

“United We Brand”: Internal brand orientation, interdepartmental conflict and performance implications

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Abstract

Internal Brand Orientation (IBO) was recently introduced as a new construct to capture the degree to which a company is oriented towards achieving high levels of brand internalization. Although it has been repeatedly asserted that internal branding constitutes an enabler of organizational success, to date, there is only scant empirical evidence on how it is generated and the way it impacts organizational performance. Based on the analysis of primary data drawn from managers of 242 companies operating in a European country, the authors find that IBO is driven by a strong marketing department and a high level of market orientation. Findings also suggest that IBO has a significant positive impact on financial performance, however, this effect is attenuated when conflict among company departments is high. The results enrich literature on the mechanisms for supporting employee alignment with the brand values and highlight the benefits of being internally brand oriented.