

The Problem of Labeling and Branding Regional Products

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1. INTRODUCTION

In several empirical studies an increasing preference of consumers for food products of their own region or nation was revealed. This paper investigates how these preferences can be integrated into marketing strategies especially by means of branding and labeling products. Two main strategies will be compared, on the one hand the classical brand strategy combined with a national or regional reference and on the other hand the labeling of products with a country of origin label or quality label with a national or regional reference. Combinations of both strategies will also be discussed.

Conclusions are based on two consumer studies in Kiel. Both studies try to determine the meaning of different product attributes like brand and label using conjoint analysis.

2. IMAGE TRANSFER REGION-PRODUCT

Before we start looking at how an image transfer would be successful it is necessary to ask under what conditions a regional labeling or branding does make sense in general. Production may be regional or spread over several regions, distribution may be regional, nationwide or international. The following table shows what has to be taken into account in each case.

Table 1: When is labeling of origin useful?

	distribution		
production	regional	national	international
regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • useful • loyalty to native region • home advantage • security applicable for all products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • useful for certain regions • difficult nationwide • labeling region or country • region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ regional image must have a meaning nationwide ⇒ popularity of the region ⇒ depends on product ⇒ specialities • Country • applicable for all products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficult • labeling of region or country • depends on knowledge and popularity of origins • depends on product • specialities
spread throughout the country	inapplicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • useful for certain regions • difficult nationwide, but with more alternatives than in the case of regional production only • lots of labeling possibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficult • lots of labeling possibilities • see above

The concept of image transfer describes the mutual transference and amplification of associations between products of different categories. The associations of one product are projected onto another. In case of marketing products produced in a certain region the associations belonging to the region are transferred to the product. This difference in category is not a problem in itself if one considers the image transfer between cigarettes, clocks and shoes in case of Camel.

If the transfer has been successful, the country of origin information becomes a key attribute in the process of product perception. Consumers judge the overall quality of a product by a single attribute. In this way, the perception process is simplified but also distorted.

This phenomenon gains importance in times of information overload when competition between suppliers of information increases. Under these conditions, reception and processing of information are carried out in a passive, selective and subjective manner. Therefore, suppliers of information have to be very activating in their communication. This could be achieved by use of strong stimuli and by supplying easy to process and pleasant information. A common instrument in food marketing that fits these requirements are brands. Another aspect is important for food: Objectively comprehensible product advantages are seldom found in saturated markets. Therefore communication has to generate an illusion of superiority. Advertising substitutes the missing USP (unique selling proposition) by a new UAP (unique advertising proposition). A missing physical product advantage is replaced by a psychological difference. The country of origin of a product can serve as a basis of such an UAP.

It has to be taken into account that the image of a country or region might be much more heterogeneous than the image of a cigarette brand that shall be transferred to a fashion line. The image that the people of Schleswig-Holstein for example have of their own country is different to the one that holiday makers from south Germany have. The first see Schleswig-Holstein as their native land the latter as a holiday area in the first place. Furthermore companies and organisations of country of origin labels only have restricted influence on the image of a region. Obviously it is much more difficult to create a joint image platform consisting of common emotions and attitudes than it is in case of classic image transfer from one product category to another.

3. STRATEGIES OF IMAGE TRANSFER

The following image transfer strategies for transferring the image of a country or region to a product can be found in food markets:

- Country of Origin Label
- Regional Umbrella Brand
- Brands with Regional Reference
- Combination Strategies

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABEL

These labels are awarded to products by the initiating organisation. It is responsible for surveillance of all criteria related to the label. Common organisations are ministries of agriculture, chambers of agriculture or cooperatives. The criteria are very different from one label to another. They reach from different areas of processing to a given share of raw material that has to be produced in a certain region. Areas are often Bundesländer or in the case of the CMA label: Germany. The majority of labels put an emphasis on country of origin aspects. The Schleswig-Holstein label is an exception: It includes an additional quality control of sensory, technological and hygienic attributes. An annual fee plus control costs has to be paid for the label. Therefore producers may put the label onto the products, provided that they passed the quality control, and may profit from advertising and sales promotion of the label initiating organisation.

CMA Quality Label:



Schleswig-Holstein country of Origin Label:



REGIONAL UMBRELLA BRAND

This strategy can only seldom be found up to now. It is based on the idea of increasing brand knowledge and popularity by using a country of origin label that is upgraded to a regional brand. Most country of origin labels are applied on packages in a very small size, sometimes using corporate colours rather than the label's original colours. They are hardly recognizable compared to the brand name. The initiator of a regional brand is a partner of producers and retailers. He is in charge of all marketing instruments. The producing company hands over

competence to this organisation. The advantage of this strategy is a higher brand recognition compared to a label somewhere on the package. The retailer is supplied with a full range of products of regional origin which simplifies the purchase for consumers. Regional brands are normally distributed in the region where they are produced.

BRANDS WITH REGIONAL REFERENCE

The objective of branding products is to achieve a differentiation from competitors and enable higher rates of brand recognition. This gives room for a price premium and helps to establish customer loyalty to a brand. In saturated markets objective product differences can hardly be found which results in a more emotional positioning of brands. Depending on the image of a certain region, the country of origin can serve as an element of positioning. This often leads to brand names or product presentations with regional reference. Advertisements can include emotional patterns related to a region. The main advantage of such a strategy is the absence of any fees as known from labels. It is also impossible that differences, built up with a lot of effort, are leveled off by competitors using the same country of origin label. However nationwide selling companies must take into account that the image of their products may be much better in their own region than in other regions (see Table 2).

COMBINATION STRATEGIES

One can think of and can often experience a combination of the formerly presented strategies. A brand company can use country of origin labels as well as a regional umbrella brand can do. The decision will mainly depend on the situation of competition. The jam producer „Schwartau“ with its famous brand „Schwartau extra“ uses the Schleswig-Holstein label. This is determined by the fact that „Schwartau“ is the only jam producer in Schleswig-Holstein. Thus, they are the only one entitled to use the label on Jams.

Regional umbrella brands are somehow a competing concept to country of origin labels when finding companies to cooperate. Nevertheless it might be useful for new umbrella brands to bear the label if it is well known.

4. RESULTS OF CONSUMER SURVEYS

4.1 PREFERENCE FOR REGIONS

Studies were conducted in the area of Kiel and some areas in east Germany. Sample size were 250 resp. 145 persons. v.ALVENSLEBEN/GERTKEN started by asking respondents about their sympathy for certain German regions (Table 2) followed by the question which region they prefer as origin of food products (Table 3). The results were obvious: The home region is preferred followed by famous holiday areas. After a short boom for western products, consumers from East Germany prefer products from their own region, too.

Table 2: Ranking of German Regions Related to Sympathy

survey locations								
Kiel			Rostock		Brandenburg		Leipzig	
rank	region	Ø rank	region	Ø rank	region	Ø rank	region	Ø rank
1	Schleswig-Holstein	1,8	Mecklenburg	1,4	Mark Brandenburg	3,6	Sachsen	4,1
2	Lüneburger Heide	4,5	Schleswig-Holstein	5,0	Thüringen	4,2	Thüringen	4,7
3	Schwarzwald	5,4	Thüringen	5,4	Spreewald	4,7	Bayern	5,0
4	Bayern	5,7	Lüneburger Heide	5,7	Mecklenburg	5,2	Schwarzwald	5,1
5	Mecklenburg	6,2	Spreewald	6,2	Schwarzwald	5,4	Mecklenburg	6,0

Source: Department of Agricultural Economics, University Kiel, consumer survey July 1991

Table 3: Preferences for Food Origin of Certain German Regions

survey locations								
Kiel			Rostock		Brandenburg		Leipzig	
rank	Region	Ø rank	Region	Ø rank	Region	Ø rank	Region	Ø rank
1	Schleswig-Holstein	2,9	Mecklenburg	1,5	Mark Brandenburg	1,9	Sachsen	2,9
2	Lüneburger Heide	5,4	Schleswig-Holstein	4,4	Spreewald	4,1	Thüringen	3,9
3	Bayern	6,2	Thüringen	5,1	Thüringen	4,1	Mecklenburg	4,7
4	Oldenburg	7,0	Mark Brandenburg	5,8	Mecklenburg	4,2	Spreewald	5,6
5	Schwarzwald	7,1	Spreewald	6,1	Sachsen	5,8	Mark Brandenburg	6,1

Source: Department of Agricultural Economics, University Kiel, consumer survey July 1991

4.2 KNOWLEDGE AND MEANING OF LABELS

To approach the problem of branding and labeling, consumers were asked whether they know existing country of origin labels (Table 4)

Table 4: Recall of Quality and Country of Origin Labels in Kiel

	unaided v. Alvensleben/ Gertken	aided v. Alvensleben/ Gertken	aided Sattler
label:	statements in %		
CMA label	38	86	--
Schleswig-Holstein	38	93	90
Bayern label	2	42	--
DLG-label	10	k.A.	--

Source: Department of Agricultural Economics, University Kiel, consumer survey July 1991 n=250, Sattler, H., Herkunfts- und Gütezeichen im Kaufentscheidungsprozess. S. 179 Diss. Kiel 1990 n=145

SATTLER asked respondents about the meaning of the Schleswig-Holstein label. The results show that country of origin information is the main aspect of the label whereas quality controls are only recognized by half of the respondents.

Table 5: Perceived Contents of the Schleswig-Holstein Label

correct answers, statements in %	
Quality of origin label	87
Controlled	57
Quality label	54
Speciality	9

Source: Sattler, H., Herkunfts- und Gütezeichen im Kaufentscheidungsprozess. p. 179 Diss. Kiel 1990 n=145

24% of the respondents claim to pay attention to the CMA label in most buying situations, 35% only seldom and nearly 40% never! For east Germany the results are even more disappointing. Labels are even less well-known than in Kiel.

4.3 RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF LABELS (CONJOINT ANALYSIS)

In a conjoint analysis SATTLER and v.ALVENSLEBEN/GERTKEN use brand, label and price as product features. SATTLER examines the importance of the Schleswig-Holstein label, a regional country of origin label combined with a quality control while v.ALVENSLEBEN/GERTKEN analyzed the national CMA quality label. The following table 6 shows the design of the conjoint analysis.

Table 6: Design of the Conjoint Analysis

product category	attributes	attribute levels
v.Alvensleben/Gertken		
evaporated milk	for each product:	
jam	brand	2 different brands
salami	price	2 price levels
	CMA-label	with/without label
Sattler		
jam	S.-H.-label	small/ big/ without label
	price	3 price levels
	band	3 different brands
	imprint (vitamin friendly produced, vacuum-packed, according to the law without artificial colourings and preservatives)	with/ without label
calves´ liver sausage	S.-H.-label	small/ big/ without label
	price	3 price levels
	brand	3 different brands
	fat content	2 levels of fat content
cheese	S.-H.-label	small/ big/ without label
	price	2 pricing levels
	brand	with/ without brand
	fat content	2 levels of fat content
	packaging	simple black/ white lavish coloured

Source: Department of Agricultural Economics, University Kiel, consumer survey July 1991 n=250, Sattler, H., Herkunfts- und Gütezeichen im Kaufentscheidungsprozess. p. 129ff Diss. Kiel 1990

v.ALVENSLEBEN/GERTKEN's design results in 8 stimuli that were judged by respondents according to their preference whereas SATTLER reduces 54 stimuli for jam and sausage to 9 and 48 stimuli for cheese to 8 stimuli in an orthogonal design (SATTLER p.181f). The importance of each attribute is shown in table 7.

Table 7: Relative Importance of Product Characteristics

attribute:	label	brand	price	imprint	fat content	packaging
importance in %						
v.Alvensleben/Gertken						
jam	8	46	46	-	-	-
evaporated milk	9	41	50	-	-	-
salami	15	29	56	-	-	-
Sattler						
jam	2	52	41	5	-	-
calves´ liver sausage	4	30	44	-	22	-
cheese	7	9	46	-	32	7

Source: Department of Agricultural Economics, University Kiel, consumer survey July 1991 n=250, Sattler, H., Herkunfts- und Gütezeichen im Kaufentscheidungsprozess. S. 181f Diss. Kiel 1990 n=145

As table 7 shows, both studies reveal only little importance of country of origin or quality labels in the process of product perception: Below 10% (except salami 15%) in the v.ALVENSLEBEN/GERTKEN study and even below 7% in this study (SATTLER 180ff). Perception of sausages and cheese is dominated by the price. Only in case of jam it is exceeded by the brand. v.ALVENSLEBEN/GERTKEN revealed the price as the dominating attribute as well. The brand only gains similar importance in case of jam and evaporated milk. High importance of brands always goes together with low importance of labels. The brand jam „Schwartau extra“ has a very strong market position compared to brands of other products (SATTLER S.183).

Further data analysis revealed some other interesting results: Respondents with a high preference for German products give a higher meaning to labels (importance is doubled to tripled) (Table 8).

Table 8: Relative Importance of Brand, Price and CMA Label by Attitude Towards the Origin of Food Depending on the Preference for German Products

		brand	price	label
importance in %				
Statement: preference for German products*				
agreement	evaporated milk	42	46	12
	jam	49	41	10
	salami	25	66	14
rejection	evaporated milk	42	54	4
	jam	47	49	5
	salami	33	49	19
Statement: origin does not matter #				
agreement	evaporated milk	46	50	4
	jam	45	45	10
	salami	34	49	17
rejection	evaporated milk	41	46	13
	jam	48	42	10
	salami	28	66	7

* If possible I try to buy German products.

I do not care whether the food is originated in Germany or elsewhere.

Source: Department of Agricultural Economics, University Kiel, consumer survey July 1991 n=250

Respondents who stated to pay attention to labels when purchasing products (24% of the sample) showed a higher importance of labels in the conjoint analysis, too (Table 9). Their importance lies above 20%. Nonetheless, price and brand were dominating.

Table 9: Relative Importance of Brand, Price and CMA-Label Depending on the Consideration of the CMA-Label

Persons which pay attention to the CMA label		brand	price	label
		importance in %		
mostly	evaporated milk	42	38	20
	jam	54	23	22
	salami	31	43	27
seldom	evaporated milk	39	54	7
	jam	38	55	7
	salami	23	62	14
never	evaporated milk	42	53	5
	jam	46	52	2
	salami	34	60	6

Source: Department of Agricultural Economics, University Kiel, consumer survey July 1991 n=250

Looking at the relative importance of labels depending on the meaning consumers give to the label, significant differences can be found (Table 10). In the case of calves liver sausage, the relative importance of the label to consumers who do not know the label is 0,5%. It is 4,4% for those who know the label and even 5,6% for consumers who realize that products pass an independent quality control. Most of the differences in relative importance of labels are significant.

Table 10: The Importance of the Label Depending on the Perceived Communication Contents of the Label

	jam		calves' liver sausage		cheese	
	importance in %	sig.	importance in %	sig.	importance in %	sig.
label known						
yes	2,5		4,4	**	7,6	
no	1,2		0,5		4,7	
country of origin label						
correct	2,6	**	4,4	**	7,3	
wrong	0,9		0,5		6,9	
controlled						
correct	3,4	**	5,6	**	8,7	**
wrong	1,1		1,6		4,9	
quality label						
correct	2,9	*	5,6	**	8,7	*
wrong	1,9		2,1		5,3	

U-test Mann-Whitney *=p<0,10 **=p<0,05

Source: Sattler, H., Herkunfts- und Gütezeichen im Kaufentscheidungsprozess. p. 188 Diss. Kiel 1990 n=145

SATTLER divided respondents into two groups. One with importance of labels above 5% and one with lower importance. The size of the first group is 16% for jam, 31% for sausage, 28% for cheese (SATTLER S.193f). Differences of importance of attributes are shown in table 11. Consumers that show a high relative importance of the label in the case of jam also show less relative importance for price and brand whereas the imprint is more important. For calves liver

sausage less relative importance of the label goes together with less importance of price and slightly less importance of brand. Looking at cheese, high relative importance of label cuts down relative importance of price about one half. In contrary to the other products, brand gains relative importance.

Table 11: Comparison Between the Share of People who Pay High resp. Low Attention to the Label

attribute:	label	price	brand	imprint	fat content	packaging
jam - relative importance of the attributes in %						
LH	15	34	43	7	-	-
LL	0,2	42	53	4	-	-
sig.			*	**		
calves´ liver sausage - relative importance of the attributes in %						
LH	13	34	31	-	23	-
LL	0,2	49	29	-	22	.
sig.		**				
cheese importance in %						
LH	25	23	15	-	24	13
LL	0,6	54	7	-	34	4
sig.		**	**		**	**
LH=high importance level of the label, LL=low importance level of the label U-test Mann-Whitney *=p<0,10 **=p<0,05						

Source: Sattler, H., Herkunfts-und Gütezeichen im Kaufentscheidungsprozess. p. 193f Diss. Kiel 1990 n=145

The general assumption that relative importance of brand is negatively related to relative importance of label cannot consistently be proved over different products. Sattler explains this with another strong effect which overlaps the first one: Relative importance of labels is strongly related to label recall and knowledge of label meaning (Table 10). The latter is very low hence even if brand is only of medium relative importance, only few consumers give the label a high relative importance (SATTLER p.196).

The results show that labels cannot become key attributes or substitute brands as key attributes in case of jam and sausages. For weaker brands the label may become a competing aspect. A remarkable share of 80% of respondents give imprints like „ without preservatives“ (see table 12) a higher meaning than labels. These imprints can be used by any producer without extra costs (note: the usage of preservatives in jam is illegal).

Table 12: Share of Respondents that Judge the Label Higher in Importance than other Attributes (figures in %)

	jam	calves´ liver sausage	cheese
brand	1,4	3,1	29,9
fat content	--	10,1	18,2
imprint	19,1	--	--
packaging	--	--	27,7

Source: Sattler, H., Herkunfts-und Gütezeichen im Kaufentscheidungsprozess. p. 202 Diss. Kiel 1990 n=145

Only 1,4% judge the label higher in relative importance than the brand in the case of jam. For cheese this figure is 3,1%. To nearly 30% of respondents the label is more important in the case of cheese.

5. ESTIMATION OF PRICE EQUIVALENTS AND SHIFT OF MARKET SHARES

To support decisions in marketing it would be very helpful to derive information on the success of different strategies directly from survey results. Two approaches will be discussed: Price equivalents and the estimation of shifts in market share.

5.1 PRICE EQUIVALENTS

Utilities were examined on an aggregated level. Comparing them to prices on an individual level enables the calculation of price equivalents that show how much a single person is willing to pay for a certain attribute. After applying the label, producers could increase the product's price by this amount without changing its overall utility. The market share would be stable and the price premium represents a rise in direct product profit (SATTLER p.211).

Table 13: Price Equivalent of Labels and Brands

	v.Alvensleben/Gertken		Sattler	
	Pfennig/package	% of the price	Pfennig/package	% of the price
jam				
advantage of label	13,2	7	8	4
advantage of brand	74	40	--	--
salami/calves´ liver sausage				
advantage of label	55,6	10	10	5
advantage of brand	98,2	18	--	--
cheese				
advantage of label	--	--	17	9
advantage of brand	--	--	--	--
evaporated milk				
advantage of label	4,5	8	--	--
advantage of brand	20	34	--	--

Source: Department of Agricultural Economics, University Kiel, consumer survey July 1991 n=250, Sattler, H., Herkunfts-und Gütezeichen im Kaufentscheidungsprozess. p. 201 Diss. Kiel 1990 n=145

Looking at the monetary advantage of country of origin labels we can see similar results for jam in both studies. v.ALVENSLEBEN/GERTKEN reveal higher figures than SATTLER in the case of sausage. For all products, price equivalents of brands are much higher than those of labels. On the basis of such figures cost-utility analysis as well as brand equity estimations can be done.

5.2 SHIFTS IN MARKET SHARE BASED ON LABEL USAGE

This method applies simulation of purchase based on utilities which are outputs of the conjoint analysis. Some realistic product alternatives are selected from the conjoint set and provided with an equal price. The first choice rule is assumed to predict purchase behaviour. Consumers choose the product that provides the highest overall utility. The qualitative market share results from the number of people choosing the product and their share of the total sample. The shift in market share induced by the usage of a label is 4% for jams and even higher for sausages. Quite high shifts for certain brands can be put down to relatively small perceived utility differences between the brands in the market. The same can be observed in case of cheese, when the meaning of the label is relatively high because of the absence of strong brands. The rise in direct product profit induced by the label usage can be calculated in the following way:

A rise in direct product profit based on the usage of a label is calculated like this:

$$D_{it} = A_{it} (E_i - K_{vi})$$

mit:

D_{it} : A rise in direct product profit based on the usage of a label for product i in period t

A_{it} : rise in sales volume based on the usage of a label for product i in period t

E_i : Unit revenue of product i

K_{vi} : Variable unit costs of product i

A_{it} is calculated by multiplying simulation output with quantitative market volume.

5.3 MODELLING CONSIDERATIONS

In the following chapter, some problems are presented that occur when applying the above mentioned models:

- The construction of the conjoint set has a major influence on the results: Testing strong brands instead of weak or even hypothetical brand, leads to a higher relative importance of the brand. Price equivalents then represent the monetary advantage of this specific brand. The same applies to labels. When calculating market shares from conjoint analysis results the assumption is made that the entire market is represented by the stimuli presented to the respondents. If in reality more product alternatives are at hand or more product attributes are considered during purchase, preference structure will change and the estimation of market shares yield no valid results (LENDER p.120). This underlines the importance of a realistic test situation which may be difficult to achieve by means of a paper based conjoint analysis. When the number of stimuli rises, respondents tend to be easily fatigued. The concept of adaptive conjoint analysis proposes a solution to this problem. Different survey modules are combined to judge a high number of attributes and expressions without a high number of stimuli (BAIER/SÄUBERLICH S.953).
- Using prices as an attribute, enables the researcher to estimate market shares and calculate price equivalents. But the choice of the right price levels is a critical point: Price stimuli can be understood as a price demand by the producer. They must be located within the margin that consumers are willing to pay for the product. In addition to that, the number of price levels has an influence on the price equivalents: More price levels lead to higher relative im-

portance of the price and, assuming constant price interval, a lower price equivalent. A larger price interval on the other hand leads to a higher price equivalent (LENDER s.166).

- Price equivalents are calculated from utilities by means of measuring utilities of prices and utilities of attribute levels on a common (metric) scale. While for prices a metric scale is appropriate, it may not be for other attributes like brand or label. (WITTKIN/KRISHNAMURTI/NUTTER p.122)
- The suggested analysis of price equivalents only leads to valid results if price equivalents of all respondents are nearly the same. But this is not the regular case. In other words, a price response function calculated from conjoint analysis results represents an average consumer who might not exist in reality.

6. BRANDS OR LABELS?

Which conclusions can be drawn from the findings of these surveys? Which of the strategies presented in chapter 2 is the most promising? It is very important to realize that purchase of food is seldom an extensive decision. It is more or less limited, habitualized and driven by impulses. Therefore, cognitive control is not very high. As stated earlier, key attributes or key information can simplify product perception. Brands as well as labels try to become such key attributes. As the results show, brands achieve this to a much higher extent than labels. This is because brands are much better known than labels. Only a well known label can gain importance in purchasing decisions. Furthermore country of origin labels convey only vague information about quality which is based on impressions of the region. If information on the label is uncertain it is impossible to serve as key attribute.

Quality labels ensure a certain level of product quality. In this case, uncertainty exists concerning the quality criteria and the exact level of quality. Consumers with higher product competence are often able to judge quality without the help of a label, by colour, look, ingredient or because they have a lot of experience and know lots of brands. In real purchasing situations, the number of stimuli is much higher than in a survey. It can be assumed that the importance of attributes is overestimated in the survey (v.ALVENSLEBEN/GERTKEN S.250).

The main weakness of regional quality and country of origin labels are low popularity and uncertainty concerning assured quality. But there is another argument from a marketing point of view: Companies applying brand strategies try to differentiate their product with a lot of effort. A label positions their product at the same level with other products carrying the label, too. This effect of a label stays in contrast to the objectives of a brand company.

Why are brands more successful when it comes to generate key attributes? First: Communication efforts of brand companies are much higher in relation to turnover than those of label organisations. The effect may occur that labels do not even exceed the level of perception. Second: Labels are positioned in an informative way. Advertising, especially for quality labels is based on text messages and is little emotional. Brand advertising on the other hand is highly emotional, easy to perceive and easy to remember in a purchase situation. Country of origin information as a part of brand strategies are easier to integrate into marketing conceptions as strategies with labels.

The use of country of origin and quality labels can still be proposed in the following situations:

- in markets that are not dominated by strong brands,

- for companies that cannot establish their own brand in the market because they are too small,
- for new products, to give the retailer's buying agent an additional quality assurance,
- to appeal consumers with a very high preference for products from a certain region or country.

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