Familiar Yet Forgotten: Rebranding and Consumer Recall at D'Botanica Mall

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Abstract. Rebranding is a strategic effort in marketing management to renew brand identity, strengthen relevance, and reshape consumer perception. However, a new brand name does not automatically replace the old one, particularly when the previous name has been strongly embedded in consumers' memory. This study examines the rebranding of BTC Mall into D'Botanica Mall in Bandung by focusing on brand awareness, consumer recall, and naming habits after the rebranding process. A descriptive-analytical approach was employed using primary data from a mini-survey of 30 Bandung residents who were familiar with or had visited BTC/D'Botanica Mall. The survey results show that 65% of respondents were aware that BTC had been rebranded as D'Botanica Mall; however, 80% still preferred to use the old name "BTC" in daily communication. The familiarity score for the new name was also relatively low, averaging 2.5 out of 5, indicating that D'Botanica Mall has not yet become a strong top-of-mind reference among consumers. These findings suggest that rebranding requires more than visual or nominal change; it needs consistent communication, repeated exposure, and shopping experiences that reinforce the new identity. This study provides managerial insight for strengthening retail rebranding strategies and highlights the importance of consumer memory in brand transition.

Keywords: Rebranding, Brand Awareness, Consumer Recall, Consumer Memory, Retail Branding

1 Introduction

Rebranding is a strategic effort in marketing management that allows organizations to renew their identity, strengthen market relevance, and reshape consumer perception. According [1], rebranding is not merely a change of name or visual identity, but a transformational process aimed at creating a more relevant and competitive brand position. In the retail sector, rebranding is often used to respond to changing consumer preferences, urban lifestyle trends, and the need for a stronger market image.

However, rebranding does not automatically lead to consumer acceptance. Brand awareness is a fundamental component of brand equity because it reflects the extent to which consumers can recognize and recall a brand [2]. Brand awareness consists of brand recognition and brand recall, both of which are essential for helping consumers

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connect a new identity with an existing brand experience [3]. Without sufficient awareness, a new brand name may remain unfamiliar, while the old name continues to dominate consumer memory.

This issue becomes particularly relevant in the case of BTC Mall, a shopping center in Bandung that has been rebranded as D'Botanica Mall. Although the new name was introduced to create a fresher and more contemporary image, preliminary observations indicate that many Bandung residents still refer to the mall as "BTC" in daily conversations. This suggests that the old brand name remains strongly embedded in consumer memory, while the new identity has not yet fully become a top-of-mind reference.

Rebranding is not only a visual or nominal adjustment, but a strategic transformation involving identity change, communication, and consumer acceptance [1,4,5,6].

Previous studies have shown that rebranding success depends not only on changing brand elements but also on how effectively the new identity is communicated and internalized by consumers. Consumer memory structure explains that names frequently used over time tend to remain stored in long-term memory [3]. Similarly, habitual behavior theory suggests that repeated past behavior can persist even when consumers are aware of new information [7]. In this context, consumers may know that BTC has changed its name, yet still prefer using "BTC" because it is more familiar and easier to recall.

Despite the growing discussion on rebranding and brand awareness, studies on mall rebranding in local Indonesian retail contexts remain limited, especially those focusing on consumer recall and naming habits after a brand transition. Most rebranding studies tend to emphasize corporate identity, brand image, or loyalty, while less attention is given to the everyday language consumers use to refer to a rebranded place. This creates a research gap in understanding how old brand names persist in consumer communication even after a new identity has been introduced.

Brand awareness and brand salience are closely related to how easily a brand comes to consumers' minds in a particular context [2, 3, 8].

Therefore, this study aims to describe the level of brand awareness and consumer recall toward D'Botanica Mall after its rebranding from BTC Mall. It also seeks to analyze how consumers' naming habits reflect the strength of the old brand memory and to provide managerial insights for strengthening retail rebranding communication. By focusing on the case of D'Botanica Mall, this study contributes to the discussion of rebranding effectiveness in local retail settings and highlights the importance of consumer memory in brand transition.

Table 1. Previous Studies

No	Author	Title	Key Findings	Source
1	Kaur et al. (2019)	Rebranding & Customer Loyalty in Retail	Rebranding does not automatically increase loyalty; an intensive communication strategy is required.	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services
	Yu et al.	Impact of	Brand awareness serves as	

No	Author	Title	Key Findings	Source
2	(2020)	Rebranding on Consumer Perception	the primary mediator between rebranding and positive consumer perception.	Journal of Business Research
3	Khan et al. (2021)	Rebranding & Brand Equity in Emerging Markets	Consumers in emerging markets are more attached to the old name habitual behavior influences their perception.	Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics
4	Muhammad et al. (2022)	Retail Rebranding & Brand Recall	Brand recall for the new name remains low during the first year after rebranding.	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services
5	Singh & Kumar (2023)	Rebranding Strategies in Shopping Malls	The success of the mall's rebranding depends on the harmonization of its new identity and the consumer experience	International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management

Source : Author's Work

The previous studies summarized in Table 1 indicate that rebranding success depends on more than the introduction of a new name or visual identity. Prior research emphasizes the role of communication intensity, brand awareness, consumer familiarity, and the alignment between new brand identity and consumer experience. However, most existing studies discuss rebranding at the level of corporate identity, loyalty, or consumer perception, while limited attention has been given to how consumers continue to use an old brand name in daily communication after a rebranding process. This gap is particularly relevant in local retail contexts, where consumer memory and habitual naming behavior may strongly influence the acceptance of a new brand identity.

Previous studies also warn that rebranding may fail when organizations underestimate consumer attachment to the old identity or do not communicate the change consistently [9-12].

Therefore, this study focuses on the rebranding of BTC Mall into D'Botanica Mall as a local retail case in Bandung. The study aims to describe the level of consumer awareness toward the new name, identify the persistence of the old name in everyday communication, and provide managerial insights for strengthening retail rebranding communication. By examining consumer recall and naming habits, this study contributes to the discussion of rebranding effectiveness and highlights the importance of consumer memory in brand transition.

The persistence of the old name can be understood through consumer memory and habitual behavior, where repeated exposure and repeated usage strengthen automatic recall [3, 7]. Rebranding effectiveness also depends on whether the new identity is supported by consistent brand experience, emotional attachment, and alignment between internal and external brand communication [13-15].

2 Methods

This study employed a descriptive-analytical approach to examine brand awareness and consumer recall in the rebranding of BTC Mall into D'Botanica Mall. This approach was selected because the study aims to describe an emerging marketing phenomenon rather than test causal relationships through inferential statistics.

Primary data were collected through an online mini-survey using Google Forms involving 30 respondents from Bandung and its surrounding areas. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling, with the criteria that they were aged 18–35 years and had either visited or were familiar with BTC Mall or D'Botanica Mall. The survey questions captured respondents' awareness of the name change, preferred name usage, familiarity with the new name, and recognition of "D'Botanica Mall" without additional explanation. Secondary data were obtained from books and journal articles related to rebranding, brand awareness, consumer recall, consumer memory, habitual behavior, and retail branding.

The data were analyzed descriptively and interpretively. Survey responses were summarized using percentages and average scores to identify patterns of awareness, familiarity, recognition, and name usage, then interpreted using relevant theories and previous studies to explain the persistence of the old name. As a methodological limitation, this study used a small-scale mini-survey and purposive sampling; therefore, the findings are not intended to represent all consumers in Bandung. Nevertheless, the method is suitable for identifying an early rebranding phenomenon and generating managerial insights for further research.

3 Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the mini-survey and discusses them in relation to the concepts of brand awareness, consumer recall, habitual behavior, and retail rebranding. The findings are used to show how consumers respond to the rebranding of BTC Mall into D'Botanica Mall, particularly in terms of whether the new name has been recognized, remembered, and used in everyday communication. Since this study applies a descriptive-analytical approach, the results are not intended to generalize the entire Bandung population, but to provide an initial empirical picture of how the rebranding is perceived by relevant consumers.

The mini-survey results indicate that the rebranding of BTC Mall into D'Botanica Mall has generated a certain level of awareness, but the new name has not yet fully replaced the old one in consumer memory and daily language. The following table summarizes respondents' awareness of the name change, their preferred name usage, their familiarity with the new name, and their recognition of "D'Botanica Mall" when mentioned without reference to BTC.

Table 2. Mini-Survey Results on Consumer Recall of D'Botanica Mall

No.	Question	Percentage
1	Are you aware that BTC has been renamed to	65% "Yes" | 35% "No"

No.	Question	Percentage
	D'Botanica Mall?	
2	Which name do you usually use to refer to the mall?	80% "BTC" | 20% "D'Botanica"
3	How familiar are you with the name "D'Botanica Mall"?	Average score 2.5 out of 5 (low)
4	If someone invited you there by saying "D'Botan- ica," would you recognize it?	60% "No" | 40% "Yes"

Source : Author's Work

As shown in Table 2, 65% of respondents were aware that BTC Mall had been renamed D'Botanica Mall, while 35% were still unaware of the change. This result indicates that the rebranding message has reached some consumers, but awareness remains incomplete. More importantly, awareness of the new name does not automatically lead to the use of the new brand identity in everyday communication.

The second finding shows a clear gap between awareness and actual name usage. Although most respondents knew about the name change, 80% still referred to the mall as "BTC," while only 20% used "D'Botanica." This suggests that the old name remains more accessible in consumer memory and continues to function as the dominant reference point. In the context of brand awareness, this indicates that D'Botanica Mall has not yet achieved strong brand recall or top-of-mind awareness among respondents. The low familiarity score further strengthens this interpretation. Respondents' average familiarity with the name "D'Botanica Mall" was only 2.5 out of 5, showing that the new name is not yet sufficiently embedded in consumers' minds. This means that even when consumers have heard about the rebranding, they may not feel familiar enough with the new identity to use it naturally in daily conversations.

The final result shows that 60% of respondents would not immediately recognize the mall if someone referred to it as "D'Botanica," while only 40% would recognize it. This finding confirms that the old name "BTC" still plays an important role as a memory cue. In other words, many consumers still need the former identity to understand the new one. This reflects a transitional stage in which the rebranding has been introduced but has not yet fully replaced the old brand memory.

The findings show that awareness of the new name does not automatically lead to the use of the new brand identity. Although some respondents already knew that BTC Mall had been renamed D'Botanica Mall, most of them still used "BTC" in daily communication. This condition supports that brand awareness is not limited to knowing a brand name, but also involves the ability to recall and use the brand naturally within a specific context [2].

From [3] perspective, the dominance of the old name reflects the strength of consumer memory. The name "BTC" has been stored in consumers' memory through repeated exposure and repeated use over time. Therefore, the new name "D'Botanica Mall" requires continuous communication and repeated exposure before it can become a stronger reference in consumers' minds.

The persistence of "BTC" also reflects habitual behavior. Habits are difficult to change because they are formed through repetition in stable contexts [7]. In this case,

Bandung consumers have repeatedly used "BTC" as a familiar reference to the mall. As a result, the old name remains more automatic and accessible than the new name.

Overall, the discussion indicates that D'Botanica Mall is still in a transitional stage of rebranding. The new name has been introduced and partially recognized, but the old name continues to dominate consumer recall and everyday language. This condition shows that rebranding should be treated as an ongoing process rather than a one-time announcement. Stronger communication consistency, repeated exposure, and alignment between brand promise and consumer experience are necessary to strengthen consumer recall and support the acceptance of the new brand identity.

4 Conclusion

This study concludes that the rebranding of BTC Mall into D'Botanica Mall has generated initial public awareness, but the new name has not yet fully replaced the old identity in consumer memory and everyday communication. The findings show that consumers may recognize the formal name change, yet many still rely on "BTC" as the more familiar and accessible reference. This indicates that rebranding is not only a matter of changing a name or visual identity, but also a process of reshaping consumer recall, habits, and perception.

The study highlights the importance of consistent communication and repeated exposure in strengthening the new brand identity. For D'Botanica Mall, the rebranding strategy should be supported by integrated promotional activities, consistent use of the new name across digital and physical touchpoints, and shopping experiences that reflect the intended brand image. During the transition period, the former name may still be used strategically as a bridge, but the long-term objective should be to make "D'Botanica Mall" the dominant and familiar reference among consumers.

This study contributes to the discussion of retail rebranding by emphasizing the role of consumer memory and habitual naming behavior in brand transition. However, the study is limited by its descriptive approach and the relatively small number of respondents. Future research may involve a larger sample and employ quantitative testing to examine the relationship between brand awareness, consumer recall, brand image, and loyalty in the context of mall rebranding.

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