

**Redefining Corporate Brand Identity in
the times of social media.
A multi-stakeholder perspective**

SPECIAL ISSUE

Guest Editors

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CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadlines	
Submission of full papers	15 November 2024
Notification of peer review results	15 January 2025
Submission of revised papers	15 February 2025
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Scope of the special issue

A corporate identity “provides the central platform upon which corporate communications policies are developed, corporate reputations are built and corporate images and stakeholder identifications with the corporation are formed” (Balmer, 2008, p.881). Therefore, a corporate brand identity encompasses specific values and features which represent an organization and its products offered to a market; moreover, to be relevant and contribute to the creation of a competitive advantage, it should be unique, verifiable, and truthful. The corporate brand identification represents an emotional attachment and a sense of belonging to the company (Cornilissen et al., 2007), consequently, it can differentiate the firm from its competitors in the eyes of its stakeholders (Balmer, 2013). A strong corporate identity should help the firm to win in the job market (e.g., attracting talents and engaging them in the firm’s values), in the financial markets (e.g., to effectively place bond issuance), in the product markets (e.g., to strengthen the intangible values of the value proposition) and so on and so forth.

Identity is one of the main elements of a firm and is usually determined by the vision of the founder(s), of its managers and/or its internal stakeholders in a broader sense. Nonetheless, the process leading to the definition of a corporate identity is undergoing a change, above all the emergence of the “purpose”. The purpose is a special case of a broader phenomenon where the increasing leadership of the external stakeholders shapes the corporate brand identity. A leading role to this shift is ascribed to the growth of social media and the new ways to communicate online, which increasingly represent a junction of the offline relationship between firms and customers due to its reach and accessibility (Kotler, 2017). As a result, firms must adapt to the new networked world, where control over corporate identity is only partially in their hands (Kotler et al., 2021). As a matter of fact, the newest generations (e.g., the first digital natives, the gen-why millennials) of social media users are influenced far more by their peers and their purchases than by established brand identities (Kotler, 2021). Digital platforms have led to the creation of communities that, allowing for an interaction between the firm, the consumers and all the stakeholders, can influence the identity of a corporate brand at various level (Devereux et al., 2017). For example, the rise of social media offers a new communication channel to employees and gives the possibility to people to collect more information on the company (Kissel and Buttgen, 2015). At this point, there is the risk to involve multiple elements not fitting correctly with the identity of the firm and not respecting what is called the corporate identity congruence (Flint et al., 2018; Signori and Flint, 2019).

Keywords: corporate identity; brand identity; social media; company purpose

Topics

This special issue is devoted to foster the academic knowledge on the way to unravel how companies define, communicate, and manage their corporate brand identities both through internal functions (i.e., marketing, human resource, corporate finance, strategy, etc.) and through the role played by external stakeholders (i.e., brand communities, financial communities, social media influencers, etc.) at the time of social media proliferation and at the beginning of a paradigmatic shift of globalization. Therefore, research that contributes to the understanding on how the identity of the company is changing while considering the implications for internal functions of the firm across different industries is welcomed.

Suggested topics are the following:

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Marketing:

- From corporate identity to brand awareness, brand image and brand reputation, the role of multiple stakeholders
- The influence of social media on corporate identity (i.e., brand visual identity and brand communications in the context of photo-based and video-based social media)
- The role of corporate and brand identity in time of crisis management

Marketing, Human Resource management and operations:

- Different stakeholders of employer branding (e.g., attracting and managing potential talents vs. current employees, customers, business partners, etc.)
- The role of corporate identity in the process of talent acquisition (i.e., recruitment and selection) and the role of social media
- Employer branding and strategic human resource management in shaping competitive advantage

Marketing and Corporate finance:

- Strategic alignment of corporate identity with financial goals of the firm
- The role of corporate identity and storytelling in financial communication
- Corporate identity, brand identity and trust in financial relationships

Marketing, Strategy, and internationalization:

- Strategic corporate identity creation for international markets
- The role of influencers and communities in the co-creation of corporate identity
- The role of sustainability to identify vision, mission, and values of a company

This special issue welcomes qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches, strongly supported by management literature.

Some useful references

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Paper submission (deadline 15 November 2024)

To submit papers to the special issue please follow instructions described at the following link:

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On the same page guidelines and template to layout papers are indicated.

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