ABSTRACT

The study sought to establish the influence of brand ideals on sustainable growth and the extent to which they are being used by Kenya's cement companies. A descriptive cross-sectional study was done with the target population being divided into two strata; the cement manufacturing companies and site engineers/developers. A census was done on the cement companies while convenience sampling was used for the site engineers and developers stratum. The sample was picked from Nairobi sites and its environs. Out of the six manufacturing companies interviewed only three actively used brand ideals, which were well communicated and aligned with the organization and 26% of their growth was attributed to these ideals. The companies which had used brand ideals over a long period had their brands more popular and preferred by the developers. The consumers were willing to buy those brands at a premium price and believed those brands were better in quality than the rest. Those which had not put in place ideals in their marketing strategies purely competed on price. 44% of those interviewed had their choice of preferred cement brand influenced by brand ideals while 37% used pricing and availability and their basis of brand choice. The study found out that by use of brand ideals companies have created brand ambassadors in their consumers as well increase levels of loyalty. However active creation and use of brand ideals cannot be generalized to the entire industry. The ideals have an influence on sustainable growth of cement companies in Kenya. The study established that there is a significant relationship between the use of brand ideals and market share retention, customer loyalty and resultant growth therein. Brands that will survive and thrive in the decades to come will be those that are based on ideals. Ideals guides brands along a path of growth and change, helps to identify opportunities for challenging the status quo, and sheds light on new and different ways to deliver higher-order benefits in the future. The study recommends that companies should create and align ideals with their organizations. Further the study recommends ideas should be distinctively used to shape businesses and organizations in three ways; first to lead to creation of meaningful products, services and customer experience. Secondly align the organization and its culture behind a common goal and to help them rethink how they communicate and engage consumers. Ideals should invite consumers and customers to a dialogue with organizations.