

**BRANDING AND DIVERSITY:
THE ROLE OF BRAND PERSONALITY IN POSITIONING BUSINESS SCHOOLS**

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ABSTRACT

Brand personality is a critical aspect which needs to be considered in positioning an offering in the market. This decision must not be taken lightly. The different personalities that competing brands can come to possess are able to provide customers with a basis for making distinctions. An experimental methodology is employed among MBA students from a mid-ranked European and a non-ranked US business school to identify brand personalities and to investigate whether brand personality is simply a function of a school's reputation as reported in published rankings. Results show that the published rankings of business schools are able to provide counterfactuals that can influence consumer emotions and help establish preferences.