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Responsible brands - so good you could eat them?

**a study of three companies devoted to Corporate Social
Responsibility in the food industry**

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Preface

We want to start off by thanking our supervisor Christina Waldensjö, who has been very helpful and supportive throughout the process of writing this paper.

Our assigner for this paper is Saatchi & Saatchi, who refer to themselves as a "creative communications company". Saatchi & Saatchi is part of the world's fourth largest communications group, the Publicis Groupe and they work in 80 different countries around the globe. They proposed a bachelor thesis to be written on the subject of CSR and since we in our previous bachelor course in marketing frequently discussed questions concerning sustainability, the proposal intrigued us to dig deeper into the matter. We find the subject interesting from a personal point of view, since it is actually something to take a stand for or against in your everyday life, for example when buying groceries. We believe that CSR will continue to increase in importance, and in the future we would like to work for companies that act responsibly and engage in CSR.

Abstract

Increased awareness among consumers about the many imbalances in the world has resulted in higher demands on companies to act more responsibly. Responsible business practices have become known as CSR, Corporate Social Responsibility. Some companies have made this their order of business, donating funds to charity and benefiting the society in every way possible. Others have also realized the advantages from this approach and set out to project a "green" image. This has resulted in the coining of the phrase "greenwashing", which is an expression describing the practice of companies deviously promoting their products and policies as environmentally friendly. Simultaneously, consumers are increasingly concerned with what they consume and how it affects their health. They want to be sure that what they see is what they get. Thus, brands have become more important to consumers in several ways. They help consumers to express their personality and they are bearers of trust, helping consumers to make sound decisions.

Media and communication company "Saatchi & Saatchi" requested a paper written on the subject of CSR and commercial success, from which the purpose of this paper emanated. Combining CSR with other current subjects, such as branding and increased awareness of health and food habits, we developed the scope of investigation. Accordingly, this paper aims to investigate how three companies operating in the food industry; Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn, work with CSR and how this work has affected their brands, from their point of view. This also includes investigating what important aspects there are to making CSR a credible part of a brand. Hence, qualitative case studies were conducted through telephone interviews with executives from three companies, whereby we mapped their different strategies, opinions and values concerning brands and CSR. Using theories from marketing and CSR, among others Carroll's "CSR pyramid" and Aaker's "Fundamentals of branding", we analyzed the data collected. In addition to the established theories, a problem model named "Ice-cream Cone" was created, in order to analyze the empirical results.

The companies we interviewed all had ethical values as a cornerstone in their businesses and considered this to be an extremely important way of conducting business. We could also conclude that committing to CSR whole-heartedly emanates from the original idea of the company or the business vision. In addition, there was a strong belief among the interviewees not to use CSR in a company's communication, since it can have a reverse result than intended. Meaning, communicating a company's CSR ventures and actions can dilute the authenticity in a company because consumers have become more critical to companies' claims of acting responsibly. Moreover, all companies experienced positive effects from their CSR engagement. Thus, CSR activities can be advantageous in the food industry, although these effects could not be specifically related to any increase in competitiveness.

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1. Introduction

This first chapter gives a background to the paper's chosen scope of investigation, discussing what has given rise to the subjects at issue in Corporate Social Responsibility, henceforth referred to as CSR, and marketing. We start off by exploring the background for our thesis, only to problematize the findings in the problem discussion. Lastly, the purpose and intention with this thesis is revealed.

1.1 Background

In a world that never sleeps and relentlessly keeps evolving, things that are unimaginable one day are fully achievable the next. Today, as opposed to the time of Jules Verne, going around the world in eighty days is no longer a challenging endeavor. Innovations in industrial engineering, shipment and communication systems to name but a few, have globalized our world and made it smaller. Sharing information quickly and over great distances is no longer an obstacle and a lot of people around the globe have access to newspapers, blogs and other sources of information through the Internet (Ind 2003). Waiting days, weeks or even months to receive a message is no longer necessary; a second is all you need. In the wake of globalization and development of innovative communication systems, competition among companies has become more aggressive. Companies in today's market place struggle hard to be heard through the massive stream of media noise. Wiio (1976) already confirmed in the 1970's that reaching out with a message to consumers had become more difficult, as consumers were being exposed to more information than they could manage. This is just as true today. As a result of fiercer competition, companies in B2C have realized the importance of finding new ways to distinguish their brands against others, in order to be noticed and eventually adopted by consumers.

At the same time, the development of the admass society and digital communication has helped to shed light upon the many social and environmental aspects of making business. Ever since the rise of a heated debate over global warming, to the now commonly acknowledged environmental threat that humanity faces, criticism towards reckless profit hunger has drawn public attention and demands for transparent and ethically correct companies (Spector 2008). A lot of different groups have lately shown interest in questions concerning CSR; companies, stakeholders, consumers, employees and government (McWilliams & Siegel 2000). This is a demand that is expected to grow continually as more companies enter the multinational arena, and the public becomes more aware of social and environmental conditions (Robertson and Nicholson 1996). This proliferation of relevance is also confirmed by the many articles, books and papers investigating the realm of CSR and competitiveness, especially the question if there is a positive relationship between CSR and financial results. However, the relationship is yet inconclusive (Villanova et al 2009) and earlier investigations have questioned whether this conundrum will ever be deciphered (Aupperle et al 1985).

Irrespective of the financial effects of CSR, there are several companies that position themselves on the market by being environmentally friendly, or by contributing to the society in other ways. Society's increased interest in corporate responsibility, for

example through consumers' change of preferences for products, has stimulated companies to set out on a quest to communicate their engagement in CSR (Grafström et al 2008, Grant 2007). This means that companies are realizing the importance of acting in a responsible way, as new communication tools have rendered them incapable of having a monopoly on the perceived brand image. The practice of responsible business has become known as Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR, and it involves corporate responsibility in areas as the environment, society and ethics. CSR has become a much-debated subject and it has lately increased in interest. For example, in 1996, four articles related to CSR were published in the Financial Times, but ten years later, the European business press on average published four to five articles in the subject per week. Moreover, between 2000 and 2001, the number of articles published in this subject increased with 170 %. Further, during the past decade, magazines that are devoted to questions concerning CSR have emerged, such as The Journal of Corporate citizenship and Brand strategy (Grafström et al 2008).

As CSR is a current topic of interest in media as well as among the public, it is recognized as important by a diverse range of companies. One company with interest in this subject is the media and communications company "Saatchi & Saatchi", who requested a thesis paper written about the link between CSR and commercial success. A lot of freedom was given in interpreting the scope of the subject and the course of investigation. Hence, the subject of CSR was integrated with other up-to-date topics such as the branding and the food industry. This resulted in a study that originates from a wide, assigned subject but with a purpose developed by the authors. We chose three companies in the food industry that are engaged in CSR; Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn.

1.2 Problem discussion

Even though CSR is and has been a much-debated subject for the last couple of decades, new questions and problems have arisen as a result of companies' efforts to stand up to society's higher demands for information and standards on products (Robertson and Nicholson 1996). Today, many companies project themselves as responsible towards the society, as they recognize the consumers' appreciation of this CSR engagement. As a brand is the image of a company that consumers perceive, communicating CSR through a brand is often adopted by companies. At present, the focus of CSR initiatives lies mainly on consumer products and industries where branding is a vital part of your company, since it is in many ways through a brand that company values are communicated.

Communicating CSR initiatives to consumers has spread like a wildfire, but it has not always occurred on a purely altruistic basis. For example, in 2000, oil company British Petroleum spent 4,5 million pounds on redesigning their logo and company name to BP; "Beyond Petroleum". Even more money will be spent to support their new image of an environmental gas company (BBC News 2000). This example shows how most industries recognize the importance of being socially responsible, especially in the aftermaths of the ongoing climate debate. Consumers have become skeptical towards companies' claims of being environmentally and socially

responsible and this has given birth to a phenomenon called "greenwashing". Greenwashing is a scheme carried out by companies primarily in the tobacco and oil industry, who are obfuscating the hazards about their products. This has resulted in a decreasing trust among consumers towards media and advertising, as brands radiate images that are not always veracious. Consumers have become more doubtful and have started to question authorities' incentives, which has made them long for consensus of what a product offers on the package and what it contains (Ind 2003).

An industry in which the significance of responsible business practices has surged is the food industry. Consumers have become increasingly aware of what they consume and how it affects their physical and psychological health (Granqvist 2009). A practice that has become popular in the food industry is launching a "green" line of products, redesigning the label to make it look more appealing to customers, or simply using a certificate to render your environmental ventures more credible (Grant 2007). As a result, many companies now provide for eco-alternatives to their products and certify them with quality labels such as "KRAV" or "Fair Trade". An example of a company that distinguishes itself by having a different view of a company's responsibilities towards the society and environment is the American ice-cream manufacturer "Ben & Jerry's". Initially they sold ice-cream at a small scale in Burlington, Vermont, but expanded and can now be found in more than 24 countries world-wide. Their ice-cream is sold in chlorine-free, recycled packages and the eggs used in the production come from free-range hens. Ben & Jerry's has always been a responsible company with strong ethical values and a quote from their business mission that shows their values is: "...using business as a tool for social and environmental change is just as important as sourcing the finest ingredients to make our ice cream" (Ben & Jerry's 2010). Further, they have continued to develop their production methods and use sources of ingredients that make the least possible impact on the environment. They also try to benefit the society by creating jobs and working with nonprofit organizations (Olausson 2009). In Swedish food industry, there are several companies that engage in CSR. Three companies that have been recognized as engaged in CSR are Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn. Their brands are linked with values such as "green", and "environmentally friendly".

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to investigate how three companies operating in the food industry, namely Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn, work with CSR. We are interested in how these companies' CSR choices have affected their brands in the companies' views, and if this engagement has helped them to accrue any benefits. We also want to discuss if these companies have used CSR as a competitive advantage when building and marketing their brands. Finally, we want to understand and clarify what it is that makes their CSR-ventures credible to customers.

2. CSR and branding

With the above stated purpose as a starting point, this chapter discusses the different factors related to CSR and branding. Hence, we discuss the subject of CSR and branding in a more comprehensive manner, describing the history of CSR, its connection to branding and other related factors. This forms an overall picture of the problem area and creates a foundation for understanding which theories can be applicable to our investigation of Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn.

2.1 The history of CSR

CSR is something that has been all the rage almost throughout the twentieth century, albeit in different matters and intensity. The latest decades have mainly been characterized by environmental discussions and one can barely read a newspaper today without stumbling across an article that touches upon related issues. However, CSR is not a new phenomenon. According to Spector (2008) CSR started to develop into its present-day meaning in the years after World War II. Hence, "...it is largely a product of the past half century" (Carroll 2010, p.85).

Starting in the 1950's, CSR was more a question of SR, Social Responsibility. It explained how businessmen were to take responsibility and act according to society's regulations (Carroll 1999). In the 1960's, the interest for CSR grew substantially as social movements demonstrated for civil- and women's rights, putting pressure on society to act more responsibly. This era therefore became a major contribution to the development of CSR. The period was also characterized by its clear focus on trying to explain what CSR was in a more formal manner. In the 1970's, new areas of CSR were discussed; corporate responsibility, responsiveness and performance. The focus on CSP, Corporate Social Performance was an attempt to investigate if the companies' responsibilities were actually getting response in a way that improved company performance. Finding a link between CSR and financial performance continued to be the area of analysis during the 1980's and 1990's. For the past two decades, CSR has been more about global corporate citizenship and in the latest years there has been an immense growth in the interest of the environment and sustainability (Carroll & Shabana 2010).

Through the years that have passed since the 1950's, CSR has developed from "if" to "how" (Du et al 2007) and from "ideology to reality" (Lindgreen & Swaen 2010, p.1). In 2004, 90 % of the companies on the Fortunes 500 had specific CSR initiatives (Bhattacharya & Lou 2006). In spite of CSR's increasing integration in the business world, few integrate CSR in the company and make it a cornerstone of the organization (Du et al 2007). Also, companies are not taking advantage of CSR as effectively as they could. CSR is often handled as an isolated part of business, instead of being a strategic brick in building business: "If, instead, corporations were to analyze their prospects for social responsibility using the same frameworks that guide their core business choices, they would discover that CSR can be much more than a cost, a constraint, or a charitable deed –it can be a source of opportunity, innovation, and competitive advantage" (Porter & Kramer 2006 p.80).

2.2 Definition of terms

Throughout the years, a multitude of terms referring to a company's responsibilities towards society have emerged. Today, Corporate Social Responsibility has become the prevailing expression. However, CSR is a term covering a wide spectrum of responsibilities and one single definition does not exist. As for now, CSR is divided into five main areas; "environment, community, employee welfare, financial performance and corporate government" (Saunders 2007, p.32). CSR has for example been defined as "a commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources" (Kotler & Lee 2005, p.8). A definition we find particularly comprehensible is the one defined by the Business for Social Responsibility organization. They state that CSR is about "achieving commercial success in ways that honor ethical values and respect people, communities, and the natural environment" (Bhattasharya & Sen 2004). This is the definition of CSR that will be used throughout the text.

2.3 CSR engagement today

Several studies have shown that CSR engagement can have positive effects for a company. A study carried out by Sen et al (2006) showed that consumers that were aware of a company's CSR efforts were more prone to buy its products, seek employment or invest in the company, than those who were unaware of the company's CSR initiatives. CSR initiatives also help customers to gain trust for a company and its products, which leads to brand loyalty (Pivato et al. 2008). In addition, companies can attain cost and risk reduction through CSR initiatives that focus on a cost-leadership strategy (Carroll & Shabana 2010). For example, after having moved to a green building with more sunlight, Japanese car manufacturer "Toyota" reported a drop in their employee absenteeism with 14 % (Carlton 2007).

What can be discerned from companies' present CSR engagement is a direction towards conducting business in a "smarter way". In other words, companies are revising their business practices and are trying to find ways to reduce costs and increase efficiency, while at the same time acting responsibly towards the society. In this way, companies are giving meaning to the proverb "kill two birds with one stone", as their engagement is not only an act of altruism; it also yields financial benefits.

The different approaches to this practice abound and an illustration of this is the American coffee shop "Starbucks". In the mid 1990's, customers in the U.S. came up with the idea to ask Starbucks to give away some of the coffee grounds they threw away on a daily basis. As coffee grounds are an excellent source of nutrition for the garden or the window box, the initiative resulted in customers receiving free nutrient to their gardens at the same time as Starbucks saved huge amounts of money on not having to pay for the disposal of large quantities of garbage. Starbucks later expanded this concept and started to cooperate with local parks to provide them with materials for improving the public gardens. Thus, Starbucks, the customers and the society proved to be better off (Granqvist 2009).

A practice that has become widespread is analyzing a business from a lifecycle perspective, as it gives insight in what happens before and after a product is produced. Understanding the whole process can lead to improvements in different areas, such as prolonging a product's lifetime or reducing the time it takes to assemble or disassemble a product. These improvements often address waste of resources and therefore benefit both the company and society. For example, companies try to reduce their electricity consumption by taking advantage of the sunlight instead of using electricity. In 2007, the American food retailer-chain "Wal-Mart", decided to use less light in their stores since electricity prices had gone up. Implementing this in 240 Wal-Mart stores resulted in savings of 1.2 million dollars during the summer months (Granqvist 2009).

Today, companies have to answer to their stakeholders and maintain a good reputation in order to conduct successful business (Grafström et al 2008). As stated earlier in the text, maximizing profits and creating lucrative business were by far the most important aims for companies for the most part of the 20th century. Therefore, companies claiming to have an interest in societal or environmental questions did not necessarily gain an advantage a couple of decades ago; "[Twenty years ago] only niche companies like [skincare -retailer] "The Body Shop", had social progress on their agenda" (Grafström et al 2008, p.109). However, CSR has today become reality and some companies have realized that CSR can be a powerful differentiator and gone one step further; making it a brand's core value.

In the food industry, CSR has become very important, as consumer interest in what the food actually contains has increased. The American food retailer "Whole Foods Market" for example, has a list of 80 ingredients that they consider unacceptable in food, and therefore do not want to sell in their stores (Granqvist 2009). These examples clearly show how the food industry, as well as other industries, has adapted to a new order.

2.5 The importance of branding

Branding has developed into one of the most important parts of marketing in the post-modern era (Elliott & Wattanasuwan 1998). Nowadays, brands are more a part of the personality than anything else; you define yourself, your values and identity through brands. Through the brand, "marketers /.../ provide consumers with identities that satisfy their needs, wants, and desires" (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan 2006, p.480). In this sense, brands are cultural symbols, both diverse and complex (Schaefer & Rotte 2010). When consumers buy products, it can be described as buying symbolic meanings. For example when buying clothes made of organic cotton, it signalizes: "I care about the environment". Accordingly, there are a lot of different aspects of self-expression when consuming. Your consumption pattern provides more than a just a functional purpose - it can explain your "self" and your values. Moreover, consumers can identify themselves with their objects strongly. In other words, the "self" is becoming more conceptualized, and is partly achieved through consumption. This is not something you can simply adopt; a person actively creates its own self, and chooses the brands that fit in to or express his or her perception of a self (Elliott & Wattanasuwan 1998).

Another explanation to why branding has increased in significance is that "...brands /.../ are so good at helping to create efficient exchange" (Ind 2003 p.4). This means that when you trust a brand, decision-making becomes much easier, as you don't have to worry and feel doubt about the authenticity of the brand. For example, you would probably feel safer buying a computer from well-known "Apple" or "HP", than buying it from a brand you have never heard about before. Consumers attach great importance to a brand's reputation and the past experiences they have had with it, as it reassures them that it will fulfill their expectations about the brand. In building this trust, it is therefore important that there exist a congruency between what a company offers and what the consumers receive (Ind 2003).

Historically, advertising has been the most central channel for expressing symbolic brand values, but there has been a shift of paradigms since the advent of Web 2.0. Developments on the web, such as blogs, twitter and social communities have created new ways of interacting with your customers. This has created more opportunities and ways to communicate than ever before (Olausson 2009). For example, consumers can today express positive comments about a brand on a social media-forum such as Facebook, on a blog or by Twitter. As individuals are nowadays more aware of what they want to consume, they are willing to participate in these commercial campaigns or events (Elliott & Wattanasuwan 1998). One rather telling example of this is the massive participation in the event "Earth Hour". It is a global event conducted by WWF, which tries to get people to turn off their lights for one hour to save energy and thus obstruct climate change (Earth Hour 2010). What this example also shows is how interaction between individuals, discussing and expressing themselves through brands, brand-related events and such, is a part of the human socialization and conversation process. It can also be seen as yet another example of how media plays an important role in our lives (Elliott and Wattanasuwan 1998).

However much brands have a meaning in our lives, branding has given birth to an occurrence referred to as "anti-branding" or "anti consumerism". The international bestseller "No Logo" written by Naomi Klein, rendered much debate at the time of publication in 2001 because of its harsh social criticism. "No Logo" strongly targets the multinational corporations and their branding which, according to Klein, threatens to invade our daily lives with commercial messages and supplies the world with sweatshop-produced goods (2001). Consumer "anti-brand"-activism has even resulted in online-communities dedicated to criticize brands, one example being "killercoke.com" (Coca-Cola) or "Starbucked.com" (Starbucks). This is yet another challenge for companies, since it is a trend that acts in direct contravention of other notions of brands (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan 2006).

2.6 The marriage between branding and CSR

Considering the increased importance of brands to consumers, either positive or negative, and the proliferation of interest for responsible business practices, CSR branding in B2C has become a relevant strategy for distinguishing your brand. Hence, in today's competitive business environment, CSR can constitute a powerful instrument in distinguishing a brand from others (Carroll & Shabana 2010). In addition, research has shown just how important CSR-related questions have become among consumers. No less than 87 % of American consumers would switch to a brand promoting a good cause, provided that price and quality were the same. This is a rise from 66 % in 1993. Inversely, 85 % of American consumers would switch to another brand if the other brand were associated with bad CSR practices and 66 % would avoid buying the product at all (Du et al 2010).

However, combining branding and CSR can have some pitfalls if it is not done in a genuine and credible way. The most significant risk is to be accused of greenwashing. Greenwashing can lead to deficient credibility and cause doubt towards using CSR in advertising and commercial messages, especially when scientific reports that support the industries' arguments are presented, and they contradict any prevailing perception of the firm. One example of this is tobacco companies presenting research on smoking not being as harmful as believed. This kind of "industry-supporting research" is funded by the industry itself, with the purpose of mainly creating unaudited media hysteria among the public rather than presenting probed scientific results. In other words, these scientific results serve as exemption warrants for unethical industries (Wahljalt 2000). Accordingly, companies must engage in actual CSR activities on a solid basis, to avoid making their CSR a watered-down concept or trend in business (Grafström et al 2008). It is essential that businesses do not only create an image of being accountable, but convey a true picture. It is therefore important that CSR is an integrated part of the brand building (Olausson 2009).

This implies that companies cannot profit from its CSR engagement as long as the stakeholders and consumers are mistrusting or are simply unaware about it (Du et al 2010). It is therefore relevant for companies to find a way to implement and communicate their CSR agenda in a credible way, because in general, there is lack of leveraging your goodwill gained from CSR to your consumer communication (Blomqvist & Posner 2004, Du et al 2007). Many cases display the contrary, by companies heavily involved in CSR but being discharged and mistrusted by society. One of many examples is the American clothing company "Nike", who engages in preventing child labor, but is hurt by scandals when horrible sweatshop conditions among their suppliers are revealed in the media (Bell DeTienne & Lewis 2005). Yet, implementing CSR in a brand's core value is not applicable to all companies. For instance, it is not likely that car manufacturers can argue to be environmentally friendly, instead they can compensate for not being it.

Finally, companies' engagements in CSR can often be dependent on what the consumers demand. For example, consumers may want a company to produce an organic alternative for the product they usually buy, while the company asserts that it is not demanded by enough people and therefore not profitable to sell. Statements like these are not uncommon, but according to Olausson (2009), acting in accordance to public demands and your own goals can be beneficial for your brand. She explains this by giving an example of how two well-established companies, that separately held a substantial share of the baby-food market in Sweden, were being shoved down to second biggest by a small newcomer brand. A small German company, Hipp, who were strongly committed to producing ecological baby food, entered the Swedish market and snatched 12 percent of the Swedish market, making baby food the leading segment of ecological products (Olausson 2009). This clearly shows how a cause and ideology can be carried out to success, and how important it is not to underestimate your target audience.

To summarize, companies engaging in CSR has indeed become reality, but there is a discrepancy in the level of involvement. Companies, who get involved only half-heartedly, cause other companies with genuine commitment to be subject of skepticism. At the same time, few companies implement CSR in their brand's core value, which results in missing out on the competitive advantage CSR can yield. According to Porter & Kramer (2006 p. 81), articles and papers on CSR are affluent, but they give little practical direction to corporate leaders. Hence, the potential of communicating CSR and using it as a tool to enhance brand value is often not utilized in the best of ways. There is therefore a need to clarify how companies work with CSR and how this can be implemented and marketed in a credible way.

3. Company History

Here, we present the history of the three companies we have chosen to investigate; Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn. This background information aims to help the reader to understand the present state of the companies and what lies behind their course of conducting business.

3.1 Max Hamburgare

Max Hamburgare is a company with a long and diverse history. It all began in 1968 when Curt Bergfors and his partner Britta opened a small hamburger establishment, "X-grillen", in Gällivare, Sweden. The years passed and they expanded their business by opening more restaurants and diversifying into several branches of industry including nightclubs, hotels and solariums to name a few. In 1999, they decided to focus on being a hamburger restaurant only and in 2002, the brothers Richard and Christoffer Bergfors took charge over the family company. The business was turned around to serve healthier food than the regular fast food chains, where the food is usually high in fat but low in essential nutrients. As a result, Max launched new lines of goods, such as "Delifresh", the "Low Carb-burger" and the low-calorie hamburger "Slim" (Max 2010).

3.2 Innocent

Innocent was founded in London, England, in 1998 by three friends; Richard, Jon and Adam. They felt that the modern society had made it more complicated to live a healthy lifestyle, and came up with the idea to sell fruit smoothies. Together they decided to conduct a pilot study that would help them evaluate the potential of their idea. Consequently, fruit for £500 was bought, made to smoothies and sold at a stall at a small music festival in London. Richard, Jon and Adam put up a sign with the text "Do you think we should give up our jobs to make these smoothies?" and the customers could put their empty bottles in either a bin that said "yes" or "no". Their smoothies proved to be popular and after the festival, the bin labeled "yes" was full. Accordingly, the friends quit their jobs the next day and started to focus on selling smoothies. They decided to go with the brand name Innocent as it refers to the drink's promised pure contents and its fresh taste. Today, twelve years later, Innocent can be found in Great Britain, Ireland, France, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Denmark and Sweden (Innocent 2010).

3.3 Saltå Kvarn

The history of Saltå Kvarn goes back to the 1930's, when an organization for mentally challenged children was founded. As the organization grew, there was a demand for biodynamic bread to be provided for the children and their caretakers. Therefore, a small bakery was built in the basement. The reputation spread about the freshly baked bread and soon the bakery started to sell bread to smaller grocery stores in town. In 1964, the local mill was bought and Saltå Kvarn was established. Even though many years have passed since its foundation, the values remain unchanged. The bread is still kneaded by hand and not by machine, and it is baked in a stone oven run with birch wood. There are no preservatives and no artificial additives in the products.

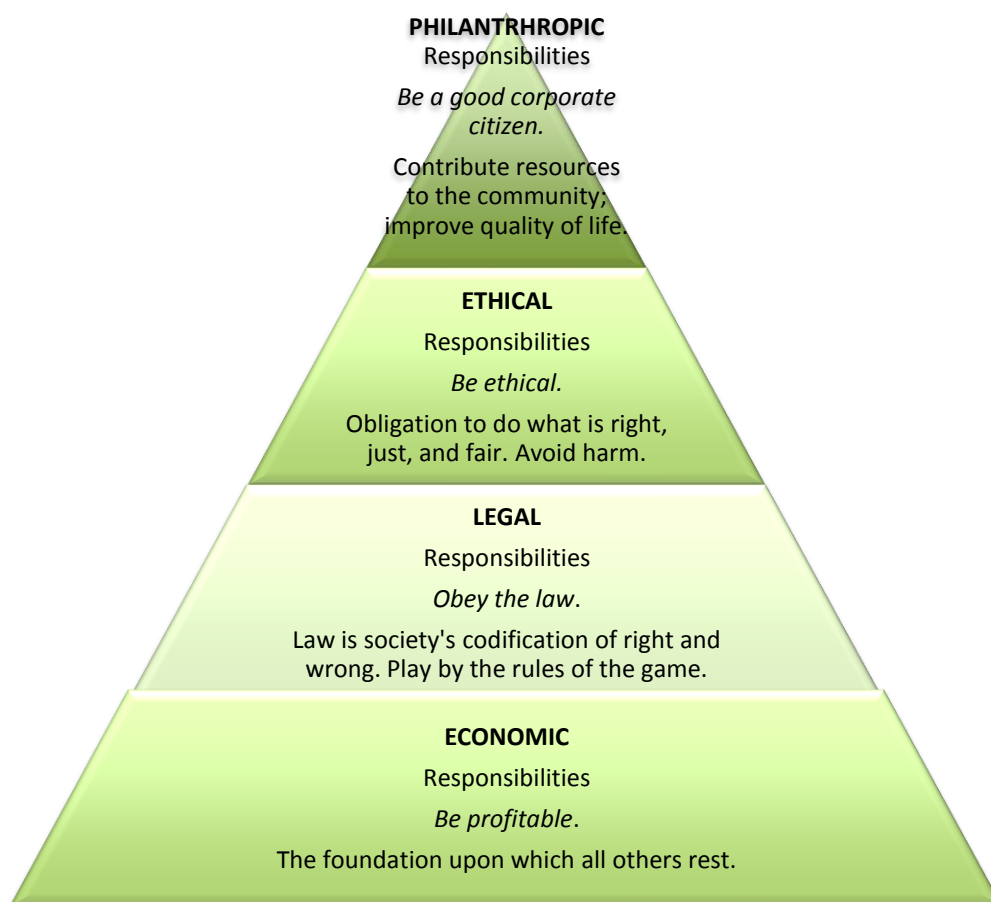
4. Theoretical frame of reference

In this chapter, we issue our research from several theories in marketing and CSR; Carroll's CSR theory, Aaker's fundamentals of branding, Olausson's model of company image and finally three strategic approaches to CSR defined by Blomqvist & Posner. Lastly, we discuss how the models presented can be combined, and how they complement each other and create a framework for analysis.

4.1 The CSR pyramid

An often cited definition of CSR is the one provided by Carroll (1991), who suggests that CSR can be seen as a pyramid encompassing four different levels; economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic (see exhibit 1). According to Carroll, these responsibilities have always existed, but it is only in recent years that the two aspects in the top of the pyramid, ethical and philanthropic, have increased in significance. In the base of the pyramid lie the economic responsibilities, since these constitute the foundation for other responsibilities to be considered. Next are the legal responsibilities, which comprise a company's obligations as stated by the law. Above the legal responsibilities are the ethical responsibilities. These can be seen as the unwritten laws and norms that a company has to follow in order to satisfy the society and other stakeholders. As ethics define what the society considers to be right or wrong, companies' ethical undertakings can often be the starting signal of a legislation process of a certain issue, such as legislation of fair wage levels.

4.1.1 Exhibit 1: Carroll's CSR pyramid



Finally, the pyramid is capped by the philanthropic responsibilities. These are characterized by activities that correspond to society's considerations of what make them good corporate citizens. Philanthropic responsibilities can constitute any kind of donation to the society's welfare, for example, donating funds to charity or to educational programs.

4.2 Fombrun et al's model of "Reputational capital"

Fombrun et al (2000) have developed an opportunity platform that shows how CSR initiatives increase a company's reputational capital through its stakeholder groups (see exhibit 2). A high reputational capital is important in order to gain competitive advantage and to be able to acquire needed human- and capital resources to the firm. Employees are key actors in building reputational capital since they are closest to the customers, and thereby affect how they perceive the company. CSR initiatives make it easier to retain employees, as it makes them feel more devoted to work. Furthermore, CSR has favorable effects on other stakeholder groups; partners, customers, regulators, the community, media, activists and investors. Through CSR, a company attracts partners and strengthens existing partnerships. CSR engagement also results in customers becoming more loyal to a brand, repurchasing and recommending it to others. In turn, regulators become less apt to impose unwanted regulations and the community can be helpful in acquiring resources and protect local companies in a dispute. Needless to say, media can either build or destroy reputational capital, but it is more likely to portray a company in good light if it is engaged in CSR. Activists that support a company rather than boycott it, also help to build a positive perception of a company. Last but not least, investors can easily change a company's reputational capital. By recommending a stock, the market value will rise. Investing in a cause results in word-of-mouth, more sold stocks and a higher market value.

4.2.1 Exhibit 2: Fombrun et al's Reputational capital



In accordance with this is the result from Du et al (2007) that suggests that the main benefit of CSR is the long-term effect on a brand's reputational capital. In conclusion, a company engaging in CSR can accumulate reputational capital through different stakeholder. This in turn, can increase the company's competitiveness.

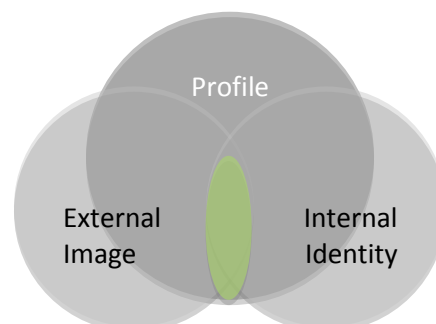
4.3 Aaker's Fundamentals of branding

According to Aaker (1996), there are four fundamentals of branding that a company must follow in order for their social program to have impact and to be noticed. First and foremost, a company should focus on one area of social initiatives, for example education, pollution or breast cancer research. Second, it is important that a company's program is consistent over time, as long-term engagement in a cause has greater impact. Third, the program should be linked to the brand, e.g. a shoe producer that donates a pair of shoes to charity for every pair of shoes sold. Fourth, the program should be branded which means that it can have its own logo or name to give more impact (Aaker p.122).

4.4 Olausson's "profile, identity and image model"

Olausson (2008) presents a model for maintaining the different parts of a company's profile transparent and coherent (see exhibit 3). The model consists of a company's external image and internal identity, which are exhibited as overlapping parts that interconnect with the company profile. According to Olausson, the external image is how stakeholders view the company, and the internal identity is how the company itself looks upon its own actions and business practices. As for the company profile, it is the part that a company communicates to its stakeholders and the public. Olausson states that it is important that "a company builds its /.../ brand from the inside and out" - meaning that internal values and ethics come first in the communication process. Further, she explains that "discrepancies between companies' actual behavior and external communication can easily damage a company's external image" (Olausson 2008, p.80). For example, if a company that is viewed as environmentally responsible becomes the source of an environmental disaster, it will damage the brand value to a much larger extent than if it happens to a company that does not claim to be concerned about the environment.

4.4.1 Exhibit 3: Olausson's profile, identity and image model



4.5 Three approaches to integrating CSR with marketing

Prophet is a management consultancy firm that specializes in brand and business strategy. They suggest three different approaches for implementing CSR with marketing; the integrated, the selective and the invisible approach (see exhibit 4). Their perception of CSR is that "CSR involves doing business in a responsible fashion that delivers value not only to the organization, but also to its stakeholders and the community within which it operates. CSR covers five main areas: environment, community, employee welfare, financial performance and corporate governance" (Blomqvist & Posner 2004 p.34, Saunders 2007).

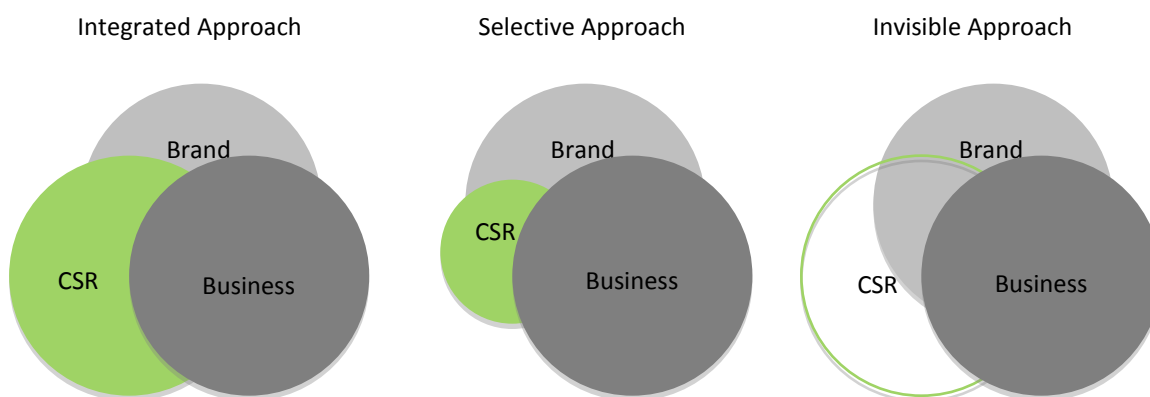
The integrated approach is when a brand and CSR are interconnected, which is appropriate when operating business in a responsible manner is crucial to what consumers prefer. An advantage with this method is that a company can use one strong story to communicate with all its stakeholders. This approach is most fitting for companies that already consider responsibility to be a vital part of their business. A company that uses this approach is the American food retailer Whole Foods. The brand's core value and promise is sustainability, which shows in their slogan; "Whole foods, Whole people, Whole planet". This philosophy pervades the whole organization. Whole Foods do not only sell organic vegetables and meat, but their employees, or rather "team members", are also encouraged to engage in charity during work hours.

In the **selective approach**, CSR has more of a strategic feature. For example, CSR can be implemented in a sub brand or through a partnership with another company. The selective approach is appropriate when there is a link between responsible business practices and brand preference, but the company cannot engage in it wholeheartedly, or when there exists a specific business segment in which consumers perceive CSR as vital for their brand preference. A strength with this approach is that it can be a powerful way to differentiate your brand from others when consumers have a lot to choose between. At the same time, the company reputation is not as exposed to stakeholder and consumer criticism, as if an integrated approach would be used. An example of a company that uses the selective approach is the supermarket "Sainsbury". They initiated a partnership and started to sell a range of Fair Trade products. As they were the first supermarket in the UK to do this, it was an efficient differentiator. However, Sainsbury has been criticized for not applying their CSR principles thoroughly enough throughout their business.

The invisible approach is suitable when there is no link between consumer brand preference and responsible business practices. In other words, it is simply not necessary or beneficial to communicate. Although CSR in this approach does not play a part in the communication to customer, it still works as an endorser to build brand trust. An example of a company that uses this approach is the fashion company "H&M". Although they work extensively with CSR, making sure that the production in factories is ethically supportable, they have chosen not to communicate this to the public. The decision is strategic, as they believe that communicating their engagement does not create a motive for consumers to shop there instead of somewhere else.

Hence, there are different ways in which companies can use CSR in their business and "the nature of the business – category, customers, competitors – should dictate how much, and in which ways, a company should promote its CSR-related activities" (Blomqvist & Posner 2004, p.36).

4.5.1 Exhibit 4: Three approaches to integrating CSR with marketing

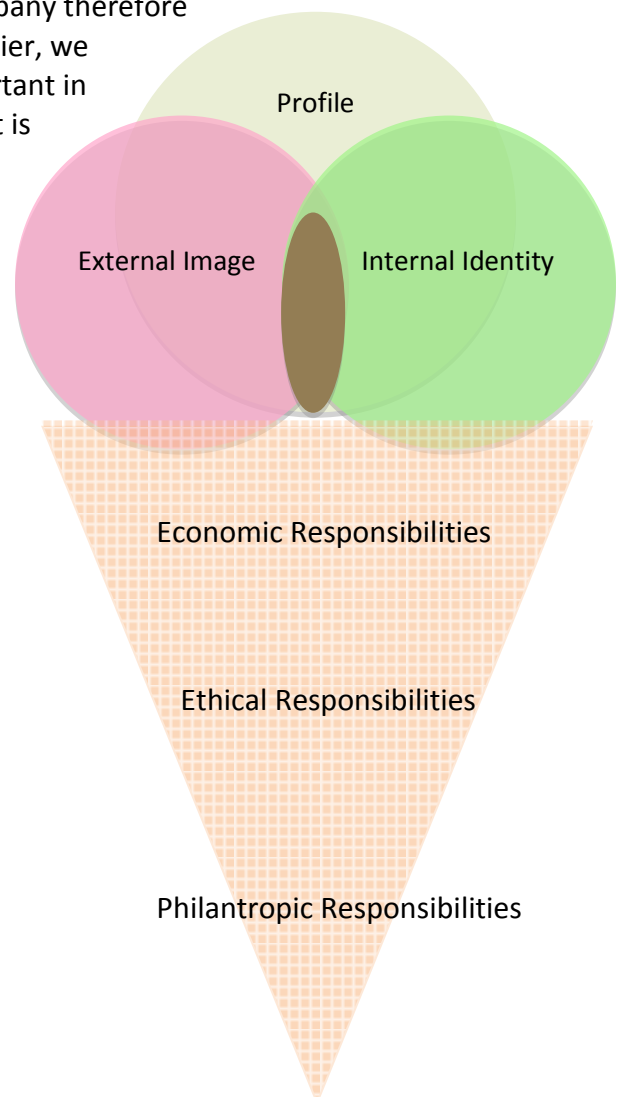


4.6 Theoretical demarcations

After careful consideration, we have decided to discard some of the features from the models presented in the previous section, as they are inapplicable in our study. More precisely, these specific features are beyond the scope of our study and therefore irrelevant. When it comes to Carroll's model "The CSR Pyramid", we have concluded that the "legal" section is beyond the scope of investigation of this paper, as the paper focuses on the voluntary domain of corporate social responsibility. As for Fombrun et al's model of reputational capital, four components are excluded since they are unrelated to our purpose; regulators, partners, investors and activists. In the theory "Three approaches to integrating CSR with marketing", the invisible approach is omitted, since this strategy is beneficial only when there is no link between responsible business and brand preference.

4.7 Problem model

To analyze our empirical results, we have combined all of the models presented in the previous chapter. However, to make a broader analysis, we have put together two of the models; Carroll's CSR pyramid and Olausson's model of a company's profile. This has resulted in the "Ice-cream Cone model" (see exhibit 5), which has been developed to look at a company's profile, image and structure from a CSR perspective. Thus, it fits the purpose of the paper and simplifies the discussion of the empirical evidence. The cone in the Ice-cream Cone model is a modification of Carroll's CSR pyramid in two ways; Firstly, the legal responsibilities have been excluded and secondly, the pyramid has been turned upside-down. There are several reasons for rotating the pyramid. To start with, the scene of conducting business has been under constant change since the CSR pyramid was created in 1991 and as concluded above, CSR has become an established part in the business world. This means that companies' present CSR engagement does not always stem from economic motives, since companies have realized that answering to consumers' demands of acting responsibly can be beneficial in other ways. Furthermore, with the problem analysis in mind, the pyramid has been turned because it from this perspective highlights that it is important to have a philanthropic starting point and from there move up and reap benefits. If not, there is a risk that a company's CSR activities are regarded as dishonest, and the company therefore becomes accused of greenwashing. As stated earlier, we believe that genuine motives are especially important in the food industry, because food and what you eat is an important question for a lot of people. In the top of the model lies Olausson's model, which describes the importance of a company's initial values being communicated through your profile, external and internal image. Hence, the top of the model takes off where the pyramid's analysis ended, and adds the communicational part of the authenticity and profile to the analysis.



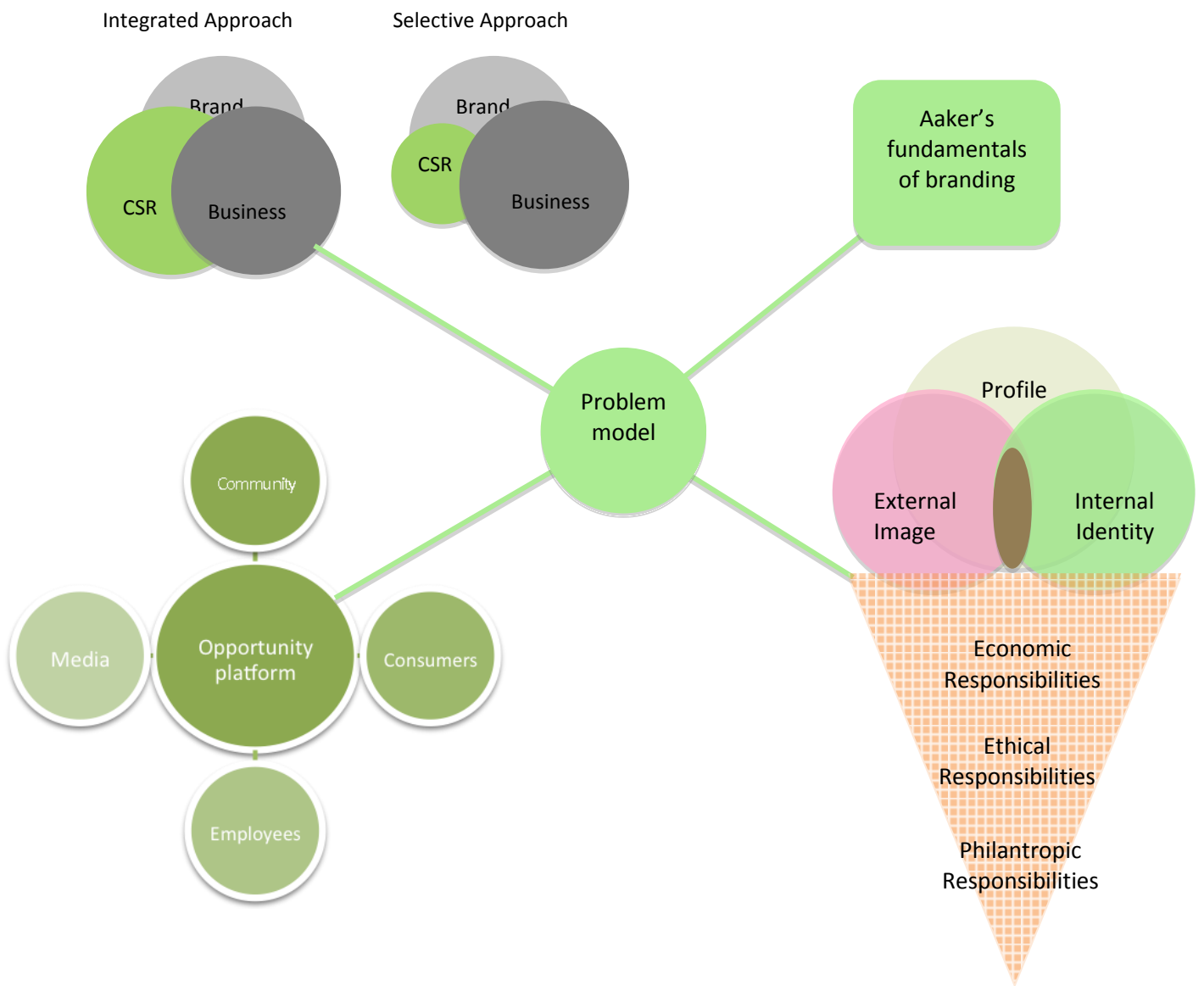
4.7.1 Exhibit 5: Ice-cream Cone model

In conclusion, the Ice-cream Cone model is a fusion of Carroll's CSR Pyramid and Olausson's model of a company's communication and perception vis-à-vis the society and stakeholders. The intermutual relationship of these two models becoming one shows how the cone constitutes the base for the company's concept and attitudes towards the society, and the ice-cream on top is the picture that emanates from the cone and is conveyed both internally and externally. Thus, together they create a model for how companies work with CSR and how this strategy is reflected in their brands.

A model is a simplification of reality that helps to make an issue more comprehensible. Therefore, we have chosen not to combine too many aspects into the Ice-cream Cone model, as this would inhibit the practicability of drawing conclusions.

Regarding the remaining models, we will use them to analyze the parts of the empirical research that are not covered by the Ice-cream Cone model, but are still essential to investigate. Combining all theories of brands and strategies helps us to analyze the empirical information from several different viewpoints. To investigate the brand part of the companies we will use Aaker's fundamentals of branding. However, as interaction with society and stakeholders is an important part of branding, we will use Fombrun et al's model to cover that aspect of branding as well. Finally we will use the strategic approaches to CSR in our analysis, as they complement the other models with a strategic perspective, which further complements the other models to create an exhaustive analysis as possible. In conclusion, our problem model is a combination of the Ice-cream Cone model and the remaining models (see exhibit 6).

4.7.2 Exhibit 6: Problem model



5. Research problem

Having discussed the background and analyzed the factors related to the problem, this chapter in greater detail specifies the problem. To clarify what information is needed to provide us with the answers for our research, we present our questions in a more comprehensible model.

5.1 Main problem

After having read several articles in the area of CSR, we noticed that in the immense base of literature, there were not many articles that specifically concerned CSR and branding. We also gained insight into the lack of practical information that the available literature has on the implementation of CSR in a brand. In particular, there is a shortage of examples or cases describing companies who have managed to incorporate CSR in their core values. We want to investigate how Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn, who are intimately devoted to CSR, work with these issues as an attempt to fill a part of the void that today exists in that area. Our investigation will stem from the companies' perspective. Looking at this from the three chosen companies' view is interesting as they are all successful in their line of business, and they can therefore provide inspiration and insights on how to conduct CSR business. Observing how the three chosen companies' engagement in CSR has been carried out and whether it has been advantageous or not according to them, will increase the understanding of CSR initiatives in the food-industry. To be more specific, we will try to find out if companies' CSR engagement has turned out to be appreciated by the companies, and if there are any explanations to how this has been achieved.

Moreover, we will try to map how Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn define and use CSR, and look into which approach to CSR they have chosen. We will further look at how the brand image is perceived by the companies' in question and whether this picture is conformable with the profile and external image as perceived by the public. Hence, we wish to find out if incorporating CSR into these companies' brands has been of any importance for the development and making of their brands.

As explained in the problem analysis, there is a substantial risk for companies who are engaged in CSR only half-heartedly, to be criticized and accused of greenwashing. Hence, authenticity is an important input for companies engaging in CSR. Further, a vast amount of available literature and theories consider genuine devotion to CSR to be the path to successful CSR communication. Therefore, we will try to discern if this statement is acknowledged the companies investigated.

5.1.1 Division of the main problem

Our main problem can be divided into several areas of interest. We have chosen CSR, branding and strategy.

CSR:

- How do they define and work with CSR?
- Why do they engage in CSR and what lies behind this commitment?

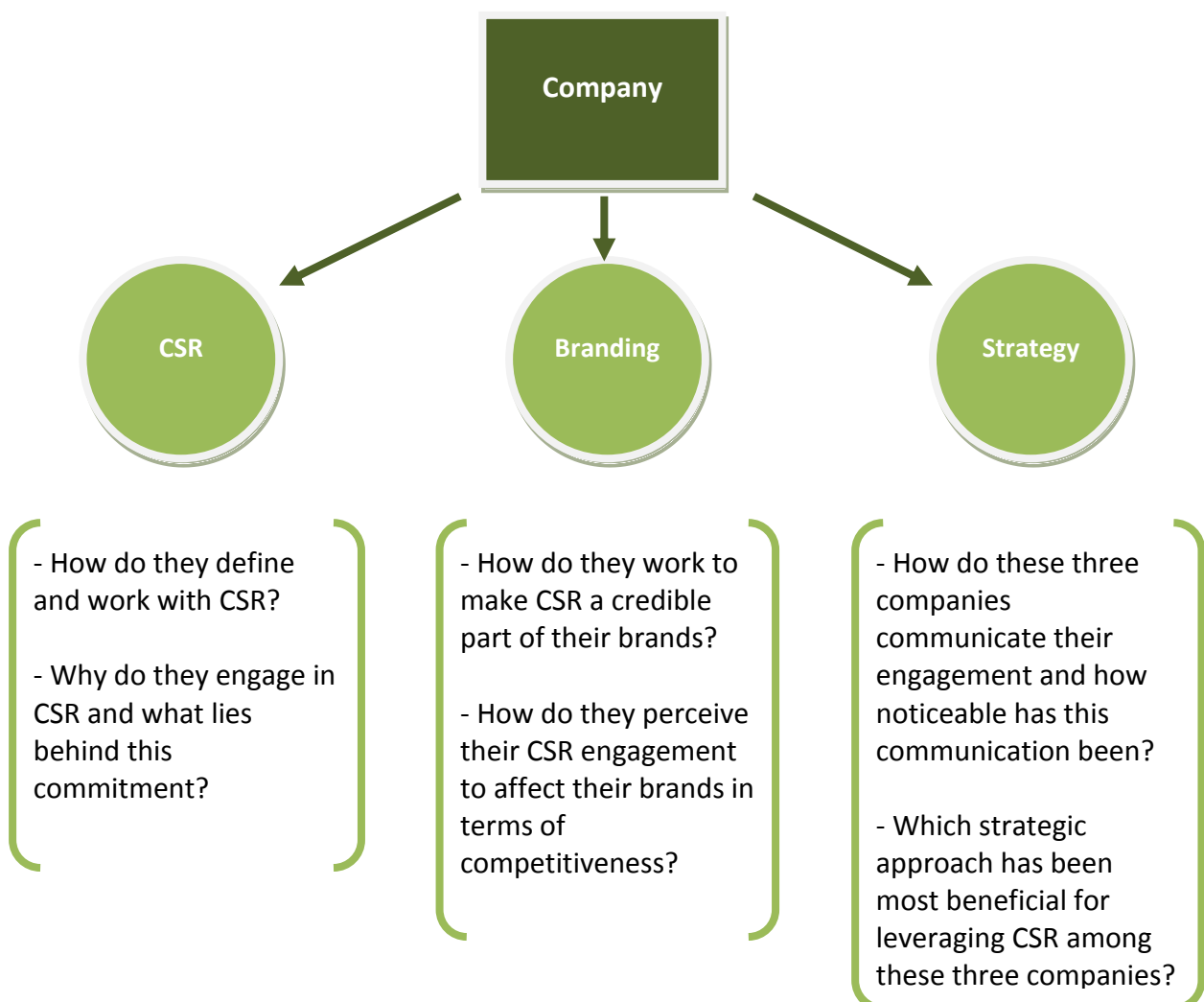
Branding:

- How do they work to make CSR a credible part of their brands?
- How do they perceive their CSR engagement to affect their brands in terms of competitiveness?

Strategy:

- How do these three companies communicate their engagement and how noticeable has this communication been?
- Which strategic approach has been most beneficial for leveraging CSR among these three companies?

5.1.1.1 Exhibit 7: Research problem model



5.1.2 Information requirements

Naturally, to answer the questions above, certain information is required. To start with, it is essential that we first establish how Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn define the areas we want to look at. For example, how do they define a brand? What areas do they consider CSR to encompass? This approach assures that we are on the same page as the companies, which is a prerequisite for being able to draw proper inferences. Further, we need to inquire into companies' CSR engagement and the background to this commitment. It is also vital to map their overall strategies for implementing CSR into their brands. Another aspect that needs to be explored is how the companies look at the relationship between their brands and their consumers. We also need to know how the companies have chosen to communicate their commitment and what commercial ventures they have gone through with, so that this strategy can be evaluated. Finally, it is vital to find out how these companies implement CSR in their everyday work and how it is manifested in their products and services.

6. Method

This chapter describes the background for the method used to conduct our research, a qualitative study based on interviews with employees from CSR-devoted companies. We also reflect on alternative methods and explain the thoughts behind the choice of method and scope of the study.

6.1 Starting point of the research

Our assigner, Saatchi & Saatchi, inquired a report discussing the causality between CSR and commercial success, and so we formulated a research problem with this as a starting point. However, "commercial success" is a broad scope of investigation, and we narrowed our study down to a marketing perspective. We further delimited the study to branding, as it is a relevant and important strategic instrument in today's competitive market place. Thus, the study has three focal points; CSR, branding and strategy.

6.2 Possible course of action

We have chosen an abductive approach to conduct this study, which means that we have combined both inductive and deductive ways of investigating. By looking at theories and doing research on specific cases and compared this to real-life cases, we have created a model based on our findings. We consider this to be preferable, since it gives us a greater freedom in conducting the study than an inductive or deductive approach does. However, this approach enhances the risk of letting the study be affected by our previous knowledge and opinions, excluding o alternative interpretations from the study (Patel & Davidson 2003). Knowing this, we have tried to avoid influencing the study with our previous knowledge and personal convictions.

The basis of our research problem was chosen on the premises that previous literature on the subject of CSR and branding is mainly written in a popular science manner, or as marketing educational literature. So, when doing our research we did not find many academic studies carried out on this subject, and therefore decided to write a thesis with the intention of trying to anchor the problem in the academic literature.

This investigation could be carried out by investigating several companies. However, a decision was made to conduct a sample study, as we have a limited amount of time. As the subject of CSR is very vast, and our intention is to explore it and present illustrative results rather than to state general conclusions, we chose to conduct a qualitative case study (Jacobsen 2002). A case study is also motivated as the larger part of the questions stated in 4.1.1 seek to answer "why" or "how" (Yin 2009). Also, case studies enable us to compare companies to find similarities and it provides for circumstantial answers (Jacobsen 2002).

6.3 Sample and interviews

The criteria to select companies were derived from our purpose, and require companies to:

1. *Operate in the food industry*
2. *Be a fairly well known brand*
3. *Be engaged in CSR*
4. *Have CSR as a core value in their brand*
5. *Be situated in Sweden*

Thus, these criteria constituted the framework for determining which companies to study closer. As our purpose is to investigate how companies work with CSR in the food industry, the first criterion constituted the foundation for selecting representative businesses. The second criterion was that the companies in question had to be fairly well known brands. Fairly well known in this case means that they should be among the leading brands in their market segment. Continuing, the companies had to be engaged in CSR and also have it as a core value in their brands, as this complies with the purpose of the paper. We excluded companies that did not emerge as having any philanthropic mission in their business concept or that were not specifically profiled as "genuine". Exclusions were made by reading about the companies on their websites and inquiring into what had been written about them in newspaper articles. Lastly, we chose to limit our study to companies situated in Sweden, as it can be difficult to contact companies as well as retrieve reliable data from companies based in other countries. Selecting companies based on these criteria enabled us to obtain broader results, as the companies that fulfill all criteria are similar (Jacobsen 2002).

For every criterion a company could not fulfill, the number of possible cases to study was narrowed down. Thus, after having examined a dozen companies, three companies that met all criteria were found; Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn. However, it should be mentioned that some of our contacts at other potential companies declined to participate in an interview, as they claimed to not have enough time. This narrowed down the selection of companies to a minimum. Thus, the empirical evidence rests upon on a small sample of companies with which we have conducted interviews based on a pre-written interview-sheet (Esaïasson et al 2003). Conducting interviews with employees from companies who have insights in these issues is a suitable way of collecting information about companies' strategies for marketing and CSR. Therefore, interviews with employees that currently work with CSR and/or marketing at the three chosen companies were conducted, to get insights from people that actively work with the questions that our paper inquires into.

At Max Hamburgare, we interviewed Pär Larshans, employee at Max for 24 years and responsible since January 2010 for sustainability-related issues at Max. At Innocent, we talked to Viktor Sylvan, manager since one year back for Innocent's Swedish branch, and at Saltå Kvarn, we talked to Jan Gustafsson, marketing and sales executive. The interviews were conducted by telephone, as

none of the companies we interviewed were located close to Gothenburg. We decided to ask all three interviewees the same questions, which enabled us to make a comparative judgment between the companies. Thus, we used an in advance put together questionnaire. Conducting interviews, rather than collecting survey data or likewise, enabled us to interact with the interviewees and collect a broad spectrum of data. Interviews also allowed unexpected answers to be registered, as interviewees sometimes express viewpoints that the interviewer may not have realized the importance of (Esaïsson et al 2003).

In addition to this primary data gathering, secondary data has been used. We have used information from websites, newspaper articles and interviews on the Internet about the companies chosen. We believe that this approach is the most appropriate as it enables us to relate the primary data from our interviews to other aspects of their business such as history, ventures and values.

6.4 Validity and reliability

As it is crucial to minimize problems regarding validity or reliability in an essay, measures were taken to assure that any conclusions drawn, answer to the research problem. The research should also be carried out with critically and carefully chosen criteria, which has been done (Jacobsen 2002). One possible way of assuring internal validity would have been to let our interviewees look at our conclusions to let them confirm or discard them. However, due to time constraints this could not be realized. Therefore, internal validity was assured by critically evaluating sources and information gathered, such as evaluating the choices of companies, interviewees and secondary data (Jacobsen 2002). We realize that a broader spectrum of companies would have made the conclusions more general and thus made the results of the study relevant to a larger amount of companies. However, as stated, time limitation in addition to companies refusing to participate, inhibited a larger collection of primary data. It should be stated that this paper treats some rather delicate subjects for a company, for example strategy. Companies not being too detailed when talking about their eventual advantages gained from CSR investments and ventures is taken into consideration when analyzing their answers.

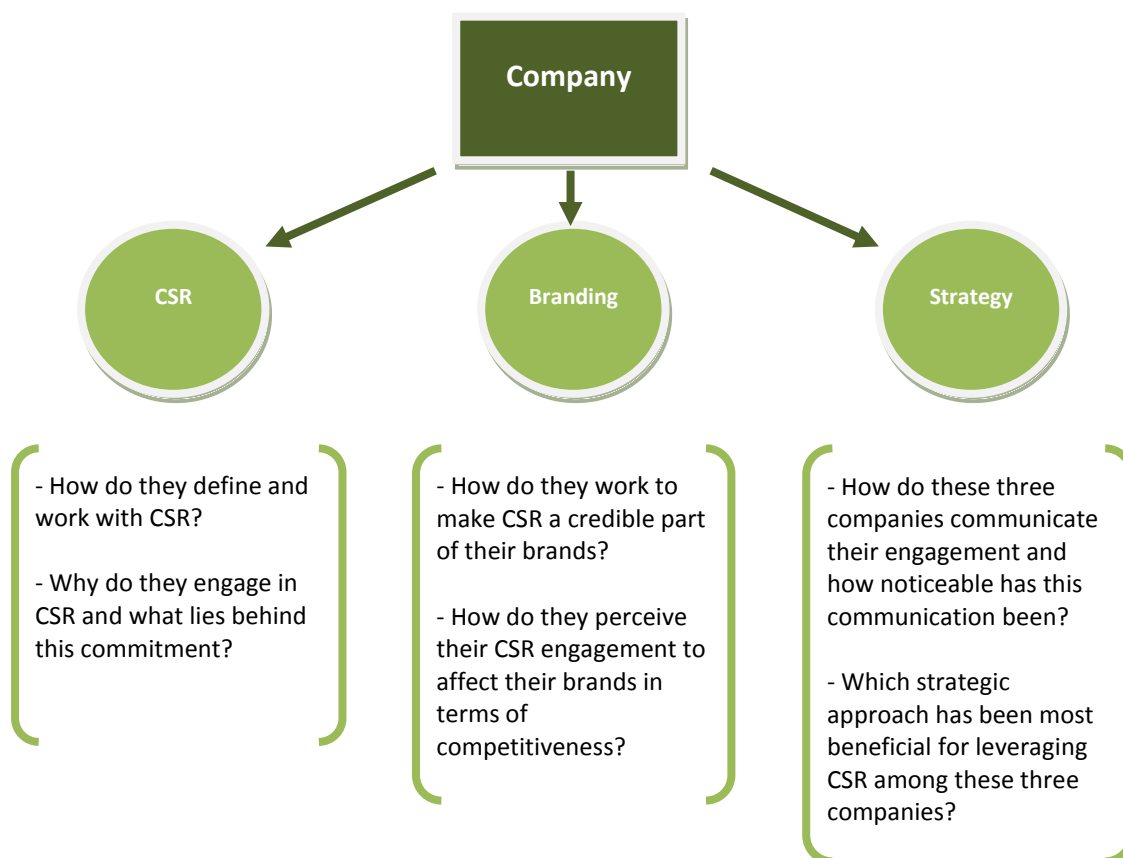
As this paper aims to investigate a small sample of companies, assuring external validity for a large population is not achievable. Instead, the conclusions from our approach must be considered to have external validity to its representative group, since the conclusions are reinforced by a clear consensus in the interviewees' answers (Jacobsen 2002). To assure a high level of reliability in our study, the interviews were recorded and then transcribed into text-files, so that nothing was forgotten or misinterpreted (Esaïsson et al 2003).

6.5 Evaluation of sources

As should be expected, we have been critical to the literature found on the Internet and only used those that we find reliable, i.e. from validated sources such as company websites. As for the sources of primary data, we tried to the most possible extent to phrase our questions in our question sheet clearly, not biased or yes/no questions, in order to get as objective and detailed answers as possible (Jacobsen 2002, Esaiasson et al 2003).

7. Results & analysis

In this chapter, the results of our study are presented and analyzed with the help of our problem model. Further, we use our research problem model to systematically present the results and analysis. The results and analysis are intertwined with paraphrased discussions from the three interviews conducted with employees at Max Hamburgare, Saltå Kvarn and Innocent.



7.1 CSR

7.1.1 Max: We are a part of the problem - but we also want to be a part of the solution.

In one year, Max's CO₂-emissions amount to 45 000 tons, and 70 % of these emissions can be derived from the beef in their hamburgers. However, since Max is a hamburger restaurant it will continue to sell beef and Max has calculated that 92 % of their environmental impact cannot be controlled directly in the short-run. In an attempt decrease their negative impact on the environment and be a part of the solution, Max has initiated four steps to contribute to a more sustainable society:

Step 1: A vision of a sustainable Max.

Step 2: Mapping their environmental impact from soil to table.

Step 3: Through an action plan, work for sustainable agriculture as well as reduce their negative effects on the environment in every step of the business.

Step 4: Communicating their engagement in a clear way, so that it inspires other companies to do the same.

Consequently, Max strives towards reducing their negative effects on the environment in other ways. For example, their requirements on their suppliers are strict, and they only buy Swedish beef. Max has also chosen to compensate for their negative effect by planting trees in the African rainforest that correspond to Max's negative impact on the environment, and approximately 135 000 trees are planted each year. In a step towards lowering their total impact on the environment, only wind-power is used as a source of energy in all of their restaurants, as it generates less CO₂ emissions than fossil fuels do (Max 2010).

With the help of "The Natural Step", a non-profit organization that provides solutions for people and organizations to take steps towards a sustainable development (The natural step 2010), Max has found a way to work for a better environment. In cooperation with experts from The Natural Step, the program "Better Aftertaste" was initiated. This includes mapping Max's products from soil to table to see how big their impact actually is. These calculations include everything, not only the emissions accounted for by the production of the food, but also the electricity used in the restaurants as well as the packaging, transportation and more. The initiative has helped Max to reduce its burden on the environment. As every meal and product at Max is labeled with how much CO₂-emissions it has produced, customers and employees can make conscious and environment friendly choices. For example, a "Max Original" hamburger accounts for 1,7 kg CO₂, while a "Chickenburger Classic" only accounts for 0,4 kg CO₂, so the consumers can actually help Max in lowering their CO₂ -emissions. In 2009, Max won the Green Awards for creativity in sustainability in the category "Best International Campaign", for putting climate on the menu (Max 2010).

Besides Max's environmental activities, they also engage in social responsibilities. For example, Max cooperates with "Samhall", one of Sweden's biggest organizations that specialize on finding the right jobs for people who are functionally disabled. Max hires people from Samhall to do the cleaning in all of their restaurants, as well as for other services, and they aspire to have at least one employee from Samhall working at each restaurant (Samhall 2010). Another important question for Max is to continually try to improve everyday responsibilities such as recycling leftover food, paper and plastic. For example, the frying oil is recycled to bio fuels and the stationeries used at Max are thinner than conventional stationeries, as it is more environmentally friendly. Lastly, all company cars are green vehicles and the employees also get educated in Max's environmental policy. The policy emphasizes the employees' individual contribution to make Max a sustainable company in a sustainable society (Max 2010).

7.1.2 Innocent: Leave things a little better than you find them

To Innocent, the attribute "natural" is the most central part of their business. Hence, there is no water, sugar or e-numbers added to their smoothies; it just contains 100 % fruit and vegetables. For Innocent, it is vital that a customer should always feel better after having consumed their product than they did before. To make sure that the smoothies are of best quality, Innocent only sources fruit and vegetables that are ecological. The bananas that are used are certified by "The Rainforest Alliance", which means that they are produced in a manner that does not undermine the world's eco-systems. The Rainforest Alliance is an independent organization with the aim to preserve the eco-system and all the living organisms in it. However, as all of Innocent's fruit is not certified, they have set their own requirements for the fruit they source, which also concern the farmers' working conditions. As it is of utmost importance that the production is both ethically and environmentally sound, the project "Get Closer to the Fruit" was initiated in 2007, which stimulates both employees and independent auditors to make sure that the requirements are adhered to.

Innocent aims to make their packaging more sustainable and follow four principles that help them carry out this endeavor. Firstly, they try to use as little material as possible. Secondly, they try to ensure that as much of the material as possible is made of recycled materials. They also try to use materials that are easy to recycle and strive to reduce their carbon emissions. In 2007, Innocent became one of the first companies in the world to have bottles made from 100 % recycled plastic and in 2009 they saved 300 tons of material by making their packages lighter, which in addition led to a 20% decrease in their CO₂-emissions. What is more, the labels on the bottles are composed of 25 % recycled paper and of 75 % paper that is certified by "The Forest Stewardship Council", FSC. FSC is an independent international organization that works for an environmentally, economically and socially sound use of the world's forests (FSC, 2010). Hence, the paper used originates from forests that are environmentally certified by FSC. Innocent also cooperates with the "Carbon Trust" in the UK to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions. By mapping Innocent's products from cradle to grave, their CO₂-emissions are measured. This helps them to understand their impact on the environment and how these negative effects can be reduced. Further, only green electricity is used and Innocent encourages their suppliers to do the same. Fruit that has been shipped by air cargo is avoided and Innocent is prepared to pay their suppliers up to 10 % more for locally produced products. Finally, through The Innocent Foundation, 10 % of Innocent's profits are donated to mainly the countries in which the fruit is sourced (Innocent 2010).

7.1.3 Saltå Kvarn: Of what nature gives. Nothing else

Saltå Kvarn provides a range of products such as flour, bread, rice, beans, nuts, dried fruit, pasta and juice. These products come from farms from all over the world and are biodynamically produced. This means that no pesticide or artificial manure has been used, nor do the products contain any additives. As all of Saltå Kvarn's suppliers are not from Sweden, but also from Brazil, Turkey, Tanzania, Sicily and China, carbon emissions deriving from shipping are inevitable. Saltå Kvarn's trucks are run on

renewable fuels and all company vehicles are green, but this does not obliterate their negative effect on the environment. Thus, Saltå Kvarn aims to compensate for their contribution to the CO₂-emissions by planting trees that correspond to their products' CO₂-emissions. Their products are linked to different levels of CO₂-emissions, as they have been shipped from different countries. This makes it possible for consumers to decide for themselves how they want to contribute to the greenhouse effect. For example, every year 100 tons of figs are transported from Turkey to Sweden, and the shipping of this results 22 tons of CO₂-emissions. Consequently, trees are planted in Uganda on an area of 2000m² (Saltå Kvarn 2010).

7.1.4 Notions of CSR

We asked our interviewees about their definition of CSR, for the reason that it is a subject full of nuance and different interpretations. In fact, Sylvan from Innocent had no clear definition of the term. He considered the company to genuinely be concerned with leaving things a little better than they found them, and therefore, they had not given their work much thought in terms of CSR. They simply believe that their way of doing business is the only imaginable way possible, and a term for it is not needed. Larshans from Max Hamburgare defined CSR as something to work with on a long-term basis. In his opinion, a company that seeks to be a long-term player on the market has to engage in these kinds of activities in order to sustain. Gustafsson in turn, saw CSR as a way of thinking and as an all-embracing responsibility for the company and its products. For example, Saltå Kvarn strives to provide for the best working environment possible and they also consider it vital to pay fair wages to all of their suppliers, Swedish as well as foreign, in order for the farms to persist. The fact that the companies' had differing definitions of CSR was not unexpected, as we earlier noted that the academic literature did not have one single explanation of the term. However, the interviewees' answers have at least one thing in common; they all take sustainability into consideration. What could also be discerned when linking the companies' work with CSR to the lower part of the Ice-cream Cone model, is that they have all taken the three areas of responsibility into consideration. Further, it should be mentioned that during our interviews, we got a feeling that the companies did not want to use the term CSR as they considered it to be for companies that only wanted to reap the benefits of CSR without engaging genuinely.

Interviewees about responsible business:

Larshans: Well, our momentum is that we, our owners, want to ensure that if you run a business you should do it ethically correct. It is very important that you are able to contribute to a better society.

Sylvan: Innocent was founded by three guys in England 12 years ago, and I think [responsibility] was really important for them. That is why it is important for the company now. They wanted to work in that way and therefore we work in that way. And yes, on the whole, we have probably always known that we play a role in that way, because we know that consumers appreciate it and want to buy one of those types of products. That's simply what we want to do.

When talking to each person, we discovered similarities in their views of working with CSR, even though there were differences between each of the interviewees' views of corporate responsibility. Gustafsson pointed out the great responsibility companies have when conducting business, both in society as well as at your own workplace. He exemplified by explaining that in Saltå Kvarn's view, "Fair Trade", a certification mostly applied in development countries for products that guarantee workers being paid fair wages, is just as applicable for farmers in Sweden. They must also be entitled to fair wages that help them to continue and develop their farming. Therefore, Saltå Kvarn is scrupulous when paying for farmers' crops. He added that this is their way of doing business, to countercheck the low-cost pressure a lot of companies are facing. Larshans from Max, on the other hand, pointed out that creating profitability that enables the industry's continued existence is a major responsibility for the company. According to him, making profit through taking responsibility for society is a long-term view on conducting business. Sylvan from Innocent explained that a major part of their responsible business roots from the employees and he stated that *"...basically, we just want people to behave at work as they do at home. And the vast majority have, naturally, very good values, which itself affects the way they behave at work"*. He added that it seems to be a common notion to leave your ethical values when coming to work, and act against your principles as a private person at work. This is not the way to create responsible business, according to Sylvan.

Although CSR is important to Max Hamburgare, Larshans explained that customers choose Max primarily because of the good taste of their products and secondarily because of the company's values. Sylvan at Innocent was of the same opinion as Larshans, and underlined that the most important thing for Innocent is that the customers like the taste of their smoothies. We find it interesting that both Larshans at Max and Sylvan at Innocent highlighted that the taste of their products is more important to customers than the companies' work with CSR. This shows that one cannot only focus on behaving responsibly, as a good taste is a prerequisite for buying the product in question. Thus, even though these companies have CSR as a core value in their brands, the starting point is still the quality and taste.

From our interviews, we can conclude that the interest in conducting responsible business often roots from a genuine interest and idea from the owners or founders of a company. Saltå Kvarn was founded as a social institution, Max changed their focus when changing owners, and lastly Innocent was created from the idea of making good food for people. This is a noticeable part of our research since it applies to all three companies, and makes us wonder whether it is perhaps from a genuine idea that successful CSR engagement lies. It was also evident when analyzing our interviews that all three interviewees considered their devotion to CSR-related issues to be genuine. Maybe this is more common in the food industry than in other industries since consumers are considerate when choosing what to put into their mouths, as it can affect both body and health. However, this philanthropic starting point is what is illustrated in the Ice-cream Cone model. The lowest part of the cone that is named "philanthropic responsibilities", suggests that a genuine motive and devotion to CSR is a prerequisite for establishing an authentic organization. Moving

upwards, "ethical-" and "economic responsibilities" are found. Our interviewees considered these parts to be important in a company and they were committed to these responsibilities. For example, ethical aspects were regarded through choosing where to conduct business. Economical aspects were considered by having in mind that a company has to remain in business in the long run. This was pointed out by Larshans from Max, who stated that creating profits is also a responsibility that a company has to take.

7.2 Branding

During our interviews, different opinions about the importance of brands were expressed. Larshans from Max believed that brands have increased in significance. He thought that this is mainly a consequence of the explosion of brands on the market, as a lot of alternatives to choose from makes it more important to have a brand that stands out. Sylvan from Innocent was of the opposite opinion; that brands are less important today than they were 10-20 years ago, due to the introduction of distributors' own brands. Sylvan emphasized that he mainly refers to his own field of trade, the everyday commodity trade to consumers. However, he recognized an increase in the importance of branding in B2B, the business-to-business area and reasoned that the consumer targeted marketing has affected the manufacturers' ways of marketing their products to other businesses.

Interviewees about their customers' relationship with their brands:

Gustafsson: As for my account, our brand is vital to our consumers. In fact, we are one of the most prominent companies in Sweden using social medias for customer communication. We were the first company to start a CEO-blog, and our fan page on Facebook has got 5000 members. I think this clearly shows how devoted our customers are. Sometimes, the mails we receive are almost pure declarations of love.

Larshans: I agree with Gustafsson, I remember one example of our customers showing their devotion to Max. It was in the 80's when a couple of vegans threw blood at one of our competitors in a town in north of Sweden, and went to eat at Max afterwards...

Sylvan: I think it goes for ethically responsible companies in general, that customers want to be associated with something good, values they stand for.

Moreover, the way of creating attractiveness and drawing attention to your brand was discussed, and Sylvan was of the opinion that the process of creating brand-awareness has changed. This process has traditionally been seen as a staircase with awareness as the first step and loyalty at the top, with several steps in between these two. According to Sylvan this process has become more compact, with only two steps left to build brands today; the first is when a consumer buys the product and the other is after he or she has tried the product. This is because communicating your product is not as important as it once was. Instead, the process of building your brand lies in selling your product and giving it unique qualities, said Sylvan. Gustafsson was of the view that what is genuine in your brand, shines through to your customers. He said that a lot of different brands try to communicate all sorts of things that are "in the buzz" at the moment of time, but it is only positively received by customers when it derives from authentic values.

Larshans from Max was of somewhat the same opinion, describing positioning and diversifying as main components for making your brand attractive. He said that creating value for your customer through good tasting food, quality and reliability is important.

All three interviewees had noticed positive effects from their CSR engagement. Larshans at Max was assured that their responsible business practices had brought about many positive effects. For example, they had noticed that municipalities as well as countries, to a greater extent prefer Max to other similar establishments. He accentuated that this has resulted in Max being able to influence and encourage politicians to make wise and brave decisions towards a more sustainable direction. This is included in Fombrun et al's model of reputational capital, where CSR has favorable effects on the community. From Larshans example, we can conclude this being so. Moreover, another example from Larshans and Max that is linked to favorable CSR- effects is the assertion that they have experienced fewer employees being on sick leave, which means that they have had positive effects from their employees. They have also noticed an increase in the number of guests visiting their restaurants, especially among those aged 16-24 years, a market that has largely been dominated by McDonalds before. Positive effects have also been noticed at Innocent, according to Sylvan. He contended that Innocent, thanks to its fair business, has been able to attract skillful employees that would otherwise not chose to work for such a small company as Innocent. Fombrun et al explain these effects by employees being more devoted to their work because they can identify their own values with the company's, a phenomenon that seems to fit in to both Larshans's and Sylvan's descriptions. This shows that a consistent and transparent company that fully integrates CSR throughout the organization is preferred when attracting employees, building customer relationships and communicating your values. It also conforms to Fombrun et al's theory about stakeholders building a company's reputational capital through CSR.

Further, positive effects rendered in the media were also acknowledged by all the companies. This is another part of Fombrun et al's variables for reputational capital; media attention that can be both negative and positive for companies. Both Max and Innocent have saved a lot of energy by decreasing their negative effects on the environment, which in turn has reduced their costs. Saltå Kvarn has taken this one step further, using decay products from their oat production as fuel for heating their office and production spaces. Sylvan also added that Innocent has received a considerable amount of PR from their environmental ventures, which has been very beneficial for them. In conclusion, several of the variables in Fombrun et al's model show that the companies have through their CSR built up a high reputational capital. This implies that their CSR-initiatives have made them more competitive.

Interviewees about advantages derived from CSR:

Sylvan: I do not think CSR has affected our competitiveness at all. I do not think we have ever had a client who has chosen our product only on the premise of it being ethically produced. However, I think that implementing [CSR] has been successful in the sense that we might have attracted people who want to work for Innocent because it is a good company. People who might not have chosen to work here otherwise, because we are such a small company.

Larshans: Yes, I think in our case, we have attracted more contracts and franchised our enterprise to different municipalities in Sweden who want us to establish there because we represent good values and business ethics.

Gustafsson: I don't believe communicating CSR has made our brand more competitive either, since it's a cornerstone in our firm. We are not communicating CSR, we're communicating Saltå Kvarn, ipso facto our beliefs and values.

Applying Aaker's four fundamentals of branding to the three companies we have interviewed, we can discern that the companies have applied almost all elements of the theory. Max, Saltå Kvarn and Innocent all focus on one area of CSR initiatives; the environment, however they are also active in other areas of interest to a smaller extent. Further, this focus has been rather consistent over time. Their initiatives are linked to their businesses, as their brands advocate sustainability and their CSR engagement mainly revolves around lowering their negative impact on the environment. Innocent's initiatives are for example linked to their business, as they donate 10 % of their annual profits to mainly the countries in which the fruit is produced. When it comes to branding the program, Max has named their initiative "Better Aftertaste", and Innocent had a program called "Get Closer to the Fruit". However, Saltå Kvarn does not have a specific name for their CSR engagement. We believe that this can be explained by the fact that their brand is already branded as responsible towards the environment. Thus, it is likely that they see no need to have branded programs that handle these questions separately. As Gustafsson explained, Saltå Kvarn's responsibility towards the society is a cornerstone they have always worked with. According to Aaker, the fact that the companies fulfill the four fundamentals of branding implies that the companies' engagement has had impact and has been noticed.

7.3 Strategy

All three companies considered it important to be fully devoted to CSR, but not to "boast" about it in their communication. In fact, Max, Saltå Kvarn and Innocent have all chosen not to communicate their initiatives through channels such as ads in papers or on the radio or television. Larshans explained that the logic behind this decision is that the risk of being associated with doing well just for the sake of publicity is too big. He emphasized that since their CSR-work is substantial and rests upon scientific results developed by "The Natural Step", they don't want to do commercials about it, as this could result in consumers becoming skeptical about their undertakings. Furthermore, Larshans pointed out that communication through traditional channels such as television commercials do not give the consumers a complete picture of Max's CSR engagement. As television commercials are 30 seconds at the greatest, there would only be time to inform the consumers about Max's compensation of CO₂-emissions, which constitutes only a small part of their engagement and would thus leave the consumers believing that it is all that Max does. For these reasons, Max focuses on telling their story to the guests in their restaurants and through positive word-of-mouth, instead of through ads.

Correspondingly, Innocent does not communicate their initiatives through traditional channels. Sylvan emphasized that their commitment is not an argument to sell products, but rather the way they consider business should be carried out. Sylvan pointed out that by having named their brand "Innocent", they are obliged to commit whole-heartedly to a natural contents and responsible business practices. Gustafsson in turn stressed that Saltå Kvarn does not have to parasite on the present trend, as they have engaged in these questions since their start. Linking this discussion to the top of the Ice-cream Cone model, and the spheres that represent the company profile, external image and internal identity it is clear that Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn have managed to create a consensus between these three parts. In other words, they have created overlaps between the image, profile and identity and consolidated them to the same value foundation. It is important to follow your values to avoid, for example, greenwashing and mistrust. As Larshans described, this was important when making the decision not to use their CSR in any commercial purposes, because it could question the companies' trustworthiness and authenticity. What you communicate becomes your external image that customers and stakeholders perceive. This picture has to cohere with the internal identity so that the company profile is genuine.

7.3.1 Thriving through CSR

Larshans explained that Max's CSR-related work has been profitable in the long run, although the company had to bear some initial costs. Viktor Sylvan agreed with him, concluding that using certain production methods and primary products of a certain quality has brought costs that are higher than for conventional production methods. However, he stressed that Innocent's aims are long-term and quality pays off in the long run. Further, Sylvan added that if a company aims to make money and high profits in the short-run, CSR is not to recommend. Gustafsson underlined that Saltå Kvarn is not a company that follows any "ecological trends", food trends such as eating accordingly to the GI-diet, or to produce goods in a certain way because of

its present actuality. Rather the opposite, he points out that their way of making products derives from a long path of history and traditions, but the present boom of CSR and ecological products is very interesting because it highlights their company as a good example.

Throughout the interviews, the companies referred to themselves as authentically engaged in responsible business practices. The companies had made their values a part of their brands, and let them set the tone for the strategic decisions that were made. This way of doing business is equivalent to the "integrated approach" of implementing CSR, as the companies' brands are aligned with CSR in an interconnected manner. Thus, the "selective approach" is ruled out as an option of strategy. The integrated approach is perhaps the most natural choice of approach for Max, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn since they offer nutriments, which highly concerns consumers.

Interviewees about their values:

Sylvan: As for me, I think the world becomes what you make it. And that goes for both people and businesses. And of course, everyone has a responsibility for how they behave, that goes for both organizations and businesses, because you affect the world in the way you act. A lot of people try to wriggle themselves out of this by saying that they are just doing like everyone else. In the end it will come down to your own responsibility and your own choice, both for companies and people.

Larshans: Yes, I believe that CSR is where one renders responsibility to society and I think in particular the question is about the consequences of the products you sell. What will be the consequences now and for future generations?

Gustafsson: The product you sell is not just a price; it is a quality, a quality product in addition to the values that very much are a prerequisite for producing the product.

Gustafsson from Saltå Kvarn believed that in the future, companies will in general continue to work with CSR. Because today, consumers have such impact and influence on companies, that when they become more and more engaged, they will set high demands on companies and on the products on the market. Larshans talked about the future as more of a workplace-related topic, about making workplaces so good that employees feel more devoted to work, thus decreasing sick-leave and other negative effects. This shows that working with CSR can be an incentive for companies, as it can reduce costs as well as enhance employee dedication. Sylvan's opinion concurred with the previous and he told us that CSR has increased in importance during the last five years.

8. Conclusions and future research

In this chapter, we return to the research problems and present the conclusions drawn from the analysis. We finish off by suggesting what additional elements could have been included in the research and what future research could be interesting.

8.1 Concluding remarks

From our research, we have obtained a deeper understanding of how Max Hamburgare, Innocent and Saltå Kvarn work with CSR. Although we observed a diverse definition and use of CSR among these companies, we do not see this as alarming, as it is only natural that the structures and working processes differ from company to company. A significant notion from the analysis is how authenticity and philanthropic values were considered to be the cornerstone of each company. Our research showed that the will to commit to CSR emanates from the idea and values that were intended in the beginning of the company's history, often a question that was very close to heart for the founders. Moreover, there was a striking consensus in the companies' decisions to omit their CSR engagement from their communication, as communication of CSR can dilute the authenticity in a company. Despite this decision, their engagement has had impact and has been noticed. We believe that this strategy has played a considerable part in making their CSR a credible part of their brands.

Although the companies had experienced positive effects from their CSR engagement, they could not relate these to any specific increase of competitiveness. This could be due to the difficulty of separating the effects of CSR engagement and a product that it liked for its high quality and good taste. It implies that CSR activities can be advantageous in the food industry, notwithstanding that its effects on the competitiveness are ambiguous. All companies agreed that there was no option between integrating CSR values fully and having a selective approach to its implementation. Meaning, CSR is either anchored in the organization or not; there is no middle road to credible CSR commitment. This notion is also related to the conclusion about strategy; from our research we found that an integrated approach was, according to the companies interviewed, the most beneficial when leveraging CSR to your brand.

We consider our conclusions to be conceivable and we believe that other companies in the food industry can use this information to gain understanding of what important aspects there are to CSR engagement. As every company is unique, all our results and conclusions will perhaps not be applicable to all companies. However, our hope is that companies can use our findings to evaluate their own engagement in CSR or potential future engagement in these questions.

8.2 Future research

In addition to our paper that focuses on companies' self-perception and evaluation of CSR, a survey stating consumers' perception of companies' authenticity and commitment to CSR would have been helpful in creating a more multifaceted and complete picture of the issue. Another aspect that would contribute to the research would be to compare our findings with views and opinions of companies from the same field of trade that are not explicitly genuine in their CSR work. This could shed light on whether the philanthropic starting point is essential to create a credible brand. This would further give the research a more extensive source of materials to draw conclusions from.

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Interview sheet

1. How would you define a brand?
2. How would you define your brand?
3. How do you think that the importance of brands for companies has changed over time?
4. How do you think the relationship between your customers and your brand looks?
5. What creates loyalty to your brand?
6. In what way do you think your brand speaks to consumers' hearts? I.e. what feelings does your brand capture in the consumer?
7. What in your brand is constant?
8. What do you think lies within the scope of company responsibility?
9. Overall, how would you define Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)?
10. How do you work with CSR and why is this commitment important to you?
11. How do you determine what should be included in your brand's CSR work? That is, how do you select the focus areas (environment, Fair Trade, etc.)?
12. What lies behind your CSR work?
13. How has your work with CSR developed over time?
14. How do you see your future work with CSR? How do you think it will evolve?
15. How do you communicate your CSR agenda in a credible way?
16. How do you think CSR affects your brand?
17. Do you believe that your CSR work has made your brand more competitive and, if so, how?
18. What positive impact have you noticed from your work with CSR?
19. Do you see any potential negative effects from working with CSR? If so, what?
20. How do you think your customers identify themselves with social responsibility?
21. Do you think that companies outside their operations should influence their customers to act in an ethically correct manner?