RETHINKING AN APPROACH TO B2B AND B2C BRANDING: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE, CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS.

SIMONA D'ANTONE

Euromed Management
Domaine de Luminy, BP 921,
13288 Marseille Cedex 9 (France)
Simona.Dantone@euromed-management.com

ANDREA REA

Sapienza – Università di Roma
Via Salaria 113, 00198 Roma (Italia)
andrea.rea@uniroma1.it

ROBERT SPENCER

Euromed Management
Domaine de Luminy, BP 921,
13288 Marseille Cedex 9 (France)
Robert.Spencer@euromed-management.com

Abstract

Despite significant interest in industrial branding and important insights offered by extant literature, this work in progress paper identifies a research gap that we propose to address to develop future research on the theme.
It is found that different perspectives, although not mutually exclusive, have been adopted so far in marketing literature to tackle brand management issues in B2B contexts:

- a first approach *contrasts* consumer and industrial markets and consequently suggests different branding guidelines for the two contexts;
- a second approach suggests *conforming* or *adapting* consumer research approaches and interpretative theories and models to industrial brands;
- finally, *challenging* contributions are identified, which aim to reformulate concepts and measures proceeding from context specific verifications.

At the heart of all existing literature there is the dichotomy between B2B and B2C markets.
However, as a result of market dynamics, this distinction is increasingly blurred and companies face branding challenges related to their coexistence in two distinct or overlapping environments. No previous research addresses this specific situation. We thus focus on the "interface" between the two "souls" of a same brand and provide first possible indications as to brand coexistence in industrial and consumer contexts, along with comments and implications useful for further research development.

Key words

Industrial branding, contamination, B2B2C, brand practices, business to business marketing.

Paper type

Work in Progress

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INTRODUCTION

A glimpse at the latest Interbrand rankings (see Fig.1 in Appendix) many of the brands classified in top positions have B2B roots, although they no longer exclusively operate in B2B markets.
So far, however, marketing literature has mainly focused on how, similarly or differently, to approach brands in an industrial context compared to consumer brands, without, to our knowledge, making reference to cases of coexistence between B2B and B2C branding, an increasingly frequent phenomenon.
To highlight this we propose here a literature review and set out the conceptual bases for future research on "interfacing" branding strategies and practises occurring in industrial and consumer environments.

B2B vs. B2C?: AN OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

***Contrasting** B2B and B2C brands: B2B **vs**. B2C*
For many years it has been implied in marketing research that brands are little relevant to industrial marketers and more recently studies have specifically focused on branding strategies in B2B contexts.
Most of the extant studies, however, have pinpointed differences between industrial and consumer brands, contrasting the main features of branding in the two contexts according to some fundamental dichotomies.
The basic assumption is that because markets, products and consumers relationships are different in the two environments, consequently the brand concept and brand management strategies have to focus on different drivers (Glynn 2012; Baumgarth 2010; Webster and Keller, 2004).
These differences between market contexts take several forms. A first type of difference highlighted in literature is in the types and volumes of products exchanged. Industrial products are often transferred in large quantities, resulting also in a greater value of the transaction (Glynn 2012). At the same time, they are heterogeneous, and often more or less complex and critical to the customer's business: some can be assimilated to commodities, whereas others, such as capital equipment, are highly underpinned by technology and associated product features and benefits such as performance, reliability, and sophistication (Webster and Keller, 2004). Moreover, frequently industrial products are highly customised, characterized by delivery of innovative solutions (Baumgarth 2010).
Because of the above mentioned differences, product brand strategies have been considered quite difficult to implement in an industrial context, hence the general suggestion to rely on corporate brand instead, rather than on product brands in a B2B context (Mudambi, 2002; Kotler, Pfoertsch & Michi 2006; Roberts & Merrilees 2007; Aspara & Tikanen, 2008).
This position is supported by Baumgharth (2010), who affirms that the disparity of products, highly customised and often with short life-cycles, impedes a proper focus on product brands in industrial contexts.
Webster and Keller (2004, p. 397) concur that "...typical industrial brand is the company name", and "Some marketers also employ sub brands for individual product lines but seldom are these sub brands divorced from the company brand". This is in contrast, they say, to consumer brands, whose most effective drivers, in a market dominated by standardised products and mass media in the communication strategy, are the product and the message. In

sum, it is more likely that an industrial customer differentiates potential suppliers according to company attributes – i.e. reputation, financial solidity - considering the quality of product as a given. This attention to the producer company is much less relevant to end consumers (Webster and Keller, 2004).
Consistently, research has confirmed that almost one company out of three (31%) focuses on a corporate brand strategy and almost one out of two (47%) (Richter, 2007 – cited by Baumgharth 2010) combines the corporate brand strategy with other levels in the branding hierarchy. Consequently, Kuhn et al.(2008), enumerating the main differences between consumer and industrial brand equity evaluations, consider measuring the value of the corporate/manufacturer brand more relevant than assessing that of individual products or product lines.

A second type of difference between industrial and consumer markets that has also been found to affect branding strategy relates to the buyers, in particular given differences between organizational and individual consumer buying behaviour (characteristics of the buyers and differences in buying processes), (Baumgarth 2010, Glynn 2012). In contrast with consumer end-users, B2B buyers are profit-motivated and budget constrained (Webster & Keller, 2004); buying acts of these actors seem rather rational and based on criteria such as quality, service quality and price, whilst feelings and imagery such as personality traits are not relevant (Kuhn et al., 2008).
A direct effect on branding is that the brand itself is less significant in organisational purchase decisions than in consumers' ones (Bendixen et al., 2004; Zablah et al., 2010) with variations noticed across product categories (Lee et al., 2008) and across buyers, differently relying on brand to make their choices (Mudambi, 2002).
Moreover, it was suggested that brand associations in B2B are predominantly focused on functional qualities rather than on personality traits and values (Abratt, 1986; Aaker, 1991; Mudambi et al., 1997; Bendixen et al., 2004 ; Kuhn et al., 2008; Backhaus, Steiner and Lügger, 2011) and, in comparison to consumer markets, brand serve more as a risk-reducer than as a tool of self-expression (Mudambi, 2002). In spite of the fact that recent research signals the increasing relevance of emotional aspects in B2B brands (Lynch & de Chernatony, 2004), the relative importance of the former in building brand value remains nonetheless higher (Bendixen et al., 2004).

A third type of diversity between B2B and consumer contexts occurs in the type of relationships engaged with customers and stakeholders in general. B2B relationships are more personal, transparent (Baumgarth 2010) and long term oriented if compared with those developed in B2C frameworks, frequently transaction oriented (Leek and Christodoulides, 2012). Because the industrial buyer is often embedded as a node in a complex network of interactions, B2B relations are not simply dyadic as those developed in the interactions between suppliers and customers, but multidimensional (Glynn 2012).
Considering the above multi stakeholder lenses have been adopted to study industrial brands (Leek and Christodoulides, 2012) and the most effective drivers of strong B2B brands have been found in the personal communication and interaction skills of employees directly in relationship with customers (Andersen & Kumar, 2006; Lynch & de Chernatony, 2007; Jensen & Klastrup, 2008). The brand equity concept developed in industrial contexts has thus been contrasted to that of more traditional consumer brands, and considered as being wider, including a relational network i.e. co-branding and alliances (Srivastava et al., 1998; Ancarani and Shankar, 2003; Bengtsson and Per Servais, 2005; Brodie et al., 2006), channel and reseller equity (Anderson and Narus, 2004). The "relationship-centred" approach has been found especially relevant for SME companies, where the brand building process

emerges from the collaboration of a focal network of actors no longer considered as external targets (Mäläskäa, Saraniemib and Juntunenc, 2011). Also the importance of the internal dissemination of brand orientation has been highlighted, as it helps the firm in consolidating its unique, albeit heterogeneous, corporate image (Webster and Keller, 2004; Baumgarth, 2010; Kuhn et al., 2008).

Moreover, the divergences mentioned above are reflected in the organisational structure, with responsibility for the handling of brand image inside the organisation attributed to the whole company in a B2B firm, as compared to a single department, as normally happens in B2C companies.

Finally, other aspects distinguishing B2B branding from consumer branding have also been found in the portfolio management strategies, with industrial portfolios tending to be wider due to company acquisitions, against a tendency toward rationalisation in consumer brand portfolios (Mudambi 2002).

Conforming *B2B brands to B2C brands: B2B as* ***B2C/B2C +***

The set of research proposals exposed in the previous paragraph often come alongside another recurrent question in the background of the extant research: questioning whether B2C frameworks can be relevant to industrial buying or if they need to be *adjusted* (Kuhn et al., 2008).

Ample premises for this approach can be found in the works from Webster and Keller (2004) and Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006), sharing the assumption that at the base of marketing there are always the same rules, whatever the context. Steps such as segmentation, targeting and positioning cannot be ignored, but such changes are basically related to practices.

In so doing, the authors trace some specific points that must be focused when managing an industrial brand, such as the brand architecture and the corporate level brand, a careful bottom-up involvement of internal staff and the usage of interactive communication instruments.

As a consequence of this premise, referring to the applicability of concepts across different contexts, some of the studies on B2B branding simply apply theory and models originated in consumer contexts to the industrial one. For instance, Glynn (2011), to capture the value creation of industrial brands, applies the brand value chain model from Keller and Lehman (2003). Similarly traditional brand equity models such as BAV® (Rozin & Magnusson, 2003; Zaichkowsky et al., 2010), Aaker's four blocks model (Beidenbach and Marrell, 2010; Biedenbach et al., 2011) or Keller's pyramidal model (Davis et al., 2009) are applied to assess the brand health of industrial companies.

Finally, Ying-Chan et al. (2008), in a study on how brand extensions from B2C to B2B are evaluated by customers, have applied the "regular B2C brand extension model" (p.410).

Always stemming from the B2C models, certain authors propose to adapt them to the B2B context, as basic differences cannot be ignored, but must be taken into account.

In this way, an adaptation of Keller's brand equity pyramid model (2003) is proposed by Khun (2008). The author suggests that it must be used particularly to evaluate the corporate brand equity and that the relevance of sub dimensions in its constituting blocks is different. For instance some brand elements such as product slogans are less important to organisational buyers while user profiles, purchase and usage situations and credibility are more relevant than elements suggested by Keller. Emotions, which all occupy the right-hand side of the CBBE model, are seen as irrelevant while the human component (company representatives) plays a key role in industrial brand equity.

Analogously, Mitchel et al. (2001) propose a revised version of Aaker's brand equity model (1991) that specifies the sources of the five facets of brand equity in an industrial context. The model highlights the relevance of brand name and sponsorship policies, of internal resources and customer focused relationships in determining industrial brand equity.
Beverland et al. (2007), to examine the process of brand building of five different global industrial brands, verify the applicability of the Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) brand leadership framework to the B2B area. They found that the four components of the framework also apply to an industrial context. However, a substantial difference from consumer market contexts is that capabilities are not developed to match market requirements, but that industrial brands build their identity and positioning on their own capabilities.
From verifying the transferability of the original model to the B2B agribusiness companies, they come to define a new brand identity model for industrial brands, based on five capabilities (relational support, coordination network players, leveraging brand architecture, adding value and quantifying the intangible) and leveraging five organizational level supporting capabilities (entrepreneurial, reflexive, innovative, brand supportive, dominant logic and executional capabilities).
Finally, in the case of the pinwheel model of consumer value developed by Mudambi et al. (1997) consumer branding is the "logical starting point" (p. 435). The result, however, is that "consumer branding strategies are not directly transferable to industrial markets" (p. 445) and the model sets four basic dimensions of performance that influence customer's value perception in conjunction with price: product, distribution (ordering and delivery) services, support services, and company involves both tangible and intangible aspects.

Challenging *B2C brands*
A third research stance can also be identified in the literature that we could name as "challenging". What characterizes these studies is the fact that they are more inductive than deductive in their approach, and thus more oriented to building specific industrial branding theory models. However the starting point for defining the research object is always linked to concepts and properties typical of consumer markets.
Among this group of research work we can cite the studies that elaborate specific scales to measure brand identity (Coleman et al., 2011), brand personality (Herbst et al., 2011) and brand equity (van Riel et al., 2005) in an industrial context.
The interest is in developing specific instruments to make concepts framed in consumer marketing available and measurable also in an industrial context.

The same intent underpins those works aiming to establish whether phenomena already verified in a consumer context are also relevant for industrial branding. These studies - basically stemming from the different nature of the organizational buying process -verify which elements differently influence purchase decisions. Some results show that brand sensitivity in an industrial context is related to risk reduction (Brown et al. 2011), that co-branding can be a valuable strategy in the same way as for consumer brands (Bengtsson et Servais, 2005), that emotions can be relevant, as happens in consumer purchasing choices (Leek &Christodoulides, 2012; Lynch & De Chernatony, 2004) while COO is not so relevant as it is to consumers (Chen et al., 2011). Moreover, brand effects on financial markets are also demonstrated to exist in a B2B context (Ohnemus, 2009).

New concepts are also developed. Baumgarth and Schmidt (2010) propose, for example, the new construct of "internal brand equity" by analogy with the classical concept of an externally-located "brand equity", measuring the incremental effect of branding on employee behaviour. Another brand concept specifically elaborated in this context is that of "branding

pool" provided by Mäläskä et al. (2011) to refer to "the dynamic group of independent network actors that perform direct branding activities" (p. 1147).
Other challenging articles include those proposing to apply other existing theoretical frameworks, such as the resource based view (Srivastava 1998), Service-Dominant logic (Ballantyne & Aitken, 2007) and Brand orientation (Baumgarth, 2010) to get a deeper understanding of industrial branding.

To sum up, in the extant literature two main perspectives can be identified, not necessarily mutually exclusive and sometimes overlapping:

- the first one which focuses on the main differences between brand practices in industrial and consumer contexts, based on product, buyers and market differences;
- the second one aimed at confronting industrial branding issues referring to consumer branding, either by adapting traditional consumer brand theories and models or rebuilding concepts and measurement criteria for the B2B specific context.

The main results from these studies are thus essentially comparative ones, and relate to emphasis on how to use *different* industrial branding approaches as compared to consumer approaches, in terms of hierarchy - focusing mainly on corporate brand - in terms of brand meaning, leveraging on performances and internal resources for positioning purposes and in terms of brand relationships, interpreting the brand as a relational platform that not only is represented by people internal to the company (employees) but also from the network of stakeholders that can contribute to its development.
They provide a deeper understanding about brand relevance in organizational purchasing situations and about specific managerial tools such as brand equity, brand identity and brand personality measures, specifically developed for industrial contexts. They cover issues relating not only to monitoring of brands in the market, but also to managerial tools for developing valuable brands in a B2B context.

DISENTANGLING B2B BRAND DISCOURSE FROM B2C COMPARISONS

Although the differences and research performed so far have been the bearer of valuable insight and improved understanding about B2B branding specificities, the premises for distinguishing between the two different visions of the two markets, the B2B and the B2C one, are in many cases no longer distinctly identifiable (Wind 2006). The distinction between B2B and B2C markets and marketing is not always clear and simple, as different authors (Fern & Brown, 1984; Wind, 2006; Cova & Salle, 2008) have argued lately.
Clear lines of demarcation seem blurred, as a consequence of many changes having occurred in the market place (Wind, 2006):

- firstly, the business models of B2B and B2C companies are today becoming increasingly more similar due – for example - to the digitalisation of the economy by means of internet, due to the increasing development of small industrial businesses that have behavioural patterns closer to those of single consumers, and due to media availability and use that has also made similar promotional strategies increasingly possible;
- secondly, supply chains are no longer distinct because of networking and outsourcing practises;
- thirdly, the knowledge society makes it more difficult to distinguish between product, service and customer experience levels;

- finally, relations between consumers and companies are increasingly similar to those between companies, with – for example - consumers co-creating with the company, buying in groups and even competing with companies and organising themselves in communities (Cova and Salle, 2008; Cova and White, 2010).
In line with these changes, most brands today do not exclusively focus on B2C or B2B markets, but they simultaneously target both companies and consumers, and sometimes in a sequential manner with B2B2C approaches, for example.

A first example, already cited in marketing literature as an instance of "ingredient branding" is that of Intel®, the micro-processor manufacturer, with direct contact with OEM customers but at the same time TV advertisements to end-users. Consistently with industrial branding guidance, the corporate brand is highly leveraged and endorses all the product brands. It is built on abstract, innovation and performance based values and is graded as the seventh most valuable brand in the 2011 Interbrand ranking.
The Intel® brand can indeed be defined as a "B2B2C brand" (Beuk et al., 2007) because it offers a component or service to the OEM but the user of the final product is the OEM's customer. Going beyond this, the end-user will also be considered as a customer in the case of micro-chip upgrade. Thus, the aim of the branding strategy in this case is to develop and leverage value along the supply chain, making Intel® a hybrid case where B2B and B2C dimensions coexist and indeed are interdependent.
The managerial issues, then, could be not only related to ways of co-branding with the OEM on final products (Luczak et al., 2007; Erevelles et al., 2008) but also to mutually complementing the two "souls" of the same brand, integrating the two different sets of findings and indications so far elaborated for brands solely operating in one of the two contexts.
In this perspective, a more articulated case is that of L'Oreal, the French brand for cosmetics and beauty. The brand, similarly to Intel® , addresses different customer targets longitudinally down the supply chain: retailers as well as final consumers. However, L'Oreal has organizational customers not only along the chain but also, horizontally, developing specific lines of products for beauty professionals.
Different is the case of BOSCH®, supplier of technology and services both to consumers, through household electrical appliances and electric tools, and to companies, basically in the automotive industry and industrial technology. As for L'Oreal, BOSCH® leverages its brand also in its trade marketing activities towards retailers.
Comparing the cases of L'Oreal and BOSCH® however, although both the companies actually simultaneously apply the same brand to develop value in their B2B and B2C relations, their dynamics over time are different.
While L'Oreal was historically created as, simultaneously from the very outset, a B2B and B2C brand, addressing its products from the very beginning both to the professional hairdressers and consumers, BOSCH® only entered the consumer market after more than 40 years of activity, with the design and commercialization of power drills, and has established its presence in this second market only relatively recently.

All these cases, corroborating the fact that real brands cannot be easily distinguished as exclusively "industrial" or "consumer", give rise to many questions, basically because the literature described above is limited to comparing and adapting, and/or contesting/refuting the applicability of branding strategies on one or the other types of market.
In other words a gap in the literature would seem to exist, as no specific research and recommendations have been provided for brands covering at the same time the two areas. More research in our view is required relative to simultaneous occurrence of markets, market

merging processes, and associated simultaneous or progressive interfacing of B2B and B2C brands and branding practices.
Recent developments in the literature partially intersecting the theme we suggest to develop also confirm the need for a deeper understanding and provide some possible directions on how to approach the issues related to the B2B and B2C coexistence.

One aspect is that marketing is indicated as the function with a central coordinating role, stimulating cross-functional collaboration/integration and shared market knowledge, in response to the necessity for companies of integrating demand and supply chains to deliver superior customer value (Esper et al., 2010; Juttner et al., 2007; Rainbird, 2004). This view is consistent with recent works (Urde et al., 2011) identifying the possibility of a synergistic combinations between inside-out brand oriented approaches and outside-in market oriented strategic approaches.
In the light of these considerations it is plausible to think about branding as a key activity at the crossing of many functions and actors in the value chain, drawing up also industrial and consumer realms.
Few pieces have already attempted at investigating brand management spanning across different levels of the value chain (Erevelles et al., 2008; Kapferer, 2008; Pfoertsch and Chen, 2011). However, these researches have mostly adopted a supplier perspective, limiting their interest to definite dyadic relations (e.g. the supplier-manufacturer relationship in the case of an ingredient branding or the supplier-distributor relationship in the case of B2B2C branding) and mainly concentrating on the reasons and the effects of targeting at once intermediate and final actors in the chain.
The aim of our proposal of further exploring this emerging kind of branding is to go one step further, from recognising the existence and necessity for hybrid industrial-consumer branding, to investigating its complexities.

A second theoretic aspect, connected with the first and supporting our proposal, is the increasing recognition that the value chain concept is often insufficient to represent the complexity of networks of boundary spanning activities that shape the customer value (Piercy, 2009). Congruently with this vision, the brand is defined as a “co-created” entity, that needs the contribution of experiences/ relations with other actors to be sustained along the time and whose value is created through interaction with various network actors (Ballantyne & Aitken, 2007; Jones, 2005; Lemmetyinen and Go, 2010; Louro & Cunha, 2001; Mertz et al., 2009).
These studies have provided interesting insights, bringing to our attention the fact that in the “stakeholder-focus brand era” (Mertz et al., 2009) targets are at the same time brand actors and that a multiplicity of different entities and meanings can coexist in the same “brand-sphere”.
Our focus on B2B and B2C interface in the context of the same brand, aims to further develop in this direction, specifically delving into the details of practices, opportunities and concerns linked to the presence of both industrial and consumer actors, as the focal participants in building brand networks.

PRELIMINARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS and AGENDA

In the light of the above discussion and conclusions, there is need for future research to focus on an understanding the interface between B2B and B2C relative to simultaneous markets and brands and branding theory and practice .
Some specific areas of understanding are discussed below.

a. A first group of underlying questions relates to the identification and classification of practices and situations interested by the branding interface between B2B and B2C markets.
From our examples alone, if we look at the actors involved in the supply chain, we could envisage at least three different kinds of simultaneity from a research perspective:

I) **Vertical** simultaneity, when the brand concerns at the same time industrial intermediaries and consumers down (up or down, potentially) its supply chain. It can occurs through an “ingredient brand” strategy but also integrating “trade marketing” and “consumer marketing” branding actions (Fig. 2 - Appendix);
II) **Horizontal** simultaneity, when direct customers of the brand are at the same time represented by end-user consumers and organizations (Fig. 3 - Appendix).
III) **Combined horizontal *and* longitudinal simultaneity**, when the previous points occur conjointly (Fig. 4 - Appendix).;

This leads on to a further “category” of interest, which is in fact rather that of market merging dynamics than a category in its own right i.e.

IV) **Dynamics of simultaneity**, with the brand initially targeting only one type of customer market then extending its business also to the other type of customers (Fig. 5 - Appendix).

Moreover, if we look at the products/services interested, the examples cited suggest that reasons and modalities of this interface can be various.
Intel is a case of intertwined hybridization between B2B and B2C as the same product can provide a different type of value at many levels of the chain.
For Bosch, the coexistence in two markets is realised through the definition of two parallel different realms, as the company has entered consumer and industrial markets with different products, keeping distinct the two offerings.
The case of L'Oreal is yet different because, even through distinct lines of products, it serves in the same category and at the same time both professional and end-users customers.

b. A second group of issues relates to the effects of the interface of industrial and consumer contexts in terms of brand meanings and experience management.
Dealing with different customers, indeed, that differ with respect to their co-creative relationship with the focal brand, can determine multiple intra-brand segments with different brand knowledge (Borghini & Cova, 2006; Koll & von Wallpach, 2009).
Differences can also involve actors traditionally defined as internal to the organization, i.e. managers, as suggested by de Chernatony (2009).
This would imply the recognition and management of a plurality of meanings that merge in the same “morphing brand” (Berthon et al. 2009, Kates & Goh 2003).
However, the brand polisemy should be monitored both at a general/conceptual level as well as at a contextualised level.
According to De Chernatony (2002), indeed, we can distinguish between a “context independent” concept of brand and its enactment, necessarily contextualised, that means distinguishing between values and promised experienced (brand concept) on the one hand, and staff behaviours and system supporting interaction with stakeholders (brand enactment), on the other. According to this distinction, then, one should question how the brand concept still remains the same and perhaps only its enactment changes across the B2B and B2C markets.
In other words, some questions to address would be:

How different customers, industrial vs. consumer, contribute to build brand meanings?
How to orchestrate these different brand meanings?
How to make the brand concept interacting with specific enactments/experiences?

c. Thirdly, as capabilities and internal resources have been focused as critical in supporting and characterising branding strategies (Beverland et al., 2007) and allowing organizations to deliver on their brand promise (cf: Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Yakimova & Beverland, 2005), it would be interesting to evaluate, from an organisational point of view, how brand management responsibilities are structured and how organisational interfaces support the concurrent interaction with industrial and consumer markets.
If the integration between chains and the interface between functions is oriented to create a superior customer value (Esper et al., 2010; Juttner et al., 2007; Rainbird, 2004), then, how to coordinate and direct this effort when customers assume multiple aspects?

With a view to providing answers to these sets of questions we intend to implement a qualitative exploratory study involving a sample of companies operating in the Italian and French market in different industries (energy, automotive, telecommunications, banking). The companies all represent “hybrid” cases of B2B and B2C coexistence, as they operate at the same time in consumer and industrial markets, giving us the possibility to investigate overlapping of the different kinds mentioned earlier.
A preliminary data collection phase targets collection and analysis of secondary data regarding the history and dynamics of the related corporate brands and the branding programmes of these companies over the last ten to fifteen years.
Following this first step, in-depth interviews will be performed with the brand manager/s in each company, aiming at understanding how the two “souls” of the corporate brand have evolved, are managed and to what degree and how they “interface” with one another..

Results from this study would fill the gap we have found in literature, shedding light on integrative simultaneous B2B B2C branding interactions rather than “confronting/adapting” approaches.
The research should thus contribute to the existing literature, pinpointing the opportunity/risks of cross-fertilisation between B2B and B2C marketing, with possible application of the “insights” of one area to the other one (Wind, 2006, Fern & Brown, 1984).

APPENDIX

	2011	2010	2009
1	Coca-Cola	Coca-Cola	Coca-Cola
2	IBM	IBM	IBM
3	Microsoft	Microsoft	Microsoft
4	Google	Google	GE
5	GE	GE	Nokia
6	McDonald's	McDonald's	McDonald's
7	Intel	Intel	Google
8	Apple	Nokia	Toyota
9	Disney	Disney	Intel
10	Hewlett-Packard	Hewlett-Packard	Disney

Fig. 1 Interbrand Top Ten positions from 2009 to 2011.

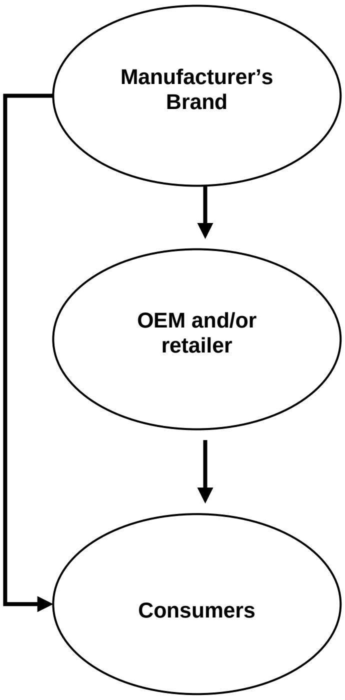

Fig. 2 Vertical simultaneity

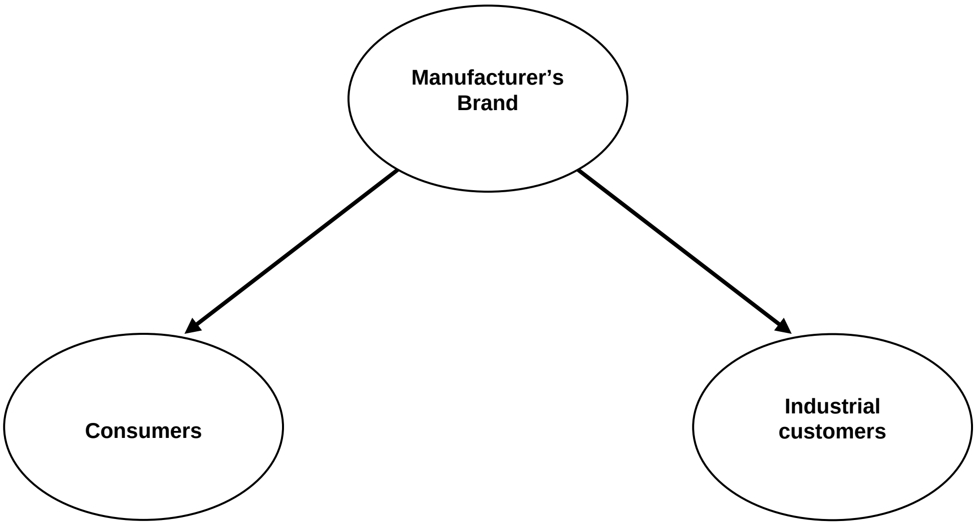

Fig. 3 Horizontal simultaneity

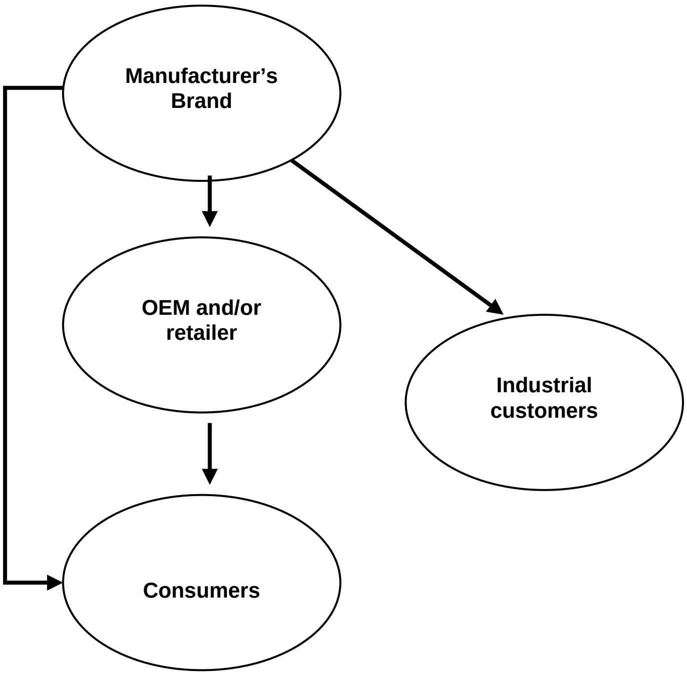

Fig. 4 Combined horizontal *and* longitudinal simultaneity

Fig. 5 Dynamics of simultaneity

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