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Independent Study and Mentorship

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### Original Work Proposal

Comprising a significant portion of international marketing, brand management is crucial to understanding and analyzing how different markets perceive a company's product or service. Especially at the international scale where the headquarters of a company are far away from different markets abroad, it is quite important to create a solid grasp of the customer base so that products and services are appealing in even a competitive market. Given the extent of globalization in today's economy, however, undertaking the task of creating a uniform perception of a brand is much more difficult, given that different cultures react to products and services in discrete manners. As a result, the purpose of this project is to analyze how different brands are perceived by consumers in various regions of the world.

After interviewing numerous professionals and analyzing research articles, it has become apparent that companies are changing their marketing strategies to incorporate a more local appeal to their brands so as to attract local culture. The age of romanticizing large multi-billion dollar corporations as the epitome of quality and service is slowly coming to an end; the limelight now shines bright on the local approach. However, what does this mean for brand management? Since brand management essentially deals with creating global uniformity in perception, this current trend seems to almost contradict the traditional approach. Nonetheless,

using a blended approach of these seemingly juxtaposing ideas results in the most success in terms of marketing. Numerous studies have shown how simply incorporating a local aspect to a global brand can attract customers by conveying the legitimacy and authenticity of the brand. By including local aspects, the perception of customers in different countries can vary greatly based on how the product is marketed in each locale.

As a result, in order to further understand how this change in marketing can influence brand management, I hope to design an online survey that analyzes how participants in different countries perceive global brands. There will be four categories being tested and each category will comprise of two brands. For each brand, the survey will ask some general questions such as, “what is the name of this brand?” and “what product or service does this brand fulfill?”. For each category there will also be a few questions that will compare the two brands. For example, some questions could be: “Which brand has products geared more towards the local culture?” and “Which product is cheaper?”. In addition to these questions, I will also have a section that asks questions such as “what age range do you fall in?” “what is your gender?”, and “what is your occupation?” so that I can also analyze how demographics influence brand perception. Before picking which brands to include on the survey, I will do some initial research with the help of my mentor to find out how different companies market their products at the international scale. In addition, I can also interview with professionals from different companies to understand how their brand identity varies in different regions. Using this knowledge, I will then pick the brands that differ most in their perception from country to country.

To get the most accurate results, I hope to receive data from the United States, India, and Mexico. Since I have family in India, I can have them pass on the survey to their friends and

other relatives. For Mexico, I will use my contacts to help send my survey to their family and friends who can further branch my survey out to others. Texting apps, like Whatsapp, which are commonly used by individuals to communicate with others in different countries can help me send my survey out to more people in an efficient manner. In addition, my mentor works for the Latin American and Caribbean region so she can also help me extend my sample size to Mexico. Furthermore, I will use Google Forms in order to create my survey since Google is accessible by most countries and it is easy to use. In order to get a solid understanding of the brand perception in different countries while also taking my time constraint into consideration, I hope to get at least 100 participants from each region.

After gathering the data, I will organize the results into a spreadsheet and utilize my higher level thinking skills by analyzing the data to see if I can find trends between brand recognition and demographics. From there, I will make graphs to show the overall results so that I can quickly compare how each brand was generally perceived by each country. Using this information, I will then compare my results with each company's brand perception to see how they relate or differ. After completing my analyzation, I will write a research paper over my results so that my data is in a readable format that can be used by anybody to further their understanding on brand management.

Although this project has multiple aspects that not only require me to interact with different professionals to extract information, conduct a survey, analyze data, and share my research in a meaningful manner, I am certain that the experience alone will help me grow and further develop my grasp on International Business. Until now, I have only read of marketing studies that have been conducted by others. The chance to explore on my own will truly change

my outlook on international marketing, which will help me later on in the year when it is time to start thinking about a final product. In terms of the bigger picture, my goal is essentially to conduct a survey that can create more awareness on how effective global marketing strategies are, and if my survey is successful, I can directly share my work with professionals.