



Evaluating the reinvention of the movie theatre experience and its role in building brand equity in the new digital age

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ABSTRACT

Ster-Kinekor has remained relevant despite the despite the vast change in technology and innovation; the brand remains valuable to moviegoers and the organisation itself (Bratt, 2019). The main argument this research study presents is whether this justifies Ster-Kinekor's relevance in the new digital age. This is approached by unpacking Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience with the aim to understand how Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience ensures that positive feelings are linked to the brand and through this determining how this contributes to brand equity.

The researcher made use of qualitative research methods such as interviews and focus group, as part of the field research to gather data. While of thematic content analysis was used as a type of qualitative data analysis technique organizing, describing, and extracting themes found within the data gathered.

The main findings reveal that moviegoers place customer experience and shared experience as the top two reasons why movie going at Ster-Kinekor is preferred while the brand places emphasis on their technology, innovation, and loyalty programmes. The research concludes that Ster-Kinekor's efforts are aligned to moviegoer's preferences when it comes to seeking a sense of escapism and shared experiences.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The digital disruption brings with it the need for flexibility and convenience in how content is consumed (PWC, 2015). “The increased use of streaming services has contributed to the need for a strategy of convergence, requiring a disruptive business-model innovation” (Salvador, Simon, Benghozi, 2019: 4). By this, Salvador et al (2019) mean that the cinema industry must reinvent itself in order to achieve long-term success.

For Ster-Kinekor, a movie theatre experience is what makes up their unique selling point (Bratt, 2019). The brand has since had to reinvent the movie theatre experience in response to the digital disruption brought about by the new digital era (Hinchcliffe, 2019). In this research study, the researcher has evaluated the reinvention of the movie theatre experience from a brand and customer perspective, as well as evaluated the role of a movie theatre experience in building brand equity in the new digital age.

Ster-Kinekor refers to their customers as “guests”, therefore, for the purpose of this study the words, “movie theatre experience”, “customer experience” and “guest experience” will be used interchangeably.

1.1 Background and orientation (contextualisation)

Cinema has continuously overcome new inventions from the introduction of the TV in the 1950s to streaming services in the 2020s (Amos, 2020). To date, Ster-Kinekor’s guest experience being the core of what makes the brand unique is not only of value to the brand but also valuable to moviegoers (Bratt, 2019). Thus, justifying Ster-Kinekor’s relevance in the new digital age.

1.2 Rationale

Brand equity benefits brands and their consumers (Bick, 2016). The basic premise of brand equity is that the power of a brand lies in how consumers perceive and experience the brand over time (Keller & Oliver, 2019). The researcher will thus, unpack the sources of brand equity that makeup Ster-Kinekor’s movie theatre experience, as this will determine how a movie theatre experience is perceived in relation to how Ster-Kinekor positions their movie theatre experience and how this contributes to building brand equity for Ster-Kinekor.

1.3 Problem statement

Kevin Lane Keller (2013), states that brand equity depends on the perceptions held by consumers about a brand. The challenge for most brands is ensuring that consumers have positive emotions associated with the brand (Keller, 2013). This research study aims to understand how Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience ensures that positive feelings are linked to the brand and in so doing the researcher will determine how this contributes to brand equity.

1.3.1 Why is the problem worth investigating?

This research study provides a deeper understanding of the existence and relevance of cinemagoing in the new digital age against Keller's brand equity model. Elements of a movie theatre experience, from a brand and customer perspective, are highlighted as important aspects and contributors to building positive brand equity for Ster-Kinekor. This information is useful to Ster-Kinekor as it will ensure that efforts taken to reinvent itself, are aligned to what moviegoers love most about the brand.

1.3.2 Purpose statement

This research study aims to evaluate the reinvention of Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience and how this has shaped consumer's perceptions of cinemagoing and ultimately contributed to building brand equity in the new digital age.

1.3.3 Research questions

The primary research question of this study is stated as follows:

How has Ster-Kinekor's reinvented movie theatre experience contributed to building brand equity, from a brand and customer perspective, in the new digital age?

The research questions are:

1. How does Ster-Kinekor define their movie theatre experience in the new digital age?
2. What are moviegoers' current perceptions of Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience in the new digital age?

3. Is there a disconnect between how Ster-Kinekor positions their movie theatre experience and moviegoer's perception of a movie theatre experience against Keller's brand equity model?"

1.3.4 Research objectives

The aim of this research is to evaluate the reinvention of the movie theatre experience and its role in building brand equity, from a brand and customer perspective, in the new digital age.

The objectives of this study are:

- To define Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience in the new digital age.
- To uncover the perceptions held by moviegoers about a movie theatre experience in the new digital age.
- To illustrate whether there is a disconnect between Ster-Kinekor's positioning of a movie theatre experience and moviegoer's perception of a movie theatre experience using Keller's brand equity model.

1.4 Conceptualization

1.4.1 Cinema in the digital age

Cinema in the digital age, according to Kiwitt (2012) is synonymous with live action. This is the accepted definition of this concept as it relates to immersive experiences.

1.4.2 Brand Equity

For this study, the accepted definition of brand equity is the added value endowed to products or services by its consumers (Keller and Oliver, 2019).

1.4.3 Customer Experience

Customer experience is defined, in this research study, as the way a brand is perceived by its consumers (Morgan, 2017).

1.4.4 Ster-Kinekor

This brand is defined as South Africa's largest movie exhibitor (Ster-Kinekor, 2020a).

1.5 Overview of Research Methodology

The researcher used a phenomenological approach and the research was conducted virtually in South Africa, Johannesburg. Qualitative data was collected by means of interviews and focus groups. Data was analysed using the thematic analysis method. A detailed discussion on the research methodology is provided in Chapter 3.

1.6 Structure of the paper

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of the research study, outlining the rationale of the research study, the research problem statement, the purpose of the research, the research questions, and research objectives.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review will be divided into four concepts namely: Cinema in the digital age; Brand equity; Customer experience; and the brand Ster-Kinekor.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter will outline a detailed research plan on how the researcher has collected and analysed data gathered for the research study.

Chapter 4: Data Findings

In this chapter, the researcher will present findings that speak to the problem statement and research questions of this research study.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Recommendations

This chapter will provide an outline of the main themes that emerged from the data findings and through thematic analysis of the data, the researcher will provide recommendations for further research that can be done.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter will reiterate the main contributions of this study to the body of knowledge in the cinema industry.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review provides an overview of existing research regarding a research problem being investigated (Maree, 2016). It serves the purpose of revealing the gap in what has or has not been written about the research topic, as well as highlights existing flaws found in the literature (Maree, 2016). In the following section, various literature will be discussed in terms of the concepts derived. The researcher begins by analysing different views of cinema in the digital age, then an overview of the views published on brand equity regarding Ster-Kinekor's customer experience is provided and finally, the researcher introduces the brand Ster-Kinekor, at the end of this section.

2.1 Cinema in the digital age

In the digital age of cinema, Van de Vijver (2017), in a study about the social experience of cinema-going today, highlights that going to the movies is seen as an outdated way of watching a movie. This is because the digital age brings with it more ways of accessing filmed entertainment through the internet and various streaming services (Van de Vijver, 2017). Marino (2010), Hirt and Willmott (2014), maintain this idea by highlighting how the collapse of long-established boundaries has altered the way people choose to watch movies due to the rise of digitization.

A contrasting view to this is provided by D'Lugo's (2019), who sets out to answer two pertinent questions in his research study, firstly, what does it mean when filmmakers say "we're making a movie"? and secondly, what does it mean when an audience says "we're going to the movies"? His argument stems from the view that technological changes, which, for this will be categorised under the label of "the digital age" (i.e. internet, streaming platforms, mobile viewing devices) are less important, than understanding cinema as a social institution (D'Lugo, 2019). Thus, it is found that the digital age brings with it an opportunity for the cinema industry to be more than just a place people go to watch movies, but also an experience brought to the audience (D'Lugo, 2019: 10).

Similarly, Salvador, Simon, and Benghozi (2019) argue that the specific focus on the cinema industry is believed to have been justified by the fact that ICT companies have

brought about a differentiated evolution for the cinema experience. One notable success story being the big-screen format IMAX, working with local partner, Ster-Kinekor (PWC, 2015). Ster-Kinekor has managed to differentiate itself from its competitors with the introduction of new, reinvented experiences such as the IMAX and Cine Prestige concept, dubbed the 'business class' of cinemas, focusing on the quality of cinematic experiences (PWC, 2015). This motivates Kiwitt's (2012) claim that cinema has managed to make use of new technologies to change the production practice and aesthetic content experience for moviegoers in the digital age.

It is said that a company's digital competency will determine whether it creates or loses value in the new digital age (Hirt & Willmott, 2014). However, for content producers, Gaustad (2019) is of the view that the lean towards streaming services do provide a presence for global services, but may result in movies being licensed to low-yielding channels (such as streaming services) when total revenues could be higher from keeping content exclusive to higher-yielding channels (such as cinema). Hence, film producers are more dependent on the revenues from the premier window, cinema releases, which proves that cinema remains relevant in the new digital age (Gaustad, 2019:70).

The next section discusses brand equity in relation to a movie theatre experience.

2.2 Brand Equity

Bick (2016: 33), defines brand equity as "a market-based intangible asset that can be leveraged to improve the performance of the organization". The inherent value of a brand is thus given by its brand equity (Bick, 2016). A basic premise of brand equity is that the power of a brand lies in the minds of consumers and what they have experienced and learned about the brand over time (Keller & Brexendorf, 2019). Shamim (2013) further highlights that brand-related experiences tend to become the part of long-term memory in the shape of brand associations resulting in associations that play a significant role in building attitudes such as brand preference, credibility, satisfaction, and loyalty (Shamim, 2013).

Thus, the research study aims to understand what moviegoers value in a movie theatre experience. Therefore, the accepted definition of brand equity for this research study, as

defined by Keller and Brexendorf (2019: 1410), is that brand equity is the “added value” endowed to a product by its consumers.

Another definition of brand equity is defined by Aaker (1996) as the value that consumers associate with a brand, as reflected in the five dimensions: brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality brand loyalty, and other proprietary brand assets (Chieng & Lee, 2011). A broader perspective has been adopted by Keller (1993) who uses the term customer-based brand equity (CBBE) to refer to brand equity that occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favourable, strong and unique brand associations in their memory about the brand (Farjam & Hungyi, 2015). Keller’s (2016) main reason for creating the CBBE model was to help marketers and brands by providing a theory that is strongly rooted in consumer behaviour.

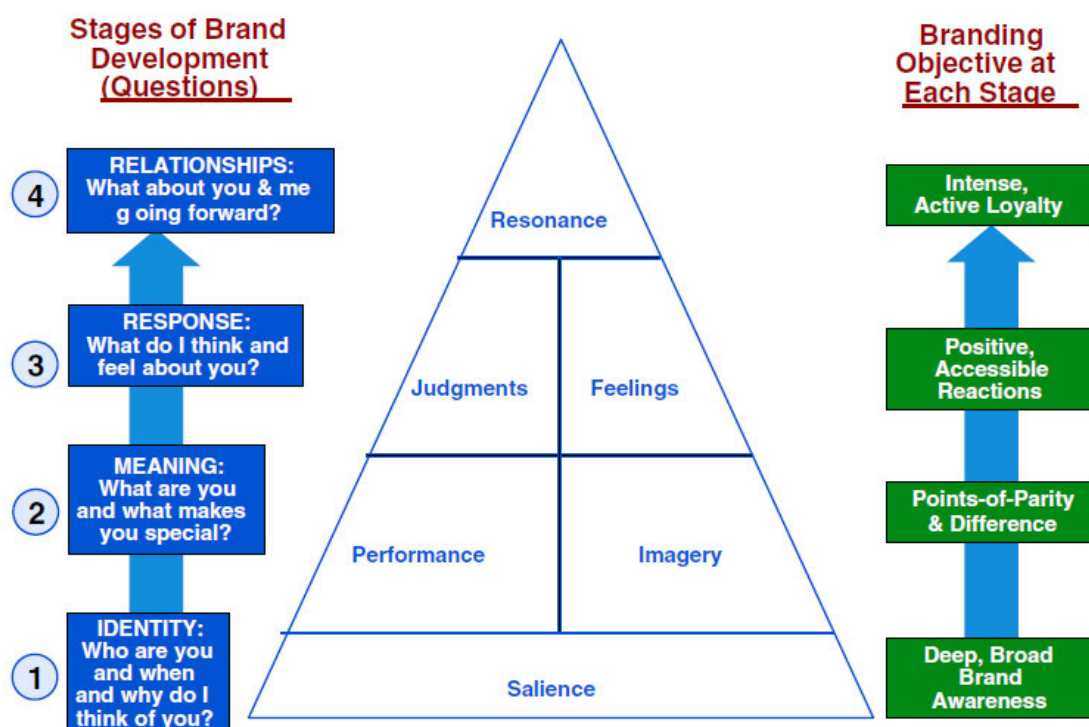
Therefore, should it be found that Ster-Kinekor, through its movie theatre experience, has positive customer-based brand equity, then the brand itself can be assured of achieving long term revenues, gaining more customers who are willing to seek out the brand over competitors, while giving the brand the advantage to command higher prices (Farjam & Hungyi, 2015). The CBBE model is found to be advantageous in interpreting consumer behaviour and phenomena (Keller, 2016). Thus, motivating the researcher’s decision to use this model to illustrate, the role that a movie theatre experience has in building brand equity for Ster-Kinekor.

Keller & Brexendorf (2019) argue the importance of understanding what the sources and outcomes of brand equity are for an organisation. The sources of brand equity, being what drives brand equity and the outcomes of brand equity, being how and where brands add value (Keller & Brexendorf, 2019). By understanding the sources of brand equity in a movie theatre experience, Ster-Kinekor will know what drives brand equity within their movie theatre experience and through the outcomes, understand how and where the Ster-Kinekor brand adds value to moviegoers and the organisation itself.

Aaker (1996) suggests, measuring brand equity by using the level of satisfaction, preference for the brand, and perceived quality on various product and service

dimensions among others (Farjam & Hungyi, 2015). Likewise, Keller (1993) suggests correct top-of-mind recall and beliefs or associations as some of the measures of brand knowledge (Farjam & Hungyi, 2015). Choosing Keller's CBBE model as a framework for this study is motivated by the model's ability to allow the researcher to outline the journey of moviegoers' relationship with Ster-Kinekor as a brand – from being able to recognise the brand to reaching the peak of ultimately resonating with the brand. Figure 1. Provides an image of the CBBE model that will be used in this research study:

Figure1. Keller's Brand Equity Model



Source: (Keller, 2016: 4)

By understanding the perceptions held in the minds of consumers about a movie theatre experience at Ster-Kinekor, the researcher can identify the source of brand equity within a movie theatre experience. Comparing this to how Ster-Kinekor defines a movie theatre experience will ultimately reveal the outcome of brand equity within a movie theatre experience. For Ster-Kinekor, being associated with brands such as IMAX and D-BOX could either bring about positive or negative brand associations in the minds of moviegoers in South Africa.

The next section discusses the concept, customer experience, in relation to brand equity as this will give insight into the aspects the researcher needs to highlight in Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience.

2.3 Customer Experience

In this research study, customer experience is defined by how a brand is perceived by its consumers (Morgan, 2017).

A study by Shumim & Butt (2013) suggests that customers prefer one brand over others based on experiential benefits, indicating the possibility of a relationship between how a brand is experienced and its ability to generate consumer-based brand equity. The gap that this research study presents is that the research only reflects the influence of brand experience on a customer's brand attitude towards product brands, thus, leaving out the impact of this relationship on service brands such as Ster-Kinekor (Shumim & Butt's, 2013: 113).

Unlike Shumim and Butt's solitary focus on product brands Biedenbach and Marell (2010), in their investigation of the impact of customer experience on brand equity in a business-to-business (B2B) service setting, argue that the relationship between consumer's experiential benefits and brand equity remains true for all service brands as well. However, this is illustrated using Aaker's brand equity model as a framework, to show the impact of customer experience on the formation of brand equity (Biedenbach & Marell, 2010). Since information is gathered during an experience that will lead to service-related brand associations being made; customer experience becomes a significant input to brand knowledge (Biedenbach & Marell, 2010).

Kuvykaite and Piligrimiene (2014) provide an alternative view to creating a favourable customer experience. Their research reveals that consumers play an active role in creating experiences that will lead to increased brand equity by making use of consumers' efforts in building brand equity (Kuvykaite & Piligrimiene 2014: 482). These consumer efforts, in the form of consumers engaging with the brand, allow brand engaged consumers to experience the emotional, functional, and social value of the brand, thus, creating positive associations for brands and further leading to increased brand equity

(Kuvykaite & Piligrimiene 2014). This is because, consumers who are familiar with and hold positive emotions towards a brand, are likely to enjoy experiencing the brand (Shobri & Putit, 2015).

A study conducted to explore how increased apparent reality affects participants' satisfaction with the film experience, revealed that viewers from the 3D screening rated their experience as more perceptually realistic and reported being less distracted during the film than viewers who watched the film in 2D (Rooney & Hennessy, 2013). In agreement to this, Mehta (2019) suggests, cinema in the digital age as an immersive experience amplifies the emotional aspect of moviegoers while enhancing the overall value of the movie theatre experience.

Similarly, Krisnanto's (2019) view on the audience's perception of high-end cinema, argues that there is an influence between service quality on audience satisfaction and loyalty. Satisfaction and loyalty of the audience affect the audience's need for a movie theatre experience (Krisnanto, 2019). Likewise, Cuong's (2020) recent study conducted, about a Vietnamese cinema, on the effect of the physical environment and perceived value on customer satisfaction, found that the physical environment, as well as the perceived value of a cinema, plays a vital role in creating customer satisfaction.

Moreover, Gaustad (2019) views a movie theatre experience as dependent on the work carried out in all the sectors, such as quality of the production, expectations created through marketing, presentation, and comfortability of the environment as well as the reliable technology used. This is comparable to Atkinson and Kennedy's (2016) research objective to evaluate the extent to which the immersive design of a cinema producing specific experiences and behaviours among moviegoers. These technology-driven aspects are what make the experience immersive for moviegoers (Van de Vijver, 2017). Thus, making the uniqueness of the positive brand associations of a movie theatre experience an important factor in determining what makes up brand equity.

The final concept is the brand focus of this research study which is discussed in detail in the next section.

2.4 Ster-Kinekor

Synonymous with the word “movies”, Ster-Kinekor, is South Africa's largest movie exhibitor, with a 60-65% overall market share in South Africa (Ster-Kinekor, 2020a). An increase in competition has led to the need for a shift from cinema being just a content delivery platform, to now being an all-out experience in the form of value-added services and advances in technology (Bratt, 2018). Ster-Kinekor has thus, had to incorporate technology into every aspect of the business to reinvent itself (Hinchcliffe, 2019).

Currently, Ster-Kinekor has the largest 3D footprint, which is an experience that requires moviegoers to wear 3D glasses to watch a movie in 3D, to fully appreciate the impact and effect of 3D images (Ster-Kinekor, 2020b). While Cine Prestige cinemas are deemed, “the business class of cinema where luxury meets the magic of the big screen”, immersive IMAX experiences are offered at various complexes in South Africa (Ster-Kinekor, 2020b). All this, in an effort, to ensure that moviegoers experience “Great Moments at their Greatest” as their tagline proclaims (Ster-Kinekor, 2020a).

Ster-Kinekor's Nouveau cinemas are dedicated “art cinema” chains, that screen independent, alternative art cinema content (Ster-Kinekor, 2020b). Unlike any other cinema, Nouveau gives moviegoers a unique and inspiring cinema experience where the art of film is appreciated (Ster-Kinekor, 2020b).

A new type of movie experience brought about by Ster-Kinekor is the D-BOX movie theatre experience (Ster-Kinekor, 2020b). D-BOX provides hyper-realistic vibrations that move the body and sparks the imagination while watching a movie (Ster-Kinekor, 2020b). Moviegoers control the intensity of the movement experienced during the movie, reinforcing the immersive nature of a movie theatre experience (Ster-Kinekor, 2020).

These studies, taken together, support the notion that the importance of evaluating the perceptions held, by moviegoers, about Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience, means understanding their level of familiarity with the brand and the brand associations they hold towards the brand, as this is what leads to customer-based brand equity.

The next chapter introduces the research methodology used for this research study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the researcher explains how research was conducted to understand how Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience contributes to building brand equity. Firstly, the paradigm used is discussed, followed by discussions on the research approach, research design, population and sampling, data collection methods as well as data analysis methods used. Lastly, the researcher provides details on limitations and delimitations presented by the research study. These will be discussed in further detail.

3.1 Research paradigm

Since the aim of the research study is to provide an understanding of how a movie theatre experience contributes to building brand equity for Ster-Kinekor from a brand and customer perspective, the selected paradigm or worldview used to understand the movie theatre experience is that of an interpretivist approach. This is because an interpretivist paradigm focuses on the meaning that individuals assign to experiences (Jansen, 2016).

The research study was thus guided by the five assumptions in the interpretivist approach. Firstly, an epistemological perspective, of which Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) describe as the knowledge and approach to a phenomenon. This assumption guided how the researcher made meaning of knowledge and processing of data, based on interaction with participants through in-depth interviews and focus groups. Secondly, the ontological perspective guided how the researcher formulated opinions based on those interactions with participants who were selected for the study. Thirdly, the researcher used Keller's CBBE model to provide a metatheoretical reflection and assessment of how a movie theatre experience in the new digital age contributes to building brand equity for Ster-Kinekor.

Fourthly, from a methodological perspective, the research study fell within a qualitative cross-sectional study. This is discussed in further detail in section 3.2.

Lastly, an axiological perspective guided how the researcher ensured valuable methods of research and data collection within the interpretivist paradigm - assessing the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the research study (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). This is further elaborated on in section 4.3.

3.2 Research approach

Qualitative research techniques were used because this research study dealt with subjective human experiences. Thus, making it an appropriate method used to provide an understanding of the qualities of a specific field of enquiry, in this case, being a movie theatre experience (Visocky O'Grady, 2017). As a cross-sectional study, the outcome of the research, was drawn from interaction with participants at a specific point in time (Di Girolamo & Mans, 2019).

3.3 Research design

The research design provides the framework and approach used in the research study (Sileyew, 2019). The type of research design the researcher has chosen to undertake is that of a phenomenological approach. This approach has helped the researcher focus on understanding the essence of experiences about a phenomenon in this case being the movie theatre experience (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a).

3.4 Population and sampling

A population is a group of people who share common characteristics as defined by a researcher's selection criteria (Rafeedali, n.d.). The population for this study was made up of cinema brand experts and moviegoers in South Africa.

The participants selected as moviegoers were active moviegoers who enjoyed cinemagoing at Ster-Kinekor and follow Ster-Kinekor's Instagram or Facebook media pages with active social engagement in the last 3 months. Purposive sampling, which involves selecting members of a sample with a purpose to represent a phenomenon or criteria, was used (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a). The researcher used the below sample frame to pull a sample that represents the population. Participants who fell within the accessible population criteria as Moviegoers needed to:

- be 18 years old and above,
- be Ster-Kinekor Facebook or Instagram page followers,
- visit Ster-Kinekor cinemas at least once a month.

Cinema brand experts needed to work at Ster-Kinekor's head office based in Johannesburg. The accessible population had to meet the following selection criteria as part of the sampling frame:

Cinema brand experts needed to be:

- existing employees at Ster-Kinekor Head Office (not at cinemas),
- have at least 3 years' experience working in Ster-Kinekor's marketing department.

The "unit of analysis" forms parts of the entity being studied, the content of which can be used as a basis for decisions made during the development of codes (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). Since the research study consisted of two populations, this research study made use of two units of analysis, namely: moviegoers and cinema brand experts.

The reason behind the choice in units of analysis chosen by the researcher is that the researcher believed that moviegoers visited the cinema on a regular basis and therefore were able to provide insight into a movie theatre experience in the new digital age. Cinema brand experts, on the other hand, were able to provide an understanding of how Ster-Kinekor has chosen to define their movie theatre experience in the new digital age.

3.5 Data collection

Field research methods were used to collect data because this method is known to resolve issues of gaps in data when there is limited information about a topic, as well as provide supporting material to existing data found (Bhat, n.d.). Field research involves observing, interacting, and understanding people in their natural environment, which is what the researcher applied when collecting information from participants using in-depth structured interviews and focus groups (Bhat, n.d.). All interviews were transcribed verbatim.

3.5.1 Interviews

An interview is a two-way conversation where the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data about the participant's views and opinions (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a). By conducting qualitative interviews, the interviewer was able to see the world through the eyes of participants.

Structured, in-depth interview questions are detailed and developed beforehand (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a). This ensures that participants don't derail information unrelated to the study as with unstructured and semi-structured interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a). However, for this study, interviews were not overly structured to the point that probing was inhibited.

The researcher opted to use Zoom as a platform to conduct the interview with cinema brand experts. Participants were sent the consent forms (via email and WhatsApp) before hand and were able to give consent to use data gathered from the interview, for the research study. Refer to table 1.1 below for the proposed interview schedule, which shows a list of questions asked (left column), relevance of the question to the study (middle column), the research questions these interview questions will help to answer (right column) and the relevance of those questions to the elements that make up Keller's brand equity model (merged rows).

Table 1.1: Proposed interview schedule for industry experts

Identity		
How would you define Ster-Kinekor as a brand?	Do participants place a greater emphasis on Ster-Kinekor's corporate brand name rather than the individual brands under Ster-Kinekor's portfolio	Research Question 1
Meaning		
How do you differentiate Ster-Kinekor from its competitors?	Relevance of brand slogan and brand name to product and service offering	Research Question 1
Judgements & Feelings		
What has partnerships with brands such as IMAX, D-Box and brand extensions such as Cine Prestige mean for Ster-Kinekor (as a brand) and the movie theatre experience?	Brand associations	Research Question 1 & 3
How would you like moviegoers to experience cinemagoing at Ster-Kinekor (from a branding point of view)?	Does the brand possess any personality traits related to experiences	Research Question 3
How does Ster-Kinekor ensure that customers have positive feelings towards your brand?	Factors that would be important to moviegoers	Research Question 3
Resonance		
Why should people be loyal to the Ster-Kinekor brand?	Does the brand possess any personality traits or values, any associations related to history, heritage or experiences?	Research Question 3

The interview participant was asked these open-ended questions which allowed the participant to fully discuss their views, impart knowledge and provide information about cinema, the desired movie theatre experience, and the brand, Ster-Kinekor.

The researcher ensured that the interviews started on time and that adequate transition between topics was provided.

Since the interviews took place on Zoom, verbal consent and consent via social media platforms was given as well as written consent in the form of signed consent forms. Virtual interviews were audio recorded upon consent given by participants.

Since the researcher had the email address and cell phone number of one of the participants (who fit the sample frame) the researcher was thus able to get the email address of more possible participants.

3.5.2 Focus groups

Focus groups can be defined as organised group discussions led by a moderator with a goal to gain insight into participants' views and beliefs about a given topic (Visocky O'Grady, 2017). This is an additional tool that the researcher used to gain an understanding of the opinion and attitudes towards the movie theatre experience by moviegoers. Focus groups allow participants to debate a given topic and encourages conflict which assists in data generation (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a).

However, because the focus group for this research study was conducted virtually using Zoom, this restricted participants' ability to debate effectively. This is because, when participants tried to speak over another participant, both participants became inaudible. Hence creating long pauses in the audio recording.

The researcher used the bellow focus group interview schedule, Table 1.2, to ensure that participants remain focused on the questions asked. However, participants were given enough room to deviate if new issues arose. Table 1.2 below, shows a list of questions asked (left column), relevance of the question to the study (middle column), the research questions these interview questions will help to answer (right column) and the relevance of those questions to the elements that make up Keller's brand equity model (merged rows).

Table 1.2: Focus group interview schedule

Brand Awareness		
What comes to mind when I say, "experience great moments at their greatest"?	The level of brand recall	Research Question 2 & 3
Which brands can you identify in the picture? (logos of cinema brands & SK cinema experiences e.g. Prestige, IMAX, etc.)	The level of brand recognition	Research Question 3
Which cinema brands do you associate Prestige, IMAX and D-Box with?	Brand recognition and brand association – does the brand possess any associations related to experiences	Research Question 2 & 3
Brand Associations		
What influences your decision to visit a movie theatre?	does the brand possess any associations related to values	Research Question 2 & 3
What would make a good movie theatre experience?	Performance & imagery	Research Question 2 & 3
How would you describe a bad movie theatre experience entail?	Performance & imagery	Research Question 2 & 3
In your opinion is Netflix killing cinema?	Performance & imagery	Research Question 2 & 3
What would you prefer: cinema or streaming services?	Performance & imagery	Research Question 2
Brand Judgements		
What is your overall opinion of Ster-Kinekor?	Relevance & credibility	Research Question 2
Brand Feelings		
What encourages you to visit the Ster-Kinekor cinema?	Is the purchase process more rational than emotive	Research Question 2
How would you describe the ambience at a Ster-Kinekor cinema?		Research Question 2 & 3
Brand Resonance		
Think back to a time before the Covid-19 was declared a pandemic, what is your fondest memory of going to the movies at Ster-Kinekor?	Did participants feel any type of kinship or affiliation with other users of the same brand post-purchase	Research Question 2 & 3
Do you think that Ster-Kinekor's technological improvements is what keeps you loyal to the brand?	Are participants willing to invest time, energy, money or other resources to get to know the brands better beyond those expended during purchase and consumption	Research Question 2 & 3
Suppose you had 1minute to talk about Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience, what would you say?	Will participants actively engage in positive or negative word-of-mouth communication about Ster-Kinekor/ their movie theatre experience at Ster-Kinekor	Research Question 2

The use of a funnelling technique in the above schedule shows that the researcher opted to start with broader and less structured questions to ease participants into discussions. This is because participants did not know one another, so debates and discussions took some time to happen. As the interaction picked up, the researcher put forward more structured questions paired with location stills such as, pictures of the different Ster-Kinekor associated brand logos, which helped participants to start actively debating on the images.

The participants selected to participate in the focus group were messaged on Instagram and Facebook, refer to screenshot in Appendix D. Once they responded with their contact details, the researcher was able to contact each participant via WhatsApp and email – by sending reminders of the consent forms that needed to be returned and the focus group which took place on 18 July 2020, at 9am. All participants provided consent via WhatsApp and some participants were able to send back signed consent form. Consent forms are provided in Appendix B.

The entire focus group session was audio recorded as per consent given by all participants. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that there was clarity and consistency in the note-taking process. The researcher's notes included:

- Quotes derived from statements made by participants which the researcher found to be enlightening. The initials of the participants were used to label the quotes.
- Key points and themes identified by participants in response to questions asked by the researcher.

All the above assisted the researcher in the next step which involved analysing the data gathered.

3.6 Data analysis

Documenting thoughts during data collection marks the beginning of data analysis because this is when the researcher takes note of initial interpretations (Lorelli et al., 2017). As part of the data analysis process for this research study, the researcher made use of thematic content analysis as a type of qualitative data analysis technique. Thematic analysis is a method that involves organizing, describing, and extracting themes found within data sets (Lorelli., Nowell., Norris., White., and Moules, 2017). The researcher found this technique useful in summarising key points from the large set of data derived from the interviews and focus groups conducted. The research followed the key stages in thematic analysis as highlighted by Lorelli et al (2017). These include:

3.6.1 Re-reading transcripts

Re-reading transcripts to ensure that the researcher is immersed in the data and becomes familiar with the data gathered. For example, the researcher repeatedly listened to audio recordings and tried to find patterns within the data. The researcher also made reflective notes on thoughts developed because of immersion into data.

3.6.2 Identifying themes

The researcher identified themes within the data that could be extracted. This is where the researcher tried to identify fascinating aspects of the data that was further categorised as themes across the data set.

3.6.3 Developing a coding scheme

Elements from Keller's brand equity model were used as preliminary codes to describe the data gathered from participant interviews and focus groups. The researcher ensured that the questions asked were related to the preliminary codes set beforehand. This

provided some sort of order when collecting the data, transcribing the data, and finally coding the data.

3.6.4 Coding the data

This involved reading through the data transcribed from interviews and focus groups, and then dividing it into meaningful logical components (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). The researcher made use of emergent coding methods, which involved identifying analytical units or themes that emerged following an initial analysis of the data (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). Meaning that the analytical units for this study were derived from the transcribed data.

3.6.5 Creating categories and sub-categories

Categories and sub-categories are formed by coherent patterns that emerge from themes (Lorelli et al, 2017). By tabulating the relationship between categories, subcategories and themes, the researcher ensured that there is enough information to support the use or creation of a theme, category, and sub-category (Lorelli et al, 2017).

Furthermore, the researcher followed the below steps in preparation for data analysis:

Preparing the data involved the following:

- Describing participants yet still protecting their anonymity and confidentiality using pseudonyms (for interviews) and initials (for focus groups) instead of participant's real names.
- Ensuring that all the data is organised by labelling or creating folders to allow ease of reconceptualising the data when needed.
- Ensuring that recordings are transcribed verbatim by replaying audio recordings when needed.
- Engaging in memoing by journalising thoughts while analysing the data.”.

3.7 Limitations and delimitations

Limitations are defined as the challenges that affect the research study as a form of constraint on the research study (Maree, 2016). Constraints for this research study include access to participants. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, participants were put under lockdown restrictions that prohibit gatherings and face-to-face meetings. The researcher was forced to create virtual meetings, using Zoom as a collaborative platform.

The Covid-19 pandemic presented another limitation which was the fact that cinemas had been closed during lockdown level 3 to 5, meaning that participants had not visited the cinema in the last 3 to 4 months. Thus, focus group participants needed more probing when discussing their movie going experience.

The decision to use Zoom as a collaborative platform was based on the fact that majority of the participants who agreed to participate in the research study advised that they had access to Zoom. This left out a few possible participants who did not have access to the platform, and therefore could not participate in the focus group conducted. The drawback of using Zoom over other platforms such as Microsoft Teams, is that Zoom does not transcribe virtual meeting. Therefore, the researcher had to make use of a cell phone as an audio recorder, and then transcribe the responses by replaying the audio recordings.

Another limitation, as presented by the use of two social media platforms from which a sample was pulled, and one collaborative platform, is the inability of the research study to be generalized.

Delimitations serve as an additional measure of validity in that the parameters in which the study will take place is specified by the researcher (Maree, 2016: 45). The focus on Ster-Kinekor as a brand; cinema brand experts and moviegoers as participants of the study, all formed part of the parameters for this research study. These delimitations will be evident in the research study population.

Additionally, the use of 2 platforms namely Facebook and Instagram to pull a sample representative of the population for this study, means that the research study cannot be generalized.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter details the findings from the researcher’s data collection. Data was analysed using thematic analysis and the findings are discussed below.

4.1 Interview findings

The below table highlights common themes that the researcher derived from the interviews conducted with cinema brand experts. This research study reveals that Ster-Kinekor’s identity stems from its persona which was commonly described by participants as fun, young or exciting. That, together with being a pioneer brand was emphasised greatly throughout the interview by participants, hence, these themes had the highest frequency.

Ster-Kinekor’s top drivers of brand meaning includes the brand’s ability to provide superior and immersive experiences through their state-of-the-art cinema with top of the range picture quality, sound, and continuous innovation. Ster-Kinekor’s industry leading loyalty programmes namely, SK Club, Edgars Club and Discovery Vitality, ensures that shared value creation is maintained to create brand loyalty. Refer to Table 4.1. for common themes derived from interviews with cinema brand experts.

Table 4.1 Interview with Cinema Brand Experts

Category: Brand Identity			
Sub-category	Themes	Frequency	Verbatim
History	Heritage	2	"Ster-Kinekor was born out of a dedication to showcasing movies as they were intended to be seen."
Affiliations	Luxury	1	" So, Cine Prestige is an owned Ster-Kinekor Theatre brand, and is a luxury cinema"
	Art	2	"And then I think that we often forget about Cinema Nouveau, I think that also differentiates us from our competitors - as it focuses on art house films. It was born in the 80's, and it showcases arthouse movies, for a unique and thought-provoking cinema experience."
	Business class	2	"and the luxurious Cine Prestige theatres - the first business class experience in South Africa."
	Fun, young & exciting	6	" I think it's a fun brand - one you can be playful with. Given that it's a brand that is affiliated to different types of characters and genres of movies"
	Customer service	4	"From the customer service, our staff have learned to live by the brand."
Category: Brand Meaning			
Sub-category	Themes	Frequency	Verbatim
Experience	Seating	2	"Great moments at their greatest is the best way I could put - with great sound, great picture, great seats and big emotion. "
	Magic	2	" It's our ongoing mission to become synonymous with the unrivalled magic of the cinema experience, by providing great moments at their greatest."
	Big emotion	2	"Our essence is about big experience and big emotion"
	Big/superior experience	4	"Going to Ster is a big experience, which is often a shared experience with you, friends or your loved ones"
	Showman quality	2	"Our personality is young confident, with a showman quality - because we're in the show business. "
Technology & innovation	Picture quality	4	"For me, if you want the best experience in cinematography, there is nowhere else to go but to SK."
	Pioneer	6	"It is the first to do most things. SK introduces different types of new movie viewing, which other cinema distributors then follow"
	Immersive	3	"So, if a customer goes to a competitor and then comes to SK the experience of cinematography in terms of the IMAX screening, the sound, the quality, the pictures, it's as if you're immersed into the movie. You won't get that anywhere else but at a SK theatre. "
Category: Brand Response			
Sub-category	Themes	Frequency	Verbatim
Service	Accessibility	2	"So as the market leaders, Ster-Kinekor aims to spearhead the advancement of cinema across, both South Africa and the rest of Africa."
Category: Brand Relationships			
Sub-category	Themes	Frequency	Verbatim
Loyalty programme	Half price Tuesdays	5	"Where else in South Africa do you get to watch a movie at half the price of a ticket? You do that if you have a Vitality card; half price Tuesday as a SK loyalty member; you do the same with 50% off your ticket price as a Vitality member; and you get the same as an Edgars club member. So, all three club memberships give you great discounts. And it is only at Ster-Kinekor. "
	Great moments	3	"And above all we want to deliver the magic of cinema in a superior way, time and time again. So that our experience is a great and memorable one."
	SK club	1	"Another differentiator, is the SK Club loyalty programme - this rewards members with redeemable points when they swipe their card when buying movie tickets or paying for catering; as well as half price tickets on Tuesdays"
	Edgars & Vitality	2	"We also have industry leading loyalty programmes from Edgars Club and Discovery Vitality. These give Ster-Kinekor a strong consumer value proposition and competitive edge"

4.2 Focus group findings

In terms of brand awareness, brand heritage as a sub-category symbolises how participants choose to remember the brand Ster-Kinekor. Through their well-known logo which is easily identifiable and is easily likened to the word 'movies' (as seen by the

frequency of time the term was used), one participant reminisced on how Ster-Kinekor entices them to visit the cinema with the frequent release of childhood movie remakes.

Brand meaning was divided into two sub-categories, namely, features and technology. The sub-category called features highlight's themes such as accessibility, timeslot flexibility, seating, and variety; with seating being the most common theme referred to by participants. These features are what makes the brand different to other brands in terms of performance and imagery. Seating was mentioned 3 times as a determinant of a good movie theatre experience with one of the participants sharing their bad experience at a cinema which could have been avoided had he booked the right seating.

Technology also highlights the brand meaning for participants as this is seen to largely contribute to their movie theatre experience. In this sub-category, the theme picture quality came up 4 times, innovation and sound came up twice while the term unique offering was mentioned once to describe Ster-Kinekor's service offering.

Brand response was largely dependent on participant's sensitivity to the price of a movie ticket and catering costs (i.e. the price of popcorn and coke combos). Themes such as pricing and value for money were mentioned the most along with themes such as budget and pricing. The theme luxury was derived from participant's perception of brand associations such as IMAX.

Brand relationships brought about by Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience as the sub-category is highlighted by participant's value for customer service, entertainment, escapism, and group bookings. Participants frequently mentioned the importance of customer service with some highlighting how they do not recall ever receiving bad customer service from Ster-Kinekor and how entertaining it was to watch a movie in a group setting. Feeling a sense escapism is how one of the participants described the movie theatre experience at Ster-Kinekor. (Refer to Table 4.2 below).

Table 4.2 Focus Group Findings

Category: Brand Awareness			
Sub-category	Themes	Frequency	Verbatim
Heritage	Childhood movie remake	1	"Okay, with me, when I see a movie like a childhood movie, like a remake of that being made. Then I feel like I wanna go watch that movie."
	Movies	2	"Ster-Kinekor ... Movies, Ster-Kinekor?"
Category: Brand Meaning			
Sub-category	Themes	Frequency	Verbatim
Features	Accessibility	1	"So, if you wanna go to a NuMetro, you're gonna have to look for one, or drive for one. But Ster-Kinekor is more freely available and they're just better."
	Flexibility timeslots	1	"At other movies, maybe, I want to watch a movie, for example, I'll have to wait until later where with Ster-Kinekor, the movie time would be just after an hour. So, they give different options."
	Seating	3	"So, the layout of the cinema is not great, so that makes the whole movie experience not great. Everybody in that cinema is level-headed, so when you're sitting down, you're directly behind the other person. " "So, I only watched half of the movie because of where I was sitting"
	Variety	1	"For me they have a more diverse list of movies that they're showing, you always have options."
Technology	Innovation	2	"And they've made a few upgrades in the last couple of years, so that's great. We're moving with the times. So, yeah, I'm a fan. "
	Picture quality	4	"I agree with Taai, like, good quality sound, good quality video and also the state that the cinema is in"
	Sound	2	"The movie was playing but the sound was coming afterwards. So that messed up the whole quality of the movie experience. "
	Unique offering	1	"But a cinema experience is something we can't put a price on."
Category: Brand Response			
Sub-category	Themes	Frequency	Verbatim
Ticket and catering cost	Budget	1	" I don't mind the cinema experience, you know, every once in a while. Yeah, because it's not definitely not just a spontaneous thing, you think about it and you make sure you have enough to enjoy yourself..."
	Expensive	1	"So, I really love it, I enjoy it. Even though they kill us with the prices. Or charging us for small movies."
	Pricing	2	"now I won't go to the cinema, I would rather wait for the movie to show on Dstv, or something like that. Rather than going out to pay so much money for a movie. "
	Value for money	2	"I'd say it's always a positive experience and you always get value for money in my opinion. "
Exclusivity	Luxury	2	" IMAX is associated with luxury, right? "
Category: Brand relationships			
Sub-category	Themes	Frequency	Verbatim
Ster-Kinekor movie theatre experience	Customer service	5	"And I called the manager, and he gave two free tickets again. And that was a good thing of him to do. So I really love it, I enjoy it." "Despite the trial and tribulations that we're facing today, amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, I would say the business is... they really just strive to satisfy their customers."
	Entertainment	2	"So, watching a movie together as friends, you'll never get that same experience except at the movies though."
	Escapism	1	"Escaping the world."
	Group bookings	1	"When we watched the Avengers Last Game, we came together as a group. We met there. It was such a nice experience."

4.3 Analysis of data (interview and focus group)

Keller (2016) advises that the first stage of building a strong brand is to ensure that consumers are aware of your brand and that your brand portrays the correct brand identity. Our findings reveal that Ster-Kinekor has created an identification of the brand with moviegoers through its logo, heritage, and an association in the minds of moviegoers with luxury, escapism, and the term movies. This means that brand salience for the Ster-Kinekor brand exists among moviegoers since the movie going experience is often considered when a sense of escapism or a need for entertainment is required.

The second stage relates to tangible and intangible brand associations established by brand meaning (Keller, 2016). Brand meaning is therefore characterised in either functional (brand performance) or abstract (image-related) associations. In terms of functional benefits, Ster-Kinekor invests in technology and innovation to ensure high quality cinematography with immersive experiences. The brand prides itself in being pioneers of movie viewing experiences.

However, for moviegoers, what makes Ster-Kinekor different from any other cinema is the accessibility (ease of finding a Ster-Kinekor cinema), access to exclusive content and the different show times offered allowing for flexibility in their own schedules. The cinema seating also plays a significant role as a functional attribute to the movie going experience at Ster-Kinekor.

With Ster-Kinekor being defined as a fun, young brand, this is aligned to moviegoer's perception of the brand as being associated with excitement, especially when experienced with other people. Thus, further reiterating that shared experience component to creating great moments.

The research also reveals that, quality, innovation and customer service are primary factors for building brand loyalty, with customer service being paramount. A moviegoer's choice to visit a Ster-Kinekor theatre depends not only on the assessment of the functional benefits for example, the movie title, the type of movie experience e.g. Cine Prestige, but also on their evaluation of the customer journey – from booking tickets online to interacting with staff members and the overall customer service. Therefore, Ster-Kinekor frontline staff members are company advocates who can affect the brand meaning in various ways.

Brand response is the third stage in the Keller model and represents opinions and evaluations of the brand based on various associations identified in the previous stage (Keller, 2016). Participants overall judgements on the brand were that the movie tickets and catering is overpriced, however, this, can be offset by a great movie and customer service experience. Common brand feelings in response to the brand were excitement and social approval which is in line with the brand's essence to provide big emotion and big experiences.

Brand resonance which refers to the nature of the relationship between the customer and the brand, is at the peak of the pyramid where brand response is converted to create an intense loyalty relationship between the brand's customers and the brand itself (Keller, 2016). Ster-Kinekor relies on their loyalty programme to build relationships with its customers. Even though the loyalty programme provides various benefits which moviegoers can take advantage of, moviegoers believe that inconsistency in customer service and a lack of creating that shared experience affects the perceptions of the brand as a whole and causes a moviegoer to switch brands or methods of accessing movie content. This is due to a poor experience at a Ster-Kinekor cinema. Engagement of participants in cinemas while watching a big movie title such as End Game, confirms the existence of attitudinal attachment and a sense of community among moviegoers.

This sense of community is what would increase moviegoer's willingness to communicate about the brand and make brand referrals. 'This strong relationship would also lead to moviegoers' willingness to extend to other products under Ster-Kinekor, such as their SK club membership loyalty programme. Thus, leading to an increase in brand equity.

4.3 Trustworthiness

Credibility as a criterion within the interpretivist paradigm refers to the trustworthiness of the data and data analysis as opposed to validity as a criterion used in research conducted through a positivist paradigm (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The use of purposive sampling as a sampling method ensures that the credibility of the research study is enhanced (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b).

Transferability refers to the ability of researchers to connect elements of this research study to their research (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). Even though the cross-sectional aspect of

the study affects the transferability of the research study, transferability can still be enhanced by ensuring that participants are representative of the phenomenon, being studied and clear context is provided about the phenomenon being studied (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). The researcher has thus ensured that a clear context is provided regarding the movie theatre experience and that purposive sampling is used to select participants who classify themselves as moviegoers.

Dependability is demonstrated through the detail of gathering data (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). Since an interpretivist approach focuses on the human experience and behaviour, the research study is subject to various interpretations compared to the positivist paradigm approach which through the criterion of reliability, ensures that the same outcome is guaranteed under similar circumstances (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The researcher has engaged in memoing every decision made during the research process, to enhance the dependability of the research (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). This clearly shows how the researcher arrived at the interpretations made and ensures that findings genuinely emerge from the data gathered (Nieuwenhuis, 2016).

Confirmability refers to the extent to which findings are not influenced by researcher bias and can be confirmed by others in the same field (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). For this study, the researcher provides a clear audit trail of the research conducted, which can be used to trace the research step-by-step. The researcher upholds the ethics of the research study by providing signed, initialled, or messaged screenshot attached consent forms before the research is conducted. This also means that the researcher has ensured that consent is given by every participant to include information about their views while maintaining the anonymity of participants in the research study with the use of pseudonyms for each participant.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Concluding answers to the research questions

1. **How does Ster-Kinekor define their movie theatre experience in the new digital age?**

Ster-Kinekor defines their movie theatre experience through their tagline “great moments at their greatest”. This is their way of delivering a superior experience highlighting the magic of cinema. It is driven by the brand’s need to create big emotion and big experiences for all moviegoers who visit any Ster-Kinekor.

2. **What are moviegoers' current perceptions of Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience in the new digital age?** Moviegoers believe that cinemagoing at Ster-Kinekor cinemas is more immersive and allows for better shared experiences. The value received in watching a movie at a cinema does not compare to the convenience of using streaming services and therefore, this brand remains relevant in the new digital age.

3. **Is there a disconnect between how Ster-Kinekor positions their movie theatre experience and moviegoer’s perception of a movie theatre experience against Keller’s brand equity model?"** No, there is no disconnect because the research reveals that Ster-Kinekor invests a lot in creating the best customer journey for moviegoers this is aligned to what moviegoers believe to be one of the most important factors in deciding to visit the cinema again. As discussed in section 4.3, chapter 4, moviegoers have also complimented Ster-Kinekor’s efforts to revamp and upgrade cinemas to maintain that excitement when visiting the cinema.

5.2 Implications of findings for future practices

Implications of this study include influences on the brand, Ster-Kinekor’s future communication regarding new ticket prices, catering and loyalty club offerings. It would be advisable to place a greater emphasis on creating shared experiences in an effort to get moviegoers to join their SK Club loyalty programme, book movie tickets or when purchasing catering meals.

Moviegoers will also start to place greater value in the movie going experience and understand that it is incomparable to any other form of entertainment.

Added to this, the result of Covid-19 regulations would require a new way of creating shared experiences for moviegoers as this is something Ster-Kinekor needs to highlight to moviegoers in future.

5.3 Conclusions

In conclusion, the sources of Ster-Kinekor's brand equity lies in the level of customer service the brand provides for moviegoers. To moviegoers, great customer service means a seamless customer journey, quality seats, friendly staff, quality cinematography and great people to share the experience with. This is aligned to Ster-Kinekor's dedication to deliver the magic of cinema in a superior way, and in so doing creating great moments at their greatest.

5.4 Ethical Consideration

Ethical concerns for this research study, regarding research participants include:

- **Confidentiality of the participants:** To maintain ethical standards and integrity of the research, the researcher protected the privacy of all participants by the use of a password that only the researcher had access to.
- **Consent of participants:** Participants signed informed consent forms that detail the purpose of the research study, the expected duration of the participants required participation, and the interview or focus group process.
- **Covid-19:** The researcher opted to do virtual meetings on Zoom to ensure the safety of all participants and adherence to lockdown regulations.

Ethical concerns for this research study, regarding the researcher include:

- **Ensuring objectivity:** The researcher did not allow personal values or beliefs to alter the collection and analysis of the data. The researcher remained objective throughout the research process and refrained from changing the research findings to suit the researcher.

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APPENDIX A: Ethical clearance

15 July 2020



Student name: Christine Monique Pearl Da Silva

Student number: 19331273

Campus: Vega Bordeaux



Re: Approval of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Strategic Brand Communication Proposal and Ethics Clearance



Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.



Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and we hereby provide you with ethical clearance to proceed with your data collection.



There may be some aspects that you still need to address in your proposal. If this is the case, feedback will be provided to you in writing. You will need to address these aspects in consultation with your supervisor.

In the event of you deciding to change your research topic or methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure that all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued in such instances.

We wish you all the best with your research!

Yours sincerely,

Helena van Wyk
Supervisor

Dr. Helena van Wyk
Campus Postgraduate
Coordinator – RESM8419

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Inanda Greens
54 Wierda Rd West
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Group Company Secretary: KN Piki

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CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.

The Independent Institute of Education Pty Ltd, its associated companies, employees, contractors, representatives and directors, are indemnified against all claims which may arise in connection with or as a result of any loss, damage or injury to you as a researcher entering into an agreement with a participant in the course of your research, provided that such loss, damage or injury is caused by the gross negligence or intentional act(s) or omission(s) of The Independent Institute of Education Pty Ltd, its associated companies, employees, contractors, representatives and directors.

Wishing you the very best of luck.

Yours sincerely,



Campus Postgraduate Coordinator – RESM8419

Dr. Ria van Zyl

National Post-graduate Coordinator – IIE-Vega

The Independent Institute of Education

APPENDIX B: Research consent form

EXPLANATORY INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

To whom it may concern,

My name is Christine Da Silva and I am a student at Vega. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Helena van Wyk about what defines a movie theatre experience and the perceptions held by moviegoers about a movie theatre experience in the new digital age. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the existence and relevance of cinemagoing in the new digital age as well as reveal what elements of a movie theatre experience, from a brand and customer perspective, contribute to building brand equity.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because the researcher is interested in (for moviegoers) how you experience cinemagoing today and (for cinema brand experts) how you define a movie theatre experience for your brand. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to (for moviegoers) invite you to participate in a focus group which will take place at the Vega school JHB campus or virtually via Zoom or Microsoft teams, depending on the availability of all participants; (for cinema brand experts) I would like to invite you to participate in an interview which will take place at Ster-Kinekor Head Office or virtually via Zoom or Microsoft teams depending on your availability. The meeting will take up 1hr30min of your time and an outline of questions to be asked can be shared with you in advance upon request.

You can decide whether to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer interview questions.

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your (cinema brand expert) knowledge of the movie theatre experience/ (moviegoers) experience of cinemagoing in South Africa. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

Your inclusion in this study is purely voluntary.

If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so.

Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

Will my identity be protected?

I agree to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my lecturer and I will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BA Honours in Strategic Brand

Communication. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my lecturer should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Christine Da Silva

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The contact details of my Research Supervisor are as follows:

Helena van Wyk

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

X

Research Participant

Consent form for participants

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Christine Da Siva about (for moviegoers) my movie theatre experience/ (for cinema brand experts) my knowledge of the cinema industry and how Ster-Kinekor has remains relevant in the new digital age.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
5. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

Signature

Date

Consent form for audio-recording recording

I, _____, agree to allow Christine Da Silva to audio record my interviews as part of the research about (for moviegoers) my movie theatre experience/ (for cinema brand experts) my knowledge of the cinema industry and how Ster-Kinekor has remains relevant in the new digital age.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
2. The recordings will be stored in a password protected file on the researcher's computer.
3. Only the researcher and the researcher's supervisor will have access to these recordings.

Signature

Date

EXPLANATORY INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

To whom it may concern,

My name is Christine Da Silva and I am a student at Vega. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Helena van Wyk about what defines a movie theatre experience and the perceptions held by moviegoers about a movie theatre experience in the new digital age. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the existence and relevance of cinemagoing in the new digital age as well as reveal what elements of a movie theatre experience, from a brand and customer perspective, contribute to building brand equity.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because the researcher is interested in how you define a movie theatre experience for your brand. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to invite you to participate in an interview which will take place virtually via Zoom depending on your availability. The meeting will take up 1hr30min of your time and an outline of questions to be asked can be shared with you in advance upon request.

You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your knowledge of the movie theatre experience. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

Your inclusion in this study is purely voluntary.

If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so.

Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

Will my identity be protected?

I agree to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my lecturer and I will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my lecturer should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Christine Da Silva

[REDACTED]

The contact details of my Research Supervisor are as follows:

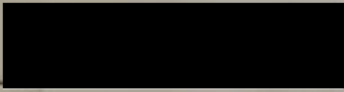
Helena van Wyk

[REDACTED]

X

Research Participant

Consent form for participants

I,  agree to participate in the research conducted by Christine Da Silva about my knowledge of the cinema industry and how Ster-Kinekor has remained relevant in the new digital age.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
5. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

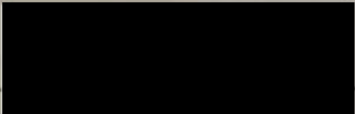
Signature



Date

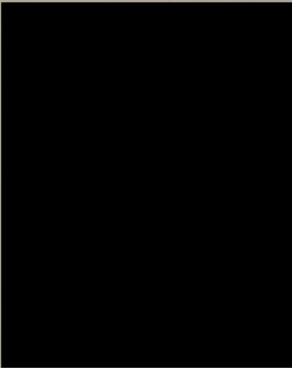
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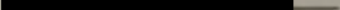
Consent form for audio-recording recording

I, , agree to allow Christine Da Silva to audio record my interviews as part of the research about my knowledge of the cinema industry and how Ster-Kinekor has remained relevant in the new digital age.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
2. The recordings will be stored in a password protected file on the researcher's computer.

 and the researcher's supervisor will have access to these


Date

15/8/2020

EXPLANATORY INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

To whom it may concern,

My name is Christine Da Silva and I am a student at Vega. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Helena van Wyk about what defines a movie theatre experience and the perceptions held by moviegoers about a movie theatre experience in the new digital age. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the existence and relevance of cinema going in the new digital age as well as reveal what elements of a movie theatre experience, from a brand and customer perspective, contribute to building brand equity.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because the researcher is interested in how you define a movie theatre experience for your brand. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to invite you to participate in an interview which will take place virtually via Zoom depending on your availability. The meeting will take up 1hr30min of your time and an outline of questions to be asked can be shared with you in advance upon request.

You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your knowledge of the movie theatre experience. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

Your inclusion in this study is purely voluntary.

If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so.

Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

Will my identity be protected?

I agree to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my lecturer and I will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my lecturer should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Christine Da Silva [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

The contact details of my Research Supervisor are as follows:

Helena van Wyk [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Consent form for participants

I, Lynette S Chivaviro, agree to participate in the research conducted by Christine Da Siva about my knowledge of the cinema industry and how Ster-Kinekor has remained relevant in the new digital age.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.

5. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

[Redacted Signature]

18 July 2020

Signature

Date

Consent form for audio-recording recording

I, [Redacted], agree to allow Christine Da Silva to audio record my interviews as part of the research about my knowledge of the cinema industry and how Ster-Kinekor has remained relevant in the new digital age.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
2. The recordings will be stored in a password protected file on the researcher's computer.
3. Only the researcher and the researcher's supervisor will have access to these recordings.

[Redacted Signature]

18 July 2020

Signature

Date

EXPLANATORY INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

To whom it may concern,

My name is Christine Da Silva and I am a student at Vega. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Helena van Wyk about what defines a movie theatre experience and the perceptions held by moviegoers about a movie theatre experience in the new digital age. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the existence and relevance of cinemagoing in the new digital age as well as reveal what elements of a movie theatre experience, from a brand and customer perspective, contribute to building brand equity.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because the researcher is interested in how you experience cinemagoing today. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to invite you to participate in a focus group which will take place virtually via Zoom or Microsoft teams, depending on the availability of all participants. The meeting will take up 1hr30min of your time and an outline of questions to be asked can be shared with you in advance upon request.

You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your experience of cinemagoing in South Africa. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

Your inclusion in this study is purely voluntary.

If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so.

Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

Will my identity be protected?

I agree to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my lecturer and I will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Helena van Wyk [REDACTED] [REDACTED]


[REDACTED]
Rese

.

Consent form for participants

I, [REDACTED] agree to participate in the research conducted by Christine Da Siva about my movie theatre experience.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.

3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.

4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.

5. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

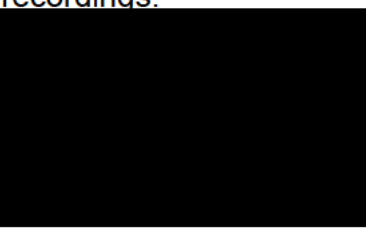
Sig  _____
Date 18/7/2020

Consent form for audio-recording recording

I,  agree to allow Christine Da Silva to audio record my interviews as part of the research about my movie theatre experience.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
2. The recordings will be stored in a password protected file on the researcher's computer.
3. Only the researcher and the researcher's supervisor will have access to these recordings.

 _____
Date 7/18/2020

EXPLANATORY INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

To whom it may concern,

My name is Christine Da Silva and I am a student at Vega. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Helena van Wyk about what defines a movie theatre experience and the perceptions held by moviegoers about a movie theatre experience in the new digital age. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the existence and relevance of cinema going in the new digital age as well as reveal what elements of a movie theatre experience, from a brand and customer perspective, contribute to building brand equity.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because the researcher is interested in how you experience cinema going today. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to invite you to participate in a focus group which will take place virtually via Zoom or Microsoft teams, depending on the availability of all participants. The meeting will take up 1hr30min of your time and an outline of questions to be asked can be shared with you in advance upon request.

You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your experience of cinema going in South Africa. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

Your inclusion in this study is purely voluntary.

If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so.

Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

Will my identity be protected?

I agree to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my lecturer and I will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my lecturer should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Christine Da Silva

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The contact details of my Research Supervisor are as follows:

Helena van Wyk

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

X

Research Participant

[REDACTED]

Consent form for participants

I, [REDACTED], agree to participate in the research conducted by Christine Da Siva about my movie theatre experience.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.

3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.

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Signature

____19 July 2020_____

Date

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Signature

____19 July 2020_____

Date

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Christine Da Silva

[REDACTED]

The contact details of my Research Supervisor are as follows:

Helena van Wyk

[REDACTED]

X

[REDACTED]

Research Participant

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My contact details are as follows:

Christine Da Silva [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The contact details of my Research Supervisor are as follows:

Helena van Wyk [REDACTED]

X [REDACTED]

Research Participant

APPENDIX C: Concept document

Research Purpose	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/ Sources	Literature Review - Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Anticipated Findings	References
The study aims to evaluate the reinvention of Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience in South Africa, and how this has shaped perceptions of consumers' cinemagoing in the new digital age. The researcher will use this information to further illustrate how Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience contributes to building brand equity for Ster-Kinekor.	1. How does Ster-Kinekor define their movie theatre experience in the new digital age? 2. What are moviegoers' current perceptions of Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience, as this will determine how a movie theatre experience is perceived in relation to how Ster-Kinekor positions their movie theatre experience and how this contributes to building brand equity for Ster-Kinekor.	The researcher will thus, unpack the sources of brand equity that make up Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience, as this will determine how a movie theatre experience is perceived in relation to how Ster-Kinekor positions their movie theatre experience and how this contributes to building brand equity for Ster-Kinekor.	Keller and Aaker's brand equity model	Theme 1: Cinema in the digital age Theme 2: Brand equity Theme 3: Customer Experience Theme 4: Ster-Kinekor	Paradigm: Interpretivism Epistemology: knowledge and processing of data, based on interaction with participants from a brand and customer perspective Ontology: formulates opinions based on those interactions with participants selected for the study Axiology: researcher will ensure valuable methods of research and data collection within an interpretivist paradigm assessing the credibility, transferability, and dependability of the research study	Qualitative Population Moviegoers & Cinema brand industry experts Parameters Based in Johannesburg Moviegoers: Ster-Kinekor Facebook & Instagram page followers: visit cinema once a month Cinema brand experts: Ster-Kinekor Marketing department	In-depth, structured interviews and focus groups	Trustworthiness of data collection and analysis – credible sources of information The four criteria that the qualitative researcher will consider when in pursuit of a trustworthy study are: credibility, transferability, and confirmability.	The need for immersive experiences is what draws people to movie theatres.	Refer to research proposal document
Research Problem	Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Sampling	Data Analysis Method(s)	Limitations	Anticipated Contribution	
This research study aims to understand how Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience ensures that positive feelings are linked to the brand and in so doing the researcher will determine how this contributes to brand equity	To define Ster-Kinekor's movie theatre experience in the new digital age. To uncover the perceptions held by moviegoers about a movie theatre experience in the new digital age. To illustrate whether there is a disconnect between Ster-Kinekor's positioning of a movie theatre experience and moviegoers' perception of a movie theatre experience using Keller's brand equity model.	The digital age The cinema industry Brand Equity Keller's Consumer based brand equity model Aaker's brand equity model	Keller's brand equity model			Purposive Sample size: For interviews: 2 industry experts For focus groups: 4 participants	Thematic content analysis Basic steps to data analysis was be used to prepare and code data	Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face meetings went against lockdown regulations. Therefore, Zoom was used as an alternative tool to conduct interviews.	The research study will reveal what elements of a movie theatre experience, from a brand and customer perspective, contribute to building brand equity for Ster-Kinekor.	

APPENDIX D: Screenshots of invitation to participate in the focus group

