



Airline Branding

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Airline Marketing

Wed 6th - Session 3

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Airline Branding

Without a heart,
it's just a machine.



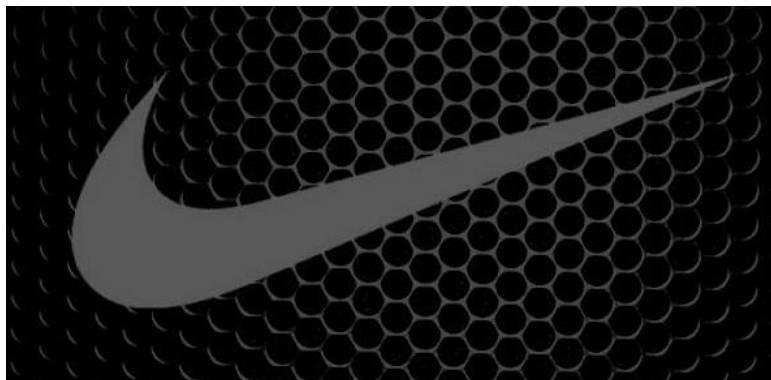
Dr Keith Mason

Head, Centre for Air Transport Management

What brands define you?



D&G

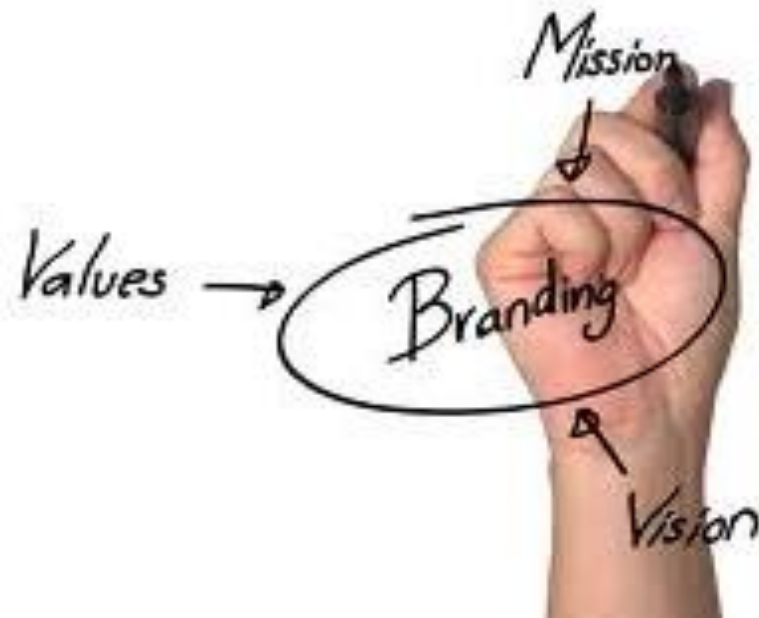


Ray-Ban

What brand values
differentiate these
companies?



What is a Brand?



The brand is a promise of **value served** with unique integrity and passion. Brand is a unique combination of **rational, emotional values** and qualities associated with a single product, services or organisation that leaves an impression in the audience's mind. It act as a credible **guarantee of quality**. Over time a brand can become a valuable asset through accumulated customer experiences based on investment made in **quality, clarity** and **consistency of communication**.

Brand = Reputation

Why Branding?

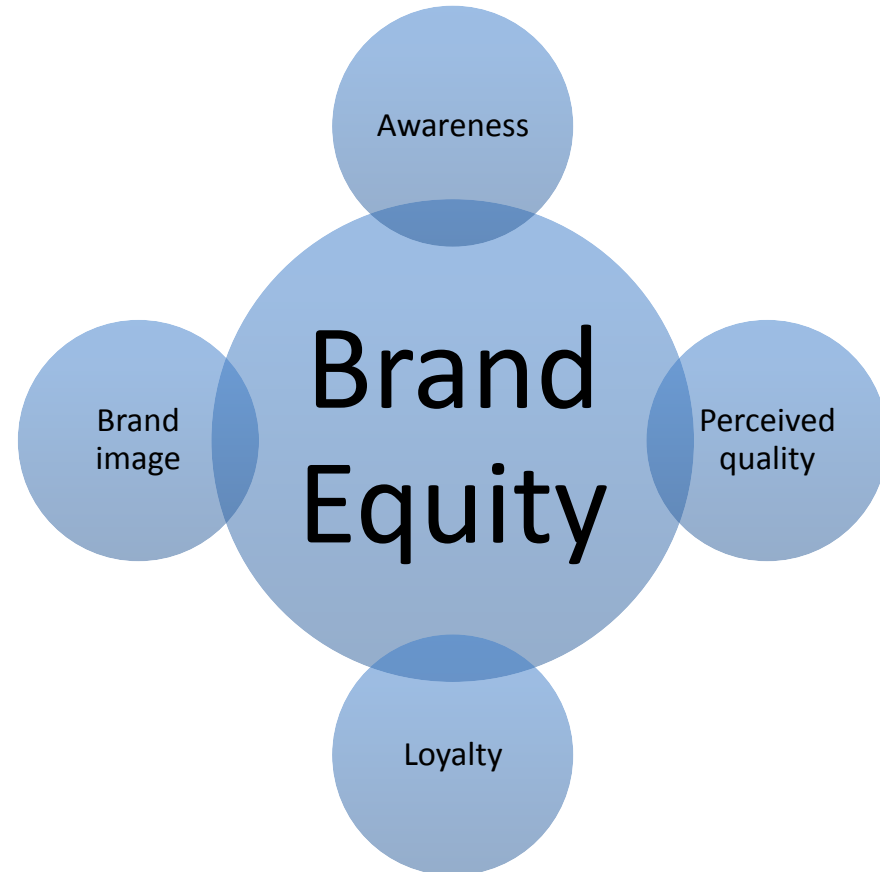
- Effective product differentiator
 - especially in markets where products or services are similar
- Increased customer loyalty
- Allow for price premium
- Can provide additional revenue through franchising activities
- Can be extended to other products/services
 - Costs and risk of developing new brands are very high
 - It is estimated that 19 out of every 20 new brands fail
- Can act as a barrier to entry for new products
- Attracts high quality employees

Brand Evolution

- Brand recognition and awareness – familiarity
- Brand acceptance – seeing products in a positive light
- Brand preference – one brand is more desired
- Brand loyalty – regular purchase

Consumer based brand equity

- Keller
 - A strong brand is an outcome of high brand awareness, positive associations that suit the needs of the customer.
- Kim and Kim and others
 - Brand equity given by loyalty, awareness, perceived quality, brand image and the interrelationships between the factors.



Consumer based Brand equity

- Describes the brand and its identity/characteristics
- Sets direction for company
 - Communications, product, people
- Provides a backbone for measurement
 - people, product and performance
- Aligns the company behind one vision
 - Crucial for customer-facing staff

Why's an airline brand different?

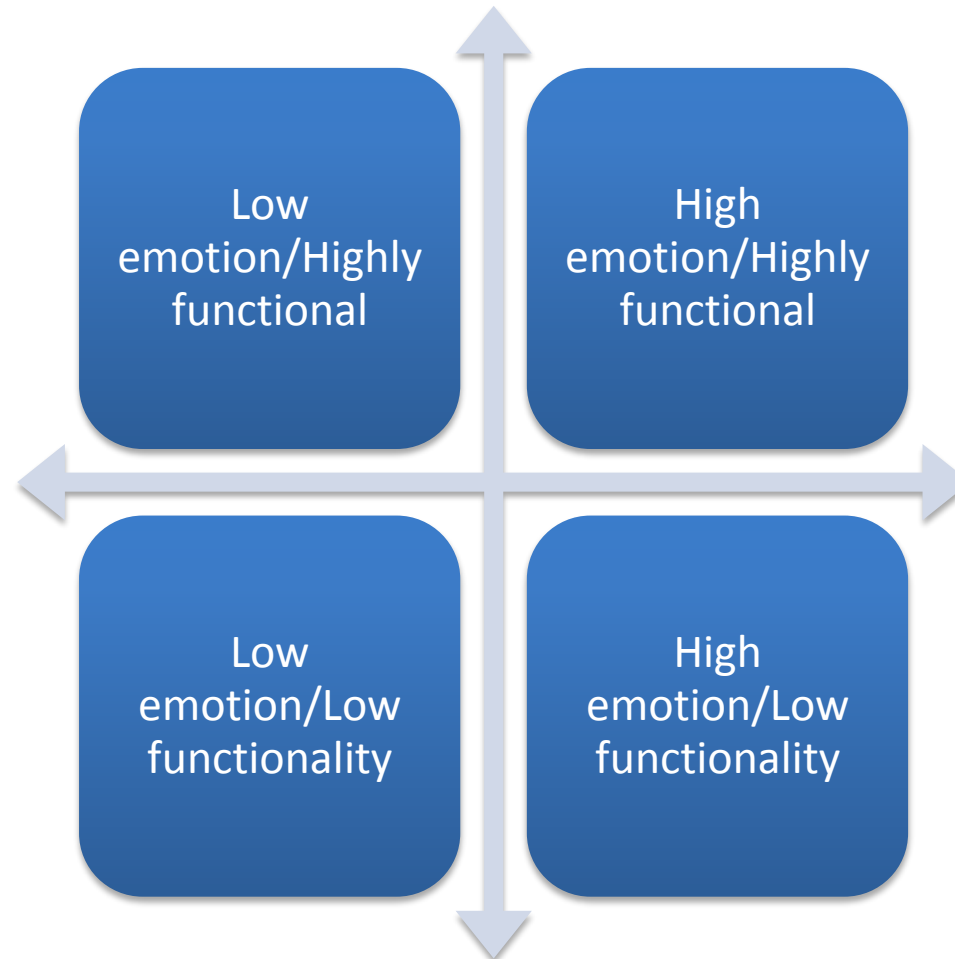
- Emotional
- 'Product AND service' not just a 'product'
- Different purchase drivers versus other industries
- Reliability on staff to deliver the brand experience
- 'Multi-locational'

Why do airlines fail to create great brands?

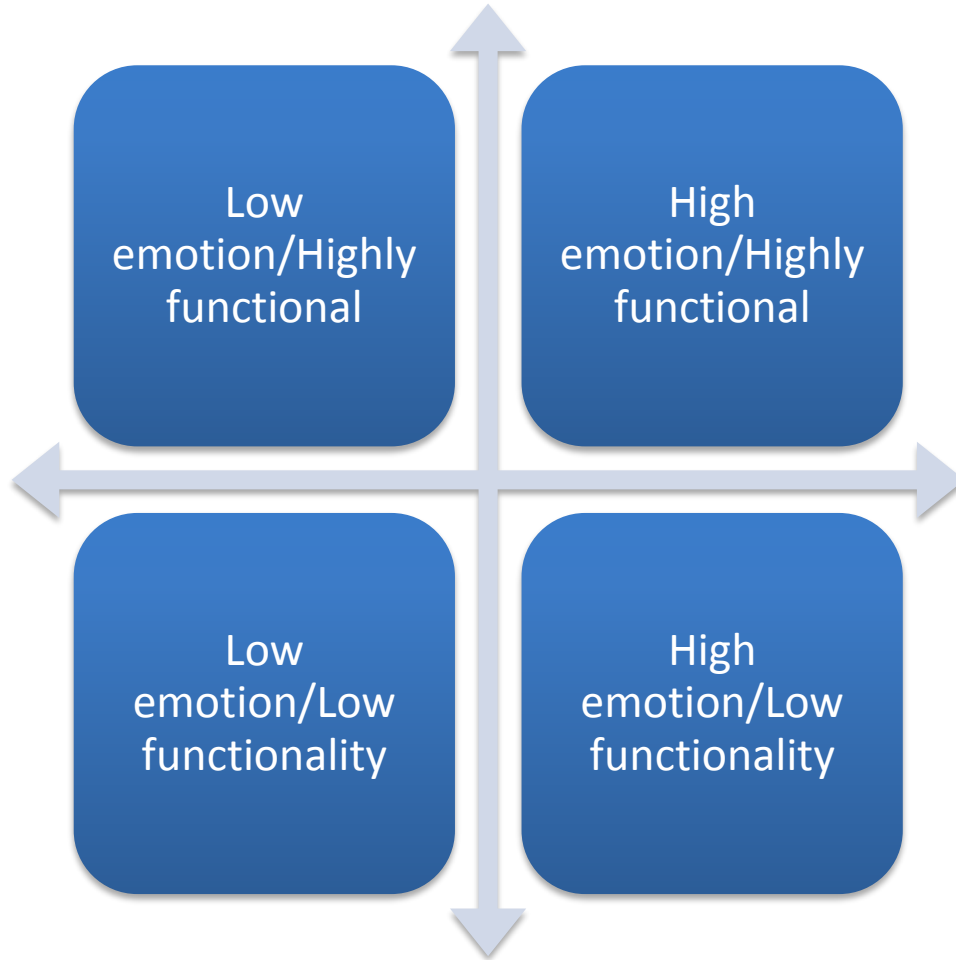
- Airline customers tend to base decisions on price, FFP, schedule and occasionally aircraft fleet
- Services are harder to brand than products
- Airlines focus on easily copied functional not emotional values
- Not clearly understood or communicated brand values
- (Rather) Small local markets and historically focus on nationality
- Alliance membership reinforce a view that an one airline's product is much the same as another's.

“When people hear the brand name, all you want is that they automatically connect it with their emotional benefit which makes them want to select your brand over and over again and recommend the experience, how they feel, to their family and friends.”

Function and Emotion



Differentiate on emotion
Deliver on function



Measured by:

- Functional
 - Cost leadership
 - On-time performance
 - Seat comfort
 - Network size
- Emotional
 - Brand rankings
 - Social media presence
 - Google trends

Brand values in the airline industry

Examples of Tangible

Safety
Punctuality
Seating Comfort
IFE
Seat pitch
Minimum connect time

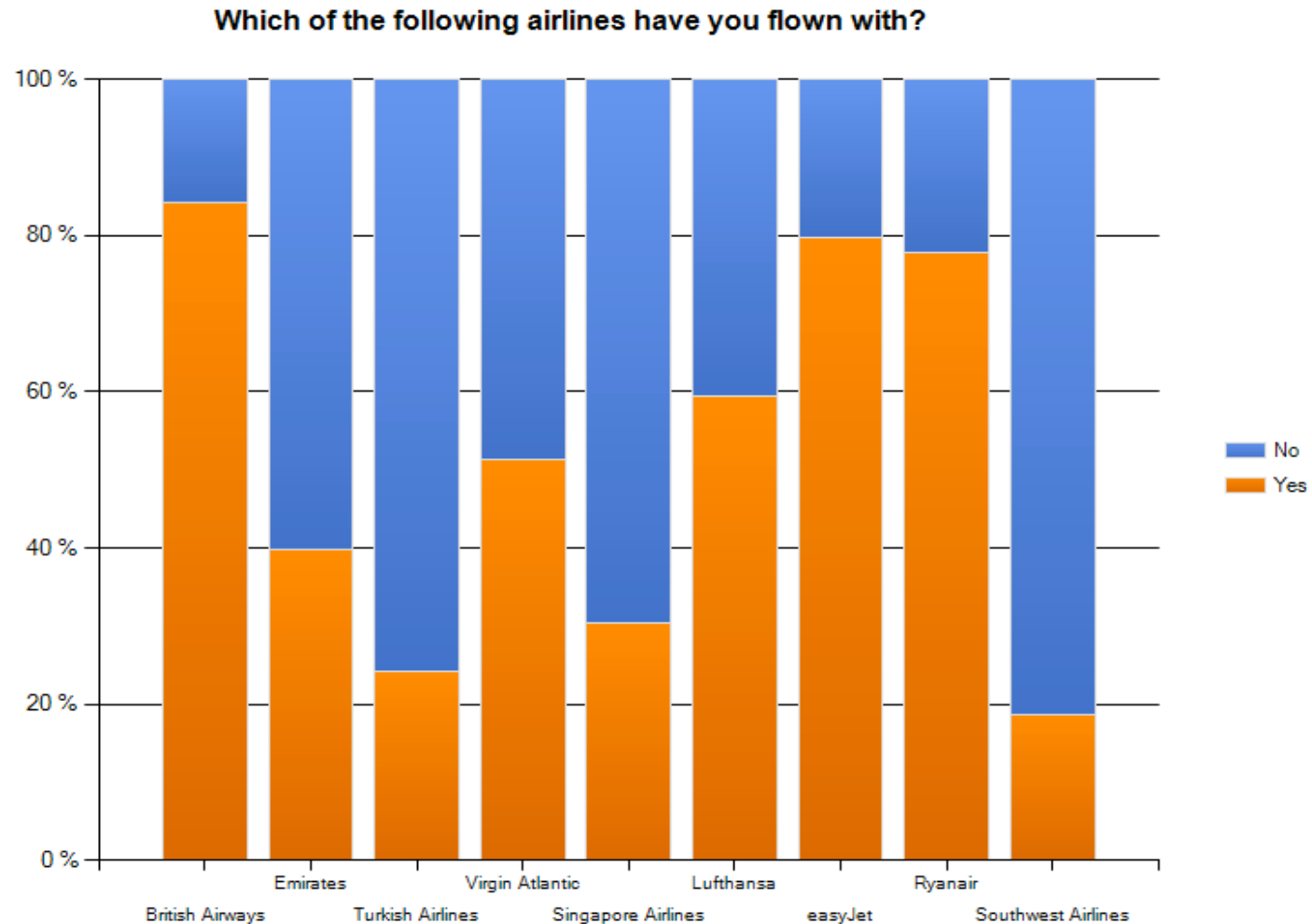
Examples of Psychological Brand Values

'Proven' and 'Trustworthy'
Prestige/Status
Fun
Friendliness
Patriotism
Innovative
Caring
'A Winner'

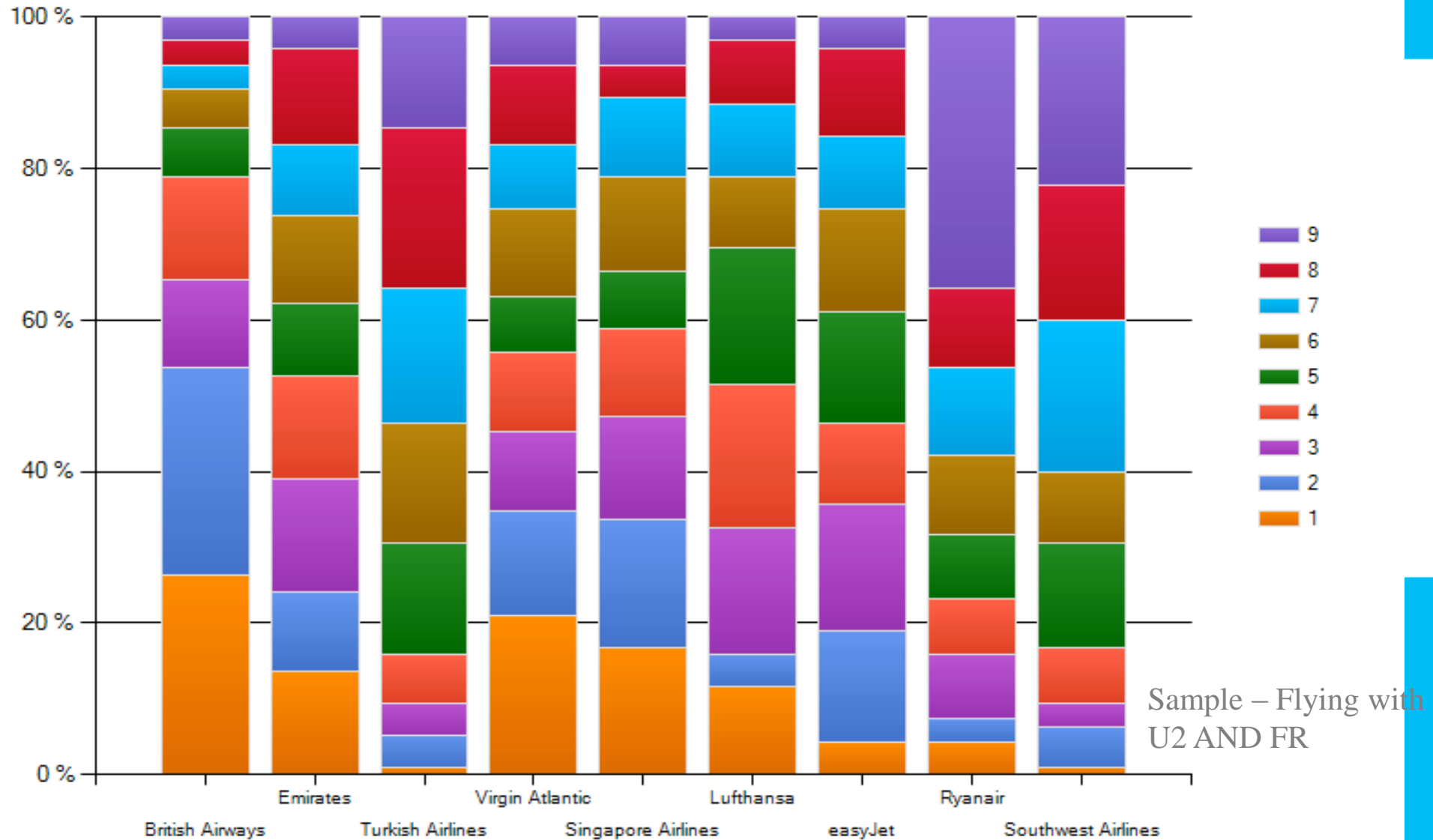
A student's analysis



A non-scientific study of airline preferences (n=177)

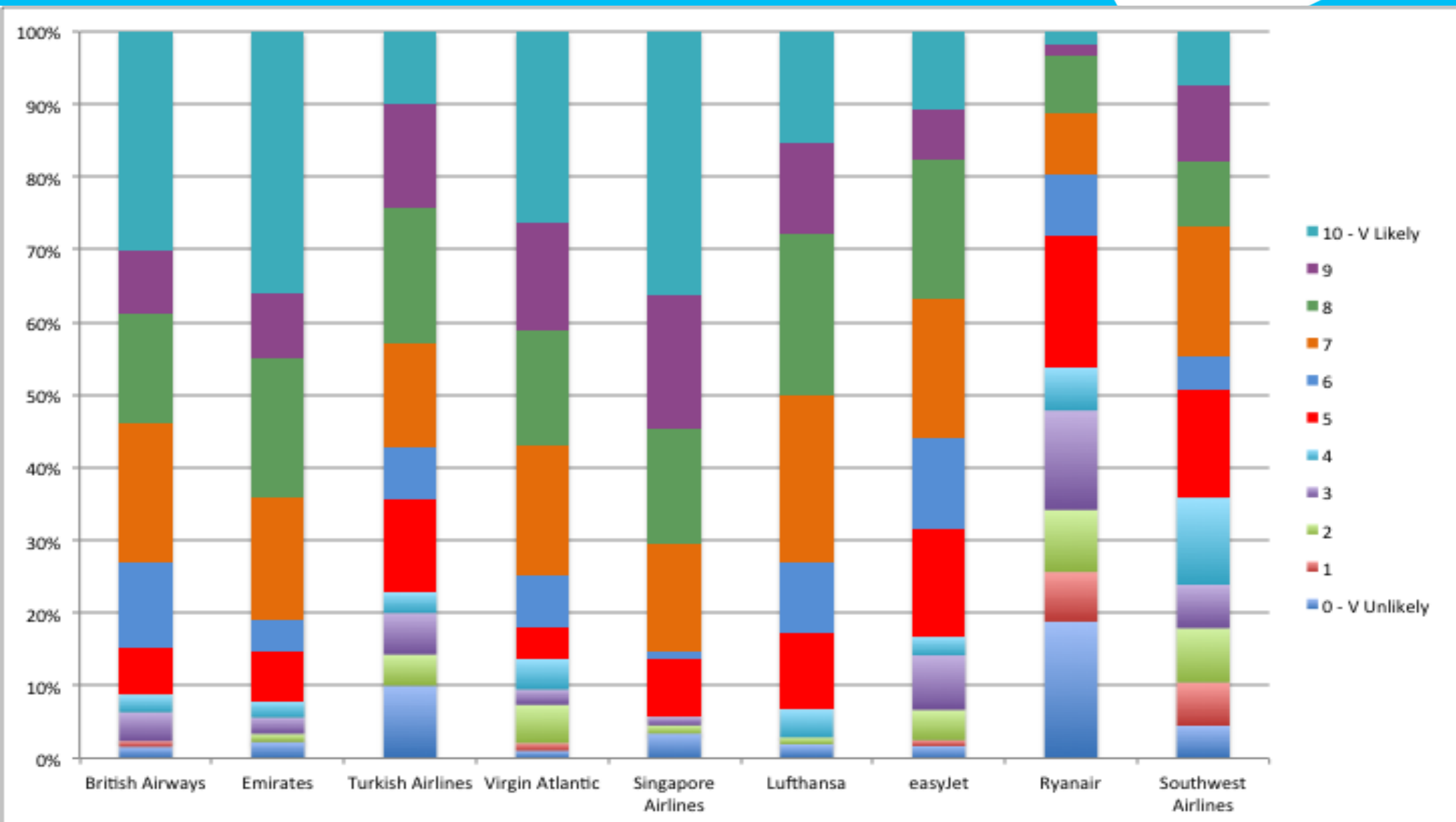


Which of the following airlines do you like the most? - please sort the list into most preferred to least preferred



Likely to recommend?

Sample – Fliers of each airline only



Branding Strategies

- Global brand – a uniform brand name and product worldwide (not possible in airline industry due to ownership and bilateral regulations)
- Global brand modified for different markets (eg Global alliances?)
- Multi-brands – each product has its own unique brand name and separate brand identity. One owner but different brand names to avoid brand dilution (BA – Club World, Euro Traveller, World Traveller Plus)
- Sub-brands – brand extension on services in the same market (eg American Airlines, American Eagle)
- Corporate umbrella brands – company name becomes the brand name and used for different products and services in unrelated markets (eg Virgin and easy)

Your brand helps you differentiate

- What you own dictates what space you occupy
- This allows the consumer to understand what you stand for and whether they're interested

What does uniform say
about your airline?



Shandong and Sichuan Airlines

Shandong's "Me too" livery



Sichuan Airlines succeeds in differentiating its brand by drawing on traditional Chinese dress





easyJet

easyJet



Successful Brand Characteristics

- Have evolved over time
- The brand values are clear (eg Virgin: fun, value for money, sense of challenge, innovation and quality)
- Company's culture is in line with brand values (eg Southwest)
- Employees recruitment is not just based on intellect and functional knowledge but also whether their values align with the value of the brand
- The employees have a good understanding of the brand and its position
- The corporate identity (logos, symbols, colours, etc) reflects the brand values
- The company is consistent in delivering its promises

Source of Brand Strength

- Leadership - how dominant is the brand in its sector?
- Market - growth characteristics of market
- Stability – well established or not
- Internationality – international brands worth more than national ones
- Trend – sales, profits,...
- Support – marketing expenditure
- Protection – patent protection, copyright, imitation, etc

Aspects of successful branding

Aspects of successful branding	
Consistency	36%
Understanding of customer/target	18%
Message/communication	15%
Creative/design/brand ID	13%
Relevance	12%
Differentiation/Uniqueness	12%
Key Stakeholder buy-in	11%
Positioning	10%
Clarity	9%
Connection to customer/target	9%
Awareness/recall/memorability	8%

A survey of branding experts. Source: Interbrand 2007.



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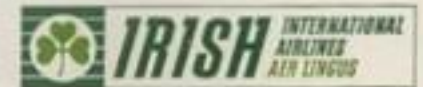


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1995/96

Winter Timetable

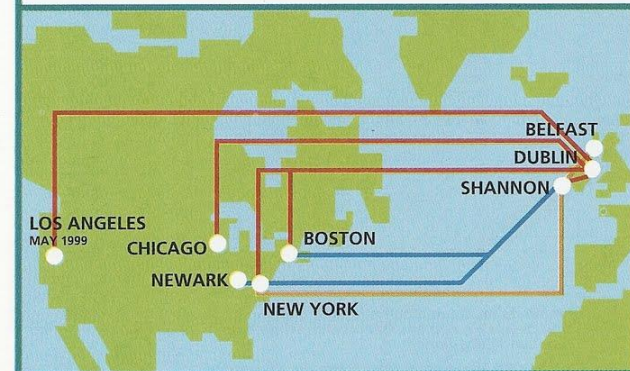


Effective from 22 October 1995

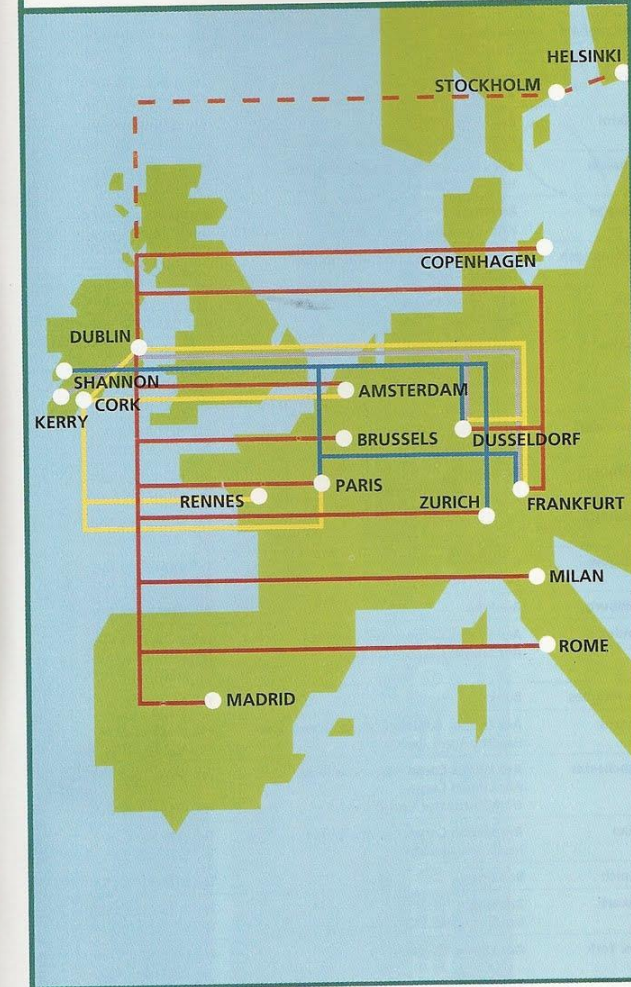
1999 IRELAND AND UK



USA



CONTINENTAL EUROPE



KEY TO ROUTES

Dublin

Cork

Shannon

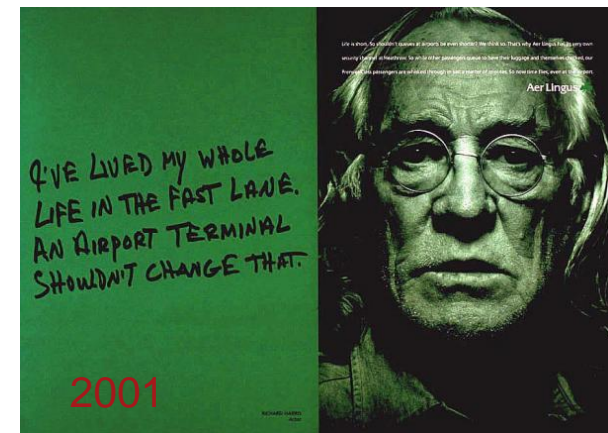
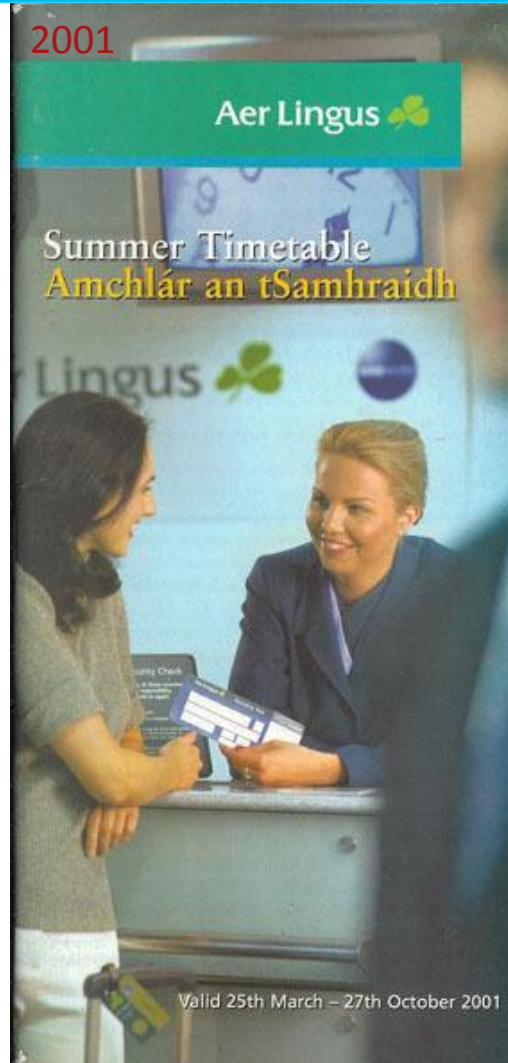
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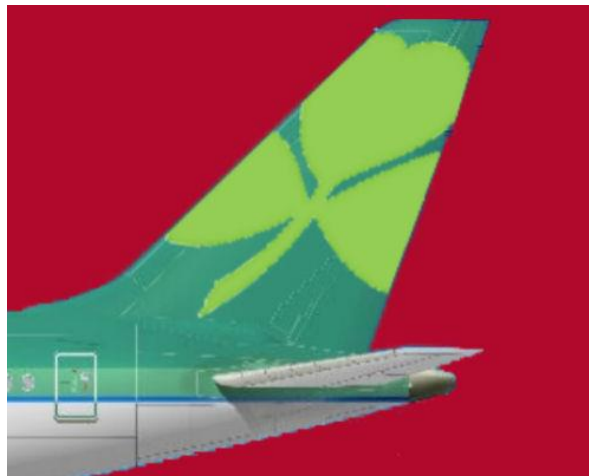
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Domestic

Belfast



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