Synergy Between Original IP Creation and Brand Strategy

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Abstract. Against the backdrop of an increasingly competitive digital economy and brand landscape, proprietary intellectual property (IP) stands as a vital intangible asset for enterprises. The synergistic relationship between proprietary IP and brand strategy has emerged as a focal point for both academic and practical communities. Through literature analysis, case studies, and multi-dimensional evaluation methods, this paper explores the pathways through which proprietary IP influences brand strategy formulation, marketing mix synergy, and organisational governance. Findings indicate that proprietary IP significantly enhances brand equity and market competitiveness by reinforcing brand narratives, strengthening consumer emotional connections, and optimising marketing resource allocation. Concurrently, effective cross-departmental coordination and flexible IP governance mechanisms are pivotal for achieving synergistic outcomes. Future research should further explore cross-cultural comparisons, standardised measurement tools, and ethical and legal challenges arising from emerging technologies.

Keywords: proprietary IP, brand strategy, integrated marketing communications, narrative marketing, IP governance

1. Introduction

The proliferation of digital platforms and generative AI has transformed how brands create, protect, and monetise intellectual property. Proprietary IP—encompassing trademarks, patents, copyrights, designs, and trade secrets—is now regarded as a core intangible asset. Beyond its legal protective function, IP is increasingly deployed as a strategic tool for differentiation, storytelling, and community building. Enterprises such as Nike, Disney, and LVMH leverage distinctive slogans, characters, and product designs to craft globally resonant brand narratives while securing legal exclusivity. Concurrently, rising costs in public domain advertising have prompted companies to cultivate private domain communities and harness user-generated content, making the integration of IP creation and brand strategy increasingly critical. Subsequently, it dissects brand strategy development pathways through dimensions such as process management, value embedding, and user co-creation. Further analysis examines cross-departmental collaboration challenges and emerging technological contexts from an organisational governance perspective. Finally, it proposes a multidimensional evaluation system and outlines future research directions. This paper systematically reveals the synergistic mechanisms between proprietary IP and brand strategy through a comprehensive application of literature analysis, case studies, and multi-indicator evaluation methods. The research not only enriches the theoretical frameworks of brand management and IP marketing but also provides practical guidance and decision-making references for enterprises seeking to build sustainable competitive advantages through IP assets in the digital era.

2. Conceptual definitions and theoretical foundations

This chapter aims to clarify core concepts and construct the theoretical analytical framework for this paper, laying the groundwork for subsequent in-depth discussions.

2.1. Definition of proprietary IP

Proprietary IP refers to intangible assets owned by enterprises and protected by law. Research in Frontiers in Psychology categorises IP into copyright, trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and geographical indications.

2.2. Brand strategy and Integrated Marketing Communications

Brand strategy constitutes a long-term plan for enterprises to shape consumer perceptions and build brand equity through consistent identity, narratives, and value propositions. Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) aims to deliver unified brand experiences across advertising, public relations, digital media, and promotional activities. The 4P framework (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) and its consumer-centric extensions (4Cs/5Ps) remain foundational tools for constructing marketing programmes. Narrative marketing has gained increasing prominence in recent years. Research from Future Business Journal 2025 confirms that a brand story possessing high credibility, strong resonance, and good extensibility significantly enhances consumer purchase intent, with brand image playing a crucial mediating role [1].

2.3. Theoretical perspectives

To delve into the synergistic mechanisms between proprietary IP and brand strategy, this paper introduces the following theoretical frameworks:

Resource-Based View and Dynamic Capabilities Theory: This framework posits that sustained competitive advantage stems from valuable, rare, imitation-resistant, and non-substitutable (VRIO) strategic resources owned and controlled by firms. Proprietary IP—such as potent brand characters or core patents—constitutes precisely such a critical resource. A firm's capacity to create, manage, and apply this IP forms its dynamic capabilities, enabling adaptation to market shifts and continuous value generation.

This fosters stronger identification and positive attitudes towards the characters, events, and associated brands within the narrative. Proprietary IP—particularly characters and world-building—serves as the foundation for constructing such immersive narratives.

AISAS Consumer Behaviour Model: This framework (Attention, Interest, Search, Action, Share) precisely delineates the decision-making journey of digital-age consumers [2].

3. Brand strategy development driven by proprietary IP

3.1. Process and portfolio management

In-house IP creation involves conceptualisation, design, narrative development, and legal formalisation. Companies like Disney invest heavily in world-building, character development, and cross-platform storytelling. For instance, LVMH preserves each brand's heritage by managing a diversified luxury IP portfolio. Patents grant exclusive rights to innovative technologies, exemplified by Apple and Samsung's patent strategies, while trademarks and designs convey recognisability and aesthetic appeal. Copyright protects content, supporting cross-media narratives that transform creativity into commercial value [3].

3.2. Embedding brand vision and values

Proprietary IP should embody brand vision and values. Nike's "Just Do It" slogan and Swoosh logo, both protected by intellectual property, reflect the brand's spirit of inspiration and excellence, resonating globally. Tesla's open-patent strategy aligns with its mission to accelerate sustainable transport, demonstrating how IP policies can communicate brand values. Integrating values into IP narratives fosters authenticity and emotional connection—key elements of enduring brand equity.

3.3. User co-creation and fan economy

Digital platforms enable consumer participation in IP co-creation. Frontiers research indicates fans amplify IP influence through content sharing via social media, offline events, and personalised interactions, forming participatory communities [4]. In China, brands increasingly combine public domain traffic with private domain communities, accumulating cultural and social capital through symbolic construction, shared meaning creation, and community management [5]. Governing the fan economy requires balancing openness with protection—permitting creative expression while safeguarding brand integrity.

4. Synergy of the marketing mix (4Ps) based on proprietary IP

4.1. Product

Proprietary IP shapes product design and differentiation. In the luxury sector, BMW and Louis Vuitton's 2015 Travel Collection fused automotive engineering with artisanal craftsmanship, reinforcing both brands' positioning as pinnacles of the luxury lifestyle. Such collaborations demonstrate how IP can imbue products with heritage and narrative, elevating perceived value.

4.2. Pricing

IP underpins premium pricing and diversified monetisation models. Scarcity strategies like hidden variants in blind boxes create price gradients. Licensing enables brands to generate royalty income without substantial investment. For instance, Disney's character licensing for merchandise expands revenue streams while maintaining quality and narrative control. Patents and design rights support premium pricing by symbolising innovation and uniqueness.

4.3. Distribution

Distribution strategies can leverage IP to pioneer new channels. Established IP helps brands transcend core markets: Coca-Cola collaborates with fashion designers and tech firms, integrating its iconic font into apparel, homewares, and electronics. This not only reaches new consumers but delivers immersive brand experiences. Physical flagship stores and IP-centric pop-up events provide experiential touchpoints.

4.4. Promotion

Promotion thrives on narrative consistency and cross-media storytelling. IP marketing research highlights that high-quality content captures attention, while emotional value and trust drive consumer searches and purchases. Licensed collaborations like BMW with Louis Vuitton and Nike with Michael Jordan transform promotions into cultural events: the Air Jordan brand, born from the basketball legend's partnership with Nike, became a symbol of excellence and aspiration, generating billions in revenue. Social media and user-generated content amplify dissemination; unboxing videos and fan creations fuel viral marketing. Cross-platform narrative consistency ensures alignment between legal and marketing objectives.

5. Organisational synergy and governance

5.1. Cross-departmental synergy

Successful IP management stems from close collaboration between legal, creative, and marketing teams. They require deep cooperation with designers and marketers to ensure trademark, patent, and copyright strategies support—rather than constrain—brand storytelling. FasterCapital emphasises that trademarks serve as the North Star for marketing campaigns, providing legal stability and recognisability for brand narratives.This collaboration must extend beyond organisational boundaries. Partnerships such as BMW-Louis Vuitton and Coca-Cola-Beats rely on shared brand values and rigorous legal agreements to protect and enhance each party's brand assets throughout the collaboration [6].

5.2. Governance challenges

The World Intellectual Property Organisation notes that IP protection should incentivise prudent investment in R&D and marketing, while licensing agreements unlock new markets. Simultaneously, enterprises must embrace open innovation by actively collaborating with external creators and fan communities. Particularly amid emerging technologies like generative AI, companies must strike a balance between transparency and control: how to define copyright ownership of AI-generated content? This necessitates establishing more flexible, forward-looking IP governance frameworks.

6. Evaluation and measurement

Assessing IP-brand synergy requires multi-dimensional metrics. Secondly, content quality and engagement: measured through view counts, shares, and social media sentiment analysis. The AISAS model provides a pathway framework from awareness to sharing. Next is commercial performance: encompassing sales uplift, licensing revenue, and premium pricing. The success of Air

Jordan illustrates how co-created IP generates multi-billion dollar franchise value. Finally, long-term asset value: the economic valuation of IP portfolios, including cross-market expansion and future cash flows.

Analytical methodologies encompass structural equation modelling based on AISAS variables, multi-criteria decision-making approaches, time-series analysis (tracking IP releases' impact on share prices or search volumes), and qualitative methods (content analysis, ethnographic research) to understand how fans interpret and co-create IP narratives.

7. Discussion and future directions

In-house IP creation and brand strategy mutually reinforce each other. IP provides legal underpinnings and distinctive symbols, while brand strategy imbues IP with meaning and furnishes narrative frameworks; when both operate in concert within the marketing mix, they can forge sustainable competitive advantages. Nevertheless, several research gaps persist: firstly, existing studies predominantly rely on single case studies or theoretical models, lacking cross-industry and cross-cultural comparative research; secondly, measuring IP-brand synergy remains non-standardised, necessitating the development of reliable scales and exploration of causal relationships; thirdly, the rise of virtual IPs and generative AI presents novel challenges concerning ownership, authenticity, and community governance. Finally, as brands explore immersive technologies and algorithmic creation, ethical and legal issues concerning consumer rights, privacy, and representation warrant attention.

8. Conclusion

Findings indicate that proprietary IP, as a core intangible asset, effectively underpins brand strategy implementation by providing unique narrative symbols and vehicles for emotional connection. Within the marketing mix, IP significantly enhances product differentiation, price premium potential, channel scalability, and communication effectiveness. Concurrently, cross-departmental collaboration and flexible governance mechanisms are critical enablers for achieving synergistic outcomes. Comprehensive evaluations demonstrate that deep integration of IP and brand not only elevates short-term commercial performance but also accumulates long-term brand equity, fostering sustainable competitive advantage.

However, this study retains certain limitations: firstly, it relies primarily on literature review and case analysis, lacking substantial empirical data support; secondly, it insufficiently explores the variations in IP-brand synergy across cultural contexts. Future research may develop standardised assessment scales using quantitative methods, conduct cross-industry and cross-cultural comparative studies, and further investigate the impact mechanisms of emerging technologies such as virtual IPs and generative AI on IP governance and brand strategy. This would enrich the theoretical framework and guide corporate practice.

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