The Role of Social Media in Brand Recognition: Case Studies From Turkey

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Abstract
Brand recognition, is defined as the ability of a consumer to recognize one brand over other brands by its attributes and design elements. It is the familiarity, which is gained from the previous encounters of the brand and the memorability that reflects the meanings that comes to the mind of consumers while referring to product group of the brand. As brand recognition states the power of the brand in consumers’ mind and its ranking among the rivalries mutually, it affects the purchasing decisions of the consumers and their commitment to the brand.

With the improvement of information and communication technologies, brands have started to show their faces not only in conventional media but also in social media. In recent years, consumers take part actively in social media channels, fiddle away their time in social media for extended periods of time, and generate contents and share them. Companies being aware of this situation end to organize various activities to draw attention of the consumers, increase their recognition levels, and obtain max benefits from the chances offered by social media. Thus, companies carry out strategic campaigns and applications overlapping consumers’ constructions and values that are offered by the brand on the social media.

Within the scope of this study, first of all brand, brand recognition and social media concepts are discussed. Then the role of social media in brand recognition is examined within the context of two social media campaigns carried out in Turkey.

Key Words: Brand, brand recognition, social media, social media campaigns.

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1. Brand and Brand Recognition

There are various definitions about the term branding in literature. Brand is “name, symbol, sign or combination of them, which identify products and services, provide distinguishing the product from the rivalries, make easy to communicate with the consumer as a focus of marketing and advertising management practice, differentiate the product (Aktuglu, 2004, p. 16). It’s a term that certain emotional and physical features become integrated on the purpose of establishing intimacy between particular consumers and forming an image or personality (Fidan, 2008, p. 157). The feature that enables the product being realized by being free of similar ones is stated as brand (Aktuglu, 2000, p. 8). Considering another definition, a brand “is a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers” (American Marketing Association). It’s an interiorised summary of all impressions that are received by the consumers, perceived on their images based on the emotional and functional interests and create privileged position (Knapp, 2002, p. 7).

The brand provides various benefits to businesses and consumers. Benefits of the brand from the view of business are helping the brand being at premium and creating demands, enabling to make known the image of business and consumer, increasing the sale and competitive capacity, making easy to add new products to the product line, following a different price strategy and ensuring legal security (Keskin, 2011, p. 16). When considered from the consumer’s point of view, brand has a lot of benefits such as enlightenment about the product, being guaranteed, developing trust for the consumer and services after sale.

Brand awareness is a marketing concept that enables marketers to quantify levels and trends in consumer knowledge and awareness of a brand's existence. At the aggregate (brand) level, it refers to the proportion of consumers who know of the brand. Brand awareness expresses a brand’s power of shape existing in the consumer’s mind and a potential customer’s understanding and remembering the fact that a brand is a member of a particular member of a product category (Aaker, 2007, p. 82). Brand awareness is an important and sometimes undervalued component of brand equity. Awareness can affect perceptions and attitudes. It can make peanut butter taste better and instill confidence in a retailer. It can be a driver of brand choice and even loyalty (Aaker, 1996, p. 114). Brand awareness reflects the salience of the brand in the customers mind. There are levels of awareness, of course, which include (Aaker, 1996, p. 114-115):
As seen above, brand awareness includes brand recognition and brand recall performance. Brand recognition is the amount to which a brand is recognized for acknowledged brand attributes or communications among consumers (Keller, 1993, p. 2). It is how we access information in our memory to identify a brand. It refers to the ability of consumers to correctly differentiate the brand they previously have been exposed to. It helps consumer lean toward our product when given the choice between our product and one they have never heard of (Subhani & Osman, 2014, p. 4). Thus, recognition enables to differentiate the brand from others in the product category (Baş & Aktepe, 2008, p. 85). Brand recognition occurs, for example, when watching different movies where product placement has been used. When the presence of a known product is noticed in one of the scenes, you recognize the brand, become aware of it and your brain looks for it during shopping and immediately takes a decision. It highly influences the decision process and "consumers usually prefer a brand, which they recognize and trust as they don’t
want to take risks in purchasing process” (Özyiğit, 2010, 94). For this reason, it’s true that possibility of a recognized brand’s purchasing is higher in comparison with an unknown brand.

On the other hand, brand recall refers to the ability of the consumers to correctly generate and retrieve the brand in their memory (Keller, 1993, 2). It is considered as a qualitative measure of how well a brand name is connected to a product type or class by consumers. Often measured through surveys and interviews, brand recall is tested by asking either aided or unaided questions to participants. In terms of aided brand recall, one type of question may be, for example, “Do you remember BMW brand?” In terms of unaided brand recall, one type of question may be, for example, “Can you name as many car models as possible?” In a highly challenging market conditions, brand managers seem to be more keen on unaided brand recall as it provides a differentiative competitive advantage against rivals. As noticed from examples, brand recall relates to consumers’ aptitude to retrieve the brand from memory when given the product category, category need or some other similar cue such as brand logos (Subhani & Osman, 2010, p. 3).

2. The Role of Social Media in Brand Recognition

Digitalization with the new media has offered a new digital oriented life and communication technology has started to become indispensable in every aspect of life. In recent years, companies prefer social media which are more active, current and transparent than conventional media platforms. Social media is defined as the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community based interaction, content sharing and collaboration. Due to new web technology, content is created, published and distributed easily and “this provides a social and two-sided communication environment” (İşlek, 2012, p. 20-21). It’s possible to classify social media as blogs, RSS, microblogs, social networks, podcasting, video/gif sharing channels, and wikis. We exemplify social networks such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Friendster, Hi5, Friendfeed, Formspringa, Xing; company blogs such as Cnet, TheHuffington Post, BoingBoing, Techcrunch, Kottke; video sharing networks such as YouTube, Dailymotion, Google Videos, Yahoo Video It’s on; photo sharing networks like 1x, Flickr, Deviantart, photosig, Fotocommunity, Photo, Photodom; wikis such as Wikipedia, Intelipedia and microblogging sharing networks like Twitter (Hazar, 2011, p. 154-155).

In a recent survey by Harvard Business Review Analytic two-thirds of the 2,100 companies who participated in a 2014 study conducted in US, said they are either currently using social mediachannels or have social media plans in the works. Never before have companies had the opportunity to talk to millions of customers, send
out messages, get fast feedback, and experiment with offers at relatively low costs. And never before have millions of consumers had the ability to talk to each other, criticizing or recommending products — without the knowledge or input from a company. Social media is rapidly becoming a new force in organizations around the world, allowing them to reach out to and understand consumers as never before. In many companies, it will move from a “one-off initiative” to be an important, integrated tool in marketing and communications strategies. Use of social media will clearly expand in the coming years. Two-thirds of the companies in the survey predicted their use of social media would grow significantly over the next few years, as the awareness of the power of social media has grown in their companies. Among organizations that already have a budget for social media, spending was expected to increase by 30% or more over the next 12 months, even as overall dollars for marketing and advertising have dropped for many companies during the recession (http://www.sas.com/events/pbls/2010/las-vegas/documents/TheNewConversation, 2014).

Brands have already realized the possible opportunities and deep impact of social media on all corporate communication processes. Thus, companies having their own official social media accounts organize various public relations, advertising, selling and marketing activities around their brands and contribute to brand recognition by creating contents that attracts attention and encourage followers to share it across their social networks. Social media as an active meeting platform of brands and consumers is considered to have a high impact on brand recognition. Social media which includes many applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, blogs and virtual world games creates an opportunity for brands to meet their consumers, to create recognition in their mindsets and moreover get consumers involved into the shared contents.

Due to their individualized and relationship based characteristics, brands try to adapt themselves to social media (Yurttaş, 2011, s. 66). Follows are the fundamental social media principles to be taken into consideration in terms of brand recognition:

- Number of followers in the social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, etc.
- Number of likes and comments made for the brand
- The continuity of sharings
- Number of hits done for sharings
- The active participation rate in interactive applications of the brand
• User friendly links to the social media applications from the official websites.
• Whether the brand is placed on different social media accounts
• Sufficiency of contents in the social media sharings
• Continuity and increase rates of brand followers

3. Case Study 1: Doritos Academy Campaign

Frito Lay is an establishment which was found in 1961 by Frito Elmer Doolin and Herman Lay. Frito Lay which became the brand of PepsiCo, is now one of the biggest companies of the world- which produce salty snacks. With its operations in over 40 countries, Frito Lay carries out one fourth of retail chips sales. Frito Lay Turkey was found in 1986. With being purchased of shares from Uzay Gıda which has the share of 50%, by PepsiCo in 1988, Frito Lay Turkey has begun its business. The 100% of the shares were purchased by PepsiCo in 1933. In 1998, PepsiCo united with Tropicana which is known as world’s the biggest production and trading company of fresh fruit juice, with Gatorade which is known as sports drink in 2001 and with Quaker company which makes production of various nuts with rice, fruity and oatmeal bar. PepsiCo has retail sales which each of them is more than 1 billion dollars annual, and 22 different brands. In addition, it is the leader establishment of global food and beverage sector whose annual net sale income is over 65 billion dollars. Main companies of it are Quaker, Tropicana, Gatorade, Frito-Lay and Pepsi-Cola. Frito Lay which makes world class production in 2 factories in Kocaeli Suadiye and Mersin Tarsus in Turkey, is on market leader status with Doritos, Lay’s, Cheetos, Ruffles and Çerezza which are preferred snack brands in Turkey. Apart from the snack that Frito Lay has, it has also many products. Among the product portfolios there are Rocco which is a candy-gum brand and Alaturca which has cookies with intense chocolate and spicy crackers (http://www.fritolay.com.tr, 2015).

Frito Lay aiming to create brand recognition in the social media for a new product lansman of Doritos performed a 360 degree campaign in 2011. This campaign named as Doritos Academy had a structure in which academy and education merged with entertainment.
Before the campaign in one of its surveys Doritos has deduced the consequences that when it was said chips, the first things coming to young people’s mind were chips and spices. Doritos wanted to change this perception by creating an entertainment which make youngsters loose their routines and aimed to cut class routine. Hence, a social media platform named as Doritos Academy was created with the thought of a school.

In application of Doritos Academy, youngsters were canalized into the social media (Twitter, Facebook, Youtube) by the advertisements given in traditional channels like television, radio, outdoors. Students have begun to be “the student of Doritos Academy” with their ID cards by entering the Doritos Academy page on the internet. Each content subsistent in a standard university did also exist in Doritos Academy. Almost all the digital channels and platforms in Turkey have been gathered around this academy.

Academic staff was also formed in virtual environment within the scope of the campaign, rectors, lecturers, classes, publications, course grades, school bus, the mobile faculty, campus, the anthem of school, exam on Twitter, interactive courses just like a proper university. The lecturers active on the social media platforms were colourful and amusing in terms of physical appearance and character. Besides, there were different and interestingly sophisticated courses just like internet antrophology and astrology except for English and political sciences.

There were also social media accounts of Doritos Academy. For example, all the staff had their own Twitter accounts and the lecturers who tweet just like a normal...
person, held examinations to their students periodically on Twitter. The ones who gave the right answers were rewarded by presents. Doritos Academy had also its own anthem. In the anthem of school, the students could ensure participation with their own photos and voices. In the campus of Doritos Academy on the school site, the students could walk around with their ID faces. Moreover, the students could have a good time by the interesting games. One of these games was “the high jump game”. In this game, the objects which came from the air were picked up by jumping. The youngsters participated could share their records on Twitter and Facebook and invite their friends to this game.

There has been a huge amount of participation to the campaign of Doritos Academy which has provided brand recognition in a very short time and a great intended population has been achieved. In 6 months, the number of likes of Facebook fan page has became over 410,000, the number of people who were in active interaction has achieved more than 50,000. The course videos shared by the account of Doritos Academy were viewed 6,000,000 times in 6 months. Apart of Facebook, the videos were also available on well-known channels such as izlesene.com, Vimeo, Dailymotion, Youtube and Vidivodo. 85,000 people have followed the staff on Twitter, there have been answers by 10,000 tweets in 1 hour to the exams questions. Fritos has achieved to a great success and became over the tonnage by 70% within 3 months (Doritos Academy Case Study, 2015).

**Picture 2. Doritos Academy**


After the lansman in 2011, Doritos Academy has started the competition “The Girls or the Boys?”. This competition started in March 2013 has received an
intense participation. In the first step of the competition, the new design of Doritos has been determined by a jury chaired by the rector of Doritos Academy Huysuz Virjin according to the criteria of creativity, suitability for the brand and applicability. In this competition which has been selected 2 different designs from the groups of Girls and Boys, each creator of the designs have been rewarded by 100,000 TL. The designs of moustache and four leafed clover have been selected by the jury and in the second step, there has been a competition for the taste of these designs. Winners being a boy and a girl have been rewarded by 150,000 TL. Another competition which has been organized within the scope of this campaign on the social media has started with the advertisements in which Megan Fox has acted. While Megan Fox has mentioned about the product of Fritos Shots in the academy by the directions of the rector Huysuz Virjin, an interesting advertisement has been formed and at the same time the new product has been introduced. The campaign of Fritos Shots with Megan Fox has been continued with the hashtag “meganfoxmaykissme”, the students had the opportunity of declare their love to Megan Fox by the application “I’m writing to Megan Fox” on Facebook.

Picture 3. The Winner Designs in the Doritos Academy Competition


The Doritos - the one in the design of moustache and taste of chop in Boys and the one in the design of clover and taste of tzatziki in Girls- have been determined and these designs had received digital word of mouth of consumers and contributed to brand recognition. This competition has been announced on both social media and the traditional channels, and had a deep impact on brand recognition. Having a look at to the results of this campaign which launched in 1 October 2011 and resulted in 15 January 2012, the success of this campaign could clearly be seen with the following data (The Campaign of Doritos Academy, IAB Turkey Results, 2015):
1) Doritos Academy Facebook page has been taken place on the 2nd grade with the score of Engagement Rate, in the brand processing of Socialbakers Turkey Facebook in November 2011; also on the 1st grade in the sector FMCG.

2) In 3 months after the Facebook fan page displayed, the number of total fans has become over 280,000. The number of people who were in active interaction has been over 50,000.

3) The most viewed video on Facebook has become Huysuz Virjin “Body Language” with the rating of 13,403.

4) The number of Twitter followers of @DoritosAkademi, @HaydarLing, @DrSosyalMedya, @ArasGorBurcuKoc, @ProfDrAliCengiz, @TanjuTanjant, @BunyaminGuzu and @SuleymanSuloganis 70,000 and the most followed lecturer is @HaydarLing by 14,580 followers.

5) There has been a great participation by 10,000 tweets in about an hour to the English, Political Sciences, Internet Anthropology, Social Sciences, Astrology and English-make up exams which have been held on Twitter.

6) There has been 328,465 visits to Doritosakademi.com. While over 350,000 page viewing has happened, 4 minutes have been spent on average.

7) The time which has been spent on the Dailymotion Haydar Lingrichbannerapplicationhas achieved 25:01 on average.

8) Haydar Lingbanner has achieved to 152,208 views in 1 month.

9) Videos have been watched 2 million times in 3 months.

10) Apart of campaign’s social networking sites, sports, game, cinema and portal sites haven also place the campaign. Google Adwords has been used as the supporting media.

11) The total rate of views has become 832,000,000 and about 3,90% CTR (click through rate) has been achieved.

12) After the 3 monthslansman process, the impact of the campaign to the sales has been great: Fritos in corn chips segment has increased the market share by 16% in November. The total market share of Doritos has increased by 3% from August 2011 to November 2011. The aimed tonnage was increased by 70% within 3 months.

4. Case Study 2: I’ve Gone Off My Eti Form Diet
Eti -founded in 1961 and started production in 1962- is a food company in Turkey. Being a pioneer innovator in the sector, it has met the consumers with the first digestive biscuit of Turkey Burçak, the first ready made toasted bread Etimek, the first industrial flament cake -slice cake with grapes, fruit and cocoa, the first packed tart Turti, the first gluten-free biscuit Pronot, the first wet cake Browni and so on. Eti , which made production with the capacity of 3 tonnes in 1962, has made production by increasing the capacity until 1999 and then stopped the production. It went on production on Eskişehir Qualified Industrial Zone which became in service in 1995. Product groups are divided as biscuits, light products, cakes and tarts, chocolates and chocolate-flavoured products, wafers, toasted breads, breakfast cereals. Eti extending its range of products has became an attention-grabbing company in Turkey with its 7 factories, about 300 products which are under 45 brands and the exportation which it makes around the world. Today, Eti - known as one of the 100 biggest industrial enterprise of Turkey with its research and development power and innovative point of view aims to include joy and happiness to life and be a qualified and safe brand- competes on world markets.

Eti is active on also social networks. The brand has above 931.000 followers on Facebook, above 56.000 on Twitter and shares various contents on social networks. One of Eti products – Eti Form- also attempts to win a seat on social media. Eti Form has a product group appealing to the ones who want to eat healthy food and be fit. Eti Form which provides various products to the consumers; has become a catchy and favorite brand with its sharings on social media, the applications and advertisments.

Picture 4: The products of Eti Form


Eti has developed an application for its internet users. Eti Form Light which is in the light snacksegment, after the slogan of “Eat Form, keep in form”, also created
an application on its web site and Facebook to the ones who go on diet and has coped out for food and wants to counterbalance it. The users who reached the application on www.diyetimibozdum.com or “diyetimi bozdum” application on Eti Form Facebook page could achieve the suggestions by choosing the food which they eat and counterbalance it. There are 186 dishes and some suggestions directed to these, and also exercises. Facebook application has received 245794 likes.

**Picture 5: I’ve Gone Off My Eti Form Diet**

![Image of the Diyetimi Bozdum application](http://www.diyetimibozdum.com)


When the users who got into Diyetimi Bozdum(I’ve gone off my diet) application stated their meals and their times within a day; there were some suggestions of eating and exercising to make the users counterbalance their food.

For example, there were some suggestions to a user who stated that (s)he has eaten chocolate. One of these suggestions was a piece of chicken breast with low-fat salad containing lemon juice in 2 dinners within a week. In order to extend brand recognition, the brand was also emphasised by adding some products of Eti Form into the suggestions. Followers of Facebook application who liked the page, were also directed to the site of Diyetimi Bozdum(I’ve gone off my diet)

**Conclusion**

It is quite noticeable in the cases that there is an obvious impact of brand recognition when there is limited information about the product and service, and there is not any motive to prefer. For this reason, companies need to form their brand strategies by taking into consideration brand recognition. However, traditional channels remain incapable for creating and developing brand recognition. Therefore companies need to use social media actively to be able to
achieve brand recognition, establish a dialogue with consumers, ensure them to get busy with the brand and create an emotional brand value in their minds.

Eventhough the social media channels have some similar configurations, they are different from each other in the aspect of content. Therefore companies first need to determine the right social media channels in order to create brand recognition. In this process, brand and target audiences’ characteristics, company values and the usage rate of social media should be taken into consideration. In this sense, the preferred social media in creating brand recognition will also differ according to the use of video, text, photograph, interactive games within the application. On the other hand, brand recognition should be measured on regular basis and the applications on social media to create brand recognition should be updated with proactive approaches.

Both cases which were taken into assessment have received great amount of participation and reached to huge masses in a very short time. The first case study - Doritos Academy- has reached over 410.000 likes on Facebook fan page, active interactions among consumers have been over 50.000. The course videos which was shared from Doritos Academy account have been watched 6.000.000 times in 6 months. Academic staff on Twitter had 85.000 followers. To the exams which were held on Twitter were answered with 10.000 tweets in an hour. Research data shows that the recognition of Doritos brand has increased and a great success which was over the sales target has been achieved. The social media data of Doritos has revealed that this campaign has been carried out in the right social media channels and the usage rate of target audiences on social media has been analysed properly. The second case of the study- Eti Form- had 245.000 followers on Facebook and over 56.000 on Twitter. It shared various contents on social networks. Eti Form application contents matched up with the brand and its consumers and increased its brand recognition on social media.

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