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Brand Elements Exploratory & Assessment to Build Brand Equity Plans for Saejiva

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Abstract: *Saejiva's target market consists of wellness and perfume enthusiasts aged 21-40. Currently in the Market Growth stage, Saejiva has a poor consumer retention rate of 2.19%. One of the values associated with brand equity is loyalty (Taylor et al., 2004, 217-227). To measure Saejiva's brand equity, previous preliminary research in a form of brand audit revealed issues with packaging durability and tagline memorability. To address these, development plans aim to enhance packaging durability and tagline memorability using Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) approach. This study scope and limitation is through qualitative in-depth interviews as data collection method with 13 respondents of 4 different backgrounds: an environment activist, content creators, wellness enthusiasts, and perfume enthusiasts analyzed using NVivo 14 resulting in business solution & implementation plan consists of leveraging the tagline with storytelling campaigns, strengthening the brand name with a compelling backstory and pronunciation content, improving bottle design with unique features, and enhancing box packaging with English variant names & grand launching preparation. With a September & Q4 2024 budget of Rp 1,700,000.00, Saejiva can execute these strategies to improve brand equity, customer retention and loyalty, thereby strengthening its market position and competitiveness.*

Keywords: *Saejiva, brand development, brand elements, keller's customer-based brand equity (CBBE) model*

I. INTRODUCTION

Perfume is one of the daily needs of a lot of people, especially one who is trying to show the best presentation of themselves in terms of fragrance. A strong and memorable smell can really bring out and show off someone's special character (Allen, Havlíček & Roberts, 2015). Lately, the perfumery industry in Indonesia is showing significant growth. According to Statista (2023), the revenue forecast of the fragrance segment in the beauty and personal care market in Indonesia will continuously increase in 2023 to 2028 by a total of USD 61.7 million. This shows that there is a significant size and potential for growth within the perfumery industry, which is one of many industries in the fragrance market for instance body lotion, room diffuser, scented candle, etc. Not only by revenue, but it is projected that the fragrance market in Indonesia will face a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 2.73% in 2024-2028 (Fragrances - Indonesia, 2023). This balance growth projection shows the increasing demand for fragrances among Indonesian consumers is increasing progressively from year to year. Furthermore, according to research by Statista in 2023, the fragrance market in Indonesia is encountering a sudden increase in demand for traditional, locally-inspired scents, considering a growing appreciation for Indonesia's rich cultural heritage (Fragrances - Indonesia, 2023). Saejiva itself is one of a local perfumery brand which uses locally-inspired scents and local wood artisan for their bottle packaging.

Saejiva is categorized as essential oil based perfume since it uses essential oils as its perfume base. Essential oil also called as volatile oil or ethereal oil is a fragrant oil extracted from flowers, buds, leaves, stems, wood, fruit, seeds, bark, gum, roots, or rhizomes of a plant and it might come from in multiple of these parts (Groom, 1997). In compliance with the book "The Art of Perfumery" by Septimus Piesse (1857), the fusion of perfume notes is one of the best illustrations of synergy

in action. Each essential oil chosen and its position within the fragrance's hierarchy contribute to the final product. This is how top, middle, and base notes came to be. According to an article from Petite & Soignée "What is the Difference Between Extrait de Parfum, Eau de Parfum, Eau de Toilette, and Eau de Cologne?" by Ivy (2019), Extrait de Parfum, sometimes referred to as Pure Perfume or Parfum Extrait, is the strongest and longest-lasting type of fragrance available. It is a highly concentrated perfume that usually comprises a concentration of 20–40% aromatic components. The aroma lasts for at least eight hours thanks to the high concentration of fragrance oils, offering a deep and intense sensory experience. Because extrait de parfum has a high concentration, it is thought to be the priciest type of perfume. Saejiva's perfume type is categorized as extrait de parfum with its high concentration of essential oils as its perfume base.

The term "brand" has become an essential element of our daily lives, including the perfumery business and a variety of branded durable and non-durable goods and services. According to the American Marketing Association (2024), a brand is a name, term, design, symbol, or other element that distinguishes one seller's goods or service from that of others. Branding is all about making differentiations. According to Keller (2001), to build a strong brand using the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model can be divided into several steps. Developing brand equity can give the organization numerous competitive advantages, for instance: a rise in the strength of consumers' positive attitudes about the branded product & enhanced perceived product or service quality (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001), larger profit margins since suppliers are more likely to agree to lower prices and consumers are willing to pay more for branded goods, a strong foundation for future product launches (brand extensions) and license contracts (Keller, 2001), and many other benefits. The strength of the bond between the customer and the brand is reflected in brand equity (Feldwick, 1996; Keller, 2001; Wood, 2000).

Brand elements, often known as brand identities, are trademarkable components that enable a brand to identify and define itself. Brand names, URLs, logos, symbols, characters, spokespeople, taglines, jingles, packaging, and signage are some examples of these components (Keller, 2003). They are picked with care to increase brand recognition as well as to establish distinctive, positive, and powerful brand connotations.

In order to establish brand equity, Keller (2003) provides a number of general guidelines for choosing and creating brand elements, including memorability, meaningfulness, aesthetic appeal as in likability, transferability across product categories and cultural or geographic barriers, adaptability over time, and legal protectability. By using these standards, it is ensured that brand elements are powerful in building a strong brand presence and safeguarding the brand from challenges from the competition.

Saejiva's target market is a person who has interest in wellness activities and consists of male and female wellness community enthusiasts who are 21-40 years old. Not only that, Saejiva also aims for a person who likes skinscent perfume with interest in perfume trends consisting of male and female perfume and beauty enthusiasts who are 21-40 years old. Skin scent is defined as a low-projection scent where one can be detected only when close to the wearer. Skin scent has similar characteristics: soft, sheer, and musky (Luckyscent, 2024).

Based on preliminary research from previous brand audit of Saejiva with qualitative & quantitative brand exploratory research, several development strategies were formulated for Saejiva's previous brand elements, for instance the tagline "Your Journey Into Nature's Embrace" can be improved since lots of respondents do not know the meaning of the tagline. Thus, development strategies such as making a tagline that contains rhymes in order to make it memorable for customers and more simple English will make our tagline more recognizable. Moreover, one of the in-depth interview respondents (TJ) stated that she did not know how to open the box packaging although she was already a customer. Not only that, based on Saejiva's customer database, there are several complaints about the box packaging durability since the material is too fragile, which then come up with suggestions to recreate the packaging box using thicker cardboard paper material to increase the packaging durability.

The development strategies were then applied in Saejiva. Later on, the CEO of Saejiva directs the team to conduct a second brand element assessment to develop a new brand equity plan for Saejiva which later on will be used to identify Saejiva's brand equity using Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model as its conceptual framework. It needs to be done to create a consistent delivered value to customers associated with brand equity to maintain its customer loyalty, especially

before it reaches the Maturity stage in the Product Life Cycle

Currently, Saejiva is in the 2nd stage of Product Life Cycle, which is Market Growth. In accordance with Harvard Business Review's Article "Exploit the Product Life Cycle", a company in the Growth Stage experiences demand increase at a faster rate and the overall market size grows rapidly (Levitt, 1964). Saejiva is experiencing a Market Growth stage in 2024. Since Saejiva is in a market growth stage, Saejiva is trying to maintain customer loyalty to the brand. One of the values associated with brand equity are consistently the primary factors that influence both the actions and attitudes of customers in terms of loyalty (Taylor et al., 2004, 217-227). However, the retention rate of Saejiva's customers is pretty low which indicates there is a lack of customer loyalty. Based on Saejiva Customer Database, among 91 customers, there are only 2 customers who repurchases our perfume from January to May 2024, which means that so far Saejiva's customer retention rate is only 2,19% while the product lifetime is 2 months.

The problem statement of this research is "Saejiva is having a problem with low customer retention rate and needs to identify its brand equity since it is associated with loyalty, highlighting the urgent need to develop a brand equity plan through new brand elements assessment and exploratory" to exploring & assessing new brand elements of Saejiva (that has been updated and implemented in Saejiva through the development strategies in the preliminary research) as a foundation to build brand equity plans.

The unit or branch analyzed in the research's final project covers the scope of branding, especially brand element assessments to identify Saejiva's brand equity using CBBE Model as its conceptual framework which results in implementation plans developed through the development strategies to increase the brand equity of Saejiva. The researcher is the CEO of Saejiva, whose one side job is to supervise the branding strategy of Saejiva which is usually handled by the CMO of Saejiva. Nevertheless, the CEO understands the issue and importance to conduct the brand element assessments while the CMO is working on other marketing strategies. The implementation plan will later on be merged with a general business strategy designed by the CEO.

This research explores how an essential oil based perfume brand in Bandung aims to conduct brand element assessments to identify its brand equity using CBBE Model. The research will be focusing on brand development, especially in brand audit which results in implementation plans developed through the development strategies to increase the brand equity of Saejiva. The research's scope consists of respondents who is male and female, perfume enthusiasts, wellness activities enthusiasts, environment activists, and content creators residing in Bandung aged between 21 to 40 years old. The data collection & analysis will be in a qualitative approach to fulfill the research objective, that is to explore the brand association. Additionally, the research is limited to the period between May and July of 2024.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study uses an action research technique, which emphasizes practice-based research supported by empirical data, as described by Koshy (2010). This method focuses on enhancing organizational quality and performance through rigorous research and practical actions. Action research is conducting a detailed examination of the initial situation before initiating efforts to improve the social context, such as community groups, organizations, and schools. It seeks to better comprehend current issues as well as identify methods for enhancing abilities, methods, and approaches.

Keller (2001) recommends utilizing qualitative methods, such as free association tasks, to measure brand associations. In these tasks, consumers describe the brand to them. For this study, data were gathered through online in-depth interviews with chosen Saejiva customers via Zoom.

The study's population is Saejiva's target market, which includes those interested in wellness activities and skin smell perfumes, both male and female aficionados aged 21 to 40. Bandung was chosen as the study's study area since it is Saejiva's target market. Purposive sampling is used to choose participants based on their relevant knowledge and expertise. The American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics (2016) describes this strategy as one that prioritizes information-rich cases.

To obtain high-quality data, the research sample is separated into four categories, each of which represents a stakeholder and Saejiva's target market:

(A): A 21-30 year old female who enjoys wellness activities and lives in Bandung has purchased Saejiva items at least once.

(B): 21-28-year-old male and female perfume fans living in Bandung who had purchased Saejiva items at least once.

(C): 22-24 year old male and female content creators living in Bandung who have purchased Saejiva products at least once.

(D): A 22-year-old male environmental activist based in Bandung who has purchased Saejiva items at least once.

Because Saejiva's primary target market consists of skinscent perfume & wellness activity enthusiasts (such as Yoga and other health activities), 5 samples from each category are selected to represent the group of interest. Additionally, two content creators were selected to serve as the group's representatives since, in comparison to other interest groups, they had a greater product understanding of Saejiva. Finally, an environmental activist was chosen as a reply since Saejiva is a natural perfume containing essential oil and natural packaging materials such as a wooden cover. In summary, 13 individuals were selected to participate in the study as respondents.

NVIVO14 software was utilized to assist in the collection of codes and classifications for data analysis. Furthermore, the first cycle approach is In Vivo/Verbatim Coding, which entails employing a word or brief phrase from the language obtained in the qualitative data record. This method directly reflects respondents' opinions by capturing the exact words they use. The second cycle approach, Pattern Coding, divides the first cycle summaries into smaller sets, themes, or structures. Pattern coding assists in identifying important themes and patterns in the data, allowing for more systematic analysis.

III. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

After conducting the brand element exploratory using in depth interviews analyzed using NVIVO 14, several critical areas for improvement and strategic actions for Saejiva's brand and product development were identified. According to Keller (2001), there are several steps to build a strong brand based on the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model. For instance, Keller (2003) suggests ways of choosing and creating a brand's elements that help establish brand equity such as being easy to remember, having significance, being attractive in terms of aesthetics, being applicable across various product categories and culture–geography barriers, being adaptable over time and legally protectable among others. Key issues include the unattractive packaging of certain products, the need for an improved tagline, and the necessity for enhanced communication with the market was found during the in depth interview. Additionally, addressing unclear brand pronunciation, revising cultural values in packaging, and developing a more meaningful product storyline are essential steps for maintaining competitiveness.

A brand needs elements for their customers to recognize. According to Keller (2015), there are six brand elements to consider: name, logo, tagline, character, packaging, and jingle. However, since Saejiva has no jingle and character, there will be only 6 brand elements to be analyzed consisting of: brand name, logo & icon, tagline, bottle, box, and color palette. According to Keller (2013), there are six criteria marketers can use to evaluate brand elements to determine if they are good brand elements: Memorable, Meaningful, Likable, Transferable, Adaptable, and Protectable. The brand element assessment table from the 6 brand element criterias collected through the in depth interview will be shown down below.

Based on the table, several elements need improvement (Brand Name, Bottle, and Box). This table highlights the strengths and weaknesses of our elements by each measurement category (Memorable, Meaningful, Likable, Transferable, Adaptable, Protectable). With these insights, Saejiva can improve elements that do not meet the criteria so that these elements can better align with customer expectations and bridge the gap between customers and Saejiva. Specifically, the brand name needs to be more memorable and transferable, the bottle needs to be more transferable and protectable, and the box needs to be more transferable and protectable. By addressing these issues, Saejiva can enhance its brand equity and customer retention.

Table 1.
BRAND ELEMENT ASSESSMENT IN NVIVO14

Criteria	Brand Name	Logo & Icon	Tagline	Bottle	Box	Color Palette
Memorable	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Meaningful	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Likable	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transferable	X	✓	X	X	X	✓
Adaptable	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Protectable	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X

IV. DISCUSSION

After gaining insight from the brand element exploratory & assessment, several strategic business solutions have been presented in accordance with Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Model. The CBBE model has four main stages: brand identity, brand meaning, brand responses, and brand relationships (Keller, 2001). Each recommended solution focuses on certain components and key criterias of these stages to achieve overall brand development.

Strengthening the brand name (brand identity).
 a. Create Engaging Pronunciation Content
Create content like infographics, short movies, and social media updates to educate customers how to pronounce "Saejiva" correctly. This process is intended to make the brand name more memorable and increase brand recall to create depth of brand awareness.
 b. Create an engaging brand story that explains the meaning of "Saejiva"
The story telling should reflect the brand's aim of producing goodness for good souls. It should explain what is the meaning of "Sae" & "Jiva". This ensures that the brand is well-known and easily remembered by consumers to create depth of brand awareness.

Enhancing Bottle Design (Brand Meaning)
 a. Introduce unique features
To make the hardwood lid stand out, carve the logo icon 'e'. Investigate ways to improve the safety and strength of wooden lids in order to assure excellent quality and longevity to create uniqueness in brand meaning.
 b. Research on Wooden Lid's Safeness and Strength
The defect rate of Saejiva has been increasing due to flaws in the wooden lid, particularly the acrylic holder inside the wooden lid. Ensure that the wooden lids are safe, robust, and have a low defect rate to create favorability in brand meaning.

Improve Box Packaging (Brand Meaning and Brand Responses)
 a. Thorough Preparations for the Grand Launching of New Packaging
Organize a well-planned launch event to unveil the new packaging, resulting in a positive first impression and improved visibility to create positive judgment (quality, credibility, consideration, & superiority) in brand responses.
 b. Provide variant names in English
Include English names for product variants on the packaging to increase the brand's transferability and appeal to a wider audience and create strength in brand meaning.

Leveraging Tagline Strengths (Brand Responses and Brand Relationships)
 a. Visibility in Marketing with Consistent Usage
Ensure that the tagline "Calming Sense in Every Scent" appears prominently on all marketing materials, including commercials, social media, and packaging. This can create intensity in brand relationships.
 b. Launch Storytelling Campaign & Engagement Activities:
Create campaigns that highlight the value of the phrase through storytelling to boost customer involvement and brand loyalty. This can create positive feelings in brand response and also activity and intensity in brand relationships.

This strategic focus will strengthen Saejiva's market position, making it more adaptive and competitive, while any remaining funding may be used to support further marketing efforts that improve overall brand equity and customer retention.

V. CONCLUSION

From comprehensive research analysis drawn up on Saejiva's brand equity, a number of focus areas requiring improvement and strategic interventions

were identified. It has been revealed that these require enhancing packaging attractiveness, improving the tagline, enhancing market communication, clarifying brand pronunciation, revising cultural values in packaging, and developing a more meaningful product storyline. This strategic focus will strengthen Saejiva's market position, making it more adaptive and competitive, while any remaining funding may be used to support further marketing efforts that improve overall brand equity and customer retention.

The research highlights the necessity of designing visually appealing and effective packaging that resonates with customers. A distinctive and accessible tagline that embodies Saejiva's vision and beliefs is essential. Effective communication through ongoing market education and an active online presence are critical for increasing and retaining brand awareness. Incorporating cultural values effectively and making them adaptable to different markets can help the brand's unique identity. Creating a story for the packaging can make the products more appealing and relevant to customers.

By prioritising the development of engaging content for market communication and the enhancement of brand elements such as packaging and tagline, Saejiva can guarantee consistent and effective marketing efforts, strengthen brand equity, and increase customer retention. These strategic activities, underpinned by Keller's CBBE model, will position Saejiva for long-term growth and market competitiveness. With proper budget management, Saejiva can also investigate new marketing activities to help it achieve its business objectives. Allocating resources effectively to match brand elements with consumer input ensures that resources are used efficiently and marketing efforts have the most impact possible.

To increase brand equity, Saejiva must prioritise developing customer-oriented brand elements and strengthening communication techniques. These activities, which follow Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity model, will significantly enhance customer retention and brand equity by ensuring that brand elements resonate with customer preferences and are consistent across all marketing efforts. With a Q4 marketing budget of Rp 1,700,000, Saejiva may efficiently allocate resources to align brand elements with consumer input and improve market visibility, resulting in efficient resource use. This strategic focus will strengthen Saejiva's market position, making it more adaptive and competitive, while any remaining funding may be used to support further marketing efforts that improve overall brand equity and customer retention.

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