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VinaTaba brand management process in Vietnam

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Abstract

This article based on a story of biggest tobacco company in Vietnam will show how the brand of an enterprise dealing in a controversial product line regarding community and social

benefits such as cigarettes compared with traditional product lines in this market.

Keywords: Brand Management, Vinataba, Vietnam

1. Introduction

1.1 Brief introduction of Vietnam's economy

Vietnam is a successful development story. Economic reforms since 1986 combined with favorable global trends have rapidly helped Vietnam grow from one of the poorest countries in the world to a low-middle-income country within a short period of time. generation. From 2002 to 2020, GDP per capita increased 2.7 times, reaching nearly 2,800 USD. Also, during this period, the poverty rate (according to the standard of 1.9 USD/day) dropped sharply from more than 32% in 2011 to less than 2%.

Thanks to a solid foundation, Vietnam's economy has shown remarkable resilience in times of crisis, most recently the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, Vietnam is one of the few countries that recorded positive GDP growth when the pandemic broke out. However, the Delta variant has caused a shock to Vietnam, Vietnam's economic growth forecast in 2021 is only 2-2.5%, 4 percentage points lower than the world average.

Health has made great progress as living standards have improved. The infant mortality rate decreased from 32.6 in 1993 to 16.7 in 2017 (per 1,000 live births). Life expectancy at birth increased from 70.5 in 1990 to 76.3 in 2016, the highest among countries in the region with similar income levels. The universal health care coverage index is 73, higher than the regional and world averages, of which 87% of the population has health insurance.

People's ability to access infrastructure has been significantly improved. As of 2016, 99% of the population has electricity for lighting, compared with 14% in 1993. Rural access to clean water has also improved, from 17% in 1993 to 70% in 2016, while the rate in urban areas is over 95%.

Vietnam has set more ambitious development visions, aiming to become a high-income country by 2045. To do this, the economy needs to grow at an average annual rate of about approx. 5% per capita in the next 25 years. Vietnam is also aiming for greener, more inclusive development.

The future of Vietnam is being shaped by several major trends. Populations are aging rapidly, global trade is declining, while environmental degradation, climate change problems and automation are on the rise. The progress of these trends has been further accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the latest update of the World Bank's Country Diagnostic Report, to overcome these challenges and meet development goals, Vietnam needs to significantly improve the effectiveness of policy implementation, especially in areas of finance, environment, digital transformation, poverty reduction/social well-being and infrastructure.

1.2 Brief history introduction of VINATABA

Vietnam Tobacco Corporation Vinataba is a state-owned enterprise of Vietnam, officially established on April 5, 1985 with the name of the Union of Tobacco Enterprises and this is also the predecessor of the Vietnam Tobacco Company (Vietnam Tobacco Company). VINATABA), was established under Decree No. 108/HDBT of the Council of Ministers of Schools (now the Government).

On October 31, 1992, the Ministry of Light Industry (now the Ministry of Industry and Trade) issued Decision No. 1007/CNn-TCLD on the transformation of the organization and operation of the Vietnam Tobacco Union into a General Vietnam Tobacco Company.

1994 Vietnam Tobacco Corporation is invested by British American Tobacco (BAT) under the model of cooperation in producing Dunhill products with Thang Long Tobacco factory and 555 product of Saigon Tobacco factory. Philip Morris International has cooperated with Vinh Hoi Tobacco company to produce Marlboro brand cigarettes.

On April 29, 1995, the Government issued Decision No. 254/TTg on the establishment of the Vietnam Tobacco Corporation, organized and operated under the model of a State Corporation, directly under the Government.

2000-2001 Vinataba cooperated with Japan Tobacco International to produce Mild Seven cigarettes at Thanh Hoa Tobacco factory. And in 2001 Vinataba cooperated with Bat Group, establishing BAT-Vinataba Joint Venture.

On September 23, 2005, the Government issued Decision No. 232/2005/QD-TTg approving the Project to change the Vietnam Tobacco Corporation to operate under the model of Parent company - Subsidiary.

On June 23, 2010, the Prime Minister issued Decision 932/QĐ - TTg to change the Parent Company - Vietnam Tobacco Corporation into a one-member limited liability company owned by the State.

On January 16, 2013, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 166/QĐ-TTg approving the restructuring plan of Vietnam Tobacco Corporation in the period 2012-2015.

In 2016, the Vietnam Tobacco Corporation basically completed the restructuring project whereby the tobacco unit was focused on 2 main focal points: Saigon Tobacco Company as the parent company.

In 2018 Handing over the ownership of state capital in Vietnam Tobacco Corporation from the Ministry of Industry and Trade to the Committee for Management of State Capital at Enterprises.

2. Theoretical basis

2.1 Trademarks and trademarks

Trademarks have existed for centuries as a means of distinguishing the goods of one manufacturer from the goods of other manufacturers. The word "brand" comes from the Old Norse word "brandr", which means "to burn". "Brand: is a distinctive sign (tangible and intangible) to identify a product, good or service, produced or provided by an individual or an organization. For businesses, a brand is a concept in consumers about a product or service with the business's sign affixed to the surface of the product or service to affirm its quality and origin. Brand is an important intangible asset, and for large businesses, the brand value of the business makes up a significant part of the total value of the business." (Definition of World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)) According to the American Marketing Association: "A brand is a name, word, sign, symbol, design, design, etc., or a collection of the above elements are intended to identify and distinguish the goods or services of one seller or a group of sellers from those of competitors". However, in reality, the concept of a brand is much broader, it can be anything that is attached to products or services to make them easily identifiable and differentiated from other products. same kind. Therefore, the first thing in the branding process is to select and design for a product or service a name, logo, symbol, color, design, packaging and other distinguishing elements. on the basis of analyzing product attributes, tastes and consumption behavior of target customers and other factors such as laws, culture, beliefs...

Trademarks, as defined in Clause 16, Article 4 of the Intellectual Property Law, are signs used to distinguish goods and services of different organizations and individuals. A manufacturer has one brand but can have many marks. In general, a trademark is a sign accompanying a product to distinguish the goods and services of this subject from those of goods and services. of another subject. According to the definition of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO): a mark is "a sign used to distinguish goods and services of the same or similar type of different production and business establishments".

Classification of marks: Based on the elements, properties and functions that the laws of Vietnam and other countries in the world can classify marks according to the following common points:

Classification based on factors when registering for protection:

- Words, phrases, slogans;
- Letters and numbers;
- Drawings, photos;
- Color;
- The combination of the above factors;

Classification by purpose of use:

- Trademarks used for goods;
- Service marks used for service industries;

Sort by nature:

- Collective trademark means a bank that has many co-owners and uses;
- Affiliate marks are the same or similar banks registered by the same owner for use on products with different versions;
- Certification marks are used to certify product characteristics such as origin, raw materials, production methods, quality standards,...; Certification mark "High quality Vietnamese goods - Voted by consumers"
- Well-known brand is NH that has a reputation and is known by many people.

2.2 Brand function

The function of recognition and differentiation: this is a characteristic and important function of the brand. Brand awareness is an important factor not only for consumers but also for businesses.

Function of information and instructions: expressed through images, language or other signs as well as brand slogans, consumers can partially recognize the value of goods, their uses. authenticity that goods bring to consumers in the present and in the future. No matter how clear and rich the indications are, but not satisfied with the ability to distinguish and recognize them is also considered an unsuccessful brand, because it easily creates confusion for consumers.

The function of creating perception and trust: it is the feeling of difference, luxury, feeling of peace of mind, comfort and trust when consuming such goods and services. Speaking of perceptual function, one refers to a certain impression of goods and services in the mind of consumers. The perception of customers does not come naturally, it is formed by the synthesis of the brand's elements and the consumer's experience. Reliability and willingness to choose goods with a certain brand has brought businesses a set of

loyal customers.

Economic function: the brand carries within it a present and potential value. The value is most evident when transferring a brand. Brand is considered an intangible and very valuable asset. Although the value of a brand is difficult to determine, thanks to the advantages that famous brands bring, goods will be sold more, even at higher prices, easier to penetrate the market.

2.3 Brand Equity

There are many views and ways of evaluating brand equity. Lassar *et al.*, (1995) divided into two main groups- brand value assessed from the investment or financial point of view and brand value assessed from the customer point of view. Keller (1993, 1998) argues that brand equity is the customer's knowledge of that brand. Customer knowledge consists of two main components: brand awareness and brand impression. Aaker (1996) suggested four components of brand equity: First brand loyalty, Second brand awareness, Third perceived quality, Fourth attributes associated with the brand as a character associated with brands, patents, relationships with distribution channels. Nguyen Dinh Tho & Nguyen Thi Mai Trang (2002), give three components of brand value, which are brand awareness, perceived quality, brand passion, including enjoyment, consumption tendency and brand loyalty.

Brand equity is a very broad concept. Brand equity includes the values that the brand brings to customers and stakeholders such as employees, shareholders, communities, etc. Factors that contribute to creating brand equity include symbols, slogans and logos. of the company or product. These factors are also the assets of the company, creating the success of each business. Because those are also factors that directly reach customers. These values are determined by the customer's perception and their experience in relation to that brand. If the brand gives customers a positive experience, the brand's recognition is large, it means that the value of that brand is "positive". On the contrary, when customers express disappointment and have bad experiences when using services and products of the brand. That means the value of that brand is "negative".

From the marketing point of view, brand equity is the result of consumers' evaluation of that brand's value, the second point of view is based on consumers' evaluations. Brand equity is a set of brand-related assets that add value provided by a product or service to an organization or its customers (Aaker 1996). The main components of brand equity include: brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association, and other brand equity values (relationships by distribution channel, development, etc.) associated with the brand).

Assets of each business can be divided into 2 categories: Visible assets (tangible assets) such as real estate, facilities, inventory are things that can be easily measure and calculate values. But non-visible assets (intangible assets) such as trademarks, other intellectual products, etc. are very difficult to calculate. Sometimes, the intangible assets of the business are many times larger than the tangible assets that the business owns.

2.4 Vision, mission, core values of the brand

Vision: Is an image, standard, unique image and ideal in the future, which is what the business wants to achieve or become. Vinataba Thanh Hoa is a leading tobacco and cigar

manufacturing and trading company in Vietnam. "Strong economic organization, holding a leading position in the chain of tobacco production and business in Vietnam and for export, contributing increasingly to the economic development of the country".

Mission: The reason the organization exists. Organizations often express their mission with a concise "mission statement", explaining what the organization exists for and what it will do to survive.

+ For consumers, best meet the objective needs of society.
+ Make the most active contribution to the fight against smuggled cigarettes and cigars.

+ Environmentally friendly and socially responsible.

+ Improve the material and spiritual life of employees.

Core Values: The foundational and sustainable principles and principles of the organization. These principles:

There are principles that exist regardless of time.

+ On its own, without outside justification,

Have value and importance within the organization.

Core values, through screening for authenticity, can be identified by determining which values are truly central and which, on the other hand, must stand the test of time.

A large company needs to define for itself what values are kept at its core, independent of the current environment, competitive requirements and management practices.

Core values of Vinataba:

+ Persevering in innovation, not getting discouraged when facing difficulties and challenges; act decisively, with high responsibility to employees, customers, partners and the community to meet the requirements of opening and integrating in the new period.

+ Maintain solidarity, inherit tradition to build Vinataba Thanh Hoa more and more developed.

+ Actively integrating, ready to cooperate and share to succeed.

+ Sustainable development on the basis of increasing intellectual content to produce better products to meet consumer needs; Professional operation with high efficiency.

3. Research methods

3.1 Brand development orientation and goals – vision, mission, goals, objectives.

- Vision: "Strong economic organization, holding the leading position in the tobacco production and trading chain in Vietnam and exporting, making increasing contributions to the country's economic development"

- Mission: "To best meet the objective needs of society, seize the opportunity to lead the development of Vietnam's tobacco industry, ensure the requirements of integration, environmental friendliness and social responsibility"

- Target:

- a) Profitable business, preserving and developing equity invested in VINATABA and capital invested by VINATABA in Subsidiaries and Associates; complete the tasks assigned by the owner; improve financial capacity, production and business efficiency to ensure the healthy and sustainable development of the Corporation.

- b) To build into a strong, large-scale state-owned corporation with modern technology; is the focal point for arranging and promoting the Vietnamese tobacco industry to develop firmly, step by step reaching out to the region and the world.

c) Continuing to promote the leading role of the Corporation in Vietnam's tobacco industry in implementing and implementing the guidelines and policies of the State towards the tobacco industry.

3.2 Brand positioning process

Understanding customers: with the strategy of diversifying products and prices in many segments, the products are divided into 3 groups including: popular product line, mid-range product line and high-end product line, meet the requirements of everyone from middle-class customers to low-income people.

- About the taste of cigarettes: The current product lines belong to the traditional Virginia taste, the advanced Virginia taste, the American taste, the Methol taste and the special taste.
- About packaging: Diverse from soft bag, hard bag, round edge hard bag, compact bag.
- About cigarette specifications: Including king size, slim, super slim, demi slim without filter, 100 mm, activated carbon filter, ventilation filter...

Brand benefits

- Quality benefits: Produced on a system of modern technological lines from England, France, Germany and on the basis of the best quality raw materials, which have been tested through measuring and testing equipment as modern as Germany's TQM machine.
- Emotional benefits: Vinataba is a premium cigarette product of Vietnam's tobacco industry, with improved design and packaging, able to better satisfy the needs of smokers with special features. What stands out is the flavor and richness...

Belief base

During the development process, the Corporation always promptly builds and transforms its operational organizational model in accordance with the requirements and tasks in each development period of the country. Each stage of organizational transformation is each time the Corporation lifts to a new height, affirming its position of constant rise: production and business are increasingly enhanced.

During the process of rearranging Vietnam's tobacco industry in the direction of a focal point, the Corporation has always played a pivotal role. The corporation has accepted most of the local tobacco units as members. The receipt of these units not only solves the requirement to focus on the tobacco industry, but also increases economic efficiency for the unit itself and for the locality through the support in all aspects of the General Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The company (reorganization of the apparatus, settlement of the backlog of capital and debts, policies and regimes for redundant workers, training of technical workers, improvement of product quality, market work). The units that join the Corporation all have developed and effective production and business, and the living standards of employees are increasingly improved.

Targeted customer

- Age: the age group from 21-50 years old accounts for nearly 50%, this is the active age in terms of behavior, income, and spending.
- Gender: Male predominate and female

- Income: all classes
- Occupation: all occupations, mostly used by the lower and middle classes. Focusing on a number of occupations such as: small traders, workers, craftsmen, car drivers, farmers, etc. Besides, there are also some unemployed parts who also smoke. In addition, current leaders and managers also smoke.
- Education level: Male with a high school diploma or less.
- Level: 11-20 cigarettes daily in the North account for a high rate of about 50%.
- Location: Shops, restaurants, sidewalk drugstores, agents or cafes, sidewalk shops. In which, consumers mainly buy at shops and sidewalk drugstores. In addition, in the Northern region, consumers are very fond of Vinataba tobacco products.

Competitors: 2 brands of cigarettes White Horse and Virginia are 2 competing brands.

- White horse is a product of Khanh Hoa drug factory, with modern and advanced equipment, the product sold was 280 million bags in 2007.
- Virginia Gold is a product brand of BAT cigarette group, the product sold was 40 million bags in 2007

Brand value:

- Vinataba accounts for 50% of the market share of mid- and high-end cigarettes with an output of over 500 million bags/year
- In 2009, the revenue reached over 30 thousand billion VND, an increase of nearly 21% compared to 2008; contribution to the state budget reached VND 4,756 billion, up 24% compared to 2008; tobacco exports reached 960 million bags; export turnover reached 149 million USD
- Continuously improve product quality and best service organization; increase domestic market share and aim to boost export
- Vinataba has successfully participated in and managed production and business in a number of important areas of the food industry such as: confectionery, wine, pure drinking water, pearl tea...

Brand personality

- Continuing to perform the dual task of preventing the Covid-19 epidemic, promoting production and business development, and ensuring stable working life of employees.
- Continue to do well in the management, use, preservation and development of capital; improve the operational efficiency of the units.
- To play a key role in the tobacco industry by stabilizing the consumption market, maintaining the market share of domestic cigarettes, and transforming the product structure in line with consumption trends.
- Focusing on implementing the State's development orientation of the tobacco industry, taking the lead in formulating mechanisms and policies, creating conditions for the industry to operate stably; cooperate in research and investment in production of substitutes for smuggled cigarettes and new generation cigarettes.
- Continue to consolidate and maintain the domestic tobacco material growing area, combine research into using domestic materials to gradually replace imported

materials in the context of import difficulties due to the Covid-19 epidemic.

Distinguishing highlights in the mind of customers:

- Tobacco raw materials are tobacco leaves in loose form, preliminarily processed sheets separated from stalks, tobacco fibers, tobacco stalks and other substitute materials used for tobacco production.

Tobacco raw materials through the processing line are separated from stalks, removed impurities, and discarded tobacco leaves that are no longer usable and those that do not meet the quality requirements for cigarette formulations. Drying tobacco at high temperature helps limit the growth of harmful microorganisms on tobacco leaves, increasing the safety and hygiene of the product.

3.3 Brand identity and design kit

Vinataba Brand Logo

Inspired by Vietnamese culture, tradition and spirit, the VINATABA graphic icon is a stylized art with a succinct meaning:

- Tobacco plant icon
- Stylized V symbol, stands for the name of Vietnam.
- The symbol of the leading bird is the pioneering image of VINATABA in the tobacco industry in Vietnam.

Slogan

An eternal value has been accumulated over time, acting as a catalyst connecting the strong links between generations of leaders and employees of Vietnam Tobacco Corporation from tradition to the present. for the Corporation to continue looking to the future, to develop into a strong economic organization of the country.

4. Results of research and discussion

In 2020, production and business activities in the domestic and export markets were strongly affected by the Covid-19 epidemic, especially the export of raw cigarettes and packaged cigarettes. Southeast Asian countries - the main export market of the Corporation, changed their policies towards controlling and restricting tobacco imports, which affected and reduced export orders. In addition, the competition in the domestic tobacco industry is fierce, the domestic raw material area is shrinking, the trend of using raw materials of cigarette units has changed in the direction of increasing the use of tobacco. using imported materials. But with determination and solidarity in leadership, direction and implementation of production and business, Vinataba has overcome the pandemic, stabilized production and business.

4.1 Achievements acquired

During the past 5 years of operation, Vinataba has recorded important achievements in its production and business activities, namely:

Compared to the initial proposed budget rate of 2.3%, Vinataba's contribution to the budget increased by 7.1%.

Vinataba's domestic consumption market increased from 55% to 67% and Vinataba's profit also increased to 6.3%

Member companies are also strongly innovated management tools system. Also in the last term, Vinataba has successfully completed divestment from outside the industry, typically the profit from divestment from Hai Ha confectionery is VND 306 billion and from Huu Nghi

confectionery is VND 240 billion. In particular, the material and spiritual life of cadres, party members and employees has been continuously improved. Average income in the whole Vinataba increased from nearly 11 million VND/person/month in 2015 to 18 million VND/person/month in 2020.

Thanks to that, Vinataba's export turnover also increased by 4%.

✍️ Through these achievements, we can see the great and meaningful development and improvement of Vinataba. Thereby creating a great power for the company to grow stronger

Not only interested in social security work, Vinataba also made a great contribution to the budget. Implemented programs to build houses of compassion, gratitude houses, support flood compatriots and children with congenital heart disease. ... and many other volunteer programs.

✍️ Establish development pillars for the new period

Vinataba promotes development for the entire company in depth, enhances export activities, increases added value in the period of 2021 - 2025 in order to improve competitiveness in the Vietnamese tobacco industry market. The company will focus on development pillars through which will promote all synergies on the basis of synergy and restructure the management system, increase focus on brand, human resources, strategy, research and development, improve the business initiative of subsidiaries.

4.2 Limit

Southeast Asian countries - the main export market of the Corporation, changed their policies towards controlling and restricting tobacco imports, which affected and reduced export orders. In addition, the competition in the domestic tobacco industry is fierce, the domestic raw material area is shrinking, the trend of using raw materials of cigarette units has changed in the direction of increasing the use of tobacco. Using imported materials

According to the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the situation of tobacco materials in the country currently only meets 40% for the production process, most of which have to be imported at a very high cost, accounting for nearly 70% of the rest.

In addition, the tobacco growing area for tobacco production in our country cannot be expanded at present. Therefore, the production situation is further narrowed and the market for tobacco production is severely reduced.

Affecting the local economy, causing people to give up farming, so the difficulties are even more difficult.

Vinataba's production and business activities encountered many difficulties and faced many challenges, such as:

✍️ Facing an increase in excise tax (SCT)

✍️ Tax Contribution to Tobacco Harm Prevention Fund

In addition, the situation of cigarette smuggling in the first months of the year tended to increase and the situation was extremely complicated, this is also a part of the difficulties in production and business activities of Vinataba.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Vinataba's branding solution

Strengthen strategy formulation, apply Internet, e-commerce to invest in export promotion. In addition, develop promotion relationship at home and abroad.

Invest in research, coordination and production of new export products for key markets in the direction of high-end

and modernity. Work closely with tobacco production units to control the quality of products being exported to meet the increasing tastes of customers.

Enhance customer care and after-sales service. Regularly coordinate with customers to monitor product consumption and capture market reactions

Coordinate with the production unit to develop a reasonable price policy for each customer, each separate market to ensure profit - export efficiency for production units.

5.2 Conclude

Vinataba has shown us the importance of brands and how to represent them. Good quality products are not enough, they must be presented in a suitable way to the tastes of consumers. Thanks to a comprehensive makeover from logo, name, to packaging... the "destiny" of Vinataba and Vietnam's tobacco industry has undergone a great change. One of the answers to the question: "How to have competitive domestic products" is branding. Brand should be the crystallization of culture in each product. In the brand there is culture, in the culture is the brand. Vinataba is successful because not only the quality satisfies consumers' requirements, but the form is also very "Vietnamese". The success of a domestic company like Vinataba means enhancing the value and reputation of Vietnamese businesses and Vietnamese goods.

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