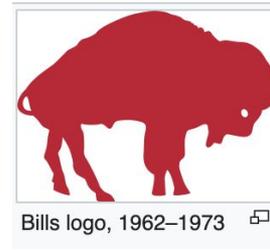


Intro

This video assignment will be present in podcast/like form, I will dive into my selected brand; the Buffalo Bills. I will explain how the brand is equitable, the branding models that relate to the brand, a critical analysis of it's positioning versus the market and provide three recommendations on how it could improve/develop its equity using academic research. Firstly, A **brand** is a product or service whose dimensions differentiates in some way from others to satisfy the same need (Aulia and Brilania, 2017). These differences may be rational and tangible or more symbolic, emotional and unintangible (Keller, 2003).

Timeline; Buffalo Bills

- Merged to NFL in 1970. Owned by Ralph Wilson until his estate sold to Pegula family in 2014.
- What we do: jump on tables, eat hot wings and watch Football
- Added value: Bills Mafia Fanbase and we are considered to be one of the craziest fan bases in the league
- Slogan: “Where else would you rather be, then right here, right now”
- The “Buffalo” in Buffalo Bills ties the brand to the city of Buffalo, NY
- Buffalo tested new markets recently by playing in London UK for just the second time



Brand Positioning Model (Elliot et al, 2011): Buffalo Bills

“Positioning is about which **benefits** the brand can deliver better than other brands and which are very important to the target market.” (Elliot, Percy & Pervan, 2011).

(**name**) is the brand for (**target audience**) that satisfies (**category need**) by offering (**brand benefit**) (Elliott, Percy and Pervan, 2011).

Brand Positioning Statement

- The **Buffalo Bills** are a team made for **Football fans** who love elitism and craziness. They represent a **diehard “Mafia” fan base** which is unlike like any other team in the market and satisfy fans with the **best American Football team in the world**. The main benefit of supporting them is to **feel as a part of one crazy family**, and consume entertainment of the best Football in America, together.

“nobody circles the wagons like the Buffalo Bills”.

Positioning Bullseye

1. **Values/ Personality/ Character**

- Hardcore, diehard, passionate, family

2. **Substantiators (reasons to believe)**

- Join the mafia and root for the team that once they win, will be one of the greatest American sports stories

3. **Points of Parity**

- Uses Football as its main product offering just like every other team

4. **Brand Mantra**

- Feeling a sense of family/ community, supporting the best team, having the best fanbase

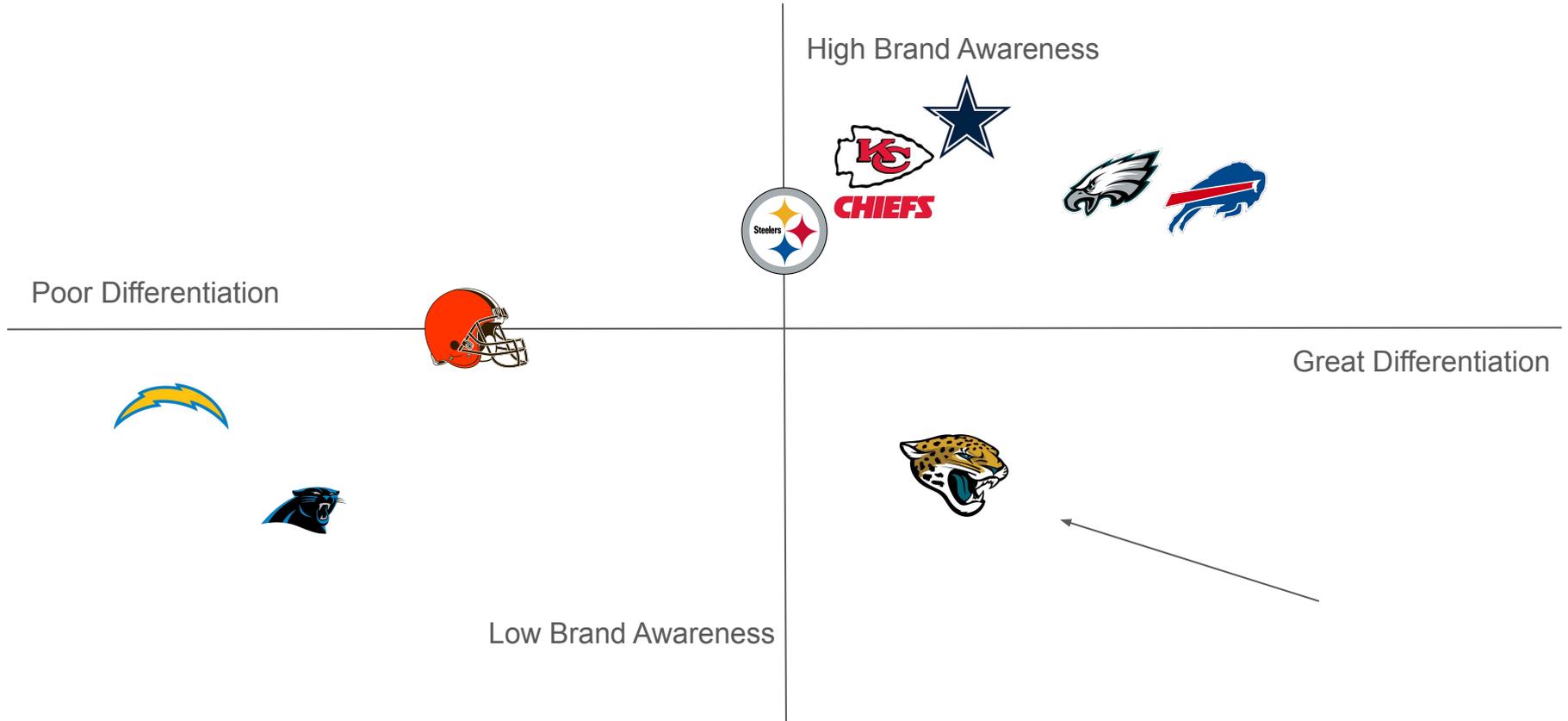
5. **Points of Difference**

- Bills Mafia Fanbase, city of Buffalo

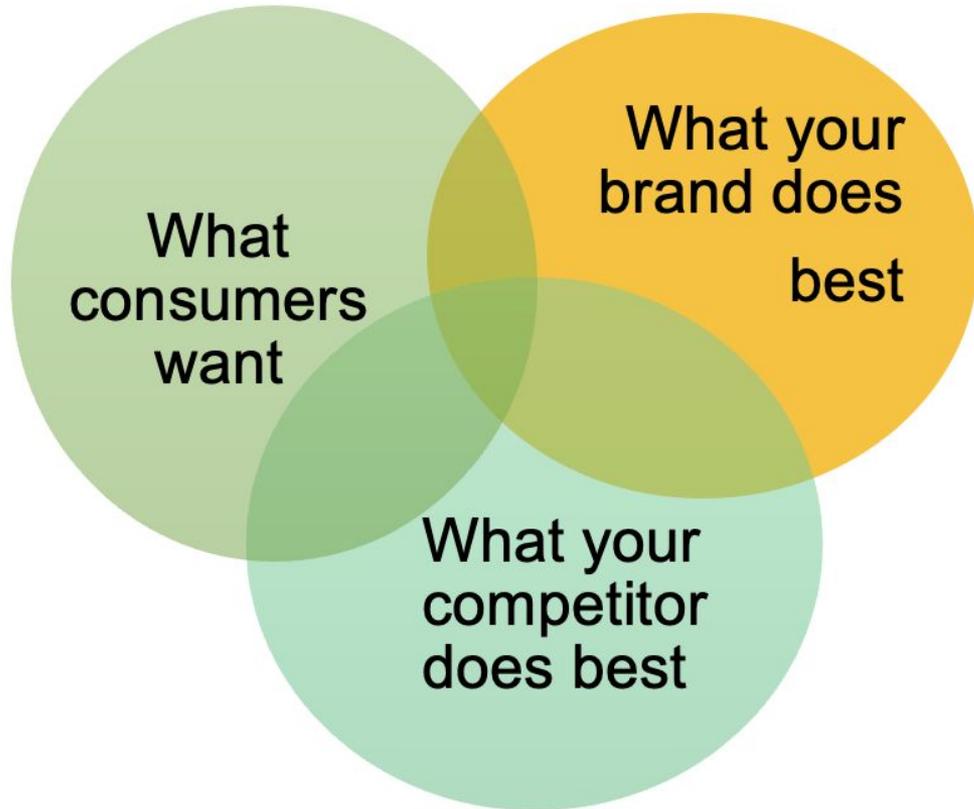
6. **Executional Properties/ Visual Identity**

- Buffaloes, hectic fans, middle of nowhere

Perceptual Map Building in 2024



Consumers Map (Robertson, 2015)



1. Consumers want the best Football
2. Bills offer Football with one of the best fans but still need to win
3. Some of our top competitors also do steps 1 & 2

For the Bills, my selling proposition is to join the mafia as soon as possible

Brand Equity - what is it?

“A set of assets (and liabilities) linked to a brand’s name and symbol that adds to (or subtracts from) the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or that firm’s customers”

(Aaker, 1996, pp. 7-9)

- I define it as the **value** that the brand **gains** from its set of **assets & liabilities viewed** through **consumer perception**
- This matters as it leads to increased sales, higher profits, and more influence on customers (Round & Roper, 2017).

What Impacts brand equity?

- A brand’s products & services, a symbol or name, a representation of the brand that can be negative or positive, word of mouth, quality of the brand, preferences, trends

Buffalo Bills - Brand Equity

How/Where does the brand create equity?

- Loyalty: long-time Bills fans are known to have gone through it all seeing rock bottom, if they still remain, they are incredibly loyal
- Perceived fanbase/culture (check pic)
- Associations: feelings of family in the “Mafia”
- Team success
- Reputation
- Tailgates



Brand Equity Cont.

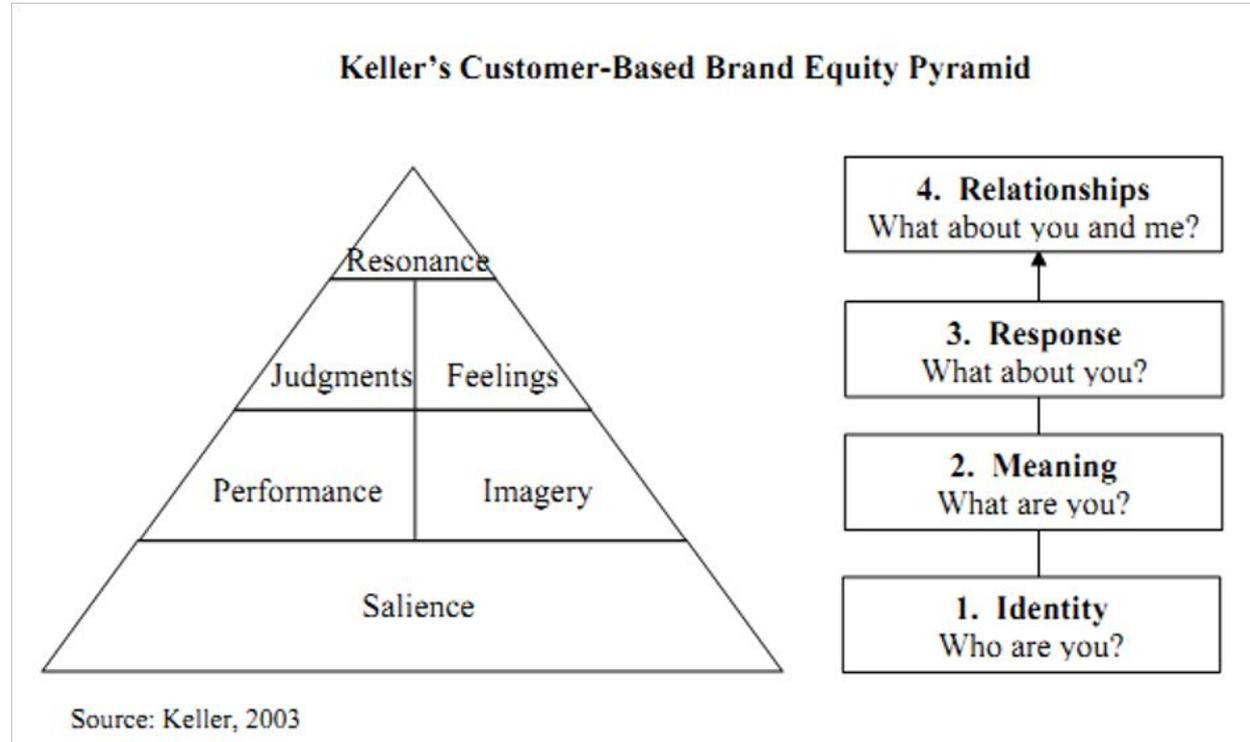
What impacts the Bills' Brand Equity:

- Other top teams in the NFL (division)
- The style of football produced
- Team history
- Team representation
- Rivalries
- Culture
- Fanbase
- Star players
- Logo
- Reputation
- Recognition
- Customer Experience

This directly affects their brand awareness. What impacts their equity, is what consumers recognize when selecting a team to support. The brand is currently at an all-time high, due to it's Super Bowl contention, the last few seasons.

Consumer Based Brand Equity Model (CBBE)

- The CBBE pyramid covers the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of a brand (Keller, 1993).
- Representing how brand equity is built, upon these factors:



Brand Resonance:
People are more loyal to the brand than anything else, ride or die.

Judgement:
Crazy people, Buffalo isn't too nice

Feelings:
Sense of a hectic family, cold weather

Performance:
Above average Football product (Super Bowl contenders)

Imagery:
Bills Mafia's extrinsic offerings

Salience:
Best team in American Football



Buffalo is still widely smaller than some of its competition, the culture is held tighter together. Therefore, Kapferer's model implies for the Buffalo Bills that an area of improvement needed is growth internationally. This links to global branding theory and how the ability to brand through new markets allows leveraging of communication and promotional efforts (Pitta and Franzak, 2008). Chadwick (2017) suggests improving global branding as other teams in the market such as the Jacksonville Jaguars are steps ahead... The worry is that an NFL franchise with such a strong Identity like the Bills, may fall behind due to potential threats of globalisation/expansion. As the game grows over time, I believe the NFL will have an American Football team in Europe therefore this could be a conflict of interest in the future. The Buffalo Bills could further globalize by expressing their desire for European ties, currently, the Jaguars have a large advantage as their owner also owns Premier League

HOW IS THE BILLS BRAND IMAGE + IDENTITY SELF-CONGRUENT?

That the greater the congruity between a brand's personality and the individuals' actual self, the greater the brand loyalty (e.g. Bauer et al. 2006; Sirgy 1982).

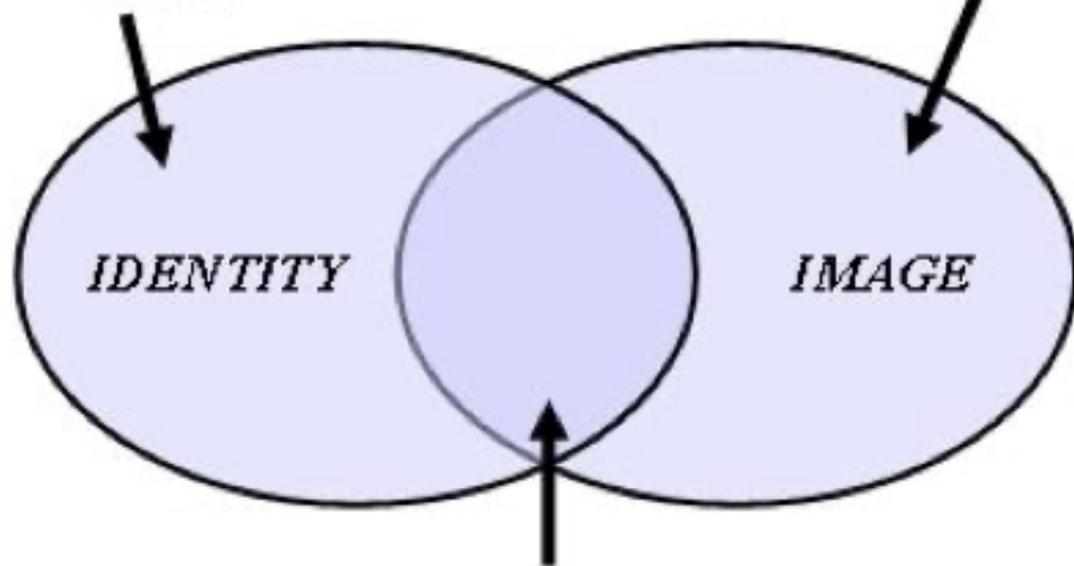
Self-congruity is defined as the match between a brand image and an individual's self-concept (Sirgy and Su, 2000).

- I feel a sense of self-congruence as I feel I overlap between how they wish to be perceived and how other consumers perceive them as well

The Buffalo Bills Identity is the way they wish to be perceived, The bills image is the way the consumers perceive them. They do not overlap as the Bills fully intend to and here's why:

How the brand owner
(management) defines what the
brand is

How consumers perceive
the brand



Goal: as much overlap as
possible

Figure 1: Brand Identity and Brand Image

Brand Identity vs Brand Image - Buffalo Bills

Identity

Image

- Resilience
- Community involvement
- History & culture

- Passionate Fanbase
- Bills Mafia = family

- Performance/ team success
- Media coverage
- Personalities (fans/ athletes)

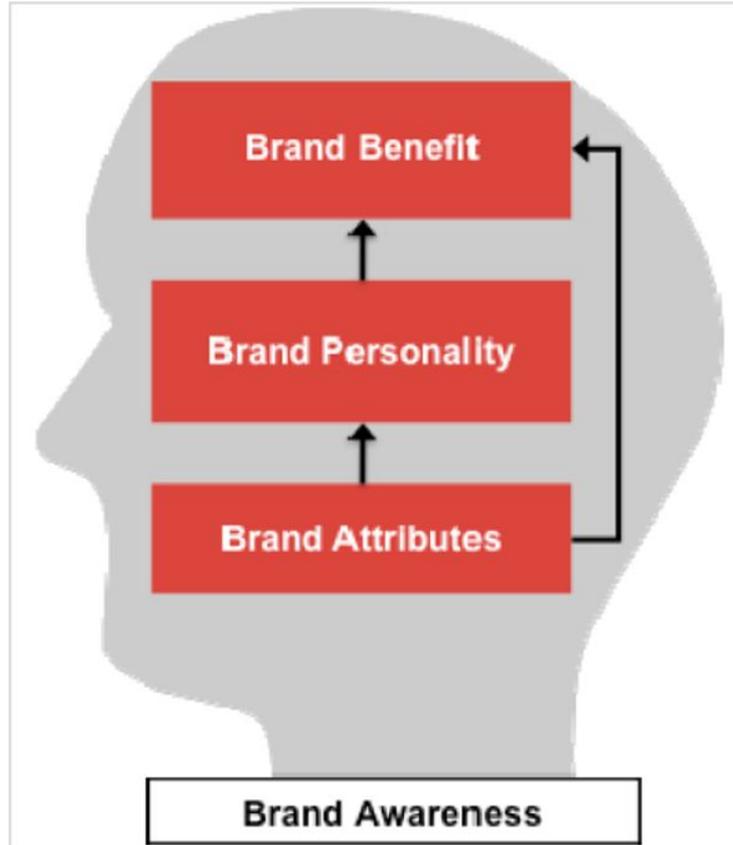
Brand Image Conceptualisation (Burmamann and Stolle, 2017)

Input:

Brand Benefit: the combination of below.

Brand Personality: Diehard, extreme, too crazy

Brand Attributes: Football in Buffalo, family



Output:

Brand Name: Buffalo Bills

Brand Logo: Looks like it's currently running

Brand Mantra: "Where else would you rather be?" (no where)

Recommendations

1. Improve In-Stadium experience for fans

The new stadium is under development for 2025, being based off of Tottenham Hotspur stadium.

As for the new stadium, more game-day fan friendly amenities need to be offered by the organization. Highmark stadium (current stadium) doesn't exactly have great cell signal and little to no wifi. Making concessions available to order through the Bills app further provides data on what concessions are more popular than others, and generates more traffic through the application to then advertise the brand.

With the next generation of sport, in-game experience is at an all time high. According to Giorgio, "Bringing a holistic approach to delivering a great stadium experience can bring teams and fans closer together, at home, or on the go and throughout the year (Giorgio, 2019).

The current stadium doesn't exactly target neutral fans. I brought my friend to a pre-season game and being a part of the Mafia was fun to him, but the game itself wasn't all that interactive for him.

If the organization focused on targeting more Bills fans, who aren't as serious as the mafia, then the fanbase would grow. Pitoniak (2022) stated: "The reality is, without Rochester and Southern Ontario, the Bills would have been history long ago. The Buffalo area isn't large or affluent enough to support an NFL franchise on its own, and the Bills would have been forced to relocate to a bigger market if they hadn't expanded their reach.

The cowboys however, utilized a standing section for the stadium which brings in closer to 100,000 spectators and the fans in that section can be thought of as "ultras" (obviously not the exact same). This in-game stadium experience further provided a home field advantage for the Boys brand.

Recommendations

2. Pursue further globalisation

- I really recommend the Bills to continue to push forward with expanding internationally.
 - NFL International series has ranged between 60,000-85,000 in attendance despite most lack luster games (Statista, 2022).
 - READ BELOW
-
- There isn't much to lose, jags fans were upset cuz they switched from one to two games this year, if I were Buffalo, I'd stay with one

Recommendations

3. Improve the Buffalo Bills App

- Let fans watch on the app so seeing every game is guaranteed (not every fan has access to all the different variety of streaming platforms that broadcast each and every game as it is diff most the time)
- Improve social media and marketing in App
- Improve merchandise nfl/shop navigation
- Host live stream Q&A's on the App
- Interactive seat viewer