

BRAND DEPENDENCY AS A MODERN PHENOMENON*Shmeleva Zh.N.**Krasnoyarsk state agrarian university, Krasnoyarsk, Russia*

The article deals with the concept of “brand dependency”. The author analyzes the basic reasons for this phenomenon development and the ways to avoid this addiction.

Key words: *brand dependency, brand addiction, social status, reason, self-esteem, self-confidence, marketing, brand, loyalty.*

БРЕНД-ЗАВИСИМОСТЬ КАК СОВРЕМЕННЫЙ ФЕНОМЕН*Шмелева Ж.Н.**Красноярский государственный аграрный университет, Красноярск, Россия*

В статье рассматривается понятие «бренд-зависимость». Автор анализирует основные причины развития этого феномена и пути избавления от этой зависимости.

Ключевые слова: *бренд-зависимость, социальный статус, причина, самооценка, уверенность в себе, маркетинг, бренд, лояльность.*

Brand is an extremely popular word these days. Many companies pay much money for marketing managers to develop a modern and a recognizable brand. What is a brand? In the traditional sense, this is a trademark of a product or service, created so that consumers can easily distinguish the manufacturer's product from competitor's analogues. In the modern sense, this is more than just a trademark. This is a trademark somehow “enriched” with an additional “message”. By creating and promoting brands, manufacturers seek to influence customers' decisions about purchasing a particular product. When advertising a particular brand, manufacturers focus on the emotional component of the message delivered to the consumer. In other words, the goal of marketers who create a brand is to influence the consumer in such a way that they make a purchase decision not in a rational way, but as a result of a sudden desire, maybe even instinct. Let's give some examples on the successful brands that are very popular in Russia. In the field of clothing, footwear and accessories, these are primarily: Elizabeth Franchi, Calvin Klein, Calvin Klein Jeans; Emporio Armani, Giorgio Armani, Armani Exchange; Lacoste; Adidas; D&G, Dolce & Gabbana; Diesel; Baldinini; Ash; HUGO; Hugo Boss; Tommy Hilfiger; Marella; Laurel, etc. In the field of electronics and mobile devices: Apple, Sony, Samsung. In the field of beverages and food: the well-known are Nestea, Coca-Cola, M&M's, Twix, Mars, Bonaqua, Raffaello, Lipton. Alcoholic beverages are represented by such trademarks as Bacardi, Hennessy, Martini. It is noteworthy that all of the above brands are owned by major international corporations. Apparently, only they can create a really hyped brand.

There are manufacturers that when promoting a brand focus on other things: reputation, a long and rich history, legendary quality, etc. Moreover, there are firms that do not promote their brands at all. So you can't say that all modern brands are the work of evil marketers.

Brand dependency (or brand addiction) is a very interesting modern phenomenon, which, unfortunately, takes place and greatly affects the choice of many people without any rational substantiation. Everyone strives to look spectacular, tasteful, in accordance with the status, and this is fine, but due to some historical factors, most of us have lost the “muscle of taste” in observing the works of fashion houses, which at the moment are all experiencing a serious creative crisis. Brand addiction is the state of a person when he focuses on the brand when choosing a product, and not on the characteristics and quality. This is a state when the “message” – the content of the brand – is more important than the actual characteristics of the product. This is a state when the product is chosen based not on the actual needs of the buyer, but on socially prestigious needs, in other words when a person views the purchased product as something that can affect his social status. Brand dependency can also be seen as a psychological condition that entails an emotional attachment to a particular brand, driven by obsessive urges that generally provide pleasure. As Antonova N.V. notes: “The active development of marketing technologies has led to the emergence of new problems related to consumer behavior, such as demonstrative consumption, shopping addiction, “materialism”, brand dependence. The group issues share a special relationship to goods that have been reflected in the revaluation of things in human life, but also in building relationships to others and ourselves through the evaluation of

the possession of goods. This behavior can lead to a dead end addiction, living “not your life” and to social maladjustment [1, p. 6].

Brand dependency can be divided into two categories: multi-brand and mono-brand. In the first case, the specific brand is not important, it is important that the brand is “trending”, promoted, popular. In the second case, the buyer shows the highest degree of irrationality, narrowing the range of products under consideration to a range of products of a single brand. Further development of brand addiction is brand mania. It is expressed in the desire to buy as many products of any brand or a limited number of brands that are associated with prestige.

Here are some examples of brand dependency:

- I only need Baldinini shoes, I don't even want to look at other footwear;
- I will buy this brand if it is with a discount even if I don't really need it;
- I don't want this brand's dress, because it is “no name” brand;
- Only I-phones are in trend, I need only the newest model;
- I want to buy only Hilfiger polo shirt, etc.

The reasons for brand addiction are quite vivid, obvious and justified by modernity:

- We pay little attention to classical art.
- The era of technological progress, on the one hand, accelerates our life, on the other; we lose an important understanding of the origins at high speed.
- Geographical location of Russia: we are located in the middle between the “moderate” in external manifestations of the West and the temperamental East.
- We are still not used to abundance after the removal of the “iron curtain”, and we often get it at the expense of generally recognized “idols”.

This is neither good nor bad, it is a given, which we will now understand in order to be aware of their style behavior and act with an understanding of their internal needs.

Let's analyze what brands give to people and what the reasons for brand addiction are. First of all, it's the status. Perhaps the main primary reason for choosing a branded item is its status. When we connect with the power and feel a brand commitment, it's like we're getting a little closer to the dream. Instagram celebrities and fashion bloggers advertise luxury life; they are usually dressed up in modern brand clothes (Yana Rudkovskaya, a famous producer, and even wears pajamas by Chanel). Their followers try to be congruent and perceive the possessing of such a brand thing as an evidence of status and luxury life. But sometimes this dependency acquires the obsession character, when people buy the clothes for a couple of hours, make photos for Instagram, make posts for “likes” and return the purchased items to the shop because they actually don't have the money to possess these things.

Secondly, and it comes from the previous reason, the high cost of image and the feeling of self-confidence. The brand gives “weight” in people's own eyes. And here again the problem is in the level of self-esteem. In most cases the self-esteem in brand-dependent people will be lower than in brand-free people. So, it's a good idea to analyze own self-esteem, reason for its being low, and conduct some kind of psychological training that may show that brands don't make the personality happier, cooler and more self-confident.

Thirdly people believe brands provide quality. In very often it is so. But you should always keep in mind and should not confuse the brand component and the quality component. It's a good idea to practice the use of the terms “brand, because quality,” “quality, because the brand”.

It is obvious that three most common personal characteristics such as self-control, self-esteem and life orientations influence this phenomenon. “The self-control is the ability to manage behavior, respond adequately to events around them and refrain from impulsive behavior. The self-esteem is an assessment of the personality itself, its capabilities, qualities and place among other people. And the life orientation is the meaning of a person's life, which he is looking for in various time intervals throughout life” [1]. So, we can make a conclusion that the problem of addiction, including brand dependence, is very relevant. The relevance of addictive issues is obvious due to the constant increase in the number of people with various types of dependent behavior. There are many reasons why people have various addictions. These may be biological, psychological, or social factors. The roots of dependent behavior lie in a person's attitude to themselves, others, and the world around them. Addiction is primarily a personal problem, so it is very important to understand the psychology and personal characteristics of the dependent person in order to solve the problem.

So what is the way out? It is not as difficult as it may seem. People can act as they did, they can change attitude to brands, or they may not change it, but understand why they are making this choice and remember that: quality is not always quality; style is not always style; level is not always a level; confidence

is only inside a person. It is better to develop your personality, increase self-confidence by inner potential and not only brand things.

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