

INTERNAL BRANDING IN MULTICULTURAL SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF BARCLAYS BANK (GHANA)

Mathias Akotia & Charity S. Akotia

Abstract

An insight into how the internal branding process is to be managed to create a coherent brand understanding and commitment among multicultural organisations is largely lacking. The main aim of this study was to investigate and highlight the key factors involved in successful internal branding in a multicultural services organisation. Through an exploratory study of Barclays Bank-Ghana, a brand whose financial value has appreciated following a brand driven restructuring, this study has surfaced the key factors involved in internal branding. The findings show that the transformational role of leaders, brand alignment with business strategy, attention to building a purposeful brand-centred unifying culture, enabling employee buy-in, are critical to successful internal branding. The study also found that processes and systems alignment with brand values, cross-functional approach to performance management, and strong customer orientation, were other factors that are critical to successful internal branding at Barclays Bank. Concluding with a suggested modeling of the internal branding process, the study found the generation of brand-centred distinctive competences, through empowered and motivated HR as the goal of internal branding at Barclays.

Key words

Internal Branding, Organizational Culture, Multicultural Organisations, Services Branding, Performance Management.

Introduction

Employees as a critical component of the service production process are ultimately responsible for delivering service brand promise. Therefore, employees need to develop shared understanding of the services brand values which must be established in their hearts and minds to manifest brand supportive behaviour (de Chernatony, 2001). But as services organizations expand internationally and as they increasingly employ multicultural teams, the process of developing shared understanding among employees becomes more complex and challenging (Vallaster, 2004).

The relational and interactional nature of services challenges organizations to deliver expectations raised by external communication and the services process. Over the last decade, emphasis has shifted from internal marketing to internal branding which takes the inside out value-based approach. Internal branding seeks to develop and reinforce a common value based ethos typically attached to corporate brand mission or vision (Mosley 2007). Corporate branding, traditionally, is aimed at external markets. Internal branding translates the corporate brand insight into a strategic concept that strives to put the external marketing strategy in line with its internal values and behavioural practices of members of the organisation (Leberecht, 2004).

As services hold more dominant place in modern society, customer conceptions of services brands are more strongly influenced by the staff they interact

with (de Chernatony, 2001). However, homogeneous work-groups in which members share similar backgrounds are giving way to multicultural groups (Alder, 2001). While research into services branding is in its infancy, an insight into how the internal branding process is to be managed in order to create coherent brand understanding among multicultural workgroups is largely lacking (Vallaster, 2004). The main aim of this study therefore, was to investigate and highlight the key factors involved in successful internal branding in a multicultural services organization. The research questions were:

- What specific psycho-social processes are involved in internal branding in a multicultural services environment?
- What human-centred competitive advantage is generated through internal branding?
- How are the Barclays' brand internal and external commitments balanced to overcome the possible multicultural workgroup challenges?
- How does leadership's enactment of brand values guide employee behaviours to overcome services unique challenges?

Literature review which follows this introduction presents discussions on services branding, culture as a source of competitive advantage and internal branding. Following the research methodology is the presentation of findings. Discussion of findings and managerial implications are then presented. This report is capped by the conclusion to the study.

Literature Review

Services Branding

The service brand is a combination of what the company says the brand is, what others say, and how the company performs the service from the customer point of view (Berry, 2000). Brand alignment within the service organization is critical so members can live and represent the brand to external customers (LePla & Parker, 2002). Services branding involves people within the organization recognizing the brand values as their own, necessitating a brand internalisation process

(Kapferer, 2007). It also means responding and enacting the values that would influence everyday behavior to manifest the brand values.

Berry (2000) proposes one of the few services-specific models for cultivating brand equity and successful brand relationships. According to Berry (2000), a service brand must make a conscious effort to carve a distinct brand personality, the brand must capture and communicate what the company wishes to be famous for with customers, the brand must always make a strong emotional connection with the target audience. Finally, the service brand must be internalised. According to Berry (2000), because of the centrality of service employees to customer experience of the service, it is essential that employees internalise, or live the brand's values and vision.

Culture as Source of Competitive Advantage to Organisations

Organizational culture has become an important phenomenon to study because it is considered a potential foundation for competitive advantage (Barney, 1986). For this reason, managing the culture of an organisation is always important. According to Gronroos (2000), for service firms and manufacturing organizations facing service competition, the development and management of a service culture is a critical task.

Organizational culture is the set of shared, taken-for-granted implicit assumptions that a group holds and that determines how it perceives, thinks about, and reacts to various environments (Schein, 1992). Culture embodies values that can be thought of as residing deep in the organization and these are passed on to new employees through the process of socialisation (Schein, 1992). Culture helps members develop a collective identity and know-how to engender internal integration. Culture guides everyday work relationships and determines how people communicate in an organization, what behaviour is acceptable and how power and status are allocated (Daft & Noe, 2001).

Culture can imprint a set of unwritten rules inside organizational members' minds that can be very

powerful in determining behaviour, thus affecting organization performance (Kotter & Heskett, 1992). Organizational culture also determines how the organization meets goals and deals with outsiders, thus helping organizational external adaptation. The appropriate cultural values can help organization respond rapidly to changes in the market places (Kotter & Heskett, 1992).

Many African countries have several different cultures and the absence of articulated unifying national culture in these countries means that organizations are constituted by multicultural groups that operate in environments bereft of national cultural guide references (Akotia, 2006). A typical international service organization in Ghana has members from indigenous and expatriate multicultural backgrounds. Diversity within a group, however, may increase uncertainty, complexity and inherent confusion in group sense-making processes, making it more difficult for the group to function (Nelson & Quick, 2003). Though cultural diverse groups generate more and better ideas while limiting the risk of groupthink, the way people think and interpret their environment, how they feel and communicate with one another are often divergent, impairing the development of a shared brand understanding (Nelson & Quick, 2003).

A critical challenge for leaders and managers of *multicultural* service firms in Ghana therefore is the cultivation of a purposeful unifying organizational culture as a genuine basis for customer valued services brand positioning (de Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2003). Recent literature holds that while corporations are progressively seeing the benefit of corporate branding strategy, to get the most out of it, corporate vision, culture and identity must align (Hatch & Schultz, 2001). Internal branding allows an organization to align its internal processes and culture with the brand values.

Internal branding

Internal branding is the process of developing a coherent brand understanding and commitment among organizational members (Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005). Mitchell (2002, p.1) asks: "You

tell customers what makes you great, do your employees know?" In response, Mitchell (2002) argues that organizations must address this critical internal market, the very people who can make the brand come alive for the organization's external stakeholders. Internal branding helps employees make a powerful emotional connection to the brand. Without this connection, employees are likely to undermine the expectations set by the organization's external communication, argues Mitchell (2002).

Though branding traditionally has been aimed at external audiences, it has internal implications. Internal branding translates this insight into a strategic concept that synchronizes external marketing strategy with the organization's values and behavioural practices. Internal branding therefore entails the alignment of the organization around the brand by coordinating marketing efforts with principles of organizational change management (Tosti & Stotz, 2001). The marketing effort is focused on defining and clarifying customer value to provide a clear direction for change, in contrast with the change management orientation which is focused on using performance management to identify and operationalise the brand values, practices and behaviours that will take the organization into the desired direction (Tosti & Stotz, 2001). Internal branding then results into marketing strategies that occur within the organization as an on-going change management, in which change means the change in stakeholders' attitudes and expectations.

Through internal branding, the previously independent disciplines, marketing and performance management are integrated by aligning employees with the brand proposition. The synchronization of these disciplines optimizes the effectiveness of marketing strategy. Tosti and Stotz (2001) argue that an organization can then use a systematic, comprehensive approach that takes into account the range of factors impacting organizational effectiveness with the required attention to people who must deliver the brand promise. Gronroos (2000) emphasizes that internal branding can be the most powerful means of developing a service culture as internal branding enables an organization's members to understand and accept the business mission,

strategies and tactics as well as its goods and services. Internal branding therefore engenders attitude management and communications management, both strategic imperatives to services culture creation (Gronroos, 2000).

Two internal branding models, derived from empirical studies, are presented below. While Tosti and Stotz (2001) focus on the process, Bergstrom, Blumenthal and Crothers (2002) 5Cs model's concern is about the key elements involved in internal branding.

Tosti and Stotz (2001) have proposed blending marketing expertise and performance technology to generate the following internal branding processes:

Phase 1: Brand Analysis. This phase involves clarifying the brand proposition and value to customers. The brand proposition is then translated into brand values and behavioral practices for all organization members.

Phase 2: Alignment. This phase involves alignment of leadership, culture and work processes with the specific brand proposition. This involves structural empowerment of employees to brand supportive mindset and behavior.

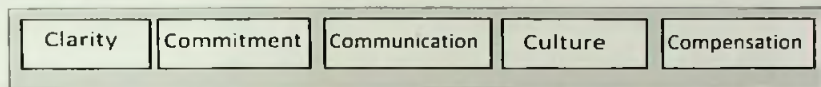
Phase 3: Education and enrolment of managers and employees. This phase involves senior managers of the organization being orientated to thoroughly understand, support and actively demonstrate commitment to the internal branding process. Through HR management and internal communication, employees are also educated and enrolled to live the brand.

Phase 4: Support, assessment and review. This phase involves on-going initiatives to measure and ensure that each phase and the overall internal brand implementation achieve the corporate brand's goals.

Bergstrom, Blumenthal and Crothers (2002) on the other hand propose the 5Cs model of internal branding which highlight the core elements as:

Clarity (brand), Commitment, Communications, Culture and Compensation, as represented in Figure 1 below. Clarity refers to what the brand is and how it should be communicated, to whom it must be addressed and the translations of brand attributes into language, sensory symbols that become the cornerstone of the brand. To Bergstrom et al (2002), Commitment refers to the building of consensus around the brand, creating a general sense of shared understanding and commitment. Communication within and without the organisation must reflect a deeply felt need for employees to approve of and appreciate the process. This emphasis is demonstrated through leadership by example, high frequency communication, use of multiple channels and environmental management.

Figure 1: The 5Cs Internal Branding Model



Source: The 5Cs model adapted from Bergstrom, Blumenthal and Crothers (2002).

According to Bergstrom et al. (2002), for true internal branding to take place, the organisation must anticipate, acknowledge and respond effectively to the inevitable cultural resistance that will spring up. For Culture change to happen, there must be a reason to co-operate and there must be consequences for opting in or out. The only way to sustain a strong brand is to offer appropriate Compensation for those who deliver it. The brand is a medium of exchange that works both ways: companies that uphold it can demand higher prices and must therefore pay higher prices to members of organisations. They emphasise that employees must feel rewarded for upholding the brand.

Research Methodology

Considering the research aim, the purpose of the research was exploratory, to enable the researchers gain insights into, and deepen understanding of how internal branding is advanced to gain a coherent brand understanding among multicultural workgroups, and to identify future research areas. The research questions demanded answers that emphasized full contextual analysis of internal

organizational processes and their relationships within a single organization. With a focus on generating detailed valuable insights for problem solving, a single case study approach was adopted, consistent with Bergstrom et al. (2002).

The population and sample: All participants in the study were drawn from Barclays' brand leadership, management and officers in Accra-Tema; this twin city hosts Barclays' country headquarters and more than half of the country branches. From the population of Barclays' brand leadership team, management and officers, three Barclays' brand leaders responsible for brand strategy development, six managers and fifteen officers were interviewed. The sample was chosen to reflect how the corporate brand was being progressed and internalised by corporate leadership on one hand, and how it was being internalised by management and employees of the organisation on the other hand. Since the main aim was to explore and deepen understanding of internal branding, purposeful sampling, on the basis of who was knowledgeable and available to articulate opinions clearly about brand strategy and implementation, was employed.

Data sources and collection: Both primary and secondary data sources were used. Considering the research questions and the fact that the sample was constituted by busy brand leaders responsible for brand strategy development, bank managers and officers who are brand implementers, the most appropriate qualitative data collection method was found to be in-depth interviewing (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007).

The interview was semi-structured, consistent with a discussion guide that elicited responses to questions on the business model and how it informs the brand strategy development, how brand strategy is clarified and internally implemented, and how brand strategy and performance management are integrated through human resource (HR) policies and practices. The guide also elicited responses on how brand internalisation engenders brand values and supportive behaviour, and how a purposeful brand culture is spawned. For an emerging area of study, the qualitative data design provided a more holistic

and richer insight into the experiences of respondents with the internal brand, beyond the understanding that would be generated through a quantitative study (Malhotra & Birks, 2003). The secondary source depended largely on published financial accounts (1998-2006) of leading banks in Ghana, and downloads from Barclays' worldwide and country websites.

Data Analyses and Presentation: All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Thematic content analysis was used to analyze the data. Common themes that cut across the respondents' views were identified. The codes were not pre-specified, but resulted from the data analysis. The results have been presented in a factual narrative format that attempts to represent the respondents' relationships and experiences with the Barclays brand consistent with other studies on services branding (de Chernatony, Drury, Segal-Horn, 2003).

The Findings

Barclays Ghana: a brand in phenomenal growth

Barclays-Ghana was established in 1917 (Anin, 2000). Barclays-Ghana, in response to competitive threats and growth opportunities as the result of improvements in the Ghanaian economy embarked on brand-centered corporate restructuring in 1998. Since 1998, Barclays, now a wholly owned subsidiary of Barclays Bank Plc, has become associated with several "firsts" in financial services innovation in Ghana. For example, Barclays was the first truly nationally networked bank, providing real time banking at all its twenty-five branches. In 2002, Barclays launched the first automated telephone banking operated in Ghana. Barclays again was the first to introduce on-line banking for its corporate customers.

Barclays Financial Performance: Most of Barclays' innovations were introduced after its 1998 restructuring that has taken the company to a new height in services brand financial success in Ghana (Akotia, 2007). From the fourth position in 1998 on many of the bank brands financial value indicators, Barclays became the market leader by 2003. The financial highlights (1998-2006) of the six top bank brands in Ghana are set below in Tables 1-3.

Table 1: Total Operating Income (€b) R=Rank

Top 6 Banks	1998 R	1999 R	2000 R	2001 R	2002 R	2003 R	2004 R	2005 R	2006 R
GCB	131 2	224 1	490 1	695 1	706 1	764 1	839 1	1037 1	1227 1
SCB	180 1	200 2	304 2	425 2	447 2	556 3	602 3	710 3	846 3
Barclays	106 4	146 3	297 3	425 2	443 3	623 2	757 2	808 2	910 2
SGSSB	107 3	126 4	235 4	284 3	295 4	357 3	408 5	445 4	518 5
ADB	59 5	89 5	238 5	269 4	290 5	344 4	453 4	403 5	542 4
Ecobank	-	50 6	125 6	151 5	165 6	243 5	294 6	398 6	492 6

From the fourth position in 1998 Barclays claimed the second position from 2003 in revenue.

Table 2: Profit before tax (€b) R=Rank

Top 6 Banks	1998 R	1999 R	2000 R	2001 R	2002 R	2003 R	2004 R	2005 R	2006 R
GCB	50 3	167 1	200 1	297 1	281 1	216 3	234 3	224 3	392 3
SCB	102 1	123 2	151 3	167 3	215 3	299 2	304 2	354 2	435 2
Barclays	40 4	70 3	192 2	282 2	266 2	329 1	431 1	410 1	450 1
SGSSB	62 2	60 4	125 4	158 4	153 4	126 4	169 4	159 5	193 5
ADB	24 5	39 5	100 5	117 5	73 6	88 6	123 6	81 6	126 6
EBC	-	29 6	77 6	87 6	89 5	120 5	148 5	187 4	240 4

From the fourth position in 1998, Barclays become the market profit leader in 2003.

Table 3: Return on Assets% R= Rank

Top 6 Banks	1998 R	1999 R	2000 R	2001 R	2002 R	2003 R	2004 R	2005 R	2006 R
GCB	3.0 5	5.0 4	6.2 4	4.4 5	3.8 4	1.8 6	2.9 4	2.2 5	3.3 4
SCB	7.4 1	4.9 5	3.7 6	4.7 4	4.3 2	4.6 2	4.4 2	4.5 2	4.0 2
Barclays	4.0 4	5.1 3	7.4 2	7.4 1	6.0 1	5.6 1	5.2 1	5.5 1	4.8 1
SGSSB	5.4 2	5.3 2	6.3 3	6.7 3	4.2 3	4.2 3	4.4 2	3.2 3	2.7 6
ADB	5.0 3	5.6 1	7.8 1	7.2 1	3.5 5	2.6 5	3.6 3	2.2 5	2.8 5
EBC	-	-	4.7 5	4.1 6	3.8 4	3.8 4	3.6 3	3.0 4	3.8 3

Barclays became the market leader on return on assets from 2001.

The management of the corporate brand restructuring

Rationale for change: Why the corporate restructuring, and how was the sense of urgency established? Following Ghana government's financial reforms that started in 1988, which involved banking sector deregulation, government

diversification of banks, restructuring of the central bank, recapitalization of distressed banks through the recovery of non-performing assets of these banks, competition in the banking sector intensified. Many new banks, for example, Ecobank (1989), Prudential Bank (1993), First Atlantic (1994), Metropolitan (1994), The Trust Bank (1995), International Commercial Bank (1996) were established, heightening the emerging banking sector competition (Anin, 2000).

Barclays recognized that change was imperative for the company's survival and sold the need for change to corporate stakeholders. Opportunity for pan-African Barclays management approach, following similar deregulation and improvement in business climate in many other countries and the appointment of a new Barclays (Ghana) managing director, Mr. Kobina Quansah, fired up the momentum for change.

At restructuring, the organisation needed a coalition with enough power to guide the change process and create a sense of team-work (Kotter, 1996) as top team shared task understanding, and involvement were considered critical. Barclays took a number of ground breaking decisions. A core of young brilliant managers more likely to adopt the change were either promoted or recruited into key positions. For example, Barclays recruited a new HR Partner (from UK), Marketing Manager (from Unilever), Corporate Director (from Standard Chartered), Financial Director (from CAL Bank) and Financial Manager (from SSB Bank). Similarly, many long serving managers and officers were retired, paving the way for a coalition of change agents to be established.

Barclays Business and Brand Strategy redefinition

At the Barclays 1998 restructuring, the business model was espoused as a *high economic value return business relationships, achieved through differentiated brand business founded on excellent customer service and innovation in superior products and processes*. Barclays' cultural revolution with the focus on values management through brand behaviours was to give expression to the brand proposition.

Barclays mission was re-defined to place appropriate emphases on the customer, employee and community, as one that is *"recognized as an innovative customer focused company that delivers superb products and services, offers excellent career opportunities for its people and contributes positively to the communities in which we live and work"* (Brand leadership). Barclays purposefully defined its culture as one in which people are focused on how they can make a difference and add value to their customers. Barclays' values are centred on delighting customers

and other stakeholders. To enact its mission and values which are at the heart of its business strategy, Barclays has espoused a set of behaviors. These six behaviours (the 6 Bs) *"provide the framework for achievement and set the tone for the values that stimulate success"* (Brand leadership). The Barclays' behaviors are to *"delight customers, drive performance, execute plans at speed, grow talent and capability, project and enhance reputation, build pride and passion"* (All participants).

To ensure consistency and synergy in Africa, Barclays has a pan-African approach to brand management. The country brand manager is the managing director who has overall accountability for consumer brand equity and financial performance. Barclays-Ghana has adopted monolithic corporate and commercial branding with line extensions to cater for specific propositions. For example, Barclays Business Master is Barclays brand line extension tailored to the requirements of the small scale entrepreneur.

Following Barclays 1998 restructuring, the brand promise was defined as to *"create a lasting impression of excellent service by proactively serving customers, in a friendly manner within a professional environment, where we get things right first time"* and the Barclays behaviours are there *"to inspire and guide employees to deliver the highest levels of customer satisfaction"* (Branch manager). Barclays also repositioned itself from *"safe and secure bank"* to *"innovative, modern and responsive financial service leader"*. This is what a personal banker said about the brand's repositioning, *"...we used to be very slow to change...but today, we are always taking the lead in customer centred innovations..."*

As part of Barclays brand redefinition, the role of customers in the service value delivery process has been defined through active and purposeful recruitment, education and the management of its brand marketing mix. Barclays, aiming to be an employer of choice for its *"best and brightest employees,"* has created a *"major cultural change in the financial services industry"*, through offering a *"wealth of career opportunities, developing our people and supporting life-long learning for them"* (www.barclays.com.uk).

Internalization of brand values and behaviours

Management buy-in and empowerment: This phase is about managers understanding, support and active demonstration of commitment to the internal brand building process (Tosti & Stotz, 2001) so as to lead the change. In Barclays, this means providing members with the soft and hard competencies, pivoted on the brand values. Management intellectual buy-in and emotional commitment were achieved through brand literacy programmes, performance and human resource (HR) management. Technical and managerial processes are centred on the brand and thus become channels for brand literacy. Management's commitment is engendered through the HR processes: recruitment and induction into the Barclays' behaviours and technical roles, reward schemes based on the behaviours and functional objectives, and socialization into the corporate brand culture. Cross-functional brand assignments and projects (for example, Barclays Mile Ahead promotion) help establish an overall brand view among management.

Education and enrolment of employees: Once the Barclays' brand was defined and top management understanding, involvement and commitment were assured, Barclays systematically rolled-out the brand through brand literacy programs, performance management and HR practice. Initial Organizational Climate study provided relevant information and direction. Employees were then involved in workshops and durbars that provided an introduction, explanation and multiple experiences that characterize the core brand values.

Through the education process, employees had the opportunity to know and experience the brand. Typically, a young graduate goes through an intense two-year Barclays' leadership program, a programme that provides functional, managerial as well as Barclays' brand behavioural orientation. Barclays University, an online learning and development facility, and Barclays' training school and library in Accra, ensure employees are provided with Barclays' brand oriented learning support.

Brand driven policies and systems: Many new systems and policies have been introduced to

support the new brand identity facets. Customer focus with the inverted service triangle ensures all employees are empowered. As part of the restructuring, performance appraisal was changed to development appraisal. A 360° performance and development feedback was introduced. Employee compensation, like all benefits, was made competitive to reflect the *"performance levels of the individual concerned and the market rate for the role"* (A Barclays' manager). An individual's performance is rated on the bases of performance on the functional objectives, defined by *what* the individual is expected to do, and the behaviour characterizing performance, that is *how* the tasks are carried out consistent with the brand values. Functional objectives are stated in terms of what is described as the Barclays 5Cs- Customers, Company, Colleagues, Community and Controls. Every employee signs to a performance contract, expressed in terms of the specific 5Cs and 6Bs. An end of the year development appraisal is conducted through the Barclays' 360° feedback. Because of the *"feedback and performance related benefits there is now a consistent effort by staff to deliver and employees encourage colleagues falling behind to improve"* (A Personal Banker).

Opportunity is crafted for story telling in Barclays. Barclays presents to employees the Eagle Award with a citation which generously describes the exceptional performance of the award winner. This sparks off contrived storytelling about the heroic deeds of exceptional employees to further reinforce the brand values among organization members.

At Barclays, all vacancies are announced internally, on Barclays' intranet and notice boards before external advertising. All prospects are carefully selected. A typical recruitment process involves screening of applicant, selection tests, board interviews and final interview with recruiting head of section or department. Barclays' recruitment processes focuses on the candidate's functional expertise and potential to live out the Barclays behaviours.

Internal communication

Internal communication at Barclays involves a mix of

reinforcing and coherent vehicles and media to convey the brand proposition to employees and also to empower and motivate them in their roles. Substantial intra-organisation communication at Barclays is through the intranet. All employees of officer grade and above at Barclays-Ghana are on the intranet. Corporate news reports, functional information, development material, recruitment adverts are disseminated on the net, so are Barclays brand advertising pop-ups. For example, there are constant pop-ups of the Barclays 6 Bs and the 5Cs. All significant physical evidences at Barclays are 'branded'. At unit-levels every day, staff meetings are held to communicate task and brand related information. Research findings and implications are shared at such durbars and meetings.

All external communication is first communicated through internal sources. For a new recruit, the first point of brand experience is the distinct Barclays recruitment adverts. The format, general impression of print ad, the Barclays' font, logo (eagle), color (blue) and slogan (fluent in finance) are always consistently Barclays. The induction, training and development activities orientate new recruits to functional as well as Barclays' behaviours.

Brand-centred Organisational Resources

This stage relates to the internal resources and competences that are generated following the internalisation processes. Investment in brand-centred human resource management engenders brand manifesting behaviours. Barclays brand internalisation results into marketing strategies that occur within the organisation as an on-going change management, enabling Barclays' to have inbuilt flexibility and adaptability to customers expectations, enabling on-going change. Barclays' organisational capability reflects its skills, know-how and reputation to combining resources to create customer value. One unique Barclays' resource is their relationship with the loyal high valued Barclays' customers. One distinctive capability of Barclays is its ability to leverage its worldwide networks and partnerships to local customer advantage. Another is its ability to target superior brand propositions to chosen customer segments.

Institutionalization of the changes

At Barclays, improvements that stand the test of time are consolidated. Feedback received from Barclays' customers and employee dialogue systems enable Barclays to review its brand delivery. For example in 2004, corporate banking services were enhanced when a new corporate office was established in the prestigious Ridge neighbourhood of Accra to cater solely for corporate customers, following consumer research. Prestige centers are being opened in convenient and affluent locations to cater for upscale retail customers who desire convenient, fast and dedicated attention in plush surroundings.

At Barclays, there is constant review of management structures, systems and policies that do not match the brand values. For example, the previously tall and bureaucratic organizational structure has been flattened through removal of the deputy Managing Director and General Manager roles. New policies have been put in place to empower relationship and branch managers. HR policies and systems are structured to promote brand manifesting behaviours. Hiring, promotion and employee development are in favor of employees who best manifest brand behaviour. To consolidate the gains, Barclays revitalizes the brand with new brand projects and themes. Internal organization climate study, consumer equity study, and financial performance analyses are a few of the evaluation mechanisms Barclays employs to ensure it is on track with brand strategy.

Modeling the Internal Brand

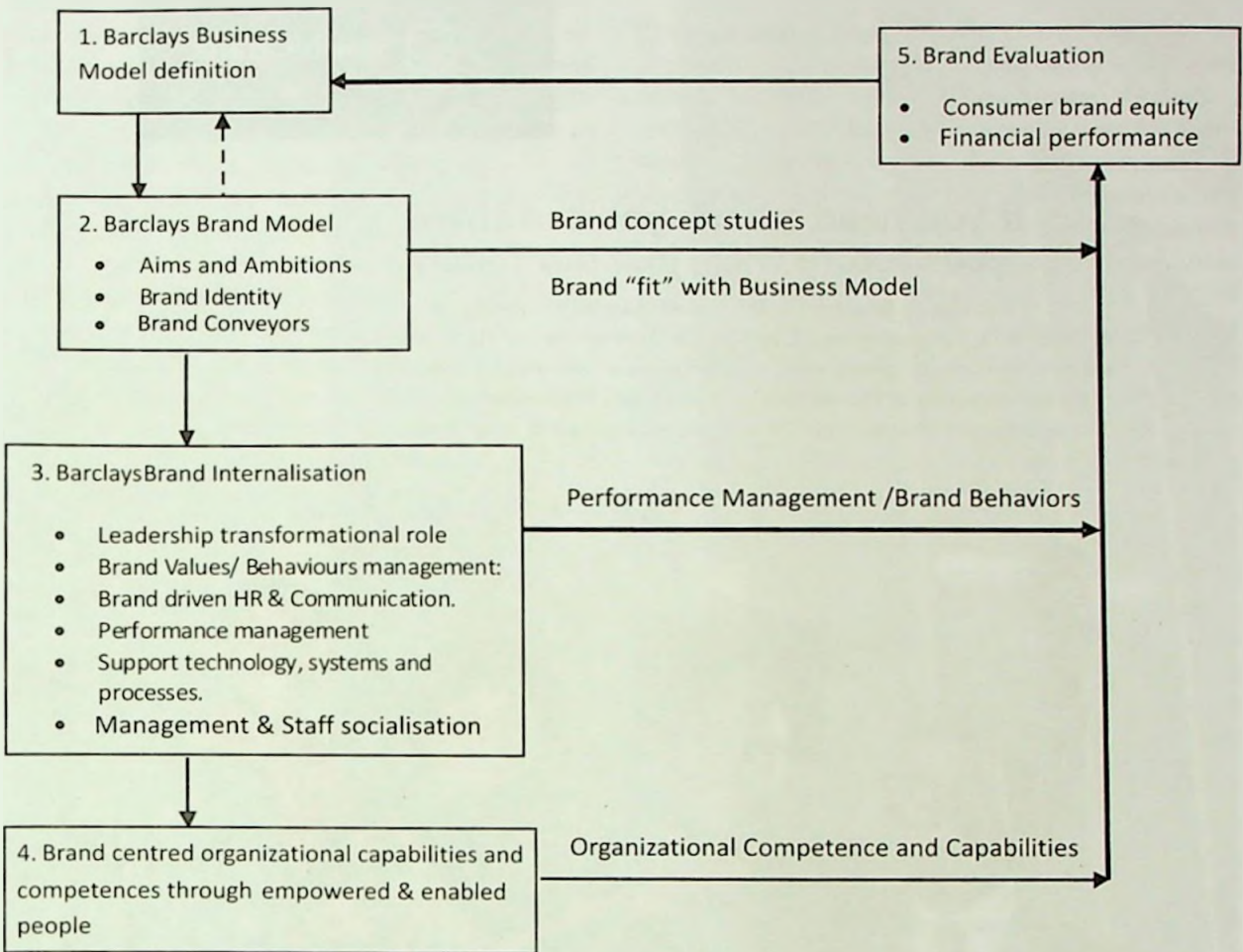
Following the study, the suggested Barclays' internal branding process is presented below in Figure 2. This model shows the processes followed in internal branding as well as the success factors.

Stage 1: Business model: As indicated in Figure 2 (above), the process began with a definition of the Barclays' business strategy

Stage 2: Brand model definition: The brand model was crafted to give expression to the business model.

Stage 3: Internalization of brand values: Internal brand internalisation leads to employee socialization into a common brand culture, a stage where

Figure 2: Suggested Model of Barclays Internal Branding Process



performance management was integrated with the brand strategy to engender the brand behaviors.

Stage 4: Generation of Brand centered organizational competences. The brand behaviors result in brand centered organization competences and capabilities based on enabled and empowered workforce.

Stage 5: Evaluation of brand internalisation: The notes on the right of the boxes (Figure 2) represent stage by stage evaluation mechanisms Barclays has adopted to ensure it stays on course with strategy. The box to the right represents Barclays' brand evaluation mechanism.

Discussion and Managerial Implications

Barclays brand financial value has dramatically appreciated since its 1998 brand centered restructuring. Since that time, more attention has been given to building the brand identity and internalizing the brand values among members of the Barclays organization. The focus of the brand internalization effort was to enable and empower members of the organization to manifest brand supportive behavior to internal and external customers. At Barclays-Ghana, the brand's internal and external commitments are balanced to overcome the possible multicultural workgroup challenges by aligning employees with the promise the corporate brand makes to the external market.



If you need a bank you can share your future with, join our family.

Preparing for tomorrow should not compromise the way you live today. At Stanbic Bank, our commitment is to help you get the most from a team that will assist you with everyday banking needs, as well as advice on different ways to save for tomorrow. After all, we want you to start seeing your financial challenges as opportunities. Whatever life has in store, you can always count on our family.

Inspired. Motivated. Involved.



Appropriate investments in Barclays' human capital and supportive technology, product and service process innovations, and the re-organization and alignment to customer segments have centred on growing the influence of the brand so as to create saliency, image and trusting relationships with customers. Barclays' values management creates an environment that reinforces dedication to an enduring purposeful ideology and performance culture centered on the brand values.

Leadership in Barclays is not passive. It constitutes the face of the brand, setting the tone for all brand supportive behaviors. The brand values, expressed in behaviors, are the credo channeling staff energies to brand performance, rewarding those who enact their roles and ejecting those who cannot or are unwilling. In such an organisation there is little room for those who will not and cannot conform to brand supportive behaviors. The Barclays behaviors articulate the deep values that must be upheld and lived by members of the organization (Bergstrom et al, 2002). The implication for managers is that people in an organization must be orchestrated to reinforce a culture which builds and preserves its core brand values (Gronroos, 2000). This is why effective communication has become imperative in the internal branding process, in enabling and empowering employees to support the brand (Bergstrom et al, 2002).

The generation of brand-centered organizational resources and capabilities revolving on HR are the criticality of Barclays' internal branding. Marketing and performance management, are integrated by aligning internal organization with the brand propositions (Tosti & Stotz, 2001). The implication is that internal branding should focus on people-centered internally generated organisational capabilities to give organization competitive advantage and distinctive competences (Gronroos, 2000). Another implication is that companies seeking to capitalize services through an empowered work environment should first define their brand values, impose the tight ideology, screen and socialize willing and motivated people into that ideology, give tremendous sense of responsibility that comes with membership of that elite

organization (Bergstrom et al, 2002; Tosti and Stotz, 2001).

Since successful organisational change depends on organisational culture and managing corporate culture is critical to the firm's success (Gronroos, 2000; Kotter & Heskett, 1992), there is need for an in-depth understanding of their transformational leadership roles in directing the internal brand building process. The implication is that the behaviors and actions of services organizations' leaders must convey meaning and messages that add to staff understanding of their roles during internal brand building (Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005). Another implication is that considerable attention needs to be devoted to creating a purposeful culture guide references for multicultural services organizations.

Conclusion

There is paucity in the understanding of how internal branding is to be managed in order to create a coherent brand expression in multi-cultural service organizations. This paper sought to advance knowledge on internal branding in a multicultural services organization, highlighting the processes and factors that are critical to internal branding.

Barclays' response to the service culture challenge has involved a two-way recognition. Internally, the organization people must internalize the brand values, prior to brand promotion to external audience (LePla & Parker, 2002). Internal branding leads to internally generated competitive advantage, difficult to copy because they are culturally-based (Gronroos, 2000). Externally, the brand promise and values must be communicated and delivered to the chosen market and customers must recognize the brand values as their values that are attractive, relevant for the brand to become successful. The aim is to deliver a unique brand experience and also ensure that the consequential satisfaction would be ascribed to the service brand (Kapferer, 2007).

The generation of internal brand resources and capabilities, pivoted on empowered, dedicated and motivated human resource, and excellent customer service and innovation in superior products and processes were found to be the criticality of Barclays'

internal branding. This requires an active role for leadership in making meaning and guiding the branding process, an elevated brand-centred role for HR, and investment in human capital.

Moving into the future it is intended that quantitative study research will be undertaken among multicultural services organizations to demonstrate the consistency of the internal branding process.

REFERENCES

- Adler, N. (2001);** International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior. Mason, Ohio: South Western.
- Annin, T. (2000).** Banking in Ghana. Accra: Woeli.
- Akotia M. (2006).** Engendering a High Performance Culture through Internal Branding in African Organizations. *IFE Psychologia*, 14(1), 95-108.
- Akotia, M. (2007).** Strategic Services Branding. *GIMPA Journal of Leadership, Management & Administration*, 5(1), 82-108.
- Barney, J. (1986).** Organisational Cultures. Can it be a source of Sustained Competitive Advantage. *Academy of Management Review*, 11 (3), 656-666.
- Berry, L. (2000).** Cultivating Services Brand Equity. *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science*, 28(1), 128-137.
- Collins, J. & Porras, J. (1998).** Built to Last. London: Random House.
- Daft, R & Noe, R (2001).** Organizational Behavior. Fort Worth: Harcourt College.
- de Chernatony, L. (2001).** From Brand Vision to Brand Evaluation: Strategically Building and Sustaining Brands. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.
- de Chernatony, L. & Segal-Horn, S. (2003).** The Criteria for Successful Service Brands. *European Journal of Marketing*, 37, 7/8, 1095-1118.
- de Chernatony L. Harris F.J. & Christodoulides, G. (2004).** Measuring the consumer-based equity of financial service brands. *The Services Industries Journal*, 24, 215-33.
- de Chernatony, L., Drury, S. & Segal-Horn, S. (2003).** Building a service brand: stages, people and orientations. *The Services Industry Journal*, 23(03), 1-21.
- Gronroos, C. (2000).** Service Management and Marketing. Chichester: John Wiley.
- Hatch, M. & Schultz, M. (2001).** Are the Strategic Stars Aligned for your Corporate Brand? *Harvard Business Review*, 02, 128-134.
- Kapferer, J. (2007).** The New Strategic Brand Management. London: Kogan Page.
- Kotter, J. (1996).** Leading Change. Boston: Harvard University Press.
- Kotter, J. & Heskett, J. (1992).** Corporate Culture and Performance. New York: The Free Press.
- Leberecht, T. (2004).** True Blue; Internal branding as a strategic corporate communications tool; A case study of Jetblue Airways. *Brandchannel*. (on line).
- LePla, J. & Parker, L. (2002).** Integrated Branding: Becoming Brand Driven through Company-wide action. London: Kogan Page.
- Malhotra, N. & Birks, D (2003).** Marketing Research. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Mitchell, C. (2002).** Selling the Brand Inside. *Harvard Business Review*, 01, 80-81.
- Mosley, R.W. (2007).** Customer experience, organizational culture and the employer brand. *Brand Management*, 15(2), 123-134.
- Nelson, D. & Quick, C. (2003).** Organizational behavior. Mason: Thompson South Western.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. And Thornhill, A. (2007).** Research methods for business students. Harlow: Financial Times/Prentice Hall.
- Schein, E (1992).** Organizational Culture and Leadership. San Francisco: J Bass.
- Tosti, D. & Stotz, R. (2001).** Brand: Building Your Brand from the Inside Out. *Marketing Management*, 10, 28-33.
- www.barclays.com.uk** (down loaded on 9-9-07).
- www.barclays.com/africa/ghana** (down loaded on 9-9-07).

Vallaster, C (2004). Internal Brand Building in Multicultural Organizations. *Qualitative Market Research*, 02, 100-113.

Vallaster, C. & de Chernatony, L. (2005). Internationalization of Service Brands: *Journal of Marketing Management*, 13, 1/7, 181-201.

In-depth Interview Guide

Good morning/afternoon.

My name is ----- and I am a lecturer at the GIMPA/University of Ghana. I am researching on Barclays brand development. I wonder if I could ask you a few questions. The confidentiality of your identity and responses are assured. Thank you.

1. Please describe your role at Barclays Bank. What specifically do you do? How exciting do you find it (Probe how well he/she is a Brand Ambassador)
2. Not long ago, Barclays was No.4 Bank in Ghana in profit terms. Today, it is the market leader. What did Barclays do to become No.1? What is Barclays doing right? (Probe the critical success factors and the role of Branding.)
3. When we say Barclays what comes into your mind? What images do you associate with Barclays? What images in your view do customers associate with Barclays?
4. What is Barclays' business about?
5. In your view what does Barclays Brand promise employees/customers. (Probe for functional and emotional benefits). How are these promises realized
6. How would you describe the Barclays culture? What values/behaviors are expected? How do you live out these behaviors? (Probe role of Leadership, Managers and Officers, and Customers.).
7. In your view, what does the organization do to

ensure you enact the Barclays behaviors? (Probe HR practices: employee selection, training and development, reward schemes, appraisal and career development; role of leadership, internal communication & attitude management, etc).

8. How will Barclays look five, ten years from now? How will you achieve that? (Probe alignment with Barclays' mission and vision statements)

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Mathias Akotia (PhD Candidate; MPhil, BSc in Business; MCIMG) is Management Partner at Market Focus. He is also an adjunct lecturer in Marketing and Entrepreneurship at Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration. Previously, Marketing Director and Managing Director of listed companies, Mr Akotia writes on brands marketing and marketing strategy. He can be reached on +233 24 4423318; mathias4042@yahoo.com; Market Focus, P.O Box AH 359, Achimota, Ghana.

Charity S. Akotia (PhD) is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana, Legon. She obtained her Master's degree at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Canada and a doctoral degree from the University of Ghana. She is a social-community psychologist and teaches both undergraduate and postgraduate students. She has published in a number of Journals in and outside Ghana and is currently involved in international research on suicide and suicide prevention. She is also involved in market research for several reputable organizations in Ghana. She can be reached on +233 20 8127695; sakotia@libr.ug.edu.gh; Department of Psychology, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana.