2]
Do (Old-Target Group)	We have a new concept, a new campaign and a new target group. What does this mean to our positioning?	New questions: product differentiation, new company divisions? New target group and new campaign are very welcome. [+2]
W (Harmed-Customers)	Is the focus on the new target group, the new concept and the new campaign, the right way?	I am happy that the new concept is a hit, the new campaign needs a closer look. [+2]
C (New-Campaign)	How do I reach the target group I want to reach?	New, different product; adapt the product [+2]
De (New-Target-Group)	Can I reach the new target group (solely) with a new campaign?	To reach the new target group, power is needed: a strong campaign and a strong branded product. [+2]
<i>Mean</i>		+2.0

Display A3.17 shows that all stand-in marketing experts were very positive about insight. The stand-in marketing expert insights were more in line with the Baby Food brander's insight than the audience marketing expert insights. Surprisingly, the stand-in marketing expert perceptions were not clearly connected to their roles during the branding constellation as is often reported in systems constellation literature (Lehmann, 2006).

Summarising, Display A3.18 presents the insight ratings for by role and category.

Display A3.17 Insight Scores Overview per Role and Category (-2; +2)

Marketing expert categories (N: audience/stand-ins)	Audience means (18)	Stand-in means (6)	Weighted overall means (24)
Users (3/0)	+2.0		+2.0
Academics (7/1)	+2.0	+2.0	+2.0
Researchers (4/1)	+1.0	+2.0	+1.2
Consultants (1/3)	+1.0	+2.0	+1.8
Managers (3/1)	-0.7	+2.0	0.0
<i>Weighted means (18/6)</i>	+1.3	+2.0	+1.5

Overall, the marketing experts were very positive about insight. However, the marketing managers were moderately negative. The stand-in marketing experts were more positive about insight than the audience marketing experts.

Next, the stand-in marketing expert perceptions on emotion per branding constellations phase are presented in Display A3.18.

The stand-in marketing experts were very positive about emotion. However, only Organisation and Product felt balanced in the vision constellation, while Old-Target-Group, New-Concept, New-Target-Group, and New-Campaign thought the Baby Food branding constellation was not finished yet.

This appendix provided an illustration of the analysis regarding the usefulness of the Baby Food branding constellation, to enhance the understanding of the thesis findings.

Display A3.18 Stand-in marketing expert relevance ratings: emotion (-2; +2)

Stand-in marketing experts	Projection phase	Intervention phase	Vision phase
Baby Food brander	Uncertain, would have liked to see it from above [+1]	In beginning little anxious, during repositionings ever more curious and positive tension, especially on the confrontation between harmed customers and their children [+2]	Unanswered question I have to think about [0]
H (Organisation)	Agitation, tension, indifference and amazement; intention to fall over and leave [+2]	Good view on the others, eye-contact [+1]	Rest, in balance [+2]
S (Old-Campaign)	Cold hands, spasm in calf; not nice to be the old campaign [+2]	In front of and next to New-Campaign I got spasms [+1]	Not applicable
Do (Old-Target Group)	Arrogance, excitement, boredom, distant, indifference; inclination to do a step backward or sideward [+2]	The situation improved, when Product felt better and stood next to me; this changed when New-Target-Group came to the stage [+2]	Not really different; the constellation was not finished yet [0]
W (Harmed-Customers)	Not applicable	Feelings of warmth and strength; having come to terms with the anger; good-humoured after having said it is OK now and that the past is not important anymore; freedom from care [+2]	Not applicable
C (New-Campaign)	Feelings of strength [+1]	When I stood with my back towards the target group, I did not like that [+1]	I would like to see New-Product; Old-Product is not strong enough for me [+2]
De (New-Target-Group)	Tension, agitation, curiousness; inclination to wait and see, but also to contribute [+2]	First repositioning made me feel able to contribute [+1]	Still feeling tense, but less than before. [+1]
Mean	+1.8	+1.3	+1.3

Appendix A4 KPN Mobile, Franchise, Sigma, Online Broker, Magazine, and Consultancy branding constellations descriptions

To enhance intuitive understanding of the findings, this appendix describes the six branding constellations that took place in addition to the 2002 Baby Food branding constellation presented in appendix A3: the 2002 KPN mobile branding constellation (A4.1), the 2002 Franchise branding constellation (A4.2), the 2003 Sigma branding constellation (A4.3), the 2003 Online Broker branding constellation (A4.4), the 2004 Magazine branding constellation (A4.5), and the 2004 Consultancy branding constellation (A4.6). The descriptions are based on the video transcription, the experiences of the stand-ins reported in the stand-in marketing expert workshop questionnaires, descriptions by students in their Masters' theses, and descriptions by the facilitator in his books on systems constellations.

A4.1 2002 KPN Mobile branding constellation

Display A4.1 presents the second 2002 branding constellation concerning the marketing manager of KPN Mobile. A similar description can be found in Van Mechelen (2005) and in Stam (2004/6).

Display A4.1 shows that the core message of the KPN Mobile branding constellation was that KPN-Mobile subbrand was more connected to its 'competitors' than to its KPN-Telecom parent-brand, whereas the KPN-Telecom-Customers preferred an endorsement branding policy. Above all, the relationship between KPN-Telecom and KPN-Mobile needed improvement. In the literature this phenomenon is referred to as the crown jewels spinout (Lord, Debethizy, & Wager, 2005). It indicates that the innovation assets were spun out that were -in hindsight- too close to the parent's core; carving out a good chunk of the parent's potential future. This is often followed by regret, reconsiderations, and eventually attempted 'recall' of the spinout - as in the KPN case. Interestingly, the major Dutch telecom companies were convicted by the Dutch Competition Authority

2002 KPN Mobile branding constellation description

The problem question the KPN Mobile brander formulates in the introduction dialogue with the facilitator is 'Is it possible for KPN Mobile to stand next to KPN?' He starts with setting up KPN-Telecom, KPN-Mobile, and (the sixteen million Dutch) KPN-Telecom-Customer in a kind of triangle, with KPN-Telecom at a rather long distance, and KPN-Mobile and KPN-Telecom-Customer facing each other at a clearly shorter distance. In this projection constellation KPN-Telecom does not feel good and he has the feeling that KPN-Telecom-Customer does not trust him. To KPN-Telecom-Customer, KPN-Telecom is indeed not dynamic enough, but KPN-Mobile is too offensive in his opinion. KPN-Mobile feels good, regardless of the fact that he feels that KPN-Telecom-Customer is passive towards him and that KPN-Telecom is a bit moody in his opinion. Then the brander brings the competitors to the stage, to begin with Competitor1 [Ben], who is placed on the left hand side of KPN-Mobile. Both KPN-Telecom-Customer and KPN-Mobile are happy with Competitor1 [Ben] coming to the stage, while it makes KPN-Telecom feel even more miserable. Then Competitor2 [Vodafone] is positioned by the brander on the left hand side of Competitor1 [Ben]. He feels very offensive and great. No one is pleased by this. KPN-Telecom wants to stand behind KPN-Mobile, but to KPN-Mobile this does not bring him anything. Then, Competitor3 [Dutchtone & O2] is placed by the brander on the left hand side of Competitor2 [Vodafone]. KPN-Telecom-Customer is more attracted to KPN-Mobile when KPN can be seen in the background, but his primary focus is on Competitor1 [Ben]. He feels the competitors are connected in a 'monstrous alliance'. KPN-Mobile confirms this and states that he feels that he and his competitors are like 'a pack of wolves'. The relationship between KPN-Mobile and KPN-Telecom improves as the facilitator asks KPN-Mobile to tell KPN-Telecom that he appreciates the role KPN-Telecom played in his development, and asks KPN-Telecom to tell KPN-Mobile that he will let go of his parenting behaviour.

(NMA) in February 2003 for making price agreements in 2001 (Adformatie, 2003). This suggests that the core idea of the constellation about the competitors being a 'pack of wolves' might be truer than the KPN brander was -understandably- willing to admit. Three months later, the decision was made to bring a new no-nonsense youth subbrand with an own name rather than the current subbrand with the descriptive name. Simyo was introduced in 2005.

A4.2 Franchise branding constellation

The third 2002 branding constellation concerned the branding problem of the Dutch brander of a global franchise company concerning their name logo problem on a corporate level: Does it need an update? An anonymous description of this case was published in the Journal of Brand Management (2007). To enhance intuitive understanding, the brander consented that this appendix revealed the name of this company: MultiCopy. Box A1 presents the 2002 MultiCopy name logo that formed the core of his branding issue.

The logo consists of two lines of text. The top line is the word "MULTICOPY" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The bottom line is the tagline "DRUKWERK • KOPIEEN • DIGITAAL NETWORK" in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font, with three bullet points separating the words.

Box A1 2002 MultiCopy Name Logo

Box A1 shows that the 2002 MultiCopy name logo consisted of a name and three descriptive terms in the tagline: Printing, Copying, and Digital Network. The Dutch MultiCopy brander did two branding constellations on the Dutch situation: the first in June 2002 in the lay marketing workshop and the second in the November 2002 marketing expert workshop. Display A4.2 presents the June 2002 MultiCopy branding constellation description of the marketing-lay workshop. This description is needed to understand the November 2002 branding constellation in the marketing expert workshop, presented in Display A4.2.

June 2002 MultiCopy branding constellation description

In the June 2002 MultiCopy constellation dialogue with the facilitator the Dutch MultiCopy brander questions whether the tagline in their brand name logo needs an update. First, he sets up Brand-Name and SME (Small and Medium sized Enterprises)-Customer. Because Brand-Name is focused on something else, the facilitator brings Original-Owner [De Bijenkorf] to the stage, which is appreciated by both. Next, Corporate-Customer, Franchiser, and Franchisee are brought to the stage. The bossy Franchiser irritates Franchisee. As trying a new position for Franchiser does not improve the situation, the facilitator takes Franchiser out of the branding constellation. From this position the facilitator asks Franchiser to set up the -coded- elements of the current tagline. He positions Prue [code name for Printing] in the centre on the right hand side of Corporate-Customer, Conny [code name for Copying] at the outer border and Diana [code name for Digital Network] close to Brand-Name. Prue [Printing] and Diana [Digital Network] are acceptable to the other stand-ins, while Conny [Copying] is not. Prue [Printing] feels a very stable factor, and she has a positive influence on all. Next, the three tagline elements are replaced by a new one, coded as Debora. The facilitator positions Debora [New-Tagline] on Diana's [Digital Network] position. Debora [New-Tagline] does not feel accepted. Then, Franchisee asks Franchiser to support him in this transition and to stand between her and Brand-Name. They still need to work on their relationship, but Franchisee realizes he cannot do without Franchiser in this transition process. To the other elements, for Debora [New-Tagline] to be accepted, Diana [Digital Network]) and Prue [Printing] need to be back in.

Display A4.2 shows that the core message of the 2002 June MultiCopy branding constellation in the marketing-lay workshop was that changing the tagline might improve the relationship with the franchisees, which was the core branding problem in the constellation. Display A4.3 presents the MultiCopy branding constellation description of the November 2002 marketing expert workshop.

November 2002 MultiCopy branding constellation description

In the November 2002 marketing expert-forum branding constellation dialogue with the facilitator the MultiCopy marketing director questions whether their brand name and/or their service-offering need an update. Initially, the brander sets up Brand-Name, Service-Offering, Customer, Franchisee, and Franchiser. Service-Offering and Franchisee are positioned behind Brand-Name opposite Customer. Franchiser is standing sideways and feels he needs to control everything. Customer feels too close and is allowed by the facilitator to take a step backwards. This brings commotion to the other elements, including an argument between Franchiser and Franchisee about who is to blame for this distancing. Next, the facilitator places Brand-Name next to Customer, which is appreciated by all. Then, he positions Franchisee in front of them, exploding the conflict between Franchiser and Franchisee. The constellation of New-Name instead of the Brand-Name is definitely not considered a solution by all, including New-Name. When Franchiser wants to take control of the constellation proceedings, the facilitator turns him around. This makes Franchisee and Customer feel more relaxed. The facilitator forms a square consisting of Customer, Franchisee, Brand-Name, and Service-Offering. Now, Alternative-Services and even New-Services seem to offer an opportunity for enhancing this subsystem. However, Franchiser is excluded.

Display A4.3 shows that the core message of the MultiCopy branding constellation in the November 2002 marketing expert workshop is in line with the core message of the MultiCopy branding constellation in the June 2002 lay marketing workshop: improving the relationship between the franchiser and the franchisees is the core branding task. In the June 2002 constellation the MultiCopy brand name is fine, and the 2002 November constellation shows that a new name will not bring anything.

A4.3 2003 Sigma branding constellation

Display A4.4 presents the description of the 2003 Sigma branding constellation that took more than two hours; almost double that of the other constellations.

2003 Sigma branding constellation description

The 2003 female Sigma brand manager -accompanied by her boss, the male Sigma marketing manager- wonders what will be the effects of 'generic availability' (extending the Sigma brand to the Do-It-Yourself-markets) and 'select dealership', as well as the effects of the current positioning statement and two alternate ones. She first sets up three elements in a kind of triangle: Brand-Retailer (dealers who have blending machines on which they can blend only her paints brand), Paints-Retailer (dealers that have blending machines that can be used for several paints brands) and Customer (in the dialogue called 'creatives'). Next, she positions Brand-Name on the cross of the perception lines between Customer and Brand-Retailer. The marketing manager says that he would have positioned them similarly. He also reveals that the brand name is Sigma and states that to him the current brand Histor is missing. From this moment on the abstract name 'brand' is changed to 'Sigma' in the naming of all elements. Sigma-Retailer (previously called Brand-Retailer) feels that Customer is far away. Paints-Retailer does not feel connected to the others. Customer feels connected to Sigma and wants to move towards her. Sigma feels a heavy burden and all eyes pointed at her. Doing a step backwards has a positive effect on her and Customer but the constellation remains at a low level of energy. Then, the facilitator asks the marketing manager to set up Histor, which he positions next to Sigma. There is tension between Histor and Sigma as they feel they are standing too close. However, they also feel complementary. Histor wants to move closer to Customer. This move energises the constellation. The facilitator then questions the brand manager on whether someone has left the company who was responsible for the Histor brand. When she indicates that this is the case, the facilitator asks her to bring this person to the stage. She positions Old-Histor-Manager next to Customer. Old-Histor-Manager brings energy into the constellation and is valued by Histor, Sigma and Customer. She prefers to have Sigma a bit closer and she thinks that she can manage with Customer, Sigma and Histor, and does not really need the others. Next, the facilitator asks the brand manager to set up General-Manager. General-Manager wants Old-Histor-Manager out. As Histor dislikes this, General-Manager realises that he should see Histor apart from Old-Histor-Manager. Then, 'generic availability' is added by introducing Builder-Merchant, who brings a boost of energy into the constellation. Especially Histor attracts him but he would also like to be closer to Sigma, although he feels some tension towards her too. General-Manager is shocked that this move makes him lose all control, while he thought he had it all worked out fine. As Sigma-Retailer agrees that this loosens the contact with General-Manager, the facilitator repositions Builder-Merchant next to Sigma-Retailers and moves the marketing manager personally into the constellation on the former position of Builder-Merchant position. This intervention is appreciated by General-Manager, Sigma, Sigma-Retailer and the marketing manager.

However, Builder-Merchant's energy is gone and thus the facilitator gets him out of the constellation. Customer is really irritated as he feels locked out, cynically stating "This they call marketing manager". General-Manager decides to leave it to the marketing manager to improve things. The facilitator invites Customer to join the Sigma circle but Customer feels they should come to him. Finally, the brand manager wants to see the effects of setting up Select-Dealership. However, he brings no energy into the constellation. As the constellation is running out of time and energy, the facilitator quickly positions respectively Proposition-A (Sigma, the paints brand in Dutch 'Sigma: het schildersmerk' and Proposition-B (the paints used by your painter, in Dutch 'de verf van uw schilder'). Neither Proposition-A and Proposition-B bring much. Then he tests a new proposition, Proposition-C, as well as Current-Proposition. As neither brings much, the facilitator ends the constellation.

Display A4.4 2003 Sigma branding constellation description

Display A4.4 shows that in the Sigma branding constellation, distribution through the builders' merchants brought a lot of energy, but also diminished the power of the Sigma organisation in the market, which is generally acknowledged in marketing theory. In the constellation -as well as in reality according to the brand manager- the internal struggle between Sigma and Histor got more attention than the connection to the customer ('creatives' in the terms of the brand manager). The Sigma retailers had an important position in the constellation, in contrast to the retailers who also sold other paints brands. The current proposition as well as the alternative ones did not bring much. However, these were constellated after two hours and thirteen minutes by the facilitator, and at this moment most energy and time were gone from the branding constellation.

A4.4 2003 Online Broker branding constellation

Display A4.5 presents the second branding constellation in the 2003 workshop concerning the branding problem of the Online Broker marketing manager.

2003 Online Broker branding constellation description

The core question of the Online Broker marketing manager is: "Which new group of customers can be attracted with the new service?" When the facilitator asks "Who has invented this new to-be-introduced service" the marketing manager responds that this person is of no importance to the system. The facilitator responds "We can only do a constellation if we think about this inventor as important, whether or not he is set up." Marketing manager writes the specification of the four potential target groups on the white board, hardly readable for the marketing experts.

He first sets up: Brand (name including colour red), Directors, Marketing-Manager, Current-Target-Group, and New-Service. After the brander has set up these five elements in a kind of circle, the facilitator asks him for a check. The brander then moves Marketing-Manager and Current-Target-Group closer to the others, turns New Service around with her face outwards and interchanges the positions of Directors and Brand. As both Brand and Directors think their previous position was better, the facilitator asks them to take their initial position. When the facilitator asks New-Service which position was 'truer to her', she indicates that it was the first but that she was standing too close. The facilitator asks her to turn around and to take one step backwards. Next, she moves a little to stand in a straight line opposite Brand, to whom she feels very connected. Brand feels good; however, he has no connection to Current-Target-Group. Directors and Current-Target-Group feel 'dead'. When the facilitator asks the marketing manager if the constellation is "playing the right movie", the brander confirms this but adds that New-Service is constellated too early. Thus, they decide to set up Current-Service, which the marketing manager places between Current-Target-Group and New-Service. In addition, they decide to rename Directors in Director-1 and to set up Director-2. This leads to a battle for leadership between both directors. However, both are negative towards Marketing-Manager. Brand regards Director-2 as more supportive than Director-1. Then, the marketing manager brings the new target groups to the scene, one by one. Remarkably, all at about the same place. New-Target-Group-1 (Do-it-yourself-customers) feels involved but from the sideline. New-Service likes him, but Director-2 does not. Marketing-Manager thinks of New-Target-Group-1 as "financially interesting, but no love." New-Target-Group-2 (regular bank customers) feels in control and makes Current-Target-Group and Current-Service want to do one step back. Marketing-Manager doubts whether the organisation can handle New-Target-Group-2. New-Target-Group-3 (rich customers) makes New-Service want to leave and Brand, Marketing-Manager and Current-Target-Group also are not open to New-Target-Group-3. But Current-Service, Director-1 and Director-2 feel good about New-Target-Group-3. New-Target-Group-4 [currently non-served customers] does not bring any additional energy in the system; neither to himself nor to the other stand-ins. Finally, the facilitator sets up Inventor (creator of the new service) represented by Old-Histor-Manager in the Sigma constellation, who brought energy into that constellation.

She brings energy here too. New-Target-Group3 likes Inventor and through her New-Service. Facilitator concludes that New-Target-Group-3 might be more interested in the philosophy behind the new service than in the new service itself. To Marketing-Manager the arrival of Inventor makes him professionally involved rather than emotionally, which he was until then. This remark brings the battle between Marketing-Manager and Director-2 to an end, but the battle with Director-1 and between the two directors goes on. As time is up, the facilitator ends the constellation here.

Display A4.5 2003 Online Broker branding constellation description

Display A4.5 shows that the main Online Broker branding problem was a leadership issue: 'Who is in charge?' It focused on the relationships between the two directors and the marketing manager, and not so much on the choice of the target group, although it is clear from the branding constellation that the opportunity is in the 'expensive bank' target group. The marketing manager indicated that he recognised the situation as visualised by the branding constellation, both on the internal organisation as well as on the target groups. He decided to leave the company, which he had done when he returned for his reflection on his constellation before the 2004 marketing expert-forum.

A4.5 2004 Magazine branding constellation

Display A4.6 presents the first 2004 branding constellation concerning the branding problem of a chief editorial magazine manager.

Display A4.6 shows that the main Magazine branding problem was a leadership issue: 'Who is in charge?' like the KPN, Sigma, and Online Broker branding problem. The real problem was the position of the editorial office in the process rather than the choice of further modifications. Remarkably, both the target group 'Business' as well as 'Science' were stimulating factors in the branding constellation, while the current customer group was not.

2004 Magazine branding constellation description

The 2004 female Magazine editorial manager wanted to explore the effects of her recently transformed magazine and whether further modifications were needed. Her aspiration was to retain the current readers and attract new readers who were interested in solid, scientific marketing information, as well as new readers who were interested in the latest marketing and best practices news. She felt a tension between the solid, scientific information and the popular news. She sets up: Historical-Essence, Renovated-Magazine, Current-Reader, Potential-Science-Oriented-Reader (coded in the constellation as target group 'BW'), Potential-Business-Oriented-Reader (coded as target group 'BZ'), Science-Based-Article (coded as 'W'), Business-Oriented-Article (coded as 'Z'), Editorial-Office and Directors. [Remarkably, she asks a male to represent herself in her function as editorial office.] She sets them up in a kind of semi-circle, with Current-Reader in the middle and Editorial-Office close to Current-Reader but looking the other way. The view of Editorial-Office is blocked by Business-Oriented-Article. Renovated-Magazine feels the energy floating between Directors, Potential-Business-Oriented-Reader and Business-Oriented-Article. Current-Reader thinks the relation with Renovated-Magazine is superior to the one with Historical-Essence, but Directors does not feel connected to Renovated-Magazine. Potential-Business-Oriented-Reader feels superior to Current-Reader. The facilitator gets Editorial-Office out of his miserable position and places him outside the semi-circle in the neighbourhood of Directors. The facilitator cannot really figure out what is going on. As the role of the Editorial-Office is perceived as limited by the facilitator, he does not perform more interventions. Instead, he asks the editor to experience the energy in the constellation on different positions; first, on the initial position of Editorial-Office, then on the position of Historical-Essence and finally on the new position of Editorial-Office. As she feels better in the last position than in the first, he ends the constellation here, with the closing remark that she might think about creating two different magazines: one for more serious, scientific readers and one for more pragmatic, business readers.

A4.6 2004 Consultancy branding constellation

The director of the Consultancy brand company also attended the March 2003 peer workshop. During this workshop she was not 'allowed' by the facilitator to conduct an ordinary branding constellation on her branding issue as the facilitator thought that it was a personal problem rather than a branding problem. Instead, he asked her to set up the clients and position herself towards them. As she could not really make contact with the client

in this ‘constellation’, it was rather confrontational for her and the other branders present. She applied for the 2004 expert-forum workshop hoping to be allowed to conduct an ordinary branding constellation. This time, she was allowed, although she presented an organisational issue rather than a branding issue according to the marketing experts who attended this workshop. Display A4.7 presents the description of the 2004 Consultancy branding constellation.

Display A4.7 2004 Consultancy branding constellation description

2004 Consultancy branding constellation description

The 2004 female Consultancy Company director wanted to know how the three internal ‘market groups’ (she used this term to label her internal departments) could enhance their use of the new brand name, which was introduced two years ago. Currently, it seemed that they were preventing clients from being confronted with the new brand name. She first sets up: Director (herself), Holding-Group, Brand-Name, Market-Group-1 [consultants], Market-Group-2 [trainers] and Market-Group-3 [process managers]. [During the dialogue she also mentioned current and potential clients, but during the branding constellation she thought they were of minor importance to her issue. She positions Director [a male person] at a distance in front of Brand and the Holding-Group, with his back to them. The facilitator proposes to question the stand-ins on their experiences before positioning other elements to which the brander agrees. Director feels lost in his current position and Brand-Name would prefer him on his left side. Therefore, the facilitator asks Director to step backwards onto the left side of Brand-Name. Brand-Name feels supported by Holding-Group. Holding-Group wants to be in control. However, in the new Director’s position Brand is standing between them.

Next, the director positions Market-Group-1 (consultants), Market-Group-2 (trainers) and Market-Group-3 (process managers) in a kind of semi-circle, with Market-Group-2 (trainers) in the middle, focused outside. Then, the facilitator introduces New-Market-Group into the constellation. Market-Group-2 (consultants) likes New-Market-Group and the facilitator allows her to stand next to him. Now Market-Group-1 (consultants) feels sidelined and blocked from joining them. Therefore, the facilitator brings Ambition into the constellation. Although Ambition is liked by Market-Group-1 (consultants), he is ridiculed for it by the others. Market-Group-3 (process managers) feels burdened by their responsibility for the Holding-Group. As the Director wants to be in control and the Market-Groups say they feel limited in their freedom to move, the facilitator asks the brander to take the position of the Directors in the constellation. From here she finds a balanced position between Market-Groups on one side, and Brand-Name and Holding-Group on the other

Display A4.7 suggests that the main branding problem was the Consultancy brander's own position towards the brand name, the Holding Group and the internal market groups. The market groups needed space to act, while the Director (brander) and the Holding Group were experienced as very controlling.

Thus, as in the KPN, Sigma, Magazine, and Online Broker branding problem a leadership issue came forward in the branding constellation.

However, in contrast to the other branding constellations in the 2002/3/4 marketing expert workshops, a stable vision constellation situation was reached.

This appendix described the six branding constellations that took place in addition to the 2002 Baby Food branding constellation presented in appendix A3 to enhance intuitive understanding of the thesis findings.

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Wim Jurg was born in 1957 in Schiedam, and obtained a Master's degree in econometrics and a Bachelor's degree in psychology in 1982. He is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at the Open University in The Netherlands. Since 2002, he has been leading a student research group on branding constellations, parallel to working on his PhD in Management Sciences at the Radboud University Nijmegen. He has been a part-time brand consultant for thirty years. Since 2007 he runs The Constellation Company, where he has gained a wealth of practical experience in facilitating branding constellations to identify branding options for large and small brands.

Parts of this thesis were presented in the EMAC Doctoral Colloquium of 2003 in Glasgow, and in the EMAC Conferences of 2005 in Milan and 2006 in Athens. Furthermore, parts have been published in the Dutch Journal of Marketing (*Tijdschrift voor Marketing*) in 2003, the German journal on systems constellations (*Praxis der Systemaufstellungen*) in 2003, the UK journal on systems constellations (*The Knowing Field*) in 2007, and the 2007 Dutch Marketing Research Association (MOA) yearbook on Developments in Marketing Research (*Ontwikkelingen in het marktonderzoek 2007*). In addition, seven non-academic journals published interviews during the development of this thesis, and over thirty presentations were held on the intermediate findings. In March 2008 part of this thesis was published in the *Journal of Brand Management*.

Samenvatting

Introductie

Het identificeren van merkvragestukken is een belangrijk onderwerp in marktonderzoek dat vraagt om een systeemperspectief. Het systeemperspectief dat in dit proefschrift wordt onderzocht is de *merkopstelling*. Dit is een nieuwe toepassing van de methode van de systeemopstelling om merkvragestukken te identificeren. Hierbij worden mensen in een ruimte opgesteld door merkverantwoordelijken als *representanten* van elementen uit een merksysteem. De veronderstelling achter de merkopstelling is dat deze representanten in staat zijn om de relaties tussen het element dat zij vertegenwoordigen en de andere elementen weer te geven door aan te geven hoe zij zich voelen ten opzichte van de andere representanten. De representanten dienen bij deze methode niet bekend te zijn met het merkvragestuk en de merkverantwoordelijke.

In het kader van dit proefschrift zijn merkopstellingen georganiseerd in 2002, 2003 en 2004. Direct na afloop van elke merkopstelling tijdens de workshop en na afloop van de workshop per email, hebben de aanwezige merkverantwoordelijken en merkdeskundigen vragenlijsten ingevuld. Bij de vragenlijst in de workshop is onderscheid gemaakt tussen de marketing experts die de rol vervulden van representant (*representerende marketing experts*) en de marketing experts die geen rol vervulden als representant (*observerende marketing experts*). In totaal hebben zeven merkverantwoordelijken een merkopstelling gedaan om een merkvragestuk te identificeren in het kader van dit proefschrift. Daarbij waren in totaal 81 marketingdeskundigen aanwezig.

Probleemstelling

Een *probleemstelling* bestaat uit een doelstelling, een centrale onderzoeksvraag en een aantal subvragen. De *doelstelling van dit proefschrift* is het beschrijven van en inzicht geven in de bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen voor de identificatie van merkvragestukken volgens merkverantwoordelijken en marketingdeskundigen. Een *merkverantwoordelijke* is een manager die een merkvragestuk identificeerde met een merkopstelling. *Marketingdeskundigen*

zijn de marketingwetenschappers en -praktijkmensen die deze merkopstellingen bijwoonden en die functioneerden als representanten als ze daartoe door de merkverantwoordelijken werden uitgenodigd.

De *centrale onderzoeksvraag* van dit proefschrift luidt: Wat is de bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen voor de identificatie van merkvragestukken volgens merkverantwoordelijken en marketingdeskundigen? Deze centrale onderzoeksvraag bevat zes subvragen.

1. Wat wordt bedoeld met 'identificatie van merkvragestukken vanuit een systeemperspectief'?
2. Wat zijn de overeenkomsten en verschillen tussen merkopstellingen en andere technieken om merkvragestukken te identificeren?
3. Wat wordt bedoeld met 'bruikbaarheid'?
4. Wat is de bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen volgens merkverantwoordelijken?
5. Wat is de bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen volgens marketingdeskundigen?
6. Wat zijn de overeenkomsten en verschillen tussen de bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen volgens merkverantwoordelijken en hun bruikbaarheid volgens marketingdeskundigen?

1. Identificatie van merkvragestukken vanuit een systeemperspectief

Merkvragestukken zijn situaties waarin merkverantwoordelijken een gat ervaren tussen de huidige en de in hun ogen mogelijke merkwaarde maar niet weten welke veranderingen zij moeten doorvoeren in het marketingprogramma om dit gat te dichten. Dit proefschrift benadert merksystemen als een metafoor (een manier van denken) en niet als werkelijke systemen die van buitenaf en objectief kunnen en moeten worden bestudeerd. Meer specifiek, de focus is op de *organismemetafoor* waarbij over merken wordt gedacht als personen en niet op de machinemetafoor die merken benadert als causale objecten. Met de *identificatie van merkvragestukken vanuit een systeemperspectief* wordt hier bedoeld dat merkverantwoordelijken bewuster worden van de terugkoppelingen van een overwogen verandering in het marketingprogramma op de andere elementen

uit het merksysteem: de centrale merkenmerken, de consumenten en de interne, micro- en macro-omgeving.

2. Merkopstellingen versus andere technieken om merkvragestukken te identificeren

Merkopstellingen combineren een holistisch perspectief met een emotionele benadering. Het *holistische perspectief* richt zich op de elementen en de relaties die voortkomen uit het geheel van de elementen in plaats van het geheel van de elementen te reduceren tot de elementen die de kern van het probleem vormen. De *emotionele benadering* is gericht op de lichamelijke ervaringen, gevoelens en intenties als ook op de spontane verbale uitingen die gebaseerd zijn op deze emoties in plaats van een logische redenering met onderbouwende argumenten. Het holistische perspectief onderscheidt merkopstellingen van brainstorming, laterale marketing, psychodrama, projecties en Zaltmans Metaforische Elicitatie Techniek (ZMET). De emotionele benadering onderscheidt merkopstellingen van Mindmapping, laterale marketing en de zachte systeembenadering.

3. Bruikbaarheid

Op basis van een onderzoek naar 'bruikbaarheid' in de marketing en sociaalwetenschappelijke methodologische literatuur is een classificatiemodel ontwikkeld, waarin vier dimensies worden onderscheiden: relevantie, validiteit, betrouwbaarheid en precisie. De dimensie 'relevantie' omvat de componenten inzicht, emotie, systeem en bewustzijn. De dimensie 'validiteit' bevat uit de componenten waarheid en volledigheid. De dimensie 'betrouwbaarheid' bestaat uit de componenten samenhang en zuiverheid (van de begeleider). De dimensie 'precisie' omvat tot slot de componenten verificatie en eenduidigheid.

4. Bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen volgens merkverantwoordelijken

De merkverantwoordelijken zijn zeer positief over de componenten inzicht, emotie, systeem en bewustzijn van de dimensie relevantie. Ze zijn ook zeer positief over de component waarheid en redelijk positief over de component volledigheid van de dimensie validiteit. Ze zijn ook redelijk positief over de



componenten samenhang en zuiverheid van de dimensie betrouwbaarheid. Ze zijn zeer positief over de component verificatie van de dimensie precisie, maar ze zijn redelijk negatief over de component eenduidigheid van deze dimensie. De merkverantwoordelijken zijn dus positief over de bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen op hun eenduidigheid na. Opvallend is wel dat de representerende marketing experts beduidend positiever zijn over inzicht en vooral zuiverheid dan de observerende marketing experts.

5. Bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen volgens marketing-deskundigen

De marketingdeskundigen zijn ook zeer positief over de inzicht, emotie, systeem en bewustzijn componenten van de dimensie relevantie. Ze zijn redelijk positief over de waarheid en compleetheid componenten van de dimensies validiteit. Ze zijn redelijk positief over de samenhang en zuiverheid componenten zuiverheid van de dimensie betrouwbaarheid, terwijl de representerende marketingdeskundigen zeer positief zijn over de zuiverheid in de workshopvragenlijst. De marketingdeskundigen zijn ambivalent over de verificatie component van dimensie precisie en redelijk negatief over de dubbelzinnigheid component. De merkverantwoordelijken zijn dus positief over de bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen op hun precisie na.

6. Merkverantwoordelijken versus marketing-deskundigen

De merkverantwoordelijken zijn positiever dan de marketingdeskundigen over alle componenten van de vier dimensies van bruikbaarheid, met uitzondering van de eenduidigheid van de dimensie precisie. Zowel de merkverantwoordelijken als de marketingdeskundigen vinden dat dezelfde merkopstelling tot verschillende, inzichten kan leiden, maar niet tot tegenstrijdige inzichten. De verschillen zijn echter zeer beperkt, behalve bij de verificatie component van de dimensie precisie: terwijl de merkverantwoordelijken uitermate positief zijn over de mogelijkheden om hun inzichten empirisch te toetsen, hebben de marketingdeskundigen daarover hun twijfels. Opvallend is verder dat de representerende marketingdeskundigen positiever over de zuiverheid van de begeleider zijn dan de merkverantwoordelijken: ze zijn bijna unaniem van mening dat de begeleider geen enkele uitspraak van hen heeft vertekend.

Beperkingen

De belangrijkste vijf beperkingen bij de uitkomsten zijn:

1. Het aantal merkverantwoordelijken was beperkt tot zeven
2. De merkverantwoordelijken en marketingdeskundigen zijn geselecteerd op hun voorkeur voor een holistisch perspectief en een emotionele benadering
3. (De identificatie van) merkvraagstukken zijn percepties van merkverantwoordelijken en marketingdeskundigen en geen feiten
4. De vergelijking van de percepties van de merkverantwoordelijken en de marketing deskundigen wordt bemoeilijkt doordat het eerstepersoons perspectief van merkverantwoordelijken fundamenteel verschillend is van het derdepersoons perspectief van marketingdeskundigen
5. De bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen is niet direct vergeleken met bruikbaarheid van andere technieken om merkvraagstukken te identificeren.

Evaluatie

De belangrijkste implicatie voor de marketingtheorie is dat het classificatiemodel van bruikbaarheid goed kan worden gebruikt bij verdere studies naar de technieken om merkvraagstukken te identificeren. Vooral ook, omdat er nog geen andere classificatiemodellen van bruikbaarheid zijn. Een vervolgstudie zou bijvoorbeeld de bruikbaarheid van merkopstellingen kunnen vergelijken met brainstorming, laterale marketing en/of Mindmapping. De belangrijkste implicatie voor de praktijk is dat het deelnemen aan een dergelijke studie vooral zinvol lijkt te zijn voor merkverantwoordelijken die zich niet willen beperken tot het standaard reductionistische perspectief in combinatie met een rationele benadering, maar die ook een holistische perspectief in combinatie met een emotionele benadering willen gebruiken om hun merkvraagstukken goed te identificeren. De kracht van merkopstellingen is dat de emotionele benadering het holistische perspectief voelbaar maakt en de mogelijkheid biedt te beslissen welke elementen het meest relevant zijn zodat het geheel toch overzichtelijk blijft.

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