



The Nobel Prize: A 'Heritage-based' Brand-oriented Network

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Working Paper

15-010

August 19, 2014

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2014-08-19

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – *Understanding the Nobel Prize as a ‘true’ heritage brand in a networked situation and its management challenges, especially regarding identity and reputation.*

Methodology – *The Nobel Prize serves as an in-depth case study and is analysed within an extended corporate brand identity framework that incorporates reputation.*

Findings – *The Nobel Prize is a ‘true’ corporate heritage brand (in this case, organizational brand). It is the ‘hub’ of a linked network of brands – “a federated republic”. The brand core of the Nobel Prize is its set of core values supporting and leading to its promise; “for the benefit of mankind”. The core constitutes a hub around which the essential award-granting institutions, as well as the Nobel Foundation and other related entities and stakeholders gravitate. The laureates represent the Nobel Prize track record. The Will of Alfred Nobel, described as “The Nobel Prize federation’s constitution” is interpreted by us as indicating a brand-oriented approach within a network of interrelated institutions and organisations.*

Research implications – *The concept of ‘brand-oriented networks’ is introduced. An individual organisation’s approach to its marketplace, brand-resources and strategy may to varying degrees be brand-oriented. This study suggests that brand-orientation also applies to a network of brands. Separately, the extended version of the “corporate brand identity matrix” provides a corporate brand framework for identity and reputation management, including networked brands.*

Practical implications – *The new extended framework and the definition of a brand network with a ‘hub’ provide logic for managing the network. Essential managerial questions on how to leverage brand heritage or not are placed in perspective. Identifying and understanding one’s brand heritage and the importance of brand stewardship are reinforced.*

Suggestions for further research – *The investigation of brand networks (market-oriented and/or brand oriented) and the application of the new “Corporate Brand Identity and Reputation Matrix”.*

Originality / Value – *The first case study of the Nobel Prize from a strategic brand management perspective. The articulation and characterisation of it as a ‘brand-oriented network’. The development and application of the new CBIRM.*

Key words – *Nobel Prize, heritage brand, brand network, networked brand, brand within a network, brand orientation, brand stewardship, corporate brand identity, reputation*

Type of paper – *Conceptual blended with empirical case study research*

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of our study is to understand the Nobel Prize (Nobelpriset) as a ‘true’ heritage brand in a networked situation and its management challenges especially regarding identity and reputation. A heritage brand is one where its past is leveraged into its positioning and value proposition for the present, and the future (Urde, Greyser and Balmer, 2007). A networked situation is one where several organisations together create identity and share reputation as a specific entity.

In the *Oxford Dictionary* the Nobel Prize is described as “the world’s most prestigious award”. Its extraordinary reputation is confirmed by Stanford President John Hennessy: “In the [Silicon] Valley, everyone talks about your IPO [Initial Public Offering to the stock market] ... but in the sciences they talk about going to Stockholm [as Nobel laureates], and you go to Stockholm only if you make a fundamental breakthrough that really reshaped the field. That’s the kind of impact we really look for in our research.” (*Financial Times*, 3 February, 2014). The Nobel Prize was possibly the first intellectual prize of its kind and introduced at a time when the modern Olympics was established. Michael Sohlman, former Director of the Nobel Foundation, described it to us as: “the Olympics of the intellect”.

The identity of the Nobel Prize is based on the Will of Alfred Nobel and it represents an impressive heritage. In a real sense, everybody knows what the Nobel Prize is and what it does, but practically nobody knows how it does it. The Nobel Prize is very much in the public eye and highly visible as a global entity. Everybody knows it is prestigious but very few know how it acquired its elevated position. Nobody, as far as we know, has written about the Nobel Prize from a strategic brand management perspective.

In this paper we are incorporating existing concepts into a larger framework as a way of looking at brand issues most relevant for the Nobel Prize. This is one reason why we will explicitly explore identity and reputation management as essential for the Nobel Prize. We also examine stewardship, which in this case has been defined by a member of a prize-awarding committee this way: “To guard the standing of the Nobel Prize”. Also, as a manager at the Nobel Foundation commented: “There is an inherent breadth to the scope of the Nobel Prize, reflecting the donor’s will – stretching from medical science, physics and literature to initiatives to bring peace to the world.” Further, there are initiatives to “reach out” with the intent to “... take the ideas of Alfred Nobel into modern times”. Thus, the stewardship and management of a heritage brand become part of our examination.

2. BACKGROUND

The historical background of the Nobel Prize is important for the subsequent discussion. For an overview of the history of awards, cultural value and the economics of prestige we refer to an excellent treatment by English (2005). The *Legacy of Alfred Nobel* written by Alfred Nobel's assistant and later executor of his will is another key reference (Sohlman, 1983). *The Nobel Prize* by Feldman (2012) provides details about Alfred Nobel's life and the controversy and prestige associated with the awards.

2.1. The Alfred Nobel legacy and the Will

In 1888, Alfred Nobel was astonished to read his own obituary, titled *The merchant of death is dead*, in a French newspaper. Because it was Alfred's brother who had died, the obituary was eight years premature (Larsson, 2010). Alfred Nobel (1833-1896) was the inventor of Dynamite (a registered trademark); he spoke five languages fluently and had patents for many inventions in his name. His first patent (1863) was for his 'method of preparing gunpowder for both blasting and shooting'. Alfred Nobel was born in Sweden and also lived in France, Russia and Italy. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by Uppsala University in Sweden (Fant, 1991). Alfred Nobel was a cosmopolite and had not been a registered resident of any country since the age of nine; therefore he was jokingly called "The richest vagabond in Europe" (Sohlman, 1983, p. 86).

Alfred Nobel died in 1896 and left one of the largest fortunes of his century. "His handwritten will contained no more than an outline of his great visionary scheme for five prizes. The will, full of legal flaws, was vigorously contested" (Sohlman, 1983, p. 1).

A section of the will reads: "... constitute a fund, the interest on which shall be annually distributed in the form of prizes to those who, during the preceding year, shall have conferred the greatest benefit to mankind. The said interest shall be divided into five equal parts ... to the most important discovery or invention within the field of physics ... chemical discovery or improvement ... discovery within the domain of physiology or medicine ... to the person who shall have produced in the field of literature the most outstanding work in an ideal direction ... to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses." (Nobelprize.org)

Those who are still entrusted to carry out the final wishes of Alfred Nobel describe the Will to us as "a strength and a ruler" and as "a constitution". The Nobel Prize has been awarded since 1901 for "the benefit of mankind" to be continued eternally. This responsibility characterises the Nobel Prize and the people behind it.

2.2 The prestige of the Nobel Prize

The Nobel Prize is considered to mark the beginning of a modern *age of awards* (English, 2005). The custom of cultural awards can be traced back at least to the sixth century B.C., in Greece (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1983). In the early Renaissance, the practice became common with the rise of royal and national academies, e.g. the French Academy founded in 1672. The Nobel Prize was a “catalyst for a process that had been gaining momentum for some time” (English, 2005, p. 53).

Based on the literature and our interviews we see four main reasons that explain why the Nobel Prize has acquired its elevated position.

First, the Nobel Prize was one of the first international prizes to be established in a time when nationalism was strong. From a draft of the Nobel Will: “It is my express wish that in awarding the prizes no consideration whatever shall be given to the nationality of the candidates, but that the most worthy shall receive the prize, whether he be a Scandinavian or not” (Nobelprize.org). The Nobel Prize has always cast a global shadow. The former Director of the Nobel Foundation said to us: “There is an ideology based on the values of the Enlightenment and its cosmopolitan nature”.

Second, the Nobel Prize gained immediate attention and stirred curiosity, debate and critique (Källstrand, 2012). “Among the grievances aired was Nobel’s supposed lack of patriotism in bypassing Swedish interest in favour of international activities”. [Also cited were] “... the difficulties which might face the prize-giving bodies in accomplishing their task; it was thus suggested that the work would interfere with their members’ main functions and expose them to bribery and corruption” (Sohlman, 1983, p. 84). There was some reluctance from academics: “There were considerable differences of opinion in the academies concerning the proposed task, and fears voiced that the Foundation would be detrimental to Swedish research and to the prize-giving bodies themselves.” (Sohlman, 1983 p. 109). Two members of the Swedish Academy commented: “If the Academy rejects this charge [in the will], the idea of the literary prize as imagined by Nobel will come to nothing, and the foremost contemporary writers on the continent will be deprived of the exceptional recognition and privileges he intended for them. A storm of critique and reproach will undoubtedly follow. In shirking this great responsibility the Academy will be bitterly blamed ...” (Sohlman, 1983, p. 110). The coverage from media was extensive (Källstrand, 2012).

Third is recognition of the absolute criteria and rigour in the processes to award the Nobel Prize. A member of a prize-awarding (scientific) committee commented succinctly to us: “The discovery. That’s it. We disregard other aspects”. The same person underlines the respect for the institutes and the Foundation’s work: “By and large it is the acceptance by the scientific communities of our work”. The member of one Nobel committee sums up its modus operandi: “We depend on nominations, then

we evaluate, processes that may stretch over a 15-20 year period ... time to judge the impact of a discovery.”

Finally, there is the iconic status rapidly gained by the Nobel Prize via its associations with extraordinary discoveries and individuals. “This is the prize awarded to Albert Einstein, the prizes that have changed our understanding of the world”, a Nobel committee member concluded.

2.3 The Nobel Prize: “A small federative republic”

To the world at large, the Nobel Prize is an annual series of awards for distinguished achievements. Upon close examination, however, the actual awards and the celebrations in Stockholm are the visible manifestation of the processes of interrelated institutions, organisations and individuals (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1983; Fant, 1991; Feldman; 2012). What is reported in international media during the annual *Nobel Week*, is in fact only the tip of an iceberg. Through a strategic brand management lens, we see the Nobel Prize as a networked (corporate organisational) brand, characterised by a Nobel official as: “A small federative republic” (Figure 1).

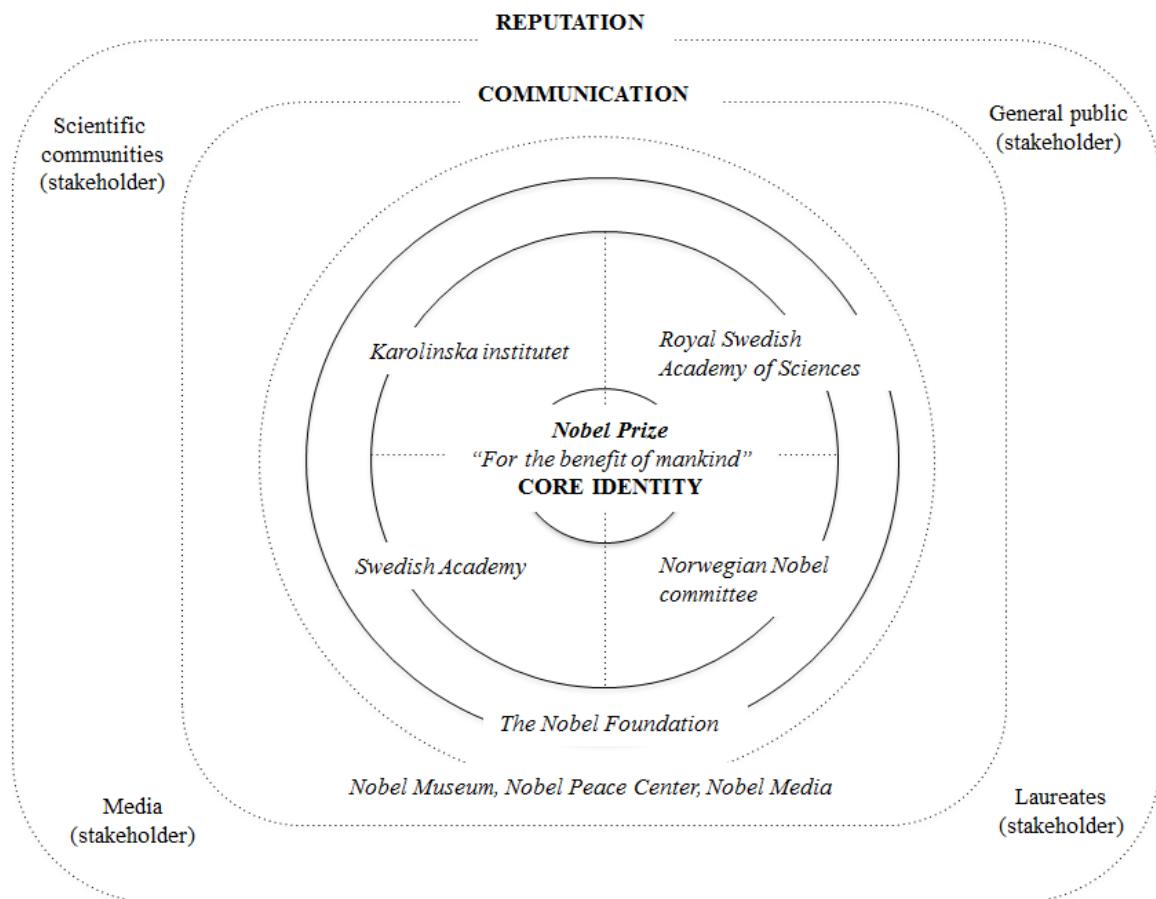


Figure 1: The Nobel Prize: A networked brand and its stakeholders

The Nobel Prize is the ‘hub’ of the network and the core of its brand identity (centre; first circle). Four prize-awarding institutions (second circle), the Nobel Foundation (third circle), as well as the Nobel Museum, Nobel Peace Center, and Nobel Media (fourth circle) make up the three principal circles in the network. The laureates represent an essential part of the network and are also stakeholders (outer circle). They all communicate the “Nobel Prize” directly or indirectly. The scientific communities, general public and media are examples of key stakeholder groups important for the network’s reputation.

To prepare the groundwork for our analysis, we briefly describe the network, starting with its hub.

The Nobel Prize

The Nobel Prize is a group of awards living together. The Will is a primary source of its identity, and the combination of awards and what they contribute to the network all bring about its unique character. As heard during our interviews: “The totality is an Enlightenment signal”. The former director of the Foundation explains the roles, relations and different audiences of the awards: “The Peace Prize is the best known and with the broadest audience, followed by the Prize in literature. The scientific prizes have more limited, but equally important, audiences. They strengthen each other. The Prize in Economic Sciences is sometimes criticized, but when one reads international media, there are articles or references to the Nobel Prize or a laureate. The Nobel Prize is constantly present in international media.”

The prize-awarding institutions

The prize-awarding institutions with their committees are the backbone of the Nobel Prize network. These are (corporate organisational) brands with their own identity, communication and reputation – a heritage in their own right. The Alfred Nobel Will and the Nobel Prize connect these institutions and provide them with a shared and common goal – to fulfil Nobel’s intentions entrusted to them.

INSTITUTE	AWARDS NOBEL PRIZE FOR ...	EST.	MOTTO
Karolinska institutet	Physiology or Medicine	1810	“To improve human health through research and education”
Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences	Chemistry, Physics and Economic Sciences	1739	“To promote sciences and strengthen their influence in society”
Swedish Academy	Literature	1786	“For the ‘purity, vigour and majesty’ of the Swedish language”
Norwegian Nobel Committee	Peace Prize	1904*	[None]

*First Peace Award in 1901. Norwegian Parliament later appointed committee for award.

Table 1: The Nobel Prize: Awarding Institutions

The Karolinska institutet was founded in 1810 by King Karl XIII to educate army field doctors among other tasks. The history of Karolinska institutet is very much the history of Swedish medicine and today it is Sweden’s only purely medical university (ki.se/en/startpage). A manager at the Karolinska institutet comments on the importance of being part of the Nobel network: “Are we to fulfil our purpose ‘to improve human health’? ... this demands that we can attract the brightest minds, the most promising young talents, funding and partners to cooperate with. To succeed in the international world of education and research would be impossible for us as a fairly small university in a small country, if we did not have a strong brand and had the capacity to protect and build it. Without our reputation and relation with the Nobel Prize we would not have the same opportunity to fulfil this purpose.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (Kungliga vetenskapsakademin), founded in 1739 by Anders Celsius, Carl von Linné and four fellow scientists, was inspired from the Enlightenment era of the time (Feldman, 2012). The Academy’s committees award the Nobel Prizes in physics, chemistry and economic sciences. Among the purposes of this academy is to be a forum where researchers can meet across subject borders, to act as a voice of science and influence research policy priorities and to stimulate interest in mathematics and the natural sciences in schools. In 1968, Sweden’s central bank established the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel with a donation to the Nobel Foundation on the Bank’s 300th anniversary (nobelprize.org). The director of the Nobel Foundation told us there is “an almost ‘holy’ rule not to add new prizes”.

King Gustav III founded *the Swedish Academy* in 1786 with inspiration from the French academies (English, 2005). The Academy has 18 elected lifetime members who have awarded the Literature prize since 1901. It has a long history of debates and critique. The Academy's purpose is to 'further' the Swedish language and literature [note to the reader: literature in general].

The Norwegian Nobel Committee is elected by the Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget) and awards the Peace prize in Oslo. Henri Dunant (founder of the Red Cross) and Frédéric Passy (founder of Société française pour l'arbitrage entre les Nations) were the first two to receive this award in 1901 (Worek, 2010). The Peace Prize is debated in international media regarding both who receives the award and who does not. Examples of committee decision followed by controversy were the awards to Henry Kissinger in 1973, Yassir Arafat, Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres in 1994, Barack Obama in 2009 and The European Union in 2012 (Feldman, 2012).

The Nobel Foundation

A central task for the Foundation, established in 1900, is to manage Alfred Nobel's capital (approx. €300 million). The asset management is conducted "in such a manner that ensures a secure financial standing for the Nobel Prize in the long-term, as well as the independence of the prize-awarding institutions in their work of selecting Laureates" (The Nobel Foundation's Annual Review, 2012, p. 24). The Prize sum to a Laureate is about €1 million. The Nobel Foundation's trustees are elected by the Nobel Prize awarding institutions. The board consists of seven members with the institutions in the majority. The trustees in turn elect a chairman from their own members.

Nobel Museum, The Nobel Peace Center and Nobel Media

The Nobel Museum AB (Limited) in Stockholm defines as its mission to "safeguard the long-term position of the Nobel Prize ... by providing information and conducting research related to the prize" (Nobel Foundation, Annual Review 2012, p. 30). The head of the museum emphasised to us that it is "a museum of story telling. We ask the laureates to bring an artefact with a personal meaning to them". The Nobel Museum's traveling exposition has visited more than 20 countries.

The Nobel Peace Prize Center in Oslo presents laureates and their work related to war, peace and conflicts. The Director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute and member of Nobel committee commented: "Why is there an interest in the Nobel Prize? First, we have been at it for a long time. Second, we are part of the Nobel family of awards. Third, our historical record is not perfect but is solid, surprisingly solid in fact. Four, the definition of peace has evolved and we embrace the entire world."

Nobel Media AB (Limited) develops and manages programs, productions and media rights of the Nobel Prize for digital and broadcast media including publishing and events. The company spreads

knowledge about the Nobel Prize award achievements to a global audience (nobelprize.org). According to its CEO, Nobel Media is in "... an expansive phase; with an open attitude to the purpose of engaging and spreading knowledge. We (Nobel Media) develop and manage a heritage". In 2012 the Nobel Week Dialogue became a new addition to the Nobel Week in Stockholm. Nobel Media collaborates, for example, with BBC World News and CNN, and has sponsors such as Astra Zeneca (medicine), Ericsson (telecom) and DNB (Norwegian-based bank).

Laureates – special stakeholders

There is more than a century of Nobel Prize laureates representing an 800+ group of individuals and their discoveries and achievements. We consider laureates as both internal and external stakeholders. They are internal since they represent the Nobel Prize track record, and external since a laureate or a group of laureates can and do impact on the award's reputation (Figure 1).

Other stakeholders

The Nobel Prize is about science and society in dialogue. Beyond the general public, it has multiple stakeholders. Some of these are educational systems (Lovell, 2006), educators, school children doing writing projects, and those who represent other awards (Bersadschi, Rakauskaite and Zorzi, 2013). An editor at Nobel Media elegantly summed up for us the Nobel Prize stakeholders: "the world-wide community of interested people".

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are five conceptual areas that we consider to be highly pertinent to our study's purpose: brand heritage; brand-orientation and market-orientation; identity; reputation; and networks. These concepts and research areas are relevant to practice, and they position the topic of this study theoretically.

We view the Nobel Prize as an organisational (corporate) brand and argue that it has a high Heritage Quotient (HQ, see below). This guides us in the selection of relevant concepts and frameworks in our analysis. It is important to note that for an organisation such as the Nobel Prize, the brand is intended to be meaningful to a range of stakeholders; this contrasts with what is typically referred to as corporate brands, which have products and services, where the focus often is on end-consumers and/or B2B customers (who chose, buy and distribute the product and services), plus other stakeholders.

3.1 Managing brand heritage

Brand heritage is a perspective on the past, present and future (Wiedmann, Hennings, Schmidt and Wuestefeld, 2011). Related constructs are *retro branding* (e.g. re-launching of historical brands; Brown, Kozinets, and Sherry, 2003), *iconic branding* (culturally driven branding with high symbolic

content; Holt, 2004), *nostalgic branding* (linking the past to the present; Davis, 1979), *monarchic branding* (e.g. using its monarchy to symbolise nationhood for a country; Balmer, Greyser, Urde, 2006), and *history marketing* (the past as part of business history; Ooi, 2002). The concept of heritage brands as a distinct category emerged from analysis of monarchies as corporate brands, applied to corporate and organisational branding; heritage brands embrace *three* time-frames – the past, the present and the future (Urde, Greyser and Balmer, 2007).

Brand heritage is defined by Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007, p. 4) “... as a dimension of a brand’s identity found in its track record, longevity, core values, use of symbols and particularly in an organisational belief that its history is important. A heritage brand is one with a positioning and value proposition based on its heritage.” When a brand ‘measures up’ to all five elements of heritage, it is considered to be a brand with very high HQ.

Urde *et al* (2007) make a distinction between a heritage brand and a brand with a heritage. They emphasise that making heritage part of a brand’s value proposition ultimately is a strategic management decision and conclude that heritage brands constitute a distinct branding category. For example, SC Johnson and Company, well known for its household products, calls itself “a family company”. This refers not only to the consumer products they make, but significantly to the family heritage of the privately-owned firm, led by Johnsons for many generations. It is a heritage brand. Among other heritage-related initiatives over the years, the company commissioned renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright to design its distinctive headquarters building in the 1930s, still recognised for the “the innate intelligence of its design” reflecting “the pride the family-owned company takes in it” (Russell, 2014).

Separately, the Swiss watch brand Patek Philippe is a heritage brand since the company has chosen to emphasise its history as a key component of its brand identity and positioning: “You never actually own a Patek Philippe. You merely look after it for the next generation”. Patek Philippe backs up this brand promise, for example, through dedicated care and restoration service of its watches (of any age) for owners (www.patek.com). In contrast, the authors categorize TAG Heuer, another Swiss timepiece brand, as a brand *with* a heritage, but not a heritage brand. TAG Heuer’s positioning is in the present – e.g. Formula 1 racing – although it makes reference to its history (“Swiss avant-garde since 1860”). Baum (2011) analysed the communication of heritage in the Swiss watch industry and how differentiation may be achieved among brands by using heritage. In a different category, the cruise line Cunard draws significantly on its history of ocean-going elegance. However, according to Hudson (2011), although it is a brand with heritage, Cunard does not have a demonstrated presence of all (or most) elements of a heritage brand.

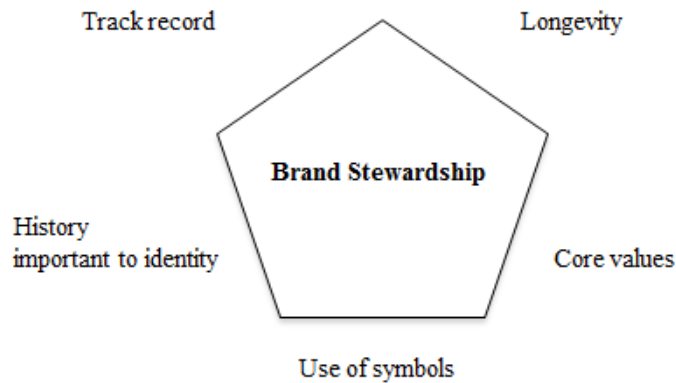


Figure 2: The elements of heritage (Urde, Greyser and Balmer, 2007)

Next we apply the Heritage Quotient model (Figure 2) to the Nobel Prize (Table 2). In analysing HQ, it is clear to us that *core values* are in fact the most difficult element to discern because they are dominantly internal. In contrast, symbols are readily recognisable externally. We view the Nobel Prize medal as an explicit example of the *use of symbols*, while the core values are implicit. Specifically, we define the Nobel Prize *core values* as: ‘Discovery’, ‘Excellence’, and ‘Engagement for higher ideals’, based upon our analysis presented later in this paper. The ‘Alfred Nobel legacy’ illustrates how *history is important to identity* of the Nobel Prize. The heritage element *longevity* is important but not decisive in itself. There are awards that date back further in time than 1901 (see English, 2005 for overview). The uniqueness of the Nobel Prize rather is related to the fact that it was one of the first truly international awards. Furthermore, the *track record*, i.e. “demonstrated performance over time” (Urde *et al*, 2007, p. 9), of the Nobel Prize is impressively represented by more than 800 laureates (see *Nobel: A Century of Prize Winners*, Worek, 2010). This is of particular importance in the evaluation of its heritage quotient, since the annual awards to new laureates continuously relate the past to the present and build expectations for the future. Heritage brands are distinct in that they are about “history and history in the making” (Urde *et al*, 2007, p. 7) but not solely about history. In conclusion, as summarised in Table 2, we find the Nobel Prize to have a high HQ indeed, and therefore we refer to it as a ‘true’ heritage brand.

Stewardship (centre of HQ model) is described as ‘a mindset’ among individuals that also may be a part of an organisation’s culture. In relation to heritage, stewardship is characterised for example by executives’ statements such as: “You are prepared to say ‘no’ [to a proposed initiative] with reference to your company’s heritage, reputation, and future ... and also to say ‘yes’ when appropriate” and “You treat what has been done before with respect” (Urde *et al* 2007, p. 15). This responsibility clearly pertains to the Nobel Prize, as stated to us by a former director of the Foundation: “We are

entrusted to steward and ensure quality of the Nobel Prize which is culturally significant for the world.”

HERITAGE ELEMENT	THE NOBEL PRIZE HERITAGE QUOTIENT (HQ)
Use of symbols	The medal; the diploma; the ceremonies; the telephone call to the laureate, the waiting outside the Swedish Academy’s door to hear the citation to the literature award; the banquet; the prize-awarding ceremony with the Monarch presenting the medal and diploma; the flowers brought from the city of San Remo, Italy; The Nobel Museum in Stockholm and the Nobel Peace Centre in Oslo
History important to identity	The Alfred Nobel legacy; the Will; the history of the awards; the history of the prize-awarding institutions; the laureates’ personal histories
Track record	The discoveries and their impact on science, culture and society; 800 + laureates with individual stories of discovery and achievements; the artefacts donated to the Nobel museum by the laureates; the award-giving institutions’ citations; the speeches
Longevity	Since 1901; a very early international intellectual prize of its kind, established in a time of prevailing nationalism
Core values	Discovery, Excellence and Engagement to higher ideals (based on our case analysis)

Table 2: Nobel Prize as a ‘true’ heritage brand. Source: Based on HQ Model by Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007).

3.2 Balancing brand-orientation and market-orientation

An individual organisation’s approach to its marketplace, resources, and strategy may to varying degrees be market-oriented and/or brand-oriented (Wallace, Buil, and Chernatony, 2013; Urde, Baumgarth and Merrilees, 2011; Melin and Gromark, 2011, Wong and Merrilees, 2007; Ewing and Napoli, 2005; Ried, Luxton, and Mavondo, 2005; Gryd-Jones, Helm and Munk, 2013). The mindset of a particular organisation will reflect the conceptualisation of its brands, their fundamental functions and how they are to be managed and presented to their marketplace. A special issue on ‘brand orientation’ of the *Journal of Marketing Management* provides perspectives and extensive references on the relation between brand-orientation and market-orientation (Baumgarth, Merrilees and Urde, 2013).

The satisfaction of the needs and wants of customer and non-customer stakeholders is a foundation of *market-orientation*. Brands (in a general sense) become in this paradigm (Louro and Cunha, 2001) a

response to the market with the ‘customer’ in focus. The *image* of the brand is key and it is defined from the ‘outside-in’, that is to say, the organisation responds to needs and wants in its market.

In contrast, in the *brand-orientation* paradigm, satisfaction of the needs and wants of the customer and non-customer stakeholders occurs within the boundaries of the brand’s identity. The clarity of the brand *identity* is key and it is defined from the ‘inside-out’.

Brand orientation has been defined as “an approach in which the processes of the organisation revolve around the creation, development and protection of brand identity in an on-going interaction with target customers [and non-customer stakeholders] with the aim of achieving lasting competitive advantages in the form of brands” (Urde, 1999, p. 117). Questions related to the two paradigms are the point of departure in the definition of a particular brand and the mindset that characterises its organisation’s brand management (Urde *et al.*, 2011).

Finding a balance between brand orientation and market orientation is a question for the management of the Nobel Prize. A quote from one of our interviews with a Nobel official illustrates in our view the tension between a brand-oriented and a market-oriented approach:

“I don’t think the reputation of the Nobel Prize was built by people caring about the reputation of the Prize. It achieved that reputation because people carried out the intentions of Alfred Nobel’s will and they wanted to reward deserving scientists. If we adhere to aspirational descriptions of ourselves such as objectivity, integrity and rigour, I think we are doing our job.”

Referring to public attitudes he went on to say:

“It is not necessarily a remit [responsibility] to go out and find out what the world thinks of the Nobel Prize and try to adjust our behaviour because of that. Every organisation wants to be very conscious about what its audience wants and to behave up to those expectations in order to grow and expand. Therein lies a big question for the Nobel Prize: what are we about, should we serve what the audience wants, or should we just do what we think is right – that is, to continue working as we always have from the Nobel Foundation’s point of view. It is interesting to know what the world thinks of the Nobel Prize, but should that change our behaviour? Therefore, if it would change our behaviour, fine let’s find out; if not we should continue doing what we are doing.”

To conclude, an organisation with a stronger brand-oriented approach to its endeavour is guided by its identity to a higher degree. The legal and moral importance associated with the Alfred Nobel Will and that it de facto is the ‘point of departure’ indicates the Nobel Prize is brand-oriented to a high degree.

In contrast, another organisation with a strong market-oriented approach would to a higher degree be responsive and guided by the needs and wants of its key stakeholders. The perception of the brand, i.e. its image and reputation, in a market-oriented approach influences the organisation's strategy process (Argenti and Druckenmiller, 2004; van Riel and Fombrun, 2007). One of the essential questions that we discern from the quote about public attitudes is: Should those who manage the Nobel Prize try to shape external perceptions or even internal perceptions to fit its goals, policies and behaviour?

3.3 Managing identity

Identity is primarily internally rooted and relates to eternal questions such as: Who are we? Where do we come from? What do we stand for and what is our *raison d'être*? In the literature, the broader concept of corporate identity is viewed as a crucial source in defining the more specific 'corporate brand identity' (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Knox and Bickerton, 2003; Balmer, 2010; 2008). Corporate brand identity is described as a "distillation of corporate identity" (Balmer, 2010, p. 186). From a management standpoint, the definition and alignment of corporate brand identity is a formulation of a strategic intent (acknowledging that there are multiple identities): how management wants the corporate brand to be perceived by internal and external stakeholders. A well-defined corporate brand identity is the bedrock of managing and long-term building of the brand (Kapferer, 1991, 2012; Urde, 1994; 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2002; 2003; 2006; Aaker, 2004; Balmer, 2008; Hatch and Schultz, 2008; Balmer *et al*, 2009; Burmann *et al*, 2009; de Chernatony, 2010; Gryd-Jones *et al*, 2013).

The recent special issue *Corporate brand management – A leadership perspective* of the *Journal of Brand Management* provides an overview of the research area and essential literature references (Balmer, Brexendorf and Kernstock, 2013). In one paper, the 'corporate brand identity matrix' (CBIM) is introduced as a response to the "... lack of a widely-agreed framework to help to define and align corporate brand identity" (Urde, 2013, p. 742). The nine elements of the CBIM (Figure 3), according to Urde (2013), define the essentials of a corporate brand's identity. Its internal (sender) elements are described in terms of three characteristics of the organisation: its 'mission and vision', its 'culture' and its 'competences'. The external (receiver) component comprises 'value proposition', 'relationships' and 'position'. The matrix is completed by three elements that are both internal and external. 'Personality' describes the corporate brand's individual character, whereas 'expression' defines the verbal and visual manifestations of the brand. The 'brand core', consisting of a brand promise and supporting core values, is at the heart of the corporate brand identity (Urde, 2013).

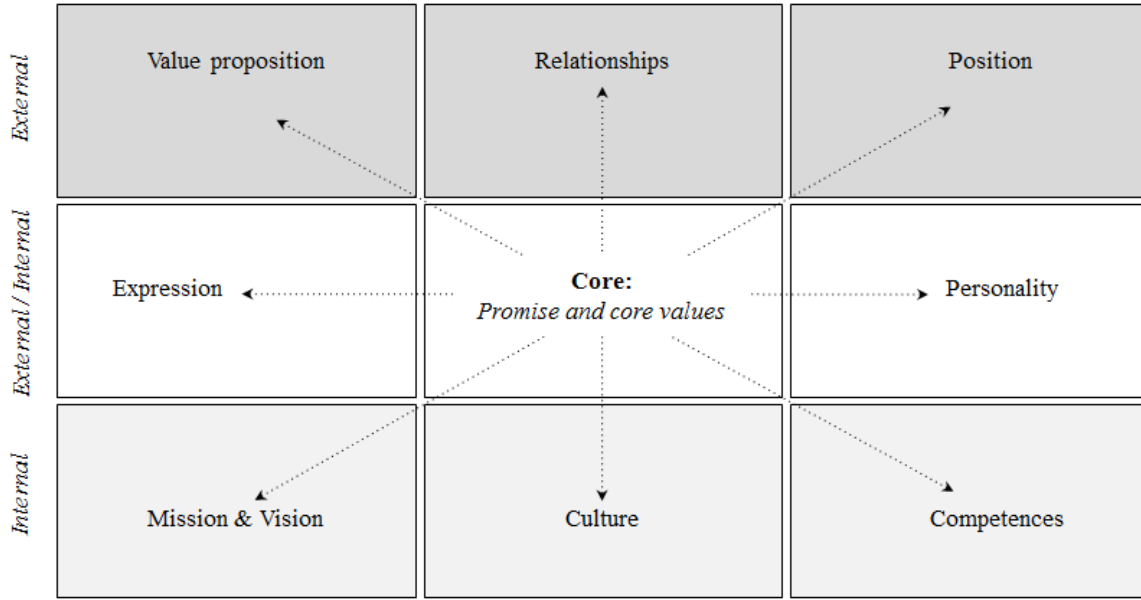


Figure 3. The CBIM (Urde, 2013)

Each of the nine key elements is explained in Table 3, along with the guiding questions that help define them, according to the CBIM.

ELEMENT OF IDENTITY	GUIDING QUESTION
Value proposition	What are our key offerings and how do we want them to appeal to customers and non-customer stakeholders?
Relationships	What should be the nature of our relationships with key customer and non-customer stakeholders?
Position	What is our intended position in the market, and in the hearts and minds of key customers and non-customer stakeholders?
Expression	What is unique or special about the way we communicate and express ourselves making it possible to recognise us at a distance?
Core	What do we promise, and what are the core values that sum up what our brand stands for?
Personality	What combination of human characteristics or qualities forms our corporate character?
Mission & vision	What engages us, beyond the aim of making money (mission)? What is our direction and inspiration (vision)?
Culture	What are our attitudes and how do we work and behave?
Competences	What are we particularly good at, and what makes us better than the competition?

Table 3. Elements of identity, CBIM (Urde, 2013)

As part of our analysis of the Nobel Prize, we use the CBIM for its capacity to "... explore corporate brand identity internally and externally and by focusing on the 'brand core'" (Urde, 2013). These characteristics coincide with this paper's purpose and the CBIM will be used as a stepping-stone for further discussion of the relation between identity and reputation.

3.4 Managing reputation

Reputation is primarily externally rooted, in contrast to identity (Davies and Miles, 1998; Griffin, 2008; Greyser, 2009; Davies, Chun, da Silva and Roper, 2003; Balmer & Greyser, 2006). One may see reputation and identity as two sides of the same coin: "Undoubtedly there is a close relationship between corporate reputation of a brand and corporate branding" (Roper and Fill, 2012, p. 184). A corporate reputation is defined as "... a collective representation of a firm's past actions and results that describes the firm's ability to deliver valued outcomes to multiple stakeholders. It gauges a firm's relative standing both internally with employees and externally with its stakeholders, in both its competitive and institutional environments" (Fombrun, 1996). This is analogous to our "track record" element of a heritage brand (Urde, *et al* 2007). We refer to Fombrun's definition (among many other useful ones) primarily because he explicitly includes "a firm's past actions". Greyser (2009)

emphasises the importance of “acta non verba” – deeds not words – in building, sustaining and defending reputation. We find this to be essential – especially for our analysis of the Nobel Prize and its heritage. Fombrun (1996) elaborates and describes reputation as a reflection of personal judgements based on a company’s (or organisation’s) past and present actions. Therefore, the reputation that constituents ascribe to a company becomes an aggregate of opinions and judgements.

As a mirroring of the eternal identity questions above (3.3), organisations ask themselves regarding reputation: How do others actually perceive us? How are we ideally to be perceived? How do others expect us to be perceived? (derived from Higgins, 1987). Young (1996, p. 6) states: “People do business with organizations they trust”. Conceptualizing and measuring reputation is a research area in itself that engages practitioners and academics alike (Davies *et al*, 2003). A review of reputation elements in the literature (and in proprietary reputation models) identifies credibility, reliability, responsibility, and trustworthiness as four that are often cited (Fombrun, 1996). Proprietary brand strength models (e.g. Interbrand) include other reputation elements such as differentiation, authenticity and relevance (Murphy, 1989). These models serve to measure reputation also for financial brand value estimates. In the advertising field, models are often based on consumer interviews to provide insights into a (corporate) brand’s image (here and now perception) and reputation (over time and overall perception). The prime Young & Rubicam model, for example, measures esteem, energised differentiation, relevance, and knowledge (Young & Rubicam, 2003). Roper and Fill (2012, p. 42) provide a comprehensive overview of “criteria that influence reputation” including: product and service quality, customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, comprehensive reputation, customer service, market position, innovation, profitability, corporate social responsibility, and vision and leadership. Roper and Fill view reputation as a ‘Gestalt’ and recommend that we “... consider that reputation is greater than the mere sum of all the parts of the organisation” (2012, p. 23). Fombrun concludes, “... a reputation comes into being as constituents struggle to make sense of a company’s past and present actions” (Fombrun, 1996, p. 72). Further, a positive reputation can translate into supportive behaviours from different stakeholder groups towards the organisation or company (Greyser, 1995; 2009).

3.5 Managing a networked brand

The network metaphor is widely used in theory to describe, analyse and understand a complex phenomenon both in detail and holistically (Håkansson and Ford, 2002; Leek and Mason, 2009). Broadly, a network can be a group or system of interconnected people, things and/or organisations.

In the marketing and branding literature, associative networks help one to understand how and what perceptions form the meaning of a brand, an understanding that is essential for the management of a

particular brand (Henderson, Iacobucci and Calder, 2002; James, 2005; John *et al.*, 2006). The term “brand network” in the literature refers to a special technique to describe a brand and its use, for example the Nike brand with extensions such as Air Jordan by Nike (Hill and Lederer, 2001). The network concept has further proved to be useful to describe and better understand place marketing and destination brands (Hankinson, 2004). Lemmetyinen and Go (2010) study how a network of cruise destinations helped build a single corporate brand identity.

On a corporate level, the formulation of brand strategies (Aaker, 2004; Kapferer, 2012; Beshart and Langan, 2014) concerns the structuring of portfolios of brands or brand systems. Paramount brand strategy (brand architecture) questions are: How many brands do we need? And if more than one, how shall our brands be related? And further, what role and function shall each brand be assigned? The overarching objectives are to create synergies within the brand portfolio and to identify opportunities to leverage brands while maintaining relevance and clarity (Aaker, 2004). Branding with other organisations is an option to cooperate and partner with others for marketing and branding purposes (Ugglå and Åsberg, 2010). Broadly, co-branding refers to any pairing of brands in a collaborative marketing effort (Servais and Bengtsson, 2004; Kapferer, 2012). Corporate sponsorship of sporting events (e.g. World Cup, Olympics) and leagues (e.g. Barclay’s Premier League) and of cultural institutions and exhibits are a form of co-branding widely known to the general public and particularly to followers of sport. Case studies that illuminate the corporate rationales for such co-branding activities include Bank of America’s program of sports-based sponsorship (Greyser and Teopaco, 2009) and the [former] Fleet Financial Group’s partnership with Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts in sponsoring the “Monet in the 20th Century” exhibition (Greyser and Crockett, 2002).

The network metaphor is also used for the analysis of interactions and relationships among and between organisations to provide insights into processes of value creation (Moller and Rajala, 2007). Typically, a network consists of mutually dependent organisations where identity is created in interaction (Ramos and Ford, 2011). In the application of network theory, a holistic view is essential in order to understand the stakeholders as parts of the network (Hultman, Johnsen, Johnsen and Hertz, 2012). Well-known entities that can be considered networks include Airbus (business-to-business) and airline alliances such as Star Alliance (business-to-consumer). Achrol and Kotler (1999) review and discuss marketing in the “network economy” and foresee a shift “from being an agent of a seller to being an agent of the buyer” (p. 146). They further emphasise that “networks are not tolerant to traditional instruments of authority and control”.

In the business-to-business field, the network concept has been extensively developed and researched, both addressing processes and structures, resulting in systems of interconnected stakeholders, resources and activities (Håkansson and Snehota 1995; Ford, Gadde, Håkansson and Snehota, 2011;

Borgatti and Halgin, 2011; Wilkinson and Young, 2002). According to Achrol and Kotler (1999) the early work on networks focused “on mapping the patterns of interpersonal ties between organisations” (p. 147). However, they see a potential in “the study of networks as formal governance structures that represent an alternative to markets or hierarchy”. Pioneering work on network theory was conducted by the research group “Industrial Marketing and Purchasing” (IMP) based on business-to-business cases (Ford *et al.*, 2011). They state three paradoxes as fundamental to their theory. First, a company’s relationships are viewed as the basis of a company’s operations, growth and development. Although these relationships provide opportunities, they also set limitations. Second, a company’s relationships are an outcome of its own decisions and actions, but they also shape the company itself. Third, companies have an ambition to manage their relationships and control the network, but a higher degree of achieved control leads to a less effective and innovative network.

The Nobel Prize is a collaborative endeavour where each of four institutional parties contributes value to the common purpose and symbol. Thus, we view the Nobel Prize as a networked brand (see Figure 1). First, it is a network based on an agreement among independent partners entrusted to fulfil the Will of Alfred Nobel. Second, the brand identity can be seen as the outcome of “interconnected processes” (de Chernatony and Harris, 2000; Ford *et al.*, 2011). The value, symbolic or otherwise, is based primarily on the institutions’ processes and commitment to select worthy laureates. The interactions and relations, direct and indirect, within and beyond the network shape it and create opportunities and set limitations. Third, there is shared responsibility and a common goal and interest to protect and build the reputation of the Nobel Prize. For example, any crisis within the Nobel Prize network related to the awards will affect to varying degrees the different partner institutions and stakeholders, as well as the Nobel Prize itself (the network hub). Therefore, we also view the reputation as largely an outcome of “interconnected processes”.

To conclude, we have presented the five conceptual areas related to our study. We find support and confirmation of our view that Nobel Prize is a heritage-based networked corporate brand. Furthermore, the balancing of market-orientation and brand orientation is identified as a relevant question for the network; this brings the discussion into the broader theoretical and managerial context of networks. Finally, the understanding of the relationship between identity and reputation emerges as an important question. We view this as relevant for the managing of the Nobel Prize network (specifically) and for the management of corporate brands (in general).

3.6 Towards a new framework

In this paper we develop a theoretical model to aid the exploration of the Nobel Prize as a ‘heritage-based’ brand-oriented network, in order to study its management challenges, especially regarding

identity and reputation. We are not surprised that there is no standard framework in the literature. To argue that this represents a gap in the literature would be an ivory-tower comment in our view.

Rather, we argue for the relevance and opportunity the Nobel Prize case offers to develop a bespoke framework, which potentially also could be relevant for other corporate brands.

By drawing from theories on brand heritage, networks, and brand-orientation/market-orientation, we combine these areas to create something new. Our approach is to draw from the literature and select and apply aforementioned existing models such as the HQ model and the corporate brand identity matrix (CBIM). These two models are used to analyse the Nobel Prize. Our research is thus a combination of deductive and inductive approaches. In order to extend the identity framework to include reputation, we first identify key *reputational* elements from the literature. These are in turn matched with the existing *identity* elements of the matrix. Adding the “R” (reputation) to the CBIM offers the opportunity for an organisation to understand more, if not the totality, of how it sees itself and how its stakeholders see it.

4. CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

The findings of this case study and the conclusions drawn from it were generated by a multi-method approach to data-gathering and analysis (Gummesson, 2005). The unit of analysis is the Nobel Prize and its network of multiple independent collaborating institutions; this implies a study of related institutions, organisations and stakeholders (Figure 1). For such a study, the importance of personal access to key knowledgeable individuals is critical. In our purpose-designed methodology we used (semi-structured) interviews, document studies and observation in the research process (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In total we have conducted over 15 interviews (see Appendix). We have interviewed individually (1.5-2.5 hours) the four selection-committee heads (in Stockholm and Oslo), the present and former Director of the Nobel Foundation, two Nobel laureates, the director of Nobel Media and the director of the Nobel Museum. The Nobel Foundation and the Nobel Museum have supplied us with relevant documents, e.g. regarding the history of the Nobel Prize. Accreditation to the Nobel Award Ceremony in Stockholm (December 10, 2013) provided an opportunity for first-hand observation. This encompassed seeing the active roles of cooperating Nobel network organisations, noting the attendance of prior laureates (the past strengthening the present), recognising the use of Nobel-related symbols, and experiencing the atmosphere of the ceremonies.

5. A NEW MANAGERIAL FRAMEWORK: THE CBIRM

The “Corporate Brand Identity and Reputation Matrix” (CBIRM) is a reinforcing framework of elements and linkages, with a core consisting of a set of values leading to a promise. It serves as a tool in an organisation’s management of its identity and reputation including communication.

The framework connects identity, communication, and reputation (in this treatment communication – although important – will not be addressed in detail). Logical links between elements of identity and reputation are outlined. Our broader intent is to provide the management of corporate brands with a larger framework that takes both identity and reputation into consideration. From a managerial point of view, it is designed to provide an overview and help to identify areas of improvements to strengthen the reputation and to stay true to the identity to the brand.

5.1 Elements of reputation

First, we selected eight key reputation elements (Table 4) that we shall show reflect and link to the nine identity elements (Table 3) in the aforementioned Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (CBIM). This in turn will lead to a new expanded model that includes reputation (Figure 4), to be described below. The reputation elements selected are established ones from the existing reputation literature. We selected elements that we believe, as a totality, capture vital aspects of the broad dimension of reputation. In the selection we have also considered that the elements ideally should not overlap and they need to fit and work in a managerial context.

Second, we used dictionary definitions of the reputation elements to provide their generally accepted meaning in language. The use of dictionaries, thesauruses and etymologies is helpful to review potential overlaps between and among concepts and to provide precision. We found inspiration and support from the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure’s distinction between *language* and *speech* (Saussure, 1983). The dictionary definition of a word represents its meaning in language, while the same word can be given a different meaning in a specific context, e.g. in the context of a model for measuring reputation or brand strength. In an attempt to overcome issues of different interpretations we resort to dictionary definition – the use of language, as de Saussure would put it.

Third, the general (language) meaning of each reputational element provided the basis for our formulation of what we call ‘guiding questions’. For example, “How consistent and solid are their [the company’s or organisation’s] quality and performance?” is the guiding question that reflects *reliability* (Table 4). Notably, the identity questions commence with *what*, while the reputation questions in Figure 4 commence with *how*. The pronouns *we* and *they* underline that the questions refer to an organisation and its corporate brand. Since identity pertains to the company or organisation itself, a

guiding question needs to be framed in terms of *we*. In contrast, since reputation reflects stakeholders' perceptions, a guiding question needs to be framed in terms of *they* (the company or organisation) and must be understandable in general language.

ELEMENT OF REPUTATION	DICTIONARY DEFINITION	GUIDING QUESTION
Relevance (Young & Rubicam, 2003)	Closely connected or appropriate to the matter in hand. The condition of being relevant. Pertinent, to the purpose, applicable, suitable	How appealing and meaningful is the value they offer?
Trustworthiness (Fombrun, 1996)	Firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability. A relationship built on mutual trust and respect: confidence, belief, faith, freedom from suspicion	How dependable are their words and deeds?
Differentiation (Young & Rubicam, 2003)	Distinction, distinctiveness, contrast, difference, demarcation	How distinctive is their position in the market?
Credibility (Fombrun, 1996)	... the quality of being convincing or believable	How believable and convincing are they?
Reliability (Fombrun, 1996)	Consistently good in quality or performance, able to be trusted	How solid and consistent are their quality and performance?
Responsibility (Fombrun, 1996)	... a moral obligation to behave correctly towards or in respect of	How committed and accountable are they?
Willingness-to-support (Greyser, 1995)	Approve of, encourage, stand-behind, prefer, endorse, recommend ...	How engaging and inspiring are their purposes and practices?
Recognisability (Young & Rubicam, 2003)	Identification from previous encounters or knowledge. Recollection, recall, remembrance	How distinct, visible and consistent are their overall communications?

Table 4: Elements of reputation

5.2 Consolidating elements of identity and reputation

Any managerial system involving identity and reputation needs measurements of how different stakeholders see the organisation in a given context. The CBIRM provides management with a general outline of key identity and reputation elements and essential linkages (Figure 4). The guiding questions and the structuring of the elements help management to tap into how its multiple stakeholders perceive their brand, and to what degrees these external perceptions match the internally-driven identity. Elements of identity (boxes in the matrix) and reputation (surrounding the matrix) thus are combined into a single more coherent whole – the new CBIRM.

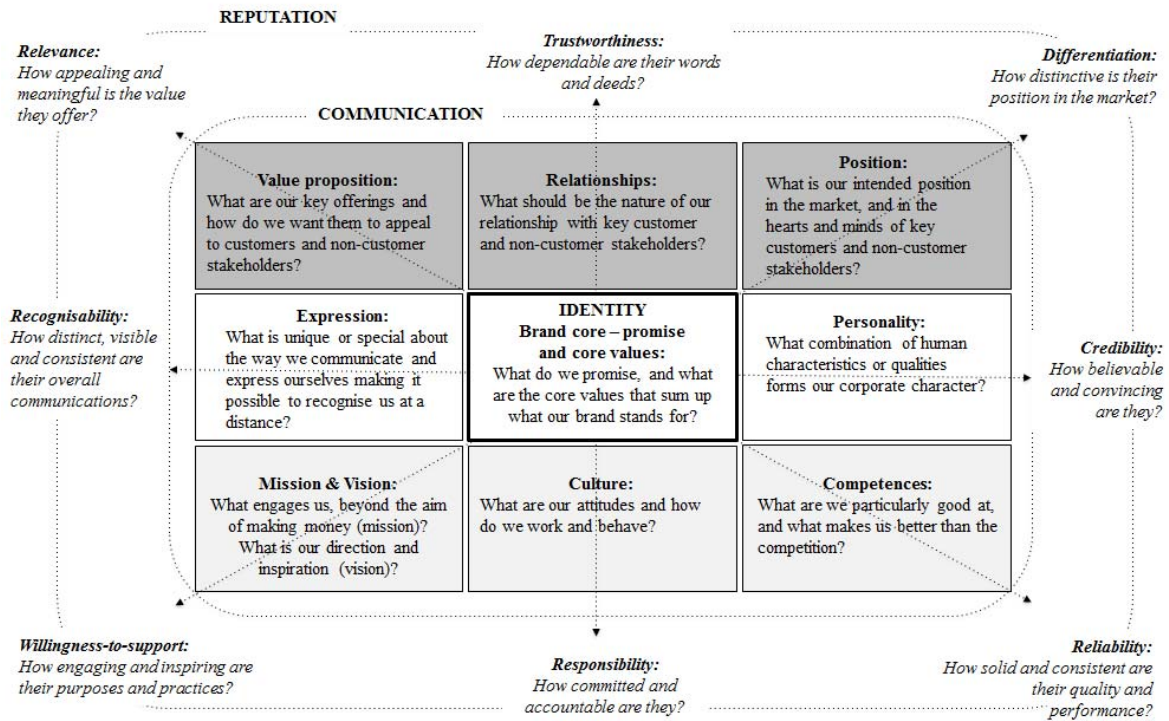


Figure 4: The Corporate Brand Identity and Reputation Matrix (CBIRM)

The framework makes it possible to identify matches or mismatches between reputation and identity. A match or mismatch can be general (looking at identity and reputation broadly) or specific (looking at specific reputational elements). For example, if the relevance (the answer to the guiding question: “How appealing and meaningful is the value they offer?”) is perceived to be low by a stakeholder group, this suggests – according to the model – that management would be advised first to review the value proposition and how it is being communicated.

The implication of a gap or a fit is ultimately a managerial question that will be influenced by the organisation’s orientation to its brand(s). As noted above in 3.2, a market-oriented approach would be guided to a higher degree by perceptions in their brand processes and communication. In contrast, an organisation with a brand-oriented approach would take perceptions into account, but their identity would continue to be the ‘fixed star’.

5.3 Logic and connections

The logic and connections in the corporate brand identity matrix (Urde, 2013) are extended here to incorporate reputation. The four dotted arrows – two diagonals, one vertical, and one horizontal – illustrate this (Figure 4).

The strategy diagonal cuts across the matrix and spans between *willingness-to-support* to *mission and vision* to the centre of the framework, the *brand core* (promise and core values), and continues to *position* which in turn points at the reputational element *differentiation*. In the definition and alignment of a corporate brand's identity, this diagonal is essential since it connects the purpose and the wanted position. The stakeholders' perceptions are reflected by the *willingness to support* and *differentiation*.

The competitive diagonal. The essence of the identity element *competences* concerns an organisation's competences, capabilities and resources and how they are combined into value-creating processes and potential competitive advantages. The *competences* are prerequisites to substantiate the *value proposition* and the connection between these two identity elements is the overall promise. The strength and clarity of the competitive diagonal is reflected by the stakeholders' perceptions of the organisation's (corporate brand's) *reliability* and *relevance*.

The communication horizontal stretches between the two reputation elements *credibility* and *recognisability*. According to the model, the identity element *personality* is closely linked to *credibility*. The question to define *personality*, i.e. "What combination of human characteristics or qualities forms our corporate character?" reflects the answer to the question on credibility: "How convincing and believable are they?" The organisation's *expression* encompasses all forms of communication, such as advertising, design and choice of media. This element of identity is primarily related in the model to recognisability, which is a reputation element in the model.

The interaction vertical illustrates the link between the organisation's *culture* as described internally and the external associations to its *responsibility*. In turn, the vertical dotted arrow in the model connects *relationships* with the external reputation element *trustworthiness*. As for all connections in the model, the brand core with the promise forms the centre.

After presenting the principal themes from our case study (Section 6), we shall then apply the new managerial framework to the Nobel Prize (Section 7).

6. THE NOBEL PRIZE: THEMES FROM THE CASE STUDY

We see five themes emerging from the case study, based on the interviews and research that we have conducted, and our analysis.

6.1 The Alfred Nobel Will: Bedrock of Identity

The first theme concerns the basis for the identity of “the world’s most prestigious award”. It rests upon the foundation of the Will of Alfred Nobel. The Will answers the questions “who and what are we (the Nobel Prize)” and “where do we come from?” The core of the identity is the phrase “for the benefit of mankind”, the principal criterion for all the awards. A member of a scientific committee commented upon the overarching purpose of the Nobel Prize: “We bring an appreciation for science and discovery”. A laureate answered the same questions: “The Nobel Prize serves to identify for the public both the on-going pursuit of knowledge and also the importance of science for humanity. ... Science is after all the source for human progress. I think the Nobel Prize is almost the only example, certainly a very rare time, when attention is focused on this fundamental human activity.” The former director of the Foundation concurred with our description of the Will as “bedrock of identity” and said: “The Nobel Prize is based on the Enlightenment and a philosophy of progress, to move the world from one position to another.”

Based upon what we have learned, the Will has been and must be interpreted in practical ways. Even more challenging is how to stay true to the benefactor’s will (and associated legal requirements) and at the same time to stay relevant in the eyes of the multiple stakeholders in a changing world. The director of the Norwegian Peace Prize Foundation explained to us: “The Will must be read with respect, but it is not a given that it is interpreted as in 1895 when it was written nor should it be. For example according to the will, awards are to be given to the discovery of the past year. This is unrealistic and therefore was set aside. Also, for example, protecting the environment is today viewed as a basis for receiving the Peace Prize.”

The Nobel Prize core identity is essential to the network. Even though the prize-awarding institutions have Nobel committees, their own organisational (corporate brand) identities are associated with, and to various degrees dependent upon, the connection to the Nobel Prize. This is illustrated by the earlier comment from a manager at Karolinska institutet who told us: “The Nobel Prize is an essential part of the Karolinska institutet corporate brand identity.”

Peter Englund, who presents the Nobel literature prize on behalf of the Swedish Academy, spoke to us about the Academy’s identity:

“Svenska Akademin [Swedish Academy] undoubtedly has her own identity beyond the Nobel Prize. Internally we speak about the Academy using feminine gender since she is a creation of the 1700s. At that time, seeking attention was not considered a virtue, and the Swedish Academy is still in a way

moving at her own pace. Without the Nobel Prize her international prestige would fade away but the work, for example with the Swedish Dictionary, would continue.”

In conclusion, the importance of the Will in our view makes it a central component for understanding the heritage of the Nobel Prize. The Will is a bedrock of identity for the networked institutions and organisations that we describe as the Nobel Prize. They share a history and a reputation as a network, they face the annual review of respect as a network, and they meet the future as a network.

6.2 The network identity: Brand-oriented with a hub

A second key theme is the highly distinctive network identity of the Nobel Prize – the federation as described in section 2.3. This too, is a key component of the Nobel Prize’s heritage. We see the Nobel Prize’s identity as being formed, shaped and defined by its network, with the Will as its core. The Will is internally often characterized as “the constitution of the federation”. The network is the source and embodiment of a culture (e.g. values, principles, behaviour and working processes) and an approach to fulfil its common task and purpose (e.g. to evaluate laureates, protect and maintain the standing of the Nobel Prize, respect the legal and moral obligations of the Will). The culture and approach connect and bind the network members together and influence how it operates.

However, each of the four partner institutions has developed its own process based on more than 100 years of experience. According to a member of a Nobel committee, “there has not been as much exchange as one would expect between the institutions”. The former director of the Foundation confirms the notion of “water-tight compartments” and underscores: “The Foundation cannot and must not direct the committees’ work” and then adds “common topics and principles such as secrecy are discussed during [Foundation] meetings.”

A comment from our interview with the Swedish Academy’s Peter Englund emphasises the notion of the Nobel Prize as a hub:

“There are prizes for science, politics and art. We all lend credibility and ‘gloire’ [glory/prestige] from each other in various fashions. The differences strengthen the prize as a totality. There is respect for competences and we never interfere in the other committees’ work.”

The processes are essential and so is the mindset of the people involved. As a Nobel committee member told us: “The institutions’ processes are decisive for the Nobel Prize reputation. We all know this is Sweden’s and Norway’s most important international symbol. All involved have a collective sentiment of responsibility to be part of a process that must stand for absolute secrecy and integrity under constant and intense media scrutiny. This is indeed demanding but also marvellous.” The

network mindset is further illustrated by a personal reflection from another member of a Nobel committee: “Objectivity, putting one’s own agenda aside, never argue for a candidate, not be there to be an advocate for anything or anyone, ‘raise oneself to the level of the committee’, the acceptance of the fact that the Nobel Prize is more important than oneself.”

In a similar spirit Peter Englund explained to us the modus operandi of the Swedish Academy: “To make a process such as ours work well – to produce and select the best possible names – heterogeneity and differences in temperament, views and preferences in the committee are essential. Without this diversity the result would become more predictable, flat and not very interesting. The breadth and the tension are part of a successful work process. At times we have animated arguments but we always retain respect for each other.”

In conclusion, the network’s identity is a hub around which it gravitates. The shared culture and mindset within the network binds it together. We view this as a strong indication of an identity-driven – i.e. brand-oriented – approach to its purpose, processes and relations to its stakeholders. An example of a network principle is ‘never selling’. Any form of unconditional response to the market’s needs and wants is considered alien. We view this foremost as an expression of deeply-held identity in the network’s brand-oriented approach.

6.3. Affirmation and expectation: The Nobel Prize track record

A third theme is the network’s track record. The consistency of applied criteria and the acceptance of the laureates by their respective communities affirm and sustain the Nobel Prize’s identity and reputation; in turn this establishes continued expectations.

The evaluation process of laureates is essential to the network’s track record, described by a committee member as: “... the institutions’ ability, proven for a long period of time, to select the most worthy laureates and the most important discoveries with relatively few questionable decisions.”

A laureate’s description of the committee work illustrates the respect committees have earned over time: “First of all, the award committees pay little attention to [the detail of] the nominations; they like to have this input so they know they are comprehensive in their coverage. They take it upon themselves to investigate the question; they do this with as much dedication as is possible. That means every single paper written by a potential laureate is read. This is an arduous process. They go incognito to conferences and listen and observe; they solicit reports from people they value, but they will of course ultimately act upon their own. They have the motto ‘A good prize one year will be a better one the next’. They feel no pressure, and would rather wait until they are absolutely sure. They can afford to wait, because it does not matter when a prize is given. There is a very stark difference

between the Nobel Prize and other prize-awarding organizations. Nobel is the last word in recognition. This is why the prize is head and shoulders above the rest.”

The same respect is expressed with humour by another laureate: “It’s not some committee that meets via Skype once or twice a year and has a cursory discussion of their friends’ research ...”. On a more serious note the laureate continues: “They [the committees] take their responsibility very seriously. And they have a record of being conservative in a good way; they wait till a discovery is firmly established. The Nobel Prize awards have stood the test of time. That is the kind of record that makes the prize so valuable and why its reputation means a lot.” The laureate shared with us a comprehensive insight into the Nobel Prize track record – what it is, how it works, and why it is essential to maintain credibility over time: “First they have a long record of good choices and very few clinkers ... and it was first of its kind. Everything else is in some sense an imitation. There is the story of Alfred Nobel, a special and interesting person, and then there is the ceremonial aspect. The whole country is behind it, the royal family, and there is a grand ceremony and there is press coverage. After some time there can be inertia, but without the careful choices and hard work and a great record, the Nobel recognition would pass away.”

To conclude, the heritage of the Nobel Prize, the use of symbols, and the laureates themselves all form part of its track record. Indeed, the laureates both generate and validate the track record. The evaluation processes are highly confidential and surrounded with the strictest secrecy. We find this to be an important aspect of the Nobel Prize and its track record: “Part of the mystique is the selection process and the mystery that surrounds the Nobel Prize”, as said by the director of the Nobel Museum.

6.4 A cluster of awards: Source of debate and attention

A fourth theme is based on the fact that the Nobel Prize is a ‘cluster of awards’. This generates both attention and debate that are important for understanding its modus operandi. A tribute to the underlying strength of the Nobel Prize network structure and the quality of choices for laureates is that its reputation has stayed strong despite public controversy over some selections.

Debate occurs most frequently on the Peace and Literature awards. The reason, according to the director of the Norwegian Peace Prize committee, is: “Everybody can have a view on the Peace Prize award, many have a view on the Literature prize, but only a select few can have an informed opinion on the scientific awards.” Reflecting on the committee’s choices over time, he referred to a foreword he wrote to a book about the Peace Prize: “Not all controversial decisions are successful. The Nobel Committee should not be controversial simply for the sake of creating controversy. Yet, the committee should never be afraid to be controversial if a decision underlines certain basic principles that the committee dearly supports.”

A comment from the Secretary of the Swedish Academy echoes the idea that critique is expected and in fact is part of the Nobel Prize international cachet: “The day when there is no discussion about the awarding of the Nobel Prize in literature [means] it has become irrelevant. The prize rests on subjective criteria and is questioned – this is completely natural. The discussions become in a sense a measurement of the prize’s relevance.”

A senior editor at Nobel Media spoke to us about the reputation of the Nobel Prize: “The standing of the Nobel Prize is strong. One would need a sequence of problems to dent the brand in a serious way because it is remarkably robust. People engage with the Nobel Prize on an iconic level. Mistakes are viewed by many as ‘well-intentioned’ ones and people happily accept that they do not agree with the awarding of a particular Peace Prize.” A laureate commented: “I don’t think this [controversies related to the Literature and Peace Prizes] seriously erodes the science prizes. The perception as well as the reality is that the science prizes are more objective and are easier to judge.” The laureate broadened the perspective: “The Nobel Prize is a common challenge for the academic world and leads to a lot of fertile discussions, and it generates contacts ... it brings researchers together.” Related to his own field of science, the laureate reflects: “You don’t need a “licence” to speak about science to the public. There are a lot of people out there speaking with the voice of authority on subjects that they really don’t know about. The Nobel Prize is not a guarantee of quality, but it is certainly a strong indication of quality: it separates the signal from the noise.”

To conclude, we think the sum is greater than its parts. What makes the Nobel Prize network so distinctive and effective is the single-minded commitment to a common goal and consistent processes used by all institutions in the network. This creates the cluster of Nobel awards that recognise achievements “for the benefit of mankind”.

6.5 Stewardship: Managing the awards and managing the brand

The fifth theme concerns stewardship of the awards and the networked Nobel Prize brand: protecting and enhancing the Nobel Prize’s value and reputation. The awards make the brand, but to us managing the awards is not the same as managing the brand.

Managing the awards is related to the work of the prize-awarding institutions, according to the former director of the Foundation: “To elect the right persons to the committees is essential and so is the support of other national and international experts contributing to the committees’ work. Within this process there are nominations and peer-reviews, and this is known. This is a ‘movement’ of a kind, of international scale and scope. This is to avoid myopia.” A member of a Nobel committee told us that

he is watchful for any signs of ‘nobelism’ within the network. This refers to a state of mind when someone is ‘carried away by the glory of the Nobel Prize’.

The absence of a traditional organisational hierarchy in the Nobel network does not imply the absence of clearly defined processes. This observation finds support in a comment from the Swedish Academy’s Peter Englund: “There is a clear division of responsibilities. The Nobel Foundation takes care of the money. The prize-awarding committees have the task of selecting names for their respective prizes. The lack of hierarchy could have been devastating if the distribution of responsibilities was not as good as it in fact is. We know what to do and when to deliver it. After we have completed our task others will fulfil theirs.”

Managing the brand concerns the identity, communication and the reputation of the network. An official with an overview of the networked institutions observes: “For the outside world the Nobel Prize is just one entity, but in reality it’s a rather complex sphere. The Foundation has the money, but there is a tension regarding who should set the direction. The institutions decide on the awards but for everything else there are different people at work. Representatives of the committees find themselves talking about and being asked about the Nobel Prize, and thereby represent the Nobel Prize in some sense. There are different opinions about who should say what, and who should represent what.”

We think the heritage of the Nobel Prize is being leveraged by a landmark initiative from the Nobel Foundation in the planned new Visitor Center in Stockholm. During the 2013 Nobel Ceremony, the Chairman of the Nobel Foundation commented: “At the Nobel Center, the focus will be on the stories of the Nobel Laureates. There are stories of brilliant discoveries, conviction and persistence. They are stories which prove that ideas can change the world.”

7. APPLYING THE CBIRM: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this section we present our interpretation and perspectives on the Nobel Prize as a brand, particularly its identity and reputation. More specifically, based on the case study and with the help of the new framework (Figure 4), we will examine and define the Nobel Prize as a networked brand. Then we present selected quotes to provide impressions of the Nobel Prize’s reputation (Table 5). The quotes represent reputation as perceived by internal (e.g. members of Nobel committees and Directors of the Foundations) and external (e.g. a president of a university and laureates) and other stakeholders.

Our intent is to illustrate an application of the new CBIRM framework to encompass the Nobel Prize’s identity and reputation. Let us note that this section represents our own analysis and interpretation of

the Nobel Prize identity, and that the description of its reputation is somewhat limited both in scale and scope.

7.1 Defining the identity of the Nobel Prize

In the sequence of our analysis, we start with the brand core (promise and core values) since it has a pivotal role for the Nobel Prize network and the model. We continue by analysing and commenting on the strategy and the competition diagonals and then on the communication horizontal and the interaction vertical. These connections are shown as dotted lines in Figure 5.

The brand core: What is the Nobel Prize promise, and what are its core values that sum up what the brand stands for? In our view, the brand **promise** is represented by the often-used phrase within the Nobel Prize network: “For the benefit of mankind” (see centre of model). As part of the Alfred Nobel Will, this phrase encapsulates the overall covenant of the network. The brand core concept is defined as “an entity of core values supporting and leading to a promise” (Urde, 2013, p. 752). We characterise the **core values** that sum up what the Nobel Prize stands for as: ‘discovery’, ‘excellence’ and ‘engagement for higher ideals’.

The strategy diagonal: Because the root of the Nobel Prize identity is based on the Alfred Nobel Will, therefore we define the Will itself to represent the **mission and vision** (lower left) of the network. The engagement and inspiration found in the mission and vision is closely linked to the promise: “For the benefit of mankind”. In turn we characterise the **position** (upper right) as ‘The world’s most prestigious award’.

The competition diagonal: The **competences** (lower right) of the Nobel Prize network are defined in the model as ‘rigorous processes to evaluate award candidates’. We acknowledge the importance of the four institutions’ unique processes that have been developed, sustained and proven for more than a century. These processes, as noted in the case study, are described as “water-tight compartments”. As in the construction of a ship, the function is to prevent the breakage of any compartment from endangering the ship’s stability and floatation. The implications of this in the Nobel Prize network are, for example, related to brand protection and safeguarding the reputation. The processes differ but the rigour is a shared key trait. The competences element points and relates to the core of the framework, i.e. the promise. In turn, we sum up the **value proposition** (upper left) as ‘celebration and propagation of scientific discovery and cultural achievements’. The Nobel Prize with its multiple stakeholders needs to specify value propositions that resonate with stakeholder groups, for example, ones that appeal to the scientific community and individual researchers.

The communication horizontal: What combination of human characteristics or qualities form the corporate character of the Nobel Prize? We answer this identity question with regard to the Nobel Prize with a description that reflects Alfred Nobel’s **personality**: An ‘impartial cosmopolitan with a passion for science and cultural enlightenment’ (middle right). The personality of the Nobel Prize is reflected by the identity element **expression** (middle left): what is unique or special about the way the Nobel Prize network expresses itself, making it possible, so to speak, to recognize the Nobel Prize at a distance? We succinctly define ‘expression’ as ‘symbolic according to traditions with a modern open approach’. The use of symbols – both physical and figurative – is essential in the communication of the Nobel Prize heritage (see Table 2). At the same time, the more recent ‘reaching out’ initiatives, including the (international) Nobel Week Dialogue and the active use of nobelprize.org explains our addition ‘... with a modern open approach’.

The interaction vertical: What are the institutional attitudes of the Nobel Prize network and how does it work and behave? This is the guiding question for the identity element **culture** (bottom centre). We define the Nobel Prize network’s culture with three words: ‘objectivity’, ‘independence’ and ‘collegiality’. In our analysis of the individual stakeholder institutions, we found the overall culture to be surprisingly consistent. Culture relates to and reflects the identity element **relationships** (top centre), according to the model. ‘What should be the nature of the organisations’ relationships with its key customer and non-customer stakeholders?’ For the Nobel Prize network we respond: ‘integrity’, ‘respect’ and ‘dialogue’.

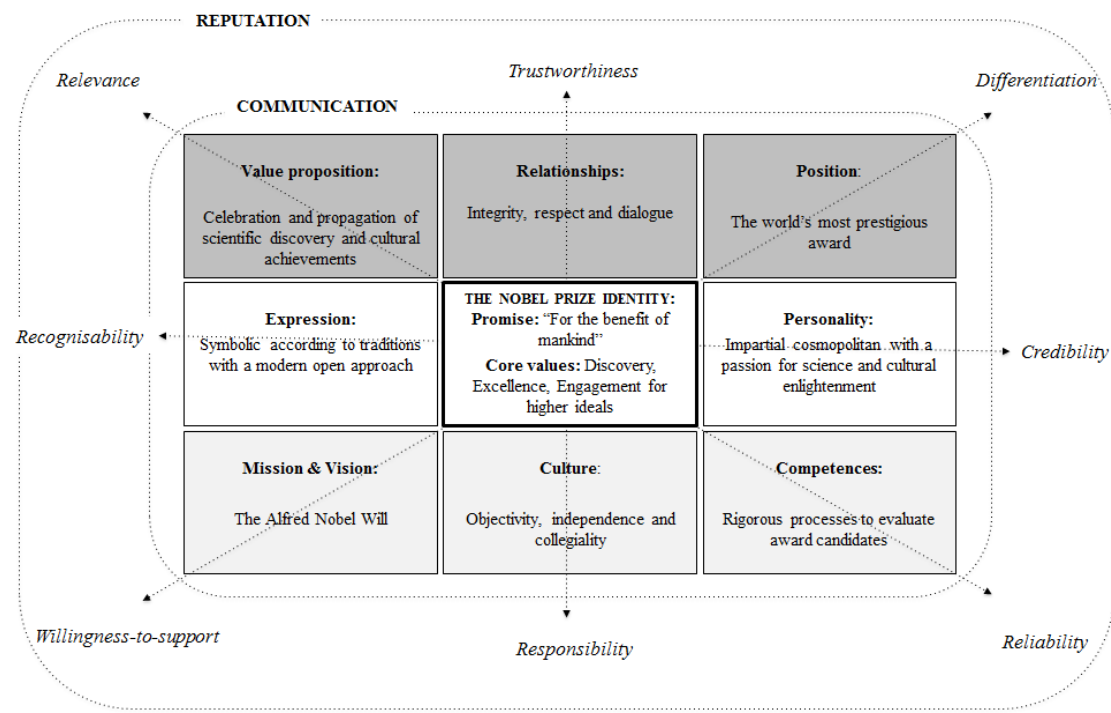


Figure 5: The CBIRM as applied to the Nobel Prize

7.2 Stakeholder perspectives on the Nobel Prize's reputation

In the second step of the analysis, we select quotes to illustrate each of the eight reputational elements (described in 5.1). Quotes can appear in both the case description and here (Table 5) because we selected them as the best illustrations. These are intended to show the wide range of perspectives from stakeholders – both internal and external – regarding the reputation of the Nobel Prize.

ELEMENTS OF REPUTATION	NOBEL PRIZE REPUTATION: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES
RELEVANCE: How appealing and meaningful is the value they offer?	"For the benefit of mankind: We bring an appreciation for science and discovery" (Member of Nobel committee) "The Nobel Prize is based on the enlightenment and a philosophy of progress, to move the world from one position to another" (former Director of Foundation)
TRUSTWORTHINESS: How dependable are their words and deeds?	"They have the motto 'A good prize one year will be a better one the next'. They feel no pressure, and will rather wait until they are absolutely sure" (Laureate) "The content of the Nobel Prize is to a large extent the laureates" (Director of Foundation)
DIFFERENTIATION: How distinct is their position in the market?	"... in the sciences they talk about going to Stockholm [as Nobel laureates], and you go to Stockholm only if you make a fundamental breakthrough [that] really reshaped the field. That's the kind of impact we really look for in our research." (Stanford President) "The world's most prestigious award" (Oxford Dictionary).
CREDIBILITY: How believable and convincing are they?	"Objectivity; putting one's own agenda aside; never argue for a candidate; one is not there to be an advocate for anything or anyone; 'raise oneself to the level of the committee'; the acceptance of the fact that the Nobel Prize is more important than oneself" (Member of Nobel committee) "[The rigorous process] is one of the reasons why the Nobel Prize stands head and shoulders above the rest. There are many awards; some of them more lucrative, but there is no scientist alive that would not return all of them in the exchange for of the Nobel Prize" (Laureate)
RELIABILITY: How solid and consistent are their quality and performance?	"The institutions' ability, proven for a long period of time, to select the most worthy laureates and the most important discovery, with relatively few questionable decisions" (Member of Nobel committee) "This is the prize awarded to Einstein ..." (Member of Nobel committee)
RESPONSIBILITY: How committed and accountable are they?	"We are entrusted to steward and ensure quality of the Nobel Prize, which is culturally significant for the world. We do this with honour and a strong sense of loyalty and duty" (former Director of Foundation) "The Will is our constitution" (Director of Foundation)
WILLINGNESS TO SUPPORT: How engaging and inspiring are their purpose and practices?	"The Nobel Prize serves to identify for the public both the on-going pursuit of knowledge and also the importance of science for humanity. ... Science is after all the source for human progress." (Laureate) "Act in accordance with the Alfred Nobel Will. To bring appreciation for science and discovery" (Member of Nobel committee)
RECOGNISABILITY: How distinct, visible and consistent are their overall communications?	"The different awards have an additive effect. The Literature and Peace awards create interest in broader audiences while the awards in physics, medicine and chemistry provide prestige among experts" (member of committee) "Nobel is the last word in recognition" (Laureate)

Table 5: Perspectives on the Nobel Prize elements of reputation

7.3 Stewardship of a heritage-based brand-oriented network

Stewardship for the Nobel Prize derives from both those in the network and its stakeholders, such as the laureates. These individuals may be seen as guardians of identity and serve as custodians of reputation and heritage. The aggregated mindsets of the individuals in the network influence the organisational mindset. We emphasise that the laureates, elevated to world-recognised status, are custodians themselves. In earlier research on heritage brands, stewardship is characterised by a number of statements. Several of these we find to be particularly meaningful in relation to the Nobel Prize: "You know that the brand is 'bigger' than you are"; "you know that you are a link in a long chain"; and "You would like to leave 'an even stronger' brand after you" (Urde *et al.*, 2007, p. 15). We

see the Nobel Prize network not only as a ‘true’ heritage-based brand, but also as a prime illustration of stewardship among heritage brands. At the same time, the network has functioned for over 100 years without a formal brand platform. We understand this and attribute it primarily to the strong identity-driven approach (with the Will as bedrock) and its culture of shared values. The management of the awards and the management of the brand are ingrained within the network based on principles such as “never selling” and “absolute integrity”.

Modern times, with higher demands for openness and transparency, represent both a challenge and an opportunity for the network and its stewardship. The universal questions of communication apply to the Nobel network: Whether to communicate? When to communicate? and What to communicate? The Nobel Prize network is brand-oriented, with its core identity – for the benefit of mankind – as the point of departure for decisions and behaviour. A laureate told us: “It is important to think about adapting to modern times; however, changing a very good thing is a very high risk ... one must be conservative.”

8. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

We have conducted extensive field research to study the Nobel Prize from a brand perspective. More specifically, we explored the five heritage elements for the Nobel Prize. We characterise it as a true (high HQ) heritage brand. Further, we identified and articulated its distinctive identity as a networked brand. Moreover, we have examined some aspects of stewardship for the Nobel Prize, such as leveraging (or not) and protecting a heritage brand. The careful and mindful stewardship aiming to protect the meaning and core identity of the Nobel Prize is a key empirically-founded insight drawn from the case, providing deeper understanding of stewardship. Also we have linked identity and reputation by introducing a new model that enriches the CBIM and then extended it to include the “R” for reputation: The new Corporate Brand Identity Reputation Matrix (CBIRM). In addition, we have extended the concept of brand orientation to an organisation that is a *network* of brands, and observed and analysed the tension between market orientation and brand orientation. The consequence is illumination of the Nobel Prize from a strategic brand management perspective.

Let us comment upon our conclusions in five key areas:

A) The Nobel Prize: A true heritage brand

In our view, all established brands have a history, which may vary in richness and length. Some brands have recognized the importance of their history and have a defined heritage as part of their identity. For those, heritage helps answer defining questions such as: “Who are we? What do we stand for? What do we ultimately promise our stakeholders?” Many brands have a heritage, but only a few can be categorised as ‘true’ heritage brands: A heritage brand is one with a positioning and a value proposition based upon its heritage. Drawing from our analysis of the Nobel Prize we view it as a ‘true’ heritage brand, as noted. More specifically, we call it a ‘heritage corporate brand with an identity and reputation formed and shared within a network of other brands with heritage’. The four institutions that form the backbone of the Nobel Prize have many of the elements of heritage brands, but they do not use their heritage as the focus of their individual value propositions (see Table 1). However in totality they support the Nobel Prize as high HQ and our characterisation of it as a true heritage brand (see Table 2).

B) The Nobel Prize: A networked brand

It is the network that over time has created the basis for the Nobel Prize to be a “true” heritage brand. The network perspective in our analysis of the Nobel Prize provides insights into its identity and reputation. A *brand network* is a cluster of brands with a hub, linked into a network based on agreement on key defining elements of identity and value proposition, that in turn create value in interrelated processes – sharing and shaping a common network identity, position and reputation. The Nobel Prize case is unique in many aspects; the fact that it is based on the Nobel Will is essential to our understanding. The wishes of Alfred Nobel provided the legally and morally binding foundation for the identity of the series of awards known as the Nobel Prize. The Will and the identities of the institutions and other stakeholders in the networks still define the identity of the Nobel Prize. In our view, the mindset and general approach of the network is to a high degree brand-oriented, i.e. identity-based. The Nobel Prize identity is the point of departure for the network; its role is that of a hub around which the network gravitates. Strategic and tactical decisions for the network are guided by the overarching promise “for the benefit of mankind”.

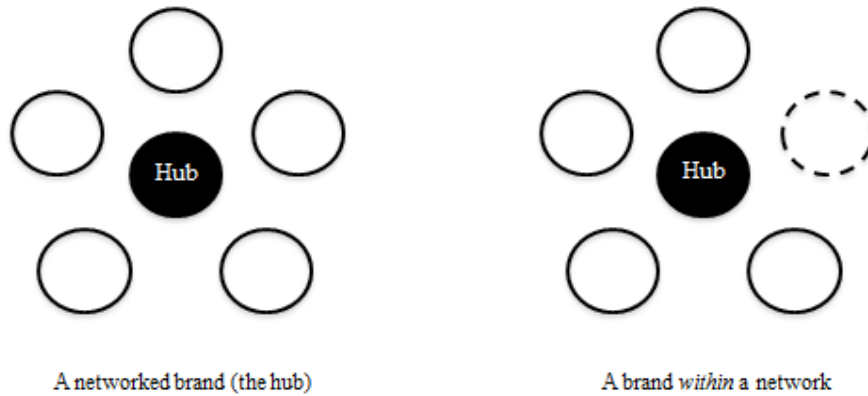


Figure 6. Roles and relations in a brand network

As shown in Figure 6, a *networked brand* is one with a core identity and value proposition that serves as a hub; around the hub other brands within the network (sometimes independent but always interconnected) gravitate to bring about value-creating relationships and processes – leading to a shared network identity, position and reputation. In contrast, a *brand within a network* is one – with its own identity, position and reputation – gravitating around the core identity of a specific networked brand and its value proposition; this generates value-creating relationships and processes, and thereby contributes to the shaping of the network’s common identity, position and reputation.

C) The Nobel Prize: A brand-oriented network

We view the Nobel Prize as a clear case of the tension that exists between brand-orientation and market-orientation in an organisation. In essence, these two paradigms represent different but synergistic approaches to an organisation’s markets, customers and stakeholders, as well as its competition and resources. The case illustrates the importance placed on what we termed earlier in this paper ‘the quintessential brand-orientation versus market-orientation question’ that delineates the two paradigms: To what extent in managing its brand(s) should an organisation be guided by its identity [brand orientation], and to what extent should it be responsive to others’ views and wishes [market orientation]? In our opinion, the case contributes by pinpointing this theoretical question (with far-reaching managerial implications) and provides an empirical illustration of the challenges of distinguishing and balancing the two paradigms.

D) The Nobel Prize: A case illustrating the Corporate Brand Identity and Reputation Matrix

Based on our analysis, the identity of the Nobel Prize as a heritage corporate brand is defined (Figure 5). The identity framework used (CBIM) is extended to encompass reputation. Logical links between the elements of identity and reputation are outlined in our new conceptual framework “Corporate Brand Identity and Reputation Matrix” (CBIRM). Our broader intent is to provide the management of

corporate brands with a framework that takes into consideration both identity and reputation. We believe the framework is applicable to the specific management context of heritage brand networks such as the Nobel Prize. The idea of a brand network is significant for understanding the Nobel Prize (“the federation”), and prospectively other corporate brands where identity is created through alliances (e.g. joint ventures and co-branding).

E) The Nobel Prize: Stewardship in a brand network

Managing the network is not the same as managing *in* the network. At the hub, one must be sensitive to the fact that the collaborating entities have their own agendas, identities and reputations. At the individual entities, one must be aware of the entity’s own role for the networked brand (the hub), and must also be sensitive to the other collaborating network entities, each of which is responsible for managing its own agenda, identity and reputation. Both perspectives are important to understanding how a brand network works – or rather should work.

In managing the Nobel Prize, stewardship is not traditionally hierarchical even within a single organization. Rather it is conducted in a collegial fashion among the networked entities based on a foundation of shared values. In our view, it is essential to recognise the importance of understanding the identity and reputation for both a brand in a particular network and the network as a whole.

An agreement on the defining elements of a corporate brand’s identity is important for all organisations; in a networked brand such as the Nobel Prize it strikes us to be vital. Its consideration of identity and reputation, and the balancing of the network’s market-orientation and brand-orientation, are even more critical in this case because it is indeed a networked brand. The CBIRM framework and the discussion in this paper provide a basis for such consideration.

9. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

We were granted unusual access to a distinctive organisation, the Nobel Prize. At the outset we understood it to be one in-depth clinical study of a single organisation. Over time we came to see it as a network of organisations that form a single brand. The notion of a network stretched existing theoretical boundaries and called for us to take a broader approach. An implication for further research is broader literature reviews and particularly research on brand networks and networked brands. This could include study of brands within networks, independent or not. We also see the potential in continuing the integration of network theory and strategic brand management theory. In addition, we think the balancing of brand-orientation and market-orientation is a relevant research topic for both

academia and practice. Further the new CBIRM conceptual framework would benefit from more case studies as well as measurements.

Our goal in this study was to examine, explore, and understand the Nobel Prize – its brand, its identity, its reputation – as well as how and why it has the character it does.

Our research has determined that the Nobel Prize is indeed a “true” (high HQ) heritage brand based on analysis of all five Heritage Quotient elements and also its brand stewardship.

We have described the unusual nature of the Nobel Prize as a “networked brand,” with the Nobel Prize at the hub of a network of four other independent collaborating organisations. They have a shared goal of sustaining and reinforcing the brand of the Nobel Prize, while each maintains its own identity and other goals. We have pointed to issues of managing at the network hub and in the individual network entities.

We have delineated “brand orientation” from “market orientation” as it applies to the Nobel Prize and its associated network.

We have developed and articulated a new approach to examining and analysing corporate brand identity and reputation (the CBIRM) and have applied it to the Nobel Prize.

Nonetheless much remains by way of further research, especially examining and exploring some of our key ideas beyond the Nobel Prize itself. We leave that for both ourselves and other researchers at another time.

APPENDIX

Interviews September 2013 – June 2014

- Amelin, Olov. Director, Nobel Museum, the Nobel Foundation. November 8, 2013: Stockholm.
- Deckeman, Maria. Communication and Brand Manager, Karolinska institutet. February 11, 2014.
- Heikensten, Lars. Executive Director of the Nobel Foundation. November 8, 2013 et seq: Stockholm.
- Heldin, Carl-Henrik. Chairman of the Nobel Foundation. December 10, 2013: Stockholm.
- Hansson, Göran K. Vice Chairman of the Nobel Foundation, Secretary of the Nobel Committee for Physiology or Medicine, Karolinska institutet. November 8, 2013: Stockholm.
- Fyrenius, Mattias. CEO, Nobel Media. October 4, 2013: Stockholm.
- Kornberg, Roger. Laureate in chemistry in 2006, Stanford University. February 3, 2014.
- Källstrand, Gustav. Researcher at the Nobel Museum. October 4, 2013 et seq: Stockholm.
- Lundestad, Geir. Director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute. February 6, 2014: Oslo.
- Pontikis, Annika. Public Relations Manager, the Nobel Foundation. October 4, 2013 et seq: Stockholm.
- Smith, Adam. Chief Scientific Officer and Editor-in-Chief, Nobel Media. October 4, 2013 et seq.
- Sohlman, Michael. Former Director of the Nobel Foundation. February 10, 2014 et seq.
- Normark, Staffan. Secretary General of the Royal Swedish Institute of Sciences. October 4, 2013: Stockholm.
- Wilczek, Frank. Laureate in physics in 2004, MIT. March 21, 2014.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We appreciate the cooperation of representatives of the Nobel Foundation and its several related institutions. We especially thank the present and former executive directors of the Nobel Foundation, Lars Heikensten and Michael Sohlman, and the director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute, Geir Lundestad. We also thank Nobel laureates and committee heads with whom we spoke. We are also grateful to Annika Pontikis of the Nobel Foundation for facilitating our unusual research endeavour.

In addition, Gustav Källstrand (Nobel Museum), Stuart Roper (Manchester Business School) and Jens Hultman, Rita Rakauskaitė and Carlotta Zorzi (Lund University) provided meaningful insights.

We extend a very special thanks and appreciation to our long-time research colleague, close friend and collaborator in developing the brand heritage realm, John Balmer (Brunel University) for inspiring intellectual discussion on this research.

This research received no financial support from the Nobel Foundation.

Note: Phrases in this paper related to “managing the brand” are ours, and not necessarily those of Nobel Prize representatives.

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Mats Urde is associate professor at Lund University, Sweden, where he specializes in strategic brand management and reputation. He has served in the Royal Swedish Navy and earned his BA, MBA and Ph.D degrees from Lund. Based on his doctoral thesis (*Märkesorientering / Brand orientation*, 1997) he co-developed the concept of brand orientation: “an approach in which the processes of the organisation revolve around the creation, development and protection of brand identity in an on-going interaction with target customers and non-customer stakeholders with the aim of achieving lasting competitive advantages in the form of brands.” Brand orientation is a strategic corporate view on brands as competitive advantages and resources, to be balanced with the dominant paradigm of market orientation. His dissertation was the first on strategic brand management in a Swedish University.

Professor Urde has published extensively, served as reviewer and as guest editor on the management of brands and has earned a reputation for conceptual work rooted in clinical-field research. Based on longitudinal case studies of corporations and organisations such as Volvo, Trelleborg (business-to-business) and the Swedish Monarchy, concepts such as core values, brand track record and brand mindsets have emerged. His published articles include those on monarchy as corporate brands, “heritage brands”, core values, “brand orientation” and the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (some co-authored).

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