**ВНЗ «УКРАЇНСЬКИЙ КАТОЛИЦЬКИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ»**

**Факультет суспільних наук**

**Кафедра медіакомунікацій**

*Пояснювальна записка*

до магістерської дисертації

освітньо-кваліфікаційний рівень – магістр

**на тему:**

# “Branding communications for tech companies and their influence on the B2B market”

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**Львів – 2019**

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# INTRODUCTION

**Actuality**

Remarkably, a number of past studies lament the status of B2B branding research, claiming that it has been under-researched, scarce and lagging behind industry practice. However, as business markets have become more sophisticated under the pressures of commoditization, globalization and growing customer power, B2B firms are increasingly seeking competitive advantage by branding their products. As a response to increasing industry attention, recent years have seen the publication of a vast number of B2B branding articles, and special issues devoted to B2B branding in such journals as the Journal of Brand Management, the Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing and Industrial Marketing Management that evidence the current importance of this topic. In addition, B2B branding is highlighted as a prominent area requiring further research in a recent literature review examining future avenues of B2B marketing.

**The objective and tasks of the study**

The aim of this study is to investigate strategies of the branding communications and to gain a deeper understanding of their influence of the business-to-business environment; to describe branding communications process in B2B tech companies.

In accordance with the aim of the research, the following tasks were set in the dissertation:

- to define the concept of brand and branding communications;
- to describe the activities in building a corporate brand for tech companies;
- to analyze the impact of branding communications on B2B relations;
- to analyze how corporate brand activity changes the business development process;
- to interview professionals of the tech companies;

- to suggest branding communication strategy for a software engineering company.

**The object of the research** is marketing communications.

**The subject of the research** is branding communications in tech companies.

**Literature overview**

Academics have long raised a concern about the lack of systematic research on B2B branding. Yet to date, integrative literature reviews taking stock of the extant B2B branding literature have been virtually absent, while the vast majority of the extant overviews are essentially "narrative literature reviews".

The study is based on more than 25 journal articles from the period of the 1950s. So, the dissertation work provides an overview of past research and highlights dominant research methods and perspectives. The most significant literature for this dissertation were papers about corporate communications and corporate brand by John M.T. Balmer, Professor of Corporate Marketing and Director of the Marketing and Corporate Brand Research Group. Balmer co-developed the Corporate Heritage field in 2006, he is also so-called 'father' or creator of the corporate brand concept.

Researches by Lisa Wood from The University of Edinburgh also played a significant role in the work. The master dissertation identifies some research gaps and limitations in the current literature to be addressed in future research.

**Research methods**

The methods are very diverse. Among the main ones are:

- analysis;
- synthesis;
- personal interviews;
- historical method;
- observation;
- measurement.
- field trials.

Also, for my researches, such method as case studies (analysis of actual materials of real business situations) was used. Advantages of this method are flexibility, a natural context for data collecting, it also leads to the creation of new hypotheses.

Generally, research on branding communications (including B2B market) uses both research and descriptive approaches, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods.

**The novelty** is research and description of new approaches to branding communications precisely for B2B technology companies and scientific understanding of these processes.

**The theoretical and practical value of the results**

Theoretical is that the research might be used to prepare courses on marketing, branding or business communications in Ukraine or other countries. This work will be the basis for further research and experimentation. The work is based on data collected during eleven months of working with Sales and Marketing department at Intellias, and two years of working with HR Marketing team. The theoretical material might be used to prepare further publications, articles on this topic.

Practical value. A detailed description of the approaches to marketing activities and branding strategies, in general, can be a guide for marketing, sales or communications departments. The research might be used by similar companies for building their marketing processes, creating or improving their branding communications.

Branding strategy suggestion might be implemented by one of the B2B tech company.

The main part of the research includes three parts: one theoretical and two practical. Part 1 is called “Defining and Distinguishing Branding Communication on B2B Tech Companies”. The idea of this part is to discover and describe methodology and approaches to branding research, to define the concept of corporate brand and its

elements in branding communications, to make a historical overview of brand concept and its practical implications in tech domain.

Part 2 is “Implementing integrated marketing communications for branding in tech companies”. Main goal is to define the role of integrated marketing communications and their influence on B2B branding by building brand awareness with inbound communications, implementing targeted communications with account based marketing and following aligning sales and marketing workflow.

Part 3 is called “Improving Branding Strategy for Ukrainian Tech Company Intellias”. The idea is to describe building blocks for Intellias branding, to investigate visual part of Intellias branding communications, to analyze them and to find main areas for improvement. Based on that research it is planned to suggest roadmap for branding strategy refinement: to prepare mail qualitative and quantitative goal of brand improvement, to plan systematic rebranding and to cover a few first steps of the process.

As the aim of the research is to discover branding communications specifically for B2B tech companies, it is important to describe what is B2B and what is tech company.

B2B is actony to business-to-business and it is a form of commerce that refers to the exchange of products or services among companies. So, the way of transaction when business sells products or provides services to other businesses.

A tech company (technology company) refers to a type of business entity that is focused on the development and manufacturing of technology, or providing technology as a service (for example, software engineering companies).

The research is based on the practical experience of the author that was gained during eleven months of work in Sales and Marketing department at Intellias (Ukrainian software engineering outsourcing company).

The author of the work attended a few conferences and private courses related to the topic of research: Media Forum, Professional Development courses at Intellias,

School of Digital Communications in Kyiv, Microsoft Meetups in Berlin, Business Development course in Lviv IT School, Employer Branding Course in Lviv IT School. Such an experience has a significant influence on the practical parts of the research. The author is certified in Google Analytics, which helps to make a high-quality analysis of the processes that are reviewed in the research.

## ABBREVIATIONS DICTIONARY

ABM - account based marketing;

B2B - business-to-business;

CPA - cost per acquisition.

CTR - click-through rate;

IMC - integrated marketing communications;

KPI - key performance elements;

MCLs - marketing captured leads;

SEO - search engine optimization.

# PART 1

# DEFINING AND DISTINGUISHING BRANDING COMMUNICATION ON B2B TECH COMPANIES

## 1.1. Methodology and Main Approaches to Branding Research in Technology Companies

The economic value of business-to-business (B2B) transactions is significantly greater than that of consumer transactions, but traditionally a preponderance of branding research has been conducted in the context of consumer products. The difference between methodologies and main approaches to research in B2B and B2C branding communications is not significant. The main methodological issues for both areas are:

1) the dominance of quantitative research;

2) the lack of longitudinal research;

3) the focus on single industries.

Moreover, both for B2B and B2C branding communications research it is common to use academical and practical methodologies. If scholars use the same methodologies for the research, the focus is different: on interviewing for B2B communications and on interviewing on the scale for B2C research.

The approaches to brand defining are very diverse. They are based on philosophical theories, on stakeholder perspectives, on consumers' perspective, etc. Sometimes branding communications are defined in terms of their purpose and sometimes described by their characteristics.

For instance, Styles and Ambler in 1995 identified two broad philosophical approaches to defining a brand. The first is the product-plus approach which views branding as an addition to the product. The brand is essentially viewed as an identifier. The second approach is the holistic perspective in which the focus is the brand itself [50].

The research of branding communications (including B2B market) uses both exploratory and descriptive approaches integrating qualitative and quantitative methods. The objective of the qualitative phase of the research is to see what types of associations will emerge from a thought-listing about the original brands and the extensions, and thus gain insights about why evaluations are more favorable towards some of the extensions than towards others. The quantitative part aims to assess the consumer's evaluation of brand extensions through measuring attitude for different variables [7].

The Professional Services Guide to Research published by Hinge in 2019 writes about two types of approaches that could be covered for research of branding communications on the B2B market:

1) primary research which involves collecting data directly from the source. A company might reach out to potential buyers - using in-person interviews or a survey tool - to find out how likely they are to buy a new service;

2) secondary research involving combining ideas appropriate to a company through current market research. It is possible, for instance, to look at economic data to estimate a market`s size, or to turn to market studies on buyer behavior to decide whether it makes strategic sense to add a new service. Secondary research is often used for estimating the size and growth (positive or negative) of markets. However, it rarely offers the kinds of ideas that would assist a company adapt a service or achieve a competitive advantage. For that kind of wisdom, we will have to conduct primary research.

As branding communication for tech companies is a very innovative and fast developing sphere, it is very important to make systematic, structured research of the market. So, in this kind of work, we exclude such informal methods as talking with clients or keeping up with industry publications, even though they might be complementary for the existing formal research.

To make effective B2B marketing research we need to learn how an organization's brand is perceived in the marketplace, what opportunities a brand has, to discover what clients or prospects need, to find out competitors, to make a client journey research and to describe a client persona. All of this might be combined into the branding roadmap method. Let's describe this way into five detailed phases.

Phase one: brand strategy. Main tasks are to explore overall business strategy and goals of the brand, pricing and niche, brand architecture: marketing and HR, integrate focus groups findings, identify target audiences (industries, services, roles), research target audiences (behavior, channels, etc), reconsider benefits we bring to the clients (rational, emotional), to explore brand personality, the essence of brand and brand DNA, to prepare positioning statement and tailor message for different audiences.

The second phase, brand identity, includes work on a brand book and style guide (both textual and visual).

Phase three: brand tools. On this level, researchers might explore the website, elevator pitch, services portfolio, videos, an industry blog, own events, to make data-driven research and high-profile interviewing, to work on brand awareness ad campaigns.

Phase four is a complex process of the internal and external brand launch. Internal brand answers how the new brand speaks to the target audience, and the external part is about brand identity and how an organization is addressing the needs of the marketplace.

The last fifth phase - brand building. Here we explore content marketing, visible experts, networking opportunities, prestigious awards or partnerships.

For successful implementation, these stages and discovering tech brand on the B2B market such methods as content analysis, interviews, case studies, surveys, and focus groups are the most effective.

## 1.2. The Concept of Corporate Brand and its Elements in Branding Communications

Branding is a concept that is very broad and extremely difficult to determine. The main reason for this is the concept's complexity. The Random House English Dictionary defines brand as “1. A word, name, symbol etc. esp. one legally registered as a trademark, used by a manufacturer or merchant to identify its products distinctively from others of the same type and usually prominently displayed on its goods, in advertising etc. 2. A product, line of products or service bearing a widely known brand name. 3. informal. A person notable or famous, esp. in a particular field: The reception was replete with brand names from politics and the arts (1925)”.

The branding communication is very often confused with the marketing process partly for this same reason. They have very identical functions on the one side: helping businesses stand out in a crowded marketplace, setting a company apart from the competition, strengthening recognition, building market trust, generating new customers, boosting employee pride, helping to grow business. That is why it is necessary to clarify exactly what it meant by two of those concepts.

As a variety of marketing environmental factors have changed and evolved over the past century, so has the definitions of marketing. Gary J. Brunswick, a Professor of Marketing at Northern Michigan University, provides a chronological listing of the various (and popular) definitions of marketing that have been used in the marketing literature over the past 100 years. Due to his research, around 30 years ago marketing was defined as the purposeful management of the products and services, the prices and the promotional and distribution activities of a business organization according to the preferences of some market or market segment and in a manner calculated to achieve the objectives of the business.

It is prevalent today to refer to the marketing concept authorized by the Board of Directors of the American Marketing Association in 2014. Accordingly, marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating,

delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.

By the same American Marketing Association brand is defined as a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers.

This definition has been criticized for being too product-oriented, with emphasis on visual features as differentiating mechanisms. Despite these criticisms, the definition has endured to contemporary literature, albeit in modified form. Watkins (1986), Aaker (1991), Doyle (1994) and Kotler (1996) adopt this definition. Dibb use the Bennett variant of the definition which is: A brand is a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers.

The key change to the initial concept is the terms “any other characteristic” because this enables intangibles to be the point of differentiation, such as image. The particular value of this definition is that it focuses on a fundamental brand purpose, which is differentiation. It should not be forgotten that brands operate in a market environment where differentiation is crucially important. Even where monopolies exist, companies may choose to position their brand with a view to future competition. The other key feature of this definition is that it takes the corporate perspective rather than emphasising consumer benefits.

Ambler (1992) takes a consumer-oriented approach in defining a brand as: the promise of the bundles of attributes that someone buys and provide satisfaction . The attributes that make up a brand may be real or illusory, rational or emotional, tangible or invisible [50].

Scott Bedbury, a former senior vice president of marketing at Starbucks, head of advertising for Nike and a CEO of independent brand consultancy, writes about a so-called soft side of “brand”. In a comparable way to Plato and the idea, every brand

has a fundamental essence. This essence is not physical or defined exclusively or entirely by products or services. A brand is the result of a synaptic process in the brain. The concept of the brand - the Platonic idea, if you will - creates a response in its audience without the audience`s seeing the product or directly experiencing the service.

A brand is the sum of the good, the bad, the ugly, and the off-strategy. It is defined by your best product as well as your worst product. It is defined by award-winning advertising as well as by the god-awful ads that somehow slipped through the cracks, got approved, and, not surprisingly, sank into oblivion. It is defined by the accomplishments of your best employee - the shining star in the company who can do no wrong - as well as by the mishaps of the worst hire that you ever made. It is also defined by your receptionist and the music your customers are subjected to when placed on hold.

For every grand and finely worded public statement by the CEO, the brand is also defined by derisory consumer comments overheard in the hallway or in a chat room on the Internet. Brands are sponges for content, for images, for fleeting emotions. They become psychological concepts held in the minds of the public, where they may stay forever. As such you can`t entirely control a brand. At best you only guide and influence it [40].

Defining branding and marketing processes proves that branding goes before marketing, that branding might be a part of the marketing strategy. A marketing campaign is constructed after creating a brand strategy. Therefore it gives an understanding that branding`s main role is not to target a market for choosing a company among its competitors, but to get your prospects to understand your business as the only option to full covering a problem that they have.

Also, it is clear that a concept of a brand can be used for products, for personality (for example, self-branding, C-level branding), for institutions, for companies, etc. Kevin Lane Keller writes that brand intangibles are often a means by

which marketers differentiate their brands and transcend, or go beyond, physical product characteristics, and can be examined at both the product-brand and corporate-brand levels.

Many professionals distinguish between product brands and corporate brands, and some consider brands as product brands only. But an academic researches show there is little practical difference between corporate and product brands, especially when it comes to building them.

A brand is a set of associations in the mind of the consumer. If we agree with Ogilvy, a good product brand offers the consumer positive associations based on emotion as much as on a reason. Individuals share or aspire to the values behind that brand. They buy the brand because of what it says about them. Assuming they can afford it, they buy their beloved Mercedes because they like the associations (and enjoy the drive).

Actually, they are not buying a brand at all, they are buying a car. The brand is intangible - it is in their mind. It is equally intangible whether the brand is attached to a product or to an organization. Plus, with many brands - Mercedes is a good example - the 'product' brand and the 'corporate' brand are virtually indistinguishable. If it was rumored one day that Mercedes were launching a three-wheeler, we would expect it to have similar qualities to their four-wheelers.

It is this equality of intangibility that makes it possible to build a brand around a firm (corporate brand) as readily as around a product (product brand). But the corporate brand building is more complex and more challenging, because products are objects, while organizations are people [13].

Brands of products convey symbolic and tangible meanings, including association with the product's specific characteristics. Corporate brands convey higher-level values and ideals: company values and mission. Products convey technical information that is usually detached from the corporate brand's abstract values.

Corporate branding is a vital aspect of a company's overall marketing strategy. Howard Schultz, an ex-Chief Executive of Starbucks points that authentic brands don’t emerge from marketing cubicles or advertising agencies. They emanate from everything the company does.

The brand of a high-tech firm is not the name of the item, not the logo, not the tagline, nor the colors of the brand. All these are linked to the brand — but they don't make up the product itself. It's his company name.

Strong brands are forged out of an emotional connection with customers. Branding pushes marketing to wonder each moment the client connects with the brand what is the number one emotion. Customers experience through when they read your blog, visit your website, retweet a tweet, visit a store, call customer care or watch a product video. Building a brand, therefore, forces the company to revisit what it really is, because as we’ll see, brands are promises that deliver an experience.

The idea of corporate identity as defined by Dowling is rather straightforward: the words and symbols a company uses to set itself apart from other companies so people will recognize it. Originally, the study of corporate identity tended to be centred on a rather narrow, graphic design perspective. One of the earliest models of corporate identity was proposed by the German corporate design firm of Birkigt and Stadler. According to Balmer and Greyser (2003), corporate identity should not be viewed as monolithic phenomenon, but one comprised of multiple types of identity. They argue that companies have more than one identity, and that they can coexist without problems when well managed. Five identity types are proposed: actual identity, communicated identity, conceived identity, ideal identity and desired identity. [21]

The author's firm sees a corporate brand as made up of three elements: vision, values, and style.

Vision is a company's contribution to its employees, clients, business, local society, and potentially worldwide society. The acid exam is to question: would

anyone realize or worry if the company suddenly disappeared? The world would notice and mourn the demise of a company like Apple, incomparably more than a host of its lower rivals. Not only is Apple honored and valued. Due to its task to produce products that empower and delight individuals, it is adored.

Values are what the company stands for — its principles, expressed through strategies, policies and practices. These are described as much by what the company does not do as by what it docs. The extraordinary overnight success of the Co-operative Bank, for example (which woke up one morning, threw out its tired, old-fashioned wardrobe and replaced it with a new set of natty designer threads), is down to a solemn promise to customers not to invest in regimes and industries which oppress the human spirit. It reinvented itself, drawing deep from its heritage of social responsibility, reformulated so as to be relevant to modern times. What is crucial here is that it is impossible to separate the association of ethical banking from the Co-operative Bank brand. The brand positioning is not some kind of corporate sales promotion (often a waste of money, as some of the sponsors of the 1998 World Cup discovered). 2 It has become part of the organization's identity.

Vision and values are expressed in how the firm conies across in its communication and through its people and its style. Very often this is the trickiest bit. One the one hand it requires identifying and grooming the right 'heroes' to communicate vision and values as spokespeople in the media. The right people are not always the most senior people. On the other hand, it requires ensuring that everyone, not just the chosen heroes, understands the vision and values and communicates these appropriately in contact with external audiences, especially customers. In communicating its corporate brand proposition, a firm is making a promise to its audiences. It must deliver behind the promise, or be pilloried for inconsistency and betrayal. People will judge a firm far more on their personal experience face to face or on the phone than on what they read about it in the newspapers. This means checking that policies, products, practices, systems — in

fact, the firm's entire operation — are set up to support it, before going public. The difficulty in large firms is that internal and external communications (let alone operations, sales, and marketing) are all too often the provinces of different departments and power structures. The advent of communication directors with responsibility across all communication has to be a step in the right direction.

### 1.3. Historical Overview of Brand Concept and its Practical Implications in Tech Domain

John M.T. Balmer places historical context of corporate identity studies in five stages: from 1950 to 1970, from 1970 to 1980, from 1980 to 1990, from 1990 to 2000, and finally from 2000 till present. He argues that researches on corporate brand area have focused their attention on corporate image during the first stage, on corporate identity, corporate personality and corporate communication during the second, and more recently on the concepts of corporate reputation and corporate brand management.

For instance, North Americans have been particularly influential during the 1950s and 1960s when the literature focused on the corporate image. In the 1970s and 1980s British, Commonwealth and European writers have made a distinct contribution by focusing on the processes involved in the formation of corporate identity, personality and image. In addition, a start was also made in articulating the relationship between these different concepts; as such, the British and European concern with an organisation's internal environment and stakeholders complimented the work of North Americans on the external environment and stakeholders [4].

The most points of the first stage (1950s to the early 1970s):

1) concern with corporate image (perception of external stakeholders) and with graphic design;

2) hegemony of the USA;

3) writings of Kenneth Boulding and Pierre Martineau. Researchers write about three distinct disciplinary approaches during this stage: the psychological paradigm, the graphic design paradigm, and the marketing and public relations paradigm.

The main idea of psychology paradigm - understanding of corporate image relates to a mental image that is a visual analogy of real world. The paradigm is focused on meaningful relation between stakeholders and company or organization. At that time corporate image is associations which organization has created in the minds of the audience.

The use of graphic design makes visual identity became a very powerful and influential tool. Organizations and consultancies use graphic design for four basic purposes:

1) to communicate the mission and philosophy of organization;

2) to encapsulate the organization's cultural values;

3) to underpin the organization's communications efforts;

4) as a means of keeping the visual identity fashionable. (1)

A marketing paradigm is the way of marketing process which is done by a set of procedures. Boulding, an eminent American philosopher, noted in his book “The Image”, that humans have to rely on images. He concluded that there was an a priori link between an individual's image of an organisation and that person's behaviour towards the organisation. Whilst Boulding appears to be the first author to articulate this view with regard to the importance of image to organisations, his writings may usefully be placed in the context of Greek classical writers such as Aristotle. Aristotle regarded images as the basic element of thought and this perspective was taken up by John Locke, David Hume and John Stuart Mill. As recently as 1998 Lord Saatchi in The Times Lecture at Worcester College, Oxford University, commented that "after 2000 years of human progress it seems that the real nature of things remains as inaccessible as it was to Aristotle."

So, corporate image is based on emotional and abstract levels during the 1950s and 1970s. The formation of a corporate image arises from the values that are transmitted from its message. A corporate image is defined as an undoubtedly the most complex of all the marketing images. It is the image of the individual corporation created in the minds of consumers by total corporate advertising and public relations as well as by the company's individual brand, advertising, packaging, value and the consumer's actual knowledge and/or experience with the company's brands or services. It is the net result of the interaction of all the experiences, beliefs, feelings and knowledge that people have about a company [6].

Now, knowing that first big researches on corporate image (reputation) were made approximately in 1950, let's take a step back and look at first tech branding itself.

American Telephone and Telegraph Co., better known as AT&T ,started as a collaboration of a few enterprises controlling the patent rights of Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone. The company was founded in 1876. However, the role of AT&T as a tech innovator goes far beyond old fashioned phones and telegraphs. The company had already sent the first ever broadband transmission, laid the groundwork for cellular telephony, and invented the transistor in the 1940s.

American Telephone and Telegraph Co. used the symbol of a bell for its logo icon for the first hundred or so years of its existence, AT&T. The logo was introducing am extremely simplified version alongside bold type in the 1960s. In the 1980s AT&T spined off some of its subsidiary companies and fashioned something new for itself. The logo has changes into a simplified globe crossed by horizontal bands signifying electronic transmission.

The most known tech company in 1960s was IBM. The brand was well known especially for its computing and innovations. International Business Machines was founded in 1924. And now, in 2019, it is the largest technology and consulting employer in the world, with more than 380000 employees serving clients in 170

countries. The first logo mark of IBM was designed in 1924. It was very different from a present symbol - IBM really made its mark upon graphic design history. The legendary designer Paul Rand redesign it in 1972 illustrating the block letters into 8 horizontal bands.

Another well-known engineering brand of the 19th century - General Electric. The company was founded in 1892. Nowadays with the headquarter in Boston, General Electric has offices in more than 250 countries worldwide. By the end of 20th century, the products of General Electric (laundry machines, dishwashers and the like) were the most visible products. GE logo brought its original original script initials inside a circle in 1934. This symbol has not changed over the past 125 years and was considered as one of the world`s most successful and all-time best logo.

Xerox corporation, est. 1906, had a long way with its name: firstly Haloid Photographic Company, Haloid Xerox after and it became simply Xerox in the 1950s. The brand name was so successful, that Xerox is forever associated with printers and scanners.

Two tech brands, what were popular in between stage 1 and stage 2 of corporate identity studies - Hewlett-Packard and Intel. Hewlett-Packard, known as “hp”, was founded in 1939. In 1968 they created the first device to ever be called a personal computer. Their logo, the founders’ initials, was created in 1974.

Intel was founded in 1968. Its products were invisible and Intel solved this problem with a help of branding. The logo was changing 3 times, but not much. The last update happened in 2005.

1970s and early 1980s are considered as a stage 2 of corporate identity studies by John M.T. Balmer. This period is known by a few very important developments. British identity consultants argued about the role of graphic design in communicating to internal stakeholders and, more significantly, it's supposed ability to encapsulate an organisation's values. The emphasis on the internal environment during this period resulted in reference being made to a new concept that of "the corporate personality".

The corporate personality refers to the values held by personnel within the organisation. The shift towards the internal environment was reinforced by the findings of the empirical research that staff are important in image formation. Without doubt it is Olins who was first to accord the concept the primary importance in his first book. The Corporate Personality: An Inquiry into the Nature of Corporate Identity." The inseparability of corporate personality from corporate identity is suggested by the title of the text. Furthermore, Olins states that of alt the concepts in use in the area, the corporate personality is the most important [4].

Moreover, in early 1980s a number of writers researched a link between corporate culture and corporate identity. Culture theory and identity studies became very related. Consultants were creating a new identity for companies based on an organisation's culture.

For the research of branding communications for technology companies this period is well-known as a time of Microsoft and Apple companies creation.

Microsoft do business in 170 countries and are made up of 114000 employees. Since inception in 1975, Microsoft has updated its brand logo five times. The logo is a combination of two words; micro computing and software - which founders Bill Gates and Paul Allen chose to reflect the company's emphasis of. Simplicity has been the approach to prior corporate brand-logos, this facilitates consumer recognition as the black-fonts stand out from a white background. Microsoft had only used letters to depict its logo, updating only font styles and sometimes bolding some fonts. Printing costs are also minimized since the font appears only in black. Although font-styles changed, simplicity can be observed in all the logos from inception to 2012. The new logo introduced in August 23, 2012 makes use of colors and a new font-style [22].

Apple, Inc. was founded by Ron Wayne, Steve Wozniak, and Steve Jobs in 1976. The company had been previously known as Apple Computer Inc.; however, Apple Inc. removed the word "Computer" in 2007 to reflect the company's focus towards consumer electronics and digital distribution. Katherine Johnson in her

dissertation “The Innovative Success that is Apple, Inc” points that “Apple, Inc. has become well-known for its advertisements in the past couple decades. Their ads have been designed to reflect the company’s business plan of targeting creative individuals to market their products to through various campaigns like the infamous “1984 Super Bowl commercial, the 1990s Think Different Campaign, and the iPod people of the 2000s campaign”. Regarding its advertising budget, Apple (AAPL) spent a lot of money for advertising over the past several years. In the 2009 fiscal year, the company spent US $501 million, which was up from US $486 million in 2008 and US $467 million in 2007”.

Based on study by Wired.com as cited in Anna Glenn found that: “Apple’s emotional branding, a brand that is felt in the heart and mind of the consumer”, is the key to its survival. Apple’s brand is reflected through their core beliefs about innovation, imagination and design. It is promoted through their products, advertisement and customer experience. According to Feng (2014), there are four factors to build a strong brand name which are brand positioning, brand sponsorship, brand development and brand name selection. Apple’s strategy is a corporate branding strategy that revolves around its emotional experience with its products. To be an emotional brand, it must have three things in common. The company must project a strong humanistic corporate culture; have a unique visual and verbal vocabulary; and establish a connection with its consumers.

Stage 3, from late 1980s to 1990s, is known by growing academic interest from marketers, strategists and organizational behaviourists. Many European and also British, Australian and South African consultants and academics were paying a heightened interest in the area of corporate reputation. Corporate image still refers to the expectations, attitudes and feelings that consumers have regarding the character and underlying reality of the corporate as represented by its company identity. But the importance of corporate identity concept increased comparing to the corporate image during the period.

Furthermore, the academics started to discuss a possibility of different perception of organization by different groups: employees, customers, media, government, suppliers, competitors etc. At the same time practitioners from Asia will, over time, bring new insights into the emerging philosophy of corporate identity. One example of this is what the Japanese call a Keiretsu. This is where a corporate identity is built around a reputation rather than a product line.

Three main characteristics of corporate identity during the third stage: 1) the concept of corporate identity is fundamentally concerned with reality, "what an organisation is," i.e. its strategy, philosophy, history, business scope, the range and type of products and services offered and its communication both formal and informal; 2) corporate identity is multi-faceted and draws on several disciplines; 3) corporate identity is based on tile corporate personality, i.e. it is based on the values present within the organisation. A number of authors hold this to be the most important of all the concepts associated with the area. [4]

The period of 1990s, when the Google was founded, broke the lines between academics and practitioners in the corporate branding area. The International Corporate Identity was launched at that time. It was an active phase of corporate brand management formation. A few business schools started classes about this sphere: the Harvard MBA elective on “The New Corporate Communications”, MBA and MSc in marketing and corporate identity in Copenhagen Business School and Queensland University of Technology in Australia etc.

The International Corporate Identity Group (ICIG) published a statement of corporate identity: “Every organisation has an identity. It articulates the corporate ethos, aims and values and presents a sense of individuality that can help to differentiate the organisation within its competitive environment Wiien well managed, corporate identity can be a powerful means of integrating the many disciplines and activities essential to an organisation's success. It can also provide tiie visual cohesion necessary to ensure that all corporate communications are coherent

with each other and result in an image consistent with the organisation's defining etios and character. By effectively managing its corporate identity an organisation can build understanding and continent among its diverse stakeholders. This can be manifested in an ability to attract and retain customers and employees, achieve strategic alliances, gain the support of financial markets and generate a sense of direction and purpose. Corporate identity is a strategic issue. Corporate identity differs from traditional brand marketing since it is concerned with all of an organisation's stakeholders and tiie multi-faceted way in which an organisation communicates".

Mintel Special Report on Corporate Image in 1991 wrote that 90% of companies regarded corporate image as important its benefits included:

1) making the organisation more customer orientated,

2) building awareness,

3) improving perception,

4) increasing sales.

In this phase researches started to discuss the difference between the traditional product brand and corporate brand communications.

Google was founded in 1998. Design Google Library writes that design was only one part of the effort for creating and evolving the Google identity. The realization required the collective work and diligence of hundreds of Googlers, in different roles, spanning the entire organization. Google`s corporate (internal) culture is very popular in the business world. The employees are ambassadors of the culture and corporate image. The thinking and design development goes deep to the core elements and process in the company: the logo has always had a simple, friendly, and approachable style.

The last stage of the corporate image and corporate identity history Balmer calls "The Advent of Corporate Marketing: Implications for Researchers, Managers and Consultants". The phase started in 2000.

Since that the basic tenets of marketing were transformed from 4 to 10Ps: philosophy, personality, people, product, price, place, promotion, performance, perception, positioning. Nowadays we have a bloom of tech industry with hundreds of expertises. Sales and marketing department use to be in every tech company. Of course, management, scholars and consultants are facing up to new challenges.

Tech brands are very famous and everybody can name a few in a second. One of the most resonance tech brand is Facebook, that was founded in 2003 by Mark Zuckerberg with the help of his Harvard classmates Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes.

Tech branding strongly evolved over the 20th century. What is very interesting, almost every tech brand became simpler over time. Multiple colours became monochrome, etchings became silhouettes, serifs became sans serifs, realistic became geometric. Branding communications became a very important part of integrated marketing communications.

*Appendix 1*

# PART 2

# IMPLEMENTING INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS FOR BRANDING IN TECH COMPANIES

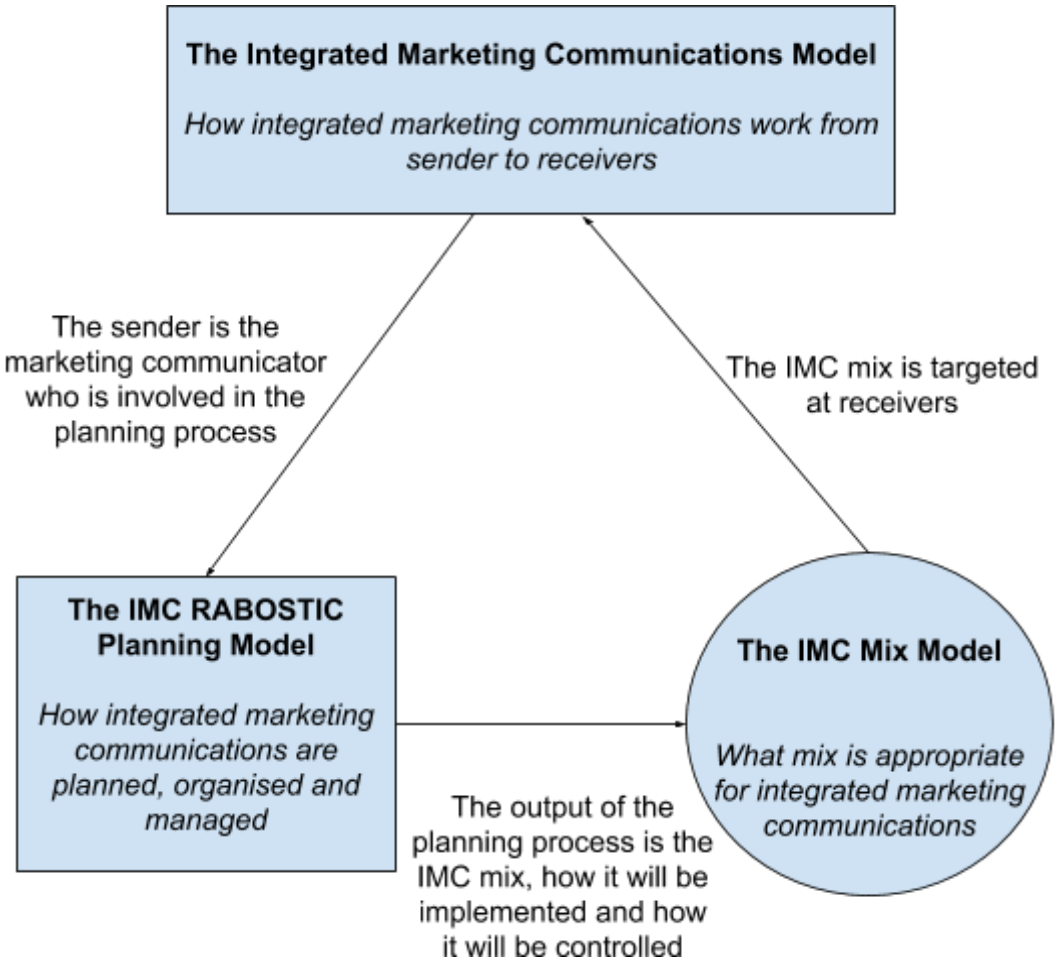
## 2.1. The Role of Integrated Marketing Communications

The rise of electronic commerce and communication, i.e. the Internet and World Wide Web revolution, has provided an even more pressing need for integration. Indeed, it is these very technologies that have not only made integrated marketing communications possible, but they have created the demand for integration in all areas of the firm. Where once we spoke of 'one sight, one sound' for external communication as being the goal of integrated marketing communications, today we speak of organisational integration and the management of brand contacts, in other words, every place and every way in which the organisation touches its customers, employees, shareholders and stakeholders.

Duncan in his research in 2002 pointed that integrated marketing communications is a process for managing the customer relationships that drive brand value. More specifically, it is a cross-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable relationships with customers and stakeholders by strategically controlling or influencing all messages sent to these groups and encouraging data-driven, purposeful dialogue with them.

Put in its simplest form, integrated marketing communications (IMC) is the bringing together of all marketing communications activities across relevant audience points to achieve greater brand coherence. Integrated marketing communications is a process which involves the management and organisation of all 'agents' in the analysis, planning, implementation and control of all marketing communications contacts, media, messages and promotional tools focused at selected target audiences in such a way as to derive the greatest enhancement and coherence of marketing

communications effort in achieving predetermined product and corporate marketing communications objectives.




The picture is visualizing the integrated marketing communications model. This is a traditional approach how communications go from sender to receiver through the integrated process.

Talking about the communications mix for exactly technology companies on the B2B market, we name these activities: corporate identity, public relations, sponsorship, outbound, inbound, partnership, events, sales process

So, we might point three main integrated marketing communications characteristics and functions:

1) they cover all stages of customer journey;

2) communications are the same experience on all touchpoints;

It is very important that integrated marketing communications are not only about external relations with customers, but also about internal communications inside the company.

Kitchen Philip in the work "Integrated marketing communication: making it work at a strategic level" from Journal of Business Strategy points that integrated marketing communications involves the whole company, starting with the CEO and cascading through the organization. Ideally, the corporate objectives should support the marketing objectives and vice versa. If commitment is only given at the tactical level, which mainly involves the marketing functions, the corporate level, such as the senior managers or the CEO itself, will probably fail to be as dedicated to the program as they should be because they will not be directly involved with the integrated marketing communications implementation and may not recognize the benefits of applying an integrated marketing communications approach as a strategic process. However, even though integrated marketing communications should start at the senior level, research has indicated that this occurs only very rarely. Senior managers ought to be highly engaged in the application of integrated marketing communications procedures throughout the organization.

Let's have a look at Intellias marketing strategy as an example of integrated marketing communications. Strategic initiatives planned for 2018 at Intellias were:

- launch and go through trial with sales partner in the US (GTSaaS),
- local partner in Berlin area & main Automotive/Fintech hubs in Germany,
- employee reference program, partner network program (Europe),
- facilitate client references,
- fintech industry initiative,
- customer events program,
- nurturing,
- newsletters,
- outbound, social channels,

- industry media,
- PR and buzz (automotive),
- experts search and motivation program,
- industry whitepaper and reports,
- video: blog, production etc.,
- competitive research and industry players,
- branding,
- LBS industry initiative,
- German market promotion activities.

As we might see, planning includes different spheres, but they have common message.

All the initiatives communicate mission, vision and values of the company. Mission of Intellias is “To enable digital technology for our clients by bringing together top engineering talent, deep industry expertise, and personal dedication in order to meet unique business needs of each customer”.

Values: “We are smart and creative. We attract smart and talented people to supply them with challenging tasks that encourage their creativity. In everything we do, we are looking for the opportunity to make it in a better way. We act honestly and fairly. Our relationships with clients and each other are built on trust. We achieve this by our fair behavior and honest communication of what matters most in every situation. We respect each other and work as a team. We unite our individual efforts to get better results together as a team. Mutual respect and close interaction give us the key to achieving success in all that we do. We take the initiative and get things done. We are proactive doers ready to take charge when we see an area for improvement. We never stop half a way to the result and are always eager to go the extra mile for exceptional services delivery. We are professionals and strive for excellence. We do not stop learning and improving our skills in pursuit of excellence

in everything we do. Our professional attitude assures clients that at the end of the day they get superior results".

Brand tone: friendly, direct, confident, inspiring, engaging. The brand has three emotional branding points: recognition, control and security. Keywords to use for "recognitions": stand out of the crowd, break from convention; be recognized for your achievements, skills, knowledge; be proud of your abilities and competence; freshness; unconventionality. Keywords to use for "control": closely track the progress; mitigate possible risks; efficiently manage resources; routine that feels comfortable and safe; sense of stability and structure, be sure you are not missing out anything; certainty; intelligence; conservatism. Keywords to use for "security": comfort, serenity, loyalty; someone to ease your burdens.

A problem of integrated marketing communications at Intellias: the company has two brands - for clients and for employees. HR Marketing department and Global Marketing work with different audiences, but they also work with different messages, visuals. There are two websites - ukrainian and international. We will go deeply into this problem in the part 3. The case demonstrates corporate rebranding failure with the focus being on the two key stakeholder groups (of internal and external corporate communications).

So, integrated marketing communications need a holistic and systematic approach to all the company's messages, like corporate identity, tone of voice etc. Every message from a company, no matter with what channel, has to be harmonized in order to make the right perception of a company. Integrated marketing communications help to receive more leads, align with customer preferences, and overall are cost saving.

### 2.2. Building Brand Awareness with Inbound Communications

Inbound Marketing is a methodology based on the idea of drawing in potential customers, as opposed to companies having to push their brand or business out there. The end goal of Inbound Marketing is that companies generate more leads.

Inbound Marketing is a content led strategy, that relies on providing genuinely useful and helpful content that educates and makes people's lives easier. By attracting users to companies` website through useful and quality content, company engage with them and paint a picture of how companies can deliver them ongoing value. Lastly corporate delight users by serving as a trusted partner with a long term interest in their success whilst building companies` position in the marketplace as an expert. Throughout the customer journey, the goal of inbound is to add value.

The content led nature of Inbound Marketing can not only boost SEO and organic traffic acquisition, but it can help to build trust and credibility of corporate brand by positioning the business as thought leaders in its market.

The term Inbound Marketing was created by HubSpot and their own Inbound Marketing flywheel can be seen below, along with some of the 'tools' and 'channels' that can form part of an ongoing approach to Inbound Marketing.

The concept of the flywheel is important: Inbound Marketing is about continued momentum, rather than just a simple linear journey.

According to marketing software company Pardot, around 82% of B2B buyers will start their purchase journey using a search engine like Google, and 89% of B2C customers do the same thing. That is why it's vital that B2B technology companies selling to other businesses master the art of inbound marketing. Without an effective inbound marketing strategy, it is almost impossible to stand out from the crowd and attract the attention of relevant buyers and researchers. Due to the HubSpot: content marketing can generate three times as many leads as traditional marketing methods, and it costs 62% less; websites that focus on content marketing can receive six times more conversions than those that use alternative strategies; more than 46% of B2B

marketers claim that inbound marketing produces a higher ROI than outbound methods; inbound marketing results in higher quality sales leads according to 59% of professionals; the most productive marketing experts claim they spend around 39% of their total promotional budgets on content; demand for infographics has increased by a staggering 800% in recent times.

Let's take a look at some of the main advantages technology brands will encounter with effective inbound marketing:

1. Thought leadership through quality informative content. Through the use of informative blog posts, articles, videos, and other inbound strategies, it is possible to establish corporate brand as an industry authority. A company can become the go-to business within their field of expertise. That will assist with building trust, and it should also increase leads, conversions, and sales.

2. Opportunities for post-conversion success. Many tech marketing teams seem to think their work is done when a potential client converts and they make a sale. However, those professionals aren't thinking about the bigger picture. Inbound marketing strategies allow a company to repeat the process with the same customer time and time again and ensure they keep coming back for more. That is achievable through: sale announcements, new product recommendations, requests for feedback, reviews, and social shares; coupon and discount codes, ability to integrate free trials.

It's possible to increase conversions and boost sales by giving new clients and customers free trials of tech products. Sometimes new leads will benefit from a "try before buying" scenario that allows them to see the value of company`s technology product or service first hand. If the product or service meets the requirements of the researcher and assists them in saving either time or money; those people are much more likely to invest.

3. Improved search engine rankings. With an effective SEO strategy and quality content that encourages backlinks and other forms of attention online, tech companies can use inbound marketing to ensure they rank in suitable positions within

search engine results for their chosen keywords. That should lead to increased leads from within a target market.

Making sure corporate website and content ranks for the most relevant keywords within Google search is vital if companies want to beat the competition and steal the lion's share of the market. Effective keyword research is essential because that is how companies work out what people are typing into the search when they're looking for the types of product or software companies supply.

There are a few options on the table when it comes to SEO. Companies can either manage the process in-house or outsource it to one of the many search engine optimisation agencies that focus solely on that task.

The decision is down to marketing professionals, but it's usually wise to assign the matter to marketing team if they have the expertise. That ensures companies` business retains as much control as possible, and companies never have to rely on others to help achieve success within the marketplace. Still, outsourcing is a popular choice for start-up brands that do not have the finances to employ an expert SEO team in their office.

4. Increased conversions and sales. All those new and relevant leads coming in from inbound marketing strategy will boost both conversions and sales if marketing team uses effective landing pages that contain clear and concise calls to action. However, it is vital that tech company uses all the most recent landing page best practices to ensure optimum results.

5. Promoting brand awareness. A tech company could have the best and most innovative new product in the world, but the organisation will never become an industry-leading brand if its target market doesn't know it exists. Inbound marketing strategies have many advantages, but one of the most important is brand awareness. Creative content enables a marketing team to introduce their business to the world and explain the ins and outs of the operation. It's also the best way to showcase new products and services while highlighting their value to the customer or client.

6. Targeting niche markets. There is no getting away from the fact that inbound marketing is the most effective means of targeting niche markets online these days. While tech companies will often promote to broad groups in the hope at least some of them will take the bait, it's also vital to focus on small niches where conversion rates will be much higher.

It also necessary to mention the role of landing pages. They can assist in reducing tech brand's marketing spend and boosting conversions. As part of a wider inbound marketing strategy, the use of landing pages tends to be more effective than sending potential clients and customers straight to companies` homepage.

Marketers can develop informative landing pages that will hook the visitor and provide them with the details they wished to uncover when making a search engine query. That helps to increase conversions and sales because it eliminates any distractions and takes the researcher straight to the content they want to read. If company impresses the visitor enough with their landing page, there is a reasonable chance they will hang around and take a look at the rest of the website.

Landing pages can also serve up gated content, behind a download form that captures information and therefore acting as a top of funnel first interaction.

All this information is another proof of the importance of the integrated marketing communications. It is crucial that a brand uses a combination of all these tactics to ensure promotional efforts cover every angle. Companies can assess the results from each and then develop and improve their approach for the future.

Another huge part of Inbound Marketing is specifically content marketing. It includes all manner of different content types that tech brand can use to promote services and products to new potential clients. Content marketing of tech companies usually includes:

- news & blog posts,
- articles & thought leadership,
- email newsletters,

- case studies,
- testimonials,
- infographics,
- slides and presentations,
- whitepapers,
- social media,
- videos,
- podcasts.

**The importance of social media.** A vital part of any tech company's inbound marketing strategy is the process of attracting new and existing customers. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and even LinkedIn are excellent tools for achieving that ambition. Due to the HubSpot statistic, brands with 100 Twitter followers can generate 106% more traffic to their websites than those with 25 or less. 87% of B2B marketers use social media channels in one form or another. Also it says that social media improves a company's lead to sale ratio by no less than 100%. There are an estimated 2.6 billion people active on Facebook at the moment according to the latest statistics. It is a great opportunity to put tech brand before so many internet users for free. Updating corporate social media pages regularly and posting links to blog posts and other content will draw new potential customers and clients from all over the world towards a tech brand.

Moreover, social media platforms are the ideal place to converse and interact with potential customers before turning them into leads and conversions. Tech marketing teams have the ability to answer questions, provide information, and spark up conversations with real people who may or may not decide to invest in their products and services in the future. That is also an excellent method for building brand authority.

All of the top social media platforms now offer the ability to run paid ads with an incredible number of different targeting options. There is no minimum investment,

and so it is possible for tech brands to play around with different strategies with low-cost campaigns until they find something that works.

Medium is a good example of using social media platform for B2B marketing at Intellias. The company has a few accounts: about different industries and profiles of experts. Please, check *Appendix 2* to see the results of lead generation process at Intellias from December 1, 2018 - February 28, 2019.

One of the most effective inbound marketing channel is Clutch. It is B2B ratings and reviews platform that collects feedbacks from clients. Clutch connects mid size and small businesses with the best-fit agencies, software, or consultants they need to tackle business challenges together and with confidence. *Appendix 3* demonstrates list of categories with the highest CTRs on Clutch (Intellias) during 2017. *Appendix 4* demonstrates how many leads were generated with Clutch between January and May 2019.

**News and blog posts.** The Content Marketing Institute (CMI) describes blogs this way: "What is a 'Blog'? Shorthand for "Weblog," a blog offers an easy way to present brief chunks of frequently refreshed Web content. Backed with easy-to-use technologies for syndication (e.g., RSS), comments and trackbacks, blogs are often the blazing centers of social media solar systems that can incorporate sophisticated SEO strategies and community-building campaigns".

Due to The Content Marketing Institute company use of blogs is on the rise and it is the 3rd most popular content marketing activity, surpassed only by social media and articles.

Why blogging is very effective tactic for B2B marketing:

- blogs are easy to create and to use, they are not expensive;
- blogging promotes companies without third-party media;
- blogs are created by corporate marketing teams, so it is easy to edit or update it, no need to outsource, blogs are integrated to corporate website;
- blogs are 24/7 communications tool, easy to comment, share and respond;

- blogging is a supplier of content for social media campaigns. It common for B2B tech companies to duplicate corporate blogs on Medium or to use for Quora;
- blogs provide a targeted location to direct prospects, customers and the public via a URL or QR code with specific information.

Blogs are flexible and can help companies achieve a variety of corporate goals, such as providing product-related content, answering customer questions, attracting new prospects and hosting an executive platform.

Blogs provide metrics that you can use to track marketing back to business goals.

**Email marketing.** Creating mailing lists made-up of details supplied by leads is essential for inbound marketing. It is possible to drive traffic to corporate website, alert existing customers about new products or news, and reach out to people on a human level. 59% of marketers claim email is the most efficient tool for revenue generation. 320% more revenue is generated from welcome emails than other promotional messages. Customers and clients who make purchases off the back of emails spend 138% more on average. 80% of retailers say that email is the best driver for customer retention

A very important benefit of email marketing: it is easy to measure results.It allows to measure an incredible number of different metrics. It's possible to assess everything from delivery and open rates to clicks and subscriptions with ease. Judging the effectiveness of each email is child's play, and market teams can use that data to make improvements for the future. Also, one of the best things about sending marketing emails to leads is the potential for speedy results. Most people check their emails multiple times every day, and so tech companies can create an almost instant spike in relevant traffic. For example, it is possible to use a tool like Google Analytics to determine how many visitors landed on corporate website after following links from each email.  Filtering email marketing list by different personas

and targeting niches offers the opportunity for corporate brand to send messages to specific buyer groups most likely to take interest in the content.

For result measuring Intellias uses Campaign Monitor. Once a month subscribers of Intellias newsletters receive emails from the company. For B2B marketing it is a very good result to have more than 25% of open rate.

Email marketing campaigns of Intellias:

- Fintech Newsletter;
- Automotive Newsletter;
- Location-Based System Newsletter;
- Company Announcements.

*Appendix 5* demonstrates email campaigns performance.

**Whitepapers.** HupSpot points that the definition of a whitepaper varies heavily from industry to industry, which can be a little confusing for marketers looking to create one for their business.

The old-school definition comes from politics, where it means a legislative document explaining and supporting a particular political solution.

In tech, a whitepaper usually describes a theory behind a new piece of technology. Even a business whitepaper can serve a variety of uses and audiences - some more product-focused than others. And although it is put together like an ebook, the two are written quite differently.

A whitepaper is a persuasive, authoritative, in-depth report on a specific topic that presents a problem and provides a solution.

Marketers create whitepapers to educate their audience about a particular issue, or explain and promote a particular methodology. They're advanced problem-solving guides. Typically, whitepapers require at least an email address for download (usually they require information more than that), making them great for capturing leads.

Technically, there are no minimum requirements for whitepapers. Anyone can call anything a whitepaper -- this doesn't mean you should, though. Without some

boundaries on what is and what isn't a whitepaper, we risk confusing our audience and losing credibility. Here's what an A+ whitepaper looks like:

**Length:** No fewer than six pages, including illustrations, charts, and references. Can be upwards of 50 if the topic requires that much detail. (Chances are, it won't).

**Structure:** There is usually a title page, table of contents, short executive summary (optional but helpful), introduction, several pages educating the reader about the problem, several pages hypothesizing a solution, several pages offering an example of a company that used that solution to achieve results, and a conclusion.

**Density:** Denser than an ebook. Whitepapers aren't usually easy to skim -- in fact, readers usually need to read them over more than once to get every morsel of information out of it.

**Format:** PDF in portrait orientation (8.5" by 11").

**Style:** Professional, serious, well written, and well edited. I'd recommend hiring a graphic designer to design page layout, images, fonts, and colors as well.

Whitepaper is very effective tool for lead generation and it helps to build trust with clients.

Here is an example how Intellias website visitors can download whitepaper about Connected Driving: Surviving the Latest Technology Disruption.

*https://www.intellias.com/connected-driving-whitepaper/*

There is a form to get the whitepaper. By submitting the form, readers agree that the company may process their data. They feel their full name, email and company. To get the whitepaper, readers have alo accept the Terms and Conditions, so they will get industry updates, event announcements, and thought leadership.

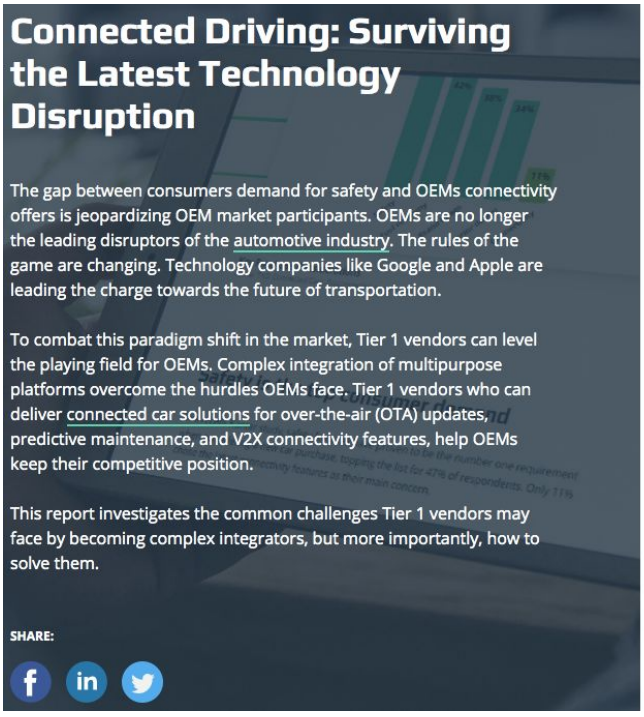
After readers download whitepaper, marketing team of Intellias make a research on contact information, qualify or disqualify them as potential customers (leads), put the data into CRM.

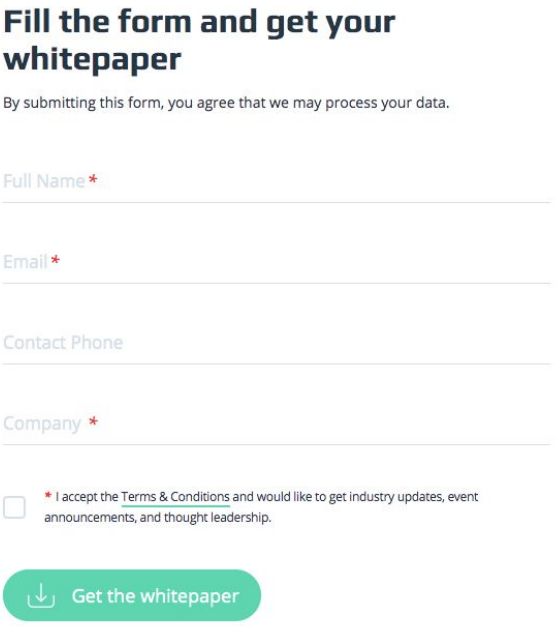
With the whitepaper “Connected Driving: Surviving the Latest Technology Disruption” Intellias have got 107 marketing qualified leads during six months.

The last point we need to make here is that inbound marketing through content like blog posts only works if companies make it possible for internet users to share their articles and increase the size of the audience. It would take forever to reach hundreds of thousands of readers if companies didn’t hand at least some of the reins over to their visitors.

Groupings of Facebook, Twitter, and other social media share icons at the side of the posts that move as people scroll usually work best. They remain on the screen no matter how far down the person might read, and so there is constant encouragement to share the post to social network accounts.

Whitepaper form on Intellias website is a good example on implementing those rules. It is easy to share the form on Linkedin, Twitter and Facebook.




Even some of the most experienced inbound marketing professionals make these mistakes from time to time, and so you should take a quick read about each of these errors now in the hope of saving your tech company a lot of time and money in the future.

Common mistakes all tech companies should avoid:

1) not aligning your content with the buyer's journey

Tech companies that want to improve inbound marketing results need to ensure the content they produce is personalised and in-line with the buyer's journey. You must make sure the message on each landing page matches the requirements and needs of the person visiting. That is why it is vital to build detailed buyer personas that include:

- clear identifiers for desirable buyers;
- challenges faced by those buyers;
- the buyers top priorities;
- questions the buyer will seek to answer.

When your marketing team understands all that information, it is much easier for them to create content that will impress a visitor and increase the chance of their click converting into a sale.

2) not using an effective lead nurturing strategy

Marketing guru Seth Godin often claims that gaining attention from a target market is the holy grail for brands looking to make an impact. However, tech companies that do not have an effective lead nurturing strategy in place could still struggle to boost conversions and sales, even if they manage to drive lots of relevant traffic to their content. You need to understand that most people landing on your web pages, articles, or blogs reach those URLs in the search for information rather than a desire to spend money. So, a suitable lead nurturing strategy will provide those visitors with the info they require, help them to understand their issues, and then provide them with clear and concise facts explaining the value your tech services or products can create.

3) not using research and data to plan for the future

Inbound marketing strategies can provide tech companies with a wealth of essential data they should use to plan and improve their approach for the future. The issue is

that most brands fail to use that information effectively, and so they never create the optimum results from their promotional efforts.

Be sure to track the progress of all your content, blogs, landing pages, and anything else you use at least once each month to work out where your priorities should lie. Key information you need to consider includes:

- the number of visitors to each page;
- the number of conversions from each inbound strategy;
- the ratio of traffic vs conversions.

### 2.3. Implementing Targeted Communications with Account Based Marketing

Account-based marketing (ABM) is strategic targeting of high-value prospects with personalized campaigns. ABM concentrates the vast majority of sales and marketing resources toward a small number of accounts that have the potential to lead to higher ROI, rather than spreading investments across a larger set of accounts. And it's on the minds of today's B2B marketers, mainly for its methodology of aligning sales and marketing departments into twin-powered lead-gen engines.

Within every company's database there are certain high-value leads that enormously outweigh the collective value of lesser known, smaller accounts. By targeting only those high-end accounts, marketers forgo cold calls, mass emails and impersonal messaging. Everything is, in essence, hyper-specific and completely calculated to the few accounts at hand.

Onboarding three large clients in 2018 for a total revenue of $6 million, for instance, is thus considered more efficient than onboarding 15 smaller clients for the same dollar amount. That said, if a marketer whiffs and only collects two of those three big-brand accounts, the financial fallout is much more serious.

Once specific accounts are targeted, the next step is to personalize campaigns to perfectly suit the stakeholders who may be involved on the client side at each stage

of the funnel. This does not, yet, mean creating individual personas but rather a few organization-level tiers of messaging. For instance, executive, managerial and staff.

Starting out, your first outreach efforts should be personalized to these general positions within two or three companies. As you gain traction – e.g., open rates, responses, demo requests – you can drill down further into more specific persona mapping.

The key at this point is that you don't want to devote too many resources to individual personas if you've yet to get a foothold within an organization. But, if or once you do, you can pull resources from less-fruitful campaigns and invest them in ones that are gaining momentum.

When siloing marketing budgets of this size to so few high-risk, high-reward efforts, you have to be even more scrupulous with your time and money than when targeting prospects in the traditional sense.

In account-based marketing, you speak to businesses as a whole, which differs from many other types of marketing.

Because today's business decisions are jointly made by anywhere between seven and 20 stakeholders, traditional prospecting is growing more difficult. That's why ABM promotes the understanding of all the people within the stakeholder supply chain who comprise a single "account."

Inbound digital marketing relies on top-of-funnel assets that draw users in organically (aka you cast a very wide net). ABM does the reverse: You remove soft leads from the equation entirely and focus only on companies that are very likely to become customers at some point.

Within your target organizations, you then convince their stakeholders to advocate on your behalf (becoming brand champions).

Consider that only 0.75 percent of leads result in closed revenue. So chasing millions of leads doesn't necessarily improve your sales pipeline or bottom line.

That's why 86 percent of marketing and sales professionals state their organizations have implemented targeted account strategies, to some degree (only 20 percent have a dedicated ABM model). That said, 60 percent of B2B marketers intend to move toward a true ABM model in the near future.

Of those firms that have already experimented with ABM, 97 percent report higher ROI relative to traditional marketing activities, and 85 percent state that ABM allows for greater client retention and upsell opportunities.

The No. 1 challenge B2B marketers face is generating high-quality leads, so ABM is a natural next step for the vast majority of businesses.

The overarching utility of an ABM model is a more seamless sales-marketing alliance. As every marketer can contest, uniting these two departments, or at least making them operate with the same mindset, is the organizational goal of goals. Sales reps then become marketing assets and marketing teams facilitate sales enablement.

B2B companies already have the ABM wind in their sails should they be interested in full-scale adoption. That's because the majority of businesses employ content marketing, an existing structure which ABM can complement.

The only way to create unique customer interactions is to produce content of all types. Email and social touchpoints must include content that's targeted and engaging, making ABM a perfect vehicle for which to ramp up content production.

There were two marketing professionals interviewed - Solomia Ryfiak, Marketing Manager at Intellias and Olesia Martynova, former Marketing Manager ar PLVision IT-company and Industry Leader at Intellias nowadays. As a result, it was investigated that three well-known IT companies in the Ukrainian market introduced the method of ABM to their marketing strategies.

Mostly this type of marketing works in SoftServe now. Softserve is an IT-company with around 8000 employees, founded in 1993 in Lviv, Ukraine. SoftServe provides services in the fields of Big data, Internet of Things, cloud computing, DevOps, e-commerce, security, and experience design.

SoftServe has a special marketing team dedicated to Account Based Marketing. The approach: marketers choose about ten target companies and make a very detailed research about the structure, C-level, decision makers etc. After the company launches advertising on LinkedIn and other social medias specifically for those companies. There is no specific massage of advertising. The main idea is to build brand awareness at this stage. Marketers are exploring conferences that target companies are going to visit during the year. Before the conferences, marketers set-up meetings with C-level or decision makers. If the team have at least five planned meetings, SoftServe is attending a conference.

Olesia Martynova points that such approach is expedient only when target companies are potentially long-term clients.

Solomia Ryfiak mentions that Intellias is starting to implement account based approach to their marketing strategy. Now the team is discovering Influ2 system.

Influ2 is Ukrainian product, an ABM platform that boosts B2B sales development productivity with person-based advertising. Influ2 delivers ads to every decision-maker from a targeted account and tracks engagement of each person, who sees an ad or clicks on it. CEO of Influ2, Dmitri Lisitski, points that the system is the first PBM-based B2B ad platform in the market.

Intellias has an account based approach when doing proposals and presentations for the leads (potential clients).

ABM may be on the tips of marketer's tongues, but for smaller teams with fewer resources, it's likely not a realistic investment.

Because of the time, resource and labor commitments, ABM is more so a strategy for companies that are already well versed in B2B marketing and have solid teams, pipelines and targeting tactics in place. But that shouldn't discourage marketers from at least integrating some of the core tenets of ABM into their programs in 2018, such as personalized campaigns, customer segmentation, lead qualification and sales alignment. Account based approach can create important

competitive advantages for companies which can acquire and develop the necessary organisational competences to implement an integrative process through alignment with strategic or important, well selected, customers.

### 2.4. Aligning Sales and Marketing for Consistent Branding Communications

One of the most important factors in creating a scalable, repeatable and predictable revenue machine is sales and marketing alignment. Those two departments have been separated before. Now leads are demanding a single buyer experience, and that requires the evolution of revenue generation to match today's client behavior. Accordingly, it is no longer acceptable to have sales and marketing running different playbooks.

HubSpot shares some data about this:

organizations with tightly aligned sales and marketing had 36% higher customer retention rates and achieved 38% higher sales win rates;

aligned organizations achieved an average of 32% annual revenue growth, while less aligned companies reported an average 7% decline in revenue (source: Forrester Research);

B2B organizations with tightly aligned sales and marketing operations achieved 24% faster growth and 27% faster profit growth over a three-year period (due to SiriusDecisions).

A SiriusDecisions poll of 300 sales leaders points that "the top third of the sales cycle has gone away. Salespeople believe that the beginning of the traditional sales process has evaporated and that buyers are self-servicing their needs instead of engaging with salespeople."

Sales and Marketing Department at Intellias is a very good exmple of sales and marketing processes aligning. Firstly, it is a one team, that have plannings together at least once in a quarter.

The goals are shared for marketing and sales. Of course, not all, because some measures can not work for two processes.

Head of Sales and Marketing at Intellias is VP of Sales and Department. So, he keeps the process running on the same line.

The department has more than 20 employees. For effective collaboration between sales and marketing, there is a Marketing Manager for sales and Account Managers Support. Main responsibilities on this position is to maintain updated information in CRM system, process new commercial requests, perform research on the incoming leads; assist with requests for custom marketing collateral and presentations. So, it is a position in-between marketing and sales. A person also prepares monthly digests for the whole department, so everybody is up-to-dated.

# PART 3

# IMPROVING BRANDING STRATEGY FOR UKRAINIAN TECH COMPANY INTELLIAS

## 3.1. Building Blocks for Intellias Branding and Main Areas For Improvement

Intellias was founded in Lviv, in 2002. By 2019 it has evolved into a major supplier of software development services in Ukraine. Intellias currently has offices in 5 cities in Ukraine, one in Poland and a representative office in Berlin, Germany. Intellias provides custom software engineering services and has a strong industry focus on Automotive, FinTech, Location Based Services, Retail, IoT, and Energy sectors.

Type of company: Privately held. Co-founders: Vitaly Sedler (CEO) and Michael Puzrakov (COO).

Intellias timeline:

2002 – Vitaly Sedler and Michael Puzrakov co-founded Intellias;

2006 – Intellias became a member of Ukrainian Hi-Tech Initiative;

2013 – IT Ukraine Association membership;

2015 – A new delivery center in Kyiv and a representative office in Berlin;

2015 – Intellias established Automotive R&D as its core industry domain;

2016 – A new delivery center in Odesa;

2016 – Lviv IT Cluster membership;

2018 – Investment from Horizon Capital;

2018 – A delivery center in Kharkiv;

2018 – Kharkiv IT Cluster membership;

2019 – A new delivery center in Krakow;

2019 – A new delivery center in Ivano-Frankivsk.

Intellias technology expertise covers Platform Development, Data Science & Big Data, IoT & Embedded, SaaS Development, DevOps & Cloud, UX/UI Design, Mobile App Development.

The geography of Intellias clients includes Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Israel, USA, Japan, and the United Arab Emirates.

Since 2014, Intellias has been hosting its own Navimotive Conference for LBS and automotive industry professionals. In 2018, Intellias became a co-organizer of Lviv IT Arena, the biggest technology event in Eastern Europe. The company helped to organize Ukraine House Davos, a five-day World Economic Forum sideline venue. Intellias also partnered and sponsored 9 conferences in 2018 - AI Ukraine, Data Science Conference, DevOps Stage, JEE Conf, Devoxx, Lviv JS, and XP Days, as well as organized 7 charity events.

Intellias also partnered with investment companies AVentures Capital, Aventis Capital, and Capital Times to release a report on the status of the IT industry in Eastern Europe.

Intellias contributes to the development of Ukrainian engineering education, in particular, "Internet of Things" program at the National University of Lviv Polytechnic and the Faculty of Applied Sciences at the Ukrainian Catholic University. The company conducts its own scholarship program for high school and college students. As a part of this program in 2018, Intellias has granted the scholarship for the Autonomous Racecar Development project.

2009 – Intellias has been recognized as one of the leading IT-BPO providers in Lviv according to KPMG.

2010, 2011, and 2014 - The best IT employer in Lviv within the category of "100+ employees" according to DOU.

2017 - The best IT employer of Ukraine within the category "800+ employees" according to DOU.

2017 - Intellias has been shortlisted for Global Sourcing Association (GSA) UK Awards in the ITO Project of the year.

2017 - Intellias has been recognized by Clutch in several ratings, including: "56 most recommended companies in the world"19 and "Top .NET developers."20

2017, 2018 - Intellias has been included to Inc. 5000 Europe list of the most dynamically growing private companies in Europe.

2018 - Intellias has been included in the list of Top 100 IT companies in the world according to the International Association of Outsourcing Professionals (IAOP).

2018 - Intellias has been listed among the Top 5 companies in the list of "27 IT Outsourcing Companies worldwide" by Clutch.

2018 – Intellias has been included in the list of key players in Simultaneous Localization and Mapping (SLAM) market.

2018 – Intellias has been recognized among top software companies by GoodFirms.

2018 – Intellias has been recognized as one of the Global Leaders among IT and business services companies by Clutch.

2018 – Intellias has been listed among top 100 Connected Car Companies.

2018 – Intellias has been recognized as a key player in Global Navigation Guidance Solutions market.

2018 – Intellias has been recognized as a key player in Global ECU Software market.

2019 – Intellias took 12th position among the 50 largest IT companies in Ukraine being the fastest growing company by DOU 2019 rating.

Intellias takes a role of “Intelligent Software Engineering Partner”. The company demonstrates itself as big enough to scale and small enough to care: “as a midsize software development company, we combine the best of both worlds. We

have the focus and speed of the small IT outsourcing companies along with the scalability and expertise of the big ones."

Customer decision journey in terms of Intellias brand is based on four stages:

1. Awareness.
2. Familiarity.
3. Consideration.
4. Loyalty.

Touchpoints for building awareness for Intellias are Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Ads in Media, Articles in 3d party media, buzz, Youtube (prerolls), offline ads, Blog, Own events, event sponsorship. For this stage target audience knows latest trends and how-tos.

KPI`s: in CPM, CTR %, Earned Media Contacts, TAReach, Affinity (returning users, time on website, bounce rate etc.).

Main tasks for building awareness: to set up social media accounts, to define social media strategy, to set up social media automation, to engage with users using Linkedin and Quora, Reddit, Twitter.

Touchpoints for familiarity stage: DisplayAds, Buzz, Website, blog, SMM, SEO, retargeting, business directories (like Clutch), industry reports.

Touchpoints of consideration stage: DisplayAds, Buzz, web-site, retargeting, cases, presentations, video references.

Loyalty stage is measured in net-promoter score (NPS). Touchpoints on this stage: greeting emails, newsletters, social media.

*Appendix 7*

All these messages, content, customer journey are based on buyer personas. Intellias has a few buyer personas (around three). Their segmentation is based on psychographic information (values and motivations) as well as demographic information (age and location).

Age: case-specific, mostly 25-60

Location: Western and Northern Europe (DACH, Benelux, UK, Nordics); USA and Canada.

Type of companies: technology companies (both established and Late Stage Startups).

Size: Intellias is targeting Midmarket companies as our key market. By midmarket we mean companies that are approximately matching following criteria:

- number of employees: from several dozen (e.g. 50) to several thousands (e.g. 5000);
- revenue: from several millions USD to several billions USD, e.g. $5 000 000 - $5 000 000 000

Industries: Automotive, Location Based Services, eLearning, Fintech, Real Estate & Energy Management, Telecom, Media and Entertainment, Healthcare, eGovernment, Travel and Hospitality.

Details about buyer personas of Intellias are confidential, but generally description looks like:

1. Eric: VP/Director of (Product, Software) Engineering/Development, VP/Director of R&D, Engineering (Program) Manager. Sometimes combined with CTO, VP/Director of Technology or Program Manager.
2. Tony: CTO, VP/Director Technology/R&D.
3. Patricia: Chief Product Officer, VP/Director of Product (Development, Management, Engineering), VP/Director of (Product, Product Line), Product Manager.
4. Prakash: Procurement Manager.

Their motivation is might be general recognition, control, security or more detailed depending on case.

Based on the Intellias history, target audience, services, industries and other key characteristic we can make a detail overview on corporate brand attributes.

*Appendix 8*

**Rational brand attributes:**

**1. Intelligence.**

Message: Cultivate enquiring minds. Smart approach, engineering culture, breakthrough products, no unnecessary compromises over technology of process.

**2. Efficiency.**

Message: Do more with less. Smart spending, no significant overhead; relatively flat structure (as for a company of our size), no unnecessary organizational layers. Lean for product development. Efficient Delivery governance model.

**3. Transparency.**

Message: Be open and self-explanatory. Self-explanatory service models, approaches, etc. Transparency of cooperation through communication, collaboration, reporting.

**4. Alignment.**

Message: Adapt and celebrate change. Adaptability (processes, special requirements, etc.), flexibility, seamless integration, part and extension of client`s culture and brand if Dedicated Teams model; readiness for extensive onsite.

**5. Authenticity.**

Message: Mean what you say. Kind of a business honesty, when people that work with the customer are being themselves, speak language they are comfortable to speak, not pretending to be someone else, not selling some crap and saying that this is a high quality service client pays for.

**6. Comfort.**

Message: Contentment with the work you do. Inspiring and comfortable environment, lack of bureaucracy, easy and informal communication, enjoyment of the work.

**Emotional brand attributes:**

**1. Recognition.**

Message: Take the lead and be ahead of the herd. Explanation: brand helps to feel myself unique and ahead of the pack.

Keywords: tand out of the crowd, be recognized for your achievements, skills, knowledge.

**2. Control.**

Message: Everything should be structured, optimized and under my control. Explanation: brand helps to feel myself safe.

Keywords: comfort, serenity, loyalty; someone to ease your burdens.

**3. Security.**

Message: Feeling taken care for, in a stable environment. Explanation: brand helps me feel myself safe.

Keywords: comfort, serenity, loyalty; someone to ease your burdens.

Except of messages and keywords, each brand attribute of Intellias is represented by color.

Green, mint, yellow, purple and blue demonstrate the idea of Intellias corporate brand.

Green color represents comfort and control. It is universally associated with nature, symbolizes peace, growth, calming, reliability.

Mint color represents transparency. It is a color communication, recharge energy, freshness, ballance, flexibility, openness.

Yellow - efficiency. It is about happiness, warmth, joy, optimism, energy, risk-taking.

Purple color represents authenticity, recognition, intelligence. Keywords: imagination, intuition, creativity, inventiveness, mystery, individuality.

Blue color represents alignment and security. It is based on feeling of trust, integrity, control, responsibility.

Brandbook of Intellias includes colores tones and basic colors parameters. Again, it is important that colors are used on all channels and with all messages.

Colors make brand look great, systematic and they have a psychological effect on people. According to the HubSpot Research, people make up their minds within 90 seconds of their initial interactions with either people or products and over 60% of this judgment is based on colours alone.

Here is how Intellias connects corporate attributes with colors:

So, Intellias brand looks systematic and integrated. But when we go the website, we do not see the internal and external alignment. Sowmya Raghu Raman in his research points that brand alignment is the process by which an organisation ensures that its functional and operational groups are aligned to create and maintain a symbiotic relationship between its internal and external stakeholders, so as to consciously and consistently deliver the brand promise.

Due to HubSpot researchers have also recognized that the success of a brand is not only dependent on the perceptions and performance of the internal stakeholders but all stakeholders. The term Corporate Branding has therefore assumed prominence in the recent years and can be viewed as a culmination of external and internal branding efforts of an organisation.

New research shows that only 19% of employees globally think their employee experience and image of their company matches up with the external brand image. According to a report by Weber Shandwick, the global public relations firm, less than a fifth of employees feels there is strong alignment between their employer's external image and the actual reality and personal experience is working at the company. Alarmingly, only 7% strongly disagree that there is strong alignment between their employer and external reputations.

So, global marketing communications are integrated. But Global Marketing is not integrated with Human Recourse Marketing. There two different websites: intellias.com and intellias.ua. That might confuse potential clients or employees, can have influence on feeling of trust of leads, influence website traffic, change analytics etc.

When we explore competitors of Intellias, we might see that the brand visual needs to be updated to more trendy style, has to be more unified.

To align external and internal brands of Intellias, we work on the new brand proposition together with creative agency, internal and external stakeholders and insight marketing teams.

### 3.2. Suggested Roadmap for Branding Strategy Refinement

We are preparing a complex rebranding that can be done in 5 stages:

1) discovery;
2) brand model;
3) visualization;
4) developing a brand of materials;
5) brand book.

**Discovery Stage.**

The main task: to find an opportunity and insights to build and develop Intellias corporate brand.

Timing: 20 days.

Result: presentation of the research.

Steps of the discovery stage:

1. Consumers:
    - to make a portrait of Intellias customer;
    - insights of the customer;
    - their motivation and challenges;
    - to make segmentation;
    - to create a consumer journey.
2. Competitors. Analyze of top-5:
    - their brand position;
    - advantages;
    - disadvantages;
    - why they are chosen;
    - communication;
    - design quality.
3. Product and company
    - positioning;
    - key messages;
    - advantages;
    - disadvantages;
    - what are we thinking about?
    - sales channels.

Brand Model Stage.

The main task: to explore and describe the brand.

Timing: 10-15 days.

Result: presentation of models.

Steps:

1. Target audience portrait.
2. Segmentation.
3. Big Idea (the main idea of Intellias brand)
4. Rational characteristics.
5. Emotional attributes.
6. Corporate values.
7. How we identify Intellias.
8. How we communicate our brand.

Visualization Step

The main task: to create a brand style.

Time: 80 days.

Result: brandbook.

Steps:

1. Development of a design approach: trends, trends, analysis of competitors' style. 10 days.
2. Development of the design concept: 15 days. Development of 2-3 directions.
3. Reproduction of directions and development of the logbook. 20 days. Logo, fonts, colors, 3 examples of use.
4. Additional development of brand elements: 15 days, visualization and master files.
5. Brand Book: 15 days. A guide on using corporate style elements with recommendations on production.
6. Design Management and copyright support.

**Who we are?**

Software engineering company.

We help businesses from all around the world to develop their potential of digital technologies. We do it, based on unique needs of every customer. We use the

best engineering talents, high quality industry expertise and personalized approach to every project.

**Our goals. Quantitative:**

1. Profit - 40% CAGR with saving profitable for the next 5-7 years
2. 3000 employees by 2021

**Our goals. Qualitative:**

1. Diversification of the client's portfolio.
2. Development Directions: Automotive, Location-Based Services, Energy, e-Commerce.
3. Expertise development: Big Data, IoT.
4. New development centers in Central and Eastern Europe.
5. Status of The best IT employer in the presence countries.

**Our main competitors in Ukraine:**

- GlobalLogic
- SoftServe
- Ciklum
- Epam
- Luxoft
- Eleks
- DataArt
- N-iX
- Zeo Alliance
- Grammarly
- MacPaw

**Main challenges for Intellias:**

1. The company depends on the biggest client account.
2. There is no powerful and consistent brand.
3. Not effective communication strategies.

4. The team can not prognose effectiveness of marketing channels.

**How do we improve our target audience description?**

Intellias has to focus on two groups of the target audience: clients and employees. It will help to build a unified message and to create a consistent brand.

**Target audience segmentation:**

1. Customers. Engineering Managers. Managers responsible for hiring a team and launching a project.
2. Engineers. Strong Middle and Senior engineers working on the Intellias team over the project.

As a result, we describe two buyer personas:

1. Eric is an engineer in the past, is now responsible for management product processes in the company. His main task- to make it so that freelance engineering teams do their work on time, with high quality and within the limits of the budget. He controls all processes: from hiring a team to checking results.

His main challenges:

1) to make the product on time;
2) to maintain product quality;
3) to stay within budget;
4) to support performance of teams and speed of development;
5) to accept the right key technological decision.

2. Serhii Kovalchuk. Strong Middle Developer. 26 years old with 4 years of work experience. English level - B1. Renting an apartment. Has a car, unmarried, has a girlfriend. Sometimes thinking of relocating. Wants to buy his own apartment.

His main challenges:

1) to gain a Senior level.

How he chooses a company to work for:

1) interesting projects - promising new technologies;
2) a strong team in which he can learn and grow;

3) financial motivation - not lower than the market standards;

4) stability of the process - there are large projects, mobile reserve;

5) comfortable, inspiring office;

6) events, conferences.

Mutual characteristic for both of our target audience: they need a good team. So, we see a team not just inside of Intellias, but also a team like "customer-employee".

The role of Intellias - to bring together high-professional engineers from different cities and countries (Eric from London, Serhii from Lviv and Kate from kyiv) to create cool innovative engineering solution.

So, who we are then?

Intellias - an international association of engineers.

The main task for target audience: Intellias is bringing an engineering team for solving complicated problems.

Why are we different for Eric?

1) powerful team - one of the biggert share (60%) of senior engineers in the market.

2) in-depth expertise - in the Automotive, Location Based Services, FinTech industries;

3) minimal bureaucracy - the ability to communicate with all engineers and top managers without intermediaries.

What are we different for Serhii:

1) powerful team - one of the highest shares (60%) of senior engineers in the market.

2) interesting projects - we are developing engineering solutions for 15 famous automotive brands;

3) minimal bureaucracy - you can communicate with a client and top managers without intermediaries.

What annoys our competitors?

Our relationship with customers and employees.

That was a rational part of the brand. Intellias brand will also gain a new emotional part. Person who joined Intellias wants to say “I found my team”. Intellias brand gives a feeling of satisfaction because of solving complex problems.

Due to the suggested roadmap, Intellias brand promotes new ukrainian culture of engineering. The company does a lot to make words “ukrainian engineer” to gain an association of a high-quality and interesting technical solution.

The company is important to environment because of new engineering and technical solutions.

**Brand Essence:** tribe of engineers.

**Steps of implementing.**

1. Logo analyze.

intellias

The current logo looks unprofessional and difficult to read. The recommendation is to update the font on the basis of a more modern font, taking into account all the identified shortcomings.

What we gain:

intellias

So, as a result of the company's brand analysis, the problem was identified - the lack of a single brand for communication on the client's market and the employees market. This has a negative impact on Intellias B2B branding communications.

Firstly, the presence of two websites can reduce the level of trust of leads. Ukrainian website of Intellias has a lower UX level. This may also become a reason why a potential customer lost motivation to make further research about the company

or to contact us. Based on those disadvantages, we have proposed a systematic rebranding, which will create a unified branding communication strategy for both markets.

## CONCLUSIONS ON MASTER DISSERTATION

The dissertation includes investigation on strategies of the branding communications. During the research the influence of branding communication on the business-to-business technology sphere was analyzed; branding communications process in B2B tech companies were described.

In accordance with the aim of the research, the following tasks are done: the concept of brand and branding communications is defined; the activities in building a corporate brand for tech companies are described; the impact of branding communications on B2B relations - analyzed. It was investigated how corporate brand activity changes the business development process.

To get the results four marketing managers were interviewed: Marketing Manager at Intellias, Head of Marketing at Intellias, Communication Manager at Intellias, Marketing Manager at SoftServe and Product Marketing Manager at PLVision.

The first part of the dissertation is theoretical. It includes an overview of methodology and approaches to branding research. Two types of approaches could be covered for research of branding communications on the B2B market: primary research which involves collecting data directly from the source and secondary that involves combining ideas appropriate to a company through current market research.

Due to the master dissertation corporate branding is a vital aspect of a company's overall marketing strategy. The main difference between a product and corporate branding is that corporate brand includes vision and values. They are expressed in how the firm conies across in its communication and through its people and its style.

The historical context of corporate identity studies might be divided into five stages starting from the 1950s. During these stages, the basic tenets of marketing

were transformed from 4 to 10Ps: philosophy, personality, people, product, price, place, promotion, performance, perception, positioning.

First tech brands that became popular are AT&T, established in 1885, IBM founded in 1888, General Electric founded in 1890. Tech branding strongly evolved over the 20th century. A lot more well-known technology companies were founded: Xerox founded in 1906, Hewlett-Packard in 1939, Intel established in 1968, Microsoft from 1975, Apple founded in 1977, Google established in 1998. Facebook established in 2003. What is very interesting, almost every tech brand became simpler over time. Multiple colors became monochrome, etchings became silhouettes, serifs became sans serifs, realistic became geometric. Branding communications became a very important part of integrated marketing communications.

Part two and part three of the master dissertation are practical. There are such results described based on the author's work at the marketing department at Intellias: the role of integrated marketing communications and their influence on B2B branding by building brand awareness with inbound communications approaches to account-based marketing and importance of aligning sales and marketing workflow.

Having identified the main approaches to inbound marketing communication for B2B technology companies, we have figured out that the integration of all channels is key to an effective brand building. Integrated marketing communications need a holistic and systematic approach to all the company's messages, like corporate identity, tone of voice, etc. Every message from a company, no matter what channel, has to be harmonized in order to make the right perception of a company. Integrated marketing communications help to receive more leads, align with customer preferences, and overall are cost saving.

Keeping in mind the importance of integrated marketing communications we analyzed Intellias brand and found a problem of communicating two different messages. We have composed suggested roadmap for branding strategy refinement

which includes five stages: discovery, brand model, visualization, developing brand materials, creating a brand book.

A current logo of Intellias was analyzed and a new version was suggested.

Branding communications are the most effective way to distinguish a company from its competitors due to the sharp development of technology companies nowadays. This industry is strongly innovative, so companies use the most innovative methods of communication.

Results of implementing some trendy approaches to marketing communication on the second part of the thesis prove that integrated branding communications of technology companies influence the B2B market helping to grow business, generate leads and to build trust between different companies.

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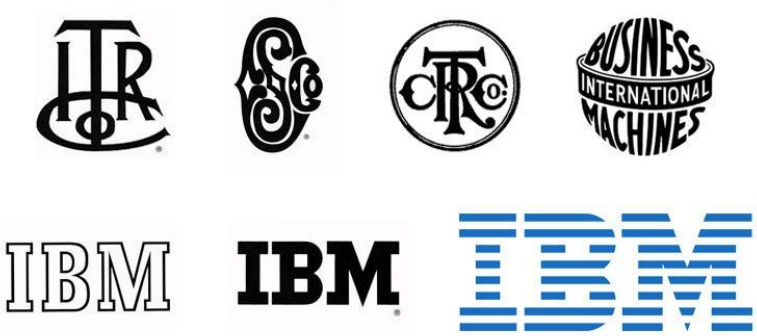
*Appendix 1*

**The evolution of tech logos as part of branding communications during the 20th century**

1. AT&T, est. 1885

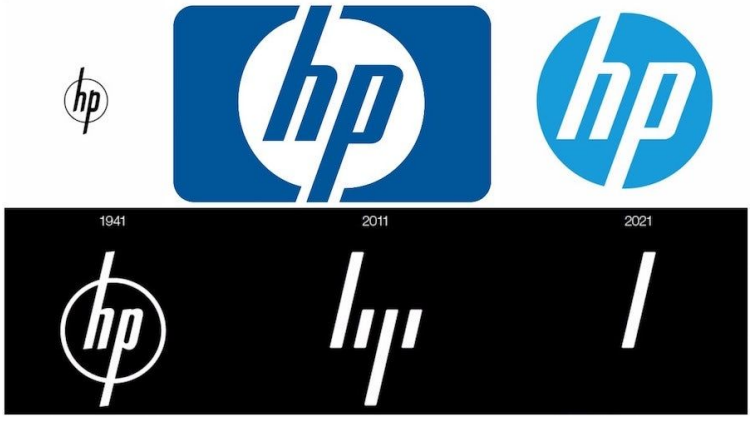
2. IBM, est. 1888



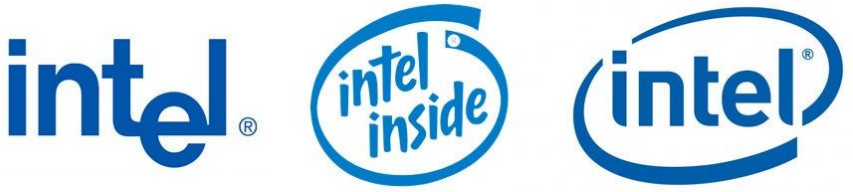
3. General Electric, est. 1890

4. Xerox, est. 1906

5. Hewlett-Packard, est. 1939



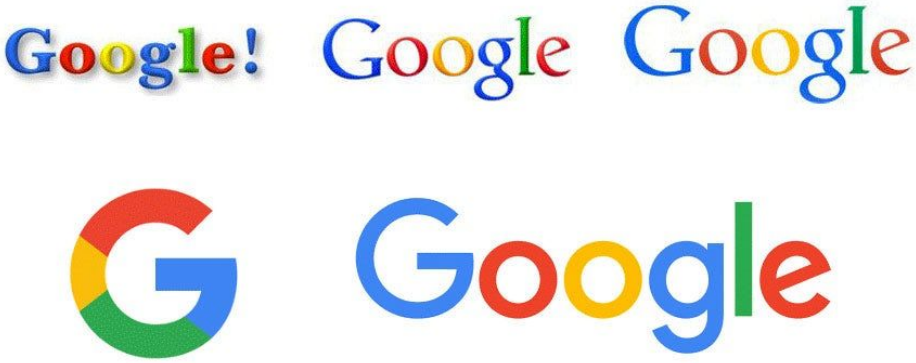
6. Intel, est. 1968



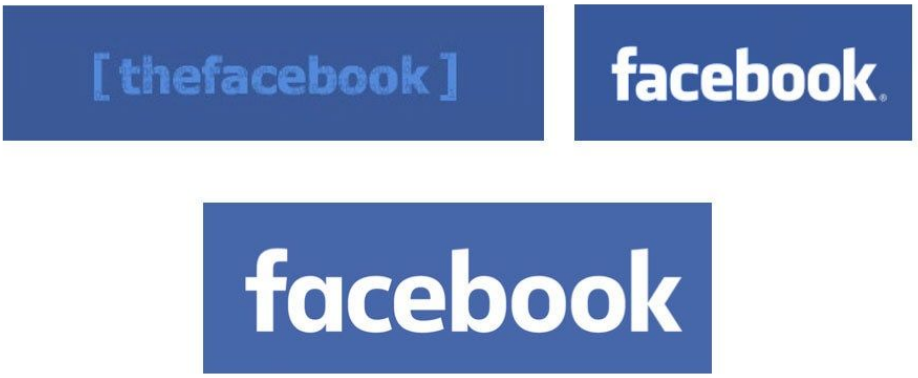

7. Microsoft, est. 1975

8. Apple, est. 1977

9. Google, est. 1998




10. Facebook, est. 2003



*Appendix 2*

**Inbound Marketing Funnel**

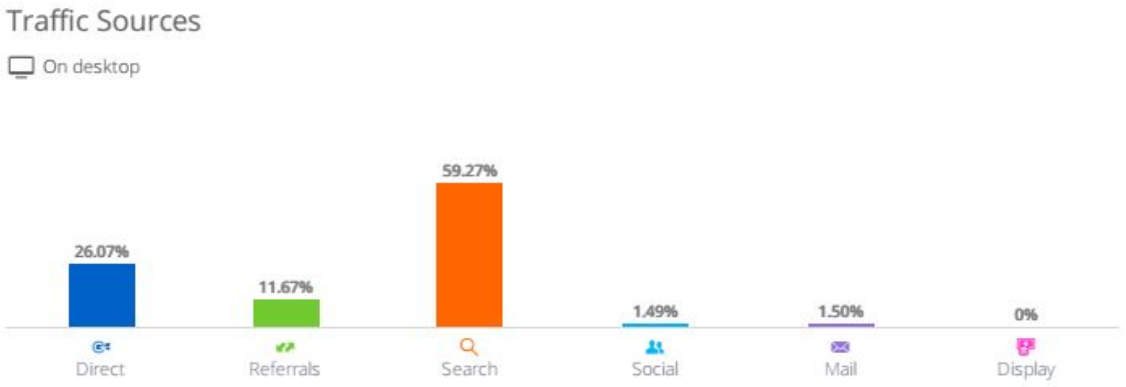
| Index | January | February | March | April | May |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Marketing Captured Leads (MCLs)** | 32 | 27 | 35 | 25 | 52 |
| **Referrals: Medium** | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 |

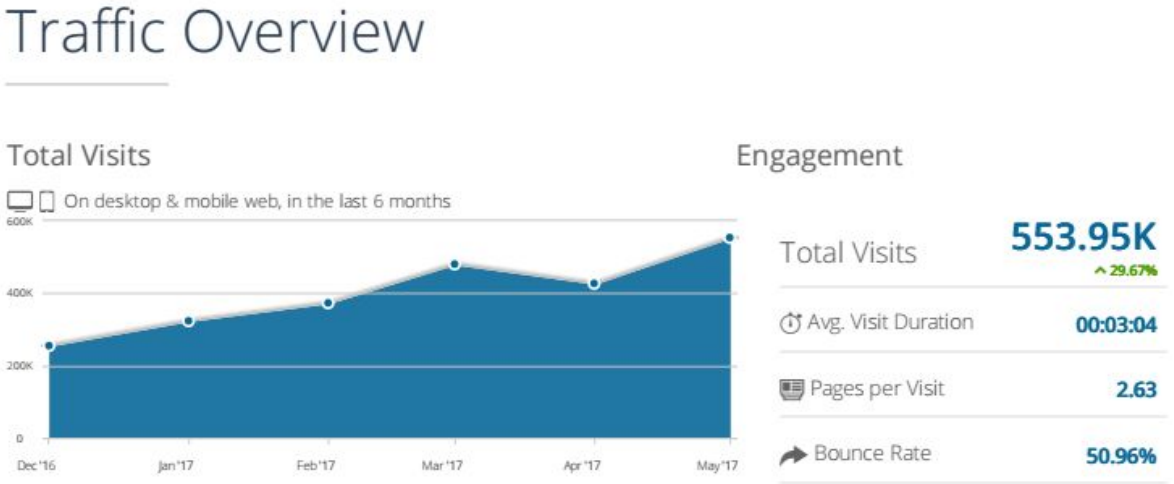
*Appendix 3*

## Intellias. List of categories with the highest CTRs.

| | Event Label | Landing Page | Total Events | Unique Events | Event Value | Avg. Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 59 % of Total: 0.02% (306,054) | 57 % of Total: 0.03% (178,275) | 0 % of Total: 0.00% (0) | 0.00 Avg for View: 0.00 (0.00%) |
| 1. | http://www.intellias.com/?utm_source=Clutch&utm_medium=ClutchProfile&utm_campaign=Clutch | /developers | 13 (22.03%) | 13 (22.81%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0.00 |
| 2. | http://www.intellias.com/?utm_source=Clutch&utm_medium=ClutchProfile&utm_campaign=Clutch | /developers/eastern-europe | 5 (8.47%) | 4 (7.02%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0.00 |
| 3. | http://www.intellias.com/?utm_source=Clutch&utm_medium=ClutchProfile&utm_campaign=Clutch | /developers/ukraine | 4 (6.78%) | 4 (7.02%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0.00 |
| 4. | http://www.intellias.com/?utm_source=Clutch&utm_medium=ClutchProfile&utm_campaign=Clutch | /hlr/l.php?u=http://www.intellias.com/?utm_source=Clutch | 4 (6.78%) | 4 (7.02%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0.00 |
| 5. | http://www.intellias.com/?utm_source=Clutch&utm_medium=ClutchProfile&utm_campaign=Clutch | / | 3 (5.08%) | 3 (5.26%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0.00 |
| 6. | http://www.intellias.com/?utm_source=Clutch&utm_medium=ClutchProfile&utm_campaign=Clutch | /hlr/l.php?u=http://www.softserveinc.com/en-us/ | 2 (3.39%) | 2 (3.51%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0.00 |
| 7. | http://www.intellias.com/?utm_source=Clutch&utm_medium=ClutchProfile&utm_campaign=Clutch | /it-services/mongodb?field_pp_size_people_value=All&country=All&state=&distance[postal_code]=&distance[country]=us&distance[search_distance]=100&distance[search_units]=mile&field_pp_hrly_rate_range_value=All&field_pp_cs_small_biz_value=&field_pp_cs_midmarket_value=&field_pp_cs_enterprise_value=&field_pp_if_advertising_value=&field_pp_if_automotive_value=&field_pp_if_arts_value=&field_pp_if_bizservices_value=&field_pp_if_conproducts_value=&field_pp_if_education_value=&field_pp_if_natural_resources_value=&field_pp_if_finservices_value=&field_pp_if_gambling_value=&field_pp_if_gaming_value=&field_pp_if_government_value=&field_pp_if_healthcare_value=&field_pp_if_hospitality_value=&field_pp_if_it_value=&field_pp_if_legal_value=&field_pp_if_manufacturing_value=&field_pp_if_media_value=&field_pp_if_nonprofit_value=&field_pp_if_realestate_value=&field_pp_if_retail_value=&field_pp_if_telecom_value=&field_pp_if_transportation_value=&field_pp_if_utilities_value=&field_pp_if_other_value=&sort_bef_combine=field_pp_sponsor_flag_value DESC&sort_by=field_pp_sponsor_flag_value&sort_order=DESC&page=2 | 2 (3.39%) | 2 (3.51%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0.00 |
| 8. | http://www.intellias.com/?utm_source=Clutch&utm_medium=ClutchProfile&utm_campaign=Clutch | /profile/radixweb | 2 (3.39%) | 1 (1.75%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0.00 |

**Clutch.co. Traffic overview.**



*Appendix 4*

**Inbound Marketing Funnel**

| Index | January | February | March | April | May |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Marketing Captured Leads (MCLs)** | 32 | 27 | 35 | 25 | 52 |
| **Referrals: Clutch** | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 10 |

*Appendix 5*

## Campaign Performance

1 Jan 2019 — 31 May 2019

**Summary**

Comparing to prior 151 days

| Campaigns sent | Emails sent | Delivery rate | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | 6 283 | 94.7% + 2.9% | |

| Open rate | Click rate | Unsubscribe rate | Bounce rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| 30.5% + 3.1% | 4.4% + 1.7% | 1.7% + 0.5% | 5.3% − 2.9% |
| 1 812 opened | 263 clicks | 99 unsubscribed | 336 bounced |

*Appendix 6*

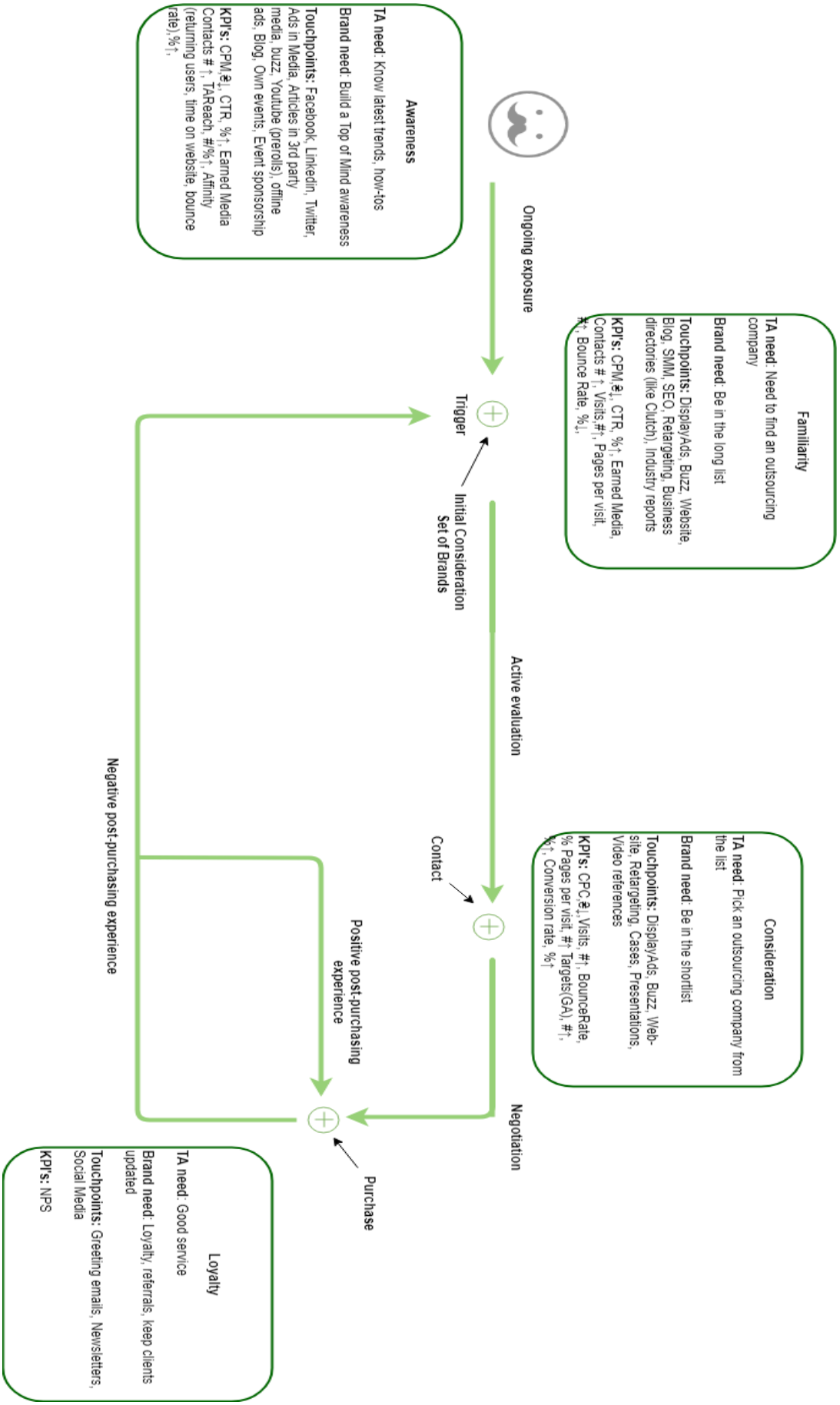
| 2019 | Company announcement #1 | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Company announcement #1 | | |
| Date of sending | 16/5/2019 | | |
| Recipients | 95 | | |
| Opened | 48 | | |
| | 50.53% | | |
| Clicked | 4 | | |
| | 8.33% | | |
| Bounced | 0 | | |
| | 0.00% | | |
| Unsubscribed | 0 | | |
| | 0.00% | | |

| 2019 | | | | LBS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | LBS Newsletter #1 | | | |
| Date of sending | 31/5/2019 | | | |
| Recipients | 59 | | | |
| | 19 | | | |
| Opened | 33.33% | | | |
| | 3 | | | |
| Clicked | 15.79% | | | |
| | 2 | | | |
| Bounced | 3.39% | | | |
| | 1 | | | |
| Unsubscribed | 1.75% | | | |

| 2019 | | | | Fintech |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fintech Newsletter #1 | Fintech Newsletter #2 | Fintech Newsletter #3 | Fintech Newsletter #4 |
| Date of sending | 2/7/2019 | 3/21/2019 | 4/25/2019 | 5/30/2019 |
| Recipients | 294 | 297 | 287 | 276 |
| | 88 | 83 | 83 | 84 |
| Opened | 31.88% | 29.33% | 30.74% | 31.82% |
| | 13 | 14 | 12 | 5 |
| Clicked | 14.77% | 16.87% | 14.46% | 5.95% |
| | 18 | 14 | 17 | 12 |
| Bounced | 6.12% | 4.71% | 5.92% | 4.35% |
| | 5 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| Unsubscribed | 1.81% | 2.47% | 0.74% | 0.76% |

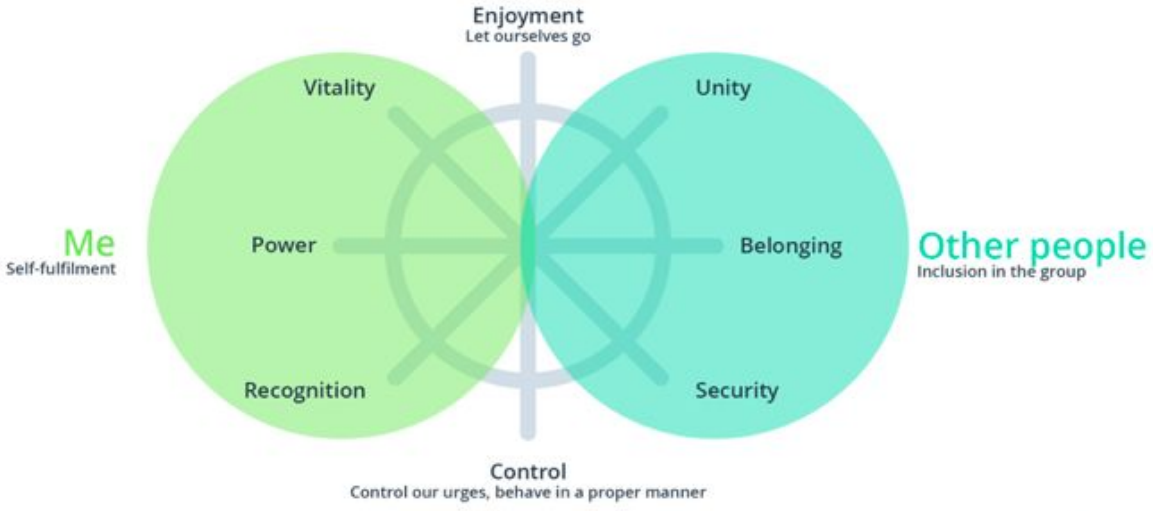
| 2019 | | | | Automotive |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Automotive Newsletter #1 | Automotive Newsletter #2 | Automotive Newsletter #3 | Automotive Newsletter #4 |
| Date of sending | 1/31/2019 | 3/21/2019 | 4/25/2019 | 5/30/2019 |
| Recipients | 543 | 628 | 661 | 705 |
| | 130 | 170 | 196 | 188 |
| Opened | 24.95% | 27.96% | 30.58% | 27.41% |
| | 27 | 35 | 24 | 53 |
| Clicked | 20.77% | 20.59% | 12.24% | 28.19% |
| | 22 | 20 | 20 | 19 |
| Bounced | 4.05% | 3.18% | 3.03% | 2.70% |
| | 1 | 3 | 4 | 8 |
| Unsubscribed | 0.19% | 0.49% | 0.62% | 1.17% |

*Appendix 7*

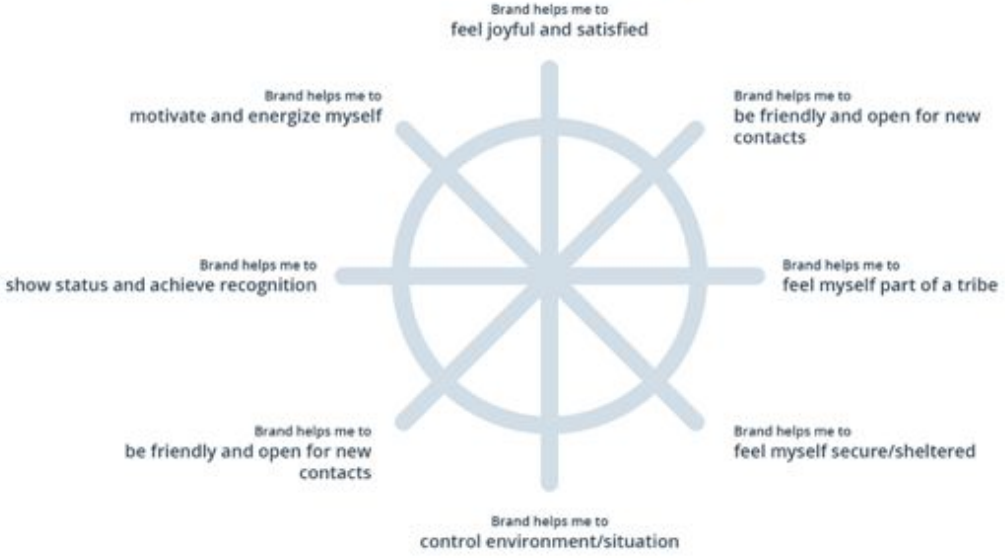

Awareness
TA need: Know latest trends, how-tos
Brand need: Build a Top of Mind awareness
Touchpoints: Facebook, Linkedin, Twitter, Ads in Media, Articles in 3rd party media, buzz, Youtube (prerolls), offline ads, Blog, Own events, Event sponsorship
KPI's: CPM,$↓, CTR, %↑, Earned Media Contacts #↑, TAReach, #/%↑, Affinity (returning users, time on website, bounce rate),%↑,
Ongoing exposure
Familiarity
TA need: Need to find an outsourcing company
Brand need: Be in the long list
Touchpoints: DisplayAds, Buzz, Website, Blog, SMM, SEO, Retargeting, Business directories (like Clutch), Industry reports
KPI's: CPM,$↓, CTR, %↑, Earned Media, Contacts #↑, Visits,#↑, Pages per visit, #↑, Bounce Rate, %↓,
Trigger
Initial Consideration Set of Brands
Active evaluation
Consideration
TA need: Pick an outsourcing company from the list
Brand need: Be in the shortlist
Touchpoints: DisplayAds, Buzz, Website, Retargeting, Cases, Presentations, Video references
KPI's: CPC,$↓, Visits, #↑, BounceRate, % Pages per visit, #↑ Targets(GA), #↑, %↑, Conversion rate, %↑
Contact
Negotiation
Positive post-purchasing experience
Purchase
Negative post-purchasing experience
Loyalty
TA need: Good service
Brand need: Loyalty, referrals, keep clients updated
Touchpoints: Greeting emails, Newsletters, Social Media
KPI's: NPS

*Appendix 8*

## Brand attributes: Emotional mapping




## Brand attributes: Motivational mapping




Corporate symbol & talisman