

Market Positioning Attributes on the Intention of Waqf to Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of market positioning attributes (service quality, quantity, image and brand personality) on the intention of waqf to higher education institutions (HEIs). Means-end Theory by Gutman, and Reynolds and Olson were used in this study to describe the attributes. This study used model development as its research design. In order to address the study objectives, the study uses qualitative approach based on means-end theory and analysis content. The findings indicated that the service quality, quantity, image and brand personality attributes has influenced to the intention of waqf to HEIs. In conclusion, market positioning attribute significantly influenced the intention of waqf. In implication, to increase the intention of waqf to HEIs among Muslims, the HEIs need to take into account the role of market positioning attributes in formulating the promotional programs. Eventually, the linkage between attributes, consequences and values are established to assist authority waqf bodies to encourage Muslim to contribute waqf for society's benefits.

Keywords: Market Positioning, Attributes, Means-end Theory, intention, waqf, higher education

Introduction

The chosen marketing strategy needs to have added value that differentiates it from competitors and can maintain a high marketability value in the minds of customers. Among the best marketing strategies that can bind the minds of the target market is market positioning (Floh, Zauner, Koller, & Rusch, 2014). Market positioning is the process of placing a product or service in a better position compared to competitors in the minds of consumers (Fumasoli & Huisman, 2013). It is also the process of designing the presentation and image of a product, service, or institution to occupy a distinctive place in the minds of the target market. Manufacturers should use effective market positioning strategies to differentiate their products from competitors' products that exist in the same market segment (Urde & Koch, 2014; Sirianni, Bitner, Brown, & Mandel, 2013; Sagar, Khandelwal, Mittal, & Singh, 2011).

Market positioning plays three important roles for consumers and customers, namely giving the definition of the product to the consumer, reminding the consumer of the existence of a product, and maintaining the consumer's view of the product image in the consumer's mind (Maringe, 2006). Consumers will compare a selected product with other products based on the criteria of similarities and differences. For example, a consumer chooses the product he wants by making a comparison with the same product in the market and will continue to choose that product in the future if the

product meets his satisfaction. Therefore, market positioning is significant to be applied by each institution to maintain their products or services in the market (Cassia, Ugolini, Cobelli, & Gill, 2015). Likewise, by implementing market positioning, an institution can build its own identity compared to competitors (Fumasoli & Huisman, 2013).

Market Positioning of Higher Education Institutions

Previous studies have discussed the HEI market positioning as a platform for providing HEIs with a distinctive and competitive identity (Wilkins, 2020; Mostafa, 2020; Dorozhkin et al., 2016; Çatı, Kethüda, & Bilgin, 2016; Fumasoli & Huisman, 2013; Hemsley-Brown & Goonawardana, 2007). Fumasoli and Huisman (2013) and Hemsley-Brown and Goonawardana (2007) have proposed HEI market positioning strategies to face competition in the higher education sector. Challenges and competitions in this sector have demanded every HEI to make progressive efforts to position their institutions on the best value compared to competitors. An institution needs to make reforms and strive to have its own unique value that can attract customers to choose the institution as a selected knowledge destination (Wilkins, 2020; Mostafa, 2020; Dorozhkin et al., 2016).

In marketing research, there are no specific market positioning attributes for a product or service. However, market positioning attributes need to be well identified according to the suitability of the product or service offered and can give a unique feature to the product or service, which can provide benefits and advantages to users or customers (Çatı et al., 2016; Shakhshir, 2014). In this study, market positioning attributes need to be carefully identified to see the appropriateness of those attributes in the context of HEI. Several studies have suggested the influence of attributes that can strengthen HEI marketing by measuring its influence on individual intention to behave, choose a product or service and decision-making such as service quality (Teo et al., 2016), customer perception of quality (perceived quality) (Pedro, Mendes, & Lourenço, 2018), strategic agency (Fumasoli & Huisman, 2013), system diversity (Fumasoli & Huisman, 2013), internationalization (Mourad, 2010), quantity (Albekov et al., 2017), images (Shamima Raihan et al., 2020), brand image (Abdelbaset Alkhalwaldeh, Abdallah Alsaad, Abdallah Taamneh, & Hussein Alhawamdeh, 2020), corporate image (Sallauddin & Mohd. Farid, 2019), brand personality (Rauschnabel et al., 2016) and brand equity (Khoshtaria, Datuashvili, & Matin, 2020).

Looking at the strength of the attributes discussed that can add value to HEI and can attract the intention of customers to subscribe or choose a product and service, it is important to apply those attributes as market positioning attributes to HEI, especially to study the intention of an individual or group for waqf. In addition, the researchers found that these attributes have not been studied together in one research framework. So, this study tries to explore the proposed attributes and adapt them to the research theory to fill the gap left by previous studies on the intention to contribute waqf to HEIs.

Theoretical Framework

The formulation of the theoretical framework of this study is based on the means-end theory and is guided by the findings of previous studies. Means-end theory is an early idea for the study of goal-oriented individual behavior by some scholars such as Tolman and Kroeber-Riel (Herrmann & Huber, 2000). Kroeber-Riel (1992) in Herrmann and Huber (2000, pg. 97) explained that the motivation to buy a product is due to the consumer's perception of the suitability of the product and ultimately give satisfaction value to the consumer. Further discussion of goal-oriented individual behavior has received attention from Howard (1977), Cohen (1979) and several scholars to develop a means-end model which is a combination of value and goal (Herrmann & Huber, 2000). The results of some ideas and discussions of past scholars have inspired the production of a means-end model which was later perfected by Gutman and Reynolds in the early 1980s (Gutman 1982).

The means-end theory was founded by Gutman (1982) who considered that value is the dominant factor in consumer purchasing patterns. This assumption means that individuals consider the selection of a product or service based on the value of satisfaction, which describes all actions that will produce an effect (either a desired effect or an undesirable effect), and finally connects the effect with the attributes of a product or service (Leão & Mello, 2007; Gutman, 1982). This theory emphasizes the main aspect of customer decision making that is influenced by desired (positive) effects and minimizes unwanted (negative) effects.

A means-end theory is a theory that predicts real human behavior via the final value or final aim that the individual seeks (Brunsø et al., 2004). In other words, consumers select a product or service based on the attributes of the product and service (goals) that generate an impact and meet the individual's value (end value). Previous study using the means-end theory have prioritized understanding why consumers pick one product over another on the market (Leão & Mello, 2007; Costa et al., 2004; Brunsø et al., 2004).

This model is inspired on the attributes-effects-values (A [attributes] - C [consequences] - V [values]) sequence, which creates a means-end chain (Leão & Mello, 2007; Gengler, Mulvey, & Oglethorpe, 1999). The means-end chain is

a structure that links product or service attributes to the effects on the final value (Mulvey, Olson, Celsi, & Walker, 1994; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). A quality service, for example, may optimise time while still providing a high level of security. The means-end chain for this theory is depicted in Figure 1.

According to this theory, an individual's action or decision (effect) is influenced by his perception of the product or service (attribute). Following that, the action (effect) paints a clear picture of the desired result (value) (Gutman, 1982). Product or service attributes are classified into two, namely concrete attributes and abstract attributes (Costa et al., 2004; Herrmann & Huber, 2000). A concrete attribute is something that can describe the "physical form - chemical - technical characteristics" of a product or service (Herrmann & Huber, 2000). According to Herrmann and Huber (2000), concrete attributes can be seen directly and they can be measured. While abstract attributes are the individual's subjective view of the product or service offered (Costa et al., 2004).

As for the consequences dimension, it will respond to the attributes chosen by the customer (Walker & Olson, 1991; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). Some past studies have proven that the means-end theory is significant in testing decision-making by customers or individuals towards the selection of products or services based on goals or purposes (means) and final values (values). The study of Brunsø, Scholderer and Grunert (2004) found that individual behavior is influenced by the desired end goal, that is, an individual tends to choose the desired effect and can minimize the unwanted effect (Leão & Mello, 2007; Mulvey et al., 1994; Gutman, 1982).

Therefore, the means-end theory is relevant to be used as a theory to see the final goal and value of the intention of individuals to waqf. Specifically, in the context of this study, the intention of individuals to give waqf for HEIs (effect) is driven by relevant attributes, which are concrete attributes and abstract attributes, where the end goal is to gain God's pleasure (SWT) (value) (Figure 2). In other words, individuals contribute to waqf by the influence of attributes, where there is a goal and final value to that action.

Intention to waqf

Waqf is an individual gift in the form of movable property (Victoria & Ong, 2019) or immovable property (Faliq Asraf & Azman, 2019) given to one party sincerely without any return (Syahnaz & Aznan, 2017). In Islam, waqf refers to the relationship of a Muslim's piety to Allah SWT, in addition to giving continuous rewards even after the contributor (waqif) has died (Mohamad Zaim et al., 2015). Waqf is not specified clearly in the verses of the Quran (Nurul Asykin & Muhammad Hakimi, 2013). Nevertheless, the demand to contribute and do good deeds for the community is expressed in many verses of the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet SAW (Mohamad Zaim et al., 2015). For example, through verse 92 in surah al-Imran, through the words of Allah SWT:

You will never achieve righteousness until you spend some of what you cherish. And whatever you give is certainly known to Allah.

(Surah al-Imran (3): 92)

Waqf is a way of distributing property that is given to certain parties with a certain intention and to be used continuously (Raja Nor Ashikin & Nor 'Adha, 2014). For higher education waqf, funds are collected from voluntary contributions of individuals or organizations to the HEI waqf fund to finance the management and development of the institution (Siti Mashitoh et al., 2018). Waqf is a significant instrument for the development of higher education (Zakaria & Ahmad Shaifful Anuar, 2017). An intention is a plan that represents a commitment to carry out an action or actions in the future (Nurul Adilah et al., 2016). Each person's behavior represents what comes from the heart, desires, and intentions. Actions that are done willingly and by choice are an interpretation of a person's inclination, understanding, and purpose in life (Sheeran & Webb, 2017).

In the Quran, many verses discuss and encourage Muslims to contribute and give charity, such as in Surah al-Baqarah (2: verses 261 and 271), Al-Imran (3: verses 92 and 134), al-Lail (92: verses 18-21) and al-Hadid (57: verse 18). An individual's intention to contribute something, whether it is property or wealth, is influenced by various specific factors (do Paço, Ferreira, Raposo, Rodrigues, & Dinis, 2015). Among the factors that influence an individual to contribute property or wealth are faith, religious understanding, information and education, trust in the collection institution, and ease of payment (Mohd Ali, Hairunnizam, & Nor Ghani, 2004). Some previous studies have used these factors as moderators to study variables in looking at the behavior of an individual to contribute property or wealth in Islam (Nurul Adilah et al., 2015; Amirul Faiz, Mustafa Omar, & Aiman, 2015).

The final effect and goal of seeing the actual behavior of individuals has been highlighted by the means-end theory (Gutman, 1982). This theory affirms the effect and the final goal, which means that individuals tend to do something with the aim of being able to fulfill their personal values (Costa et al., 2004). According to Costa, Dekker and Jongen (2004), the effects and final goals are usually influenced by the attributes of a product or the characteristics of services offered by manufacturers, institutions and so on. This final effect and goal is an important element in looking at the intention of individuals to perform actual behavior (Brunso et al., 2004). Previous studies have not discussed the effect

factors and individual end goals in the intention to waqf (Pitchay et al., 2015; Amirul Faiz, 2014; Zuhriinal, 2011).

As a result, this study also investigates the intention to waqf to HEI, and waqf behavior is tested using the means-end theory. Rational views the end goal of waqf behavior because individuals will intend to do good in order to achieve the desired end goal.

Methodology

The study methodology used is qualitatively descriptive by using content analysis as an analysis method. Analysis is done by examining secondary data, especially related writings, journals, papers, and published articles.

Result

Attributes of HEI's market positioning and influence the intention to waqf

According to the means-end theory, the chain of means-end is a structure that links product or service attributes to the effects that will affect the final value (Mulvey et al., 1994; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). Product or service attributes are classified into two categories: concrete attributes and abstract attributes. So that, in the context of HEI market positioning, attributes can be classified into concrete and abstract attributes.

According to Herrmann and Huber (2000), a concrete attribute can be seen directly and it can be measured specifically. Based on the discussion of marketing attributes, service quality and quantity are suggested as concrete attributes for this study. The study of Štimac and Šimić (2012) explains that an HEI has a high marketability value by offering the best quality of institutional services to customers and society. This finding is also supported by the study of Paradeise and Thoenig (2013) who stated that the quality assessment of an HEI must be emphasized, especially in positioning their institutions to meet local and global standards. The quality of HEIs includes various aspects, including the administration and management of institutions, maintenance, security, course offerings, and student recruitment. The phenomenon of reduced budget allocations by the government towards HEI expenses requires each HEI to adopt private management models to generate HEI income while maintaining the highest quality standards (Cullen, Joyce, Hassall, & Broadbent, 2003).

Service quality is a dimension that can influence an individual to make a decision when choosing a product or service offered by a manufacturer or institution compared to the same product or service offered by competitors (Füller et al., 2011; Wu, Yeh, & Hsiao, 2011; Lee, Kim, Ko, & Sagas, 2011; De Cannière, De Pelsmacker, & Geuens, 2009). Institutions that emphasize quality aspects of products and services can maintain customer loyalty by re-subscribing to the products and services offered (Wong & Sohal, 2003). The study of Farahmandian et al. 2013, on the other hand, emphasized the quality aspects of HEI services, namely the convenience factor, advisory services, curriculum, financial aid, and tuition fees. The findings of the study show that aspects of good HEI service quality have a positive and significant effect on student satisfaction.

There are studies that support quality as an attribute that can influence an individual's intention to contribute funds or waqf (Yati, Maria, & Nik Kamariah, 2019; Sani Adamu & Ram Al Jaffri, 2016). The study by Yati, Maria, and Nik Kamariah (2019) revealed that the quality of service in zakat management institutions influences zakat payers to pay zakat more efficiently. Sani Adamu and Ram Al Jaffri (2016) suggest that the quality of the institution can promote the attraction of customers to contribute funds to the institution. This is because customers can expect the best returns and results that will benefit themselves and society (Siti Zakiah & Hairunnizam, 2014). According to Mokthar (2017) and Hamidah et al. (2004), the community will feel confident and believe in the institution invested in because of the quality exhibited by the institution.

Besides service quality, the quantity aspect in an institution is an example of concrete attributes that can influence an individual's intention to choose (Sela & Berger, 2012; Skytte & Bove, 2004). The quantity aspects of HEIs are discussed in product and service offerings in terms of the large number of staff, the highest number of ratings, the largest number of students, the large number of campuses, and so on (Albekov et al., 2017; Li et al., 2016; Razali et al., 2013; Teixeira et al., 2012; Mazzarol et al., 2001). Market positioning that discusses on the quantity aspect of institutions can place institutions in the best position compared to competitors (George, 2006; Reay et al., 2001). George (2006) insists that an HEI needs to choose the best method to become a strong HEI in global competition.

In marketing, quantity refers to the number and amount of assets, employees, customers, or subscribed products that can be calculated with numbers (Mansor & Khairul Ghufuran, 2015; Nelson, 1991). Quantity attributes in market positioning play a specific role in influencing customer attitudes towards an institution (Albekov et al., 2017; Razali et al., 2013; Li et al., 2016; Mazzarol et al., 2001). Based on the aspect of quantity, the community can see the strengths and weaknesses of an institution in relation to the products and services offered (Albekov et al., 2017; Muhammad Hazrul, 2012). Rationally, the public has confidence in institutions that have a large number of customers, a variety of products, and multiple branches of the institution

(Humphrey, 2005; Mazzarol et al., 2001).

Quantity attributes play an important role in influencing the intention of individuals or groups in making decisions on the selection of a product or service (Muhammad Hazrul, 2012; Mazzarol et al., 2001). Quantity attributes also affect the intention of individuals and communities to contribute funds and engage with the institution (Amato & Amato, 2007). For example, an institution that has a large customer will indirectly influence the intention of individuals to contribute funds for the benefit of the institution (Gorodnichenko & Roland, 2016). In addition, corporate institutions' willingness to donate can be influenced by the size and number of firms (Amato & Amato, 2007).

Abstract attributes are the individual's subjective view of the product or service offered (Costa et al., 2004). Based on the discussion of HEI marketing attributes, brand image and personality attributes are proposed as the abstract attributes of this study. There are several studies on the abstract attributes of institutional marketing such as image (Shamima Raihan et al., 2020; Gunarto, Hurriyati, Disman, & Wibowo, 2018; Wilkins & Huisman, 2015; Duarte et al., 2010; Brown & Mazzarol, 2009; Ivy, 2001; Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2001) and brand personality (Rauschnabel et al., 2016; Rutter et al., 2016; Opoku, Hultman, & Saheli-Sangari, 2008).

An image is an attribute that can give the first perception of a product, service, or institution to an individual or group (Abd Hair et al., 2017). An excellent image is capable of attracting an individual or group's interest in products, services, or institutions offered in the market and maintaining their loyalty (Wilkins & Huisman, 2015; Brown & Mazzarol, 2009). An image has a significant impact on students' choice of the institution, and a good image can attract donors or fundraisers to HEI. In addition, the image of a superior HEI can attract the intention of private companies and industry to choose the HEI as a center for scientific research and development collaboration (Ivy, 2001). In the context of waqf, the community or stakeholders tend to give waqf and charities to specific institutions as a result of the institution's good image (Hairunnizam et al., 2017; Asharaf & Abdullah, 2014; Hairunnizam & Sanep, 2014).

Like image, brand personality can display the superiority of an individual or an institution (Dennis et al., 2017). The brand personality of an institution can be interpreted through a logo designed to depict the character of the institution, the efficiency and accuracy of employees in performing tasks, the work environment, and so on (Rutter et al., 2016; Watskin & Gonzenbach, 2013). A good brand personality is able to attract customers to subscribe to the product or service offered and is able to maintain customer loyalty (Dennis et al., 2017).

Brand personality is the subjective characteristics found in an individual, institution, or something that can influence the choice of individuals or society towards that person, institution, or something (Freling & Forbes, 2013). In the context of HEI, personality is an important aspect of marketing in strengthening the institution's brand towards customers and stakeholders. HEI's brand personality, which is unique and has advantages over competitors will be able to continue to grow and be strong in the higher education sector. Outstanding personalities tend to be preferred and tend to attract the interest of the community in choosing the products or services offered (Jani & Han, 2014). The management personality of a good and productive institution also greatly influences the community in contributing their funds or property for benefit and welfare purposes (Hasnizam, Salniza, Phoon, Selvan, & Fakhru Anwar, 2019; Phoon, 2017; Aida & Sri Rahayu, 2016; Venable, Rose, Bush, & Gilbert, 2005). Phoon (2017) did a study on the intention of alumni to donate to the university. The findings of the study show that the personality of the university is one of the significant factors in influencing the intention of donors and fund contributors.

Discussion

Based on previous studies that discuss the importance of service quality attributes in influencing the intention of choosing an institution, the intention of customers to make a decision to buy or subscribe to the product or service offered, and affecting customer loyalty and satisfaction (Füller et al., 2011; Wu et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2011; De Cannière et al., 2009), in addition to revealing the need for quality in influencing individuals towards the intention to contribute funds and waqf to institutions (Yati et al., 2019; Sani Adamu & Ram Al Jaffri, 2016), then service quality attributes are able to influence individuals in choosing HEI as a destination for them to contribute waqf. Accordingly, it can be expected that service quality attributes are able to influence the intention of Muslim individuals to give waqf to HEI. If the HEI has good service quality, the probability of the intention of individuals to contribute waqf to the HEI is also high.

In previous studies, the influence of quantity attributes in market positioning on the intention to waqf or contribute funds is too limited (Gorodnichenko & Roland, 2016; Amato & Amato, 2007). Several studies have found that the quantity attribute in an institution has a positive and significant relationship with the community's intention to choose that institution (Albekov et al., 2017; Li et al., 2016; Razali et al., 2013; Muhammad Hazrul, 2012).

Looking at the strength of the image can influence the intention of customers to subscribe to the product (Norazah & Norbayah, 2017; Decrop, 2017; Vijaranakorn & Shannom, 2017; Wang & Hazen, 2016; Olya & Altinay, 2016; Wei, Chang, Lin, & Liang, 2016) and influence the intention of the community to contribute funds and property (Hairunnizam et al., 2017; Asharaf & Abdullah, 2014; Ivy, 2001), so that this attribute can influence the intention of individuals to contribute funds and assistance to the institution (Michel & Rieunier, 2012).

Previous research has shown that brand personality attributes can influence the public's intention towards institutions (Dennis et al., 2017; Phoon, 2017; Rauschnabel et al., 2016; Rutter et al., 2016) and can influence individuals' intention to contribute funds or waqf to institutions (Hasnizam et al., 2019; Phoon, 2017; Aida & Sri Rahayu, 2016; Watskin & Gonzenbach, 2013; Venable et al., 2005). As a result, the strength of brand personality attributes can influence customers' and society's intentions toward the institution and maintain their loyalty. If the brand personality of the HEI has a high probability of significance, then the level of individual desire to donate to the HEI is also high.

In conclusion, market positioning attribute of HEI significantly influenced the intention of waqf. In implication, to increase the intention of waqf to HEIs among Muslims, the HEIs need to take into account the role of market positioning attributes in formulating the promotional programmes. Eventually, the linkage between attributes, consequences and values are established to assist authority waqf bodies to encourage Muslim to contribute waqf for society's benefits.

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APPENDIX

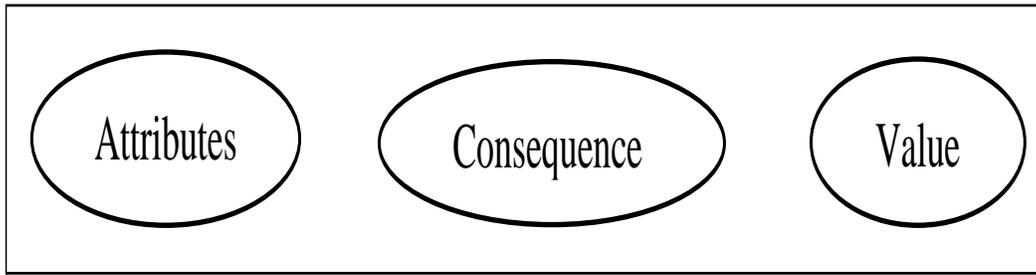


Figure 1. Means-end Chain. Source: Gutman (1982)

The means-end chain model developed by Gutman (1982) sustains the supposition that values are dominant factors in the pattern of consumer purchase; that these consider products or services based on the function of satisfying values; that all actions have consequences (desired or not); and, finally, that there is a connection between consequences and product or service attributes. The central aspects of the model are consumer decision-making that produce desired consequences (positive) and minimize undesired ones (negative) (Leão & Mello, 2007).

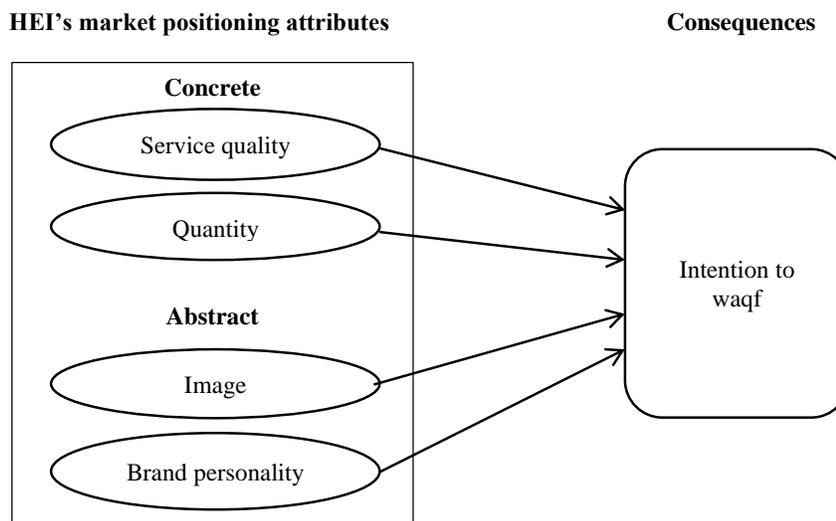


Figure 2. Research Conceptual Framework

This research framework was developed based on the means-end theory. The study suggests that in order to explain the influence of market positioning attributes on waqf intentions, the study suggests two concrete attributes of market positioning, namely service quality and quantity, and two abstract attributes of market positioning, namely the image and personality of the institutional brand.