

STOCKHOLM SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS
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Nation Branding

A *Brand* New Marketing Tool on the Global Arena

A Qualitative Case Study in a Swedish Context

Abstract: Global competition is becoming fierce. New marketing techniques are emerging, among them Nation Branding. The aim of this study is to answer the following questions: What is Nation Branding and how is it applied in Sweden? Why is Nation Branding controversial and when does it matter? The study is performed through a qualitative, abductive approach. The empirical data is compared with theory by applying conventional marketing theory as well as corporate co-branding theory and cultural branding. Recently developed Nation Branding theories, such as the Nation Brand Hexagon and Index (NBI) and the Nation Brand Architecture model (NBAR), are used together with a Public Diplomacy framework in this research. This also opens up for a hermeneutic, holistic perspective including export related Heckscher-Ohlin framework. The primary data consists of interviews with practitioners and the general public. The secondary data are a literature research and a study of the NSU organs and stakeholders: The Swedish Institute, Visit Sweden, the Trade Council and Invest Sweden's web-pages. The findings of this paper are that: Sweden is a nation with a long tradition of Nation Branding. According to practitioners and general public, Sweden is successful in its Nation Branding activities, distributing a "relevant picture" of Sweden, stimulating branded exports, and portraying Sweden as being a trustworthy, environmentally friendly and innovative nation. Moreover, Sweden scores well in the NBI, with a positive impact on both people working with Nation Branding in Sweden, as well as among the public. However, this study reveals that the NBAR model is not used to its full potential in Sweden and that the theoretical perspective has to be well grounded and applied with relevance to stakeholders before the notion and the implementation can gain full appreciation. More research has to be done, and opportunities must be provided for both students and those interested in studying the new discipline.

Keywords: *Corporate Co-branding, Country of Origin, Cultural Branding, National Identity, Public Diplomacy*

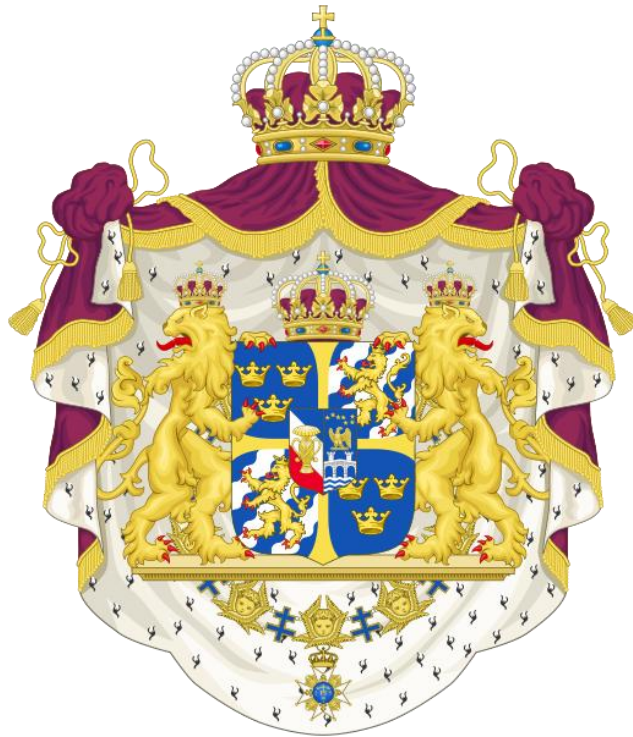
Author: Görel Englund 20470

Supervisor: Peter Hagström

Examiner: Susanne Sweet and Anna Nyberg

June 12, 2012, Room C606 14:00 – 15:00

Discussants: Camilla Adolfsson, Johanna Sevoni, Louise Karl, Pontus Englund



Greater Coat of Arms Sweden¹

¹ <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/europe/sweden/sesymbols.htm> [2012-12-21]

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Görel Englund

Stockholm, in January till December, 2012

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“Eloquence in nothing else but power of winning belief of what we say; and to that end we must have aid from passions of the hearer. Now to demonstration and teaching of the truth, there are required long deductions, and great attention, which is unpleasant to the hearer; therefore they which seek not the truth, but the belief, must take another way; and not only derive what they would have to be believed, from somewhat believed already, but also by aggravations and extenuations make good and bad, right and wrong, appear in great or less, according as it shall serve their turns.”²

² Thomas Hobbes in Ted H. Miller’s *Mortal Gods – Science, Politics, and the Humanist Ambitions of Thomas Hobbes*, Penn State Press, 2011, page 128

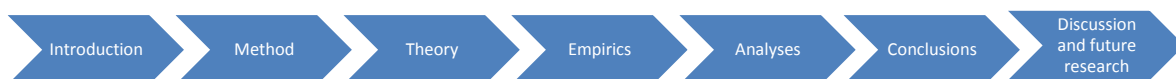
1 Introduction

This first chapter gives an introduction to the choice of subject and current state of knowledge. It states the problem formulation, the thesis' purpose and research questions. Definitions of key terminology, limitations and the disposition of the thesis are also part of this chapter.

What happens in the moment of a purchase? Academics, researchers, and marketing professionals ask the question over and over again. To what extent does *the origin*, that is, *in which country* the product is produced, influence the buyer? Is it a cue that interests market managers and do they work with this type of cue actively? Facing the opportunity to deepen the knowledge in a field of study, it would be interesting to base this research paper on this subject. In a search for possible concepts in the research field, an interesting practice showed up, namely: *Nation Branding*³.

The aim of this paper is to describe the new marketing phenomenon of branding nations. The product-evaluation research called *country-of-origin*, started shortly after the world wars.⁴ It was then followed by place marketing that is frequently used by cities and regions today and the concept has now developed further into the possibility to make places, including nations, into brands and treat nations as a brand, and consequently, actively brand the nation.

It would be interesting to study this new branding technique and its theory as well as practice, in Sweden. The first chapter of this study will contain the current status of knowledge and a problem discussion with purpose statement and predicate the research questions. Furthermore, the expected research contribution will be stated, as well as the thesis' limitation, and also, definitions on the most frequent notions. This chapter will also explain the disposition of the thesis, describing the work process which includes the chapters accordingly; starting with this *introduction*, followed by chapters on the *method* and the *theory* chosen for the study. The *empirics* and the *analyses* will altogether make it possible to make final assessments and come to the *conclusions* of this study. Lastly, a *discussion and suggestion to further research* will round up this thesis.



³ The notion will in this chapter be spelled with capital letters since it is a notion, later it will also be spelled with lower-case typing since it is a practice.

⁴ The key objective was, at that time, *not* to buy German products followed by the “buy domestic”-movement (60s&70s), also part of the con liberal trade movement and later the no-logo advocacy by Naomi Klein (1980s).

1.1 Current Status of Knowledge

Branding communities, cities, regions, nations and other geographic entities “is not as novel concept as some might think”.⁵ Already centuries ago the phenomena “were already at hand” when, for example, the pioneers were encouraged to settle “the New World”. Thereafter followed the “place marketing” when the new settlers were encouraged “to move to the West”.⁶ Another early example of *Nation Branding* is Greenland, where the settlers who came from Iceland perceived the name Iceland discouraging and they therefore wanted to have a name with a more positive connotation and decided to use the name *Greenland*.⁷

Scholars and practitioners have been investigating the relationship of country image and product evaluations for quite some time now.⁸ A transnational survey, covering 2 400 respondents in eight countries, became the country of origin land mark theory in 1987 with the subject “consumer perceptions of foreign consumer good”, and the objective was to explore key dimensions of the country of origin issue and the “Made in” concept. The conclusion from the study was: national and product images are often conjectural rather than experiential and this suggests the rich complexity of the country of origin concept. The authors stressed this complexity in turn and pointed to the need for further research.⁹ The authors also announced that they planned to continue to analyze the data base to discover more relationships within and across the various subsets of data from the eight countries. This promise was fulfilled six years later¹⁰ when other researchers in the field, also were invited to contribute to the book.¹¹

According to the foreword,¹² international marketing researchers, had at the time, been working on the phenomenon over 25 years, but to receive grants for an organized joint

⁵ Gertner, David (2011) A (tentative) meta-analysis of the ‘place marketing’ and ‘place branding’ literature, *Journal of Brand Management* (2011) 19, 112–131. doi:10.1057/bm.2011.13; published online April 15, 2011 [2012-03-30]

⁶ Ibid

⁷ As soon as the hopeful settlers arrived to their new home land they were probably taken by surprise. Today the name is seen as a positive brand name since Iceland wants to be known for its coolness and freshness being a leading country as a seafood global supplier. Dinnie, Keith (2008) *Nation Branding: Concepts, issues, practice*. Rutledge, London, New York

⁸ Ibid Gertner, also called *country-product image*.

⁹ Papadopoulos N.G. (1987) *Does "country-of-origin" matter?: Some findings from a cross-cultural study of consumer views about foreign products*, Marketing Science Institute, Cambridge, MA

¹⁰ Papadopoulos, Nicolas and Heslop, Louise A (Editors) (1993), *Product-Country Images – Impact an Role in International Marketing*, International Business Press, New York, London, Norwood (Australia) (477 pages)

¹¹ Ibid, for example A. K. Johansson, *Missing Strategic Opportunity: Managers’ Denial of Country-of-Origin Effects*, p 77-86

¹² The Foreword is written by Warren J. Bilkey, University of Wisconsin-Madison, U.S.A.

research was hard, or actually impossible before “the eight-countries-study”¹³ took place, since there was no theory building before then. It took the researchers 10 years of “begging” to finally be able to conduct the research. After the launch of the book “hardly an international journal issue or conference goes by without at least one country-of-origin article”¹⁴. And the book is still one of the most important books in the COO research field though there have been followers in recent years, since a lot has happened in field since then.¹⁵ We will already now make a statement here to set this clear from the start: The COO-effect will not get much attention in this survey since “It is all in the eye of the consumer”¹⁶, not the sender of the marketing message. So, we will focus this study on the market management side, since this is where the branding is taking place. This will now lead over to conventional marketing theory and closer to our study object: The Nation and Branding.

Philip Kotler has written several articles and two books on what he and other researchers call *place marketing*¹⁷ and *the marketing of nations*¹⁸. Both books cover marketing theory in the sense of creating new market possibility for “places in trouble”, as Kotler describes it in his book in 1993: “it may be cities or entire nations”. Furthermore, Kotler explains how places can recover through appropriate marketing strategies. The latter book has the same theme, not necessarily stressing places or nations in trouble, but the need for nations to be able to compete globally and how they can be successful from internationally extended marketing theory, through, for example, joint ventures. Neither book is about branding, though COO is mentioned. The author is giving a brief of what the research indicates; in the latter book “strong country brands” are mentioned as *perfumes from Italy* and *cars from Japan*. Though, nothing is written about how to create strong brands or that branding theory can create competitive advantage for a nation. For this we have to turn to other specialists in the field.

In 1996, a British consultant, Simon Anholt published his first article and coined the expressions *nation brand* and *Nation Branding*.¹⁹ Anholt is the leading authority on managing

¹³ Papadopoulos (1987)

¹⁴ Papadopoulos et.al. (1993), p XIX

¹⁵ For example Jaffe, Eugene D. and Israel, D. Nebenzahl, (2006) *National Image and Competitive Advantage: The Theory and Practice of Country-of-Origin Effect*, Copenhagen Business School Press, DK, 2001. 2nd ed. Both authors also contributed with their original research papers in Papadopoulos et.al. (1993)

¹⁶ Ibid, Jaffe and Nebenzahl (2006), page 63-93

¹⁷ Kotler et.al (1993) *Marketing Places; Attracting Investment, Industry, and Tourism to Cities, States, and Nations*. THE FREE PRESS, NY

¹⁸ Kotler et.al (1996) *The marketing of nations: a strategic approach to building national wealth*, Free, N.Y.

¹⁹ Anholt, Simon (1996) *Nation Brands of the twenty-first century*

national identity, reputation and image and a consultant to governments.²⁰ He wrote his first book in 2003 and has published several more since then.²¹

The brand management of nations, regions, and cities became such a popular topic that Simon Anholt has published a quarterly British journal since 2004, devoting it to the practice of *place branding*. Anholt, at the time, defined Nation Branding as "a concept involving a combination of the promotion of tourism, investment, and trade, plus public and cultural diplomacy". Countries that want to succeed in this era of globalization must, according to Anholt, "have coordinated brand strategies in all of these areas".²²

In 2006, Anholt launched his Nation Brands Index (NBI) where the nation's brand is measured world-wide. The index uses a public-opinion survey to judge the countries on the basis of six criteria based on Anholt's trademark; "*The Nation Brand Hexagon*", and is a tool that indicates which nations have the best brands and which are most in need of help in the different criteria of the model. The latest results can be found online at www.simonanholt.com²³ and will also be part of the theoretical framework in this thesis.

The idea that business, marketing and branding strategies could be adopted by local and national governments, stirred up controversy among scholars. Brand-averse doubt that it is possible to treat a nation as a product and there was a deep discussion on the possibility of rebranding a whole nation, between Michel Girard, director of the Department of Political Science at the Sorbonne in Paris, and another leading expert in the field: the British academic and consultant Wally Olins who referred to Girard's standpoints in his article in 2002, where Olins recalls "the historic French figures", "such as the Bourbons, General Napoleon... and the Revolution"... (among other events) as "historical non-ending activities of rebranding France".²⁴

The practice of branding whole nations caused many discussions and debates in the press, articles and also the academic papers. Among them, Fan Ying at Brunel University, London, published his working paper and later article: *Branding the Nation; what's being branded?*²⁵ The "great fuzz" had already started the same moment Simon Anholt launched his Nation

²⁰ Gertner, Fan Ying, Olins, Dinnie, Pike

²¹ Anholt, Simon (2006) *Brand New Justice; the Upside of Global Branding*, Oxford Butterworth Heinemann, GB

²² Kahn, Jeremy (2006) "A Brand-New Approach", October 10, 2006, *Place Branding* Vol. 2, No.2, April 2006 http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2006/10/10/a_brand_new_approach [accessed 2012-05-04]

²³ See *Chapter 3, Theoretical Framework* page 38-39 for further explanation of the Hexagon Model.

²⁴ Olins, Wally (2002) "Olins Viewpoints, Branding the Nation – historical context", *The Journal of Brand Management*

²⁵ Fan Ying (2005) *Branding the nation: What is being branded?*, Brunel Business School, London, UK

Brands Index.²⁶ The notion Nation Branding caused so much hazard that Anholt had to withdraw and repent.²⁷ The notion is lately being proposed to be replaced by other semantic expressions, for example: “Country image management”,²⁸ “national identity”, “good governance”²⁹.

However, Anholt made his repent in this moment, though, during the later years of 2008 and 2009, books on *Nation Branding* have started to get published.³⁰ Kotler wrote the foreword to one of these books but still did this without using the word *branding*. Kotler uses *place marketing* and stretches the notions a bit by referring to Anholt’s “new term” *place branding* [not Nation Branding, author’s remark] but is ending his foreword with the sentences: “*No nation, city or place should undertake the challenging task of marketing itself without first reading this book*”.

Then, as late as in the autumn of 2011, the notion *Geographical Branding*³¹ is used in a cross-conceptual book with the same name which includes articles and research papers within *Place Marketing, Region Marketing, City Marketing* and also holds articles on *Nation Branding* including one by Anholt where he makes his repent.

Quite a few books have been published recently on “straight-forward” branding nations practice and research including the new terminology – as well as *Nation Branding* – and other terms of place marketing and closely related phenomena which, many of them are composed by compiled original articles and therefore, as a result, hold the latest discourses within the research field.³²

²⁶ Interview with Thomas Carlhed, 2012-04-04

²⁷ Thomas Carlhed, furthermore; in some sources Anholt himself goes as far as saying he “neither coined or even thought of the existence of such a possibility to brand a nation”, Andy Pike (2011) and Malaysian Radio (2011-09-21)

²⁸ Fan Ying

²⁹ Simon Anholt

³⁰ Dinnie, Keith (2008) *Nation Branding – Concepts, Issues, Practice*, Rutledge, London, New York, UK
Moilanen, Teemu and Seppo Rainisto (2009) *How to Brand Nations, Cities and Destinations: A Planning Book for Place Branding*, Basingstoke England, Palgrave Macmillan, New York

³¹ Pike, Andy, (2011) Editor of *Brands and Branding Geographies*, Newcastle University, UK

³² For example Pike (2011) and Richard Elliot (2009) Editor of *Brands and Brand Management, Critical Perspectives on Business and Management*, Volume IV *Cross Cultural Perspectives on Brands* (709 pages), Routledge, London & New York

1.2 Problem Discussion, Purpose and Research Questions

It is not really clear what Nation Branding is, theoretical framework has only recently been ventured by scholars. The debate continues; Simon Anholt states that he never coined the notion, nor did he ever think that nations could apply traditional branding techniques.³³ In a way you could interpret this as if Anholt now assesses that Nation Branding has never existed and it does not exist today either. In this case – is this true?

Fan Ying has stated in his papers that his conclusion is that he is skeptic that Nation Branding would be worth the effort of the nation.³⁴ Could this be a fact?

Others say that Public Diplomacy has not been part of the research so far and regret this.³⁵ If this is true, it would be interesting to see if Public Diplomacy can be included in a more holistic theoretical nation-branding framework.

Do these statements above also hold for Sweden or will a study on Sweden's work with Nation Branding give other results than the above stated and; is it possible to include Public Diplomacy in a Swedish Nation Branding context? If the answer is yes, then: How or when and why does Sweden use Nation Branding?

Also, it would be interesting to compare Nation Branding with conventional marketing theories and see what the similarities or differences are. Can general branding theories and explicit Nation Branding theory explain why Nation Branding has a hard time to win acceptance among the scholars and people in general? Or, do the problems come from another context?

Sweden is included in the early research on country of origin³⁶ and was one of the first countries to join the Nation Brands Index in 1996. Furthermore, we suppose that Sweden is working with Nation Branding today but it has never been part of the Nation Branding literature as a case.³⁷ This is why it would be interesting to include Sweden in a case study.

The final thing to consider or ask is – Does Nation Branding make any difference? That is; does Nation Branding activity lead to positive effects that are important or great enough for a

³³ *Brands and Branding Geographies* and Malaysian Radio, 2011-09-21

³⁴ Fan Ying in *Branding the nation - What is being branded?*

³⁵ Dinnie, Keith, *Nation Branding – Concepts, Issues, Practice*

³⁶ Sweden is one of the eight countries in the initial COO research (Papadopoulos 1987).

³⁷ There are 30 thesis published in Sweden, based on the search word "Nation Branding" on uppsats.se of an approximately total 15.000 theses, up to this date (April 2012)

nation to engage in these kinds of activities?

From what is stated above, the research will hence be performed on the subject: *Nation Branding –A brand new marketing tool on the global arena; A qualitative case-study in a Swedish context*. The three research questions that will shed light over the new concept and support the analyses are:

- *What is Nation Branding and how is it applied in Sweden?*
- *Why is Nation Branding controversial?*
- *When is Nation Branding worthwhile?*

The purpose of this paper is to explore these three questions in an academic context as well as “out there”: To find today’s frontier of Nation Branding.

This is done through a literature survey as well as looking at Sweden as an actor within Nation Branding. Furthermore, a study on the marketing management used by the Swedish Government and the actors chosen by them; as well as a study of websites, talking to people working with Nation Branding as well as general public will all be included.

Finally, the aim of this paper is to put the empirical findings in a context of relevant theory, which will be constituted of a mix between conventional branding and more specific branding theory. Through the analysis assessments will be made which will in turn answer the research questions above. From these answers some final conclusions will be extracted. The hope is that this study can give guidance further research in the field. We will explain this more in detail in the following part of this chapter 1.3 “Expected Research Contribution and Limitations”.

1.3 Expected Research Contribution and Limitations

Since this study is an explorative study of a new phenomenon the knowledge contribution is first of all to shed some light over the new concept Nation Branding. Secondly, the study will explain the history and artifacts of the new concept with a market management focus on Sweden, with a special focus on branding. Thirdly, the aim is, when this is possible, to explain how Nation Branding differs from general branding theory. Forth, the study will explain what makes Nation Branding somewhat controversial or hard to accept. Earlier research has assessed the lack of research of Nation Branding theory including the Public Diplomacy's framework. It is the intention of this thesis to reduce this gap. Finally, the aim of this study is to give a contribution to how Nation Branding works in practice, then from a small country perspective, in Sweden. This we will do by looking at the brand in a historical context and follow the evolvement up till this date. All this, has so far, as we know, not yet been done, with this scope, in Sweden.

The limitation of this thesis is that it is meant to cover *only the notion of Nation Branding*. As a consequence other notions and pledged synonyms are omitted, for example, *place marketing* or *destination marketing*. This is a thesis about *nations* and *branding*. And the geographical limitation is Sweden, though other nations and regions will be mentioned to bring back-bone to the discussion.

Furthermore, this is *not* a survey of Nation Branding on corporate level. The different actors in Swedish business will not be involved to any great extent, that is; for example Ericson's, Volvo's and IKEA's contribution to enhancing the impact of the Swedish brand will not be included. This study is taking place *above corporate level*, that is, from a governmental view; it is a study of the umbrella picture with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as the "father figure" and the "family" at the levels beneath in "the branded house". The third level or parties of "the house" will not be explored, also, as mentioned before, due to BSc thesis limitations. Though, in one occasion there will be a highlight on Swedish business were the Swedish business environment will be briefly scanned on artifacts on nation-branding traces. This is only made to give an example of how a theoretical framework for Swedish nation-branding activities could look like in reality, and is *not* meant as anything more than a fictive example of this.

We leave to future researchers to fill in the relevant, and if possible, a more factitious "true picture" concluding which actors could be accurate to bring into the theoretical model of the Swedish Nation Brand Architecture Model (SNBAR), which the reader will get acquainted with in later chapters.

1.4 Definitions

Here follow definitions on the most frequent conceptual notions used in the study.

Brand platform – A platform as the base for marketing strategies.

Branding a Nation – To actively build and promote a nation's brand.

Co-branding – When brands co-operate in order to achieve synergy effects.

Country of Origin Effect – (COO Effect) Buyers' opinions regarding the relative qualities of goods and services produced in various countries.

Country product image – Another word for country of origin (COO).

Corporate branding – The practice of using a company's name as a product brand-name.

Cultural branding – To create identity brands using myths and cultural halo effects.

Enterprise 2.0 – Aims to help businesses organize information via the Web 2.0 technologies.

National Identity – The person's identity and sense of belonging to one state or to one nation, a feeling one shares with a group of people, regardless of one's citizenship status.

National Income – The aggregate of earnings from a nation's current production including compensation of employees, interest, rental income, and profits of business after taxes.

Place brand – A notion for a commercial areas brand. Can be a country or a federal unity.

Place marketing – A notion for the marketing of a region, a federal unity or a nation's brand.

Product brand – A product's brand. Can be products or services.

Public Diplomacy – The communication with foreign publics to establish a dialogue designed to inform and influence. It is practiced through a variety of instruments and methods ranging from personal contact and media interviews to the Internet and educational exchanges.

The Heckscher-Ohlin Theorem – States that a country will export goods that use its abundant factors intensively, and import goods that use its scarce factors intensively.

Web 2.0 – Is an extension of the Web 1.0 where the user could only watch static information on the web, not interact as it is now possible to do via the Web 2.0 generation that provides ample possibilities for interactions, for examples: Facebook, Bloggers and Twitters.

1.5 Disposition

This thesis has been divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1 gives an introduction to the choice of subject and current state of knowledge. It states the problem formulation, the thesis' purpose and research questions. Definitions of key terminology, limitations and the disposition of the thesis are also part of this chapter.

Chapter 2 explains the methodology of the thesis. It presents the primary and secondary data as well as the research design including the theoretical framework. The used methods will also be exposed to criticism.

Chapter 3 is the part of the thesis where Nation Branding theory will be explored, with the help from conventional marketing theories as well as corporate management theory. These chosen theories will later be tested in the analyses of the empirical findings of this thesis.

Chapter 4 presents the empirical study of this thesis. The findings will be linked to the chosen theory in the previous chapter. The theoretical and the empirical contexts are the foundation to the analysis in *Chapter 5* as well as the conclusions in *Chapter 7*.

Chapter 5 is the part where the empirical research in the former *Chapter 4* will be tested through the theories explained in *Chapter 3*. This is also the foundation to the answers of the thesis' problem formulation, questions and conclusions in *Chapter 6* and *7*.

Chapter 6 is where the three research questions formulated in *Chapter 1* gets addressed and answers are formulated in the light of the analysis in *Chapter 5*.

Chapter 7 is the chapter, after having analyzed the empirical material in this study, based on the findings in previous chapters, some conclusions will be assessed.

Chapter 8 embraces a discussion on this paper's findings and presents suggestions to further research.

Chapter 9 contains the references in the primary and secondary data, information on the interviews, bibliography and other research material including data accessed from the internet.

Chapter 10 includes *the Appendix* containing additional research material for the interested reader, such as, further information on Swedish Nation Branding activities. Furthermore, the interview questions and transcripts of the interviews are provided here. Finally, a presentation of the leading experts in the Nation Branding research field is compiled.

Chapter 11 contains an epilogue of this thesis which gives the final word to Edgar Leamer in his most recently published book *The Craft of Economic: Lessons from the Heckscher-Ohlin Framework* (2012).

2 Method

This chapter explains the methodology of the thesis. It presents the primary and secondary data as well as the research design including the theoretical framework. The used methods will also be exposed to criticism.

Business research does not exist in a vacuum. Not only is it shaped by what is going on in the real world of business and management; it is also shaped by many of the intellectual traditions that form the social sciences at large.³⁸

The concept *evidence-based management*, developed since the 1990s, is “the systematic use of available evidence to improve management practice”³⁹. According to Bryman and Bell there are four sources of information that contribute to evidence based management, namely: Practitioner expertise and judgment, evidence from the local context, critical evaluation of the best available research evidence and perspectives of those who may be affected by the decision.⁴⁰

The aim of this study is to explore Nation Branding from these evidence based management sources. This will be done by a case study where we will be listening to the people working with Nation Branding in Sweden. The purpose is to get access to practitioner expertise and judgment, trying to find evidence in a Swedish context, also by looking at earlier research – then with a critical eye – trying to put the findings of this paper in the perspectives of Swedish Nation Branding stakeholders. Therefore, also general public is approached in the case study.

Before moving over to the choice of approach in this study, we start this chapter by asking:
– What is *a case study*?

The answer is:

The most common use of the term associates the case study with a geographical location, such as a workplace or organization. What distinguishes a case study from other research designs is the focus on a bounded situation or system, an entity with a purpose and functioning parts. The emphasis tends to be upon intensive examination of the setting.⁴¹

³⁸ Bryman & Bell, p 4

³⁹ Reay, Berta, and Kohn (2009) in Bryman & Bell, p 6

⁴⁰ Briner, Denyer, and Rosseau (2009) p19, in Bryman & Bell, p 6

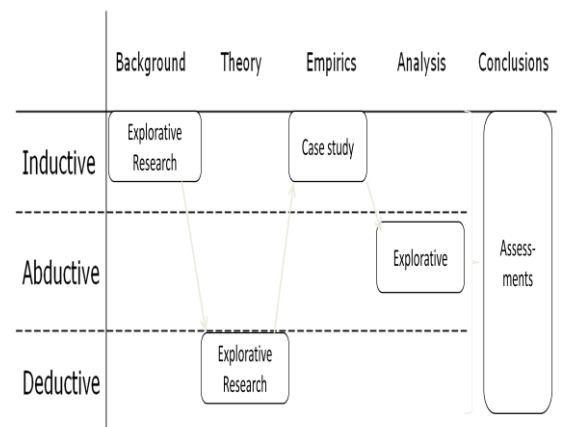
⁴¹ Bryman & Bell, p 60

2.1 Choice of Approach

Theory is according to Bryman and Bell something that guides and influences the collection and analysis of data.⁴² Considering the relationship between theory and research the researcher moves around in two different research dimensions, he or she is either working in a *deductive or an inductive theoretical approach*, or somewhere in between.⁴³

An *inductive approach* has its spring-board in the empirics – what kind of theory or theories can explain what we see? A *deductive approach* starts off in the theory, testing the empirical research data to see if the theory is applicable for the research objects.⁴⁴ Deductive theory represents the most common view of the nature of the relationship between theory and research.⁴⁵ Bryman & Bell explains inductive research as “the findings are fed back into the stock of theory”, and the intention of this thesis is to follow this way of inductive approach. However, Bryman & Bell inflicts; “the issues are not as clear-cut as they are sometimes presented”.⁴⁶ This will also be the case for this research that will, in the end, be based on a mix of the two approaches, forming a third kind of approach, the so called *abductive approach*.⁴⁷

Since this thesis is dealing with a new concept and the purpose is to find explanations to the new concepts’ nature an inductive approach seems more relevant than a deductive. Later in the research a deductive approach will be used when Nation Branding is examined with the help of general branding theories, and as an outcome from this part, the study is deductive. Since there will be a mix of both approaches the final result of this thesis’ theoretical approach is consequently the choice of using an abductive approach which includes, as we have already explained, both the inductive and the deductive approach.



Figur 2.1 Research method (own elaboration)

⁴² Bryman and Bell, p 11

⁴³ Seminar lectures on theory and methods in thesis writing, SSE Course 629, Spring 2012

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Bryman & Bell, p 11

⁴⁶ Bryman & Bell, p 13

⁴⁷ Seminar lectures on theory and methods in thesis writing, SSE Course 629, Spring 2012

2.2 Theoretical Framework

While this thesis is about nations and branding a definition of the two concepts was the first step in the theoretical research, followed by a thorough research on Nation Brandings' history, going through ideas and concepts through the years, related to the research field. Kotler and other general branding theory experts, for example Aaker and Johansson are also highly relevant in this context. Aaker is interesting because of his portfolio and co-branding theory, Johansson because of his corporate management theories in a global setting. Holt is a foregoer when in cultural branding, here presented as part of the conventional theory context, but it could also belong to what we call in this thesis, “the specific” nation-branding theory context.

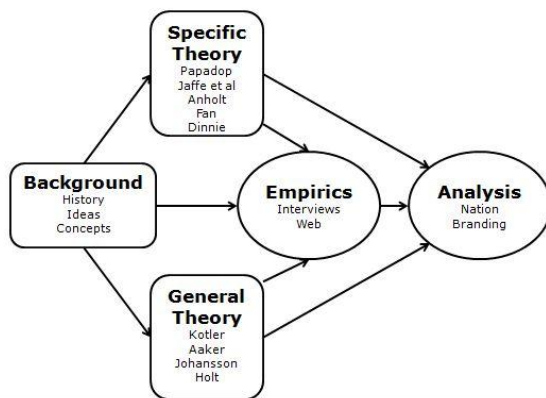


Figure 2.2 The Disposition of the Thesis and its Theoretical Framework (Author's elaboration)

Papadopoulos is the foremost researcher on Country of Origin (COO) followed today by many, for example Jaffe et.al. Simon Anholt is the unprecedented expert and consultant on Nation Branding. He is also the one who coined the notion⁴⁸ and created the world wide Nation Brands Index (NBI). Fan and Dinnie are well known and often cited scholars and researchers, the latter has written the first book on “pure” or “specific” Nation Branding with a rich theoretical framework as well as practice.

Public Diplomacy, trade and net exports are also playing a crucial role in nations work, closely related to or included in nation-branding activities; therefore these areas will also be covered in both the theoretical as well as the empirical parts, to see to what extent they have something in common with the specific Nation Branding theories, or if there are other touch points in the interfaces of theory and practice. Together with the empirical studies on Swedish Nation Branding; the interviews, articles, and web site research will be analyzed through the

⁴⁸ Though this is being debated.

chosen theoretical framework and the conclusions of this thesis will finally be assessed upon this framework. But will this be sufficient to answer the research questions adequately? Are all the sources relevant for the questions? We will also put our theory and data under criticism in this chapter as well as discussing its validity and reliability.

2.3 Primary Data

The primary data consists of interviews with Håkan Hjort at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs,⁴⁹ Joakim Norén at the Swedish Institute, e-mail and telephone contacts with Ylva Björnberg and Thomas Carlhed, former Secretary General at the Swedish Institute, who both created the Sweden Picture 2.0 web platform. Also, informal talks with employees at the Visit Sweden both in Stockholm and the regional offices are part of this data.

Nation Branding on a regional level is covered by both e-mail and telephone interview with one of the area managers in south Sweden.

Moreover, other stakeholder's perspectives are taken into account, that is, short talks and interviews with the general public. Some of the contacts are presented in this thesis' *Appendix*.⁵⁰ Finally, a study on the NSU organs Web 2.0 is performed in order to analyze the transmitted message.

The interview at the Swedish Institute was performed face-to-face and recorded on digital media and transcribed word-by-word. The other respondents did not have the possibility to book a meeting since they either had left the office (Carlhed) or was about to leave (Björnberg) or were too busy (the region manager). In these cases the interviews had to take place on telephone and had more the character of informal talks and open question interviewing. Since the face-to-face interview was recorded on digital media it was also possible to transcribe this interview word-by-word.⁵¹

Valuable citation has been possible due to the personal contacts with the interviewees, though one respondent has not given the permission to use citations" since it is not clear what was being said" on the telephone, even though notes were taken during the interview. This problem has been overcome by the decision to not give any information on which Visit Sweden regional office has been contacted or who the respondent is.

⁴⁹ Very brief, quick questions on telephone, since Hjort was leaving the country for a longer period of time, that same afternoon. Though, still, with the possibility to get in touch on mail if it should be necessary.

⁵⁰ See 10.6 *Appendix*, pp 130-133, *Transcripts of Interviews*

⁵¹ See *Appendix* for interview transcripts, pp 125-132

The purpose of the qualitative interviewing was to follow Bryman & Bells advice to, in accordance with “evidence based management”, study “practitioner expertise and judgment” to be able to include “evidence from the local context” in this study. This in turn leads to the possibility to, “to see” the research field “through the eyes” of the individuals; to obtain an understanding of the social world of Nation Branding through an examination of the interpretation of that world, by its participants.⁵²

However, in discussions with the supervisor of this thesis the decision was already in the planning state to put focus and emphasis on the theoretical framework and only do a sparse number of interviews. The main reason for this was the limited scope of a BSc thesis as well as the fact that this thesis has only one writer and also, BSc students should primarily get familiar with the theoretical framework in the process of thesis writing. As a consequence, the theoretical part is the biggest part of this study.

Furthermore, this is also the reason to why it is necessary to get a holistic view⁵³ over the phenomenon, in order to not risk too severe myopia and valuable opportunities to make sufficient analysis will be lost. Therefore, we take the chance of maybe bringing in more theory than needed, since we prefer to have large margins in order to create elbow-room for the analysis part. This thinking also results in a relatively meager primary data, for the same reason. This research shows that Nation Branding is a vast and complex phenomenon. There are ample possibilities to study Nation Branding threw only a restricted scope of empirical data. The rest is left for future researchers to take care of.

⁵² The method is described in Bryman & Bell, p 386

⁵³ Alvesons, Mats and Kaj Sköldberg (2000) *Reflexive Methodology; New Vistas for Qualitative Research*, Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Dehli

2.4 Secondary Data

The secondary data contains literature and research articles on Nation Branding. Especially the background in this study is covered through the means of this, it is meant to provide the latest research issues and assessments.

Students on university level in Sweden have complained over the lack of books written on the subject.⁵⁴ Since then, when these theses were written, there have been an increasing number of books issued on Nation Branding and others are probably in process, following the progress in the research field.⁵⁵

Writing about the theoretical framework, literature on general branding theory has provided valuable insights.

In the study of Nation Branding in Sweden, the Swedish brand-platform has provided empirical information including the Swedish Institute, Visit Sweden, the Trade Council and Invest Sweden's homepages. Sweden also figures since the start in Simon Anholt's Nation Brands Index (NBI). This is easily accessed on Simon Anholt's home page and also the GfK Roper's, which is the research bureau that cooperates with Anholt, and also holds a homepage that provide information on the NBI.

These are all valuable resources for this study's both theoretical as well analytical parts though, we need to put them under criticism as well, and discuss their grade of validity and reliability before we can move over to the theoretical part of this study.

⁵⁴ For example, Gina Aspelin and Charlotte Mellners' Master thesis *Sverigebilden – Ett place marketing projekt – En fallstudie*, Ekonomihögskolan, Lunds Universitet, January 2008 [*The Sweden-picture – A Place Marketing Project – A Case Study*, Lund University (author's translation)]

⁵⁵ See *References*, for example Dinnie (2008), Molainen & Rainisto (2009)

2.5 The Empirics and Criticism of the Sources

A thesis writer should always keep a certain distance to his or her work and be open for self criticism so, here follows a part where we will distance ourselves from the methods used in this paper to see our choices with a critical eye.⁵⁶

The main criticism of this thesis is the fact that it has only one writer and therefore *throughout the whole process of qualitative writing*⁵⁷: outlining the general research questions, selecting relevant sites and subjects for the research, collection of relevant data and interpretation, finding the conceptual and theoretical framework, tightening the research questions, collection of further data and finally writing up findings and conclusions; the gathering of the four sources of information⁵⁸ explained earlier⁵⁹ is suffering from the fact that this is all performed by only one individual. As a result, the *trustworthiness and authenticity*⁶⁰ is damaged. To put it simply: There will be no absolute truths in this research since the validity and reliability suffers severely from this fact of qualitative writing and “one sole writer”.

Also, a broad research area is covered and therefore the research might be accused of being too shallow. But to this thesis defense, *flexibility and limited structure*⁶¹ has made the research possible. It was a necessity to stay open for almost anything that came in the way during the research period, to avoid situations of myopia. However, Bryman and Bell states that “An advantage of the unstructured nature of most qualitative enquiry is that it offers the prospect of flexibility.”⁶² And this fact, that there has been a great deal of this flexibility in writing this thesis still gives reason to believe that the flexibility has been of a positive nature, and not causing the thesis too many drawbacks.

Moreover, even though the purpose of this thesis is to find concepts and theory grounded in data, or if possible, also do the other way around: create new theory from the data – the critique of qualitative research, as mentioned above, is that it is too subjective. It is usually very difficult to replicate. It has problems of generalization and it lacks transparency. This study is no exception from these facts.⁶³

⁵⁶ Seminar lectures on theory and methods in thesis writing, SSE Course 629, Spring 2012

⁵⁷ Bryman & Bell, pp 389-392

⁵⁸ Practitioner expertise and judgment, evidence from the local context, critical evaluation of the best available research evidence and perspectives of those who may be affected by the decision.

⁵⁹ See page 19 and Briner, Denyer, and Rosseau (2009) p19, in Bryman & Bell, p 6

⁶⁰ Bryman & Bell, p 395

⁶¹ Bryman & Bell, p 405

⁶² Bryman & Bell, p 406

⁶³ Bryman & Bell, pp 408-409

2.6 Validity and Reliability

Bryman and Bell states that the validity of a research paper is the most important criterion, “concerning the integrity of the conclusion that is generated from a piece of research”.⁶⁴ More simply explained it is the question of what conclusions a researcher reaches and if another researcher, with the same research material will come to the same conclusions, or will they differ? That is, if they differ you would say that the research validity is low.⁶⁵

A researcher should also judge the *internal validity*, which relates to the issue of causality, which is; if the researcher examines the different independent variables (X), to what extent do they cause a change in the factor (Y)? And, to what extent will the factor (Y) change due to this change in the variable(s)? Could there be *other* variables within the research context not counted for? This is usually of great importance in quantitative research where the researcher depends heavily of the results given from a deductive, often numerical analysis. The same thing concerns the *external validity*, that is, what external variables beyond the specific research context causes factor changes?

External validity is one of the main reasons why quantitative researchers are so keen to generate representative samples but these criteria seems, according to Bryman and Bell, to be geared mainly to quantitative research rather than qualitative research. For the latter other aspects such as credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability constitute more relevant criteria.⁶⁶ These four criteria relevant for qualitative research are explained by Bryman and Bell:⁶⁷

- *Credibility*, which parallels internal validity – i.e. how believable are the findings?
- *Transferability*, which parallels external validity – i.e. do the findings apply to other contexts?
- *Dependability*, which parallels reliability – i.e. are the findings likely to apply at other times?
- *Confirmability*, which parallels objectivity – i.e. has the investigator allowed his or her values to intrude to a high degree?

Since interviews have been held with individuals working with Nation Branding and also a thorough literature and article research has been performed, this points to the fact that a broad

⁶⁴ Bryman & Bell, p 42

⁶⁵ Seminar lectures on methods in thesis writing, SSE Course 629, Spring 2012

⁶⁶ Bryman & Bell, pp 42-44

⁶⁷ Bryman & Bell, p 43

scope of the research field has been covered and this in turn gives reason to believe that the criteria above are covered satisfactorily. The interviews and informal talks are also presented in *the Appendix* for the reader to control its validity as well as reliability.

Furthermore, the interviewed individuals are well orientated persons with a lot of knowledge in their working field and sufficient knowledge of Sweden. Also, most of the material gathered for this study has been registered and is presented in *the Appendix*. The aim has also been to not make too many corrections, so the authenticity is not being harmed. So, the information the respondents have provided must be seen as both valid and relevant for the study objectives, but of course also has to be placed in the “one sole writer” perspective as it is explained above, then the validity and credibility in, for example, the analytical part decreases.

Moreover, the broad scope of literature and peer reviewed articles that have emerged since the mid 90s make it easier to find information related to the research field. These facts also increase both the validity as well as the reliability, if not fully, at least to a broader extent compared to the situation for earlier research. Still, this study is a “momentary lapse of reason”, the gathering of data, the analyses and the conclusions are made from observations by only one individual and therefore highly subjective.

However, in this context the first three criteria; credibility, transferability and dependability must be possible to assess as being fairly high compared to conformability which probably is being lower than the other three.

We have now brought up relevant issues concerning the methodological part of this thesis and are ready to make a summary of this chapter, before we move on to the next chapter where we will describe this study’s theoretical framework.

2.7 Summary

In this chapter we have assessed the methodology of this study. Since the study concerns a new phenomenon the best alternative is a mixed method of inductive, which is explaining the empirical data through a possible theoretical framework, as well as deductive approach, which is testing if the data can be explained through a chosen (set of) theoretical framework. This leads this study to end up with a mix of inductive and deductive, the so called *abductive approach*, in an *explorative qualitative study* which is suitable when we want to study a new phenomenon through different kind of observations, mixing several kinds of theories in a holistic theoretical framework.

The aim of this study is to find a set of theories through which we can explain what Nation Branding is and how it is used by nations. The choice of theoretical framework for this study is conventional branding theories mixed with, in recent years, the developed specific Nation Branding theories.

Also, we will also use a case study technique where Sweden's work with Nation Branding is our objective to see how Sweden follows the theoretical framework set for this study. The study is qualitative since the most important issue of writing this thesis is to stay open for any kind of outcome and to prevent myopia in a too early state of the study, since this is a new phenomenon. Anything could be the outcome of this study.

Though, qualitative studies also have draw backs. It is hard to present any absolute fact and consequently to assess something on grounded theory is also very hard. Still, this doesn't mean that this is a useless method; it is just very much different from for example quantitative research which gives the study possibility to make statistical assessments with different significance levels.

Furthermore, it has to be stressed that the people working with Nation Branding have knowledge about their organization but it doesn't necessarily mean that they have knowledge about the theories and how they should be applied. Therefore, it was decided together with the supervisor to use primary data (interviews) sparsely and keep main focus on theory where books, literature and research articles are used to a great extent.

Finally the choice of sources are evaluated and the validity and reliability of this study discussed, and we are now ready to present the theoretical framework chosen for the study in the following *Chapter 3*.

3 Theory

This is the part of the thesis where Nation Branding theory will be explored, with the help from conventional marketing theories as well as corporate management theory. These chosen theories will later be tested in the analyses of the empirical findings of this thesis.

Earlier research states that the factual theoretical framework of Nation Branding is still uncertain.⁶⁸ Only recently, a theoretical framework of Nation Branding has seen the light of the day in the late 2000s.⁶⁹ The aim of this thesis is to find a relevant framework for the analysis of Nation Branding in Sweden. What is relevant for Sweden is probably not relevant for all nations since nations differ.⁷⁰ But supposedly, nations that are engaged in Nation Branding share some foundation in conventional marketing theory,⁷¹ as well as the new specific Nation Branding framework that is being developed, most probably in progress also in the very minute this research is made.

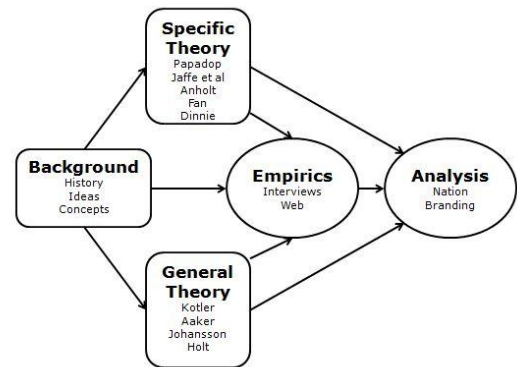


Figure 3.1 The Research' Theoretical Framework (Author's elaboration)

In this chapter we will make up a theoretical framework based on Kotler's theories and add some other expertise on corporate co-branding strategies.⁷² Cultural branding⁷³ and other platform theory will also be explained. This conventional or traditional theoretical framework will be tested together with the new Nation Branding theoretical framework including the definitions of nation-branding: Countries and nations, the Nation Brand Architecture Model⁷⁴ and the Hexagon Model⁷⁵ including the Nation Brands Index (NBI)⁷⁶ are the core of the specific nation branding theories brought up in this chapter. Also, brand liabilities and trademark-law is discussed. As well as, a holistic setting with Public Diplomacy including the theory of representation and the national income identity, also seem relevant to invite in this chapter. Initially, we start with the definitions on Countries and Nations and National Identity.

⁶⁸ Fan Ying, Dinnie, Pike, Gertner, Kotler et.al.

⁶⁹ Dinne (2008), Moilanen & Rainisto (2009), Pike (2011)

⁷⁰ Hantrais, Linda (2009) *International Comparative Research; Theory, Methods and Practice*, Palgrave Macmillan

⁷¹ Carlhed, Norén

⁷² Aaker (2004)

⁷³ Holt

⁷⁴ Dinnie (2008)

⁷⁵ Anholt

⁷⁶ Anholt

3.1 Countries and Nations and National Identity

Countries are legal entities with border; *Nations* include people, regions and the diaspora.⁷⁷

National identity is according to Wikipedia “the person's identity and sense of belonging to one state or to one nation, a feeling one shares with a group of people, regardless of one's citizenship status.” Furthermore, various studies have shown that a person's national identity is a direct result of the presence of elements from the "common points" in people's daily lives: national symbols, language, national colors, the nation's history, national consciousness, blood ties, culture, music, cuisine, radio, television etcetera.

The national identity of most citizens of one state or one nation tends to strengthen when the country or the nation is threatened militarily. The sense to belong to the nation is essential as an external threat becomes clearer when individuals seek to unite with fellow countrymen to protect themselves and fight against the common threat.⁷⁸

This is by no means a full explanation of nations, countries and national identity. The interested reader finds a broader definition in *the Appendix*, while the above mentioned will be sufficient for the analyses part of this thesis. Though, brand and branding require more detailed explanations. We want to find both the origin of Nation Branding as well as modern Nation Branding theory to help us in the analyses of this study, and we therefore, start by looking closer into the brand and branding theories, as well as the history of branding in the following chapter.

⁷⁷<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Country>; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nation> 12-04-10 [09:05]

For a deeper definition see *Appendix 10.1*, p 117

<http://www.webster-dictionary.org/definition/Nations> 12-05-10 [07:45]

<http://www.webster-dictionary.org/definition/Country> 12-05-14 [10:20]

⁷⁸ Wikipedia, 12-07-10 [21:20]

3.2 Brand and Branding: History and Theories

The definition of a brand is defined by the American Marketing Association as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors”.⁷⁹

A brand is a name or symbol used to identify the source of a product. A strong brand adds significant value and profits as a result of the benefits derived from the name.⁸⁰ Creating a new brand where the name will have the meaning with respect to the positioning of a product as well as “being short and easy to remember can be a challenge”.⁸¹ Brand names can be so called *Founder or Owner names, Functional Names, Invented Names, Experiential Names [and] Evocative Names*.⁸²

To create a sort of identity mark in the skin of a human being, man or animal, creating a pattern due to the scar that comes as a consequence of this action, is said to be an early example of a brand, which then also is obvious in the English term *branding*.⁸³ Another branding is taking place within body arts.⁸⁴ In recent years a number of new branding areas have developed, for example, one of the most recent is *Employer Branding* where the employer creates a brand towards potential and current and former workers.⁸⁵ Also, the so called *Foreign Branding*⁸⁶ that exploits the country of origin to give the brand a foreign image, is one of these new forms of branding. Theory states that the foreign image can be real as well as made up. Anybody can use any country’s image to add this differentiated image and incorporate it in the product brand.

Wahlund & Håkanson tell the history of *trade mark and branding* and explain how people in Europe during the antique ages made usage of brands as they put up *little notes* to attract customers with information of for example where to go to get shoes mended, knives sharpened and custom tailored clothes. *Pictures* of the product or service they offered were also used in order to reach the illiterate. The customers could use “this little piece of

⁷⁹ Kotler & Keller (2009) *Marketing Management* 13th edition, p 276

⁸⁰ Best, Roger J. (2009) *Market-Based Management, Strategies for Growing Customer Value and Profitability*, 5th ed, Pearson International Edition, p 239

⁸¹ Best, p 255

⁸² Kotler & Keller (2009), p 256

⁸³ Wahlund, Richard & Per Håkansson (1996) *Varumärken – från teori till praktik*, SSE

⁸⁴ sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Body art [2012-04-09 16:00]

⁸⁵ Moroko, Lara; Uncles, Mark D. (2009) “Employer Branding and Market Segmentation”, *Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 17 Issue 3, pp181-196

⁸⁶ sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign branding [2012-04-09 14:15]

information as a rule of thumb” in their daily lives.⁸⁷ Still today, we have brands closely attached to pictures. During the middle ages, the producers started to mark their products to seclude them from others. The buyer could then create an opinion of the quality through this marking or *branding*. Kotler states that a brand should be able to protect and the legal aspect in America started when the cattle got protected through law and other institutional practice.⁸⁸

In the process of going from a pre-industrial society to the industrial society of today, when large scale production is making the distance between the company and its customers larger, it was important for the producers to preserve the link to the customers in order to keep the demand intact, and this is when the usage of brands became even more important. The personal contact was replaced by brands.⁸⁹

To be able to reach out to the right customers the company works hard with defining who the customers are, what their needs are and how the company’s product can fulfill these needs. This is done by categorizing the customer in different homogenous target segments with the same needs, background and demographics. Detailed marketing research is performed and the marketing program gets customized thereafter. Differentiated consumer segments and target groups are created. This ties the right segment to the company’s relevant offerings and functions as a bilateral benefit both for the company and its customers.⁹⁰

It is hard work for the company to obtain this knowledge in order to” stay close to” the company’s customers and to maintain this profitable contact intact in a long term perspective involves a lot of work and focus on creating a brand value that is relevant, high and intact.⁹¹

3.2.1 To Create Brand Value

According to Kotler & Keller brands offer benefits to customer and firms; they are valuable intangible assets that need to be managed carefully and the key to branding is that consumers perceive differences among brands in a product category. This is something brand managers must be aware of and know how to handle. Furthermore, *brand equity* is the extra value perceived by the customer because of its brand, compared to the final monetary result, it is the *extra added value*, if that same product or service was not identified by that brand.⁹² This

⁸⁷ Free interpretation.

⁸⁸ Swedish Trade Mark Law is explained later in this chapter, p 33

⁸⁹ Wahlund & Håkansson, pp 17-19

⁹⁰ Kotler, Best

⁹¹ Ibid

⁹² Kotler & Keller, p 276

created brand equity is also called *goodwill*.⁹³ Apart from being functional, rational, tangible brands may also be *intangible, symbolic or emotional* – related to what the brand represents.⁹⁴

The marketers have to make a careful choice of brand elements in order to differentiate the brand. Strong brands use multiple brand elements, and they are used in order to build up as much brand equity as possible. The brand-building ability is measured through what consumers would think or feel if the brand element was the only thing they knew. *Brand awareness, brand associations, brand quality and brand loyalty* are the performance drivers building the *brand equity*. Furthermore, there are six main brand element choice criteria. A brand should be *memorable, meaningful, likable, transferable, adaptable and protectable*.⁹⁵ Also, according to Kotler & Keller *building brand equity* depends on three main factors:⁹⁶

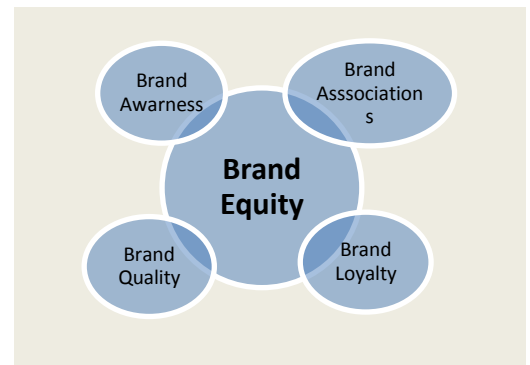


Figure 3.2 The Brand Equity Model (Kotler & Keller, Aaker)

- 1) The initial choices for the brand elements or identities making up the brand.
- 2) The way the brand is integrated into the supporting marketing program.
- 3) The associations indirectly transferred to the brand by linking the brand to some other entity for example the company, channel of distribution or another brand could also be *country of origin*.⁹⁷

The brand asset evaluator is also recommended by Kotler, embracing five aspects:⁹⁸

- *Differentiation* measures the degree to which a brand is seen as different from others.
- *Energy* measures the brand's sense of momentum.
- *Relevance* measures the breadth for the brand's appeal.
- *Esteem* measures how well the brand is regarded and respected.
- *Knowledge* measures how familiar and intimate consumers are with the brand.

⁹³ Wood, Lisa, M. (1995) "Brands: The Asset Test", *Journal of Marketing Management*, 1995 11, p 552

⁹⁴ Kotler & Keller, p 276

⁹⁵ Kotler & Keller, p 286

⁹⁶ Kotler & Keller, pp 285-286

⁹⁷ Italics added.

⁹⁸ Kotler & Keller, p 283

Also *designing holistic marketing activities* is important while building *brand equity*:⁹⁹

- Choose the right moment
- Link external and internal marketing
- Bring the brand alive for employees

After this overview of brands and the history of branding as well as a manager focus on the brand building conditions we will now look at branding in a more specific context; how brands are created on the *corporate level* and maintained in the market environment as well as different types of branding leading to the more specialized *Nation Branding* elements.

3.2.2 Strategic Market and Portfolio Management: Co-Branding

According to David Aaker the way to create a strong market position is through *differentiation* and *brand equity* built on *brand awareness*, *brand associations*, *perceived quality* and *brand loyalty*.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, Aaker

suggests the branding technique of the so called *co-master branded offerings*¹⁰¹ where brand partners have major driver roles in the offerings and together they enjoy positive spill-over effects. *Co-master brands* have the potential to create offerings with points of differentiation, but only if the brand associations are

complementary rather than redundant. The whole point is, according to Aaker, to create an offering that is greater than the firm could develop by itself. The impact of *co-branding* can be more than expected when there are real synergy effects between the brands, when the associations of each brand are strong and complementary. A successful co-master brand needs to involve visible customer benefits from each brand that collectively represent a *point of differentiation*. Just having similar customers or associations are not adequate if the benefit is not there. The co-master brand might also allow greater freedom “to stretch like tying two rubber bands together, the combination goes farther than one”.¹⁰² Co-master brands thus represent a way to enter a new product market that is an alternative to creating a new brand or extending an existing brand. A new brand is, of course, usually too expensive or simply not feasible. Instead, brand extension risks stretching the brand beyond its product boundaries. In

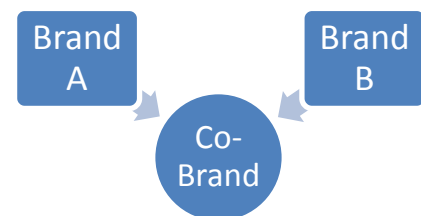


Figure 3.3 The Co-Brand Model (Aaker)

⁹⁹ Kotler & Keller, p 290

¹⁰⁰ Aaker, David A. (2001) *Strategic Market Management*, University of California Berkeley, p 164-169

¹⁰¹ Aaker, David A. (2004) *Brand Portfolio Strategy; Creating Relevance, Differentiation, Energy, Leverage and Clarity*, Free Press, New York, pp 162-166

¹⁰² Ibid.

a co-brand situation, the risk is minimal, because each brand can be true to its heritage and image. It also reduces brand-building investment since a co-master brand can draw on existing brand equities so that investments supporting the new brand can be minimal. A co-master brand alliance can also be strategically defensive. If a competitor is on the verge of creating a strategically important position in response to a market trend it can be critical to implement a response quickly with a high likelihood of success, and without a lengthy test and refinement period.¹⁰³

3.2.3 Driver Brand and Endorser Brand

According to Aaker the development of a *brand portfolio strategy* involves several dimensions: A key brand portfolio dimension is defining the brand scope¹⁰⁴. For what product categories and subcategories can the brand play a role? How far should the brand be stretched as a *driver brand*, or as an *endorser brand*?

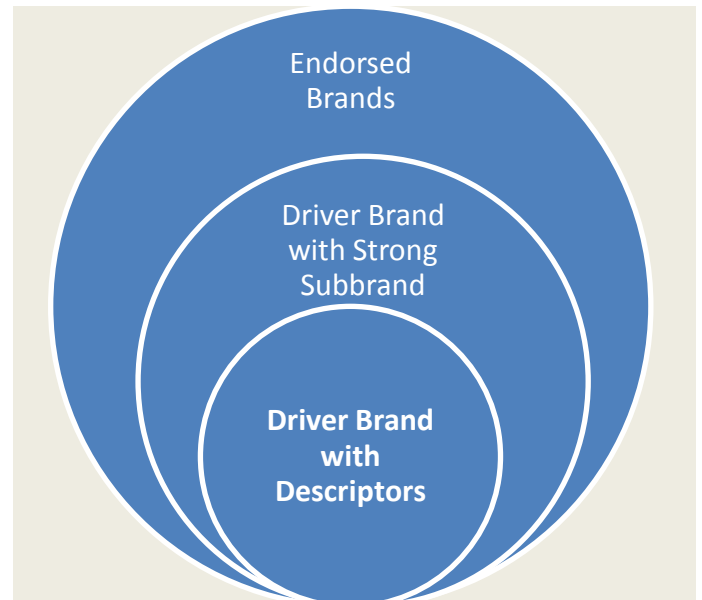


Figure 3.4 The Brand Scope (Aaker)

Does the brand have permission to extend? If not, does the brand need to be redefined in order to support the business strategy? Is a new brand needed so support a new product-market?¹⁰⁵

The extension offering needs to have a brand strategy, three major brand options exist that will leverage an existing brand:¹⁰⁶

- An existing master brand with a descriptive subbrands (a branded house)
- An existing master brand with subbrand
- A new brand endorsed by an existing brand

The master brand (or parent) brand is the primary indicator of the offering, the point of reference. Visually, it will usually take top billing; an endorser brand serves to give credibility and substance to the offering. A master brand can have subbrand, or can be endorsed. *Endorsers are usually organizational brands.* That is, they represent organizations rather than

¹⁰³ Aaker (2004)

¹⁰⁴ Aaker (2004) p 196

¹⁰⁵ Aaker (2004) p 193

¹⁰⁶ Aaker (2004) p 200

products because *organizational associations such as innovation, leadership and trust are particularly relevant in endorser context*. Endorsements are powerful because endorsers are somewhat insulated from the brands they endorse. Thus they can contribute with reduced risk that their association will be affected by the performance.¹⁰⁷

Subbrands are brands that modify the associations of a master or parent brand, which remains the primary frame of reference.¹⁰⁸ The driver role reflects the degree to which a brand drives the purchase decisions and defines the use experience. A driver brand is usually a master brand or a subbrand. Endorsers and second level subbrands, however, can have some driver role.¹⁰⁹

According to Aaker there are three questions upon which the optimal branding choice depends:¹¹⁰

- Will the brand enhance the extension?
- Will the extension enhance the brand?
- Is there a compelling reason to generate a new brand (whether it be a stand-alone brand, an endorsed brand, or a subbrand)?

But the extensions can damage the brand,¹¹¹ it can dilute the existing brand associations, undesirable attribute associations are created when, the brand can fail in deliver on its promise, disasters out of the firms control can occur, as well as cannibalization.¹¹²

Also, channel conflicts might occur¹¹³ and will the business support a new brand name or (expanded) strategy? At what costs are the work with the brand and its maintenance able to defend?¹¹⁴ The conclusion is according to Aaker that there are those who do suggest that brand extensions are risky and should be avoided. Another possibility is to create so called *range brand platforms*. The problem with this mindset is that the decisions tend to be ad hoc, with a short term perspective, working with extensions, and thus potentially suboptimal or even damaging with respect to a *longer-term strategic view* of the business. Aaker concludes:

¹⁰⁷ Aaker (2004) p 43

¹⁰⁸ Aaker (2004) p 44

¹⁰⁹ Aaker (2004) p 45

¹¹⁰ Aaker (2004) p 201

¹¹¹ Aaker (2004) pp 210-213

¹¹² When a brand extension is at the expense of the master brand , Aaker p 213

¹¹³ Aaker (2004) p 216

¹¹⁴ Aaker (2004) p 216

“A more strategic brand strategy should conceive of range brand platforms rather than brand extensions”.¹¹⁵ We will now look a bit closer at these so called brand platforms.

3.2.4 Brand Platforms

A *range brand platform* is created by a *range brand*, that is, it is constituted by a brand that spans several product categories whose identity includes a differentiation association that is applicable across categories. Creating a point of differentiation that can be employed across a set of target product categories is very different from creating one that will resonate with a single candidate category. The range brand platform perspective also differs from ad hoc extensions in that the strategy involves a judgment about the composition of an ultimate product scope that will be driven by both a *driver brand* and an *endorser brand*.¹¹⁶

There are several motivations for brand platforms. Strategically, the concept can provide coherence and structure to an organization’s strategy. The essence of a business strategy is to address three questions:

- What business areas (product-markets) will be included?
- What value proposition will be offered? And;
- What strategic assets will exist in each of these business areas?

A second motivation is simply to leverage strong brands. A brand platform strategy will often result in a larger business base and a stronger brand as well. It will also tend to be broader when the brand draws more heavily on associations that are not tied closely to a specific product. A third motivation is economic; brand platforms provides the opportunity to be cost-efficient in brand building for example shared overhead, fixed costs, advertising and promotional costs and other synergy effects. A fourth advantage of brand platforms is that it is being associated with multiple products that can add visibility and reassure that the firm is capable of success in different contexts. Finally, a brand platform can create a broader, richer relationship with customers based on exposures and use opportunities that span product classes.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Aaker (2004) p 218

¹¹⁶ Aaker (2004) p 218

¹¹⁷ Aaker (2004) pp 218-222

Emergent Social Software Platforms (ESSPs)

Staying with platform theory in another context, a different platform building since the 1990's is the "Web 2.0" and "Enterprise 2.0" theory where the latter is being described as: "the organizations most great challenge but foremost tool in communication of information" in the new Web 2.0 era.¹¹⁸ The Web 2.0 definition is: "*Web 2.0 is the business revolution in the computer history caused by the move to the Internet as platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform. Chief among those rules is this: Build applications that harness network effects to get better the more people use them.*"¹¹⁹ The definition of Enterprise 2.0 is: "*Enterprise 2.0 is the use of emergent social software platforms by organizations in pursuit of their goals.*"¹²⁰

Enterprise 2.0 belongs to *the Emergent Social Software Platforms (ESSPs)* which are both intranet and extranets including public Web sites.¹²¹ *Social software* enables people rendezvous, connect, or collaborate through computer-mediated communication. *Platforms* are [in this case] digital environments in which contribution and interaction are globally visible and persistent over time. *Emergent* means that the software is freeform and contains mechanisms such links and tags to let patterns and structure inherent in people's actions become visible over time. *Freeform* means that the software is most of the following: optional, free of imposed structure, egalitarian and accepting many kinds of data.¹²² These insights provide theory on this century's most fascinating phenomena which are taking place in the IT-environment. They provide ample possibilities for organizations in their daily work and we will analyze Sweden's work with Nation Branding through this kind of platforms.

In this IT context we will also come to this chapter's last but not least theoretical framework within general branding theory: *Cultural Branding*. Since, in this study, there is reason to believe that Sweden works with the technique of combining Cultural Branding with the new types of IT tools, and that they are doing this in a successful way, on the Emergent Social Software Platforms (ESSP).

¹¹⁸ McAfee, Andrew (2009) *Enterprise 2.0; New collaborative tools for your organizations toughest challenges*, Harvard Business Press, Boston, Massachusetts

¹¹⁹ O'Reilly's in McAfee pp 45-46

¹²⁰ McAfee, p 73

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²² McAfee, p 69

3.2.5 Cultural Branding

Conventional branding combined with meaningful stories and myths work as salves for contradictions in nation’s culture and create powerful identity brands commonly called *iconic brands*.¹²³

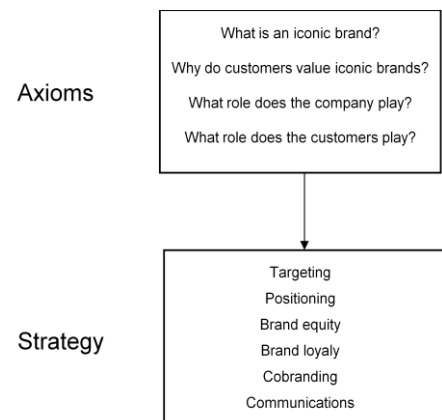
The Oxford English Dictionary defines cultural icon as “a person or thing regarded as a representative symbol, especially of a culture or a movement; a person or an institution considered worthy of admiration or respect.” More generally, cultural icons are exemplary symbols that people accept as a shorthand to represent important ideas.

Holt in *How Brands Become Icons*, page 1

Name, logos, and designs are the material markers of the brand but the products do not yet have a history so these markers are empty. Brand stories make up plots and characters and they depend on metaphors to communicate and spur our imaginations. Marketers often like to think of brands as psychological phenomenon which comes from the perceptions of the consumers. But what makes a brand powerful is the collective nature of these perceptions; the stories have become conventional and so are continually reinforced because they are treated as truths in everyday interactions.¹²⁴ Customers value some products as much for what they symbolize as for what they do,¹²⁵ the identity value is acting as a vessel of self-expression and consumers flock to brands that embody the ideas that they admire, brand that help them express who they want to be. The most successful of these brands become *iconic brands*.¹²⁶

Cultural branding also applies to other marketed entities that people rely on to express their identity. “The most obvious examples are culture industry products, such as film and television stars, musicians, heroes and novels and on screen /.../ In addition, NGO’s tourist destinations, other places (**nations**, cities, neighborhoods)/.../ **are all prime candidates for cultural branding.**”

Iconic brands provide extraordinary identity value because they address the collective anxieties and desires of a **nation**.¹²⁷



¹²³ Holt, Douglas B. (2004) *How Brands Become Icons*, Harvard Business S

¹²⁴ Holt, p 3

¹²⁵ Compare with Kotler & Keller

¹²⁶ Holt, p 4

¹²⁷ Holt, p 6, bold added.

Figure 3.5 Iconic Brand (Holt)

Holt explains that this is from the fact that people share the same historical progress of the *nation's* history. Working according to these principles Holt has both coined the expression *Cultural Branding* as well as constructed the model in his book.¹²⁸

To become *an icon* a brand must not only target the most advantageous contradictions in society, but also perform the right myth and the right manner. In cultural branding the story itself must be the center of strategy, because quality of the myth, not some set of abstractions, drives the brand identity value. Conventionally, the positioning statement is the heart of the brand strategy. Positioning statements typically identify the set of associations (benefits, quality, user imaginary etc.) that the brand should own, the support for claiming these associations, and perhaps the tone or personality by which the brand should speak to its prospects about these concepts. For advertising purposes the brand's positioning is expanded into the creative brief, but the content is the same.¹²⁹ The elements of *creative brief* have three components: *Myth treatments, populist authenticity and/or charismatic aesthetic.*¹³⁰

To build iconic brands managers must not only target the appropriate contradictions in society, but they also must *develop a compelling myth* to address this contradiction. But managers who use the mind share, emotional and viral models also understand creativity is something magical, outside their control.¹³¹ For iconic brands the brand is a symbol so equity is a collective phenomenon rather than a product of the brand's hold on individual consumers. The success of a brand's prior myths establishes reputation. The brand becomes renowned for telling certain kinds of stories that are useful in addressing certain social desires and anxieties. In formal terms, from the brand's prior myths grow two kinds of assets – *cultural authority and political authority*. Identity brands succeed when their managers draw on these two types of authority to reinvent the brand.¹³² What is then a strategy for an identity brand? Cultural branding strategy should include the following components:¹³³

1. Target the most appropriate myth market
2. Compose the identity myth
3. Extend the identity myth
4. Reinvent the identity myth

¹²⁸ Holt, p 7, also see *Figure 3.5*, page 31

¹²⁹ Holt, p 63

¹³⁰ Holt, pp 64-65

¹³¹ Holt, p 92

¹³² Holt, p 95

¹³³ Holt, pp 218-219

3.3 Swedish Trade Mark Law and Brand Liabilities

After the theoretical display above of different branding techniques we will now move over to the Swedish Trade Mark Law and see how it defines the right and wrongs regarding general branding practice.

We ask the questions: Can Anything Be a Brand? Can One Do Anything to a Brand?

According to Swedish Trade Mark Law anything that can be depicted graphically can be registered as a trade mark and the brand has to differentiate from the rest of the company's product categories. If this possibility is obtained a competitor also has the possibility to register a product in the same name, given that it is a totally different product category. The name is not allowed to be describing, that is, adjectives that describe the products are not possible to register as a trade mark. Made up, not linked or imaginary words are much easier to register than describing or generic attributes. According to the Trade Mark Law in Sweden the following are not possible to register in Sweden:¹³⁴

- State or international logotypes and municipal weapons
- Geographical names
- Misleading words for example "Wooly Products" if products are made of cotton
- State law protected products such as film or book titles
- Too simple figures such as a circle or a triangle

Brands can also incur *brand liabilities* due to *product failure, lawsuits, or questionable business practices*. Among the many brand liabilities we could consider, the following five are particularly harmful: *Customer dissatisfaction, product or service failure, questionable practices, poor record on social issues, negative associations*.¹³⁵

After this overview of the Swedish trade mark and possible brand liabilities we will move over to the specific Nation Branding theories developed only recently. We are ready to study the new theoretical framework of recent years constituting "pure" or "real" or "specific" Nation Branding theory.

¹³⁴ Wahlund & Håkansson, p 19

¹³⁵ Best, p 259

3.4 Nation Branding: The Country-Of-Origin Effect and National Identity

The Country of Origin Effect (COO)¹³⁶ is the *effect* that a country has on the buyer in a buying situation and there are plenty of studies regarding *these effects*.¹³⁷ Furthermore there are certain parts that the Country of Origin Effect that has attributes common with *Nation Branding*.¹³⁸ There are, for example, companies which use the country of origin in their brand such as British Petroleum (BP)¹³⁹ and Swedbank. There are those companies that try to use another country's brand, such as Lexus, trying to be identified as an American brand instead of Japanese in order to attract customers more broadly.¹⁴⁰ The Country of Origin Effect (COO) is also called “the label effect” and has been criticized of having approached the country image in “a far too narrow way”; country of image is determined by a far broader mix of factors than a country’s products and services alone.¹⁴¹

According to Keith Dinnie *Country-of-Origin and National Identity* are two related fields that underpin the concept of *Nation Branding*, though according to Dinnie: “rarely have the two fields been integrated”. Dinnie identifies the areas of commonality between these two concepts and “relate them to the differentiating power of branding that forms the basis of nation-brand development.” The integrated parts from the two theories are: *National Stereotypes, Ethnocentrism, Expressions of Culture, Individualism versus Collectivism, Blurring national identities and countries of origin*.¹⁴²

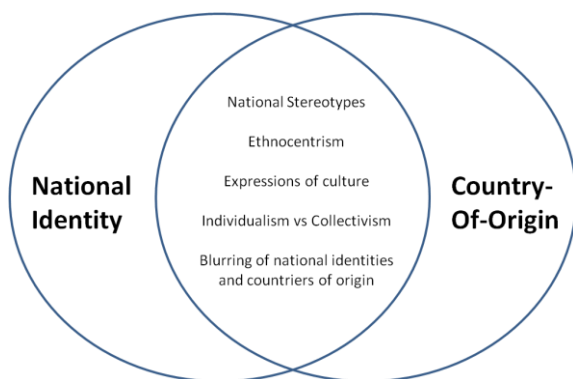


Figure 3.6 The National Identity and COO Model (Dinnie)

¹³⁶ Papadopoulos N.G. (1987) *Does "country-of-origin" matter?: Some findings from a cross-cultural study of consumer views about foreign products*, Marketing Science Institute, Cambridge, MA

¹³⁷ Fan Ying (2005)

¹³⁸ Dinnie (2008) *Nation Branding: Concepts, issues, practice*. Rutledge, London, New York

¹³⁹ Dinnie, p 88

¹⁴⁰ Dinnie, pp 85-89

¹⁴¹ Fan (2005), Dinnie (2008)

¹⁴² Dinnie, p 137

A lot of research has already been done regarding Country of origin effect (COO) and it is probably the most explored *Nation Branding* tool.¹⁴³ The COO is not a static effect but can vary depending on who you speak to. COO has different levels depending on the demographic profile of the consumer. Younger buyers can be more positive to a products COO, than older. The country of origin effect can also differ between what country the consumer lives in. Residents of certain countries can have a higher acceptance to foreign product than others.¹⁴⁴ The Country of Origin Effect (COO) can influence attitude and behavior towards brands, whether, products, services or whole nations. What the rest of the world think about a product from a certain country can change over time and it is the task for *Nation Branding* stakeholders to ensure that the change occurs in a favorable direction.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Dinnie

¹⁴⁴ Dinnie, pp 90-91

¹⁴⁵ Dinnie *ibid.*

3.5 The Nation Brand Architecture Model

It is important for a company as well as for a nation to communicate a coherent message of its brand. On a company level, brand work is rather straightforward, and a single department can manage so that the correct image is communicated.

For corporations with divisions or multiple brands it directly becomes more difficult when the different brands needs to be coordinated. And yet they both are helped by particular products or services as bearer of the brand.

For the large corporation the branding architecture can be divided depending on what level the brand is located. An example in the textbooks¹⁴⁶ is General Motors which is an umbrella brand with a large number of endorsed brands such as Chevrolet, Buick etcetera. These car brands in turn have their own standalone brands, for example Corvette. All the way from GM down to Corvette the branding needs to be coordinated to reach the optimal effect. This architecture can be directly transferred to Nations.

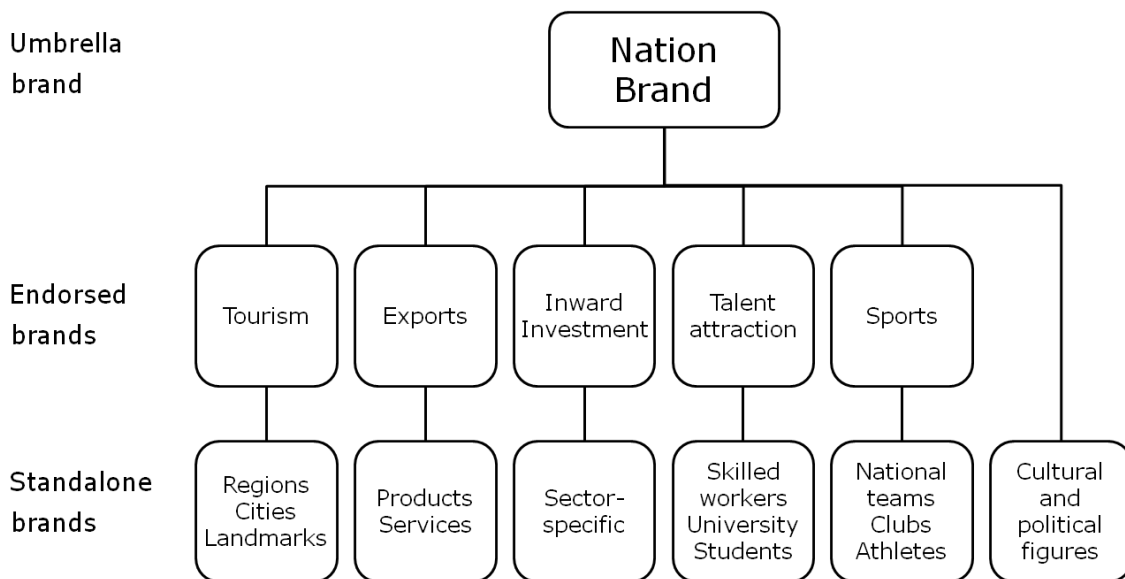


Figure 3.7 The NBAR Model (Dinnie)

The Nation brand in this case can be compared to GM, the organizations which get instruction from the government to work with certain areas of the Nations brand can be compared to Chevrolet. And the end line, such as the number of tourists visiting a city is a standalone brand and is comparable to Corvette. When drawing a blue print over a *Nation's Branding* we

¹⁴⁶ Dinnie, p198

get the model called the *Nation Brand Architecture Model*, NBAR-model depicted in *Figure 3.7*.¹⁴⁷ There is a tactical reason for a NBAR as well and that is to reach a maximal impact of the branding and optimize the synergy effect and get a long lasting effect.¹⁴⁸

According to Dinnie a nation that follows the model is Iceland, which launched a marketing program in the US and then gave room for business to participate in an exhibition in New York. Iceland's government also made a logotype for the exhibition without knowing that it actually follows the NBAR model exactly.

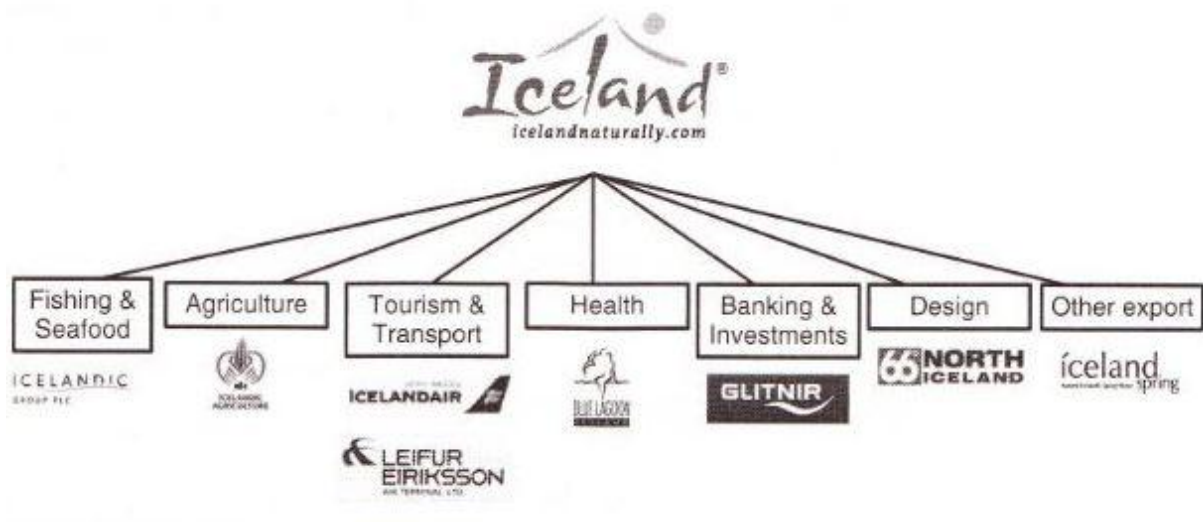


Figure 3.8 Iceland as an example of a "perfect" NBAR Model (Dinnie)

In *Figure 3.8* we see this "perfect example" of the nation's "The Iceland Naturally" brand model with the three levels structure of the driver brand included and reinforced by the endorsers and stand-alone brands made up from relevant Icelandic business. This framework still exists today though the business has changed over time.

¹⁴⁷ Dinnie, p 200

¹⁴⁸ Dinnie, p 199

3.6 The Nation Brands Index and the Hexagon Model

The way a country is perceived can make a critical difference to the success of its business, trade and tourism efforts, as well as its diplomatic and cultural relations with other nations.

I first began to write about an idea I called *Nation Branding* in 1996. My original observation was a simple one: that the reputation of countries functions like the brand images of companies and that they are equally critical to the progress and prosperity of those countries.

Simon Anholt in Dinnie, page 22

Simon Anholt explains that he has found that what makes a difference to the images of countries is when they become dedicated to develop new ideas and make investments in innovations. “This prove simple truths about the country they come from, reputation starts to move; the place produces a *buzz*, people pay attention and prepare to change their minds.”¹⁴⁹

Anholt has been working with different governments to help them plan the policies, strategies, investments and innovations and in 2005 he developed *the Nation Brands Index* (NBI) in order to try to continuously measure the image and reputation of different countries. 50 countries are today part of the index.¹⁵⁰

Anholt performs the NBI together with the research company GfK Roper¹⁵¹ and together they produce the only international measurement of *national brand*. It is used throughout the world as a tracking of the effects of a country's ongoing *Nation Branding*. Interviews are held in 49 countries via a web panel where the respondents are asked to rate the perception of the counties images in the 6 different areas¹⁵² on a seven-points scale. Each index is based on three to five questions and covers: *Tourism, Exports, Governance, Investment and Immigration, Culture and Heritage and People*.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Anholt in Dinnie, p 23

¹⁵⁰ www.gfkamerica.com [2012-04-10 17:54] See *Appendix 10.2*, pp 118-119

¹⁵¹ GMI did the Index in the years 2005-2007. <http://www.simonanholt.com/Publications/publications-other-articles.aspx> [2012-05-12 13:20]

¹⁵² See the Nation Brand Hexagon, *Figure 3.9*, p 39

¹⁵³ The Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index methodology. Summary 2009.pdf, Anholt.com/publications [2012-05-12 13:25]

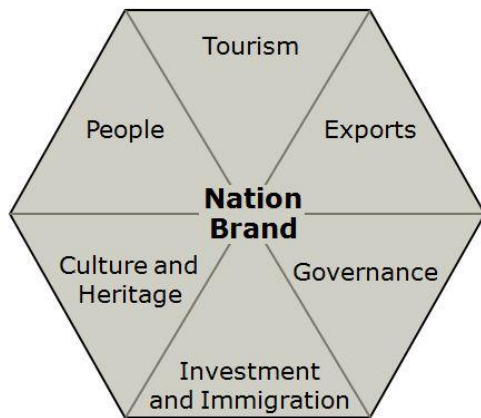


Figure 3.9 *The Nation Brand Hexagon* (Anholt)

The NBI measures the countries power and the quality of *brand image* is measured using the six dimensions in the model explained below:¹⁵⁴

Exports – Determines the public's image of products and services from each country and the extent to which consumers proactively seek or avoid products from each country-of-origin.

Governance – Measures public opinion regarding the level of national government competency and fairness and describes individuals' beliefs about each country's government, as well as its perceived commitment to global issues such as democracy, justice, poverty and the environment.

Culture and Heritage – Reveals global perceptions of each nation's heritage and appreciation for its contemporary culture, including film, music, art, sport and literature.

People – Measures the population's reputation for competence, education, openness and friendliness and other qualities, as well as perceived levels of potential hostility and discrimination.

Tourism – Captures the level of interest in visiting a country and the draw of natural and man-made tourist attractions.

Investment and Immigration – Determines the power to attract people to live, work or study in each country and reveals how people perceive a country's economic and social situation.

¹⁵⁴ http://www.gfkamerica.com/practice_areas/roper_pam/nbi_index/index.en.html [2012-04-08 10:15]

3.7 Nation Branding and Public Diplomacy

Nation Branding literature mentions Public Diplomacy which is by its nature self-evident; the head of the decision-makers within Nation Branding are the nation's governments. But Public Diplomacy has never or seldom been included in Nation Branding research which is stated as a drawback in the research field.¹⁵⁵ Naturally a study on Nation Branding ought to include governmental policy and its theoretical framework, it cannot be omitted since Nation Branding is not only about marketing, it is also dependent on the government, and vice versa. This also shows in the number of theses on Bachelor and Master level in Sweden on Nation Branding.¹⁵⁶ The main parts of the theses are written in other faculties. Very few are written in political and social sciences.¹⁵⁷

Molainen and Rainisto states¹⁵⁸ that there has not been any international research on Nation Branding above master thesis level until they published their book.¹⁵⁹ But approximately at the same time a Mexican scholar César Villanueva Rivas¹⁶⁰ published his doctoral thesis at the Växjö University on the subject Cultural Diplomacy where Nation Branding is part of Villanueva Rivas theoretical framework.¹⁶¹

Villanueva Rivas research receives a section of its own in this thesis since it is highly relevant for the development of Nation Branding theoretical framework, to see in what full context Nation branding could be situated in research. Also, the fact that Villanueva Rivas subject is Cultural Diplomacy in Sweden and Mexico makes it even more interesting.¹⁶² The assessment and theoretical perspective of Villanueva Rivas is both insightful and interesting, not the least for the analyses of the Sweden in a Nation Branding perspective.

Villanueva Rivas states that "Nation Branding is a new concept that only is used by some nations for example Sweden".¹⁶³ In his research he describes the concept of Nation Branding as being a part of a nation's *Cultural Diplomacy* together with its "family members" *Soft Power* and *Cosmopolitan Constructivism* which are explained in *Table 3.1* below.

¹⁵⁵ www.brandhorizons.com

¹⁵⁶ There are just above 30 theses published on Nation Branding in Sweden from 2004 up till this date. www.uppsats.se [2012-04-12]

¹⁵⁷ None of them in marketing, the ones that exist are written mainly in Media and Communication.

¹⁵⁸ Moilanen, Teemu & Seppo Rainisto (2009) *How to Brand Nations, Cities and Destinations*

¹⁵⁹ Moilanen & Rainisto

¹⁶⁰ Today at UNAM and UIA

¹⁶¹ Villanueva Rivas, C. (2007) *Representing cultural diplomacy: Soft power, cosmopolitan constructivism, and Nation Branding in Mexico and Sweden*, Växjö University Press.

¹⁶² According to Villanueva Rivas Mexico is an example of a nation that does not employ Nation Branding.

¹⁶³ Villanueva Rivas, p 165

Discursive issues	Soft Power	Nation Branding	Cosmopolitan Constructivism
<i>Instrumentality</i>	Power	Marketing	Culture
<i>Security</i>	Protection-promotion	Promotion	Exchange
<i>Spatiality</i>	International	Global	International/Global
<i>Directionality</i>	One way	One way/Two way	Mutual/Plurality
<i>Public/Private</i>	Mainly public	Mainly private	Mainly public

Table 3.1 Representations of Cultural Diplomacy as Discourses¹⁶⁴

Furthermore, Villanueva Rivas states that “Cultural Diplomacy a la Nation-Branding [in Sweden] [...] runs an advanced cosmopolitan constructivist agenda with excellent results”.¹⁶⁵ He explains that Sweden, in its work with Nation Branding, is diversifying its approach towards both *Cultural* and *Public Diplomacy* using the Swedish Trade Council, Invest Sweden, Visit Sweden and different Swedish Chambers of Commerce linking our interests within the public and cultural diplomacies of Sweden.¹⁶⁶ *Soft Power* is used by political and diplomatic institutions through *Public Diplomacy* and *the source of authority* explained in *Table 3.12*. The *National Interest* is communicated via national and cultural events based on the nation’s perceived image, both within the country as well as abroad.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Source: Villanueva Rivas, Table 1.1, p 43

¹⁶⁵ Villanueva Rivas, p 158

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁶⁷ Villanueva Rivas and authors interpretation from the *Table 3.1*, in Villanueva Rivas Table 1.1, p 43

	Authority	Sources	Accountability Strategies
SP	Political & diplomatic elites. Public Diplomacy.	National Interest ([P]olitics)	Quantity & impact of national cultural events abroad & nation's image perception abroad.
NB	Private interest groups & public/commercial diplomacy.	Market forces (Marketing)	Nation's image perception abroad. Promotion of tourism, national firms & products abroad.
CC	Civil society & public/cultural diplomacy.	Identity/alterity (Culture)	Cultural & educational exchange. Cultural representation's contents & discourse abroad. Cooperation, peace & development with other nations.

Table 3.2 Representations and Pitkin's Political Descriptive View¹⁶⁸

Political Representation (Hanna Pitkin 1967)¹⁶⁹

Nation Branding is one of three concepts in Villanueva Rivas's political representations model based on three political questions raised in the early 1970s by Pitkin.¹⁷⁰

- Who has the authority to make decisions on behalf of others?
- What are the sources of authority to represent?
- How the representative is accountable for the actions performed in the name of the constituents

We see in Table 3.2 that “the authority” that makes the decision on behalf of others in Nation Branding is the private sector together with the Public Diplomacy, which is also partly commercial in Nation Branding activities. The sources used by “the authority” in Nation Branding are market forces and marketing. This is being conjured up through the work with the nation's image perception abroad, promotion of tourism, national firms and Swedish products. We also see here that Villanueva Rivas makes a distinction between Cosmopolitan Constructivism and Nation Branding where culture activities belong to the former. These are distinctions that will be of importance in the analysis. Villanueva Rivas' research overall is highly interesting and useful since it involves a case study on Sweden, combining Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding in Sweden. Continuing the holistic view we will extend the theoretical framework further and also set Nation Branding in Sweden in a national economic context of the National Income Identity¹⁷¹ and competitive advantage of nations¹⁷².

¹⁶⁸ Source: Villanueva Rivas, p 63

¹⁶⁹ Pitkin, Hanna Fenichel (1967) *The Concept of Representation*, Berkeley: University of California

¹⁷⁰ For example: Chapter 2 *The problem of Thomas Hobbes*, p 14-37 in Villanueva Rivas, pp 62-63

¹⁷¹ Jones, Charles, (2010) *Macro Economics*, International Student Edition, W.W. Norton & Company, NY

3.8 National Income Identity and Competitive Advantage of Nations

As mentioned above, Nation Branding is closely related to other research fields such as political and social sciences. Also, international economics and competitive advantage of nations; the Heckscher-Ohlin theorem assesses that nations increase their wealth through international trade.¹⁷³ This theory is playing a major role, not the least on governmental level, also being of significance in Public Diplomacy, on the net export side. The Swedish Trade Council is part of the Nation Branding framework and Simon Anholt's view on Nation Branding in this chapter can also be linked to the theories in international economics.¹⁷⁴

National Income Identity is one of macro economics most famous and important theoretical framework since it for example steers the government's work in their work with the welfare of the nation. The nation's welfare is equivalent to the *gross domestic product* assessed by the sum of the nation's produced products and services at the moment in time (t),¹⁷⁵ counted in total revenue (Y_t). This could also be explained through the *National Income Identity* as the gross product revenue from *consumption (C)*, *investment (I)*, and *government net expenditure (G)*¹⁷⁶ and the nation's *net export*.¹⁷⁷ Adding one more variable; a nation's branding activity (NBA), the leverage from this activity could then be expressed according to the following model¹⁷⁸:

$$Y_t = C_t + I_t + G_t + [((1+NBA * Exports) - Imports)]_t^{179}$$

NBA stands for a nation's *Nation Branding Activity*, (t) for any given time. The term has to be positive [NBA > 0] for the model to work. The model shows how an increase in NBA creates leverage to the net export and thus also has a positive effect on a country's gross domestic product and the welfare of the nation. This is under the circumstance that the nation branding activity is also in reality "positive", that is, that the branding activity is of such nature that it affects people's conception of the country in a buying decision. That is, the country has a COO-effect that is positive.

¹⁷² Krugman, Paul and Maurice Obstfeld (2006) *International Economics – Theory and Policy*, Pearson International Edition, USA

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ SSE Course 407, Macro Economics

¹⁷⁵ Could be a year, a quarter of a year, a month or any scope of time (t)

¹⁷⁶ T-G = Taxes – Expenditure

¹⁷⁷ Export – Import, GDP=C+I+G+Exports-Imports

¹⁷⁸ Author's elaboration of the *National Income Identity* model, here including Nation Branding activity.

¹⁷⁹ Author's elaboration

3.9 Summary

In this chapter a decision has been made on which theories will be used in the analyses of the empirical research of Nation Branding in Sweden.

The theories chosen are, to start with, conventional branding theory by Kotler et.al. To build up brand equity to create strong brands and Aaker's theory on corporate, strategic market and portfolio management for big organizations, and nations, is then of interest for the study. We will use Aaker's examples of co-branding strategies with driver and endorser brand and other platform techniques such as the use of Emergent Social Software Platform (ESSP) and Web 2.0 and Enterprise 2.0 theories in the study of the Swedish government's work to communicate the Swedish national brand.

National identity include culture, therefore is *cultural branding* interesting to use as a research tool. Also, Swedish trademark law is included to give a juridical perspective, as well as studying the risk of brand liabilities.

Now over to the specific Nation Branding theories; since 2008 there is a suggestion to a framework that would be interesting to use in this case study: Keith Dinnie's Nation Branding Architecture Model (NBAR), as well as Simon Anholt's Nation Brand Hexagon Model and the Nation Brands Index (NBI). They are probably a great help trying to understand Nation Branding activity in its own context.

Also, it cannot be denied that Public Diplomacy plays a great role, and is therefore included in this study together with the theory of representation, in a Culture Diplomacy framework. Furthermore, Public Diplomacy and governmental activities are very much about state budgets and enhancing nation's wealth through stimulating exports. The Competitive advantage of nations in the Heckscher-Ohlin framework, as well as the National Income Identity is therefore included, since the external setting of the object studied is also to a great extent international economics and international trade. Finally, the governmental activities given are also part of a macro-level theoretical perspective which completes the overall, holistic theoretical research perspective.

The findings in the analyses will lead to the conclusions from the cross breed between the theory in this chapter and the upcoming chapter's empirical study: *Nation Branding in Sweden*.

4 Empirical Study

This chapter presents the empirical study of this thesis. The findings will be linked to the chosen theory in the previous chapter. The theoretical context is, together with the empirics, the foundation to the analysis in Chapter 5 as well as the conclusions in Chapter 6.

The aim of this study is that it shall cover all the four sources for evidence based management: *Practitioner expertise and judgments* taken from the interviews with individuals working with Nation Branding in Sweden. *Evidence from the local context*, through the interviews and study of actor's homepages as well as a historical overview of the local context in Sweden. Also, *a critical evaluation of the best available research evidence* will be performed through an evaluation and a *perspective of those who may be affected by the decisions* be presented; that is, we need to look closer at the stakeholders. In the pursuit of trying to cover the above, we will in this chapter give a description of the empirical data that is found in the study of the subject: Nation-branding in Sweden.

The choice of study objects depended on the possibility to come in contact with people working with Nation Branding, to study Nation Branding "through the eyes" of these individuals.¹⁸⁰ It was also interesting to find out if the general public is acquainted with the new concept.¹⁸¹ The research questions more specific answers are obtained from asking the question: To what extent does Sweden use the new concept and its implications? Since when is nation-branding used as a practice in Sweden, how is it used, in what context and why?

A wide research scope with mixed methods is used; these methods are described more in detail in *Chapter 2*.

This empirical part will hopefully contribute to a rich input to the analyses and provide possibility to give answers to the research questions in *Chapter 5*. Furthermore, readers are encouraged to find extra information, in *the Appendix* where, for example, for example, the interviews at the Swedish Institute¹⁸² and Visit Sweden as well as some "voices" from general public.

We will now take a closer look at the brand of Sweden, where it is being communicated, how it is communicated and why.

¹⁸⁰ Bryman & Bell, see *Chapter 2, Method*, p 18

¹⁸¹ See *10.5 Appendix*, pp 134-135

¹⁸² *10.5 Appendix*, interview with Joakim Norén (SI), pp 125-132. The interview is in Swedish though part of it is translated into English in this chapter.

4.1 The Swedish Nation Brand

“The issue” of Sweden’s Nation Branding activity is according to Håkan Hjort “owned” by The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and delegated to the Swedish Institute, Visit Sweden, The Trade Council and Invest Sweden via the NSU, Nämnden för Sverigefrämjande i Utlandet.¹⁸³

The sub-organizations are responsible for the activity and work without guidance and are not politically controlled; if the government changes this doesn’t mean that the mission or activities change. The people working with Nation Branding are not steered in any specific direction than working with the mission to promote Sweden both locally and abroad.¹⁸⁴

So, directly under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs lies “The Council for Promoting Sweden Abroad”, NSU (Nämnden för Sverigefrämjandet i utlandet) and NSU¹⁸⁵ is supervising the following four organizations:¹⁸⁶

- The Swedish Institute
- Visit Sweden
- The Swedish Trade Council
- Invest Sweden

NSU was created in 1995 as an arena for dialogue, discussion and work for an efficient cooperation in a joint effort promoting Sweden abroad. The internet portal “Sweden.se” is the official gate way to Sweden where the NSU-organizations play a central role where the main focus lies on presentations of the Swedish profile. Under the web portal you also find Sweden Promotion Forum (SPF) where information about current activities, projects, reports and “good-to-knows”, and contacts are posted regularly and can be seen seven days a week. There is also multimedia focus with film clips at The Sweden Channel which can be compared to a news channel where TV-channels, online media and bloggers can find moving pictures and texts for their news delivery.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ Informal talk on telephone with Håkan Hjort, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, April 13

¹⁸⁴ Håkan Hjort

¹⁸⁵ Nämnden för Sverigefrämjandet i utlandet, ”The Council for Promoting Sweden Abroad” also called ”Promoting Sweden”.

¹⁸⁶ Hjort and Norén, <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/3028> [12-04-21]

¹⁸⁷ Go to Sweden Channel on www.thenewsmarket.com [12-04-21]

The basis of all the activity is the communication platform for the Swedish nation-brand, which is named “Sweden Picture 2.0”, where Sweden is described as being “a people, and environment friendly innovation country”.¹⁸⁸

4.1.1 The Brand Platform of Sweden

The brand-platform of Sweden “Sweden Picture 2.0”¹⁸⁹ was formed by the cooperative organizations within NSU. The platform has the position ”progressive” and Sweden’s “unique character and selling points” are:

- New thinking
- Openness
- Genuiness
- Thoughtfulness

The *new thinking* and *openness* represent “modernity, energy and incentive”, while *genuiness* and *thoughtfulness* represent” inner freedom, calm and afterthought”. According to the Platform there’s a “dynamics in the combination of the core values which brings life to the mission and is the foundation to all communication with Sweden as the communicator”.¹⁹⁰

This is the strategic foundation to all new incentives within the NSU organizations as a framework for how they develop new projects, programs and activities, how they should run Sweden.se, choosing content and forms.¹⁹¹ If a new type of activity is launched, this will also be based on “the Sweden Picture 2.0”. Management programs, contributions to projects, scholarships, exhibitions, seminars, printed material, digital communication, NSU’s own channels and media etcetera are all managed according to the Platform. It is also communicated to businesses, municipalities and regions and other stakeholders who are interested and find it useful in their communication.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ Joakim Norén (SI), see *Appendix, 10.5* pp 125-132

¹⁸⁹ http://www.sweden.se/upload/promotion_forum/Promotion_Tools/Brand_Sweden/FINAL_SWE_080117.pdf [2012-05-14 06:25]

¹⁹⁰ Ibid

¹⁹¹ Joakim Norén (SI)

¹⁹² Joakim Norén (SI)

4.1.2 The Swedish Institute

The Swedish Institute (SI)¹⁹³ works in the Public Diplomacy field with the mandate given by The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, since 1995 via the NSU, to promote Sweden around the world. Formed in 1945 SI had the task to cooperate with foreign organizations and help promote Sweden and Swedish companies abroad. This can also be explained as an early Swedish Nation Branding activity¹⁹⁴. Today the focus has shifted towards bilateral exchange in the fields of culture, education, science and business. SI's goal is to increase awareness and interest in Sweden by providing information and develop relations with stakeholders in other countries.¹⁹⁵ SI's thematic priorities reflect areas in which Sweden has a comparative advantage or experience to share in an international perspective. The focus areas are:¹⁹⁶

- Environment and Sustainability
- Innovation
- Governance and Society
- Culture and Creative Industries

4.1.3 Visit Sweden

The National Strategy for Swedish Tourism¹⁹⁷ is to double the number of visitors by year 2020. Another important goal is to increase the number of tourism destinations in order to improve the competitiveness through comparative advantages. So, visit Sweden has set a rather ambitious quantitative goal for development for tourism industry for the coming decade.¹⁹⁸ The turnover is to be doubled and 100 000 new jobs be created in this period. Furthermore, part of the goal is to use NBI-ranking as benchmark.

Goal	2010	2015	2020
Turnover (Billion SEK)	252	350	500
Export value (Billion SEK)	94	150	200
Number employed	160 000	200 000	260 000
Number export mature destinations	15	25	35
Image/NBI Ranking	10	9	8

Table 4.1 *Quantitative Goals for Sweden* (www.partner.visitsweden.com)

¹⁹³ www.si.se [2012-05-14 06:30]

¹⁹⁴ Håkan Hjort, Joakim Norén

¹⁹⁵ www.si.se, Joakim Norén

¹⁹⁶ www.si.se

¹⁹⁷ www.partner.visitsweden.com [2012-05-14 06:30]

¹⁹⁸ Region Manager in (Y)

The tourism business is measured in turnover and export value and also how many people that are employed in Sweden in tourism and also the number of cities, places or regions that will be “mature” tourism destinations in the future. The positions on the brand platform are based on the needs of the target groups and what Sweden has to offer. The four themes of the platform are:¹⁹⁹

- Urban Nature
- Swedish Lifestyle
- Natural playground
- Vitalized meetings

Furthermore, these four segments are described more in detail by definition, main target group and segment type, tourist types and the estimated demand within the four themes.²⁰⁰

4.1.4 The Swedish Trade Council

Founded in 1972 the Swedish Trade Council²⁰¹ serves the Swedish Government and Swedish business. They have offices in 60 countries and work closely with trade associations, embassies, consulates and chambers of commerce around the world. The purpose is to make it easier for Swedish companies to grow internationally.²⁰²



Figure 4.1 Illustration on the Swedish Trade Council's Partner Webpage

The Swedish Trade Council (STC) also helps to reinforce the image of Sweden as an attractive country to do business with. They contribute in different ways to increase business contacts between Swedish and foreign companies through arrangement of events such as seminars, fairs, press-trips and match-making projects.²⁰³

Visiting the home page of the STC subpages tradewithsweden.com²⁰⁴ we get acquainted with the associated organizations *SymbioCare* and *SymbioCity* which are networks of Swedish companies, consultants and organizations in health and medicine and in “sustainable and profitable urban development”.

¹⁹⁹ Source: <http://partner.visitsweden.com/sv/Startsida/Vart-arbete/Positionstema/> [2012-05-10]

²⁰⁰ See *Appendix 10.3.4* p 122 for full description of the four positions.

²⁰¹ www.swedishtrade.se [2012-05-14 06:40]

²⁰² www.swedishtrade.se

²⁰³ www.swedishtrade.se

²⁰⁴ <http://www.tradewithsweden.com> [2012-08-31 22:35]

The following message is communicated on the entry page:²⁰⁵

Contemporary Swedish food culture is founded on a unique, local knowledge about nature, seasons, crops, food craftsmanship and culinary traditions. At the same time it is playful and imaginative with multicultural influences.

The SymbioCity recipe is to develop attractive urban areas while conserving natural resources, enhancing human capital, and promoting growth – all at the same time. You can apply it to a single block or to an entire urban district

Founded in Sweden, the SymbioCare concept is about providing world class care for everyone, combining resources effectively to benefit from the arising synergies. The sum is always greater than its parts.



Figure 4.2 Illustration on
<http://symbiocityorg/en/concept>

SymbioCity supports the Swedish business international marketing management. The concept has been presented at more than 30 international events, seminars and delegations around the world. It is run by the Swedish Trade Council.²⁰⁶

*In Sweden this is the way we have been saving our natural resources and money for over fifty years. It is our way to a prosperous, secure and comfortable future for all citizens. In our experience the SymbioCity approach is applicable to other countries, no matter the circumstances.*²⁰⁷



Figure 4.3 Illustration on
<http://symbiocityorg/en/concept>

²⁰⁵ <http://www.tradewithsweden.com> [2012-08-31 22:38]

²⁰⁶ <http://symbiocity.org/en/concept> [2012-08-31 23:08]

²⁰⁷ <http://symbiocity.org/en/concept> [2012-08-31 23:10]

4.1.5 Invest Sweden

Invest Sweden's²⁰⁸ mission is to contribute to the possibility for foreign companies to make investments in Sweden. This is done directly through contacts and counseling with potential investors and indirectly by increasing the foreign interest to notice Sweden as a possible country to invest in. Invest Sweden has offices in Stockholm, Gothenburg and in USA, Japan, China, India and Brazil, chosen as specially selected markets.²⁰⁹ Invest Sweden wants to strengthen Sweden's positions in markets

where Sweden and Swedish companies are relatively unknown. By working proactively on these markets that are characterized by high growth rates and globalization in established and strong economies Invest Sweden can make a difference and strengthen Swedish business.²¹⁰

Invest Sweden's homepage states "10 Reasons for investment in Sweden": Innovation, Market, Easy to do business, High productivity, Central location and Modern work place, Research and Development, First rate infrastructure, Attractive corporate taxation, Quality of Life.²¹¹



Figure 4.3 Illustration on Invest Sweden's Webpage



Figure 4.4 *Quality of Life 10 Reasons for Sweden*
<http://investsweden.se/North-America/Advantage-Sweden1/10-reasons/>

²⁰⁸ www.investsweden.se 2012-05-14 06:30

²⁰⁹ www.investsweden.se

²¹⁰ Investsweden.se/Sverige/Om-Invest_Sweden/Marknader [2012-08-31 23:30]

²¹¹ For more information on "10 Reasons for Sweden" see *Appendix*, p 123

4.2 Sweden and Nation Branding

Nation Branding is...

People's perception of a country - the picture of it. People have general ideas of the country and a country has core values. The nation brand is not the core values of our platform, it is the conceived ideas people have of the country.

This is Joakim Norén at the Swedish Institute in Stockholm's own definition on Nation Branding.²¹² Norén says he thinks the term Nation Branding is easy to define but it is harder to explain how it works. People with background in business, media, and communication seem to understand it better than Norén's colleagues that have their education in culture. People within media and communication are more positive to it and think it is interesting to work with, which Norén believes comes from the fact that they are already familiar with branding theory. The definition, "People's perception of a country" is simple, but then to go further and explain "who owns the question", "what you can do with a country or not, or ought to do." "What businesses can work with the platform?" "Where's the distinction between Nation Branding and domestic politics?" "What is the difference to propaganda?" "How is Nation Branding related to Public Diplomacy?" Trying to answer these questions suddenly becomes very complex. Norén explains:

I stick to the word nation-brand that is much simpler. As soon as you ask the question, what it is, in our daily work; then it becomes much more difficult.

According to Norén there is an interesting distinction between *a nation's brand* and *Nation Branding*. It is a nation's brand SI is working with, *not* nation branding.

But in some peculiar way it is so easy to say nation-branding while, what we actually are talking about or working with is a nation's brand.

Norén narrates: Each country has its own specific brand. But the brand is dependent on people's view of the country. In the case of Sweden it could be the thought of democracy, for another person it could be the cold or polar bears or blond women, ABBA or Olof Palme. The combination of these "pictures" of Sweden then makes up for the brand of Sweden. In order to see which of these picture are relevant for Sweden one can use existing indexes and make

²¹² Interview with Joakim Norén (SI) 2012-04-04; citations in italics, and the translation is made by the author. For full transcript of the interview (in Swedish) see *Appendix*, pp 125-132

extensive surveys to see what is of most relevance to people and to combine this with the definition of brands, these components together create the brand of Sweden.

But then, to make an activity out of this and say that you work with nation branding is a bit misleading since it is practically impossible to change a country's brand without changing the country, and, for it to change requires quite large changes. To believe that we, at SI, what we do here could be resulting in another brand than Sweden already has, would be extremely presumptuous. We have no resources to do this and people are not that easily fooled. Even if we do work with stereotypes and what we think of as myths of a country they are well-deserved. What we can do instead is to enhance those images of Sweden that already exist, and put stress on what we think is positive. This is to work with the nation's brand or whatever we call it; nation branding. And it is to work with the enhancement of the nation-brand in an international context. And doing this, we use methods and theories which come from general branding theories, but also theories which have been developed within nation branding. But those theories that come from conventional branding theory must be modified since the reality we live in is quite different, a country's brand is a lot more complex, but this also makes it much more fun!

Then, what is the history of Nation Branding? Norén is not quite sure; he says that there are other sources to turn to for an answer to this question; it is not his specialist field. But Norén thinks that once Anholt coined the expression nation-brand, it got used by people who thought it was a natural thing to do, to treat a nation as a brand and start to work with it, trying to change it. This is a pity, Norén inflicts. Furthermore, Norén narrates that he listened to a speech where Anholt told the story of a dictator in an African country who asked Anholt for help in making the country get a better reputation. But Anholt's answer was that it is not possible; you cannot make a country democratic without changing the country first. Anholt is against the term nation branding, which is quite interesting, says Norén.

But is Nation Branding not getting more and more accepted? According to Norén this is true, especially among people with background in the faculties that include branding theory. But it is also controversial since people who don't have this background have a hard time to accept it. But according to Norén, if he talks about the practical work at SI in their daily work, then people have a better understanding. It seems like it is the term that stir up people's feelings, not the activities, explains Norén. He continues telling, that when he is out of the office,

holding speeches on Nation Branding, people tend to be suspicious in the beginning, but after a while they change their attitude and get more positive. The reason for this is, according to Norén, that Sweden has a platform that works for Sweden and it does not risk belonging to any propaganda or any unbalanced marketing campaign. “We have a more problem orientated image of Sweden that most of us Swedes can feel is a relevant image of Sweden”, explains Norén.

– Irrelevant images risk being the same thing as propaganda and then the money is thrown into the lake, says Norén. Furthermore, to go out and say that you are a democratic country when you are not, this creates “bad will”. Furthermore, talking about the cost side, Norén narrates that SI has a budget on 300 million SEK and still, if IKEA is opening a store in a country, IKEA will have so much greater impact on that country’s perception of Sweden than a SI:s campaign ever can create.

Furthermore, Norén states: Sweden has low awareness in many countries and SI worries over the fact that young people don’t know very much about Sweden. But, there are also positive things that one can tell from the Simon Anholt Nation Brands Index, and that is, for example, that there are only *two* countries in the world that combines “sexy” and “trustworthiness”, both “exciting” and “exotic”, “reliable” and “safe” etcetera, “and get away with it”. It is Sweden and the UK. But even though fewer people know about Sweden, we combine this with high quality, which is not always the case with the UK...

When I work with the “Sweden Picture”, then I realize how much better it is than we actually think; how very positive it is to be Swedish! How much value there is in this and for Swedish companies to say “we are Swedish”. Then, saying in one word, that we deliver very well designed, high quality products, good environmental thinking, social responsibility, that we are a good employer and we deliver on time. To say all this in one word is: fantastic!! I mean, all Swedish companies ought to have a little Swedish flag in the corner of their logo or something, because it is all about these positive values which are so very important!

4.3 Summary

This chapter has covered the empirical study of this thesis: The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs delegates the authority to the Näringsfrämjandet för Sverige i Utlandet (NSU)²¹³, established in 1995, to control the nation-branding activities in Sweden through the Swedish Institute, Visit Sweden, the Swedish Trade Council and Invest Sweden.

The work at the Swedish Institute is an early form of nation-branding with the goal to promote Sweden and Swedish companies abroad already in 1945. Today SI's focus has shifted to bilateral exchanges in culture, education, science and business. In this part of the study some of the elements of the actors' homepages have been compiled.

Visit Sweden is the strategy department for inbound as well as regional tourism with ambitious quantitative goals both in incoming number of tourists, development of new destinations and increase in employment. A platform strategy is used with positioning and targeting focus on four themes with their own specific segments.

The Swedish Trade Council's goal is to together with the platforms of SymbioCity and SymbioCare, run by STC, to reinforce the image of Sweden. Invest Sweden has the same goal, then addressing potential investors. All actors are displaying their message by using colorful and attractive illustrations showing nice scenery, buildings, people, as well as the Swedish flag, in their communication on the ESSPs²¹⁴. These strategies constitute the brand-platform: "Sweden Picture 2.0" which give guidance to the concept for all activities within the NSU and its partners and other stakeholders who show interest.

Furthermore, we have been able to study Nation Branding "through the eyes of" those who work with Nation Branding as well as the general public²¹⁵ which will function as valuable information in a "real life" perspective.²¹⁶ According to Joakim Norén (SI) Sweden uses the notion Nation Branding, though what Sweden actually does, is to work with the Swedish brand, *not branding* since this could be interpreted as if Sweden wants to change the image of Sweden which is *not* the case. According to Norén it is important to emphasize that the work with the Swedish brand is *only to emphasize the image that already exists* and NSU:s work on a problem oriented image that most of the Swedes feel is a relevant for Sweden.

²¹³ The Promotion for Sweden Abroad

²¹⁴ Emergent Social Software Platforms

²¹⁵ Also governmental staff, see the Appendix pp132-135

²¹⁶ Bryman & Bell, *Business Research, Qualitative Research Methods*, p 386
See the interview material in *the Appendix*, pp 134-135

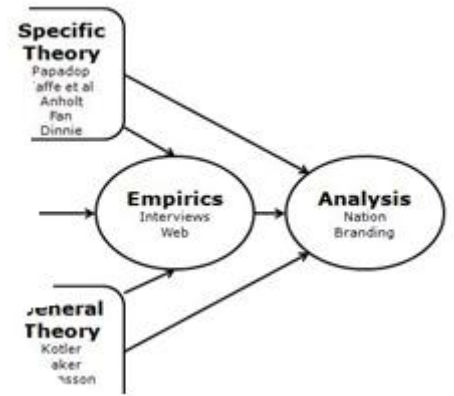
The findings in this chapter will be compared with and linked to the theoretical framework in *Chapter 3*. This will be done in order to see if the empirical findings can be explained by the theoretical framework chosen for this study.

The aim is to answer the questions in the problem formulation.

To sum this up, we are now ready to move over to the analysis of this study in the next *Chapter 5*.

5 Analyses

In this chapter the empirical research in the former Chapter 4 will be tested through the theories explained in Chapter 3. The upcoming chapter is also providing answers to the thesis' problem formulation, questions and conclusions in Chapter 6 and 7.



As earlier mentioned, in *Chapter 1*, Gertner states that, “Nation Branding is not quite as novel concept as you think”.²¹⁷ The Greenland story is an example of Nation Branding history, the settlement of America as well; other articles mention more or less creative examples:²¹⁸ there is obviously an interest in early Nation Branding history. Keith Dinnie assesses that the initiative of placing Nation Branding in a historical context as done by the historian Wally Olins “is a somewhat original way to treat Nation Branding”²¹⁹ which in the context above seem a bit out of the ordinary since it is obvious that the research comprises apparent artifacts of Nation Branding history in the research field.²²⁰ However, from this background it would be interesting to start this chapter and analyze Sweden in a historical context and then ask:

– *What examples exist as early artifacts of the Swedish Nation Brand?*

Nation branding literature suggests that we, in this context, talk about the *national brand*.²²¹ Consequently, this analysis will start by presenting *a suggestion* to Sweden’s national brand-development in a “historical context”. Thereafter, the analysis will move over to modern times and we will focus on Sweden’s nation-branding activity today. This will be done by listening to what Joakim Norén shared in the interview made at the Swedish Institute as well as analyzing the activities within the NSU affiliated organizations such as they are presented in the empirics of this thesis in *Chapter 4*. We will analyze Sweden’s nation-branding activity, comparing them with the theory, and thus, be able to answer the question:

– *How is Sweden using Nation Branding theory today?*

Answering this question we start with yet another sub-question: Is Sweden following the conventional marketing management theories as well as the more specific nation-branding

²¹⁷ See *Chapter 1.1*, p 2

²¹⁸ Fan Ying (2010) “Branding the nation: Towards a better understanding”, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 6, 97-103, mentions “the world of Plato” as relevant, according to Ying Fan, for the Greek nation.

²¹⁹ Brand Horizons.com [2012-07-28 06:10]

²²⁰ To Dinnie’s redeem the article above was written before Gertner and Fan Ying’s statements.

²²¹ Jaffe, Eugene D. and Israel, D. Nebenzahl, (2006) *National Image and Competitive Advantage: The Theory and Practice of Place Branding*, Second Edition, Copenhagen Business School Press, DK, “Developing a National Brand”, page 138

theories? Is Sweden using them as a tool such as they are explained in the empirics in *Chapter 4*? If Sweden is doing this – does the practice of nation-branding follow the theoretical framework? Are there key points missing or do they differ in any parts? What else could be interesting to take into account to achieve a more holistic view and understanding for this study, in the theoretical framework that we have chosen in *Chapter 3*? Finally, we will ask the question:

–Is it really possible to say that a nation is a brand and that nations can be branded and why would nations want to use branding techniques? Why is Nation Branding regarded as a controversial phenomenon? What are the underlying reasons for this?

Answers to these questions should, altogether, give an explorative, wholesome perspective of Nation Branding, with a focus on Sweden, and thus make it possible to answer this study's research questions:

- *What is Nation Branding and how is it applied in Sweden?*
- *Why is Nation Branding controversial?*
- *When is Nation Branding worthwhile?*

In the next part of this chapter follows the analyses that will give us the assessments we need to answer the three questions stated above. We will start with an analysis of a suggested Swedish *national brand*, set in Sweden's historical context. Furthermore, this initial part will also function as an analytical background and introduction to how Sweden is using Nation Branding theory today.

5.1 Analyzing Sweden’s Nation Brand in a Historical Context



Figure 5.1 *The Viking Culture*
(<http://vallepajares.wordpress.com>)

Studying the Swedish Brand from a past perspective á la Wally Olins,²²² the following moments could describe the Swedish brand: *The Vikings*²²³ being the first to place Sweden on the map before Sweden was founded as a nation. Thereafter “our founding father” *Gustav I of Sweden* also known as *Gustav Vasa*.²²⁴

During the year of 1611-1718 Sweden became a Great Power which resulted in placing Sweden on the world map.²²⁵

Later, in modern times, *the Stockholm Art and Industry fair* in 1897²²⁶ and *the Olympic Games* held in Stockholm in 1912²²⁷ are among the first historical moments when Sweden is being highlighted, in a societal, industrial and sport’s context. We hereby chose the three moments *The Vikings*, *Gustav Vasa* and *the Olympic Games of 1912* as examples of historical moments creating a *national brand* for Sweden.



Figure 5.2 *Gustav I of Sweden*
(Foto: Scanpix Sverigesradio.se)

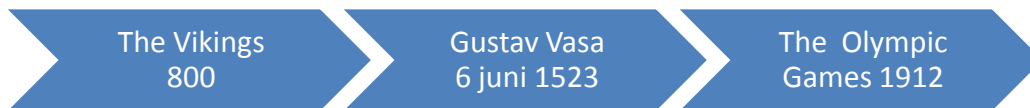


Figure 5.3 *Historical Moments of the Swedish National Brand Development* (Author’s suggestion and elaboration)

The historical periods or moments in Sweden’s history set in a nation-brand perspective are assessed above, in Figure 5.3.²²⁸ Though, some would probably argue that Sweden’s political

²²² Olins, Wally (2002) *Wally Olins Viewpoints, Branding the Nation – historical context*”, The Journal of Brand Management.

²²³ Though this maybe should be described more accurately as a brand of "barbarian warrior" or noble savages. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viking> [120824 20:30]

²²⁴ Larsson, Carl-Henrik,”(2005) GUSTAV VASA – DEN MODERNA SVENSKA STATENS GRUNDARE”, *Nordisk Filateli*, Juni 2005, <http://www.filateli.se/data/archive/media/calleartiklar/gustavvasa.pdf> [120824 19:50]

Scanpix foto: <http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=791&artikel=4244751>.

Sweden’s first king would probably be given the description by Wally Olins as a true *re-branding* enthusiast.

²²⁵ <http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stormaktstiden> http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Sweden [120824 21:32]

²²⁶ <http://www.thebestinheritage.com/presentations/2009/a-mediated-window-to-the-stockholm-art-and-industry-fair-of-1897,51.html>

²²⁷ The 100th anniversary is held this year. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1912_Summer_Olympics [120825 11:42] <http://www.investstockholm.com/en/About-Us/Press/Summer-Olympics-1912-press-kit/>

²²⁸ Some people would probably argue that it was the 1809 state declaration, also taking place on June 6. But in this model Gustav Vasa is the winner of “The Swedish Brand Competition”.

situations during the World Wars are moments affecting Sweden's national brand. However, this is only a fragmentary accounting of possible historical moments that could be seen as early artifacts of the Swedish national brand. *The aim of this section of the thesis is not to provide a thorough picture; it is meant to point to the fact that Sweden is a nation with artifacts of Nation Branding history, though only a few are mentioned here.*

What's more, if we would analyze Sweden further, in a *Cultural branding* perspective,²²⁹ we should also add historical, cultural or politically important "icons" of Sweden. There are many to choose between. We pick randomly or highly subjectively: ²³⁰The Swedish Royalties, ²³¹Alfred Nobel, ²³²Dag Hammarskjöld, ²³³ possibly also Carl Linnaeus, ²³⁴ Ingmar Bergman, ²³⁵ ABBA and Waterloo²³⁶ could all be seen as Swedish Iconic brand elements.²³⁷

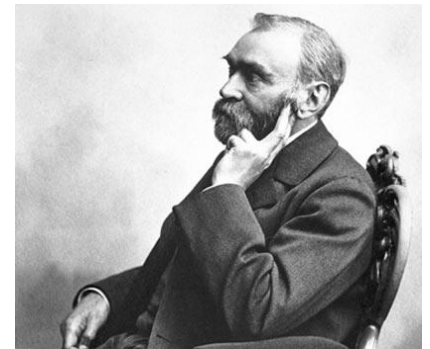


Figure 5.4 Alfred Nobel (Sweden.se)

Going over into modern times and Sweden's work with Nation Branding today, the branding activities started proactively when the Swedish Institute was inaugurated in 1945, though the notion *Nation Branding* was not coined until later.²³⁸ The objectives were already then, in 1945, to promote Sweden and Swedish products abroad, with the same mission for the Swedish Institute and its fellow organs within the NSU today.²³⁹ *Therefore, we can by this assess that the year of 1945 is when Nation Branding history takes off in modern times, in Sweden.*



Figure 5.5 Nation Branding moments in modern times according to Joakim Norén (SI)

In figure 5.5 we see that the work with the Swedish brand started as a Nation Branding activity already in 1945 but NSU (Näringsfrämjandet för Sverige i Utlandet, The National

²²⁹ Holt, Douglas B. (2004) *How Brands Become Icons*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, Massachusetts

²³⁰ Though some of the examples are mentioned in the informal talks with general public, see *the Appendix*.

²³¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_Royal_Family [120824 22:24]

²³² Alfred Nobel. Sweden.se [120824 22:29]

²³³ (1905-1961) UN:s General Secretary 1953 till his death. Honored with Nobel's Peace Price 1961

²³⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Linnaeus [120824 22:34]

²³⁵ <http://bergmanorama.webs.com/index.html> [120924 21:45]

²³⁶ Waterloo won the Eurovision Song Contest in 1974 which made ABBA and Sweden famous all over the world in popular culture.

²³⁷ *Cultural Branding and Iconic Branding*, see *Chapter 3.2.5*, pp 31-32

²³⁸ 10.5 *Appendix*, interview with Joakim Norén (SI), pp125-132

²³⁹ Joakim Norén (SI)

Promotion Board of Sweden) was not formed until in 1995. Ten years later Simon Anholt launched his Nation Branding Index (NBI) and Sweden was among the first nations to join the index.²⁴⁰

Since this study is based on qualitative data no absolute truths can be assessed. Still, this research gives reason to believe that Sweden is a “true” “Nation Branding nation with a history and clear moments of statutory, already long before the notion was coined. Sweden is consequently a nation with almost 70 years track-record in Nation Branding activity which gives strong evidence for these qualitative assessments.

However, we cannot yet call these assessments findings, though with this historical over-view we have received some kind of backbone to what Nation Branding is, in a historical perspective and we are now ready to move over to the more in detail scrutinizing part of Nation Branding theory, and how it is applied in Sweden, today.

The question is: Will we find a wholly “true” follower of “pure” Nation Branding theory or will we find a hybrid of some kind? This is the purpose of the rest of this chapter to find out: To see how well Sweden’s work with Nation Branding in modern times is corresponding with the theory chosen for this study.

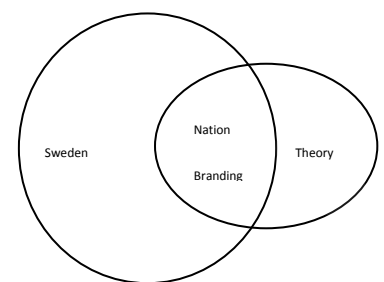


Figure 5.6 The Thesis’ Analysis Scope and Overlaps (Author’s elaboration)

²⁴⁰ Joakim Norén (SI), *Chapter 3.6*, “The Nation Brand Index and the Hexagon Model”, pp 38-39 and *Chapter 5.2.2*, “In a Perspective of Specific Nation Branding Theory”, “Sweden in the NBI”, pp 79-81

5.2 Sweden’s Work with Nation Branding Today

The conceptual, historical part is now done and we have a starting-point from which we will go through Sweden’s work in the daily activities, comparing them with the theory chosen for this study. First bringing up issues related to the conventional marketing management theories²⁴¹, looking at the empirics in *Chapter 4* with the material from the interviews and the findings on the web pages of the NSU organizations. The aim is to see to what extent the theoretical and empirical material correspond with each other. A schematic overview of the study is depicted in *Figure 5.6.* and *Figure 5.7.* Furthermore, in figure 5.7 the model is extended with *Public Diplomacy* and, in this thesis, also included *Heckscher-Ohlin export related framework*. Since these theories are seldom included in the research field, although it is also often stated that there are obvious connections between them, they are brought into the perspective to provide a solid basement for an explorative holistic study.²⁴²

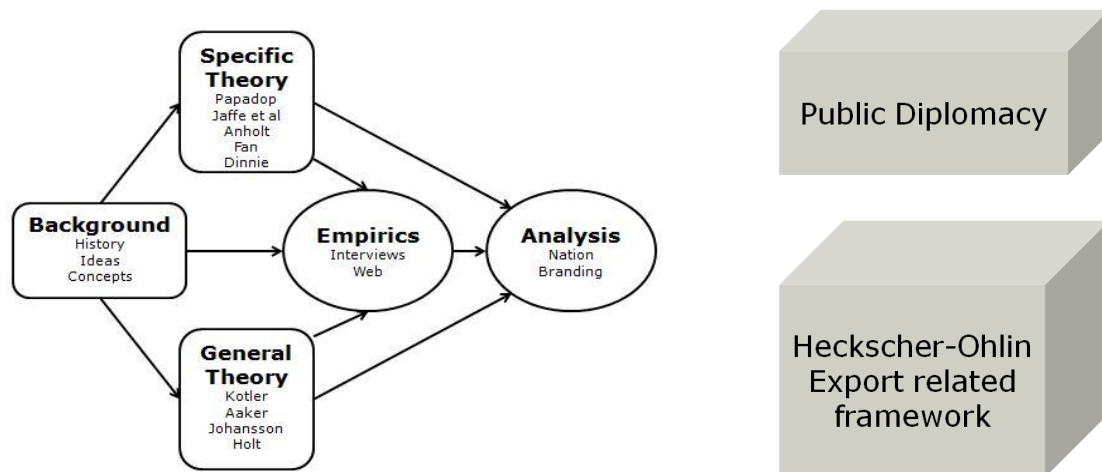


Figure 5.7 The extended theoretical framework including Public Diplomacy and Export Theory (Author’s elaboration)

During informal talks with individuals working with Nation Branding in Sweden the answer is “Yes, we are working with Nation Branding”.²⁴³ When it comes to the definition of the notion these individuals show the same confidence; practically all persons that were asked the question about the notation, say that it is easy to define the notion; on a scale 1-10– just about everyone stated eight or nine, where 10 is the easiest.²⁴⁴ People working with Nation

²⁴¹ Aaker, Holt, Johansson, Kotler and Wahlund & Håkansson

²⁴² This was received as valuable input by the opponents as well as the tutors of SSE Course 407 *Macroeconomics*.

²⁴³ Hjort, Norén, Region Manager, employees at the info-desk of SI and Visit Sweden.

²⁴⁴ This includes students, researchers and teachers (for example Course 629), at the SSE, and general public.

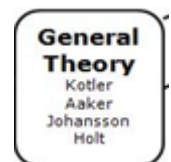
Branding think it is easy to understand what the notion means.²⁴⁵ People in general refer to the Eurovision Song Contest, the Olympic Games and other international sports events. Also, the Royal Family and the Nobel Foundation were mentioned, Swedish film, Spotify, Skype and the fact that IKEA has changed their logotype from red and white to the colors of the Swedish flag.²⁴⁶

Talking to individuals who are *not* working with Nation Branding they have no difficulty in finding examples of what they think are nation-branding activities both in Sweden and the rest of the world. However, on the question “Have you ever heard of Nation Branding?”, the answer was in almost all cases a unison “*No, never heard of it*”, except for two persons. This is strong evidence of how little Swedes in general are aware of the notion.²⁴⁷

After this introductory part to nation-branding practice in Sweden in modern times, referring to what people in general think or know about Nation Branding in Sweden, we will now scrutinize the study object, seen through different theoretical perspectives, also found in the theoretical framework in *Chapter 3*, namely: *Conventional Marketing Management Theory*, *Specific Nation Branding Theory*, *Cultural Branding Theory* and the holistic views of *Public Diplomacy* and *National Income and Export-related theory*.

5.2.1 In a Perspective of Conventional Marketing Management Theory

Going back to the history of branding, this gives us the perspective of how branding has evolved over time and it also explains how it has become one of the most important differentiating tools within marketing management in modern times. We have learnt in the theory part of this thesis that branding was a necessity already in the development of business in medieval times. “Getting close to your customer” was a focus so that the product would be “the one thing” a consumer thinks of when he or she is in the action of choosing a product for his or her needs.²⁴⁸



²⁴⁵ This also account for everyone who got the question in informal talks during the time this thesis was written, the answer was always, “it is easy to understand since it is quite obvious what it means”.

²⁴⁶ Some of these general thoughts among Swedes are represented in the interview material in *the Appendix*.

²⁴⁷ Well over 100 persons were asked altogether during spring 2012 including marketing students and people met upon in different situations where the two persons that had heard of Nation Branding before was an Italian research student at the SSE, and the tutor and course administrator of the bachelor thesis course (629). This is also evidence that shows that Nation Branding is an important topic both for further research as well as finding means through which the knowledge of Nation Branding could be broadened.

²⁴⁸ Wahlund, Richard and Per Håkansson (1996) *Varumärken – från teori till praktik*, Stockholm School of Economics

Today the market has expanded, it is not the question of how to get close to or obtain the attention from the customer in the local city or region, the setting is nowadays the vast global arena that is the humongous contact-area for companies and customers today. This is also why this study gives reason to believe, that branding has become even more important today for corporations, as well as for nations.

In the moment of the purchase decision, the customer should choose “your product” over the others; the producer consequently needs to verbally establish contact with the consumer on the other side of the world. How is this implemented? It is a mission for managers of local, regional as well as international company leaders to ponder over and take action for.²⁴⁹ This is where Nation Branding comes as a welcoming possibility and means to reach out in a cooperative and efficient way to the nation’s global customers. It is a powerful tool for businesses, not only on corporate level but also *on a national level* where many positive synergy effects can be obtained if the branding techniques are applied properly in a joint effort to communicate the nation’s image and messages to the world.²⁵⁰

Furthermore, the Swedish products sold on the global market today are not necessarily commodity products, they are also intangible service or a vacation, or to come to the country to work and live there. Another form of consumption is to come and study, make inward investments, setting up a business, organization or doing research. All these different products and offerings are possible to reach out with, in co-operation between the government and business, to the nation’s customers. This new technique nowadays lies open for the *countries and nations* to use and benefit from.²⁵¹

Mixing the theoretical framework with the Swedish government’s possibility to work together with Swedish business, Sweden is able to create “this simple little note” *the little piece of paper* “[of Wahlund & Håkansson], that says: “*SWEDEN* ☺ “.When consumers make a decision they use “the rule of thumb”, that Wahlund and Håkansson explains, is built on associations and generalizations which also brands are built upon. This is a means to handle the complexity of living conditions for modern mankind, a concept which the brand-creators use and which also leads to “a much simpler life for the consumers”.²⁵² If companies *as well as a whole nation*’s image have a good reputation and are being evaluated in a positive way

²⁴⁹ Johansson, Johnny, K.(2003) *Global Marketing: Foreign Entry, Local Marketing & Global Management*, 3d ed., International edition, Georgetown University, Mc Graw Hill, NY

²⁵⁰ Joakim Norén (SI), Simon Anholt, Keith Dinnie, Wally Olins, Moilanen & Rainisto, Jaffe & Nebenzahl

²⁵¹ Joakim Norén (SI)

²⁵² Wahlund & Håkansson

by its purchasers or people in general, the companies that belong to – *Aaker's branded house*²⁵³ – also benefit from the positive spill-over effects within “the house”, that is, the Nation.²⁵⁴

A Nation's Branded House

If customers can identify themselves with *the nation's branded house products*, and if the companies or nation can create and maintain positive attitudes towards its customers, the whole nation's business will have the possibility to increase sales as well as charging higher prices and thus also increase GDP which in turn leads to the prosperity of the nation, *in the long run*.²⁵⁵ As Wahlund and Håkansson assesses, this is done without a time limit compared to patents that have a date of expirations and therefore, brands that are well managed “will give eternal returns”, “so there's no wonder that the interest for brands have increased all over the world”.²⁵⁶

These facts are strong evidence that there are positive payoff effects as well from Nation Branding. From these findings we can assess that nations enjoy these positive side-effects and therefore ought to engage in the activity of branding, not necessarily only for underdeveloped nations,²⁵⁷ but also for small nations, or any nation that otherwise would have a hard time to be seen properly or in the relevant context on the global arena.

So, we can through these findings assess that also nations need a brand perspective, in thinking as well as acting, in order to create those synergy effects that the joint cooperation can produce within the branded house. The synergy effects are achieved through the nation's use of the collectively shared core values²⁵⁸ and differentiation of targeting and segmenting your brand values to the relevant customer target and segments²⁵⁹ that the whole nation and its business share.

²⁵³ See *Chapter 3.2.2*, “Strategic Market and Portfolio Management: Co-branding”, pp 26-28

²⁵⁴ Part of this is quantified COO-theory assessed by Jaffe & Nebenzahl, in for example: “Strong Country Image – Strong Brand Image”, p 123

²⁵⁵ Anholt, Simon, (2003) *Brand New Justice: The Upside of Global Branding*, Oxford Butterwort Heinemann, GB

²⁵⁶ Wahlund & Håkansson, “The History of Brand Management” page 5-7 “A brand is what?” p 9-15 (Author's translation)

²⁵⁷ Fan Ying, Simon Anholt (2005) *Brand New Justice: How branding places and products can help the developing world*, 2003 revised edition 2005, Elsevier Butterwort Heinemann, GB

²⁵⁸ Jaffe & Nebenzahl, *National Image & Competitive Advantage – The theory and Practice of Place Branding*, “Managing Country of Origin Effects by Industry and Government”, pp 137 ff, “Developing a National Brand” pp 138-140 and “Umbrella Branding”, p141

²⁵⁹ Kotler et. al.

The NSU and Conventional Theory

We can hereby, once again, link the theoretical research to the empirics of this study and assess that conventional marketing theory also count for larger organizations, such as nations. This study shows that it is obvious that the Swedish state government has realized that the NSU can use marketing in their implementation of the Swedish brand in order to highlight Sweden as an actor on the global arena.

To give an example of what is mentioned above; Visit Sweden explains the core value positions chosen by the NSU, on their homepages. The four positions are: *Urban Nature*, *Swedish Lifestyle*, *Natural playground*, and *Vitalized meetings*.²⁶⁰ These four positions are also present in a slide show that functions as an opening to the home page where Sweden is communicated through the four positions mentioned above through “the Kotler conventional theory framework” of differentiation through targeting and segmentation.²⁶¹

The four segments by which Sweden is supposed to attract its customer are: the “DINKS”,²⁶² the “Active Family”, the “WHOPs”²⁶³ and the broader definition: “Meeting buyers and incentive and event companies”.²⁶⁴ The four different tourist types, connected to each independent segment, are also explained in detail as well as their different demand conditions.

Thus, we can hereby assess that these findings show that Sweden follows conventional marketing management theory á la Kotler.²⁶⁵

“Corporate Branding but on a higher level”

During the time of research, people, especially teachers at school, have referred to the thought that “Nation Branding is or must be equivalent to corporate branding but “on a higher level”. That is, the nation state is acting as a corporation in a global setting.²⁶⁶ Aaker provides interesting theory in these issues. He explains this as a result that companies are “brand driven” and conscious about the importance of implementing well functioning branding strategies. “././ a corporate brand is a brand that represents a corporation, or more generally

²⁶⁰ See *Appendix, 10.3.4*, “Visit Sweden Positions”, p 122

²⁶¹ See also *Chapter 4.1.3* p 49 and the entire positioning framework in *Appendix*, p 122 (foot note 260).

²⁶² Double Income No Kids

²⁶³ “Wealthy Healthy Older People”, also called “The first charter generation” that views travelling as a lifestyle.

²⁶⁴ Translated and abbreviated by the author.

²⁶⁵ See referral notes of the semi-informal talk on cell phone with the former Secretary General at SI, Thomas Carlhed, 2012-04-03 and Kotler’s *Principles of Marketing* used in SSE Course 310.

²⁶⁶ Johansson, Johnny, K. (2003) *Global Marketing: Foreign Entry, Local Marketing & Global Management*, 3d ed., International edition, Georgetown University, Mc Graw Hill, NY

an organization.²⁶⁷ Aaker explains further that “/./ it reflects its heritage, values, culture, people, and strategy.”²⁶⁸ Staying with Aaker for a while, and his portfolio-brand theory, this also include brands external to the corporation whose link to internal brands are actively managed, “such as branded sponsorship, symbols, celebrity endorsers, **and countries or regions**”.²⁶⁹ Here we see that Aaker includes countries as larger organizations that can be included as portfolio users. Referring to the empirical findings we can see these attributes “: /./ heritage, values, culture, people, and strategy/./ are mentioned both in the interviews as well as artifacts stressed on the website. Countries have regions as endorsers as well as other external attributes such as corporations, both private, state owned and NGO’s which all function as endorsers to the nation.

Furthermore, according to Aaker, a country or a region can have a strong brand association and therefore “be providing interest, energy, and differentiation to a target brand” as “for example Chanel and L’Oreal mean Paris, Stolichnaya vodka means Russian and Volvo is from Sweden”.²⁷⁰ In each case the brand’s association implies higher quality because the country or the region has a heritage of making the best within the product class.²⁷¹

The Endorser Brand Theory and the Swedish COO

To extend Aaker’s thoughts with examples of Swedish companies and organizations that could play the role as endorser brands for the brand of Sweden, and also, already carries the country of origin symbolism in their logo using the Swedish name, flag or colors in their logotype, we have found the following examples:²⁷²

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absolut Vodka • En Svensk Klassiker • Hello Sweden Team • IKEA • Mora of Sweden • Orrefors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAS • SJ • SSAB • Swedish House Maffia • Swedish Match | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Svenska Kyrkan • Svenska Spel • Svenskt Näringsliv • Svenskt Sigill • Svenskt Tenn • Vattenfall |
|---|--|--|

Table 5.1 Examples of Swedish Business using Country of Origin in their logotypes²⁷³

²⁶⁷ Aaker (2004) p 16

²⁶⁸ The cultural heritage and values will be explored further, later in this chapter where we will discuss the issue of *Cultural Branding*.

²⁶⁹ Aaker (2004), bold added.

²⁷⁰ Aaker (2004) p 179

²⁷¹ Aaker (2004)

²⁷² Swedbank among others missing, mainly because this compilation is only meant to provide some examples

²⁷³ Author’s research and compilation

We can see in Table 5.1 the country of origin theory explained within Aaker's corporate branding theoretical framework,²⁷⁴ where Aaker assesses that the associations provide the target brand, in this case the nation brand, with "interest, energy, and differentiation".²⁷⁵

According to Aaker a large number of studies have confirmed that brand credibility within a certain product class will be influenced by the country of origin.²⁷⁶ Furthermore, a country or a regional brand can provide emotional and self-expressive benefits, for example within the Japanese market Western brands enjoy high regards. And a country or a region can usually not fade away as traditional endorser brands.²⁷⁷

We here see once again that Aaker's corporate branding theories correspond closely to the conventional theory of Kotler as well as the findings of COO theory in our empirics. Empirics and theory go hand-in-hand. Through these findings we can conclude and assess that there are strong links between corporate branding and Nation Branding, as well as between theory and practice, in Sweden. Although, the practice can also go wrong, which is explained both in the theory as well as mentioned in the empirics.²⁷⁸ Once again theory and practice go hand-in-hand.

Now, as we have assessed these links between Nation Branding and corporate branding both within theory as well as reality this leads us automatically over to the branded house and portfolio issues suggested by Aaker:

- Should one or more brands be added? According to Aaker there are situations in which a portfolio can be strengthened by the addition of brands. However, brand-additions should always have a well-defined role. Furthermore, the decision to add a brand should be made or approved by a group with a portfolio perspective. Too often, states Aaker, such decisions are left to decentralized groups that have little felt of the total brand portfolio, which creates a bias toward brand proliferation. The goal should be to have the fewest relevant brands needed to meet business goals.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁴ Probably also influenced to a great extent by Papadopoulos and Jaffee's research on country of origin cues.

²⁷⁵ "Differentiation" and "Energy" are also brand asset evaluators according Kotler, see *Chapter 3.2.1* "To Create Brand Value, p 24

²⁷⁶ Aaker (2004)

²⁷⁷ Aaker (2004)

²⁷⁸ See interview with Joakim Norén (SI)

²⁷⁹ Aaker

This study has not yet seen any clear and strong extension of the endorser brands on corporate level. The fact that regions as well as cities are natural endorsers to the nation is easy to comprehend.²⁸⁰ But the lack of an endorsed brand extension of private business does *not* make it possible to state that Sweden follows the theory all the way on third, stand-alone endorsement level. This is, from the result of this study, an assessment in itself: Sweden does not follow Aaker's co-branding framework, nor gives us reason to believe, the NBAR, fully. The Swedish private business is missing on third, bottom level.

We will discuss this further when we discuss the Swedish NBAR model (SNBAR)²⁸¹. But, maybe this is the reason why the feeling for what the total brand portfolio stands for, which creates this bias towards brand proliferation that Aaker explains above. There is a need of a less decentralized group who has a stronger feeling for what the total brand portfolio stands for, in this case the nation's, to find the relevant portfolio which strengthens the house of brands.²⁸² This research indicates as well as gives us reason to believe that Sweden has not come this far yet in their nation-branding activity. We will see this clearly when we will look at Sweden's work, following the more "specific nation branding theory".²⁸³

Sweden and the Web 2.0 and the Enterprise 2.0 Theory

This research does not give an answer to who made the NSU web-pages and how it was done in detail or how it is working in reality.²⁸⁴ But on the whole, the communication within the NSU organs looks very well worked through the Web 2.0 using it as 2.0 Enterprise theories suggest, creating the 2.0 platforms of the *Sweden Picture 2.0*.

This thesis aim is not to make any thorough study in HTML theory and analyze it closely, but it seems that it is immaculately well done, surfing through the home pages. Visit Sweden's websites are nicely and informatively composed with several other sets of websites both extensively linked and tagged that are both entertaining and interesting to navigate between, though the national stereotypes described later in this chapter, bring the relevance down a

²⁸⁰ See *Appendix, 10.3.3*, Visit Sweden's regional offices as brand endorsers, p 121

²⁸¹ See *Chapter 5.2.2* "In a Perspective of Specific Nation Branding Theory" p 70-76 and *Chapter 5.4* "The SNBAR" pp 97-98

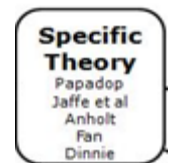
²⁸² This is also mentioned in earlier theses, though the reference is lost.

²⁸³ See *Chapter 5.2.2* "In a Perspective of Specific Nation Branding Theory", p 70

²⁸⁴ Joakim Norén (SI) refers to Thomas Carlhed and Ylva Björnberg as head responsible for the 2.0 Platform.

bit.²⁸⁵ Although, this should be seen as being the core value of stereotyped identities and should be treated as such, which also theory recommend.²⁸⁶

To sum this part up we cannot conclude differently than saying that the Swedish Institute and the other organs of the NSU have done their job well when it comes to employing conventional marketing theory and combining it in the Web 2.0. The question that now follows is: Does Sweden work with Nation Branding's *specific theoretical framework* as well? Are, for example, all levels and divisions in the branded house theory of Aaker's covered, also in reality? This question leads us over to the next part of the analyses: Nation Branding in Sweden seen through the perspective of *the specific Nation Branding theory*.



5.2.2 In a Perspective of Specific Nation Branding Theory

After the introductory analyses of the conventional theoretical framework of marketing management we will now look at the more specific theoretical constructions found in the emerging Nation Branding literature, as it is chosen and depicted in *Chapter 3*²⁸⁷. Since specific Nation Branding theory has emerged in the research field, there is not total lack of theoretical frameworks any longer. Today several models and theories exist, for example, the Hexagon Model, and the NBAR model, which both are chosen for this study.

However, we will leave most of the COO theory behind from now on. It is part of the theoretical framework to bring clarity to the definition of Nation Branding being constituted by country of origin and national identity. Though, the COO effect is present from now on in the background of the analyses but not necessarily being brought up in details, since it is more an effect of the Nation Branding activity, in the eye of the observer, than being an activity in itself.²⁸⁸

Hence, the analysis that now follows has a guideline presented below:

- A closer look at Sweden's work with Nation Branding through the NBAR model;
- Comparing the SNBAR²⁸⁹ with Aaker's theory of corporate branding and NBAR;
- Examining two platform theories: Aaker's and the Enterprise 2.0

²⁸⁵ See *Chapter 5.2.3* "In a Perspective of Cultural Branding Theory", pp 82-87

²⁸⁶ See *Chapter 3.4* "Nation Branding: The Country-Of-Origin Effect and National Identity".

²⁸⁷ Papadopoulos and the COO research, Anholt, Fan, Dinnie.

²⁸⁸ This is also part of the delimitations of the study.

²⁸⁹ The Swedish Nation Brand Architecture Model.

- Analyzes of Sweden’s performance in the Nation Brands Index (NBI) and Anholt’s theoretical framework
- A focus on Cultural Branding and the Creative Brief of Sweden
- A section on Public Diplomacy and National Image Identity

After this come a section where we will discuss if *nations can be treated as brands and be branded?* This discussion will provide answers to the research question: *Why is Nation Branding controversial?*

The attentive reader will now notice that one theory is left out, namely the Swedish Trade Mark Law. This part will be included in the discussion above. But, let us now move over to the specific NBAR model and see if the Swedish “SNBAR” is similar or different in reality.

Sweden and the Nation Brand Architecture Model (NBAR)

Listening to Håkan Hjort and Joakim Norén’s description of how Nation Branding activity is organized in Sweden we get the following model.

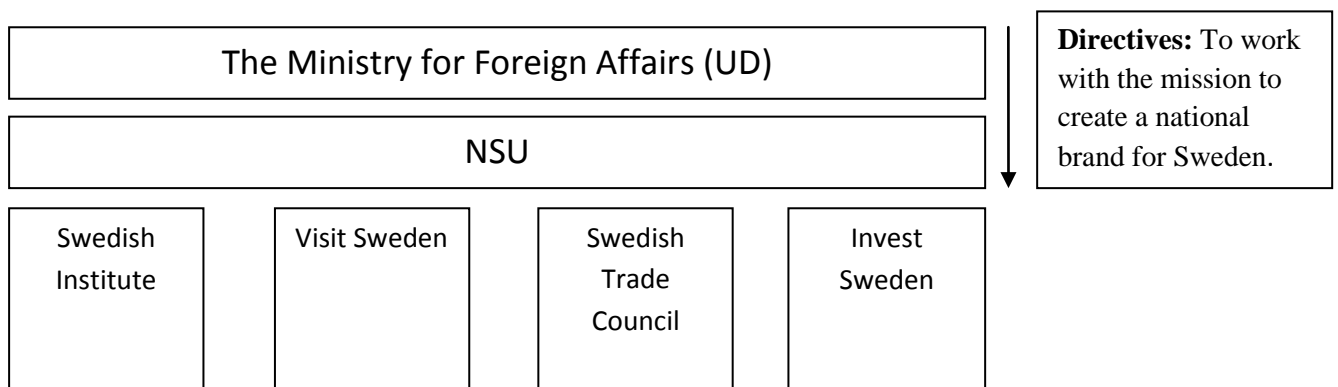


Figure 5.8 Nation Branding in Sweden (Author’s elaboration from the empirical research)

One of the main reasons to organize a nation’s branding this way is to make sure that all actors communicate the same message.²⁹⁰ And in the case for Sweden we have seen that a co-operational organization ties the different branding actors together and that the unified brand platform for Sweden directs the work for the different actors.²⁹¹ This model depicts Sweden’s organization in NSU’s work with the mission to create a national brand for Sweden. Its structure resembles Keith Dinnie’s NBAR model, which in turn is an exact depiction of

²⁹⁰ Joakim Norén (SI)

²⁹¹ NSU <http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3028/a/146544%2020> [2012-05-12 19:00]

Aaker's umbrella model of a house of brands with endorsed brands on the second level and stand-alone brands on the third and ground level.²⁹²

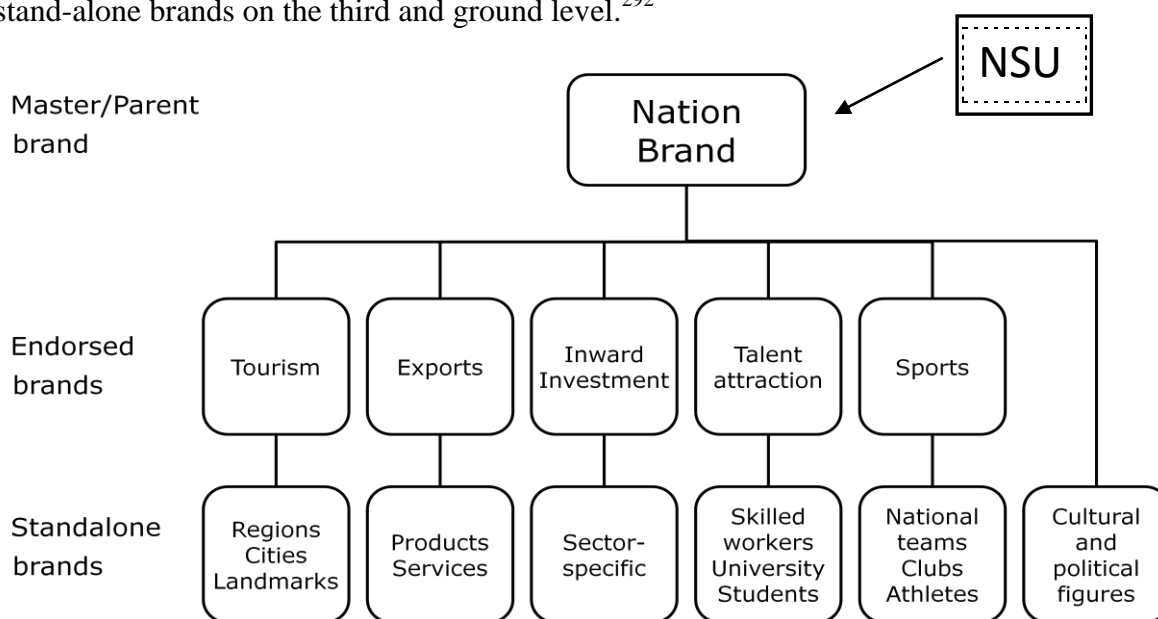


Figure 5.9 The NBAR Model (Dinnie)

We see here that the empirics follow the theory closely, both in Keith Dinnie's NBAR as well as the organization of Sweden's work with Nation Branding. Sweden has the driver brand and the endorser brand, and stand alone brands according to Aaker brand scope theory. NSU works actively with its existing master brand with descriptive subbrands that constitutes the so called *branded house*.

Though, when analyzing the NBAR-model we notice that the notions differ. In the Aaker theory the *umbrella brand* is called *the house of brands* or the *parental brand*, but they both show a hierarchical structure and the following picture of the so called *endorser brands* emerges:

- **Tourism:** This is *the endorsement part* made up by the governmental body in charge for promoting Sweden as a tourist destination given the mission to Visit Sweden and their objective is to market Sweden accompanied by regional tourism organizations.²⁹³
- **Exports:** This is *the endorsement part* given to the Swedish trade council's to help Swedish companies to reach out outside Sweden's borders and also to assist foreign companies to establish a presence in Sweden. A central task for the trade council is to promote certain industries such as Energy and Environmental, Health and Medicine and Swedish Food which we can be seen as the third level of the NBAR of Products

²⁹² The NBAR model is based on Douglas et al, Place Brand Architecture Model, Dinnie p 200

²⁹³ See Appendix, 10.3.3, "Regional Tourism Organizations in Sweden", p 121

and Services. Though the SymbioCity and the SymbioCare, are on a hybrid, “semi-level” in the NBAR model, since these are still state-run activities/actors, not stand-alone brands.²⁹⁴

- **Inward Investment:** This is *the endorsement part* of Invest Sweden which has the mission to connect international companies with business partners in Sweden and also offer investment consultancy to foreign investors. Invest Sweden focuses their work in a number of sectors for example ICT – IT and Telecom, Metals and Mining and the Retail sector and also uses a positioning statement in its “10 Reasons for Sweden”.²⁹⁵
- **Talent Attraction:** This is *the endorsement part* of SI to distribute scholarships and exchanges on educational level creating lasting relationships and mutual learning processes. The Swedish Institute administers scholarships and runs the webpage’s www.studyinsweden.se and www.workinsweden.se where foreign talents get information regarding all practical issues when coming to Sweden.²⁹⁶
- **Sport:** This is *the endorsement part* where sports in Sweden are run by *Riksidrottsförbundet*²⁹⁷ which is a kind of people’s movement organization with financing from both public and private sectors. It is rare that sports are used as an official tool by the government. It is primarily done by totalitarian countries.
- **Cultural and political figures:** This is *the endorsement part* that has high visibility in the rest of the world, and the National Identity can be formed by the usage of Swedish citizens such as Raoul Wallenberg,²⁹⁸ Alfred Nobel, Ingmar Bergman, Ingrid Bergman and ABBA.²⁹⁹ But the image of these individuals cannot be influenced by the government. This is, as in the case above in sports, done by totalitarian countries.

To sum this part up, the conclusion is that in the Swedish context the official Nation Branding in Sweden is by large designed after the NBAR-model. Though the parts including ‘Sports’ and ‘Political and Cultural figures’ have to be changed, or clarified that it is *not* run by state governance and therefore not applicable on the Swedish NBAR architecture. Håkan Hjort at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs also stated: “The individuals working with Nation Branding in Sweden are *not* subjects of the political agenda. If the government changes this does not mean that the people working with the branding of Sweden changes or have to change their

²⁹⁴ See *Chapter 4.1.4*, “The Swedish Trade Council”, pp 49-50

²⁹⁵ See *Appendix 10.3.5* 10 “Reasons for Sweden”, p 123

²⁹⁶ See interview with Joakim Norén, Question nr 9, pp 129-130

²⁹⁷ <http://www.rf.se/>

²⁹⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raoul_Wallenberg [2012-08-31]

²⁹⁹ This can also be seen at the Arlanda Airport’s Arrivals where important Swedish both historic and today living persons are present in big photos on the wall with the explanation “Welcome to my home country..”

attitude towards the country or how it is displayed or branded. The NSU organs have their mission held intact and are not influenced by the politics or the representation of the country. This assessment has to be high-lighted in a creation of a Swedish NBAR model, which will be done at the end of this analysis.³⁰⁰

Furthermore we have to ask: Is the model complete or are squares missing? Could there be areas where Nation Branding is present but not included in the model? For example, we find organizations with the focus on promoting *the language* in other countries. The British Council³⁰¹ has this function in the UK. In Germany this function is performed by *Das Goethe-Institute*³⁰² and in Spain by *El Instituto Cervantes*³⁰³. A Swedish well known organization within language and literature is the Swedish Academy which every year appoints the Nobel Laureates in literature at the Nobel Award Winning ceremony. Furthermore, the Swedish institute is helping 200 universities in 40 countries by acting as a mediator with Swedish teachers, arranging seminars and informing about literature and teaching material in the Swedish language. So, we would like to extend the NBAR model with also a section for “Language” which maybe is taken for granted by our “World Language” neighbors.

“The SNBAR”

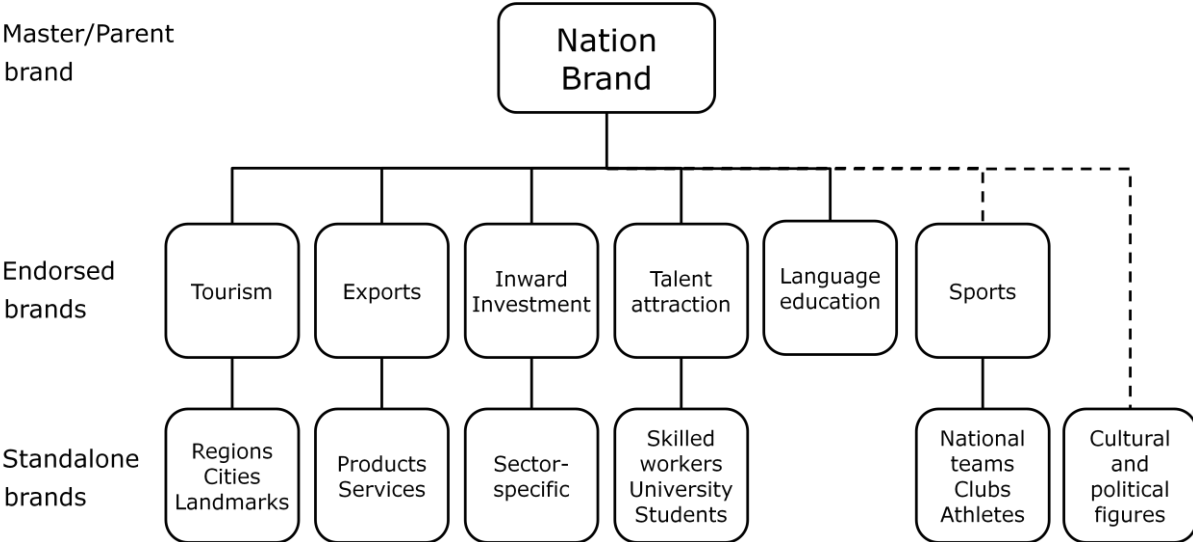


Figure 5.10 *The NBAR Model* adapted after Swedish conditions “The SNBAR” (Dinnie, revised by the author)

³⁰⁰ See author’s SNBAR-model, *Figure 5.10*
³⁰¹ <http://www.britishcouncil.org/> [2012-08-31]
³⁰² <http://www.goethe.de/>[2012-08-31]
³⁰³ <http://www.cervantes.es/default.htm> / [2012-08-31]

A revised NBAR-model can be formed after the reasoning regarding the language and the stand alone endorser brands of sports and cultural talents or figures. In Sweden's case, Sports and "Cultural and political figures" are not under a strongly linked umbrella organization.

The master brand or parent brand, Sweden, is the primary indicator of the offering, the point of reference. The organization is set in a Public Diplomacy framework with the state as the parent brand: The Swedish Government. It is the top billing in the sense of generated GDP³⁰⁴ which also functions as "the primary role, credibility and substance to the offerings"³⁰⁵. We see, according to theory, that a master brand can have a subbrand, or be endorsed. Since endorsers are usually organizational brands, according to Aaker, this seems to be the case with Sweden and is also evident in the NBAR model that we follow here. The endorsers are for example the different regions of Sweden's Visit Sweden framework. Other examples are the SymbioCity and SymbioCare organizations and related businesses connected to the Swedish Trade Council. Once again, the reality follows the given theoretical framework of this study as we add the members of SymbioCity and SymbioCare to the third and lower [semi-]level, though, as mentioned earlier; this is some kind of a hybrid, since the Symbio-concept is still a state-run activity. However, Aaker states that endorsements are powerful because they are "somewhat insulated from the brands they endorse". Once again, repeating the above: As Håkan Hjort states; the organizations within the NSU work with the given mission; no matter how the political situation is in the country and the house of the Parliament. Also, Aaker explains: "the endorsers can contribute with reduced risk that their associations will be effected by the performance". We can see this also in our interviews with the region manager.³⁰⁶ Consequently, this research also shows that the region managers act independently. Furthermore, reality or practice shows that we do not find a full usage of theory down to the bottom level with the nonexistent stand-alone brands – but this is also probably a result from the divided power in a democratic country.

The Swedish Master-Brand and Endorser Brands

As stated earlier, the master brand or parent brand is the primary indicator of the offering, the point of reference, the Government being the top of the branded house: Sweden. But then the organization is quite loosely held, since Sweden is a democratic country where the state governance by tradition does not interfere too much in people's daily life. On the other hand,

³⁰⁴ This will be explained further in 5.2.4 *Public Diplomacy and the National Income Identity*, p 87-89

³⁰⁵ Aaker

³⁰⁶ *Appendix* pp 132-133

this might as stated in earlier theses, in Sweden, give the result that there has been a lack of existing organization either within the NSU or between NSU and the endorsers, and this in turn, gives the result that the nation-branding activities are somewhat disrupted and the theory is not fully deployed all the way. Earlier theses have stated the need of someone or an organ to work with this full way, since for example, the Swedish business does not seem to be involved to any great extent. This study can now give the evidence that this work has been executed by the existing organizations within the NSU, when for example the SymbioCity is now added and the NBAR model is therefore more complete, in this part today.

It is understandable that this extension or involvement of endorsers at the third level in the NBAR model takes time. Aaker brings up the questions: “Will the brand enhance the extension”; “will the extension enhance the brand?” Is there compelling reason to generate a new brand, whether it be a stand-alone brand, an endorsed brand, or a subbrand?³⁰⁷

– Questions like these require time for evaluation and development. Many different categories must be overlooked in a good and bad perspective with reflections of awareness of the brand. Are the branded house’s partners all relevant? Will the mix of brands be familiar to the customers? How do the different brands influence perceived quality and trust of all the brands included in “the house”? What are the house-of-brand-associations before and after the extensions, do they help communicate the brand? What about brand loyalty? Does the new brand configuration draw on the same customer base or is it enlarged? Will it shrink or increase loyalty? What about credibility? The questions for managers to take in consideration are both demanding and many! These are time-consuming activities!

However, Aaker assesses that whatever the risks are, a brand extension usually increase the visibility and the exposure is a bonus for the brand. But the question still remains, when it comes to a nations whole potential of the sum of all the different businesses that already are present, as well as the newly created with the help of organizations working with new business development,³⁰⁸ this makes the decision probably almost impossible to decide who should be included.³⁰⁹

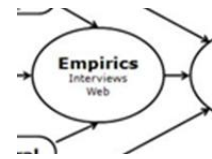
We can by the evidence of this study assess that Sweden has a long tradition in branding the nation, and that Sweden and the NSU works continuously with the mission to enhance and

³⁰⁷ See p 28

³⁰⁸ For example at Nutek, <http://destinet.eu/who-who/governments-administrations/nutek-swedish-agency-for-economic-regional-growth>, <http://www.tillvaxtverket.se/> [2012-08-31 17:58]

³⁰⁹ Still, we will give a suggestion to a SNBAR Model later in this chapter, see *Figure 5.21*, p 98

make Sweden's brand among the strongest in the world. This is obvious in the study of the NSU homepages and during the discussion with Joakim Norén and the other individuals. But one also understands that this is time consuming work and cannot all be done over night. To sum this up: As Aaker points out: *It is a long-term strategic view of the business.*



Platform Theory and “The Sweden Picture 2.0”

Moreover, evaluating Sweden's brand platform “Sweden Picture 2.0” and the theory behind this we here see a difference from the theoretical perspective of what a brand platform is according to Aaker and how it works for the Swedish brand. The brand platform is described by Aaker as the range of driver and endorser. Aaker also states that by showing a multitude of brands, “the house” provides association with capacity to success in different contexts. But in a Nation Branding perspective this is all taking place at the next level: At the top of the brand, with the parental brand, and the platform is instead *the imaginary context* of what the brand stands for. As in the case of the “Sweden picture” Joakim Norén explains, among other things, for example, “the images of Sweden as being trustworthy and sexy, and producing high quality products in a relevant context, not the least environmental”. This “Sweden picture” is quite obvious in some the NSU organs, but far from all. The interesting thing to notice here is that the concept of a brand platform is treated differently. The brand platform is according theory to the backbone or the structure of the NBAR Model and this is not found in the empirics of this study. When Norén mentions “the brand platform” this is more a description of which values Sweden should use in their communication on the web pages of Sweden.se etcetera.³¹⁰

Therefore, you could also say that the platform theory is two-fold: 1) It could be described according to Aaker's brand platform theory. 2) Another perspective is the imaginary, digital world that the Web 2.0 provides since the 1990s. The latter is a described as a challenge for the organizations to implement, but also brings organization management an outstanding opportunity to run its business since it also includes so many possibilities.³¹¹ Research shows that there is an inherent resistance against change management involving the Web 2.0³¹² and that it relies heavily on the management part, which has to take on both the new technology as

³¹⁰ See 3.2.4 *Brand platform theory*, p 29-30

³¹¹ McAfee, Andrew, *Enterprise 2.0; New collaborative tools for your organizations toughest challenges*, Harvard Business Press, Boston, Massachusetts, 2009

³¹² According to McAfee, p 11, this is high-tech-anxiety that reminds him of high school students' math anxiety. For definition of Web 2.0, see p 30

well as its possibilities, to the organizations favor.³¹³ This research shows that the NSU and the Swedish Institute together with Visit Sweden is very successful in implementing the new technology, the platform appears as well used and organized at Web 2.0 and the possibilities of, as MacAfee mentions and highlights Enterprise 2.0, to be used with positive result for the enterprise.

Sweden and the Enterprise 2.0

“Enterprise 2.0 is the use of emergent social software platforms by organizations in pursuit of their goals.”³¹⁴ This study assesses that Sweden makes use of this possibility to full extent since the different IT-platforms are employed as a means to focus on the Swedish market, distributing the country’s brand values, deploying the new technology of the Web 2.0, applying it to critical, important areas.³¹⁵ Thereof, this study can further assess that Sweden is an “Enterprise 2.0”, which also belongs to *the Emergent Social Software Platforms* (ESSPs) with both intranet and extranets including public Web sites.³¹⁶ The websites belong to the so called *social software* “which enables people rendezvous, connect, or collaborate through computer-mediated communication”.³¹⁷ The platforms are digital environments in which contribution and interaction are globally accessible, with links and tags to let patterns and structure of the conveyed message become visible over time.³¹⁸

Combining the two Platform-Theories

Regarding the message transmitted on the Web 2.0 and the strategic market and portfolio management co-branding, in combining the two mediums, according to this research, Sweden is not doing this thoroughly on the web platform. If, we regard the NSU as the umbrella brand representing Sweden, and then on endorsement level, the four organs of the NSU, we have a co-brand strategy in two upper levels. If we then see the different parts of Visit Sweden with its regional branches we also have this type of co-



Figure 5.11 <http://symbiocity.org/en/concept> using the Platform 2.0 recommended photo portfolio

³¹³ McAfee

³¹⁴ McAfee, p 73

³¹⁵ For example Bloggers, Twitters and Facebook

³¹⁶ McAfee

³¹⁷ McAfee

³¹⁸ McAfee, p 69

branding making use of endorsers. But we do not see much of the Swedish business at the stand-alone brand-level.

It seems as if the Swedish business is not playing any role in a co-brand perspective yet, with the few exceptions of SymbioCity and SymbioCare. This study shows that these actors make use of the suggested photo-portfolio of the brand-platform, as the photo in *Figure 5.11* shows up in the Symbio-concepts. Though, it must be stressed that these actors cannot be regarded as hundred percent third-level stand-alone endorsers since they do not belong to the so called “stand-alone brands” fully. For the second time in this chapter; the reason for this poor evidence in comparison to the theory is probably, as Aaker states: *It is a long-term strategic view of the business; we have not seen the end-result yet!*

Sweden in the NBI

Another strong actor on the Web 2.0 platforms is Simon Anholt’s Nation Brand Index (NBI)³¹⁹ which is also the hallmark of modern Nation Branding activity in Sweden. NSU was formed in 1995 and the participation in the NBI started ten years later when the NBI was launched in 2005. The NBI and the Hexagon are described in the theoretical framework in *Chapter 3* and we will now analyze Sweden’s position in the hexagon as well as the index. Down below is a compilation of Sweden’s position in the index from the start till today, where the results for 2012 have not yet been published.³²⁰

In *Table 5.2* we can see the results for Sweden since the index started.

	Total	Exports	Governance	Culture	People	Tourism	Immigration and Investment
2005	4		1	6	2	2	2
2006	7						
2007	6	7	2	15	3	11	5
2008	10	8	3	13	4	14	8
2009	10	9	3	14	7	14	8
2010	10	8	3	15	9	14	8
2011	10	-	4	15	-	13	-
2012	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 5.2 Compiled rankings from the NBI Index for Sweden (Author’s compilation)

³¹⁹ First in cooperation with GMI, today GfK Roper.

³²⁰ Compilation made by the author from the information of the Indexes during the relevant period.

During the years from the start, Sweden has always been ranked top ten in the overall NBI. In the first year GMI only performed interviews in ten countries. Sweden got very high results in almost every index which even surprises Simon Anholt himself.³²¹ The survey was published quarterly in the earliest years and from 2008 it has been an annual survey.³²²

It is also at this point interviews are performed in several countries, not just ten. We can see that from 2008 till 2011, Sweden has stable results overall, except for the Index “People”.³²³ Maybe it is the media that is playing a role here and our domestic affairs and problems are dragging down the ratings. As one of the interviews explained, “one more prime-minister assassinated and this will harm our position as a friendly country, severely, forever.”

The competition is fierce in this index as more countries join. If we should analyse the numbers further it is probably worth to mention that the result is set in a competitive context where six countries have a “People-Index” in the 65’s in 2010, so Sweden’s decline should not be to alarming after all. This could be related to the need for nations to also work on the internal branding of the nation, where the citizen’s attitudes and behaviour is in focus.³²⁴

Also, the new Swedish brand platform introduced as late as in the fall of 2011 causes reason to believe that there has not been enough time for an impact in the NBI. We can expect a time lag of a couple of years until we can see any improvement or changes from the new platform.

The six indices reflect Anholts different aspects of what constitutes a nations brand. As earlier noticed the Swedish work with Sweden’s nation brand is divided in basically between four different actors. Each of the actors can be linked to one of Anholts indices. Swedish Trade Council is primarily focused on *Exports*. Visit Sweden is naturally focused on *Tourism* but also have a stake in the total NBI since tourism is also counted as *Exports* and influencing *Immigration, Culture* and *People*.

The Swedish Institute’s responsibility is in nature also broader as concept and spans *Culture, People* and *Governance* but it could be natural to see that the body responsible for *Governance* is the Government in general and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in particular.

³²¹ http://www.si.se/upload/Sverige%20i%20v%C3%A4rlden/rapporter/NBI_Q1_2005.pdf [April, 2012]

³²² This coincides with the change in research institute from GMI to GfK Roper.

³²³ People” has gone from 67,4 in 2008 to 65,1 in 2010.

³²⁴ Some nations have severe problems in this area. For example, the African nations are struggling with corruption. Falemara, Francis Ola (2008) *Re-Branding the Nation*, Xlibris, USA



Figure 5.12 Spider charts from NBI Reports 2010 and 2008 (GfK Roper)

The spider charts above are taken from the 2010 and 2008 reports. In 2010 Sweden was numbering third place in *Governance*, 8th in *Exports* and *Immigration*, 9th in *People*, 14th in *Tourism* and 15th in *Culture*. We can see that there hasn't been that much progress or major changes between these two years. On the contrary, a slight shift downward on the *People* axis is the only noticeable change and Sweden's ranking dropped from the fourth to the ninth place between these two surveys.

A criticism towards the report is that the charts lacks scales on the axis and consequently also does not state what the measures are, though a clue to what is measured is found in the labels in 2010 where the ranking is included. Also, since a large number of countries joined in later years, a rise in the index can still mean a drop in the ranking. However, we can see that *Exports* and *Governance* play a prominent role in the indices and this is also why these two concepts, the Government and Exports are also in focus in this study.³²⁵

Anholt's Theoretical Framework

According to the empirical research Anholt has two different types of theories going. One is the Nation Branding Index (NBI) and the Hexagon Model, where nations can see how they are evaluated by the rest of the world in quantified parameters. The members of the index can use the results as a benchmark in their work in, for example, by enhancing or improving the brand image, as they can detect the relevant issues that are shared among people, according to the indexes.

The other theoretical framework is assessed in Anholts writings where Anholt is concerned with the branded exports theory that give reason to believe, according to Anholt that, small, underdeveloped nations will benefit from using the developed nations branding theories and as a result from this, *not* being the countries that only provide non-branded goods and components to the "already rich" part of the world.

³²⁵ See *Chapter 5 2.4*, "Sweden's Work with Nation Branding Today; In a Perspective of Public Diplomacy and National Income Theory", p 87-89

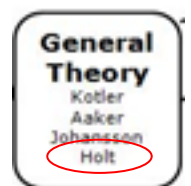
Anholt's theory is consequently set in the North-South dilemma theory. According to Anholt the developed nations grow and gain in their competitive advantage from the fact that *branded exports pay off better*, and Anholt states that also the poor countries "should be allowed" to both learn and employ this new technique.³²⁶ Anholt resembles a Robin Hood, giving from the rich to the poor, by suggesting that also the underdeveloped countries should enjoy the positive spill-over effects from branded exports. This theory will also be linked in this thesis later in the Public Diplomacy and National Income chapter.³²⁷

But seeing this from a Swedish perspective, we must add that it is *not only* those *underdeveloped nations* that benefit from a branded export. Sweden is a small country that has to work proactively to be seen efficiently on the vast global arena and therefore engage actively in promoting activities, and has done so since the Second World War.³²⁸ These facts contradict both Simon Anholt as well as Fan Ying in their earlier statements of Nation Branding being something that is worth the effort [*only*] for [small] underdeveloped nation. Of course, the meaning could also be interpreted as either small *or* undeveloped nations. Still, it needs to be stressed it does not hold for both.

We now leave both the general as well as the specific Nation Branding theories behind us; instead we will now focus on Sweden's work in a *Cultural Branding* perspective which could be seen both as a conventional theory and a specific Nation Branding theory. Iconic branding is a fairly new type of theory so therefore it seems to belong to the latter. Anyhow, it will be the second last theoretical framework of the analyses. Public Diplomacy and the National Income Identity, just briefly looked upon together with Anholt's perspective above will close the full holistic explorative perspective of Nation Branding and the analyses will come to an end.

5.2.3 In a Perspective of Cultural Branding Theory

According to Holt, *cultural knowledge* is critical for building iconic brands, yet is sorely lacking in most managers arsenals.³²⁹ To create new myths, managers must get "close to the nation" – the social and cultural shifts and desires and anxieties that result. This means looking far beyond consumers as they are known today.³³⁰



³²⁶ Anholt, Simon, (2005) *Brand New Justice: How branding places and products can help the developing world*, revised edition of Elsevier Butterwort Heinemann, GB, (2003)

³²⁷ See *Chapter 5.2.4* p 87-89

³²⁸ Interview with Joakim Norén (SI), for example Question 9 pp 129-130 and Question 13, pp 131-132

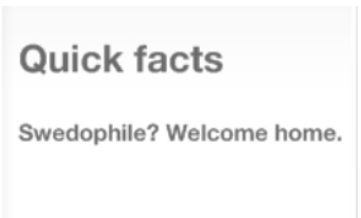
³²⁹ Holt, Douglas B.(2004) *How Brands Become Icons*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, Massachusetts

³³⁰ Holt, p 215

Cultural branding strategy is a plan that directs the brand towards a particular kind of myth and also specifies how the myth should be composed. A cultural strategy is necessarily quite different from conventional branding strategies, which are full of rational and emotional benefits, brand personalities and the like.³³¹



Figure 5.13 Cultural Branding in Sweden: *Swedish Midsummer* (Sweden.se)



“Do you know Sweden?”

Analyzing the web pages of the Swedish Institute³³² we clearly see the artifacts from Holt’s *Cultural Branding* theory to communicate the Swedish message. We can see how Sweden is communicating via the “the little note”,³³³ or “the little buzz”,³³⁴ to the target customers and stakeholders through, for example, the Web 2.0. where Sweden is being presented in a highlighted way with modern, sometimes bold web design and beautiful photography, including repeated messages that show up in several places. The recommended brand portfolio photography is used in several places, and holds the actors communicated message as an entity. It is in this case obvious that Sweden has been successful in the work to see to that the same message is being communicated within the NSU.³³⁵ The aim can be explained through cultural branding theory as a means to display stories and myths, in order to create a powerful identity brand for Sweden, that is, to both create and distribute a “meaningful and charismatic *iconic brand*” of Sweden. Though, this research shows that some of the actors within the NSU are following this to a greater extent than others.³³⁶



Figure 5.14 Sweden.se

³³¹ Holt p 215

³³² The photos on the following pages are retrieved from Sweden.se [2012-08-31]

³³³ Wahlund & Håkansson

³³⁴ Anholt, see page 38 foot note 149

³³⁵ Chapter 5.2.2, and the Figure 4.3 p 50 and Figure 5.11 p 78 which are the same.

³³⁶ Invest Sweden seems to have a photo portfolio of their own, or a lack of messages through photography, though the usage of , for example, the Swedish flag must be assessed as staying close to *the Creative Brief*. Also, note that Figure 5.17 p 87 is connected to the Creative Brief of the Vikings.

Holt explains that, what makes the brand powerful is the collective nature of the perceptions of people based on conventional stories that are continuously reinforced “because they are treated as truths in everyday interactions”³³⁷ The “brand story of Sweden” is made up by plots and characters of Sweden being “once a violent now a peaceful” nation, referring to the Vikings which also are part of the suggested national brand image heritage.³³⁸ As a result, we can, in this study, for example, see the usage of the nation’s history in order to create the shared national brand-identity *creating a Creative Brief for Sweden*. We will come later to that.

Today Sweden is described as a peaceful, democratic country ruled with state governance and monarch representation.³³⁹ We can also see that ABBA and Waterloo is mentioned on the web pages, being part of a quiz on the start-page.³⁴⁰ This is also evidence of the fact that this can be regarded as a “Nation Branding artifact” in the early 70s. ABBA was not actively promoted as such, but it is definitely used today to highlight Sweden’s national brand image.³⁴¹

Moreover, on the Web 2.0, Swedes are depicted as a happy, joyful people enjoying liberal sex being a forefront country in legalizing gay sex and homosexual marriage.³⁴² Furthermore, it is depicted in a slide show in a photo of two men kissing each other, carrying the typical flower garlands on their head.³⁴³ This is maybe not what we see every day in Sweden, not necessarily even on midsummer’s eve, but on the web page of Sweden.se this is an example of how our *national identity* is explored by the *national stereotypes* constituting a “true fact” of how midsummer is celebrated in Sweden, all adding to the Nation Branding theoretical framework of Dinnie’s definition on what Nation Branding stands for: An overlap by Country of Origin (COO) and National Identity.³⁴⁴ But the “true fact” is also steered by what is relevant for Sweden to communicate to the rest of the world.³⁴⁵

³³⁷ Holt, p 3, this thesis also *Chapter 3.2.5 “Cultural Branding”*, p 31-32

³³⁸ *Figure 5.17* p 87

³³⁹ This can be seen on the Web-2.0 where pictures of the Royal family are displayed. Furthermore, the Royal family was also given as an example by the general public who were asked if they believe that Sweden is a nation engaging in Nation Branding activity.

³⁴⁰ See *Figure 5.14*, p 83

³⁴¹ This is also mentioned by people spoken to, during the time of writing this thesis, though ABBA have refused to be part of the “Welcome to my home country” exhibition at Arlanda Airport.

³⁴² This topic is also being part of the quiz in *Figure 5.14*, p 83

³⁴³ See *Figure 5.13*, p 83

³⁴⁴ Dinnie, Keith, *Nation Branding – Concepts, Issues, Practice*, 2008, p 137 and Brand Horizons. com

³⁴⁵ Joakim Norén (SI)

In the images on the Web 2.0 we can see how Cultural Branding is overlapping the *brand asset evaluator* embracing five aspects³⁴⁶, when Sweden, is working with the communication and *differentiation* to distinguish the Swedish nation from others as an open-minded and liberal country. *Energy* gives the brand a sense of momentum: Sweden is modern and proactive. *Relevance* is one of the most important components since it affects the breadth for the brand's appeal, which then is to describe Sweden as a sympathetic, open-minded and democratic country where we do not judge other peoples sexuality. Sweden is a society in which equality and freedom to live without other peoples or governments judgments is emphasized. This will hopefully affect the aspect of *Esteem measures* in a positive direction and make the brand regarded and respected, as Kotler suggests. Finally, the aim is probably also to high degree, to create *knowledge* about Sweden, to provoke to a certain extent and create awareness which leads to a higher degree of the brand's *familiarity* and how *intimate* consumers will be with the brand. By these means this will lead to positive reactions of the stakeholders and ratings in the NBI and other indexes that the NSU organs are using to keep track of the development of the Swedish brand.

Furthermore, the NSU organs go into details in their telling the Swedish brand's stories, both historical as well as current. Internet is a powerful tool to be used by powerful brands and on the web pages.³⁴⁷ The aim is to present Sweden so that it will appear charismatic as well as both historical and politically relevant to people, attracting stakeholder's attention. This is, for example, done also in frequent use of Web 2.0 via the news channels and on Twitter and Bloggers of the week.

Studying the photos on the websites we can see "The little frogs" dancing around the phallic symbol, the midsummer pole, engaging in sympathetic loveable activities.³⁴⁸ In *Figure 5.15* we see the national stereotypes depicted, several men dancing around the prosaic pole with one woman, in the photo. In reality, and in general, it is usually different in the gender segregation, especially women and children are usually participating in the dancing, in the



Figure 5.15 The Creative Brief of Sweden: *Dancing around the Midsummer Pole*

³⁴⁶ See p 25 and Kotler & Keller, p 283

³⁴⁷ McAfee, Andrew, *Enterprise 2.0; New collaborative tools for your organizations toughest challenges*, Harvard Business Press, Boston, Massachusetts, 2009

³⁴⁸ The story telling goes as far as pointing out the factual result of babies being born nine months later.

festivities taking place in the culture parks in Sweden, and also in other parts of the world.³⁴⁹

The Creative Brief of Sweden: “Peaceful but not boring”

According to Holt customers value products for what they symbolize, not only for what they do. The identity value is “acting as a vessel of self-expression and consumers flock to brands that embody the ideas they admire, brand that help them express who they want to be.”³⁵⁰ This is the expression or part of Holt’s definition of iconic brands. Furthermore, Holt



Figure 5.16 The Creative Brief of Sweden: Peaceful but not boring

explains that it is from the fact that people share the same historical progress of the nation’s history that makes it possible to build up the stories the brand is telling. It is a position statement that identifies a set of associations, such as benefits, quality or user imaginary etcetera. The advertising purposes the brand’s positioning should according to Holt be expanded in the so called *creative brief* where the elements should have myth treatments, populist authenticity and/or charismatic aesthetic.³⁵¹ Furthermore, appropriate “contradictions in society” should be revealed. And managers who use the “mind share” and “emotional and viral models also understand creativity is something magical, outside their control.”³⁵²

We can see these elements of *creative brief* in the web pages. The savage people of Sweden have become nice and kind – but not boring – this shows in several occasions.³⁵³ Through this story telling, “telling the myth of the brand” grow two kinds of assets for Sweden according to Holt theory – *cultural and political authority*. According to Holt identity brands succeed when their managers draw on these two types of authority to reinvent the band. We see this kind of myth telling of imaginary history, especially in *Figure 5.17 History – from violent to peaceful*. Also this can be linked to what Joakim Norén tells us about Sweden being aware of the need of communicating relevant information that is relevant both for the rest of the world including the Swedish citizens.

³⁴⁹ www.skansen.se, Swedish Midsummer festivities in Hyde Park, London : The Little Frogs Dance, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=on9PLzIYOWw&noredirect=1> [2012-08-31]

³⁵⁰ Holt, p 4, in this thesis also pp 31-32

³⁵¹ Holt, p 64-65, in this thesis also p 31-32

³⁵² Holt, p 92 also in this thesis, see foot note 127, page 32

³⁵³ Depicted in the photo, *Figure 5.16*. The creative brief of Sweden: *Peaceful but not boring*, p 86 as well as in the *Figure 5.17 The Creative Brief of Sweden: “History - From violent to peaceful”*, page 87. Both images are accessed in the spring of 2012 and retrieved from Sweden.se [2012-08-31]

To sum this part up, Sweden uses the Swedish heritage and cultural knowledge, to create the national brand identity, getting close to the nations national symbols and stereotypes built on our national identity, incorporating this to the Swedish brand, creating *an iconic brand*. *Myth treatments, populist authenticity and charismatic aesthetics* is used in the creative brief where also the *cultural authority is combined with the political authority* to use these assets in reinventing a strong an



Figure 5.17 The Creative Brief of Sweden: “History - From violent to peaceful” (Sweden.se)

reinforced Swedish brand. The aim is to create relevance both to the interior stakeholders of Sweden as well as the exterior, to create a cohesive image that stand out as trustworthy and reliable for both the nation’s people and the rest of the world. Once again, it is evident that Sweden’s work with iconic branding on the Web 2.0 and other related and linked Web 2.0 pages follow the theory of Enterprise 2.0 and conventional branding closely, though the more specific nation branding models³⁵⁴ are not visible to the same extent. However, the way of treating myths and creating national stereotypes can be criticized of being generalizations and not having much do with the reality.

5.2.4 In a Perspective of Public Diplomacy and National Income Theory

We are now ready to go over to the last theoretical framework of this study, the external context blocks of Public Diplomacy and the export related theory, necessary to bring up and into the model to obtain the holistic picture of Sweden’s work with Nation Branding.

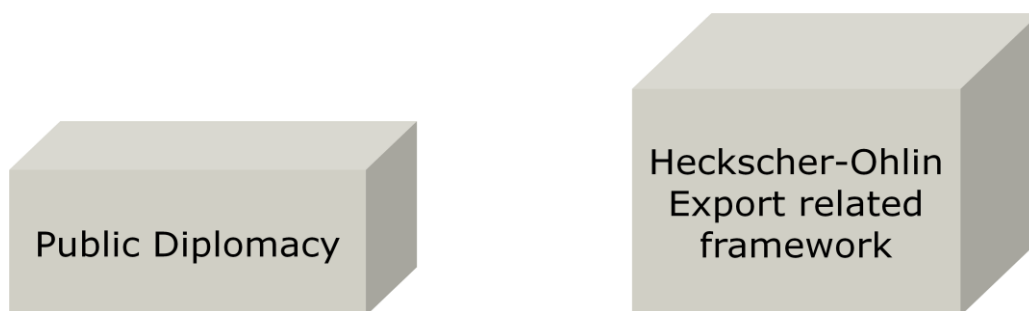


Figure 5.18 The thesis’ Extended Theoretical Frame-Work Including Public Diplomacy and the Heckscher-Ohlin Theorem (Author’s choice of framework)

³⁵⁴ For example the NBAR model.

The theoretical framework grows, including also these theoretical perspectives that are much different from marketing and rarely integrated with each other.³⁵⁵ In the Nation Branding context they are highly relevant and also described in Anholt's Hexagon Model as *Government* and *Exports*.³⁵⁶ Therefore, it is a necessity to bring these perspectives in, if we want to understand Nation Branding in its full context. Public Diplomacy because it is the Government that has the objectives to work with Nation Branding and the Heckscher Ohlin export related framework since Nation Branding does affect net exports.³⁵⁷

Associate Professor David Domeij at the Department of Economics at the SSE also got the question "Have you ever heard of Nation Branding" "Do you find the notion hard to define? The answers were the following... "No, I have never heard of Nation Branding but it should not be too hard to understand that it is also related to Economics". Domeij suggested that this thesis should have "at least one page on the macro economic theory" and suggested the Heckscher-Ohlin theorem and that it is possible to connect in the analyses in marketing and management. This is now done in the theoretical framework— how do we then analyze this in a relevant way? Anholt's theories are discussing this:³⁵⁸ Government's work with branding help the underdeveloped nations to gain advantages that normally only the developed nations enjoy through the possibilities to work with branding.³⁵⁹ Since Sweden is a well developed nation but still gain advantages from its work with nation-branding, according to this study, this theory also holds for smaller, developed nations.³⁶⁰

Villanueva Rivas theoretical framework is interesting since it is the only example of a Cultural Diplomacy framework where Nation Branding is set together with Public Diplomacy and Soft Power, and where Sweden is an example.³⁶¹ Villanueva Rivas also finds a distinction

³⁵⁵ Dinnie, Keith (2008) *Nation Branding – Concepts, Issues, Practice* and Brand Horizons.com

³⁵⁶ *The Hexagon Model* is described on pp 38-39

³⁵⁷ Domeij, David, Associate Professor the SSE Faculty of Economics and Course 407, *Macroeconomics* and author's national income identity model including the nation-branding factor, see p 43

³⁵⁸ Anholt, Simon, (2003) *Brand New Justice: The Upside of Global Branding*, Oxford Butterwort Heinemann, GB and (2005) *Brand New Justice: How branding places and products can help the developing world*, 2003 revised edition, Elsevier Butterwort Heinemann

³⁵⁹ Anholt, Simon (2005) *Brand New Justice: How branding places and products can help the developing world*, Elsevier Butterwort Heinemann

³⁶⁰ We need quantified data to make final assessments; therefore this is only a qualified data assumption. Also, according to SSE PhD students a study with a macroeconomic AS/AD framework could make it possible to assess findings, but this is omitted due to limitations of the study, taking part within the Marketing Department.

³⁶¹ Sweden is compared with Mexico, similarities and differences between the two nations cultural diplomacy, where Sweden is a "perfect" example of a nation-branding nation while Mexico is an example of a nation that is not using Nation Branding. (Mexico is according to Villanueva a user of "Cosmopolitan Constructivism")

between nations that work within the Cultural Diplomacy framework, and instead of using branding techniques they use what Villanueva Rivas calls “Cosmopolitan Constructivism”.³⁶²

Furthermore, Villanueva Rivas is proposing a theoretical framework including “the theory of representation” which in turn is also valuable to take in consideration when we discuss the mandate given by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs via the NSU, to work with the aim of enlarging the nations National Income Identity.

Even though it is not possible to state any findings from this part of the study, the conceptual over-view through this holistic framework adds to the understanding of the Nation Branding concept, and is therefore regarded as valuable knowledge in this study.³⁶³

5.3 Nation Branding Pros and Cons

We have now studied Sweden as a case in nation-branding practice. We have tried to draw a picture of the earlier artifacts of the national brand and come up with a suggestion in order to depict a possible national brand for Sweden. We have studied how Sweden is working with nation-branding today and also extracted the theoretical framework of both conventional marketing theory as well as the more specific nation-branding framework from the empirical evidence. We have created a holistic theoretical framework and been able to come up with some assessments.

In our approach to analyzing the phenomena of Nation Branding, trying to find answer to the research questions; we will bring in other aspects, “other voices”. We will let “pro” and “con” discuss the question: Is it really so, that a *Nation* can be treated as a *brand*? Some describe the practice of nation-branding as being a controversial issue? Is it?

We will pose the questions to our “voices” to see what answers they come up with.

³⁶² See p 41, Villanueva Rivas has the international exhibition “Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries, in 1990-1992 as an example of Cosmopolitan Constructivism, as opposed to or different from Nation Branding within a Soft Power framework.

³⁶³ See *Figure 5.21, The holistic Nation Branding managerial perspective, final theoretical framework and completion of study* (Author’s elaboration). See *Chapter 5.4* p 97

Of course a Nation is a brand!

First, looking back at the theoretical chapter, according to Kotler's theory a brand name can be the following: *Founder or Owner names, Functional Names, Invented Names, Experiential Names, Evocative Names*. A country's name could be several of these; also go under the epitaph evocative, experiential, and functional – yes there's no doubt.

Second, a brand is according to theory this “little note” saying, “here I am”, or here is our business, come to us and we solve your problems, we will assist you or provide you with either a product or a service of your choice. This was done when business developed in the medieval era³⁶⁴. This kind of thinking still exists; which is also clear from the interview with Joakim Norén at the Swedish Institute:³⁶⁵

*././ all Swedish companies should have a little Swedish flag attached to their logo /.../
because it's about this thing with positive values that is so very important!*

Why *not* see the nation as a big corporation that needs this “little note”; the Swedish flag to remind its customers about the nation's offerings.

Third, also other voices say that a nation is equivalent to a big corporation.³⁶⁶ This kind of thinking or theory is depicted in the NBAR-model³⁶⁷. So, it seems perfectly natural to treat a nation as a brand.

Moreover, in Sweden it is an active choice of the government to treat Sweden as a brand that they wish to create awareness of, and thus work actively with this mission on a day-to-day basis. Yes, according to this study, Sweden is a brand and Sweden is working with nation-branding, assessed by the strong connections to the specific nation branding theory. Thus we can hereby assess that a nation is a brand and can be branded.

As one person interviewed put it:

“A country is its brand, there's nothing strange with that.”³⁶⁸

³⁶⁴ This research has brought up some examples of this.

³⁶⁵ See Interview with Joakim Norén (SI), question 13, p 132

³⁶⁶ Informal talk with the Associate Professors at the SSE.

³⁶⁷ Dinnie, Keith, *Nation Branding – Concepts, Issues, Practice*, 2008

³⁶⁸ Region Manager, see *Appendix* page 132-133

Can it, really? This is a tricky question. The answer is: A nation is *not* a brand!

It is now time to contradict the voice above and raise the question: How does a Nation actually “own” a brand identity in the market? According to Edge and Milligan “there’s no point owning an identity unless it’s by law”.³⁶⁹

In *Chapter 3.3* we assessed that Swedish Trade Mark Law clearly states that nations cannot be registered as brands.

According to the Trade Mark Law in Sweden the following are not possible to register in Sweden:

- State or international logotypes and municipal weapons
- Geographical names

Moreover, Joakim Norén is talking about the “impossible thought” of treating “our Nation”³⁷⁰ as a brand and Wally Olins is also bringing this up³⁷¹. This is, in a sense also, what Edge & Milligan states: “never launch a logo and pretend it’s a brand”, or vice versa.³⁷² A “normal” brand *is yours* once you make the decision you want it; *a brand is something you own*, both from the company’s and the final owner of the product’s view; when you have paid for the purchase and it also gives the owner “that little extra”, the feeling of receiving more than you have paid for it. This is a bilateral action from two sides; the company who produced the product can charge a higher price, just because of the fact, that it offers its consumers the product *as part of a brand* and the ownership provide a feeling of belonging to something more than just the very item just purchased. An example is given in the theory of this study: once you have bought your Lacoste tennis shirt nobody can take it away from you, you *are* a person that wear this special kind of shirt, which is the added non tangible value that a brand provides the consumer with. In this case you could also say that, in the moment you put your Lacoste tennis shirt on you are the brand, or part of it; “you are living the brand” but it’s up to each consumer to decide which relationship he or she has and in what position they find themselves in, in relation to the brand. It is hard to do this with nations. It is in some way impossible to do, in cognitive way: To “own” a nation [as a brand] “and live it”.

³⁶⁹ Edge, John and Andy Milligan (2009) *Don’t Mess With the Logo – The Straight-Talker’s Bible of Branding*, FT Prentice Hall, Financial Times, Person Education, p 161

³⁷⁰ In Swedish “Fosterland” with the free interpretation “Our Fostering Nation” or “Father Land”

³⁷¹ Olins, Wally (2002) “Olins Viewpoints, Branding the Nation – historical contexts”, *The Journal of Brand Management*.

³⁷² Edge & Milligan, *Don’t Mess with the Logo*, p 173

Also, according to theory *a brand is something you can rely on. You can trust the brand*, it will “always deliver”, that is, it will be there and it will not change over time.³⁷³ Now, compare this with nations and general branding techniques: Anybody can use the technique of “foreign branding” and take any nation’s product character and make it part of the product. While, nations can change in the minute somebody uses them, or treats the nation in a specific way or something happens to it. It can be political, environmental, and personal, many times it can be incidents that are out of control. Look at the example of Borat mentioned in the interview at SI.³⁷⁴ Anybody can do anything with a nation, it seems.³⁷⁵ A regular brand is more in control by the producer or the end user.

To sum this up, this is all quite confusing and contradictive information. It seems as if people and businesses can do whatever they like with a nation’s logo, the flag or its name or its artifacts. It can be used whenever you want as long as it does not contradict the law. You can actually go quite far (as in the case of the movie mentioned above). So, in this sense, maybe it is safer to say, if you want to create a brand of a nation, according to these theoretical aspects of an “ordinary brand”, a nation *cannot* be treated as a brand. You lack control over it, it is not reliable and not always trustworthy. It does not correspond with conventional branding theory, so, to brand a nation is unthinkable.³⁷⁶ Theory also states that there are risks, because of political and cultural forces which can affect the image and personality of a country, turning an association into a liability.³⁷⁷ Theory also states these dangers, in general branding, which mentions the risk of liabilities of negative associations.³⁷⁸ This is also obvious in Joakim Norén’s assessments on the dangers of being too careless in the creation of a nation’s brand, not focusing on what is relevant for people, only looking at what the nation want to achieve, etcetera - to sum this up: misinterpreting the whole objectives and the opposite effect of what was intended is achieved instead, and the whole idea of branding the nation fails.³⁷⁹

³⁷³ At least not without the company making thorough marketing research finding what is relevant to the purchaser, which in turn is part of the essence of branding, according to theory in general, the brand is in control by the company and directed by marketing research.

³⁷⁴ See *Appendix* question 12, p 131

³⁷⁵ Fullerton, Kendrick, Wallis (2008) “Brand Borat? Americans’ reaction to a Kazakhstani place branding campaign”, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 2008, 4, 159 – 168.

Though in the case of Kazakhstan, it has turned for the better. According to the article the nation is now also on the mental map of the world citizens and tourists are invading the borders, since as they say “Now we know that Kazakhstan is a real country and worth visiting”.

³⁷⁶ This is also part of the view of Naomi Kline in *No logo: taking aim at the brand bullies*

³⁷⁷ Aaker (2004)

³⁷⁸ Best, p 259, in this thesis p 33

³⁷⁹ Norén, Carlhed, Anholt

Is Nation Branding controversial?

From the above arguments as well as within the scope of this research, there is reason to believe that nation-branding is also a controversial issue. We have discussed the question if a nation can be treated as a brand, back and forth and here follows now also a suggestion to include the arguments in a depiction of a model which we will now do.

When we in *Figure 5.19* put the different notions of *brand*, *branding*, *national brand*, *Nation Branding* and *re-branding the nation* we obtain differentiated positions in the diagram. The horizontal axes describe how hard the notion is to define, based on this research's question to both to practitioners and general public as well as the literature. The diagram depicts the sense of complexity on the horizontal axes and how emotional the notions are on the lateral axes. This diagram shows how hard it is for the different notions within Nation Branding, to be accepted among both scholars and general public, which also the interviewees in this study show evidence of.³⁸⁰

These are no absolute truths assessed on quantified data, though some quantifiable data has been gathered and the assessments already exist in some research,³⁸¹ though not displayed in any model until now. Although, we see in *Figure 5.19* how the different notions carry different meanings and are seen as being accepted or not accepted in a gradual development depending on how hard the notions are to define and how much emotions they seem to cause.

It is probably no linear relationship between the variables but this research shows evidence of that there could be a causal effect between the two axes.

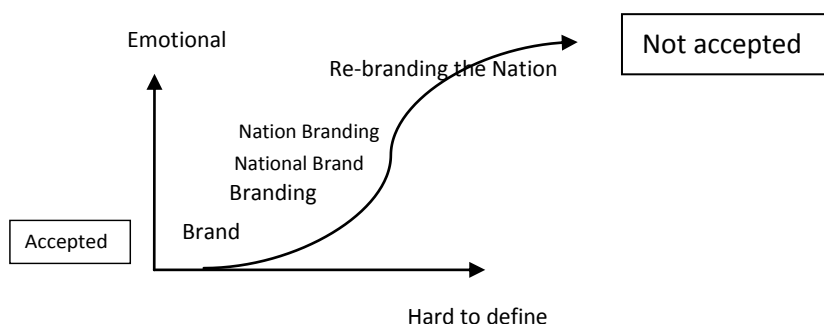


Figure 5.19 The Nation Branding's Accepted – Not Accepted Perspectives
(Author's elaboration)

³⁸⁰ See informal talk with Aziz from Algeria in *the Appendix*, p 135

³⁸¹ Fan Ying (2005)

Let's settle for: A nation is after all a brand

These findings of differences in the terminology and the whole discussion above leads us to the fact that nation branding is also controversial, though in different aspects and varying dimension and size; adding several different perspectives to the concept, making it both new as well as complex.

There is no doubt about it – nations do take on a risk when they decide to work with nation-branding. Theory is stating: You must be aware of the fact that liabilities risk occurring, for example the risk of giving the brand bad instead of positive connotations. This is what happens when you work with the nation's brand for the wrong reasons, or when you do it in a way that does not feel relevant to people, or if the brand you create is nothing the general public can relate to.³⁸² So, if as mentioned, in the interview with Norén, the nation wants to stand out as better than it is, as in the example of a nation wishing to convey the image of being a democratic nation, while it is not – According to Best, among the most harmful liabilities in general branding are *questionable practices* and *negative associations*.³⁸³ It might be even worse when it is a nation that is suffering from these kinds of brand liabilities.

But still, let's settle for the fact that a nation is a brand and you can brand it. According to these theoretical aspects, it cannot be a brand in a regular sense and therefore it also follows other rules when you want to brand a nation. The definition of a nation as a brand has to be different from the definitions of a brand in conventional marketing theory. This is probably one of the reasons why people tend to get provoked by the fact that nations are brands. We repeat the statement above: For some individuals and institutional environments it is simply not possible to treat nations as brands, then to brand them becomes even more unthinkable.

But also, in other perspectives you could say that every nation *is its brand* and this is a fact.³⁸⁴ Furthermore, people have their own perception of what a country stands for.³⁸⁵ But one can create a brand if a nation is for example new and not known to the world public.³⁸⁶ Most nations have a long history and got its brand from the very start of the nation itself. Or when a new nation is created (born) the government of that nation has to inform the world of the new nation, what it stands for and why it is created.

³⁸² Joakim Norén (SI)

³⁸³ See foot note 135, p 33 and Best p 259

³⁸⁴ Norén, Carlhed, Region Manager, Anholt, Fan, Olins among others

³⁸⁵ Ibid

³⁸⁶ Norén

We have given an example of a “perfect” nation that follows the NBAR model; Iceland.³⁸⁷ It is as Dinnie says; even though the Government of Iceland is not aware of their branding activities they follow the school book example. Iceland has made a logo with its core value included, with the nation as the top in the master brand and the endorsers and corporations involved on two lower levels just as the NBAR is displayed.³⁸⁸ From this research we can also make an assessment on the fact that Sweden is doing well in this sense, and, if not following the NBAR perfectly, you could say that Sweden is not very far away. The SNBAR resembles the NBAR in most of its aspects.

From the above we can assess that, even though it is difficult to in some aspects say that a nation is its own brand the minute they are born. But, as Norén and also the region manager in this study explained, it is a complex brand structure; this citation will close this discussion.³⁸⁹

A country is its brand, there's nothing strange with that, but you should not think you can change it.

Every person, you and me, everybody, has the right to think or feel what you want about what a country is or is not...

So, from this we can finally draw the conclusion that a brand is fairly accepted but branding and then branding a nation and definitely re-branding a nation is, as the scholars say, risk to be controversial. It is as Wally Olins says in the end of his article states:“/./some does it well, others do it badly”.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁷ According to Dinnie it is not actively worked on, theory and practice just happens to coincide in this example.

³⁸⁸ See *Figure 3.8* “Iceland as an example of a “perfect” NBAR Model”, p 37

³⁸⁹ Region Manager in (Y), pp 132-133

³⁹⁰ Olins, Wally (2002) “Olins Viewpoints, Branding the Nation – historical contexts”

5.4 Final Analysis Assessments: Nation Branding in Sweden

Within this study's framework we can hereby assess that Sweden belongs to the nations that are successful in their nation-branding activity. This is probably because of the long tradition of the Swedish Institutes mission from 1945 to promote Sweden actively abroad extended with the NSU from 1995. But, also the fact that Sweden is a nation that has not been subject of a controversial state organization or questionable practice, is also contributing to this success.

On the whole, we can assess from this study's frame-work that Sweden meets the conditions for a successful Nation Branding activity. Therefore, we hereby assess, with Sweden as an example, that nations are brands and they can be branded. Though, it has to be done with good knowledge of the relevant theories and how they should be applied. Furthermore, a new more well grounded definition of branding related to nations would probably be beneficial.

Thus, from this analysis we can draw the conclusion that Sweden has been involved in active work with the national brand since 1945, when SI was created. The work with branding the Swedish nation was further grounded in 1995 when NSU was established and Sweden joined the Nation Brands Index already from the start in 2005.

Furthermore, from the findings in this analysis we can draw the conclusion that a dual platform building is used, where the branding activity is taking place, in a setting of both to Aaker's corporate branding theory as well as the digital Web 2.0 theory. The Swedish government works as an "Enterprise 2.0" using the new IT-technology of "Web 2.0" to distribute the message of the Swedish national brand globally.

This dual platform is in turn, built up by using the tools from both general marketing theory as well as specific Nation Branding theory. Though, the specific theory shows discrepancies between the NBAR and SNBAR framework. The most obvious difference is that Sweden does not have a government-run cultural and sport's endorsement. Also, language is included in the SNBAR model. The stand-alone brand level does not exist to the full extent and therefore does not the SNBAR complete the model, as for example, Iceland has done (implicitly), where in Sweden's case, the theory had been more consistent with practice if private business also had been included.

To sum this research up, the theoretical framework of this thesis has been built on the previous research of *Country of Origin* and *National Identity* which according to this research is part of the framework and which this study assesses – that Sweden is working actively with

the COO cues and stereotyped national identities. Furthermore, the *Corporate Brand Elements* are used in Sweden’s work with organizing the brand communication to the world, then also transmitting elements of *Cultural Branding* in its messages.

Moreover, the work with the nation’s brand is taking place within a *Public Diplomacy* framework where *the Theory of Representation* gives the Swedish state government the mandate to work with these issues.

Finally, this research suggests that it is the *National Income Identity* that is the overall monitoring issue in the Nation Branding activities, which in the end, shows up as a top result where the nation’s mission is to continuously work with the improvement of the nation’s inhabitants living conditions, giving the people employment and income, and as a result enhancing the nations GDP.

Consequently, with this holistic perspective, the Nation Branding activities are all embedded in the theoretical framework depicted below.

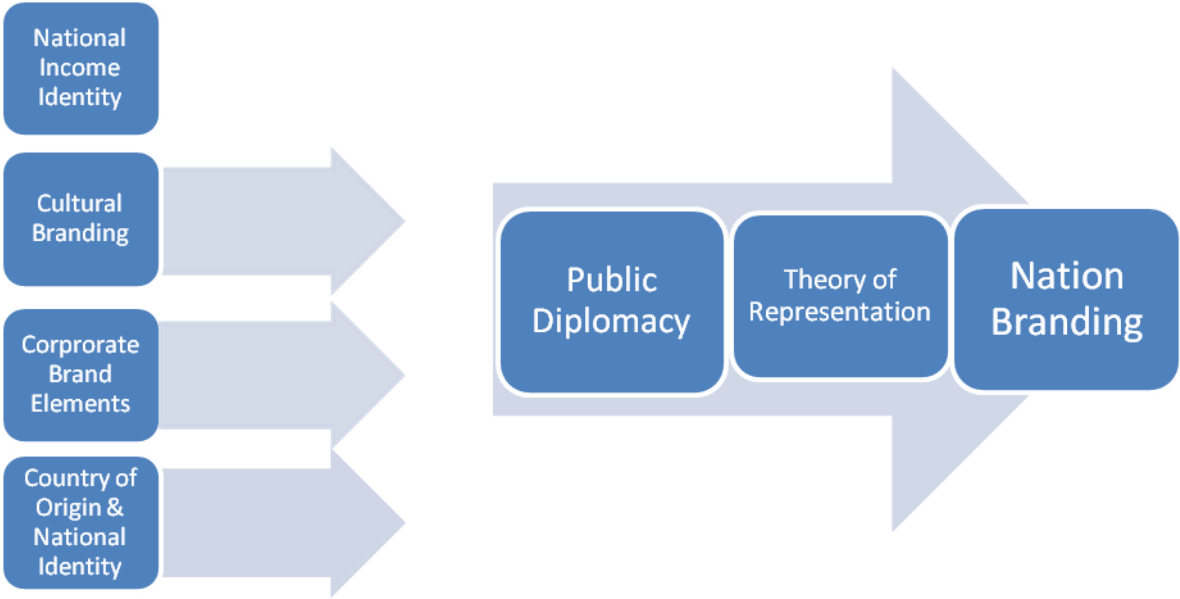


Figure 5.21 The holistic Nation Branding managerial perspective, final theoretical framework and completion of study (Author’s choice of theoretical framework and elaboration)

The SNBAR

In creating a model of the Swedish Nation Brand Architecture model according to Aaker's branded house theory and Keith Dinnie's NBAR, we found in our search for stand-alone brands that carry the Country of Origin symbolism from either the colors of the Swedish flag or the name Sweden in their name,³⁹¹ and thus, we get the following "Swedish NBAR model", depicted in *Figure 5.21* below.

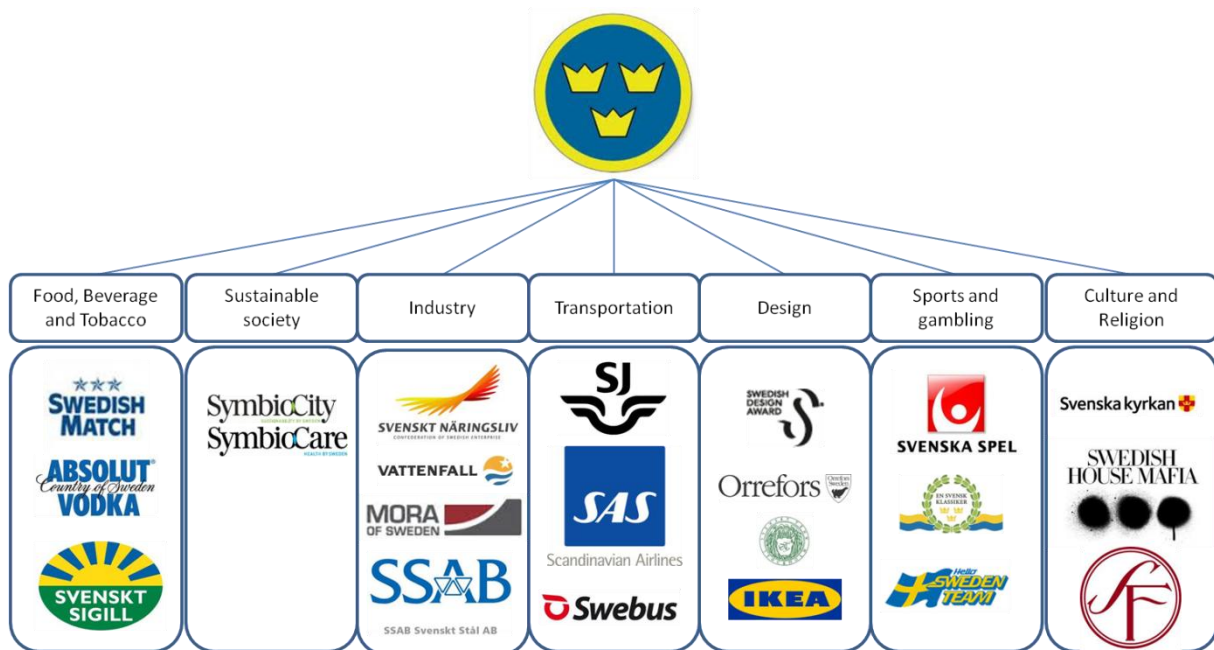


Figure 5.21 The Swedish Nation Brand Architecture Model (Author's elaboration)

This model is only a suggestion based on this research where actually only two actors are obvious existing parts of the Swedish Nation Brand Model. Including business at the third bottom level, according to the information found on the web pages, these two are SymbioCity and SymbioCare, and maybe also to some extent the Swedish Design Award, though these are also state-run activities and not standalone brands. Also, other stakeholders could be employing the Swedish brand and the platform content at their choice, in co-operation with the Swedish Institute and the other NSU organs without their or our knowledge. According to Norén it is up to Swedish business to use the brand platform as they please.³⁹² It could be, having the Platform 2.0 in the back of their mind, using words or expressions or the photos. But, this is not in control of neither the NSU nor the Swedish Institute or even at their knowledge.

³⁹¹ See *Chapter 5.2.1*, "The endorser brand theory and COO", pp 67-69

³⁹² See Interview with Joakim Norén (SI) pp 125-132

The NSU organs follow the platform more or less (use parts of it) except for Invest Sweden that appears as being farther from the concept, since obvious platform-messages or symbols are hard to detect. The suggested photo-portfolio does not seem to be used by Invest Sweden, as is the case with the other NSU organs.

Also, this research shows evidence that the individuals that work with Nation Branding on a day-to-day basis are not fully aware of what the concept stands for.³⁹³ This survey shows evidence of that the top-management employees need to let the knowledge be more grounded and transmitted from top down, as well as, also having the internet updated with relevant information in order to avoid confusion. This is of importance since the concept in itself is very complex, then clarity and understanding is even more important. How the image and the messages are communicated in the positioning and the platform thinking is probably very confusing for some. You could explain this through Kotler theory: The employees have difficulty “to live the brand”.³⁹⁴ This is understandable, since not even proper theory exist in the education of marketing managers; nation branding does not exist as a topic on any level of any of the educational programs.³⁹⁵

Since Nation Branding does not exist as a verified concept or in education, how should then people working with Nation Branding know how to use its theoretical concepts? It is one thing to build the framework, but you also have to educate the people who will work with the concept on a daily basis. Also, the information, both on the intranet and external net, have to be clear and understandable within the organization, or else the objectives risk failing.

³⁹³ See *Appendix*, referral of informal talk on telephone with the project-leader in (Y) and the employees at the info-desk (Z), page 133-134

³⁹⁴ Kotler & Keller p 290 and this thesis *Chapter 3.2.1* page 26 “Bring the brand alive for employees”.

³⁹⁵ This research shows evidence of the fact that there’s reason to believe that not even the professors at university level in Sweden are yet aware of its existence.

6 Answering the Problem Formulations and Its Research Questions

In this chapter the three research questions formulated in Chapter 1 gets addressed and answers are formulated in the light of the analysis in Chapter 5.

After the analyses we are now ready to answer the research questions:

- *What is Nation Branding and how is it applied in Sweden?*
- *Why is Nation Branding controversial?*
- *When is Nation Branding worthwhile?*

This is done by the comparison between the theoretical framework and the empirical research of this paper. The answers are as follows.

6.1 What Is Nation Branding and How Is It Applied in Sweden?

All literary research points to the fact that the theory of Nation Branding is a new and complex concept. It is obvious that there's a lack of quantitative research, no repetitive studies for grounded theory assessment exist. Still, this research shows that Sweden has applied the concept for almost 70 years and therefore, in a Swedish context, Nation Branding is a mature concept and successful practice in Sweden.

Furthermore, this research also shows the fact that people in general, finds the notion Nation Branding easy to understand. The general public defines Sweden as a Nation Branding country through, for example, its promotion activities, and refers to the Royal Family, Sweden's participation in the European Song Contest, the Olympic Games and other international events.

Earlier research also states that Nation Branding is something that has existed equally long as nation's existence and Sweden can also be assessed as a country with a probable long historical tradition back to the Vikings pin-pointing Sweden on the map in the 800's, which this thesis is suggesting, puts Sweden in "a historical Nation Branding context". This is also evident in the empirical research where NSU organs use the Viking era as historical artifact in their communication on the web pages.³⁹⁶ Furthermore, according to the empirical research, Sweden starts to engage actively in Nation Branding activity from 1945 when the Swedish Institute was established, promoting Sweden and its exports to the world. Also, Sweden is one of the first countries to join as well as apply the Nation Brands Index from the start in 2005.

³⁹⁶ See *Figure 5.16* p 86 and *Figure 5.17* p 87

So therefore, from these findings we can assess that Sweden is a Nation Branding country with a history, at least as long back as 800's in a non-active context and from 1945 in an active context that has been further applied and intensified through the configuration of the NSU in 1995.

Even though Joakim Norén (SI) is very specific when he says that Sweden is working with the "Swedish brand", *not Nation Branding*, studying the theoretical framework, comparing reality with theory we see evidence of the fact that Sweden *is* following this research suggested Nation Branding framework well. Although, this research shows that there are differences between conventional product branding and Nation Branding.

In earlier Nation Branding research it is stated that there has been lack of theoretical framework. This is no longer the case since; just recently, several books have been published including Nation Branding models. This research is based on some of them, for example Simon Anholt's Nation Brands Index (NBI) and Hexagon Model, and Keith Dinnie's Nation Branding Architecture Model (NBAR). Looking into the theoretical framework, comparing reality with theory, it is obvious that Sweden is following this research suggested framework well.

For example, studying the NBAR Model we see that this model resembles Aaker's corporate branding theory of platform branding through co-branding, which is recommended for larger and complex organizations. According to this study Nation Branding is not only made up by the mix of Country of Origin and National Identity and consequently the usage of cultural expressions. The activities performed within the NSU are also organized and executed through a corporate framework that reminds the one compiled by Aaker's. The resemblance is striking and therefore these findings also give the evidence that Nation Branding in Sweden *does* follow corporate branding theory as well as the NBAR, if not fully, to a great extent.

The Swedish Institute and the other organs responsible for the activity and mission given by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs via the NSU can all be "checked" by the NBAR³⁹⁷ model and re-drawn as a SNBAR.³⁹⁸ Moreover, the same general branding theoretical concepts of both general textbook marketing theory and corporate branding theory can be "checked" in the ESSP's theoretical framework of the Web 2.0 and its techniques on the web-pages run by the NSU branches. Also, conventional branding theory of targeting and segmenting the target

³⁹⁷ Nation Brand Architecture

³⁹⁸ The Swedish Nation Brand Architecture, see p 74

customer is performed via the Swedish Web 2.0 brand platform “The Sweden Picture 2.0” through means of the basic and general, conventional branding theory also combined with cultural expressions and thus, *Cultural Branding*.

We can through this study assess that Sweden is a nation that follows theory both in its organizational structure as well as the implementation of this thesis chosen theoretical framework. Therefore, it can be assessed that theory and reality overlap and Sweden is as a result a “true Nation Branding nation”. And, that Sweden in this way also can be assessed as a nation being successful in its nation-branding activities, not only according to the actual results in for example the NBI, as Joakim Norén explained, but in a theoretical perspective as well. Though, this study also shows that Sweden has no stand-alone business brands in the SNBAR, there are only state-owned endorser brands on bottom level, so the SNBAR is a hybrid of some kind.

Public Diplomacy is part of the framework; this is nothing that can be contradicted since it is the nation’s representatives that take care of the issue of branding the nation. What is interesting to see in this part of this study is that the concepts of Cultural Diplomacy, Soft Power and Cosmopolitan Constructivism, together constitute Public Diplomacy where nation branding is included or part of some, but not all concepts, depending on how the country is governed. And, that this research shows the fact that Sweden is a nation that uses Nation Branding in its Cultural Diplomacy.³⁹⁹ What is more, it seems as if each nation has its own, almost “personal”, framework. The theory of representation is also part of the model elaborated for this study, and can be used in the discussion “who owns the question” which also is of importance. We will come to this later, when we discuss Nation Branding controversial issues.

Finally, this research gives evidence of the fact that Sweden is working with Nation Branding to promote exports⁴⁰⁰ and therefore national economics is part of the explorative holistic theoretical framework. This perspective will be useful in answering the final question in the problem formulation – when is Nation Branding worthwhile?

³⁹⁹ Villanueva Rivas

⁴⁰⁰ Tourism is regarded as exports.

6.2 Why Is Nation Branding Controversial?

Nation Branding is explained as being a complex phenomenon and the scope of this thesis is evidence of this!⁴⁰¹ One can both say it is possible to brand a nation but also that it is *not* possible. It depends, according to this research, on the context and how it is done. To interpret Nation Branding through conventional marketing theories as well as for example the Swedish trade mark law, it is impossible to say a nation is a brand. For example, it is not legally accepted to treat a geographical area as a brand, the law explains this explicitly, that you cannot register a country as a trade mark. Furthermore, you cannot buy or be the *owner* of a nation's brand and consequently you cannot protect it nor sue anybody who uses the national identity as a branding context for a specific product. On the contrary, anybody can actually use the nation in a brand context, since the COO, is set in a conjectural sense in,⁴⁰² as mentioned in *foreign branding*⁴⁰³. Though, the liabilities are very closely related to this as well. The companies using this kind of branding stand in the meantime also the risk of drawbacks or complete failure in for example trustworthiness, which can affect the brand in a negative way. Managers working with the country of origin cues have to be highly aware of what they are doing or else they risk upsetting the general public and consumers by not being honest and reliable, etcetera.

Secondly, branding is about creating an image that is relevant for people. A country already has an image from the day it is born. The image is not possible to be made up "unnaturally", recreated nor be changed. It can only be reinforced by highlighting already perceived or relevant images, so, this is also a distinct difference from general branding.

Thirdly, if you try to change a nation's brand with the wrong intentions, as explained above, people will notice this and the brand liabilities risk occurring again.

Forth, both *branding* as well as the word *nation* are expressions with, in some contexts, also negative connotations. Especially branding since people in general are sensitive to the manipulative side of branding or marketing. Also, Nation or National Identity are, especially in case of war, intensified, and being equivalent to "opposed to others" in an "aggressive way". The notion contains defensiveness and is introvert in its definition, in this context, not open-minded and friendly, as a brand ought to be.

⁴⁰¹ Thomas Carlhed said that it is hard to write a BSC thesis on a vast concept as nation-branding, and he was right! This thesis did not pass in the first presentation due to "shallowness and lack of appropriate theoretical framework". It is now extended with the parts missing, suggested by the opponents, examiner and supervisor. It was decided together with the supervisor that the scope of the thesis (40 pages) had to be extended.

⁴⁰² Papadopoulos (1983)

⁴⁰³ See p 23

So, the answer to the question if Nation Branding can be controversial is, unfortunately: Yes! But, what is positive is that this research shows that Sweden has nothing to fear in this context. According to the empirical research of this study Sweden is successful in emphasizing a relevant image which makes the Swedish national brand positive and strong.

What is more, the theory of representation plays a crucial role in the question of who gives the power to the state to act in the citizens interest, and decides how these activities should be worked with. Some people don't feel sympathy with state governments that they believe interfere too much in people's daily lives. The Nation Branding activities can seem to be too manipulative and therefore be perceived as being controversial. Hanna Pitkin⁴⁰⁴ describes this dilemma as being overcome by the fact that those that are elected authorities of the state do not necessarily have to follow the agenda of the people once they are elected. The state elected can do what they please to proceed with without having the support by the people, until it's time for a new election. Not until then might the mandate be changed. This is the mandate given by the theory of representation which also gives the NSU full authority to govern as they please. Though in the case of Sweden, the mandate is given freely to those appointed and will not be changed if the Government changes. It is not politically oriented. Democratic "natural" laws are steering the mandate in Sweden. The employees are free to do as they please, and what they believe is right, for Sweden.

We will not go further into the theory of representation, since it is not included within the scope of this thesis, touching upon Social Science issues. Though, this research assess the fact that the theory of representation is what gives to the state mandate to run the nations activity, as well as branding the nation. Though, still, this might not soothe people's aggressions to nation states involving too much in people's daily life.

⁴⁰⁴ Pitkin, Hanna Fenichel (1967) *The Concept of Representation*, Berkeley: University of California

6.3 When Is Nation Branding Worthwhile?

This research gives reason to believe that branding the nation makes a difference, not only for underdeveloped but also for the developed nations. The reason why Sweden is working with Nation Branding is, according to this research that Sweden wants to achieve a highlight on the global arena and has done so actively since 1945. The macroeconomic model of GDP, increasing through a positive net export gives reason to believe that promoting export will, in the long run, give added value to the export-nation. To be able to state an absolute truth and assess this firmly we need quantitative research result, but in a qualitative, reasoning way it seems logic that, not the least, small nations need to make themselves heard on the global arena through some other means and that branding the nation could be one of them.

Fan Ying states in his research that Nation Branding is for “small and/or underdeveloped countries” which is a statement that in this thesis’ context does not hold any longer. Though Sweden is considered being a small nation it is far from underdeveloped, so this statement of Fan Ying’s is, according to this research, not relevant. On the contrary, we can, through this study, assess that Nation Branding can be a good solution for developed [small] nations to reach out with their products and services on the global market.

This research suggests that one way could be to accompany export with activities such as efficient branding techniques, making the end consumers aware of the nation’s existence and its possible benefits, through means of marketing management, by differentiating and targeting, for example, cable the messages out to the world through the Emergent Social Platforms. Sweden is using the brand platform “The Sweden Picture 2.0” to create a coherent message of a nation that is “progressive” and with a “unique character and [shared] selling points” for interested stakeholders to use in their transmitted message of a [shared] brand value of Sweden, stressing the fact that Sweden is a nation that delivers: “New thinking”, “Openness”, “Genuiness”, and “Thoughtfulness”.⁴⁰⁵ Joakim Norén explained this with the phrasing: [Sweden is a nation that delivers] “High quality, is trustworthy and a provider of reliable investments, being an environmental friendly, innovative, and democratic nation” – all this seems well worth blazoning out to the world, in whatever way you believe is worth it.

There must be positive gains from this – if not, the Swedish Institute, Visit Sweden and the Trade Council would not have been working with Nation Branding for such a long time. 70 years of experience speaks for itself!

⁴⁰⁵ See *Chapter 4.1.1* “The Brand Platform of Sweden”, p 47

7 Conclusions

Having analyzed the empirical material in this study we will now, based on the most important finding in previous chapters we will now assess some conclusions.

1. Sweden is working actively with Nation Branding activities since 1945 and therefore holds a history of well documented Nation Branding activity during soon 70 years.
2. The NSU uses a mix of conventional marketing theory, corporate and cultural branding, built on national identity and stereotypes, promoting Sweden. This is performed on the ESSP via the Web 2.0 “Sweden Picture 2.0”.
3. Sweden follows theory closely in its organization of the branding activities, including a mix of different conventional branding techniques, as well as Cultural Branding, which is performed with a corporate branding technique or structure that resembles the specific nation-branding “NBAR model”.⁴⁰⁶ Reality follows or resembles the theory with some discrepancies on bottom level where the private business is not yet incorporated into the SNBAR (The Swedish Nation Brand Architecture Model).
4. Nation Branding is still a new and complex concept and to understand it fully there’s a need of an extended holistic theoretical framework that also includes Public Diplomacy and international trade and the Economics’ National Income Identity. The theory of Representation is the backbone in the Public and Cultural Diplomacy. These theoretical frameworks are, according to this study, also included in the suggested “Swedish Model” of nation-branding activities.
5. Macroeconomic theory shows that liberal trade and economic actions to leverage net exports *does* increase the nation’s welfare being beneficial to a nation’s economic development in the distribution of wealth to the nation’s citizens *in a long run perspective*. This is also the belief of those working with Nation Branding in Sweden; the incentive is strong not the least in the Trade Council’s contribution and work with promoting Swedish export since 1945, together with Visit Sweden⁴⁰⁷.
6. Nation Branding is used by nations in need of a change process. Or, as in the case with Sweden, the government is working with the nation’s image in order to differentiate it from other nations. If this is not done with relevance and the new image does not agree with the reality or people’s conceptions of the nation’s image this can cause hesitation among the observers and result in brand liability. The state risks

⁴⁰⁶ Keith Dinnie

⁴⁰⁷ Tourism is defined as export in this theory.

communicating procedures that resemble the way totalitarian states act. Consequently, it could be interpreted as a (new) wave of nationalism or propaganda.

7. More research is needed and the theoretical perspective must reach maturity, before the notion and its implementation can gain full appreciation, and also, preferably, opportunity is given for students and those interested to study the new discipline.

8 Discussions and Suggestions to Future Research

This chapter embraces a discussion on this paper's findings and gives suggestions to future research.

Nation Branding is a new approach in the field of branding techniques in the wake of the 20th century. It emerged as a concept in the last decade but since there are no absolute truths, Nation Branding lacks grounded theory. Still, the research of this paper shows evidence, that Nation Branding activities are taking place in many countries of the world, including Sweden.

Although Nation Branding inherited much from Public Diplomacy, there are many important differences between them. Firstly, Nation Branding is based not on public relations theory but on marketing, and especially general branding theories mixed with more specialized branding theory for corporate business acting on the global market. Thus, positioning, segmentation, targeting and other pragmatic promotional techniques are being used in a mix of public relations techniques. Secondly, the majority of Nation Branding specialists, especially those of the moderate view, emphasize the importance of primary communication and the need of adapting to changing reality. The individuals working with Nation Branding must be highly skilled and able to detect what is relevant for the nation. Nations change, prosper and differ and therefore no set concept of Nation Branding theory counts for all. Instead, each Nation Branding program has to be developed and managed in each individual nation's relevant context, practice and needs. This is maybe the most different and challenging nature of nations as "products" on an international market. Nations only come in one piece, they cannot be replicated or subject for any kind of efficiency treatment. Branding is a specific marketing technique for, usually, marketing one product to many customers, that now, in a national and global context requires a different form of branding. One nation's branding strategy is not relevant for any other nation. Thus the nation's image communication expands beyond conventional conceptions of communication as well as marketing or branding techniques, and furthermore, it is also oriented towards the local people and their customs, seeking to make the country better and more beautiful.

It is obvious that Nation Branding is having a hard time to get accepted and a great help would be if text-books use the notions by its proper name. If this is achieved, as a consequence and benevolence to the notion and practice of this special kind of branding theory, it would definitely manage to reach out to a larger audience. If not possible to go all-in, one way of doing this would be to use for example Fan Ying's proposed "Country Image Management", and phrase it "*also called Nation Branding*" as an initial start. This would put

an end to the tedious discussions on theoretical level and give Nation Branding the opportunity to reach out to those who work with Nation Branding today, not to forget the future; to all individuals who are interested in working with the theories concerned.

Future research

It would be of interest to find out more about why Nation Branding is having a hard time to be accepted in an etymological and semantic study on the negatively charged words *nations* and *branding* and how this could be overcome. Maybe, this research could help to understand the notions better and make Nation Branding more accepted?

Secondly, it is stated in earlier research that there are basically no research on the cross-bread of marketing management and Public Diplomacy. It would be interesting to see a thorough comparison between the two disciplines in marketing and G2B management to find relevant marketing management theory for education of the Public Diplomacy staff and other stakeholders, to make the practice more known and accepted. Also, there is specific theoretical framework for change management, to bring into play.⁴⁰⁸

Ola Falemara's book *Re-branding the Nation* is an example of internal re-branding in a political and socio-economic context where Falemara uses religion as a means to reach out to the nation and its people in order for the citizens of Nigeria to change and take offense from corruption. Falemara tries to achieve this purpose by using Hinduism as an incentive for the people to build up stronger character among the Nigerian people. This is an interesting book on *internal* Nation Branding, both in its content and context since it shows how very complex and different Nation Branding can be between nations and this would be interesting to read about in future studies.⁴⁰⁹

Another interesting area is *regional* Nation Branding, for example the Öresunds/Baltic Sea - region, the EU, the African nations altogether or regional parts, for example "The Golf Coast" etcetera,⁴¹⁰ "China" made up by not only main land but also Hong Kong and Taiwan, "The Little Tigers" are examples of House of Brands where the endorsers are nations. This makes up for a study at yet another level in the House of Brands by Aaker's extended yet another level, which would also be an interesting subject of study.

⁴⁰⁸ Jick, Todd D. and Maury A. Peiperl, (2011) *Managing Change; Cases and Concepts*, 3d ed. MacGraw-Hill Irwin, NY

⁴⁰⁹ Falemara, Francis Ola (2008) *Re-Branding the Nation*, Xlibris, USA

⁴¹⁰ Noman, Akbar et.al, *Good Growth and Governance in Africa; Rethinking development strategies in Africa*, Oxford University Press, New York

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9.1 Interviews and Course Seminars

Interviews with individuals working with Nation Branding in Sweden among others

Håkan Hjort, UD, Stockholm, on telephone, three times between 14-15 pm, April 13

Joakim Norén, Swedish Institute, Slottsbacken 10, Stockholm, 09:00-10:00, April 4

Thomas Carlhed, former General Secretary, SI, Stockholm, short on cell-phone, approx 15 minutes, April 4

Region Manager (Y), on telephone, 10:20 – 10:50, April 20, 2012

Representatives of the Visit Sweden Information desk, 3-5 minutes each, spring 2012

E-mail correspondence with Ylva Björnberg, initiator to the Sweden-picture 2.0 and the Visit Sweden Web 2.0 platform together with Thomas Carlhed, April and May, 2012

SSE Course 629 BSs Thesis writing and methods

The following seminars were included in the SSE course 629 Spring of 2012

120125 **Richard Wahlund**, “Short introduction to thesis writing, constructing a problem formulation and research design”

120130 **Hans Kjellberg**, “To use theories and methods”

120201 **Per Andersson**, “To use qualitative research methods”

120202 **Patrik Andersson**, “To use quantitative research methods”

120206 **Peter Gavelin** and **Staffan Rundberg**, “SSE Library support & services when writing a thesis”

120217 **Peter Hagström**, “To analyze, interpret and discuss the research outcome”

120223 **Magnus Söderlund**, “To be able to assess thesis quality, reliability and validity”

120427 **Susanne Sweet**, “Presentation and examination of the BSc thesis”

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10 Appendix

This final chapter contains additional research material for the interested reader in the research field such as further information on Swedish Nation Branding activities.

Furthermore, the interview questions and transcripts of the interviews are provided here.

Finally, a presentation of the leading experts in the Nation Branding research field is compiled.

10.1 Nations and Countries

Here is a definition on Nations and Countries retrieved from Webster's Dictionary on line.

Nations or states are independent bodies politic; societies of men united together for the purpose of promoting their mutual safety and advantage by the joint efforts of their combined strength. But every combination of men who govern themselves, independently of all others, will not be considered a **nation**; a body of pirates, for example, who govern themselves, are not a **nation**. To constitute a **nation** another ingredient is required. The body thus formed must respect other **nations** in general, and each of their members in particular. Such a society has her affairs and her interests; she deliberates and takes resolutions in common; thus becoming a moral person who possesses an understanding and will peculiar to herself, and is susceptible of obligations and rights. It belongs to the government to declare whether they will consider a colony which has thrown off the yoke of the mother country as an independent state; and until the government have decided on the question, courts of justice are bound to consider the ancient state of things as remaining unchanged.

<http://www.webster-dictionary.org/definition/Nations> 12-05-10 [07:45]

COUNTRIES In political geography and international politics, a country is a political division of a geographical entity. Frequently, a sovereign territory, the term is most commonly associated with the notions of both state and nation, and also with government.

In common usage, the term is used casually in the sense of both nations and states. Definitions may vary. It is sometimes used to refer to both states and some other political entities, while in some occasions it refers only to states. It is not uncommon for general information or statistical publications to adopt the wider definition for purposes such as illustration and comparison.

There are non-sovereign territories (subnational entities, another form of political division or administrative division within a larger nation-state) which constitute cohesive geographical entities, some of which are former states, but which are not presently sovereign states. Some are commonly designated as countries (e.g. England, Scotland and Wales), while others are not (e.g., Cornwall, Brittany and Texas). The degree of autonomy and local government varies widely. Some are possessions of states, as several states have overseas dependencies (e.g., the British Virgin Islands, Netherlands Antilles, and American Samoa), with territory and citizenry separate from their own. Such dependent territories are sometimes listed together with states on lists of countries.

<http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definitions/country> 12-05-14 [10:20]

10.2 The United Nations and the NBI

Here is a list of the members of the United Nations⁴¹¹ where the ones measured in the Anholt - GfK Roper Nation Brands Index⁴¹² is marked in bold text. Two Nations, Scotland and Taiwan, are measured but not among the member states of the UN.

Afghanistan	Greece	Pakistan
Albania	Grenada	Palau
Algeria	Guatemala	Panama
Andorra	Guinea	Papua New Guinea
Angola	Guinea-Bissau	Paraguay
Antigua and Barbuda	Guyana	Peru
Argentina	Haiti	Philippines
Armenia	Honduras	Poland
Australia	Hungary	Portugal
Austria	Iceland	Qatar
Azerbaijan	India	Romania
Bahamas	Indonesia	Russian Federation
Bahrain	Iran	Rwanda
Bangladesh	Iraq	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Barbados	Ireland	Saint Lucia
		Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Belarus	Israel	Samoa
Belgium	Italy	San Marino
Belize	Jamaica	Sao Tome and Principe
Benin	Japan	Saudi Arabia
Bhutan	Jordan	Senegal
Bolivia	Kazakhstan	Serbia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kenya	Seychelles
Botswana	Kiribati	
	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Sierra Leone
Brazil	Republic of Korea	Singapore
Brunei Darussalam	Kuwait	Slovakia
Bulgaria	Kyrgyzstan	Slovenia
Burkina Faso	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Solomon Islands
Burundi	Latvia	Somalia
Cambodia	Lebanon	South Africa
Cameroon	Lesotho	South Sudan
Canada	Liberia	Spain
Cape Verde	Libya	Sri Lanka
Central African Republic	Liechtenstein	Sudan
Chad	Lithuania	Suriname
Chile	Luxembourg	Swaziland
China	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Sweden
Colombia		

⁴¹¹ <http://www.un.org/en/members/index.shtml> 2012-05-13 [19:18]

⁴¹² http://www.gfkamerica.com/practice_areas/roper_pam/placebranding/nbi/index.en.html 2012-05-13 [19:19]

Comoros
Congo
Democratic Republic of the
Congo
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Djibouti
Dominica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Equatorial Guinea
Eritrea
Estonia
Ethiopia
Fiji
Finland
France
Gabon
Gambia
Georgia
Germany
Ghana

Madagascar
Malawi
Malaysia
Maldives
Mali
Malta
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Mauritania
Mauritius
Mexico
Micronesia
Republic of Moldova
Monaco
Mongolia
Montenegro
Morocco
Mozambique
Myanmar
Namibia
Nauru
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Nicaragua
Niger
Nigeria
Norway
Oman

Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic
Tajikistan
United Republic of Tanzania
Thailand
Timor-Leste
Togo
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Tuvalu
Uganda
Ukraine
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom
United States of America
Uruguay
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu
Venezuela
Viet Nam
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe

10.3 Sweden Facts

10.3.1 Quick facts about Sweden

Area: 174,000 sq mi (450,000 km²), the third largest country in Western Europe

Longest north-south distance: 978 mi (1,574 km)

Longest east-west distance: 310 mi (499 km)

Capital: Stockholm

Population: 9.5 million inhabitants

Languages: Swedish; recognized minority languages: Sami (Lapp), Finnish, Meänkieli (Tornedalen Finnish), Yiddish, Romani Chib

Form of government: Constitutional monarchy, parliamentary democracy

Parliament: The Riksdag, with 349 members in one chamber

Religion: In practice, Sweden is very secularized. The Church of Sweden is Evangelical Lutheran; co-exists with many other beliefs

Life expectancy: Men 79 years, women 83 years

<http://www.sweden.se/eng/Home/Quick-facts/> retrieved 2012-10-02 [15:16]



Figure 2 The Swedish State Herald

10.3.2 Swedish lifestyle

The Swedish lifestyle brings together a love of nature, good housing, environmental thinking and lots of culture — all tied up with awareness of health and a strong sense of equality. Efficiency is combined with a laid-back attitude, and old traditions blended with openness for new technologies. Swedes in general work hard but treasure their free time and enjoy long relaxing holidays.

The Swedish lifestyle varies greatly with the seasons. During the darker winter months, there are lights in the windows, evenings in the cinema, and winter sports during the day. In spring and summer, life is lived outdoors: music festivals, outdoor theatres and open-air museums are popular. Not only are the flowers blooming, the Swedes themselves are too.

Traditions such as June's Midsummer and December's Lucia are of great importance to Swedes and are celebrated just as enthusiastically today as they have been for generations. This sense of heritage is mixed with an open-mindedness for other cultures, due to the facts that one-fifth of the population has roots in other countries, that Swedes travel a great deal, and that they speak other languages. The most innovative country in the world, as highlighted by numerous reports, is not only the home of inventors and entrepreneurs but also a creative hub for fashion, music and food.

<http://www.sweden.se/eng/Home/Lifestyle/> retrieved 2012-10-02 [15:18]

10.3.3 Regional Tourism Organizations in Sweden

*Here follow a list of the regional tourism organizations as endorser brands of the Swedish House of Brands*⁴¹³

Göteborg & Co

Region Halland

Malmö Turism

Tourism in Skåne

Region Blekinge

AB Glasriket

Smålands Turism AB

AB Destination Småland

Västsvenska Turistrådet

Ölands Turistbyrå

Östsvenska Turistrådet

Gotlands Turistförening

Region Gävleborg

Regionförbundet Örebro län

Stockholm Visitors Board

Sörmlands turismutveckling AB

Turistinformation Dalarna

Uppsala Tourism AB

Värmlands Turistråd

Västmanland Kommuner och Landsting

Hälsingland Turism

Jämtland Härjedalen Turism

Swedish Lappland Tourism

Visit Västernorrland

Västerbottens Tourism

⁴¹³ <http://partner.visitsweden.com/sv/Startsida/Turism-i-Sverige/Regionala-turistorganisationer> 2012-05-13
[16:45]

10.3.4 Visit Sweden Positions

<i>Author's translation</i>	<i>Urban Nature</i>	<i>Natural Playground</i>	<i>Swedish Lifestyle</i>	<i>Vitalized Meetings</i>
	Experiencing the major cities of Sweden	Sweden as a natural playground	Swedish Culture	Innovative meeting grounds
Definition	Swedish urban lifestyle gives a unique combination of dynamic creativity, harmony, and close-to-nature experience in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmoe.	People's interaction in nature. Sweden offers a unique possibility to move around freely and learn about nature. Challenges that combine playfulness, fantasy and adventure with simplicity, coziness and authenticity.	Experiencing Swedish culture and lifestyle. Everything from design, history and traditions to meetings with people that share something about modern Sweden and its heritage. A culture which is close to nature. It's simple, sustainable and respectful and at the same time extrovert, curious and innovative.	Innovative conference- and meeting arrangements, combined with playfulness and futuristic features, combined with harmony and uncomplicated experiences in natural environment. Meetings and events in Sweden. Vitalize the individual's way of thinking which leads the way to sustainability.
Main Segment	DINKs	Active family	WHOPs	Meeting-buyers, PR-agents and event companies, incentive houses and ordinary companies.
Tourist type	City break with focus on city treats. Short and vivid trips up till three days.	Families going on vacation together and often by car.	Tours or short breaks with focus on culture and nature.	Tours for conferences, meetings, incentive travels.
Demand	Looking for urban environments with a variation of offers and classical big city-treats such as restaurants museums, shopping.	Activities, hang-outs, joy and comforting/simple adventure, learning something new.	To learn something new, meet people and discover culture. Appreciate beautiful landscapes, unique interests in culture and nature, such as glass-blowing or flora/fauna, nature phenomena.	High accessibility and quality, price worthy and comfortable, high-quality meals, large number of activities, modernity.

10.3.5 10 Reasons for Sweden

	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Key phrase</i>
1	Innovation	The Swedish culture is open-minded and readily embraces new ideas and technologies.
2	Market	Sweden is often seen as a frontrunner in adopting new technologies and setting new consumer trends.
3	Easy to do business	Sweden has an international business environment that is modern, open and business-friendly.
4	High productivity	Sweden has a long track record of very high productivity, even though there are generous labor regulations regarding vacations, parental leave etc.
5	Central location	Sweden is a prime location for centralized market operations in Northern Europe.
6	A modern workplace	With an abundance of skilled labor, high female participation in the workforce and a consensus on economic restructuring, Sweden has a good platform for a globalized world.
7	Research and development	Sweden's science infrastructure is world-class.
8	First rate infrastructure	Sweden hosts an excellent infrastructure. It matches or outperforms that of any other European country.
9	Attractive corporate taxation	Sweden is one of the most competitive locations for corporate taxation in Europe. This is confirmed in comparative surveys and in analysis by international tax consultants.
10	Quality of life	Living and working in Sweden means being part of a well-functioning society in a dynamic environment. The quality of housing, education and health care is excellent.

Source: <http://investsweden.se/North-America/Advantage-Sweden1/10-reasons/>
Retrieved September 20012

10.4 Interview Questions for the Swedish Institute et.al.

These are the questions posed at the Swedish Institute and also part of them posed to other respondents.

Q 1 Kan du berätta för mig vad Nation Branding är? Finns det olika delar av eller inom Nation Branding och vilka är de i så fall?

Could you tell me what Nation Branding is? Are there different parts within Nation Branding and if so – which ones are they?

Q 2a Kan du ge en definition av Nation Branding?

Could you please give me a definition on NB?

Q2b Jag ber dig nu att definiera begreppet i en mening.

I now ask you to define the notion again, this time by using only one sentence.

Q2c Om du bara får använda ett ord, en synonym, för Nation Branding vilket ord skulle det då vara?

If I now tell you to try to use only one word as a synonym for NB, which word would that be?

Q3 Upplever du det svårt att definiera begreppet Nation Branding? Svara gärna på en skala 1-10

Do you feel or think that it is hard to define the notions NB? If possible, kindly answer using 1-10.

Q4 Kan du berätta lite för mig om NB:s historia. Hur det började och varför ?

Could you please tell me about the history of NB? How it started? And why?

Q5 Är NB accepterat [tycker du]? *Is NB accepted [do you think]?*

Q6 Är NB kontroversiellt [tycker du]? *Is NB controversial [do you think]?*

Q7 Är NB propagandistiskt [tycker du]? *Is NB propaganda [do you think]?*

Q8 Kan du definiera närliggande begrepp det vill säga berätta om ”familjen” NB?

Could you define some closely related notions; that is, tell me who is part of the “NB Family”?

Q9 Hur jobbar SI med NB?

How does SI work with NB?

Q10 Vilka övriga institutioner, företag, personer jobbar aktivt med NB i Sverige

What other institutions, companies, people work actively with NB in Sweden?

Q11 Vilka personer/institutioner tycker du att jag ska prata med om jag vill veta mer om NB i Sverige/internationellt.

What persons/institutions do you advice me to talk to if I want to know more about NB both in Sweden as well as internationally?

Q12 Kan du ge mig ett exempel på när Nation Branding blir fel?

Do you have an example when things go wrong?

Q13 Solen skiner idag. Går det att avsluta med en solskenshistoria inom Nation Branding?

Finally, the sun is shining today ... Can you tell me a true sunshine story of Nation Branding?

10.5 Transcripts of Interviews

Joakim Norén at the Swedish Institute 120408

Digital recorded interview with the permission from Joakim Norén to transcribe word-for-word and include in the empirical framework.



Joakim Norén SI
photo:regeringen.se

Q1 GE: Vad är Nation Branding?

JN: Det första som jag tycker är intressant: Simon Anholt är han som myntade begreppet nation brand och inte Nation Branding. Och vi använder oss också av båda begreppen, och på något sätt så blir det mer naturligt att säga Nation Branding. Men det vi egentligen vill prata om är Nation Brand och varje land har ett varumärke /../ När man [nämner ordet] Sverige till någon ute i världen så poppar det upp vissa bilder i huvudet av Sverige. En kan vara demokrati eller kallt och isbjörnar på gatorna eller blonda flickor eller det kan vara ABBA eller Olof Palme. Och hela den här kombinationen av bilder av vad det här är för något land är ju då Sveriges varumärke i den här personens huvud. Men sen att ta steget och aggregera det här så ser man den samlade bilden av ett lands varumärke. Det kan man ju titta på och göra stora enkätundersökningar och mäta det här och så vidare så man får något pass annorlunda torrt på fötterna hur ett land uppfattas, och utifrån definitionen av varumärken så blir det då ett lands varumärke. Och sedan aktiviteten då – Nation Branding, att arbeta med det, den är lite missvisande för det är i stort sett omöjligt för ett land att förändra sitt varumärke utan att landet förändras. Och det krävs hyfsat stora förändringar. Att tro att det vi gör på SI, att vi ska kunna skapa ett annat Nation Brand för Sverige än det som redan finns, det är extremt förmätet. Med våra resurser, så har vi inte den möjligheten. Folk går liksom inte på det. Även när det är [fråga om] stereotyper och det som vi uppfattar som myter och liknande om ett land så är de på något sätt välförtjänta eller förtjänta i alla fall. Det vi kan göra är att arbeta med det landsvarumärke vi har, och utifrån de uppfattningar som finns om Sverige kan vi förstärka och förtydliga det som vi tycker är positivt. Så det kan vi då säga är arbetet med Sveriges nation brand eller vad vi än kallar det ”Nation Branding”. Det är ju att arbeta med landsvarumärket, att stärka det ute i världen. Där använder vi metoder och teorier som kommer från mer generella varumärkesteorier, men också teorier som är utvecklade inom Nation Branding. Men de teorierna och metoderna som kommer från vanligt varumärkesarbete måste man modifiera för vi sitter i en helt annan verklighet. Det är mycket mer komplext med ett lands varumärke, vilket gör det mycket roligare också.

Q2a GE: Tack! Då har du nu berättat om Nation Branding och du har talat om olika delar. Det känns frestande att gå in på dem men det gör vi inte nu. Nu vill jag att du försöker ge mig en kort definition av Nation Branding.

JN: Ett lands varumärke. Det vill säga, det som människor uppfattar, den bild man har av ett land. Och jag skulle vilja likna det vid.. En person har värderingar och uppfattade värderingar och ett land har kärnvärden. Jag menar att landsvarumärket är det som folk uppfattar, det är inte det som står i vår varumärkesplattform.

Q2b GE: Nu har du definierat Nation Branding i ca tre meningar. Om vi tar ner det till en mening – hur skulle du då formulera den?

JN: Mittersta meningen där, det som folk uppfattar om ett land, den bild som finns i folks sinne när jag säger Tyskland eller om jag säger Burundi eller om man säger Malaysia, den bilden som dyker upp.

Q2c GE: Nu ska jag bråka med dig, förlåt! Ett ord! En synonym... om du kan,..

JN: Tre ord! Uppfattningen om ett land.

Q3a GE: Då kommer jag till fråga tre nu. Är Nation Branding svårt att definiera tycker du?

JN: Ja, både och. Jag kan tycka att jag har entydig bild, och jag är ju ekonom och min utbildningsbakgrund är organisationsutvecklig, men har jobbat med varumärkesfrågor och trendanalys konceptutvecklig, så för mig är det inga konstigheter att tänka på att ett land har ett varumärke, och jag kan ju tycka att det inte är något svårt att förklara det, men det är ju alldeles uppenbart att andra som jag förklarar det för har svårt att förstå det. Framförallt när man går ner på lite djupare nivåer, vad innebär det här då? Vad är implikationerna för hur ett land ska bete sig eller hur en organisation som SI ska bete sig eller hur kan olika företag använda det och så vidare.. Då blir det mer komplicerat och framförallt när man ska börja arbeta praktiskt med det. Då blir det verkligen komplicerat emellanåt!

Q3b GE: Jag ber dig att säga hur svårt du upplever det är att definiera Nation Branding och då utgå från en skala på 1 till 10.

JN: Jag skulle säga att om man pratar om att få folk att förstå det här, och då pratar vi om man är beredd på det, beror det helt och hållet på vem man pratar med, och om man säger att 10 är svårt och 1 är lätt så skulle jag säga att pratar jag med människor som har en kommunikationsbakgrund eller en marknadsföringsbakgrund eller något liknande så ligger vi ungefär på en trea. Men pratar jag med kulturvetare som en del av mina kolleger är, så hamnar vi någonstans uppe på sju-åtta. Ett är enkelt och tio är svårt.

GE: Så kulturvetarna begriper inte det här, medan dina kollegor med bakgrund i ekonomi...

JN: Alltså, jag har kolleger som är kulturvetare, [och] de har ju svårare att förstå det här medan det ju ibland är mycket enklare med samarbetspartner på en kommunikationsbyrå till exempel... och de är jätteintresserade av det här och tycker det är jättespännande och har redan tänkt i varumärkestemer och så vidare.

GE: Och nu till dig själv, vad tycker du?

JN: Nä, jag tycker inte det är ett problem alls. Jag skulle säga en åtta nia [här vänder Joakim/vi på skalan]. Jag tycker inte definitionen är något konstigt. Men det är nog också för att jag inte tycker att brand, alltså varumärke, är något konstigt. Det är ju utifrån min förståelse för det och jag märker ju till exempel ett problem – att jag har en ekonomibakgrund och organisationsbakgrund – och jag märker att jag ibland har en annan syn på varumärke än vad de som har en kommunikationsbakgrund har. Jag uppfattar varumärke som något mer, och då pratar vi om företags-varumärken eller kommersiella varumärken. Jag ser det som något mycket mer fundamentalt, alltså något som är basen eller själen i ett företag, medan en del med kommunitaionsbakgrund ser det som något som man stämplar på produkten när man ska ut på marknaden. Så det är alldeles uppenbart att det finns [olika uppfattningar] även bland dem som arbetar dagligen med varumärkesfrågor och kommersiella varumärken /../ och för många så blir det här med lands-varumärken mer komplicerat. Men jag tycker inte alls att definitionen på det är konstig. För mig beror det på att jag utgår från det som redan finns. Alltså den här uppfattningen om ett land som redan finns där ute, och mindre utgår från själva

aktiviteten branding, hur man sen ska göra det här. För om man går in på det, hur ska man arbeta med det rent praktiskt? Då droppar man långt ner på den här skalan och då hamnar man någonstans under fem och brottas med diverse komplexa frågor om vilka vi ska involvera, eller hur olika parter kan vara involverade. Vem äger den här frågan? Vad kan man göra och vad bör man göra? Var går gränsen till inrikespolitik? Var går gränsen till propaganda? Hur förhåller sig Nation Branding till begreppet Public Diplomacy? Då blir det väldigt komplext. Jag svarar lite på frågan om *nation brand* och där tycker jag att det är enkelt [att förklara uttrycket]. Men om man pratar om hur man arbetar med det så finns det massor av frågor som går in och ur varandra, vilket gör det svårt.

Q4 GE: Tack för ditt utförliga svar. Jag kommer nu till punkt fyra. Kan du berätta kort om Nation Brandings historia. Jag vill gärna veta lite om början och anledningen. Ja, vi kan stanna där; början och anledningen.

JN: Jag tror du kan säkert hitta bättre underlag för dig på just den frågan, det är inte mitt expertområde, men som jag har lärt mig så är det just Simon Anholt som myntade begreppet ”Nation Brand” och som är gurun inom området. Där är jag inte säker på hur det förhåller sig till området *Place Branding* som man också pratar om – hur städer, orter, regioner och så vidare också arbetar med sina varumärken. Om det är något som kom före eller efter, är någonting jag är osäker på. Men det är ju en ganska kort historia [det är fråga om]. 2005: Man drog igång Nation Brands Index, som är den stora undersökningen som rankar [länder] då. Det var den första och största ambitionen att kvantitativt möta och ranka ett lands varumärke och se hur det ser ut [i jämförelse med andra länder]. De är ju något som vi har följt sedan starten och som vi använder oss av. Vi tittar på massor av olika index. Det finns ju väldigt många expertindex som rankar olika länder [i fråga] om hur bra de är på hållbarhet, innovation eller kreativitet eller någonting [liknande]. Men NBI är det enda som mäter vanliga människors uppfattning. Det mäter verkligheten, *inte* hur bra ett land är på någonting utan det är just *uppfattningen* [om ett land som indexet mäter], vilket gör det väldigt intressant. Och det tycker vi fortfarande är det bästa indexet som mäter just det. Och sedan inser vi ju att det finns mycket som... Det är ju inte någon heltäckande sanning på något sätt. Men det är ju helt klart en viktig pusselbit för oss.

Q4b GE: Så vad var anledningen till att man började med Nation Branding? När gick man från *brand* till *branding*?

JN: Jag tror att så fort man myntar uttrycket *Nation's brand* och fick någon sorts uppmärksamhet för det och medvetenhet om, att hos olika makthavare och människor som arbetar med att föra ut sitt land i världen – så fort man fick en medvetenhet om det där med nation brand så kom det helt naturligt en vilja att börja arbeta med branding. [Då] man blev medveten om att landet har ett varumärke så ville man försöka påverka det på något sätt, och på sätt och vis är det ju synd. Jag hörde ett föredrag av Simon Anholt där han berättar att han får förfrågningar från diverse länder som inte har så bra rykte som då kanske, han nämnde något exempel om något afrikanskt land med någon diktator, att han [vill att Anholt] ska hjälpa honom och förbättra landets brand och Anholts svar är att det inte går:

”Jag kan inte göra någon reklamkampanj som gör att ni uppfattas som demokratiska. Ni får ju ha fria val. Man måste förändra landet först”.

Så han [Anholt] försöker helt och hållet ta sin hand från uttrycket *Nation Branding*, vilket är rätt intressant.

GE: Det är ju jätteintressant. Det är en skiljevägg här nu. Jag har ju förstått det här, att det hände något, men jag har inte sett det så här konkret uttryckt.

JN: Det ligger ett föredrag någonstans på UD:s hemsida där Sinom Anholt talar från Almedalen. Förra eller förförra året. ... Du får söka runt lite där, jag vet faktiskt inte riktigt hur man hittar det.

GE: Jättebra tips! Tack!

JN: Där pratar han just om de här frågorna om *nation brand* och *Nation Branding*. Det är rätt intressant.

Q5 GE: Tack, det ska jag göra. Nu så är min fråga om *Nation Branding* är accepterat och det har du pratat om delvis, men vi kan väl ta något kort om det så vi hamnar under fråga fem här i protokollet.

JN: Det är ju klart att det blir mer och mer accepterat. Många som inte har någon varumärkesbakgrund tycker att det är konstigt, kulturvetare och samhällsvetare till exempel. Det är många som är tveksamma. Det är ju Sverige! Det är ju vårt fosterland! Så det är ju klart att det finns ett brett engagemang. Om man då uppfattar det här med varumärke som någonting rent, något som hör hemma i reklamvärlden och propaganda och så vidare... Det är klart, då är det kontroversiellt, men jag har hållit ganska mycket föredrag och presentationer av varumärkesplattformen för Sverige och det finns många som är skeptiska till det när jag börjar prata men nästan alla i stort sett är positiva när jag slutat, för vi har ändå en varumärkesplattform som verkligen fungerar för Sverige som inte hamnar i propaganda eller en enkel reklambild utan som problematiserar mer och som innefattar det som vi, de flesta svenskar, kan känna är en relevant bild av Sverige.

Q6 GE: Nu har du nämnt detta redan. Men för att det ska hamna i protokollet på rätt ställe, kanske det är värt att diskutera vidare. Är *Nation Branding* kontroversiellt?

JN: Ja som sagt! Ja det är det absolut hos stora grupper som inte har den bakgrunden, men jag tror det viktiga är att, när man pratar med de målgrupperna som inte har den bakgrunden så får man prata mer specifikt, om vad det är man gör i praktiken. Vad innebär arbetet som vi gör? Då brukar det inte vara så kontroversiellt utan det rör sig snarare om begreppet.

Q7 GE: Jag har skrivit propaganda frågetecken. Jag lämnar det därhän, vi har berört detta. Ändå, säg gärna något kort om du känner för det, om det är något ytterligare du vill säga om propagandabilden av *Nation Branding*.

JN: Om man tar *Nation Branding* med kommunikationen att *förändra* bilden av ett land som om det vore någon sorts verklig bild, eller någorlunda verkligt förankrad bild, då är det ju propaganda. Men samtidigt, om man arbetar med ett lands varumärke och om man ska göra det på ett professionellt sätt som kan få någon vettig effekt, då är inte propaganda effektivt. Det är någon sorts nidbild. Om man lägger pengar på propaganda så är det pengar i sjön. Det fungerar liksom inte i dagens värld. Vi har totalt en budget på 300 miljoner ungefär på SI. Mycket av det är pengar som vi bara transfererar som går till stipendier och olika projektuppdrag och så vidare. Om man tittar på det låter det jättemycket. Men tittar man på vad man kan göra i en stad ute i världen, till exempel i Mumbai, Sao Paolo eller Paris, eller var som helst, [visar det sig att] hur mycket vi än satsar i en stad – om IKEA öppnar ett nytt varuhus där samma år som vi gör en stor satsning [där], så kommer IKEA ändå få mycket mer uppmärksamhet. Och allting som görs, allt som alla svenska företag gör, andra svenskar med kontakter, det som poppar upp i media om Sverige, det som folk pratar om Sverige – frikopplat från det vi gör – det är ändå så mycket större så vi kan liksom inte gå in och säga att Sverige är karnevalslandet och få genomslag för det, utan vi måste bygga på den uppfattning som finns. Det är enda möjligheten. Som sagt, propaganda är pengar i sjön, det är bara ineffektivt. Det handlar inte om vad vi vill göra eller inte. Det är ju bara dålig strategi.

Q8 GE: Du har nämnt lite närliggande begrepp, kan du definiera familjen kring *Nation Branding*?

JN: Någonting som jag tycker är viktigt som vi hela tiden hamnar i är ju begreppet *Public Diplomacy*, som för oss, som en statlig myndighet så är ju det... Jag tycker, det som vi gör i hela vår verksamhet är *Public Diplomacy*, med andra ord, att från ett land så kommunicerar man med en allmänhet istället för att man kommunicerar med officiella representanter från ett annat land, något som då är traditionell diplomati. Offentlig diplomati eller *Public Diplomacy* är liksom kontexten i det vi gör. Där ser vi arbetet med *nation brand*. Det är ett verktyg. Det är ett begrepp som förenklar, att förklara vad det är vi försöker föra ut, vad det är vi har att möta. Jag skulle säga att det viktigaste när vi arbetar med Sveriges lands-varumärke, det är de undersökningar vi gör för att förstå hur Sverige uppfattas. Det är det absolut viktigaste och sedan – att vi utifrån det har en varumärkesplattform som ligger till grund för vad vårt arbete är. Det är ett praktiskt verktyg för hur vi då kan möta den här förväntade bilden och uppfattningen av Sverige på ett relevant sätt och hur vi kan se till att våra olika projekt, program och verksamheter samordnas. Visa en relevant och vettig bild som kan stödja varandra på ett bra sätt och hur vi också då kan samarbeta med andra myndigheter och organisationer som har liknande uppdrag.

GE: Om vi gör en modell av *Nation Branding*... Du har pratat om *Public Diplomacy*, har du någon tvåa och trea? Vem är familjen?

JN: Jag skulle säga att *Public Diplomacy* är familjen som har adopterat *Nation Branding* från *branding*, kommersiellt varumärkestänkande. Det är ju därifrån som teorierna och begreppet kommer men det har adopterats till *Public Diplomacy*-familjen och utvecklats vidare där men de biologiska föräldrarna är ändå den kommersiella branding.

GE: Då går vi tillbaka till familjen, Jag har hittat *Soft Power* och *Cosmopolitan Constructivism*.

JN: Den var ny för mig. *Soft Power* är ju... Det finns ju olika begrepp som kuggar in i varandra, *Soft Power* är ju verkligen ett relevant begrepp inom *Public Diplomacy* och medvetenheten om just länders *mjuka makt* bli viktigare och viktigare. Att den hårda makten, den militära makten som man kan påtvinga, blir mindre och mindre relevant framförallt för små länder, ja då så är det ju *Soft Power* som man kan hitta [där, i små länder].

Q9 GE: Nu har jag en bruttolista här på olika saker som jag jätte gärna vill gå in på här med dig nu. Eftersom du snart ska gå på ett möte så kan vi se om vi kommer in på bruttolistan, annars får vi lämna den därhän. Men det är ju familjen jag är intresserad av. Fråga nio av 13, är hur SI jobbar med *Nation Branding*. Du har berättat lite om 300 miljoner i budget och andra saker. Kan du berätta lite kort om SI:s arbete.

JN: Svenska Institutet bildades 1945 för att främja Sverige bilden utomlands, så man kan ju säga att vi har ju arbetat med det här [Nation Branding] sedan 1945. Men det var ju långt innan begreppet fanns, men vi främjade Sverige utomlands. Vår egen bild av vad vi gör har förändrats mycket över tiden och inte minst på senare år när vi gått från kanske en bild av att vi vill främja svensk kultur, till att se det mer som att vi främjar Sverige, där vi använder svensk kultur som ett verktyg, vi har fått in en massa begrepp som *Public Diplomacy*. Det har ju funnits hela tiden. Sveriges varumärke uppstod ju inte i början på 90-talet utan det fanns ju hela tiden, utan man hittade teorier för att förklara det vi gör. Och vi har en varumärkesplattform som är utvecklad inom NSU, *Nämnden för Sverigefrämjandet Utomlands*. Där ingår flera olika myndigheter och organisationer som har ett officiellt uppdrag att främja Sverige. Det är utvecklat utifrån analyser av hur Sverige uppfattas, vilket vi då har ställt mot vad som vi ser att Sverige verkligen har någonting faktiskt att komma med, det vill säga att vi kan leverera på det. Så det är ju grunden för den strategiska grunden för det vi gör. Sen tolkar vi ut[ifrån]

den, för det blir.. för många blir det lite för abstrakt och inte helt relevant.. Vi tolkar ut den i olika temaområden, där vi tar fram budskapsplattformar som kan ligga till grund för att utveckla projekt, program, verksamhet, driva Sweden.se och välja innehåll och format på det. Och dra igång ny verksamhet. Rent konkret så gör vi fantastiskt mycket olika saker. Det är managementprogram, stipendieprogram, projektstöd, stipendier, evenemang som föreställningar, utställningar som vi turnerar med, seminarier som vi arrangerar. Tryckt material, digital kommunikation i egna kanaler och i social media och så vidare, och så vidare. Så det är en otrolig bredd i verktygen vi använder.

Q10a GE: Vilka övriga institutioner jobbar med *Nation Branding*?

JN: De som ha ett officiellt uppdrag inom det här genom att främja Sverige det är SI, UD, såklart, Näringsdepartementet, Visit Sweden, Invest Sweden och Exportrådet. Och jag tror, men jag är inte 100 säker men jag tror att de myndigheter som har *Nation Branding* specifikt nämnt i regleringsbrev det är SI och VS.

Q10b GE: Handelskammaren? Exportkreditnämnden? Någon annan, indirekt?

JN: Åhum, jag vet inte om, hur de ser på sitt. De har inte ett uppdrag från staten att arbeta med det här och jag vet inte hur de ser på sin roll, om de använder de här begreppen.

Q10c GE: Alla trade councils? Men de är underordnade Exportrådet..

JN: Men vi samarbetar ju med massor av olika organisationer, bl.a. dem, men vi har otroligt mycket samarbeten och vi presenterade varumärkesplattformen för Sverige till våra samarbetspartners, och även andra som vi inte samarbetar med direkt men som vi tror har en användning för det. Som företag, regioner och kommuner, som kan tycka att varumärkesplattformen för Sverige är relevant i deras egen kommunikation.

Q10d GE: Jobbar ni med någon mjukare organisation?

JN: Ja, vi arbetar ju med kulturutövare och näringsliv. Vi måste ju välja och vi väljer ju också strategiskt vilka vi vill samarbeta med. Vi har många sorters samarbeten. Vi har företag som sponsrar våra utställningar. Vi ger stöd till kulturutövare och organisationer som kanske ska genomföra någonting, som vill ha stöd att göra någonting. Vi har mer samarbeten där vi går in med våra egna resurser och de andra går in med sina resurser. Vi har massor av olika sorters samarbeten med olika typer av organisationer.

Q11 GE: Nu är du den första personen som jag pratar med och det var min första tanke [att tala med dig]. Kan du ge mig ett råd? Jag planerar att prata med fler personer för att bredda min syn [på NB] och vem skulle du då rekommendera mig att kontakta.

JN: Ylva Björnberg på Visit Sweden tycker jag absolut. Jag tycker att du kan prata med Håkan Hjort på UD och faktiskt min före detta chef som heter Thomas Carlhed. Han jobbar nu på Socialdemokraterna men han var med och tog fram varumärkesplattformen för Sverige. Jag skulle säga att av honom och Ylva så kan du få extremt mycket matnyttigt. Håkan arbetar med de här frågorna på UD så han är absolut relevant att prata med, men jag skulle säga att Ylva och Thomas har också extremt mycket att berätta inom det här området. Du kan få hela teorin och bakgrunden och historien och så vidare.

Q12 GE: Tack för tipsen! Kan *Nation Branding* gå fel?

JN: Alltså, ja det beror på hur man ser det. Ja, det kan absolut gå fel, verkligen. Det finns ju exempel på det. Branding överhuvudtaget och om man jämför med hur det fungerar i företagsvärlden som är lite enklare ändå. SJ får skäll för att de är för sena, att det är dålig service och så vidare. Flera gånger under den senaste tio, tjugio åren, går de ut i olika kampanjer med att nu satsar de på service. Och även om de går ut med jättestora reklamkampanjer så blir det inte bättre, eller folk uppfattar inte att det blir bättre. Folk känner att de står där och väntar på tåget och får inte så bra service. Den här reklamkampanjen var ju en felsatsning. De måste ju satsa på service, men kampanjen är bara relevant om folk sen uppfattar att det blir bättre service. Ett land kan gå ut med en kampanj och säga att Sverige är si eller så. Men om man sen inte uppfattar att man levererar och det kanske är så att vi hittar något och upptäcker att den här bilden av Sverige vill vi förbättra och så går vi ut och pratar om det och även om vi samtidigt i Sverige blir bättre inom det här området, så om vi inte blir [det]. Om inte folk uppfattar att vi blir bättre i förhållande till andra länder, ja då blir det liksom inte relevant. Det här exemplet som Simon Anholt nämner med någon afrikansk diktator som ringer och frågar, ”kan ni hjälpa oss att förbättra vår bild som ett trevligt och demokratiskt land?” blir svaret: ”Nej det går inte”. Det är bara pengar i sjön. Och risken är att det bara blir en backlash. Man ser att det här landet faktiskt inte är demokratiskt och så går de ut och säger att ”vi är demokratiska”, det bli bara en ”bad will” av det. Det liksom bara stärker bilden av ett icke demokratiskt land. Det kan absolut gå fel. Och även i vissa fall om det inte blir någon backlash så finns det alltid en risk att det blir pengar i sjön, att man försöker kommunicera något som ingen är beredd att lyssna på. Ett irrelevant budskap i vissa länder. Sverige är mer relevant och där är man mer intresserad av det, men om man tittar på Indien så är Sverige inte ett relevant land. Ett seminarium om några östafrikanska [länder] om Nation Branding och Public Diplomacy och hur blir de länderna relevanta i Sverige. Det finns ingen i Sverige som är intresserad av Burundi, Tanzania. Vi har ingen bild av dem. Uganda, vad är bilden av dem? Idi Amin, fortfarande. Det har hänt fantastiskt mycket i Uganda men frågar man i Sverige vad är Uganda? Ja då är det Idi Amin och ingenting mer, det är inte ens safari eller semester, det är bara något land med en galen diktator.

GE: Borat i Kazakstan talas det ju mycket om. Ett exempel på oönskad PR men det blir bättre med tiden.

JN: Jo, där försöker faktiskt Kazakstan bemöta det och förmedla – ”nej vi är inte så...”[som nidd bilden i Borat förmedlar] Och i stort sett insåg de att Borat hade så otroligt mycket mer genomslag än vad ett helt land kan ha. Och i stort sett det enda de kunde göra var att surfa på vågen och utnyttja den det bästa de kunde.

GE: Det blev ju bra i slutändan, eller hur? Turismen har ökat något enormt. Och det är väl egentligen det som ett land vill uppnå, eller hur? Om man inte är Nordkorea, förstås...

JN: Ja, för Kazakstan var de ju så okända att bara att folk upptäckte att de fanns var positivt i slutändan.

Q13 GE: Solen skiner. Det är en solig dag idag. [Vi ser ut genom fönstret mot Slottet] En solskenshistoria kanske vi ska avsluta med? Har du en sådan att berätta om?

JN: Alltså, Sverige är inom det här området är en solskenshistoria. Det är en otroligt positiv bild! Generellt sett så har vi [Sverige] låg kännedom i många länder i världen. Framför allt så är orosmolnet [gäller detta] ungdomar. Unga har klart lägre kännedom om Sverige än äldre runt om i världen. Men något som Simon Anholt också påpekar att det finns... I Nation Brands Index ser man bara två länder som kombinerar ”sexig och pålitlig”, både ”spännande och exotiskt” och ”pålitligt och tryggt” och så

vidare och det är UK och Sverige men samtidigt så har UK inte en odelat positiv bild utan visserligen är UK välkänt men det är många som har en negativ bild av UK. Så är det Sverige som har i och för sig låg kännedom [i utlandet] men som har.. och jag tycket att det är väl värt.. alltså när jag arbetar med Sverige bilden, så inser man hur mycket bättre den är än vad vi själva inser. Hur positivt det är att vara svensk! Hur mycket värden det finns i det! Och för svenska företag att säga att ”vi är svenska”, då säger man i princip med ett ord att vi levererar väldigt väldesignade kvalitetsprodukter med hög kvalitet. [Man säger också att] vi har ett bra miljö tänk och socialt ansvarstagande, vi är bra arbetsgivare och vi levererar i tid.. Att sammanfatta allt detta med ett ord; det är *fantastiskt*. Alltså, alla svenska företag skulle ha en lite svensk flagga i hörnet på loggan eller någonting, för det är ju det där med positiva värden som är så viktigt!

JN: Nu måste jag skynda vidare...

GE: Stort tack!

Thomas Carlhed 2012-04-03

Former General Secretary, SI

Referral notes, hand-written, of semi-informal talk on cell phone at school corridor on 5th floor.

Jag har inte tid att boka ett möte eller samtal på telefon, men du får gärna tala om för mig vad du vill veta. Vilka är dina frågor? Jaha, Nation Branding, det stämmer, jag har arbetat med platformen. Det är inte så komplicerat, du kan läsa i Kotler så vet du hur den är gjord. Allt finns på hemsidan, ja, du vet nog hur du ska hitta den. Titta på Platformen 2.0 och jämför med Kotler så är det klart. Nation Branding är Kotler och lite academic papers, ja du vet de där akademiska papprena som skrivs ute i Europa. Egentligen finns det ingen Nation Branding här i Sverige, allt som händer inom Nation Branding händer ”out there”, ”in the big world”. Inget händer här i ”lilla Sverige”. Jag rekommenderar dig att läsa Kotler och academic papers och så får du se om du kan få ut något av det. Jag vet inte, kanske har du tagit dig vatten över huvudet. Du får väl testa och se. Historien bakom Nation Branding, ja det är Anholt. Han råkade mynta begreppet och sen blev det ett himla liv. Det blev ett djävla liv rent sagt. Ja, du får läsa själv, jag har inte tid med det här nu. Men du får gärna skicka dina frågor. Nej, träffas och prata kommer jag inte hinna. Men du klarar dig nog bra ändå, eller... Ja, du får väl se, när du ger dig ut i stora världen, det pågår en hel del grejer inom Nation Branding där... I Sverige har du antagligen inte mycket att hämta.

Regional chef i (Y)

Referral notes, hand-written, at a booked telephone meeting with the region manager in (Y)

Ja, vi jobbar med Nation Branding här i (Y) men vi kallar det Destination Marketing. Jaha, säger Håkan Hjort att UD äger frågan om Nation Branding, det kan han väl inte göra? Ingen ”äger frågan”. Vi ”äger” vår egen Nation Branding! Vår egen syn på hur vi ska göra med Sverige, utåt. Det är ju vi som har vår egen uppfattning, du har din, jag har min. Ingen kan komma och säga hur jag ska se på Sverige. Jag kan ju bara jobba utifrån det jag ser, min syn, det som känns relevant för mig. Och som jag tror är relevant för oss, här i (Y). Ja, och så måste du ju förstå att det inte är så lätt. Ja, det kan verkligen bli fel. Över en natt kan allt ha förändrats, bilden av (Y) har förändrats över en natt. Ja, du känner väl till vad som händer här! Du har ju läst tidningarna själv, och vet vad vi har att jobba med. Det är inte så himla lätt att ändra på. Så det är ju olika, beroende på vad som händer. Och det kan ingen hjälpa oss med, det får vi lösa själva. Eller går det att lösa? Går det att göra något åt detta? Det är ju inte alls bra för oss men vi

får göra det bästa av situationen helt enkelt. Nation Branding, svårt att definiera? Nej, det är det ju inte, det hör man ju vad det är. Ett land är sitt eget varumärke, det är inget konstigt med det men du ska inte gå och tro att du kan ändra på det. Varje människa, både du och jag, alla har rätten att tänka eller känna vad vårt land står för eller inte står för.. Dess historia... Nej, jag vet inte något om den. Vem han är [Anholt], [Fråga om NBI] Vad är detta för frågor, vi jobbar ju inte så, vi jobbar bara med att få hit turister, det är vårt uppdrag, att de ska gilla (Y) och komma hit. Vi tänker egentligen inte så mycket på något annat. Vår fokus ligger ute på kontinenten, där turismen kommer ifrån. Vi kan allt om det. Det ä detta vi jobbar med. Investeringar? Export? Vad är detta för frågor. Nej, har du inte lärt dig detta i skolan på samhällskunskapen? Vi sysslar vi inte med sånt, det är det andra som gör. Nej, varför skulle vi samarbeta? Kring vad? Fast vi var i Stockholm för inte alls länge sen, vi hade en monter på Centralstationen, det vet du kanske? Såg du den?⁴¹⁴

Marknadsansvarig projektledare i (Y)

Referral of informal talk on telephone with project leader at the marketing department in (Y), hand-written notes.

Ja, vi jobbar med Nation Branding, men jag är nyanställd. Det här är mitt första uppdrag inom marknadsföring. Jag har aldrig jobbat med marknadsföring tidigare så jag är inte så bekväm med att svara på dina frågor. Jo, jag ansvarar för projekten, men du måste tala med min chef som vet mycket mer. Jag har inte arbetat tillräckligt länge för att veta vad Nation Branding är eller står för. Du får ursäkta men jag är för ny här för att kunna svara på dina frågor. Jo, det är lätt att definiera, 8-9 på en skala 1-10. Man hör ju på orden vad det är... Nej, jag vet inget om historien. Nej, jag har aldrig hört talas [om Simon Anholt eller läst] om det. Jag vet bara att det finns, vi jobbar ju med det. Du får tala med min chef så får du nog bra svar.

Samtal med anställd vid info desk (Z)

Referral of informal talk on telephone with info desk (Z), hand-written notes.

Ja, vi jobbar med Nation Branding. Jo, jag har jobbat här ett tag, men jag ska faktiskt sluta nu, i nästa vecka. Nej, jag tror inte jag kan berätta något alls faktiskt, jag har ingen fördjupning i marknadsföring så jag kan inget om det. Jag har utbildning i ekonomi, ska nog läsa vidare, kanske mer om branding. Det vore roligt få veta mer om Nation Branding. Jo, jag kan nog definiera det, man hör ju vad det är. Nej, det är inte alls svårt definiera, jättelätt skulle jag vilja säga. 8-9 på en skala till 10. [Tror du att det kan vara kontroversiellt?] Nej, varför skulle det vara det? Det är väl inga konstigheter med det? [Propaganda? Gå fel?] Nej, i varje fall inte här i Sverige.

Samtal med anställd vid info desk (Z)

Referral of informal talk on telephone with info desk (Z), hand-written notes.

Visst jobbar Sverige och vi med Nation Branding. Nej, det är inte svårt att definiera, man hör ju vad det är. Jag vet inte alls mycket, du får fråga (B), han vet allt om detta. Jag vet inte om det stämmer. Det står på hemsidan, du får titta där. Det var ju konstigt, det är ju vår hemsida, det ska då där. Det bör ju

⁴¹⁴ Ja, det gjorde jag. Den var imponerande. Jag hoppades dessutom på att få möjligheten att träffa Region Manager i (Y) men det gick inte. Då jag befann mig i (Y) var denne ute på resa och ingen annan kunde svara på mina frågor. Man hänvisade till chefen, ”då får du svar på alla dina frågor”. Men chefen var inte på plats så det fick bli ett samtal på telefon i stället.

stämman. Jaha, står det så?.. Men det är fel, det vet jag. Vi har en ny organisation här. Ja, vi har omorganiserat. Jag vet faktiskt inte så mycket hur det är egentligen. Du får ursäkta, men jag måste få säga att jag är rätt ny här. Och allt är nytt här också, så det är inte så lätt heller för mig att få veta något. Jag har i princip börjat nyligen och kan ingenting om det du frågar. Men du kan hitta all information på hemsidan.. Nej, det stämmer inte heller. Du får tala med (B) eller (C). Då ska du nog få rätt svar. Förlåt!

Nationalekonomiska Föreningens öppna sammanträde, Handelshögskolan, 11 maj, 12:00 – 13:30

Kerstin af Jochnick 13:35 – 13:40

Digital recorded word-for-word interview and with the permission to be used in this thesis.

A five- minutes talk with Kerstin af Jochnick, First Deputy Chairman of the Swedish State Bank on Nation Branding as a new concept and framework for the Public Diplomacy in Sweden.

Jag kan inte säga att jag känner till begreppet men visst handlar det om att göra Sverige känt ute i världen. Jag tänker på alla stora sport-sammanhang, The Olympics, Eurovision Song Contest, är inte det väldigt mycket Nation Branding!? Jag börjar nu fundera på det och nej, det är inte svårt att definiera. Man hör att det handlar om att göra Sverige känt, om att marknadsföra Sverige. Det är lätt, och på en skala ett till tio är det 8-9, där 10 är det lättaste. Ämnet är viktigt för små länder, vi är ju egentligen kända utomlands för fysik, teknik och design, jag tänker på Skype och Spotify och design. Att nå ut och visa att vi ligger i framkant. Att vi är innovativa och duktiga på det vi gör. Jag tänker på teknik och design.. Vi är ju egentligen väldigt bra på det här! Och behöver visa att vi ligger i framkanten av utvecklingen och visa att vi finns och är bra på det vi gör. Det är väl bra att regeringen har ett övergripande ansvar, att man har ett perspektiv på det här och för ut detta.

Jag tror att centralbanker, tillsynsmyndigheter jobbar globalt, de vet vad Sverige är och vad Sverige står för. Det är viktiga frågor i verksamheten. Vi företräder Sverige det som Sverige står för, det är viktiga frågor, att hävda svenska och nordiska åsikter, försvara marknaden här, så att det går bra för Sverige.

Det finns ingen kunskap om NSU inom Riksbanken, vi är totalt ovetande om att Sverige jobbar med det här.

Ja, det är klart jag företräder Sverige, både privat och i min yrkesroll.

Jag tänker på Margot Wallström sa i Skavlan, att hon gärna säger när hon är utomlands att ”In Sweden we have a system”, men att det gillar man inte att höra i utlandet. Vi ska inte komma och tro att vi är något där ute, vi – ”lilla Sverige” – har väl inget att slå oss på bröstet för....

Jag kan känna mig mycket stolt som svensk och företrädare för Sverige både privat och yrkesmässigt.

Jaha, tyckte man så i (Y) [att UD inte äger frågan]. Där sysslar man antagligen med ” (Y) – branding”..

Samtal med Hans Rödén, pensionär (65) medlem i Nationalekonomiska förningen

Digital recorded word-for-word interview with the permission to be used in the empirical setting.

Hans Rödén tog examen på Handels 1970, jobbade två år som lärarassistent på nationalekonomiska institutionen. Flyttade till New York, arbetade 14 år för Internationella Valutafonden varav 4,5 år i Indonesien.

Jag har rest jorden runt 25 gånger, jag såg hela världen sen kom jag hem och insåg att Sverige är världens bästa land och nu bor jag i Täby, världens bästa kommun! Man måste ha något att jämföra med, kan man säga. Då tänker jag att Sverige är bäst!

Jaha, du skriver om Nation Branding. Vilket roligt ämne du har valt. Och intressant måste det vara också. Nej, jag har inte hört talas om det men det låter ju mycket bra. Jag tänker på en stor och fin artikel i en bilaga till Financial Times för inte alls länge sen, som handlade om detta, hur bra vi är i Sverige på i princip allting. Det stod där i FT i en *jättestor* artikel på flera sidor... Jag kände mig så stolt!

Då är Sverige säkert världsbäst på det också. Nation Branding, det låter väldigt fint och bra. Ja, vårt land är fantastiskt! Det behöver man inte åka hela världen runt för att inse, som jag har gjort. Det räcker med att vara hemma, bo och vistas här. Vårt land är och förblir det mest fantastiska landet på jorden. Se bara på den välfärd vi har lyckats skapa åt oss medborgare här, se på naturen och våra traditioner. Ja, håll med om att det är fantastiskt! Jag tror Sverige måste vara världens bästa, också inom Nation Branding. Lycka till med din uppsats!

Samtal med Aziz (54) från Algeriet

Retelling of informal talk with Aziz from Algeria

Aha, du skriver om *Nation Branding*.. Oh la la, du skriver om GUD... Jaha, nu ska man sälja *nationer* också. Det var inte alls illa. Det är STORT! De tror att de *är Gud*, eller? Ja, det måste de tro. Ja, det är staten det. Som tror att de kan göra precis som de vill. *Ja, de tror verkligen att de är Gud*... Hahaha....

*Aha, so you write about **Nation Branding**.. Oh la la, you write about GOD... Well, so now they are going to sell **nations** as well. Now, that is not too bad. I would say it is quite BIG! They think they are **God** - or what? Yes, that is what they must believe. Well, that is the State. Who believe they can do as they please. **Yes, they really believe they are God**...Hahaha....*

Elena Mattina, Italy (27)

Informal speech during the break with a seminar tutor at the SSE, Course 407 Macroeconomics

Of course I know what Nation Branding is! Of course I have heard of it! Of course it's easy to understand! You are talking to an ITALIAN! I come from ITALY!! We ARE Nation Branding!!! We Italians *always* brand our nation! Yes, of course I do it! I come from a small country: ITALY!!!! And WE are the BEST – in all categories – of course! ☺

10.6 Leading Experts on Nation Branding Research

Here follows a presentation of the experts within the Nation Branding research field that are mentioned in this paper.

Simon Anholt is leading authority on managing and measuring national identity and reputation, and the creator of the field of nation and place branding. He is a member of the UK Foreign Office's Public Diplomacy Board, and has advised the governments of some 30 other countries from Chile to Botswana, Korea to Jamaica, and Bhutan to the Faroe Islands. He is founding editor of the quarterly journal *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, and author of *Another One Bites the Grass; Brand New Justice, Brand America, Competitive Identity: The New Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Regions, and Places: Identity, Image and Reputation*. He publishes two major annual surveys, the Anholt Nation Brands Index and State Brands Index. He was awarded the 2009 Nobel Colloquia Prize for Leadership in Economics and Management and is a Parliamentarian of the European Cultural Parliament. For further information see www.simonanholt.com.



Andy Pike et.al., Brands and Branding Geographies, 2011

Keith Dinnie teaches at Temple University Japan (TUIJ), Tokyo. He has delivered masters and Honours level courses in various aspects of marketing and branding at the University of Edinburgh. He also taught on the world class Strathclyde MBA program, delivering seminars on marketing management and brand management & strategy in the UK as well as in international centers such as Athens, Hong Kong and Shanghai. /..He has published in various journals including the *Marketing Review*, *Journal of Brand Management*, and *Journal of General Management* and *Corporate Communications: An international Review*. /.. His research and consultancy work includes projects conducted on behalf of market-leading consultancies Landor Associates and Burson-Marsteller, as well as innovative research conducted into the emerging field of Nation Branding amongst senior decision-makers and brand consultants on a worldwide basis. He is the founder of Brand Horizons consultancy.

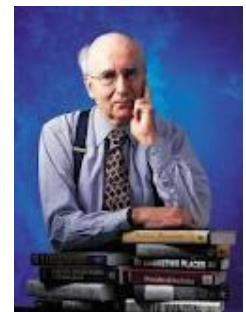
Keith Dinnie, Nation Branding, 2008

Ying Fan: I am Professor of Marketing at Northampton Business School. I have more than 25 years of experience in academia, and previously held faculty positions at the universities of Durham, Hertfordshire, Lincoln and Brunel. My qualifications include a BSc in computer science, and a MBA and PhD in marketing. I started my first job in a textile factory in 1975. Before coming to the UK in 1988, I worked in a university in Beijing, the State Economic Commission and Nixdorf Computer AG. I have taught at all levels in several broad subject areas: marketing, strategic management and international business, with a special expertise in international marketing. I also have extensive experience in curriculum design and programmed development. Over the last 18 years, I have developed innovative and dedicated methods to create an interactive learning environment, using self-made teaching materials and findings from my own research to engage students in the learning process and enhance their whole experience. My main research interests are in branding, marketing communications and cross-cultural management. I have authored more than 80 publications in academic journals and research conferences. My current research relates to Nation Branding and nation image management.



<http://www.northampton.ac.uk/people/ying.fan> [2012-05-09]

Dr. Philip Kotler is the S.C. Johnson & Son Distinguished Professor of International Marketing at the Northwestern University Kellogg Graduate School of Management in Chicago. He is hailed by Management Centre Europe as "the world's foremost expert on the strategic practice of marketing." Dr. Kotler is known to many as the author of what is widely recognized as the most authoritative textbook on marketing: *Marketing Management*, now in its 13th edition. He has also authored or co-authored dozens of leading books on marketing. In addition, Dr. Kotler has published more than one hundred articles in leading journals, including the *Harvard Business Review*, *Sloan management Review*, *Business Horizons*, *California Management Review*, and the *Journal of Marketing*. Dr. Kotler presents continuing seminars on leading marketing concepts and developments to companies and organizations in the U.S., Europe and Asia. He participates in KMG client projects and has consulted to many major U.S. and foreign companies - including IBM, Michelin, Bank of America, Merck, General Electric, Honeywell, and Motorola - in the areas of marketing strategy and planning, marketing organization, and international marketing.

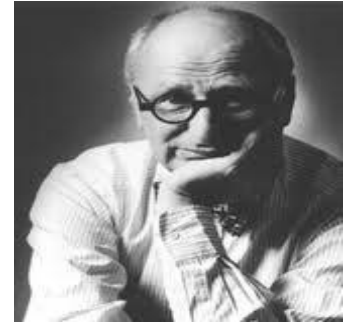


<http://www.kotlermarketing.com> [2012-05-09]

Wally Olins Hello I'm Wally! You can visit my website if you like
<http://www.wallyolins.com/>

Olins is chairman of Saffron Brand Consultants based in London, Madrid, New York, Mumbai, Vienna, Dubai, São Paulo, Shanghai and Istanbul. He studied history in Oxford and has written the following books on brand management: *Corporate Identity* (1989),

Trading Identities – why countries and companies are taking on each other's roles (1999). *On brands* (2003) **Wally Olins website [2012-05-09]**



Nicolas Papadopoulos is Chancellor's Professor and Professor of Marketing and International Business at the Sprott School of Business of Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. His research focuses on international strategy and buyer responses to it and includes place images and branding, the role of culture, expansion strategy and international market systems. He has over 200 publications, including the edited books *Product and Country images* (1993) and *Marketing from the Trenches* (2006), the textbook *International Marketing* (et.al. 2011), and recent articles in *International Business Review*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, and *Journal of Europe*, and is a member of six journal editorial boards including *the Journal of Academy of Marketing and Sciences*, *International Marketing Review* and *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*.

Andy Pike et.al., Brands and Branding Geographies, 2011

Andy Pike is Professor of Local and Regional Development in the Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies (CURDS), Newcastle University, UK. His research interests are in the geographical political economy of local and regional development. He is widely published in international journals, co-author of *Local and Regional Development* (Routledge, 2006) and co-editor of *Handbook of Local and Regional Development* (Routledge, 2011). He has undertaken research project for the

OECD, European Commission and national, regional and local organizations. He is currently working on brand and branding geographies, evolution in economic geography and spatial inequalities, spatial economic policy and decentralization. He is an editor of *Regional Studies* and leads the postgraduate local and regional development programs in CURDS.

Andy Pike et.al., Brands and Branding Geographies, 2011



11 Epilogue

Summary,

Validity is not the same as usefulness. Accuracy is not the same as usefulness. Single minded pursuit of validity and accuracy doesn't ensure usefulness. On the contrary, it guaranties a useless product.

Any theory has a domain of usefulness and a domain in which it is misleading. A great economist knows when a model works and when it doesn't. Before falling completely in love with your latest model, it is best if you spend some time thinking about its domain of usefulness. What public policies does your model help formulate?

Analytical thinking has a trinity of tasks: formulate questions, chose a set of alternative theories, collect and analyze the data. These three tasks can be performed with the help of three different languages: Words, graphs, and math. Be multilingual and chose the language that best fits the task.

Data analyzes has a trinity of languages too: pictures, words, and numbers. Don't imagine that humans can understand numbers. Concentrate on pictures and words.

*Last, and most important, the Heckscher-Ohlin framework, its representation in various models, and the progress that has been made to bring it to life with real data are economics at its best. But there is still much work to be done.*⁴¹⁵

⁴¹⁵ Leamer, Edward, *The Craft of Economic: Lessons from the Heckscher-Ohlin Framework*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2012, p 165