Summary BriefLogo Selection and Modification Guides: An Empirical International Validation

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Abstract

Brand elements, including: brand name, logo, slogan, colors, jingles and characters, can be considered as important determinants of brand awareness and brand image (Keller 1998; Schmitt 2000). In this study we investigate the effects of logo design characteristics on brand recognition and effect in the Chilean market. The overall conclusion is that the logo design characteristics (harmony, parallel, etc.) identified in the US based literature, do affect consumer responses on a cross-cultural setting, thus adding value to the original framework. There are certain variables though, that behave differently than expected when studied in an overseas setting.

Introduction

Brand elements, including: brand name, logo, slogan, colors, jingles and characters, can be considered as important determinants of brand awareness and brand image (Keller 1998; Schmitt 2000). In other words, according to the literature, brand elements, particularly brand visual elements, can help the creation and enhancement of brand equity if they fulfill several characteristics. Logos are particularly important because they are included in advertising, brochures, packaging, promotional material, sponsorships, and several other marketing communications. According to the literature, "good" logos should be recognizable, familiar, elicit appropriate and consensual meanings in the target market and generate positive affect in consumers (Robertson 1989, Giberson and Hulland 1994, Petr 1989).

In this paper we extend Henderson and Cote's (1998) research to an international setting. This is thought to be important, for in today's environment many of a brand's strategic alternatives and brand elements decisions need to take into consideration the potential to expand and compete globally. There already is some observational and empirical evidence that Latin-American consumer behavior varies relative to US consumers' behavior (see for example: Nicholls et al 2000). In particular, we replicated the study in a developing country such as Chile, to test the cross-cultural relevance and stability of US based logo guidelines in the context of a developing Latin-American nation. Chile provides a good setting for testing the stability of previous findings, because it is a developing nation, with a very stable and open economy, and represents (as manifested by the large number of recent corporate arrivals) a typical target market for expanding multinational corporations. Additionally, most of the other developing nations in the region the Southern Cone -- have been following the same development strategy started by Chile during the 70s and 80s. The overall conclusion is that the logo design characteristics identified in
the US-based literature, do affect consumer responses on a cross-cultural setting, thus adding value to the original framework. There are certain variables though, that behave differently than expected when studied in an overseas setting.