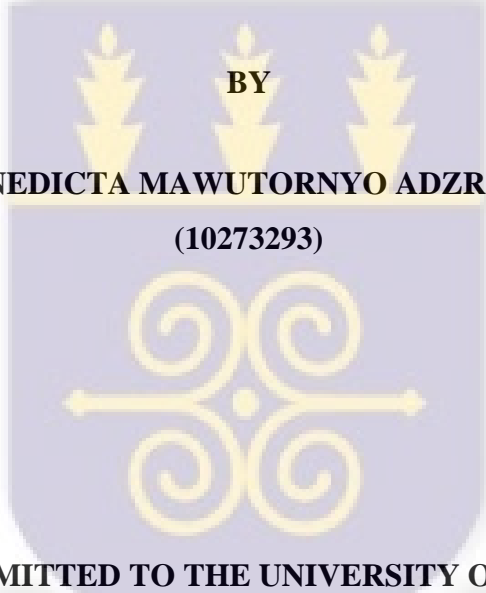


UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS

**BRANDING IN THEATRE MARKETING IN GHANA: THE CASE OF
ROVERMAN PRODUCTIONS**



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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A
MPHIL THEATRE ARTS DEGREE**

JULY, 2015

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own undertaken research and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other university. Any scholarly work that has been quoted or cited has also been duly acknowledged by means of referencing.

Any errors of commission or omission in the entire work are entirely my own.



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Date: 06/06/2016.....

Date:

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my yet to be born children and husband, Stephen Aidoo. I thank God I found you.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GADEC	Global Arts and Development Centre
GTV	Ghana Television
NTG	National Theatre of Ghana
RP	Roverman Productions
SPA	School of Performing Arts
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America



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ABSTRACT

Branding in the theatre seeks to connect a theatre company and its product to its audience. This is with the aim of achieving a company's mission and audience satisfaction. Though generally not much attention has been paid to branding in theatre practice, however, it is important to note that a few theatre practitioners are working towards improving this aspect of theatre. Amongst the groups and companies who engage in theatre practice in Ghana, Roverman Productions is one of the few which has attained a credible reputation. This paper seeks to investigate how Roverman Productions has engaged branding and how effective it has been. In conducting this research, the qualitative method is employed. The research finding of this paper will serve as a guideline for branding in theatre practices in Ghana.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter introduces the whole thesis. It gives a background of the study and also identifies the problem this research is to investigate. The chapter also discovers the objectives and research questions of the study. It goes on to identify the scope of the study, significance of the study, limitations, and organization of the whole thesis. Subsequently, the chapter ends with a conclusion and summary.

1.2 Background of the Study

Theatre in Ghana has gone through various stages. It has advanced from being just a part of religious, political or social event to a profession. Theatre practice in Ghana, be it religious, political or professional, employed some management skills. The Concert Party tradition of the 1950's and 1960's is among the first professional theatre troupes in Ghana. The troupe constitutes what is described in literary terms as 'popular theatre'. It is worth noting that, the troupe consciously or unconsciously employed branding to champion its course. It was known for its music and dance feature. It was also identified with addressing moral and social issues in a comic way (satire). The interactive nature of the Concert Party troupe cannot be ignored. Abdallah, as cited by Wikinson (1992) explains that, "The wicked stepmother for instance gets insulted by the audience and when the stepdaughter is ill-treated in her tattered clothes, people have been known to get up and give her some money whiles she's singing her sad song!" (pp.34-35). This affirms the interactive nature of the Concert party troupe. The troupe was furthermore identified

with its tie/partnership with the then Lever Brothers Company (Unilever), producers of Key Soap (brand tie). This partnership gave the Concert Party tradition an enviable brand which positively affected its patronage. As cited by Wikinson (1992), Mohammed Ben Abdallah, again, identifies Concert Party with,

“[...] stock characterization, expanded and exaggerated acting, an element of satire, of moralization, teaching of lessons, broad acting and slapstick, and the use of the body extensively in terms of dance, music, mime, movement and improvisation, even at times, acrobats.” (p.33)

Apart from the earlier Concert Party troupe, Osofo Dadzie and Cantata theatre groups created brands for themselves. It is believed that, these brands might have been created unconsciously just like in the case of the Concert Party troupe. The Concert Party troupe, Osofo Dadzie and Cantata group all collapsed and this was a resultant of the weakness of their brands. In the early stages, these brands were able to thrive due to lack of competitors, who would commit to effective branding. According to Yifan (2007), “Without competition, it is the same for producers whether there is brand or not” (p.10)

Conversely, theatre practice in Ghana is becoming competitive, hence, the need for effective branding. The number of private theatre companies in Ghana multiplied by the turn of the 21st century. Some of the theatre companies or entities in Ghana are Selsi Productions, Roverman Productions, Globe Productions, GADEC, Kritik Productions, just to mention a few. There are also other companies which engage in theatre

productions as part of their several activities. Some of these are Novelty and H4P Crew. All these companies mentioned above have been engaged in theatre for a while. Although most of them aim at making profit or at least, breaking even, branding which will help in that regard has not been given much attention. Through personal interview with some of the Chief Executive Officers of these theatre companies, it is evident that many of them lack the basics of branding.

Amongst the several theatre companies and groups in Ghana, Roverman Productions has distinguished itself in terms of branding. Roverman Productions is a theatre company in Ghana which has been in existence and produces a play every quarter of the year since 2008. It is among the few fast growing and most popular theatre companies in Ghana. It has a team exclusively in charge of branding. Roverman theatre productions has distinct features which are music, comedy and themes which address social issues.

The American Marketing Association (AMA), as quoted by Byrnes (2013), defines brand as, “A name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one’s seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers” (p.358). Pearson (1996) similarly defines branding as, “a process involved in crafting a distinctive name and image for a product in the consumers mind, largely through marketing with a consistent theme” (p.113). Branding can simply be defined as how an organization differentiates itself and its services from all others in the area of work. It can also be said to be how an organization “positions” itself in its “marketplace” (Stein& Bathurst, 2008) whiles emphasizing on its advantages over competitors so as to sell its products to consumers. In effect, branding is a process of creating and managing an identity, whereas, brand is the

identity created. This is very handy, because, the consumer or public perception about every (theatre) company is of great essence. This perception may influence the patronage of a company's products. It also highlights the need to ensure that public perception of a theatre company is in line with what it seeks to be known for. Thus, a company is able to control and protect its image in the public's eye through branding.

Branding incorporates the form and content of a company's work. Both form and content are influenced by a company's style and ideologies. Branding basically is to direct public or consumer perception about a product. The relevance of it in theatre practice cannot be over emphasized. Whether the focus of a theatre company is aimed at making money, sending forth a message or just entertaining, it needs an audience, hence, the need for branding.

Aims/ Essence of Branding

- i. The principal aim of branding is for an organization to achieve its goal; most at times, to maximize profit.
- ii. The aim of branding is to create a distinction for ones organization in the industry or marketplace where it finds itself.
- iii. Branding also aims at developing a perception in the minds of consumers about a product.
- iv. In addition, branding is to convey the brand message of an organization vividly to the consumers or the public in general. Through the branding process, a company gets feedback on how they are faring in the market place so as to re-strategize if necessary.

- v. Another aim of branding is to create audience loyalty. Brands create consumer trust, thus, consumers rely, depend and are faithful to them.
- vi. Because branding carries a consistent message to the buyer, it attracts and persuades those who find the message relevant.
- vii. Lastly, branding helps to establish an emotional connection with the consumer.
“Great brands aren’t just known and trusted. They’re loved” (Chiaravalle and Schenck, 2007, p.10)

Despite the essence of branding as mentioned above, some performing artists (especially those in academia) have raised concerns that branding in theatre practice to an extent, inhibits artistic excellence. This research will therefore probe into such possibilities.

1.3 Problem Statement

Roverman Productions has knowledge and expertise in management of the theatre and this is reflected in the management structures of the company. This is manifested in their contribution to the development of theatre in Ghana; which is essential to socio-economic development. In this global dispensation, many are striving to contribute to the development of theatre. This echoes the need to use the best managerial strategies to achieve theatre’s mission, vision and purpose in society. After Ghana’s independence, the first president of Ghana , Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah included the arts in his plans, budgets and implementations. According to A.M. Opoku, (1963), as part of Nkrumah’s vision in 1992,

“Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana, demonstrated his foresight by establishing the School of Music and Drama in the University, for the training of actors, dramatists, musicians and dancers. In 1961, he personally encouraged the construction of the Ghana Drama Studio in Accra, whose program has now become most useful integrated with the School of Music and Drama. Consistent with Osagyefo’s determination to advance the development of the Arts, is the establishment of the Arts and culture, for the purpose of promoting and disseminating artistic developments in the country” (pp.51-56)

From this quote, Nkrumah was passionate about the arts, therefore, put in place implementations for the purpose of promoting and disseminating artistic development in the country. Since independence, theatre is one of the arts that the nation has rested upon for national identity and unity. Apart from this role theatre plays in the country, theatre has the general role/ purpose to inform, educate and entertain.

Also in the Cultural Policy of Ghana, the arts industry (theatre) has an important role to play in the development of the country. In this document, there are three major objectives. One of it is,

“To enhance Ghanaian cultural life and develop cultural programs to contribute to the nation’s human development and material progress through heritage preservation, conservation, promotion and the use of traditional and modern arts and crafts to create wealth and alleviate poverty” (p.4).

Also under the specific objectives of the cultural policy, it states;

“To promote the arts by;

- i. Enhancing the status of artists and artistes.
- ii. Identifying, developing and rewarding creative talents
- iii. Making artistic products contribute to wealth creation
both for creative individuals and the nation as a whole.” (p.5)

The third specific objective identifies the responsibility of the arts industry to the growth of the economy of the country. It states that the art does not only have a role to play in providing wealth for individuals, but also to improve the economy of the country.

It is relevant to note that, amongst the twelve institutions and agencies listed to implement the Ghana cultural policy, eight of them are arts institutions. Again, in the Ghana Cultural Policy under the preservation arts column, it mentions that the theatre has a role to play in the preservation of culture. The Cultural Policy in most of its columns, talks about the role of the arts (theatre) to the nation. It then can be said that the success of the theatre arts industry, subsequently, will be a success for the nation. If theatre has

such important roles to play in society, then there is the need to implement the best policies and strategies for its development.

In theatre practice, there are two major areas; the artistic and the management. In Ghana, attention has been given to the artistic, ignoring the management aspect. There is the need for balance in both the artistic and management aspect of every theatre company. Focusing on the former over the latter can be destructive. The consequence will be that, management might not be in the position to effectively take charge of a theatre company's activities. This lack of focus can lead to the failure of a company.

It is essential to know that, gone are the days when the state fully supported the operations of arts. There have been times in the history of Ghana, under the Nkrumah governance, when government fully sponsored theatre groups, built auditoriums for performances amongst others. Theatre arts practitioners must come to the realization that the situation has changed negatively. As a result, there is the need to work harder in order to keep the theatre scene in Ghana vibrant.

Patronage is vital in the promotion of theatre business. It is however influenced by consumer perception. It is then in place if branding (a marketing strategy that directs consumer perception) is implemented in theatre management/marketing. The branding strategy is not only aimed at attracting audience to theatre performances, but also attracting sponsors, producers, policy makers and the right staff, cast and crew for any theatre organization. In few sentences, the problem statement is;

Apart from audience attraction and patronage which is a major challenge in the theatre industry, it is extremely difficult for theatre professionals to acquire sponsorship. In

addition, the ‘little’ money the government has allocated in its budget to the arts is not made available to the creative sector. In the absence of branding, there are misrepresentations. These result in misconceptions in society about the theatre. This, as a result, tends to negatively affects patronage (audience, sponsorship), attitude of theatre practitioners, government’s investment into the arts

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This research seeks;

- i. To unravel the necessary branding tools and implementations made by Roverman Productions.
- ii. To investigate and analyze activities of Roverman Productions and their effects on its brand.
- iii. To develop and create, based on Roverman’s interventions, a manual for branding theatre companies in Ghana.

1.5 Research Questions

This paper seeks to address the following questions:

- i. What are the branding tools used and implementations made by Roverman Productions?
- ii. How does Roverman Productions’s activities affect its brand?
- iii. How can theatre companies be branded effectively?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research is significant considering its importance in achieving the purpose and aims of theatre.

- i. As branding is geared towards consumer perception, the application of the branding strategies developed in this study will help in directing the perception of Ghanaians towards the arts. Consequently, clearing the misconceptions towards the theatre arts in Ghana.
- ii. The study is relevant because, it will possibly help in the development of theatre art industry in Ghana through proper presentation and clearly presented benefits of the arts and this will in the long run, impact positively on the economy.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study puts theatre in Ghana into three groups.

- i. In academic institution
- ii. Theatre as a business
- iii. Theatre for development

Each of these groups has vision and mission statements as well as aims and objectives.

This research addresses the misconception some artists have concerning branding. Some artists are of the view that branding is only necessary for those in theatre business. This is incorrect as branding is not only geared towards attracting audience to buy tickets for a show, but also ensures that an organization or company gets to work with people who share its vision and mission. Branding ensures that an institution or company also attracts the right investors who share in the focus and vision of the organization. From this

argument, branding is necessary for every theatre organization, institution and group. However, this study is interested in branding in theatre practice in Ghana with Roverman Productions as the centre of attention. The aim is to investigate the branding tools and implementations used by Roverman Productions. Given that every activity of a company contributes to its brand, the various sections of the company and some of its activities will be examined. Since branding is being looked at in an artistic field, the possibility of branding influencing artistic work will also be investigated.

1.8 Limitations

Theatre practice in Ghana pays little attention to the management aspect. Thus, there is little literature on branding in theatre in Ghana. The available literature is also limited in terms of what is relevant to the research. The result of this is that, there was the need to put in extra effort to acquire relevant literature and this can be stressful.

1.9 Expected Outcome of the Study

- i.** The successful completion of this study is expected to serve as a guide or reference for other students in the department who would want to research further into the area.
- ii.** The research outcome is also expected to serve as a guide for theatre managers in effectively performing their duties for their theatre companies, institutions and groups.

1.10 Organization of the Whole Thesis

The whole thesis is directed towards researching into branding in theatre practice in Ghana, using Roverman Productions as a case study. The thesis is divided into five chapters to achieve its objectives. The first chapter which is titled, Introduction, has already been outlined. It begins with an overview of the chapter, followed by a background of the study which entails theatre in Ghana, branding in theatre in Ghana and a write-up on Roverman Productions. After this, is the problem statement, objectives of the study and the research questions. Afterward, there is the scope of the study, significance of the study, limitations, organization of whole thesis, conclusion and summary. This leads to the chapter two, Literature Review. It begins with an overview of the chapter followed by an introduction, branding, brand, theatre in Ghana and literature on Roverman Productions. The third chapter is titled Methodology, which presents, discusses and justifies the choice of research method. The chapter which follows is the Presentation of Data and Analysis. In this chapter, collected data is transcribed and analyzed. The final chapter which is the fifth chapter entails the summary, findings, conclusion and recommendation of the thesis.

1.11 Summary and Conclusion

Theatre is not a new subject to the Ghanaian. It has gone through stages and has developed from being a social or leisure activity to a profession. Considering the fact that theatre is now a profession makes it obvious that the management aspect has to be taken seriously. Branding helps to build a relationship and connection between the consumer and the product and this helps product patronage. Amongst the several researched theatre

groups in Ghana, Roverman is one of the few which has employed branding. This work focuses on investigating the branding strategies used by Roverman Productions and how effective it has been. The research findings are expected to serve as a guide for theatre brand managers and arts managers in general.

Considering the problem stated earlier, the relevance of this research cannot be over emphasized.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature in several areas of the research. First of all, concerns of theatre professionals and management experts on the absence of implementing the marketing strategy, branding, are discussed. The chapter also discusses theatre marketing and branding. Subsequently, it discusses the theatre's brand consumer, what aspects of a company can be factored when analysing a brand and Roverman productions as a Ghanaian theatre.

2.2 Theories/ Concerns on Branding in Theatre Marketing

Considering the essence of branding to any company or organization, it is worrying that many theatre groups do not make use of branding. It is important to note that it is not only in Ghana that art organizations have ignored this management aspect of the theatre. Nevertheless, one can mention few art institutions which have incorporated this marketing strategy. The American Ballet Theatre, Chicago Symphony, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Disney, Africa Umoja and Roverman Productions are all art organizations who have distinguished (identified) themselves in their market place, using branding. "Dolly Parton for instance has a fantastic brand and a visual image that goes with her talent. And this brand has been very consistent even with the changing of trends amongst others. She hasn't changed. It is still the big hairstyle and the suit and everything that goes with it" (A. Frimpong, personal communication, 2015). Gbormittah speaking on branded art organisations says that, "We all know the standing of Umoja, a South African

Company, when it comes to branding in Africa, even in the world. I just happen to be a friend to one of the members and he tells me how their system is structured to the extent that even if they have to travel to another country, the branding unit ensures they send a party that takes the lead in order to ensure that their brand is retained in terms of artistic work and marketing. So the brand that you will see in South Africa is the same brand they want to exhibit elsewhere.” (F. Gbormittah, personal communication, 2015)

A number of art practitioners and managers have shown concern towards companies ignoring the marketing, thus, branding aspect of the theatre. Below are comments that some experts have made concerning some companies attitude towards branding.

- i. “Power in business resides with the owner of the customer interface, yet most companies have no experience of controlling their customers or managing their customer interface” (Pearson, 1996, p.19)
- ii. “Traditionally, the management of arts organization has been considered as separate from other types of business, since it was assumed that different rules would apply to the management of these organizations ” (Kolb, 2000, p.15)
- iii. “Indeed, in the past arts and cultural organizations have looked at marketing with ‘suspicion and even hostility,’ in that marketing was regarded as a practice not wholly honourable and somehow too ‘slick’ for their high calling” (Raymond and Greyser, 1978, p.130)
- iv. Some scholars have argued that the conventional marketing formula that is centred on consumer needs is not appropriate in the case of high artistic production since artists are defined as people who create freely without principally considering consumer needs. This view is based on the belief that

there is a division between low and high cultural productions; high is arts for art sake while low is based on consumer needs. Such views however do not hold due to the fact that, the distinction keeps fading and has started to disappear. (Zusana, Jitka and Miroslaw, 2012). “Hence, it becomes increasingly non-sensical even in the area of high cultural production to apply the outdated “product-oriented” approach to marketing that focuses on selling whatever product is “in stock” rather than creating an offer based on consumers’ needs” (Zusana, Jitka and Miroslaw, 2012)

The above quotes tend to highlight the absence of, the use of marketing strategies in theatre business. It is observed from these quotes that, it is essential for the producer to be in charge of his consumer interface thus, implementing branding. Though arts organizations, thus, theatre companies might not be comfortable with some marketing strategies such as branding, it is significant that they note that, the essence of brands is to ensure that they build efficient and reliable reputes among target audience, sponsors, stakeholders, policy makers and producers.

2.3 Theatre Marketing and Branding

Management is a huge concept and entails several activities. It begins with identifying consumer need and producing to satisfy that need. In the marketing process, the 4P’s (price, product, package, promotion) are essential. Management can be divided into regions i.e. information and technology management, operations management, HR management and marketing management. This means that marketing is a region within management. In agreement to this, both the Chartered Institute of Marketing (2007) and

Kotler and Armstrong (2010) in their definitions, refer to marketing as a management or managerial process.

Defining marketing, the American Marketing Association as quoted by the McIntyre (2013) opines, “Marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distributing ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives” (p.5). Kotler (2003), similarly defines marketing simply as, “A societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, and freely exchanging products and services of value with others” (p.9). Inferring from these definitions, I define marketing simply as, a process of exchanging products of value in order to achieve the producer’s mission and consumer’s satisfaction.

Stein and Bathurst (2008) state that, “In the case of the performing arts, that product is the artistic experience” (p.278). Branding is a marketing strategy which is geared towards creating an identity for a product and directing consumer perception towards a product. As a result every activity of a company is accessed as being in line with the brand. I agree with Kotler (2003) when he says that, “Branding is the art and cornerstone of marketing” (p.418). Stein and Bathurst (2008), again, say that, “creating demand for the performing arts [is] a bit different than conventional marketing” (p.278). This communicates the need to investigate and find effective strategies suitable for branding the arts, thus, theatre.

2.3.1 What Is A Brand?

It is not easy to define a brand, considering that various literatures have defined it in several ways. The American Marketing Association (AMA), as quoted by Byrnes (2013),

defines brand as, “A name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies ones seller’s good or device as distinct from those of other sellers” (p.358). Whilst this definition place emphasis on the physical features of a brand, Kotler on the contrary defines a brand as “a marketer’s promise to deliver a specific set of features, benefits, and services consistently to the buyers” (Kotler, 2003, p.420). In Kotler’s definition, he bases what a brand is fundamentally on the promise a seller makes to his consumer and consistently delivering that promise. Inferring from Kotler’s definition, creating, delivering and maintaining a seller’s promise to the consumer is important. Hence, a brand will not be successful if it does not consider the consumers’ perception. Similarly, Kuenyehia an entrepreneur also in his view defines brand as, “The impressions that customers form based on the sum total of their interactions, experiences and communication with an enterprise and its products, service and employees” (Kuenyehia, 2012, p.519).

A brand goes beyond the physical features of a product and mainly is derived from the intangibles of a product. Deducing from all the definitions, one of the roles of a brand is to offer a mark of differentiation on a product in its marketplace. Even though the AMA has the word “feature” (which means any other characteristic or attribute) in its definition of brand, the definition stresses on the physical features of a brand. This gives little or no attention to the intangibles of a brand which is supposed to be key. According to Kapferer (1998), “For decades the value of a company was measured in terms of its buildings and land, and then its tangible assets (plant and equipment). It is only recently that we have realized that its real value lies outside the business itself in the minds of potential buyers”, (p.15).

This quote endorses the above brand definition by Kuenyehia. Different physical features will differentiate one brand from the other but what will motivate the patronage of one product rather than the other is a product's clearly communicated benefits, shared values and attributes between the consumer and product. Also, Kuenyehia indicates that what a brand is, is centred on the consumer's perception. "Arts organisations cannot really understand their products, until they understand how the consumer or the audience perceived it" (March and Tompson, 1996, p.4).

Thus, consumers are the heart of every business and Pearson rightly states that they are the most valuable assets of any company, (Pearson, 1996, p.xiii). If consumers are a valuable asset to every company as Pearson points out, then the decisions of a consumer can either make or unmake a business. This perception he explains is generated from a number of things which are interactions, experiences and communication with an enterprise and its products, service and employees. The physical features of a brand (name, term, design, and symbol) as defined by the AMA, is part of the experience of a consumer with a product. Another part of the experience a consumer has with a product, service and employees are emotional, which is intangible. Therefore, a brand can be generated from the sum of tangible and intangible features and experiences a consumer has with a product. "Customer decision-making is a mix of the rational and the emotional", (Pearson, 1996, p.8).

This research is premised on the opinion of Kapferer (1998) when he says; "The brand is not the product but it gives the product meaning and defines its identity in both time and space" (p.17). Since brand is geared towards directing consumer perception, this research defines brand as, the perception of a consumers towards a product, developed from their

contact (experience) with the features, benefits and values of the product. From this, we find the need to create an emotional connection/ belonging with customers.

Apart from the fact that a brand serves as an identification tool, it also tells the source of a product, thus, building product credibility. Ciceo, (2013) affirms this by saying, “Brand also indicates the source of the product or service, giving the consumer the possibility to attribute a certain level of responsibility to the seller and, thus, to compare products that satisfy the same need, but labelled under different brands; it is an assurance of the product’s quality making the consumer to return” (p.18)

2.3.2 Branding

“Branding is a process involved in crafting a distinctive name and image for a product in the consumers mind, largely through marketing with a consistent theme”, (Pearson, 1996, p.113). Deducing from this quote, the research defines branding as the process of conceiving, delivering and maintaining an identity of an individual, group, product or service in the consumer’s mind.

More often than not, when it comes to making a choice between products people know and trust and that which they don’t know, people confidently and easily chose the known brands. It is most likely that a consumer picks a brand which he knows and trusts rather than taking the risk to acquire a product he knows almost nothing about. Chiaravalle and Schenck in *Branding for Dummies* (2007), explain that, People note the benefits or positive features of a brand even before they purchase that brand. Thus, when it is time for sales to be made, a good branded product only has to speak of its benefits while a product which is not branded will require more of a consumer’s time to introduce the

product, convince potential customer before spelling out product benefits. Consequently, organizations which are not branded have to every single time, introduce and convince consumers to purchase their products.

Branding considerations become important the moment one decides to start an organization. One must be clear in his mind on what he stands for and what position he wants to occupy in his marketplace amidst all competitors. He must also be clear on what he wants to stand for in the consumer's mind. Know that you cannot stand for everything at the same time but you need to stand for something. As has been stated earlier, brand is not only about tangibles as a result; in the process of branding, one must also consider the brand experience of the consumer in terms of feelings.

Branding is a process and this gives the idea that there are steps to be follow. Kuenyehia explains the branding process with an equation which is;

R-STP-MM-I-C.

R= Research

STP= Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning

MM= Marketting Mix (popularly known as the four P's, i.e. product, price, place and promotion)

I= Implementation

C= Control (getting feedback, evaluating results and revisiting or improving STP strategy and MM tactics). (Kuenyehai, 2012, p.517).

2.3.3 History of Branding

The concept of branding is not a new phenomenon in society. We can cast our minds back to the times when people identified their flock with some distinct tags either on the neck or leg while others painted a particular part of their poultry for identification (then, branding was just for identification). Since the earliest of times, Kapferer (1998) explains that, “The 1980s marked a turning point in the conception of brands. Management came to realize that the principal asset of a company was in fact its brand names” (p.15). This explains why the American Marketing Association defines a brand based on a name, logo and other physical attributes. Within this view, Keller (2003) states that, “Technically speaking, then, whenever a marketer creates a new name, logo, or symbol for a new product, he or she has created a brand”, (p,43). He however admits that presently, brands mean much more than that. This reveals that formerly, brands had an uncomplicated role as identifiers.

Through the stages of discovering the essence of brands, the legal aspects of a brand was developed. There also came the realization that, brands meant more than just names. It was conceived that not only the tangibles (machines, land, buildings, staff) of a company make up its assets. Consequently, companies with good brands are sold many times than how much they are actually worth without brand. Kapferer (1998) says, “It is only recently that we have realized that its (a company) real value lies outside the business itself, it is in the minds of potential buyers”, (p,15). He again makes an instance of Nestle buying Rowntree for almost three times its stock market value and 26 times its earnings. It then becomes obvious that the strength of a company is not only in knowing how to do what they do best, but knowing how to brand effectively. “The strength of a company

like Heineken is not solely in knowing how to brew beer; it is that, people all over the world want to drink Heineken” (Kapferer, 1998, 16).

Theatre has been in existence with the Ghanaian for a while. One can remember the moonlit story telling times and the popular By the Fire Side. Reference can also be made to the 1950s and the 1960s; days of the ever popular Concert Party. The Concert Party played a great role on the education, information and entertainment scene in Ghana. Account is made of frontline personalities and groups like Bob Cole, Kwabena Onyina, Kakaiku and the Jaguar Jokers who were great crowd-pullers whenever they performed. The Concert Party constitutes what is described in literal terms as 'popular theatre'. Their contributions and importance to the arts in Ghana is tremendous and on the same level with conventional or western theatre, if not more. It is worth noting that, the Concert Party consciously or unconsciously employed branding to champion its course even though it is not recorded that they had persons in charge of its brand. Concert Party was identified with its tie or partnership with the then Lever Brothers Company (Unilever), producers of Key Soap. This partnership gave the Concert Party tradition an enviable brand which hugely affected its patronage. According to the business development manager of Roverman, “Concert Party and Key Soap were a fantastic alignment of brand because of their target consumers” (Ocansey, 2015). Apart from the Concert Party being associated with Key soap which had its tagline as “the tradition goes on”, it was also known for addressing social issues amongst which family conflicts was prominent. Concert Party was also identified with its music and comic feature.

Apart from the earlier Concert Party groups, Osofo Dadzie and Cantata were others which created brands for themselves. Just like in the case of the Concert Party, these brands were created not with so much effort. I am of the view that, these brands were able to thrive however, due to lack of competitors who would commit to effectively creating a brand. Yifan (2000) talking about brand in China during 1949 and 1970 states that, “There were very few products both in terms of number and variety. This saved producers and consumers from thinking more about brands. Without competition, it is the same for producers whether there is brand or not” (p.10). Equally, theatre practice in Ghana presently is becoming competitive, hence, the need for branding. Travelling on the streets of Ghana, one will notice that many roadside food vendors have ‘special’ as a prefix to their names. This is done with the quest of not only creating a brand for themselves but also communicating their brand value which is special. Having this identity most likely was started by one person then built up to as many as there are now. It is obvious now that the prefix ‘special’, has lost its power and impact hence the need to put in more effort in order to create an identity.

Stein and Bathurst echo the need for branding by explaining that,

“In today’s fast-moving information age, perception can change on a dime, so keeping the brands core attributes at the fore front of your mind helps to determine appropriate messaging in a campaign, through both language and design.”
(p.298)

Stein and Bathurst do not only indicate the need for branding but also draw attention to the importance of doing it effectively, maintaining ones promise and values.

Seeking interim audience patronage is not enough for the theatre. It is important to sustain audience involvement, patronage and interest through a consistent relationship created by setting ones company apart from all others and emphasizing its benefits. Customers are the backbone of every company, thus, to have a sustainable organization, there is the need to use the best strategies to attract and maintain their interest. Diggle (1994), an expert in art marketing affirms the above saying, “Art organizations have to live in the present as well as the future” (p.28). Accordingly, branding is a strategy that if effectively carried out, will lead to a sustainable producer, consumer relationship/communication.

2.3.4 The Theatre’s Brand Consumer

Pearson, Stewart in his introduction to *Building Brands Directely*, states that, “the most valuable asserts of any company is its customer base” (Pearson, 1996, p.xiii). “Successful companies know the value of a customer. This knowledge becomes a touchstone, shared by everyone, guiding everything they do”. (Pearson, 1996, p.xiii).

Branding has its focus on consumer perception. It gives consumers the opportunity not only to associate with the tangibles of a product but also the intangible and this allows them to have a sense of belonging. Petterson and O’Malley. Building a good brand is not only geared towards attracting people to patronize a product. In the contest of this work, the consumer is not only the theatre audience but also potentials who come into contact with the theatre product. The research concludes that, building an effective brand for any

theatre company will be towards attracting good performers and designers, policy makers, art critics, sponsors, advocates and stakeholders thus ensuring good patronage and support for the theatre. Thus, in my opinion, all the groups of people stated above qualify to be consumers of a theatre brand since they come into contact with the theatre organization one way or the other.

2.4 Aspects to Consider when Assessing and Evaluating a Theatre Brand

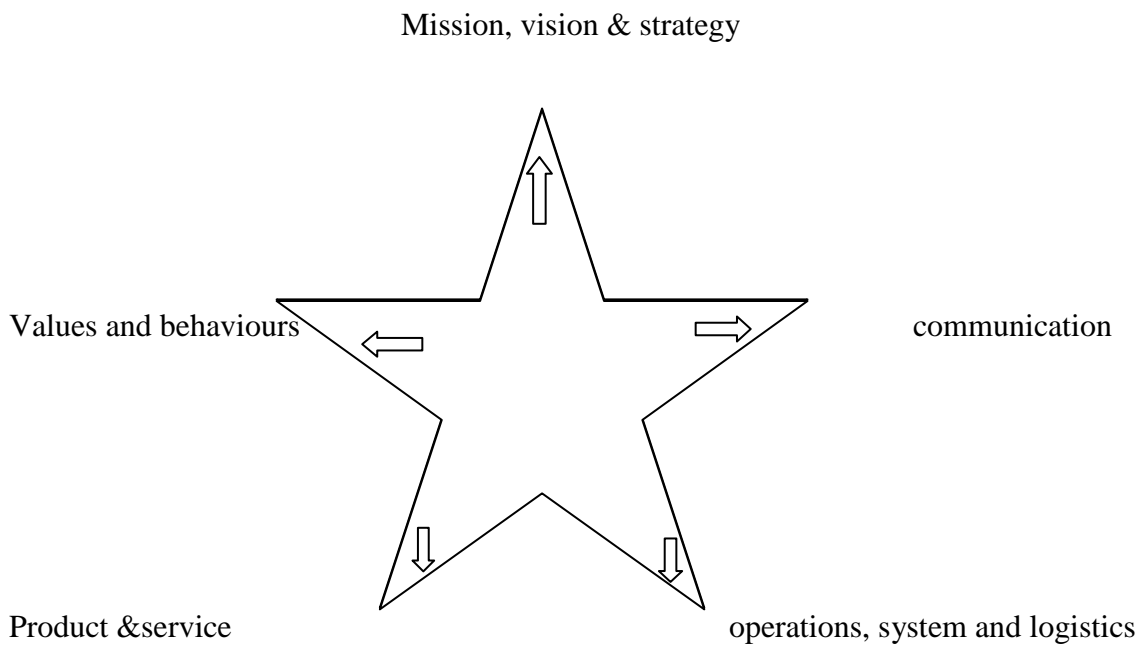


Figure 2.1: The brand promise figure: (VanAuken, p.17)

In branding a theatre company or organization, all its activities have to be considered. “The process of branding associates values with the name of a product or company [...]” (Pearson, 1996, p. 7), and, thus, these values have to be communicated in every aspect of the company’s work.

VanAuken suggests the diagram above as a guide for determining the personality of a brand. Applying the above diagram to a theatre brand in order to identify a brand personality, I maintain the 'vision and mission' as it tells the focus of every organization. Under 'values and behaviour' are the experiences that consumers have with staff of a theatre company; beginning from the highest to the lowest in the organizational structure. Also under products and service, I place every theatre performance of the theatre company. Under 'communication', I look at all media and advertising channels. And lastly, 'operations, systems and logistics' covers other activities of a theatre company such as collaborations, price of production amongst others.

Since a company is identified by its products and all that it engages and associates with, theatre performances of Roverman are going to be looked at considering their reflection and contributions to the company's brand. Also, all other activities that the company engages in also contribute to the perception people have about it, as a result, will also be looked at. In play production, what will be in focus are both the form and content of the work. Examining the form of the plays is basically looking at the genre/style of plays which are produced (example: comedy, tragedy, social drama amongst others). Also, the physical features of a play production are one aspect to be looked at. Costume, set, sound, light, props and makeup all give an identity to a production and thus, have to be looked at. Talking about content, what will be looked at are the themes/messages that play performances send across. Branding can go as far as considering using particular faces (actors) for every performance. As mentioned earlier, all activities a theatre company engages in also have an impact on the brand. Thus, a theatre company has to strategically, in line with its brand decide particular companies, institutions and personalities it

collaborates or associates with. For instance, a theatre company which has its brand as promoting discipline and healthcare for children cannot be seen in collaboration with a liqueur or cigarette company. Obviously, the brand tends to be defeated by this collaboration. Consequently, such collaborations will be investigated. Also, media stations, funding bodies and sponsors that a theatre company associates with may contribute to its brand hence, the need to factor their impact to a brand.

With all the things stated above which have to be considered in branding a theatre company, there may be the concern of branding affecting artistic work. This is highly possible. Nevertheless, I believe the brand a theatre company chooses should be one that is flexible enough not to restrict artistic/creative work; even if it does, should be minute.

Talking of who communicates a brand, Pearson (1996) opines that, “The capacity for growth lies within two groups of people: your customers and your staff” (p.53). Thus, beginning from the highest position in a company’s organogram to the least, everyone has to work in line with the brand vision of the company. Pearson (1996) again asserts that, “Every staff member shares the responsibility, starting with those who interact directly with customers” (p.54). Thus beginning from the front of house, security persons, those who sell tickets and ushers, all staff has to be receptive to customers and work towards promoting the identity a company wants to create. Since the brand of a company is the message sent across to a consumer through adverts and publicity affirmed by experience, it is important that every staff works towards providing the right experience for its audience. To solidify the role of the staff in branding, I quote Pearson (1996) who again says, “The people behind a product or brand matter to the customer.” (p.53)

Apart from a company's products and staff which are to reflect a brand, other mediums are as follows;

- i. Advertising (publicity; press releases, posters, fliers, television and radio adverts)
- ii. Ongoing communications (interviews)
- iii. Billings (programme)

2.5 Roverman Productions as a Brand in Ghanaian Theatre

Roverman Productions is a theatre company in Ghana that produces a play every quarter of the year since the last quarter of 2008 till present. According to the CEO, James, Ebo Whyte, "It was born from the ashes of two failed attempts to set up a theatre company; After those two failed attempts that left me with nothing" (Whyte, personal communication, 2015). Roverman productions started as a platform for showcasing the creative writings of James, Ebo Whyte popularly known as Uncle Ebo. He explains that, the company started with him alone because, then, he did not have the money to employ anyone.

Presently, the company is in three parts; apart from the live theatre section, there is also the media section which involves the Joy FM radio Food for Thought and also, the publishing session which publishes the Rover Report as well as, other books. Amongst the three sections of the company, the live theatre was the first started. In a personal interview with the Uncle Ebo he discloses, "I have been writing and directing plays since 1975. It was in 1975 that I wrote and produced my first play, *Man Must Live* at the art centre. So, radio came years later. By the time I started doing radio, I had already done (15) fifteen plays. These however were not scheduled plays like we have now" (Whyte,

personal communication, 2015). Roverman productions do not limit their theatre productions only to Accra but also to other major cities in Ghana including Tamale, Kumasi, Takoradi, Cape Coast and Koforidua.

Roverman Theatre Productions can be identified with a number of things which are; being organised, being on time (performances are started and ended on time), attitude of front of house staff (audience are given a warm reception), and being serviceable (there are personnel who always assist audiences when they need help). In relation to form, the company produces plays which can be considered as social dramas. In a personal interview with Uncle Ebo about the style of his plays, he says, “Messages in my play were initially ‘Do Ministry’, plays that were witnesses for Christ. There were plays that were meant for educating audience how to serve and think about God but they were also set in real social issues. Currently I write mainly to entertain and themes are based on social issues. My focus is to get the audience laughing. If I do that, I can sell with anything” (Whyte, personal communication, 2015). He goes on to say that, *The Devil’s Wife* was also part of his earlier plays and was a break between the early days when he was a preacher through writing and these later days where he is just a writer telling the story. Presently, plays produced by the company address social issues, mainly, marriage, relationship, and unity. It is recorded that, most of Roverman’s plays, if not all, are sold out.

Enquiring about the meaning of the company’s name, Ocansey, the business development manager explained that, “Roverman has a long history. Uncle Ebo presents a programme on Joy Fm called, Food for Thought. It used to be called the Rover Man reports; meaning, a man who walks around and reports. A man who rovers! That programme was

run for few years until its name changed to Food for Thought. Uncle Ebo was still representing the programme, when the name was changed. At that same time, he was setting up a Theatre Company, and because a lot of people knew him and could align him to the radio programme, he decided to take up that name for his theatre company” (Ocansey, personal communication 2015)

2.5.1 James Ebo Whyte, CEO of Roverman Productions

James Ebo Whyte is the CEO of Roverman Productions, Ghana’s leading live-theatre Production Company, which produces plays every quarter at the National Theatre and selected regional capitals in Ghana. He also functions as the playwright and director of all the plays produced by the company. James Ebo Whyte is a man of many parts. He started writing and producing plays in 1975 when he became the Artistic Director of J-Theatre, the drama troupe of Youth for Christ (YFC) in Accra. He is as well the publisher of the magazine, Rover Report Monthly, which has a readership of over 10,000.

Uncle Ebo is a management and communications consultant, and also, a motivational speaker. He has spoken on the platform of many leading companies in Ghana including Barclays Bank, Standard Chartered Bank, Stanbic Unilever, and Kama Pharmaceuticals, to mention a few.

Uncle Ebo as mentioned earlier is the broadcaster for the radio program, Super Morning Show, Food for Thought on Joy FM on Mondays and Thursdays. According to Ocansey in a personal interview, that platform attracts about one million listeners. (Ocansey, personal communication, 2015)

Below are plays produced by Roverman Productions from 2014 descending to 2008 when it began:

Make me a Woman Tonight 2014

Games Men Play

Unforgiven

Apartment 1 2013

Men Run, Women Cry

Sins of our Fathers 2012

Trials of the Ghanaian

Don't Mess with a Woman

Everyone has Secrets

Different Shades of Women 2011

He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not

Life is Someway

The Day Dad Came

Dad is Mom, Mom is Dad 2010

House of Secrets

Terms of Divorce

Caught in the Act

Mr. President, Your Move 2009

What Dad Left Behind

The Devil in the Mirror

Unhappy Wives Confused 2008

2.5.2 Newspaper Review on Roverman

Below are quotes from some online newspapers and websites describing and referring to Roverman Productions:

- i. “[...] complete with the total package of classic drama and excitement, Ebo Whyte Style” (ghanaweb talking about the play, *Make Me a Woman Tonight*. Saturday, 22nd February, 2014)
- ii. “ It is now obvious; Uncle Ebo Whyte did not mince words when he promised to deliver a play every quarter of the year six years ago when he started to whip up appetite for theatre again in Ghana”
- iii. “Like most of Uncle Ebo Whyte’s productions he manages to highlight important societal issues while keeping the audience entertained and glued to the edge of their seats [...]” (Saturday, 30th August 2014 on the play, *Unforgiven*).
- iv. “Producers of hilarious, lesson-laden, rib cracking plays, Roverman Productions [...]” (August 16, 2013, 12:20GMT)

From the above quotes, one will find some common descriptors used in identifying Roverman Productions. Ghanaweb talking about the play, *Make Me a Woman Tonight*, on Saturday, 22nd February, 2014 describes Roverman Productions and its works as a “total package of drama and excitement”. Ghanaweb again on the Saturday, 30th August 2014 identifies Roverman for its quarterly staged performances. In that same article, it describes Roverman’s works as one which highlights important societal issues while keeping the audience entertained. The last is from myjoyonline.com which identifies Roverman Productions as the Producers of hilarious, lesson-laden, rib cracking plays. From observation, all the above identify Roverman in a similar way. They see it as a theatre company which has its plays sending forth lessons in solving societal issues in an exciting or entertaining manner.

2.6 Summary and Conclusion

Whilst a brand is the consumer’s perception of a product backed by their experience with that product, branding is the process of creating that brand. Presently, a brand goes beyond the physical attributes of a product. The consumer tends to be an essential part of a brand; as a result, it is essential to ascertain the consumer’s perception of every brand. While theatre marketing in Ghana over the years just entails sponsorship and publicity, Roverman Productions, headed by James Ebo Whyte has moved a step further by involving branding. This company has been producing a play every quarter since 2008, and most, if not all of their plays are sold out.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the various processes and strategies employed in gathering appropriate data for this study. It presents a discussion on the diverse approaches of gathering data. The data gathered involved;

- i. what brand and branding means,
- ii. how much has been done in terms of branding Roverman Productions,
- iii. Branding strategies of Roverman Productions.

This was done by reviewing relevant literature, examining some Roverman theatre productions as well as other activities of the company. It was also backed with interviews of the staff of Roverman Productions, some branding experts and some theatre professionals. The study employed the qualitative research method and this informed the researcher on the best primary and secondary data for the research. The researcher employed the stated approaches in order to ensure that the objectives of the research were properly substantiated. Also, the stated approaches were to ensure that sufficient data is acquired for both analysis and the theatre branding manual to be developed at the end of the research. The primary data was acquired via personal observations of Roverman Company's activities, its theatre performances, collaborations, front of house, and other activities pertaining to the theatre. In depth interviews were also conducted with people with the expertise in theatre, branding, and the Roverman brand.

The secondary data focused on books, journals, newspapers, articles, and internet sources. This chapter will as a result, focus on research design, library research, population of the study, sampling of population, data collection instrument, administration of instruments, data collection procedures, types of data, and data analysis plan.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted the qualitative research method due to the interpretive and analytical nature of the research and also considering the need for detailed data. Also, due to the objectives of the study, the researcher found the qualitative method more applicable because, “The method allows a researcher to view behaviour in a natural setting” (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006, p.26). This implies that, this method gives the advantage of observing and noticing the response of respondents not only in words but also actions. And these physical responses may be relevant to the research. Also, the qualitative method is appropriate because, it gives the researcher the chance to select experts in the area of study which is exactly what the research needed. Rudestam and Newton (1992) opine that, qualitative implies that, data collected are in the form of words as opposed to numbers. This research was particularly focused on information gathered from the interviewees and not necessarily the sum total of respondents interviewed.

Wimmer and Dominick (2006), again, posit that, “Qualitative methods are flexible and allow the researcher to pursue new areas of interest” (p.49). Chapter one, of this research indicated that, branding is a fairly new area in theatre management in Ghana. Thus, the research required a method that helps, supports and in anyway assists gathering of

relevant data for the study. Consequently, the qualitative method was found most useful which affirms the assertion by Wimmer and Dominick (2006) which says, “Interviewing, a research strategy for understanding audience attitude and behaviour [...] the people possess certain characteristics and are recruited to share a common quality or characteristic and interest to the researcher” (p.15). As a result, of the above stated relevance of interview in qualitative research, the researcher applied this strategy to attain a more reliable and trustworthy data. Accordingly, the researcher interviewed the C.E.O., the artistic director, the head of creative (visual brand), the head of media content, business development manager who also serves as the brands manager and other staff of Roverman productions. Interviewing the Roverman staff enlightened the researcher on the identity the company sought to create for itself and the impressions they had of themselves. Some lectures from the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ghana were interviewed as well as some branding experts. Interviews with these experts dealt with what really a brand and branding is. It revealed the perceptions of some theatre professionals of the Roverman brand, what the Roverman Company has done in terms of branding, its implementations, its strategies and the essence of this strategy in theatre practice. Finally, the interviews were run with potential ethical issues in consideration. According to John W. Creswell (2003), “In all steps of the research process, you need to engage in ethical practices”, (p.23). He again says that, “It is important to respect the site in which the research takes place. This respect should be shown by gaining permission before entering the site, by disturbing the site as little as possible during the study, and by viewing oneself as a “guest” at the place of study”. All these were put into consideration and thus guided the research process.

3.3 Library Research

Library research was the first strategy embarked on in gathering data for the research. The obvious reason of the intense data search from libraries was to gather substantial data to support the study and also to access expert knowledge in branding and explore possible works which have been done in this area. Data on Roverman Productions was also needed; the history of the company, how the brand was conceived and implemented and other activities of the company. The library research helped in getting some relevant and extensive data on branding but little on theatre arts branding. Little information were also acquired on Roverman productions and so interviews, newspaper reviews, online blogs and few articles had to be used to fill that vacuum. The libraries visited in the University of Ghana, Legon Accra, were the Balme Library, African Studies Library, and the school of performing arts libraries (Music and Theatre Arts Departments).

3.4 Population of Study

The population of the study basically asks the question; which groups are of interest to this research? This includes individuals, organizations, facilities, individuals, and objects amongst others. This study thus investigated matters concerning branding in theatre practice in Ghana generally, paying attention to Roverman productions. Experts needed for this research fall under five major different areas.

- Roverman Productions Staff
- Branding experts
- Lecturers from the University of Ghana, Theatre Arts Department
- Staff of the Ghana National Theatre

- Theatre practitioners

Roverman productions has ten personnel on its staff. The research focused on six of the staff members being; the CEO, business development manager, head of media content, head of creative, artistic director and the technical director.

3.5 Sampling of Population

In identifying the steps in the qualitative research, John W. Creswell (2003), states that, “The five steps are first to identify participants and sites to be studied and to engage in a sampling strategy that will best help you understand your central phenomenon and question you are asking” (p,205). Accordingly, after recognizing the population of the study, sampling was done. Kumekpor (2002) then defines sampling as the application of “definite procedures in selecting a part for the express purposes of obtaining from its description or estimates certain properties and characteristics of the whole” (p.132). Based on this definition, the researcher carefully surveyed the selected population after which the purposive sampling approach was implemented. The population of the study was selected through purposive sampling. The choice to use the purposive sampling approach is because the study requires “quality data” people who are knowledgeable/experts in the area of the research.

There were different groups of people selected for this research as already stated in the population of the research. The first group mentioned is the Roverman Productions staff. They handle all the activities of the company. Roverman Productions has a nine member staff but six of them were interviewed. The six were selected from the nine because of their area of duty in the company, their significant contribution to the brand and thus their

relevance to the research. It was relevant to interview the CEO of the company who also happens to be the playwright and director to know the general history of the company and also how branding as a strategy was conceived and has been applied in the company. The person in charge of marketing and brand was also relevant to this research and so he was also interviewed. Heads of other departments; the head of media content, artistic director, head of creative (physical brand) and the technical director were all selected to assess their contribution and impact on the Roverman brand.

At the University of Ghana, Department of Theatre Arts, some selected lectures were interviewed. They were selected based on their expertise in branding in theatre practice in Ghana, and their experience with Roverman productions. The selection of the national theatre staff as part of the population of the study was also very relevant. Roverman Productions runs productions every quarter of the year at the National Theatre, Ghana, and these are in collaboration with the National Theatre Ghana. This, as a result, necessitated the need to interview a number of their staff. Three people were selected at the national theatre and their selection was based on their direct dealing with Roverman productions, on collaborations. The three selected are the marketing manager, the Acting Executive Director, and the Deputy Executive Director (Artistic).

To get an in depth knowledge into branding as well as to gather the views of branding experts, two brands managers were selected and interviewed. Five theatre “active” practitioners were also interviewed to gather their thoughts. It is necessary to again echo that, the research falls under two broad aspects which is theatre and business. Consequently, information was needed from experts in both areas therefore making it

vital to find people who were experts in both areas. This research area is technical and so it was relevant to also gather the views of practitioners.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instruments administered in this research included interview guides. The major device the researcher used in gathering data was the audio recorder. The researcher conducted one on one interviews so as to collect different perspectives on the Roverman brand. Interview guides were structured to help the interview. However, since the qualitative method has a flexible question approach, it was not necessary to strictly follow the structured questions but also to ask follow up questions as and how the interview was directed. This was necessary because the research needed some flexibility in the process since the researcher needed different, in-depth perspectives on the study as opposed to the structured interview which requires the interviewee to go straight to the point. To acquire relevant data on the study, some factors were considered in structuring the interview guide and these have been listed below.

- i. Do the questions cover all the relevant areas needed to be explored by the researcher?
- ii. Do the questions lead to reaching the objectives of the research?
- iii. Are the questions flexible enough for respondents to understand and express themselves as they should?

Thus, with the aim of allowing follow up questions and allowing flexibility, the interview guide was designed to have open ended- questions. The interviews were conducted in the English language. Considering the kind of people selected to be interviewed for this

research, the English language came up as most appropriate. This seemed as the best for both the respondents and the researcher hence, gave the advantage for both parties to express themselves. To help record the data, the research was recorded with the audio recorder and later transcribed for analysis. Also, the researcher made notes of the peculiar issues that came up during the interview. These were later investigated to gain further insight. In the course of interviewing the Roverman staff, the researcher realized that the company being a business entity and in a competitive market, limited the degree of information the staff could give out on their branding strategies. One of the major objectives of the research is to find out the branding strategies of the company so as to build upon it to design a branding guide for theatre companies in Ghana. The researcher was a bit disappointed with the Roverman staff for withholding some relevant information but also understood the need to.

A month was set aside to run all interviews and to begin the process, interview recruitment and consent forms were designed for each group of respondents. Sample questions were attached to these letters to give the respondents an idea of what to expect. The objectives of the research were also made clear in the interview recruitment and consent form. Some of the interview letters were dropped in the offices of the respondent while others were handed personally to them. The letters were made available to the respondents two weeks before the stipulated time of interview. Respondents were to choose which day and time was convenient for them so as to schedule an appointment.

The main places or locations the researcher had to run the interviews partly depended on the various groups of respondents. Some respondents are located in the Theatre Arts Department, University of Ghana and so that was one major location to run interviews.

Even though this location seems very accessible to the researcher, it took several weeks to be able to reach and interview some of the respondents because of their busy schedules which led them to continually cancel interview appointments. The second major location was the national theatre. Though there were three members of staff of the company to be interviewed, interviews had to be run on different days based on the availability of each person. At the Roverman office which was the third major location, it took about two to three months after the letter had been delivered to be able to run the interviews. Despite the several follow ups and the continual reassurance, it took an external influence to make scheduling an interview day successful. It took a week to be able to interview the six selected Roverman staff. The rest of the respondents called to communicate their schedules which were discussed and a suitable date and time, agreed upon.

There were other scheduled dates for follow ups and clarifications. Some of these respondents were contacted again to give details to some of the issues they raised in their interviews. Whiles analyzing the data, it was relevant to do these follow ups to establish some points in the analysis. Whiles some of the respondents were available to support, others were not. Considering how difficult it was for them to schedule a day for the interview, it seemed just impossible to be able to schedule another day for follow ups and clarifications. For the purpose of this research, it is important to know the perception of theatre professionals of the Roverman brand; in essence identifying what the brand image is. It also sought to know how the Roverman brand was conceived, how it was created and how it has been managed till present. From brand experts, the researcher sought to know what branding is all about, what is one supposed to consider when branding, how a brand can be managed and what is a successful brand.

3.7 Types of Data

Both the primary and secondary data types were selected in conducting this research. The use of both the primary and secondary data collection methods was to ensure that information regarding all the objectives of the study was recorded for analysis. The researcher believes that by using the two data collection methods, reliable and substantive data was acquired in order to draw the significant findings, recommendations and genuine conclusions at the end of the study.

The primary data for this study took the form of audio recordings. These were the recordings the researcher made of all interviews. Information gathered on audio tape from all the different groups of respondents tended to serve as the primary data.

The secondary data however were collected through sources such as published books, articles, unpublished thesis, newspaper articles, blogs, magazines, stage productions and programme brochures. The published books mostly gave information on branding while a few did on branding in theatre practice. To get information on the Roverman Company, the researcher had to rely on newspaper articles, online articles, the Rover Reports and the Roverman performance brochure. Some of these sources were also to gather the views of the media on the Roverman Productions brand. It should however be noted that it was very difficult to get a published book on theatre arts branding and more specific, theatre arts branding in Ghana. There were not adequate books in this area even in the School of Performing Arts, Theatre Arts library.

3.8 Administration of Instrument

After the researcher identified the specific respondents to be interviewed, they were put into groups and plans made for each group. Special questions were designed for the different groups of respondents and samples were added to the interview recruitment letter to give respondents an idea of what questions to expect. After the letters were ready, they were personally delivered to the respondents. On the first meeting with the respondents, introductions were done, the intention of visit was explained, and a recruitment letter and consent form was handed over to each respondent. Respondents were to agree to the interview by signing a portion of the letter and giving consent that the interview could be audio taped. There at the initial visit, the date and place of interview could be scheduled or the respondent would call to schedule a day based on their availability. This was the designed process of administering instruments.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

Most of the interviews were conducted in the offices of the respondents. Little information were received through mail. However, phone calls was used a lot for scheduling, some clarification and follow ups. Many of the respondents were not able to avail themselves during the stipulated time. Therefore the scheduled time for interviews was exceeded. Because of the delays, as and when any respondent in any of the groups was ready, the researcher also had to be available to run the interview.

3.10 Data Analysis Plan

The study analyzed data both from the primary and secondary sources. The information from the secondary sources made more sense when the primary data was acquired just as the primary data made more meaning with the secondary data. As stated in the objectives of the study, the data gathered have been analyzed. Amongst the data gathered are the branding strategies of the company which have also been presented and analyzed in the next chapter. Also in the same chapter, some activities of the company have been analyzed since they have a high tendency of influencing the consumer's perception (brand) of the company. In addition, concerns and opinions of other theatre professionals are also analyzed in order to inform the branding guide to be developed at the end of the study.

3.11 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the method, processes, instruments and other implementations in conducting this research. In achieving or addressing the objectives of the study, it was important to choose which method would be more suitable. In that regard, the qualitative method was selected and used. A library research was done and the population of the study, clearly defined. After that the population was sampled; considering how many people and which of them were to be selected in the midst of the whole population. Selected people were interviewed, gathering their knowledge on the study. Before the interviews, consent and recruitment letters were made available to the respondents giving them the chance to either agree or not to the interview and its terms. Schedules were made as well as interviews conducted, and recorded by an audio tape recorder. A draft questionnaire was used to guide the process. There was room for some

follow ups and clarifications. It is important to note that research ethics are important to the researcher hence the whole research was conducted with ethical considerations.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter entails the findings, analysis and interpretation of data collected on the study. There are few documents on theatre management in Ghana and it makes it even rarer to find any literature on branding in theatre practice in Ghana. However, for the purpose of this work, a few documents were accessed outside the walls of Ghana. The company under study also has few reviews written on them, most of which are newspaper reviews. The available literature was generally limited in relevance to the subject of this research. Thus, information for the research was principally acquired from interviews and business management books.

This chapter initially examines the Roverman brand from both the company and consumer perspective, with Kapferer's diagram in Chapter two. From the consumer perspective, the research looks at what people (especially theatre professionals) who have experienced the Roverman brand make of it (brand image). From the perspective of the company, it discusses what brand the company wants to be known for in the public's eye and the position it has created for itself in the industry (brand identity); this is to ascertain if the brand has been communicated effectively. Branding strategies of the Roverman Company is also analyzed. With the diagram by VanAuken illustrated in chapter two of the thesis, some of Roverman's activities are also analyzed; assessing their impact, contribution and influence on the brand. Some of these activities which are analyzed are sponsorship deals, collaborations, play productions, ticketing, publicity, producer-consumer relationship, and the influence of the CEO's personal brand on the Roverman

Company. Also in this chapter, some interview respondents will be referred to as interviewees because of ethical concerns

4.2 Roverman Productions

Roverman Productions is an entertainment company in Ghana with the tagline, 'Be the difference'. Roverman Productions is in three departments; the media content, the publications where the rover report, other magazines and books are published and the live theatre which has been producing a play every quarter, since 2008. It is important to note that, there is Roverman Productions staff and the Roverman Productions group. The difference is that, while the staff is employed members of the company on monthly salary, the group members are those who are part of the cast and crew of the company. They are not permanent employees of the company, and are paid as and when they offer their service to the company. James Ebo Whyte popularly known as Uncle Ebo is the CEO of Roverman Productions. He also serves as the playwright, director and producer for the productions (live theatre) department of the company. In a personal interview with him, he stated that the company started with just him because he could not afford the services of anybody else. Uncle Ebo reveals that it was born from the ashes of two failed attempts that he set up a live theatre company. That group of about twenty has now grown to about eighty five. The content for media part, which entails the radio "food for thought" program, has been in existence since 1996. When asked if the radio "food for thought" motivated the start of the live theatre, Uncle Ebo revealed that he has been writing and directing since 1975. He also stated that he had already done fifteen plays

before the radio program; these however were not scheduled plays. His first play is titled, *Man Must Live*.

Uncle Ebo again states that, even when the company started as being structured, he was the only staff. He says “I took up everything; designing, adverts, jingles, recording of the jingles, playing of the jingles, going on air to promote it, all the interviews, distribution of tickets, counting of money at the gate was all under me” (J. Whyte, personal communication, 2015). However, the thought of getting a staff was not absent. Right from the start, Uncle Ebo found it necessary to employ people who share his vision to help, but, he could not afford them. Presently, the company has employed ten people as staff. According to Kabutey Ocansey, the business development manager, a number of functions and roles have been combined to create the positions of Roverman staff because it is not yet a high level company. He explains that as the company grows and becomes bigger and longer in hierarchy, some of the roles may be split apart but essentially, business development encompasses branding, sales, marketing, public creations and communications. Some of the plays the company has produces are, *Make me a Woman Tonight*, *Unforgiven*, *Men Run Women Cry*, *The Devil in the Mirror*, *Caught in the Act*, *He Loves Me*, *He Loves me not*, *The Last Flight*, and *Term of Divorce*.

4.3 Processes a branded product goes through

Branding is the process of conceiving, creating, delivering and maintaining an identity for an individual, group, product or service in the consumer's mind. A branded product goes through three (3) major channels. It moves from the producer who is the sender, through a medium to the consumer (receiver). The diagram below shows the process a branded product goes through.

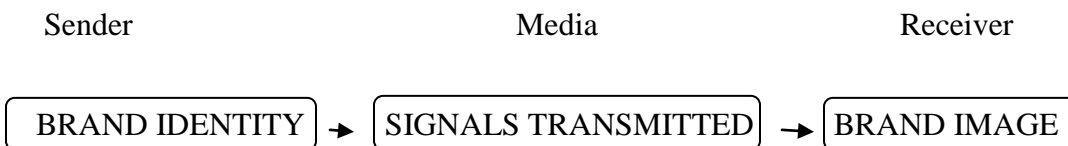


Figure 4.1: (Kapferer, 1998, p.95)

According to Kapferer (1998), brand identity is how an organization wants to be known and what an organization wants to be known for. It is deciding the brand's meaning, self image and aim. This is what is translated and communicated to the consumer. Thus, brand identity is on the giving side; from a company or organization to the consumer.

The brand identity is transmitted and communicated to the consumer through the media; print (magazines and newspapers), television, radio, internet and outdoor advertising (billboards).

According to Kapferer, "image research focuses on the way in which certain groups perceive a product, a brand, a politician, a company or a country. The image refers to the way in which these groups decode all of the signals emanating from the products, services and communication covered by the brand", (Kapferer, 1998, p.94). Brand image is on the side of the receiver. It is an outcome and interpretation of the brand identity.

4.3.1 Brand identity

To arrive at a brand identity of an organization, a number of things have to be considered.

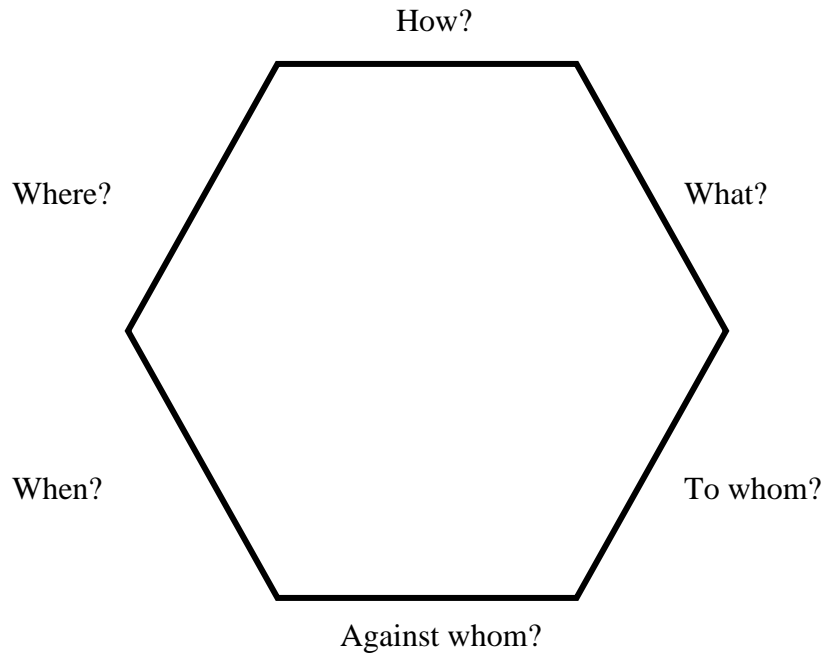


Figure 4.2: Creating a brand identity

Inferring from the diagram, a brand is derived from who you are, who you want to be and who people really perceive you to be. It is in defining yourself that you can tell who you really want to be. Are you the innovative type? Are you the dependable type? Are you the reliable type? Are you the low cost? Are you the quality option? Are you just an option? You can't be all things at the same time. Defining your brand is like a journey of self discovery. Every company needs to stand for something. It is important that, to distinguish yourself in your market place, you need to emphasize the distinguishing features that make you different from other competitors and appealing to the public. This is achieved by going through the analytical process based on the above diagram.

- How: How do I want to be perceived? How do I want to be seen? This happens to be the broader question in determining a brand identity. However, it is still essential to ask this question. Being able to analytically answer the other questions will also result in answering how you want to be perceived.
- What: a brand for what? This addresses what the brand promise and consumer benefits are. What is your promise to your consumers and what benefits are they likely to get from you? A theatre company's brand promise can be reliability, entertaining, educating, environment friendly amongst several others.
- Where: a brand for where? Which geographic location is your product created for? Do you want to create an international brand or a national brand? Where are your circles and your barriers? Effectively answering this helps in the brand creation process.
- When: a brand for when? This refers to what occasion your product will be consumed. At what times will your product be needed and of use? Some products are branded to serve people when they are stressed. Others are to serve their consumers when they are tired. When is your product to serve your consumer's needs?
- To whom or for who is your product created? This refers to the target audience of your organization. Which segment of the market is your product supposed to serve? Are you for adults, are you a family product? Are you for the teenagers? Are you for females? Are you for males? You need to be able to determine who your target audiences are.

- A brand against whom? Kapferer (1998) opines that, “In today’s competitive context, the question defines the main competitor(s), i.e. those whose clientele we think we can partly capture” (p.96). There are many theatre groups and organizations in Ghana and it is essential that in a marketplace as that, you note your competitors; those whose consumers you can capture and who can also capture your consumers. This knowledge helps in strategizing a brand.

4.3.2 Signal Transmitted

Signal transmission basically delves into how the brand identity is passed on to the consumer. In theatre practice, even before the consumer decides to come and watch a performance, through what mediums do they hear about you? and what do they make of you? Pearson (1996) explains that, “Advertising had largely been responsible for building the brands” (p.xv). There are five types of advertisement which are print (newspaper and magazine), television, radio, internet and outdoor advertisement (billboards, posters). For print media advertisement, often, one must call the print media organization and ask for an advertisement slot. Print media outlets require that advertisements are sent electronically. The price of an advert is determined by a number of factors; the size of the advert, determined by the percentage of the page size to be covered. Often in print advertisement, the layout should be clear and simple, the graphics should compel and it should contain a headline that will be appropriate for target audience. It should also tell the story of the production.

In the same vein as print advertisement, radio and television adverts are placed by contracting radio and television stations directly. Prices are also determined based on the

number of viewers and listeners for a television and radio show. Also, the number of spots influences price charge. On this kind of platform, the advert should be clear and concise. Details of the performance (the name of the theatre company, the title of the performance) should be included. Ticket sales point and performance venue should also be entailed in the advertisement. Contact details (website, telephone numbers) are also an essential factor in TV and radio ads and should be repeated for clarity. According to Stein and Bathurst, “The radio and television adverts should have consistent audiovisual elements to help create institutional identity for the organization; music and sound effects may be used to enhance the spot” (Stein and Bathurst, 2008, p.306).

For internet advertisement, there are several platforms which can be used. The use of social media/mass media in this dispensation helps to access a huge number of people. Websites should be the first internet source to any organization. It provides an organization, the platform to promote itself using graphics, sound and video. This platform can contain promotional elements such as production photographs, rehearsal video coverage, historical information on the organization and the production, promotional videos, interview videos amongst others. A website should however be well designed, easy to navigate, entail detailed information and possibly, a link to buy tickets. One other essential thing that can be included is the calendar of the company. This will tell what shows you have and on what dates; in that case, anyone who visits your website will be able to follow your activities and purchase tickets. Presently, there are a lot of social media platforms; Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are some of the media platforms which are proving efficient in reaching consumers. Whatsapp has a new feature which is the broadcast feature. This allows a user to send messages to a large

number of people at the same time, but individually. On all of these social media platforms, graphics of the show, promotional videos, write-ups and teasers of the show can be shared.

Outdoor advertising includes billboard and posters. These are placed at strategic points and examples are, the central routes in town, en route the airport, stations amongst others. With outdoor advertisement, one needs to contact the owner of the place where the ad will be displayed and negotiations done for payment. Due to the static nature of this advertisement, it should be simple, not crowded and also bold, clear and catchy. This sort of advertisement should be attractive, colourful and must have a good and creative concept. The creativity of the artwork should be good enough to draw the attention of road users.

These media communication platforms can either be relevant or not, depending on the target audience for a performance. Often, defining clearly the target audience will help in identifying which media platform will be effective and how a media platform should be used to achieve its purpose. For example if an organization wants to target a student population, it may want to spend more time and money advertising on drive time radio and internet. The particular level of students may also change the marketing/ publicity strategy.

4.3.3 Brand Image

Brand image is on the receiving side. It is the consumer's perception of a product. Image is an interpretation of the communicated brand identity to the consumer. The image is therefore a fusion made by the public of all the various brand signals which are brand

name, logo, visual symbols (graphics), product, advertisements sponsoring amongst others. All these come from the brand identity of the organization.

4.4 Brand Identity and Brand Image of Roverman Productions

In order to be able to assess and evaluate the Roverman brand, it is first of all important to know the brand identity of the company, and also, the brand image. In view of this, the diagram discussed above will be applied to the Roverman brand to access both the brand image and brand identity. Apart from the fact that the Roverman brand identity helps in the assessment of the brand of the company, it also reveals whether or not the Roverman Staff who are a significant entity in communicating the brand of the company are aware and work towards maintaining the company's brand.

4.4.1 Roverman Brand Identity

According to Kapferer (1998), brand identity is how an organization wants to be known and what it wants to be known for. It is deciding the brand's meaning, self image and aim. This is what is translated and communicated to the consumer. Thus, brand identity is on the giving side; from a company to the consumers.

In the case of Roverman Productions, James Ebo Whyte, the CEO of Roverman Productions in a personal interview explained that, "Brand is your own identity and your ability to communicate that. You can have an identity and fail to communicate that. It is when you communicate it that it becomes a brand otherwise you know what you are but nobody knows what you are and nobody cares. A brand is successful when someone who is not connected to you hears your name and can give (spell out) your attributes. How the public perceives us, is our brand and that can be manufactured or engineered. It is this art

of engineering we call branding” (J. Whyte, personal communication, 2015). With this statement, he confirms that a brand can rightly be defined as the consumer’s perception of a product. It is therefore deduced from his statement that, it is possible to fail in communicating what one stands for, as a brand cannot be based only on what a company wants to be identified with, but also, if that position has been effectively communicated. Hence, in branding, effective communication is essential.

Responding to what Roverman Productions’ brand identity is, the CEO continued that, “a producer of not just theatre but family entertainment for audience and patrons. And for corporate Ghana, a platform on which they can position and sell their brands. Therefore, there are two levels; to corporate Ghana, a platform on which they can enhance their own marketing strategies, and for patrons, family entertainment” (J. Whyte, personal communication, 2015). Again in a personal interview, Uncle Ebo confirmed that, the brand identity influences his choice of artistic work (both form and content). He adds that from day one, the company has been quite clear on what it stands for. It is important to note that to achieve, successfully create and maintain a brand, one should be clear on what he wants to stand for. Otherwise, the confusion in what a Company stands for will be reflected in its activities and that confusion, will be formed in the minds of consumers. Hence, a business which seeks to create a special position in its market domain cannot afford to create confusion in the minds of its consumers.

According to Kotler (2003), “The brand idea will not take unless everyone in the company lives the brand”, (p.420). Hence, it is essential that every experience of the consumer is guarded and directed. The staff of every organization is essential in communicating the brand. In theatre practice, every member of the theatre company is

obliged to give consumers the experience that promotes the brand of the company. According to Stein and Bathurst (2008), “The entire staff contributes to marketing the product and selling tickets simply by performing their jobs well [...] it is the way that people work in the box office, the way that staff members speak to the public on telephone, and the way that emails are written for outside consumption” (p.279). The above quote clearly explains the role of staff members in marketing an organization. Similarly, the staff of any theatre organization has to play these same roles in giving the consumer the appropriate brand experience. In view of this, everyone needs to be involved in the marketing effort; from the artistic director, executive director, managing director, board members all the way down to the custodial staff. All staff members need to understand their role in marketing an institution, and they must own the role in order to effectively represent the organization. Stein and Bathurst (2008) emphatically state that, “nothing beats the marketing push a show receives from someone having a good experience in your theatre, driving home and telling her friend about it” (p.297). The question then is, how does a consumer get this good experience and from whom? Right from radio jingles, billboards, television adverts and ticket sales points, the consumer must have the appropriate experience that affirms and communicates the brand of the theatre company. On the day of performance, the audience needs to get this same experience right from the car park, entrance, lobby and in the theatre by the performance which is put up. Human resource (staff) happens to be very vital in communicating and affirming a brand. It then becomes important to find out if the staff of a company knows the brand values, mission and vision of the company. Hence, it is important to know if Roverman staff knows what identity the company seeks to be known for since the

knowledge of this informs activities of the staff. These consequently can either maintain or soil the brand. According to the business manager of the Roverman Productions, Ocansey, when having discussions about the company, there is a phrase that keeps coming up and that is, the company's image. He explains that, "we understand that the brand is important and that our brand needs to stand for something and that it needs to be known for something. Our tag line is, 'be the difference'. For us, in everything we do in the company, we try to be as real as possible about the tag line and the message that we give out. If you did not know Uncle Ebo from anywhere, by just watching his shows, you would have an idea about which kind of entity it is. We have core values that we want to be meaningful; Values like integrity, shifting paradigms, and building community. This is why we say that we are a family oriented theatre platform where the whole family can come together once in a quarter and enjoy great entertainment. So, family oriented issues are very important to us" (K. Ocansey, personal communication, 2015).

Also in the words of the Roverman artistic director, "we have a tagline that says, 'be a difference' and I believe that in Ghana, for our contest, we are the difference. Maybe not yet fully on an international scale but definitely here, we are the difference. I mean that in terms of how we sell our shows (our marketing), how our works are made and how we create a buzz around each production. For us, it is not as simple as the director going on TV a day before the exclusive and then that is enough to get people. It is not about just putting the posters up in the mall. There are a range of things that we do to create much noise and buzz. Another thing with our brand is quality. We are about excellence and I think that we try and achieve a very high level of excellence with everything that we do. Comparing our artworks (poster and billboard designs) with other theatre companies, our

artworks look like a good movie poster or promotion instead of a play. What one will conventionally assume a play's artwork should look like (low quality). I think another brand we have is, how we run our shows, be on time; finishing at the time we need to finish, starting at the time we say we want to start and of course the quality of what you get in the show. These are all things that tie in to being the difference. What you won't get on other theatre maker's show in Ghana, you will get that and combination of other elements. So the tagline, be the difference, is how I see our brand. We are being the difference. We consider; what are our patrons are coming back for all the time and we ask ourselves. How do we make it better? How do we introduce them to something different all the time?" (E. Nkrumah, personal communication, 2015)

"The first time I went for rehearsal, I was just laughing. I did not know a place like this existed where educated people can just come and commit themselves to fooling. So instantly, I knew it was a worthy course. Then came, their modes of operation and that was excellent. In all of Ghana, I have never seen any group which starts anything on time. Though it had been said of Roverman, I didn't believe until I witnessed it myself then I knew that if everyone was towing the opposite line, there is one person who has decided to do the right thing. For me, that meant a lot and was everything: in terms of discipline. Most of the time when you go for shows, you are made to sit for hours without anyone coming to tell you anything. They just take you for granted. That is where I find Roverman very unique and that is something I will forever remember" (K. Yeboah, personal communication, 2015). These are the words of the head of the technical team of Roverman Productions when he responded to his perception of the Roverman brand.

The last view was taken from the head of media content. In describing the Roverman brand, he said “It is a brand that entertains, inspires, moves society, a brand that sets to drive the new generation to a conscious mind of whatever you do” (Aseidu, personal communication, 2015).

In all the above statements made by the CEO and the staff of the company in describing the Roverman brand, one will notice that there are some features which run through. It is noticed that the tagline ‘be the difference’ means a lot to the staff rather than just a slogan. They all identify that there are some gaps in the theatre industry in Ghana that they seek to fill. Being disciplined and starting stage performances on time mean a lot to them, as it also reflect their respect for their patrons. It is also observed that Roverman seeks to be known for creating a family entertainment. This suggests that the company wants to serve as a platform that mother, father and children can all come together and enjoy one form of entertainment. It also implies, making the company and its audience bond so much that the audience feel a part of what product is offered. The CEO mentioned that, to corporate Ghana, he seeks that his brand is known as a platform on which they can enhance their own marketing strategies. From this statement, it is clear that the CEO of the company in addition to creating a family entertainment wants to succeed in creating the identity as that huge platform that any business can consider selling its products on. What this basically implies is that, Roverman Productions wants to be known by the corporate world as that brand that is worth sponsoring because you are bound to receive value by sponsoring the company. In the assessment of the Roverman brand, Efi, the artistic director mentioned that, it is brand that does intense marketing and publicity on their work unlike other companies in the same market place.

Generally, the above statements by the staff of the company affirm that, they have knowledge about what the Roverman brand identity is supposed to be with regards to the brand vision of the company.

As much as it is essential to research and prove that the staff of Roverman is aware of the brand vision of the company, as has been done above, it is also important to ascertain the views of some consumers on the brand of the company. In this case, the interviewees are picked from theatre professionals and branding experts who are also consumers of the Roverman brand. Also, online reviews and newspaper articles on the Roverman brand have also been considered in the chapter two of this research paper. Theatre professionals and branding experts were selected in order to get an in depth and expert view on the Roverman brand. The aim of gathering views from this group of people is to ascertain the success or otherwise of the brand. As mentioned earlier, a brand is the consumers' perception of a product or service based on their experience with the product or service. Therefore, it is when the consumer's perception of Roverman is in line with its brand identity, that the brand can be called, successful.

4.4.2 The Roverman Brand Image

According to Kapferer (1998), "image research focuses on the way in which certain groups perceive a product, a brand, a politician, a company or a country. The image refers to the way in which these groups decode all of the signals emanating from the products, services and communication covered by the brand", (p.94). Brand image is on the side of the receiver. It is an outcome and interpretation of the brand identity.

The Ghana National Theatre is an institution that collaborates with Roverman Productions in staging all performances at the theatre. The acting executive director of the company, Amy Appiah Frimpong, was interviewed to gather her thoughts and experience with the Roverman brand. She is a theatre manager and also doubles as a theatre lecturer at Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ghana. According to her, the National Theatre partners with Roverman because what they do helps the National Theatre accomplish its mandate. This is because; Roverman Productions has four productions in a year that deal with social issues, highlighting some of the everyday social issues we may have ignored. That is the reason the National Theatre partners with them. She continues to say that, “in terms of the partnership, for us, they are a trustworthy brand and they deliver in time and also adhere to everything we agreed to in the MOU. So we trust that if they say they are going to do four new productions, we get four new productions. If they are going to do two new productions in a day, it happens. They also do acknowledge the theatre as a partner. With regards to trusting a brand, yes, it happens all the time” (A. Frimpong, personal communication, 2015). This testifies and affirms the brand identity Uncle Ebo intends Roverman to serve corporate bodies. The above statement by the Acting Executive Director of Ghana National Theatre, (an organization that collaborates with Roverman Productions) discloses that, Roverman Productions is a good platform for the corporate world to showcase and sell their products.

In the opinion of another interviewee when asked about branding in theatre practice in Ghana, “I will say Roverman is the only theatre company that has been able to consider branding as one of the key elements; to the extent that, you can even equate it to non theatre companies. You can talk about their branding as equivalent to companies working

in different areas which we always associate with branding. And how do they do this? I think the details, you will get from them but from afar, what I see them doing generally is, always to be out there, talking about what they do, talking about their current productions, making sure they keep a certain level of professionalism, making sure they have a certain contract with the public they need to fulfil. And Ebo Whyte himself will tell you that, he has a contract with the public that he will produce a performance each quarter. Again, we can link that to branding because, you have reacted with your consumers appropriately by telling them that I will give you this and they are also always prepared to get that from you at the end of each quarter” (F. Gbormittah, personal communication, 2015)

He continues by explaining that, “There are three basic ways that any branding person will like to do this; through your logo, the message that you send out, and then also your professionalism. I am not too sure about logo for Roverman but we can talk about it in terms of colour; colour for the set amongst others. We have talked about messaging. I just want to talk about the Rover reports that he also produces. That is another platform that he sends out his message. Now when it comes to professionalism, then we can talk about so many things. That will be looking at how people should behave artistically, when productions should start and end and even what happens with that environment that the production is taking place. Professionalism can also be considered when adverts that are being sent out are done in a manner that you are not either forcing people to come to your show or deceit (you say you are going to deliver something to your consumer which you don't). These are some of the things that Ebo Whyte has succeeded in doing to achieve his brand” (F. Gbormittah, personal communication, 2015). Gbormittah in his statement

identifies Roverman as a serious company and equates their brand to other corporate businesses in the country. It then reveals that Uncle Ebo's statement to his staff; 'if you can't take this work as serious as bankers take their job, then you have no business being in the arts' has an impact on the company. Gbormittah also identifies Roverman with the intense publicity that the company executes for all its shows and this according to one of the staff of the company is a brand the company has created for itself. In identifying the brand of the company, the interviewee again acknowledged the quarterly performances by the company. He mentions that Roverman has a promise with the public to produce a new play every quarter and that promise is always delivered. According to the interviewee, an organisation can be branded in three basic ways; which are the logo, messaging, and professionalism. Under professionalism, he identifies Roverman Productions with delivering on their promise to their consumers and not deceitfully drawing people to their shows. He also identifies Roverman Productions with being time conscious. Comparing Gbormittah's comments to the brand identity of the Roverman Company, we can affirm that there has been a good level of communication between the company and its consumers.

4.5 Assessment and Evaluation of the Roverman Brand

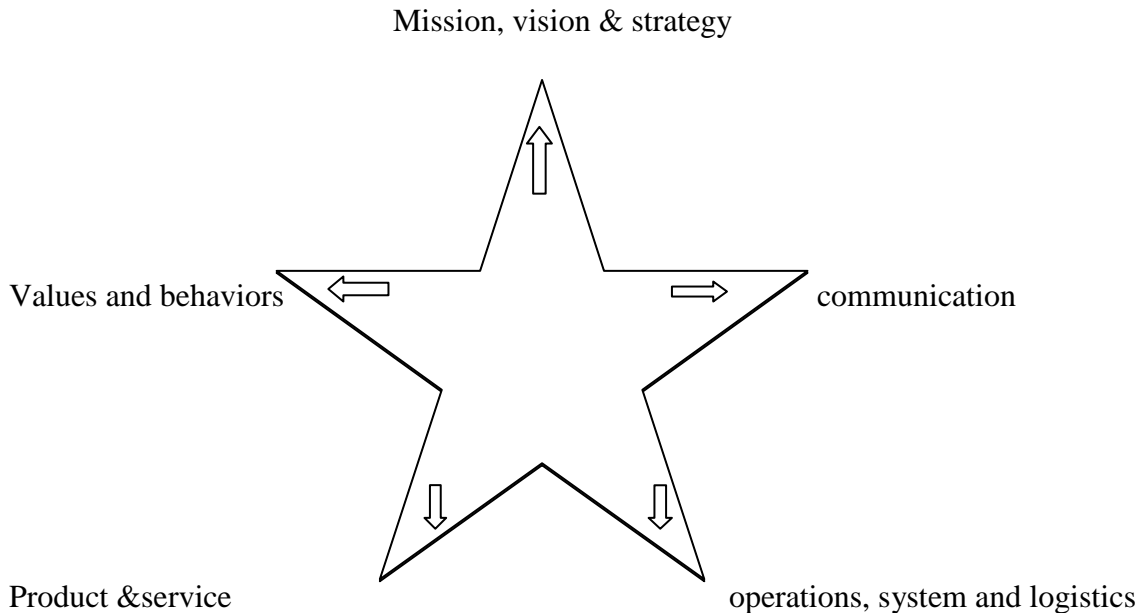


Figure 4.3: The brand promise figure: (VanAuken, p 17)

As stated in chapter two of the thesis, this diagram above is being used for the analysis of the Roverman brand. In branding a theatre company or organization, all its activities have to be considered. “The process of branding associates values with the name of a product or company [...]” (Pearson, 1996, p.7) and thus these values have to be communicated in every aspect of the company’s work. VanAuken suggests the diagram above as a guide for determining the personality of a brand.

4.5.1 Mission and Vision

Applying the above diagram to the Roverman brand in analysis of its brand, the research findings reveal that, the brand vision of the company is to be a family entertainment producer to its patrons and a marketing platform to the corporate world. It has been obvious that the Roverman brand is serving as a marketing platform for corporate brands.

Intentionally or coincidentally, the major sponsor of the Roverman theatre performances, Airtel, shares the same brand colours with the company. Strategically, on the day of a performance, the red and white colours which these two brands share are used for the decorations at the front of house of the National Theatre.

Not only are all sponsors of the Roverman Live Theatre acknowledged on all publicity platforms, they are also allowed to mount their stands in the foyer with the aim of not only making their presence felt, but also selling their products to the audience of the Roverman plays. Many a times, audience are allowed into the foyer thirty minutes before the performance starts and this gives sponsors the opportunity to sell their products. Sometimes, these sponsors offer discounts on their products or give the products as gifts to some of the Roverman audience.

In the theatre auditorium, before the performance starts until the end, adverts of sponsors are projected or televised not less than twice. As a result, stage plays are paused in order to acknowledge sponsors. A brand like kiss condom has also received its benefits by sponsoring Roverman Productions. As part of the marketing this sponsor, condoms were shared to the Roverman audience who attended the theatre production sponsored by kiss condom. Roverman has indeed proven that it is a brand that offers a good publicity platform to the corporate world.

In evaluating the Roverman brand, some of its implementations were discussed with some interviewees. In a personal interview with a theatre practitioner (director), he mentioned that he is totally against pausing a stage play for the purpose of projecting/televising adverts. Another interviewee when asked about her take on pausing a stage performance to acknowledge sponsors says, “I think that we have to be very careful when

doing some of these things. I personally do not even like the projections on the side of the wall. I don't. I think that when people come to experience theatre, they come into a space, a zone and they have to be able to enjoy what is going on, on stage without the distractions" (Interviewee, personal communication, 2015) In the words of another interviewee, also is a theatre professional, he said, "The barriers in branding should be that, we should not sacrifice artistic work for sponsors. Content should be intent. If we want to praise sponsors, let's create an art work for them. You don't go for a music show with a choreographer putting a sponsor's name in their song or dance. It is not a product lunch" (Interviewee, personal communication, 2015). These were not the only comments gathered. Another theatre practitioner explains "I believe when adverts and sponsors are projected in the course of the play, it takes a lot away from the play. If you are watching and there is suspense and suddenly there is a commercial break, you lose it and you may not want to follow the story anymore. You have to allow the story to flow. This is not like a television movie that you can stop at anytime and play later. I think there are so many creative ways it can be done. Do not make them a part of the play itself because it even goes to affect actors on the stage as well. Because the actor might have built some mood and characterization that they want to sustain then suddenly the actor has to cut it. You will lose it because is a very thing difficult thing to do. Rather find a nice way of making noise about your sponsors. Roverman is doing well. It challenges all of us" (Interviewee, personal communication, 2015).

In branding sense, Roverman is successfully achieving the brand image they have strategized to achieve. However, it is lightly using a platform (theatre) which requires professional skill or training. It is therefore expected that unprofessionalism will be

noticed in the works presented by the Company. However, when analyzing the artistic output of the company, one must not forget that there are several kinds of theatre serving several purposes. There is theatre for education purposes, theatre for development, theatre for entertainment and a few others. Thus the activities of the Roverman brand have to be assessed based on the kind of theatre.

Another vision of the Roverman Company is to be a family entertainment producer to its consumers. In this view, the Roverman Company refers to its audience as patrons and not just audience. According to the artistic director of the company, “we have a data base of patrons or people who come frequently and have trusted us enough with their information to fill out a form we try to contact them on their birthdays, on their anniversaries. Give them extra incentives like discounted tickets every quarter and so we try to honour their patronage. For the fact that we even call them patrons, I actually think in Ghana, we take that word for granted. Usually in theatre practice in abroad, there is one patron. Often, patrons are people who have put their resources and names which are of value behind a production. People work hard to get a patron but here we actually honour everybody with that title (you are all our patrons). I think that in itself is a great thing. That we have a name for everybody we don’t just call them as customers. We don’t treat them as a one off thing, to me that is important” (E. Nkrumah, personal communication, 2015). In her statement, it is important to the organization. As a result, are treated as such. Calling the Roverman audience patrons gives them a sense of belonging. This research reveals that, there are a number of the Roverman audience who do not miss Roverman live theatre performance, because of the sense of belonging they feel when they receive messages personally addressed to them from the company. In order to achieve the family bond with

its audience, Roverman sometimes during a stage performance, projects birthday wishes to birthday celebrants amongst its audience. According to the business development manager, this is done with the intention to achieve a kind of family bond with the consumers. Opoku, a brand manager, in an interview also acknowledged that, this strategy employed by Roverman is all with the ploy of achieving consumer satisfaction. Now that it has been established that the Roverman brand is very particular about creating a family bond with its consumers, thus, always coming up with strategies to achieve that, it is necessary to analyse the details of family entertainment.

A family entertainment programme is just not about creating a family bond between a producer and its consumer. First of all, family is defined as a social unit made of parents and their children. A nuclear family is made of a father, mother and children while an extended family adds the grandparents, aunts and cousins. Family entertainment in effect, is a program that serves a family, in that, a whole family of different generations will enjoy together. It should be a one which is relevant to the whole family. Mostly, family entertainment programmes deal with issues pertaining to the family. Not only should the issues be addressed in a manner that everyone will be able to understand and relate to but also, relevant and entertaining to all. Applying this to Roverman's live theatre, both the form and content of the company must be one that serves and is relevant to the whole family. Many of the plays Roverman produces address relationship issues. *Forbidden*, *The Smartest Man Alive* and the *Last Flight* are all plays that delve into relationship and religious issues. However, the content of these works do not appear to have any relevance to children. Despite the fact that the Roverman Company identifies itself as a family entertainment producer, it also identifies its target audience as both

business men/women and people in the middle class. This reflects a contradiction in the Roverman brand identity. It is evident that the content of Roverman's productions does not serve family entertainment. In addition, the Company's publicity mediums and messaging do not also in any way reflect its identity as a family entertainment producer. In terms of ticketing, there are no packages (discounts) for children, neither are there packages for families. Thus, Roverman being a family entertainment producer has not been successfully achieved.

4.5.2 Values and Behaviour

Values such as integrity, discipline, shifting paradigms (being the difference) and building community according to the business development manager, Ocansey are the values of the Roverman brand. Upon interviewing the Roverman Productions staff and observing their activities of the company, it is realized that they hold on tightly to the above values. Roverman Productions understands that, its audiences are important and must be treated with all respect. With this in mind, it respects the time of its consumers. For that reason, Roverman performances are always started at the scheduled time. This however, is unlike many other theatre/entertainment shows in the country. In the case of Roverman, respecting the time of their audience is a way in which they guard their integrity and also be a difference in their market domain. There is a kind of professionalism that one will notice when he arrives at a Roverman performance. Right from the car park, there are attendants who make sure that things are in order and consumers are welcomed warmly. From there to the theatre auditorium, things are well organized, personnel are serious on the job and audiences are welcomed warmly. Even

after a show ends, Roverman audience are appreciated for patronizing the show. These are all strategies that Roverman puts in place to ensure that it is different from all others in its market domain.

4.5.3 Communication

Communication goes down to the tone of your emails (the way it is written), even your tone on social media (facebook, whatsapp, twiter etc). On such media platforms, Roverman sends motivational messages which are followed by the details of their upcoming performances. Sometimes, there are biblical connotations to messages that are sent. Motivational and biblical tones are prominent features of the Roverman social media publicity. The company has also generated an audience data through which they send text messages to their consumers informing them and giving them details of their upcoming shows. These messages are customized in the sense that, a receiver has a message addressed specially to him which gives a sense of belonging. This gives the consumer a sense of belonging. In radio advertisements of the company, particular voices have been used and over time, this has become a mark, identifiable to the company.

4.5.4 Operations, Systems and Logistics

Experiencing the Roverman Company and its performances, one will notice that, activities have been effectively planned. In a personal interview, Uncle Ebo states that, responsibilities have been clearly defined. The fact that the company has a ten member staff employed and on monthly salary, indicates that there is some kind of seriousness and commitment attached to the work they do. As mentioned earlier, plays are started on time and ended as such, so as to stay true to the publicity information. Effective plans are

drawn by various departments in the execution of their duties. Yeboah, the head of media content explained that, whenever the company had to work towards a live theatre performance, he and the head of business development both worked under the productions manager. Therefore, there is a mandate to follow. In essence, nothing is left to chance in order to safeguard the Company's integrity.

4.5.5 Products and service

Theatre offers an intangible product which is an emotional product. Apart from the fact that it can be educational, revolutionary and entertaining, it also serves a therapeutic purpose. In a theatre experience, audience do not come to the theatre and leave with a tangible product in hand. However, they leave with an emotional satisfaction. To achieve all of these, Ocansey, explains that, "We use mainly theatre. Our first and most important objective is entertainment. That is what we are, hence, we are an entertainment company that wants to use the medium of theatre to reflect society for change; positive change. But when we start a production, our first thought is not what message we intend to send. Our thought is on how we are going to entertain the people. In the process, because our shows are live based- reflecting on society we cannot talk about it without lessons and inputs and food for thoughts coming in. These are natural consequences of it but our core objective is entertainment" (K. Ocansey, personal communication, 2015). It is revealed that the main aim of the Roverman Company is to be a source of entertainment just as its vision says; family entertainment producer. This is an unmistakable attribute of Roverman performances. One major feature of Roverman performances is the comic trait. The company takes advantage of and tries to create humour from the prominent

issues in society at every point in time. However, these are sometimes not necessary to the plot, and broadly, the play. Yet, to achieve the brand identity of being an entertainment company, these are of essence to the company. To also achieve the essence of being an entertainment providing company, Roverman now projects the lyrics of the songs that actors sing on stage. According to Ocansey, this is with the aim of getting audience to participate in the performance that goes on, on stage. Even though Roverman's aim of projecting/ televising lyrics of songs is to encourage audience participation, other people think differently. Below are some comments from interviewees in relation to the subject.

"I think in terms of quality, they fall short. And the way I see it, it is more like an amateur company on stage because if you look at the things they do, it is basic. Unlike, a production like *No Rules* by the Ghana National theatre in collaboration with the French Embassy is a production of a lifetime. Creativity was at work. It is the kind of performance that a National theatre should be producing. High quality, well rehearsed work and this is not to put down the work of Roverman but it is like a factory. You just churn this out without really focusing and spending time with artists to get good quality work and so for me the brand really falls short in terms of the quality of artistic work"

(Interviewee, personal communication, 2015)

Another interviewee stated emphatically, "If you ask me if Roverman is doing the right thing? My answer is no. Is Uncle Ebo a playwright? My answer is no. Is Roverman a proper theatre company? My answer is still no. This is because, these are untrained professionals right from the writer to many of the actors, so what do you expect when somebody is in marketing and has found a gap within the theatre space? Good and kudos

to him for filling that space but is he doing the right thing? I will say no. So maybe when theatre practitioners like us begin to rise up and write proper plays, plays that entail all the characteristics of a good play, then we will make a significant change to the way things are. But as it stands now, he is filling the gap” (Interviewee, personal communication, 2015)

I believe that, these arguments stem from the fact that Roverman Productions as a theatre entity lack theatre professionals. This is a result of the fact that, the criterion for appointing and admitting Roverman staff and group members is not mainly based on having professional theatre training but having talent and being commitment. This shortcoming is identified in the playwriting, directing, acting aspects of the performance. Despite these concerns, one must however note that the theatre scene in Ghana had been dormant for a while until Roverman came onto the scene. Therefore as an entrepreneur, Roverman has identified an avenue and is making the best of it. Despite the unprofessional nature of the performances, Roverman is filling a vacuum in the live theatre scene in Ghana. Commenting on this, an interviewee also opines that;

“I think this is where if care is not taken, we shoot ourselves in our own foot. For me, in theatre practice, there are different kinds of theatre. We have commercial theatre, we have experimental theatre. Every kind of theatre has a role. Roverman is doing a great job because; Ghanaians have been away from theatre for a while. We need something that will bring them back and this kind of theatre is a good entry point for a lot of people. I won't call it purely commercial because if it were, he will repeat the same performance about twenty times to really get what he puts in the production. At this moment, I will be surprised if he tells me he makes profit. I know the cost of producing for a live theatre

production. There is no way, perhaps he may be breaking even but I won't call it a business. I will call it commercial in the sense that it is an entry point for a lot of people who are perhaps scared of going into theatre because they are not sure if they will understand what is going on, on stage. Uncle Ebo allows those people to relate to theatre in a very unique way" (Interviewee, personal communication, 2015).

In the view of this interviewee, the works of Roverman must be understood in the context of the kind of theatre it is. This assertion however will not necessarily hold in that, being a theatre which focuses on providing entertainment does not give license for actors to mask each other on stage or be poor with stage movements. Nonetheless, I agree with the interviewee when he says that Roverman has served as an entry point for many people who had and have little or no experience with the theatre.

4.6 Branding Strategies of Roverman Productions

Looking back at the history of the company, it all started with an individual for years even before staff was employed. Here, it is important to note that, there is Roverman Productions theatre group and the Roverman Productions Company. The Roverman Productions Company has a ten member staff who work on everything relating to the company. These are; the CEO, head of business development, media content manager and assistant, digital media officer, head of productions and events (under which there is the technical head), artistic director and administrative officer. The staff works on everything pertaining to management and administration. In terms of the theatre productions, they take care of playwriting, directing, the technical aspects (sound, scenic design, light, projections in the foyer), creating art works for bill boards, posters and

fliers, publicity, media advertisements and many other things concerning the theatre production. On the other hand, the members of the theatre group comprise the actors, stage manager (they work under the director and the artistic director of the company), the crew (sound, light, set, stage hands), these people work under the technical director, and the members who take care of the front of house (they are in charge of the car park, gates and ushering). These people work under the head of business development. In essence, there is a difference between the Roverman Productions theatre group and its members and the Roverman Productions Company and its staff.

Upon interviewing the Roverman staff, it was disclosed that the company did not follow any special procedures in branding. However, there are some strategies the company has implemented in creating, delivering and maintaining the brand. In the words of Ocansey, “We have always experimented what will work and what will be most effective. We have our goals and objectives and that is fixed. How to realise these goals and objectives, I keep as dynamic as possible depending on the circumstances and depending on what is happening in the bigger society” (K. Ocansey, personal communication, 2015). This statement by Ocasey implies that, the company had no guidelines for doing what they do basically because; there have been no examples to follow. In essence, they experiment and find out the best strategies that work for them as a company. However, being knowledgeable in business management and marketing also helps them in decision makings and taking strategies.

4.6.1 Be clear about what you want to be identified with

According to Uncle Ebo, the first thing one must do when branding in theatre practice is to know what to stand for and being clear and consistent about it. He adds that, Roverman is known for starting its theatre productions on time, from day one they have been quite clear about it and will not compromise on that. According to Aseidu, head of media content, understanding that the brand is important and that the brand needs to stand and be known for something is what keeps them going. “Our tag line is, ‘Be the Difference’. For us, in everything we do in the company, we try to be as real about the tag line and the message that we give out as possible”. (K. Aseidu, personal communication, 2015)

This research revealed that the Roverman staff are clear about what the organization stands for and thus, uphold it.

4.6.2 Uphold what you stand for / Maintain your brand

In response to what the Roverman Productions wants to be known for, the business development manager said, a producer of a family entertainment and a platform where corporate brands can sell their products. When he was asked if the brand identity influences the style, themes and issues in his plays, he affirms,

“Like I said, the family oriented nature of our business is very core, so all of our communication and marketing tools are geared towards establishing a family like relationship between us and our patrons. So, as much as we may use mass media, radio and television to communicate to our people, we would always put a number out. We always let people know that we are willing to come and deliver tickets to them without any extra cost. So even though it is mass media, we still try to make it personal. We try to

give options that allow a direct engagement between us and the patrons. Without them solely depending on mass media that allows us our fate. We have a sales team that goes out from person to person, individual to individual, company to company, door to door and hand over the fliers to people. For us, it is an important aspect of making sure that even though that individual never meets Roverman again, by that one opportunity that they had by someone coming into their house, office, and giving them a flier, it establishes a link that cannot be broken. So that direct contact between our patrons and us is very important to us. So we go to churches to tell them about our shows and invite them to our shows, we offer group packages and offer cooperate packages for people and companies who want to buy tickets for their staff or their client. This is all in the bid for them to see us as a company they like and enjoy. It costs more, it takes a lot more time and the obligation is big but that is important to us. That is how we have chosen to define ourselves differently from any other entertainment platform. It means that our profits are smaller and the cost goes high, but to us, that is important” (K. Ocansey, personal communication, 2015). From this statement it is realized that discipline is essential in maintaining a brand. Branding can be costly, time consuming, tiring but also essential. Thus to attain and maintain one’s brand, it is essential to have principles and go by them by all means.

Also, with the quest of maintaining a company’s brand, collaborations and sponsorship must be considered. Every organization that you collaborate with, associate with or seek sponsorship from should be carefully studied to ensure that their brands do not defeat your company’s brand. No organization should allow its brand which is built with

discipline, time and money be jeopardized by another brand who serves as a sponsor. This is what the CEO of Roverman had to say about that,

“The first thing is to let them know what you stand for. The second is to go for people whose values align with your own. You cannot bring a company on board whose value goes against yours and expect that your own values will be upheld. It will be swallowed up and be negated to a large extent. Hence, who we go for and whose money we take is key. You will have to be consistent with what you represent so that another brand will not come unto your platform and when he leaves, leave a vacuum. We have dealt with some major companies. But I don’t think that there will be any doubt in anybody’s mind that what we do is not our program. This is Roverman. Sponsors happen to be on the platform of Roverman. Not that, this is for MTN and so as soon as it pulls out, nobody then knows us anymore. That is not what has happened with us. You have to be clear and fair in your dealings, so, we are very clear about what we offer our sponsors. As a result, a sponsor does not come on board until we have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with them. This is done so that they know what to expect from us and we, also know what to expect from them. It is clear card. We do not have the situation where in the middle of a production, someone comes to make a new demand. Whatever demands a sponsor can make must be consistent with what we agreed to in the MOU. If it is not in the MOU, do not come and make a demand because you will not get it and you cannot come and bully your way and say, ‘now, I have thought about this, I want this’. Those things help; the fact that it is structured, the fact that it is formalized in an MOU. It makes it quite clear where everybody stands and what everybody can expect” (J. Whyte, personal communication, 2015)

In the words of Yeboah, “every now and again when we plan shows, the kind of people we associate with, the kind of sponsors we associate with, the brand is taken into consideration. Uncle Ebo acts as the torch bearer and his own brand stands for something. Some people know him as a lawyer; others know him as a teacher, as a storyteller and a motivational speaker. If you put all these together, it amounts to something and that something needs to be preserved in the minds and in the eyes of the patrons and the general public. It is quite a lot we do in terms of maintaining the brand and making it stand for what it is intended to stand for” (K. Yeboah, personal communication, 2015).

Lastly, Ocansey also gives his take on the issue. He says “Well, mostly, we prospect for sponsorships. This is because we operate the brand and the platform. There are a few occasions where potential sponsors come up to us. There are a few we have had to reject because it was not well aligned with what we stand for” (K. Ocansey, personal communication, 2015).

The above statements have been presented to show the brand implementations of Roverman Productions concerning sponsorship and collaborations. According to Yeboah, they recognize that the company has an identity which is very valuable and as a result, must be protected. Ocansey adds that, some sponsorship deals have been refused because the brands of those companies do not align with what Roverman stands for. Uncle Ebo crowns it all by explaining that, when going into collaborations and agreeing on sponsorship deals, they are very particular not to stain the brand of the Roverman Company. Thus, they go into formal agreements where the roles of every party are clearly defined. These are all done with the aim of upholding and maintaining the Roverman brand.

4.6.3 Get people who share your vision and are passionate about what you do

Kotler (2003) states that, “The brand idea will not take unless everyone in the company lives the brand” (p.420). It is then of essence to critically select workers (staff members and group member) to ensure that they share the vision of your company and also have it at heart. Uncle Ebo makes it clear that, to achieve the vision of the company, “Bring in the kind of people that will know what it is you stand for, understand your vision and are prepared to buy into that and to help carry it forward” (J. Whyte, personal communication, 2015).

Ocansey makes it clear that, it is a lot of work ensuring that both the Roverman group members and staff share and maintain the brand in all their activities pertaining to the company. He carries on by explaining, “It is a general orientation that we try to give them. First of all, with everybody who works with Roverman, we ensure that there is that passion for the arts. So every staff member became a group member once. And the only way to become a group member is to willingly present yourself for audition. It means that you already have the passion and the interest for the art. That is why you came to audition as a member in the group. That aspect does the chunk of the work for us” (K. Ocansey, personal communication, 2015). Apart from this implementation by Roverman to ensure that staff members and group members are passionate and share the vision of the company, the CEO also ensures this by, continually organising workshops and training programmes for his staff and group members. Ocansey makes it clear that, “Uncle Ebo has regular planning and reviewing meetings. Before every show, there is a production meeting in- house for the group members and the staff as well. We have after every show three levels of review meetings to look at all the things we could have done better. All

our ushers are group members. We run very regular workshops and training for the ushers and resource persons train them in customer service and client management. Because of the role I play, I manage the direct sales team. Before I deploy the direct sales team, we always have an orientation session together. We always look at what the protocol for engaging in somebody is. If you walk into an office, what is the first thing you will do. How do you say what you want to say? Because there is no template for us, we try and document the things that work and those that do not, we change them. So we build our own documentation and procedures so that over time, it then becomes a template for us on how to go about our things. It usually serves as a reference point for us” (K. Ocansey, personal communication, 2015).

4.6.4 Assess Your Brand Communication by Collecting Feedback

The CEO of Roverman opines, “I think brand is your own identity and your ability to communicate that. You can have an identity and fail to communicate that. It is when you communicate it that it becomes a brand otherwise you know what you are but nobody knows what you are and nobody cares. A brand is successful when someone who is not connected to you hears your name can give (spell out) your attributes. How the public perceives us is our brand and that can be manufactured. That can be engineered. The art of engineering that is what we call branding” (J. Whyte, personal communication, 2015). With this, the CEO identifies that, for a brand to be successful, it is essential to ensure an effective communication between the producer and consumer.

Explaining how Roverman receives feedback from its consumers and sponsors, Uncle Ebo says; “We get feedback on the spot. Live shows, feedback are almost instantaneous

because whether they are laughing or not is a feedback. Whether they are applauding or not is a feedback, whether at the end of the show, they are leaving happy or not is a feedback. Now, that is one area of feedback. Because we do this on a quarterly basis, our biggest feedback is when they come back. Then, we know we are doing something right. But beyond that, we have a data base of our patrons who we communicate with on a regular basis; on their birthdays and some other events. When you call them, whether you ask for their feedback or not, they will give you feedback because they feel a part of the family so they are likely to tell you ‘oow, I didn’t enjoy this play’ or ‘bring back this other play because I enjoyed it more than this’. Those are the levels of feedback we get.” (J. Whyte, personal communication, 2015). To summarize, feedback happens as a part of the natural dynamics of live theatre production. With Roverman, it also happens because performances are done quarterly. So with the level of operations for live theatre, there is some feedback you ask for and others, whether you seek feedback or not, you get it. However, it is always essential to consciously seek feedback from consumers.

Uncle Ebo, the CEO, also mentioned that, for a company like his, he always has to deliver on his brand promise because three months away, he will be going back to seek sponsorship to run his next show. As a result, feedback from his consumers (audience and sponsors) is essential to running his company.

4.6.5 Give your consumers your brand experience

According to Ocansey, the business development manager of Roverman Productions, it is important that Roverman consumers get the brand experience. “So when you hear the jingle, even though we are just telling you about our show, how does it make you feel?”

That is important to us because that is where the experience starts from. When you see the flier, it is just telling you about the show but we are interested in how the flier makes you feel. When you get to the show, you get to the car park, for you, it is just a place where you park your car but for us, how does the car park make you feel? When you enter the lobby, how does what you see and the people you meet make you feel? When you meet the ushers, the sales people at the various stands, when you go to the box office or an outlet to buy a ticket, how does it make you feel? When you see the ticket, how does it make you feel? When you enter the National theatre itself before the show starts, how do you feel? That is why we have a live band that plays right from the beginning till the show starts because we want you to feel in a certain way. We are interested in how you feel. When the curtain is raised, before the first character says the first thing, when you see the set, how does it make you feel? It is important because it is part of what we call the Roverman experience. You are coming for a show, but what we are trying to sell to you is not just a show. We are selling to you a total family and corporate entertainment experience and all that is part of it. That is why even though we do not own the National theatre, it is important to us if the air conditions are working well or not, whether the light is working well or not, whether the floor is clean or not. You know the National theatre does not allow other events to take food into the auditorium but for our shows, we have negotiated with them to allow that; because for us, it is part of the experience. A family cannot go out without the wife taking ice cream or the children taking popcorn. It is part of the experience, so we have negotiated and we have made the necessary commitments to ensure extra cleaning after every show so that our patrons will be allowed to bring consumables to the hall. It is one thing also that the technical theatre oriented people do

not appreciate and think that when you are going to watch a theatre, it should be serious business, you come in, sit down, concentrate, watch and go. For us, it is a family experience and it includes all of these things. You take it out of it; the typical Ghanaian thinks that there is something incomplete. They may not even be able to lay a finger on it but they feel it and for us because we understand it. We want it to be there. So at the end of the day, if someone says ‘I went to watch a Roverman play and it is nice ooh’ and you ask them what was nice? You will realise that they will go through so many things, they can’t really tell what it is. That is what we call the Roverman experience. The stage is part of it. Sometimes you should see our arguments about the stage, the colour, the design amongst others. Of course the technical people are around. We have to make sure it is functionally appropriate for the play and story and reflects the setting. Also, it has to mean something to the audience member who just came there to see a good show, who doesn’t know the difference between a round door and a square door, stage right and stage left. All of those things are part of the Roverman experience” (K. Ocansey, personal communication, 2015).

This emphasizes that delivering the Roverman brand experience is essential to the company. They have succeeded in creating a unique theatre experience, within and without the auditorium, by observing the rudiments of theatre and altering but not necessarily breaking them, to suit the various audiences they seek to reach, serve and satisfy and most importantly, to achieve their brand identity. Thus, from the point of ticket sales till the curtain call, the audience are roped into an indirect communal performance structure that ensures that nothing is overlooked in delivering the very best value for technical acumen and for money.

4.6.6 Using the personal brand of the CEO as an advantage

This may not apply to other companies nor work for them. However, for Roverman Productions, the company is taking advantage of the personal brand of the CEO and the name, recognition and clout he has gained in the media. Roverman Productions is largely dependent on the personal brand of Uncle Ebo. In Uncle Ebo's words, "I don't think it is a bad thing that Roverman Productions is linked to Ebo Whyte because I began by saying that Roverman Productions serves as a vehicle for showcasing my creative works not any other person's creative works. The strength in that is, to compete with us, you have got to be Ebo Whyte. You have to write, direct and produce like Ebo Whyte. Otherwise, you cannot quite compete with us. To that extent, it makes us stand out. It is not just the play, there is also the name and you cannot duplicate Ebo Whyte easily and that has also become an advantage. As long as the Ebo Whyte brand continues to have integrity and continues to be useful, and beneficial to people, it will then result in a goodwill from these same people to the Roverman platform. It is a good thing that has happened. We are trying to let Roverman have a name recognition of its own and have a following of its own but it has been very difficult; Because they (consumers) prefer to link it up with somebody; with Ebo Whyte" (J. Whyte, personal communication, 2015).

Roverman clearly has an advantage over its competitors if there are any as it is at the moment, riding on the wings of their CEO, James Ebo Whyte. His huge following on social media is a good selling point for the company. Also, his 'Food for thought' segment on Joy fm radio as well as his position as a conference speaker and counsellor, continue to pull large audiences for him and thus, for Roverman Productions. It is a positive thing for Roverman, to have their lead salesman as a 'talismanic' figure. In that,

as long as the Ebo Whyte brand soars, Roverman will do same. However, it would be good for Roverman as a company to distinguish itself and build its reputation as a competent theatre production house, independent of the Ebo Whyte brand image. This has the potential to keep them relevant and top of their game, even when the Ebo Whyte brand diversifies or ceases to be relevant. One might be tempted to say then that Ebo Whyte is equal to Roverman, but Roverman is not equal to Ebo Whyte.

4.6.7 Have a long term vision and a long term plan to achieve the vision

Since the company relies on the personal brand of Uncle Ebo, in the long term, the question will be what if Ebo Whyte is no longer around? Uncle Ebo explains, “That is why we produce a new play every quarter. I don’t like to repeat plays. My idea is that; let me build a body of work so huge that when I am not here, the company can do about a 20year cycle of the plays; for instance, if they start with *Unhappy Wives* in year one after I am gone, it will take 20years for them to do the same play again. Within that time, new people would have come on the market, they would have heard their parents also talk about *Unhappy Wives* and they would want to see it. It is also the reason why I don’t like doing dated plays; so that *Unhappy Wives*, *Confused Husbands* can be produced anywhere at any time; same as *Smartest Man Alive* and *Women on Fire*. So those are all deliberate things to ensuring that this brand will survive and will continue to serve people long time after I am gone. If I drop dead today, the company will be able to have a seven (7)-year cycle. If they did *Women on Fire*, it would take them seven years to come back to it, but every year God allows me to live, then widens the cycle. I don’t know how

much longer I will live but until that time, I will continue to produce a new play every quarter so we can widen that cycle” (J. Whyte, personal communication, 2015)

The strategy Roverman has for the future is that legacy starts now. Ebo Whyte obviously is on a steady mission to lay a solid foundation for posterity, by ensuring that Roverman Productions survives him. His strategy is to produce a quality play each quarter, ensuring an ever-growing repertoire. This is a clear case of quality consistency, which produces effectual results. So for each play he produces, he enlarges the Roverman probability chain of sustenance and survival. This simple approach seems sustainable for now at least, and for as long as Ebo Whyte lives. However, if the worst is to occur, eventually, Roverman would run out of new plays and be forced to repeat the same old scripts. This trend presents two possibilities. The first scenario would be the case of old wine tasting better. This would seek to propose that the more these plays are performed time and again, they would become classics and gain appeal down the ages. The other scenario would hold a bleak future for Roverman Productions, forcing them either out of business, to diversify, or to attempt to replace Ebo Whyte or employ the works of other playwrights to sustain them. All in all, it is undoubtedly the best way to go, as Ebo Whyte says, to enlarge the performance circle for Roverman Productions, by producing new plays every quarter.

4.7 Branding Manual (Brand Building Procedure)

According to Kuenyehia (2012),

“It follows that branding considerations become relevant the moment the entrepreneur decides to

start an enterprise. He must be clear in his mind what sort of enterprise he is seeking to build and what position he would want the enterprise to occupy in the industry in which it competes, as well as in the minds of target customers. Branding considerations continue to be relevant at every stage of the enterprise, including raising finance; attracting, managing and retaining people; constituting a board of directors; expansion; etc. At each of these stages, the entrepreneur has an opportunity to enhance or hurt his brand and, whether he likes it or not, the decisions he makes and the actions he takes will affect how his brand is perceived by others”, (p.516).

Branding considerations are essential right from the moment a company starts and persists throughout the lifetime of the company. Since branding is a lifetime decision and strategy, it is important to guard the decisions and implementations a company makes. Thus, it is important to guard the activities of a company. This will be done accurately by following some steps that help in brand implementations and maintenance.

Brand building process is the steps one needs to go through in branding a product.

Kuenyehia (2012) has built a branding equation out of the brand building process.

R-STP-MM-I-C

R: Research

S: Segmentation

T: Targeting

P: Positioning

MM: Marketing Mix

I: Implementation

C: Control

Inferring from this brand equation, I develop a branding procedure which is;

Research-Develop a promise-Make the promise-Get feedback-Maintain the promise

4.7.1 Research

By researching, what the study means is, making findings into the theatre industry or perhaps, arts industry in general. It is essential for one already in or entering theatre practice to find out and know other theatre companies, and their activities. This helps to define yourself as an organization. It also helps to note your advantages over your competitors. By researching, you will know whose customers you are capable of winning and who is capable of attracting your audience. It also helps to know your position in your market place and this pushes you to be better. This is the discovery stage. Here, you identify the values you want to showcase. Amidst your market place, who are you and what do you stand for?

4.7.2 Develop your Promise

After research, it is important that when a theatre practitioner decides to brand, he has to develop a promise. In developing the promise, one must consider his vision and mission since it tells the company's aims and what they want to achieve. This can also be known as the creation stage. Talk about things that associate with your brand. For example, apple is trendy. As a theatre entity, how should you be defined in terms of form and content? Are you a social commentator? Are you a religious theatre group? Or, are you a historian?

Under this headline, one decides the identity he is creating for his theatre organization or theatre performance. During this process, the tangibles and intangibles of theatre organizations and theatre products must be considered.

Things to be considered when developing the promise

After answering the what, whom, to who, when, how, against whom, there are a number of things that a brand must entail. In creating a brand identity, one must do the following.

- i. The four P's (product, price, place and promotion): product refers to both tangible commodities and service which is of no physical structure. It also includes the experience, image and emotional associations with a product. According to Kenyehia (2012), it must, "at the minimum meet an identified customer need in a way that is equal or superior to the completion", (p.521). Price is the second P to be considered. The basis of pricing is to consider the willingness of consumers to pay an amount for a product or service. The question to ask oneself is if it is worth it to pay a stipulated amount in exchange for a product or service offered. Cost is

a factor in determining price. However, one must consider the worth of a product being offered, the price of other competitors, and the target consumers in determining the price of a product. Place is the third P and it is where a customer obtains a product and also ticket sales points. This is aimed at making available to the customers the product at the right place and time. The last P is the promotions. Before consumers can patronise a product, they need to hear about it and be convinced to purchase it. Persuasion may either be through mass media or one on one basis. Promotion must clearly state the value, benefits and relevance of a product or service.

- ii. Brand mission and vision: According to Kotler (2003), “the marketer must establish a mission for the brand and a vision of what the brand must be and do”, (p.420). Kuenyehia (2012) also states that, “the entrepreneur must set a brand vision, the same way that, [...] she will set a vision for the enterprise” (p.520). A brand, just like every organization must have a vision and mission. You must state clearly and write out what the brand must be and do. “The brand vision articulates the ideal position that the entrepreneur and her team would like to see a brand occupy” (Kuenyehia, 2012, p.520). The brand vision tackles what you envisage the brand to be whereas the brand mission considers what the brand will do; in other words, what service the brand is to offer. A brand vision and mission have to be clearly stated and written out.
- iii. Get a brand name: Kapferer (1998) states that if a brand concept encompasses all of the brand’s distinctive signs (name, logo, symbol, colours, endorsing characteristics and even its slogan), it is the brand name that is talked about, asked

for or prescribed”, (pp.132-133). It is therefore essential to devote time and attention to the selection and creation of a brand name. If a brand name is that essential then, is there a best method or criteria for choosing a brand name? Is there a particular way to choose a brand name that guarantees the brand success? Do the successful brand names have something in common? “Coca-Cola referred to the product’s ingredients when it was first created; the original meaning of IBM (International Business Machines) has disappeared; Schweppes is hard to pronounce; Marlboro is a place; Kodak, an onomatopoeia” (Kapferer, 1998, p.133). This little analysis only proves that, almost any name can be used as a brand name. However, there should be a consistent effort to give the brand name its own meaning over time. This however does not mean that thought and effort should not go into creating a brand name. Since a company has to be registered, it is essential to find out if the selected name already exists (locally and internationally) or otherwise.

- iv. Get a logo: “An organization may choose to use a word or image to represent the organization, using it on all marketing and printed materials. The word or image is known as logo” (Stein and Bathurst, 2008, p.298). A logo is the visual representation of your company. It should be able to create an immediate connection between the visual image and the theatre organization. For example, the image of the ‘*Lion King*’ is associated with the production company which is Disney. It also invokes a connection and brand association to the production and the company. This indicates that, not only the logo of a company must be

- distinctly created but also all graphics (for marketing and publicity) of a theatre entity .
- v. Website: Websites should be the first internet source of any organization. It provides an organization, the platform to promote itself using graphics, sound and video. This platform can contain promotional elements such as production photographs, rehearsal video coverage, historical information on the organization and the production, promotional videos, interview videos amongst others. A website should however be well designed, easy to navigate, entail detailed information and possibly, a link to buy tickets. One other essential thing that can be included is the calendar of a theatre company. This will allow consumers to be acquainted with your shows and their schedules; in that case, anyone who visits your website will be able to follow your activities and purchase tickets.
 - vi. Style/form and content: style refers to the form of a theatre performance. In theatre practice, this is also a factor to clearly define when deciding on a brand. Disney is identified with producing family entertainment whiles Tyler Perry is known for producing social dramas with religious themes, with music, as a prominent feature. Just like these examples, it is important that in branding, a theatre company carves a niche for itself through the form or content of play it produces. This could also include the playwright whose plays a theatre company stages. Are you a company which performs only Shakespeare's works? Who are you featuring? Are you the brand that features that particular actor everyone admires? The personal brand of a playwright or an actor, can also serve as the brand of a theatre company.

- vii. Integrate your brand: it is essential that every part of your organization becomes one with your brand. Branding extends to every aspect of your business. How you answer your phones, what you and your sales people wear, how you sign out your emails and letters and everything. According to Stein and Bathurst (2008), “In addition to the performing arts itself, the product of a performing arts organization also contains all of the elements associated with the artistic experience, such as the location of the venue, the convenience of acquiring a ticket, and the comfort and cleanliness of the auditorium” (p.278). He adds that, “These additional elements can play a major role in the success of the marketing effort, increasing the demand for the product” (Stein and Bathurst, 2008, p.278). Also, create a voice which applies to all written communication and incorporate it in your visual imagery of all materials on and offline.
- viii. Develop a tagline: a tagline is a signature statement or slogan of an organization. In creating a brand, one must write a memorable tagline which is meaningful and concise and also captures the essence of the brand.
- ix. Design templates and create brand standards for your marketing materials (packaging): you need to use the same colour scheme, logo placement and look. This must be consistent in all graphic works. Fliers, posters and billboards are all a contributing factor to the brand and so must be critically studied before created. The most essential thing is that, you must be consistent.
- x. Be true to your brand, be consistent: Kapferer states that, “Brand bonding occurs when customers experience the company as delivering on its benefits and

promise” (Kapferer, 1998, p.420). Advertising has a role to play in branding but the fact is that, a brand is created by the brand experience rather than advertising.

- xi. Marketing style: this is another platform that gives an impression of whom your company is perceived to be. You must use the platforms that can reach your target audience. You must also use platforms which give the right impression about your organization. Publicist mannerisms also fall under this section. Kuenyehia mentions that employees (public relation officer, ushers, actors etc) are key to a brand. Building a brand could go as far as the styles of dresses ushers wear at a performance. The period it takes to publicize a theatre production prior to the performance may also be considered when branding. The media houses that theatre practitioners liaise and work with influence the theatre company’s brand.

4.7.3 Make your promise

Set the tone and lay the background of your promise. The letter I in Kloter’s equation which is implementation is synonymous with this step, making the promise. This basically talks about materializing the ideas of your brand. It can also be said as delivering what you have decided on paper or creating the impression you need to create. The underlying thing is integrating everything (ushers, adverts, website, logo etc) to communicate the brand effectively as planned.

4.7.4 Get feedbacks and make evaluations

After the promise has been made, it is important that one gets feedback to know if its communication has been effective. In theatre practice, one needs to get feedback from its

patrons and audiences concerning what they make of the productions and the theatre company. This mostly is influenced by their experience with productions and all other aspect including advertisement. Since an aim of brand is to convey a message vividly, it is necessary to get feedback to ensure effective communication. As a result, if there are breeches, adjustments must be made. “What distinguishes a brand from its unbranded commodity counterpart is the consumer’s perceptions and feelings about the product’s attributes and how they perform. Ultimately, a brand resides in the minds of consumers”. (Keller, 2003, p 27).

4.7.5 Maintain the promise

One aim of branding is to create connectivity with one’s consumer. Since the impression that audience and public have on a brand is based on their experience with it, it is essential that one maintains and keeps to the promise. In the book, *Performing Arts Management*, Stein & Bathurst (2008) state that;

“There can’t be any disconnect between people’s perception of your brand and the experience that they have with your product. The most successful brands are the ones that figured out a way to communicate the experience that people are going to have and consistently deliver that experience. [...] if the experience with your product does not match the expectations you’ve given customers, your branding efforts will fail”, (p.295).

Murphy (1992) also states that “Brand owners must constantly ensure that the qualities and values of their brands are maintained. They must continue to appeal to the consumer and should be developed so as to maintain their attractiveness in the changing society” (p.5).

Lastly, Kuenyehia (2012) affirms that, a brand experience is the most important aspect of the brand building. He believes that the perception of consumers will be shaped by their personal experience with the product.

4.8 Summary and Conclusion

Roverman Productions as a company have set out to be identified with a number of things. Very key to the company’s brand is the personal brand of the CEO. The company has effectively communicated some of Roverman’s brand identities. However in analysing the brand identity alongside company’s activities, they fall short in some instances. One most important thing in branding is being clear on what you stand for and knowing that everything you do influences what you stand for and thus, must be guarded. It must also be noted that brand goes beyond the physical attributes (tangibles) of a product. It most importantly has to do with the intangibles (feeling, emotional satisfaction) and the connection between a consumer and a product. Unlike other companies, theatre offers an emotional product and as a result, the best strategies have to be implemented to ensure the consumer’s satisfaction and producer’s mission. The

branding equation presented is; Research-Develop a promise-Make the promise-Get
feedbacks and evaluations-Maintain the promise.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the entire thesis and also captures in total, all issues related to the objectives of the study. The chapter also captures the challenges encountered during the research, the recommendations as well as the conclusion of the research.

5.2 Summary

Amongst the objectives of this research, clearly stated in the chapter one, the researcher is to examine the Roverman brand, investigate the branding process and strategies of the company. The idea is to disclose and access the branding strategies to reveal how effective it has been. The essence of this to help in creating a branding process guide for theatre companies in Ghana. Also, the research questions stated in the first chapter of the research have been appropriately answered in the chapter two, three, four and five.

In the chapter two, titled literature review, several issues pertaining to the research are discussed. It delves into the misconceptions about branding, what a brand is and what branding really means. It also discusses the consumer in terms of theatre. In order to discuss branding in theatre practice in Ghana, it is important that literatures on theatre in Ghana are also discussed. Furthermore, literature on the company under study, Roverman Productions, was also discussed; this was done to unearth the history and activities of the company. Also some newspaper reviews on the Roverman brand are also gathered.

Having reviewed some literatures in chapter two, the third chapter titled, methodology, identifies the research methods selected to achieve the objectives of the research. The chapter also explains and justifies the choice of research method, research design, and population of the study, sampling, research instruments, and the data analysis plan.

Further in the fourth chapter, data gathered are presented, analyzed and interpreted. Amongst the data analyzed are data on the Roverman Productions, Roverman brand, the Roverman brand identity, the Roverman brand image, the branding strategies of Roverman Productions, assessment and evaluation of the Roverman brand, and a brand building guide.

5.3 Findings

The findings of this research are aligned to the objectives of the research. There are three objectives listed in the chapter one of the research and the first is to unravel the necessary branding tools and implementations made by Roverman Productions. This was achieved mainly through interviews conducted with the Roverman staff, and some theatre professionals who have observed works of Roverman Company. Also, personal observation of activities of the Company and a few literature reviews helped in ascertaining the branding implementations of the company. The following were discovered in alliance with the above objective.

- i. The use of the personal brand of the CEO as an advantage: Roverman productions as a Company is highly dependent on the personal brand of its CEO, James Ebo Whyte. Upon speaking with the CEO of the company, his staff and some audience, it is revealed that a huge percentage of the people who patronise

- Roverman performances, do that because of a relation with Uncle Ebo. These set of audiences have listened to Uncle Ebo on radio, read his magazine or heard someone speak of him. As mentioned in the previous chapter of the thesis, the Roverman audience want to relate the company with a person and that is Ebo Whyte. In view of this, the company has identified this as an advantage and is using it to sell its brand to the audience. Upon interviewing the staff of the company, it is evident that every activity of the company is done, putting into consideration its impact on the personal brand of the CEO.
- ii. Being clear about what they stand for: Here again, the company seems to be quite clear on what they stand for or represent and that is a major feature needed in building a strong brand. Beginning from the CEO to the group members of the company, everyone seems to be clear on what the company stands for and as a result is committed in promoting that identity. This according to the Roverman staff, is able to ensure that, the company is working towards achieving its vision.
 - iii. Roverman ensures it employs people who share the Company's vision and are passionate about it: this is one of the major strategies implemented by the Roverman Company in order to maintain their brand and this is affirmed by personal observations and interviews. In the communication and maintenance of a brand, employees are very important. In order to ensure the achievement of this strategy, the Roverman Company ensures that people who are accepted as members of the Roverman group are those who are committed to the course of the company and are willing to share the vision of the company. As a result, to become a staff member, one must have been once a committed group member.

- iv. Training and workshops: In order to maintain the brand of the company, training programmes and workshops are organised to equip staff and group members of the company. This amongst the above stated are all strategies implemented by the Roverman Company to maintain its brand.

The second objective of the study is to investigate and analyze activities of Roverman Productions and its affect on the brand. In view of this, the brand identity of the Roverman Company and some other activities of the company such as collaboration deals and sponsorships have also been analyzed in the previous chapter. Aspects of the company that are analyzed are its vision and mission, values and behaviours, communication, products and service, and operations. Analysis of the Roverman brand reveals the following:

- i. Contrary to the brand identity of the company as a family entertainment producer, the company produces entertainment that serves only adults. According to the CEO of Roverman Productions, he intends the company to be known as a family entertainment producer. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, the plays produced by Roverman productions discusses, relationships, marriage, politics and trending social issues and these tend to be contents which are suitable for only adults. Even in terms of ticketing, Roverman does not make room for a family package or discounts for children. Thus, the brand identity as being a family entertainment producer has not been effectively communicated and achieved.
- ii. Upon analyzing the Roverman brand, it was revealed that just as the company has planned, it serves as a platform on which corporate brands can place and sell their

products. Sponsors are not only recognized on all media platforms but also given the chance to sell themselves and their products in the foyer. In the theatre auditorium, before the show starts until the end of the show, adverts of sponsors are projected or televised not less than twice. The Roverman Company continually comes up with new opportunities for sponsors to sell themselves

The final objective of this thesis is to develop and create through research findings, a manual for branding theatre companies in Ghana. This however, has been done in the previous chapter. The branding procedures are listed as follows;

- i. Research
- ii. Develop your promise
- iii. Make your promise
- iv. Get feedback and make evaluations
- v. Maintain the promise

5.4 Challenges

The major challenge encountered during this research is the unavailability of books in this research area. Even though business management books were available, theatre management books are not, either in the blame library or school of performing arts library. It was not only these two libraries but other libraries on the University of Ghana campus lacked relevant books for this research.

Another challenge was the lack of experts in this area of study. To help with this research, the researcher needed experts because literatures were not available. But that was also a failure.

5.5 Recommendation

I recommend that the University and the School of Performing Arts Library stocks its library with books on theatre management especially Theatre Arts branding. The relevance of branding in theatre practice cannot be over emphasized. Hence, there is the need to update literature in libraries.

I also recommend that, arts branding is included in the syllables of theatre management students in the University in order to keep students abreast with the subject.

In addition, I recommend that theatre practitioners in Ghana take interest in the subject of this research in order to improve theatre practice in Ghana. I propose that, theatre professionals should research more and write books on the subject whiles, theatre companies implement the strategy. I also encourage theatre management lecturers to also study and be abreast with the subject.

I also recommend that, in order to be very effective in creating a theatre (service) brand, audience is included in the creative process. For instance, audience can have a reading of the script before it is staged so people can ask questions. That could even be helpful to the director to make some artistic decisions. I believe that the best thing to do with any theatre brand is to find ways to engage audiences in the creative process. Have a place for them to discuss or have an interaction with the creators to be able to ask questions. Know that not everybody feels comfortable going to the theatre. There a lot of people who think they will not understand what goes on in the theatre even though they haven't even tried.

5.6 Conclusion

Branding in theatre seeks to connect a theatre group or company with its consumers; consumers not only being audience but sponsors, policy makers, media and advocates. This results in both consumer satisfaction and the achievement of a company's mission and vision. In view of this, branding creates a distinction for one's organization in its marketplace. In addition, branding creates audience loyalty and also establishes an emotional connection with the consumer. In branding, one must consider his mission and vision. Branding incorporates all aspect of a theatre company including sponsorship deals, collaborations, form and content.

Roverman Productions as an entertainment company which has its major aspect as the theatre department has engaged the branding. Furthermore, it has not totally but hugely been able to implement and maintain the brand image. As declared by the CEO of the company and his staff, the branding strategies of the company has contributed to its success. This research revealed that the Roverman brand identity has influenced the artistic work of the company. This only implies that, a company should be clear on what he wants to be identified with.

Branding a theatre company requires discipline since it can be stressful and time consuming. In building and maintaining a brand, a theatre manager ought to be clear on what the company stands for and ensure that, it is implemented in all aspects of the company.

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PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

Roverman Productions

Aseidu, Kweku. Personal Interview. Roverman Office, 19-05-2015

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National Theatre

Danso Alfred. Personal Interview. National Theatre, 15-04-2015

Frimpong, Amy. Personal Interview. National Theatre, 04-05-2015

Department of Theatre Arts

Agbovi, Vivian. Personal Interview. Legon, 28-04-2015

Gbromittah, Francis. Personal Interview. Legon, 18-05-2015

Branding Experts

Adjei Eric. Personal Interview. 15-12-2014

Osei-Tutu, John. Personal Interview. 08-04-2015

Theatre Professionals

Ahlijah, Robert. Personal Interview. Legon, 23-04-2015

Dartey, Solomon. Personal Interview. Legon, 10-04-2015

APENDIX

Interview Recruitment Letter and Consent Form – Roverman Productions’ Staff

Date: 16th March, 2015

Benedicta Mawutorny Adzraku

Graduate Student

Theatre Arts Department, School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana

Dear Sir/Madam:

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Branding in Theatre Marketing in Ghana: the Case of Roverman Productions*, conducted by Benedicta Adzraku from the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana. The research is geared towards developing a manual for branding theatre companies.

Many theatre companies in Ghana are not making use of marketing strategies such as branding. The misconceptions about the essence of theatre in society will be corrected with effective branding since branding is geared towards consumer perception. Therefore, by interviewing key informants, the researcher hopes to collect, analyse and interpret data relevant for this research. Roverman Productions stands out when it comes to branding in theatre practice and thus has been chosen for a case study in this research. Interview with key staff members will help to unravel the branding strategies implemented, how it has been managed over the years, how every section of the company works in the direction of the brand, and how branding which has widely been used in the business world has been negotiated in the arts.

You have been selected to participate in this study because of your leadership/position and experiences with Roverman Productions. If you decide to take part in this research project, you will be asked to participate in an in-person interview, lasting between 15 to 30 minutes, from March to April 2015. Interview venues and time schedules will be scheduled at your convenience. In addition to taking hand written notes with your permission, the researcher will audio tape conversations for transcription and validation purposes. You may also be asked to provide follow-up information through phone calls or email.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your consent to participate in this interview, as indicated below, demonstrates your willingness to have your name used in any resulting documents and

publications and to relinquish confidentiality. Your participation is voluntary. I anticipate that the results of the study will be of great benefit to theatre companies and the arts sector as a whole. However, I cannot guarantee that you, personally, will receive any benefits from this research.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the researcher at (0242274208/0236844580) or bennyetor@gmail.com or Dr, Grace Uche Adinku at 0233260260). If not, please read and initial each of the following to indicate your consent.

----- I consent to the use of audiotapes and note taking during my interview.

----- I consent to my identification as a participant in this study.

----- I consent to the potential use of quotations from the interview.

----- I consent to the use of information I provide regarding the organisation with which I am associated.

----- I wish to have the opportunity to review and possibly revise my comments and the information that I provide prior to these data appearing in the final version of any publications that may result from this study.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty, that you have received a copy of this form, and that you are not waiving any legal claims, right or remedies. You have been given a copy of this letter to keep.

Name: -----

Signature: -----

Date: -----

Thank you in advance for your interest and consideration.

Sincerely,

Benedicta Mawutorny Adzraku

Graduate Student

School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana

Sample Interview Questions for Roverman Production

(RP's) Staff

1. What does Roverman Productions seek to be known for?
2. In your opinion, what is branding to Roverman Productions?
3. How did the whole concept of branding Roverman Productions start ?
4. How is the brand of the company communicated to every staff member?
5. Does every staff member work towards projecting the brand, if yes, how?
6. Has the brand been well communicated? If yes, how do you know (explain)?
7. What extent, have you employed branding?
8. What are your publicity channels and how do you communicate your brand through those channels?
9. Does your name, logo, slogan and website reflect what you want to be known for?
10. What is the style of plays you produce? Does it reflect your brand?
11. Do you think branding is necessary in theatre practice?
12. Of what essence has branding been to your organization?
13. What are the branding strategies you have implemented?
14. Has all these strategies been effective? If yes, how?
15. How has your organization been able to implement branding in theatre practice?
(a fairly new area in theatre in Ghana)

Interview Recruitment Letter and Consent Form – Branding Experts

Date: 16th March, 2015

Benedicta Mawutornyo Adzraku

Graduate Student

Theatre Arts Department, School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana

Dear Sir/Madam:

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Branding in Theatre Marketing in Ghana: the Case of Roverman Productions*, conducted by Benedicta Adzraku from the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana. The research is geared towards developing a manual for branding theatre companies.

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You have been selected to participate in this study because of your expertise in branding and experience with Roverman Productions. If you decide to take part in this research project, you will be asked to participate in an in-person interview, lasting between 15 to 30 minutes, from March to April 2015. Interview venues and time schedules will be scheduled at your convenience. In addition to taking hand written notes with your permission, the researcher will audio tape conversations for transcription and validation purposes. You may also be asked to provide follow-up information through phone calls or email.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your consent to participate in this interview, as indicated below, demonstrates your willingness to have your name used in any resulting documents and publications and to relinquish confidentiality. Your participation is voluntary. I anticipate that the results of the study will be of great benefit to theatre companies and the arts

sector as a whole. However, I cannot guarantee that you, personally, will receive any benefits from this research.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the researcher at (0242274208/0236844580) or bennyetor@gmail.com or Dr, Grace Uche Adinku at 0233260260). If not, please read and initial each of the following to indicate your consent.

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----- I consent to my identification as a participant in this study.

----- I consent to the potential use of quotations from the interview.

----- I consent to the use of information I provide regarding the organisation with which I am associated.

----- I wish to have the opportunity to review and possibly revise my comments and the information that I provide prior to these data appearing in the final version of any publications that may result from this study.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty, that you have received a copy of this form, and that you are not waiving any legal claims, right or remedies. You have been given a copy of this letter to keep.

Name: -----

Signature: -----

Date: -----

Thank you in advance for your interest and consideration.

Sincerely,

Benedicta Mawutornyo Adzraku

Graduate Student

School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana

Sample Interview Questions for Branding Experts

1. What is brand?
2. What is branding?
3. What is the process of branding?
4. What do you make of the Roverman brand?
5. What branding strategies do you see Roverman implementing?
6. What will you suggest are the best strategies in building a theatre brand?

Interview Recruitment Letter and Consent Form – National Theatre Staff

Date: 16th March, 2015

Benedicta Mawutornyo Adzraku

Graduate Student

Theatre Arts Department, School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana

Dear Sir/Madam:

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Branding in Theatre Marketing in Ghana: the Case of Roverman Productions*, conducted by Benedicta Adzraku from the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana. The research is geared towards developing a manual for branding theatre companies.

Many theatre companies in Ghana are not making use of marketing strategies such as branding. The misconceptions about the essence of theatre in society will be corrected with effective branding since branding is geared towards consumer perception. Therefore, by interviewing key informants, the researcher hopes to collect, analyse and interpret data relevant for this research. Roverman Productions stands out when it comes to branding in theatre practice and thus has been chosen for a case study in this research. Interview with key staff members will help to unravel the branding strategies implemented, how it has been managed over the years, how every section of the company works in the direction of the brand, and how branding which has widely been used in the business world has been negotiated in the arts.

You have been selected to participate in this study because of your experience and most importantly, your association with Roverman Productions. If you decide to take part in this research project, you will be asked to participate in an in-person interview, lasting between 15 to 30 minutes, from March to April 2015. Interview venues and time schedules will be scheduled at your convenience. In addition to taking hand written notes with your permission, the researcher will audio tape conversations for transcription and validation purposes. You may also be asked to provide follow-up information through phone calls or email.

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sector as a whole. However, I cannot guarantee that you, personally, will receive any benefits from this research.

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Name: -----

Signature: -----

Date: -----

Thank you in advance for your interest and consideration.

Sincerely,

Benedicta Mawutornyo Adzraku

Graduate Student

School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana

Sample Interview Questions for National Theatre Staff

1. Based on your experience with the Roverman Company, what do you make of their brand?
2. What do you observe are the brand values of Roverman Productions?
3. Why does your institution collaborate with Roverman Productions Company?

Interview Recruitment Letter and Consent Form – Theatre Professionals

Date: 16th March, 2015

Benedicta Mawutornyo Adzraku

Graduate Student

Theatre Arts Department, School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana

Dear Sir/Madam:

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Branding in Theatre Marketing in Ghana: the Case of Roverman Productions*, conducted by Benedicta Adzraku from the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana. The research is geared towards developing a manual for branding theatre companies.

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You have been selected to participate in this study because of your training in theatre and, experience with Roverman Productions. If you decide to take part in this research project, you will be asked to participate in an in-person interview, lasting between 15 to 30 minutes, from March to April 2015. Interview venues and time schedules will be scheduled at your convenience. In addition to taking hand written notes with your permission, the researcher will audio tape conversations for transcription and validation purposes. You may also be asked to provide follow-up information through phone calls or email.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your consent to participate in this interview, as indicated below, demonstrates your willingness to have your name used in any resulting documents and publications and to relinquish confidentiality. Your participation is voluntary. I anticipate that the results of the study will be of great benefit to theatre companies and the arts

sector as a whole. However, I cannot guarantee that you, personally, will receive any benefits from this research.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the researcher at (0242274208/0236844580) or bennyetor@gmail.com or Dr, Grace Uche Adinku at 0233260260). If not, please read and initial each of the following to indicate your consent.

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Name: -----

Signature: -----

Date: -----

Thank you in advance for your interest and consideration.

Sincerely,

Benedicta Mawutornyo Adzraku

Graduate Student

School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana

Sample Interview Questions for Theatre Professionals

1. What is your idea of branding in theatre practice?
2. What do you make of the Roverman brand terms of content, form and marketing?
3. What is your assessment of Roverman theatre performances?
4. What will be your suggestions for effectively branding in theatre practice?