

The language of advertising: Powerful, innovative and environmental?

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New perspectives on sustainability n° 2, 2010, p. 6-27

1. Introduction

Advertising is part of the culture and economics of a society and, therefore, part of our every-day lives. It tells us what car to drive, what bank to use, what to drink and eat, which products to buy and even what to think. Advertising is not simply about the commercial promotion of branded products; it can also enhance the image of an individual, group or organization. The information revolution has profoundly changed the environment of advertising. Consumers today are more familiar with the language of advertising than that of history. The process of advertising communication is complex, and its language can have a powerful influence over people and their behaviour. Specific language choices are vitally important to convey specific messages which aim to influence people.

Many of us believe we are immune to advertising, however, surveys and sales figures show that well-designed advertising has dramatic effects, and as

such it is a primary marketing tool. Ads are designed to influence, and they use hidden persuaders and persuasive magic to achieve this goal.

Originally, ads were meant to give general information. In today's competitive society, this stimulating media, with its shorter print texts, innovative slogans and headlines, have the purpose of catching the reader's attention. Novel words, phrases and constructions as well as common words, often with some emotional as well as literal value give the advertisement meaning through a level of creativity. Together with physical properties of the text (colour, size, people, names, organizations, etc.) and in complex interaction with image, ads aim to transform information into persuasion.

In this day and age we are, and must be, more and more concerned, even allow ourselves to be persuaded to be aware of the negative effects of materialism and consumerism on our environment. A growing sense of social responsibility, such as for

the environment, has been a current trend. This project will focus on ecological ads, as they represent an important market to be explored within today's worldwide business and environmental context. We are interested in advertisers who are increasingly specialized in creating effective messages using innovative, captivating media to promote enthusiasm for eco-friendly products, services and ideas.

Objectives

Our task has been to analyze advertisements to see if we can understand how they do what they do. Our approach to advertising is that it is presented as rational communication, even if not all aspects of it seem rational. Advertising is a powerful medium and choice of words and images provide that power. One question we ask is: "Is eco-advertising even more powerful than traditional advertising?"

The main aim of this project is to gain a better understanding of how advertisers use and can use language innovatively to promote environmentally-friendly products, ideas, companies, services. A further objective is to identify and compare cultural perspectives in advertising strategies in the three countries represented in the project team: Portugal, Latvia and Norway.

2. Theoretical part

2.1. Key aspects of advertising

*"Language has a powerful influence over people and their behaviour. This is especially true in the fields of marketing and advertising. The choice of language to convey specific messages with the intention of influencing people is vitally important."*¹

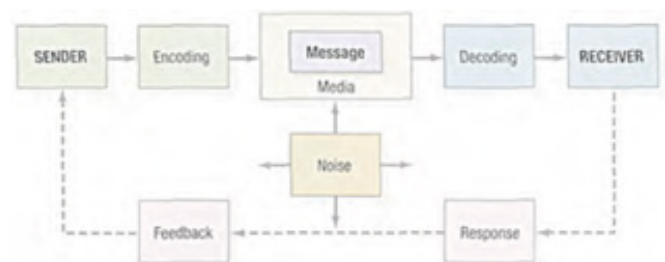
But to be able to influence people you first have to get their attention to your advertisement. Daily we are exposed to 5000 – 8000 commercial messages and in addition to this are all the personal relations, which make it very difficult to stand out of the crowd. This is why language is so important; that it reflects the target group and the situation and stage they're at.

To be able to do some research on this topic it is important to have in mind the definition of language and advertisements. Language is a mean to communication; it can be words, images and symbols among other things. Advertisements are one kind of communication, and according to Philip Kotler, advertisements should have a persuasive effect on the target group.

To understand the totality we should think of advertising as a discourse. Discourse is text and context together, interacting in a way that is perceived as meaningful and unified by the participants. This way you describe all elements and the impact they have on each other.²

A communication model can be very helpful to explain the different stages and tools in the process of creating an advertisement. I will use the most relevant elements in this communication model to do so.

Figure 1 Communication model³



There are two types of *senders*; often it is a company that wants to send out a message. The message has to be in accordance to the company's vision. Who the sender is may have an effect on the language; if the sender is a government entity the language will be characterized by political correctness, but this is not the case with for example iPhone.⁴ The other type is called a *narrator*, which is the storyteller within the text (created by the writer). He or she can be constructed the way he or she best gives the message and persuade the reader. The narrator can be a celebrity, children or a hard working man.

The *encoding* is the creation of the language; writing the text and designing the actual ad to

1 The language of advertising, Marcus Evans Linguarama, <http://www.linguarama.com/ps/index.htm>

2 Cook, Guy. The Discourse of Advertising. (Routledge: London)

3 Kotler, Philip, Marketing management 3rd issue 2007

4 Anita Myklebust Støvne, Consilio (2009)

emphasize the message. Tools that are frequently used is humor, certain people, sexuality and nudity, emotional appeal, music, pictures, ethics, environmental lifestyle, metaphors, signs, slogans and so on. To choose the right tool and use it the right way it is important to analyze the market and find out preferences and be able to be innovative and surprise the audience. Words in the advertisements are very important; the use of “We” and “I” may also have a big impact on the reader, and if this is in a good or bad way depends on the message and context. “I” may in some contexts sound too personal and even manipulative, for example if it is a picture of a baby who supposedly talks. In some advertisements pictures and music are the main point and what sets the mood and feeling, and what draws attention and is persuasive. And you know what they say; “Pictures says more than thousand words”. The interaction between text and images and music and or other tools is however what draws attention to the advertisements. This happens by making each other stronger or by being in contrast to each other

Another tool I want to mention is intertextuality, which is that one text is based on another text that might be known to the reader. There are two forms of intertextuality; continuity, which is that one text refer to an older text (often from the same sender), and text that base themselves on other texts from the same era. One example on the last point is the commercial “Hold Your Breath” by the electric car company ‘Think’ in Norway ⁵. Here they use the ‘Zero’ expression that is already known to most people through for example Coca Cola, and the reader immediately thinks of something ‘clean’. ‘Zero’ is frequently used in environmentally friendly advertisements. To fully understand the message in the advertisement the reader has to know the text that it is based upon. But if he or she doesn’t see or understand the references that are given it will still be mysterious and interesting and it will make an impression on people who most likely will talk about it.

The *message* must be clear and understandable. A good way to be remembered is to have a “chunked”

message ⁶ that is that you ‘squeeze’ it to something small and easy to remember and that people think of YOU when they hear it or see it. F.ex. That your message is in the logos, slogans, etc. What do you think of when you hear “Just do it”? Nike!

The media or channel (TV, newspaper, Internet, a celebrity etc.) where the advertisement is placed has an impact on the message and if the message reaches the target reader. Or if a person that people know does the opposite of the message is used, the message disappears in the “noise”.

Because the advertisements often consist of complex tools, the readers have to work hard to *decode* the message, and they have to look for and understand different address relationship. There are several ways for people to *decode* a text or a picture etc. therefore it is important that the sender is aware of the target group; it is vital to understand and target *it!* You have to be aware of the fact that people and groups of people interpret messages differently based on prior experiences, age, sex, religion, culture, and believes.

Especially cultural variations might be a huge barrier if its’ not taken into consideration: First of all it is important to understand the text system in the different countries when you are going international. Many western companies have made this mistake. For example one soap manufacturer that were expanding to the Middle East didn’t change its advertisement to the Middle East text system. The product was offering to turn their snowy white to grimy gray. Since they (people in the Middle East) read from right to left, then the message is interpreted the opposite in relation to what was intended by the sender (the grimy gray to snowy white).

Second cultures have different values and attitudes when they are reading a text, therefore you should change the text to suit the different countries. Words have also different and even several meanings. For example, Ford’s ‘Pinto’; in Brazilian the meaning of Pinto in slang is ‘tiny male genitals’. *Metaphors* might have a different meanings as well, depending on the culture or the country: The Pepsi slogan: ‘Come alive with the Pepsi generation’ means in

5 Think, YouTube, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bpMWWelNNE&eurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.think.no%2Fthink%2FPress-Pictures%2FPicture-gallery%2FMovies2&feature=player_embedded

6 Blundel, R. (2008), *Effective Organization Communication*, Harlow: FT Prentice Hall

Chinese: 'Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead'.⁷

To adopt one commercial from one country to another might therefore be a big mistake. Like ICA, a retail company in Norway, did very well in the Swedish market and the whole concept, including the advertisements, was adapted to the Norwegian market. In Norway the company has been more or less a flop and never been able to position themselves in the consumers' mind. The commercials that were a great success in Sweden, fell through in Norway. This is because ICA has been a huge company with a powerful position in Sweden for many years.

We can say that there are two different kinds of readers or receivers; the reader implied by the text (the target group)- narrators, and the real reader, he or she who actually read the text. By using words that appeal to the real readers' feelings and emotions they might identify themselves with the writer's profile and then they become narrators and act upon the advertisement. Words can make the reader feel ashamed, guilty, smart, enlightened, make somebody important or scare you, etc. It can also appeal to our emotions and bad conscience about the way we treat the planet or maybe because of the fact that we're not helping people, and often children, who need our help.

Who the receiver is has a huge influence on the language in the advertisement. For example has Coca Cola segmented Coca Cola Zero and Coca Cola Light to respectively men and women, and if you watch the commercial of these two products you will see the clear difference between the two. Zero has a more action-like design and plays on "every guys dream" with hot women, while Light has a more "girls just wanna have fun"-design and is sparklier.

Advertisements consist of a mixture of regular language and paralanguage. Paralanguage is nonverbal communication that emphasizes and accompanies the regular language, such as facial expressions, gestures, voice quality, letter sizes and so on.

The language has been changing continuously over time, and it will keep changing. People change

thus the language. Old words and phrases get new meanings and are reconnected, new words are invented and Anglicism is more and more clear, (which is the use of the English language in other languages). There are several things that can influence the language in the ads and how people respond to it. These things can be international or national, cultural, historical, a trend or a happening, or the impression people already have of the product or company etc. New technology is no exception. Advertisements on Internet and cell phones need to have a short and concise language because these media are read differently than papers and magazines. The trick is to use these things in the way that profits the impact the ads can give. We have to customize the language in advertisements to fit several relations and that in the best way persuade the narrators!

2.2. Powerful and innovative language in advertisement

2.2.1. Innovative language

It is important to be innovative because of all the competition there is today. Every day we get exposed to more ads than we remember. That's why the ad has to stand out from the crowd, it has to get noticed.

Most of the world's societies are changing rapidly and therefore so are trends, values and languages. You have to adapt and adjust the language to fit the changes; your audience has to be able to relate to your message.

You can be innovative if you think in a different direction, take a little step forward or reinvent the company's profile to meet modern demands. The way the brand or company is delivered cannot be outdated or boring. You have to get your audience attention and interest by using various advertising techniques, if these are used right your audience relates to what you are trying to communicate and it will get attention.

Taboo is one of the tools that can be used to accomplish just that. Taboo is areas that are 'forbidden' in some social groups or situations.⁸

7 Goddard, Angela. *The Language of Advertising, Written Texts.* (Routledge: London)

8 Goddard, Angela. *The Language of Advertising, Written Texts.* (Routledge: London).

Sometimes it can be important to break these taboos, because of how the societies view the subject and, also create reactions and opinions from your audience and the rest of the society. And if you are able to shock you will most likely get attention. Breaking taboos can be both good and bad.

Often advertising that touches on an area of cultural taboo, changes over a number of years. For example Tampax could not use the word “period” in their ads but instead they used “code names”. Now there is no problem using the actual word, it is no longer a taboo. Tampax is an example of a good taboo breaking. Dolce & Gabana used gang rape in there advertisement for one of their collections. It shocked people and got attention, but is it a taboo that we want broken? Has the innovative and, shock value become more important than the ethic value?

Another tool that can and, is used is global happenings. What is on the global agenda influences the language in advertisement and, it is a subject that most people pay attention to and, it affects us all. When the climate crises really came on the agenda people got more concerned about the environment. Ads reflected this by using words, expressions and images that people associate with the environment. Like I love eco, words like life and future, images of trees and the vulnerable animals. It then was innovative.

But now the financial crisis is a fact, and it is affecting so many people all over the world. This reflects in the ads in price orientation, low prices are in focus. It is a relatively simple language that is used; by to, get one for free, or 30% off. The level varies in every country.

2.2.2. *Powerful language*

We have seen that when advertisement is used “right” it can be very convincing. Powerful in that way that it can change opinions and make people act.

If you want to influence people to act the way you want, words and images can be used powerfully. Dull once can make u fall asleep or not give the desired response, while power-words can get the attention and response. You can convince your desired costumers that you are ethical or have high quality instead of that you are ok. Hope and life are examples of words that can have an impact on the receivers.

Powerful Advertisement can also play on the audients emotions; fear, hope, desire, conscience, guilt and self- confidence.

To play on strong emotions can be “dangerous” to the point of illegal; there is a big grey area. But it can also be very effective. Some insurance companies play on parent fear of losing a child, or the fear of leaving there family without no financial security. It can also be used in a relatively good way, it can be used to influence the audience to act in a better way; like the hope or desire to become more eco-friendly.

Another tool is to use colors to make a statement of have you want people to regard your company, brand or/ and product. For example you can use neutral colures for seriousness, bright colures for playfulness, fun and youth. Different colures have different meanings, it also varies between cultures.

Now nature-colors that can be very powerful. It represents an environmentally friendly lifestyle. The colors are used in ads for environmentally friendly products, but also to make none environmentally friendly products appear environmentally friendly.

The use of colors represents the values in a society. Like the earth colors represent the desire to be more environmentally friendly, the use of bright colors represent the worships of youth in the western society.

Images of great mountains, large fields, and paradise beaches, powerful forces of nature and world heritages are some of the breathtaking sceneries that advertisement may use to

The new technology has made the sceneries even bigger and more powerful. It can make you feel like you are inside of the sceneries by animating it and, adding special effects.

2.3. Green advertising

2.3.1. *Key aspects of green advertising*

Green advertising is clearly one of the hottest topics today. Individuals are rightly concerned about the fate of our planet. Governments are increasingly taking steps to address global warming, destruction of habitat, the insidious - and vastly under-reported and underestimated - problem of invasive species, and other major environmental problems. Businesses

are increasingly getting into the act and offering “green” alternatives, like the Toyota Prius, green home environmental products, organic and natural personal care products, environmentally preferable building products, green advertising agencies, and other green products and services.

The environment was discovered by advertisers in 1980. Since then advertising took on a new role, the role of creating ads that showed environmentally friendly products. Ads also started and continue to use nature and pristine locations as backdrops. According to *Julia Corbett*, “Green advertising was defined as product ads touting environmental benefits or corporate green-image ads” With this definition comes controversy because the values of advertising and environmentalists differ, and some believe that advertising is “Brown” not “Green.” Corbett claims, “Because advertising is the workhorse of capitalism and supports continually increased production, it is ideologically contrary to environmentalism, which recognizes that ever increasing growth and consumption are inherently unsustainable”

So where does this concept of Green Advertising take us? Well, “Green” products may not be produced but nature, weather, and animals are used to send messages to consumers. The auto industry makes the best use out of nature by using nature, weather, and animals to show value, safety and the sense of finding adventure all of which contradicts the fact that cars, especially SUVs⁹, pollute our environment. Environment friendly companies such as General Electric use nature to send a message to its consumers that they naturally produce energy with wind and coal in order to reduce their own emissions.

Like any rhetoric, Green Advertising can be used for good and bad. I believe that General Electric uses Green Advertising in a positive way by going public

with their campaign to be more environmental friendly. I think that Green Advertising becomes bad rhetoric when they display unrealistic portrayals of nature. According to Corbett, “Advertising presents the world as pristine, simple, and not endangered, yet depictions are always contrived and often created” . I believe that this type of Green Advertising does a disservice to consumers by adding these sublime locations and situations to our culture.

2.3.2. Beware of falsely ‘green’ advertising

Green products touting environmental features such as “recyclable,” “biodegradable” and “eco-friendly” seem to be everywhere from grocery stores to card shops to car dealers. Every other advertisement seems to show a windmill, a field of grass, or other green scene seeking to give a product a green image. But along with the rise in “green” marketing claims has come an increase in “greenwashing” — false or misleading green claims. When it comes to green products, buyers need to do their homework, and check out a company’s environmental track record, Case said. He advises looking for products certified by a qualified and independent third party such as EcoLogo or Green Seal. In 2007, his firm conducted a survey of 1,018 consumer products making 1,753 environmental claims. All but one of the claims were either false or misleading, Case said.

For example:

— A dishwasher detergent boasts “100 percent recycled paper” packaging, and yet the container is plastic.

— A caulking product claimed to be “Energy Star” certified, but Energy Star doesn’t certify such products.

Case said the vast majority of companies are not following marketing guidelines provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Trade Commission and Consumers Union.

“The gist of the guidelines is that folks should be making specific, accurate environmental claims and should have substantial proof to back up the claims,” Case said. “It is a very simple litmus test that most companies are failing miserably.” Kim Sheehan, a University of Oregon associate professor of advertising, said energy and automotive companies are among the worst offenders, with advertising

9 SUV is the widely used and known acronym for Sport Utility Vehicle. At first conception, an SUV was a vehicle that combined the towing capacity of a full-size truck with the passenger and storage capacity of a minivan. However, as consumer demands have changed, so has the SUV. Many manufacturers now focus on fuel-efficiency and driving and riding comfort, rather than towing capacity. Some of the more popular makes and models of SUVs include the Cadillac Escalade, Chevy Blazer, Dodge Durango, Ford Explorer, Honda CRV, Jeep Grand Cherokee, Hummer and Land Rover, and the Nissan Pathfinder

suggesting they are greener than they really are. When an automaker touts the gas mileage its SUV gets by comparing it with other SUVs, “this is a false comparison,” she said “There are many cars that would give you better gas mileage that are not SUVs. You are talking about a group of cars that get horrible gas mileage.” The University of Oregon, in conjunction with Austin, Texas-based EnviroMedia, created a “Greenwashing Index” Web site for consumers to rate green advertising. Since January 2007, 124 ads have been reviewed. Still, there are no shortcuts for consumers to protect themselves from products with bogus green advertising. Sheehan said she doesn’t trust green certifications and endorsements because they’re easy to obtain, and the product could also be changed for the worse later. “There’s nothing to make it easier,” Sheehan said. “People have to make a little effort on their own.”

2.3.3. Case studies: General Electric and Ford

General Electric

General Electric began way back in the 1890s when Thomas Edison merged companies and ideas to become a dominate force in the electrical industry. Today General Electric has multiple divisions and products that are used in your everyday life. Their website, <http://www.ge.com>, contains endless information about the company and what they do. I am concerned with their recent advertising/company commitment known as Ecomagination. The commercials above are two examples from this campaign and they both demonstrate two of GE’s recent breakthroughs. According to their website, GE produced more than 1 gigawatt of wind energy throughout the United States in 2006 alone. This makes GE the countries largest supplier of the renewable energy source. GE has also made advancements in the purification and preservation of water through their efforts in desalination, the process that turns seawater into fresh drinking water. According to their website, GE is one of the biggest suppliers of desalination plants in the world. For more information on this breakthrough visit: <http://ge.ecomagination.com/site/index.html#desa/introduction>. The main question that is raised becomes, is GE running this campaign in order to try to simply look enviornmentally friendly,

or do they really have a concern for the environment and want to make their company “Green?”

Ecomagination has been in full force around the world. In Erie, Pennsylvania, GE developed The Evolution™ making GE’s locomotives the cleanest diesel-powered machines in the world. In Ireland, GE continues to develop electricity from air, and in Algeria they run one of their desalination plants. Ecomagination clearly is in full force, but what brought this commitment to GE? Jeffrey Immelt, CEO of GE, is responsible for the “Greening of GE,” Immelt has committed his company to make changes that will cut their emissions of carbon dioxide. Without any action, GE’s emissions would increase 40% over 8 years. Their goal is to decrease their 2004 emissions by 1% by 2012. The companies new campaign has taken criticism and According to a 2005 report from The Economist, some people find Ecomagination “green-wash” rhetoric that is trying to confuse the public about the true nature of their business. The Economist does not agree, however; claiming that GE’s embrace of being green appears to be genuine and substantive. The Economist believes GE does not need to become “Green” to defend how they run their business, and are in good position to be able to ignore criticism from environmental groups. Not to mention the fact that Ecomagination is not cheap. I do not believe GE would spend 1.5 billion dollars a year on research for clean products if they were simply trying to confuse the public. Immelt is committed to Ecomagination and he continues to prove it.

GE’s Ecomagination campaign has been supported by investors and their consumers. The Economist reports, before coming out with the new campaign, 18 months was spent discussing the plan of Ecomagination with its customers. It is obvious that GE and Immelt have done their homework in order to run a successful campaign both for the environment and for General Electric.

Based on this research I believe that GE is committed to being “Green.” They have done extensive research and are constantly trying to find ways for cleaner energy, water preservation, and more fuel-efficient engines and locomotives. The advertising GE has done is simply bringing awareness to this huge change in company policy. I do not believe that they are trying to lie or confuse anyone, and I think GE sends a very positive message to the world through

Ecomagination and the amount of money it will actually cost them to be cleaner and more efficient. There will always be pollution but the fact that GE is one of the first major companies in an industry that pollutes to make a change in order to be more environmental friendly says a lot and it is a huge step forward for our world and the environment.

Ford

Ford's Attempt at Greenwashing: Greenwashing is used to cover-up a companies poor environmental practices. It tries to portray a light on the company that they are concerned about what they are doing, and that they do everything in their power to cut the hazards they are causing to the environment. However, greenwashing is a method to trick the population and maybe even themselves into believing that the company is environmentally friendly. After viewing the green advertisement by Ford Motors on the website http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6i-6-s_WjO0, I gave them 5 out of 10 for a score. When I first saw this ad, the thing that first came into my mind was what a joke! The advertisement is very catchy with Kermit the Frog portraying the green image with himself as green and singing, "its not easy being green." However, the fact of the matter is that the car they are advertising, the Ford Escape Hybrid, only gets 36 miles per gallon on the highway and 31 mpg in the city. These numbers are not that good in comparison to the market of hybrid automobiles, and they are also created at optimal conditions; such as, gradual speed increase, no wind resistance, no air conditioning, and no road or weather effects. This green advertising is meant to lead the consumer to believe that if you purchase this automobile you are doing a big part to save the environment. In my opinion, this is a desperate attempt by Ford automotive to try to keep up with the much more fuel efficient cars and SUV's created by other makes and models. Ford is not in ones evoked mindset when thinking about a fuel efficient automobile. In fact, they are relatively close to the bottom. Toyota, Hyundai, and Honda are just a few that come well before Ford. Ford needs to bring forward more products that have high fuel efficiency (that compare to Toyota...ect.) before they run a green campaign that promotes a hybrid that runs 36 mpg hwy. and 31 mpg city. Creating a better image before entering the green marketing scheme would give them more creditability. According

to tests and studies from www.greenhybrid.com/compare/mileage/, this Ford Escape Hybrid only gets at best 32 mpg. About 15 mpg short of the better hybrids and about 33 mpg less than the best hybrids, I would say the Ford Escape Hybrid needs some work before it can call itself green.

2.3.4. Conclusion

Overall, Green Advertising is a cultural phenomenon that developed along side the environmentalist push for a clean world with renewable resources. Green advertising exists in both good and bad forms and it is up to the consumer to be smart enough to know what is real and what is unrealistic. Hopefully most of the Green Advertising will help bring awareness to consumers that we do need to take care of our environment rather than continue to consume products that will hurt it.

3. Practical part

3.1. Methodology

In order to fulfill our project aims, we used such methodology:

- Research of theoretical materials. (discourse analysis, creative language and metaphors of advertising, texts/images, readers/writers of advertisements, communication awareness and persuasion, eco-advertising and alternative advertising);
- Case studies;
- Qualitative research:
 - Interviews;
 - Survey.

3.2. Interviews

3.2.1. Introduction

In our everyday lives we look at the advertisements from a customer retrospective so our euroweek team decided to look at the advertising also from the side of the creators of the advertisements - the creators of the text.

Our euroweek team has developed a list of 8 questions (Appendice 2) and interviewed 4 advertising agencies - 2 in Latvia and 2 in Norway

– in order to investigate strategies of professional advertising agencies in their work to ‘sell the product’ they have been contracted to promote.

3.2.2. *Interview with Terje Andersen, Edda Media consultant, Norway*

This chapter is based on the interview with Terje Andersen, Edda Media consultant.¹⁰

After the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Al Gore won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 there was great fuzz about the climate and the environment. That also reflected on the advertisements language. People started to buy more environmental friendly products. But there weren't anyone (organizations) in Norway who took the big leap and the responsibility to go through with it a 100 %. And then the big financial crisis hit the world, and a dark shadow covered the advertisement business in Norway.

Today advertisements are characterized by lower prices and pushing as much merchandises as possible on the consumers. Nowadays advertisements are characterized by lower prices and pushing as much merchandises as possible on the consumers. The language is mostly like this; “take three, pay for two”

Now there is no market for environmentally friendly products in Norway. In these times of crisis people are prioritising low prices instead of using more money on the environment. Another reason is that Norway doesn't have enough inhabitants for a profitable business for ecological and environmentally friendly products. And also the fact that those who have an environmental vision often can't afford to go through with an advertisement campaign, is a huge reason for the small amount of environmental and ecological ads.

There has been a campaign for an ecological food brand on TV, where they used humour, but Terje claims that it does poorly in influencing the Norwegian people to go shopping at that store. ICA who has the campaign is not doing very well; they are loosing marketing shares in Norway and their position in the consumers mind is bad. The commercials that were a great success I Sweden, fell through in Norway. This is because ICA has been

a huge company with a powerful position I Sweden for many years.

Conclusion:

There are several things that can influence the language in the ads and how people respond to it. These things can be international or national, cultural, historical, a trend or a happening, or the impression people already have of the product or company etc. The tric is to use these things in the way that profit the impact the can ads give.

3.2.3. *Interview with Anita Myklebust Støvne, Consilio Kommunikasjon AS adviser, Norway*

This chapter is based on the interview with Anita Myklebust Støvne, Consilio Kommunikasjon AS adviser.¹¹

Because the agency is located some hours away from where we live, we sent them a list of questions by e-mail. They gave us a very general answer with a lot of things we already know, and nothing about the language in environmental-friendly advertisements. This is what they wrote:

As a communication agency are we a link between a **customer** (commercial actor/organisation/government entity/etc) that wants to communicate with his **target group**.

The customer has a goal: to sell more pasta, create sympathy for a cause, ask for contribution for a good cause or change attitudes towards a given theme (for example safety on the road and using seat belt). The customers have often a strategy as a basis build upon their own values that describes who they are or their brand strategy.

On the other side is a target group (who doesn't know anything); consumers, decisions-makers, politicians, etc. They are only target groups in the customers' strategies, but are often through common values, demographics or consumer-patterns possible to isolate to specific channels to influence them. The have in common that they are people that are influenced by what they are exposed to/experience every day.

10 Andersen, Terje 2009. Consultant, Edda Media. Interview 03

11 Myklebust Støvne, Anita 2009. Adviser, Consilio Kommunikasjon AS. Interview 26.03

Advertisements – or other forms of communication – are then going to influence the target groups' behaviour based on the goal of the sender (customer). This is not easy.

As consumers we are exposed to 5–8000 commercial messages every day. It is therefore not easy to break through this kind of “nois”. In addition there are other personal relations that consumes the target groups' attention and focus.

The first thing you have to do is to **expose the target group** to the message. This can be planned and analysed based on several tools that describes the different target groups' habits, which media they use and how they travel, etc. For example use young people in Oslo often the underground and facebook.

Second, you have to **get attention** in the channel(s) you use. You are not alone in trying to influence your target group.

Third, is the message **relevant and believable** to the target group? Do they consider what you are trying to say or is it ignored?

It is the two last points that includes text as a instrument. It is difficult to say something exact about the development of the use of language in advertisements. But there are some points we can make.

The text has to reflect on the target group. It has to be relevant; you can't use sms-language to a 60-year-old target group.

Sender and receiver makes the language-context; if it is a government entity the language will be characterized by 'political correctness', it will differ from for example an advertisement for iPhone. From a creative perspective; both a visual expression and text can be an obstacle. As humans we are different, some are visual, and some likes to read. Language can be a strong visual power; for example a white page with just one black word in middle.

The interaction between text and picture is often what give attention, either that they amplify each other or that they are in contrasts to each other.

Increased use of Internet as a channel (and other mobile media) creates new languages. The language (in such cases) has to be short and concise because it is read in a different way than papers and magazines.

Language is important and will in the futures advertisements-world (or more correct: communication world) have to adjust new target groups and new media/channels.

3.2.4. Interview with Ivars Apkalns, The Link project director, Latvia

This chapter is based on the interview with Ivars Apkalns, The Link Project director.¹²

The Link - is the fastest growing media agency in Baltic states. The Link has been working in Latvia since 2005, and today it is widely know and recognized advertising agency among Latvian companies. The Link provides different types or promotion and advertisements like – Product presentations, organizing promotional events, the decoration of shopping centers and show-windows and other.

1. Please name the 3 best (most successful) advertisements that your agency has developed over the past 2 years!

- The first one is *DnB Nord Bank's* name change and the whole bank's advertisement campaign rebrending. Company made new advertising posters, a series of video commercials which were massively advertised on TV and in magazines.
- Second successful advertising campaign was for Samsung. Samsung developed a new mobile phone line - Samsung Ultra 2 Edition. At that time, that was the thinnest mobile telephone in the world – and The Link designed for them an advertising campaign. The main slogan was – *Millimeters have an importance*

2. As “creators of texts”, what do you consider is best way to “communicate” with the consumers, the “readers of texts”?

It is all about symbiosis of Text and Picture, in other words 50%-50%. Also of course it depends on the budget of a company which is buying the advertisement from us. Secondly it depends on what we are trying to achieve – A promotion of a

¹² Apkalns, Ivars 2009. Project director, The Link. Interview 11.03

new product, an advertisement about Sales or just a reminding advertisement. And thirdly it depends on the latest trends on the market and economical situation on the whole. Nowadays when the situation is rather hard and people are interested mostly in discounts –we show now mostly in our advertisements figures and text slogans, which inform people about low prices. Advertisements always depend on consumer needs and that of course has its influence on what we show in our advertisements

3. *What are the most popular hidden persuaders you use in creating advertisements?*

Music, traditional motives effect. As an example is mentioned – *Tukuma Piens (milk)*. This product range is made of fully recycled packaging and doesn't make any harm to people's health and doesn't pollute environment.

4. *Do you think the language of advertising is a powerful and innovative tool in today's business world?*

Yes, even now during world economical crisis, companies need to advertise themselves in order to prove their financial stability and to struggle for the customers during the fall of purchasing capacity. Without advertising big companies and new business ideas will not develop in modern trading world.

5. *Which media channels (TV, radio, press, Internet or cinema) are used most frequently for product advertising?*

Mostly this is TV and Press. For TV – it is video clips (commercials) and for the Press there are some posters. Another popular way of advertising it is public presentations – which include some closed presentations for specially invited guests, tasting in shopping centres, leaflets and presentations during exhibitions.

6. *What about banned advertisements? Has your agency ever experienced a situation when an advertisement you have made was banned by the Advertising Standards Authority/ other Institutions?*

There was one case, when The Link made an advertising campaign for the drink, but in the

end they found out, that the name of this drink is already registered by some other company and they could not use this advertisement.

7. *What are your predictions for the future development of the advertising industry?*

We can see that in the present economic situation advertising business has come to a halt. Nowadays clients try to organize efficient campaigns with the best possible results. They estimate the costs more carefully. A lot of clients choose to organize campaigns that concentrates on selling the product and not the ones that popularize the brand name. Their goal is to sell the biggest possible amount of goods. When planning their advertising budgets clients choose BTL (Below The Line – non-media communication) activities over ATL (Above The Line – promotion through mass media) activities because they are cheaper. I predict that this trend will remain for at least one more year. In the present situation those advertising agencies who will provide creative and unusual ideas will be those who will stay in the market.

3.2.5. *Interview with Gatis Murnieks, FUSEARMIJA manager, Latvia*

This chapter is based on the interview with Gatis Murnieks, FUSEARMIJA manager.¹³

FUSEARMIJA is an 100 % outsourced advertising agency in Latvia which deals with the untraditional marketing and guerilla marketing.

Guerilla marketing - a system of promotion that relies on time, energy and imagination rather than a big marketing budget.¹⁴

FUSEARMIJA is the winner (the best media folder) of the international advertising festival Golden Hammer 2008 and its manager Gatis Murnieks is the winner of International Young Communications Entrepreneur award 09.

13 Murnieks, Gatis 2009. Manager, FUSEARMIJA. Interview 25.03

14 Guerilla marketing. Riga: Edita: [referred 17.04.2009]. Available in www-format:
<URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla_marketing

1. Please name the 3 best (most successful) advertisements that your agency has developed over the past 2 years!

- The most successful would be **Hyundai Getz trolleybus** (trolleybus – a public transport that operates with the electricity). Hyundai positioned itself as the cheapest car in Latvia. The slogan for the campaign was “Choose the way to go to the work tomorrow”. This Hyundai trolleybus was driving around Riga, stopping at the public transport stops and inviting people to have a ride with it instead of a bus. . Results: this campaign increased sales by 50 %.
- The best would be **Statoil eco-weather vanes**. Statoil is known as the biggest fuel retailer in Latvia. The campaign was created to promote the new Statoil extra loyalty card, to keep existing and add new clients and to position Statoil as an environmentally friendly company. Creative media execution – wind cones were incorporated into billboards. In the hearth of the billboards were rotating modules in the form of Statoil extra card. Wind power made this ad environmentally-friendly. Results: all cards were sold within the first week of the campaign and the total membership of extra card club grew by 40 %.

2. As “creators of texts”, what do you consider is the best way to “communicate” with the consumers, the “readers of texts”?

- a) *Using images/pictures, emphasis on the pictorial display?*
- b) *Using words, linguistic strategies and/or innovative language?*

I believe that one picture speaks a thousand words. If we calculate a little this is what we get: a 15 second clip speaks about 360 000 words.

But all in all I can't name the “one best way” to “communicate” with the consumers. It depends on the industry and the media. For example, I wouldn't use more than 5 words in outdoor advertising. The key is to speak a language people understand.

3. What are the most popular hidden persuaders you use in creating:

- a) *A standard ad;*
- b) *An ad for an environmentally friendly product?*

Nudity and sex. Unfortunately we haven't had the opportunity to work with many environmentally friendly products so I can't compare. We have had just a few environmentally-friendly ads such as Statoil eco-weather vanes I mentioned before.

But continuing with the hidden persuaders, we don't try to buy, hoodwink or bribe people. Our ambition is to bring advertisements and real life closer to each other.

4. Do you think the language of advertising is a powerful and innovative tool in today's business world?

4.1. ...how can words persuade people to act environmentally friendly?

4.2. ...how do you use language to be “innovative”?

Firstly, tone is as important as the actual words. It has to be explanatory, encouraging and reminding instead of plain shocking. It is more efficient to urge people turn the lights off than to nag them because they don't.

Secondly, in every advertisement there is the form and content. I believe it is important to give people chance to make the content themselves and let them think for themselves. We organize “open campaigns” where there is a dialog between the manufacturer and consumer.

5. Which media channels (TV, radio, press, Internet or cinema) are used most frequently for product advertising?

Of course most common media channels are TV, Press and Radio. FUSEARMIIJA mostly works with outdoor advertising and internet but I would also like to work with ATL media channels (ATL – Above The Line – mass media – TV, radio). We try to create new media channels ourselves or transform the existing media channels using technological innovations. However, I believe that the best possible results can be achieved using not only one media channel but various combinations of

media channels, for example, TV + Internet, Radio + Internet or Radio + Press + Outdoor advertising.

6. Please name the craziest and the most innovative advertising campaign your agency has ever made.

What was the wildest idea?

I would say it was BITE GSM graffiti projections. Bite is a telecommunications company in Latvia. The campaign was created to promote www.esvaru.lv (I can). The campaign was innovative because we created a new media – digital spray/video projections and it was crazy because we didn't ask governments' permission to realize this campaign.

7. What about banned advertisements? Has your agency ever experienced a situation when an advertisement you have made was banned by the Advertising Standards Authority/ other Institutions?

There have been many cases when our advertisements have been banned. It's a pity because the community doesn't get a chance to see really interesting and creative advertisements. However our company takes all the responsibilities for our actions. I have been taken to court many times and the company has paid a lot of fines. We wanted to paint the stalk of the factory green once and add a slogan "Become green even here" but unfortunately this environmental advertisement was banned.

8. What are your predictions for the future development of the advertising industry?

I would say that the future is present, it is just not evenly presented. Latest innovations in advertising reach Latvia later than countries like the USA, England, France etc.

Many advertising agencies don't think so much about the content, but I believe that the content and the quality of it is the most important thing in advertising. There is still a place to grow. I predict that there will be less newspapers and magazines in the future, but those few left will be more qualitative. The importance of TV will be the same but Internet as a media channel will develop more and, for example, radio will develop through internet. New technology allows individuals to avoid seeing advertisements and many ads are

simply ignored. Therefore advertisers have to find even more innovative ways to get the attention of potential customers. Guerilla marketing and outdoor advertising are good examples of our advertising future, and more innovation is to be expected.

3.2.6. Conclusions

In-depth interviews with advertising agencies gave us a great insight into the way the agencies operate and how they put forward their strategies. The answers provided by respondents in both countries were quite similar, however, there were several differences.

There were different opinions related to the way of communication with customers. Is it more efficient through visual materials or linguistic strategies? One agency pointed out that a Picture speaks a thousand words. The other one claimed that nowadays customers are more affected by the words and figures because they are putting a stronger emphasis on the price. For example: 50 % off, take 3 for 2 price etc.

Agencies agreed that the language in advertisements has to be short, concise and understandable for the customers. It is important to identify the target group and use the text and media that is relevant.

In the present economic situation people are prioritizing low prices instead of using more money on the environment. Today advertisements are characterized by lower prices and pushing as much merchandises as possible on the consumers. We have come to the conclusion that in Latvia there are more environmental ad campaigns than in Norway. Nowadays there is no market for environmentally friendly products in Norway.

3.3. Survey

3.3.1 Introduction

We have studied culture and advertising. Studies refer to cultural dimensions, such as, individualism-collectivism and femininity-masculinity, which are used to explain appearances and portrayals of people in commercial print messages. Investigation methods include content analysis of advertisements in general interest magazines that are widely read in cultural communities: results suggest how culture

affects advertising content. In order to understand better the applications of these varied theories, our Euroweek team has surveyed attitudes and preferences of students to see how advertisements influence their product choices. Our Euroweek team has done a survey in 3 countries: Norway, Portugal and Latvia. A total of 90 students (30 in each country; 45 males and 45 females) completed the survey.(Appendix 1)

3.3.2. Survey results

1. Please mention three advertised products you remember from any kind of media (TV, Internet, newspapers, posters, boardings...)

Figure 2. Most frequently mentioned product groups in Latvia

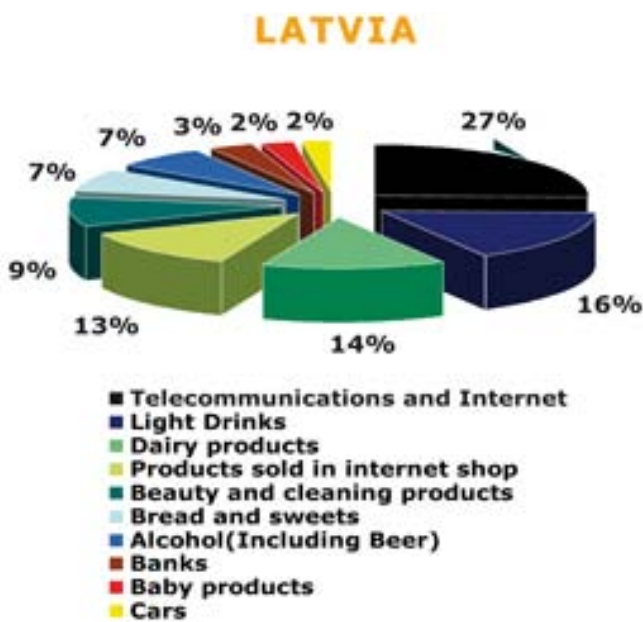


Figure 4. Most frequently mentioned product groups in Norway



Figure 3. Most frequently mentioned product groups in Portugal

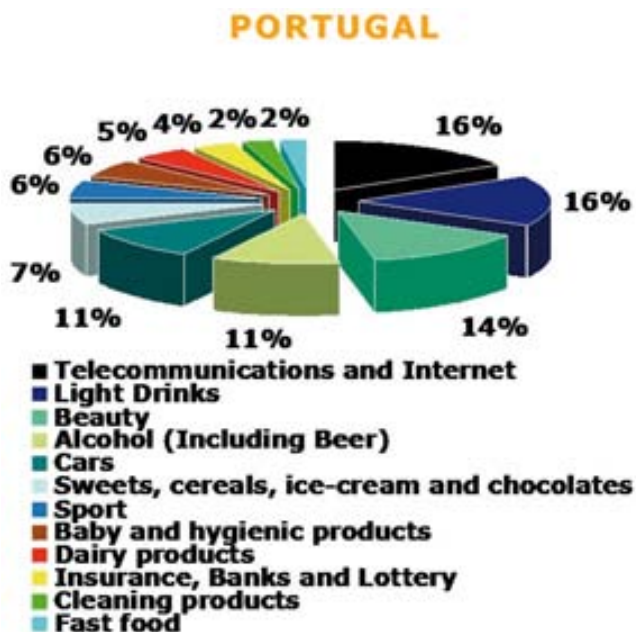
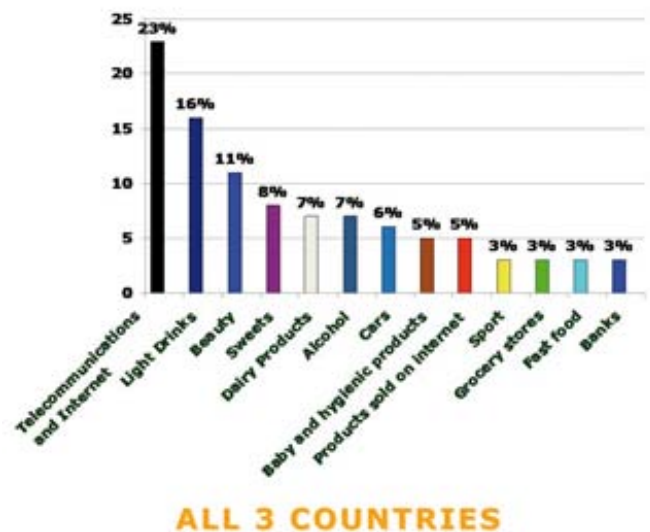


Figure 5. Most frequently mentioned product groups in all 3 countries



We can see from Graph 4 and 5 the summarised results from all three countries – Latvia, Norway

and Portugal had similar results and common leaders in answers: Telecommunications and Internet products, light drinks, beauty products and food. It's not a surprise because nowadays largest Advertisers like Procter and Gamble or Coca-

Cola are widely advertised in all media formats, which makes them really recognisable and easy to remember.

What do you remember about the ads?

Figure 6. Most popular answers in Latvia

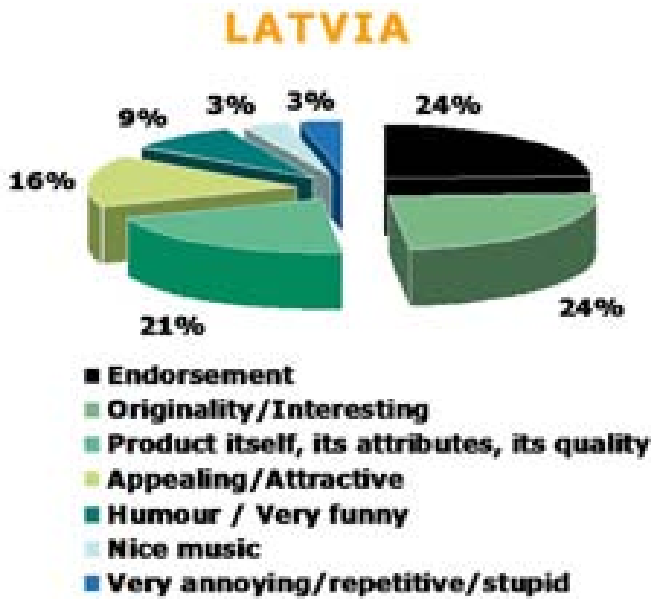


Figure 8. Most popular answers in Norway

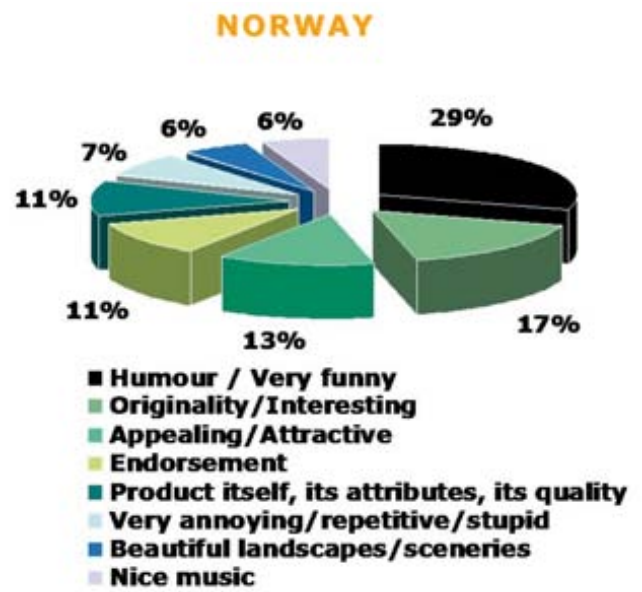


Figure 7. Most popular answers in Portugal

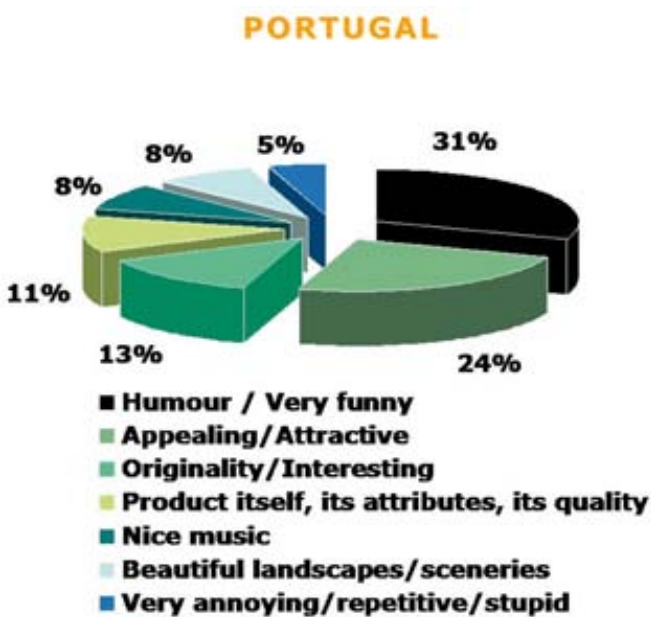
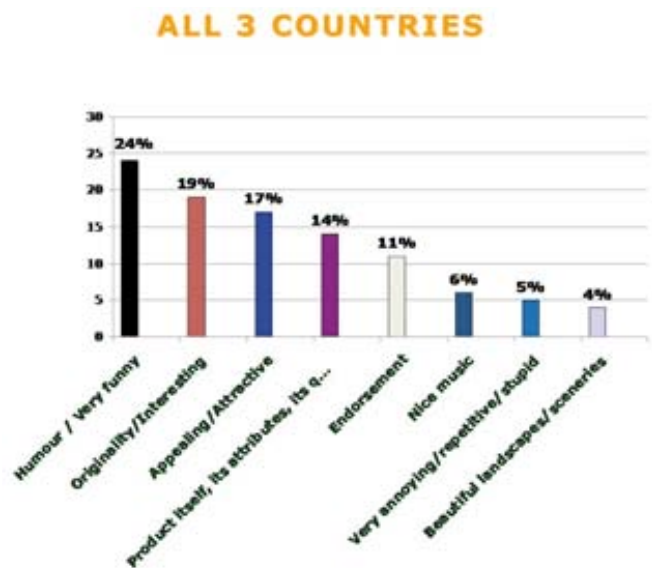


Figure 9. Most popular answers in all 3 countries



The results from Graphs 9 and 10 show that : Humour, Originality and Attractiveness were the main points which people remember from advertisements. It is very important for advertisers to understand that people are more interested in unusual and original advertising – which has either

humor or some special and innovative idea. These advertisements have a true influence on consumer and are positively met by all people. Only a positive impression will make a person by advertised product – and that is the main key for a successful product.

2. We showed 2 different products to the students: Ecological product versus Standard product.

Figure 10. Question 2 results in Latvia

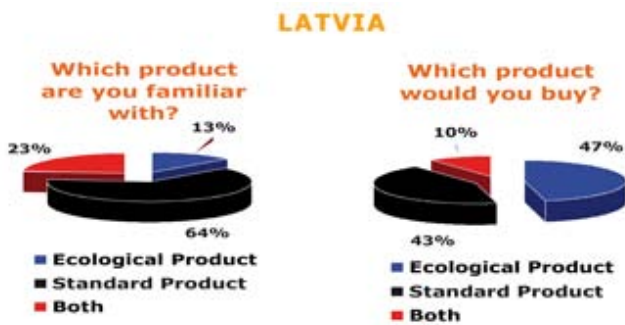


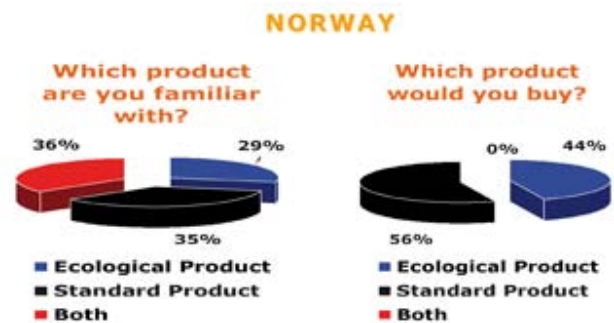
Figure 13. Question 2 results in all 3 countries



Figure 11. Question 2 results in Portugal



Figure 12. Question 2 results in Norway



As we can see from this graph most people are familiar with ecological products but they still prefer the standard products. The most frequently mentioned reasons for choosing the ecological product were:

- the fact that this is a high quality, ecological product;
- humor and originality in the advertisements that were shown to the students.

The main reason for choosing the standard product was the price.

3. We showed 2 car slogans to the students: an environmentally friendly car (Lexus Ls Hybrid) versus standard car (Lexus Ls 460). Students were asked to name the car they relate to best.

Figure 14. Question 3 results in Latvia, Portugal and Norway



As we can see from this graph, the majority (60 %) of all surveyed students chose the environmentally friendly car slogan. It shows that nowadays the environmental consciousness is increasing and people prefer cars with electric motors, low gas emissions and good fuel economy.

3.3.3. Conclusions

Surveys had one of the major roles in our project-work because our topic was advertising. To make certain conclusions and prove different facts – we had to find out other people opinion. Based on

this research we have gathered priceless statistic information which helped to develop and improve our project. Having in our team three countries (Latvia, Norway and Portugal) situated in different parts of Europe – we had a chance to make an international surveys and see how our cultures differentiate.

In some questions our countries were similar in other not. However we have discovered certain facts which helped us during preparation of our work:

1. People are starting to react to green advertising. Choosing a *Green Lifestyle* is a modern tendency of all Europe.
2. People prefer unique and innovative advertisements rather than dull and repetitive ones. Advertisers should not save their money on making cheap commercials. Idea – is a key of all successful advertising campaigns.

4. conclusion

Our team has had the opportunity to critically engage in the influential, pervasive advertising discourse of the twenty-first century and has developed our necessary analytical vocabulary to understand what print advertising is and how it works. With that background, we have uncovered a number of interesting insights.

- Words (short and powerful slogans) and images are carefully-chosen and in some cases even invented in commercials or advertisements. Sometimes words can be even more convincing and influential than pictures.
- Romance, humor, shock- and scare-tactics are often used to appeal to the emotions of the audience. Copy writers want the target group to be moved by certain feelings.
- People remember best the things they like and have an interest for, like music or the (famous) persons that featured in the ads.
- International or national, cultural, historical trends or happenings can influence the language in the ads and how people respond to them: even the impression people already have of a product or company.
- Cultural insights seem to indicate that more consumers in more countries are being

persuaded by advertisers to adopt an eco-lifestyle; consumers require more and better information from ad agencies.

- Culture can be a huge barrier in creating international commercials, especially when these are dubbed. One thing that is funny in one culture may be offensive in another.
- Advertising tendencies are highly dependent on the economic situation in governments and in the world. In today's financial crisis people now seem more affected by numbers (discounts or low prices) than by visual effects.
- By comparing ads for standard products with eco-product advertisements, we understand that advertising is trying to change our lifestyles. These changes are implemented by the use of innovative linguistic strategies, that include the use of new words, with the prefix "ECO" and the use of the verb "To Love". To love eco-products, to love everything that is eco-friendly is actually our life goal.

We have studied the language of advertising in our three countries.

1. We have discovered that advertisements ARE and HAVE TO BE innovative to be successful.
2. We understand that the creation of advertisements is very complicated. Different cultures can understand ads in different ways.
3. Ads can be global and can be national/local. Cross cultural advertising has to be especially careful to respect the unique cultural values and traditions.
4. Translations can often be misleading, wrong, ineffective. Disregard for national cultures can result in negative press and ineffective marketing...
5. National cultures often maintain national ideal and beliefs, behaviours. These are reflected in the design of national ads.
6. The conclusion is that advertisements ARE cultural and have to be to reach the target audience effectively.

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Appendix 1

Euroweek, 2009
Portugal, Norway, Latvia

Euroweek student survey

Male: Female:

1. Please mention **three advertised products** you remember from any kind of media (TV, Internet, newspapers, posters, hoardings...).

a) What do you remember about the ads?

2. Ecological vs. regular food (see attachment 1)

a) Which of these 2 products are you familiar with?

b) Which product would you buy?

c) Please circle the aspect(s) that influenced your choice

- Humor

- Originality
- Emotional appeal
- Endorsement (advertised by an appealing person)
- High quality
- Environmental ethics
- Ecological lifestyle
- Habit
- Packaging
- Neutral design
- Colour
- Music
- Romance
- Work simplification
- The message itself,
- Others, please write in here

3. Environmental friendly car versus standart car (see attachment 2)

a) Which one do you relate to best?

b) Please explain why.

Attachments:

1. Norway

a) Freia Premium – Intens nytelse



b) Fair Trade - Fair play, fair pay



Latvia

a) Daugava – ecological dairy product

b) Valmieras piens – standart dairy product

Lexus Ls Hybrid

H is for many things. H is for hope. Hope for wonderful moments today, hope for even more events tomorrow.
H is for hybrid



Versus

Lexus Ls 460

The pursuit of control
The pursuit of performance
The pursuit of beauty
The pursuit of exhilaration
The pursuit of silence
The pursuit of perfection



Appendix 2

Euroweek, 2009

Portugal, Norway, Latvia

2) EUROWEEK ADVERTISING AGENCIES SURVEY

1. Please name the 3 best (most successful) **advertisements** that your agency has developed over the past 2 years. (Real ad examples if possible)
2. As “**creators of texts**”, what do you consider is best way to “communicate” with the consumers, the “**readers of texts**”?
 - a) Using images/pictures, emphasis on the pictorial display?
 - b) Using words, linguistic strategies and/or innovative language?
3. What are the **most popular hidden persuaders you use in creating**
 - a. A standard ad
 - b. An ad for an environmentally friendly product.

* Humour, Shocking ads, Emotional appeal (beautiful people, children, music...), striking character, Original plot, ethical attitude, global consciousness, intelligence

4. Do you think the **language of advertising** is a **powerful** and **innovative tool** in today’s business world?

As “creators of texts...”:

- 4.1 ...how can words persuade people to act environmentally-friendly?
- 4.2 ...what do you have to do to be “innovative”?

5. Which media channels (TV, radio, press, Internet or cinema) are used most frequently for product advertising?
6. Please name the craziest and **the most innovative** ad for an environmentally friendly product your agency has ever made? What was the wildest idea? (Real ad examples if possible)
6. What about **banned advertisements today**? Has your agency ever experienced a situation when an advertisement you have made was banned by the Advertising Standards Authority/ other Institutions? Are there fewer restrictions today?
7. What are your predictions for the **future development of the advertising industry**?