

**THE ROLE OF INTERNAL PROCESSES IN BRAND
ALIGNMENT
CASE: FILX PRODUCT FAMILY**

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ABSTRACT

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>This thesis investigates the role of internal processes in brand alignment, through a case company, more specifically one of their product family brands. The research focuses on two Market Areas which cover the entire Americas: North, Central and South America. The study investigates the research problem with the help of three research questions, focusing on three areas: level of brand alignment between brand image and brand identity, company's recent name changes and finally, internal processes. To establish a foundation for the study, the theoretical framework walks through the main theoretical concepts: B2B branding, brand identity, brand image, internal brand management, brand alignment as well as the AC⁴ID Test Framework. This thesis utilizes qualitative research methodology because it is best suited for examining multi-layered topics. More specifically, the research was done by conducting semi-structured interviews with global organization representatives as well as sales personnel from both Market Areas being researched. The thesis concludes that there is brand alignment between brand identity and brand image to some extent. The misalignment stems from two factors: pricing and poor understanding of the portfolio. It can also be seen from the research data that the various company name changes have caused a lack of understanding of offering within the product family brand, its naming and value propositions. Lastly, there was a consensus from all interviewees that the internal communication has been much better recently but there is still room for improvement. The biggest need in internal communication stems from lack of references, which is causing a lack of understanding when it comes to value, benefits and pricing. Also, general brand awareness is lacking in South America. However, in North and Central America it can be stated that brand alignment, therefore brand awareness and understanding is at a good level.</p>	
Key words b2b brand, brand alignment, brand image, brand identity, internal processes	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Brand and branding are not considered to be new concepts, they have been around for hundreds of years. A brand is a way for companies to differentiate themselves and their products from their competition. It is one of the most valuable assets an organization can have. (Keller et al. 2011.) According to Keller et al. (2011) a brand has various meanings: it can be considered as a symbol of quality to customers, a competitive advantage, way to legally protect unique features of a product or products and much more.

Companies have realized that there is significant value in having a strong corporate brand. In business-to-business (B2B) branding is about creating a positive image and reputation for the company as a whole. It is believed that having a strong and well-known corporate brand can result in an increased number of sales and more profitable relationships. A well-known brand can also be considered as a large competitive advantage. B2B brands are much more complex than brands in consumer markets because of the number of people involved from the company side and from all the targeted market segments. The level of complexity requires involvement from the marketing and communications teams, and they play a vital part in successful B2B branding. (Keller et al. 2011.)

According to Kapferer (1992), companies typically focus on the corporate brand instead of product brands. Corporate brands are seen to have strategic importance while product brands are considered to serve short-term goals with visually appealing advertisement campaigns, for example. However, companies do not have to pick either or, corporate or product brands because they have different purposes. It is up to a company to choose whether a product brand is worth investing in because similar to a corporate brand, it requires time, money and consistent efforts both internally and externally. (Hatch & Schultz, 2003.)

For a brand and branding to be successful, internal communication is key. It is crucial for all stakeholders within the company to believe in the brand's values and see the brand in a similar light. The alignment between stakeholders will make it more likely that the brand is communicated and portrayed to customers in the correct light. (Leek & Christodoulides, 2011.) The role of internal processes, including internal communications, in brand alignment is the target of research in this master's thesis.

1.1 Research gap

Both corporate and product brands are competing within today's global markets (Yu Xie & Boggs, 2006). Given the intense rivalry in the marketplace, establishing robust brand value, both internally and externally, is vital for any company to maintain a lasting competitive edge (Kabiraj and Shanmugan, 2011). The

understanding that a brand is much more than the name and logo is still not fully understood in B2B industries. Leek and Christodoulides (2011) have researched the challenges of B2B branding. Although their research is very comprehensive, they have identified various questions for future research under six themes: B2B brand concept, decision making process, brand architecture, internal brand communication, brand relationships and brand equity (Leek & Christodoulides, 2011). To connect their research with the topic of this thesis, the further research directions specifically for internal brand communication are highlighted below.

Theme	Further research directions
Internal brand communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are buyers perceiving the brand as companies want them to? How relevant are concepts such as brand image and brand personality in communicating B2B brand benefits?</i> • <i>What internal company processes are required to generate consistent brand perceptions amongst employees?</i> • <i>What processes will enable employees to convey a consistent brand image to industrial buyers?</i>

Table 1. B2B branding: future research directions for internal brand communication (Leek & Christodoulides, 2011).

In addition to Leek and Christodoulides (2011), a special issue of the Journal of Brand Management (2018), authored by Piehler et al., discusses the importance of internal brand management and existing research on the topic. Piehler et al. (2018) introduce five all-encompassing domains for future research. Firstly, they identify the need to investigate the importance of Internal Brand Management (IBM) in relation to a company's success. They identify that future research should look into customer satisfaction, brand commitment, brand awareness and also investigate how valuable the brand is to the company. Secondly, Piehler et al. (2018) identify the need to ensure that the findings around IBM relate to a wider range of situations and can be useful to various companies, industries, and countries. The third focus area is to enhance the understanding of the IBM framework by looking into how it impacts employees. Recent studies on employee-related IBM outcomes, have highlighted the importance of emotional commitment. More knowledge needs to be gained about the results tied to employees, the tools managers can use to influence these outcomes and the factors that can influence the connections between said outcomes as well as between the managerial tools and the outcomes. The fourth direction for future research is to expand the scope of IBM by taking into account brand portfolios, not only focus on the corporate brand. (Piehler et al. 2018.) This future research direction was also

highlighted by Baumgarth and Schmidt (2010) who focused their research on corporate brand only and identified the need to look into the differences between internal brand value of corporate and product brands. Lastly, the fifth future research area involves improving research techniques by integrating a variety of data sources and embracing different study approaches. Many existing IBM studies rely on self-reports from employees as the primary data source. As a result, there is a growing demand to incorporate alternative sources of data, such as assessments from management, supervisors, colleagues, or customers, along with objective measures and data. (Piehler et al. 2018.)

This master's thesis will aim to contribute to the identified research gaps by investigating the topics through a case study. The contributions will shed light on some of the questions outlined in table 1, including internal company processes that are required to generate consistent brand perceptions amongst employees, and investigate potential processes that can enable the employees to convey a consistent brand image to the buyers. This study will not investigate IBM as a whole concept but dive deep into a specific branch under IBM: brand alignment.

Therefore, in addition to the above, this thesis will contribute to four of the five future study directions outlined by Piehler et al. (2018), in a marginal manner: the first, second, fourth and fifth. The thesis will contribute to the first research area by investigating the value of the FilX brand to the case company, throughout the organization as well as look at the importance of brand alignment in relation to a company's success. This can be deduced from the amount of brand alignment between brand image and brand identity. The second area is about having research from a wider range of situations, industries, countries and companies. This thesis will add a new industry and company to already existing research. Fourth research direction is about focusing on product brands, instead of purely looking at the corporate brand. This was not only highlighted by Piehler et al. (2018) but also by Baumgarth and Schmidt (2010). The fifth and final research area is about having a variety of data sources and asks for assessment from managers. The interviewees in this thesis will cover a wide range of roles and will include assessments on the current situation of brand alignment between brand image and brand identity from management as well as the specialist level.

In addition to the theoretical contributions outlined above, this is a timely topic for the case company's filtration segment as the FilX product family brand is still very well known in the industry by end-customers, and there are issues with competitors trying to utilize the brand name to their advantage. Therefore, a good level of internal brand alignment would help with market recognition and sales as well.

1.2 Research questions and objectives

All research projects begin with an idea which eventually develops into a precise research problem. After the problem is identified, the researcher should create questions which can be transformed into the research objectives. (Hair Jr. et al., 2015.) The research problem of this study is to better understand what the role of internal processes is in the level of brand alignment between brand identity and brand image in a B2B setting. This will be investigated through a case: FilX product family brand. The product family is owned by the case company, and due to several acquisitions and mergers over the past years the FilX brand knowledge has diluted within the organization, and it appears that it is not as well appreciated and understood as what the business owners, who are also the brand owners, would require. As an added challenge, the case company's current single brand strategy prohibits the use of the old FilX logo, making it slightly more challenging to spread awareness of the case company's ownership of the brand, heritage, and know-how.

This study investigates the research problem with the following research questions (RQ):

RQ1: How aligned is brand image and brand identity?

The goal of this question is to understand the level of alignment between brand image and brand identity, at this moment for the case company's FilX product family brand.

RQ2: How have the recent changes been perceived and what kind of implications have they had to your understanding of the product family brand?

This will shed light on why there is either alignment or a gap between brand image and brand identity. This will also give a good basis for managerial implications for future internal brand communication plans in company transformations and acquisition situations.

RQ3: What internal processes are required to generate consistent brand perceptions amongst employees?

This question was taken directly from Leek and Christodoulides (2011) future research directions and aims to understand the needed internal processes for ensuring that brand image and brand identity are aligned throughout the organization. This will shed light on how the case company should plan their internal processes going forward and additionally give valuable insights to other companies utilizing a legacy brand as a product family brand.

This research will purely focus on the Filtration segment: covering the FilX product family offering, including the capital equipment as well as the aftermarket offering, including spare and wear parts and lifecycle services. Other Business Lines within the case company also have products which fall under the FilX product family brand, but this thesis will purely focus on the filtration solutions.

In order to gather more focused and accurate data, it was decided that instead of conducting a worldwide study, this research would concentrate on two selected Market Areas (MA) which are currently key focus areas for the filtration segment. The chosen MAs are North and Central America (NCA) and South America (SAM).

1.3 Case company

The case company is a global solutions and services provider for aggregates, minerals processing and metals refining industries. The company aims to improve its customers' sustainability by focusing on energy and raw material efficiency, water management and safety. (Case company, 2023.) In 2020 the case company's Minerals Business and another Finnish company merged, resulting in a name change (The case company, 2020). In early 2023, the case company announced another name change, which was reasoned by allowing the company to focus on further developing one, strong unified brand. (Case company, 2023.)

The case company is divided into five Business Areas which cater to the different customer segments of the company. Each Business Area is then further split into Business Lines which then are divided into Product Groups. In addition to being split into Business Areas, the case company is split into Market Areas who are responsible for sales and local activities such as marketing. The case company has eight Market Areas: Africa, Asia Pacific, China, Central East Asia, Europe, Middle East, and India, North and Central America as well as South America. (Case company, 2023.)

Business Area	Market Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profit and loss end-to-end. • Leadership of global business organization. • Strategy, targets, organization and resourcing. • Development and management of offering including quality and digital. • Go-to-market strategy and model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership of local Market Area organization. • Implementation of business strategies. • Customer access, relationships and satisfaction. • Operative management of sales and account management. • Operative management of field service and HSE.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pricing strategy, targets and guidelines. • Manufacturing, supply chain and project delivery including HSE (Health, Safety, Environment). • Business policies and processes. • Functional compliance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price realization (within Business Area guidelines). • Local operational efficiency (quality + cost). • Business process compliance. • Functional compliance.
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Table 2. Case company's organizational responsibilities (Case company, 2023).

Filtration Business Line (from here on "Filtration BL") is one of the seven business lines within the Business Area that is being research in this thesis. As the name suggests, Filtration BL focuses on the filtration portion of the process in mining, metals and industrial applications. Filtration is a crucial step in minerals processing, metals refining and industrial applications such as pulp, paper, food, and pharmaceuticals. It is the separation of solids from liquids where the separation happens by an outside force such as pressure or vacuum. The end product of filtration can either be a solid, filtrate or both. (Case company, 2023.)

The case company's filtration portfolio is the most versatile offering on the market with more than 10 different filter types. In addition to filtration solutions, the case company also has comprehensive testing capabilities with several testing locations worldwide. Out of the several different filters, the case company has in its portfolio, five belong to the FilX product family. In addition to equipment, the case company also has a wide range of aftermarket solutions including lifecycle services, wear and spare parts, upgrades, and inspections. The aftermarket offering for filters specifically belongs to another BA, under the Filtration Product Group (from here on "Filtration PG"). The Filtration PG has an offering which is specifically relevant to the FilX product family. The Filtration services team is there to support the FilX customers throughout the entire lifecycle of the filter. (Case company, 2023.)

1.3.1 FilX product family brand

The FilX brand was established nearly 50 years ago in 1970s. From the beginning, the brand was not only known for exceptional filtration equipment, OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) spare parts and services but for having good relationships, both from a customer and personal angle. (Salovaara, 2007.) Over the years, FilX became a major player in the filtration business and in 2009 it was acquired by another Finnish company. FilX's portfolio, expertise and know-how further strengthened former Finnish company's position as the leading provider of filtration solutions and services to the mining, metals and other industrial industries. (Case company, 2023.) Since the acquisition, FilX's growth journey has continued, and the brand has continued to set industry standards in mining,

metals, and industrial applications. Currently, FilX is a product family brand under the corporate case company brand, which consists of filters and aftermarket solutions. (The case company, 2023.)

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of five main chapters: introduction, theoretical framework, research methodology, research finding and discussion as well as conclusions. Additionally, this thesis includes a list of references and the interview framework in the appendices section.

The introduction chapter begins with identifying the research gap and taking a look at the research questions and objectives. These are followed by some background information to the study with an introduction to the case company, the business environment, and the FilX brand which is the case that is utilized for this research. Finally, the chapter concludes with delimitations of the study and the overview of the structure of the thesis.

The second chapter focuses on theoretical framework, including coverage of the B2B brand as well as concepts such as brand identity and brand image. Followed by internal brand management and brand alignment, finally walking through the AC⁴ID Test Framework which will be used to analyse the current state of brand alignment within the case company. Next, the third chapter is dedicated to research methodology, followed by a chapter on research findings and discussion. The fifth chapter concludes the thesis by focusing on the theoretical contributions, outlining managerial implications, as well as listing some limitations of the study along with directions for future research.

In this thesis the researcher used AI-based tools, more specifically ChatGPT 3.5, in the theoretical framework portion to determine whether an article is relevant to the thesis and worth reading. The researcher would insert the introduction of an article into the AI tool and ask it to summarize the article in an easy-to-understand format. Then the researcher made the call whether the article seemed relevant for contributing to the thesis' theoretical framework chapter, and if the topic seemed relevant, the researcher would read the full article. This utilization of AI allowed for the researcher to skip reading the full articles which seemed to be of an irrelevant topic based on introduction.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Branding started more than a century ago when farmers identified their cattle by using branding irons. This enabled the ranchers to know which animals were theirs when they moved around. After this, in the 19th century when packaged goods became available, suppliers put their mark on the product to distinguish where it is from. Therefore, it can be stated that brand, simply put, is the non-generic name for a product that helps the user identify the supplier of the product. (Forbes, 2011.) Branding is about adding extra value to products by giving them a name and making them special. Branding started off with being only for everyday items, but that is not the case anymore. It works for all sorts of products, solutions and services. The key is that while the idea of branding stays the same, how we use it might change depending on what is being sold. In the business-to-business context, branding is a more recent concept than many would believe, and research has shown that branding is important. Both in B2C and B2B markets, brands need to build trust and connect with people in both logical and emotional ways. (Leek & Christodoulides, 2011.)

This chapter will first introduce B2B brand, brand identity as well as brand image. After that there will be a theoretical review for internal brand management, brand alignment, completed with AC⁴ID Test Framework.

2.1 B2B branding

In the past it was thought that branding is not as important for B2B as it is for B2C. However, for many years now, it has not anymore been enough for B2B companies to only offer great products, but the importance of brand has risen rapidly over the years. The B2B environment has become increasingly competitive and one of the only ways for a company to differentiate themselves is to create a strong, distinctive brand. (Kotler et al. 2006.) B2B companies have stopped selling products and services, they now sell solutions which is considered to include the companies' various products and services (Everi, 2011.). According to Everi (2011) this makes the offering in the B2B markets complex. Creating a strong brand can be one way of simplifying the offering for customers. Companies are discovering that traditional marketing tools are not enough to communicate the essence of their brand anymore, so they are constantly looking for new approaches. A brand cannot be made, a brand is something that is created and moulded over time. A company can guide, nurture, and shape a brand, create a name but not make it. It is crucial to understand that everything a company does, says and shows is a reflection to its brand, and will influence how the brand is perceived on the market. (Everi, 2011.)

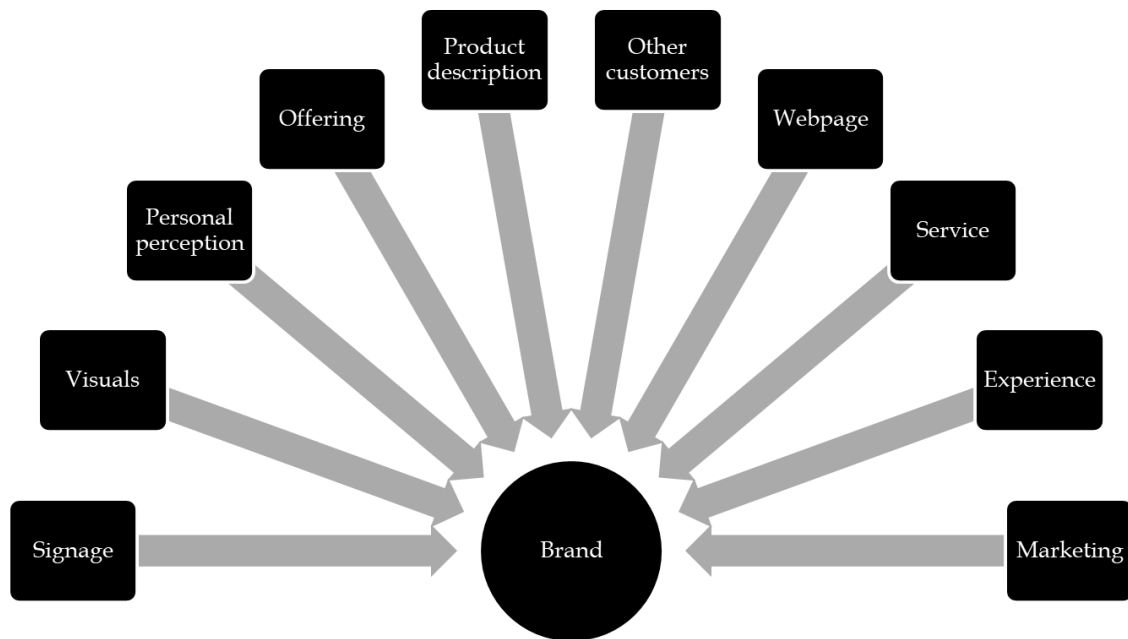


Figure 1. All interactions effect the perception of a brand (Modified from Everi, 2011).

Figure 1 visualizes the variables of brand perception to a customer, and although there are multiple branches, the perception of a brand is not only limited to these factors. Building a successful brand is a long process and everyone in the company needs to be committed to it. A brand is built and represented by all company employees, suppliers, agents, and partners, not only by the team that is responsible for brand. (Everi, 2011.) Everything a company does on a daily basis when communicating with customers, employees, investors and other stakeholders can and does have an effect on the company's brands, corporate and product (Pranjal & Sarkar, 2020).

2.1.1 Brand identity

There are numerous views on brand identity in the existing branding literature (Csaba & Bengtsson, 2006). Many researchers have tried to compare these different views to create a comprehensive understanding of brand identity. However, it is challenging because the definitions and frameworks related to brand identity often do not correspond with each other. This lack of agreement could be because the concept of brand identity has evolved and developed differently over time. (Holt, 2002.)

Brand identity can be considered a company's unique fingerprint (Lee et al. 2014) and the way a company perceives its brand (Burmann et al. 2009). This viewpoint is often referred to as an "inside-out perspective" and it is what sets a company apart and shows the world who they are (Burmann et al. 2009).

Companies use branding to communicate their identity and the value they offer to customers and others (Lee et al. 2014).

Brand identity is made up of brand vision, brand positioning and personality. Brand vision represents the core purpose of a brand and is based on a set of values and culture that provide direction and guidance. Brand positioning aims to highlight the unique characteristics and attributes that make the brand special. It conveys the benefits that the brand offers to consumers. Lastly, personality, which stands for the emotional characteristics of the brand, influenced by its positioning and the values as well as culture of top management. Vision and culture also influence the relationships between employees, customers, and other stakeholders. The company is the one to communicate the brand promise, while the employees are the ones to demonstrate the brand behaviour. (Lee et al. 2014.)

To create a strong and genuine brand identity in today's B2B world, companies need to engage with the people who care about their brand. A successful brand is one that holds meaning and relevance for its audience, so building a brand should be a collaborative process. A robust and relatable brand identity needs ongoing interaction and feedback from the people that the brand targets. This means that managers should embrace a new approach to brand management. Instead of rigidly sticking to the original brand identity, they should be open to allowing it to evolve over time while preserving its fundamental values. (Iglesias et al., 2019.)

As stated earlier, brand image can be defined in multiple ways (Csaba & Bengtsson, 2006). In 2011, Silveira et al. identified that there is still the question of what exactly brand identity is, is it purely what managers intend it to be, or is it a mix of both, including how consumers perceive the brand. They conclude that there is no straightforward answer and that the lines between brand identity and brand image can be blurry (Silveira et al., 2011). To clarify, in this thesis, brand identity is looked at as the inside-out view. Meaning, it is what the company wants its brand to be, the company's definition and vision for their brand. Brand image is defined in the following section.

2.1.2 Brand image

There have been various definitions of brand image throughout the years, starting already in the 1950s (Lee et al., 2014). Lee et al. (2014) breaks down the evolution of the definitions by three time periods: 1950s to 1970s, 1980s, and lastly, 1990s to the present. During the 1950s to 1970s brand image was seen as the combination of what customers thought and felt about a brand, along with the physical attributes of the product. People did not distinguish between "product image" and "brand image" at this time. The two terms were used interchangeably, although a brand is an idea in your mind, while a product is physical item. In the 1980s, the concept of brand being a symbol became popular. Brand image was defined in terms of symbolic meanings and associations in people's minds. This period focused on the symbolic meaning of products, and the separation between product image and brand image started to become more apparent. The last shift

in thinking has happened rather recently, from the 1990s to the present day. The idea of brand image being separate from product image started in 1990s, and this thinking included services as well. It developed into brand image being seen from the perspective of the sender, and it was separate from the product image. (Lee et al. 2014.)

The concept of brand image has evolved over time, from a combination of cognitive and affective perceptions with physical attributes to a symbolic representation of a brand's meaning and associations in people's minds (Lee et al. 2014). Today, brand image can be defined as the mental picture a person has of a brand. It is moulded by the associations people have with the brand, as well as their thoughts and feelings towards the brand. (Jenama et al. 2017.)

Brand image plays a crucial role in decision making (Wijaya, 2013). Gardner and Levy (in Nandan, 2005) believe that a brand's personality can weigh more in decision making than the product features. Therefore, it can be concluded that brand image is an essential concept for companies who wish to build a successful product brand.

As earlier stated, the distinction between brand identity, brand image, and brand positioning can be hard to clarify (Silveira et al. 2011). Therefore, to reiterate, in this thesis brand image refers to the way Market Area representatives perceive the brand identity.

2.2 Internal brand management

Originally, branding was seen as something that companies control and communicate to customers, a one-way street where companies tell customers what their brand means, and customers are expected to accept it. However, more recently, there's a different way of looking at branding. This perspective sees branding as a social process. It's not just about what companies say, it's about how everyone involved with the brand, for example employees, customers, and other stakeholders, interact. In other words, it is a group effort where everyone has a say in what the brand stands for and what the brand values are and will be. (Zhang et al. 2014.)

Employees play a big role in spreading the company's brand message to customers. Building relationships and working together with stakeholders are seen as essentials in creating a brand that people connect with. (Zhang et al. 2014.) Therefore, brand equity is largely affected by a company's internal behaviour. It has been found that employees who think positively about how their company's brand are more likely to want to stay with that company. (Leek & Christodoulides, 2011.) This also affects how well employees do their job and how much they go above and beyond at work to support the brand (Baumgarth & Schmidt, 2010). This approach can be called the stakeholder perspective of branding. It is all about communication and interaction between the company, its employees,

customers, and other stakeholders to build and shape the brand. In a way, it is a more collaborative and inclusive way of doing branding. (Zhang et al. 2014.)

Baumgarth's (2008) research has important implications for B2B management. Firstly, it confirms that systematic brand management is crucial for success in B2B industries, and it directly impacts market performance and indirectly affects economic performance. Secondly, it is vital for managers and employees at all levels to embody the brand values, norms, and artifacts. Without this internal alignment, professional brand management becomes challenging. (Baumgarth, 2008.) Finally, Baumgarth (2008) concludes that effective brand management is key in B2B, and aligning internal practices with brand values is essential for success.

2.2.1 Brand alignment

Brand alignment refers to arranging different aspects of a company's brand, such as vision, culture, identity, and personality, in the right way across the entire organization. Recently, this idea of brand alignment has expanded to include not just people inside the company but also external groups such as customers, partners, and other stakeholders. With the rise of new technologies and the ways people can connect and share information, companies need to ensure their brand is aligned across the different stakeholder groups and platforms. Companies used to focus on advertising, but now it is more about making sure everyone who interacts with the company sees and understands the brand in a consistent manner. (Pranjal & Sarkar, 2020.)

Managing a brand in a B2B environment means constantly checking to make sure everything around the brand is in alignment, both internally and externally. Various aspects of a brand need to be aligned, for instance image and identity, for a brand to work to its full potential. In the B2B world, it is especially important to align brand values because it helps with building strong relationships. An internal lack in alignment can hurt business relationships and the brand as a whole. The company needs to ensure that the way its brand is seen corresponds with the company's views. It is a dynamic process that requires organizational adjustments and communication to align with all stakeholders' perspectives. (Pranjal & Sarkar, 2020.)

Pranjal and Sarkar (2020) found that brand alignment is all about being authentic and true to what the brand represents. They identify that managers have a big role in brand alignment because they receive information from various sources, they are capable of leading by example, and if they authentically believe in the brand, most likely employees in the company will follow. Communication and experiences are important in telling the brand's story, and managers are one of the main groups in making sure the whole organization understands the brand's promises and feel aligned with the values. (Pranjal & Sarkar, 2020.)

The importance of internal alignment is also emphasized by Baumgarth & Schmidt (2010), who state that there are four aspects that can tell how strong a brand is within a company. These are: brand orientation, internal brand

commitment, internal brand knowledge, and internal brand involvement. Brand orientation is about how much a company focuses on its brand when creating their business strategy. Internal brand commitment refers to how much employees feel connected to the brand. The stronger the connection, the more likely employees are to act in a way that supports the brand and works hard to achieve the brand goals. Internal brand knowledge is about how well employees know and understand the brand. The more they know about the brand, the better they can behave in a way that fits with what the brand stands for. This knowledge comes from internal training and internal communication. Lastly, internal brand involvement, which is about how much the brand matters to employees personally, their emotional connection to the brand. When employees care about the brand and believe it is important for the company's success, they are more likely to pay attention to brand related aspects and drive forward the brand values because they are not only interests of the company, but also interests of the employee. (Baumgarth & Schmidt, 2010.)

As stated above, brand image and brand identity need to be aligned for a brand to work to its full potential (Pranjal & Sarkar, 2020). This is why, this thesis will focus on gaining a better understanding of the level of brand alignment between brand identity and brand image among sales personnel and brand owners in a B2B setting. This relationship is represented in figure 2 which has been constructed by summarizing the theoretical framework discussed above.

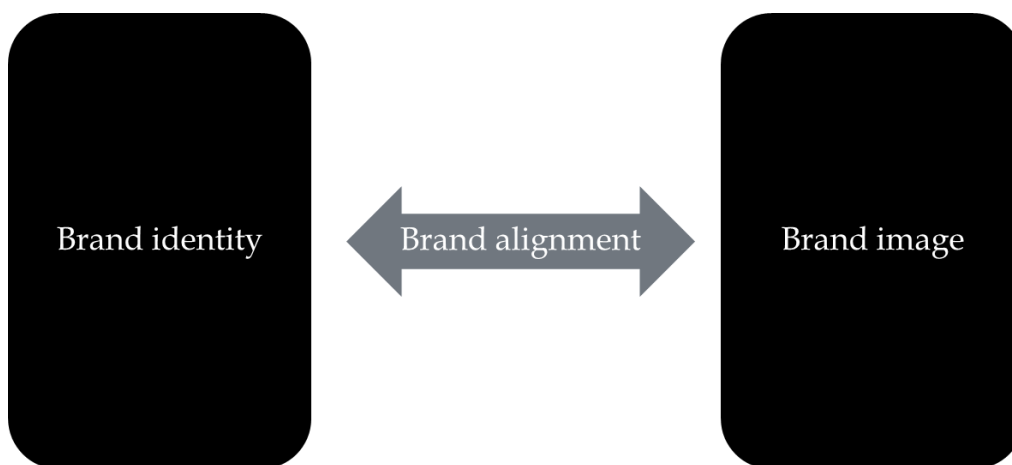


Figure 2. Alignment between brand identity and brand image is essential to maximize end-customer satisfaction.

Brand image is how people see the brand from the outside, meaning it is the brand's reputation. Brand identity is what the brand is on the inside, the definition of it, meaning it is the brand's personality. (Christodoulides & Chernatony, 2010.) According to Burmann et al. (2009) these two brand concepts together create brand equity, which is a term that dates all the way back to the 1980s and its meaning has not changed much over the decades. It refers to the intangible value a brand has in its relationship with customers (Christodoulides & Chernatony, 2010). For brand equity to be managed in an effective way, marketing strategies

should take a long-term approach. It should be recognized that changes in marketing campaigns in the short-term may affect campaigns in the future because campaigns running on short-term can affect the views customers have on the brand. (Keller et al. 2011.) Everi (2011) points out that good marketing, to build a strong brand, is consistent and tailored to each target group.

Nandan (2005) echoes Pranjali and Sarkar's (2020) thoughts: to maximize customer satisfaction, the connection between brand identity and brand image needs to be strong. This is because brand identity plays a crucial role in forming brand image. To clarify, it means that a company needs to be able to deliver on their branding claims and have alignment between what the brand says and what it does. (Burmann et al. 2009.)

2.2.2 AC⁴ID Test Framework

To investigate the research problem of this study, Balmer's (2012) AC⁴ID Test framework will be utilized. It is used to analyze and align different aspects of brand. It helps with strategic brand management and is all about making sure the brand image and identity are aligned. Originally the framework dates back to the 1990s (Balmer and Soenen, 1999) but Balmer's (2012) refreshed model aims to help marketing teams keep their brands relevant and valuable to the company, its shareholders, and other stakeholders. It can also be considered a tool for senior executives to guide them in building, managing, and maintaining brands successfully. The framework also recognizes that brands can change and evolve over time, and when such changes occur, it can result in a domino effect of misalignments between brand identity and brand image. The AC⁴ID Test is a tool that helps companies identify and address these misalignments to create a more coherent and effective brand. It can be used in three different ways by choosing to focus on present and future at the same time or separating the two and looking at only the present or the future. (Balmer, 2012.)

Identity type	Explanation	Underpinning construct
Actual identity	What the company's identity is irrefutably found to be	Image
C ¹ ommunicated brand identity	The brand identity as communicated by the company	Brand communication
C ² onceived brand identity	What the brand is seen to be	Images/stakeholder identifications
C ³ ovenanted brand identity	What the brand promises to be	Brand
C ⁴ ultural brand identity	What the brand culture is found to be	Brand culture

Ideal brand identity	What the brand needs to be	Brand strategy
Desired brand identity	What managers wish the corporate brand to be	Brand vision

Table 3. AC⁴ID test of corporate brand management and the identities forming the corporate brand constellation (modified from Balmer, 2012).

The **AC⁴ID Test framework** is comprised of seven brand identities: **Actual** identity; **C¹ommunicated** brand identity; **C²onceived** brand identity; **C³ovenanted** brand identity; **C⁴ultural** brand identity; **Ideal** brand identity; and **Desired** brand identity (Balmer, 2012). The seven identity types are outlined in table 3, and further explained below.

Actual identity refers to the characteristics that set the organization apart, considering aspects such as function, legal status, and financial dimensions. In other words, this lists the company's core strengths and competencies. Identifying and defining the actual identity is essential because it reveals what the organization is truly good at. To determine the most important qualities of the actual identity, the A, B, C, D, E, F approach should be followed. It involves prioritizing elements based on whether they are:

- Advantageous for achieving the organization's goals.
- Beneficial for customers, shareholders, and other stakeholders.
- Central to the core of the organization's identity.
- Distinctive for differentiating the organization from others.
- Enduring and evolving, having lasted over time.
- Favorable in backing up the brand promise.

This approach emphasizes relying on factual information rather than only being dependent on what the organization claims. The continuity of actual identity is crucial for organizations that have a long history. Understanding a company's actual identity is very important because it provides valuable information about how well the company is doing, the quality of its products and services and how the company behaves. Additionally, it's important to remember that the promises a brand makes are based on the company's actual identity. In summary, this is why the actual identity is extremely important within this framework. Therefore, the relationship between the actual and covenanted identities deserves special attention. (Balmer, 2012.)

Communicated identity, also called brand communications, is all about what a company tells its customers and stakeholders regarding a brand, and this often includes mentioning the unique promises the brand offers. This perspective relies on stakeholder theory and the principles associated with it. Stakeholder theory emphasizes the importance of considering the interests of all parties involved. For brands, this is crucial because they need to communicate with both customers and various stakeholder groups. In the world of branding, it is vital to understand that communication should be tailored to different stakeholders.

Some stakeholders may have more power or urgency in their relationship with the organization, and these factors should be considered. With brands it is not only about what is communicated but also who the message is directed to. This means understanding and managing relationships with various stakeholders, considering the diverse perspectives, and forming informal agreements that benefit both the organization and the brand community. (Balmer, 2012.)

Conceived identity is all about how individuals or groups perceive the brand identity. It stems from corporate reputation theory, which focuses on how the brand is seen in the eyes of stakeholders. Understanding how people perceive a brand is essential, as these perceptions can significantly impact brand meaning and acceptance. This complexity arises because brands can be embraced, adapted, or even rejected by different individuals or groups. In essence, there are not only brand supporters but also critics and, in some cases, even those who might actively oppose the brand's message. The principles of stakeholder theory are highly relevant to this brand identity as well, especially in the context of communicated identity. This means that considering and understanding how stakeholders perceive the brand is vital when managing brand. (Balmer, 2012.)

Covenanted identity is about what stakeholders think a brand stands for. It is closely tied to how the brand is seen in the eyes of stakeholders and involves aspects such as image and reputation. Understanding how people perceive the brand is crucial because it can affect how the brand is interpreted and whether it is embraced or rejected. This is important because some stakeholders support the brand while others may be unsure of their feelings towards the brand, and some stakeholders may even actively oppose it. The principles of stakeholder theory, as discussed earlier, play a big role in this aspect of branding, especially when considering how stakeholders view the brand. (Balmer, 2012.)

Cultural identity is the shared perception and emotional connection that employees have with the brand. This is shaped by the values, beliefs, and historical aspects related to the brand. The cultural identity is significant because it sets the stage for how employees interact with each other and with various groups, including customers. (Balmer, 2012.) The importance of cultural identity is also backed up by the four aspects identified by Baumgarth and Schmidt's (2010) for determining the strength of a brand. They spoke about the connection employees have with the brand and how the strength of a connection supports the brand (Baumgarth & Schmidt, 2010). In cultural identity, employees play a crucial role as the face of the brand, but the concept can also extend to customers and other stakeholders who are part of the corporate brand community (Balmer, 2012).

Ideal identity is the envisioned strategy for the brand. The main goal is to establish the best possible position and image for the brand within its markets during a specific period. This approach is based on the belief that having a single, well-defined brand strategy is effective. It relies on insights from strategic planners and experts, considering the company's abilities and future prospects while taking into account how the brand will fare in the overall business landscape. (Balmer, 2012.)

Lastly, **desired** identity is what the leaders envision for their brand. It is their vision for how they want the brand to be. Sometimes, this desired identity has a more significant impact on the company's strategic direction than the ideal identity. (Balmer, 2012.)

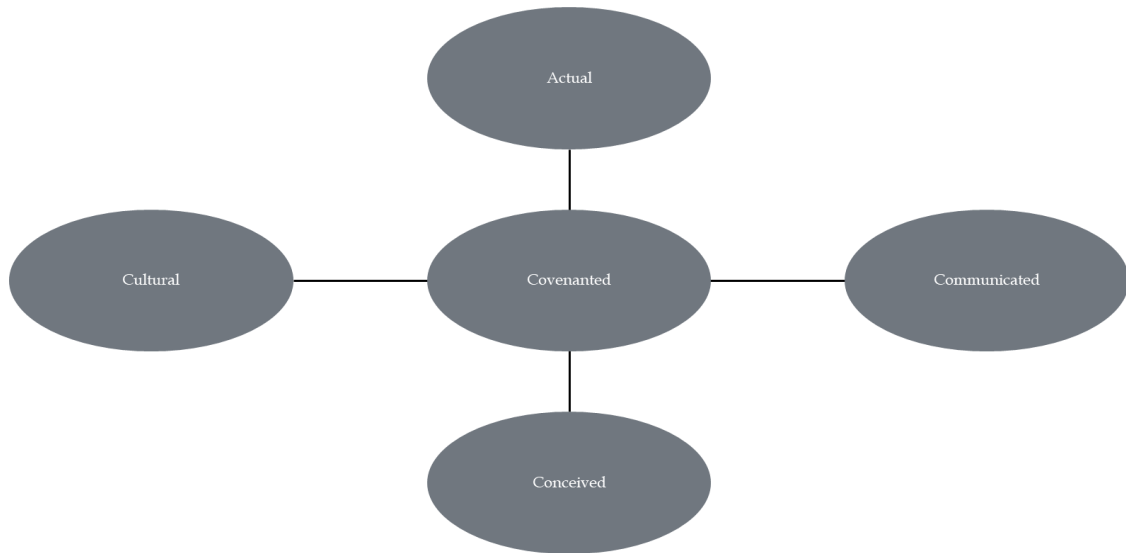


Figure 3. Simplified corporate brand constellation, focusing on the present timeframe (Balmer, 2012).

As stated earlier the AC⁴ID test framework can be used to either analyze present and future or choosing to focus on only the present or the future. This thesis will focus on analyzing the present state of the brand, as shown in figure 3. This means that not all seven brand identities will be utilized and analyzed but instead, will focus on the actual, communicated, conceived, cultural and covenanted identities. This will enable analyzing of the present state of the organization's brand alignment.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter will introduce the chosen research methodology, walkthrough the data collection method, interview questions and choosing of the research subjects, in other words interviewees, as well as the approach to data analysis.

3.1 Qualitative research & data collection

Research methods can be categorized into two main types: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research is used for collecting and understanding numerical data, whereas qualitative research focuses on the non-numerical data. (O’Gorman and MacIntosh, 2014.) For this thesis, qualitative research methodology was chosen because it is best suited for examining multi-layered topics. This research type enables gaining in-depth knowledge and understanding of the issue at hand. Qualitative research is about collecting, analysing, and interpreting data by observing what people do and speak. There are various methods for data collection but the most used are questionnaires, interviews, document-based information gathering and observation. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2002.) Interviews can be classified into a few different categories: questionnaires, semi-structured, unstructured, in-depth and qualitative interviews. However, there is no academic consensus on what each interview type should be comprised of. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2008.)

In this study, a semi-structured interview method was chosen. With predetermined questions each interview will follow the same format, but the answers of the interviewees will not be guided in any direction due to not having any set answer alternatives. The qualitative research methodology will enable focus on the knowledge and opinions of the interviewees. It will create clarity around the research questions and allow for analysis of further actions. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2008.)

Semi-structured interviews can be conducted either with individual people or within groups (Mariampolski, 2001). For the purpose of this thesis, each interview will be conducted individually. This will eliminate the possibility of the interviewees influencing each other’s answers (Mariampolski, 2001). The data gathered from interviews will strictly be for the purpose of this thesis. Therefore, the data collected can be considered empirical (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015). The selected interview method is flexible in nature. The open-ended questions allow for the interviewees to answer in a way that they feel comfortable, and in their own words. This will help with the reliability of the research and decrease the possibility of the interviewer influencing the answers somehow. It also enables for additional questions to be asked if needed to guide the conversation towards a different direction to get a more in-depth answer for example. (Hair et al. 2015.) There are also some disadvantages in the semi-structured interviews, for

example they are more time-consuming for the researcher, compared to questionnaires for example, and the collected data can prove to be difficult to generalize to answer the research question or questions. (O’Gorman and MacIntosh, 2014.) Despite the disadvantages of the semi-structured interviews, for the purpose of the thesis it can be said that it is the best available method for data collection and will allow for a more in-depth sampling.

The semi-structured interview questions were divided into themes based on the research questions. The questions designed to get an understanding of the level of brand alignment, were divided into two themes: brand identity and brand image. The brand identity questions were targeted towards the global role interviewees and the brand image questions towards the Market Area interviewees. Questions under both themes were designed with the AC⁴ID test framework in mind, enabling the researcher to gather relevant information in order to utilize the AC⁴ID framework for the analysis. The framework was introduced in sub-chapter 2.2.2. Additionally, there were questions under the themes of name changes as well as internal processes and internal communication to gain insights on research questions two and three.

To create a better understanding of the terminology linkage in this thesis, table 4 connects the AC⁴ID Test Framework terminology to the earlier explained theoretical framework: brand identity and brand image.

AC⁴ID Test Framework terminology	Linkage to thesis terminology
Actual identity	Brand identity
Communicated identity	Brand identity
Conceived identity	Brand image
Covenanted identity	Brand image
Cultural identity	Brand identity & brand image

Table 4. AC⁴ID Test terminology linked to theoretical framework utilized in the thesis.

O’Gorman and MacIntosh (2014) suggest that once a researcher has determined all interview questions, a pilot interview should be conducted. This will enable the researcher to assess whether the interview questions are appropriate and understandable, and that they cater to the research objectives, ultimately enabling answering the research problem (O’Gorman & MacIntosh, 2014). After conducting the trial interview, the researcher gained a better understanding of the possible responses and also had a chance to practice the interviewing process. During the trial interview, the researcher realized that it is better to always refer to either “FilX product family” or “FilX filters” to avoid the misunderstanding that the questions are about the FilX company brand, which has not existed since another Finnish company acquired FilX Oy in 2009. Therefore, this adjustment was made to the set of interview questions after the trial interview and prior to starting the actual thesis interviews. It is worth noting that the information

collected during the pilot interview was not included or analysed in the dataset of the study. The interview questions can be found in *Appendix 1*.

The interviews with each participant were conducted remotely through Microsoft Teams. Each interview was recorded with the record function in Microsoft Teams and transcribed afterwards with the help of Microsoft Word. Prior to the interviews, each participant received three GDPR forms: consent form, final notification, and privacy notice. The forms covered the research topic, progress of the study as well as processing of the interviewee's personal data. The only personal data saved from the interviews was the audio recording of the interviews, which was removed after the completion of this thesis. This research did not involve processing of personal data of special categories.

It is worth noting that in addition to references listed at the end of this Master's thesis, the researcher also utilized ten other sources of information including press releases, webpages and books. These were left out of the references list in order to keep the case company and product family brand anonymous.

3.1.1 Research subjects

In research, sampling is the process of methodically selecting individuals from a pre-determined group to participate in a study (Sharma, 2017). The quality of research heavily depends on the understanding of sampling methods (Berndt, 2020). Berndt (2020) states that there are two primary methods of sampling: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Qualitative research cannot utilize probability sampling (Berndt, 2020); therefore, this thesis will utilize the non-probability sampling method. Berndt (2020) categorizes non-probability sampling into four methods: purposive, quota, snowball, and self-selection. For the purpose of this research, only one of these methods will be utilized: purposive. Purposive sampling refers to the selection of participants based on specific characteristics, and it is sometimes referred to as judgmental sampling as it purely depends on the researcher's judgment when choosing the research subjects (Berndt, 2020).

The research subjects were selected based on their organization and role, to best answer the research problem and support the research objectives. Interviewees one to five are the owners of brand identity. They are in a global role within the Filtration segment. To connect with the AC⁴ID Test Framework, they are the interviewees who will shed light on actual identity as well as the communicated identity, therefore making up the terminology of brand identity in this thesis. Interviewees six to ten are from the Market Area organization, also known as the customer-facing organization. They will shed light on the conceived as well as covenanted identities in the AC⁴ID Test Framework, in this thesis making up the definition of brand image. All interviewees will contribute to the cultural identity theme. Interviewees six to eight are from North and Central America giving a perspective on that Market Area, whereas interviewees nine and ten are from South America, giving a perspective on that Market Area and geographical location.

Table 5 lists the research subjects, their responsibility area, time employed in the company and finally the interview lengths. In order to keep interviewees anonymous, the time employed in the company has been generalized to three categories: Less than 10 years, 10-15 years, 15-20 years, and more than 20 years.

Interviewee	Responsibility area	Time employed in company	Interview length (mm:ss)
I1	Global	15-20 years	33:30
I2	Global	10-15 years	26:28
I3	Global	Less than 10 years	48:14
I4	Global	10-15 years	26:01
I5	Global	More than 20 years	29:41
I6	Market Area (NCA)	10-15 years	42:25
I7	Market Area (NCA)	10-15 years	40:05
I8	Market Area (NCA)	Less than 10 years	28:40
I9	Market Area (SAM)	15-20 years	20:35
I10	Market Area (SAM)	Less than 10 years	39:14

Table 5. List of research subjects, including their responsibility area, time employed in company and interview lengths.

3.2 Data analysis

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis should be the primary method for analysing data from qualitative studies. Thematic analysis involves studying, arranging, and discussing themes within a data sample. It is considered flexible and allows for diverse as well as complex interpretations. (Braun & Clarke, 2006.) Braun and Clarke (2006) recommend following six steps when implementing the method of thematic analysis: understanding the collected data, creating codes, exploring themes, analysing the themes, describing the themes and finally, reporting the themes. In these steps, a theme refers to a reoccurring pattern that a researcher finds in the data sample collected. It is a way to categorize and understand the key ideas and concepts that repeat themselves in the collected data. The themes help researchers make sense of the information and enable making conclusions from it. (Braun & Clarke, 2006.) For the thematic analysis in this thesis, the interview transcriptions in Microsoft Word were divided into themes which were identified based on theory. The researcher used Microsoft Excel to support with the division of interview data into the identified themes.

4 RESEARCH FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

In the following chapter, the interviews are discussed by themes which are determined by the research questions and theoretical framework. The first sub-chapter 4.1 is set to answer the first research question: how aligned is brand image and brand identity? This sub-chapter and theme focuses on the AC⁴ID Test as it is a framework utilized for analysing brand image and identity. The second theme, sub-chapter 4.2 is focused on company name changes which will be used to answer the second research question and the third theme, sub-chapter 4.3 will concentrate on internal processes, and answer research question three.

4.1 AC⁴ID Test Framework

The first sub-chapter will focus on the AC⁴ID Test Framework which will be utilized to analyse the level of brand alignment between brand identity and brand image. This thesis will focus on analysing the present timeframe of brand alignment, therefore, utilizing five of the seven identities from the AC⁴ID Test Framework: actual identity, communicated identity, conceived identity, covenanted identity and cultural identity. Each identity will be constructed based on interviews conducted with the ten interviewees from global and Market Area organizations. Table 4 in sub-chapter 3.1. shows the linkage between the framework terminology and the thesis terminology.

4.1.1 Actual identity

This sub-chapter will discuss the actual identity of the product family. It is divided into the A, B, C, D, E, F approach, as recommended by Balmer (2012) in the theoretical framework.

Advantageous for achieving the organization's goals

The FilX product family, and sales of the products as well as services in it, is instrumental for achieving the organization's goals. The sales not only contribute to the Filtration segment's overall profitability and targets but also to the company as a whole. It is clear throughout the interviews that the organization has a lot of trust in the FilX product family and there are also concrete figures and facts to back up these assumptions. FilX product family's flagship product had a record year in sales in 2022 and 2023 is going to be a record year when it comes to profitability. It was also noted that concentrates filtration is a business that continues to grow 5-7% on an annual basis. Therefore, the need for high quality filtration solutions will not disappear.

“FilX is something we should be proud of, and it brings great profitability in numbers. We should utilize it and realize there is a great future for that.” – Interviewee 5

“Very, very, very high profitability, not just only on the capital side, but also the number one profitability for services and spare parts. So as a segment, absolutely critical for case company.” – Interviewee 2

The trust in FilX product family’s ability to continue its growth and profitability is also shown by the effort put into the continuous development of processes and solutions. The organization is committed to further improving and developing its products and making sure that they are the best possible filtration solutions available on the market. The company has invested greatly in the research, testing and manufacturing which further backs up the claims of the global interviewees about having a bright and profitable future ahead. As a concrete example, the company has invested approximately three million on manufacturing in Finland.

Sustainability is one of case company’s strategic priorities. All the equipment in the FilX product family portfolio are considered to be sustainable products, meaning they are more energy and/or water efficient than the market baseline, can help customers reduce CO₂ emissions or achieve other sustainability targets. The sales of the FilX product family equipment contribute to the company’s sustainability strategy as a whole.

Beneficial for customers, shareholders, and other stakeholders

FilX product family as a whole guarantees a high-quality product but additionally, it guarantees a safe lifecycle for the equipment. FilX is associated with various positive descriptors such as being the best, on-time delivery as well as guaranteed lifecycle support, and it is a well-known product brand throughout the organization and market. The philosophy behind the FilX product family is that it is the best filtration solutions that are available on the market today but also, through the continuous research and development, it is the best that is available tomorrow.

“We are not just known as FilX filtration technology but also as the company that does not leave the customer alone. We are there to help them in their business. Customers can rely on us. That is the DNA we have.” – Interviewee 1

“It will be delivered on time. It will be delivered with constant quality. It’s like Mercedes in the car business.” – Interviewee 3

Central to the core of the organization's identity

The FilX brand originates from a small city in Finland and the identity of the FilX product family brand still largely, in people’s minds, associates to Finland and especially to the originating city in Finland. All employees in the original location know that the land the case company is currently standing on is originally FilX

and it is where FilX originated almost 50 years ago. FilX did not invent pressure filtration, but it was the first company to bring the tower press technology to the market and develop it into the market leading brand that it is today.

“There is a very strong identity of FilX in our city. All the new and old employees know us as FilX here. We are also proud of the case company, but FilX is deep in our backbone.” – Interviewee 1

Although the original city and Finland are heavily tied to FilX, it is crucial for the organization to accept and understand that the brand lives on as a product family brand, not as a company brand anymore. It is important for everyone to be able to utilize the new overarching brand of the case company, to its full potential. Use the recognition of the case company brand to increase awareness of the FilX product family solutions. Throughout the business segment interviews (I1 to I5), it was clear that everyone has a very positive view on FilX being a part of the case company nowadays.

The people working with the FilX product family are very proud that they get to work with world-class solutions. They confidently state that they are proud to promote the FilX product family brand globally, to customers and to friends. They feel a sense of pride, working with a premium product and supporting the premium products throughout the lifecycle. They felt confident that they are working with the best equipment available on the market.

Distinctive for differentiating the organization from others

The FilX name has become widely known throughout the target industries over the years. Especially in the mining industry, owning a FilX filter brings a sense of pride, and the customers know that they have a solution that will last for decades. The case company has also paved the way on the industrial side and when speaking to chemical processing customers nowadays, it is more than likely that they will also recognize the brand right away. The common thought between interviewees was that FilX filters equal robustness and that the solutions last for a long time because they also equal quality.

New competitors are emerging on the market all the time. With this, it is getting harder to differentiate because also competitor technology is getting better. This used to not be the case some years ago. However, due to the long history of FilX and the work of the companies that have acquired the brand, the FilX product family has remained to keep its strong presence in the market. The original FilX filters will always have a differentiation when it comes to competing equipment. This is substantiated by results, and it is what the market recognizes, and why the end-customers continue to choose the case company's FilX product family solutions. A large differentiator of FilX solutions, compared to competitor solutions, is the long lifetime and the fact that a FilX filter will be a long-term investment which could potentially even be moved from mine site to mine site. The case company is currently the industry-setting benchmark for filtration solutions and competitors are following the example set by the company.

Enduring and evolving, having lasted over time

The FilX brand started off with the pressure filter and later grew its filter selection by acquiring other brands. In 2009, FilX was acquired by another Finnish company, and during that era, the FilX brand name was not used to its full potential. Despite this, it stood the test of time. When the case company merged with the Finnish company that had purchased FilX, a brand study was conducted on the market, and it was realized that the brand name still carries a lot of value in the eyes of the customers, and it can even be stated that FilX can be considered to be a synonym for filters. That is why the case company made the decision to take the brand name back into use.

Favorable in backing up the brand promise

The case company communicates the FilX product family brand to be the original equipment manufacturer and spare part provider. Additionally, the brand promises reliability, high quality, and support throughout the lifecycle. This can be backed up with existing reference cases throughout the world. The organization knows that the brand promise is widely known in the industry and that it should be used as sales argumentation and justification for the higher pricing of the FilX product family solutions. The brand promise is also something that case company's competitors do not have; it is a big advantage.

“Proven to be reliable. The flagship product has more than 1300 installations.” – Interviewee 5

“Our customers have 20 years old filters or even over 20 years old still working well and they don't want to change it to competitor equipment because we can take care of them throughout the lifecycle.” – Interviewee 3

The actual identity was constructed by using the responses of interviewees one to five. All but one of the respondents have been in the company for more than 10 years. However, even the interviewee with the least amount of time spent in the company and no prior experience from the original FilX company, the responses to questions were very similar. Therefore, it can be stated that in the business segment, there is no correlation between the time spent in the company and the thoughts, feelings, and perceptions one has of the FilX product family brand.

4.1.2 Communicated identity

The communicated identity is also built by utilizing data from discussions with interviewees one to five. Based on the interviews there are five messages that the Filtration business wants to communicate when it comes to the FilX product family brand. Firstly, the team identifies that one of the strengths of the FilX product family brand is the legacy. From the very early days of the FilX company a large focus area was building brand awareness, making the FilX name known

throughout the globe. That work was carried on throughout the years and can be said that it paid off due to the fact that FilX is considered a synonym for pressure filters nowadays. Tied together with the legacy is the brand awareness. It can be stated that the majority of existing and potential customers know the FilX filters.

Secondly, the descriptive attributes: premium, quality, performance, and reliability. These are the features and benefits that should be used when selling FilX product family solutions.

“Premium product in the mining industry. High quality, high performance, high reliability.” – Interviewee 1

“Proven technologies, you can rely on the thing that you get, and you know what you're getting. FilX products are the best filtration technology.” – Interviewee 5

“There are very few unknowns for the customer when they choose FilX to be their filter.” – Interviewee 3

Third, the people: in the early days of the FilX company, people were in focus. It was not only about promoting the world-class equipment but also the people, support organizations, lifecycle support and the fact that when a customer purchases a FilX filter, they are not left alone. There is an organization to support in whatever is needed. People is still in great focus when communicating the FilX product family services, and one of the pillars of FilX marketing is that it is not only the equipment but also the people behind the equipment.

The fourth message is the strength of the research and testing capabilities. The current testing facility was built in 2015 but testing has been performed on the original site already prior to this. The team has the capability to also test directly on customer site. They do lab, pilot, and bench scale testing.

“FilX is known all the way from the testing to the products.” – Interviewee 1

“Good knowledge and understanding about the processes and the applications has been built by continuous test work.” – Interviewee 3

The fifth message is the original slogan, which still lives on as it is the first sentence that came to the interviewees' minds when asked for one sentence to describe the FilX product family. The same sentence is still used in FilX product family marketing to this day and is also visible on the outside of the original site's main office building.

Four out of the five interviewees (I1, I2, I3 and I5) identified pricing as a weakness for the FilX product family solutions. However, they believe that there is a way to justify the slightly higher price to the customers. There is a belief that for the premium price, the customer gets something that no competitor can offer such as the support throughout the lifecycle.

4.1.3 Conceived identity

The FilX product family brand is perceived in a very positive light throughout both Market Areas which were interviewed for this topic. It was clear that there is a positive perception for the product family. The interviewees used very similar adjectives, such as premium and high quality, to describe the product family as what the Filtration business personnel, also known as the brand owners in this case. The general perception can be summed up by stating that the FilX product family does the filtration job correctly, they have high performance, and the brand is very well known. Several interviewees, I6, I7 and I8, also mentioned the long history and expertise as a value proposition.

“The technology is the best in class I would say, and we do not do any shortcuts as far as far as the performance is concerned.” – Interviewee 7

Similar to interviewees one to five, who represent the global roles, also interviewees from the Market Areas, interviewees six to ten, identified pricing as a weakness. However, contradictory to the business segment interviewees’ statements, the Market Area personnel do not think that the higher price is justified as easily. Their opinion was that the price is something that should be lowered in order to be more competitive on the market. They state that it is difficult to say that customers should be paying so much extra, compared to competitor equipment just because the case company is claiming that the FilX filtration solutions are the best.

“Proving the value is a challenge in our industry.” – Interviewee 7

The FilX product family is also perceived as somewhat confusing. In three of the five MA interviews, it became clear that there is no understanding of which products actually belong underneath the FilX umbrella. Additionally, there was some disagreement with the decisions made by the Business Line for what filters to keep underneath the FilX product family and which of them were dropped out to just be under the case company brand.

“There was a decision made that FilX name will be kept in some filters and on the other filters it will be dropped out. I understand but it is a little bit confusing.” – Interviewee 9

It can also be identified that the FilX product family is not relevant to all sales personnel. To one interviewee all the filters are just the case company brand. To some extent this is true because of the case company’s single brand policy but the FilX name is now a product family brand which the business has taken a careful decision on to keep and to continue boosting.

“We don’t see it as FilX product family. We only see the overall filtration portfolio.” – Interviewee 10

4.1.4 Covenanted identity

On a positive note, the ideas that the stakeholders have for what the product family brand stands for are quite similar to how the business segment thinks. They describe the product family with very similar attributes. The interviewees spoke about reliability, trust, and performance. In addition, the awareness and knowledge of the brand in the industry was mentioned as a strength by two of the interviewees (I7 and I8).

“A reliable technology solution to your solid liquid separation.” – Interviewee 8

“Well known for filtration technology. Brand you can trust.” – Interviewee 7

To continue on the same track as the business segment interviewees (I1 to I5) did in their interviews, the MA personnel (I6 to I10) also highlighted the important of people and aftermarket capabilities as a significant strength for the FilX product family. It was stated that many of the case company’s competitors also offer aftermarket support but not on the level the case company does, offering lifecycle support for the next 20 to 50 years.

“The experience and the knowledge that comes from the FilX brand is incredible, there a lot of dedicated and passionate people, and the products themselves are far superior to competition.” – Interviewee 6

Also, the testing capabilities in Finland were highlighted by two of the interviewees (I6 and I7) in the Market Area. Due to the large test data base, there is concrete justification for why the filter being sold works in the application that is in question.

“I think around 40,000 test work data over the years. We have done that in the last 40 years, that gives us a very good base for what we propose, so we have experience with more or less, all the applications.” – Interviewee 7

4.1.5 Cultural identity

It was clear throughout the interviews that interviewees from the business side as well as the Market Area side have a certain level of emotional connection to the brand and the legacy company. However, it should be noted that for the interviewees (I3, I8, I10) who have worked with the company for less than 10 years, this sort of emotional connection cannot be determined. The others, who have worked in the company for more than 10 years and have also had the chance to work already for the FilX company, there was a strong sense of pride and connection to the original FilX brand and through that to today’s product family brand. Surprisingly, even interviewee 7 who only had a chance to work for FilX

for a few weeks before the acquisition in 2009, always had this thinking that FilX was the best filtration technology available on the market.

"I am very proud of FilX, was proud to work for FilX and am proud to work with FilX today." - Interviewee 2

"At FilX we were proud, but we were not arrogant, and this has been carrying us a long time, it still separates the best from the rest." - Interviewee 4

"FilX was a good company in the sense that you felt that your work is really appreciated. They had aggressive marketing. I still have these same feelings about the FilX product family." - Interviewee 9

Some interviewees spoke about their experience with customers. It was recommended that everyone working for the case company and that are involved with the FilX product family brand that may not be familiar with it from the past, should go and see the offering in action. It will help everyone understand the feelings and thinking that is associated with the brand. Others highlighted the fact that customers are very loyal to the FilX product family. There are several cases to prove that once a customer purchases a FilX filter, they will in the future also, only be purchasing FilX product family filters. Once they have a FilX filter, they join the journey of the brand and the lifecycle of the filter.

"They started with FilX. They stick with FilX." - Interviewee 9

"I recommend everyone to go and see the appreciation and passion for FilX. At the customer sites and workshops. It all then gets passed on and that helps with the name." - Interviewee 6

4.1.6 Brand alignment in present time frame

Taking into account the above descriptions for actual, communicated, conceived, covenanted and cultural, the following chapter will continue to analyse the present status of brand alignment between brand identity and brand image.

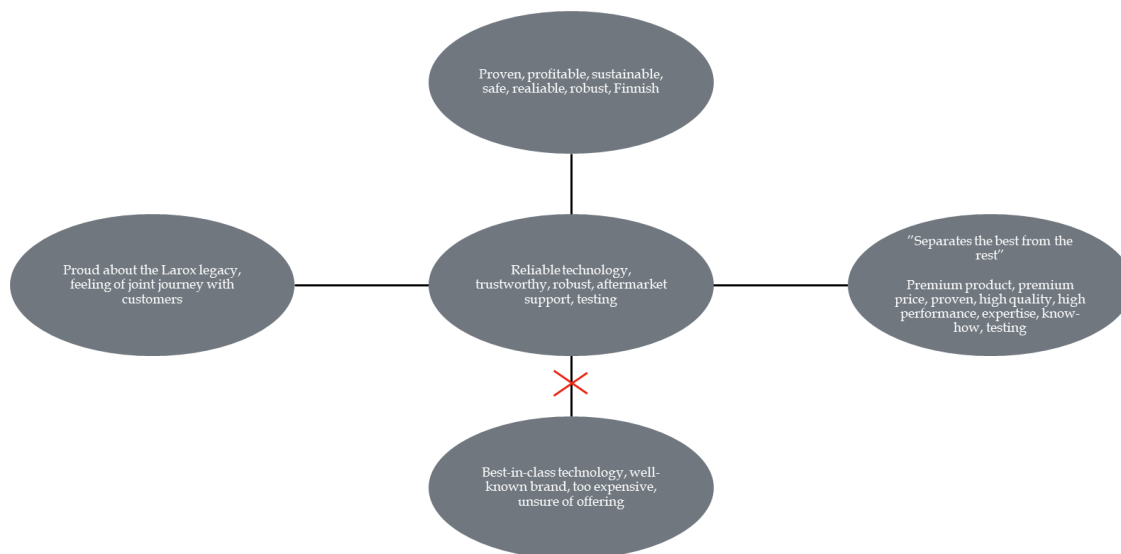


Figure 4. Present timeframe in the case company, utilizing Balmer's (2012) simplified corporate brand constellation.

Looking at Figure 4 which summarizes sub-chapters 4.1.1 to 4.1.5, it can be concluded that there is brand alignment between brand identity and brand image to some extent. The misalignment is between covenanted and conceived identity, this is indicated in the figure with a red 'x'. This misalignment stems from two factors: pricing and poor understanding of the portfolio. Brand identity has the belief that the premium pricing can be easily justified by the benefits of the product family. However, in brand image, it is believed that the product family is simply too expensive and impossible to justify to end users. Another misalignment is with the offering itself. It is unclear, especially in SAM, what solutions belong to the FilX product family portfolio. Therefore, it can be stated that the level of brand alignment is significantly better in NCA, compared to SAM. Identifying the main factors of misalignment will enable corrective actions to be taken within the company, meaning that brand alignment will be a goal that can tangibly be reached with some additional efforts from managers.

4.2 Company name changes

Overall, the merger of the case company with another Finnish company, along with the most recent name change in 2023 has been perceived very positively throughout both the global organization as well as the Market Area organizations. The thinking is that the merger of the two companies brought a lot of new opportunities because the combination of the two portfolios enables offering customers end-to-end solutions. It also brought many new resources to both companies, enabling the capabilities to do larger projects and serve a wider range of customers.

“In order to give FilX the ability to grow, you need bigger shoulders, which the case company is now offering. The case company is enabling FilX and the whole filtration business to grow. We would not be where we are today if we would have stayed as FilX, the company.” – Interviewee 1

“It enhances us even further because now the case company is a one stop shop from end to end from crushes, mills, floats, thickness conveyors and everything all the way through to tailings filters.” – Interviewee 2

The consensus was also clear that the merger is the reason why the brand name FilX was able to be taken into use again. The global organization interviewee’s felt that there was no room for FilX as a product family name during the previous company time but once the companies merged, the name was taken into use again as a product family name. This is seen as a very positive development.

“In the previous company there was this idea that no other brand names should be used, FilX was very hidden. In the case company there is more space for FilX, compared to what it was.” – Interviewee 5

It can also be concluded that the interviewees did not see that the company name before FilX carries too much weight. The important fact is that the FilX name lives on and the FilX product family solutions continue to be offered.

“Whatever is in front of FilX, who is the owner, who is the mother company, I think that that doesn't matter.” – Interviewee 3

Despite the positive perception of the merger and the recent name change, it was clear that there is much confusion that has stemmed from the changes. Even the global organization believes the name changes to be confusing to the organization overall and speculate that it is most likely confusing to the customers as well, since the company itself cannot comprehend it fully.

“Everyone is a little confused about the company. There are a lot of different names here and there and it's confusing.” – Interviewee 1

“How are we supposed to communicate the brand name? Is it [Old company name] FilX, [Case company, old company name] FilX, [Case company] FilX or just FilX?” – Interviewee 10

Regardless of the overall attitude being positive towards the name change, there was also concern for the brand recognition. It was speculated that the constant changes of the owner company have probably had effect on the brand recognition. Especially recently with a competitor also trying to utilize the FilX name to their advantage.

“There was even confusion about can we talk about the FilX brand at all. Some Market Areas thought the brand went to a competitor.” – Interviewee 4

The second research question was about name changes: “How have the recent changes been perceived and what kind of implications have they had to your understanding of the product family brand?”. Based on the interview data, the company name changes are a big contributing factor to brand alignment not happening fully within the company. The continuous changes have caused a lack of understanding of product offering, its naming and value propositions.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there are various factors affecting the level of brand alignment. Figure 5 showcases the most important factors including both: negative and positive ones. Factors in black boxes are the negative factors that are causing misalignment, whereas factors in the red boxes are positive factors and therefore sources of alignment between brand image and brand identity.

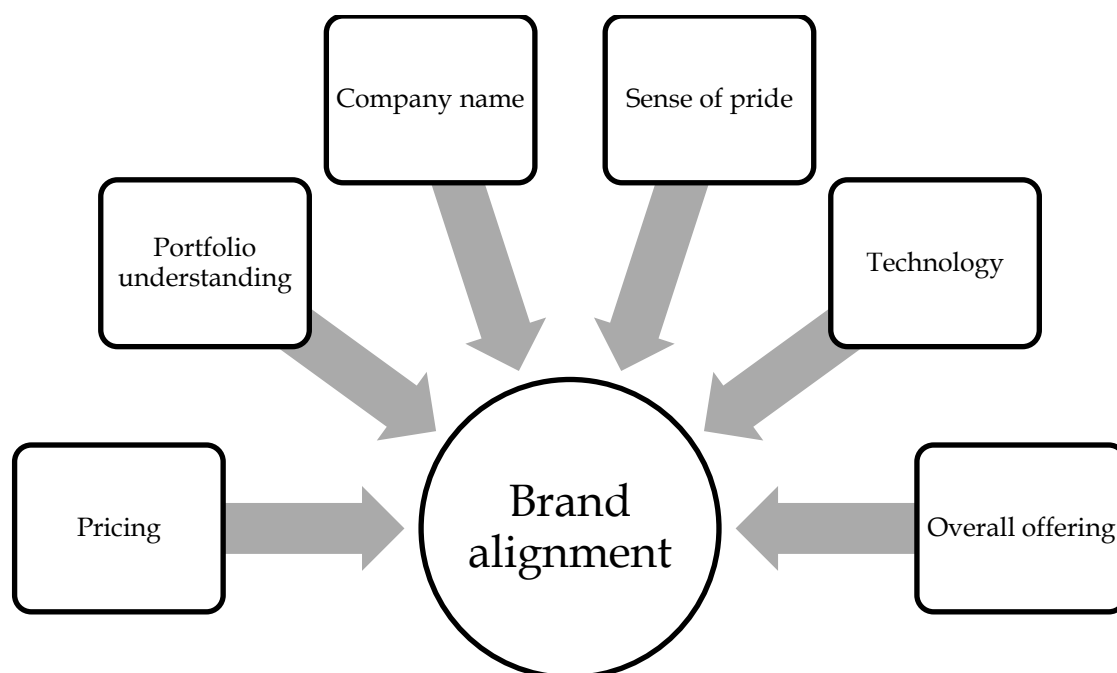


Figure 5. Factors affecting brand alignment in case company at present timeframe.

4.3 Internal processes

In addition to the FilX product family having multiple benefits from a business and profitability perspective, the global organization also believes that having this separate product family within the filtration portfolio makes communication easier and more streamlined. The solutions selected to be a part of the product family share similar features and benefits, they are considered to be a premium

choice. Therefore, it is easy to create the communication around the entire product family and make that message consistent.

There was a clear consensus between the business and Market Area interviewees: the recent efforts to boost the FilX brand have been noticed and have paid off. The overall knowledge of the FilX product family, both name and offering, has increased significantly. They think that the communication is on the right track, and it should be continued and should be taken to the next level. Interviewees one to five felt that the knowledge within the company has increased due to the FilX awareness campaign. Interviewee 7, from the Market Area organization, felt that all material is much more organized and readily available.

The responses between the two Market Areas that the interviewees were from, North and Central America (NCA), and South America (SAM), were very similar through all the questions. Key differences and similarities can be seen from Figure 6.

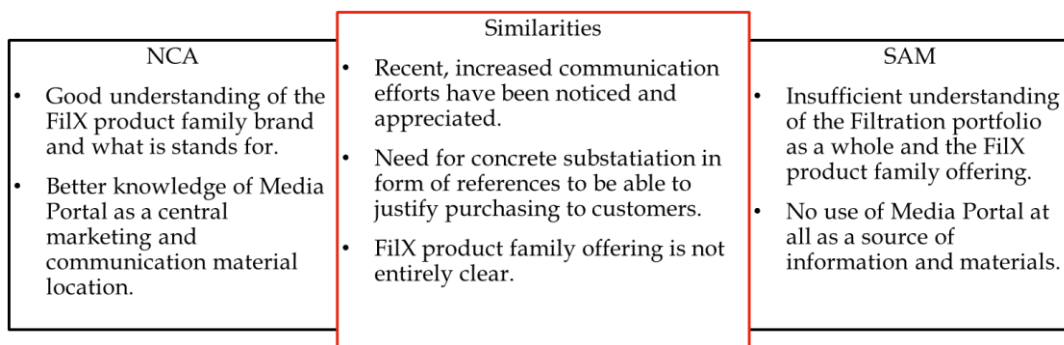


Figure 6. Key differences and similarities between NCA and SAM Market Areas.

The most significant difference between the two Market Areas was the fact that there is a need for not only FilX product family related training in South America, but it is also key to train the personnel on the full filtration portfolio and educate them on the end-to-end offering that the case company currently has capability of offering. Another differentiating point between NCA and SAM was their sources for marketing materials. All NCA interviewees identified Media Portal as the location they go to when they are looking for any sorts of material or communication on the FilX product family. However, neither of the interviewees from South America mentioned Media Portal as their source. In fact, for SAM it can be concluded that they believe there are better ways of storing and distributing the communication packages, and that there is no need to use Media Portal.

One MA interviewee also identified the disappearing of FilX knowledge as a concern. Many employees who have worked for the FilX company are starting to retire which means that unless the knowledge is passed on and the newer generation understands the value and the passion behind the name and behind the products, the brand value will begin to dilute over time despite the efforts of the business, the brand owners.

“We run very lean as an organization and there's a lot of people that are retiring or they're moving on and we need to, we need to be able to continue to grow and one way to continue to grow is to transfer that knowledge and have more people who understand.” – Interviewee 6

Finally, the third research question: “What internal processes are required to generate consistent brand perceptions amongst employees?” will be answered by analysing and summarizing the data covered in this sub-chapter.

There was a clear consensus on what is missing from the communication package. There is a need for references. They feel that having reference cases will help understand the portfolio better but also help them sell the product to customers. It makes proving the value easier when there is concrete quantification to back up the claims. References are crucial for customers to see and to believe that the solutions work. If they see quantification for solutions working at another site, it is easier for them to believe that the solution can do the same for them. Also, it was identified that it is crucial to have references for various applications. As an example, a FilX pressure filter reference from concentrates will not work when selling a FilX pressure filter to a starch customer.

There is a need to keep working on the basics of brand awareness and making sure that the sales organizations know that the case company is utilizing the FilX brand when it comes to their filtration solutions. It was also highlighted that there should be special attention paid to the fact that the FilX product family solutions do not only cater the mining industry but there are also filtration solutions for the hundreds of industrial filtration applications that the company serves.

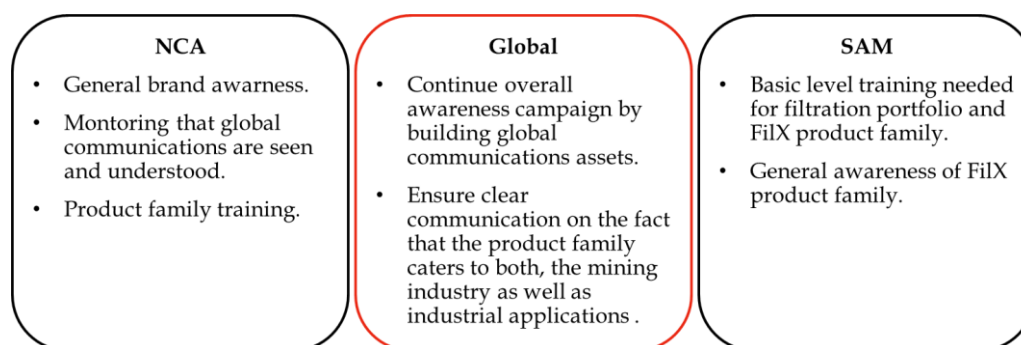


Figure 7. Overview of next steps for internal communication.

As stated earlier, there is much confusion around the FilX product family portfolio. Therefore, in addition to general brand awareness promotion it is extremely important to focus on clarifying the offering. This is essential for sales personnel to understand, so they can sell the product to the best of their ability.

When the business organization was asked about the message of the FilX product family and whether it should be tailored to the different geographical locations, answers were similar. The overall message should be the same, it should follow the same patterns and same value proposition. However, based on

the interviews, there are differences in terms of the level of education in the Market Areas. Therefore, the communication should start at a more basic level for those Market Area organizations where there is no understanding of the FilX product family offering. Meaning, in the case of NCA and SAM, the communication for NCA should be more about boosting brand awareness, ensuring everyone remembers to promote the FilX product family brand when speaking to customers. On the other hand, with SAM, the starting point should be with more of the basics: going through the portfolio and ensuring that there is understanding about the five products within the portfolio, and explaining why those products are in the portfolio. Once the offering is understood, the FilX product family brand can be promoted further. These steps are visualized in figure 7, above.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The focus of this master's thesis was on the role of internal processes in brand alignment. The goal was to also take into account the name changes and make conclusions on how they have affected the level of alignment internally. This chapter will first evaluate the quality of this research, then discuss the theoretical aspects that this research has contributed to by relating back to chapter 1.1 where the research gap was highlighted. This will be followed by managerial implications which will help the brand owners and Marketing Managers in future plans for internal communication to create a better level of brand alignment. Lastly, the chapter will make some suggestions for future research.

5.1 Evaluation of research

According to Stenfors et al. (2020) breakdown evaluation of qualitative research into five areas: credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability, and reflexivity. This research will now be evaluated based on these criteria. In order for the research to be credible, the researcher should clearly explain and justify their chosen methodology, data collection methods should be suitable for the chosen approach and the selection criteria for study participants should be well reasoned (Stenfors et al. 2020). This thesis clearly explains the chosen research method, and why it is suitable for conducting the research. It was stated that there are disadvantages to semi-structured interviews but despite them, it was the best method available for conducting this research. Each of the research subjects had a clear role in providing the researcher with enough information to answer the research questions. However, in order to make the findings more credible, the research could have taken a wider look at the organization. This research was limited to only two of the eight Market Areas, meaning that conclusions about the level of brand alignment can be only made for the two interviewed markets. Second, dependability refers to the fact that the research should be written in a way that it can be replicated (Stenfors et al. 2020). As stated for the reasoning of credibility, this thesis clearly reasons the chosen research methodology, selection of research subjects and explains how thematic analysis was used for data analysis. Therefore, making it possible to replicate to another brand or company. Third, confirmability is defined as establishing a link between the data and the findings with clear explanations and use of quotes to back up claims (Stenfors et al. 2020). This research utilizes quotes to back up claims and findings stated throughout the research findings and analysis chapter. Fourth, transferability, which means that the finding can be applied to another setting and context (Stenfors et al. 2020). This research was conducted as a case study, focusing on the FilX product family brand. Therefore, the applicability of the research to other legacy

brands in other companies is difficult to assess. It can also be stated that the findings cannot be generalized to be applicable to other legacy brands that the case company is currently utilizing in their product portfolios. The fifth and last area of evaluation is reflexivity which is about the researcher's role in the study and should be an ongoing process throughout the research process (Stenfors et al. 2020). This is an area that could have been taken into account slightly better throughout the study. The researcher is the Marketing Manager of said product family brand and works closely with the research subjects on a weekly basis. However, it can be stated that the role of the researcher did not affect the research findings negatively as all the research subjects were very honest even when talking about negative aspects of the internal processes that have been led by the researcher.

Stenfors et al. (2020) also suggest considering the ethical aspects of research, such as ensuring all research subjects have consented to being interviewed and they are aware of how their personal data is going to be handled. This was taken into account by sending each research subject a consent form, final notification and privacy notice prior to the interviews taking place.

5.2 Theoretical contributions

The research problem of this study was to better understand what the role of internal processes is in the level of brand alignment between brand identity and brand image in a B2B setting. The problem was investigated through three research questions which have been answered in-depth in sub-chapters 4.1.6, 4.2 and 4.3. To summarize, it can be concluded that there is brand alignment between brand identity and brand image to some extent. The misalignment is due to the lack of understanding on offering as well as the pricing point of the filtration solutions. It can also be concluded that the level of brand alignment is significantly better in NCA, compared to SAM. The name changes of the company have also to some extent had an effect on brand alignment because the changes have caused insufficient understanding of product offering and its naming.

Taking all of the above into account, it can be stated that internal processes have a significant role to play when it comes to brand alignment. In order to improve the level of brand alignment between brand identity and brand image, the internal communication efforts need to be increased and monitored carefully to assess the communications success and effectiveness.

Reflecting to the identified research gaps, the following sub-chapter will reiterate the future research directions identified in sub-chapter 1.1 and explain how this thesis contributes to said gaps. Leek and Christodoulides (2011) outlined future research directions for internal brand communication by highlighting two questions: 1) What internal company processes are required to generate consistent brand perceptions amongst employees? and 2) What processes will enable employees to convey a consistent brand image to industrial buyers? Based

on the research conducted in this thesis while investigating the FilX product brand one of the keys for brand alignment is understanding of the offering. In order to achieve this a consistent, structured process should be followed. A key part of this process is internal trainings and consistent internal communication which needs to be monitored to be sure that the communication and information is reaching all relevant stakeholders all over the globe. This structured communication and training will ensure brand alignment and enable consistent communication by employees to external stakeholders.

In the research gap chapter, it was identified that this thesis will contribute the first, second, fourth and fifth research area identified by Piehler et al. (2018). To recap, it was stated that this thesis will contribute to the first research area by investigating the value of the FilX brand to the case company, throughout the organization as well as look at the importance of brand alignment in relation to a company's success. This can be deduced from the amount of brand alignment between brand image and brand identity. From the research data, it can be concluded that the value of FilX product family is very significant. It not only has a significant potential to contribute to the profitability of the Filtration segment, but it also plays a significant role in helping the segment reach its sustainability targets which are then tied to the company's sustainability targets as a whole. As stated in chapter 4, there is brand alignment between brand identity and brand image to some extent. This is also shown in the research results when looking at the company's success. This year and 2022 showed recorded numbers for the FilX pressure filter but it is worth noting that there are four other filters in the FilX portfolio which have much more sales potential. As stated in some of the interviews, there is potential for further growth and development and the full potential of the product family has not been unlocked. This can further be achieved with improving the level of brand alignment.

The second area was about having research from a wider range of situations, industries, countries and companies. This thesis has added a new industry and company to already existing research. Providing a different view and an additional comparison point for previous findings.

Fourth research direction was about focusing on product brands, instead of purely looking at the corporate brand. In addition to Piehler et al. (2018), this was also highlighted by Baumgarth and Schmidt (2010) as a future research direction. This thesis did not look at the corporate brand of the case company, but the product brand, FilX. Therefore, providing the missing viewpoint.

The fifth and final research area was about having a variety of data sources and asks for assessment from managers. The interviewees in this thesis covered a wide range of roles and all conclusions are drawn based on feedback provided from management level all the way to front-facing sales positions.

5.3 Managerial implications

This research can be used as guidance for the filtration segment as a whole, including the business personnel as well as the marketing teams, to plan for internal processes, including internal communication. Overall, it was clear that the communication needs to be increased and it should be more consistent and regular. There is also a need to monitor that the Market Area personnel are seeing and reading the information. Firstly, it is important to focus on increasing brand awareness and brand recognition. This is for both Market Areas: NCA and SAM. However, the level of brand alignment was significantly better in North and Central America, compared to South America. This can be since NCA has more existing and potential customers for the FilX product family, compared to SAM. This means that the personnel working in MA NCA have more experience working with the FilX product family solutions. Therefore, more focus should be placed on SAM communication in the future.

For South America, the communication should go back to the basic level. It needs to be explained that the FilX product family exists, it would also be good to give reasoning for why the Filtration segment chose to keep the name and why it was selected for the five filters which belong to the product family.

One important learning from the research was that there needs to be more open communication on the pricing of the FilX product family filters. There is not enough justification for the premium level pricing which makes it very hard for the sales to understand and communicate forward.

Lastly, since there are thousands of references available for the FilX product family filters, they should be utilized in the communication. If there are concrete results to back up the value propositions and marketing claims, it will become easier for the sales to sell and promote, and to justify the premium level pricing. This can also be backed up by Zhang et al. (2015) who state that customers typically trust each other more than companies who are trying to sell their products and services. References would in a way act as customer-word-of-mouth.

5.4 Suggestions for future research

There are various ways in which this research could be expanded and studied in the future. For instance, to further justify the results of this study, it would be beneficial to investigate the other six market areas that were not interviewed for the purpose of this thesis. This would enable a better understanding of the level of brand alignment and the role internal processes have in it. Secondly, this research could be expanded to the portfolio in the other BL which also belongs to the FilX product family. This would give a wider look at the entire product family portfolio and not only be limited to filtration solutions.

Outside of the scope of the FilX product family, the research could be expanded to investigate other legacy brand names that the case company has and seeing if there is correlation between the research findings of the FilX product family brand name and the other brand names.

Lastly, the research results could be further verified by conducting similar research for a legacy brand in a different industry, outside of mining but still remaining within the B2B sector and looking at original equipment manufacturers. Additionally, it would be important to conduct further research by focusing only on the product brand, not taking the wider corporate brand outlook, as most research at the moment does.

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APPENDIX 1 Interview questions

Background information

- How many years have you been in the company?
- Please tell me about your role.
- Please explain how your role is related to FilX filters.

Brand identity (Global roles)

- Can you tell me about FilX filters? // Can you tell me about FilX product family brand?
- What do you think about the FilX product family brand?
- What kinds of feelings does the brand raise in your mind?
- What do you see as the key strengths and weaknesses of the FilX filters?
- How do you feel the FilX filters differentiate on the market?
- How do you feel, are there any values and beliefs associated with the FilX product family brand?
 - Continuance question: can you please elaborate on the values and beliefs.
- In your opinion, what sentence best describes FilX product family?
- How confident are you in the FilX product family's ability to grow and maintain profitability? Please give reasoning to your statements.
- What business strategy goals does the (increased) sales of FilX filters support?
- What in your opinion characterizes the target audience or ideal customers of FilX filters?

Brand image (Market Area roles)

- Can you tell me about FilX filters and product family?
- What kinds of feelings does the FilX product family brand raise in your mind?
- Has anyone in your family worked for FilX or the previous Finnish company?
- In your opinion, do the FilX filters have an emotional connection to the mining industry?
 - And does this somehow have an effect of the filter selection/purchase?
- How do you see the FilX product family brand?
 - Can you elaborate further what it stands for?
- What do you see as the key strengths and weaknesses of the FilX product family brand?
- What kind of values and beliefs you promote to the customers when selling FilX filters?
- Do you have any certain value propositions you use when selling FilX filters?
- How would you describe the target audience or ideal customer for the FilX filters?
- Do you tailor your message/description of FilX filters to each customer?

Name changes

- How do you see the recent name changes of the company (first in 2020 and then to current name in 2023)?
 - Do you feel they've influenced your perception of the FilX brand? If yes, how and what?
- Do you feel that there have been changes in communication during and after the company changes?
 - What kind of potential changes (for e.g. has the focus shifted from product features to brand value etc.)
- What about the way you communicate about the brand when you speak to customers. Do you feel that there have been behavioural changes when speaking to customers?

Internal processes and communication

- Do you feel that any internal communication so far has given you new information or new views on the FilX brand?
- Do you feel that you have received sufficient information on the FilX product family in order to communicate its benefits, value proposition etc. to the customers?
- What internal tools or channels do you use to look for information on FilX and why?
- What would enable you to get a better understanding of the FilX product family brand?
- What would help and what you would need in order to be able to communicate the FilX product family values and benefits to the customers in a better manner?