Improving branding

A case study of a small, niched, management consulting firm

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Abstract

The competition within the management consulting industry is increasing and many of the smaller consultancies are having trouble attracting new business and achieving company growth. In order for smaller firms to be able to compete, many choose to focus on a niche market. However, firms are still having trouble growing and attracting business from new customers. A way for these firms to increase their market share and sales is to build and maintain a strong brand by working with branding.

Greenlight Project Management is a small management consulting company focusing on project management. The company has set a target to double its revenue within two years. For a company with such growth ambitions, branding could be considered a powerful weapon that could be used to attract new business.

This report examines how Greenlight Project Management, a small, niched, management consulting company, can improve their branding efforts in order to strengthen the brand. The process starts with a breakdown of the concept of branding. Several areas are examined in order to construct a model of the branding concept. The model consists of six branding functions, and within each function is a set of activities. The success of the company's branding is determined by the performance in these activities. The model is then applied to the case company and a gap analysis identifying and evaluating rooms for improvements is performed.

The findings suggest that the constructed model could be used for assessing the case company's current branding efforts and assess the room for improvement within each defined branding function. The report concludes which activities the case company needs to improve and gives recommendations on how to do so.
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1 Introduction

In this chapter, a brief introduction will be given of the management consulting industry and some of the challenges the consultancies are facing. The problem will be examined and the implications of branding will be discussed. A description of a company that is facing some of the discussed challenges is given as well as an explanation for why it is an interesting firm to study. This in turn leads to the purpose of this thesis and finally the chapter is concluded with a layout of the disposition of the report.

1.1 Background

The global management consulting industry has grown rapidly in the last two decades (Furusten, 2013) and accumulated over $300 billion in revenues in 2011 (MarketLine, 2012). The industry is also expected to grow with 33.6 % from 2011 to 2016, according to an industry profile done by MarketLine (2012). Furthermore, according to Christensen et al. (2013), the management consulting industry is starting to be reshaped. The authors mention as one of the most notable changes that new competitors with new business models have entered the market undermining the position of long-time leaders. The authors have identified three business models for consulting firms, where the solution shop is the traditional business model. The three generic business models are briefly described in Figure 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consulting: Three business models</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Solution shop</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Structured to diagnose and solve problems whose scope is undefined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Delivers value primarily through consultants’ judgment rather than through repeatable processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Customers pay high prices in the form of fee-for-service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Examples: McKinsey, Bain, BCG, IDEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value-added process business</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Structured to address problems of defined scope with standard processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Processes are usually repeatable and controllable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Customers pay for output only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Examples: Motista, Salesforce.com, McKinsey Solutions, Accenture, Deloitte (both moving toward solution shop)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilitated network</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Structured to enable the exchange of products and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Customers pay fees to the network, which in turn pays the service provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Examples: OpenIDEO, CEB, Gerson Lehrman Group, Eden McCallum, BTG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1. Consulting: three business models (Christensen et al., 2013, p. 114, own adaption).*

In the meantime, many of the incumbent firms have chosen to flee to higher-margin activities. At traditional strategy-consulting firms, for instance, the classic strategy work share has decreased from 60-70 % to about 20 % of the total work in some 30 years (Christensen et al., 2013). However, in order for smaller management consulting firms to
compete it might be necessary to focus on a more niche market (Furusten, 2013). The advantages of focusing on a niche market are further mentioned by several authors (e.g. Panchal 2012 and Crosley, 2011), and Anand et al. (2007) suggest that acquiring expertise within a niche area within management consulting is one way to increase the success of the firm. One such niched market is project management. Project management services may include project management consulting services, training and educational services related to project management, etc. This is a growing industry and it is estimated that in the year 2020, 15.7 million new project management roles will be added globally (Guarino, 2014).

1.2 Problem discussion

Although the industry is growing, the number of firms providing these services is also increasing (Furusten, 2013). New organisations are being formed and already established organisations within other areas are starting to offer management consulting services (Furusten, 2013). Christensen et al. (2013) suggest that the competition is increasing, and according to Henricsson (2013) many of the smaller consultancies are having trouble attracting new business and achieving company growth. Studies suggest that reputation is one of the primary factors considered when clients compare management consulting firms (McKenna, 2000). Abratt and Kleyn (2012) argue that a strong corporate brand is integral in building strong corporate reputation. Furthermore, the corporate brand is especially important for business-to-business (B2B) companies (Aspara and Tikkanen, 2008; Kuhn et al, 2008) since it affects the image and perception that customers have of the company, which in turn will affect customer loyalty and customer referrals (Aspara and Tikkanen, 2008). According to Kotler and Pfoertsch (2007), brands in both B2B and B2C markets serve as a guarantee of quality, origin, and performance, in order to increase the value perceived by the customer as well as reducing the risk and complexity involved in the buying decision. The authors furthermore suggest that a strong brand is the basis of competitive advantage and long-term profitability, and provides companies with higher return. While Khermouch et al. (2001) suggest that a strong brand can boost a company’s earnings, Kotler and Pfoertsch (2007) point out that brand building creates long-term benefits rather than short-term sales. Jobber and Fahy (2009) furthermore suggest that a strong brand has several benefits, such as customer loyalty and increased possibilities to raise prices. Building and maintaining a corporate brand, i.e. corporate branding, is according to Juntunen et al. (2010) vital for achieving company growth. Leek and Christodoulides (2012) suggest that a strong brand and brand awareness can be seen as a relationship initiator and can be useful in business decisions where the parties have no previous experience of dealing with each other. Juntunen et al. (2011) argue that a strong corporate brand is especially important in business services, where the object that is being purchased is an intangible service. Furthermore, many authors suggest that not only branding focusing on corporate brands, but all types of brands, aid company growth. One of these authors, Abimbola (2001), argues that branding is of grave importance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and creates growth opportunities. Wong and Merrilees (2005) also stress the importance of branding for SMEs suggesting that successful branding can enhance the ability to compete, generate company growth and increase profitability. Kapferer (2008) argues that companies must work with branding in order to increase their
market share. According to Keller (2009), branding has become a key marketing priority for most companies, indicating the importance of having a well-developed branding strategy.

It is becoming clear that branding is an important aspect for SMEs to generate company growth. For an SME active in a competitive niched management consulting industry, branding could be considered a powerful weapon that could be used to attract new business, increase the market share, and create company growth. One SME within the niched management consulting industry with ambitions to create company growth is Greenlight Project Management.

1.2.1 GREENLIGHT PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Greenlight Project Management S.L. (henceforth referred to as Greenlight) is an international management consulting firm with focus on project management. Founded in 2003 in Madrid, Spain, the company has grown significantly and today Greenlight has more than 50 consultants with legal entities also in Portugal, Sweden, USA and the UK as well as representation offices in Italy, Mexico, Panama, Qatar, Angola and Mozambique. The company has in principle been focused on project management consulting all the time since its establishment by delivering training within project management, establishing project management offices (PMOs), providing project managers and offering other consulting services related to project management. (Greenlight, 2014)

Greenlight’s strength mainly comes from deep knowledge, competence and experience within the area. The idea is that Greenlight should stand for very experienced and senior people, whereupon all consultants have extensive experience and there are no employees under the age of 35. Over the years, Greenlight has managed to create a reputation among its key customers to be the best project management consulting company, not only in Spain but also worldwide. These key customers are both large companies, for example Ericsson, BBVA, Telefonica and Indra, as well as smaller companies around the globe. Greenlight is however not very well known outside its current customers. (Romander, 2014)

Greenlight has expanded internationally quite fast lately and has a vision to double its turnover within the next two years. The primary strategy for doing this is to expand some of the locally established business units around the globe, primarily in North America, Sweden and the UK, as well as from these offices also increase sales in Africa and the Middle East. Greenlight intend to keep focusing on its core business, project management, and it is within this segment that the firm sees the potential to grow and increase its revenue to reach the target value for 2015. (Romander, 2014)

In order to reach the targeted revenues, Greenlight needs to attract new customers and get new business from current clients. According to CEO and founder Rickard Romander (2014), some attempts at marketing and branding related efforts have been made but Greenlight needs to improve these efforts in order to achieve its goals. Companies outside Greenlight’s current customers do not know that the Greenlight brand stands for high-quality project management services delivered by competent consultants with valuable real-life experience (Romander, 2014). In Sweden for example, Romander (2014) says that outside of Ericsson no one knows anything about Greenlight. Regarding its current clients, Romander (2014) mentions that at for example Telefonica, a large Spanish telecom
company with almost 300,000 employees, only around five to ten people know about Greenlight and the high-quality services that they provide.

To be able to reach the targeted turnover for 2015 Greenlight needs to further develop its branding activities. In order to get a comprehensive understanding of how to aid company growth by working with branding, it is of interest to study the concept of branding and identify which branding activities that can be improved at the case company.

1.3 Purpose

Derived from the problem discussion above, the purpose of this thesis is to investigate and evaluate how Greenlight can improve their branding efforts in order to strengthen the brand.

In order to achieve the purpose, a theoretical framework will be constructed. This framework aims to break down the concept of branding in order to find the activities that build up the branding process in management consulting companies like the case company. This framework will then be used to analyse the case company’s current branding efforts in order to identify which activities that can be improved.

1.4 Disposition

This section provides the reader with a summary of the contents of each chapter of the thesis.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the first chapter, a brief introduction will be given of the management consulting industry and some of the challenges the consultancies are facing. The problem will be examined and the implications of branding will be discussed. A description of a company that is facing some of the discussed challenges is given as well as an explanation for why it is an interesting firm to study. This in turn leads to the purpose of this thesis and finally the chapter is concluded with a layout of the disposition of the report.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

In the second chapter, the theoretical framework of the study is presented. The framework is based on literature reviews and begins with a breakdown of the concept of branding. The breakdown will lead to a set of branding functions, which will be used to structure the theoretical reference frame. Next, the reader will be presented with a list of keywords and definitions. The identified branding functions are then further investigated and explained in order to increase the understanding of the importance of branding. The different branding functions are broken down into a set of branding activities. The activities lead to an analysis model aiming to describe how the theoretical reference frame will be used to analyse empirical data in order to answer and fulfil the purpose of this report. Finally, a precise investigation approach is determined, listing a set of questions based on the theoretical framework that will clarify the empirical data needs.
Chapter 3: Methodology
In the third chapter, the methodology used for carrying out the study will be presented. The chapter aims to provide the reader with an understanding of how theoretical and empirical data have been collected and analysed, as well as how the report have been structured. The chapter also offers a discussion about the validity, reliability and objectivity of the study, and ends with listing the delimitations that have affected the study.

Chapter 4: Empirical data
In this chapter, the reader is presented with the data that was collected during the field study. The data aims to provide an understanding of how the case company, Greenlight, is working with the different functions of branding and their respective activities identified in the literature reviews and synthesized in the analysis model. The empirical data mostly derives from interviews with Greenlight employees, an employee survey conducted among Greenlight personnel and from interviews with a number of Greenlight’s customers. The empirical findings are structured according to the six defined branding functions and presented to the reader in the form of a case description. A discussion about how the interviews were conducted, their validity and who the interviewees were is conducted in chapter 3.

Chapter 5: Analysis
The fifth chapter presents the analysis that was conducted in this study. The theoretical framework introduced in chapter two is used to analyse the empirical data presented in chapter four. With the theoretical framework as a basis, the situation at the case company, Greenlight, was evaluated in order to establish if there is any room for improvement regarding the identified activities within each branding functions needed for successful branding. The analysis provides support for the thesis’ culminating conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 6: Conclusions
In the sixth chapter, the reached conclusions are presented. The conclusions are derived from the analysis and are meant to fulfil and answer the purpose of the thesis. The chapter also provides a discussion about the generalizability of the results of the study.

Chapter 7: Recommendations
The seventh chapter provides recommendations for the studied case company, Greenlight, regarding how to improve the branding activities showing room for improvement. The recommendations are customized to fit the needs of the case company, however some of the recommendations are hopefully generally applicable to companies with similar preconditions in similar situations.
2 Theoretical framework

In this chapter, the theoretical framework of the study is presented. The framework is based on literature reviews and begins with a breakdown of the concept of branding. The breakdown will lead to a set of branding functions, which will be used to structure the theoretical reference frame. Next, the reader will be presented with a list of keywords and definitions. The identified branding functions are then further investigated and explained in order to increase the understanding of the importance of branding. The different branding functions are broken down into a set of branding activities. The activities lead to an analysis model aiming to describe how the theoretical reference frame will be used to analyse empirical data in order to answer and fulfil the purpose of this report. Finally, a precise investigation approach is determined, listing a set of questions based on the theoretical framework that will clarify the empirical data needs.

2.1 The concept of branding

Strong brands are considered a key success factor and B2B companies are increasingly seeking competitive advantage through branding (Jalkala and Keränen, 2014). Many authors have defined various models and frameworks that map various activities that branding is built up by. It has been established in the problem discussion (Section 1.2) that not only corporate branding aids company growth, but also the more “traditional” branding that focuses on specific product or service brands (for example, Abimbola, 2001; Wong and Merrilees, 2005; Kapferer, 2008). For small, niched, management consulting firms there are usually no product or service brands that differ from the corporate brand, i.e. services are being sold under the corporate brand. Because of this, it is of relevance to consider and evaluate branding theories specifically focusing on corporate branding as well as “traditional branding”. According to Heding et al. (2008) product or service branding has a more external and market-driven perspective, whereas corporate branding involves the whole organisation and emphasizes the role of employees as part of creating strong brands. Harris and de Chernatony (2001) also suggest that corporate branding requires greater internal focus and that the role of employees in the brand building process requires significant attention. Kotler and Pfoertsch (2007) argue that for companies on a B2B market to be successful, a holistic branding approach is necessary, covering everything from the development and design to the implementation of marketing programs, processes, and activities that are intersecting and interdependent.

There is still no clear consensus regarding how corporate brands should be effectively developed (for example, Juntunen et al., 2010; Wallström et al., 2008; Bickerton, 2000). Bickerton (2000) suggests that corporate branding can be viewed in two different, although congruent, perspectives: a marketing perspective and an organisational perspective. The major difference is whether to approach branding with a customer market focus or an organisation focus (Bickerton, 2000). Figure 2 illustrates the two different perspectives of corporate branding and what functions the respective processes include according to Bickerton (2000).
Juntunen et al. (2010) classify six functions of corporate branding, using Bickerton's (2000) organisational perspective as a starting point. The authors furthermore specify a number of corporate branding activities related to each function. The corporate branding functions suggested by Juntunen et al. (2010) are illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Classification of the corporate branding functions (Juntunen et al., 2010, p. 117, own adaption).
The *brand system* is illustrated by Kapferer (2008) as a pyramid illustrating several branding functions (see Figure 4). The pyramid gives an overview of the two different processes that build the brand: The brand management process and the brand perception process. The brand management process is the process by which a company builds and maintains its brand. The brand perception process on the other hand is the process by which consumers generate a perception of the brand.

![Brand System Diagram](image)

**Figure 4. The brand system (Kapferer, 2008, p. 34, own adaption).**

Hopefully, successful brand management will ensure that customers perceive the brand in the way intended by the company. It is therefore, for example, important for the company not to lose focus and forget about the vision and core values of the brand when determining which products and services to offer. Otherwise, customers could have trouble understanding that all the offered products and services, if not all in line with the brand, is offered under the same concept and carry the same brand essence¹ (Kapferer, 2008).

Heding et al. (2008) describe the *identity approach*, where focus often is on a corporate brand, as an approach to brand management that focuses on establishing and exchanging a coherent brand identity to all stakeholders. The approach requires attention to both internal and external elements in order to create and communicate a coherent brand identity, which in turn will create brand value (Heding et al., 2008). The elements that brand identity is made up of are illustrated in Figure 5.

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¹ Brand essence refers to the brand’s core values and personality (Kotler et al., 1999).
Figure 5. Elements building up brand identity in "The Identity Approach" (Heding et al., 2008, p. 56 and p. 60, own adaption).

It has been suggested that it would be of interest to consider areas of both internal and external aspects of branding in order to gain a full understanding of how an SME within the niched management consulting industry can improve their branding efforts in order to strengthen its brand. For this purpose, a model has been constructed taking the contributions presented previously in this chapter into account (see Figure 6). This model defines five areas, or functions, that form the basis for the literature reviews that will form the theoretical reference frame. The theoretical framework chapter has also been structured according to these areas.
Brand identity has been argued to be an important function of branding by Bickerton (2000) and Heding et al. (2008). Taking into account the importance of corporate branding, the branding function corporate identity suggested by Juntunen et al. (2010) is included in the defined branding function *brand identity* in the constructed branding model (Figure 6). The brand identity function includes corporate personality, suggested by both Bickerton (2000) and Juntunen et al. (2010) as well as brand-oriented strategic planning suggested by Juntunen et al. (2010). Also included in the brand identity function are the top three levels of Kapferer’s (2008) brand system pyramid. Furthermore the defined brand identity function includes Heding et al.’s (2008) internal elements of brand identity, whereas the external elements suggested by the authors (image and reputation) have been included in the branding function defined as *brand reputation and image*. The reason for separating the external and internal elements of Heding et al.’s (2008) definition of brand identity is that Bickerton (2000) and Juntunen et al. (2010) have defined corporate image and brand image as separate functions from brand identity.

Brand positioning has been argued to be an important aspect of branding by Bickerton (2000) and therefore *brand positioning* has been defined as a branding function, which also incorporates Kapferer’s (2008) branding aspects that can considered to be related to the positioning of the brand: *strategic benefits and attributes, physical signature and family resemblance and products and services, typical brand actions.*
As suggested by Juntunen et al. (2010), *employee involvement* has been identified as another branding function, including activities related to the organisations employees and their part of the branding process. Lastly, Juntunen et al.'s (2010) *brand communication* constitutes a branding function of its own.

How the five defined branding functions are build up by the presented authors' frameworks and models is illustrated in Figure 7.

*Figure 7. The five defined branding functions.*

While the amount of research on B2B branding is limited (Leek and Christodoulides, 2012), there are numerous similarities in B2B and B2C branding as well as some differences (Ryan and Silvanto, 2013). In B2B branding the focus is more often on the corporate brand, whereas in B2C branding more emphasis is placed on individual brands (such as specific product or service brands) than on corporate brands (Ryan and Silvanto, 2013). Another significant difference is the importance of establishing trust and a strong reputation:

"In sum, brand building in the B2B context is not only about sales and marketing strategies, it is about the buyer's overall perception of the seller as a trusted, reliable and expert partner.” (Ryan and Silvanto, 2013, p.43)

Many of the theories that form the basis for this thesis' theoretical framework originate from well-distinguished and renowned authors within the field. Keller (2009) has contributed considerably to the research of branding. Trout and Ries (2000) introduced and popularized the concept of positioning in marketing. Porter (1996) is a leading
authority on competitive strategy. Kotler et al. (1999) is a respected marketing professor with several awards and distinctions. The author's views on marketing communications strategy have been used as a shell in the section of brand communication in this thesis.

Furthermore, several authors cited in this thesis have focused their research on corporate branding in a B2B context, such as Aspara and Tikkanen (2008), Ryan and Silvanto (2013), Juntunen et al. (2010) and Juntunen et al. (2011). Many of the studied theories are directly focusing on B2B branding, such as the research presented by Lynch and de Chernatony (2004).

2.2 Key words and definitions

The theoretical reference frame of this thesis largely revolves around branding, which refers to the activities related to the development and management of brands. To help the reader to easier comprehend and understand the theories presented in the theoretical framework, definitions of some of the most central key words and aspects within the area are provided in this section.

Brand equity

Brand equity is at the heart of brand management (Heding et al., 2008; Keller, 2009) and Keller (2009) defines it in terms of marketing effects uniquely attributable to a brand, i.e. the value of a brand. Heding et al. (2008) also state that brand equity defines the value of the brand and that it can refer to two different types of brand value; either a strategic and subjective understanding of brand value or a financial and objective expression of the brand value. The strategic and subjective value of a brand is based on the customers' perception of the brand and suggests that the brand's equity is the value added to a product or service by associating it with a certain brand name (Heding et al., 2008; Leek and Christodoulides, 2012). The financial and objective value of a brand suggests that brand equity is an intangible entry on a company's balance sheet, similar to goodwill or know-how (Heding et al., 2008). According to Ryan and Silvanto (2013) strong brand equity is important for maintaining customer loyalty in a B2B context.

Keller (2009) argues that in a B2C context brand equity is built up by the brand knowledge, i.e. the knowledge that consumers have regarding the brand not in terms of facts but in terms of thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, and experiences etc. that customers link to the brand in their minds. To shape this knowledge, the author suggests that marketing communications, i.e. the means by which a firm attempts to inform, persuade and remind consumers, directly or indirectly, about the products, services and brands they sell, play a crucial role. Ryan and Silvanto (2013) argue that in a B2B context, relationships play an important role in building brand equity as well as intangible factors such as trustworthiness and expertise. These are factors that to some extend can be affected by marketing communications, whereas it is of interest to consider marketing communications as an important branding activity.
Brand image

The *brand image* is the perception of the brand by customers (Keller, 2009). It is important to work strategically with brand image to ensure that the consumers hold associations with the brand that are both strong and favourable (Heding et al., 2008), since such associations can drive the differential effects and thus enhance the consumer loyalty towards the brand (Keller, 2009). Persson (2010) suggest that the definition of brand image given by Keller is appropriate in a B2B context and that the brand image is of importance for B2B companies, especially the corporate brand image.

Brand loyalty

*Brand loyalty* refers to the degree of loyalty that consumers have towards the brand and a high degree of brand loyalty is desirable since it is much less expensive to keep existing customers than recruiting new ones (Heding et al., 2008). Brand loyalty is an important aspect of the branding strategy since it will increase the probability of recurring business from customers, as well as it will enhance the likelihood of customers engaging in post-purchase word-of-mouth communication (Dick and Basu, 1994). Persson (2010) mentions that brand loyalty can be built by engaging in branding activities in a B2B context.

Employee branding

The process by which the brand image is being internalized and projected to customers by the employees is called *employee branding*. The goal is to engage the employees in the branding process in order to make them “live the brand” and thereby incorporate and live brand values so that they can deliver the brand promise fully to customers. This process is a key part of brand management since employees are important bearers of the brand. (Heding et al., 2008)

2.3 Brand identity

Wallström et al. (2008) identify *brand identity* as an internal brand-building activity that is part of the planning of a brand and occurs before the brand is implemented. Creating a clear identity is according to Juntunen et al. (2010) a prerequisite for building a strong corporate brand. The importance of developing a clear brand identity has furthermore been argued by a great number of authors (for example, Bickerton, 2000; Heding et al., 2008; Wallström et al., 2008). Brand identity is defined as how the firm wants the brand to be perceived (Aaker, 1996), and consists of corporate culture, corporate behaviour, corporate internal communication, and corporate design (Juntunen et al., 2010). To put it in another way, brand identity is the key beliefs of a brand and its core values (Kapferer, 2008).

The *identity approach* to branding, described by Heding et al. (2008) and illustrated in Figure 5, is not limited to the corporate brand identity. The approach goes further and defines several more functions as part of the brand identity, such as the external elements image and reputation (Heding et al., 2008). In this theoretical framework, these external functions will be treated separately since they according to several corporate branding and B2B branding authors (e.g. Bickerton, 2000 and Juntunen et al., 2010) should be treated as separate functions. Kapferer (2008) in turn divide brand identity into separate aspects, or facets, that are all parts of building up the brand identity. In his *brand identity prism,*
Kapferer (2008) presents the six facets of brand identity. It is a tool that helps to identify the brand, as well as recognize brand strengths and weaknesses. Kapferer (2008) divides brand identity into:

- **Brand physique**: refers to the physical specificities and qualities of the brand. It is the tangible added value, the basis of the brand, and to define the brand’s physical aspects (such as product features, symbols and attributes) is the first step of developing a brand.

- **Brand personality**: a personification of the brand and represents how it speaks about its products or services and what kind of person it would be if it were a human. Many companies get famous people to represent their brands in order to quickly create brand personality.

- **Brand culture**: refers to the basic principles governing the brand in its outward signs (products, services and communication), and the set of values that feed the brand’s inspiration.

- **Brand relationship**: refers to the mode of conduct that most identifies the brand. It affects how the brand acts, delivers services and relates to its customers.

- **Brand reflection**: a reflection of the buyer that the brand seems to be addressing. The customer should be reflected as he or she wants to be seen as a result of using a brand. The brand reflection can be seen as the stereotypical user.

- **Self-image**: how the customer sees himself or herself when compared to the brand, the customer’s internal mirror.

To gain an understanding of the brand identity, Kapferer (2008) presents the following questions to help define the identity of the brand:

- What is the brand’s particular vision and aim?
- What makes it different?
- What need is the brand fulfilling?
- What is its permanent nature?
- What are its value or values?
- What is its field of competence? Of legitimacy?
- What are the signs that make the brand recognisable?

It is evident that brand identity is an important function of branding. Within the function, a set of activities has been identified based on Kapferer’s (2008) theories regarding brand identity. The activities identified within the function are listed in Figure 8.

**Figure 8. Activities within the branding function Brand Identity.**
2.4 Brand positioning

Brand positioning can be defined as the act of designing the company’s offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market (Kotler and Keller, 2006, p. 310). Or putting it in another way:

“A brand’s positioning sets out what the brand is, who it is for and what it offers” (Harris and de Chernatony, 2001).

Juntunen et al. (2010) stress the importance of establishing a clear positioning among stakeholders, and Jalkala and Keränen (2014) argue that the positioning of the brand has an impact on corporate performance. Kotler and Pfoertsch (2007) argue that a strong brand positioning entails more effectiveness, efficiency, and competitive advantage across operations. Jalkala and Keränen (2014) suggest that companies must position their brand and communicate selected brand associations to customers in order to differentiate their brand from competitors. The authors furthermore suggest that firms need to carefully evaluate the points of difference that they want to emphasize in their brand positioning. In a B2B context, firms often position their brands on corporate level attributes such as experience and reputation by emphasizing non-tangible associations such as expertise and trustworthiness (Jalkala and Keränen, 2014).

Wallström et al. (2008) identify brand position statement as an internal brand-building step that is part of the planning of a brand and occurs before the brand is implemented. The brand position statement is a statement of how the brand should be seen (Wallström et al., 2008) and should be based on the brand identity (Aaker, 1996; Kapferer, 2008). The statement is, according to Moore (1991), a phrase that is formulated in a certain way in order to answer a number of questions that summarises the chosen positioning. Levi (2007) argues that the statement should be around 35 words and answer the questions: what do you do, how are you different, and what value will you provide. A position statement will help keep everyone in the company on the same page in terms of key messages and marketing rhetoric (Levi, 2007).

To effectively work with brand positioning it is necessary to identify and communicate the brand’s uniqueness, differentiation and verifiable value. The firm needs to answer the following questions (Kapferer, 2008):

- A brand for what benefit? (Brand promise and consumer benefit)
- A brand for whom? (Target)
- Reason? (Factual or subjective elements that support the claimed benefit)
- A brand against whom? (Main competitors)

Furthermore, Jalkala and Keränen (2014) suggest that when designing a brand positioning firms should consider not only the features of the offering (e.g. product performance and pricing) but also their key capabilities central to delivering value to customers. It is important to have a portfolio of offerings that consists of a number of value propositions, or in the case of management consulting firms: service offerings, which are in line with the brand. As argued by Kapferer (2008), and illustrated in Figure 4, the range of products and services are the first building block when customers form a perception about the brand. Kapferer (2008) stresses that the wider the base of the pyramid is, i.e. the more products
and services the brand offers, the harder it is for the customers to see that all these offerings originate from the same brand essence.

When putting together value propositions, the company must also consider the pricing strategy. The pricing of products or services offered by a brand affects the customers’ perception and expectations of the value added by the product or service (Kowalkowski and Kindström, 2012). DelVecchio and Puligadda (2012) conclude that lower prices can be associated with lower perceived brand quality. Especially offering a limited time discount on a product or service is according to Clayton and Heo (2011) damaging to the brand’s image and perceived quality.

Competitor and customer analysis are an integral part of the brand positioning process (Jalkala and Keränen, 2014). To illustrate the brand positioning process and its typical steps, Levi (2007) gives the following general description:

1. Identifying the business’s direct competition,
2. Understanding how each competitor is positioning its business today (e.g., claiming to be the fastest, cheapest, largest, the number one provider, etc.),
3. Documenting the provider’s own positioning as it exists today (may not exist if startup business),
4. Comparing the company’s positioning to its competitors’ to identify viable areas for differentiation,
5. Developing a distinctive, differentiating and value-based brand positioning statement, key messages and customer value propositions.

Key messages are statements that further validate the claims in the positioning statement. They are usually built upon one or more of the power words in the positioning statement and will help peak customers’ interest and differentiate from competitors. (Levi, 2007)

Jalkala and Keränen (2014) argue that for solution providers, that provides complex offerings of integrated products and/or services, more in-depth analysis of the customers’ goals is required in order to develop a brand positioning strategy that clearly shows the customers how the offered solution helps meeting these goals.

Porter (1996) argues that strategic positioning choices determine not only which activities a company will perform and how it will configure individual activities but also how activities relate to each other. The essence is that companies must choose a position and make sure to implement it fully. This is especially important during company growth since the pursuit of sales can tempt companies to engage in activities that blur the positioning (Porter, 1996). Ries and Ries (2002) mention Chevrolet as an example. Once an industry leader and best-selling automobile brand in America, the car manufacturer wanted to sell more cars and therefore introduced many new different models. Today, Chevrolet sells large cars, small cars, cheap cars, expensive cars and even trucks. This model expansion has led to increased sales in the short term, but in the long term it undermines the brand name in the consumers’ minds. This is a common problem for companies pursuing rapid growth (Porter, 1996; Ries and Ries, 2002) and the example helps illustrate the importance of maintaining a clear brand positioning, especially during company growth.

It is evident that brand positioning is an important function of branding. A set of activities has been defined as important for succeeding with the branding efforts within this function.
Developing a brand position statement has been suggested to be of importance by several authors (Wallström et al., 2008; Moore, 1991; Kapferer, 2008; Aaker, 1996 and Levi, 2007). Conducting competitor analyses is suggested to be of importance by Levi (2007) and Jalkala and Keränen (2014). Furthermore, both Kowalkowski and Kindström (2012) and DelVecchio and Puligadda (2012) argue that applying an appropriate price level is important and it is an activity that companies must consider when working with building a brand positioning. According to Levi (2007), developing a set of key messages is important to validate the claimed positioning. Lastly, working with ensuring a congruence between products and services offered under the brand name is an important activity for companies to work with within the brand positioning function of branding (Ries and Ries, 2002; Porter, 1996 and Kapferer, 2008. The activities identified within the function are listed in Figure 9.

**Figure 9. Activities within the branding function Brand Positioning.**

### 2.5 Employee involvement

Through interactions with customers and other stakeholders, employees in B2B markets play a major role in the brand positioning as well as the shaping of brand image (Jalkala and Keränen, 2014). Harris and de Chernatony (2001) argue that a brand’s values are not only communicated by advertising but also through employees, and that the role of employees therefore is crucial in the brand building process. Furthermore, Kapferer (2008) argues that the brand’s sender, i.e. the person bearing the brand’s name, affects customers’ perception of a company. This stresses the importance of encouraging employees to identify with the company and brand culture and values in order for them to represent the brand in the intended way to customers, i.e. employee branding (Heding et al., 2008). As two authors put it:

“*The internal communication of the brand to employees within the supplier company is essential as it determines how the brand is conveyed externally to the buyers.*” (Leek and Christodoulides, 2012)

Heding et al. (2008) mention that the ability of employees to deliver the content and promise of the brand in the long run creates corporate image and reputation. Harris and de Chernatony (2001) suggest that employees need to be recognised as brand ambassadors since they are the link between the brand’s internal and external environment. One of the challenges that managers face is to define the brand’s values and then work within the organisation to ensure commitment, enthusiasm and consistent staff behaviour delivering these values (Chernatony, 1999).
Brannan et al. (2011) argue that successful employee branding leads to a stronger brand image, increased employee satisfaction and higher levels of customer satisfaction. Therefore, the firm must work with internal branding activities in order to enable employees to better understand the organisation they work for and thus provide inspiration about desired behaviour (Chernatony, 1999). The internal communication must be clear and easily accessible by employees, and Chernatony (1999) mentions Intranets as an example method for this. Drake et al. (2005) also argues that the company's leaders need to keep the employees informed and updated regarding the company's values, goals, vision, and results as an attempt to make the employees feel as part of the organisation. The goal is, according to Heding et al. (2008), to make the employees "live the brand" in order to ensure that the brand is being communicated as intended. In other words:

"Assuring employees’ involvement is seen as the key to building relationships with all the company’s stakeholders." (Juntunen et al., 2010)

Therefore, it is of great importance for organisations to ensure that the recruitment process of not only competent people, but people who also can align with the brand, is working properly. Chernatony (1999) argues that when recruiting new personnel, companies should also evaluate the congruency of the potential employee's values with the brand's values. It is also important for companies to try and impose the brand culture and brand values upon the employees continuously (Cheratony, 1999).

While the recruitment of new personnel can be viewed as a short-term solution to satisfy a short-term need for competence, employer branding can be viewed as a long-term effort in order to secure talent. According to Heding et al. (2008) employer branding relates to strategies for communicating that a company is an attractive employer to both current and potential employees. Since the competition for competence is fierce these days the need for standing out as an employer is becoming more and more important (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003). This is obviously even more so for knowledge and competence intensive companies such as management consulting firms. Furthermore, a recent trend within the project management industry is that the number of young people joining the workforce is increasing (Guarino, 2014). Nowadays, younger project managers are leading their own projects to a wider extent than before (Guarino, 2014). One of the major benefits of employing young people as project managers is that they demonstrate experience and competence in a wider range of sectors, such as business, engineering and economics, compared to before when project managers used to come in with more narrow experience centred around IT experience (Guarino, 2014).

Ryan and Silvanto (2013) suggest that the essential difference in B2B vs. B2C branding is that the number of players on both the buyer and seller's side is far more limited in the B2B domain. The interactions between buyers and sellers are also wider ranging and more frequent and intense in the B2B domain (Ryan and Silvanto, 2013). Kuhn et al. (2008) also conclude that relationships are an important factor since the interaction in a B2B context is between sales staff and buyers whereas in a B2C context it is between customers and brands. By this reasoning, the authors illustrate the significance of the role of employees in B2B branding.

According to Furusten (2012), building and maintaining relationships with both clients and potential clients is of great importance for management consulting companies. Kapferer
(2008) even states that a brand is a relationship, and that it is especially true for brands in the service sector. Lynch and Chernatony (2004) stress that emotional brand values and emotional relationships with customers must play an important role in B2B marketing since it has an impact on the customers’ purchasing decisions.

Keller (2009) argues that relationships are the foundation of brand loyalty. According to Lynch and Chernatony (2004), a relationship with a customer built up over a long period time establishes trust and brand loyalty, which becomes a valuable competitive factor. Brand loyalty will increase the probability of recurring business from customers, as well as enhance the likelihood of customers engaging in post-purchase word-of-mouth communication (Dick and Basu, 1994). Building brand loyalty in combination with creating exit barriers are tools for firms to lock in buyers (Luo and Donthu, 2006). Investing in relationship building that helps strengthen the brand loyalty will in turn lead to customers becoming more inclined to avoid substitutes, even if they are offered at lower prices (Kotler et al., 1999).

Leek and Christodoulides (2012) conclude that a brand’s value is a driver for the development of B2B relationships, where the brand’s value refers to the value of goods and services as well as the added value resulting from the brand name.

It is evident that employee involvement is an important aspect of branding. The literature reviews of theories regarding this aspect of branding have however resulted in a split of the previously defined function. The earlier defined function employee involvement will be split up into two new functions based on the theories presented in this chapter: employee branding and employer branding. Within the function employee branding, two activities have been identified to be important to work with in order to reach the overall employee branding goal: to get employees to "live the brand". Drake et al. (2005) suggest that in order to make the employees feel as part of the organisation the company must keep employees updated on values, vision, goals, results, etc. Furthermore, fostering employee involvement in building the brand is suggested to be an important activity within employee branding by Harris and de Chernatony (2001) and Juntunen et al. (2010).

The activities identified within the branding function employee branding are listed in Figure 10.

**Figure 10. Activities identified within the branding function Employee Branding.**

Within the function employer branding, a number of activities have been identified to be important to work with in order to secure competence and talent in a long-term perspective. Heding et al. (2008) argue the importance of communicating that the company is an attractive employer. Also, when considering candidates for vacant positions it is important to evaluate potential employees’ values congruence with the brand’s values (Chernatony, 1999). Finally, Guarino (2014) suggests that employing young people as
project managers brings several benefits, whereupon it is considered an important employer branding activity.

The activities identified within the branding function employer branding are listed in Figure 11.

![Figure 11. Activities identified within the branding function Employer Branding.](image)

### 2.6 Brand communication

"Brands can only exist if they communicate. As a matter of fact, they grow obsolete if they remain silent or unused for too long." (Kapferer, 2008, p. 187)

Harris and de Chernatony (2001) argue that companies must devote time and resources to both external and internal brand communication in order to ensure that the brand is being communicated properly. Internal branding aspects such as core values and corporate culture must be established and communicated to the employees in order to increase the success of the external brand communication (Drake et al, 2005). External marketing communications can be used for building brand equity and developing strong brands (Keller, 2009), which can be used as weapons against competitors in the battle for customers.

A company's marketing communications mix – or promotion mix – is a mix of tools through which the company pursue its advertising and marketing objectives (Kotler et al., 1999). Kotler et al. (1999) argue that the entire marketing mix and its respective factors (product, price, place and promotion, and for services sometimes also people, process and physical environment) all communicate something to consumers. There is therefore necessary to coordinate all activities within the marketing mix, even though the promotion mix is the primary communication activity, in order to achieve the greatest possible impact (Kotler et al, 1999). All of these activities will in turn have to be design in accordance with the brand position that the firm wants to communicate.

According to Keller (2009), marketing communications help create intense, active loyalty relationships as well as contribute to the brand equity and drive sales. Marketing communications activities can create brand awareness, build brand image, elicit positive judgements or feelings about the brand, and facilitate a stronger connection between shareholders and the brand (Keller, 2009). Kotler et al. (1999) argue that instead of focusing on overcoming immediate awareness, image or preference problems, which is a short-term and costly communication approach, companies should rather take on a more long-term view of marketing communications. The authors suggest an approach that is more individually designed for specific segments or individual target audiences. The communication development process suggested by Kotler et al. (1999) is illustrated in
The process described by Kotler et al. (1999) primarily concerns B2C marketing communication, but the development process has been supplemented with discussions regarding the applicability in a B2B context.

**Figure 12. Communication development process (Kotler et al., 1999, p. 759, own adaption).**

**Identify the target audience**

As Figure 12 suggests, the process of developing effective communication starts with identifying the target audience. This audience could for instance be potential buyers or current customers. It could be individuals, groups, the general public, etc. (Kotler et al., 1999).

B2B marketing messages usually targets a narrower group of customers and is more personalised, compared to B2C messages (Ryan and Silvanto, 2013).

**Determine the communication objectives**

After identifying the target audience, Kotler et al. (1999) suggest that it needs to be determined at what stage in the buyer-readiness stages they are and to what stage they need to be moved. The authors suggest that the customer needs to be moved towards a purchase through several steps: Awareness, Knowledge, Liking, Preference, Conviction and finally purchase.

The first stage regards the level of awareness that the target audience have of the brand, organization or product. Depending on the level of awareness, the message should be designed differently: if the target audience for example have never heard of the company the message must aim to build awareness, perhaps by repeating the company name in order to achieve name recognition. (Kotler et al., 1999)

At the second stage, the target audience are somewhat aware of the existence of the brand, and the aim for the company is now to inform potential buyers of the features and benefits. When the target audience has knowledge of the company or product/service in question,
the third stage calls for the need to develop favourable feelings in the target audience's minds. If the target audience for some reason looks unfavourably on the company or product/service it is important to find out why in order to develop a message that addresses these issues in order to change the audience’s feelings. (Kotler et al., 1999)

The fourth stage simply implies that the target audience like the company or product but not prefer it compared to competitors. The message in this case must promote the quality, value and other benefits the company or product brings the customer. In order to know what benefits in particular to promote to the target audience, it may be necessary to investigate which areas of the offering that is not as good as competing companies or products and find a way to make up for these weaknesses. (Kotler et al., 1999)

At the fifth stage, the target audience prefers the company or product compared to others, but has not yet developed a conviction about buying it. The firm must now try to build the conviction that its company or product is the best one for the potential buyer. (Kotler et al., 1999)

The sixth and final stage is getting the customer to make a purchase. The buyers are at this stage convinced but are for various reasons waiting with the actual purchase. The message at this stage needs to persuade the buyers to make the purchase by for example offering special prices. (Kotler et al., 1999)

Kotler et al. (1999) argue that this typical learn-feel-do process is appropriate when the target audience has high involvement with a product or service category and perceives brands in that category to be highly differentiated, which can be considered the case for management consulting services.

Similar to the process described above, Turner (1966) suggests that firms providing professional services try to identify the customer's needs by examining the customer's situation in order to be able and design an effective marketing message. The prospective target audience might not be aware of their needs and how they would benefit from the service in question. The firm's objective then is to get the prospective customers to realize that they would benefit from the service. When the prospective customer has identified its needs, the question of where such professional services shall be obtained is raised. The supplying firm must then try and steer the customer towards its own service. In this stage, image has an effect on the customer's decision. (Turner, 1966)

**Design a message**

When the communication objective for the target audience has been determined, the message needs to be designed. Juntunen et al. (2010) argue that companies must ensure that all communication is coherent and that the corporate identity is being projected consistently to internal and external stakeholders. To increase the chances of the message attracting the attention of the target audience, Kotler et al. (1999) stresses the need for the message to communicate new information about the product or brand since buyers pay more attention to new messages. Furthermore, the message must also have a practical value to the target audience and not put too much focus on benefits that does not interest or add value to the audience in question (Kotler et al., 1999). Turner (1966) points out that professional services firms such as management consulting firms must design marketing messages that describes the service or product's ability to satisfy the customers' needs.
Turner (1966) especially points out that most professional service firms with a technical background tend to think of their offered services as a set of particular knowledge, expertise, and experience. This leads, according to the author, to professionals at the supplying firm describing services in terms of their own capabilities rather than in terms of the customer’s needs.

Anderson and Naurus (1998) mention that it is vital to point out the value added to the customer. The authors suggest the use of value case histories, which is a documentation of the cost savings or added value that a previous customer has received. This will help illustrate the financial benefit of the offering to potential customers. Ryan and Silvanto (2013) argue that in B2B marketing, the target is usually a narrow niche of customers. The message must therefore be designed to provide highly attentive and personalised information regarding offered services etc. (Ryan and Silvanto, 2013).

Choose how to deliver the message

When choosing how to deliver the message, there are two major types of communication channels: personal and non-personal. Non-personal communication channels include media such as newspapers, television, atmosphere (office design for example) and events (Kotler et al., 1999). Personal communication is direct communication between two or more people and includes activities such as sales visits, e-mail conversation, word-of-mouth, etc. Kotler et al. (1999) give some examples of how to increase the chances of having personal communication channels promote the firm:

- Targeting and selling to well-known people or companies, which in turn may influence other potential buyers,
- Using influential people in advertisements or developing advertising that has high conversation value,
- Managing word-of-mouth communications by finding out what customers say to others by taking actions to satisfy customers, correct problems and help customers seek information about the firm.

Kotler and Armstrong (2013) list several promotion types that constitute the B2C marketing communications mix (advertising, sales promotion, events, public relations, direct marketing, interactive marketing, word-of-mouth, and personal selling), and Keller (2009) argues that a spread in the marketing communications that mix several promotion types helps enhance the message and helps build the brand equity. For professional service firms however, Turner (1966) argues that mass media advertising is generally not suitable since the firms do not have a mass market. Instead, Turner (1966) suggests more selective advertising and sales promotion methods to be used to project a firm’s image to targeted audiences. Also, Lynch and Chernatony (2004) mention typical media for communicating brands in a B2B setting to be personal selling, advertising, trade shows, direct marketing, word-of-mouth, and the Internet. Furthermore, Wheeler (2013) presents an illustration of the many brand touchpoints that companies can use in order to communicate their brand (Figure 13).
The results of a market survey conducted by Forrester Research and further discussed in a report by social marketing technology company Zuberance (2010) indicate that word-of-mouth is the top influencer of B2B purchase decisions. 84% of the survey’s respondents said that they are influenced by word-of-mouth recommendations. The results from the survey are illustrated in Figure 14. Word-of-mouth has always been a source of credible information and affects the customers’ loyalty to the brand (Davis, 2010).

![What influences B2B Purchase Decisions](image)

**Figure 14. What influences B2B Purchase Decisions (Zuberance, 2010, own adaption).**
Lovett et al. (2013) argue that word-of-mouth on brands is spread as a result of social, emotional and functional drivers. It is therefore important to ensure that the customers are satisfied with the brand and that they easily can get their hands on information regarding the brand and the services offered in order to facilitate positive word-of-mouth. Libai et al. (2013) suggest that companies often try to create positive word-of-mouth by putting together a group of customers and let them try the product or service in order for them to be able to spread positive reviews about it. There are a few important things to consider when using these seeding programs however. The process of choosing the people for the group is specifically important. Furthermore, other critical factors are the content, network structure, and behavioural incentives. Appropriate people profiles for the group might be opinion leaders or influencers, people who are connected to many others, experts, persuaders, or people who experience an advantage due to a network position that enhances their influence in the social system. (Libai et al., 2013)

Regarding interactive marketing, i.e. on-line marketing activities, Keller (2009) acknowledges the many advantages (such as less expensive than traditional advertising media, the ability to send tailored messages to different segments by reflecting their interests and behaviours, easily traceable effects, etc.) but at the same time raises the issues and disadvantages that come with it. Mainly, the advertising company looses control over what consumers will do with the message in terms of where it will be displayed and what information in the message will be ignored (Keller, 2009). Ozer (2009) discusses the benefits of developing a promotional video that is easily accessible, the author specifically suggests publishing a video on the company's website. Ozer (2009) suggests that the video should aim to spark interest and provide the viewer with limited scope information and a conclusion that tells people what to do next (for example website address or specific section on company website etc.).

Furusten (2013) stresses that it is important for management consulting firms to maintain a close relationship with previous clients and to be available if assignment opportunities presents itself. It might therefore be of interest for companies to provide previous, current and prospective clients with several channels of communication with the firm. While current clients might feel more comfortable contacting the firm directly via telephone, it might be a good idea to provide more options for prospective clients or jobseekers such as social media (for example LinkedIn and Facebook). Social networking sites have become important B2B branding tools that help companies to attract customers and cultivate customer relationships (Michaelidou et al., 2011). Keller (2009) argues that the use of this form of interactive marketing plays a significant role in building the brand. According to Schlinke and Crain (2013), Facebook is a tool that can be used for defining the brand and connect more deeply on a personal level with current, previous and prospective clients. The author also highlights the importance of continuously monitor and improve the content of the social network profile. To gain an increased level of trust it is suggested to publish photos of people (Schlinke and Crain, 2013). Posted questions and comments need to be addressed as soon as possible, and the firm should put up updates and new material on a regular basis (Schlinke and Crain, 2013). Failure to comply with this may result in damaging the brand, whereupon it is important for firms to make sure that they are willing to invest the necessary resources before entering a new social media platform (Schlinke and Crain, 2013).
Collect feedback

The firm sending the message should also evaluate its effect on the target audience. It is of interest to ask the members of the target audience in order to research how they felt about the message, how many times they saw it, how their attitudes towards the product, service and company have changed, how many people bought something as a result of the message, how many talked to others about it, how many visited the website for further information, etc. The data gathered then needs to be analysed in order for the sender to be able to draw conclusions about the message’s ability to achieve its goal (for example raise awareness). (Kotler et al., 1999)

It is evident that brand communication is an important function of branding. A set of activities has been defined as important for succeeding with the branding efforts within this function. According to Kotler et al. (1999), the communication development process consists of five major steps. These steps are considered to be the key activities necessary to work with in order to be successful with the brand communication. The activities are listed in Figure 15.

![Figure 15. Activities identified within the branding function Brand Communication.](image)

2.7 Brand reputation and image

Kuhn et al. (2008) argues that reputation is an important aspect of B2B branding. The authors suggest that buying behaviour is positively influenced by a strong brand image and reputation. Furthermore, a strong image and reputation is said to enhance differentiation (Kuhn et al., 2008). Ryan and Silvanto (2013) mean that reputation plays an important role in B2B purchase decision-making. Some authors go as far as stating that brand image and brand reputation are key determinants of consumers’ brand choice (Heding et al., 2008). Whereas brand image is considered short-term, brand reputation is considered a more long-term evaluation of brand identity and brand actions (Heding et al., 2008; Chernatony, 1999). Brand image is not to be confused with brand identity: brand image is on the receiver’s side and how the brand is perceived, while brand identity is on the sender’s side and how the firm wants the brand to be perceived (Kapferer, 2008).

Kuhn et al. (2008) suggest that brand reputation is more important than price in a B2B context. Mudambi (2002) mentions that customers in a B2B setting have more emphasis on risk-reduction than on expressive benefits and that in order to decrease risk and uncertainty, customers can choose suppliers with leading brands and strong corporate brand reputation.
In order to maintain a good brand reputation it is important to be aware of, and continuously work on, the six factors that Fombrun et al. (2000) have concluded that global reputation is based on:

- Emotional appeal (admiration, trust and respect)
- Products and services (quality, value for money and innovative)
- Vision and leadership
- Workplace environment (well-managed, attractive workplace and talented employees)
- Social and environmental responsibility
- Financial performance (strong record of profitability, low risk investment, outperforms competitors and strong prospects for future growth)

In order to build and maintain a strong brand reputation, it is thus important to pay attention to all the above listed factors. Some of them are more easily measureable than others while some require more thorough analysis. It is also essential to ensure that the firm's successes within each of these six sectors (such as success stories and corporate social responsibility activities etc.) are communicated to stakeholders in one way or another. Furthermore, a global B2B brand tends to inspire status, prestige and images of quality among customers (Ryan and Silvanto, 2013). Heding et al. (2008) argue that a firm can enhance its reputation by communicating itself, but that it is more effective when communicated by an independent third party.

It is evident that brand reputation and image play an important role in the branding process. Whereas several authors (e.g. Kuhn et al., 2008; Ryan and Silvanto, 2013; Heding et al, 2008 and Mudambi, 2002) argue the importance of brand reputation and image, Fombrun et al. (2000) conclude that there are six major factors that form the basis for global reputation. Working with aspects that affect these six factors has therefore been considered vital for improving brand reputation and image, whereupon six activities have been defined based on Fombrun et al.'s (2000) factors. These activities might be considered a bit broader than other identified branding activities in the other branding functions. However, although the defined six activities may include a variety of concrete efforts they still constitute the main activities affecting the brand reputation. Much of the focus is on communicating the work within these six activities. The activities defined within the function are listed in Figure 16.

Figure 16. Brand reputation and image summary.
2.8 Analysis model

The reference frame has been structured according to the five building blocks, or functions, of branding identified in Chapter 2.1. However, after more in-depth literature reviews the composition of building blocks has been adjusted. The function employee involvement has been divided into two different functions. The reason for this re-definition of the branding concept is that for a B2B company, and a management consulting firm no less, employees have been proven to play a bigger role than expected in the earlier break down of the branding concept. In total, six functions have been identified as building blocks of branding regarding SMEs in a B2B environment.

Brand identity has been argued to have an important impact on a company's branding success (e.g. Bickerton, 2000; Wallström et al., 2008 and Heding et al, 2008). It can be viewed as a prerequisite for successful branding (Juntunen et al., 2010) and entails definition and establishment of a brand vision, brand culture, brand values, and recognisable signs.

Establishing a brand positioning has been argued to be an important part of branding (e.g. Juntunen et al., 2010 and Jalkala and Keränen, 2014) that gives competitive advantages (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2007). Studied theories suggest that important activities within this branding function are developing a brand position statement (Wallström et al., 2008), conducting competitor analyses (Jalkala and Keränen, 2014), having an appropriate price level (Kowalkowski and Kindström, 2012 and DelVecchio and Puligadda, 2012), developing a number of key messages (Levi, 2007), and maintaining a congruence between products and services offered under the brand name (Kapferer, 2008).

Employee branding has been argued to be an important branding function and consists of activities that aim to get employees to identify with company culture and values, or "live the brand", in order for them to represent the brand as intended (Heding et al., 2008). The activities aim to establish commitment and ensure involvement from employees. Activities include: keeping employees updated on values, goals, vision and results (Drake et al., 2005), and foster employee involvement in building the brand. The function is important since employees are in direct contact with customers and therefore affecting many branding aspects, such as image, positioning, and overall perception of the brand (Jalkala and Keränen, 2014 and Leek and Christodoulides, 2012).

Working with employer branding activities has been argued to be an important branding function in order to secure a long-term need for competence, which is consider crucial for a competence and knowledge intensive company such as a management consulting firm. The function's importance is further validated by the fact that employees play an important role in building the brand. The employer branding function entails the activities communicating that the company is an attractive employer (Heding et al, 2008), evaluate potential employees' values congruence with the brand's values (Chernatony, 1999), and securing young talents (Guarino, 2014).

Another important branding function is brand communication (e.g. Kapferer, 2008; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001 and Keller, 2009). The function refers to the activities related to the external communication of the brand and is centred on the company's marketing communications mix, which helps create loyalty relationships, brand equity, brand

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awareness, brand image, and increased sales (Keller, 2009). Identified activities within the function are identifying the target audience, determining the communication objectives, designing a message, choosing how to deliver the message, and collecting feedback (Kotler et al., 1999).

*Brand reputation and image* are important aspects of branding (Kuhn et al., 2008), especially for B2B companies (Mudambi, 2002 and Kuhn et al., 2008). A strong brand reputation and image has been argued to positively affect the business and it is therefore important to build and maintain a strong brand reputation and image. Based on factors that reputation and image is based upon, activities within this function are establishing a strong emotional appeal, offer the right products and services (in terms of quality, innovation, and value for money), establish industry vision and leadership, create an attractive workplace environment, take social and environmental responsibility, and exhibit a strong financial performance (Fombrun et al., 2000). All of these defined activities include the communication of the achievements within each activity to the stakeholders.

The six functions listed above all affect how well an SME within a niched management consulting industry succeed in its branding efforts according to the theoretical reference frame. Since successful branding leads to a strong brand that in turn has been argued to increase sales, it is of interest to analyse how well the case company works regarding these six branding functions in order to identify activities that are missing or can be improved. Therefore, an analysis model has been developed. The model aims to describe how the theories presented in the theoretical reference frame will be synthesised and used for analysing the empirical data describing the current situation at the case company. In order to fulfil the purpose of evaluating how the branding activities can be improved at the case company, a *gap analysis* is needed. This means that the analysis must compare how the case company today works with the activities identified in the theoretical framework in order to determine if there is any room for improvement or not (i.e. identify potential gaps between the theories and the case company’s efforts). The analysis model will furthermore lead to a set of questions clarifying the precise approach of the investigation, which in turn will help structure the gathering of empirical data and the structure of the analysis chapter. The analysis model is illustrated in Figure 17.
Figure 17. Analysis model.

- **Theoretical framework**
  - **Brand identity**
    - Establish a brand vision
    - Establish a brand culture
    - Establish brand values
    - Give the brand recognisable signs
  - **Brand positioning**
    - Develop a brand position statement
    - Conduct competitor analyses
    - Apply an appropriate price level
    - Develop key messages
    - Maintain congruence between products and services
  - **Employee branding**
    - Keeping employees updated on values, vision, goals, results, etc.
    - Foster employee involvement in building the brand
  - **Employer branding**
    - Communicate that the company is an attractive employer
    - Evaluate potential employees’ values congruence with the brand’s values
    - Secure young talents
  - **Brand communication**
    - Identify the target audience
    - Determine the communication objectives
    - Design a message
    - Choose how to deliver the message
    - Collect feedback
  - **Brand reputation and image**
    - Create an emotional appeal
    - Offer the right products and services
    - Establish vision and leadership
    - Create an attractive workplace environment
    - Take social and environmental responsibility
    - Exhibit strong financial performance

- **Empirical data**

- **Gap analysis**

- **Greenlight**

- **Recommendations for improvements**
2.9 Precise investigation approach

Based on the constructed analysis model, a set of precise research questions has been formulated. Each branding function results in one question and together the questions aim to provide the researcher with a more precise research issue and investigation approach to gather and structure empirical data and conduct the analysis. The questions therefore serve as an overall basis for the development of interview guides as well as the structure for the chapter Empirical data and Analysis.

The branding function brand identity consists of the activities establishment of a brand vision, brand culture, brand values, and giving the brand recognisable signs. In order to find out if there is any room for improvement at the case company within this branding function, the following question must be answered:

➤ How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function brand identity?

The branding function brand positioning consists of the activities developing a brand position statement, conduct competitor analyses, apply an appropriate price level, develop key messages, and maintaining congruence between products and services. In order to find out if there is any room for improvement at the case company within this branding function, the following question must be answered:

➤ How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function brand positioning?

The branding function employee branding consists of the activities keeping employees updated on values, vision, goals, results, etc., and fostering employee involvement in building the brand. In order to find out if there is any room for improvement at the case company within this branding function, the following question must be answered:

➤ How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function employee branding?

The branding function employer branding consists of the activities communicating that the company is an attractive employer, evaluating potential employees’ values congruence with the brand’s values, and securing young talents. In order to find out if there is any room for improvement at the case company within this branding function, the following question must be answered:

➤ How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function employer branding?
The branding function *brand communication* consists of the activities identifying the target audience, determining the communication objectives, designing a message, choosing how to deliver the message, and collecting feedback. In order to find out if there is any room for improvement at the case company within this branding function, the following question must be answered:

> How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function *brand communication*?

The branding function *brand reputation and image* consists of the activities creating an emotional appeal, offering the right products and services, establishing vision and leadership, creating an attractive workplace environment, taking social and environmental responsibility, and exhibiting strong financial performance. In order to find out if there is any room for improvement at the case company within this branding function, the following question must be answered:

> How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function *brand reputation and image*?
In this chapter, the methodology used for carrying out the study will be presented. The chapter aims to provide the reader with an understanding of how theoretical and empirical data have been collected and analysed, as well as how the report have been structured. The chapter also offers a discussion about the validity, reliability and objectivity of the study, and ends with listing the delimitations that have affected the study.

3.1 Report structure

The report has been structured on the basis of a slightly modified version of Lekvall and Wahlbin’s (2001) U-model (see Figure 18), which describes how the different components of the report are related to each other. The method enables the researcher to make clear connections between the various parts of the study from the start.

The study began with a series of short, unstructured interviews via Skype in order to identify the problem area at the case company, Greenlight. Following the initial problem identification, the situation was analysed more thoroughly with on-site semi-structured interviews at Greenlight headquarters in Madrid and literature studies within the area. The purpose was determined through discussions with both the project sponsor at Greenlight and the supervisor at the university. This led to the final problem discussion and purpose of the study, which in turn has determined the theories that constitute the theoretical

Figure 18. The U-model (Lekvall and Wahlbin, 2001, own adaption).
framework. After comprehensive literature studies, an analysis model was constructed which illustrated how the theoretical findings was going to be utilised together with the empirical findings in order to conduct an analysis that would help fulfil the purpose. Based on the theoretical framework and the analysis model, several precise research questions were formulated in order to clarify what empirical data was needed to conduct the analysis. Primary and secondary empirical data was then collected and processed. The collection methods are further discussed later on in this chapter (3.3). The empirical findings were then analysed according to the analysis model in order to identify potential branding activities that could be improved at the case company. A more comprehensive description of the analytical process is provided later on in this chapter (3.4). Upon completion of the analysis, conclusions could be drawn. Finally, recommendations on how the case company can improve their branding efforts were given.

3.2 Research characteristics

3.2.1 An explanatory orientation

Lekvall and Wahlbin (2001) define four different orientations of research studies in terms of the goal and level of ambition when creating knowledge. These different orientations are listed and described in Table 1. Studies of each level of ambition require knowledge of the earlier levels (Lekvall and Wahlbin, 2001).

Table 1. Research orientation and goals (Lekvall and Wahlbin, 2001, pp. 196-198, own adaption).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Goal of study</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>To determine</td>
<td>When the knowledge about the research subject is very limited it might be necessary to conduct a study to determine the problem and formulate a problem or issue for further research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>To describe</td>
<td>Studies of descriptive orientation aim to identify and map facts, and describe how it is without explaining why it is like that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanatory</td>
<td>To explain</td>
<td>Studies of explanatory orientation aim to map and explain causal links.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictive</td>
<td>To forecast</td>
<td>Studies of predictive orientation aim to forecast or predict something in the future.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher possesses sufficient knowledge within the studied subject in order to conduct a problem discussion and narrow down the purpose of the study, hence the study is not of an exploratory orientation. Furthermore, the researcher aims to explain how companies in a certain situation should work with branding in order to achieve company growth, rather than simply identify and describe contributing factors etc. Therefore, this study is considered being of an explanatory orientation.
3.2.2 A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

For this thesis, a qualitative approach has been used. This approach was chosen since the author of this thesis found it relevant in order to find the best answers to the posed purpose of the study. Qualitative research entails observations and/or interviews in natural setting (Jackson, 2014), which felt appropriate for this study. Furthermore, according to Jackson (2014), qualitative studies aim to interpret phenomena that occur in natural settings, and where the researcher does not quantify the findings. Instead, data is analysed without the use of statistics (Jackson, 2014).

3.2.3 A CASE STUDY METHOD

The research method for this study has been the case study method, which according to Jackson (2014) is one of the oldest qualitative research methods. A case study method normally means that the researcher focuses on one, or in some cases two or three, research object (Bhattacharyya, 2006). According to Lekvall and Wahlbin (2001), research with a case study method is usually combined with an analysis of qualitative character. For this thesis, the research has been limited to one organization: Greenlight. This method was found appropriate in order to find the necessary data to fulfil the purpose derived from the problem discussion. Furthermore, Bhattacharyya (2006) mentions that a case study approach requires an in-depth analysis and that the approach is characterized by intensively focusing on some limited identified areas. The theoretical framework and analysis model has helped narrowing down the problem identified in the problem discussion into a limited number of specified areas, which is in accordance with Bhattacharyya's (2006) approach for case study methods. Furthermore, Lekvall and Wahlbin (2001) suggest that a case study method is suitable for studies of explanatory orientation, such as this study.

3.3 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY DATA FORM THE BASIS FOR ANALYSIS

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through interviews, a questionnaire and observations, and secondary data consist of findings from literature reviews of scientific articles, internet-based information and books.

Throughout the study, guidance and recommendations regarding literature, analytical approach and more have been received from a supervisor/tutor at the university. The supervisor is a docent in industrial marketing and has a deep knowledge within the studied area. The different sources of information for primary data used for this thesis are listed in Table 2. Secondary data sources were mainly found through Linköping University’s library’s online portal.
Table 2. Sources of information for primary data collection and their respective characteristics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Comment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview: Rickard Romander, CEO and founder</td>
<td>3 interviews</td>
<td>Interview guide in Appendix 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview: John Lindberg, Managing Director UK</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td>Interview guide in Appendix 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview: Mats Malmström, Managing Director Americas</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td>Interview guide in Appendix 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview: Alfonso Mora, Responsible for marketing</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td>Interview guide in Appendix 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire/Survey: all employees</td>
<td>19 respondents</td>
<td>Questionnaire in Appendix 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews: Current customers</td>
<td>6 customers, 1 interview each</td>
<td>Interview guide in Appendix 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations: Greenlight HQ, Madrid</td>
<td>20 January 2014 to 23 May 2014</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.1 Interviews and Observations

Primary data were collected through interviews with employees at the case company, Greenlight, as well as from a number of Greenlight’s customers. One-on-one interviews have been conducted with key personnel from upper management from the local offices of Greenlight, as well as with a number of current clients. The client interviews aim to provide a more balanced picture of the situation for Greenlight and to minimize the risk of biased information acquired through interviews with Greenlight employees. The interviewed customers represent customer from all of Greenlight’s service segments. The customers were guaranteed anonymity in the thesis in order to ensure more honest responses.

Some of the interviews with upper management were held via Skype since the local managing directors are placed in various countries around the world. Since the researcher spent the entire period of writing the thesis on site at Greenlight’s headquarters in Madrid, Spain, primary data was also collected daily on a more informal basis both through observations and informal interviews. However, to ensure a certain level of structure to the research, 6 semi-structured interviews were held with key personnel. Semi-structured interviews entail a pre-formulated interview guide, but the answers are open-minded and can be expanded by the interviewer or interviewee (Schensul et al., 1999). During the interviews, the questions have been a mix of simple direct questions, primarily in order to
confirm information the researcher had acquired elsewhere, as well as open questions that enabled the interviewees to answer more freely without being led to certain answers by the interviewer. Not asking leading questions will minimize the risk of getting answers that the interviewer wants, such as answers that will validate theories or hypothesis of the interviewer (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

When the interview questions were formulated, guidelines stipulated by Bryman and Bell (2011) were considered. The authors stipulate that interview questions should not be too long and not include complicated or technical terms that the interviewee may not be all that familiar with. If these guidelines are not followed, the respondents may have trouble understanding the questions (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Furthermore, it is suggested to avoid questions that are actually asking two questions (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In most cases, interviews were recorded to enable the researcher to revisit the interviews in order to minimize the risk of misinterpretation of information. The interviewees were of course asked for permission before the interviews were recorded. The recorded interviews were then transcribed to ensure that all collected data was easily accessible.

### 3.3.2 Questionnaire

A survey/questionnaire has been conducted with employees at Greenlight as respondents. The survey was sent out to all employees and out of those, 19 people answered the survey. The survey consists of questions of a more open and qualitative character. For the questionnaire, the respondents were anonymous in order to increase the chance of getting more honest answers and allow respondents to, if they wanted to, criticize their employer without feeling afraid of being reprimanded. The majority of the questions were based on the theoretical framework and the precise research questions, however some questions were added by upper management at Greenlight with the purpose of acquiring specific innovation-related information. The questionnaire did not aim to provide data for a statistical analysis but rather provide the researcher with the employees' opinions and thoughts in a number of areas. Interview guides and employee questionnaires are presented in appendix 1-5.

### 3.3.3 Case description

Based on the collected empirical data, a case description was compiled (presented in chapter 4). Only information relevant for conducting the analysis was presented. The precise research questions and analysis model stipulated what empirical information was needed for the analysis. Information from interviews with different persons was compared to identify any irregularities where the interviewees had different opinions. In such events, all angles were considered and presented. In the chapter presenting the case description, the empirical findings have been presented to the reader without direct references except for where interviewees had different or specific views on an aspect.
3.4 Analytical Process

The collected data has been analysed with the theories presented in the theoretical framework in accordance with the analysis model. A gap analysis has been conducted, comparing the branding activities identified in the theoretical framework with the efforts of the case company, Greenlight, regarding each of these activities. Depending on how big the gaps were considered to be, each activity was given a check mark, or tick, in one of the following colours: green, orange or red (See Figure 19). A green check mark indicates that the case company was considered to be performing well within an activity and in accordance with the studied theories. An orange check mark indicates that the case company was considered to partly work with an activity but showed some room for improvement when comparing the case company's efforts with the studied theories. Finally, a red check mark indicates that the case company was considered to perform poorly within an activity and significantly deviated from the activity-related efforts stipulated by the studied theories. The analysis is concluded with a summary of how the case company performed within each and every branding activity defined in the theoretical framework and analysis model. The case company's efforts within each overall branding function was also discussed and compared.

![Check marks]

Figure 19. Colour-coded check marks were used to denote the degree of which room for improvement was identified within each activity.

During the analysis phase of the study, additional interviews were conducted if there was any need for clarification or follow-up questions. The analysis was made on a qualitative basis, meaning that the results from interviews were not coded and quantified. Furthermore, the analysis was done with a deductive approach where a theoretical framework was used to analyse collected data in order to reach specific conclusions (Saunders et al., 2009). However, the analysis has incorporated some elements of an inductive approach, such as collecting data and exploring which issues to follow up and concentrate on (Saunders et al., 2009). The data collection revealed quite early on what areas needed further investigation.

The analysis led to conclusions and concrete recommendations for the case company, Greenlight. As stipulated in the problem discussion and purpose of this thesis, the recommendations intend to provide means of action that will help Greenlight improve its brand management efforts in order to increase revenues by attracting new business. While the recommendations are primarily meant for Greenlight, it is not excluded that they will be helpful for other companies in similar situations.
3.5 Method criticism

The following sub-chapters aim to provide the reader with a discussion about the validity, reliability and objectivity of the study. These areas all affect the credibility and quality of the study (Yin, 2009) and are important to take into consideration in order to ensure a higher quality of the study. In general, the case study approach and the fact that only one company was being closely studied in this study means that the analysis is based on the conditions of one company. This understandably means that the conclusions and recommendations are not applicable to all companies, not even all companies in the same industry, of the same size, etc. However, it is the belief of the author of this thesis that the recommendations still are relevant for a number of companies in similar situations. Different aspects of the recommendations might be applied in various companies.

3.5.1 Validity

The validity of a study is whether or not it measures what it is intended to measure or not (Lekvall and Wahlbin, 2001). Lekvall and Wahlbin (2001) argue that the researcher can take some measures in order to achieve a higher level of validity. It is suggested that a number of insightful persons verify the interview questions (Lekvall and Wahlbin, 2001). The interview guides associated with this study have been screened by the university supervisor, who has deep knowledge within the studied area, as well as by a university classmate. This measure is a step to improve the face validity of the study, and this method is often quite effective (Lekvall and Wahlbin, 2001). Furthermore, Cohen et al. (2013) suggest that in order to ensure a higher validity the researcher should use a method called triangulation, which means that two or more methods of data collection are being used. For this study, collected data comes from both primary and secondary sources. Interviews have been held with personnel at the studied case company as well as with its customers. Data has also been acquired through extensive literature studies, Internet research, and discussions with a professional in the studied area (the university supervisor).

High content validity is achieved by making sure to measure all aspects of a notion, e.g. if the aim is to measure brand image the notion itself must be correctly decomposed and questions regarding the different aspects of brand image must be asked (Lekvall and Wahlbin, 2001). The theoretical framework in this thesis has enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of the studied concepts and notions in order to ensure that they are correctly decomposed to form appropriate questions. This approach has hopefully resulted in a high content validity.

Due to the time restriction, a questionnaire had to be used instead of one-on-one interviews to get the opinions from all employees. Using a questionnaire may have meant that some information did not get collected since there were no possibility for follow-up questions and clarifications. Also, there is a risk that respondents have misinterpreted questions. Since the questionnaires were anonymous there were no possibility to follow-up on the answers with specific respondents. To minimize these risks, a lot of time was put into formulating the questions and the questions were screened by a third-party before being distributed to the Greenlight employees.
The interviewed current clients were chosen by the case company, which could have affected the validity of the study if only clients who would give a positive description of the case company were chosen.

### 3.5.2 Reliability

The *reliability* of a study refers to by how much it is affected by chance or coincidences, i.e. how much will the results vary if it were to be conducted again (Lekvall and Wahlbin, 2001). Low reliability can be caused by a lot of factors including, according to Lekvall and Wahlbin (2001), changing conditions of the interviewee such as stress and motivation, the environment for the interview, the manner in which the interviewer asks questions, and to what extent the interviewees are making separate interpretations of a question. To help reduce the risk of respondents feeling stressed, the interviewees were allowed to choose the time for the interviews. Also, if the interview took longer than expected, the rest of the interview was rescheduled for another time. The supervisor at the case company was also asked to read through the chapter *Empirical data* over the course of a couple of days in order to ensure that the information had been correctly understood and minimize the risk of misinterpretations and the potential stress factor of the interviewees. This process helped validate the case description.

Using a case study method increases the risk of getting subjective results (Jackson, 2014). In order to try and minimize the risk of generating subjective interpretations of the information gathered via interviews before the analysis stage, the interviews were recorded so that the researcher could go back and listen to the interviews at any time. Also, to increase the reliability of information from interviews, both internal and external, several employees and customers were interviewed.

### 3.5.3 Objectivity

The objectivity of a study refers to the observer's ability to observe a true picture of a phenomenon without being affected by personal opinions (Kumar, 2002). The researcher spent the entire time writing this thesis at the case company's headquarters, integrating with management and lower-level employees. This might have resulted in affecting the objectivity of the researcher. As an attempt to reduce the risk of subjectivity, the researcher had this risk in mind during the study in order to knowingly try and look at the data more objectively. The researcher's ability to determine the relevance of gathered data (both empirical as well as theoretical) might have affected the credibility and outcome of the study. Since only one researcher conducted the study, the risk of subjectivity is increased. However, throughout the study the researcher has had a close collaboration with a colleague as an attempt at reducing objectivity.
4 Empirical data

In this chapter, the reader is presented with the data that was collected during the field study. The data aims to provide an understanding of how the case company, Greenlight, is working with the different functions of branding and their respective activities identified in the literature reviews and synthesized in the analysis model. The empirical data mostly derives from interviews with Greenlight employees, an employee survey conducted among Greenlight personnel and from interviews with a number of Greenlight’s customers. The empirical findings are structured according to the six defined branding functions and presented to the reader in the form of a case description. A discussion about how the interviews were conducted, their validity and who the interviewees were is conducted in chapter 3.

4.1 Brand identity

The vision for the Greenlight brand is to become recognized as an international, leading, agile and innovative Project Management company. According to CEO Rickard Romander (2014), the brand aims to fulfil the customers’ needs to lower their costs by increasing efficiency and reducing mistakes. On the company website, the mission is stated to be to help the clients to achieve outstanding business results through great project performance – realized by the best project management, enabled by an excellent project culture.

The idea is that brand and corporate culture at Greenlight should reflect the brand values and vision. However, the company’s CEO admits that the culture could probably be further refined and better communicated to employees.

There are three established common values at Greenlight: Professionalism, Perseverance and Having fun. A large poster with these values is clearly visible to employees and customers that walk through the entrance at Greenlight’s headquarters in Madrid. The intention is for the brand to stand not only for values such as quality and professionalism, but also a more modern, fresh and fun perspective on project management.

The Greenlight brand has some recognisable visual signs. The logo, website, interior design at the office, brochures etc. are all in the same green colour theme. According to Romander (2014), the brand also has a more intangible recognisable sign as being fresco (the Spanish word for fresh). Especially Spanish customers have come to recognise Greenlight as fresh, innovative, and fun. In a way, Greenlight exports a Swedish management style, which often is more dynamic and less hierarchic.

4.2 Brand positioning

Since the beginning and until present day, Greenlight has deliberately positioned themselves as experts on project management, and focused on this niche market. This has been communicated to customers in many ways; one of the foremost is that this niche has been incorporated in the company’s logo (illustrated in Figure 20).
There is no official formulated brand position statement for the brand, but CEO and founder Rickard Romander (2014) wants the Greenlight brand to stand for competence, quality, expertise and innovation within project management. He wants the brand to be perceived as creative and hands-on rather than theoretical, and as a brand that offers more value for money than other consultancies do within project management. Local branch managers Lindberg (2014) and Malmström (2014) also want the Greenlight brand to be seen as a high-quality provider of project management services. The internal employee survey revealed that the employees generally think that the Greenlight brand is seen as a highly competent provider of project management services of high quality, although sometimes a bit expensive.

Greenlight conducts competitor analyses for most of the geographic markets where it conducts business. The competitor analyses are kept up to date. Based on the analyses Greenlight makes continuous improvements to ensure that the offered products and services are competitive on the market. It can be simple actions such as improving specific courses or adding additional courses, to more complex actions such as developing totally new products or services.

Greenlight’s courses have a more or less fixed price model, whereas project managers and consulting services naturally are priced based on each assignment.

In the USA, where Greenlight at the moment primarily provides training courses (and plans for consulting services) in project management, the local branch manager feels that Greenlight’s prices are somewhere in line with competitors or sometimes a little higher.

The company’s CEO believes that overall, Greenlight’s prices are not the highest nor lowest in any segment. Regarding training and courses within project management, he believes that Greenlight’s prices are among the more expensive. These prices are however considered to be motivated by the fact that Greenlight has good teachers, a good pedagogy, continuously improved content and adaption to customer needs. The aim is, according to Romander (2014) to have a quite high price level and motivate it by offering high quality services. The employee survey suggests that some employees think that customers perceive Greenlight as quite expensive (mainly for project managers).

In the UK, where Greenlight at the moment provides training, project managers, and consulting, the local branch manager believes that Greenlight’s prices are quite low compared to what Greenlight offers.

Interviews with a selection of Greenlight’s customers from all service segments (training courses, project managers and consulting) suggest that the vast majority of the six interviewed customers perceive Greenlight’s prices as somewhere in the middle or more competitive compared to similar service providers. All interviewed customers consider Greenlight’s services to give value for money.
According to the company’s CEO, Greenlight’s primary key message is quality and competence. In order to convey this message, from the first contact with customers focus is put on the competence that Greenlight possesses and the employees’ experiences.

Based on the desired positioning and vision of the brand, a number of phrases have been formulated to convey Greenlight’s message. The phrases are found on the website, corporate presentations and in brochures.

Greenlight offers the following services:

- **VCT²-courses** (on-line training courses in project management and related areas)
- **ILT³-courses** (on-site classroom training courses in project management and related areas)
- **Project Managers** (Greenlight provides project managers)
- **Establishing and/or running customers’ PMOs**
- **Consulting services** (Greenlight consults on how customers can improve their project culture. The most comprehensive service is called *Total Solution* and includes everything from analysis of the current situation and developing customized methodologies and models, to implementation and training of personnel)

Greenlight has many “products” that aim to strengthen the offerings to customers. These products are models and methodologies such as the GPMM-model⁴. The use of these “products” helps make the offering more concrete.

Lindberg (2014) sees a trend of increased interest in agile⁵ within project management. At the same time, he does not have a clear grip on Greenlight’s value proposition regarding this aspect: what is Greenlight offering and why is Greenlight the best? He emphasizes that Greenlight does have a lot of competence and experienced employees within this field, but feels that there is no clear “set of services” offered in this area by Greenlight and that it is not clear why Greenlight is good at it or how Greenlight can communicate this to customers.

Furthermore, Greenlight has lightly started off to offer more conventional management consulting services. Because of this, there are plans to create a new brand for these types of services.

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² VCT – Virtual classroom training
³ ILT – Instructor-led training
⁴ GPMM® is a special version of the World-leading project management model PROPS®. It conforms to all the key standards (PMI®, IPMA, CMMI, BABOK®, Agile Manifesto, Prince2, PMD Pro etc.), and it is enriched, since 1989, with real experiences from a great number of customers. (Greenlight, 2014)
⁵ “The Agile movement proposes alternatives to traditional project management. Agile approaches are typically used in software development to help businesses respond to unpredictability.” (Agile Methodology, unknown year)
4.3 Employee branding

Greenlight has its headquarter in Madrid, Spain, and local companies in Portugal, the UK, Sweden and the USA. There is also an office in Panama and partners in several other countries. Figure 21 illustrates the time of establishment for the local entities.

![Timeline illustrating the establishment of local Greenlight offices.](image)

Greenlight has about 30 employees and about 20 contracted freelancers. The majority of these employees are located at the company’s headquarter in Madrid. The offices in the UK, USA and Sweden only employ around 1-3 persons each (January 2014).

The employees at the UK branch travel to Greenlight’s headquarters in Madrid about two times per year, and the UK branch manager would like to increase the number of these trips. Greenlight’s CEO visits the UK branch about three or four times per year.

It has been about two years since the USA branch manager travelled to Greenlight’s headquarters in Madrid.

All Greenlight employees receive an internal newsletter from the CEO approximately once a month, containing information about goals, results, and the situation for the firm in different countries, etc. The managers for the project managers, consultants and trainers hold regular meeting (once a week or once a month depending on department) with all the department’s employees. In these meeting managers will share information with the employees regarding business goals, business results, vision, strategy, etc. To further foster the cohesion among employees Greenlight’s CEO used to organise a “Greenday” once a month where all employees (in Madrid) gathered at Greenlight’s office and discussed goals, vision, results, etc. and were given an opportunity to meet their co-workers. Although people appreciated these meeting they more and more found it difficult to find the time to attend and the Greenday meetings were therefore cancelled. Nowadays, the CEO gathers all Greenlight employees once every six months for a day of teambuilding activities,
presentations about business goals and results, the vision for the brand, etc., and some kind of non-work-related activity such as playing sports or having dinner. Generally, non-work-related activities among employees such as after works are fairly limited.

According to the conducted employee survey, 90% of the respondents feel that they are well or very well familiar with Greenlight's vision and mission statement. When asked about the Greenlight brand’s common values (*Professionalism*, *Perseverance* and *Having fun*) 74% of the respondents said that they are familiar with them. However, when asked to list them only 32% actually knew them, meaning that 42% of the respondents think they know these values but in fact do not. Furthermore, 79% of the respondents said that they feel part of creating the Greenlight brand and 84% said that they feel like part of the “Greenlight family”. Whereas 68% of the respondents feel that they get enough information from upper management regarding business goals, sales and profits progress, corporate values etc., 32% want more of this kind of information.

### 4.4 Employer branding

Greenlight provides a number of opportunities for competence development to employees, mainly internal training courses and the possibility to work abroad. However, according to the employee survey 56% of the respondents would like to be given more competence development opportunities. The employee survey furthermore indicates that 56% of the respondents feel that Greenlight is lacking in competence that customers want in certain areas.

Greenlight is always looking to extend its base of competent consultants who can be hired when assignment opportunities arises. There is also an interest in finding people with the right competence to recruit as full-time Greenlight employees. In the UK, Greenlight does not always have enough local candidates with the required competence that some customers request. According to the UK branch manager, this is one of Greenlight’s primary weaknesses in the UK. Greenlight has a standing job advertisement for a number of roles on the company's website (See appendix 6 for examples of two job advertisements). The career section on Greenlight’s website is close to non-existent and basically consists of a number of advertisements for job openings.

The job ads are usually not posted anywhere else besides the website so it is up to job seekers to find the website and the information about the open positions. The ad for a UK position has however recently been posted on the company's LinkedIn profile page. The UK branch manager has been contacted by a number of people, from different countries, who have found the job ad on the Greenlight website. There is usually no follow up on how people found the job ad or the Greenlight website, but it has become clear that some of these applicants knew about Greenlight since they have done business with Ericsson. The UK branch manager thinks that what people find interesting about Greenlight as an employer is that the company is not that big, like for instance Accenture, but instead have a more personal touch.

Greenlight's USA office is also looking for personnel, and besides an advertisement on the company website and LinkedIn page the local branch manager is looking for candidates within his established network of personal connections.
The recruitment process is quite thorough and consists of interviews with both an HR specialist and the recruiting manager in order for Greenlight to find candidates that are the right fit for Greenlight. Recruiting the right competence and talent is a high priority at Greenlight since the employees’ ability to perform their assignments well and deliver high quality results are key success factors for the company. The job candidates go through an extensive interview with the HR specialist where the candidate’s personality is investigated. Greenlight is looking for qualities in candidates such as driven and proactive, and whether or not the candidates show potential to align with Greenlight’s values.

The UK and USA managers both express concern regarding the language barriers that sometimes arise. Especially in countries with native English speakers, the customers tend to expect a higher level of English skills from trainers and project managers. Lindberg (2014) says that if Greenlight is to stand for high quality, it is necessary to make sure that the trainers and project managers have sufficient language skills. The employee survey also suggests that employees think that the English language skills among employees need to be improved. According to Malmström (2014), this is a problem that customers in the USA have reacted to and it is therefore important to find employee candidates that are American and can bring in a greater understanding of American culture and the English language. At the same time, Lindberg (2014) argues that the fact that so many employees speak many languages, such as English, Spanish and Swedish, is one of Greenlight’s many strengths.

To ensure a high level of quality and competence Greenlight’s employees are all very experienced, resulting in a rather high average age of employees. Some projects and assignments could however be done by younger less experienced people according to the CEO. Greenlight works a lot with standardised models and methodologies, and with a mentor or more senior consultant Romander (2014) feels that an ambitious young consultant would learn how to use these models.

The employee survey suggests that the competencies and qualities that respondents most find missing at Greenlight are business mindedness and consulting skills.

Greenlight applies a pyramid approach to the different consultant roles within the organisation (see Figure 22).

![Figure 22. The career progression of a consultant at Greenlight.](image)

At an entry level the consultant starts off as a junior consultant and through training, mentoring and gaining experience in projects the consultant moves up in the pyramid.
4.5 Brand communication

The marketing communications efforts at Greenlight are today fairly limited according to the person responsible for marketing at Greenlight, Alfonso Mora (2014). There is no established marketing budget, only some minor spending on marketing related activities. Mora (2014) lists the following marketing and communication activities:

- The Greenlight website (includes a blog)
- E-mail newsletter
- LinkedIn profile
- Sponsoring
- Seminars and events

To this list, Lindberg (2014), Malmström (2014) and Romander (2014) add networking and personal connections as important marketing activities for Greenlight that generates a lot of business for the firm.

The website is managed by the marketing responsible at Greenlight. The website provides information about Greenlight, including corporate values, cases of previous assignments (however not including financial data), offered services, a blog, etc. Blog entries consist primarily of news or information about offers and events, and the frequency of new posts vary from 1-2 times per month to once every three months. Mora (2014) mentions that the main reason for the lack of frequent blog updates is that the generation of content is not a high priority for the people responsible for providing content. There is a possibility to generate statistics for the traffic on the website and blog, but at this time this function is not used and no feedback is collected. On the blog, there is no possibility for readers to comment on the entries. The website contains a lot of useful information about Greenlight the website aims to provide the viewer with a good and comprehensive picture of the company and offered services.

For the newsletter, Greenlight uses the tool MailChimp, which provides useful statistics and feedback. At the moment there are about 3,500 subscribers to the newsletter and the subscribers are almost entirely current and previous customers. The subscribers are divided into two segments: one with client contacts that the Key Account Managers have provided and another one with all the people who have attended anyone of Greenlight's training courses. It is possible to easily further divide these two segments based for example on which company the subscribers work at. Usually, all subscribers receive the same newsletter. The newsletter is designed to reflect the characteristic green colour of Greenlight. The aim is to send out one newsletter every quarter and each newsletter should comprise about 1-3 pieces of news or announcements and lists upcoming courses and events and sometimes discounted offers.

The customer interviews revealed that while some found the newsletter interesting, others would like to see different content. An interview with one of Greenlight’s biggest clients revealed that the interest for receiving information about discounted offers is low. Instead, the customer asked for content like articles about project management related issues, new

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6 More information about MailChimp can be found at http://www.mailchimp.com/
products and services that Greenlight is introducing, and concepts and trends within project management.

The rate of which subscribers open the newsletter is usually around 30 % (Mora, 2014). To put this in perspective, a study by MailChimp (2014) shows that the average opening rate of e-mail newsletters in the consulting industry is 37.1 %. Interviews with six customers revealed that while every one of them receives the newsletter not all of them read it. One customer said that she does not read Greenlight’s newsletters since she receives so many newsletters and therefore does not have time to read all of them. Another customer said that he only reads the headlines in order to find out if there is anything interesting to read more about.

The LinkedIn page is updated on average 1-2 times per month and has just over 3,200 followers. The posts are usually news about the company, links to the company’s blog and website, or current campaigns. The majority of the posts get a handful of “likes” but usually no one comments on them. (LinkedIn, 2014)

Greenlight acts as a sponsor for The Swedish-Spanish Chamber of Commerce. This sponsorship has however not resulted in any new business. Greenlight also has plans to become a sponsor at The Project Management Institute: Madrid Chapter7 (PMI Madrid). PMI Madrid acts as a market place for project management related services and is used frequently by consumers. As a member, Greenlight would get more visibility among potential customers. The downside is that Greenlight would have to give a 15 % discount on their training courses advertised on the PMI Madrid website. The sponsorship fee for PMI Madrid is around 2,000€ per year (Mora, 2014).

Greenlight also hosts a number of seminars and events. During 2013, four events were hosted in Spain regarding PMO, M2M, Human Resources, and the Greenlight 10 year anniversary Open House. In addition to these events, a couple of seminars about innovation were hosted. Most of these events were for selected invited customers and potential customers, but a few of them were open for the public. Each event attracted around 15-20 people. A seminar regarding PMO was also hosted in the UK in 2013 and was attended by about ten people. Greenlight also had an inauguration event at the USA office recently with a couple of presentations. Some 20 people attended the event.

In an interview with one of Greenlight’s customers, the customer expressed that the seminars and workshops he had attended was very interesting and that he would like to see more of them.

In the UK, Greenlight representatives have attended events and seminars with organisations from the non-profit industry. For instance, the UK branch manager and the Greenlight CEO attended an event regarding PMOs for IT directors within the non-profit industry. Although the event did not generate any business, people found it interesting to learn about Greenlight and it gave Greenlight exposure and led to new connections within the industry.

7 More information about The Project Management Institute: Madrid Chapter can be found at http://www.pmi-mad.org/
Networking and personal connections are important tools in Greenlight’s branding process. Much time is spent on communicating with already established personal connections as well as getting to know new potential customers. In the UK, networking is the primary marketing activity.

An attempt to boost new business in VCT-courses was made in March 2014. A 2-for-1 offer, offering two VCT-courses for the price of one, was sent out via e-mail to current and past customers as well as posted on Greenlight’s LinkedIn page. The campaign did however not pay off. Statistics conclude that 3,652 people received the offer via e-mail, 1,483 people (≈41%) opened the e-mail, 104 people (≈3%) clicked on the offer to get more information, but ultimately no one registered for courses (Mora, 2014). The lack of success is believed to derive from two main reasons. First, one of the biggest regular customers for training courses, Ericsson, was having a temporary stop on the purchase for training courses. Second, the majority of the recipients do not have the authority to purchase training courses.

Lindberg (2014) feels that Greenlight has not necessarily found the right message that conveys Greenlight’s excellence and why it is superior to competitors. He furthermore feels that there is not a clear united message and marketing strategy for the local entities of the Greenlight Group, and would like to see an increased collaboration between the local branch managers and the headquarters. He thinks that one reason for this is that the situation for Greenlight is different and Greenlight is operating under different conditions in different countries, partly due to the fact that the local entities were founded at different times. Where business has not yet gotten started there is little time over for making long-term marketing plans.

The situation for the local Greenlight entities around the world is quite different. The local offices have been established at different times (see Figure 21) and have reached different positions today. Because of this, there is some difficulty aligning the strategic and operative marketing efforts. However, many of the local managers would like to see an increase in combined efforts regarding planning of strategy and marketing.

Lindberg (2014) thinks that Greenlight needs to more clearly communicate its position as “best in class” in order to stand out as different from its competitors. He especially raises the issue of not having enough documentation to back up the claim of being the best, such as whitepapers8, business cases, testimonials, published articles, etc. Malmström (2014) also raises concern regarding the lack of documented success, especially financial documentation. On the company website there are a number of documented cases illustrating the challenges and outcomes of previous assignments. These cases do not however include financial data.

When communicating the Greenlight brand, key aspects that are stressed are according to Romander (2014) competence, experience and international presence.

8 “A white paper is a persuasive document that usually describes problems and how to solve them. The white paper is a crossbreed of a magazine article and a brochure. It takes the objective and educational approach of an article and weaves in persuasive corporate messages typically found in brochures.” (Stelzner, 2008)
4.6 Brand reputation and image

According to upper management at Greenlight, the Greenlight brand has a good reputation and is associated with high quality services amongst its customers. The respondents in the employee survey in general believe that customers perceive Greenlight as professional, competent high-quality providers within project management. All interviewed customers associate Greenlight with high quality and expertise in project management. Table 3 shows the results from when the six interviewed customers were asked to rate the quality of Greenlight’s services compared to competitors on a scale of 1 to 10.

Table 3. Quality of Greenlight’s services compared to competitors according to six interviewed customers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer</th>
<th>Quality of Greenlight’s services [1-10]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer 1</td>
<td>8 or 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer 2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer 3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer 4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer 5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer 6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 clearly indicates that the customers think that Greenlight’s services are of very high quality. The interviewed customers were all satisfied with the close relationship they have with Greenlight and would be comfortable recommending Greenlight as a partner in project management if asked or given the opportunity. Many of them had already recommended Greenlight, either internally or externally. The customers’ perception of Greenlight was the same no matter what type of service the customer purchased from Greenlight (training, project managers, consulting). The customers furthermore felt that they trust Greenlight. As one customer puts it:

"Greenlight Project Management often do more than we expect in order to satisfy our needs. I really value Greenlight Project Management’s expertise and experience, and would recommend GreenlightPM as a partner in project management." (Customer 5, 2014)

In order to uphold a strong reputation, Greenlight tries to build close relationship with customers and continuously follow up on delivered services. The account manager also tries to proactively anticipate new or changing needs the customer might have. Greenlight has a good relationship with current clients and much of the new business that Greenlight gets come from new people or divisions within an already existing customer organisation. Key account managers keep in contact with previous, current, and potential customers. The consistency and channel of contact may vary and could for example be occasional phone calls, in-person visits, e-mail newsletter, invitations to seminars, etc. Key account managers have a very close relationship with current clients and have regular contact with them in order to ensure that they are satisfied and to identify any new needs that the client may have. The customer interviews suggest that all the interviewed customers were very satisfied with their relationship with Greenlight and their contact person.
Romander (2014) says that the sales process tends to be rather long since Greenlight often needs to explain and argue for how the potential client would benefit from acquiring Greenlight’s services and why Greenlight is the best partner regarding these services. Therefore, a relationship is often established even before a contract is signed.

There are routines for following up on delivered services. Course participants fill out questionnaires about the attended courses and for project managers and consultants, the customers are asked to evaluate Greenlight and the consultant or project manager in question after each assignment or for longer assignments on a yearly basis. If a course is getting negative feedback in some aspect, meetings are held with the involved Greenlight employees in order to discuss and resolve the issue. According to Lindberg (2014), Greenlight normally receives very positive feedback on courses and the average rating is above 5 on a 6-point scale. However, interviews with upper management as well as the employee survey suggest that the offered services are not always in line with the customers’ needs, and that new services are not being developed in the same rate of which customer needs change.

One of Greenlight’s primary assets is the competence and experience of the employees. They all have deep knowledge within project management and hands-on experience from working as project managers in large multinational organisations.

Greenlight’s largest office, the headquarters in Madrid, is an open plan office with free seating arrangements leading to different employee interactions from day to day. There are a number of conference rooms of different sizes and an office for the CEO as well as for the finance and administration department. The policy that the CEO’s door is “always open” lead to an office atmosphere where employees feel comfortable talking to each other in a casual way and joking around.

To enhance the brand’s image, Greenlight sponsors two non-governmental organisations (NGOs): Unicef and Fundación Vicente Ferrer9. The sponsor commitments are displayed on Greenlight’s website. According to Greenlight’s CEO there are plans of increasing the spending in social responsibility and a mission to send used personal computers to a school in Uganda is currently being carried out. Greenlight also has a number of customers within the NGO sector. In an interview with one of Greenlight’s customers, the respondent said that he had attended one of Greenlight’s seminars where he had learned that Greenlight had begun working with NGOs and that he found it to be interesting to hear since he did not know this about Greenlight.

Greenlight has increased its revenue every year since it was founded over ten years ago with the exceptions of 2009 and 2012. The focus has been on growth and increasing sales rather than profit. However, there is much more focus on profit now.

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9Spanish NGO committed to improving the living conditions of the most deprived communities in Andhra Pradesh, India.
5 Analysis

This chapter presents the analysis that was conducted in this study. The theoretical framework introduced in chapter 2 is used to analyse the empirical data presented in chapter 4. With the theoretical framework as a basis, the situation at the case company, Greenlight, was evaluated in order to establish if there is any room for improvement regarding the identified activities within each branding functions needed for successful branding. The analytical process, further described in chapter 3.4, entail not only the identification of gaps between the theory and empirical data but also an evaluation of to which extent each branding activity shows room for improvement, illustrated by colour-coded check marks (as presented in Figure 19). The analysis provides support for the thesis' culminating conclusions and recommendations.

5.1 Brand identity

It has been argued that having an established brand identity is a prerequisite for building a strong corporate brand (Juntunen et al., 2010). The brand identity is build up by several activities that all help define how the brand wants to be perceived (Aaker, 1996). At the case company in this study, Greenlight, many internal key activities aiming to define the brand identity are in place.

5.1.1 Establish a brand vision

First of all, there is an established vision and aim for the Greenlight brand, which according to Kapferer (2008) is part of defining the brand identity. Second, interviews with key personnel clearly illustrate that the foremost quality that makes the brand different is the competence within and focus on project management, another important aspect of defining the brand identity according to Kapferer (2008). To further understand and define the brand identity, Kapferer (2008) also recommends that the need that the brand fulfils is identified. Greenlight has identified that need to be the reduction of costs by increasing efficiency and reducing mistakes. All in all, Greenlight is considered to have a well-established vision for the brand and no immediate room for improvement has been identified (i.e. colour-coded with a green check mark).

5.1.2 Establish a brand culture

Juntunen et al. (2010) suggest that the corporate culture is part of the brand’s identity. At Greenlight, there is an implied corporate culture where employees interact with each other and their managers in an informal and casual manner. Furthermore, relating to the brand culture is the way of how clients are treated and Greenlight always aims for establishing close, open and long-term relationships. This is also how the interviewed customers perceived their relationship with Greenlight. The interviewed customers all thought of Greenlight as professional, something that could be contributed to the brand culture. The culture surrounding the Greenlight brand as well as the corporate culture is all in all considered to be quite well established, meaning that the activity is performed well (green). The issues raised by the CEO regarding the communication of the brand culture will be
analysed in chapter 5.3 as it relates to getting the employees to identify with and "live" the brand culture.

5.1.3 Establish brand values

Kapferer (2008) also argues that determining the brand’s field of competence and values are important. The values that the Greenlight brand should incorporate and communicate have already been established. Management has defined a set of common values, and values that the brand should stand for have been established. Not considering the employees’ acceptance and embrace of these values (which will be discussed in chapter 5.3), Greenlight is considered to be performing well with this activity and no immediate room for improvement has been identified (green).

5.1.4 Give the brand recognisable signs

The Greenlight brand has several recognisable signs, both tangible signs, such as a consistent corporate colour theme, and intangible signs, such as being considered to be "fresh". These signs are also contributing to defining the brand identity according to Kapferer (2008). Other intangible signs could be considered to be the way that Greenlight interact with their customers. All interviewed customers indicated that they feel that they have a close relationship with Greenlight and their respective contact person, and that the relationship and Greenlight is very open. In a way, this type of transparency (as well as the intention of being open and transparent to a large extent in communication with customers and on the company website) can be considered a recognisable sign for the Greenlight brand.

Greenlight's performance with regards to giving the brand recognisable signs is considered to be well and no immediate room for improvement is identified (green).

5.1.5 Summary

Regarding Greenlight's brand identity, top management at Greenlight are all agreeing that Greenlight should be perceived as a high-quality service provider within project management. Greenlight's performance is considered well in regards to all activities within this branding function. The communication of the culture to employees will be further discussed in section 5.3 Employee branding. A summary of Greenlight's performance within this branding function is illustrated in Figure 23.

![Figure 23. Summary of analysis of brand identity branding activities.](image-url)
5.2 Brand positioning

5.2.1 Develop a brand position statement

Greenlight has positioned itself as a leading innovative expert on project management. Although there seems to be consensus among senior management at Greenlight how the brand should be perceived, a formulated brand position statement that summarises the chosen positioning does not exist. Advocated by Wallström et al. (2008), such a statement aims to clarify how the brand should be seen, based on the brand identity, and will according to Levi (2007) keep everyone in the company on the same page when interacting with customers. However, despite of the absence of this statement upper management, employees and customers all seem to have a quite clear and similar perception of the Greenlight brand and how it should be perceived, where the power words most often used to describe the brand are competence, experience, quality, and project management. Formulating an official brand position statement would however take little effort and would become increasingly important as the company grows across the world in order to ensure that the intended brand positioning is sought after in all countries by all employees. Therefore, Greenlight is considered to show some room for improvement within this activity (orange).

5.2.2 Conduct competitor analyses

Greenlight conducts competitor analyses on a global basis and keeps them updated. According to Levi (2007) and Jalkala and Keränen (2014) this is an important activity in the process of establishing and maintaining a clear position. The fact that the competitor analyses are carefully evaluated and are used for product innovation and improvement illustrates that Greenlight has an understanding of the value of knowing what competitors do and what the market looks like. Greenlight’s performance is therefore considered well regarding this activity and no immediate room for improvement has been identified (green).

5.2.3 Apply an appropriate price level

It has been argued that in order to maintain a position as a high-quality provider the price level cannot be too low since it affects customers’ perceived brand quality (e.g. DelVecchio and Puligadda, 2012). Romander (2014) says that the aim is for the Greenlight brand to have a quite high price level on its services, which according to the theories will help strengthen the chosen positioning as project management experts delivering high quality services. In general, the price level is perceived as somewhere in the middle or a little higher than competitors by most Greenlight employees. In the UK however, the branch manager feels that the price level is a bit low compared to what Greenlight can offer its clients. This might suggest that the position as experts and leaders on project management might not yet have been reached, probably due to the relatively short time presence on the local market. In order to strengthen the desired positioning, effective key messages and brand communication efforts might be able to validate a higher price level. Furthermore, interviews with Greenlight’s customers in all service segments (training courses, project managers and consulting) suggest that the vast majority of interviewed customers
purchasing training courses perceive Greenlight's prices as somewhere in the middle or more competitive compared to similar service providers. Customers purchasing project managers, however, perceived Greenlight's prices to be rather expensive and less competitive than competitors. This indicates that Greenlight's goal to have quite a high price level has not yet been reached in all service segments. The interviewed customers instead feel that Greenlight many times has a more competitive price level than competitors. Since Greenlight desires to reach a position as a high-quality service provider with a quite high price level, it might be damaging to the aspiring positioning if the offered prices are too low (DelVecchio and Puligadda, 2012). In order to address this issue, Greenlight might want to further investigate the possibility of increasing the prices for certain service segments (mainly training courses since the customer interviews suggest that it is customers purchasing training that feels that Greenlight's prices are more competitive than other providers) while focusing on motivating a higher price by delivering superior services and adding more customer value than competitors.

Greenlight recently sent out discounted offers on on-line training courses. According to Clayton and Heo (2011), offering limited time discounts is damaging to the brand's image and perceived quality. Furthermore, interviews with Greenlight's customers reveal that the interest for receiving information about discounted offers is not always high. Greenlight must therefore carefully consider the implication of offering general discounts in order not to damage the brand and the desired positioning as a high-quality service provider.

The analysis of Greenlight's efforts in regards to this activity suggests that Greenlight needs to address the pricing issue. Offering public discounts and applying a price level on services that customers perceive to be more competitive than other providers is according to the theoretical framework not in line with the aspired position as high-quality leader in project management. Greenlight therefore shows room for improvement within this branding activity and the current performance is considered not well (red). The fact that most managers and employees at Greenlight think that the prices are higher than competitors when in fact the majority of the interviewed customers think the opposite further illustrates the need for improvement in this activity.

5.2.4 Develop key messages

Jalkala and Keränen (2014) argue the importance of finding and emphasizing relevant points of difference and suggest that in a B2B context, non-tangible associations such as expertise are commonly emphasized. In the case of Greenlight, the emphasis is on competence and quality in communication with all stakeholders. There are several phrases and messages available to employees at Greenlight that help strengthen the chosen positioning. However, employees express concern that it is not always clear what the arguments are for Greenlight being "best in class". A branch manager feels that there is not a clear united message. This indicates that it might be necessary for Greenlight to develop more and clearer key messages and ensure that they are available to employees in order to arm sales people with arguments and phrases that will help differentiate the brand from competitors and demonstrate the brand's value. The lack of defined key messages that are available to Greenlight employees in all countries can lead to local employees developing their own messages and therefore damaging the brand’s global positioning by appearing different in each country. A coordinated united message would help ensure that
Greenlight's aspired position is the same in all countries, which is important since many of the customers are multinational corporations that contract Greenlight in different countries.

Although Greenlight have developed several key phrases and messages, the requests from employees of a more united, clear and easily available message indicate that while Greenlight works partly with this activity it shows some room for improvement (orange).

### 5.2.5 Maintain congruence between products and services

Kapferer (2008) argues that all products and services offered under a brand need to show congruence in order not to confuse customers. All of Greenlight's offered services are related to project management. Whether it is a service or a solution with a combination of services (e.g. the offer total solution), all offerings share common brand values and the same brand vision (e.g. all services are related to project management, should exude professionalism and aim to fulfil the customers' needs to lower costs by increasing efficiency and reducing risks). Interviews with customers further acknowledge that there is congruence between the offerings: no matter what type of service the interviewed customers purchased their perceptions of the Greenlight brand was still similar.

The fact that Greenlight in recent time has started to offer more conventional management consulting services that not necessarily relates to project management under the same brand could have negative effects on the brand and the position as experts on project management. Kapferer (2008) suggests that the wider the brand system base (Figure 4) is, and the less the products and services relate to one another, the more likely it is for customers to comprehend the brand essence. The plans to incorporate these new services under new brands would therefore be vital for the current brand's positioning.

Greenlight is considered to perform the activity of maintaining congruence between products and services well (green). All services offered under the brand are related in terms of delivering high-quality services within project management in a professional manner. The plans for establishing a new brand for the more conventional management consulting services further indicates that the importance of this activity is understood by management at Greenlight. Therefore, no immediate room for improvement within this activity has been identified.

### 5.2.6 Summary

The branding function brand positioning shows room for improvement in three out of the five identified activities. The activity of applying an appropriate price level is the one showing most need of attention since it is considered to have a direct impact on the perception of the brand quality and the aspiring brand positioning. A summary of Greenlight's performance within this branding function is illustrated in Figure 24.
5.3 Employee Branding

Employees play an important role in B2B companies (Jalkala and Keränen, 2014). Heding et al. (2008) argue that it is important to encourage employees to identify with the company and brand culture and values in order for them to represent the brand as intended. Greenlight is taking several actions in order to try and affect the employees and get them to “live the brand”.

5.3.1 Keeping employees updated on values, vision, goals, results, etc.

In accordance with Drake et al. (2005), Greenlight’s leaders are keeping the employees updated on company values, goals, vision and results. The CEO sends out an email with this type of information about once a month and managers hold meetings with their employees on a regular basis. 90% of the respondents in the employee survey say that they are well or very well familiar with the brand’s vision and mission. However, 32% of the respondents indicate that they would like to receive more of this type of information. This means that it might be a good idea to reinstate the “Greendays”, the monthly gathering of all Madrid based employees where the CEO addressed the employees in regards of the above-mentioned type of information and where the employees got a chance to interact with each other. Since the Greendays were cancelled due to employees not having the time to attend, it would be necessary for the CEO and the respective team managers to try and ensure a high attendance by encouraging employees to attend.

Chernatony (1999) argues the importance of ensuring clear and easily accessible internal communication. By having the brand’s common values clearly visible at the entrance to the Greenlight office the CEO tries to remind the employees of these values. However, the employee survey revealed that only 32% of the respondents knew these values. Furthermore, 42% of the respondents thought that they knew the common values but listed the wrong values. This could lead to employees identifying with the brand in the wrong way and that in contact with customers they misrepresent the brand. In order to avoid this risk, Greenlight needs to further try imposing the common values to the employees.

About a third of the respondents in the employee survey, or 32%, indicated that they would like to receive more information from management regarding vision, values, goals, results, etc. This means that the ways of communicating the information to the employees, which is
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of grave importance according to Chernatony (1999), need to be improved. Perhaps by putting together brochures with information on corporate values and vision, putting up vision and mission statements on the wall of the office, introducing an Intranet, not to mention the Greenday-events.

The fact that employees based outside of Spain very rarely meet and interact with other Greenlight employees is a risk factor. Especially as the local branches grow the fact that local employees do not get a chance to interact with other Greenlight employees could lead to isolation and that the brand is being represented differently in different countries. Since the goal is for the Greenlight brand to pursue the same positioning in all countries it is important that the employees in each and every country feel like part of the brand and know what the brand stands for.

Even though management at Greenlight tries to keep employees updated on company and brand related information, the employees seem to want more. In many cases, the information exists and is available, but not very easily. This indicates that it is the communication of the information that foremost needs to be improved. For instance, no Intranet exists. Since the termination of the Greenday-events, the occasions where employees are gathered and updated in person by management have been greatly reduced. Considering the risks of employees in different countries not being updated and aligned in their information about the brand, the importance of communicating the information clearly and continuously is further emphasised. Therefore, even though Greenlight to some extent works with this activity, the performance in this activity is considered to show some room for improvement (orange).

5.3.2 Foster employee involvement in building the brand

It is important to make it clear to the employees that they are vital to the company’s success. The company therefore has to ensure that the employees feel involved. The employee survey at Greenlight suggests that almost 80% of the respondents feel like part of creating the Greenlight brand, which means that the vast majority of the employees feel involved. However, the goal should be 100% and more efforts should be dedicated to ensuring a higher level of employee inclusion in creating the brand.

Drake et al. (2005) argue the importance of making the employees feel as part of the organisation. The employee survey revealed that 84% of the respondents feel like part of the Greenlight family. The survey was anonymous and therefore there is no way of knowing if the respondents are located in Spain or in another country. If a respondent is located in another country, not surrounded by other Greenlight employees and not visiting the company headquarter in Madrid very often, the respondent would probably not as strongly feel like part of the Greenlight family. This means that the percentage of employees feeling like part of the Greenlight family might be higher if only employees from the Greenlight Spain office had answered, and lower if the respondents were from Greenlight’s offices in all other countries. This further shows the need for integrating all employees, including employees working in local offices across the world, with the brand and the Greenlight family. The fact that many employees spend their time at customers’ offices and seldom meet their fellow Greenlight colleagues could also have a negative effect on feeling included
in the Greenlight family. The absence of after works and the rarity of teambuilding and non-work-related events (twice a year) are probably also contributing factors.

Thinking in terms that the goal is to strive for having 100% of the employees feel like part of creating the brand, Greenlight’s efforts in the activity fostering employee involvement in building the brand need to be improved. As the company grows internationally the activity will become even more challenging, which suggests that Greenlight needs to improve their efforts within this activity starting now. In conclusion, Greenlight’s performance within this activity is considered not well and shows room for immediate improvements (red).

5.3.3 Summary

Greenlight is trying to get the employees to “live the brand”, for example by keeping them updated on relevant information and hosting two annual non-work-related gatherings. However, the employee survey suggests that there is room for improvement within this branding function. This function has also been suggested to become even more crucial as the company grows internationally. A summary of Greenlight’s performance within this branding function is illustrated in Figure 25.

![Figure 25. Summary of analysis of employee branding activities.](image)

5.4 Employer branding

The internal employee survey suggests that 56% of the respondents feel that Greenlight is lacking competences that customers want in certain areas. For a company like Greenlight, which has positioned itself as a highly competent service provider within a niched area, possessing the right competences is vital. This establishes the importance for Greenlight to work with employer branding activities in order to become known an attractive employer to be able to choose from the best candidates to secure the necessary competences.

5.4.1 Communicate that the company is an attractive employer

Heding et al. (2008) argue that an important employer branding activity is to communicate that the company is an attractive employer to both potential and current employees. Greenlight primarily uses the company’s website as a recruiting tool. However, there is no career section with useful and descriptive information about Greenlight as an employer and most of the job advertisements do not go through much information about Greenlight as an employer. Greenlight must dedicate more resources to actively and effectively communicate the brand as an attractive employer. The content on the website could be improved by developing a career section page with information about Greenlight as an employer and the job advertisements could be elaborated to include more information.
about the employer, not just the particular role. It needs to be clear what Greenlight offers its employees and why it is an attractive employer. Furthermore, Greenlight currently only utilises a small number of channels communicating its brand as an employer. In order to reach a broader audience Greenlight should consider posting its job advertisements in more places. Considering that there are no routines in place regarding following up how job seekers found the job ad or Greenlight’s website, establishing routines for this would help identify which channels are most effective and in turn planning of future spending on employer branding activities.

The employee survey suggested that 56% of the respondents would like to be given more opportunities to develop their competence. This could indicate that the employer needs to give the employees more competence development opportunities in order to avoid the risk of losing employees who feel under stimulated. However it could also mean that the current employees do not fully take responsibility of their own development to large enough extent. In order to ensure that future employees have the urge to continuous development, it needs to be clearly communicated that Greenlight is only interested in people who want to constantly develop their competencies. Therefore, when communicating the brand as an employer it must be clear that Greenlight is a place for driven and proactive people, eager to take charge of their own competence development.

Due to the limited amount of information available to potential job seekers and the limited number of channels for communicating the brand as an employer, Greenlight is showing room for much improvement within this activity (red). The fact that acquiring the right candidates is very important for a company like Greenlight indicates that these issues need to be addressed fast.

5.4.2 Evaluate potential employees’ values congruence with the brand’s values

Chernatony (1999) argues that companies need to evaluate the congruency of potential employees’ values with the brand’s value when recruiting new personnel. Greenlight carefully evaluate job candidates’ personalities in order to find people who are the right fit for Greenlight. The HR specialist tries to evaluate the potential employees’ values and whether or not the candidate would fit in at Greenlight and the Greenlight brand’s values. All in all, Greenlight is considered to perform this activity well (green).

5.4.3 Secure young talents

It is suggested by Guarino (2014) that young people are becoming more popular in the management consulting industry. Today, Greenlight does not employ any young people. The focus has been on recruiting people with a lot of experience and seniority in order to ensure a high level of expertise. However, the internal employee survey indicated that some competencies that are believed to be missing within Greenlight are business mindedness and consulting skills, qualities which Guarino (2014) argues that young people often possess in a wider extent than many older people who often come in with more narrow experience centred around IT. Apart from the wider range of competence that Guarino (2014) suggests that young project managers possess, since they are at an earlier stage in their careers a younger person would most likely be willing to work for a lower salary.
Bringing in younger employees with a new and fresh perspective could also help strengthen Greenlight's position as modern and innovative leaders.

Furthermore, younger people would likely be more willing to travel and relocate for certain amounts of time. This will result in employees moving around the Greenlight offices all over the world and increase knowledge flows and the sharing of experiences from one office to another. Younger people are also more likely to have a stronger command of the English language, something that branch managers at Greenlight in the UK and the USA have said is something that Greenlight’s current employees not always have. Also, a younger person is more likely to not have been shaped by any other organisations culture and values, and would therefore be more receptive to Greenlight's values and culture. Considering that Greenlight's CEO has expressed that it would probably be possible to recruit and train a younger person, this possibility is worth considering due to the many benefits it could bring. Introducing some sort of trainee program would help attract driven inexperienced candidates that would receive training whilst contributing in real work-projects.

Considering that Greenlight does not actively work with securing young talents, even though the company’s CEO says it would be possible to recruit and train younger people, the company's performance of this activity is considered poor and shows much room for improvement (red).

### 5.4.4 Summary

Dedicating resources to employer branding activities will not only help secure talent and competences for future needs, but it is also a form of marketing that gives the company a chance to signal to customers and potential customers that Greenlight only hires the best people, whether it is young aspiring talents or more senior and experienced professionals.

A summary of Greenlight's performance within this branding function is illustrated in Figure 26. The long-term importance of this branding function indicates that the activities showing room for improvement should be addressed quite fast.

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**Figure 26. Summary of analysis of employer branding activities.**
5.5 Brand communication

5.5.1 Identify the target audience

Kotler et al. (1999) argue that identifying the target audience is an important first step in developing marketing messages.

When Greenlight sends out the monthly/quarterly newsletter via e-mail all subscribers usually receive the same newsletter. However, Ryan and Silvanto (2013) argue that the target audience should be quite narrow in a B2B context in order to make the messages more personal. Since the tool that Greenlight uses for sending the newsletter allows the creation of segments, the target audience for the newsletter could easily be divided into smaller groups based on various categorisations. The customer interviews revealed that while some found the newsletter interesting, others would like to see different content. This indicates that it might be worth segmenting the subscribers and create more narrow target audiences in order to be able to design more personal messages that are more appealing to the subscribers.

The seminars and workshops that Greenlight sometimes holds are only for selected customers, usually in not too large groups. This would indicate a more appropriate approach to communicating the brand in a B2B context. The fact that much of the brand communication is through personal selling would indicate that the brand communication is being communicated to a very narrow target audience in most cases. Except for the e-mail newsletter most of the brand communication efforts at Greenlight focus on quite narrow target audience, all in accordance with the theoretical framework. Therefore, not considering the e-mail newsletter segmentation, Greenlight is considered to perform this activity well and shows no room for immediate improvements (green).

5.5.2 Determine the communication objectives

Determining the communication objectives has been argued to be important (Kotler et al., 1999) and Greenlight actively works with this activity. Since most of the brand communication focuses on a narrow target audience, Greenlight can individually try to examine potential customers' situations, something that Turner (1966) argues to be important for professional services providers. Greenlight employees attend seminars and events to engage in networking and raising awareness about the Greenlight brand. Turner (1966) suggests that the firm must get prospective clients to realize that they would benefit from the service and why they should choose the particular provider in question. As mentioned by Romander (2014), the sales process tends to be rather long and a relationship is often established before a contract is signed. During this period of negotiation, Greenlight tries to get the potential client to realize how the services would benefit his or her organisation and why Greenlight should provide the service.

The Greenlight newsletter reaches current clients and people who have attended any of Greenlight's training courses. The subscribers therefore have knowledge about Greenlight. However, it is possible to divide the subscribers into two categories: previous participants of training courses and current customers in contact with a key account manager at Greenlight. Subscribers from these two segments are probably in different buyer-readiness
stages (defined by Kotler et al. (1999)). Depending on which stage the recipient is at the message has different objectives. Today the same message is sent to these two groups, which might make it difficult to design effective messages that will move the recipient forward in the buyer-readiness process.

Greenlight's overall performance within this activity is considered well and in accordance with the studied theories. However, a specific area showing room for improvement is, as also mentioned in the analysis of the first activity within this branding function, the e-mail newsletter. Sending the same message to all recipients limit the possibility to establish different communication objectives for segments that might be at different stages in the buyer-readiness process. Since this method of communication reaches a large number of people and is for many of the recipients the only regular contact with Greenlight, the importance of defining segments with different communication objectives leads to Greenlight's performance being considered well but with room for improvement (orange).

5.5.3 Design a message

Juntunen et al. (2010) argue that it is important to ensure that the brand is being coherently communicated and in accordance with the brand identity. The local entities of Greenlight in many ways plan and conduct their own marketing activities, and local branch managers say that they would like to see an increased coordination of marketing activities and strategies. If the communication of the brand is not sufficiently coordinated amongst the countries where Greenlight is active it might be damaging to the brand. If the brand is presented differently in different countries the customers might perceive the brand differently in each country and the brand’s identity and positioning might not be perceived as intended. This is especially important for Greenlight since many of the customers are multinational organisations that have ties to several local Greenlight entities. The lack of a united message has been argued to be potentially damaging to the aspiring positioning of the brand (discussed in chapter 5.2.4), and this further illustrates the importance of designing clear and congruent messages when communicating the brand to stakeholders in all geographic markets.

An interview with one of Greenlight’s biggest clients revealed that the interest for receiving information about discounted offers is low. Instead, the customer asked for content like articles about project management related issues, new products and services that Greenlight is introducing, and concepts and trends within project management. This customer's feedback can be related to Kotler et al. (1999) stressing the importance of designing messages with new information, instead of sending messages repeating offers and discounts etc. Another customer pointed out that he only has time to read the headlines in the newsletter to see if anything is interesting enough to continue reading. This illustrates the importance of investing time in constructing intriguing headlines in the newsletters in order to increase the chances of having the recipients continue to read the information.

Anderson and Naurus (1998) argue that it is vital to point out the value added to the customer. This is crucial and something that Greenlight has problems with in certain areas. One problem is that Greenlight is having problems illustrating the value they have previously brought to their customers since there is no documentation or value case
histories in terms of monetary value (advocated by Turner, 1966), i.e. how much money Greenlight’s services saved the customer by reduction of costs. Greenlight has a few documented success stories that aim to illustrate the value added to the customers in more intangible terms, but there are no value case histories of previous assignments in terms of monetary value. Since the need that Greenlight aims to fulfil is reduction of customers’ costs (see chapter 5.1.1) this type of documentation becomes of grave importance in order to be able to show proof that Greenlight in fact can fulfil this need. In order for Greenlight to be perceived as a leading high-quality provider within project management and to motivate a higher price than competitors, Greenlight must focus on showing customers how Greenlight adds value to their business. Today, Greenlight does not contribute with whitepapers or publish articles within project management, which if done could help strengthen the credibility and aspired positioning as leader within project management. Furthermore, no testimonials or quotes from satisfied customers are collected and used in the brand communication process.

When communicating the brand, Greenlight always stresses that it has international experience with a local presence in many countries. This is according to Ryan and Silvanto (2013) something that inspires status, prestige and images of quality. It is and needs to remain an important ingredient of the message that Greenlight communicates.

A lot of the communication of the Greenlight brand is through personal connections and networking. This means that Greenlight employees often talk to customers one-on-one and therefore have the opportunity to deliver more personalised information. This is something that Ryan and Silvanto (2013) argue is very important in B2B marketing. In contrast, the newsletter is sent to a much wider target audience and the message thus cannot be as personalised. In order to make the newsletter contain more personalised information, the target audience would have to be narrower (i.e. the subscribers would have to be segmented).

All in all, Greenlight is considered to show much room for improvement with regards to this activity (red). Primarily it is the need for more documentation and coordination that must be addressed.

5.5.4 Choose how to deliver the message

Greenlight communicates its brand via a variety of channels, which according to Keller (2009) helps enhance the message and helps build brand equity. Furthermore, the communication channels that Greenlight uses are in accordance with Lynch and Chernatony’s (2004) suggestion of appropriate brand communication channels for B2B companies.

Greenlight is engaging in interactive marketing, i.e. marketing activities that take place online, which according to Keller (2009) has many advantages. Greenlight’s primary on-line presence is the corporate website and the profile page on the business-oriented social networking site LinkedIn. The website has many photos of employees, something that Schlinke and Crain (2013) argue helps establishing trust. However, Greenlight’s LinkedIn profile is only updated around once or twice a month and not much time is spent on producing content for updates and being active on the site. Schlinke and Crain (2013) argue that it is important to continuously monitor and improve the content of the company’s
social networking profile on a regular basis. This indicates that if Greenlight wants the presence on LinkedIn to be as successful as possible, more time and effort would be needed. To be active on a social networking site and engaging in discussions, posting whitepapers, articles etc. would further help strengthen the aspired positioning for the brand as innovative leaders in project management. Spending more time and resources on communicating the brand via social networking sites would also be in accordance with Greenlight wanting to be perceived as modern. Posting material with high conversation value would also help generate positive word-of-mouth (Kotler et al., 1999), which is the top influencer of B2B purchase decisions (Zuberance, 2010). The fact that Greenlight’s posts today only receive a handful of “likes” and usually no comments indicates that the material might not have enough conversation value for people to “share” the post or start a discussion around it.

Kotler et al. (1999) furthermore suggest that there are other ways that firms can increase the chance of having personal communication channels promote the firm. First of all the authors mention targeting and selling to well-known people or companies, which in turn may influence other potential buyers. The fact that Greenlight has an established customer base of internationally well-known companies (Romander, 2014) is a good indicator that could help the firm get credible word-of-mouth. In interviews with a number of customers it became apparent that those customers (all of them from well-known international organisations) would be comfortable recommending Greenlight as a partner in project management if asked or given the opportunity. Many of them had already recommended Greenlight, either internally or externally. This suggests that these customers are willing to spread positive word-of-mouth about Greenlight, and the fact that much new business comes from people within other divisions in already existing customers might be an indicator that this word-of-mouth has had an effect at least internally within the customers’ organisations. Therefore, to benefit from this Greenlight would have to collect testimonials and get approval from the customers to use these testimonies in brand communication activities.

Kotler et al. (1999) argue that the chances of having personal communication channels promote the firm could be increased by managing word-of-mouth communications by finding out what customers say to others by taking actions to satisfy customers, correct problems and help customers seek information about the firm. The key account managers at Greenlight have a very close relationship with their clients and talk to them often. This will help ensure that the customer is satisfied with Greenlight’s services and increase the chances of having positive word-of-mouth. Furthermore, Greenlight’s website contains very much information regarding Greenlight’s services, vision, previous assignments, contact information, etc. and thus provides a lot of useful information about the company to those who seeks information about it. However in order to further improve visitors impressions and try and influence their perceptions, Ozer (2009) suggests developing a promotional video. This might be a helpful tool for Greenlight since many of the services are complex and a visitor who does not have any knowledge of Greenlight might have difficulty getting an understanding of what the brand stands for and what it offers.

To further try and generate positive word-of-mouth, Libai et al. (2013) suggest that companies offer a service or product free of charge to a group of people in hope of having them spread positive reviews about the company/product/service. This is not something
that Greenlight does today, not considering the "buy one get one" offer on VCT-courses sent to all newsletter subscribers. According to Libai et al. (2013) the trial offer would have to be much more limited and well targeted. If not, offering free trial services might damage the brand, according to Clayton and Heo (2011).

Greenlight delivers their messages in several ways and works with many aspects within this activity, such as using appropriate B2B communication channels, and trying to enhance positive word-of-mouth by managing relationships and keeping customers happy and making sure that a lot of information about Greenlight and the offered services is easily available. However, some room for improvement has been identified within the activity (orange), for example the fairly limited online presence and further control of word-of-mouth communication.

5.5.5 Collect feedback

The person responsible for marketing at Greenlight follows up the results for the newsletter, which is important according to Kotler et al. (1999) in order to know how successful a marketing message has been so that future marketing spending can be organised more effectively. However, the follow up is today fairly limited to looking at the number of subscribers that open the newsletter and click on links in it. In order to get a better understanding of what kind of marketing messages the customers and subscribers respond to, the data would have to be more thoroughly evaluated. Statistics from different newsletter containing different types of information (discounted offers, news about Greenlight's services, articles/white papers about project management related issues, etc.) could be compared in order to find out what kind of information most of the subscribers prefer. This would also help in creating segments in order to reach narrower target audiences. The customer interviews furthermore revealed that subscribers not always read the newsletter due to the large amount of other newsletters and e-mail they receive. In order to try and avoid this, the date of the month that the newsletter is sent out could be changed each month in order to compare the statistics and investigate which date most of the subscribers opened/clicked the newsletter.

As discussed in chapter 5.4, feedback is not collected in order to assess how job seekers found information about Greenlight and the job ad. This further illustrates the need for increased resources devoted to collecting and evaluating feedback in the brand communication. Especially if the brand communication efforts are increased and given more resources, the need for following up the activities will require more time and the information collected will be even more valuable since it will help Greenlight prioritise among communication messages and channels. Therefore, Greenlight’s performance within this activity is considered to show some room for improvement (orange).

5.5.6 Summary

The analysis of the brand communication branding function suggests that there is a need for more brand communication efforts. A summary of Greenlight’s performance within this branding function is illustrated in Figure 27. Although Greenlight works somewhat with all activities within the function, almost all of them show room for improvement. Furthermore, working with designing the messages has been identified as the activity that needs
immediate improvements. Also, the e-mail newsletter has shown room for improvement in regards to multiple activities, indicating that it should also be given a fairly high priority regarding the priority of resources for improving the brand communication activities. Improving the collection of feedback will become more important when the other activities have been improved and the number of messages and channels has been increased.

![BRAND COMMUNICATION]

1. IDENTIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE
2. DETERMINE THE COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES
3. DESIGN A MESSAGE
4. CHOOSE HOW TO DELIVER THE MESSAGE
5. COLLECT FEEDBACK

*Figure 27. Summary of analysis of brand communication activities.*

## 5.6 Brand reputation and image

The brand’s reputation and image have been argued to be important aspects of branding, especially in a B2B context, that enhance differentiation and affect purchase decisions (Kuhn et al., 2008; Ryan and Silvanto, 2013; Heding et al., 2008 and Mudambi, 2002). Fombrun et al. (2000) conclude that there are six aspects in particular that firms must work with and communicate to stakeholders in order to build and maintain a strong reputation. These six aspects are analysed in this chapter with regards to Greenlight.

### 5.6.1 Create an emotional appeal

Greenlight works hard with developing close relationships with both customers and potential customers. The customer interviews suggest that the customers trust Greenlight and personal connections and relationships have often been a basis for the establishment of a business relationship. Greenlight is therefore considered to have a quite strong emotional appeal and no room for immediate improvement has been identified *(green).*

### 5.6.2 Offer the right products and services

Fombrun et al. (2000) argue that brand reputation is affected by the products and services offered under the brand name. The authors suggest that factors such as quality, innovation and value for money are important to work with and communicate to stakeholders. A priority for Greenlight is to offer services of the highest quality and provide a higher value for customers than other providers of similar services. Greenlight continuously works with innovation and improvements of its services based on changes in customer needs and competitor analyses. Assignments are evaluated in order to ensure that the customers are satisfied. The customer interviews suggest that the customers are in fact satisfied with the quality of Greenlight’s services and that Greenlight offers good value for money. However, in terms of innovation interviewed managers and the employee survey suggest that Greenlight needs to be more innovative when it comes to developing new value
propositions and anticipating changes in customer needs. For example, one branch manager feels that there is no clear value proposition about agile, an aspect that is seeing a trend of increased interest on the market. If the aspired position as a leader within the field of project management is to be reached Greenlight must make sure that the offered services are up to date and in line with current and future customer needs, whereupon innovation becomes very important.

The quality and value of already offered services is therefore considered to have a positive effect on the brand reputation. However, the internal work with innovation of services displays some room for improvements, whereas Greenlight’s performance in this activity is considered to be in need of improvement (orange). This activity can be considered fairly large compared to many other identified branding activities. The brand reputation is said to be affected by the company's offered products and services, the activity of offering the right products and services therefore comprises various aspects regarding the company's offerings. The activity can furthermore somewhat be considered to be affected by other identified branding activities within other functions of branding. For instance, Fombrun et al. (2000) suggest that the brand reputation is affected by the quality of the services. This can be related to the brand positioning activities. As Greenlight has positioned the brand as a high-quality service provider, the efforts to ensure that delivered services in fact are of a high quality are a priority. If Greenlight had chosen to position the brand as a provider of low price services by compromising a bit on the quality, it could have a negative effect on the brand reputation. The focus would in that case have to be on ensuring that customers associate the service with value for money, rather than top quality.

5.6.3 Establish vision and leadership

Brand reputation is furthermore suggested to be positively affected by showing vision and leadership (Fombrun et al, 2000). Greenlight does try to position the Greenlight brand as a leading project management consultancy (see chapter 5.2) and the brand vision is to be a recognised leader within the field (see chapter 5.1). The brand vision and positioning would therefore, if achieved and communicated properly, benefit the brand reputation. The customer interviews suggest that customers do in fact perceive Greenlight as experts within project management. However, to become widely recognised as, and establish a reputation as, leaders within project management the efforts need to increase and go beyond offering high quality services. In order to try and demonstrate leadership Greenlight hosts a number of seminars and workshops for selected customers during the year. However, the customer interviews suggest that the customers want to see more of these events. To clearly establish a leadership within project management, the activities where Greenlight demonstrates its competence and innovative approach need to increase. Hosting seminars and workshops more often and to a wider selection of guests, publishing whitepapers and articles about project management related subjects, trying to appear in newspapers or magazines, etc. are all examples of activities that would give Greenlight the opportunity to demonstrate its knowledge and expertise in order to establish the company as a leader. One can argue that to be a leader, it cannot be just about being experts and delivering high-quality services; it also has to be about leading the industry forward. Again, while it already is considered a priority at Greenlight to work with ensuring high-quality services, the company needs to further work on being recognised as an industry leader in
order to further strengthen the brand reputation and in turn reap the benefits of a strong brand reputation. Therefore, Greenlight’s performance within this activity is considered to exhibit some room for improvements (orange), primarily establishing leadership and communicating it to stakeholders.

### 5.6.4 Create an attractive workplace environment

Greenlight tries to create an attractive workplace environment by designing offices designed to increase employee interactions, establishing an office culture that is less formal and more friendly, providing development opportunities for employees, etc. The recruitment process is thorough and the recruitment of talent is highly prioritised. The workplace environment is therefore considered attractive and there is no apparent room for improvement, however the career section on the website could be further developed in order to better communicate the workplace environment. For example, advertisements for available job positions do not describe how it is like to work at Greenlight, how the recruitment process is designed in order to secure the best talent, the corporate values, etc. Therefore, Greenlight’s performance within this activity is considered to show some room for improvements (orange), mainly in terms of communication. This activity can be closely related to the employer branding function activity communicate that the company is an attractive employer. However when considered as part of the brand reputation and image function, the activity emphasizes that the attractive workplace must be communicated to all stakeholders, whereas within the employer branding function the activity aims to help secure a long-term supply of competence and therefore puts more focus on communication towards current and potential employees.

### 5.6.5 Take social and environmental responsibility

Greenlight’s efforts related to social and environmental responsibility are today limited to financial sponsoring to two NGOs and sending computers to a school in Uganda. However, there are plans on increasing the efforts in this area. Fombrun et al. (2000) suggest that the actions that companies take regarding social responsibility affect the reputation and that they therefore need to be communicated. Greenlight lists the two NGOs on the company website, but there is no mention of the Ugandan school project.

The fact that Greenlight works with a number of NGOs (i.e. Greenlight has customers within the NGO sector) might also be worth communicating. Since one of the interviewed customers had no previous knowledge of Greenlight’s work within the NGO sector but was interested to learn about it, it might indicate that it is something that could be communicated clearer in order to increase the brand reputation.

While Greenlight takes some actions to take social and environmental responsibility, the efforts need to be further communicated to stakeholder. Greenlight’s performance within this activity is therefore considered to show some room for improvement (orange).
5.6.6 Exhibit strong financial performance

Although this activity may be of a somewhat different character and more difficult or complex to affect, the communication aspect is still very affectable. Greenlight’s financial situation is improving every year. Priority has been to increase sales and to grow whereupon the company has not reported a profit each year. However, the fact that Greenlight has grown every year (with two exceptions) since it was founded suggests willingness to invest for the future and prospects for future growth, which according to Fombrun et al. (2000) is an aspect that has a positive affect on the brand reputation. To further reassure potential customers that Greenlight is a low risk investment it might be worth considering the possibility to balance the growth rate in order to maintain a stronger record of profitability, something that Fombrun et al. (2000) argue could strengthen the brand reputation. This is in fact the action already taken by Greenlight, as more focus now lies on profits. The current absence of a strong record of profitability might be less important for Greenlight’s reputation since many of Greenlight’s customers are large multinational companies known for setting high standards and having high demands on their suppliers. This should give Greenlight a certain level of credibility and demonstrate financial stability. Therefore, Greenlight is considered to perform this activity well and no room for improvement has been identified (green).

5.6.7 Summary

At Greenlight, upper management believes that the Greenlight brand has a good reputation and image. The general perception among employees is that the Greenlight brand is associated with professionalism and high quality services within project management. The customer interviews revealed that this belief seems to be true. In order to build an even stronger brand and increase the brand reputation and image, some room for improvement has been identified. Especially the communication of the successes within each activity, which according to Heding et al. (2008) helps enhance the brand reputation, needs to be improved. Heding et al. (2008) especially argue that having an independent third party communicating the firm’s successes has larger impact and more credibility. The customer interviews suggest that customers who are satisfied have no problem recommending Greenlight and many have already done it. Potential customers that goes to the Greenlight website to look for information will probably find quotes from satisfied customers to be more credible than what Greenlight says about itself. However, there are no testimonials from customers available on the website. Therefore, allocating more resources to collecting and spreading more credible testimonials might be needed.

A summary of Greenlight’s performance within this branding function is illustrated in Figure 28.
5.7 Summary of analysis

The analysis of each branding function can be summarised by answering the stipulated precise research questions (see chapter 2.9):

- **How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function brand identity?**

The analysis of Greenlight’s efforts within this branding function suggests that there are no apparent activities in need of improvement.

- **How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function brand positioning?**

Greenlight can improve their efforts within the branding function brand positioning by developing a brand positioning statement, developing key messages and applying a more appropriate price level.

- **How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function employee branding?**

Greenlight can improve their efforts within the branding function employee branding by keeping employees updated on values, vision, goals, results, etc. and foster employee involvement in building the brand.

- **How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function employer branding?**

Greenlight can improve their efforts within the branding function employer branding by securing young talents and communicating that the company is an attractive employer.

- **How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function brand communication?**

Greenlight can improve their efforts within the branding function brand communication by designing a clearer and united message and improving their efforts in determining the communication objectives, choosing how to deliver the message, and collecting feedback.

- **How can Greenlight improve their work with the activities within the branding function brand reputation and image?**
Greenlight can improve their efforts within the branding function *brand reputation and image* by offering the right products and services, establishing and communicating vision and leadership, communicating an attractive workplace environment, and communicating that the company is taking social and environmental responsibility.

The activities have also been categorized as *green, orange or red* depending on Greenlight’s performance in each activity. All activities and the assessment of Greenlight’s performance within them are summarised in Figure 29, organised according to the performance/room for improvement.
Figure 29. Summary of analysed activities.

Looking at the six functions of branding defined in the theoretical framework Greenlight’s performance vary. All activities within the function brand identity are considered well performed (green). This might be explained by Wallström et al.’s (2008) statement that working with defining and establishing a brand identity is part of planning the brand and that it occurs before the brand is implemented.
The function *brand positioning* shows room for improvement in three of the five defined activities. Most alarming and in need of immediate improvement is the activity related to applying an appropriate price level. The activities within this function also differ somewhat in scope. Although all activities are important for establishing a clear positioning, the activity of developing a brand positioning statement is in Greenlight’s case quicker and easier to improve since an idea of the aspiring positioning already exists, it is just the formal documentation that is missing, whereas the activity related to applying an appropriate price level requires far more work efforts and investigation to improve. However, as all activities showing room for improvement affect the positioning it is important for Greenlight to dedicate resources to ensure better performance within all of these three activities in order not to damage the brand and aspiring positioning for the brand. It is therefore considered to be of high priority for Greenlight to address the under-performing activities within this branding function.

The function *employee branding* shows room for improvement in all activities. The importance of employees and their role, especially in a B2B context and the management consulting industry in particular, suggest that the activities within this function need to be improved rather quickly. Greenlight will need to continuously evaluate their performance within this function in order to ensure that activities aiming to get the employees to “live the brand” are in place and working.

Within the function *employer branding* two out of three activities are showing much room for improvement. Considering that employer branding can be viewed as a long-term effort in order to secure talent, it might be less prioritised by a company at an early stage. As Greenlight has “only” been alive for just over 10 years, this function might not have been a priority. Instead it looks like Greenlight has focused its efforts on establishing a brand identity, a function considered to be more of a prerequisite for successful branding (Juntunen et al., 2010). However as the company now grows and the competition for competence is increasing, as well as the competition within the management consulting industry, under-performing activities within the employer branding function will need to be addressed at some point.

Within the function *brand communication* four out of five activities are considered to be partly performed but showing room for improvement (one activity showing much room for improvement). Therefore, this function is considered performed poorly and resources need to be allocated to improve the efforts within this function. Considering the importance of communicating the brand in order to attract business from new customers, the function can lead to short-term pay-offs if performed well. By this reasoning, the function should be given a high priority.

Activities within the function *brand reputation and image* are not always easy to change and affect since they often are dependent or affected by other functions, such as brand positioning. However, the activities within the function brand reputation and image also include the communication of the efforts within each activity. At Greenlight, room for improvement has been identified within four out of six activities. The improvements especially consider the communication of successes within each activity. Since the customer interviews suggest that the interviewed customers had only positive things to say about Greenlight, improving the efforts within this function might not need to be given highest
priority. However, improving the communication of the successes in the activities should be considered when improving the brand communication function.

Based on the reasoning above, a “radar” summarising and illustrating Greenlight’s performance in each branding function is presented in Figure 30, and a list showing the recommended priority for improving each function is presented in Figure 31.

![Radar chart showing Greenlight's performance in each branding function](image)

**Figure 30. Greenlight’s performance within each branding function.**

![Priority chart for improving branding functions](image)

**Figure 31. Suggested priority for improving the branding functions.**
6 Conclusions

In this chapter, the reached conclusions are presented. The conclusions are derived from the analysis and are meant to fulfil and answer the purpose of the thesis. The chapter also provides a discussion about the generalizability of the results of the study.

The purpose of this study is to investigate and evaluate how Greenlight can improve their branding efforts in order to strengthen the brand. The study has reached the conclusion that Greenlight can improve their branding efforts by working with the following activities:

- Develop a brand positioning statement
- Develop key messages
- Keeping employees updated on values, vision, goals, results, etc.
- Determining the communication objectives
- Choosing how to deliver the message
- Collecting feedback
- Offering the right products and services
- Establishing vision and leadership
- Creating an attractive workplace environment
- Taking social and environmental responsibility
- Applying an appropriate price level
- Fostering employee involvement in building the brand
- Communicate that the company is an attractive employer
- Securing young talents
- Designing a brand communication message.

Detailed recommendations for improvements within each of these activities are presented in chapter 7.

6.1 Discussion

The analysis model developed in this study describes the branding activities identified as contributors to the branding successes of an SME within a niched management consulting industry. Therefore, it should be applicable to companies fitting that description. When applied on the case company, the model enabled the researcher to identify gaps in the company’s branding efforts in order to assess the room for improvement and reach recommendations on how to improve. Worth noting after testing the model on the case company is that some of the activities turned out to be affected by others or in a way related to one another. The case company performed well within the function brand identity, something that could be explained by theories saying that this function is something that companies usually start working with early. Also, the case company had not prioritised the function employer branding, something that might suggest that it is a function that becomes more important as a company has established itself well on the market and already achieved some company growth. These reflections could be of interest for other companies in the sector in both early and later stages. The analysis of the case company also demonstrates that although a company is working with a branding function, attention might not be given to all activities. Therefore, the need for companies to develop an understanding of the branding concept and all the underlying activities in order to be able to work effectively and successfully with each branding function is illustrated.
7 Recommendations

This chapter provides recommendations for the studied case company, Greenlight, regarding how to improve the branding activities showing room for improvement. The recommendations are customized to fit the needs of the case company, however some of the recommendations are hopefully generally applicable to companies with similar preconditions in similar situations.

7.1 Brand positioning

7.1.1 Develop a brand positioning statement

As the company grows, a formal documented brand positioning statement becomes more and more important in order to ensure that all employees in all countries seek after the same positioning. A template for formulating a statement is presented in Figure 32.

![Positioning Statement Template](image)

Using another phrasing, Levi (2007) gives the following example of a company's brand positioning statement to illustrate the level of detail, length, etc.:

“Medical Software Provider is a technology company helping specialty physicians and medical billing companies increase revenue up to 40%, productivity up to 20%, and regulatory compliance as much as 10% by streamlining and enhancing the patient-billing process.” (Levi, 2007, p. 16)
7.1.2 **Apply an appropriate price level**

The customer interviews suggest that Greenlight’s price level is perceived as the same or more competitive than other providers, with the exception of the service project managers. However, the internal survey and interviews with management at Greenlight suggest that at the company the belief is that Greenlight’s prices are somewhat higher than other suppliers. This indicates that the price level needs to be adjusted in order not to damage the brand, as the positioning as a provider of high quality and value to the customers might be negatively affected if the services are priced too low. Based on the customer interviews, the primary service segment where prices need to be adjusted is training/courses. It is however important to at the same time ensure that an increase in price can be motivated and explained to customers by providing higher quality and more value than other providers.

7.1.3 **Develop key messages**

The lack of united key messages could severely hurt the aspiring positioning and several key messages should be formulated, documented, and made easily accessible to all employees over the world.

7.2 **Employee branding**

7.2.1 **Keeping employees updated on values, vision, goals, results, etc.**

- Vision and mission statements for the brand could be framed and hung up on the wall, in all local offices, visible to employees.
- Reinstate the Greenday-events in order to more often gather the employees and provide them with updates regarding results, goals, etc.
- Ensure that employees in all local offices are updated on values, vision, goals, results, etc.
- Investigate the possibility of introducing an Intranet, where employees are provided with:
  - Updates about goals and results
  - Information about values and vision
  - Links to relevant documents in Documenta
  - Links to interesting articles/news/trends in project management
  - Document templates
  - Information about available assignments
  - Brief memos from employees who have finished an assignment describing the assignment, challenges, course of action, result, lessons learned, etc.
  - E-learning videos
  - Schedule for upcoming internal courses that employees can attend.
7.2.2 Foster employee involvement in building the brand

- Increase the number of non-work-related events for Greenlight employees.
- Introduce workshops where employees are paired up or divided into small groups and solve cases or engage in discussions related to innovation and challenges in the project management industry. The aim of these exercises is to include the employees in the creation and development of the brand. Topics for discussion could be brand values or recent and future changes in customer needs and services. The employees could also, in groups, be responsible for developing a key message about the brand or a particular service.
- Ensure that employees in the local offices feel part of the brand and the Greenlight family. Consider the possibility to increase the number of trips to the headquarters in Madrid. Encourage employees to take assignments abroad in order to increase the interactions of Greenlight employees from different countries.
- Introduce a brochure for internal use called something like “Living the Greenlight brand”, explaining what it means to be “a Greenlighter”, the benefits of being one, what’s expected of the employees, benefits, culture, values, how to interact with customers, etc. Present the brochure in combination with a small campaign in order to generate a buzz and create excitement among employees.
- Work hard with ensuring that as many employees as possible take the time to come to all internal Greenlight events. The time needs to be put aside for this in order for the Greenlight brand to endure a sustainable long-term development.

7.3 Employer branding

7.3.1 Communicate that the company is an attractive employer

- Introduce a career section on the company website. Develop content such as:
  - Benefits of working at Greenlight (personal and professional development, possibility to travel, working environment, unique competence development opportunities in the form of internal training and external assignments, etc.)
  - Quotes, interviews and career stories from selected current employees
  - Introduce a special area for graduates/inexperienced with information especially aimed at this group (such as the possibility of writing a master thesis at Greenlight)
- Post advertisements for available job openings targeted at experienced candidates on PMI’s website to gain exposure to experienced professionals looking for jobs within project management. The cost for advertising job openings on the PMI website starts at 395 USD

10 http://careerhq.pmi.org/rates/
Increase the number of channels for communicating the brand as an employer, for example by establishing a university presence (see more recommendations regarding this in chapter 7.3.2)

Take the opportunity to signal potential customers when formulating and posting job advertisements in various channels. Saying things like “We are growing fast..., our values are..., we are looking for experienced and driven top-performers with a passion for project management and creating value for customers...”, etc. can also enhance the brand reputation and spike interest among potential customers.

Make sure to always follow up on how job seekers heard about Greenlight and how they found the advertisement for the job opening. Use this information to evaluate the various communication channels and prioritise the allocation of resources.

### 7.3.2 Secure young talents

Establish a university presence in order to strengthen the brand’s attractiveness as an employer among young people. Gaining exposure at a university can also lead to future business as the students might be in the need of these types of services in the future.

#### 7.3.2.1 Course participation

There is a possibility for companies to act case companies in several courses undertaken by engineering and management students at Linköping University. Except for master thesis projects (swe: exjobb), there are many other courses that do not cost any money, give exposure among students at the university, and provide valuable insights and data for decision-making. Here are two examples:

- **TEIM04 Industriella marknads- och teknikstrategier** (Industrial market and technology strategies). TEIM04 is a course where 5th year engineering students with a specialization in management or industrial marketing analyse a case company’s strategy in relation to industry trends and development. The recommendations are usually somewhat helpful to the companies and they also get valuable exposure among students at the university. The case company and the student group (3-4 students) together decide where the focus of the analysis will be. Reports might for example focus on positioning strategies or sales strategies. It does not cost any money for the case company but requires approximately 2-3 visits by the students, each visit lasts for about 1-3 hours.

- **TEIE06 Integrerad företagsplanering** (Corporate planning). TEIE06 is a course where 4th year engineering students with a specialization in management. A group of 4-5 students analyse the whole company for about 4-5 months. The work usually includes some type of interviews with customers and mapping of the market as well as an analysis of internal activities at the company. It does not cost any money for the case company but requires some time. Confidentiality contracts are signed so that the information will not be shared outside of the student group and the examiner at the university.

#### 7.3.2.2 Career fairs

Linköping university has two career fairs: LARM and TEAM. LARM is for all engineering students whereas TEAM is mainly focusing on students studying industrial engineering and
management (swe: civilingenjör i industriell ekonomi) and business administration and economics (swe: civilekonom). LARM attracts more students and gives more exposure but TEAM usually attracts more ambitious students often looking for careers in management consulting.

- LARM
  - Attended by 7 500 students.
  - Price: 19 500 SEK. Includes several benefits.

- TEAM
  - Attended by 2 000 students.
  - Price: 30 000 SEK. Includes several benefits.

### 7.3.2.3 Sponsor

Greenlight could act as a sponsor to “I-sektionen” which represents the industrial engineering and management (swe: industriell ekonomi) students at Linköping University. Several possibilities for getting exposure, increasing brand recognition, and interacting with potential employees are given. Some examples are:

- Guest lectures
- Case workshops
- Putting up posters
- Ads in school magazine, common areas at the university, and website

More information: [http://www.i-portalen.se/foeretag](http://www.i-portalen.se/foeretag)

### 7.3.2.4 Trainee programme

In order to maintain a high level of competency within Greenlight it is important to make sure the recruitment of talent. Trends and the latest research suggest that it might be a good idea to also employ and invest in some younger less experienced people. With the use of the consultant career pyramid it is possible for Greenlight to employ a less experienced person to start off helping with projects under supervision of a more senior consultant. This is further facilitated by the fact that Greenlight works a lot with standardized models.

Since they are at an earlier stage in their careers they are willing to work for a lower salary. Younger people also tend to be more willing to travel and relocate for certain amounts of time. This will result in employees moving around the Greenlight offices all over the world and increase knowledge flows and the sharing of experiences from one office to another.

Since it will be difficult to attract the best talent with temporary contracts it might be worth considering to invest in a full-time employment of a younger less experienced person, perhaps even a recent university graduate. These persons will bring in a fresh perspective and are hungry for work and professional development. Coming directly from the university, they are not schooled in other organisations corporate cultures and will be fully shaped by the brand identity at Greenlight. Looking at competition within the field and what high achieving students want, a way to attract the most talented graduates could be to create some kind of trainee programme. An example of an advertisement for such a programme with a simple description/layout of the programme is presented in Appendix 7.
7.4 Brand communication

7.4.1 Determine the communication objective

Divide the e-mail newsletter recipients into segments based on communication objective. For example, for people who have the authority to make purchase decisions the objective with the communication would most likely be different than for people who are not responsible for purchasing the types of services that Greenlight offers. If the recipient is a newly added subscriber whose only connection to Greenlight is that he has attended a VCT-course, the objective would most likely be to raise awareness about Greenlight. A subscriber who has attended many courses by Greenlight could be interested in learning about new specific courses related to his industry and information about the benefits of being up to date within the area so that he would become interested and contact his manager asking for permission to participate in the course.

7.4.2 Design a message

✓ Develop value case histories illustrating the monetary value brought to a customer by acquiring Greenlight's services (savings in costs).
✓ Write whitepapers
✓ Collect testimonials from current and previous customers where the customers say positive things about Greenlight and how Greenlight’s services added value to the customers’ organisations.
✓ Allocate more resources to brand communication activities.
✓ Develop united communication messages.
✓ Increase the coordination of marketing strategies and marketing material OR ensure that it is clear that the main responsibility for these activities lies with the local branches and ensure that the responsibility is being taken seriously and dedicated enough time and resources. If the responsibility is placed on the local branches, ensure that the messages are congruent between the countries.
✓ Ensure that the headlines in the e-mail newsletters are well formulated and interesting.
✓ Post articles, whitepapers, new trends, etc. on LinkedIn and try to ensure that the information is of high conversation value. For example, read articles about the latest research and trends within project management related areas, such as agile, and post LinkedIn updates such as "In the latest issue of Journal of Project Management, Professor NAME discusses the importance of establishing clear roles of responsibility and the knowledge flow process...".
✓ Ask current customers if they are willing to be interviewed and have it published in the e-mail newsletter and on Greenlight's LinkedIn page. The customer would get exposure and an opportunity to talk about their company, how they work with project management or other aspects related to project management, how Greenlight has helped them, etc. This will be beneficial for Greenlight and the customer gets to promote his company, a potential win-win situation.
7.4.3 Choose how to deliver the message

- Develop a promotional video.
- Increase the online presence. Aim for posting updates on LinkedIn once a week and to make some kind of noise at least once a day (for example engage in a discussion, share an article, follow up on comments on posts, etc.). Make a schedule stipulating who is in charge of this, it may be different people each day in order to not take up too much time from one person and to get fresh and different perspectives each day.
- Offer a free course for a select group of people (important that the persons are carefully selected, for example influencers within their organisation, trendsetters in the project management industry, people who works for trade magazines. Can lead to positive word-of-mouth between individuals and in magazine articles.
- Try to appear in newspapers, magazines, articles about project management, etc.

7.4.4 Collect feedback

- In the course evaluation questionnaire, include a question about where/how the participant heard about Greenlight. This will contribute to the evaluation of different communication channels effectiveness and future resource allocation.
- Ask how job seekers heard about Greenlight.
- Evaluate the statistics for the newsletter more carefully and try different content and delivery dates each month/quarter in order to identify what type of content gets the most views and what time of the month most people open the newsletter.

7.5 Brand reputation and image

7.5.1 Offer the right products and services

- Dedicate more resources to service innovation

7.5.2 Establish vision and leadership

Although considered experts within project management (by interviewed customers), Greenlight must improve their efforts to establish leadership within the field and communicating it to stakeholders.

- Try to appear in newspapers/magazines
- Publish articles in trade magazines
- Host seminars and workshops more frequently and extend the invitations to influential people within the field, people from newspapers/magazines
- Frequently attend seminars / give presentations
- Collaborate with university researchers within project management (provide information and appear in academic and scientific research, learn about and perhaps even try the latest methods and models within project management, etc.)
7.5.3 Create an attractive workplace environment

See chapter 7.3.1 for recommendations on how to improve the communication of the brand as an attractive employer. The major difference is that this activity stresses that the communication must be directed not only towards current and potential employees but to all stakeholders since it strengthens the brand reputation.

7.5.4 Take social and environmental responsibility

✔ The fact that Greenlight has customers within the NGO sector could reflect positively on the brand reputation and should be advertised more clearly on the website, newsletters, blog, LinkedIn, etc.

✔ Communicate (for example via the website, LinkedIn, blog, etc.) that Greenlight is participating in a project providing computers for a school in Uganda.

✔ To remind people of Greenlight’s social responsibilities, follow Unicef’s activity on LinkedIn and “share” one of their posts and adding a title saying something like “Unicef, one of the NGOs that Greenlight contributes to, recently presented a study suggesting...”

7.6 Suggestions for further studies

Information that has been attained from the interviews at Greenlight as well as from extensive literature suggest that in order to be able to communicate and uphold a brand and a position as a firm that stand for competence, experience and knowledge within the area of project management, the firm and its employees must be able to deliver services with a high standard of quality and competence. Kotler and Pfoertsch (2007) argue:

“Without great products or services and an organisation that can sustain them, there can be no successful brand.” (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2007, p. 358)

Ryan and Silvanto (2013) suggest that the qualifications and competence of the people providing the services are critical considerations in a B2B context. The authors further state that in a B2B context sales are likely to be part of a long-term relationship between a buyer and a seller, which further emphasizes the role of the employees and their ability to interact with customers in an appropriate manner. Mudambi (2002) also stresses the importance for sellers to display expertise in order to establish trust. This requires that the consultants and trainers are well trained and have sufficient competence and experience. To ensure such a high level of knowledge, it is important to actively work with competence development and knowledge sharing within the organisation. It is also important to carefully follow up and evaluate delivered services to make sure that the customers are satisfied with the services. Customer satisfaction is especially important in order to encourage positive word-of-mouth. Interviews with upper management at Greenlight suggest that there are difficulties getting the extensive knowledge and experience that many senior long-time employees possess to spread to the more recently employed people.
Especially younger more inexperienced employees who have the most need for this valuable knowledge are having problems attaining it.

All in all, further studies are suggested within the area in order to attain more knowledge about the problems and how to best meet this challenge.

Some suggestions, based solely on the experience and knowledge of the author of this thesis, are however given here. The suggestions may be considered by upper management at Greenlight or act as material for further discussions regarding the issue.

➢ Take more advantage of “the consultant pyramid”.

During interviews for this thesis, Romander (2014) mentioned “the consultant pyramid” as a common way for management consulting firms to describe a consultant’s career (example illustrated in Figure 22). The idea is to categorize consultants according to their competence, experience, and knowledge. For example, a person might start his career at Greenlight when he is young, has recently graduated from university and is relatively inexperienced. He will then attain the position of something like junior consultant or similar. For the projects that Greenlight work on, a number of junior consultants will be assigned to devote 100 % of their time on a certain project. On the same project, in order to uphold a certain level of quality, a senior consultant will devote maybe 50 % of his time and a master maybe somewhat 5-10 % of his time. This will help reduce the cost of the resources since less experienced junior consultants are less expensive to put on a project, and at the same time it will allow the junior consultants to gain experience and knowledge from the more senior employees. This is, according to Furusten (2013) how the majority of the larger management consulting firms operate. The benefits are many, as mentioned it will reduce the cost and allow more efficient resource allocation, as well as nurture the competence development at the firm. Furusten (2013) furthermore discusses that the larger firms often use some kind of standardized model in their work, which makes it easier to employ young and inexperienced consultants. This can be related to the GPM-model (or PROPS-model) that Greenlight often uses as a basis in many projects. As mentioned earlier in this thesis regarding the Greenlight Talent Program and the importance of also recruiting younger people, younger people tend to be more willing to travel and relocate for certain amounts of time. This will result in employees moving around the Greenlight offices all over the world and helping to spread knowledge and experiences from one office to another.

➢ End-of-project seminars

After finishing a big project, a seminar could be held where the involved employee(s) briefly talks about the challenges, course of action, and what they have learned from the project. These seminars should be scheduled so that as many of Greenlight’s employees can attend. For smaller projects, the same information can be written down on 1-2 pages and then stored in Documenta as well as distributed to all Greenlight employees. It is important not to make the document too long in order to ensure that as many employees as possible take the time to read every end-of-project document.

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11 Documenta is the internal online-based storage location for Greenlight documents.
If a project carried out by employees in other countries than Spain, a yearly seminar could be scheduled when all Greenlight employees worldwide meet at the headquarters in Madrid for a day. During this day, the employees will get the chance to present their most important experiences from the past year. An event such as this would also help boost the company moral, help strengthen the corporate values and brand identity in order to get the employees to “live the brand”, and help unite Greenlight employees from different countries.

➤ Sponsor program

Greenlight employees can be divided into pairs, where two co-workers will act as each other’s sponsor. The two employees will help each other to establish individual development plans based on the person’s personal and professional development goals. The sponsor will then support, encourage and follow up with his or her partner in order to provide moral support and follow up on the progress.

➤ Introduce a minimum quota for internal training

A minimum yearly quota for internal training could be established. This means that every Greenlight employee will be encouraged to attend internal training courses (VCT or ILT). This will further increase the competence at the employees. The quota may be adjusted according to how long an employee has worked at Greenlight. For younger and more newly employed personnel it might be good to have a higher requirement for internal courses, whereas older, more experienced, and long-time employees might not need as high a requirement for number of training courses.

7.7 Suggestions for further reading

Kalafatis et al. (2012) discuss the impact of brand equity on B2B co-branding. The authors give recommendations on how to choose partners and what impact the difference in brand equity and company size will have on the partnership and respective firm’s brand equity. One of the key findings is that in a co-branding partnership the smaller firm captures more benefits in total, especially in economic terms. However, the smaller firm in a co-branding partnership is less likely to capture the knowledge-based benefits from the brand alliance. From the smaller firm’s perspective, the alliance should therefore be viewed as an opportunity to improve brand awareness and increase market share, rather than an opportunity to gain knowledge.

Furusten (2013) argues that smaller management consulting firms should try and differentiate and maybe even develop a niche focus in order to be able to compete against the larger and better well known firms. This means that the firm sometimes needs to pass on assignments that it feels that it is not qualified for in order not to risk hurting the firm’s and brand’s reputation (Furusten, 2013). Because of this, some smaller firms set up a network with other firms and collaborate in terms of sending assignments that others are more capable of carrying out to another firm (Furusten, 2013). In order to get business in return it is important that the firm finds the right partners with the right competencies for the network so that the firms complement each other. A way to reduce the risk of not getting as much back as you give is to introduce a brokerage fee (Furusten, 2013). Furusten
(2013) argues that this way of operating is quite common among consultants. However, some firms find that it could be very risky and argue that even though someone else is carrying out the work, the firm giving the recommendation to the client is still carrying some of the responsibility, which is problematic since the firm cannot affect the service quality (Furusten, 2013).

There is also the possibility to engage in co-branding. Co-branding can help strengthen a brand and increase sales revenues from existing customers as well as from new customers (Kotler and Keller, 2006). It does however involve risks, especially regarding the lack of control that is associated with aligning the brand with other brands in consumers’ minds (Kotler and Keller, 2006). It therefore requires a lot of strategic consideration and Kotler and Keller (2006) mention that the firm needs to make a number of decisions and answer a number of questions:

- What capabilities do you not have?
- What resource constraints are you faced with (people, time, money, etc.)?
- What growth goals or revenue needs do you have?
- Is it a profitable business venture?
- How does it help to maintain or strengthen brand equity?
- Is there any possible risk of weakening brand equity?
- Does it offer any extrinsic advantages (for example learning opportunities)?

Kotler and Keller (2006) argue that a necessary condition for successful co-branding is that the brands involved separately have brand equity in terms of adequate brand awareness and a sufficiently positive brand image. The authors furthermore state that the most important requirement is that the match of two brands is logical. Consumers have shown to perceive co-brands more favourably if the two brands are complementary rather than similar (Kotler and Keller, 2006).
8 Abbreviations

Greenlight – Greenlight Project Management S.L.

PMO – Project Management Office

B2B – Business-to-business

B2C – Business-to-consumer

NGO – Non-governmental organisation

SME – Small and medium-sized enterprises
9 References

9.1 Printed sources


9.2 Electronic sources


9.3 Oral sources

Daniel Kindström, Supervisor, Linköping University

John Lindberg, Managing Director UK, Greenlight Project Management UK
2014-03-11 | Interview

Mats Malmström, Managing Director Americas, Greenlight Project Management Americas
2014-03-20 | Interview

Alfonso Mora, Senior Project Manager and Responsible for Marketing, Greenlight Project Management Spain
2014-02-04 | Interview

Rickard Romander, CEO and founder, Greenlight Project Management Group

Customer 1
2014-04-25 | Interview

Customer 2
2014-04-25 | Interview

Customer 3
2014-04-28 | Interview
Customer 4

2014-04-28 | Interview

Customer 5

2014-05-06 | Interview

Customer 6

2014-05-08 | Interview
10 Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1 — Interview guide CEO

Do I have your permission to record this interview?

How often do companies who aren’t and haven’t been customers contact Greenlight on their own initiative to inquire about Greenlight’s services?

What channels of communication are available in such cases? (Phone, mail, contact form on website, etc.)

Do you have any partnerships or other forms of cooperation with other firms that you refer clients to if you feel that you do not have the necessary competence to take on a certain assignment?

How often do you refer clients to these partners?

Have you received any clients from these partners?

Do you have any partnerships or other forms of cooperation with other companies?

What is the nature of these partnerships?

How do you plan to reach the targeted revenue for 2015?

How do you primarily plan to grow your business in terms of increasing the sales of courses, project managers or consulting (e.g. total solutions, PMO in the cloud, etc.)?

Do you feel that Greenlight has and communicates a clear position?

How do you want current and potential clients to perceive Greenlight?

What is your most important message to your target audience?

What do you do in order to convey this message to your target audience?

What do you do in terms of brand communication / marketing communications today?

What channels do you use?

How does the distribution among these communication channels look like?

Do you follow up on the effectiveness of brand communication and marketing efforts?

What method of communication has been the most successful?

How autonomous are the different countries?

In terms of communication and marketing efforts (operative and strategic)?

Same image in all countries?

How do you work with maintaining strong relationships with current and previous clients?

What pricing models do you use?
Would you say that Greenlight’s prices are relatively high or low compared to competitors?

What are the most common reasons for potential clients not choosing Greenlight after some initial negotiations?

How do you work with recruiting?

Do you have routines for following up the quality of delivered services?
- What are they?
- How do you collect feedback?
- For what services do you collect feedback?
- How is the collected feedback analysed?

According to you, what is Greenlight’s primary strength and weakness?

How do you think that your customers perceive the Greenlight brand?

How do you work with competence development and knowledge sharing?

What is your ratio of returning customers?

How often are meetings held with the entire staff regarding company goals and objectives, company vision, strategy for achieving these goals, etc.?
- To what extent are the employees involved in the development of these things?

What kind of introduction do new employees get about Greenlight?
- Are they told about the company’s history?
- ...mission?
- ...vision?
- ...goals (financial/non-financial)?
- ...corporate values and culture?

To what extent do you work with standardized models/methods?

How big is the marketing budget?

Has Greenlight been mentioned in newspapers, articles, etc.?

What is the brand’s particular vision and aim?

What makes it different?

What are the signs that make the brand recognisable?

Do you do any competitor analyses?
- If yes, tell me more about how you do them, how often, and what you do with the information you get.
10.2 Appendix 2 — Interview guide

Managing Directors

Do I have your permission to record this interview?

How often do companies who aren’t and haven’t been customers contact Greenlight on their own initiative to inquire about Greenlight’s services?

What channels of communication are available in such cases? (Phone, mail, contact form on website, etc.)

Do you have any partnerships or other forms of cooperation with other firms that you refer clients to if you feel that you do not have the necessary competence to take on a certain assignment?

How often do you refer clients to these partners?

Have you received any clients from these partners?

Do you have any partnerships or other forms of cooperation with other companies?

What is the nature of these partnerships?

How do you plan to reach the targeted revenue for 2015?

How do you primarily plan to grow your business in terms of increasing the sales of courses, project managers or consulting (e.g. total solutions, PMO in the cloud, etc.)?

Do you feel that Greenlight has and communicates a clear position?

How do you want current and potential clients to perceive Greenlight?

What is your most important message to your target audience?

What do you do in order to convey this message to your target audience?

What do you do in terms of brand communication / marketing communications today?

What channels do you use?

How does the distribution among these communication channels look like?

Do you follow up on the effectiveness of brand communication and marketing efforts?

What method of communication has been the most successful?

How autonomous are the different countries?

In terms of communication and marketing efforts (operative and strategic)?

Same image in all countries?

How do you work with maintaining strong relationships with current and previous clients?

What pricing models do you use?

Would you say that Greenlight’s prices are relatively high or low compared to competitors?
What are the most common reasons for potential clients not choosing Greenlight after some initial negotiations?

How do you work with recruiting?

Do you have routines for following up the quality of delivered services?
   
   What are they?
   
   How do you collect feedback?
   
   For what services do you collect feedback?
   
   How is the collected feedback analysed?

According to you, what is Greenlight’s primary strength and weakness?

How do you think that your customers perceive the Greenlight brand?

How do you work with competence development and knowledge sharing?
10.3 Appendix 3 — Interview Guide

Responsible for Marketing

Do I have your permission to record this interview?

Could you please tell me a little bit about your role as responsible for marketing and what you do?

How big is the marketing budget?

What are the main marketing goals?

What are the main marketing activities?

Which channels do you use to communicate the brand?

How much time do you dedicate to marketing related work?

How well coordinated are the marketing activities in different countries where Greenlight has offices?
10.4 Appendix 4 — Employee survey
Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. The survey is completely anonymous and the answers will be very helpful in the process of improving the branding and competence development efforts at GreenlightPM.

**1. If you were to describe GreenlightPM with just a few words, what would they be?**

**2. How well are you familiar with GreenlightPM’s vision and mission statement?**
   - Very well
   - Well
   - Somewhat
   - Not at all

**3. Can you list GreenlightPM’s three common values?**
   - No
   - Yes (please list them here)

**4. Do you feel that you are a part of creating the GreenlightPM brand?**
   - Yes
   - No

**5. Do you feel like part of the “GreenlightPM family”?**
   - Yes
   - No
*6. Do you feel that you get enough information from upper management regarding business goals, sales and profit progress, corporate values, etc.?
   Yes
   No

*7. What do you think that GreenlightPM’s primary strength is, compared to its competitors?

*8. What do you think that GreenlightPM’s primary areas to improve are, compared to its competitors?
9. How do you think customers perceive GreenlightPM?

10. Do you feel that GreenlightPM meets the needs of the customers?
    All the time
    Most of the time
    Sometimes
    Almost never

11. Have you noticed anything that customers are missing from GreenlightPM?

12. Have you received any negative feedback from customers?
    No
    Yes (please specify what the negative feedback was)

13. Do you feel that the services that GreenlightPM offer are in line with the customers’ needs?
    Yes
No (do you have any specific examples where GreenlightPM's offers do not fulfil the customers' needs)

**14. Do you have any suggestions on how GreenlightPM's offer could be changed in order to better meet customer needs?**

No

Yes (please specify)

**15. Is there any type of service that customers have asked for that GreenlightPM does not offer?**

No

Yes (please specify what kind of service)

**16. Do you have any suggestions on how GreenlightPM can strengthen and better communicate its brand?**
17. What do you feel is the most valuable competence that you have and contribute with in your work?

18. Do you feel that GreenlightPM and its employees are lacking competence that customers want in any area?

   No
   Yes (please specify in what area)

19. What do you think are the most important qualities that customers value...

   ...in a project manager?
   ...in a trainer?
   ...in a consultant?

20. Do you feel that the customers’ needs are changing regarding the competence they request in a project manager, trainer or consultant?

   No
   Yes (please specify)
21. In your opinion, what area is most important for GreenlightPM to focus on regarding developing competence?
22. Would you be interested in working on a project in another country for a limited period of time?
   No
   Yes, for 1-2 weeks at a time
   Yes, for 1-3 months at a time
   Yes, for 3-6 months at a time

23. Which kind of assignments would you be interested in doing in another country for a limited period of time?
   None
   Training
   Consulting
   Project manager

24. Are there any kind of competence development opportunities you would like to see more of?

25. What have you done in order to foster your own development at GreenlightPM?

26. Do you have any suggestions or reflections regarding competence development at GreenlightPM?
27. Do you have any suggestions or reflections regarding knowledge sharing at GreenlightPM?
10.5 Appendix 5 — Interview guide customers

Do I have your permission to record this interview?

What are the first words that come into mind when you hear the name Greenlight?

How would you describe Greenlight with ONE word?

What type of services have you purchased from Greenlight?

- Consulting services?
- Training courses?
- Project managers?

Are you satisfied with the relationship you have with Greenlight and the services that they perform?

Is there anything that Greenlight can do in order to improve their services?

How is Greenlight different from competitors?

How did you get in touch with Greenlight in the first place?

Did you consider offers from competitors before choosing Greenlight?

- If yes, what made you choose Greenlight?

Would you recommend Greenlight to others?

- If no, why not?

Have you recommended Greenlight to others?

How likely is it that you would purchase additional services from Greenlight in the future?

How would you rank Greenlight and the quality of the services they provide on a scale of 1 to 10?

How would you rank Greenlight and the price level of the services they provide on a scale of 1 to 10? (10 being very competitive and 1 being not competitive at all)

Do you receive and read the Greenlight newsletter?

Which of these words would you associate with Greenlight? Could you also please rank them in order?

- Quality
- Competence
- Price worthy
- Professionalism
- Proactive
- Expensive

Would you feel comfortable with giving a quote about Greenlight and have it put on the Greenlight website with your name and company name?
Greenlight Project Management is a leading innovative international Management Consulting company specializing in Project Management and Project Portfolio Management. With the Head Office in Madrid, Spain, Greenlight PM has also branch-offices in USA, United Kingdom, Panama, Sweden, Qatar and Portugal. We offer Total Solutions which includes Project Models & Tools, Consulting, Training, Project Managers and PMOs.

Our clients comes from various business sectors such as Telecom, Financial, Aerospace, Railway, Renewables, IT and Consulting and are based in especially Europe, Africa, Middle East, Latin America and North America.

**We are now looking for Consultants – Sweden**

Greenlight Project Management is now looking for selfdriven and motivated Consultants with a minimum of 3 years project management experience -preferably from the Telecom, IT, Banking and Insurance sectors for assignments in our expanding Nordic region. Relevant certifications such as PMP®, PgMP, Prince2, CBAP or similar are considered as an merit. We require University degree and strong written and oral English communication skills.

We look for multidisciplinary people who can help us commercialize and deliver Total Solutions to our customers.

Our Nordic office is in Stockholm but you might be required to travel both inside and outside of the country.

**Are you interested?**

More information about our company can be found at our [WEB site](http://www.GreenlightPM.com)

We look forward to your application by latest 2014-02-21 to pauli.ilmatainen@greenlightpm.com
Greenlight Project Management Ltd is looking for Senior Project Managers with Telecom experience for our UK market.

We expect that you have at least 4-5 years experience in managing network roll-out, upgrade/modernization projects for Radio Access and Core Networks or System Integration projects.

You must hold at least a relevant undergraduate degree and have strong written and spoken English communication skills.

The contract period would typically be 6 to 12 months, with the possibility for extension. The contract starting date will be depending on the project assigned to you.

Experience from working or studying in the UK will be an advantage.

Please mark any email conversation in regards to this position with “Telecom Project Manager (UK)”. Are you interested?

More information about our company can be found at our WEB site www.GreenlightPM.com
Are you, or are you about to be, a recent graduate with an excellent academic track record looking for an opportunity to have an international career in management consulting? Do you have a passion for project management, enjoy working in teams, and have great interpersonal skills? Then this might be a perfect fit for you!

The Greenlight Talent Program offers you a chance to fully live up to your potential and travel across the globe working with people from all over the world.

Depending on availability and your profile you will be assigned a home office at one of our local branches. The program is made up of four blocks. During the first block you will be placed at our global headquarters in Madrid. You will then return to your home office to partake in an external customer project. For the third block you will get ownership of your own internal project, which you upon completion will present for global upper management. For the fourth block you will get another chance to participate in an external customer project, and this time you will really be expected to contribute. One of the customer project assignments will be carried out abroad. Throughout the program you will receive comprehensive training in areas such as project management, models and methodologies, consultant professionalism and much more.

After completion of the program you will be offered a permanent position with one of our local branches, depending on availability and current needs. As an employee at Greenlight, you will be given the opportunity to constant personal development with possibilities of international assignments.

Read more and apply at www.greenlightpm.com/trainee

Greenlight Project Management is a Leading, Innovative and International Management Consultant Company, focusing on Project Management.

Our Mission is to help our clients to achieve Outstanding Business Results through Great Project Performance – realized by the Best Project Management, enabled by an Excellent Project Culture.

We contribute with extensive experience and competence, and our Total Solution, which includes Project Managers, PMOs, Training, Consulting and Project Models & Tools.

Sweden – Spain – UK – USA – Qatar – Panama – Portugal