Internship Report

At

B – Black Belt Pharma Brand Builder

Submitted to

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(MBA) in Pharmaceutical Management

By

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Introduction

I interned with the B-Black Belt Brand Builders founded and led by Mr. Vivek Hattangadi. This organization is known for providing strategic support and training to pharmaceutical professionals, helping them become better brand builders. The institute is respected for promoting patient-centered marketing strategies and effective communication methods tailored to the Indian pharma market.

As part of my internship, I worked on a dissertation titled:
"Adaptive Brand Positioning in Complex Healthcare Markets: Building Multi-Dimensional Value Propositions."

This project focused on understanding how healthcare brands—particularly in India's hospital and pharmaceutical sectors—can balance the conflicting expectations of key stakeholders, namely patients and investors. With India's healthcare market expanding rapidly yet unevenly, the study addressed the need for brands to adopt adaptive strategies that align with both emotional and financial value dimensions.

Through real stakeholder interviews (patients and investors) and extensive secondary research from leading sources like NITI Aayog, Bain & Company, and Statista, the project analyzed how brand perception is shaped in both urban and rural contexts. Patients prioritized trust, affordability, and accessibility—often guided by personal experience, doctor recommendations, or word-of-mouth. In contrast, investors focused on scalability, financial performance, and regulatory compliance. Despite different priorities, both groups viewed brand reputation as critical to decision-making.

The core of the project involved designing a dual-value proposition framework to guide healthcare brands in crafting tailored marketing strategies. Case studies from Apollo Hospitals, and Cipla were analyzed to demonstrate how successful Indian healthcare companies manage stakeholder alignment through transparent messaging, digital transformation, and strategic branding.

Ultimately, this research emphasized that adaptive brand positioning—grounded in stakeholder theory and brand equity models—can be a powerful strategic tool. It allows healthcare organizations to navigate India's complex healthcare environment by remaining patient-centered while also investor-attractive.

Objective of the Internship

To analyze the branding strategies of healthcare organizations in India and evaluate how they can develop stakeholder-specific value propositions. The focus was on understanding the differing expectations of patients and investors and creating an adaptive brand positioning framework that balances trust, quality, affordability, and financial performance to ensure long-term sustainability and competitive advantage in a complex healthcare environment.

Organizational Profile

The B-Black Belt Brand Builders led by Mr. Vivek Hattangadi, is a pioneering platform dedicated to training, mentoring, and consulting in the field of pharmaceutical branding and marketing. With decades of industry experience, Mr. Hattangadi has established IHBC as a leading name in scientific branding practices, especially for India's growing pharmaceutical sector.

The organization is focused on transforming pharmaceutical marketing by promoting human-centric strategies that go beyond conventional promotion techniques. Instead of relying only on product features and data, IHBC emphasizes emotional connection, patient-oriented messaging, and value-based communication — reflecting the principles of Kotler's Human-to-Human (H2H) marketing.

They work across various areas, including skill development for brand managers, branding strategy formulation, academic collaborations, and creating engaging marketing content. It also supports young professionals and MBA students through hands-on training, insightful projects, and guided internships that prepare them for real-world challenges.

Mr. Hattangadi's approach combines deep marketing knowledge with storytelling and empathy — helping pharmaceutical companies connect better with healthcare providers and patients. Under his leadership, IHBC continues to influence how brands are built, positioned, and sustained in the healthcare space.

Key Activities and Projects Undertaken

- Conducted comprehensive secondary research on India's healthcare ecosystem including hospitals and pharmaceutical sectors.
- Reviewed government and private industry reports from NITI Aayog, Bain & Co., ZS Associates, and others to assess healthcare market trends.
- Designed and administered real interviews for patients and investors to explore perceptions and decision-making drivers.
- Developed a mixed-methods research framework, combining stakeholder interviews with thematic coding and industry data analysis.
- Identified branding strategies used by Apollo Hospitals, Cipla and mapped them to stakeholder-specific value expectations.
- Created a dual value proposition model to help brands align patient trust with investor appeal.
- Structured and drafted the final dissertation using integrated insights from qualitative and quantitative research.

Key Learnings from an Internship

- Gained a deep understanding of the **complexity of stakeholder dynamics** in healthcare—balancing empathy with profitability.
- Learned how branding influences **trust, loyalty, and investment decisions** in both patient and investor communities.
- Strengthened skills in **stakeholder analysis, brand equity modeling, and adaptive strategy development**.
- Enhanced my ability to use **marketing theory in real healthcare contexts**, particularly in relation to value-based care and strategic brand positioning.
- Improved research capabilities in **data collection, qualitative coding, and framework development**.
- Acquired firsthand insight into **how Indian healthcare brands adapt** to digital transformation and regulatory pressures.

Professional Development

This internship greatly enhanced my professional capabilities. I developed the ability to assess brand perception challenges from both clinical and financial standpoints, and to propose marketing strategies rooted in stakeholder alignment. It also taught me how to combine academic research with business strategy, preparing me for future roles in healthcare marketing, strategic planning, or brand management. My interactions with mentors and healthcare professionals sharpened both my communication and problem-solving skills.

Conclusion

The internship offered a 360-degree view of healthcare branding in a rapidly evolving Indian market. By bridging academic insight into stakeholder reality, I was able to propose a practical, scalable framework for adaptive brand positioning. The final model empowers healthcare brands to build trust-driven patient engagement while also meeting the expectations of investors and regulatory bodies—making it relevant not just for today's market but for the future of healthcare branding strategy in India.