

Q SCORES

Marketing Evaluations conducts surveys to determine “Q Scores” for a broad range of entertainers and other public figures, such as TV performers, news and sports anchors, and reporters, athletes, and models. Each performer is rated on the following scale: “One of My Favorites,” “Very Good,” “Good,” “Fair,” “Poor,” and “Never Seen or Heard of Before.” The sum of the “Favorite” through “Poor” ratings is “Total Familiar.” Because some performers are not very well known, a positive Q Score is a ratio of the “One of My Favorites” rating to the “Total Familiar” rating, and a negative Q Score is a ratio of the sum of “Poor” and “Fair” ratings to the “Total Familiar” rating. Q Scores thus capture how appealing or unappealing a public figure is among those who do know him or her. Q Scores will move around, depending on the fame and fortune of the subject. For example, Steph Curry of the Golden State Warriors, who recently topped LeBron James as the most sought-after National Basketball Association (NBA) star, also boasts of an outsized Q Score of 34 (relative to higher-ranked Kevin Durant who has a Q score of 26, or LeBron James with a Q Score of 29 among sports fans).⁵⁵

tack and take advantage of the actor’s self-deprecating, campy wit to draw attention to its discount message.

Finally, marketing research must help identify potential endorser candidates and facilitate the development of the proper marketing program, as well as track its effectiveness.

Celebrities themselves must manage their own “brands” to ensure that they provide value. Anyone with a public profile, even if just within the company in which he or she works, should consider how to manage his or her brand image best.⁵⁶ Branding Brief 8-5 offers some thoughts



BRANDING BRIEF 8-5

Managing a Person Brand

Although many branding principles apply, there are some important differences between a person brand and a product or service brand. Here are some of the main differences to consider:

1. Person brands are more abstract and intangible but have very rich imagery.
2. Person brands are more difficult to compare because the competition is very broad and often not easily relatable.
3. Person brands can be difficult to control and keep consistent. A person brand can have many facets, and many interactions and experiences with many different people over time, all adding to the complexity of brand management.
4. People may adopt different personas for various situations (such as work versus play) that will affect the dimensionality of their brand.
5. Repositioning a person brand can be tricky because people like to categorize other people, but it is not impossible. Actors and entertainers (such as Mark Wahlberg and Madonna) have changed their images, whereas others (such as Sylvester Stallone and Jim Carrey) have found it more difficult.

As guidelines for managing a person brand, consider the following recommendations:

1. A person brand must manage brand elements. Names can be shortened and nicknames adopted. Even though a person does not necessarily have a logo or symbol, appearance in terms of dress and look can still help to create a brand identity.
2. A person brand is built by the words and actions of that person. Given the intangible nature of a person brand, however,

it is hard to form judgments at one point in time—repeated exposures are usually necessary.

3. A person brand can borrow brand equity through secondary associations such as geographical regions, schools and universities, and so on. A person brand can employ strategic partnerships with other people to enhance brand equity.
4. Credibility is key to a person brand. Trustworthiness is important, but so is likability and appeal in terms of eliciting more emotional responses.
5. Person brands can use multiple media channels—online is especially useful for social networking and community building.
6. A person brand must stay fresh and relevant and properly innovate and invest in key person traits.
7. A person brand should consider optimal positioning in terms of brand potential and associated points-of-parity and points-of-difference. A clear and compelling point-of-difference is especially important to carve out a unique identity in the workplace or market.
8. Brand architecture is simpler for a person brand—sub-branding is less relevant—but brand extensions can occur, for instance when a person adds to his or her perceived capabilities.
9. A person brand must live up to the brand promise at all times. Reputations and brands are built over the years but can be harmed or even destroyed in days. One slip can be devastating and difficult to recover from.
10. A person brand must be a self-advocate and help to shape impressions.