

A CASE REPORT ON NIKE: BRANDING A SIGN OF STATUS SYMBOL

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ABSTRACT:

Although it is simple to think that marketing consists solely of selling and advertising, today's definition of marketing includes meeting consumer demands and building stronger relationships with them. Although there has been a move to new and developing types of communication, such as interactive electronic media, traditional marketing is still quite significant. The importance of branding to businesses, organizations, and even people has increased recently. Everywhere and a part of everyday life, brands help consumers distinguish between identical businesses and perceive value. The secret to luring clients to a particular lifestyle and to a particular brand is emotional attachment.

In recent years, lifestyle branding has grown in popularity. In the end, it's about promoting a way of life and providing the target audience with significant societal benefits. Even though they may try to convey it, not all brands can be lifestyle brands. It's important to keep in mind the distinction between something being a part of life and something being the way of life when working to develop a lifestyle brand.

Currently, Nike is the most successful sportswear brand worldwide. The business has succeeded in developing a distinct, captivating, and adaptable brand that has earned a place in the hearts of consumers. Nike's ultimate objective is to provide cutting-edge items to everyone by improving performance, lowering injury rates, and bolstering perception and feel. But Nike is much more than a clothing manufacturer. Nike is the ideal lifestyle brand that represents living an active lifestyle and constantly pushing the envelope.

Introduction:

The authors have always placed a high value on brands. The author favors some brands because they remind her of her youth or because she has become accustomed to them. The author prefers some brands because they offer specific health benefits and others because they appear to have a high social value. Since Nike has long been a favorite brand of the authors and is presently the largest sports corporation in the world, it was decided to utilize it as the case study. (2014) Forbes The author considered what makes Nike superior to other sports brands and was interested in hearing other people's opinions as well. Since lifestyle companies are growing in popularity, the author sought to understand the fundamental ideas behind lifestyle branding and how it varies from "regular" brands. For this reason, lifestyle brands were selected as the main topic of this thesis.

Whether we like it or not, brands are pervasive and have a daily impact on our lives. Since ancient times, branding has been used to help us distinguish between good and bad goods and services. Anything can be branded, including people and animals, as recent years have demonstrated. The purpose of this thesis is to describe how brands, especially lifestyle brands, are created and what characteristics they typically have. In the end, it comes down to marketing a way of life and providing the target audience with significant societal benefits. Even though they may try to convey it, not all brands can be lifestyle brands. The secret to luring clients to a particular lifestyle and a particular brand is emotional attachment.

The fundamental theories of marketing, consumer behavior, and consumer engagement are introduced in this research. Additionally, the fundamental elements and ideas of brand image, identity, and brand building are introduced. The author also learned how consumers' emotional attachment to particular lifestyle brands develops and what keeps that attachment strong. The Nike brand identity, the top sports brand in the world, is finally introduced to round out these theories.

Author of the case study outlined Nike's existing brand identity and image. Nike has succeeded in developing a distinctive, captivating, and adaptable brand that has quickly risen to the top. The sports companies and the items they offer might not appear to differ significantly at first glance, yet for some reason, Nike simply outsells the competition. The purpose of this study is to comprehend how Nike's brand identity was developed, the level of emotional attachment its consumers have to it, and what qualifies branding as a status symbol.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:

Unmet desires are typically the source of motivation, so it is crucial for marketers to recognize which requirements are more critical than others. In order to describe both basic, low-level needs (including safety and physiological demands) and higher-level needs, the author employed Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (such as esteem needs and self-actualization). According to Maslow's hierarchy of requirements, when one need is largely met, it ceases to serve as motivation, which causes the next higher need to supplant it.

The "most important" requirements physiological and safety needs are at the bottom of the pyramid, as indicated in the figure below. These needs are necessary for individuals to survive. Even if the next three are not equally crucial, meeting these requirements is necessary for people to feel loved and cared for. These requirements include social, esteem, and self-actualization demands.

Physiological needs: Needs required to sustain life. For example: air, water, nourishment and sleep. According to Maslow, these needs need to be satisfied before humans can feel any higher needs.

Safety needs: Following the satisfaction of physiological demands, one should focus on security and safety requirements with the goal of preventing both bodily and emotional harm. Living in a secure environment, having health insurance, and having financial reserves are a few examples of how these demands might be met. Before humans to be motivated by higher needs, these needs must be met.

Social needs: Social needs, which are connected to interpersonal connection, become significant after physiological and safety requirements have been met. Social needs include, for instance, a desire for friendship and a sense of community.

Esteem needs: These demands are predicated on the idea that everyone wants to feel significant and successful in life. Internal needs for esteem (such self-respect and success) and external needs for esteem can be distinguished (such as attention and reputation).

Self-actualization: These wants, in contrast to lower level requirements (discussed above), are always evolving as people develop psychologically, therefore they can never be totally satisfied. Examples of these requirements include truth, wisdom, significance, and justice, and they are frequently employed in missions to realize human beings' full potential.



Although it's important to keep in mind that not everyone is motivated by the same requirements and some people may have wholly different motivations from other people. This basically indicates that, in terms of marketing, a considerably more thorough analysis of the unique demands of potential customers is required than what this theory can account for. Furthermore, despite their placement in Maslow's hierarchy, some needs can actually be more important in some cultures than others. For instance, social requirements may be

prioritized over other needs in some societies. Additionally, "starving artists" prioritize their needs for self-worth and self-actualization over some basic physiological requirements (such as food).

Customer value, satisfaction and quality:

When there is such a wide choice of essentially identical products with varying features, status, and pricing, finding and selecting the proper products may not always be simple. At this point, the consumer must assess the distinctions between owning and using the goods, as well as the associated expenditures. A consumer may have specific demands and desires for a certain product, such as a new cell phone with a particular design and set of features, but there may be several identical products available. In these situations, the buyer either bases their choice for a specific brand (Apple, Samsung, etc.) or on pricing. The customer may also assess how much money will be required in the near future to maintain this product in order for it to function correctly (for example, whether or not the customer will need to purchase any more devices or features or perform maintenance) (in case of breakings). The consumer might opt to select a product that is more expensive but is anticipated to last at least 2 or 3 years without breaking if the price is reasonable but the phone will only last a year without maintenance. As a result of the customer's typical perception of the value of a particular brand's products, brands play a significant role in this scenario. Customers "develop expectations about the value and happiness that various market offerings would bring and buy in accordance," according to Kotler and Armstrong (2013: 7). Satisfied clients who are happy with their purchases recommend your business to others. Customers who are not satisfied frequently switch to rival brands and criticize the goods to others”.

Lifestyle branding:

Anything may be branded, and branding efforts typically take the same course from developing the brand's image through engaging consumers. When a customer purchases a lifestyle brand, such as an active and energetic lifestyle that aids in the achievement of his or her intended goals, rather than just a simple pair of sneakers, emotional response is a crucial component. James D. Roumeliotis writes in his blog article "Lifestyle branding: Engagement and the complete experience" that when a consumer buys a given brand, it "defines the manifestation of a certain taste - of a personal identity." He goes on to say that it combines a variety of emotional aspects, such as social standing, an evaluation of one's own value, and emotional ambitions. "A lifestyle brand's objective is to develop into a tool that people can use to connect with one another. Instead of marketing a product and what it actually does, those brands are an attempt to market an identity or an image". (Roumeliotis).

When it comes to luxury brands, it is very important to sell the lifestyle more than the actual product since who would spend thousands of dollars on just a bag? Perhaps someone who just happens to have that much extra money, but not everyone does and still there are people who save money for months and months just to have enough to buy the Louis Vuitton-bag even though instead they could buy food for the next 6 months. In author's opinion, these people do not buy “just the bag”, but instead they buy a status symbol which tells other people that they are something more than they actually are. Many lifestyle brands are defined as luxury products for example Mercedes Benz, Gucci and Rolex. Not all lifestyle brands are super-expensive though

such as Coca-Cola which has made a name for itself by selling, essentially, fun. Their marketing campaigns are filled with friends and family having fun in the parks and beaches while drinking Coke. Lifestyle that seems to fit for all ages, genders and income-levels. Who does not want to have fun with loved ones? During Christmas even Santa Claus is having fun while drinking Coke and it seems we all just have to get a bottle of Coca-Cola to our Christmas table.

Even the most popular lifestyle companies, like Nike, cater to a diverse range of consumers. Nike was formerly just known as an athletic brand, but over time it has expanded to include apparel, footwear, and accessories for both athletes and non-athletes alike. Nike items are practical, fashionable, and colorful and may be worn in a variety of settings, including Casual Park hanging with friends or jogging. These clothing feels so good on the skin that some individuals choose to sleep in them. For instance, people can wear the well-known Nike Dunks as basketball shoes, which is what they were designed to be, or just as a fashion accessory (which they are perceived now). (Thimothy)

Any brand can achieve overnight success, but the trick is to create one that inspires millions of people and commands their allegiance over the long haul. A lifestyle brand is essentially any company that can be associated with a particular lifestyle; however some experts have elevated this classification. A map of symbol-intensive brand categories has been developed by Stefania Saviolo, professor of creative industries at Bocconi University, and Antonio Marazza, general manager of Landor Associates Milan. Symbol-intensive brands, as defined by Marazza (2013), "represent certain traits or meanings to the consumer rather than just functional values". The first category on their map is "Authority Brands," which typically rely on technological procedures or extremely distinctive designs. Examples include BlackBerry and Dr. Hauschka cosmetics. These companies often target a fairly small market and elicit particular emotional reactions, which cause consumers to feel particular ways. "Solution Brands," the following category, includes a wider range of customer segments. These brands were frequently formal authority brands that began as highly regarded products in a specific industry, such as Microsoft, Honda, Sony, and Mattel. 2013 (Marazza) The majority of luxury companies, including Chanel and Tiffany, belong to the third group, known as "Icon Brands." These brands have strong ideals that influence consumers' perceptions of their own abilities and self-worth. Icon Brand values transcend gender, age, and regional lines, which is also vulnerability because values can change in society. Change is slow, though, and maintaining these brands' underlying principles is their harder struggle. The fourth category is "Cult Brands," which includes companies like Harley-Davidson. These items may not be the most cutting-edge, but they embody symbolic brilliance and give customers a sense of belonging. Of course, "Lifestyle Brands" like Nike and The Body Shop, which are closely associated with a certain way of life, make up the fifth and final category. Lifestyle brands "provide considerable social benefits via which a consumer would be able to consciously or unconsciously respond to the query, "When I buy this brand, the type of people I relate to are..." 2013 (Marazza). People who appreciate nature, for instance, are aligned with The Body Shop, whereas those who are athletic and strive to exceed their limits are aligned with Nike. Although lifestyle brands are frequently associated with young consumers, companies like Apple and

Nike have evolved from a young audience to become international success stories. Since brands change frequently, just like categories do, they frequently transition between these categories. 2013 (Marazza)

"Marketers see lifestyle positioning as a way to escape the fierce rivalry inside a category by establishing a more personal connection with consumers" (Marketing Science Institute). Lifestyle brands primarily focus on the consumer's self-expression through their consumer-driven activities, which puts brands from various product categories in direct rivalry with one another. Therefore, organizations trying to offer lifestyle brands put themselves up for even fiercer competition rather than overcoming it. Consumers' main objective is to fulfill their demand for self-expression, which can be done in a variety of ways. "The relative relevance of many lifestyle brands will probably diminish as more brands enter the self-expression arena and consumers discover more non-brand forms of self-expression." (Marketing Science Institute).

It's important to keep in mind the distinction between something being a way of life and something being just a part of it while trying to build a lifestyle brand. For instance, many people describe themselves in terms of working out, although many are not particularly passionate about any particular sports. However, the author is acquainted with some dancers, for whom dancing appears to be a genuine way of life. They are dancers, as evidenced by their movements and demeanor, and they live and breathe dancing. Brands can also be used to support a particular action without ever transitioning into lifestyle brands or "the way of life". If the author only wants a new exercise top, the best option would be to get Soc, a premium brand with attractive colors and an inexpensive price from the sports store Stadium. The ultimate option is a Nike shirt, even if it costs 30 euros more and the quality is essentially the same, if the author wants to push her restrictions to the extreme and "Just do it." The primary distinction between these two is that, while not actually being an athlete, Nike represents the interests and way of life that many aspire to pursue.

Consumer brand relationship:

The contact between a brand and a customer that begins to resemble interactions between individuals can be described as a consumer brand relationship. Customers' connections with brands are not all that different from relationships with individuals, as Jeanette Mulvey (2012) explains in her blog article. Others are in your life because you need them, while some you care about sincerely. It should be simple to relate to this statement since many individuals utilize certain brands without even seeing them and purchase some things only based on their reputation (such as very expensive Louis Vuitton -handbag). Another excellent example of a brand that some customers hold in such high regard that they won't even contemplate purchasing a laptop or a smartphone from a competing manufacturer is Apple.

Consumers typically react to brands in two ways: economically (via considerations like cost and value) and "communally" (such as caring, trust and partnership). According to researchers, "how consumers relate to the brand in the first place depends on how they react to interactions with the brand, both positive and bad" (Mulvey). According to study, even after initially receiving poor treatment from a brand (such as experiencing issues with their acquired products, etc. customers who have a strong bond with a particular brand or brands respond favorably to good customer service. On the other hand, customers who solely have a business

relationship with a brand tend to hold onto their unfavorable opinions even receiving excellent customer service. Marketers must be aware of the type of relationship that customers have with their brands in order to make any necessary corrections. While a customer with a purely commercial relationship with a company may respond well to a heartfelt apology letter, such a customer may prefer to receive a refund or discount. (Mulvey)

In his blog, Susan Fournier identified seven different forms of brand relationships, which David Aaker (2013) discuss. These types provide insight into how customer brand interactions should be conceptualized, assessed, and maintained. These dimensions are:

1. **Behavioural interdependence:** “This brand plays an important role in my life”
2. **Personal commitment:** “I feel very loyal to this brand”
3. **Love and passion:** “I would be very upset if I couldn’t find this brand”
4. **Nostalgic connection:** “This brand reminds me of things I’ve done or places I’ve been”
5. **Self-concept connection:** “The brand reminds me of who I am”
6. **Intimacy:** “I know a lot about this brand/ the company that makes this brand”
7. **Partner quality:** “This brand treats me like a valued customer” (Aaker 2013)

Some brands might want to superior all of these dimensions, but basically it is good to focus on one or few of them. There are multiple brands that could fit into any of these dimensions, but only a few or none that could fit into them all at the same time.

As we transition from traditional “transactional” excellence of brands to “interactional” excellence, where personal relationship is built and managed, there are key transformative adjustments that need to be taken into account. First, goods transactions have changed into human encounters. Nike is a wonderful example of this, as it sells more than just athletic gear to athletes; it has also developed communities around the Nike+ platform where users can connect with others who share their interests and goals. Second, interactions between customers and brands are becoming more intimate. This indicates that customer service has evolved into more of a personal discussion than simply answering queries and fulfilling requests. Third, user-led demand has replaced marketing-led transactions, giving customers more flexibility over when, when, and how they interact with a business. When all the information need is available on the internet, there is no need to wait for marketing campaigns. By way of reviews, Google searches, peer recommendations, and social media, people are introduced to businesses through their personal relationships with one another. (LaFors)

The importance of the firms being accessible and exposed increases as the importance of the personal relationships between the brands and consumers increases. Sometimes, marketers may utilize esoteric corporate jargon that "regular" people just do not comprehend, which irritates and bores them and decreases their desire to purchase the good or service. "Your target audience wants to hear, see, and comprehend you. They want you to engage and inspire them to connect with you. They seek inspiration to act differently, improve, and improve themselves (Moore). This can be accomplished by taking several actions to humanize the brand. Focus must also be placed on the client, audience, and community: who are they, what do they

want, and how can this brand assist them in achieving their objectives? Businesses must put an emphasis on building relationships with customers, such as through social media, and developing a unique brand identity (and stick with it). Instead than shoving tones of content in customers' front when they don't need or want it, they could share useful information with them. The final phase is engaging the audience by revealing the company's genuine identity and forging an emotional bond through tales, images, and other motivating methods. Social media may be a great tool for connecting with customers and communicating with them. (Moore)

Whether its love, passion, fury, or trust, people must feel something. Marketers must build strong emotional bonds with consumers in order to create truly significant brands. One strategy is to provide engaging brand-related stories, rather than merely marketing the brand but highlighting the brand's history. This can be accomplished, for instance, by employing emotionally charged language and displaying images and videos that help customers visualize and comprehend the essence of the brand and the goals that drive it. People aspire to have the same passion and optimism as the brand's founders. Marketers must comprehend the circumstances in which their target audience finds themselves and then put their brand in those same circumstances, overcoming the same challenges and emerging victorious. The brand promise and image must be maintained by businesses at all times, even when they are conveying a story. 2013 (Gunelius) For instance, it does not appear to make sense to advertise a fitness vacation while simultaneously featuring images of wild parties filled with inebriated guests.

Branding in Sports industry:

Since individuals have always had strong emotional reactions to sports (for instance, towards a particular team, person, or event), it makes sense that brands in the sports business have a greater significance than in other industries. Sports brands can be thought of as the entire collection of associations and pictures that a sports fan has in their head usually concerning a particular team, athlete, or sporting event. The notion of brand religion, in which a consumer values a brand so highly that they will always be devoted to it, is best exemplified by sports brands. Many different brand components, including as logos, slogans, colors, characters (mascots), and individuals, can be found in sports (such as players). These traits aid in brand differentiation, but the key concept is the set of consumer perceptions of a particular brand (for example that Manchester United is the best football team in the world).

Without a question, branding is one of the most crucial resources used by sports businesses to discover new growth chances. A brand was long thought of as little more than a logo, particularly in the realm of sports. Since then, a lot has changed, and today there are thousands of sports brands, ranging from a single sport (like football) to an occasion (like the ice hockey world championships) and even an individual (such as David Beckham). These are not just merely names and logos; rather, they have distinct connotations with an active lifestyle, fierce international conflicts, and appealing pictures. Since differentiation is getting more and more

challenging in other ways, it is critical to have a brand that sets a certain product or service apart from the wide selection of similar ones in a highly competitive field like sports. (FIBA, 2004)

Sport marketing has numerous beneficial "side-effects," such as raising worldwide awareness and fostering communities, but it also has a drawback: when individuals become unduly enamored, it can lead to violence. Sports used to be more about "liking" or "disliking," however today they are more commonly associated with passion, immediacy, body health, and globalization. The importance of people (players) in sports branding has increased, and some athletes, like David Beckham and Tiger Woods, have even succeeded in building their own brands. Although there is fierce competition among sports brands, some seem to prosper more consistently than others (like Nike, Adidas and Reebok).

Emotional Connection within Sports Retail Brands:

There are without a doubt some very strong emotional ties between people and particular sports, events, teams, and sportsmen. These connections deepen through time and may be learnt, passed down from family or friends, or both. One may have family who have always been ardent Manchester United supporters and who cheered them on from the television. Or perhaps a person has been involved in basketball since they were 6 years old, and their love and respect for the game has grown through time. Perhaps you recently watched a fantastic football match where Christian Ronaldo performed better than ever, which made you realize what a terrific player Ronaldo is (and seemingly good looking too). Since ice hockey is one of the few sports that Finland is truly competent at (and there is just a need to beat Sweden's butt based on countries mutual history), being a little fanatical about the World Championships of Ice Hockey just stems from the Finnish "patriotic" mentality.

When it comes to clothing companies, the situation is a little different. It is doubtful that a person's parents just always purchased Nike apparel and footwear, which is the cause of their intense brand loyalty. This may be the case for certain individuals, but developing a close relationship with a business that merely produces apparel, footwear, and accessories requires more. Even the most ardent Manchester United supporter requires some sort of brand involvement. People naturally believe that sports apparel will be of the highest quality and that the materials will be used to their fullest potential. Products must complement people's own styles (using the proper materials, colors, and shapes) while yet enhancing their performance. However, with time, the emotional ties often fade into the background in favor of product functionality. Why? There must be a deeper reason why individuals pick one brand over another when there are other businesses selling identical high-quality goods that precisely suit specific styles and purposes.

Companies emphasize on forming emotional connections, drives product advancements and brand extensions because they want to meet loyal customers' high expectations. What kinds of marketing strategies are effective are ultimately determined by the emotional bond that exists between the consumer and the brands. Because customers who have an emotional connection to a brand or brands are more valuable in the long run, businesses frequently place a higher priority on long-term client connections than short-term sales. (Yohn 2014) With fashionable products and motivational marketing campaigns, Nike might seem like an intriguing

alternative to someone simply weighing their options, but for someone who has an emotional connection to the company; Nike is the only option that can truly make them feel like athletes.

It's crucial to maintain the emotional connection after it has been established. As with any other sort of interaction, there are numerous strategies to preserve a client relationship. The cornerstones of staying in touch with customers are excellent customer service and effective marketing. The client must be able to have positive interactions with the brand, whether that is actually purchasing the things they require and receiving excellent service or simply getting regular email updates on the business's progress. Given that social media is always accessible and some customers find it simpler to send a message, it may be a terrific approach to stay in touch with your customers these days. The business can share news (or a narrative) with its customers on social media on a daily or weekly basis, offer discounts, or solicit feedback from its audience. In this approach, providing customer service may actually be simple and enjoyable, and clients will remember the business and the brand.

It is simple to think that because something like sports is seen as a lifestyle, all sports-related firms must also be lifestyle brands. This is untrue, though, as previously mentioned lifestyle brands are attempting to market a product by projecting an image of a particular lifestyle, whereas sports brands can easily focus just on marketing their product or service. One sports brand that appears to not be a lifestyle brand is Soc (the own brand range of the athletic goods retailer Stadium). For someone who wants to invest in the quality of their athletic goods but does not want to pay more for the label, Soc is a more affordable option. People may purchase Soc-clothes because they are high-quality goods with attractive colors and reasonable costs, but the label does not appear to have the same perceived value as some other labels or brands. They want their athletic gear to be comfortable and reasonably priced because exercising is an important part of their lives. Since there isn't really any Soc as a brand, no particular anthems, ideologies, or even sports that are associated with it spring to mind. Conversely, when people think of Nike, they frequently see the "Swoosh" emblem, the motto "Just do it," and motivational commercials with athletes sitting in the front row.

Reebok is an intriguing brand in this regard since, despite the fact that its logo is not easily recognizable and no particular marketing campaign comes to mind, it continues to rank among the top 10 most recognizable sports companies in the world. (Forbes) When it comes to sporting goods, Reebok has developed a lot of fantastic inventions recently, yet for some reason Nike continues to outperform it year after year. Although consumers generally view Nike products as being of great quality and featuring some pleasant innovations, the author believes that even more significant is the emotional bond that consumers have with Nike, which they do not have with Reebok. New developments typically pique people's interest, such as Reebok's Easy Tone-shoes, which exercise your butt more effectively than other sneakers. Even if the customer may be quite delighted and the product may be excellent, if they do not feel an emotional connection to the brand—in this case, Reebok—they may not end up choosing it above other options. This means that Reebok must develop fresh ideas year after year to keep customers interested. However, how long can Reebok continue to develop fresh inventions? Reebok can perhaps start considering their brand image more, rather than just being "the

brand that produced those butt-shoes," and strive to come up with marketing efforts that evoke real emotions in consumers' thoughts.

CASE ANALYSIS ON NIKE:

This case introduces Nike's mission, vision and history in more detail with an insight to Nike's branding activities. In the end, the author aims to understand what the factors are making Nike more popular than other sports brands.

Overview of Nike, Inc.: Nike Inc. defines its mission as bringing inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world. Seems like a simple mission and possibly many other sports brands could relate to this also, but for some reason Nike has done it better than the rest. According to Bloomberg BusinessWeek in May 2014, "Nike is now the largest sportswear company in the world, with 23 billion dollars in revenue and a 17 percent market share" (Bloomberg Business week, 2014).

Over the past 50 years, Nike has provided gear to athletes (you are an athlete if you have a body). Nike has a rich history. In the beginning, middle-distance runner Phil Knight and track and field coach Bill Bowerman planned to call their business Dimension 6, but ultimately settled on the name "Nike," which is derived from the Greek goddess of triumph. (O'Reilly, 2013)

Innovation has always been a key component of Nike throughout its existence. When Bill Bowerman created the "Nike Waffle Trainer" in 1974, Nike made its debut in the footwear industry (a grooved pattern on the sole of trainers to help athletes grip running tracks). Since then, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has exclusively awarded Nike over 540 patents. (Nike Inc.)

The "Swoosh" emblem, which was created by student Carolyn Davidson at a low cost, is what most people associate with Nike. However, the "Just do it"-slogan's origin tale doesn't seem all that pleasant. According to mythology, serial killer Gary Gilmore, who muttered "Let's do it" immediately before his execution in 1977, served as the inspiration for the song "Just do it." However, the 1988 "Just do it" campaign has been extremely successful for decades and has included many outstanding athletes, like LeBron James, Serena Williams, and Ronaldinho. The initial "Just do it" advertisement featured Walt Stack, an 80-year-old running legend who genuinely motivated the audience by sharing his active lifestyle. Even though the athletes featuring the campaign have changed many times during the years, the idea is always same: "to inspire viewers to push their limits and strive to reach new goals". (Nike Inc.)

Nike's approach has always included marketing efforts as a key component. In addition to the most well-known (and effective) "Just do it" campaign, Nike has also created additional campaigns, such as "Better for it," which aims to inspire and motivate women to achieve more by using the example of athletes. Nike, Inc. Nike began focusing their advertising on female consumers in 1995 with the "If you let me play" commercial, which featured a young girl stating statistics about the advantages of sports and how they lower the chance of

health issues. The advertisement also highlighted the difficulties associated with having abusive parents and urged kids to seek assistance in such cases. (Taube, 2013)

Nike has started to focus more on environmental issues in recent years, as have many other retail businesses. Nike wants to employ as many recycled materials as possible while using less water during production. Nike also pays attention to trash minimization and energy consumption. Every two to three years, the company releases Sustainable Business Performance reports. Furthermore, Nike Inc. is strongly devoted to fostering stronger communities and bringing about constructive social change throughout the world. For instance, the business participates in providing kids with active activities where they can have fun and learn things that get them moving and interacting with others. Nike aims to focus in particular on adolescent females worldwide because they believe that they represent the biggest untapped reservoir of human potential. The organization aspires to support underprivileged young girls in getting the education they deserve and so assisting their own community as they mature. (Nike Inc.)

Even now, Nike continues to develop top-notch sports products using scientific advances in addition to its motivational catchphrases and outstanding success stories. The Nike Explore Team Sport Research Lab, the intellectual and physical centre of Nike Inc., is where these breakthroughs are created. Continuing long-standing traditions, the lab strives to develop fantastic product breakthroughs via an understanding of athletes and sports performance. Biomechanics, physiology, sensory/perception, and data science are the main areas of interest for Nike sport research (Nike Inc.). Nike's ultimate objective is to provide cutting-edge items to everyone by improving performance, lowering injury rates, and bolstering perception and feel. (Nike Inc.)

With Nike+, an application that connects a coded sensor (often found inside Nike shoes) to any smartphone and offers helpful information on the intensity and progress of one's activities, Nike has impressively built a community. In the Nike+ (online) community, these findings can be discussed with others. Numerous advantages of Nike+ include activity tracking, personal goal-setting, better training, and performance enhancement. In addition to providing challenges, the Nike+ network also enables people to connect with one another and draw inspiration from others' achievements. (Nike+)

Branding Nike:

Nike's brand strategy appears to be based on the traditional hero's journey tale, which evokes strong emotions in consumers and motivates them to improve their own performance. True athletes (as well as amateurs) striving to perform at their best in every circumstance by having faith in their own ability and constantly pushing themselves to improve can be seen in Nike's advertisements. With fantastic tales and meaningful pictures, emotional branding is incredibly successful at motivating consumers and fostering a sense of brand loyalty. The twist in Nike's advertising is that "the enemy," instead of being an external force that "the hero" must defeat, is actually people's own lethargy.

Nike was founded with the goal of producing high-quality sporting goods for athletes all over the world while utilizing the most recent technological advancements to provide customers with the best products possible.

Nike has been successful for more than 50 years, proving that there is always a demand for high-quality, innovative products. However, Nike has evolved into much more than just a clothing and footwear company. Although the "Swoosh" emblem and the "Just do it" motto exclude the corporate name, they are still widely recognized as integral parts of Nike. The tagline "Just do it" is short, direct, and appealing to almost everyone.

Without a doubt, Nike has benefited from its partnerships with well-known sportsmen (like Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods) and sports organizations (like Manchester United). As previously said, people tend to react emotionally more strongly to particular sportsmen and sports teams than to clothing labels. For instance, linking Manchester United's emotional connection to the team's sponsor, Nike, has definitely given the business some extremely loyal new consumers.

Nike's social media marketing, such as the "Better for it" ad for women, have likely increased brand appreciation and transparency. Women are much too frequently viewed as being weak, but Nike wants everyone to know that they are also strong, competitive, and passionate. Many people also have a strong concern for the environment, and they value companies like Nike that have clear sustainability objectives. Nike sincerely believes that fostering innovation and effective teamwork will result in a competitive advantage. Every employee, stakeholder, and partner is required to abide by Nike's code of conduct, which covers matters like corporate social responsibility and lowering manufacturing's environmental impact. (Nike Inc.)

Nike+ is really just an interactive training programme, but sharing work out details and one's own progress with others has recently become popular. Since the programme receives all the necessary data directly from the encoded chip in users' shoes, Nike+ makes this straightforward. Sharing personal experiences with others who are going through the same thing can be motivating, especially when training expressly for something, like a marathon.

Nike has cut back on its advertising in recent years while ramping up its use of social media and other forms of digital marketing. Currently, Nike dominates all of its social media channels in terms of subscribers and followers. Nike employs hash tags (like #justdoit), inspirational imagery, and intriguing material to spread a lifestyle and a sense of community among its followers on social media (such as latest news from its website). Nike uses social media to build the link between the corporation and its customers while also fostering two-way communication.

Additionally, don't overlook the cutting-edge products. Although Nike doesn't release brand-new super-advances every year (like Reebok appears to do), its products are always of a high calibre and are occasionally updated to reflect new innovations. The Nike Explore Team Sport Research Lab is designed to develop outstanding products by gaining understanding of athletes and their athletic performance. In order to provide the greatest products for every athlete* in the world, Nike seeks to deliver revolutionary products to everyone by improving performance and bolstering perception and feel of the items. (*You are an athlete if you have a body.). (Nike Inc.)

What makes Nike better than the others?

Three well-known sports (clothing, footwear, and apparel) businesses, Nike, Adidas, and Reebok, are among the top 10 most valuable corporation brands according to Forbes. (Forbes) On the surface, it appears like these entire companies offer items that help athletes perform at their highest levels. However, Nike continues to outsell the competition in some way. "Many Nike's rivals attempt to outperform Nike's products in terms of innovation and style. However, Nike's success is largely due to how strategically it uses athlete relationships and cutting-edge brand experiences to make its clients feel like athletes (Yohn 2014). Although Nike products are always of the highest quality, they are also associated with ideals like success, aspiration, and status. Heather Amuny-Dey, Nike's design director for the United States, famously remarked: "Nike is more than performance. Nike also addresses the way we live. Nike puts an emphasis on innovation, style, narrative, and experience to establish an emotional bond (Yohn 2014). The simplicity of "Just do it" and the significant sums of money spent on promoting Nike "heroes" as opposed to products are key factors in its success. (Davis 2009: 21)

Along with creating excellent products, a distinctive brand experience, and motivational marketing initiatives, Nike also understands how to preserve strong consumer brand relationships. The company's website is stuffed with details about its new product lines, social impacts, and environmental objectives. Nike posts updates regarding marketing campaigns, new products, and forthcoming events almost daily in the news section. Nike has more than 22 million Facebook fans from across the world, and each of its "sub-brands," like Nike Women and Nike Football, has an own Facebook page. Every post Nike makes receives hundreds of comments, likes, and shares, suggesting that people genuinely enjoy the videos and pictures they upload. On Twitter, Nike has almost 5 million followers and the company has made over 19 000 tweets. Many companies try to be active in social media these days since that is the easiest place to contact fans over the world, but Nike seems to "just do it" better than anyone else.

Why Nike is superior to other sports brands is a subject that is difficult to answer simply (according to sales). Perhaps it has to do with the fact that Nike doesn't actually promote items, but rather inspirational messages and pictures of fit athletes. Nike has succeeded in developing a close bond with its customers that is simply impossible to match.

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