

How Can a Festival Be Defined as a Brand? And Why Branding Is Essential to a Festival?

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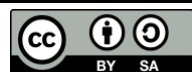
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ABSTRACT

These brands are becoming an unexpected phenomenon among audiences. Brand presence gives the audience a choice to determine their personality's suitability. Discussions about brands have taken place in the academic world, where each expert comes with their brand definition. This discussion leads to difficulties in understanding the brand's interpretation and management [38]. Brands are often seen in the products and services that are produced in meeting the needs and wants of the audience. The explanation of the festival's presence as a brand is poorly clarified in literary academics, where festivals come with a personality adaptation of the audience to engage. This article aims to provide an overview of brands and branding that are often the focus of academia and how festivals can be defined as brands.

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1. Introduction

The country has developed strategies to attract tourists to experience, visit and engage in the tourism products or services offered. The strategies can help increase tourism arrivals, and involvement and at the same time introduce local products to the international level. One of these strategies includes festivals. Festivals are part of the cultural celebration designed according to specific themes, usually including the community, as this strategy has proven to attract visitors [22]. Festival is one of the most rapid-growing aspects of tourism and has accommodated the country's marketing arts. From the researcher's general observations, the growth of this sector can be described as exceptional.

Festivals in Malaysia have managed to attract organizers' and tourists' involvement locally and internationally. However, in 2020 all festivals and events have been put on hold due to the widespread transmission of the pandemic Covid-19. The government has decided to postpone all events involving large-scale gatherings until covid-19 gradually recovers. Even so, organizers have taken a more creative approach to hold the festival virtually. This strategy means all programs and performances that have been planned are held virtually for the audience. Globally, the cultural and creative economy has experienced rapid growth in the 21st century. This stems from increased demand for distinctive goods and services, including those for leisure. This rising demand can be attributed to the world's expanding middle-class consumers and increased disposable income [13]. The previous study emphasizes the need for festival organizers to set up a festival brand to identify celebrations [10] quickly.

In marketing, a brand is an essential requirement in generating an organization and developing a product or service that is produced. Companies often issue brands to make it easier for audiences to identify specific products. A brand is part of the identity of a product or service, where it can be identified through symbols, characters, designs, signals, or slogans produced by the company. The importance of the brand in this marketing is to protect the owner's rights, where it can give the seller the exclusive right to use the trademark in the buying and selling process. With this, copyright plagiarism can be avoided and protected by the bodies involved. Excellent branding can introduce the brand more widely because it is the determining point for its position in the audience. The brand image needs to be communicated consistently and systematically according to a strategy that has been formulated so that the brand is strong enough to compete with competitors producing similar products or services. Within the festival's scope, brands play a crucial role in distributing information.

According to Leaders [34], brand characteristics such as pictures, atmosphere, and emotions attract the audience to visit and be loyal to a festival brand and spend more money to engage with the event. This study shows that tangible experience in the brand is a significant driver of audience equity in the festival and provides an overview of brand and branding and brand festivals.

2. Brand and Branding



Figure 1. The Brand Definition Adopted From De Chernatony

The term brand is not easy to define; every marketing expert such as Chernev [12]; Kastberg [26]; De Chernatony [15]; Dunn [17]; Marconi [37], and Keller [27] has a different definition focus formulated for the term "brand". Dunn (2004) defines a brand as an idea or concept of feeling in an audience's mind, and sometimes it is only related to words and thoughts that involve emotions and feelings. Kastberg [26] thinks that a brand is a sign (including logos, symbols, etc.) and designed positive and emotional relationships. However, Keller [27] argues that brands are more than that and have created awareness, reputation, and excellence in the market. Brands are increasingly becoming the primary source of differentiation that drives audience purchasing choices. Bivaineine [6] stated that the definition of a brand is widely released by past and present researchers, where the benefits provided themselves create the definition of function or purpose. Brands are seen as a practical means of identification and used as marketing tools to identify and differentiate them from similar market offerings [6,12].

Because of the overlap in definition, De Chernatony [15] has categorized the definition of a brand into 12 themes: Legal instrument, company, logo, shorthand, risk reducer, identity system, image, value system, personality, relationship, adding value, and evolving entity (figure 1.1), each term has antecedents, and consequences to the brand construct. In his book, De Chernatony [15] has added 2 more themes of brand

definition, namely positioning and vision. Positioning and vision are crucial for a company to develop a strong brand. They have categorized 14 themes into three perspectives: Input perspective (legal instrument, company, logo, shorthand, risk reducer, identity system, adding value, value system, personality), Output perspective (image and relationship), and time perspective (evolving entity). These categories show how the brand's integrated characteristics are evolving through a balance of brand input and output perspectives.

Brand and branding need to be emphasized in the field of marketing. Brand and branding have different content in terms of understanding. Bonnici [7] defines a brand as a set of tangible and intangible traits designed to give awareness and identity and build reputation, products, services, or organizations. While branding is a long-term strategy that includes various activities ranging from product innovation to marketing communication. The branding strategy's objective is to create a different brand from the existing competition [49]). Kotler and Pfoertsch [31] assume that branding is a discipline that belongs to an organization's long-term strategy and has the strength to lead and influence. To introduce a great brand and achieve a good level of branding, brand companies need to run a strategy wisely. Eppler and Will [18] stated that branding should be given attention to the press, employees, stakeholders, and audience, not only focusing on sponsorship and advertising. The branding strategy developed is a significant contributor to the company's becoming exceptional.

According to Adamson [2], branding is about a signal. Branding creates a signal that conveys the meaning of a particular brand and creates a difference in people's minds. The signals people use determine what the brand stands for as a brand. Branding signals related to external things and clear items such as logos, signage, and more. At the same time, brands also combine intangible things like identity and personality. This brand signal is vital in marketing, primarily the branding phenomenon; the brand is used to mark oneself, and personality is focused positively or negatively on an interest. Therefore, a signal is one of the crucial aspects that need to be emphasized in delivery. Signals are one of the 'channels' in branding for connecting brands and audiences. Signals involve external, but they can also affect audiences' minds.

Brands develop due to creating their own identity [33, 12, 50, 37]. The purpose of branding is to allow audiences to express their personality through the brand used. Creations such as personalities, characters, logos, colors, and slogans help increase their level of branding in the global market. It can be seen in the brand marketing industry today; a slogan is a must for brands in winning a place in the audience, for example, such as McDonald's "I'm Lovin' it", Nike's "Just do it", and Coca-Cola's "open happiness". Creating a brand effect through a product or service with a certain quality or feature makes it special and unique. Overall, branding is essential to build a brand, especially a product, service, or organization representing a modern feature and contemporary characteristics.

Branding can help create positive news and introduce a brand, where it helps build trust and loyalty to the brand. A brand represents the consumers' perceptions and sentiments about a product and its performance [30]. Nowadays, many new settlements have been opened and developed, further bringing the brand to new markets. Extensive communication can help brand companies develop different markets, and current knowledge of branding can help speed up the brand process in the market. Branding is not about building a brand itself; it is also about how to be good to audiences, employees, and partners.

In summary, researchers conclude that a brand can be defined as an identifier. Logo symbols or slogans identify offers and make it easier for audiences to choose the desired product. However, a promise is an offer that the audience will consume as a brand. An asset, for instance, looks like an incentive for audiences to acquire a brand, and perceptions are influenced by other user experiences, the effect of word-of-mouth, and advertising.

2. Festival as A Brand

Marketing strategy cultural tourism resources contribute to the improvement of market value and should be carried out regularly and continuously to achieve a high level of visitor immersion. The brand has become a trend in brand marketing and is considered a medium for increasing the demand for products and services. According to Dreyer and Slabbert [16], branding plays a vital role in the position created by the brand. Effective branding will help to get an optimal ranking and contribute to the sustainability of a festival. Mossberg and Getz [39] argue that brands can manage festivals and events, but the process must be done through the involvement of multiple stakeholders. Owners, suppliers, employees, audiences, the community, and the public sector are specific stakeholders involved in the festival's branding.

Esu and Array [20] argue that views and understandings related to a brand festival can be drawn from studies related to a brand destination because festivals are one of the destination attractions and directly share some traits that influence the audience's decision to visit such festivals. Destination brands can be used to describe the personality and characteristic traits of a destination [29].and views on festival brands.

Each festival brand has its distinctive personality and characteristics. The uniqueness exhibited by a festival brand can be adding value to a marketing strategy that differs from other festivals. The brand allows the festival to maintain its status among its relational audience. According to De Chernatony [12], value is a relative concept that allows an audience to make a purchase based on the brand's competitiveness. Effective branding can reach a good position [16] improve distribution [45] and help increase the audience [37].

Besides that, effective tourism promotion, communication, and experience can extend an audience's stay and guide them to visit tourist destinations and attractions in other areas. A brand's decisions usually depend on the value of the product or service being launched. Supported by Marconi [37] stated that the decision to remain loyal to the brand over time is based on several considerations such as price and quality (value), personality and reputation (image), service, satisfaction, and availability. Burger [9] argues that it is essential to build a festival brand so that organizers can quickly identify the festival.

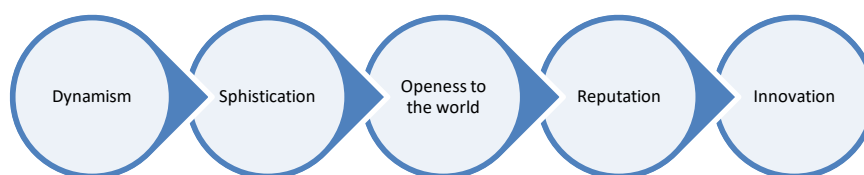


Figure 2. *The Brand Personality Scale of a Cultural Festival*

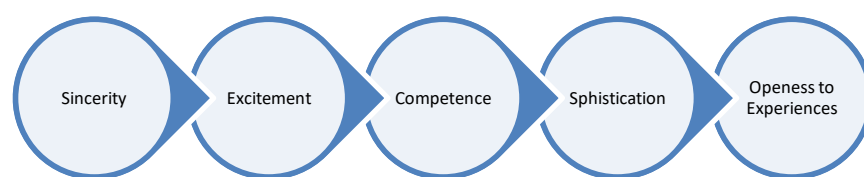


Figure 3. *The Brand Personality Scale of Cultural Tourism*

The festival is enriched by the originality of the experience and the influence of individuality on the audience. Each themed activity and program offered can affect the satisfaction and delight of the audience. Aaker [1] develops a Brand Personality Scale (BPS) that consists of sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness as a means of measuring brand personality. It has been widely accepted and applied by many authors in various disciplines. The development of the Brand Personality Scale (Figure 2 and figure 3) gets the author's attention to extend and generate new personality attributes for a particular area [44, 46, 14, 42]. Personality is critical at festivals to be seen as a successful and unique brand. Chernev [12] asserts that brand personality is a strategic concept that reflects human characteristics.

4. Importance of Branding in Festival Brand

In the current business, the modernization brand is an essential value in a company. They are willing to invest in introducing their product brands. A brand is an added value in a product or service to facilitate product identification in the market, and the brand of a product will be more valuable. The brand is used as a medium or symbol to connect the mind with the company's brand, and branding is a driver in marketing, where it helps create a unique and different brand from the competition. The use of the brand is extraordinary; its importance is not limited to scope and impacts daily life.

In the tourism industry sector, various festivals and art events are organized. Each organization has its target audience. Although each festival has a relatively similar program, each of these festivals has a different brand, the way of delivery is different, and the satisfaction gained by the audience is also different. The differences and specialties of a festival can attract the audience's loyalty and encourage them to remember the festival's brand. Besides that, branding will motivate their staff and help the audience know what to expect. The significance of festival branding can be described to show that branding helps introduce products and can put the brand in mind and create a perception that a festival has qualities that make it unique.

4.1 Increase Brand Recognition

A brand is an asset because it provides a way to get to know audiences and define a particular product if the audience wants to see it again and recommend it to others [23]. At the same time, it provides a significant communication function and can build trust among consumers about the nature and overview of the product [35].

Brand recognition is one of the primary sources to differentiate a product from competitors in the market [25]. Khurram, Sherraz, and Qadeer [28] show that high brand recognition generates many product purchases. The importance of effort in marketing cannot be ignored because the purpose of promotion and advertising is to make people recognize the brand immediately and place a brand in the top position when the audience decides to choose.

Festival has its personality, symbols, and names in the brand context. Each creation aims to raise brand awareness and encourage viewer participation. Brand recognition includes brand [5], brand logo [47], and digital branding [21]. In this century, brand logos can increase awareness and allow the audience to identify brands based on the logo quickly. The logo is an integral part of the brand that can evoke consumers' emotional responses before carrying out promotional activities [9]. Brand recognition is considered successful if it can be directly identified without using the product or service name. Only with the distinctive features of the brand will the audience immediately recognize the product. Besides that, the brand recognition that can be applied is experience. Simply put, viewers tend to remember and participate in the brand. Therefore, it is crucial to create a brand in the audience's mind.

4.2 Adding Brand Value

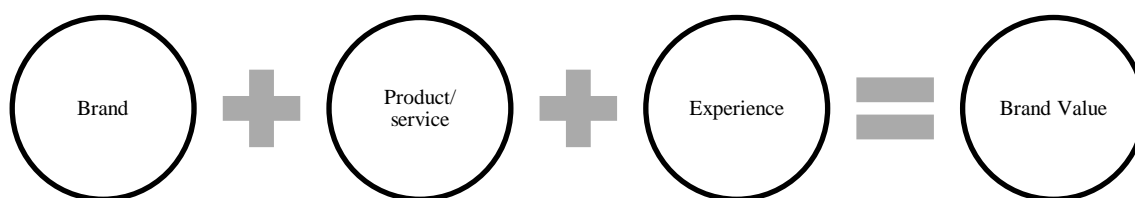


Figure 4. *Brand Value*

Kriegbaum [32] stated that brand value is the financial result of management to leverage brand strengths. It is done through tactical and strategic actions to provide profits and reduce risks in the future. Branding creates audiences' value by identifying the company's products and services and developing unique brand associations that extend beyond the product and services characteristic of the offerings to create a meaning that resonates with target audiences [12]. Value is intangible because it is not a property of the company's offerings and does not physically exist in the market. The audience will value when their behavior, sense, or cognitive interaction interacts with the brand. According to De Chernatony [15], a brand is considered a cluster of values. Conceiving a brand as a cluster of values provides a basis for making the brand different from others. In his book, Sir Richard Branson has declared that the brand is a cluster of five values: quality, innovation, value for money, fun, and a sense of challenge.

There are three dimensions of audience value stated by Chernev [12], where each dimension has a different way of offering, namely, functional, monetary, and physical value. These three values have their respective advantages, and functional values include service, evaluation, or performance of offerings related to user convenience, customization, and style. This value is the most exact value that the current audience can see. Osman [40] shows that functional value is directly related to the functionality provided by a product or service to the audience. If it has a functional advantage, then the brand dominates the category. The second value is monetary, where the brand is a tool to create monetary value and signal the offer price of a company's product or service. It covers benefits or costs associated with prices, discounts, or fees. Monetary value is exchanged in a sale and purchase to obtain a service or product offered to the audience. The latter is related to psychological value. The value of brand psychology can create an effective response to audiences and provide emotional benefits in every experience felt while engaging with a brand.

Every value felt by the audience while engaging with a festival brand impacts the brand. Perceived value can be seen as an individual's perception of the difference between the benefits offered by a brand. If the delivery of brand value is successful, it can create trust and audience loyalty. Akhoondnejad [3] has found that the audience's value within the festival influences the festival's trust, satisfaction, and loyalty. Directly the value of the festival will be seen as something valuable and will not be earned in other festival brands.

4.3 Creating Brand Trust and Loyalty

Consumer confidence is one of the targets in branding to gain trust in the brand's products or services. The marketing division plays a role in executing the strategy through promotion, advertising, and communication, focusing on the brand value to be gained. Trust plays a vital role in forming an attitude toward a brand; it influences purchasing a brand of product or service.

According to Ercis, Unal, Candan, and Yildirim [19], brand trust is seen as the consumer's belief that a selected brand will fulfill a particular function; this belief will affect loyalty which is vital for a high market. Such as festivals, festival brands promise interesting programs, exhibitions, and activities to every audience who attends. As a result of the brand strategy, the audience has trust and confidence to attend, hoping that the selected festival brand can provide satisfaction and delight. Emotional values and openness are factors that should be prioritized and essential in building trust in the long term. With this, the success of a festival can add value to the views of the audience.

Audience loyalty is a success achieved in a marketing company. The audience is beginning to trust and is loyal to using the product. The experience gained by the audience is the main reason loyalty occurs [8, 41, 43]. Experience gives an effect in terms of emotions, senses, cognition, and audience behavior. Experiences arise in various situations directly or indirectly [8].

Loyalty is like a consistent brand repurchase due to an audience's positive relationship with the brand or product. When loyalty exists within the audience, everything related to the brand will be known, leading to repeat purchases or visits. While according to Latif, Islam, and Noor's [36] study, there are four recommended levels of brand familiarity, satisfaction, trust, and loyalty attitudes that allow a brand company to build strong loyalty. Understanding the audience is the starting line for every successful attempt. Yang, Gu, and Cen [48] emphasize that maintaining visitor attendance rates is essential to ensure a profitable and sustainable festival. Therefore, the factors influencing loyalty need to be reviewed following the modern market environment.

Consumers connect with their favorite brands through pre-purchase search, shopping, consumption, and more. In the context of the festival, customers can interact with the brand through virtual and social media. Other respondents are indirectly associated with the brand without consuming it. Customers develop feelings and emotions in their favorite brands and display more extraordinary emotions. In terms of experience, it is an emotional experience [4]. Emotional attachment provides an exceptional promise to a brand; brand loyalty results from deep emotional attachment, influencing the audience to revisit behavior [24]. It is also a cognitive brand experience when customers think more about their brand.

4.3 Creating Target Market

Target marketing strategies focus on customer needs and wants. This focus includes the identification of the most profitable market segments. To create a target market, organizations need a strong strategy in management. Creating an attractive brand with a certain set of strengths and uniqueness serves as a medium of appeal to audiences and affects the overall brand a company creates. Thus, a marketing strategy is a blueprint that defines how a company creates market value. According to Camilleri [11], there are three market options available. That are undifferentiated marketing, differentiated marketing, and concentrated markets.

In this century, identified customers are increasingly demanding. Undifferentiated marketing strategies ignore market differences. This strategy can reach customers with one market offer. However, developing a product or brand that satisfies all consumers with diverse needs, wants, and expectations can prove difficult for companies. In the scope of different marketing strategies typically target multiple segments. This marketing coverage strategy requires an organization to develop individual products or offerings and create a marketing plan for each segment. To carry out this strategy, organizations need to do a thorough investigation to find ways to achieve the selected target.

In comparison, the concentrated market is an organization that targets only one or a few sub-markets with limited resources. If the segment is booming, the company can have a high return on investment. However, if the selected segment fails, the organization can suffer enormous losses. This form of marketing involves high risk and has a direct impact on organizational performance and mobility.

The brand target market is defined by five factors (5 Cs): the target market for customers offerings, collaborators, competitors, companies, and content to create value [12]. Consumers in the target market have similar characteristics such as purchasing power, demographics, and income level. The key to specifying a brand's target audience is to choose the right balance between the breadth of scope and the depth of the brand's customer relationships. Brand target customers consist of two principles: attractiveness and compatibility. Attraction means that the target audience needs to create value for the company.

In contrast, compatibility means that a company's strategy needs to be tailored to the needs of its customers so that a company's brand can create value for its target audience. For example, in a festival brand, the audience complements a festival because audience involvement is the primary driver of the smooth running of the

festival. Audience engagement gives value to the festival to be known; therefore, festival brand organizers always strive to satisfy and delight the audience.

The second factor is competitors; each brand has competition in terms of products or services. The purpose of any brand developed is to raise profits by satisfying the audience. Competitors are sharing customers. The quality, features, and advantages emphasized by the brand can differentiate the experience the audience feels. By meeting audience expectations, brand festivals are able to be rated higher than competitors. A brand collaborator is an entity that works with a company to build and manage a brand. In a collaboration that involves cobranding, two or more companies join in developing strategies and leveraging each other's brands to achieve synergies by linking their brands. In the festival scope, they have stakeholders such as the ministry, arts organizations, and sponsors to collaborate and benefit each other.

Company resources and content are essential for building and managing a brand. The brand strategy is a specific asset of a company's brand; it helps organizations build a brand portfolio, strong reputation, and experience. The branding strategy is a plan to create, develop, and launch the brand organized like the marketing mix. Chernev [12] stated that brand strategy is influenced by different economic, technological, sociocultural, regulatory, and physical aspects.

5. Conclusion

This article explains a bit about branding in festivals and the importance of branding to festivals. Often the brand is only associated with a product or service, underscoring the lack of research on the festival's brand. The potential of the festival is very high to be introduced, especially worldwide. Many international festivals attract the attention of local tourists and foreigners, such as the Malaysian Rainforest Music Festival and the Georgetown Festival. Every product or service name developed by a company that involves buying and selling, the exchange of values that provide satisfaction to consumers can be seen as a brand, whether in the context of products, services, associations, and politics. Each brand has its target market before being developed. Festivals play an essential role in the context of tourism and destinations. A festival brand that brings delight, satisfaction, and value to the audience will directly create a sense of trust and influence the audience's intention to return.

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