DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BRAND WORLDS IN B2C AND B2B

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ABSTRACT

Brand worlds, permanent physical branded locations, are increasingly popular venues used by marketers on consumer markets to build relationships with their customers, based on the direct, personal interactions and the extraordinary experiences they provide. Such brand museums, showrooms, or flagship stores also exist in B2B marketing practice, but have only received limited academic attention. Differences between the context of B2C and B2B markets raise the question of how and whether B2B brand worlds differ from their B2C counterparts. We build on a sample of 37 expert interviews, comprising the perspectives of all relevant stakeholders: 18 interviews with 17 different operating companies, 14 interviews with business visitors from 13 companies, and five interviews with exhibition designers. Although similar and building on the same principles, we find that B2B brand worlds also differ substantially from their B2C equivalents in several dimensions. B2B companies focus more on providing live product experiences, in order to explain often complex products, and to create awareness for the whole breadth and depth of their product portfolio in their brand worlds. B2B visitors expect a visit to support them in their own business activities. Furthermore, the visits, experiences, and interactions in B2B brand worlds are more customized, based on a strong personal interaction with the respective contact persons, sales agents or guides. Our research highlights the differences between B2C and B2B brand worlds as three-dimensional 'business cards', where relationships are initiated and built.

KEYWORDS

brand worlds, interaction, relationship, B2B, experiential marketing, branding, experience

Extended Abstract

INTRODUCTION

The importance of relationships on business markets and the notion that interactions between actors are at the core of business relationships has been highlighted in IMP research. (Håkansson *et al.*, 2009; Håkansson and Snehota, 1995). These interactions can be analyzed on various levels, such as on the organizational level, or on a more micro level by looking at individual processes that can involve organizational units, single products, individuals, or certain types of activities, such as business meetings (Guercini *et al.*, 2014).

In consumer research, the facet of the environment or servicescape and its influence on the behavior, interaction and relationship building between actors (i.e. consumers and a company) has been widely researched (Baker *et al.*, 2002; Bitner, 1992). Building on this B2C research, specific instruments of experiential marketing and live communication, namely permanent, physical branded locations such as flagship stores, brand stores, brand lands, brand museums, or customer experience centers, subsumed under the term brand worlds, are increasingly popular venues used by B2C companies (Kozinets *et al.*, 2002). As "apexes of branding" (Dolbec and Chebat, 2013, p. 460), they are not only used to communicate the brands, but also to directly and personally interact with consumers, to provide them with extraordinary experiences, and eventually to build relationships with them (Dolbec and Chebat, 2013; Kozinets *et al.*, 2002; Moore *et al.*, 2010). These venues have also been mentioned as a possibility for B2B companies to increase close rates, due to the relationships developed there (Gilmore and Pine, 2002), and industrial marketing practitioners have already discovered the potential of such instruments for their own organizations. In fact, B2B brand worlds can be found all over the world, such as for example the Caterpillar Visitors Center or the Customer Experience Centers of General Electric and Honeywell Process Solutions in the US, the Innovation Center of logistics provider DHL or the Stahlwelt of Austrian steel producer Voestalpine in Europe, or the Mitsubishi Minatomirai Industrial Museum in Asia. But in contrast to their B2C counterparts, these physical environments and instruments of experiential marketing in industrial markets, and how they influence behaviors, interactions and relationships, have not attracted academic attention yet. Since researchers are advised to be cautious with the mere transfer of knowledge, theories, and frameworks from B2C to B2B, and instead to take into account the unique characteristics of B2B markets for the development of a sound B2B theory (Guzmán *et al.*, 2012; Mudambi, 2002; Seyedghorban *et al.*, 2016; Webster and Keller, 2004), one first needs to understand the nature of B2B brand worlds compared to their B2C counterparts in order to further investigate how business interactions and relationships might be influenced by a visit to such B2B brand worlds. Against this background, the purpose of this paper is to identify potential differences between B2C and B2B brand worlds.

The remainder of this manuscript is structured as follows. To provide the context for this study, we first describe brand worlds and their nature in B2C, before we elaborate briefly on the core differences between consumer and business markets. Next, we describe our exploratory research approach, and present an overview of our comprehensive, multi-perspective sample. Subsequently, we present our results and draw a conclusion.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

BRAND WORLDS

The efforts of brandscaping – creating physical locations based on brands – are amongst the strongest means in creating brand experiences and relationships with a brand in B2C, based on emotions and a non-rational approach (Riewoldt, 2002). Some examples for such locations in the consumer marketing area are the Disney Worlds, the Apple flagship stores, or the World of Coca-Cola in Atlanta, Georgia. They follow the conviction that "the glamour and power of the brand are the key weapons in the battle for target groups and customers. By staging the brand experience in flagship stores, shop designs or entire theme parks, companies communicate the image of the brand and imprint a characteristic atmosphere on the consumer consciousness" (Riewoldt, 2002, p. 8). In contrast to most classical advertising instruments, the brand becomes visible, actually tangible in such locations, and therefore a strong, real, memorable customer experience, and a relationship between the brand and the customer is created (Manlow and Nobbs, 2013; Webb, 2012). The live experience of taking a trip to, for example, a brand park, and actually visiting the brand becomes part of one's own life and has a higher recollective value than simple advertising or conventional PR (Mikunda, 2004). Simply witnessing a product's production in a mere plant tour can lead to higher brand loyalty and a better relationship to the brand, based on the identification with the product, the familiarity with the production process, and the interaction with employees (Mitchell and Orwig, 2002).

Flagship stores are titled the "apex of branding" because of their branding power (Dolbec and Chebat, 2013, p. 460). Similar venues have been mentioned and investigated in consumer-centric academic literature, such as customer experience places, brand lands, brand museums, brandscapes, flagship stores etc. (Borghini *et al.*, 2009; Diamond *et al.*, 2009; Gilmore and Pine, 2002; Hollenbeck *et al.*, 2008; Joy *et al.*, 2014; Kozinets *et al.*, 2002; Sherry *et al.*, 2016; e. g. Sherry, Jr., 1998). We use the term 'brand worlds' as an umbrella term for such permanent branded locations that are an instrument of brand communication and experiential marketing. These brand worlds have been subject to a limited amount of academic research in the B2C environment already. For example, the goals of different types of brand worlds in various industries have been investigated, which are, to summarize, related to the image of the brand, the presentation, staging and testing of products, merchandising goals, knowledge transfer, and customer relationship goals (Borghini *et al.*, 2009; Diamond *et al.*, 2009; Gilmore and Pine, 2002; Hollenbeck *et al.*, 2008; Joy *et al.*, 2014; Kozinets *et al.*, 2002; Sherry *et al.*, 2016; e. g. Sherry, Jr., 1998). In two synoptical works, several main goals that operating companies pursue with their brand worlds in B2C with different priorities were identified (Kirchgeorg *et al.*, 2012; Zentes *et al.*, 2014): Goals with the highest priority are brand experience, brand- and product presence, the determination of the own position in the competitive environment, as well as to improve, strengthen, and foster the own brand image. Medium priority goals are information, raising brand awareness, internal communication goals, the management and activation of existing customer relationships, and building trust. Lower priority goals encompass the integration of customers into business processes (e. g. co-creation), engaging with potential new customers, and generating sales turnover.

B2C visitors' motivations, expectations and demands have also been subject to investigation. When they visit brand worlds, they want to experience entertainment, flow, get information about the products and the brand, relax, be distracted and escape from their day-to-day live, experience community with other visitors, and feel well and appreciated by the operating company (Kirchgeorg *et al.*, 2012; Opaschowski, 2000; Zentes *et al.*, 2014).

Differences between B2C and B2B Markets

Core differences of B2B markets compared to B2C comprise the nature of demand (derivative vs. primary); more technical and quantifiable value propositions; a small number of customers, but large-unit transactions; complex buying processes involving buying centers and thus group dynamics, resulting in more rational discourse and decision-making; the emphasis on corporate rather than product branding; a culture driven by manufacturing and technology, which is related to the complexity of industrial products; and the more important role of relationships, interpersonal communication or personal interaction and selling (Brown *et al.*, 2007; Brown *et al.*, 2012; Grewal *et al.*, 1998; Kotler *et al.*, 2006; Lilien, 2016; Webster and Keller, 2004; Zablah *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, B2B buying decisions are influenced by the buying situation

(e.g. Kotler *et al.*, 2006), a higher perceived risk, and the more economic and performance type of risk (Brown *et al.*, 2007). These differences have effects on marketing communications, which are proposed to be more technical and pedagogical, but also more interactive and personal, and thus also on the branding efforts, interaction between actors and relationship-building on business markets (Brown *et al.*, 2007).
After about 40 years of research, B2B branding has evolved from irrelevance towards being important for business marketing practice, and an established field of study (Gordon *et al.*, 1993; Interbrand, 2016; Saunders and Watt, 1979; Seyedghorban *et al.*, 2016; Shipley and Howard, 1993; Sinclair and Seward, 1988; Webster and Keller, 2004). Nowadays, "branding is just as relevant in B2B as it is in B2C" (Kotler *et al.*, 2006, p. 12). When it comes to the question of how a B2B brand can be built and communicated, the brand is conceptualized as a holistic and interactive experience, as in B2C, which highlights the importance of interaction in brand building (Beverland *et al.*, 2007; Biedenbach and Marell, 2010; Kotler *et al.*, 2006; Lynch and Chernatony, 2004). Therefore, despite the specific importance of the salesperson and personal interaction (Lynch and Chernatony, 2007), all customer touchpoints and elements of the marketing mix contribute to brand equity dimensions, as they do in B2C: They create awareness of the brand, link desired associations to the brand image, evoke emotions or judgements of quality, and facilitate a stronger customer-brand relationship (Biedenbach and Marell, 2010; Kotler *et al.*, 2006).

The different, professional setting outlined here suggests, that several differences might also arise between brand worlds in B2C and B2B regarding several aspects, such as for example the goals of operating companies, the motivation and expectations of visitors, or the general setup and design. Although the possibility for B2B companies to create flagship venues, where customer visits can evolve into engaging branded experiences and lead to a strong relationship between the actors, has also been mentioned in the literature (Gilmore and Pine, 2002), and the emergence of B2B brand worlds in business practice, they have not so far attracted the attention of academia. To address this gap and to build the foundation for a deeper understanding of the value and contribution of B2B brand worlds to business relationships, we investigate brand worlds in the industrial marketing context and whether and how they differ from their B2C counterparts.

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

Given the exploratory nature of our research question, we applied a qualitative research approach using semi-standardized expert interviews to investigate the differences between brand worlds in B2C and B2B. This research method has previously proven purposeful in industrial marketing when there is scant or no existing information (Geiger, 2017; Keränen and Jalkala, 2013), and has been deemed appropriate for research in exploratory stages (Bogner *et al.*, 2009).
Although the interviews are qualitative and explorative in nature, prior theoretical knowledge about the concepts in the area of research is fundamental (Flick, 2009). This knowledge can then be used to develop interview guidelines, while the openly formulated questions leave room for the experts to fill with their specific knowledge (Mayer, 2012). Due to the lack of literature on brand worlds in B2B, we focused on the B2C literature on brand worlds (Borghini *et al.*, 2009; Diamond *et al.*, 2009; Gilmore and Pine, 2002; Hollenbeck *et al.*, 2008; Joy *et al.*, 2014; Kozinets *et al.*, 2002; Sherry *et al.*, 2016; Sherry, Jr., 1998). Based on this prior knowledge, we developed our interview guidelines, specifically targeting the characteristics of B2B brand worlds, also in comparison to their B2C counterparts.

To achieve a relevant and full understanding of brand worlds in business markets, we engaged with a comprehensive and unique, multi-perspective sample. Adding to the perspective of operating companies, we triangulated our findings with samples of business visitors and exhibition designers. In total, we base our research on 37 expert interviews with 44 informants. We carefully and thoroughly selected 17 companies from the industrial sector operating B2B brand worlds, covering different industries and sizes from the US, Germany and Austria. We identified them through extensive online research and visiting practitioner conferences on experiential marketing and brand worlds. All participating companies operate different, outstanding, and innovative types of brand worlds – including for example Showrooms, Factory Tours, Visitor Centers, Customer Experience Centers, Museums, and Innovation Centers. One company was interviewed twice with different interviewees, because the firm operates two separate brand worlds in different locations with different goals, giving us a total of 18 interviews with 17 companies. We were invited to conduct 15 interviews on-site at the brand worlds and conducted three interviews by phone. Each on-site interview was preceded by an extensive tour throughout the entire brand world of roughly 1.5 - 2 hours. Due to the fact that the interviews were conducted directly after these extensive tours given to us by the respondents themselves, we could directly dive into the topic and start with the depth interview without the need to get acquainted during the beginning of the interviews. A detailed description of our sample of operating companies is provided in Appendix A.
To triangulate and enrich our findings from the company sample, we also conducted 14 expert interviews with business visitors of B2B brand worlds. Informants are employed by 13 different companies in various industries and act in various buying center roles. They have visited at least one, some also several B2B brand worlds in a role as a business visitor recently before the interviews. 13 of the interviews were conducted via phone, one face-to-face. A full, detailed description of our sample of business visitors is provided in Appendix B.
To additionally triangulate and validate our findings with a third, supplementary point of view, we conducted five more interviews with exhibition designers in managing positions at different exhibition design or marketing and brand agencies. This sample was chosen based on the extensive experience of the respective informants in designing and implementing various types of brand worlds for numerous companies in both the consumer and business marketing area. Two interviews were conducted by phone, and three interviews were conducted at the informants' offices. A full overview of our sample of exhibition designers is provided in Appendix C.
The overall average net duration of our interviews was 47 minutes of deep and relevant discussion. The overall average phone call duration was 53 minutes. The overall average visit duration for on-site interviews at brand worlds or face-to-face interviews with visitors and exhibition designers was 2 hours and 58 minutes. We fully transcribed all interviews and presented them to the interviewees afterwards for validation. Where necessary, we translated the statements quoted in this study into English.

We analyzed the interview material using the method of qualitative content analysis. Specifically, we used the technique of inductive category formation to arrive directly at summarizing categories coming from the material itself, and not from theoretical considerations (Mayring, 2014). We used a qualitative data management and analysis program (MaxQDA) and handled all interview transcripts with ultimate care. Two coders analyzed all data material separately, following established procedures developed for the inductive category formation technique of qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2014). The process involves revising the emerging categories after approximately 50% of the content analysis, to arrive at a final category structure. We also investigated whether a revision of the initial coding definitions and instructions was necessary, but no issues arose during the coding process so changes were necessary. We subsequently merged the codings based on thorough discussions between coders regarding the interpretation and categorization of individual informant statements, as well as a peer debriefing with other researchers not involved in the study (Gorley and Gioia, 2004).

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN B2C AND B2B BRAND WORLDS

Our findings show that despite the similarities of B2C and B2B brand worlds, and he fact that they rely on the same principles of experiential marketing and live communication in both B2C and B2B, there are also substantial differences. Similarities also emerge because B2B brand worlds increasingly open up to the general public, e.g. for reasons of employer branding or PR. Nevertheless, there are major differences between brand worlds in the two contexts. These are based on their role as three-dimensional ‘business cards’. Furthermore, what leads to differences is their role and implementation in the B2B purchasing process to support the visitor in their business activities, by providing deep, tailored experiences and knowledge about products and processes based on personal interaction and emotions. Also, the differences regarding the goals of operating companies, and expectations and motivations of visitors the physical appearance and content of the B2B brand world. An overview of these differences is given in Appendix D.

The *goals* that operating companies in B2B and B2C contexts pursue are similar in general, but the focus is slightly different. While a major goal for B2C companies is to create brand experience, B2B companies focus more on product awareness and product experience, as well as brand awareness and associations. Additionally, the means that these goals are pursued with are different, which we will elaborate on later in this section.

A major difference between B2C and B2B brand worlds is the *motivation and expectation* of the visitor. In B2C, consumers are driven by and expect hedonic aspects, visits take place fully unrelated to specific purchase intentions, and are based completely on the own intention to visit. In contrary, business visitors to B2B brand worlds are motivated by and expect more utilitarian aspects. Their visits are usually related to specific purchasing intentions or an already existing customer-brand relationship, in the process of which they are invited by the operating company to a company visit. In fact, they often do not visit the company to ‘visit the brand world’, but to conduct their general business activities, such as meetings, workshops, negotiations, audits, relationship maintenance, or trainings. The B2B brand world is then rather used by the operating company as a ‘business card’, a tool where the company presents itself at a glance, or as a complementary instrument to provide the visitor with either an additional experience to present a positive, credible image, or as an extraordinary and stimulating location in which, by the provision of additional, unique information, mutual value is created and where these business activities take place and the relationship is deepened further.

The overall *experiential value* that visitors derive from B2C and B2B brand worlds is also similar in general, but the focus is different, largely also due to the different motivation of the visit. While private visitors to B2C brand worlds derive stronger emotional and hedonic value from the visit, the focus of business visitors to B2B brand worlds is more on learning, epistemic and knowledge value, as well as professional value dimensions, due to the embedding of the visit in the overall B2B customer journey.

Also, due to the more influential role of *personal interaction* and more complex products and services in B2B, B2B brand worlds are guided experiences, so that visitors are always accompanied by a contact person representing the brand, elaborating on the exhibits, and building a relationship with the visitor. This goes along with a much more customized visit, in which the specific areas of interest of the business visitor are discussed in much more detail and depth.

Regarding this content provided in the B2B brand world, the level of *information* in general is much more detailed, more technical, and focused on the explanation of technical specifics, whereas in their B2C counterparts, the information is more superficial, less technical and detailed. Nevertheless, by means of interactive exhibits and media, visitors to B2C brand worlds can go into deeper detail as well, so that all interests can be met.

While B2C brand worlds are focused on creating strong *emotions*, fascinating, entertaining and edutaining the visitor, B2B brand worlds are not necessarily less emotional, but more serious. They try to evoke different kinds of emotions, such as trust, credibility, authenticity and reassurance. Nevertheless, also edutaining contents play an increasing role according to our respondents.

The experience created in B2C brand worlds is based on intense, impressive, and ludic *orchestration and staging* of the contents in the entire brand world. In B2B brand worlds in contrast, this staging and orchestration is done much subtler, and all staging has to serve the purpose of conveying the message of the content.

The importance of *product training* is also an important differentiation between B2C and B2B brand worlds. While product training only plays a minor role in B2C, it often is a crucial function in or even the reason for the B2B brand world visit, which then usually occupies a large amount of the brand world premises.

Factory tours, which are also often a part of the utilitarian visit to a B2B company and its brand world, only play a minor role in B2C brand worlds, since these are often also not located at production sites.

Another obvious difference between B2C and B2B brand worlds is the *number of visitors* per year. B2C brand worlds are in general much more highly frequented. The exception to the rule are brand worlds of B2B companies that are, intentionally or not, tourist attractions, which target at and also attract a large number of private visitors and charge entrance fees.

The *budget* is usually higher in B2C brand worlds. Again, exceptions are the just mentioned brand worlds turned tourist attractions of B2B companies, which target a private audience, or B2B brand worlds which are large in size.

Physically, both brand worlds of B2C and B2B companies can be rather large or small in *size*, which usually depends on the type and the size of the products, the level of awareness of the operating company in the general public or its industry, respectively, and the number of visitors that it aims to attract.

The *location* is a big success factor for some B2C brand worlds such as flagship stores (Moore and Doherty, 2007). This only plays a minor role in the context of B2B brand worlds, where the propensity of the potential visitor to travel to the brand world is higher as in B2C. Therefore, they are usually situated directly at the corporate headquarter or at important production or historical sites, where the 'genius loci' comes to bear. The exception to the rule in our sample is one gateway facility situated directly in the area of a customer cluster, in order to gain access to these customers.

CONCLUSION

Brand worlds as the apex of branding and an instrument of experiential marketing have made their way from the consumer area into business marketing practice. The extraordinary experiences and the direct, personal interaction that they provide also influence relationship-building on business markets (Gilmore and Pine, 2002). Given the different B2B context (Brown *et al.*, 2007), the direct transfer of theories, frameworks, and knowledge from B2C to B2B should be approached with caution. In order to understand the phenomenon of brand worlds in the B2B context, and to lay the foundation for further inquiries into their influence on interactions and relations on business markets, we investigated how these marketing instruments in the B2B context differ from their counterparts in B2C.

Our findings show that B2B brand worlds share several similarities with their B2C counterparts, and that they are using the same principles of experiential marketing, live communication, and branding in order to fulfill their goals and convey their messages. But based on the different priorities of operating companies regarding the goals, and the motivations and expectations of business visitors, also some major differences in Brand Worlds in B2B compared to B2C emerge. Our results highlight these differences that have to be taken into account for the design, implementation, and operation of brand worlds in B2B. Our research thus extends the existing knowledge on brand worlds in B2C.

An interesting area of future research arises in the investigation of the specific role of B2B brand worlds in the entire customer journey, and the relationships and interactions between actors along this journey in brand worlds on a micro level, since these relationships and interactions are at the core of business markets (Håkansson, 1982; Håkansson and Snehota, 1995). If one of the actors involved possesses a brand world, they often provide the inspiring and stimulating physical environment for a first personal meeting and interaction, and thus the foundation for a future relationship between the operating company and other actors on business markets. Based on environmental psychology literature, we expect the brand world's stimuli, atmospherics and servicescape to influence how these relationships and interactions are perceived (Baker *et al.*, 2002; Bitner, 1992; Kotler, 1973; Mehrabian and Russell, 1974).

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Appendix A: Company sample overview

Name	Position	Company	Headquarters	Industry	Sales turnover 2016	No. of employees 2016	Brand world location	Brand world description	Interview conducted	Interview duration (hh:mm:ss)
Anna	Program Manager	C-A	DE	Electronic Manufacturing Services	> 1 billion €	> 9,000	Corporate headquarters with production facility	Factory visit and product showroom with meeting rooms	On-site in DE	00:29:44
Alex	VP of Technology Americas						Production facility	Factory visit	On-site in US	00:53:14
Adam	Technical Program Manager									
Brian	Head of Factory Visits and Brand World	C-B	DE	Construction Chemistry	> 1 billion €	> 5,000	Corporate headquarters with production and training facility	Visitor- and information center with product showroom, museal parts and caféteria; Production facilities and training center at the same location	On-site in DE	00:29:47
Bill	Product Manager									
Cara	Marketing Communications Manager North America	C-C	CH	Electrical Equipment	> $ 35 billion	> 125,000	BU headquarters with training facility	Product showroom with meeting rooms and training rooms	On-site in US	00:41:38
Doug	Director Communications	C-D	US	Conglomerate (BU: Automation and Control)	> $ 35 billion (BU: > $ 2 billion)	> 125,000 (BU: N/A)	BU headquarters with training facility	Product showroom with meeting rooms; training center separated at the same location	On-site in US	00:36:02
Dana	Brand World Manager									
Eric	North America Product Marketing Manager	C-E	US	Conglomerate (BU: Energy)	> $ 100 billion (BU: > $ 3 billion)	> 325,000 (BU: 13,500)	BU headquarters with production facility	Product showroom with meeting rooms and training rooms; directly attached to production facilities	On-site in US	00:29:44
Erin	Brand World Manager									
Fanny	Head of Customer Engagement	C-F	DE	Logistics	> 50 billion €	> 450,000	Stand-alone facility, about 10mi / 16km distance to corporate headquarters	Stand-alone facility focusing on innovation; with product and innovation showcase, meeting and event rooms	Via phone	00:29:27
Gabby	Business Unit Senior Marketing Manager	C-G	US	Security (BU: Retail systems)	> $ 9 billion (BU: > $ 2 billion)	> 55,000 (BU: N/A)	Stand-alone facility, about 7mi / 10km distance to German headquarters	Stand-alone product showcase with meeting room in business complex dedicated to the industry	On-site in DE	00:56:22
Gary	Business Unit Product Manager Continental Europe									

BU = Business Unit; DE = Germany; CH = Switzerland; US = USA; AT = Austria; N/A = Information not available

Appendix A: Company sample overview (continued)

Name	Position	Company	Headquarters	Industry	Sales turnover 2016	No. of employees 2016	Brand world location	Brand world description	Interview conducted	Interview duration (hh:mm:ss)
Heather	Deputy Head of Customer Care	C-H	DE	Agricultural Technology	> 3 billion €	> 11,000	Corporate headquarters with production facility	Product showcase with museal parts, cinema and caféteria	On-site in DE	00:44:24
Ian	Head Internal Communications and Customer-Brand-Experience	C-I	US	Conglomerate	> $ 30 billion	> 85,000	German corporate headquarters with research facility	Lobby with product showcase and meeting rooms; separate area with technology showcase and meeting rooms focused on innovation, co-creation and collaboration	On-site in DE	00:33:14
Jade	Brand & Customer Communications Manager	C-J	DE	Conglomerate (BU: Elevators)	> $ 42 billion (BU: > $ 7 billion)	> 150,000 (BU: > 50,000)	Stand-alone facility, about 12mi / 20 km distance to production facility	Test and research facility with customer lobby, visitor platform, conference rooms and multi-media-room	Via phone	00:34:59
Karl	Head of Events, Heritage and Sponsorship	C-K	DE	Engineering	> $ 10 billion (BU: > $ 3 billion)	> 55,000 (BU: > 14,000)	BU headquarters and production facility at the site of a ground-breaking invention	Museum and Event-Center, often in combination with factory tour	On-site in DE	00:55:48
Katy	Head of Brand World and Historical Archive									
Luke	Head Sales Promotions	C-L	DE	Vehicle manufacturing	> 40 million €	> 200	Corporate headquarters with production facility	Product exhibition with museal parts, meeting rooms, and caféteria	On-site in DE	00:37:31
Mike	CEO Brand World	C-M	AT	Steel	> 10 billion €	> 45,000	Corporate headquarters with production facility	Visitor center and exhibition with event rooms and caféteria; usually combined with plant tour	On-site in AT	00:36:58
Nina	Marketing Manager	C-N	DE	Machine and tool wholesale	> 200 million €	> 800	Corporate headquarters	Interactive product showcase and workshop	Via phone	00:48:54
Oliver	Global Communication and Marketing Manager	C-O	DE	Engineering	> 25 billion €	> 125.000	Corporate headquarters	Product exhibition with museal and futuristic parts, meeting rooms, training rooms, cinema, caféteria and lecture hall	On-site in DE	01:00:45
Paul	Brand Communication Manager	C-P	DE	Cleaning Industry	> 2 billion €	> 10.000	Corporate headquarters with production facility	Interactive product/application showcase with caféteria, meeting rooms, and museal aspects; additional separate corporate museum	On-site in DE	01:01:48
Peter	Visitor Manager									
Quentin	Head Brand Management and Marketing Communication	C-Q	DE	Engineering	> 2.5 billion €	> 10.000	Corporate headquarters with production facility	Interactive product and technology showcase with meeting rooms and caféteria, including separate historic and customer application section	On-site in DE	00:37:02

BU = Business Unit; DE = Germany; CH = Switzerland; US = USA; AT = Austria; N/A = Information not available

Appendix B: Visitor sample overview

Name	Buying Center Position	Industry experience (years)	Company	Headquarters	Industry	Sales turnover 2016	No. of employees 2016	Interview conducted	Interview duration (hh:mm:ss)
Amy	Buyer	> 5 years	V-A	DE	Sensors	> 300 million €	> 3.500	Via phone	01:03:03
Ashley	Buyer	< 5 years						Via phone	00:59:04
Betty	Influencer	> 5 years	V-B	NL	Consulting	> 600 million €	> 10.000	Via phone	00:42:24
Chris	Decider/Buyer	> 5 years	V-C	DE	Medical devices	> 1.5 billion €	> 10.000	Via phone	00:49:14
Diane	Decider/Buyer	> 10 years	V-D	NL	Trade, Maintenance DIY	< 50 million €	> 200	Via phone	00:38:50
Ed	Decider/Buyer	> 5 years	V-E	DE	Pharmaceutical, food, and chemical industry	N/A	< 10	Author's office	00:43:05
Frank	Influencer	> 15 years	V-F	DE	Engineering	> 50 billion €	> 300.000	Via phone	00:58:09
Greg	Decider/Buyer	> 5 years	V-G	DE	Vehicle manufacturing	> 150 billion €	> 250.000	Via phone	00:50:49
Harry	User	> 5 years	V-H	DE	Trade	< 10 million €	< 50	Via phone	00:55:56
Isaac	User	> 20 years	V-I	DE	Trade	< 5 million €	< 10	Via phone	00:52:02
James	User	> 5 years	V-J	DE	Trade	< 2 million €	< 5	Via phone	00:30:29
Ken	User	> 10 years	V-K	DE	Trade	< 5 million €	< 25	Via phone	00:47:21
Larry	User	> 30 years	V-L	DE	Trade	< 20 million €	< 200	Via phone	01:01:13
Matt	Decider/Buyer/ User	> 5 years	V-M	DE	Trade	< 1 million €	1 (self-employed)	Via phone	00:47:23

DE = Germany; NL = The Netherlands; N/A = Information not available

Appendix C: Exhibition designer sample overview

Name	Position	Profession	Industry experience (years)	Company	Headquarters	No. of employees 2016	Interview conducted	Interview duration (hh:mm:ss)
Alan	Partner, Head trade shows and brand worlds	Interior designer	> 10 years	D-A	DE	> 200	Via phone	01:09:30
Bob	Associate	Architect and industrial designer	> 10 years	D-B	DE	> 100	Informant's office	01:23:48
Craig	Creative Director	Communication designer	> 20 years	D-C	DE	> 50	Informant's office	00:45:22
David	Live Communication Consultant	Communication designer	> 5 years	D-D	DE	> 100	Informant's office	00:56:48
Earl	Managing Director	Exhibition designer	> 20 years	D-E	DE	> 5	Via phone	00:31:23

DE = Germany;

Appendix D: Differences between B2C and B2B brand worlds

Dimension	B2C	B2B
Goals of operating company	Goals are similar in general, but importance of goals is slightly different	
	Stronger focus on brand experience	Stronger focus on product awareness, product experience, brand awareness and brand associations
Motivation and expectations of the visit for the visitor	More hedonic, unrelated to buying situation, motivated only by the customer	More utilitarian, related to specific buying situation, invited visits; brand world visit rather addition to business activities than end in itself
Experiential value for the visitor	Value derived is similar in general, but importance is different	
	More hedonic and emotional value	More learning, epistemic and knowledge value, as well as professional value
Personal interaction with brand	Usually no strong personal interaction, except for service personnel or guides	Customized visits and experiences; strong personal interaction with contact person, sales agent or guide
Information	More superficial and not as technical	Deeper, more focus on detail and technical explanation
Emotion	Stronger focus on emotion, fascination, entertainment and edutainment	More serious and different type of emotionality. More focused on trust, credibility, and authenticity, but edutainment gains importance
Orchestration and staging	Strong, impressive, and ludic staging	Subtler, only to support the message
Product training	Plays a minor role	Plays a strong role, often reason for the visit, or training is conducted in the brand world facilities; often occupies a big portion of the size of the brand world premises
Factory tours	Sometimes attached	Often attached/incorporated
Number of visitors	Usually higher	Usually lower
Budget	Usually higher in relation to the size of the brand world	Usually lower in relation to the size of the brand world
Size	No difference, can be small and large in both contexts	
Location	Usually in highly frequented locations or at corporate headquarter	Usually at corporate headquarter