Preface

Since the literature on brand management first arose in the 1990s, a set of conceptual frameworks and concepts have developed that have permeated academic research as well as brand management across industries. These include: the concept of brand equity, brand associations, brand personality, brand extensions, brand valuation, and the like.

The purpose of this handbook is not to retread these paths, but rather to explore new and emerging directions in both research and practice. While the reader will find discourse and critique of the basic frameworks and concepts, the focus will be on exploring new concepts such as brand attachment, brand permission and brand meaning; new contextual factors such as digital convergence, target group multiplicity, and the rise of experience economies; and new research domains such as empirical tests of consumer experiences, incidental brand exposure, and brand naming.

In particular, the last 10 years have seen the rise of new concepts around the paradigm of brand and customer experiences, as evidenced by a variety of academic and trade publications on the subject. These concepts are being utilized within the branding and marketing functions of many companies and agencies and are now entering the academic field as well.

The focus on customer experience has led a shift away from an analytical and largely cognitive view of branding that views customers as information-processors towards a more holistic view of customer value that encompasses rational and emotional benefits. Obviously, this shift in perspective has had a profound impact on the practice and meaning of branding. In some cases, experience is framed in relation to a new, broader vision of branding – for example that the customer experience is what shapes all perceptions and value of the brand. In other cases, experience is used as its own paradigm, with branding (traditionally defined more narrowly as visual identity, advertising and communications) being one domain of the customer experience, along with other domains such as innovation and service interactions.

We therefore chose to focus this handbook on perspectives on brand management, on experience management, and perspectives that combine the two.

The handbook encompasses a diverse set of approaches in its five parts:

- Part I, ‘Concepts and frameworks of brand management’, presents the latest academic research offering new frameworks for understanding brand management
- Part II, ‘Managerial concepts’, brings to bear the researcher’s perspective on current tools in practice by brand managers today, linking theory and practice
- Part III, ‘Concepts and frameworks of experience management’, presents new research and conceptual frameworks for understanding and managing customer experiences
- Part IV, ‘Empirical studies and scales for brand and experience management’, presents recent empirical research and scale development in both brand and experience management
• Part V, ‘Practitioner perspectives’, presents articles by practitioners involved in brand and experience management, focusing on practical, managerial and organizational best practices

We hope the reader will find the breadth of these contributions useful in gathering new theoretical concepts to test, new methodologies to put to use, and new questions to stimulate further research.