MARLBORO

Marlboro has been defined as the world’s best selling international cigarette brand (Hafez and Ling 2005). Placing in at #29 on the Forbes list for the World’s Most valuable Brands (2013), it is no wonder it has such a positive global image with the brand-made icon ‘The Marlboro Man’ and Marlboro’s distinctive red packaging.

However, my own personal perceptions of Marlboro seem to differ as opposed to other young adults around the world. My initial reaction when I think of Marlboro (or any cigarette brand) is sickening, dangerous, bitter, filthy, stressful and disgusting.

Marlboro has attempted on creating a global brand identity that consumers will associate with masculinity, this branding succeeded phenomenally. In 1955 Leo Burnett established the Marlboro man that created the brand identity of masculinity with the American Cowboy trademark (The Marlboro Man 2014). Marlboro has endeavoured to connect its brand to the common values and lifestyles of its male target market through their masculine brand identity (Hafez and Ling 2005).

The brand image that I distinguish from Marlboro is significantly different to the brand identity the company wishes to portray. Australia proves to be a challenging and restricted market for Marlboro. The Australian market is often referred to as the “dark market” by the tobacco industry due to the laws and legislations of strict tobacco marketing (Carter 2006), with much of the tobacco industry being about brand image and not the actual tobacco (Robert Stumberg as cited in Schneider 2013). A recent study in Australia also showed significant decreases in cigarette consumption among individuals since the legislation has come into act (Hafez and Ling 2005). These strict laws could be the primary reasons that Marlboro has failed at succeeding in Australia, as they are not able to brand with their exciting, prominent and visible red packaging design. According to Schneider (2013) red is perceived as one of the main components of their branding, and the distinct ‘Marlboro’ typeface is one of the 10 most recognised consumer logos around the world.

It is important to note that although there are strict laws and legislations that apply to the Australian tobacco industry, this is not the only factor contributing to Marlboro’s Australian market failure. Marlboro markets within the premium tobacco category in Australia, but only has a 12.4% market share compared to its competitors (Winstanley 2012).

It has been illustrated that Marlboro has failed to market in Australia due to its “poor fit with Australian brand categories, as it lacks both the quality essence of premium and the good humour, value, and ordinary Aussie user associations” (Carter 2006). Phillip Morris International has attempted to market Marlboro with a standardized one size fits all approach. The Marlboro Worldwide Creative Review Committee (MWCRC) mission was to “ensure a shared worldwide vision for Marlboro. Consistent marketing strategy. Consistent creative/promotional execution,” (Hafez and Ling 2005). This is an ideal example of how Marlboro’s brands personality has not be perceived in a manner that the firm has designed it to due to Australia’s cultural differences.

Although it could be argued that I am not the target market for Marlboro, it is still clearly evident there are more than just laws and legislations that are stopping the Marlboro brand from becoming successful in Australia. These are due to our cultural differences that need to be tailored to by Marlboro with a contingency approach.
Reference list:


THE BODY SHOP

Your perception of Garnier is very similar to mine of The Body Shop, who are surprisingly owned by the same corporate group; L’Oreal. My outtake of the Body Shop and the picture of the brand in my mind is organic, fair trade, youth and affordable.

The Body Shop has created its highly reputable brand identity through their five core values:

1. Activate self-esteem
2. Against animal testing
3. Supporting community fair trade
4. Defending human rights
5. Protect the planet

(The Body Shop Values Report 2014)

The Body Shop prides itself on its support of its ethical business trade which is made visible through the design of the brand. “The informal initial application of the pod logo, the basic packaging, green store design, and the reluctance to change demonstrated design's compliance with the organisation's values” (Kent and Stone 2007).
It could be disputed that The Body Shop is a victim to its own success having created this effective unique proposition for promoting ethical business that has now appeared to become more ‘mainstream’ within the corporate community (The Body Shop design 2007). Kent and Stone (2007) take it further by arguing that campaigning a stance on ethical consumption is no longer a key differentiator. However, it is still evident that The Body Shops brand image successfully replicates its brand identity as its visual consistency has been maintained, which has lead to the brand sustaining its clarity and focus among its consumer base (The Body Shop design 2007).

246 words

**Note:** After writing this post my own personal perception changed of The Body Shop as I discovered that it was owned by L’Oreal. However, founder of the Body Shop Anita Roddick stated that she did “not believe that L’Oreal will compromise the ethics of The Body Shop. That is after all what they are paying for and they are too intelligent to mess with our DNA” (Blackhurst as cited in Kent and Stone 2007).

**Reference List:**


*The Body Shop design: An evolvin retail brand identity* 2007, Strategic Direction, Vol. 23 no. 11, pp.9– 11, viewed 12 September 2014, Emerald Insight


**ADIDAS**

Furthering on from what Karlee Welsh has discussed in regards to Nike’s nearest competitor Adidas, my perception of Adidas’s brand image is somewhat different to Nike. While Nike positions itself as an extremely aesthetically pleasing sport-luxe brand, my initial thoughts and perceptions of Adidas are team sports, competitive and further male-orientated.

The brand identity of Adidas is illustrated through the core values of the company; authenticity, inspiration, honesty and commitment (Manning-Schaffel 2002). The “Impossible is nothing” Adidas slogan reflects accomplishment, passion, love of the game and competition (Adidas- Impossible is Nothing n.d.). Adidas reflects team spirit through their sponsorships of the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games, aligning with their brand image (Global Brands Strategy n.d.). The Global Brands Strategy (n.d.) for Adidas outlined that they are attempting to also market to the lifestyle and fashion consumer through teaming with top designers, however, I am yet to associate Adidas with fashion in my mind.

Arguably my personal perception of Adidas brand image is degraded through the prominent use of counterfeit goods in Australia. Although there is little visible difference in the actual product of Adidas and the counterfeit product, the demographic that wears the imitation is
defined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (1986) as reducing the ‘snob’ appeal of products. However, this counterfeit culture only further demonstrates Adidas’s high popularity among consumers, with customers sacrificing quality in order to wear the label and the identified design characteristics. The same issue of counterfeit goods degrading brand reputations could also be an example for the Nike Free Run shoes, with imitation online shopping websites all over the net (Hoh 2014).

Reference List:

‘Adidas- Impossible is nothing’ n.d., *Warc database*, viewed on 12 September 2014


ROBERT CAVALLI

Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols and forms an integrated part to understanding global advertising theory (DeMooij 2013). In 2013, luxury Italian fashion house Roberto Cavalli introduced the “Just Cavalli” line that features clothing, watches, shoes, perfume and accessories (Adams 2014). The logo of the new line is the shape of a horizontal ‘H’ that is intended to represent a ‘snakebite’ and stand for ‘a sign of seduction’ (Adams 2014). However, this sign has proved to be seemingly similar to that of a sacred Sufi Muslim religious symbol that represents “Allah” and stands for unity and love (Alexander 2014).

Culture is described by DeMooij (2013) as the shared ability to recognize, decode, and produce signs and symbols. The religious emblem for Sufi Muslims had been trademarked for 27 years and used for over 150 years (Adams 2014). It is evident that many people from the Sufi-Muslim religion and non-Sufi individuals are offended by the religious symbol now being associated with sex and lust, individuals were not supportive of it as they stated that if Roberto Cavalli can change the meaning of this symbol then he could change the meaning of
any (Adams 2014). Protests have been held world-wide to create awareness of the misuse of the religious symbol. A petition also went viral that gained over 3000 signatures and a social media campaign also began with the #TakeOffJustLogo hashtag trending over multiple platforms (Adams 2014). With symbols holding such cultural importance it is no wonder why Muslims were offended by the demeaning and misrepresentation of the symbol that the logo is causing.

Despite the controversy received Roberto Cavalli has not recalled the logo, nor apologized for the offense being caused. Protestors have sent letters to Roberto Cavalli's offices but were informed that the logos did not look “anything alike” and when approached by a reporter they declined to discuss the issue (Adams 2014). It had been proposed he would likely issue an apology after the last incident of his 2004 underwear line featuring Hindu gods, which he issued an apology and stopped producing the items (Adams 2014). Unfortunately this time around Roberto Cavalli does not appear to be issuing an apology any time soon and is also being backed by the European Union trademark commission (Alexander 2014). Due to Roberto Cavalli’s lack of resolving the issue, the leader of the school of Islamic Sufism is now in the process of suing Roberto Cavalli for trademark infringement and if they win Roberto Cavalli will have to refrain from using the logo and award profit attributable to infringement as well as monetary damages (Decipher 2014). This misrepresentation of a religious emblem as a sexual clothing label only negatively represents Roberto Cavalli as a brand and the consumers who wear it.

This incident has proven to be a public relations nightmare with much negative publicity and many media impressions caused from the controversial logo. A more effective way of handling such a delicate issue would have been through a public relations initiative that involved acknowledging the problem and issuing an apology to enable loyalty and trust to remain with consumers even if they are not the target market, Greenberg & Elliott (2009) also argue that apologia can be used as a way of defending and restoring reputations during a public relations crisis.

Reference List:


BRAND CASE STUDIES


**BRANDIFF**

Electrolux is an extremely interesting case demonstrating how even English words can still hold different meanings depending on the culture. The notion that words are considered signs and symbols illustrates that a brand’s slogan can heavily influence the perception of the brand’s values that consumers relate to (DeMooij 2013). Unfortunately Electrolux is not the only brand who failed to research translation in regards to the cultural market they were targeting.

Now-defunct airline Braniff Airways launched a global campaign in 1977 to promote their brand new leather seats for their first class guests (Mueller 2008). The slogan of their campaign; “Fly in Leather” was translated to Spanish as “Vuela en cuero” which is actually interpreted in Spain as “Fly Naked” (Kelly & Zetzsche 2012). What was intended to highlight luxury, prestige and comfort for the airline ended up causing confusion among consumers and negatively influencing their brand image (Mueller 2008). For an airline it would be expected that they would have a thorough idea of global translation and cultures, but this campaign proved to illustrate quite the opposite (Wooten 2011). Although the message could have appealed to some consumers, it was far from the message they were intending to send and unfortunately the consequences of such an unintentional mistake damaged the credibility and reputation of Braniff Airways (Mueller 2008).

Similar to Electrolux, Braniff Airlines also confirmed it was an accident, however, they refused to apologise or remove the slogan stating that it was not offensive (Wooten 2011 and associated press 1987). Mueller (2008) states that the message did result in humor which I believe they could have utilized to their advantage to generate a positive brand image with a follow up campaign of ‘feeling like you are naked on our new leather seats’. However, a humorous follow up campaign could be accused of showing insensitivity to Hispanics as their initial mistranslation was accused of (Associated Press 1987). It is worthy of note that although the message was mistranslated I would have humorously and light-hearted argued that to “Fly Naked” still promoted comfort.

**Reference List:**

It is extremely interesting that such world renowned brands have easily made such consequential mistakes with global branding in relation to brand semiotics. DeMooij (2013) states that colour can have a particularly strong cultural meaning in relation to a brand's semiotics. Czinkota & Ronkainen (2007) also declare that colours have much more of a meaning in more traditional societies. Coca-Cola’s nearest competitor, Pepsi (Yahoo Finance 2014), experienced mistranslation through colour with the release of brand new vending machines across Southeast Asia.

During the 1950’s soft drink market leader Pepsi discovered colour importance with their release of brand new vending machines featuring a light “ice blue” shade instead of their traditional “regal blue” shade (Czinkota & Ronkainen 2007). Pepsi had failed to understand the cultural significance of colours and light blue’s association with death and mourning in Southeast Asia (Czinkota & Ronkainen 2007). Donna Sturgess (as cited in Wooten 2011) states that colour is the first impression that a brand has on consumers. Due to this cultural mistranslation, Pepsi experienced a significant backlash, decline in sales and lost a considerable amount of market share allowing Coca-Cola to become the dominant market leader (Czinkota & Ronkainen 2007). After extensive research it is unclear as to what Pepsi’s response to this catastrophe was (presumably they changed the vending machine colours), however, they have not been able to regain their dominant market share in Southeast Asia since (Czinkota & Ronkainen 2007).

This case illustrates that it is not just a matter of knowing what colours are effective in certain cultural markets, but also the shades of the colours (Supreme Spotlight n.d.). A simple but catastrophic mistake like this outlines how important and imperative cultural research is to ensure that mistranslation does not occur.

Reference List

The concept that cultural values define who we are affects which advertising appeals we prefer, influencing the development of global advertising strategies (Chang 2006). Hofstede (as cited in DeMooij 2013) expands on being able to differentiate cultures through gender specific values of masculinity and femininity. Hofstede (Dimensions n.d.) defines masculine societies as being assertive, materialistic and competitive, whilst identifying feminine societies as caring, modest and focusing on quality of life. The GLOBE dimension ‘assertiveness’ reflects the degree to which masculine societies are assertive, dominant and aggressive in social relationships correlating with Hofstede’s views on masculinity (DeMooij 2013). The United States has been defined by Hofstede (United States n.d.) as having a high masculine culture that thrives on success and “being the best in the field”. With guns being portrayed as something that is collectively part of America’s culture, the advertising of guns in a masculine society needs to be further explored.

Bushmaster rifles provides a perfect example as to how the United States embodies masculinity with Bushmaster’s two year long “Man Card” campaign that was distributed in 2010 (Gray 2013). The campaign that was produced by creative agency Brothers Co included print advertisements that abruptly showed a photograph of a large rifle, expanding on Hofstede’s views that “bigger is better” in a masculine society (as cited in DeMooij 2013). The copy states “Consider your man card reissued” urging men to then go to the website to complete a quiz so they can earn a ‘Man Card’ (Nolan 2012). The quiz questions involve asking men if they are able to change a flat tire and if their inner self reflects a candle, a pussycat or a rifle (Zeller 2012). Upon meeting the appropriate ‘manhood’ criteria they are then issued a ‘Man Card’ that allows them to brag about their masculinity to family and friends (Gray 2013). If anybody believes that the Man Card holder has transgressed their masculine duties then they can be revoked of the Man Card.

Although there are currently no legislations in act that prevent gun advertising, many mass media organisations refuse to promote it, as it has negative connotations for all involved.
Bushmaster has effectively used the rise of the internet to dodge informal advertising bans and target a younger audience (Gray 2013). The distasteful campaign uses a dysfunctional stereotype that judges men as hormone raging, aggressive and dominant individuals. The campaign uses the premise that by purchasing a gun you will be masculine and without one you will be inadequate. Owning a man card is also depicted as a form of status which is prominently part of a masculine culture to show success.

Hofstede (as cited in DeMooij 2013) states that individuals in masculine societies use their possession of products to represent their success and status. Bushmaster’s campaign is a great example as to how they has successfully applied the Hofstede masculinity dimension to target the American culture, however, the campaign is distasteful and creates an extremely offensive male stereotype and some could argue even encourages harmful behaviour.

Note: After the Sandy Hook Elementary massacre, Bushmaster pulled the campaign as the shooter used a Bushmaster gun to kill 27 children and teachers (Gray 2013). This raises an important issue if we should be allowed to advertise guns in a way for 'status' and 'masculinity' as opposed to the practical purposes they provide (hunting, protection etc.).

Reference List:


Coca-Cola

As you have stated Annie, people in collectivist cultures identify themselves through their groups and their social network (DeMooij 2013). China is defined by Hofstede (China n.d.a) as being a highly collectivist culture. Self image is reflected through the group they belong to and the degree of interdependence amongst a society maintains among group members (China n.d.a). Personal relationships dominate values as Chinese people are ‘we’ conscious (China n.d.a).

Coca-cola provides a perfect example of how collectivist values are part of the Chinese culture through the implementation of their 2008 Beijing Olympics television commercial. The advertisement shows a red carpet being rolled out for guests who will be coming to China for the event, to enthusiastically welcome every athlete and visitor as distinguished guests (Lin, Koroglu & Olson 2012). The Chinese people work in unity to push the red carpet past many famous Chinese landmarks and the end of the video features professional basketball player Yao Ming, followed by thousands of Chinese people running after him (Lin, Koroglu & Olson 2012).

The key components of the commercial are based on the collectivist culture of working together in a cooperative effort, teamwork, cooperation, harmony within social groups and an emphasis on interdependent relationships (Lin, Koroglu & Olson 2012). Although the commercial does also represent the different groups within the Chinese culture through clothing attire such as casual and work, they still represent a ‘coming together’ that is reflected through their actions and helping one another. This advertisement is excellently executed for the Chinese culture by representing collectivism, the red colours symbolizing good wishes and luckiness and featuring another Hofstede dimension of Power Distance, which is also highly impactful in the Chinese society (China n.d.b), this is present with Yao Ming (celebrity endorsement) and the Terra-Cotta Warriors.

Reference List:


DeMooij, M 2013, Global Marketing and Advertising: Understanding Cultural Paradoxes, 4th edition, Sage Publications Inc, California, USA

TAMPAX

As mentioned above, Hofstede’s dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance dictates how a society deals with the unknown future (DeMooij 2013). Whilst some cultures such as the United States are open to going with the flow and taking the future as it comes (United States n.d.), others, such as France are anxious regarding the ambiguity of the future (France n.d.). As Annie has discussed, Uncertainty Avoidance has a significant influence on the French Culture.

Leo Burnett recognised this trend and used it to their advantage with a humorous Tampax ‘Sharks’ advertisement targeting French women (Ads Of The World n.d.). The advertisement shows a woman swimming in shark infested ocean waters; presumably the sharks are attracted because the woman is menstruating.

The benefit of using Tampax is promptly communicated through visuals metaphorically implying that if you use Tampax it will prevent you from being a shark attraction, because you will have no leakage. The advertisement is very dark and gloomy giving a certain ‘fear’ element to it whilst making viewers feel uncomfortable. The advertisement uses fear as the key message, with hope that French women will most likely go to the shops and buy Tampax to prevent themselves being in a terrible and unknown situation. Chung & Ahn (2013) state that studies have shown that fear appeals are effective in promoting self-protective behaviours across a variety of health issues which directly ties in with using Uncertainty Avoidance in advertising to cultures such as France.

Reference List:


DeMooij, M 2013, Global Marketing and Advertising: Understanding Cultural Paradoxes, 4th edition, Sage Publications Inc, California, USA


KFC SO GOOD

My own personal understanding of the “So Good” slogan is that it is simple and easy to remember. It seems to portray the brand with a positive attitude that represents the KFC
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brand values and is a very broad statement that could easily reflect the food, company or service. However, due to the breadth of the slogan I do believe that it does not communicate ‘food’ to me, and personally if I had never heard the slogan before I would not have known what is was aiming to advertise, although it could be argued that the simplistic vocabulary of the slogan may more effectively be directed to the KFC target market.

The KFC slogan has evolved through three fundamental stages. In the 1950’s KFC adapted the slogan “North America's Hospitality Dish”, this was aimed at creating a relationship within the American market (Pena 2014). KFC then coincidentally moved on to adapt the “Finger Lickin’ Good” slogan in 1956 after it was developed by accident when a television commercial aired in the US, with franchisee Dave Harman licking his fingers in the background of their commercial. A viewer called and complained to the manager in which he responded “Well, its finger lickin’ good”, this then became the famous trademark and motto of the KFC brand for 50 years (The Sydney Morning Herald 2011). In 2011 KFC decided to change their slogan from “Finger Lickin Good” to “So Good” to adjust with the increasing health trends and portray a healthier and more environmentally conscious brand image (Cave 2011). The “So Good” slogan also represents the company values as a whole instead of being completely food centric as per the previous slogan (The Sydney Morning Herald 2011).

The famous “Finger Lickin’ Good” slogan has faced two major issues in relation to miscommunication in both China and Iran. In 1987 KFC opened their first Beijing food outlet with their “Finger Lickin’ Good” slogan, however, the translation was actually interpreted as “We’ll eat your fingers off” in Chinese (Jenkins 2011). Fortunately due to the fact KFC was relatively unknown at the time in China, it was able to fix the translation error and recover quickly, becoming the most popular fast food restaurant in China today (Anderson n.d.). When entering the Iranian market KFC used the same “Finger Lickin’ Good” slogan. This was also misinterpreted in Iran to communicating “So good you will eat your fingers off” (Hager & Scheiber 2000). It is evident that KFC has approached their global advertising efforts with a ‘one size fits all’ standardized approach, DeMooij (2013) states that if you wish to reach consumers in various parts of the world, you need to communicate to them in a way they understand. The issues KFC faced with slogan miscommunication could have been easily avoided with a further insight into the local community they were entering. This proves how crucial market research is when entering international markets to ensure you are communicating the same brand values in each culture and region.

Reference List


DeMooij, M 2013, Global Marketing and Advertising: Understanding Cultural Paradoxes, 4th edition, Sage Publications Inc, California, USA
A global investor relations brand similar to HSBC is Visa and their adaption of their “Everywhere you want to be” slogan. Personally when I hear/see this slogan I associate a lifestyle as opposed to practical benefits that Visa could potentially provide and for my personal travel values, this is a positive association as it evokes a ‘feel good’ emotion. Visa has attempted to position themselves to be strong enough to seamlessly move from market to market with over 200 branches around the world (Precourt 2011).

The “Everywhere you want to be” slogan was only introduced in 2014 and is a surprising development of their previous slogan “It’s everywhere you want to be” which had been effective since 1985 (Elliott 2014). The rationale behind evolving their most famous tagline was to adapt to their consumers changing, fast-paced and busy lifestyles (Elliott 2014). The “Everywhere you want to be” slogan celebrates the range of services that are available through Visa including mobile and electronic payments, whilst “It’s everywhere you want to be” focused more specifically on the broad worldwide acceptance of their credit cards (Elliott 2014).

Visa has adapted a ‘Semistandardized’ strategy where the innovative attributes and benefits are central to the advertisement (DeMooij 2013). By using this strategy, Visa has strategically dodged mistranslation errors and successfully implemented their “It’s everywhere you want to be” and “Everywhere you want to be” slogans globally through the use of human translators, this method is essential in a globalized economy and an area where many brands seem to blunder (Melby, Manning & Klemetz 2005). Visa has also effectively been able to position themselves as a global leader by sponsoring global events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympics (Sachs 2014).

Reference list:

DeMooij, M 2013, Global Marketing and Advertising: Understanding Cultural Paradoxes, 4th edition, Sage Publications Inc, California, USA
Furthering on from what Miao has discussed, McDonalds successfully received significant global reach with their global marketing campaign in relation to the “I’m lovin’ it” slogan. Turner (as cited in Paulick 2007) suggests that ad agencies will simply use words to best convey a certain feeling in campaigns, this is evident through McDonalds use of portraying the emotion of ‘loving’ in their “I’m lovin it” slogan that consumers such as Miao, are attracted to. In 2003 McDonalds launched the “I’m lovin’ it” campaign featuring Justin Timberlake in an effort to rebuild their brand identity (Bailey 2007). The significant success of the campaign helped to crown the “I’m lovin’ it” slogan as “king of the catchphrases” (Bailey 2007).

The campaign may have been lost in translation with some countries as Miao suggested, however, it was also lost in meaning with countries where a negative brand image of McDonalds was already portrayed. McDonalds experienced difficulty rebuilding their brand identity in England, where there was poor service and an association of “I’m lovin it” with junk food was apparent (MacArthur 2004). Due to the failure of the campaign in this market, McDonalds attempted to introduce a ‘follow-up’ campaign called “Changes: McDonalds, not as you know it” to highlight its positive transformation. However, Quelch (as cited in MacArthur 2004) warned that this follow up campaign could have easily backfired due to the instability of the McDonalds market position in UK at the time, and that McDonalds simply just needed to stick with the “I’m lovin’ it” campaign longer. Despite the extreme success of the “I’m lovin it” campaign, McDonalds executives did state that consumers outside of the US had not fallen head over heels for it (MacArthur 2004), this would be evidently due to the standardized approach that McDonalds adopted.

Reference List:
Brand Case Studies

Bailey, R 2007, McDonald’s Corporation: I'm Lovin' It Campaign, Encyclopaedia of Major Marketing Campaigns, Vol. 2, WARC Database, viewed 29 October 2014
