

Aviva: changing a brand name

Discuss

1 Discuss these questions in groups.

- 1 What do you know about Aviva?
- 2 Why might an organisation want to change its name?
What are the risks of changing names?

Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 (0.06–3.15): How Aviva became Aviva; Where the name Aviva came from; The process of rebranding; The brand logo

2 Watch parts of an interview with Virginia Barnes, Aviva's Global Brand Manager. Are these statements true or false? Correct the false statements.

- 1 Aviva is a very old organisation.
- 2 The new brand name came from an existing name within the organisation.
- 3 The name Aviva comes from a word meaning 'unity'.
- 4 The whole organisation changed its name at the same time.
- 5 The new logo was designed to symbolise the history of the organisation.

3 Watch these parts again. Answer these questions.

- 1 What was the main reason for the name change?
- 2 What important things happened in 2002?
- 3 What was special about Norwich Union, Hibernian and Commercial Union?
- 4 What was the new CEO's vision for Aviva?
- 5 Where did the logo come from?

Parts 5, 6, 7 and 8 (3.16–6.47): The risks of rebranding; Managing the change; The benefits of rebranding; Interacting with an insurance brand

4 Watch the next parts of the interview. Answer these questions.

- 1 What were the biggest risks connected with the change of name?
- 2 How did Aviva tell its customers and investors about the name change?
- 3 What benefits of the name change does Virginia Barnes mention?
- 4 Why does she compare buying insurance with buying a tin of beans?

5 Check the meaning of these expressions in a dictionary or with your teacher. Then watch these parts again. What does Virginia Barnes say about each expression?

to mitigate a risk manifold (adj.)
a force to be reckoned with a global player
a legacy brand staid (adj.) a natural preconception
to make the most of something an interaction
a renewal

Part 9 (6.48–7.51): Comments from students of Cambridge Judge Business School – What do you think about Aviva's rebranding?

6 Discuss the question in pairs. Then watch the Judge students discussing the same question. Who expressed these opinions, Sarah (S) or Tom (T)?

- 1 I thought there was only one company that became Aviva.
- 2 It feels good to use familiar brands when you travel abroad.
- 3 Rebranding may be a good idea for an organisation with many companies in different countries.
- 4 Rebranding is especially dangerous for well-known brands.
- 5 Even organisations that seem to be in a good condition may benefit from rebranding.

DVD Worksheet 5: Marketing

Aviva: changing a brand name

Background reading

The About us page of the Aviva website (<http://www.aviva.com/about-us/>) contains useful sections on the rebranding process (*The Journey to One Aviva; Our brand*) and the company's history (*Heritage*).

- 1 Students discuss the questions in small groups. After a few minutes, discuss the questions with the class.

Suggested answers

- 1 Aviva is one of the world's largest insurance companies, with a history dating back to 1696. The organisation changed its name from CGNU in 2002. CGNU had been formed by mergers of three big insurers: Commercial Union and General Accident (which merged in 1998) and Norwich Union (which joined in 2000).
 - 2 A good reason for changing names can be seen by comparing Aviva with its old name, CGNU, which is impossible to pronounce and easy to forget. The old name also suggested some sort of ranking, where C (Commercial Union) is more important than G (General Accident), which in turn comes before NU (Norwich Union), and all three were still seen as separate businesses within the group. With a name like Aviva, however, there is no ranking, and the old businesses are no longer seen as separate. Risks include creating confusion for (potential) customers and investors, as complete rebranding is needed. In a sector like insurance, stability is very important, so customers and investors need to know that the company has a long and stable history.
- 2 Students read through the statements first to make sure they understand all the words, and to predict whether they are true or false, based on their own knowledge of Aviva. When you have played the clip, students discuss the answers in pairs before feeding back to the class.

Answers

- 1 True. 2 False – the name was completely new. 3 False – it doesn't mean anything. 4 False – the smaller businesses changed first, with the largest three businesses following much later. 5 False – it was created thinking about the future of the business.

Background notes

The four people in the advert are: Ringo Starr (the Beatles' drummer, who changed his name from Richard Starkey); Bruce Willis (a Hollywood leading man, who changed his name from Walter Willis); Elle Macpherson (a model and actress, who changed her name from Eleanor Gow); and Alice Cooper (a rock musician, who changed his name from Vincent Furnier).

- 3 Check students understand the meaning of *CEO* (= Chief Executive Officer). Students discuss the questions in pairs to remember as much as they can about each question. Then play the clip a second time for them to complete their answers. They discuss the answers again in pairs before feeding back to the class.

Answers

- 1 The organisation realised that it was inefficient to have about 50 different brand names around the world; they wanted to have one brand name to signify unity around the world.
- 2 The Aviva name first appeared and was adopted by smaller markets in the organisation; Aviva plc was formed and was listed on the London Stock Exchange.
- 3 They changed their names in 2009/10. They were the three largest brands and the largest businesses, so they carried the most risk.
- 4 'One Aviva' – harnessing the power of having one brand name.
- 5 It referenced an old Norwich Union logo, but was intended to be something new.

Extension activity

You could discuss with the class whether they think the name Aviva is a good name and why. You could also find and print an old Norwich Union logo on the Internet (e.g. search Google Images) so students can compare the old logo with the new one.

- 4 Students discuss the questions in pairs to predict the answers. Then play the clip for them to check their predictions. They discuss the questions again in pairs and then share their answers with the class. Note that Virginia says that Aviva are 'the world's fifth largest insurance company' – this was correct at the time of writing.

Answers

- 1 You might lose people along the way; they might not know that you've changed your name; they might be confused.
 - 2 They announced the name change to the City (= the financial markets in London); they advertised to inform people about the name change and to describe the new brand; they wrote to every customer.
 - 3 Having one brand name makes Aviva appear as one business; it allows the organisation to present itself as a global player, not just a British insurer; it allowed them to revitalise the brand – to give it more energy; there are big cost efficiencies (e.g. buying, selling, operations, websites, etc.).
 - 4 Customers have fewer interactions with a financial services brand than with a simple everyday product such as a tin of beans.
- 5 Go through the meanings of the expressions with the class. Then play the clip again for students to identify what was said about each expression. Students discuss their answers in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Answers

Aviva **mitigated** (= managed, reduced) the risks of the name change by communicating as much as possible. The benefits of the name change were **manifold** (= large in number). The name change showed that Aviva is a **force to be reckoned with** (= a powerful organisation) and a **global player** (= an important international organisation). Its **legacy brands** (= the brands that existed before the rebranding process, such as Norwich Union) had a reputation for being very **staid** (= conservative, traditional, safe, reliable). Virginia Barnes describes this reputation as a **natural preconception** (= a common or normal belief that may be wrong). Having one name allows Aviva to **make the most of** (= to use fully) its buying power, selling power, etc. Customers have very few **interactions** (= contacts) with a brand like Aviva. One example of an interaction is when a customer is making a **renewal** (= buying insurance for another year).

- 6 Students work in pairs to discuss the question (What do you think about Aviva's rebranding?). You could also write the following questions on the board to extend the discussion:
 - Was Aviva right to change its brand?
 - What other organisations might benefit from changing their brands?
 - What lessons could they learn from Aviva's experience?
 - How can an organisation like Aviva increase the number of its interactions with customers?
 - Why is this important?

After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Students then discuss the five statements in pairs to decide which statements they agree with. Then play the clip for them to work out who expresses each opinion. Make sure they realise that the opinions are in a different order in the clip. Afterwards, check the answers with the class, including exactly what Sarah or Tom said in each case, and whether your students agree with them.

Answers

1 T 2 S 3 T 4 S 5 S