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**LIFESTYLE AS A CULTURAL FORCE IN  
BRAND PHENOMENA: ANALYZING RED  
BULL PORTUGAL**

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Dissertação apresentada ao IADE - Faculdade de Design, Tecnologia e Comunicação da Universidade Europeia, para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Marketing e Inovação realizada sob a orientação científica do Professor Doutor William Cantú, Professor Auxiliar Convidado do IADE – Universidade Europeia.

## **Abstract**

This dissertation presents a comprehensive analysis towards lifestyle brands, with a specific focus on the case study of Red Bull. Lifestyle brands have become increasingly influential in shaping consumer preferences and behaviors, as they offer products and experiences that align with consumers' values, aspirations, and self-identities. Understanding how consumers perceive and engage with lifestyle brands is essential for marketers to develop effective strategies and build strong brand-consumer relationships.

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative data collection methods, such as interviews (Desai, 2002), participant observation (Kawulich, 2005), in depth analysis using Kapferer Identity Prism (Kapferer, 2015) that provide in-depth insights into consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and emotional connections with Red Bull as a lifestyle brand. In addition, a secondary data analysis (Vartanian, 2011) was conducted to gain insights into how Red Bull strategically positions its brand and communicates its message to individuals.

Specifically focuses on Red Bull Portugal, this study examines various aspects of consumer reception, including brand image, brand personality, consumer identity formation, and brand loyalty. It investigates how Red Bull strategically positions itself as a lifestyle brand and appeals to its target audience through its marketing efforts and brand experiences.

Overall, this dissertation contributes to the existing literature on consumer behavior and brand management by providing an in-depth analysis towards lifestyle brands, using Red Bull as a case study. By examining the specific strategies and tactics employed by Red Bull, this research sheds light on the effectiveness of lifestyle branding and provides valuable insights for marketers seeking to navigate the dynamic landscape of consumer preferences and engagement with lifestyle brands.

**Keywords:** Red Bull; Lifestyle Brands; Brand Management; Brand Personality; Communication

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## **Chapter I - Introduction**

Lifestyle brands have become a prominent phenomenon in contemporary consumer culture, with their ability to transcend product functionalities and establish unique identities that resonate with consumers on a deeper level (Holt, 2019). These brands go beyond mere transactions, positioning themselves as symbols of personal values, aspirations, and lifestyles (Kapferer, 2012). Red Bull, the iconic energy drink brand, stands as a prime example of a lifestyle brand that has successfully captured the attention and loyalty of consumers worldwide. This thesis endeavors to examine the dynamics and challenges surrounding lifestyle brands, with a specific focus on the case study of Red Bull Portugal.

The rise of lifestyle branding reflects a shift in consumer preferences and behaviors. Today's consumers increasingly seek products that align with their identities and actively seek out brands that project a desired image or lifestyle (Solomon, 2020). Red Bull's meteoric rise to prominence can be attributed to its masterful ability to cultivate an aspirational lifestyle around extreme sports, adventure, and high energy. By strategically associating itself with events like the Red Bull Air Race and sponsoring extreme sports athletes, Red Bull has positioned itself as a catalyst for adrenaline-fueled experiences and an emblem of daring and excitement.

Understanding how consumers receive lifestyle brands like Red Bull is crucial for marketers and brand managers aiming to create meaningful connections with their target audience. By examining the factors that influence consumer perception, adoption, and loyalty towards such brands, valuable insights can be gained regarding consumer behavior, brand positioning, and marketing strategies. This thesis seeks to address the following research questions:

- How does Red Bull Portugal incorporate lifestyle elements into its brand identity and marketing communications?
- How do individuals in Portugal perceive and engage with the lifestyle aspects promoted by Red Bull?
- What are the effects of Red Bull Portugal's lifestyle-oriented branding on consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchase behaviors?

To address these questions, a qualitative research method will be employed, including in-depth interviews (Desai, 2002), participant observation (Kawulich, 2005), in depth analysis using

the application of the Kapferer Prism framework (Kapferer, 2015) and secondary data analysis (Vartanian, 2011). The findings of this study will contribute to the growing body of knowledge on consumer behavior, lifestyle branding, and the effectiveness of marketing strategies in the context of lifestyle brands.

By examining the case of Red Bull, this research will provide insights that can be applied to other lifestyle brands seeking to engage and resonate with consumers on a deeper level. Ultimately, the findings will help marketers and brand managers understand the intricacies of brand communication and enable them to craft strategies that effectively communicate brand values, foster consumer loyalty, and create lasting connections with their target audience.

Considered one of the founders of the scientific method, Francis Bacon (2013), emphasized the importance of systematic observation, experimentation, and inductive reasoning in the acquisition of scientific knowledge. Thomas Kuhn (2015) introduced the concept of "paradigm shifts" in his book, as he argued that scientific progress occurs through the replacement of existing scientific paradigms with new ones due to anomalies or crises in the old paradigm. The following research aims to examine and understand the concept towards lifestyle brands, with a specific emphasis on Red Bull Portugal.

The primary focus of the study was to examine the concept of lifestyle brands, with Red Bull as the specific case study. The research employed a qualitative method approach, combining interviews (Desai, 2002), participant observation (Kawulich, 2005), in depth analysis using Kapferer Identity Prism (Kapferer, 2015) and a secondary data analysis (Vartanian, 2011) as the main methodological tools. To gain insights into consumer perceptions, Red Bull employees were interviewed to gather first-hand information about the brand's marketing strategies, target audience, and the consumer experience. These interviews provided valuable insights into how Red Bull positions itself as a lifestyle brand and how it aims to connect with its consumers. Participant observation was another crucial methodology used in the study, which involved immersing oneself in the consumer's environment and observing their behaviors and interactions with Red Bull. This approach included attending Red Bull-sponsored events, observing consumer reactions, and documenting the overall consumer experience to capture real-time consumer responses, preferences, and engagement with the brand. In addition, the Kapferer Identity Prism was employed as a theoretical framework to analyze the brand's identity and its impact on consumer perception. This framework helped in examining the various dimensions of Red Bull's

brand identity, including its physical attributes, personality traits, culture, relationship with consumers, and reflection of consumer ideals. By integrating Red Bull employer in-depth interviews (Desai, 2002), participant observation (Kawulich, 2005), in depth analysis using the application of the Kapferer Prism framework (Kapferer, 2015) and secondary data analysis (Vartanian, 2011)., this dissertation aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the brand achieves the level of lifestyle brand.

Regarding the structure of the dissertation, it can be divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the research, presenting the problem statement that forms the basis of the investigation, the research questions to be addressed throughout the study, the objectives to be achieved, and the methods employed in the dissertation.

In Chapter 2 the literature review is conducted. This section explores the fields of consumption communities, brand personality, cultural branding, lifestyle brands, emotional brands, consumer self-expression through brands, sports marketing and the use of social media in sports marketing.

The literature review encompasses the works of authors such as Max Weber (1930), Kapferer (2012), Godin (2012), Ditcher (2012), Joyce Hill Stoner and Rebecca Rushfield (2012), Douglas Holt (2019). Various documents analyzed in this study were obtained through access to different sources, including dissertations, books, online documents, works by other authors published as scientific articles, among others.

The development part of the thesis – Chapter 3 - delves into an in-depth exploration of the building of the Red Bull brand since its inception. The focus is placed on understanding the brand's design and objectives, tracing its evolution from a mere beverage drink to a powerful lifestyle brand. In this section, a comprehensive research study is conducted to uncover the core essence and values that have shaped the Red Bull brand. The objective is to highlight the brand's strategic approach in leveraging its status beyond a traditional product. Red Bull's goal has been to establish a strong brand personality that resonates with consumers on a deeper level, creating a sense of identity and belonging. Another critical aspect explored in this section is the role of storytelling and content creation in Red Bull's brand communication strategy, as the brand has masterfully utilized storytelling as a means to connect with its target audience, creating compelling narratives that embody the spirit of adventure, extreme sports, and pushing boundaries. Through captivating content, Red Bull has effectively communicated its brand message and fostered strong emotional

connections with consumers. In addition, the thesis investigates Red Bull's expansion into areas beyond energy drinks. The brand has extended its presence and influence by diversifying into various sectors, including sports events, music, and entertainment. This expansion strategy has allowed Red Bull to engage with consumers in different contexts, reinforcing its position as a lifestyle brand that transcends the boundaries of a traditional beverage company.

In the Chapter 4 of the thesis, a comprehensive analysis will be conducted to examine lifestyle brands, with a specific focus on the case study of Red Bull. This analysis will be approached through a rigorous methodology that incorporates three key methods: interviews, participant observation, in-depth analysis using the Kapferer Identity Prism and a secondary data analysis.

The first method employed is interviews conducted with Red Bull employers. These interviews involve engaging with individuals who have direct experience and knowledge of the brand's perception, both from a business and consumer standpoint. By interviewing Red Bull employers, who are intimately involved in shaping and promoting the brand, valuable insights are gained towards Red Bull as a lifestyle brand.

The second method is participant observation, where the researcher actively immerse himself in the environment where consumers interact with Red Bull. By observing and documenting consumer behaviors, preferences, and interactions with the brand, valuable firsthand insights are gathered. This method provides a comprehensive understanding of the actual experiences and behaviors of consumers in relation to Red Bull as a lifestyle brand.

An in-depth analysis using the Kapferer Identity Analysis is conducted. This analysis framework, developed by Jean-Noël Kapferer, examines the various dimensions of a brand's identity and how they are communicated and interpreted by consumers. By applying this framework to Red Bull, the researcher delves into the brand's personality, values, culture, and symbolic associations, shedding light on how consumers perceive and interpret these elements in the context of a lifestyle brand.

The last method conducted on this study it's a secondary data analysis. Using secondary data analysis to explore Red Bull's communication strategies with consumers.

The final Chapter of the research addresses the initial research questions, confirms the main findings, presents the conclusions drawn from a critical analysis of the objects of study, and provides final considerations derived from the investigation.

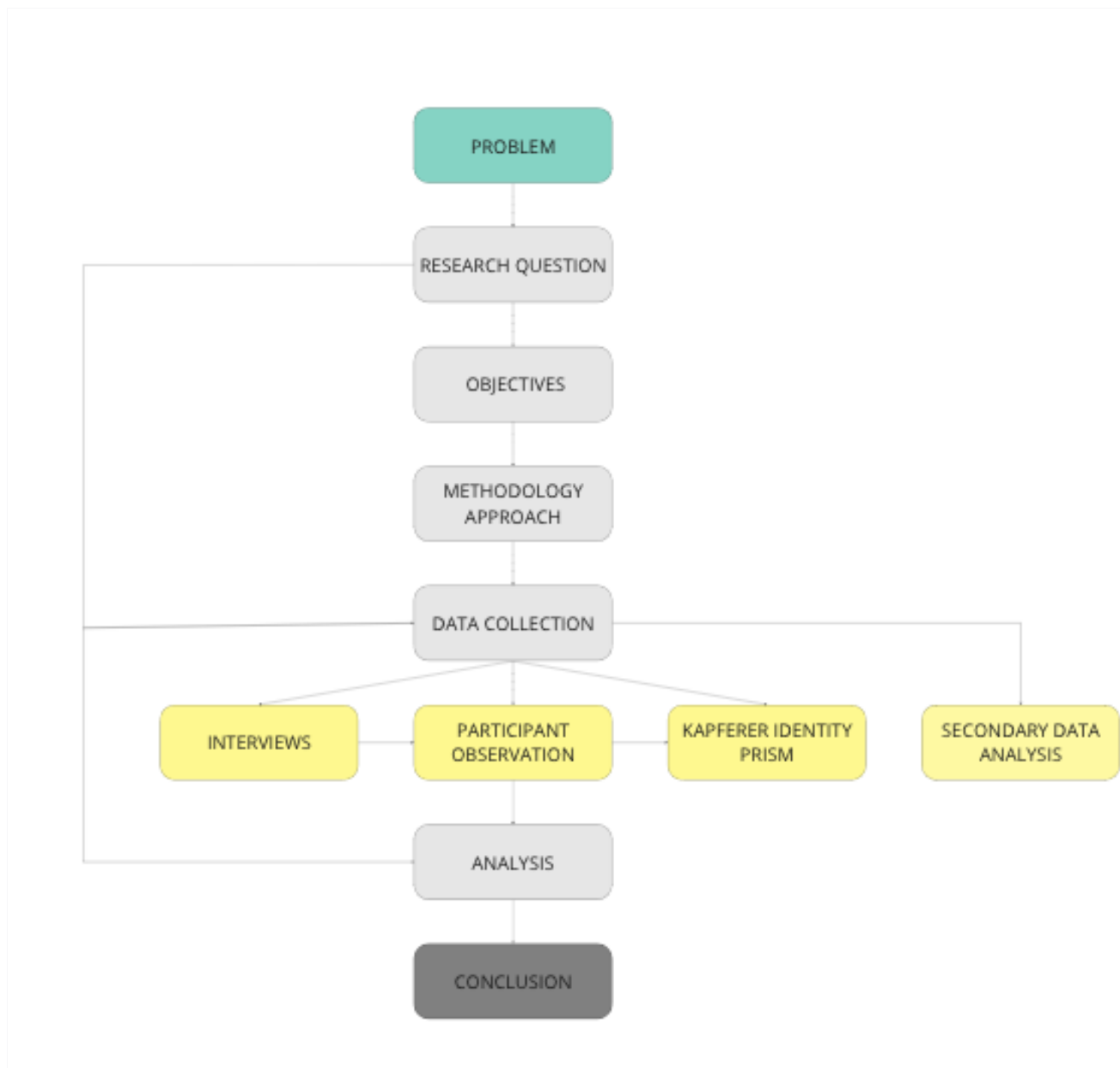


Figure 1. Investigation Diagram. Author's Image.

## Chapter II - Literature Review

### 2.1. Emotional Basis of Consumer Behavior

The behavior of consumers towards brands has always been of great interest to marketers - especially studies to understand the correlation between emotional connections and consumer

behavior. Austrian American psychologist Ernest Dichter (2012) presented his thoughts on the development of motivational research – to the study of consumer behavior in the marketplace. Based on the Freudian psychoanalysis<sup>1</sup>, Dichter (2012) developed a concept called “the art of influence”, in which the author presupposes that humans make decisions not based on rational considerations but emotions. Furthermore, he claims that all the items that encircle us possess their own essence, possessing human-like attributes as they solely exist within the realm of humanity.

The concept of material culture, as proposed by Bernie Herman (2012), aligns with the idea of Ernest Dichter, that humans make decisions not solely based on rational considerations but also emotions. Material culture refers to the objects, artifacts, and physical environment that shape and reflect human behavior and values (Herman, 2012). According to Herman, material culture influences our emotions, beliefs, and decision-making processes. He suggests that our decisions are not solely guided by rationality but are also influenced by the emotional connections we have with material objects and the cultural meanings associated with them. Joyce Hill Stoner and Rebecca Rushfield (2012) supported the definition of Bernie, as the scholar expressed that material culture is the unpacking or mining of both historic and everyday objects to find the embedded ideas and concepts that define the surrounding society. Through this perspective, material goods become an act to express the beliefs and social relations of individuals.

Social lives emerge as individuals engage in the processes of obtaining, utilizing, and interchanging objects (Foxall, 2021). Investigates the ways in which consumption practices and consumer identities shape and are shaped by broader social, economic, and cultural processes. Lury (2011) provides a comprehensive analysis of the complex relationship between individuals, society, and consumerism. By considering the social life of things, the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1986) analyzed the ways in which goods create social identity, and the effects on interpersonal influence behind the transformability of objects. The prominent anthropologist examines how goods and commodities play a crucial role in shaping social identity and cultural practices. He explores the social, economic, and cultural dimensions of objects, discussing how they circulate, are valued, and become meaningful within specific cultural contexts. The study

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<sup>1</sup> Freudian psychoanalysis, developed by Sigmund Freud, revolutionized psychology and the understanding of the human mind and behavior.

delves into the ways in which goods are not merely passive items but active agents in the construction of social relationships and identities.

Thorstein Veblen (1973) supported this idea by saying that commodities and consumption define social positioning. Conspicuous consumption was a term used by Veblen to describe the acquisition of products mainly for the purpose of attaining or maintaining social status. The pursuit of social distinction becomes a key motivator behind consumption patterns. Veblen argued that conspicuous consumption serves two primary purposes. First, it acts as a form of social signaling, where individuals use visible displays of wealth to communicate their elevated social status to others. Second, it functions as a means of establishing and reinforcing social hierarchies, as those with greater wealth and status engage in ever-increasing levels of conspicuous consumption to distance themselves from lower social classes. Veblen criticized conspicuous consumption as wasteful and non-productive, suggesting that it perpetuates a culture of materialism and fosters inequality. He viewed it as a result of a competitive and status-driven society, where individuals engage in conspicuous displays to gain social recognition and outdo their peers (Veblen, 1973). On the other hand, Juliet Schor (2016) acknowledges the negative aspects of conspicuous consumption but argues that it is not solely driven by status-seeking. She suggests that individuals engage in excessive consumption due to various factors, including societal pressures, advertising, and the desire for personal fulfillment.

The idea that individuals use brands to express their identities has led many brands to rethink their positioning focusing on the attributes that a product can fit into a consumer's lifestyle. Brand is a tool for individuals to express their self-identity (Berger & Heath, 2007) or to highlight some social attribute as prestige (Braun & Wicklund, 1989). According to Fournier (1998) brands create value for customers by creating meaningful associations that add value beyond the intrinsic product attributes.

Introducing the concept of brand personality, Aaker (1997) and Fournier (1998) suggest that consumers perceive brands as having distinct human-like characteristics. Consumers form perceptions and associations with brands based on their experiences, beliefs, and values. When a brand aligns with consumers' ideals and beliefs, it creates a strong and favorable brand image, leading to increased brand loyalty and preference (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020).

Therefore, individuals are more likely to choose brands that reflect their identity and values, as these brands become an extension of themselves (Belk, 1988). Following this idea, cultural branding is a concept to categorize the use of goods for self-expression (Holt, 2019). Categories that are associated with lifestyle, image, or ego-expressive products (Chernev et al., 2011). Holt's vision (2012) centers around the idea that brands become culturally relevant and successful by aligning themselves with broader cultural trends, ideologies, and movements. They tap into the values and aspirations of their target audience, becoming more than just functional products or services but symbols of a larger cultural identity. Individuals use brands to communicate their identities, values, and desired lifestyles to others. It suggests that consumers select and engage with specific brands that align with their self-perception and aspirations, and by doing so, they express their unique personalities, interests, and desired image to the world (Munteanu et al., 2014).

Brands have evolved beyond being mere products or symbols of consumerism. Instead, brands have become powerful cultural resources that people use to construct their identities and navigate the complexities of modern life. Brands, according to Holt (2019), offer individuals a toolkit of meanings and values that enable them to express their identities, connect with like-minded individuals, and establish social hierarchies. Furthermore, brands are deeply intertwined with cultural processes and narratives, playing a crucial role in shaping and reflecting societal values, ideologies, and aspirations. Brands act as cultural intermediaries, mediating between corporations and consumers, and contributing to the creation of meaning and shared cultural understandings. By constructing immersive worlds that captivate consumers' imaginations, eliciting inspiration and evoking thought, while aiding them in interpreting their surrounding environment, brands will garner both acclaim and financial rewards (Holt, 2002).

## **2.2. Lifestyle and Branding**

Max Weber (1930) coined the term "lifestyle" to describe the patterns of behavior, attire, language, thinking, and attitudes that characterize different "honor" groups. According to Sobel (1982) these lifestyles serve as benchmarks for individuals who aspire to join these groups. Lifestyle choices, such as consumption patterns, leisure activities, and personal preferences, are influenced by one's social class and the cultural context in which they live (Weber, 1930). In Weber's view, lifestyles

are not just individual choices but are socially constructed and influenced by larger societal factors. They reflect the ways in which individuals position themselves in society and express their social status and identity through their behaviors and preferences. The use of the concept of lifestyle plays a huge role on consumer behavior and brand preferences. As consumers tend to choose brands that match their ideas, thoughts and values, basically brands that are considered appropriate for their self-image. In this context, companies will try to position their brands to fit into consumers' lifestyle (Munteanu, 2014). Furthermore, Jennifer Aaker refers to the terms "lifestyle" and "branding" when combined as part of the brand personality - that is defined as a set of human characteristics associated with a brand (Aaker, 2000).

Lifestyle and branding have a reciprocal relationship as consumer lifestyles influence brand preferences, while branding strategically aligns with and reflects consumer lifestyles. According to Simon Anholt (2005) the basic concept of branding, as commonly understood by marketing service providers and their clients, revolves around the creation of a visually designed identity. This identity encompasses elements such as the name, logo, slogan, and overall corporate appearance. It serves as a means of recognition and communication. The design style and content convey information about the essence and character of the product or service, as well as its intended target audience. However, a more comprehensive definition of branding expands upon this basic understanding. It encompasses a broad range of corporate strategies, consumer and stakeholder motivations and behaviors, internal and external communications, ethics, and purpose. Companies that embrace this advanced definition of branding utilize it as a guide to navigate the intricate network of relationships between the personality of the company, product, or service, the individuals involved in its production and delivery, and the individuals who consume it or interact with it in some way.

According to Holt (2019) a lifestyle brand goes beyond simply selling products or services. Instead, it is closely tied to a specific way of living or a set of principles. The primary aim of a lifestyle brand is to establish an emotional bond with consumers by embodying and promoting a desired lifestyle or identity. These brands aim to be more than just functional; they strive to become an essential part of consumers' self-expression, aspirations, and daily lives. By fostering a sense of community and resonating with like-minded individuals who share similar values and interests, lifestyle brands offer a comprehensive experience that extends beyond the act of purchasing their products. Brands serve as an extension of one's identity, like an artificial limb or a part of oneself.

They represent not only tangible value but also serve as a statement to others and a reflection of one's authentic self. When purchasing a brand, individuals are essentially acquiring a set of values. This phenomenon fuels an insatiable demand in the market, as consumers continuously seek new brands to express and fulfill their evolving inner selves. Brands act as tools that transform ordinary "things" into vehicles for limitless aspirations and desired lifestyles. As brands gained prominence, businesses shifted from merely meeting individual needs to actively generating, overseeing, and manipulating desires (Kornberger, 2009).

Brand personality plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions, preferences, and behaviors, as it revolves around understanding how brands can possess human-like characteristics that consumers can relate to and develop emotional connections with (Aaker, 1997). To effectively deliver the desired brand experience to customers, Heding, Knudtzen, and Bjerre (Heding et al., 2020) presented a framework that encompasses brand identity, brand positioning, brand communication, and brand performance evaluation. By establishing a strong connection with their target audience, embodying and enhancing their desired lifestyles, brands can have the potential to cause trouble because they are deeply embedded in cultural and social dynamics, exerting significant influence on consumer behavior and shaping societal values and aspirations. Douglas B. Holt (2002) presents a thought-provoking vision that challenges conventional perspectives on brands and their impact on society. Holt's vision challenges the assumption that brands are solely driven by corporate marketing efforts. Instead, he suggests that brands are co-created through complex interactions between corporations and consumers. Brands are not passive entities but active participants in shaping culture and society. Holt's vision offers a critical and nuanced perspective on brands, highlighting their role as cultural forces that both shape and are shaped by society.

### **2.3. Emotional Brands**

Kapferer (2012) believes that brand management is not just about creating and maintaining a positive image for a company's products or services, but rather about creating a unique and authentic brand identity that resonates with consumers on an emotional level. By doing so, companies can create a powerful competitive advantage that can drive growth and success in the

long term. Furthermore, in line with Kapferer's perspective on brand management, which emphasizes the creation of a unique and authentic brand identity that connects with consumers on an emotional level, Fournier's vision challenges marketers to go beyond transactional approaches. Instead, Fournier's research highlights the importance of cultivating meaningful and enduring brand relationships, focusing on trust, emotional connections, and consumer engagement (Fournier, 1998).

Brands need to go beyond traditional branding approaches and establish deep emotional connections with consumers to become “lovemarks” (Roberts, 2005). Kevin Roberts introduces the concept of "lovemarks" as brands that have achieved the highest level of consumer loyalty and engagement. These brands transcend the mere transactional relationship between companies and customers, forging an emotional bond that goes beyond reason and logic. Lovemarks evoke powerful emotions, trust, and respect, creating intense loyalty and advocacy among their consumers. The author emphasizes the importance of storytelling, creating experiences, and engaging with consumers in ways that go beyond traditional marketing practices.

Building upon the concept of "lovemarks" introduced by Kevin Roberts, which emphasizes the establishment of deep emotional connections between brands and consumers, Jennifer Aaker's (1997) contributions shed light on the role of emotions in branding. Her vision revolves around the idea that emotions play a crucial role in consumer behavior, decision-making, and brand relationships. One key aspect of Aaker's vision is the notion that brands should strive to evoke specific emotions in their target audience. She argues that by understanding the emotions that resonate with their customers, brands can create experiences, narratives, and visual elements that tap into those emotions and leave a lasting impression. On the other hand, Fournier's vision emphasizes that brands are not solely functional entities but rather complex relationship partners for consumers (Fournier, 1998). By acknowledging the multi-dimensional nature of consumer-brand connections, Fournier emphasizes the importance of building enduring and meaningful relationships and examines how

consumers form communities around brands, coming together based on shared interests, values, and brand affiliations. These communities provide platforms for consumers to connect, interact, and engage with like-minded individuals, further strengthening their relationships with the brand. Integrating Aaker's focus on emotions and Fournier's emphasis on brand relationships, a

comprehensive approach to branding can be achieved, wherein emotions serve as a catalyst for cultivating deep connections between brands and consumers.

A comprehensive approach to branding emerges, recognizing that emotions serve as a catalyst for cultivating deep connections between brands and consumers. Building upon this foundation, Brian Solis (2015) further argues that businesses should adopt a holistic approach to experience design. Solis emphasizes the need to consider not only the product or service itself but also the overall brand identity, visual and sensory elements, and the emotional impact on customers. This approach aligns with the understanding that meaningful and immersive experiences can reinforce the emotional connection between brands and consumers, leading to stronger brand loyalty and advocacy.

Businesses can differentiate themselves and create memorable brand experiences by engaging customers on a deep emotional level. By creating immersive, sensory-rich experiences that elicit positive emotions, businesses can forge deeper connections with customers, differentiate themselves in the marketplace, and cultivate enduring brand loyalty (Schmitt, 1999). The professor at Columbia Business School goes beyond and encourages businesses to adopt an experiential marketing approach, which involves engaging customers through multiple senses and creating immersive brand experiences. He highlights the importance of sensory marketing, where brands leverage sensory stimuli such as sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell to evoke emotions and create powerful connections with customers.

## **2.4. Branding and Consumer Identity**

Brand identity is not solely shaped by companies or marketers but is also co-created by consumers. Consumers actively participate in shaping and defining a brand's identity through their engagement, interactions, and experiences with the brand. This co-creation process involves consumers aligning their values, aspirations, and self-identity with the brand's image, values, and positioning. Consumers incorporate brands into their self-concept and use them as symbolic tools to express their identity, values, and lifestyle choices. Brands become integral to the construction and representation of consumer identity. Brand communities consist of like-minded consumers who share a common interest or passion for a particular brand. Through their active participation

in these communities, consumers contribute to the development of a shared brand community identity, which further reinforces their own individual consumer identities (Black & Veloutsou, 2017).

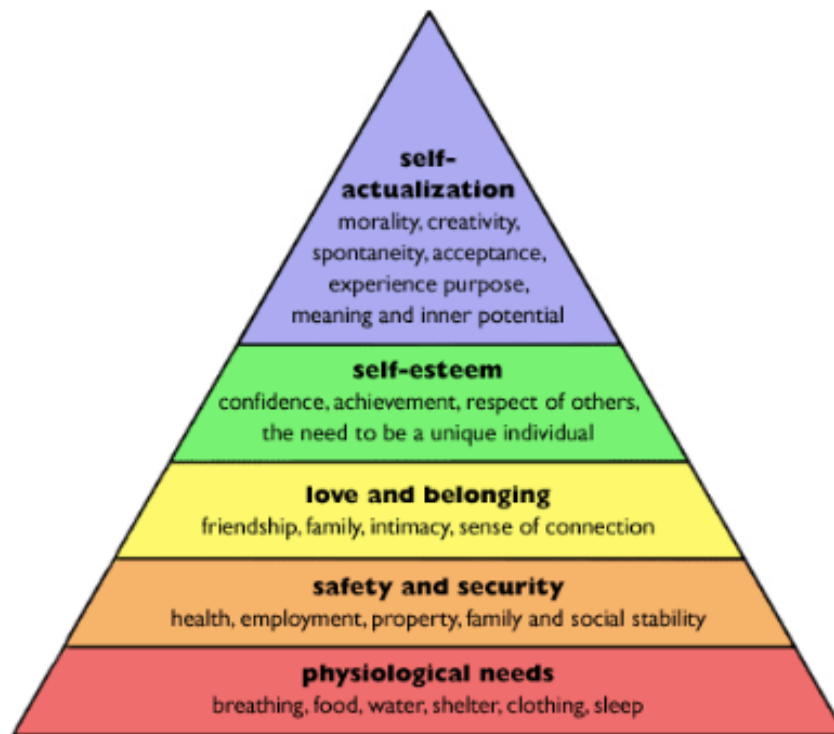
Douglas B. Holt (2019) delves into the idea of cultural branding, which emphasizes the creation of cultural meaning around brands. It highlights that brands become iconic when they successfully tap into broader cultural narratives, values, and symbols that resonate with consumers. This process of meaning creation contributes to shaping consumer identity as individuals align themselves with brands that reflect their desired cultural associations. Furthermore, Holt says that consumers use brands as symbolic tools to express their social identity, affiliations, and desired self-image. Brands that successfully align with consumers' desired social identities can become powerful icons and drivers of consumer behavior. Possessions are not just external objects but extensions of an individual's self-identity, Russell Belk (1988) argues that individuals use possessions as a means to define and express who they are, reflecting their values, aspirations, and social roles. In addition, the author explores the diverse interplay between possessions, self-extension, and consumer identity across different contexts. He emphasizes the impact of social and cultural factors on individuals' relationships with their possessions, recognizing that possessions hold varying meanings in different cultures, social classes, and life stages. Belk examines how cultural norms shape the significance of possessions in expressing and defining identity, while also considering how social class influences access to possessions and their role as status symbols. Furthermore, he delves into the evolving nature of possessions and self-extension as individuals progress through various life stages, recognizing that possessions reflect personal growth, changing priorities, and evolving identities. Furthermore, Belk (1988) underscores the dynamic influence of contextual factors, such as social norms, peer influence, media, and marketing messages, which shape individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards possessions.

Michael Solomon (2020) also delves into the field of consumer identity and shares the idea that brands have symbolic meanings attached to them, and individuals often align themselves with specific brands that reflect their desired self-image or help them communicate their values, personality, and lifestyle to others. Consumers often identify with brands that align with their ideal self-concept, the person they desire to be or the lifestyle they aspire to have. These brands become symbols of their aspirations and offer a way for individuals to express and signal their desired

identity to themselves and others. By consuming aspirational brands, individuals attempt to bridge the gap between their current self-identity and their ideal self. They see these brands as a means to enhance their self-image and bring themselves closer to their desired identity. Consuming aspirational brands allows individuals to associate themselves with the qualities, values, and attributes represented by those brands. This association creates a psychological connection between the brand and the consumer's self-identity, reinforcing a positive self-concept and a sense of alignment with their desired identity.

Abraham Maslow (Research History, 2023) proposed the following psychological theory that suggests that human needs can be arranged in a hierarchical order, with more basic physiological and survival needs at the bottom, and higher-level psychological and self-fulfillment needs at the top - it's called the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (see figure 2). On the borrow of the pyramid there are the physiological needs - these are the basic survival needs, such as food, water, shelter, and sleep. Brands related to these needs may focus on attributes like affordability, accessibility, and functionality. Once physiological needs are met, individuals seek safety and security. Brands associated with safety needs may emphasize protection, reliability, and trust. Third, belongingness and love needs, as humans have a need for social connection, love, and belonging. Brands that fulfill these needs may emphasize community, relationships, and inclusivity. Moving forward, esteem needs involve the desire for recognition, achievement, and self-respect. Brands can tap into this by providing products or services that enhance consumers' self-esteem, self-confidence, and status. At the top of the hierarchy are self-actualization needs, which involve personal growth, fulfillment of one's potential, and the pursuit of individual purpose.

Brands associated with self-actualization may focus on personal development, self-expression, and empowerment. When it comes to branding and consumer identity, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs suggests that consumers' needs and motivations evolve as they move up the hierarchy. Brands can align with these needs and help individuals express their desired identities.



*Figure 1 - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*

Brands have the potential to play a crucial role in fulfilling consumers' psychological needs. Individuals often seek brands that reflect their desired self-image and enable them to express their unique identities (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020). Jean-Noël Kapferer (2012) emphasizes the role of branding in fulfilling consumers' higher-level needs, such as self-expression and self-actualization. According to Kapferer, successful brands go beyond providing products or services and instead create a sense of meaning and belonging for consumers. These brands become cultural symbols that resonate with consumers' desired identities and allow them to differentiate themselves from others. By choosing specific brands, consumers can communicate their values, aspirations, and affiliations to the world. By appealing to consumers' emotions, brands can go beyond functional attributes and become more meaningful and relevant in consumers' lives. Emotional branding enables brands to shape consumers' identities, as individuals associate themselves with brands that align with their desired self-image and values (Kotler, 2022). Furthermore, Kotler (2022) says brands that successfully address consumers' needs and create emotional connections

are more likely to build loyal customer relationships. Furthermore, brands that successfully align with consumers' self-esteem and self-actualization needs can build strong brand equity. This equity manifests through consumer loyalty, positive brand associations, and an emotional connection with the brand, ultimately resulting in a competitive advantage for the brand (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020).

## **2.5. Consumer Perception and Attitudes**

Consumer communities, also known as consumption communities or brand communities, are groups of individuals who share a common interest, passion, or affiliation with a particular brand, product, or industry (Holt, 2002). Another definition of consumption community can be described as groups of people who come together because they have similar interests and behaviors when it comes to buying and using products. These communities are important because they greatly impact how people make purchasing decisions. Members of these communities influence each other's choices, share advice on what to buy, and together shape the cultural significance and values attached to different consumption practices (Belk, 1988).

Within the broader consumption community, a brand community emerges, uniting individuals through their shared passion for a specific brand. According to Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) a brand community is characterized as a distinct community that is not limited by geographical boundaries and it is formed through organized social connections among individuals who have a strong affinity for a particular brand. The authors emphasize that a consumer community or brand community is formed by individuals who have social connections, whether through familial bonds, friendships, or shared interests, with a specific brand. These individuals come together to engage in various forms of social interaction, such as sharing experiences, knowledge, and emotions related to the brand (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001).

Consumers' relationships with brands extend beyond mere transactions and functional benefits, on the other hand, brand relationships are complex and encompass emotional, symbolic, and social dimensions (Fournier, 1998). Fournier's vision challenges the traditional view of consumers as passive recipients of brand messages and proposes that they actively engage with brands, forming deep connections and attachments. Value refers to the assessment made by customers regarding the advantages they gain from using a product in relation to the efforts and

sacrifices made to obtain it. It is a measure of the perceived benefits weighed against the costs associated with acquiring and using the product (Fetchko et al., 2021).

Consumers have different motivations for purchasing products, which can be categorized into functional and psychological benefits. When it comes to sports products, the psychological reasons often hold more significance than the functional needs for consumers. In other words, the emotional and psychological satisfaction derived from using sports products tends to have a greater impact on consumer decision-making than the practical utility they offer (Fetchko et al., 2021).

Philip Kotler and Gary Armstrong (2006) delve into consumer perception and attitudes by saying that consumers have limited attention spans and are constantly bombarded with information. By comprehending the cognitive processes underlying memory, marketers can create memorable brand experiences that leave a lasting impression on consumers. Consumers selectively attend to and interpret marketing stimuli, such as advertisements or product features, and encode relevant information into memory. Marketers can optimize encoding by using attention-grabbing visuals, engaging storytelling, and persuasive messaging that resonate with consumers' needs and interests (Solomon, 2020).

## **2.6. Brands as a Consumer Self-Expression**

Brand is something that a consumer builds a relationship with (Fournier 1998). The fundamental objective of brand identity management is to cultivate brands that customers can deeply resonate with and form a strong sense of connection. It involves creating a brand image and perception that aligns with customers' values, aspirations, and desires. By crafting a compelling brand identity, organizations aim to establish an emotional bond with their target audience, foster brand loyalty, and enhance customer engagement. Effective brand identity management strategies encompass various elements such as brand positioning, visual identity, messaging, and consistent brand experiences across different touchpoints. Ultimately, the goal is to create a brand that not only meets customers' functional needs but also fulfills their emotional and psychological desires, leading to a long-lasting and meaningful relationship between the brand and its customers (Sihvonen, 2019).

According to Kotler (2006), marketing can be described as a process that involves individuals and groups satisfying their needs and desires by creating and exchanging products and

value with others. Understanding consumer needs and wants is a crucial part of the marketer's responsibility. Effective marketing strategies should be developed based on a thorough understanding of these consumer needs.

Brands play a vital role in the process of crafting their brand identities, messaging, and values in a way that resonates with specific consumer segments. Furthermore, this perspective suggests that consumers seek to project their desired personal lifestyle through the brands they associate with. By choosing brands that represent their ideal image or lifestyle, consumers aim to signal their aspirations and the image they want to present to others (Munteanu, 2014). Brands have evolved beyond their functional role to become cultural symbols through which individuals communicate their identities, values, and desired image to the world. Furthermore, brands play a significant role in facilitating this expression by aligning with consumer aspirations and crafting meaningful brand experiences (Douglas, 2019). Building upon the understanding that brands have evolved into cultural symbols for self-expression, values, and identity communication, it is essential to consider the implications and limitations of lifestyle branding. Alexander Chernev (2011), in his exploration of lifestyle branding and its impact on consumers, acknowledges that associating a brand with a specific lifestyle or identity has its potential drawbacks. By critically examining the concept, Chernev highlights the need for a balanced approach, recognizing that while lifestyle branding can be powerful, it should also be approached with caution to ensure authenticity and avoid potential pitfalls. He argues that while consumers may be attracted to lifestyle brands initially, the rigid associations and narrow identities created by such branding strategies can lead to limitations in self-expression and may not fully align with consumers' evolving identities and preferences. According to Chernev, lifestyle branding tends to create fixed and predefined identities that consumers are expected to conform to. This can restrict individuality and limit the diverse range of self-expression that consumers may desire. He suggests that consumers may feel pressured to conform to a particular lifestyle brand's image or may find it challenging to fully express their multifaceted identities when they are strongly associated with a single brand. Chernev cautions marketers and brands about the perils of relying solely on lifestyle branding strategies. He emphasizes the importance of allowing consumers the flexibility to express their identities authentically and the need for brands to accommodate consumers' changing preferences and evolving self-expression. Furthermore, Chernev highlights the risk of lifestyle

branding becoming overly commoditized, with brands competing to occupy similar identity spaces. This can lead to the dilution of brand distinctiveness and consumer confusion.

## **2.7. Experiential Marketing and Brand Engagement**

Experiential marketing differs from traditional marketing approaches that primarily emphasize functional features and benefits. Instead, it places a greater emphasis on creating meaningful customer experiences. Experiences are the result of engaging with and going through various encounters or situations. These experiences go beyond mere functionality and offer sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational values that replace the emphasis on functional values. Experiential marketing aims to provide customers with immersive and holistic experiences that engage their senses, emotions, thoughts, actions, and relationships, ultimately creating a deeper and more impactful connection with the brand. By focusing on customer experiences, experiential marketing seeks to foster stronger brand loyalty and generate positive associations and memories that go beyond the functional aspects of a product or service (Schmitt, 1999).

Experiential marketers recognize that customers are motivated by both rational and emotional factors. While rational decision-making is common, emotions play a significant role in the consumption experience. Customers are often drawn to products or services that fulfill their desires for fantasies, evoke certain feelings, and provide enjoyable and entertaining experiences. This understanding emphasizes the importance of creating engaging and emotionally resonant experiences that go beyond functional benefits (Schmitt, 1999). By tapping into customers' emotions, experiential marketers aim to create memorable and impactful interactions that establish strong connections between consumers and brands (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982).

SEMs, or Strategic Experiential Modules, are tools that managers can utilize to craft various types of customer experiences for their target audience (Schmitt, 1999). These modules serve as strategic frameworks or templates that guide the design and implementation of experiences that align with the organization's objectives. By employing SEMs, managers can systematically plan and execute experiences that are tailored to specific customer segments, enabling them to deliver

unique and meaningful interactions that resonate with their customers' preferences and expectations.

The SENSE module, also known as SENSE marketing, aims to engage the senses in order to create sensory experiences. This approach involves utilizing visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory stimuli to captivate customers and provide them with immersive sensory encounters. By leveraging the power of these senses, organizations can enhance customer engagement and forge deeper connections by appealing to their sensory perceptions.

FEEL marketing focuses on tapping into customers' inner feelings and emotions to create affective experiences. The goal is to evoke a range of positive emotions and moods that are associated with the brand, ranging from mild to intense. By connecting with customers on an emotional level, organizations can create memorable and impactful experiences that resonate deeply with their target audience.

THINK marketing aims to engage customers' intellect and create cognitive experiences that involve problem-solving and creative thinking. By incorporating elements of surprise, intrigue, and provocation, THINK marketing stimulates both convergent and divergent thinking in target customers. The objective is to encourage customers to think critically, explore new ideas, and engage in intellectual challenges that lead to meaningful and thought-provoking experiences.

RELATE marketing encompasses elements of SENSE, FEEL, THINK, and ACT marketing while extending beyond an individual's personal feelings. It establishes a connection between the individual and something beyond their private state. RELATE campaigns target the individual's aspiration for self-improvement, such as their vision of an ideal future self. They also appeal to the individual's desire for positive recognition from others, including peers, romantic partners, family, and colleagues. Additionally, RELATE marketing relates the individual to a broader social system, such as a subculture or a country. The focus is on fostering relationships and connections that go beyond the individual's personal experiences and encompass their social interactions and aspirations.

Michael Beverland (2009) explores the concept of brand authenticity and presents seven habits that iconic brands possess to establish and maintain their authenticity. Beverland emphasizes the importance of having a distinct and meaningful brand purpose. The author affirms that iconic

brands have a well-defined purpose that goes beyond making profits. They have a higher mission or cause that resonates with their target audience and creates a sense of purposeful engagement. Beverland's vision underscores the significance of having a clear purpose, consistent experiences, emotional connections, authentic storytelling, engagement, transparency, and co-creation in building iconic and authentic brands.

Jim Signorelli (2015) highlights the power of storytelling as a means to connect with audiences on an emotional and personal level. He believes that stories have the ability to engage and resonate with people, making brands more relatable and memorable. Authenticity is crucial in building trust and loyalty with consumers. Signorelli emphasizes the need for brands to differentiate themselves from competitors. The author explores how storytelling should be integrated across all brand touchpoints, from advertising and marketing campaigns to customer experiences and employee interactions.

A common thread that emerges from the visions of both Jim Signorelli (2015) and Seth Godin (2012) is the transformative power of authentic storytelling in creating meaningful connections between brands and their audience. Bernd Schmitt (1999) explores the concept of experiential marketing and provides insights on how to effectively engage customers. He emphasizes the importance of creating experiences that allow customers to sense, feel, think, act, and relate to a brand. Seth Godin (2012) presents a vision that challenges traditional marketing approaches and highlights the significance of authenticity in successful marketing strategies. People are naturally drawn to stories and are more receptive to marketing messages that are presented in a compelling narrative format. By framing marketing messages as stories that resonate with the desires and beliefs of their target audience, marketers can create a more meaningful and memorable connection. Godin underscores the importance of authenticity in marketing, as he suggests that in an era of skepticism and information overload, consumers are seeking genuine experiences and are more likely to engage with brands that demonstrate transparency and honesty.

Extending the concepts of the author, Godin (2012) encourages marketers to focus on creating remarkable products and experiences that naturally generate positive word-of-mouth marketing. He believes that when a product or experience exceeds expectations and stands out from the crowd, it becomes a story worth sharing, leading to organic and authentic brand advocacy.

Customers are not just passive recipients of advertising messages but active participants who seek engaging experiences (Schmitt, 1999).

Experiential marketing fosters brand advocacy by generating positive word-of-mouth communication. Consumers become brand advocates when they feel that the brand experience has enriched their lives and engaged them in meaningful interactions. This leads to stronger brand relationships, increased customer loyalty, and a more strategic focus on gaining and retaining market share in the long term. Essentially, experiential marketing creates a ripple effect of personal recommendations, driven by the added value and meaningful connections consumers perceive in their brand experiences.

The main idea is that modern consumers, particularly Gen Y/millennials, prioritize emotions and experiences in their shopping behaviors. They seek transparency, authenticity, and engagement from brands, emphasizing the importance of corporate social responsibility. Positive emotions and experiences play a significant role in influencing their perceptions and attitudes towards brands, surpassing the significance of functional product characteristics. As technology advances, the boundaries between real life and social life continue to blur, shaping the way brands connect with consumers (Smilansky, 2018).

## **2.8. Sports Marketing**

During the 1940s and 1950s, sports were predominantly non-commercialized, and people engaged in them as a regular activity without much emphasis on monetary gains. Sports were considered a natural part of life, and the perception of young individuals regarding sports was typically influenced by traditional values, family customs, and the opinions of their peers (T. & Stewart, 2014). Since then, the time has evolved and savvy marketers have acknowledged the significance of utilizing sports as a means to promote their non-sports-related products (Fullerton, 2022).

Sport and sporting events have a significant influence on society. The impact they have on social aspects refers to the effects on people's lives, work, leisure activities, social interactions, community organization, and overall ability to adapt as members of a society. These impacts arise from any public action related to sports that brings about changes in the way individuals and communities' function and interact with one another (Institute for Environmental Studies, 1995).

Engagement in sports, regardless of the specific nature of involvement (active, passive, direct, individual, or event-related), has emerged as an appealing approach for local, regional, and national governments to deliver social advantages to the residents of communities. It has become a favored strategy to promote and provide various societal benefits through sports participation (Johnson & Whitehead, 2000).

In the realm of sports, there is a common belief that the inherent nature of the game itself is inherently appealing and capable of fulfilling the needs of consumers (Karg et al., 2022). According to Michael Fetchko et al. (2021) sports marketing encompasses the application of marketing strategies to create, convey, provide, and facilitate the exchange of sports-related experiences that hold significance for customers, clients, partners, and society. The more widely recognized facet of sports marketing pertains to the proactive endeavors aimed at shaping consumer preferences for diverse sports-related goods and services. In this context, we refer to the marketing of products within the sports industry (Fullerton, 2022). Sport marketing encompasses two main aspects: the application of marketing principles to promote sport products and services, and the utilization of sport to market non-sport products. Similar to traditional marketing, the primary goal of sport marketing is to meet the needs and desires of consumers. This is achieved by offering sport-related products and services that cater to their preferences. However, what sets sport marketing apart is its unique ability to also stimulate the consumption of non-sport products and services through their association with sports (T. & Stewart, 2014).

The "5P" framework offers a perspective on the marketing of sports and the use of sports as a marketing platform. Positioning focuses on understanding the needs and preferences of customers. The platform refers to how sports properties adapt and respond to meet those customer needs. Promotion provides an avenue for sports to actively engage and connect with customers. Profits encompass not only financial success but also the satisfaction of customers throughout the entire process. Lastly, the people aspect recognizes the significant role of employees in the present and future success of sports marketing (Fetchko et al., 2021).

Within the broader concept of sports marketing, there are two distinct approaches: marketing related to the sports industry itself, and marketing that leverages sports as a platform or

medium (Karg et al., 2022). The main idea conveyed in the passage is that "marketing 'of' sport" involves using marketing strategies to promote the benefits of both sports' participation and spectatorship. The objective is to ensure the continued success and survival of the sport in a rapidly changing environment. This aspect of marketing has gained importance in sporting organizations, particularly those associated with elite-level professional competitions. The focus is on making the sport product attractive as live entertainment and through television, the internet, and other mobile platforms. Additionally, sports-governing bodies have a responsibility to maintain healthy participation levels as participants are essential for the growth of the sport. The book does not differentiate significantly between marketing strategies for spectators and participants, as the theories and principles apply to both. However, specific tactics and channels may vary depending on the objectives. Regardless of the context, the application of the marketing mix remains important for the ongoing success and financial well-being of individual sporting organizations. The main idea expressed in the passage is that "marketing through sport" refers to the use of sport as a platform for firms to promote and advertise their products. This is often done through sponsorship, where large corporations associate themselves with a particular sport to reach their target audience. Sports that receive significant television coverage are particularly attractive to these firms. Another example of marketing through sport is the development of licensing programs, where companies pay for the rights to use sport logos on their products to boost sales. In simpler terms, marketing through sport involves companies using sports to advertise their products through sponsorships and licensing agreements.

Sports brands often establish a deep emotional connection with consumers through their favorite athletes, teams, or sports. This attachment can stem from various factors, including familial influence, the desire to belong to a community with shared interests, or a sense of civic pride in supporting a local team. The advantage of this emotional connection is that consumers' affinity for sports brands is often unaffected by common challenges faced by other brands, such as competing for attention and the tendency to switch brands when expectations are not met (Fetchko et al., 2021). Market segmentation in sports marketing enables marketers to move beyond a one-size-fits-all approach and tailor their strategies and offerings to meet the specific needs and desires of different consumer segments. By understanding the demographics, psychographics, behaviors, and preferences of sports consumers, marketers can develop more targeted and personalized marketing

initiatives, leading to increased engagement, loyalty, and business success in the dynamic sports marketplace (Mullin et al., 2014).

Before devising strategies and tactics to influence consumers' thoughts, attitudes, or behaviors towards a sports brand, it is crucial to understand why people choose to establish a connection with a brand. Consumption motives can be divided into two main categories: utilitarian and hedonic. Utilitarian consumption motives stem from a consumer's desire to attain functional benefits from using a product or service. For instance, purchasing a microwave oven for cooking or taking clothes to a dry cleaner for cleaning and pressing are driven by utilitarian motives. On the other hand, hedonic consumption motives arise from a desire to indulge in sensory experiences that evoke pleasure, fun, or excitement.

Sports consumption, whether as a spectator or participant, falls within the realm of behaviors influenced by hedonic motives. Attending a sporting event fulfills consumers' desires to experience exhilaration or enjoyment. Furthermore, additional experiential elements like music, contests, and giveaways are often incorporated into events to enhance the overall experiential benefits derived from sports consumption (Fetchko et al., 2021). When comparing the act of consuming sports entertainment with the purchase of utilitarian goods that offer functional benefits, a logical perspective would suggest that the utilitarian option would always prevail. However, we know that this is not always the case. Why? The intense emotions and strong feelings evoked by sports brands have a significant influence on purchasing decisions.

Opting to engage in hedonic experiences can be justified in various ways. For example, someone contemplating whether to buy tickets to attend a San Antonio Spurs game may rationalize their decision by saying, "I need a break from the daily routine," "I deserve something special for myself," or "It's important to support the local team." Hedonic consumption is not solely driven by simple desires for pleasure; rather, it is rationalized by identifying benefits that hold greater value beyond mere enjoyment.

For sports marketers, understanding the distinction between utilitarian and hedonic consumption motives is crucial. The choice of target market segments, brand positioning, event production elements, advertising and communication strategies, and facility design should all align with the reasons why individuals would be compelled to consume a specific sports brand (Fetchko et al., 2021).

Sports have a remarkable ability to bring people together, particularly within the context of family and group affiliations. Family traditions and the influence of shared interests lead to generations of families attending sporting events together. Group affiliation, on the other hand, attracts individuals who seek connections with others who share a passion for a specific team or performer. This sense of belonging prompts people to engage in sports consumption as a means of connecting with like-minded individuals. Internal desires, such as self-esteem and escape motives, also play a significant role in sports consumption. Supporting a team or individual athlete enhances personal identity and fosters a sense of pride and achievement. The success of a team or athlete is celebrated by fans as their own, known as "basking in reflected glory." Additionally, sports offer an escape from daily responsibilities and problems, providing a temporary reprieve and a fantasy-like experience. Participation sports and fantasy sports cater to the escape motive. Playing sports allows individuals to break away from hectic work lifestyles, while fantasy sports offer a simulated experience of being a team manager, fulfilling the desire to create a dream team roster. Another category of motives for sports consumption revolves around personal needs. Aesthetic motives attract consumers to sports, teams, or players based on their style of play or observable characteristics. Tiger Woods, for example, had a significant impact on the popularity of golf, and his absence from tournaments often resulted in lower television ratings. Entertainment and sensory stimulation motives overlap, as sports provide entertainment value and sensory experiences through various tactics such as pre-game events, promotions, and the intense and fast-paced nature of the sport itself. Auto racing, particularly NASCAR, appeals to the audience's need for sensory stimulation, with high speeds and the potential for crashes creating excitement and anticipation among fans. In summary, sports consumption is driven by various motives, including family traditions, group affiliations, internal desires for self-esteem and escape, and personal needs for aesthetic appreciation, entertainment, and sensory stimulation. These motives shape consumer behaviors and inform marketing strategies within the sports industry (Fetchko et al., 2021).

## **2.9. Sponsorship Strategies and Activation**

Sponsorship has undergone significant changes in the past three decades, both in strategy and operations. It can be divided into three periods of development. Initially, sponsorship was seen as a way for companies to communicate with their audience. The second period involved finding synergies between sponsorship and other marketing elements to maximize results. Currently,

sponsorship is integrated into overall company strategies and used to enhance the sponsor's brand with various target groups. Understanding these trends is crucial for effectively managing the strategic and operational aspects of sponsorship (Ferrand et al., 2007).

Sponsoring sports, arts, or events can serve as a highly effective means of marketing communication for businesses and organizations (Cornwell, 2020). Sponsorship involves a partnership between a brand (sponsor) and a sports entity (sponsee) where the brand provides financial or other forms of support in exchange for promotional benefits and association with the sports property. Bernard James Mullin's book "Sport Marketing" (Mullin et al., 2014) explores the benefits of sports sponsorship for both sponsors and sports entities. Sponsors gain advantages such as enhanced brand visibility, targeted audience reach, positive brand association, and the generation of goodwill and brand loyalty. On the other hand, sports entities benefit from revenue generation, increased exposure and media coverage, talent attraction, and the creation of a positive image and reputation.

Sponsorship in the sport industry is a distinctive aspect that allows corporations and businesses to engage in commercial advertising. While sponsorship is not limited to sport, it serves as a platform for companies to promote their products and services. Sponsorship is considered the industrial component of the sport product, where commercial advertising plays a significant role in showcasing its industrial aspect. In simpler terms, sponsorship in the sport industry enables corporations and businesses to advertise their products commercially, contributing to the overall sport product (Karg et al., 2022).

In sports, a brand refers to the use of a name, design, symbol, or a combination of these elements by a sports organization to distinguish its product from others in the market (Shank & Lyberger, 2014). According to this definition, every individual athlete can be regarded as a brand because they have their own unique name, appearance, and personality. Athletes, as public figures, can establish their own symbolic meaning and value in the market by leveraging their personal attributes. Their name, distinctive appearance, and personality contribute to shaping their brand identity and differentiating themselves from other athletes. This emphasizes the notion that athletes are not only athletes but also entities with marketable qualities that can be perceived and valued by the audience (Arai et al., 2014). Based on the definitions by these authors, an athlete brand can be characterized as the public image or persona of an individual athlete, which they have developed

by associating their name, face, or other branding elements with specific symbolic meanings and value within the market. It involves creating a distinct identity that sets the athlete apart from others and communicates a unique value proposition to their target audience. Through strategic branding efforts, athletes can cultivate a recognizable and influential brand that resonates with fans, sponsors, and other stakeholders. This branding process involves carefully crafting and managing their image, leveraging their personal attributes, and engaging in marketing activities to enhance their brand perception and market positioning. Ultimately, the success of an athlete brand relies on the ability to establish a strong and authentic connection with the audience, leading to increased recognition, support, and commercial opportunities (Arai et al., 2014).

The notion of an "athlete brand" has emerged due to the diverse roles and platforms that athletes occupy (Arai et al., 2014). Athletes are now seen not only as endorsers or promoters of products, but also as cultural products that can be marketed and sold as brands themselves. They have become valuable entities that extend beyond their athletic abilities and can be leveraged for various marketing purposes. Athletes have been extending their influence beyond their sport by engaging in various social activities and businesses. In today's media-driven culture, these athletes are seen as social symbols that carry cultural meanings and ideological values. They express their unique personalities, evoke desire and identification among the audience, and serve as emblems of national celebrity. Their influence is founded on their physicality, fashion sense, and personal style. This suggests that athletes have become multidimensional figures who transcend their athletic achievements and become influential cultural icons.

The value of individual athletes in the commercial realm goes beyond their visible statistics and is influenced by how spectators perceive them. It is not uncommon for athletes to maintain high popularity and value regardless of their performance, and the opposite can also be true. Fluctuations in performance can lead to high-profile athletes having disappointing seasons, while lesser-known athletes may excel unexpectedly. It is important to understand the factors that contribute to this disparity, and branding is a key aspect in unraveling this puzzle. Branding shapes the audience's perception of athletes, creates value for them, and plays a crucial role in their commercial success.

Existing research has consistently demonstrated that the brand image of a sports entity plays a crucial role in shaping fan loyalty. Several studies, including those conducted by Bauer, Sauer,

and Schmitt (2005) and Bauer et al. (2008), have highlighted the significance of brand image as a key factor influencing the level of commitment and support exhibited by fans. These findings indicate that the way fans perceive and connect with a sports brand, including its values, reputation, and overall image, strongly influences their loyalty towards the brand. By cultivating a positive and favorable brand image, sports organizations can foster greater fan loyalty, which can translate into increased engagement, attendance, merchandise sales, and overall support. Therefore, understanding and managing brand image is essential for sports entities seeking to build enduring relationships with their fan base and enhance their long-term success (Arai et al., 2014).

According to Shuart (2007), an endorser is a widely recognized individual who is employed in advertising with the purpose of promoting and selling products. However, athletes are more than just endorsers when considering their multifunctional and symbolic status (Arai et al., 2014). In the realm of marketing and advertising, endorsers play a crucial role in influencing consumer perceptions and purchase decisions. By leveraging the fame and credibility of these well-known individuals, companies seek to enhance the appeal and desirability of their products or services. Endorsers can be celebrities, athletes, influencers, or public figures who possess a strong following and are perceived as trustworthy and influential. Their involvement in advertising campaigns aims to create a positive association between the endorser's image and the promoted brand, ultimately driving consumer interest and purchase intent. As mentioned by Seno and Lukas (2007), celebrity product endorsement can be seen as a form of co-branding, where independent brands establish a public relationship. Recent studies on endorsements have started to view endorsers as independent brands, highlighting the concept of co-branding rather than just the traditional roles of endorsers and endorsees.

The proposed model of athlete brand image incorporates Keller's (2012) customer-based brand equity model, which emphasizes the importance of both product and non-product aspects. Athletic performance is identified as a product-related attribute, highlighting the significance of an athlete's on-field excellence in building their brand status. Additionally, off-field characteristics, including marketable lifestyle and physical attractiveness, are considered non-product-related attributes that contribute to an athlete's brand image. The recognition of physical attractiveness as a dimension of the athlete's brand image acknowledges its potential as a distinctive trademark that can further enhance an athlete's brand identity. There are different dimensions in the world of

branding athletes, such as: athletic performance, expertise, rivalry, competition style, sportsmanship<sup>2</sup>, attractive appearance and marketable lifestyle (figure 3). These dimensions of the athlete brand image model highlight the factors that shape an athlete's brand perception, recognition, and consumer trust. Each dimension plays a role in how athletes are perceived by fans, their identification with the athlete and team, and their loyalty towards the brand.

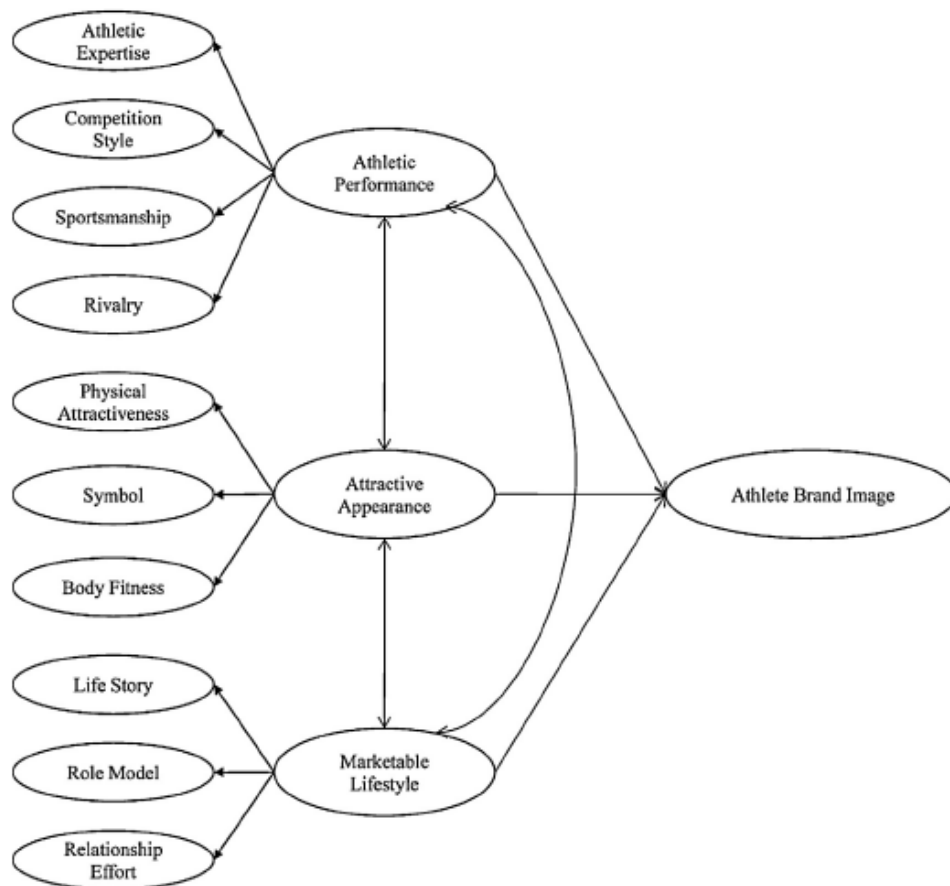


Figure 2 - Conceptual Model of Athlete Brand Image

## 2.10. Digital and Social Media in Sports Marketing

Social media refers to the dynamic exchange of information, opinions, and content within virtual communities and social networks, facilitated by individuals engaging with one another. It serves

<sup>2</sup> Sportsmanship encompasses a set of values and behaviors that are crucial in the world of sports. It goes beyond the pursuit of victory and focuses on virtuous conduct, fairness, integrity, and respect for the game, opponents, and teammates

as a platform for people to actively participate, share, and generate various forms of information. Through social media, individuals have the opportunity to connect, communicate, and express their thoughts and ideas, fostering a sense of community and interaction in the digital realm (Hajli & Hajli, 2015).

The exponential rise of social media and the prevalence of peer-to-peer communication offer individuals a valuable avenue for self-expression. Social platforms create an environment where customers can freely express their opinions and connect with like-minded individuals, thereby enhancing their social identity (Chernev et al., 2011).

In their study, Williams and Chinn (2010) established a correlation between social media and sport marketing, specifically focusing on the relationship between social media and relationship marketing. The authors emphasized that the main objective of relationship marketing is to establish enduring connections with the organization's most valuable customers. Stavros, Pope, and Winzar (2008) additionally propose that relationship marketing plays a role in strengthening brand recognition, deepening comprehension of consumer requirements, fostering loyalty, and delivering extra value to consumers. The concept of relationship marketing revolves around the idea that beyond the inherent value of products or services being exchanged, the presence of a strong relationship between two parties brings about additional benefits for both the customer and the supplier/service provider. By fostering a long-term relationship, customers can experience a sense of security, control, and trust. This can lead to reduced purchasing risks and ultimately lower costs associated with being a customer. In other words, establishing and nurturing relationships with customers goes beyond the immediate transactional value and creates a mutually beneficial environment where both parties gain from the ongoing association (Grönroos, 2004).

Social media platforms provide opportunities for consumers to engage and interact with each other as well as with organizations. These interactions gradually shape and contribute to the overall consumer experience. Social media has greatly influenced the evolution of sports in the experience era. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter enable fans to connect with both brands and fellow enthusiasts. This fan-driven communication has transformed the delivery of sports experiences. While TV broadcasts remain an essential part of the experience, stadiums and arenas are becoming interactive social media venues. Fans can access unique camera angles on their smartphones, communicate directly with team officials, and share their experiences in real

time. These developments are driven by the desires of younger audiences who seek interactive and immersive sports consumption beyond passive viewing (Fetchko et al., 2021).

According to Holmlund (1997), relationship-building interactions can be categorized into four levels. The initial level involves basic interactions, such as an invitation to follow the organization on social media. These basic interactions then progress to interrelated episodes, which subsequently combine to form sequences. Finally, these sequences converge to establish a full-fledged relationship (Holmlund, 1997). In the context of social media, the initial interaction serves as a foundation with the aim of evolving into a lasting relationship. Sport organizations need to recognize and emphasize the significance of nurturing and strengthening customer relationships (Bee & Kahle, 2006). This crucial aspect of relationship marketing can be accomplished by focusing on the variables outlined in the proposed model. Research indicates that relationship marketing entails an ongoing cooperative interaction between marketers and consumers (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2000). The social media platforms offer a valuable platform for organizations to engage with their fans, enhance their experiences, and meet their needs in line with the proposed model. Leveraging social media as a tool in relationship marketing allows organizations to attract new fans, cultivate lasting connections, and retain loyal consumers. Each of these elements has previously been identified as integral components of relationship marketing (Bee & Kahle, 2006). By effectively utilizing social media platforms, sport organizations can actively participate in building strong and enduring relationships with their fan base, ultimately leading to enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Social networks offer numerous advantages for sport companies, ranging from expanding their reach and engaging with fans to building brand loyalty and gaining valuable insights. According to Reza Mohammadkazemi (2015) - the author of the book *Sports Marketing and Social Media* - there are ten key reasons why brands should focus their attention on social media platforms as a tool in marketing: **cost-effective** way for businesses to promote themselves by utilizing social media, companies can stretch their advertising budget; social platforms enable sport companies to connect with a broad range of audiences and fans, expanding their **reach**; a more personal **connection** with the customers; the **flexibility** that social media gives in terms of promotion; **timely** as enables companies to rapidly share information with their followers in real-time. Unlike traditional marketing methods that require printing and limited exposure, social networking allows

for instant and frequent communication; customers' trust and **referrals** play a crucial role in purchasing decisions. Social networking technology enables customers to easily share company information with their online friends, leading to potential new customers. Sports clubs leverage this by providing social platforms for their members, allowing existing consumers to invite their friends to join the club or gym, resulting in increased membership; **promotions** are effective in encouraging customer purchases, particularly when targeting new customers. Social networking provides a platform for sharing information about promotions with a large audience, maximizing their reach and impact; driving increased **web traffic** to a company's main website. By including the website address in their social networking profiles and mentioning it in regular posts, companies can attract more visitors to their website, especially for web-based businesses operating primarily online; by strategically interacting on their profile pages, companies can shape and reinforce their **branding**; attract potential employees who are proficient in social networking. This expands the pool of candidates with technology expertise, allowing the company to find and hire the most qualified individuals for job openings.

Sports brands have found a vast audience to promote themselves to through popular platforms like Facebook and Twitter. The impact of social media extends to all types of businesses, including those in the sports industry. In the realm of sports, social media provides a fast and effective means of communication with fans and customers, offering specialized and detailed information. Additionally, traditional advertising and promotional efforts are amplified through these interactive channels, enhancing their reach and impact (Mohammadkazemi, 2015).

## **Chapter III - Methodology**

### **3.1. Objectives and Research Question**

Lifestyle brands have gained significant attention in recent years as they aim to create strong connections with consumers beyond their products or services. According to Douglas B. Holt (2019), a lifestyle brand is a type of brand that reflects and represents who consumers are and what they aspire to be. It encompasses a specific set of values, attitudes, interests, and behaviors that are aligned with the target audience. Unlike ordinary brands that simply offer products or services, a lifestyle brand aims to create a unique and unified brand experience that resonates with the desired lifestyle of consumers. It seeks to establish a strong emotional connection with its audience, fostering a sense of belonging and providing a platform for self-expression. A lifestyle brand becomes integrated into consumers' identities and daily lives, influencing their decision-making, preferences, and overall behavior. Overall, a brand is something that a consumer builds a relationship with (Fournier, 1998).

The primary objective of the thesis titled "Lifestyle as a Cultural Phenomena in Brands: The Case Study of Red Bull Portugal" is to explore and analyze the relationship between lifestyle and brands, with a specific focus on the cultural aspects. The thesis aims to investigate how lifestyle influences and shapes brand perceptions, particularly in the context of Red Bull in Portugal. By conducting a case study on Red Bull, the objective is to gain insights into how the brand aligns with the lifestyle of its target audience in Portugal and the cultural factors that contribute to its success. The thesis seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between lifestyle, culture, and branding, offering valuable insights for both academia and the marketing industry. By conducting this analysis, the researcher wants to investigate how lifestyle influences consumers' perceptions and interactions with brands, particularly in the context of Red Bull in Portugal. The goal is to uncover how Red Bull aligns with the lifestyle of its target audience in Portugal and understand the factors that contribute to its success as a brand. The intention was to delve into the dynamics of how lifestyle and culture shape brand preferences, choices, and behaviors, ultimately providing valuable insights into the interplay between lifestyle, culture, and branding. The goal of this research is to understand the relationship between the concept of lifestyle and brands, with a specific focus on how brands, such as Red Bull, strategically position themselves and act in relation to lifestyle. By analyzing the brand's actions, strategies, and overall approach, the researcher aims to gain insights into how brands effectively align themselves with the lifestyle

of their target audience. This involves examining how Red Bull communicates his messaging, interprets consumer needs and aspirations, and establishes a strong connection with consumers based on shared values. Through this analysis, we seek to uncover the underlying mechanisms and strategies employed by Red Bull to effectively integrate lifestyle into their brand identity and positioning.

This research will contribute to the understanding of the relationship between lifestyle and brands, specifically focusing on the case study of Red Bull Portugal. By exploring how Red Bull strategically positions itself as a lifestyle brand, the research will provide insights into the effective integration of lifestyle concepts into brand identity and positioning. The findings will contribute to the existing body of knowledge in marketing and branding by shedding light on the strategies and mechanisms employed by brands to establish a strong connection with their target audience based on shared values and aspirations. This research will also provide practical implications for marketers and brand managers, offering valuable insights into how they can effectively align their brands with the lifestyle preferences and aspirations of their target consumers. Overall, the research aims to enhance our understanding of the role of lifestyle in branding and provide practical guidance for building successful lifestyle brands.

### **Objectives:**

- To examine the role of lifestyle in the branding strategies of Red Bull Portugal;
- To understand how Red Bull Portugal leverages lifestyle to connect with its target audience;
- To provide insights and recommendations for marketers on effectively incorporating lifestyle elements into brand strategies

### **Research Questions:**

- How does Red Bull Portugal incorporate lifestyle elements into its brand identity and marketing communications?
- How do individuals in Portugal perceive and engage with the lifestyle aspects promoted by Red Bull?
- What are the effects of Red Bull Portugal's lifestyle-oriented branding on consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchase behaviors?

These objectives and research questions provide a framework for investigating the role of lifestyle in branding, specifically focusing on the case study of Red Bull Portugal. The study aims to gain insights into how Red Bull uses lifestyle as a phenomenon to connect with consumers and explore its impact on consumer perceptions and behaviors. The findings can contribute to the understanding of lifestyle branding strategies and provide recommendations for marketers in developing effective brand strategies in the context of cultural phenomena.

### **3.2. Lifestyle Brand: Red Bull as a Case Study**

The decision to focus on the Red Bull<sup>3</sup> brand for this research stems from a genuine interest and admiration for the brand's exceptional achievements in creating a brand that transcends its core product - the energy drink. With the added perspective of being an employee of the company, I have had the opportunity to directly witness the innovative strategies and unconventional marketing tactics utilized by Red Bull to solidify its position as a prominent lifestyle brand.

Red Bull's ability to create a strong brand identity that resonates with consumers, even beyond the functional benefits of its energy drink, is intriguing and deserving of further exploration. By studying Red Bull's branding strategies and consumer engagement, this thesis aims to gain insights into the factors that have contributed to its exceptional success in creating a brand that works independent of the product itself. Additionally, as someone working within the company, I have unique access to internal resources (see annex A), industry knowledge, and valuable insights that can enrich the research process. This insider perspective allows for a deeper understanding of Red Bull's brand building efforts, market positioning, and consumer relationships. By investigating Red Bull's achievements in brand building and the establishment of a brand that transcends its product category, this research aims to contribute to the broader understanding of branding and marketing strategies. It also provides an opportunity to extract valuable lessons and best practices

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<sup>3</sup> In conducting this analysis, I have had the privilege of accessing and utilizing internal documents specific to the Red Bull brand. As an employee of the company, I have been granted valuable insights into their strategies, campaigns, and brand management practices. By leveraging these internal documents (see annexes), I aim to provide a comprehensive examination of the Red Bull brand, shedding light on their unique approach to marketing, their brand positioning, and the factors that have contributed to their remarkable success.

that can be applied to other industries and brands seeking to establish a similar level of success and brand loyalty.

### **3.3. Energy Drink Sector**

The decision to investigate the energy drink sector, specifically focusing on Red Bull, stems from several compelling reasons. Firstly, the energy drink industry has witnessed remarkable growth and transformation in recent years, with Red Bull being a prominent player in this market. Exploring this sector allows for a comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to the success of the energy drink brand and its impact on consumer behavior. Secondly, Red Bull, as a leading energy drink brand, has garnered significant attention and intrigue due to its unique marketing strategies and lifestyle positioning. Investigating Red Bull provides an opportunity to delve into the intricacies of its brand image, messaging, and consumer reception. By examining Red Bull's marketing approach, this research aims to contribute to the broader understanding of branding strategies within the energy drink sector. Furthermore, studying the energy drink sector, with Red Bull as a focal point, holds practical implications. The findings of this research can provide valuable insights for marketing practitioners, enabling them to develop effective strategies in the highly competitive energy drink market. Understanding consumer preferences, motivations, and perceptions towards Red Bull can guide companies in tailoring their branding, communication, and product offerings to better meet consumer needs.

Overall, investigating the sector of energy drinks, particularly Red Bull, presents a compelling opportunity to gain insights into brand strategies, consumer behavior, and industry dynamics. By shedding light on the factors that contribute to the success of the energy drink brand, this research aims to contribute to both academic knowledge and practical applications within the energy drink sector.

### **3.4. Methodology Approach**

In this thesis, the researcher will employ a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively explore and analyze the relationship between the concept of lifestyle brands and the Red Bull brand. By integrating qualitative research methods, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding

of how Red Bull aligns with the principles and characteristics of a lifestyle brand. The research design will incorporate interviews (Desai, 2002), participant observation (Kawulich, 2005), in depth analysis using the application of the Kapferer Prism framework (Kapferer, 2015) and secondary data analysis (Vartanian, 2011). These methods are selected to provide a comprehensive understanding of consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards Red Bull, while also considering the brand's strategic elements and the experiences of individuals involved with the brand.

Firstly, to gain valuable insights into the brand's marketing strategies, brand positioning, and perceptions of Red Bull as a lifestyle brand, in-depth interviews (Desai, 2002) will be conducted with key employees of Red Bull. These interviews will offer a unique opportunity to gather firsthand information from professionals who are intimately involved in shaping and promoting the brand's image and values. Through open-ended questions and discussions, the researcher explored various aspects, such as the brand's target audience, communication channels, messaging, and unique selling points that contribute to its positioning as a lifestyle brand. The interviewees' insights and perspectives will shed light on the company's strategic decisions, innovative approaches, and the rationale behind the brand's evolution as a lifestyle-oriented entity. The interviews will provide a deeper understanding of how Red Bull perceives and strategically aligns itself with the lifestyle branding concept. The researcher will explore the specific tactics, campaigns, and initiatives employed by the brand to cultivate an emotional connection with individuals and create a distinct lifestyle brand experience. By capturing the viewpoints of internal stakeholders, the study aims to uncover the underlying strategies and insights that have contributed to Red Bull's success as a lifestyle brand.

Secondly, as a Red Bull Student Marketeer<sup>4</sup>, I will actively engage in participant observation (Kawulich, 2005), immersing myself in the brand's student marketing activities, events, and initiatives. By being directly involved in these activities, I will have the opportunity to closely observe and experience how Red Bull interacts with its target audience, particularly in the context of student life. Through participant observation, I aim to gain a deeper understanding of

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<sup>4</sup> A Red Bull Student Marketeer is an individual who represents the Red Bull brand on university campuses and within the student community. They are typically employed by Red Bull to serve as brand ambassadors and promote Red Bull's products, events, and initiatives targeted towards students.

the brand's impact on consumer behavior and the ways in which it fosters emotional connections with its audience. By being present in real-life settings where Red Bull is actively promoting its brand, I will be able to witness firsthand how consumers engage with Red Bull as a lifestyle brand. This may include observing their reactions, behaviors, and interactions during events, as well as understanding the motivations and experiences that drive their engagement with the brand. During the participant observation process, I will document my observations, taking note of the various strategies, tactics, and approaches employed by Red Bull to create and reinforce its identity as a lifestyle brand. This method will provide rich and detailed insights into the real-world dynamics of Red Bull's brand-consumer interactions, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the brand's effectiveness in cultivating a lifestyle brand image.

Furthermore, to gain a comprehensive understanding of Red Bull as a lifestyle brand, an in-depth analysis will be conducted using the Kapferer Prism Framework (Kapferer, 2015) as an analytical tool. This framework, consisting of six facets - physique, personality, culture, relationship, reflection, and self-image - offers a structured approach to explore various dimensions of the brand's identity and its impact on consumer perception. Through the application of the Kapferer Prism Framework, each facet will be examined to uncover insights into how Red Bull communicates its brand identity. The "physique" facet will focus on the tangible elements of the brand, such as its visual design and product attributes. The "personality" facet will delve into the brand's distinctive characteristics and brand persona. The "culture" facet will explore the cultural associations and values that Red Bull represents. In addition, the "relationship" facet will analyze the brand's interactions and connections with its target audience, including the emotional bonds and sense of community fostered by Red Bull. The "reflection" facet will examine how consumers perceive themselves when they engage with the brand, reflecting on their own identity and aspirations. Lastly, the "self-image" facet will explore how Red Bull enables consumers to express their desired self-image and align with their desired lifestyle. By applying the Kapferer Prism Framework, this analysis aims to uncover the multi-dimensional nature of Red Bull as a lifestyle brand. It will provide valuable insights into how the brand communicates its values, establishes cultural relevance, builds relationships with consumers, and resonates with their self-expression. The findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of the brand's impact on consumer reception and its effectiveness as a lifestyle brand.

In addition to primary data collection methods, a secondary data analysis (Vartanian, 2011) will be employed as a valuable methodological approach in this study. The analysis will involve examining and interpreting existing data provided by Red Bull regarding their marketing mix. This secondary data will serve as a rich source of information for understanding Red Bull's marketing strategies and their impact on the brand's positioning as a lifestyle brand. Through the analysis of this secondary data, I aim to gain insights into various aspects of Red Bull's marketing mix, including event marketing, communication, consumer collecting, opinion leader programmes, on premise, off premise and word of mouth. This will allow for a comprehensive assessment of the brand's marketing efforts and their alignment with the concept of a lifestyle brand. By studying the company-provided data, I can explore how Red Bull has strategically incorporated lifestyle elements into its marketing mix, and examine the effectiveness of these strategies in creating a strong brand identity and resonating with the target audience. Furthermore, the secondary data analysis will enable a comparison of the documented marketing activities with the findings from primary data collection methods, providing a more robust understanding of the brand's marketing strategies and their impact on consumer perception. By triangulating data from different sources, this approach strengthens the overall research findings and enhances the credibility of the study.

By combining interviews with Red Bull employees and participant observation, this study will provide a holistic understanding of the brand's marketing strategies, consumer perceptions, and the role of Red Bull as a lifestyle brand. The findings from this mixed-methods approach will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on lifestyle branding and provide valuable insights for both academic research and practical brand management.

## **Chapter IV - Theoretical Framework**

### **4.1. A Case Study of Red Bull Portugal**

As a privileged insider at Red Bull, I possess exclusive access to a wealth of internal data and insights that unveil the brand's captivating journey and future endeavors. Being an employee of the company grants me valuable access to the brand's historical milestones, strategic decision-making processes, and forthcoming initiatives. This unique vantage point allows me to delve deep into the inner workings of Red Bull, uncovering hidden gems of knowledge that will enrich my analysis and provide a comprehensive understanding of the brand's evolution and future trajectory. Furthermore, the following data and insights are taken from Red Bull internal documents.

Red Bull is an energy drink brand that was created by the Austrian entrepreneur Dietrich Mateschitz and introduced to the market in 1987. The brand's history can be traced back to the late 1970s when Mateschitz, who worked for the German consumer goods company Blendax at the time, encountered a Thai energy drink called "Krating Daeng" while on a business trip to Thailand. Impressed by the drink's energizing properties, Mateschitz saw potential in introducing a similar product to Western markets. He partnered with Chaleo Yoovidhya, the creator of Krating Daeng, and together they adapted the Thai energy drink formula to suit Western tastes and preferences. In 1984, Mateschitz established Red Bull with Yoovidhya and other partners, and they began developing and refining their energy drink formula. Red Bull was formulated as a carbonated beverage that combined caffeine, taurine, B-vitamins, sugar, and other ingredients to provide a boost of energy. After several years of product development, Red Bull was launched in Austria in 1987. The brand quickly gained popularity, particularly among young adults and those seeking an energy boost for physical and mental performance. Red Bull's marketing campaigns were innovative and targeted extreme sports, adventure, and nightlife, aligning the brand with an edgy and adventurous image. The success of Red Bull in Austria led to its expansion into other European markets, starting with Hungary in 1992 and Germany in 1994. The brand's international growth continued throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, as it entered markets in Asia, the Americas, and beyond.

Red Bull's marketing strategies played a significant role in its success. The brand focused on experiential marketing and sponsored various extreme sports events and athletes, including

Formula 1 racing, snowboarding, skateboarding, and more. Red Bull also created its own events, such as the Red Bull Air Race and the Red Bull Stratos space jump, which garnered global attention and reinforced the brand's association with high-energy activities. Over time, Red Bull expanded its product line beyond the original Red Bull Energy Drink. The brand introduced variations like sugar-free and zero-calorie options, as well as different flavors and formulations tailored to specific markets. Red Bull has become one of the world's leading energy drink brands, with a presence in over 170 countries. The company has diversified its portfolio by acquiring or launching other beverage brands, including Red Bull Cola, Red Bull Simply Cola, and Red Bull Organics. Red Bull also extended its reach into other sectors, such as media and sports teams, further solidifying its global brand presence.

#### **4.2. The Red Bull Can - Design**

According to internal data provided by the company, when Dietrich Mateschitz was attempting to launch Red Bull, it was clear that this unique product would require unique packaging. Red Bull aimed to be a high-quality drink, but during that period, all high-quality drinks were typically presented in glass bottles. Since Dietrich created a brand that pursues innovation, he made the deliberate choice to be the pioneer in introducing a high-end product in a slender, aluminum can (figure 4), setting a new trend in the market. The two bulls fighting in front of the sun represents power, vigor and energy (figure 5). The red color also stands for energy, power, and passion. To reinforce the bold look, Red Bull opted for the edgy lines of blue. The blue shape itself also projects a dynamic look symbolizing speed and progression (figure 6). The can's blue and silver color combination completed the masculine appeal (figure 7).

In the present day, the Red Bull can is universally acknowledged by customers across the globe. Brand identity is a concrete and sensory experience. It is visually perceptible, physically tangible, and can be sensed through touch, sound, and motion. The presence of brand identity enhances recognition, emphasizes uniqueness, and enables profound ideas and significance to be easily understood and appreciated (Wheeler, 2018). According to Moira Culten, VP. Girobal Beverage Design, design sets brands apart and represents the intangible elements that are most important to consumers, such as emotions, context, and essence (Wheeler, 2018). Remarkably, it has maintained its original iconic design without any alterations. Design is a powerful tool for visual communication. It enables brands to convey their messages, values, and unique selling

propositions to consumers. A well-crafted design captures attention, communicates the brand's essence, and leaves a memorable impression, ensuring that the brand remains top-of-mind for consumers over time (Neumeier, 2003).

Red Bull's design encapsulates its essence as a lifestyle brand associated with extreme sports, music, and adrenaline-fueled events. The distinctive visual identity, combined with its sponsorship of high-profile sporting events and creative marketing campaigns, creates a memorable impression that stays with consumers over time. The following provided pictures serve to enhance comprehension and offer a visual illustration of the subject matter:



*Figure 4 - Red Bull Aluminum Can Design*



*Figure 5 - Red Bull Aluminum Can Design (2)*



*Figure 6 - Red Bull Aluminum Can Design (3)*



*Figure 7 - Red Bull Aluminum Can Design (4)*

### **4.3. The Face of The Brand**

Red Bull's approach to utilizing its logo is truly distinct and sets it apart from other brands. As a premium brand, Red Bull adopts a careful and discerning approach to how its logo is employed. Rather than overusing it, Red Bull maintains a selective and deliberate approach, ensuring that the logo is purposefully connected to specific projects or initiatives. This approach adds to the brand's allure, credibility, and premium image. The selective and strategic use of the logo is a conscious decision made by Red Bull to maintain an air of exclusivity and sophistication. By refraining from excessive branding, Red Bull avoids diluting the impact and significance of its logo. Instead, the logo is reserved for meaningful and purposeful applications that align with the brand's values and objectives. This deliberate use of the logo serves to enhance the desirability and perceived value of the Red Bull brand. By associating the logo with specific projects or initiatives, Red Bull creates a sense of exclusivity and uniqueness. Consumers begin to associate the logo with quality, innovation, and meaningful experiences, further elevating the brand's image. Experiential marketing shifts its attention from solely emphasizing functional features and benefits to prioritizing customer experiences. Experiences arise from engaging with, undergoing, or living through various encounters. These experiences offer sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational values that supplant the importance of functional values (Schmitt, 1999).

Moreover, Red Bull's approach to logo usage conveys a sense of confidence and restraint. By not saturating the market with the logo, Red Bull sets itself apart from brands that employ more pervasive and ubiquitous branding strategies. This approach allows the logo to stand out when it is used, capturing attention and evoking curiosity and intrigue. The purposeful and selective use of the logo also aligns with Red Bull's overall brand identity. The brand is known for its association with high-energy activities, extreme sports, and unique events. By connecting the logo to specific projects or initiatives, Red Bull reinforces its commitment to these core elements and maintains consistency in its messaging.

Overall, Red Bull's unique approach to logo usage distinguishes it from other brands. By being restrictive and selective, Red Bull enhances the logo's impact, elevates the brand's desirability and credibility, and maintains a premium image. This deliberate strategy contributes to Red Bull's success in cultivating a strong and aspirational brand identity.

#### **4.4. The Product vs The Brand**

##### **4.4.1. How Red Bull Has Successfully Positioned Itself as a Lifestyle Brand**

When a consumer purchases a Red Bull, they are not merely acquiring a product, they are also embracing the brand. Brands have evolved beyond their functional role to become cultural symbols through which individuals communicate their identities, values, and desired image to the world (Douglas, 2019). However, it is crucial to understand the distinction between a brand and a product. A product refers to something offered to the market that can fulfill a need or want, encompassing physical items, services, shops, people, organizations, places, or ideas. On the other hand, a brand is a specific type of product that distinguishes itself through additional dimensions. These dimensions can be rational and tangible, such as product performance, or symbolic, emotional, and intangible, relating to the brand's representation and meaning (Keller et al., 2012).

Regarding the product itself, it must serve a specific purpose. In the case of Red Bull, the energy drink revitalizes both the body and mind. This indicates that Red Bull is positioned as a product that provides an energy boost, helping consumers feel more alert and focused. By positioning itself as a revitalizing beverage, Red Bull aims to cater to individuals seeking an energy lift to overcome fatigue or enhance their mental and physical performance (figure 10). On the other hand, when we consider the brand and the value associated with the slogan "Red Bull gives you wings", Red Bull was intentionally designed to cater to diverse needs in various key situations. Whether it is for parties and socializing, work, studying, sports and fitness, gaming, or even driving, consumers seek different functional benefits from Red Bull (figure 8).

The role of the product - Red Bull can - is the cornerstone of Red Bull. The functionality it offers serves as the foundation for the brand. People choose to consume Red Bull because they have come to expect and personally experience its effectiveness in delivering the desired results. However, Red Bull is not solely defined by its product. It goes beyond the tangible qualities and encompasses the power of associations (figure 9). Brand image evokes specific desires and emotions within consumers whenever they encounter a can of Red Bull. These associations are what resonate with individuals and further drive their decision to consume the product. When people identify with these associations, they find a sense of connection and alignment with the values, experiences, and lifestyle that Red Bull represents. It becomes more than just a functional beverage; it becomes a symbol of energy, vitality, and the pursuit of passions. This identification with the brand and the emotions it elicits is a significant factor in why people choose to drink Red

Bull. It becomes a choice that extends beyond the physical benefits, but rather an emotional and aspirational connection that the brand evokes. One of the key aspects of Red Bull's innovation lies in its ability to create an emotional connection with consumers. Stephen Brown (2009) argues that the brand's success lies in its understanding of the desires and aspirations of its target audience, primarily young adults seeking excitement and adventure. By aligning its brand image with these desires, Red Bull cultivated a loyal following and established an emotional bond with its consumers.

Furthermore, Red Bull's brand building strategies went beyond positioning itself as a mere energy drink and focused on creating a brand identity associated with an active, dynamic, and adventurous lifestyle. By fostering a sense of community, encouraging consumer engagement, and championing thrilling experiences, Red Bull established itself as a symbol of energy, vitality, and personal achievement (Friberg, 2011).



Figure 8 - Product vs Brand (Benefit)

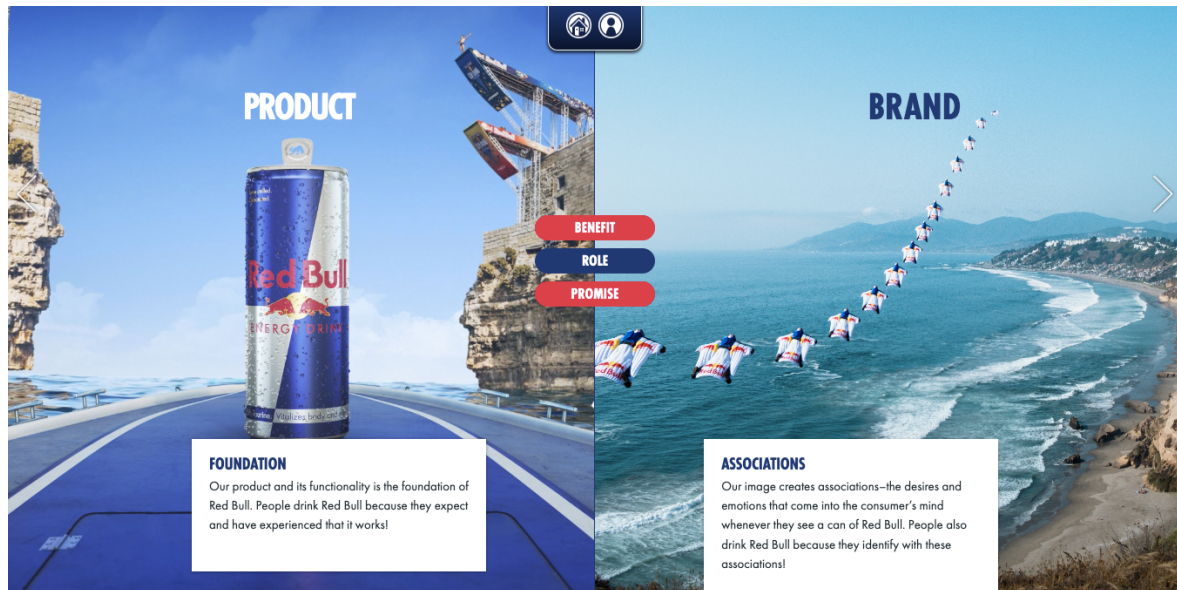


Figure 9 - Product vs brand (Role)

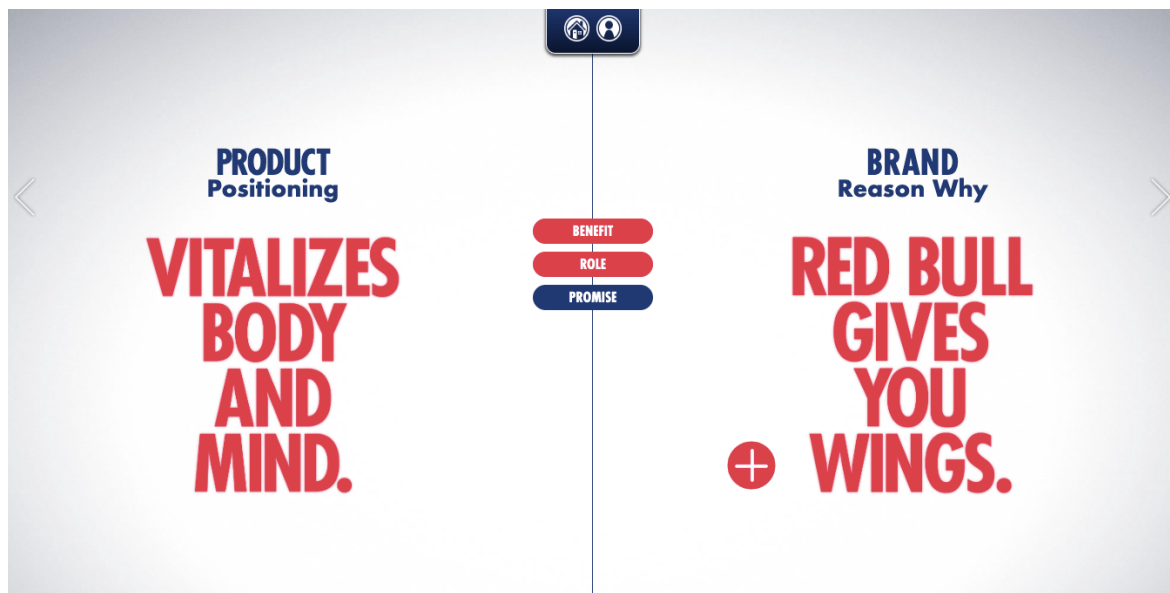


Figure 10 - Product vs Brand (Promise)

#### 4.5. Red Bull Lifestyle Brand Engagement

Michael Solomon (2020) presents a comprehensive and insightful exploration of how individuals engage with brands and make consumption decisions. Solomon's vision revolves around understanding the complex interplay between consumers' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in the context of their interactions with brands. He emphasizes the importance of studying consumer behavior from a multidimensional perspective, considering psychological, social, and

cultural factors that influence individuals' choices and actions. Through the study, the author recognizes that consumers often seek brands that align with their values, aspirations, and desired social affiliations. By choosing certain brands, consumers seek to express their individuality and fit into specific social or cultural groups (Solomon, 2020). Through his research, the author sheds light on the complex interplay of conscious and unconscious influences that shape consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and purchase decisions. Furthermore, Solomon emphasizes the impact of social and cultural factors on consumer behavior. He explores how social norms, reference groups, cultural values, and societal trends shape individuals' preferences, perceptions, and consumption patterns. Recognizing that consumers are not isolated entities but are influenced by their social environment, including family, peers, and broader cultural contexts.

According to Jean-Noël Kapferer (2015), lifestyle brands are brands that carefully develop a distinct culture, style, and attitude through their offerings, marketing strategies, and overall brand experience. These brands effectively capture the longing of consumers to express themselves and connect with a specific way of life or subculture that resonates with their values and aspirations. Based on Douglas B. Holt (2019), lifestyle brands are brands that establish symbolic significance and cultural narratives that deeply connect with consumers and assist them in shaping their identities. These brands frequently utilize cultural symbols and current trends to foster a sense of belonging and uniqueness among their customers. Furthermore, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) also give a definition for lifestyle brands, as they say that lifestyle brands are brands that go beyond the mere practical advantages of their products or services and instead concentrate on crafting a holistic lifestyle experience for their customers. These brands harness their distinctive personality and values to appeal to and retain devoted customers who resonate with their preferred way of living.

Red Bull's success as a lifestyle brand stems from its ability to cultivate a specific culture, create an aspirational identity, and offer a comprehensive lifestyle experience beyond its core product. Through strategic marketing, brand partnerships, and a consistent focus on its target audience's desires, Red Bull has effectively positioned itself as a brand that represents an energetic, adventurous, and boundary-pushing lifestyle. As Red Bull has successfully positioned itself as more than just a beverage brand, it has evolved into a prominent lifestyle brand that resonates with consumers on multiple levels. Consumers engage with the Red Bull brand as a lifestyle brand in various ways, embracing its culture, values, and experiences. This introduction will explore the

diverse ways in which consumers connect with Red Bull beyond its product offerings, highlighting the brand's ability to create a compelling lifestyle that attracts and captivates its target audience.

Through consumption, consumers engage with Red Bull by purchasing and consuming its products, particularly the energy drink. They may incorporate it into their daily routines, such as starting their day with a can of Red Bull or using it as a source of energy during physical activities. Besides that, there is a sense of brand affiliation, as consumers engage with Red Bull by associating themselves with the brand and its lifestyle. They may proudly display Red Bull merchandise, wear branded clothing, or use branded accessories, signaling their identification with the brand and its values. A big part of the marketing strategy passes through the events and experiences, as Red Bull organizes and sponsors a wide range of events, including extreme sports competitions, music festivals, and cultural events. Consumers engage with the brand by attending these events, participating in activities, and experiencing the unique atmosphere that Red Bull creates. Additionally, Red Bull has a strong presence on social media platforms and online communities. Consumers engage with the brand by following Red Bull's social media accounts, sharing content, and interacting with other fans and enthusiasts. They may also participate in online discussions, contests, and challenges organized by the brand. Red Bull's strong presence on social media platforms like Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitter, and YouTube allows consumers to connect with the brand in real-time, share their positive experiences, and engage with Red Bull's content. By creating user-generated content that showcases their involvement with the brand, consumers can effectively promote the Red Bull lifestyle to their friends, family, and online communities. Through social media, consumers can share recommendations, write reviews, post photos or videos of their Red Bull experiences, and participate in discussions centered around the brand. These platforms enable a sense of community and facilitate conversations that further reinforce the Red Bull lifestyle and its association with adventure, energy, and excitement. Red Bull's active presence on social media platforms and online communities not only provides consumers with an outlet to express their affinity for the brand but also amplifies their voices and extends the brand's reach to a wider audience. It cultivates a sense of belonging and participation, fostering a community of like-minded individuals who embrace the Red Bull lifestyle and share their enthusiasm for the brand with others. Red Bull's branding goes beyond being a mere logo or tagline; it becomes intricately woven into the fabric of consumers' lives. The brand's integration into various aspects of consumers' hobbies, interests, and aspirations creates a powerful connection that resonates on a personal level.

Consumers engage with the Red Bull brand by consciously aligning their lifestyle choices with the core values it embodies – adventure, energy, and pushing boundaries. In their pursuit of an active and thrilling lifestyle, consumers willingly embrace the Red Bull brand as a symbol of their own aspirations. Whether it's extreme sports enthusiasts, outdoor adventurers, or individuals seeking an extra boost of energy in their daily lives, they find that Red Bull aligns perfectly with their personal interests and passions. By incorporating Red Bull into their routines, activities, and mindset, consumers actively express their affiliation with the adventurous and energetic lifestyle that the brand embodies. Moreover, Red Bull's branding extends beyond the product itself, as it infiltrates various realms of consumers' lives, from their choice of clothing and accessories to the events they attend and the social circles they participate in. By associating themselves with Red Bull, consumers not only embrace the brand's values but also signal their membership to a larger community that shares similar interests and values. This deep integration of Red Bull's branding into consumers' lives creates a mutually reinforcing relationship. As consumers embrace the brand's values and incorporate them into their lifestyle, Red Bull, in turn, gains increased visibility and relevance in their daily experiences. This creates a continuous cycle where consumers feel a sense of connection and belonging to the brand, while Red Bull maintains a prominent presence in their lives.

Overall, consumers engage with Red Bull as a lifestyle brand by incorporating its products, participating in its events and experiences, actively interacting with the brand on social media, and integrating its values into their own lives and self-expression.

#### **4.6. Cultural and Social Influences**

Cultural and social factors play a pivotal role in shaping consumers' reception of lifestyle brands such as Red Bull. These factors influence consumer attitudes, preferences, and behaviors, ultimately impacting their perception and engagement with these brands. Scholars like Kevin Lane Keller (2012), Susan Fournier (1998), and Philip Kotler (2006) have contributed to the understanding of how cultural and social factors influence consumer behavior and brand reception. Cultural values and beliefs are instrumental in shaping consumers' perceptions of lifestyle brands. Red Bull's success stems from its ability to align with specific cultural values, such as adventure and pushing boundaries, which resonate with its target audience. Keller's (2012) brand equity

framework emphasizes the importance of creating emotional connections with consumers, and this resonates with Red Bull's ability to tap into the cultural values that drive consumer engagement.

Lifestyle brands often target specific subcultures or communities, which Fournier (1998) has explored extensively. By understanding and connecting with these subcultures, Red Bull establishes a sense of belonging and identity among its consumers. This aligns with Fournier's (1998) research on brand relationships and the role of consumer advocacy within communities. The influence of social trends on consumer behavior is a topic that both Keller (2012) and Kotler (2006) have addressed. Lifestyle brands like Red Bull adapt their marketing strategies to align with cultural trends, such as the increased emphasis on health and wellness. Keller's brand-building principles and Kotler's (2006) marketing management concepts highlight the importance of staying attuned to societal trends to maintain consumer engagement. The role of media and celebrity endorsements in shaping consumer perceptions and behavior aligns with Kotler's (2006) emphasis on the power of marketing communication. Red Bull leverages media platforms and influential figures to endorse its brand and embody the desired lifestyle. This taps into the concept of social proof, where consumers are influenced by the behaviors and endorsements of others. Cultural context and regional differences, as mentioned, require brands to adapt their messaging and strategies to resonate with specific cultural contexts. This relates to Keller's (2012) understanding of brand resonance, where brands need to establish deep connections with consumers by considering their cultural backgrounds and preferences. Ethical and sustainability considerations have gained prominence in consumer decision-making, reflecting a growing societal awareness. Consumers expect brands to align with their values and engage in responsible practices. This aligns with Kotler's (2006) concept of societal marketing and the need for brands to address social and environmental concerns to maintain positive reception and engagement.

In conclusion, the impact of cultural and societal factors on consumers' reception of lifestyle brands like Red Bull is a multifaceted phenomenon. By understanding cultural values, connecting with subcultures and communities, adapting to social trends, leveraging media and endorsements, considering cultural context, and addressing ethical and sustainability concerns, lifestyle brands can enhance their reception and engagement with consumers.

## **4.7. The Role of Storytelling and Content Creation in Red Bull's Brand**

### **Communication Strategy**

The role of storytelling and content creation is integral to Red Bull's brand communication strategy. Red Bull has mastered the art of captivating storytelling, using compelling narratives and high-quality content to engage consumers and build a strong brand identity. This approach aligns with concepts discussed by authors such as Joseph Campbell (Davies, 2021), Simon Sinek (2019), and Jonah Berger (2007).

Red Bull embraces the power of storytelling, employing a narrative-driven approach in its brand communication. The brand often highlights extraordinary feats, adrenaline-pumping adventures, and personal triumphs in its content. By tapping into the innate human desire for compelling stories, Red Bull captures consumers' attention and creates an emotional connection. The brand's storytelling approach resonates with Joseph Campbell's (Davies, 2021) concept of the hero's journey, where individuals are drawn to narratives that involve challenges, transformation, and ultimate triumph. Red Bull's content often showcases athletes and adventurers overcoming obstacles and pushing their limits, effectively drawing consumers into these captivating narratives.

Simon Sinek's (2019) concept of "Start with Why" also aligns with Red Bull's brand communication strategy. Red Bull focuses not only on what it does (selling energy drinks) but also on why it does it. The brand communicates its core values of adventure, energy, and pushing boundaries through its storytelling and content creation. By showcasing the "why" behind its brand, Red Bull connects with consumers on a deeper level and attracts individuals who share its values and aspirations.

Red Bull's content creation strategy embodies the principles of contagiousness and social influence discussed by Jonah Berger (2007) in his book "Contagious: How to Build Word of Mouth in the Digital Age." The brand produces high-quality and engaging content that is highly shareable and sparks conversations. From adrenaline-fueled sports events to captivating documentaries and viral videos, Red Bull's content stimulates social sharing and generates buzz. By creating remarkable content, Red Bull leverages the power of social influence, as individuals are motivated to share and talk about their experiences with the brand. This word-of-mouth marketing further amplifies Red Bull's brand message and extends its reach.

In summary, Red Bull's brand communication strategy heavily relies on storytelling and content creation. By incorporating the principles of captivating narratives, starting with "why," and creating contagious content, Red Bull effectively engages consumers and builds a strong brand identity. These approaches are influenced by concepts from authors such as Joseph Campbell (Davies, 2021), Simon Sinek (2019), and Jonah Berger (2007), who emphasize the importance of storytelling, purpose-driven communication, and creating remarkable content to connect with audiences on a deeper level.

#### **4.8. Red Bull's Expansion into Areas beyond Energy Drinks**

Red Bull's brand extensions and diversifications have played a significant role in expanding its presence beyond the energy drink market and establishing itself as a multi-faceted lifestyle brand. Through strategic ventures into various areas, Red Bull has successfully capitalized on its brand equity and captured the interests of its target audience (see annex's).

##### **Media Production**

Red Bull's foray into media production, with initiatives like Red Bull Media House and Red Bull TV, has been well-received by consumers. These platforms provide a diverse range of content, including documentaries, live events, and original series, all aligned with Red Bull's brand values of adventure, energy, and pushing limits. By creating and curating high-quality content, Red Bull has positioned itself as a credible and trusted source of entertainment within its target audience. Consumers appreciate the immersive and authentic storytelling approach, which enhances their connection with the brand and reinforces its lifestyle image. This expansion into media production has allowed Red Bull to go beyond being a mere energy drink and become a multi-faceted lifestyle brand.

##### **Sports Teams and Events**

Red Bull's ownership and sponsorship of various sports teams and events have resonated well with consumers. The brand's involvement in extreme sports like Formula 1 racing, soccer (RB Leipzig), and ice hockey (EC Red Bull Salzburg) has created a sense of authenticity and credibility. Consumers perceive Red Bull as genuinely supporting and investing in the sports they are passionate about, which enhances their affinity and engagement with the brand. Red Bull's

association with successful teams and thrilling events further reinforces its adventurous and high-energy brand image, attracting consumers who share these interests and deepening their loyalty.

### **Branded Merchandise**

Red Bull's expansion into branded merchandise has allowed consumers to incorporate the brand into their daily lives beyond the consumption of energy drinks. The brand offers a wide range of merchandise, including apparel, accessories, and collectibles, all featuring the iconic Red Bull logo and associated imagery. Consumers see these products as a way to express their affiliation with the brand's values and lifestyle. By wearing or owning Red Bull-branded merchandise, consumers feel a sense of belonging to the Red Bull community and use these products as symbols of their identity and interests. The availability of branded merchandise has not only increased consumer engagement but also created additional revenue streams for the brand.

Overall, consumers have responded positively to Red Bull's expansion beyond energy drinks. The brand's ventures into media production, sports teams, and branded merchandise have allowed it to establish a deeper connection with its target audience. By diversifying its offerings and extending its presence into various lifestyle-related areas, Red Bull has enhanced its brand image, increased consumer engagement, and fostered a sense of community among its loyal followers.

## **Chapter V - Data Analysis**

The data analysis phase of this study delves into the insights gathered from various research methods employed to explore and analyze the relationship between lifestyle and brands, with a specific focus on the case study of Red Bull Portugal. This section presents the findings derived from three key methods: interviews (Desai, 2002) conducted with Red Bull employees from the sports events and athletes' departments, participant observation (Kawulich, 2005) as a Red Bull Student Marketeer, an in-depth analysis with the application of the Kapferer Prism Framework (Kapferer, 2015) to analyze brand identity, and lastly a secondary data analysis (Vartanian, 2011) will be employed. These methods collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of how consumers engage with and interpret Red Bull's brand messaging, values, and offerings. The following sections present the outcomes of each method, shedding light on the nuanced perspectives and observations that contribute to unraveling the complex dynamics of the Red Bull brand in the context of lifestyle brands.

### **5.1. Interview Analysis**

An interview, as a method to collect qualitative data, involves engaging in a conversation between an interviewer and one or more participants with the aim of gathering detailed information, insights, and perspectives on a particular topic or research area. The fundamental concept revolves around perceiving the interview as a narrative that individuals share about their own lives, rather than considering it as a straightforward record of events, attitudes, or emotions (Desai, 2002). In this study, it was conducted an open semi-structured approach that allowed the researcher to explore subjective experiences, beliefs, opinions, and narratives. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative research method that lies between structured and unstructured interviews. It provides a flexible framework for gathering data, allowing for a balance between predetermined questions and the freedom for participants to elaborate on their responses. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher prepares a set of core questions or topics to guide the interview, while also allowing room for additional questions or follow-up inquiries based on the participant's responses (Yin, 2014).

Red Bull, as a brand, has established a strategic approach to branding, marketing, and consumer engagement, which is evident in the interviews with Filipa Taylor (annex A),

Communication Manager, and Patrícia Jesus (annex B), Events Coordinator. From both of the interviews conducted, several patterns can be identified, as it is observed in the chart 1.

Through a comprehensive interview process, valuable insights were gathered from participants, shedding light on various aspects of the subject under investigation. The findings from the two conducted interviews highlight a consistent pattern that reveals the brand's target audience. To effectively position themselves in the market, Red Bull targets Entry Point Consumers<sup>5</sup> (EPCs), particularly Gen Z individuals aged between eighteen and twenty-four. This deliberate targeting is driven by the understanding that this age group is at a crucial stage in their lives where they are actively shaping their identities and affiliations. During this period, individuals are exploring their interests, values, and preferences, and as a result, they are particularly receptive to brand messaging and experiences. Gen Z individuals, being digital natives, are heavily influenced by social media, online content, and peer interactions. They actively seek brands that align with their personal beliefs and aspirations, as these choices become a part of their identity formation. Red Bull recognizes this and capitalizes on the opportunity to connect with this impressionable demographic by crafting a brand experience and lifestyle that resonates with their values and desires. By targeting Gen Z EPCs, the brand aims to establish a strong brand connection early on, knowing that these consumers are in the process of building their personalities and defining their preferences. Through targeted content creation, engaging social media presence, and partnerships with influential figures in the sports and extreme sports world, Red Bull effectively positions itself as a brand that aligns with the interests and aspirations of Gen Z individuals.

Moreover, by reaching out to Gen Z during this critical developmental stage, Red Bull aims to foster long-term brand loyalty. By creating an emotional bond and offering experiences that resonate with this demographic's desire for self-expression, adventure, and personal growth, Red Bull becomes an integral part of their identity formation. This is the basis of Red Bull strategy as explained by Filipa Taylor “Basically, our biggest concern is to transmit the Red Bull spirit of adventure, challenge, as well as promoting our athletes equally. We want to show the fun and at the same time the professional part that athletes propose on a daily basis.” This early brand connection lays the foundation for a lasting relationship, as Gen Z individuals continue to affirm

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<sup>5</sup> Entry point consumers refer to individuals who are new to a particular brand or product category and represent the initial target.

their brand preferences and connect with brands that reflect their evolving personalities. Within this target audience, Red Bull further segments its approach by catering to specific communities or audiences, such as surfing, skateboarding, motorsports, and biking. By studying each audience's preferences - through professionals in each segment analyzing the latest news - and creating tailored content, Red Bull aims to connect with consumers on an emotional level and build lasting brand loyalty. According to the Red Bull Communication Manager, Filipa Taylor, the brand understands that they have different audiences and they need to work the content differently “We have consultants in different areas who tell us what that community wants to see, where they want it, and how events should be created. We are here to serve the community, so we want to give back in some way to the people who are within this community.” Furthermore, Red Bull's brand positioning strategy revolves around creating a unique brand experience and lifestyle that goes beyond being just a beverage. With its own internal team for social media and content creation, Red Bull ensures full control over the content and its alignment with the brand's adventurous and professional spirit. By relying on their own team instead of external agencies, Red Bull is able to exercise complete control over the content that is produced and ensure that it aligns seamlessly with the brand's adventurous and professional spirit. Having an internal team grants Red Bull the advantage of having a deep understanding of their brand identity, values, and target audience. They can work closely with their creative team to develop content that reflects the essence of the brand and effectively communicates its messaging. This level of control enables Red Bull to consistently deliver a cohesive brand experience across all their digital platforms and engage their audience in a meaningful way. Furthermore, Red Bull can respond quickly to emerging trends and engage in real-time conversations with their audience. This agility allows them to stay relevant and adapt their content strategy to align with the ever-changing preferences and interests of their consumers.

The brand's success lies in its ability to evoke emotions and create an emotional connection with consumers. Red Bull understands that by associating itself with the lifestyle and aspirations of high-performance athletes, it can inspire consumers to push their limits and step out of their comfort zones. This emotional connection is further strengthened by Red Bull's innovative and spontaneous events. Events like the New Year's Eve skydive and the MotoGP event - as explained by Filipa Taylor - exemplify Red Bull's commitment to providing unique and exhilarating experiences that captivate and inspire their audience. By organizing such daring and visually stunning events, Red Bull creates a sense of awe and wonder, evoking powerful emotions

among spectators and participants alike. The skydive, with its breathtaking visuals and the display of skill and bravery by professional skydivers, showcases the brand's adventurous spirit and its dedication to pushing boundaries. These events not only serve as thrilling spectacles but also serve as catalysts for personal growth and self-discovery. Witnessing the extraordinary feats performed by high-performance athletes underlines the brand's message that anything is possible with determination and the willingness to take risks. It sparks a sense of inspiration and encourages individuals to challenge their own limits, motivating them to pursue their passions and embrace a more adventurous lifestyle. Moreover, these events generate buzz and excitement, both during their occurrence and in the aftermath. They become topics of conversation among consumers, who eagerly share their experiences and emotions associated with the event. This organic word-of-mouth promotion further reinforces Red Bull's brand image and fosters a sense of community among its followers.

The extended strategy of Red Bull to evoke emotions is intrinsically directed as well to Red Bull's partnerships with athletes as it plays a crucial role in its brand positioning strategy. As the Red Bull Events Coordinator, Patrícia Jesus, said in the interview “We position ourselves among the best in each modality.” By aligning themselves with successful athletes, Red Bull reinforces the brand's image of high performance and credibility. Consequently, consumers feel motivated to adopt similar routines and aspire to reach similar levels of achievement, viewing Red Bull as a catalyst for their own personal success.

Furthermore, in the interview with the Events Coordinator of Red Bull, Patrícia Jesus said that Red Bull extends its brand presence beyond the realm of sports, targeting multiple consumption occasions. While primarily associated with high-performance sports, Red Bull recognizes the need to appeal to consumers in various situations. By positioning itself as an energy drink that can enhance experiences, whether it's for non-athlete consumers on long drives or helping students stay focused during exams, Red Bull showcases its versatility and ability to integrate into consumers' daily lives.

Overall, Red Bull's brand positioning strategy focuses on creating an emotional connection with consumers through targeted content, lifestyle branding, and partnerships with athletes. By offering a unique brand experience and associating itself with high performance and

credibility, Red Bull has successfully positioned itself as more than just an energy drink, becoming synonymous with a distinctive and aspirational lifestyle.

At the end of the interview, it was questioned the durability of brands that associate themselves with a certain lifestyle. Following this idea, the interviewee's response highlights the growing popularity of lifestyle brands and the importance of emotional connections in brand positioning. In Filipa's statement, she emphasizes that brands which connect with emotions and maintain credibility will shape the future "More and more brands are positioning themselves to connect with emotions. Everything that is connected to emotions and still is credible, is the future, without a doubt!". This insight opens up an opportunity for brands to tap into the desire for inspiration, challenge, and stepping out of comfort zones among new generations.

By associating themselves with the emotional side of consumers, brands can create a sense of relatability and aspiration. The interviewee specifically mentions that even though individuals may not possess the same athletic skills as high-performance athletes, they can still see themselves in those individuals. This identification with the challenges and aspirations depicted by lifestyle brands can serve as a powerful motivator for consumers. Identifying this opportunity, brands can strive to inspire and empower individuals to overcome their own obstacles and push their limits. By showcasing stories of personal growth, resilience, and triumph, brands can foster a sense of connection and provide a source of motivation for consumers. This approach not only resonates with the current consumer mindset but also aligns with the shifting values and aspirations of new generations.

In the case of Red Bull, they have been successfully capitalizing on this opportunity since 1997 by associating themselves with the emotional side of consumers and positioning themselves as a brand that inspires and challenges individuals to pursue their passions. The interviewee's statement further reinforces Red Bull's commitment to this path and suggests that it will continue to be a fruitful investment for the brand.

| INTERVIEWERS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| FILIPA TAYLOR<br>Red Bull Communication Manager                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | PATRÍCIA JESUS<br>Events Coordinator at Red Bull Sports Team                                                                                                                                                                                                | KEY FINDINGS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| "Our focus is the EPC's - Entry Point Consumers - or those aged between eighteen and twenty-four - Gen Z. We believe that it is at this time that personal tastes are defined and will define which brands they will accompany them for the rest of their adult years."                                                                                                                            | "There are studies that prove that teenagers under the age of 18 have a preference for other energy drink brands that are part of our direct competition and from the age of 18, this scenario changes and the top of mind for consumers becomes Red Bull." | Studies show that teenagers under the age of 18 tend to prefer energy drink brands other than Red Bull, while consumers aged 18 and above increasingly choose Red Bull as their top preference. This highlights the significance of targeting individuals between 18 and 24, as this age range plays a crucial role in shaping long-term brand preferences.                                                            |
| "More and more brands are positioning themselves to connect with emotions. Everything that is connected to emotions and still is credible, is the future, without a doubt!"                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | "Red Bull, in addition to being a brand and selling a product, is also a lifestyle. And it tries to pass that message through the athletes, the communication and all of the events created by the brand."                                                  | Red Bull goes beyond being just a brand selling a product; it encompasses a lifestyle that it communicates through athletes, effective communication strategies, and a variety of brand-created events. This approach highlights the growing trend of brands seeking emotional connections with consumers, as emotions paired with credibility are deemed the undeniable future in marketing and branding.             |
| "The consumer, through our social networks and our website is always in contact with Red Bull and that later, when choosing, will make a difference because he will associate the consumption of Red Bull with what he felt when he was watching the content."                                                                                                                                     | "The brand image, or the image that Red Bull tries to pass on, makes the consumer want to consume the product."                                                                                                                                             | Red Bull establishes a strong connection with consumers through social networks and engaging content. This connection cultivates an emotional association between consumers and the brand, which influences their decision to choose and enjoy Red Bull products. The brand's image effectively drives consumer desire and consumption.                                                                                |
| "We have surfing, skateboarding, motorsports, biking audiences and we try to reach them all with specific content. We study these audiences, identify what they want to see, and how they want to see it, and build our content for each audience based on the study we do and the conclusions we reach. We have very different audiences and that's why we have to work the content differently." | "I think the most obvious is without a doubt the extreme, the extreme sports, the sport itself (...) the fact that we position ourselves among the best in each modality."                                                                                  | Red Bull strategically targets diverse audiences by tailoring content specifically to their preferences. In addition to positioning themselves as leaders in extreme sports and excelling in various disciplines, Red Bull establishes a strong presence and garners credibility among these communities.                                                                                                              |
| "We are always testing the limits because in any modality that is more or less radical, the athletes are always testing their own limits and Red Bull also explores a lot this side of overcoming the almost impossible."                                                                                                                                                                          | "I think the most obvious is without a doubt the extreme, the extreme sports, the sport itself"                                                                                                                                                             | Red Bull thrives on pushing boundaries and embracing the extreme. From daring athletes continuously pushing their own limits to Red Bull's relentless pursuit of overcoming the seemingly impossible, the brand immerses itself in the realm of extreme sports. It is in this world of radical pursuits where Red Bull finds its most obvious and undeniable presence, embodying the essence of extreme sports itself. |

Chart 1 - Key Findings of the Interviews conducted

## 5.2. Participant Observation Analysis

Participant observation is a method of data collection through the participation in and observation of a group or individuals over an extended period of time (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). Another definition can be given by Marshall and Rossman (Marshall et al., 2022) as the deliberate and systematic process of describing and documenting events, behaviors, and tangible objects within a specific social setting chosen for study. It involves keenly observing and recording various aspects of the social environment, such as interactions, actions, and the physical context, in order

to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject being observed. The goal of observation is to meticulously capture and interpret these elements, providing valuable insights and contributing to the overall knowledge and analysis of the chosen research area.

Participant observation by convenience refers to a specific approach in qualitative research where the researcher engages in participant observation with individuals or groups that are conveniently accessible or readily available. In this method, the researcher selects participants based on convenience and proximity, rather than through deliberate and purposeful sampling strategies. The researcher observes and actively participates in the activities or interactions of the selected individuals or groups, gaining insights into their behaviors, attitudes, and experiences within a specific social setting. While participant observation by convenience may offer practical advantages in terms of accessibility and efficiency, it is important to acknowledge that this approach may introduce potential biases and limitations in terms of representation and generalizability.

As a Red Bull Student Marketeer, I had the opportunity to engage in various practices that contribute to the brand's marketing and promotional efforts. These practices revolve around product promotion, event planning and execution, acting as brand ambassadors, campus activation, social media and content creation, and market research. Therefore, my analysis was based on the interaction that I had with consumers or stakeholders during events, sampling activities, or campaigns. Further notes of this observation can be seen in the annex C and D.

The setting of the observation is primarily focused on college campuses and related events where Red Bull engages with its target audience. College campuses serve as a vibrant and influential environment where young individuals explore their identities and make consumer choices that shape their lifestyles. This setting offers a valuable context to understand how consumers perceive and engage with lifestyle brands like Red Bull. In addition, an observation was conducted to people that attended Red Bull events. The participants in the observation are college students, particularly those who are part of the Red Bull target audience - according to the interviews conducted, the target audience ranges between 18 and 24 years old - and people that were participating in events and guests. The specific focus of the participant observation is to understand how these college students and viewers of events perceive and connect with lifestyle brands, with Red Bull as the primary brand of interest. This involves closely observing their responses to Red Bull's brand image, positioning, promotional activities, and the emotional

connections they establish with the brand. The duration of the observation spanned several months to ensure a comprehensive understanding of consumer perceptions of lifestyle brands.

As the observer in the participant observation study, my role was to closely observe and document the interactions, behaviors, and perceptions of consumers towards Red Bull.

During the participant observation study, tools and techniques were employed for data collection to capture the rich and detailed information. The following tools and techniques were utilized:

**Field Notes:** Field notes were taken during the observation process (see annex D). These notes involved descriptions of participants' behaviors, conversations, and environmental factors that could influence their perceptions. Field notes helped in capturing real-time data and provided a basis for later analysis and interpretation. In qualitative research, field notes are highly advocated for capturing essential contextual information. They serve as a valuable tool for documenting observations and insights gathered during fieldwork (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2017).

**Audio and Video Recording:** In some instances, audio or video recording was used to capture participants' interactions and non-verbal cues (see annex C).

During the participant observation as a Red Bull Student Marketeer, various activities and events were observed to understand consumer perceptions and behaviors towards the brand. The observation focused on product promotion activities, event planning and execution, brand ambassador interactions, and campus activation efforts.

**Product Promotion Activities:** The observation focused on the distribution of Red Bull samples, product demonstrations, and raising awareness about the unique features and benefits of Red Bull energy drinks. Interactions with consumers during these activities provided insights into their receptiveness, interest, and understanding of the brand.

**Event Planning and Execution:** The observation included the planning and organization of innovative and exciting events sponsored by Red Bull, such as sports competitions, music festivals, and parties.

**Brand Ambassador Interactions:** These interactions involved engaging with peers, students, and the wider community, embodying the values, lifestyle, and image of Red Bull. The observed interactions provided insights into how consumers perceived and responded to the brand's spirit of adventure, challenge, and professionalism.

**Campus Activation Efforts:** The observation encompassed the activation of the Red Bull brand on college campuses, including the setup of Red Bull booths, organization of campus events, and sponsorship of student clubs.

During the participant observation as a Red Bull student marketeer, observations were conducted on a regular basis. The frequency of observations varied depending on the specific activities, events, and engagements scheduled during that time. Notable patterns and trends emerged during the course of the observation period. Some of the key findings include:

It was observed that consumers generally exhibited high levels of engagement and enthusiasm during Red Bull-sponsored events. The brand's reputation for innovation and excitement attracted a considerable number of participants, who actively participated in various activities and shared positive feedback. Consumers often displayed a strong association between Red Bull and its core values of adventure, challenge, and professionalism. They identified Red Bull as a brand that aligns with their aspirations and lifestyle choices, which contributed to their positive perceptions and willingness to engage with the brand. The observations revealed that Red Bull's social media presence and content played a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions. Consumers were highly active on social media platforms, sharing their experiences and engaging with Red Bull's content. This highlighted the importance of social media as a channel for brand engagement and communication. Notable trends were identified regarding the impact of Red Bull's campus activation efforts. Observations showed that the brand's presence on college campuses increased brand visibility, generated excitement among students, and fostered a sense of community. This had a positive influence on consumer perceptions and their willingness to try Red Bull products.

In addition to the findings, one of the observed events was the Skate Conquest that happened last year in Lisbon. This event showcases Red Bull's commitment to pushing boundaries and embracing unpredictability. By selecting Lisbon as the host city and organizing the event at an iconic location like Terreiro do Paço (annex C), Red Bull demonstrates its penchant for

unconventional and unique experiences. The participation of athletes from various countries further reinforces the brand's global reach and its association with extreme sports. The event not only provides a platform for talented skateboarders to showcase their skills but also creates a sense of excitement and thrill for spectators, aligning with Red Bull's adventurous brand image. The energy and excitement among the participants and spectators were palpable. People were cheering, clapping, and eagerly engaging with the athletes. This observation highlighted the strong association between Red Bull and adrenaline-fueled activities, as consumers actively sought out such events to experience the brand's adventurous spirit.

Another example is the communication and promotion of events in schools not only generate awareness but also create a sense of excitement and curiosity among university students. By actively engaging with the event communication, students become aware of the unique experiences and opportunities that Red Bull provides. The cases of university students who participated and succeeded at events further strengthen Red Bull's image as a brand that fosters personal growth, achievement, and international representation. These success stories serve as testimonials to the brand's commitment to supporting aspiring athletes and providing platforms for them to showcase their talent on a global stage. Overall, this example reinforces the notion that Red Bull goes beyond simply organizing events. It actively involves and engages with its target audience, empowering them to participate and pursue their passions. By providing opportunities for personal and athletic development, Red Bull creates meaningful and memorable experiences that resonate with consumers and strengthen their connection to the brand.

Besides that, through social media monitoring, it was observed that the Red Bull Doodle Art event organized by Red Bull gained significant traction online. Attendees were actively sharing their experiences, tagging Red Bull's official accounts, and using event-specific hashtags. This social media buzz created a ripple effect, with more people expressing their desire to attend similar events and join the brand's online community. This demonstrated the power of user-generated content and the potential for brand advocacy through social media.

These examples provide real-life instances that illustrate the key findings and significant moments observed during the participant observation. They showcase the impact of Red Bull's marketing efforts on consumer perceptions, engagement, and emotional connection, contributing to a deeper understanding of how consumers perceive and interact with lifestyle brands like Red Bull.

### 5.3. Case Study Analysis: Kapferer Prism Framework

The Kapferer Prism Framework is a brand identity model that helps analyze and understand the various dimensions of a brand. According to Jean-Noël Kapferer, the creator of the Kapferer Prism Framework, it is defined as a brand identity model that provides a structured framework for analyzing and understanding the various dimensions of a brand (Kapferer, 2012). The Kapferer Prism Framework explores the six facets of a brand's identity: physique, personality, culture, relationship, reflection, and self-image (see figure X). These dimensions help shape the brand's perception and influence consumer behavior, allowing to develop a holistic understanding of the brand and its positioning in the market.

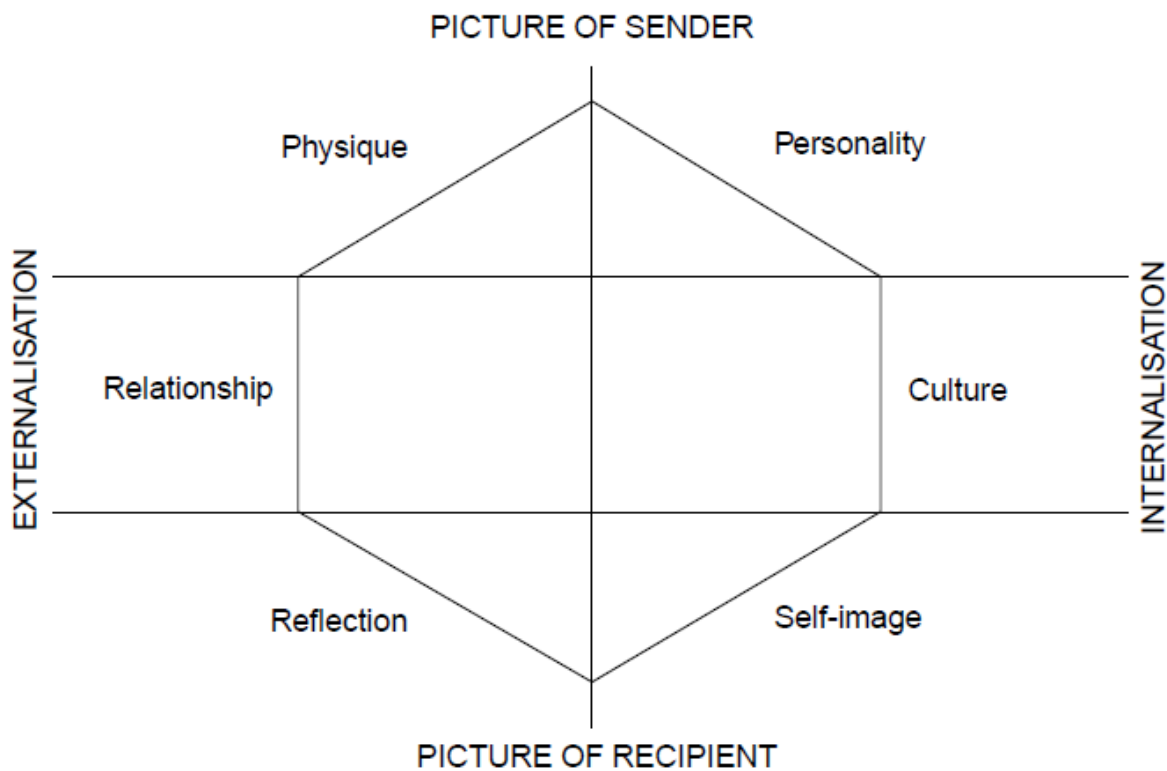


Figure 11 - Kapferer Brand Identity Prism

To apply the Kapferer Prism Framework specifically to Red Bull, an analysis should be conducted through the following steps:

## **Physique**

Red Bull's physical attributes and characteristics are carefully crafted to contribute to its overall brand image and differentiate it from competitors. These elements include product design, packaging, logo, and visual identity.

In terms of product design, Red Bull stands out with its slim and tall can, sporting a striking blue and silver color scheme. The sleek shape and vibrant colors create a visually appealing product that exudes modernity, energy, and dynamism. This design aligns perfectly with Red Bull's brand identity as an adventurous and high-performance brand. The packaging of Red Bull further reinforces its brand image. The can prominently displays the iconic Red Bull logo and brand name. Bold typography and the brand's signature red and blue colors create a sense of excitement and power. The packaging also includes information about the product's benefits and ingredients, emphasizing its functional attributes.

At the heart of Red Bull's visual identity is its powerful logo. The logo features two red bulls charging towards each other, symbolizing motion, strength, and determination. This simple yet impactful logo embodies the brand's core values of energy, action, and pushing limits. It is instantly recognizable and memorable, serving as a strong visual representation of the brand.

Red Bull maintains a consistent visual identity across its marketing materials, events, and sponsorships. High-quality action photography and video footage showcasing extreme sports, adventure, and adrenaline-fueled activities are frequently used. This visual approach reinforces the brand's association with excitement, performance, and a vibrant lifestyle.

Collectively, these physical attributes and characteristics contribute to Red Bull's overall image as a premium, energetic, and daring brand. The distinctive product design and packaging make it visually appealing and easily distinguishable. The logo serves as a powerful symbol of the brand's core values. The visually dynamic marketing materials and events further reinforce the brand's identity and resonate with its target audience.

In comparison to competitors, Red Bull's physical attributes help it stand out by conveying a sense of sophistication and premium quality. The sleek design, bold colors, and visually captivating imagery command attention and create a strong brand presence. Furthermore, Red Bull's focus on extreme sports and adventurous activities differentiates it from the majority of other energy drink brands, as it aligns with the interests and aspirations of its target audience.

## **Personality**

As a globally recognized and influential brand, Red Bull has built a distinct identity and reputation over the years. Its brand traits encapsulate the essence of what the brand stands for and how it is perceived by consumers. By delving into Red Bull's brand traits, we gain insights into its values, positioning, and the emotions it evokes in its target audience.

One of the core personality attributes of Red Bull is adventure. The brand is synonymous with adrenaline-fueled activities, extreme sports, and pushing boundaries. Red Bull's association with events such as Red Bull Cliff Diving, Red Bull Air Race, and Red Bull Rampage showcases its adventurous spirit. This trait resonates with the target audience, particularly young individuals seeking excitement, thrill, and new experiences.

Energetic is another key personality attribute of Red Bull. The brand is all about energy, vitality, and staying active. Through its tagline "Gives You Wings," Red Bull positions itself as a source of physical and mental stimulation. The brand's messaging and marketing campaigns emphasize the energizing effects of its products. This energetic trait appeals to individuals looking for a boost of vitality, whether it's during sports activities, studying, or work.

Boldness is another prominent personality trait associated with Red Bull. The brand is known for taking risks, embracing unconventional approaches, and pushing boundaries. Red Bull's innovative and daring marketing initiatives, such as the Stratos space jump, demonstrate its boldness. This attribute aligns with the aspirations of its target audience, who seek to break free from norms, challenge themselves, and embrace a non-conformist mindset.

The combination of these personality traits helps Red Bull establish a strong brand perception. The adventurous trait positions Red Bull as a leader in the world of extreme sports and excitement. The energetic trait establishes it as a reliable source of energy and vitality. The boldness trait sets Red Bull apart from competitors by showcasing its willingness to take risks and push boundaries.

These personality attributes not only resonate with the target audience but also contribute to the brand's overall perception. Red Bull's adventurous, energetic, and bold personality traits create a sense of excitement, passion, and empowerment among consumers. They foster a strong emotional connection and identification with the brand, making Red Bull more than just an energy drink but a lifestyle choice.

Overall, the personality traits associated with Red Bull align with its target audience's values and aspirations. The brand's positioning as adventurous, energetic, and bold contributes to its success and differentiation in the marketplace, reinforcing its image as a dynamic and aspirational brand.

## **Culture**

Red Bull has successfully established cultural associations and symbols that contribute to its brand identity and resonate with its target audience. The brand strategically aligns itself with various cultural domains, including extreme sports, music, and youth culture, to tap into trends and connect with its consumers.

One of the key cultural associations of Red Bull is its affiliation with extreme sports. The brand has become synonymous with activities such as skateboarding, surfing, snowboarding, and motorsports. By sponsoring high performance athletes and events in these domains, Red Bull creates a strong connection with individuals who are passionate about these sports. This association with extreme sports positions Red Bull as an authentic and credible brand within these communities and fosters a sense of excitement and adventure.

Red Bull's involvement in the music industry is another significant cultural association. The brand sponsors music festivals, hosts concerts, and supports emerging artists. This association helps Red Bull connect with the youth culture and the music-loving audience. It positions the brand as a supporter of creativity, self-expression, and the pursuit of artistic passions. The collaboration with musicians and music-related events allows Red Bull to align itself with cultural trends and capture the attention of its target audience.

Furthermore, Red Bull's alignment with youth culture is evident through its engagement with various activities and initiatives that appeal to young individuals. The brand actively supports youth-oriented projects, such as art exhibits, gaming events, and social causes. By participating in

these cultural movements, Red Bull positions itself as a brand that understands and supports the aspirations, interests, and values of the youth. This alignment helps create a sense of belonging and relevance among its target audience.

In essence, Red Bull leverages cultural associations and symbols to connect with its target audience and tap into their aspirations and interests. By affiliating with extreme sports, music, and youth culture, the brand aligns itself with cultural trends and establishes a strong presence in these domains. This strategy allows Red Bull to go beyond being a mere energy drink and become an integral part of the cultural fabric of its consumers' lives.

## **Relationship**

Red Bull has successfully built a strong and loyal community of consumers through its strategic marketing activities, events, and sponsorships. The brand excels in fostering an emotional connection with its consumers and engaging them in a way that goes beyond traditional marketing tactics.

One of the key aspects of Red Bull's consumer relationship is the brand's ability to evoke emotions and inspire its audience. Through its marketing campaigns, Red Bull taps into the aspirations of its target audience, encouraging them to push their limits, embrace challenges, and live life to the fullest. By associating itself with extreme sports, high-performance athletes, and adventurous lifestyles, Red Bull ignites a sense of excitement, passion, and adrenaline among its consumers. This emotional connection creates a bond between the brand and its audience, leading to increased brand loyalty.

Red Bull's marketing activities also play a crucial role in engaging consumers and fostering a sense of community. The brand organizes and sponsors a wide range of events, including sports competitions, music festivals, and cultural gatherings. These events provide platforms for consumers to come together, share experiences, and connect with like-minded individuals who share a common interest in the Red Bull brand. By creating these communal experiences, Red Bull strengthens the bond between its consumers and cultivates a passionate community of brand advocates.

Furthermore, Red Bull's strategic sponsorships contribute to the relationship it establishes with consumers. By partnering with athletes, teams, and cultural icons, Red Bull aligns itself with influential figures that embody its brand values and aspirations. This association not only enhances the brand's credibility but also creates role models and sources of inspiration for consumers. Seeing successful individuals supported by Red Bull reinforces the brand's image and encourages consumers to adopt the same mindset and strive for their own achievements.

## **Reflection**

Red Bull excels in its self-reflective dimension, as the brand effectively reflects the values, lifestyles, and aspirations of its target audience. Through its marketing strategies and messaging, Red Bull inspires and motivates consumers to embrace an adventurous and active lifestyle, pushing their limits and seeking new experiences.

One-way Red Bull achieves this is by aligning itself with the aspirations of its target audience. The brand understands the desire for excitement, achievement, and personal growth among its consumers, particularly those who are attracted to extreme sports, high-performance activities, and a dynamic lifestyle. By showcasing athletes and individuals who embody these values, Red Bull creates a relatable image that resonates with its audience.

Red Bull's marketing campaigns and messaging consistently emphasize the importance of pushing boundaries and stepping out of one's comfort zone. The brand encourages consumers to overcome challenges, embrace new experiences, and live life to the fullest. This self-reflective dimension is evident in slogans like "Red Bull gives you wings" and "Do the impossible," which serve as motivational mantras that inspire consumers to believe in their own potential.

Moreover, Red Bull's association with extreme sports and high-performance athletes reinforces the brand's self-reflective dimension. By showcasing athletes who achieve remarkable feats, Red Bull not only inspires consumers but also provides them with role models who embody the values of determination, resilience, and passion. This inspires consumers to emulate these qualities in their own pursuits, whether it's sports, academics, or personal goals.

Red Bull also actively engages with its target audience through events, competitions, and experiences that promote an adventurous and active lifestyle. By organizing and sponsoring events

like the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series or the Red Bull Air Race, the brand offers consumers the opportunity to witness and participate in thrilling and adrenaline-pumping activities. This hands-on engagement allows consumers to immerse themselves in the brand's self-reflective dimension and experience firsthand the exhilaration and sense of achievement associated with an adventurous lifestyle.

### **Self-image**

Red Bull plays a significant role in shaping the self-image of its consumers by associating itself with extreme sports and high-performance activities. Through this association, the brand impacts consumers' self-perception and identity in several ways, allowing them to express their desired image and fulfill their aspirations.

Firstly, Red Bull's association with extreme sports and high-performance activities provides consumers with a sense of identity and belonging. By aligning themselves with a brand that represents adventure, adrenaline, and pushing boundaries, consumers feel connected to a community of like-minded individuals who share similar values and interests. This association enables them to express their desired image as adventurous, daring, and ambitious individuals.

Furthermore, Red Bull's involvement in extreme sports and high-performance activities allows consumers to identify with the brand's sponsored athletes and role models. These athletes represent excellence, determination, and the pursuit of greatness, inspiring consumers to emulate these qualities in their own lives. By aspiring to the achievements of these athletes, consumers can shape their self-image as individuals who strive for success and are committed to reaching their full potential.

Red Bull also provides opportunities for consumers to actively participate in events and experiences that reflect their desired self-image. Whether it's through Red Bull-sponsored competitions, recreational activities, or attending high-energy events, consumers can engage in activities that align with their aspirations and desired image. This participation enables them to feel a sense of accomplishment, reinforce their self-perception, and validate their identity as individuals who embrace an active and adventurous lifestyle.

Additionally, Red Bull's marketing strategies and messaging emphasize the importance of living life to the fullest and seizing opportunities. By encouraging consumers to step out of their

comfort zones and pursue their passions, the brand empowers individuals to shape their self-image as proactive, bold, and fearless. Red Bull's association with extreme sports and high-performance activities serves as a catalyst for individuals to challenge themselves, overcome obstacles, and grow personally, thereby contributing to their self-perception as capable and determined individuals.

In summary, Red Bull's Kapferer Prism identity is characterized by its distinct physique, adventurous personality, strong cultural associations, deep emotional relationship with consumers, and reflection of consumers' desired self-image. This identity has allowed Red Bull to differentiate itself in the market, build a passionate community of brand advocates, and become synonymous with energy, excitement, and the pursuit of extraordinary experiences.

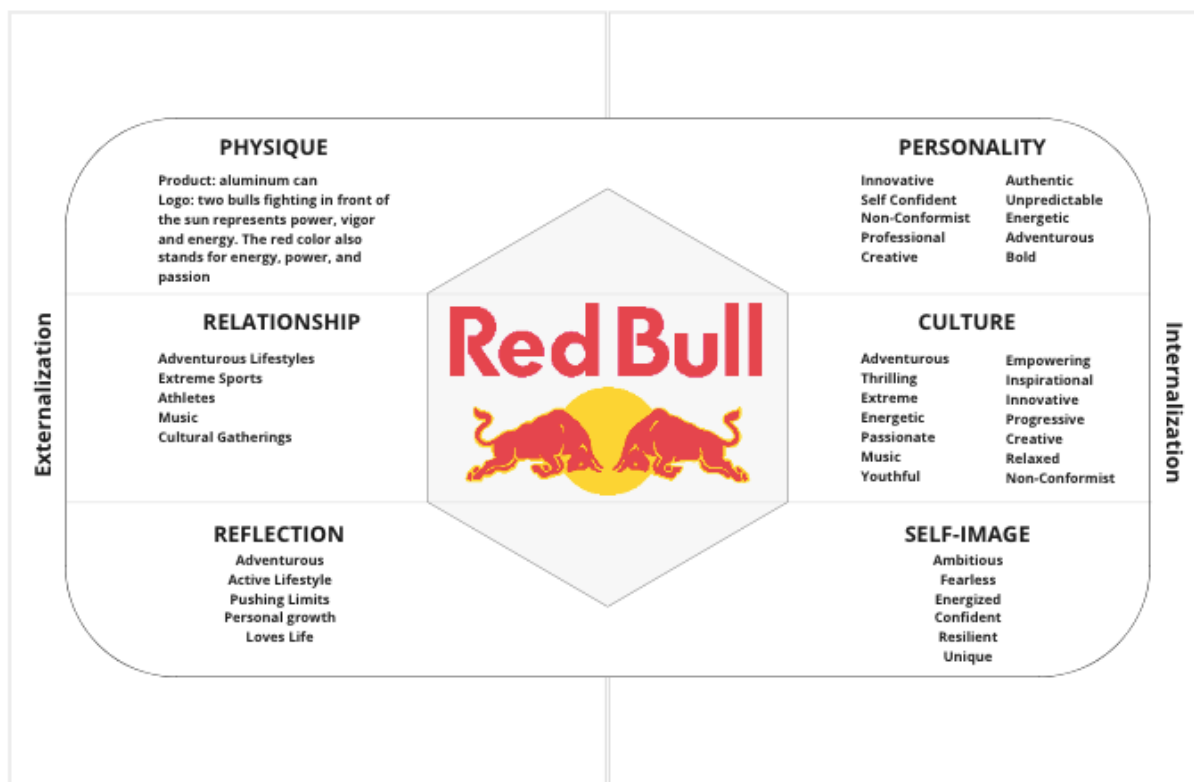


Figure 12 - Red Bull's Kapferer Prism identity

#### 5.4. Secondary Data Research: Red Bull Marketing Mix

Secondary data analysis involves the examination and analysis of data that was originally collected by someone else for a different primary research purpose. It is a research approach that applies the same fundamental principles as studies using primary data, and it follows specific steps similar to

any other research method. This paper argues that secondary data analysis is a valid and effective method to employ in the research process, as long as a systematic approach is followed. It emphasizes that when conducted properly, secondary data analysis can contribute valuable insights and be a viable research method for inquiry (Johnston, 2014).

The marketing mix analysis presented in this study was derived from Red Bull internal documents (annex X). Subsequently, secondary data research methods were employed to further develop and expand upon the findings. This involved gathering and analyzing existing information from external sources such as industry reports and market research studies. By leveraging secondary data, a comprehensive examination of the Red Bull Marketing Mix was conducted, combining insights from both internal and external sources to inform the research outcomes.

Philip Kotler (2009), a prominent marketing expert, defines the marketing mix as a set of controllable marketing tools that a company uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market. The marketing mix, often referred to as the "4 Ps," consists of four key elements: **Product:** This refers to the tangible or intangible offerings that a company provides to its target market. It involves decisions related to product design, features, packaging, branding, and quality; **Price:** This element encompasses the amount of money customers are willing to pay for the product or service. It involves pricing strategies, pricing levels, discounts, and payment terms; **Place:** Also known as distribution, this aspect focuses on making the product available to customers at the right place and time. It involves decisions regarding distribution channels, logistics, inventory management, and retail or online presence; **Promotion:** This element involves activities aimed at communicating and promoting the product to the target market. It includes advertising, public relations, sales promotion, personal selling, and various promotional strategies. According to Kotler, an effective marketing mix involves carefully managing these four elements to create a compelling value proposition, meet customer needs, and achieve marketing objectives.

Red Bull demonstrates its commitment to strategic marketing by effectively utilizing the renowned Kotler marketing mix while tailoring it to fit its unique needs and brand strategies. Red Bull's implementation of the Kotler marketing mix showcases its strategic approach to marketing. By emphasizing product innovation, premium pricing, strategic placement, and captivating promotion, Red Bull not only meets consumer needs but also aligns its brand image with the core values of its target market. Through its distinctive marketing strategies and adaptations, Red Bull

has become a global phenomenon, exemplifying the successful integration of the Kotler marketing mix to achieve brand differentiation, customer loyalty, and market leadership.

This study delves into the marketing and communication strategies employed by Red Bull to create and maintain its status as a lifestyle brand. By exploring the brand's innovative approaches, unique positioning, and successful engagement with consumers, we can gain insights into how Red Bull has carved out a distinctive niche in the highly competitive beverage industry. From its captivating content marketing initiatives to its strategic event sponsorships and social media presence, Red Bull's marketing and communication strategies have played a pivotal role in solidifying its position as a lifestyle brand and fostering a loyal consumer base. Through this analysis, we will gain a deeper understanding of how Red Bull has effectively utilized these strategies to create a powerful brand image and maintain its status as a leading lifestyle brand.

Red Bull's distinctive strategy in establishing emotional connections with consumers is known as the Red Bull Marketing Mix (Figure 11). This comprehensive approach is built upon six pillars, each serving a distinct purpose while carrying equal significance and it represents the specific strategies and tactics employed by the brand to establish these emotional connections and create a distinct position in the market.

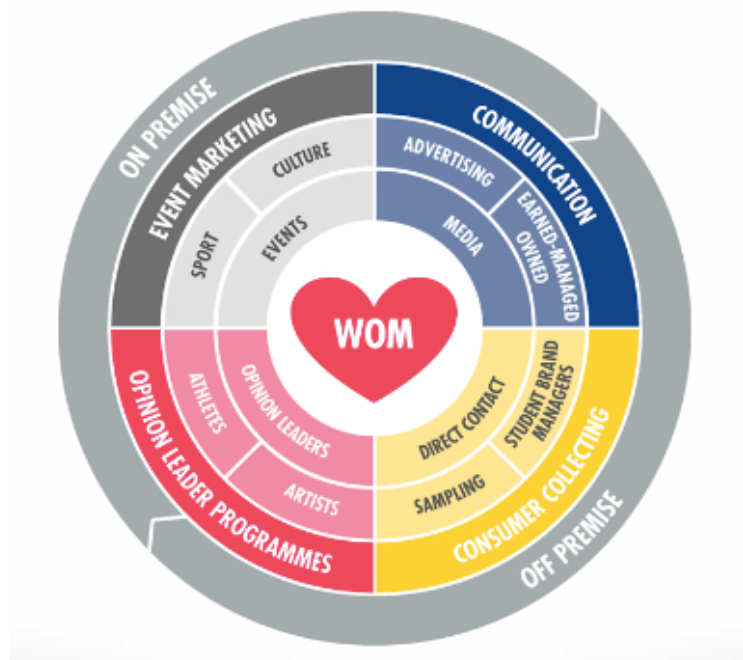


Figure 13 - Red Bull's Marketing Mix

## **Event Marketing**

Event Marketing is a key component of Red Bull's brand strategy, serving as a dynamic platform to bring the Red Bull brand world to life and generate captivating content that sparks conversations among consumers and enthusiasts alike.

Through strategic event planning and execution, Red Bull aims to create immersive and memorable experiences that align with the brand's core values and resonate with its target audience. These events go beyond traditional marketing approaches by providing opportunities for individuals to actively engage with the brand, fostering a sense of participation and connection.

Red Bull's event marketing endeavors span a wide range of activities, including extreme sports competitions, music festivals, art exhibitions, cultural showcases, and innovative experiential activations. These events often feature adrenaline-pumping performances, cutting-edge talent, and unique settings that captivate the attention and imagination of attendees.

By bringing the Red Bull brand world to life through events, the brand aims to go beyond traditional advertising and create an environment where consumers can directly experience the brand's energy, passion, and adventurous spirit. The immersive nature of these events creates lasting impressions, driving brand awareness and fostering a sense of brand loyalty among participants.

Moreover, Red Bull recognizes the power of content creation in today's digital age. By organizing events that are visually striking, action-packed, and socially shareable, Red Bull generates compelling content that captures the attention of audiences both during and after the event. This content becomes a catalyst for organic conversation, as attendees and online viewers eagerly share their experiences and discussions surrounding the Red Bull brand.

Through event marketing, Red Bull not only showcases its brand values and lifestyle but also cultivates a community of passionate individuals who become brand advocates. These events provide a platform for like-minded people to connect, share their passions, and create a sense of belonging within the broader Red Bull community.

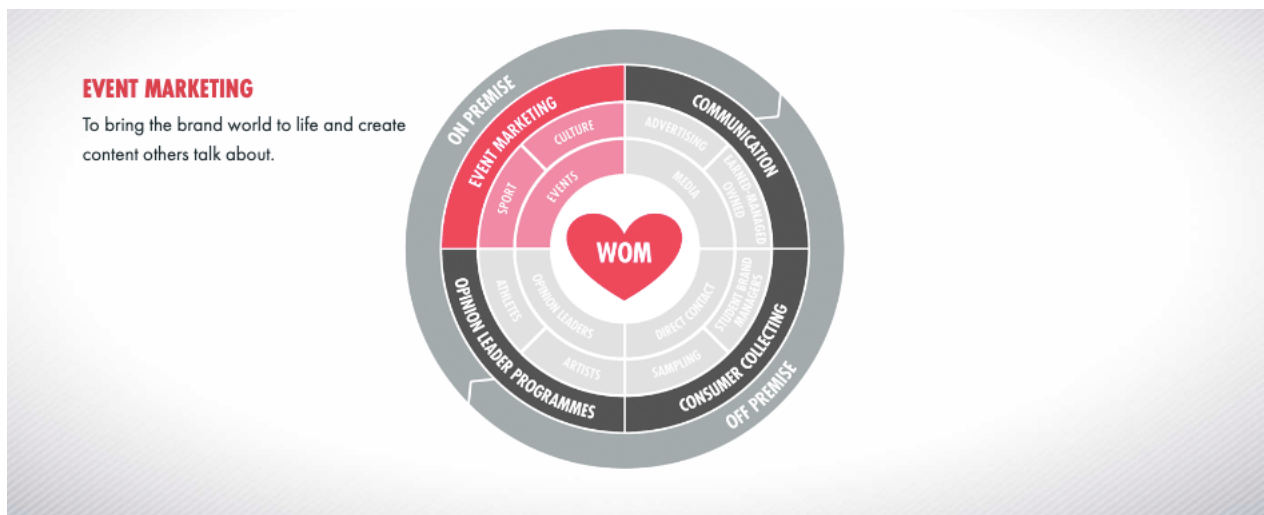


Figure 14 - Red Bull's Marketing Mix - Event Marketing

## Communication

Communication is a fundamental pillar within the Red Bull Marketing Mix, playing a vital role in positioning the brand, generating awareness, and shaping the brand's image.

Through strategic communication efforts, Red Bull aims to establish a distinct position in the market by effectively conveying its unique brand values, messaging, and offerings. This involves crafting compelling narratives and brand stories that resonate with the target audience and differentiate Red Bull from competitors.

Creating awareness is a primary objective of Red Bull's communication strategy. By utilizing various channels and platforms, such as traditional advertising, digital marketing, social media, and public relations, Red Bull seeks to reach a broad audience and ensure that the brand is top-of-mind for consumers. The goal is to spark curiosity and interest, prompting individuals to explore and engage with the brand further.

In addition to generating awareness, communication plays a crucial role in shaping the brand's image. Red Bull strategically communicates its brand identity and values, emphasizing its association with energy, adventure, and pushing boundaries. By aligning messaging with the desired brand image, Red Bull creates a perception of excitement, vitality, and a lifestyle that resonates with its target market.

Furthermore, effective communication helps build brand equity by establishing an emotional connection with consumers. Red Bull's communication efforts aim to evoke emotions

and capture the attention of the audience, forging a bond between the brand and its consumers. By consistently delivering relevant and engaging content, Red Bull reinforces its brand positioning and strengthens brand loyalty.

Within the Red Bull Marketing Mix, communication serves as a powerful tool for creating a cohesive and consistent brand identity. It allows Red Bull to convey its values, generate awareness, and shape the desired brand image in the minds of consumers. Through strategic messaging and engagement across various communication channels, Red Bull strives to establish a strong brand presence, foster consumer connections, and ultimately drive brand preference and loyalty.

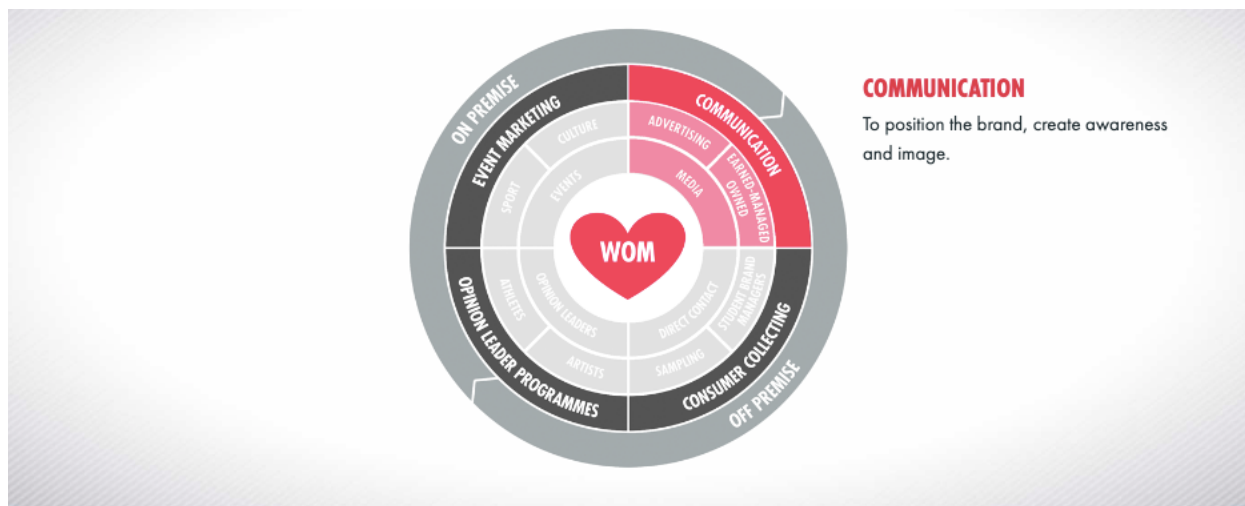


Figure 15 - Red Bull's Marketing Mix - Communication

## Consumer Collecting

Within the Red Bull Marketing Mix, consumer collection plays a crucial role as one of the major pillars, serving a range of objectives. These include acquiring new consumers, introducing the brand to diverse consumption occasions, and nurturing brand loyalty, with a particular focus on students.

One aspect of consumer collecting focuses on expanding Red Bull's consumer base by targeting individuals who have yet to experience the brand. Red Bull aims to engage with new consumers by showcasing the product's functionality and benefits across a range of consumption occasions. Whether it's for work, study, driving, sports, or socializing at parties, Red Bull strives

to demonstrate how its energy drink can enhance performance, boost energy levels, and provide the desired effects in different scenarios.

By effectively introducing Red Bull to these diverse consumption occasions, the brand seeks to position itself as a versatile and reliable choice for individuals seeking an energy boost. The goal is to capture the attention and interest of new consumers who may not have considered Red Bull before, ultimately encouraging them to try the product and become regular consumers.

Another key objective of consumer collecting, specifically targeting students, is to cultivate brand loyalty. Red Bull recognizes the importance of building strong relationships with this demographic, given their significant influence and potential for long-term brand advocacy. By engaging with students through tailored marketing initiatives, sponsorships, and events, Red Bull aims to create a sense of affinity and loyalty among this specific consumer segment.

Red Bull understands that students often lead fast-paced, demanding lifestyles that require increased energy and focus. Through targeted communication and strategic activations, the brand positions itself as a trusted companion for students during their academic pursuits, social activities, and overall lifestyle. By establishing a strong presence within the student community, Red Bull aims to foster brand loyalty that extends beyond the academic years, creating a lasting connection that transcends into other life stages.

Through consumer collecting, Red Bull seeks to expand its consumer base, introduce its products to various consumption occasions, and nurture brand loyalty among students. By effectively engaging with new consumers and demonstrating the value and relevance of Red Bull in different contexts, the brand aims to establish a strong foothold in the market and cultivate lasting relationships with its target audience.

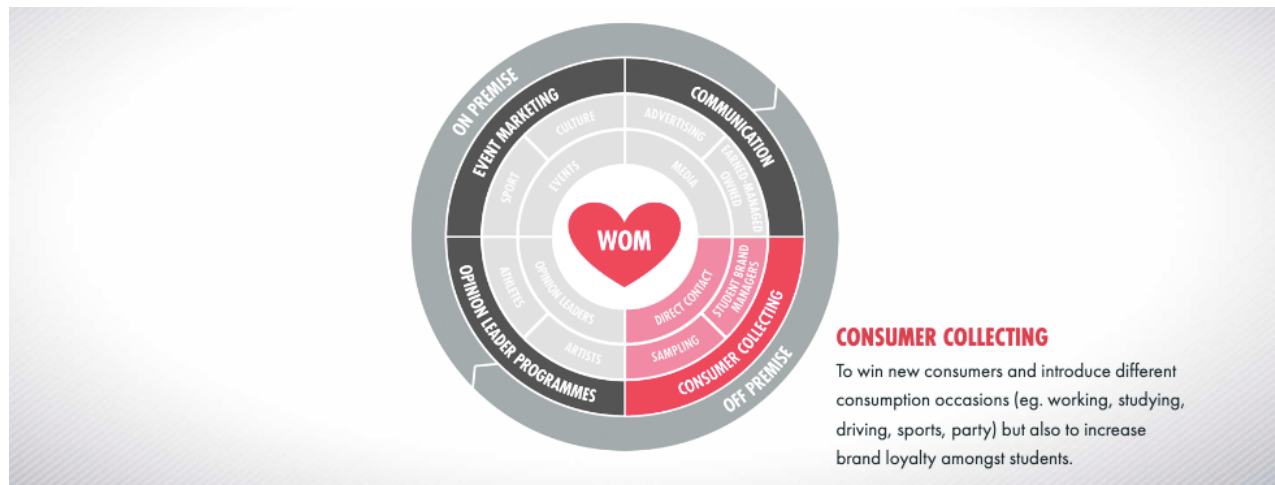


Figure 16 - Red Bull's Marketing Mix - Consumer Collecting

## Opinion Leader Programmes

Opinion Leader Programmes aimed at reinforcing the credibility of the product's effectiveness and building a strong brand image.

The primary objective of Opinion Leader Programmes is to leverage the influence and credibility of key individuals within relevant fields or communities. These opinion leaders are individuals who possess a high level of expertise, influence, and trust among their respective audiences. By collaborating with opinion leaders who align with Red Bull's brand values and target demographics, the brand aims to enhance the perception of its product's effectiveness and authenticity.

Through Opinion Leader Programmes, Red Bull seeks to showcase how the energy drink delivers the desired benefits and positively impacts performance, energy levels, and overall well-being. Opinion leaders, who are respected and trusted within their communities, provide testimonials, endorsements, or share their personal experiences with Red Bull, reinforcing the product's credibility and efficacy.

Moreover, these programs contribute to building a strong brand image for Red Bull. By associating the brand with influential figures who are seen as authoritative and knowledgeable, Red Bull establishes itself as a trusted and reputable choice in the market. The endorsement and support from opinion leaders add a layer of authenticity and validation, helping to shape a positive brand perception among consumers.

Opinion Leader Programmes also extend beyond traditional advertising by creating meaningful collaborations and partnerships. This involves engaging with opinion leaders through various initiatives, such as sponsorships, ambassadorships, or co-creating content. By aligning the brand with influential voices, Red Bull aims to not only reinforce product credibility but also amplify its reach and engagement with target audiences.

Overall, Opinion Leader Programmes play a crucial role within the Red Bull Marketing Mix by leveraging the influence and credibility of opinion leaders to strengthen the perception of the product's effectiveness and build a positive brand image. Through these strategic collaborations, Red Bull enhances its reputation, increases consumer trust, and positions itself as a reliable choice for energy-boosting needs.

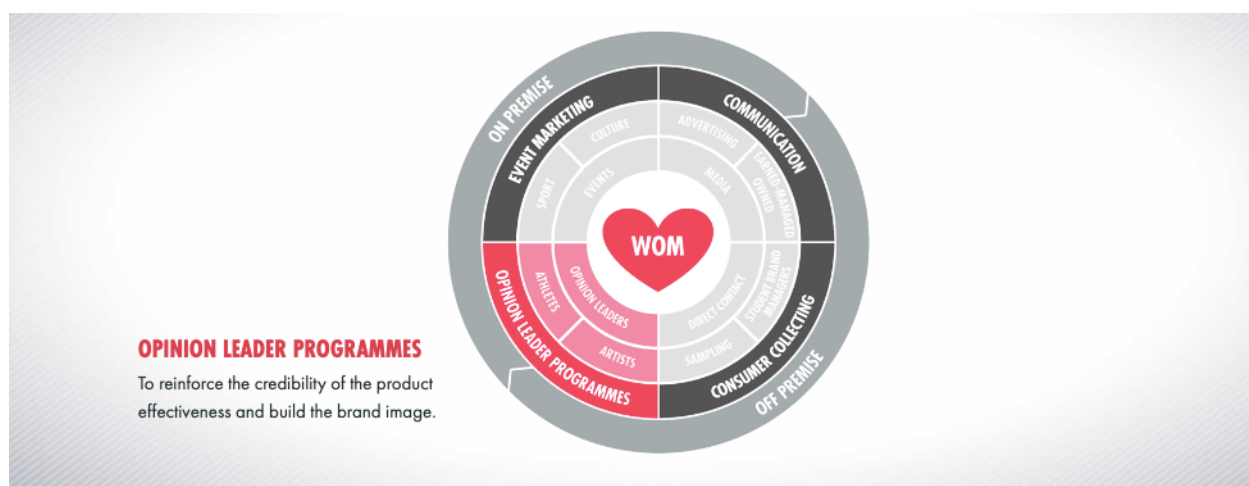


Figure 17 - Red Bull's Marketing Mix - Opinion Leader Programmes

## On Premise

The On Premise strategy is crucial for Red Bull as it allows the brand to actively shape the consumer experience in the environments where its products are consumed. By strategically partnering with clubs, bars, and restaurants that align with the brand's values and target demographic, Red Bull creates an immersive and engaging atmosphere for consumers. These venues serve as extensions of the brand, providing a unique setting where consumers can enjoy Red Bull in a social and dynamic context.

The On Premise pillar is instrumental in establishing and reinforcing the brand's image. By associating Red Bull with popular and trendy establishments, it enhances the perception of the brand as dynamic, energetic, and culturally relevant. The ambiance, music, and overall vibe of these venues contribute to creating a brand experience that resonates with consumers and aligns with Red Bull's brand identity.

Additionally, the On Premise outlets represent the first point of contact for many consumers. It is often where individuals are introduced to Red Bull or where they make their purchasing decision. As consumers encounter Red Bull in these settings, the brand has an opportunity to make a lasting impression, creating positive associations and driving further engagement.

The On Premise pillar goes beyond the traditional retail experience by immersing consumers in an environment that embodies the brand's values and lifestyle. By creating memorable experiences and fostering a sense of connection, Red Bull strengthens its relationship with consumers and cultivates brand loyalty.

In conclusion, the On Premise pillar within the Red Bull Marketing Mix is essential for establishing the brand's image, creating immersive experiences in clubs, bars, and restaurants where Red Bull is consumed. This strategic approach serves as the initial point of contact for many consumers, allowing Red Bull to shape their perception, drive engagement, and build lasting connections.

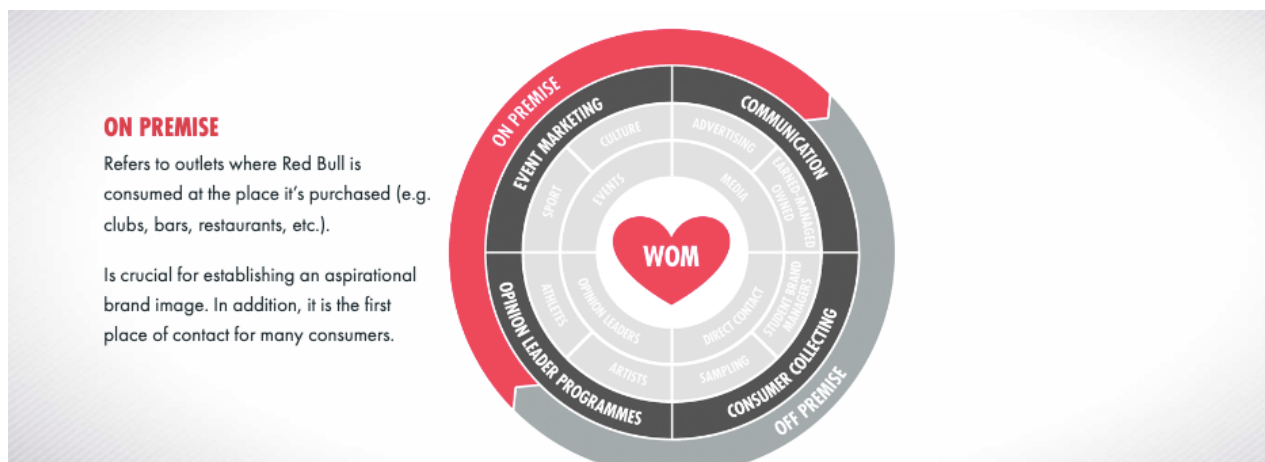


Figure 18 - Red Bull's Marketing Mix - On Premise

## **Off Premise**

The Off Premise pillar encompasses various retail outlets such as grocery stores, convenience stores, gas stations, and more. This pillar focuses on the places where consumers purchase Red Bull to consume at a later time. A strong in-store presence, appropriate pricing, and effective promotional support are crucial elements within this pillar.

In the Off Premise environment, Red Bull aims to ensure a compelling and noticeable presence on store shelves and displays. This involves strategic positioning within high-traffic areas, eye-catching packaging, and effective merchandising techniques. By creating a visually appealing and easily accessible product presentation, Red Bull increases its visibility and captures the attention of consumers in these retail settings.

Moreover, pricing plays a significant role in the Off Premise strategy. Red Bull strives to offer competitive pricing that aligns with consumer expectations and market standards. The right pricing strategy ensures that Red Bull remains accessible and attractive to a wide range of consumers, encouraging them to choose Red Bull over alternative energy drinks or beverages.

In addition to a strong in-store presence and appropriate pricing, effective promotional support is essential in the Off Premise channel. This includes promotional activities such as in-store advertisements, discounts, loyalty programs, and product bundling. These promotional efforts serve to create awareness, incentivize purchases, and encourage repeat buying behavior among consumers.

The Off Premise pillar acknowledges that consumers often make purchasing decisions in a retail environment based on various factors, including brand recognition, product availability, pricing, and promotions. Red Bull's goal within this pillar is to optimize these factors to influence consumer choices positively and drive sales.

By focusing on the Off Premise channel, Red Bull aims to capture the attention of consumers during their routine shopping trips and provide them with a convenient option for later consumption. The brand understands that a strong in-store presence, competitive pricing, and effective promotional support are crucial in influencing consumer behavior and driving purchase decisions.

In conclusion, the Off Premise pillar within the Red Bull Marketing Mix encompasses grocery stores, convenience stores, gas stations, and other retail outlets where consumers pick up Red Bull for future consumption. By ensuring a strong presence, appropriate pricing, and effective

promotion, Red Bull aims to attract consumers, enhance brand visibility, and drive sales in these retail environments.



Figure 19 - Red Bull's Marketing Mix - Off Premise

## Word Of Mouth

Word of Mouth (WOM) is a powerful outcome that emerges from the combined impact of all activities within the Red Bull marketing mix. It represents the most credible and convincing form of marketing available to the brand.

WOM refers to the organic conversations, recommendations, and endorsements that occur between individuals based on their personal experiences with Red Bull. It is a natural and authentic form of communication that arises when satisfied consumers share their positive experiences with others. Unlike traditional advertising, which can be perceived as promotional and biased, WOM carries inherent credibility as it stems from real-life interactions and genuine satisfaction.

The effectiveness of WOM lies in its ability to influence consumer behavior. When people receive recommendations or hear positive stories about Red Bull from friends, family, or peers, they are more likely to trust and act upon these suggestions. WOM acts as a powerful social proof, reassuring potential consumers about the quality, effectiveness, and value of Red Bull. It helps build trust, reduce skepticism, and increase the likelihood of trial or purchase.

The impact of WOM can be amplified through the various activities and strategies employed in the Red Bull marketing mix. By delivering exceptional product experiences, engaging in innovative and memorable marketing campaigns, leveraging social media and digital platforms, partnering with influencers, and creating remarkable brand experiences, Red Bull cultivates positive conversations and encourages consumers to share their enthusiasm with others.

One of the primary goals of Red Bull's marketing mix is to generate positive WOM by creating remarkable experiences that leave a lasting impression on consumers. The brand aims to exceed expectations, provide unique value, and evoke emotions that trigger conversations and storytelling.

By focusing on generating positive WOM, Red Bull taps into the power of personal recommendations and authentic advocacy, which have a profound impact on consumer perceptions and behavior. The brand recognizes that while traditional marketing efforts play a significant role, WOM holds exceptional value as the most credible and convincing form of marketing available.

In summary, the Red Bull marketing mix encompasses a range of activities designed to generate positive WOM. By delivering exceptional product experiences and implementing impactful marketing strategies, Red Bull aims to spark conversations, cultivate advocacy, and leverage the power of personal recommendations. Ultimately, the brand recognizes that WOM is the most credible and persuasive form of marketing, capable of driving consumer behavior and strengthening its position in the market.

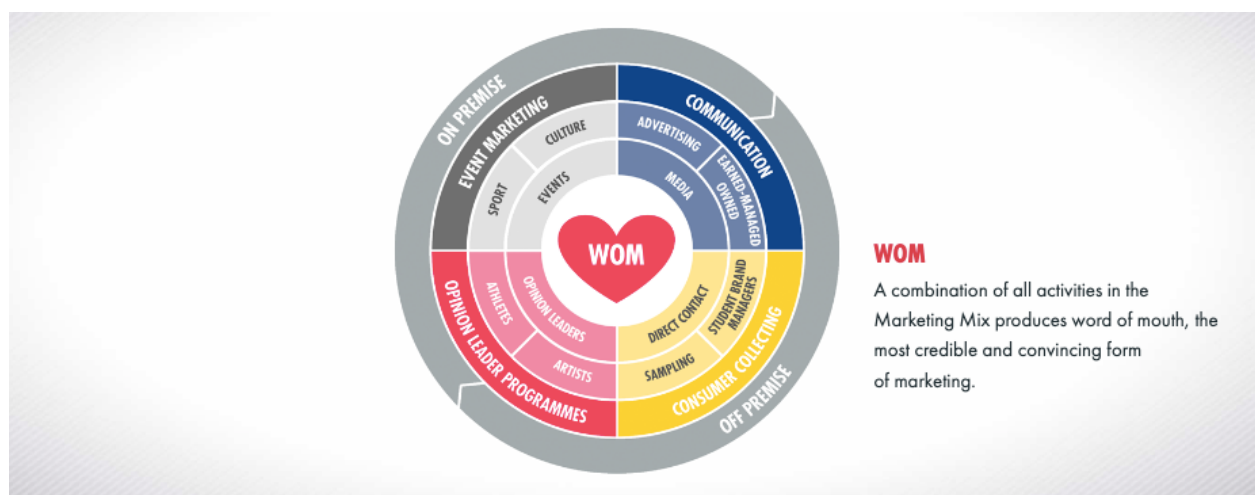


Figure 20 - Red Bull's Marketing Mix - Word Of Mouth

The following chart presents a comparative analysis between Kotler's traditional marketing mix framework and the marketing mix employed by Red Bull. Developed by Philip Kotler, the marketing mix consists of the four key elements: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. However, Red Bull, a prominent energy drink brand known for its innovative marketing strategies, has adopted a unique approach to its marketing mix, incorporating elements that go beyond the traditional framework. This chart aims to highlight the similarities and differences between these two approaches, shedding light on how Red Bull has crafted its own distinct marketing mix to achieve remarkable success in the industry.



Chart 2 - Kotler's Marketing Mix vs. Red Bull Marketing Mix

As observed, none of the mentioned pillars of Red Bull's marketing mix (Event Marketing, Communication, Consumer Collecting, Opinion Leader Programmes, On Premise, Off Premise, WOM) directly corresponds to the "Price" element of the Kotler marketing mix.

In the traditional marketing mix framework, the four Ps are Product, Price, Place, and Promotion and each of these elements represents a different aspect of marketing strategy. The mentioned pillars of Red Bull's marketing mix focus on different aspects related to product positioning, distribution, promotion, and consumer engagement. However, none of them specifically address the pricing strategy or the determination of product costs. While price is an essential aspect of marketing strategy, it is not directly represented by the pillars mentioned. Price considerations typically involve factors such as pricing strategies, pricing models, and pricing tactics.

Introduction:

Red Bull's decision to not prioritize price as an important element in their marketing mix can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the brand focuses on brand differentiation and positioning itself as a premium and distinctive product. Emphasizing price may undermine this positioning and dilute the brand's image. Instead, Red Bull places a stronger emphasis on the functional and experiential benefits its energy drinks provide. The brand aims to create a perception of value that extends beyond the product's monetary cost. By emphasizing the benefits of increased energy, enhanced performance, and a unique lifestyle, Red Bull emphasizes the value consumers receive rather than solely focusing on price. Moreover, Red Bull has built a strong brand equity over the years through strategic marketing efforts and sponsorships. By prioritizing other elements of the marketing mix, such as product quality, brand image, and consumer engagement, Red Bull maintains and reinforces its brand equity, which is crucial for long-term success. Additionally, Red Bull's market positioning as a leader in the energy drink industry allows the brand to command premium pricing without heavily relying on price competition. Instead, the focus is on creating a strong brand identity and engaging experiences that differentiate Red Bull from its competitors.

In conclusion, Red Bull's marketing mix deviates from the traditional emphasis on price by strategically prioritizing other elements such as brand differentiation, value perception, brand equity, and market positioning. By doing so, Red Bull has successfully established itself as a prominent and distinctive brand in the energy drink market.

## **5.5. Triangulation of Data Analysis**

The combination of these sectional methods provided a comprehensive understanding of Red Bull's marketing approach. Moreover, triangulation was employed as a methodological approach to enhance the credibility and robustness of the research findings. Triangulation involves using multiple sources, methods, or researchers to validate and corroborate the results (Flick, 2018). By comparing and contrasting data from different sources and utilizing various methods, converging or diverging findings were identified, as I delve in the following sentences. This approach helped minimize biases and errors, ultimately providing a more comprehensive and well-rounded understanding of Red Bull's marketing strategy. The integration of these sectional methods and the application of triangulation ensured that the conclusions drawn from the study were supported by multiple sources and methodologies, enhancing the overall validity and reliability of the research findings.

According to the findings from the conducted interviews, several key patterns and insights emerged regarding Red Bull's brand positioning and marketing strategies. The study revealed that Red Bull strategically targets Entry Point Consumers (EPCs), particularly individuals in the Gen Z age group (18-24 years old), who are actively shaping their identities and affiliations. This deliberate targeting recognizes the receptiveness of Gen Z individuals to brand messaging and experiences, particularly those that align with their personal beliefs and aspirations. The interviews highlighted that Red Bull successfully positions itself by creating a unique brand experience and lifestyle that resonates with its target audience. The brand capitalizes on Gen Z's affinity for digital media, social interactions, and the desire to connect with brands that reflect their values. Red Bull leverages its internal team for content creation, allowing for full control over the brand messaging and alignment with its adventurous and professional spirit. By targeting specific communities or audiences within Gen Z, such as surfing, skateboarding, motorsports, and biking, Red Bull creates tailored content that emotionally engages consumers on a deeper level, building lasting brand loyalty.

The study further revealed that Red Bull's success lies in its ability to evoke emotions and create an emotional connection with consumers. The brand associates itself with high-performance athletes and organizes innovative and spontaneous events that captivate and inspire audiences.

These events not only serve as thrilling spectacles but also act as catalysts for personal growth and self-discovery. Red Bull's brand positioning strategy fosters an emotional bond and an integral part of the identity formation process for Gen Z individuals.

The findings also indicated that Red Bull extends its brand presence beyond the realm of sports, targeting multiple consumption occasions. By positioning itself as an energy drink that enhances experiences in various situations, Red Bull showcases its versatility and ability to integrate into consumers' daily lives. Overall, the findings highlight Red Bull's effective brand positioning strategy, which focuses on emotional connections, lifestyle branding, and partnerships with athletes. By creating a unique brand experience and aligning itself with high performance and credibility, Red Bull has successfully established itself as a lifestyle brand synonymous with adventure, challenge, and inspiration. The interviews revealed that brands that connect with consumers on an emotional level and maintain credibility are likely to shape the future. This insight suggests that Red Bull's strategic approach aligns with the growing popularity of lifestyle brands and the importance of emotional connections in brand positioning. The study provides valuable insights into Red Bull's marketing strategies, shedding light on the brand's targeting strategies, emotional branding techniques, and the impact of their lifestyle positioning on consumer behavior. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of Red Bull's success and provide implications for brands looking to connect with Gen Z consumers and position themselves as aspirational lifestyle brands.

The participant observation conducted in this study aimed to gain insights into consumer perceptions and behaviors towards Red Bull as a lifestyle brand. The observation focused on college campuses and related events, where Red Bull engages with its target audience. Through close observation and documentation, key findings emerged. Consumers exhibited high levels of engagement and enthusiasm during Red Bull-sponsored events, reflecting a strong association between the brand and its core values of adventure, challenge, and professionalism. The brand's social media presence played a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions, as consumers actively engaged with Red Bull's content and shared their experiences online. Red Bull's campus activations increased brand visibility, generated excitement among students, and fostered a sense of community, influencing consumers' willingness to try Red Bull products. Observations of

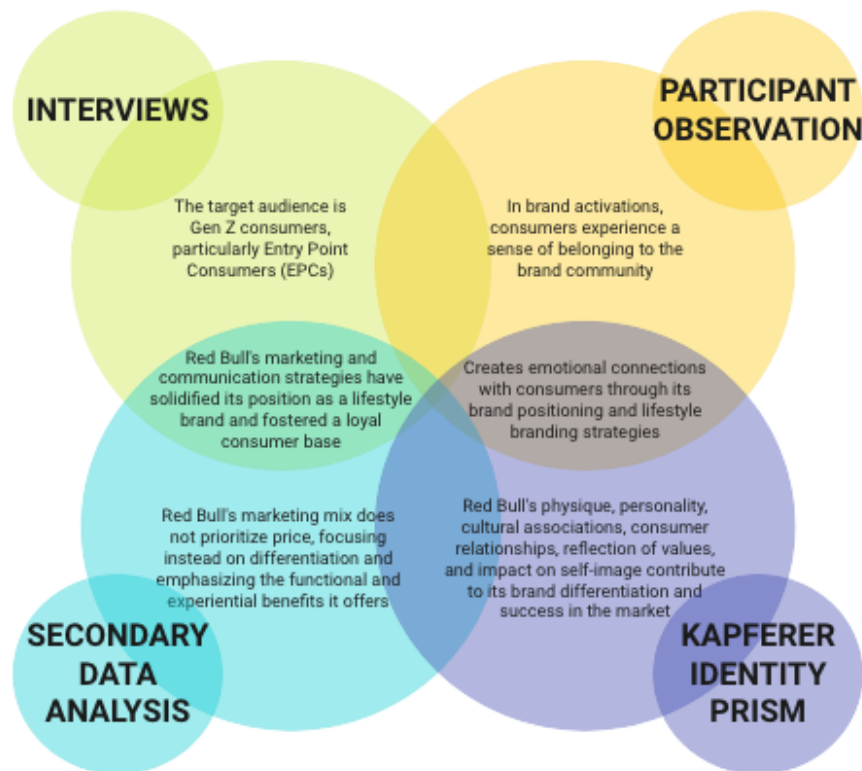
events, such as the Skate Conquest in Lisbon, highlighted the brand's commitment to unique experiences and its association with extreme sports. Red Bull's efforts to empower and support aspiring athletes through events and promotions in schools reinforced its image as a brand that fosters personal growth, achievement, and international representation. The power of social media and user-generated content was evident in amplifying Red Bull's brand presence, as seen in the success of the Red Bull Doodle Art event. Overall, the participant observation provided valuable insights into consumer perceptions, engagement, and emotional connection with Red Bull as a lifestyle brand. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how consumers interact with and perceive lifestyle brands, particularly in the context of Red Bull's marketing efforts.

The main findings of the chapter on the Kapferer Prism Framework and its application to Red Bull can be summarized as follows: Red Bull's physique includes carefully crafted physical attributes such as product design, packaging, logo, and visual identity. The brand's slim and tall can design, striking blue and silver colors, bold logo, and dynamic marketing materials contribute to its energetic and adventurous brand image. Red Bull's personality traits encompass adventure, energy, and boldness. The brand is associated with extreme sports, vitality, and pushing boundaries, which resonates with its target audience seeking excitement, vitality, and non-conformity. The cultural associations of Red Bull are linked to extreme sports, music, and youth culture. By sponsoring athletes and events in these domains, Red Bull establishes authenticity, relevance, and a sense of belonging among consumers who are passionate about these activities. Furthermore, Red Bull excels in building a strong relationship with consumers through emotional connections and community engagement. The brand's ability to evoke emotions, organize events, and support influential figures fosters brand loyalty and advocacy. In addition, Red Bull effectively reflects the values, aspirations, and desired self-image of its target audience. Its marketing campaigns inspire consumers to push boundaries, embrace challenges, and live life to the fullest, while its association with extreme sports and high-performance athletes provides role models and sources of inspiration. Lastly, the self-image created by Red Bull is shaped by its association with extreme sports and high-performance activities. Consumers identify with the brand's community, sponsored athletes, and participation in events, allowing them to express their desired image as adventurous, ambitious, and capable individuals. Overall, the findings demonstrate that Red Bull's brand identity, as analyzed through the Kapferer Prism Framework, successfully positions the brand as energetic, adventurous, and inspiring. The brand's physical attributes, personality traits, cultural associations,

consumer relationships, reflection of values, and impact on self-image contribute to its differentiation and success in the market.

The fourth and last method used was a secondary data analysis that involved examining and analyzing existing data collected by Red Bull for different research purposes. When conducted systematically, secondary data analysis can provide valuable insights and contribute to the research process. Through the analysis of data research, it was possible to conclude that Red Bull has created its own innovative marketing mix. Unlike the traditional marketing mix framework proposed by Kotler, Red Bull's approach does not prioritize the element of price. As a premium drink brand, Red Bull focuses on differentiation and positioning itself as a distinctive product. Instead of competing on price, the brand emphasizes the functional and experiential benefits it offers to consumers. In addition, Red Bull's marketing and communication strategies have played a crucial role in solidifying its position as a lifestyle brand and building a loyal consumer base. The brand's strategic efforts have effectively communicated its values, image, and offerings, resonating with the target audience and creating a sense of affiliation. Through these strategies, Red Bull has successfully positioned itself as more than just an energy drink, but as a lifestyle choice. In conclusion, this chapter highlights the validity and effectiveness of secondary data analysis, showcases Red Bull's innovative approach to its marketing mix by not prioritizing price, and underscores the success of its marketing and communication strategies in establishing Red Bull as a lifestyle brand with a devoted consumer base.

Overall, the combination of these sectional methods provided a comprehensive understanding of Red Bull's marketing approach and its influence on consumer behavior. The interviews with employers shed light on the brand's lifestyle strategies, while participant observation provided insights into consumer behavior and brand actions. The in-depth analysis using the Kapferer Identity Prism revealed the brand's consistent identity, and the secondary analysis of the marketing mix examined the tactical aspects of Red Bull's marketing efforts. Together, these findings contribute to a holistic understanding of Red Bull's marketing strategy and its impact on consumers.



*Chart 3 - Triangulation of methods*

## Chapter VI – Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis aimed to examine the role of lifestyle in the branding strategies of Red Bull Portugal and understand how the brand leverages lifestyle to connect with its target audience. By addressing the research questions, valuable insights have been gained regarding the incorporation of lifestyle elements into Red Bull Portugal's brand identity and marketing communications, the perception and engagement of individuals in Portugal with the brand's lifestyle aspects, and the effects of Red Bull Portugal's lifestyle-oriented branding on consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchase behaviors.

The findings reveal that Red Bull Portugal effectively incorporates lifestyle elements into its brand identity and marketing communications. According to Holt (2019), brands provide

individuals with a set of symbols and principles that empower them to articulate their identities, form connections with similar individuals, and establish social hierarchies. The brand strategically positions itself as a lifestyle choice, emphasizing adventure, energy, and pushing boundaries. According to Berger and Heath (2007), a brand serves as a means for individuals to communicate and showcase their self-identity, while Braun and Wicklund (1989) argue that brands can be used to emphasize social attributes such as prestige. Fournier (1998) further suggests that brands generate value for customers by establishing significant connections that extend beyond the inherent characteristics of the product. Red Bull Portugal's lifestyle-oriented branding resonates with its target audience, particularly the Gen Z age group, who actively shape their identities and affiliations. By creating a unique brand experience and aligning with their values, Red Bull Portugal successfully connects with consumers on an emotional level, fostering a sense of affiliation and belonging to the brand community. As Schmitt (1999) said, the goal of experiential marketing is to offer customers all-encompassing and immersive encounters that actively involve their senses, emotions, thoughts, actions, and relationships. By creating and providing unique experiences to individuals, Red Bull aims to establish a profound and long-lasting bond between the customer and the brand.

The perception and engagement of individuals in Portugal with Red Bull Portugal's lifestyle aspects were found to be highly positive. Consumers perceive the brand as synonymous with adventure, challenge, and inspiration, and actively engage with Red Bull Portugal's content and experiences. The brand's sponsorship of events and collaboration with high-performance athletes further solidifies its credibility and enhances consumer engagement. The lifestyle-oriented branding of Red Bull Portugal has a significant impact on consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchase behaviors. Consumers are attracted to the brand's image, aspire to be associated with its lifestyle, and exhibit strong brand loyalty, influencing their decision to purchase Red Bull products. Consumers tend to select brands that align with their beliefs, thoughts, and personal values, seeking out brands that are perceived as fitting their self-image and identity (Munteanu, 2014).

These findings provide valuable insights and recommendations for marketers on effectively incorporating lifestyle elements into brand strategies. Marketers can learn from Red Bull Portugal's success in leveraging lifestyle to connect with the target audience. By understanding the

preferences, values, and aspirations of the target market, marketers can create authentic and meaningful brand experiences that resonate with consumers on a deeper level. Incorporating lifestyle elements into brand identity and marketing communications can foster emotional connections, build brand loyalty, and differentiate the brand in a competitive market.

In conclusion, this study highlights the significance of lifestyle in the branding strategies of Red Bull Portugal and provides insights into how lifestyle-oriented branding can effectively engage consumers and drive consumer behavior. Marketers can utilize these findings to develop and implement successful brand strategies that leverage lifestyle elements to connect with their target audience. As consumer preferences continue to evolve, incorporating lifestyle elements into brand strategies becomes increasingly essential for brands to establish strong connections, foster brand loyalty, and achieve long-term success in the market.

Further investigations could delve into the potential impact of Red Bull Portugal's lifestyle-oriented branding on consumer loyalty and advocacy could shed light on the long-term effects of these branding strategies. Further research could also investigate the effectiveness of different experiential marketing tactics employed by Red Bull Portugal in creating immersive and memorable brand experiences. Additionally, comparative studies could be conducted to explore how other brands in the energy drink industry or different market sectors leverage lifestyle elements in their branding strategies and their impact on consumer behavior. Such investigations would contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of lifestyle in branding and provide practical recommendations for marketers seeking to connect with their target audience on a more meaningful level.

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## **Appendix List**

Appendix A: Interview Filipa Taylor

Appendix B: Interview Patrícia Jesus

Appendix C: Images from participant observation during Red Student Marketeer's work

Appendix D: Field Notes during Red Bull Student Marketeer activations.

## **Appendix A**

**Interview Filipa Taylor**

**Position: Communication Manager at Red Bull**

**Interviewer: How long have you been working with Red Bull? Can you give me a brief resume of how you start and what position do you practice at the moment?**

**Interviewee:** My route it's a little bit unusual for Red Bull. I did a degree in Social Communication at Católica Lisbon School, and then my Master's in Fashion Communication in Milan. When I came back, I spent 8 years working with several brands within the fashion industry. Then I met Verónica - Director of Communication at Red Bull - who asked if I knew someone who was interested in working at Red Bull's digital department.

At the time, I thought it might make sense for me and I went for a first interview, but it meant taking a step back in my career from what I was already doing, so I said no and gave some contacts of people who might be interested. After a few months, Verónica found out that I was leaving the company where I was at the time and she contacted me again so we could try one more time and then I said yes. I accepted the challenge!

When I entered it was a whole new world for me. I thought that I wouldn't adapt to the themes, culture and sports inserted in the culture of the brand. But the truth is that I adapted and started to like the dynamic of the events and projects.

I spent one year in social media, and the following year I was in the programming part - as responsible for digital. After two years in that position, came the opportunity to become director of communication, which I decided to grab in January of this year.

**Interviewer: Part of the functions of the Media Network Team involves creating content on social networks or websites. What are the Red Bull Media Network's main objectives and goals in terms of content creation and distribution?**

**Interviewee:** As you know, Red Bull does everything in house, that means, we have our own team ready for social media, we don't work with agencies outside the brand. Basically, our biggest concern is to transmit the Red Bull spirit of adventure, challenge, as well as promoting our athletes equally. We want to show the fun and at the same time the professional part that athletes propose on a daily basis.

We need to make that content tangible for whoever is watching and funny at the same time. With the main objective of creating awareness and word of mouth for those who are viewing.

We want consumers not only to have the product present when buying the can. We believe it's a journey that starts with the content and ends with the content. The consumer, through our social networks and our website is always in contact with Red Bull and that later, when choosing, will make a difference because he will associate the consumption of Red Bull with what he felt when he was watching the content. All those emotions that he felt when he was watching those incredible videos. That results in a customer journey - because when buying the can and enjoying the product, the client will feel the same when he was watching the video.

**Interviewer: What is the target audience or consumer segments that Red Bull intends to reach on social media?**

**Interviewee:** At the moment, our focus is the EPC's - Entry Point Consumers - or those aged between eighteen and twenty-four - Gen Z. We believe that it is at this time that personal tastes are defined and will define which brands they will accompany them for the rest of their adult years.

Therefore, this is our target audience, this is the one we want to conquer. Posteriorly, within that target we divide it into different communities or audiences. We have surfing, skateboarding, motorsports, biking audiences and we try to reach them all with specific content. We study these audiences, identify what they want to see, and how they want to see it, and build our content for each audience based on the study we do and the conclusions we reach. We have very different audiences and that's why we have to work the content differently. That's why we selected strategic people to produce this content. If we want to develop content about skateboarding, we're going to look for people who are skaters but who are also content creators and understand the language of Red Bull. We have consultants in different areas who tell us what that community wants to see, where they want it, and how events should be created. We are here to serve the community, so we want to give back in some way to the people who are within this community.

**Interviewer: Can you give me examples of successful social media campaigns or initiatives that Red Bull has run and what made them particularly effective?**

**Interviewee:** Speaking of Portugal, I can give an example of the content we recorded during the pandemic. We hosted the MotoGP in Portugal in 2020, and we had the athlete Miguel Oliveira racing for the Red Bull team.

Basically, we put Miguel Oliveira on top of the 25th of April Bridge with his motorcycle and record the content. The bridge part was the most emblematic part - but we also placed the athlete in several places around Lisbon and Sintra.

We closed the bridge to record this content, during the night. And when we launched the content, with the return of the race to Portugal, in Portimão, there was already great hype around the athlete, but this content exploded in our networks, as in the media, and we got everyone talking about it.

Another example was in Madeira! We did New Year's Eve in Madeira, it was a surprise activation, we didn't communicate in advance what was going to happen. Obviously, the locals in Madeira began to realize what was happening because they watched some training sessions during the day and the athletes jumping out of the plane.

However, the main action took place a few minutes before midnight - the athletes jumped and had some kind of rockets attached to their suit and it coincided with a release of a Netflix movie that talked about the earth being hit by a meteorite and the image was very similar to the jump of the athletes. They jumped together and the image looks like a ball of fire, because of the surprise effect and the media around the subject of the meteorite, that activation was immensely successful on social media.

**Interviewer:** These are good examples that characterize the attitude and personality of the brand, of testing the limits and being adventurous.

**Interviewee:** We are always testing the limits because in any modality that is more or less radical, the athletes are always testing their own limits and Red Bull also explores a lot this side of overcoming the almost impossible.

**Interviewer:** To finish, do you think the popularity of lifestyle brands will continue to grow in the future? If so, what do you think will be the driving factors for this growth?

**Interviewee:** More and more brands are positioning themselves to connect with emotions. Everything that is connected to emotions and still is credible, is the future, without a doubt! Because that's what makes us think that somehow, it can be us! Even though we don't have those athletic skills, it could be us. Somehow, we relate to the difficulties of our day to day by inspiring us to get out of our comfort zone and I think that often new generations are looking for this - the inspiration, the challenge and getting out of our comfort zone. Therefore yes, that is why we see more and more brands associating themselves with the emotional side of the consumer. Red Bull has been doing this since 1997, but without a doubt that's the path we will continue to invest.

## **Appendix B**

**Interview** Patrícia Jesus

**Position:** Events Coordinator at Red Bull Sports Team

**Interviewer:** How long have you been working with Red Bull? Can you give me a brief resume of how you start and what position do you practice at the moment?

**Interviewee:** I joined Red Bull, in 2016, to the Wings Team (nowadays it's called Student Marketeers). Basically, this job - as you know - is a part time job for students. The Wings Team is the direct contact with the consumer and we do actions of marketing within universities, demystify the myths surrounding the product, present and offer the product, and carry out sampling actions on occasions of strategic consumption of the brand. I spent two years in this role, and later I became full time in the Consumer Collecting department, which mainly involved coordinating all Red Bull projects at universities - I was in this role for almost three years. And a year ago it started with my current role as Events Coordinator in Sports Marketing, managing the entire program of events supported by Red Bull within the sport area.

**Interviewer:** Red Bull, as a brand, embraces a certain lifestyle. Do you agree with the statement, and if so, what do you think this lifestyle is?

**Interviewee:** Of course! I think Red Bull, in addition to being a brand and selling a product, is also a lifestyle. And it tries to pass that message through the athletes, the events and all of the events created by the brand.

**Interviewer:** And can you manage to list some of those characteristics of the identity that the brand is based on?

**Interviewee:** I think the most obvious is without a doubt the extreme, the extreme sports, the sport itself. However, I think the main characteristic that Red Bull is associated with is high performance. To be a premium drink, a premium brand within sports and, in essence, the functionality of your product in the lifestyle of a high-performance athlete.

The fact that we position ourselves among the best in each modality.

We also ended up having this relaxed style, zero corporate and above all, the phrase that best defines the brand's culture is "work hard, play hard" whether for any employee and for any athlete connected with the brand.

**Interviewer: In your opinion, what is the main reason consumers are attracted to Red Bull? Is it the products themselves, the brand image or another element?**

**Interviewee:** The brand image, or the image that Red Bull tries to pass on, makes the consumer want to consume the product. But after a certain age, there are studies that prove that teenagers under the age of 18 prefer other energy drink brands that are part of our direct competition and from the age of 18, this scenario changes and the top of mind for consumers becomes Red Bull. For being a more premium drink.

**Interviewer: Currently, there are several athletes from different sports associated with the Red Bull brand. What is your philosophy behind partnerships with athletes and how or in what ways do they benefit the company?**

**Interviewee:** Because our drink is a functional drink, in the case of sports, when you are doing sports, pre or post sports. For this reason, we managed to quickly associate the consumer with the lifestyle of high competition athletes. Inspiringly, consumers think that if they want to reach that level, they will adopt the same routine as that athlete.

**Interviewer: What about consumers who are not athletes?**

**Interviewee:** Here we are talking about other occasions of consumption. Whether you're a driver on a long business trip, we put Red Bull into your day-to-day life. Hence we have the product in gas stations. For students, we have our campaigns at universities to help them stay focused during

exams. I spoke about athletes because our brand is more positioned in that direction, but all the other actions we do are also linked to other consumption occasions. To show consumers that they can include a Red Bull in their daily lives on several occasions.

## Appendix C

Images from participant observation during Red Student Marketeer's work

### Sampling Activations



### Sampling / Off Premise



### Red Bull Lisbon Skate Conquest

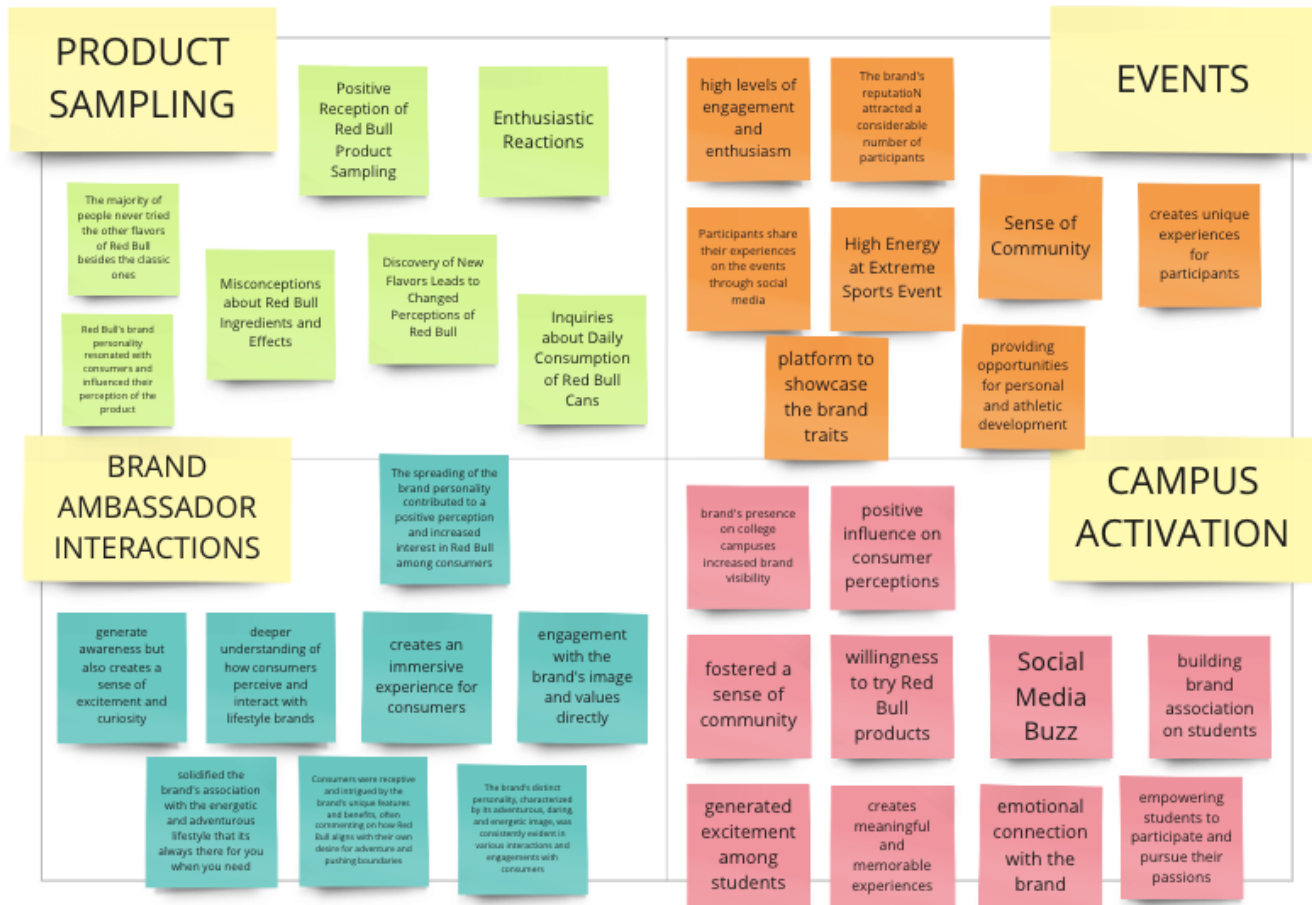


### Red Bull Events: Dancing Competitions, Surf, MotoGP, Skate



## Appendix D

Field Notes during Red Bull Student Marketeer activations.



## Appendix E

### Internal Documents

