

Modeling Brand Equity in International Nonprofit Organizations: A System Dynamics Approach

Nathalie Laidler-Kylander

And

Bernard Simonin

Fletcher School
Tufts University
160 Packard Avenue
Medford, MA 02155 (USA)

Tel: (617)627 5777 Fax: (617) 627 3712

nathalie.laidler_kylander@tufts.edu

Bernard.simonin@tufts.edu

ABSTRACT

While nonprofit organizations and their brands are growing in importance and stature, these organizations display surprisingly limited brand management activities. This is partly due to the fact that no explicit brand equity models exist specifically for nonprofit organizations. The aim of this research is to build a formal model of brand equity for international nonprofit organizations engaged in development, advocacy and relief work, using a combination of a system dynamics approach and grounded theory development. In doing so, we hope to contribute to the system dynamics literature by illustrating the step-by-step process of building a model from actual case studies rather than the traditional approach of literature review. Based on in-depth field work in three organizations (Care, Oxfam, and World Vision), two waves of focus groups with 18 brand managers led to the derivation and validation of a formal brand equity model. At the heart of this model are four core variables (Consistency, Focus, Trust, and Partnerships) and their associated causal loops. As such, this research constitutes a significant attempt to advance our understanding of brand equity in nonprofits through modeling, and to demonstrate the effective use of system dynamics in areas of marketing that have traditionally not considered this methodological approach.

Key Words: Marketing, Nonprofit, International, Brand Equity, Branding, Grounded Theory development, causal loops, focus groups.

Modeling Brand Equity in International Nonprofit Organizations: A System Dynamics Approach

Nonprofit organizations are playing an increasingly important role in our lives and many large international nonprofit organizations are now considered among the world's most powerful and trusted brands (Wooltiff and Deri 2001). At the same time, these organizations are facing tremendous challenges in terms of their ability to implement their missions, and are concurrently facing a crisis of legitimacy (Slim 2002).

Given this context, branding, and by extension, understanding the drivers of brand equity is important, even critical, for international nonprofit organizations (Smillie 1995; Nadaff 2004; and Chiagouris 2005). Yet, nonprofit managers and leaders have seemed reluctant to actively embrace existing brand building activities (Nissim 2004; Bishop 2005; and Ewing and Napoli 2005). This is partly due to the fact that no explicit brand equity models exist specifically for nonprofit organizations (Haigh 2005). Thus, the aim of this research is to build a formal model of brand equity for international nonprofit organizations engaged in development, advocacy and relief work, using a combination of a system dynamics approach and grounded theory development. In doing so, we also hope to contribute to the system dynamics literature by illustrating the step-by-step process of building a model from actual case studies rather than the traditional approach of literature review.

While the call for the 25th International Conference of the System Dynamics Society (marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of the field) highlights the diversity of perspectives and wide range of applications of system dynamics across domains, applications in marketing are in short supply. Paradoxically, system dynamics is a methodology that seems to be particularly well suited for the field of marketing, particularly complex system such as brand equity, but its use to date has been surprisingly limited (Sisodia and Hurly 2002; and Sveiby, Linard and Dvorsky 2002). While many different brand equity models currently exist (Woods, 1998; and Knowles, 2004), to date, none are designed specifically for international nonprofit organizations. Nor have any brand equity models been developed using a system dynamics approach. This study aims at addressing both of these gaps.

Senge argues that a successful system dynamics model should: “organize, clarify and unify knowledge; give people a more effective understanding about an important system; change the way people think about and act within a system (Senge 1990).” It is our hope that this study will do just that: 1) It answers the call for a more unified definition of brand equity (Czellar and Denis 2002), thereby “unifying knowledge; 2) It captures explicit mental models of brand equity, thereby “clarifying knowledge; ” 3) It also provides, “a more effective understanding” of brand equity; 4) Finally, the model provides a framework for nonprofit managers to build and manage brand equity, and demonstrates the use of system dynamics to marketing academics, helping both groups “change the way they think and act.”

Next, we will briefly review some of the basic theoretical tenets of the current study; introduce the underlying methodological approach; detail the research process and data analysis; draw an initial brand equity model centered on four core variables (Consistency, Focus, Trust, and Partnerships); present the results of a second empirical stage aimed at validating and refining the initial model; and, finally, offer some concluding remarks regarding the study, its managerial implications, limitations, and areas of future research undertakings.

Theory and Background Literature

This study draws on three main bodies of research. 1) The existing marketing literature on branding, brand management, brand equity, and brand valuation. 2) The extent literature on nonprofit management, the trends and challenges facing the international nonprofit community, and the differences between nonprofits and for profits. 3) The emerging body of literature on nonprofit brand management.

The first of these literatures provides a context to the concept of brand equity, summarizes existing knowledge, and identifies current research trends in the field of branding and brand management. The second body of literature on nonprofit management gives an overview of the environment in which the case studies in this study operate, and the challenges and opportunities they face. It also provides an overview of some of the differences between for-profits and nonprofit organizations that can lead to insights into the variables that drive brand equity in nonprofits as opposed to for-profit organizations. The final literature to be reviewed is the emerging literature on nonprofit brand management at the heart of which this research and study lies.

BRAND EQUITY

The term brand equity is used in three distinct senses in the marketing literature. The first corresponds to “the total (financial) value of a brand as a separate asset – when it is sold or included on a balance sheet.” The second to “a measure of the strength of consumers’ attachment to the brand,” and the third, as “a description of the associations and beliefs the consumer has about the brand (Feldwick 1996). The first concept is actually brand valuation and is the determination of the financial worth of a specific brand (Abratt and Bick 2003). The second and third concepts focus on the consumer, and are sometimes referred to as consumer brand equity. Feldwick defines the second and third concepts as brand strength and brand description respectively. Most of the brand equity literature, models and debate have centered on the second concept, that of brand strength, and it is this concept which we refer to as brand equity in this paper.

For Aaker, brand equity is “a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol, that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to that firm’s customers (Aaker 1996).” These assets and liabilities can be grouped into five main categories or variables: brand loyalty, name awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and other assets (such as patents and trademarks), and can be thought of as the drivers and levers of the brand. Many alternative brand equity models exist but common components include consumer awareness, loyalty, consumer-relationships, and the positive consumer perceptions of the brand. These models offer a measure of a brand’s relative strength and resilience, insight into consumer preferences and some suggestions as to the drivers of long-term brand equity. The methodologies for defining and measuring brand equity vary tremendously. Indeed, many authors have called for a greater degree of homogenization and a “universally acceptable and simple to understand meaning” of brand equity (Woods 1998; Blackston 2000; and Knowles 2004). Reynolds and Phillips assert that the “lack of agreement about something this fundamental (measurement of brand equity) says much about the state of brand strategy and brand research (Reynolds and Phillips 2005).” It is also important to note that to date, no explicit brand equity models exist for nonprofit organizations; it is this gap that is addressed by this research.

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The changing landscape of international nonprofit organizations has profoundly altered the mindset and duties of nonprofit managers and leaders, and propelled them into new competitive arenas where astute brand stewardship can be a differential advantage (Laidler-Kylander, Quelch, and Simonin 2007). Smillie, considers that the building and nurturing of strong global brands is critical for the future survival of many of today's major international NGOs (Smille 1995). Although having strong brand equity is certainly no panacea, it is critical for raising funds, implementing the organization's mission and protecting employees and volunteers.

Oster suggests that nonprofit organizations differ from their for-profit counterparts in at least five major areas: their organizational culture; their human resources; their collaborative rather than competitive approaches; the complexity of their customers; and the importance of mission (Oster 1995). Ritchie, Swami and Weinberg add that, "some distinct features of nonprofits make the brand concept especially relevant to them." And suggest that they build brand equity differently than for profits (Richie, Swami, Weinberg 1999). Finally, Sargeant and Ford conclude that, "strongly differentiated nonprofit brands are surprisingly rare" and that, "nonprofits are perceived as a bland homogenous mass of well-meaning but similar organizations with which donors find it hard to bond emotionally and financially (Sargeant and Ford 2007)."

At the same time, recent studies by Edelman PR suggest that major international nonprofit organizations, such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Amnesty International (AI), have greater brand trust (as defined by Delgado-Ballester as a state of confidence under risk (Delgado-Ballester 2004)), and potentially greater brand equity, than many major multinational corporations such as Coca Cola or IBM (Edelman PR 2003). Likewise, Wootliff and Deri argue that, "non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are no longer perceived (of) as small bands of activists, but rather as the new super brands (Wootliff and Deri 2001)."

NONPROFIT BRANDING

Despite the overwhelming evidence regarding the importance of nonprofit brands, some researchers have surprisingly found that many nonprofits "devote little time, energy and care to branding (Nissim 2004)." Other authors suggest that, many "nonprofits do not effectively utilize and manage their brands (Bishop 2005)." Ewing and Napoli agree. They are surprised that "the concept of brand management has been largely overlooked (Ewing and Napoli 2005)." Bishop's recent research conducted in New Zealand, suggests that in nonprofit organizations, "brand management is neglected because marketing itself is seen as a limited range of activities, mainly concerned with fundraising (Bishop 2005)." These findings are counterintuitive, particularly in the light of the literature that so clearly proclaims the importance of branding for nonprofit organizations. In fact, it is very likely that many of the international nonprofit organizations with strong brands, do expend energy and resources building brand equity but the models they use are implicit and intuitive (mental models). They do differ from the existing for-profit models of brand equity.

Judd argues that, "nonprofit organizations need strong brands just as much as corporations" and that "building brand equity should be a priority for nonprofit groups large and small (Judd 2004)." Keller adds that, "strong brands are supported by formal (read explicit) brand-equity-management systems (Keller 2000)." It also seems clear that the management of the assets and liabilities that make up brand equity, require some type of model (Aaker 1991).

Little research has been devoted to nonprofit brands despite the growing importance of these organizations and their brands. The lack of an explicit nonprofit brand equity model is a challenge for international nonprofit organizations; it partly explains the reticence to date of nonprofits to actively manage their brands. Given the many differences between nonprofits and for profits, simply applying an existing for-profit brand equity model would be less than optimal (assuming that one could even choose a model among the dozens of existing for-profit models). The current study aims at circumventing this important drawback and at providing nonprofit managers with explicit guidelines for brand equity management based on the mental models currently used in their sectors.

Methodology

The approach of this research is one of theory building using both grounded theory development through case studies, and a system dynamics approach. Case study research has been found to be an effective methodology in marketing when there exist a paucity of knowledge and theory, and when the phenomenon to be studied is broad and complex (Bonoma 1985). In particular, case studies have proven useful for generating both theoretical and practical insights in the field of nonprofit marketing, (Austin 2000).

Eisenhardt's eight step process of grounded theory development from case study research, considered a reference research methodology, is based on Glaser and Strauss' work (Eisenhardt 1989). Glaser and Straus established the principles of grounded theory as the inductive development of theory from qualitative data, using a general method of comparative analysis (Glaser and Straus 1967). Eisenhardt notes that, "the striking feature of research to build theory from case studies, is the frequent overlap of data analysis with data collection." She advocates the analysis of the empirical material simultaneously with ongoing data collection in order to adjust data collection instruments and adding new cases if they provide additional insight.

Qualitative data is the main source of information in the modeling process of many system dynamics models (Sternan 2000). Forrester suggests that in system dynamics, "Model building should be a circular process of creating a model structure, testing behavior of the model, comparing that behavior with knowledge about the real world being represented and reconsidering structure (Forrester 1991)." It is important to note that the iterative nature of Eisenhardt's methodology above is analogous to the system dynamics approach wherein the initial model is tested and adapted several times on the basis of feedback from interviewees. While there is general agreement about the importance of qualitative data during the development of a system dynamics model, there are few clear description about how and when to use it (Luna-Reyes and Andersen 2003). These authors suggest that many system dynamics approaches lack transparency in the modeling process, particularly when it comes to collecting and analyzing qualitative data. They recommend "introducing strong qualitative methodologies," specifically citing the use of grounded theory development, "to system dynamics, to strengthen the modeling process by systematically eliciting the information contained in the mental databases of the experts (Luna-Reyes and Andersen 2003)." Williams agrees, and argues that, "the case for combining system dynamics modeling and case study research approaches is strong," but that "research designs that extensively combine both are rare." He adds that, "simulation modeling and case study are powerful research methods whose added advantages can complement each other in term of theory building" (Williams 2000).

In essence, the parallel use of these two methodologies: grounded theory development using case study research and a system dynamics approach, is expected to strengthen the development of a brand equity model for international nonprofits. A pertinent example is the recent article by Repenning and Sterman, on Capability Traps, that follows Eisenhardt's research design and uses System Dynamics for theory development based on case studies (Repenning and Sterman 2002).

Conducting the Research and Analysis

The research was conducted in two phases, both using a focus group approach. In the first phase, the focus groups consisted of two parts: 1) a series of semi-structured questions; and 2) a set of system dynamics exercises. The second phase of the research was based on the analysis conducted from the first phase and also comprised two parts: 1) the validation of causal loops; and 2) the operationalization of key variables. The focus groups or group model building (GMB) sessions were conducted following the recommendations outlined by previous researchers (Anderson and Richardson 1997, Ford and Sterman, 1988, Luna-Reyes and Anderson 2003, Martinez-Moyano and Richardson 2002, and Sterman 2000).

The potential case study population of this research is defined as large, well-known international nonprofit organizations working in all three fields of development, relief and advocacy. The member charities of Global Impact (50 organizations) in the U.S. are a fairly representative sample. In addition, the UN organizations, the Red Cross organizations, and large international human rights and environmental advocacy organizations were also included. The total estimated population is therefore estimated at around 80 international nonprofit organizations. Based on the theoretical sampling approach and existing access opportunities, three relatively similar organizations were selected: CARE, Oxfam International, and World Vision. These are all large international organizations, Anglo-Saxon in origin, well-known, and broad based (being active in development, relief and advocacy). In terms of selecting key informants in each organization and codifying the information shared in the various sessions, the use of a gatekeeper, flip-charts, and audiotape recording were adopted. Finally, in keeping with grounded theory development, all data was analyzed using a constant comparison methodology.

DATA COLLECTION

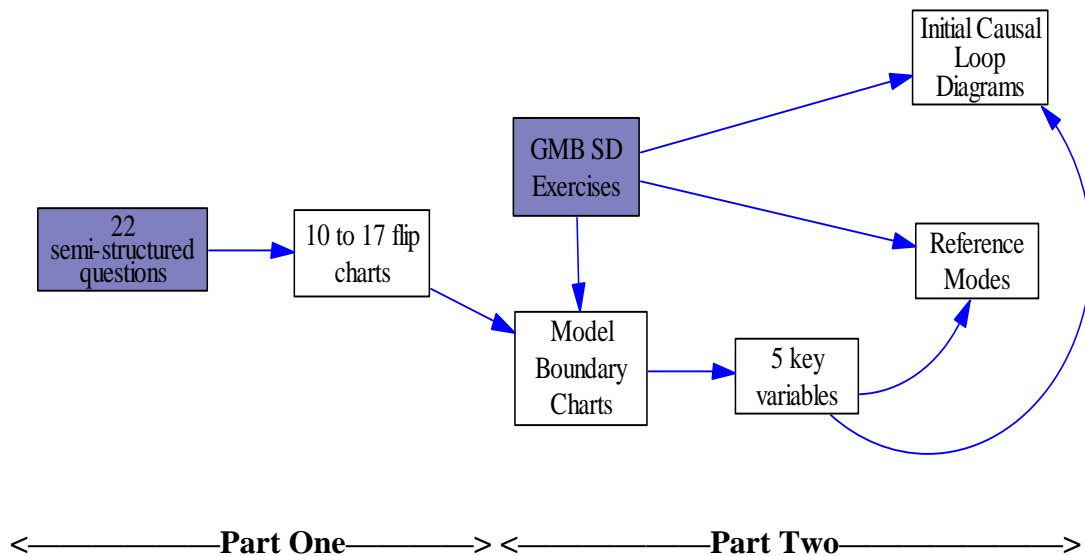
As indicated above, data collection was carried out in two distinct phases. The objective of the first phase was to develop an initial system dynamics model of brand equity in international nonprofit organizations by tapping into the "mental models" of participants from each of three case studies: Care, Oxfam and World Vision, using a focus group approach. The objective of the second phase was to refine and test this initial model through a second series of focus group sessions at these same organizations.

Focus groups or group brainstorming sessions, were selected as an ideal data collection approach, well suited both for grounded theory development using case studies, and system dynamics (Dick, 2005; and Barnett 2006). Three focus groups of 3 to 3.5 hrs, for each of the three case studies were conducted between March 23rd and May 1st, 2006. The brainstorming sessions were audio-taped in their entirety, after obtaining signed consent. The conduct of these sessions relied on identical Power-point presentations, used to provide an introduction and overview of study, give an initial common definition of brand equity, guide the discussion with

an increasingly specific series of 22 semi-structured questions, introduce system dynamics, and supply the platform for conducting three system dynamics model building exercises.

Diagram 1 below, depicts the data collection process. The shaded boxes represent the input by the researcher using the research protocol and correspond to the two parts of the focus group sessions. The clear boxes represent the outputs or products of the data collection process itself and their relationships to one another.

Diagram 1
The Data Collection Process



PART ONE – 22 SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

During the first part of the brainstorming session, participants were asked to respond to the 22 questions and their answers were recorded verbatim on large flip chart sheets using the key words and phrases used by the participants. The number of flip chart pages produced varied between 10 and 17 depending on the organization, and the average number of words per flip chart varied between 24 and 28. Each time a flip chart was completed, it was posted on the wall of the meeting room for all to see and refer to. An effort was made to address each individual question, but flexibility was granted to participants in terms of time and emphasis of their responses. Characteristics of this part of the data collection are given below in Table 1

PART TWO – GROUP MODEL BUILDING SYSTEM DYNAMICS EXERCISES

During the second part of the session, participants were guided through three system dynamics exercises: model boundary charts; reference modes; and initial causal loop diagrams (Following Sterman’s recommendations (2000)). Characteristics of this part of the data collection are also given in Table 1

Table 1
Characteristic of Data Collection
Part One and Part Two - Phase I

	CARE	OXFAM	WORLD VISION
Number of participants	6	5	7
Duration of Part 1	75 mins	82 mins	89 mins
Duration of Part 2	85 mins	80 mins	115 mins
Number of flip-charts derived from part 1	10	13	17
Average number of words / flip chart	28	26	24
Number of endogenous variables	20	11	26
Number of exogenous variables	6	5	6
Number of reference modes developed	5	5	0
Number of variables from the initial causal loop diagrams	43	48	46

DATA ANALYSIS

Constant comparative analysis was originally developed for use in the grounded theory methodology of Glaser and Strauss. It involves taking one piece of data: an interview, a statement or a theme, and comparing it with all others that may be similar or different (Thorne 2000). The constant comparison method comprises four stages: comparing incidents applicable to each category; integrating categories and their properties; delimiting the theory; and writing the theory. Categories are created when the researcher groups the data. These categories should emerge out of the data (inductive analysis) rather than being imposed on prior to the data collection (Patton 1990).

Constant comparison is at the heart of all the data analysis in this study. In some instances, categorization evolved inductively from the data itself. In others, discrete categories of data already existed and data was simply compared across these existing categories. The objective in both cases, was to surface variables or themes that recurred or dominated the specific issue under investigation.

The Recurring Variables listed below in Table 2 are those variables derived from part one of the data collection (22 semi-structured questions) that, through a constant comparison analysis, appear to be the most important in terms of brand equity for international nonprofits.

Table 2
Recurring Variables
Derived from 22 Semi-structured Questions

Variable	Frequency of Recurrence
Focus	9
Consistency	8
Partnerships	7
Awareness	5
Trust	4

Global (transcending culture / language)	4
Distinctive (differentiation)	4

Common variables were also determined from a constant comparison analysis of the system dynamics exercises. Table 3 lists all the common variables derived from the constant comparison of the model boundary charts, and Table 4 the common variables from the initial causal loops constructed during the focus groups by case study participants.

Table 3
All Common Endogenous Variables
From Model Boundary Charts

Recurring Variable	Frequency (case study)
Consistency	3
Integrity	3
(Product) Quality	3
Credibility	2
Focus	2
Relevance	2
Scandals	2
Coherence	2
Trust	2
Awareness	2
Accuracy	2
Partnerships	2
Media expenditures	2
Image	2
Message focus	2
Emotional connection	2

Table 4
Final Common Variables
From Initial Causal Loop Diagrams

Consistency
Integrity
Focus
Coherence
Trust
Partnerships
Relevance
Emotional connection

These three “lists” of variables were then compared and contrasted and the main finding was that four common variables appear in all three lists: *consistency*, *focus*, *trust* and *partnerships*. It is these four variables that are at the heart of the initial system dynamics model for brand equity for international nonprofit organizations. In the spirit of both grounded theory development and system dynamics (Eisenhardt 1989 and Forrester 1991), this initial model,

composed of four causal loop diagrams, was subsequently validated in the second phase of this research.

Initial Brand Equity Model

A series of simplified Causal Loop Diagrams (CLDs) were developed for each of the four key variables highlighted above. These CLDs help explore the dynamic meaning of each of these variables, the relationships and causality between these four key variables and other model variables, and to highlight important feedback structures in the overall model (Coyle 2000).

VARIABLE MAPS

In order to summarize the information captured in the myriad of relationships between the variables in the initial causal loops developed by study participants, Variable Maps were developed to summarize the major relationships between variables and uncover potential loops for each of the four key variables. These Variable Maps were obtained by systematically combining the input and output variables depicted in each of the CLD developed during the focus groups and tracing these back to find common pathways, using a decision tree like approach.

Specifically, in an Excel spreadsheet, the key variable, for example, Consistency was placed at the center of the spreadsheet. Then using the causal loops developed by the study participants, every variable that fed into Consistency was listed in the column to the left of Consistency. Likewise, every variable that flowed from Consistency was listed in the column to the right of the Consistency. Then, one by one, each of the variables listed to the left and right of Consistency were examined and the variables that flowed into and from each of them was also listed in a similar manner (in columns to the left and right). The result of this analysis is a series of four Variable Maps, one for each of the key variables, that lays out all the relationships between variables and provide a visual indication of the pathways and potential loops for each of the four key variables.

SIMPLIFIED CAUSAL LOOP DIAGRAMS

From the Variable Maps, simplified CLDs for each of the key variables were developed and are described in turn below. The simplified CLDs are based on the data collected through the initial CLD and the relationships between variables have all been specified by case study participants. In six specific cases, the researcher has had to make an assumption about a link between two specific variables. These assumptions are identified as such (researcher's assumption) in the following sections. The reference modes (behavior-over-time-graphs) obtained during the focus groups were also used during the crafting of the simplified causal loops since every reference mode has a corresponding structure in causal loop diagrams (Stermann 2000).

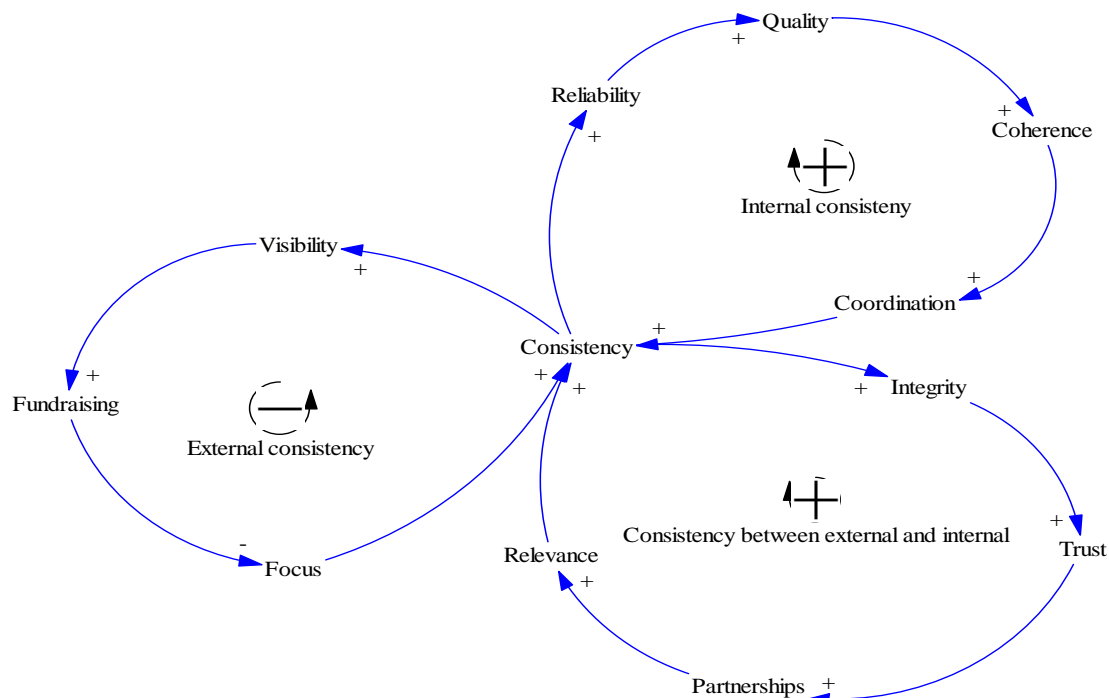
CONSISTENCY

Consistency seems to be increasingly important to international nonprofit organizations as the role of internet and global communications expands. From the research data, it appears that Consistency has three dimensions: operational consistency between parts of an international organization (countries and functional domains); consistency in communications between and among different brand audiences (external and internal); and consistency between activities and

communications (what an organization is actually doing (identity) and what stakeholders perceive that it is doing (image). These three roles of consistency can be summarized as: internal consistency; external consistency; and consistency between internal and external worlds (actions and communications).

The following simplified CLD captures the three essential roles of consistency. The “Internal consistency” loop shows an increase in consistency giving rise to greater reliability of activities which in turn, results in greater product quality (researcher assumption). This in turn results in more coherence (researcher assumption), facilitating coordination, which increases consistency. The “External consistency” loop addresses different brand audiences and results in increased overall visibility. This in turn has a direct positive impact on fundraising. However, an increase in fundraising may have a negative impact on focus, since the temptation to expand activities to absorb a broader array of funds can reduce operational focus. Focus though, has a positive impact on consistency. This negative loop is the driver of the S-shaped reference mode for consistency determined by the study participants at Oxfam. Finally, the “Consistency between the internal and external” loop (which corresponds to consistency between the internal activities of an organization and what they say they do), results in greater integrity (do what you say you do), which impacts (among other things), trust, resulting in better and more numerous partnerships. This reinforces the relevance of the brand and circles back to enhanced consistency. These three loops are shown in diagram 2 below.

Diagram 2
Simplified Causal Loop: Consistency

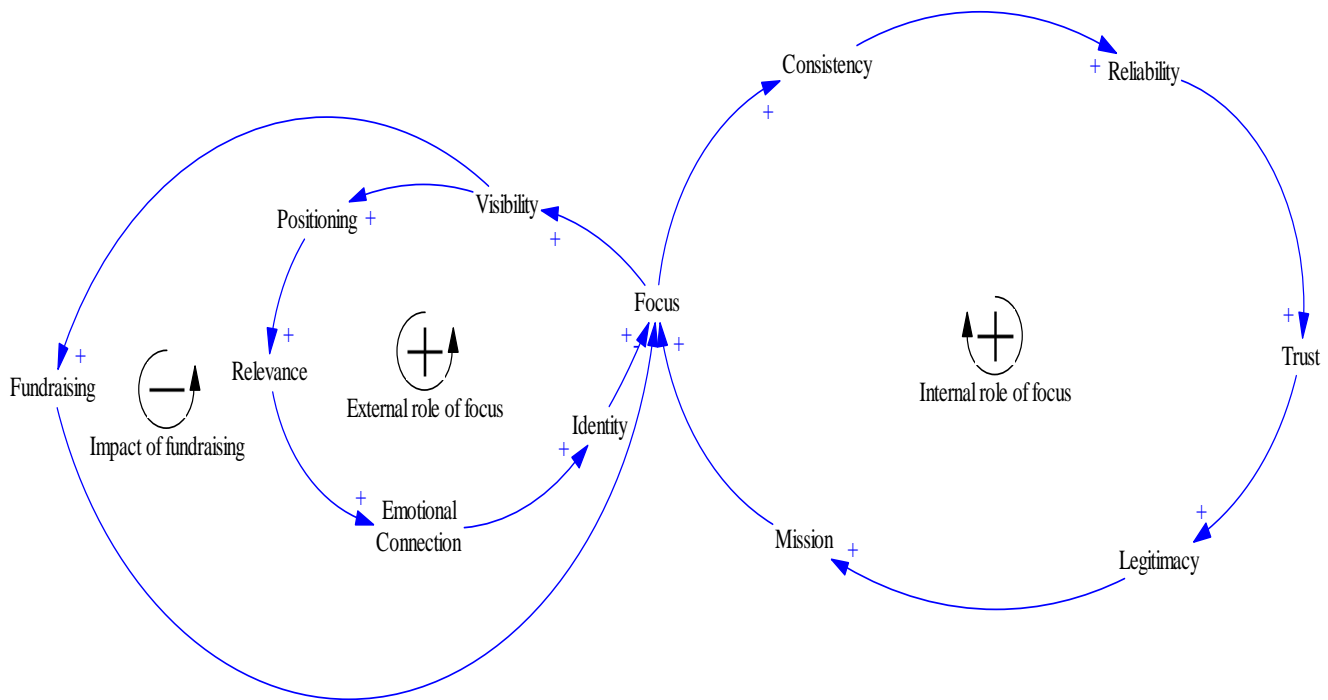


FOCUS

The need for focus was a recurring theme for international nonprofit organizations that have evolved over time, adding to their activities and becoming larger and more diffuse as they age. Interestingly, at the annual American Marketing Association’s nonprofit marketing conference of July 2006, the importance of brand focus was indeed a key theme. It appears that it is the “lack” of focus that is a concern for organizations in this research study and that this lack of focus is perceived as being a barrier to achieving greater brand equity.

Brand focus also plays both an internal and external role as depicted in the simplified causal loop diagram below in diagram 3. In the “Internal role of focus” loop, focus leads to consistency which, among other things gives rise to increased reliability for internal stakeholders. This creates a greater atmosphere of trust internally, adding to the sense of legitimacy of the organization and validating the mission (researcher assumption) which continues to provide help provide focus for the organization. In the “External role of focus” loop, focus results in increased visibility, enabling the organization to differentiate itself from competitors in terms of a more distinct positioning. This positioning leads to a greater degree of relevance, resulting in higher emotional connection by external stakeholders. This in turn, solidifies the organization’s identity (researcher’s assumption) which loops back into an increase in focus. However, from the previous CLD on consistency, we also identified that an increase in visibility leads to greater fundraising which may have a negative impact on focus. This third, “impact of fundraising” loop explains the growth with overshoot reference mode that was defined by the Care study participants for focus.

Diagram 3
Simplified Causal Loop: Focus



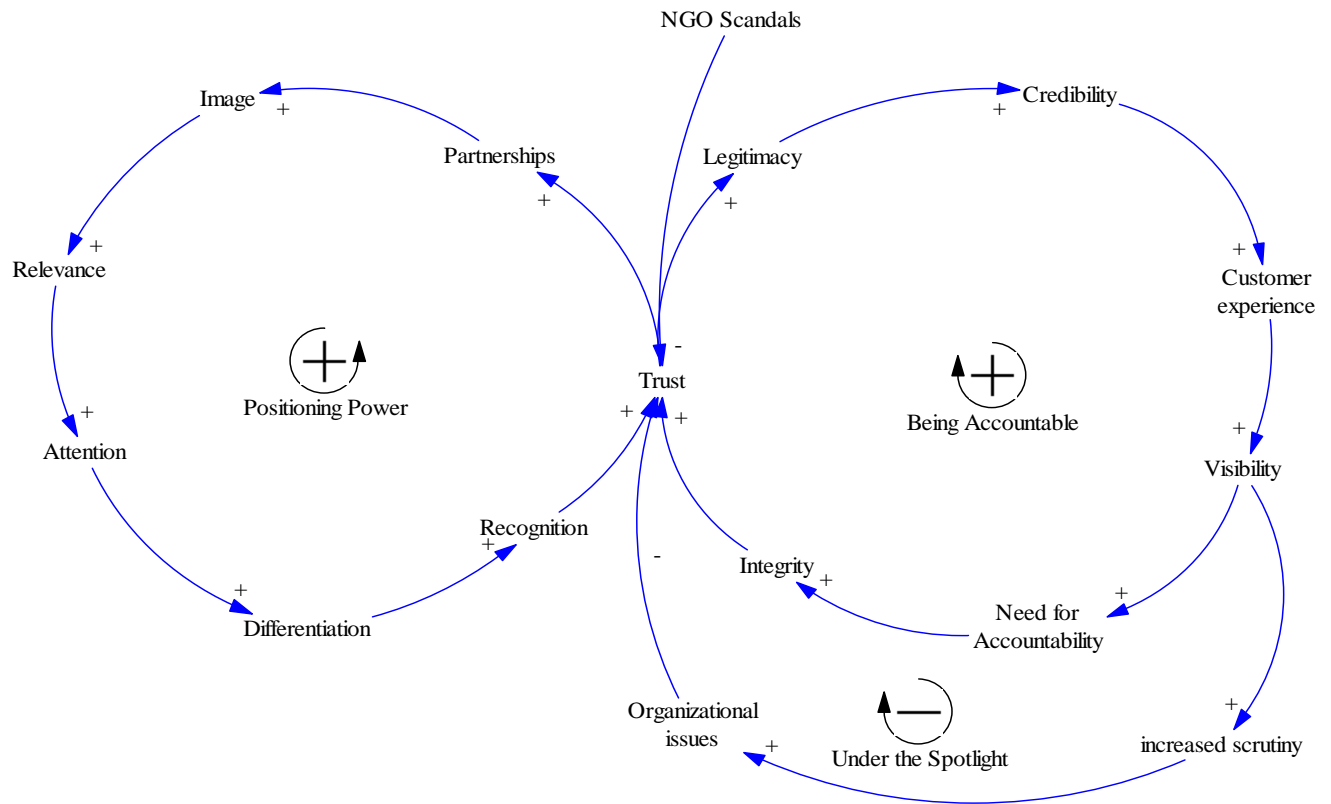
TRUST

In terms of participant's definitions, the notions of integrity, trust, accountability and credibility are closely linked. Trust gives rise to perceptions of legitimacy which leads to an increase in credibility. This in turn, has a positive impact on the customer experience, leading to an increase in visibility. Higher visibility places greater demands on an organization for accountability. Research participants expressed the fact that those organizations with more public visibility, also received a greater degree of public scrutiny, resulting in the need for greater accountability. This increased need for accountability results in enhanced integrity which results in greater trust. However, increased scrutiny resulting from higher visibility can also reveal minor (and potentially major) organizational issues which could have a direct negative impact on trust (researcher's assumptions). Thus, two loops are created (see Diagram 4), the first is the reinforcing "Being Accountable" loop and the second the balancing "Under the spotlight" loop.

In addition to these two loops, a third loop exists, the "Positioning Power" loop in which trust results in a greater number of partnerships which enhances the image of the organization, making it more relevant. An increase in relevance can lead to greater public attention helping to differentiate an organization relative to its competitors. This is particularly important in combating the problem encountered by many international nonprofit organizations of being "all lumped together" such that when a scandal or negative press occurs for one organization, all similar nonprofit organizations get tarnished by the same brush. This influence is shown in the simplified causal loop below as an exogenous variable called NGO scandals. The ability of an organization to differentiate itself, thereby boosting its ability to be recognizable (researcher's assumption) results in an increase in trust.

According to Oxfam study participants, trust displays an oscillating reference mode, which suggests the presence of a balancing loop and delays and perhaps the intermittent dampening impact of an exogenous variable. Unless an internal issue arises or is brought to light to erode trust directly (Increased Scrutiny loop), the assumption, in this simplified causal loop for Trust, is that exogenous forces (NGO scandals) can negatively impact an organization's trust, (because of a lack of differentiation with other similar organizations) which is slowly countered by the two reinforcing loops displayed below. The speed at which trust is recaptured depends somewhat on a brand's resilience to trust erosion, and the two critical variables of differentiation and accountability.

Diagram 4
Simplified Causal Loop: Trust

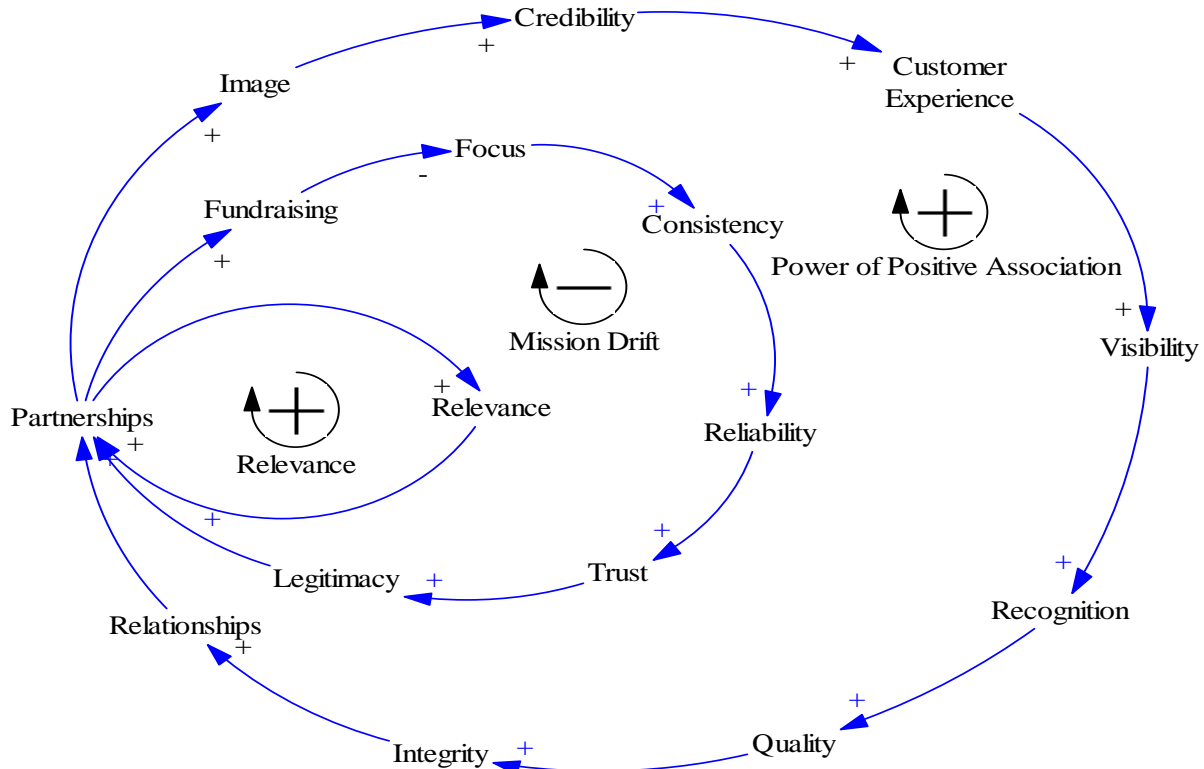


PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are those relationships not only with corporations, but with any important group of stakeholders external to the organization itself. The relationship between partnerships and relevance was highlighted as critical and self-fulfilling. The more numerous and visible the relationships an organization develops, the more relevant it appears, and the more attractive it becomes to future potential partners. This is captured in the simple “Relevance” loop (see Diagram 5). Partnerships also however lead to an increase in fundraising (researcher’s assumption) which as we have seen previously, can have a negative impact on focus. This second loop, called the “Mission drift” loop, posits that a decrease in focus results in a decline in consistency, which in turn leads to an erosion of reliability and trust. This decrease in trust has a negative impact on perceptions of legitimacy which reduces the attractiveness of the organization to future potential partners. On the other hand, successful partnerships can result in an enhanced image for an organization, leading to an increase in credibility. This reinforcing loop, named the “Power of positive association”, links this increase in credibility to an augmented customer experience, with a positive impact on visibility and recognition of the organization. This increase in recognition, in turn drives higher quality, resulting in increased levels of integrity. This rise in integrity has a positive impact on relationships in general which has a positive influence on present and future partnerships.

According to the Care study participants, the partnerships variable displays an upward oscillating trend which would suggest the presence of reinforcing loops and a weaker balancing loop with some kind of delay.

Diagram 5
Simplified Causal Loop: Partnerships



Model Validation and Modification

The objective of the second phase of the research was to refine and test the initial model through a second series of focus group sessions at these same organizations. The focus groups were conducted between November 16th 2006 and December 13th 2006 and varied in duration between 104 minutes and 135 minutes.

Participants were shown the initial, simplified causal loops for each of the four variables: consistency, trust, focus and partnerships and asked to validate them based on specific questions outlined below. In addition to the research protocol captured in a Powerpoint presentation, participants were provided with a six page worksheet that reproduced the simplified causal loops and summarized the questions to be addressed in table format with space for individual notes and responses.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

During the brainstorming session, lasting approximately one hour, participants were asked to take a few minutes to examine each of the simplified causal loops and to individually take notes on their worksheets when answering each of the following questions: 1) Does the causal loop ring true? 2) Are there any fundamental errors? 3) Are some variables unnecessary? 4) Do the relationships between variables make sense? and 5) What key one or two variables may be missing? After 2 minutes of individual reflection, the participants were invited to share their answers as a group and responses were recorded verbatim on large flip sheets using the key words and phrases of the participants.

In the case of World Vision, given the nature of the brainstorming session being held by conference call (instead of face-to-face), the researcher took hand written notes of the discussion (rather than flip charts) which were not visible during the session. These notes were subsequently forwarded to the participants for validation, although no additional feedback was obtained. As a brief aside, despite the many benefits of conducting research using webinar technology, the session was less rich in participation and detail. Although single interviews might work quite well using telephone and videoconferencing, focus groups or group-based brainstorming sessions do not seem to work quite as well. The number of major comments made for each simplified causal loop varied between 5 and 12 as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5
Data Collection - Phase II

	Care	Oxfam	World Vision
Number of participants	5	4	7
Duration of data collection	135 mins	116mins	104 mins
Number of comments for Consistency CLD	12	11	6
Number of comments for Trust CLD	11	10	10
Number of comments for Focus CLD	5	6	6
Number of comments for Partnership CLD	5	9	7

A constant comparison method was also used to analyze the data described above. Data categories were developed inductively from the research data, in the same way as for Phase one of this research. Between four and five data categories were developed for each of the four causal loop evaluations and data from the three case studies were tabulated side by side to facilitate the horizontal cross comparison of a total of 81 data blocks Table 6 below summarizes the results of the constant comparison of participant's suggestions concerning the four causal loops: consistency, trust, focus and partnerships. Comparison of each data block was made both horizontally, to capture the common themes between case studies and also vertically, to capture those themes or recommendations that participants thought were particularly important. Only those recommendations that occurred more than once were recorded and used to modify the initial causal loops described in the previous chapter.

Table 6
Constant Comparison Analysis of Causal Loop Evaluations
Recurring Comments and Frequency

CATEGORY and number of data blocks			
CONSISTENCY CLD			
<i>Fundraising to Focus – 12</i>	It's not just about fundraising but about engagement and advocacy (4)	Fundraising does not necessarily reduce focus (3)	Lack of focus is not bad / strength of NGO = diversity and holistic approach (2)
<i>Role and position of coordination - 4</i>	reliability and quality should come after coordination and coherence (3)		
<i>Internal-external loop - 3</i>	The most important loop is the internal-external consistency loop (2)		
<i>Importance of Coherence - 6</i>	Coherence is generic and could be taken out (2)	Quality is important but reliability should not be included (2)	
TRUST CLD			
<i>Partnership doesn't fit - 5</i>	Partnerships is a forced fit (3)	Could replace partnership with identity (2)	
<i>Differentiation or distinctiveness - 7</i>	Distinctiveness is a more powerful form of differentiation (3)	Attention should be replaced by visibility (2)	Relevance leads to differentiation and vice versa (2)
<i>Empowerment and internal branding - 3</i>	Empowerment comes from integrity and internal brand understanding (3)		
<i>Trust is a result not a driver - 10</i>	Recognition cannot lead to trust without legitimacy, visibility and proximity (3)	The need for accountability also comes from an internal decision to be more transparent and is linked to integrity (2)	
FOCUS CLD			
<i>Visibility and positioning - 5</i>	Positioning and visibility should be reversed (2)		
<i>Internal focus and resources allocation - 5</i>	Focus allows better resource allocation and brings effectiveness and efficiency (3)		
PARTNERSHIP CLD			
<i>Should not be a key variable of brand equity - 10</i>	As defined here partnership should not be included as a key variable, relevance should be the fourth variable (4)	Maybe partnership could be replaced by engagement or redefined more broadly (3)	Partnerships can also negatively impact image and reduce distinctiveness (2)
<i>Quality and integrity brand equity - 3</i>	Quality comes before recognition and integrity leads trust (2)		
<i>Fundraising - 3</i>	Fundraising may negatively impact focus but positively impact visibility and is certainly an important driver of brand equity (2)		

MODIFYING THE CAUSAL LOOPS

Using the recommendations summarized above, specific modifications were made to each of the simplified causal loop diagrams (CLD) as follows:

CONSISTENCY CLD

The “Internal Consistency” loop was simplified and the variables reliability and coherence were removed. Although participants agreed that coordination could lead to consistency and in turn to quality, the relationship between quality and coordination remained unclear. We suggest that a new variable be introduced, to link the two: desire to maintain quality (of product and services) throughout the organization, through sharing of best practices for example.

In terms of the “External Consistency” loop, participants felt that visibility would also lead to increased engagement and advocacy (that might positively impact quality), not just fundraising. Many also challenged the negative connection between fundraising and focus (ie: that increased fundraising would result in a decrease in focus). In addition, it was suggested that fundraising would also feed back and increase visibility. We suggest therefore adding a variable between fundraising and focus which reflects the role of the growth of the organization. The case studies all suggest that as an international nonprofit organization grows and matures, the pressure to add products and activities also increases, which dissipates the original focus of the organization. The third loop, “Consistency between external and internal,” was perceived as accurate and relevant and remains unchanged.

TRUST CLD

Many participants felt that the partnership variable in the “Positioning Power” loop was a forced fit and suggested replacing it with the variable identity. The attention variable was also questioned and participants suggested either replacing it with visibility or removing it altogether. In the interest of model simplification it was removed from the loop. It should be noted that differentiation or distinctiveness was considered by participants as of crucial importance in brand equity. Finally, some participants noted that recognition by itself does not lead to trust, but that variables such as legitimacy, visibility and proximity were also important drivers.

In the case of the “Being Accountable” loop, participants felt that an additional variable, representing empowerment derived from integrity and that accountability was driven both by visibility externally and by an organizational decision to be accountable internally. These comments were taken into account and the trust causal loop was modified accordingly.

FOCUS CLD

In the “External role of focus” loop, participants suggested reversing the order of the visibility and positioning variables, and in order to be consistent, the variable growth was added to the “Impact of fundraising” loop (as suggested in the consistency CLD above). In terms of the “Internal role of focus” loop, the study participants suggested that the greatest internal impact of focus was that of better resource allocation resulting in effectiveness and efficiency, which would increase internal trust and perceptions of legitimacy, in turn validating the mission and current focus of the organization.

PARTNERSHIPS CLD

Some participants challenged the choice of partnerships as one of the key variables, suggesting that other variables such as relevance might have more direct impact on brand equity. This justifies the decision to include the additional variables of: relevance, visibility, and integrity as stocks in the stock flow diagram. If partnerships are defined more broadly, to include most stakeholders and customers, participants were more comfortable with this variable as a key variable. In the “Power of positive association loop,” participants noted that recognition does not lead to quality and that integrity leads to trust. In addition, participants suggested that partnerships, particularly with other organizations, might reduce differentiation. In the “Mission drift loop,” in order to be consistent with changes to the previous loops, the variable “Growth” was added and “Reliability” removed, with “Consistency” leading to “Quality” and in turn to “Integrity” and “Trust.”

ADAPTING VARIABLE NAMES AND INCLUDING BRAND EQUITY

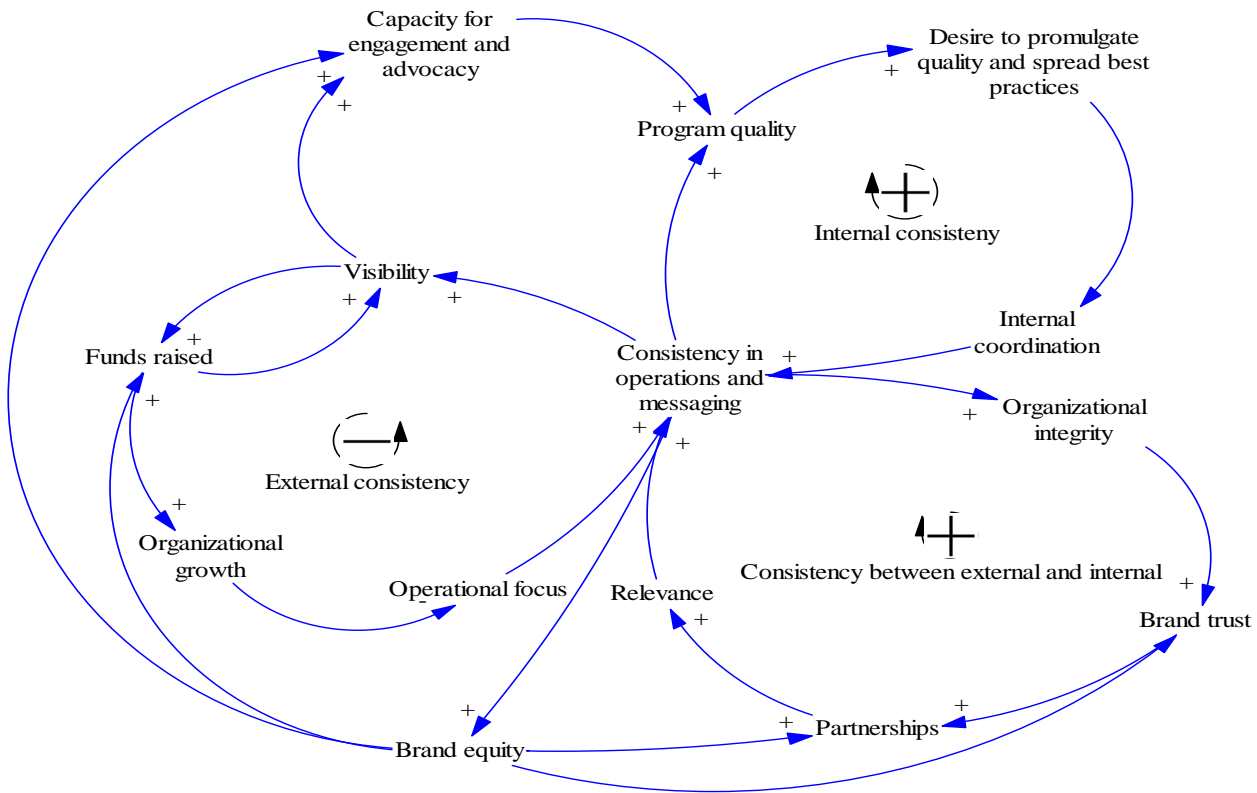
Sterman advises that in system dynamics models, variable names should be nouns and have a clear, preferably positive, sense of direction (Sterman, 2000). In addition, variable names should be as specific as possible to avoid any ambiguity. Until this point, the exact terms and wording defined by the study participants have been used throughout the causal loops and stock flow diagrams. Proposed changes to certain variable names were made on this basis and are included in the final causal loops below.

In this research on brand equity for international nonprofit organizations, brand equity is the main dependent variable and the key independent variables have been identified as: consistency; focus; trust; and partnerships. Until now, we have been operating under the assumption that the independent variables act together, and indeed are intimately connected in a series of complex feedback loops, to result in brand equity. However, we have mostly focused on the independent variables themselves, isolating and describing their individual dynamics. We have not yet incorporated brand equity as a variable that itself impacts other variables, giving rise to additional feedback loops and model complexity.

With the exception of a specified link from brand equity to partnerships in the initial CLD from the first Care brainstorming session, the impact of brand equity on other variables has not yet been articulated. However, the impact of brand equity on other variables can be easily inferred from the original data. From the data in this series of tables, it appears that strong brands, brands with high brand equity, have the following abilities: internally, they provide a common identity and culture; externally, they facilitate communication, provide an image and competitive position, and promote trust, fundraising and partnerships. The abilities of strong brands include: attracting partners and influencing customers (including donors), and enabling differentiation. Given these stated characteristics, it is possible to insert brand equity into the existing CLDs and capture the feedback structure this results in.

The following causal loop diagrams (Diagrams 6, 7, 8, and 9) are the final CLDs for the four independent variables at the heart of the brand equity model: Consistency, Focus, Trust and Partnerships. They are the result of the validation by case study participants whose recommendations and suggested changes have been incorporated. These final causal loops also reflect the change in variable names and the re-insertion of brand equity as a model variable as discussed above.

Diagram 6
Final Causal Loop Diagram - Consistency



In this final causal loop diagram for Consistency (see Diagram 6), the variable name is made more explicit and captures the true meaning of consistency. The three loops: Internal consistency; External consistency; and Consistency between external and internal remain, but additional variables and connections between variables add some complexity and dynamics.

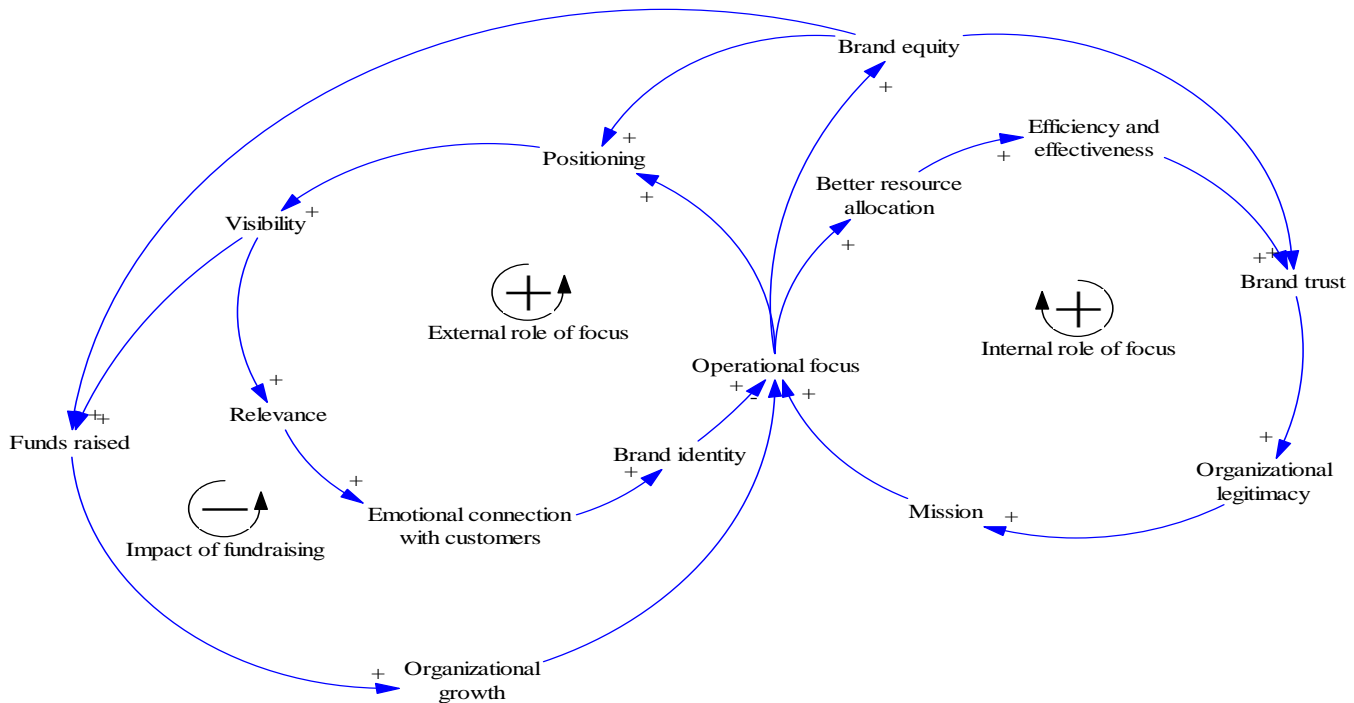
In the “Internal consistency loop,” a reinforcing loop, increased consistency in operations enhances program quality, which in turn drives a desire within the organization to spread best practices. This stimulates an increase in the activity of internal coordination which results in more consistency in operations.

In the “External consistency loop,” a balancing loop, consistency in messaging enhances visibility which drives both funds raised and the capacity of the organization to effectively engage and advocate. An increase in this last variable also boosts program quality, particularly in terms of advocacy. An increase in funds raised not only feeds back to amplify visibility but also results in organizational growth. It is this organizational growth, rather than simply fund raised, that can cause an organization to become less focused in terms of both it’s activities and it’s messaging. Finally, a decrease in focus, leads to a decrease in consistency.

In the “consistency between external and internal loop,” a reinforcing loop, consistency produces greater organizational integrity which positively impacts brand trust. An increase in brand trust leads to more numerous and better partnerships, which in turn, enhances the organization’s relevance. This increase in relevance circles back to positively impact consistency.

In addition to the three main loops, consistency enhances brand equity which positively impacts a number of variables: partnerships; brand trust; funds raised; and the capacity for engagement and advocacy. The feedback from brand equity therefore magnifies the dynamics of the existing structure by strengthening both the reinforcing loops and the balancing loop.

Diagram 7
Final Causal Loop Diagram - Focus



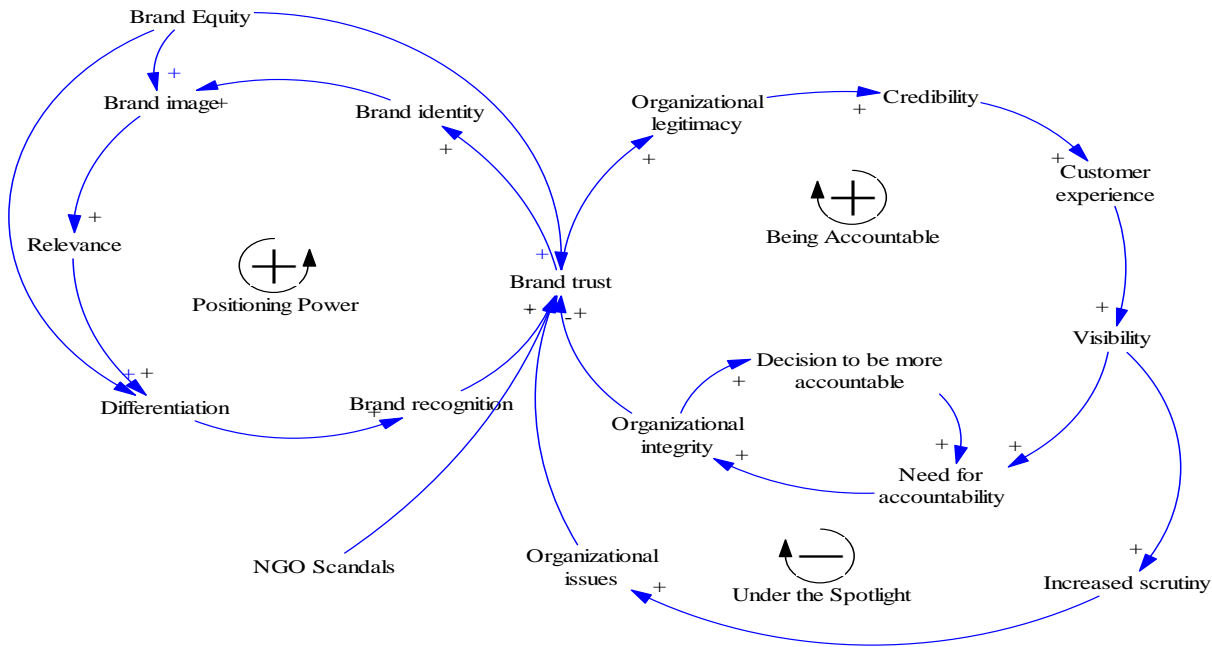
In this final causal loop for Focus (see Diagram 7), better described as operational focus, the three loops still exist but have been modified somewhat. The “Internal role of focus” loop is a reinforcing loop and captures how an increase in operational focus can result in better resource allocation which in turn leads to greater efficiency and effectiveness. This boost in efficiency and effectiveness translates to enhanced brand trust which positively influences organizational legitimacy. An increase in the organizational legitimacy reinforces the validity and appropriateness of the mission itself, which provides the boundaries for the organization’s activities, and therefore helps establish organizational focus.

In the “External role of focus loop,” also a reinforcing loop, operational focus helps establish a strong positioning for the organization which increases its visibility in the market. Visibility positively influences both funds raised and relevance. An increase in relevance strengthens the emotional connections with customers which enhances brand identity. A stronger brand identity justifies and supports the organization’s current operational focus.

However, visibility also drives funds raised, which as we saw in the previous CLD for consistency, results in organizational growth which negatively impacts organizational focus. As an organization becomes larger and more diffuse, it becomes harder to maintain operational focus. This is depicted in the balancing loop labeled above as “Impact of fundraising loop.”

Once again, focus, as one of the four established independent variables of brand equity, enhances brand equity and brand equity positively impacts: brand trust; positioning; and funds raised thereby magnifying the dynamics of all three previously discussed loops.

Diagram 8
Final Causal Loop Diagram - Trust



In this final causal loop for trust (Diagram 8) the two reinforcing loops: “being Accountable” and “Positioning power” are attenuated by the balancing loop “Under the spotlight.” This causal loop diagrams also has an exogenous variable, NGO scandals that directly dampens brand trust.

In the “being Accountable loop,” brand trust has a positive impact on organizational legitimacy which in turn, enhances credibility. This increase in credibility positively influences the customer experience which drives up visibility. An increase in visibility results in a greater needs for accountability as well as increased scrutiny by actors outside the organization. The increase in the needs for accountability pushes up organizational integrity. The internal organizational decision to become more accountable is a direct result of this increase in organizational integrity and feeds back to enhance the need for accountability, this time from an internal perspective. In this way an additional small reinforcing loop is established that drives up organizational integrity which results in an increase in brand trust.

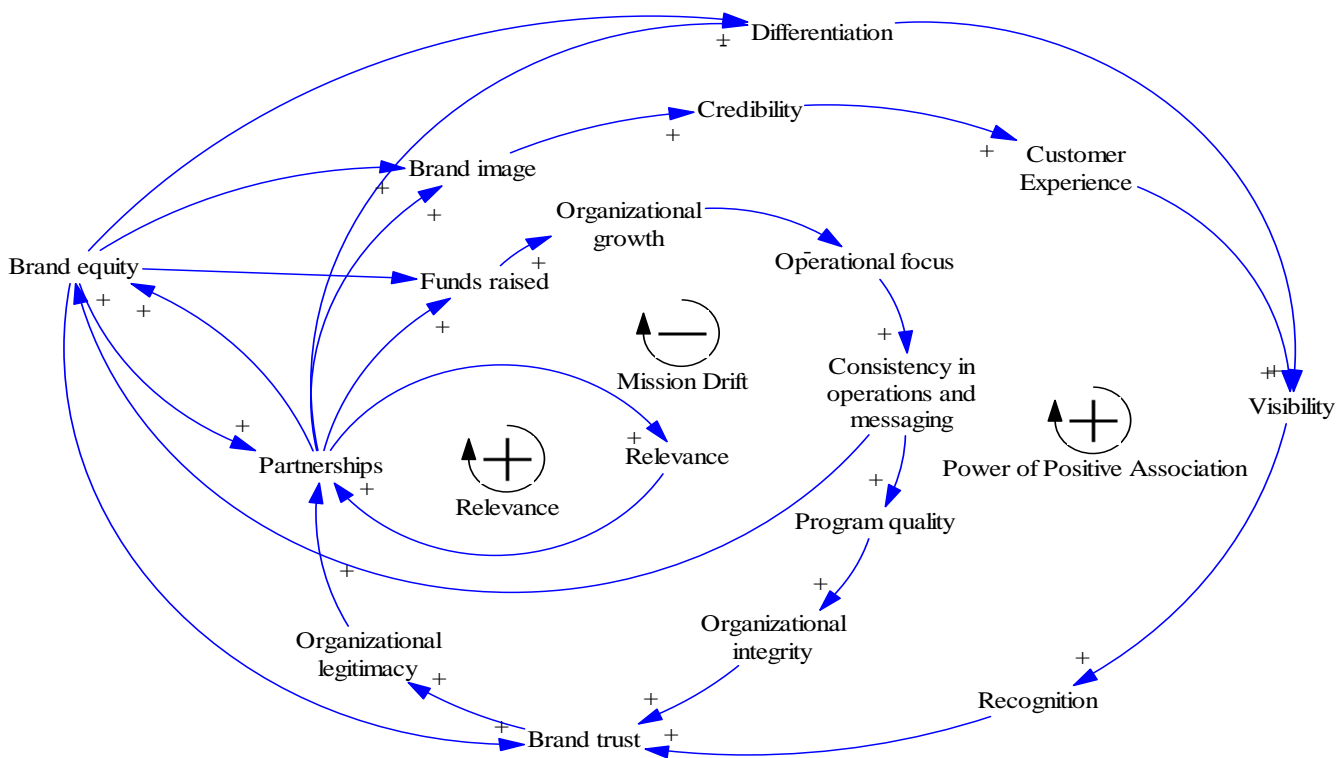
At the same time, the rise in visibility results in increased scrutiny by external actors. This increased scrutiny can result in organizational issues, small and large, being uncovered. Even the fact that an organization is under increased public scrutiny can imply that organizational issues might exist, causing a negative impact on that organization’s brand trust. This dynamic is captured in the reinforcing loop called “Under the Spotlight.”

Brand trust also plays an external role, helping establish a stronger brand identity and brand image. As brand image strengthens, the organization’s relevance increases in the eyes of its customers and this helps the organization become more differentiated it the market place. As

differentiation increases, brand recognition is enhanced, resulting in turn in an increase in brand trust. Finally, brand trust positively influences brand equity which in this causal loop diagram, positively impacts brand image and differentiation, thereby enhancing the “Positioning Power” loop that was just discussed.

Although not shown above, the greater an organization’s ability is to differentiate itself effectively from its competitors, the less impact the exogenous variable “NGO scandals” is likely to have on brand trust. Study participants lament the fact that all NGOs are “lumped together” and this is why a scandal at one NGO can impact the brand trust of another. If that other NGO is sufficiently differentiated from the first, the negative impact of the scandal on brand trust will be considerably lessened.

Diagram 9
Final Causal Loop Diagram - Partnerships



In this final causal loop for Partnerships (see Diagram 9), two reinforcing loops and one balancing loop exist. The first of the reinforcing loops in the “Relevance loop” which highlight the reinforcing relationship between partnerships and relevance. In essence, the more good partnerships an organization has, the more relevant it becomes and the more relevant it is the more partnerships it attracts.

In the second reinforcing loop, the “Power of Positive Association loop,” partnerships play a positive role enhancing brand image, which increases credibility. An increase in credibility results in a positive customer experience and enhances visibility. In addition, partnerships also help in differentiating an organization which also enhances visibility. Increased visibility results in higher recognition which drives up brand trust. Brand trust boosts organizational legitimacy which helps attract partnerships.

Partnerships also positively impact funds raised which as we have seen already in previous causal loops, results in organizational growth and a decrease in operational focus. As focus declines, so too do consistency, program quality and organizational integrity. This negatively impacts brand trust, organizational legitimacy and partnerships, as shown in the balancing loop called “Mission Drift.” Finally, brand equity is enhanced by good partnerships and in turn positively impacts: partnerships; fund raised; brand trust and differentiation. In this way brand equity plays a role enhancing all three loops.

Conclusion

The stated objective of this research was to model brand equity for international nonprofit organizations engaged in development, advocacy and relief. The expectation was that this model would shed light on the key managerial and contextual variables that drive brand equity for these organizations, and how they interact. The four final causal loops depicted and described above (Consistency, Focus, Trust, and Partnerships) form the core of the proposed model of brand equity in international nonprofit organizations. For clarity purpose, we did not show in the text the final integrated model combining the four main causal loops. The full model captures the complexity and simultaneity of their inter-relationships as well as the nature of their systemic links to other pertinent variables (as captured in the four final causal loops above). As such, this research constitutes a significant step in advancing our understanding of brand equity in nonprofits through modeling.

More precisely, this research results in two principal contributions: 1) An explicit set of principles and guidelines for nonprofit managers and marketing academics alike, drawn from the brand equity model just derived; and 2) The demonstration of the effective use of system dynamics in the field of marketing, particularly in the critical domain of branding and brand management. On the basis of this model captured in the four final causal loops, we propose 11 specific recommendations for international nonprofit brand managers. These are summarized in Table 7 and outlined below.

Had this research used a more traditional approach to theory building consisting only of interviews of case studies using semi-structured questions (Eisenhardt 1989), we would have come to the conclusion that seven variables drive brand equity: Focus, Consistency, Partnerships, Awareness, Trust, Globalness, and Distinctiveness. These conclusions would not be wrong per se. Indeed, they include the four key variables of the proposed brand equity model of this study, but we have no additional insights into what drives these variables or how they interact. It is only by developing causal loops for each key variable, and validating these in the field, that we can gain these additional insights. The use of system dynamics tools such as causal loops can help researchers more profoundly understand the nature of key variables, for example the three dimensions of consistency, as well as identify the managerial and contextual variables that influence key variables. The role of organizational integrity, for example, becomes apparent, both in terms of a product and input of consistency but also as a key variable for building brand trust. And the role of brand trust itself, as a driver of Partnerships, Focus and Consistency is captured in the final causal loops that make up the heart of this brand equity model for international nonprofit organizations.

Table 7
Recommendations to International Nonprofit Brand Managers
For Building and Managing Brand Equity

FOR CONSISTENCY
1) Increase internal coordination in order to enhance consistency throughout the organization and between operations and messaging
2) Concentrate external messaging efforts to increase communication consistency
FOR FOCUS
3) Strive for operational focus despite the pressures of growth and fundraising
4) Stick closely to the mission
FOR TRUST
5) Endeavor to differentiate the organization through strong brand positioning
6) Raise visibility and recognition through messaging and presence in the field
7) Promote organizational integrity through workshops as well as the implementation of standards and best practices
FOR PARTNERSHIPS
8) Select partners that provide the best fit with organizational values and activities
9) Proactively manage relationships and the portfolio of relationships
INTERNAL BRANDING
10) Recognize and embrace the powerful internal role of the brand and promote the brand to internal audiences
11) Encourage internal brand ambassadors

While this study has led to some key finding and contributions, it is also important to recognize the limitations of this work and to identify future research needs. The limitations of this study fall into two main categories: 1) Issues of replicability of the research and 2) Issues of applicability or generalizability of the model itself.

Concerns with the replicability of the research occurred at two levels: a) Focus group structure and participation; and b) Interpretation of data and application of constant comparison. In the former, bias is introduced by the existence of different personalities and hierarchical reporting structures within the focus groups. In phase two, worksheets were introduced to enable more balanced and broader participation. In the latter, researchers' expectations and prior experience may have shaped the interpretation of the data, thereby influencing the categories that arose. Concerns with applicability exist with respect to whether the proposed brand equity model, based on only three case studies, is generalizable to other international nonprofit organizations and domestic nonprofits.

We suggest three areas of future research linked to this study: 1) Finalizing and refining the existing model; 2) Validating and assessing the generalizability of the model; and 3) Expanding on the model. In the first area, a simulation model based on the causal loops could be completed and tested for validity with the original case studies. In fact, we did extend the study and run a simulation using the Vensim simulation software for the final causal loop of "Trust" (the description of the simulation, mathematical model, and results go beyond the scope of the current paper). In the second area, the model could be tested with new international nonprofit

organizations as well as domestic nonprofits to ascertain generalizability. Finally, different brand audiences might be interviewed and polled to understand how and to what extent different brand audiences influence brand equity. Overall, we hope that the detailed account of the process of our model building constitutes sound material for replication of this type of study and a source of inspiration in the field of marketing which has traditionally shied away from considering system dynamics in many of its research domains.

Reference List

- Abratt, R and Bick, G. 2003. Valuing Brands and Brand Equity: Methods and Processes, *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 8, No. 1.
- Aaker, David. 1991. *Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name*, New York, The Free Press.
- Aaker, David. 1996. *Building Strong Brands*. New York: The Free Press.
- Anderson, David F. and Richardson, George P. 1997. Scripts for group model building. *System Dynamics Review*, Volume 13, Number 2 Summer 1997 p107-129.
- Austin, James. 2000. Strategic Collaboration Between Nonprofits and Businesses. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*. Iss. 29 (supplemental) 69-97.
- Barnett, Jacqueline, M. 2006. Focus Group Tips for Beginners, TCALL Occasional Research Paper No. 1. Available from <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/orp.orp1.htm>
- Bishop, D. 2005. Not-for-profit brands: Why are many under-utilized by their owners? Paper presented at the 2nd Australian Nonprofit and Social Marketing Conference, September 22/23, Melbourne, Australia
- Blackston, M. 2000, "Observations: building brand equity by managing the brand's relationships", *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vol. 40 No.6, pp.101-5.
- Bonoma, T. 1985. Case research in Marketing: Opportunities, problems and a process, *Journal of Marketing Research*, May 1985, 199-208.
- Chiagouris, L. 2005. Nonprofit Brands: come of age. *Marketing Management*, Chicago: Sept/Oct 2005. Vol 14, Iss 5; 30-34.
- Coyle Geoff. 2000. Qualitative and quantitative modelling in system dynamics: some research questions. *System Dynamics Review*, Vol 16, Iss 3, pg 225 - 244
- Czellar Sandor and Denis, Jean-Emilie. 2002. Un Modele Integrateur du capital-client de la marquee: Une perspective psycho-cognitive, *Recherche et Applications en Marketing*. 2002; Vol 17, No 1, 43-55
- Delgado-Ballester, Elena, 2004 Applicability of a brand trust scale across product categories: A multigroup invariance analysis. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol 38, Numbers 5-6. 573-592
- Dick, Bob. 2005. Grounded theory: a thumbnail sketch. Available from www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/grounded.html
- Eisenhardt, Kathleen M. 1989. Building Theories from Case Study Research. *Academy of Management Review* 14, no.4
- Feldwick, Paul. 2002. What is Brand Equity Anyway? *World Advertising Research Center*, Page Brothers, Norwich, Norfolk UK
- Ewing, M. and Napoli, J. 2005. Developing and validating a multidimensional nonprofit brand orientation scale, *Journal of Business Research*, Volume 58, Issue 6, June 2005, pages 841-853 (Special Section: The Nonprofit Marketing Landscape).

Ford, D. and Sterman, J. 1998. Expert knowledge elicitation for improving mental and formal models, *System Dynamics Review*, 14(4), 309-340.

Forrester, Jay. 1991. System Dynamics and the Lessons of 35 Years, *The Systemic Basis of Policy Making in the 1990s*, edited by Kenyon Greene

Glaser B. and Strauss A. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies of Qualitative Research*. London. Wiedenfeld and Nicholson.

Haigh, D. and Gilbert, S. 2005. Valuing not-for-profit and charity brands – real insight or just smoke and mirrors. *International Journal of nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*. May 2005, p 107-130.

Judd, Natalie. 2004. On branding: building and maintaining your organization’s brand in an AMC, *Association Management* 56.7 (July 2004): S17(2)

Keller, K. 2000. The Brand Report Card, *Harvard Business Review*, Jan 2000.

Knowles, Jonathan 2004. In Search of a Reliable Measure of Brand Equity. Zyman Institute of Brand Science, Emory University. <http://www.zibs.com/knowles.shtml>

Laidler-Kylander, Nathalie, Simonin, Bernard, and Quelch, John. 2006. Building and Valuing Global Brands in the Nonprofit Sector, *Nonprofit Management and Leadership* Vol. 17

Luna-Reyes, Luis Felipe and Andersen, Deborah Lines. 2003. Collecting and analyzing qualitative data for system dynamics: methods and models, *System Dynamics Review* Vol 19, No 4, (Winter 2003):237-296.

Martinez-Moyano, Ignacio and Richardson, George P. 2002. An Expert View of the System Dynamics Modeling Process: Concurrences and Divergences Searching for the Best Practices in System Dynamics Modeling. *Proceedings of the 20th International Conference of the System Dynamics Society*, Palermo, Italy.

Naddaff A. 2004. Branding by Design, *Communication World*, Sept/Oct 2004. Vol 21, Iss 5; 18-22.

Nissim, B. 2004. Nonprofit Branding: Unveiling the Essentials, *Guidestar.org*, October, 2004. <http://www.guidestar.org/DisplayArticle.do?articleId=833>

Oster, Sharon. 1995. *Strategic Management for Nonprofit Organizations*, Oxford University Press.

Patton, M. Q. 1990. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Repenning Nelson, and Sterman John D. 2002. Capability Traps and Self-Confirming Attribution Errors in the Dynamics of Process Improvement. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 47 (2002): 265-295.

Reynolds T. and Phillips C. In The Search of True Brand Equity Metrics: All Market Share Ain’t Created Equal. [Journal of Advertising Research](#) (2005), 45: 171-186

Ritchie, Swami and Weinberg. 1999. A Brand New World for Nonprofits, *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 4(1), February 1999, 26-42.

Sargeant A. and Ford J. The Power of Brands. *The Stanford Social Innovation Review*. Winter 2007 Vol.5, Iss. 1; 40-48

Senge, Peter. 1990. *The Fifth Discipline*. New York: Doubleday

Sisodia, R. and Hurly, T. 2002. System Dynamics and Marketing Productivity. 20th System Dynamics Society Conference Proceedings. July 28-August 1, Palermo, Italy

Slim, Hugo. 2002. By What Authority? The legitimacy and accountability of NGOs. Paper presented at the International Council on Human Rights Policy International Meeting on Global

Trends and Human Rights – Before and after September 11, January 10-12, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Smillie, Ian. 1995. *The alms bazaar: altruism under fire: non-profit organizations and international development*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre

Sterman, John. D. 2000. *Business Dynamics: Systems Thinking and Modeling for a Complex World*, Irwin/McGraw Hill

Sveiby, K., Linard, K. and Dvorsky, L., Building a Knowledge-Based Strategy: A System Dynamics Model for Allocating Value Added Capacity, (unpublished)

<http://www.sveiby.com/Portals/0/articles/sdmodelkstrategy.pdf>

Thorne, Sally. 2000. Data Analysis in Qualitative Research. *Evidence-Based Nursing*; 3:68-70

Williams, D. 2005, Integrating System Dynamics Modelling and Case Study Research Method: A theoretical framework for process improvement. Working paper, System Dynamics Society

Woods, R.J., (1998) Can There be a Common Definition for Brand Equity? *Journal of Modern Business* 1998 1-11

Wootliff, J. and Deri, C., 2001 “NGOs: the New Super Brands,” *Corporate Reputation Review*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 157-164.