COCA-COLA GOES GLOBAL: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF COCA-COLA

ADVERTISEMENTS FROM SIX COUNTRIES

A Thesis

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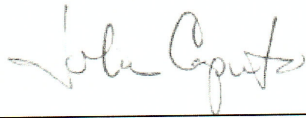In Partial Fulfillment

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By

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We the undersigned, certify that we read this thesis and approve it as adequate in scope and quality for the degree Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

There has been a lot of research completed on advertising strategies in specific countries, but little research has been done to explore advertising strategies of a single company across different countries. This study sought to discover what trends existed in Coca-Cola's global advertising strategies, specifically discerning whether cultural elements within differing countries were implemented or ignored. Building on current research and employing a content analysis methodology, this research used Stuart Hall's Theory of Cultural Studies, the Theory of Localization, the Diffusion of Innovation Theory and Semiotics to explore the advertising strategy of the Coca-Cola Company in six different emerging markets. Thirty-six total advertisements from the United States, China, Brazil, India, Russia and Nigeria were analyzed using a qualitative and quantitative coding method. The results provide interesting insight as to the frequent use of the Coca-Cola logo and human presence within its advertisements. Most predominantly, the results show that while Coca-Cola's advertisements often catered to specific cultural values, they displayed a common theme of festivity and happiness, something people of all cultures understand. Coca-Cola also managed to appeal on a global scale by minimizing copy in the advertisements and using images to advertise their product and festivity theme.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Problem and Goal

Advertising is one driving factor in the advance of globalization. For many brands, advertising and marketing strategy are what make products distinct in the minds of consumers- a term, design, logo or feature that sets one brand apart from another (Badal, Melewar & Small, 2006). A person's attitude toward advertising in general (qualified as "AG") has been defined by Liu (2002) as a "learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner to advertising in general" (p. 118). Attitude varies greatly from country to country, and even within countries between different villages, cultures and belief systems. As a global communication medium, advertising faces many challenges.

Multinational corporations often adopt similar advertising strategies in very different countries, assuming that what works in one will work in another or that the appeal of Western values in an emerging country will be enough to gain entry into that market. Other companies take a more specialized approach to advertising campaigns, focusing on a specific country, region or village's culture. It is important to understand the advertising strategies of major corporations, such as the Coca-Cola Company, in order to gain insight into what global advertising strategies have proven to be successful throughout the world. Furthermore, it is necessary to determine whether these strategies are specialized by culture or if a Coca-Cola strategy is standard across cultures, values and groups.

Importance of the Study

As domestic brands continue to climb the ranks of commerce within the United States, many companies have begun to wonder what is next. Making an international move becomes the whisper for many business leaders who are looking for the next big opportunity. Many know it is an appropriate step that may pay large dividends if done correctly. This trend is not specific to the U.S. All over the world, businesses of every size are trying to discover how to be more successful, how to make a larger profit. The goal is to become a company that is continually ahead of the curve- one that is making the larger profits and has an unwavering group of customers loyal to their brand.

Some companies have successfully created a business model that allows them to go into any new market, create new customers, and retain loyal followers who stick with them for years. The Coca-Cola Company is one such example. After years of various trials and a few tribulations, Coca-Cola remains at the top of their industry and continues to find new and innovative ways to revitalize their brand. Even further, Coca-Cola continues to be one of the few brands able to bridge the international gap and to overcome such a move's hurdles, including overseas leadership, production hassles, learning a new market and cultural differences. Coca-Cola's ability to remain among the most respected brands in the U.S. and to expand into almost any international market has prompted many scholars to study their strategies and business model as a successful example for other companies looking to bridge the international gap.

Other studies have looked at trends in advertising between different countries, (Ahmed, 2006; Friedrich, 2002; Bender & Vranica, 2010) but none have broadened the

scope to include more than one or two countries. In order to get a more accurate picture of what advertising strategies work on a global scale, advertisements for more than one country must be analyzed. While these studies provide an adequate lens through which to view the relationship of advertising strategies in the U.S. and other countries, more research is needed on strategies that reach multiple international markets and cultural boundaries. This study will provide additional research on this topic by analyzing a single, successful company's strategies in a variety of different, emerging world markets.

Organization of Remaining Chapters

This study discusses the importance of understanding global advertising strategies in Chapter One. Chapter Two first provides the philosophical and theoretical foundations that are necessary to understand the influence of advertising in globalization. It continues with specific aspects of advertising as they relate to a number of global markets. The scope and methodology of the study will be discussed in Chapter Three through a qualitative and quantitative coding method used to determine specific elements and trends in Coca-Cola's global advertisements across six major global markets. Chapter Four provides the coding mechanism used, data analysis of the research's findings, and finishes by drawing conclusions related to the research questions. Chapter Five then includes limitations of the study and further recommendations for extending the research.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Philosophical Foundations

Every culture is specific and unique unto itself. Within a single country, cultural values, beliefs and desires can vary greatly. Franz Boas, an important contributor to cultural philosophy, believed that what is good or bad, right or wrong, for each individual person is determined by that person's culture. This idea is known as Cultural Relativism (Rosado, 1994). Many ethicists struggle with the idea of a subjective morality between cultures because "if there is no observable control transcending all cultures, no book of rules, then right and wrong are a matter of opinion and it doesn't matter what we do: anything goes!" (as cited in Rosado, 1994, p. 3); However, in the context of advertising and communication, this philosophy provides an interesting view of the world that encourages a review of strategies to determine whether specialization or standardization in advertising is best. If cultures are, in fact, so inherently different, while anything may go in ethics, a standardized "everything goes" strategy may not work in advertising.

This study assumes that cultures are different, even within a very small area of the globe, and that this poses a very specific challenge for advertising firms wishing to enter the global market, especially in emerging countries. The results of this study will provide further insight into the advertising strategy of a company that has had large success globally, in order to contribute to the body of information on which global advertising strategies are most effective and to provide a foundation for further study across cultures.

Theoretical Foundations

A number of theories serve as reflective lenses for this study. The first is the Diffusion of Innovations Theory. The Diffusion of Innovation Theory is not simply a

theory, but a meta-theory – made up of many smaller theories by different researchers.

The first work on Diffusion Theory was done by Ryan and Gross at Iowa State

University in 1943 (Surry, 1997). Since then, other theorists have continued studies on

diffusion. The most extensive work in Diffusion Theory to date comes from Everett

Rogers. His research led Diffusion Theory to its most unified version and includes some

of the sub-theories proposed by past researchers (Surry, 1997). Rogers' sub-theories of

Diffusion – Innovation Decision Process and his theory of Perceived Attributes – will be

the focus of this study as they relate most closely to its purpose.

Rogers (1995) stated that part of the Diffusion of Innovation is the Innovation

Decision Process, which consists of five specific stages (p. 124):

1. Knowledge

2. Persuasion

3. Decision

4. Implementation

5. Confirmation

The Innovation Decision Process is the most widely recognized and known sub-theory of

Diffusion. This study will analyze results in all five stages of the process, but will focus

most specifically on Stage 2 and Stage 3 since advertisements are being coded for

content, which is ultimately designed to persuade the consumer to act in a certain way, or

to desire a specific product.

The second sub-theory of Diffusion Innovation that will be used in this study is

Roger's theory of Perceived Attributes. This sub-theory states that potential adapters of

an innovation judge the innovation on five specific attributes. First is trialability, which is

whether or not the product can be tried for a limited time before ultimate adoption. Second is observability: whether or not the product offers observable results or gain to the adopter. Third is relative advantage: whether or not the innovation offers an advantage relative to others. Fourth is complexity: the product or innovation cannot be overly complex. The fifth and final attribute is compatibility: whether or not the product or innovation is compatible with existing practices and values the consumer already holds (Surry, 1997). In other studies mentioned by Surry (2007), compatibility and complexity were found to be judged the strongest by consumers, and so these two attributes are the focus of this study.

A second lens through which this study reflects is Stuart Hall's Theory of Cultural Studies (1980). Hall's theory seeks to untie mass communication from the culture in which it is utilized. Hall believes that the mass media maintain the dominance of those people within a culture who hold positions of power. This dominance also translates across the boundaries of culture. The mass media not only maintain the dominance of individuals but also of one country over another. According to Hall, a message cannot be separated from the culture it inhabits or from discussions of power relations surrounding it (Hall, 1980). His theory speaks to the powerless and oppressed within a society and encourages them to rise from an "unknowing acquiescence" (Griffin, 2000, p. 339). He truly believed that his theory could raise society's consciousness of the ways in which the mass media negatively impact and maintain the status quo.

In Hall's view, the mass media restrict freedom of expression rather than support it. Private control of mass media means that the majority of messages distributed in a society, especially in the United States, are controlled by a small number of corporations

(Hall, 1980). Hall states that communication via mass media turns into a "production of consent" rather than a "reflection of the consensus that already exists" (as cited in Griffin, 2000, p. 340). Hall recognized the media's ability to control the making of meaning. He believed that no message holds inherent meaning on its own; as humans, we create meaning for ourselves based on our experiences and the culture that surrounds us (Hall, 1980). Hall was especially intrigued by Foucault's study of mental illness through the years. Foucault found that the definition of insanity and the means of dealing with this "problem" have changed dramatically over time. People in positions of power at different times in history arbitrarily drew lines between what was considered normal or outside the norm – arbitrary definitions that physically impacted members of either group (Griffin, 2000). To Hall, this was a disturbing manifestation of the media's ability to exploit the powerless.

Hall's (1980) theory encompassed three different "decoding options" into which an audience member could fall when coming into contact with mass media. The first is "operating inside the dominant code," which means that the media distributes a message with a specific intent and the person who receives the message comes away with the preferred interpretation. The second is "applying a negotiable code," in which a person generally agrees with the idea behind a message, but opposes it in a few specific cases. The final decoding option is "substituting an oppositional role." In this option, the one that Hall would prefer most audience members fall into, people see through the media bias and lead an organized effort to "demythologize" the information. Though Hall rarely seemed optimistic about the odds of people turning to the third option, he had a genuine respect for the ability of society to oppose dominant media messages. Hall waited for a

revolution, even though he did not know when or how it would come about (Griffin, 2000). Hall's theory serves as a strong reminder that messages cannot be analyzed or interpreted outside of the culture in which they are used and without a discussion of power relations and how these relationships affect the message that is portrayed.

Another theorist who studied the context of global media in independent cultural industries was Joseph Straubhaar. Straubhaar's research begins by acknowledging that during the 1960's and 1970's, "critics analyzed… structural inequalities of cultural production in terms of media imperialism and dependency," but his fear is that these analyses have become too simplistic (1991, p. 39). His studies sought to extend beyond this idea and state that "one must analyze the structural context, problems and constraints of the world's media while analyzing the development of increasingly independent cultural industries, including the cycles of technological changes that… change structural relations" (p. 39). Straubhaar's idea takes into consideration a greater number of factors than dependency theory initially did. He asserts that audiences have a very active role in media. This was not a significant aspect of the dependency theory, which viewed "structures and economic factors as determinant" and did "not give much attention to the audience's interaction with the text or content" (p. 40).

Straubhaar references two individuals who sought to explain American product expansion into local markets: Pool (1977) and Read (1976). These two argued that the "expansion of U.S. media into international sales and investment could be better understood as a natural logic of a business cycle" (p. 40). They believed that the media flow followed a consistent cycle, starting with the development of an appealing product, followed by the product's expansion, until it became an export and then eventually

peaked in markets and with its audience. It is at this point that Pool predicted that local producers could compete with the export product (in this case, usually U.S. and European), and audiences would tend to prefer their own culture in media products when they were available. This is interesting because it is at the point of "market saturation" that someone like Coca-Cola might have to consider a shift in their advertising strategy. When they first enter a market, the Coca-Cola brand could possibly begin with a less localized strategy because in the consumers' eyes, they are a new and appealing, American option. At the point when this "shine" wears off, and local products are able to compete again, is possibly where Coca-Cola would consider shifting their product appeal from "an American product" to "the drink of choice for locals." Advertisements might reflect this by no longer having American text or superstars, but instead have local language and people who reflect the local demographic.

While there is research that supports that some individuals from a particular culture prefer import products and others prefer local, one of Straubhaar's studies that focused on the viewer numbers for different categories of programming in Sao Paulo, Brazil, seemed to demonstrate that "other things being equal, audiences will choose their own cultural products when they can" (p. 51). Straubhaar makes this assertion based on the fact that when local programming was shifted to new time frames, audience percentages shifted with them. While this idea would demonstrate then that Coca-Cola might not stand a chance because locals tend to prefer local content and products, additional research has shown that the preference for national culture is not uniform, but can be shown to be related to social class.

One such example of this is Garcia Canclini's and Martin Barbero's research from 1988. It asserts that elite classes are more likely than the "popular classes" to not choose a local product for an export product. They explained this difference because "elites tend to have greater access to new media, such as VCRs, cable TV, and satellite dishes, which tend to carry more U.S. programming" (p. 51). One could also argue that they are more financially able to purchase products that are identified with a Western Culture, potentially ranking themselves higher within the elites in their own culture. Additionally though, it has been argued that this schism is due to the "popular classes" preferring nationally or locally produced materials because they are "more reinforcing of traditional identities" (p. 51).

If it is understood that a country looks to the West as an example to strive for or what to be like, using Western elements and practices in advertisements not only seem satisfactory but of benefit; however, if they demonstrate a negative perception of the West, or even just a greater interest in supporting local products because of any of the aforementioned reasons, the product and its advertising should reflect the local culture as much as seemingly possible. McDonald's provides one example of this; the company completely changed its menu in India in order to accommodate and respect India's population that consider the cow a sacred animal (O'Barr, 2008).

Straubhaar's research recognized that national producers will certainly succeed in some target markets, while in others, customers will continue to prefer international products (p. 56). It suggested that brands like Coca-Cola must always consider the factors that influence the decision-making of the local demographic.

Global Markets and Advertising Tactics

While there has been no general agreement on the status or reach of globalization by critics, the term is recognized and often used in advertising and marketing strategy. Maynard & Tian (2004) define globalization as the "rapidly developing process of complex interconnections between societies, cultures and individuals worldwide (p. 287). In business, globalization often means a company's purposeful, strategic expansion into new world markets. The same is not true for advertising and marketing firms. Firms in marketing and advertising qualify as "service firms;" therefore, expansion into global markets is client-driven- a firm must follow a client into an international market in order to remain competitive and retain business. While challenging, Boggs, Magnuson and Westjohn (2009) believe that international experience can serve as a good indicator of a "firm's competitive advantage in human, relational and organizational capital" (p. 28). Experience with international markets gives firms a chance to test employees and experiment with new skills and strategies. Succeeding in international markets may require shifts in innovation and resources that leave a firm completely changed within (Lieberthal & Prahalad, 1998).

Out of all the aspects involved in the business mix, advertising is viewed as the most culture-bound (Liu, 2002). Many newly international firms make the mistake of catering advertisements toward the more Westernized populations of a country, which also tend to be the most affluent. As a result, new firms miss a very large market share in the lower socioeconomic classes who make up a large portion of the population in emerging markets such as India and China (Lieberthal & Prahalad, 1998). Firms must

also recognize that while affluent consumers in emerging markets are far beyond their

financial status in the years before their country liberalized trade, they are not affluent by

Western standards. (Liu, 2002).

Another mistake commonly made by companies entering the international

business sphere is to assume that emerging international markets are new markets for old

products. Without considering a country's specific interests, a firm can waste a lot of time

and resources trying to squeeze new money out of failed products and technologies

(Lieberthal & Prahalad, 1998). Success in new markets requires that firms first build a

broad understanding of the country's people, their needs and unique characteristics (Liu,

2002). Western brands have a huge capacity to influence local consumers, and this

influence may not always be positive. Exposure to Western advertisements that are often

material-oriented can have what Roth (1995) describes as "the demonstration effect" (p.

166) on consumers in emerging societies. The specific effect is that poorer consumers

will buy symbolic or sensory products in order to mimic the consumption cultures they

see depicted in Western advertisements.

Globalization and Standardized Advertising

Globalization has two general approaches: the local and international. Some

global companies spend large amounts of time on campaigns that are highly specialized

to a specific country and others create one campaign strategy across all their global

markets. Companies who use a standardized approach to global marketing believe the

approach will reap benefits such as lower costs, increased control over the content of

advertisements and simplified planning processes (Hyman, Tansey & Zinkhan, 1990).

When globalization first entered the business world, a standardized approach was deemed

best as countries were expected to become increasingly alike. However, even in 1975, Marquez stated that advertising that is catered to the values of a native culture is more effective than advertising that speaks to a broad range of cultures. Standardization in advertising only makes sense for companies whose brands have a similar position in every market (as cited in Pae, Samiee & Tai, 2001). Brands that are well established have a distinct advantage over others in international markets because they are widely recognized by consumers without targeting specific cultural values (Pae, Samiee & Tai, 2001). For these brands, advertising standardization may work. For others, more specific advertising campaigns are needed.

The Use of English in Global Advertisements

In 2002, Friedrich did an extensive study on the use of English in global advertising. Despite the fact that culture-specific advertising is more effective in many countries, English is commonly seen in global advertisements created by both international and local firms. In some instances, a country's association of English with prestige is what first prompts use of the language in advertisements. Soon after, English words are quickly accepted into local jargon (Friedrich, 2002). The use of English in foreign advertising has other advantages too. Instead of having only one language – one specific set of characters or codes – with which to work, using English offers advertising firms a greater opportunity to be creative with combinations (Friedrich, 2002).

Brazil provides a good example of why English is often incorporated into advertising. Many Brazilian consumers expect to see English words in advertisements because they associate the presence of English words with an experience shared between the Western world and developing countries (Friedrich, 2002). English is used not for

sound, but for appearance. In Brazil specifically, words that resemble English are fabricated for some advertisements because they are short and look "cute" (Friedrich, 2002).

Relating Aspects of Culture and Advertising

Roth (1995) related Hofstede's earlier work on cross-cultural value systems to modern advertising. Hofstede identified three main aspects of culture: power distance, uncertainty avoidance and individualism. In his research, Roth (1995) focused on social, functional and sensory brands and how each interacts with the different value systems. He found that social brands work well in countries with a high power distance because consumers in these cultures value status and social norms (Roth, 1995). Functional brand images work best in societies with a high uncertainty avoidance in which consumers spend a great deal of time avoiding risks and preventing future issues (Roth, 1995). In the United States, where power distance is very high, these advertisements would not be quite so effective. Finally, societies high in individualism respond best to sensory images that emphasize "variety, novelty and individual gratification" (Roth, 1995, p. 166). Roth's (1995) research laid a good foundation for further research on how to specialize brands to best fit a country's specific needs and desires.

The Chinese Market

Hanschen and Wyrwoll did extensive research in 2007 about the ease of entering China's market. They found that China is the world's largest and most challenging emerging world market. In size, China ranks third in the world behind Russia and Canada but is vastly more populated than either of the other two (Hanschen & Wyrwoll, 2007). Varying geographical characteristics, changing climates, and cultures that differ between

villages require that firms entering this complicated market must have a good balance of countrywide brand management strategy (Hanschen & Wyrwoll, 2007). Within these varying geographic regions lie many smaller and larger provinces. Each is in a different stage of market development and most have a separate set of governing rules or legislation (Hanschen & Wyrwoll, 2007). Their research states that China has a two-sided character meaning that it is "one of the most interesting and promising growth markets for companies, while at the same time involving a great deal of risk" (p. 233).

Chan, Ireland and Yu (2007) studied China's populations across different villages and provinces and found that while differences exist, there is no doubt that China's middle class is growing and that this market will soon have a large impact on the world's markets. Their research stated that "it's almost as if China has no present, only an impending future" (p. 126). China's immense growth has produced a new type of modern Chinese consumer. These new consumers have more sophisticated tastes and are careful spenders (Liu, 2002). This newly affluent group of Chinese consumers is torn between two opposing wants/needs: the desire to gain financially and socially, and the rigid hierarchical social structure that requires conservatism in all areas of Chinese life. A large portion of this new consumer group is more specifically termed "Chinese new-generations," and drives much of the revenue for new, innovative products in China, especially where technology is concerned (Chan, Ireland & Yu, 2007). Chinese new-generations have very specific views about advertising. Chan, Ireland and Yu (2007) state that Chinese new-generations believe advertising tends to confuse their choices and is making them a nation of conformists. While they don't agree that advertising is necessarily false, they do not believe it presents an inaccurate picture of reality.

Similar to the population, China's brands are growing and gaining strength. Strong local reputations may be hard for foreign firms to maintain as China's corporate sector develops more sophisticated brand strategies across the country (Fombrun & Pan, 2006). China's economy already holds an impressive record; China is the first world economy to make the switch to capitalism without also transitioning to a democratic form of government (Chan, Ireland & Yu, 2007). Still, China's largely rural population, numbering about 660 million, does not "share this modern lifestyle [with other parts of the country] and some percentage do not aspire to it" (Chan, Ireland & Yu, 2007, p. 7).

Since China is the largest emerging market, there is a lot of research available on how to advertise and market in China, and each of these components about the country and culture provides information about the type of advertising that is successful. Culturally, the Chinese are high context and emotional (Pae, Samiee and Tai, 2001). Advertising used here often utilizes indirect and ambiguous messages or images. On the other hand, European and American cultures are analytical and action-oriented, requiring detailed information and providing yet another challenge when entering the Chinese market. Doctoroff (2005) states that the first instinct of the Chinese is to prevent and avoid disastrous situations. Second is the goal of escaping the possibilities of such situations via dreams and fantasies. Given both of these facts, Doctoroff (2005) advocates that advertisements should never portray Chinese real-life scenarios so as not to serve as reminders of daily problems. The younger Chinese generations also seek novelty and material progress, but are generally skeptical toward advertising, providing a challenge for brands seeking establishment in these areas (Liu, 2002). For this younger generation,

advertisements featuring Western faces are appealing because they are associated with prosperity and higher status (Chan, Ireland & Yu, 2007).

Advertising in Brazil

One of the newer entrants to the world market is Brazil. In fact, the United States and Brazil have a long record of increasing trade, as each is the largest market on their respective continents (Hyman, Tansey & Zinkhan, 1990). Brazil's communication markets opened early to foreign markets with the creation of the first Brazilian newspaper in London in 1808 (Friedrich, 2002). By 1966, eight US agencies produced half of all advertising seen in Brazil, and ninety-nine percent of Brazil's advertisements were sponsored by foreign capital (Friedrich, 2002). Brazil continues to grow on the world stage with native consumers eager to partake of the lifestyles portrayed in foreign-produced advertisements (Friedrich, 2002).

Advertising in India

India is second most-populated country in the world behind China - over a billion people are squeezed between its borders (O'Barr, 2008). Companies entering the Indian market have faced an array of interesting challenges. First, only a small percentage of the Indian population is affluent enough to afford international brands. Lieberthal and Prahalad (1998) referred to this group as Tier 1. Their research reported that the lower two tiers, while possibly interested in international brands, were held back by limited resources and often remained loyal to local brands (Lieberthal & Prahalad, 1998). Still today, only a small percentage of the Indian population is able to participate in an economy of mass consumption. Even purchasing a soft drink or a bar of soap can be considered a luxury for this group (O'Barr, 2008). In addition to this challenge, India has

no single congruent language and a host of different cultures, belief systems and traditions. Media in India utilize over twenty-four different languages in marketing and advertising campaigns in order to reach the largest audience possible (O'Barr, 2008). Markets for certain products may not exist at all. For example, Kellogg went to India to sell cereal and found that succeeding at this task meant changing the eating habits of Indian consumers (Lieberthal and Prahalad, 1998). McDonald's had to completely change its menu in order to interest those customers in India that consider the cow a very sacred animal (O'Barr, 2008). O'Barr (2008) advocates that modern advertising in India must seek to balance the old and the new. As an independent nation, India is a mere sixty years old but boasts a civilization with a history of over 5,000 years. According to a commercial for the *Times of India*, there are two facets of India that advertisers must seek to reach: "one that eagerly anticipates the forces of change and the other that holds onto deeply ingrained traditions" (O'Barr, 2008, p. 3).

Advertising in Nigeria

Another rising star on the world stage is Africa, specifically Nigeria. Martin Sorrell, CEO of the world's largest advertising company (WPP) said that all of WPP's "major clients, as they are looking for geographical expansion opportunities, have Africa and the Middle East high up on their priority list, if not at the top" (Bender & Vranica, 2010). In their report, Bender and Vranica (2010) cite the reason for this growth as an advertising market driven by telecom companies, financial services firms and makers of consumer products. They also report that agencies are finally expanding beyond South Africa, which is good news for growing markets like Nigeria. According to their research, last year Nigeria's market grew by twenty percent – drawing business with its

vast natural resources, specifically oil. With such a flood of business, advertisements in Nigeria have to be written in five languages to accommodate the increased diversity of culture (Bender & Vranica, 2010). Patrick Ehringer said his agency will "bulk up in Nigeria because of the volume of business that's going on there" (Bender & Vranica, 2010).

Advertising in Russia

In Russia, advertising has been around for many years. Originally, all advertising in Russia passed through the Ministry for Foreign Trade to Vneshtorgreklama – the Russian agency responsible for re-producing foreign ads, changing the language, and placing them in the appropriate local or national media (Andrew, Durvasula & Netemeyer, 1994). In the last fifteen years, advertising in Russia has made giant steps forward with thousands of new Russian agencies opening in addition to more than a dozen Western-based agencies (Ustinova, 2006). There have been a few surprises for these Western agencies upon entry. Many say they are shocked by "the number of signs and labels in English and the number of English words that creep into everyday Russian" (Ustinova, 2006, p. 269).

Andrew, Durvasula and Netemeyer (1994) found that while many Russians preferred Western advertisements to those produced locally, they were frustrated by the sudden onslaught of advertising when some products were not readily available at the time. Today, with Russia' growth in technology and mass media, Western advertisements are much better received (Ustinova, 2006). In 1994, when Russia was undergoing this major expansion, even with some products not available in the country, Russians held a

more positive attitude toward advertising in general than US consumers (Andrews, Durvasula & Netemeyer).

The Coca-Cola Company

Coca-Cola, a prime example of a global company, has successfully entered each of the markets mentioned previously. While there have been some bumps along the way, Coca-Cola remains a leading example of how to advertise internationally. In fact, about ten years ago over forty percent of Coca-Cola's market was already overseas, specifically in Asia, but growing in other areas as well (Lieberthal & Prahalad, 1998). Even though Coca-Cola has a large share in international markets, nationally owned companies continue to hold the largest market share within their own countries. In China, local soda company Wahaha leads Coca-Cola and Pepsi in sales, especially in parts of rural China where local products are still preferred (Badal, Melewar & Small, 2006).

In India, Coca-Cola took an early fall to Pepsi, who had a more specialized marketing strategy and appealed to Tier 2 consumers as well as the more affluent (Lieberthal & Prahalad, 1998). A Coca-Cola executive told the *Wall Street Journal* that "we're so successful in international business that we applied a tried and true formula in India…and it was the wrong formula to apply in India" (Lieberthal & Prahalad, 1998). Following the hire of a new vice president, Coca-Cola started to gain ground in India again. The company followed Pepsi's lead, employing well-known Cricket players to appear in advertisements and giving generously to sponsorship of local competitions. Shunu Sen, former Marketing Director at Unilever, commented on Coca-Cola's success saying, "Coke's advertising now seems to be more innovative and appealing to customers

because it is more relevant and covers areas that appeal to youth audiences" (Lieberthal & Prahalad, 1998).

Coca-Cola has applied the above strategy in Africa as well, specifically during the 2010 World Cup. Coca-Cola sponsored the production of K'Naan's song *Waving Flag* that became the anthem for the Cup. In order to reach the largest amount of people, Coca-Cola translated the song into eighteen different "celebration mixes," each in a different language and tailored to a specific country (Tetzeli, 2010). Many of the mixes featured local artists singing the lyrics in their own language. The strategy meshed well with Coca-Cola's personal branding strategy.

Research Questions

Global advertising is becoming an increasingly important part of any company's strategy in emerging foreign markets. As shown in the studies discussed previously, each country has specific challenges that come with marketing and advertising in its markets. Some countries provide extensive challenges within their boundaries, like China, whose villages are individually unique (Hanschen & Wyrwoll, 2007), and Nigeria, whose population speaks more than five different languages (Bender and Vranica, 2010). These specific differences raise the question of whether or not a single advertising strategy is the most successful means of entering these emerging markets. Lieberthal and Prahalad (1998) claim that the most successful multinational companies are those that take extensive time getting to know the people and the culture around them, in order to avoid mistakes like the one Coca-Cola made in India.

As shown in the studies reviewed, basic differences in each country may prevent a standardized advertising approach from being used. An advertisement released in Russia

faces more strict governmental restrictions than one in Nigeria (Andrews, Durvasula & Netemeyer, 1994), and the Nigerian advertisement would need to be translated into five languages in order to reach most every portion of the population (Bender & Vranica, 2010). While the Coca-Cola Company has ultimately been successful in each of these emerging markets, local soft drink companies like Wahaha in China still hold the majority of the market share in several of these emerging international markets. This fact begs the question of whether Coca-Cola's global advertising strategy, while clearly successful, is the best approach to global advertising.

While extensive research has been done to investigate successful trends and advertising strategies in specific countries, more information is needed on what trends are emerging in global advertisements and whether or not multinational companies are actually utilizing the strategies mentioned in the research. This study seeks to increase the body of information on global advertising strategy by examining one successful multinational corporation (the Coca-Cola Company) and its strategy within six emerging markets worldwide. The goal of the research is to provide a basic knowledge of how one company utilizes advertising across cultures and whether or not specific aspects of culture are implemented or ignored. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What do trends in Coca-Cola's global advertisements in more than one market say about the nature of globalization within marketing strategies?

RQ2: Are specific elements of culture implemented or ignored within Coca-Cola's advertising strategies?

The following chapter will discuss the specific methods that will be used to evaluate the data and answer the research questions.

Chapter 3: Research Design

Scope of the Study

This study looked at advertisements from a single, successful, multinational corporation: The Coca-Cola Company. Only one corporation was chosen in order to provide a consistent institutional background for all the advertisements analyzed in the study and to allow the researcher to focus on the content of the advertisements without having to worry about variations in company mission or intent. The Coca-Cola Company has successfully entered many different global markets, which demonstrates the company's ability to utilize effective global advertising strategies. Coca-Cola's consistent, global success prompted the choice of the company's advertisements for analysis in this study.

The advertisements selected for this study were produced by Coca-Cola for use in the United States, Brazil, India, China, Russia, and Nigeria. Advertisements from the United States were included because the Coca-Cola Company originated there and U.S. advertisements provided a control group for the study. Other countries were selected because of their status as significant emerging world markets and to provide a sample of differing cultures and geographic locations. Each country was also experiencing a significant growth in advertising, which made it ideal for use in this study. Each advertisement was chosen based on a specific set of criteria, and a convenience sampling was used with Google search engine as the medium for selection.

Methodology of the Study

This study utilized both qualitative and quantitative content analysis to determine the underlying themes in global advertisements created by The Coca-Cola Company.

Content analysis was used to examine advertisements in each of the countries and identify trends. Stone, Dunphy, Smith and Ogilvie (1966) defined content analysis as "a research technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics within a text" (p. 5). According to Stemler (2001), "content analysis is a useful tool for examining trends and patterns." Further, Krippendorff (2004) asserted "art, images, maps, sounds…and even numerical records may be included as data – that is, they may be considered as texts – provided they speak to someone about phenomena outside of what can be sensed or observed" (p. 19). Weber (1990) stated that content analysis can be used to "reflect cultural patterns of groups, institutions, or societies" (p. 9) which is in line with the theoretical foundation of this study.

Content analysis was determined to be the most effective method for this study because the research sought to further explore Coca-Cola's advertising strategies by looking at a variety of different advertisements across campaigns, countries and time periods. Qualitative content analysis allowed the researcher to develop a method of coding by looking at specific elements that were already present in Coca-Cola advertisements. Quantitative content analysis was then used to determine the frequency of these elements and provided the researcher with more concrete results. Holsti (1969) stated that "the method is, broadly speaking, the scientific method" (p. 3). However, qualitative content analysis has also proven to be effective, especially in ethnographic research. Supporters of qualitative analysis profess, "each body of text is unique, affords multiple interpretations, and needs to be treated accordingly" (Krippendorff, p. 87). In either method, Krippendorff (2004) strongly advocated that results of content analysis must be replicable and valid in order for the method to be deemed reliable. Weber (1990)

stated "different people should code the same text in the same way" (p. 12). For the purpose of this study, advertisements were analyzed qualitatively to determine specific elements that appeared. The results of this original analysis were then analyzed quantitatively to provide a greater level of accuracy. Kerlinger (1964) says it best, stating, "Content analysis, while certainly a method of analysis, is more than that. It is…a method of observation. Instead of observing people's behavior directly, or asking them to respond to scales, or interviewing them, the investigator takes the communications that people have produced and asks questions of the communications" (p. 544).

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used for this study. RQ1 asked the researcher to determine *what* information could be gathered from an analysis of the advertisements selected. In order to answer this question, it was necessary to determine what information was already present in the advertisements selected. The most appropriate method for identifying what information appeared frequently within an advertisement was a quantitative method. RQ2 sought to determine if cultural elements were used in Coca-Cola advertisements. Examples of such cultural elements include symbols of public spirit, distinguished national figures, or representations of prominent moments in the nation's history. Since the *frequency* of *specific* elements needed to be determined, a quantitative method was also most appropriate to answer this question.

The final research question (RQ3) asked what themes are present within Coca-Cola's global advertisements. The best way to determine this was a qualitative method. This allowed specific themes to emerge throughout the coding process which was most appropriate for reaching a conclusion (Krippendorff, 2004).

Development of the Coding Mechanism

Codes for this study were developed based on Weber's (1990) guidelines on developing a reliable and valid system of coding. The following steps were included in his methods for content analysis (Weber, 1990, p. 23):

- Define the recording units

- Assess accuracy or reliability

- Test coding on a sample

- Revise the coding rules

- Define the categories

The researcher defined the recording units as the elements being noted in each of the advertisements (e.g. "Human Presence"). Once the recording units were created, they were separated into different categories, outlined in Appendix A. The coding was tested using the researcher and one other colleague participant in order to assess the reliability of the codes.

In step one, the researcher made a list of codes thought to be applicable to any advertisement that could provide further information about the strategy behind it. In step two, the researcher tested the coding mechanism on six of the actual advertisements to determine if they were applicable. Certain codes were thrown out if they could not be easily defined and identified within an advertisement. Tests were performed to ensure the reliability of the results (see below). Based on Krippendorff's (2004) belief that reliable units are coded the same by different people, step three called for the coded answers of both testers to be compared. The researcher and colleague revised the list as necessary for codes that were understood differently or hard to identify. Definitions were

created to more specifically explain the codes chosen. The researcher and colleague then performed the test-retest method until reliability was confirmed. For step four, once the specific list of codes was created, the researcher placed the codes into categories, providing an easier definition of the results. Finally, once reliability of the coding mechanism was determined, in step five, the researcher coded the entire sample of advertisements from each of the six countries.

The final coding instrument can be found in Appendix A.

Reliability and Validity

The researcher applied two methods to test the coding mechanism for reliability. The first method used was test-retest reliability. The researcher tested the same six advertisements a second time to see if the coding would produce identical results. A day was added between the test runs to limit the likelihood of performing the test based on simple recall. As a second method of testing reliability, a colleague was chosen to test and retest the six selected advertisements as well. This individual was given the same time it took the first researcher to complete the initial coding. A day was also set between the test and retest by the colleague.

Face Validity. According to Weber (1990), it is common for content analysts to use face validity, the weakest form of validity available to researchers. Weber described face validity as "the correspondence between investigators' definitions of concepts and their definitions of the categories that measured them" (p. 18). Codes in a content analysis appear to measure what they were intended to measure. However, in order for the results of content analysis to be truly valid, other forms of validity must be considered. This

study did not accept face validity as a way of determining whether or not results were valid.

Construct Validity. Weber (1990) described construct validity as the "generalizability of the construct across methods or measures" (p. 19). This idea correlates with Krippendorff's (2004) statement that elements need to be coded in the same way by different researchers in order for the results to be valid. This study addressed the issue of validity by testing the researcher's codes against those of a volunteer participant and revising them as needed.

Semantic Validity. Another challenge of the content analysis method is semantic validity. Krippendorff described semantic validity saying it exists when "persons familiar with the language and texts examine lists of words…placed in the same category and agree that these words have similar meanings or connotations" (as cited in Weber, 1990). Since coding of the advertisements in this study was done entirely by the researcher, semantic validity was addressed by creating specific definitions for any codes that could appear ambiguous and adding extensive notes in order for readers to clearly understand what each code measures. These definitions were developed and then revised based on the results of the test coding done by the volunteer researchers. The coding definitions can be found in Appendix A.

Procedure

A total of thirty-six advertisements were selected for this study. Each was selected from Cola-Cola advertisements that appeared at the top of the list in a Google Images search. The researcher chose this method of selecting advertisements because it gave a random, objective selection of the advertisements available from each country. This

method is what Rubin (2009) referred to as an accidental or convenience sample. She stated that this type of sampling occurs when researchers use "participants who happen to be available. Surveys done in college classes or by intercepting shoppers in malls are examples of this sampling technique" (Rubin, 2009, Chapter 9, Section 7). In this case, a similar method of selections was used, but the sample contained advertisements found by using Google's search engine. By asking Coca-Cola or any other person to provide a selection of advertisements, objectivity would have been lost. Each type of advertisement was searched using a variation of the following search words, "(*blank*) Coca-Cola ad/advertisement," for example, "Russian Coca-Cola ad/advertisement." For the purpose of this study, each advertisement that was utilized was produced as a print advertisement for either a billboard or a magazine. In order to determine the type of advertisement and the country in which it was displayed, each was traced back to its original online source. Advertisements for this study were limited to those found in print and outdoor displays (billboards, posters, etc.). It was likely these types of advertisements would be most readily available for study, especially in emerging markets. Television, radio, and online advertisements would be less frequent in emerging markets where the mediums necessary for distribution are less accessible to consumers.

Chapter 4: The Study

Introduction

This study seeks to better understand the methods and strategies that The Coca-Cola Company uses to localize advertising in emerging foreign markets by using the study of semiotics. Semiotics is the study of how signs and symbols are used to create meaning. In relationship to advertising, Dr. John Caputo discusses semiotics in a study of McDonald's strategies (Alfino et al., 1998). The assumption is that an image cannot have meaning in itself but instead has a meaning assigned to it by a consumer. Advertisers seek to use symbols and images to create a specific meaning for their audience. By coding and measuring the symbols and images used within various global Coca-Cola advertising campaigns, this study provides insight into what strategies The Coca-Cola Company has used to try to create meaning for various targeted consumer markets.

This chapter explains and defines all aspects of the coding mechanism used to analyze the advertisements that were selected for this study, followed by the results produced. Lastly, this chapter contains a discussion of the findings in greater detail.

Data Analysis

The following categories and codes were developed for the purpose of this study:

(Character, Item, Place, Product, Talent, Product/Character, Product/Item, Product/Place, Product/Talent)

Product Present

(Yes, No)

Human Presence

(Yes, No)

(Male, Female)

(Child, Youth, Middle Age, Elder, N/A)

Copy

(Yes, No)

(Chinese, English, Indian, Portuguese, Russian, Chinese/English, Other)

Headline

(Yes, No)

Amount of Copy

(Less than 10 words, 10-20 words, Paragraph, Paragraph+, N/A)

Keywords

(1, 2, 3, 4, 5+, N/A)

Color Scheme

(Brand Palette, Extension of Brand Palette, Not Brand Palette)

Call to Action

(Yes, No)

Presence of Living Creatures

(Yes, No)

Logos Present

(Yes, No)

Number of Logos

(1, 2, 3, 4)

Cross Promotion

(Yes, No)

Scene

(Fiction, Reality, Other)

The following definitions can be used to further understand the meanings assigned to the more ambiguous codes for the purpose of this study. These codes were developed by the researcher based on personal advertising knowledge and experience within the field, and review of the advertisements. A separate coder selected by the researcher was asked to code the advertisements to test for validity and reliability:

ADVERTISEMENT THEME

Achievement: The main design element of the advertisement suggests that the product will increase recognition by peers or society through fame or success.

Festivity: The main design element of the advertisement suggests that the product increases feelings of happiness or may cause celebration. Advertisements coded in this category may also display surprise or amazement.

Nationalism: The main design element of the advertisement suggests that the product is related to strong feelings about the country or government. Advertisements coded in this category may also portray a community focus.

Satisfaction: The overall feeling of the advertisement or the person within the advertisement portrays a fulfillment of needs related to the consumption of the product. Personal/overall feel may give a sense of wellbeing or contentment.

Seduction: The main design element of the advertisement suggests that the product may increase personal appeal or attract attention from members of the preferred sex. Advertisements coded in this way may also portray the ideas of confidence or pretention.

Other: The main design element of the advertisement is not suggestive of any particular feeling or theme.

DESIGN ELEMENT

Note on Design Element Coding: In order for a specific advertisement to be coded as one of the following elements, that element must be the focal point of the advertisement.

Design: a mixing of ambiguous shapes and colors that provides a visual effect or appeal to the audience but is not representative of an object, person or place;

Graphic: any design element in the form of an object or being that is digitally re-created; for example, a cartoonish character, a logo, or an object that appears to be, but is not, photographed;

Photo: any photograph taken of an actual occurrence or person used within the advertisement;

CENTRAL IMAGE

Character: The focal point of the advertisement is any animated figure (e.g. an avatar or cartoon) advocating for the product within the advertisement.

Item: The focal point of the advertisement is a physical item (e.g. a vase or a chair) that is not a Coca-Cola product, a human being, or a physical, recognizable place.

Place: The focal point of the advertisement is a photograph or representation of a specific and recognizable place in the world that holds some meaning for the message.

Product: The focal point of the advertisement is a Coca-Cola product in physical form: a bottle, can or any line of product (e.g. Coke Zero). The product can be shown in a photograph or as a re-created graphic.

Talent: The focal point of the advertisement is an actor/actress hired to play the role of consumer or advocate within the advertisement.

NATIONALITY

Local: Person(s) featured in the advertisement appear to be of a race/ethnicity/background/color that is native to the country in which the advertisement appears.

Western: Person(s) featured in the advertisement appear to be of a race/ethnicity/background/color that is native to North America, specifically the United States and culture of consumption within that society.

Other: Person(s) featured in the advertisement are not distinguishable by race/ethnicity/background/color.

AGE

Child: Person(s) featured in the advertisement appear to be younger than 13 years old (teenage).

Youth: Person(s) featured in the advertisement appear to be between the ages of 13 and 35.

Middle Age: Person(s) featured in the advertisement appear to be between the ages of 35 and 85.

COLOR SCHEME

Brand Palette: Colors used in the advertisement are part of the brand's accepted color shades and hues.

Extension: Colors used in the advertisement are a slight variation of the brand's accepted color shades and hues.

Not Brand Palette: Colors used in the advertisement are completely opposite or contrasting to the colors accepted within the brand palette.

SCENE

> **Fictional:** Advertisement displays people, beings, events, places or scenarios that could NOT exist in real life.
>
> **Reality:** Advertisement displays people, beings, events, places or scenarios that could exist in real life.

ADDITIONAL

> **Government or National Symbols:** The advertisement displays logos, emblems, colors or symbols of the country (and its government) in which the advertisement is produced.

Results of the Study

Some significant results are described below. The full brand code chart can be found in Appendix A.

RESULT 1: PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ADVERTISEMENTS EXHIBITING SPECIFIC THEMES

The results of this coding illustrate what theme or themes are present in each of the markets of the advertisements studied. The results highlight the fact that festivity, among other themes, are present in multiple countries and are not isolated occurrences by which a specific theme was used for one country. Festivity was a theme present in almost forty percent of the advertisements studied, by far the majority theme present in Coca-Cola's advertisements, according to this research. Satisfaction was present in approximately twenty percent of the advertisements coded. Nationalism or other themes were also present in less than twenty percent of the advertisements studied. Achievement and seduction were each present in only two of the advertisements studied.

The results demonstrate that Coca-Cola might be developing a global advertising method rooted in the belief that different demographics are interested in the same rational or emotional appeals. One specific example of this is demonstrated in a Coca-Cola advertisement displayed in a Chinese store window. As discussed in Chapter Two, the Chinese are largely a high context and emotional people (Pae, Samiee and Tai, 2001). This particular advertisement shows this plainly and reinforces the results of the "festivity" theme; the advertisement features a number of Tibetan people, arms in the air, on the steep descent of a roller coaster. An advertisement from India provides another example of Coca-Cola's aim for festivity. It includes a male and female, both holding bottles of Coca-Cola with smiles on their faces, and references the website: myenjoyzone.com. Because the advertisement lacks other props, scenery, or aesthetics, one possible meaning could be that all one needs is a Coca-Cola to find happiness.

RESULT 2: PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL ADVERTISEMENTS INCLUDING COCA-COLA LOGO AND/OR PRODUCT

In more than eighty percent of the advertisements studied, at least one Coca-Cola product was included within the print, poster, or billboard, and it was the central image in fifty-six percent of the advertisements. A related result showed that in one hundred percent of the advertisements studied, at least one Coca-Cola logo was included in the image or photograph. A significant finding, however, was the number of advertisements that included multiple logos. Seven of the advertisements included in this research contained three or more logos.   One example of this is an advertisement that was used in Brazil. There is one product with the logo in the foreground and another being used as a

prop by the talent. Additionally, two of the trademark Coca-Cola logos are used as layered elements/textures in the background.

RESULT 3: PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL ADVERTISEMENTS
EXHIBITING HUMAN PRESENCE

One aspect of this study highlighted the percentage of coded advertisements that contained a human presence and their genders. The results found that over half of the advertisements studied had a human presence, and the presence of males and females in these advertisements were approximately equal. These findings show that while design, animal presence, or other factors can be important components of an advertising strategy, human presence is highly relatable for countries worldwide and is therefore used with great frequency. This follows Stuart Hall's Theory of Cultural Studies, when he argued that, as humans, we create meaning based on our experiences and the culture that surrounds us (Hall, 1980). These results would suggest that consumers find meaning in advertisements featuring humans because they can relate it to their own experiences and culture.

RESULT 4: PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ADVERTISEMENTS
FEATURING HUMAN PRESENCE NATIVE TO THE COUNTRY

This study discovered that the presence of people native to a country or culture is much more significant to the presence of non-native people in the selected advertisements. Almost seventy-five percent of the advertisements studied that contained a human presence featured a person or persons native to that culture. Less than fifteen percent featured someone that seemed to be from a more Westernized culture. More specifically, each of the advertisements from China and Nigeria that featured a human

presence was native to their respective cultures; however, the advertisements from Russia, Brazil, and India featured some talent that was native and some that appeared to be of Western, or American, influence.

RESULT 5: PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ADVERTISEMENTS
FEATURING AGE GROUPS

The fifth result demonstrates if a specific age category was used more often than others within different countries, or if Coca-Cola Company prefers a certain category to others in their advertising strategy. Over fifty percent of the advertisements studied that contained a human presence had a person of the ages thirteen to thirty-five. One Brazilian advertisement for Coca-Cola clothing shows a young adult female splashing through ocean water. An advertisement used in China includes a teenaged girl with headphones, listening to the fizzing of her glass of Coca-Cola. Approximately twenty-five percent of the humans present in the advertisements studied consisted of someone between the ages thirty-five and seventy. One Indian advertisement, for example, shows a barbershop where middle-aged men are giving haircuts to patrons; one of the barbers has crafted a Coca-Cola bottle into a spray bottle for water. While children and people older than seventy were present in a select few of the advertisements, the results would suggest that youth or middle age categories are the preferred method and desired demographic of Coca-Cola's global advertising.

RESULT 6: PERCENTAGE OF COPY DISPLAYED IN
TOTAL ADVERTISEMENTS

The coding for copy present in the advertisements studied resulted in almost seventy percent containing copy. Of the advertisements that contained copy, the large

majority, over seventy-five percent, contained less than ten words of copy. If there were more than ten words, it most often included a paragraph or more of copy. This result was a little bit contradictory to general advertising strategies in China, where advertisements tend to be more indirect and ambiguous, as discussed in Chapter Two. However, an example of one Chinese advertisement for Coca-Cola contained the phrase, "Make it real," which supports Doctoroff's statement that the Chinese often escape negative situations via dreams and fantasies (2005).

Chapter Two highlights the presence of Western appearance as an increasing advertising strategy in Russia. One way to include a Western presence is by using copy in English. For example, one advertisement used in Russia contained the words, "It's the real thing." According to the results from this study, it is possible that the use of copy was frequent because it is one way to feature a Western presence in global advertising.

Discussion

Advertising is one of the most culture-bound elements of the business model and the Coca-Cola Company has successfully used advertising to gain acceptance of its products in emerging countries all over the world. This study sought to better understand Coca-Cola's advertising strategy and to gain insight into how these strategies and messages have impacted the success of Coca-Cola products within emerging countries. As a company's success in new markets is largely dependent on knowledge of the market and its ability to reach audiences with different standards and beliefs, Coca-Cola's success makes it a good company to research when considering how advertising and culture interact to create product success.

The results of this study indicate that Coca-Cola's global advertising strategy focuses on four major concepts:

1. Portrayal of the "happiness" brand, which is a universal emotion

2. Frequent use of the product/company logo

3. Advertisements that are straightforward with little, if any, copy, and the presence of English as the primary language used

4. Targeting the specific demographic of a country using people of a native race

The "happiness" brand

The first concept most clearly evident in a large majority of the thirty-six advertisements analyzed was satisfaction or festivity. In addition, these themes hold the highest percentage of any present theme in each country looked at in the study. The results support Tetzeli's (2010) discussion of Coca-Cola where he states, "Every brand at Coca-Cola is associated with a central idea or theme. Coke… is associated with happiness" (p.1). Coca-Cola is presenting the idea to its consumers in every country that drinking this soda creates feelings of happiness and satisfaction. While this is not harmful, there may be concern for which kind of happiness a specific consumer should be striving. In some third-world countries such as India or Brazil, not all members of the population can aspire to the Western ideas of happiness displayed in some of the advertisements from United States companies (Liu, 2002).

Viewing the first result, Coca-Cola's focus on "happiness," through the lens of the Diffusion Theory of Innovation provides interesting insight into the results. The Innovation Decision Process discussed by Rogers (1995) moves innovations through a

series of five stages. In each of the countries used for the purpose of this study, Coca-Cola has already reached stage five, confirmation, in which consumers in the society generally accept the product. The advertisements coded belong to stage two: persuasion. Coca-Cola appears to have a straightforward method of persuading consumers across the globe to adopt its products. It is interesting to note Coca-Cola's methods of persuasion given the fact that the company has successfully moved through Rogers' five stages of adoption. A combined forty-five percent of advertisements displayed satisfaction or a festive theme, tying into Coca-Cola's branding strategy of selling "happiness," a universal emotion. It is unsure whether choosing this emotion was originally a global strategy, but it certainly seems to have worked in Coca-Cola's favor.

Alfino, Caputo and Wynyard's (1998) theory of McDonaldization provides further support of the first result- festivity as a focal point of advertisement. In the case of McDonald's, research showed that the company was not selling just hamburgers but instead a particular lifestyle as its commodity (Alfino et al., 1998). McDonald's sold the message of "food, folks, and fun," similar to Coca-Cola's portrayal of "happiness" as a lifestyle. These two corporations and their advertising strategies provide insight into the study of semiotics. Semiotics is the study of signs and how signs are used to create meaning in any communication medium, advertisements included (Alfino et al., 1998, p. 4). In *McDonaldization Revisited*, the author discusses an experience of shopping while traveling outside the United States and desiring a McDonald's cheeseburger. While McDonald's food may not be of superior quality, it sells an American experience and familiarity that is comforting (Alfino et al., 1998, p. 7). Essentially, McDonald's has created this great myth surrounding its products that is much larger than the value of the

products themselves (Alfino et al., 1998). Coca- Cola seeks to implement a similar method by portraying happiness in all of its advertisements and through its messages, giving its customers a sense of what "happy" should look like. Coca-Cola advertisements show aspects of happiness through smiles, friends and joyful events; however, the study of semiotics would suggest that one must look past the denotative level, the first signs of significance from a symbol or image. To better ensure that a brand is displaying symbols that speak to a specific feeling or emotion, additional time and research must be done to understand the items that will speak to individual markets. This research more likely results in communication at the connotative level hypothesized by Alfino, Caputo and Wynyard in their discussion of semiotics (1998, p. 19).

Use of the product/logo

The second result revealed by this study showed that Coca-Cola uses its product or logo as a central image in its advertising strategy. Regardless of which design element is used, a Coca-Cola product (usually a bottle or a can) is featured as the central image in eighty-one percent of the advertisements. In every advertisement coded, Coca-Cola's logo appears, in some as many as four times. This is a very clear persuasion strategy alongside the fact that seventy-six percent of the advertisements contained less than ten words of copy. In Rogers' Theory of Perceived Attributes, the fact that Coca-Cola was accepted into the societies of the countries studied relates to the idea that consumers judge less complex innovations more favorably. By largely using its logo and products, consumers may become accustomed to seeing the product and the emotion of the featured person without any other messaging necessary. No changes would have to be made to advertisements in order to distribute them in different countries (Paie, Saimee & Tai,

2001). Stuart Hall would be greatly disappointed by the idea of distributing the same messages and images to separate cultures, thereby taking away their freedom of personal choice and telling them what they should believe or how they should act (Hall, 1980). However, Rogers' (1995) Theory of Diffusion of Innovations would support this because, regardless of whether or not culture-specific elements are used within the advertisement, the strategy is persuasive and results in successful implementation and confirmation.

A discussion of McDonaldization would agree with the result demonstrating the use of frequent logos as well. By inundating audiences with a single image, that image becomes familiar and comfortable in the same way that McDonald's universal advertising themes came to represent something much larger – America and a lifestyle (Alfino et al., 1998). Similarly, by familiarizing consumers with its company logo, Coca-Cola develops in its customers a strong association with the Coca-Cola logo and happiness, increasing sales and popularity of its products. In all thirty-six advertisements studied, Coca-Cola displays its logo; in thirty-three percent of the advertisements, only one logo is displayed, but in forty-seven percent there are two. Two of the total advertisements feature four logos within a single advertisement. Logos appear on multiple products within the advertisement or separate from the scene pictured. Often, the Coca-Cola "swish" mark appears somewhere in the advertisement. The most creative use of this mark found in this study is in a Brazilian advertisement featuring a woman walking through the water and the water was moving in the form of the "swish." As this item was difficult to code for and is not considered part of Coca-Cola's official logo, it is not included in the official results of the study, but is worth noting.

The use of copy

The third result revealed by this study discusses the use of copy within the coded advertisements. Sixty-nine percent of the thirty-six advertisements feature any copy at all. Seventy-six percent of the advertisements feature less than ten words of copy. What these results say about the Coca-Cola Company is not completely certain. Since the largest percentage of advertisements coded display photographs, perhaps Coca-Cola wishes to let images send a greater message than any words. Again, this makes the advertising strategy a more standardized approach, with very little changes needed to distribute advertisements in various countries (Pae, Saimee & Tai, 2001). As a related observation, more than half of the advertisements from each of the countries that contain copy feature English as the main language. Though it wasn't a frequent occurrence, Coca-Cola also featured native languages in a few of the advertisements studied, especially in Brazil and China. These facts are in line with Hall's (1995) Culture Studies theory because they support a native audience's ability to make decisions based on their specific culture and not have another forced upon them. Four advertisements feature two languages in its copy. One was an advertisement used in the United States, featuring both Spanish and English. Two of the advertisements studied from China contained both English and a form of Chinese. The fourth example of this was an advertisement from Russia that featured both English and Russian.

The result that the majority of advertisements with copy used English, rather than the country's native language, supports the discussion in Chapter Two about the idealization of Western images, specifically in China, Brazil and Russia. Despite the fact

that culture-specific advertising is more effective in many countries, English is commonly seen in global advertisements (Friedrich, 2002). In Brazil, many consumers expect to see English words in advertisements because they associate their presence with an experience shared between the Western world and developing countries (Friedrich, 2002). A similar statement was made about how English copy is viewed in Chinese advertising; Chan, Ireland, and Yu suggested that advertisements featuring Western images are appealing because they are associated with prosperity and higher status (2007).

Targeting a demographic

The fourth result of this study supports Marquez's (1975) statement that advertising targeted to the native population will be more successful than a standardized approach (Pae, Saimee & Tai, 2002). Even though globalization is becoming a widely recognized idea in the world, Coca-Cola's advertising strategy proves that catering to the specific cultural needs and values of an audience still produces great results. Rogers (1995) listed "persuasion" as one of the necessary steps in his Diffusion of Innovations theory. In order to gain acceptance for its product in emerging countries, Coca-Cola used messages and images specific to the countries in which the advertisements were displayed. These advertisements were much more persuasive and successful because they catered specifically to the native audience and not to Western ideals. "Implementation" is listed as the next stage in the Diffusion of Innovations and this was clearly achieved as Coca-Cola now has over forty percent of its markets overseas (Lieberthal & Prahalad, 1998).

Percentages vary for the three design elements used in the study: design, graphic and photo. Based on the overall percentages, Coca-Cola does not seem to favor any one option in its global advertising strategies. However, in India, according to the results, photography holds the overwhelming majority. Almost every advertisement features a photographed talent or scene. It is interesting to note that only two advertisements out of the thirty-six that were studied feature celebrities. Further, one of the two advertisements featuring a celebrity is from India. The advertisement highlights Katrina Kaif, a popular Bollywood actress, enjoying a bottle of Coca-Cola. This supports Lieberthal and Prahalad's (1998) writings about Coca-Cola's strategy change in India: the company began employing well-known cricket players and other celebrities to feature in advertisements (p.134). The lack of celebrities present in the advertisements correlates with the lack of achievement coded in advertisement themes. It again seems as though Coke intentionally stays away from other themes and is consistent in portraying the idea that anyone can get satisfaction and pleasure from Coca-Cola's product. To further draw on this result, not all researchers would agree that including people native to that culture is the best approach for all countries. As discussed in Chapter Two, many Chinese people retreat to dreams and fantasies to escape the hardships of their reality. Doctoroff (2005) argues that companies advertising in China should stay away from portraying Chinese real life. It seems this is not the case in Indian advertisement, according to this study.

A deeper look at the nationality of the people in the advertisements reveals that even though Coca-Cola keeps the same central theme and similar central images for many of the advertisements, it adapts the nationalities of human figures to make the advertisements more appealing to local consumers. The great majority of advertisements

studied that contained human presence featured someone native to the target

demographic. The Theory of Perceived Attributes notes that consumers more favorably

judge innovations that have the attribute of compatibility, meaning they are compatible

with current practices and values held by the consumer or society (Rogers, 1995). For

Coca-Cola, portraying compatibility appears to mean that people featured in the

advertisement are often of a native race/background/ color/ethnicity in order to best relate

to consumers in a specific market and demographic.

Straubhaar built upon this assertion in his discussion by pointing out that "elites"

in a culture tend to prefer products that have a Western appearance; however, he suggests

that the lower, or "popular," classes prefer nationally or locally produced materials, and

Coca-Cola's strategy to advertise with native talent helps support this preference. Of the

advertisements that were studied, each of China's advertisements that included a human

presence featured someone native to its culture. These results are then likely consistent

with Straubhaar's belief about the popular classes, as China's population is largely rural,

about 660 million (Chan, Ireland & Yu, 2007, p.7).

A final note is that there were only two cases in the advertisements analyzed in

this study where items specific to different markets were present. These occurred in an

advertisement from the United States and one from India, each of which featured a living

creature other than a human being. These results seem contradictory to Lieberthal and

Prahalad's research, (1998) as they stated numerous examples of companies failing in

Indian markets because of a lack of understanding of sacred animals within the country.

 Caputo's discussion of semiotics and McDonaldization would suggest that Coca-

Cola's ability to use native standards and ideas in its advertising strategy still promotes its

general theme of happiness. As Neil Postman states, "Our genius lies in our capacity to make meaning through the creation of narratives that give point to our labors, exalt our history, elucidate the present, and give direction to our future," (as cited in Caputo, 2005, p.2). Coca-Cola essentially does this in its advertising through the use of persuasive images to change the audiences' perspective on their labors (buying Coca-Cola will improve their satisfaction) and give direction to their future (they will continue buying Coca-Cola to be happy).

Chapter 5: Summaries & Conclusions

Limitations

Because of the limited amount of advertisements that could be located for certain countries used in this study, only six advertisements were selected for each, with a total of thirty-six advertisements for the whole study. This limited the researcher's ability to accurately predict trends in Coca-Cola's global advertising study that a larger scope of advertisements would have offered. Additionally, a very general selection of advertisements was performed for this study. Results may have been more detailed had a specific campaign been researched across the companies selected.

Codes were based on Weber's guidelines for developing a reliable and valid system of coding (1990), but were selected according to the discretion of the researcher and assistant coder as to what would be most reliable, valid and accurate. Even though the results were quantifiable, content analysis does lack some validity because of how codes are selected for individual studies. While the researcher and one additional individual for accuracy tested the codes, greater validity could have been achieved using a greater number of coders.

Further Recommendations

The results of this study suggest that further research is needed on Coca-Cola's advertising strategy in the other four steps of the Innovation Decision Process developed by Rogers in 1995. While this study focused on the stage of persuasion, exploration of Coca-Cola's strategy in the stages of knowledge, decision, implementation and confirmation throughout the company's history in each of these countries would provide further insight into the results of this study.

Coca-Cola was the only company used for the purpose of this study because of its success in international markets. However, additional information could have been added had the results been compared to advertisements coded from Pepsi or a similar competitor. This comparison would provide insight into how Coca-Cola's successes compare to its competitors and how advertising strategy may have an effect on that success.

Taking the comparison one step further, it would be helpful to compare Coca-Cola against a company native to a specific country such as Wahaha in China. This comparison would provide information about how advertising strategy differs between the companies and how these strategies impact success in a specific country. It may also provide insight into changes that could be made in Coca-Cola's advertising strategy to make it more successful in reaching certain native audiences.

Conclusions

As suggested by Pae, Saimee and Tai (2001), Coca-Cola used numerous culture-based themes in its advertisements which has proven to be very successful based on the amount of its market that is based overseas. Use of these culture-based themes is not only very persuasive, but likely led to the implementation and confirmation of Coca-Cola products in many emerging countries as discussed by Rogers' (1995) theory of Diffusion of Innovations. This use of cultural themes also fits into Stuart Hall's (1980) Culture Studies theory by allowing native audiences to freely choose to accept or deny the product based on their own standards and cultural beliefs instead of those imposed on them by Western ideals.

Coca-Cola also did an overwhelmingly thorough job of encouraging brand recognition of their products by featuring a logo or product in every single advertisement used in this study. In some advertisements, the product or logo was the main focal point, which suggests that the overall strategy used is more standardized rather than specific. More advertisements could have featured languages native to the countries in which they were displayed. However, Coca-Cola has managed to brand its products in a way that not only sells bottles of soda, but that also sells an idea (happiness) and a lifestyle in the same way that McDonald's was able to create a lifestyle around cheeseburgers and French fries, with the occasional Play Place thrown in (Alfino et al., 1998). Along with the idea of happiness, Coca-Cola also carries with it the intrigue of an American company and the ideals of a Western way of life which may appeal to foreign countries even if they are not completely compatible (Alfino et al., 1998). Coca-Cola has successfully used a mix of advertising strategies to get its products adopted in a wide variety of emerging foreign countries. It will be interesting to see how the brand expands and grows moving forward.

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Appendix A

CATEGORY	CODE	DEFINITION
Theme	Satisfaction	The person within the advertisement or the overall feeling of the advertisement portrays a fulfillment of needs related to the consumption of the product. Personal/overall feel gives a sense of well-being or contentment.
	Seduction	The main design element of the advertisement is suggestive that the product may increase personal appeal or attract attention from members of the preferred sex. Advertisements coded as this may also portray the ideas of confidence or pretentiousness.
	Festive	The main design element of the advertisement is suggestive that the product increases feelings of happiness or may cause celebration. Advertisements coded in this category may also display surprise or amazement.
	Nationalistic	The main design element of the advertisement is suggestive that the product is related to strong feelings about the country or government. Advertisements coded in this category also portray a community focus.
	Achievement	The main design element of the advertisement is suggestive that the product will increase recognition by peers or society through fame or success.
	Other	The main design element of the advertisement is not suggestive of any particular feeling or theme.
Design Elements[1]	Graphic	Any design element in the form of an object or being that is digitally re-created. For example, a cartoonish character, a logo, or an object that appears, but is not photographed.
	Photograph	Any photograph taken of an actual occurrence or person within the advertisement
	Design	A mixing of ambiguous shapes and colors that provide a visual effect or appeal to the audience, but are not representative of an object, person or place.
Central Image	Product	The focal point of the advertisement is the physical Coca-Cola product in some form including a bottle, a can or line of Coca-Cola product (e.g. Coke Zero). The product can be

		shown in a photograph or as a re-created graphic.
	Talent	The focal point of the advertisement is an actor hired to play the role of consumer or advocate within the advertisement.
	Place	The focal point of the advertisement is a photograph or representation of a specific and recognizable place in the world that holds some meaning for the message.
	Character	The focal point of the advertisement is any human figure re-created graphically to act as a "talent" within the advertisement.
	Item	The focal point of the advertisement is a physical item (e.g. a vase or a chair) that is not the product and not a human being or physical, recognizable place.
	Product/Talent	Combination of above two in equal focus.
	Product/Character	Combination of above two in equal focus.
	Product/Item	Combination of above two in equal focus.
Product Present	Yes	
	No	
Human Presence (HP)	Yes	
	No	
(HP) Gender	Male	
	Female	
(HP) Age	Child	Person(s) featured in the advertisement appears to be younger than 13 years of age (teenage).
	Youth	Person(s) featured in the advertisement appears to be between the ages of 13 and 35.
	Middle Age	Person(s) featured in the advertisement appears to be between the ages of 35 and 70.
	Elder	Person(s) featured in the advertisement appears to be older than the age of 70.
Copy	Yes	
	No	
Copy Language	Chinese	
	English	
	Portuguese	
	Russian	
	Indian	
	Chinese/English	

	Other	
Headline	Yes	
	No	
Amount of Copy	Less than 10 words	
	10-21 words	
	Paragraph	
	Paragraph +	
	N/A	
# of Keywords	One	
	Two	
	Three	
	Four	
	Five +	
	N/A	
Color Scheme	Brand Palette	The colors used in the advertisement are part of the brand's accepted color shades and variations.
	Not Brand Palette	The colors used in the advertisement are completely opposite, contrasting, or do not follow the brand's accepted color shades and variations.
	Extension of Brand Palette	Colors used in the advertisements are a slightly different version of the brand's accepted color shades and variations.
Call to Action	Yes	
	No	
Presence of Living Creatures	Yes	
Logos Present	Yes	
	No	
Number of Logos	One	
	Two	
	Three	
	Four	
Cross Promotion	Yes	
	No	
Scene	Fiction	Advertisement displays people, beings, events, places or scenarios that could NOT exist in real

		life.
	Reality	Advertisement displays people, beings, events, places or scenarios that could exist in real life.
	Other	

[1] *A note on Design Element coding: In order for a specific advertisement to be coded as one of the elements in this category, that element must be the focal point of the advertisement.*