

Brand Knowledge and The Influence on Tween's Consumer Behavior

by

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## ABSTRACT

The importance of brand knowledge in the consumer's memory is significant, because it influences what comes to mind when a consumer thinks about a brand. Overall, high levels of brand awareness and positive brand image increase consumer loyalty and competitive advantage (Keller, 1993). Brand sensory (Lindstrom, 2008) and brand loyalty (Aaker, 1991) are also directly related to brand knowledge. For this research study, the focus was on tween consumers. An average tween in the U.S., Australia and the United Kingdom sees between 20,000-40,000 commercials a year (Lindstrom, 2004). They are bombarded with advertisements by marketers' everyday. With all of the clutter, how do marketers convey the brand knowledge to tweens that is crucial to creating brand loyalty and the success of a brand?

This study sought (1) to determine the level of the informants' knowledge of brands, (2) to determine whether brand knowledge has an influence on tweens, (3) to determine what types of brand knowledge are influential to tweens, and (4) to establish what influences brand loyalty in tweens. Through using data from focus groups conducted there were five major findings. The findings included (1)vparents greatly affect their tween's consumer behavior, (2) it is very important for a brand to create a brand sensory experience and strong associations, (3) the role that the length of exposure plays in creating brand loyalty, (4) the associations tweens made to a brand were discussed more in the focus group than actual brand name, and (5) informants were most attracted to fun advertisements.

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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

When marketers improve marketing productivity they create knowledge about the brand in the consumer's mind, which leads to customer-based brand equity. The importance of knowledge in the consumer's memory is significant, because it influences what comes to mind when a consumer thinks about a brand. Brand knowledge includes two main components, brand awareness and brand image. Overall, high levels of brand awareness and positive brand image increase consumer loyalty and competitive advantage (Keller, 1993).

Brand sensory is also an important part of brand knowledge. Currently, there are more visual advertisements than ever before. Visual images are also more effective if they are paired with another sense such as sound or smell. This technique is called Sensory Branding™. Senses play a very important role in our behavior. Eighty-five percent of the respondents from a Seoul International Color Expo survey stated color amounts to more than half of their deciding factors when they are choosing a brand. Marketers have been associating sound with products since the 1950's. Sound triggers strong associations and emotions. The associations and emotions can apply a powerful influence on our behavior such as our buying behavior. When informants are emotionally engaged, there is evidence of long-term memory encoding (Lindstrom, 2008).

Brand knowledge also directly affects the level of brand loyalty in a consumer. Brand loyalty measures the attachment a customer has to a brand (Aaker, 1991). Each lifetime consumer is estimated to be worth \$100,000 to a

retailer (Lindstrom, 2004). A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, design, or a combination designed to identify a seller's goods or services and to differentiate them from competitors. Trust in a brand is when a consumer is willing to rely on the brand even if it means they may be taking a risk because of expectations that the brand will cause positive outcomes. A primary characteristic of loyalty is trust. Trust in a company is beneficial when introducing new brands to consumers. Consumers are more likely to try a brand if it comes from a trusted company (Lau & Lee, 1999).

For this research study, the focus was on tween consumers. Tween is a contraction of between; thus a tween is a person who is too old to be a child and too young to be a teenager (dictionary.com, January 20, 2010). In 2004, the tween segment alone was estimated to control and influence \$1.18 trillion per year through using their own money and their general influence on their parents' purchasing decisions (Lindstrom, 2004). With the increase in dual-income families, peer pressure to conform to their peers, and their purchasing power, tweens are a major target for marketers.

### Statement of the Problem

An average tween in the U.S., Australia and the United Kingdom sees between 20,000-40,000 commercials a year (Lindstrom, 2004). They are bombarded with advertisements by marketers everyday. With all of the clutter, how do marketers convey the brand knowledge to tweens that is crucial to creating brand loyalty and the success of a brand? The goal of this research is to gain a better understanding of how marketers create brand knowledge with



tweens, and whether this leads to brand loyalty and an increase in their consumer buying power.

### Significance

This research study will enhance the literature by assessing the impact of marketers on tweens' knowledge of brands as well as affect their brand loyalty and consumer buying power. The research findings will also help marketers understand tweens' brand awareness, at what age, and why. Marketers can use this information to improve marketing campaigns targeted towards tweens and effectively attract the target market.

### Research Objectives

There are four research objectives for this study:

1. To determine the level of the informants' knowledge of brands.
2. To determine whether brand knowledge has an influence on tweens.
3. To determine what types of brand knowledge are influential to tweens.
4. To establish what influences brand loyalty in tweens.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to test the research objectives:

1. How are tweens exposed to brands?
2. Does length of exposure to a brand create brand loyalty?
2. What type of associations do tweens make with brands?
3. Do family members influence or inhibit brand loyalty?
4. Do peers of the tweens influence or inhibit brand loyalty?

5. From the different techniques of creating brand knowledge, what are the most attractive to tweens?

5. How does brand sensory affect tweens?

#### Description of the Testing Site

Fashion Camp at Texas Tech University is a camp hosted by the Nutrition, Hospitality, and Retail Management Department and offers activities and lessons related to the fashion industry. Fashion Camp is for girls and boys in the 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. The camp has an average of 30 campers per session. Currently, Fashion Camp is moving into its fourth year. The camp offers two one week sessions a summer which are one week per session. The activities and lessons take place in the College of Human Sciences.

#### Data Collection

This research study used focus groups to gather data. The informants were females between the ages of 8-12 who were attending Fashion Camp in 2010. Two focus groups were conducted in order to validate results with a total of 15 informants. Each focus group was restricted to six to eight informants in order to create a manageable environment while still gathering quality data. The informants and their parents were emailed information about the focus groups and consent and assent forms. The informants and parents were asked to mail back the forms or to bring them to the camp check-in.

#### Limitations

The age group of the informants was limited to the age of 10-12 because the camp only allows 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders. Therefore, eight and nine year olds were

not included in the data collection. Additionally, race/ethnic diversity, income, and awareness of brands were not considered when choosing informants. It is assumed that informants attending fashion camp do have a higher awareness of brands than an average tween.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

This chapter includes topics that explain brand knowledge as well as using focus groups as the preferred method of research. The theoretical framework is included in the brand knowledge section. Brand knowledge has two main components which are brand awareness and brand image. Within each component there are factors that affect the influence of the component on brand knowledge. Brand sensory is important because it influences consumer behavior and creates strong brand associations. Brand loyalty was also included because brand knowledge directly influences brand loyalty and the strength of consumers' brand relationships. Focus groups were used as the preferred method of research in order to explore what a specific set of people think and feel about a topic (Sommer, 1997). The specific set of people was tweens which were discussed in this chapter as consumers and their purchasing power.

#### Brand Knowledge

With higher costs, greater competition, and a lower demand in many markets, firms are trying to increase the efficiency of their marketing expenses. This is why understanding brand equity is very important to improving marketing productivity. When marketers improve marketing productivity they create knowledge about the brand in the consumer's mind, which leads to customer-based brand equity (Keller, 1993).

An example of customer-based brand equity is when the customer has a reaction to an element of the marketing mix for a well known brand and then is exposed to the same marketing mix elements for an unknown brand and has no reaction. In other words, customer-based brand equity occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and contains some unique, well-built, or favorable brand associations in their memory. Short-term marketing efforts can greatly affect consumer's knowledge of a brand in their memory, therefore, future brand strategies are more effective if the brand knowledge is all ready in the consumer's memory, and the consumer is able to recall brand related information (Keller, 1993).

The importance of knowledge in the consumer's memory is significant, because it influences what comes to mind when a consumer thinks about a brand. Brand knowledge contains two main components, brand awareness and brand image. Brand awareness relates to brand recall and recognition. Brand awareness involves connecting the brand with cues such as the brand name, brand logo, and symbol in the consumers' memory. Brand image is the associations that are linked to the brand that consumers contain in their memory. The dimensions of brand knowledge are summarized in Figure 1 (Keller, 1993). This figure will also be used for the theoretical framework of this research study.

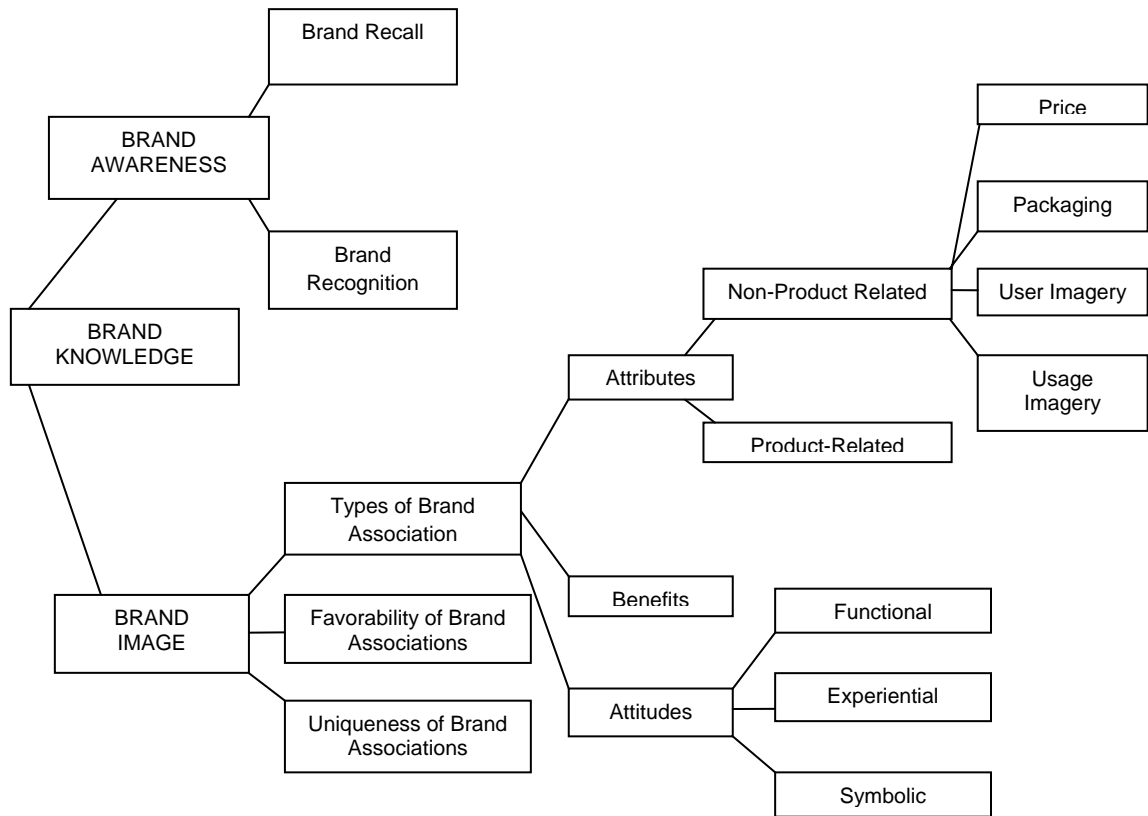


Figure 1: Dimensions of Brand Knowledge (Keller, 1993).

Brand recall and recognition from brand awareness is reflected by a consumers' ability to recognize the brand under different conditions (Rossiter & Percy 1987). Recognition of a brand is a consumer's ability to recognize the prior exposure to the brand once they are given a brand cue (Keller, 1993). Brand recall is when a consumer is able to distinguish the brand when given the product category or brand cue (Bettman 1979; Rossiter and Percy 1987). Brand awareness plays an important role in consumer decision making. First, raising brand awareness increases the chances that a consumer will think of the brand when they think about the product category (Baker et al. 1986; Nedungadi 1990). Also, brand awareness can affect consumers' decisions about brands. Finally, it

influences and strengthens brand associations in the brand image. Brand image is the perception about a brand due to the brand associations held in the consumer's memory. Brand image is how a consumer thinks about a brand rather than what they think the brand actually does. Brand associations can be classified into three major categories: attributes, benefits, and attitudes (Keller, 1993).

Attributes are the descriptive features that characterize a product or service (Myers & Shocker, 1981) and are distinguished by how they directly relate to a product or service performance. Product-related attributes are the characteristics required for performing the product or service function that customers are looking for. The non-product-related attributes are the external features of the product or service like price information, packaging and product appearance information, user imagery, and usage imagery. Through all of these attributes, consumers form an attachment to the product or service (Keller, 1993).

Benefits are what consumers think the product or service can do for them and are often distinguished into three categories, (a) functional benefits, (b) experiential benefits, and (c) symbolic benefits (Park, Jaworski, & MacInnis, 1986). Functional benefits usually correspond to the product related attributes and usually contain physiological or safety needs from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1970). Experiential benefits relate to the consumers experience using the product or service and often satisfy needs such as sensory pleasure and variety. Symbolic benefits relate to a consumers personal expression, social

approval, and self-esteem. An example of this is when a consumer values exclusivity of a brand in order to increase their social approval (Keller, 1993).

Brand attitudes are consumers' evaluations of a brand (Wilkie, 1986). They are important because they often influence consumer behavior such as brand choice. All of these different categories of associations can fluctuate according to their favorability, strength, and uniqueness. Often, the success of a marketing program is measured by the favorability of the brand associations. In other words, do the consumers believe that the brand has the benefits needed to satisfy their needs? The strength of brand association increases the likelihood that the brand information will be recalled at ease and also be able to spread activation (Keller, 1993).

Spreading activation is the process of linking memory nodes. This helps us remember a brand and/or its characteristics (Rath, Bay, Petrizzi, & Gill, 2008). The larger number of cues linked to the brand, the greater chances are that the information will be recalled. The strength of the brand associations with the product category is a determinant of brand awareness. The uniqueness of brand associations gives consumers a compelling reason to buy the brand, which in turn gives the brand a competitive advantage over their competitors (Keller, 1993).

Marketing professionals need to know how the consumer responds to a specific brand. One aspect of brand responses is brand feelings. This is a consumer's emotional response to the brand or the emotions that are evoked by



a marketing campaign. These emotions can be both positive and negative. Keller (2001), list six important brand-building feelings:

1. Warmth: Calm, soothing, peaceful
2. Fun: Amused, lighthearted, cheerful, playful
3. Excitement: Energized, cool, elation
4. Security: Safety, comfort, self-assurance
5. Social approval: Feel that others approve on their appearance or behavior
6. Self-respect: Pride, accomplishment, or fulfillment

Overall, high levels of brand awareness and positive brand image increase consumer loyalty and competitive advantage. The effectiveness of marketing communication increases and requires fewer exposures to advertisements in order to meet the communication objectives (Keller, 1993).

### Brand Sensory

Currently, there are more visual advertisements than ever before. Times Square in New York City is a perfect example of over stimulating consumers' visually. As a result, sight is not as powerful as it originally was, but smell and sound are more powerful to a marketer than many are aware. Visual images are also more effective if they are paired with another sense such as sound or smell. This technique is called Sensory Branding™ (Lindstrom, 2008).

Dr. Calvert performed a research study of fragrances where the informants saw the images and smelled the fragrances separately. The results showed the informants rated the image-fragrance combinations higher than when seeing the image or smelling the fragrance alone. She also discovered odor

activates many of the same regions of the brain as the sight of a product. An example is the aroma of a doughnut is likely to cause individuals to picture a doughnut from memory. Sound can also evoke equally powerful visual images. When an individual hears the cracking noise of opening a soda can, they will also visualize the opening can even though they did not see it (Lindstrom, 2008).

Senses play a very important role in our behavior. When smelling Play-Doh or Johnson & Johnson Baby Powder consumers are more likely than not to be transported back to childhood. When individuals smell something their gut response is instantaneous. According to Pam Scholder Ellen, a Georgia State University marketing professor, with all senses except smell, the brain responds before it thinks. Many retailers use this to their advantage by pumping scents through their vents in their stores. Northern European supermarkets often don't bother with actual bakers, and instead they pump a fresh-baked-bread smell into their vents, which fills their store aisles (Lindstrom, 2008).

Colors can also be powerful in connecting the consumer emotionally to a brand. Martin Lindstrom tested the blue Tiffany's box on six hundred women. By measuring their heart rates and blood pressure he was able to see their heart rates went up 20% when they were handed the closed box. The women never saw the logo, just the color of the box. The box did not even contain anything. In one study of telephone directory advertising, researchers found colored ads were able to hold customers' attention for two seconds longer than black and white images. Black and white images only held their interest for one second. This is

crucial when considering that on average most products only have one-twentieth of a second to grab our attention before we move on. It was also discovered at the Seoul International Color Expo that color increases brand recognition by 80%. Eighty-five percent of the respondents from the survey stated color amounts to more than half of their deciding factors when they are choosing a brand (Lindstrom, 2008).

Marketers began associating sound with products in the 1950's. The Kellogg Company has spent many years refining a signature sound. They hired a Danish lab to develop the one-of-a-kind crunch consumers could distinguish from the sounds produced by eating a generic cornflake. Some more recent uses of sound are the tick-tick-tick of the iPod wheel or the sound when turning a Macintosh computer on and off. Jingles are also very popular and become part of a memory for consumers. Sound can also deter vandalism and loitering in vacant lots and subways. The London Underground piped classical music over loudspeakers and found robberies dropped by 33%, assaults on staff by 25%, and vandalism of trains and stations by 37%. All of these examples confirm sound triggers strong associations and emotions. The associations and emotions can apply a powerful influence on our behavior such as our buying behavior. Dr. Calvert concluded that consumers' attention is increased when they hear a signature tune while also seeing a recognizable image or logo. Through scanning their brains Dr. Calvert determined the informants were emotionally engaged, which also showed evidence of long-term memory encoding.

## Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty measures the attachment a customer has to a brand (Aaker, 1991). Brand loyalty provides a retailer many benefits, including repeat purchases, word of mouth marketing of the brand, and a way to remain competitive to other retailers (Lau & Lee, 1999). Each lifetime consumer is estimated to be worth \$100,000 to a retailer (Lindstrom, 2004). An example of brand loyalty is offering an individual two different soft drinks a number of times and measuring the frequency in which they choose one brand rather than the other. If the individual selects Pepsi Cola rather than Coca Cola most of the time, and it is not due to chance, the person is showing their brand loyalty to Pepsi Cola. Identifying the development of the consumer self in relation to a given product or brand can help marketers connect or reconnect their brand to consumers (Tucker, 1964). Also, retaining customers often requires fewer marketing resources than when recruiting new customers (Knox & Walker, 2001).

Branding and brand management principles can provide consumer insights into the retailer's image and can help develop strong and unique retail brand associations in the minds of consumers (Ailawadi & Keller, 2004). A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, design, or a combination designed to identify a seller's goods or services, and to differentiate them from competitors. Trust in a brand is when a consumer is willing to rely on the brand even if it means they may be taking a risk because of expectations that the brand will cause positive outcomes. A primary characteristic of loyalty is trust (Lau & Lee, 1999). Retailers have to focus on building and maintaining trust in the consumer-brand

relationship. When retailers gain this trust they can focus on the long-term benefits of the relationship (Ganesan, 1994) and enhance competitiveness and reduce transaction costs (Noordewier et al., 1990). According to Lau and Lee, (1999) there are five factors affecting trust in a brand which are directly related to brand loyalty (Figure 2).

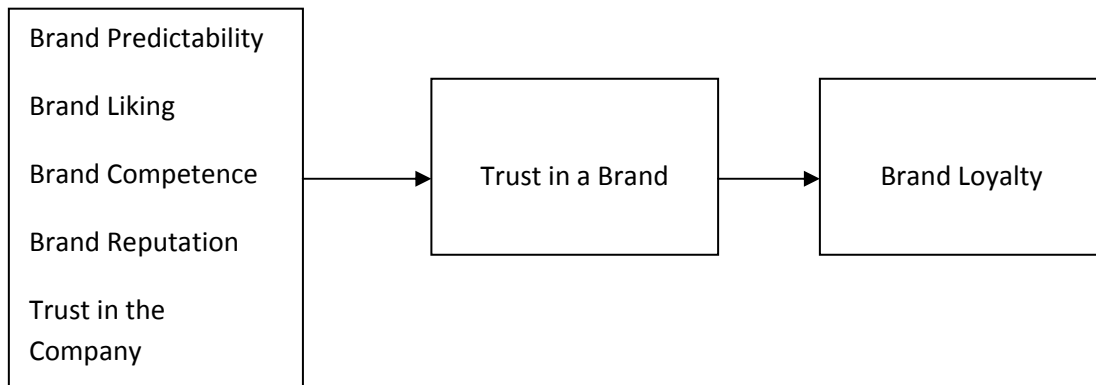


Figure 2: Revised Brand Loyalty research model (Lau & Lee, 1999).

Brand predictability occurs when a brand user can anticipate with reasonable confidence how the brand will perform each time it is used (Lau & Lee, 1999). This predictability comes from repeated interaction. Predictability enhances trust (Kelly & Stahelski, 1970) and confidence with the consumer because they know nothing unexpected will happen. Trust also builds positive expectations (Kasperson, Golding, & Tuler, 1992).

A brand's reputation can be developed through advertising and public relations as well as being influenced by product quality and performance. A positive reputation can also lead to trust, which can be reinforced through a

brand meeting its expectations after usage. Just as a positive reputation can have an effect on a brand, so can a negative reputation. A negative reputation can make a consumer suspicious of the brand and more aware of any flaws the brand may have (Lau & Lee, 1999).

A brand is competent when it has the capability to solve a consumer's problem and to meet their needs. A brand's competence can be found out through word of mouth communication or direct usage. A consumer is willing to rely on the brand once they are convinced that a brand is able to solve their problem (Lau & Lee, 1999).

A company behind the brand can also influence a consumer's trust in the brand. Trust in a company is beneficial when introducing new brands to consumers. The consumers are more likely to try a brand if it comes from a trusted company. Similar to a brand, a company's reputation can also increase trust when a consumer feels secure consuming brands from the company. Consumers also trust companies perceived as working in their best interest and being compassionate. Along with being compassionate, integrity is another way to gain consumers' trust. The act of integrity may include keeping promises, being ethical, and being honest (Lau & Lee, 1999).

Brand-loyal consumers may also be willing to pay more for a brand because they identify some unique value in the brand that no alternative can provide (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978; Pessemier, 1959; Reichheld, 1996). This willingness may come from the trust they have in the brand or from the

performance of the brand when the customer uses it. When the same brand is repeatedly purchased, it increases into market share (Assael, 1998). Behavioral loyalty consists of repeated purchases of the brand, whereas attitudinal brand loyalty includes a commitment to the brand because of some unique value associated with the brand. When brands make consumers "happy" or "joyful" or "affectionate" it prompts a greater purchase and attitudinal loyalty. Consumers who have a strong and favorable brand attitude are also more willing to pay premium prices for brands (Keller, 1993).

### Tween Consumers

Tweens is a contraction of between and tween, thus a tween is a person who is too old to be a child and too young to be a teenager (dictionary.com, January 20, 2010) This age range is 8-12 (Lindstrom, 2004). Cuneo (1989) stated tweens are too old for Ronald McDonald but yet they are too young to drive a car. According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, the population of 8 to 14 year-olds living in the United States totaled approximately 28 million. More than half of that population was female (Castleberry & Merrier, 2008).

Tweens are heavily targeted by marketers because in 2004, the tween segment alone was estimated to control and influence \$1.18 trillion per year through the use of their own money and their general influence on their parents' purchasing decisions. A study called the BRANDchild conducted by the research institute MillwardBrown revealed that in up to 80% of all brand choices, tweens control the final decision (Lindstrom, 2004). Also, reports have stated that tweens

have more discretionary purchasing power than younger children (under the age of 8) and older adolescents (over the age of 14). Tweens shop at least three times a week and save 30% of their spending money for higher priced items (McLaughlin, 1991). Scholastic Inc. conducted a survey with 7-13 year olds to ask what they would do if there were an extra hour in a day. From this survey, 19.3 % said they would use the extra time to shop. The only higher percentage was participation in sports activities (Castleberry & Merrier, 2008).

The increase in dual-income families and nontraditional households has also led to greater responsibility being placed on tweens, which in turn gives them greater purchasing power and more independence (Cuneo, 1989; McLaughlin, 1991; Miller, 1994; Rickard, 1994). Often, the shopping duty is passed on to the children because their parents do not have much time for shopping. About one-third of tweens do the family grocery shopping (McLaughlin, 1991). According to Dave Siegel, the president of the Wonder Group, tweens rely on their power to influence their parents in order to buy the goods and/or services they want. In the past the parents have been the gatekeepers but now the tween and the mom act as one consumer (Castleberry & Merrier, 2008).

Marketers also realize tween consumers are going through a time of vulnerability due to peer pressure and the pressure to conform. A tween will often use a type of clothing, which is often brand-name apparel, to create acceptance among others (Dateres, 1990; Forney & Forney, 1995; Frances, 1992; Kelly & Ficher, 1970; Miller, 1994; Rickard, 1994; Rosenberg, 1989; Smucker & Creekmore, 1972; Storm, 1987; Whalen, 1994). A tween is more concerned with



brand name clothing than other adolescents because of their current life stage (Cuneo, 1989; Fitzgerald, 1992; Koester & May, 1985; McLaughlin, 1991; Simpson, 1994).

According to a study done in 1999 by the Annenberg Public Policy Center (2001), children spend 60% more time watching television than they spend in school each year. An average tween in the U.S., Australia and the United Kingdom sees between 20,000-40,000 commercials a year (Lindstrom, 2004). Market Research reported advertisers targeting the tween market have learned they need to place advertisements with the target market of tweens in publications and programs appearing to be geared towards older teens but in fact are popular with tweens. This strategy is called “age up” (Castleberry & Merrier, 2008). However, the purpose of television commercials has changed. Commercials are no longer used to communicate product details to tweens, but instead they aim to inspire tweens. After inspiring the tween, the brand will become interactive. Other marketing channels will provide information as tweens seek more information about the brand on the alternative channels available to them around the clock. Tweens are part of the instant generation. Companies need to operate multiple channels so that when tweens learn of new and exciting product they will be able to access information 24-7 (Lindstrom, 2004).

#### Using Focus Groups as a Preferred Research Method

“A focus group is a type of group interview designed to explore what a specific set of people (such as teenagers, senior citizens, or police) think and feel about a topic” (Sommer, 1997, p. 124). They are often used as an alternative to

surveying potential consumers in order to gain insight into public perceptions (Feig, 1989), and can be used to fill gaps that surveys cannot fill (Kitzinger, 1994). Focus groups are part of the group interview category. They are well known within this category because of the frequent use when observing and recording group interaction' as research data (Merton, 1956; Morgan, 1988).

The success of the focus group process is related to how the researcher organizes the focus group and prepares to gather research. To begin this process, researchers must recruit informants. Some examples of ways to recruit are poster campaigns, classroom announcements, extra credit opportunities for a class, and personal requests (Morrison, 1997). Another well-liked technique is offering incentives for participation. Fowler, Wesley, and Vazquez (2006) used a complimentary meal served before the focus group session and a \$20 gift certificate to a major retailer presented after the conclusion of the focus group.

While recruiting informants, it is important to determine the optimal number of informants and the location where the study will take place. Focus groups include six to 12 individuals who meet in a non-intimidating environment to discuss a prearranged topic (Bers, 1989). The location should be somewhere convenient to the informants, as well as have a comfortable atmosphere (Fowler et al., 2006).

Choosing the group moderator is also an important decision for the focus group. The moderator does not always have to be the author of the research paper. Another member of the research team can also serve as the moderator, however according to Morrison (1997), the ideal moderator is not affiliated with

the group being studied. Overall, the moderator needs to be a skilled interviewer with knowledge of the focus group process, in order to establish a good relationship with the informants (Sommer, 1997). A focus group often needs an assistant observer as well. To help document the information gathered in the focus group. The most popular techniques to document the focus group is to use audiotapes or videotapes (Morrison, 1997).

After the focus group has been organized, the purpose is to document the research study. Marketing, advertising, politics, and communications have all used focus groups as an important research tool. They generally last 1.5 to 2.5 hours (Sommer, 1997), and at least three or four groups are studied to avoid the possibility of an unresponsive group (Morrison, 1997). Within a focus group, facilitators often use group exercises to build rapport that help warm up the informants and encourage them to engage with one another (Kitzinger, 1994).

In general, focus groups are an effective methodology used by researchers. They can produce a wealth of information and introduce issues that were not originally foreseen by the researchers (Morrison, 1997). They not only provide insight into what people think but they also provide information on how they think and why they think they way they do (Kitzinger, 1994). Focus groups can also complement other methods. For example, a survey can collect opinions of a random sample, and then a focus group can provide depth to the responses from the survey. The focus groups discussion can explain why people answered the survey questions as they did (Sommer, 1997).

In addition, focus groups can elicit responses and amplify situations that other methods cannot discover. They can obtain understanding often missed by one-to-one interviews or questionnaires. The focus group atmosphere, which includes co-informants, helps other informants overcome embarrassment of expressing feelings because they are common to their group. Other times, informants would not share this information because their feelings might be considered unexpected from mainstream culture (Kitzinger, 1994).

Focus groups help collect data on a group norm and demonstrate the differences between the informants. The researchers observe how people theorize their own point of view and in turn how others' perspectives affect their thoughts. The differences between individuals are equally important as group norms and play a large part in the results of the focus group research. Furthermore, focus groups allow the moderator to examine how different languages and forms of speech can facilitate or restrain communication. When informants have interactions where confusion occurs because of the way the informants use their words, researchers can identify the impact particular words or phrases can have on the discussion (Kitzinger, 1994).

As Sommer (1997) stated, "focus groups are a type of group interview in which people's feelings or opinions about a specific topic are explored in depth" (p. 125). Overall, a focus group is a very useful type of research. The researcher can use the focus groups to explore the difference between group informants, use the conflict between informants in order to clarify why people believe what they do, explore the arguments people use against each other, and analyze how

particular forms of speech facilitate or inhibit communication. Researchers can also use focus groups to fill gaps that are created by surveys, as well as serve as substantial information on its own (Sommer, 1997).

### Summary

In this chapter, the importance of brand knowledge and the different components to brand knowledge were discussed. Brand knowledge's direct affect on a consumer's loyalty was addressed as well as brand sensory. Tween consumers' generation and purchasing power was discussed along with how brand knowledge affects them as consumers. Focus groups were defined and the process was explained for clarification.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

#### Introduction

This chapter discusses the following: research objectives, research questions, recruitment of informants, location of focus group discussions, demographics of informants, moderator, instruments, taping, and pilot test.

The purpose of this study was to understand how brand knowledge has an influences tween consumers. This information can help marketers effectively attract tween consumers and create strong brand associations in a tweens' memory through such techniques as Sensory Branding™. Attracting tween consumers and creating strong brand associations increases brand loyalty which in turn increases profit. Not only does brand loyalty increase profits through sales, it also saves money on advertising efforts since it is easier for a tween to recall and recognize the brand through all of the advertisement clutter with which they are surrounded.

#### Research Objectives

There were four research objectives for this study:

1. To determine the level of the informants knowledge of brands.
2. To determine whether brand knowledge has an influence on tweens.
3. To determine what types of brand knowledge are influential on tweens.
4. To establish what influences brand loyalty in tweens.

## Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to test the research objectives:

1. How are tweens exposed to brands?
2. Does length of exposure to a brand create brand loyalty?
3. What type of associations do tweens make with brands?
4. Do family members influence or inhibit brand loyalty?
5. Do peers of the tweens influence or inhibit brand loyalty?
6. From the different techniques of creating brand knowledge, what are the most attractive to tweens?
7. How does brand sensory affect tweens?

## Method

### *Research Method*

This research study used focus groups to gather data. Two focus groups were conducted in order to validate results. Each focus group was restricted to six to eight informants in order to create a manageable environment while still gathering enough data.

### *Recruitment*

The informants were recruited from Fashion Camp, which is hosted by the Department of Nutrition, Hospitality and Retailing at Texas Tech University. Fashion Camp is one- week long with two different sessions for female campers between the ages of 8-12. Their parents were emailed an informational letter as well as a consent and assent forms two weeks before the beginning of camp. All

parents and campers were asked to mail back the consent and assent forms as soon as possible or to bring them to check-in to the camp. All consent (Appendices A & B) and assent forms (Appendices C & D) were required and approved by the Texas Tech University Internal Review Board (Appendix E). Incentives were not offered to informants since all campers attending Fashion Camp needed to be treated equally.

#### *Location*

The focus groups took place in a location familiar to the campers and convenient to the camp. They were conducted in a Texas Tech University classroom also used as a Fashion Camp activity room. The chairs were arranged in a semi circle in order to increase the likelihood that all informants would participate.

#### *Demographics*

Table 1 summarizes the demographic information. All informants were females. It was assumed informants from larger cities had more brand knowledge due to the larger number of shopping venues and the likelihood of more variety of retailers in larger cities. A large city was classified as 500,000 and above a medium city as 100,000-500,000 and a small city as under 100,000. There were a total of 15 respondents.



Table 1: Demographics of Tween Informants

Hometown	Tween%
Small City	53%
Medium City	40%
Large City	7%
Age	Tween%
10	.07%
11	27%
12	67%

#### Moderator and Observer

The moderator was the principal investigator and a graduate student at Texas Tech University in Master of Hospitality and Retail Management Program. She has taken a graduate qualitative research course in which she conducted several different types of qualitative research. The observer was also a graduate student in the same program that had also completed a course in qualitative research.

#### Instrument

The moderator's guide (Appendix F) consisted of questions phrased in an age-sensitive manner. The moderator's guide included open ended questions that required informants to explain their thoughts without a yes or no answer. Probing questions were also used for further explanation of an answer and to gather more data. This study focused on tweens' brand knowledge of a number

of brands. Questions focused on the following areas related to brand knowledge: memories of brands, advertisements, recognition, and preference.

### Recording

The focus groups were both audio-taped and video-taped for data analysis. Informants were guaranteed confidentiality and their identities would not be revealed. The observer took notes as the focus group was conducted.

### Pilot Test

The moderator conducted a pilot test in an undergraduate retail class in order to examine the questions as well as the effectiveness of the order of events. After the pilot test, the order of events was rearranged to increase efficiency in time. The questions were also examined to insure the goal of focusing on the overall research questions.

### Sensory Experience

In addition to the format of the traditional focus group, three sensory aids were developed to test the sensory stimuli theory of the study. The three senses used were hearing, smelling, and sight. For hearing, the informants were played a short sound clip of an iconic brand. After, the informants revealed if they were familiar with the brand and whether they could distinguish the brand. With smelling, the informants were blind folded and one at a time they were exposed to a certain product to smell. For sight, the informants were exposed to a "brand board" (Appendix G) which displayed partial brand names and logos.

## Summary

This chapter includes the purpose of the study as well as the research objectives and research questions. The following were also discussed: research method, recruitment of informants, location of research study, demographics of informants, background of moderator, instruments, recording and pilot test were discussed.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS

#### Introduction

The focus group data were analyzed by the Cut-and-Paste technique as well as through the ATLAS.ti: The Qualitative Data Analysis Software. ATLAS.ti helps consolidate several documents such as text, images, audio, video, and geo data. It also keeps track of all notes, comments, themes, and memos (Wikipedia.org, 2010). Major issues were distinguished and then grouped into themes. The following are the research questions with the related emerging themes from the transcripts. The theoretical framework was based on of the Dimensions of Brand Knowledge (Keller, 1993). It has been adapted to reflect the topics that were covered in this research (Figure 3).

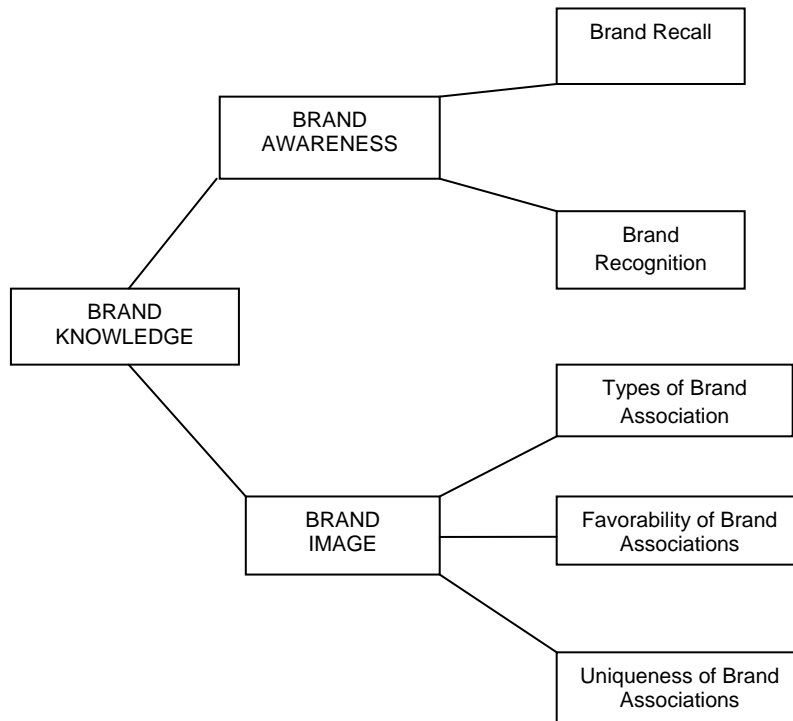


Figure 3: Adapted from Dimensions of Brand Knowledge (Keller, 1993).

## Analysis

### *Research Question 1. How are tweens exposed to brands?*

One of the emerging themes was the way that the informants were exposed to the brand. The informants were asked how they became familiar with the brand and how they heard about the brands. The most prominent answer was that they see the brand everywhere. One informant even stated that she does not really pay attention to them, they are just there.

The channels of exposure discussed were television, movies, family, and school. Often, tweens were exposed to the brands by their parents. One brand that personifies this is Johnson & Johnson Baby Powder. The informants stated that they do not really remember the first time they were exposed to baby powder, but they know it was through their parents. For the Walt Disney brand, movies were the most prominent channel of exposure discussed. They stated that the signature sound was played at the beginning of every movie and during movie previews. Another brand that the tweens were exposed to through movies was Tiffany & Co. Through product placement, tweens were able to recognize this brand from such movies as *Bride Wars*. The names in the dialog boxes have been changed in order to keep the informants identities confidential.

Moderator: How do you think you knew that sound (Disney)?

Molly: Because it's at the beginning of every movie: Peter Pan, Snow White

Moderator: Yes. Ok, how did you hear about these brands (Disney)?

Elizabeth: You just kind of get use to seeing them.

Gillian: Parents, going to them

Chelsea: I don't really pay attention to them they are just there

Moderator: Why do you think you are familiar with that sound (Disney)?

Alex: Because everyone watches Disney movies  
Courtney: Because we grew up with them

Moderator: How are you familiar with the brand (Disney)?

Molly: TV

Ellie: TV

Brittney: TV

Ellie: Yes, I mean you just see them everywhere

Moderator: So did your parents or family introduce you to baby powder?

Gretchen: Yes

Ally: Yes

Moderator: But if you see the M isn't even completed and you all ready knew. What made you recognize that (MTV)?

Brittney: If you watch that channel there is always that symbol in the bottom corner.

Ally: It's always there

*Research Question 2. Does length of exposure to a brand create brand loyalty?*

The emerging theme under this research question is how long the informants have been exposed to the brand. The first question the informants were asked was how old they were when they first learned about the brand. Second, they were asked why they think they are familiar with the brand, which also fell under the research question how the informant was exposed to the brand. From the first question regarding age, the majority of the informants answered that they couldn't even remember how old they were because it was so long ago. For Walt Disney, Play-Doh, Crayola Crayons, and Johnson & Johnson Baby Powder the informants stated that they have been exposed to this brand all of their life. One informant even stated that she has always known about Tiffany & Co. Wii brand is one that the informants stated they were just exposed to in the last couple of years.

Moderator: Ok, why do you think you are familiar with that sound (Disney)?

Ellie: Because we have heard it all our life

Molly: Because I grew up watching Disney movies like everyday

Moderator: Ok, do you remember how old you were when you first learned about Disney?

Gretchen: No

Moderator: You can't even remember?

Molly: One, like my first year I was born

Moderator: So do you remember when you first played with Play-Doh?

Molly: No

Brittany: No

Ellie: No

Moderator: Why do you think you recognize the smell (Crayola) for the people who did?

Rory: Because I've always been an artist and I use crayons a lot

Ellie: When we were little we were introduced to them and so they've just gone through life as we have grown up.

Moderator: Do you remember how old you were when you learned about this brand (Wii)

Molly (age 12): Yes, I was 11 last year, no I was 12

Ally: I was 11

Caroline: I was 9

Gretchen: I was 10

Moderator: How long have you known about these brands?

Molly: My Whole Life

Brittany: Forever

*Research Question 3. What type of associations do tweens make with brands?*

The first emerging theme under this research question is the associations tweens make with branding practices such as brand logos and other symbols that spark an association. The informants were asked what they thought of when they heard the brand's signature sound, smelled the brand's signature smell, or what they remembered when they saw the brand logo. When hearing a brands

sound or smelling its scent, the informants answer was often a symbol that is related to the brand. For instance, when hearing the signature Walt Disney sound the informants thought of Cinderella's castle and the shooting star going over the castle. When the Apple sound was played the informants thought of the logo with the apple and the little crack in it. They also thought of the different products within the brand such as the iPhones and iPods. When hearing the sound or scent they often explained their association as they imagined it in their head. With the Pixar sound everyone described what would be happening as if they were watching it. They described the lamp hopping on the letter "I" until it squishes it down.

Moderator: Do you think of anything when you hear that sound (Disney)?

Group: Castle

Molly: The rainbow going over the castle

Gretchen: The shooting star

Ally: The white rainbow

Moderator: Disney, y'all are right. Did everyone know that?

Group: Yes

Courtney: I was about to say Cinderella, then I was like wait.

Moderator: So how did you know that sound?

Becca: When you watch a movie that castle thing comes up and plays that.

Halle: And that thing goes over it (castle)

Moderator: So what do you think of when you hear the sound (Apple)?

Rory: I think of the apple logo coming on and Mac osx

Ally: and the blue screen

Moderator: So those who didn't recognize the sound, what do you think of when you hear the word Mac?

Gretchen: I think of the apple with the little crack in it

Aspen: I phones and IPods

Moderator: What did you think of when you heard that sound (Pixar)?

Ally: The light that squishes down the "I"

Ellie: The setting of it

Moderator: Anything else?



Rory: Short films and Steve Jobs

Molly: It makes me think of Toy Story

Moderator: So you remember the smell (Crayola) on your hands?

Ally: Yes

Brittany: I remember when they came out with the crayon sharpener in the back of the box

The next emerging theme was the links that the informants made to other brands when discussing another brand. The links between brands came up when asking questions about what memories they remember or what they thought of when smelling the brand, and what advertisements they remember about the brand. When discussing Apple, informants often referred to Dell. They compared Apple to Dell, and if they weren't in favor of Apple, they were in favor of Dell. When informants smelled baby powder, many of the informant's first guess on the brand was other products that had the baby powder scent. The informants guessed Dove soap and one stated that it made her think of Bath and Body Works.

Moderator: Ok everyone take your blindfolds off. On a count of 3 I want you to say the name of the Product. 1-2-3.

Gillian: Dove soap

Caroline: That's what I was saying

Moderator: Anyone else?

Molly: Soap

Rory: It is powder fresh Secret deodorant?

Moderator: Did you remember any memories (of Baby Powder)?

Brittney: All of bath and body works perfumes

Moderator: Anyone else recognize it (Apple)?

Molly: We don't have Mac's, we have all Dells and Dells are so popular in Austin. There are like 3 different maintenance stores.

Moderator: What kind of advertisements have you seen?

Brittney: Commercials comparing Dell and Macintosh

Ally: There like I'm a PC, I'm a Mac

*Research Question 4. Do family members influence or inhibit brand loyalty?*

Family members influencing the opinion of the tween are the next theme. The informants were asked what their parents thought of this brand, and then they were asked if they thought their parent's opinions affected theirs. Several informants stated that their parent's opinions influence theirs. The informant's parent's opinions of Apple greatly affected their opinion of the brand. One informant stated that this was the only brand her parents used and so that is all that she uses as well. Another informant says that her parents only use Dell so therefore she prefers Dell as well. With Disney, many informants referred to their siblings opinions. They stated that their siblings often watch Disney which makes them want to watch Disney as well. Some of the informant's parents had negative opinions towards Wal-Mart. These negative opinions transferred to the tweens. Overall, the parent's feelings and their brand loyalty was directly transferred to their tweens.

Moderator: Do your parents like this brand (Apple)?

Brittney: Yes

Molly: Yes, definitely

Moderator: So how did you know that sound Rory

Rory: My Family, we do not have a single Dell in our house. We have like 5 different Macs including the ones at my dads recording studio

Moderator: So do you think your parent's opinion makes you like or not like the Mac

Molly: Yes

Moderator: What about you Rory what do you think?

Rory: Definitely because I have never had a Dell computer my entire life

Moderator: Because your parents buy them or how come?

Rory: Yeah, because my parents buy them

Moderator: Someone said Wal-Mart. Rory why don't your parents like Wal-Mart

Rory: Because some of the stuff is lower quality and it gets annoying when kids are bouncing big bouncy balls down the aisle and stuff.

Moderator: Does that make you not want to go to Wal-Mart

Rory: Yes

Moderator: What about you Brittney, does it make you not want to go to Wal-Mart?

Brittney: Yeah we don't like it we always say it sarcastically but me and my friends joke around saying we are going to Wal-Mart yea. We don't like the atmosphere and it's usually messy or at least ours is. And there are a bunch of freaks running around in ours.

*Research Question 5. Do peers of the tweens influence or inhibit brand loyalty?*

For the next theme the informants were asked whether their peers like this brand and whether their peer's opinion affects theirs. The informants had mixed responses about their peer's opinions. Their responses included yes they like the brand, no they do not, or I don't really know what they think. When asked if their friends didn't like the brand, would it make them not like the brand everyone stated that their friend's opinion would not affect theirs.

Moderator: Do your friends like this brand?

Brittney: (Nods Yes)

Rory: (Nods Yes)

Molly: Yes

Ally: Yes

Caroline: Some do

Moderator: So some do and some don't?

Brittney: (Nods Yes)

Moderator: Do you think that what your parents or friends opinions are affecting yours?

Gretchen: My sister she watches Disney movies every day. I knock on the door and she says don't come in I'm watching a Disney movie. I'm like ok.

Moderator: So does that make you want to watch them?

Gretchen: Yeah, because sometimes we watch them together. She's older than me be but she loves them

Moderator: Do you think if you had a friend who didn't like Disney, do you think that would make you not like Walt Disney.

Molly: No

Moderator: You would still like it?

Molly: Yes

*Research Question 6. From the different techniques of creating brand knowledge, what are the most attractive to tweens?*

For this research question the informants were asked about the different advertisements they had seen and whether they were fun, happy, emotional, or informational. They were also asked what they like about the brand. For the majority of the brands, the informants stated that they had fun advertisements. For Disney they said that it was fun and inviting and made you want to go to Disney. They also said that it can let you be a little kid again. For Apple, they said that some of their advertisements are informational, but the ones they preferred were the funny ones. Often, when just discussing the commercials the informants lit up as they explained their thoughts and laugh as well. For the Wii, the informants said that the commercials are fun and made them want to buy the game. When discussing Google, an informant said that she likes Google because it is the best search engine and another said that it helps her answer questions she is unsure of. For Wal-Mart an informant gave an example of an old commercial that she said was fun and then said that she thought they were a lot funnier than the current ones, which she didn't like. Overall, the fun advertisements seemed to attract the tweens the most and benefit the brand the most.

Moderator: What makes you like this brand (Disney)?

Ally: You can be a little kid.

Gretchen: Yeah!

Molly: Yeah, you can be like 20 years old.

Moderator: What kind of advertisements do they (Disney) have?

Molly: Fun, inviting

Brittney: Awesome

Gretchen: Brilliant

Ally: Some of them are funny, some just show you like all the apps, like it was more kind of like oh that's cool

Rory: Some of them are more informational, but the ones I like are the funny ones

Brittney: I remember when they had Wal-Mart commercials with the little smiley face that went around with his knife cutting down the prices.

Moderator: Did you like that?

Brittney: I thought they were funnier than the ones they have now

*Research Question 7. How does brand sensory affect tweens?*

The theme that fell under this research question was the effect of font, color, and shape of a brands logo on a tween. The tweens were shown partial clips of a brand logo and asked to distinguish the brand. The informants were able to do this through the brands unique font, colors, and shape. When shown only the letters "gle" of Google, the informants were instantly able to tell me what it was. They stated that it was the way it was typed (the font). They said the colors also played a role in helping them distinguish the brand. With a red carton containing french fries it was the color of the carton that told the informants that it was McDonalds. This was a reoccurring pattern for all of the other brands. For Pepsi not only was it the font and the color but it was also the shape. The signature circle helped the informants on this brand. Shape also played a role when an empty, unlabeled, Coca Cola bottle was shown. All of these functions created it easy for the informants to recall and recognize the brand.

Moderator: What about number 3(Kellogg's)?

Molly: I like Kellogg's bars and I see the Kellogg's on the front of it

Ally: Like the special K

Ellie: The way that it's written

Moderator: Anyone else? Number 4(Tiffanys)? I was surprised

Molly: Because of the blue box Moderator: Ok, number 9(JCPenney)?

Molly: JCPenney because it says JCP

Ellie: The colors

Brittney: Red and White

Moderator: Number 10(Pepsi)?

Molly: Pepsi

Brittney: Who doesn't know Pepsi?

Molly: It's like red white and blue

Caroline: The bubble

### Summary

This chapter included the analysis method, the adapted theoretical framework, and the themes that related to each research question. The following are the themes that were found through the analysis:

- The way informants are exposed to brands
- How long informants have been exposed to the brands
- The association's tweens make with branding practices such as brand logos and other symbols that spark an association
- The links that the informants made to other brands when discussing another brand,
- Do family members influence the opinion of the tween
- Whether their peers opinion affects theirs
- The type of advertisements that attract the informants
- The effect of font, color, and shape of a brands logo on a tween.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter will include a conclusions and a discussion including how this study differs from the studies cited in the review of literature. The five major findings from this study will be discussed as well as the implications for marketers. In addition, a recommendation for further research has been included.

#### Conclusions

There are several conclusions drawn from this research study. The first one is that tweens are bombarded with exposure to brands. They often stated that they know this brand because it is everywhere. The next conclusion is that tweens are very aware of a brands logo and branding practices and often acknowledge these as the actual brand. One example of this is that after hearing a clip of Disney's signature sound, an informant's first thought was to call it Cinderella. Another conclusion drawn is that a brand who is introduced to a child at a young age creates brand loyalty through out their life. Many of the brands used in this research study were introduced to the informants at such a young age that they can not remember when they first learned about the brand. Although they were too young to remember, they are still aware of the brand today. They are still aware because they are continually exposed to the brand in new ways even though they were introduced so long ago. These tie into the next conclusion about brand loyalty. Through this study it was shown that the informants were more likely to form brand loyalty if their parents were fond of the

brand. This may be because most of the brands were introduced to the informants by their parents at a young age. The attractiveness of a brand is often due to fun and happy advertisements. The tweens have grown up in a 24-7 generation in which the advertisements are to attract the market while the information is portrayed through other channels that are available 24-7. The importance of brand sensory in attracting tweens as well as forming brand associations is the last conclusion. Font, color, shape, and smell play an important roll in a tweens' memory and being able to recall the brand.

### Discussion

The topics focused on in the review of literature were brand knowledge, Sensory Branding™, brand loyalty, tweens as consumers, and using focus groups as the preferred research method. After the analysis of the data, there were two major differences in the review of literature and the findings of this study. One topic expressed in the literature was the power the tween's peers have over their purchasing behavior. The tweens are going through a time of vulnerability due to peer pressure and the pressure to conform (Dateres, 1990; Forney & Forney, 1995; Frances, 1992; Kelly & Ficher, 1970; Miller, 1994; Rickard, 1994; Rosenberg, 1989; Smucker & Creekmore, 1972; Storm, 1987; Whalen, 1994). The tweens in this study were not concerned with what their friend's opinions were. They stated that even if their friends did not like the brand, they would still like it. When asked whether their friends liked the brand they would either say yes, no, or I do not know. No matter what the answer was, it never seemed to affect their opinion. Another topic where the findings differed



from the literature is the tweens' purchasing power as a result of their influence on their parents' expenditures. From the BRANDchild study, Milward Brown revealed that in up to 80% of all brand choices, tweens control the final decision. In this study, parents were often the ones who introduce brands to their children. Therefore, the tween may influence the purchase, but the brand is first introduced by the parent, which indicates parents are responsible for brand knowledge of their children.

Prior to beginning this study, the researcher had projected assumptions for the findings of this study based upon the review of literature. The first assumption relates to the finding discussed earlier about tweens and their vulnerability to peers. Similar to the literature, it was assumed this would be a factor greatly affecting tweens buying behavior. Marketers often use peers to influence tweens' buying behavior as a marketing technique. This study indicated this assumption was incorrect based upon the data. Another assumption was the impact of exposure to the internet on brand knowledge of tweens, however, when asked how they knew about the brand none of the tweens indicated their brand knowledge was due to exposure through the internet. With their generation being known as the instant generation, it was assumed the internet would be a major factor in their exposure and brand knowledge. The last assumption was that when the tweens smelled the Johnson & Johnson Baby Powder they would immediately recognize the aroma. Unfortunately many products now have the signature scent of baby powder. The tweens related the baby powder aroma to products with that scent, and not to the original product.

There were five major findings from this research study. These findings resulted from the data analysis and relate directly to the literature. The first major finding was parents have a great affect on tweens' consumer behavior. First of all, a parent's opinion of a brand greatly affects the tween's opinion. Throughout the focus groups, tweens were hesitant to like a brand if their parents did not like the brand. The next finding is the importance of a brand creating a brand sensory experience and association. Brand sensory helps create associations within the tween's brain to the brand. During the focus groups, the brand display board showed how brand sensory factors including font, color, and shape helped tweens recall and recognize the brand. For each logo, the tweens explained how the type of font, the brand specific color, or unique shape helped them decipher what the brand was without seeing the complete logo. The third finding was the role that the length of exposure plays in creating brand loyalty. Most of the brands discussed were introduced to the tweens as very young children. The top reason the informants said that they were familiar with the brand and recognized it from the sound, smell, or logo is they have been exposed to the brand for as long as they can remember. This early exposure has led to brand loyalty, because the tweens still have positive attitudes about the brands that they learned about as younger children. There were only a couple of times the tweens did not recognize the scent of a brand to which they were exposed. They stated that they did not recognize the smell because they had not been exposed to the brand recently. If a brand is going to create brand loyalty through early exposure, they have to continue to attract the consumer through new and enticing ways.

Creating brand loyalty at a young age through early exposure is great, but it is not beneficial if the brand loyalty is lost by the time they are a tween. Another finding was that the associations tweens made to a brand were discussed more than the actual brand name. For instance, with Walt Disney the majority of the informants thought of Cinderella's castle, recent Disney movies, and Mickey Mouse. These are all images and associations that represent the brand. The last finding is the informants were most attracted to fun advertisements. This is when the informants are most likely to develop brand feelings which are evoked by marketing campaigns. Consumer's positive brand images increases consumer loyalty as well as the brands competitive advantage (Keller, 1993).

#### Implications

From the findings, there are several implications that effect marketers. First, marketers need to realize that although tweens are known for their buying power, it is mainly due to the exposure to brands by their parents. With this information marketers and retailers should realize that it is important to appeal to the parents and influence them that the product is great for their children or tween. Tweens can influence the purchase but the parents are the ones who influence the initial brand awareness. The next implication is the importance of marketers integrating brand sensory in order to create successful brand associations with a brand logo. Brand sensory factors such as the unique font, smell, and shape of a logo make it easier for a consumer to recall and recognize a brand. When a consumer is able to recall and recognize a brand easily the success rate of future marketing campaigns will increase since the consumer is

all ready aware of the brand. The implication for the third factor is that marketers should introduce their brand to tweens at a young age. The likelihood of brand loyalty increases with early exposure. However, if marketers are going to do this they have to continue to research their marketing campaigns to make sure they are effectively reaching the informants as they age. The fourth implication is that marketers can create strong brand images for tweens to create with the actual brand. The brand extensions are just as important for the tween to know as the actual brand. If a tween has a favorable brand extension, here she will relate these to the originating brand. The last implication is that marketers should create fun advertisements to appeal to the tween market. As stated in the review of literature, the purpose of commercials has changed. Their purpose is to attract the tween in order to entice the tween to further research the product through instant channels.

#### Further Research

After conducting a research study it is always important to focus on where further research can take the topic in order to increase the findings and knowledge of others. One recommendation is to conduct a mixed methods study including focus groups as well as surveys. This would be helpful to compare statistics with the informant's thoughts, not only to compare the two, but to use quantitative statistics to explain the larger sample of informant's thoughts. Using both forms of research would allow for a better understanding. Another recommendation is to focus on a more specific topic with in brand knowledge. In this study, the approach was very general to brand knowledge. It would be

beneficial to marketers to focus on effective brand associations for tweens in order to benefit their brand. The last recommendation is to adapt this study to focus on the parents of the tweens. In this study it was evident that parents have a great affect on tweens' consumer behavior. With that information, it is important to know more about how the parents gain brand knowledge about brands that relate to their tweens.

### Conclusion

This chapter included conclusions and assumptions developed prior to conducting this research study, findings that differed from the literature, and five major findings. From each of the five major findings, implications were discussed that affect marketers. After the implications the researcher incorporated future research recommendations. The recommendations for future research will allow a marketer to focus in on specific topics, gain a better understanding of current findings, and gather data about how the parents of the tweens create brand knowledge on brands focused towards their tweens.

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## APPENDIX A

### CONSENT FORM TO PARENTS OR GUARDIANS SESSION 1

I hereby give my consent for my child's participation in the project entitled: "How Brand Savvy are Tweens?" I understand that the person responsible for this project is: Dr. Deborah Fowler (Associate Professor; telephone number 806-742-3068 ext. 295) and Amy Reed (masters student in Hospitality and Retail management; telephone number 806-742-3068 ext. 295). I understand that this project has the following objectives:

- to assess how effective marketers are in reaching tweens
- to assess how brand savvy tweens are

I am aware that

- The focus group will take about one hour and a half. This focus group will only ask questions pertaining to the topic. My child's answers are completely confidential.
- My child's participation is voluntary, and my child or I will not receive any payment or incentives from this study.
- At any time, my child and I can decide that she does not want to participate in the study.
- My child can withdraw from the study at any time she chooses without any penalty.
- The session will be audiotaped and videotaped.
- The focus groups take place on the Texas Tech Campus in Room 283 of the Human Sciences building on June 22, 2010 at 10:45 AM in Lubbock, Texas.
- If I decide for my child not to participate prior to the date of the focus group, I may contact Amy Reed or Deborah Fowler at 806 742 3068 or [amy.reed@ttu.edu](mailto:amy.reed@ttu.edu) or [Deborah.fowler@ttu.edu](mailto:Deborah.fowler@ttu.edu).

I understand the study involves no physical or psychological risks to my child. I understand that under no circumstance will my child or I be identified by name or other characteristic when Dr. Deborah Fowler and Amy Reed report the results of this study. All data associated with this study will remain strictly confidential.

Dr. Deborah Fowler and Amy Reed will answer any inquiries I may have concerning the procedures and has informed me that I may contact the Texas Tech University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

by writing to them in care of the Office of Research Services, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409, or by calling 806-742-3884.

**Name of Participant (Please Print):**

---

**Signature of the Participant's Parent(s) or Guardian(s):**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**This section will be returned to you after the focus group.**

**\*This consent form is not valid after (the expiration date will be May 31, 2011).**

## APPENDIX B

### CONSENT FORM TO PARENTS OR GUARDIANS SESSION 2

I hereby give my consent for my child's participation in the project entitled: "How Brand Savvy are Tweens?" I understand that the person responsible for this project is: Dr. Deborah Fowler (Associate Professor; telephone number 806-742-3068 ext. 295) and Amy Reed (masters student in Hospitality and Retail management; telephone number 806-742-3068 ext. 295). I understand that this project has the following objectives:

- to assess how effective marketers are in reaching tweens
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- My child's participation is voluntary, and my child or I will not receive any payment or incentives from this study.
- At any time, my child and I can decide that she does not want to participate in the study.
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I understand the study involves no physical or psychological risks to my child. I understand that under no circumstance will my child or I be identified by name or other characteristic when Dr. Deborah Fowler and Amy Reed report the results of this study. All data associated with this study will remain strictly confidential.

Dr. Deborah Fowler and Amy Reed will answer any inquiries I may have concerning the procedures and has informed me that I may contact the Texas Tech University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

by writing to them in care of the Office of Research Services, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409, or by calling 806-742-3884.

**Name of Participant (Please Print):**

---

**Signature of the Participant's Parent(s) or Guardian(s):**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**This section will be returned to you after the focus group.**

**\*This consent form is not valid after (the expiration date will be May 31, 2011).**

## APPENDIX C

### ASSENT FORM FOR TWEEN INFORMANT SESSION 1

I hereby agree to participate in the project entitled: "How Brand Savvy are Tweens?" I understand that the person responsible for this project is: Dr. Deborah Fowler (Associate Professor; telephone number 806-742-3068 ext. 295) and Amy Reed (masters student in Hospitality and Retail management; telephone number 806-742-3068 ext. 295). I understand that this project has the following objectives:

- to assess how effective marketers are in reaching tweens
- to assess how brand savvy tweens are

I am aware that

- The focus group will take about one hour and a half. This focus group will only ask questions pertaining to the topic. My answers are completely confidential.
- My participation is voluntary, and I will not receive any payment or incentives from this study.
- At any time, I can decide that I do not want to participate in the study.
- I can withdraw from the study at any time I choose without any penalty.
- The session will be audiotaped and videotaped.
- The focus groups take place on the Texas Tech Campus in Room 283 of the Human Sciences building on June 22, 2010 at 10:45 AM in Lubbock, Texas.
- If I decide not to participate prior to the date of the focus group, I may contact Amy Reed or Deborah Fowler at 806 742 3068 or [amy.reed@ttu.edu](mailto:amy.reed@ttu.edu) or Deborah.fowler@ttu.edu.

I understand the study there are no risks and my answers are confidential. I understand that under no circumstance I be identified by name or other characteristic when Dr. Deborah Fowler and Amy Reed report the results of this study. All data associated with this study will remain strictly confidential.

Dr. Deborah Fowler and Amy Reed will answer any inquiries I may have concerning the procedures and has informed me that I may contact the Texas Tech University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects by writing to them in care of the Office of Research Services, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409, or by calling 806-742-3884.

**Name of Participant (Please Print and sign):**

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**\*This assent form is not valid after (the expiration date will be May 31, 2011).**

## APPENDIX D

### ASSENT FORM FOR TWEEN INFORMANT SESSION 2

I hereby agree to participate in the project entitled: "How Brand Savvy are Tweens?" I understand that the person responsible for this project is: Dr. Deborah Fowler (Associate Professor; telephone number 806-742-3068 ext. 295) and Amy Reed (masters student in Hospitality and Retail management; telephone number 806-742-3068 ext. 295). I understand that this project has the following objectives:

- to assess how effective marketers are in reaching tweens
- to assess how brand savvy tweens are

I am aware that

- The focus group will take about one hour and a half. This focus group will only ask questions pertaining to the topic. My answers are completely confidential.
- My participation is voluntary, and I will not receive any payment or incentives from this study.
- At any time, I can decide that I do not want to participate in the study.
- I can withdraw from the study at any time I choose without any penalty.
- The session will be audiotaped and videotaped.
- The focus groups take place on the Texas Tech Campus in Room 283 of the Human Sciences building on June 29, 2010 at 10:45 AM in Lubbock, Texas.
- If I decide not to participate prior to the date of the focus group, I may contact Amy Reed or Deborah Fowler at 806 742 3068 or [amy.reed@ttu.edu](mailto:amy.reed@ttu.edu) or [Deborah.fowler@ttu.edu](mailto:Deborah.fowler@ttu.edu).

I understand the study there are no risks and my answers are confidential. I understand that under no circumstance I be identified by name or other characteristic when Dr. Deborah Fowler and Amy Reed report the results of this study. All data associated with this study will remain strictly confidential.

Dr. Deborah Fowler and Amy Reed will answer any inquiries I may have concerning the procedures and has informed me that I may contact the Texas Tech University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects by writing to them in care of the Office of Research Services, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409, or by calling 806-742-3884.



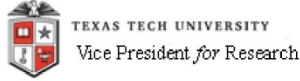
**Name of Participant (Please Print and sign):**

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**\*This assent form is not valid after (the expiration date will be May 31, 2011).**

APPENDIX E

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD LETTER



June 16, 2010

Deborah Fowler  
Nutrition, Hospitality and Retailing (NHR)  
Mail Stop: 1240

Regarding: 502356 How Tweens Create Brand Loyalty

Dr. Deborah Fowler:

The Texas Tech University Protection of Human Subjects Committee has approved your proposal referenced above. The approval is effective from June 16, 2010 to May 31, 2011. This expiration date must appear on all of your consent documents.

We will remind you of the pending expiration approximately eight weeks before May 31, 2011 and to update information about the project. If you request an extension, the proposal on file and the information you provide will be routed for continuing review.

Sincerely,



Rosemary Cogan, Ph.D., ABPP  
Protection of Human Subjects Committee

## APPENDIX F

### MODERATOR'S GUIDE

- I. Introduction
  - a. Hello everyone! My name is Amy Reed and I will be leading our activity today. Linda Carter will be assisting me. We are gathering information on how brand savvy tweens are. We want to know how much you know about different brands, and how you feel about them. Since you all qualify as tweens, we want to know what you think and feel about brands. Please don't worry about telling us how you really feel—this is a safe environment. What you say is completely confidential! In this activity, there are no right or wrong answers, only different opinions. Any thought you have is right and important to us and we want to hear it. There are a few rules for this activity that we should discuss before we begin. Just like in a classroom, please raise your hand when you want to speak so that everyone gets a turn. Also, we are videotaping and recording this session because we don't want to miss any of your comments, and Linda will also be taking. Don't worry about the taping, because like I said everything is confidential. The session will last about one hour, and you are free to stop your involvement in the discussion at any time.
- II. Activities and Questions
  - a. The focus group will begin with a short questionnaire asking:
    - i. Age
    - ii. Hometown
  - b. Activity 1: A short sound clip will be played from a brands signature sound. The brands include:
    - i. Disney
    - ii. Mac
    - iii. Pixar
    - iv. Wii
  - c. Question: The informants will be asked to write down the brand name for each sound on the slips of paper provided, and place their answers in a pot.
  - d. Probing Questions:
    - i. How did you know that sound?
    - ii. What do you think of when you hear that sound?

- iii. Why do you think you are familiar with that sound? Do you remember any specific advertisements about this brand?
- iv. Do you remember any memories when you hear that sound?
- v. Do you remember any specific advertisements about this brand?
- vi. Was the advertisements fun, happy, emotional, or informative?
- vii. What makes you like/dislike this product?
- viii. Do you remember how old you were when you first learned about this brand?
- ix. Do your parents like this brand?
- x. Do your friends like this brand?
- xi. Do you think your parents and friends opinion effects yours?
- e. Activity 2: Kids will be blindfolded and will be asked to smell a product. These products include:
  - i. Play-Doh
  - ii. Crayola Crayons
  - iii. Baby Powder
- f. Question: The informants will be asked to write down the brand name of each product on the slips of paper provided, and then place them in a pot.
- g. Probing Questions:
  - i. How did you recognize the smell?
  - ii. What do you think of when you smell that scent?
  - iii. Do you remember any memories when you smell that scent?
  - iv. Do you remember any advertisements about this brand?
  - v. Was the advertisement fun, happy, emotional, or informative?
  - vi. What makes you like/dislike this product?
  - vii. Do you remember how old you were when you first learned about this product?
  - viii. Do your parents like this brand?
  - ix. Do your friends like this brand?
  - x. Do you think your parents and friends opinion affects yours?
- h. Activity 3: A brand collage board will be put at the front of the room. The board will display partial pictures of a brand or a popular product from a brand. These pictures will include:
  - i. Picture of out line of Mickey Mouse head
  - ii. Gucci wallet
  - iii. Yellow asterisk from Wal-Mart's new logo

- iv. Popular iTunes picture of girl with iPod
  - v. Picture of glass coca-cola bottle with no logo
  - vi. Blue Tiffany box
  - vii. Initials of JCPenney, JCP
  - viii. The letters “gle” from the Google
  - ix. French fries in red carton
  - x. The letters “Kel” from Kellogg
  - xi. Half of the Pepsi circle
  - xii. Louis Vuitton pattern
  - xiii. Character from Super Mario
  - xiv. Nike swoosh
  - xv. Half of MTV logo
  - i. Question: Each brand will have a designated number. The informants will be asked to write the brand name next to the corresponding number on their paper, and then place their paper in the pot.
  - j. Probing Questions:
    - i. How were you able to recognize the brand from just a partial picture or one with no logo at all?
    - ii. What are some thoughts that pop into you head when you think of these brands?
    - iii. How long have you known about these brands?
    - iv. How did you hear about these brands?
    - v. Why do you like/dislike some of these brands?
    - vi. Do you remember your favorite advertisement about any of these brands? Were they fun, happy, emotional, or informative?
    - vii. Do your parents like this brand?
    - viii. Do your friends like this brand?
    - ix. Do you think your parents and friends opinion affects yours?
- III. Conclusion
- a. Does anyone else have anything they want to add to our discussion? I want to thank you for sharing your opinions on brands. Everything that you have shared today has been very helpful. Before everyone leaves, I have a gift card to show my appreciation for your help.

APPENDIX G

BRAND BOARD

