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**Journal of Euromarketing** (ISSN:1049-6483) is published quarterly by IMDA Press, 1201 Stonegate Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036, USA.

**US Postmaster:** Please send address changes to Journal of Euromarketing, c/o IMDA Press, 1201 Stonegate Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036, USA.

**Annual Subscription, Volume 22, 2013**

Print ISSN: 1049-6483, Online ISSN: 1528-6967

Institutional subscribers: \$600, Personal subscribers: \$125. Institutional and individual subscriptions include access to the online version of the journal.

**Production and Advertising Office:** 1201 Stonegate Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036, USA. Tel: 717-566-3054, Fax: 717-566-1191.

**Subscription Office:** IMDA Press, 1201 Stonegate Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036, USA. Tel: 717-566-3054, Fax: 717-566-1191.

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**September 2013**

# JOURNAL OF EUROMARKETING

Volume 22, Number 3, 2013

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<i>Reviewed by Claude Cellich International University in Geneva, Switzerland</i>	

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## *EDITORIAL*

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In the first article, Dimitrova et al. examine the impact of globalization on consumer store choice in four transition economies (TEs) in Central and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia). The authors find that in countries that score higher on cultural globalization, consumers tend to shop in modern grocery stores such as supermarkets and hypermarkets. This suggests that direct contact with foreign cultures plays an important role in changing consumers' shopping patterns. Further, younger and more educated TE consumers as well as people who live in bigger towns are more likely to shop in modern grocery stores. Global retail chains should thus seek to penetrate TEs that have achieved a higher level of cultural globalization to take advantage of changing consumption patterns as well as target younger, more educated consumers and consumers who live in bigger towns. At the same time, global retailers that decide to penetrate TEs should not completely ignore host market culture because globalization might reinforce consumer desire to preserve cultural traditions in an attempt to protect their cultural identity. So, global retailers operating in or planning to penetrate TEs should offer a large variety of imported products that will allow TE consumers to satisfy their desire to experience other cultures as well as rely on the experience and local market knowledge of local suppliers in order to fulfill TE consumers' domestic product needs. Store design in TEs that have achieved a higher cultural globalization level should also reflect this blend of the global and the local. In addition, "mom-and-pop" stores in TEs that aim to resist the intense competition brought about by modern stores should offer a more specialized and customized product assortment that will allow TE consumers to experience foreign cultures without abandoning their

local consumption patterns and tastes. In fact, these stores' key strategic advantage is their profound knowledge of the local market and their ability to cater to local consumers' needs. So, they should focus on further developing their capabilities in this area in order to sustain intense foreign competition.

The mediating effect of preference for regular-size models in the relation between individual characteristics and attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the brand, and purchase intention is examined by Ketelaar et al. Past studies indicate that personal differences may influence the preference for regular-size models. The first personal characteristic that might influence the preference for regular-size models is BMI. The second personal characteristic that might influence the preference for regular-size models is age. The third personal characteristic that might influence for regular-size models is self-confidence. Closely related to this is body satisfaction. One might expect that women who are dissatisfied with their own bodies will feel uncomfortable when confronted with seemingly perfect thin models. The final characteristic is internalization of social attitudes toward appearances. In the light of these, the authors postulate that the preference for regular-size models mediates the relation between individual characteristics and persuasion variables. It is further stated that a higher BMI is related to higher liking of regular-size models. Lower age, self-confidence, internalization of social attitudes and body satisfaction are related to higher liking of regular-size models.

The study used a three-part online survey. In the first stage, participants answered questions about their preference for either slim or regular-size models. Second, the study tested the effect of preference for models in ads on persuasion variables such as attitude towards

the ad, attitude towards the brand, and purchase intention. The participants saw two ads featuring regular-size woman from the “Time for Real Beauty” campaign and were asked if they knew the campaign. Participants who indicated that they did not know the campaign were excluded from the analysis. To control whether participants actually perceived the models as regular-size, they were asked to describe the size of the models in this campaign. The research agency TNS NIPO randomly selected 726 female participants from a database. Of those selected, 72.3% (n=525) returned the online questionnaire and 59% (n=428) participated in the study. Participants received an incentive of 5 Euros.

Study findings indicate that women prefer regular-size models more when they have higher BMI, lower self-confidence, and lower internalization of the thin ideal; in addition, preference for the regular-size model is in turn associated with a more positive attitude towards the ad and attitude towards the brand, as well as increased purchase intention.

Industrial marketing research has for a long time ignored the case of subcontracting. Now today, it seems that a specific approach could really give results in industrial companies. Blanc and Chassagne propose to analyze, to build, and to develop a strategic marketing model through a longitudinal perspective. A main result is to get a new marketing mix concept applied to a new typology of subcontractors.

In the age of the relationship marketing paradigm and lovemarks as the ultimate brand positioning, practitioners are required to understand and reflect in their communication what a loved brand is and how this relationship between a specific brand and the customer is unique and also different from any interpersonal love relationship. The proposed conceptual model by Ezgi Merdin emphasizes the most important antecedents of brand love and thus represents the points of action in order to leverage the brand. The dimensions provided

under the concept of brand love are points of investigation to determine the lovability of the brand. For example, the intimacy dimension can be measured via the consumers’ willingness to disclose information as part of CRM efforts of a certain brand. The strategic outcomes part of the conceptual model provides information about the strategic value of creating and nourishing a loved brand and thus helps justifying the marketing expenses and empowering the CMOs (chief marketing officers). For example, any investment in social media is prone to be seen as sunk costs financially, whereas realizing that positive WOMM is a strategic positive outcome of a loved brand, any effort to create brand communities and aligning marketing tactics in synchronization with the demands or reactions of those powerful groups that are in love with your brand is a winning step.

The current brand environment, where companies are constantly losing their power over controlling the perception of their brand at various levels and populations (Iglesias & Bonet, 2012), like the context in which the consumer first encountered the brand, which functionality it fulfilled, which life-cycle the consumer (or the brand) was in, makes it more difficult to persuade and sustain consumers.

Every critical touch point through the cycle of a relationship is of critical value, and once the attributes of the brand attract the consumer to fall in love, their maintenance by the company over time is perceived as the brand deserving and winning the love. Therefore, being a loved brand requires a total organizational mindset that deals with the production processes, innovative capacity, packaging, and pricing decisions.

Enjoy reading the journal!

Erdener Kaynak  
Editor-in-Chief

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Iglesias, O. and Bonet, E. (2012) Persuasive brand management: How managers can influence brand meaning when they are losing control over it, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 25(2), 251-264.