

An Analysis of the Impact of Alumni Activities and Branding Associations on Branding in Chinese Universities

Chen Wu ^{Corresponding author} Huam Hon Tat

Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 43000;

Abstract: This article focuses on the key role of alumni activities in shaping university brands. Alumni activities strengthen connections between alumni through various forms, enhance their sense of identity with their alma mater, and become an important force in university brand communication. These activities not only enhance the cohesion of alumni, but also promote resource sharing and emotional communication between alumni and their alma mater. The strong sense of identification of alumni with their alma mater helps to spread the brand image and values of the alma mater, and establish a good social image for the university. Alumni activities are an indispensable part of university branding and have significant implications for enhancing the overall strength and attractiveness of the university.

Keywords: Alumni activities; University brand building; Alumni cohesion; Sense of identification with the alma mater

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Introduction

In the context of increasingly fierce competition in higher education today, university brand building has become a key element in enhancing the comprehensive strength and attractiveness of schools. As an important organization within universities, brand associations play a pivotal role in the process of brand building. The brand association not only gathers various forces such as university teachers, students, alumni, and business elites, but also effectively enhances the visibility and influence of university brands through organizing various brand activities. This article aims to explore in depth the specific role of brand associations in shaping university brands, in order to provide useful reference and inspiration for the brand building of universities.

1.The specific role of alumni activities in shaping university brand

1.1.Enhance alumni cohesion and improve the sense of identity with the alma mater

Alumni activities, as a key measure to maintain alumni emotions and enhance the cohesion of the alma mater, have particularly significant organizational forms and characteristics. The activities cover various forms such as alumni gatherings, alumni forums, alumni donations, etc. With their high degree of participation and interactivity, they effectively stimulate alumni's enthusiasm for participation and sense of belonging. Alumni activities not only enhance friendship and trust among alumni by building a platform for communication and interaction, but also allow alumni to deeply feel the care and support of their alma mater. This emotional connection and resonance significantly enhance alumni's sense of identity and belonging to their alma mater, laying a solid emotional foundation for the brand building of their alma mater. Alumni identity, as an important cornerstone of university brand building, cannot be ignored in its influence. When alumni have a strong sense of identification and belonging to their alma mater, it often becomes an important force in the dissemination of the alma mater brand. Through word-of-mouth and active promotion by alumni, the brand image and values of the alma mater are widely spread, establishing a good social image and brand reputation for the alma mater. Therefore, alumni activities have profound positive significance in enhancing alumni cohesion and enhancing the sense of identity with the alma mater, for shaping the university brand.

1.2.Building a communication platform to promote resource sharing

Alumni activities play a crucial role in shaping the brand of universities, especially in building communication platforms and promoting resource sharing. These activities have established a stable and efficient communication bridge between alumni and their alma mater, enabling both parties to fully realize resource sharing and complementary advantages. Alumni, as valuable assets of the alma mater, have immeasurable value in terms of their abundant resources

such as funds, talents, and technology for the development of the alma mater. Through alumni activities, alumni can gain a deeper understanding of the current development status and needs of the alma mater, and provide targeted resource support for it. At the same time, the alma mater can fully utilize its advantages in education, research, and other aspects to provide strong assistance for alumni in career development, academic research, and other areas. The in-depth implementation of resource sharing not only helps to enhance the comprehensive strength and competitiveness of the alma mater, but also plays a positive role in shaping the university brand. With the significant improvement of the educational quality and research strength of the alma mater, its brand image and popularity will also be correspondingly enhanced, attracting more outstanding talents' attention and joining. Alumni activities inject new vitality and momentum into the shaping of the university brand by building communication platforms and promoting resource sharing.

1.3. Inheriting the spirit of the university and promoting campus culture

Alumni activities play a crucial role in inheriting the spirit of the university and promoting campus culture. By telling the long history of the university and spreading the profound spirit of the university, alumni activities enable alumni to deeply understand the cultural heritage and spiritual connotation of their alma mater. This not only deepens alumni's sense of identity and belonging to their alma mater, but also provides a solid platform and motivation for alumni to inherit and promote the spirit of the university. Campus culture, as a key element in shaping university branding, has a profound impact on the university's visibility and reputation due to its uniqueness and charm. A university with rich cultural heritage and distinctive campus characteristics often attracts more outstanding talents to pay attention to and join, enhancing the comprehensive competitiveness of the university. At the same time, campus culture can also stimulate the innovative spirit and creativity of teachers and students, injecting a continuous stream of vitality into the sustainable development of universities. Alumni activities not only provide opportunities for alumni to look back on the past and look forward to the future by inheriting the spirit of the university and promoting campus culture, but also inject profound cultural heritage and spiritual connotations into the shaping of the university brand. This measure not only strengthens the connection between alumni and their alma mater, but also lays a solid foundation for the long-term development of the university.

2. The specific role of brand associations in shaping university brands

2.1. Organize brand activities to enhance brand awareness

Brand associations play a crucial role in the process of shaping university brands, with their organizational forms and characteristics being particularly prominent. Generally speaking, brand associations are composed of university teachers, students, alumni, and business elites. This diverse composition endows the association with a high degree of professionalism and autonomy. Members of the association, with their respective professional knowledge and industry experience, are committed to shaping and spreading the university brand. The brand association carefully plans and organizes various brand activities, such as brand forums, brand exhibitions, etc., fully showcasing the university's brand image and unique charm. These activities not only attracted active participation from teachers and students, but also attracted widespread attention and recognition from all sectors of society. In the brand forum, experts and scholars conducted in-depth discussions on the core values and development strategies of university brands, providing valuable intellectual support for the shaping of university brands. Brand exhibitions, on the other hand, use intuitive display methods to allow the public to more intuitively feel the charm and strength of university brands. Brand activities also provide an important platform for universities to communicate with the industry. Through close cooperation with enterprises, universities can timely understand market demand and industry trends, and continuously adjust and optimize brand development strategies. This integrated development model of industry university research not only enhances the brand awareness and influence of universities, but also injects new vitality and momentum into their sustainable development.

2.2. spread brand value and shape brand image

Brand associations play a crucial role in shaping university brands, especially in disseminating brand values and shaping brand images. As a bridge connecting the internal and external world of universities, brand associations effectively convey the university's brand value system through a series of carefully planned activities and strategies, shaping the unique image and characteristics of the university brand. The brand association plays a key role in formulating the brand

value system, deeply exploring the cultural heritage, educational philosophy, and educational characteristics of universities, integrating these elements into the brand value system, and forming a unique and charming brand concept. This system not only provides a solid theoretical foundation for the dissemination of university brands, but also points out the direction for the construction of university brands. In terms of brand value dissemination, the brand association widely spreads the university's brand value system to all sectors of society through multiple channels and forms of publicity. By utilizing various channels such as social media, on campus and off campus activities, and media reports, the university's brand image and characteristics are deeply rooted in people's hearts, enhancing the recognition and reputation of the university brand. More importantly, brand image, as the core element of university branding, has a profound impact on the comprehensive strength and competitiveness of universities. A university with a unique brand image and characteristics is more likely to attract outstanding talents, partners, and the attention and support of all sectors of society. This kind of attention and support not only brings more resources and opportunities to universities, but also injects new vitality and momentum into their sustainable development.

2.3.Promote school enterprise cooperation and promote the integration of industry, academia and research

Brand associations play a crucial role as bridges and links in the cooperation between universities and enterprises. By carefully building a platform for school enterprise cooperation, brand associations promote deep communication and cooperation between both parties, injecting new vitality into the development of integrated industry university research. This cooperation model not only significantly enhances the research and innovation capabilities of universities, but also brings rich practical opportunities and employment resources, effectively promoting the comprehensive improvement of the quality of university education. The integration of industry, academia, and research is an important way to shape university brands, and its role in promoting university development cannot be underestimated. Through school enterprise cooperation, universities can closely adapt to market demand and industry dynamics, adjust educational content and research directions in a timely manner, and ensure the practicality and foresight of education. At the same time, the integration of industry, academia, and research provides universities with abundant innovative resources and technological achievements, promoting the comprehensive development of universities in scientific research, teaching, and social services. The brand association has injected new impetus into the shaping of university brands and laid a solid foundation for the long-term development of universities by promoting school enterprise cooperation and the integration of industry, academia and research. During this process, the visibility, reputation, and influence of university brands have significantly increased.

3.The synergistic effect of alumni activities and brand associations in university brand building

3.1.Interactive mechanism between alumni activities and brand associations

In the process of shaping university brands, there is a close interactive relationship between alumni activities and brand associations, which jointly promote the enhancement and development of university brands. Alumni activities, as an important link between alumni and alma mater, provide valuable resources and network support for brand associations by strengthening the connections and exchanges between alumni. These resources and connections not only enrich the content and format of the brand association's activities, but also provide a wide range of promotion and advertising channels, significantly enhancing the brand association's visibility and influence. At the same time, the brand association also plays an indispensable supporting role in alumni activities. By organizing various brand activities, the Brand Association provides alumni with more opportunities to participate and showcase themselves, enabling them to gain a deeper understanding of their alma mater's brand image and values. The brand association also utilizes its professional advantages to provide professional guidance and support for alumni activities, ensuring that the quality and effectiveness of the activities reach the best state. The interactive mechanism between alumni activities and brand associations not only promotes mutual development, but also injects new vitality and momentum into the shaping and dissemination of university brands. Through close cooperation and synergy between both parties, university brands are able to showcase their unique charm and influence on a broader stage.

3.2.The synergistic effect of alumni activities and brand associations in university brand building

Alumni activities and brand associations are jointly performing a wonderful chapter of collaborative cooperation on the stage of university brand building. This synergistic effect is not only reflected in the respective roles played by the two, but also in the profound impact generated by their interweaving and mutual promotion. From a performance perspective, the synergistic effect between alumni activities and brand associations has significantly enhanced the brand image and visibility of the university. Alumni activities connect alumni closely with their alma mater through emotional bonds, while brand associations inject new vitality into the university brand with their professionalism and autonomy. Working hand in hand towards a common goal, the university's brand image has become more distinct, and its popularity has also skyrocketed. More importantly, the synergistic effect of alumni activities and brand associations has had a profound promoting effect on the shaping of university brands. On the one hand, this synergistic effect helps universities form a unique brand image and characteristics. The extensive participation of alumni and the professional planning of brand associations make the university brand more personalized and attractive, attracting more outstanding talents and partners to join. On the other hand, synergies also provide universities with abundant innovative resources and technological achievements, alumni donations and technical support, as well as close cooperation between brand associations and industry, providing strong support for the university's research and teaching, and promoting its continuous development.

Conclusions

Alumni activities, as an important means of shaping the university brand, effectively enhance alumni's sense of identity and belonging to their alma mater by promoting close connections and deep communication among alumni. These activities not only provide alumni with a platform to review the past and look forward to the future, but also invisibly strengthen the brand image and values of the alma mater. Alumni share experiences and convey emotions during activities, becoming important ambassadors for the dissemination of the alma mater's brand. Alumni activities play an irreplaceable role in promoting university brand building and enhancing the overall strength of the school. Universities should fully recognize the value of alumni activities, actively plan and organize diverse alumni activities to further promote the shaping and dissemination of the university brand.

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