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Research into the internationalization of the brand of Chinese basketball association

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ABSTRACT

Brand internationalization is a course to push an enterprise's brand to the international market and gain wide recognition and specific benefits. Brand internationalization is an avoidable tendency for Chinese Basket Association's development, and will exert very deep influence on improving the brand of Chinese Basketball Association. However, Chinese Basketball Association faces both great opportunities and challenges while going into the world.

KEYWORDS

Chinese basketball association; Market; Opportunities; Challenge.



INTERNATIONALIZATION OF BRAND

There are a lot of definitions for the internationalization of brand, among which the most comprehensive and accurate one is raised by Professor Su Yong from Fudan University and Doctor Zhang Mingbo, namely, a dynamic process of marketing and brand output involving timing and space. Through this process, the enterprises' brands are pushed to the international market and it is expected that enterprises are widely recognized and gain specific benefits^[1]. The definition means that internationalization of brand includes six aspects: timing, space, dynamic marketing, brand output, recognition of brand internationalization, and gain of specific benefits.

In the background of integration of global economics, almost all of the famous enterprises take the internationalization of brand as a strategic goal. The internationalization of brand may bring a lot of benefits to the enterprises^[2] for the following reasons: firstly, enterprises may immediately find ways out and have new development space when their development in China is obstructed; secondly, the enterprises may grow better and be exposed to small risks in the overseas market; thirdly, the standardized production and packaging may bring scale economies effect to enterprises while they are internationalized; fourthly, by internationalizing brands, products may cover the target market immediately, and give no time to the competitors to respond to them, and global development brings equal opportunities to each product. In a word, the internationalization of brand does not originate from the market demand, but occurs because of the drive to get more profits.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE BRAND OF CHINESE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

Seizing the international market of basketball games

In Asia, the professional basketball has gained a quick development in Japan and Korea. Although the games are just broadcasted inside their countries, they may probably be introduced into other countries, even China. Accordingly, it is also for the purpose of taking the preemptive opportunities in the brand internationalization competition in the future to push Chinese Basketball Association outside China immediately to occupy the international market^[3].

Improving the international fame of the brand of Chinese basketball association

Although Chinese Basketball Association ranks above medium level internationally (the eighth place in 2008 Beijing Olympics and 2010 Turkish FIBA World Champion), it is not so famous internationally. The internationalization of brand not only may drive its development, and may also attract more excellent basketball players in the country to join in the Chinese Basketball Association, thus improving the level of the Association (improving the quality of products).

Accumulating the international experience in games

Among the three balls for Chinese men (basketball, volleyball and football), basketball is the most famous internationally. The attempt to internationalize the brand of Chinese Basketball Association may provide experience for other professional associations to internationalize their brands and references for them, thus achieving the internationalized development of more sport games.

OPPORTUNITIES THAT THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE BRAND OF CHINESE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION FACES

Historical background of economic globalization

As the age of economic globalization comes, internationalization of enterprises, product and brand becomes inevitable, and famous enterprises in China begin to consider how to establish their brands and push them into world, in particular China joins WTO, Chinese enterprises do businesses with other countries more and more frequently, and the procedures for product import and export are simpler and simpler and more standard. We can buy products all over the world conveniently without going abroad due to the economic globalization, so Chinese Basketball Association may fully enjoy the convenience when spread and marketed overseas.

Good images of a great sport nation

In 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, China Sport Delegate made a new record and was in the first place both in the number of gold medals and medals. President Hu Jintao pointed out at the commendation congress of Beijing Olympic Games and Paralympic Games on September 29, 2008 that China should try to become a sport power, which provides a new direction for the development of Chinese sport business, and also injects new power. As an important constituent of Chinese sport business, Chinese Basketball Association also takes the responsibility of building a sport power. At the same time, for other countries, Chinese sport business develops fast so that people will often think of China while talking about sport. As basketball is very popular in all of the countries, it is easy to be accepted and recognized by people from all over the country. The internationalization of basketball games is relatively smooth. During the transition from a great sport nation to a sport power, in the background of increasing international influence of Chinese sport, Chinese Basketball Association has already taken the preemptive opportunity in the way of internationalization its brand.

Joining of foreign basketball players

As Chinese Basketball Association develops fast, more and more foreign players choose China to start their professional careers. As of the season of 2007-2008, 273 foreign players from USA, Europe and Asia joined the Chinese

Basketball Association successively, including 224 ones from USA. Now, every club of Chinese Basketball Association has at least two foreign players, and some are famous ones that have participated in NBA. Besides the players, some coaches are also from abroad to work as chief coaches or assistant coaches. Every year since the season of 2004-2005, Chinese Basketball Association will invite foreign judges to judge some key games to ensure fair law enforcement and improve the international influence of the Chinese Basketball Association. The incoming of foreign players, coaches and judges also helps to take the information concerning the Chinese Basketball Association to their countries, thus intangibly expanding the international influence of Chinese Basketball Association^[4]. Undoubtedly, it does not mean that Chinese Basketball Association has already been internationalized. However, as more and more foreigners join in the Chinese Basketball Association, there is a basis established for Chinese Basketball Association to be internationalized.

Joining of Chinese players from NBA

In 2001, Wang Zhizhi was the first person to join in NBA in Asia. In the following year, Yao Ming joined the NBA Rockets as the first pick. In recent years, there are more and more Chinese Basketball Association players joining in NBA, and besides bringing great commercial benefits to NBA, they also display the charm of Chinese players to the world, and improve the international influence of Chinese Basketball Association.

The situation that NBA occupies the whole market

The situation that NBA occupies the whole market provides opportunities for the Chinese Basketball Association. Indeed, NBA is the most influential basketball game in the world. Since NBA started to carry out the strategy of internationalization in the 1980s, the TV broadcasting signal of NBA covered more than 200 countries and regions, and authorized brand shops were established in dozens of countries, and it is a typical successful case for internationalized development of professional sport brand. However, seen from the market positioning, NBA has not occupied all of the markets, and there will be opportunities for the Chinese Basketball Association where NBA does not exist, namely, it is because there is only NBA that is influential in the international basketball games that the Chinese Basketball Association has the opportunities to be internationalized. We believe that after the Chinese basketball Association is accurately positioned in the international market and takes measures as appropriate, its brand may be internationalized.^[5]

CHALLENGES THAT THE BRAND OF THE CHINESE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION WILL FACE WHILE INTERNATIONALIZED

No reference while the internationalization of sport games is promoted

In recent years, some international games are held successively, for instance F1 Grand Prix (Shanghai), China Open (Beijing), Snooker China Open (Beijing). However, all of the games are held according to the standard of international sport event. Although these games are held in China, the ownership does not belong to China. Although the fame of the city holding the games is improved, and China's experience and confidence in holding international games are improved, the parties that benefit most from the games are foreign sponsors. There are no successful cases of games exclusively held by Chinese that are spread overseas, and we still need to keep exploring and moving ahead.

Low international reputation of Chinese products

Currently, there are more than 170 kinds of products with their outputs leading in the world, however, there are no ones with great influential international brands. Although such famous enterprises as Lenovo and Haier have established their research and sales bases overseas, however, there are still gaps between them and such world famous brands as Coca-Cola, Microsoft, Google and others. Every year, the Business Week from USA and Interbrand chooses top 100 world brands of that year, and there have been no Chinese brands listed for continuously seven years from 2003 to 2009^[6]. According to surveys, only 6% on the international market will buy Chinese products, and among them 66% of ones do so as the Chinese products are cheap. In the eyes of the world, products made in China are just cheap, instead of excellent. Sport game as a product is special in itself, the negative impression of the world on Chinese products must be changed while the sport game is internationalized, which is however a challenge for internationalizing the brand of Chinese Basketball Association.

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