

The requirements of modern consumers, increase of the intensity of competition, the globalization of markets and the dynamic development of information and communication technologies stimulate companies for adaptation to modifying and often unstable situation. Consequently, **in the conditions of the modern market, the brand has become a source of competitive advantage for companies, being the reference point for the consumer, not only through the distinction of products and services, but most of all by offering symbolic value.**

The brand has become the key element of marketing, while other marketing tools are more frequently determined by brand strategy. Observation of market trends proves, that the development of brands is inevitable. The requirement to be competitive forces companies to undertake non-traditional actions in the area of marketing, thereby adapting to the preferences of consumers and behaviours of competitors.

Brand management is one of the greatest challenges of modern marketing. In view of the changes taking place in the environment of modern companies, brand is a reference point which allows the consumer to evaluate not only the material properties of a product, but also the fundamental intangible values associated with the brand. At the same time **we can observe the trend of development of the marketing activities that appeal to emotions, experiences and memories of consumers.** As a result, the basis of relations between the consumer and the brand can be nostalgia, which is a positive attitude towards brands that are directly or indirectly related to the consumer past.

The implementation of the phenomenon of nostalgia in brand management can create the emotions associated with sensations and experiences important for buyers, often making reference to their own, or an idealized historical past. As a consequence on the market there are two basic categories of nostalgic brands:

- **generational brands**, based on a real nostalgia (relating to the own direct and personal memories), having the individual or collective character,
- **transgenerational brands**, based on a real nostalgia (relating to the own direct and personal memories) or simulated nostalgia (referring indirectly to the individual experiences or memories of other people, eg. parents, grandparents, as well as to the collective experiences and memories in case of historical nostalgia) having the individual or collective character.

The main objective of the project “Nostalgia in brand management” is to determine the relevance and possibilities of using the phenomenon of nostalgia in brand management and the identification and assessment of consumers attitudes towards nostalgic brands, taking into account the brand category, as well as demographic and geographic consumers characteristics.

In Polish literature, there is no complex approach of the issues of nostalgia in brand management which would give a holistic view on the concept. In the Polish literature there is only a few articles concerning the issues of nostalgia in marketing management and these articles are mainly popular science publications. It should be also emphasized that the issues of nostalgia in marketing management is often perceived in Poland only through the prism of a return to the culture of socialist realism, which is very limited approach. The results of pilot studies prove in fact that for Polish consumer, nostalgic brands are the brands with a long tradition, associated primarily with the positive personal experiences. In the studies of marketing and brand management, the concept of nostalgia is omitted or treated in a marginal way. The main source of information is, therefore, world literature, which in this area, however, focuses on selected areas of nostalgia in management.

In project four stages of empirical research will be conducted to identify and assess consumers attitudes towards nostalgic brands and identify methods of the nostalgic brand image development.

The first stage of the research includes identification of nostalgic brands and non-nostalgic brands, both generational and transgenerational. On the basis of selected brands, the brand equity of nostalgic and non-nostalgic brands will be analysed. After, the identification and assessment of Polish consumers' attitudes towards generational and transgenerational nostalgic brands, taking into account their selected demographic characteristics (age, gender, education) will be made. A quantitative research will be conducted among 1,000 Polish respondents. The indirect method of gathering information, using an online survey technique will be applied.

The second stage of the research relates to the identification and assessment of Polish consumer attitudes towards nostalgic brands, taking into account the selected demographic characteristics and it will be a research experiment. Using the direct qualitative methods, such as group interviews and projective methods, as well as sensory methods, active and passive observation, author wants to complement the first stage of research for better understanding of Polish consumer attitudes towards nostalgic brands. The study will be conducted among 100 respondents.

The third stage of the study relates to the identification and assessment of Polish and French young consumers attitudes towards international nostalgic brands. During the pilot studies, 6 international nostalgic brands, indicated both by Polish and French consumers were identified. It confirms the presence of generational and transgenerational international brands, perceived as nostalgic by consumers in different countries. Author of project in collaboration with Professor of Marketing from the French university conducted this research among 200 French and 200 Polish respondents. The qualitative research concerning the attitudes of the Polish and French young respondents will be also conducted. They will be based on the focus groups and the direct qualitative methods, such as group interviews and projective methods will be used.

The fourth stage of the study is to identify methods of nostalgic brand image management, and will be based on case studies concerning eight nostalgic brands, selected after the analysis of the results of 1-3 research stages. In order to ensure the credibility

of research, qualitative data will be used, including, observation, interviews, archival materials, websites etc.

Realisation of the research project will allow to prepare the treatise presenting a multidimensional and complex characteristics of the concept of nostalgia in brand management. Realisation of research will allow also identify and assess Polish consumers attitudes towards nostalgic brands (taking into account the brand category, as well as demographic and geographic consumers characteristics) and the attitudes of young consumers from different countries towards international nostalgic brands.

The results of this study may affect the further development of management sciences by:

- improving knowledge and understanding of consumer attitudes towards nostalgic brands,
- determination of the opportunities of development of image of nostalgic brands in the context of consumer attitudes towards generational and transgenerational brands.