

Brand Valuation and ISO 10668

Anupama Vijayakumar* and Filma V**
 Edited by Dr. Sudhir Ravindran***

Brand Valuation exercises help in detecting the strengths and weaknesses of the brand, helping companies to distinguish between strong brands and weak brands and allocate resources in the most appropriate way. This article reviews brand valuation in the light of new ISO standard – 10668 which sets out the requirements for procedures and methods of monetary brand value measurement.

"If this business were split up, I would give you the land and bricks and mortar, and I would take the brands and trade marks and I would fare better than you."

—John Stuart
 Chairman of Quaker (ca.1900)

A brand is a name, logo, slogan and/or design scheme associated with a product or service. It often includes a logo, fonts, colour schemes, symbols and sounds which may be developed to represent implicit values, ideas and even a personality.¹ The most fundamental function of a brand is to enable the consumers to distinguish the products produced by one enterprise from that of the other.

It is possible to argue that the majority of business value is derived from brands.² They have the potential to generate revenue for years to come. Through their associations with the consumers, brands create a significant economic impact. They initiate future purchases by influencing the choices of customers, employees and government authorities. The consumer's awareness and perception about the company's brands reflect the bottom line of the company. In a way, it represents the reputation and goodwill acquired by the business and is therefore, used as a marketing tool by the companies.

Nowadays, the words "trade mark" and "brand" are used synonymously. According to the report of the

* Intern with Altacit Global and IIIrd year student of National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata

** Head with Altacit Global, Trade Mark Department. E-mail: trademark@altacit.com

*** Solicitor-England and Wales, Patent and Trade mark Agent and Attorney with Altacit Global. E-mail:ravindran@altacit.com

1 Brand Valuation, <http://www.brandvaluation.co.uk/Brand-Valuation-Issues/What-is-brand-valuation-11.html>

2 Jan Lindermann, Brand Valuation: The Financial Value of Brands http://www.brandchannel.com/papers_review.asp?sp_id=357

Accounting Standards Committee, a trade mark is a subset of a far wider concept of brand. A trade mark is a distinctive sign or indicator of some kind which is used by an individual, business organisation or another legal entity to allow consumers to identify the source of its products and services and to distinguish uniquely its products from those of other entities. It helps in communicating its uniqueness to the consumer.³

Need For Brand Valuation

The term brand value can have various definitions according to the context in which it is used. In some contexts, it can mean the financial value of the brand. Otherwise, it can refer to the value of one of the attributes that contribute to the value of the brand. Such attributes may include brand awareness, familiarity, relevance, heritage and understanding.

Brand Valuation exercises help in detecting the strengths and weaknesses of the brand, helping companies to distinguish between strong brands and weak brands and allocate resources in the most appropriate way. As far as accounting is concerned, brand valuation helps in areas like balance sheet reporting, tax planning, licensing and franchising, mergers and acquisitions, litigations, investor relations and securitised borrowing.⁴

Brand valuation has various tangible and intangible benefits.

Among intangible benefits, brand valuation⁵:

- Gives a picture of public loyalty at large.
- Acts as an indicator of effective utilisation.
- Acts as an excellent tool for strategy development by revealing the strengths and weaknesses of the brand.

Among tangible benefits, brand valuation⁶:

- Helps in capitalisation;
- Gives a clearer picture of goodwill acquired by the band;
- Facilitates speedy transfer of capital during dissolution;
- Enables the use of Intellectual Property as collateral security.

Brand valuation also helps the management to review brand decisions by linking investment made on a brand to the increase in brand value over a reasonable period of time. It reveals to the management, the disparities between its assumptions and the market realities pertaining to the brand.⁷ ISO 10668, the standard on brand valuation laid down in 2010, acts as a comprehensive set of guidelines to be followed in a brand valuation exercise.

About ISO

The International Standard Organisation (ISO) was formed on 23rd February, 1947 in London in a

3 Amar Raj Lall and Vinod Khurana, Brand Valuation, <http://www.iiprp.com/tm/brandval.htm>

4 Arindam Bhattacharjee and C. Prashanth, Need for Brand Valuation, <http://www.hinduonnet.com/businessline/2000/03/23/stories/112302c2.htm>

5 Jan Lindermann, Brand Valuation: The Financial Value of Brands, http://www.brandchannel.com/papers_review.asp?sp_id=357

6 Ibid

7 Ibid

conference of 25 delegates. It came out as the product of the merger of two organisations—the International Federation of the National Standardizing Association (ISA), which was established in New York in 1926 and the United Nations Standard Coordinating Committee (UNSCC) established in 1944.⁸ The purpose of the formation of such an organisation was stated to be “to facilitate the international coordination and unification of industrial standards.”⁹ Today, ISO is the pioneer in development of standards in the world and has 163 members.

Why Standards?

Standards can be defined as clear identifiable references that are internationally recognised. They represent an international consensus on the best practice.¹⁰ Standards play a vital role in the current world scenario. Compliance with standards is completely at the volition of the party. But as the current economic trend shows, compliance with standards has become a requirement. With standards like ISO 9001, it has become more of an expectation.¹¹

A whole range of different people and activities are benefited by the usage of standards. Standards ensure certain attributes of products like quality, reliability, safety, interchangeability and compatibility and hence encourage fair

competition in free market economies.

The usage of standards brings along many other social, economic and societal benefits. For businesses, the standards enable them to compete in an international arena, thereby increasing their market reach. For consumers, it serves as an assurance of reliability and safety and offers them a wide range to choose from. As far as innovations are considered, they help in faster dissemination and marketing, by laying down the guidelines for safety and compatibility.¹² In a nutshell, standards:¹³

- Promotes fair competition.
- Help in sharing technological advances and good practices.
- Help in the dissemination of innovation.
- Helps consumers by assuring them of the safety and reliability of a product.

History of ISO 10668

The need for brand valuation gained prominence in the 1980s when there was a wave of acquisitions happening. The accounting practices of the time were not equipped to deal with the valuation of goodwill and other intangible assets. The companies were even penalised in certain cases for making value enhancing acquisitions.¹⁴

8 Founding, http://www.iso.org/iso/about/the_iso_story/iso_story_founding.htm

9 Ibid

10 David Martin, Review of Standards, Best Practice, Testing and Calibration in Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), http://www.fig.net/pub/monthly_articles/september_2008/martin_september_2008.pdf

11 About ISO, http://www.iso.org/iso/about/discover-iso_the-iso-brand.htm

12 Who Standards benefit? http://www.iso.org/iso/about/discovers-iso_who-standards-benefits.htm

13 ISO Standards, http://www.iso.org/iso/about/discover-iso_what-standards-do.htm

14 Brand Valuation, A chapter from brands and branding, An Economist Book, <http://www.marketingritson.com/documents/week1brandvaluation.pdf>

In countries like the UK and France, the accounting aspect of brands was a grey area. In the mid-1980s, Reckitt & Colman, a UK Company put down the value of Airwick, which it had acquired recently in its balance sheet. Reckitt & Colman was followed by Grand Metropolitan's acquisition of Smirnoff.¹⁵

In 1988, Goodman Fielder Wattie (GFW) made a hostile takeover bid to acquire Rank Hovis McDougall (RHM). A part of the defence strategy of RHM was to put down the value of its own brand in its account books. This was the first independent brand valuation to establish that brands could be valued even when the company had created the value by itself. The concept was endorsed by the London Stock Exchange in 1989, by allowing the inclusion of intangible assets in the class test for shareholder approvals during takeovers. This acted as a driving force for branded companies to recognise the value of their intangible assets.¹⁶

Before the ISO standard came into existence, the accounting systems in the UK and the USA provided detailed guidelines as to how to deal with brand valuation. The UK came out with IFRS 10 and 11 on the treatment of acquired goodwill and the USA came out with FASB 141 and 142.¹⁷

If an industry or a sector realises, the need for the existence of a standard in that sector, it is suggested to any member state of the ISO. The member state then proposes it to the ISO. If the proposal is accepted then it is assigned to a technical committee. The technical committee after taking into account

the interests of the member state who made the proposal and other stakeholders and interested parties submits a report, which if approved becomes the final draft which becomes the standard.

The first move towards a standard for brand evaluation was made in Germany. The proposal was made by the Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN), the German Institute for standardisation. The technical committee set up for this purpose began its work in March 2007 and concluded it in December 2009.

ISO 10668: A Synopsis

ISO 10668, the standard for brand valuation can be termed effective since it brought various aspects pertaining to brand valuation under one umbrella. It combines the behavioural, financial and legal aspects related to brands in order to arrive at an accurate result.

The standard sets out two kinds of requirements that need to be followed in a brand valuation exercise:

- General Requirements
- Specific Requirements

In addition, ISO 10668 also sets out the valuation approaches and the valuation inputs.

General Requirements

- Transparency – this requirement involves disclosure and quantification of valuation inputs, the risks and assumptions involved and the sensitivity analyses of the brand value wherever required.

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Interbrand, Brand Valuation: The Financial Value of brands http://www.brandchannel.com/papers_review.asp?sp_id=357

- Validity—the validity has to be based on inputs and assumptions that are valid and relevant.
- Reliability—if the valuation is repeated, the result obtained should be comparable and reconcilable
- Sufficiency—the brand valuation is to be based on sufficient data and analysis.
- Objectivity—the brand valuer should not be biased
- Financial, behavioural and legal parameters—the brand valuer should take into account, all the above parameters.

Specific Requirements

Declaration of Purpose – The first requirement is the declaration of purpose which suggests that the brand valuer is required to state the intended use, addressed audiences, identified asset, premise of value, valuation date and value date. These aspects have to be specified in relation to the purpose of the valuation. The purposes behind brand valuation are diverse, and these include, strategic planning, licensing, accounting, liquidation etc.

It needs to be specified whether the brand valuation is technical or commercial. Technical valuations are usually carried out for licensing, mergers and acquisitions, litigation etc. Commercial valuations are used for marketing strategy, portfolio management etc.¹⁸

Value Concept – The brand valuer needs to take into account the value concept surrounding the brand. The idea behind this is to manage the asset value of the brand.¹⁹ It is concerned with the economic benefit conferred by a brand over its estimated economic life. It is generally calculated by reference to earnings economic profits or cost savings. In order to do this, the brand valuer shall focus on consumer-based inputs like brand supremacy, vitality, stature, environment, safety and support and arrive at a proper assessment of the brand strength.²⁰

Identification of the brand – The brand valuer shall identify, define and describe the brand subject to valuation, i.e. the valuer shall address the query as to what exactly is being valued—the trade mark, the brand or the business.²¹

Valuation Approaches

ISO 10668 suggests the employment of three valuation methods in a brand valuation analysis

Cost Approach – It calculates brand value based on the cost invested in building the brand. The approach is not considered to be effective as the brand value is not equivalent to the cost invested in creating them.

Market Approach – It bases its analysis on what a consumer would pay for a similar brand with similar attributes in the market. The approach is not usually preferred because it is hard to find relevant comparables.²²

18 Ibid 1

19 Ibid

20 Ibid 5

21 Ibid

22 Get ready for the new ISO standard on brand valuation, <http://www.themarketer.co.uk/articles/legal/get-ready-for-the-new-iso-standard-on-brand-valuation>

