

**International Management  
Masters Thesis No 2000:44**

**Organising for  
EVENT MARKETING  
in Order to Change Brand Image  
and Increase Sales**

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## Abstract

*“A product is something that is made in a factory; a brand is something that is bought by a customer. A product can be copied by a competitor; a brand is unique. A product can be quickly outdated; a successful brand is timeless.”*

Stephen King  
WPP Group, London

Although there is a discussion of the new economy, growing and transforming rapidly, still most global industries today are part of matured marketplaces, in which the actors have set positions. There are changes in these industries through mergers and acquisitions, however the majority of the mergers and acquisitions, will not affect the brand positioning but only the ownership.

Most of the traditional global firms that are acting in the market places have well-known brands that carry a certain value from a customer’s perspective. However, the brand might have different interpretations in different countries. Still, core values exist and it is these core values that define what the brand stands for. In some occasions, the core values have created the brand identity and this brand identity could have been there for very long time. How can a company change the brand image and still keep the core values?

One example is Volvo Car Corporation. Their heritage is:

*“Cars are driven by people. The guiding principle behind everything we make at Volvo, therefore, is and must remain – safety”.*

Gustaf Larson and Assar Gabrielsson  
(The founders of Volvo)

A heritage that has characterised Volvo brand identity to become what it stands for today. In some countries today, Volvo cars are interpreted as safe square boxes that go on and on like a tractor. However, Volvo Car Corporation has decided to change brand image and take a step from the overall car industry to

become a premium brand world wide and at the same time increase their sold car volume by 50%. Is this a goal that can be achieved?

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Malin Andersson & Anders Wesslau  
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## **1. Introduction**

*In our master thesis in International Management at the Graduate Business School, we want to investigate how multinational companies need to organise themselves for work with Event Marketing. We have decided to focus on the premium car industry, and our primary study will be on Volvo Car Corporation.*

### **1.1. Background: New Demands On Marketing**

Today there might be a problem when using mass communication marketing tools such as paper advertising, TV commercials and pure sponsoring. Lots of money is spent on broad marketing communication but a company does not know who will receive the message, in which situation and most important, how the message is perceived (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 1997). Of course target groups will be included if a company has placed itself in the right media, however the message might be interpreted in a totally different way than it was intended. Also, mass communication will not provide a company with its own right to the consumer; rather the reality is that there are several actors competing for the attention. Depending on the context of the organisation, the problems with mass communication differ. For a new company, brand or product, mass communication can be seen as a tool to create awareness and therefore not a problem but rather a solution to reach as many consumers as possible by just showing the brand. However, in a mature market the situation might be the opposite.

Another aspect that affects the marketing tools of today is the change in people's way of living. Due to that we today have less hours that could be counted as spare-time, many of us search for quality time once we have time off. When having time-off we do not want to waste much time trying to find information about new products etc, rather we want to make the purchase

process as easy as possible. This is something many companies have used when exposing on the Internet.

On the other hand, the use of Internet as a communication tool stresses non-contact between people, and as we see it the communication can be divided into two separate sides. One side is the relation building/networking side, which emphasises human beings to search for contact and meet in order to achieve results within work or in private life. The other side is to avoid all unnecessary time wasting communication. For example, instead of visiting the local tourist agencies people search the Internet for information. For companies to be able to reach through to the customer or the prospect, companies need to change the way of marketing themselves.

During recent years, a new communication channel, Event Marketing, has emerged that might increase the possibilities to reach the consumer. The traditional sponsoring, to pay for or place money in an event in order to have the brand shown, has developed to become more interactive. Today the companies have realised the advantages of using sponsorship as a way to interact the brand and the consumer, by creating experience.

According to Model (2000), marketing director at Saab-Opel in Sweden, the customers today seem to have less time to seek information and visit places. Inviting people to come to an event might not give the result that was intended just because people do not have the time. Rather, events should be created in an environment that is natural in the on going every day process that the customer lives in. A good example of this is the “Fly and Try” campaign that Saab Automobile AB is doing right now. For people travelling to Arlanda and Gothenburg, “The Fly and Try” offers the possibility to test-drive a new Saab of preferred choice. No waist of time for the customer, rather he/she gets a great opportunity to drive a fun car instead of having to go by bus or Taxi. (Camenius and Lundmark, 2000)

Event Marketing seems to offer a unique possibility to create a human dimension to the product in a limited situation. By attending an event the company creates an area for the human dimension to be expressed. Compared

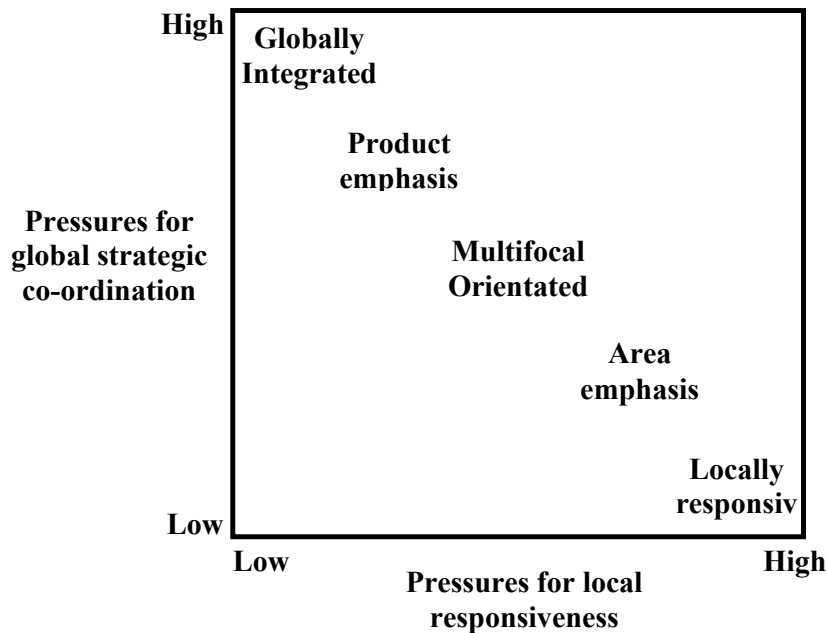
to the traditional methods of marketing, such as advertisements, where the company does not have the possibility to adjust to specific ad hoc situations, the human factor in events provides the company with a chance to adopt the message depending on the needs of the customer. Furthermore, Event Marketing could also be adjusted to fulfil brand building and sale stimulation (Behrer and Larsson, 1998).

## **1.2. Global Integration or Local Responsiveness In Event Marketing?**

According to Dalrymple and Parsons (2000), an on going controversy is whether the firms should pursue a global or localised strategy in their international marketing activities. Global marketing emphasises selling the same product with the same ads all over the world. This approach implies that the world is becoming homogenised and everyone wants the same things. A reason why global marketing is so attractive today is that global communications networks are opening access to more markets. Localised marketing, on the other hand implies that customers' needs are different in each country, and that the company should adjust both its product and its ads to meet local market conditions.

As firms pursue the economies of scope, they constantly face a trade-off between the advantages of being responsive to market conditions in their nondomestic markets and the advantages of integrating their operations across the multiple markets in which they operate. On the one hand, local responsiveness can help the firms be successful in addressing the local needs of nondomestic customers, thereby increasing demand for a firm's current products or services. On the other hand, the full exploitation of the economies of scale that are created by selling a firm's current products or services in nondomestic markets, can occur only if there is tight integration across all the markets in which a firm operates. However, the full value of these economies of scope is realised only when they are transferred from a particular domestic market into the operations of a firm in all its other markets. (Barney, 1997)

**Figure 1-1: The global integration-local responsiveness framework**



**Source: Based on material in Prahalad and Doz (1987).**

Two authors, Bartlett and Ghosal (1989), argue that the traditional trade-off between global integration and local responsiveness can be replaced by a transnational strategy that exploits all the advantages of both global integration and local responsiveness. Firms implementing a transnational strategy treat their global operations as an integrated network of distributed and interdependent resources and capabilities. In this context, a firm's operations in each country are not simply independent activities attempting to respond to local needs; they are also repositories of ideas, technologies, and management approaches that the firm might be able to use and apply in its other global operations. Put differently, operations in different countries can be thought of as "experiments" in the creation of core competencies. Some of these experiments will work and generate important new core competencies; other will fail to have such benefits for a firm.

Furthermore, a company's ability to build new strategic capabilities depends on the existing assets and capabilities that it has built up over a long period of time. And these attributes, referred to as the administrative heritage, are not

easily changed. The way a company can respond to the changes in the environment is constrained by the internal capabilities, which are shaped by the administrative heritage. Due to this, companies have to understand the nature of their administrative heritage and develop capabilities that are consistent with their heritage. (Prahalad and Doz, 1987)

Applying the same thoughts to marketing as general phenomena and especially to Event Marketing, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999) mean that economies of scale can be enjoyed when creating a single global marketing campaign. When only using one centralised agency as well as strategy, benefits such as same message can also be achieved. However, consolidating all marketing to one agency and developing a global theme can cause problems that can outweigh any advantages. First of all, it is sometimes more important to centralise produced campaigns and then adapt them locally. Moreover, cultural differences may make it hard to pull off global campaigns. An example of this could be illustrated when Volvo were thinking about launching the S60 “ReVolvolution” campaign worldwide. The campaign fits the west countries splendidly but using the word “Revolvolution” in Russia can be a disaster.

Another aspect is that not all brands have the same images everywhere. For example, in Sweden Volvo is an everyday car while in Brazil a Volvo car is seen as an exclusive car which is three times as expensive in comparison to Sweden. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999) illustrate a further example of this; Honda means quality and reliability in the United States, but in Japan, where quality is a given for most cars, Honda represents speed, youth and energy. Organisations working globally need to have openness for differences between countries and the differences will vary.

For a transnational corporation working with brand building, the process must include a mechanism that ties global strategies to local strategies. One possible way of doing this is to use a top-down approach, which for instance Sony Mobile does. A top-down approach begins with a global brand strategy followed by local strategies and bottom-up approach emphasises the opposite. Important to know is that a country brand strategy can add elements to the global strategy that in turn could modify the brand identity. These elements do

not necessarily have to be positive for the company in a long-term perspective. One example is if a manager of a Mobil Fuel brand wants to emphasize that the brand gives an honest gallon (because other fuel brands are not considered reliable in their measurements) he would add “honest measures” to the country brand identity and in another country where the fuel brands are considered reliable this added value to brand will have the opposite effect. (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 1999)

Question arises when Volvo Car Corporation, operating across borders, should organise for Event Marketing. According to Dicken (1998), the significance of the transnational corporations, especially the very large global corporation, lies in three basic characteristics:

- Its co-ordination and control of various stages of marketing chains within and between different countries;
- Its potential ability to take advantage of geographical differences in the distribution of factors of marketing (e.g. capital, labour) and in state policies (e.g. taxes, trade barriers, subsidiaries, etc.)
- Its potential geographical flexibility – an ability to switch and to reswitch the organisation’s resources and operations between locations in an international, even a global scale.

Looking back to the goals for Volvo Car Corporation in the future, we see that they both want to change their brand image and increase sales worldwide. Since Volvo Car Corporation already today are working with a trade-off between global integration and local responsiveness, they could be referred to as a transnational corporation. But how is Volvo Car Corporation supposed to organise to for Event Marketing? Is there a possibility to combine the two goals and use Event Marketing to reach both brand building and sales stimulation?

### **1.3. Purpose with the study**

The purpose with our thesis is to provide Volvo Car Corporation with information about how to organise for working with Event Marketing, having

in mind the challenges to increase the sold car unit in combination with a changed brand image. Furthermore we also want to develop a general understanding for Event Marketing. In order to achieve our purpose our intention is as follow:

Firstly, we want to make theoretical study of Event Marketing in combination with brand building and sale stimulation.

Secondly, we want to research event agencies' opinions on event marketing and especially how they believe a large organisation, as Volvo Car Corporation, should organise themselves when working with Event Marketing.

Thirdly, we want to study how other car manufactures than Volvo view and organise themselves for Event Marketing.

Fourthly, we want to study how Volvo Car Corporation is working with Event Marketing today as well as how they are willing to work with Event Marketing in the future.

Fifthly, we intend to analyse the gathered information and use the analysis as a base for a proposal how large organisations in general, and Volvo Car Corporation specifically, should organise themselves

Finally, we also intend to gather ideas about Event Marketing that could be useful for Volvo Car Corporation. However, this last purpose will not be presented in the thesis handed in to the school.

We intend to combine the goals of Volvo Car Corporation for tomorrow, and see if Event Marketing could be a good solution in reaching the set goals. The intention is to look at organisational factors, should Volvo Car Corporation for instance build a unique Event Marketing unit, or integrate Event Marketing into an already existing working method?

## **1.4. Problem statement**

Should a global company centralise or decentralise decisions about Event Marketing?

How should Volvo Car Corporation organise themselves when working with Event Marketing?



## **2. Method**

*In order for the reader to understand our thoughts behind this thesis, how we work but also why we have chosen the approach we have, we intend to use this chapter to describe the ideas behind the thesis. The appearance of the method chapter is that it starts with the chosen theories followed by the empiric interviews, and then the analytic approach. We will end the chapter with a disposition to make the thesis easier to follow.*

### **2.1. Theoretical approach**

In order to delineate what has been done within Event Marketing in the premium car industry we have used secondary data such as books and articles that deal with Event Marketing in general. The reason for this is to create an understanding for both the reader and us. There has not been much written about Event Marketing, however, we decided to base our study on how to organise for Event Marketing upon the brand. The reason for this is not only that the brand is the platform for all marketing activities but also that the goal for Volvo Car Corporation in the future is to change their brand image from being a middle brand to become a premium brand. Together with this goal Volvo Car Corporation also intend to increase their sold car units by 50%. Also, we know that Volvo Car Corporation has got a strong heritage concerning safety, environment and quality that they want to keep as well, since the Volvo heritage has made Volvo into the 75<sup>th</sup> strongest brand in the world.

We believe that since the brand is the platform for all marketing activities, and Event Marketing is about experiencing together with added values for the customer, correct brand communication must be emphasised throughout the event. In our theoretical approach we have investigated the importance of the brand identity together with how the brand should be integrated in the organisation in order to communicate the right message to the consumer. Hence, we have chosen to view the problem from a management perspective,

discussing which key issues the managers need to focus on when organising the event to communicate a persistent brand identity.

Throughout the thesis and in the premium car industry we see Volvo Car Corporation as one brand. Volvo Car Corporation is owned by Ford Motor Company and therefore separated from Volvo AB. We are aware that Volvo AB has several brands such as Volvo Penta, Volvo Trucks, Volvo Construction Equipment etc. However, since Volvo Car Corporation is a brand within the Ford Motor Company and we do not see every single car model as a brand, the most logical for us is to see Volvo Car Corporation as a single brand. This is further supported by the fact that every model in the range uses the Volvo name in combination with a model mark.

## **2.2. Empirical approach**

### **2.2.1. *Research***

The research was qualitative, meaning that the interviewees were free to discuss what they see as most important regarding Event Marketing, the benefits of it, how a car company should use event marketing and also if there is a future for Event Marketing or not. However, there were some key issues that we wanted to discuss and if the interviewees did not address the issues during interviews, we asked them anyway. Totally we did 19 interviews, two with car manufactures, five with event agencies and 12 within Volvo Car Corporation.

Since we wanted to discuss the future of Event Marketing in the premium car industry and written information was “old”, we saw it as important to gather ad hoc information from event agencies to see the trends in general and how the event agencies believe that Volvo Car Corporation should work with and organise themselves for Event Marketing. In order to learn from more mature Event Marketing industries we decided to interview five Event Agencies that were recommended by our facilitator at Volvo Car Corporation. They all are

located in Sweden and have worked with events for several years. All the interviewees, except one, are owners or/and managers of the agencies.

However, in order for the reader, us, and Volvo Car Corporation, to get a deeper and more general understanding of Event Marketing within the premium car industry, we decided to expand our research horizon by making a comparison to other car manufactures as well. We believe that every organisation needs to create a unique way of working that is suitable for their context, however, in order to keep and even increase the position in the premium car industry, it is also important to look at what others do. Therefore we interviewed two key people dealing with event marketing for competing brands. By looking at competitor's way of working, Volvo Car Corporation can learn the trends in the car industry and what not to do. We did interviews with Saab Automobile AB and Audi AG and asked them to describe how they view Event Marketing and organise themselves to achieve good results.

Since the case company, Volvo Car Corporation, that we have studied, is divided into different market units we decided to interview executives on each market. The reason for this was to see if there is a common understanding for what Event Marketing is and how it should be used. Further, we also interviewed people working with different responsibility areas within the global marketing department at Volvo Car Corporation. Our facilitator at Volvo Car Corporation helped us both to select whom to interview and also notified the chosen interviewees in advance.

Since our purpose was to find out how Volvo Car Corporation can use a central Event Marketing unit, we thought it was of great importance to study the differences in opinion among the interviewees. When we discussed Event Marketing within Volvo Car Corporation we also asked about the history of marketing as a whole. The reason for doing this was to see if there were any differences in the opinions among the markets. We believe that if a company wants to use central units there is a need for a common understanding of what the company wants to achieve in the long run as well as how to get there.

All the questions we focused on during the interviews are enclosed divided into event agencies, competitors and Volvo Car Corporation. Apart from the questions we also ended the interviews showing the Event Marketing model by Behrer and Larsson (1998), and had a discussion around it. We only prepared the interviewees at Volvo Car Corporation that we were going to interview them about marketing in general and Event Marketing specifically. The reason for this was that we wanted the interviewees to speak openly from their heart about what they associate with Event Marketing. We had to sign a secrecy agreement with Volvo Car Corporation otherwise some interviewees would not have let us interview them. Therefore there are details that we are not allowed to discuss in this thesis. On the other hand signing the agreement gave us the opportunity to deepen our discussions, which made us more mature in the subject.

We did not know how much time we would have with the interviewees from the event agencies and car companies. Therefore we decided to send out the interview guides beforehand, and this was also a demand from the car companies otherwise they would not participate.

### **2.2.2. *Reliability***

We are aware that we have done research in a sensitive area; therefore we were a bit worried how much reliable information the interviews would provide. Firstly, none of the interviewed agencies are working with Volvo Car Corporation today but might want to have them as a customer in the future. This could have influenced the answers given by them. On the other hand, we received comments, as “We are too small to have Volvo Car Corporation as a client” and “To have Volvo Car Corporation as our customer would take all our resources.” Though, it should be remembered that the agencies still have their brand reputation to think about and the answers given to us could be how the event agencies wants to be perceived rather than how they really work.

Secondly, the interviews that made us most worried were the ones with Saab Automobile and Audi AG since they are competitors to Volvo Car Corporation. Before we started to contact the car manufactures we had a long discussion

whether we should present ourselves as students only or as Volvo Car Corporation representatives. When we questioned our facilitator at Volvo Car Corporation, we agreed that it was the best to tell the whole truth. We were recommended to offer the competitors a chance to take part of the final report only regarding the competitor's view on Event Marketing.

Once we met the interviewees we realised that our nervous behaviour had been overreacted. The interviewees were open and discussed issues that we never thought they would. Our interview guide was quite narrow, since we thought we would get less than an hour with the interviewees. However, we got much more time and therefore we saw the opportunity to talk not only about Event Marketing but also on what the competitors think about exhibitions in the future. This is due to the fact that Volvo Car Corporation as well as other companies and media are discussing the relevance of Motor Shows, if their effect matches the money spent.

We are aware that having sent the interview guides in advance gave the interviewees the possibility to prepare themselves for the interviews. We see both positive and negative aspects by doing this, the positive aspect is that the interviewees had the chance to get acquainted with the subject and therefore provide us with more correct information. On the other hand, negative is that the answers could be too well prepared and the openness lost. But none of the interviewees had any written answers; rather the interviewees seemed to speak openly.

All external interviews took place outside Volvo Car Corporation. The interviewees set the time and place for the interviews; therefore all except two interviews took place at their home offices. Still, the two interviews that did not take place at their home office were done in a suitable environment; Sandberg Event Synergi was interviewed at the marketing exhibition in Stockholm and Audi AG was interviewed at their stand at the Paris Motor Show. The reason for this was that we wanted the interviewees to feel comfortable and relaxed.

The internal interviews, except three, took place at Volvo Car Corporation offices, in face-to-face conversation or conference telephone (United States and

Japan). Two of the three interviews that did not take place at Volvo Car Corporation offices were still in a Volvo Environment; they took place at the S 60 test drive in Montreux. The S 60 test drive is an internal event for the Volvo Car Corporation Markets to experience the comparison between the S 60 and the closest competitor cars. The last interview took place at SAS Radisson Hotel in Gothenburg, but we feel that this environment did not affect the interviewee since he has worked within Volvo Car Corporation for nearly 30 years and is familiar with the hotel.

During the interviews we chose to use a small but handy tape recorder. The reason for this was that we did several interviews and wanted to focus on writing down certain keywords. Still, we wanted to have all information saved in order to make sure that we do not give away information that is false. We have found that this is coherent with Yin (1994) when saying that the use of tape-recorders offers more correct interpretation of an interview than other methods known. We had a systematic approach when listening to the tape, searching for information that could be placed under certain key concepts. Therefore it felt secure to use a tape-recorder.

We wanted to make sure that it was OK to record the interviews and also see if there were any negative reactions, therefore we asked the interviewees if they had any problems with it. We did not get any negative reaction at all, on the contrary, all the interviewees emphasised that using tape recorder is a must when doing interviews. It was almost as if they would have been disappointed if we had not recorded the interviews.

Our facilitator at Volvo Car Corporation selected all our interviewees except the car manufactures and two internal since the facilitator had a better pre-understanding of whom to interview regarding Event Marketing. We are aware that this type of selection might have affected the result since the facilitator also brought up the thesis subject. However, the interviewees selected have high positions and we hope they have the potential and the interest to provide us with the necessary information placing Volvo Car Corporation in first position. Further, all the interviewees are anonymous which we further believe enhances the reliability.

### **2.3. Analytical approach**

The first issue that we had to deal with was the amount of information that we had gathered from the interviews. The average interview took about one and half hours, which gave us much information. Information that could be seen as qualitative information for this thesis, however, some information will only be used in a separate report for Volvo Car Corporation. Also, some information is classified and therefore not disclosed in this thesis. The classifying made it harder for us but we have created knowledge and this gives us a deeper understanding of the subject. Still, we hope that we have disclosed enough information for the reader to follow our thoughts.

Traditionally, a thesis has separate empiric and analytic sections. However we decided to integrate the empiric with the analytic section in order to make it easier for the reader. Furthermore, we wanted to use the expert knowledge within event agencies and competing car manufactures, as an added opinion to the theory. This has to do with the fact that the area is developing quickly and there is not much written about Event Marketing. By using both theory and empiric in combination we received a more up to date information base when analysing how global organisations in general, and Volvo Car Corporation in specific should organise when working with Event Marketing. Also, if we had chosen to use the traditional sections we would have had redundancy in some parts and we felt this would make our thesis difficult and boring for the reader.

We decided to divide the analysis into three key concepts that we saw as important when discussing how an organisation in general and Volvo Car Corporation specifically should organise when using Event Marketing in their marketing mix. The first key concept is Event Marketing, where we studied the interviewee's opinion about what Event Marketing is. The second key concept is Centralised or Decentralised, where we investigated how the interviewees mean an organisation should organise for working with Event Marketing.

Since Event Marketing could have different purposes and all marketing should be based upon the brand, our third key concept was to study the interviewee's opinion about brand in combination with Event Marketing.

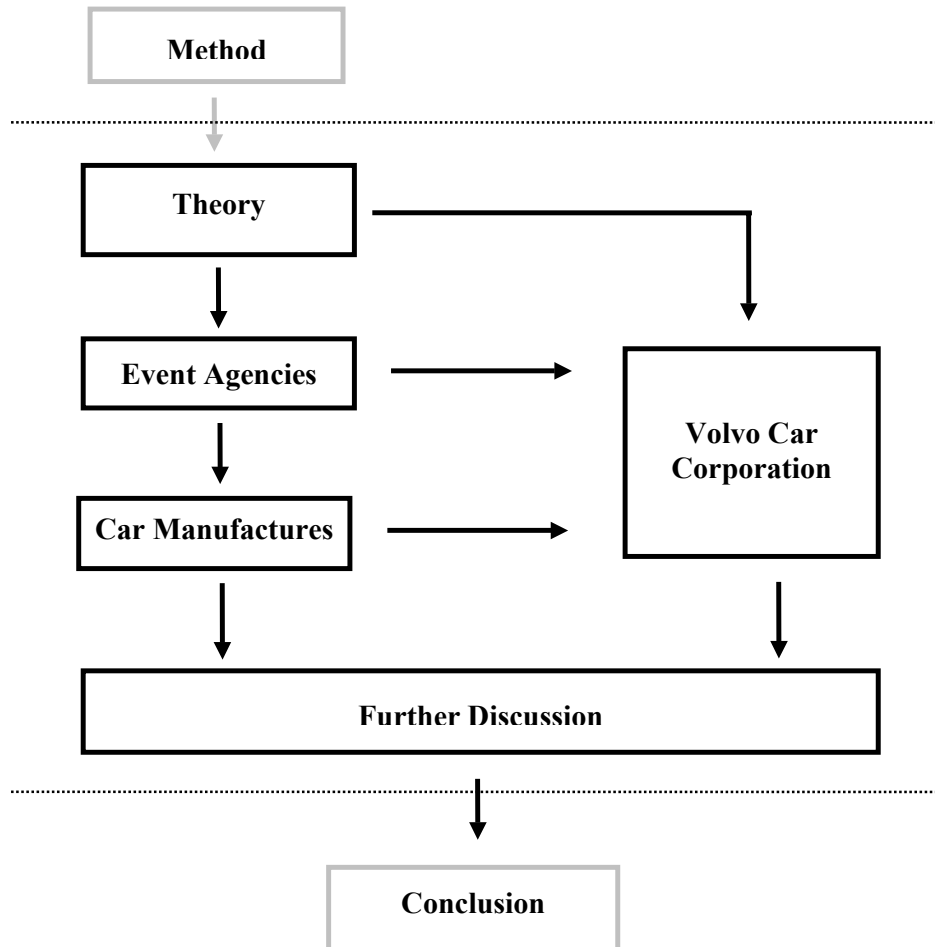
Our aim was to combine the three different sections, that is the event agencies, the car manufacturers, and Volvo Car Corporation, in a further discussion. Since we, during our research, have realised the importance of having a human dimension in events, we decided to deepen the analysis in this subject.



### 2.3.1. *Disposition*

To facilitate the reading we have chosen to illustrate part of the thesis structure in the model below.

**Figure 2-1: Disposition of Analyses and Further Discussion**



### 2.4. **Limitations**

Since we are attending the International Management program, we have chosen a strategic management perspective. Therefore we focus on increasing the values of the brand through Event Marketing in the long run, rather than how every single event should be organised. Also, when discussing economics of

scales we do not mean from a financial perspective, instead we discuss increased value of the brand that in turn will upgrade the sales.

Furthermore we have not touched upon measurement tools of Event Marketing counting sold products, since we see this as a totally different area that could be elaborated in another thesis. We have decided not to analyse different event ideas and how they specifically affect the brand. The reason for this is that even if we intended to make a proposal for Volvo Car Corporation, we still want to be able to draw more general conclusions. Finally, when discussing brand equity we decided not to bring up the value dimension brand equity but only the consumer dimension.

We have decided not to present how Volvo Car Corporation is organised for Event Marketing today since we wanted to study the subject with an open mind, without preconceived ideas.

### 3. Event Marketing and Brand

*We will start this chapter by discussing Event Marketing, the concept, differentiation or focus and the different purposes from the prior research. Further we will discuss the brand with a focus on brand identity, brand communication and global brand leadership.*

#### 3.1. Event Marketing

*We intend to discuss Event Marketing with Behrer and Larsson (1998) as platform, however we will use other authors as well. In The Concept we will discuss the subject Event Marketing and how Event Marketing in general can benefit organisations. Then we move on to the discussion of different purposes with Event Marketing in Differentiation and Focus as well in Brand Building and Sales Stimulation.*

##### 3.1.1. *The concept of Event Marketing*

More and more companies are interested in Event Marketing today. Event Marketing can be anything from product tasting in stores to customer seminars with education on the schedule. **The common factor of all activities is that they provide experiences and stimulate all senses. The big difference between reading about fireworks and experiencing them is the actual experience. The core of Event Marketing is the possibility to give the consumer positive experiences in connection with the company or its products.** (Lundmark, 1998)

Essunger and Lövberg (1998), support that there is a need from the customers to be given more valuable information by the companies. They mean that it must also be a goal from the company to provide the customers with added values since the competition today is increasing and in order to be seen and heard, companies need to be **honest and clear in their communication.** However being clear is not enough. There are many players on the market and in order to be seen, the message or the way the message is communicated **must be unique.**

Behrer and Larsson (1998) mean that when using events, companies get the possibility to have their own-right to the consumer during the duration of the event. This means that if a company manage to get the consumer to attend the event, the distortion from the competitors will be gone or at least minimised during the duration of the event. Though, the own-right thought is not applicable if more than one company, depending on what kind of company it is, are using the event.

Wildhuss, board member of the Swedish Event Association, contends that events are different types of meetings; a party, a seminar, or a happening. The advantage with an event is the personal meeting; to face the customer and build relations that no videoconference ever could manage. Though, Wildhuss, points out that the most important is to communicate the brand identity of the company, Event Marketing is not something new, what is new is that it has become more business oriented rather than a publicity stunt, or a pure sponsorship. (Beertema, 1999)

One of the greatest advantages with using Event Marketing is the possibility to add more content to the traditional marketing mix. Events are not only communicating information that should lead to increased values, but rather by using events a company can actually do something that adds value to the customer and/or other external factors. An example is that if a company is sponsoring a soccer tournament for kids, the company not only spread their message but also brings value to the kids that attend the tournament. This will contribute to the brand building on an overall level. (Behrer and Larsson, 1998)

Behrer and Larsson (1998) mean that the consumers of today have become more demanding regarding the content in the marketing from the companies. The authors believe that the consumers of today need more content and value in the information that they receive from marketing activities. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999), further support this, when they say that there is too much information today and consumer desire more than just persuasion since there are often many alternative brands on the market. In order to get away from persuading communication, the companies will have to add a value for the consumer, create expectations and build relations between customers and

organisations. Behrer and Larsson (1998) mean that using Event Marketing as part of the marketing mix could reach all these factors.

### ***3.1.2. Differentiation and Focus in Event Marketing***

Event Marketing has several advantages with multiple purposes, which normal marketing media do not have. For example, when advertising in a magazine, a company needs to decide which message they want to communicate as well as with whom they want to communicate. For companies using differentiation as a competitive advantage, spreading several messages in many different magazines, the result might not cover investment. On the other hand, for companies using focus as a basic strategy, the cost for gathering information about the specific target group must match the possibility to actually reach the right segment. Depending on how Event Marketing is used both differentiation and focus can be achieved. (Behrer and Larsson, 1998)

There are two major differences when using events. Either the events are pre-communicated; the company have a possibility to control who will attend, or the event just happens; whoever is there has an opportunity to be a part of the event. Of course, depending on which place the company selects for the event, different types of consumers will be reached. When using general events; meaning that no single target group is invited, the company can still gain on the situation since they have a chance to adjust the added value to specific customers during the event. The employees working during the event “read” the situation and adjust his/her behaviour. Further the event itself might also communicate an added value to other people, although they might not be interested in the specific event. (Behrer and Larsson, 1998)

On the other hand, Behrer and Larsson (1998) mean that Event Marketing can also be used when focusing on specific target groups. An example is taken from Volvo Car Corporation in Thailand where they use Event Marketing to reach a very specific segment. Since Volvo cars are rather expensive, only the wealthy people can afford them. Also, in Thailand it is very expensive to go to concerts. Therefore, Volvo Car Corporation has decided to sponsor famous world artists that give concerts in Thailand. Selected consumers can buy these tickets with a

good discount at the dealers. By doing this Volvo Car Corporation in Thailand build relations with the customers and get the prospects to visit the dealers.

### **3.1.3. *Brand Building and Sales Stimulation through Event***

#### ***Marketing***

Behrer and Larsson (1998), mean that Event Marketing has two main purposes, Brand Building and Sales Stimulation, which is shown in the figure 4-1. What further is illustrated in the figure is the difference between the understandings of the event from a consumer's perspective. Either the consumer knows about and has planned to attend the event, or the customer does not know before that he/she will attend, and then it is referred to as a happening. In connecting brand building and sales stimulation four different activities are intended; Action Marketing, Three-dimensional advertisements, Traffic Building Events and Relation Building Events, which are explained below.

#### **Action Marketing**

Action Marketing was invented by the Swedish commercial industry with the purpose to separate happening orientated sales promotion (free tasting in stores) from traditional sales promotion (discount coupons). Just as other sales promotion, Action Marketing needs the consumer to be active and therefore Action Marketing must take place where the products are sold. (Behrer and Larsson, 1998)

The “*Opel Millennium Express*”, the “*Mercedes A-Class tour*”, the Saab Automobile AB’s “*Fly and Try*” and the Audi AG’s “*Driving Experience*” are examples of Action Marketing. The “*Opel Millennium Express*” was a train with 24 wagons containing an Opel museum travelling around Europe, with the purpose to educate consumers both about the brand and the products. The “*Mercedes A-Class*” tour was about launching the A-Class and also trying to reach a new segment within the younger generation.

The Saab Automobile AB's "*Fly and Try*" and the Audi AG's "*Driving Experience*" are events that have purpose of letting the consumers test drive the cars, which in turn will hopefully lead to increased sales.

### Three-dimensional (3D) Advertisements

Unexpected happenings taking place in an environment, unnatural for the product, are referred to as Three-dimensional Advertising. 3D Advertisement requires an active consumer and therefore occurs in places that well trafficked. A well-known example is illustrated by Gevalia's installations of "unexpected visits". Apart from the consumers that experience the advertisement, a great advantage is that the company often receives free commercial through publicity in the media. These advertisements have caused much publicity and discussions around the concept Event Marketing. (Behrer and Larsson, 1998)

An example from the car industry is the product display of cars at Landvetter Airport that both Volvo Car Corporation and Saab Automobile AB are doing. Another example is Mercedes placing their cars in the middle of the shopping mall Nordstan. However since the event also is benefitting Nordstan, it could as well be referred to as traffic building.

ReVolution in L.A is an example of a 3D Advertisement taking place in a natural environment for the product. The new model S 60 was placed in strategic places on the street.

### Traffic Building Events

Traffic Building Events have the purpose to generate traffic to stores and malls, which in turn hopefully increase sales. Examples are talent competitions and exhibitions in big malls. (Behrer and Larsson, 1998)

An example of a Traffic Building Event within the car industry is illustrated by Toyota in Gothenburg. Toyota launched more than ten cars in association with their one-year anniversary of the dealership in Mölndal. In order to get more people to come there, Toyota arranged concerts and dance shows. On the other hand, this event could also be seen as a Relation Building Event since customers were invited.

## Relation Building Events

Relation Building Events have the main purpose to build relations with the customers. The events are emotional and involve the customer in a specific way that separates the Relation Building Events from the others. In order to create a good relation with the consumer, the emotional touch is important. Normally, the consumer has a motive to attend the event and the main activity is the event rather than the place where the event is held. This constitutes the difference between Traffic Building Events and Relation Building Events. (Behrer and Larsson, 1998)

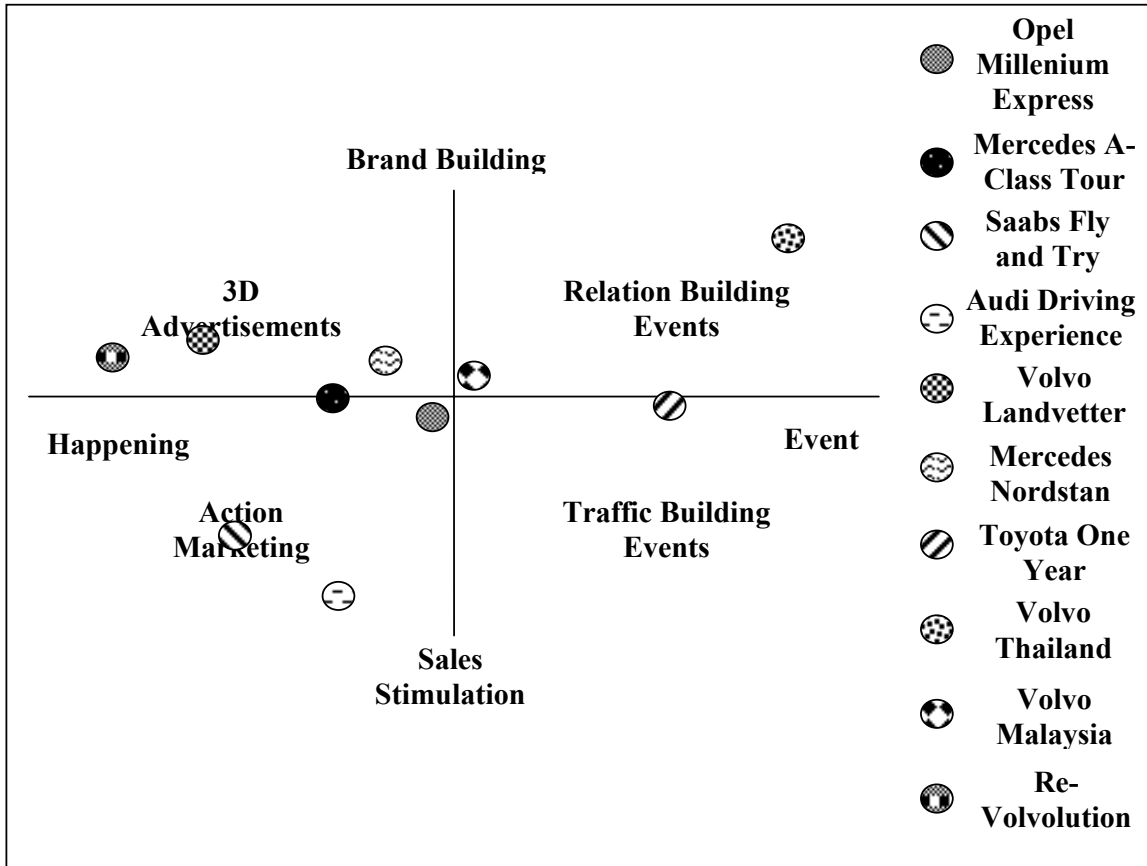
Depending on the situation, the events request the customer to be active or passive. Within business-to-business, and focused events invitations will be used and therefore no action from the customer is needed. On the other hand, sponsored related events often require an active customer to find the event, since the customers' main purpose with attending the event is not related to the companies attendance. (Behrer and Larsson, 1998)

However, not all people agree that event marketing is relation building. According to Söderlund, associate professor at Handelshögskolan in Stockholm, Event Marketing is not a way to build relations but rather just a new way to mass communicate. If a company wants to build relations it needs to get to know its customer and find out how the customers want to be communicated with. (Beertema, 1999) On the other hand, depending on how the event is planned, collecting information about the customer in advance could be a part of the process as well.

Volvo Car Corporation in Thailand, which we have already explained, illustrates an example of Relation Building Events that also collect knowledge about the customer. Volvo Car Corporation in Malaysia illustrates another example where the brand is in focus. They rented a part of the main street in Kuala Lumpur and arranged multicultural and high quality concerts and activities.

### **Figure 3-1: Event Marketing and Explanation Model with examples**





Source: Elaboration on Behrer and Larsson (1998).

### 3.1.4. *Event Marketing as a part of changing the brand image*

To change a company's position by changing their brand image means that, with help of systematic and long term marketing communication expanding or in another way changing the clientele for a product. The marketing tools that can be used to change the brand image are: the name, symbols and logos, and events. The first three are more informative channels that explain that the company has changed the brand image, the last one can have an informative approach but also a communicative, teaching approach. (Essunger and Lövberg, 1998) Behrer and Larsson (1998) mean that most commercial channels will not change the attitude of the consumer unless the consumers are searching for the current product. The consumer realises the increased values, desire for the product or brand might occur when an event offers physical and concrete experience of the product or the brand values.

The traditional image advertising is only the object for the individual's own fantasy, associations and mental construct. Contrary to this, Event Marketing can fill this purpose in a concrete experience rather than just in their fantasy. Event Marketing even have the possibility to motivate consumption of products that cannot normally been seen as hedonistic consumption. Sponsoring or creation of an event is based upon that a positive feeling in general being built that affects the sender of the message during the event. Furthermore, the positive feeling within the event will also enhance other marketing tools that are used to communicate the same message and the person attending the event will be reminded of the experience when he/she gets in contact with this other marketing media. (Behrer and Larsson, 1998)

## **3.2. Brand Building**

*In this chapter we will focus on the key issues that we believe are important when building a global brand. In our theoretical study we have found important factors that according to the authors are important for building, retaining, developing a brand from the organisational point of view. The key issues we intend to discuss are brand identity, brand communication and global brand leadership.*

### **3.2.1. Brand Identity**

Farquhar (1990), mean that the use of brands is centuries old, brick makers in ancient Egypt placed symbols on their bricks to identify their work. This is further explained by Baker (1996) when saying that craftsmen have long been identifying their work, either by use of a distinctive symbol or by a signature particular to them. During the gild system, the symbol or signature was used to protect the customers and to ensure that poor workmanship could be traced back to its originator.

Brands are intended to distinguish the goods and services of one seller to another by using a name, term, sign, symbol or design. The basic idea is to have a special term for the product in the market place so that the customer can identify the unique item. However, brands are more than just a product. In

addition, a brand includes consumer perceptions and feelings about a product's attributes as a whole. Marketers try to create appealing images around their products based on quality, shape, colour and lifestyle compatibility. (Dalrymple and Parsons, 2000) These tangible and intangible images are the promises that can be associated with the brand and are referred to as the brand identity by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1997).

To illustrate the importance of having clear brand identity, two examples are taken from Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1997). The first example is the Body Shop's core brand identity in essence with its "profits-with a-principle philosophy". The soul of the brand of Body Shop, taking care of environment, third world etc is a philosophy consisting of a clear message to employees and customers alike. Body Shop as a company is not only helping the non-profit organisations, they also get the employees to commit to the philosophy and the work that is needed in order to help. These efforts are not additional to the Body Shop brand; they are the brand, and this vision is shown immediately when consumers enter the Body Shop stores. Displayed in the Body Shop stores social messages about the company's causes, values and products are found. Also to be found is how the consumer can help the work that the company does. Compared with other skin care lines, Body Shop has a clear brand identity that does not need same marketing channels to differentiate.

The other example is when Haagen-Dazs decided to launch their ice cream on extended markets. Haagen-Dazs brand launched its ice cream as a premium at a price 30%-40% higher than its competitors in Europe, although Europe was in an economic recession - and they succeeded. They did not adjust their price to fit the situation but still launched in a manner that a premium brand needs. It is important to keep a consequent strategy when trying to develop and extend into new markets, otherwise the consumer can be confused.

Another ice-cream company could illustrate an example of what could happen when a clear and strong brand identity is missing. The company launched a premium brand in Spain to compete with Haagen-Dazs. The problem was the communication message sent by Farggi's. It was confusing at best and had too many elements: Competing directly with Haagen-Dazs, creating associations

with Spain, an Italian sound alike name and using the American style ice cream to cash in on it. Having a clear identity means to have values and philosophies in and around the brand. These should not collide with each other, as shown in the example above, but rather be in line and consistently managed to each other. (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 1997)

If the brand identity is about the added values that the consumer relates to a certain brand, the brand equity is how they evaluate the brand values compared to other brands. One definition of customer-based brand equity “is the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of one brand than to another.” Marketing tools that help enhance the values of the brand lead to better brand knowledge, hence increased brand equity. The more the consumer knows about the brand the more lasting the brand’s impression on consumer’s memory and the stronger the resulting brand equity. (Dalrymple and Parsons, 2000)

Brand equity occurs when consumers have a high level of awareness of a certain brand and hold great favourable brand associations in memory. Further, brand awareness is enough to trigger purchase for low involvement decisions most among fast consumer goods. In more complex situations such as in high involvement purchase there is a need for the companies to build high brand equity. Brand awareness developed by repeated exposure to advertising and promotion build brand recognition. Other elements that can build awareness are logos, symbols, characters, and unique packaging. The best way to intensify brand awareness is through careful matching of the brand with desired usage in a variety of communication alternatives. Anything that causes the consumer to experience the brand can magnify the brand awareness. (Dalrymple and Parsons 2000)

Dalrymple and Parsons (2000) argue that when consumers have a positive image of the brand in memory this will reinforce the brand equity and therefore it is important to build a strong positive image around the brand. Marketing can strengthen the brand image programs that link, strong, favourable and unique associations to the brand. Further brand associations can be enhanced by direct experience; free samples and test-drives, or/and by word-of-mouth

communication with friends etc. According to Kover, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) the marketing mix strategy that a company chooses is actually more important than how it is followed, the focus should lay in having the right marketing mix rather than having every part in the process done correctly.

The strength of the brand association also influences the brand image and the more a consumer connects the product information to existing knowledge, the stronger the ensuing brand affiliations. To build strong affiliations is to make sure the data is relevant and consistent to the individual and still in line with brand values. Also, brand images are intensified by presenting the brand in a context that is both familiar and provide cues for action. (Dalrymple and Parsons 2000)

Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1997) argue that companies can actually build brands without mass media. Referring back to the Body Shop example illustrated above, where the whole organisational process is in line with the brand identity, there are other ways of working with brand associations. The role of visibility in creating brand equity is often underestimated. Brand visibility can signal leadership, success, quality, substance, excitement and energy – all before the product comes into play. However, as in the case of Body Shop, it is important that the whole organisation is permeated with the values that the company wants the brand to be associated with.

### **3.2.2. *Brand Communication***

The cornerstone of marketing is now and has always been the brand. Brands provide the basis upon which consumers can identify and bond with products or services or a group of products or services. The brand name assures the consumer that the features and the characteristics of the brand will remain in variant from purchase to purchase, in that way the brand provides its maker with the means to constantly provide the consumer with intrinsic value or the illusion of such value or both. The company is sending a message that the consumer associates with and it is important that this message is delivered correctly. (Weilbacher, 1995)

Kover, Aaker, and Joachimsthaler (2000), state that “the classic brand manager dealt with simple brand structures with few extensions, sub brands, and endorsed brands in part because he or she was faced with a relatively simple environment and simple business strategies.” Today the situation has changed. The brand managers now face market fragmentation, channel dynamics, global realities, and business environments that have drastically changed their task. According to Weilbacher (1995), a brand is a singular, global concept and the new challenge for the company is to keep unified brands although the market fragmentation increases.

When using a consumer based brand equity perspective effective brand management is required to take a long-term view on marketing decisions. Any action a company takes as part of its marketing program has the potential to change consumer knowledge about the brand. These changes in consumer brand knowledge will in turn have an indirect effect on the success on future activities. Due to this it is important when making marketing decisions to consider how the changes in brand awareness and image, resulting from the marketing decisions, may help or hurt subsequent marketing decisions. Trying to change into a premium brand by the use of events and at the same time have a sales promotion towards a medium brand segment, could lead to the intended increased view of the brand being offset. (Keller, 1999)

King believed that 1990s would be quite different regarding brand building; from that of the past which led to the emergence and dominance of classic single-line brands such as Coke, Pepsi, Marlboro etc. King saw a trend towards company brand instead of singular brands, in which it is the subjective, difficult-to-define aspects of service and reputation associated with the company, which will position it in the consumer’s mind and the market place. King states “*In the essence, brand-building in the 1990s will involve designing and controlling all aspects of a company, leading people and activities well beyond the traditional skill of the marketing department and the agencies that it employs. It will be a lot closer to the marketing service (such as airlines, hotels, retailer, building societies) than to the brand building of the classic brands.*” (Baker, 1996)

According to Dalrymple and Parsons (2000), there are risks in using one single brand name on many different products. The image conveyed by the brand name may become too diffuse, as the specific customer benefit the brand name stands for is lost. Care must be taken to extend the brand name to categories where it cannot inherit customer benefits. Connecting the same thought to a global company, having only one brand but on several different markets, the idea must be the same. To keep the value of the single brand, a company cannot have too many differentiated messages being spread since this can lead to confusion for the customers. Keller (1999) further supports this when he argues that in a general sense, brand equity is reinforced by marketing actions that consistently convey the meaning of the brand to consumers.

Furthermore, Duncan and Moriarty (1998), take the discussion a bit deeper when they say that the message communicated is not only what the organisation is doing, rather there can also be a message communicated in what they do not do. Companies and brands must manage what they do not say as well as the broad spectrum of planned, unplanned, product, and service messages they deliver. This thought supports Behrer and Larsson (1998) when emphasising that Event Marketing just like all other marketing activities as well as the whole organisation needing to be integrated and part of an overall marketing strategy.

### **3.2.3. *Global Brand Leadership***

The focus of the brand builders today is to have global brands. However, global brand leadership should rather be the goal. Trying to reach global brands means to seek every possibility to use the same positioning, advertising strategy, personality, look, and feelings in every country. Brand Leadership, on the other hand, means that although differences occur in the interpretation of the brand from one country to another, still the brand is in the top range in every country. Organisational structures, processes, and cultures must be used to allocate brand-building resources globally, adapting the brand to fit each market. (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 1999)

On the other hand, Aaker (1997) mean that adjustments some times are strategic imperatives but can also be dangerous. The danger lies in if a brand in one market has a mainstream value and in another a premium. It may be possible to have different positions if the two markets are very separated with respect to communication and distribution. But markets are rarely that distinct. Similar thoughts are also discussed by Keller (1999), when mentioning consistency and change in marketing strategies. A contributing factor for success of the brand is that, despite tactical changes, certain key elements of the marketing program are always retained and therefore continuity is preserved in brand meaning over time. However, consistency does not mean that marketers should not avoid making any changes in the marketing program. However, there is a need for balance in order to both keep the brand values unified and still move forward on the market adapting the brand to it.

From research done among global companies by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999), four common ideas about effective brand leadership emerged. These are:

- To stimulate the sharing of insights and best practices across countries;
- To support a common global brand-planning process;
- To assign managerial responsibility for brands in order to create cross-country synergies and to fight local bias; and
- To execute brilliant brand building strategies.

As discussed in our problem area, the problem is for global companies to find a way to organise in order to get the best out of global integration and local responsiveness. No matter where the focus is, there is a need for the employees to understand the company's philosophy. Even though if companies have a strict central control, there will be situations in which employees need to make their own decisions. In those situations employees need to understand the company's values in order to contribute to the organisation.

Senge (1990) believes in a learning organisation where people are always developing their abilities to realise their own goals and where new and expansive ways of thinking are developed. In a learning organisation a will



exists towards a common goal and people have learned to always seek knowledge together.

## **4. Event Marketing In the Car Industry**

*In this chapter we intend to illustrate how Swedish event agencies believe Event Marketing should be dealt with in a global car corporation in general as well as at Volvo Car Corporation. Further, we intend to give a description of how car manufactures beside Volvo Car Corporation work with Event Marketing. The reason for doing this is that we want more empirical data than we have received from Volvo Car Corporation. We believe that external opinions will deepen our analysis.*

*We will start off with the event agencies, then move on to the car manufactures, and finally discuss Volvo Car Corporation.*

### **4.1. Event Agencies View**

*We will start off by presenting the event agencies. After that, we will elaborate the agencies' opinion regarding Event Marketing, centralised or decentralised and Brand according to chosen method. The chapter will be ended with a short conclusion.*

#### **4.1.1. Presentation of Event Agencies**

##### **Projektbolaget**

The company was established in 1992 with Event Marketing as core business area. Today the company has added two more core business areas, Sales Marketing and Store Marketing and has offices in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö and Oslo. The agency's objective is to create live communication through interactive meetings. Common for all three-core business areas is that the communication from client to the customer occurs in living form and with people as the messenger. (www.projektbolaget.se, 2000-12-04)

Through the last years of expansion, the agency acts on the whole Scandinavian market with customers as Nokia, American Express, Spendrups, Whirlpool, Dagens Industri, Adcore, Fisherman's Friend etc. (www.projektbolaget.se, 2000-12-04)

### Hall&Cederquist/Y&R

Hall&Cederquist/Y&R is an advertising agency that was established as early as 1973. Today Hall&Cederquist/Y&R is fully owned by Young & Rubicam (Y&R) Advertising Sweden, which is a part of the global company Young & Rubicam. The company is based in Stockholm and some of current and earlier customers are Gevalia, Marabou Mjölchoklad, Europolitan, Wasabröd, Ikea at work, Ericsson Mobile communication NetOnNet and Eurocard. (Interviewee, 2000-09-26)

The role of Y&R Advertising is to communicate brand essence, attributes and benefits, to a defined group of consumers. The advertising is rooted in strategic insights about the brand and has developed most effective and efficient media. (www.hcyr.se, 2000-12-04)

### Locomotiv – Action Marketing

The agency was established in 1992 and is active within action marketing. It develops both strategic and creative competence in sales promoting marketing. The mission is to *“help companies to create activities or sales through market activities that are in line with the customers' mission.”* The objective of the company is to focus on the purchase point of the customer and influence this for the client. This is done, in a creative way, by getting the consumer to act and at the same time build the brand for the client. (www.a-com.se/bolage.html, 2000-12-04)

The agency works mostly with fast consumer products and is located in Stockholm, Helsinki, Oslo and Moscow. Examples of important customers are Pripps, Cloetta, Elle, Telia and Unilever. (www.a-com.se/bolage.html, 2000-12-04)

Since both Locomotiv - Action Marketing and Sandberg Event Synergi (presented below) are owned by A-Com (750 employees spread out over 65 companies) they share A-Com's vision, "*to be Europe's leading supplier of competence and communication tools that increases the clients ability to create revenue.*" (www.a-com.se/affarside.html, 2000-12-04)

### Sandberg Event Synergi

Sandberg Event Synergi's mission is that "we shall give the client the best and most qualified strategic advice when dealing with event marketing, enhance with creating solutions." In reality, this means that Sandberg Event Synergi creates, develops and leads the client's event and the strategies with a focus in both long-term and short-term perspectives. Every concept is integrated with the client's other existing communication and is rooted in the existing brand platforms.

The agency uses project platforms and insources temporary personnel needed for each project. The agency was established in 1999 and is placed in Stockholm.

### Bodén&Co Kommunikation AB

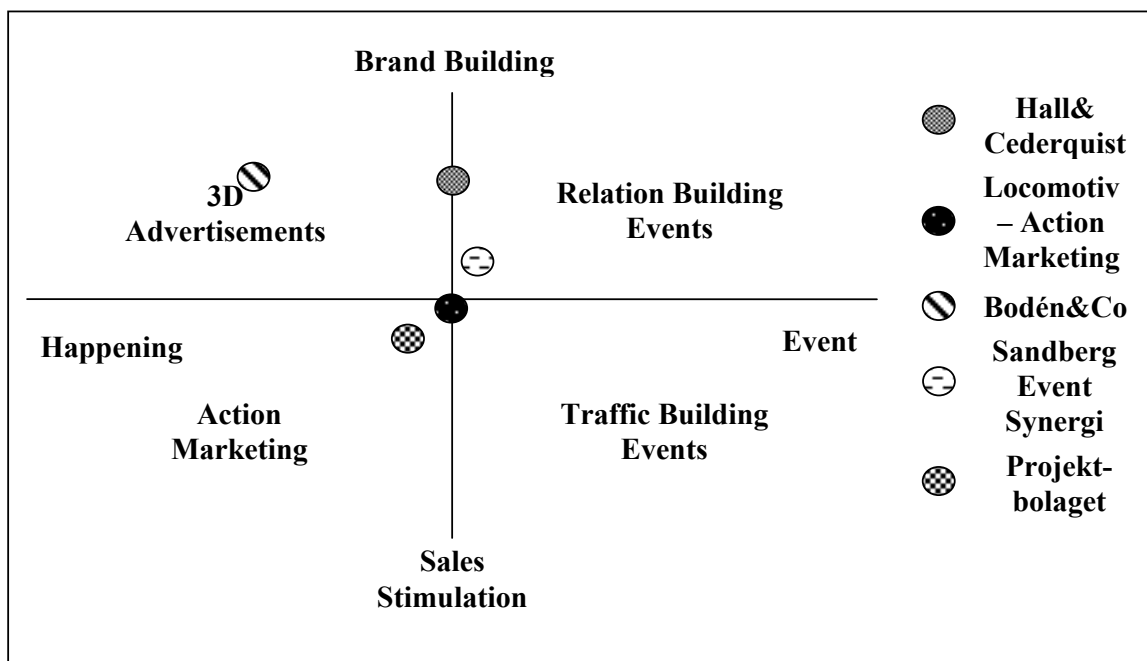
The agency's objective is to help companies and organisations to communicate more effectively, both internally and externally. Their ambition is to become a fully competent agency that can create unique communication solutions with events as a base. Bodén&Co was established in 1991 and today it is one of Scandinavia's leading companies in Event Marketing and Event Management. Through their strategic co-operation with Caribiner International, with offices around the world, Bodén&Co can produce events on global bases. Bodén&Co has done commissions for Microsoft, Siemens Nixdorf, Niké, SAS etc. (www.bodenco.se, 2000-12-04)

### 4.1.2. *Experiencing through Event Marketing*

Projektbolaget defines Event Marketing as a meeting with the customer and the target group, either invited or just passing by the event. Hall&Cederquist mean that Event Marketing is a 3D presentation, personally adapted and a physical encounter, of the product/service or (and) brands/values for a limited group of people. Bodén&Co defines Event Marketing as a happening that communicates the brand. Sandberg Event means that Event Marketing is a relation creating activity that is based upon experience and that a company has the customer for little while. Relationship is a word that also Locomotive emphasises when using Event Marketing.

All definitions used by the interviewees are comparable with the theory. Words as meeting, presentation, limited group of people, brand communication and relation are also used by Wildhuss when describing Event Marketing (Beertema, 1999). However, it seems as if some of the agencies are more focused on brand building and others on sales stimulation referring to their levels of time-perspective. This is illustrated in figure 4-1.

**Figure 4-1: Different focus of event agencies**



Source: Elaboration on Behrer and Larsson (1998).

A meeting with consumers, either invited or just passing by does not refer to brand building but rather sales stimulation. However, if the words brand values are added there might be a long-term perspective. Also, though an agency uses the word happening it still puts communication of the brand in focus, which indicates a strategic perspective. Further, relation and relationship emphasise a long-term, and though sales stimulation wants to be achieved, the sales might increase due to the added brand value.

Most of the interviewees have Event Marketing as a central concept. However, Locomotive has got Event Marketing as a part of Action Marketing since they view Action Marketing as the central concept. A concept that, according to Locomotive is used to increase the customer's/prospect's interest in buying the current brand, this further supports that Locomotive has more of a brand building focus, illustrated in the figure 5-1. On the other hand, Behrer and Larsson (1998) describe the use of Action Marketing in an opposite way; meaning that Action Marketing is sales stimulating rather than brand building. This might be explained by the fact that Locomotive works with clients who sell fast consumer goods with many brand extensions. Alhgrens, for example, has got several sorts of pastilles with different product names attached to them and these products can also be called brands; Läkerol, Zoo etc. Due to this, we might have a different understanding of what a brand is. Still, the word relationship, that Locomotive uses, emphasises something built, although the companies are selling fast consumer goods.

According to Locomotive, Action Marketing has the purpose to stimulate purchase through printed media, moving media, in store media, and events during a longer time perspective. In this Action Marketing mix, the events keep growing and taking a larger stake. Compared to the other tools in the mix, Event Marketing is more based on creating brand awareness. Although Locomotive has a different definition of Action Marketing, the thought of Event Marketing creating brand awareness is in line with Behrer and Larsson (1998) placing relations building events as brand building.

Event Marketing is, according to the interviewee from Locomotive, an interactive process in order to educate the customer about the brand. Locomotive meant that it is important to get the customer to act in the event. The reason for this is that there is a big difference in experiencing by all senses compared to passively receiving information about something (Lundmark, 1998). All events agencies emphasised that, through events, experiences can be offered, which no other marketing tools are able to provide.

While four of the event agencies supports Behrer and Larsson (1998) that Event Marketing bring up the possibility to have own-right to the customer, Bodén&Co does not mention this. On the other hand, Bodén&Co is the only agency that is emphasising group activities within the events to get the customer to understand “What is interesting in the brand for me?” which indicates a desire for experience as well. Bodén&Co is working a lot with internal events, for example with Ericsson and Microsoft. The internal events have the purpose to educate the employees about the brand and the added values the companies want to communicate.

All the agencies supports the thoughts from Aaker & Joachimsthaler (1999) and Behrer and Larsson (1998), that Event Marketing should not be seen as something separated from the rest of the marketing mix; instead, Event Marketing should be a further tool to strengthen the existing strategy. This is further elaborated by Locomotive, meaning that there are some products that cannot be promoted by Event Marketing due to the fact that there must exist associations with what the company stands for. Also, since the Event Marketing should be integrated in the marketing mix, the purpose of the whole promotion is more important than just focusing on having an event. According to Sandberg Event Synergi, Event Marketing should contribute and not just be used because it is a trend today.

#### ***4.1.3. Event Marketing Desires Flexibility***

When discussing with the agencies, whether to centralise or decentralise decisions, all of the agencies, more or less believed that there should exist a centralised unit in to keep a unified global focus. Three agencies,

Hall&Cederquist, Locomotive and Sandberg Event Synergi, pointed out the importance of having a centralised unit and mentioned aspects such as frames, references and guidelines for local adaptation. According to Hall&Cederquist, Locomotive and Sandberg Event Synergi, Event Marketing should have a centralised strategy that concerns the company's core values and have the purpose to inspire and control the local units. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999) do not mention specific Event Marketing strategies, but they support the thoughts in general when discussing strategies.

According to the interviewee from Sandberg Event Synergi, the central frame ought to explain what needs to be communicated and should further be used as a centralised toolkit that local units can either copy-paste, or adjust to fit the local situation. However, it is important to understand what needs to be associated with the brand. Therefore Sandberg Event Synergi meant decisions regarding sponsoring of sport events should be on a central level. The reason for this is that major sport events have to be in line with the brand value and if a company is sponsoring too many different sports, or sports with different associations, the company will send confusing messages to customer/prospects. This thought supports what Dalrymple and Parsons (2000) emphasise when they say that too many differentiated messages will lead to confusion for the customer, and that the sum of activities could end up without contribution.

Although not all agencies mentioned a central unit, they all agreed that there is a need for local adaptation, since people have different preferences in the world. We have earlier given an example by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999), in which they illustrated that Honda does not mean the same the United States as it does in Japan. Furthermore, Hall&Cederquist meant that Event Marketing decisions should be handed over to local units and the central unit should provide the local unit with information regarding what can be done rather than what could not be done.

Connecting the agencies desire for global units in combination with local adaptation could be related to Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999). The authors stipulate that economies of scales can be enjoyed when creating one single global marketing campaign, however, cultural differences might make it hard to



pull off global campaigns. The campaign should be adjusted to local conditions, which is further supported by Sandberg Event Synergi saying, that the event should fit the natural place of the products. Furthermore, issues such as political and economic imperatives could also affect Event Marketing. For example, the Saab Automobile AB's "*Fly and Try*" is not applicable on the U.K market since they do not carry personal identities, such as the driving licence, when they travel abroad.

In order to meet the different demands on Event Marketing, the company needs a flexible organisational structure. All people involved or being affected by the event should be more or less integrated in the creative process of the event. In order to achieve the best results, all involved people, external as well as internal, working with creating the event must be in the process from the beginning. All parties need to be educated in understanding the brand since the event should be in line with the values of the company. Referring back to Lundmark (1998), and also discussed in the chapter above, one way of integrating and educating all people involved in the event process, is to use Event Marketing internally. The best way of understanding is to experience with all senses, and by letting the event personnel experience the added value of the brand; they might communicate a unified brand identity although the main focus of the event is sales stimulation.

#### ***4.1.4. Brand Integration Demands Understanding***

Some of the interviewees have a long-term focus on building a brand and all of them viewed events as part of the marketing mix in order to create and sustain long-term effects for the brand. Therefore it is important to integrate the agencies to create an understanding for the value of the brand. The interviewee from Hall&Cederquist meant that events have to be connected to the values of the brand and a good agency must therefore absorb the strategic values of the company. Event Marketing should be seen as a complement that communicates the brand identity strategically right since it is about examining and creating focus.

Hall&Cederquist, Locomotive and Sandberg Event Synergi seem to focus on learning the client's brand, since they even have specific programs for it. This together with what the agencies mentioned earlier, discussing the importance of brand building and central units, supports the idea of global brand leadership, discussed by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999). The three agencies meant that they have to understand the underlying values of the client's brand to be able to produce professional services. Since the result is a part of the agencies image, there have been situations where clients have been rejected due to the fact that the agencies did not believe that the event was in line with the brand values of the client. The reason for this is that the event agencies need to build their brands as well, and failures do not belong to a brand building process.

#### **4.1.5. Conclusion Event Agencies**

There is a need for a centralised unit to inspire and co-ordinate the events in order to communicate the brand values correctly. All events should be associated with the core values of the company. However, since all events do not have direct focus on brand building there is a need for local adjustments in order to create sales stimulation. If the event is there to show the product and create sales stimulation, there is a large demand for interaction since the uniqueness with event compared to other traditional media is to inspire two-way communication. The consumer knows what he/she wants and this is needed to be communicated back into the organisation in order to revise the strategies etc. Also, by using interaction in events, a company can combine unified brand building with local adjusted sales promotions that fit the specific situation and the current consumer.

By using human beings who are fully aware of the brand identity the message communicated could be differentiated to a specific consumer and still contain the value of brand identity. Even though the purpose with the event is to stimulate sales, this can be done in accordance with the values of the brand, both with the event itself and with the people working within it. Depending on what the company does with the event, both added values, for the attending consumers as well for the people hearing about the actual event, might occur. Still, there has to be a match between the event, the employees and the brand

values. Also very important is to create experience for the consumer, since it is experience that brings understanding.

## **4.2. Car Manufactures' View**

*We start this chapter with a presentation of the car manufactures'. After this, we will elaborate the interviewee's opinion in combination with theory due to the key concepts mentioned in the method. We have done interviews with people responsible for Event Marketing on the strategic level at Saab Automobile AB and Audi AG. Finally, we will summarise how the car manufactures are organised in a conclusion before we enter the next chapter.*

### **4.2.1. Presentation of Car Manufactures'**

#### **Saab Automobile AB**

Svenska Aeroplan Aktiebolaget, known as Saab, was founded in 1938 as a national manufacture of military aircraft for Sweden. Shortly after Second World War, Saab started to build cars and is today seen as the second largest car manufacture in Sweden after Volvo Car Corporation. In 1990, General Motors acquired 50 % of Saab Car Division from Investor AB. The car division was reconstructed into an independent company know today as Saab Automobile AB. This year, 2000, General Motors acquired the rest of the company and is now the sole owner of Saab Automobile AB. ([www.saab.com/home/global/en/historical](http://www.saab.com/home/global/en/historical), 2000-12-04)

The company's head office is in Trollhättan, Sweden, with subsidiaries in other parts of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, United Kingdom, Germany, France, USA, Australia, Switzerland, Korea, Italy and Finland. Worldwide, Saab is active in more than 50 countries. The most important markets are: The USA, United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, Italy, Australia, France, The Netherlands and Norway. One of the top markets is the International and Diplomat sale, IDS, which accounts for considerable volume. ([www.saab.com/home/global/en/historical](http://www.saab.com/home/global/en/historical), 2000-12-04)

Saab is renowned for its innovation and design. Other key terms are control, performance, safety, and design. In 1999, Saab Automobile AB had 10,176 employees and sold 131,240 cars. ([www.saab.com/home/global/en/historical](http://www.saab.com/home/global/en/historical), 2000-12-04) This year Saab Automobile AB produced 9-10 events and is also sponsoring motor racing (Interviewee, 2000-10-03).

## Audi AG

Audi AG was founded as early as in 1898 in Cologne, Germany. Between the years 1951- 1958 the company was a part of Daimler-Benz group. In 1964, Volkswagen purchased Audi AG. In the recent year Audi AG acquired the Lamborghini brand, which sold 265 cars in 1999. In 1999 Audi AG sold 634,973 cars and at the end of 1999 the Audi Group had 46,558 employees. ([www.audi.com/java/facts/index.html](http://www.audi.com/java/facts/index.html), 2000-12-04)

Technological progress, safety, design and premium quality are today, and have been for the past hundred years, the guiding principles at Audi. Audi sponsorship can be recognised in several fields around the world: concerts, sporting events and other activities. ([www.audi.com/java/facts/index.html](http://www.audi.com/java/facts/index.html), 2000-12-04)

### **4.2.2. *Brand or/and Products In Events?***

The interviewees seem to share the same thoughts when defining Event Marketing. They related Event Marketing to strong experiences, in which the companies can add a third dimension, the interaction between personnel and the consumer.

Furthermore, the interviewees shared the same thought that Event Marketing could be used to retain customers by building relations and attracting new customers. The importance of interaction will increase in the future since the added value that is possible to achieve with human factor in events will be one key issue that separates automobile companies. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) mean that there is too much information today for the consumer and emphasise that a company needs to be unique in order to be distinguished from

other competitors. To really provide the consumer with an experience, and at the same give car companies own-right to the consumer, both car manufactures suggest show rooms in the future.

A show room is a place where people can experience and get necessary information about a specific car brand; two examples are the “*Volvo Show Room*” and the “*Audi Show Room*” at Kungsträdgården in Stockholm. Another example is the “*Toyota Experience Centre*” in Tokyo, Japan. The experience centre does not only promote cars, it also has shops, cinemas, restaurants etc. in order to provide consumer experience. Referring back to what Essunger and Lövberg (1998) mean to be an important marketing goal; to be unique, a show room is one solution; depending on what experiences they are offering to the consumer.

An interesting difference is, that Saab Automobile AB wished that premium car brands could join together in joint events since people in general are short of time and seek cars in the same segment. Therefore, the car companies could provide the consumer with all the premium brands in the same place and in turn people might take time to visit the show rooms. Audi AG, on the other hand, is only discussing single brand show rooms. However, the Volkswagen-Audi Group’s show room, in Berlin, illustrates something in between, since they are exposing the whole brand range under the same roof. What came to our minds was that something has already started to happen.

The interviewee from Audi AG has been working for the Volkswagen-Audi Group for a long time and during the interview, the interviewee mentions that things are happening in the organisation; young people are coming in and with them, new ideas. Further, Saab Automobile AB mean that if car corporations really believe in their brands joint ventures would not be any problem but rather a great opportunity. Though the own-right to the consumer might be lost, since the company has another brand to compete with regarding consumer attention (Behrer and Larsson, 1998). However, depending on the purpose with the overall marketing strategy, show rooms and other marketing tools can be adjusted. Having a joint event does not exclude having an own unique event or creating something unique within the joint event.

A great similarity between the two car companies is that not all the traditional marketing departments are integrated in the creating of events. Saab Automobile AB does not have the PR-department integrated and Audi AG lacks the sponsoring department. None of the interviewees were able to give an answer to why this was the case, but both mentioned that they think this constellation is wrong. Actually, the interviewees emphasised that it is of great importance to have the whole organisation integrated in order to be successful with all marketing today. Saab Automobile AB mentioned that they were in the initial stage of organising for tactical and strategic events and therefore the organisation today might change in the future since they already know the advantages of full integration.

Further, both Saab Automobile AB and Audi AG believed that Event Marketing should not be separated from the marketing mix but rather seen as a further tool to strengthen the already existing strategy. This thought does not only exist in theory but is actually being practised by both companies today. For instance, Saab Automobile AB wants to be associated with design and innovation, the Saabs Automobile AB's "*Fly and Try*" has a unique design and is an innovation within Event Marketing and at exhibitions they make interesting stands with employees in futuristic clothes.

Both interviewees meant that the labour intensity before and during an event is much greater compared to other marketing tools. Still, companies will work more with interactive marketing in the future and Event Marketing will take resources from broadcast/passive media. Since, according to Saab Automobile AB, the cost for every sold car through traditional mass-communication is extremely high.

A tenfold labour intensity is needed compared to the other marketing tools. If a company invests 100,000 SEK into an advertisement campaign for 100 days, or invest the same sum in an event lasting two days, the effect of the event will be greater, if the company is communicating correctly and to the right consumers. Although the company has chosen the right event there will still be a risk depending on whether the personnel have understood the values of the brand

and if they are able to communicate it. According to Aaker (1997), one of the success factors for building a brand is for the organisation to understand how to develop brand identities, to know what the brand stands for and how to most effectively express that identity. Saab Automobile AB meant that although information and training is provided, it is hard to tell how the hired employees really interpret the values of the brand. This might be one reason why they do not have in-house education for insourced personnel.

### **4.2.3. *Control or Flexibility***

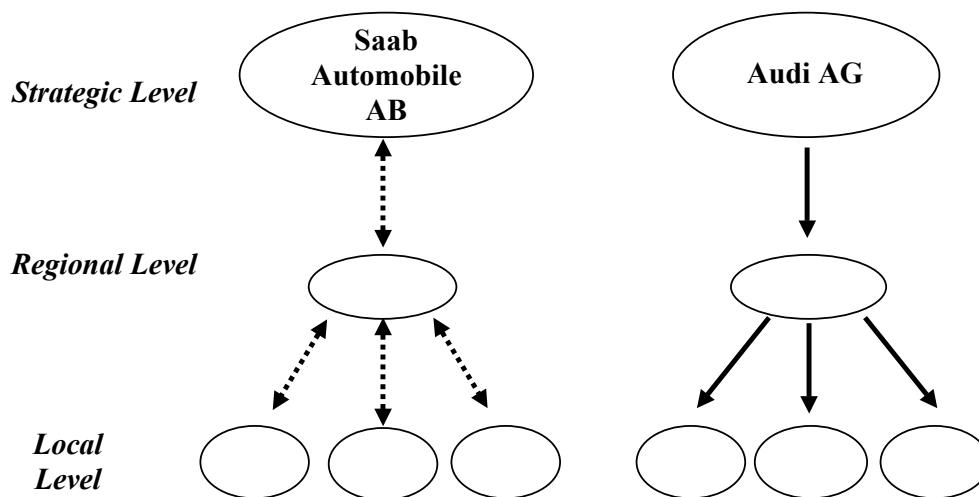
When discussing if Event Marketing should be centralised or decentralised we noticed a great difference between the two car companies. While Audi AG emphasised no other alternative than a centralised organisation, due to the need for control, Saab Automobile AB discussed the advantages with local decisions. Connecting back to Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999), focus of brand-builders today is to have global brand, when they in fact should be trying to achieve global brand leadership. It might be that Saab Automobile AB is heading towards global brand leadership while Audi AG is still chasing a global brand. Saab Automobile AB emphasised and explained different local adjustments that had been made while Audi AG wanted to implement the Audi AG test drive.

Another explanation might be that Saab Automobile AB has gotten used to openness and flexibility due to economic problems. Saab Automobile AB supported this when saying that they have to evaluate every spent “cent” and this might have increased their administrative heritage mentioned by Prahalad and Doz (1987). Studying the way Audi AG is planning to work further supports this thought. Since Audi AG is planning to introduce the “*Driving Experience*” first in Europe and then later expand throughout the world, Audi’s heritage might be less adjustable to changes on the local bases and more adaptable to the use of centralisation.

However, even if Audi AG emphasised a centralised organisation, their events were executed in co-operation with dealers. Saab Automobile AB had a signoff responsibility for their Events and the local executioners have total

responsibility. The process of the signoff responsibility in Saab Automobile AB was that they had a three-stage event campaign plan. The first stage is the global plan, which is distributed to the dealers. The dealer has the possibility to adjust the global plan to fit their market. After they have set the plan, it is returned to the strategic level. According to Argyris (1993), this way of working could emerge into a double-loop learning, strategy is adapted to tactical level and vice versa.

**Figure 4-2: Communication Channel of Event Marketing at Saab Automobile AB and Audi AG**



Also, according to Bartlett and Ghosal (1989), Saab Automobile AB could be seen as a transnational organisation since local markets have the possibilities to add new dimensions to the brand. Though the brand strategy is set on a strategic level due to the need of a unified brand communication. However, according to Argyris (1993) adjustments have to be made from both sides, however this cannot be applicable to Saab Automobile AB. The reason for this is that even though the dealers have economic responsibility and many decisions are made locally, the development of the events is planned centrally. Therefore the interviewee from Saab Automobile AB felt that the local dealers sometimes are placed second.

Another reason for having decentralised events is that some ideas that are successful in one country might not be applicable in other countries. The Saab



Automobile AB's "*Fly and Try*" is one example of this. The idea "*Fly and Try*" started in Sweden but cannot be executed in all countries due to, ID-identification (in the UK people do not bring their ID's with them when they travel) needed for insurances etc. Because of this, local adjustments have been done. In France Saab Automobile AB has developed the "*Dine and Try*", where consumers are invited to a restaurant. A representative from Saab Automobile AB picks up the guest, who test-drives the Saab to the restaurant. The guest enjoys a great dinner and then the driver takes the guests home. Similar ideas are applied to other countries.

Saab Automobile AB illustrates that bottom-top strategy, described by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999), is a good way to communicate the brand values globally. The "Fly and Try" idea started as a local sales stimulation idea on the Swedish market, has developed to become a strategic idea due to the innovation, and has now travelled to other countries.

#### **4.2.4. *Lacking Brand Identity needs Control?***

When discussing what should be communicated when using Event Marketing, we noticed separated thoughts between the two car companies. Audi AG never mentioned the brand as the most important, rather the interviewee did not believe in having an event without the product. Actually, the purpose of an event is for the people to experience the product and when we asked if there were a reason for doing the event without the product, the answer was "*no*".

However, since sponsorship is not integrated in the Event Marketing department of Audi AG, this event channel might be used for brand building. As mentioned in the presentation of Audi AG, the company sponsors many types of sport events. Still, Dalrymple and Parsons (2000), mean that using too many different communication channels can be interpreted in different ways and confuse the consumer. This might be indicating that Audi AG is working with a more short-term perspective. Audi AG had the product in focus in the "*Driving Experience*", which also supports a more short-term perspective. Last year, Audi AG did about 700 road shows with the purpose to let consumers test drive an Audi. To create and implement 700 road shows indicate routine rather

than uniqueness, which might be interpreted as a search for a global brand. On the other hand, maybe Audi AG's intention is to approach BMW since their brand is associated with driving performance.

Saab Automobile AB on the other hand, believed that both strategic brand events to build brand awareness, and tactical test-drive events to stimulate sales was important. The two extremes could either be used together or separated from each other but both were equally important. However, in some cases, as for instance the "*Fly and Try*", a tactical event has become a strategic event. The "*Fly and Try*" event is a new way of thinking and is really unique for Saab Automobile AB. Since one of the core values in Saab Automobile's brand is innovation, the "*Fly and Try*" is a perfect way to illustrate that as well. By using "*Fly and Try*", Saab Automobile AB reaches what Behrer and Larsson (1998) refer to: that the event itself also communicates an added value to people that are not part of the event, but have seen or heard about it.

Even if the two car manufactures share the same thought when defining Event Marketing there seems to be a fundamental difference. Audi AG on one hand emphasises the sale stimulation while Saab Automobile AB on the other hand focuses on both sales stimulation and brand building. The reason for this could be that Saab Automobile AB is building a brand whilst Audi AG thinks they are using the already existing brand awareness when focusing on sales stimulation. Since the interview with Audi AG took place first, we discussed the issue above with Saab Automobile AB. From the discussion we could gather that Audi as a name is well known worldwide while Saab Automobile AB have to create brand awareness. In those countries that Saab Automobile AB has brand awareness, consumers are aware what the brand stands for, on the other hand, Audi AG's case it is harder to tell.

When Saab Automobile AB is planning a strategic event, they put together task forces containing external as well as internal personnel from Saab Automobile AB. Further, if Saab Automobile AB insource personnel to be a part of the event, they let the current agency educate them in the spirit of Saab Automobile AB. The reason why they do not educate the personnel themselves was that they have a long relationship with the current agency and Saab Automobile AB

does not have enough resources. Connecting back to the event agencies wanting to absorb the client's brand and values, it might be enough to let the agency educate the insourced personnel since the company and agency have a long relationship. Personnel are expensive, but human resources are important. Because of this it is of great importance to educate personnel and therefore the training must be a part of the budget. Saab Automobile AB meant that internal brand marketing is as important as external brand marketing. Connecting back to the Body Shop example by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1997), where the employees are in the process of building the brand rather than just being informed of it, internal marketing is a good way of getting the brand identity imbued in the organisation.

One thought that both interviewees shared is that once a prospect tests drive and experience the car through all senses; there is a higher possibility of a prospect turning into a customer. Saab Automobile AB meant that sometimes it is not necessary to have the product in the event. Seeing that Audi AG made 700 road shows last year, this must indicate that it was fruitful. Also, the Saab Automobile AB's "*Fly and Try*" has been successful, maybe not on the sales stimulation but on a strategic brand building level since it has gone from a tactical level to a strategic level. But since the Saab Automobile AB's "*Fly and Try*" is an event that exchanges normal taxi transport for test driving a Saab, it might stimulate sales if the consumer finds the car attractive.

#### **4.2.5. Conclusion Car Manufactures'**

When Volvo Car Corporation presents their competitor analyses, all other car companies, except Audi AG, in the premium segment can be presented not only with a brand but also with what it stands for. Volvo Car Corporation presents Audi AG with a product promise of being "*technologically advanced*", however the lifestyle reference is described, as "*probably a progressive couple, but the picture is vague*". Further, the interviewee from Saab Automobile AB discussed the brand identity, meaning that Saab Automobile AB stands for innovation, while Audi AG focus is only on the products. Also, the interviewee from Audi AG could not see a combination of other brand together, in one place, but rather to have the customers solely to themselves.

As mentioned earlier, Audi AG emphasised a centralised organisation due to the need for control which could mean a search for a global brand rather than brand leadership. Further, test drives was seen as the “best” way to gain customers out of prospects, this might be interpreted as if Audi AG does not have a clear brand identity. Basically connecting to Weilbacher (1995), about the brand being the base for all marketing and Aaker (1995) mentioning that one success factor to build brand is to have a clear brand identity, it might mean that Audi AG needs to have centralised control over the Event Marketing, since they are rather trying to build product image than brand identity. On the other hand, maybe the brand image of Audi AG is in the driving experience.

### **4.3. Event Marketing and the Volvo Car Corporation**

*The final part of the analysis will be dealing with Volvo Car Corporation. We start off with a short presentation of the company, followed by the Soul of the brand. After this we will do a short analysis of marketing in general at Volvo Car Corporation. Then we move on and discuss the key concepts in the same way as in the chapters above.*

#### **4.3.1. Soul of the Brand**

Soul of the brand is the title of Volvo’s strategy document, which includes description of the company’s strength and objectives in form of:

- The company’s product philosophies and values.
- The product features and main customer benefits.
- The principal target customer in terms of profession, education, general needs and values.
- How Volvo intends to be perceived by potential customers.

Recently, Volvo Car Corporation started to educate their personnel in the Soul of the Brand and the education has also become a part of the introduction for new employees. The Soul of the Brand Education does not only contain

lessons, rather it is an experience. The employees get to act and this has the purpose to free their mind by using all of their senses (Schein, 1980).

#### **4.3.2. *Short history of Volvo Car Corporation Marketing – Openness for Changes***

Depending on whom we asked if Volvo Car Corporation is working decentralised or centralised with marketing, we got different answers. People who have worked in the organisation for a long time meant that it has changed during the years, due to which management trends have occurred on the market. The same people meant that Volvo Car Corporation has gone from being decentralised to become centralised. The time for the change was in 1994 when a new department, Global Marketing, was implemented on a central level. The employees that have recently started their work at Volvo Car Corporation meant that company is working decentralised. One of the interviewees meant that Volvo Car Corporation is not only working with different perspectives due to geographical placement but also with differences in the time perspective. The interviewee thinks that strategy and operational level is not being well integrated within Volvo Car Corporation. But, this is one of the strengths that Volvo Car Corporation has got, and this way of working must be compared within the current organisation rather than to other organisations.

Volvo Car Corporation is divided into two main markets, the European and the American, meaning that the marketing is distributed from two sources. The European market believes that all markets except the American will follow the work from the European side. But, as we understand from the interviews, the rest of the markets thinks that they have the best position since they have the possibility to choose among the two market distribution channels. However, one of the interviewees, who started recently at Volvo Car Corporation, mentioned that in the past 60 days, the contact between Global Marketing and U.S. office has had an upturn. This could indicate that there is a demand form central level to use networking in order to share best practices and also together change the brand image.

In order to build new strategic capabilities, for example Event Marketing, the organisation has to develop openness for new ideas, an administrative heritage, which we believe Volvo Car Corporation has. The reason for this could be seen in the different thoughts between recently employed and others. Although Volvo Car Corporation has become more centralised the newly employed felt the opposite and most of the recently employed seemed to have other organisations to compare with. Further, the education of the Soul of the Brand seems to have developed the heritage towards openness, at least on the management level, since everyone mentioned the Soul of the Brand emphasising that events should be imbued with it. Further the interviewees who are talking about changes between centralised and decentralised management, might be used to changes and therefore better know how to adapt to new ideas and strategies. Connecting the same thoughts to the interviewed car manufacturers' there could be a similarity, Saab Automobile AB is more used to changes due to their limited finance, and therefore have developed their administrative heritage to adjust to new situations.

On the other hand, if there have been too many changes in the past, this could lead to employees not changing, instead they might view the change as another management trend just passing by. However, during the interviews we never heard people complain about changes, in fact most of the people saw the changes as positive. One reason for this could be that the changes have emerged gradually, "*the changes have been natural*". Another reason could be that the employees trust the organisation and the people within it. It might be that Volvo Car Corporation has managed to imbue the organisation with one of the values that they want to be associated with, namely the modern family. There is no limitation for what a modern family is, and with the way we live today many people view their working place as home.

#### **4.3.3. *Long-term and Short-term perspective***

One thing that we have noticed is that all the interviewees define Event Marketing similarly, however, depending on position and market some interviewees emphasises brand communication more and some emphasise sales

stimulation. People working with global strategies have brand building closer to everyday work and this might affect the definitions of Event Marketing. Still, none of the interviewees thinks it is necessary to have the products in the events at all times. Depending on what Volvo Car Corporation wants to communicate, for example Safety, events could be created without having the product involved. On the other hand, the people we have interviewed are mostly managers who must have both perspectives.

Words that are commonly used by people working in the central departments are: personal experiences with the brand, interaction, customer relations, long-term perspectives, relations based upon activities, communicating the message, brand development, communicating core values, product values and experiences. People working in specific markets use terms as: selecting the right target group, invitation, cost per hit, measurements, personal contact, databases. However, there do not exist any distinctive differences in how the interviewees view Event Marketing but rather what the purpose of using Event Marketing is. The same words are used to describe Event Marketing throughout Volvo Car Corporation, but people working with strategic issues are more concerned to communicate long-term values while the others have a more sales stimulating focus. Still, every interviewee believes that even though the event has the purpose of sales stimulation, it still needs to be associated with Volvo's Soul of the Brand.

The differences in focus are shown by the examples of Event Marketing we received. At the strategic level large sponsorships; Volvo Ocean Race, Cannondyale, PGA Tour etc. were discussed. Furthermore, the interviewees emphasised co-branding on a strategic level, which also indicates long-term perspective, *“the values associated with the co-brand must match Volvo's values”*. At the regional level, the interviewees discussed local events, such as Go-carts, BBQ, fishing, test-drives etc. On a strategic level there seemed to be a desire for the local markets to use larger centralised events and apply them to the local market. However, the local markets seemed to want best practice sharing among the markets in order to create events on their market. The local market seemed to interpret the larger events as something they rarely could take advantage of since the toolkits provided, did not suit them. In some cases, the

main idea of the larger event is not applicable. One example is the Volvo Ocean Race, which only passes certain harbours and therefore is difficult to apply in the countries that are far away and do not have a natural connection to the race.

Comparing the difference among the interviewees at Volvo Car Corporation regarding long-term (brand building) or short-term (sales stimulation) perspective. The same words that the interviewees from Volvo Car Corporation used were also used by the event agencies that emphasised a more long-term focus with the events and vice versa. According to Schein (1980) an organisational department develops its own context due to what the department needs to deal with in its every day work. Further Schein (1980), means that this context will affect not only what the department, and the people working within it, interpret as important but also how they interpret it. For managers dealing with their markets needing to show an x% average revenue, the sales stimulation might be interpreted as more important than the brand building, and therefore Event Marketing also is interpreted as an important sales stimulation tool rather than a brand building tool. This is further supported by the fact that Volvo Car Corporation intends to change their brand image. Due to this, the interviewees within Global Marketing were very focused on brand building.

#### **4.3.4. “As global as necessary, as local as possible”**

All interviewees agreed upon the importance of having the events imbued with the brand values and therefore there has to exist some form of centralised control. Still, the interviewees that emphasised product focus used more concrete words to illustrate the importance of local adjustment. For example, the interviewees at different markets argued that the creator of the event has to own the event in order to make it work successfully, and with too much control creativity is lost. Local ad hoc opportunities must be possible to seize, these thoughts were also emphasised by Bodén&Co when saying that local responsibility is needed in order to quickly arrange an event due to a specific local happening. Local decisions make the global organisation more flexible and dynamic, otherwise there will a bureaucratic decision process.



Another aspect was the call for local adjustments when using focused events, since Volvo brand is not interpreted the same on all markets, and not all markets request the same marketing mix. For instance in some countries there is a desire for networking, the social class belonging is important which must be taken into consideration. If local adjustments are not taken into consideration, the brand image could then be concaved and apart from that the car units sold might be affected.

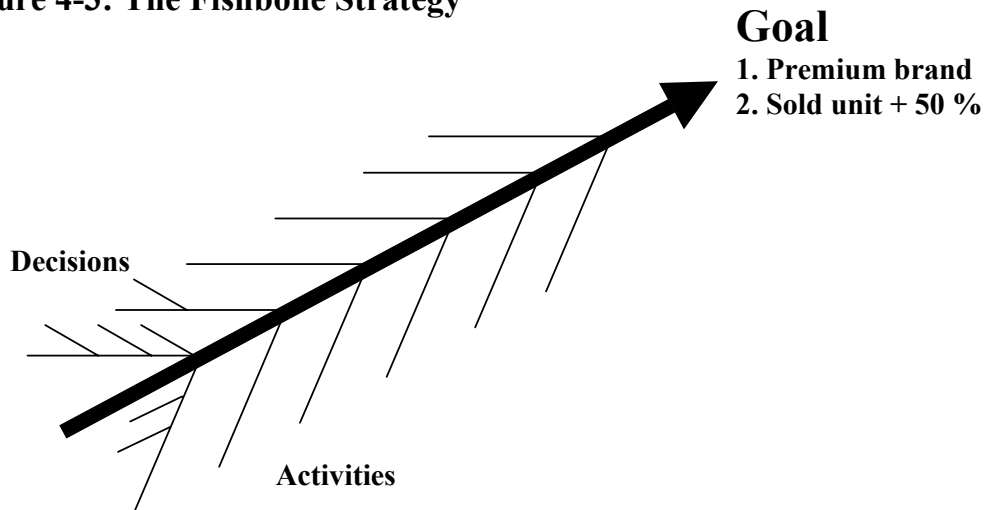
Still, there was a desire for control in order to communicate the unified message outwards, *“Volvo is not a global brand if there is no global control”*. Most interviewees meant that large or global events, for instance Volvo Ocean Race, should be decided on a central level in order to guarantee that the event is matched with the brand. Furthermore, to keep the substance of the global events, portfolios of toolkits should be provided for the local markets. These toolkits should be a method or frames for what should be communicated through the event and not only contain tangible assets but also intangible assets, for instance task forces or other advisors that have the tacit knowledge.

Another incentive for having local adjusted events is the possibility of creating a two-way communication. With a two-way communication the interviewees argued that it provides opportunity to collect ideas and concrete best practices that could be saved, analysed and distributed on other markets. Both tangible and intangible knowledge could be passed though this channel. Referring back to Bartlett and Ghosal (1989), when they discuss transnational corporations, Volvo Car Corporation has got, if not in practice, at least the thoughts, about transnational strategies.

Even if local events are regional, not part of a larger event, they still have to contribute to yearly sales, an overall brand image or another set goal. One of the interviewees brought forward an interesting model to illustrate that all activities should be in line with decisions. *“The Fishbone Strategy”* also shows that all decisions and activities should help Volvo Car Corporation in achieving set goals, mission and vision. The model is applicable on all levels in the organisation. However, since the market managers did not seem to know about

all the events that take place on their markets, it seems to be a great step to have the organisation fully integrated and contributing by best practice.

**Figure 4-3: The Fishbone Strategy**



**Source: Interviewee at Volvo Car Corporation (2000).**

Finally, to summarise this section we will use a quotation that we have heard from several interviewees, *“As global as necessary, as local as possible”*.

#### **4.3.5. Increased Brand Importance**

The interviewees from Volvo Car Corporation shared Saab Automobiles AB’s thoughts that Event Marketing can be used both to build the brand and to increase sales. Some of the interviewees emphasised that despite making a sales stimulation event, the events still have to contribute to the brand building, a thought that could be connected to *“The Fishbone Strategy”*. A traditional brand as Volvo Car Corporation needs to attend the brand and this is a fundamental difference in comparison to unknown brands that are trying to create brand awareness. Volvo Car Corporation has a heritage to maintain, and therefore it is important that everything is done in accordance with the brand identity.

Even if the heritage must be maintained, *“the world does not need Volvo Car Corporation”*, and therefore Volvo Car Corporation must not be afraid to create something unique and new. However, the interviewees argued, that since

the heritage must be considered, every event has to be questioned whether it contributes or not to the brand. The importance of the brand might be illustrated by one of the interviewees, when sharing ideas for the future: The Ford family acquires car companies due to their brand. Since the value of the company is in the acquired brand, the production of every single brand could be outsourced to one manufacturer that produces all cars, whether it is a Mazda, Jaguar, Audi etc. What is kept, is the design, the brand and the marketing in order to maintain the added brand values.

Some of the interviewees argued that the full car range does not need to be exposed during events. By using the products from the range that fits into the specific situation, Volvo Car Corporation can use the opportunity to create a more individually adjusted event. By changing the cars that are in the event, the events do not become duplications of previous events but rather unique for each situation. However, cars are products and therefore a further dimension is need.

The world does not need Volvo Car Corporation since products are easy to duplicate. Therefore, Volvo Car Corporation should benchmark their brand values rather than their products, in order to reach competitive advantage. The benchmark should focus on trends in the car industry and be connected to the brand values. From this benchmark new unique solutions to communicate should be created that are imbued with the brand and are up to date.

The change of the brand image implies that consumers need to change their minds of what a Volvo car is. As one of the interviewees mentioned, *“everybody knows what a Volvo (was ) is – teen, fifteen years ago”*. What the interviewee meant is that consumers look upon Volvo Car Corporation products with driving, design and safety etc. associations, that are ten, fifteen years old and this is a critical success factor for Volvo Car Corporation when changing into a premium brand. Connecting to Lundmark (1998), Event Marketing is a way to experience in order to understand the advantages of the product by using all senses. Due to this, some interviewees emphasised that instead of showing the traditional models, Volvo Car Corporation should show cars that are in line with the new wanted image, for instance the Volvo C 70, the Performance Car Concept or the Cross Country. Furthermore, the

interviewees emphasised that this should be permeated in all marketing activities.

#### **4.3.6. Conclusion Volvo Car Corporation**

There seems to be an apparent belief that Event Marketing can be used to change the image and in the same time increase the units sold. The heritage within Volvo Car Corporation seems to be very positive towards new ideas and changes. This is not only mentioned but can also be seen in that all interviewees had a great interest in the subject.

Volvo Car Corporation seems to have the ideas of a transnational corporation, wanting to share best practices and listening to each other. Furthermore, there is no sign that events need to expose products, however, the specific market executives do have a more sales stimulating perspective than the employees at the Global Marketing. Furthermore, all the interviewees saw Event Marketing not as a separate tool outside the marketing but rather a further tool to reach set goals.

In order to create brand building events, all interviewees argued the use of the soul of the brand education for the employees working within the event. Actually it was emphasised that the Soul of the Brand should be a part of the introduction for new employees.

## **5. Key issue for Event Marketing**

*In this chapter we intend to deepen our analysis by discussing the key issues that have been emphasised as important when organising for Event Marketing within the car industry. We will discuss the importance of the human context and integrated organisation.*

## **5.1. The Human Dimension**

After our analysis we have realised that a key issue for Event Marketing is having the right human resources communicating the brand values. The importance of having people working that truly understand the brand was emphasised by almost all the interviewees.

The human dimension of Event Marketing is what creates the uniqueness to the brand in an event, especially for high-involvement purchases. In the capital goods industry, where high involvement decisions are taken and more reliable information is needed, interaction serves as a great function. When buying a car, the consumer is making one of his/her biggest investments, the consumer is more sensitive and might require more than one-way communication to convert to another brand. Therefore, the Event Marketing model from Behrer and Larsson (1998) is applicable to the car industry with one “small” correction, namely the need for the human dimension.

There is nothing unique with placing a car at an airport or a mall. The only difference with this type of event in comparison to printed advertisement is that the consumer gets a view of the car live. What makes the 3D advertisement more unique is adding a human dimension, by placing someone who is familiar with and can communicate the company brand and product. The car will be more “alive” since it can be shown and explained both inside and outside. Further, the consumer has the opportunity to get an answer to his/her questions. In connection to the demonstration of the car, the consumer can also be offered the chance to sign up for a test drive or be shown to the closest dealer of preferred choice.

### **5.1.1. *The human context***

To add a human dimension might sound an easy solution in order to communicate the brand identity. However, the human being is rather complex in her way of learning, interpreting and understanding, since she, is characterised by her context. Everything the human being experiences will

affect the way she interprets situations. Unless she experiences a situation, which requires new behaviour and this behaviour is positive, she will not change her way of acting. However, if she is put in a situation in which she has to experience a new way of acting and if the experience is interpreted as positive, it is most likely that she will repeat the behaviour in a similar situation. (Schein, 1980)

Mental Models are deeply ingrained assumptions and generalisations that influence how we understand the world and how we take action. The models keep us in the same pattern of both thinking and acting. By questioning the Mental Models people see matters from a different perspective and openness. But in order to be able to question the Mental Models we first must realise that there has to be something to gain by questioning them. (Senge, 1990)

Connecting back to brand building, Kings (1991) argues that brand building will involve designing and controlling all aspects of a company. Most managers today only see the brand as the company's logo and corporate identity program, but in the future the company "brand" will have to encapsulate and communicate what an organisation is and what it stands for. Therefore the manager must change the interpretation of the brand. It is as important to win a distinguished and distinctive place in the perception of a company's actual and perspective customers, as it is the same with the employees. Since it is the human dimension that adds the value to a customer/prospect in an event, all members and functions in the organisation must not only be market orientated in general but also market orientated in combination with the brand values. (Baker, 1996)

It is a common fact that people are different and cannot adjust to all situations. Several interviewees supported this when mentioning that there has to be a match between the individual values and the company values. One of the interviewees meant that one has to *"love the work and do it by heart otherwise it will not be honest."* Another interviewee meant that the Soul of the Brand is a lifestyle, a lifestyle that has to be shared by the employee in order to be communicated in the right way.

One crucial factor might be the individual's ability to learn, since the individual must not only understand the added values in the brand identity but also learn to interpret the different situations that might occur during an event, and combine the behaviour to the specific situation. It is the individual's perception of the current situation together with how he/she translates the added values to fit to that specific situation that will help or not help the company.

The executives on the specific markets seemed to request best practices and toolkits since they were not familiar with the Event Marketing concept and the new ways of working the new types of events need. Also, if the market executives have used the same type of events a longer time, and this has led to increased sales, new ways of working might be seen as a risk and therefore will not be tried. Some of the executives might need to learn about and experience the advantages of the new way of working in order to adopt the changes. Still, the individuals must have a willingness to try and also get the opportunity to experience.

People with a high level of personal mastery are able to consistently realise the results that matter most deeply to them. Personal Mastery is an art to deepen and widen ones own vision, to develop one's patience, gather energy and to see reality in a unbiased way. Furthermore, the organisation's will and abilities to learn are dependent on the individual's ability to learn. However the individuals' development is not a guarantee for an organisation to develop, but a good base for it. (Senge, 1990)

Relating to Schein's (1980) discussion about context influencing the human interpretation, depending on past experiences and how these experiences have influenced the person, some people are more open for changes than others. Also this context is influenced by the person's own values. Since some people might have context and values that are better suited for certain situations, this supports the fact that some people are a better off working at Volvo Car Corporation. Duncan and Moriarty (1998), take these thoughts a bit further when meaning that the communication based relationship, teaching the consumer rather than persuading, also should be applied to the employees. In

the same way that an organisation should teach the consumer about the brand and its values, the employees also need to be taught.

### **5.1.2. *Integrated organisation***

When working with Event Marketing it is important to have a well-integrated organisation, therefore we agree with Benoy (1996) when stating, “*that internal marketing builds service quality*”. Grönroos (1990), defines internal marketing as selling the firm to its employees, and Kotler and Armstrong (1993) view internal marketing as the building of customer orientation among employees by training and motivating both consumer contact and support staff as a team. These definitions might be too static, since they are not teaching the employees; rather they are persuading how great the business idea of the company is.

By learning how different components in a system interact will increase the understanding of how the entire system works. Understanding just one component by itself that is isolated from the others will not be enough. A company itself is a complex system that is connected by a series of contacts and the components in this system are highly integrated. Since we are a part of this network, we most often only see specific components and are puzzled by that we cannot find good solutions to our greatest problems. System thinking is a term that contains knowledge and different tools, which can help us, understand and influence the entire patterns in an organisation. (Senge, 1990)

According to Senge (1990), one should view the organisation as an act in a play. This idea was also brought up by one of the interviewees at Volvo Car Corporation, when, in fact, using the exact words for illustrating an organisation. Senge, (1990), means that an act is normally well rehearsed; all the people involved in the team understand why and how the different actors, light settings, stage structure etc are combined to perform the best. However, a well-working team does not always start off great but learns to produce extraordinary results. Still, connecting to Baker (1996), it is important to find market orientated people that are able to adopt the brand values. Some people might match the Volvo Car Corporation brand values better while others are suitable



to work in other companies., a thought that is supported by the fact that we have different context due to earlier experience.

One great problem within the premium car industry seems to be that the dealers do not work towards the same goals as the Volvo Car Corporation does. The dealers are working very much on their own, focusing on short-term sales stimulation rather than long-term brand building. This is a problem since the way the dealers are communicating the brand in their daily work seems to be the opposite from what Volvo Car Corporation wants to communicate through their event and other marketing tools. An explanation to this could be that the dealers work on provision.

However, this might change in the future, since Volvo Car Corporation has just started a new way of selling cars in certain countries. Instead of having dealers, they have show rooms where no cars are sold but only information and contact is provided. After the consumer has visited the show room, he/she is offered a “personal” consultant who will help the consumer with an eventual purchase. If the prospect decides to become a customer, the consultant will help with all the details until the purchase is done. Aftersales Marketing such as services, repairs etc. will be provided by a new consultant as soon the purchase is finished.

## 6. Conclusion

*We will first start the conclusion with general aspects and then move on to Volvo Car Corporation.*

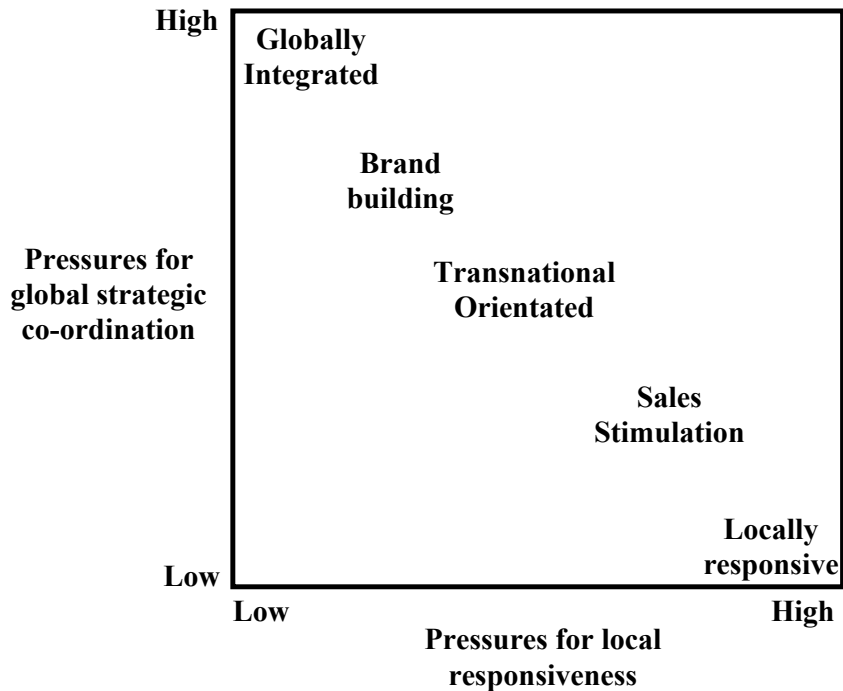
### 6.1. Event Marketing in Transnational organisations

Until now Event Marketing has only been seen as a separate tool aimed at consumers. The interest for Event Marketing and its beneficial contribution to reach both brand building and sales stimulation has changed the view of Event Marketing to become a natural part of the marketing mix. Event Marketing is not a replacement, however it will keep taking a larger stake of the marketing budget in the future and mostly from the mass communication stake.

Event Marketing might help a company to “*be unique in the communication with the consumer*”, which is needed due to the difficulties that the increasing competition brings. Noticeable, though, is that more man working hours will be needed compared to other marketing tools, therefore there is a need to create competitive events that are deeply rooted in the marketing strategy.

In order to be unique with an event the trend is going from the classical way of *using* sport events etc, to *creating* own specific events that better illustrate the brand identity. Examples of this are the Saab Automobile AB’s “*Fly and Try*”, “*The Opel Millennium Express*” and the show rooms in Kungsträdgården. Still, sponsoring in general will remain since all parts of the marketing mix can be used to contribute to the brand building. All the marketing tools can be combined to extend the effects of an event. Important to remember is that the marketing mix is not static, every marketing strategy has a purpose and the marketing mix should be set to match the purpose.

**Figure 6-1: Global integration and local responsiveness framework in combination with Event Marketing**



**Source: Elaboration on material in Prahalad and Doz (1987).**

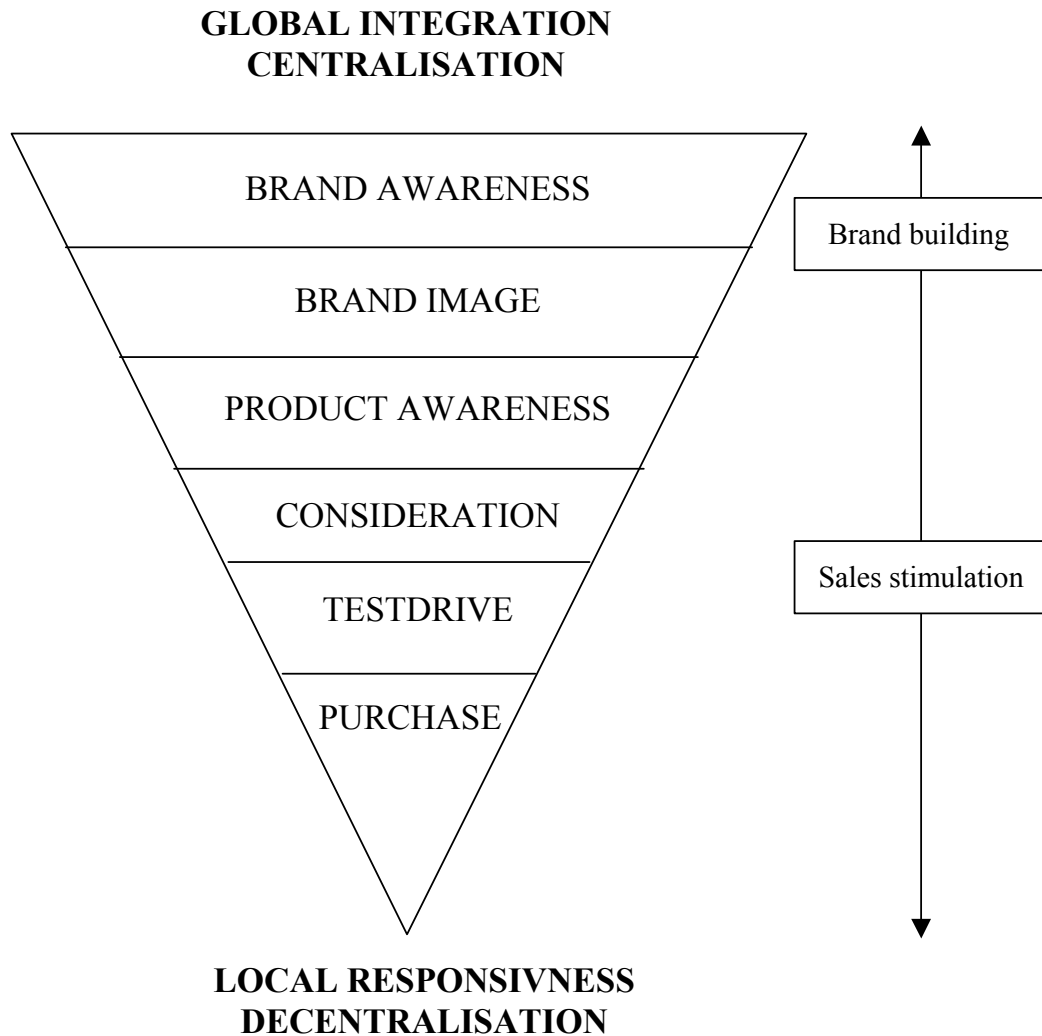
In a transnational organisation there are several strategies to follow, all of them need to contribute to the overall marketing strategy of company. Still there might be a need for local adjustment due to local pressures, since the advantages with Event Marketing are the possibility to adjust to a specific consumer or create an event for a very limited target group; knowledge about the local demand is needed. Still, there has to be a way to integrate the brand worldwide, otherwise the unified brand building might be lost. Prahalad and Doz (1987), illustrate global integration and local responsiveness from a production perspective. The same model can be used on Event Marketing in a global market. (Figure 6-1)

By using both global integration and local responsiveness brand building and/or sales stimulation can be reached. This is due to the fact that a transnational organisation can take advantage of best practices; spreading them throughout the organisation, and also use economies of scale/scope to create an overall image.

In order to use the two purposes with Event Marketing efficiently in a transnational organisation, Event Marketing should be divided in to one strategic level and one operational level. Depending on the purpose intended, events related to the brand awareness should be handled on a more strategic level and vice versa. However, this might be more applicable to companies acting on mature markets, where companies do not need to create brand awareness, rather maintain and develop the existing brand identity.

However, for companies trying to reach brand awareness in a new market, there might not be a need for central control of the brand building. Rather, the company should try and use all channels just to get their sales started and put the brand name in the consumer's mind. Still, there might be a "*break even*" when it is time to take the consumer-based brand equity in to consideration. On the other hand, once the company has started to expose brand and products, all activities will be associated with the brand. Therefore a brand building strategy might be needed from the very beginning, although not acting on a mature market. For companies planning brand extensions on new markets, the same thoughts are applicable. It seems as if the holistic picture needs to be there from the start and the management must learn to see cause and effects in everything they do.

**Figure 6-2: Centralisation and decentralisation concerning Event Marketing in the car industry**



Some of the interviewees from Volvo Car Corporation mean that in some countries, the people buying a Volvo are people who generally travel and therefore are more global and transnational in their way of living. The more international people become the more they might desire global products that are familiar and status oriented among their international friends and colleagues. Should the brand be communicated differently world-wide, the whole idea of brand building would be lost.

The fact that people are becoming more internationalised might contradict the global brand leadership theory presented by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999).

The mission for transnational companies in the future might be to create global brands anyway, depending on the status of the brand. Global premium brands that are capital goods rather than consumer goods might desire more global brand focus than the opposite. Still, in order to reach all consumers in order to build the brand and reach a premium status, local adjustments are needed in the local events. Furthermore, local adjustments need to be made in order to give the event a local touch and to take legal and other issues into consideration.

## **6.2. Event Marketing in the Volvo Car Corporation**

Volvo Car Corporation has a good base for working with Event Marketing since they have a common view of what Event Marketing is and how it should be used. Furthermore, the Volvo Car Corporation's heritage includes an openness and positive attitude towards changes.

We believe that the best for Volvo Car Corporation is to develop a central unit working with Event Marketing, since they have the intention to change their brand image. The Volvo brand is the 75<sup>th</sup> strongest brand in the world and have an existing brand awareness in almost all countries, therefore the unit must be fully integrated with the overall marketing mix strategy in order to achieve the best results for the unit as well as for Volvo Car Corporation. The message that should be communicated through out the world has to be associated with the same values in order to have impact.

On the other hand, the second goal for Volvo Car Corporation is to increase the sold car unit by 50%, and therefore sales stimulation might be needed as well. In order to create sales stimulation on local markets events need to be locally adjusted, since values associated with a premium product might differ from one market to another.

However, for Volvo Car Corporation to reach both goals simultaneously, a combination of brand building events in which products are in focus might be the optimal solution. Events that expose the new products; the Performance Car Concept, the Safety Car Concept, but also the S60 and the C70 could help Volvo Car Corporation illustrate that change.

Further we suggest that every event or series of events should be seen as one specific project. Depending on the purposes with the event, we believe that Volvo Car Corporation can benefit from having teams consisting of both internal and external people. The reason for this is that we believe that good events are unique and in order to develop, new thoughts and new inputs are important. These thoughts are in line with the Volvo Car Corporation philosophy, emphasising employees to work together in projects and learn from each other.

The employees within the event unit should be seen as the core crew to select team members. The reason for doing this is to keep the unified communication. However, there is also a need for flexibility and therefore the rest of the team should be picked, internally and externally, referring to which key issue Volvo Car Corporation wants to address. By using this way of working, both competence transfer and new ideas can be achieved. The project group doesn't necessarily have to consist of members from the event unit, on the contrary it could be good with inputs from other departments within Volvo Car Corporation or external channels.

In order to have global integration and use local responsiveness, toolkits for specific events could be used. If it is a brand building event with the purpose to change the brand image, centralised restrictions together with education will play a important role since there is a need for a common understanding of what the new brand image stands for in order to have a common way to work with the marketing strategy. On the other hand, if it is a local event that focuses on increasing sales, local adjustments might be needed; therefore the toolkits must be supportive rather than restrictive since creativity is needed in order to be unique. Still, the toolkit must be there to make sure that the event is being held in the spirit of the Volvo's Soul of the Brand.

An internal common understanding of Volvo's Soul of the Brand will provide better chances for Volvo Car Corporation to have to reach the premium brand and still maintain the heritage.

Furthermore the event unit should serve as an idea generator, support for all markets, and a information bank with best practices, templates and other tools to help. Especially for Volvo Car Corporation today, best practice sharing might be a very good solution since they already have premium brand status in some countries. It is unnecessary to invent “the wheel” twice, money and time can be saved by studying how other markets work By using an information bank, consisting not only of what has been done but also information about the ideas behind, both money and time can be saved. Also, local ideas can be adopted to a strategic level and spread throughout the organisation. In order to grow unique and maintain this, the Event Marketing unit must foresee the future and learn to see the work as an on-going process. Every event must be followed-up and all employees working with the events must be educated, but also free to come with new crazy ideas.



## **7. Broader implications**

*In this chapter we will bring a thought that has come to our mind during this thesis, to use Event Marketing internally in order to imbue the organisation with the brand.*

### **7.1. Building Shared Visions with Event Marketing**

The individuals within the organisation need to have an understanding both for what the brand values are and how they should be communicated. Gathering every employee in the organisation around a common goal might secure that everyone is engaged working in the same direction. When there is a strong vision and not only a wish from the management, people develop because they want to since it is the nature of the human to develop (Senge, 1990). However, the goal can not only be communicated in order to build a shared vision. The employees must experience the benefits to be able to change in the same way that consumers need to experience in order to understand the advantages of a product or a brand. Therefore, internal Event Marketing might be way to teach the employees.

Since internal marketing is to sell the business idea of the company to its employees in order to get the whole organisation to work towards a unified goal, the internal marketing goal might be the same as building shared visions. Once again, we bring up what the interviewees have mentioned, believing it is of great importance to have all employees integrated in the Event Marketing. When discussing the subject it might seem that it is only important for the people who are directly working with the event that need to be integrated in the whole process. However, according to Aaker (1991), in order to create a strong brand identity that is well known, a company needs to integrate the whole organisation in their work. That no matter where in the organisation a customer asks a question, the same answer should be given.

We mean that these thoughts emphasise that the Event Marketing that is used to educate consumers might be an optimal solution to use on the employees as well. Firstly, the employees understand the brand values but also they experience the event in advance and this might increase the ability to interpret consumer behaviour correctly. Furthermore, by learning together in the event team, the team can prepare themselves for certain situations that might occur when they run the event.

## **7.2. Team Learning**

Through working in teams, using dialogues, the members' ability to "*learn together*" with open senses and to co-operate increases. Team learning It gives insight, which individuals would not get otherwise. When the group learns and develops, it will not only reach good results, the group members develop and faster than if they were by themselves. (Senge, 1990) By learning the patterns of defensive reactions that undermine co-operation and by making them noticeable, the reactions may be of great use. Also, the more one learns, the more conscious one becomes of one's own knowledge.

When connecting the team learning with Schein (1980), teaching us to change the basic assumptions of a human person, we see that team learning might be one way to change the mental models of humans. Reflecting back to the thoughts about how dealers is a bottleneck when trying to achieve better results with event marketing through the use of human resources, there might be a need to change the basic assumptions of the dealers regarding how to get the prospects to become customers. Although the dealer has been informed to change his way of working, it might be difficult for the dealer to change the context unless he/she experiences the advantages.

One of the interviewees from Volvo Car Corporation brought up several ways of dealing with changing that could be connected to team learning. The interviewee suggests that pep-boys could be used (professionals, informative people) to visit and work in a show room for one week in order to teach the rest of the crew by showing the best way to treat consumers. Another suggestion is to create sample show rooms with 50% ideal informative people and 50%

personnel that are there to learn. The idea is to let “teachers” provide their “students” with real life experiences in a natural environment. When referring back to Schein (1980), experience in order to understand benefits from new behaviour might be a good solution for changing basic assumptions, which further supports internal Event Marketing as a way to teach the employees.

Connecting back to the purpose of Event Marketing when changing a brand image towards the customers, we see that it might take experience in order to understand the added value to the brand. Since the employees also are human beings, Event Marketing could also fulfil the purpose of teaching the brand identity internally. What we mean is that, in order to change brand image externally, the company has to begin from the employees’ way viewing the brand and what is supposed to be communicated.

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## **Appendix 1: Interview Guide – Event Agencies**

How do you define EM (=place within the concept)?

Which marketing tools (sponsorship, citizenship) do you place under the concept of EM?

Do you believe in the concept of EM for all branches/Volvo?

Why/ Why not?

Organisational structure for EM?

Why?

Do you think that EM should be decentralised/centralised? Benefits and disadvantages?

The role of the Agencies?

How can Volvo use Event Marketing in the future?

## **Appendix 2: Interview Guide – Car Manufactures’**

### Definition

Your definition of Event Marketing? Do you have different definitions depending on target group (customers, PR, dealers)? Why?

### Organisation

How is your company organised when it comes to Event Marketing?

What is centralised and what is not? (Planning, implementation, budget and follow-up )

When you do Event Marketing, do you work through the different market organisations or do you execute it centralised?

Do you have a specific event department or do you work on a project basis?

Number of employees working with Event Marketing/Event Marketing departments?

Do you use Event agencies?

### Activities

Why do you use Event Marketing?

What have you done earlier that has been good/less good?

Which activities do you believe do not work within the premium car industry?

Why?

What Event Marketing activities are you really good at?

Why?

What Event Marketing activities are you specialised in?

Why?

Do you believe that Event Marketing is under development? If so, how?

What events do you see as World Class events?



## **Appendix 3: Interview guide – Volvo Car**

### **Corporation**

#### Marketing

1. Opinion about if Volvo is working decentralised/centralised?
2. What conditions do you have to communicate/spread a message throughout the country (for instance through retailers?)
3. How does it work today?
4. How will it be in the future?

#### Event Marketing

1. How do you define EM?
2. Which marketing tools (sponsorship, citizenship) do you place under the concept of EM?
3. Do you believe in the concept of EM for the car industry?
4. Why/ Why not?
5. Can EM complement your already existing marketing mix?
6. Why/why not?
7. What do you do within EM today?
8. What has been done that was good/bad?
9. Why?
10. What do you want to do in the future?
11. and why?
12. Do you think EM can enhance the Soul of the brand on your market/all markets, or are there any differences?
13. Why/why not?
14. How/in what ways do you think EM can be used to contribute to the existing Marketing Mix?
15. Should it replace something else or be used as a complement?
16. Do you think that EM should be decentralised/centralised? Benefits and disadvantages?