



1 Introduction

The global automotive industry is facing several dramatic changes and developments, that "highlight that the automotive industry needs to reinvent itself" (Winkelhake 2018, p. 2) Namely one of the biggest changes at the moment is the change of drive train technology. Due to increasingly strict emission restrictions the car manufacturers have to come up with more sustainable technologies, such as fully electric vehicles.

Almost every car manufacturer is offering new fully electric vehicles now. Also the traditional German sportscar manufacturer *Porsche* now offers its very first all electric sportscar called *Porsche Taycan*. It should be the beginning of entering this new market or era of cars for the brand.

With this car Porsche is not the first manufacturer offering an electric vehicle. Therefore there is already an established image of this product category in the mind of the consumers. The main goal of this research is to find out whether there are differences between category and brand image and what Porsche can improve in terms of their brand positioning and image.

2 Research Question

"Differences between the image of the electric vehicle product category and the brand image of the Porsche Taycan and according suggestions for action for Porsche."

3 Problem & Relevance

Electric cars are often primarily associated with sustainability (cf. BDEW 2019), sportscars are mainly associated with irrational and emotional attributes. Therefore there is a problem of a big disparity between those two very well established dimensions of associations of these two product categories. The question is now, whether *Porsche* with its *Taycan* is serving the established image of electric cars or not and whether this is the right strategic decision for the brand.

This problem or this question is highly relevant, because if there is a disparity between the positioning of Porsche's *Taycan* and the general image of the electric car product category, and if this disparity is not understood or well perceived from the consumer, there is the danger of a failed product innovation and in the worst case a long term damage to the overall brand image of *Porsche*.

4 Scientific Fundamentals & Methods

- Explorative Research
- Online / mobile survey
- Software used: Quantilope
- N=23 participants
- Timeslot: 14th July 2020 - 1st August 2020
- Implicit Association Test
- Exploring subconscious image perceptions of the Porsche Taycan of the consumers

5 Theory / Literature Research

Definition of construct

Brand image can be defined as the consumers' perception about a brand and its positioning defined by the company, which is reflected by the brand associations based on the consumers' interactions, beliefs, ideas, and experience with the brand (cf. Keller, 1993).

Scale description

The basis of the brand image scale was developed by Zarantonello & Delassus (2015) with specific reference to the car industry, containing four benefit-based brand image dimensions: sensory, symbolic, utilitarian and economic which help consumers understand how a brand can answer their needs.

For the purpose of this research, the brand image dimensions were expanded to 58 items, integrating more versatile items as well as items corresponding to sustainability and e-mobility attributes.

Brand image scale

Sensory dimension (emotional characteristics)
Exciting, fun to drive, good acceleration, styling, sporty, interior design, exterior design, ...

Symbolic dimension (experiential benefits)
Luxury features, prestige, sustainable, innovative, ...

Economic dimension (value for needed characteristics)
Good dealer service, good value for maintenance, good e-loading infrastructure, ...

Utility dimension (functional attributes)
Made to last, reliability, safe in accident, travel flexibility, good value for money, ...

6 Results

6.1 Results Category

Category Interest

- 82,6 % rather or very interested in the electric car category
- 69,6 % rather or very interested in the hybrid car category
- 65,2 % rather or very interested in petrol cars

Brand Familiarity

- Porsche 1st place
- 4,0 out of 5,0 mean value

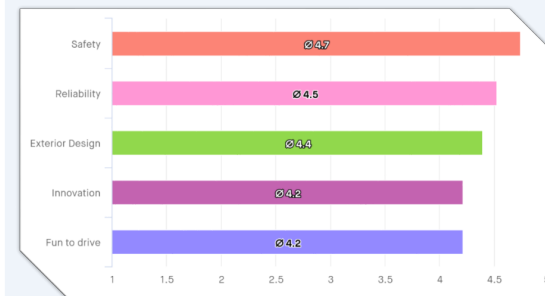
Category Communication Frequency

- 52,2 % last week
- 26,1 % in the last two to three weeks

Category Communication Channels

- 39,1 % family & friends
- 26,1 % advertising (e.g. TV, social media, O-O-H)
- 17,4 % reviews (print and video)

Figure 2: Category Key Buying Factor (Mean Values)



Category Key Buying Factor: Imagine you are buying an electric car. How important would the following product features be for you? | 1: "1 = Not at all important" - 5: "5 = Very important"

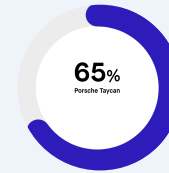


Figure 1: Porsche Taycan's Brand Awareness Aided

6.2 Results Porsche Taycan

Porsche Taycan Key Buying Factor

1. Comfortable charging-infrastructure
2. Long-lasting battery
3. Long-distance driving comfort
4. High driving dynamics
5. Fast loading capability

Negative Factors Denying the Preference

1. Too expensive
2. Poor value for money

Main Findings of the SAT

Top Implicit Associations

1. Fast (Sensory)
2. Joy (Sensory)
3. Precise Handling (Sensory)

1. Luxury (Symbolic)
2. Prestige (Symbolic)
3. New (Symbolic)

1. Freedom (Utilitarian)
2. Reliable (Utilitarian)
3. Independence (Utilitarian)

1. Up-to-date (Economic)
2. Powerful (Economic)

Brand Image Porsche Taycan

- Porsche managed to transfer the established image onto the new Taycan
- In terms of brand image, the Taycan is still perceived as a sportscar and not like rational purchase
- Very emotional and less rational image / positioning
- Implicit associations are mainly sensory

Figure 3: SAT Brand Image Porsche Taycan



7 Conclusion / Outlook

- This exploratory research was used to measure and manage the brand image of Porsche Taycan. The study may help Porsche marketing managers to build brand image and clarify the promise of Porsche Taycan in satisfying consumers' symbolic, economic, and utilitarian needs.
- Category results revealed mostly rational dimensions (symbolic, utilitarian) except for e-loading infrastructure
- Porsche maintained the well established conventional (irrational and emotional / sensory) sportscar brand image
- Question is, whether maintaining it is the right strategic decision for Porsche
- Negative factors denying the preference show that for many consumers of our sample a sportscar is financially not in reach
- Therefore these consumers tend to think rather emotional about the Porsche Taycan, because there is no need to think rationally
- Rational thinking in the category caused rational demands for the Porsche Taycan
- Big gap between rational purchase decision factors and an emotional brand image of the Porsche Taycan
- Sensory aspects are well trained and established in the consumers' minds
- Suggestion 1: Utilitarian aspects (range, e-loading infrastructure, etc.) need to be stressed more in the brand communication
- Suggestion 2: Sustainability needs to become part of the brand image in a convincing and authentic way in order to stay relevant in the future

8 Literature

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