

**An Cross-culture Study on the Differences of Advertising Adaptation
Management**

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I . Acknowledgement

I am very excited to write this acknowledgement not only because of the accomplishment of the thesis, but also the precious memories of my Master study.

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II. Abstract (English)

Custom is one of behaviors in cultural groups. Each country and region has its unique culture and custom, which leads varied standards and habits for goods selection. This implies that a successful international marketer must do to get deep insights to understand the difference of various cultures and customs, and applies his understanding to the marketing planning process to get a best marketing strategy.

In this context, as a necessary means in international marketing, cultural difference should be considered while applying advertisement strategy for local markets. For international corporations, the backgrounds of current consumers have significant differences which can be reflected on the consuming behaviors, and hence results in the general performance.

Based on Hofstede's Culture Dimensions theory of national cultural differences, this thesis focus on the cross-culture analysis, by studying those comparative advertisement cases selected from several global companies: Sony, McDonald's, Canon, Ikea etc. Therefore, the author attempts to display how these renowned global companies used local advertising adaptation strategies to brand their products and marketing management in different countries successfully.

Finally, it also gives practical guidance and assistance to the process of advertising internationalization in different cultural backgrounds.

Key Word: advertisement, Hofstede's theory, cultural dimensions, cross-culture advertisement, marketing

III. Abstract (Portuguese)

Costumes é um dos comportamentos em grupos culturais. Cada país e região tem a sua cultura e os seus costumes únicos, o que conduz a variados standards e hábitos para uma boa seleção. Isto implica que um marketer internacional com êxito deve ter uma profunda compreensão sobre a diferença das diversas culturas e costumes, e que aplica o seu conhecimentos ao processo de plano de marketing para obter a melhor estratégia de marketing.

Neste contexto, como um factor necessário no marketing internacional, a diferença cultural deve ser considerada enquanto aplicando uma estratégia de publicidade e de se dar a conhecer para os mercados locais. Para as corporações internacionais, o background de actuais consumidores têm diferenças significativas que podem estar refletidas nos comportamentos de consumo, e assim nos resultados da performance geral.

Baseada na Teoria das Dimensões Culturais de Hofstede das diferenças culturais nacionais, esta tese centra-se na análise cross-culture. Assim, o autor procura mostrar como estas renomadas companhias globais usaram estratégias de adaptação de publicidade local para promoverem os seus produtos e gestão de marketing em diferentes países de uma forma bem sucedida.

Finalmente, também dá orientação e assistência ao processo de internacionalização de promoção em diferentes backgrounds culturais.

Palavras-chave: Hofstede, estudos transculturais, marketing internacional, adaptação de publicidade local

TABLE OF CONTEXTS

I. Acknowledgement.....	I
II. Abstract(English)	II
III. Abstract(Portuguese).....	III
 1. Introduction	 1
1.1 General Statement	1
1.2 Purpose of the Research	5
1.3 Significance of the Research	6
1.4 Research questions	7
2. Literature Review	7
2.1 International Communication.....	7
2.1.1 Definition of Culture	7
2.1.2 Expression of Culture	8
2.1.3 The development of Culture Study	9
2.2 Advertising	12
2.2.1 Definition of advertising	12
2.2.2 Definition of international advertising	12
3. Methodology	14
3.1 Introduction	14
3.2 Research Method and Theory	15
3.3 Data Resources	16
3.4 Analyzing Procedure	17
4. Theoretical Background	17
4.1 Introduction of Hofstede's theory	18
4.2 Individualism and Collectivism	19
4.3 Masculinity and Femininity	20
4.4 Power Distance.....	21
4.5 Uncertainty Avoidance.....	22
5. Case Analysis and Discussion.....	23
5.1 Individualism and Collectivism	23
5.1.1 One IKEA Case in France	23
5.2 Power Distance.....	33

5.2.1 One Sony case in Japan	33
5.2.2 One Sony Case in America	34
5.2.3 Contrast and Discussion	35
5.3 Uncertainty Avoidance.....	36
5.3.1 One Canon Cases in America.....	36
5.3.3 Contrast and Discussion	39
5.4 Masculinity and Femininity	41
5.4.1 One Canon Case in Korea	41
5.4.2 One Canon Case in Hong Kong	42
5.4.3 Contrast and Discussion	43
6.Conclusion and Limitation	43
6.1 Limitations of the study.....	43
6.2 Conclusion of the study.....	44

List of tables

Table 1: IDV dimension in 6 countries	31
Table 2: PDI dimension in 6 countries	35
Table 3: UAI dimension in 6 countries	39
Table 4: MAS dimension in 6 countries	43

List of figures

Figure 1 : Haagen Daz Chinese moon cake advertisement	2
Figure 2: Starbucks Trump Cup	3
Figure 3: SK- II Advertisement	4
Figure 4: Expression of culture at different levels.....	9
Figure 5: IKEA advertisement in France	24
Figure 6: IKEA advertisement in Taiwan.....	26
Figure 7: McDonald's advertisement in France	27
Figure 8: McDonald's advertisement in Taiwa	29
Figure 9: PlayStation4 advertisement in Japan	33
Figure 10: PlayStation4 advertisement in America.....	34
Figure 11: Canon advertisement in America.....	37
Figure 12: Canon advertisement in Japan	38
Figure 13: Canon advertisement in Japan.....	41
Figure 14: Canon advertisement in HK.....	42

1. Introduction

1.1 General Statement

Markets with large cultural differences need an adaptation based on local cultures, to better integrate local markets and satisfy consumers needs and requirements. For example, Eastern females pursue white skin tone, and not usually use perfume; while western females have highly demand on perfumes and look for tan skin tone. This is because the culture difference leads to different aesthetic, and hence results in reverse consuming behaviors. Therefore, the display arrangements in stores are adjusted in China and Europe.

Culture also plays a key role in marketing segmentations, from geographical to psychographic. Religions, customs, taboos, and nationalities are all present in culture. Compared to standardized advertising, customized advertising strategy can better show the market characteristics and meet the customer needs, which is more effective. On the contrary, attempting to force a standardized advertisement onto unreceptive consumers will only lead to failure.

Marketing strategies have large potentials in the process of globalization due to cultural differences. On the one hand, many enterprises are looking for international expansion in the process of the globalization, especially developing countries such as China are hoping to “step out the door”; on the other hand, the future prospect of cultural industry makes countries pay more attention on culture characteristics. Brand awareness with customer loyalty is a core and trend in marketing strategy. For example, companies like Haagen Daz blend Mid-Autumn Festival are culture values in Chinese market and generate local commitments.



Figure 1 : Haagen Daz Chinese moon cake advertisement

Similar as standardized marketing framework superseded by customized marketing, general customized marketing is threatened by further cultural segmentation. Therefore, understanding how cultural differences would affect the advertising performance is necessary and decisive.

Besides, promoting through emotional issues is one of current advertising means, since the public attitudes to an issue reflect the group's culture characteristics. If the advertising can perfectly fit the public major thoughts, and has the same standpoint with the major thoughts in the society, the product values would be easier to accepted by the public in general. If the advertising is against the major public thoughts, the public reactions to the brand and the product have potential risks rejected. After Donald Trump, has been elected the president of the U.S who advocates racialism, Starbucks advertises on the next date in New York to advocate a fair and united American dream. In the same time, Starbucks launches a new coffee cup with multinational and racial characters on it for "united town", and sarcastically named it as "Trump Cup", which helps to boost sales.



Figure 2 : Starbucks Trump Cup

America is a country of emigrants, and “American dream” is a culture to emphasize the unity of different races and nations. This is the core to succeed in the Starbucks marketing. However, if we apply the same marketing method in Korea or Japan, public reactions would be confusing and meaningless, since these countries have a single nation and race.

In 2016, SK-II China launch an advertising “The Expiry Date” to achieve general female agreements to the “Turning age thirty” topic in white-collar class. If SK-II launches this advertising in the U.S or Europe, the performance will be discounted due to the cultural difference of female independence as singles. Marketing promotions in nowadays is more like a mirror to reflect the emotional issues and social cultures, and hence to study and explore culture impacts on targeted consumers become ever more important.



Figure 3:SK- II Advertisement

Successful advertising is also limited and affected by local policies and regulations which are also the manifestation of cultures. The second largest chain supermarket, Sainsbury, launches a homosexual advertising in 2016, which was supported by homosexual people and the locals. However, if ignoring the politic and cultural difference and forcing the same campaign in China, it violated the media industrial regulation published in 2016, which prohibit any homosexual topics in films, TV programs, and advertising.

All in all, culture plays a key role in international marketing. This thesis will analyze cultural differences and independences across countries based on Hofstede's dimensions theory to get enlightenment from successful advertisements.

This thesis has five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction to brief conversation about the purpose and significance of this thesis. The second chapter is the literature review, showing previous studies about intercultural communication and advertising in the country and abroad. The third chapter is the theoretical background for introducing and explaining the theory which will be applied in the analysis of this thesis. The fourth chapter is the case comparative analysis. The author will combine the theories mentioned

in chapter three to analyze selected commercials, outdoor advertisements and images. The fifth chapter is the conclusion and the author's opinion.

Finally, it also gives practical guidance and assistance to the process of internationalization advertising in diverse cultural background.

The purposes of this paper are to compare and analyze cultural differences manifested in the selected cases and find out how these global companies adapted their advertisements to local culture successfully based on intercultural theories.

1.2 Purpose of the Research

During these recent 30 years, China has made tremendous development in economy. In the background of globalization, many Chinese domestic and national enterprises are actively searching for going abroad and exploring new markets in other countries. Thus, raising awareness of intercultural marketing communication competence becomes unprecedentedly necessary. Besides, culture has always been regarded as a crucial part of the core competence of a company, how to use intercultural marketing tool to promote the company's culture to new consumers appropriately has now become one of the determinants in international brand management strategies.

One of the most important and crucial tools of marketing is advertisement. Mass media advertising is an especially effective tool to market consumer products. It is common for consumer product companies such as Nintendo (Weekly Toyo Keizai, 2015) and Proctor Gamble (Kaynak, Herbig, 2014) to cost 10% or even more of their annual sales revenues on mass advertising. Billions of dollars on television and online commercial markets are funded on mass media advertising with the data that advertising expenditure accounts more than 1 percent for GDP, or over \$191 billion in the United States in 2016. Modern industry has relied entirely on advertising to promote itself. Global advertising expenditure has exceeded 550 billion dollars in 2016, which USA accounted for nearly 45 percent, with China second, Japan third. (Statista, 2016). What is worth mentioning is that advertising spending in China has increased dramatically over the past 10 years whose prosperity is estimated to continue in the near future in the advertising market.

The reason why the author selects these several global companies' advertisements as the target of the research is also meaningful. On the one hand, the advertising cases are all selected from some renowned global companies which range from countries with western culture like Ikea and McDonald's to those with eastern culture such as Sony and Canon. They all made a remarkable success in international brand management by adopting the appropriate advertising localization strategy. On the other hand, even though "Make in China", has been well known all over the world, "Create in China" the new concept put forward by the latest Chinese government still has a long way to go. Many newborn Chinese companies like Huawei, Alibaba and Haier have already implemented their international advertising in many countries, but comparing to Sony and Ikea, Chinese brands are obviously still far from being considered as a global brand, accepted and perceived by the consumers in most of mainstream markets in the world. The study toward these premium companies can offer good references to Chinese developing companies.

So, what makes those leading global companies deliver their cultures and build up their brands across the cultural boarder successfully? Could their intercultural advertising experiences help the improvement of Chinese companies' globalization brand management? These questions are well worthy to explore, and the comparative study between different culture connotations behind the advertising materials is rewarding.

1.3 Significance of the Research

This research has considerable functional and instructional significance. Firstly, from the theoretical angle, it provides some references to the intercultural advertising communication, and figure out the reason why these intercultural advertisements are successful. This comparative analysis can not only make a more precise comprehension of cultural dimensions and intercultural communication, but also helps readers understand other intercultural materials easier. Secondly, from the angle of applied values, it also offers some useful instructions for viewers to understand the advertisements of a specific brand in different nations with distinct cultural backgrounds. This thesis employed Hofstede's theory to analyze the commercials of several global companies which is helpful to readers break through their inertial thinking and pave a way for them to understand an advertisement in new vision with the connection of its social and cultural

factors context. Therefore, it could help us gain more various and personalized views and make theory better serve practice. Thirdly, it may raise the reader's awareness to respect each other from the perspective of ethnic culture, and have thorough comprehension of cultural differences of different countries, ethnics and cultural backgrounds, thus to make modern advertising better carrier for people to realize and accept other cultures distinct from their own. Thus, international advertisement could be designed better to match the target audiences' taste according to their cultural customs, and respect their traditions. The ultimate purpose is to make advertising strategy adapt cultural environments of different countries.

1.4 Research questions

This paper is designed to make a comparative research of international advertising broadcast by several international enterprises on mass media platforms. In order to analyze the observed commercials, the author selected Hofstede's culture dimensions theory to explain as a tool to answer following questions:

- (1) What is the cultural connotation displayed in each observed advertisement?
- (2) What cultural factors these well-known companies take into account during the process of advertising adaptation aiming at target market?
- (3) Why this culture connotation differentiation lead to marketing success and how the global company improve their abilities of international marketing from the perspective of cross-cultural communication?

2. Literature Review

2.1 International Communication

2.1.1 Definition of Culture

Culture is the set of values and practices that create meaning for a society. It has many manifestations and has been defined in many ways. It is common to distinguish between high culture such as literature, art, and education, which appeals to elites, and popular culture, which focuses on mass entertainment.

However, there are more than 500 different definitions of culture. An early definition was provided by Tylor (1967:2), "*Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as member of society.*" Hofstede (1990) treated culture as a complex whole of our social traditions and as prerequisite for us to be a member of the society. The most well-known is raised by an American anthropologist, Kluckhohn (1951), who believes that culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; and the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. Historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values (Kluckhohn 1951). When we use the word "culture" in its anthropological sense, we mean to say that culture is any of the customs, worldview, language, kinship system, social organization, and other taken-for-granted day-to-day practices of a person which set that group apart as a distinctive group (Scollon *et al*, 2011). Anthropologist at the beginning of this century defined culture as the way of life of a person, or as what an individual needed to know to survive in a society, or as what could be learned by an individual and passed down in a society (Hall, Neitz, 1993).

2.1.2 Expression of Culture

Culture is also expressed in several ways. Amongst those terms applied to describe expressions of culture Hofstede compares culture an onion as the following figure with four layers: symbols, heroes, rituals and values. According to figure 1, these have been depicted as skins of an onion which indicates that symbols represent the most outermost layer and values are in the centre, with heroes and rituals falling in between. The most superficial layer is made of symbols which represent those objects or poses, vocabularies painting with meaning regularly easy to copy from one cultural group to others. In the second layer, there are the heroes who possess characteristics that are highly praised in a culture, therefore serve as an ideal to worship. Heroes are persons, real or imaginary even from cartoons, like Superman in America or King Arthur in Britain being able to consider as heroes. In this mass media age, outdoor appearance becomes more important thus the choice of heroes representing a cultural group become more important than it was correspondingly. The third layers are rituals. Rituals are collective activities considered

essential within a culture for specific cultural reasons like the seat arrangement of important meetings and meals in Chinese culture, and bowing and taking off shoes before entering a room in Japanese culture.

As a central cultural element, values are invisible until they become visible in behaviors, but culture also manifests itself through visible elements (Hofstede, 2007). A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of actions (Kluckhohn, 1951). When we are studying “values” we compare individuals; when we are studying “culture” we compare societies (Hofstede, 2007). For the purpose of this paper, culture is defined as the socially transmitted behavior patterns, norms, beliefs and values of a given community.

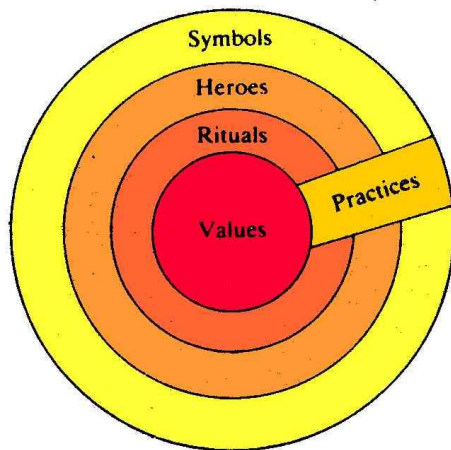


Figure 4: Expression of culture at different levels

(source: Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations)

2.1.3 The development of Culture Study

Reeves as scholar argues that culture can shape everything (Reeves,2004). Thus, culture can be used as a clue to predict and analyze human's behaviors. In early 19th Century, culture was used to be considered determined by only one factor: time. Only time determines which stage and how the culture is developed. Taking anthropologist Taylor for example, after making research toward hundreds of societies in the world, he concluded that the developments of human resembled Darwin's Evolution Theory entirely. Almost all societies and their cultures moved on from savagery, barbarism and

civilization. (Taylor, 1967). Edward Burnett Taylor has always been considered as the founder of Cultural Anthropology in the 19th century. The research methods he initiated, historical ethnography and comparative have made contribution to cultural study even till now.

Another anthropologist worth mentions in 20th century Bronislaw Malinowski, the founder of the functionalist school of anthropology. He extended original culture study from evolutionary to sociological and psychological scopes. He also attached the importance of the psychology of individuals and forecast how the individual behavior cause changes.

In addition to in the field of anthropology, the research of culture also enters the scope of psychology. The most representative psychological survey called Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) which was created by a famous psychologist Milton Rokeach (1973) categorizes two kinds of values respectively - terminal value and instructional value and each have 18 sub-values inside to classify different individual's culture. This survey has been proved to be useful to reveal the characteristics of a specific society.

Even though many early theories mention above are still contributing to the present culture study, but they are also found lack of the support from empirical experiments. They are more likely a concept and theoretical framework instead of a specific measurement to predict and judge the culture and society. When the time went to 1970, the international communication pattern in the world began to change essentially since the unavoidable trend of globalization. Many scholars began to realize that the culture theory before could not meet the rapid need of intercultural communication in the booming international commerce and trade. As a result, adopting empirical experiments to study cultural differences and identify the eastern and western cultural characteristics became the main stream of contemporary cultural studies.

One of empirical cultural studies quoted most by others is the Value Orientations Method (VOM) of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961). In his value theory, people can be classified by six dimensions: relationship to the environment, time orientation, man orientation, activity orientation, activity orientation, focus of responsibility and concept of space.

The American anthropologist Edward. T Hall studied inter-culture by connecting high and low context to the characteristic of society. (Hall,1977) and offered the

dimension to distinguish the high context culture and low context culture. The outcome of Hall's research is still impacting on the fields of intercultural study.

There are many other theories about cultural study, but the one which deserves more attention is Hofstede's national cultural dimensions which is based on a large amount of empirical and theoretical experiments. It is proved to be useful to analyze the majority intercultural questions in the societies. Moreover, Hofstede's values theory has been validated directly or indirectly by many other researchers (Zakour, 2003), and Michel Harris Bond's Chinese Values Survey.

One of the most famous researcher who validated Hofstede's theory is Fons Trompenaars (2011). By employing the example of Hofstede and modifying his theories, he invented with Charles Hamden-Turner the new 7 dimensions of culture differences to deal with the problems in the global business field: individualism and communitarianism universalism and particularism affective and neutral, specific and diffuse, achievement and ascription, sequential and synchronic, internal and external control. These seven criteria aim to manage complexity in a heterogeneous environment, which is always considered as the major challenge for temporary international global business. By reconciling cultural differences, this theory is helpful to create long-term competitive advantage.

However, as we all know, none of the theories in the world can totally avoid the critiques and refutations by others. One of the most representative researcher who suspected Hofstede's theory is Tony Fang. He argued that Hofstede's bipolarized and static view was incompetent to explain contemporary culture which changed dramatically in the background of globalization and the use of internet with which cultural learning was not just longitudinal from one's ancestors within one's own culture group but dimensionally from different nations, cultures and peoples in borderless and wireless marketplace, cyberspace and daily life. To deal with this downside of Hofstede's theory, he proposed an alternative Yin Yang theory which was based on Chinese indigenous philosophy. The core of this theory is: *All cultures share the same potential in value orientations, but at the same time they are also different from each other because each culture is a unique dynamic portfolio of self-selected globally available value orientations as a consequence of that culture's all-dimensional learning over time.*" (Tony Fang, 2010). Even though the culture is learning, but the core value has already built up in the

early childhood, including the thinking and behavior pattern. Frankly the value can change because of some experiences such being an immigrant or living in another country for a long time, but the process will be slow and the root values will still endure firmly.

In this thesis, the author will adopt Hofstede's theory to make research toward cultural phenomenon in advertising.

2.2 Advertising

2.2.1 Definition of advertising

Promotion as one of four components of the marketing mix, is a marketing instrument marketing mainly based on, for reaching their customers. (Pervasive Advertising, 2011) Thus, advertising is considered as one of the most important tool in the marketing mix, designed to change the recipients' attitudes and behavior therefor to promote the products. One of the most representative definitions is *"An audio or visual form of marketing communication that employs an openly sponsored, non-personal message to promote or sell a product, service or idea."* (Williaml, 1993). From the description of the AMA (American Marketing Association), the definition is more detailed on the perspective of function, *"As a tool of marketing communications, advertising is the structured and composed, non-personal communication of information. It is usually paid for and usually persuasive, about products, services, or ideas, by identified sponsors through various media."*

Though advertising has many kinds of definitions from different aspects, there are some common characteristics can be seen from them. First of all, advertising is an activity of transmission. Secondly, advertising usually focuses on the group instead of individual, so it is a kind of popular transmission. At last, advertising is delivered to people via a broadcast way, which means advertising should be transmitted through various mass media,(Turban et al, 2016)including old media such as newspapers, magazines, Television, Radio, outdoor advertising or direct mail; or new media such as search results, blogs, websites or text messages.

2.2.2 Definition of international advertising

International advertising extends the implementation region to more than one country, which means the participators should take the cross-culture factors into account.

It has many manifestations and has been defined in many ways. Robert, F, Roth (1982) defined international market in rather execution-oriented way: “*International marketing communications is the implementation of advertising, sales promotion and public relations activities that support the sale of goods and services in more than one country.*” Rein Rijkens (1986) and his co-author Gordan also pointed out in their book European Regulation of Advertising that international advertising is advertising, created at, coordinated or directed from one crucial point, for execution, with or without local adaptation, in a number of countries. However, there are basic similarities in terms of advertising activities, marketing philosophies and process. The differences lie in the location and types of markets and the organization of the enterprise which operates both in the homeland and, simultaneously, in other national markets.

2.3 Cultural and Advertising

There are several researches in recent 5 years which discovered that advertising's content and appeal varied from culture to culture, as thinking patterns in communication are closely influenced by cultural. (Teng et al, 2014). They argued that consumers are more likely to favor an advertised brand when the cultural meaning expressed by the ad is congruent with their own cultural beliefs and values. Wlassics (2015) refers that “Respondents from both countries have positive perception of outdoor advertising in general and respondents from both 54 countries prefer advertisements with an emotional appeal to advertisements that are text-heavy.” and therefore explains that cultural values are the premise and determinant of the advertising, which are reflected, are intensified by the themes, messages as well as appeals. Antonio Pineda (2015) and his colleagues made corresponding research on illustration styles differences of newspaper advertisements between Spain and the USA, based on cultural differences theory. Ye Lin, Didem Koroglu and Lyle Olson(2012) compared the advertisements of China and the United States from the perspective of culture and concluded that the United States commercials displayed individualistic values, and exhibited low context culture values, while Chinese commercials showed collectivistic values, and exhibited high context cultural values. Further comparative research to clarify the differences between communication patterns

and cultural values have been found across various countries including Russia and South Korea (Rakova, Baek, 2013), China and UK (Ju, 2013), Mexico and the United State (Cruthirds *et al*, 2012) and Taiwan (Yu, Bandyopadhyay, 2014).

Hornik ((Hornik *et al*, 2016)) therefore argued that culture-specific cultural value appeals when developing international advertising campaigns was important. Gregory and Munch (1997) pointed out that the advertising which can mirror the local culture values are more appealing as persuasive than standardized ones.

Moreover, De Mooij (2004) explored that the culture played a determinant role in advertisement content by referring to schemata. Schemata is influenced by individuals' cultural background and in turn make compact on one's thinking pattern and world view. Based on this theory, De Mooij argued that the consumers will only decode the advertising messages which fit their individual's schemata, otherwise they are tended to ignore them. Some of researchers found that it is necessary to take culture distinguishing values because they can make the advertisements more effective and persuasive than advertisements neglecting to mirror the culture values. Fam and Grohs (2007) also confirmed this, by finding that advertisements from the USA are not effective in India, as the American advertisements did not mirror the Indian consumers' values and therefore have not been adequately perceived and processed by Indian individuals. Similarly, Okazaki et al. (2006) found that advertisements that have been adapted to the local customs of cultures, taking cultural values into consideration, result in higher levels of advertising effectiveness and acceptance, which positively effects consumers' attitudes towards the advertisement and purchase.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Advertisement adaptation is proved as one of the most effective and efficient advertising strategies for many global enterprises to promote their new products. Thus, it is always observed that many manufacturers design different style commercials aiming at different target markets. To further explore and figure out what are the differences in these adapted advertisements, the author will use the contrastive method and Hofstede's culture value theory to analyze. The companies these commercials selected from are all

the most leading and well-known companies in their own industries, whose successful market strategies could provide some enlightenment to other corporations in related fields. In chapter three, three questions are presented, what is the cultural connotation displayed in each observed advertisement? What cultural factors these well-known companies consider during the process of advertising adaptation aiming at target market? Why this culture connotation differentiation leads to marketing success and how the global companies improve their abilities of international marketing from the perspective of cross-cultural communication?

In this chapter, the author will firstly introduce the case selection, including where the cases are from and why they could be selected from copious amounts of advertisements. Furthermore, the analysis procedure will be presented.

3.2 Research Method and Theory

Advertising cross-cultural researchers generally choose the comparative method to find out the cultural connotative differences between the localized advertisements in the advertising adaptation marketing. While some of them use quantitative method through sampling including advertising cultural execution style comparative study in U.S and Japan (Taylor *et al*, 2015), cross-cultural comparative advertising study toward customers' perception between the United Kingdom and Hungary (Palma Wlassics, 2015) etc. Others use qualitative method for open-ended exploration, for instance, the analysis of intercultural business communication. (Beckers and Bsai, 2014).

According to Campbell, Quantitative research allows data to be collected that focuses on precise and objective measurements that use numerical and statistical analysis to support or refute a hypothesis while collects open-ended, emerging data that is then used to develop themes for a study of an exploratory nature. (Campbell, 2014)

Since this thesis aims to find out what and how the cultural connotations contained in the cross-cultural advertisements instead of the measure of specific figures, the author will use qualitative method to make this comparative research in the thesis.

In this thesis, the author selected Hofstede's cultural value theory, which has been one of the most important frameworks in the cross-cultural area, to analyze the observed advertisements. Through the observation toward the selected advertisements, the author finds out that advertisements in different cultural regions gives rise to different cultural

connotations which affect the acceptances degree of the targeted customers. Based on several previous researches about cross-cultural advertising, the author wants to analyze and explain the observed advertisements from the perspectives of hierarchical level, individualism or collectivism, success-oriented or comfortability-oriented and crisis awareness level which are consist with the cultural value dimension of Hofstede. So, Hofstede's value dimension theory would be used as the theoretic framework in this thesis.

3.3 Data Resources

This thesis aims to analyze media advertisements of McDonald's, IKEA, Sony and Canon which are all chosen from their official channel on YouTube, the most mainstream video website in the world. Each case has earned at least 100,000 views, been broadcast over 1 year and was released within recent 3 years, which means the cases selected are all popular, successful and new therefore are qualified to analyze. Except for the YouTube, these commercials are advertised on television and other mass media platforms. In order to eliminate the possible interference factors, two advertising cases used to compare are from the same company and for the product or service promoted in the cases are same or similar. Therefore, the only variable in this comparative research is the country.

The reasons why McDonald's, IKEA, Sony and Canon are the companies my advertising cases chosen from as follows: McDonald's is the most large-scale chain fast food corporation in the world whose number of locations is up to 36,000 in more than 100 countries (McDonald's.com,2017). As its main competitor, KFC only possesses about 20,000 locations in the world. McDonald's as the most powerful cross-countries company has built up a good brand reputation by its improved and advanced international marketing strategies, thus its advertising adaptation strategy aiming at the local market is worth considering and analyzing. Ikea as a leading furniture manufacturer has now developed its business all over the world, with the figure of 389 stores in 50 countries and regions. By its successful marketing resorts, Ikea not only promote its products, but also its ready-to-assemble and DIY concepts to the world. Without any doubt, Ikea is reasonable to be selected to display how a European manufacturer implements its marketing strategy. Comparing to Ikea and McDonald's, Canon and Sony are two Japanese companies with typical eastern culture. The selection of the advertisements from

those could display how an Asian company with oriental civilization develops itself to western societies successfully.

The selection of advertising cases is based on the following principles. First, the advertisements are selected from the companies with successful advertisement marketing which means they are qualified and representative among those of other advanced manufacturing corporations. Secondly, all the commercials are downloaded or screenshot from the official channel on YouTube, which guarantee the accuracy and completeness of the advertising cases. Third, as the author mentioned before, this thesis is aimed at discussing the advertising adaptation strategy through the comparative analysis toward the commercials observed in our daily life. So, the commercials are all selected randomly from daily routine instead of personal preference therefore ensure the objectivity of the research. Lastly, the duration of all the commercials selected is within three minutes, which can contain the cultural connotations in the most effective duration.

3.4 Analyzing Procedure

The theory used to analyze the cultural connotation differences in observed advertisements has been established in chapter before. In this contrastive analysis, there are following procedures:

- 1) Downloading all the commercials videos from the authoritative official YouTube channel and incised them into several pictures by screenshot.
- 2) Classifying these pictures with numbers. For instance, the first cases are labeled “1”, and its pictures labeled as “1-1”, “1-2”, “1-3”. Then the author will add these pictures into the thesis by screenshot.
- 3) Introducing the brief content of the ad cases and analyze the scene and the meaning of them.
- 4) After the analysis, the author then contrasts each two commercials of one group, aiming at finding the cultural differences.
- 5) Identifying the cultural connotations that companies consider during the advertising adaptation strategy process.

4. Theoretical Background

As mentioned in the chapter one, this thesis is a comparative study about intercultural advertising through analyzing international commercial cases advertised by enterprises on media platform. To demonstrate the connotations hidden in these cases, this thesis employs Hofstede's value theory. In this chapter, the author will introduce these two theories respectively.

So, this chapter begins with the review and discussion of Hofstede's cultural dimension theory and Trompenaars' cultural dimension theory which the current study involved. To introduce these theories in a more detailed way, the author thus, expounds and explains all the dimensions appearing in this thesis. Therefore, this chapter offers a theory foundation for this thesis.

4.1 Introduction of Hofstede's theory

Hofstede's five values dimensions can be considered as the most fundamental and significant theory in cross-cultural psychology, international management and international communication which inspired to many researchers and consultants in many fields. This theory is based on several empirical researches through surveying more than one hundred thousand workers in multinational organizations in forty countries from 1967 to 1973.

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory as a framework for cross-cultural communication, describes the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members, and how these values relate to behavior, by using a structure derived from factor analysis.

There are five dimensions in the Hofstede's Value Dimensions Theory, which has developed all the time and will contribute to our research on intercultural contrast and analysis in differences between different countries' enterprise.

“The comparison of cultures presupposes that there is something to be compared—that each culture is not so unique that any parallel with another culture is meaningless” (Hofstede, 2007). Besides, he sets an interesting example to this. The first hold that *“you cannot compare apples and oranges,”* whereas the second argue that apples and oranges are both fruits and can be compared on a multitude of aspects, such as price, weight color, nutritive value and durability. The selection of these aspects obviously requires a primary theory about what is important in fruits.

Hofstede found that there are five dimensions of culture that help to explain how and why people from various cultures behave as they do. Hofstede's massive study continues to be a focal point for additional research. These well-known dimensions that Hofstede examined are power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity (later long-term orientation). He put forth five basic definitions as follows (Hofstede, 2007), which in combination get at the root of any culture's value system, no matter how different or seemingly exotic a culture is: (1) Power Distance, which is related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality. (2) Uncertainty Avoidance, which is related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future. (3) Individualism versus Collectivism, which is related to the integration of individuals into primary groups. (4) Masculinity versus Femininity, which is related to the division of emotional roles between men and women. (5) Long-term versus Short-term Orientation, which is related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present.

4.2 Individualism and Collectivism

The first dimension of national culture is called individualism and its opposite is collectivism. According to Hofstede's explanation, his degree is calculated by individualism index (IDV) and can be used to describe the relationship between the group and the individuals in the group. By surveying the respondents in IBM Hofstede found that the answers are clustered in two groups. People in the first group were expected to take care of him, or herself and his or her immediate family. The societies consist most of these people defined as individualism in which the ties between individuals are loose. On the contrary, the society in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continues to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. This society opposite to individualism is defined as collectivism.

In individualism societies, or in other words, high IDV societies, personality and individual rights are encouraged to be protected preferentially. Cultures advocating individualism emphasize personal achievement, self-actualization, self-esteem, self-identity, self-awareness and self-expression. Comparing to group goals, people will attach more importance and consideration to their own personal goals, competition tends to be more priority in this culture. Society system with this culture model are shown to be looser

than those in collectivism culture. Hofstede's findings indicate that the United States, Australia, Great Britain, Canada, Italy belongs to this group.

On the contrary, collectivism culture features more rigid social system in which self-actualization plays a less important role in social interactions. Low IDV indicates that the tight relationship between members instead of the member himself/herself is more important. In this cultural system, people tend to think themselves as part of the group and prefer using "we" instead of "I" to express themselves in daily life. They comparatively have a stronger sense of responsibility toward their group instead of themselves. Besides, sacrificing individual interests for the group is honorable. The social networks are much more fixed and less reliant on individual initiatives.

In Hofstede's research against Individualism IDV is the indicated index to measure the degree of individualism, the lower IDV it is, the more collectivism-like in the target society, such as Japan and other Asian countries. Columbia, Venezuela, Pakistan, Peru, Chinese Taiwan rank top 5 in Hofstede's research.

4.3 Masculinity and Femininity

The second dimension differing systematically nationally called masculinity, whose opposite pole is femininity. This duality of index can reflect the gender character of a society. In the theory, like the biological differences between two sexes in the aspects of emotional and social roles of the genders each country has its own "gender" character. Some countries are tending to focus on social-goals like a woman and others emphasize on ego-goals like a man. By converting the mean country work goal scores opposing social to ego goals, Hofstede has been using MAS (masculine index) to measure the masculinity level of a country. According to Hofstede, the differences between masculinity and femininity societies lie in this:

The members belong to different cultures have different awareness toward gender, which therefore affects how they perceive gender roles and in which gender roles they play to cope with problems. (Geert Hofstede, 2003)

However, what is the specific meaning of masculinity and femininity?

In the higher masculinity society, gender differences are tending to be larger than the lower one. Men in these countries are supposed to be more dominant, confident and material success-oriented; while women are encouraged to be tender, considerate, and living quality and relationship-oriented.

On the contrary, the boundaries of gender roles in femininity society are vaguer. The expectations of responsibility commitment of two genders are always overlapped. In these societies, people generally have less desire to pursue material goals, they are likely attaching more importance to improve their relationship and living qualities.

The conservative and tradition tendency to define two genders is found higher in the society with higher MAS society. What's more masculinity culture honors highly of ego-goals like wealth, social status pursuing while in femininity society in adverse values social-goals like interpersonal relationship, the balance between life and career more. Referring to this cultural dimension, China, British and America are all considered as masculinity societies, being keen on pursuing career success and boast materialism.

4.4 Power Distance

Power Distance is related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality. Hierarchy exists in every corner in the world which means absolute the human society will not fair absolutely. For dealing with this problem, every country has its own solutions and laws to guarantee the fairness. In the meantime, the dimension of power distance, labeled as PDI, reflects the attitude of different countries on how the extent they consider the inequality amongst people. Hofstede defines that power distance:

The less powerful members of institutions and organization within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.

The majority countries classified in the list of low PDI are developed countries, which have improved democratic system and corresponding rational judicial systems to guarantee fairness. People these nations emphasize the utilization of decentralized power and power balance. The consideration toward hierarchy and class is relatively weaker than people in high PDI society. The relations of superior and subordinate in a company, government officer and common citizen, parent and child, teacher and student are more

equal than it in high PDI country, their differences are more likely lie in roles they play in a society instead of their statuses. The United States and most European countries have a relatively low PDI, which is lower than most East Asian countries but higher than many Northern European countries. In those Scandinavia, people are seeking for eliminating class gaps and create a more highly democratic society where personal, political and economic priority should be controlled strictly. Therefore, superior people always cannot use their power independently, they are more likely to negotiate, instead of order their subordinates in decision making.

On the opposite side, people in the society with high power distance always have ultimate decision-making power and the people governed will take it for granted. Such phenomena are found in the relationship between parents and children, teachers and students, upper class and lower classes. Even though more and more people in high PDI society begin to accept the thoughts of equality and democracy and attempt to reduce the gaps between high and low classes in economic organization and political areas, the rooted values derived from their traditions and rituals underneath will still impact a lot in daily life. Besides, the managers are tending to rely more on their superiors and companies' regulations instead of their own work experience and subordinates.

4.5 Uncertainty Avoidance

The fourth dimension of national culture has been named uncertainty avoidance, which is borrowed from Cyert and March's (1963) book "A Behavioral Theory of the Firm".

Uncertainty avoidance can therefore be defined as the extent to which members of a culture feel threatened by the ambiguous or unknown situation, it is also a basic fact of human life with which we try to cope with through the domains of technology, law, and religion. (Hofstede, 2003).

People from diverse cultures have different understandings of uncertain behavior, situation or future in life. The index used to measure the degree of uncertainty avoidance labeled as Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI).

The outcome derived from the IBM survey shows that countries vary in the degree of uncertainty avoidance. Individuals belonging high uncertainty avoidance cultures uphold strong beliefs and are skeptical of unorthodox and new behavior. Unfamiliar behaviors and thoughts are intolerable for them.

On the contrary, cultures with low uncertainty avoidance attach less importance on principles and rules. Compare to high UAI society, people in low UAI society tend to feel lower stress and less discomfort.

5. Case Analysis and Discussion

5.1 Individualism and Collectivism

5.1.1 One IKEA Case in France



1-1



1-2



1-3



1-4



1-5



1-6



1-7



1-8

Figure 5: IKEA advertisement in France
(Source: YouTube, IKEA)

This advertisement represents one of those which were put on by IKEA in France in 2016, and it is divided into nine pictures. Firstly, the author will interpret the main explanation shown in the advertisement, by describing what did happen in each scene of the advertisement. What's worth mentioning is because the length of this thesis is limited, the author only cuts nine pictures which are enough to fully explain the meaning of the advertisement, instead of cutting every second in it.

This advertisement is an interesting story describes how a boy made use of the troubled relationship of his separated parents to let his parents cook delicious meals for him. In the first picture, the father asked his son what had the mother cooked for his dinner. And the son answered “Pizza”, the father asked further dissatisfaction. “Every night?” And his sly son tricked his father again by answering “Yes”. In the picture five, the father was obviously angry and was cooking a great meal to make up his “suffering” son. In the next picture, the scene turns to the mother’s house. The mother asked her son “What did he make for dinner?” And his sly son responded to his mother by repeating what he said to his father. When he finally got a delicate meal cooked by his mum, he showed his cunning smile because he succeeded his trick and enjoyed great cuisines wherever he was. The slogan in the ending scene is “say it for food”, which spreads a thought that everybody should express what the life they really want and pursue it!

5.1.2 One IKEA Case in Taiwan



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2-2



2-3



2-4



2-5



2-6

Figure 6: IKEA advertisement in Taiwan

(Source: YouTube, IKEA)

This IKEA advertisement which was released in Taiwan in 2016 begins with a clear title: “It’s impossible to go picnic if fried rice is the only thing you can cook.” This advertisement describes a story how a housewife prepared great cuisines for the whole family picnic.

At the beginning of the Ad, this mum was frustrated because the only meal she knew how to cook was fried rice, which would make the picnic boring and disappoint the whole family because great prepared foods means a lot when the Chinese get together. To make her family happy, this housewife used many IKEA cookers to make fried rice more interesting by several methods like putting many other colorful fruits and vegetables to decorate it and rolling the fried rice in roast sleeve-fish (Picture 2 and 3). In the fifth picture, we can see the foods were much better than those in picture 1, which only put in

a plate with unappetizing-looking. The Chinese subtitle in picture 5 means innovative ideas make the family full of love. In the last picture, it is seen that everybody was happy and cheerful when the foods were served.

5.1.3 One McDonald's Case in France

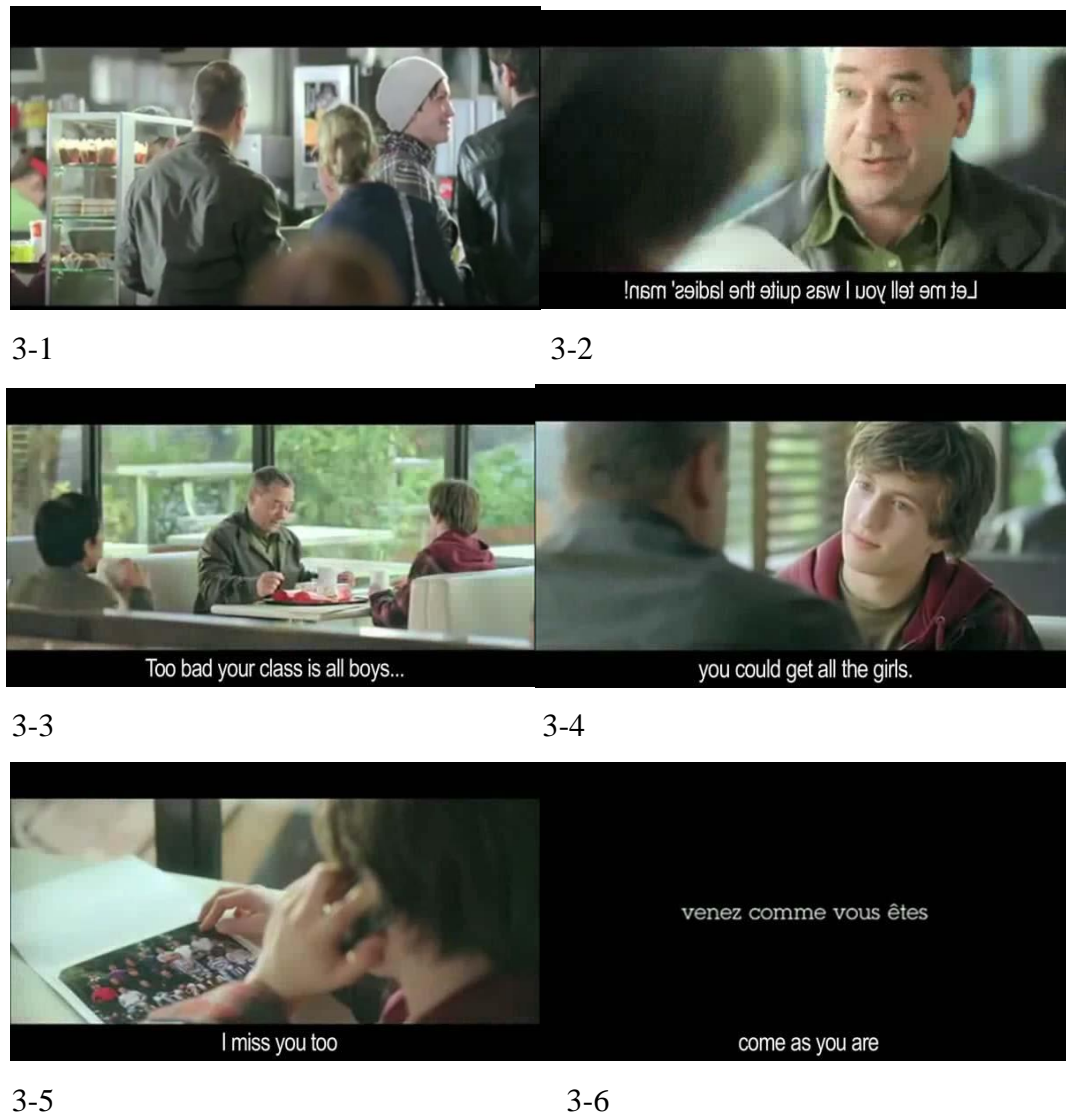


Figure 7: McDonald's advertisement in France

(Source: YouTube McDonald's)

This Ad released by Macdonald's in France describes how a teenage concealed his gay identity from his father. In the beginning of this advertisement, this teenage 's father was queuing up far away from the seat he sat. Then when the boy was taking

a photo out of his backpack, a phone call came to him. In the second picture, the boy was staring at someone in the picture and said, “I miss you too” with a sweet smile. Obviously, his lover, who he was talking to, was one of the people in this photo. But in picture 2, it’s easy to see that all people in this group photo were boy which indicated that this boy were gay. In picture3, his father came back and told his son that he used to be very popular with girls. Then when he saw the photo, he felt sorry for his son and said, “Too bad your class are all boys otherwise you could get all the girls”. From the perspective of the father, his son should have been upset because there were no girls to chase in his class. On the contrary, his son just responded to his father with an indifferent smile because his sexual orientation was male instead of female and he did not need to care how others thought about him even his father. At the end of the advertisement, there is a sentence on the screen” Come as you are” which shows that self-expression and self-awareness are considered very important and encouraged to respect.

5.1.4 One McDonald’s Case in Taiwan



4-1



4-2



4-3



4-4



4-5



4-6

Figure 8: McDonald's advertisement in Taiwan

(Source: YouTube McDonald's)

In 2016, McDonald's released a very popular TV commercial series in Taiwan for its sub-brand McCafe and the slogan of this commercial series is "Let the conversation warmer". These six snapshots above are selected from one of the episodes in this successful series. There are 3 episodes in this commercial series totally, each episode records a moving conversation happening in McCafe. By focusing on many details in McCafe like the good service McCafe offers, the warm cafe it serves, the comfortable environment it provides, the commercials convey a concept that MacCafe is a good place

for people to communicate and enjoy the gathering time, therefore furthermore advertise the deeper connotation behind the its products and services to the public- “McCafe doesn’t sell food, they sell happiness and love”.

At the beginning of this episode, a middle-aged man and a youth sat face to face with a cup of cafe. They were all silent, it looks like that the youth got the older one angry somehow and begged for forgiveness. Then it turns to the second picture, the disposable cup was put in the center of the scene with several clear Chinese words which mean “I love man”. So, here is the plot of this episode, a son admitted that he had been a gay and hoped his father accept him. After a long time thinking, this father left the table, but came back with a pen and added some words on the cup which made the sentences become “I accept that you love man”. When the son saw these words, the atmosphere of nervousness was suddenly swept away and both of them smile at each other. In the last picture, the slogan “let the conversation warmer” appeared which means in McCafe, not only the temperature, but also the heart would become warmer.

5.1.5 Contrast and Discussion

Two comparative advertisements group reveals that the advertisement strategies are significantly different when a company promotes the similar product in different countries. The treatment and attitudes toward the same problem inside is extremely different too, to accord with the values and culture of target customers.

The theme “say it for food” in figure2 and the attitude of homosexual identity in Figure 4 both employ an individualism perspective and focus on personal pursuit and self-identity (come as you are); while Taiwan advertisements emphasize the reinforcement of in-group members’ relationship (new idea makes family full of love) and the acceptance and support from the family (make the conversation warmer).

The problem this thesis aims to study is why advertisements from the same company will reveal totally different values in different regions? What factors can account for these differences? The author will use the IDV dimension to explain these differences.

Table 1: IDV dimension in 6 countries

Country	United States	Great Britain	France	Japan	Hong Kong	Taiwan
IDV	91	89	71	46	25	17
Rank in 53 countries	1	3	10	22	37	44

(Source: Geert Hofstede Culture's consequence, sage publications, 2001:215)

The countries which those four advertisements selected from are France (scores 71) and Taiwan (scores 17) which can represent for high-IDV and low-IDV countries respectively. From table 1, France and Taiwan exist conspicuous score difference in IDV dimension.

As what Baker said in his research: "it was not the family which existed to support the individual, but rather the individual who existed in order to continue the family". From the Taiwanese advertisement, we can see as one member of the family (in group), the wife is very caring about whether she can bring the enjoyment and happiness to her family at the picnic. IKEA makes used of this family-centered values, which is found very important in collectivism society, to convey that IKEA is helpful to build up a harmonious family phenomenon to Taiwan and Chinese audiences. According to Hofstede, the boundary between in-group (we-group) and out-group (they-group) is very clear in low IDV society, and the in-group is the major source of one's identity instead of himself/herself. This view can be reflected appropriately in the Taiwanese version advertised. The son strongly hopes his father can accept him as a homosexual and even feel guilty because his sexual orientation burdens his family a lot. In the collectivism society, in-group people connect with each other closely. This view can be proved by another research in 1980. Hasting H and E Hasting made a survey aiming to mothers by asking them "when you old, what kind of relationship would you like have with your children?", the outcome shown that the answer "to live together and be looked after", was endorsed only 2% by France and Britain, 34% by the Southern Korea and 73% by Thailand. These percentages were strongly correlated with IDV. As a result, the demand to acquire the identity from in-group and maintain the interdependence with in-group is both psychological and practical in low IDV society.

On the contrary, most people in high IDV society always agrees that individual interests are superior to group benefit. Individualism society considers each person as a fundamental unit to compose a society which is very different from the collectivism society in which the people think the fundamental unit in society composing should be family. Comparing to Taiwanese version, the son in France advertisement is more confident to recognize his homosexual identity, without worrying about whether his sexual preference will bring any negative influence on others. Because in the individualistic society, the major source of one's identity is the people himself/herself "I" instead of others (come as you are). Furthermore, through surveying 26 countries in 1980, Lester found that the divorce rate was closely positive correlate with individualism level. Relatively speaking, marriage in individualism society is less steady than it in collectivist society, which is also reflected in France IKEA commercial. It's obvious that the parents in case 1 have divorced, which is found very naturally and common in France. But if a commercial containing divorce details is released in Taiwan, it will be considered as a negative marriage example and lead to society.

From the perspective of personality, Grossmann and his colleague Michael E. W. Varnum (Grossmann and Varnum 2015; Hamamura, 2012) have concluded that the importance attached to individualistic in describing a person has a positive correlation with IDV scores in the country. The little boy made use the bad relationship of his parents to get delicious foods is the best reflection of the importance of individualizing for people in high individualism society.

5.2 Power Distance

5.2.1 One Sony case in Japan



5-1



5-2



5-3



5-4

Figure 9: PlayStation4 advertisement in Japan

(Source: YouTube PlayStation)

The advertisement above was released in 2015 by Sony for Playstation4 promotion. In the first picture, the actor negotiated with his boss if he could have several days off because he wanted to play playstation4 desperately and he couldn't wait even one day more. It's not surprising that his boss refused his ridiculous request directly. In the next picture, the actor didn't give up and even knelt before his boss yelling "Please permit my day off!" In the last picture, playstaion4 appeared with a subtitle:" New games are all here, why are you still waiting!"

5.2.2 One Sony Case in America



Figure 10: PlayStation4 advertisement in America

(Source: YouTube PlayStation)

These six incised pictures displayed above are belonging to a TV campaign by Sony for its new TV streaming services PlayStation Vue. By describing how this PlayStation Vue satisfied three men's different TV demands, this advertisement showed its powerful, convenient and diversified functions to consumers successfully.

At the beginning of this Ad, one man was sitting on the sofa and had just been ready to enjoy the new season football game on ESPN. After saying "Football season is here!", a boss-like man sat down, rested his hand on the man's shoulder intimately and supported that the subscription of ESPN was right. Then one more senior executive-like came in and recommended that they should choose another TV channel package to subscribe because he wanted to watch another football game. But what made the thing worse was the fourth man joined in and argued that they still had the third choice which

he reckoned was better than all of theirs. At this moment, the first man jumped out to explain that ESPN in PlayStation Vue service could meet the demand of all of them. At the end of the advertisement, a few words displaying on the screen, showing that PlayStation Vue was a better stream TV service than the rest of others which could satisfy various demands.

5.2.3 Contrast and Discussion

Even though the gap between Japan (54) and the United States (41) on power distance index is not very large, Japan can be considered as a society with higher PDI comparing to America. PDI refers to the how the level people accept the unequal distribution between powerful class and powerless class. From these two advertisements, obviously exists an enormous difference between Japan culture and the American on PDI.

Table 2: PDI dimension in 6 countries

Country	Mexico	Hong Kong	Japan	United States	Australia	Austria
PDI	81	68	54	41	36	11
Rank in 53 countries	5/6	15/16	33	38	41	53

(Source: Geert Hofstede Culture's consequence, sage publications, 2001:215)

On the one hand, in the society with lower PDI, hierarchy means an inequality of roles, established only for convenience and subordinates are expected to be consulted instead of to be told. So, in the American version PS4 commercial, the boss consulted his subordinate to know if he could subscribe ESPN channel instead of ordering directly. Moreover, latent harmony between the powerful and the powerless exists in a low PDI country which can be supported by this commercial, boss and subordinated sat together and discussed which channel they should choose. Furthermore, powerful people who belong to a low PDI community tends to make themselves look less powerful than they are. As a result, in America commercial, it is common to see that boss treat subordinates like friends or relatives. Additional, Hofstede mentions that people treat manual work as

same status as clerical work. At the end of this commercial, a cookie cook appeared and make the final decision for everyone, by which Sony conveys a spirit of sharing with its customers successfully.

On the other hand, hierarchy means existential inequality in the high PDI society, where powerful people should try to look as powerful as possible. In the Japanese version commercial, the subordinate knelt to his superior to show his ardent desire to go back home and play the PS4 games. This behavior will obviously encounter resistance in society with low PDI such as America since they only kneel for beloved woman and the god while in Japan it's acceptable.

5.3 Uncertainty Avoidance

5.3.1 One Canon Cases in America



7-1



7-2



Figure 11: Canon advertisement in America
(Source: YouTube Canon)

The commercial above is a representative one of those which were put on by Canon's in America, aiming to promote its newest product T5i. This ad consists of several shots and three of them are selected in this thesis. In the first picture, a middle-aged man was standing on the edge of the roof with a camera in his hand and obviously, he was trying to shoot something interesting. The situation of this man was dangerous and risky because the roof he stands was covered by a thick blanket of snow and slippery and it's easy to fall to the ground. What was the view there on earth that is worth, the man risked himself to shoot? In the second picture, it's seen that a person was lying in the swimming pool casually and enjoying the sunshine. In the third picture, to grasp the little girl's blowing out candles moment (pic4), the photographer pushed aside a bowl with foods inside to the ground in a flash just because they blocked the lens at that moment! The fifth picture, a youth lying on a skateboard was shooting the burning tire, which was rolling downhill at high speed. The behavior of this young man can be considered very dangerous. It's obvious that the downhill is steep, the youth had to focus on shooting, which would distract the attention away from protecting himself. In the last picture, it's seen that the

rolling tire video shot by that boy was amazing and inspiring. The slogan of this ad is “Beautiful dream” by which Canon encouraged people brave to seek and grasp your beautiful dream view when they appear in your daily life.

5.3.2 One Canon Case in Japan

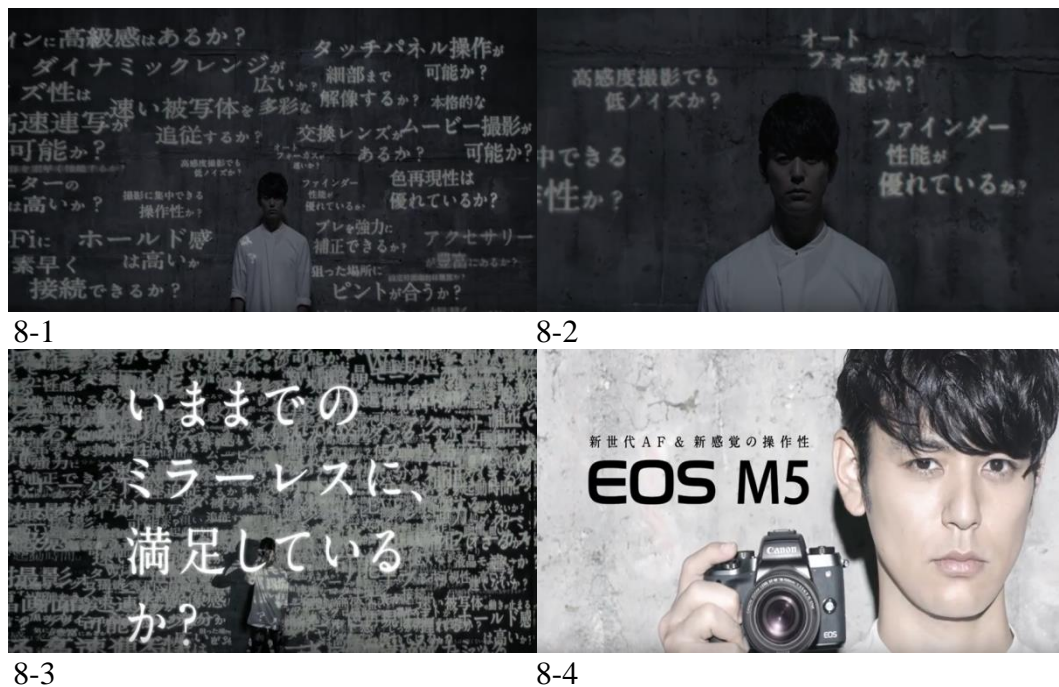


Figure 12: Canon advertisement in Japan

(Source: YouTube Canon)

This succinct ad is one of the most representative Japanese-style commercials, which reflects a lot about Japanese features and cultural characters. At the beginning of this ad, Japanese actor Satoshi Tsumabuki was standing before a pure black wall, then there were more and more Japanese symbols projected on this wall surrounding Satoshi Tsumabuki. (Pic 2). Those symbols are all the key words to introduce the superior functions and characters of the product like reliable, user-friendly, advanced devices available etc., which kept appearing until all the wall was almost entirely covered (pic3). In the picture 3, a sentence appeared which mean “Are you satisfied the experience of mirrorless camera so far?” which implicated that the new Canon M5 mirrorless camera could satisfy your

demands which had never been met ever before with the support of those superior latest functions. The stability and reliability the ad conveyed to Japanese consumers also reflected the characters valued most in Japan, a sense of responsibility and promise commitment. As a result, this Japanese version M5 ad can reflect the essence of Japanese culture.

5.3.3 Contrast and Discussion

These two selected Canon cases are released in America and Japan are, and the cultural connotations which convey to customers are obviously different. The slogan of the United State version is “Beautiful Dream”, whose idea is very similar to the American cultural background of “American dream”. By emphasizing the spirit of adventure and the courage to face the risks, case 5 arouses consumers’ interest to try Canon latest products. On the contrary, commercial in Japan only introduces the camera’s performances and parameters, with the purpose to eliminate consumers’ doubt toward new products and meet their psychological demand for safety in high uncertainty avoidance society. In this chapter the author will explain the differences between two commercials through Uncertainty Avoidance dimension.

Table 3: UAI dimension in 6 countries

Country	Portugal	Japan	France	Norway	United States	Hong Kong
UAI Score	104	92	86	50	46	29
Rank in 53 countries	2	7	10	38	43	49

(Source: Geert Hofstede Culture’s consequence, sage publications, 2001:215)

The exhibit above shows that these two countries have a large distance in the perspective of uncertainty avoidance. According to this, the score of Japan is 92 and The United State is 46 which can be considered as a high UAI country and medium UAI country respectively. Then what and how UAI differences impact on the advertising pattern in different countries?

People belong to high UAI society are tended to take action in known risks, therefore exhaustive introduction of the products is very necessary for them. Furthermore, according to Hofstede, for people in high UAI society, what is different is dangerous, which means their attitude toward new products is more likely vigilant instead of curious. So the second purpose of this ad is to meet consumer appeal of “safety, durability and security” toward the new products. McClintock and McNeel (1966) pointed out that success motivation is differentiated into “hope of success” in low UAI against “fear of failure” in high UAI. The commercials focusing on stability and quality assurance are supposed to be more effective.

Comparing to high UAI, low UAI societies are more willing to take unknown risks. The behaviors shown in the American Canon commercials are dangerous, such as standing on the snowy roof without any protection for just taking photos. They are curious those differences, like to adventure and exploit new things. Besides, people in low UAI society are comparatively not easy to feel uncomfortable facing ambiguity and chaos. In the picture 3 and picture 4 in case 7, the photographer can pay attention to grasp the little girl’s valuable blowing candles moment without any consideration of the chaos situation around her and even knock down the bowls on purpose. This connotation reflected in the commercial is in accord with the outcome of Nancy and Betsy’s research toward the consistency between business advertising appeals and Hofstede’s cultural dimension (Nancy and Betsy, 2015). They pointed that the advertisement appeal “untamed” is negatively related to uncertainty avoidance. From the perspective of success motivation, American version aims to inspire consumers’ hope to success by display the charming pictures shot by this camera rather than parameters and performance introduction. This commercial even exaggerates the risk and the danger to cater for viewers’ adventurous cultural background.

5.4 Masculinity and Femininity

5.4.1 One Canon Case in Korea



Figure 13: Canon advertisement in Japan

(Source: YouTube Canon)

This Canon N2 advertisement is focusing on the Korean market with its spokesperson Lee Sun Bin, a widely-welcomed actress star in Korea. Based on the original video, it is incised into 5 pictures.

At the beginning, Lee Sun Bin was enjoyable with shooting the lovely birthday cake and taking selfies with it. In the four pictures, Lee Sun Bin used the camera to take group selfie happily. In the last picture, the camera was put on a diary book which many happy moments seemed to be written down with many lovely photos stuck on. Through the entire advertisement, the expression of happiness and enjoyableness on her face could be easily affect viewers and gave viewers an impression that Canon was helpful to build a happier life for you and for the people you stay with.

5.4.2 One Canon Case in Hong Kong



Figure 14: Canon advertisement in HK

(Source: YouTube Canon)

This is a Canon Ad released in HK which described how an alpinist prepared himself to conquer a summit (picture 1). For achieving this extremely tough task, he must not only practice himself but also select his equipment carefully. Because in this perilous high mountain environment, even one more redundant gram weight will burden the alpinist much and waste his energy. In picture 3, the ad shown that the product was lighter than all product ever before. In the last of the advertisement, the ad implicated that only the lightest and most professional product was qualified to be selected by the real achiever and winner. This is one of the most representative advertisements which could mirror the virtue of most HK people appropriately. The pace of life in HK is quickly and people here believe premium material life should be attained by themselves and a hard work.

5.4.3 Contrast and Discussion

Although the MAS scores of South Korea and Hong Kong are close, the ranks among 53 invested countries are very different, with 18 in HK and 41 in South Korea. So Hong Kong belong to the society with high MAS while South Korean belong to the low society.

Table 4: MAS dimension in 6 countries

Country	Japan	United State	Hong Kong	France	South Korea	Portugal
MAS Score	95	62	57	43	39	31
Rank in 53 countries	1	15	18	35	41	45

(Source: Geert Hofstede Culture's consequence, sage publications, 2001:215)

Hong Kong has a tradition of encouraging success and achievement pursuit among public. This tradition could be reflected by the old Hong Kong saying of “Work more gain more”. This saying is a reflection of the ethos of Hong Kong, a set of ideals in which freedom includes the opportunity for prosperity and success, and an upward social mobility for the family and children, achieved through hard work in a society with few barriers. The pursuit of success and achievement regardless of any types of difficulties is a typical feature of a masculinity culture. In the HK version Canon advertisement, the alpinist kept challenging himself to achieve higher target. Conan make good use of this ethos to advertise its advanced professional camera equipment successfully.

On the contrary, South Korea belongs to low MAS society, people in which are relationship-oriented, focus on the quality of life and people. Not like the commercial in HK, the pace of South Korea commercial is relatively slow, focusing on the moment sharing the happiness with friends instead of the ego boosting, wealth, and recognition.

6.Conclusion and Limitation

6.1 Limitations of the study

This study analyzes the advertisements of different national cultures from the perspective of cultural differences. It gives a reference for the advertizing producers and

viewers to understand cultural differences and characteristics of advertising in different cultural background. However, there are still some limitations in this study.

Firstly, the scale of the cases is not comprehensive enough because this study only analyzes those commercials which can be explained by Hofstede's value theory. In the future, to get more comprehensive understanding and the tendency toward cross-cultural advertising, the cases collection should include more forms of advertisements such as outdoor advertisements, packing advertisements. Moreover, besides Hofstede, many other cross-cultural theories should be used.

Secondly, the values of the advertising recipients would change according to the development of social and economic environment. Advertising updates very fast, thus producers and managements should continue to review more detailed comparative analyses and collect more information from the target market in a regular period.

6.2 Conclusion of the study

There are numerous studies which have proved that culture plays a significant role in advertising adaptation strategy, influencing the perception of the consumers by the cultural-loaded connotations within the advertisements. If the cultural connotation in an advertisement is consistent with the appeals of the targeted consumers, it more likely gains huge marketing success like McDonald's, Sony, Canon and IKEA. Moreover, the process of culture impact on advertisement is not intangible, it affects the advertisement's tone, style and expression way directly. This thesis has revealed and explained how the culture leads to different connotations in cross-cultural advertisement.

In the individualism-collectivism group, the reason why French commercials advertise their brand value by advocating self-actualization and self-identification while in Taiwan the commercials focus on group benefits and the sense of family is because the former belongs to high individualism society and the latter is low one; in the power distance group, Japan is the country with higher power distance, so they consider the "kneel" is a kind of formal expression way for request instead of humiliation while in America they more enjoy the equal relationship between powerful and powerless people as a low PDI society; in the uncertainty avoidance group, Japan customers are attracted by the stability and reliability of the products in the commercials because of their high uncertainty avoidance culture character while in America the products will

become more appealing if it's advertised in a magic and adventurous way since the UAI in America is relatively high; in the last pair of femininity-masculinity comparative commercials, South Korean commercial show its femininity but focus on the comfortability of environment and relationship while Hong Kong version emphasizes the ego-orientation and materialism which can be concluded as masculinity.

Although the change of social and economy in influencing the culture, the process is relatively slow and it is well-regulated. Therefore, advertising department of the international company could understand and deduce the targeted customers' cultural appeals from the analysis of culture. Furthermore, they should improve their cross-cultural competence to make better localized advertisement.

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Appendix I:

The Collection of Selected Media Advertisement cases

IKEA France: Published on 2016 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2s52Peghm00>

IKEA Taiwan: Published on 2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WzURbNdTlu8>

McDonald's France: Published on 2010 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBuKuA9nHsw>

McDonald's Taiwan: Published on 2016 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqLFpbFiulY>

Sony PlayStation4 Japan: Published on 2015
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JxZ6KAGSW0>

Sony PlayStation4 USA: Published on 2015
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioUDUgcPnPg>

Canon USA: Published on 2013 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZi7V2SHU0I>

Canon Japan: Published on 2016 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zvv7EEncbi8>

Canon South Korea: Published on 2014 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2k4SJxwIa9M>

Canon Hong Kong: Published on 2013 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvB7f1gfw5>

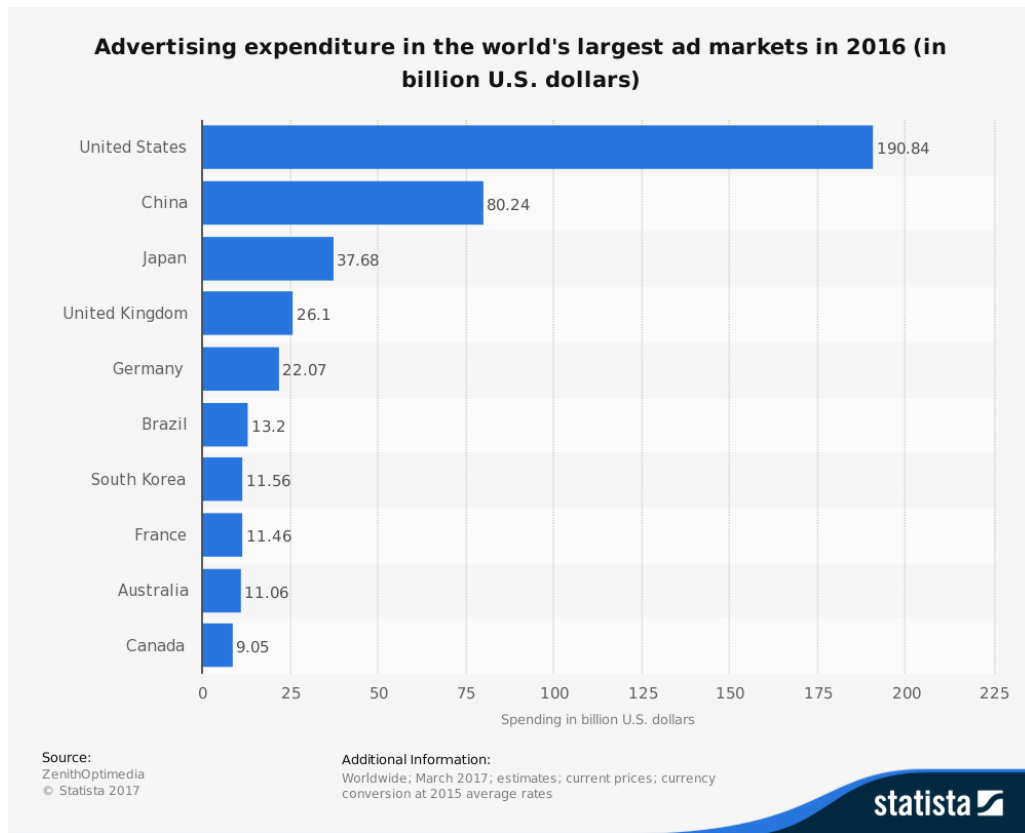
Annex:

1.Weekly Toyo Keizai, (2015,8 28).「広告宣伝費」トップ 500 社ランキング 2015.
"Advertisement promotion expenses" Top 500 companies Ranking 2015, Japan

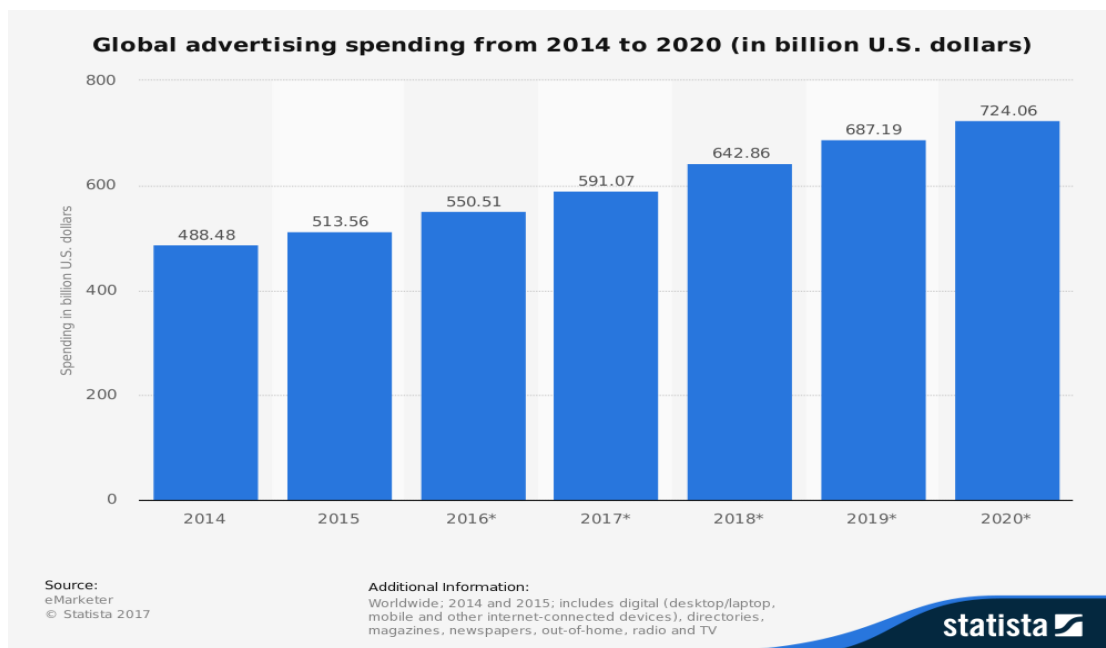
■ 広告宣伝費が多い会社(1~50位)					
順位	社名		広告宣伝費 (億円)	売上高 (億円)	売り上げ広告費 比率(%)
1	ソニー	S	4,444	82,158	5.4
2	トヨタ自動車	S	4,351	272,345	1.6
3	日産自動車		3,367	113,752	3.0
4	イオン		1,721	70,785	2.4
5	セブン&アイ・ホールディングス		1,656	60,389	2.7
6	プリチストン		1,243	36,739	3.4
7	マツダ		1,224	30,338	4.0
8	武田薬品工業	I	1,132	17,778	6.4
9	NTT	S	1,012	110,953	0.9
//	三菱自動車		1,012	21,807	4.6
11	パナソニック	S	981	77,150	1.3
12	花王		924	14,017	6.6
13	富士重工業		815	28,779	2.8
14	キャノン	S	797	37,272	2.1
15	リクルートホールディングス		787	12,999	6.1
16	麒麟ホールディングス		771	21,957	3.5
17	ニコン		702	8,577	8.2
18	NTTドコモ	S	691	43,833	1.6
19	ファーストリテイリング	I	609	13,829	4.4
20	任天堂		548	5,497	10.0
21	サントリー食品インターナショナル		537	12,572	4.3
22	資生堂		532	7,776	6.8
23	アサヒグループホールディングス		527	17,854	3.0
24	住友化学		494	23,766	2.1
25	山崎製パン		478	9,950	4.8
26	オリンパス		429	7,646	5.6
27	バンダイナムコホールディングス		413	5,654	7.3
28	フジ・メディア・ホールディングス		337	6,433	5.2
29	住友ゴム工業		326	8,376	3.9
30	住友商事	I	310	37,622	0.8
31	コカ・コーラウエスト		307	4,244	7.3
32	大和ハウス工業		305	28,107	1.1
33	J. フロント リテイリング		303	11,495	2.6
34	ヤマダ電機		301	16,643	1.8
35	ブラザー工業		300	7,072	4.2
36	大日本住友製薬		288	3,713	7.8
37	三菱電機	S	281	43,230	0.7
38	ロート製薬		256	1,517	16.9
39	味の素		252	10,066	2.5
//	コカ・コーライーストジャパン		252	5,232	4.8
41	積水ハウス		249	19,127	1.3
42	ライオン		245	3,673	6.7
43	高島屋		241	9,125	2.7
44	サッポロホールディングス		226	5,187	4.4
45	野村不動産ホールディングス		224	5,671	4.0
//	三越伊勢丹ホールディングス		224	12,721	1.8
47	エディオン		216	6,912	3.1
48	シチズンホールディングス		208	3,284	6.3
49	クレディセゾン		204	2,590	7.9
50	オリックス	S	203	21,742	0.9

(注)一部企業は販売促進費も含む、企業名横のSは米国会計基準(SEC)、Iは国際会計基準(IFRS)
(出所)2014年5月期~2015年4月期の有価証券報告書

2.StatistaNet, Advertising expenditure in the world's largest ad markets in 2016 (in billion U.S. dollars) 2016.



3.StatistaNet, Global advertising spending from 2014 to 2020 (in billion U.S. dollars) 2016.



4. StatistaNet, Number of Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant worldwide from 2010 to 2016 (in billion U.S. dollars) .

