

TURKISH BRANDS

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country
is as rich
as its
brands.

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GARANTI
BANKASI

"Valuing the Individual, Respect for the Profession": Garanti Bank

The Brand in Brief

Garanti Bank has been engaged in branding activities at an ever-increasing rate since 1983. Behind this commitment lies the Bank's belief in the strength of delivering the same quality of service at every single branch. Such an understanding of the importance of a uniform service has increased the amount of trust felt towards the Bank, making branding efforts pay off.

Garanti Bank's first steps in the branding process began with the principle, "first comes the individual." A long and intense training period began at every level, mainly because the Bank was a firm believer in "the need to win the heart of the customer with each and every member of personnel, everywhere and at every moment in order to be able to become a brand in the services sector." The Bank was aware of the fact that it could only be as strong as its weakest employee. In order to become a brand, the Bank's entire workforce needed to become "responsible" individuals. This could only be achieved by spending an incredible amount of time and effort on internal communications, as well as perfecting the art of motivating human resources equitably and without discrimination.

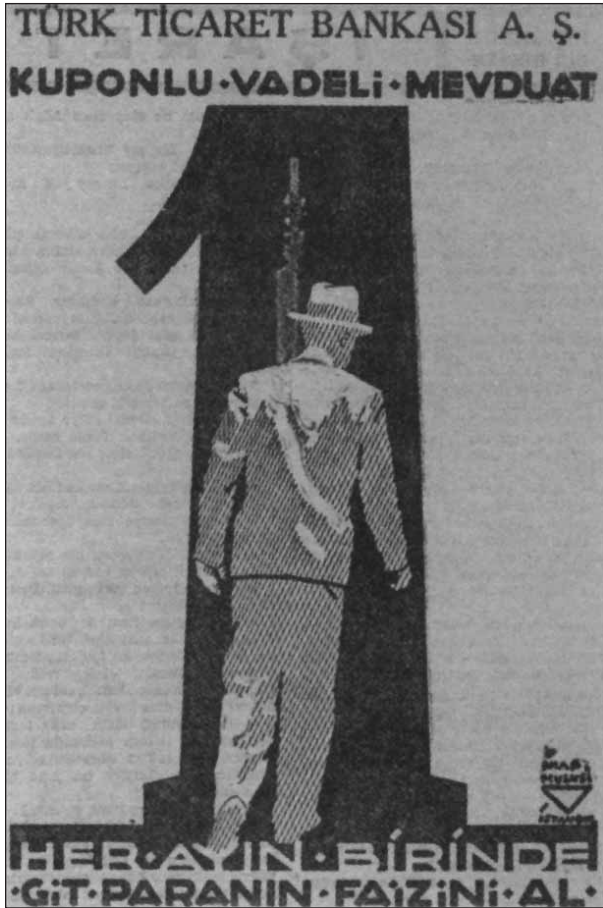
The Marketing Department was established as early as the 1980s, as a reflection of the importance the Bank attached to branding efforts. Before starting to communicate brand values to customers, the Bank made sure that the product promises and services they delivered were identical at every branch. Only then did they start to announce new products to their customers. The brand ties which had been established with customers were further boosted by the creation of Garanti Payment Systems (in Turkish, Garanti Ödeme Sistemleri) in 1999.

Garanti Bank has maintained crystal-clear communication with consumers which is easy to grasp and which is different from what its competitors are saying. It has created a warm yet professional working environment for all its personnel and extended the same relationship to all its advertising agencies which it has sustained through the years. When one wins over the heart of an individual, whether it be the customer, a member of personnel or the agency, one actually increases one's own brand value. This is purely a matter of the heart, and cannot be enforced! Here, then, is the branding story of Garanti Bank, which is full of creative solutions...

A Short History of the Bank

Garanti Bank was founded in Ankara in April 1946 by Kemal Sümer and twelve other businessmen with a founding capital of 2.5 million TL. The headquarters were moved to İstanbul in 1950, and in seven years the total number of branches reached 22. Cabir Selek, one of the founding partners, remained on the Board of Directors for many years. In the 1970s, 56% of the Bank's shares were transferred to Koç Group and a further 33% stake was acquired by Sabancı Group. However, in the early 1980s first Koç Group and then Sabancı Group sold their shares to Doğuş Group, which meant that by 1983, 100% of Garanti shares were owned by Doğuş .

Two Garanti Bank posters created by well-known Turkish graphic designer İhap Hulusi in 1950s (Orhan Kolođlu, Reklam Tarihi, Reklamcılık Vakfı Yayınları, p. 321)



Garanti Bank's shares were publicly quoted in 1990, and the Bank became the first corporation, selling its shares abroad in 1993. Subsequently, 25.5% of Garanti's shares were acquired by General Electric in December 2005. Doğuş Group had 27.54% of shares while the remaining 46.96% were publicly owned at April 2006. The Bank holds the "Europe's best bank" vision and embraces a "we" culture, with humbleness, innovation, and openness to change and knowledge as its corporate values.

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"The Brand that Listens to its Customers"

Ergun Özen joined the Bank in 1992 in the Treasury Department, and was promoted to Deputy Managing Director in 1995 and Managing Director in 2000. He defines Garanti Bank as "the brand that listens to its customers" and highlights the added value that the "Right Customer Line" (customer complaint line) has brought to the Garanti brand over many years. He continues,

- We don't do things 'in spite of the customer'; on the contrary, we listen to their wishes first. If you are a good listener, open to new things and respectful of opinions, good ideas come to you first. One of Garanti's most powerful assets is its ability to recognize good ideas at an early stage and to then quickly put these original ideas into practice. ▶

Doğuş Group

Doğuş Group was founded by Ayhan Şahenk in 1951. It was originally active in the construction sector, but today is dominantly active in the service sectors, under F. Ferit Şahenk's leadership. The Group has more than fifty companies in sectors with high growth potential such as finance, automotive, construction, tourism and the media. In 2005, the Group's total assets added up to 12.6 billion USD and revenues totaled 3.4 billion USD (www.garanti.com.tr, website accessed on 17 June 2006).

"You Can't Become a Brand Just by Saying So"

Garanti Bank was ready to celebrate its 40th anniversary in 1985. In the Bank's 1985 Annual Report, Doğuş Investment PLC's Chairman of the Board Ayhan Şahenk wrote,

- Our Bank's total savings have increased the most amongst all private banks and we have already started working on increasing the capital, in line with article 3,182 of Turkish Banking Law. ▶

1985 had been a successful year for Garanti: the Bank's total savings had increased by 81% to 256.6 billion TL. However, 1986 was recorded as being an even better year: Garanti's interest rates for deposit accounts were as high as 40% and total savings had increased by 54%, yielding higher profits for the Bank (Garanti Bank 1986 Annual Report, p. 11).

İbrahim Betil, Managing Director of Garanti Bank between October 1986 and April 1991, explains how he considered the branding and marketing efforts as a whole.

- First of all, branding efforts create extra responsibilities for the corporation and need to be sustainable. You need to meet customers' high quality expectations precisely and give perfect after-sales service. Furthermore, you need to deliver these standards to your customers in a consistent way and in every situation. It's not enough to give decent service from time to time, or only once. ▶

Therefore the Bank started to give top priority to training cashiers and those personnel who had direct contact with the customer. In other words, before the brand started to communicate with its consumers, first the service supplied had to be improved. Only then could the brand promise be the same as the delivery of those services.

"For Corporate Integration, Training for All"

Between 1986 and 1991, extensive training began which included the Managing Director, deputies and branch managers. In these training sessions, led by Human Resources Deputy Managing Director Saide Kuzevli, a considerable amount of time was spent explaining what to do in each division in order to become service-oriented towards internal as well as external customers (İbrahim Betil, *Hafiften Bankacılık, Ana Yayıncılık, 2002, pp. 127-36*).

İbrahim Betil, explains why they felt such a need for training as follows:

- People don't trust a corporation for its logo, nor for its window displays. Trust is felt towards the people who work there. We need to exhibit a whole performance as an institution in order to gain that trust. I always make an analogy between branding and putting bricks on top of each other. Piling bricks requires a lot of energy and takes a long time. But when you pull a brick from the bottom of the pile, you can easily level a wall or even demolish a building. The human element in Garanti was very strong: it was not a group of people put together randomly. They felt personally responsible for the Garanti name and felt part of the corporation. They didn't use to have regular managers' meetings: I think we conducted the first one of the series in 1987. As a recently appointed MD coming from outside the Bank, I had to have face-to-face communication with other managers. This was not something I could do in a memo; I had to look at their faces and talk to their hearts. These managers cared about Garanti so much that they questioned me at our first meeting before some 300 or 400 people. For me this was the best indication of how responsible they felt. We had a team of people, ready to get motivated. When you motivate people, no one can hold you back. If you are able to give a consistent quality of service at every branch then this increases consumer trust, and then you can start building your brand. ▶

To sum up, in those years Garanti's philosophy of "for corporate integration, training for all" received positive results.

Akın Öngör worked at Garanti Bank between 1987 and 2002, and was Managing Director between 1991 and 2000. He explains the development of the brand as follows:

- When we first started working at Garanti, the workforce was very friendly and amicable, but it was not totally qualified. Even between 1991 and 1992, within a total workforce of 6000 people only 29 knew English, the average age was 51, and only 21% were university graduates. We kept saying that the Bank needed to be service- and customer-oriented. However, it was up to the branch personnel to make our customers experience the actual quality of service. The market research we had conducted indicated that in the consumers' mind, going to the bank was as horrific as going to the dentist! So we decided to increase our training, which resulted in Garanti's training programs reaching 3-3.5 times the sector average. Furthermore, we asked Beymen Group to prepare a video on personal hygiene and grooming. It was compulsory for all of the workforce to watch these videos during office hours, and to enable this we sent videos to every branch. ▶

"Training Programs are Like Products for Us"

Ergun Özen, speaking about Human Resources at Garanti, says,

- Today we have a team of people who come to work with great anticipation every day, and who have a total understanding of our corporate culture. ▶

He adds,

- We attach the greatest importance to on-the-job training, and tailor the training programs to meet our own needs. They are no different to the products that we offer to our customers. ▶

The comments of all three managing directors on the subject of training are interrelated and complementary, each stressing the importance of being customer-oriented and delivering the brand promise fully. The methods applied to attain this goal continued to develop at Garanti over time.

A Consistent Look

The Garanti logo and the color and fonts it used varied until the 1980s. It was then decided to standardize the logo, with any exceptions to the rule made clear to all related parties. As **Akın Öngör** explains,

- In those years, our logo, letterhead and business cards were all different. İbrahim Betil started the standardization job and insisted on making it work. Sometimes you would see our logo in white on a red background, or our green clover by itself. Our corporate identity was defined in detail and a consistent look was attained back in those years.

Setting up the Marketing Department

The Marketing Department was set up back in 1986, with the aim of marketing credit to a few major sectors. In its early days, the team comprised 35 people who provided support for corporate banking services.

The first good news came at the end of that same year. Due to its high ratio of capital to total assets and its liquidity power among other major private banks, Garanti Bank was listed as the number one bank in Turkey by Euromoney in its December 1986 "Turkish Banking and Finance" supplement. In the same listings in 1984, Garanti had reached only fifth position. The Euromoney results were communicated to consumers with the help of a press advertisement.

Naciye Günel, Garanti Bank's Advertising and PR Manager, gave us information about the brand in the 1987-2006 period from both the advertiser's and the advertising agency's perspective. (Günel began working with Garanti as an Account Executive at Ajans Ada in 1987. Subsequently she moved to Garanti Bank in 1993.)

Euromoney analizlerinde
A SUPPLEMENT TO EUROMONEY DECEMBER 1986

EUROMONEY

RANKING BY THE KEY PERFORMANCE RATIOS: BIG PRIVATE BANKS

Bank	1983	1984	1985	1982	1981
Garanti	4.59	4.79	4.31	2.21	3.35
İş Bankası	4.29	4.56	4.86	2.86	2.59
Yatırım Bankası	4.29	3.75	5.23	1.91	1.94
Bank of Commerce	3.53	4.51	6.31	4.27	1.42
Bank of Turkey	3.59	5.83	3.89	4.49	2.47

NET CAPITAL/TOTAL ASSETS (%)

Bank	1983	1984	1985	1982	1981
Garanti	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
İş Bankası	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Yatırım Bankası	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Bank of Commerce	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Bank of Turkey	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1

RATIO GROUP: LIQUIDITY (%)

Bank	1983	1984	1985	1982	1981
Garanti	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
İş Bankası	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Yatırım Bankası	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Bank of Commerce	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Bank of Turkey	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1

Garanti'nin güçlü sermaye yapısı

GARANTI BANKASI'na duyulan güven, somut verilerden, sağlam rakamlardan kaynaklanır.

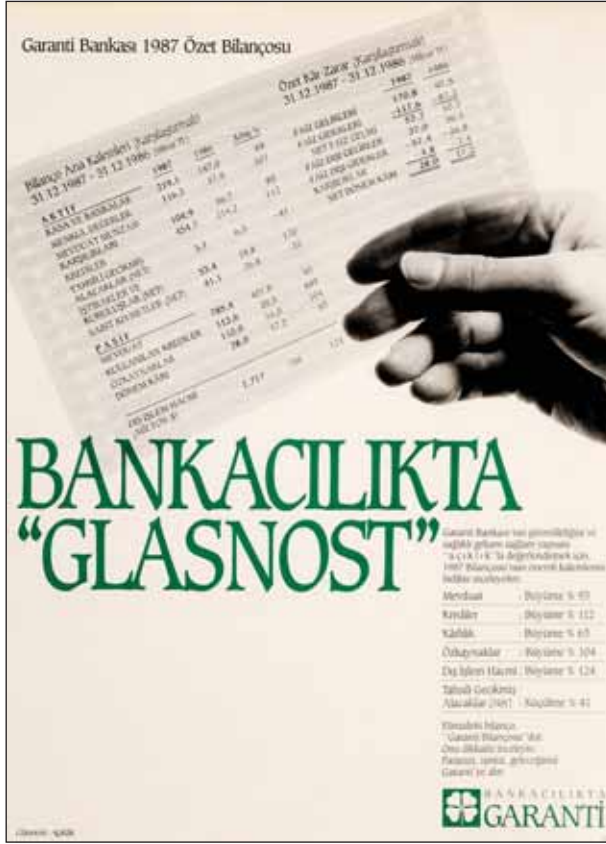
Finans dünyasının saygın uluslararası dergisi EUROMONEY'nin Aralık 1986'da yayınladığı "Turkish Banking and Finance / The Markets Matters" ekinde yer alan analizlerde iki önemli gerçek bir kez daha vurgulanmıştır. Garanti Bankası, büyük özel bankalar arasında özsermayenin toplam aktiflere oranının yüksekliği ve likidite gücü açısından Türkiye'nin "bir numaralı" bankasıdır.

Bu veriler, Garanti'nin güçlü sermaye yapısının ve güvenilirliğinin göstergelerinden yalnızca ikisidir.

Banka seçiminde güven unsuru sizin için önemlidir. Garanti ile çalışın. Paranız, işinizi, geleceğinizi Garanti'ye alın.

BANKACILIKTA GARANTI

The Euromoney ranking was turned into an advertisement in 1987. The title reads, "Garanti's powerful capital structure" (Ajans Ada)



The Beginning of Automation

On the cover of the Bank's 1986 Annual Report we see Garanti's original logo, the clover leaf, but this time in a modern, digitized form. This alteration was an indication of Garanti's desire for modernization, and an early sign of the new era that the Bank was about to enter.

In those days, when the word "automation" was mentioned people thought of fax machines. As [İbrahim Betil](#) explains,

- Our target was one fax machine for every branch.

- We were aiming to obtain financial data on a monthly basis. It was very important for branding activities to know where we were, and for setting our new route. If we were able to get the monthly results, we could make our strategic decisions accordingly, such as what our level of total savings was, how much our non-cash loans had increased by, and so on. Using these results, we would decide on what to communicate to the consumers.

[Akın Öngör](#) also mentions the importance given to the Bank's technological infrastructure during his time in management, adding,

- We kept talking about consumer wants and wishes, but it was impossible to deliver these promises without the help of technology.

Öngör states that first of all they had to convince Hüsni Erel, a "technology wizard" as he calls him, to be part of their team. He says that Erel altered and improved the service content delivered, and elevated Garanti Bank to the number one position in technology. Similarly, Garanti made sure that the changed and improved service content and service quality was explained to consumers directly through clear messages in advertising. The first communication of the series was the Bank's "On-line/Real-Time" advertisement.

[Ergun Özen](#) also states that Garanti's major competitive edge was its capacity to merge its highly technology-driven infrastructure with its highly qualified human resources, concluding:

- Technology has always created solutions for us. It has enabled us to put all our new projects into practice. In other words, it is our most powerful asset after our HR.



"You Shouldn't Keep Quiet!"

Ibrahim Betil stresses the importance of consumer communication after having made sure that all preparations are complete on the product side. As he says,

☛ If you keep quiet, no one will notice what you have accomplished. ☛

Put simply, you first need to make sure that the product/services are ready—in other words, "do"—and then communicate what you have done—in other words, "say." Garanti always adhered to this simple formula. In addition, the Bank never pretended to do anything that it was not actually doing, and never intentionally misled consumers.

Being a Model Advertiser Through Good Times and Bad

Being a model advertiser through good times and bad can be simply translated as having an effective advertiser/advertising agency relationship. Although team members including the Managing Director have changed over the years, one can see consistency and continuity in Garanti's communication efforts from the start. The fact that Garanti Bank worked with Ajans Ada from 1987 to 1993, with Y&R/Reklamevi from 1994 to 2003 and then with Alametifarika is the best proof of this.

From 1987 to 1993, Ajans Ada received its agency briefs directly from the top management, which enhanced brand communication efforts. In Betil's words,

☛ If the agency gets the brief directly from the Managing Director, they are able to see the top management's vision....You can't delegate certain functions, and Advertising and Public Relations fall into this category....If you don't assign enough importance to communication, you can't turn the corporation into a brand. ☛

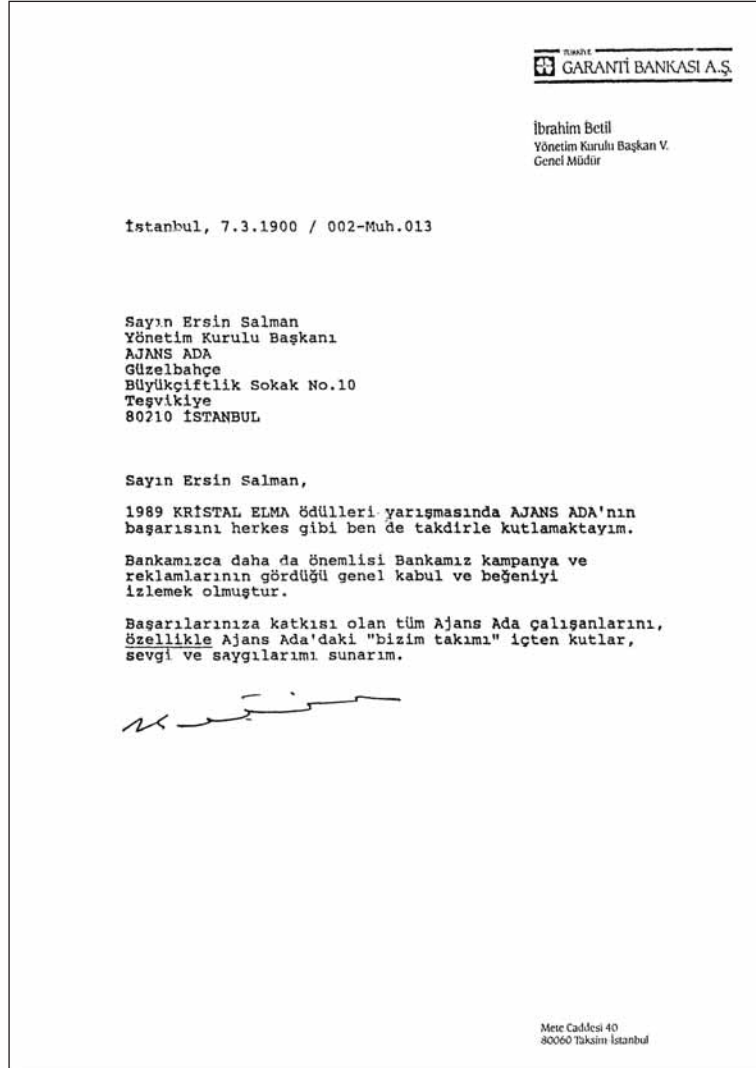
The Managing Director used to be personally involved in everything from branch openings to the interior design of the branches, in addition to expecting the agency to find solutions to all communication problems since they really were true partners through good times as well as bad. As Betil explains,

☛ I worked very closely with our ad agency. I even questioned the shade of our logo that was used in one of our branches. If I recall correctly, I postponed the opening of one branch because the logo was a different shade of green to what it was supposed to be. ☛

Laughing, he adds,

☛ If you are so concerned about branding activities, you can't become a brand with different shades of green used everywhere. ☛

Although the Managing Director made a great issue out of the logo color, expressing his concerns openly to the ad agency, he warmly welcomed Ajans Ada's success in the 1st Crystal Apple Creative Awards in 1989, and extended his sincere congratulations with a cordial note sent to the agency.



İbrahim Betil's letter to Ajans Ada, congratulating the team on their success at the 1st Crystal Apple Creative Awards in 1989

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We can see that both the agency and the advertiser shared a sense of responsibility for the brand. Nobody said, "it's not my responsibility." Their mutual aim, which was very simple, was to produce quality work. Whoever found a problem tried to correct it. Here is an anecdote from a Managers' Meeting held in Side, Antalya, back in 1988 which well illustrates this point: "Şahap Er, Doğan Şahin, Hasan Tüzün and Arcan Balcıoğlu were the awesome team at the meeting. On the Tuesday night two days before the meeting, all the name tags were checked. The checking finished at 2 a.m. Later the same morning at 7 a.m., Arcan Balcıoğlu was woken up by Şahap Er who told him that the clips holding the name tags also needed to be counted! (This early morning anecdote would often be retold among the Ajans Ada and Garanti teams. Each time Şahap Er reiterated the same answer: 'What if we hadn't let you know how many more of those clips we needed before the meeting had started?')"

(Yonca Dergisi, Issue 23, 1998, p. 26)

The working style is not "we are the bank, they are the agency." Rather, the philosophy "they are our agency" seems to form the backbone of the relationship. Ad agencies have believed in what Garanti sets out to do. Similarly, Garanti continues to believe and trust in all three agencies that they have worked with. This is a true example of how the saying "valuing the individual, respect for the profession," which is used in all of Garanti's internal communications, comes to life in practice.

1991-2000: "Change Management"

When Akın Öngör was appointed as Managing Director in May 1991, he began approaching the training issue from a different perspective. As a first step, the entire personnel from all the Istanbul branches were invited to Ayhan Şahenk Sports Center. All sat on the benches. Öngör stepped on to the playing field and explained what he intended to do, stage by stage. Then he said, "Now it's your turn." At first nobody uttered a word, then slowly they started talking. Subsequently these meetings were repeated in all regions, quarterly, bi-annually and annually. Everybody from branch managers to office boys was invited because everybody's opinion mattered. This tradition continues today.

After these meetings, 61% of all personnel suggestions were put into practice. The average age of Garanti Bank's workforce dropped from 51 to 30.5, the ratio of university graduates increased from 20% to 80%, and the ratio of personnel with a foreign language rose to 35-40%. As an example of the system, the suggestion that women personnel be allowed to wear trousers and the idea of non-smoking branches were raised in these meetings and the final decisions were voted among all personnel before being put into action. The workforce had been motivated. After having observed that they were being listened to, their sense of belonging increased even more. Now they were all responsible! All this verbal communication was put down on paper and was subsequently published by the Garanti Bank Human Resources Department under titles such as "The Principles of Ethics," "Coherent Values," and "A Guide to Management," etc. While all this was taking place, Garanti Bank had managed to decrease the workforce from 6,000 to 3,800 and reduce the number of branches from 310 to 150 between 1991 and 1994, without losing the workforce's motivation.

Müteri	Garanti Bankası	M. Tümüleri	Naciye Günel
Ürün / Hizmet	Sonbahar Kampanyası	Tarih	25.7.1991
Konu		Etilen Başlık	ND

Seyin Akın Öngör'ün Garanti Bankası ile ilgili felsefesini özetlemek:
"Ödak noktasız müşteri olmalı, müşteriye en iyi hizmeti vererek memnun etmeliyiz. Bunu yaparken müşterinin ihtiyacına göre hizmet geliştirmek ve çeşitlendirmek gerekli. Türkiye'deki genel yaklaşım "product-oriented" bir yapıda: Ürün geliştiriliyor ve o ürünün müşteriye nasıl satılacağı düşünülüyor. Bu yanlış. Bankalar "market-oriented" kuruluşlar olmalı ve müşterinin ihtiyaç duyduğu/duyacağı hizmetleri de sunabilmeli.
Garanti Bankası belki bunu tam olarak yapan bir banka olmayabilir ama uzun vadede hedefi bu."
Sonbahar Kampanyası, yukarıda özetlenen hedefe doğru bir adım olacağından, belli bir ürüne dönük değil, imaja yönelik olacak. Bir anlamda, son kampanyamıza konu olan "Özenli, kaliteli, tatmin edici hizmeti su içer gibi vermek" vaadini koruyacağız. Bir bankadan beklenecek bankacılık hizmetlerinin, olması gerektiği gibi özenli verildiğini anlatacağız. Müşteriye önem veren özenli ve kaliteli hizmetten bahsedeceğiz.
ZAMANLAMA
2/8 genel değerlendirme, 9/8 müşteri sunum.

The client brief on "Being Customer Focused," written by Naciye Günel at Ajans Ada in July 1991 (Ajans Ada)

Heading Towards "Every Customer is a Star"

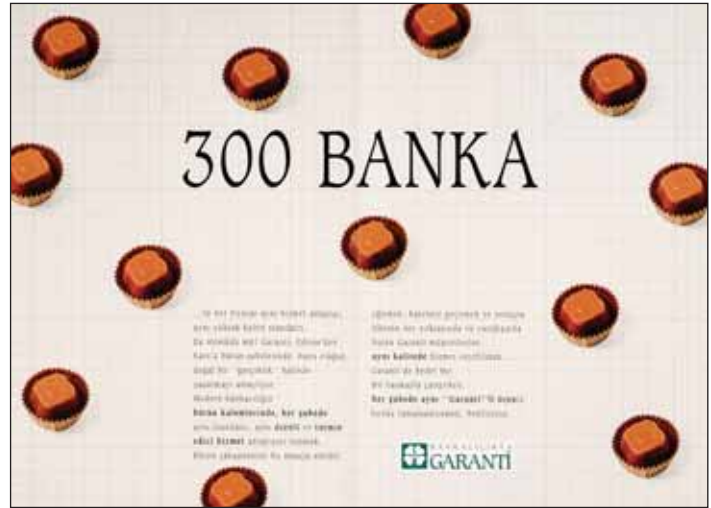
In 1991, after extensive training had been conducted at all levels, the corporation was ready to make strong statements about its brand. Garanti Bank gave Ajans Ada a brief saying that it was time to shift from being "product-oriented" to being "customer-oriented."

In response to this brief, Ajans Ada created the "Every Customer is a Star" campaign. The agency not only mentioned stars in the campaign but also used stars as a symbol in different forms of communication, from internal to POP materials. It was only 1991 and Garanti was already avidly implementing integrated marketing communications.

The Bank started to communicate its customer-oriented approach with the "Every Customer is a Star" campaign, which won Ajans Ada the Crystal Apple in the finance sector press ads category at the 3rd Crystal Apple Creative Awards in 1991.

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The "Every Customer is a Star at Garanti" press ad (Ajans Ada)



Standardized services in all branches were communicated through a press ad titled "300 Banks" (Ajans Ada)

Another press ad titled "The Garanti workforce runs 100 meters in under 10 seconds" was created by Ajans Ada in order to motivate its internal customers. Before running this ad, the management asked the workforce whether or not they would be able stand behind their words. After the management received the approval of branch personnel, the ads were aired.

Retail banking products were also being gradually introduced during this time. One such ad was created by Ajans Ada using an illustration by internationally known Turkish illustrator Gürbüz Doğan Ekşioğlu.



Retail banking products were introduced with the help of a press ad titled "20 Ways to Make Life Easier" (Ajans Ada)

A Sad Separation

A sad separation was waiting for Garanti Bank. In 1993, just as branding activities were accelerating, Ajans Ada and Merkez Ajans merged to create a new agency, Adam Tanıtım. After the merge, the new agency ended up having two bank clients overnight. As it was not possible to work with two clients under the same roof, the efficient partnership between Ajans Ada and Garanti, which had continued since 1986, had to come to an end. Both sides were very sad. Actually they were so sad that, Ajans Ada ran a "goodbye" ad for Garanti, something which was not often seen in the sector.

The illustration by Gürbüz Doğan Ekşioğlu which was used in Ajans Ada's "goodbye" ad for Garanti (with special thanks to G.D. Ekşioğlu and Z. Karafakioğlu)



Garanti's New Agency Pitch

As a result of this split, Garanti had a pitch for choosing a new partner agency. Initially ten agencies were contacted. The top three agencies which were shortlisted were given a pseudo-brief and asked to come up with a creative solution. Öngör says,

- They were all very creative. However, we were particularly impressed by Y&R/Reklamevi's presentation. They understood us very quickly and adapted themselves to our sector. ▶

Akın Öngör commends the efforts of Serdar Erener and his team at Y&R/Reklamevi. Furthermore, he reiterates that Naciye Günel, Ergun Özen and the managing director deputies on the Garanti side were great catalysts throughout the entire process. The two agencies who did not get the account were remunerated for their creative work. This was probably a first in the Turkish advertising sector, just like many other firsts that would be realized during the Garanti-Y&R/Reklamevi partnership.

Sector Firsts in the Garanti-Y&R/Reklamevi Partnership

In all the creative work undertaken by Y&R/Reklamevi, content came first. Garanti had news to share with its customers, and the agency communicated the message in a most creative way. **Serdar Erener**, talking about Garanti's previous branding efforts, groups Garanti's communications in the Y&R era into three stages:

- Our first stage of advertising was based on explaining the advantages of Garanti's balance sheet. In those days, retail banking products were not known and most of the communication was done on corporate banking. Akın Öngör always emphasized that Garanti's focus was on banking having a 'lean' balance sheet. Garanti was making money from banking, not from Treasury bond purchases. This information formed the backbone of our communications. ▶



The ad for Garanti's September 30th 1995 balance sheet, titled "Customers' share, Treasury's share," for which Y&R received a distinction in the 8th Crystal Apple Creative Awards (Y&R/Reklamevi)

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September 1993 was a turning point for Garanti: the Bank received a long-term "Grade A" rating from Capital Intelligence, the world's renowned rating company. This made Garanti the only multi-branch Turkish bank with a Grade A rating. The meaning of the A was explained in an internal communication which said, "Garanti is among the most respected finance corporations with its service quality and financial power."

Following the internal communication, the same message was shared with customers with the help of two black-and-white TV commercials titled "Calm Harbor" and "Acrobat." Garanti continued to receive a Grade A rating for four years in a row.



"Grade A": an example of internal communication

Reaching a Wider Audience through Television



Shots from the "Water-Seller Boy" TV commercial (Y&R/Reklamevi)

Serdar Erener says, "We won Garanti's trust after this ad. In that sense, 'The Water-Seller Boy' was the agency's 'A.D.'" Y&R received the top prize in the banking sector TV category at the 7th Crystal Apple Creative Awards in 1995.

Serdar Erener, talking about their second stage of communication with Garanti, explains:

It was a time when TV commercials were the star and Garanti Bank was becoming a legend;

and adds,

During this time, with the help of TV, the Bank's corporate culture and its basic principles were communicated to the masses.

The ads mentioned in the following pages were all aired during this period.

Although "The Water-Seller Boy" was aired in 1994, it is still vividly remembered in 2006. The message given in the commercial was: "We believe in quality service. Better service means more customers. Our profits are invested into our future business. Over the last three years, Garanti has added its profit to its capital. Today our capital is 4 trillion TL." Ongör explains the driving force behind the film as follows:

There were two misconceptions that were dominating the agenda at that time. One was that banks were making a lot of profit. The other one was that banks did not have enough capital. Therefore at Garanti we wanted to communicate that we were adding our profit to our capital, which is actually reflected on to the customer, via better service. And we said this in a very courageous way.

Naciye Günel says that changes at the Bank in the 1990s were realized in order to be able to understand the customer better, and hence perform more efficient and effective segmentation. Customer communication also reflected these changes. Furthermore, from 1995 to 1997 the Bank's infrastructure became more efficient with the help of the Consumer Banking Effectiveness Strategy (BEST), which led Garanti to be more competitive on the retail banking side. For instance, in 1995 the new ELMA (Excess Liquidity Management Account) was introduced to consumers, and the idea was promoted via a creative solution. Similarly, as Garanti Bank's services were increasing and the service quality had improved, a TV ad called "Anything Else?" was aired in 1995, and the name shortly became a catchphrase.



The ELMA ad (in Turkish, elma means "apple") (Y&R/ Reklamevi)

The 1995 "Anything Else?" commercial (Y&R/ Reklamevi)



With the "Anything Else?" commercial, a totally customer focused period started at Garanti. This was communicated to customers in an uncomplicated way. The film also received the Crystal Apple for TV category at the 8th Crystal Apple Creative Awards in 1996.

A Business Process Redesign project was realized by IBM Consultancy in 1997. As a result of this work, the corporation's efficiency increased by 30%. At the same time, Garanti Bank started internet banking with the launch of its website, www.garanti.com.tr. The Bank continued to introduce new services to its customers in 1998, and during this period advertising investments were shifted to alternative distribution channels. Garanti had started its "ŞubeSiz Bankacılık" ("branchless banking") era. While getting prepared for 2000, the Bank continued its investments in technological infrastructure, leading the Bank to develop new products in addition to pioneering the delivery of faster and more efficient services to customers. "Branchless banking" grew quickly, and at 2006 comprised internet banking, Alo Garanti, Paramatik, CepBank, Wap and Palm services. For instance, the CepBank service (cep is short for mobile phone in Turkish) which was introduced in 2006 enabled customers to transfer money to another person's bank account by sending an SMS via a mobile phone, even if the sender did not have an account at Garanti. With this application, Garanti became the first bank in the world to initiate money transfers via mobile phone.

The "I Hate It/Branchless Banking" TV film aired in 1998. This commercial received the Crystal Apple for TV in the banks and banking services category at the 11th Crystal Apple Creative Awards. (Y&R/ Reklamevi)



At the end of the 1990s, the idea of "branchless banking" was communicated to consumers with the TV commercials "Free" and "Hello Garanti." However, it was with the "I Hate It" TV film that the branchless banking concept was fully explained. Immediately following this came communication about internet banking. As a result of these innovative steps, the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) presented the Garanti Call Center with its Committed to Excellence in Europe award in 2004.



Internet banking advertisement (Y&R/ Reklamevi)



"The World's Best Internet Bank" (Alametifarika)

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In addition to other awards received by the Bank, Garanti's internet branch was chosen as the "World's Best Internet Bank" in the investment services category by Global Finance in 2006.

That year, 25% of all Turkish internet banking users preferred www.garanti.com.tr.

During the late 1990s the Bank decided to add a third dimension to the Garanti logo, giving it a more dynamic look. In 2000 the logo was revised and took on its current form.

The evolution of the Garanti logo



Garanti's advertiser-agency relationship, which had already set an example to the Turkish advertising sector, continued during the Garanti-Y&R/Reklamevi years. When Akın Öngör retired as Managing Director, Y&R/Reklamevi planned an unusual goodbye gift for him: they compiled all of Garanti's communications that had been realized during the 1994-2000 period and turned them into a book called Bank Advertising, dedicating it to Öngör. [Erener](#) comments,

« We mirror our advertisers' behavior. If they give us courage, we act daringly; if they are hesitant, we produce timid advertising. Although the Garanti Bank managers we worked with all had different characters, the Bank's communication was always consistent. »

The Birth of Garanti Payment Systems

Garanti Payment Systems was founded in June 1999. Its Managing Director Mehmet Sezgin explains that the idea for the company was initiated by Ayhan Şahenk. After a meeting with American Express top executives, Şahenk came to the conclusion that the most efficient way of managing credit cards would be to form a separate company for the cards. This is mainly because credit cards have a more direct link with the consumer, which involves specific risks and requires a separate operational network. Mehmet Sezgin, who joined the team during this time, mentions that their credit card know-how had been acquired with their "Open Card" experience and through their co-operation with a chain retailer, YKM, and their retail card, adding that these actually sped up their own work.

2000 and After

In 2000, Ergun Özen was appointed Managing Director of Garanti Bank and Garanti's interest in brand communication continued at top management level. Serdar Erener states that the third wave in Garanti's communication was the investment made in credit cards. After Garanti Payment Systems became a separate company, almost all communication was shifted to these products.

©Nükhet Vardar



The Bonus Family were introduced to Turkish consumers in summer 2000. This cute family loved shopping, and reiterated their opening line of "What shall we buy for free?" at every opportunity. The campaign earned Y&R/Reklamevi the Crystal Apple in the multi-media campaign category at the 12th Crystal Apple Creative Awards.

The Launch of Garanti Payment Systems' Products

In April 2000 the Bonus Card was launched. The card had an EMV (European Master Visa) chip with multi-branded chip-based attributes, and offered both per purchase installment payments and cashback rewards. The chip also enabled various CRM (Customer Relations Management) applications. It was easy for consumers to collect and spend the rewards they earned—called "Bonus" in Garanti jargon. Furthermore, the card's consumer advantage was always communicated in real money terms, as opposed to an abstract promotional value. Although the use of credit card rewards had been limited to just 20% in the past, the use of Bonus points went up to 78–84% due to the fact that the Bonus Card explained the advantages of use clearly to its consumers.

Mehmet Sezgin states that they were very particular about two aspects of their communication. The first was continuity:

Continuity comes first for us. We have never ever supported our brands for just two months and then left them with their own future, giving only POP support via our branches.

The other was visibility. In order to give the Bank an effective level of continuity and visibility, the budget was calculated and then spent entirely, with no budget cuts, right in the middle of the campaign. Communication also aimed to appeal to the consumer's five senses. In order to have a different identity in the eyes of consumers, Garanti Payment Systems started using "Bonus green" (although it was a green similar to the one used in the Garanti logo, it was still easily noticeable and could be easily differentiated). The original music used in the campaign became familiar to consumers within a short period of time. There was a long debate on whether to have the same or different brand name to that of the Bank. Elvan Bilge Garanti Payment Systems' Deputy Managing Director responsible for marketing and branding, emphasizes that the importance of having a separate brand name for the card has been appreciated more, especially in recent years. She adds that in 2006, when member shops were issuing co-branded cards, combining the Bank's logo with the retailers' own logo would have been much harder than using the Bonus logo. In its first Bonus advertising brief, Garanti asked for a communication

which would address the whole family and highlight the card's cash-based reward aspect, in addition to being a commercial with high recall which incorporated attention-getting attributes.

As a result of this brief, Y&R/Reklamevi presented the Bonus Family. This rather cute family was slightly overweight, had frizzy hair and loved to shop. They got the attention of Turkish consumers right away, so much so that "Bonus hair" became a catchphrase with the general public. After a while, in order to be able to address a wider audience, GPS decided to let go of the family but continued to use the Bonus hair, which was given to different cast, whoever they might be. The color, music and hair are still being used at October 2006. After its launch in April 2000 and within the next 13-14 month period including the economic crisis in 2001, the Bonus Card reached one million card users. Even in that harsh period, communication did not cease and all shopping malls were covered in

Bonus green (For more information, see Nükhet Vardar, "Sadakat Nasıl Somutlaşır?" Biraz Cesaret, Reklamcılık Vakfı Yayınları, 2003, pp. 135-57)

A nice surprise was waiting for the football club manager after he had paid Bonissimo's transfer money using his Bonus Card: Bonissimo arrived on the pitch with a little Bonissimo running next to him! Here the advantage of the card is communicated in a most tangible way. The campaign was awarded a Crystal Apple in the TV category at the 16th Crystal Apple Creative Awards in 2004.

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Shots from the "Bonissimo" TV commercial (Y&R/Reklamevi)

The Launch of Shop&Miles

Garanti Bank started its most notable segmentation work with the introduction of the Shop&Miles card in October 2000. For the first time, free airline tickets were being offered as a reward, targeted at higher-level income groups who flew frequently. This is a good example of co-branding undertaken by Turkish Airlines and Shop&Miles.

Flexi: the World's Most Flexible Card

Following the Shop&Miles launch, the Flexi Card was introduced to the market in February 2006. Flexi was a tailor-made card which allowed consumers to choose the card's interest rate, the Bonus points received, the number of installments, promotions, the annual card fee and even the image on the card, all according to their individual needs and wishes.

In other words, with Flexi the control of the product was left totally to the consumer. With the consumer creating his own card, Garanti became a pioneer in the micromarketing area.

Therefore with the help of three main credit card brands, Garanti was able to address different segments and also build different brand characteristics parallel to these segments' attributes. For instance, according to a positioning study undertaken by Plus Remark Research in 2005, Bonus was considered to be "warm," "fun," and "self-confident," whereas Shop&Miles reflected more "business life" and "elite" characteristics. Therefore it was decided that Flexi would invest more in "proud" and "leader" attributes. With this strategy, while each card developed its own territory, the cards did not cannibalize each other's segments.

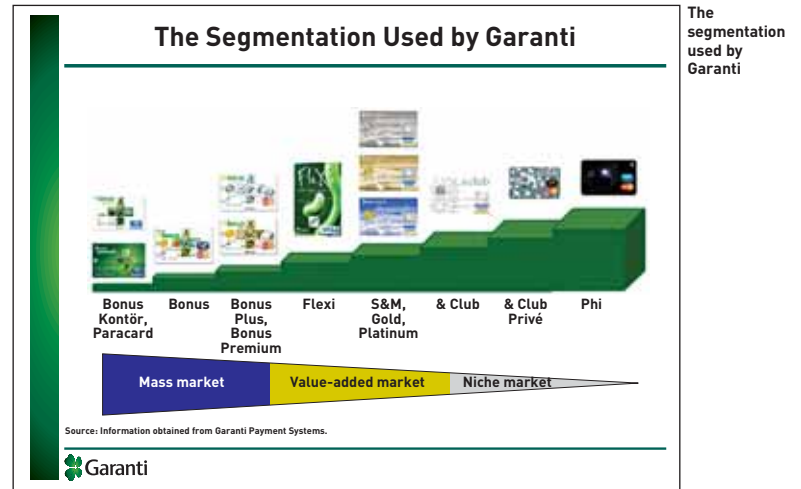


The "The Original" campaign for Shop&Miles (Alamettifarika)



The Flexi campaign (Alamettifarika)

Bonus always delivered its message effectively while incorporating a high dose of fun. Bonus commercials have always given the consumer a warm feeling, making them smile regardless of how many times the TVC has been viewed. Good examples are the "Bonissimo" commercial or the "Beauty and the Beast" TVC, which cast famous Turkish songwriter Aysel Gürel and famous model Deniz Akkaya. With the help of such effective communication, Bonus card-holders reached five million within the first half of 2006.



The segmentation used by Garanti



Garanti 25

Shots from the "Beauty and the Beast" TVC (Alametifarika)



The 1915 Miss World, Aysel Gürel (a well-known Turkish songwriter), is actually happy with her figure. However, she asks the cosmetic surgeon to lift the tip of her nose slightly. After the operation, we see her emerging as a perfect model (Deniz Akkaya). The surgeon explains the outcome by saying, "You had accumulated a lot of Bonus points!" We then hear Deniz Akkaya exclaim, "Is this much Bonus really possible?" as she turns to the camera with a surprised look.

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Shots from the
"12 Giant Men"
TV film
(Y&R/Reklamevi)



Garanti 27

"12 Giant Men"

was another Y&R/Reklamevi campaign. The "Hu-ha, 12 giant men" jingle is still vivid in Turkish consumers' memories. This campaign won a Silver Apple in the multimedia campaign category at the 15th Crystal Apple Creative Awards in 2003.

Garanti and Community Relations

Garanti has also been at the forefront of corporate responsibility campaigns since the early 1980s, giving support to the preservation of wildlife and to different educational programs, as well as promoting the arts and other cultural events which are in line with the brand's identity and which add value to its brand equity. Garanti continued to support similar projects in 2000, one of its principles being "to continuously increase, in a significant way, added value to society and to the environment." In sponsorship activities, Garanti does not restrict its role only to giving financial support, it prefers to choose supported projects like a "business partner," taking part in every step of the project and adding extra value. As a result of these principles, due to long-term continuous support given by Garanti, many sub-brands such as "Garanti for Nature," "Garanti Jazz Green" and "12 Giant Men" have been created.



In order to be able to give full support to culture and the arts, Garanti has started founding its own institutions. As an example, the Platform Garanti Contemporary Art Center was inaugurated in September 2001 during the 7th International İstanbul Biennial, and has since hosted many cultural events. Similarly, Garanti Gallery (GG), founded by Garanti Bank and located in Beyoğlu, the heart of İstanbul's most cosmopolitan area, continues to have an exclusive focus on the exhibition of design work which is discussed throughout the world. In 2005, Garanti took its community relations one step further to the international arena by becoming the main sponsor of "Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600-1600," an exhibition held at the prestigious Royal Academy of Arts in London, UK in early 2005 which highlighted the artistic and cultural heritage of the Turks.

Garanti Bank was one of the main sponsors of the exhibition "Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600-1600," which was held at the Royal Academy of Arts in London, UK in early 2005



In all Garanti's social campaigns, whether mentioned here or not, the common denominator has always been an act of responsibility towards society as well as improving the life quality of large groups of consumers.

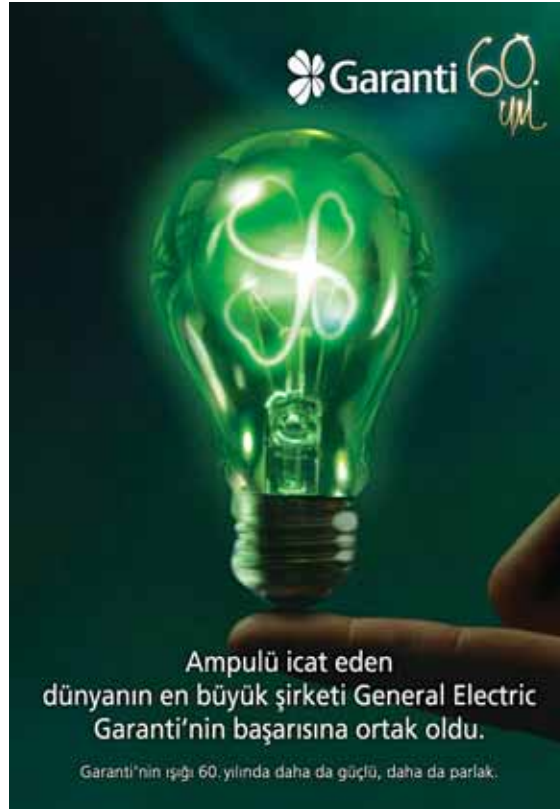
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Examples of Garanti's Retail and Commercial Products

In order to be able to meet consumers' changing financial needs throughout their different life stages, Garanti put together various service packages aimed at different target groups. For example, Mini Bank was launched in order to protect children's futures, "g'bank" enabled 12- to 18-year-olds to use their weekly allowance simply with the help of new technology, and Unibank was created to meet the different financial needs of university students. Garanti's use of different service packages to target various groups has not been restricted to retail products, but also expanded into commercial banking. For example, in 2002 new products came to life under the SME (Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise) Banking umbrella.

Garanti and the GE Partnership

Garanti entered a different period in December 2005, exhibiting its brand value from an another perspective. Under the leadership of Managing Director Ergun Özen, **25.5% of Garanti Bank's shares were sold to General Electric for 1,556 billion USD.** This important step, taken in the name of the Garanti brand, was communicated to consumers in March 2006.



The Garanti and GE merger was communicated to the consumer in the most direct way through the use of the well known symbols of both brands: GE's bulb and Garanti's clover.

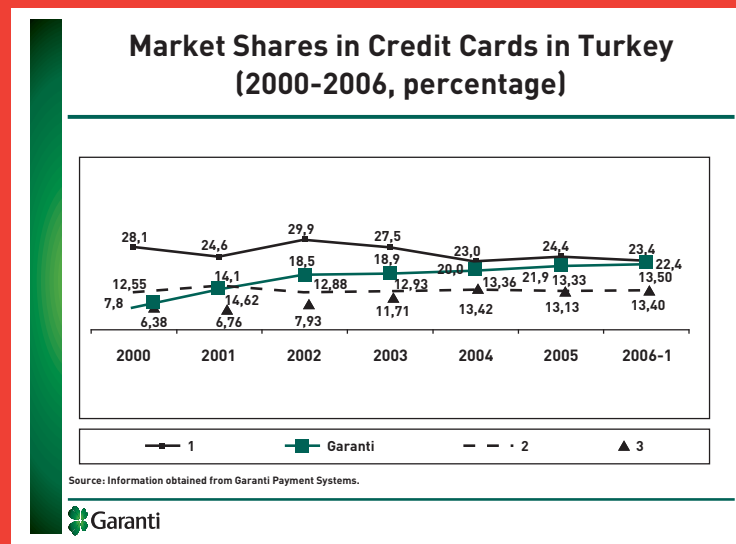
We could consider the awards, facts and figures and the consumer perception research results as the success criteria for Garanti. However, stating Garanti's market success with the help of the following four figures would be simplest: Garanti's market value was 150 million USD in the 1990s, and this value rose to 5 billion USD in 2000, 6.6 billion USD in 2005 and finally 7.7 billion USD in December 2005. Any measure of success mentioned is bound to be shadowed by these figures. Furthermore, the fact that the "Garanti" brand stands alone (without the need for the category name) could also be considered as the most unprecedented sign of brand value.

Ergun Özen reiterates that the most important factor behind Garanti's success is its ability to adapt quickly to the low inflation business environment which has recently materialized in Turkey. Furthermore, the fact that the Bank's activities have been shaped by consumer needs for a long time and that Garanti's profitability comes only from banking also need to be considered as success factors. Özen describes his views in the 2005 Annual Report as follows:

-
- Our Bank had record results in 2005, reaching 36.5 billion YTL balance sheet value, 708 million YTL net income and 1.6 billion YTL free equity.
-

Similarly, while Garanti was the number three brand in 2000 with a 7.76% valued market share in the credit card market, it increased its market share to 22.42% and became the number two brand within the first quarter of 2006. (The leading brand's market share was 23.38%.) Furthermore, the Bonus Card program was chosen as the "Longest Sustained Success Programme" at the 5th MasterCard European Affinity & Co-Branding Conference in 2004, and has also received other prestigious awards.

Market shares in credit cards in Turkey, 2000-2006 (percentage)



As was mentioned earlier, 25.5% of Garanti shares were sold to General Electric in December 2005. GE is a world giant with annual revenues of 150 billion USD and 750.3 billion USD total assets in 2005. Ergun Özen mentions the quality of the workforce at Garanti as a major factor behind the share transaction, and proudly adds, "GE have been repeatedly telling us at every opportunity that they have not seen such a qualified workforce all within the same company, for the last ten years."

Ferit Şahenk, expressing his views on the Garanti-GE partnership, says that under the Garanti logo they have even bigger dreams.

-
- The Garanti logo will not change. In other words, the GE name will not come next to it.
-

says Şahenk, highlighting the importance of the brand's value and proving what the Garanti brand means to them ("Şimdi Biz de Banka Arıyoruz", Hürriyet, 27 October 2005, p.13). Furthermore, Ergun Özen shows the way forward for the brand by saying,

“In the future the mortgage market is going to expand further. It is clear that we are going to make use of GE’s expertise in this respect, as well as in consumer credit, leasing, commercial finance and in project finance. We are going to add these advantages to our current strong infrastructure.”

[“Garanti’de İmzalar Atıldı”, www.ntvmsnbc.com, 26 August 2005; website accessed on 17 October 2005].

Ergun Özen mentions that their 438 branches at the end of 2005 will reach 500 at the end of 2006, enabling Garanti to open more new branches especially in the eastern part of the country, and that their plans extend well beyond the borders of Turkey. He concludes by saying that they are in complete harmony with GE to become a regional stronghold, and adds,

“We intend to transfer what we have accomplished in Turkey to other countries,”

highlighting Garanti Bank’s current strong position with the help of all its brands.

In 2006 Garanti Bank was also named “Turkey’s Best Bank” for the seventh time by Euromoney and received the Euromoney Award for Excellence. Ergun Özen, in a speech made while receiving the award, gave credit where credit was due in front of a large audience by saying, “the real reason behind our success is our workforce and their commitment to quality at all times.”

Garanti celebrated its 60th anniversary on June 24, 2006 at İstanbul’s Olympics Stadium. The celebrations were attended by both its domestic workforce and personnel traveling all the way from China, Holland, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania and Russia, making a combined total of 12,000 members of Garanti personnel.

Garanti’s first quarter financial results for 2006 are like early indicators of its 60th anniversary celebrations. Ergun Özen states that Garanti’s strategy has been based on

“long-term sustainable growth,”

and adds that the real value of a bank is reflected in the total loans it gives. Hence, he says, Garanti’s total cash and non-cash credits rose to 29.2 billion YTL in 2006. He makes his last point in regard to brand value by expressing his view that

“Garanti is experiencing its brightest period in its 60-year history.”

December 2005
Updated October 2006

RETAIL BANKING

Consumer Loans

- Five-Minute Loans
- General Purpose Loan
- Mortgage
- Auto Loans
- Home Equity Loan
- Overdraft
- Doctor’s Office Loans

Investment Products

Deposit Accounts

Standing Orders

Excess Liquidity Management Account (ELMA)

Expatriate Banking

Life-Cycle Banking

- Mini Bank (children’s banking)
- g’bank (teenage banking)
- Unibank (university student banking)

Insurance

Private Pension

Credit Cards

- Bonus Card (Bonus Plus, Bonus Premium, Bonus Trink, Bonus Transparent, Bonus Kontör, Bonus Gift Card)
- Flexi Card
- American Express Card
- Shop&Miles
- &club Card (&club Privé, Phi Card)
- Commercial Cards (Bonus Business, Corporate Card, Shop&Miles Business, Supplementary Card)
- Virtual Credit Cards (Bonus Virtual Card, Shop&Miles Virtual Card)

Bank Cards

- Paracard

ONLINE AND TELEPHONE BANKING

- Online Banking (www.garanti.com.tr)
- 444 0 333 Alo Garanti
- Garanti Paramatik
- CepBank
- Garanti Wap
- Garanti Palm
- Şifrematik
- Cepşifrematik

PRIVATE BANKING

SME BANKING

COMMERCIAL BANKING

CORPORATE BANKING

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- Serdar Erener
- Naciye Günal
- Zeynep Karafakioğlu
- Akın Öngör
- Ergun Özen
- Mehmet Sezgin

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