Chapter 9

Advertising Adaptation: Beyond Standardization and Translation of Ads

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ABSTRACT

In a globalizing world, global brands seek to reach consumers around the world through global marketing strategies. In order to achieve this, global advertising strategies set in global marketing strategies are very important. Advertising adaptation, which is one of the aspects of global advertising strategies, means adapting a global brand’s ad for different countries. One of the main reasons why brands utilize advertising adaptation is the cultural and language differences among countries. Advertising adaptation is much more than translation of advertisements. In addition, advertising adaptation is a cultural phenomenon. In this context, advertising adaptation concept will thoroughly be analyzed in this section, and comparison of advertising adaptation with standardization, relation between advertising adaptation and translation and relation between advertising adaptation and culture will be addressed. Later on, it will attempt to explain how advertising is adapted, stages of advertising adaptation process, and types of advertising adaptation through examples.

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INTRODUCTION

It is over 50 years that Marshall McLuhan (1962, p. 31, 1964, p. 43) came up with the concept of Global Village. McLuhan expressed that communication technologies of that period turned the world into a global village, and people increasingly felt the need of connectivity to each other. This ‘reality’ which is prudently expressed by McLuhan half a century ago has increasingly felt by more people today. New technological developments, especially internet, have further increased speed and impact of globalization.

Today impacts of globalization are visible in many aspects of life. According to McBurnie (2002, p. 172,173), there are four interrelated dimensions of globalization, namely political dimension, cultural dimension, economic dimension, and technological dimension. In general, these dimensions which are in interaction with each other are examined and discussed separately.

One of the few areas where the impact of these dimensions of globalization is completely visible is branding and marketing. Brands, in an increasingly globalizing world, seek to influence consumers under the impact of globalization and consequently to ensure that these consumers prefer them. In order to achieve this, they try to effectively utilize promotion, which is one of the elements of the global marketing mix. One of the sub-elements of promotion is advertising. Through advertising, global brands aim to raise awareness of global products or services among consumers, create a positive attitude towards product or service, and consequently to make sales.

Global advertising strategy is related to how to achieve the desired level in line with the objectives of changing target groups’ attitudes and behaviors toward the brand at different locations and in different periods, ensuring raising awareness of brand, creating loyalty and ensuring the continuity of buying behaviors (Timur & Özmen, 2013, p. 373, 374).

Among global advertising strategies, advertising adaptation has an important place. Today consumers are global; however, understanding global consumer alone is not sufficient. Global brands should sometimes evoke local feelings of global consumers. Therefore, advertising adaptation is mainly about how to cover local motives within globalizing consumers in advertising. Advertising adaptation is about determining how advertising should be adapted in order to create the given impact desired by the global brand.

In this section, the concept of advertising adaptation will thoroughly be analyzed, subsequently, the background of advertising adaptation will be discussed in the framework of comparison between advertising adaptation and standardization, and a relation between advertising adaptation and translation. Later on, the relationship between advertising adaptation and culture will be examined. Afterward, it will be attempted to explain how advertising is adapted, stages of the advertising adaptation process, and types of advertising adaptation through examples.

ADVERTISING ADAPTATION

Advertising adaptation is the process of adapting the advertisement (TV commercial, print, etc.) or advertisement strategy of a global brand for another country. In other words, an adapted advertisement can be defined as the advertisement resulting from the adaptation of an international advertisement or advertisement strategy by countries. In advertising adaptation, the advertisement should be adapted by considering differences in culture, economic situation, legal conditions and media (Wang & Yang, 2011, p. 27).
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