



**Company case study:
Brand strengthening plan based on
consumer behavior**

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<p>Abstract:</p> <p>The topic of this thesis is a brand strengthening strategy “Brand strengthening plan based on consumer behavior” and covers the creation of a strategic brand strengthening plan for a Finnish company called GreenStreet. This is a company specialized in producing raw cakes and other raw treats but also organizes evening educational courses for those who want to expand their basic knowledge about raw food “baking”. The raw food industry is rapidly growing in popularity in Finland. Moreover, GreenStreet is seeking to expand brand awareness and strengthen brand image to be able to fairly compete with other suppliers. To strengthen the brand, this research utilizes the Customer-Based Brand Equity model which comprises four main focus areas; creating brand identity, conveying the meaning to customers, focusing on response and feedback from customers and taking proactive actions to meet customer demand and expectations and the final step of this model process is to develop and nurture the relationship with the customer. The research comprises a questionnaire survey and assessment of customer preferences pursuant to raw cake selection and what criteria is used in their decision making process. Together with the earlier mentioned brand equity model and the results from the consumer behavior survey a conclusive and comprehensive brand strengthening plan is generated.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Marketing and branding dates back as far as the Roman Empire, it has changed forms along the way and will only grow bigger and better with time, developing technology and software. There are always going to be newcomers, rivals and contenders in your field, who bring “never before seen” products or services to the market. These new products, product lines or services must be marketed and most importantly; they must create a brand that is attractive and startling for the customers. It all starts with finding out and developing the appropriate product. Then one must create a brand image that is so intriguing that when you get the customers to buy your product or service once, they stay loyal to your brand. In the end, getting customers ‘hooked’ on your product, is what it is all about. Using bright colors, catchy music and cheesy slogans work to get started. But there is so much more to it than just this, they have to have a point, they somehow have to connect to whatever products you have and the customers have to feel a connection to the brand. To create customer attraction and increase sales are always the key points of marketing. Creating a structured marketing plan will help a company to organize their thoughts and plans for when and where they are going to market their product. No matter if your company is new or old, having a well thought out, comprehensive brand identity that also matches the perceived brand image, will help you grow.

This thesis will cover the creation of a brand strengthening plan, for a Finnish, relatively small and fairly new company that goes by the name GreenStreet. The focus is laid on building the brand strengthening plan around consumer behavior and customer preference. The researcher has found out the top three factors that customers value when choosing a raw cake through a consumer behavior survey and used these factors when creating the brand strengthening plan. A strong brand image is exactly what a small sized company like GreenStreet needs since that will be a tremendous help for the company to establish a solid ground in their field as well as help them on their way to one day become internationally known.

1.1 GreenStreet

1.1.1 About

GreenStreet is a company that focuses on selling health products and promoting well-being. The company is owned by Johannes Laine, a Finn in his mid-twenties. The company was established in 2012 but has only recently started to take its true form. GreenStreet has been molding itself for five years and started out with selling superfoods (e.g. dried goji-berries, dried mulberries, cocoa butter, cocoa powder and toco powder), ecological cosmetics and ecological clothing. Since about a year ago (January 2015) GreenStreet found the demand for raw food and especially raw cakes and treats and jumped on that “trend wagon”. It is within this field that GreenStreet now wants to grow its roots and bloom. In addition to the production and retailing of raw cakes and other raw treats GreenStreet also organizes evening workshops every week on how to make raw cakes and raw chocolate. They teach the participants of the health benefits of raw food and also why it is better for both the environment and the body to choose the specific ingredients that are used in “baking” these raw treats.

In Helsinki, the company currently has four retail cafés, Rupla and Roots in Kalio, Rupla Rööperi in Punavuori and Johan&Nyström in Katajanokka, five retail grocery stores (all K-market) and on average they get about three private cake orders a week. However the demand is constantly increasing and obviously clusters around holidays. GreenStreet also has an affiliate in Joensuu, run by Ksenia Peltovuori, which started operating in September 2015. In Joensuu GreenStreet has a couple more retailers but mostly survive on private orders that also peak around holidays. At the moment, there is only two raw food chefs working for GreenStreet, one in Helsinki and one in Joensuu. However, Laine stated that he must hire a second raw food chef to start working for him in Helsinki quite soon due to increased demand. Laine also has bigger plans for the company’s future. In his mind he is going to have a chain of health/raw food cafés that he later could start franchising internationally. He sees that the raw food workshops would be a part of the franchising concept as well as an established, online, coaching lifestyle-page, focusing on both mental health and physical well-being.

1.1.2 Interview with the owner

Interview with Johannes Laine, owner of GreenStreet

The study was conducted in Finnish due to the owner's preference and later translated into English. Original interview can be found in the appendixes section.

What was your vision for the brand identity when you started?

“My vision for the brand... hmm... it was such a long time since I started... –long pause- well ecological, good quality, clean, trustworthy, first class stuff, when I started I was working with different products so the vision has changed a bit along the way.”

What is your desired brand identity at the moment?

“A lot of the same (adjectives) as I mentioned before but a kind of realness, warmth, quality, indulgence, happiness, energy, comfortability, awesome, exciting and the best customer service->we are really service oriented, trustworthy, flexible and a really good overall vibe. Then of course big, growth and internationally known!”

What is your future vision for the company?

“On a big scale we would like to be an internationally known brand. We are a brand that focuses on raw cakes and on promoting well-being so a big franchising chain that sells and promotes wellness products would be a dream come true. I don't think that GreenStreet is going to be limited to only producing and selling raw cakes and raw chocolates but it could also open cafés from where the real turnover would come, cafés that would be known for their luscious cakes. So basically, in the end, my main business would be franchising.”

Did you come up with the name, logo, colors, packaging and slogan? If no, who did?

“We don't have a slogan but umm... apropos we just changed the logo, haha. I didn't have to come up with anything myself because I bought the GreenStreet business from three small scale entrepreneurs, whose own careers prevented them from focusing on

GreenStreet, which made them want to sell it. The logo came from a friend and the color scheme has not, at this time, been planned or designed at all, heh...”

Do you have a branding strategy?

“No.”

Have you thought about having one?

“No... Or well, no I haven’t thought.”

Do you feel you have a brand that represents your products?

“Pretty much yes, pretty good. When you eat a piece of cake it might be hard to perceive all these feelings that I want to convey but then again, yes it’s amazing and the quality is good and you feel happier so I would say yes, definitely yes, 5/5.”

Do you think your brand image matches your desired brand identity?

“No... too many that see the logo or see the name don’t know what we do or the other way around, when someone tastes our cakes at a café or comes to the raw chocolate workshop they don’t get that “ooh, hey *this* is GreenStreet” not even within the groups of people where you’d think that they would recognize. Exactly what I want to convey I think that our customers at the moment feel very well, happy and good customer service and of course the good quality.”

Has the brand identity changed along the years?

“Well yes it has, and it will most likely change in the future as well.”

Would you feel comfortable with changing the branding strategy?

“Yes, at least I don’t think anything bad can come out of it.”

1.2 Raw food

1.2.1 What does a raw food diet imply?

The concept of a raw food diet is a fairly new phenomenon. What is not new is to eat raw foods since every living thing on this planet started out eating raw food. Only through the humans' use of fire and later electricity did cooked or prepared food evolve.

Eating a raw food diet means only eating food in its natural state, unprocessed and uncooked, which means it can never be heated to over 48 degrees Celsius. Such foods are naturally fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds but there are also many more options for those who follow a life-style raw food diet. There is no absolute must to follow a 100% raw food diet, like a cooked food diet can include a variety of raw fruits and vegetables, a raw food diet only needs to be raw for the most part. (the raw food coach 2015)

1.2.2 Why follow a raw food diet?

According to the international raw food coach, chef and teacher, Karen Knowler, switching to a raw food diet has multiple physical benefits and the changes can be visible in as little as 24 hours. The first noticeable changes would be clearer skin and greater energy followed by stronger hair and nails. Even nagging aches and pain disappear and in the long run, Knowler says, it is proven that sticking to a raw food diet can help people recover from serious illnesses and diseases. The benefits of eating a raw food diet stretches even further than just the physical aspects, Karen Knowler says that many have experienced emotional and mental well-being as well.

All of this is due to the fact that uncooked/unprepared food contain more nutrients which contribute to a person's overall health. When food is cooked the heat destroys many vital nutrients, among these are oxygen, phytonutrients and enzymes. Enzymes are proteins, they are biologically active which means they are alive, when not heated to over 48 degrees Celsius. Alive enzymes help the body break down the food faster and releases the energy provided more evenly to avoid fatigue due to lack of nutrients. (raw food made simple, 2015)

1.2.3 Raw cakes and other sweets

The raw food diet became trendy around the 1980s, first mostly in the western U.S. and in Australia. The raw food “boom” started in Los Angeles, California, where the first, raw food restaurant, named “Juliano’s Raw”, was opened by gourmet chef, Juliano Brotman, in the beginning of the 1990s. (purely raw 2015) It was not until the early 2000s that the knowledge of raw food began spreading to big cities in Europe and soon after to Finland. Today there is already over a dozen raw food cafés and restaurants, mostly in Helsinki and a few in Turku.

Because the human is so used to sweets it was not long before cakes and other treats were developed using only uncooked and unprocessed ingredients. These cakes and treats are no harder to make than normal ones and are better for the body in every way possible. When making raw cakes and treats processed ingredients are substituted with healthier unprocessed ones like coconut sugar, coconut oil and coconut cream instead of sugar, butter and dairy. Wheat flour can be substituted with almond or quinoa flour and only natural colorants and preservatives are used.

1.3 Research

There is no existing research that would be available on finding out about customer preferences for choosing raw cakes. This means that this research cannot be based on any previously used model and no former data, on this specific matter, can be used. This research is conducted as a survey, using a printed questionnaire form. However, it is proven that brand awareness has an impact on consumer behavior which is why the researcher decided to study customer preference and use the answers acquired to strengthen the brand. (The Effect of Brand Awareness on Consumer Buying Behavior, 2016)

1.3.1 Research aim

The aim of the research is to find out customer preferences, and use the information acquired to strengthen the brand image of the company. The investigation done focuses on what factors that make a customer choose one piece of raw cake over another when faced with a choice. The aim with finding this out is to then incorporate these factors in the brand strengthening plan. Using customer preference in brand strengthening has not directly been studied nor used even if it is known that brand equity is often measured by customer preference (acr website 2015). Basically the core of this study is to, instead of measuring brand equity with customer preference, using customer preference to build your brand and in that way try to increase the brand equity.

For a small and relatively new company like GreenStreet it is vital to have a strong and well established brand identity that is easy to get people to recognize and remember. Having a strong, well known, brand image will help the company to get more retailers and through this get their product to reach an even broader group of new potential customers. The demand for raw cakes in Finland is small but growing and there is already a few other competitors in the field. This is why it is so important to strengthen the brand now as the demand is still growing. So that when the peak comes, GreenStreet will already be well established in the business.

1.3.2 Research questions

The main research questions of this thesis are:

1. What factors influence the customers' decision making process when choosing a raw cake?
2. What do they find appealing in the visual aspects of the GreenStreet brand?
3. What visual aspects would make them feel more connected to the GreenStreet brand?

The answers to these specific questions are of big weight to the researcher when developing the brand strengthening plan. The answers will be obtained through a customer survey, at a café, with randomly chosen sample persons.

The survey will comprise of two parts, one focusing on finding out which factors the customers base their decision on when choosing their cake, faced with all the options available. In the first part of the questionnaire the first question for the consumers is “why did you choose a raw cake over a normal cake?” The second question is “what are the most important factors you consider when choosing your raw cake?” The participants have to choose their answers from a list of factors that can be found below, they should choose three answers in order of importance. The whole questionnaire form along with the answer alternatives can be found as an appendices.

The second part of the questionnaire is owed to finding out opinions on how to best strengthening the visual part of the GreenStreet brand. In this part there is going to be pictures of the GreenStreet logo, the cakes and cake boxes. The questions for this part are; “Do you feel the pictures create desire?” “Do you think the logo and its colors match the raw cakes?” “Do you think the visuals give you a feeling that the company wants to convey?” (Owners view of brand identity coming soon) “Do you have any suggestions on what would make any of these pictures more desirable?” To these questions the participants would answer, in writing, with own words.

This research would give the order of importance on the factors that customers base their choice of cake on. This would be the customer preference around which the brand would then be build. What also would come out of this questionnaire is what the customers think about the visual appearance of GreenStreet, including the logo and looks of the cakes and cake boxes. From these answers might arise some good suggestions on which direction the visual part of the brand needs to be evolved in.

1.3.3 Scope and limitations

The research will focus on the customers' preferences on raw cakes in general and how their preference combined with a brand might strengthen it and give the brand more value. The research will only cover factors of preference on choosing raw cakes, not any other sweets. It will also include the thoughts and feelings that the existing GreenStreet brand awakens in the customers. The survey included 60 written answers from randomly chosen persons at GreenStreets most successful retailer, Johan&Nyström.

Only persons that have experience with raw cake will be chosen, this will be made sure of by only giving the questionnaire to people after they have purchased a piece of raw cake. The researcher will be very strict not to include any answers that are not within the limitations. That is any answers that are not fully answered or have answers that are outside the topic of the question asked. This means that from the 60 surveys that were handed out only 48 could be used in the research.

Since all the questionnaires are handed out personally and analyzed manually time will be a big limitation for the researcher. A factor that also limits the research is if the number of customers purchasing raw cakes at the café is too low. The study is gender equal and will have an age limit. The lower age limit is set at 16 years of age but there will be no upper age limit for completing the questionnaire.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Action plan

An action plan is one way to make sure that a vision meets reality and is made concrete. A plan of action is developed for anything in need of thorough planning or change, an event, a project, a company, a community and even a brand. The action plan is a descriptive list of all the necessary steps of action and accompanying changes that need to be completed, over a certain period of time, to meet the set goals. (ctb.ku.edu 2015)

To create a comprehensive action plan it should follow the all-around applicable “5 Ws’ and an H”-model. In this case it would include *what* actions or changes will take place, *why* these actions or changes are brought about, *who* makes the changes or carries out the actions, *when* it all will take place and *where* the actions or changes will take place (physical location or intangible area). Lastly *how* these actions or changes will be brought to life, meaning what resources (money, staff etc.) are needed, also where to find and how to obtain these necessary resources.

2.2 Consumer behavior theories

Michael R. Solomon describes consumer behavior as follows “It is the study of the process involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires”. This is really as simple as it can be put, however it is very broad and includes plenty of different areas of focus and can be studied from multiple angles.

The subject of study here is the consumer which in most cases is also the buyer, but sometimes, especially within families, the end consumer is the child and the buyer is the parent. Also other influencers, such as social media and your own friends, have a big effect on your behavior as a consumer. This can lead to confusion in studies as well as for the companies trying to figure out their marketing target groups. Companies should start by dividing the population into demographic and psychographic groups, also called,

market segments, such as e.g. age, gender, social class and income, ethnicity etc. This will help them to focus on less people at a time which will help them with their behavioral studies and analysis even though it might still be a too vast group to generalize too much.

Why understanding customer behavior is so important for businesses and marketers is because their ultimate purpose is to fulfill the customer's desires. The better they know their customer's behavior patterns, needs and desires the better they can be at meeting the requirements. It is also speculated that companies and marketing agencies create artificial needs, they create needs and desires in people by convincing them that they need this specific product, questioning how they could ever have been without. Basically they create a demand around their own product so that they can then satisfy it in the best way. (Consumer Behavior, Solomon, 2001, chapter 1)

2.2.1 The 5 stages of consumer buying decision making process

The whole idea around consumer behavior is to figure out how the customers make their decisions on what they buy, want or need. Pro-active companies that follow and study consumer behavior can predict a change and get an advantage in launching new products and sales. (study.com 2016)

Factors that effect a customer's decision making process are obvious visual things such as design, price, promotion, packaging, positioning and distribution but also factors such as personal, psychological and social factors. These are all intangible and very difficult to know or predict about other people. The nature of consumer behavior is constantly changing because of external factors whereof the biggest reasons are e.g. a person's aging, increased income level, changing trends, changed lifestyle, a growing family or a new job, new friends or moving to a new city/country. (your article library, 2016)

There are five main stages in a customer's decision making process; need or problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives to meet this need, purchase decision and post-purchase behavior. These stages are all equally important for a company to be aware of so that they can be there to cater to the needs of their potential customers during all stages.

1. Need or problem recognition

The first and most important step to the buying decision making process is the need recognition, because if there is no need for a product or service there is not going to be a purchase. The need or problem occurs when there is a difference in a person's current life situation and the persons desired life situation. This difference, the need recognition, can occur due to a vast amount of reasons such as physiological needs, functional needs, social needs or need for change.

2. Information search

Once the need for a product or service is recognized the buyer needs to acquire the information needed to make the right purchase decision. This information source can be acquired internally, which means it is something the buyer knows or remembers from before. Internal information is used when buying everyday products that require little to no investigation in order to make a purchase decision, e.g. food. The other way of acquiring information is through external sources e.g. family and friends, reviews or press, advertising or seller's speeches. The need for external information sources is bigger when the product or service to be bought is very expensive or the buyer has no previous knowledge or experience about it, e.g. a new car.

3. Evaluation of alternatives

Once all the necessary information is acquired the evaluation of the found alternatives can begin. In this stage brand identity and perceived brand image comes in strong. An example is that person A might choose a product that is more expensive but that has more brand value while person B does not care about brand image and then naturally opts for the more affordable alternative. Considering all the previously acquired information and the persons desired features for that specific product all alternatives are categorized in three. "Evoked set" which is the category with products that could be purchased, "inert set" with products without any further opinion and "inept set" with products that would never be purchased. A consumer always chooses a product with features that have the best chances of satisfying his/her needs within a set price range.

4. Purchase decision

After learning about products and possibly finding a favorite to buy, there is still time for the consumer to be affected by factors such as the store or the sellers working there. Say someone was really rude or unfriendly you would still have time to choose another brand. Also promotion, terms and conditions, return policy and sales might make the customer change his/her mind. It is vital for the company to have all the aspects in top form so that the customer does not get scared off at any stage.

5. Post-purchase behavior

After the product or service has been bought and used the customer evaluates it to see how well it satisfied the expectations and desires. If the customer is satisfied with the product they are more likely to stick to that same product or brand the next time they are making a buying decision. This is what every brand is aiming for, customer loyalty, as well as the good word of mouth that a happy customer can spread. Contrary, if the customer is disappointed in the product or service they can cause a lot of damage with their negative comments and reviews.

Except for everyday basic needs the first step, need/problem recognition, is the most important step to make people purchase a product. Companies have to find ways to make people recognize there is a problem or need, then provide them with the solution which would be their product or service. This is done by advertising, and smart campaigns can make all the difference in the world. New products and services do not always cater to fundamental needs but if the company can present the problem solving product or service in a smart way they will create a need recognition in a lot of people. (The 5 stages of Consumer Buying Decision Process, 2016)

2.2.2 The importance of the perceptual process

Every human being perceives everything differently based on their personal experiences, biases and needs. We all have the same “tools”, sensory receptors, for seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling, which are our eyes, ears, nose, mouth and skin. Still everyone perceives the received stimuli in different ways. There are three stages to the perceptual process, exposure, attention and interpretation. (Consumer Behavior, Solomon, 2001, page 42-43) Exposure is when any sort of sensory stimuli is within reach of a person, when a person hears a jingle, sees an advertisement, reads a poster etc. This happens more or less constantly but as earlier mentioned not everyone reacts to all of it or even most of it. (Consumer Behavior, Solomon, 2001, page 50) Attention is the part of the process where a person chooses to consciously or unconsciously process that stimuli. Nowadays there is so much information everywhere that the human brain has learned to automatically filter a lot of sensory stimuli and not letting it through to the attention stage. (Consumer Behavior, Solomon, 2001, page 54) Interpretation is when the sensory stimuli has reached a person’s attention and they try to make sense out of it, interpret it so to say. This is where all people interpret differently because their unique experiences, expectations and desires. (Consumer Behavior, Solomon, 2001, page 58)

2.2.3 The effect of brand awareness on consumer buying behavior

All brands have a value and it reflects back on the customers’ decisions making process when choosing between products. In the eyes of the consumer the brand is the full experience, everything they hear, see, feel and learn about the company and the brand is what helps to shape it. Nowadays there are so many different providers for the same product that the companies simply cannot differentiate the actual product substantially. This is why so much weight is laid on developing the brand and the consumer experience around it. Take running shoes for example, there are without a doubt over a dozen different brands and suppliers but the shoes are not that different. Consumers get so influenced by strong and popular brands they are willing to spend more money on a product from a

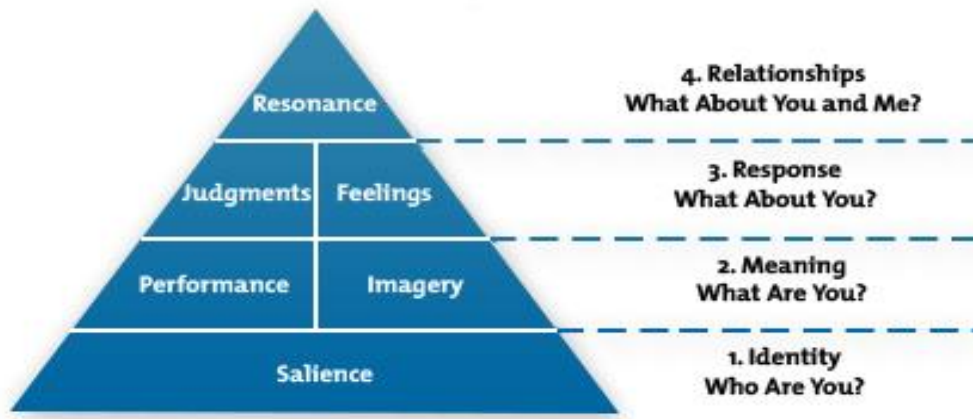
popular brand. It has come to a point where peoples' decision making process is so heavily influenced that they skip the whole part where they should compare products with one another because they care more about the brand of the product than the actual features of the product. (The Effect of a Brand on Consumer Behavior, 2016)

It has been studied and proven that consumers are quicker to choose a product from a brand that they are familiar with and take more time deciding if all the brands are unknown. In other words, creating brand awareness for your company changes the consumers buying behavior in your favor. (The Effect of Brand Awareness on Consumer Buying Behavior, 2016)

2.3 Brand strengthening theory

2.3.1 Customer-Based Brand Equity model – building a stronger brand

In this model there are 4 highlighted steps that have to be followed in order to build a successful brand that customers support and stay loyal to. This model is developed by Kevin Lane Keller and also goes by the name Keller's brand equity model. The focus of this model is to create the right kind of experience for the customer, get them to have positive thoughts and feelings about the brand. The stronger the brand equity is the more likely it is that the customers stay loyal for a longer period of time. The following picture illustrates the pyramid with 4 questions that customers, subconsciously, ask themselves about a brand and 6 building blocks that all have to be attained to reach the top of the pyramid, which obviously is the goal of the model.



From "Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity" by Kevin Lane Keller. © Pearson Education Limited 2013.

The first block, “identity”, “who are you?” is all about creating brand awareness and also trying to make sure that the perceived brand image matches the brand identity. The company needs to get to know how their customers think in the process of choosing products to best satisfy their needs. It is important to communicate to the customer how this particular brand can satisfy their needs with its unique selling proposition, USP. Also important is to stand out so that the customers can recall the brand more easily amongst all others in the same market.

The second block, “meaning”, “what are you?” is the part where the company has to get through to the customers about what the company really stands for and strengthen their identity. Here it is crucial to meet or preferably exceed the customers’ expectations to get both loyalty and a good word of mouth rolling. Not only does the product have to match the customers’ expectations but also the service part, and how the customers feel after an encounter with the brand, is vital.

The third block, “response”, “what about you?” is the brand response, meaning the response the brand gets from the customers about their judgement and feelings. The customer judgements fall into 4 categories; quality, credibility, consideration and superiority whilst the positive feelings the brand wants to evoke are; warmth, fun, excitement, security, social approval and self-respect. Here the company needs to identify gaps between the customers’ expectations and their own performance and take actions accordingly.

The last, most desirable block and also the one that is the hardest to reach, “relationships”, “what about you and me?” is when the customers feel a deep psychological connection with the brand. This type of connection is behavioral loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community and active engagement. Also the last block is all about strengthening all four previously mentioned categories. (mind tools 2015)

2.3.2 Brand identity vs. Brand image

Brand identity is what the board of a company wants the brand to be like, it symbolizes the company’s own reality and what they desire to be like. The brand identity is always looking ahead, it is where the company wants the brand to go, in a strategic way. Brand identity is what the company would like to be perceived as, regardless of the reality.

In comparison, the brand image is how the market or the customers see the brand, from an outsider point of view. It is only superficial and always symbolizes the actual perceived image. Brand image is hard to change once it is established and can only be measured or researched looking back in time. (management study guide 2015)

3 METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

3.1 Research design

3.1.1 Material

The primary data will be collected through printed out questionnaire forms, handed out to sample persons from the target group, randomly chosen by the researcher. This will be qualitative data since there are 60 questionnaires. The questionnaires are all the same and each consist of two questions that should be answered by choosing the top three choices from readily stated answering options, five yes/no questions and two questions where the participant can freely formulate their answer. The full questionnaire, with associated pictures, can be found in the appendixes section.

The secondary data chosen as ground for the brand strengthening plan is “Keller’s brand equity model” that is explained in chapter 2.2. More about this theory can be found in the printed book but also online as an e-book at: <http://mktg.uni-svishtov.bg/ivm/resources/CustomerBasedbrandEquityModel.pdf>. Other useful sources of secondary data is consumer behavior theories and the book “Consumer Behavior, buying, having and being” by Michael R. Solomon.

3.1.2 Approach

To collect the primary data the researcher will personally hand out the questionnaire. The researcher will then collect the answered questionnaires and keep them safe for later reviewing. The handing out and answering of the survey will take place in Helsinki in the café Johan&Nyström, which is GreenStreets number one retailer and hence has the best possibility to reach the most potential participants.

3.1.3 Data collection

The research was conducted using a questionnaire given to random sample persons at GreenStreets most successful retailer, which is located in the center of Helsinki. The questions were asked in form of a handout questionnaire with a few written options to choose from but also with questions that will be answered with freely formulated answers. No interviews, except the one with Johannes Laine, the owner of GreenStreet, will be conducted. The researcher only handed out the questionnaire to customers who bought a raw cake to ensure response from actual consumers which then gives significance to the study. The research is empirical, qualitative, due to the layout of the questionnaire. The researcher finds no need to do a quantitative research since the customer base is not yet that vast. The time that was needed to collect enough answers was quite long since the researcher needed to be on spot to hand out the questionnaires. Two weeks in total to collect 60 answers.

3.1.4 Data analysis

The researcher processed the data obtained from the questionnaires manually, going through the questionnaire forms one by one. To avoid errors, the researcher went through all the questionnaires twice. No technical tools were used to analyze the data.

3.1.5 Data interpretation

Since there are only 60 answering sheets to go through the researcher analyzed and interpreted the results manually. The researcher found out the three most frequently answered factors to decide the top three preferences of how the customer bases their choice of raw cake. Even with these factors in mind the plan will still follow the steps of the Customer-Based Brand equity model.

3.1.6 Validity and reliability

There should not occur any reasons for the study to lose its validity or reliability factors. The researcher will be on spot when the participants answer the questionnaire so if something does happen it can be taken into consideration. The questionnaire will be handed out to the first 60 people that purchase the raw cake at the café, within the set age limit. In case someone does not want to participate, the questionnaire will be handed out to as many as needed in the order of purchase.

There is one case where the validity factor might be quite low since there is a question that asks the participants if they have ever heard of GreenStreet before. There is no question in the survey that would declare where the participant is from, someone from abroad have obviously not heard of the company before since they are only active locally, hence a lower validity on those answers.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Expected results

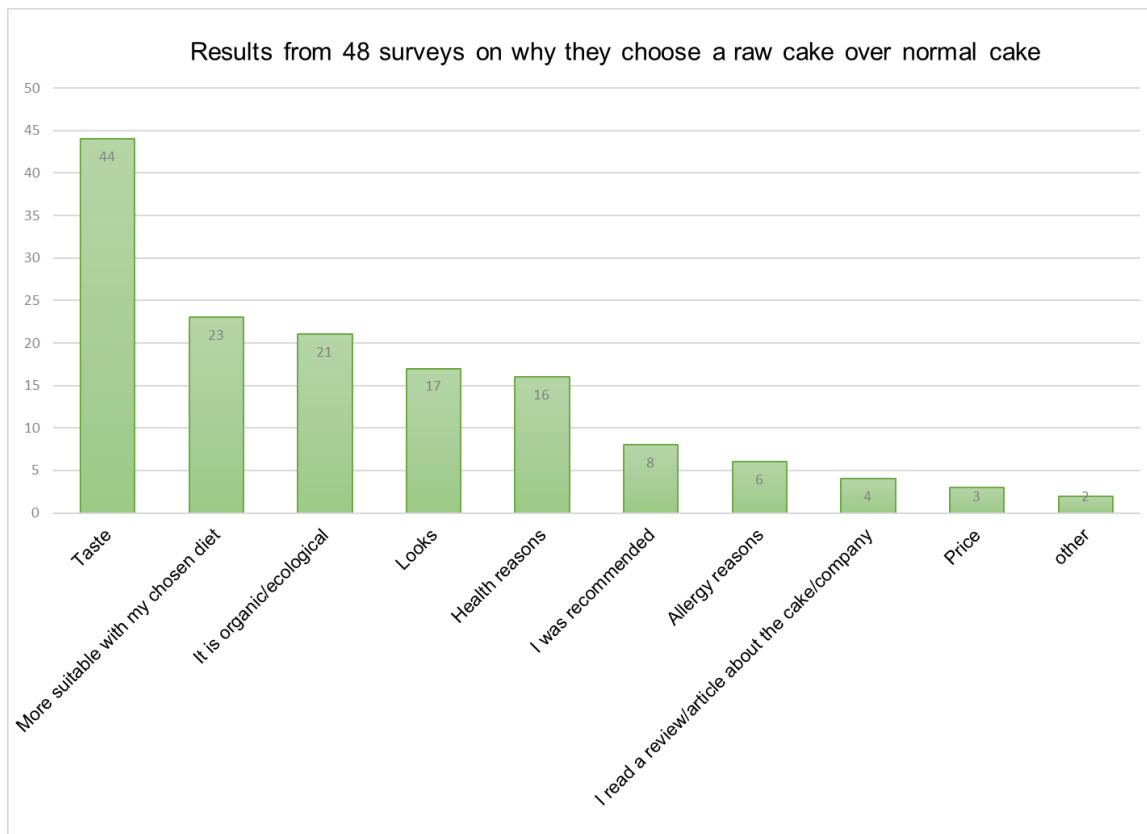
From the questionnaire the researcher expects to find out the top three factors that make a customer choose one piece of raw cake over another. The result of the questionnaire is vital for the research aim to be fulfilled since the top three factors are needed to create the brand strengthening plan. The top three factors are going to be the building blocks along with “Keller’s brand equity model” to make GreenStreets brand stronger. The last question on the questionnaire that asks the sample person what would make them more likely to choose GreenStreet instead of another raw cake manufacturer and if the logo and name effects how they choose are also going to be important for the brand strengthening plan. The hypothesis is that if the participants’ top three choices would be included in the slogan, e.g. “GreenStreet the healthier, more ecological and a choice” it would make them a lot more likely to choose that brand of raw cake over some other. The expected result of this question is “yes”, the customer would be more likely to choose the brand where their preferred factors are somehow included and visible.

If this turns out to be true, then making a plan to strengthen a brand based on consumer behavior and customer preferences is a good thing. The brand equity rises with customer preference and loyalty grows which can be seen through an increase in sales and cash flow. Eventually the company will grow bigger and generate more money for the stakeholders.

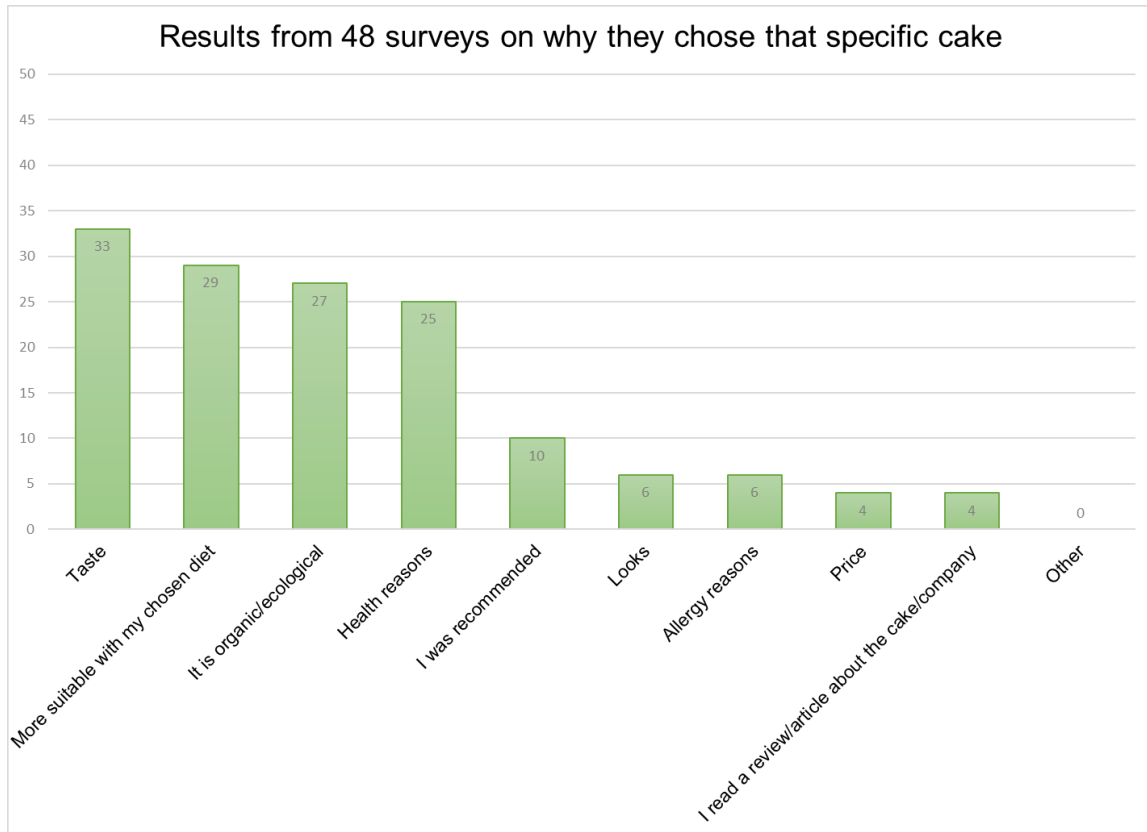
4.2 Actual findings

4.2.1 Top three factors

From 60 surveys only 48 were filled in properly and hence only 48 surveys were analyzed. Every participant could choose three alternatives which means that a conclusion of 144 preferences are presented in the chart below. From analyzing all the answers given for the first question, studying customer preference, it turns out that the most popular factors chosen by the participants, for the question “*Why did you choose a raw cake over a normal cake?*” are, **taste** on first place, **suitability with chosen diet** on second place, the fact that it is **organic/ecological** on third place. Also the **looks** and **health reasons** are worth mentioning because of the high response frequency.



For the second question “*What are the most important factors you consider when choosing your raw cake?*” the most frequently chosen answers are **taste** on first place, **suitability with chosen diet** on second place and the fact that **it is organic/ecological** on third place, also the **health reason** is clearly one of the more popular factors as well.

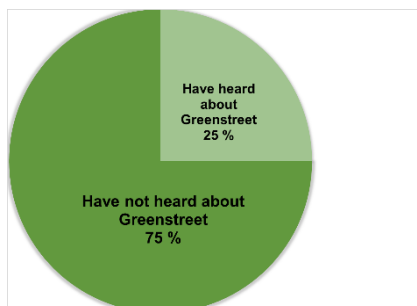


These two questions were meant to help the researcher to find out what factors influence the customer’s decision making process when choosing a raw cake, in other words reflecting back to the consumer buying decision making process theory presented earlier. By using the findings in marketing, and including them in the presentation of the cakes as well as in strengthening the brand, the researcher hopes to increase the desirability and hence the sales of the cakes. In other words, the factors that need to be pointed out in marketing are taste, suitability with special diets, the health factor, the fact that it is ecological and also focus on the presentation and overall looks.

What can also be noted from the survey was that only very few people had been recommended to come or had read an article or review about GreenStreet. This is something that must change, GreenStreet needs more visibility and needs to get their name out more. On the first question two people answered the “other” option, clarifying that they were just curious. Curiosity is a good thing and that is one good way of introducing new products to people, get people excited about something that is different.

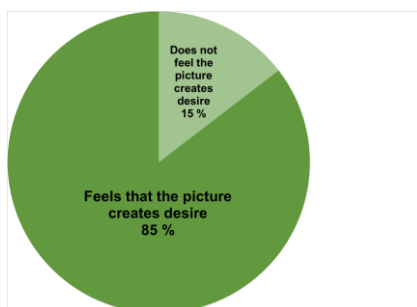
4.2.2 Visual brand image

In the customer survey the following questions were asked with intention to find out how the customers perceive the brand, in other words, does the owners wanted brand identity match the customers perceived brand image. The results of this survey are going to be used to strengthen the brand by narrowing the possible gaps and hopefully even aligning these two visions, in other words create more brand awareness. Since brand awareness directly affects consumer behavior this is an important aspect to focus on.



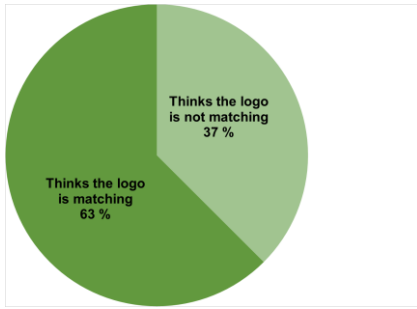
Have you heard about GreenStreet before?

To this question 36 people answered “no” and only 12 answered “yes”. This proves that the brand is still quite unknown and there is a lot of room to grow.



Do you feel the pictures create desire?

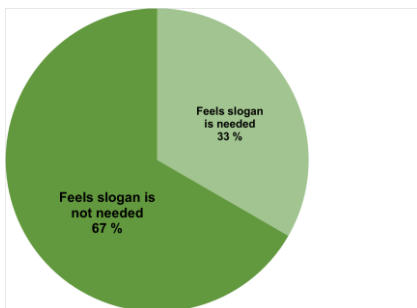
41 people answered “yes” while only 7 people answered “no”. This indicates that there is no real lack in presentations and planning of marketing pictures which is a good thing.



Do you think the logo and its colors match the raw cakes?

Here 30 people said “yes” and 18 said “no” so basically the majority liked the logo but there is definitely room for bettering the suitability of the logo and/or colors. Some of the feedback given by the participants

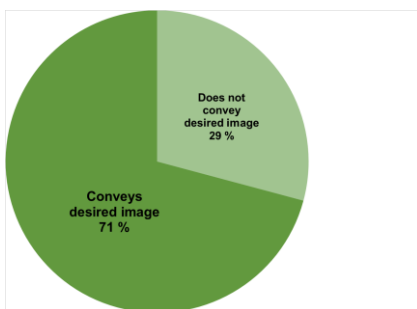
is: “greenstreet written in black seems odd to me” “a black and white logo doesn’t portray a healthy image, ex green would give it a healthier image” “don’t like the logo, strong, harsh font & color doesn’t convey owner’s description of the brand. Needs color & softer accompanying image” “I would recommend earthy tones, natural colors etc. forest green, wooden brown, beige, also a softer tree would be more inviting to me”. Concluding these comments, the biggest issue here seems to be to color choice of the logo which at the moment is black and white.



Do you feel a slogan is necessary for a brand to be remembered?

32 people thought a slogan is not necessary for a brand to be remembered and answered “no” while only 16 though a slogan is indeed needed and therefore answered “yes”. The expected result was thought to be a

strong “yes” in which case creating a slogan would have been necessary, but now that the majority thought differently the focus is not going to be laid on creating a slogan.



Do you think the visuals give you the feeling that the owner wants to convey?

Most people seemed to agree on this one since 34 answered “yes” and only 14 people answered “no”. This is a good discovery since the majority thinks that the logo and pictures do match the feeling that the owner

wants to convey. Some positive comments about the visual image of the brand include “fresh” “inviting” and “quality pictures”.

Do you have suggestions on what would make these pictures more appealing?

(the picture of the logo and also of the cakes)

Here only a little over half of the participants wrote down an answer and many repeated themselves from the earlier comments. The main comments on the logo were that it needs some color and that the font is too harsh. Then the most common answer about the cake pictures were that they are fresh and colorful but could use more focus on the actual cake or on one piece of cake and less on the surroundings.

4.2.3 Interpreting the results

Identifying gaps between brand identity and brand image and thereby also taking action to narrowing them is the number one priority. In the survey conducted appeared small gaps between the brand identity and the brand image. The brand identity is described, by the owner Johannes Laine, with adjectives such as trustworthy, real, warmth, ecological, friendly, flexible, energetic, tasty treats, good service, and good quality. The main issue in the perceived brand image seems to be the logo which, according to the survey, participants did not feel matched the brand identity. This was mainly due to the fact that the chosen font that was described as harsh and that the logo is presented in black and white which the participants did not feel matched the owner's description of warmth and being ecological.

5 BRAND STRENGTHENING PLAN BASED ON MAIN FINDINGS

5.1 The importance of the customer decision making process

The five main stages in a customer's decision making process are, as earlier described; need or problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives to meet this need, purchase decision and post-purchase behavior. It is vital for a company to be aware of the importance of each stage to be able to strengthen themselves in each stage and be more available and desirable to the customers.

1. Need or problem recognition

The need for these raw cakes and treats has increased due to more studies made about the health benefits of raw food, more knowledge about allergies as well as the simple fact that it is trendier to eat healthier nowadays. For GreenStreet to strengthen their position at this stage they need to get the word out to people that there is an option like this because many people with allergies, for example, still don't know that these cakes exist. GreenStreet needs to make people want these cakes, they need to market in a way that increases the desire. The study showed that a vast amount of people chose their raw cake because of some kind of eating restriction or special diet so to point out that these cakes actually are gluten free, dairy free, nut free, refined sugar free etc. would give people with eating restrictions or special diets, that don't know about these cakes, a new better alternative.

2. Information search

The results from the survey said that not many people know about GreenStreet which means that even though there would be a need for raw cakes people may have a hard time finding GreenStreets cakes. In other words, it would be vital to get people talking about them maybe in forms of a competition or something similar because word of mouth is a really good way to get recognition. Also making their name more visible will help because at many retail places the name GreenStreet is not mentioned anywhere. Then obviously search engine optimization would help but it is quite expensive.

3. Evaluation of alternatives

At this stage the customers evaluate all the alternatives found to see which one will best satisfy their need. The answers from the survey made clear that people value looks and taste quite high when choosing their cakes and at the moment GreenStreet only has three different flavors and the look of the cake is fairly simple. In other words, having more flavor options as well as making the cakes look really delicious by decorating is highly recommended. Here also the price could be a deal breaker, say the price would be a lot higher than other raw cakes then less people would buy them. The price of GreenStreets cakes are relative with other similar cakes so no need in adjusting there.

4. Purchase decision

This is the stage where the customers make the actual purchase decision, here things such as promotion, special offers, store design and staff knowledge can still change their minds. GreenStreet have regular deals such as “get free coffee with the purchase of a piece of raw cake” which makes it easier for customers to opt for that alternative. Friendly and knowledgeable customer service as well as an overall cozy atmosphere, comfortable chairs and nice music will give the customer that last extra bit of certainty to buy the product.

5. Post-purchase behavior

The customers post purchase behavior forms out of how well the whole purchase process went as well as to what extent the actual product satisfied their specific needs. If the product and service satisfied their needs, then the customer is more likely to come back and repurchase the product or in general favor the brand over others. Usually customers who have been treated well, better than their expectations, have a tendency of spreading good word of mouth. To focus on friendly and knowledgeable service as well as put some effort into making the overall experience pleasant in forms of comfortable seating, nice interior design and pleasant background music, is going to get the brand customer loyalty.

5.2 Implementation using Customer-Based Brand Equity model

5.2.1 Identity

This first building block, identity, is about “who are you?” in this case, that is, who is GreenStreet, and also about creating brand awareness. The owner, Johannes Laine, has quite a clear vision of the desired brand identity, being friendly, warm, healthy, trustworthy, energetic and happy, and now the gap between that and the perceived brand image is already established through the conducted survey. The gap that was found is mostly due to the logo that does not convey the right image because of it being black and white and the harshness of the font. This is the first tangible asset that needs to be fixed. Here the logo can be seen in black and white, as it is today, but some added color and eventually a softer font is recommended to make the logo more suitable with the desired brand image.



Here it is also suggested that the company gets to know how their customers think in the process of choosing products. This was examined in the consumer behavior survey and the results suggested that the main factors on which customers base their choices are, taste, health reasons, suitability with chosen diet and because it is organic/ecological. This gives a good platform to start strengthening the USP, unique selling proposition. The taste factor is tricky because everyone’s personal taste is different but here a larger variety of flavors is recommended to better satisfy everyone, also giving out samples to crowds on different events and happenings around town would create awareness and hopefully even desire. The following three factors, health, suitability with diet and it being organic, can be boxed together because this is already true about the cakes. They are already made with healthier and organic/ecological ingredients, they are modified to suit every type of diet; they are all wheat, refined sugar and dairy/egg free hence gluten friendly, lactose free and vegan, there are also nut free cakes for people with allergies or other special diets where nuts cannot be consumed. These are major factors in the customer’s decision making progress so the weight here needs to be laid on getting the word out, making sure everyone with special diets knows there are already options like these out there.

Then lastly what is important in this first block is to make your company stand out amongst the other companies in the same market. In this case it is not quite that vital because there are not that many competitors yet, what is going to be most important is to just get the word out to all the people who don't know GreenStreet exists.

5.2.2 Meaning

The second block is about “what are you, that is, what does GreenStreet stand for. The desired brand identity is already established so this block is dedicated to strengthening that identity and making sure the message actually goes through to the customers. The idea is to meet and preferably exceed the customers' expectations about, not only the product but the service as well. GreenStreet stands for ecologically produced products, good quality, cleanliness, they want to be trustworthy and be known for having first class products. GreenStreet does not really do any marketing other than that they have an Instagram and Facebook page and since the things that they stand for are not mentioned there they cannot be found anywhere. The customer cannot connect these things to the brand when they have not seen them in marketing nor heard them anywhere. This is the number one thing that needs to be dealt with. Even if it is not any big adverts but only on their social media pages or at their retail locations these things must come across to the customers. The plan is that there is going to be small signs put up that are going to state these things clearly but in a fun way. A note next to the cake that looks a little like a speech bubble saying “I am made out of 100% organic ingredients” or “I am handmade, with love” or “The berries in me are from the clean Finnish forests” would bring out the fact that it is high quality products without saying it directly. These same notes would be made into stickers and put on the take away packaging of the cakes and be visible at every event GreenStreet attends. The information to put in these bubbles is up to the owner but everything that is worth mentioning, such as where the ingredients are from, if fresh fruits or berries have been used and nutritional values. In addition to these signs and stickers small info posts will be made on their social media pages. These posts would say e.g.

“Did you know every single one of our cakes are handmade? No joke” or “Go nuts without nuts because we have that nut free cake just for you” or “We treat all living creatures the same, YES all our cakes are vegan!” or “A slice of our chocolate-menthe cake will provide you with your daily dose of Omega3 to keep your brain working, how about that?” and these would be to remind and teach the customers about the products and their benefits.

Small things like these are going to get the customers attention and it is going to make it easier for them to connect these thing with the brand. The brand needs to be more visibly attractive, it needs to have more things that attract peoples’ attention and makes it memorable and worth choosing.

5.2.3 Response

The third part of this brand strengthening theory is mainly about analyzing the results that have emerged through the response from the customers after making these previously mentioned changes. So basically, after changing the logo and trying to add on to the visual appearance of the brand, a new survey should be conducted to see if there are any changes in how the customers see the brand. Hopefully the new survey would show that the gaps between the brand identity and brand image would be gone and the customers’ expectations would be met and even exceeded. In most cases however the brand identity changes along the way and rarely there is nothing to better. In other words, this is the part where you step back and reflect and figure out what more actions that needs to be taken to achieve the desired brand identity to match the perceived brand image.

5.2.4 Relationships

The fourth block is the last and most important one. It is hard to reach because it is when the brand is strong enough to form a psychological connection with the customer. This type of connection is behavioral loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community and active engagement. In this brand strengthening plan the fourth block is going to be implemented quite strongly because even if the customer base is not the vastest at the moment it is still important to form a connection with the existing customers. Especially sense of community is reachable because the “raw food trend” is something that unites people, however it is important to emphasize to make people feel like they actually are a part of this whole thing. Also one weighing factor is the raw food workshops that GreenStreet hosts once a week, they assist in making people remember the brand and learn things that can be used in everyday life, things that can benefit them, this is definitely active engagement which is also a part of the fourth block goals.

5.3 Action plan

In the case of creating a brand strengthening plan, that needs physical actions, a plan of action is in its place. The action plan is designed to make it clear for everyone involved what needs to be done, why it’s done, how it needs to be performed and by who, as well as when and where the actions are taking place.

There are five main areas of focus in strengthening the GreenStreet brand. The first most important one is changing the logo. Johannes Laine, the owner, needs to decide what color scheme he wants to use or outsource it to someone else but earthy colors would best reflect the values he wanted to convey. Here is an example of the current logo where the color scheme is changed to be warmer and earthier, not too bright but just enough color to give it the warmth it was lacking. The font can also be changed but the color already makes the biggest difference. This needs to happen as soon



as possible and the new logo needs to be visible in as many places as possible. People who already know the brand might notice the improvement, the rest will just get an overall warmer more inviting image of the brand.

The following thing that needs to happen is the final design and ordering of the stickers/notes, they should be colorful and informative but in a fun way. The stickers go on the take away cake boxes and the notes go next to the cakes. The social media posts should be thought through beforehand and be posted at least every other week. It doesn't always have to be new information since many people already know about the benefits but the statement that wants to be made can be written in a lot of different and fun ways.

Another thing that would help with drawing peoples' attention is new releases. It is understandable that a small sized company cannot have too many flavors at once but introducing new flavors every now and then would make people want to come back to try a new one. A suggestion is introducing seasonal flavors, e.g. one for Christmas, one for summer and maybe something in between, also since GreenStreet has other treats than only raw cakes the new products can be in whatever category. These new flavors would have to be invented which would take some extra time for the head chef but releasing them would also bring more customers and hopefully be financially beneficial in the end. What needs to be done is give the head chef more working hours to create new recipes or hire another chef to leave more time for creating new recipes.

The fourth area of focus in this plan is figuring out all the information that can be told to the customers in order to wake their interest and keep them coming back. This information is going to be posted on GreenStreets social media pages which are their Instagram and Facebook pages as well as be visible at the events they attend. Information posts regarding the ingredients used, regarding how suitable they are with almost every special diet as well as about nutritional values and pointing out that the ingredients are organic. As earlier mentioned this is important to get through to the customers because even though many know of the benefits of a raw cake most people still do not. Here a meeting needs to be held where these things are discussed. As much information as possible should be gathered and someone should be assigned the responsibility of regularly updating the social media pages.

The final thing that should be given serious weight is trying to “get out” more. GreenStreet should attend as many food and health related events as possible as well as urban markets and such. This would give them more visibility and attention on their products to create a known and more desirable brand. Such events are e.g.:

- “Herkkujen Suomi” where once a year local producers of organic foods gather on the market square next the central railway station.
- “Street Helsinki EATS” which is held a couple of times a year everywhere around Helsinki and draws a lot of people and attention.
- “Ihana Helsinki” which is a once in a year street festival held to tribute the beginning of spring.
- “Tuomaan Markkinat” which is a Christmas market held on the market square of the big white cathedral.
- “Taiteiden yö” which is a one-night street festival where cafés and restaurants as well as art galleries and stores all have special offers and are open later than usual.

5.3.1 Action plan figure

	What	Who	When	Where	Why
Logo	Give the logo more warmth in the form of an earthier color scheme	Johannes Laine the owner, unless he chooses to out-source it	A.S.A.P.	Should be integrated everywhere where the current logo already is visible	To give the brand an overall warmer and more inviting image, a suggestion from current customers
Stickers	Creating short, funny and informative notes and stickers	Johannes Laine the owner, unless he chooses to out-source it	A.S.A.P.	The notes go next to the cakes in the cafes and the stickers go on the take away packages	To both teach and remind the customers of the benefits suitability and quality of the products
Flavors	Creating new and interesting cake flavors	The head chef Heidi	Recommended to release a new flavor at least 4 times a year	To all the cafes as well as informing customers about it on social media	To create more interest and desire
Info	Meeting to be held to gather as much information on the product, ingredients and nutritional values as possible	The whole GreenStreet team	Meeting to be held when it best suits the owner Laine, information to be posted at least every other week	Meeting to be held in the office, information to be shared on social media	To both teach and remind the customers of the benefits suitability and quality of the products
Events	Different food related events	A representative from GreenStreet	At least four times a year, whenever the events are held	In Helsinki, location depends on the event	To promote the products and get more visibility

Above is an example of how the action plan could look like, some prefer it simple and some a bit more detailed. The one who then is in charge of a specific task must obviously be briefed more about it so that he/she knows what to do. A separate description sheet of each task could be useful as well.

6 DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that GreenStreet is not very known, also that there are not really any articles or reviews about them anywhere. This is not a bad thing since the whole point of creating a brand strengthening plan was to increase GreenStreets brand awareness. Only future study will declare if any growth in awareness or sales has followed from implementing this brand strengthening plan. The study made clear that the visuals, especially the logo, did not suit the owners desired brand identity, according to the participants. This is obviously a small scale study but even with this amount of answers it is good for the owner to know that what he is trying to portray is not in line with what people perceive. So listening to the customers and making changes accordingly is going to be mutually beneficial. Also the results on what the customers find important when choosing a raw cake was clear, they value the taste, that it is suitable with their chosen diet, that it is healthier and that it is organic. These results were exactly what was needed in order to fulfill the initial vision of creating a brand strengthening plan, based on customer preference, using answers from a consumer behavior survey.

The results found were in line with the hypothesis with one exception, being that according to the people who participated in the survey the results showed that a slogan is not needed for the brand to better be remembered. This means that no slogan was created in this brand strengthening plan even if the initial assumptions, according to the hypothesis, was that a catchy slogan would be needed.

Eventual shortcomings of this study might be that it was a fairly narrow range of people who answered the survey which maybe does not give the most accurate answers. The survey should have been done online to speed up the analyzing process and get more data. Also the survey could have specified the gender of the participant to look into if there would occur any gender specific differences in preference or perception of the brand. Also a professional brand strengthening plan could be a lot more specific and thorough than this one, as well as have a time reference that stretches over a longer period of time to make larger and more specific changes.

7 CONCLUSIONS

Since the brand strengthening plan is based on customer preference the researcher found it necessary to strengthen the brand firstly through getting more visibility to the brand via attending events and being more present on the existing social media pages. Secondly through getting the information out to the people more effectively via social media and using short, funny but informative notes to remind the customers about these already existing reasons to choose GreenStreets raw cake. This is because, according to the results of the survey, the reasons why the customers choose raw cakes are already present but not clear enough. Through these changes GreenStreet should slowly but surely get more attention and hopefully grow as a brand and one day reach their goal of becoming an international franchise.

7.1 Suggestions for future study

It is recommended to do a similar study in about a year or two to see if any results have shown through the changes of implementing this brand strengthening plan. The desired results for the following study would be increased brand awareness. In addition, to follow up on the eventual monetary results of this brand strengthening plan, a financial study is recommended as well. This study could look into if the resources spent on this brand strengthening plan have transferred into an increased profit.

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9 APPENDICES

1. Questionnaire; preferences on choosing raw cake and opinions on visual brand image
2. The original interview with Johannes Laine, owner of GreenStreet (in Finnish)
3. Summary of the thesis (in Swedish)

Questionnaire; preferences on choosing raw cake and opinions on visual brand image

Why did you choose a raw cake over a normal cake?

(Write the numbers 1, 2 and 3 in the boxes in order of importance)

- 1. Price
- 2. Taste
- 3. Looks
- 4. Health reasons
- 5. Allergy reasons
- 6. More suitable with my chosen diet
- 7. It is organic/ecological
- 8. I was recommended
- 9. I read a review/article about the cake/company
- 10. Other? What:

What are the most important factors you consider when choosing a raw cake?

(Write the numbers 1, 2 and 3 in the boxes in order of importance)

- 1. Price
- 2. Taste
- 3. Looks
- 4. Health reasons
- 5. Allergy reasons
- 6. More suitable with my chosen diet
- 7. It is organic/ecological
- 8. I was recommended
- 9. I read a review/article about the cake/company
- 10. Other? What:

Look at the pictures below and then answer the questions on the next page.



Figure 1: GreenStreet logo



Figure 2: Mint-Chocolate raw cake



Figure 3: Lingonberry-Caramel raw cake

Have you heard about GreenStreet before?

Yes No

Do you feel the pictures create desire?

Yes No

Do you think the logo and its colors match the raw cakes?

Yes No

Do you feel a slogan is necessary for a brand to be remembered?

Yes No

Do you think the visuals give you the feeling that the owner wants to convey?

(Owners description is of brand: trustworthy, good quality, real, warmth, ecological, friendly, good service, flexible, tasty, treats and energy)

Yes No

How/Why? :

Do you have suggestions on what would make these pictures more appealing?

Interview with Johannes Laine, owner of GreenStreet

What was your vision for the brand identity when you started?

Visio brandistä... hmm.. siitä kun aloitin oli niin kauan... -pitkä tauko- ekologinen, laadukas, puhdas, luotettava, ykköskamaa, silloin kun aloitin oli eri tuotteet niin nyt on vähän vaihtunut matkan varrella tää visio.

What is your desired brand identity at the moment?

Paljon samoja kun just mutta semmonen aitous, lämminhenkisyys, laatu, herkuttelu, ilo, energia, mahtava, mukava, innostunut, paras asiakaspalvelu ->ollaani palveluhenkisiä, luotettava, joustava ja tosi siisti meininki. Sit tottakai iso, kasvu ja kansainvälisesti tunnettu!

What is your future vision for the company?

Isossa mittakaavassa olisi että oltaisiin myös ulkomailla tunnettu brandi. Me ollaan raakakakkujen ja hyvinvoinnin edistämiseen keskittynyt brändi, elikkä iso franchising ketju joka myy ja edistää hyvinvointituotteita olisi unelma. En usko että GreenStreet jää ainoastaa raakakakkujen ja raakasuklaiden tekoon vaan voi myös avata kahviloita ja siitä tulisi se oikea liikevaihto, kaviloita jotka olisi tunnettu mehevistä kakuista, pääbisnes siis mulla olisi franchising loppupelissä.

Did you come up with the name, logo, colors, packaging and slogan? If no – who did?

Ei meillä ole slogania mutta ööh.. just sopivastihan meillä vaihtui logo haha. En keksinyt mitään itse vaan ostin aikoinaan GreenStreet:in liiketoiminta kolmelta pienyrtyäjältä koska niitten omat urat oli tiellä joten ne halusi myydä sen pois. Logo tuli ystävältä eikä värimaailmaa ole tällä hetkellä vielä suunniteltu sen enempää hehe...

Do you have a branding strategy?

Ei.

Have you thought about having one?

E.. tai siis ei, en ole miettinyt.

Do you feel you have a brand that represents your products?

Aikalailta joo, aika hyvin. Kakkupalaa syödessä on vaikeaa ehkä tuntea kaikkia näitä tuntemuksia mitä haluaisin välittää mutta joo kyllä on mahtavaa ja laadukasta ja iloiselle mielelle tulee eli joo sanoisin että joo, 5/5.

Do you think your brand image matches your desired brand identity?

Ei.. liian moni joka näkee logon tai näkee nimen niin ei tiedä että mitä me tehdään tai toistepäin kun joku maistaa kakkua kahvilassa tai käy suklaa kurssilla niin niille ei tule se että ”aa, hei tää on se greenstreet” ei edes semmosessa piirissä missä luulisi että ihmiset tuntis. Se mitä mä haluan viestiä niin luulen että ne ketkä on tällä hetkellä asiakkaina kokee hyvän, ilosen asiakaspalvelun ja tottakai sen laadun.

Has the brand identity changed along the years?

Onhan se, ja varmaan muuttuu jatkossakin.

Would you feel comfortable which changing the branding strategy?

Joo ei kai siinä mitään pahaa ole.

Sammanfattning

Detta examensarbete är i huvudsak gjort som ett försök för att förstärka GreenStreet brandet genom att implementera svar, från kunder som deltagit i en konsument beteende undersökning, i brand förstärknings planen.

GreenStreet är ett finskt företag som grundades år 2012 av Johannes Laine. Det började då sin verksamhet med att sälja ekologisk kosmetik och kläder samt "superfoods" som är t.ex. torkade goji och mullbär, kakao fett och pulver etc. I början av år 2015 märkte Laine att det fanns en efterfrågan för "raw food", på svenska rå-kost, vilket var en relativt ny trend. Han bestämde sig då för att ändra på GreenStreets koncept och började tillverka och sälja raw food kakor. För tillfället har GreenStreet 9 stycken återförsäljare varav 4 stycken är caféer och 5 är K-supermarket butiker. Utöver tillverkningen och återförsäljningen av rå-kost kakorna ordnar GreenStreet kvälls kurser där man lär sig om fördelarna av ingredienserna som används i tillagningen samt hur man tar sig till väga då man vill "baka" en rå-kost kaka.

Rå-kost är alltså en slags special diet där målet är att man bara skall äta mat i dess naturliga form, med andra ord rå mat. Med rå mat anses allt som inte är uppvärmt till mera än 48 grader celsius. Detta beror på att då maten uppvärms försvinner det viktiga näringsämnen så som t.ex. syre och enzymer som behövs för att smälta maten och hjälpa kroppen att släppa energin i en jämnare takt.

Undersökningen gjordes i form av ett frågeformulär som delades ut i GreenStreets populäraste återförsäljnings café, Johan&Nyström, på Skatudden. Det gavs ut 60 stycken frågeformulär varav 48 var korrekt ifyllda och kunde användas i undersökningen. Bara personer som köpte en bit råkaka fick delta i undersökningen för att försäkra sig om att de kunde svara på frågorna. Detta berodde på att de två första frågorna löd: "varför valde du en bit rå-kost kaka istället för en vanlig kakbit?" och "varför valde du just denna rå-kost kaka?". De resterande 6 stycken frågorna handlade om brandkännedom och vad deltagarna tyckte om GreenStreets visuella aspekt. De skulle titta på tre stycken bilder

varav en var GreenStreets logo och de två andra var bilder på deras kakor. Dessa frågor löd som följande: ”har du hört om GreenStreet förut?”, ”tycker du att bilderna väcker ett begär?”, ”tycker du att logon och dess färger matchar kakorna?”, ”tycker du att en slogan är nödvändig för ett brand att bli ihågkommet?”, ”tycker du att den visuella aspekten ger ut den bild som ägaren vill framföra?” och sista var ”har du några rekommendationer om vad som skulle göra dessa bilder mera lockande?”. Målet med undersökningen var att få fram på vilka grunder kunderna väljer en rå-kost kaka över en vanlig kaka men också på vilka grunder de sedan valde just den specifika kakan som de gjorde. Dessa svar implementerades sedan i en plan för att förstärka brandet. Annat som ville undersökas var vad kunderna tyckte om den visuella aspekten av brandet och hur detta eventuellt kunde förbättras.

Teorin som stöder detta arbete är konsument beteende teorier samt en existerande plan för att förstärka ett brand som går under namnet ”Customer-Based Brand Equity plan” alltså en plan för kund-baserat varumärkeskapital. Konsument beteende kan förklaras som studier om prosessen då en individ eller grupp väljer, köper, använder eller gör sig av med en produkt, service, idéer eller upplevelser för att mätta deras lust och möta deras behov. Det är alltså studier om konsumenten och hur den beteer sig i olika köp situationer. Konsument beteende teorin är viktig för företag att förså sig på eftersom det ultimata målet för alla företag, som förser människor med en produkt, service eller upplevelse, är att uppfylla kundens önskemål och helst också överträffa deras förväntningar. Det finns 5 steg i en konsuments beslutsprocess före ett köp, dessa är igenkännandet av ett behov, informationssökning, utvärdering av urval, köps beslut och beteendet efter köpet. Dessa steg lönar det sig för företag att känna igen så att de lättare kan vara synliga och påverka deras potentiella kunders beslut. Till konsumentbeteende teorin hör också hur olika personer upplever saker som t.ex. reklam på helt olika sätt. Även om vi alla har ögon, mun, näsa, öron och hud som tillåter oss att se, smaka, lukta, höra och känna så upplever vi saker på olika sätt vilket i stort sätt beror på varje persons egna erfarenheter och upplevelser. Med andra ord är det väldigt svårt för företag att få reda på hur extakt deras brand upplevs eftersom konsumentbeteende teorin säger att alla ändå upplever den på sitt sätt. Brandkännedom spelar också en stor roll i hur konsumenterna beteer sig innan köp,

konsumenter brukar automatiskt köpa en produkt eller service från ett väl känt brand. Delvis för att brandet är en status fråga men också delvis för att om flere personer har samma så känns det tryggare.

Planen som använts som bas för att förstärka brandet är utvecklad av Kevin Lane Keller och den går ut på att försöka skapa den rätta slags upplevelsen för kunden så att denne utvecklar positiva tankar och känslor om brandet i fråga. Alltså att förstärka brandet genom att lyssna på och uppfylla kundens behov vilket automatiskt lyfter på brandet värde och betydelse i kundens ögon. Planen följer i huvudsak 4 olika steg som måste följas, dessa steg baserar sig på frågor som kunder omedvetet ställer sig själv i samband med ett köp. Första är identitet, ”vem är du?”, här måste alltså företaget fastställa vem de är och hur de vill bli sedda i omvärlden. Andra är betydelse, ”vad är du?”, alltså vad man är i andras ögon, företaget måste ta reda på vilken slags kundgrupp de vill nå, vad dessa personer vill se i ett brand och hur de skall uppnå detta . Det tredje steget respons, ”vad handlar du om?” går ut på hur omvärlden upplever brandet. Företaget måste undersöka om de som kunderna upplever är i linje med hur de vill bli sedda. Sista steget i denna plan är förhållandet, ”hur passar vi ihop?” vilket betyder att kunden ifrågesätter sitt förhållande till brandet, känner de sig viktiga och speciella. Här måste företaget se till att kundrelationerna uppvaktas för att uppehålla kundens lojalitet mot dem.

Från undersökningen kom det fram att kunderna väljer en rå-kost kaka över en vanlig kaka i huvudsak med tanke på smaken, men också för att den passar bättre med deras valda diet och för att den är ekologisk. Grunder för varför de valde just den kakbit som de hade framför sig var också i huvudsak smaken men även för att den passar bättre med deras valda diet och för att den är ekologisk. De tre mest valda grunderna var alltså samma för båda frågorna vilket betyder att det är dessa faktorer som måste tas i beaktning då planen för att förstärka brandet skapas. De andra svaren visade att 75% inte hade hört om GreenStreet förut vilket betyder att man måste öka på varumärkeskänndomen. 85% tycker att bilderna väcker ett begär, bra ingen åtgärd behövs. 63% tycker att logon o dess färger matchar brandet. 67% tycker att man inte behöver en slogan för ett brand att bli ihåkommet vilket ledde till att ingen slogan skapades för brandet. I den sista frågan där deltagarna fritt fick skriva kommentarer om hur den visuella aspekten eventuellt kunde

förbättras kommenterade de flesta på logon. 37% tyckte att den inte matchade brandet och skrev här att logon inte borde vara svart-vit utan behöver färg och att typografin är för hård. Andra kommentarer var att man borde fokusera mera på själva kakan istället för omgivningen.

Planen för hur brandet skall förstärkas följer den tidigare presenterade modellens riktlinjer med stort fokus på de resultat som kom fram i undersökningen. Den första åtgärden som måste tas är att ändra på logon för att göra den mer passande till brandet. Logon kunde ha färg för att upplevas som mera warm, ekologiskt, hälsosam och jordnära vilket var verb som ägaren använde för att beskriva sitt brand. Från undersökningen kom också fram att de viktigaste faktorerna på vilka kunderna baserar sina val är smaken, för att det passar bättre med deras diet och för att den är ekologisk. Dessa faktorer kommer att understrykas och föras fram på ett helt nytt sätt för att fånga mera intresse och hoppeligen skapa ett större begär. GreenStreets rå-kost kakor är redan ekologiska och väldigt special diet vänliga, p.g.a. att de är gluten- och mjölkprodukt fria, fritt från raffinerat socker, nöt och ägg fria och utan tillagda onaturliga färg eller konserverings medel. Detta måste föras fram mera aktivt eftersom det fortfarande finns många personer med varierande kostrestriktioner som inte vet om att ett passande sötsaks alternativ redan finns på marknaden. GreenStreet gör inte mycket reklam utanför deras sociala media sidor, vilka är instagram och facebook, men att redan på dessa sidor tydligare föra fram dessa faktorer skulle göra en stor skillnad. Smaken var den viktigaste faktorn för kunderna då de väljer sin kaka vilket betyder att destu mera olika smaker det finns att välja mellan så skulle destu flera personer hitta sin favorit. För tillfället har GreenStreet bara tre olika kakor att bjuda på men några nya skulle inte bara väcka intresse i de existerande kunderna men också hämta nya kunder. En annan mycket viktig faktor var att ändast 25% av deltagarna hade hört om GreenStreet förut även om de precis hade köpt en av deras kakbitar. Varumärkeskännedomen är alltså väldigt låg vilket betyder att det finns mycket rum för GreenStreet att köra fram sitt namn på olika ställen. De måste mer aktivt delta i olika mat och hälso inriktade evenemang och tillställningar för att få mera synlighet. Så var också planen att skapa klistermärken med deras logo på föratt klistra på alla take-away boxar eftersom majoriteten av deras kakbitar återförsäljs i plast boxar i matbutiker.

Målet med examensarbetet uppnåddes eftersom undersökningen gav de förväntade resultaten och planen för att förstärka GreenStreet varumärket skapades. För fortsatt intresse rekommenderas det att göra en ny mera specifik undersökning ca ett år efter att planen implementeras för att se om de eftersträvda målen nås. Dessa var alltså ökad varumärkeskänedom och som följd till detta också en ökad försäljning och vinst.