

Business Advantage

Upper-intermediate DVD video script

DVD Worksheet 5: Marketing Aviva: changing a brand name

How Aviva became Aviva (0.06)

Virginia Barnes: Aviva as a business has actually been around for about 300 years in different forms in different company names. And about ten years ago we were about 50 different brand names all across the world, across our different markets. And we realised that that was a pretty inefficient way of operating as a business, and that by combining together to act more as one business throughout the world and having one brand name to sort of signify that unity around the world, it was pretty critical to start to ... adopt to ... one single name.

10 Where the name Aviva came from (0.57)

Virginia Barnes: The name Aviva didn't come from a business, it wasn't that we decided to take the name from one market and apply it to everywhere. We actually found a new name, so we went to research a new name that could work in every market, that meant positive things but also didn't really mean anything.

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The process of rebranding (1.18)

Advertisement extracts: Would any of this happened to me if I'd have still been Richard Starkey? Are you aiming for those people? No! Would Walter Willis have got to play the leading man? Sometimes a change of name – is more than a change of name. Sometimes it's a chance to show the world who you've always wanted to be.

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Virginia Barnes: The Aviva name first appeared, I think, in 2002 and that's when Aviva plc was formed and that's when we started being listed as Aviva on the London Stock Exchange, and our smaller markets started to adopt the name Aviva from that point on. However, we left our three largest businesses, therefore our three largest brands, they kept their original names. So they were Norwich Union in the UK, Hibernian in Ireland, and Commercial Union in Poland. So we left those three brands all with their original names and it was only in 2009/2010 were those brands finally migrated to the Aviva name.

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The reason Hibernian, Norwich Union and Commercial Union in Ireland, UK and Poland kept their names was because they were the largest brands, the largest businesses and therefore they carried the most risk to move from their names to the new Aviva name. However, in 2007 we had a new CEO, Andrew Moss, and he ... one of his new things really was introducing this new vision for the business, which was about one Aviva, which is about truly harnessing the power of having one brand name all over the world.

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The brand logo (3.01)

40 **Virginia Barnes:** The logo, I think, may originally have referenced an old Norwich Union logo, but to be honest with you, it was something that was created for Aviva, very much thinking about the future of the business overall.

The risks of rebranding (3.16)

45 **Virginia Barnes:** The biggest risk when changing your name is that you're going to lose people along the way, that they're not going to know that you have changed your name, or that they are going to be confused. So what you need to do is be very clear with communication all the way along the way to mitigate that risk by telling
50 people that you're going to change your name, and just trying to be as clear as possible.

Managing the change (3.38)

Virginia Barnes: We announced it to the City first of all, then we introduced some advertising to tell people we were going to change our name. Then we wrote to all
55 our different customers so they all had, er, specific communication telling them about the name change, um, and then more advertising talking about the name change, and then additional advertising, talking about what kind of brand Aviva was going to be, and therefore what they should expect from the brand experience of Aviva.

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The benefits of rebranding (4.05)

Virginia Barnes: The benefits of having one name all over the world are manifold, to be honest with you. I think a big one is about having one brand name all over the world makes us appear as one brand, one business, one force to be reckoned with all
65 over the world. I think ... you know, we're the world's fifth largest insurance company. People tend to perceive that we're very UK-heavy, and we are, 40% of our business is here, but a lot of our business is elsewhere, and I think it was an opportunity to make ourselves – make Aviva seem much more of a global player. Similarly, I think it was an opportunity to revitalise the brand. I think our previous
70 legacy brands were very strong. I'm talking specifically here about Norwich Union, Hibernian and Commercial Union, because the other businesses had already changed to the Aviva name. Um, but they were very strong, but they were very ... seen generally as quite old and old-fashioned and quite staid almost, and you know, we're an insurance company – that's a natural preconception. So I think actually it's an
75 opportunity to revitalise the brand and to give more energy and, um, yeah, vitality to ... to Aviva, as ... to the perceptions of Aviva as a business. Um, and obviously there are also big cost efficiencies for having one name all over the world, in lots of different ways. It just means that we're just able really to make the most of our buying power, make the most of our selling power, make the most of systems and
80 operations and websites, and all these different reasons why it makes so much more sense to have one name, one way of doing things all throughout the world.

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Interacting with an insurance brand (5.47)

85 **Virginia Barnes:** I think one of the biggest challenges in managing a brand for a
finance service company versus a product that you pick up in a supermarket is that –
particularly with insurance actually – is that your interactions with that brand are
very few. So, if you're a tin of beans, you know, people go into the supermarket and
they pick up that tin of beans, you know, once a week, they eat that tin of beans
once or twice a week. They have much more interactions with it. Financial services,
90 particularly insurance – what, you make one renewal a year – or, you know, it's just a
statement that you receive in the post, the rest of the time we're not interacting
with the brand. Or when people do interact with us it's when they're calling to make
a claim or make a complaint, or ask where their ... why their rates have gone down*.
So it's ... that's the biggest challenge, is that how can we build a brand with very a
95 few numbers of interactions and how can we help it to be a very positive experience,
when actually dealing with an insurance company is quite a transactional boring
thing.

[* Virginia probably meant to say *why their rates have gone up!*]

100 **Comments from students of Cambridge Judge Business School (6.48)**

What do you think about Aviva's rebranding?

Sarah: I think the risk of rebranding of well-known companies, it's well known. So
you're going away from something that's stable, something that, you know,
everyone knows about and then going to something completely new.

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Tom: I think the reason they were rebranding in this case was because they had
different businesses in different places round the world, um, which is something I
hadn't realised when ... I knew Norwich Union had changed their name, I never really
understood why and I'm one of their clients, or one of their customers. So I think in
110 that case it was trying to bind together a company with lots of different names and
different identities in different places which ... that makes a certain amount of sense.

Sarah: It's like redecorating a house. Just 'cause it looks nice, doesn't mean it can't
use another coat of paint. If I go abroad, I like to know that my company, my bank,
115 my ... my sort of my restaurant, anything that I like so much I can go and get the
exact same thing in a different country.