

The Impact of Culture on Advertising The Case of Chinese Advertising

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Abstract

Advertising is created in keeping with culture. Due to cultural differences between Western countries and China, advertising values are different. Therefore, the interpretation of the same commodity will have different results. As culture is always behind the creation and understanding of advertising, the impact of culture on advertising is to be discussed in this article. It is illustrated by a case study on advertisements for the mobile phone Huawei P8 in China and Western countries.

Keywords: *advertising, cultural differences, cultural values, the impact of culture, China*

Introduction

Culture is a main factor of human society, which develops with the advancement of society, with a profound influence on every member of society. It is the influence of various aspects, including the concept of the people's outlook on the world, the outlook on life and values, which impacts people's customs, religious beliefs, life, behavior, etc. Therefore cultural influence on human society is far-reaching and profound. As a product of social development, advertising is under the influence of culture. With the development of global economy, countries around the world are all involved in the international business. As an effective tool of promoting sales, advertising plays an important role in modern life. In today's globalized market, consumers have much more national consciousness and consumer behavior bears deep ethnic and cultural traits. Advertising has to adapt to the cultural tastes of the target audience, in line with their cultural habits, respecting their national customs. Multinational companies have developed effective global intercultural advertising communication strategies, namely localization and the balance of standardization strategy. Multinational companies should adapt to the target countries in order to meet the target market

needs as the starting point for the operation of a targeted brand management strategy.

In this paper, this process will be illustrated by the presentation of Huawei's campaign for its phone P8 both in China and in European countries.

Brief Presentation of Huawei Company

Huawei terminal company, formerly known as Huawei communications, for Huawei technologies co., LTD., a subsidiary, headquartered in Shenzhen city, Guangdong province of the People's Republic of China, generally refers to brand Huawei mobile phones, wireless data card, router, modem for Huawei terminal products. Huawei terminal is one of the four big business group of Huawei, focusing on the areas of communication terminal products. Huawei terminals was founded in 1993 and separated by wireless base station equipment and the technology used in WCDMA, CDMA, GSM, TD-SCDMA, LTE, PHS, video, access terminals, terminal application, and other areas of the multiple terminal, terminal products cover mobile phone, mobile broadband, fusion, fixed-line CPE, video and other forms.

Huawei terminals has the research and development center in the United States, Sweden, Russia, India, Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen, A chip research and development department is also set up in Zhubei region, Taiwan. Sales and service network of Huawei covered more than 70 countries. Huawei terminal products and services cooperate with 35 of the world's top 50 telecom operators, such as British telecom, Vodafone and Telefonica. Huawei is regarded as a strategic partner of the world's leading operators^[1].

Huawei is the world's second largest telecom equipment supplier, with \$945.8 billion revenue in 2011. Huawei is now on the list of the world top 500 enterprises, and is also the most international company in China. Huawei spends more than 110 billion RMB each year on R&D department, which takes more than 10% of the total revenue. Therefore, Huawei has achieved lots of technical breakthrough in telecommunication area. Huawei's smart phone brands contain Huawei Ascend and Huawei Honor, which are the world's top two smart phone brand-users.

^[1] <http://zh.wikipedia>

Advertisements of Huawei Ascend P8 in European countries

Huawei P8 was announced in London on 15 April, 2015. But Huawei's advertisements countdown had already started nearly one week before the official announcement. And all the pictures used in this chapter are from Huawei official website and screenshots of Huawei advertising video.



This is the countdown advertisement for 8 days. Because the announcement was in London, so Huawei took use of London Eye and its inverted reflection to simulate number 8. The advertisements show out both location and countdown of the announcement.



The countdown of 7 days shows that the sound quality of P8 is as excellent as a musical instrument saxophone. Huawei P8 built an independent team to research and develop the Hi - 6042 independent audio chipset. Apart from other manufacturers who use professional ESS analog-to-digital conversion chipset and combination of op-amp chipset, Huawei P8 has noticed that the mobile phone sound quality is very important to meet the consumers' demands.

The countdown of 6 days shows that P8 smart phone uses frameless 5.2-inch screen in the front, and it can show the whole world. The implied meaning of the picture is that the sea includes hundreds of rivers, at the same time means that though Huawei P8 you can see the whole world.

The countdown of 5 days shows that P8 can help to keep the beautiful moment forever. It is due to that the Huawei P8 raises the bar with an amazing 13MP rear camera producing stunning images every single time. With Optical Image Stabilisation, P8 ensures every picture you take is ultra-sharp^[2].



For the countdown 4, the picture shows two candles in the candlestick, it looks like the number 4. The countdown of 4 days shows that P8 can catch the lights and make use of the lights all around the world for taking pictures. This shows that Huawei P8 is more than a smart phone with a camera. It is a tool that unleashes your creative spirit. With the light

^[2] <http://www.huaweidevice.co.uk/devices/huawei-p8/>

painting feature you can sketch light tracks in the air to create spectacular and unique night shots. While real time preview allows you to choose the right exposure time for the perfect shot.

For the countdown 3, the picture shows one shoe and its inverted image looks like the number 3. The countdown of 3 days shows that with the Huawei P8's time lapse camera feature you can experience a new way of seeing the world around you. Using the new delayed photography function- you can take a photo at specific intervals and put them together to create and make a dynamic video with your own soundtrack.^[3]

For the countdown 2, the picture shows a graceful goblet full of wine and there is one light inside, the refraction exactly looks like number 2. The countdown of 2 days shows the one who chooses Huawei P8 is a fashion and premium setter.

The countdown of 1 day is a picture of a speaking trumpet. It means that the conference of Huawei P8 will be held ceremoniously. It also uses a simple picture to show the importance of the conference and wants to tell the whole world that Huawei P8 is coming.



^[3] <http://consumer.huawei.com/cn/mobile-phones/p8/>

Advertisements of Huawei Ascend P8 in China

Huawei P8 was officially announced in Shanghai on 22 April, 2015. Again, nearly one week before the conference, Huawei's advertisements countdown has already started, but the advertising pictures are totally different from the ones for London announcement. It makes special use of some Chinese elements to make it more attractive for Chinese consumers. For example the Arabic numerals from 1 to 9, in Chinese we have different writing forms which all have the same meaning.



The first picture shows that there are 8 days left, we can see the number eight written in yellow and the whole word means 'future' which means that Huawei P8 has a good future.

The second picture shows that there are 7 days left, also the number seven is written in yellow. This picture shows that Huawei P8 is much different from other mobile phones, making you elegant and outstanding. For the advertisements they use yellow color to write the numbers because Chinese think yellow is a symbol of right and power in the ancient times and all the clothes of emperors are in yellow. Yellow stands for imperial household. This time the product Huawei P8 has three colors: golden, silver and black, the golden one is a special design for Chinese.

The third one means six, there are 6 days left. It also means that all things alive are moving, Huawei P8 is endowed with camera experience elevated, with Optical Image Stabilization, making sure that every picture you take is ultra-sharp.



The first picture above means five, namely that there are 5 days left. It also means comprehension; the audience will understand the producer's intentions. With a frameless 5.2-inch screen on the front, a camera that sits flush with the back and only being 6.4 mm thin, the Huawei P8 strikes a perfect balance between beauty and comfort.

The next picture above means four, there are 4 days left. It also means sprinkle, waving before gold. Huawei P8 is made of more than 200 procedures finely, and you will feel elegant inside and outside it. Let the P8 brings you a shiny Homecoming.

The first picture below means three, there are 3 days left. It also means beautiful, P8 pleases you not only with the appearance. Besides P8 beautiful compact casing, it contains more powerful functions and configuration, claiming your life, through fingertip etc.



There are 2 days left. The first picture above also means fast. A whole new generation chipset combined with the upgrading of the system, brings an unprecedented sense of speed, can balance the power and performance, offering the best operating experience for you.

The second picture above means one, there is 1 day left and it also means sound. Bright and beautiful sound quality can lead to heart. Sound quality is the most unique voice of each phone. P8 high-energy timbre processing, rhythm each note, every sound waves, calls, music is a wonderful enjoyment.

Analysis of the Advertisements for the Product

The theme of Huawei P8 advertisement is "Homecoming"^[4].

P8 mobile phone is not only the continuation of the Huawei P series of minimalism aesthetics, but also strengthened the fluency of communication. What is more, it is a great breakthrough in mobile phone photography.

P8 lasted for P series minimalist aesthetics: the integration of the metal body, head has no obvious of photography, shows Huawei mobile phone technology complete, elegant and extreme. However, the integration of metal fuselage often leads to the difficulty of reception, the so-called "death grip". Huawei technology with its strong accumulation in the

^[4] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixueu2Uy3ok>

communications field, the launch of the "signal+", with dual antenna design and seamless intelligent switching technology to ensure the smooth communication, reconstructed the "balance" of science, technology and aesthetics.



One advertisement set up outside the Old Billingsgate, emphasizing the P8's success in photography, with its slogan: Embark on a journey of light with us.

Though the picture we can see one person is electing a thwart-wise number 8, this just wants to show the theme is Huawei P8 and also the new function of camera.



They invest more and add more fun elements to the camera. With the best low-light performing camera, consumer can capture their beautiful vision in low-light conditions. The light painting camera feature provides an artistic creative tool for young people.

"Homecoming" echoes of the P8 on images to explore the "concept of time." Homecoming, resulting in a "superposition" effect, Huawei mobile phone brand evolution time axis, the originally single head single vector linear time, the growing gap, suddenly paused and looked back once, memories.

To understand why the P6 Huawei mobile phone brand has spread worldwide, we have to consider that the main line of Huawei mobile phones P series has been reducing the "show hardware, show muscles, show run points" tone, while emphasizing on humanity and looking for brand culture basic points.^[5]



The background of "Homecoming" is the perception and understanding of time. In 2013, Huawei, as the world's largest telecommunications equipment suppliers, was on the "main channel" as it obtained the victory; in 2014, mobile terminal business representatives of huge success made Huawei brand more famous. Huawei has become one of the world leaders in technology.

^[5] Huawei Terminal CMO China, Yang Tuo

People say that Huawei has the best performance ever, the most balanced structure and the most beautiful time.

But the company's advertising is a shocking play which shows a gorgeous pair of ballet feet taking off dancing shoes, while the foot is scarred. Huawei recorded big achievements during the past 20 years, but behind the light and dazzle there are lots of pains taken.



Huawei P8 perceived exactly this kind of large scale structure of "Time superposition", in a new era which tries to reshape the logic of time. Huawei pratt&whitney distribution mechanism of interests, in the 28 years of high-speed growth, brought Huawei people material abundance. After more than 30 years of economic reforms in China, the Chinese society has become an affluent society as well.

Many people are seeking wealth, financial freedom or freedom of spirit. They are in search of a higher ideal, a more personal ambition. Huawei has expressed its opinion on this, looking back at the time of the beginner's mind, the time of growth, the dancers being exhausted by time. In the large scale structure superposition of "time", Huawei said: "in an age of great opportunity, don't be opportunistic".

Differences in Advertising between China and European Countries

The advertisement run in European countries just shows the function of Huawei P8. It says "Fire ignites passion". Passion always inspires creativity. If you have an idea, go out and make it happen. Free your imagination, and ignite your creativity, with the slim, sleek and beautiful new Huawei P8."



In the advertisement, they not only use several foreign languages, such as "Entdecke Deine Kreativität", which means discover your creativity, but also choose a local actor as a protagonist.



The advertisement in China below expresses the theme within ten seconds, the old photos make the protagonist recall "Homecoming".



It recalls the time when the protagonist and his partner took the train from Guiyang to Guangzhou, with a series of struggled memory, such as the swallowed trademark goods, the collective to see the TV live of Hong Kong return, until unlimited communications company listed. The protagonist eventually succeeded, and recalled "Homecoming" with his partner, while enjoying life.^[6]



An enterprise worldwide strategic vision is needed to develop, a nation needs to absorb the essence of the world culture to be more powerful, a company needs to establish global business ecosystem to

^[6] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixueu2Uy3ok>

development, the staff need a cosmopolitan ideas and skills to succeed. In the international marketing of enterprises, culture has a mutual influence, and cultural integration is the key to enterprise internationalization.

Suggestions for Advertising in China

Cross-national culture, especially the common and differences in national cultures, offers wider space for advertising creativity. But there are also new problems and challenges. According to the Chinese culture, there are several suggestions for advertising for western companies who want to enter the Chinese market.

Firstly, respect China's folk customs. Folk custom is a kind of comprehensive cultural phenomenon, which is also the embodiment of the national life. All the year round, the Chinese nation has a variety of festivals. We have different ways to express festival celebration. Companies can take advantage of the Chinese traditional festivals to create related advertising. Relative to daily consumption, holiday consumption shows children's blessing on their elders, and expectations of elders from the younger generation, communication between relatives and friends. This is an important opportunity for consumers to express feelings. Whoever can understand consumer demand could have the business opportunity.

Second, to meet the Chinese blessing psychology: companies need to consider China's national religion. Chinese culture has always had a devout prayers thought, and this is a way of national religion. The Chinese believe that it brings good luck via ourselves' blessing, or other people's blessing. So the contents of the advertisements can revolve around this Chinese characteristic.

Third, reveal the principle of honesty and trustworthiness. The concept of good faith is a Chinese code of conduct and living standards. It is still the principle governing life and business rules. Western advertising in the Chinese market should highlight the integrity concept present in the Chinese culture and pay attention to sincere returning customers. The advertising of western companies tends to take into account this phenomenon in recent years, which is a kind of respect paid to the Chinese culture.

Fourth, maintain the dignity of the Chinese nation. Every country has some rules that advertising could not violate. In China, it is very important to maintain national dignity, so advertising must not insult and ridicule this dignity.

Fifth, emphasize health and keeping in good health. Since ancient times, Chinese has had excellent knowledge to keep good health, along with the improvement of modern living standards. Have a healthy body is one of the aims of the Chinese medicine. Western advertising should highlight the health concept to Chinese, which will attract more consumers.

Sixth, emphasize the family values. Family is very important for the Chinese thinking. The core values of Chinese culture are based on family, and the Chinese always attach great importance to family relationship and community. Family dependence is quite strong. Family harmony is the key to be successful, which is the Chinese understanding of ideal family. For people who work overseas, the longing for home can be a starting point in advertising to achieve the resonance of the audience.

Seventh, convey the nostalgia of the Chinese nation. China was once the most powerful country, and it keeps seeking the road to revival. The Chinese have a strong nostalgia. So if the western advertising can catch Chinese nostalgia, it will surely get great success. The competitive social reality always makes us nervous, but nostalgia is not to dream the old dreams. People are willing to seek for the physical and mental relaxation in the nostalgia emotions, to seek for the shadow of the carefree before. Nostalgia has become not only a romantic and fashion trend or the expression of a mood and interest, but also a type of behavior of the collective preferences which permeate the social actions, which injects fresh energy into the masses, making the mass culture more elegant and robust.

Conclusions

The development trend of economy towards globalization, cultural exchanges and fusion between each other is inevitable, advertising as a product of economy and culture will also encounter various problems brought by the cultural differences. China is developing rapidly, global commercial brands take a fancy to the Chinese market, the Chinese brands slowly access into the international market, so China's advertising and western advertising need to face cross-cultural challenges. More successful cross-cultural advertising should be based on the analysis of culture and grasp the trend of the development of culture, refine the cultural concept in the advertisements. Based on the principles of cultural adaptability for advertising activities, according to different cultural backgrounds of the audience advertising should be adapted to the culture of the target audience, in line with their cultural habits and respect for their culture and

customs. At the same time, during the absorption of the national culture, advertising should fully reflect the style of the national culture and should overcome the shortcomings of the nation, while enhancing the audience's aesthetic consciousness.

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