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MASTER THESIS

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DEVELOPMENT OF A BRAND-BUILDING CONCEPT FOR A SERVICE BRAND WITHIN THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE RED CROSS IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Supervisor:

Ing. Mag. (FH) Alexius Aigner

Presented by:

Sabine Pasterk, BA

191055801

Graz, July 2nd, 2021

Declaration of authenticity

I hereby certify that I have written the present thesis independently and without help from any third parties. I have not used any sources other than those which are clearly indicated and have duly provided details of the sources of both direct and indirect quotations.

The present piece of work and parts thereof have to date not been presented to this or any other examination board in the same or similar form, nor have they been published. The present version is the same as the electronic version submitted.

Graz, July 2nd, 2021



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Sabine Pasterk, BA

Explanation of principle of equality

For readability purposes, gender-specific formulations have not been used in the present piece of work. It is, however, hereby expressly stated that when the masculine form is used to denote people, both sexes are being referred to.

Acknowledgement

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Executive Summary

As the elderly population is constantly growing, the functional decline of elderly people constitutes a major concern within the global health care industry. Especially the Republic of North Macedonia is struggling with one of the highest growth rates in Europe but lacks in the provision of appropriate public care services for older adults. Therefore, the Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia aims to close this gap by offering a novel Personal Emergency Response Service (PERS), providing rapid medical help in emergency situations. In relation to this, a new brand should be established, positioning the new service as market leader and, concomitantly, fostering an increased brand awareness within the local population.

As a result, this thesis presents a brand building concept for the new PERS service brand, containing six main steps as follows:

1. Preliminary market research including the situation analysis and primary research illustrating the basis for further strategic considerations
2. Definition of brand identity and strategic brand values
3. Definition of strategic brand positioning including the development of a new positioning category as basis for the market leadership position
4. Implementation of brand positioning through the creation of brand name, brand logo, slogan as well as evaluation of relevant brand touchpoints
5. Derivation of integrated communication measures including the selection of instruments as well as recommendations for actions summarized within an integrated communication plan
6. Establishment of controlling instruments to measure the concept's success.

The concept has been established by theoretical brand management principles and has afterwards been complemented by results from qualitative primary research containing relevant expert inputs on the given topic.

In summary, the brand building concept follows a low-cost and step-by-step approach, focusing on building the brand with trusted PR and word-of-mouth measures, implementing advertising only at a later stage. Furthermore, it puts an emphasis on the visual connection to the *Red Cross* brand to leverage from its positive image and trust towards the organization, which comes right after the most central customer need of feeling safe at all times – the most central criteria for the establishment of the PERS service brand.

Abstract

Das laufende Wachstum der älteren Bevölkerung stellt eine große Herausforderung für das globale Gesundheitswesen dar. Besonders Nordmazedonien hat mit einem überdurchschnittlich starken Wachstum zu kämpfen, wofür jedoch unzureichend öffentliche Pflegeangebote für ältere Menschen bereitgestellt werden. Durch das Angebot eines neuartigen Notruf-Services (PERS) des Roten Kreuzes Nordmazedonien, soll die beschriebene Lücke geschlossen werden. In diesem Zusammenhang wird gleichzeitig eine neue Marke für das genannte Service etabliert, eine Markenbekanntheit aufgebaut und eine Marktführerschaft erlangt werden. Um dies zu erreichen, behandelt diese Masterarbeit die Erstellung eines Markenaufbaukonzeptes für die PERS-Service-Marke, welche folgende sechs Hauptschritte umfasst:

1. Erhebung einer Marktforschung inkl. Situationsanalyse, sowie die Durchführung einer Primärforschung als Grundlage für weitere strategische Entscheidungen
2. Definition der Markenidentität sowie Festlegung von zentralen Markenwerten
3. Definition der strategischen Markenpositionierung einschließlich der Ableitung einer neuen Positionierungskategorie als Grundlage für die Marktführerschaft
4. Implementierung der Markenpositionierung durch Definition von Markennamen, Logo und Slogan, sowie die Selektion von relevanten Markenkontaktpunkten
5. Ableitung integrierter Kommunikationsmaßnahmen durch die Auswahl von Kommunikationsinstrumenten und konkreten Handlungsempfehlungen, welche zu einem integrierten Kommunikationsplan zusammengefasst werden
6. Definition von Controlling-Instrumenten zur Messung des Konzepterfolges

Das beschriebene Konzept wurde zuerst mittels Literaturrecherche zum Thema Markenführung festgelegt und anschließend mit den Ergebnissen der qualitativen Primärforschung, umgesetzt durch Experteninterviews, ergänzt.

Zusammengefasst verfolgt das Konzept des Markenaufbaus einen kostengünstigen und schrittweisen Ansatz, welcher sich auf vertrauenswürdige PR und Mund-zu-Mund Maßnahmen konzentriert. Darüber hinaus wird ein Schwerpunkt auf die visuelle Verbindung zum Roten Kreuz gelegt, um vom positiven Image und Vertrauen der bestehenden Marke zu profitieren. Dies geht besonders auch mit dem wichtigsten Kundenbedürfnis, dem Gefühl der Sicherheit, einher und stellt somit den zentralen Nutzen bzw. Vorteil der PERS-Service-Marke dar.

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List of Abbreviations

AAL	Ambient Assisted Living
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AMA	American Marketing Association
AR	Augmented Reality
B2B	Business-to-Business
B2C	Business-to-Consumer
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
F2F	Face-to-Face Communication
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMC	Integrated Marketing Communication
IoT	Internet of Things
NM	Republic of North Macedonia
NPO	Non-Profit Organization
PERS	Personal Emergency Response System
PoD	Points of Difference
PoP	Points of Parity
PR	Public Relations
RC	Red Cross
RCNM	Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia
UX	User Experience
V2C	Value-to-Consumer
V2F	Value-to-Firm

1 Introduction

This chapter contains the introductory information related to the master's thesis listing the initial situation, problem definition, company objectives, thesis objective and the frame of reference of the thesis.

1.1 Initial Situation

As the elderly population is constantly growing, the functional decline of elderly people constitutes a major concern in the global health care industry (cf. Lachal et al. 2016, p.1). According to the United Nations, the Republic of North Macedonia will experience a rapid ageing process in its population within the next couple of decades. Latest results illustrate that 19% of its current population are aged 60 or over, whereas it is estimated to be 33% by the end of 2050 (cf. United Nations 2017, p.32ff). This trend, defined as 'population ageing', also implies significant effects on appropriate health care services to support people of old age (cf. United Nations 2015, p.31f). Concomitantly, these developments can also be seen in the medical alert market. According to latest research, the global market of medical alert systems is currently estimated to reach a global Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 7,9% until 2025 (cf. Markets and Markets 2020). Another cause for this considerable growth, apart from the aging population, is the general inclination towards independent living and the increasing usage of age-appropriate assisted living systems as support for enhanced autonomy and security at home (cf. Markets and Markets 2020).

As a result, personal emergency response systems (PERS), developed in the 1970's, have been enjoying growing popularity ever since (cf. Dibner 1992, p.1; Markets and Markets 2020). PERS provide enhanced security at home, as well as rapid medical attention in emergency situations through activation of an emergency button. The technical devices consist of a panic button worn as a wristband or bracelet, as well as an in-house device, equipped with a microphone and speaker enabling two-way communication. In case of an emergency, the elderly person manually activates the panic button and is put through to a 24-hour emergency center, where an eligible query is conducted to define appropriate emergency measures (cf. Agboola et al. 2017; Heinbüchner et al. 2010, p.219; Roush/Teasdale 2011, p.73). Furthermore, these technical systems aim at enhancing the elderly's

quality of life by reducing anxiety and improving their sense of security (cf. Agboola et al. 2017; Heinbüchner et al. 2010, p.219).

During the last decade, this system has mainly been provided by aid organizations and NGOs. But even though special hardware devices are described with PERS, it is the 24/7 emergency call and rescue service the organizations actually offer to clients in return for a monthly fee (Stuppnik 18.03.2020). It enables helpful domestic support for elderly living alone or suffering from chronic diseases (cf. Beul et al. 2010, p.112).

Just recently, the Red Cross in North Macedonia (RCNM) launched the previously described PERS solution in the Republic of North Macedonia. The main reason for their product development next to the market potential was the increasing discrimination against older people during emergency calls resulting from the lack of ambulance resources provided by the state (cf. Boeva 15.10.2020). Until now, only some security firms offered PERS services for the residential area but focused rather on burglary protection instead of medical emergencies. Hence, RCNM now holds a first mover position and strategic advantage, offering the first PERS service which ensures rapid medical help in domestic emergency situations. (cf. Boeva 07.03.2020).

1.2 Problem Statement

Prior to the PERS service launch, the RCNM project team conducted interviews with 449 older adults (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 23). The results of this survey demonstrated a very high interest on the solution provided by the Red Cross (97,6%), but little to no knowledge about the PERS service in general (91,8%) (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 61). These results indicate a vast knowledge gap within the respected target groups and hence leads to an important aggravating factor the market entry and growth of the offered PERS service.

In addition, since the RCNM is operating as a non-profit organization and is mostly financed by donations, a very limited financial budget is available to finance the appropriate marketing activities necessary to close the gap.

Lastly, the RCNM decided not to apply an apparent visual connection to the main Red Cross (RC) brand for their new PERS service within the new brand logo, as people associate it with free humanitarian services (cf. Boeva 15.10.2020).

Therefore, it is not possible to leverage from the already high recognition rate of 98%, referencing to the overall RC symbol (cf. Kapferer 2012, p. 66).

1.3 Objectives

This chapter contains the company aims as well as derived thesis aims.

1.3.1 Aims of the company

The company's long-term objectives are the exploitation of the market potential and the development of a market leadership position in the future. In order to achieve these goals, the company aims to close the earlier described knowledge gap as a first step.

Hence, the following company aims can be derived:

- Establishment a supported brand awareness within the defined target groups of 30% for the PERS service brand within the Republic of North Macedonia by the end of 2022 through specific communication measures.
- Increase of the PERS annual revenue of the RCNM by 59% until the end of 2022, compared to the projected revenue of 2021.

1.3.2 Aims of this thesis

The aim of this master's thesis is to develop a brand-building concept for the PERS service brand of the Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia, which supports the company in achieving their previously described goals.

Derived from the main objective of the thesis, the following sub-aims are set:

- Development of a suitable brand identity
- Determination of an individual brand positioning with specific recommendations for the appropriate marketing mix
- Establishment of an integrated communication plan with specific measures
- Definition of appropriate brand controlling instruments to measure the concept's success

1.4 Structure of Thesis

The following part of the paper outlines the main structure of the thesis.

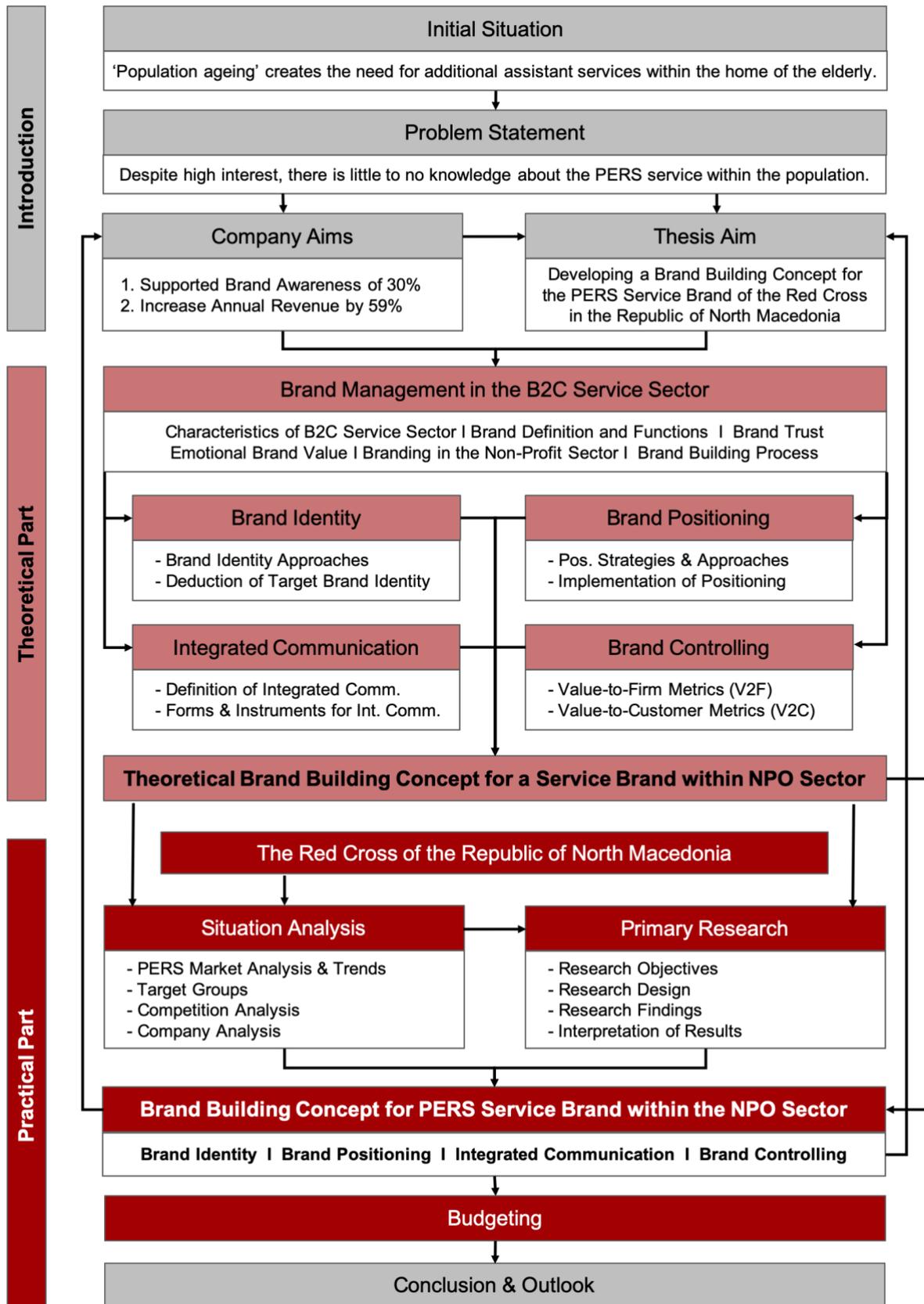


Figure 1: Frame of Reference (own presentation)

2 Brand Management in the B2C Service Sector

More and more organizations have identified brands related to their products or services as one of the most valuable assets they possess (cf. Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 32). Since brands, among other things, enable the differentiation of someone's products or services from their competitors', they also aim to adopt a desired position within the customers' mind and heart (cf. Kotler/Keller 2016, p. 322; Kapferer 2012, p. 7). Especially in today's fast changing and complex environment, strong brands facilitate important risk reduction and quick decision for both, companies and individuals. Therefore, strategic brand management became a key management imperative, which is responsible for the creation and constant enhancement of brands in order to ensure the organization's long-term profitability (cf. Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 32; Misof/Schwarz 2017, p. 3).

Even though brand management is mostly understood as a central part of a corporation's strategic activities, its application and significance within strategic management differs strongly between industries (cf. Daw 2015, p. 210; Dunes/Pras 2013 p. 446). Hence, the following chapters will summarize the characteristics of the B2C Service Sector as well as the Non-Profit Sector and will provide relevant background information and particularities about the mentioned industries. Furthermore, relevant differentiation factors related to the traditional product brand management within the for-profit environment will be elaborated. Following this brief digression, further theoretical background on the general definition and functions of brands, brand trust, emotional brand values and the brand building process will be provided.

2.1 Characteristics of the B2C Service Sector

As the actual chapter includes many topics that need to be analyzed and considered separately, the following subchapters will provide fundamental information and delimitations about services in general, the associated B2C industry as well as important elements which influence the of buying behavior related to services compared to tangible products.

2.1.1 Definition and Delimitation of Services

According to Kotler, products can be defined as '*anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or*

need' (Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p. 244). This definition thereby suggests for all goods to be defined as products. However, since the characteristics of tangible products discern strongly from the ones of services, a differentiation between the two terms is essential (cf. Meffert et al. 2019, p. 26).

Services are mainly defined as *'intangible performances, which are exchanged directly from producer to user, cannot be transported or stored, and are almost instantly perishable'* (Marketing Dictionary 2020). Therefore, the main differentiation factors of services in comparison to tangible products can be summarized in the following four factors (cf. Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p.258f; Meffert et al. 2019, p. 26 - 29):

- **Intangibility:** Intangibility outlines the central characteristic of services and describes the lack of visual output previous to the consumption. Since the missing output often leads to uncertainty, service providers often add tangible elements. It aims to improve the customer's perceived service quality by visualizing elements of quality related to the place, people, equipment, communication, etc.
- **Inseparability:** This term relates to the connection between the service provider and its customer and explains that the service itself cannot be separated from either of them. Very often the successful output largely depends on the participation of all parties, since especially the customer often plays a central role in the process.
- **Variability:** Service variability describes the variance of service quality, resulting from the integration of external factors, such as people, time, place and circumstances. Hence, the service output can be strongly influenced and also vary with every performance. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to ensure specific performance capacity of service providers (e.g. know-how, physical capacity of employees, etc.) in order to ensure a consistent service quality and thus high customer satisfaction.
- **Perishability:** This factor describes lack of storage, as services can only be consumed during the performance, without the possibility of storage afterwards. This could become an issue in fluctuating demand, especially when experiencing demand peaks where not every consumer can be served.

Even though all the mentioned points are valid, service inseparability constitutes the most relevant success factors for services. It has the most important implication for

the perception of product quality by consumers and cannot be compensated by other factors (cf. Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p. 258).

2.1.2 Services and their Impacts on the Consumer's Buying Behavior

Within the B2C service sector, organizations need to focus on specific success factors related to the customer's buying behavior, which is central for this thesis. However, as there are numerous factors relevant concerning this area, only the ones most relevant for the thesis will be listed.

Firstly, before actually consuming the service, a consumer must become aware of its existence and explore all relevant choices and alternatives (cf. Wirtz/Lovelock 2018, p. 39 - 41). During this stage, price is an important factor for the decision-making process. Therefore, it is key to focus on the differentiation of the respected service to reduce the importance of the price (Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p. 262).

Secondly, as services cannot be returned or replaced afterwards, the perceived risk related to the consumption constitutes an important factor influencing the consumer's buying decision. Due to the high amount of experience and credence attributes, which can only be evaluated during or after the consumption, it is necessary to reduce the risk by appropriate marketing and management measures (cf. Wirtz/Lovelock 2018, p. 41 – 44; Meffert 2018, p. 93).

Lastly, customer service expectations are important to consider, as they could strongly deviate from the provided service. It mainly depends on the customer's previous experiences, the information search, the company's communication as well as possible alternatives. In any case, expectations are compared to the actual output or perceived performance of the service and, hence, strongly influence the customer's satisfaction, loyalty and perceived quality (Wirtz/Lovelock 2018, p. 46 – 48; Meffert 2018, p. 92).

2.1.3 Definition and Elements of the Global Service Industry

The consumption of services can be found in different business segments but is nevertheless mostly related to the Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumer (B2C) sectors. In the B2C sector, services are occupied by individuals and households, whereas B2B services are offered or implemented by corporations or businesses (cf. Wirtz/Lovelock 2018, p. 5; Aichele/Schönberger 2016, p. 6). The delimitation of the mentioned sectors is determined by the definition of target groups

instead of products, as the offered goods or services can be sold to both fields at the same time (cf. Whalley 2010, p. 49). For the purpose of this thesis, only the B2C service sector will be considered and applied for further research.

The importance of services in the global B2C industry has grown within the last decade (cf. Wirtz/Lovelock 2018, p. 7). This is due to the fact that the value of a customer orientation and the satisfaction of individual customer needs has become increasingly important (cf. Meffert/Bruhn/Hadwich 2018, p. 2f). As a result, the service industry develops stronger than other industries, accounting for 63% of the gross world product in 2018 already (cf. Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p. 258). However, despite an outstanding development of services being recognized, the intangibility of services poses a great challenge for many firms. As a result, services are more and more combined with tangible products to visualize customer benefits more easily and reduce the otherwise associated uncertainty of immaterial services (cf. Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p. 244f). Nonetheless, the application and management of services can vary widely across different industries, especially taking into account the divergence between the non-profit and for-profit environment (cf. Wirtz/Lovelock 2018, p. 7).

2.2 Characteristics of the Non-Profit Sector

The development and importance of the non-profit sector and resultant organizations is supported by many theories, influenced by the public and private sector. In general, the non-profit sector is understood as gap filler for the market failure of the private economy and governments as non-profits provide goods and services the other mentioned sectors are unable to provide. In addition, they also stand out for their focus on supplementing the economy with products and services which are driven by vision, values and social objectives. This also illustrates that non-profits centralize the good provided to society instead of only focusing on profitability (cf. Worth 2019, p. 57) and are hence practicing the so-called social entrepreneurship (cf. Wu/Wu/Sharpe 2020, p. 2).

Within the last two decades, the non-profit sector has grown and developed strongly (cf. Renz 2016, p. 734). Latest statistics illustrate a considerable growth of new organizations, which amounts to 4.5% between the years 2006 and 2016. Furthermore, today's charitable non-profit organizations account for almost two-thirds of the total revenue within the sector (cf. Urban Institute 2020). However, the

main functions of non-profit management remain unchanged, including planning, leadership and organization. Still, the developing environment they are doing business in brings about many new factors to be considered and adaptations in existing business processes that are required (cf. Renz 2016, p. 734).

2.2.1 Characteristics of Non-Profit Organizations

Non-profit organizations act in a special environment between the government and private sector. They are driven by the achievement of their mission by still focusing on economic sustainability. Also, this organizational structure obligates them not to distribute profit to the management board or stakeholders, but to invest revenues in activities which support attaining their central mission (cf. Chew 2009, p. 2; Heuser/El-Banna 2018, p. 3; Worth 2019, p. 56 - 58).

Since the previously mentioned business conditions deviate significantly from the private industry, non-profit organizations must focus on the following particularities and trends in strategic management:

- Non-profits struggle with **declining private financing** through donations and public funding in relation to the organization's relative need (cf. Renz 2016, p. 735). In 2018, total donations from private individuals decreased by -1.7% compared to the previous year (cf. Urban Institute 2020).
- Decreasing financial resources leads to **increased pressure for professionalization and demand for enhanced efficiency** to illustrate desired results (cf. Bodo 2018, p. 16).
- Especially in the field of healthcare, the **growing number of for-profit and non-profit competition** within the market leads to the demand for competitive structures related to products, service, human capital, communication and processes. As a result, non-profits **adapt their organization** more and more into **for-profit ambivalence** (cf. Renz 2016, p. 375f; Kotler/Andreasen 2014, p. 23).
- Due to the fusion of those two areas, **non-profits and for-profits are competing for the population's attention, business opportunity and trust** (cf. Renz 2016, p. 375)
- Still, research illustrates that **non-profits are considered warmer and more incompetent** compared to for-profit companies, which also relates to the

preference of acquired products or services from commercial for-profit organizations (cf. Aaker/Vohs/Mogilner 2010, p. 224).

- The changing environment obliges non-profit leaders to **continuously rethink their known business and find new and creative ways** to finance their organization (cf. Renz 2018, p. 737)
- The competitive environment and development of new technologies have driven non-profits to **concentrate and invest more into marketing and branding activities**, albeit still having relatively low budget available compared to for-profit organizations (cf. Renz 2018, p. 738).
- The **rise of new technology** implies the urge of investing into new software applications as well as contemporary tools to support marketing communication, such as Social Media (cf. Renz 2016, p. 735 - 737).

2.2.2 Marketing and Brand Management in Non-Profit Organizations

Traditionally, marketing and branding was considered an important tool for commercial organizations. Today, it also plays a central role in non-profit organizations to achieve long-term social goals as well as trust, loyalty, brand image and brand awareness (cf. Garg et al. 2018, p. 5f; Keller 2013, p. 45; Whalley 2010, p. 49). According to literature, nowadays, NPOs apply mostly the same marketing tools (cf. Durgee 2016, p. 73; Kotler/Andreasen 2014, p. 11f). Then again, one of the biggest challenges already mentioned in the previous chapter is that marketing in non-profits is still often restricted by tight budgets and it is usually harder to promote bigger investments (cf. Kotler/Andreasen 2014, p. 23; Renz 2016, p. 735 - 737).

In addition, brand management as a strategic marketing tool has more often been used to promote the NPO itself, rather than to offer services or products. However, NPOs have already realized the advantages branding attains to promote their mission, values, social contribution and emotions related to the organization's services (cf. Kotler/Andreasen 2014, p. 169). Due to market growth and competition within the sector, it is evident that NPOs need successful branding to differentiate themselves from competitors to reach the desired donations or revenues (cf. Chapleo 2015, p. 207). Thus, NPOs as well as research have focused mainly on the development of brand management relating to donations, brand image, communication strategies, non-profit and for-profit partnership, as well as the management of stakeholders (cf. Sepulcri/Mainardes/Belchior 2020, p. 655).

Furthermore, latest results in research also demonstrate that brand salience, defining the depth of awareness during a buying decision (cf. Kotler/Keller 2016, p. 330; Keller 2013, p. 107), and brand attributes directly influence the decision-making progress of non-profit stakeholders. This is especially valid for charity donations and fee-based services within NPOs. However, despite brand salience being key, it is important to communicate it in an appropriate way as wrong communication would have a negative impact on the desired brand choice. (cf. Gregory/Ngo/Miller 2019, p. 594f).

However, the main challenge for branding in NPO still lies in the support of leadership and their understanding of the importance of brand management as a strategic tool (cf. Chapleo 2015, p. 207; Liu et al. 2015, p. 319). Furthermore, many non-profits also struggle with the implementation of effective branding measurements and the selection of appropriate controlling instruments, as they are mostly concentrated on brand image alone (cf. Garg/Swami/Malhotra 2018, p. 4).

2.3 Definition and Function of a Service Brand

According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), a brand in general can be defined as *'a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers'* (AMA 2020).

Therefore, the ultimate aim of a brand is to differentiate products or services from their competitors and to create certain ideas and assets in a customers' mind and heart (cf. Kotler/Keller 2016, p. 322; Kapferer 2012, p. 7; Ries/Ries 2002a, p. 110). Moreover, a brand also illustrates a promise to the consumer, which constantly conveys unique benefits, functions, attributes, cultural characteristics and personality traits (cf. Kotler 2008, p. 296f). Consequently, brand management is the strategic activity within a company, that manages and implements the appropriate communication measures to transfer the mentioned characteristics (cf. Misof/Schwarz 2017, p. 71; Markenlexikon 2020).

Brands in general have specific functions for both, consumers and companies as brand owner. The following table summarizes all relevant functions of brands for both parties (cf. Keller 2013, p. 34):

Consumer	Brand owner
Product identification and information	Identification to simplify handling
Assignment of responsibility	Legal protection of unique features
Risk reduction	Quality signal to consumers
Reduction of search costs	Source of competitive advantage
Promise or bond with producer	Source of financial returns (pricing)
Symbolic device	Unique associations by consumers
Quality indicator	Enhancing company value

Table 1: Functions of Brands (based on Keller 2013, p. 34)

Traditionally, brands have always been associated with tangible goods, since the classical and known brand product has mostly been represented by consumer goods. However, with the increased importance of the service sector, the differentiation of branding between goods and services dissolved increasingly (cf. Bruhn 2008, p. 5).

Service brands can be understood as common perception and images customers and other stakeholders visualize when considering service offers (cf. Bruhn 2008, p. 6). Even though the definition of service brands appears similar to the ones of products, service brands show two substantial distinctions (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 460). Due to the fact that services are intangible and need the integration and proximity of customers, the service quality can vary widely. Thus, it is the brand management's responsibility to put a special emphasis on the relating consequences which could occur, and how to create counteracting measures, as summarized in the following figure (cf. Keller 2013, p. 42; Bruhn 2008, p.6f).

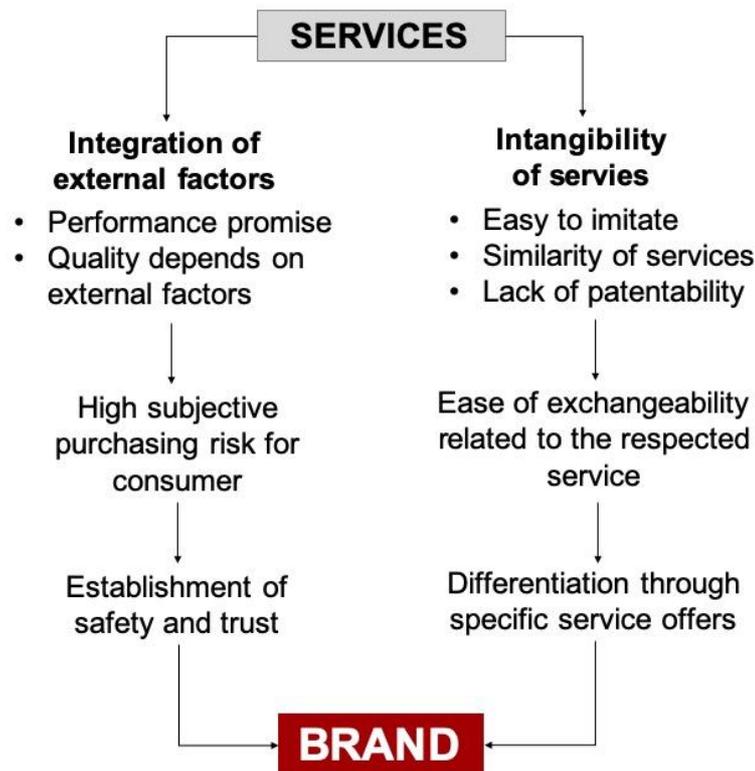


Figure 2: Influencing Factors of Service Brands (based on Baumgarth 2014, p. 461)

As illustrated, external factors influence the value proposition and quality of services which can lead to a subjective purchasing risk for consumers. On the other hand, the intangibility of services offers the possibility to imitate them more easily, while at the same time it is more difficult to receive a patent for them, which again leads to an increased exchangeability. As a result, it is essential for brand management to eliminate the risk and exchangeability by establishing a feeling of safety, trust and differentiation to competing products (cf. Keller 2013, p.42; Baumgarth 2014, p. 462f).

Next to the influencing factors, service brands consist of divergent components, which ultimately influence the strategic positioning and image. As pictured in the following figure, service brands are directly associated with the perception of employees and consumers, as well as the positioning of the brand owner (cf. Bruhn 2008, p. 13; Baumgarth 2014, p. 462).

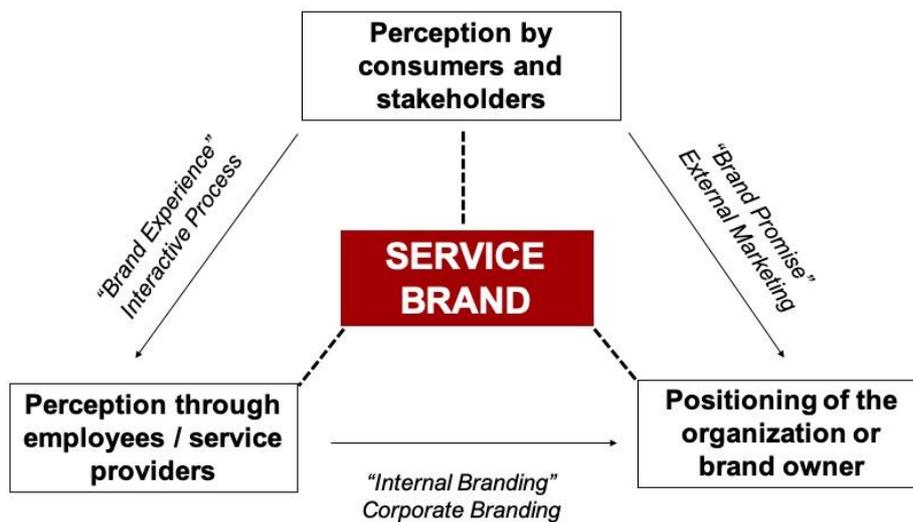


Figure 3: Components of Service Brands (based on Baumgarth 2014, p. 462)

This illustration highlights the connection between the three brand components, consisting of brand experience, brand promise and internal branding. Especially brand experience and the interaction with brand touch points, such as employees, can have the biggest impact on the perception of the respected brand. Additionally, the perceived experience also relates directly to preliminary defined brand promises and corporate branding (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 462; Schmidt 2013, p. 51). Hence, the following three points should play a central role in the strategic management of a company (cf. Schmidt 2013, p. 50f):

- Change management processes need to be considered and applied constantly to adapt the brand promise to the needs of customers.
- Strategic human resources must play a central role for the management of service brands.
- The management of instruments used at customer touchpoints should play a central role to foster a positive brand experience.

In conclusion, service brands are more complex and challenging to manage than brands of consumer products (cf. Schmidt 2013, p. 48).

2.4 Brand Trust

The most valuable global brands manage to evoke a high consumer trust (cf. Kotler 2008, p. 296f; Burman et al. 2017, p. 70). According to a study published by McKinsey, 90% of consumers rate brand trust as one of the most important factors for the buying decision, directly following brand safety (cf. Bauer et al. 2011, p. 10). However, according to recent studies, brand trust has significantly declined within

the last decade. Therefore, brand trust gained in importance for brand managers around the world (cf. Rajavi/Kushwaha/Steenkamp 2019, p. 651).

In general, brand trust illustrates how certain consumers go about the assessment of a brand. In general, it reduces a consumer's perceived risk, which can be divided into financial risk (e.g. car acquisition), functional risk (e.g. used-car acquisition), psychological risk (e.g. purchasing certain medicine) or social risk (e.g. purchase of presents). Thus, brand trust is an essential tool during the purchasing decision of consumers (cf. Burman et al. 2017, p. 71).

According to Haller, brand trust is the main factor resulting in brand loyalty and an emotional attachment of consumers to the respected brand (cf. Haller 2014, p. 143; Burman et al 2017, p. 70). He argues that the bigger the trust in a brand is, the stronger the relationship and commitment between consumers and brands get. However, subjective uniqueness as well as social acceptance of the respected brands are important preconditions for this effect (cf. Haller 2014, p. 138 - 145; Baumgarth 2014, p. 136). Subjective uniqueness and social acceptance mainly result from the assessment of experiences (e.g. own experience, experiences by close social contacts, test reports, expert opinions, etc.), the individual communication or applied marketing mix of the brand owner (cf. Haller 2014, p. 145 - 150; Rajavi/Kushwaha/Steenkamp 2019, p. 651). Hence, brands with a high valuation of trust are also characterized by a clear brand image and strong brand preference (cf. Burman et al 2017, p. 70).

When it comes to service brands within the health care and the non-profit environment, trust plays an even bigger role since the service quality is hard to evaluate previous to the consumption (cf. Kotler 2008, p. 358; Garg/Swami/Malhotra 2018, p. 5). Therefore, it is obvious that during the purchase decision process consumers search for quality indicators which are verifying a competent, caring and trustworthy service. For consumers of health care services, those indicators are mostly directly related to more tangible elements such as place, people, used equipment or price (cf. Kotler 2018, p. 258; Kotler 2008, p. 266). Within the non-profit environment, strong brand trust can even prevent the transmission of negative images in case a similar organization within the sector experiences an image loss (cf. Garg/Swami/Malhotra 2018, p. 5; Burman 2017, p. 71).

2.5 Emotional Brand Values

As mentioned in the previous chapter, brand trust can evoke a strong emotional attachment. According to literature, about 70% of the brand success is based on emotional factors, which cannot be derived from rational behavior (cf. Haller 2014, p. 133). Kapferer and Kotler also confirm these statistics, since they state that the strongest brands possess a distinct emotional part (cf. Kapferer 2012, p. 26; Kotler 2018, p. 266). As a result, the establishment of a connection between consumer and brand is often established through a specific set of emotions (cf. Digital Marketing Institute 2020). It aims to personalize the brand as well as create a long-term and deep brand attachments (cf. Akgun/Kocoglu/Imamoglu 2013, p. 503).

In any case, this process is supported by the application of certain emotional values, which are distinct from use-oriented values of brands. They mainly contain purely emotional values such as tradition, responsibility, family, beauty and security instead of functional values like taste, formula or sent. Furthermore, they especially support brand differentiation and can add value to the brand. This, however, got increasingly more difficult for organizations (cf. Haller 2014, p. 157f).

Emotions particularly play a central role for the branding of services. They reduce the uncertainty related to the intangibility by providing a sense of security and fostering social approval (cf. Keller 2013, p. 43). Especially within the NPO sector, emotional and experiential branding is an essential tool to foster differentiation of services (cf. Chapleo 2015, p. 199).

In general, the dimensions of emotional values related to brand management can be summarized into four categories, illustrated in the following figure (cf. Haller 2014, p. 159):



Figure 4: Dimensions of Emotional Values (based on Haller 2014, p. 159)

All of these dimensions mentioned in the previous figure, have a very distinct and individual impact on the growth and stability of a brand. However, 68% of brands with a strong value connection and implementation experience strong growth and stability (cf. Haller 2014, p. 160). The biggest drivers of growth are the self-presentation and vitality, which are also the most important values for the brand development or brand launch. As soon as brands are established, safety and sustainability are values which are fostering the stability of a brand (cf. Haller 2014, p.160 - 164).

Apart from that, the relevance of mentioned emotional values can vary strongly between markets and sectors. Still, successful brands always cover multiple value dimensions which suit the product as well the perception of the customer (cf. Haller 2014, p.165 - 170). However, emotional brand values have proven to be more sustainable regarding customer relationship management and are able to represent a strong competitive advantage over functional oriented brands (cf. De Chernatony 2008, p. 306).

2.6 Brand Building Process

The first step of strategic brand management is always the development of a brand building concept in order to successfully establish new brands (cf. Keller/Brexendorf 2019, p. 156). During the development phase of the brand concept, important preconditions and brand elements are being analyzed, selected and established. As a result, the main aim of a successful brand building concept is to create a specific brand image perceived by the customer, which at the same time corresponds to the desired brand perception of the company (cf. Markenlexikon 2020).

However, the establishment of a brand does not happen at a certain point, but rather develops over a longer period of time within the mind of the customer. Hence, it is necessary to develop the brand gradually (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 253). With regard to this specific brand building process, many different concepts can be found in literature (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 253).

In any case, all brand building processes correspond in their main steps. They all start with a fundamental situation analysis of the internal and external analysis of the market and company, including the deduction of actual brand identity (if existing) and an internal and external analysis of the company and the market. Afterwards, strategic considerations related to the target brand identity and brand positioning

are developed and set. The next step is to define operative measures which transfer the strategic brand elements to the target group through the appropriate marketing mix actions. Lastly, appropriate controlling instruments to measure the brand concept's success are created that match the brand's strategies and objectives (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 253; Markenlexikon 2020; Burman et al. 2017, p. 92; Esch/Langner 2019, p. 179-199; Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p. 265).

The following figure, based on the illustration of a brand building concept of Esch, visualizes all the mentioned points and summarizes them into a process plan, which is also used as the central pursuing guideline for this thesis (cf. Esch 2005, p. 128; Esch/Langner 2019, p. 198):

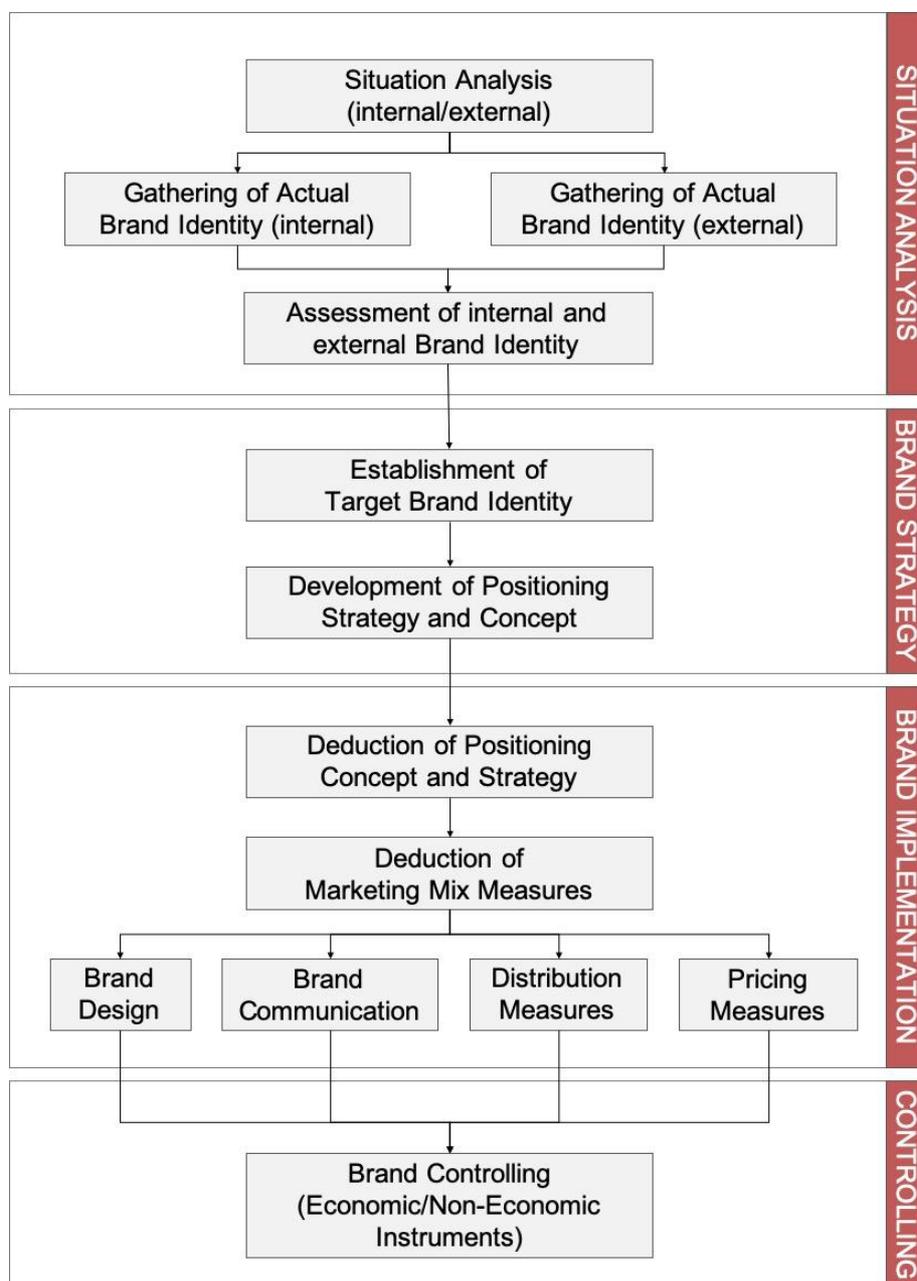


Figure 5: Brand Building Process (based on Esch/Langner 2019, p. 198)

An important factor for the strategic step, especially referencing the brand positioning for new brands is to focus on unique emotional aspects instead of only considering functional arguments (Baumgarth 2014, p. 253). Since the main factor for brand growth is caused by building strong customer relationships, it is key to have an appropriate two-way communication based on emotional values. It fosters the integration of the respected brand in the social life of consumers and enables a long-term and therefore profitable social relationship between them (Whalley 2010, p. 89). Furthermore, this is especially important for brand building within the non-profit sector as a very clear and emotion- as well as experience-centered strategy supported by operative communication is required to differentiate from competitors and establish desired feelings within the target group (cf. Chapleo 2015, p. 199; Kotler/Andreasen 2014, p. 173 – 175). Nevertheless, as authenticity is the essential basis for non-profit brands, communication measures also must be integrated to create a consistent picture about the non-profit brand (cf. Kotler/Andreasen 2014, p. 173 - 175).

In the following chapters, previously mentioned strategic and operative steps for brand building – namely brand identity, brand positioning, brand communication and brand controlling – will now be described in further detail, aiming to define a general valid theoretical concept for brand building within the B2C non-profit service.

3 Brand Identity

In general, brand identity can be described as a combination of specific associations aiming to evoke the meaning, purpose and direction of the brand. (cf. Aaker 2010, p. 186; cf. Whalley 2010, pl. 86). These associations communicate the brand promise to consumers as well as the desired impression, the brand wants to be associated with (cf. Aaker 2010, p. 186). Since this concept represents the internal perspective of an organization, brand identity can also be understood as the personal character of a brand (cf. Burman et al. 2017, p. 27).

Therefore, clearly defined identities enable consumers a quick recognition of successful brands (cf. Allen 2015, p. 24). The precondition for this is represented by the cohesive linkage of the selected brand elements within the definition of brand identity as well as the derived marketing activities (cf. Keller 2013, p. 167). Important for the long-term success of brands is also that brand attributes are unique and permanently differ from other brands (cf. Markenlexikon 2020).

However, within the healthcare and non-profit organizations, brand identity is not recognized as a strategic element of brand management, but rather understood and used as a tactical tool. Also, these industries often lack the appropriate accurate controlling instruments, since most of the time, brand identity is not being measured at all (cf. Kotler 2008, p. 319).

Nevertheless, brand identity constitutes the essential base for the creation of a positioning strategy, elaborated in Chapter 4, as well as the successive creation of a clear brand image for the consumer (cf. Esch 2019, p. 177). Therefore, the connection between the three mentioned concepts is elaborated in the next chapter.

3.1 Correlation of Brand Identity, Brand Positioning and Brand Image

Brand identity, brand positioning and brand image are concepts which are closely related to one another and exhibit a strong dependence and correlation between them. While brand identity constitutes the company's self-portrait (cf. Esch 2019, p. 179f), the brand image describes the impression an external person or customer has about the brand (cf. Burman et al. 2017, p. 57; Kotler 2008, p. 245). However, both of the mentioned concepts develop over a longer period of time and are also known to change slowly (cf. Esch 2019, p. 179f).

However, brand positioning is the crucial intermediate, defining and communicating the companies' offer and identity by placing it within the customers' minds and translating it into a specific brand image (cf. Keller 2020, p. 78). It takes a strategic positioning strategy as well as derived marketing measures to differentiate from other brands and influence the brand image perceived by consumers (cf. Esch 2019, p. 179f).

Especially for service and healthcare organizations it is important to consider that one of the most important marketing measures are 'place' and 'people'. They must authentically live and promote the defined identity to establish a clear brand image. This is especially due to the high amount of experience attributes the consumer has during the service performance (cf. Esch 2019, p. 181f; Kotler 2008, p. 301).

The following illustration presents the summarized process of the concepts described previously:

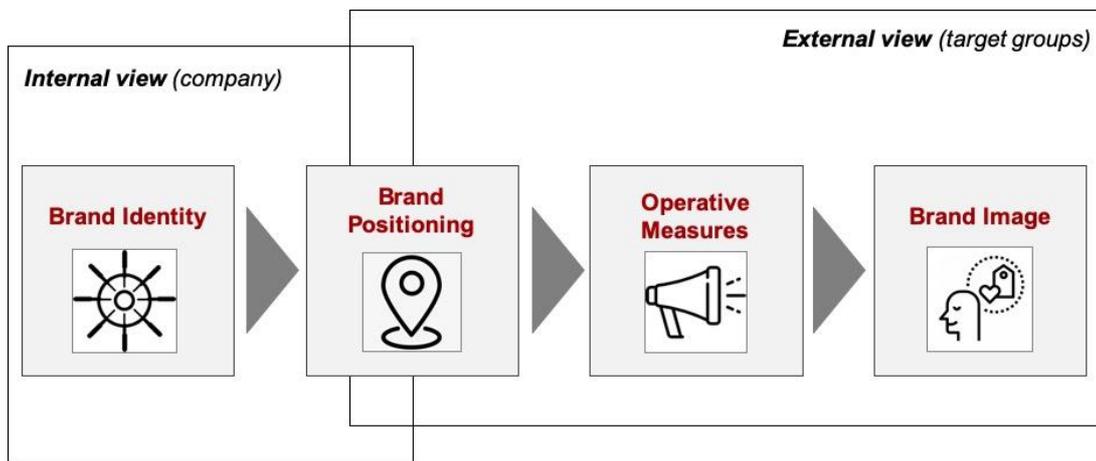


Figure: Correlation between Brand Identity, Brand Positioning and Brand Image (based on Esch 2019, p. 180)

Nevertheless, it is important to note that all of the mentioned factors above can only be achieved if the brand awareness needed is already present (Burman et al. 2017, p. 57). Furthermore, brand managers need to be aware of the possible deviation of the communicated identity and the perceived image as every consumer could perceive the communicated identity and positioning differently (cf. De Chernatony 2008, p. 314; Roy/Banerjee 2014, p. 207).

3.2 Brand Identity Approaches

Since several different brand identity approaches can be found in literature, only the three most common and cited concepts are described in further detail. By doing so, important factors related to Chapter 1 are included to select one approach for the practical part.

3.2.1 Brand Identity by Aaker

According to Aaker, brand identity should '*establish a relationship between the brand and the customer by generating a value proposition involving functional, emotional, or self-expressive benefits*' (Aaker 2000, p. 43).

In his model, the mentioned benefits are translated into three main components, consisting of brand essence, core identity and extended identity (cf. Aaker 2000, p. 43), demonstrated in the following figure:

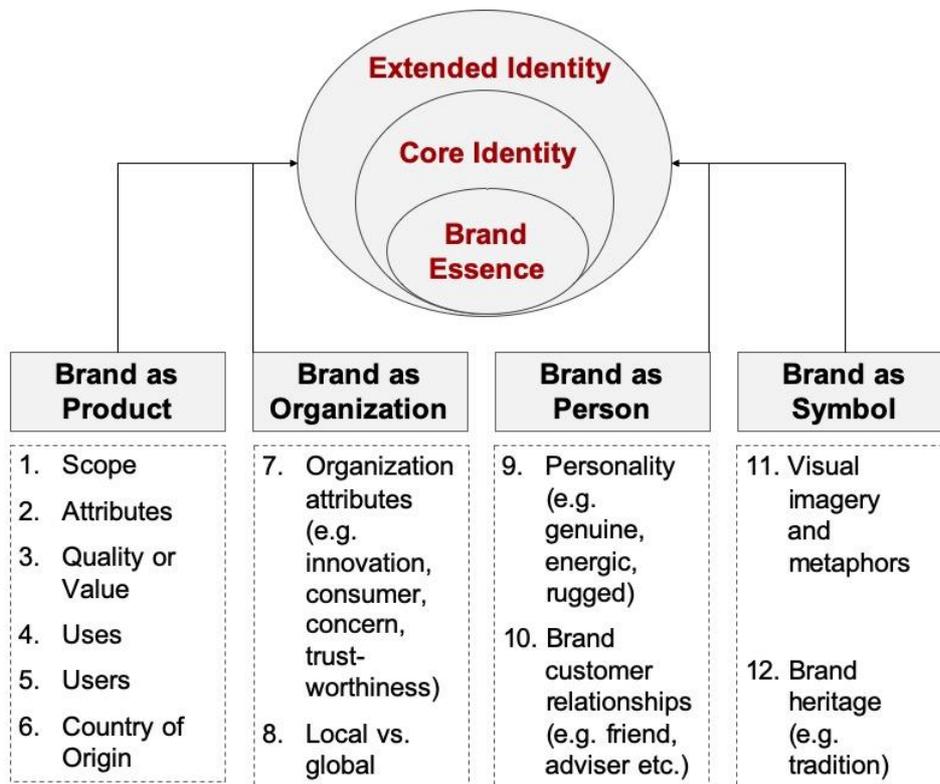


Figure 6: Brand Identity by Aaker (based on Aaker 2000, p. 44; Aaker 1996, p. 79)

Since the concept has a rather wide definition, it is important to focus especially on the core identity, which should typically stay invariable to sustain a clear identity, especially in alternative markets. The brand essence can be seen as the heart of the core identity, which summarizes the essential brand values and hence the brand's soul in one brief statement (cf. Aaker 2000, p. 43 – 45; Esch/Langner 2019, p. 189f). The extended identity on the other hand includes elements which are structured in groups and can be adapted to their current environment. Still, they should always correlate with the core identity and provide structure as well as completeness in every context (cf. Aaker 1996, p. 68f).

In addition, this concept suggests the implementation of twelve dimensions in order to create a clear picture of what the brand should stand for (cf. Aaker 2000, p. 43). They are illustrated in figure 6 and can be grouped into the following four categories (cf. Aaker 1996, p. 78 - 84; Esch/Langner 2019, p. 190 - 191):

- **Brand as a product:** Communicated attributes related to the product or service itself can have a strong influence on the brand choice and customer experience. Hence, functional and emotional associations with the product are established through the dimensions of this category listed in figure 6.

- **Brand as an organization:** In contrast to the product-focused perspective, this category deals with the main attributes and orientation of the organization. Through the values and culture of the company as well as the behavior of the employees, the two listed attributes can be further operationalized.
- **Brand as a person:** Within this category, the brand is linked to central human personality attributes. Hence, the brand should rather be seen as an individual, aiming to create a personal and strong emotional relationship between brand and customer.
- **Brand as a symbol:** Brand as a symbol includes all visual elements linked to the brand. They foster an easier recognition by customers and can be seen as a key element during the brand building process.

3.2.2 Brand Identity by Kapferer

The concept of Kapferer illustrates six specific facets of brand identity including both, the external and internal perspective. Furthermore, it takes into consideration the classical communication theory which incorporates the picture of the sender opposed to the one of the receiver. All these factors are summarized in his brand identity concept, which is visualized as the following hexagonal prism (cf. Kapferer 2012, p. 158):

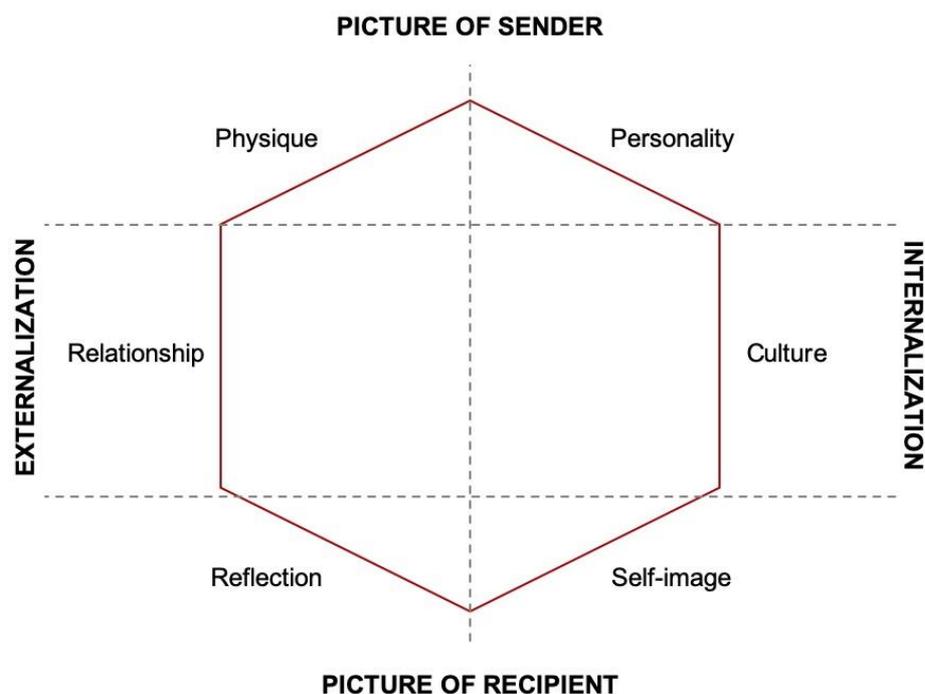


Figure 7: Brand Identity by Kapferer (based on Kapferer 2012, p. 158)

In detail, the brand identity prism includes the following six main elements (cf. Kapferer 2012, p. 158 – 162):

1. The brand's **physique** is determined by basic or tangible features of product and service, which communicate the relevant physical qualities of a brand.
2. The **personality** describes the character of a product or service. It presents the brand as human being.
3. The aspect of **culture** should illustrate vision and ideology of a brand, which is also essential for the differentiation of the brand.
4. The **relationship** component reflects the link between the brand and the customer. Especially within the service sector, service brands are central to transactions and relations between individuals.
5. A brand also represents the personal **reflection** of an individual. It aims to invoke certain characteristics customers do identify with and hence establish a strong connection to the brand.
6. The **self-image** on the other hand should provide an internal picture of how customers feel and see themselves through or with the brand.

The prism of Kapferer illustrates that all of the mentioned facets need to be interrelated in order to represent a coherent brand identity. Furthermore, he suggests that brands can be seen as communication tools between the organization and customers. Therefore, physique and personality are attributes which are conveyed by the sending part. On the downside, the reflection and self-image support the definition of recipients and hence target audience. However, both sides are completed by the internal and external view the brand has to consider. Consequently, personality, culture and self-image represent the internal picture, while physique, relationship and reflection form the external part of a brand (cf. Kapferer 2012, p. 163).

3.2.3 *Brand Identity by Esch*

The individual brand steering wheel established by Esch represents an enhancement of the brand identity concept of icon added value. It now contains five central elements describing both hard and soft factors of a brand's identity. On the one hand, they should address the rather rational right part of the brain, on the other hand also the more emotional left side. The brand competence in the center of the concept provides the key values of the brand. Even though this strict separation

related to the functions of the brain is not scientifically valid anymore, the general brand identity concept by Esch represents a dependence on the mindset of humans and hence still applies for the definition of a brand identity (cf. Esch/Langner 2019, p. 184f; Esch 2017, p. 97).

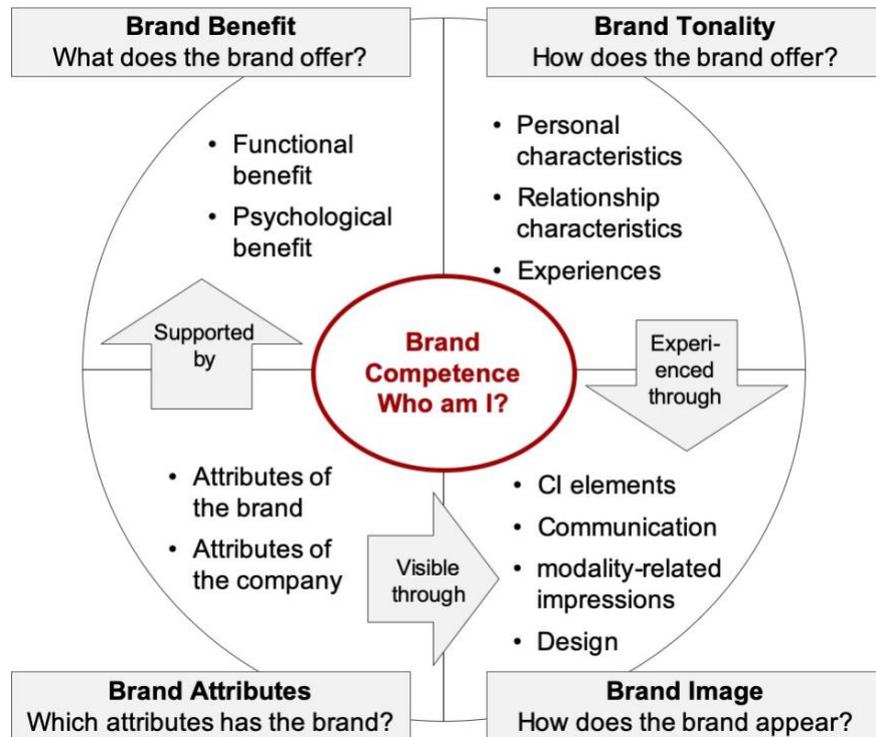


Figure 8: Brand Identity by Esch (based on Esch 2019, p. 185)

As already mentioned, the left side of the concept rather focuses on the rational attributes and benefits of the brand. They deal with the functional and psychological benefits which can be offered and form the reasons to buy a product. Furthermore, communicated attributes of the products and the company support the benefits and provide an additional argument for the buying decision (cf. Esch/Langner 2019, p. 185f; Esch 2017, p. 97 - 100)

The right side on the other hand focuses more on emotional and visual factors. The brand tonality describes all associated emotions which should be evoked through the brand and can include personality, the relation and experiences. Especially emotional factors provide strong differentiation potential in saturated markets. Furthermore, the visual brand image includes all sensorial contacts to the brand and visualize the previously defined tonality (cf. Esch/Langner 2019, p. 186; Esch 2017, p. 101f).

Putting these areas together, the brand competence connects both of them by defining the brand essence with the main characteristics of it. It also helps to

examine and induct the relation of all the mentioned area to create a sound identity (cf. Esch/Langner 2019, p. 186f; Esch 2017, p. 102).

3.3 Deduction of Target Brand Identity

In general, brands with strong and clear identities enable important orientation and support during the buying process of consumers. Hence, the establishment of emotions, trust and loyalty is essential. Therefore, it is important to highlight that the better characteristics are being implemented at the customer touchpoints, the clearer the identity can be established (cf. Esch.2017, p. 94).

However, it is important to select the appropriate brand identity approach for the respected brand of an organization. The following points list the main factors for the selection of the target brand identity concept (cf. Esch/Langner 2019, p. 193 – 196):

- Integrity of all identity attributes: All of the necessary elements and characteristics of the desired brand must be displayed.
- The different elements of the approaches must be interrelated in order to result in one coherent picture of the brand.
- At the same time, the different components of the approach must be strictly separated so confusion about the practical application cannot occur.
- The practical implementation of the concept must be given. Therefore, further measures must be clearly identified and derived on an operative level.
- For the deduction of an appropriate service brand identity, also relevant factors in Chapter 2 Brand Management in the B2C Service Sector are considered.

The following table lists an evaluation of brand identity concepts, applying a rating of 1 (insufficient criteria), 2 (most criteria fulfilled) and 3 (all criteria fulfilled), which is totalized in order to determine the one appropriate concept for the target brand identity. The rating is based on the theoretical background provided within the previous chapters. The detailed evaluation and argumentation can be found in the Appenix.

CRITERIA	B.I. AAKER	B.I. KAPFERER	B.I. ESCH
Completeness of factors	2	3	3
Interrelation of elements	3	3	3
Separation of components	3	3	3
Practical Implementation	1	2	3
Considering brand trust	1	2	2
Considering emotional value	2	2	2
Service intangibility	2	1	2
Non-profit appliance	2	3	3
SUM	16	19	21

Table 2: Evaluation of Target Brand Identity Concept (own presentation)

Since the brand identity wheel of Esch receives the best rating, this concept will be further used for the practical part of this thesis.

However, before defining the target brand identity, it is important to analyze the market as well as the actual identity perceived by customers. Afterwards, the internal evaluation needs to be interpreted in contrast with the internal brand identity in order to define the final target brand identity used as basis for further strategic considerations (cf. Esch/Langner 2019, p. 197). This process is further illustrated within figure 5 in Chapter 2.6 Brand Building Process.

4 Brand Positioning for Brand Building

Brand positioning in general describes *'the establishment of a competitive advantage in the mind of the customers within the marketplace'* (Keller/Swaminathan 2018, p. 68). It is usually derived from the brand identity and represents the basis of all brand related decisions made by consumers (cf. Burmann 2017, p. 109; Esch 2017, p. 114; Dietrich 2018, p. 117). Therefore, the positioning of a product or brand aims at the establishment of a clear differentiation as well as preference compared to its competition (cf. Kotler 2018, p. 228; Esch 2017, p. 115; Whalley 2010, p. 77). This especially means that the brand must evoke a unique and independent image related to the subjective perception of customers (cf. Esch

2019, p. 202). However, brands further need to correspond with consumers' individual needs and desires. As a result, the closer the perceived brand positioning of the customer matches with the individual needs of customers, and the more diverse the competition brands are, the better the consumer's purchase probability is established (cf. Esch 2017, p. 202). This is also acknowledged by today's NPOs, which recognized the need for strategic positioning to have a unique standing compared to their competition. Nevertheless, positioning within the charitable non-profit environment is not only characterized by competition and the customer, but especially by its various important stakeholders and their complex relationships (cf. Chew 2009, p. 14 – 16, 36).

4.1 Positioning Idea and Objectives

For the establishment of strong brands, the definition of a positioning strategy is not sufficient. Especially for brand building within the non-profit sector, creating a unique and powerful position idea within the mind of the target audience or selecting an alternative position is even more essential (cf. Kotler/Andreasen 2014, p. 158).

However, successful and clear positioning ideas must meet the following criteria in order to build strong brands (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 210f, Esch 2019, p. 203; Brandtner 2019, p. 43f; Whalley 2010, p. 77; Burmann et. al. 2017, p. 109):

- **High subjective relevance** for customers
- Since most people generally deal with information overload and have limited learning capacity, the positioning should be **simple and clear** by putting their **focus only on the key elements** they want to promote
- **Authenticity and credibility** with special focus on tradition, which could influence the credibility of brands
- **Differentiation** to competitive brands
- **Durability** should ensure that the positioning cannot be imitated easily
- **Orientation towards the future** promotes continuous innovation and future relevance of positioning for customers
- **Flexibility** relates to the ability for adaptation within a changing environment without losing continuity and durability
- The positioning must obtain a certain '**company fit**', reflecting a close relation to the organizational purpose and strategies.

- **Increased subjective quality perception** which makes a brand superior compared to the competition

Next to a specific positioning idea, the definition of positioning objectives is needed in order to derive the appropriate strategies afterwards. However, the choice of the appropriate objective is influenced by the involvement of the target group. This relates to the degree of emotional or cognitive engagement between the consumer and the brand, illustrated in the following figure (cf. Esch 2019, p. 207f).

		Cognitive Involvement	
		<i>high</i>	<i>low</i>
Emotional Involvement	<i>high</i>	Mixed Positioning Needs are current and not trivial High interest on product information	Experience-Oriented Positioning Needs are current and not trivial Low interest on information as product is already known
	<i>low</i>	Objective Positioning Needs are trivial High interest on product information	Promotion of Brand Recognition Needs are trivial Low interest on information as product is already known

Figure 9: Positioning Objectives (based on Esch 2019, p. 208)

From this concept four different positioning objectives can be derived (cf. Esch 2019, p. 2018; Baumgarth 2014, p. 217):

1. **Mixed Positioning** aims to activate emotional needs by promoting brand attributes, which at the same time satisfies significant cognitive needs. Therefore, this positioning appeals cognitive factors by providing facts which also support emotional arguments at the same time. One example would be the positioning of safety, which is emotionally charged, but at the same time requires many facts for the decision-making.
2. **Experience-Oriented Positioning** is often used for saturated markets where information-based anchoring is unsatisfactory for successful branding. Consequently, branding focuses on an experience related connection to the brand which aims to increase the consumers' perceived quality of life. Hence,

content is often related to adventure, prestige, success, performance, sports, etc. are being.

3. **Objective Positioning** relates to fact-based decision making with low emotional attachment to the brand. It is often applied in early developed markets where costumers need a lot of information at the beginning, or in rather fact-based market environments, such as the automotive industry.
4. **Promotion of Brand Recognition** is applied through specific communication of the brand itself, since emotional and cognitive attributes are trivial. Therefore, the main goal is to get the brand into the consumer's consideration set and suppress the competition from it.

In addition to the involvement concept, literature illustrates that brand positioning focusing on emotional and social features proves to be much more effective and successful compared to the rather functional oriented orientation (cf. Fuchs/Diamantopoulos 2010, p. 1779). Furthermore, brand positioning with social and emotional focus also have a positive effect on brand value and demonstrate higher brand trust. Hence, they lead to increased customer loyalty (cf. Akbari et al. 2019, p. 682).

Relating the different positioning objectives with the B2C service brand within the non-profit and health-care sector, only one strategy appears adequate. Since they on the one hand are based on distinct emotional needs related to health-care services and require important fact-oriented attributes, both emotional and cognitive involvement of consumers are high. This interpretation is also supported by the fact that brands focusing on social or ethical positioning are more robust to crisis or negative news (cf. Brunk/Boer 2018, p. 455). As a result, the mixed positioning objective will be applied for the practical part of this master thesis.

4.2 Positioning Strategies

Since the central task of positioning is to establish a new and unique position within the mind of the consumer by manipulating the already existing connections and perceptions, marketers must define specific strategies for it. (cf. Ries/Trout 2001, p. 5). Therefore, this chapter focuses on the appropriate positioning strategies derived from the former defined objectives and will describe the most relevant ones in more detail.

In any case, strategies aim to unify the company's offer with its ideal conception by the customer (cf. Esch 2019, p. 213). This is especially important as matching positioning strategies and perceptions by customers evoke a sense of superiority related to brand value and, hence, establish a distinct competitive advantage (Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p. 230). In general, a company can either focus on the preservation of the current brand position, reposition the brand or create a completely new positioning strategy (cf. Esch 2019, p. 213; Baumgarth 2014, p. 215). Since this thesis deals with the brand building of a service brand, which is dissociated with the main brand of the company, only the latter is relevant and will be applied for this purpose.

As a result, the following subchapters will focus on strategic orientations which are determined at the beginning of the brand building process of this thesis.

4.2.1 Positioning Strategy for Market Leaders

Being a market leader related to positioning is mostly related to be the first on the market or a certain category (cf. Ries/Trout 2001, p. 43). It is basically considered the best and easiest strategy, since it evokes the highest customer loyalty and is associated with many strategic advantages (cf. Aaker 2011, p. 31).

Then again, being first could also be inefficient for successful branding, as success usually comes first on the customer's mind (cf. Brandtner 2005, p. 28). As a result, in addition to being first, market leaders deploy their long-term first-mover advantage as well as extend their leadership position and create the perception of superiority to the competition. However, success is also dependent on the appropriate perception of consumers. Hence, strong brands with market leadership positions respect differences in communication in order to get closer to the consumers perception by applying the appropriate communication measures (cf. Brandtner 2019, p. 207).

4.2.2 Positioning Strategy for Challengers

This strategy is often applied in saturated non-growth markets aiming to gain additional market share from the competition. Still, challenging competitors and applying direct confrontation can be cost intensive. Consequently, it is recommended to previously evaluate the potential costs compared to expected gains (cf. Hooley et al. 2017, p. 255).

Especially within the last decade, challenging the market leader by applying a contrary brand position proved to be very popular and successful (Brandtner 2019, p. 2018). It fundamentally describes the implementation of points-of-difference (PoD) and positions the brand as far away as possible in order to be perceived as unique resulting from the active differentiation (cf. Burman et al. 2017, p. 118). However, it is necessary to focus on positive PoD in order to be considered as good alternative (cf. Brandtner 2019, p. 208)

4.2.3 Positioning Strategy for Followers

Another strategy for brand positioning is to imitate the competition, or most likely, the market leader. The aim is to leverage from the image of the competing organization by communicating the points-of-parity (PoP) with the leading brand (cf. Burman et al. 2017, p. 118; Ries/Trout 2001, p. 53).

Still, the strategy of followers is mostly a combination of both, PoD and PoP. In this case, some brand benefits are imitated, whereas other brand characteristics are clearly differentiated, which could result in the elimination of differentiation related to the market leader brand (cf. Burman et al. 2017, p. 118). Consequently, most emphasis is put on the unique brand benefits or unique selling proposition such as e.g. price, efficiency, additional service, performance or high quality (cf. Ries/Trout 2001, p. 53-60; Burman et al. 2017, p. 118).

4.2.4 Deduction of Target Positioning Strategy

By comparing the three strategies mentioned in the previous chapters, one is selected for the applied positioning strategy within this thesis. Since the brand building concept is established for a service brand choosing a different and new market to establish without existing competition (as mentioned within the initial situation in Chapter 1 of this thesis), the market leadership strategy is selected. It is considered the most appropriate and beneficial approach for the establishment of a sustainable and strong service brand within the non-profit sector.

4.3 Positioning Approaches

After selecting the appropriate strategy, the next step is to choose the right approach to specify the positioning strategy. The positioning approaches relate to the actual customer perception in relation to brand alternatives (cf. Esch 2019, p. 212). In

general, there are two main positioning strategies, namely the classical and active positioning approach, which will be described in the following subchapters (cf. Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 133). However, marketing experts suggest that depending on the market environment or situation, combining both positioning approaches is often needed for developing strong brands (cf. Powerbrand 2020). Especially in new and rising markets, a more reactive strategy is needed, whereas brands in saturated markets should rather apply active positioning due to the vast competition (cf. Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 140).

4.3.1 Classical Positioning Approach

The classical or reactive positioning approach describes the theory that customers choose products or services based on how they meet their individual expectation and perceived benefits compared to alternatives (cf. Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 133f). In other words, this approach mainly focuses on the expectation and characteristics of the target group (cf. Powerbrand 2020). Therefore, two different ways can be applied: Either the performance is adapted to the expectations of consumers, or the expectations of consumers are adapted to the performance (cf. Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 135). Both aim to reduce the perceived gap between ideal conception of the consumer to the own brand in order to increase the purchase probability (cf. Esch 2019, p. 213).

Furthermore, this approach suggests the positioning of an organization's offer within a positioning matrix, delivering the frame with the most relevant product characteristics for the purchase decision. Its application visualizes the actual position of the own brand compared to the competition and helps to decide on the different approximation possibilities aforementioned (cf. Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 133f).

This focus on the actual market situation provides a good picture about the current situation as well as a sound base for strategic marketing planning. However, it lacks innovation orientation, is rather past-oriented and could also lead to harmonization of strategic considerations between all involved market players (cf. Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 136).

4.3.2 Active Positioning Approach

Since there are some restrictive limitations within the reactive positioning, the active positioning offers a novel perspective (cf. Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 136). It focuses on the divergence of products or services from the actual market by creating a completely new category within the mind of the consumer. According to positioning pioneers Al and Laura Ries, who first published this new approach, the most successful method to build a strong brand is to create a new market and hence be the first one in it (cf. Ries/Ries 2004, p. 18; Powerbrand 2020). Through this strategy, firms also have the possibility to establish a true competitive advantage (cf. Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 136).

In order to develop an active positioning, two distinct orientations are possible. Firstly, the 'outside-in-orientation' evaluates the latent needs of the target group in order to develop an appropriate solution. In contrast, the 'inside-out-orientation' aims to create innovative solutions resulting from the organization's core competences, for which in a later step, customers with the appropriate latent needs are being sought for (cf. Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 136; Brandtner 2002, p. 20 - 23). The main goal behind this approach is to understand customers better and react to their needs faster than the competitors (cf. Tomczak/Kuss/Reinecke 2014, p. 162). In any case, only the combination of inside-out and outside-in orientations can lead to a long-term competitive advantage. It describes an organizations' ability to consider both, the latent needs of customers and providing the appropriate solution with the internal core competences (cf. Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 139f).

4.4 Implementation of Positioning

Since all strategic considerations have been described in the previous chapters, this part of the thesis deals with the implementation and derivation of appropriate measures for the establishment of a specific branding.

The strategic realization of positioning and therefore fundamental presentation of the brand is often defined as branding (cf. Schmidt 2015, p. 68; Baumgarth 2014, p. 260). It comprises all relevant design elements of a brand, which are summarized in the theoretical concept of the branding triangle. These elements are needed to differentiate brands with similar alternatives and establish a clear association and recognition (cf. Langner 2003, p. 25). Furthermore, different customer touchpoints

associated with the branding communication are an important factor that needs to be considered in the alignment of branding. Since the branding triangle as well as deduction of customer touchpoints form the most important base for the brand building process (cf. Schmidt 2015, p. 68f; Esch 2017, p. 310), they will be elaborated in detail within this chapter.

4.4.1 Branding Triangle

The main aim of branding is to combine all elements of a brand into a holistic picture about the product or service (cf. Schmidt 2015, p. 69). These elements can be divided into substantive elements, aiming to convey fundamental information, as well as formal elements relating to all external parts of a brand which are mainly transported visually. In any case, both are perceived through the human's basic sensory modalities. However, verbal and visual elements constitute the most important factors for the positioning and establishment of a brand (cf. Langner 2003, p. 25f).

Langner firstly published the 'magical' branding triangle in 2003, focusing on the verbal and visual brand elements which include the brand name, brand logo and brand design (cf. Langner 2003, p. 26; Schmidt 2015, p. 69; Esch 2017, p. 310f). However, since the brand packaging and design is not applied for service brands, Bruhn suggested to have a slightly modified version of it, exchanging the brand design with the brand slogan in order to develop additional value to the intangible service brand (cf. Bruhn/Meffert/Hadwich 2019, p. 529), as illustrated in the following figure:

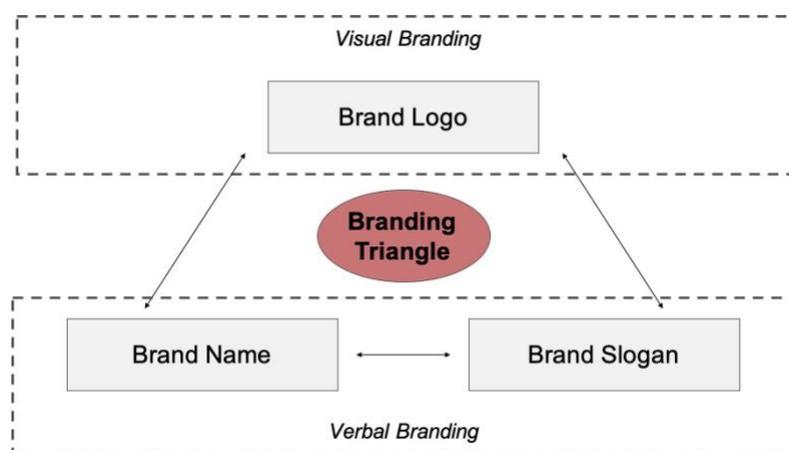


Figure 10: Branding Triangle (based on Bruhn/Meffert/Hadwich 2019, p. 530)

However, the perfect integration of all three elements is essential. They need to play together in a perfect way in order to reinforce the position of the brand in the minds

of the customers. If applied correctly, it supports acceptance and therefore brand awareness, and it also remains within the mind of consumers, which is especially important during the brand building phase (cf. Esch 2017, p. 311f).

4.4.1.1 Brand Name

A brand name can consist of letters, numbers as well as special characters (cf. Langner 2002, p. 27). According to Ries, the brand name is the most important branding decision for the brand building (cf. Ries/Ries 2002, p. 44). This is also true for the health-care organizations, which target the creation of a name that will be recognized in a long-term perspective. Hence, a brand name should be short, unique, communicating the service's benefits, outlining qualities, it must be easy to pronounce and remember and, most importantly, needs to be distinctive (cf. Kotler 2008, p. 300; Ries/Ries 2002, p. 44; Brandtner 2019, p. 69). Ideally, the brand can be downsized to a single word, which has a place in the mind of the customer (cf. Brandtner 2019, p. 70). But in order to transform a name into a brand, it must also evoke respect, passion, trust, engagement and even a rather emotional relationship with the consumer. Within the non-profit branding, the name needs to further establish a set of memories or feelings that foster the strong relationship (cf. Worth 2019, p. 249). With achieving these set of characteristics, belonging, preference and real attachment to the brand can be built (cf. Kapferer 2012, p. 9, 185).

For the brand building concept, the 'Joyce-principle' is most successful. It describes the linkage of the brand name to the product characteristics and image which should be evoked within the consumer. Even though the name does not need to be real, it should still connote to specific brand elements (cf. Langner 2002, p. 29). The advantage of this brand name is that they arouse quick associations for consumers that have potential to maintain a long-term position in their minds. However, these brand names are not supporting product and service characteristics, but rather the brand positioning and related associations (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 263).

Latest research confirms these findings and proves the preferred purchase of products with 'better' brand names compared to other alternatives. However, which brand name is perceived as 'better' is determined by consumers. One possibility to match this perception is to choosing a clear and unique (preferentially nonword) brand name which may not lead to confusion or misunderstanding and matching the

name to the quality and benefits of the corresponding product or service, such as e.g. Duracell (cf. Hillenbrand et al. 2013, p. 301 - 307).

4.4.1.2 Brand Logo

During the implementation of positioning strategies, most businesses focus on the perfect wording or selection of brand-words alone. However, visuals, such as logos, have proven to be much more important than words, since consumers remember visuals rather than words or slogans (cf. Ries 2015a, p. 15-17; Baumgarth 2014, p. 267). This is also relevant for businesses and NPOs with limited budget, as brand logos create affective reactions before the implementation of promotion activities (cf. Bresciani/Del Ponte 2017, p. 375). Especially for service brands, who lack in tangibility, creating and placing the brand logo is particularly challenging as it cannot be indicated on a physical product. But since the customer in any case needs to be present on-site for the service performance, different possible customer touchpoints could support the visualization, which will be elaborated in a later chapter (cf. Bruhn/Strauss 2008, p. 15f). In any case, it is of great importance to integrate tangible elements into the service logo, which could also have an effect on the brand name (cf. Bruhn/Meffert/Hadwich 2019, p. 532).

In general, brands mainly consist of two main categories, namely key images and brand signals (cf. Schmidt 2015, p. 69, Langner 2003, p. 33). Firstly, key images can be described as emotional or informative associations supporting the brand building process. They contain the central advertising message and together with the brand name are mainly used to label the product or services. Brand signals represent the traditional brand logo, which increase brand awareness. They consist of real or abstract visual elements which are understood as traditional brands by customers without the dissemination of a specific content idea (cf. Langner 2003, p. 33f). In any case, research proves that when both elements are used to form the logo, a brand name and icon linked together, consumers perceive it as more attractive compared to logos using only either of the two (cf. Bresciani/Del Ponte 2017, p. 375).

However, the main aim of logos is to create awareness and appeal, they can be remembered easily and establish relevant associations for the desired positioning (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 267). Hence, for service brands, the following factors must be considered for the establishment of a brand visualization (cf.

Bruhn/Meffert/Hadwich 2019, p. 532; Luffarelli/Stamatogiannakis/Yang 2019, p. 89; Sharma/Varki 2018, p. 1, 7 – 8; Luffarelli/Mukesh/Mahmood 2019, p. 862; Bettels/Wiedmann 2019, p. 7-9):

- **(A)symmetry:** Symmetric shapes are processed faster, are more appealing and can be remembered more easily. Contrary to that, asymmetric logos lead to increased attraction at the consumers side since they are associated with a more exciting personality.
- **Complexity:** More complex stimuli are harder to remember than less complex brand visuals. Therefore, it is essential to create a descriptive visualization which has a positive influence on purchase decision, brand evaluation, and brand performance. This is due to the fact that they are easier to process and create a stronger perception of authenticity, which is important for consumers.
- **Figure-Base-Contrast:** The contrast of the logo from its background improves the ease of perception. Especially active white spaces can be applied as stylistic tool, as it fosters visual evaluation, ensures clear brand communication and improves the highlighting of the brand's personality.
- **Geometrical structure:** Abstract shapes which can be dismantled into simple geometric forms are faster processed as well as easier memorized.
- **Quality of forms:** Rectangular shapes are perceived as rather passive and powerful, whereas round shapes are linked with weak and passive characteristics and acute-angled shapes appear powerful and active.
- **Color:** Saturated brand colours are perceived as more pleasant than dark and tarnished colours.

In summary, the brand logo constitutes an important influence of the brand image (cf. Esch 2017, p. 328). Therefore, it can be understood as key element within the positioning concept of a brand and has to be equally simple and unique in order to be recognized and memorized by the target audience (cf. Ries 2015a, p. 21).

4.4.1.3 *Brand Slogan*

A brand slogan is a short phrase, which conveys emotional and descriptive information about the brand to the target audience. Slogans can also have various functions (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 269). Firstly, they can create and foster a brand's recognition value and therefore have a positive impact on the consumers purchase

decision, since they choose familiar brands rather than unknown alternatives (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 269; Vance/Virtue 2011, p. 42). In addition, slogans establish a conjunction between the offer and the brand, which concomitantly improves brand awareness. Furthermore, slogans underline the desired position of a brand and therefore have a positive influence on the brand's assessment (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 269f; Briggs/Janakiraman 2017, p. 98). Lastly, slogans usually also reflect a company's main strategy and provide a purchase reason due to differentiation from current alternatives (cf. Ries 2015b, p. 46; Bruhn 2019, p. 533).

Consequently, service brand slogans should fulfill the following preconditions (cf. Bruhn 2019, p. 533; Ries 2015b, p. 47; Brandtner 2019, p. 128, 134 - 136):

- A brand slogan must get to the heart of the brand's verbal positioning strategy in order to consolidate its brand perception in the long-term.
- Slogans must be communicable for publication in electronic media.
- They should be supported by memorable taglines or jingles.
- The wording should be defined in precise as well as comprehensible manner and should create a vivid picture of the brand. However, slogans do not have to be short, but may even include more than three to five words.
- The slogan must be tightly linked to the brand or could even include the brand name as part of it.

Furthermore, brand slogans need to be introduced at the beginning of the brand building process already, since they need to confirm and set the tonality of the whole brand communication (cf. Ries 2015b, p. 48). Therefore, slogans should also not be changed often due to their provision of stability and authenticity related to the respected brand (cf. Brandtner 2019, p. 128).

Although most literature focuses on the appropriate wording of slogans, it is rather the sound of the words that is key for brand slogans. This is due to the fact that the brain processes sound more easily than words. Therefore, tonality of slogans can be construed as one of the most important factors during the creation of a new and innovative brand slogan (Brandtner 2019, p. 128f).³

Considering the points mentioned before, the most important criteria for creating a successful slogan, which is memorable for consumers in a long-term perspective, do not focus on the wording alone. Hence, creating a slogan must include or consider alliteration, rhyme, repetition, reversal or double entendre. Hence, to

create a slogan, it is necessary not only to focus on the content, but more importantly on its memorability (cf. Ries 2015b, p. 50; Brandtner 2019, p. 130 - 134).

4.4.2 Brand Touchpoints within the Customer Journey

Customer touchpoints or also called brand touchpoints can be defined as any contact points where an interaction between the consumer and a brand can occur (cf. Brandmeyer Markenberatung 2020; Aaker 2015, p. 85). The summary of all possible touchpoints forms the customer journey, which is understood as the sequence of all interactions influencing the purchase decision of a consumer. Hence, this concept puts a special emphasis on the consumers experience during the buying process (cf. Stöckle 2015, p. 159; Spies 2015, p. 176f). Especially with the development of digitalization, the possibilities of brand touchpoints increased enormously. The more consumers shift their usage behavior from traditional media to online channels, the more interaction possibilities emerge from which the brand can be leverage of. However, organizations should only operate on the channels they are able to serve and manage properly with the given resources (cf. Baumüller 2017, p. 52f; Burman et al 2017, p. 196). However, it is important to note that the perception and experience the customer gains with the different touchpoints has a strong influence on the customer relationship and consequently it's brand's image (cf. Brandmeyer Markenberatung 2020; Aaker 2015, p 85).

Therefore, especially for service brands, the strategic fit between the brand positioning and implementation at the brand's touchpoints is even more vital compared to products. The reason for this lies in the performance of the service, which is conducted through the interaction with the organization's employees and as a result has a formative impact on the brand's perception (cf. Bruhn 2008, p. 18). Hence, the main aim of the customer touchpoint management of service brands is to create positive experiences and establish a positive holistic picture of the brand. With this, strong brand loyalty as well as customer excitement leading into the development of emotional relationships can be established (cf. Bruhn 2019, p. 356; Baetzgen 2015, p. 8).

However, not all customer touchpoints have the same relevance for the establishment of a strong customer relationship. Therefore, the evaluation of the given importance of each contact point can be conducted through the following five-step prioritization (cf. Aaker 2015 p. 85):

1. Identification of existing and potential customer touchpoints
2. Evaluation of the customer experiences at each touchpoint
3. Determination of influence between touchpoint and customer decision process as well as brand perception
4. Setting Priorities relating to the efficiency and performance of each touchpoint
5. Development of an action plan aiming to improve customer experience

In order to evaluate the appropriate and most important customer touchpoints, two different approaches will be consolidated within the following subchapters. The first approach focuses on the traditional marketing mix measures. Therefore, additionally to the known four P's of *product*, *place*, *promotion* and *price* within traditional marketing literature, service brands require an extension of three more variables including *people*, *physical evidence* and *process* (cf. Zeithaml/Bitner/Gremler 2018, p. 25f; Wirtz/Lovelock 2018, p. 18; Markenlexikon 2020).

The more recent approach of the previously described customer journey evaluates the individual and flexible process a customer is experiencing throughout the entire buying process. It includes all possible touchpoints a customer can have with a brand during the prepurchase, purchase and post-purchase phase. Hence, this approach also includes similar influencing factors, such as a consumers' past experiences, future expectations as well as external factors related to a brand, which are usually summarized within the customer journey map as illustrated in the following figure (cf. Lemon/Verhoef 2016, p. 74; Schlömer 2018, p. 81). As illustrated subsequently, this journey as well as associated touchpoints can be separated into five phases, starting from awareness, consideration set until the actual purchase, followed by the customer retention and advocacy after the buying decision (cf. Schlömer 2018, p. 81).

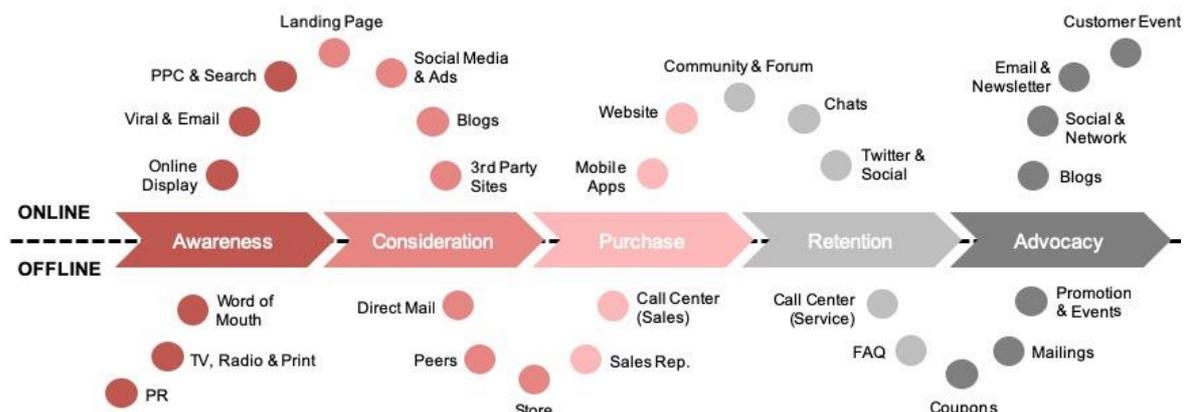


Figure 11: Customer Journey Map (based on Schlömer 2018, p. 81)

In order to establish a successful customer touchpoint management, it is essential to harmonize them with the brand and avoid too many divergent touchpoints which could lead to different perceived experiences for the consumer. Furthermore, it is vital to link all possible touchpoints in order to establish one coherent picture of the brand (cf. Keller 2018, p. 41). This is especially important since consumers also tend to switch between online and offline touchpoints permanently or even use both to come to a buying decision, depending on the individual's information demand (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 169; Schlömer 2018, p. 83).

Nevertheless, it must be considered that the perception of individual customer touchpoints is still influenced by the personality traits of the respected target group as well as the industry particularities (cf. Rajavi/Kushwaha/Steenkamp 2019, p. 651). Therefore, the next subchapter will analyze the most relevant touchpoints as well as marketing mix measures related to service brands within the non-profit environment. According to latest literature, nine touchpoints have a significant influence on the positive brand evaluation as well as brand loyalty, namely customer service, mobile messaging, website, TV and cinema advertising, the physical store, mobile advertising and apps, word of mouth as well as sales representatives (cf. Ieva/Ziliani 2018, p. 450).

4.4.2.1 Product

Since services miss the tangible component, supplementary service components in terms of order taking, consultation, handling exceptions, hospitality or providing information about the respective service can be vital during the customer journey (cf. Witz/Lovelock 2018, p. 18). However, the customer's perceived quality of the service brand can be very different from the actual one and has a strong influence on the brand evaluation. This illustrates that the quality is not only derived from the functional performance, but rather from the whole experience around the brand (cf. Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 186). And since consumers tend to choose the original brand over other alternatives, it is essential to highlight elements of supremacy, such as e.g. helpfulness, speed, accuracy, care of installation or customer service (cf. Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 186f; Brandtner 2019, p. 45 - 48).

4.4.2.2 Price

Consumers evaluate brands not only in accordance to their relative price within a certain category, but also in relation to quality. In particular, consumers usually rate a service quality based on the price and hence derive a perceived value from it. This perceived value constitutes an important purchase decision factor (cf. Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 190f). However, for the pricing of service brands also the associated costs using the service must be considered as well, such as waiting time, physical effort, or additional monetary costs. These factors can also influence the consumers' evaluation of the service brand (cf. Wirtz/Lovelock 2018, p. 21).

4.4.2.3 Store

The element of place is often associated with distribution, which is only partly applicable for the intangible services (cf. Zeithaml/Bitner/Gremler 2018, p. 25; Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p. 78). However, the physical store where the service performance is conducted or where intermediaries deliver the service as third party should be considered as important touchpoint and branding element (cf. Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 196f; Witz/Lovelock 2018, p. 19). Therefore, it is essential not to lose personal contact to the consumer and focus on maintaining a personal relationship to customers (cf. Bruhn 2019, p. 329).

Another important factor is the importance of time. According to literature, additionally to the physical store, speed and the convenience of time in this context play an important role during the decision process. Since today's consumers tend to be surpassing time-sensitive, they expect continuous service availability. If the mentioned availability is not given, customers might consume similar service from the competition (cf. Witz/Lovelock 2018, p. 20).

4.4.2.4 Sales Representative

Especially within the service and non-profit industry, people – or in this context employees – conducting the service are brand ambassadors. They represent and therefore influence the brand's image and assessment of customers (cf. Heuser/Abdalalem 2018, p. 116). However, not only the service performance itself, but also their attitudes, behaviors, personal appearance or even their way to dress influences the consumer's brand perception (cf. Zeithaml/Bitner/Gremler 2018 p. 26). Furthermore, there is a significant correlation between the personal or

emotional relationship between employee and customer and brand loyalty (cf. Bruhn 2019, p. 330). Since personnel plays an important role within the service branding, it is important to choose the right people for the job and invest appropriate resources into their development (cf. Umundze 2020).

4.4.2.5 Physical Evidence

The intangibility of services constitutes the biggest challenge related to customer touchpoints. In order to overcome this obstacle firms often set their focus on establishing a strong corporate brand or on incorporating as many physical elements as possible (De Chernatony/McDonald/Wallace 2011, p. 223f; Bruhn 2008, p. 15f). It can be established through the equipment or furniture within the store, through uniforms worn by personnel, vehicles or brands on any print forms. In case of customers who value the brand's appearance as external image, they can also convert into contact subjects by e.g. wearing a branded t-shirt or other merchandize (cf. Bruhn 2008, p. 15f).

4.4.2.6 Process

The process can be described as the method of how the service is delivered, consumed or co-created to the consumer (cf. Zeithaml/Bitner/Gremler 2018, p. 27). Within the non-profit sector the consistence of process and message transported through the service is essential, since it reflects the organizations standards related to accountability and transparency (Umundze 2020). If service processes are not performed or designed properly, it could result in frustration at the consumer and low productivity as well as increased defective execution of employees (cf. Wirtz/Lovelock 2018, p. 238). Depending on the process complexity, it could be necessary to establish certain standards, visualizing the consumer what they may expect from the service (cf. Zeithaml/Bitner/Gremler 2018, p. 27).

4.4.2.7 Word of Mouth

Since the success of a service introduction very often depends on the reputation of the respected company, word-of-mouth can be seen as critical touchpoint for a service brand launch (cf. Abedi/Berman/Krass 2014, p. 994). Especially for non-profit communication word-of-mouth is one of the most important touchpoints. This is due to the fact that people give more credence on the information they receive from individuals and peers than from the media. Hence, one of the most critical

communication variables for nonprofits is credibility which therefore can vary due to the specific transmitter of the information. Most credibility is transferred therefore through the experiences and opinions family members, friends and associated communicate through online or verbal communication. After this category, professionals, followed by newspaper, direct mail or the internet receive the most credibility by consumers (cf. Worth 2019, p. 288f).

4.4.2.8 Website

According to literature, the website or landing page constitutes one of the most important touchpoints which influences the customer loyalty and positive brand evaluation of service brands (cf. Ieva/Ziliani 2018, p. 450). Therefore, it is vital to provide helpful and also meaningful content to consumers, such as success stories with testimonials, brochures, price lists, product certificates or tests, product test offers, to win their attention. Additionally, it is recommended to implement a call-to-action field, where potential customers data related to the customer's problem or need can be gathered in exchange for a free trial or additional content (cf. Schlömer 2018, p. 113).

5 Integrated Marketing Communication for Brand Building

After the strategic considerations relating to brand management and its creation of identify, positioning and branding, this chapter now focuses on the communication of the predefined strategies to the consumer. Hence, integrated marketing communication (IMC) measures the second side of the brand management coin and aims to build a brand in a sustainable way (cf. Esch 2017, p. 313). It is supposed to bundle transport all information and messages of strategically predefined brand identity and positioning to the target group (cf. Tomczak/Kuss/Reinecke 2014, p. 218 – 221; Bruhn 2014, p. 38).

Especially for service brands, IMC focuses on the reduction of the consumers' perceived risk related to the purchase as well as communicate the service value proposition which should create a specific customer expectation. Additionally, due to the characteristics of service brands, a 360° customer experience should be established, where all forms of communication related to customer touchpoints (e.g. contacts, processes, personnel and stakeholders) need to establish a holistic

picture of the brand (cf. Meyer/Meindl/Brudler 2016, p. 571; Zeithaml/Bitner/Gremler 2018, p. 422f).

Within the scope of NPOs, IMC exhibits some particularities over commercial goods and services (cf. Bruhn/Herbst 2016, p. 607f):

1. The variety of stakeholders requires a differentiated and group-oriented communication, depending on the target group.
2. The scarcity of budget available for marketing communication raises the need for creative but cost-effective methods.
3. The immateriality of marketing messages creates the need for quantification and clarification of the main goal or mission.
4. The potential of social polarization through messages needs special consideration if the aim of the marketing measure is to change the behavior of the respective target group or communicate a specific opinion on a public topic.

As a result, the following chapter will describe the IMC concept and will afterwards analyze all instruments relevant for service brands within the non-profit environment as well as find appropriate application approaches for it.

5.1 Definition of Integrated Marketing Communication

The integrated marketing communication can be defined as '*carefully integrating and coordinating the company's many communications channels to deliver a clear, consistent and compelling message about the organization and its products.*' (Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p. 427). The original definition of IMC was established in 1989 and concentrated on the planning of communication measures. Today, this position is still applicable, but has been extended by a strong customer relationship focus (cf. Percy 2018, p. 5; Smith/Zook 2020, p. 12; Blech/Blech 2018, p. 10).

The mentioned definition can also be applied for brand communication. According to recent literature, modern brands need a very innovative and integrated brand communication, which are premised on a consistent and clear brand identity connected to all brand touchpoints aiming at individualized and consistent brand experience as well as sustainable customer loyalty (cf. Misof/Schwarz 2017, p. 44; Kotler/Armstrong 2018, p. 427 - 429). The rationale for it is that customers seek for a single and individual customer experience and journey, even though applying a multichannel journey including online and offline media (cf. Smith/Zook 2020, p. 5).

However, the integration of all touchpoints plays an even greater role in an NPO than in other organizations, since they cover a greater variety of stakeholders which at the same time are often overlapping (cf. Worth 2019, p. 288f; Bruhn/Herbst 2016, p. 607f). Hence, the following illustration provides an overview about all relevant internal and external nonprofit stakeholder groups, their relation as well as their touchpoints to be considered:

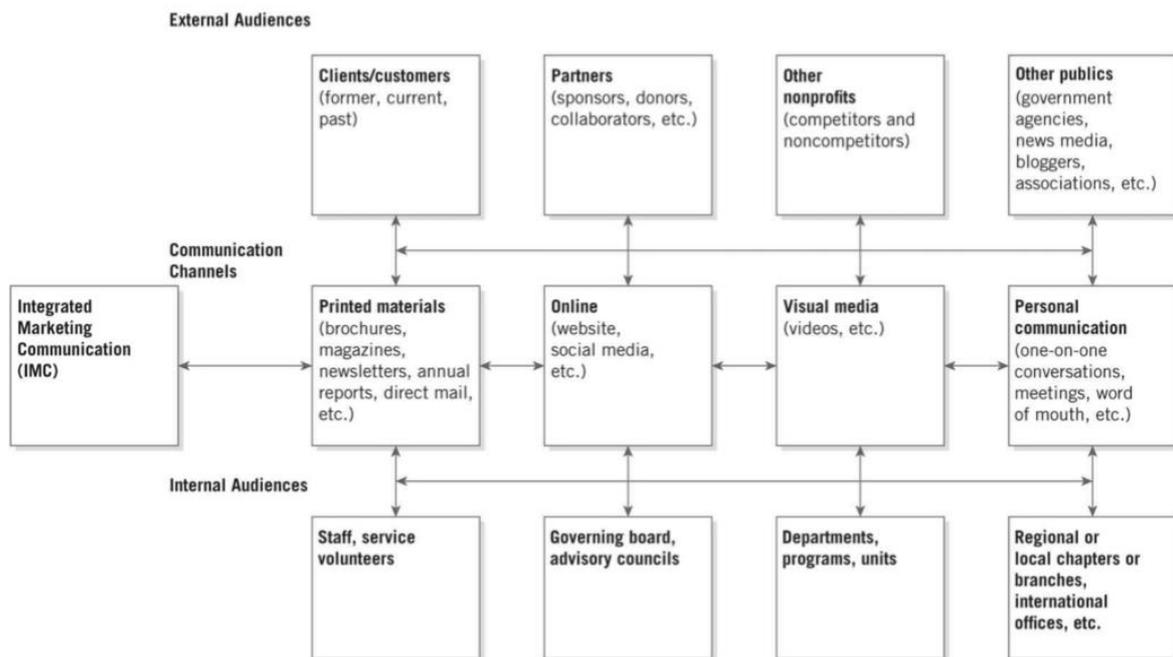


Figure 12: IMC within the Nonprofit Environment
(Worth 2019, p. 290)

However, for integrated nonprofit brand communication a rather personally and emotionally relevant communication which also creates a sense of community must be established. Therefore, the message not only has to be understood by the target group but also has to be able to 'touch their hearts' by convincing them about the passion and mission of the NPO and provoke them to participate. (cf. Daw 2015, p. 211). In addition, not only the integration of communication, but also the continuous time and content-related repetition of key messages is essential for a successful brand building communication (cf. Ries 2015a, p. 26; Esch 2017, p. 200, 223).

5.2 Forms of Integrated Brand Communication

Following the main definition of IMC, this chapter deals with the different forms of integrations which need to be complied for the implementation of IMC. However, all forms of integration must be implemented throughout all target groups as well as instruments used for IMC (cf. Bruhn 2014, p. 135).

5.2.1 Content-Related Integration

The content-related integration refers to all activities transmitting central messages and arguments needed for the implementation of the desired positioning. In other words, all contents communicated through textual and verbal communication as well as symbols, images and similar forms need to be harmonized so they conclude to one consistent picture about the brand (cf. Bruhn 2014, p. 123).

5.2.2 Formal Integration

The formal integration illustrates the synchronization of all design tools in order to establish a consistent appearance of the brand. In general, formal integration can be implemented easier than the content-related synchronization but has no strong influence on the positioning of the brand. It can include e.g. the brand name, logo, corporate design, slogans, layout, colours, key images as well as typography (cf. Bruhn 2014, p. 125; Esch 2019b, p. 914f).

5.2.3 Temporal Integration

The temporal integration suggests the temporal coordination of related messages and instruments of communication in order to strengthen the consistent picture of the brand. It aims to establish a push between individual instruments such as social media with advertising or print ads with TV-Ads (cf. Bruhn 2014, p. 130). However, the implementation can be carried out simultaneously (classical print advertising), gradually with sometime in-between (Mailings and Ads), or in succession with one instrument replacing another (cf. Fuchs/Unger 2014, p. 161f).

5.3 Communication Instruments for Non-Profit Organizations

Since the IMC strategy has a substantial influence on the establishment and maintenance of a brand, the selection and detailed analysis of the appropriate instruments related to their brand building contribution is a crucial step (cf. Bruhn 2014, p. 118). Hence, this chapter will focus on all relevant communication instruments for the brand building process within the NGO environment. Furthermore, the assembly and integration of important tools will be analyzed, as it constitutes the core of ICM (cf. Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 218).

Within the non-profit communication and selection of instruments, it is important to note that traditional instruments (e.g. advertising) can have a very converse effect.

This is due to the interpretation of each instrument in contrast to the organizations' mission, budget and target group. Therefore, all instruments illustrated in the following figure can be assorted into instruments with low and high potential benefits (cf. Bruhn/Herbst 2016, p. 614).

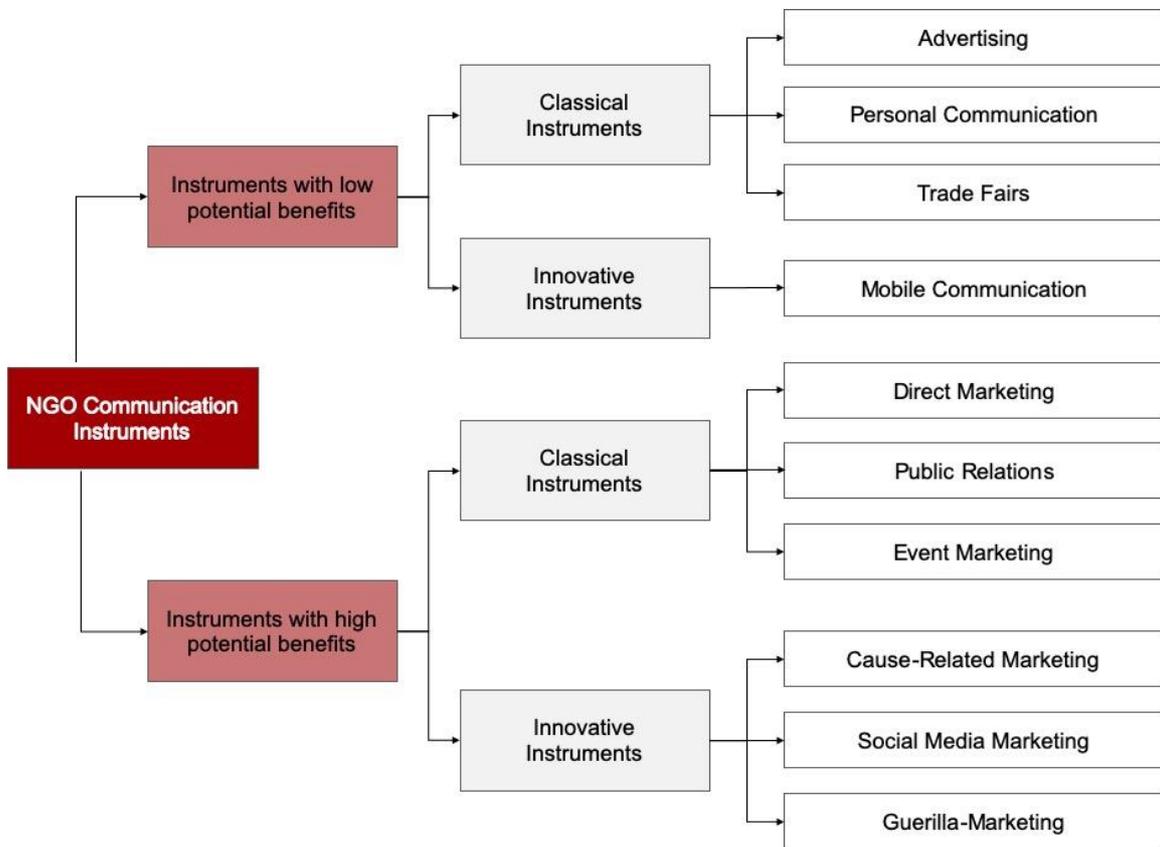


Figure 13: Communication Instruments within the Non-Profit Environment (based on Bruhn/Herbst 2016, p. 615)

In addition, each group in turn distinguishes between classical and innovative instruments, resulting from the development of information and communication technology (cf. Bruhn/Herbst 2016, p. 614; Voeth/Herbst 2013, p. 500). However, since IMC and the definition of appropriate tools is mainly derived from literature of service marketing within the for-profit sector, the instruments listed in the figure above apply for both thesis backgrounds, the NPO as well as service environment (cf. Bruhn/Herbst 2016, p. 619).

5.3.1 Communication Instruments with Low Potential Benefits

This subchapter focuses on the analysis of instruments with low potential benefits, as illustrated in Figure 12. For a better visualization of key elements related to each instrument, all information as well as pros and cons in the NPO service brand context will be portrayed and summarized in a lucid list format (cf. Bruhn/Herbst

2016 p. 615f; Keller/Swaminathan 2020 p. 218 – 230, 264; Bruhn 2014, p. 177 – 181; Blech/Blech 2018, p. 17).

Advertising	
<p>Advertising describes any paid and nonpersonal promotion in relation to an organization's brand, goods or services. It includes mediums such as television, radio, print media in newspapers and magazines as well as place advertising on e.g. billboards.</p>	
<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powerful tool to establish strong and unique brand associations • Focus on increase or establishment of brand awareness • High reach • Can portray the brand effectively and hence communicate key brand benefits and intangibles (e.g. emotions or personality) 	<p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to predict and calculate • Customers are often saturated by too much advertising • Due to large number on ads, customers are not able to remember the ads afterwards • Rather expensive • Print media and radio have lost popularity through increase in online interest. • Used as more tactical instrument
Personal Communication	
<p>It defines the direct exchange of information between the consumer and organization, mainly via face-to-face (F2F) communication. Within the NPO environment, it is one of the most important instruments.</p>	
<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct customer feedback • Fosters customer relationship • High credibility 	<p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High need in resources (time, personnel)
Trade Fairs	
<p>This instrument refers to special events, where the promotion of the organization's brand or product takes place.</p>	
<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct communication to target group 	<p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High costs with low disponibility • Restricted to time and place • Importance of fairs decreases especially for B2C sector

Mobile Communication	
Mobile communication is a rather innovative instrument, including communication through the internet and smartphones.	
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick communication of missions and news • Mobile tagging fosters high reach • Possibility to get into contact with organization through messaging or mail • Direct communication with desired target group • Rather inexpensive compared to former instruments • Fosters the establishment of a relationship between consumer and organization • High level of customization through different channels 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication limited to specific target group – often hard to enlarge the audience • Possibility of negative brand engagement through customer anonymity

Table 3: Communication Instruments with Low Potential Benefits (own presentation)

5.3.2 Communication Instruments with High Potential Benefits

Within this chapter, all communication instruments with a high potential benefit will be analyzed in the following tabular display (cf. Bruhn/Herbst 2016, p. 616 - 619; Bruhn 2014, p. 178 – 182; Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 230 - 232 ; Blakeman 2018, p. 328f; Blech/Blech 2018, p. 19; Tropp 2018, p. 183 – 188; Preusse/Schulze 2018, p. 319; Brandtner 2019, p. 166):

Direct Marketing	
Direct Marketing is mainly understood as one part of the promotional marketing mix and includes offline and online mediums such as direct mailing, database management, direct selling, telemarketing and direct response advertising.	
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important for saturated markets for brand differentiation • Increases revenue directly • Increases customer loyalty (discounts and customer cards) 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of customer information is needed (databases) • Not appropriate for brand building or promoting brand image

Public Relations	
<p>Public Relations (PR) aims to transport cognitive information to the public. For NPOs, the most common mediums are press releases, conferences and publications to socially relevant topics in magazines or personal communication related to public authorities or lobbyists.</p>	
<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evokes trust and comprehension • Creates credibility and acceptance • Maintains a public relationship or public image of the NPO • Increases brand awareness for brand building efforts • Increases public attention • Beneficial for low-budget NPOs 	<p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not generate direct desire to donate or purchase
Event Marketing	
<p>Event Marketing for NPOs refers to any activities with relation to entertainment or social purposes. It aims to not only entertain guests, but also to inform them about the NPOs' cause and create a special experience around the event.</p>	
<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of brand awareness • Establishes a brand experience and customer relationships • Generates additional revenue 	<p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rather short-term or project-oriented goals
Cause-Related Marketing	
<p>This medium describes the cooperation between an NPO and a for-profit company, where the revenue of sold products is fully or partially donated to the NPOs mission or cause.</p>	
<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NPO leverages from the community of the for-profit customers and can amplify their community or target group • Brand communication savings through large campaign of for-profit company • NPO gains additional revenue 	<p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is applied as a rather tactical instrument to generate a project-related revenue instead of strategic brand management

Social Media Marketing	
<p>Social Media Marketing aims to inform consumers about their offer and communicate with the target group online through different channels. It gives NPOs the possibility to communicate the mission and interact with their audience.</p>	
<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick and direct communication with target group and fans • Communicate the NPOs' mission • Supports the communication of brand positioning and brand image • Offers various possibilities to visualize and communicate the brand • Extension of target groups due to different channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, etc.) • Cost-effective and rather inexpensive PR • Increases importance due to digitalization • Dialogue-oriented communication 	<p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User-generated content cannot be managed completely by the organization – rather reactive
Guerilla Marketing	
<p>It can be described as an unconventional and memorable event to present a product or service and gain special attention of consumers. They aim to stand out from conventional advertising and create a unique customer experience.</p>	
<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract attention of consumers in an unconventional way • Creates a lot of awareness • Often used for charity events or causes to raise money • Creates lots of word-of-mouth and viral communication fostering brand awareness • Less financial expenses needed compared to traditional advertising 	<p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onetime event only • Brand needs to repeat the hype and innovative communication style • Mostly used for saturated markets to differentiate from competition

Table 4: Communication Instruments with High Potential Benefits (own presentation)

5.3.3 Selection and Combination of Communication Instruments

The appropriate selection and combination of communication instruments depends on the synergies and relation between the product or service with the actual market. For service brands, for example, direct contact with the consumer is most important. Hence, instruments like direct marketing or personal communication play an important role within the integrated communication mix (cf. Bruhn 2014, p. 176).

However, the appropriate selection and combination will be determined after the evaluation of results from the primary market research within the practical part of this thesis.

5.4 Communication Approaches for Brand Building

After the analysis of all relevant IMC forms and instruments, this chapter now deals with the approach of how to enter the market. According to positioning experts, there are two possible ways to launch a brand, the so called 'Big-Bang' or 'Slow Takeoff' approach, which are elaborated within the following subchapters (cf. Ries/Ries 2004, p. 268f).

5.4.1 Big-Bang Approach

The Big-Bang approach references to a quick brand launch through advertising measures. It describes the concept of spending most of the budget on advertising at the beginning, since this is traditionally understood as creating the most attention with the target group. Hence, this approach is mostly compared to a rocket-launch which has a rapid start followed by a slow departure (cf. Ries/Ries 2004, p. 268f).

The main disadvantage of advertisements chosen for the brand building process, is that they lack credibility (cf. Ries/Ries 2004, p. 271f). This is due to the fact that it gives the impression that the organization solely wants to sell their products, which has proven to cause reluctance in consumers (cf. Brandtner 2019, p. 165). Therefore, advertising messages are often perceived as one-sided, selfish and rather oriented towards the company instead of the customer (cf. Ries/Ries 2002b, p. 73).

Therefore, advertising and the associated 'Big-Bang' approach is not an appropriate communication method for the launch of a brand (cf. Brandtner 2019, p. 195; Ries/Ries 2004, p. 271f; Ries/Ries 2002b, p. 243f). When building a brand, many important strategic steps must be accomplished, such as the establishment of brand

attention, the new brand name and target brand attributes within the mind of the consumer. Therefore, a slow takeoff approach is more appropriate, which will be described in the following chapter (cf. Ries/Ries 2002b, p. 243f).

5.4.2 Slow Buildup Approach

The second possible method for a brand launch is the slow takeoff approach. It is often compared to an airplane launch, since the brand's success starts slowly and increases exponentially over time. This approach is linked to the application of public relations (PR) as main medium to communicate the new brand (cf. Ries/Ries 2004, p. 268f; Ries/Ries 2002b, p. 243f).

The success of many internationally known brands (e.g. Microsoft, Apple, Coca-Cola) have applied this method and have successfully established a strong brand (cf. Brandtner 2019, p. 162; Brandtner 2005, p. 99f). In order to achieve the same, it is necessary to be the first within a new category and create a vast amount of publicity. This offers the opportunity to let others speak about your brand and create awareness and, therefore word-of-mouth which results in important credibility. Hence, this approach is seen as the most powerful one and deemed more appropriate for the brand building process as advertising (cf. Ries/Ries 2002a, p. 15f). Especially for organizations with low budget, PR is a suitable option to still establish a strong brand. Furthermore, today's technological development also supports PR, since social media is perfect for spreading interesting content and stories for brands to establish (cf. Brandtner 2019, p. 166).

However, promoting the new brand through PR alone is insufficient. After the brand has established on the market, advertising illustrates the following step (cf. Brandtner 2019, p. 162; Ries/Ries 2002a, p. 19; Ries/Ries 2002b, p. 265f). According to literature, consumers are firstly looking for a fresh and different product when identifying a new brand. Once the brand has established over time, the following advertisement's effort is put into maintaining or improving the current positioning of the brand. (cf. Brandtner 2019, p. 163).

As a result, the slow buildup approach is more suitable for the brand launch of the non-profit service brand since it is very cost effective, establishes credibility and gives more creative communication possibilities compared to advertising.

6 Brand Controlling

After the implementation of communication actions, it is essential to measure the success of the whole strategic and operational concept and therefore evaluate the realization of the previously set objectives. Additionally, marketing brand controlling also supports future planning of strategic and operative measures in order to continuously improve a brand's performance (cf. Tomczak/Kuss/Reinecke 2014, p. 254; Esch 2017, p. 627).

In general, controlling measures can be divided into two categories. Either the evaluation concerns the relation to the consumers and illustrates Value-to-Firm Metrics, or they evaluate the product's or brand's success within the organizational environment and thus are part of the Value-to-Firm Metrics (cf. Meffert et al. 2019, p. 930f). For the purpose of this thesis, the most relevant metrics will be analyzed within the following subchapters.

6.1 Value-to-Firm Metrics

Value-to-Firm (V2F) metrics are mostly quantitative and thus economically oriented, since they evaluate the performance of a product or brand in relation to the company's success (cf. Meffert et al. 2019, p. 930f). Hence, the most appropriate ones for brand building are described as follows.

Return on Sales (ROS)

The return on sales illustrates the 'net profit as a percentage of sales revenue' and gives an illustration of how much profit is being made with the achieved revenue by subtracting the total costs (Farris et al. 2010, p. 338). This key figure can be calculated with the following formula (cf. Meffert et al. 2019, p. 931):

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Net Profit (\$)} &= \text{Sales Revenue (\$)} - \text{Total Costs (\$)} \\ \text{Return on Sales - ROS (\%)} &= \frac{\text{Net Profit (\$)}}{\text{Sales Revenue (\$)}} \end{aligned}$$

Figure 14: Calculation of ROS (based on Farris et al. 2010, p. 340)

However, small business or organizations with limited personnel and financial resources often focus only on revenue maximization, since they often have no access to the cost structure (cf. Ng/Harrison/Akroyd 2013, p. 92-94) Hence, this

would also be a first and permissible step before establishing an appropriate ROS metric, since it could also relate directly to the organization's objective.

Return on Marketing Investment (ROMI)

Since many firms require the justification of all marketing expenditures, the marketing metric ROMI has gained in popularity (cf. Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 328). For this metric, the total expenses of the current period illustrate how the expenditures for marketing or a specific brand contribute to the overall profit. It is calculated through the following formula (cf. Farris et al. 2020, p. 350f):

$$\text{Return on Marketing Investment (ROMI) (\%)} = \frac{[\text{Incremental Revenue Attributable to Marketing (\$)} * \text{Contribution Margin (\%)} - \text{Marketing Spending (\$)}]}{\text{Marketing Spending (\$)}}$$

Figure 15: Calculation of ROMI (based on Farris et al. 2020, p. 351)

Digital Marketing Metrics

With the increasing importance of online marketing possibilities, the need for digital controlling instruments increased as well. Especially the application social media marketing offers various possibilities to report the performance of marketing measures and to gain important insights about the topics associated with a brand (cf. Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 335). Possible metrics for online marketing would be the following (cf. Kingsnorth 2016, p. 160):

- **Web analytics** measure the performance of a website through page views, unique visits, bounce rate, session duration, new vs. returning visitors, demographics, device type, traffic source, etc.
- **Social analytics** measure social media effectiveness through reach, engagement, impressions, click-through rate, conversion rate, sales, share of voice, mentions, followers, etc.
- **SEO analytics** measure the individual's search performance through inbound links, site speed, search visibility, brand monitoring, etc.
- **User experience (UX) analytics** include the monitoring of every step of customer journey to improve conversion. For this various different software applications can be used.

6.2 Value-to-Customer Metrics

In comparison to V2F, Value-to-Customer (V2C) metrics are rather qualitative figures, since they focus on the mind-set and perception of the customer in relation to the product or brand (cf. Meffert et al. 2019, p. 932). Therefore, this chapter includes information about brand awareness and brand image as appropriate controlling instruments, since they constitute the base for brand trust, loyalty and satisfaction influencing the purchase decision of consumers (Esch/Langner 2019b, p. 1386).

Brand Awareness

According to literature, brand awareness is the most important aspect during the brand building process. Hence, this measure can also be seen as the central metric to measure a brands' success (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 253). It describes 'the likelihood that a brand will come to a consumer's mind in various situations, and the ease in which it does so giving distinct types of cues' (Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 376; Burmann et al. 2017, p. 29). However, brand awareness can be divided into the following two different types (cf. Esch/Langner 2019b, p. 1387):

1. **Aided Brand Awareness:** With this approach, a predefined set of brands are selected and provided to the consumer through this recognition test, one particular brand needs to be recognized by the examinee.
2. **Unaided Brand Awareness:** This figure is measured by the recall test, where the consumer spontaneously needs to name products of a category.

Brand Image

Brand image describes the set of associations and benefits a consumer links with a specific brand (cf. Burmann et al. 2017, p. 29). In short, it is the customer's perceived image and opinion of a brand. This could include verbal, nonverbal, emotional or cognitive impressions about the brand (cf. Esch/Langner 2019b, p. 1387). However, a distinction between lower-level considerations (image, benefits and performance) as well as higher-level consideration (relationships, judgements and emotions) is needed (cf. Keller/Swaminathan 2020, p. 378). In contrast to brand awareness as key measure for the brand building, brand image illustrates the main metric for brand loyalty. Therefore, the measurement of brand image is not suited for the brand building phase, since it is conducted during the brand maintenance process, after the brand's establishment on the market (cf. Baumgarth 2014, p. 260).

7 Theoretical Brand Building Concept for a Service Brand within the Non-Profit Sector

This part of the paper will now summarize the theoretical input of the previous chapters and present one theoretical valid brand building concept for a service brand within the non-profit environment. The basic structure of the concept is derived from Chapter 2.3 Brand Building Process and is conflated with all the theoretical background and decisions stated in Chapters 1 to 6.

The concept starts with a situational analysis, followed by the definition of target brand identity with the branding wheel. As a next step, the suitable positioning strategies and approaches are determined. After the strategic decisions, the implementation of the previously defined positioning decisions is realized through the branding triangle including name, logo and slogan, as well as the marketing mix complemented by an integrated communication plan. Finally, to measure the concepts success, appropriate controlling instruments covering value-to-firm and value-to-customer metrics are defined.

The following concept illustrates the mentioned strategic steps and decisions on the left side, as well as the possible realizations on the right side which will be further completed with the results from the situational analysis and market research of the practical part of this thesis.

STRATEGIC STEPS

REALIZATION

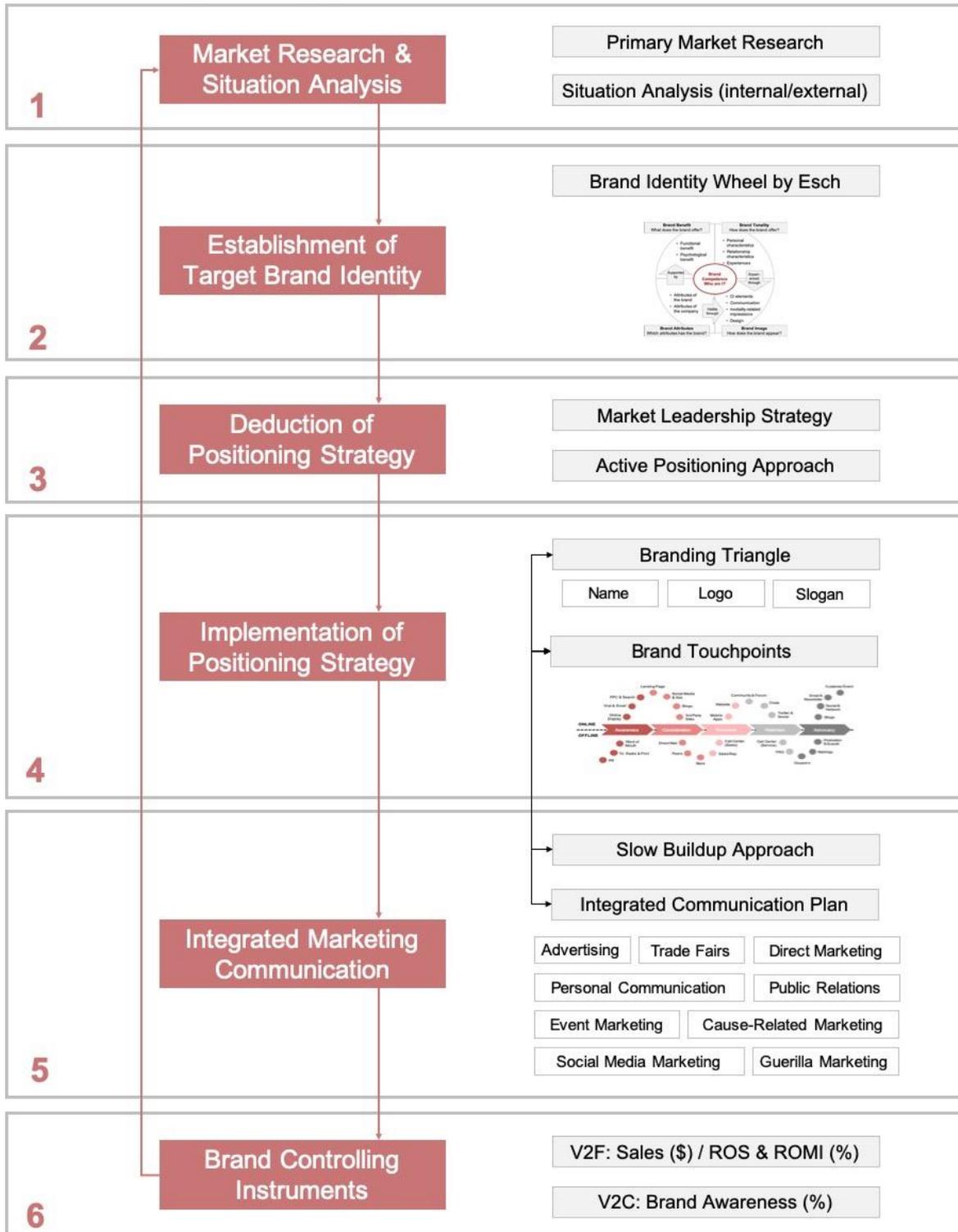


Figure 16: Theoretical Brand Building Concept for a Service Brand within the Non-Profit Environment (own presentation)

8 Presentation of the Red Cross in the Republic of North Macedonia

The Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia (RCNM) was founded on March 17th, 1945 in the city of Skopje. It is a member of 192 independent national societies of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), which is also the largest humanitarian organization worldwide (cf. IFRC 2020; City Red Cross of Skopje 2020a). The main objective of this international movement is *'to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world'* (IFRC 2020). Moreover, all national societies operate in accordance with the international vision by following its seven fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntariness, unity and universality (cf. IFRC 2018).

In addition to the described universal principles, the RCNM puts special emphasis on certain national issues, which are derived from the 'International Strategy 2020 and 2030' of the IFRC. As a result, RCNM's current strategic focus lies on

- the implementation of activities enhancing human values,
- improving health care services to enable 'healthy and safe living' and
- focusing on organizational development and the mobilization of funds (IFRC 2010; IFRC 2018).

To achieve these set national objectives, the RCNM has implemented its programs and project activities throughout 34 Red Cross branches, which are coordinated and managed from its headquarters in the city of Skopje. Today, the RCNM employs a total paid workforce of 138 employees, which are supported by over 3.500 active volunteers within different business units and social projects (City Red Cross of Skopje 2020a).

Within the last decade, the RCNM has invested a lot of resources into creation of new health care services in order to respond efficiently to local challenges. One key initiative was to enable diversified services for the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups within society (City Red Cross of Skopje 2020a). Starting from 2010, the organization therefore decided to concentrate on the development of supportive

solutions for the ageing population within the country, as this group already demonstrated numerous health, social and economic challenges at that time. The lack of provision related to social services for the elderly population as well as inadequate public nursing offers indicated the need for the development of such services within the organization's non-profit environment (City Red Cross of Skopje 2020b).

As a result, the City Red Cross of Skopje introduced their first mobile home care service for elderly people in the year 2011. As of today, this project has developed into a well-established service, which provides social and medical help for over 500 beneficiaries. Despite many years have gone by, the RCNM is still the only organization that provides this kind of systematic services in households of elderly people. However, this scope of service has not proven to be sufficient to improve the lives of the older population. People in high age still need additional assistance in their households, which could not be provided with their mobile home care capacity alone (City Red Cross of Skopje 2020b).

To counter this challenge, the team of City Red Cross of Skopje decided to provide a new 24/7 emergency system, also known as personal emergency response systems (PERS). It provides quick medical help related to accidents within the household by pressing an emergency button, mainly worn as a wristband. With this additional service, the organization aims to improve the quality of live and foster an active and independent lifestyle of the elderly (City Red Cross of Skopje 2020b). In order to establish a concept for this service, the RCM joined together with partner organizations from Austria and Switzerland, who supported with long-term expertise in already implemented PERS solutions (Chichevaliev 2019, p. 17). Just recently, in September 2020, RCNM has finally started the market entry on the new 24/7 emergency service and have experienced a very high demand but low awareness and know-how regarding the general concept of PERS.

9 Situation Analysis

This chapter deals with the internal and external analysis of the market and the associated company. Therefore, it contains a detailed external market and trend analysis, the description of the target audience defined by RCNM as well as a critical evaluation of the mentioned NPO relating to their developing PERS business unit.

9.1 Market Analysis

As the aging population is constantly growing, the decline in functional ability among the elderly constitutes a major concern for the health care industry (cf. Lachal et al. 2016, p.1). According to the United Nations, by 2030, nearly 30% of Europe's population will be older than 60 years compared to 24% in 2015. This trend, defined as 'population ageing' or 'silver society' also implies significant effects on appropriate health care services to support people of older age (cf. United Nations 2015, p. 31f; zukunftsInstitut 2021). As a result, PERS close the gap between population aging and the need for assistance solutions for the elderly population and have developed strongly since their first market entry in the 1970s (cf. Dibner 1992, p.1; Markets and Markets 2020; Market Data Forecast 2020).

9.1.1 *Global PERS Market Analysis and Development*

Next to 'population ageing', the strong PERS market growth can also be reflected on the medical alert systems market. According to the latest research, the global market of medical alert systems is estimated to be worth USD 6.5 billion and is projected to reach USD 9.5 billion by 2025. This will lead to a global Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 7.9% within the mentioned period (Markets and Markets 2020). However, PERS constitutes more than half of the whole industry size, accounting for a value of USD 3.88 billion in 2020 as well as an expected CARG of 5.3% within five years (cf. Market Data Forecast 2020).

Apart from the main issue of 'population ageing', the considerable growth can be derived from several different market drivers, which are especially important for the Republic of North Macedonia (NM). On the one hand, getting older and more vulnerable, people develop an increased awareness related to self-care and improvement of health through proper treatment of illnesses and chronic diseases. This is especially associated with the general inclination towards a healthy and independent lifestyle. On the other hand, since the population is getting older, more

chronical conditions and illnesses (e.g. dementia, epileptic seizures, heart attacks, increased risk of falling) lead to an increased demand in individual and innovative care services. As a result, PERS enjoyed considerable popularity on the global market, since it is seen as technical support for enhanced safety and, at the same time, fosters the desired healthy and independent way of life (cf. Market Data Forecast 2020; Research Nester 2021).

In addition, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, the whole telemedicine industry has experienced a strong increase in demand, amounting for 50 times more than previous to the crisis. The reason for this lies in the many requests by the government asking for social distancing and the specific recommendation for elderly people to remain at home. As a result, industry analysts estimate that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the global PERS market reached a growth of 14.8% by the end of 2020 (cf. StrategyR 2020).

However, there are also some market restraints to consider. According to the latest industry reports, uncertainty and concerns towards the secure utilization and storage of personal data is growing. Furthermore, the considerable lack in awareness towards available brands as well as the knowledge regarding the system's utilization, which is especially the case for rural areas of less developed countries within Europe such as NM has lead to the fact that the market potential could not be exploited fully in the past. Lastly, since the production of PERS is rather expensive and requires well-skilled labor force, only few suppliers can be found on the market. Therefore, price management has been a challenge and also a limiting factor for the existing market participants offering PERS as well as the end users with limited budget. Especially the latter could constitute a big threat for the market in NM (cf. Market Data Forecast 2020, Stuppnik 18.03.2020).

9.1.2 PERS Trend Analysis

Relating to the PERS market and hardware, there are several trends to consider, which are linked directly to PERS or can be derived from general trends across industries. However, all are valid within the global and national environment of NM.

The first relevant trend can be seen in the usage and development of **PERS hardware**, related to telecommunication components. Today, the majority of PERS users, in particular 45%, utilize an analogue landline hardware type. The remaining 55% of global users can be equally divided into 'Mobile' and 'Standalone' hardware,

using mostly SIM cards for the connection establishment to emergency call centers (cf. Research Nester 2021). When analyzing the market figures from 2014 to 2025, the biggest increase of market revenue by hardware type can be recognized within mobile and standalone PERS hardware (cf. Grand View Research 2017). This illustrates the need for investments in new hardware in order to fulfill changing developments within the telecommunication industry and customer needs (cf. Gartner 2019). However, NM demonstrates a well-developed infrastructure related to GSM technology and network (cf. Boeva 17.02.2021, cf. Datareportal 2021).

Another trend related to future hardware emerging from changing customer needs is the increased market interest in **Ambient Assisted Living (AAL)** solutions. AAL is fostering age-appropriate living for the elderly by providing digital assistance for daily activities at home. These technologies facilitate innovative care solutions including sensors, telecare integrations, wearables and early detection related to changing behaviours of older adults (cf. KMU Digital 2021; AAL Europe 2020; Care Home Professional 2019). Related to PERS, several research institutes have been working on an emergency call initiation, which is triggered by an automated speech recognition system (cf. Hamill et al. 2009, p. 1f). However, future generations will be more open to digital care solutions as they have been using digital technologies before (cf. DAPAS 2020).

Due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the popularity of telecare and telemedicine solutions has grown strongly. Due to the pandemic, the elderly population has been more isolated, thereby increasing the demand for assistance systems such as PERS. Therefore, many organizations further developed their products by including e.g. video calls to doctors, tracking human vitals, medication reminders, etc, in order to increase autonomy and simultaneously reduce hospitalization. This development has also motivated older people to take a conscious look at digital solutions and see the benefits they may have in daily activities (cf. StrategyR 2020; DAPAS 2020).

Lastly, there are several global **megatrends** as well as sub-trends, where important considerations can be derived from. According to the Megatrends-Map of *zukunftsInstitut*, there are twelve main trends. However, not all of them are relevant within the given context. Therefore, the following table will illustrate only the megatrends with connection to PERS within the NPO industry (cf. *zukunftsInstitut* 2021).

Megatrends	Categorial Sub-Trends
Security	Simplicity, <u>Privacy</u> , <u>Big Data</u> , <u>Cybercrime</u> , <u>Self-Tracking</u> , <u>Internet of Things (IoT)</u> , Trust Technology
Silver Society	Lifelong Learning, Forever Youngsters, <u>Digital Health</u>
Health	<u>Digital Health</u> , <u>Big Data</u> , Sportivity, Mind-Sport, Self-Balancer, <u>Quality of Life</u> , <u>Mindfulness</u> , Holistic Health, Preventive Health
New Ecology	<u>Quality of Life</u> , <u>Mindfulness</u>
Connectivity	<u>Big Data</u> , Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR), Omni-Channeling, <u>Privacy</u> , Predictive Analytics, <u>Cybercrime</u> , <u>Self-Tracking</u> , <u>Internet of Things (IoT)</u> , Social Networks, Smart Devices, Real Digital, Collaboration

Table 5: Megatrends and Sub-Trends related to PERS (based on zukunftsinstitut 2021)

As can be seen in the column of categorial sub-trends, there are many underlined trends which are overlapping in different categories which could be essential for future strategies.

9.1.3 PERS in the Republic of North Macedonia

NM will experience a rapid ageing process in its population within the next decades. Latest results illustrate that 19% of the population are aged 60 or over whereas it is estimated to be 33% by 2050. This illustrates the vast market potential for care services as well as PERS systems for elderly people (cf. United Nations 2017, p. 32f). However, in order to build up a strong service brand, important macro-economic factors of the target market must be monitored and analyzed in detail as well. Hence, this chapter provides an insight on the most relevant political, economic, social, technological and legal factors to be considered.

In general, the Republic of Northern Macedonia suffered from severe political and inter-ethnic instability until 2017. Within this year, a new government formation focused on fundamental changes towards a more open political atmosphere. However, they still failed to gain the trust of the population and provide them with the vital social reforms, legislation and associated public infrastructure (cf. European Commission 2018). As a result, social institutions lack in funding possibilities and hence are not able to provide those in need with appropriate social services (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p 31). In addition, the elderly are highly affected by this service gap as they are not able to afford private social services. According to national studies, pensions do not adjust as fast as monthly salaries and inflation are growing,

which constitutes an increase of inequality and further decrease of purchase power of seniors in NM (cf. Boeva, 17.02.2021, Center of Economic Analyses 2017, p. 8 - 16). As a result of the political instability, lack of social funding and an increasing old-age poverty, the grey market gained in importance and is estimated to make up between 20% - 45% of the national GDP. This constitutes a big challenge for new social service providers in terms of price and professional standard (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p 57, 32; Center of Economic Analyses 2012). Nevertheless, even though the purchase power in general is rather low, technology does not present an obstacle. According to latest statistics, 82% of the population use the internet regularly. The stated web traffic is mainly used through mobile phones (56.4%) and laptops (42.5%). Additionally, 57.6% of the population use social media on a regular basis, whereas this number increased by +9.1% between 2020 and 2021. Within this area, Facebook and Instagram are the most popular channels. In 2021, 55.9% of the population used Facebook and 39.1% could be reached through Instagram, mostly through their smartphones (97.2%). Especially interesting is that there are 2.10 million active mobile connections within a total population of 2.08 million citizens within the country, which would amount to an equivalent mobile connection penetration rate of 100.6%. This is due to the fact that many people have more than just one phone, mostly one smartphone and another mobile landline connection for their homes. However, the actual penetration rate for mobile services remains unknown (cf. Datareportal 2021).

Key figures such as market size or market potential have proven to be difficult to calculate, since there are no other providers with a similar service offer. Therefore, potential customers are defined as older adults, who have at least used some kind of care services before. This amounts to 51,560 persons within the target market for PERS, who represent the total addressable market size. However, only 85,7% were interested in using and purchasing the service. Therefore, the actual market potential amounts for 44,187 customers within NM. Since the recent feasibility study predicts a market penetration between 2% and 6% of the overall population, there is also another applicable calculation especially for the region of Skopje. According to the recent study, 85.70% of the overall target population (amounting 112,822 people in Skopje, Gazi Baba, Gyorche Perov, Karposh, Sopsishte) ages 60 and above, are interested in the PERS system offered by the RCNM. This would lead to a potential target group of 96,688 older adults in the defined region. Taking into consideration the actual penetration estimates (between 2% and 6%), this would

lead to a realistic number of potential beneficiaries between 1,934 and 5,801 users in Skopje which is the region, where the emergency button service as well as the brand will be launched first (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 47f).

9.2 Target Groups of PERS

This chapter puts an emphasis on the definition of the target audience. It further illustrates, that not only PERS users can be seen as central target group, but their relatives and closely related individuals as well. The reason for this lies in the diverging needs and purchase motivations of the two groups (cf. Boeva 17.02.2021). As a result, both will be elaborated in further detail within the following subchapters.

9.2.1 Older Adults

The first target group of PERS users is usually 65 years or older and lives alone in the area of Skopje. Since they are of higher age, they have additional safety needs that need to be covered by PERS in order to get rapid help in medical emergencies, such as e.g. falls, heart attacks, circulatory problems or chronic diseases (cf. Boeva 17.02.2021, City Red Cross of Skopje 2020c). Some of them (12.2%) already use care services at home and hence already have a close contact to the respective care organization. However, most of the population has very tight financial resources and therefore could struggle even with low monthly PERS subscriptions. According to a recent study conducted by RCNM, the average purchase power for the PERS amounts to 1,000 MKD (16.26 EUR) per month (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 63, 72). Additionally, the population associates offers by the Red Cross as free of charge and hence is only willing to pay a symbolic price for PERS (cf. Boeva 17.02.2021, City Red Cross of Skopje 2020c). On the contrary, the majority however has access to many modern technologies or media, such as cell phones (89.8%), TV (87.8%) landline telephones (55%), internet (46.3%), radio (41.4%) and newspaper (36.1%). Compared to the access of technology, the use of it still illustrates a very divergent picture. According to research, at least half of the population use cellphones (58.4%) and TV (56,3%) regularly, whereas the other technologies are very rarely used within that target group (>10%) (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 62f). Furthermore, study participants stated that next to the two most used technologies, they would also like to receive offers and consultation through personal visits to obtain individual and detailed information about the respected services.

Therefore, trust in the organization related to products and services is an important criteria for the purchase decision of services, as well as recommendations from peers or friends (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 72f).

This target group is represented by the persona card in the following figure:

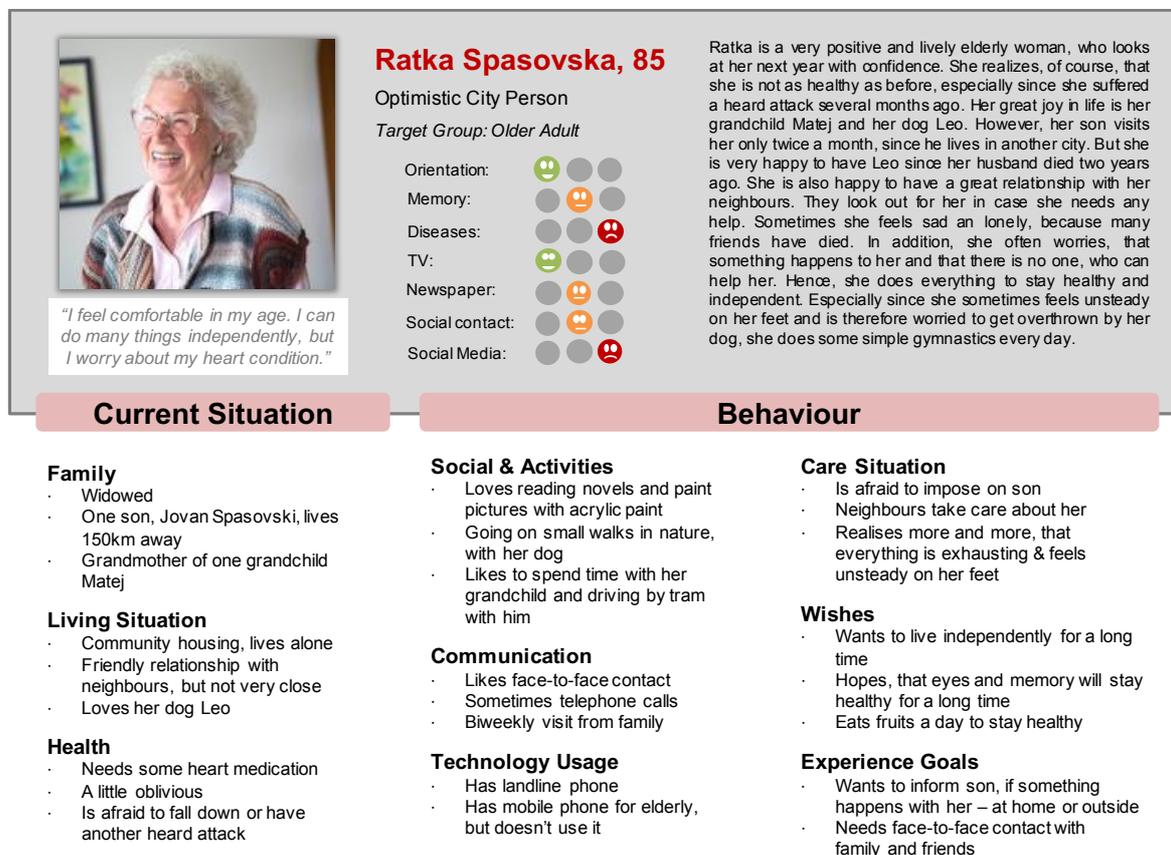


Figure 17: Persona - Older Adult (based on City Red Cross of Skopje 2020c)

9.2.2 Informal Caregivers

The second main target group illustrates relatives or closely related individuals (e.g. friends), who can be seen as contact persons or informal caregivers looking after the older adult. They are defined as an additional target group, as they mostly take care of all administrative tasks for the elderly and are also mostly making the important purchase decisions for them. Especially when people are getting older and less independent, this group investigates appropriate care services and takes responsibility for the older person's health. Since the family members of PERS users often live far away or at least not in the same household, they often worry for their relative's health and safety. Therefore, they wish to have a reliable service, where they know that the older adults are safe and in 'good hands'. In addition, they also often take financial responsibility for needed care services (cf. Boeva 17.02.2021, City Red Cross of Skopje 2020c). In comparison to the first target group, informal

caregivers have an increased budget available, ranging between 1,500 – 2,000 MKD (24.40 – 32.50 EUR). However, price is still one of the most important criteria during the purchase decision process. Next to price, also word-of-mouth, brand image, recommendations from existing beneficiaries and advice coming from medical personnel are seen as important factors influencing the purchasing decision of relatives. Since this target group is mostly represented by the younger family members, they also prefer receiving information through the internet (especially Social media, Google and Landing Pages) and via cellphone. However, they also highlighted the importance of TV advertisements in order to inform the whole population about the brand and the service offer (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 73f). The following figure illustrates the persona of relatives:

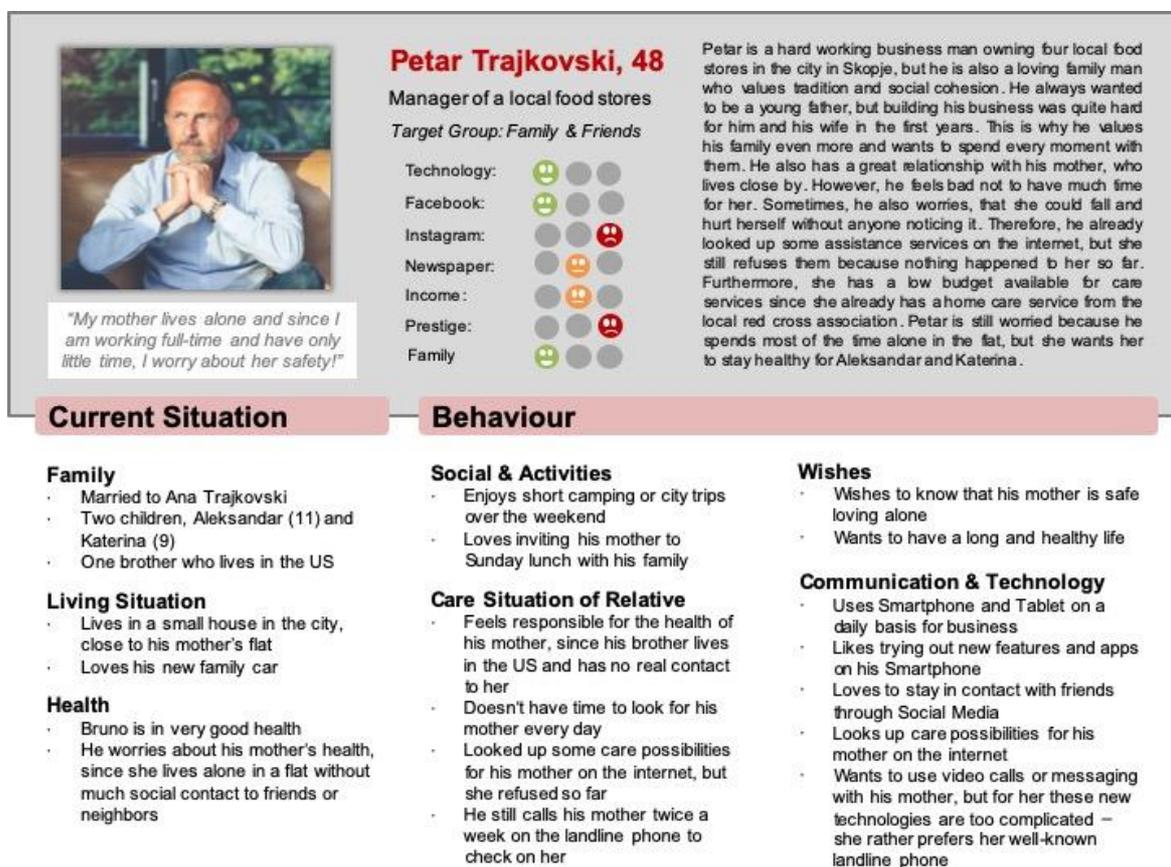


Figure 18: Persona - Informal Care Giver (based on City Red Cross of Skopje 2020c)

9.3 Competition Analysis

The PERS service is a novel offer in NM, which does not exist on the market so far. Hence, RCNM has currently no competition who provides PERS the population. (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 78).

However, just recently, the private security company **NIKOB Security** with headquarters in Skopje, started to develop a very similar panic button for medical emergencies to expand their traditional security portfolio (cf. Boeva 17.02.2021). In general, *NIKOB Security* was established in 1998 in Skopje and was the first security company in Macedonia. Today, they are the market leader in security of persons and property within the country. Within this industry, the organization is very successful and provides their service to over 6,000 clients as of 2020. Furthermore, they are reporting a strong increase of demand related to their services for the years to come (cf. NIKOB 2021).

For the establishment of a medical alarm service within the mentioned firm, some advantages of *NIKOB* over RCNM must be considered. Since *NIKOB* already has the technical equipment for property security and burglary protection, the panic button for medical emergencies can be integrated rather simple and fast. The technology and processes for this novel service are very similar to the burglary alarms and can hence be offered without big investments into infrastructure (software acquisition, enlargement of IT infrastructure etc.). Furthermore, since the company already has the personnel for secure transports, installations and mobile patrol, they already have vehicles and personnel at their disposal, that only need additional training in order to transport people in need to the closest hospital. Additionally, their existing 6,000 clients are beneficial for the service launch, as they constitute existing and satisfied customers.

On the contrary, people in North Macedonia do not associate security firms with medical support and would hence not trust them to provide an appropriate service for medical emergencies (cf. Boeva 17.02.2021). Additionally, RCNM could also leverage from it and try to overturn the situation of competition into an opportunity for service-cooperation between the two market leaders. *NIKOB* already owns the infrastructure but lacks in trust, whereas RCNM has insufficient budget to invest into the whole IT infrastructure, but has the medical personnel as well as access to the main target audience through care services (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 18). Still, the mentioned cooperation also bears the risk of knowledge transfer from RCNM to *NIKOB* and hence should be evaluated in further detail when considering collaborating with a possible competitor.

9.4 Company Analysis

Following the external analysis of the previous chapters, this part of the paper focuses on the internal perspective related to the RCNM.

9.4.1 *Strengths and Weaknesses*

The biggest strength of RCNM is the high **trust** the target audience has in the organization. According to the recent feasibility study related to the PERS product launch, the target audience has communicated a high interest in the RCNM PERS service. This also reflects the recent trust scale, where 89.3% of the people were not only interested in this service, but would also trust RCNM over other providers (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 18). Furthermore, RCNM is a **pioneer in the field of social and care services**, especially for the elderly. Hence, they are known for their well-established services related to the vulnerable group of people. Additionally, the organization has gathered a lot of **experience with social entrepreneurship**, since two past projects and launched brands *Negar Centar* (offering mobile care services) and *Kopche* (offering second hand clothes) have already well established in the market. Especially with the mobile care service RCNM is offering, they have already **good access and well-established relationships to the defined PERS target audience**. Lastly, RCNM's long-standing **reputation** as traditional and trustworthy welfare organization puts the associated PERS service brand into a beneficial position (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 78; Boeva 17.02.2021).

In contrast to many organizational strengths the RCNM exhibits, there are also some inhibiting factors to consider. Firstly, RCNM has **limited resources** available for the brand launch. Not only the marketing budget is very low, but the personnel resources lack in availability and specific knowledge on brand management and PERS service development. As often the case with welfare organizations, they rely mostly on donations and project funding grants from the government. In addition, since the RCNM has a long-standing **reputation to provide the population with charitable services which are free of charge** for vulnerable groups, it could be difficult to change this image and hence the willingness of clients to pay for Red Cross services (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 79; Boeva 15.10.2020).

9.4.2 *Communication Channels*

In general, it is not communication or marketing guidelines that RCNM focuses on. Therefore, different channels and used tools lack in the definition of target audience

and hence do not pursue the aim to reach specific target groups or objectives. However, several different marketing channels are used by the organization to distribute their messages and information to the overall population and stakeholders, which are now elaborated in further detail (cf. Boeva 18.03.2021).

9.4.2.1 Website

Within the official website, all relevant information related to the organization itself, offered services, recent news and events are published (cf. Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia 2021).

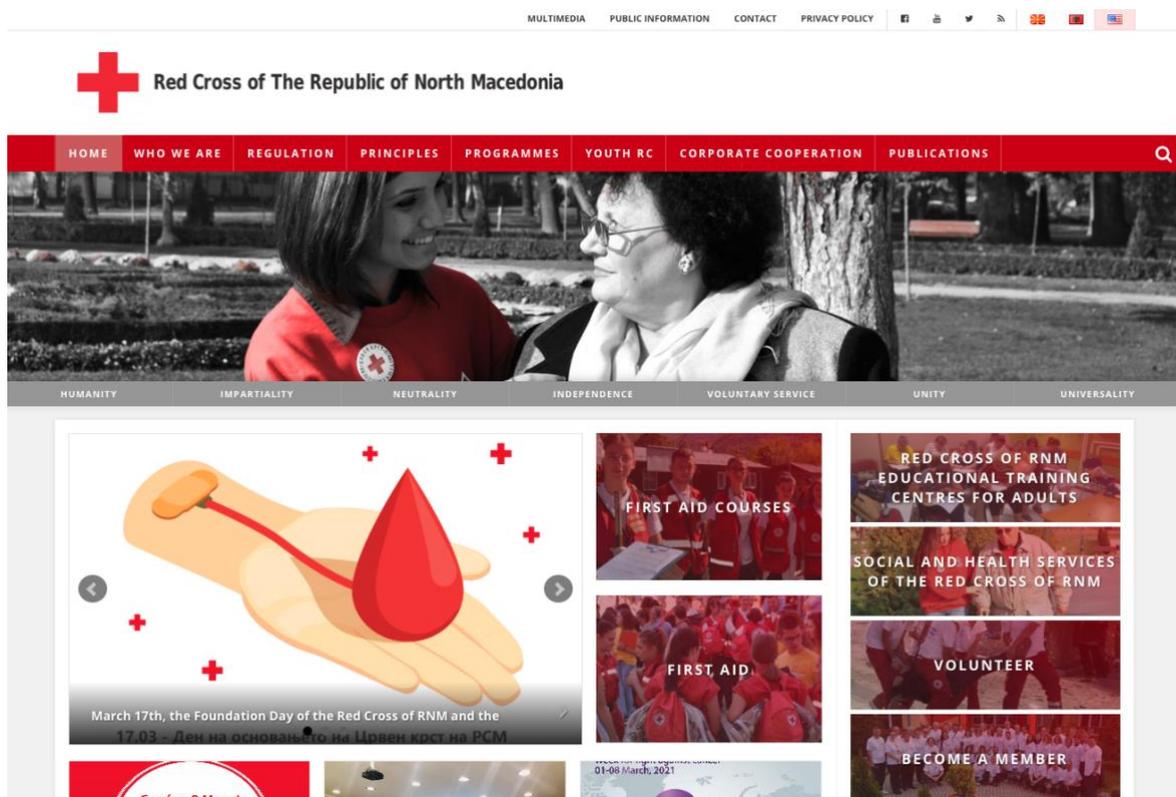


Figure 19: Official Website of RCNM (Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia 2021)

Within this digital platform also additional services of the RCNM can be found as subpage. They are inserted as special service at the bottom of the Homepage. One example would be the additional brand *Kopche* offering second-hand clothing. Eventhough these services are also separated from the main Red Cross brand, they still do not have an individual website. However, this subpage lists all links to the main communication channels Facebook and Instagram (cf. Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia 2021).

Facebook

Since the branding and communication strategy of *Kopche* is similar to the developed PERS service brand, it will be used for further analysis on marketing channels.

The *Kopche* facebook page was established in April 2018 and has been the main channel of communication with the younger target audience (25 – 60 years), since Social Media is their preferred information source (cf. Boeva 17.02.2021). As of today, the facebook page has 3,980 active fans. Postings or news are published at least once a week and receive between 10 to 30 likes, but exhibit little further interaction with the target groups, such as comments or shares etc. The communication itself is rather cheerful and puts special emphasis on the visualization of the brand logo as well as the product of second-hand clothes. Related to the design, colour or tonality, no further patterns can be identified (Kopche Facebook 2021).

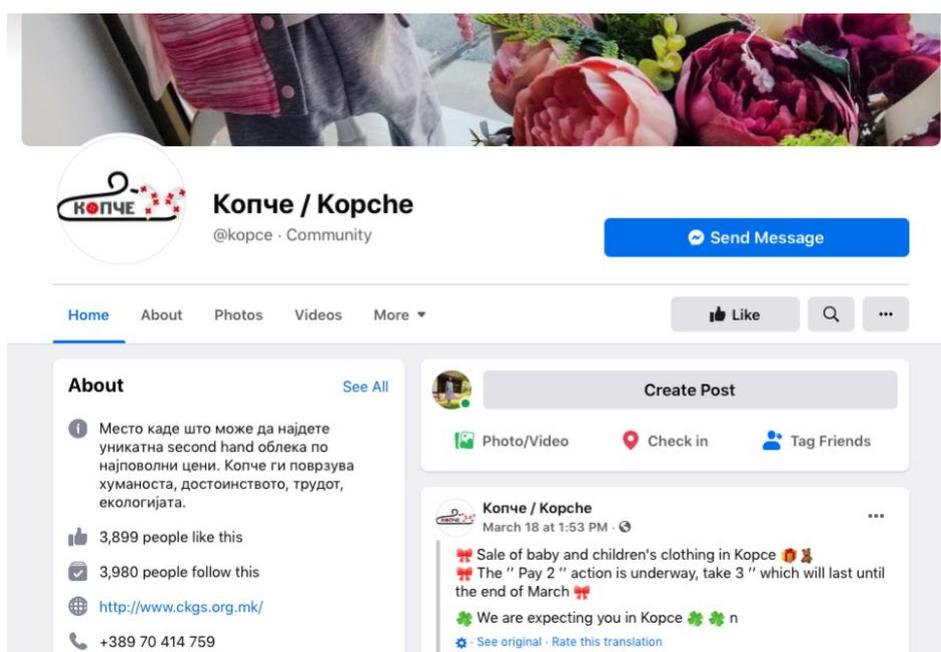


Figure 20: Official *Kopche* Facebook Page of RCNM (*Kopche* Facebook 2021)

Instagram

Alongside Facebook, Instagram is the second most important communication channel for RCNM and *Kopche* (cf. Boeva 17.02.2021). As can be seen in the following figure, the communication is done in less regular intervals and is mainly done with graphics aiming to transport messages to a rather juvenile target group (15 – 30 years). Especially on Instagram, the design and tonality of communication

are even more playful, but still focus on the brand and products associated with it (cf. Kopche Instagram 2021).

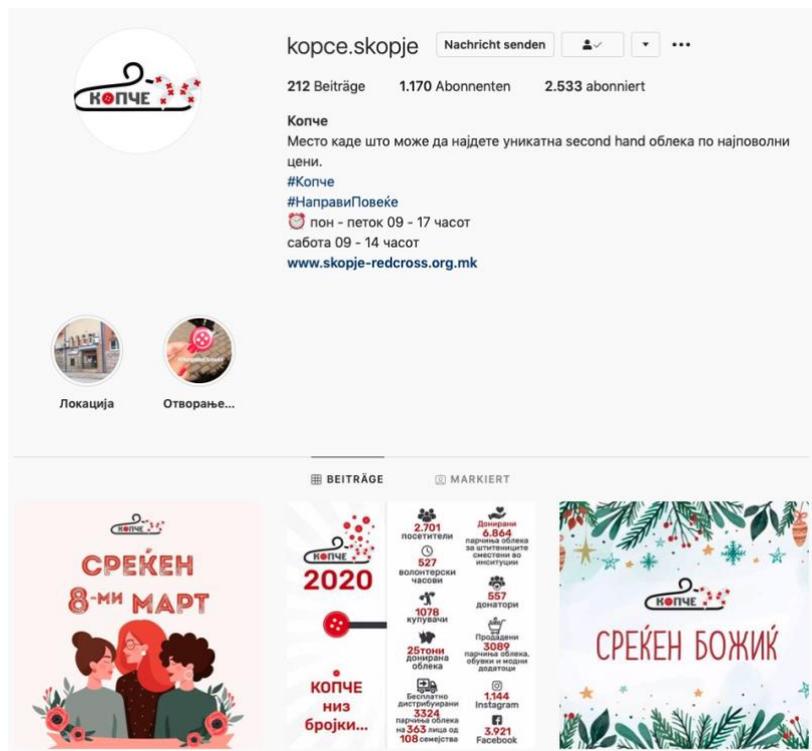


Figure 21: Official Kopche Instagram Page of RCNM (Kopche Instagram 2021)

Newsletter

For the communication to all Red Cross members, the organization sends out newsletter twice per week, including information about latest results, events, activities or offers. These newsletters are sent out to more than 50,000 stakeholders including volunteers, professionals, donators, beneficiaries or other stakeholders. The content of this newsletter however is rather fact-based and brief in order to give a quick overview to all related parties (cf. Boeva, 19.3.2021).

9.4.3 Red Cross Branding Guidelines

The IFRC has defined very clear branding guidelines for the general Red Cross brand and its application in all national societies worldwide. It contains all relevant considerations and regulations related to brand colours, design, placement, communication via Social Media, cooperation with external partners, product promotion as well as practical examples for do's and don'ts. All national societies do still derive their individual application of it (IFRC Branding Toolkit 2016, p. 3). The RCNM only applies the general brand colours and puts a special emphasis on the positioning of the brand-logo on diverse promotional material (cf. Boeva 18.03.2021).

However, since the PERS service brand should only be associated with the general Red Cross brand in the widest sense, the regulations of the IFRC must not be applied nor met, but could serve as important reference point to provoke a certain similarity to the Red Cross brand.

10 Primary Market Research

Following the theoretical background and situation analysis, a primary market research study complements the findings by providing expert knowledge related to the thesis topics. Therefore, this chapter firstly contains the research objective and design of the study, followed by the presentation of findings as well as an interpretation related to the organizational context.

10.1 Research Design

This chapter recapitulates the thesis' research design. For a more detailed description thereof see the Appendix in chapter 9.

The main research objective of this thesis is collecting and evaluating specific expert opinion and experience on brand identity, positioning and communication to then establish a customized PERS service brand building concept. In order to determine the appropriate and detailed insights therefore, qualitative research is conducted. This approach has been chosen due to the fact that this thesis aims to develop a new branding concept where data related to subconscious feelings as well as preferences of the target groups are collected (cf. Malhotra/Nunan/Birks 2017, p. 150 - 155).

Since the target of this research is to gain deep understanding of the thesis' topic, a criterion-based sampling is applied (cf. Merriam/Tisdell 2016, p. 96; Kolb 2008, p. 113). Therefore, a total of 15 expert interviews were conducted, including professionals from the areas of brand management and PERS management. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews have been carried out through the videoconferencing tool MS Teams. All interviews took place between March 1st, 2021 and March 22nd, 2021, were held in English and lasted between 25 and 55 minutes.

The evaluation of data is conducted following the content-related analysis of Udo Kuckartz (cf. Kuckartz 2018, p. 100 - 111) and further interpreted through the

analysis software MAXQDA (cf. Rädicker/Kuckartz 2019). With this method, the definition of categories and codes was done a-priori as well as inductive during the analysis to include theoretical basis and practical implications (cf. Kuckartz 2018, p. 34, 64 – 67, 72f, 95). After the complete allocation of codes on the data material a category-based analysis summarizes the main verbal results of the interview (Rädicker/Kuckartz 2019, p. 149 - 153), which will be described in further detail in the following chapter.

10.2 Research Findings

This chapter summarizes the main results of the conducted primary research on expert interviews. Therefore, conducted input on successful brand management approaches as well as valuable industry insights into the PERS sector are recapitulated in the following subchapters. Eventhough research findings stem from two different groups, the results almost always correlated and showed consistency within the specific categories. The most important comparisons related to these two interview groups will be elaborated visually within the following subchapters. However, before going into detail, one main finding applies for all subjects of the research. Continuously, the data analysis reveals that findings are consistent with many different categories at the same time. This again illustrates a very integrated approach, linking all subject areas and process steps into a holistic picture of the brand.

10.2.1 Brand Building

Related to the crucial issues during the brand building, all experts agree on the fact that trust and credibility are the necessary base to consider. In the context of PERS there is a concordant statement which suggests using the connection to the brand *Red Cross* (colours, design, corporate identity, implement RC logo into PERS logo somewhere, 'powered by Red Cross' etc.), since it is a well-established brand, automatically evoking trust and credibility in customers. Hence, the brand should also match the general values and principles of the Red Cross brand to leverage from its image. At the same time, quality as delivered proof of trust and credibility is essential. Additionally, experts prioritise the need to focus only on the core value of the brand in order to establish a clear picture from the very beginning and avoid ambiguity in the resulting image. This is also often equated with the need to

convince the personnel of the product and find a team, that does not only have the needed expertise, but also fits the personality of the brand.

Regarding the process of brand building and crucial first steps, nearly all experts outline the step-by-step approach to be essential, since customers need time to adapt and anchor the brand into their minds. This also relates to the target group and communicating with them since *'nobody feels like everybody, make people feel special'* (B2 03.03.2021). Therefore, it is advised to start with a very small market and have it grow continuously. Furthermore, about half of all experts describe the analysis on knowing and defining the 'why' of the brand as one of the most important steps at the very beginning of the brand building process. It gives purpose and orientation to both, personnel as well as customers, and, hence, relates to the brand's core value which needs to be central at all times.

10.2.2 Brand Identity

Brand experts outline the importance of a clear brand identity, defining what the brand should stand for. It is advised to focus only on the main core values and strengths in order to not create an overload of numerous characteristics and make it too complicated for customers. Afterwards, it should be used as guideline for further activities in positioning, marketing measures and communication.

In the context of PERS, experts state that **brand attributes** such as trust, reliability, quality, credibility, safety, empathy, humanity, independence, simplicity and sympathy are important. However, most of them also highlight the importance of the first six attributes as most important ones for the service brand within the non-profit and health sector.

In terms of **brand personality**, brand and industry experts suggest very similar characteristics, again illustrating the holistic alignment. Hence, personality traits such as trustworthy, reliable, loyal, honest, supportive, empathic, traditional, dependable, strong, competent, experienced and friendly are often mentioned in the given context. Additionally, some of the experts use a rather human description and talk of a guardian, good friend or safeguard who is there whenever needed.

The following issue of **brand benefits** is analyzed by brand experts as well as industry experts, using a divergent point of view. Brand experts are asked to list general brand benefits supporting the establishment of a service brand. Industry experts focus on actual benefits PERS brings about for current customers. In both

cases, analysis shows a strong correlation between the mentioned benefits and criteria for purchase decision, described in Chapter 10.2.5. However, answers of both groups on benefits also correlate strongly, illustrating a high relevance of current industry practices. As a result, the corresponding benefits include quick help when needed, reliability, trust, autonomy or independence, taking away fear, gaining peace of mind, affordable care service, easy use, professional care service and medical expertise. In contrast to the very general assets, one stands out since it was often stated as the most crucial benefit. Both expert groups define that *'it's really the feeling the brand gives to customers and the special feeling you create with the brand'* (B3 04.03.2021). In particular the feeling of safety and piece of mind the PERS can provide to both, users and relatives, is seen as core benefit throughout the service and its brand.

The following wordcloud figures illustrates the main findings related to the mentioned topics and illustrates the relevance and frequency by mention by size:



Figure 22: Summarized Findings on Brand Identity (own presentation)

10.2.3 Brand Positioning

When talking about brand positioning, all brand experts consider it the most important strategic step within the brand building process. Furthermore, more than

half of them state that for a successful positioning, it is necessary to find a certain spot within the customers mind which creates a new category without competition. Here again, all of them establish a connection to the predefined core value of the brand identity described in Chapter 10.2.2, which customers should perceive as unique and applicable only to this particular brand. However, as soon as the category or position is set, it is evident to think about the proof the brand has to deliver to reinforce the desired position.

Regarding the **implementation of branding**, some experts suggest the applicance of the branding triangle, where based on the position of the brand, the visual and verbal communication including the service brand name, logo and slogan are derived from. Furthermore, experts emphasize the integration of all three components into one clear brand picture. However, the visual brand logo represents the idea of the brand and should therefore illustrate the emotional part and catch the attention of the target audience, whereas the verbal part, including brand name and slogan, should represent the rational part and definition of the brand. Combining the two into one concept fosters an easier recognition of to the brand. Additionally, experts recommended to create a visual connection to the Red Cross brand for the establishment of the PERS logo (e.g. colour, CI, form, etc.) in order to leverage from its positive brand image. Another key argument is to integrate the core service or product into the actual brand logo and name so that verbal and visual branding corresponds. Lastly, both, name and logo, have to be clear, easy and rather obvious to people in order for them to understand the idea behind the brand. The simplicity and easy comprehension is also suggested for the brand slogan. However, *'the right tone-of-voice and transportation of core value or benefit is central for the verbal part'* (B4 04.03.2021). Concerning the design, both expert groups have similar figurative associations when thinking about the brand. They refer to a picture about the desired feeling the brand should communicate, including a real world with a simple and clear design - however not linking with lifestyle but rather daily life. Experts further suggest the illustration of the target audience and happy people who are satisfied and confident. Hence, they focus on a rather emotional and human-centered visualization, which should put the emergency button device right in the center of attention and cause for contentment.

All branding experts agree on the main success factors for the establishment of a **market leadership position**. For this, the brand must be understood as pioneer in

the defined category. Thereby the leadership again is based on this one core value the brand stands for in order to *'get known as the number one for it, but also the only one'* (B3 04.03.2021). Especially the first mover advantage and the absence of competition facilitates the establishment of market leadership. Additionally, experts recommend furthermore associating the brand with a market leader of another category. Therefore, the market leadership of the Red Cross in the non-profit sector can also support the brand to establish the same for the PERS market. However, use of incorrect communication or definitions like 'the best' should be avoided since it could severely harm the brand's image.

In terms of **customer touchpoints** within the customer journey, many brand experts recommend evaluating possible touchpoints for every target group since they may vary strongly. Furthermore, most of them combine customer touchpoints with communication instruments described in Chapter 10.2.4, which illustrated the need for a well realized integration of both subject areas. However, the majority implies that, regardless of the touchpoint, the brand value needs to be present and equally communicated at every touchpoint, in order to create the holistic picture of the brand and foster the market leadership position. However, the first step to make a brand strong is brand awareness, so brand experts suggest *'to push touchpoints that create brand awareness first'* (B1 01.03.2021). When integrating the touchpoint visual from theory, the following are suggested as most relevant for the PERS brand building:

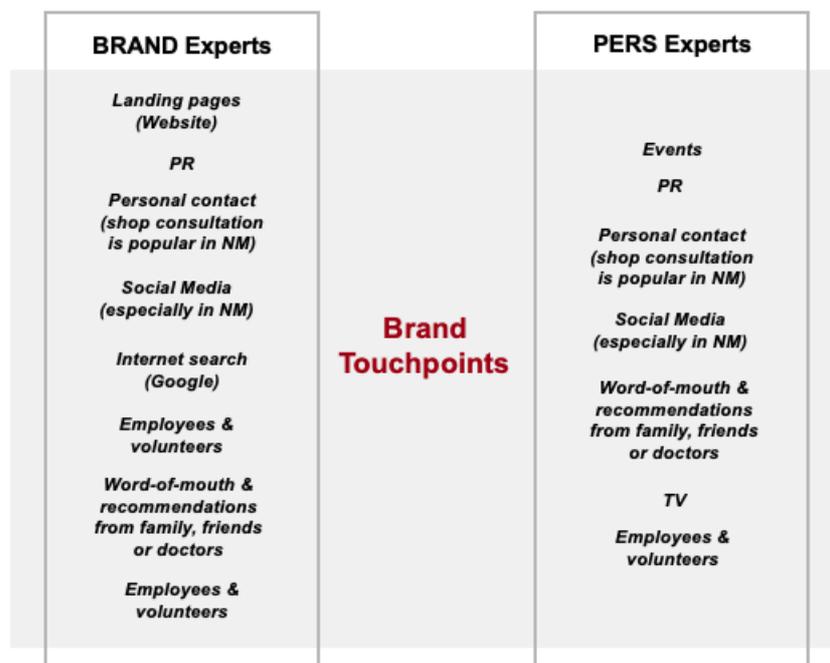


Figure 23: Summarized Findings on Brand Touchpoints (own presentation)

Especially in NM, TV and radio morning shows are listed by local experts since they have a vast reach across target groups. The same also applies for social media, which is used heavily among the the younger population and target group of relatives (under aged 60, since people do not read much newspapers) and gradually substitutes print news. In addition, word-of-mouth is mentioned by all experts as main trust-building source for brand building. This is due to the fact that credibility for intangible services is build on recommendations instead of tangible elements.

10.2.4 Brand Communication

For the topic of communication, all experts recommend the **integrated approach**, which aims to unify all communication measures to one central brand message. For this, a clear and unique message about the service brand and its core value must be established in order to catch the target audience's attention. Therefore, brand and industry experts suggest storytelling , since *'positive and very emotional stories about people using the system are easy for people to remember and connect to'* (B7 17.03.2021). Experts as well as theoretical background agree on the fact that this supports brand awareness and brand recognition, which is essential in the first phase (cf. Canziani et al. 2019, p. 69f). In addition, the unique position of being a pioneer needs to be included to establish the market leadership simultaneously.

However, mostly, PERS is only used when an emergency had already happended before. Hence, one of the main challenges for the communication is to change the stigma PERS already has on the market from a rather negative one (service for vulnerable people) to a positive one (additional safety as health prevention). Additionally, to avoid brand damage, PERS should avoid cooperations with local politicians as they lack the population's trust.

Since experts recommend adjusting the PERS storytelling to all touchpoints, an appropriate strategy is needed. Relating to the theory described in Chapter 5.4, experts agree to start with a **slow build-up approach**. It again includes storytelling and PR measures to inform the target group about the new brand an associated values. This should be applied, especially since people are always interested in new things and leading organizatons. Additionally, classical advertising mostly lacks in trust and credibility. Another form of storytelling is described as word-of-mouth which is seen as especially important to gain the consumers trust in North Macedonia. Therefore, it is advisable to *'let third-parties report about your new brand'* (B1 01.03.2021).

Additionally, in communication, a **step-by-step approach** is recommended, relating to the target audience, success stories and growth of the brand. Furthermore, it is essential to provide much information about the service brand, as it is intangible and new to people. However, it is important to continuously focus on the core value and main message and to avoid negative stories. Still, the main gain and pain points should still be included in the messages, as people immediately relate to them and see the benefits of the brand more easily.

Results from both expert groups show that communication requires equally **emotional and functional messages**, as illustrated in the following figure:

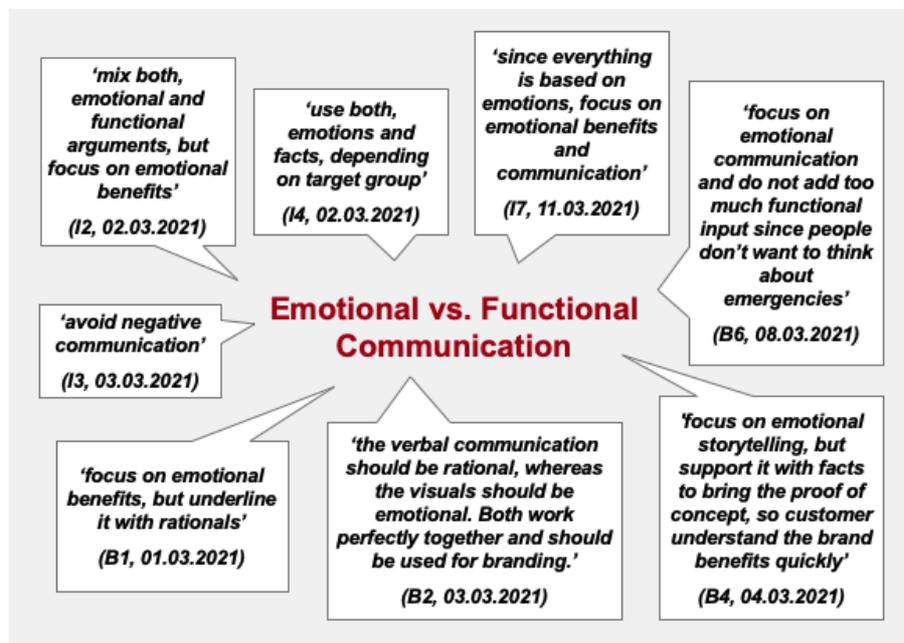


Figure 24: Summarized Findings on Emotional vs. Functional Communication (own presentation)

However, it is recommended to adjust the tone-of-voice and content on the respected target group. In this case, data analysis illustrates a strong correlation between the target audiences and communication approaches related to emotional and functional arguments. Directly related persons or users themselves react more on emotional arguments, whereas professional personnel (such as caregivers) look for more functional data. Especially emotional communication needs some rational arguments in addition to proof the concept, which leads to *'the customer's quick understanding of the real value of the brand'* (B4 04.03.2021). Therefore, especially during the first phase of brand building, emotional storytelling is seen as important to gain the customer's attention, but must always be completed by important rational facts for its confirmation. At this point, data analysis further points out a strong correlation between emotional communication and latent customer needs described

in Chapter 10.2.5, since emotional communication related to those needs trigger strong emotions at the respected target audience.

In addition, data analysis shows a strong correlation between customer touchpoints and **communication instruments** described in Chapter 5.3. At the one hand, experts differentiate between the terms, but on the other hand still interpret them analogous within the given context. This again illustrates that industry practices comply with brand management principles. In general, experts suggest that the selection of communication instruments should depend on the target group's customer journey and touchpoints. However, some instruments appear to be especially important across both target groups or need to be highlighted due to their high impact on the the brands image.

Personal communication to both target groups is still considered one of the most important instruments, since people tend to get information and consultations when they are in need for additional care services. Hence, industry results show successes with personal communication, as it fosters trust and emotional relationships with potential customers. Within this category, word-of-mouth is recommended by every expert as the most important brand brand building instrument, especially applying to the market in North Macedonia.

Mobile communication relating to internet research (Google) and landing page are also stated as key instruments, since especially the target group of relatives seeks information online. As a result, recommendation platforms, which are seen as online word-of-mouth gain importance for the PERS service brand as well.

In connection to this, **Social Media** is rated as another essential communication instrument for the same target group, especially in Macedonia – since only few people read newspapers. Hence, experts indicate the relevance of storytelling on social media platforms and the linkage of PR and reports on digital platforms. Within this area, local experts define *Facebook* as most important channel to reach the desired target group of relatives, since older adults up to the age of 60 are active Social Media users as well.

Eventhough digital instrument appears to be important, classical instruments such as **PR and advertising** are still credible for older people and hence important to be considered additionally. Especially PR relates to trust and credibility as mentioned in previous chapters. Considering North Macedonia, TV and radio morning shows should be implemented since this is cost-efficient and they benefit from a high reach.

10.2.5 PERS Marketing

In order to gain specific industry results, PERS experts provide the main challenges and success factors they have faced in their past experience.

Nearly all experts agree that the biggest challenges for PERS or non-profits are the lack of marketing budget, the shortage of professional marketing employees as well as the missing strategic alignment of marketing within the organization. Hence, they struggle to reach customers on modern and innovative channels or marketing campaigns. Furthermore, there is a strong stigma associated with PERS, since it illustrates a rather negative part of advanced age. Therefore, shifting the image from a rather negative to positive one is seen as a huge challenge for all experts. Lastly, especially in Macedonia, the purchase power is very low and people are *'not willing to pay for this kind of emergency service and argue that it should be free or at least be available for only a symbolic price'* (11 01.03.2021), which on the other hand is not cost-covering for non-profits. The following figure summarizes the findings by illustrating the importance of each point by size and accentuation.

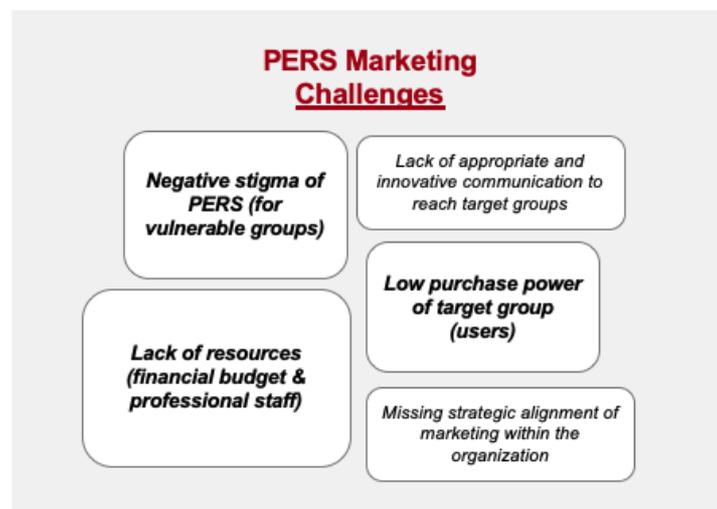


Figure 25: Challenges in PERS Marketing (own presentation)

Contrary to this, many successful measures are reported. According to industry experts' experience, mouth-to-mouth recommendations and personal communication via events result in the highest successes related to revenue. This is due to the fact that people trust the Red Cross brand to be trustworthy and reliable and has hence often been the preferred service provider for medical and care services. Professional and creative marketing staff are seen as a big success factor, since they create economic campaigns with great outputs, which again is still a challenge. However, often volunteers close this gap and offer their time and

ressources to push the brand, be available for representation or other services at hand. Another important success was to *'include the target group from the very beginning and implement co-creation'* (I2 02.03.2021) to focus on a strong customer-centricity. Lastly, some experts also mention comparison portals to one of the most successful channels related to revenue and generating new customers.



Figure 26: Success Factors in PERS Marketing (own presentation)

10.2.6 Target Audience

When asking about the target groups, all PERS experts list the two target groups of users and their relatives, described in Chapter 9.2, as main target groups. However, they also highlight the **target group of relatives**, since they strongly influence the purchase decision related to care services for the older adult, or are the ones responsible for its administration and establishment. Hence, they are seen as main target group to focus on within the brand building concept.

Within the category of **customer needs**, all experts agree that in order to customize communication measures, experts suggest to *'analyze the biggest pain and gain points within the customer needs, which is especially important when building a brand'* (B4 04.03.2021). According to experts, *'the most important customer need in both groups is to feel safe and have piece of mind'* (B1 01.03.2021). For older adults this means that they do not want to be a burden for their relatives and want to stay independent by still making decisions on their own. For relatives it is more about the feeling of knowing that their loved ones are safe and provided for with quick and professional help in case of an emergency. By focusing on the latent customer

needs and biggest problems, the brand can catch the target group's attention, since they feel understood. Therefore, it is advisable to find the right touchpoints along the customer journey of the target group of relatives and individualize messages and measures as much as possible. Especially storytelling including individual experiences and stories through word-of-mouth or further recommendations (offline and online) have the biggest impact within the mentioned touchpoints.

Next to the customer needs, experts rate trust in the organization, experience, image, recommendations (word-of-mouth) from family and friends, the feeling of safety, and the brand as most important **criteria for the purchase decision**. Even though most of the experts assess price as not important for the purchase decision, local experts from North Macedonia mention money as the most important criteria for the target groups. However, all experts agree that the used technology for the service is not important at all.

10.2.7 PERS Market Development

When industry experts are asked about the market development, technology and trends, answers are consistent. Nearly all of them confirm that the PERS market in general is very static and changes or innovations are implemented very slow. However, technology will develop strongly in the next five to ten years and hence current reactive systems will change more and more into proactive and preventive systems. It will very likely include sensors in living areas to predict behavioural changes and prevent emergency situations or support medical diagnosis (e.g. sending vital values to the doctor's). Especially PERS system could change into a concierge system which has the possibility to customize the service to each user. Also smart home applications gain in importance since it can support in daily activities of elderly people. Especially COVID-19 promotes this trend, since many older adults recognize already how beneficial new technologies are to maintain contact with the relatives. Lastly, *'services for people with dementia who go astray will be of high importance especially in North Macedonia, as this is already a big issue'* (11 01.03.2021). However, all experts highlight the need to integrate modern technology and respond to the development of the market and customer needs in order to keep the brand interesting and maintain a market leadership position.

11 Brand Building Concept for the PERS Service Brand in the Republic of North Macedonia

In this part of the thesis, the theoretical background as well as research findings from the situation analysis and primary research are brought together to derive the practical brand building concept for the PERS service brand in NM. Therefore, the structure of six main steps according to the theoretical brand building concept described in Chapter 7 is applied. In order to avoid constant repetition and provide a lucid presentation of strategy and operational measures, both parts are enlarged upon each chapter directly, including both, strategic alignments and appropriate recommendations for action.

11.1 Market Research

This chapter condenses the findings of the internal and external analysis explained within Chapter 9 by illustrating the main points within a SWOT matrix. For each statement a valuation is set to determine the strength of influence a certain factor has on the success of the PERS brand building concept (1 = low impact, 2 = medium impact, 3 = high impact). It aims to gain an overview about the most relevant findings of the internal and external situational analysis and create a basis for the deduction of a brand building concept in the following chapters.

INTERNAL			
Strenghts	#	Weaknesses	#
The population of North Macedonia has high trust in the Red Cross and sees it as prefered provider for care services	3	Not used to do professional marketing or management, more focused on social welfare objectives	2
Pioneer in the field of social and care services within NM	2	Only limited ressources related to finances and personnel	3
Experienced in social entrepreneurship	1	Reputation to provide charitable services which are free of charge	2
Good access and well-established relationship to defined PERS target audience (existing care customers)	3	Limited communication channels to reach customers (website, Facebook, Instagram, newsletter, personal contact)	2
Longstanding reputation as traditional and trustworthy welfare organization	3	Strict branding guidelines, which however only relate to the general Red Cross brand	1

EXTERNAL			
Opportunities	#	Threats	#
Population is ageing quickly, especially in NM - high demand in care services	3	In general, people are concerned about the safe utilization and storage of data, especially elderly people and their relatives are worried about data protection	2
Medical alert market is growing strongly due to high demand in care services through ageing population	3	Lack of awareness regarding available PERS services and brands (especially in rural areas of NM)	3
COVID-19 pandemic promoted significantly the demand for care services at home	2	The population in NM and especially elderly have a low purchase power	3
Lack of funding for social services of ageing population	3	Political instability related to the government of North Macedonia	2
Bad reputation of public services (public health insurance, public ambulance)	3	One possible competitor in future PERS market: well-established <i>NIKOB</i> with financial power	2
Strong development within PERS market towards new technologies (AAL, communication tech, smart home, IoT etc.)	1	Increase in chronic illnesses (e.g. dementia, epileptic seizures, etc.) leads to increased demand for customized care services	1
The population in NM has a high usage of modern technologies integrated in daily routine (smartphone, computer, etc.)	2	Divers target groups (older adults, chronic ill people, relatives of users) creates the need for professional and well-structured marketing	3

Table 6: SWOT Matrix on Market Research (own presentation)

11.2 Brand Identity

For the brand identity, the brand steering wheel by Esch of Chapter 3.2.3 is applied. As described in theory, this model first of all includes the brand's core competence in the middle of the figure, describing the key value (cf. Esch/Langener 2019, p. 184f). This correlates with the experts opinion to focus on one core value as basis. Hence, one specific core value should be selected which will be central for all subsequent steps of the brand building concept. Furthermore, this brand identity concept includes functional as well as emotional benefits and attributes (cf. Esch 2017, p. 97), which is compliant with expert recommendations to focus on both, emotional and rational argumentation. Including the research results of Chapter 10.2.2, the following practical brand identity model is suggested:

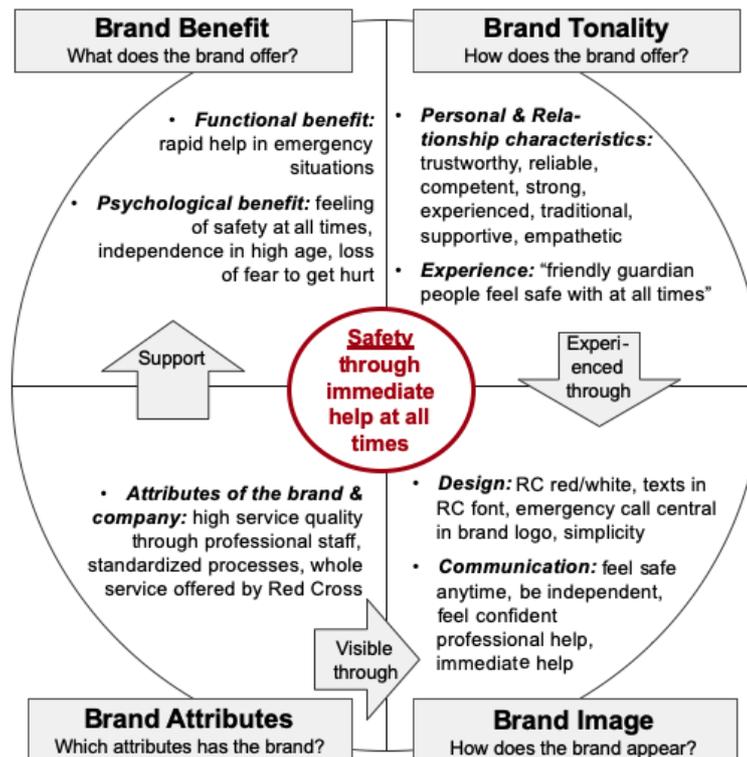


Figure 27: Brand Identity for PERS Service Brand (own presentation)

Since research results suggest to create a clear brand identity with only core values, the previous figure focused only on the main attributes of it. Furthermore, because the feeling of safety was reported as biggest customer benefit, 'safety through immediate help at all times' is also defined as core competence of the brand. The reason is that this is the main function of the service putting it in a non-competitive position since ambulance services cannot provide this for older adults due to lack in resources anyway. Special emphasis is also put on the word 'safety' as main value, as research suggested to focus only on one word describing the later positioning. Additionally, the theoretical Chapter 3.1 describes that the identity, positioning and image are closely related (cf. Esch 2019 p. 179f), positioning is already partly insidery in this part of the strategic consideration.

The functional benefit represents the actual service of PERS, whereas the psychological benefit covers the feeling that is experienced when using the service. It should evoke a feeling of safety, independence and confidence so older adults do not need to worry about safety anymore, which is also one of the main issues according to research results. To let people trust this service, brand attributes like the high service quality, professional staff, standardized processes and the offer of the well-known Red-Cross should indicate that people can rely on

it. Furthermore, the tonality of the brand results mainly from research results and is defined to signalize trustworthy, reliable, competent, traditional, empathetic personality traits and should give people the feeling that it is a 'friendly guardian people can feel safe with anytime'. However it is important to note that the mentioned guardian is someone who is by one's side but is not monitoring but rather in the background only helping whenever needed. Lastly, The brand image is transported through a visual proximity to the Red Cross brand, applying the colours red and white for the logo. In addition, the design of the brand should be characterized by simplicity and clear structures as suggested by research findings and theoretical input from Chapter 4.4.1. It is also recommended to use the same font for the texts and put the visual of the emergency button within the brand logo to directly associate the service with it. The reason for this is reflected in the research findings, as people recognize and remind brand easier when the brand logo, name and idea are consistent. The details for the brand identity communication will be further described in Chapter 11.5.

11.3 Deduction of Positioning Strategy

Within this chapter, the strategic considerations related to the brand positioning are described in further detail.

11.3.1 Active Positioning Approach

As already illustrated in the theoretical brand building concept of Chapter 7, the active positioning approach is selected for the positioning. The reason for it is that it aims to create a new market or category for the service brand and hence gain a competitive advantage without competition (cf. Ries/Ries 2004, p. 18). Since the latent customer needs of additional safety for elderly people match the core competence of the Red Cross providing special care services for the vulnerable population, a long-term competitive advantage and intended market leadership position can be achieved (Tomczak/Reinecke/Kuss 2018, p. 139f). Furthermore, since there is no competition present at the moment, the positioning offers the opportunity to define the market according to the PERS service brand. According to research findings, this makes it even harder for following competition to withdraw a market leadership position afterwards.

Based on research results and defined brand identity, the definition of category is derived. In order to find the most suitable position, findings related to customer

needs, benefits and target groups defined in Chapter 9.2 are considered. According to PERS experts included in the primary research, the main reason for potential customers of the target groups of relatives is to find a solution where they do not have to worry about their loved ones anymore. They are looking for a reliable service, which delivers immediate help in emergency situations. Therefore, most people do not look directly for PERS or medical help, but rather a service that makes them feel safe, confident and cared for in case they need it. Consequently, the actual positioning should not focus on the emergency service itself, but rather the feeling the brand gives the target audience. Both target groups want to feel safe and independent without any concerns about the older adult's health. Furthermore, the actual service of immediate medical help is also applied infrequently, as in most cases people are fine but just feel better knowing that they would be in good hands if a medical emergency were to happen.

As a result, the positioning of the PERS service brand should focus on the **category 'safety'**, representing the emotional status or aim of the target audience. Furthermore, it should be supported by the actual service offered which also provides proof for the concept of safety PERS is offering. Hence, 'through immediate help at all times' should be added to the category name to put a clear picture about the new category and PERS service within it. Thus, **'safety through immediate help at all times'** is recommended as definition for an active positioning strategy as well as identity.

However, there are several criteria defined in Chapter 4.1, which have to be fulfilled for the definition of a clear positioning, illustrated in the following table.

#	Criteria	Evaluation	✓/X
1	High relevance for customers	Directly relates to most important customer needs and problems	✓
2	Focus only on key elements (keep it clear and simple)	Focus only on the need and service itself, so the target audience knows immediately what is - 'safety at all times'	✓
3	Authenticity and credibility	leading service provider and strong organization behind (Red Cross) with correlating mission/vision (helping people in need)	✓
4	Differentiation	Development of own category without competition, also leading organization of this service (first-mover in the market)	✓

5	Durability	Cannot be imitated easily since service and positioning needs a lot of trust which is not easy to imitate and compete with the Red Cross	✓
6	Orientation towards the future	Continuous innovation is communicated, since they are the first ones entering the market. Positioning is also applicable in the context of mentioned trends.	✓
7	Flexibility	Adapt to changing environment and technology is possible with this positioning since the basic need will not change quickly, only features.	✓
8	Company Fit	Suits to the Red Cross organization and focus on services for vulnerable people.	✓

Table 7: Criteria for the Definition of the Positioning Approach (own presentation)

Considerations to connect PERS with the technology used or the specific emergency button device was another option, but is not recommended, since research findings illustrate, that technical devices are not considered as important for the target audience. Furthermore, the emergency button itself has a rather negative stigma and could hence again connote a service for elderly people only, which should be prevented.

11.3.2 Market Leadership Positioning

Consistent with the active positioning strategy, a market leadership positioning should be pursued. Since there is currently no competition and existing market for PERS, the RCNM has the competitive advantage to shape the market and associated category individually and leverage from the first mover advantage. However, according to research findings, being the first in the market is not enough to obtain a market leadership position. The target audience also needs to consider the organization to be the leading player within the given market. Hence, the communication towards market leadership is necessary to establish the organizations image of market leadership for PERS. Hence, buzzwords such as 'pioneer' or 'leader' should be implemented into the communication strategy. In addition, communicating the partnership with the Red Cross could also support the market leadership position of the PERS service brand, since the Red Cross is also known as leading organization to provide aid for vulnerable people.

11.4 Implementation of Positioning Strategy

After the strategic considerations, this chapter deals with the operative realization of positioning. Therefore, based on the theoretical background and primary research findings, concrete suggestions for the branding and touchpoints are presented in the following chapters.

11.4.1 Branding Triangle

As described in Chapter 4.4.1, the branding triangle for service brand consists of the brand name, the brand logo as well as the brand slogan (cf. Bruhn/Meffert/Hadwich 2019, p. 529).

Relating to the **brand name**, theory suggests a very short, unique name which outlines the quality of the service. Furthermore, it should ideally be summarized in one word, which does not necessarily be real but easy to pronounce and remember (cf. Kotler 2008, p. 300; Ries/Ries 2002, p. 44; Brandtner 2019, p. 69f; Langner 2002, p. 29). Research results on the other hand illustrate that the main benefit and quality of PERS can be described as 'feeling safe' and 'quick help by pushing a button'. Additionally, experts suggest to use the emergency call or emergency button as brand name, since it directly describes the service as is, which is therefore easily remembered and also associated quickly by customers. However, the trend analysis as well as research findings illustrate that the technological enhancement will lead to the further development of PERS systems. Hence the classical emergency button will very likely be supplemented by other customized concierge services for users. Therefore, it is important to consider these technological factors as well, in order to create a timeless brand which can also be associated with future services offered additionally to the classical PERS. Still, for the brand it is important to associate and connect to the core value and competence, which again points towards the emergency button which can be understood as talisman making people feel safe.

As a result, combining both, the core competence with creating a timeless name, the brand name '**urgent button**' is suggested. It includes the button as talisman and device to trust in and further signalizes to urgent medical help which again signalizes a professional service people can rely on at all times. Furthermore, the word 'urgent' can also indicate further urgent matters related to future services (e.g. concierge service, urgent call to relatives, transmission of vital values, etc.).

Moreover, the brand name can be translated into Macedonian (ИТНО-КОПЧЕ) and Albanian (pulla emergjente) to form a completely new word which then can easily be associated with the new brand and category.

As a second step, the **brand logo** needs to be defined. Theoretical background as well as research results suggest combining the brand name with the brand logo, since people memorize as well as recognize it easier. Thus, it is suggested to transform the brand name into the logo as well. The round logo reflects the emergency button supported by the signal lines in red. Therefore, the following brand logo is suggested as possible implementation:



Figure 28: PERS service brand logo (Boeva 30.03.2021)

In detail, the logo implements the 'button' into the round geometric symbol including a ringing bell in the middle, which illustrates the urgent matter. To strengthen the brand name, it is added around the button. Since about 25% of all people living in North Macedonia are Albanians (cf. Minority rights group international 2020), the brand name is illustrated also in both languages. The color of the brand logo is suggested to be based on the Red Cross Corporate Identity in order to draw an immediate connection to it. However, the color application is reversed compared to the original logo in order to still create a differentiation between the two. Additionally, the figure-based contrast between the logo and the background is suggested to be high so it is perceived quicker and easier. Therefore, the white recess in shape of a bell is suggested to add a stylistic highlighting of the core of the brand.

However, in order to visualize the connection to the Red Cross even more, it is suggested to implement it in official communication measures, whenever needed. For this, the following combination of both logos as e.g. header in mailings is recommended.



Црвен крст на Република Северна Македонија
Kryqi i Kuq i Republikës së Maqedonisë së Veriut
 ЦРВЕН КРСТ НА ГРАД СКОПЈЕ / KRYQI I KUQ I QYTETIT TË SHKUPIT

Figure 29: PERS Service Brand with Red Cross Brand (Boeva 30.03.2021)

Lastly, the definition of **brand slogan** completes the branding triangle. According to research results, branding experts highlight the importance of slogans, as they should present the last part of the holistic branding picture which should be clear to people. Furthermore, research and theory both suggest implementing the positioning as well as the core value into the brand slogan in order to improve the brand's assessment and strengthen a clear position within the customer's mind. Moreover, it should also be unique to support the desired positioning of the brand. Hence, the the brand slogan '**feel safe every step you take**' is suggested. In order to verify its compliance, it will be interpreted and evaluated based on the defined criteria in Chapter 4.1 as follows:

#	Criteria	Evaluation	✓/X
1	Must get to the heart of the brand's verbal positioning strategy long-term	'feeling safe at any time' is the most intrinsic need people have, which is also a very emotional desire and purchase decision for customers. It also represents trends and possible future applications.	✓
2	To be communicable for publication in print and electronic media	Can be used for print and electronic media. Especially for electronic media, word plays and associations as well as graphical applications are possible	✓
3	To be defined precisely as well as comprehensible manner and should create a vivid picture of the brand	Feeling safe associates positive images and vivid pictures of people feeling good/confident/active through PERS safety. Feeling safe at any given time is clearly defined.	✓
4	Be tightly linked to the brand	The brand offers safety and quick help in emergency situations.	✓
5	Should be supported by memorable taglines or jingles	Can be developed further for memorable jingles and messages (e.g. feel safe – feel at ease; feel safe – feel secure; feel safe – anytime and anywhere; etc.)	✓
6	Must reflect the company's main strategy or core value	Supports market leadership positioning in the category 'safety'	✓

Table 8: Evaluation of Brand Slogan (own presentation)

In addition to the met criteria, the mentioned brand slogan also supports the defined brand personality defined in Chapter 11.2. It describes the association with a reliable and trustworthy guardian, who is always by one's side so people do not have to worry anymore – they can feel safe with them at all times. Furthermore, it also meets the needs of both target groups, since both desire safety either for themselves or their relatives.

Since experts highlight that all three parts of the triangle need to fit together perfectly, they are now visualized again in the following figure:

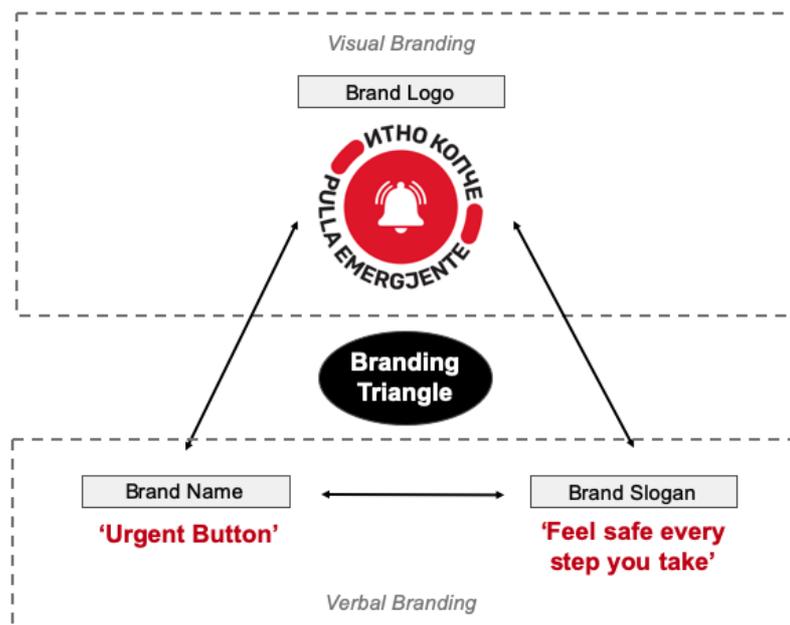


Figure 30: PERS Branding Triangle (own presentation)

11.4.2 Brand Touchpoints

As implied by brand experts within the thesis' primary research, the components of the branding triangle must be made visible and experienceable wherever it is possible and appropriate. Especially since the PERS service brand is intangible, brand experience plays an even bigger role. Hence, this chapter describes the most relevant customer touchpoints for the brand building phase, where the mentioned implication can be implemented.

To derive recommendations for action related to bring the holistic brand experience to every touchpoint, theory and research results will be summarized in the following customer journey map:



Figure 31: PERS Customer Journey Map with Brand Touchpoints (based on Schlömer 2018, p. 81)

Since theory as well as research findings see brand awareness as first objective when building a brand, it is obvious that brand touchpoints within the first phase of the customer journey are the most important ones. However, the customer journey should be adjusted to each target audience as well, since brand touchpoints may vary. In addition, they further relate to different communication instruments and will hence be connected to appropriate instruments in Chapter 11.5.2.

11.5 Integrated Communication

Within this chapter the communication approaches as well as measures are elaborated. Thus, the aggregation of theory and research provides the basis for the definition of appropriate instruments as well as a step-by-step action plan.

11.5.1 Communication Approach

Before going into the operationalized measures, the strategic approach must be defined. The theory stated in Chapter 5.4 as well as the primary research results suggest the application of a **'slow build-up approach'**, especially when considering a long-term market leadership position. The reason therefore is that with the slow build-up organizations can build their brand sustainably step-by-step through the application of supportive communication instruments, **focusing on offline as well as online PR and hence good content management**. Furthermore, experts highlight the importance of storytelling within the brand building approach and its implementation on all touchpoints and instruments. In order to build important trust in the first phase, **word-of-mouth** is seen as very important. However, this method can also be very well managed by letting third parties talk about your brand, such as comments in forums, recommendations within close related family and friends, social media, online reviews, etc.

To gain the attention of the target audience, a very **emotional communication** connected to the core values or latent customer needs should be applied, since the main target group is represented by the relatives of older adults. However, emotional arguments should be **supported by functional points** to gain credibility and trust. An example is that the urgent button gives people the feeling of safety and ease, to be independent and 'themselves' again because they do not have to worry anymore (emotional), they can get rapid and professional help in case of an emergency situation (functional). This aims to let people desire the feeling of safety and well-being again, because we show proof through the service itself.

Derived from the brand identity and positioning, the **tone-of-voice** should reflect the brand's personality and hence be trustworthy, friendly, experienced, supportive and empathetic. It is essential to also comply online and offline. However, it is still important to adjust the tone-of-voice to the respected communication instrument and target group. This means that on Social Media you can play more with a funny story, whereas in a more serious newspaper enough information and facts about the system should be integrated into text.

Main messages could hence be: to feel safe at all times, to be in good hands, service people trust in, experienced and professional staff, always there for you, immediate and professional help when needed most, stay active and independent.

Messages in storytelling should therefore relate to strong emotional and positive feelings, which are again targeting relatives who care deeply for their loved ones. Some examples for main messages in storytelling are: I feel more vivid ever since, I am able to enjoy life to the fullest, I only feel fine when I know my guardian angel is with me, I feel like my mother is in very good hands, I trust this service with my life, it is the most faithful companion anyone could wish for.

Additionally, it is necessary to maintain a **consistent picture** about the brand at all times, especially when different stories are told in the context of PERS. Thus, it is recommended to consolidate them into a single **storytelling campaign for the brand launch**, fostering one main message related to the positioning and brand core value. One suggestion for the campaign is to publish success stories of people who talk about their experience. This could be defined as **'feel safe, be yourself'**. It should illustrate people's happiest and most wonderful moments they have experienced, since they feel completely safe with the new PERS service. This campaign could include a series of stories from both target groups, users as well as

relatives, explaining how PERS improved their quality of life. For this, the same headline of 'feel safe, feel xxx' is used, as illustrated in the following table:

Headline	Details about content	Visualization
<i>'fell safe – feel confident'</i>	<p>User feels confident since his loved one has the emergency button and feels safe. She wears her guardian angel with confidence and as an accessory or talisman.</p> <p>Relative explains how her new confidence and talisman gives her the opportunity to focus on work again and feel confident that her mother is safe, as she cannot visit her every day.</p>	<p>User/Woman standing in front of the mirrors putting her PERS necklace on and feeling confident and glamorous.</p> <p>Son is next to her, putting her arm around her shoulders, feeling reassured and comfortable.</p>
<i>'feel safe – feel strong'</i>	<p>User feels stronger since she practices yoga regularly at home, because she feels safe with PERS.</p> <p>User and relative practice yoga online since daughter lives in another country and feels fine since mother is in good hands with PERS.</p>	<p>User/Woman practices yoga in her living room with tablet in front of her where her daughter is visible on the screen, doing the yoga session together. PERS is visible as wristband during yoga-pose central in picture.</p>
<i>'feel safe – feel alive'</i>	<p>User feels more alive than before since she started inviting her friends over for coffee again where they tell old stories and enjoy shared laughter. She does not have to worry about getting hurt during preparations (cleaning, baking a cake, etc.)</p> <p>Relative/Woman is happy that the emotional wellbeing of their mother increased with this additional security and that she meets her friends regularly, since relative was worried about her mother getting lonely since the children live in another country.</p>	<p>User/Woman and some other women sitting together at the table having coffee and cookies and laughing about old stories.</p> <p>User is in the focus laughing – holding her hand on her cheek where PERS is visible on her wristband.</p>
<i>'feel safe – feel independent'</i>	<p>User/Man feels independent, still takes care of his garden by himself without the help of gardener, since he feels safe with PERS. His garden is what he values most and loves to spend time for it.</p> <p>Relative has piece of mind that safety is assured; the garden is a lot of work but he does not want to forbid his father taking care of it and thereby denying his passion and the largest source of joy he now has following his wife's passing.</p>	<p>Man is planting flowers in the garden with a happy face. He is holding the flower in his hand, which he places into the soil, illustrating the PERS as wristband central in the picture.</p> <p>Son is looking at a picture of his father standing in front of his flowerbed that he got for last Christmas.</p>

Table 9: Examples for Storytelling Campaign 'feel safe - be yourself' (own presentation)

Another option for a campaign could be 'from me to you', providing advice on general health issues apart from PERS. In this case, users or doctors give individual

or professional advice to peers or patients on how to maintain their state of health in high age. Within the mentioned content, they also indirectly relate to the PERS service, which gives a valuable feeling of safety to vulnerable people. One example could be a women of high age talking about how taking care of her garden every day helps her to stay active, but she also has a PERS system that gives her the additional feeling of safety.

For social media platforms, additional hashtags can also support the brand awareness and reach a bigger target audience, even the younger generations of grandchildren. Therefore, hashtags such as ‘#feelsafe #everystepyou take #becausewecare #selfcare #beyourself #happyme #feelconfident #thebestversionofme #passion #happymoments #feelgood’ could support the reach of the respected stories.

11.5.2 Communication Instruments

In order to select the most appropriate instruments, a cost-benefit analysis is applied, based on suggested instruments from the theoretical Chapter 5.3 and research findings of Chapter 10.2.3 and 10.2.4. The detailed calculation can be found in the thesis’ appendix and illustrates the relative benefit of communication instruments. However, only the instrumens suggested by theory and research findings were included into the evaluations, since others were not seen as appropriate for the PERS service brand building. The evaluation results show the following clear prioritization for the use of instruments related to the brand building phase:

1. Social Media [#443]
2. Public Relations [#430]
3. Mobile Communication [#391]
4. Event Marketing [#294]
5. Personal Communicaton [#279]
6. Advertising [#243]

As a result, the main focus related to communication should lie on Social Media, PR, mobile communication and event marketing for the brand launch. However, since the mentioned instruments only represent categories, the following table connects them wih important brand touchpoints of Chapter 11.4.2 and derives

recommendations for actions to consider for each instrument, gathered from theory and research.

#	C. Instruments	Brand Touchpoints	Recommendations for Actions
1	Social Media	Community and Forum, Social Networks	Storytelling on Facebook and Instagram PERS page, Success Stories, Push new service, link with website, call-to-action, contact via Social Media, co-creation
2	Public Relation	PR, Radio, Print, Word-of-Mouth	Storytelling on classic PR in newspapers, recommendation platforms, Success Stories, TV and Radio PR-shows, online reviews and experiences
3	Mobile Comm.	Online-Display, PPC & Internet Search, Landing Page,	Mobile responsive website, all relevant information on website, contact, call-to-action, SEO, many visual and emotional pictures and communication measures to present the service, success stories, link to other instruments
4	Event Marketing	Customer Event, Word-of-Mouth, Peers, Personal Communication, Sales Rep.	Personal and interactive communication towards individual customer needs, direct feedback, call-to-action, coupons/special offers, storytelling and success stories, empathetic consultations,
5	Personal Comm.	Recommendations, Word-of-Mouth, Peers, Store, Call-Center, Sales Rep., Community, Customer Event	Personal and interactive communication towards individual customer needs, direct feedback, call-to-action, storytelling and success stories, empathetic consultations, trustful recommendations from direct environment, peer reviews, exchange of experiences, co-creation
6	Advertising	Social Media Ads, Print Ads	Focus on brand name, logo and slogan, positioning must be clear, call-to-action, strong and emotional verbals and visuals, storytelling by quote of people using it, newspaper, social media ads

Table 10: Communication Instruments and Recommendations for Action (own presentation)

Related to the instruments in the previous table, **Social Media, PR, mobile communication and event management** is rather recommended for reaching the **primary target group of relatives**. **Personal communication, advertising and PR**, however, are rather recommended for increasing brand awareness among users and hence **older adults themselves**. However, since relatives are seen as primary target group and the analysis also rates a higher importance of associated instruments, older adults only play a minor role in communication measures. Still, since relatives aim to evoke a certain feeling in their loved ones, it is recommended that the users play a central role in storytelling.

11.5.3 Integrated Communication Plan

Within this subchapter, the previously described communication measures of the slow build-up approach, instruments and touchpoints are being condensed into a communication plan. Research results highlight the importance of step-by-step approach also for communication. Hence the first marketing efforts should only focus on the city of Skopje, since it is also advisable to conserve resources related to staff. Based on this, the following figure illustrates a communication process divided into three main steps:

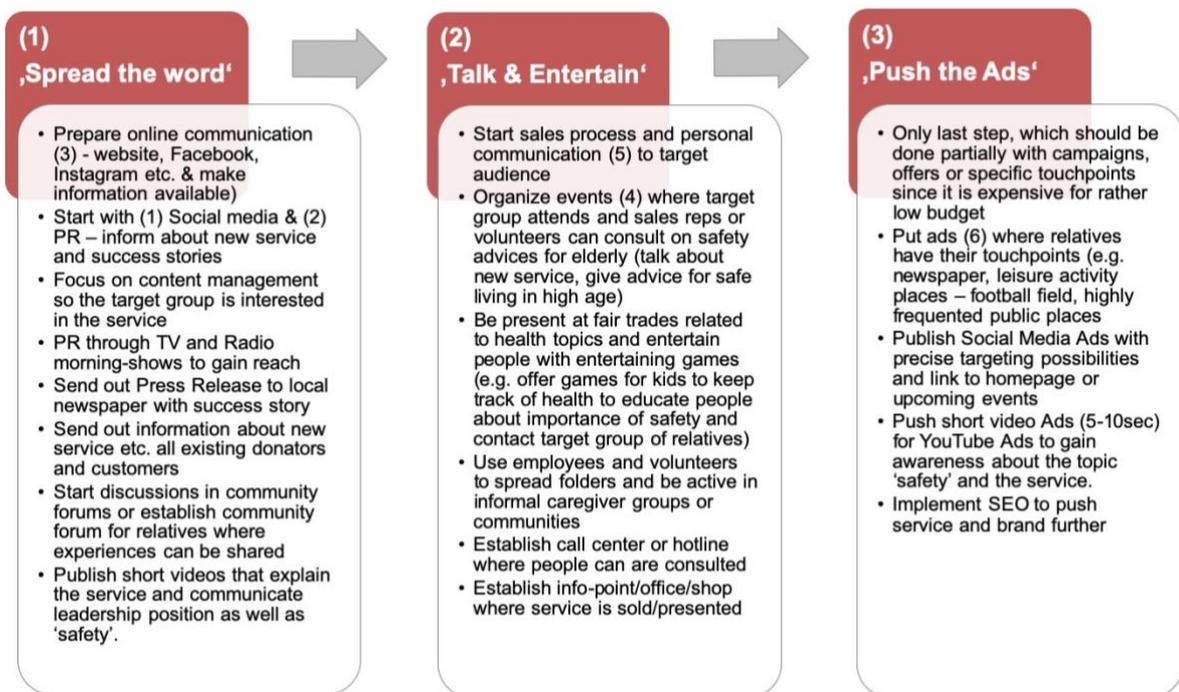


Figure 32: Communication Process for PERS Brand Building (own presentation)

Throughout all three main steps, a call-to-action is needed so people have the possibility to get more information about it (e.g. link to homepage, phone number, purchase-button etc.). Furthermore, as mentioned previously, the integration of communication measures and tone-of-voice (online, offline, personal) is essential in order to create a clear and holistic picture of the brand. Additionally, due to the intangibility of the service, all related uniforms, vehicles, buildings, print material, equipment, marketing material, ads, articles etc. needs to visualize the PERS logo in order to create awareness. However, for each step illustrated in figure 27, another detailed process plan should be created by the organization in order to also keep track and adjust immediately to leverage as good as possible from single measures.

11.6 Brand Controlling

In order to evaluate the brand building concepts success, brand controlling instruments need to be implemented and selected (cf. Tomczak/Kuss/Reinecke 2014, p. 254). As already described in Chapter 6, there are different V2F and V2C metrics which can be used for this purpose. However, only some of them are suggested in the context of this thesis, since others would not be appropriate or meaningful. As a result, the following metrics are recommended to be applied one year after the brand has been launched.

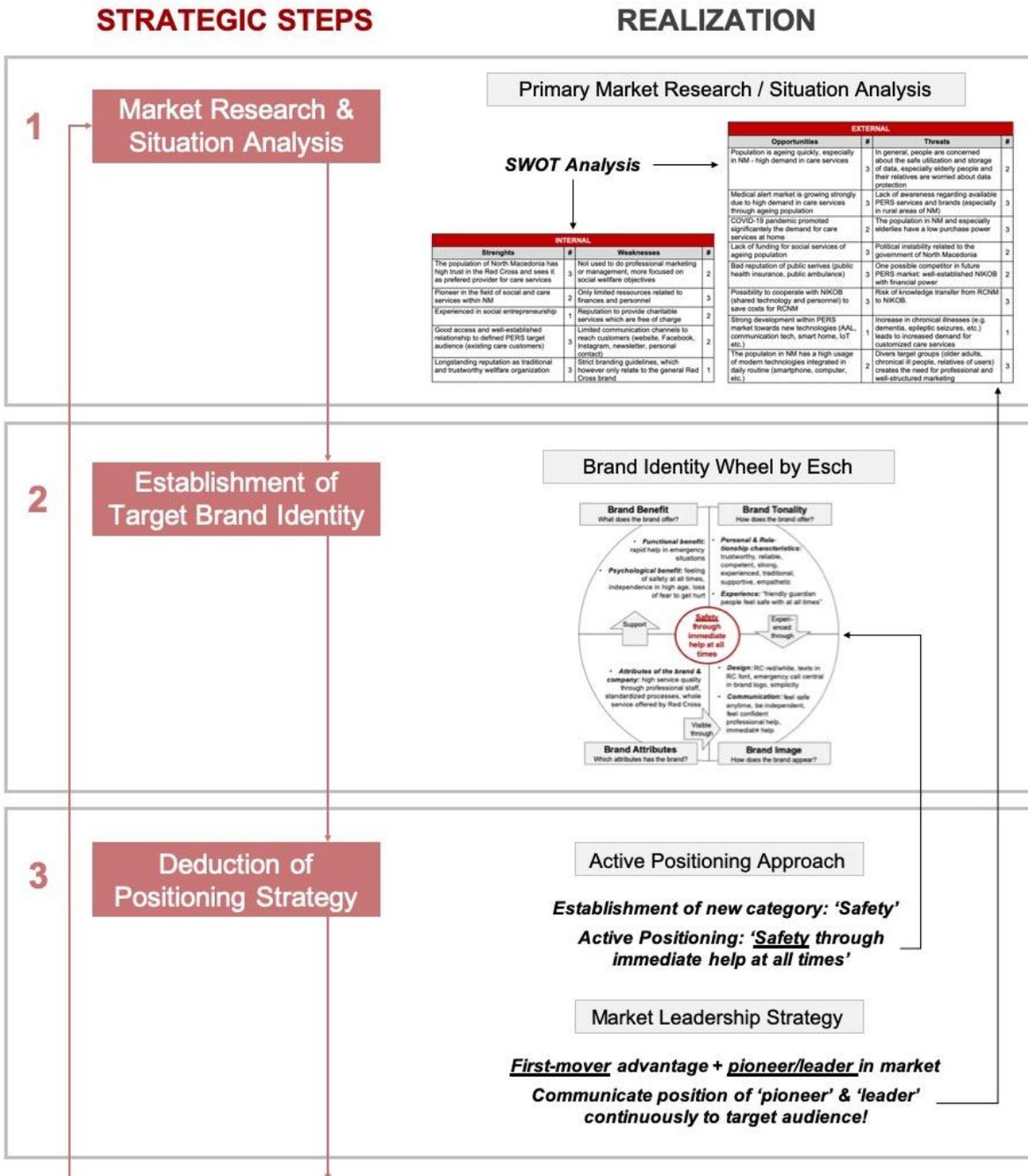
Within the category of **V2F metrics**, the following are selected for this concept:

- **Revenue Increase:** Since the second company objective for the brand building concept aims to achieve an annual increase in revenue by 59%, this metric must also be included into the brand controlling instruments.
- **Return on Marketing Investment (ROMI):** For the RCNM, only limited budget is available for marketing measures. Therefore, the ROMI plays a central role within the strategic controlling instruments, especially for the current brand building concept. However, if the brand building concept reports successful metrics, it could also be used as line of argument for an increased investment into marketing in the future.
- **Social Analytics:** Since Social Media measures play an important role for the brand building concept of PERS in North Macedonia, the evaluation of social metrics such as reach, engagement, impressions, click-through-rate, conversion rate, share of voice, mentions, followers, etc. should also be implemented.
- **Web analytics:** Lastly, web analytics such as page views, unique visits, bounce rate and demographics should be used, since online-presentation through the website plays an important role during the brand building.

In addition to the previous mentioned metrics, also **V2C metrics** are important to consider. According to research findings and theoretical background, **brand awareness** is seen as most important metric for the evaluation of a brand building concept. Furthermore, it also forms part of the thesis' objective, which aims to reach a supported brand awareness of 30% within one year.

11.7 Summary of PERS Service Brand Building Concept

In order to gain a holistic picture and quick overview of the previously described concept, all main points and findings are inserted into the following illustration, derived from the already defined general valid approach of Chapter 7.



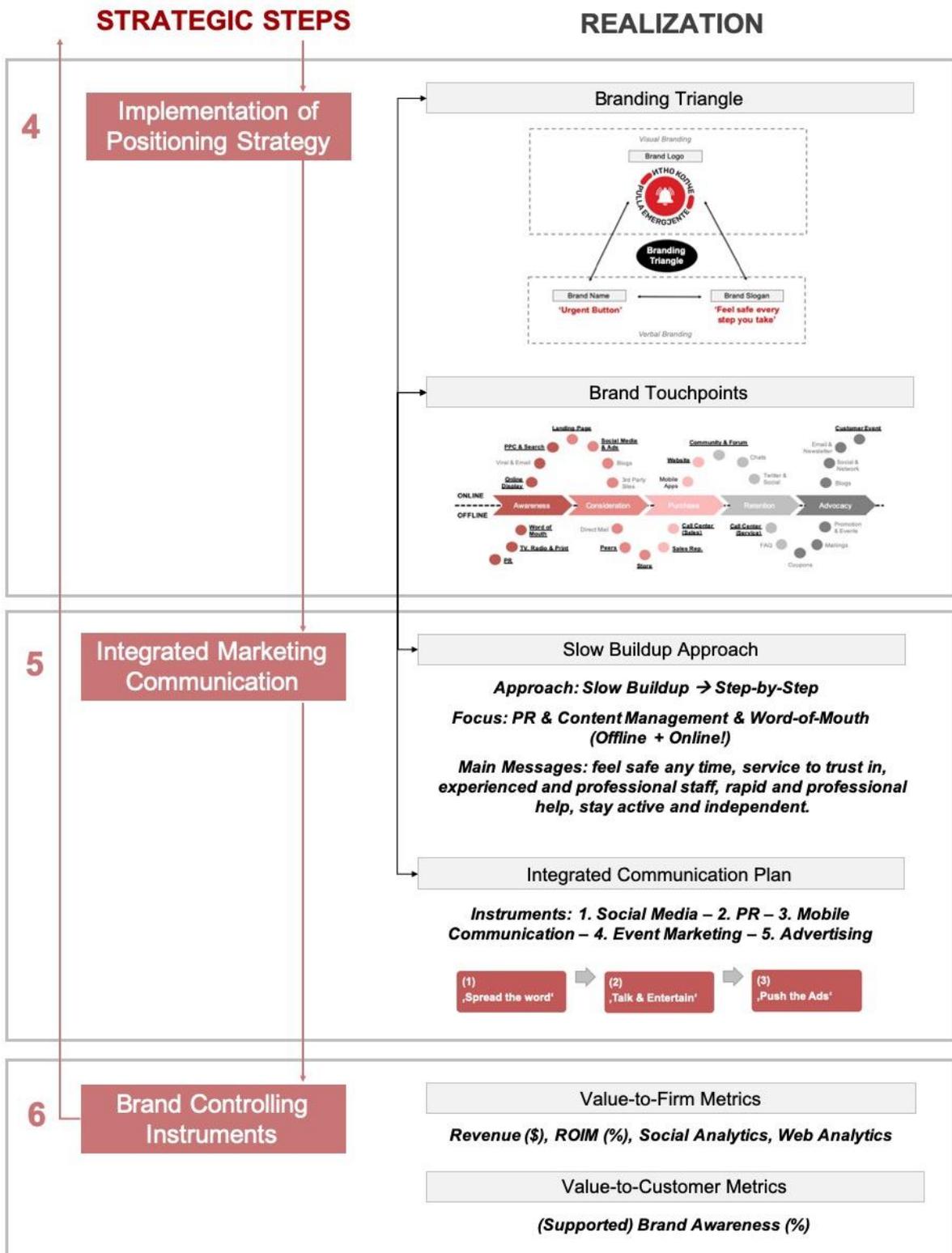


Figure 34: PERS Service Brand Building Concept – Part 2 (own presentation)

12 Budgeting

Since RCNM has only a very limited budget of 1,000 EUR within their first year of business and 1,500 EUR for the second year, their biggest emphasis for support lies on volunteers available to the organization. Furthermore, this amount does not include the personnel costs of paid employees within the PERS project team, or any other equipment needed for the execution of service such as uniforms, vehicles, etc. Due to the fact that this budget is only assigned for marketing material, without considering the personnel costs associated therewith, the previously mentioned concept of Chapter 11 can still be applied.

As a result, the given budget related to marketing measures which are liable to pay can be established for the years 2021 and 2022 as illustrated in the following table:

Marketing Measures	Q3	Q4	2021	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2022
Promotion								
Folder/Brochures		350,00	350,00	200,00			100,00	300,00
Print Material Office		120,00	120,00			100,00		100,00
Events								
Giveaways	150,00		150,00	50,00			50,00	100,00
POS booth		200,00	200,00					0,00
Rollup		80,00	80,00					0,00
Advertising								
Social Media Ads		100,00	100,00			200,00		200,00
Print Ads			0,00				300,00	300,00
SEO			0,00				500,00	500,00
Total Costs	150,00	850,00	1.000,00	250,00	0,00	300,00	950,00	1.500,00
								2.500,00

Table 11: Budgeting for Marketing Measures (own presentation)

In addition to the mentioned marketing measures, internal personnel costs also need to be considered, which are needed for the organization and implementation of marketing measures. Therefore, the projected personnel costs of RCNM are used as base for this calculation. According to the internal project documentation, a monthly salary of EUR 682.50 per month is calculated for the project coordinator who is responsible for marketing and the implementation process (cf. Chichevaliev 2019, p. 131). Hence, the hourly rate of EUR 17.96 illustrates the base for the calculation of additional personnel costs of the mentioned concept and individual budgeting items listed in the following table:

Additional Costs		Q3		Q4		2021		Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2022		
		h	EUR	h	EUR	h	EUR	h	EUR	h	EUR	h	EUR	h	EUR	h	EUR	SUM
Preparation																		
Creating Logo Design	40	718,42					718,42											0,00
Creating Folder/Broschures Design	35	628,62				628,62												0,00
Organizing print material	5	89,80				89,80				2	35,92						71,84	
Organizing success story testimonials	15	269,41				269,41				5	89,80						89,80	
Establishing Social Media pages (FB, Insta)	10	179,61				179,61											0,00	
Establishing Website Content	20	359,21				359,21											0,00	
Presentation to volunteers (marketing/sales)	5	89,80	5	89,80	5	89,80	5	89,80	5	89,80	5	89,80					179,61	
Implementation of PR measures																		
Preparation of press release	2,5	44,90				44,90	5	89,80										89,80
Send out press release	2	35,92				35,92	2	35,92										35,92
Writing and sending newsletter article	3	53,88	3	53,88	3	53,88	3	53,88	3	53,88	3	53,88	3	53,88	3	53,88		215,53
Writing and publishing success stories	10	179,61	4	71,84	4	71,84	251,45	8	143,68			15	269,41	8	143,68	8	143,68	556,78
Postings on Facebook	20	359,21	20	359,21	20	359,21	718,42	8	143,68	20	359,21	8	143,68	8	143,68	8	143,68	790,26
Postings on Instagram	20	359,21	20	359,21	20	359,21	718,42	8	143,68	20	359,21	8	143,68	8	143,68	8	143,68	790,26
Writing on Blogs/Forums	15	269,41	15	269,41	15	269,41	538,82			15	269,41			15	269,41			538,82
Adjustments on website (design/content)	20	359,21	20	359,21	20	359,21	718,42	20	359,21			20	359,21					718,42
Preparation of public lectures	2	35,92				35,92	2	35,92						2	35,92			71,84
Holding lectures in public or groups	2	35,92				35,92	2	35,92	2	35,92	2	35,92	2	35,92	2	35,92		143,68
Events																		
Preparation of event (booth/personnel)	15	269,41				269,41				8	143,68							143,68
Preparation of speapstakes	6	107,76	3	53,88	3	53,88	161,64	4	71,84			6	107,76					179,61
Advertising																		
Preparation Social Media Ads			8	143,68	8	143,68	143,68					8	143,68	8	143,68	8	143,68	287,37
Preparation Print Ads						0,00	0,00					5	89,80					89,80
Preparation of short image video						0,00	0,00					30	538,82	30	538,82	30	538,82	1.077,63
Total Costs			4.445,23	1.796,05	6.241,28	1.203,36	1.436,84	1.885,86	1.544,61	6.070,66	12.311,94							

Table 12: Budgeting for Additional Marketing Costs (own presentation)

Since both cost structures are needed for brand building, by the end of 2022, total expenditures of EUR 14,811.94 are necessary for the brand building of the PERS service. However, these very low costs can only be feasible if a lot of support is delivered by volunteers who do not cause additional personnel costs (e.g. personell presence at events, consultations via phone, creation of promotion videos and pictures, creation of marketing graphics for online and print media, etc.). Furthermore, a very low budget for advertising measures is applicable since TV morning shows and many print ads are offered to the RCNM for free or at least for a very low non-profit price.

13 Conclusion

The 'ageing population' creates a vast market potential for organizations offering PERS systems for vulnerable groups. However, non-profits struggle to compete within the private industry and entrepreneurship due to lack of financial power and professional staff. Since a new PERS brand is to be established, brand management plays an important role for the novel service in order to build essential brand awareness. As a result, this thesis focuses on the development of a brand building concept within the given context.

Research findings show that due to the mentioned challenges and the safety-relevant service, trust and credibility are the most crucial success factors for non-profits to compete within a market. Hence, the RCNM can leverage from the positive image of the general Red Cross brand. However, the general principle puts special emphasis on a step-by-step approach for the brand building, especially when aiming for a market leadership position. Firstly, strategic considerations related to brand identity and positioning are established. Afterwards, operationalized measures (e.g. brand logo, slogan, name, communication, messages, campaigns, etc.) need to be derived from that to create a clear and holistic picture of the brand throughout all touchpoints.

The main target groups are defined as PERS users (older adults) and their close contact persons (relatives and friends). Since, mostly, relatives influence the decision processes of older adults, they are defined as primary target group, especially for the brand building. Hence, research suggests to focus on emotional communication and storytelling to build the brand and increase brand awareness. However, rational arguments should always underline emotional communication to evoke a sense of credibility and trust.

In summary, the PERS brand building concept is a rather detailed and important strategic tool that should be implemented into the strategic alignment of non-profit management and hence needs to be lived top down to be successful.

14 Outlook

Since the market growth is definitely increasing in the future, many other organizations are going to try to exploit the potential within the market. Hence, in order to maintain a market leadership position long-term, this position as market leader must be recharged regularly. According to branding experts, this is obtained by constant product and marketing improvement, so that the target audience will still perceive the brand as the market leader even after many years. Thus, it is key to continuously research trends and market developments and adjust the products and marketing measures accordingly. However, despite continuous development, the core value and the market leadership position must still be maintained and function as central alignment. Therefore, it is also advised to regularly review the current positioning and evaluate the accuracy of it, in order to still be able to maintain the holistic image of the brand.

The market development within the PERS industry is predicted to proceed slowly. However, it is still important to consider that technology is constantly evolving. Hence, future trends foster a rather proactive than reactive assistance, including the derivation of behavior patterns through different sensor technology. Therefore, PERS will still play a central part of the service, but may be extended by further assistance services within the home of older adults (e.g. smart home). In addition to that, customer needs are adapting too, which illustrates the need to focus on strategic marketing and market developments continuously.

As the PERS service brand will not start with the initial phase of building the brand within the market, the external brand image needs to develop concomitantly. However, it is recommended to conduct a market research on the PERS brand image later on (e.g. in three years) to see if the defined positioning and strategic alignment also correlates with the perceived impression by customers.

In conclusion, it can be stated that it is crucial for organizations to maintain a future-oriented alignment to build a strong PERS service brand and maintain the market leadership position in a long-term perspective.

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4 MT Project Plan

The following figures will describe the overall project timeline and management plan in two parts. The first part presents the period from September 2020 to January 2021, as presented in the figure below:

	Who	Status	Sep. 20					Oct. 20					Nov. 20					Dec. 20					Jan. 21				
			36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	1	2	3	4			
WP1 - Exposé																											
1.1 Initial Situation	S	done																									
1.2 Problem Statement	S	done																									
1.3 Company and Thesis Objectives	S	done																									
1.4 Structure of Thesis	S	done																									
1.5 Project Plan	S	done																									
1.6 Meeting with MM	S, MM	done																									
1.7 Company Kickoff Meeting	S, MM	done																									
1.8 Revision/Feedback after MM/MS	S	done																									
1.9 Master Seminar 1	S, MM	done																									
WP2 - Theoretical Part																											
2.1 Brand Management	S	done																									
2.2 Brand Identity	S	done																									
2.3 Brand Positioning for Brand Building	S	done																									
2.4 Integrated Communication	S	done																									
2.5 Brand Controlling	S	done																									
2.6 Theoretical Brand Building Concept	S	done																									
2.7 Meeting with MM	S, MM	done																									
2.7 Revision/Feedback after MM/MS	S	done																									
2.8 Master Seminar 2	S, MM	done																									
WP3 - Practical Part																											
3.1 Company Presentation	S	done																									
3.2 Situation Analysis	S	done																									
3.3 Research Design	S	done																									
3.4 Recruitment of Experts for Interviews	S	done																									
3.5 Implementation of Interviews	S, CM	done																									
3.6 Analysis and Interpretation of Results	S	done																									
3.7 PERS Brand Building Concept	S	done																									
3.8 Budgeting	S	done																									
3.9 Recommendations for Action	S	done																									
3.10 Meeting with MM	S, MM	done																									
3.11 Revision/Feedback after MM/MS	S	done																									
3.12 Master Seminar 3	S, MM	done																									
WP 4 - Finalization																											
4.1 Conclusion / Outlook	S	done																									
4.2 Abstract en/de	S	done																									
4.3 Meeting with MM	S, MM	done																									
4.4 Finalization of MT	S	done																									
4.5 Final Company Presentation	tbd	tbd																									

Figure 1: Project Plan Sept.20 - Jan.21 (own presentation)

5 MT Project Plan - List of Deliverables

Deliverables (D)		Deadline
D1	First Draft - Exposé MM	28.09.20
D2	Final Exposé MS1	16.10.20
D3	MT agreement	20.11.20
D4	First Draft - Theory MM	08.01.20
D5	Final Theory - MS2	22.01.21
D6	First Draft Practical MM	02.04.21
D7	Final Practical - MS3	19.04.21
D8	First Draft - Final MT	10.05.21
D9	Final MT - plagiarism	14.05.21
D10	Final MT - library ready	02.07.21

Table 14: Project Plan - List of Deliverables

6 MT Project Plan - List of Milestones

Milestones (M)		Deadline
M1	Kickoff Meeting Company	15.10.20
M2	Master Seminar 1	23.10.20
M3	Master Seminar 2	29.01.21
M4	Master Seminar 3	23.04.21
M5	Evaluation MT	20.06.21
M6	Final Exam	10.07.21
M7	Final Company Presentation	tbd

Table 2: Project Plan - List of Milestones

7 MT Project Plan - List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations	
S	Student
MM	Master Thesis Mentor
CM	Company Mentor
D	Deliverable
M	Milestone

Table 3: Project Plan - List of Abbreviations

8 Criteria for the Deduction of the Target Brand Identity

CRITERIA	Brand Identity Aaker	Brand Identity Kapferer	Brand Identity Esch
Completeness of factors	2 doesn't include relationship aspects or emotional factors	3 includes all relevant factors	3 includes all relevant factors
Interrelation of elements	3 structured as modular concept from essence to extended identity , each with all dimensions	3 interrelation is basic idea of concept by Kapferer	3 arrows in concepts show how all functions should be interrelated
Separation of components	3 all components are clearly defined and separated from others	3 all components are clearly defined and separated from others	3 all components are clearly defined and separated from others
Practical Implementation	1 description is very vague and not easy to apply in practical context, also if the brand as organization or person is not important for the specific brand	2 Some parts are easy to implement into practice part, others such as culture, reflection or self-image are harder or more complicated to apply	3 practical application is very clear and easy to implement, since they can easily be entered for every point
Considering brand trust	1 is not included in the concept, not clear where to include it - product, person, or organization. Not clearly possible to focus on trust	2 is not directly included into concept, but could be included at the part of brand personality	2 is not directly included into concept, but could be included at the part of brand tonality and attributes - both can be derived from trust.
Considering emotional value	2 is not a focus but could be implemented at different points	2 is not a focus but could be implemented at different points	2 is not a focus but could be implemented at different points
Service intangibility	2 not a focus, but can be included in 'Brand as Product'	1 Cannot be applied since Physique focuses only on tangible designs, no other point to focus on intangibility	3 Brand benefits focus on functional and psychological benefits - here intangibility can be covered and highlighted
Non-profit appliance	3 could be applied also for NGOs - no limiting factors	3 could be applied also for NGOs - no limiting factors	3 could be applied also for NGOs - no limiting factors
SUM	17	19	22

Figure 3: Criteria for the Deduction of Target Brand Identity (own presentation)

9 Research Design

This chapter provides all relevant information about the research design applied for the conduction of the primary market research. It contains the desired research objective, applied methodology, selection of sample size and survey instrument, planned fieldwork as well as preliminary information on the evaluation of research data.

Research Objective

The main research objective of this thesis is to collect and evaluate specific expert opinion and experience on

- appropriate brand attributes for the development of the target brand identity,
- success factors for a long-term market leadership position of strong brands,
- the related trends and developments in the market, which are important to consider to maintain the desired long-term market leadership position,
- appropriate branding decisions related to brand name, slogan and logo,
- the selection and prioritization of customer and brand touchpoints and
- the evaluation of the appropriate communication instruments for the defined target groups.

All the gathered expert information as well as the input from theoretical part will then be conflated to a customized brand building concept for the PERS service brand of the RCNM, transporting all strategic and operational cornerstones to the defined target audience.

Investigative Methodology

In order to determine the appropriate and detailed insights for the PERS brand building concept, a qualitative research is conducted. This approach has been chosen due to the fact that this thesis aims to develop a new branding concept where data relate to subconscious feelings as well as preferences of the target groups are collected. Additionally, this method illustrates a rather unstructured and exploratory research methodology, aiming to yield insight, depth and understanding of the investigated topic (cf. Malhotra/Nunan/Birks 2017, p. 150 - 155). Furthermore, qualitative research enables the analysis of causes and motives, creation of new ideas, identification of influencing factors as well as screening of appropriate alternatives (cf. Oberzaucher 2017, p. 24f), which is central for this investigation.

Sample Selection

Since the target of this research is to gain deep understanding of the thesis' topic as well as discover expert implications for practice, a purposeful sampling is applied. It describes the investigation through specific experts seen as purposive sample, representing the basic population within a certain field, where the investigator can learn most from (cf. Merriam/Tisdell 2016, p. 96; Kolb 2008, p. 113). However, since qualitative research does not apply the probability theory, statistical representativeness is not fulfilled. Therefore, the theory-controlled as well as homogenous sampling method and size is selected, since theories and characteristics related to the research subject is already given and should be evaluated through the interview (cf. Oberzaucher 2017, p. 39f).

Therefore, a criterion-based selection of interviewees as first step is essential to find experts delivering the desired insights (cf. Merriam/Tisdell 2016, p. 96f). Hence, a total of 15 experts are interviewed, who must fulfill the following criteria:

- Professional activity or occupation within the field of Brand Management or PERS Management
- A minimum of 5 years in experience within the mentioned field of expertise
- A maximum of two persons may be selected from one company
- At least 25% of all experts must be occupied in the Republic of North Macedonia to receive input on local challenges and preferences.

Since the needed input for the study needs to reflect information from brand management experts as well as experts responsible for PERS management, they have been divided into two separate interview groups. The first group of brand management experts focuses on general branding topics, whereas the PERS experts provide input on marketing and branding within the PERS and non-profit environment as well as previous brand and service launches in their field of business. Since both groups are equally important, the number of interview partners has been split likewise. More detailed information about the individual interview partners is described in Planned Fieldwork.

Survey Instrument

For this survey, a semi-structured one-on-one interview is chosen, as it offers increased flexibility using an interview guide which includes a well-balanced mix of more and less structured questions. This means that whenever more specific

information is asked, questions are designed with more structure, whereas most of the interview contains rather open questions to receive the maximum of information from the interviewee. Furthermore, this survey format offers the researcher to respond spontaneously with additional questions to any situation and individualize each interview as needed (cf. Merriam/Tisdell 2016, p. 109 – 111; Kolb 2008, p. 150f).

The used interview guide is structured as funnel, where the questioning at first focuses on general topics, perusing a more detailed inquiry afterwards. In addition, essential questions will be placed rather at the beginning, since the needed time of qualitative questions can vary widely and could hence answered insufficiently due to lack in time or motivation of interviewees (cf. Oberzaucher 2017, p. 64f).

Since the research includes two different expert groups including brand management experts and PERS management experts, the interview guide and associated questions are aligned to their specific field of expertise. However, most of the questions covered equal topics in order to analyze correlations or differences with high impact on the brand building concept. Hence, the following table illustrates the included topics of interview guide for each group.



Figure 4: Topics of Conversation Guide for Expert Groups (own presentation)

The conduction of the selected one-on-one interviews is very flexible, because it only involves the interviewer and the participant. For expert interviews, the place of employment is a convenient place for the interview where interviewees mostly feel very comfortable (cf. Kolb 2008, p. 151f). However, in the present circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic, personal face-to-face meetings are in general reduced to a minimum. Therefore, the interview medium changed from personal meetings to videoconferencing through MS Teams, since mobile phone meetings should not exceed 15 minutes (cf. Oberzaucher 2017, p. 17).

Fieldwork

Even though pretests evaluate the accuracy of questions as well as the duration of the survey and are hence indispensable for quantitative surveys, it is not applied in qualitative research. This is due to the fact that qualitative investigations include rather flexible questioning techniques and would hence require exceeding effort (cf. Oberzaucher 2017, p. 73). Hence, the pretest will not be carried out for this study.

The recruitment of interviewees took place between January 22nd, 2021 until March 9th, 2021, since many professionals were very hard to get into contact, or cancelled the interview some days before. The execution of the 15 interviews took place between March 1st, 2021 and March 22nd, 2021. As already mentioned in the chapter of sample selection, the interviews have been split into two expert groups, namely brand management experts and PERS experts, combining their input into a holistic picture which will be transferred to the thesis objective.

The following two tables list all brand management experts, their position within the field of brand management, as well as the date of interview.

#	ID	Position of Interviewee	Country	Interview Date
1	B1	Marketing and Brand Manager	DE	March 1 st , 2021
2	B2	Positioning Expert, selfemployed	AUT	March 3 rd , 2021
3	B3	Brand and Positioning Consultant	AUT	March 4 th , 2021
4	B4	Marketing and Brand Consultant	AUT	March 4 th , 2021
5	B5	Marketing and Brand Manager	MKD	March, 9 th , 2021
6	B6	Brand Manager	AUT	March 8 th , 2021
7	B7	Marketing and Brand Manager	MKD	March 17 th , 2021
8	B8	Marketing and Brand Consultant	MKD	March 17 th , 2021

Table 4: List of Interview Partners - Brand Management Experts (own presentation)

The next table illustrates the interviewed PERS experts and respected information mentioned previously.

#	ID	Position of Interviewee	Country	Interview Date
9	I1	PERS Manager	MKD	March 1 st , 2021
10	I2	PERS and Assisted Living Manager	AUT	March 2 nd , 2021
11	I3	CEO of private PERS company	DE	March 3 rd , 2021
12	I4	PERS Global Marketing Manager	UK/NL	March 18 th , 2021
13	I5	PERS Marketing Manager	DE	March 22 nd , 2021
14	I6	PERS Manager	AUT	March 22 nd , 2021
15	I7	PERS Marketing and Sales Manager	DE/UK	March 22 nd , 2021

Table 5: List of Interview Partners - PERS Experts (own presentation)

All interviews were held in English language and lasted between 25 and 55 minutes, depending on the interviewee's cooperation to share practical experience. Furthermore, all interviews were conducted via MS-Teams videoconferencing calls, since the COVID19-pandemic did not permit personal meetings. For the purpose of transcribing and analyzing the interview data, all interviews have been recorded with the interviewees individual consent. Additionally, all interview partners were given a general overview about the product, industry and brand management consideration previous to the interview to get a good impression about the topic.

Evaluation of Data

For the evaluation of data, conducted interviews need to be transcribed and analyzed. For this, the transcription has been converted in the software *easiertranscript* after the guidelines of Udo Kuckartz (cf. Rädicker/Kuckartz 2019, p. 44f). For the following evaluation of collected qualitative data, the content-related analysis of Kuckartz has been applied (cf. Kuckartz 2018, p. 100 - 111). This approach can be summarized in the following six steps:

1. Instigated textual work: marking text passages and writing memos
2. Developments of categories and code system
3. Coding of data material
4. Inductive determination and tapering of categories
5. Finalization of coding
6. Analysis and visualization of research

The definition of content-related categories for the coding was conducted a-priori and has been derived from the theory as well as the sub-objectives of the thesis,

explained in Chapter 1.3.2 (cf. Kuckartz 2018, p. 34, 64 - 67). However, during the process of coding, also inductive coding has supplemented new input from the interviews demanding new categories (cf. Kuckartz 2018 p. 72f, 95). This approach has been particularly selected to combine the predefined subject areas for the establishment of brand building concept, complete it with new input from the interviews and condense the coding systems for categories with rather little input. The further analysis of interview material was conducted through the analysis software *MAXQDA* (cf. Rädicker/Kuckartz 2019). After the complete allocation of codes on the data material a category-based analysis has been conducted in order to constitute verbal results of the interview. For this, all codings have been analyzed and summarized (in note form) within a summary grid. For the content related analysis, the summary grid served as facilitating illustration and basis for further content derivations in relation to the thesis' concept. (Rädicker/Kuckartz 2019, p. 149 - 153). Since demographic information and other statistical data was not collected through the interviews, this research omits statistical analysis and rather focuses on verbal-interpretative analysis of data and categorial information. Through this approach, arguments will be analyzed and interpreted for each category and hence the thesis topics (cf. Kuckartz 2018, p. 135f).

10 Coding System of Qualitative Research Analysis

#	C*	Category Name	Description
1	MC	Brand Building	General brand building input
1.1	SC	Brand Building Process	Brand building steps during to brand launch
1.2	SC	Brand Building of Service Brands	Particularities of brand building for service brands
2	MC	Brand Identity	General brand identity input
2.1	SC	Brand Attributes	Brand attributes recommended for service brands or PERS band
2.2	SC	Brand Personality	Brand personality being associated with PERS service brand
2.3	SC	Brand Benefits	Brand benefits of a PERS brand within the nonprofit environment
3	MC	Brand Positioning	General Input for brand positioning
3.1	SC	Market Leadership Position	Success factors how to reach a market leadership position and main it long-term
3.2	SC	Implementation of Branding	Input on how to implement the identity and positioning into branding (logo, slogan etc.)
3.3	SC	Customer Touchpoints	Most important customer touchpoints during brand building of PERS service brand
4	MC	Brand Communication	General brand communication input
4.1	SC	Communication Process	Necessary brand communication steps during brand building
4.2	SC	Communication Strategy	Strategic considerations on main strategy related to advertising or PR
4.3	SC	Communication Instruments	Relevant communication instruments for brand building and target groups
5	MC	PERS Marketing	General PERS marketing input
5.1	SC	Challenges in PERS or Nonprofit Marketing	Most relevant challenges for PERS marketing within the nonprofit environment
5.2	SC	Success Factors in PERS or Nonprofit Marketing	Most relevant (past) success factors for PERS marketing within nonprofit sector
6	MC	Product or Brand Launch	General brand and product launch input
6.1	SC	Challenges in Product or Brand launch	Most relevant challenges for brand and/or product launch in general
6.2	SC	Success Factors in Product or Brand Launch	Most relevant (past) success factors for brand and/or product launch in general
7	MC	PERS Benefits	PERS benefits for target group
7.1	SC	Critical PERS benefits	Most critical PERS benefits for target group to build awareness and demand
7.2	SC	Emotional vs. Functional Benefits	Input on communication of benefits in an emotional and/or functional style
8	MC	Target Audience	Description of possible target audiences
8.1	SC	Selection of Target Group	Input on most relevant target groups
8.2	SC	Customer Needs	Relevant customer needs of target group
8.3	SC	Purchase Decision	Criteria for purchase decision of target group
9	MC	PERS Market Development	General PERS market development estimation for the next 5 to 10 years
9.1	SC	Trends & Technological Development	Most relevant technical developments and trends for the next 5 to 10 years
9.2	SC	Development of Customer Needs	Estimated development of customer needs within the next 5 to 10 years related to SC 9 and 9.1

Table 6: Coding System for Qualitative Research Analysis (own presentation)

*Primary Table Key: MC = Main Category, SC = Subcategory

11 Cost-Benefit Analysis for the Selection of Instruments

Cost-Benefit Analysis for the Selection of Communication Instruments													
Criterion	Weigh- ting	Advertising		Personal Comm.		Event Marketing		Mobile Comm.		Public Relations		Social Media	
		Rating	Benefit	Rating	Benefit	Rating	Benefit	Rating	Benefit	Rating	Benefit	Rating	Benefit
Costs [€]	15	2	30	1	15	2	30	4	60	5	75	5	75
Total reach [total population]	15	3	45	1	15	2	30	3	45	4	60	3	45
Reach of target audience [relatives]	20	2	40	3	60	3	60	5	100	4	80	5	100
Internal efforts [time/flexibility]	5	4	20	2	10	2	10	3	15	4	20	4	20
Integration of storytelling [emotions]	12	3	36	5	60	4	48	3	36	5	60	5	60
Credibility [of instrument and brand]	11	2	22	5	55	4	44	3	33	5	55	3	33
Possibility for feedback & questions	8	1	8	4	32	5	40	4	32	3	24	5	40
Integration of call-to-action [contact]	4	3	12	3	12	3	12	5	20	4	16	5	20
Connect to other instruments [link]	10	3	30	2	20	2	20	5	50	4	40	5	50
Total Benefit	100		243		279		294		391		430		443

Rating Key:
 1 = very low relative benefit
 2 = low relative benefit
 3 = medium relative benefit
 4 = high relative benefit
 5 = very high relative benefit

Figure 5: Cost-Benefit Analysis for the Selection of Communication Instruments (own presentation)