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The role of culture in the adapted approach to international advertising: implications for the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games

Donald Vest

Clark Atlanta University

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ABSTRACT

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

VEST, DONALD
M.B.A., ATLANTA UNIVERSITY, 1981
B.A., MOREHOUSE COLLEGE, 1977

THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN THE ADAPTED APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE 1996 ATLANTA OLYMPIC GAMES

Advisor: Professor Lydia McKinley-Floyd
Dissertation dated July, 1995

The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate the attitudes of business and advertising executives, civic leaders, and individuals towards the perceived role of standardized or adapted international advertising appeals in promoting the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games.

The study was descriptive in design and used both secondary and primary data. The findings suggest that the 1996 Olympic Games should be advertised in other countries using culturally meaningful themes adapted to reflect the aesthetics, language, customs and educational level of the target audience. Conversely, Olympic advertising themes should not contain religious messages or be standardized.

These findings carry implications for the International Olympic Committee, the World Cup Soccer Federation, Tourists Boards, Convention Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, as well as scholars and practitioners who wish to advocate employing adapted or standardized advertising messages to culturally diverse target audience.
THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN THE ADAPTED APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE 1996 ATLANTA OLYMPIC GAMES

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
DONALD S. VEST, JR.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
JULY 1995
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely grateful to the many people, too numerous to list, who provided me with the guidance and support during this endeavor.

To God Almighty be the glory for filling me with the insight, inspiration and stamina required to complete this challenge.

To Dr. Lydia McKinley-Floyd, committee chair, I give thanks for her leadership, patience and commitment. I offer special thanks to the other committee members; Dr. Hashim Gibril, for broadening my global perspective; Dr. Komanduri Murty, for the insight he gave me to research this and other topics; and Dr. Kwaku Danso, chairman, International Affairs and Development, for his persistence in mentoring me through the process.

I extend sincere appreciation to my parents, Hilda and Donald Vest Sr; my grandmother, Vida Vest, and all the members of my family for their love and untiring support.

Special thanks are in store for all of my friends and colleagues, especially Ms. Almaz Teferra, my academic comrade, who weathered the storm with me. I give thanks!
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The International Olympic Committee (IOC), the central organization that controls the rights to the Games, and the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG), a nonprofit corporation responsible for planning and staging the events,¹ can implement one of several international advertising strategies when promoting the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games to culturally diverse target audiences in different countries.

Two major international advertising approaches are the standardized approach, also known as "globalized," "universal," or "internationalized" approaches, and the adapted approach, also referred to as the "customized," or "localized" approach.² The standardized approach, advocated by Elinder (1965), Fatt (1967), Levitt (1983), and others,³ uses the same basic appeal in all of the firms' international


advertising campaigns and is most effective when there are predominant cultural commonalities among the target audience, irrespective of political boundaries and demarcations. The multinational corporations (MNCs) and transnational institutions that use the standardized approach base their contention on the notion that the needs and desires of the people throughout various global markets are basically the same, and therefore, a consistent advertising appeal is suitable practice.\(^4\)

The standardized school of thought assumes that because of better and faster communication there is a convergence of art, literature, media availability, tastes, thoughts, religious beliefs, culture, living conditions, language, and consequently, advertising.\(^5\)

Although the method of satisfying needs and desires often varies on a global basis, many market segments in different nations are culturally comparable. As such, with the standardized approach, international advertising appeals are based on cultural similarities, not differences.\(^6\)

Strictly speaking, a standardized advertisement is an advertisement which is used internationally with virtually no change in its theme, copy, or illustration, except for translation when needed. More recently, a new view of standardization claims that, as long as the same theme is maintained, an advertisement is still considered standardized even though there is a change in its copy or illustra-


\(^5\)Akhter, 377.

\(^6\)Wright, 473.
tion (e.g., a foreign model is used in an overseas version).\textsuperscript{7}

The major advantage of the standardized approach is the cost savings gained from economies of scale established by using the same film, print, illustrations, models, copy, and/or music in its international advertisements.\textsuperscript{8} Global coordination and communication control can also be more efficient and easier to implement with the standardized approach.\textsuperscript{9} This approach is particularly useful if the firm's consumers travel frequently to other countries and the MNC wishes to present one worldwide image via their advertising message.\textsuperscript{10} The standardized approach provides global advertising consistency which can enhance product preference and acceptance. In short, proponents of the standardized approach contend that:

\textit{...there are certain basic appeals that are common to all people, although they may not be expressed in the same words. The key is to identify and respect the differences in point of view and}


\textsuperscript{8}David W. Nylen, Advertising, 4th ed. (Cincinnati: South-Western, 1993), 583.

\textsuperscript{9}George E. Belch and Michael A. Belch, Introduction to Advertising and Promotion, 2nd ed. (Homewood, IL: Irwin Press, 1993), 749.

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid.
sensitivities to nuances. Basic appeals can be successfully employed everywhere.\textsuperscript{11}

The adapted approach, supported by Lenormand (1964), Green, Cunningham, and Green (1975), Ricks (1983), and others,\textsuperscript{12} employs tailored advertising appeals for different target audiences, and is employed when salient and obscure cultural nuances necessitate the adaptation of the firm's advertising message. According to this traditional strategy, advertisers must take into account barriers such as taste, media availability, phase of economic development and culture.\textsuperscript{13} By creating a unique advertising message, this strategy has the advantage of infusing the advertising message with the culture of the target market; thus promoting the concept of "thinking global while acting local."

Users of the adapted approach are more likely to consider the taste, preferences and cultural tendencies of the target audience and are inclined to employ local advertising agencies. In addition, the MNCs that use the adapted approach are less ethnocentric than users of the standardized approach,\textsuperscript{14} and are more likely to implement the marketing concept; the corporate philosophy that places the

\textsuperscript{11}Akhter, 373.
\textsuperscript{12}Kanso, 10.
\textsuperscript{13}Akhter, 378.
\textsuperscript{14}Onkvisit, 54.
consumer in the center of strategic planning. Proponents of the adapted approach warn against the overuse of the standard approach, citing that the standardized approach is preoccupied with cost reduction, and other factors that are important to managers but not necessarily to consumers.

Not surprisingly, standardization tends to increase the likelihood of communication breakdown because an advertiser may fail to encode his message properly and the receiver may be unable to decode the signal.

In brief, standardization is associated with cost minimization while adaptation is associated with profit maximization. Although the two international advertising strategies represent opposite ends of the spectrum, there are strong advocates supporting either strategy. Moreover, the difference between the two strategies should be viewed as a spectrum; with a movement towards the standardized pole, there is increased homogeneity and more opportunity to implement standardized advertising appeals. We will discuss the use of both strategies in Chapter III, Literature Review.

From a pragmatic perspective, the use of either strategy by MNCs and transnational institutions is not mutually exclusive. To illustrate, a survey designed to ascertain


16Akhter, 392.

17Vern Terpstra and Ravi Sarathy, International Marketing, 6th ed. (Fort Worth, TX: The Dryden Press, 1994), 266.
levels of standardized and adapted advertising appeals employed in the global arena was conducted by Hite and Fraser (1988). Of the fifty United States-based firms that advertised globally, 37 percent used adapted advertising appeals; 9 percent used standardized appeals; and 54 percent used a combination of standardized and adapted advertising. In short, their study revealed, "...a trend toward less standardization."19

Aligned with the findings of various scholars, this research advocates the employment of adapted advertising appeals for the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games.

**Statement Of the Problem**

The purpose of this research is to investigate attitudes of executives, civic leaders, and individuals toward the perceived role of employing advertising to promote the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games to culturally diverse target audiences, and the perceived applicability of using either adapted or standardized advertising appeals. Since, "The relationship between cultural orientations of advertising executives and their use of advertising strategies have not

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19Ibid.
been fully investigated,\textsuperscript{20} and because, "The controversy over the use of standardized versus localized advertising approaches may continue for decades,\textsuperscript{21} this study addresses the following research questions and the null hypothesis associated with advertising the 1996 Olympic Games:

RQ 1: The magnitude of the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games warrants use of international advertising.

RQ 2: Culturally meaningful themes should be used to advertise the Olympic Games.

RQ 3: Adapted international advertising themes should be used to promote the Olympic Games.

RQ 4: Adapted themes are more likely to be used in countries that are not impoverished.

HO: There is no statistically significant relationship between advertising the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games in other countries and employing culturally meaningful themes.

\textbf{Significance Of The Study}

The academic significance of this research expands the advocacy of employing adapted international advertising appeals for promoting the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games. In addition, this research examines economic and

\textsuperscript{20}Kanso, 11.

\textsuperscript{21}Ibid.
commercial gains associated with hosting the 1996 Olympic Games.

Theoretically, most studies related to advertising describe the application of purchasing tangible goods and services and ignores the use of advertising to promote ideas and images. Approximately 90 percent of all advertising is used to promote tangible features, benefits, and uses for goods and services, and is known as product advertising; and the counterpart, institutional advertising, is used for promoting intangible ideas and images and represents approximately 10 percent of all advertising.\(^{22}\) It is the latter, adapted institutional advertising themes of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, on which this research focuses.

As host of the Centennial Olympic Games, the City of Atlanta and ACOG are akin to new businesses that should exploit the virtues of advertising both domestically and internationally. By so doing, the City of Atlanta and the Olympic Committee will be more inclined to reap the benefits of enhanced international business, economic development, tourism, ticket sales, profit, television ratings, and goodwill vis-a-vis the Olympic Games. As such, Atlanta's professional image makers are discussing ways to shape the image of the city and the Olympic Games, and are attempting to position the City of Atlanta as, "The World's New

International City."23 Whatever the desired image, institutional advertising will play a powerful role in forging the impression of the Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games on domestic and foreign target audiences. As such, astute marketing and advertising strategies must be implemented by the City of Atlanta and the Olympic Committee.

**Historical Overview**

Between 776 B.C. and 394 A.D., Greece celebrated the Olympic Games in four-year festivals.24 The Games were so grandiose that they inspired worship of the athletes who were often regarded as gods.

On June 23, 1894, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, a French educator, proposed to re-establish the ancient Games as a modern competition among nations.25 Founded on the principle of bringing athletes and nations together in a sporting celebration of friendship and peace, representatives from Belgium, France, England, Greece, Italy, Russia, Spain, Sweden, and the United States unanimously approved the proposal.26 Thus began the Modern Olympic Movement. The

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25Ibid., 1.

26Ibid.
purpose of the Olympic Games, according to its Charter is, "to promote development of physical and moral qualities which are the basis of sport."27

Greece reaffirmed its pre-eminent position in Olympic history when Athens became the site of the first Modern Olympic Games in 1896, and since then, only 20 cities have hosted the Summer Olympic Games.28 Although the movement began with only nine nations, there are currently more than 167 nations representing the current Olympic Movement.29

Economic Significance Of The Games

Atlanta's victory as host of the 1996 Centennial Games was announced in Tokyo, Japan, on September 18, 1990, by International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Juan Antonio Samaranch.30 Upon confirmation of the Games, former Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson, announced that the victory would be the, "single biggest continuous infusion of economic

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development to Atlanta in the history of the City, under any circumstances."³¹

Economically, from 1991-1997, the Olympic Games are expected to boost the City of Atlanta's revenue by $5.1 billion: $2.39 billion from ACOG and $2.67 billion from out-of-state visitors.³² From July 20, 1996, to August 4, 1996, the City of Atlanta is expected to host more than 700,000 visitors and 15,000 athletes, coaches and officials, and the Games are expected to gross $715 million.³³ Approximately, 39,000 jobs will be created, mainly in the hotel and restaurant sector. Sources of revenue totaling $1.16 billion will be raised by ACOG through selling television rights ($549 million), corporate sponsorships ($324 million), ticket sales ($171.7 million), Olympic Coin Program ($50.0 million), interest income ($40.0 million), and other income ($27.8 million).³⁴ Of the proposed expenditures by ACOG, $57.0 million have been allocated for promotion.³⁵

³¹Ibid.


³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid., 2.
After a two-year intensive competition against Athens, Greece; Belgrade, Yugoslavia; Manchester, England; Melbourne, Australia; and Toronto, Canada, Atlanta was selected in its first bid to host the 100th anniversary of the Modern Games.\textsuperscript{36} For the first time in Olympic history, the Games were awarded to a United States city east of the Mississippi. As the first city east of the Mississippi to host the Olympic Games, Atlanta enjoys a strategic location in the Eastern standard time zone, the single most pivotal time zone in planning national and international television broadcasts.\textsuperscript{37}

Another major advantage Atlanta possesses is its modern transportation, telecommunications and housing infrastructure. This will enable the City of Atlanta to provide "place" utility in the form of airport, ground transportation, telecasting, and hotel services. From a marketing perspective, the aforementioned areas represent responsibility of the distribution variable in the marketing mix. To explain, the distribution variable is responsible for making the product available in a convenient and accessible location to as many people as possible, and seeks

\textsuperscript{36}Atlanta Centennial Olympic Properties, \textit{The Celebration of the Century}, 12.

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid., 16.
to create time, place, and possession utility by having the product available.\textsuperscript{38}

Los Angeles hosted the Summer Olympiad in 1984, and unlike Atlanta, which competed fiercely for the Games, Los Angeles was the only city in the world to bid for the 1984 Summer Olympic Games.\textsuperscript{39} The Los Angeles Olympiad was clearly a success, attracting in excess of six million spectators, gaining the support of numerous corporate sponsors, and making an estimated $250 million profit.\textsuperscript{40} Prior to the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, the revenue generated from ticket sales and broadcasting rights were insufficient to cover the direct costs of the Games, let alone the cost of constructing new facilities.\textsuperscript{41} However, the privately organized 1984 Los Angeles Games showed the IOC, civic leaders, and corporate sponsors that the Games could incorporate success and profit.

To capitalize on the "carry-over" effect once the Games were over, the Los Angeles Visitors and Convention Bureau allocated an extra $500,000 to attract potential visitors by employing the "L.A.'s the Place" advertising campaign.\textsuperscript{42}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{39}Edmond, 43-44.
  \item \textsuperscript{40}Atlanta Centennial Olympic Properties, \textit{The Celebration of the Century}, 12.
  \item \textsuperscript{41}Daniels and Radbaugh, 36.
  \item \textsuperscript{42}Ibid.
\end{itemize}
Cities far away from Los Angeles, like San Francisco, were also able to increase their tourism by employing advertising that emphasized their proximity as a great opportunity for an extended visit.\textsuperscript{43}

The Olympics serve as big business for the host city, corporate sponsors, media, and athletes, who hope that increased global exposure, goodwill and business will occur because of the Games.\textsuperscript{44} Moreover, once the city assumes the risks, costs, and responsibilities associated with being host, the Olympic Games become the catalyst that provides free publicity and global exposure to the city and its business establishments. These institutions hope that the carry-over effect of the Games will translate into long-term profitability and goodwill. However, one must be mindful that the Olympic Games can succeed while, concurrently, the host city loses money. Such was the case with the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympic Games. "By the time of the 1984 games in the United States, Canadian taxpayers were still paying for the more than $1 billion cost of the 1976 Montreal competition."\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid.


\textsuperscript{45}Daniels and Radbaugh, 36.
The Olympic Games, alone, cannot thrust Atlanta into the limelight of internationally-recognized cities. However, combined with effective international advertising, the Olympic Games are theoretically suited to position the City of Atlanta as the "New Mecca for International Business and Tourism." Moreover, the synergy created by hosting and advertising the Centennial Olympic games can produce a lasting "carry-over" effect.

Commercial Significance Of The Games

Television elevated the Olympic Games to the largest single, social, international sporting event in the world.\(^{46}\) The growing influence of television in the 1950s played a significant role in the commercialization, expansion, and world-wide popularity of the Olympic Games. For example, the Opening Ceremonies of the 1964 Tokyo Games were the first to be broadcast live via satellite to the United States; the 1968 Mexico City Games provided live satellite coverage to an international audience; and the 1972 Munich Games provided live satellite coverage to a worldwide television audience of one billion viewers.\(^{47}\) In 1980, the United States led a boycott in excess of 50 nations against the Moscow Games,

\(^{46}\)Marill, 76.

causing NBC to withdraw full coverage of the Games.\textsuperscript{48} With respect to the 1996 Atlanta Games, the Opening Ceremonies are expected to attract the largest global television audience ever--approximately 4 billion.\textsuperscript{49}

The advent of global satellite communication has fostered mega-events of international interest, such as the 1990 World Cup Soccer Championship in Italy, which had 26.7 billion viewers, the largest number of viewers thus far.\textsuperscript{50}

Cumulative television audience for Global events include:\textsuperscript{51}

\begin{tabular}{ll}
1984 Los Angeles Olympics & 2.6 billion viewers \\
1986 World Cup, Mexico & 13.6 billion " \\
1988 Seoul Olympics & 17.3 billion " \\
1990 World Cup, Italy & 26.7 billion " \\
1992 Barcelona Olympics & 16.6 billion " \\
1994 World Cup, USA\textsuperscript{52} & 4.45 million " \\
\end{tabular}

Included below are fees paid by U.S. networks and television rating since the 1972 Summer Olympics:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{48}Ibid., 11.
\item \textsuperscript{49}Ibid., 3.
\item \textsuperscript{50}Ibid., 6.
\item \textsuperscript{51}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{52}Steve Woodward, "World Cup Exceeds Rating Predictions," \textit{USA Today}, July 15, 1994, Sec. C, 3.
\end{itemize}
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<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
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<th>COST$53</th>
<th>RATINGS$54</th>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>Munich</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>$7.5 million</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>$87</td>
<td>NO TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>$225</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Barcelona</td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>$401</td>
<td>16.9</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>NBC</td>
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NBC secured the rights to broadcast The Summer Olympic Games for the third consecutive year by paying a record $456 million to the IOC. Even though NBC declared a deficit of $100 million from the 1992 Barcelona Games, and barely covered the cost of the 1988 Seoul Games, NBC President Robert Wright stated, "They [Atlanta Games] are a much more valuable event," and Dick Ebersol, president of NBC sports

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53"TV Rights Soar," USA Today, November 18, 1992, Sec C, 8.


56Jensen, Sec. B, 1.

57Ibid.
said, "We feel very strongly these Games will be profitable."\(^{58}\)

The unpopular pay-per-view Triplecast, which made its debut in Barcelona, contributed to NBC's $100 million loss and will not be incorporated into the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games.\(^{59}\) Unlike the Barcelona Games, which were largely broadcast via tape delay due to the time differential, the Atlanta Olympic Games will include prime-time coverage.\(^{60}\) Moreover, it will not be necessary for the Atlanta Games to compete with the Winter Olympics for advertising dollars and viewers' attention in the same year because for the first time, Winter Games will be held in the off years.\(^{61}\)

TV Rights account for 35 percent of the Atlanta Committee's budget, or approximately $554 million. Since ACOG receives 60 percent of the fee from the IOC's TV negotiations, ACOG will earn approximately $275 million from NBC. With $165 million as its share from the negotiated contract for European rights, ACOG has approximately $440 million, or about 80 percent of its goal of TV revenue.\(^{62}\)

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\(^{59}\)Rudy Martzke, "NBC To Air Olympics Again," *USA Today*, July 28, 1993, Sec. A, 1.

\(^{60}\)Jensen, Sec. B, 1.

\(^{61}\)Ibid.

\(^{62}\)Ibid., Sec. B, 10.
ACOG projects that revenues will be generated mainly from TV rights, corporate sponsors, ticket sales and other sources. With respect to ticket sales, the price variable in the marketing mix represents the value placed on what is exchanged, and establishes the amount of money or other consideration that the seller (ACOG), seeks from the buyer in exchange for the product. The cost of Olympic events is expected to range from $10 to $200, with the average price of a ticket costing $25, and from these projections, ACOG plans to generate $171.7 million from the sale of approximately eight million tickets.

Expenditures are estimated at $1.47 billion, leaving a surplus of $1.16 million. The $1.16 million surplus should enable ACOG to retain its oath of staging the Games without assistance from tax payers. If NBC generates in excess of $615 million in advertising revenue, ACOG and IOC will share in the additional revenue. To promote the Atlanta Olympic Games, NBC provided the first half-hour of the pre-game show

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63Pride, 582.

64Schoell, 34.


66Jensen, Sec. B, 10.

during the 1994 Super Bowl at the Georgia Dome. According to Dick Pound, the International Olympic Committee's television negotiator, the added incentives could be worth $15 million to the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games. Currently, the major financial challenge for ACOG concerns corporate sponsorship revenue.

**Scope**

International institutions utilize five product and promotional strategies that are general in scope. They include: 1. standardized product and promotion; 2. adapt-only promotions; 3. adapt-only products; 4. adapt product and promotions; and 5. invent new products (Figure 1).

Terpstra, (1994), outlined seven major decision areas affecting the international advertiser. They are: 1. selecting the advertising agency; 2. choosing the advertising message appeal; 3. selecting the media; 4. determining the advertising budget; 5. evaluating advertising effectiveness; 6. organizing for advertising; 7. deciding whether to engage in cooperative advertising abroad.

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70 Louis E. Boone and David L. Kurtz, Contemporary Marketing, 7th ed. (Forth Worth, TX: The Dryden Press, 1992), 103.

71 Terpstra, 458.
Based on the aforementioned strategies, this research focuses on adapting only promotions and on choosing the advertising message appeal as it relates to the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. This is the scope of the research.
Limitations

The principal limitations of this research are that it will not evaluate the other international product and promotional strategies outlined in Figure 1, nor will the research evaluate the impact of environmental factors; such as the political, competitive, economic, technological, legal and regulatory forces, outlined in Figure 2, that do influence international advertising strategies.

Fig. 2. The International Marketing Environment

CHAPTER II
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Research in this section will establish the theoretical framework between the international marketing environment in general, and the cultural environment in particular, and will provide a conceptual marketing mix of the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games. In addition, the relationship between culture and international advertising will be evaluated.

International Marketing Environment

The international marketing environment consists of the social, economic, political, legal, regulatory, technological, competitive and cultural forces that affect the marketing and promotional strategies of transnational institution, such as an Olympic Committee, in ways beyond their control.\(^1\) To reduce the uncertainty associated with conducting business in foreign markets, a detailed analysis of the international marketing environment is necessary.

Moreover, if international advertising strategies are to be effective, the complexities of the marketing environment must be intimately studied, along with the cross-cultural behavior of the target audience. In short, multinational institutions, such as an Olympic Committee must execute the exhaustive task of monitoring these and other environmental factors, especially when making critical decisions that pertain to selecting, evaluating and targeting advertising strategies at foreign audiences.

John O'Toole, former chief executive officer of Foote, Cone and Belding Advertising Agency, believes that knowledge of cultural differences is, "essential to advertising effectively abroad," and at the same time, "a fascinating and rewarding pursuit." In a broad sense, the difficulty facing the marketer in adjusting to the cultural environment lies in recognizing its impact, and therefore, the task of cultural adjustment is undoubtedly the most challenging and most important factor confronting international marketers such as an Olympic Committee.

When a firm operates in other cultures, marketing and advertising strategies have a propensity to fail if

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3Ibid.
executives use unconscious frames of reference that are acceptable in one's own culture but are unacceptable in different environments. In short, cultural conditioning is like an iceberg, we are not aware of nine tenths of it.

Cultural Environment

Culture, unlike any other variable in the international marketing environment, exerts the broadest and deepest influence on the behavior of the consumer,⁴ and on the promotional strategy of the MNC.⁵ Moreover, "...cultural differences are the most significant and troublesome variables encountered by the multi-national company."⁶ Therefore, in this research, the cultural environment is conceptualized as being the most powerful factor influencing successful implementation of the international advertising campaigns associated with promoting the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games to foreign target audiences.

The need to comprehend the impact of culture on consumer behavior has become increasingly important as marketers


expand their international marketing efforts. To be successful in other countries, it is imperative that marketing and advertising executives become students of culture. Not only must they obtain factual knowledge, but a level of cultural sensitivity is also required if they are to communicate with the foreign-target audience. Advertisers must anticipate cultural changes and position products in a manner that meets the needs of consumers in other countries.

Culture is defined as, "the integrated sum total of behavioral traits that are shared by members of a society."

Khambata, defines culture as, "the entire set of social norms and responses that dominates the behavior of a population, which makes each social environment different and gives each a shape of its own."

Ball defines culture as, "the sum total of beliefs, rules, techniques, institutions, and artifacts that characterizes human populations." Although there are numerous definitions of culture, most anthropologists agree that culture is a learned process; various aspects of culture

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7Terpstra and Sarathy, 98.


are interrelated and shared; and like geo-political demarcations, culture defines intangible boundaries of different groups of people as well.\textsuperscript{10}

Edward T. Hall, who has contributed valuable research on culture and business, distinguishes high and low-context cultures. In high context cultures, such as Japan and Saudi Arabia, context is at least as important as what is actually said.\textsuperscript{11} The sender and receiver rely on a common understanding of the context. In low-context cultures, such as those found in North America, most of the information is explicitly expressed in words and message.\textsuperscript{12} International marketing managers must also be aware of what Edward T. Hall called "the silent languages of culture." These silent languages include time, space, agreement, friendship and material possessions.

In addition to the diverse definitions of culture, there are degrees as to the number of cultural elements, including Murdock's list of "cultural universals" (Figure 3).

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., 290.


\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., 155.
Fig. 3. Murdock's List of Cultural Universals


For the purpose of this research, however, we will focus on a list of cultural elements that consists of the materials culture, language, aesthetics, education, religion, beliefs, attitudes, the social culture and customs (Figure 4).
Fig. 4. The Cultural Environment

Scrutinizing the aforementioned cultural variables is common in international marketing. In addition, when applicable, we will underscore specific variables of culture with examples of advertising blunders that are caused by lack of cultural sensitivity or by the over use of standardized advertising messages. Other examples of blunders are presented in Appendix 1.
Material Culture

The material culture consists of the tools, artifacts, and technology that exists within a given society,\(^\text{13}\) and refers to the results of technology as it relates to the manner in which a society organizes its economic activity.\(^\text{14}\) Technological advances are a cause of cultural change in many countries. To explain, the increase in leisure time, which is characteristic of many Western cultures, has been attributed to technological developments. A bicycle, for example, is part of the material culture, and in the U.S., marketers often advertise its "recreational" attributes; whereas in other parts of the world, marketers adapt their advertising message to emphasize "basic transportation" appeals.\(^\text{15}\)

Language

Language has been deemed the "mirror of culture," since it delineates cultures and is the most prominent of all cultural variables.\(^\text{16}\) Spoken languages demarcate cultures,

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\(^\text{13}\) Terpstra and Sarathy, 99.


\(^\text{15}\) Louis E. Boone and David L. Kurtz, *Contemporary Marketing*, 7th ed. (Fort Worth, TX: The Dryden Press, 1992), 104.

\(^\text{16}\) Terpstra and Sarathy, 102.
just as political barriers do. In fact, language is unequaled as a disclosure of cultures.

When promotion involves translating international advertising messages from one language to another, ascertaining consistent cross-cultural meanings are extremely challenging. Blunders are legion in the global marketplace due to language misinterpretation. With respect to international advertising, the adage, "If you want to kill a message, translate it," is true.\textsuperscript{17} For example, "Come live with Pepsi" was interpreted as "come out of the grave with Pepsi" in Germany and Flemish.\textsuperscript{18} American Airlines advertised its "Rendezvous Lounges" on flights to Brazil only to find that in Portuguese "rendezvous" is exclusively associated with a place to have sex.\textsuperscript{19} See Appendix 1 for examples of blunders.

"Whatizit," the initial mascot for the 1996 Olympic Games, faced similar problems due to language translation. In fact, due to differences in language, "Whatizit" was called "Was ist das," in German, in French it would be called "Qu'est-ce que c'est," and in Turkish, "Bu ne."\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{17}Czinkota, 205.


\textsuperscript{20}"How You Say Qu est-ce Que c'est?" \textit{Atlanta Journal Constitution}, August 11, 1992, Sec. A, 20.
has been changed to "Izzy," another nebulous name for an international mascot.21

Language differences present grave challenges to standardized advertising campaigns. The worldwide theme "Can't Beat The Feeling," is "I Feel Coke," in Japan; "Unique Sensation," in Italy; and "Feeling of Life," in Chile.22 A single world language would obviously facilitate standardized advertising. For those who speak English, English is gradually filling that role. However, the present role of English in the world does not permit international advertising campaigns in English, except in some cases of industrial goods and goods that appeal to people who travel extensively and are known as the "jet set." Although language overlap among countries is insufficient in permitting global standardized advertising campaigns, a few multilingual areas do facilitate standardized advertising on a basis that is less-than-global.23 It must be noted that if language translation is the only adaptation needed in an international advertisement, it will not modify the similarity of appeal and is therefore still considered to be standardized.24


22Czinkota, 416.

23Terpstra and Sarathy, 467.

24Ibid.
David Kerr, vice president of Kenyon and Eckhard, gives the following guidelines for translation. He suggests that for English-language advertising employed in international campaigns, the English should be of the 5th or 6th grade vocabulary level and be void of slang or idioms. Furthermore, copy should be relatively short since languages invariably require more space when saying the same thing in English. It should also be noted that the growing use of visual presentation, that is, pictures and illustrations, minimizes the need for translation. Thus, European advertisements are becoming more visual; presenting graphics that evoke a mood while citing the company name. Emphasizing simple illustrations also avoids certain communication problems that arise from high rates of illiteracy in many nations. "Bear in mind that linguistic anomalies are but one class of blunders in advertising."26

Aesthetics

Aesthetics pertains to the sense of beauty and taste in a culture, and includes colors, shapes, symbols, body motions, greetings, and numbers,27 as well as myths, tales and dramatizations of legends and of modern expressions of the

25Ibid., 468.


arts, music, and architecture. International advertising themes must consider various aspects of aesthetics and design campaigns that do not alter the aesthetic values of the target audience. Sex, for example, as a selling factor, has utmost appeal in many countries. However, the Japanese aesthetic strives to preserve the purity of their women; thus frequent use of blonde, blue-eyed models occurs frequently in their advertisements.

Various colors have powerful meanings because of religious, patriotic, or aesthetic reasons. The marketer must be aware of these aesthetic patterns in the planning of products, packaging and advertising. For any market, the choice of colors, illustrations, and appeals will be related to the aesthetic sense of the buyer's culture rather than that of the marketer's culture. For example, white symbolizes death and mourning in many parts of West Africa and Japan. By contrast, black is the color of mourning in the United States. In the Ivory Coast, dark red is the color of mourning, purple is associated with death in Latin America, and in Malaysia, green symbolizes death and disease. A marketer wishing to promote in these countries

28Khambata, 255.
29Czinkota, 212.
30Terpstra and Sarathy, 108.
31Khambata, 255.
32Schoell, 710.
must be aware of the symbolism of color, especially when making advertising and packaging decisions. Symbols are also a component of the aesthetics in a given society. While successful in many parts of the world, Esso Oil Company's much assailed, "Put a tiger in your tank" standardized advertising campaign failed in Thailand because the Thai's do not consider the tiger as a symbol of power.33

Aesthetics also relates to symbols such as numbers. The number "seven" signifies "good luck" in the United States, while in Singapore, Ghana, and Kenya it is the opposite; and in Japan, "four" is unlucky.34 The United States, as well as many European countries, avoids the use of number "thirteen." The marketer should also avoid use of a nation's flag or any symbols connected with religion.35

Musical commercials are generally popular in the international market. Music and dance is a key element of aesthetics and is frequently coupled in international advertising campaigns; especially in the visual mode of television advertisements.36 However, once again, the marketer must be cognizant of the aesthetics of various markets.

33Akhter, 372.
34Ball, 294
35Pride, 787.
36Ball, 294.
Immediately following the closing ceremony of the 1992 Summer Olympic Games in Barcelona, the local television network in Atlanta aired an advertisement promoting the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games. The essence of the message was, "...See you in Atlanta, goodwill and brotherhood provided," with the spiritual hymn, "Amazing Grace," as accompaniment. Much of the literature pertaining to aesthetics and religion forbids this type of advertising as culturally acceptable. In fact, it is documented that the inclusion of religious music in advertising is frequently perceived as culturally offensive, especially in Latin American and Middle Eastern countries.

We may conclude that the aesthetics of a given culture, indeed, impacts marketing and advertising practices in the host country.

Education

Education, whether formal or informal, plays a major role in the evolution of culture. It includes the process of transmitting skills, ideas, attitudes, and training in various disciplines. When considering international

38Pride, 787.
39Czinkota, 213.
40Terpstra and Sarathy, 109.
advertising appeals, MNCs must evaluate the level of education and the literacy rate of the people in the target market. A high level of illiteracy will suggest the use of more adapted visual advertisements rather than standardized advertisements with printed messages.41 Literacy levels are the principal indicator used to describe educational achievement, and if consumers are largely illiterate, advertising programs will need to be adapted.

In the infamous case entitled, "Nestle Alimenta—Can Advertising be a Killer?,"42 a major issue surrounding the controversy of Nestle's advertising practices in the Third World dealt with the fact that Nestle failed to adapt their advertising messages based on the education, literacy levels, and language diversity of the expectant mothers the firm was targeting.

Religion

"Religion is a socially shared set of beliefs, ideas, and actions that relate to a reality that cannot be verified empirically, yet is believed to affect the course of nature and human events."

41Czinkota, 213.


moral norms of a culture and provide optimum insight into the overall behavior of the people. Religious symbols and personifications should be avoided in most messages in Latin American countries; and in many Middle Eastern countries, symbols such as the Star of David and Koranic sayings are culturally prohibited.\footnote{Pride, 787.} 

In general, religion is only one aspect of culture in Western societies; whereas, it represents a total way of life in the Islamic world.\footnote{Schoell, 711.} Human nudity is forbidden, as are pictures of anything sacred, and images in the shape of the cross or photographs of Mecca are also prohibited.\footnote{Ibid., 744.}

Beliefs And Attitudes

With respect to beliefs and attitudes, much of human behavior is shaped by these values and are passed on from generation to generation. Beliefs and attitudes often influence values associated with piety, family responsibilities, sex appeals, and personal achievement,\footnote{Terpstra and Sarathy, 108.} as well as values associated with "silent languages" related to time, space, friendship, agreement, and material possessions.\footnote{Edward T. Hall, "The Silent Language in Overseas Business," \textit{Harvard Business Review} (May/June 1960): 87.}

\addcontentsline{toc}{section}{References}
With respect to international advertising appeals, in many parts of the world, it is better to emphasize "tradition" rather than stressing what is "new" or different about a good, service, or idea.49

Social Culture

Marketing activities are primarily social in nature; therefore, they are influenced by religion, family, the role of women, education, health and recreation. The social culture refers to the way people relate to one another, and includes class structure, caste systems, sex appeals, age values, roles of men, women, children, and extended family members,50 as well as social institutions dealing with religious affiliations, educational institutions, and recreational sports systems.51 Lack of sensitivity to the social culture has caused many international advertisements to fail in the host country. The role of children in the family and a society's overall view of children also influences marketing activities. For example, General Mills introduced breakfast cereal in England with an advertisement showing a child saying "Gee-Kids, it's great." However, the message failed because the British family is not child-centered, and believes that children should be "seen and not

49Terpstra and Sarathy, 108.
50Ibid., 120.
51Pride, 788.
heard."\textsuperscript{52} It is important that international marketers do not make the assumption that young people in other countries exert the same buying influence on their parents as they do in America.

With respect to sports events and recreation, football is popular in the United States, and represents a major opportunity for television advertisers. However, soccer is the most popular sport in Europe and Latin America.\textsuperscript{53}

\textbf{Customs}

Customs are associated with differences between people and must be carefully monitored; especially in cases that indicate a narrowing of cultural differences.\textsuperscript{54} General Food's advertises its Tang as a "breakfast drink" in the U.S., but in France, where orange juice is not customarily consumed at breakfast, Tang is advertised as a "refreshment drink."\textsuperscript{55} DeBeers Diamond Company observed that in the U.S., men customarily purchase diamond engagement rings for their fiancées; while in Germany, women tend to purchase diamond engagement rings for themselves.\textsuperscript{56} These differences in

\textsuperscript{52}Kenneth E. Runyon, \textit{Consumer Behavior and the Practice of Marketing}, 2nd ed. (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, Inc., 1980), 91.

\textsuperscript{53}Pride, 788.

\textsuperscript{54}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{55}Czinkota, 210.

\textsuperscript{56}Ibid.
custom prohibit the successful implementation of standardized advertising and require the use of adapted advertising appeals.

**Summary Of Cultural Variables**

This set of examples was used to strengthen the case for adapted international advertising appeals and illustrates the principal weakness of the standardized advertising approach. In addition, the material culture, language, aesthetics, education, religion, beliefs and attitudes, social institutions, and customs represent the theoretical framework on which this dissertation will focus as they influence the need for firms to adapt their advertising messages. Moreover, as the Olympic Committee prepares to advertise the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games to culturally diverse international target audiences, this research advocates the use of adapted international advertising appeal as opposed to the standardized approach.

**Marketing Mix And International Advertising**

Once an Olympic Committee has selected and evaluated the markets it intends to target, the next step is to develop and maintain a marketing mix, with a suitable blend of the product, price, distribution, and promotional variables designed for the target market. In this section we will focus on the product and emphasize international advertising.
The "product" is the bundle of perceived tangible or intangible attributes, devised to satisfy consumers' needs and wants, and can be goods, services, ideas, images, concepts, people, or places.\(^{57}\) In this research the "product" is the "idea" and "image" of the City of Atlanta relative to hosting the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. Many tourist boards of cities and nations market the "idea," and shape the "image," of their respective municipalities; hence it is not uncommon for a product to be a "place," such as Atlanta. However, in this research, the "product" can be the City of Atlanta, the 1996 Centennial Olympics, particular events and venues, specific athletes, or any combination of perceived tangible or intangible benefits that tourists, visitors, spectators, consumers, television viewers, television networks, corporate sponsors, civic officials, and athletes, etc., expect to receive by "consuming" the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games.

The promotional variable, the scope of the research, is the most cultural-bound marketing mix variable of the firm.\(^{58}\) It is used to facilitate exchanges by informing, persuading, or reminding the target audiences to accept the organizations' products.\(^{59}\)

\(^{57}\)Schoell, 34.

\(^{58}\)Terpstra and Sarathy, 453.

\(^{59}\)Pride, 476.
The primary role of promotions is communications, which in any market is a complex behavioral process that involves one's senses, emotions, and cultural background. Moreover, culture not only exerts the broadest and deepest influence on the promotional strategy of the firm, but on the behavior of the consumer as well. Because promotion is charged with cross-cultural communications, international marketers must have an astute understanding of the communication process.

In the next section, the relationship between culture and communication will be examined.

The Communication Process

According to the communication process (Figures 5 & 6), the sender is the person, group, or organization, such as an

![Communication Model Diagram](https://example.com/communication_model.png)

**Fig. 5. Communication Model**


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61Kotler, 120.
Fig. 6. The Process of International Advertising Communication, Including Constraints That May Cause Communication Problems


Olympic Committee, that has a message it intends to share with its target audience. When coding the message, the sender must consider the cultural background of the target audience, and encode promotional messages with signs, words, colors, concepts, and appeals that are culturally suitable to the receiver of the message. In the decoding process, the target audience processes the encoded message and hopefully responds to the sender in the form of "action," which ultimately leads to the sale of the product. As stated by Akhter:

62Pride, 478.
When we are engaged in international marketing communication, that communication which takes place as a deliberate form of cross-national advertising, the sender's cultural background affects message form, whereas the receivers' cultural background determines message perception.⁶³

Seldom is the intended message decoded by the receiver as it was encoded by the sender. Whenever the results of decoding are significantly different from the encoded message, "noise" in the communication process occurs. This noise can severely impede the desired response or feedback to the sender. In order to mitigate the potential for such noise, transnational institutions, such as an Olympic Committee, should conduct a thorough market study before committing themselves to the task of international advertising. In fact, most blunders in international advertising occur because of a failure to understand the foreign culture, and range from blatant ethnocentrism to innocent insensitivity. According to David Ricks, "of all of the aspects of culture, communication may be the most critical and certainly has been involved in numerous blunders."⁶⁴

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⁶³Akhter, 355.

⁶⁴Ricks, 7.
Advertising

According to Pride and Ferrell, advertising is defined as:

A paid form of non-personal communication that is transmitted through mass media such as television, radio, newspaper, magazine, direct mail, mass transit vehicles, and outdoor displays.65

And Nylen defines advertising as:

A paid message that appears in the mass media and uses information to persuade consumers to understand, consider, and utilize a product.66

Whereas product advertising is used to promote features, benefits, and uses of "tangible" goods and services,67 institutional advertising, the focus of this research, centers on promoting the image of a product category, a non-profit organization's cause, or an industry association.68

Wright defines institutional advertising, (also known as corporate advertising), as "advertising designed to create a favorable attitude or image towards the organization sponsoring the advertising."69 Some examples of institutional advertising designed to promote an "idea" include, "Just Say No," National Drug Council; "A Mind Is A Terrible Thing To

65Pride, 504.


67Schoell, 531.

68Ibid.

As stated, immediately following the closing ceremony of the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympiad, the local television network in Atlanta aired an institutional advertising message promoting the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games. The advertising message said "See You in Atlanta, Brotherhood and Goodwill Provided," and the music in the background was the Spiritual Hymn "Amazing Grace." NBC donated the time and the McCann-Erickson Advertising Agency developed the advertisement. Although the advertisement did not appear outside of the United States, this type of institutional advertising represents the focus of this research, with the emphasis on employing the adapted approach to promote the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Games to international target audiences.

71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
73 Interview with Darryl Evans, Senior Vice-President, McCann-Erickson Advertising Agency, Atlanta, Georgia, November 18, 1992.
As a critique of the "Amazing Grace" Olympic advertisement, and as an opponent of employing standardized advertising appeals for the 1996 Olympics, much literature reveals that many countries in Latin America and the Middle East culturally forbid the use of religious personifications, symbols, music and the like from appearing in promotional messages. In many regions throughout the world, the lack of religious sensitivity to one's culture can create "noise" in the advertising message.

Whether product or institutional, in general, advertising has the distinct advantage of reaching vast target audiences at a relatively low cost per person. Advertising also has a broad range of print media such as magazines, newspapers and billboards; as well as broadcast media, like television and radio that are available to users. When combined with the growing communication infrastructure, advertising messages are capable of reaching specialized target audiences, domestically and internationally. These and other advantages make advertising one of the most cost-efficient promotional tools available to transnational institutions, such as an Olympic Committee.

In spite of the advantages advertising affords, there are inherent disadvantages. Although efficient advertising

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74Pride, 787.
75Ibid., 485.
can provide the firm with low-cost-per personal contact, the capital outlay often makes advertising prohibitive, especially for commercials during the Super Bowls. For example, the cost for a 30-second advertising spot during the 1993 Super Bowl XXVII was $850,000, almost eight times the average cost for a 30-second spot during prime time, which was $106,400.76 Because of the monumental television audience, the cost of advertising during the Super Bowl Games has been the most expensive of all United States airtime.

In addition to its high capital outlay, advertising has another major disadvantage. With respect to the communication process, feedback to the firm is often slow and difficult to measure.77 Moreover, if an advertisement is [culturally] misleading, causing "noise," the damage to sales and goodwill occurs long before the firm recognizes its mistake.

Even though MNCs have extensive advertising and research budgets, the failure by firms to develop advertisements adapted to the cultural norms of the target audience has severely impeded the success of many products domestically and internationally.

By not considering the cultural nuances of the target audience, many international marketers have offended their


77Pride, 486.
target audience with misleading and offensive advertisements. In fact, cultural incompetence has cost MNCs millions of dollars through lost sales and ill-will created from the "noise" caused by improper use of encoded promotional messages.

**International Advertising**

Two major challenges facing international advertisers are: 1. Assessing the cultural background of the target audience, and 2. Choosing the global message appeal.

To advertise accurately with consumers in the global marketplace, marketers must have an intimate understanding of the cultural environment and adapt their advertising message when necessary. If not, they risk misinterpretation of their message which can severely undermine sales and goodwill. The role of international and domestic advertising is the same, namely to stimulate demand, promote social, political and civic causes, increase sales, inform, persuade, and remind the target audience of the virtues of the product. Nonetheless, international advertising policies require more sensitivity than do domestic ones. The case entitled

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78Terpstra and Sarathy, 454.

"Nestle Alimentana - Can Advertising be a Killer?," is an infamous example of what can happen when advertising practices are not culturally sensitive.

Since cultural preference will be reflected in what is purchased, international marketers must not assume that an advertisement can be automatically used in another country without carefully researching it in the local marketplace. In fact, the international advertiser must be on alert to cultural variations in the host country, and realize that advertising planning, research, segmentation, creative considerations, and campaign strategies become more complex in the international environment. Individuals in the host country often have customs, motives, and cultures that are often different from those found in the home country. While astute marketers often regard a segmented marketing and promotional strategy as a necessary practice in their home market, too often, myopic executives think of consumers in other countries as "all alike."

Fortunately, many international marketers are recognizing that cultural risk is as powerful as political risk, and the successful execution of international advertising depends heavily on understanding and appreciating the cultural background of the target audience.

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80 Terpstra and Sarathy, 457.
81 Akhter, 353.
82 Czinkota, 202.
To reiterate, the cultural environment is conceptualized as being the most powerful external variable influencing the successful implementation of international advertising campaigns for the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games.
CHAPTER III
LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is organized according to authors who support both standardized and adapted views during the decades of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. This structure was selected because, as one author stated, "Since 1961 the standardization controversy has surfaced once every decade."¹ Moreover, by organizing the chapter by decades one can better assess the views supported by either school of thought and evaluate trends. Since little empirical research has been documented on the relationship between culture and international advertising,² in this chapter, when applicable, the author will cite examples of empirical studies by scholars related to the subject.

Introduction

International advertisers have faced a dilemma since the 1960's which concerns the degree to which advertisements can


be standardized in foreign markets or the extent to which advertisements require a degree of adaptation. This issue has created a great debate among international marketers, advertising executives, and academicians. Lack of agreement among scholars and practitioners has caused this perplexing and vexing question to remain. Between 1964 and 1989, of 34 major studies conducted on the issue of marketing standardization versus adaptation, 14 concentrated on international advertising.

1960s

The issue of marketing standardization versus adaptation was first addressed in 1961 with reference to advertising by Erick Elinder, Chairman of the Board of the Swedish Sales Institute, Stockholm. Although his views concerning standardized advertising appeals initially dealt with Swedish


Savings Banks, he questioned the need for using various appeals in Northern Sweden compared to Southern Sweden based on different banking traditions. Furthermore, he used his views concerning Swedish banking to make references to Europe as a whole. He regarded similarities such as the standard of living and the technical infrastructure among Western European consumers as common enough to create a suitable atmosphere for standardized advertisements to thrive.

Elinder appreciated the success of global issues of Readers Digest Magazine and believed that, "if a single international edition of Reader's Digest can succeed throughout Europe and most of the world, why can't a single advertising campaign?" Elinder also felt that, "if there is no belief in advertising that can pass over all boundaries, then neither should we manufacture products which pass over all boundaries." Elinder reviewed the successful standardized advertisements in the United States and was convinced that the lack of trade barriers from coast-to-coast helped to stabilize differences between regions.

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8Ibid., 9.

9Ibid., 7.


11Ibid., 3.

12Elinder, 9.
the question of the European consumer, he felt that the European consumer did, in fact, exist and states that, "...there are millions of Europeans living under largely similar conditions, although they read and speak different languages." Moreover, Elinder stated that, "Soon it may only be advertising which stubbornly refuses to adjust itself to the new similarities." He felt strongly that advertising must become global and that the entire advertising community must play an active role in speeding up the initiative towards standardized international advertising appeals.

Ilmar Roostal was also a proponent of standardized international advertising appeals, especially for Western Europe. To support his views, he cited developments in the communication infrastructure, increases in intra-Europe travel, over-the-border television advertisements and institutions, such as the EEC (European Economic Community) and EFTA (European Free Trade Association), as factors contributing to the decline of cultural "distancing" elements.

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13Ibid.
14Ibid.
15Ibid, 11.
17Ibid., 16.
He did, however, state that, "in addition to the still remaining tariff barriers, the main obstacle for a standardized advertising approach is the multitude of languages." In addition, he felt that inadequate marketing planning and media availability, lack of international advertising agencies, and government regulations were the principle hindrances to standardized international advertising.\textsuperscript{19}

Although Arthur Fatt (1967) is placed in the standardized advertising camp,\textsuperscript{20} he makes strong arguments for both the standardized and the adapted appeals. In his article, he states: A growing school of thought holds that even different people are basically the same, and that an international advertising campaign with a truly universal appeal can be effective in any market.\textsuperscript{21}

In support of his views on standardized appeals, he believed that the traveling segment, or as others call them, the "jet set," is more inclined to "dissolve" many traditional cultural habits of thought and action and thus create a favorable atmosphere for standardized international advertising appeals.\textsuperscript{22} In addition, he felt the trend towards

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., 20.

\textsuperscript{20}William L. James and John S. Hill, "International Advertising Messages: To Adopt or Not to Adopt (That is the Question)," \textit{Journal of Advertising Research} (June/July 1991): 65.

\textsuperscript{21}Ibid., 61.

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid.
standardized appeals was accelerating due to the "shrinkage" of time and space, and that political boundaries do not restrict consumer attitudes and cultural commonalities.23

Conversely, he believed that:

No single country is a single unified market, but composed of marketing segments, each with its own characteristics. We find different mentalities, religious beliefs, customs, and standards of living.24

Furthermore, he cited the fact that the United States, despite having one language, English, is a heterogeneous market demographically, ethnically, culturally, and psychographically.25 In accordance with this premise, the article stated:

Although it is true that human nature is the same everywhere, it is just as true that a German will always remain a German, and a Frenchman will always remain a Frenchman.26

This evidence supports the current state of affairs in Europe concerning the Common Market challenges.

Differences in consumer taste and educational levels must be taken into account when considering employing standardized advertisements. Anne Fisher (1984) noted,

23Ibid.
24Ibid., 60.
25Ibid.
26Ibid.
"...as people around the globe become better educated and more affluent, their tastes actually diverge."27

Another prominent author cited frequently in the literature is S. Watson Dunn, who has written from standardized and adapted international advertising perspectives. His works in the 1960s revealed that United States print advertisements were transferable to Europe and the Middle East. Consistent with the conceptual framework of this dissertation, he emphasized analyzing culture when assessing the probability of transferring advertising appeals.28

Gordon Miracle (1968), another proponent of standardized appeals declared:

The requirements of effective communications are fixed and cannot vary with time, place or form of communications; therefore the same approach to communication (that is, the same approach to preparation of messages and selection of media) can be used in every country.29

Yves Fournis (1962), an opponent of standardized advertising, noted that cultural traditions tend to endure, and therefore, the notion of the "European consumer" was a

27Jain, 72.


misnomer. The implications of his views were discouraging for those favoring standardized advertising appeals.

Denis Lanigan, observed market segmentation as it related to Europe and asked, "Does market segmentation mean that an advertiser can run the same advertising for his products in every country of Europe?" Furthermore, he discussed the fact that customs and other cultural elements vary from country to country and that a standardized advertising campaign may not always be immediately applicable.

Edward T. Hall, an anthropologist, wrote an intensive study dealing with the impact of "silent languages" on international business. Although he did not write directly on the subject of international advertising, he discussed the impact that time, space, friendship, material possessions, and agreement have on international business decisions. His emphasis was that international business approaches should be tailored to individual countries and that cultural barriers

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30 Jain, 76.


32 Ibid., 93.

are especially relevant to communications.\textsuperscript{34} The implications of his works suggest the need for marketers in general, and advertisers in particular, to be poised to adapt to diverse cultures when conducting business overseas.

In summary, of the authors who studied the subject of international advertising appeals in the 1960s, much of the literature supported the need to standardize advertising appeals and reject the existing notion that it was "mandatory" to develop separate advertisements for individual countries. Not surprisingly, much of the literature in the 1960's focused on Western Europe.

1970s

In the 1970s, much more literature was written on the subject of standardized and adapted international advertising appeals, and scholars were stronger in their positions.

In an effort to determine the perceptions of international executives toward their "current" international orientation versus their "desired" international orientation Yoram Wind, Susan Douglas, and Howard Perlmutter, conducted two exploratory studies. They studied fifteen marketing variables, including advertising, in order to gain insight into the validity of the E.P.R.G. framework. Ethnocentric (home-country orientation), polycentric (host-country orientation),

orientation), regiocentric (regional orientation), and geocentric (global orientation) perspectives were evaluated as they were assumed to reflect the goals and philosophies of executives from several large MNCs doing business overseas.35

The first study analyzed perceptions of international executives in forty large MNCs toward alternative marketing strategies hypothesized to be associated with international orientations. The results revealed that the polycentric orientation was the dominant "current" approach favored across all fifteen marketing decision areas. When considering the "desired" approach, however, a substantial shift in preference from the polycentric approach to the regiocentric and geocentric approaches occurred.

In the study concerning "current" international orientations, with respect to advertising decisions, 10% had an ethnocentric perspective, 67% had a polycentric perspective, 0% regiocentric, and 22% had a geocentric outlook. With respect to "desired" international orientation, 8% had an ethnocentric orientation, 43% polycentric, 5% regiocentric, and 43% geocentric orientation.

Although the first study lacked a large sample size, and revealed a greater bias towards geocentrism, the study did provide initial support to the hypotheses that: 1. The

E.P.R.G. framework is relevant for describing both "current" and "desired" international marketing decisions; 2. Distinct international orientations (i.e., E.P.R.G.) were employed in international marketing operations; and 3. Different international orientations were appropriate for functionally different marketing decisions.

The second exploratory study examined the conditions under which different E.P.R.G. marketing strategies are appropriate and implied strategies to specific management objectives and individual company situations. The study was based on unstructured depth-interviews with senior level international marketing executives from 10 United States MNC's. Respondents were asked to describe their company's "current" strategies, their rationale underlying these strategies, their planned strategies, and their opinions concerning alternative E.P.R.G. strategies.

The results of the interviews suggest that the ethnocentric position appears to be the most appropriate when the volume of overseas sales is insignificant. Similarly, adapted advertising appeals were developed for individual markets when sales were large enough to support the additional costs.

Consistent with the findings of the first study, most executives regarded the polycentric position as the most desirable. In short, polycentric-oriented managers in subsidiaries tended to reject standardized marketing
strategies, feeling that they were unsuited to their particular markets. Regiocentric and geocentric orientations were advantageous in production and research operations more so than for marketing activities.

The major limitation of their study was that a company's position on two key dimensions of marketing and international orientation cannot be determined by observing the company's actions. For example, a common, standardized international advertising strategy did not reveal whether the company was:

1. an ethnocentric company that employed standardized advertising; 2. a polycentric company which after considerable evaluation decided to use standardized advertising; and 3. a regiocentric or geocentric firm that employed a standardized international advertising strategy.

Steuart H. Britt, a proponent of adapted advertising, discussed the "fatal" aspects of standardized advertising appeals, especially for products that are culturally bound. In his article he stated that:

The findings of this study offer support for the view that most advertisers feel that their non-domestic advertising must be adapted to each locale where it is to appear.

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37Ibid.
In addition to his general position supporting adapted advertising, he examined consumption patterns, psychosocial characteristics, and cultural criteria to be considered when developing international advertising strategies.

With consumption patterns, if the product was consumed by people of diverse income brackets who live in different countries, then standardized advertising appeals would unlikely be successful.\(^{38}\) On the other hand, if the same family members, i.e., parent, child, etc., initiate the purchase decision in the targeted countries, then standardized advertising appeals are likely to be useful.\(^{39}\) Finally, if most consumers use the product for different purposes, like bicycles, then adapted advertising appeals are necessary.\(^{40}\)

With respect to psychosocial characteristics, such as beliefs and attitudes, if an international advertiser feels targeted consumers in different countries are similar, then standardized appeals are suitable.\(^{41}\)

With respect to cultural criteria, advertisers should consider social restrictions, stigmas, and traditions that

\(^{38}\)Ibid., 41.

\(^{39}\)Ibid.

\(^{40}\)Ibid.

\(^{41}\)Ibid., 42.
influence the way in which the product is perceived when designing their advertising campaign.42

In conclusion, Britt warned against the use of standardized advertising and felt that standardized themes must be at least translatable into the local idioms.43

A strong opponent to standardized international advertising appeals is Tom Sutton (1974), executive vice-president of J. Walter Thompson advertising agency. He pointed out that the "people-are-alike-theory," a requisite for the successful implementation of standardized advertising, had become a dangerous oversimplification. Moreover, he felt that standardized advertising campaigns would be of lesser value in the future and that adaptive advertising strategies will become more effective.44 Sutton also challenged the notion that similar standards of living and affluence make for fertile ground for standardized advertising. He cited:

The hitherto equalizing effect of affluence and establishment of international standards of consumption may well boomerang as consumers search for differences through consumption.45

42Ibid., 42-43.
43Ibid., 45.
44Dunn, 52.
45Ibid.
This view opposes positions made from proponents of standardized advertising like Elinder who felt that Western Europe was ideal for standardized advertising themes.

In an article entitled, "Effects of National Identity on Multinational Promotional Strategy in Europe," S. Watson Dunn examined the extent to which promotional appeals, emphasizing local identity, were more effective than those emphasizing foreign origin. The objective of his article was to determine the extent to which consumer tastes are becoming more national in character and how these changes were likely to affect the transfer of advertising strategy. Dunn stated:

One major problem confronting marketers is whether a reorientation in politics and culture will lead to a reorientation in consumer tastes.

In addition to Dunn's contentions, his article included views from other scholars who wrote on the subject of international advertising. Ulrich Wiechmann (1974), in a study of 27 United States and European based multinational firms, found that advertising tends to be more decentralized than other marketing functions, and that advertising strategies vary more from firm-to-firm than do other factors. Wiechmann concluded that cultural-bound products,

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46 Ibid., 50.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid., 51.
such as food, were more difficult to standardize, and therefore required promotional adaptation.\textsuperscript{50}

In conclusion, Dunn's study revealed a renewal of national identity in Western Europe, creating an environment conducive for adapted advertising and slowing down the use of standardized appeals.\textsuperscript{51} In fact, fewer multinational firms used standardized advertising in 1973 than in 1964, and there was a higher proportion of firms making major advertising adaptations in 1974 than in 1964.\textsuperscript{52}

Ralph Sorenson and Ulrich Wiechmann undertook an empirical study of 100 senior executives from 27 leading multi-national firms (in consumer packaged goods industries) to show the conditions under which multi-national firms standardize their marketing practices. Their basic assumption was that the more similar the market conditions were from country-to-country, the greater potential for standardized marketing practices.\textsuperscript{53}

To measure the degree of standardization in various marketing decisions, they gathered a large number of paired country comparisons and asked the executives to study two

\textsuperscript{50}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{51}Ibid., 56.

\textsuperscript{52}Ibid., 54.

countries, simultaneously, and decide how similar or different the decisions regarding product formulation, packaging, advertising, and other marketing functions would be.\textsuperscript{54}

To assess the degree of cross-border similarity of market conditions, they asked the executives to observe two conditions, simultaneously, and discuss how similar or different they thought market conditions were for certain products. The responses could range from "quite similar" (1) to "quite different" (7).

Until the recent resurgence of nationalism around the world, there appeared to be a move toward greater advertising standardization. Sorenson and Wiechmann found high degrees of advertising standardization by 71 percent of the 27 multinational firms surveyed,\textsuperscript{55} placing advertising closer to the standardized spectrum.\textsuperscript{56}

The executives were able to employ high degrees of standardized advertising by employing pattern advertising; whereby, managers were given the autonomy to adapt the copy with the prototype advertising campaigns developed at headquarters.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{54}Ibid., 40.
\textsuperscript{55}Kanso, 11.
\textsuperscript{56}Sorenson and Wiechmann, 41.
\textsuperscript{57}Ibid.
The article warned against the misleading appearance of over-standardizing advertising, citing the fact that many executives felt that, "if it worked successfully in Country A, why shouldn't it work in Country B."\(^{58}\) In spite of the merits of standardization, the article stated:

> It would seem that the mistake of standardizing when market conditions are significantly dissimilar is generally more serious than not standardizing under highly similar market conditions. In view of this point, one is tempted to ask: Is standardization really worth trying?\(^{59}\)

Moreover, in their view, "companies already using systematic cross-border analysis have realized that marketing programs cannot often be standardized."\(^{60}\)

Green, Cunningham, and Cunningham, conducted a cross-cultural exploratory study of college students from the United States, France, India, and Brazil to provide empirical evidence related to the effectiveness of standardized advertising appeals.\(^{61}\) Subjects were asked to rate the importance of attributes of soft drinks and toothpaste along a five-point scale, ranging from "Unimportant" to "Extremely Important."

\(^{58}\)Ibid., 45.

\(^{59}\)Ibid.


\(^{61}\)Green, Cunningham, and Cunningham, 26.
The findings of the study suggested that advertising messages used in France, Brazil, and India should be adapted and not contain the same appeals used in the United States.\textsuperscript{62} In addition, the findings revealed that cultural factors do influence the product attributes which should be emphasized in advertising messages.\textsuperscript{63}

John Ryans and Claudia Fry, researched the comparative attitudes of advertising executives from the United States, France, and the Netherlands; corporate executives from the United States and Germany; and one marketing association president from Germany, on select international advertising issues. Their survey consisted of eight statements. The statement most relevant to this dissertation reads: "Standardized advertising can now be applied readily throughout the world, because cultural lag has been minimized."\textsuperscript{64} Their findings revealed that 25.7 percent of United States advertising agency executives agreed, while none of the French or Dutch advertising executives agreed. Thirty one point nine percent of United States corporate executives agreed, while 26.3 percent of German corporate executive

\textsuperscript{62}Ibid., 28.

\textsuperscript{63}Ibid.

executives agreed. Finally, 7.1 percent of German marketing association presidents agreed.\textsuperscript{65}

The implications revealed that advertising agencies and corporate executives from the United States rated standardized advertising to be more applicable than did their European counterparts. Even though the study occurred during the 1970s, such findings should be considered by Olympic Committee executives in preparation for advertising the 1996 Olympic Games on a global basis.

Only a few studies have reported empirical evidence as to the extent of promotional transfers related to standardized or adapted international advertising. Of these, James Killough's, study has been one of prime importance.\textsuperscript{66} Killough surveyed senior level executives of multinational firms who were involved with more than 120 multi-country advertising themes.\textsuperscript{67} In his article he dealt with the question of what contributes to the success or failure of standardized advertising campaigns, and whether success can be improved through systematic planning.\textsuperscript{68} In addition, Killough determined the distinction between buying proposals

\textsuperscript{65}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{66}James and Hill, 66.


\textsuperscript{68}Ibid., 103.
(i.e., sales platforms) and creative presentations (i.e., creative contexts or tone). He found that among the executives surveyed, sales platforms could be transferred to new markets without substantial adaptation more than 50 percent of the time, while creative contexts could only be standardized less than 30 percent of the time. He also found that 9 out of 10 executives felt the key to success in international advertising transfer related to a well-structured strategic plan. Like other scholars, Killough found total advertising standardization to be inconceivable.

F. T. Marquez, undertook cross-cultural research among respondents in the United States, the Philippines and Thailand to determine if culture is a deciding factor in establishing when to use standardized or adapted advertising appeals. The basic research question addressed whether or not advertising could be used interchangeably in these countries. In the study, Marquez examined the cultural parameters of: male-female roles, the concept of masculinity and femininity, personality type, family type, social class, ethnocentrism, concepts of time and space, and racial images.

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69 James and Hill, 66.
70 Killough, 104.
71 Jain, 11.
The results of the study revealed that the cultural contents of advertising from the United States, Philippines, and Thailand were strikingly similar, and therefore, American advertisements could be standardized in the Philippines and Thailand and vice-versa.\footnote{Ibid., 159.} Two additional aspects of the study were uncovered. Namely, the cultural contents of a country's advertising can be used in deciding whether to use standardized or adaptive international advertising appeals. Secondly, an international advertiser would benefit from scrutinizing the cultural contents of the targeted country's culture.

Peebles, Ryans, and Vernon, discussed the concept of pattern standardization, whereby the international advertiser has a degree of standardization in its global advertising campaign. Yet, concurrently, it empowered local subsidiaries with the autonomy to adapt the advertising message to the cultural-environment.\footnote{Dean Peebles, John Ryans, and Ivan Vernon, "A New Perspective on Advertising Standardization," \textit{European Journal of Marketing} 11, no. 8 (1977): 576.} Under pattern standardization, the same advertisements would be employed in multiple markets with only idiomatic and translation adaptations utilized.\footnote{Ibid., 576.}

Much of the work by Peebles, Ryans and Vernon focused on the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company's pattern advertising
strategies employed in Britain, Western Europe, Brazil, Mexico, Japan, South Africa, and Australia. When advertising adaptation was necessary, local managers were expected to undertake consumer research and determine which adaptations were suitable for the market.

**1980s**

Alfred Boote, discussed some of the findings of Britt (1974); and Ryans and Donnelly (1969), who found evidence supporting the fact that marketing and advertising standardization were not practiced by the majority of the MNCs surveyed. Cultural factors were cited as the key deterrent to standardization. However, these scholars and practitioners favoring standardization were quick to indicate that the degree of standardization depends on the type of product(s) involved, the phase of the product's life cycle, the stage of economic development, and the social conditions of the proposed target audience.

Boote, like other scholars, described the European market, stating, that:

Europe presents the special case of a regional market in which the countries are closely linked
economically within a relatively small geographic area and yet characterized by considerable cultural diversity.\textsuperscript{80}

Boote's article represented a study of comparative values of respondents in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany and presents implications for international advertisers. The variations among the three countries were sufficient to alert marketers of the possibilities of differential effects of advertising appeals.\textsuperscript{81} The implications of his study provide tenuous evidence supporting the use of standardized advertising campaigns among the three countries.\textsuperscript{82} However, there was plausible evidence of differences in values among the three European countries which meant that minor advertising adaptations were at least necessary for effective communications to occur.\textsuperscript{83}

Theodore Levitt (1983), a strong proponent of standardized marketing,\textsuperscript{84} maintained many of the views of his predecessors, focusing mainly on the belief that better and cheaper transportation and communication made the advanced countries of the world fertile for standardized marketing practices. In his essay, he focused mainly on standardized global product policies and gave little attention to the

\textsuperscript{80}Ibid., 20.

\textsuperscript{81}Ibid., 22.

\textsuperscript{82}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{83}James and Hill, 65.

\textsuperscript{84}Kanso, 10.
pressing issue of standardized international advertising. Because his article is quoted frequently, it is surprising that his assertions were not based on any empirical data but rather on his vision of the "global village," and the new "Republic of Technology."

J. J. Boddewyn, Robin Soehl, and Jacques Picard, in an article entitled, "Standardization in International Marketing: Is Ted Levitt in Fact Right?," surveyed the activities of United States based MNCs operating in the European Economic Community (EEC). They found information which challenged the validity of the much assailed notion of global standardized marketing practices as proposed by Ted Levitt.85

Like other proponents of marketing standardization of the 1960s, Levitt assumed that inexpensive global travel and world-wide communications created an ideal environment in which standardized marketing practices could flourish. However, as stated in the article, "Levitt's arguments are hardly grounded in fact. They are more like visions that may turn out to be true or made into realities."86 Also stated was the following fact:

Levitt's technology argument resembles the popular argument of the 1960s on how the logic of


86Ibid., 70.
industrialization was going to homogenize management and industrial relations around the world. Cultural and national differences are less significant to the substance web of rules the more a country has industrialized.87

This contention has been discontinued by most scholars.

Three longitudinal studies spanning 25 years concerning United States MNCs who exported to the EEC were cited in the article. From a sample of consumer nondurable, consumer-durables, and industrial goods manufacturers, similar questions were asked in 1963, 1973, and 1983.88 One aspect of the study revealed that, "European consumers have not broken all of their nationalistic chains, despite the modern travel and communications means available to them."89

With respect to advertising standardization, "the percentage of respondents adapting their advertising very substantially was significantly higher than those opting for standardization in 1983 [than in 1973], and even in terms of anticipations for 1988."90 It was also noted that, "Standardization of product, brand, and advertising do not necessarily move apace, and advertising is more resistant to uniformization than are the other two."91

87Ibid.
88Ibid., 71.
89Ibid., 72.
90Ibid., 73.
91Ibid.
In conclusion of the Boddewyn, Soehl and Pircard article, when evaluating the overall marketing atmosphere of EEC nations it was stated that:

But if the EEC, which has been developing a common market for goods, firms, and consumers since 1958, is not fertile grounds for market homogenization and marketing standardization, what part of the world is?92

Again, these findings have powerful implications for Olympic advertisers who plan to advertise in the European Community nations.

Charles Madden, Marjorie Caballero, and Shinya Matsukubo, in their article entitled, "Analysis of Information Content in U.S. and Japanese Magazine Advertising," discussed some of the dissimilarities between U.S. and Japanese advertising appeals. They examined the fact that "Initially, a casual observer might be tempted to assume that Japanese and U.S. advertisements are very similar."93 To the contrary, they discussed the fact that Japanese advertisements often downplay product attributes in favor of emphasizing a mood designed to enhance the emotional appeal associated with using the product.94

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92Ibid., 71.
94C. Anthony DiBenedetto, Mariko Tamate, and Rajan Chandran, "Developing Creative Advertising Strategy for the
(1982), pointed out that the use of testimonials in Japanese advertisements were viewed as pushy and phony.  

Madden, along with his associates in this study, provided the following caveat: "Although this study suggests differences in advertising context exist, it would be premature to speculate on the exact nature or direction of those differences."  

Barbara Mueller discussed some of the challenges facing transnational advertising agencies that promote goods, services, and ideas in Japan. Initially, she discussed some of the negative circumstances associated with standardized advertising; namely, that many regard it as promoting mass manipulation and cultural imperialism.  

Mueller's research focused on the role of culture in advertising content in Japanese advertisements compared to American advertisements for similar products. Her thesis concluded: "Advertising tends to reflect the prevalent values of a culture in which it exists, insofar as those values can be used to shape the consumption ethic."  

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96Madden, 38.  


98Ibid.
advertising appeals that relate to group consensus, individuality and independence, soft-sell, hard-sell, elderly/traditional values, modernity/youth, status, product merit, oneness with nature, and manipulation of nature.

The findings, with respect to group consensus/appeals, disclosed that, among the more than 378 advertisements reviewed, more American-based advertisements used group/consensus appeals than did the Japanese advertisements. This was in sharp contrast to the orthodox view that the Japanese are more group-oriented than their American counterparts. With individual and independent appeals, there appeared to be a shift towards greater usage of these themes in Japan than in America. Consistent with the findings of other scholars such as Helming, less direct, soft-sell appeals were more common in Japanese-based advertisements than in those found in American-based advertisements. Therefore, direct, hard-sell appeals were used more frequently in American based advertisements. There were significant differences between appeals related to the veneration of the elderly with respect to Japanese and American advertisements. One in ten Japanese advertisements stressed greater respect for the elderly and greater use of traditional values than did American advertisements. The United States and Japan have large youthful markets. Little

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99Ibid., 54.

100Helming, 7.
difference was found concerning modernity in advertising appeals aimed at the younger generation. Status appeal was particularly significant between the two countries, and the Japanese advertisements were almost twice as likely to illustrate some form of status appeal than did American-based advertisements. In Japan, status appeal was often executed by associating the product with the West, or by using Western looking models in the advertisements. The use of product merit (i.e., differentiated product attributes and benefits), was higher in American advertisements than in Japanese ones. With respect to oneness with nature, no significant differences were displayed, and the manipulation of nature as an appealing factor was seldom found in either of the countries.

In conclusion, Mueller noted, "...there are numerous differences between Japanese and American advertisements. Some differences are rather subtle, other are quite blatant." Based on her study and findings, Olympic advertisers aiming at the Japanese market would be remiss to employ standardized advertising appeals without careful scrutiny.

Sak Onkvisit and John Shaw discussed the work and views of Elinder, Roostal, Fatt and Levitt. They began with a discussion of the standardized views held by these authors and believed that because of improved communications, there

\[101\text{Mueller, 57.}\]
was a convergence of art, literature, media availability, tastes, thoughts, religious beliefs, culture, living conditions, language, and consequently, advertising. In addition, they discussed proponents of adapted international appeals that were elaborated by such scholars as Neilsen, Leighton, Lenormand, Reed, and McCarthy. These scholars, along with others who advocate the use of adapted appeals, believed that differences in culture, taste, media availability, and other economic considerations necessitate the use of adapted international advertising appeals. For example, according to McCarthy:

Lumping foreign nations together under the common and vague headings of 'foreign,' or at the other extreme, assuming that they are just like United States consumers almost guarantees failure.

Reed stated:

It is true that all people are motivated by the same basic instincts, sense, affections, passions and aspirations, but the different manner of expressing these motivations and aspirations can wreck marketing plans and advertising campaigns, as can customs and many other differences.

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103 Ibid., 45.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.
Caffyn and Rogers, in a study of creative approaches for the same or similar products using six United States and British commercials found that:

Despite a common language, the social, cultural, and marketing differences between the two countries are so great that a commercial which is successful in one country is unlikely to be very successful in the other.106

Onkvisit and Shaw made a strong parallel argument concerning adaptive advertising and market segmentation in the United States. The article stated that:

...the necessity and effectiveness of having specific advertisements aimed at the black segment has been well documented by studies such as Barban and Cundiff. The fact that Coke, McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and many others would go through the difficulty of designing advertisements directed at blacks, women, Hispanics, teenagers, etc., makes it clear that economic gains must be derived from devising unique advertising campaigns for different segments.107

The article also discussed international advertising and the notion of ethnocentricism.

The insistence on advertising standardization is a symbol of this viewpoint. Those who insist that American advertisements are effective everywhere should be willing to accept foreign advertisements and values as being just as suitable for the US market—a very unlikely occurrence.108

Robert Hite and Cynthia Fraser, examined the international advertising strategies of a sample of United States-based MNCs to determine the levels of standardized

106Ibid., 49.
107Ibid., 52.
108Ibid., 54.
international being used; to identify factors which were important determinants of the transferability of advertising; and to identify demographic variables which were systematically related to attitudes and behaviors regarding international advertising standardization.

The sample consisted of 418 Fortune 500 business firms that were involved in international business. A self-administered questionnaire was mailed to each firm and 150 usable responses were generated. Respondents were queried on the degree of standardized advertising being used, the site of responsibility for preparing international advertising campaigns, and the importance of adapting advertising components.

The results of the study indicated that 66 percent of the firms surveyed advertised internationally; 54 percent used a combination of adapted and standardized advertising; 9 percent used totally standardized advertising; and 37 percent used totally adapted advertising.¹⁰⁹

Seventy-seven percent of the respondents strongly agreed on the importance of adapting the language to blend with the cultures of the foreign target audiences. Respondents also agreed on the importance of adapting the models, scenic background, and product attributes to suit the target

audience, while most had no opinion regarding the adaptation of colors. With respect to the transferability of advertising slogans, the following were rated important in ascending order: levels of consumer education, attitudes towards the United States, the degree of nationalism in foreign markets, and competence of personnel in foreign offices. The rate of economic growth, independence of the media from government control, and attitudes towards work and monetary gain were rated somewhat important.

With respect to demographic variables, standardized international advertising appeals was positively associated with industrial goods, where buyers are assumed to be more sophisticated and homogeneous.

Subhash Jain reported the works and findings of several scholars and outlined the following: 1). The decision on standardization is not a dichotomous one between complete standardization and customization; rather there can be degrees of standardization (e.g., Quelch and Hoffman, 1986), and 2). "Across the border standardization is inconceivable" (Killough, 1978).110

In particular, most scholars have analyzed the issue of standardization and adaptation related to Western Europe, and as stated, proponents of standardization who used Western Europe as their reference included Elinder (1961), Fatt

110Jain, 71.
Robert Jordan (1988), also noted that the countries of the industrialized world were converging in many ways, noting declining birth rates, more leisure time, the changing social role of women, and similar demographics, all of which helped to create a "worldwide popular culture." Ohmae (1985), believed that the markets of the United States, Western Europe, and Japan, which account for the bulk of international trade, were becoming homogeneous and suitable for standardized marketing activities. Walters (1986) recommended standardized international advertising to promote a coherent global image, rapid diffusion of products and ideas, and centralized coordination and control.

Conversely, proponents of the adapted approach used advanced countries as their reference, and Fouris (1962) noted, "that customs and traditions tend to persist and therefore the concept of the 'European consumer' is a misnomer." Fisher (1984) noted, "as people around the

111Ibid.


113Jain, 71.

114Ibid., 76.

115Ibid., 72.
world become better educated and more affluent, their tastes actually diverge.\textsuperscript{116}

1990s

William James and John Hill evaluated conditions related to an international advertisers' feasibility to standardize advertising messages, when to adapt their advertising messages, and situations when a subsidiary might adapt or standardize incoming advertising messages from the parent company.\textsuperscript{117}

The sample consisted of thirty-three consumer nondurable MNCs selected from the Directory of American Companies Operating in Foreign Countries. Respondents were asked about promotional messages accompanying any recent two-product transfers. In addition, respondents were asked to indicate whether sales platforms and creative contexts had been changed.\textsuperscript{118}

In brief, the results of the study illustrated that in advertising transfers between two markets, the likelihood of maintaining sales platforms and creative contexts was about one-in three; thus implying that, a maximum of thirty-three

\textsuperscript{116}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{117}James and Hill, 65.

\textsuperscript{118}Ibid., 68.
percent of all advertising campaigns has the potential of being standardized.\textsuperscript{119}

Regarding conditions favoring standardization, subsidiaries that employed standardized advertising were situated in less affluent markets, with under $6,000 per capita annual income. In addition, the subsidiaries had less than $25 million in sales, and had high proportions of United States-originated products.\textsuperscript{120} Conversely, subsidiaries that employed adapted advertising were situated in more affluent markets, with greater than $6,000 per capita annual income. These same subsidiaries had high levels of sales, more United States-originated products, and were more prone to have headquarter-initiated products.\textsuperscript{121}

In short, their study suggested that standardized advertising campaigns were more likely to occur in less affluent, but not necessarily less developed countries.\textsuperscript{122}

Ali Kanso (1992), undertook a study that dealt with the effect of culture on international advertising. The purpose of his investigation was two-fold. Firstly, studying international advertising approaches used by American based MNCS; and secondly, determining the significance of culture.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{119}Ibid., 70.
\item \textsuperscript{120}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{121}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{122}Ibid.
\end{itemize}
and international advertising as perceived by advertising executives.\textsuperscript{123}

In the communication process, an individual's cultural background significantly affects the way he or she perceives information. Kanso's study emphasized that international advertisers (senders) should use cultural frames of reference that are understood by the target audience (receivers).

To measure cultural orientations of advertising managers, respondents were asked to express their opinions on ten questions related to the cultural parameters of language, aesthetics, values, economics, kinship, social structure, technology, religion, and tradition.\textsuperscript{124}

Kanso's study used a sample of 118 firms from the Fortune Directory of the 500 largest industrial corporations. Data were collected through a mail survey, and advertising managers were asked to indicate the percentage of advertising messages for which their firm used standardized appeals (i.e., use of identical messages in both United States and foreign markets). A firm that either made no use of standardized advertising, or made use of standardized advertising less than 50 percent of the time was defined as "localized/adapted."\textsuperscript{125} Conversely, firms that used

\textsuperscript{123}Kanso, 10.
\textsuperscript{124}Ibid., 12.
\textsuperscript{125}Ibid., 11.
standardized messages exclusively or more than 50 percent of the time were categorized as "standardizers."\textsuperscript{126}

Kanso's study addressed two research questions and one hypothesis. The first research question read, "Do international advertising messages tend to follow the standardized approach or the localized approach?" The findings revealed that 72 firms, (75 percent of the respondents) followed the localized/adapted approach; whereas 24 firms followed the standardized approach.\textsuperscript{127}

Research question two read, "Is there any significant relationship between managers' attitude towards controversial cultural issues and advertising approaches (i.e., standardized or localized) used by their firms?" The findings suggested that managers with the localized/adapted perspective tended to agree that advertising messages should fit the unique traditions and beliefs in each country, and the use of foreign advertising agencies is more practical for accommodating local cultural changes. In addition, they agreed with the notions that the time to devise a standardized advertising campaign has not yet come, and that advertisers must use symbols that are recognizable in each country.\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{126}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{127}Ibid., 12.

\textsuperscript{128}Ibid., 13.
Conversely, managers with a standardized perspective tended to agree that the centralization of advertising decisions will achieve the greatest success for overseas markets and that advertising campaigns can be standardized in all countries. In addition, they agreed that advertising for different countries should be identical in content, layout of advertising can be universally understood, and the advertising theme can be the same for all markets. The only issue that gained the consensus of both standardizers and adapters related to advertising appeal. The two groups agreed that advertising appeals must be compatible with the lifestyle of consumers' in targeted foreign markets.

Kanso hypothesized that nonculturally-oriented managers, compared to culturally-oriented managers, tend to use the localized approach. The hypothesis was confirmed.

The conclusion of Kanso's study suggested that the majority of firms were guided by the localized/adapted approach, and that American based MNCs must consider each foreign business opportunity as a unique marketing challenge, and take a "global commitment to a local vision."

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129Ibid.
130Ibid.
131Ibid.
132Ibid.
CHAPTER IV
METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the study's rationale, research design, sampling, instrumentation, and data collection methods.

Rationale

The purpose of marketing research is to provide information to decision-makers which will facilitate the identification of a problem or opportunity and to assist managers in arriving at the best possible decisions. Since marketing is practiced more as an art than a science, successful decision-making in marketing depends heavily on the judgment and intuition of the individuals involved rather than on an organized body of scientific principles. The real value of marketing research, therefore, is measured by the enhanced improvements in one's ability to reduce risks and make better decisions.

Since international advertising endeavors entail more uncertainties than do domestic ones, gaining an understanding


2Ibid., 29.
of the target audiences' cultural background is one of the first barriers to overcome. As stated in the Review of Literature, limited empirical research has been done on the relationship between culture and advertising practices. As such, the author of this research sought to examine views concerning the use of international advertising and the Olympic Games. In addition, cultural variables likely to impact advertising themes, along with views concerning the use of standardized or adapted international advertising themes were examined. These areas, along with the pilot study and previous research, inspired the researcher to explore the use of adapted international advertising to promote the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, and created the rationale for the undertaking of this research.

Pilot Study

Primary data were collected by the researcher in an exploratory pilot study conducted in November 1989 from a questionnaire administered to thirty-eight MBA students attending Clark Atlanta University. The questionnaire (Appendix 2), was designed to ascertain which marketing variables were perceived as being the easiest to standardize in international marketing and the ones perceived as being the most difficult to standardize. The six marketing

---

variables consisted of distribution, promotion, product, advertising, marketing research, and price.

Respondents were asked to rank numerically, on a scale of one-to-six, the variable considered to be the "easiest" to standardize and continue ranking the variables until they were exhausted. Respondent's were asked not to use the same number twice.

The results indicated that respondents perceived the product to be the "easiest" variable to standardize (80%), followed by distribution (63%), price (51%), marketing research (40%), promotion (39%), and advertising (28%), respectively.

As indicated by results of the pilot study, advertising was perceived to be the "most difficult" of the six marketing variables to standardize internationally. As such, adapting advertising would be a suitable, if not a necessary practice in many markets around the world.

The findings of the pilot study provided the impetus for the undertakings of this dissertation.

**Research Design**

The descriptive design, a widely accepted method used to conduct qualitative research, was used in this study. The descriptive design was utilized since the subject under investigation is relatively new, and the researcher wanted design flexibility. This design enabled the researcher to investigate the method (standardized or adapted) that would
be most suitable to advertise the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games on an international basis. Since the Olympic Games have experienced significant changes in Charter and commercial policies, the descriptive design allowed the researcher to study a broad range of attitudes on the subject. The descriptive design, which incorporated a questionnaire using the Likert Scale, enabled the researcher to address the research questions and hypothesis mentioned in Chapter I. In addition, secondary data were secured from periodicals, journals, magazines, newspapers, textbooks, and proceedings. Moreover, a diverse set of contentions were cited from proponents of both the standardized and adapted advertising schools of thoughts in Chapter III, Literature Review.

Sample Technique And Sample Frame

The sampling technique employed in this study was a non-probability, judgment sample. The sample frame consisted of executives from various institutions and corporations and several students. The Institutions were categorized according to the following: 1) Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG); 2) Atlanta Centennial Olympic Properties (ACOP); 3) Advertising Agencies; 4) Corporations; 5) Olympic Corporate Sponsors; 6) City/Municipal Agency;

7) Convention/Visitors' Bureau; 8) Students; 9) Other, i.e., Venue Sites, Local Television Stations, and a graphic artist.

**Instrumentation**

The approach used in this study was to gather primary data by conducting depth-interviews with key executives from Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Agency and McCann-Erickson Advertising Agency, and through the administration of a questionnaire (Appendix 3). The questionnaire was pre-tested with twenty-five students in a marketing research class. This enabled the researcher to correct problems related to coding and clarity. The questionnaire consisted of thirteen statements, using the Likert Scale with ratings of 4=Strongly Agree, 3=Agree, 2=Disagree, and 1=Strongly Disagree. It was designed to gain insight into the attitudes of respondents towards international advertising strategies for the 1996 Olympic Games; their attitudes regarding the use of advertising themes related to culture; and most importantly, their attitudes towards the use of employing standardized or adapted themes to advertise the Olympics. Included in the instructions of the questionnaire was a brief definition of the standardized and adapted approaches.

**Data Collection Methods**

A multi-step process was involved in collecting the primary data. First, key executives in the specified institutions were contacted in person, by mail or telephone.
in order to request permission to send questionnaires (See Appendix 4, Request Letter). Second, executives were contacted two weeks later to confirm their participation in the study.

In total, 165 self-addressed stamped questionnaires were mailed or disseminated, and 100 completed surveys were returned. That represented a response rate of approximately sixty-one percent. Of the 100 completed surveys from the sample frame, forty-one were obtained from advertising agencies (41%); thirty from corporations (30%); ten from the City of Atlanta (10%); nine from other areas (9%) (which included five (5%) from venue sites, three (3%) from television stations, and one (1%) graphic artist); seven students (7%); and three (3%) from ACOG.

In addition to the questionnaire, five depth-interviews were conducted with select advertising agency executives: one represented a major advertising agency in Atlanta, the other four represented a major advertising agency in New York. The duration of each interview was approximately fifteen minutes. The researcher was able to collect information that broadened the range of views concerning the implementation of either strategy relative to international advertising and the Olympic Games.
CHAPTER V
DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses the results of the study to: (a) provide answers to the research questions; and (b) test the hypothesis posed in Chapter I. To this end, this chapter is organized into six sections: 1. an analysis of the four research questions (the use of international advertising to promote the 1996 Olympics; the use of culturally meaningful themes to advertise the 1996 Olympics; the use of adapted international advertising themes; and the use of adapted international advertising themes in "prosperous" countries), 2. test of the study hypothesis (there is no statistically significant relationship between advertising the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games in other countries and employing culturally meaningful themes), 3. findings pertinent to Olympic advertising themes as they relate to certain cultural variables (aesthetics, religion, customs, language, and education), 4. analysis of tourism and Olympics to assess perceptions regarding the employment of Olympic advertising in countries that have potential to generate tourism, 5. an analysis of the five in-depth interviews with advertising executives, and finally, 6. Chi-square analysis to determine any significant
tier-specific relationships in terms of adapted Olympic advertising themes.

Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question 1 sought to address the attitudes of respondents towards advertising the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games in other countries. The findings revealed that 98 percent of the respondents agreed (65% strongly agreed, 33% agreed), and 2 percent disagreed (none strongly disagreed) to statement one on the survey which read: "The 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games should be advertised in other countries." The cross-tabulated dichotomous analysis in Table 1 shows that, with the exception of one respondent from ACOG and one from a New York-based advertising agency, respondents from every institution unanimously agreed to statement one. Also see Figure 7.

The fact that there is an overwhelming agreement among respondents that the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games be advertised in other countries, the managerial implications are far reaching. By employing effective Olympic advertising strategies to target audiences in specified countries, the Olympic Committee, City of Atlanta, and other dominant stakeholders, will be more inclined to benefit, commercially and economically, from the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games.
Table 1

Q 14. Please check the organization that most represents your affiliation by Q1. The 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games should be advertised in other countries.

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Row Total: 2.0 | 98.0 | 100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0
Fig. 7. Olympics Should Be Advertised Globally
In response to Research Question 2, whether culturally meaningful themes should be used to advertise the Olympic Games, 91 percent agreed (43% strongly agreed, 48% agreed), and 9 percent disagreed (8% disagreed, 1% strongly disagreed) to the statement: "Themes that are culturally meaningful to the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics." Figure 8 graphically depicts response patterns.

The cross tabulated dichotomous analysis in Table 2 revealed that a majority of respondents from every institution were in favor of employing culturally meaningful themes. In fact, significant proportions of representatives from ACOG, Atlanta-based advertising agencies, New York and Atlanta-based corporations, Olympic Corporate Sponsors, undergraduate students, venue sites, and television networks, unanimously agreed with this advertising strategy.
Table 2

Q 14. Please check the organization that most represents your affiliation by Q3. Themes that are culturally meaningful to the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics.

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| Column Total          | 9     | 91           | 100               |

Number of Missing Observations: 0
Fig. 8. Should Use Culturally Meaningful Themes

Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree
48 | 43 | 8 | 1
Regarding the third Research Question, which examines the extent to which respondents felt that adapted international advertising themes should be used to advertise the Olympic Games, 74 percent agreed (20% strongly agreed, 54% agreed), and 26 percent disagreed (20% disagreed, 6% strongly disagreed) with the statement: "Adapted international advertising themes should be used for the 1996 Olympics." See Figure 9 for graphic representation.

The cross-tabulated dichotomous analysis in Table 3 demonstrates that the majority of the venue site and television station respondents disagreed, while all respondents from ACOG, New York and Atlanta-based corporations, graduate students, and the graphic artist agreed one hundred percent to statement eleven.
Table 3

Q 14. Please check the organization that most represents your affiliation by Q11. Adapted International advertising themes should be used for the 1996 Olympics.

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Number of Missing Observations: 0
Fig. 9. Adapted Approach

![Bar Chart]

- Strongly Agree: 54
- Agree: 20
- Disagree: 20
- Strongly Disagree: 6
Standardized advertising, the counterpart of adapted advertising, was preferred by 55 percent of the respondents of whom 15% strongly agreed, and 40% agreed, with the employment of standardized advertising than did respondents from other institutions. Figure 10 graphically illustrates the results.

The cross-tabulated dichotomous analysis in Table 4 reveals that the majority of the respondents from New York-based advertising agencies and the City of Atlanta disagreed with standardized advertising than did respondents from other institutions.
Table 4

Q 14. Please check the organization that most represents your affiliation by Q10. Standardized International advertising themes should be used for the 1996 Olympics.

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Number of Missing Observations: 0
Fig. 10. Standardized Approach
Figure 11 displays that while 74 percent of the respondents agreed (20% strongly agreed, 54% agreed) to the use of adapted themes, only 55 percent elected to the use of standardized themes (15% strongly agreed, 40% agreed) for the 1996 Olympic Games. Thus a preponderance of preference to adapted international advertising themes for the 1996 Olympic Games by 35 percent over the use of standardized themes.

The foregoing analysis suggests that the Olympic Committee create advertising themes that are adapted to particular regions, countries and cultures. As slightly more than one third of the respondents favored the use of adapted themes over standardized themes for the 1996 Olympic Games, it also suggests that the Olympic Committee take somewhat of a combined approach of adapted and standardized advertising themes into account.
Fig. 11. Adapted Approach Preferred
Research question four examined the extent to which respondents felt adapted themes should be used in prosperous countries. The study revealed that 65 percent agreed (17% strongly agreed, 48% agreed), and 35 percent disagreed (26% disagreed, 9% strongly disagreed) that: "Adapted themes should be used to advertise the Olympics in more prosperous countries (with more than $6,000 per capita income)."

Figure 12 graphically depicts the results.

Table 5 shows that respondents from Johnson & Johnson, graduate students and television station disagreed with this theme in higher proportion than those from other institutions. Conversely, all the respondents from ACOG, undergraduate students, venue sites and the graphic artist agreed with this theme.
Q 14. Please check the organization that most represents your affiliation by Q13. Adapted themes should be used to advertise the Olympics in more prosperous countries (with MORE than $6,000 per capita income).

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<td>8</td>
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</tr>
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Column Total 9 | 91 | 100

Number of Missing Observations: 0
Fig. 12. Use Adapted Themes in Prosperous Countries
Standardized advertising in poor countries was exemplified in statement twelve, which read: "Standardized themes should be used to advertise the Olympics in poor countries (with LESS than $6,000 per capita income)."

Overall, 45 percent agreed (10% strongly agreed, 35% agreed), and 55 percent disagreed (37% disagreed, 18% strongly disagreed). Figure 13 graphically depicts the results.

Table 6 evidenced that a majority of the respondents from New York-based advertising agencies, New York-based corporations, Johnson & Johnson, Olympic Corporate sponsors, City of Atlanta, graduate and undergraduate students, venue sites, local television station, and the graphic artist, disagreed with this proposition. On the other hand, many respondents from ACOG, Atlanta-based advertising agencies and Atlanta-based corporations agreed.
Table 6

Q 14. Which organization most represents your affiliation by Q12. Standardized themes should be used to advertise the Olympics in poor countries (with less than $6000 per capita income).

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</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 13. Use Standardized Themes in Poor Countries
Analysis of Hypothesis

To examine the relationship between respondents' views concerning advertising the 1996 Olympic Games in other countries and employing culturally meaningful themes, the following null hypothesis was tested: "There is no statistically significant relationship between advertising the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games in other countries and employing culturally meaningful themes to the target audience."

The Pearson's Correlation Coefficient ($r = .2077$) was found to be significant at .038 level, indicating that the relationship between advertising the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games in other countries and employing culturally meaningful themes is significantly positive. Since .038 is less than the .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Analysis of Cultural Variables

In order to ascertain the cultural variables most likely to influence Olympic advertising themes, the researcher queried respondents' on five commonly scrutinized elements of culture: aesthetics, religion, customs, language, and education.

Aesthetics

With respect to aesthetics and Olympic advertising themes, 84 percent of the respondents agreed (40% strongly
agreed, 44% agreed), and 16 percent disagreed (14% disagreed, 2% strongly disagreed) to statement four, which read: "Themes that are aesthetically meaningful to the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics."

The results suggest that Olympic advertisers must consider the aesthetics of the target audience and therefore reflect the beauty, taste, colors, symbols, numbers and music of the target audiences' culture. Olympic advertisers must design campaigns that neither offend nor clash with the aesthetic views of the target audience.

Religion

In reference to religion as an Olympic advertising theme, only 17 percent of the respondents agreed (4% strongly agreed, 13% agreed) and 83 percent disagreed (43% disagreed, 40% strongly disagreed) to statement five, which read: "Themes that have religious significance to the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics."

The managerial implications concerning religion and Olympic advertising are cautionary. There are many cultures throughout the world that forbid the use of religious themes, messages, symbols and personifications in advertising and commercial endeavors. This is especially true for countries in the Middle East and Latin America. Of the five variables of culture in the questionnaire, respondents overwhelmingly disagreed to the use of religious themes in Olympic advertising. This is particularly noteworthy because
following the closing ceremonies of the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games domestically aired an institutional advertisement that included the music from the spiritual hymn, "Amazing Grace" in the background. As stated in Chapter II, Conceptual Framework, religion and commercial endeavors are considered taboo to many people. Moreover, the results of the survey cautions the use of religion in Olympic advertising.

**Customs**

Eighty-one percent of the respondents agreed (31% strongly agreed, 50% agreed), and 19 percent disagreed (17% disagreed, 2% strongly disagreed) to statement six, which read: "Themes that consider the customs of the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics."

When considering the customs of various target audiences, Olympic advertisers must ask themselves, "What are we selling." Also, they must be mindful of the influence of ones customs on buyer behavior and cross-cultural communication. In fact, the influence of customs on a target audience could be of such that it prohibits the use of standardized advertising altogether and demands the use of adapted Olympic themes.

**Language**

With language and Olympic advertising themes, 87 percent of the respondents agreed (50% strongly agreed, 37 % agreed),
and 13 percent disagreed (11% disagreed, 2% strongly disagreed) to statement seven, which read: "Themes that consider the language of the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics."

As language has been called, "the mirror of culture," it is not surprising that most blunders in international advertising relate to language translation. The advertising and marketing strategies for the Atlanta Olympic Games have not been exempt from language obstructions. In fact, language interpretation and translation was one of the major problems with "Whatizit," the original mascot for the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. As stated in Chapter II, Conceptual Framework, "Whatizit" was called "Was ist das," in German, "Qu'est-ce que c'est" in French, and "Bu ne," in Turkish. "Whatizit" has since been changed to "Izzy," another nebulous name for an Olympic mascot.

**Education**

Education, the last variable of culture in this examination, revealed that 66 percent of the respondents agreed (26% strongly agreed, 40% agreed), and 34 percent disagreed (26% disagreed, 8% strongly disagreed) to statement eight, which read: "Themes that consider the educational level of the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics.

The findings suggest that the Olympic Committee must assess the role of education in cross-cultural communications
and evaluate the literacy rate of target audiences. High levels of illiteracy suggest the need for adapted visual advertisements.

Although not conclusive, the results support the contention that a relationship exists between advertising and culture. Specifically, the findings revealed that there is an association between advertising the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games in foreign countries and employing culturally meaningful themes to the target audience.

The managerial implications suggest that Olympic advertising should be adapted and incorporate aesthetics, customs, education and language of the target audience. Conversely, Olympic advertising themes should not include religious messages or be standardized.

Analysis of Tourism and Olympics

In the analysis of tourism and target-audience selection, 66 percent of the respondents agreed (19% strongly agreed, 47% agreed), and 34 percent disagreed (27% disagreed, 7% strongly disagreed) to statement nine, which read: "Olympic advertising should be targeted at countries that generate the most tourists."

It is evidenced in the cross-tabulated dichotomous analysis in Table 7 that respondents from New York-based corporations, and the City of Atlanta disagreed in greater proportion to statement nine than did respondents from other institutions. Due to the commercial significance of the
Olympic Games on the local economy, it is not surprising that with the exception of respondents from the City of Atlanta, all respondents from Atlanta-based institutions (i.e., ACOG, advertising agencies, corporations, venue sites, television stations, students, and graphic artist) agreed in greater proportions that the 1996 Olympic Games should be targeted at countries that generate the most tourists. Respondents from Johnson & Johnson, New York-based advertising agencies, and Olympic Corporate Sponsors also agreed in greater proportions to statement nine.
Table 7

Q 14. Which organization most represents your affiliation by Q9. Olympic advertising should be targeted at countries that generate the most tourists.

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<th>Page 1 of 1</th>
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<td>Row Pct</td>
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<td>Atl. Ad. Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>NY Corp.</td>
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<td>Johnson &amp; Johnson</td>
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<td>Other-Graphic Ar</td>
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</table>

Number of Missing Observations: 0
Since two-thirds of the respondents agreed that the 1996 Olympic Games should be targeted at countries with the greatest capacity to generate tourists, the findings suggest that the Olympic Committee research those nations who typically have a large segment of their population in attendance at Olympic Games. By doing so, the commercial success of the 1996 Olympic Games can be enhances.

In fact, in preparation for the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games:

The official travel agents of twelve Western European nations protested that they were discriminated against. This was not because they did not receive a fair share of tickets, but rather because a large part of their ticket allocation was to sports in which their countries were not participating; for example, baseball. Interest in any given sports varies on a country-to-country basis.¹

By gathering information on tourism, ticket sales and preferred venues by countries, the Olympic Committee will be more precise in targeting Olympic advertisements, and will achieve a favorable return on their promotional investment.

Analysis of Personal Interviews

In addition to the analysis of the questionnaire, primary data were collected from in-depth interviews with five advertising agency executives, four from New York-based agencies and one Atlanta-based agency. All executives

strongly agreed that the Olympic Games should be advertised in other countries to foster greater participation by sports fans throughout the world. Moreover, the commercial significance of the Olympic Games prompted most of the advertising executives to agree that the Olympic Games are certainly not a "monopoly" in the minds of sports fans, and therefore, the market for the 1996 Olympic Games should be stimulated with advertising.

When asked if the Olympic Games should be promoted via publicity, the executives agreed that the Olympic Games are already well known among the international "jet-set" found throughout many parts of the world. However, if an Olympic Committee is consciously attempting to increase the business of the Olympic Games, publicity, alone, cannot sufficiently tap the global market potential.

With respect to the attitudes of advertising executives concerning standardized or adapted international advertising appeals and the 1996 Olympic Games, one executive from Atlanta and one New York executive stated that the Games should be advertised with a global standardized theme. In particular, they stated that cooperative global competition is the fundamental Olympic theme that can be consistently promoted with the standardized approach throughout the world. Conversely, three advertising executives from New York affirm that Olympic advertising themes should be adapted and emphasize nationalism, patriotism, and the cultural
tendencies that exist in specific nations and regions. Also, they believe that some nations can gain global recognition vis-a-vis Olympic advertising adapted to reflect the strengths and uniqueness of many nations and regions. Notwithstanding the potential for political jingoism, certain countries and regions can accentuate their cultural strengths with the employment of adapted international advertising.

**Chi-Square Analysis**

Chi-square is a measure of association used for testing statistical significance of the observed differences between cell frequencies of a given joint contingency table (perceptions by gender in this case). All sample subjects were classified into two tiers: tier one consisted of 41 advertising agency respondents; and, tier two included 59 non-advertising agency respondents. Genderwise, females comprised 64 percent and males 36 percent. Initially, we conducted chi-square test for all 13 survey statements and only statement eleven (adapted international themes should be used for the 1996 Olympics) yielded significant differences between the perceptions of males and females (see Table 8). In order to further investigate this perceptual difference by the nature of agencies represented, we controlled the analysis (at the next level) to each tier. The results corresponding to tiers 1 and 2 were included in Tables 9 and 10, respectively.
**TABLE 8**

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS OF STATEMENT 11, "ADAPTED INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING THEMES SHOULD BE USED FOR THE 1996 OLYMPICS," BY GENDER

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<td>12 (18.8%)</td>
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<td>26 (26%)</td>
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Chi-square value = 4.86, Degrees of Freedom = 1
Level of Significance = .02754

Table 8 revealed that there is a significant relationship between the views of men and women towards the use of adapted international advertising themes for the 1996 Olympics. Sixty-one point one percent of the men agreed, while 81.3 percent of the women agreed to the aforementioned statement concerning adapted themes. These differences were found to be even more significant for tier 1 respondents (Table 9) but were insignificant for tier 2 respondents (Table 10).
TABLE 9

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS FROM TIER 1, ADVERTISING AGENCIES, RESPONSE TO STATEMENT 11, "ADAPTED INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING THEMES SHOULD BE USED FOR THE 1996 OLYMPICS," BY GENDER

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<td></td>
<td>5 (62.5%)</td>
<td>3 (37.5%)</td>
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<td>7 (21.2%)</td>
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<td>12 (29.3%)</td>
<td>29 (70.7%)</td>
<td>41 (100%)</td>
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Chi-square value = 5.30, Degrees of Freedom = 1
Level of Significance = .02130

TABLE 10

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS FROM TIER 2, NON-ADVERTISING AGENCIES, RESPONSE TO STATEMENT 11, "ADAPTED INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING THEMES SHOULD BE USED FOR THE 1996 OLYMPICS," BY GENDER

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<td>9 (32.1%)</td>
<td>19 (67.9%)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5 (16.1%)</td>
<td>26 (83.9%)</td>
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<td>14 (23.7%)</td>
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Chi-square value = 2.08, Degrees of Freedom = 1
Level of Significance = .14879
Overall, the chi-square analysis revealed a significant relationship between the perceptions related to the use of adapted international advertising themes for the 1996 Olympic games by gender. Specifically, more females in both tiers were favorably inclined toward adapted themes than their male counterparts; and, significantly so among females in tier 1, advertising agencies. This finding may suggest, at least in part, that some of the earlier male-made advertisements might not have positive female images which contributed to their sensitivity against standard advertising strategies. Moreover, the fact that the females in tier one represent advertising agencies might reflect on their prior knowledge and experience with the adapted advertising strategies rather than on personal impressions.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A recapitulation of the research is described in this chapter and is followed by implications and recommendations relevant to this study.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the attitudes of business and advertising executives, civic leaders, and individuals towards the role of employing standardized or adapted advertising in promoting the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games on an international basis. The research gathered primary data on the cultural aspects of aesthetics, language, customs, religion, and education related to Olympic advertising themes. More importantly, the researcher was able to ascertain whether respondents favored standardized or adapted international advertising appeals in promoting the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games.

This study was significant in advocating the use of institutional advertising to promote the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games internationally. While most advertising studies investigate the relationship of advertising to the purchase and consumption of tangible
products, this study focused on promoting the "idea" of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games on an international basis. This study was also significant from a pragmatic perspective. Because professional image-makers are discussing ways to shape the image of the City of Atlanta, vis-a-vis the Olympic Games, institutional advertising can play a powerful role in forging the image of the City of Atlanta and Atlanta Olympic Games on domestic and foreign target audiences.

Implications

1. The 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games should be advertised in other countries with adapted themes. Thirty-five percent more respondents agreed that adapted international themes should be used to advertise the Olympic Games compared to standardized advertising. Diplomatic advertisers must develop Olympic themes that reflect, to some degree, the culture of the target audience. If implemented successfully, international advertising has the potential to enhance Olympic ticket sales, corporate sponsorship and television audiences; position the City of Atlanta as "The New Mecca for International Business;" and stimulate economic growth and development to the City of Atlanta before and after the occurrence of the Olympic Games.

2. This study further revealed a significant relationship between advertising the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games in other countries and employing culturally meaningful themes. The findings support the hypothesis that the 1996
Atlanta Olympic Games is of a magnitude that warrants the use of international advertising, and that the advertising should be adapted to reflect the cultural nuances of the target audience.

3. The study demonstrated that variables of culture, including aesthetics, religion, customs, language and educational levels must be considered when developing advertising themes for the Olympic Games. Not surprising, language rated highest among the cultural variables that relate to Olympic advertising themes, followed by aesthetics, customs, and educational levels, respectively. Religion was the sole element of culture that respondents overwhelmingly agreed to be excluded in Olympic advertising. The researcher refutes the use of religion in Olympic advertising themes, but unequivocally advocates the use of adapted Olympic advertising themes that tastefully infuse language, aesthetics, customs, education and other aspects of the audience's culture.

4. Since standardization is associated with cost minimization, and adaptation is associated with profit maximization, adapted Olympic advertising should be used in "prosperous" countries. For countries that are not as "prosperous," the standardized approach is recommended. The latter recommendation concerning standardized Olympic advertising is based solely on the cost, volume, and profit
investment of advertising and not on cultural nuances that exist in countries, irrespective of per capita income.

5. Olympic advertising should be targeted at countries that generate maximum tourists. Again, from a managerial perspective, the financial success of the Olympic Games requires a systematic approach to selecting, evaluating and reaching specified target audiences that will enhance the social and commercial success of the Games. If the Olympic Games are not financially successful, as with the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games, the consequence can be grave.

6. The results of the study are generalizable to the International Olympic Committee, Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, World Cup Soccer Federation, Tourist Boards, Convention Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, as well as scholars and practitioners who which to advocate employing adapted or standardized advertising messages on an international basis.

Recommendations

1. Further research should be conducted to include copy research that uncovers specific themes that can be used to advertise the Olympic Games in various countries and regions. A plethora of Olympic advertising themes should be rigidly researched to ascertain the elements of culture that have the greatest appeal to a particular target audience, the cultural variables that can be standardized in various regions, and the cultural variables that may be offensive to target audiences if included in commercial endeavors.
2. Conduct causal research and ascertain the relationships between distinct Olympic advertising themes, the independent variable, and Olympic ticket sales, the dependent variable.

3. Broaden the composition of the sample and administer the questionnaire to respondents in other countries. By collecting primary data from respondents in other countries, this would provide additional cross-cultural views that concern adapted and standardized Olympic advertising themes; and thus, enhancing the generalizability of the results to include specific countries, regions and culture.
Appendix 1

Language Blunders

- Automakers, for some reason, seem to have had more than their share of these problems. For example, Ford's difficulties with the Spanish language are widely discussed. It introduced a low-cost truck, the "ugly old woman" (Fiera), into some less developed countries. Its Caliente model did not do well in Mexico, perhaps because this is a slang term for a streetwalker there. Finally, in Brazil, the Pinto was changed to the Corcel after its initial introduction: this meant that the "small male appendage" became a "horse" in Portuguese.

- Similarly, the foreign firm selling Evitol shampoo in Brazil was embarrassed to discover it was claiming to be a "dandruff contraceptive."

- Pet Milk has problems with French-speaking consumers, since this word can be translated as "to break wind." Similarly, Fresca soft drinks appeared to be aiming at a specialized market segment in Mexico: the word there is slang for lesbian. And a new airline trying to enter the Australian market chose EMU as its symbol: unfortunately, the emu is an Australian bird that cannot fly.

- Other types of problems can occur when there is no similar collection of letters in another language, so that some translation must occur into different words. When Coca-Cola was attempting to enter China in the 1920s, it developed a group of Chinese characters that sounded like Coca-Cola. Unfortunately, when these characters were placed on the bottles, they translated as "bite the wax tadpole."

- When Hunt-Wesson attempted to introduce its Big John brand into French-speaking Canada, the translation Gros Jos turned out to be slang for a woman with large breasts. The brand sold well, however.

- General Motors, touting its "body by Fisher" to Belgian consumers, found that the phrase was interpreted there as "corpse by Fisher."

- The famous Pepsi-Cola slogan "Come alive with Pepsi!" was translated in Germany as "Come out of the grave!" and in Taiwan as "Bring your ancestors back from the dead."

- Oregon-based Taco Time decided to expand into Japan, when management learned that "tako" can mean either "octopus" or "idiot" in the Japanese language. The company's president commented, "Well, we'll have to do a bit of marketing."

- Sometimes there are problems with high illiteracy rates, when written language cannot be used. One food company maintained its normal practices in selling baby food in Africa. The local population, most of whom could not read, looked at the labels with pictures of infants and interpreted them to mean that the jars contained ground up babies!

- American marketers are not the only ones with language problems. A popular chocolate candy in Europe, for example, did not sell well in the United States. Its name: Zit.

- Similarly, a large Japanese industrial firm entered the United States market with ads promoting its new specialty steel named Sumitomo High Toughness steel. Rather than writing this out each time in the ads, the firm used the acronym in bold capitals throughout the advertising, which closed with a claim that this product "was made to match its name."

- Finally, to attract American tourists, a dress shop in Paris featured the sign: "Come in and Have a Fit!"

Appendix 2

International Marketing Questionnaire

Most Fortune 500 companies depend on foreign revenue for a significant portion of their total profit. This being the case, in order to take advantage of economies of scale globally, executives are seeking to standardize as many variables as possible.

From the following, list numerically, the variable you consider to be the easiest to standardize to the variable you consider the most difficult to standardize: 1 being the easiest, 6 being the most difficult. Do not use the same number twice.

easiest to standardize (1 2 3 4 5 6) most difficult

*Distribution
*Promotion
*Product
*Advertising
*Market Research
*Price
Appendix 3

OLYMPIC ADVERTISING SURVEY

Donald Vest, PhD. Candidate
Clark Atlanta University
Department of International Affairs and Development
OLYMPIC ADVERTISING SURVEY

As part of my dissertation research, I am interested in determining how people feel about advertising the Olympic Games. One view is that a standardized approach (using the same basic advertising theme in different countries) should be utilized, while others feel that an adapted approach (using different advertising themes in different countries) would be more appropriate. As a person who is interested in the 1996 Olympic Games, your opinion is very important to me. Please express how you feel about the following statements using the scale below.

4=Strongly Agree  3= Agree  2= Disagree  1=Strongly Disagree

1. The 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games should be advertised in other countries.
   4  3  2  1

2. The 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games should be publicized via word-of-mouth.
   4  3  2  1

3. Themes that are culturally meaningful to the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics.
   4  3  2  1

4. Themes that are aesthetically meaningful to the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics.
   4  3  2  1

5. Themes that have religious significance to the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics.
   4  3  2  1

6. Themes that consider the customs of the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics.
   4  3  2  1

7. Themes that consider the language of the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics.
   4  3  2  1
8. Themes that consider the educational level of the target audience should be used to advertise the Olympics.

4 3 2 1

9. Olympic advertising should be targeted at countries that generate the most tourists.

4 3 2 1

10. Standardized international advertising themes should be used for the 1996 Olympics.

4 3 2 1

11. Adapted international advertising themes should be used for the 1996 Olympics.

4 3 2 1

12. Standardized themes should be used to advertise the Olympics in poor countries (with LESS than $6000 per capita income).

4 3 2 1

13. Adapted themes should be used to advertise the Olympics in more prosperous countries (with MORE than $6000 per capita income).

4 3 2 1

14. Please check the organization that most represents your affiliation.

   ____ Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games
   ____ Atlanta Centennial Olympic Properties
   ____ Advertising Agency
   ____ Corporation
   ____ Olympic Corporate Sponsor
   ____ City/Municipal Agency
   ____ Convention/Visitors’ Bureau
   ____ Student (Graduate _____, Undergraduate _____)
   ____ Other ____________________________

15. How many years have you been in your present profession?

   ____ Less than 1 year
   ____ 1-2
   ____ 3-5
   ____ 6-9
   ____ 10-14
   ____ 15 or more
16. How many foreign countries have you visited?
   ___ 0
   ___ 1-2
   ___ 3-5
   ___ 6-9
   ___ 10-14
   ___ 15 or more

17. How many times per year do you travel abroad?
   ___ 0
   ___ 1-2
   ___ 3-5
   ___ 6-9
   ___ 10 or more

18. Please check your highest level of education completed.
   ___ High School
   ___ Some College
   ___ College Graduate
   ___ Graduate or Professional
   ___ Doctorate

19. Sex
   ___ Male
   ___ Female

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!
John Doe, Director of Advertising
Doe and Doe Advertising Agency
489 Main Street
New York, New York 10014

Dear Mr. Doe:

This survey is about your views on the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games and international advertising. Please read the statements and circle the answer that reflects your attitude.

After you have completed the survey, please return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope or give it to the interviewer. This survey is for the purpose of my doctoral dissertation and strict confidentiality is assured.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Donald Vest,
Doctoral Student, Clark-Atlanta University


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