

# The impact of “Cause Related Marketing” (CRM) on “Brand Awareness”. (Special reference to “Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank Pvt. Ltd.”, Sri Lanka.)

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**Abstract**— *this study is carried out to determine the impact made by “Cause Related Marketing” activities on the brand awareness of a business. For “Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank”, in order to successfully establish itself in the minds of the target clientele and also to successfully survive and operate sustainably amidst of heavy competition; this research intend to study the possibilities of improving the brand awareness of the bank, through a strategic “Cause Related Marketing” campaign which could be successfully linked to the current strategies and operations of the group subsidiaries such as the “Cargills Food City”. This study has examined the concepts and analysed the relationship between “Cause Related Marketing” and “Brand Awareness”. Through qualitative and quantitative analysis, the researcher has been able to ascertain that there is a positive relationship between these two concepts. The population of this study is the customers and employees of Cargills Bank. The qualitative analysis was based on interviews. The researcher interviewed ten customers of the same sample, to obtain the customers’ perspective about the relationship between cause related marketing and brand awareness of the bank. The researcher has thus been able to ascertain that there is a positive relationship between Cause Related Marketing and brand awareness which would therefore contribute to the enhancement of the performance. Therefore Cause Related Marketing could be utilized as an effective concept to ensure sustainability of the bank. Therefore based on the research data analysis, it could be concluded that Cause Related Marketing has a positive impact on brand awareness.*

**Keywords**— *Cause Related Marketing, Brand Awareness, Corporate Sustainability.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank Private Limited, Sri Lanka; is the newest addition to the Cargills group of companies and to the list of licensed commercialized banks of Sri Lanka, The bank, being newly established (opened on April 2014), has ventured into a highly competitive and an aggressively expanding arena which

consist of a number of both local and multinational banks and finance companies, all engaged in a heavily raged battle to acquire more market share and expand in order to play significant role in the quest of making the Asia’s next growth story in Sri Lanka. The bank being newly set up with only one branch along with the head office, is being challenged with the quest of getting itself established as a commercialized bank in Sri Lanka and carving it’s market share amidst heavy competition by winning over the confidence of the potential clientele both retail and institutional. The bank is being challenged with the quest of getting itself established as a commercialised bank in Sri Lanka and carving it’s market share amidst heavy competition by winning over the confidence of the potential clientele both retail and institutional.

Therefore in considering the current strategies and processes followed by the prime subsidiaries of the group; in order to successfully establish itself in the minds of the target clientele and also to successfully survive and operate sustainably amidst of the heavy competition, facing a very strong set of local and multinational competitors; this research intend to study the possibilities of improving the “Brand Awareness” of the emerging subsidiary, “Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank” through setting up a strategic “Cause Related Marketing” campaign which could be successfully linked to the current strategies and operations of the rest of the subsidiaries in the group such as the “Cargills Food City”.

The objectives of this research are to examine the concepts of “Cause Related Marketing” and “Brand Awareness” and to analyse the relationship between “Cause Related Marketing” and “Brand Awareness”. This study will provide an understanding on how to apply these concepts in practice in order to implement them and obtain successful results whilst facing heavy competition, for a newly established and an emerging entity such as the “Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank”. The researcher also seek to improve the stakeholder awareness levels towards the level of improvement in brand awareness, that will be created by

CRM activities which would ultimately contribute towards improving an organisation's performance, thus trying to establish a link between the strategy CRM and the brand awareness of an organization; through CRM practices.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Cause Related Marketing

The emergence of the concept of "Cause Related Marketing" could be traced back to the early 1980s where it emerged as an effective tool of marketing communication, which was based on the idea of shifting a corporation's focus from consumer needs to consumer interests. The concept was initially practiced by "American Express" campaign which was aimed to raise funds for the restoration of the "Statue of Liberty". Every time the credit cards were used, the company made a donation of two cents to the Statue of Liberty. Subsequent to this campaign eventually the number of card holders grew by 45% and the card holders grew up by 28% (Liyanage 2014). In this case the "Cause Related Marketing" campaign was based on the idea that involved with the promise to donate a certain amount of money to a non profit organisation or a social cause when the customers purchased it's products or services (Nan and Heo, 2007).

"Cause-Related Marketing" (CRM) could also be defined the public association of a profit oriented company with a non-profit organization or a cause, intended to promote the company's product or service and to raise money for the non-profit. "Business in the Community", a UK based business-led charity focused on promoting responsible business practice, more popularly defines CRM as 'a commercial activity by which businesses and charities or good causes form a partnership with each other to market an image, product or service for mutual benefit'. Vardarajan and Menon (1998) as cited by Nan and Heo (2007), categorised CRM among the CSR strategies that "Do Better By Doing Good".

Vardarajan and Menon (1988) defined CRM as "the process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are categorised by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated cause when customers engage in revenue providing exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual objectives". As a type of CSR, Cause Related Marketing has received particular corporate interest. This is due to the fact that especially CRM might have positive effects on consumer behaviour (Zen and Bhattacharya, 2001). There has been numerous studies and research done on the impact of CRM on a variety factors such as the consumer choice (Baron *et al.*, 2000), consumer purchase decisions (Webb

and Mohr, 1998), consumer attitudes towards CRM ( Barnes, 1992 as cited by van den Brink *et al.* 2006) and the impact made by CRM towards companies that engage in such marketing initiatives (Webb and Mohr, 1998).

Strategic CRM is characterized by high senior management involvement, higher amount of invested resources and a longterm commitment towards the CRM campaign which will increase the duration of the campaign comparatively. Tactical CRM on the other hand lasts for a short period of time (Till and Nowak, 2000 and Drumwright and Murphy, 2001, cited by van den Brink *et al.* 2006). Also the congruency between the cause and a company's core competency is high in Strategic CRM in comparison to Tactical CRM. Tactical and Strategic CRM differ from each other mainly on the following four dimensions,

01. The congruency between the cause and a company's core competency (Pracejus and Olsen, 2004 as cited in van den Brink *et al.* 2006).

02. The duration of a campaign (Till and Nowak, 2000 as cited in van den Brink *et al.* 2006).

03. The amount of invested resources (Macleod, 2001; and Welsh, 1999 as cited in van den Brink *et al.* 2006).

04. The degree of senior management involvement (Macleod, 2001; Miller, 2002 as cited in van den Brink *et al.* 2006).

However CRM programmes can have mixed characteristics of both strategic and tactical CRM with high and low correspondence of afore stated dimensions and therefore the CRM campaigns do not necessarily has to be classified as tactile or strategic ( van den Brink *et al.* 2006). According to Ellen *et al.* (2000) corporate can be characterised as either extrinsically or intrinsically motivated in their CRM campaigns, where, intrinsically motivated companies considers the CRM programmes to be rewarding in itself, while the extrinsically motivated companies will be looking for rewards from the environment for their effort.

### B. Brand Awareness

It is still debatable as to how industrial brand equity which comprises of brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, brand association and brand satisfaction; could arise or originate. Numerous studies have been done to ascertain the components of brand equity and aspects which would lead to the creation of a competitive advantage to the business. Brand awareness

is considered to be the first dimension distinguishing the brand knowledge in consumer's mind and is related to strength of the brand node or trace in memory, as reflected by the consumer's ability to identify the brand under different conditions (Rossiter and Percy 1987, cited in Keller 1993).

Brand awareness could be defined as the basic level of knowledge that a consumer would have on a particular brand involving at least of knowing the brand name. It could range from the customer's simple recognition of the brand name to a developed cognitive structure based on detailed information (Hoyer and Brown 1990). Rossiter and Percy (1987) describe brand awareness as being essential for the could effectively crave it's share and establish itself successfully communications process to occur as it precedes all other steps in the process. Without brand awareness occurring, no other communication effects can occur. For a consumer to buy a brand they must first be made aware of it. Brand attitude cannot be formed, and intention to buy cannot occur unless brand awareness has occurred (Rossiter & Percy 1987; Rossiter et al. 1991, cited in Macdonald and Sharp 1996). When a customer purchases a product, if a particular brand drive to the mind of the customer first, then it implies that the particular brand has higher brand awareness (Malik et al. 2013). Therefore, it is evident that and organisation in a favourable position in the target market through creating effective brand awareness for it's products or services.

According to Macdonald and Sharp (1996), the purchase decision of the consumers is influenced by brand awareness, despite whether the consumers are the familiar and willing to buy the product. Brand awareness can be referred to as the probability that the consumers are familiar about the accessibility and the availability of a particular brand (Aaker, 1991). According to Keller (1993), brand awareness refers to the likelihood that a particular brand name will derive to the minds of the consumers easily and suggests that brand awareness consists of brand recognition and brand recall performance of the customers. Brand awareness is considered to be the first dimension distinguishing brand knowledge (Keller, 1993, p: 3). It is argued that the awareness of a brand has a significant impact on the first purchase of a product by a customer. The model of Ray *et al* (1973) suggested that the first purchase of the product should be followed by trial and evaluation and subsequent purchases will be based on the result of the trial and error purchase (Smith and Swinyard 1983, as cited by Hoyer and Brown 1990). Brand awareness will eventually reduce the consideration on the choices available in consumer's mind and will encourage the

consumer to select the particular brand that he or she is familiar repeatedly.

Therefore it is ascertained that the Brand Awareness is an important factor in consumer decision making for three main reasons. Firstly it will make the brand included into the consideration list in customer's mind when making a purchase, secondly it will affect the customer's purchase decision even if there are no other brand associations with the brand for the customer and finally it'll affect the decisionmaking by influencing the formation and strength of brand associations in the brand image.

### C. *The relationship between Cause Related Marketing and Brand Awareness.*

The consumer's perception on the ethical existence and corporate citizenship on which there may be an impact created by the "Cause Related Marketing" (CRM) activities and strategies carried out by the business, would in turn create positive brand awareness or brand association that would lead to brand loyalty and brand satisfaction based on the perceived quality of the products. It is still debatable as to how industrial brand equity which comprises of brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, brand association and brand satisfaction; could arise or originate. Numerous studies have been done to ascertain the components of brand equity and aspects which would lead to the creation of a competitive advantage to the business. It is evident that there are very few researches done to ascertain the relationship between "Brand Awareness", CRM activities and customer perception.

Jones (2005) in his "daisy – wheel" model of brand equities has suggested that brand equity forms by generating creative interactions between the brand and it's stake holders. Therefore social responsibility initiatives originated by companies, forms an important linkage between the brand awareness and customer expectations. "Cause Related Marketing" (Vardarajan and Menon, 1988) concept was built on the idea of creating socially responsible attributes infused into the brand and through that to differentiate the products in order to enhance sales. Brickely *et al.* (2002) as cited by Lai *et al.* (2010), acknowledged that a company's reputation for socially responsible behaviour contributes significantly to the improvement of it's brand capital. In building the brand awareness of a product via CRM, it is considered to be important that the promoters correctly matches the brand and cause fit, i.e; a brand to be fixed with a social cause which would serve a similar consumer base (Nan and Heo, 2007). For example an infant milk powder producer could organise a free medical clinic for

pregnant ladies in particular area. Higher the brand/cause fit, the success of the CRM campaign will be more which will lead to the enhancement of brand awareness.

A customer to ignore the physical factors of a product such as the performance and the price which are prioritised in purchase decision making, than the CRM campaigns, there should be strong moral attributes that the customer will pay his attention on (Baron and Spranca 1997; Tversky *et al.*1998, cited in Baron *et al.* 2009), where customers will use all available information in order to consider switching from a product which is better in performance and/or price; to a product with positive CRM associations (Keeney and Raifa 1976; Von Neumann and Morgenstern 1947, cited in Baron *et al.* 2009). Therefore it is evident that positive CRM campaigns could effectively enhance the level of brand awareness of a product enabling the product to overcome even crucial physical attributes such as performance and price, building a sustainable competitive advantage, ensuring the existence of a business amidst strong competition.

“mixed” method as methodical choice, where both a questionnaire and a set of interviews are conducted in order to gather and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data. The researcher uses “Cross - sectional” time strategy where the research is undertaken to answer a question or address a problem at a particular time.

*B. Sample*

The sample comprised of total sixty respondents with a composition of five respondents from the senior and middle management of Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank Private Limited, Sri Lanka and another ten respondents who are serving as executives (senior and middle level) and the rest of the forty five respondents were customers of Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank Private Limited, Sri Lanka.

*C. Rational*

The sample comprises of five senior and middle level managers and another ten senior and middle level executives of Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank Private Limited. It should be noted that the respondents to the questionnaire, from the bank (the officials), were asked to assume themselves as the customers of the bank when filling the first five questions of the questionnaire. These questions were aimed at obtaining the respondent’s view on the level of brand awareness and the importance of implementing marketing strategies such as CRM campaigns and the officials were asked to assume themselves as customers in order to obtain their perception on the level brand awareness of the bank and the importance and relevance of marketing strategies such as CRM to improve the business and operations of the bank. The insights of the officials for the questions which focused on the importance of both CRM and Brand Awareness to the bank’s operations provided an idea on the level of support and commitment that could be obtained from the staff of the bank towards such activities.

The rest of the forty five correspondents who banked with the Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank Private Limited, were randomly selected and the researcher in order to obtain the brand recognition and customer perception on the importance and effectiveness of practicing CRM campaigns, selected the respondents who were banking with at least another bank other than Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank Private Limited.

*D. Area / Region – Field work*

The middle and the senior management of the bank were selected from the head office of the bank situated in the

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Conceptual framework

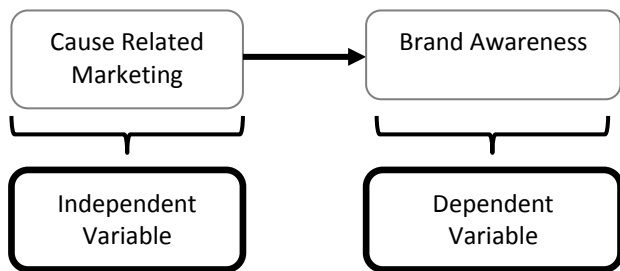


Figure 2: Conceptual framework

Hypothesis: There is a positive relationship between “Cause Related Marketing” and “Brand Awareness”.

In describing the design of the research through the “Research Onion” model, the researcher has undertaken this research based on the research philosophy “Realism” where both quantitative and qualitative data gathering techniques are used and argues the point that what is acknowledged through the senses of the researcher is subsequently processed subjectively by the mind (Critical Realism). The research is done based on a “Deductive” approach where the past information is gathered and analysed to identify the gaps that exist. The researcher has collected data using the “survey” method through a questionnaire and interview. The researcher uses

Galle Road, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka. The bank still has only two branches, which are also situated within the city limits of Colombo, as it's been merely around one year since the inception of the business. Therefore the staff of the bank could only be chosen from the head office. The senior and middle level officials were also selected from the head office. However in order for the bank to get on with the operations in full swing immediately, the staff that has been recruited comprises of a set of banking professionals who have been carefully head hunted and who are equipped with extensive experience in banking and finance field. They were more experienced in servicing a more educated and seasoned clientele who have demanding requirements. Through these officials thirty five respondents (customers / account holders of the bank) were selected from the suburbs as they were more sophisticated and concerned about the social and ethical conduct of businesses and corporate citizenship. These respondents therefore were from the suburbs of Colombo, Sri Lanka and were taken again from the clientele of the head office situated in Colombo 3.

The sample taken for the questionnaire consisted of the respondents who were segregated into eight age categories ranging from eighteen, to fifty five and above, with a gap of five to six years in each category, both male and female. The qualitative analysis was done based on interviews. The researcher interviewed ten customers of the same sample in order to obtain the customers' perspective about the relationship between cause related marketing and brand awareness of the bank.

IV. ANALYSIS

According to Walsh (1995), the Cronbach's Alpha should be greater than 70 percent. Walsh (1995) argued that if the Cronbach's Alpha is greater 70 percent, it explains that the internal consistency of the variables is reliable.

Table1: Reliability and validity - A. Reliability and validity

Variable name	Cronbach's Alpha	N.O of Items Valid
Cause Related Marketing	.741	60
Brand Awareness	.775	60

The Cronbach's Alpha of "Cause Related Marketing" is 0.741 which means that the internal consistency of the "Cause Related Marketing" variable is 74.1 percent reliable. According to the table, the dependent variable "Brand Awareness" has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.775 indicating that the internal consistency of the

"Brand Awareness" variable is 77.5 percent reliable. Further, the validity test suggests that the data collected to measure the variables of "Cause Related Marketing" and "Brand Awareness" is 100 percent valid.

Table2.: Reliability and validity - B. Correlations

		BA	CRM
Brand Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1	.509**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
Cause Related Marketing	Pearson Correlation	.509**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation analyses the relationship between Cause Related Marketing and Brand Awareness. In the above table, the Pearson correlation is indicated as 0.509 which is a positive value. This means that the Cause Related Marketing and Brand Awareness have a positive relationship. Additionally, this also states that when the value of Cause Related Marketing increases by 1, Brand Awareness will be increased by 0.509. The two tailed significance between the variables should then be analysed. According to the SPSS tutorial, if the significance is less than 0.005, then it can be stated that the relationship between two variables is significant. Based on the above table, the significance is calculated as 0.000 which is less than 0.005. Therefore, it is evident that there is a significant positive relationship between Cause Related Marketing and Brand Awareness.

Table3. C. Linear regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.718 <sup>a</sup>	.558	.552	.2460917

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Cause Related Marketing
- b. Dependent Variable : Brand Awareness

The data obtained through the questionnaire were processed to obtain the linear regression and the outcome is as given above. In this study, since the IBM SPSS statistics (ver. 20) software is used to analyse the

data, the model fit of the study will be analysed by taking the adjusted R-square value in to account.

According to the table, the Adjusted R Square value is 0.558 which is also expressed as 55.8 percent. Therefore, in the case of this study, the Adjusted R Square indicates that 55.2 percent of the total variance of "Brand Awareness" is explained by "Cause Related Marketing" activities. This implies that "Cause Related Marketing" has a positive impact on "Brand Awareness".

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#### v. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research undertaken proves that there is a significant positive impact created by "Cause Related Marketing" on "Brand Awareness". Being the new comer into the banking and finance sector in Sri Lanka, the bank needs to carve their mark by promoting its presence aggressively.

The study done through an exploratory research, enabled the researcher to conclude the fact that the bank currently do not have a strong brand awareness created within it' target market the exploratory research also helped the researcher to determine the fact that "Cause Related Marketing" strategy could be used as an effective channel in order to create brand awareness of the bank and the products. The Cargills super market chain has successfully implemented the firm's strategy on downward integration to create a mutually beneficial and

a strong and long lasting, loyal relationship with the group of suppliers, the farmers and small holder entrepreneurs. The company has been able to get it firmly positioned in the minds of the consumers through adopting a unique strategy of downward vertical integration which has produced the company a sustainable competitive advantage. Also this has proved to become one of the best implemented Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies, so far in the Sri Lankan corporate arena and recognised as one of the most sustainable business models produced in the world so far (Annual report, Cargills Ceylon Plc, 2009/2010).

Therefore it is recommended for the "Cargills Agriculture and Commercial Bank" to design and implement cause related marketing campaigns, integrating the corporate group policies of supporting the farmers and vertically integrating the business process and promote it's products such as the loan schemes, savings accounts and fixed deposit schemes etc; which would enable the bank to successfully approach a wider clientele and establish it's presence strongly across the country through the super market chain, creating a mutually beneficial and socially responsible conduct of business which would in turn result in the increase of brand awareness and eventually brand loyalty as well as the creation of goodwill towards the bank within the society and governing authorities, that would enhance the stability and the growth of the bank.

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