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A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRINT ADVERTISEMENTS
FROM THE UNITED STATES AND TAIWAN

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Business Administration

by
Ya Hsuan Sunny Tan

June 2004

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June 2004

Approved by:



Dr. Melissa St. James, Chair, Marketing

May 10, 2004

Date



Dr. Nabil Y. Razzouk, Marketing



Dr. Vic Johar, Department Chair, Marketing

May 14, 2004

ABSTRACT

This study is conducted through content analysis to determine the degree of advertising standardization between the United States and Taiwan. Based on the literature review the impact of standardization versus localization advertising strategies is discussed.

The findings revealed a high degree of advertising standardization. Also, the use of some modified forms of standardized approach was found to be widespread, but the practice of total standardization was rare in Taiwan.

Moreover, the advertisers of multinational firms tend to adopt standardized advertisement appeals by using western or American settings to communicate with Taiwanese consumers. This perhaps to be expected as a corollary of the growth of multinational marketing and the convergence among consumers. Toward this end, the study provides insight on how to advertise effectively in the modern advertising industry of Taiwan.

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DEDICATION

To my parents and my brother.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, a wealth of literature has made a valuable contribution to the understanding of cross-cultural differences in advertising content (Al-Olayan & Karande, 2000). Those studies were related to the debate on standardization versus localization of advertising. The advertising standardization idea first arose in 1965 (Elinder, 1965). In 1994 Harris reviewed Elinder's (1965) and Fatt's (1967) studies and asserted that the communication revolution has created such a level of convergence among consumers across national markets that national cultures should no longer be represented as a barrier to international advertising standardization.

Many studies have compared advertisement content across dissimilar cultures such as the U.S. and Japan (Hong, Muderrisoglu, & Zinkhan, 1987; Mueller 1987, 1992; Javalgi, Cutler, & Malhotra, 1995), print advertisements in the U.S. and Japan (Belk & Pollay, 1985; Mueller, 1987), TV commercials in China and the U.S. (Cheng & Schweitzer, 1996; Lin 2001), print advertisements in magazines in the U.S. and the Arab World (Al-Olayan et

al., 2000), print advertisements in the USA and France (Biswas, Olsen, & Carlet, 1992).

Other studies have focused on the similarities and differences between culturally similar countries, such as the U.S. and Australia (Dowling, 1980), five Euro-markets (Seitz & Johar, 1993), the U.S. and Great Britain TV advertising comparison (Katz & Lee, 1992; Weinberger & Spotts, 1989), as well as a print advertising comparison of the Pacific Basin countries of Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea (Javalgi, Cutler, & White, 1994).

However, little attention has been given to Taiwanese advertising despite its growing importance in the international market (Zandpour & Changhui, 1992; Wang, Jaw, Pinkleton, & Morton, 1997). Furthermore, the U.S. and Taiwan are very different in terms of culture, geography, language, political and economic background, and development stages of advertising. So, a content analysis of the degree of advertising standardization in the U.S. and in Taiwan is even more meaningful.

The U.S. was selected on the basis that the majority of prior studies have used the U.S. as either a framework or a model of Western culture for their comparative content analyses in advertising (Belk, Bryce, & Pollay,

1985; Belk & Pollay, 1985; Hong et al., 1987; Katz & Lee, 1992; Lin, 1993; Mueller, 1987, 1992).

In 1992, Cutler and Javalgi selected the U.S. as a comparison country for their study because the U.S. is the world's largest advertiser and contains the advertising sponsors more likely to attempt standardization across countries. Cheng and Schweitzer (1996) also regarded the U.S. as a typical western culture. Only through a comparison with advertising in the U.S. can the "Westernness" and "Easternness" of advertising in Taiwan be convincingly decided.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the degree of standardization of international advertising between the U.S and Taiwan. Specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Select and develop a methodology for examining international advertising standardization.
2. Employ the methodology to obtain detailed and precise comparisons in the same medium for the same brands in two culturally different countries.

3. Present initial findings to determine the degree of advertising standardization for different product categories.
4. Identify the trend of advertising approach in Taiwan.

Research Questions

Three research questions are posed to explore the descriptive aspects of the study project further:

- RQ1: What is the degree of advertising standardization between the U.S and Taiwan?
- RQ2: Do international advertisements in Taiwan tend to follow a standardized approach, a localized approach or a combination approach?
- RQ3: Does product category being promoted influence the degree of standardization?

To answer these three research questions, a total of 68 full-color, full-page advertisements were analyzed for this study.

Expected Contributions

This study will contribute to the debate on standardization versus localization of advertising by examining print advertisements in a country that has been seldom studied. Moreover, this study will shed more light

for international advertisers on how to communicate effectively in the modern advertising industry in Taiwan. Specifically, this study seeks to examine the international advertising practices of multinational companies, and whether they standardize or localize their print advertisements. Therefore, this study is significant for multinational companies wanting to market their products to women in Taiwan because they must have a keen understanding of what degree of advertising standardization is most frequently used in Vogue-Taiwan.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In 1994, Javalgi et al. expressed the view that from an international marketing perspective, one component of the marketing mix, advertising, is considered to be particularly challenging owing to cultural, economic and political differences of the target countries. International advertisers have been confronted with the question of whether to standardize the advertising message across countries or to localize the message for every country.

The issue of international advertising standardization was first discussed during the 1960s. However, no general conclusions have been reached. Twenty years later, in the 1980s, three main approaches were distinguished with regard to the issue of international advertising standardization: the standardization approach, the localization approach, and the middle of the road approach.

Standardization Approach

The standardization approach in international advertising means the adoption of one advertisement for all markets. Use of the standardization approach is based

on the assumption that consumers anywhere in the world share the same basic needs and desires (Lynch, 1984).

Theodore Levitt (1983) made the best-known argument for standardization-the growing homogenization of needs across borders legitimates standardization. He described it as the globalization of markets. Levitt said that many firms have successfully transferred their advertising campaigns and that standardization approaches have supported unified brand image worldwide.

In Levitt's later study he suggested global companies must forget idiosyncratic differences between countries and cultures and instead concentrate on satisfying universal drives. He believed that technology had become a powerful force that drove the world toward a homogenized commonality.

Levitt's globalization theory also offered support for consumer behavior and attitudes in many ways. For example, consumer brands have received wide global acceptance in categories such as consumer electronics, cars, fashion, home appliances, food products, and beverages (Hassan, Katsanis, & Kaynak, 1994). Many of these products respond to the basic needs and desires of consumers that cut across country boundaries (Hassan, Katsanis, & Kaynak, 1994).

A similar point of view to that of Levitt was put forward by Fatt (1967), who stated that despite obvious language and cultural differences people in the world from Argentine to Zanzibar want a better way of life for themselves and their families. . . the desire to be beautiful, to be free of pain, healthy, etc. is universal. Fatt's opinion was also shared by Ryans and Donnelly (1969), they asserted that the same products can be sold with a standardization approach.

In their comprehensive study Sorenson and Weichmann reported high standardization of advertising by 71 percent of 27 U.S. and European multinational firms (1975). Dunn (1966) found that U.S. print advertising campaigns were surprisingly transferable to Europe and the Middle East.

In 1968 Buzzell addressed the benefits of the standardization approach for international advertising: cost savings, consistency in image, improved planning and control, exploitation of good ideas, and balanced appraisal needed. Despite the potential benefits of standardization, Buzzell has compiled a table that summarized the major classes of factors which limit standardization in international marketing strategies. Those four types of obstacles are: market characteristics,

industry conditions, marketing institutions, and legal restrictions.

Several researchers agree that the question regarding advertising standardization to date is not one of whether an international advertising campaign can be completely standardized. Rather, the question is to what extent or degree an international advertisement can be standardized or harmonized throughout the various markets (Batra, Myers, & Aaker, 1987, p. 721; Harris, 1996).

In summary, those in favor of standardization highlight the similarities that are characteristic of consumers all over the world and believe the same advertisement will work in any market. Moreover, advances in telecommunication technologies, increased consumer sophistication and purchasing power, and the emergence of global media accelerate those similarities.

Localization Approach

A localization approach refers to the use of different advertisements for different markets in order to adapt to local market conditions. Proponents of the localization approach pointed out that most blunders in international advertising occurred because of a failure to fully understand the foreign culture and its social norms

(Ricks, Arpan, & Fu 1974). This argument is based on a number of American advertising campaigns which failed overseas because their advertisers did not consider the cultural dissimilarities and this viewpoint is shared by Onkvisit (1999), in his study he supported that consumer differences may actually have been widening, also, shared needs and desires do not necessarily result in the manifestation of identical behavior.

More recently, Jones (2000) reported that, though consumers in each continent shares similar needs, they vary in the way they characterize the product that can satisfy those needs. (cited by Lin, 2001). Ricks et al. who have contended that in most instances differences in national culture and local market conditions dictate that local adaptations will be more effective.

In a pilot study, Hornik (1980) found significant differences in the way advertisements were perceived. His research study suggested that the localization approach has a greater likelihood for success. According to Straubhaar (1991) native advertisers also tend to localize the western appeals to the extent that they are easily accessible by the local consumers. This scenario supports the localization approach assumption.

Mueller (1987) compared Japanese advertisements with American advertisements for the same product categories and observed numerous differences between the two types. Mueller conducted a similar study in 1992 and showed that Japanese advertising is still far from being standardized.

On the same theme, in 1985 Belk and Pollay found that, though Japanese advertisements were clearly becoming "Americanized" in style, deep-rooted Japanese cultural values remain apparent in the advertisements. Consequently, cross-cultural differences in advertising expression have been the subject of recent attention in the advertising localization literature, primarily because understanding the cultural influences is necessary in order to choose the right advertisements for communicating with the audience successfully.

Yoram Wind (1986), an advocate of the localization approach, believed that the trend toward a homogenization of the people's needs does not exist and standardization may be a difficult approach to pursue on a global basis simply because different types of market response functions exist across countries. Wind recommended "think globally, act locally".

A Middle of the Road Approach

Peebles, Ryans, and Vernon (1978) pointed out that neither strict standardization nor localization policies were optimal, and they introduced the idea of negotiated adaptation. This idea suggested that each company should consider the type of product, the cost, the consumer characteristics, and environment factors before the right combination of these two approaches can be formed (Marquez, 1979).

Susan H. C. Tai (1997) conducted a survey of 87 samples from four Chinese markets: Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and the People's Republic of China. Tai's study found that the four Chinese markets are all using an adaptation strategy, and they are adopting a similar account of advertising standardization, which is neither a fully standardized nor differentiated strategy. Tai reported that, in general, her respondents hold a conservative attitude towards advertising standardization.

Also, in 1999 Yin surveyed the 873 selected multinational companies from China, her finding is consistent with the results of the Tai study (1997). Yin found the majority of companies use the combination approach with only a small number of companies uses either standardized or localized approaches.

Hite and Fraser (1988) reported that 54 percent of 99 American companies conducting various types of business used a combination of standardized and localized advertising, 37 percent used an all localized approach, and only nine percent used an all standardized advertising approach. Moreover, 54 percent of these international advertisers used a combination strategy of an umbrella theme submitted to local agencies localized or tailored based on the customs, cultural values, and lifestyles of the native markets (Hite and Fraser, 1988). However, they also stated that sometimes just addressing the local market's customs, cultural values, and lifestyle might not be enough. Different communication patterns should also be addressed.

Other research on the middle of the road approach such as Philip Kotler (1986), believed the mixed approach or the combination approach-partly standardized and partly localized-as the most effective advertising strategy. It was also called the contingency approach (Agrawal, 1995) because the approach suggested some degree of uniformity of advertising theme is needed, but that different factors or variables must be recognized such as economic development of the market or product categories.

Dunn (1966) postulated that the most successful international advertising campaigns were those where advertisers have managed to work out a good balance between complete standardization and localization. He also asserted that the criteria which could be used to determine the degree of transferability of advertisements fell into three general categories: market or economic criteria, cultural or psychological criteria, and media criteria.

It has been claimed that the debate over the standardization versus localization of international advertising is futile, and can be resolved only by determining whether or not global consumer segments exist (Baalbaki & Malhotra, 1993).

In practice, several researchers found this middle of the road approach is practiced by the majority of international advertisers. Their studies reported that global brands are rarely promoted on a purely standardized or localized approach. For example, de Mooji (1998) has proposed models in which both product categories as well as promotion variations form a combination of standardization and localization advertising.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study examined the degree of international advertising standardization using content analysis. The content analysis approach is a reputable and frequently used method for marketing research studies (Kassarjian, 1977; Samiee & Jeong, 1994). Moreover, content analysis is a widely used research tool to determine generalizations about an individual, culture, society or nation. These generalizations are derived from the examination of communication media such as newspaper articles, magazine advertisements, and television commercials (Yang, 1995; cited by Wang, 2003).

Sampling Method

To conduct this content analysis, parallel magazine advertising content for six product categories between Vogue-U.S. and Vogue-Taiwan was examined. The sampling frame of July 2003 to December 2003 was used.

Vogue-Taiwan was chosen for two reasons. First, Vogue-Taiwan is one of the most widely-read women's monthly magazines in Taiwan, with average monthly circulation of 50,000, provided by senior circulation specialist, Mr. Lai. Second, it carried major magazine

advertisement genres at the time of the study, including apparel, jewelry/watch, skin care product, etc. We assume, that from a foreign advertiser's point of view, print advertising in Vogue magazine is an important communication method for reaching their targeted female consumers.

In content and target segment, the U.S. equivalent of this publication would be Vogue-U.S., as this offered a coherent target group and publications with similar characteristics and readership profiles. However, this magazine does not reflect every female-oriented product category that could appear in Vogue. Hence, the study is restricted to a comparison of six product categories which are sold in both the United States and Taiwan. This may be recognized as a limitation of this study.

Sampling Procedure

All full-color, full-page advertisements appearing during July 2003 to December 2003 issues of Vogue-U.S. and Vogue-Taiwan were collected and used as the data base for this content analysis.

The project considered only full-page or larger advertisements because of their dominant use in magazines and also because this procedure controls for advertisement

size (Harmon, Razzouk, & Stern, 1983). Duplicate advertisements for the same brand appearing in different issues were excluded from the sample to eliminate redundancies that may have skewed the results.

The intent was to select a set of advertisements that would be identical between the U.S. and Taiwan. This resulted in a total of 68 advertisements, classified into six product categories, for analysis (see Table 1). Table 2 contains a breakdown by product category of samples, and Table 3 reveals the product's country of origin.

Table 1. Product Category Represented in Ads from the Vogue-U.S. and Vogue-Taiwan

Product category	# of ads from Vogue-U.S. July-Dec 2003	# of ads from Vogue-Taiwan July-Dec 2003	# of double matches
Apparel	177	433	39
Jewelry/Watch	119	116	11
Fragrance	30	58	4
Cosmetics	59	85	7
Skin care product	117	66	6
Auto	10	24	1
Electronics	33	8	0
Service	37	21	0
Toiletries	11	33	0
Food/Beverage	16	15	0
Alcohol	7	21	0
Medication	5	15	0
Miscellaneous	28	28	0
Total	649	923	68

Table 2. Product Category of Samples

Product category	Number of samples
Apparel	39
Fragrance	4
Cosmetics	7
Skin Care Product	6
Jewelry/Watch	11
Auto	1
Total	68

Table 3. Nationality of Samples

Product's country of origin	Number of samples
USA	17
France	24
Italy	17
UK	1
Japan	1
Germany	4
Switzerland	4
Total	68

Measurement

The methodology of the coding scheme was based on the Whitelock and Chung (1989) model. This model focused on comparing advertisements appearing in the same media in two culturally diverse, but economically similar country markets, France and the UK. Whitelock and Chung used picture, size, color, general layout, text, and product

portrayal to identify the differences between advertisements for the same brands.

In 2003, Harris and Attour made significant changes to the scoring system of the Whitelock and Chung model. In the original model several key elements were coded as either being similar or adapted. Harris and Attour stated that this model did not allow for measuring how similar or how adapted these individual elements might be. For example, in the Whitelock and Chung (1989) model the picture element is treated as one whole part, whereas in the Harris and Attour (2003) model the picture was broken down into three separate elements-the visual background, the models/spokespersons in the advertisements and the way product is presented. Likewise the text was broken into the headline; subhead; body text and slogan.

Besides the six elements in the original model, Harris and Attour added one additional element- product packaging to this content analysis model. However, in this study the product packaging was replaced by purchasing information based on the need to reflect the trend of that element to the overall advertisements. A complete list of seven executive elements analysed and compared is presented in the following Table 4.

In terms of scoring system, points were given and summed for each comparison made and then deducted from the total score of 100 to indicate the degree of international advertising standardization. Degree of standardization = $100 - \text{total score}$. Thus, the higher the value the more standardization is the advertisement.

Coding Procedure

The coding scheme and instructions were developed on the basis of seven executive elements discussed previously. All 68 samples from Vogue-Taiwan were translated into English before the evaluation of content analysis. Even though, advertisements still convey subtle nuances based on both verbal aspects and differences in hue, this did not affect the study. The coding procedure involved a multistep process. The coder first scanned the picture, colors and size of the advertisements. Then the product portrayal, purchasing information and the extent of the usage of foreign words in text were examined. Finally, general layout was scanned. Next, the scores for each element were summed. The equation was used to determine the degree of standardization. The detailed coding scheme for the 68 advertisements is attached in the Appendix.

Table 4. The Content Analysis Model

(1) Picture (40 points):	
(a) Visual background (20 points)	Same (0 points) Different (20 points)
(b) Model/spokesperson (10 points)	Same (0 points) Different (10 points)
(c) Modifications (10 points)	Minor (5 points) Major (10 points)
(2) Text (32 points)	
(a) Headline (10 points)	Same language/ different meaning (3 points) Translated/ same meaning (6 points) Completely different (10 points)
(b) Subhead (6 points)	Same language/ different meaning (2 points) Translated/ same meaning (3 points) Completely different (6 points)
(c) Body Text (10 points)	Same language/ different meaning (3 points) Translated/ same meaning (6 points) Completely different (10 points)
(d) Slogan (6 points)	Same language/ different meaning (2 points) Translated/ same meaning (3 points) Completely different (6 points)
(3) General layout (10 points)	Minor differences (5 points) Major differences (10 points)
(4) Product portrayal (6 points)	Difference in size (2 points) Difference in number (2 points) Other differences (2 points)
(5) Purchasing information (4 points)	Same (0 point) Different (4 points)
(6) Colors of the advertisements (4 points)	Same (0 point) Different color (4 points)
(7) Size of the advertisement (4 points)	As original + extra section (1 point) Different size (4 points)

Notes: Total score = sum of points from all the elements; degree of standardization = 100 - total score.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Results for the three research questions are summarized in Tables 5 and 6.

Examining RQ1 and RQ2

To answer RQ1 and RQ2, Table 5 has been divided into ten brackets to present the degree of advertising standardization for this study. Only three (3.4%) advertisements out of 68 which are exactly the same in both magazines. These three totally standardized advertisements are two for apparel and one for watches. Table 5 also shows that no completely non-standardized (or localized) advertisements were seen in this study.

Table 5. Result Using the Content Analysis Model for the 68 Advertisements

Standard-ization	Non-Standardization (Localization)									
Score	0	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-100
Degree	100	99-90	89-80	79-70	69-60	59-50	49-40	39-30	29-20	19-0
# of ads	3	25	15	13	6	0	3	0	3	0
Percentage	4.4	36.8	22.1	19.1	8.8	0	4.4	0	4.4	0

The findings revealed a high degree of advertising standardization between the U.S. and Taiwan with a mean standardization degree of 80.57 (See Table 6). Moreover, this study has shown that usage of the standardized approach is quite frequent for advertisements transferred between the U.S and Taiwan. Also, the practice of modified forms of advertising standardization is more common than the practice of total standardization.

Product Category Effects on Advertising Standardization

The information in Table 6 addresses RQ3, which investigates the research question concerning the influence of product category on standardization. The results in Table 6 indicate that product category being promoted significantly influences the degree of advertising standardization.

The average advertising standardization score in descending order across six product categories is as follows: apparel (87.18), jewelry/watch (82.9), fragrance (81), cosmetics (69.57), skin care product (55.83), and auto (21). This finding does not seem to support the previous finding by Seitz and Handojo (1997) that the apparel category reflected zero standardization scores.

Another finding is that cosmetics and skin care product categories are moderately standardized. Those two categories are more likely to fall in the middle of the road approach because of the significant differences in the text. In 13 (100%) advertisements, the headline and subhead are mostly translated verbatim in Mandarin. The majority of these advertisements utilize non-translated foreign language in the slogan. By contrast, the body text in eight advertisements (61.54%) is varied in language and meaning. The use of translated language in Vogue-Taiwan apparently affects the degree of standardization.

Table 6. Average Advertising Standardization Score Across Product Categories

Product category	# of samples	Average advertising Standardization score
Apparel	39	87.18
Jewelry/Watch	11	82.9
Fragrance	4	81
Cosmetics	7	69.57
Skin care product	6	55.83
Auto	1	21
Total	68	80.57

Major Research Findings

To summarize the findings, the following major similarities and differences among 68 samples are presented. (See Table 6)

1. Significant differences were noted in purchasing information. On average, advertisements from Vogue-Taiwan contain purchasing information such as company's official website, store's location and telephone number far more frequently than do those from Vogue-U.S.. Moreover, no advertisement mentions the price of the advertised items.
2. Twenty-One (30.88%) advertisements, of the 68 compared are different in size. Those samples are varied in size from one to eight pages. It can be also noted that in all of those 21 samples, Vogue-Taiwan shows a smaller visual size format in terms of the number of advertisement pages compared with Vogue-U.S.
3. Analysis of the data showed that the picture element of the advertisements is highly standardized. For example, the visual background of 63 samples (92.64%) deployed in the Vogue-U.S. and Vogue-Taiwan is exactly the same. Similarly, 65 advertisements (95.59%) have

identical models/spokespersons in both magazines. In advertisements for PATEK PHILIPPE Twenty-4 watch, the models/spokespersons are different (See Appendix, sample #47). In advertisements for NIVEA Body Firming Lotion Q10, the model is changed from a Caucasian model to an Asian model (See Appendix, sample #35). In another instance, in sample #41, ESTÉE LAUDER New. Pure Color Lip Vinyl Gloss Stick, the African American model is replaced with a Caucasian model..

4. Only sample #5 has a completely different color. The remaining advertisements (98.53%) are totally standardized in color, they just differ slightly in hue due to the subtle nuances of copy quality or paper quality.
5. The majority of the advertisements are different in general layout. Forty (58.82%) advertisements are presented with minor or major differences in their layout due to the size. In other words, the size of the advertisement is a key variable affecting the standardization degree.
6. For the 68 samples, it was found that the majority of the advertisements (51.47%) are

standardized in product portrayal, and 33 (48.53%) advertisements are varied in size, number and other differences of product portrayal. In the cases of cosmetics and skin care product categories, the most common differences when comparing two editions are the addition of another product. For instance, in samples #61 and #62 for fragrances, the same collections of body lotions are included in the Vogue-Taiwan edition. In another instance, the advertisement for Dior ROUGE lipstick, the same lipstick collection but different colors are shown in two magazines (See Appendix, sample #39).

7. Twenty-Seven (39.71%) samples had modified text. Forty-one advertisements (60.29%) used standardized text. This result is consistent with the findings of previous literature indicating the use of foreign language is very common in Taiwan (Neelankavil, Mummalaneni, & Sessions, 1995).

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The large amount of advertising standardization in Taiwan supports Levitt's arguments that technology enables countries to be seen as similar and this allows the successful use of standardization. This combination reflects the trend toward modernization. Over the past 40 years, Taiwan has evolved from an underdeveloped, agricultural island to an economic power that is a leading producer of high-technology goods.

One factor that relates to standardization is market affluence. In 2003, per capita Gross National Product (GNP) in Taiwan was a healthy US\$13,157 (National Statistic of Taiwan). This may suggest that more and more multinational companies recognize Taiwan as a powerful consumption market. That is why some multinational companies are moving toward a standardized approach in order to achieve consistency in their global marketing strategies. These companies believe that the standardized advertisement helps establish a uniform worldwide product image, and this will be a success for companies' products in Taiwan. In other words, this is about the multinational companies' perception of Taiwan market. Obviously, Taiwan

is recognized as having high adoration for products of western origin; on the other hand, Taiwanese consumers are also attracted by western or American settings in the advertisements. This phenomenon might explain why multinational companies tend to standardize the visual elements and campaign themes to communicate with Taiwanese consumers.

It should also be noted that a high level of advertising standardization had been practiced by these multinational companies to help present an umbrella branding for all their product collections. Moreover, "there are significant opportunities for cost saving via international advertising standardization" (Buzzell, 1968). However, budgets allowed for advertising production costs or hiring product spokespersons/models to appear in the advertisements are much higher than other individual national markets could afford.

By contrast, take the case of Neutrogena, a successful American cosmetic companies, which is distributed in more than 70 countries. Neutrogena uses the standardized creative theme but different endorsers (actress, Jennifer Love Hewitt for the U.S; Asian actress, Angelica Lee for Taiwan) for its acne care product. Another example is Neutrogena can have separate

advertising operations for Taiwan and the U.S. or a single and uniform advertising operation for both markets. This indicates that standardization is a flexible policy that can take many forms of modifications when necessary to suit the local consumers.

Another factor comes from the impact of international advertising agencies. Wang et al., (1997) reported that many multinational advertising agencies, mostly American agencies, have their own branches in Taiwan. Their connection with the headquarters and operations in the Taiwan advertising industry, may explain why western artifacts and American settings are frequently transferred to Taiwanese advertisements.

However, changing language and product portrayal to blend with Taiwanese culture are the two most important factors regarding advertising transferability.

International advertisers must understand the possibility that Taiwanese consumers might buy the same products but for different reasons depending on the cultural aspects and product characteristics to consumer benefits and values. This may provide the basis for recommendation to advertisers that having adequate cultural sensitivity minimizes advertising blunders.

In practice, international advertisers could apply salient cultural dissimilarities in a meaningful way. Moreover, it is recommended that multinational corporations validate their advertisements with local Taiwanese advertising agencies.

This study found that the pattern of standardization in terms of variation by product categories is a critical factor in influencing the international advertising standardization. As evident from the findings, apparel advertisements are using a very standardized approach in Vogue-Taiwan. One plausible explanation for this result perhaps is that apparel is presented as a reflection of universal needs and desires and Taiwanese consumers share the same desires with people all over the world for enjoying fashion.

Also, this result supports the idea asserted by Sommer and Kernan (1967) that advertising standardization is possible when the products sell the same symbolic needs across cultural boundaries such as beauty, love, joy, and material comforts. Furthermore, this result suggests that the standardized approach for apparel is possible because apparel advertisements speak for themselves and focus on visual elements rather than the text.

Based on the present study, it was shown that advertising appeals in Taiwan tend to be dominated more by standardized approaches than localized approaches and most multinational companies practice modified forms of standardization. The implication for international advertisers is that they are faced with a choice of what elements should be standardized and to what degree the advertisements should be standardized in Taiwan. In other words, a decision regarding consistent worldwide brand image as well as effective communication can harmonize the innate cultural differences. More important, this decision will depend much on the type of product category, consumption patterns, cultural factors and competitive environment in Taiwan.

In general, such a finding supports proponents of advertising standardization in that standardization highlights the similarities of people the world over. Therefore, advertisement appeals can be carefully designed around people's basic needs and desires. The study holds a positive attitude towards the standardization approach and the belief that in the future, advertising standardization is likely to become more intensified because of the integration of advertising media and the convergence among consumers across national markets.

CHAPTER SIX

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

One must keep the following limitations in mind while interpreting these findings about the degree of advertising standardization in Taiwan.

First, this study was conducted using a limited sample. Therefore, it may not be appropriate to generalize the results for other advertisements to other media vehicles. Also, the use of only Vogue magazines in the study may have resulted in the exclusion of advertisements for other product categories.

Second, the sampling frame of six months made it difficult to generalize from these findings. Therefore, over a longer period of time this study might have adequate seasonal product advertisements selected in our samples and the results might differ considerably.

Finally, this study shows a high degree of advertising standardization. While this finding conflicted with the results obtained from most prior studies, this contradiction could be a result of focusing on sampled multinational big brands and using a different content analysis model.

In addition to examining the degree of advertising standardization between the U.S. and Taiwan, future research could determine the target market's desires as well as Taiwanese competitive environment as influencing the usage of standardization versus localization.

It would also be valuable to determine how the Taiwanese consumers respond to western and American settings in their commercial communications. International advertisers must determine to what extent and what modified forms of the standardized approach should be practiced in Taiwan. Moreover, it is suggested that future research examine the advertising effectiveness of standardization, localization and combination approaches. The results to this type of study would provide information vital to advertisers when deciding on their communication strategies.

APPENDIX

THE CODING SCHEME FOR THE 68 SAMPLES

Sample	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
Product category	J	J	C	A	A	A	C	A
Product's country of origin	S	I	US	F	I	F	F	F
(1) Picture								
(a) Visual background (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Model/ spokesperson (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Modifications (0, 5, 10)	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
(2) Text								
(a) Headline (0, 3, 6, 10)	3	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
(b) Subhead (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0
(c) Body text (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	0	6	0	0	0	6	6
(d) Slogan (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(3) General layout (0, 5, 10)	0	5	0	0	0	5	0	0
(4) Product portrayal (0, 2, 4, 6)	6	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
(5) Purchasing information (0, 4)	0	0	4	4	0	4	4	0
(6) Colors of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
(7) Size of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Total score	14	5	15	4	9	13	21	6
Degree of standardization = 100 - total score	86	95	85	96	91	87	79	94

Sample	#09	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16
Product category	C	S	A	A	A	A	A	A
Product's country of origin	US	US	UK	US	F	F	I	I
(1) Picture								
(a) Visual background (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Model/ spokesperson (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Modifications (0, 5, 10)	5	0	10	5	0	0	0	10
(2) Text								
(a) Headline (0, 3, 6, 10)	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Subhead (0, 2, 3, 6)	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Body text (0, 3, 6, 10)	10	6	0	0	6	0	0	0
(d) Slogan (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(3) General layout (0, 5, 10)	0	0	10	5	0	5	0	10
(4) Product portrayal (0, 2, 4, 6)	2	0	4	2	0	0	0	2
(5) Purchasing information (0, 4)	0	0	4	4	0	0	4	0
(6) Colors of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(7) Size of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	4
Total score	25	9	32	20	6	5	4	26
Degree of standardization = 100 - total score	75	91	68	80	94	95	96	74

Sample	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22	#23	#24
Product category	A	A	A	C	A	A	A	S
Product's country of origin	F	F	I	F	F	F	I	US
(1) Picture								
(a) Visual background (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Model/ spokesperson (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Modifications (0, 5, 10)	0	0	5	0	10	10	0	0
(2) Text								
(a) Headline (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	6
(b) Subhead (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	6
(c) Body text (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	6
(d) Slogan (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
(3) General layout (0, 5, 10)	5	5	0	0	0	10	5	0
(4) Product portrayal (0, 2, 4, 6)	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
(5) Purchasing information (0, 4)	0	0	4	4	4	0	0	0
(6) Colors of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(7) Size of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	0
Total score	5	5	9	24	18	24	5	20
Degree of standardization = 100 - total score	95	95	91	76	82	76	95	80

Sampl	#25	#26	#27	#28	#29	#30	#31	#32
Product category	A	A	A	A	A	F	S	Auto
Product's country of origin	US	US	G	F	F	I	Japa n	G
(1) Picture								
(a) Visual background (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20
(b) Model/ spokesperson (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Modifications (0, 5, 10)	5	5	0	10	5	0	10	10
(2) Text								
(a) Headline (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10
(b) Subhead (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
(c) Body text (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10
(d) Slogan (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	0	3	0	6	3
(3) General layout (0, 5, 10)	0	5	0	10	5	0	10	10
(4) Product portrayal (0, 2, 4, 6)	2	2	0	2	2	2	2	2
(5) Purchasing information (0, 4)	0	4	4	0	4	0	4	4
(6) Colors of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
(7) Size of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
Total score	7	16	4	26	19	2	78	79
Degree of standardization = 100 - total score	93	84	96	74	81	98	22	21

Sample	#33	#34	#35	#36	#37	#38	#39	#40
Product category	W	A	S	F	A	A	C	W
Product's country of origin	US	US	G	F	I	I	F	I
(1) Picture								
(a) Visual background (0, 20)	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Model/ spokesperson (0, 20)	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Modifications (0, 5, 10)	10	0	10	0	0	10	0	0
(2) Text								
(a) Headline (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Subhead (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	2	0	0	6	0
(c) Body text (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	0	10	10	0	0	10	0
(d) Slogan (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(3) General layout (0, 5, 10)	10	5	5	10	0	10	10	0
(4) Product portrayal (0, 2, 4, 6)	6	0	2	0	0	2	2	2
(5) Purchasing information (0, 4)	4	0	0	4	0	4	4	4
(6) Colors of the advertisements (0, 4)	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(7) Size of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	4	0	4	4	0
Total score	54	5	57	30	0	30	36	6
Degree of standardization = 100 - total score	46	95	43	70	100	70	64	94

Sample	#41	#42	#43	#44	#45	#46	#47	#48
Product category	C	A	A	C	A	A	W	A
Product's country of origin	US	F	I	F	F	I	S	US
(1) Picture								
(a) Visual background (0, 20)	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Model/ spokesperson (0, 20)	20	0	0	0	0	0	20	0
(c) Modifications (0, 5, 10)	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	10
(2) Text								
(a) Headline (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	0	0	6	0	0	10	0
(b) Subhead (0, 2, 3, 6)	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(C) Body text (0, 3, 6, 10)	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	0
(d) Slogan (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	6	3	0	0	0
(3) General layout (0, 5, 10)	0	5	5	5	5	0	0	10
(4) Product portrayal (0, 2, 4, 6)	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	4
(5) Purchasing information (0, 4)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
(6) Colors of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(7) Size of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	4	4	0	4	0	0	4
Total score	59	13	13	33	23	4	39	32
Degree of standardization = 100 - total score	41	87	87	67	77	96	61	68

Sample	#49	#50	#51	#52	#53	#54	#55	#56
Product category	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Product's country of origin	I	F	G	F	US	F	F	US
(1) Picture								
(a) Visual background (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Model/ spokesperson (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(C) Modifications (0, 5, 10)	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	5
(2) Text								
(a) Headline (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Subhead (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Body text (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	0
(d) Slogan (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(3) General layout (0, 5, 10)	10	5	5	10	0	0	0	5
(4) Product portrayal (0, 2, 4, 6)	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	2
(5) Purchasing information (0, 4)	4	0	4	0	4	0	0	0
(6) Colors of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(7) Size of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	4	4	4	0	0	0	4
Total score	21	16	20	21	4	6	6	16
Degree of standardization = 100 - total score	79	84	80	79	96	94	94	84

Sample	#57	#58	#59	#60	#61	#62	#63	#64
Product category	W	S	S	W	F	F	A	W
Product's country of origin	I	US	US	I	US	F	I	I
(1) Picture								
(a) Visual background (0, 20)	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Model/ spokesperson (0, 20)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Modifications (0, 5, 10)	0	0	10	0	0	5	0	0
(2) Text								
(a) Headline (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	3	10	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Subhead (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Body text (0, 3, 6, 10)	0	10	10	0	6	0	0	0
(d) Slogan (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	6	0	0	6	0	0
(3) General layout (0, 5, 10)	5	10	10	0	5	10	5	0
(4) Product portrayal (0, 2, 4, 6)	0	2	0	0	2	4	2	0
(5) Purchasing information (0, 4)	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4
(6) Colors of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
(7) Size of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Total score	5	28	73	0	18	26	7	4
Degree of standardization = 100 - total score	95	72	27	100	82	74	93	96

Sample	#65	#66	#67	#68				
Product category	W	W	A	W				
Product's country of origin	S	S	US	F				
(1) Picture								
(a) Visual background (0, 20)	0	0	0	0				
(b) Model/ spokesperson (0, 20)	0	0	0	0				
(c) Modifications (0, 5, 10)	0	10	0	0				
(2) Text								
(a) Headline (0, 3, 6, 10)	6	10	0	0				
(b) Subhead (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	0				
(c) Body text (0, 3, 6, 10)	6	6	0	0				
(d) Slogan (0, 2, 3, 6)	0	0	0	0				
(3) General layout (0, 5, 10)	5	5	0	5				
(4) Product portrayal (0, 2, 4, 6)	2	0	0	2				
(5) Purchasing information (0, 4)	0	0	0	0				
(6) Colors of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	0	0	0				
(7) Size of the advertisements (0, 4)	0	4	0	0				
Total score	19	35	0	7				
Degree of standardization = 100 - total score	81	65	100	93				

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