An Investigation into the Value of Product Names, their Impact on Consumer Behaviour and Subsequent Marketing Tactics

An Investigation Using Low-Involvement Purchases within the Irish Retail Sector

Main Business Discipline: Marketing

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Abstract

Many companies rely heavily on a potential consumer’s prior knowledge of their products before purchasing them. Numerous companies still, utilise eye catching packaging to target the consumer at the point of purchase. Due to these factors dominating organisations’ marketing tactics, little research has been conducted on the impact that a product’s name can have on consumer purchasing intentions and resulting marketing tactics.

This dissertation examines how customers connect to product names in isolation of any other knowledge about the product and a subsequent effect on purchasing intention. Much of the existing literature explores the influence of a brand as an overall concept, however, this research looks at the name of brand extensions (the product) in isolation to other influencing factors. This document also looks at such product names as driving forces behind marketing tactics. Furthermore, this research attempts to fill gaps in research findings that have been overlooked or underexplored in previous academic literature.

This research was conducted using a mixed methods approach utilising both exploratory and casual methods. An online questionnaire and multiple interviews were the techniques used within these approaches as were deemed most appropriate to meet the objectives of this research. This investigation aims to construct an understanding of the ability a product name has on influencing purchasing intention and, as such, how this impacts the methodology of resulting marketing tactics. It is hoped therefore that this research will provide relevance and insight for future academics and practitioners alike.
Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. Other academic research used in the completion of this paper has been appropriately referenced. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MBA in Business Management at Dublin Business School. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Stephen Mc Cann

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1. Overview

1.1 Introduction

The importance of branding as a research topic has been the subject of debate amongst both academics and practitioners. Branding and brand development are deemed to be key components of marketing strategies and building consumer relationships. For example, Kotler et al (2012) claim that good marketers need timely, accurate and actionable information about consumers, competition and their brands to help them interpret past performance as well as plan future activities.

Within a marketing framework, authors examined the use of connecting with customers through such methods as creating integrated campaigns, dealing with competition, brand development and packaging, all of which will be looked at throughout the course of the literature review in chapter 2.

Edelman (2010), through adopting these considerations, published an update to the consumer decision journey (see Appendix 7.8) showing an apparently narrower window that organisations have to promote their product to the consumer. Organisations therefore need a greater impact statement and to do this, they need a strong, memorable name.

Kotler et all (2012) note how the consumer has little interaction with the brand at the moment of purchase, therefore brand recall becomes critically important. They further argue that an easy to remember brand name therefore becomes essential. This can therefore be adopted to say that an easy to remember product name therefore becomes essential. While some may consider a product to be a brand, Mondelez International (who will be interviewed as part of this research), separate the brand ‘Mondelez’ from the individual products. As such, it is not promoted towards the consumers, therefore the products are advertised individually. This is further supported in this document by an interview with Fyffes Limited (who are currently undergoing a mergence with Chiquita creating ChiquitaFyffes) highlighting their need to create a separate ‘business name’ and ‘consumer name’. Therefore, it can be argued that this document primarily focuses on the name of brand extensions (consumer name) as put forth by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) rather than the brand itself.

The purpose of this dissertation is to add to the body of knowledge that currently resides in academia while also answering unanswered questions. It takes account of secondary research findings and seeks to build on this by conducting primary research methods. The literature review has provided the researcher with a more in depth understanding of his chosen topic. Furthermore, it has helped identify the key areas of research and has helped align some of these areas so that the researcher can identify and target areas that are under researched. This in turn has aided the development of the
research purpose of this document and to identify a suitable area where the conclusions of this research can reside upon completion.

The following study is exploratory by nature. Through interviews, it aims to explore the process and considerations involved within organisations in naming a product and the role such names play on future marketing campaigns. This research will also take into account such factors as product name change among other considerations. The interview technique allows the researcher to conduct a probing and response driven means of investigation.

Through questionnaires, it also aims to investigate what type of name (e.g. informative, catchy etc.) relates most to the consumer depending on product type. It will also investigate a product’s ability to be perceived as the generic product in such categories e.g. coke may be perceived as the generic cola drink. This allows the author to conduct a higher level investigation but be allowed to make reasonable assumptions about the general population based on the sample population chosen.

Finally, a reflection of my learning can be found in Appendix 7.15 highlighting my accomplishments and obstacles overcome throughout the MBA process.

1.2 Justification for Research

1.2.1 Introduction

There are three areas influencing the need for this research to be conducted:

- Market Justification
- Academic Justification
- Personal Justification

Through this investigation, the researcher aims to satisfy each of these areas.

1.2.2 Market Justification

This paper has the potential to create significant changes in the ways organisations cater for names and promote their products. While investigating the level of importance of naming a product, it can produce a corresponding increase or decrease in the importance of having supporting marketing campaigns. While products and marketing campaigns are required to be interpretive, engaging and relevant (according to Bonfire Limited who were interviewed for the purpose of this paper), this paper aims to investigate if these characteristics can be contained in the name alone and projected towards the consumer at the point of purchase. Furthermore, it has the potential to highlight consumer preference in relation to their naming convention versus product type.
Finally, we can see the success of such concepts as personalising products through putting a name on a product in the recent ‘Share a Coke’ campaign (whereby first names are printed on the bottles). According to an article published on MarketingWeek.co.uk by Lara O’Reilly (2013):

“Coca-Cola’s value sales increased 4.93 per cent year on year to £765 million in the 52 weeks to 17 August, according to IRI Worldwide data. Sales of all colas in the UK grew 2.75 per cent, all carbonates 3.11 per cent and the total soft drinks market’s value sales increased 2.36 per cent in the period. Volume sales for the Coca-Cola brand grew 3.88 per cent, apparently stealing share from all carbonates, which marked a 0.44 per cent decrease in volume during the 52-week period, IRI Worldwide says. The total soft drinks market’s volume sales grew just 0.98 per cent. Meanwhile, consumer sentiment towards the Coca-Cola brand appears to have shifted towards the positive end of the scale during the campaign”.

This shows how much of an effect personalisation of products can have on consumer behaviour supporting a company’s ability to connect with customers. This paper will investigate what other naming conventions e.g. informative, catchy, etc. can affect consumer behaviour and how much they do so.

1.2.3 Academic Justification

Little academic endeavour has been directed towards researching the influence of product names – most have been attracted to the brand name overseeing the product. Furthermore, it is apparent that connecting with customers appears to be fundamental in establishing a brand and completing a marketing plan. Most areas whereby a connection is made with customers is through the use of marketing campaigns as it is assumed that all potential customers have been exposed to the product through advertising.

The literature review conducted in chapter 2 highlights the aforementioned factors, therefore evidencing an apparent gap in the literature to be satisfied by this research. Furthermore, much of the literature focuses on brands themselves rather than brand extensions or sub-brands. Although the concept of brand names or physical product features are not a new phenomenon (Variawa (2010) for example investigated the role packaging plays), the influence of a product name has not been explored in isolation to these other factors.

This piece of research investigates and explores such factors. It provides more insight to influencers of consumer buying behaviour and ultimately aids in the formalising and understanding of a more complete picture in influencing consumer purchasing intention.
1.2.4 Personal Justification

On a personal level, the researcher is conducting this investigation to understand the rationale for product name changes. During his lifetime, two notable changes have made an impact – Opel Fruits changed their name to Starburst while Marathon bar changed its name to Snickers.

Also, everyday examples of how names can influence customers’ reaction and association have become evident to the researcher in recent years. The well-known board game, ‘Absolute Balderdash’ has a ‘People’ element in the game. Upon the people element coming into play, a person’s name is read out and each player must construct an answer for what that person is known for – it is completely fictitious. The variety of answers generated shows the thought process an individual follows when a name arises. Interestingly, each player’s thought process provides a different solution highlighting numerous thought processes based on a name and, when a new name arises, each player engages in another different thought process with no basis other than the name of a person. For example, if the name ‘John Wood’ arose, one person might say ‘famous actor’, another might say ‘discovered wood’. These answers would change when a name other than ‘John Wood’ arose.

This shows how a name can trigger different thought processes for different people which can be applied to marketing practise. The psychology of connecting with consumers through this naming convention is of interest to the researcher.
2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to provide the researcher with sufficient knowledge so as to understand all aspects, from a high level to a low level, of the background of his chosen topic. Figure 2.1(a) below was used to provide the scope for research, progressing from a broader aspect (influencing the consumer through strategic marketing campaigns) of the topic at the top of the inverted pyramid, through to the bottom of the pyramid for more granular detail (influencing the consumer using product specifications only).

Much of this research was conducted initially through textbook so that the researcher gained a general and unbiased background of the subject. The textbook chosen was Kotler et al’s Marketing Management (2012) (which will be referred to as ‘KEA’ throughout the document). This was then researched in more detail through academic journal articles and previous studies in similar fields, among other sources, in an effort to gain a more in-depth understanding of the selected subject.

Figure 2.1(a) Literature Review Methodology
2.2 Capturing Market Insights

2.2.1 Introduction

KEA noted three key methods for tracking and identifying opportunities in the market:

- Market Research and Forecasting
- Analysing Consumer Markets
- Analysing Business Markets

2.2.2 Managing Market Research and Forecasting

Good marketers want insights to help them interpret past performance as well as plan future activities. They need timely, accurate and actionable information about consumers, competition and their brands (KEA).

Craig and Douglas (2001) argue towards the study of past evolution as a need to understand the research needs of the twenty-first century. However, as firms are expanding internationally and product markets are becoming increasingly integrated worldwide, the key decision issues facing firms are continuously changing. As a result, research and information needs have changed and broadened. Developments in mass communications technology and global and regional media create an environment where certain segments of the population worldwide are developing a common set of expectations.

As research efforts are aligned to match markets with the highest market potential, Craig and Douglas (2001) argue that researchers will need to broaden their capabilities in order to design, implement and interpret research in the twenty-first century to accommodate such changes as the global environment, technological advances, data collection, analysis and dissemination. Craig and Douglas also claim that developing and using new tools, in addition to developing the capabilities to conduct research spanning diverse environments, international marketing researchers also need to create and make imaginative and thoughtful use of new approaches to understand the changing marketplace. This is further supported by Barnard’s (1997) claims that researchers will need to develop the capabilities and skills to conduct and design research in these environments as well as incorporating new tools associated with these advancements.

An example of one new method that has emerged from such developments mentioned above, is highlighted by Ilieva, Baron and Healey (2002) in their study “Online surveys in marketing research: pros and cons”. Among the disadvantages were the low rate of response for online surveys compared to email surveys (15-29% compared with 25-50%) and the lack of virtual addresses compared to physical addresses.
Pros of online surveys included low financial resource implications and short response time. Ilieva, Baron and Healey (2002) did foresee an increase to these advantages with the growing use of the internet. This study has certain limitations however, including its premature publication with respect to the take-off of social media and other means of survey distribution.

Craig and Douglas (2001) further identify the first priority as focusing research effort and capabilities on markets with future growth potential. Interpretation of results from emerging market countries may also pose some challenges especially for researchers from other sociocultural backgrounds. Researchers need to be wary of interpreting results in terms of their own culture (see chapter 2.3.2) and experience, and, in particular, of generalising from experience in industrialised markets to emerging markets. Furthermore, the ability to define relevant research issues in each context, and to coordinate and manage the different studies, will be critical to provide meaningful input for the development of the firm's long-run strategy in world markets according to Craig and Douglas.

2.2.3 Analysing Consumer Markets

KEA teaches that the aim of marketing is to meet and satisfy target customers’ needs and wants better than competitors. Marketers do this by looking for emerging customer trends that suggest new marketing opportunities. Successful marketing requires that companies fully connect with their customers. Numerous resources note consumer behaviour as a key factor in analysing consumer markets which will be looked at in the next chapter.

Much consumer research has focused on the tangible benefits of conventional goods and services and on product attributes that lend themselves to verbal descriptions. All products—no matter how mundane—may carry a symbolic meaning (Levy 1959, 1980). In some cases, the symbolic role is particularly evident, for example, entertainment, the arts, and leisure activities while many products project important, nonverbal cues that must be seen, heard, tasted, felt, or smelled to be appreciated properly. Cases affected by the symbolic role have received increased attention from consumer researchers concerned with products like musical recordings, fashion designs, architectural styles, paintings, etc. (Hirschman and Holbrook 1981). However, in many consumption situations (viewing a movie, eating at a restaurant, playing tennis), several sensory channels operate simultaneously.

Content analyses of communication in consumer research have more often focused on drawing inferences about the source of a message (family, reference groups etc.) than on explaining its effects (Kassarjian 1977) which will be analysed in more detail in chapter 2.3. When the latter perspective has been considered, it has generally involved an information processing orientation toward the study of consumer responses to the semantic aspects of communication content (Shimp and Preston 1981).
2.2.4 Analyzing Business Markets

KEA highlight the differences between the business market and the consumer market and how campaigns need customisation to cater for each market type. Business markets include fewer, larger buyers, professional purchasing and close supplier-customer relationships. As a result of these differences, there is a behavioural change in the industrial buyer. Sheth (1973) created an integrative model of industrial buyer behaviour (see Figure 2.2.4(a)) which acts as a generic model which attempts to describe and explain all types of industrial buying decisions.

Figure 2.2.4(a) Sheth’s Model of Industrial Buyer Behaviour
Sheth (1973) notes that there are typically at least three departments whose members are continuously involved in different phases of the buying process and it is not the sole responsibility of the purchasing agents. Sheth also notes the continuous interaction between these departments, and the purchasing department, therefore highlights the criticality to examine the similarities and differences in the psychological worlds of the individuals within said departments. This model (Figure 2.2.4(a)) specifies five different processes which create differential expectations among the individuals involved in the purchasing process (see also Appendix 7.5):

1. The background of the individuals (see also chapter 2.3),
2. Information sources,
3. Active search,
4. Perceptual distortion,
5. Satisfaction with past purchases.

Sheth documented the following implications for marketing research as a result of this buyer behaviour model:

1. In order to explain or predict supplier or brand choice, it is necessary to conduct research on the psychology of other individuals in the organisation, as well as the purchasing agents, as the unique nature of the organisational structure could play a key role.
2. While some are more difficult and indirect, it is possible to operationalise and quantify most of the variables included in the model.
3. Although considerable research has been done on the demographics of organisations in industrial market research, demographic and life-style information on the individuals involved in industrial buying decisions is also needed.
4. A systematic examination of the power positions of various individuals involved in industrial buying decisions is a necessary condition of the model. The sufficient condition is to examine trade-offs among various objectives, both explicit and implicit, in order to create a satisfied customer.
5. It is essential in building any market research information system for industrial goods and services that the process of conflict resolution among the parties and its impact on supplier or brand choice behaviour is carefully included and simulated.
6. It is important to realise that not all industrial decisions are the outcomes of a systematic decision-making process. There are some industrial buying decisions which are based strictly on a set of situational factors for which theorising or model building will not be relevant or useful. What is needed in these cases is a checklist of empirical observations of the ad hoc events which unbalance the neat relationship between the theory or the model and a specific buying decision.
However, Sheth (1973) also notes that, while numerous departments may be involved in the purchasing process, not all decisions are made jointly, therefore it is of benefit of the marketer to know whether the decision will be made autonomously or otherwise.
2.3 Consumer Buying Behaviour

2.3.1 Introduction

Consumer behaviour is the study of how individuals or groups buy, use and dispose of goods, services, ideas and experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. This chapter will look at consumer buying behaviour in specific relation to impulse purchases. KEA noted a number of influencers on consumer buying including, but not limited to:

- Culture
- Social Groups
  1. Reference Groups
  2. Family
- Individuals
  1. Age
  2. Occupation
  3. Personality

Kacen and Lee (2002) note numerous studies claiming that impulse buying is described as more arousing, less deliberate, and more irresistible buying behaviour compared to planned purchasing behaviour, citing Rook and Gardner’s (1993) definition that impulse buying is defined as ‘an unplanned purchase’ that is characterised by both relatively rapid decision-making and a subjective bias in favour of immediate possession.

According to Abrahams (1997), Smith (1996), and Sfiligoj, (1996) impulse buying accounts for up to 80% of all purchases in certain product categories and it has been suggested that purchases of new products result more from impulse purchasing than from prior planning.

Highly impulsive buyers are likely to be unreflective in their thinking, to be emotionally attracted to the object, and to desire immediate gratification (Hoch & Loewenstein, 1991; Thompson et al., 1990). KEA somewhat confirm this noting that customers are inspired by one of three primary motivations: ideals, achievement and self-expression.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will now analyse impulse buying behaviour in relation to Culture, Reference Groups, Age, Personality and Emotion.

2.3.2 Culture

Elliot (1997) found that the relationship between trait buying impulsiveness and impulsive buying behaviour will be stronger among people from individualist cultures compared to people from collectivist cultures. Culture influences both “feeling rules,” (how an individual interprets the environment,) and “display rules,” (which emotions are expressed and how they are expressed)
(Ekman, 1972) which coincides with arguments outlined in Kacen and Lee’s research. Consumption as a cultural practice is one way of participating in social life and may be an important element in cementing social relationships, (Baudrillard, 1988).

Through secondary research (e.g., Kim et al., 1994; Schwartz, 1994; Singelis & Brown, 1995; Triandis, 1994, 1995), Kacen and Lee emphasised the importance of examining the influence of culture at the individual level as well as at the national level and according to Triandis (1994), “All of us carry both individualist and collectivist tendencies; the difference is that in some cultures the probability that individualist selves, attitudes, norms, values, and behaviours will be sampled or used is higher than in others”.

Two studies were conducted in Kacen and Lee’s (2002) review to measure the influence of culture on consumers’ impulsive buying behaviour. The results of the main study provide further evidence that culture affects the relationship between trait buying impulsiveness and impulsive buying behaviour at the cultural grouping and individual difference levels.

2.3.3 Reference Groups

A person’s reference groups are all those groups that have a direct or indirect influence on their attitudes and behaviours (KEA).

Featherstone (1991) claims that advertising feeds the desire to achieve the unobtainable unity of the self with destabilised meanings therefore is responsible for an “expansion of inadequacy” which is encouraged by a barrage of new criteria for self-evaluation. This form of advertising potentially creates these reference groups that individuals thrive to belong to. Cushman (1990) corroborates this, claiming that we are in an era of the ‘empty self’ in which alienation and loss of community can be solved by the ‘lifestyle’ solution in which the consumer constructs a ‘self’ by purchasing and ‘ingesting’ products featured in advertising, a behaviour which can be construed as, at best, of limited rationality.

Lunt and Livingstone (1992) argue that it is within this social context that the individual uses consumer goods and the consumption process as the materials with which to construct and maintain an identity, form relationships and frame psychological events. Consumer goods are not only used to construct our self-identity but are also used by others to make inferences about us that guide their behaviour towards us (Dittmar, 1992).

The influence of reference groups is further highlighted in a study of 7,000 consumers (noted by KEA 2012) in seven European countries, 60 per cent said they were influenced to use a new brand by family and friends.
2.3.4 Age

Kacen and Lee (2002) claim to have discovered a relationship between an individual’s impulsive behaviour tendencies and demographic characteristics such as a consumer’s age. They claim that age’s influence is expected to affect the impulsive buying behaviour of people from collectivist cultures earlier than those from individualist cultures and that college-aged individualists are not expected to be in decline, noting Wood’s (1998) study highlighting a slight increase in impulsive buying behaviour into their late 30’s. Conversely, because people in collectivist cultures learn at an earlier age to control their emotions and behaviour, it is expected that age will negatively impact impulse buying once collectivists reach college age. Age will negatively impact impulse buying to a greater extent for collectivists compared to individualists, in their early adult years.

2.3.5 Personality

Kacen and Lee (2002) further argue that the relationship between trait buying impulsiveness and impulsive buying behaviour will be stronger for individuals classified as having a more independent (individualist) self-concept compared to those classified as having a more interdependent (collectivist) self-concept because the emotional factors of pleasure and arousal that characterise impulsive buying behaviour will be more positively related to impulsive buying behaviour among individualists than among collectivists.

2.3.6 Emotion

Kacen and Lee compared Beatty and Ferrell’s (1998) findings that a consumer’s positive mood was associated with the urge to buy impulsively, with Weinberg and Gottwald’s (1982) conclusion that the impulse buyers were more ‘emotionalised’ than non-buyers. Donovan et al. (1994) discovered a positive association between consumers’ feelings of pleasure in the shopping environment and impulse buying behaviour.

Elliott (1997) argues that the vital act of consumer choice may not be to choose that which is most pleasing, but to reject that which is most distasteful claiming that we may define ourselves not by what we like, but by what we dislike, and it is strong negative emotional reactions to the consumption practices of others that may structure our social categories. Bourdieu (1984) suggests that tastes, “when they have to be justified, they are asserted purely negatively, by the refusal of other tastes”.

2.3.7 Summary

Consumer behaviour is affected by numerous aspects of the consumer’s lifestyle. Brown (1995) offers a unique overview that goes some way to amalgamating and defining such influencers: “the emotion-laden experiences of the consumer – irrational, incoherent and driven by unconscious desires; constrained by the market economy yet obtaining limited freedom; able to be unique through
consumption yet suffering an expansion of inadequacy among peers through advertising – constructs the subjectivity of the postmodern consumer with whom postmodern marketing must deal.”
2.4 Marketing Communication

2.4.1 Introduction

A communication becomes progressively more difficult as more companies clamour to attract an increasingly empowered consumers’ divided attention. Consumers are taking a more active role in the communication process. Below is KEA’s method of developing an effective marketing communications strategy for an integrated marketing communications campaign. (see Figure 2.4.1(a) below) (see also Appendix 7.3).

Figure 2.4.1(a) Kotler’s Method of Developing Effective Strategy in IMC
2.4.2 Developing Effective Communications

KEA identify the specific challenge that multinational companies face when developing global marketing communications programmes. They must decide whether the market offering is appropriate for a country, ensuring that the market segment they address is both legal and customary, that the style of the advertisement is acceptable, and whether advertisements should be created at headquarters or be locally specific (see Appendix 7.4). All influencers mentioned in chapter 2.3 above play a key role in the development of effective communications. Companies must ask not only ‘How should we reach our customers?’ but also ‘How should our customers reach us?’ and even ‘How can our customers reach each other?’.

Marketing managers must subsequently make the 5 major decisions, known as the 5 Ms’ (see Figure 2.4.2(a) below):

- **Mission**: What are our advertising objectives?
- **Money**: How much can we spend?
- **Message**: What messages should we send?
- **Media**: What media should we use?
- **Measurement**: How should we evaluate the results?

**Figure 2.4.2(a) Marketing's 5 Major Decisions**

- **Mission**: Sales goals, Advertising objectives
- **Money**: Factors to consider: Stage in PLC, Market share and consumer base, Competition and clutter, Advertising frequency, Product substitutability
- **Message**: Message Generation, Message Evaluation and selection, Message Execution, Social Responsibility review
- **Media**: Reach, frequency, impact, Major media types, Specific media vehicles, Media Timing, Geographical media allocation
- **Measurement**: Communication impact, Sales impact
KEA note the effect of exposures on audience awareness depends on the exposures’ reach, frequency and impact.

- **Reach**: The number of different persons or households exposed to a particular media schedule at least once during a specified time period.
- **Frequency**: The number of times within the specified time period that an average person or household is exposed to the message
- **Impact**: The qualitative value of an exposure through a given medium

It can be argued that the 5 M’s and the reach, frequency and impact can offer greater return to marketers if researchers broaden their capabilities using new tools as per Craig and Douglas’ argument (see chapter 2.2.2). These new tools can be used to expand towards an integrated marketing communication campaign.

### 2.4.3 Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)

Both Porcu (2012) and Eisenhart (1989) outline a number of different obstacles in adequately defining IMC. One such obstacle is the rapid development of the concept and its different forms of application. However, the major concept lies with the fact IMC is both a concept and a process and the degree of integration within each dimension can greatly vary.

KEA’s attempt to define IMC is “a concept of marketing communications planning that recognises the added value of a comprehensive plan. Such a plan evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of marketing communication disciplines” (see also Appendix 7.1 for alternate definition).

In simple terms, IMC is the concept of combining and co-ordinating two or more promotional mix elements (see Appendix 7.9) together to create a ‘one-voice’ message (Kitchen, P., Brignell, J., Li, T., and Spickett Jones, G. 2004). IMC is just one interpretation of the ‘one-voice’ message. Ballantyne (2004) notes that “communication is not something that is just done to audiences, it is also about relating to and communicating with audiences”.

KEA claim that the ideal advertisement would ensure that ‘the right customer is exposed to the right message at the right time. It is proposed therefore, that a new marketing communications mix should combine both, the message and media elements (Hughes & Fill 2007) so as to allow the consumer to interact with the organisation and friends / neighbours etc. By combining numerous media platforms, the organisation has a greater chance of reaching a larger percentage of its target audiences. In the same way media platforms are competing with each other for consumption, advertisers are competing with advertisements on each platform in an effort to reach its desired target audience so the more platforms, the less competition.
According to Tortorici (1991), IMC is one of the easiest ways an organisation can maximise its return on investment (ROI) by reaching its target audience and allowing the target audience to reach them, however, there is little proven formulae in marketing to accurately measure ROI. Hughes and Fill (2007) argue that organisations need to adopt and IMC approach because the emphasis has shifted from a ‘promoting to’ to a ‘communicating with’ focus. Unfortunately, again, as there is no way to accurately measure the ROI, companies are hesitant to invest in a change from the traditional method.

Duncan and Moriarty (1998) outline key benefits of an integrated campaign including Information and Feedback (see Appendix 7.2).

Schultz and Kitchen (2000), argued that a marketer’s attention should be concerned with measuring ‘outcomes’ rather than ‘outputs’ or marketing communication activities. While exploring this, concerns were raised that many marketing activities cannot be measured, and the value of communication effects and impacts are even more tenuous. Therefore, measurability is not only the problem of IMC, but the primary concern of all marketing communication activities. Schultz and Kitchen proposed an IGMC Communication Planning Matrix (see Figure 2.4.3(a)) that divided marketing communication programs into two categories, one to serve the purpose of business building and the other to serve the purpose of brand building. Current inflows from customers and prospects will be measured for the short term, which will be turned into marginal returns and incremental revenue; whereas the return of investment on brand building will be measured based on the brand equity (relationships) among customers and prospects.

Ehrenberg (1974) notes the potential negative impact repetitive advertising can have on the consumer, thus arguing against the use of an IMC campaign. This is particularly evident when building a relationship by promoting a brand rather than a product (see also chapter 2.6.2).
2.4.4 Mass and Personal Communication

KEA define personal communication channels as those by which two or more persons communicate face to face, person to audience, over the telephone or through email. These channels derive their effectiveness through individualised presentation and feedback. Non-Personal (mass) channels are communications directed to more than one person and include media, sales promotions, events and experiences and public relations (see Appendix 7.3.4.2). Both of these methods can co-exist.

While some marketers measure effectiveness based on sales (i.e. to serve the purpose of business building), Lavidge and Steiner (1961) argue for a more ‘long-term’ measurement of results (to serve the purpose of brand building). They argue that immediate sales results, such as from personal selling, don’t completely measure a campaign’s effectiveness. Lavidge and Steiner outline a number of steps (the Stair Step Model) between purchasing intention and the purchase itself (see Figure 2.4.4(a)).
These steps indicate three major functions of advertising. The first two, awareness and knowledge, relate to information or ideas. The second two steps, liking and preference, have to do with favourable attitudes or feelings toward the product. The final two steps, conviction and purchase, are to produce action—the acquisition of the product. It is indicated in this text that through conative, affective and cognitive advertising, that the further down the steps the consumer is, the greater the tendency for mass communication to be directed at the consumer.

Through a series of qualitative and quantitative research, Stokes and Lomax (2002) attempted to investigate the value of Word-of-Mouth (WOM) advertising as a method of mass communication. The research aimed to measure both, WOM and involvement (i.e. how likely the customer would be to recommend a product), and negative WOM. The results indicate that WOM marketing can form an integral part of a business strategy. However, what it does fail to demonstrate, is how much of a part WOM does play as part of an integrated strategy and how much of an impact that a lack of WOM or hidden WOM can play. Unfortunately, this paper could not foresee the emergence of ‘rating’ websites whereby the user is given the opportunity to rate certain services (e.g. hotels, restaurants, etc.) provided by some organisations. These may have changed the role that WOM has played since the publication of this paper.
2.5 Connecting with Customers

2.5.1 Introduction

KEA advise that companies cannot connect with all customers in large, broad or diverse markets. However, they can divide such markets into groups of customers with distinct needs and wants. This requires a keen understanding of customer behaviour and careful strategic thinking. Marketers need to learn to differentiate themselves from their competition by segmenting the customers, creating a sense of perceived value and developing relationships.

2.5.2 Dealing with Competition

D’Aveni (2007) highlights a number of key areas that marketers must manage strategically in order to differentiate themselves from their competition. These include:

1. **Defining the Market**: An organisation needs to identify the consumers that they wish to target and understand. A wide range of products should be offered to satisfy multiple needs. Consistent with arguments made above in relation to aspects such as age and culture, D’Aveni notes a need to carefully choose a region or country in which to sell the product.

2. **Chose Price**: An organisation must then decide whether to study retail or wholesale prices but must also consider other pricing parameters.

3. **Determine Primary Benefit**: The success of marketing strategies depends on the value that customers, not the organisation, place on the product.

4. **Anticipating Shifts in the Value of Benefits**: Companies can employ a suitable benefit equation (see Figures 2.5.2(a) & 2.5.2(b)) to get ahead of rivals in markets where consumers keep demanding different benefits. Once they have identified what benefits appeal to customers, executives can use the equation to decide which features to develop, at what cost, and how soon they must create the next differentiator.

5. **Finding Paths of Least Resistance**: D’Aveni recalls personal experience in the automobile sector to reinforce the significance of finding the paths of least resistance, citing that in 1993, customers weren’t willing to pay very much for new safety features, but by 1999 they were paying an extra $1,800 for each increment of improvement in air bags and crash test performance, and an additional $1,500 for antilock-braking systems.

6. **Pre-empting Rivals**: Not only can organisations escape the vicious cycle of declining market share and profit margins but it also have the potential to turn the tables on rivals by shaping the emerging competitive landscape. By forecasting the movements of prices and benefits, organisations can stay ahead of shifts in the expected-price line – and rivals.
Figure 2.5.2(a) Advanced Functionality Benefit Equation

Mapping the Cell Phone Market

Plotting prices against the primary benefit products offer in a market makes it easy to see how that market looks to customers. This price-benefit positioning map suggests there were five segments in the U.S. cellular telephone market when Apple launched the iPhone in June 2007, carving out a new ultrapremium niche. That was short-lived though, as Apple quickly dropped the price by $200 in September. The move, which might have been anticipated in view of Apple’s iPod strategy, clearly puts pressure on many players in the superpremium segment.
2.5.3 Segmentation

In mass marketing, the seller engages in mass production, mass distribution and mass marketing communication of one item for all buyers. The objective of a niche competitor is to be a large fish in a small pool.

Geographic segmentation calls for dividing the market into geographical units, such as nations, states, regions, counties, cities or neighbourhoods. The company can operate in one or a few areas, or operate in all but pay attention to local variations. For example, white goods manufacturers have to cater for variations in demand across European frontiers e.g. top-loading washing machines are needed for the French market, front loading for the UK market, and ecologically efficient machines for Northern European markets (KEA).

Smith (1956) considers market segmentation as a force in the market that will not be denied. The challenge to planning arises from the importance of determining, preferably in advance, the level or degree of segmentation that can be exploited with profit. There appear to be many reasons why formal recognition of market segmentation as a strategy is beginning to emerge. One of the most important of these is a decrease in the size of the minimum efficient producing or manufacturing unit required in some product areas. Many companies are reaching the stage in their development where attention to market segmentation may be regarded as a condition or cost of growth. Their core markets have already been developed on a generalised basis to the point where additional advertising and selling expenditures are yielding diminishing returns. Attention to smaller or fringe market segments,
which may have small potentials individually but are of crucial importance in the aggregate, may be indicated.

Success in planning marketing activities requires a combined strategy maximising both product differentiation and market segmentation as components of marketing strategy. There is a limit to which diversity in market offerings can be carried without driving production costs beyond practical limits. Similarly, the employment of product differentiation as a strategy tends to be restricted by the achievement of levels of marketing cost that are untenable.

2.5.4 Perceived Value

Zeithaml (1998) discovered widely varied attributes among consumers when asked to describe what value mean to them, indicating a perception of value to be highly personal and idiosyncratic. Zeithaml was however able to group consumers into four definitions of value:

- value is low price
- value is whatever I want in a product
- value is the quality I get for the price I pay
- value is what I get for what I give

Numerous researchers identified by Zeithaml (such as Schechter [1984] and Bishop [1984]) also note an apparent tendency for consumers to associate value with price.

This second definition can be likened to the economist's definition of utility, that is, a subjective measure of the usefulness or want satisfaction that results from consumption. Value has been defined as "whatever it is that the customer seeks in making decisions as to which store to shop or which product to buy" (Chain Store Age 1985). Schechter (1984) continues to define value as all factors, both qualitative and quantitative, subjective and objective, that make up the complete shopping experience.

The third and fourth definitions arguably follow similar suit with (Bishop 1984; Dodds and Monroe 1984; Doyle 1984; Shapiro and Associates 1985) noting a consumer’s belief of value as “what I get for what I give” which are also consistent with Sawyer and Dickson's (1984) ideology of value as a ratio of attributes weighted by their evaluations divided by price weighted by its evaluation. This meaning is also similar to the utility per dollar measure of value used by such researchers as Hauser and Urban (1986).

Zeithaml has assigned one definition to capture these four expressions of consumer value as “the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given”. Though what is received varies across consumers (i.e., some may want volume, others high quality, others convenience) and what is given varies (i.e., some are concerned only with
money expended, others with time and effort), value represents a trade-off of the salient give and get components.

2.5.5 Relationships

Morgan and Hunt (1994) propose that relationship marketing refers to all marketing activities directed toward establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges (brand building as noted by Lavidge and Steiner (1961) and Schultz and Kitchen (2000) above). They claim that the need for relationship marketing stems from the changing dynamics of the global marketplace and the changing requirements for competitive success.

Morgan and Hunt proposed that relationship commitment is central to relationship marketing citing trust as being so important to relational exchange that Spekman (1988) suggests it to be "the cornerstone of the strategic partnership (see Figure 2.5.5(a)). Cook and Emerson (1978) characterise the commitment aspect of the relationship as "a variable we believe to be central in distinguishing social from economic exchange".

![Figure 2.5.5(a) The KMV Model of Trust and Commitment](image)

Because commitment entails vulnerability, parties will seek only trustworthy partners (Morgan and Hunt 1994). Social exchange theory explains this causal relationship through the principle of generalised reciprocity, which holds that "mistrust breeds mistrust and as such would also serve to decrease commitment in the relationship and shift the transaction to one of more direct short-term exchanges" (McDonald 1981).
Morgan and Hunt argue that willingness to act is implicit in the conceptualisation of trust and therefore, one could not label a trading partner as "trustworthy" if one were not willing to take actions that otherwise would entail risk. More simply, genuine confidence that a partner can rely on another indeed will imply the behavioural intention to rely. If one is confident, then one would be willing; if one is not willing, then one is not genuinely confident.

Aspects such as trust development and relationship commitment can enable firms and their networks to enjoy sustainable competitive advantages over their rivals and their networks in the global marketplace.
2.6 Building Strong Brands

2.6.1 Introduction

Kohli and Thakor (1997) claim that the challenge today is to create a strong and distinctive image so as to serve as an identity to distinguish a product from the competitors. This challenge is however more concerned with an overall view of the brand i.e. the value of the brand as an institution. The brand must continue to improve to maintain its customer trust and to expand to reach out to potential new customers.

2.6.2 Brand Development

KEA defines a brand as “a name, symbol, logo, design or image, or any combination of these, which is designed to identify a product or service and distinguish it from those of their competitor. Within this view, as Keller (2003) says, “technically speaking, then, whenever a marketer creates a new name, logo, or symbol for a new product, he/she has created a brand”. Keller does argue that there is more to brands than just these factors, however, it is understood that brands can exist without symbols, logos, etc. but cannot function without a name.

Aaker and Joachimsthaler’s (2000) put forth a brand leadership model (see Figure 2.6.2(a)) for the purpose of building strong brands. They argue that there are four challenges to be addressed. The ‘organisational challenge’ and the ‘brand building program challenge’ view the brand as more than a name etc., similar to Keller’s (2003) views. Aaker and Joachimsthaler’s arguments surrounding the brand ‘architecture challenge’ and ‘identity and position challenge’ attempt to understand the role of brands, and their extensions (such as sub-brands) to determine the role each individual brand plays in the overall brand portfolio.
Doyle (1989) argues that products mean “different things to people inside the business, than they do to people outside”. His argument revolves around the perceived value of a product claiming that value is associated with what the consumer gets out of the product rather than what the organisation puts in citing Rodger’s (1986) note that IBM “Doesn’t sell products, it sells solutions to customers’ problems”. KEA further links this to the emotional branding aspect adding Gucci’s claim that they “are not in the business of selling handbags. [They] are in the business of selling dreams”. This however is only one consumer definition of value as proposed by Zeithaml’s (1998) – “value is what I get for what I give”. Other concepts of value are not highlighted in Doyle’s paper.

Doyle (1989) does continue to note that “successful brands are built upon the principle of seeking to build sustainable differential advantages for the customer”. Doyle’s view is that there are advantages to be realised from extension strategies (sub-branding) albeit mitigating against risks.

Doyle (1989) proceeds to expand the product life-cycle into a brand, growth direction matrix (see Figure 2.6.2(b)). This matrix highlights the tendencies of successful brands to incorporate new technology, ingredients and packaging developments to circumvent the product life-cycle. Doyle combines this ideology with Levitt’s (1983) portrayal of the need for organisations to enter new
markets as a critical component of brand development, furthering the brand towards ‘global branding’. This, combined with Booz, Allen and Hamilton’s (1982) research concludes that “growth, based upon continuously developing successful brands, appears to provide a more secure foundation than that based upon unrelated acquisitions or new untried products where failure rates are as high as 95%”.

**Figure 2.6.2(b) Brand Growth Direction Matrix**

![Brand Growth Direction Matrix](image)

**Markets**

- **Existing Markets**
  - Existing Brand Share
  - New Segments

- **New Markets**
  - New Technology
  - Global Brands

**Technology**

- **Existing Technology**
  - Existing Brand Share

- **New Technology**
  - New Segments

- **New Brands**
  - Global Markets
2.6.3 **Branding and the Consumer**

KEA identify two different roles for brands – Functional and Emotional. Each of these roles can be an important factor in identifying the preferred naming convention for a product. KEA highlight the role of emotional branding as developing a special bond with the customer.

Doyle (1989) documents the influence of brand loyalty and its role in developing brands. Trust is highlighted as a key factor in connecting with customers and maintaining a successful brand image citing examples including, but not limited to, a brand’s ability to override occasional hitches and disasters - specifically, Tylenol’s complete recovery from withdrawing water after a poison scare.

Gobé (2001), through a concept he calls ‘citizen brands’ puts forward the idea that people’s emotional bond with brands exists on a higher level than merely their sale position. He argues that a brand’s global influence places an important role in ‘seducing’ the customer. However, Gobé does not proceed to qualify what happens in the event a customer is ignorant of a brand’s corporate social responsibility (CSR) – the research appears to solely be based on the assumption that consumers have prior knowledge of the brand and this may not always be the case.

Jennifer Aaker (1997) developed the concept of a brand personality (see Figure 2.6.3(a)) through ‘humanising’ the brand and offering the brand human characteristics. Her Brand Personality framework could potentially be transferable to all aspects of the brand including, but not limited to, the name.

*Figure 2.6.3(a) Brand Personality Matrix*

Dawar & Parker’s (1994) study focuses on four product quality signals that have received the greatest attention in the marketing and economics literature: pricing, branding, physical features and
retailer reputation. Dawar & Parker's study found that, in choosing competing brands, consumers were faced with uncertainty of product quality. They argue that signals mostly serve as heuristics in assessing product quality when:

(I) There is a need to reduce the perceived risk of purchase;

(2) The consumer lacks the ability to assess quality;

(3) Consumer involvement is low;

(4) Objective quality is too complex to assess;

(5) There is an information search preference and need for information.

The most prevalent signals studied include brand names or brand advertising; product features or appearance; price and product/retail reputation; store names; warranties or guarantees. Brand names have been found to be more important than price, which is, in turn, more important than physical appearance. Retail reputation or store name has been found to be least consequential in signalling product quality. To understand the buying behaviour of consumers, we must separate all factors leading to the purchasing decision and measure each factor individually.
2.7 Influencing the Consumer at Point of Purchase

2.7.1 Introduction

While all of the above factors play important roles in connecting with the customers and building successful brands, each factor plays on the assumption that a consumer has time to consider their buying options in advance of making their purchase. There are factors outside direct communication between an organisation and the consumer that can play equal importance in influencing consumer buying behaviour such as product naming convention and packaging.

2.7.2 Brand / Product Name

Sood and Keller (2012) examine a convention known as ‘sub-branding’ where products are introduced combining the parent name with individual brand names, paying particular attention to how a duel naming convention influences how consumers process information during brand extension. This also shows that brands must disassociate themselves from certain products by highlighting a different name on the product (such as Pepsi and Tropicana). Sood and Keller designed a pre-test using ordinal data analysis so that participants could rate how much they liked names – which found that ‘Quencher’ was the preferred option for vitamin enriched cola, whereas ‘Sunburst’ was the preferred name for sodium-free orange juice. The experiment considered how the structure of brand names influences extension evaluations. They argue that equally, if not more important to marketers, is the effect of naming on parent brand dilution.

However, upon review, this experiment appeared to be conducted in a controlled environment where customers were provided with names and asked for an indication of preference. It did not appear to rank the proposed names of the products in comparison to other products of similar nature merely the likeliness to the name in solitude nor did it advise why the consumer preferred said names i.e. a functional or emotional preference as noted by KEA. Interestingly, the name did change depending on what the product type was – ‘Quencher’ for Cola and ‘Sunburst’ for Orange Juice. Unfortunately, the reverse effects are not noted in the paper – the reaction to ‘Sunburst’ for Cola and ‘Quencher’ for Orange Juice. This also showed an apparent need for a relationship between parent brand and sub-brand by associating Pepsi with Sunburst (Pepsi Sunburst / Sunburst Pepsi). Park, Jun, and Shocker’s (1996) claim that consumers’ impressions of a co-branded new product concept were driven more by the first or “header” brand than by the second or “modifier” brand was also cited by Sood and Keller.

KEA identify 6 main criteria for choosing brand names – the brand name must be memorable, meaningful, likeable, transferable, adaptable and protectable. The first three of these are considered to be offensive tactics to build the brand.
In contrast, Ehrenberg (1974) notes the potential negative impact repetitive advertising can have on the consumer when building a relationship by promoting a brand rather than a product. One cannot go on selling something which people do not like after they have had. The usual reason why people buy things is that they want them. Suitable products have to be developed to satisfy a need rather than developing a product and creating a need. Instead, Ehrenberg notes the significant influence of ones friends, neighbours and family (or reference groups as noted by Kacen and Lee in chapter 2.2.3). The promotion one receives from a more trusted source (e.g. WOM as in chapter 2.4.4) appears greater than the combined effects of an integrated marketing campaign.

2.7.3 Packaging

R. Fletcher (2005) offers fresh insight into how western entrepreneurs do not fully understand the realities on the ground. The examples he cites are of washing clothes in an outdoor stream. He argues that this will require a different type of packaging and soap product formulation to washing clothes in a washing machine that adjusts itself to levels of soiling and colour of garments.

Variawa (2010) noted that marketers increasingly face challenges in trying to understand the decision-making processes and behaviours of those consumers located at the Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP). His study claims that 73% of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) purchases are made at the point-of sale, and product packaging has been found to play a strategic role in seven of the ten in-store purchase decision criteria. Variawa notes that packaging is, therefore, an important basis through which companies can differentiate products from the excess of competing brands which was already noted by Bone & Corey, 2000.

Variawa (2010) analyses the influence of packaging on consumer behaviour. Using the Packaging scale (Sehrawet & Kundu, 2007) and the Brand Experience scale (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009), Variawa concluded that there was a positive correlation between the two variables. Overall, the results suggest that a weak correlation exists between grocery packaging and the brand experience, therefore, a weak relationship exists between grocery packaging and brand experience. Variawa concluded that the Packaging variable and Brand Experience variable are, nevertheless, still important decision-making criteria for the consumers targeted as part of this research.

The most significant factor in the packaging research conducted by Variawa is the language barrier – with 22.6% illiterate (at least in English) with almost all of the packaging written in English. The major concern with this is that the packaging can (and does in some cases in this research) include instructions on how to use. Therefore, packaging alone may play a more significant role in consumer behaviour than suggested in this study.
What Variawa apparently overlooks is the difference between how a customer thinks they act and how a customer actually acts. Where some consumers may have claimed that packaging does influence their buying decision, it may differ if a more practical situation presented itself. Variawa also claims that customers want products that have marketing campaigns that are contextual, appeal to their senses, touch their hearts and stimulate their minds. They want products, communications and campaigns that they can relate to or that they can incorporate into their lifestyles, however, there didn’t appear to be anything in his findings to support this.
2.8 Literature Review Summary

The research demonstrated above shows the necessity for all organisations to adequately conduct market research to cater for consumers’ current needs and to prepare themselves for future needs of consumers. These trends can be conducted by researching both business markets and consumer markets which include aspects such as behaviour and emotion.

Behaviour can be influenced by a number of sources. It is the marketers’ job to identify an area which, statistically will be emotionally similar to the target audience, by reviewing aspects such as age, education etc. Each characteristic of the consumer can be targeted in multiple ways, therefore effective communication strategies are crucial with IMC being one possible model. These strategies are used as an effort to develop a relationship with the customer with the aim to create a sense of value that the customer can relate to.

Creating a brand can be considered to be the governing body of all factors mentioned above. A brand will have a consistent communication strategy across all/most products with the purpose of developing trust and providing a customers’ interpretation of value.

What is apparently lacking in the research is a product’s ability to promote itself instantaneously. All of the research conducted suggests a long term plan from identifying target audience to point of purchase. However, this contradicts behaviour accustomed with impulse buying behaviour where immediate possession is demanded by the consumer. Variawa attempted to identify the role of packaging in controlling impulse buying behaviour, however, it is apparent that this failed to isolate packaging from other elements, therefore, significant limitations are placed on this research.

KEA notes that the ‘glossy images’ of affluence shown in advertisements and in the media generally reflect a real demand. Eliminating advertising would not eliminate the demanding consumer, thus a theory emerges whereby consumers will actively seek out a product that meets their needs therefore consistent promoting of the product is not required. Advertising is often thought of as aiming to attach an image or some special consumer benefits to a brand in an effort to distinguish it from its competitors in the eyes of the consumer. This is attempted, especially in situations where there are no physical or quality characteristics to differentiate it such as gasoline or water.
3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Cameron and Price (2009) claim that research is likely to be defined by three things – a central theme, a means of investigation and a location (see Figure 3.1(a)). The means of investigation is reflected in the methodology of the paper. By articulating the means of investigation, the researcher notes what it is they aim to accomplish and how they plan on achieving that.

Figure 3.1(a) Considering the Research

Ellis and Levy (2009) note that for each study type there is an accepted methodology documented in text and exemplified in the literature, citing numerous texts where such methodologies are available. As a first step in establishing the value of a proposed study, the researcher is well advised to closely follow the template for the study type contained in the text, and model his/her research methods after similar studies reported in the literature. In this case, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill’s (2011) ‘research onion’ will be the preferred methodology template. According to Ellis and Levy (2009) the description must provide a detailed, step-by-step description of how the study will be conducted, answering the vital “who, what, where, when, why, and how” questions.
The purpose of this study is to determine the importance of appropriately naming a product and said name’s impact on consumer impulse buying behaviour. This chapter will look at the methodology used to appropriately conduct this research, including how the information is analysed, while also highlighting the stages used in determining a sample population to research within, and any ethical issues and limitations known to the researcher.

Ellis and Levy (2009) note that a properly developed description of the research methods would allow the researcher to conduct the study being proposed based upon the processes outlined. Included among those processes are: forming research questions and hypotheses; identifying assumptions, limitations and delimitations and establishing reliability and validity. These will all be looked at in greater detail in this chapter.

### 3.2 Research Problem

#### 3.2.1 Introduction

According to Ellis and Levy (2009), “in order for the research to be at all meaningful, there has to be an identifiable connection between the answers to the research questions and the research problem inspiring the study”. They also note that the research-worthy problem serves as the point of departure for the research and that the nature of the research problem, and the domain from which it is drawn, serves as a limiting factor on the type of research that can be conducted. Finally, the best design cannot provide meaning to research and answer the question ‘Why was the study conducted’, if there is not the anchor of a clearly identified research problem.

The first hypothesis of this paper suggests that there is a link between a product name and a consumer’s tendency towards purchasing low involvement products in isolation of other factors.

The second hypothesis of this paper suggests that marketing tactics are influenced by the product name, and, as such, the product name is the driving force behind marketing tactics.

As such, for this investigation, the general research question is expressed as follows:

“What impact does a product name have on consumer buying behaviour if all other factors influencing a purchasing decision are removed?” (i.e. how important is the product name as an isolated factor in influencing buyer behaviour) and what impact does this have on resulting marketing tactics?

#### 3.2.2 Research Objectives

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2011) suggest that the research question can be subdivided into research objectives which are more likely to lead the researcher to obtain more specific information of
the topic in question. Therefore, the researcher has developed subsequent research objectives for this research which are outlined below:

1. **To investigate the consumers’ perception of product names and associated product types**

   More specifically:

   To analyse consumer perception in relation to:

   - Brand name versus generic product
   - Naming convention and its association with a product type
   - The preferred product name association channel

2. **To evaluate the marketer’s perception of the importance of naming a product**

   More specifically:

   A product name’s ability to portray:

   - Promotion
   - Emotional/Functional Appeal
   - Information

3. **To examine the impact product names have in influencing the consumer’s decision making process**

   More specifically:

   To analyse the relationship between a product and the consumer:

   - At point of purchase
   - Upon product consumption (satisfaction)
   - Upon product name change
4. To investigate a brand’s ability to be perceived as the generic product through consumer’s familiarity with the brand name

More specifically:

To investigate a potential market share earned by the manufacturer by:

- Being considered the most familiar brand in a product category
- Creating a sense of ‘ignorance’ among consumers whereby the product is considered to be wholly unique
- Considering naming practices in comparison to product competitors

3.3 Research Methodology

The purpose of this research is to demonstrate, using mixed methods, the role that a product’s name plays in influencing the consumers’ purchasing decision and any control and awareness that an organisation may hold in this regard. In order to achieve this as accurately and competently as possible, the researcher will utilise the ‘Research Onion’ model (Figure 3.3(a)) as proposed by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2011). There are 6 layers completing this model, each providing important insight regarding the process that was undertaken during the research, which will be looked at in greater detail in the following subchapters. This model provided a structure for the researcher to conduct the investigation, from initial theory to data analysis, through to the conclusion, while providing as much information to the reader regarding thought processes structural barriers, etc.
3.3.1 Research Philosophy

The first layer in the research onion is the philosophy layer. This “relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge” and Saunders Lewis and Thornhill (2011) note that the research philosophy adopted “contains important assumptions about the way in which [the researcher] views the world”. As such, the research philosophy layer may be considered as one of the most important aspects of the research methodology as it demonstrates an understanding of the methods selected to gather and analyse the primary data used for the purpose of this research.

Bryman and Bell (2011) note two approaches to research philosophy – epistemological considerations and ontological considerations with a series of concepts within each approach. For the purpose of this research, a positivism approach (an epistemological position) will be adopted as knowledge will be generated through the gathering of facts in a means that allows the researcher to be objective. Cameron and Price further support this assessment by stating that “the positivist view holds that knowledge can – and can only- be gained by objective observation and measurement. The role of this research is to test theories and to provide material for the development of laws. Cameron and Price (2009) also note that a positivism approach attributes a reality not only to concrete objects but also to more abstract ideas such as satisfaction, provided they can be observed in some way and
measured. It is worth noting Cameron and Price’s (2009) view that a positivism approach can be frustrating for the business researcher because it places severe limits on what can be researched.

Objectivism as an ontological consideration will also be adopted. According to Bryman and Bell (2011), objectivism asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors. It implies that social phenomena confront us as external facts that are beyond our reach or influence.

### 3.3.2 Research Approach

Once a research philosophy is selected, the researcher must identify the appropriate tools in order to correctly investigate the research question. Saunders Lewis and Thornhill (2011) identified two types of approach available to the researcher - inductive and deductive (see Figure 3.3.2(a)).

**Figure 3.3.2(a) Deductive and Inductive Approaches**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deduction emphasises</th>
<th>Induction emphasises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>scientific principles</td>
<td>gaining an understanding of the meanings humans attach to events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moving from theory to data</td>
<td>a close understanding of the research context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the need to explain causal relationships between variables</td>
<td>the collection of qualitative data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the collection of quantitative data</td>
<td>a more flexible structure to permit changes of research emphasis as the research progresses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the application of controls to ensure validity of data</td>
<td>a realisation that the researcher is part of the research process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the operationalisation of concepts to ensure clarity of definition</td>
<td>less concern with the need to generalise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a highly structured approach</td>
<td>researcher independence of what is being researched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the necessity to select samples of sufficient size in order to generalise conclusions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), the positivism approach can entail elements of both a deductive approach and an inductive strategy while noting that deductive theory represents the most common view of the nature of the relationship between theory and research. The principle of deductivism is noted as one of the five principles entailed in the positivism approach suggesting a greater connection between positivism and deductive reasoning than positivism and inductive reasoning. It is apparent that the inductive approach is better aligned with the interpretivism philosophy which is more concerned with the empathic understanding of human action rather than with the forces that are deemed to act on it according to Bryman and Bell (2011). Furthermore, the
researcher, through literature review and general observation, has deduced two hypotheses that will be confirmed or rejected based on the research undertaken as part of this project.

Therefore, for the purpose of this research, the researcher will undertake the deductive approach in accordance with Bryman and Bell’s (2011) process of deduction (see Figure 3.3.2(b)).

**Figure 3.3.2(b) Bryman and Bell’s Process of Deduction**

1. Theory
2. Hypothesis
3. Data Collection
4. Findings
5. Hypothesis Confirmed/ Rejected
Revision of Theory
3.3.3 Research Strategy

According to Saunders Lewis and Thornhill (2011), there are numerous strategies in tackling a research project including, but not limited to: experiments, surveys, interviews, case studies, action research, grounded theory, etc. Some of these strategies are better fitted with different approaches and philosophies and it is critical that all are aligned. The researcher will adopt a mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) approach utilising both survey (questionnaire) and interview tactics for the purpose of this research. Considerations when using the mixed methods approach are outlined in chapter 3.3.7.

Zikmund et al (2009) note some difficulties that can arise which can be applicable to this type of research in relation to both, respondent error and distributor error (see also Figure 3.3.3(a)).

Figure 3.3.3(a) Categories of Survey Error

3.3.3.1 Respondent Error

Surveys ask people for answers. If people cooperate and give truthful answers, a survey will likely accomplish its goal. If these conditions are not met, nonresponse error or response bias, the two major categories of respondent error, may cause sample bias.
Non-Response Error

Few surveys have 100 percent response rates. To use the results, the researcher must believe that consumers who responded to the questionnaire are representative of all consumers, including those who did not respond. The statistical differences between a survey that includes only those who responded and a survey that also included those who failed to respond are referred to as nonresponse error.

Response Bias

If a distortion of measurement occurs because respondents’ answers are falsified or misrepresented, either intentionally (breach of ethical behaviour) or inadvertently, the resulting sample bias will be a response bias. Because of the questionnaire format, i.e. respondents were asked to provide ‘freetext’ answers, this bias should not occur, however, there are numerous types of response bias which can be broken into 4 categories:

**Acquiescence Bias:** Some respondents are very agreeable. They seem to agree to practically every statement that they are asked about. A tendency to agree (or disagree) with all or most questions is known as acquiescence bias.

**Extremity Bias:** Some individuals tend to use extremes when responding to questions. For example, they may choose only “1” or “10” on a ten-point scale. Others consistently refuse to use extreme positions and tend to respond more neutrally—“I never give a 10 because nothing is really perfect.”

**Interviewer Bias:** Response bias may arise from the interplay between interviewer and respondent. If the interviewer’s presence influences respondents to give untrue or modified answers, the survey will be marred by interviewer bias. Some respondents may give answers they believe will please the interviewer rather than the truthful responses.

**Social Desirability Bias:** Social desirability bias may occur either consciously or unconsciously because the respondent wishes to create a favourable impression or save face in the presence of an interviewer. Incomes may be inflated, education overstated, etc. In contrast, answers to questions that seek factual information or responses about matters of public knowledge (zip code, number of children, and so on) usually are quite accurate.

**3.3.3.2 Distributor Error**

The survey distributor/analyst can also contribute to survey error, either consciously or subconsciously. Below are some examples as outlined by Zikmund et al (2009):
Self-selection bias

Self-Selection bias relates to occasions whereby the recipient of the questionnaire had an out-of-the-ordinary experience with the questionnaire topic. These recipients are more likely to complete the survey than an indifferent recipient and can over-represent extreme positions while underrepresenting responses from those who are indifferent.

Deliberate Falsification

A response bias may occur when people misrepresent answers to appear intelligent, conceal personal information, avoid embarrassment, and so on. Sometimes respondents become bored with the interview and provide answers just to get rid of the interviewer. At other times respondents try to appear well informed by providing the answers they think are expected of them. On other occasions, they give answers simply to please the interviewer. Deliberate falsification can be deemed a breach in ethical behaviour by the respondent.

Unconscious Misrepresentation

Even when a respondent is consciously trying to be truthful and cooperative, response bias can arise from the question format, the question content, or some other stimulus. A bias may also occur when a respondent has not thought about an unexpected question. In many cases consumers cannot adequately express their feelings in words. The cause may be questions that are vague or ambiguous. Researchers may ask someone to describe his/her frustration when using a computer. However, the researcher may be interested in software problems while the respondent is thinking of hardware issues. Language differences also might be a source of misunderstanding.

Administrative Error

Administrative errors are caused by carelessness, confusion, neglect, omission, or some other blunder. Four types of administrative error are data-processing error, sample selection error, interviewer error, and interviewer cheating.

Data-Processing Error: Processing data by computer, like any arithmetic or procedural process, is subject to error because data must be edited, coded, and entered into the computer by people. The accuracy of data processed by computer depends on correct data entry and programming. Data-processing error can be minimised by establishing careful procedures for verifying each step in the data-processing stage. The researcher had to play careful attention when processing the data due to the nature of the ‘freetext’ survey.

Sample Selection Error: Many kinds of error involve failure to select a representative sample. Sample selection error is systematic error that results in an unrepresentative sample because of an error in either the sample design or the execution of the sampling procedure. A firm that selects its sample from the phone book will have some systematic error, because those with only cell phones or
with unlisted numbers are not included. Stopping respondents during daytime hours in shopping centers largely excludes working people or those who primarily shop by mail, internet, or telephone.

**Interviewer Error:** Interviewers’ abilities vary considerably. Interviewer error is introduced when interviewers record answers but check the wrong response or are unable to write fast enough to record answers verbatim. Also, selective perception may cause interviewers to ‘misrecord’ data that do not support their own attitudes and opinions.

**Interviewer Cheating:** Interviewer cheating occurs when an interviewer falsifies entire questionnaires or fills in answers to questions that have been intentionally skipped. Some interviewers cheat to finish an interview as quickly as possible or to avoid questions about sensitive topics. Often interviewers are paid by the completed survey, so you can see the motivation to complete a survey that is left with some questions unanswered. Interviewer cheating can be deemed a breach in ethical behaviour by the researcher.

### 3.3.3.3 Survey/Questionnaire

Zikmund et al (2009) describes a survey as “A research technique in which information is gathered from a sample of people by use of a questionnaire or interview; a method of data collection based on communication with a representative sample of individuals. Surveys provide quick, inexpensive, efficient and accurate means of assessing information about the population”.

For this investigation, the researcher conducted a personal survey (see Appendix 7.6) in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaires for this investigation were online questionnaires where invitations were posted in such areas online as open forums whereby all were invited to participate. Due to errors such as the site crashing mid-survey, the researcher created a separate identical survey on another site and paid for random responses to complete the 100 quota (see Appendix 7.6.4). As the survey analysed text answers provided and did not measure results through a rating system, results were theoretically unaffected by this duplicate survey. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain reasonable data to suggest that, in some instances, consumers consider a branded product to be the generic equivalent and to associate product types with naming conventions.

Each page of the questionnaire asked a series of questions triggering different consumer thought processes:

- Brand vs generic product association
- What product a consumer considers when a name is offered with no other background
- What name a consumer considers when a product if offered with no other background
For this investigation, the researcher used both non-probability and convenience sampling techniques (as highlighted in chapter 3.3.8.4). The first questionnaire remained open for a period of two weeks between August 4th and August 18th and links were placed on various open forums online, inviting users to participate. A brief explanation accompanied the links to the questionnaire (see Appendix 7.6.2). The second questionnaire remained open for a period of two days between August 16th and August 18th. Respondents to this survey were paid respondents only, i.e. it was not open to the public.

Issues in conducting the research strategy were highlighted above, however, there are also advantages and disadvantages specific to survey distribution.

Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2003) highlight the below advantages in distributing a survey:

One major advantage of surveys is their ability to accommodate large sample sizes at relatively low costs. Using a large sample increases the geographic flexibility of the research. When implemented correctly, the data structures created from survey methods can increase the researcher’s ability to make generalised, inductive and probabilistic inferences about the defined target population as a whole.

Most surveys are fairly easy to implement because there is no need for sophisticated devices to record actions and reactions, as with observations or experiments. Surveys also allow for the collection of standardised common data. All respondents give answers to the same questions and have the same set of responses available to them. This allows for direct comparisons between respondents.

Another factor in favour of surveys is that they collect quantitative data ripe for advanced statistical analysis. Patterns and trends within the data can be determined by using mathematical analysis to identify large and small differences within the data structures. Qualitative data can suffer from problems of subjectivity; interpretations may be speculative or anecdotal.

A final advantage of surveys is their ability to tap into factors or concepts that are not directly observable (e.g., attitudes, feelings, preferences, personality traits). Through both direct and indirect questioning techniques, people can be asked why they prefer one package design over another. Predetermined questions can concern what thought process a consumer uses to select a particular brand or how many brands he/she considered.

Hair Bush and Ortinau (2003) also note the following disadvantages in utilising the survey method:

Developing the appropriate survey method can be very difficult. To ensure precision, the researcher must contend with a variety of issues associated with construct development, scale
measurements, and questionnaire designs. Inappropriate treatment of these issues will create inaccuracies in construct development and measurement, opening the floodgates to systematic errors. As the possibility of systematic error increases, so does the likelihood of collecting irrelevant or poor-quality data.

A second potential disadvantage of survey designs relates to their limited use of probing questions. In general, survey designs limit the use of extensive probing by the interviewer which can lead to very broad results. Consequently, the data might easily lack the detail or depth that the researcher desires for addressing the initial research problems.

A third disadvantage of surveys is the lack of control researchers have over their timeliness. Depending on the administration techniques, surveys can take significantly longer to complete than other methods. The researcher can only estimate how long it will take respondents to complete the survey. In reality, the researcher loses control of the process as soon as the questionnaire is distributed. While the researcher might estimate that the process will take 14 days to gain the desired responses, the reality is that it may take 30-40 days. Associated with the problem of response time is the problem of guaranteeing a high response rate (or return rate of completed surveys). As the computer and software technologies that drive the internet, multimedia communications, and real-time data acquisition and retrieval processes become more sophisticated, this timeliness disadvantage will be eliminated.

Although surveys are designed to collect quantitative raw data, the statistical techniques selected may introduce very subtle and insidious levels of subjectivity to the derivation or interpretation of data structures. Such subjectivity, or bias, may not be as apparent in survey research as it is in qualitative research.

In addition, the questionnaire distributed as part of this research contained product names that the researcher assumed the consumer was ignorant of. The consumer might have prior knowledge of said product, thereby rendering the answer void. Furthermore, the ‘freetext’ nature of the survey concluded in some answers not providing measurable results.

Figure 3.3.3.3(a) below shows a summary of the advantages and disadvantages associated with the questionnaire method.
3.3.3.4 Interviews

The interviews for this research were conducted in controlled environments using Dictaphone (smartphone application) to record the discussion and attach to the research paper. The researcher asked a series of documented questions but remained agile to adapt to responses presented by the interviewee and probe for more information.

The interviews were conducted for the purpose of understanding what processes are followed to determine the names of a product. Such factors as ‘how will the name affect a marketing tactics’, ‘does it attract consumer emotion or rationale’ and ‘what impact would changing the product name incur’ will be investigated.

Two interviews were conducted with companies who product their own products and have their own marketing division. Emma Crewe from Fyffes Limited and Gavin Magee from Mondelez International were the interviewees (see Appendix 7.7). The purpose of these interviews was to investigate what engagement (if any) was made with the marketing team before a product name was finalised.

A separate interview was conducted with marketing campaigners outside the remit of the manufacturers i.e. the marketing campaigners were a separate entity. The interviewee selected was
Sean Hynes of Bonfire Limited. The purpose of this interview was to determine what impact a name set by the manufacturers had on subsequent marketing tactics that were conducted by a third party.

Cameron and Price (2009) highlighted a number of advantages to the researcher in using interviews as a means of data collection:

**Face Validity**

With sensible questions and a reasonable sample, interview responses are likely to be readily accepted as valid information, thus providing credible support for the researcher’s arguments.

**Flexibility**

If a flexible design is adopted, the researcher can ask different questions if something interesting emerges. The interview allows the researcher to probe for more information there and then, and include additional questions on the topic in all subsequent interviews. As well as adapting during the interviews, the researcher can intentionally use different questions for different interviewees, where appropriate, where ‘one-off’ instances may occur. Although some questions might be common, there would be specific questions needed for each key informant. Interviews are flexible enough to allow for such tailoring.

**Interactivity**

Interviews are a social interaction. This allows the interviewee to check his/her understanding of a question, and for the researcher to clarify the matter if necessary. It enables the researcher to ask supplementary questions to clarify or extend answers given, and to explore any unexpected or apparently contradictory answers, and to confirm the researcher’s understanding of what the interviewee means.

**Generating Rich Information**

When using unstructured interviews, the interviewee is left free to express what is important to them. This can generate extremely rich and finely textured qualitative information about individual’s perceptions and feelings.

**The potential to explore meanings**

When looking at something from a constructionist perspective, perhaps to discover the meanings attributed to something or how those meanings have been constructed, interviews may be one of the prime methods.

Cameron and Price (2009) also note some disadvantages to conducting interviews:
The method is not simple

Simplicity may be one of the main apparent attractions of this method, but this advantage is usually ‘illusionary’. Interviewing, and afterwards analysing interview data, takes a high level of skill, particularly for qualitative data. Without these skills, the conclusion may not be trustworthy. Necessary skills include establishing and sustaining rapport, asking questions clearly and without influencing answers, steering the interview, listening and analysing qualitative information.

The time required

Interviews are extremely time-consuming for both interviewer and interviewee. Actual time spent interviewing is the tip of a far larger ‘time-iceberg’. It can take a long time to arrange interviews, travel to them and reschedule if either party cannot make appointments. Transcription of the interview record may take several times as long as the interview itself. Analysing qualitative data puts huge demand on time. Interviews are not a quick or easy main data collection option.

A smaller sample size

The time required for interviewing almost inevitably restricts the sample size. The research purpose will influence the significance of this.

Susceptibility to Influence

When interviewing, there are many ways in which the researcher can influence the answers they get. Before the interview begins, the researcher has decided how the study will be framed, the information sought after and the shape of the interview. During the interview, there are more subtle influences. The tone of voice, language used and the insertion of additional or indifferent worded questions can all affect replies. Differential use of such gestures as ‘mmm’ and ‘thank you’ may convey approval and disapproval, thus selectively rewarding certain ways of answering.

Scope for influencing face-to-face interviews is far greater because there are non-verbal cues such as smiles and body posture. The greater the researcher’s interpersonal skills and the stronger the rapport with the interviewee, the more the interviewee is likely to want to please the interviewer. Therefore, although establishing a rapport is a good thing, it does increase the likelihood of inadvertent bias.

Lack of Comparability

Comparability is not a problem with a fully structured interview, but the more flexible the interviews, the less likely they are to produce comparable information. Each interview becomes a different ‘tool’. This may not matter at the exploratory stage, but if the ultimate aim is to make explicit comparisons or generalisations, unstructured interviews would be unsuitable as the main method.
Figure 3.3.4(a) below shows a summary of the advantages and disadvantages associated with the interview method.

**Figure 3.3.4(a) Advantages and Disadvantages of Interview Method Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>face validity</td>
<td>difficult method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexibility</td>
<td>time consuming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactivity</td>
<td>small sample size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generating rich information</td>
<td>susceptibility to influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potential to explore meanings</td>
<td>lack of comparability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3.4 Research Choice

There are three methods of research available to the researcher: mono method, multi-method and mixed-method. The researcher has selected a mixed method for this research as both a questionnaire and interviews are being used, evidencing the existence of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Domegan and Fleming (1999) define research design as the general action plan in a marketing research study and have classified it into three different types of research: Exploratory, Descriptive and Casual. Both Domegan and Fleming (1999) and Burns and Bush (2014) note that the selection of a research method listed in Figure 3.3.4(a) is dependent on the objectives set out by the researcher and is as important as the investigation’s problem definition. Exploratory research is the main theme as it will be used in conducting the qualitative aspect of this research while the researcher questions experts in the relevant field. A casual method will also be evident in the quantitative aspect of the research in testing hypothesis 1 that the naming convention plays a significant role in consumer buying behaviour.
3.3.5 Time Horizons

With regards to time, there are two available methods in conducting research – cross-sectional and longitudinal.

For the purpose of this research, a cross-sectional approach will be applied. Interviews will observe a point in time and the researcher will allow a short window whereby the survey will be conducted. There is also a time commitment whereby this research must be submitted to the appropriate bodies.

3.3.6 Secondary Research

According to Stewart (1984) and Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, (1992), secondary research refers to all data that is collected by others i.e. it is not gathered by the researcher on a primary basis. Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2003) note that many companies are now using a variety of

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**Figure 3.3.4(a) Research Methods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exploratory</th>
<th>Descriptive</th>
<th>Casual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Type</strong></td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>Qualitative and Descriptive</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aims</strong></td>
<td>To Explore, to Chart and to Identify</td>
<td>To Describe, to Quantify</td>
<td>The Establishment of Cause and Effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nature of Variables</strong></td>
<td>Unknown, Uncharted</td>
<td>Known Associations and Documented</td>
<td>Know Exactly and Clearly Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Degree of Formality</strong></td>
<td>Little</td>
<td>Some to Extensive</td>
<td>High Mathematical Content, Highly Formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sample Size</strong></td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Small to Large</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question Types</strong></td>
<td>Probing and Response Driven</td>
<td>Some Probing and Interview Driven</td>
<td>No Probing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis</strong></td>
<td>Generates, Develops</td>
<td>Tests, Develops and/or Generates</td>
<td>Tests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
techniques (particularly as a result of new levels of information technology) to collect, store, and categorise customer data for future decisions. As more and more such data becomes available, many companies are realising that they can be used to make sound decisions thereby proving the value of secondary research in generating primary data for other researchers.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2011) note three different types of secondary data – documentary, multiple source and survey. They proceed to subdivide these types of secondary data into seven categories – written materials, non-written materials, area based, time series based, censuses, continuous and regular surveys and ad hoc surveys. For this investigation, the research has utilised written material, initially using textbooks as a source to gain an understanding from a general perspective and gaining more in-depth knowledge from arguments put forth in academic journals and websites.

3.3.7 Mixed Methods Approach

While a mixed methods approach is being adopted for this paper, most objectives will only employ one method, therefore overlap is minimal. However, they will be drawn together to draw conclusions.

Cameron and Price (2009) note that there are definite advantages and disadvantages to be realised from each, quantitative and qualitative approaches. On its own, qualitative data gives rich explanations but no verifiable evidence while quantitative data offers verifiable evidence with few explanations. The mixed methods approach allows the researcher to meet the demands of a wider range of stakeholder groups and potentially overcomes some of the shortcomings presented through isolated research methods.

Venkatesh, Brown and Bala (2013) highlight a number of factors in conducting mixed method research including, but not limited to its value, its purpose, its validation and its quality. Note that Venkatesh, Brown and Bala’s research namely refers to information systems but can be applied to this research.

3.3.7.1 Value

First, mixed methods research has the ability to address confirmatory and exploratory research questions simultaneously (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2003). Mixed methods research can leverage the complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative methods, and offer greater insights on a phenomenon that each of these methods individually cannot offer (Johnson and Turner 2003). For example, interviews (qualitative approach) can provide depth in a research inquiry by allowing researchers to gain deep insights from rich narratives. Surveys (quantitative approach) however, can bring breadth to a study by helping researchers gather data about different aspects of a phenomenon from many participants.
An amalgamation of the approaches can help researchers make better and more accurate inferences—that is, meta-inferences. Meta-inferences represent an integrative view of findings from qualitative and quantitative strands of mixed methods research, and are considered essential components of mixed methods research (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2008).

Finally, mixed methods research provides an opportunity for a greater assortment of divergent and/or complementary views (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2003). When conducting mixed methods research, a researcher may find different (e.g., contradictory and complementary) conclusions from the quantitative and qualitative strands. It is therefore critical for the completion and accuracy of this research that the researcher utilises a mixed methods approach so the researcher can identify a link between customer perception of product names, and the importance that the manufacturer aligns with said name. Such divergent findings are valuable in that they lead to a re-examination of the conceptual framework and the assumptions underlying each of the two strands of mixed methods research. These findings not only enrich our understanding of a phenomenon but also help us appraise the boundary conditions of a phenomenon or relationships among its components (i.e., substantive theory) and open new avenues for future inquiries.

3.3.7.2 Purpose

Employment of a mixed methods approach in a research inquiry should serve certain purposes. These purposes include complementarity, completeness; developmental, expansion, corroboration/confirmation, compensation, and diversity (see Figure 3.3.7.2(a)). Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008) noted that the reasons for using mixed methods are not always “explicitly delineated and/or recognised” by researchers who conduct mixed methods research. They argue that unlike qualitative and quantitative approaches, a mixed methods approach is typically not a natural methodological choice in social and behavioural sciences. Therefore, it is suggested that a mixed methods research approach should serve one or more purposes beyond the core purpose of a research methodology (i.e., help researchers conduct scientific research inquiries). Furthermore, an explicit delineation and/or recognition of these purposes by researchers employing a mixed methods approach may help the reader better understand the goals and outcomes of a mixed methods research paper. Finally, an unambiguous understanding of mixed methods research purposes will help researchers make informed decisions about the design and analysis aspects of a mixed methods inquiry.
3.3.7.3 Validation

Although there is a general consensus among researchers with respect to the validation principles and processes in quantitative studies, researchers do not have any such agreement when it comes to applying validation principles in qualitative studies. However, there have been attempts in recent years to develop a cumulative body of knowledge of validation principles and processes for qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Validation in mixed methods research is essentially assessing the quality of findings and/or inference from all of the data (both quantitative and qualitative) in the research inquiry (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2003). Overall, validation is a major issue in mixed methods research.

3.3.7.4 Quality

Inference in mixed methods design is defined as a researcher’s construction of the relationships among people, events, and variables as well as his/her construction of respondents’ perceptions, behaviour, and feelings and how these relate to each other in coherent and systematic
manner (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2008). Inference quality in mixed methods research refers to the accuracy of inductively and deductively derived conclusions in a study or research inquiry. In contrast, data quality is associated with the quality of measures and/or observations—that is, reliability (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2003).

3.3.8 Sample

Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2003) refer to sampling as selecting a relatively small number of elements from a larger defined group of elements and expecting that the information gathered from the small group will allow judgments to be made about the larger group. Hair, Bush and Ortinau also note a seven stage plan for developing a sample that Ortinau and Brensinger (1992) put forward (see Figure 3.3.8(a)).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{sampling_plan}
\caption{Steps Involved in Developing a Sampling Plan}
\end{figure}

3.3.8.1 Specifically Define the Target Population

In order to collect the quantitative data for this research and provide as accurate conclusions as possible, the researcher needs to consider a sample of the whole population, which in this case, is anyone with the potential to purchase a low involvement product. The Irish population was chosen as was the easiest market for the researcher to analyse.

For the purposes of the qualitative research for this paper, promoters of impulse products will be considered. Said promoters can manufacture the products or promote them on behalf of the manufacturers. Numerous companies were contacted from the Irish Times top 1,000 companies in
Ireland (http://www.top1000.ie/) as well as various companies known to the researcher. Companies that responded were analysed for best suitability to this project and further contact was made.

3.3.8.2 Select the Data Collection Method

The quantitative research will be conducted through questionnaire distribution. Pros and cons of this method were highlighted in chapter 3.3.3.3.

The qualitative research will be conducted through interviews. The preferred method of interview is a personal approach. Pros and cons of this method were highlighted in chapter 3.3.3.4.

3.3.8.3 Identify the Sampling Frame(s) Needed

As the target population for the quantitative aspect incorporates such a broad audience, the sample frame will include anybody who has internet access in order to complete the questionnaire. Being registered to open forums where a link to the questionnaire will be available is not necessary but may prove valuable. Failing a measurable number of responses, random subjects were targeted by the questionnaire providers at a cost.

The sampling frame for the qualitative research will be any organisation that promotes a product through advertising. This product does not have to be manufactured by said company.

3.3.8.4 Determine the most Appropriate Sampling Method

For this research, a non-probability sample design will be utilised as probability of selection of each sampling unit is not known, therefore the results obtained may not be completely generalised for the whole population (Hair, Bush and Ortinau 2003). Due to time and monetary restrictions, this is the only available method. In addition, convenience sampling will be used for this research as the research will target members of the population who are conveniently able to provide it (Sekaran & Bougie 2010).

3.3.8.5 Determine Necessary Sample Sizes

Due to such restrictions as time and monetary constraints, a total of 100 questionnaire responses were desired through a free online format. As it was foresighted that some recipients of the questionnaire may not respond, 300 recipients were targeted with the aim that 30% would respond. Due to errors in the ability for users to complete the survey, an additional survey was distributed whereby a third party was asked to collect further responses. This third party offered 100% of the desired responses i.e. if 50 responses were required, 50 responses were received.

In order to gain different perspectives and a broader and more complete view, 3 promoters were selected for interview. Again, as not all promoters would accept the invitation, numerous promoters were contacted. Not all willing participants were asked to carry out the interview as they were deemed surplus to requirements.
3.3.8.6  Create an Operational Plan for Selecting Sample Units

The researcher wants to clearly lay out, in detail, the actual procedures to use in contacting each of the prospective respondents who were drawn into the sample. How the researcher selected sample units for each, the questionnaire and interviews are highlighted in chapter 3.3.8.1 above.

3.3.8.7  Execute the Operational Plan

This step consists of actually conducting the data collection activities such as the questionnaire and interviews.

3.4  Ethics

There are many opportunities for both ethical and unethical behaviours to occur in the research process. Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2003) highlight a number of potential conductors of unethical behaviour during the research process, including the researcher, research design and respondents with Gans (1962) suggesting that the researcher cannot obtain all relevant information unless a sense of dishonesty is realised “If the researcher is completely honest with people about his activities, they will try to hide actions they consider undesirable, and so, will be dishonest. Consequently, the researcher must be dishonest to get honest data”.

There are also numerous areas whereby unethical behaviour can exist. These include:

- Design (a biased design could be created leaving little room for alternative perspectives to be highlighted)
- Data collection (the researcher distributes the survey to a known sample of acquaintances or interviews acquaintances)
- Analysis (the researcher potentially removes responses he/she deems not applicable or ignores potential probing questions or cuts interviewee off mid-point)
- Writing up (the researcher highlights factors that he/she want highlighted and ignores other factors)

Areas where unethical behaviour can occur can be dependent on actors, such as respondent and researcher, and are noted in chapters 3.3.3.1 and 3.3.3.2.

For the purpose of this project, a universalism stance on ethics will be adopted. Bryman and Bell (2011) advise that a universalist stance takes the view that ethical precepts should never be broken. Other stances accept that certain circumstances allow for a sense of unethical behaviour to exist. There are numerous situations whereby the researcher has the opportunity to be unethical for this research, however the universalist approach will be adopted regardless of what situation presents itself. This approach was made easy in that unethically acquired data was not required.
For this investigation, the following measures are in place as an endeavour to achieve the most ethical research achievable:

- All literature studied as part of the research is referenced appropriately
- Confidentiality agreements were provided to all parties who partook in interviews (see Appendix 7.10) it was agreed however, that no confidential information would be shared, hence these were not signed.
- No interviews with relevant parties exceeded the allotted time requested
- Information provided by information providers (interviewee or questionnaire respondent) will be for the purpose of this document only and information, contact or otherwise, will not be shared outside this document
- An anonymity option existed within the questionnaire whereby no personal information will be exchanged
- All information included in the final draft of the research project is be traceable to point of origin as evidence of originality of research (see Appendix 7.7.4 for interview recordings)
- The same instructions were read to all interviewees prior to commencement of the interviews (see Appendix 7.7.5)

The researcher has little control over respondent’s ethical behaviour therefore an element of trust and assumption exists.

### 3.5 Limitations

According to Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2003), limitations are the result of extraneous events which are always present in spite of all endeavours being made to develop and implement a flawless study. All researchers must be aware of, and document, the limitations surrounding a project, and inform the client of such events.

The first limitation surrounds the researcher’s choice of using mixed research methods (both qualitative and quantitative) as highlighted in chapter 3.3.7. There are also specific limitations in each, the questionnaire and the interview methods as highlighted in chapters 3.3.3.3 and 3.3.3.4 respectively. More importantly, as there is minimal overlap between the two research methods in this paper with regards to each objective, it may prove more conclusive conducting two separate investigations – one full investigation from a customer perspective and one full investigation from an organisational perspective. Furthermore, the mixed method approach may be deemed inappropriate as there is minimal overlap.
As mentioned in chapter 3.3.3.3, the survey host encountered errors, thereby restricting users from completing the survey. Therefore, an additional survey was launched. While every effort was made to ensure both surveys were identical, it may not have been the case. Furthermore, the motivations behind taking the surveys would have changed, affecting the results.

The researcher’s lack of psychology knowledge may have also affected the results and creation of the survey. It could be argued that numerous aspects of the questionnaire assumed some psychological element. One element perhaps would be the omittance of an emotional aspect to the names. Also, the researcher selected products that he had no prior knowledge of. This does not mean that respondents to the survey have no prior knowledge and in creating fictitious products, may have chosen a name that already exists.

Time management should be considered the second factor. This is evident from three angles:

1. The Researcher – The size sample of the questionnaire needs to be on a smaller scale to meet the time requirements potentially preventing more accurate results.
2. Interviews also need to be set up and, due to time constraints, the researcher’s schedule may conflict with the primary interview target meaning a secondary target may need to be approached.
3. The interviewees/questionnaire respondents – Availability and commitment towards the research may result in interviews and responses being low priority and not being complete before the research deadline.

In addition, this research will be conducted using a sample representation which will result in an inference to what the general population might do and may result in what Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2003) describe as a ‘sampling gap’. As such, it is not definitively accurate. There will be minimal control over who participates in the questionnaire - all consumers are invited to participate. As such, an equally diverse population is unlikely to be obtained.

Interpretation of the analysis provided could prove unreliable in concluding the findings in this project. The researcher’s understanding of the questionnaire results or interviewees’ information may differ from other researchers’ understandings. Furthermore, the respondents and interviewees understanding of questions or unethical behaviour, as mentioned above, may be diverse leading to distortions in the research.

The researcher is restricted to a word count of c.20,000 (+/-10%) words. The can lead the researcher including non-relevant information or excluding important information to meet the quota.
Assumptions based on product name versus brand name can be interchangeable, particularly in the case of commodity goods (e.g. Fyffes bananas). Therefore, some research findings based on product name may be highlighted as part of the literature review with reference to brand name.

Finally, the philosophical choices were deduced as they were deemed to be the best fit to the overall research objectives but did not 100% accurately reflect the researcher’s desired philosophy. Bryman and Bell (2011) as well as other researchers, align constructionism and interpretivism as the best suited ontological and epistemological approaches respectively for qualitative analysis. Qualitative analysis also best adopts an inductive research strategy. Aspects of these approaches could be evident when conducting the research, however, the overall approaches (positivism, objectivism, deductive strategy) are deemed to be best suited, therefore adopted by the researcher.
3.6 Methodology Summary

Below is a summary of the methods used for the purpose of this research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methodology Division</th>
<th>Methodology Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 1</strong></td>
<td>There is a link between a product name and a consumer’s tendency towards purchasing low involvement products in isolation of other factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 2</strong></td>
<td>Marketing tactics are influenced by the product name, and, as such, the product name is the driving force behind marketing tactics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Question</strong></td>
<td>“What impact does a product name have on consumer buying behaviour if all other factors influencing a purchasing decision are removed?” (i.e. how important is the product name as an isolated factor in influencing buyer behaviour) and what impact does this have on resulting marketing tactics?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epistemological Philosophy</th>
<th>Positivism</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontological Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Choice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualitative Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quantitative Strategy</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Horizon</td>
<td>Cross-Sectional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Sample</td>
<td>Marketing Experts (Bonfire Limited), (Fyffes Limited) &amp; (Mondelez International)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Sample</td>
<td>All Consumers (51 general responses + 51 paid responses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Approach</td>
<td>Universalism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Research Findings

“What impact does a product name have on consumer buying behaviour if all other factors influencing a purchasing decision are removed?” (i.e. how important is the product name as an isolated factor in influencing buyer behaviour) and what impact does this have on resulting marketing tactics?

4.1 Introduction

It is evident from the literature review that knowledge on the power of a product name is limited. As a result, marketers rely on creating and maintaining brand awareness as well as providing prior knowledge to the consumer about product existence (outside a purchasing frame of mind). This is a costly and arguably, unmeasurable task. The findings presented as part of this research may help gain a more complete understanding of what is required from marketers in successfully launching and/or re-launching a product by adding another element to consumer targeting.

The net results of this research present the first unique findings specific to the importance product names play in consumer buying behaviour. The researcher hopes that these findings provide a foundation for marketers and academics alike in further understanding, constructing and executing the most efficient marketing strategy.

One marketer interviewed as part of this research noted that a product name is “becoming increasingly important”, further highlighting the need for this research.

4.2 Objective 1 - Research Findings

“To investigate the consumers’ perception of product names and associated product types”

4.2.1 Consumer Product Perception as the Generic Product

Through questionnaire, respondents were asked a series of questions to understand their perception of products as ‘household names’ i.e. ‘did respondents recognise a brand as a brand?’ and ‘do consumers associate the name of a brand with the brand or the original meaning? e.g. upon hearing the word ‘apple’, does the consumer consider the fruit or the tech giant?’ This will be explained below. These questions included a ‘Hoover’ versus ‘Sony’ question and a ‘Google’ versus ‘googol’ question.
4.2.1.1 Hoover Versus Sony

Respondents were asked ‘What brand of Hoover do you own?’ and ‘What brand of Sony do you own?’ on two separate pages. Because of the ‘freetext’ nature of responses i.e. respondents could answer whatever they wanted, not all answers could be utilised to form definitive results – for example, some respondents listed Sony products as an answer. Of the answers that are measurable, a staggering 86% provided a brand of vacuum cleaner as a brand of Hoover (Dyson for example) but were unable to provide a brand of Sony because “Sony is a brand”. This highlights how consumers are able to identify some brands as brands (Sony) but believe other brands to be a generic product (Hoover). These findings in particular, show how the word ‘Hoover’ is synonymous with vacuum cleaner products. Sean (Bonfire Limited) also noted how this has worked for Shazam – “Shazam is now a verb”.

4.2.1.2 Google Versus Googol

All but one out of the 102 respondents claimed that Google was their preferred online search engine. However, when queried about what 1 followed by 100 zeroes is, i.e. how Google got its name (see appendix 7.11), 77% were unable to provide the correct answer – googol. This highlights a brand or a product’s ability to relinquish a word of its original meaning and place a new meaning on that word, thereby the first thought amongst consumers when they hear that word is about the product or brand. See Figures 4.2.1.2(a) and 4.2.1.2(b) below.

Figure 4.2.1.2(a) Preferred Search Engine
4.2.2 Product Naming Convention and its Association with Specific Product Types

Five real products were provided to the questionnaire respondents to investigate what product each consumer considered if presented with a name i.e. if a customer could make a connection between name and product type based on the name alone. The products chosen as part of this research were:

- Golden Gaytime (ice-cream)
- Oh Henry! (chocolate bar)
- White Rabbit (sweets/candy)
- Bart’s Peanut Butter Chocolate Crunch (breakfast cereal)
- Vault (energy drink)

Images of these existing products are available in Appendix 7.12.

The results of this show the difficulty consumers have in establishing a connection with a product based on the name alone with an average 89% failing to ‘guess’ the correct product when the name was offered. This may prove to be a risky and costly practise as an enormous amount of supporting marketing tactics will need to run in parallel in order to establish the connection.

The results from ‘Golden Gaytime’ and “White Rabbit” tended to indicate to consumers, products of a sexual nature. Perhaps the marketers were attempting to connect with consumers at this level, however 99% and 93% respectively failed to make the connection between the product type and the product name.
‘Vault’ and ‘Bart’s Peanutbutter Crunch’ appeared to have the best connection between product type and product name among consumers. This may be due to a familiarity between the consumer and the product as ‘Vault’ is a Coca-Cola product and ‘Bart’s Peanutbutter Crunch’ employs a Simpson’s character for marketing. However, while having the best connection, the results still show that 76% and 78% respectively were unable to establish the connection. Interestingly, ‘Golden Gaytime’, as a HB (Hazelbrook Farm) product, scored the worst (99% inability to establish connection) as mentioned above.

4.2.3 Consumer Preferred Product Association Channel

For this research objective, questionnaire respondents were asked to choose the product they were most likely to purchase, by providing them a list of ‘product names’ in a product category. No other information was offered to the questionnaire respondents i.e. respondents were to assume all products cost the same price, looked the same, tasted the same and offered the same benefit.

The products were split into three categories of low involvement products:

- Fizzy Drinks
- Cereal
- Sweets/Candy

Within each product category, each respondent was offered a choice of twenty-five names (see page 5 in survey in Appendix 7.6.1) from which to choose 1 product name for each product type. Each of these 25 names on offer belonged to one of five categories – 5 products in each. The respondents were not made aware of these categories. The categories were:

- Colour
- Informative
- Catchy
- Animal
- Real Brand

The results (see Figure 4.2.3(a)) show that the real brands accounted for 22% of the preferred products. Since the real brands accounted for 20% of the products offered to the respondents, it appears that the name doesn’t have any significant differentiators from other products offered i.e. probability would suggest that, given no prior connection to the respondent, 20% would select the real brands. This suggests that the product name in these cases, in isolation of all other factors attributed to the product, is not connecting with customers more than it should be. This further suggests that these products required accompanying market tactics such as packaging, price, advertisements etc. in order to successfully differentiate themselves from other products. It is worrying that these products did not
stand out to the consumer, particularly as these are existing products versus fictional products, constructed by the researcher, but also as some consumers might have chosen these products as they have a level of familiarity with them from previous encounters (see chapter 3.5).

**Figure 4.2.3(a) Product Name Preference**

![Product Name Preference Chart]

A further breakdown of the products for each category is available in Appendix 7.5.6.2.

It is apparent from these results that consumers prefer a product name that somewhat describes the product and this remained a constant throughout the three products. There is minimal connection between customers and products whose names were colours while connection with products whose names took after animals also scored low. Interestingly, catchy names appeared most effective in connecting with the customers through cereal than with the other product types.

Again however, these were all names constructed by the researcher with no consumer testing yet they are able to compete with products that currently exist in the marketplace based on name alone.
4.3 Objective 2 - Research Findings

“To evaluate the marketer’s perception of the importance of naming a product”

4.3.1 The Influence of a Product Name on the Resulting Marketing Tactics

“If a product name can hint at what the product is, it is becoming increasingly beneficial to marketers” (Sean).

Product name has a significant role to play in the formation of marketing tactics. In general, if the name offers a cue back to the benefit (e.g. if it can host such factors as being interpretive, engaging and relevant), it can lead to a very positive marketing campaign, however, it is difficult and somewhat ambitious to do, particularly in a saturated market. It appears to be the general consensus of marketers that hosting a description of the product in the name can be particularly useful when launching an entirely new product to the market. When attempting to start with a new product in a niche market, it’s difficult to get that level of communication across in the product name.

Ideally, marketers would prefer to have an influence in naming the product as they can then direct a successful campaign but it is not always essential. It is generally felt that the marketing potential could be hindered if the marketing team is not involved in the naming process and vice versa. This appears particularly true when attempting to launch new products to the market. Parcel Motel (see Appendix 14) for example was born from an innovative concept. Both Nightline (the owners of the service – see Appendix 13) and Bonfire Limited (the advertising partner) were involved in the naming process. In terms of formalising a campaign, the name had a significant influence on the success of the campaign as this was a niche market. This then influences the methodology of the tactics used (informative) and points it in the direction in which it would be best marketed.

“[Including information in the name] helped hugely in terms of what the campaign was going to become, the tone of the campaign. It helped describe in the words what it was about” (Sean).

However, while the name commands some importance, the benefit of the product appears to be the main factor attributing to the success of a product with Gavin claiming that “We trust the product more than the name” and therefore, through marketing tactics, highlight the benefit to the consumer rather than highlighting through the name.

Gavin did offer the Cadbury Dairy Milk (CDM) Sandwich as an example of how information can be portrayed through the name alone. This product was recently launched within the Irish market. CDM Sandwich is a functional name, deemed suitable to offer information to the consumer about the product as it is an innovative (new) product. By offering functional names however, it can make the
product very generic and distracts from the personality of the product. Having established a relationship with the consumer, informing them of the product, Mondelez are now in the process of stepping back from the ‘sandwich’ aspect of the name and calling the product CDM. This aids in creating a more memorable name for the consumer, particularly in brand recall “I think the shorter the name the better. It’s easier to speak about, it’s easier to work with” (Gavin). Mondelez are using the name as a platform to inform the customers about the product and, once that level of knowledge exists, a more interactive name will exist.

4.3.2 Using the Name to Emotionally Appeal to the Consumer

“It is all about how the brand is positioned in the marketplace and through that you need marketing execution. A name on a shelf is not going to hit home with consumers” (Emma).

It is very dependent on the product whether a marketer will target emotion or satisfaction (in line with KEA’s argument in chapter 2.6.3). It is also agreed among all marketers interviewed that the name is also very dependent on the target audience, for example, men like names that are going to tell them what a product does (in line with segmentation aspects outlined in chapter 2.5.3). In trying to connect with the consumer, you are trying to tell them about the general benefit of the product without going into too much detail.

There may be some instances whereby the name of a product must change in order to establish or maintain a connection with the consumer. Emma offered the example of ‘ChiquitaFyffes’. While ChiquitaFyffes might be suitable to satisfy the ‘business brand name’ after a merger between the companies, it will not form an emotional connection with the consumer. It therefore might be beneficial to separate the product from the brand to appeal to customers by isolating a ‘business brand name’ from a ‘consumer product name’.

“The slightest change [of a product name] can set off a catechism of events that can impact any brand if you do anything wrong” (Gavin).

While the names of the products apparently offer less importance to marketers than packaging, it’s interesting to note the emotional connection between consumers and the name. As Gavin mentioned, customers would just go to the competitor should the name change. Mondelez were worried about removing the foil packaging from a range of products as it was seen as ‘jewel in their crown’. However, when asked about the recent change in packaging in some of the products, the results were that “There has been no negative feedback to the change in Dairy Milk packaging”. Gavin also provided insight that there have been significant results from IPSOS (media/consumer tracking company) on feedback in terms of people’s perception of the products after the packaging change. Each of the bars that had packaging changes saw a double digit increase in sales with the exception of Cadbury’s Dairy Milk standard. It is believed that these sales fluctuations around
packaging changes will level out eventually with a reduced hype over the packaging change. Consumers may have been ‘too used’ to seeing the old package and with a new package, the product can be seen to be revitalised. Sean did however note that a packaging change can deter customers as they may feel that the product has also changed. However, it is generally considered that a name change would have more of an impact due to the emotion involved.

4.3.3 Product’s Ability to Provide Information to the Consumer through Name

With names that do not portray what the product is about (Galaxy for example), without supporting ad campaigns the consumer would have little knowledge about the product, therefore might be hesitant in purchasing said product. If the functions of the product were to be contained in the product name, it could be presumed that the company would have more success according to the marketers. This is also evident in the questionnaire research findings (Figure 4.2.3(a) previously) whereby the majority of consumers (44%) selected a name based on information provided. However, in looking at an example such as Fyffes, whereby nothing related to bananas is contained in the name, given their great success it is difficult to argue that the company would have had more success if it was named differently.

However, Fyffes became successful through their distribution channels at a time when the market wasn’t saturated thereby the consumer was more probable to try a Fyffes product (according to Emma, Fyffes are the first fruit brand in the world ever). If a competitor was to enter the market in today’s environment (in a saturated market) with unlimited resources and to compete with such well-established products, while being an enormous task to achieve, it would be easier to do so if the product name contained information about the product, according to the marketers.

Furthermore, in countries where Fyffes wouldn’t have wide awareness e.g. Germany, Fyffes face significant struggle trying to promote the product as there is little link between the word Fyffes and what they sell – bananas. “it’s a real struggle, you’re trying to develop a brand from scratch” (Emma). This comes back to mass advertising as highlighted in chapter 2.4.4. Because there’s so much segmentation in the marketplace (chapter 2.5.3), it’s difficult to realise which medium suits the product best, particularly with television advertising not being as effective as it used to be, which is why many marketers adopt an IMC approach (chapter 2.4.3). There needs to be something that makes the connection at that level when a description isn’t in the name whether it’s viral or otherwise. The consensus among the marketers is that it would help in entering a new market if the name included some information or a description of the product.

However, it is generally deemed that the product name alone is not enough to carry information to the consumer, therefore additional aspects of marketing are required such as a tag line. The tag line is deemed to be an add-on to the name, however, “there’s no point in having it on a
“statement on an annual report, it’s how you use it and filter that into your marketing” (Emma). It does form part of an overall campaign, of which name is one aspect, a tagline another, price another, etc.

When referring to a tagline that Fyffes hosted in the 1980’s, Emma claimed that people sang this tagline which was deemed ‘gold’ by marketing campaigners. This also highlights the role WOM and reference groups can play as noted by Stokes and Lomax (2002) in chapter 2.4.4 and Featherstone (1991), KEA (2012) and Cushman (1990) in chapter 2.3.3. “It was simple and people can remember it” (Emma). This tagline could be adopted to include the product name which could in turn prove even more effective (‘P-P-P Pick up a Penguin’ for example). Again, we can look to Gavin’s CDM Sandwich example. This offered information to the consumer before removing the information aspect of the product (once a level of knowledge was established) before attaching itself in an emotional way.

There is also an ability within the brand to cater for a product’s need to host an informative name. Gavin used the example of Dairy Milk Bubbly, a product that was launched a number of years ago. The name of this product focused on the bubbles aspect while leveraging off the success of the Cadbury’s brand in order to gain success.

Sean also offered an alternative view on how a product name can offer information to the consumer. Websites are extremely important and there is a significant chance that the ‘Dot Com’ has already been taken. This is one method that allows your consumers to find you and without the appropriate Dot Com, marketers are hesitant to proceed.
4.4 Objective 3 - Research Findings

“To examine the impact product names have in influencing the consumer’s decision making process”

4.4.1 Consumer/Product Relationship at Point of Purchase

At the point of sale, there are limited opportunities to influence the consumer. This highlights the importance of packaging and perhaps the product name to get the core message across. It is apparent that the brand proposition is a key influencer in differentiating the product from its nearest competitor. It is generally accepted that if the packaging can communicate the brand proposition i.e. the product differentiator, then that is where it should be done. It would appear that a combination of the packaging and the product name would be the best method to get this message across. Again, if you start a campaign with a name that has some information or description, such as ‘Powerade’, it makes engaging with the consumer easier at the point of purchase.

However, Mondelez attribute more importance to packaging and price at the point of purchase (product, packaging and price come before the name) which complies with Variawa’s (2010) packaging study. Mondelez, use ‘brand blocking’ to promote their product at the point of purchase through a concept they call ‘the power of purple’. They use the colour purple which is synonymous with Cadbury’s products. This purple block is therefore seen as the ‘signpost’ which lures the customer to the Cadbury section.

“The colour of the packaging would be more important than the name” (Gavin).

People have so little time to purchase confectionary items on an impulse level. It is not the name, it is the colour of the packaging that lures the consumer into buying the product. Until a product grabs their attention, the customer is not looking to purchase a product. Through the name of a product alone, it is not thought to be possible to achieve this. If the packaging all looked the same, the customer would find it difficult to connect with the product and would select the product based on other elements such as price. Price is the next key element, after packaging, particularly in the confectionary sector according to Gavin.

4.4.2 Consumer Ability to be Satisfied / Dissatisfied with Products based on Product Name

The purpose of this piece of the investigation was to determine if a consumer could really be dissatisfied with a product upon consumption based on the product name i.e. Powerade and 7up are assumed to be products that will quench ones thirst but the additional benefit offered in the name
‘Powerade’ hints that, upon consumption, the consumer will gain a sense of power whereby 7up doesn’t really offer an additional benefit.

The discussions with the marketers indicate that consumers can be satisfied or dissatisfied from a product regardless of product name. Consumers can be satisfied through usage rather than value for what is offered on the packaging. However, in the case of benefits that can actually be seen and/or measured, the product name plays a significant role in influencing consumer buying behaviour. When comparing 7up versus Powerade, it could be perceived that Powerade would give the consumer a greater burst of energy as it is hinted at in the product name, however, realistically, there may be no scientific validation that this is true.

“The challenge for marketers who put a claim into the name is that it has to deliver on it” (Sean). Otherwise consumers aren’t going to know what benefit they are getting from the product. In a case of a name that’s very descriptive of the product, if it doesn’t deliver on the description, there will be an issue. If it’s more descriptive of the benefit but the consumer doesn’t know whether they are getting the benefit or not - they just assume they are because it’s on the packaging - then it may not be significant.

Having information in the name can help the product promote satisfaction, however, it is not a requirement. There is an element of history and experience in knowing what product will provide what level of satisfaction. Putting information in the name can play a part in promoting a new product over one that has existing brand equity.

4.4.3 The Impact of Product Name Change on Consumer Emotions and Purchasing Behaviour

Name changes come about, by such aspects as business realities (such as international markets and cost efficiencies) and also regulation bodies (such as the EU) among other reasons. Regardless of the rationale, the consensus is that it is a delicate campaign to change the name. The marketer has to be really careful because the consumer has such a strong emotional connection to the product.

As mentioned above, because of the mergence between Chiquita and Fyffes, the company may have to create two names – a business name and a consumer name. On the consumer level, there is a huge body of work that has to be worked through, possibly testing such aspects as consumer reaction to the name. Influence on sales depends on how the campaign is packaged and if consumers notice because if both brands are to continue separately, i.e. a Chiquita and a Fyffes position statement, sales and brand architecture will not be affected.
In theory, if the resulting new name were to combine both Chiquita and Fyffes names, it can be deemed as an opportunity to engage more with consumers because the benefits of both products are sold into one single name. This however is only a theoretical assumption and the reality is that consumers would have difficulty connecting with such a name. Furthermore, the emotional element of Chiquita advertising is in stark contrast to the functional element associated with Fyffes advertising therefore a whole new campaign is likely to be adopted when the two products combine. It is also thought that, while a complete name change might be essential in connecting with the consumer, it may also hinder already established relationship between the product and consumer.

It is assumed that culture (see also chapter 2.3.2) plays a role in potential backlash from consumers. Ireland, for example, has a more relaxed culture, therefore may not be as outspoken about a distaste with product name change. However, in changing the name of a product away from one that customers have established a relationship with, significant backlash is to be expected.

“People buy the product because it is synonymous with the name”…….“People would go to Mars if Cadbury Dairy Milk changed its name……[ The colour purple] would have a similar effect……It is all part of a full 360 campaign which packaging plays a huge role in, the name plays a role in and the quality of the product”. (Gavin)

“Product, packaging and price are the next two, and name then” are the rank of importance according to Gavin. This is astounding resemblance to Dawar and Parker’s (1994) study on product quality signals in chapter 2.6.3.

It is generally considered that the informing marketing campaign will determine whether the product name change will be successful or not. Gavin further notes that the marketing campaign and the product name are not ‘Siamese’ i.e. one can change without the other.
4.5 Objective 4 - Research Findings

“To investigate a brand’s ability to be perceived as the generic product through consumer’s familiarity with the brand name”

4.5.1 Product’s Ability to be Perceived as Generic Product Through Promotion

Creating/Promoting a product in such a way that it is eventually considered to be the generic product (e.g. coke is considered to be a generic cola product) is considered to be the ‘Holy Grail’ for marketers to achieve however, the reality is that needs to be a completely new market segment – a wholly unique area in order to achieve this. As such, this is not an objective set out when launching a product.

In order to achieve this ‘monopolistic’ sense “The product would need a really, really good name but also, deep pockets are required” (Sean). Sean then alludes to a cultural involvement (see chapter 2.3.2) in saying that “it needs to be in the popular culture”.

“Shazam have done it. There are other competitors (Soundhound), but [Shazam] is now a verb. It is possible. It’s not surprising that the example that came to mind is in the technology area”.

(Sean).

Sean also noted factors such as being a new product (like Shazam), first to market, have a good name, and have a big budget. In this day and age, it may need to be global for people to accept it as a meaning.

For commodity products, having the name perceived as the generic product is almost impossible. If however, this was the objective from the outset (particularly with Fyffes), there may have been a chance. The consensus among the marketers is that a new product introduced to the market at the right time could potentially own the word for the generic product. Emma offered the iPad example hinting that it may not be the first tablet, but to consumers it is because it was marketed correctly and appealed to a mass audience.

Being the first of its kind is seen as an advantage. This does not include being the first of its kind in relation to what is out there but being the first of its kind to successfully connect with the consumers. Gavin highlighted the Marvellous Creations bar range as an example. Marvellous Creations has been an “overriding success” in its product category. The initial aim was not to make this be the greatest bar in the category. First to market and a well thought out campaign were the key drivers in the success of the marvellous creations.
While agreeing with the aforementioned factors, Gavin offered an alternative consideration in that a customer has to be invested in the product in order to consider it to be the generic equivalent.

4.5.2 Creating a Sense of Ignorance whereby the Product is Considered to be Wholly Unique

Marketers are finding it harder and harder to make claims about the product’s uniqueness particularly with product names not attributed to the product benefits. It is more and more difficult to substantiate. “This is one of the reasons why Johnson and Johnson spend so much money on research to substantiate their products’ uniqueness to differentiate themselves from their competitors” (Sean).

The reality is that consumers probably have a built in preference in their mind and will purchase a product believing that there is a difference between it and an alternative. Emma offered the example of red and yellow cheddar. From her background in promoting dairy products, Emma noted that these are the same product with the exception of tasteless food colouring. However, consumers perceive there to be a difference between the products therefore will opt for one over the other. “At the heart of this, this is due to very strong marketing” (Emma). Another example offered was the ‘Finish Powerball’. ‘What is a Powerball’?......“Using names such as Powerade and these ‘words’ that drive a sense that this product must be superior to the other one on the shelf still works” (Emma). In such a saturated market, the product cannot be wholly unique in terms of the benefits it provides but can offer a sense of uniqueness through the name.

Gavin offered an alternative approach in that advertising creates the sense of ignorance. His example can be seen within the beer industry. Heineken is considered to be the generic beer product. It might not be the best tasting product, might not have the best name, however, through advertising, it is widely considered to be the most popular beer. “It is down to exposure” (Gavin).

4.5.3 Considering Product Naming Practises in Relation to Competitors

Marketers will normally look at competitors and their product name when launching a similar product and to somewhat launch a retaliation name in some cases. Nowadays, again with market saturation, the marketer “hasn’t a prayer” (Sean) in being able to select a name remotely associated with the product. When looking at competitor products, and looking at how successful or unsuccessful the campaign is, marketers do believe that they can attribute some of this success to the product name itself.

The product name can play a particular role in analysing competitor products and attributing this to how well the product is doing. In looking at this, you are trying to emulate success. It’s incredibly hard trying to find product names, therefore, if a competitor has a good name, then it’s incredibly difficult to emulate this. “If [a competitor] has gotten off the bat with a good name, it definitely puts you on the back foot, but, in saying that, you have to have everything else” (Emma). If
they have got a good name, and haven’t got all of the other supports behind it, then the marketer wouldn’t be as concerned.

However, as a company, Mondelez would not look at a competitor’s product and feel they need to emulate this. This is a result of Mondelez’s perception that it is the leading innovator in the industry and would try to be the first to market with new things. Mondelez looks outside the industry to acquire these innovations. The name might not necessarily be an overriding factor in the success when looking at competitor products.

However, Gavin noted how competitors will look at Mondelez and launch similar products in retribution. The Wonka bar was launched as a potential to compete with the Cadbury’s Marvellous creations. It has since been delisted. Wonka was a resoundingly well-known name. “Chocolate is synonymous with Willie Wonka. They had the name, they got the packaging completely wrong….personally I didn’t think it tasted nice”. Names only play such a part that competitors wouldn’t necessarily look at the name to attribute success / failure. Much of Gavin’s ideologies seem to comply with Daveni’s steps in dealing with competition outlined in chapter 2.5.2.

4.6 Hypothesis Findings

4.6.1 Hypothesis 1

“There is a link between a product name and a consumer’s tendency towards purchasing low involvement products in isolation of other factors”

In general terms, Hypothesis 1 is held to be accurate. Consumers will tend to buy products based on a connection between the customer and the product name. When a product name is isolated from other influencing factors, it appears that a descriptive or informative name is the preferred connection tool. However, based on the qualitative analysis conducted as part of this research, the name is only one feature in connecting with the customer and is not to be considered the primary tool.

4.6.2 Hypothesis 2

“Marketing tactics are influenced by the product name, and, as such, the product name is the driving force behind marketing tactics”
In general terms, this hypothesis is deemed to be incorrect. It appears that the primary driving force behind marketing tactics is the actual benefit of the product. While the name does warrant some merit, it is the observation of marketing practitioners that name alone is unsubstantial. We can see from Gavin’s example of the Wonka bar that had a great name but due to poor marketing execution, the product failed.
5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The limitations inherent in the existing literature concerned with product names, rather than brand names, has ultimately proved the decisive factor in conducting this dissertation. An excessive amount of research has been offered to the role that a brand plays on consumer buying behaviour while limited research has been placed on the names of brand extensions. This allowed for this research to be conducted in such a way that would almost certainly draw unprecedented conclusions. The results will almost certainly provide a platform for academics and practitioners alike to construct further investigations and conclude more in depth understandings of what is required to connect with customers.

5.2 A Consumer’s Perception of Product Names

5.2.1 Investigating Consumer Perception of Products vs the Generic Equivalent

In the conclusion of this research, consumers can lack the ability to recognise a brand as a brand through associating branded products as the generic equivalent. The reality of a marketer’s ability to achieve this is based on numerous factors but the consensus is that launching an entirely new product at the right time and correctly marketed play significant roles in achieving this. If such phenomenon are to arise in the future, there should be no surprise that these will come in the technology sector.

Furthermore, brands/products have the ability to absorb a name and attribute new meaning to the name. As evidenced in this paper, consumers associated the word Google with the large technology based company rather than the word’s original meaning (not accounting for spelling). Other instances not explored in this document could include the word ‘apple’ triggering consumer thought process towards the tech giants before considering apple the fruit.

Previous literature has not directly alluded to or examined this therefore, these appears to be newly documented findings. With the marketers interviewed claiming that a shorter name is better as “it’s easier to speak about and easier to work with” the results of this dissertation help to redefine the role of naming a product (or brand) so that it will have a greater impact on consumer behaviour, particularly in sustaining longevity as a unique product.

5.2.2 Consumers Preferred Product Name Association Channel

While the emotional element was not tested as part of this survey, significant evidence of the ‘functional’ aspect highlighted by KEA (in chapter 2.6.3) is evident in the results. In comparing multiple platforms of fictitious names with those of real products, names containing information relating to the product offer the consumer more of an incentive to connect with the product.
realisation that some consumers selected a name based on an attribute contained within the name itself, and the fact that this did vary consumer to consumer, product type to product type, may be attributed to Zeithaml’s (1998) ideology that consumers have varied definitions of value as highlighted in chapter 2.5.4.

As evidenced in the questionnaire distributed as part of this research, consumers can fail to identify a product based on the name. This would infer that vast amounts of supporting marketing tactics are required to allow the consumer to make the link between name and product type. If consumers were unable to make the link, it may show an element of distrust between the consumer and the product resulting in a lack of purchase.

5.2.3 The Consumer’s Emotional Connection To Product Names

Because a sense of emotion exists between a product name and a consumer, it may benefit the manufacturer to distance their business name from a consumer name. Consumers may fail to assign a level of emotion to names that are more business oriented.

Interestingly, while marketers associate a higher level of importance in marketing influence to packaging rather than the name, a “Catechism of events” could significantly impact a brand should the name change. However, as evidenced in Mondelez’s recent packaging change on certain product lines, consumers embraced a packaging change with sales improving at a double digit rate.

It appears best to communicate certain products through functionality in the name and others through emotion in the name. However, in launching new, innovative products, it may appear best to include an element of functionality in the name to establish a connection through a level of knowledge with the consumer, and then retract the functionality and substitute it with a shorter, more emotional name. Again however, substituting a name is a delicate campaign, therefore including the short name as part of the long, informative name may be of benefit.
5.3 The Driving Force of a Product Name on Marketing Tactics and how the Customer is Reached

The research findings extrapolated under research objectives one through three generally validated Dawar and Parker’s (1994) study on product quality signals in chapter 2.6.3. Marketers associate much of a product’s marketing potential to the benefit that the product provides. In order of importance, the marketers interviewed also ranked price and packaging ahead of the name of the product as below:

1. Product
2. Packaging
3. Price
4. Name

Despite this, a name’s ability should not be overlooked. Its ability to drive the methodology of a campaign can prove to be a significant factor in successfully establishing new, innovative products. In particular, a name on such elements as a service, whereby no packaging is required can add even greater value.

However, this is not always found to be the case. Some companies such as Mondelez attribute the success of a product to the product itself and other marketing elements. They believe that, in spite of a name, a product can be successful if other marketing tactics are executed correctly. Similarly, a strong, memorable name may result in failure if other supporting elements aren’t deemed to be appropriate or executed to the full marketing potential.

In isolation of other factors influencing purchasing intention, the name has influence, however, other factors have greater influence.

5.4 Answer to Research Question

“What impact does a product name have on consumer buying behaviour if all other factors influencing a purchasing decision are removed?” (i.e. how important is the product name as an isolated factor in influencing buyer behaviour) and what impact does this have on resulting marketing campaigns?

In isolation of all other factors influencing purchasing intention, consumers will look to establish a connection with a product through an element of information contained within the name of the product. Without advertising campaigns supporting products, consumers have little awareness of the benefits provided by said product, therefore look to the name as a substitute provider of information. This in turn can direct marketing campaigns towards the best methodology to successfully
establishing the product, however, a good name is not always critical in the success of a product, nor is a bad name a deterrent in the success of a product.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

Although this research has provided an improved understanding of the role a product name plays on connecting with customers, there are many areas left unexplored. In order to provide a complete framework, further research should be conducted on other factors (such as packaging), both in isolation of all other factors and as an entire portfolio. This, in time will result in a more well-rounded understanding of what is required to connect with customers. All factors should be explored as equals until a concrete framework is developed with undoubted evidence regarding the level of importance each factor plays. As a starting point, further research should explore the limits and diversity of the findings presented as part of this research. Particular attention could be paid to the survey distributed here. The full potential of this survey was not realised within this paper due to such factors as time and word count restraints. Such factors as the number of syllables in the name as well as the rationale behind the product names offered by consumers may lead to less finite conclusions.

Previous academic research has focused on the wider role that a brand plays on influencing consumer behaviour (as seen in chapter 2.7.2). This study has endeavoured to add to the existing framework of a marketer’s ability to connect with customers for brand extensions. While the results are significant, they are not exhaustive. This research will greatly benefit from further application, particularly from a practical means, and quantification.

5.6 Finally

We have seen the role that a product name plays both on consumer perception and on the methodology of marketing tactics. This research has demonstrated that the product name does play a role in marketing tactics as it can impact consumer behaviour. Consequently, this paper has noted that purchase intent can be somewhat predicted from our perceptions of how appropriate the product name is and the resulting campaign. A variety of mitigating variables also have a role to play, most notably, the selected packaging of a product (e.g. Mondelz’s ‘power of purple’).

This research has highlighted an understudied area in academic research to date. Furthermore, through appropriate research and analysis using mixed research methods, this once understudied area can now be used to formulate a more complete picture of what is required of marketers. However, other areas of influence beyond the scope of this research merit further exploration. It is the sincere hope of this researcher that this document has highlighted many important issues and provided a point of reference for future endeavours.
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7. Appendix

7.1 Integrated Marketing Communications

Pickton and Broderick proposed that IMC is:

“a process which involves the management and organisation of all ‘agents’ in the analysis, planning, implementation and control of all marketing communications contacts, media, messages and promotional tools focused at selected target audiences in such way as to derive the greatest economy, efficiency, effectiveness, enhancement and coherence of marketing communications effort in achieving predetermined product and corporate marketing communications objectives (Porcu 2012).

7.2 Benefits of IMC

7.2.1 Information

Duncan and Moriarty (1998) claim that the process of communicating information effectively is the ‘tie that binds in any relationship including commercial relationships with customers and other stakeholders’. It allows for a centrality of information processing to both fields.

Communication theory has moved from a persuasion/information base to one that is essentially a transformational interpretation (Duncan and Moriarty 1998). The theory of an IMC program is that it has one basic communications strategy for each major target audience. This theory is then used as the basis for executing each communications function (advertising, PR, sales promotion, etc.) throughout a variety of communications channels (Duncan, Thomas, Everett, 1993).

This approach recognises the importance of listening, interacting and being relationship orientated. However, as some audiences prefer to engage in transactional exchanges there is still an important role for mass media based communications.

7.2.2 Feedback

Companies must ask not only ‘How should we reach our customers’? but also ‘How should our customers reach us’? and even ‘How can our customers reach each other’? By increasing communication effectiveness and efficiency, new technologies have encouraged companies to move from mass communication to more targeted, two-way communication (KEA 2012).

The benefit of having an interactive communication strategy is noted by Schramm (1973) as making the receiver’s response known to the sender. Schramm describes this interaction as a ‘reversal of the flow, an opportunity for communicators to react quickly to signs resulting from the signs they have put out’. Feedback is central to two-way communication – even a non-reaction qualifies as feedback. New interactive technologies help shape the ever changing concept of feedback. As coverage of these technologies increases, feedback becomes more instantaneous allowing quicker
turnaround time for desired solution. Schramm further explains that ‘interactivity is the hallmark of the paradigm shift in both marketing and communication’. As mentioned above, Duncan, Thomas & Everett’s (1993) approach recognises the importance of being relationship oriented. If developing relationships is the objective, then impersonal, mass communication must be supplemented by personal, customised communication that is, by definition, interactive.

7.3 Developing Effective Communications

7.3.1 Identify Target Audience

KEA identify the target audience as the critical influence on the communicator’s decisions about what to say, how, when, where and to whom. The concept of a target market is not limited to consumers but social channels. Social channels consist of neighbours, friends, family members and associates talking to target buyers. Marketers have discovered that one influential person’s word of mouth tends to affect the buying attitudes of two other people, on average. The circle of influence, however, jumps to 8 online.

As one marketer noted, ‘You don’t need to reach 2 million people to let them know about a new product – you just need to reach the right 2,000 people in the right way and they will help you reach 2 million.

7.3.2 Determine Objectives

Rossiter and Percy (1997) identify four possible [communication] objectives:

1. Category need: establishing a product / service (market offering) category as necessary to remove or satisfy a perceived discrepancy between a current motivational state and a desired emotional state. A new-to-the-world item, such as electric cars, would always begin with a communications objective of establishing a category need.

2. Brand awareness: developing the ability to identify (recognise or recall) the brand within the category in sufficient detail to make a purchase. Recognition is easier to achieve than recall. Brand recall is important outside the store; brand recognition is important inside the store. Brand awareness provides a foundation for brand equity.

3. Brand attitude: evaluating the brand with respect to its perceived ability to meet a current relevant need. Relevant brand needs may be negatively oriented (problem removal, problem avoidance, incomplete satisfaction normal depletion) or positively oriented (sensory gratification, intelligent simulation, social approval). Household cleaning products (market offerings) often use problem solution; food products, on the other hand, often use sensory-oriented advertisements emphasising appetite appeal.

4. Brand purchase intention: self-instructions to purchase the brand or to take purchase-related action. Promotional offers in the form of coupons or two-for-one deals encourage consumers
to make a mental commitment to buy a product. However, many consumers do not have an expressed category need and may not be in the market when exposed to an advertisement, so they are unlikely to form purchase intentions. For example, in any given week, only about 20 per cent of adults may be planning to buy detergent; only 2 per cent may be planning to buy a carpet cleaner; and only 0.25 per cent may be planning to buy a car.

7.3.3 Design Communication

According to KEA, formulating the communications to achieve the desired response will require solving three problems:

- what to say (message strategy)
- how to say it (creative strategy)
- who should say it (message source)

7.3.3.1 Message Strategy

In determining message strategy, management searches for appeals, themes or ideas with the brand positioning and to help to establish points-of-parity or points-of-difference. Some of these may be related directly to purchase and use experience (the quality, economy or value in the brand), whereas others may relate to more extrinsic considerations (the brand as being contemporary, popular or traditional).

7.3.3.2 Creative Strategy

Communications effectiveness depends on how a message is being expressed, as well as on the content of the message itself. If a communication is ineffective, it may mean the wrong message was used, or the right one was just poorly expressed. Creative strategies are the way marketers translate their messages into specific communication. They can be broadly classified as either informational or transformational appeals. These two general categories each cover several different specific creative approaches.

Informational Appeals

An informational appeal elaborates on market offering quality and payment attributes or benefits. Examples in advertising are advertisements that provide a solution, demonstrate a clear benefit, offer product comparison and testimonials from unknown or celebrity endorsers, such as famous film stars or sports personalities.

Transformational Appeals

A transformational appeal elaborates on a non-market offering-related benefit or image. It might depict what kind of person uses a brand. Communications use negative appeals such as fear, guilt and
shame to get people to do things or to stop things. Communicators also use emotional appeals such as humour, love, pride and joy.

7.3.3 Message Source
Many communications do not use a source beyond the company itself. Others use know or unknown people. Messages delivered by attractive or popular sources can achieve higher attention and recall which is why advertisers often use celebrities as spokespeople. Celebrities are likely to be effective when they are credible or personify a key market offering attribute. The most highly credible source would score high on all three dimensions – candour, humour and naturalness.

7.3.4 Select Communication Channels
Selecting efficient means to carry the message becomes more difficult as channels of communication become more fragmented and clustered. Communication channels may be personal and non-personal and in each category there are many sub-channels. The best advice is to focus on connecting the company’s cause to its targeted audience’s values rather than telling people to value the company’s cause – and reach people when they are in the best place, time and state of mind to get the best impact for the marketing communications budget.

7.3.4.1 Personal Communication Channels
Personal communication channels are communications directed to one person and include:

- **Word of Mouth**: an interpersonal communication of products/services where the receiver regards the communicator as impartial
- **Buzz Marketing**: generates excitement, creates publicity and conveys new relevant brand-related information through unexpected or even outrageous means.
- **Viral Marketing**: encourages the consumer to pass on company-developed impressions of company offers to others online.
- **Opinion Leaders**: as society is perceived as consisting of cliques, marketers target people who function as liaisons with an effort to connect two or more cliques.
- **Blogs**: Regularly updated online journals or diaries have become an important outlet for word of mouth. Internet users are increasingly reading blogs, but many still regard market offers information from corporate websites as being more trustworthy

7.3.4.2 Non-Personal Communication Channels
Personal communication channels are communications directed to one person and include:

- **Media**: consist of print media (newspapers and magazines); broadcast media (radio and television); network media (telephone, cable, satellite, wireless); electronic media (audiotape,
videotape, videodisk, CD-ROM, web page); and display media (billboards, signs, posters). Most non-personal messages come through paid media.

- **Sales Promotions**: consist of consumer promotions (such as samples, coupons, and premiums); trade promotions (such as advertising and display allowances); and business and sales force promotions (contests for sales representatives).

- **Events and Experiences**: include sports, arts, entertainment and ‘good cause’ events as well as less formal activities that create novel brand interactions with customers.

- **Public Relations**: include communications directed internally to employees of the company or externally to consumers, other firms, the government and media.

### 7.3.4.3 Integration of Communications Channels

Although one-to-one communication is often more effective than mass communication, mass media are the major means of communicating to large target audiences. Mass communications affect personal attitudes and behaviour through a two-step process. Ideas often flow from radio, television and print to opinion leaders, and from these to less media involved groups.

### 7.3.5 Establish Budget

KEA (2012) identify numerous methods of deciding an organisation's budget which include the following:

- **Affordable Method**: The affordable method completely ignores the role of marketing communication as an investment and its potential impact on sales volume. It leads to uncertain annual budget, which makes long-range planning difficult.

- **Percentage of Sales Method**: Supporters of the percentage of sales method see a number of advantages. First, expenditure will vary with what the company can afford. Secondly, it encourages management to think of the relationship between the cost of marketing communications, selling price and profit per unit. Thirdly, it encourages stability when competing firms spend approximately the same percentage of their sales on marketing communication. In spite of these advantages, the percentage of sales method has little to justify it.

- **Objective-and-Task Method**: The objective and task method calls upon marketers to develop budgets by defining specific objectives. For example, if a company wants to introduce a new market offering, it needs to:

  1. Establish the market share goal
  2. Determine the percentage of the market that should be reached
  3. Determine the percentage of aware prospects that should be persuaded to try the brand
  4. Determine the number of impressions per 1 per cent trial rate
5. Determine the number of gross rating points that would have to be purchased
6. Determine the necessary marketing communications budget on the basis of the average cost of buying a gross rating point

Here are five specific factors to consider when setting the advertising budget:

1. Stage in the product life cycle. New market offerings typically merit large advertising budgets to build awareness and to gain consumer trial. Established brands are usually supported with lower advertising budgets, measured as ratio to sales.
2. Market share and consumer base. High-market-share brands usually require less advertising expenditure as a percentage of sales to maintain share. To build share by increasing market size requires larger expenditures.
3. Competition and clutter. In a market with a large number of competitors and high advertising spending, a brand must advertise more heavily to be noticed. Even simple distractions (noise) from advertisements not directly competitive to the brand creates a need for heavier advertising.
4. Advertising frequency. The number of repetitions needed to convey the brand’s message to consumers has an obvious impact on the advertising budget.
5. Product sustainability. Brands in less-well differentiated or commodity-like classes such as beer, soft drinks, banks and airlines require heavy advertising to establish a differential image.

In one study of budget allocation, Low and Mohr (1998) found that managers allocated less to advertising as brands moved to the more mature phase of the product lifecycle; when a brand was well differentiated from the competition; when managers were rewarded on short-term results.

7.3.6 Design Media Mix

KEA (2012) identify 8 major modes of communication – advertising, sales promotion, public relations and publicity, events and experiences, direct marketing, interactive marketing, word-of-mouth marketing and the sales force (see Appendix). Within these modes of communication, KEA (2012) identify three major factors to be considered in developing a communications mix:

1. Type of Market
2. Buyer Readiness
3. Product Life Cycle

7.3.7 Measure Results

After implementing the marketing communications plan, specialists must measure its impact on the target audience. This can be conducted using multiple techniques, however, results often surround exposure, relationships, message and attitudes.
7.4 Global Advertising

KEA note how multinational companies wrestle with a number of challenges in developing communications programmes. They must decide whether the market offering is appropriate for a country. They must make sure the market segment they address is both legal and customary. They must decide whether the style of the advertisement is acceptable and whether advertisements should be created at headquarters or be locally specific.

1. Product (market offering package). Many items are restricted or forbidden in certain parts of the world. Beer, wine and spirits cannot be advertised or sold in many Muslim countries. Tobacco products are subject to strict regulation in many countries.

2. Market Segment. In Norway and Sweden for example, TV advertisements may not be directed at children under 12. Sweden lobbied hard to extend that ban to all EU member countries in 2001 but failed. To play it safe, McDonald’s advertises itself as a family restaurant in Sweden.

3. Style. Comparative advertisements, acceptable and even common in the United States and Canada, are less commonly used in the United Kingdom, unacceptable in Japan, and illegal in India and Brazil. The EU seems to have a very low tolerance for comparative advertising, with a Comparative Advertising Directive that prohibits criticising rivals in advertising.

4. Local or global. Today, more and more multinational companies are attempting to build a global brand image by using the same advertising in all markets. Companies that market their products to different cultures or in different countries must be prepared to vary their messages. In advertising its hair care products in different countries, Helene Curtis adjusts its messages. Middle-class British women wash their hair frequently, whereas the opposite is true among Spanish women. Japanese women avoid washing their hair too often for fear of removing protective oils. Car advertisements screened on UK TV often feature cars that are left-hand drive and so risk reducing the impact and positive recall.

7.5 Differential Expectations

Sheth (1973) highlighted the following differential expectations:

7.5.1 Background of Individuals

The first, and probably most significant, factor is the background and task orientation of each of the individuals involved in the buying process. The different educational backgrounds of the purchasing agents, engineers, and plant managers often generate substantially different professional goals and values. In addition, the task expectations also generate conflicting perceptions of one another’s role in the organisation. Finally, the personal life styles of individual decision makers play an important role in developing differential expectations. It is relatively easy to gather information on
this background factor. The educational and task differences are comparable to demographics in consumer behaviour, and life style differences can be assessed by psychographic scales on the individual's interests, activities, and values as a professional.

7.5.2 Information Sources and Active Search

The second and third factors in creating differential expectations are the source and type of information each of the decision makers is exposed to and their participation in the active search. Purchasing agents receive disproportionately greater exposure to commercial sources, and the information is often partial and biased toward the supplier or the brand. In some companies, it is even a common practice to discourage sales representatives from talking directly to the engineering or production personnel. The engineering and production personnel, therefore, typically have less information and what they have is obtained primarily from professional meetings, trade reports, and even word-of-mouth. In addition, the active search for information is often relegated to the purchasing agents because it is presumed to be their job responsibility. It is not too difficult to assess differences among the three types of individuals in their exposure to various sources and types of information by standard survey research methods.

7.5.3 Perceptual Distortion

A fourth factor is the selective distortion and retention of available information. Each individual strives to make the objective information consistent with their own prior knowledge and expectations by systematically distorting it. For example, since there are substantial differences in the goals and values of purchasing agents, engineers, and production personnel, one should expect different interpretations of the same information among them. Although no specific research has been done on this tendency to perceptually distort information in the area of industrial buyer behaviour, a large body of research does exist on cognitive consistency to explain its presence as a natural human tendency. Perceptual distortion is probably the most difficult variable to quantify by standard survey research methods. One possible approach is experimentation, but this is costly. A more realistic alternative is to utilise perceptual mapping techniques such as multidimensional scaling or factor analysis and compare differences in the judgments of the purchasing agents, engineers, and production personnel to a common list of suppliers or brands.

7.5.4 Satisfaction with Past Purchases

The fifth factor which creates differential expectations among the various individuals involved in the purchasing process is the satisfaction with past buying experiences with a supplier or brand. Often it is not possible for a supplier or brand to provide equal satisfaction to the three parties because each one has different goals or criteria. For example, a supplier may be lower in price but the delivery schedule may not be satisfactory. Similarly, a product's quality may be excellent but its price may be higher than others. The organisation typically rewards each individual for excellent
performance in their specialised skills, so the purchasing agent is rewarded for economy, the engineer for quality control, and the production personnel for efficient scheduling. This often results in a different level of satisfaction for each of the parties involved even though the chosen supplier or brand may be the best feasible alternative in terms of overall corporate goals. Past experiences with a supplier or brand, summarised in the satisfaction variable, directly influence the person's expectations toward that supplier or brand. It is relatively easy to measure the satisfaction variable by obtaining information on how the supplier or brand is perceived by each of the three parties.

7.6 Questionnaire

7.6.1 Initial Questionnaire

Attached is the survey that was distributed for this research. This is the survey template that the researcher used for analysis. The names on Page 5 were re-arranged in the online versions. Qualtrics.com was the hosting website for the survey.

7.6.2 Invitation

Below (Figure 7.6.2 (a)) is a screenshot of boards.ie, one location where a link to the survey was published. This also shows the number of views as on day 2 of the launch of the survey. There is no way to actively measure how many of these actually took the survey. A total of 30 surveys were taken at this time.
The below text was used as an invitation for participants to take part in the survey.

"Hi,

I am currently undertaking an MBA in Business Management. All has gone well so far, I am in the final stage of the MBA - the dissertation stage. My dissertation revolves around consumer buying behaviour. Part of this thesis requires me to distribute a survey to analyse this from a quantitative perspective.

I would therefore greatly appreciate if you could take the time to complete the survey by following the link below. It is 25 questions long, and should take no more than 10 minutes to complete.

https://qtrial2014.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_7PREn89yOesHEuF

The first question asks for your name. **You do not have to provide your name.** All other questions are mandatory with the exception of the final comment box. The questions may seem random but the data extracted will be invaluable to me.

**Doing the survey might also boost your karma!**
7.6.3 Questionnaire Error

As evidenced below, (Figure 7.6.3 (a)), there was a significant number of started and incomplete questionnaire respondents. Feedback suggests that this is due to the questionnaire crashing as participants attempted to complete said questionnaire.

Figure 7.6.3(a) Incomplete Questionnaires

7.6.4 Additional Questionnaire

As a result of error within the initial survey portal, the desired number of survey responses would not be achieved. Therefore, the researcher was required to investigate other means of acquiring the desired number of responses. The researcher utilised a service that catered for paid survey responses (see receipt below Figure 7.4.4(a)). Unfortunately, these paid responses were only available through other portals, therefore the researcher was forced to create the survey on another hosting site. Due to time and monetary constraints, the desired 100 responses would not be available on one hosting site, therefore two questionnaires co-existed (see chapter 3.5).
7.6.5 Survey Results

7.6.5.1 Overview
Survey results are available on the attached documents. However, due to the type of survey (freetext responses), the surveys were analysed online individually. The amalgamation of results is available in the excel document below, however, may require an accompanying explanation from the author.

![Survey results](image1.png)

Figure 7.4.4(a) Paid Questionnaire Receipt
7.6.5.2 Product Name Breakdown per Category

**Fizzy Drinks**

- Colour: 20%
- Informative: 23%
- Catchy: 8%
- Animal: 5%
- Real Product: 45%

**Cereal**

- Colour: 8%
- Informative: 37%
- Catchy: 37%
- Animal: 17%
- Real Product: 1%
7.7 Interviews

Three interviews were held as part of this investigation. These interviews were held with professional marketers – two in house marketers and a third party marketer. These were

- Fyffes Limited
- Mondelez International
- Bonfire Limited (Third Party)

7.7.1 Fyffes Limited

This interview was conducted with Emma Crewe of Fyffes Limited. Emma is responsible for Fyffes in Ireland and, as such, is responsible for all activities in both Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland while liaising with colleagues across Europe and the USA.

Fyffes is currently undergoing a brand merge with Chiquita and, for the time being, the name of said mergence is ChiquitaFyffes.

7.7.2 Mondelez

Gavin Magee partook in this interview on behalf of Mondelez International. Gavin is currently in charge of Project Landscape within the company which includes seeing projects through the supply chain to the resulting marketing campaign.

Kraft acquired Cadbury’s in 2007. A subsequent division between groceries and confectionery occurred. Mondelez looks after the chocolate aspect of the organisation. The name Mondelez comes from ‘Monde’ which is French for ‘World’ and ‘Delez’ meaning delicious.
In the interest of full disclosure, the recording from this interview was paused on a small number of occasions. Reasons for this were for discussion between Gavin and other parties who entered the room for discussion outside the remit of the interview scope. The interview was not discussed during such intervals and, as such, Gavin’s responses were not altered.

**7.7.3 Bonfire Limited**

This interview was conducted with Sean Hynes, joint Managing Partner and co-founder at Bonfire Limited, an advertising company based in Dublin 8.

Bonfire Limited conduct their advertising for a multitude of companies ranging from Dunnes Stores to Johnson and Johnson to Fujitsu on an approach basis and has been in operation for the past 10 years.

**7.7.4 Interview Recordings**

All interviews were recorded using a ‘Voice Memo’s application on iPhone. Copies of these recordings are attached below. If this is a printed copy and you request a copy of transcript, please contact me at Stephen.a.mccann@gmail.com.

**7.7.5 Interview Instructions**

The following text was read to each interviewee before commencement of the interview began. These were instructions read before recording commenced to provide the interviewee with an overview as to what was taking place. This was read to all interviewees for consistency. In some cases, the interviewer also confirmed what the interviewees preference was for the company e.g. Fyffes vs Chiquita Fyffes vs Total Produce.

“I am looking to see what role the name of a product plays in creating marketing campaigns and how the name affects the consumer by assuming no prior knowledge of the product exists. I have 3 objectives to reach with these interviews, each of which has 3 sub objectives. Before each objective and sub objective, I am going to state the number for my own benefit when listening back, you don’t need to be concerned with this. If you have any questions that you are uncomfortable in answering, please don’t hesitate to ask me to clarify the question or to avoid the question entirely. I know we have a time constraint, therefore I am going to try to limit each question and answer to 1.5 minutes. If I do cut you off, I don’t mean to be rude, I am just trying to keep to the time limit for both of our benefit. I may also be writing things down, please don’t assume this means I am not listening or feel that you need to slow down or stop. Please be as honest as possible, I do not have to like or agree
with your answers, I am treating you as an expert in your field and assuming I am ignorant of any other knowledge”.

Interview Questions
Attached below are the set questions asked in each interview. There are some hints/examples for the interviewer to use should the question need clarity. Separate notes were also taken during the interviews to accommodate interviewee response in future questions.

Interview Questions
Bonfire.docx
Fyffes.docx
Mondelez.docx
7.8 Consumer Decision Journey

Edelman (2010)

7.9 Major Consumer Promotional Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 20.2 Major consumer promotion tools</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samples</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coupons</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cash Refund Offers (rebates)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Price Packs (money-off Deals)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Premiums (gifts)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency Programme</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prizes (contests, sweepstakes, games)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Patronage Awards</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Free Trials</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Product Warranties</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tie-In Promotions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cross-Promotions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Point-of-Purchase (P-O-P) Displays and Demonstrations</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.10 Confidentiality Agreements

The attached confidentiality agreements were offered to interviewees prior to the commencement of the meetings. However, it was agreed on all counts that no confidential information would be shared, therefore there was no need for the confidentiality agreements to be signed by any parties.

Non-Disclosure Agreement Bonfire.doc
Non-Disclosure Agreement Fyffes.doc
Non-Disclosure Agreement Mondelez.doc

7.11 Google

Google.com is registered as a domain on September 15. The name—a play on the word "googol," a mathematical term for the number represented by the numeral 1 followed by 100 zeros—reflects Larry and Sergey's mission to organize a seemingly infinite amount of information on the web. (http://www.google.ie/about/company/history/).
7.12 Products Selected for Questionnaire

7.12.1 Golden Gaytime

7.12.2 Oh Henry!
7.12.3 White Rabbit

7.12.4 Bart’s Peanut Butter Chocolate Crunch
7.13 Nightline

Nightline was established in 1992 and is today’s largest domestic parcel delivery company. With 450 vehicles, Nightline delivers 1 million parcels a month all over Ireland including Northern Ireland. Nightline has 10 depots nationwide. Nightline’s clients include many leading high street and online retailers. Nightline employs 700 staff and has a 40% domestic market share. In addition, Nightline has 80 partner hubs across the UK with major hubs in Lichfield and Coventry and an office in Manchester to support UK customers (BQ).

7.14 The Parcel Motel Service

Once registered, the customer has instant access to the service. The customer can use Parcel Motel as a two-way service – sending and receiving packages.

7.14.1 Registering

The customer must first register online with Parcel Motel, including selecting your nearest Parcel Motel location and entering a mobile phone number. Parcel Motel then provides the customer with their own unique PMID (Parcel Motel Identification) number which is directly linked to the customers preferred pick up location.

7.14.2 Receiving

When checking out from an online retailer, the consumer edits the delivery address to a Parcel Motel address (currently Finglas or Antrim). The name the customer enters in the
delivery details is the PMID code provided when registering with Parcel Motel. This code enables Parcel Motel to identify the consumer and delivery the parcel to the correct location.

The Antrim location offers added benefit to the Irish market when ordering from the UK. Not only do many e-retailers (e.g. Amazon) offer free delivery within the UK, but some UK retailers don’t even deliver certain / all products to the Irish market e.g. Amazon, eBay.

The consumer will then receive an SMS message when their parcel is ready for collection. This SMS contains a unique PIN code. At convenience to the customer, they enter their phone number and the allocated PIN code to the collection point, at which time, the specified locker will open.

7.14.3 Sending

To return an item purchased, all partner e-retailers will supply a returns label which can be scanned at the machine and a suitable door will open. For ordinary parcel sending, the customer will be asked a series of questions about the size, weight, etc. of the parcel and can use their credit card to pay. A label will be printed from the machine and a suitable door will open for the parcel to be put into.

7.15 Reflection on Learning (915 words)

7.15.1 Self-Appraisal

This dissertation process afforded me a situation whereby I could challenge my discipline in completing such an enormous task. I believe that I have stepped up to the challenge and completed a document that, not only complies with the college’s practises, but has also offered a huge sense of satisfaction and completion for me personally.

Having gained level of maturity in 2 years of employment between my undergraduate degree and my MBA course, this process has offered me a chance to apply that maturity to furthering my education. While I believe that employment allowed me to develop more skills than this course, the MBA program offered an alternate environment in which to apply and nurture them. I don’t believe these skills would have evolved as much had I not partaken in employment prior to the MBA program.

Researching and referencing other people’s work has never been my comfort zone. However, some modules, the marketing modules in particular, have somewhat forced me to leave my comfort zone which, although challenging at first, has provided a great foundation of confidence for my future career.
7.15.2 Problem Solving

Numerous issues were encountered throughout this dissertation process. I believe that, through the learning process, I picked up on advice from the lecturer to extend continuity measures should these issues arise.

The biggest issue in completing this research was acquiring enough survey responses to provide accurate conclusions based on the objective set out. I have familiarity with SurveyMonkey.com in the past, therefore this was the preferred option. Unfortunately, this is a paid service, therefore free versions were explored. The free version encountered difficulties, therefore I was forced to explore paid alternatives. However, this did get me survey results in 24 hours so was worth it. Ideally, a free survey hosting platform and cheaper respondents would suit best. Paid respondents work well as there is an evidence trail to prove respondent objectivity.

Finally, I wanted to include further analysis on the questionnaires within the document. Unfortunately, due to time and word count constraints mainly, I was not able to achieve this. I would have tried to include a measureable calculation, however, this would have proved incredibly time consuming without adding much to the body of text.

7.15.3 Dissertation Process

I believe my dissertation topic is an accumulation of observations, consciously and/or subconsciously, in the marketplace. Because of this observation from everyday life, it felt like more of a natural happenstance as opposed to outlining strategies which is probably the reason it was of interest to me.

The majority of the information that I required was readily available in the library. This was my first time using a college library for such use and I was very surprised with the amount of relevant information available.

I do believe that I would have found it difficult to find relevant academic journals to conduct my research using the library had I not already known the titles. I believe advising students to sign up to a periodic academic journal subscription early in the MBA process would be beneficial.

I would have had no idea where to begin looking for the aforementioned titles, however, much of the topics were covered in a module and, courtesy of guidance from the marketing lecturer, and it was relatively easy to find said journals. Books were also readily available in the library upon request. There is a lot of information out there in my chosen topic, some of which I was baffled by, but it does highlight a sense of vagueness and ‘unmeasureability’ within the marketing discipline. I can’t see anything concrete entering the discipline for many years.
Some case studies were interesting and loosely touched base with my chosen topic. However, they were deemed to be too distant and other more relevant material was available. Psychology could have proved a factor in aiding in the study more closely, in terms of connecting with customers, however, again, it was deemed that the available literature provided adequate reading.

7.15.4 Summary of Added Value and Plan to Apply/Sustain the Learning

The main benefit that I have gained from this is not the MBA title, but a business discipline. This program accepted all students regardless of background. My background is journalism, an area which I do not wish to pursue and this business degree will offer options for future employment.

This process has helped give me a sense of perspective about how easy or hard things are. For example, I never considered learning another language as I struggled in school to learn French. However, I believe if I do it of my own recognisance, I will enjoy it more and absorb more information.

As of completion of this document, I have no plans to extend my learning from a conventional and measured perspective. However, I would like to expand my knowledge base by doing such things as ‘train the trainer’ learn a language, etc. and I believe that, having completed the MBA process, these will seem relatively easy in comparison. Furthermore, I currently do not know what career I wish to pursue. This MBA has resulted in at least one job offered, whereby I will gain experience in different areas of a business environment. This, I believe, will help me find my career path. This MBA has effectively opened the door to the door to the right path in my case and it is something that will remain with me for the rest of my life. Even if I were to fail the MBA program, the knowledge that I have gained has placed me on a higher level than I previously found myself on.

7.16 Additional Comments

In addition to the reflection, I would like to make the following comments regarding the final stages of the dissertation process.

One issue that I believe to be quite serious was the college’s communication process. Having spoken to numerous colleagues about requirements for the final document, it appears as though different colleagues were told different requirements. While all of us are individuals, therefore have different requirements, our investigation proved that a lack of communication on behalf of the college was the root cause. This put serious time constraints on the student as certain requirements had only come to light with 8 days left until deadline. The final product quality may have suffered as a result in some cases.

Having brought this to the attention of the appropriate bodies, I felt my opinions were ignored with a hope that ‘I would eventually leave them alone’. A subsequent voicemail left on my phone
advised that the college was ‘bewildered’ by the fact that I was unaware that I was a QQI student whereas I believe that the college made minimal effort to inform me of such. One method of knowing if a student was QQI or otherwise was the existence of the letter ‘Q’ on the student card. Not having this Q, I was under the assumption that I was not QQI. In addition, numerous colleagues were informed not to proceed with the QQI aspects of thesis submission, therefore why question it?

A mail was sent out after I had a conversation with the appropriate bodies, however, this mail was sent out 2 minutes after the conversation ended (having already been drafted prior to the conversation) and nothing that I had brought attention to was included, for example, students were told that the letter Q on the student card meant that a student was QQI. It was brought to attention prior to this that, even though I was QQI, I did not have a Q on my student card. This mail was so poorly constructed with regards to the feedback provided that another mail was subsequently issued moments later correcting the mistake. Please note that the sender that distributed these emails was not the person that I was speaking to prior, therefore, no responsibility is placed on him/her. The college have yet to accept responsibility for this area of negligence and oversight which I would greatly accept an invitation to discuss with the college.

I did send a follow up mail on August 12th highlighting some feelings towards this which to date (21st August) has gone unanswered. I feel as though I was treated as an ‘ignorant student’ rather than a customer of the college and I am incredibly disappointed at how my colleagues and I were treated in this regard – I feel it was incredibly patronising. I have been advised from numerous students that their ‘mentors’ have not responded to querying mails on the back of the below mail (possibly due to annual leave) therefore an extension should have been given greater consideration.

Providing a poster worth 10% for an MBA is baffling in any case. I believe this to be a cost cutting measure enforced by DBS in place of a presentation or discussion with the student regarding said thesis, and, being a non-interactive poster, may prove to serve a sense of injustice to the final thesis output.

Finally, the ‘reflection on learning’ is appalling in my personal opinion. The guidelines provided are not for a self-assessment of learning, rather more of a tool to rate the college library and other facilities. Unfortunately, as I have attempted to avoid rating the library in favour of a more complete self-evaluation, I may again be subject to lose marks. I believe it is absolutely farcical to assign 10% of the marks for this when a survey (quantitative analysis) would suffice. I am aware that extremity bias (as highlighted above) would be evident in my response.

It’s even more unfortunate that this somewhat overshadows my learning reflection – not only my reflection but potentially those of my colleagues. Without attempting to sound petty, I hold a slight reservation in accepting an MBA from a college as dismissive as I found this college to be. If it had
been a case whereby there was lack of communication between myself and my ‘mentor’, my ‘mentor’ and the faculty, or both, I would have gotten on with it – these things happen and I had great respect for my ‘mentor’. However, since such a vast number of students were affected (the entire handful that I spoke to), I felt it needed highlighting. While I am aware that these comments may cast a grey cloud over the work I have produced as part of this process, I feel obliged to document them to provide feedback so that future student endeavours don’t suffer the same fate.

Please note, that while I have made the above comments, I do so with the best intentions to provide honest and critical feedback so that the college can develop. As such, I bear no grudge against the college in any aspect. I do extend my most heartfelt and sincerest apologies to anyone who has taken any personal offense to these comments but I have made all endeavours to objectify my feedback.