Chapter 2

What If the Future Never Comes?
A Better Understanding about Future Anticipatory Efforts, Brand Personality, and Autobiographical Memory

ABSTRACT

In Chapter 1, we have established the importance of adhering to ethical norms in research, especially when dealing with children both as research subjects and consumers, since we do not want them to be exploited. In this chapter and the next, we will shift gear to comprehend consumer perception on future anticipation. This is essential in order to develop a better understanding about customer’s potential needs and wants in the future, thus enabling marketers to stay ahead of competitors. Specifically, this chapter will attempt to present the relationship between brand association and future anticipation to develop brand loyalty. Since future anticipation is a complex concept, this chapter will use adults as research subjects. However, the findings should still be relevant to comprehend children’s future anticipation and develop brand loyalty in the long run as they grow up and get exposed to a lot of different advertorial messages.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-0993-6.ch002

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INTRODUCTION

The future is always a mystery and interesting to be explored. By understanding only a little part of the future, those who know it will gain a lot of benefits. For instance, children who understand that in the future they will become good musicians will be more apt to learn music harder compared to those who do not foresee their future. The same thing happens to companies. Those companies which can anticipate their future will gain more benefits. This philosophy is the basic idea of a marketing-driven paradigm, which means that companies have to identify the future needs and wants from their customers in order to be always one step ahead of their competitors (Curlo & Chamblee, 1998).

This phenomenon is very interesting because companies have done many high cost efforts to understand the future by identifying customer preferences as well as their future needs and wants. The division of Research and Development always innovates through many experiments in order to clarify this future trend. On the other hand, CEOs in many companies conduct sophisticated qualitative and quantitative methods to get a better understanding of future trends (e.g. Mische, 2009).

Due to the high level of importance about predicting future trends, it is certain that there is a need for numerous research regarding future anticipatory trends (Leung, 2010). This research attempts to identify the connection between brand association and future anticipation on the development of brand loyalty. This concept of brand loyalty has attracted scholars’ attention for a long period; however, its relationship with future anticipation has not been explored yet. Scholars and companies have worked very hard to identify future needs from customer perspectives. They have invested a lot of time and resources to understand customers’ future needs. In this article, future anticipation is not only limited to customers’ future needs. It includes future anticipation done by companies in facing changes in technology, culture, competition, etc. Despite the importance of anticipating future trends, we have only found a limited number of studies on this matter (e.g. Mische, 2009; Curlo & Chamblee, 1998).
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