

COMUNICAÇÕES: LIVRO DE RESUMOS

XXIV

JORNADAS  
LUSO-ESPAÑOLAS

# GESTÃO CIENTÍFICA

Contributo da Gestão para a Sustentabilidade  
das Organizações e da Sociedade

6.7.8 FEVEREIRO 2014  
INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE LEIRIA



MARKETING

## AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE RECALL OF SLOGANS

Aníbal Vieira | email: anibal.vieira@esce.ips.pt  
Paulo Duarte Silveira | email: paulo.silveira@esce.ips.pt  
Mário Cravidão | email: mario.cravidao@esce.ips.pt  
Susana Galvão | email: susana.galvao@esce.ips.pt  
Graça Penteado | email: graca.penteado@esce.ips.pt  
Escola Superior de Ciências Empresariais do Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal

### ABSTRACT

The general purpose of this paper is to analyze the effectiveness of slogans. An empirical quantitative study was conducted, in order to access the effectiveness of twenty one brand slogans from nine business-to-consumer product categories, measuring their recall and recognition rates and possible intrinsic characteristics impacting it: slogan antiqueness, slogan length and product category as independent variables.

The main global finding is that a slogan can play an important role in branding, but the slogan should be managed in a long-term perspective, coherent with long-term brand positioning and avoiding frequent radical changes. This means that slogans can be important, but in a slow and incremental way, due to its long-term benefits. It was also found that shorter slogans have higher spontaneous recall rates.

**KEYWORDS:** Slogans, Branding, Effectiveness

recall and improved brand evaluations (Dahlén & Rosengren, 2005).

Synthesizing, slogans are assumed to contribute positively to brand equity because they can help on (Rosengren & Dahlén, 2006): creating brand awareness by linking the brand to a product category; shaping brand evaluations by priming specific brand associations; shaping brand evaluations by transfer of likeability; reinforcing brand awareness and evaluations by serving as a memory aid.

## 2.2 EFFECTIVENESS OF SLOGANS

Concerning the creation of slogans, Stewart and Clark (2007) refer that a slogan must connect with the public in two areas - it must be understood by the consumer and be readily associated to the brand it represents. According to the perspectives of advertising decision-makers, Molian (1993) found that, on the first place, an effective slogan should be easy to remember, make a distinctive claim and be easily understood. On the second place, Molian's (1993) findings indicate that the slogan should highlight a customer benefit, convey a sense of mission and be credible. Kohli et al. (2007) provide theoretical guidelines for creating effective slogans. Although those guidelines were not empirically tested and proved, such authors recommend that a slogan should:

- include the future's business;
- position the brand in a clear way;
- link the slogan to the brand;
- be absolutely consistent from ad to ad and be repeated;
- be used at the outset;
- be creative.

According to Rosengren and Dahlén (2006), slogans are generally assumed useful in branding, but few empirical investigations have tested it. In table 1 the previous academic empirical studies found on the effects of slogans in consumers are summarized. Some of those studies reached controversial findings, since some found that demographic consumer variables (e.g. age and gender) are correlated to slogans' effectiveness, and others did not found significant correlations. Some studies used slogans as an independent variable to explain brand equity dimensions, and other studies tried to explain the slogan recall and recognition rates. Of these last ones, the majority used as independent variables extrinsic factors to slogans (e.g. age, gender, consumption rate), not considering intrinsic elements or characteristics of the slogan itself.

Table 1 - Previous academic empirical studies on the effects of slogans in consumers

Authors and Date	Findings
Katz and Rose (1969)	Slogan familiarity increases with age for some products and decreases for other products. Familiarity with slogans increases with consumption. No differences were found among genders. Significant incorrect recall for slogans, especially in heavily advertised markets with products lacking differentiation.
Yalch (1991)	There are conditions when presenting advertising slogans enhances memory and conditions when it does not. When the slogans were integrated into an advertisement in the form of a jingle/song, music improved memory for advertising slogans.
Ennis and Zanna (1993)	Slogans have been found to affect product beliefs about cars.
Boush (1993)	Brand slogans seem to influence the acceptability of potential brand extensions. There are significant relationships between the theme of a slogan and the product categories it can be applied to.
Reece et al. (1994)	The figure of linguistic devices (amount and type of wordplay) in a slogan had a significant positive effect on correct identification rates. Television usage was significantly correlated to recall ability, but print media usage was not. Younger participants had better recall ability. Men had also better recall ability.
Pryor and Brodie (1998)	Priming can play an important role in supporting or undermining a brand extension strategy.
Bradley and Meeds (2002)	Syntactic complexity did not influence the comprehension of advertising slogans.
Dahlén and Rosengren (2005)	Slogans could function as carriers of brand equity. Slogan learning was biased by the brand's equity; therefore, slogans for strong brands were normally better favored.
Rosengren and Dahlén (2006)	Mismatching of slogans and brands can be clarified by the different memory processes utilized by individuals. The key of effective slogans is to be noticed, not to be liked in mature brands. Finding ways to ensure sufficient processing of the brand-slogan link is important.
Dimofte and Yalch	The unconscious impact of polysemous brand slogans can be more influential than intuitively

The slogans in analysis covered nine business-to-consumer industries of brands operating in Portugal: retailing coke, juices, water, sports, mobile/telecoms, beer, personal care and ice-cream. For those industries, the leading brands (leader and challengers) were the ones studied. All those brands were chosen because of their high and recent mass media advertising investments and exposures, since it may be expected that those characteristics will drive a higher probability of recalling slogans (Reece et al., 1994).

To obtain the data for analysis, both secondary and primary data sources were used. The secondary data sources were used to know the antiqueness of each slogan, the nationality of the respective brand, the nationality of the slogan language, and the length of slogan.

The primary data source used was an original self-administrated questionnaire, applied in the presence of the researchers. The population consisted of marketing undergraduate students, obtaining a sample of 156 elements. The first section of the questionnaire consisted of twenty one open-questions, prompting for the slogan for each brand, using the product category and brand name as the cues. The second section of the questionnaire consisted of twenty one closed questions (one for each brand), proposing three alternative phrases for each brand, and questioning which one of those was the actual slogan of the brand. For each brand, the alternatives included the actual slogan of the brand, an older slogan of the brand and a miscellany of those two. The third section contained questions about the demographic profile of the respondent.

#### 4. RESULTS

As a preliminary and preparatory result, for each slogan the number of words and characters were counted (Table 2). The antiqueness of each slogan was also obtained, and then coded in one of the intervals: lower antiqueness: <1year; medium antiqueness: between 1 year and 4years; higher antiqueness: >5years.

Table 2 – Slogans' antiqueness and length

Product Category	Brand	Slogan Antiqueness	# Words in Slogan	# Characters in Slogan
Retailing	A	Lower	7	38
	B	Medium	3	18
	C	Medium	5	24
	D	Medium	5	25
Soft drinks	E	Lower	4	27
	F	Medium	4	20
Juices	G	Higher	4	23
	H	Medium	2	18
Water	I	Medium	2	18
	J	Medium	5	25
Sports	K	Higher	3	10
	L	Medium	4	16
Telecoms (mobiles)	M	Higher	2	6
	N	Medium	3	13
	O	Medium	5	23
Beer	P	Lower	2	9
	Q	Higher	2	15
Personal care	R	Higher	5	21
	S	Higher	3	18
Ice-cream	T	Medium	2	19
	U	Medium	3	15

The spontaneous recall rate and assisted recognition rate of each slogan were measured (table 3). The spontaneous recall was analyzed coding the open responses in six possible categories:

- i) Totally correct slogan (the actual slogan for that brand was written);
- ii) Partially correct slogan (at least 50% correct words);
- iii) Incorrect slogan, because it was written an older version of the slogan;
- iv) Incorrect slogan, because it was written the jingle;
- v) Incorrect slogan, due to other reasons;
- vi) Didn't answer/know.

The global correct spontaneous recall of slogans is lower than 50%, since this was rejected with 5% of confidence (one tailed p-value=0,000 for H0:  $\mu = 0.5$  vs H1:  $\mu < 0.5$ ). The highest value for which H0 would not be rejected is  $\mu = 0.15$  (H0:  $\mu = 0.15$  vs H1:  $\mu < 0.15$  having a one-tailed p-value=0,240). So, when testing Kumar (2000) threshold of 25% recall rate (H0:  $\mu = 0.25$  vs H1:  $\mu < 0.25$ ), H0 is rejected. Considering that the brands studied were chosen due to its high and recent advertising investments and exposures, it is expected that other brands may even have lower correct spontaneous slogan recall rates. So, it is suspected that, in modern societies, brands may suffer from the “vampire creativity” phenomenon (Caywood & Gronstedt, 2011), which implies high information memorability but a marginal connection of a slogan to a brand. It was also found that the assisted correct recognition rates were higher than 50% (one tailed p-value=0,000 for H0:  $\mu = 0.5$  vs H1:  $\mu > 0.5$ ).

In order to test Ha), the antiqueness of each slogan was cross-tabulated with its spontaneous recall (H0:  $\rho = 0$  (no correlation) vs H1:  $\rho \neq 0$ ). The calculus obtained revealed Spearman's rho=0.396 and p-value two-tailed=0.076. So, the correlation is significant from  $\alpha=10\%$ . Then, it is concluded that there is a positive relationship between the antiqueness of a slogan and its spontaneous correct recall. Although there is not unique universal case, most senior slogans tend to have higher recall than the most recent ones, supporting Ha). As already stated, the antiqueness of a slogan is related to need of positioning coherence. Some of the problems and challenges that a brand might face in repositioning and changing a slogan are illustrated by the fact that some brands (eg. brands “A” and “L”) have higher spontaneous recall rates of older slogans than the actual slogan does.

Correlating the number of characters in each slogan - as a measure of its length - with the correspondent level of spontaneous recall, Hb) was tested. The results obtained led to found that there is evidence that the shorter slogans have higher correct spontaneous recall. In fact, the Pearson correlation is  $R = -0.475$  and, if a linear regression is estimated, the R-square is 0,2255. Also, correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (p-value 2-tailed = 0.03).

Finally, it was also found that there are significant differences between the spontaneous recall of slogans among different product categories, supporting Hc). In fact, it is possible to arrange the industries in different groups, considering the homogeneity of the slogan spontaneous recall rates, as presented in table 4 (this homogeneity was obtained comparing the means in pairs with the Tukey multiple comparison test).

Table 4 – Slogans recall grouped by differences among product categories

Product Category	Subset for alpha=0.05				
	1	2	3	4	5
Water	,0064				
Soft-drink coke	,0096				
Ice cream	,0321	,0321			
Soft-drink juice		,0929	,0929		
Beer			,1122	,1122	
Retailing			,1538	,1538	
Personal care				,1763	
Sports apparel					,3141
Telecoms					,3162
sig.	,962	,121	,121	,083	1,000

Tukey HSD | Means for groups in homogeneous subsets | Uses harmonic means sample size = 156

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This paper’s fundamental general implication is that, under certain conditions, slogans may play an important role in brand positioning. That might be only possible if the slogan is managed in a long-term perspective, highly aligned and coherent with a long-term brand positioning. Such long-term perspective is a crucial element in order to achieve a more easily and effectively recalled slogan. In fact, the results found a positive relationship between the antiqueness of a slogan and its spontaneous recall. Besides that, it was also found that the spontaneous recall of slogans has high variation among brands, and also between groups of industries. A final conclusion is that shorter slogans have higher spontaneous recall rates, which is a validation from literature concerning guidelines for creating slogans.

- Reece, B., Vanden Bergh, B. & Li, H. (1994). What makes a slogan memorable and who remembers it. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 16(2), 41-57.
- Rice, B., & Bennett, R. (1998). The relationship between brand usage and advertising tracking measurements: International findings. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 38, 58-66.
- Romaniuk, J., & Sharp, B. (2004). Conceptualizing and measuring brand salience. *Marketing Theory*, 4(4), 327-342.)
- Rosengren, S., & Dahlén, M. (2006). Brand-Slogan Matching in a Cluttered Environment. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 12(4), 263-279
- Stewart, J. & Clark, M. (2007). The Effect of Syntactic Complexity, Social Comparison, and Relationship Theory on Advertising Slogan. *The Business Review*, Summer, 7(1), 113-118.
- Supphellen, M. & Nygaardsvik, I. (2002). Testing Country Brand Slogans: Conceptual Development and Empirical Illustration of a Simple Normative Model. *Journal of Brand Management*, 9(4/5), 385-395.
- Vakratsas, D. & Ambler, T. (1999). How Advertising Works: What Do We Really Know?. *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 63, No. 1. 26-43.
- Viecelli, J. & Shaw, R. N. (2010). Brand salience for fast-moving consumer goods: an empirically based model. *Journal of marketing management*, 26(13-14), 1218-1238.
- Yalch, R. F. (1991). Memory in a jingle jungle: Music as a mnemonic device in communicating advertising slogans. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 76(2), 268.
- Wang, W. (2010), *Towards a Deeper Understanding of Human Emotions in Marketing Communication: The 'Slogan Validator' and Self-Reported Measurement Contrasted*. Glasgow: University of Glasgow.