BRANDING STRATEGY FOR THE KENYA AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE AND ITS PRODUCTS

BY

PRISCILLA MUTHONI MUTA

A MANAGEMENT RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

OCTOBER 2009

DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for any degree in any other University.

PRISCILLA MUTHONI MUTA
REG. NO. D61/P/7148/04

....Priscilla.................. ..27/10/2009

Signature Date

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as supervisor.

Dr. J. M. Munyoki
Supervisor and Lecturer
Department of Business Administration

.... 27-10-2009

Signature Date

DEDICATION

To God, my mother, Harriet Nyawira Muta, and my sister and best friend, Naomi Wangeci Muta, for who I am today. Thank you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost I would like to thank the Almighty God for the gift of life, health, strength and resources throughout my life and specifically through my study period.

I am very grateful to my supervisor, Dr. J. M. Munyoki, for his insightful guidance and patience right from the beginning to the end of my project.

I appreciate the tremendous support I received from my family members especially my sister, (Naomi Muta) and my mother (Harriet Nyawira Muta). Thank you both for the moral and financial support you extended to me even when I proved difficult. I also would like to acknowledge my other sister (Olive Muta) who went before me through this race and two brothers (Wahome Muta and Thomas Komu), for being part of my family. Andrew Marindi Mochache, thank you for having my back and bringing joy to my life. To my unborn child, I love you.

Appreciation also goes to my colleagues in Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI), Socioeconomics section (Kilambya, Thuranira, Jane and Violet) for their insights to the study and especially Elias Thuranira (Biometrician) for assisting me in data analysis and interpretation. I also want to acknowledge KARI's management for their support especially my Centre Director, Dr. P. T. Gicheru.

My gratitude is also extended to the individuals in KARI management who took time to respond to my checklists thus making it possible for me to complete my study.

Thank you all.

ABSTRACT

Brands are recognised to connote quality to customers, distinction within a market and to gain financial rewards to an organisation, and can be characterised as products, corporations, persons and place. The purpose of this study was to investigate the branding strategy adopted in Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) and its products. The study's objective was to determine the brand strategy for KARI and its products. Data collection was carried out by administering questionnaires through the face to face interview technique. The interviews were conducted on selected KARI managers and/or key informants. The study found out that KARI does have a branding strategy for its products and the organisation has adopted some branding elements that increase visual linkages with their consumers. The findings also highlight some factors that hinder the adoption of a branding strategy. The study therefore recommends that if KARI wants to achieve self sustenance through commercialisation, more resources need to be directed towards determining an appropriate branding strategy that will champion its vision.

CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ANNEXES

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ATIRI	Agricultural Technology and Information Response Initiative
ARIS	Agricultural Research Investments Services
EABL	East Africa Breweries Limited
FMCG	Fast Moving Consumer Goods
HP	Hewlett-Packard
IARCs	International Agricultural research Communities
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KARI	Kenya Agricultural Research Institute
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PR	Public Relations

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

1.1.1. The concept of branding and branding strategies

Brands have become one of the most discussed phenomena of market research in recent years; the benefits are so impacting that organisations are hiring brand strategists specifically to build their brand images and allocating substantial amounts of their budgets to ensure that the department is running smoothly towards achieving its goals. Branding, therefore, has become a very significant concept in just about all organisations. However, its emphasis is more in the private sector than public due to the nature and levels of competition. Nevertheless, public institutions have been forced to adopt fundamentals such as branding because of liberalisations of markets and the Government's emphasis through the vision 2030 on the agricultural sector achieving an internationally competitive, profitable and commercially viable environment that in turn it will boost the economy of the country.

Branding has an ancient history which could be traced back to the times when the ancient Egypt brick makers used to stamp symbols on the bricks for identification and distinction purposes (Farghuhar 1990). Aaker (1991) observes that branding has a history that goes back to medieval Europe whereby, Craftsmen and artists used to put unique identity marks on their work. Customers could seek these marks as they associated them with quality. Branding in this era was associated with commerce. However, Aaker says that it was in the twentieth century that branding became central to competition.

Kotler (2000) recognises that in the latter part of the 20th century, the growth of competition forced companies to shift from the production and selling concept to the marketing concept which necessitates that companies be better than competitors in creating, delivering and communicating value to its target markets in order to win buyer preference This led to the increase of brands and branding activities as companies were aggressively looking for mechanisms to emerge and stay on top of the competition 'game'.

Kotler (2000) quotes the American Marketing Association definition of a brand as a 'a name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of them intended to identify goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers'. The use of signs, symbols and artefacts would allow explaining the process of unfolding services, reducing time spent by customers and creating the feeling of effectiveness for customers. This implies that branding is not about getting your target market to choose you over the competition, but it is about getting your prospects to see you as the only one that provides a solution to their problem.

A successful brand is the most valuable resource a company has. The brand name encompasses the years of advertising, good will, quality evaluation, product experience, and other beneficial attributes that market associates with the product. A brand is one of the most valuable elements in an advertising theme as it demonstrates what the brand owner is able to offer in the market place. Brand identity then becomes a very important aspect of branding as it is fundamental to consumer recognition and symbolizes the brand's differentiation from competition.

Brands have become one of the most discussed phenomena of market research in recent years. An important part of brand is its image. It is the way a brand is perceived by the public, which is based on and closely linked with another important part of a brand and that is its identity. Brand identity reflects the company' attempts to develop a desired brand image. The process of developing a brand identity revolves around interacting with the target customers with the aim of achieving a lasting competitive advantage (Urde, 1999).

Branding is a general term that covers the brand name, trademark and symbols that represent an institution or a product. A brand name strictly refers to letters, words or groups of words which can be spoken; it may be used to mean 'a name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers'.

Branding is a marketing concept that aims at increasing a product's (goods and/or services) perceived value to the customer with the aim of encouraging purchase and consequently increase frequency in repeat purchases leading to increased sales (thus increased profits) and customer loyalty.

Organisations engage in building brands because the benefits of branding are enormous. According to Bernhardt, et al (1991) branding helps achieve the success of effective communication through advertising, confirms credibility of either the product or the organisation where the product originates, connects your target prospects emotionally, motivates the buyer and concretes user loyalty; it increases ease acceptance of an institution and its products minimising the activities for curbing competition; helps in penetrating in a new market or a new market category; It also makes market segmentation easier and therefore market targeting becomes effective thus achieving customer satisfaction and it is also a source of demand and the competitively superior quality image justifying premium price.

1.1.2 Strategies of branding

A branding strategy can be defined as the decision that lies on whether to put the brand names on the organisation's products, whether the brands should be manufacturer's or distributor's or whether individual or family brands. Etzel, et al, (2007) categorises branding strategies as being producer's, also referred to as national and middlemen's strategies, also referred to as private. They further categorised these strategies as follows:-

Producer's strategies: Marketing entire output under producer's own brand name: - this strategy is characteristic to organisations that are very large, well financed, well managed, large share of market and vast distribution channels. Organisations such as Safaricom and Johnsons & Johnsons among others have used this strategy very effectively.

Branding of fabricating materials and parts: - the seller seeks to develop a market preference for its branding parts or materials. This strategy is effective when a product is also a consumer good that is bought for replacement purposes and the item is a key part of a finished product. Kodak Company has used this strategy with their cameras and films.

Marketing under middlemen's brand: - this strategy helps a firm maximize its plant capacity. However, a firm's revenue is depended on the strength of middlemen (campaign strategy). The organisations that adopt for this strategy are usually manufacturing oriented and they outsource the marketing component or organisations that do not want the responsibility of either product branding or the associated cost of branding.

Middlemen' strategies: This applies when a middleman buys products from manufacturers and brands them under his/her name and markets them. This strategy is applicable to firms that are purely 'manufacturing'. The producer's revenue is depended on the marketing strength and campaign of the middleman and these enable producers' to maximize on plant capacity because they do not engage in marketing. However, the producer is at risk of loosing customers for its own brand and is also not in a position on forecasting sales revenue due to having no control over the marketing of their products.

Kotler and Keller (2006) also categorise the different branding strategies existing as generally being four. They are as follows: -

Corporate name combined with individual product name: This is sub-branding policy. The company name legitimises, and the individual name individualises the new product. East Africa Breweries Limited (EABL), Toyota among others have used this strategy on their products. EABL has various products such as Tusker, Pilsner, Senator among others, which have been individualised but the company's name appears on each product to legitimise the product.

Individual brand names: When a company's products are given different names. This strategy is also referred to as house of brands. The advantage of this strategy is that if one of the organisation's products fails, it will not affect the other products within the organisation. The disadvantage is that, an organisation may spend a lot on name research and promotion when introducing a new product in the market. Cocacola Company has used this strategy on its product Novida (non-alcoholic brand) as oppose to its other products which they have adopted the corporate name combined with individual brand strategy.

Blanket family name: When one brand name is used for several related products. It is also referred to as branded house. Organisations that have and are continuously successfully adopting this strategy are Johnsons & Johnsons and Cadburys. The advantage of this strategy enables the organisation to introduce new products quickly and successfully in the market and more so to new markets especially on a global perspective. The disadvantage is that if a product fails, it may affect the organisation's image and the uptake of their other products and vis-visa.

Blanket family name strategy has an extension strategy called separate family name which refers to the brand name given to a product which falls under a family name to distinguish it from the others.

Company's brand name: This is the brand name of a product which is also the company's name. A company may use its name on a product to promote its image. This strategy has commonly been adopted by Information Technology oriented companies such as Hewlett-Packard (HP), Sony, Dell, Samsung, Nokia among others.

Below is a summary of the branding strategy and example of some organisations that have adopted those strategies.

Table 1.1 Summary of branding strategies

Corporate name combined with Individual brand name	*Individual brand name*
e.g. o EABL (alcoholic products) o Toyota	e.g. o Novida (cocacola product) o Unilever products o Procter & Gamble (P&G)
Company name	*Blanket family name*
e.g. o HP o Samsung	e.g. o Johnsons o Cadburys

1.1.3 Benefits of a branding strategy

A branding strategy enables an organisation to define and establish its identity in the minds of their markets, consumers and employees.; distinctively separates an organisation from their competitors, gives value and relevance to their consumers and prospects; establishes a promise and expectation on products (goods and services); outlines how all brand elements will be used, defined and strengthened; enables the launch of new products quickly and cost effectively especially where an organisation has existing brands that are doing well in the market or when it's a case of a global brand; provides mechanisms for measuring impact which could be through increase in sale of products, increase in market share.

1.1.4 History of Kenya Agricultural Research Institute

The Kenyan economy is largely agro-based, with the agricultural sector accounting for 25% of the gross domestic product (GDP). Agriculture is recognised by Government as the engine of growth for the Kenyan economy. For a very long term agriculture has been considered the backbone/mainstay of the economy. The goal of the Government is to exploit the enormous agricultural potential to achieve food security, reduce poverty, promote economic growth and generate employment (GoK 2003). The sector contributes over 80% of employment and 57% of national income both directly and indirectly (KARI 2005). However, the agricultural sector has not performed well over the last decade despite its importance in the economic growth of the country (KARI 2005). The retardation of growth is seen to be solved through agricultural research which is viewed as having a fundamental function in achieving agricultural potential.

The Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) is the apex of national agricultural research institution. KARI is a Kenya Government parastatal established through the Science and Technology (Amendment) Act LN.7 of 1979 section 4 CAP 250 section 12 and schedule 4 of the Revised Edition of Science and Technology. The Act gives KARI the mandate to carry out research to support agriculture and forestry development. The Kenyan Government views KARI as an institute that will continue to lead in the development of sustainable technologies and disseminating knowledge and information in a rapid changing environment (KARI 2002).

KARI's fundamental role has been research and knowledge generation in agriculture. This fundamental role has been distinctively separated into research and non-research/service functions. The research role aims at generating technologies that addresses the needs of farmers among other stakeholders while at the same time impressing on innovativeness. The technologies that are generated are categorised into hard (physical/tangible products such as seed varieties) and soft technologies (information or knowledge). In terms of non-research/service functions, KARI provides a range of services to the public which need to be recognised adequately as they are time and resource intensive.

These functions include (KARI 2005): - Provision and advisory function, technical backstopping and capacity building to the relevant ministries, farmers and other agencies dealing with agricultural research for development. (ATIRI and ARIS); Establishment and management of human, physical and financial resources for research centres and laboratories, among others; Capacity development of other service providers (extension, NGOs and civil society); Management of a national gene bank; Quality assurance of technologies developed, multiplied and disseminated through the uptake pathways (ISO standards); Promotion of commercialisation of its technology and products and catalysing linkage of farmers to markets; Development and management of agricultural research information systems; Building and sustaining effective linkages and partnerships with local, regional and international research for development organisations; Identification and prioritisation of research agenda together with partners; Contribution to policy formulation and advocacy; Offering other services (for example, laboratory services).

These functions give KARI its form and content. Over the years it has become very imperative for KARI to go beyond research and become a vehicle for development and therefore, formulate a strategy that will diligently and carefully respond to real, current and future needs of its consumers (Who are characteristically categorised into: Farmers, Research institutions, Universities, Commodity foundation, Private sectors and Government Ministries).

KARI is a non-profit organisation which aims to provide these services for the 'public good'. Profits in KARI are measured in the same way as profits in private sector. KARI faces the challenge of having to finance its research activity up to 20% of the total budget. To achieve this, KARI has strategically proposed to commercialize its products so as to position them for their markets keeping check of the issue of 'public good'. In non-profit organisations, it is sometimes more difficult to be objective in evaluating the benefits of different activities relative to their costs (McCarthy, et al 1993). The aspect of 'public good' overrides the profit making aspect.

KARI faces the challenge of adopting marketing concepts because no one is assigned the responsibility and it not considered a priority activity with a budget component attached to it. Marketing concepts are helpful in any type of an organisation as each organisation is trying to satisfy some group of consumers in some way. On the other hand, management and the staff of KARI are 'science oriented' thus it seems less crucial to adopt marketing concepts especially if no one understands and appreciates what marketing is all about.

KARI operates under a Board of Management. The Director is the Chief Executive Officer and is supported by two (2) Deputy Directors (Research and Technology Deputy Director and Finance and Administration Deputy Director), ten (10) Assistant Directors, twenty two (22) Centre Directors and three (3) Chiefs of Divisions, who are in charge of the programmes within KARI. The organisation has 23 main Centres (including KARI Headquarters) and 14 sub-centres strategically spread throughout the country to cater for different agro-ecological zones and socioeconomic systems (Annex 1 and Annex 2. respectively).

Therefore, through implementing and adopting a branding strategy and been clear on the dimensions and means of communicating their brands, KARI will be able to differentiate themselves from other research organisations especially agricultural research based organisations. This differentiation will be evident in their products (especially adaptive research, technology packaging and dissemination) and it will address two issues: quick conveyance of information with ease and efficiently raise customer loyalty as a result of KARI becoming a known brand. Branding also will assist in, this case, the selection of a marketing strategy (suitable strategy would be the porter's generic strategies – product differentiation and market segmentation) which, if incorporated within the corporate strategy, will define how the organisation will successfully engage customers, prospects and competitors in the market arena.

1.1.5 The need for Branding in KARI

In the recent years, KARI has been acknowledging the need for commercialising through accepting to take up the responsibility of marketing itself and its products. This is as a result of a decline in the uptake of technologies which is attributed to lack of information on what KARI offers as an organisation. They proposed to achieve this through reviewing its organizational structure to incorporate a marketing strategy that will increase adoption of its technologies (KARI, 2005). In the reviewed strategic plan of 2009 – 2014, the management proposes to adopt a branding strategy that will aim at increasing purchases of their products and to also increase visibility of the organisation in the market. They propose to achieve this through creating an office that will be responsible for the implementation and adoption of marketing activities that will boost sales. However, the strategic plan is still very vague on how to formulate the new office among other logistics.

The needs, wants, attitudes and behaviour of consumers change over time and an organisation must adjust with those changes or risk losing those customers to competitors (Bernhardt, et al 1991). This applies to profits' and non profits' organisations because both aim to satisfy some group of consumers in some way. KARI needs to appreciate the need for branding their products and communicating this efficiently and effectively to their segmented consumers. This appreciation needs to reflect in their budgets or when they are seeking donor funds; they need to include the activity of promoting/positioning their products to their consumers.

KARI is a however, a non-profit organisation which aims at providing services for the 'public good' and with dwindling funds from donors and the Government for operating resources, it has been difficult to provide these services'. This has lead KARI to start identifying alternative sources of funds. One of the sources identified is aggressively marketing their commercial products with the aim of getting returns that will finance some of their research activities. KARI proposes to do this by coming up with strategies that will raise awareness on its products and most importantly market them competitively (KARI, 2000).

In the revised strategic plan of 2009 – 2014 (KARI, 2009), the organisation outlines some of the remedies to achieving increased awareness and commercialisation of its products. It outlines the creation of a new department which will be headed by a Deputy Director, who will report to the KARI Director and will be responsible for packaging and transferring/distributing technologies especially researchable products/technologies. On the other hand, management aims at legalising the Agricultural Research Investments Services (ARIS) body so that the commercial products can be branding and sold in autonomy of the researchable products.

KARI's products can be categorised into hard and soft technologies (KARI, 2005) and their consumption is depended to the consumers needs. Table 1.2 below highlights the category of products and the customers it targets

Table 1.2: KARI's products and their respective consumers

PRODUCT	CONSUMER
-*Hard technology* (seeds, crops vaccines, farm equipment, livestock and its by-products etc.)	• Farmers, community based organisations, and farmers associations. • Authorised companies/processors/traders • Public and private extension service providers • Government Ministries, Departments and State Corporations
-*Soft technology* (information/knowledge in the form of publications ranging from brochures, journals, reports, strategic plans, books etc.)	• Farmers • Universities, Scholars, researchers • Commodity foundations • IARCs. NGOs • Policy makers, donors, service providers • Government • Extension agents • Media • The general public

Identifying a branding strategy and means of communicating brands, will enable KARI to differentiate themselves from other research organisations especially agricultural research based organisations (Aaker, 1991). This differentiation will be evident in their products as it will address the benefits of branding.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Many studies have been done in the area of branding. Notably, however is, that most of these studies focus on organisations that fall in the category of private sector and not the public sector. For instance, Nyambok (2007) undertook a study on the influence of branding on employees' attitude and perceptions on four banks in Kenya. The results of this study indicated that when an organisation brands or re-brands, there was no relation to indicate influence on employees' attitude neither their perception. However, the influence of branding was directly impacting on the existing and potential customers.

Mbau (2001) studied brand building activities in the pharmaceutical industry and concluded that there are brand public relations (PR) mechanisms that promote favourably the growth of the pharmaceutical industry. The study highlighted the brand public relations mechanisms and selectively justified why some of those mechanisms were more preferable in the favourable promotion of the pharmaceutical industry. This study focused on pharmaceuticals companies that are privately owned as oppose to those public.

Similarly, Kabura (2002) studied the usage of brand equity assets in positioning brands in the agrochemical industry. Both Mbau's (2001) and Kabura's (2002) studies concluded that branding is effective in position an organisation, especially, against competitors and also increased organisations' recognition in the markets and this boosted sales. However, the study focus was in the privately owned agrochemical companies.

Hongo's (2001) study investigated the practice of brand extensions in fast moving consumer goods (FMCG). He highlighted how organisations that engage in FMCG embrace the aspect of brand extensions and the benefits and challenges that they experienced. The study also focused on FMCG's which are in the domain of the private sector as opposed to public.

Mburu (2001) undertook research on the impact of perceived quality of brand choice in the soft drinks industry (private sector). The study concluded that branding aims at creating an image in the mind of consumers about a product by tapping into their emotions and this influences purchase or rejection of a good. Kwena (2002) looked at the impact of branding on consumer choice regarding new domestic sugar brands. The study findings were that branding increases purchases of the branded domestic sugar as oppose to the unbranded sugars because they were able to identify with the source of the sugar and this gave the product credibility.

These studies address the scope of branding mainly the private sector and not in the public sector and specifically determining a branding strategy that is suitable for KARI and its products. This study therefore, set out to investigate the branding strategy adopted by KARI and its products.

1.3 Objective

To determine the branding strategy adopted by KARI and its products.

1.4 Importance of study

It is imperative to note that KARI has been falling short of dispensing their activities and hence the need to impress on a brand strategy that will aim at increasing their presence within and without the environment in which they operate and also encourage purchases of products.

Therefore, the study seeks first to, contribute to the pool of knowledge that impress on the significance of branding and branding strategies while addressing the gap on branding agricultural research products in the public sector, especially in KARI. Secondly, sensitise KARI's management to aim at making agricultural research effective, which is dependent on adequate uptake and up-scaling of research products and innovations, through highlighting the benefits of branding especially on positioning their technologies competitively in the markets. Finally, the study will highlight the branding strategy that they have adopted as an organisation and on its products.

1.5 Organisation of the study

The study is presented in five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction that embodies the background, statement of the problem, objectives and organisation of the study. Chapter two gives the literature review. Chapter three encompasses the research methodology which is presented in two parts: research design and data collection procedures. Chapter four presents the results of the data collected and interpretation of the data and discussions of the results; while summary, conclusion and recommendations are in the final chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of what brands are in terms of the characteristics of good brands, devising a branding strategy and the challenges of brands and branding that organisations can anticipate. The identification of good brand characteristics enables an· organisation devise a branding strategy that would favourably position their products competitively in the market and that which is within their resource capacity. When devising a branding strategy, there are certain factors that need to be considered and also certain challenges in order to come up with a strategy that is pragmatic.

2.2 Characteristics of a good brand

A successful brand is the most valuable resource a company has. The brand name encompasses the years of advertising, good will, quality evaluation, product experience, and other beneficial attributes that markets associates with the product. A brand is one of the most valuable elements in an advertising theme as it demonstrates what the brand owner is able to offer in the market place. Brand identity then becomes a very important aspect of branding as it is fundamental to consumer recognition and symbolizes the brand's differentiation from competition.

A brand is viewed as consisting four levels (Chernatony & et al, 1998): generic, expected, augmented and potential. The generic level is the level at which the commodity meets the user's basic needs. At the expected level, the commodity is value engineered to satisfy a specific target's minimum purchase conditions, such as functional capabilities, availability, pricing and so on. Augmented level, the commodity satisfies both the functional and non-functional needs of users. At this level the user is more sophisticated as a result of increasing experience or interaction with the commodity. With even more experience/interaction in the brand, and therefore with a greater tendency to be more critical, it is only creativity that limits the extent to which the brand can mature to the potential level.

To succeed in the long term, a brand must achieve these four levels while offering added values over and above the basic product characteristics. These added values must be relevant to the consumer and not just the producers'; they must be unique and sustainable against competitive activities.

Brands can be characterised as either being products, corporations, persons and places. This means that brands are multidimensional creations and should be coordinated at management level.

Several characteristics of a good brand have been identified by several authors (Aaker, 2002; Keller, 1998; Chernatony & Et al, 1998); among other. These characteristics can be categorised into: -

Quality: Quality is a vital ingredient of a good brand. The core benefits of a brand must be delivered well, consistently. It has been proved over the years that a high quality brand achieves a higher market share and higher profitability than their inferior competitors.

Positioning: This is the position a brand occupies in a market in the minds of consumers. Strong brands have a clear, often unique position in the target market. Positioning can be achieved through the brand name, image, service standards, product guarantees, packaging and the way in which it is delivered. A combination of these usually leads to successful positioning.

Brand name: A good brand name must possess certain characteristics which are: it should suggest something about the product, especially its benefits and use; should be ease to pronounce, spell and remember; be distinctive; be adaptable to additions to product lines and should be capable of registration and legal protection (Etzel, et al, 2007).

Repositioning: This occurs mainly when a brand tries to change its market position to reflect a change in consumer's tastes. This is often required when a brand has become tired, perhaps because its original market has matured or has gone into decline. An example of a repositioned brand is Lucozade from a sweet drink for children to a sports drink.

Communications: This plays an important role in building a successful brand. All elements of the promotional mix need to be used to develop and sustain customer perceptions. Initially, the challenge is to build awareness, then develop the brand personality and reinforce the perception.

First mover advantage: In brand development, the concept of fast mover means that it is possible for the first brand in the market to create a clear positioning in the minds of target customers before the competition enters the market. A good example of this is the entry of Safaricom in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Industry. They were the first movers and based on this concept, they were able to create a clear position in the market and also took up a huge market share. This reflected when competitors like Zain, Eco Wireless, Orange among others, entered the market and it was and still is dominated by Safaricom.

Long-term perspective: This factor entails brand-building activities towards the need to invest in a brand over the long term. Building customer awareness, communicating the brand's messages and creating customer loyalty takes time. This implies that management must invest in a brand perhaps at the expense of profitability in the short term.

Internal marketing: Management should ensure that the brand is marketed internally as well as externally. The whole organisation should understand the brand value and positioning. This is particularly important in service businesses where a critical part of the brand value is the type and quality of service that a customer receives.

A brand is one of the most important elements in an advertising theme, as it demonstrates what the brand owner is able to offer in the market. Consistence and in line with an organisation's core competencies that shows the benefits of your business to the consumers.

According to Keller (1998), branding tactics is a concept that is tackled under brand management. Brand management is basically the application of marketing techniques to a specific product, product line, or brand with the aim of increasing the product's perceived value to the customer and thereby increasing brand equity.

Keller (1998) highlights brand elements options and tactics as:

Brand names: - it should capture the central them or key associations of a product in a very compact and economical fashion. Brand names build brand awareness and brand associations. The name should be simple and easy to pronounce and spell; familiar and meaningful; different, distinctive and unusual; fictitious names and not necessarily real; should suggest something about the product especially its benefits and use.

Logos and symbols: - Logos have a long history as a means to indicate origin, ownership or associations. Because of their visual nature, logos and symbols are often easily recognised and a valuable way to identify products. They are versatile in nature and therefore can be updated as needed over time and generally transfer well across cultures.

Characters: They represent a special type of brand symbol that takes on human or real-life characteristics. They are attention getters as they are rich in imagery. However, their lifespan can be short or the intended market can fail to identify with it. A good example of a brand that has successfully used this element is Guinness through Michael Power character.

Slogans: They are short phrases that communicate descriptive or persuasive information about a brand. They should aim at precision and easy to recall. They appear in advertising but also play an important role in packaging. Most organisations have used this element especially when branding their organisations. An example of a slogan that is successful is Safaricom, *the better option.*

Jingles: they are musical messages written around a brand. A product that has used this element to brand is Cadbury.

Packaging: it's the designing and producing containers or wrappers for a product. They aid in identifying the brand, convey descriptive and persuasive information, facilitate product transportation and protection, assist at home storage and aid in product consumption. Therefore packaging selection should be done with carefulness to be able to communicate the product even before utilising it; it should be attractive and eye pleasing.

2.3 Devising a branding strategy

Devising a branding strategy involves deciding the nature of new and existing brand elements to be applied to new and existing products (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Therefore, when identifying an appropriate branding strategy, one needs to ask whether to put a brand name on the organisation products, whether the brands should be manufacturers or distributors or whether individual or family name.

2.3.1 Factors to consider when branding

Bernhardt, et al (1991) observes that when devising a branding strategy, certain factors need to be considered: Company's resources (this will include financial and human resources); Objectives (the reason for determining a branding strategy: is it for market penetration, introducing a new brand and so on); Competition (the nature and levels of competition that an organisation operates in); and Consumer choice behaviour (what influences a consumer to purchase product from one organisation and not the other).

Kotler & Keller (2006) observe that firms rarely adopt a pure example of the four branding strategies. Organisations employ more than one of the branding strategies in order to maximise the benefits that come with branding. They further state that deciding on which strategy to adopt depends on several factors as stated in table 2.3:

Table 2.3: Factors that influence the adoption of a branding strategy

Towards a branded house	**Towards a house of brands**
Does the parent brand contribute to the offering by adding: • Associations enhancing the value proposition? • Credibility through organisational associations? • Visibility? • Communication efficiencies?	Is there a compelling need for a separate brand because it will: • Create and own associations? • Represent a new, different offering? • Retain/capture customer/brand bonds? • Deal with channel conflict?
Will the master brand be strengthened by associating with the new offering?	Will the business support a new brand name?

***Source**: David Aaker and Erich Joachimsthaler,* Brand Leadership *(New York) free press, 2000, figure 4 – 6).*

Etzel, et al (2007) highlights certain factors that must be considered when selecting a strategy. These factors are as follows:

Branding within a product mix*:* - an organisation can either use a separate name for each product (individual branding); the organisation can use the organisation's name combined with a products name (Family branding) or the organisation can use the company name's alone (company branding) - this is appropriate for products that are related in quality, use etc). An organisation needs to clearly understand the nature of the products that it intends to sell in the market. If the products are of the same use and quality, then this will call for a 'branded house'; and if the products are uniquely different then 'house of brands' will be appropriate.

Co-branding (Dual branding): - the strategy to be implemented will be to two separate companies or two separate departments within the same organisation and have separate brands. This is commonly evident in food products and franchising. The advantage of co-branding is the differential advantage over competitors and it has a direct effect to increase in sales. On the other hand, if the cooperation fails, there is a greater risk of damaging the brands reputation and also there is possible over exposure of a brand name.

Branding for market saturation: - an organisation aims at employing multiple strategies to achieve various objectives concomitantly such as: maximise sales, reach different market and penetrate different market segments.

There is also the consideration of the marketing mix when formulating a branding strategy. Since the early 1960's, marketers have been using the four P's to develop marketing strategies. Chernatony, et al (1998) states that a brand is the result of a coherent marketing approach which uses all elements of the marketing mix with the aim of directing the buyer to recognise relevant added values that are unique when compared with competing products and services and which are difficult for competitors to emulate.. The four P's of marketing according to Aaker (1996) are:

Product (quality) – It is a good, service or idea that a customer needs to satisfy his/her needs. It is developed to suit the needs, wants and demands that are presupposed in the markets. However there is need to introduce the product in the market in a manner that is socially and economically acceptable to the markets. Brands can be built through this P.

Price (affordability) – it is the values attached/associated with a good or a service. There are different pricing policies that organisation adopts and this will depend on their objectives. For example, pricing policy can differ if the organisation aims for market saturation as oppose to attracting a niche market.

Place (availability) – It involves getting the product to the consumers for consumption. There are different mechanisms of getting the product to the consumers. It basically involves the distribution channels that an organisation may adopt.

Promotion (advertising and communication) – Involves the communication strategy between an institution and their customers' ad public. This influences a variety of conditions: awareness, expectations, perceptions, attitudes, behavioural intensions and behaviours. This P is achieved through brand public relations mechanisms which are, according to Kotler & Keller (2006), sponsorship, brand news, merchandising activities/point of purchase strategy, tactical advertising, relationship marketing strategy and complains and correspondence.
Over the years the Ps' of marketing have worked effectively for goods; however, for the marketing of services which are characteristically intangible, the Ps' have been added to capture that very nature of services. These additional Ps' are: people, physical evidence and processes.

2.4 Challenges of brands and branding

A brand will not work instantly, it will develop strength over time as long as any business consistently communicates and delivers their brand values to customers. In doing so, there are certain challenges that an organisation with brands may face. Some of these challenges are: -

A recurring challenge for brand managers is to build a consistent brand while keeping its message fresh and relevant. An older brand identity may be misaligned to a redefined target market, a restated corporate vision statement, revisited mission statement or values of a company. Brand identities may lose resonance with their target market through demographic evolution. Therefore, the emphasis is on consistence and relevance which also contributes to building credibility of a brand and its owner.

Brand orientation is the degree to which the organisation values brands and its practices are oriented towards building brands capabilities. The fast pace of technological development and the increasing speed with which imitations turn up on the market dramatically affect product lifecycles. The consequence is that product-related competitive advantages soon risk being transformed into prerequisites. For this reason, increasing numbers of companies are looking for other, more enduring, competitive tools- such as brands and this has massive implications on costs and consequently profits.

Repositioning of brands or re-branding may cost some brand equity and can confuse the target market, but ideally, a brand can be repositioned while retaining existing brand equity for leverage. However, an organisation has to cautious when re-branding because they may loose or gain their customer base. A good example of re-branding is Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB); when it re-branded, their customer based increased tremendously. This was attributed to customers' confidence increasing on the potential of the bank in service provision (Nyambok, 2007). On the other hand, when KenCel re-branded to Celtel and there was colour change, the response was negative. Their customer base decreased and this was attributed to change in ownership and/or management, the corporate colours adopted (pink) was nor relatable and so on. These two examples then show that re-branding has to be a necessary undertaking.

Brands are sometimes criticised within social media web sites and this must be monitored and managed. The possibility of this is sometimes out of control of the management and the monitoring and managing of these critics especially the negative ones can be such a financial burden for any organisation. However, the effects of these social media web sites are so impacting to an organisation and its products and there is need to still monitor and manage them.

The concept of brand and brand management implementation is left solely to the management and this may be a challenge to present the product to the market in a manner that will create positive perceptions in their minds thus improve brand strength.

The ever increasing competition in the market, lays emphasis on branding as an essential part of competitive advantage. Resource input is high especially financial and human resource. Such expertise is needed to come with brands that are continuously consistence and fresh. However, the brand concept is still not embraced wholly in the public sector especially non-profit organisations. Resources are not allocated for this and this is mainly because they are in a competitive arena, their internal operational costs are catered for by the government, they do not necessary have performance targets thus the culture of laxity cropping up and so on. However, with deterioration of public services and the implementation of Vision 2030, there has been a paradigm shift for such organisations to be self sustaining and this has forced Board Members and managements' to started adopting marketing strategies that we previously thought to be the 'business' of private sectors.

Branding of services is more challenging than goods because of their intangible nature. It is harder to communicate the values of service brands as they have no tangible attributes to assess the brand. Therefore, organisational that sell services have to impress on their processes, people and physical evidence and this can have significant financial and human resource requirement on such organisations.

According to Chernatony & Et al (1998), certain factors can affect the development of the right brand values in the future:

The shift from strategy to tactics: the emphasis here is for management develop long term strategic plans for their brand but they should be flexible to respond appropriately to crisis.

The shift from advertising to promotion: Organisations often opt for promotions as they tend to generate quick results in terms of sales and therefore cut back on advertising. This is considered as a 'suicidal move' as the cut back on advertising will result in a small reduction in sales for a sometime while the stock of goodwill is depleting, but then there will be a rapid fall in sales. Therefore, the need to purpose a commitment to communicate a brands benefit continuously.

On-line shopping: This mode of distribution of products is different in that; brands are available at all times from all over the country, information and interaction are in real time and consumer choice selection is much more easier and convenient.

However, this poses threats to brands as some of the added values on brands may be well eliminated

Brand advertising on the internet: The web encompasses a new sales channel as well as a new form of advertising and allows new form of customer relationship and sponsorship. This mode of communicating a brand is seen to be very convenient, quick and in real time. However, the managing of the internet critics is

Retailers' names as brands: The challenge many brands face especially when not strongly associated with their parent company, is that while they receive advertising support, this does not match the significant sums major retailers spend developing a clear proposition for their stores and their brands. Therefore there is need to recognise the support retailers are placing behind their own brands. The reasons why an organisation may opt to use retailer's name to brand their products, it helps a firm maximise its plant capacity especially manufacturing organisations. However, the revenue for such an organisation is dictated by the strength of the retailer's marketing campaign and they also risk loosing customers to the retailer's own brand.

The challenges of the single markets: strong brand shave richly complex personalities, enabling them to adapt and appeal to consumers in different countries by, for example, sharing the same language or adhering to a country's cultural norms. Coca-Cola, Kodak organisations are good examples of strong brands that are taking advantage of more open markets. More emphasis on visual identifiers will help overcome the differences within the single market.

Opportunities from technology: Organisations are embracing technology to gain competitive advantage. Technology has been put to use to gather market intelligence for organisations enabling them to come with strategies that will respond appropriately. Keeping up with the pace of technology change can be a financial burden to any organisation.

More sophisticated buyers: consumers are becoming much more marketing literate thus expecting higher standards in brands and appreciate brands that deliver real value.

The growth of corporate branding: emphasis here is to build the assets of the company's brand. Corporate branding is based on a well devised corporate identity programme which provides a clear vision about how the firm's brands are going to benefit the markets.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

Descriptive case study was used as the study's objective was to investigate and determine the branding strategy adopted in Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) and its products. Descriptive research was used to collect data that aims to answer questions of who, what, when, where and how; it basically describes situations. A qualitative research approach was factored in because the data collection scope was on the lower level; it gives insight so as to gain an understanding of branding and branding strategies in KARI.

3.2. Data collection procedures

The study collected both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was derived from a desk research that involved literature search. Primary data was derived from designing a checklist that would capture information on the adopted branding strategy in KARI. The primary data was collected through administering designed checklists to managers/key informants. The checklist is divided into two parts: part one, the demographics which captures the respondents' name (which was optional) and their occupation/positions; part two captured questions that addressed brand and branding strategies adopted by KARI. The checklist contains a total of fourteen questions.

The check lists were administered to the KARI managers who were selected using purposive sampling technique based on their interaction with KARI's products. Some of the respondents were not managers but their interaction with KARI products is significant and such persons were categorised as key informants. Their interaction to products was at different levels: either at the production, selling and/or decision making. The respondents were totalling eight in number comprising: the Deputy Director Research and Technology Development, the Assistant Director Livestock Production, The Assistant Director Adaptive Research, The Assistant Director

Information and Documentation Services, The Assistant Director Kenya Seed Unit, the Legal Officer, the Manager of Agricultural Research Investments Services (ARIS) and the Project Coordinator of Livestock Production who was previously a Centre Director of one of the KARI Centres.

The selection of the proposed managers/informants was convenient and subjective (Blaxter, Hughes and Tights 2000); therefore, data collection sites covered basically KARI Headquarters where the selected managers/key informants are based. The administering took the form of interview. The respondents had a prior look at the checklists' questions that were to be asked during the face to face interview session; appointments were scheduled and each interview session took approximately forty five minutes (45mins). The interviews were over a period of three weeks because of the availability of some of the respondents; the interpretation of the data to draw results and document took a period of approximately one month.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results of a case study of Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) with an aim of determining the branding strategy that the organisation has adopted for itself and its products. The data was collected through checklists using the face to face interview technique. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) reveal that an interview is a method that helps to gather valid and reliable data for research questions and objectives and allows researchers focus on the case study topic. The interview session involved the respondents giving answers based on their understanding of the questions and notes (respondents answers) taken on a writing pad to record the responses. The interpretation of the data was achieved through recombination of the collected data and interpreted using frequencies in the form of percentages and direct and indirect quotes of the respondents.

4.2 Study findings/interpretations

4.2.1 KARI as a brand

The respondents were asked to indicate whether KARI is a brand through stating the brand elements that exist. Based on their understanding of what branding is all the respondents stated that KARI is a brand through the elements they have adopted. The general definition of brand from the respondents is that, branding is what an organization does to create the right impression and/or image to prospects. The respondents stated that the elements used to brand KARI are: - colours (blue and white), logo, name and the use of t-shirts for staff and stationary. However, the respondents stated that these elements are only used at the headquarters level as oppose to all the centres though they emphasized on plans being underway to have uniformity in branding in all centres.

Logo: - the use of logo confirms ownership and this is the main reason why KARI has adopted this element as a means of identifying themselves in the market and especially differentiating themselves against competitors, partners and collaborators.

Colour: - KARI colours' are blue and white. The organization has proficiently used this element in branding mainly their vehicles and not their premises of conducting business. The use of colour in their vehicles has not achieved the benefits of branding that it was set out to achieve. The use of colour was implemented to identify with the organisation through building visual link to its brand value. However, the vehicles give an impression of money and therefore, some of the prospects are apprehensive to interact with the organisation especially farmers who view the organisation as being out of their reach.

Name: - the organization name (Kenya Agricultural Research Institute) has a lot of weight that the management has capitalized on to earn credibility in the environment they operate. The abbreviation, KARI, is ease to pronounce, spell and remember and it suggests something about the products or what the organization is all about and in this case, research. However, the naming of KARI excludes the aspect of selling products or any aspect of dealing with commercial products and for this reason commercialising of products need for efforts.

T-shirts and stationary: - the organization has used these elements for the purpose of building visual link to its brand value. These elements have not been successful as should be the case because these elements are adopted internally and the t-shirts are only worn, mainly, on Fridays and with the lower carder whose interaction with prospects is limited; while the stationary is mainly used by management and not the entire staff, thus not effectively adopted.

4.2.2 KARI's products and markets

The respondents were asked to list which KARI products are positioned for markets and if they are branded and how they are branded. The respondents stated that KARI has two types of markets and therefore their products are positioned depending on the type of market in question. These two markets are: with income and without income. That is, products that are positioned to bring income and those that are meant for the 'public good' or no income. KARI products are viewed by the respondents as falling into two categories: researchable products and commercial products. Researchable products are those products that are positioned for the 'public good'/not for selling (table 4.1: No. 1 – 5); while the commercial products are those that are positioned to be offered to the markets at a cost (table 4.1: No. 6 – 19).

Table 4.1 highlights the products and the market type: -

Table 4.1: Products and markets

No.	Products (goods and services)	Market Type
1.	Improved and high quality crops, livestock and veterinary technologies, information, methodologies and approaches.	No income/public good
2.	Advisory services, technical backstopping and capacity building and development.	No income/public good
3.	Promotion of commercialization of agricultural research technologies and catalyse linkages of farmers and markets.	No income/public good
4.	Custody of the national germplasm at the National Gene Bank.	No income/public good
5.	Facilitation of effective linkages and partnerships with local, regional and international research organisation	No income/public good
6.	Soil, manure and plant tissue analysis	Income
7.	Livestock feed analysis	Income
8.	Water analysis	Income
9.	Diagnosis of plant diseases	Income
10	Diagnosis of animal diseases	Income
11	Pesticide and veterinary drug residue analysis in livestock products	Income
12	Pesticides and drug efficacy tests	Income
13	Environmental impact assessment	Income
14	Contract research	Income
15	Consultancy in agriculture and related sciences	Income
16	Information bulletins and brochures	Income

17	Planting materials and seeds through the KARI Seed Unit	Income
18	Students attachments	Income
19	Conference facilities	Income

Table 4.1 indicates products that are positioned for markets (income) are more in numbers than the ones positioned for 'public good'. This then necessitate KARI to have a strategy that will enable those products not only be known in the market but also gain competitive advantage over existing and potential competitors.

4.2.3 KARI's branding strategy

KARI's strategy for selling their products is not unique in that, they sell their products through intermediaries. These intermediaries mainly are: Agro processing companies, the Ministries of Agriculture, Seed Companies and Private Organisations. These intermediaries purchase products such as planting materials and seeds directly from KARI which they multiply, package and market at their own cost and as their own products; that is, they brand them using their respective company's name. The end consumer, at the point of purchase, buys the product without the knowledge of the initial source of the product.

Some intermediaries, such as Agro processing companies and Seed Companies, enter into a Memorandum of Association (MoU) with KARI to purchase products at cost price and sell them as their own with an understanding that a certain percentage of their profits will be KARI's through royalties. The respondents expressed disappointed that this arrangement has not achieved results as it should due to certain environmental factors both internal and external such as politics, structures and mechanisms for receiving payments are not in place, no one is assigned the responsibility of ensuring payment is done, it has not been a priority for the organisation to be 'entrepreneurial' and so on. In this case, the products that appear on the market shelve do not reflect KARI as the source but the intermediaries as the owners of the products. KARI in this looses out as their profits are depended on the selling strength of the intermediaries and transparent and accountable structures and mechanisms of the MoU.

The respondents stated that the only item that appears on the final products that can be linked to KARI is a code which identifies the products' source of origin and products specifications. The coding is numerical which is unfamiliar to the public including staff apart except staff members who are the breeders; the products, coded or not, are not KARI owned after purchase. The coding has no benefit for the organisation, therefore, not effective for achieving brand benefits.

The only branding element that KARI has incorporated in some of its products is the logo and this is profoundly adopted on the soft technology products which take the form of publications. However, this element is not used in hard technology. These branded products also are used for internal displays or when there are launches, re-launches, field days and such events.

According to Kotler and Keller (2006) and Etzel, et al (2007) among other authors; they have clearly stated the definition for a branding strategy as that decision to determine whether to put the brand names on the organisation' products or whether to use middlemen's or distributor's or individual or family name. Therefore, within the given definition of a branding strategy, KARI has a branding strategy. In practise it appears that KARI's branding strategy could be categorised as being middleman's strategy. This is whereby, a middleman buys products from producers/manufacturers and brands them under their own brand name.

The respondents do not recognise the fact that it does have a branding strategy. All the respondents were very categorical in stating that KARI as an organisation does not have a branding strategy for its products. However, the study finds show that KARI does a banding strategy which is the middleman's branding strategy.

4.2.4 Factors that hinder adoption of a branding strategy in KARI

The respondents were asked to explain which of the listed factors influenced a branding decision/strategy. This question was based on the fact that the respondents felt that KARI has no branding strategy. The listed constraints were provided for as being: objectives for branding, objectives for KARI, KARI's resources, the product type, legal constraints, competition (natures and level), consumer choice behaviour and other reasons not stated. The responses from respondents to the listed factors were as follows:

Objectives of KARI

All the respondents stated that KARI's objectives, in the past, did not support marketing activities and specifically branding of the organisation and its products. However, a paradigm shift from supply driven agriculture to demand driven agriculture has necessitated the need for KARI to identify some marketing strategies that will give them a vantage point in the market. KARI identified five areas of commercialization in reference to their products through the Agricultural Research Investments Services (ARIS) body: Consultancy, contract research and training; Laboratory analytical services; Farm resources; Hospitality infrastructure such as cafeteria, accommodation facilities, conference facilities and so on; and Intellectual property. KARI for a long time has not been producing their technology with the market in mind. They worked from the premise of supply driven agriculture; this meant that they produced technology with the assumption that the demand will be automatic, that through the availability of the technology, the consumers will consume or take up the technology.

The respondents stated that the aspect of commercialising in KARI is a very recent and the misconceptions around it are overwhelming for the management. However, the objectives of KARI still do not spell out clearly the marketing plan they intend to implement, who will be responsible and the budget allocated to this activity. The focus of 'public good' is still emphasised despite the acknowledgement that they need to commercialise their products which will fund up to 20% of their research activities.

KARI's resources

All the respondents stated that the lack of both financial and human resource was a contributing factor as to why there was no branding strategy. Having no budget allocated for marketing and no persons responsible for carrying out marketing activities implies that branding is the least prioritised activity within management and the organisation as a whole.

However, in the revised strategic plan (KARI 2009), the management proposes to have a new department that will handle organisation marketing and also an assigned Deputy Director that who will be responsible for adaptive research, packaging and transfer/distribute the commercial products. This is seen as a positive effort in the direction of commercialising thus marketing.

The product type

Approximately eighty seven point five percent (87.5%) of the respondents said that the products that are within KARI would be a challenge to brand. For example, the organisation's products are characterised as either being research products or commercial products. The research products are meant for public good while the commercial products are positioned for markets. These two categories are not clearly defined in terms of where their boundaries are and there is also no clear structure on how to go about packaging, labelling and naming the products. Because of this non-clarity situation, branding would be a challenge. There was a respondent who felt that the whole concept of branding was the 'business' of the Director and the legal office and the lack of a strategy at the moment reflects the lack of commitment from these two offices.

Thirty seven point five (37.5%) of the respondents felt that KARI products enjoyed some degree of monopoly and thus there is no need for branding. The respondent stated that branding would an effort in futility both in terms of time and finances as the market is very receptive to KARI's products.

Consumer choice behaviour

KARI's consumers are varied; however their needs are similar in nature but those needs at are different levels. The challenge is satisfying those needs at the different levels. The consumers include farmers, farmers associations and community based organisation; Government Ministries, Departments and State Corporations; Public and Private Extension service providers; Non-governmental Organisations; Universities and other tertiary education institutions; Church Based Organisations; Agricultural private sector players; the general public; and the Media

All the respondents stated that KARI consumers are unique in that, in the past years they accessed products from the organisation at no charge because the Government took care of the cost implications that the organisation incurred producing the products. In recent years, the organisation has commercialised some of these products, for example, laboratory analytical products have for the past five years being provided at cost; with these changes from free to a price attached to products, consumers are shying from purchasing products those products while other consumers are opting for competitors' products because they believe that KARI should provide those very services for free while others say that the process of getting a service or product is very tedious as oppose to competitors.

Competition (nature and level):

KARI has no recognition of the nature and levels of existing and potential competition within their industry. 37.5% of the respondents (3 out of 8) stated that the organisation operates within a monopolised industry; that is; they enjoy 'lone providers of services' status within the agricultural industry and for this reason, they feel that there is no need for branding; its not a priority. 62.5% of the other respondents stated that the organisation has being ignorant of the competition growth that is creeping on the organisation and they need for them to come up with mechanisms to check the nature and levels of competition and strategise ways to curb or manage it.

The competitors of KARI are mainly the organisations' collaborators and partners in research activities. These are the Universities, Development partners/donors, Private sectors that are agricultural related among others. The nature of competition is very non-aggressive compared to private sector where the 'heat' is felt by involved institutions and because of this very characteristic nature of the competition, KARI's management is not in a position to recognise competition, both in nature and level.

Legal constraints

According to the legal officer (a respondent), KARI has no legal constraints on branding the organisation and adopting a branding strategy that would aid the organisation gain competitive advantage. KARI is a Kenya Government parastatal established through the Science and Technology (Amendment) Act LN.7 of 1979 section 4 CAP 250 section 12 and schedule 4 of the Revised Edition of Science and Technology. The Act gives KARI the mandate to carry out research to support agriculture and forestry development. It also mandates the organisation to disseminate their products and one way of disseminating is through commercialisation. The Vision 2030 strategic plans emphasises on the agricultural sector aiming at an internationally competitive, profitable and commercially viable environment.

Therefore, there are no legal constraints that hinder the adoption of a branding strategy within the structures and mandates of the organisation.

Objectives for branding

There was a respondent that stated that "issues of marketing and branding are not KARI's business". Such a response can be viewed as ignorant.
Organisations engage in building brands because the benefits of branding are enormous. According to Bernhardt, et al (1991) branding helps achieve the success of effective communication through advertising, confirms credibility of either the product or the organisation where the product originates, connects your target prospects emotionally, motivates the buyer and concretes user loyalty; it increases ease acceptance of an institution and its products minimising the activities for curbing competition; helps in penetrating in a new market or a new market category; It also

makes market segmentation easier and therefore market targeting becomes effective thus achieving customer satisfaction and it is also a source of demand and the competitively superior quality image justifying premium price.

All the respondents stated that management is not in tune with the objectives for branding and therefore the lack of recognition in the organisation objectives. However, the respondents stated that the benefit that KARI would seek through branding would be to confirm credibility of the origin of the product as this will increase consumers confidence while purchasing and for market segmentation therefore addressing consumers needs directly thus ease market targeting and product positioning which in turn will support the demand driven agriculture paradigm shift.

According to the respondents, these factors have varying degree of influence on the adoption of a branding strategy. The respondents felt that the priority of the listed constraints based on their opinion was as follows:

Objectives for KARI: - All the respondents felt that if branding was incorporated in KARI's objectives and the management supports a process then it is bound to be successful.

KARI's resources: - All the respondents stated that even if management supports the branding process and there are no resources to support the process, then it's bound not to work.

Consumer choice behaviour: -All the respondents said that KARI's consumers are versatile though their needs are similar. However, the challenge is satisfying those needs at the different levels. Therefore this factor has great influence on the type of branding strategy to be adopted.

Objectives for branding: - All the respondents felt that lack of expertise on objectives of branding was a hindering factor.

The product type: - Eighty seven point five percent (87.5%) of the respondents stated that the lack of clarity on the distinction of researchable and commercial products poses a challenge to the hindrance of a strategy adoption. While 37.5% of the respondents felt that there is no need for branding as the organisation operates in a monopolised industry.

Competition: Thirty seven point five percent (37.5%) felt that KARI sees itself as being in a monopolised industry and while 62.5% of the respondents stated that management does not acknowledge competition and this then becomes a factor that hinders the adoption of a branding strategy and also marketing activities.
Legal constraints: - All the respondents felt that there were some legal constraints as to why KARI does not engage in marketing and branding activities. The lack of awareness on the legal mandates of KARI and more specifically on income generation poses a challenge. However, the legal officer (12.5% - one respondent) stated that there were no legal restraints to marketing and branding activities.

4.2.5 Reaching markets effectively

The respondents were asked if KARI reaches its markets effectively through the branding strategy they have adopted. All the respondents stated that KARI was not effectively reaching their markets due to various reasons and the lack of a branding strategy was a contributing factor. One of the respondents said that "we are failing to thumb chest ourselves as an organisation because of having no branding strategy". The respondent felt that in the past KARI has not being positioning the organisation as one that deals with products. They viewed products as those goods and services that are in the private sector domain; research outputs were not viewed as products. This coupled with the fact that the Government was taking care of product production costs and it being KARI's sole customer, put the organisation in a position of 'monopoly'. But with the changes in Government and political environment temperatures, public organisations and in particular KARI, have to source for alternative funds that will sustain their activities thus the need to commercialise emerged.

The respondents also expressed that vast numbers of consumers' and lack of versatility of resources both financial and human as playing a hindering role in reaching the markets effectively. This means that the consumers/markets are many and are decentralised geographically (Annex 2); while the resource requirements to reach these markets is so demanding and the organisation's resources are very

limiting and more so towards marketing activities. This then poses a challenge towards reaching the markets effectively.
Four out of the eight respondents (50%) felt that a lack of focus especially on marketing and markets results to not reaching the markets effectively and having no structures or plan on how to reach the markets is also a contributing factor. All the respondents felt that branding issues is to be left at the discretion of the Director and the Board of Management.

4.2.6 KARI brand and branding products management

The respondents were asked who manages the brand management process. However, with the responses received from previous questions indicate that KARI has no branding strategy.
All the respondents stated that branding KARI as an organisation was entirely left to the Director with consultations with the Assistant Directors of respective programs. However, the branding of KARI's products is not assigned any persons and this contributes to the lack of a branding strategy according to the respondents. However, 37.5% respondents felt that they have inadequate skills on marketing/branding disciplines to be assigned the responsibility and opted for the Director to be in charge with consultation with the Board of Management while another 37.5% of the respondents stated that marketing and branding issues should be outsourced; while 25% of the respondents felt that an office should be set up and persons with expertise in marketing and branding to take up the responsibility of branding KARI and its products.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

Branding is a marketing concept that is considered a new emergent discipline but with significant impact to any organisation. This fact is reflected in the tremendous growth it has achieved over the years. This study looked at the history of Kenya Agricultural research Institute (KARI) and the need for a branding strategy within the organisation. However, the study's objective was to determine the branding strategy that KARI has adopted for itself and its products. The determination of the adopted branding strategy was achieved through interviewing selected managers and key informants in KARI's management using a checklist. The data collected was analysed and the data interpretation achieved.

5.2 Conclusions

The study concluded that brands are recognised to provide quality to customers, distinction within a market and to gain financial rewards to an organisation. This recognition has placed great emphasis for organisations both private and public to embrace this concept. The study objective was to determine the branding strategy that KARI has adopted for itself and its products.

The study findings revealed that KARI has some brand elements used to brand the organisation. The brand elements adopted are: use of colour especially on the vehicles, use of logo, use of name, use of t-shirts and stationary. However, the use of these elements is not effective because it's not uniformly used within the organisation and the use of it, especially the t-shirts is with the lower cadre whose interaction with prospects is minimal.

The study findings revealed that KARI has varied products which are characterised as either being researchable products and commercial products. These two categories of products are positioned to target different markets; the researchable products are positioned for public good while the commercial products are positioned for income generation.

The study found that the commercial entity of KARI is underdeveloped as the discipline of marketing is alien to the organisation; structures for commercialising have not being developed; the objectives for the organisation are not in tune with the objectives for KARI; the organisation resources are not geared towards marketing and they are limiting; the consumers choice behaviour is unique in that consumers would opt for public good products over commercial products.

The study findings revealed that KARI does have a branding strategy for its products which is the middleman's strategy. However, management does not recognise the fact that it does have a strategy as the respondents stated that they do not have a branding strategy yet the respondents are the management.

5.3 Recommendations

This study found out that KARI does have a branding strategy for its products but management is not aware. The study therefore, recommends that the management needs to be sensitised on the importance of brands and therefore branding and the benefits that accrue. Management also needs to be made aware of the branding strategy that they have 'unknowingly' adopted and the pros and cons the strategy has vis-à-vis the other branding strategies highlighted.

The study recommends that further studies should be carried out to determine the suitability of KARI's middleman strategy in achieving a commercial status, highlight the brand public relations mechanisms and determine the suitability of each to KARI.

REFERENCES

Aaker D. A. 1996. *Building Strong Brands*. Free Press. New York.

Bernhardt K. L. and Kinner T. C. (1991). *Cases in Marketing Management. 5th Edition*. Irwin Publishers.

Blaxter L., Hughes C. and Tight M. (2001). *How to Research.* Buckingham, Open University Press.

Chetnatony D. L. and McDonald M. (1992), (1998). *Creating powerful brands in consumer, service and industrial markets*. Second Edition. Published in association with the Chartered Institute of Marketing. Linacre House, Jordan Hill, Oxford OX2 8DP.

Etzel M. J., Walker B. J. and Stanton W. J. (2007). *Marketing. 14th Edition.* McGraw-Hill Irwin.

Farquhar, P., (1990). *Managing brand equity.* Journal of Advertising Research. August/September 30, RC 7 – RC 12.

Government of Kenya (2003). *Economic Recovery Strategy Paper (ERSP) for Wealth and Employment Creation over the period 2003 – 2007*. Government Printers, Nairobi Kenya.

Gregory J. R and Iechmanin J. G. (2001). *Branding Across Border*. McGraw Hill. Irwin

Heemskerk W., Lema N. M., Guindo D., Schoute C., Semgalawe Z., Verkijl H., Piters B. S. and Penninkhoff P. (2003). *A guide to demand-driven agricultural research. A client oriented research management approach*. KIT Publishers, Amsterdam.

Hongo P. (2001). *An empirical investigation into the practise of Brand extension. The case of fast moving consumer goods in Kenya.* Unpublished MBA Research Project. University of Nairobi.

Kabura E. (2002). *Usage of brand equity assets in positioning brands. The case of agrochemicals in Kenya.* Unpublished MBA Research Project. University of Nairobi.

Kenya Agricultural Research Institute. (2002). *Third Medium Term Plan, July 2003/4 to June 2007/8.* KARI Publications Unit.

Kenya Agricultural Research Institution (2005). *A strategic plan for the period 2005 – 2015.* KARI Publications Unit.

Kenya Agricultural Research Institution (2006). *Human Resources strategic plan 2005 – 2009.* KARI Publications Unit.

Keller K. L. (1998). *Strategic Brand Management; Building, Measuring and Managing Brand Equity.* Pretice Hall, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

Kohli, C. and Thakor, M. (1997). *Branding consumer goods: insight from theory and practice. Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 14, issue 3, p. 206.

Kotler P. and Keller L.K. (2006). *Marketing Management. Twelfth Edition.* Pearson Prentice Hall.

Kwena F. (2002). *The impact of branding on consumer choice. The case of new domestic sugar brands.* Unpublished MBA Research Project. University of Nairobi.

Mbau E. P. (2000). *An empirical investigation of creation and application of brand equity in Kenya.* Unpublished MBA Research Project. University of Nairobi.

Mburu R. I (2001). *The impact of perceived quality on brand choice. The case of soft drinks.* Unpublished MBA Research Project. University of Nairobi.

Nilson, H. T., (1998). *Competitive Branding-Winning the Marketplace with Value Added Brands*. Chichester: Wiley,cop. United Kingdom.

Nyambok G. A. (2007). *The influence of branding on employee attitude and perceptions in the banking industry in Kenya. A case study of four banks*. Unpublished MBA Research Project. University of Nairobi.

Phillip Kotler. (2000). *Marketing Management. Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control. 8th Edition*. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NewJersey.

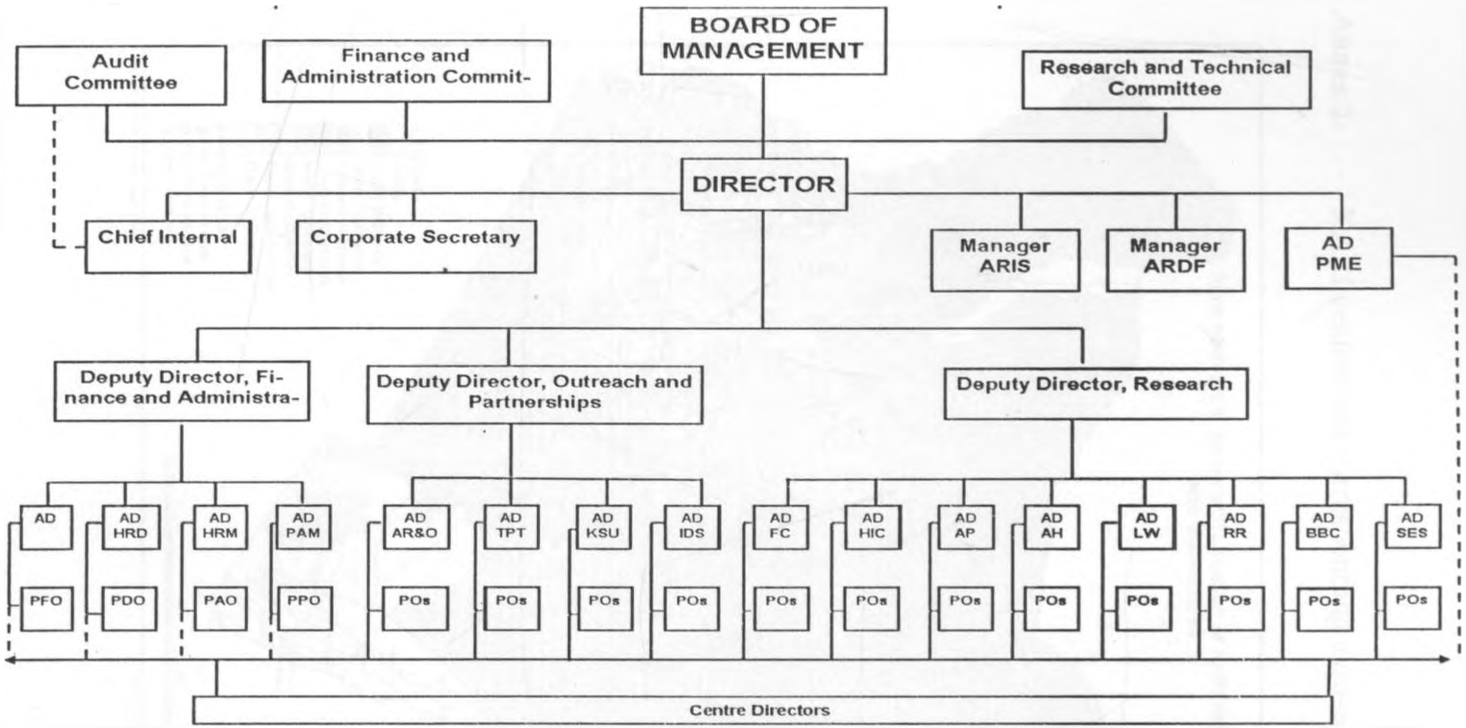
Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2003). *Research Methods for Business Students. Third Edition*. Harlow: Financial Times/Prentice Hall.

Tudor N. and Catalin B. M. University of Craiova (2004) *Retail Store Design and Environment as Branding Support in the Services Marketing.*

Urde, M. (1999). *Brand Orientation. A Mindset for Building Brands into Strategic Resources*. JOMM, Volume 15, issue 1 – 3, p. 117. McGraw-Hill Irwin.

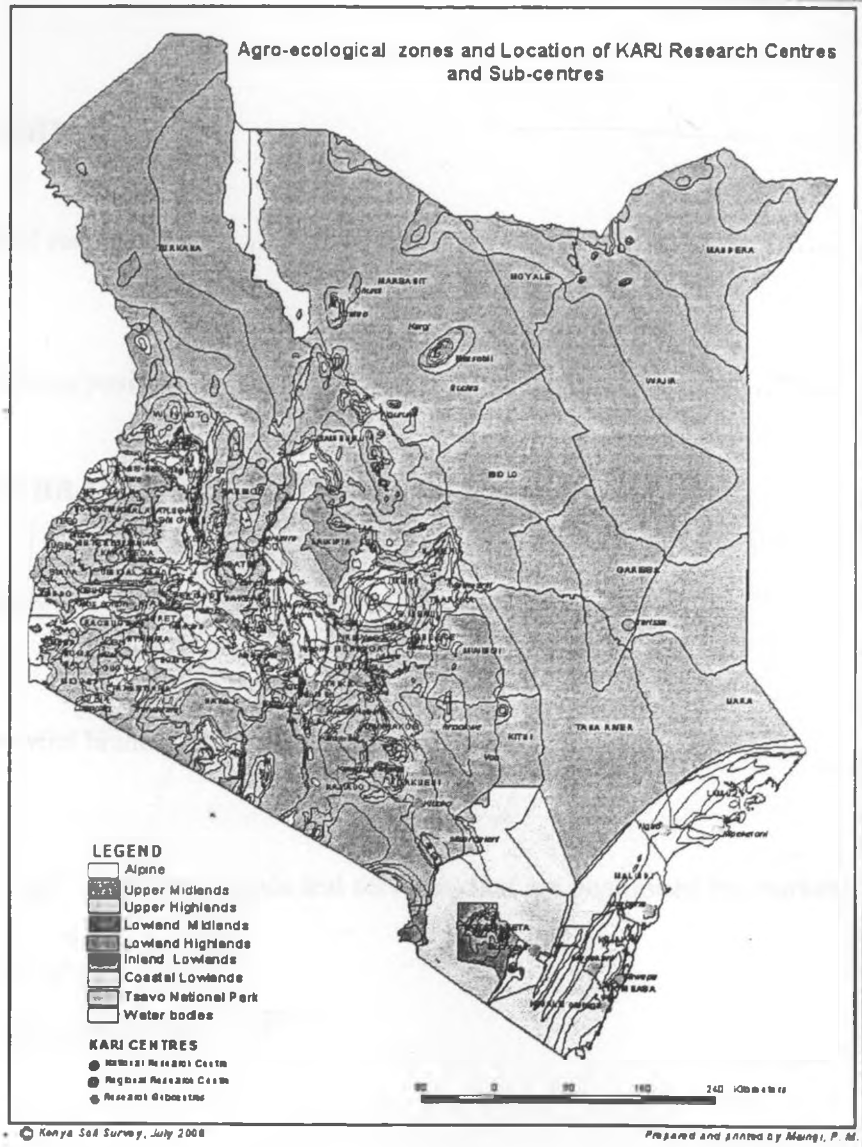
World Bank. (2002). *Good practices for monitoring and evaluation and management information systems in competitive grant programs in Europe and Central Asia Region countries*. Washington.

Annex 1: KARI Organizational Structure



Key: AD = Assistant Director, **F**=Finance, **HRD**=Human Resource Development, **HRM** = Human Resource Management, **PFO** = Principal Finance Officer, **PDO** = Principal Development Officer, **PAO** = Principal Administrative Officer, **PAM**=Procurement and Asset Managements, **PPO** = Principal Procurement Officer, **TPT**=Technology Packaging and Transfer, **KSU**=KARI Seed Unit, **SES**=Socio Economics & Statistics, **IDS**= Information and Documentation Services, **BBC**=Biotechnology and Biodiversity Conservation, **FC**=Food Crops, **HIC**=Horticultural and Industrial Crops, **AP**=Animal Production, **AH**=Animal Health, **RR** = Range Research, **AR&OP** = Adaptive Research, Outreach and Partnership, **ARIS** = Agricultural Research Investment Services, **LW**=Land and Water, **PME**=Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, **POs** =Programme Officers, **CD**=Centre Director, **ARDF**=Agricultural Research Development Fund. ________ Line of authority, _ _ _ _ _ Line of Linkages

Annex 2: KARI centres and corresponding agro-ecological zones



ANNEX 3: CHECKLIST

Survey Questionnaire: To determine the branding strategy that KARI has adopted for itself and its products.
It targets managers (or persons who are considered key informants) of KARI.

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Name of respondent...

2. Occupation/position held...

BRAND AND BRANDING STRATEGIES

3. Is KARI, as an organisation, branded?

4. If yes, what branding elements have you adopted?

5. List KARI's products (goods and services) that are positioned for markets.

6. Are these products branded?

7. If yes, how have you branded these products?

8. Is the branding uniform for all KARI's products or they differ from product to product?

9. Which of the listed factors influences the branding decision/strategy?
   (1) Objectives for branding
   (2) Objectives for KARI
   (3) KARI's resources (financial and human resource)
   (4) The product type
   (5) Legal constraints
   (6) Competition (nature and level)
   (7) Consumer choice behaviour
   (8) Others. Specify..

10. In your opinion, do you effectively reach the intended market through the branding strategy adopted?

11. If yes, what are the indicating factors?

12. If, no why and what are the strategic plans in place to reach the intended markets?

13. How do you manage KARI brand and its branded products?

14. Who manages KARI brand and its branded products?

Thank you.