

HUMOUR IN EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS AND ITS PERCEPTION BY CZECH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract

NAVRÁTILOVÁ LUDMILA, MILICHOVSKÝ FRANTIŠEK. 2015. Humour in Experiential Marketing Campaigns and its Perception by Czech University Students. *Acta Universitatis Agriculturae et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis*, 63(2): 587–593.

At present, it is necessary to monitor marketing communication strategy connected to actual customers' needs and requirements. At the same time, there is important to respect gender of customers. The paper provides an overview of current marketing communication trends of the companies. Based on the theoretical data there are applied statistical methods, which should be achieved of main aim of the paper. The main aim of the paper is to find connections between communication and gender from point of view of humour. To support this approach theoretical information from the area of marketing communication connected with data from primary research were used. Success companies know customers' needs for long-term strategic development of relationship marketing with customers. That is necessary to reach the customers' emotion and their irrationality of purchase decision. For this contact companies try to use experiential marketing full of humour elements as the way to increase own turnover. Adequate communication campaigns could create acceptable background for effective marketing. The article is focused on dependency between genders and used marketing communication tools. The objective of this research is to verify intensity dependence of marketing communication in connection with respondents' gender and to identify impacts of the marketing communication and to describe communication trend. The research was aimed in random chosen group of young people in the Czech Republic. It was made data processing by statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics 20 to obtain relevant answers.

Keywords: marketing communication, new trends, experiential marketing, humour

INTRODUCTION

Marketing communication nowadays has to get more and more variable, challenging and specific to attract customers and reach customers expectation. Companies operate in highly competitive environment than ever before, not only because of the competitive products or services but also because of creative, unusual, interesting ways how their competitors communicate with their potential clients.

Traditional techniques used for external marketing communication are not sufficient and companies have to see their presentation as a whole, including non-commercial communication to

support marketing strategy as stakeholders such customers, business partners, suppliers etc. (Kotler, Keller, 2012).

Improvement meets new challenges due to information technologies that have moved to our daily lives by internet connection in tablets, cell phones, laptops that consumers use automatically during not only their working but more over free time (Bednář, 2011; Shih, 2009). Advantage of the Internet marketing is also that it brings down costs of marketing communication (Kotler, Caslione, 2009) and customers' feedback via social media (Winer, 2009; Chlebovský, Plšek, 2012).

Marketing effectiveness becomes key part of corporate strategy in connection with designing

budget for realisation of marketing activities (Clark, Abela, Ambler, 2006). For own measuring there have been used mainly financial metrics such return of invested finance into marketing activities and its feedback (Kotler, Keller, 2006; Milichovský, Hornungová, 2013). According Ambler (2008) has been marketing effectiveness mainly targeted on corporate objectives, which increase shareholder value, net cash-flow or profit. Kaikati and Kaikati (2004) mentioned that except financial area there are very important non-financial goals which could generate e.g. customers' awareness and creating their interest about the product.

Traditional media tools are represented by using media for a consideration which are based on marketing communication mix which include five principal groups (Kotler, Keller, 2012): advertising, sales promotion, public relation, direct marketing, personal selling.

Due to the development of the internet in last twenty years is possible to add interactive marketing, events or Word-of-mouth marketing which include traditional ways of promotion with more using e-tools. For example, Word-of-mouth is old tool, but because of the large expanse of internet and electronic communication (like social networks, messengers, emails) ways it becomes mostly new appliance (Wu, Wang, 2011).

Using alternative ways of marketing communication, experiential marketing is part of corporate marketing strategy. Smilansky (2009) defined experiential marketing as „a process of identifying, satisfying customer needs and aspirations, profitably, by engaging them through two-way communications that bring brand personalities to life and add value to the target audience“. The author added that experiential marketing is an integrated methodology and its marketing campaign is built around one big idea involving two-way communication between the target audience and the brand, therefore creates its core, a live brand experience (Smilansky, 2009).

Schmitt (1999) and Alkilani, Ling, Abzakh (2013) propose the concept of strategic experiential modules that aims to help the marketers to create alternative types of customer experiences. The experiential modules managed by the experiential marketing include: sensory experiences (sense); affective experiences (feel); creative cognitive experiences (think); physical experiences, behaviours and lifestyles (act) and social-identity experiences that result from relating to a reference group or culture (relate). Schmitt (1999) and Smilansky (2009) add that the purpose of experiential marketing is to create holistically integrated experiences that possess, at the same time, sense, feel, think, act and relate qualities. Lee, Hsiao, Yang (2011) mention that experiential marketing can be related to the customer satisfaction.

Sense experience may be used through aesthetics or excitement that differentiate brands, products and motivate customers to buy what companies

offer (Schmitt, 1999). Feel experience includes range from a little positive moods attached to a brand to powerful emotions (happiness, satisfaction, joy etc.). Think experience uses creative involvement with costumers and encourages them to have in the mind a creative way how brand communicate with them through surprises, provocation, etc. Act experience target alternative ways of consumers' behaviour especially in lifestyle, social interactions etc. The aim of the act experience is to enrich social interaction pattern, improve physical experience and to give impression upon lifestyle and behaviour pattern of consumers. Relate experience can depend on individual's connection, social communities, social entities and the use of specific products/services. Campaigns in relate experience fulfil individual's desires (Schmitt, 1999; Alkilani, Ling, Abzakh, 2013).

Lee and Kleiner (2005) defined humour as a message whose sophistication, verbal skill, and/or incongruity has the power to make people laugh. According to Bergeon and Vachon (2008) humour contains minimally following dimensions: humour production, a sense of playfulness, the ability to use humour to achieve social goals, personal recognition of humour, appreciation of humour and use of humour as an adaptive mechanism. The wide acceptance of humour as an advertising tool suggests that it may also be used to improve effectiveness of selling products/services. Hay (2000) concluded that many researchers have dealt with topic of gender and humour and they found out differences in expression of humour, sense of humour, functions of humour, interesting patterns of men and women. According to Holmes (2006) women's humour is more cooperative and more often constructed than men's. Men's humour tends to be more competitive than women's.

Technological development provides improving new ways of introducing own products and brand. This development could create competitive advantage by using non-conventional media (Winer, 2009). Internet as tool bears interactive media that induce all aspects of marketing communication and make the most important business method (Mallin, Finkle, 2007).

Global economic structure and current IT level prepare environment where it is possible identify ways to improve online marketing, mobile marketing or social network marketing (Jánská, 2011). The main advantage of online marketing tools is accessibility of all target customers due mobile platforms as cell phones, tablets or laptops. There is possible to address target audience with appropriate message – mainly due to viral marketing and guerrilla marketing as well as mobile promotion.

Because of expansion of internet to various environment (consumer, corporate or service sector) there has supervened huge opportunity to all marketers. They could create some resemblance of electronic message included in video or web site (Ho, Dempsey, 2009; Mráček, Mucha, 2011). In process of the viral marketing it is possible to measure its

influence to wide audience. It allows preparing tactics for snapping and capture of behavioural data (Ferguson, 2008).

Viral marketing includes specific part, Word of mouth, which is evolved as alternative technique with individual approaches to traditional marketing forms (Swanepoel, Lye, Rugimbana, 2009). WOM does not have commercial scope so it works on high credibility of message in comparison with commercial ads (Wu, Wang, 2011; Chan, Ngai, 2011).

Guerrilla marketing represents way for not only SMEs how to catch consumers' attention with demoralization of their adversaries. That is caused by limitative amount of budget (McNaughton, 2008; Ay, Aytekin, Nardali, 2010).

Campaigns, where is implemented guerrilla marketing, illustrate interesting crispening in the communication field. The main goal of guerrilla campaigns is to increase customer awareness and interest about product and brand. Campaigns which are created with principles of guerrilla marketing, must be diversified between sharp practice to collecting information own marketing communication (Roy, Chattopadhyay, 2009; Milne, Bahl, Rohm, 2008). Basic principles how campaigns of guerrilla marketing work explain Baltes and Leibing (2008), e. g. implementers should collect all resources, campaigns should be original, connected with product, pass preoccupation in perception, find synergy effects.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main objective of this paper is to identify impacts of the marketing communication trends on customers (or final consumers) in Czech market with connection to humour and gender. Main hypothesis is that there is dependence in perception of marketing communication in connection to humour and/or gender.

Gender differences are received as kind of social signals on base of comprehension of content. Effects of gender have been ignored. Nowadays, there are approaches to observe perception in social and mental fields to find out possible impacts on communication (Barkley, Gabriel, 2007; Pavlova, 2009).

According to many researches (Navrátilová, Rašticová, Němeček, 2012; Costa, Terracciano, McCrae, 2001; Rahmani, Lavasani, 2012; He, Wong, 2011) there could be founded differences between marketing perception of men and women.

The first part of the paper presents main secondary information, which was processed by many scientific articles and literature. The main part of the paper introduces research data that was obtained from the primary research focused on current and non-traditional marketing communication on Czech customers.

To process the results of the questionnaire survey were used basic types of descriptive statistics on the selected data set (Tab. I, Tab. II). The data were

processed by using the statistical program IBM SPSS Statistics 20, which was subsequently analysed the dependency between the two nominal variables by means of contingency tables and Pearson's chi-squared test. The sample was created by 199 respondents that were chosen from university students of Brno University of Technology. Basic population was designed by the students who attended various marketing courses, provided by authors, during spring 2013. These courses were given to students of four faculties: (1) Faculty of Business and Management, (2) Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, (3) Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Communication, (4) Institute of Forensic Engineering. Total amount of basic population was 292 students.

RESULTS

The first part of the paper presents main secondary information, which was processed by many scientific articles and literature. The main part of the paper introduces research data that was obtained from the primary research, which was focused on the marketing perception of university students.

Analysis of results shows that companies still use traditional promotional ways to impact the target customers in comparison with experiential marketing tools. Based on the analysis of descriptive statistical characteristics of the sample (Mean, Median, and Values of Variability), conclusions will be presented merely as an explorative result limited by the resultant reliability (see Tab. I). The conclusions provide characteristics of the limitations of research and its potential further direction. Marketing communication tools are often chosen by companies on base of conditions of right market segmentation and of course in relation with communication strategy of company.

Descriptive statistics of marketing communications tools (Tab. I) show that companies still use average effective advertising tools because of the perception (according mean – best value should be 1.00). From point of view of traditional marketing communication tools have been strong impact by “communication media” (58%) and their “modification” in internet (53%). In experiential marketing communication tools there is particularly used only “events at the point of sale” (57%). Important condition of these results are that there exist differences with respect to traditional marketing communications tools where students' responses differ from the mean of “Advertising in the media” 85.34%, “Internet advertising” 96.35% and “Sales support” 94.34%. In experiential marketing communication tools there were similar results – “events at the point of sale” 87.02%. These expected means are not typical values in the data file because customers are oversaturated by traditional tools.

According Coefficient of variation there were obtained two variables on which are possible to

I: Basic descriptive statistics

	Perception of advertisement	Humour in advertising	Traditional marketing communication tools						Experiential marketing communication tools			
			Advertising in media	Outdoor advertising	Direct contact	POP/POS materials	Internet advertising	Sales support	Events at the point of sale	Street marketing	Viral marketing	Actions based on playfulness
Mean	1.86	1.78	0.58	0.33	0.33	0.14	0.52	0.53	0.57	0.35	0.18	0.48
Median	2.00	2.00	1.00	.00	.00	.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	.00	.00	.00
Std. Deviation	.687	.690	.495	.472	.472	.343	.501	.500	.496	.479	.382	.501
Variance	.471	.793	.245	.223	.223	.118	.251	.250	.246	.229	.146	.251
Coefficient of variation	.3694	.3876	.8534	1.430	1.430	2.45	.9635	.9434	.8702	1.369	2.122	1.044

Source: Own processing

II: Contingency table: Gender and Humour in advertising

		Definitely not	Rather not	Rather yes	Definitely yes	Total
Gender	Female	2	32	30	14	78
	Male	20	39	43	18	120
Total		22	71	73	32	198

Source: Own processing

III: Contingency table: Gender and Perception of advertisement

		Definitely not	Rather not	Rather yes	Definitely yes	Total
Gender	Female	0	12	51	15	78
	Male	2	44	57	18	121
Total		2	56	108	33	199

Source: Own processing

IV: Pearson's test of the relationship between Gender and Humour in advertising

		Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	
Chi-Square Tests	Pearson Chi-Square ²	9.763 ^a	3	0.021	
	Likelihood Ratio	11.637	3	0.009	
	Linear-by-Linear Association	3.053	1	0.081	
	a)0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.67.				
		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig
Symmetric Measures	Nominal by Nominal/Contingency Coefficient	.217			.021
	Interval by Interval/Pearson's R	-.124	.067	-1.756	.081 ^c
	Ordinal by Ordinal/Spearman Correlation	-.109	.068	-1.540	.125 ^c
	a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.				
	b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.				
	c. Based on normal approximation.				

Source: Own processing

apply other statistical application. These variables are "Perception of advertisement" and "Humour in advertising".

The individual responses on dependency between gender and humour in advertising, and gender and perception of advertisement are recorded in contingency tables (see Tab. II, Tab. III). The results of the dependency test are provided in Tab. III which examines the dependency between customers' gender and impact of humour

in advertising. The results of the dependency examination in individual variable categories are depicted in the following results of Pearson's chi-square test.

During a further analysis, an analysis of dependency of variables was carried out – influence of promotion. In order to establish the dependency test, statistical testing using Pearson chi-square test was used.

V: Pearson's test of the relationship between Gender and Perception of advertisement

		Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	
Chi-Square Tests	Pearson Chi-Square ^a	12.168 ^a	3	0.007	
	Likelihood Ratio	13.454	3	0.004	
	Linear-by-Linear Association	8.252	1	0.004	
	^a 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .78.				
		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Symmetric Measures	Nominal by Nominal/Contingency Coefficient	.240			.007
	Interval by Interval/Pearson's R	-.204	.065	-2.927	.004 ^c
	Ordinal by Ordinal/Spearman Correlation	-.208	.066	-2.990	.003 ^c
	a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.				
	b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.				
	c. Based on normal approximation.				

Source: Own processing

Maintaining the % reliability of the test, there was compared the established value with 0.05 which represents a 5% reliability level. The established values are for the variable Humour in advertising $\alpha = 0.021$ and for the variable Perception of advertisement $\alpha = 0.007$ (see Tab. IV, Tab. V). Both values are less than 0.05, which brings the conclusion that an alternative hypothesis applies – there are dependency between humour in advertising and gender, and perception of advertisement and gender.

DISCUSSION

Previous results showed that there is a relationship between influence of promotion and customer's gender. Subsequently, the degree of such dependency was examined. To that end, the intensity of dependency determined by means of contingency coefficient as per formula (1) was used.

$$C_p = \sqrt{\frac{\chi_p^2}{\chi_p^2 + n}}, \quad (1)$$

where

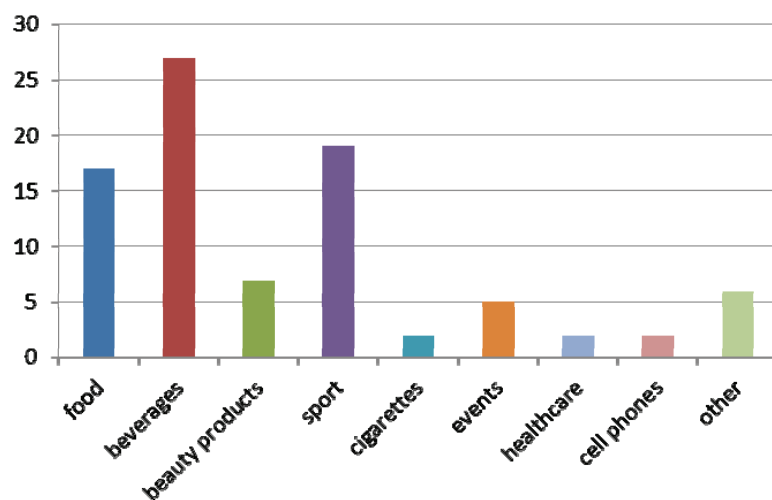
C_p contingency coefficient,

n number of cases,

χ_p^2 Pearson's chi-square.

The intensity of dependency ranges between $<0; 1>$. That means that the higher the absolute value, the greater the intensity of dependency. The values 0.217 of Humour in advertising, and 0.240 of Perception of advertisement mean that the intensity inclines to be medium rather low.

Another objective was finding of the knowledge of marketing campaign with experiential approach. According the questionnaire there was found that 62.81% of respondents do not know any experiential marketing campaign. There is obvious in the survey that there exist three field of the most known marketing campaigns – beverages, sport (included cars) and food.



1: Knowledge of the experiential marketing campaigns

Source: Own processing

CONCLUSION

Management of marketing communication is one of the key parts in realised marketing activities of companies (in connection with defined corporate strategy). Aims of each company would cover up all customers into two higher levels (partner and advocate) because they create the biggest value for the company (Šimberová, 2008).

Corporate marketing management has become key part which each company have to focus on. Individual objective of a company is to target to all stakeholder groups, for who are created high value products. That is possible through effective marketing communication campaigns which include impact on industry field because of their mutual dependence. The defined hypotheses, according the results of Pearson's chi-square test, bring the conclusions that alternative hypotheses are applied – there are dependencies between gender and humour in advertising (value 0.021), and gender and advertisement (value 0.007). Intensity of these dependencies is 0.217 between Humour in advertising and gender, and 0.240 between Advertisement and gender. These values mean that the intensity inclines to be medium rather low.

There is important to undertake further research with extended sight and removing the limits through making survey in international environment, to help verify the significance of the marketing communication performance.

Acknowledgement

This paper was written as part of a specific project of the Faculty of Business and Management Brno University of Technology, reg. No. FP-S-13-2053, entitled "Determinants of management and marketing development in the context of transforming the European Union".

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