
THE IMPORTANCE OF ADVERTISING SLOGANS AND THEIR PROPER DESIGNING IN BRAND EQUITY

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Abstract

The term slogan derives from Slough-ghairm, pronounced as Slogorm from Scottish Gaelic which means battle cry. Slogan is usually an unforgettable phrase that is frequently used to express an idea or purpose. Slogans have been employed in religious and political areas since long time ago, but today they are mostly used in business and trading. They vary from other ordinary text and images, and often because of their simple structure cannot convey a lot of concepts and details. Hereupon, slogans instead of drawing specific audience, address general audience to convey their particular meanings. Brand owners pay lots of money to advertising agencies to come up with snappy advertising slogans. Advertising slogans often claim to have knowledge of something and attempt to show it. Slogans usually serve a substantial role in calling audience's attention to one or more aspects of a product or service. Normally slogans claim that the advertised product or service is of the highest quality, or is the most delicious, the most inexpensive, or nutritious... one. The slogans should point out, at least, the most important advantage of a product, or respond to the audience's needs, or offer more benefits for their future/probable customers.

Keywords: advertising slogans, brand equity, competitive markets, customer knowledge

Introduction

Advertising slogans and promotional tools enable companies to introduce themselves, their products, or services. In order for an advertising slogan to be effective in introducing a company or institution, it should be easily understood by consumers, and be associated with a specific brand (Stewart and Clark, 2007). An advertising slogan along with brand name and logo are three key components of brand identity that establish companies' connections with the world around them (Kohli and Leuthesser and Suri, 2007). Each of these components has different function. A brand name gives the product identity and acts as a brand image protector and cannot be changed easily. Logos-graphic designs containing the trade name or totally abstract designs- act as the key factor in the growth and globalizing the brand recognition process among various languages and cultures. Logos hardly ever undergo fundamental changes, but to keep them up to date, they can be improved from time to time. Advertising slogans play an important role in protecting brand identity. A trade name is not usually more than one or two words and cannot be interpreted in a literal sense. This point rings true for logo as well. These brand identity elements can undoubtedly build compelling picture over time, through brand association. However, these components are simply limited to the image and lack the ability to give more information about the product. As a result, the bulk of the responsibility is transferred to the long-term advertising. Advertising slogans can bridge this gap and reveal information about the image of the product. By this means, building relationship with whatever that brand is created for becomes possible (Keller, 2009). Advertising slogans are of unique and considerable use in recognizing a brand.

This recognition, instead, provides brand awareness and brand image through recognition, recall and favorite associations in relation to the brand. Thus advertising slogans act as a hook whereby the customer grasps the concept of a brand, and intensify everything that makes the brand distinct. Brand name and logo are linked, in a complex manner, to basic brand identity. On that account, making any change in brand name can ruin brand identity. Logos almost akin to brand name have the same condition, but relating to them the advertising slogans appear as updated. Adjusting brand image and relationship with its long-term equity and market changes is of immense importance; accordingly, the brand needs to adapt itself to these changes. Since name and brand cannot easily undergo change, these advertising slogans, with their unique position, can remain as bond between the brand image that customers bear in their mind and the new image to be presented. Indeed, the slogans are considered as the most dynamic component of the brand identity that can be easily changed when necessary (Byrt, 2003).

The prominence of advertising slogan in creating brands

Having insight about the factors affecting brand perception, due to placing brand among the valuable assets of a company, is of profound significance. Annually Business Week magazine publishes important brand equity created by global branding consultancy company of interbrand. The best brands in the world are worth over tens of millions of dollars. Effective management of these brands, at the higher levels of the organizations is of high priority (Bradley and Meeds, 2002). The dollar value of the brands is in accordance with their ability to produce economic profit, overall (Kohli and Leuthesser and Suri, 2007). Figure 1 displays a model in relation to brand equity and its cause factors.

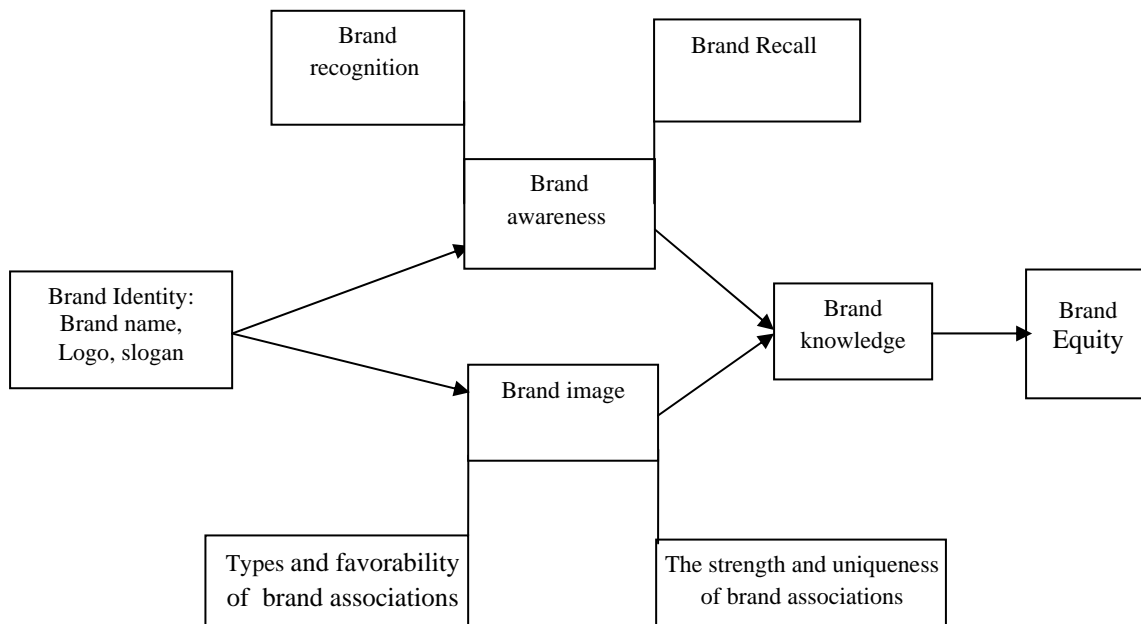


Figure 1. relationship between brand equity and advertising slogans Aaker (1991) [19]

In the fully competitive markets where the products don't markedly vary from each other, brands with high equity can achieve greater profitability. Put differently, higher brand equity influences customers' responses to marketing endeavors. Thus, differentiation is the turning point of brand equity. Without becoming distinct, a brand cannot seek for gaining economic profit. In some cases, such as automobile and cereals industries, it is fairly simple to offer contrast, while in other cases such as petrol and drinking cups, it can be a challenging task. However, customers must have sufficient knowledge on the brand to shape their perceptions of the differences between the brands. Two primary factors that affect consumers' knowledge of brand are brand awareness and brand image. The main indicators of brand awareness are brand recall and brand recognition. Brand recall denotes the customers or the respondents' ability to remember brand without receiving any help. Brand recognition means recalling with help, as a matter of fact, brand recognition refers to the ability of a customer or respondent in identifying brand in a compiled list of brands. Brand image involves evaluating and examining the strength and type of brand association. As it can be seen, some factors including brand identity, promoting brand awareness as well as brand image accompany advertising slogans in affecting consumers' knowledge of brand (Kohli and Leuthesser and Suri, 2007).

Mathur discussed the importance of function/practice of advertising slogans based on the results of his study undertaken in 1995 on making changes in advertising slogans and its consequent effect on market value of a company. In this study, he found that after making change in advertising slogans the market value rose rapidly. Furthermore, he concluded that the increase in market value is due to conformity of change in advertising slogans to marketing strategies and advertisements of companies. Companies inventing new advertising slogans formulate positive response to changes in some variables

like geographical factors, consumers' preferences and competitive environment. Although an advertising slogan cannot produce lasting effect on market value, making change in the slogan signifies management tendency to influence market and develop in the media (Mathur, 1995).

Constructive Slogans

As shown in Figure 1, the slogans are designed to achieve two objectives: 1. Promoting awareness of brand, 2. creating, protecting, or changing image or perception of brand that cause it's repositioning. These purposes cannot be achieved both at the same time. To accomplish them, marketers strive to develop advertising slogans and make efficient use of them.

Promoting awareness of brand

Low amount of research studies has been conducted on advertising slogans, which large portion of it pertains to the effect of advertising slogans on brand. Two components of recognition and recall are mainly used for assessing the degree of brand awareness. A group of studies have examined the role of novelty in advertising, and have concluded that new and recurrent ideas find way to the individuals' minds much more readily than inactive and monotonous /uninteresting ones (Fiske and Taylor,1984). The efficiency of novelty has been proven in a variety of cognitive activities, such as designating objects and identifying the words (Burnett and Tabossi,1989). In another study, its effect was investigated on advertising slogans. During the study the participants were initially faced with new advertising slogans which were specifically related to the brands, subsequently they were asked about the expansion rate of brand. The study revealed that advertising slogans with new characteristics had higher rate of development compared to the slogans with ordinary features. Making use of slogans in advertisements has increased so considerably that a very large proportion of today's advertisements end in advertising slogans (Boush, 1998).

In fact, advertising slogans are considered as an attracting means which offer novelty for a brand. Advertising slogans are often presented as jingles; because such slogans typically can adequately fulfill their duty which is improvement of remembering and recalling brand (Olivera, 2001). Examined the conditions under which jingles act as tools for effective recall and in turn establish relationship between advertising slogans and brand. In this examination a list of advertising slogans was made for the participants. Some of the slogans in this list included jingles and some didn't. The participants were asked to match these advertising slogans with their specific brands. Then using a recall test (identifying the brands according to their specific advertising slogans without having a list of brands), a result was obtained indicating that slogans with jingles could help individuals recall brand more accurately and noticeably. When memory was measured employing an easy way (recognizing brand name through offering a list of brands), the researchers came to the end that there is no difference in the individuals' ability to recognize the brands pertaining to the advertising slogans with jingles and those without it (Yalch, 1991). The relationship between complexity of advertising slogans and recalling has also been investigated (Corder, 1986). Several investigations have assessed the amount of recalling. These studies have shown that while there is a generally positive relationship between exposure to advertisements and the ability to correctly recognize the advertising slogans; short advertising slogans are committed to memory more quickly than complex ones.

Scientists with dexterity made these slogans convey the same intended meaning effectively in spite of being complex. They employed active and impacting statements instead of ineffective ones (ineffective

statements seemed more complicated) through applying particle beside main verb vs. separating them from each other. The researchers have discovered that participants' perception of advertising slogans was not affected by the skill but their recognition (choosing from a list) in simple structures i.e., employing effective speech and keeping particle and the main verb beside each other occurred better. Surprisingly, they found that recalling advertising slogans with short structure didn't take place in a better way, and they concluded that the complexity of the advertising slogan may cause recognition process to take place deeply and improve remembering advertising slogans (Grayser and Balmer, 2006). Petty and Schumann (1983) claimed that simplifying advertising slogans, as far as possible, is not always necessary, rather advertising slogan should be simplified to the extent that can be easily committed to memory (Petty and Schuman, 1983). Conducting further studies, McQuare and Mike (1999) suggested that the increased complexity of expressions through using tools improves their understanding of slogans (Quare and Mike, 1999). In connection with this investigation, it can be concluded that deliberately leaving slogans vague, particularly, by means of rhyming can improve the audience understanding of advertising slogans. The Lagrov's study showed that this kind of creativity is very effective and the created confusion for the audience can be solved. But if a slogan is presented with ambiguity, while the literal and allegorical meanings are not consistent with each other, this strategy will be ineffective and may even have the opposite effect as well. Therefore, the rhetorical tools such as using concepts that are ambiguous with audience should be used more cautiously. Be creative, but you cannot be too creative.

In a study undertaken over 500 individuals on recognition of advertising slogans and their pertinent brands, the results were frustrating, though they were 30 top and well-known brands. The study showed that the average amount of correct answers was 6%, except for some few cases, including Allstate insurance (you are in good hands) 87%, State farm (Like a good neighbor) 70 %, Wal-Mart (always the low price, always), 67% of the correct answers. On the other hand, the percentage that the respondents could correctly identify and match many other leading brands with their relevant advertising slogan was very low, such as: K Mart (right here, right now) about 1 percent, Staples (it was easy) and Wendy (here it is) both zero percent. With the growing use of slogans, the challenge of precisely determining the relationship between brand and advertising slogan has increased as well (<http://www.adslogans.co/ans/creslo04.html>). This is a weakness that should be addressed in the industry. The noteworthy point is that the advertising slogans can be well tied to the brand, as such over the many successive years, they won't undergo any change. And if any change is necessary to be made, it should be only for the sake of adapting to strategy.

Brand image and positioning

Inasmuch as brand awareness is obviously sine qua non of establishing relationship with a brand, advertising slogans, in addition to building awareness of brand, have ability to achieve more objectives such as creating image of brand. This end is usually measured by brand association. Strikingly, there are only few research studies on this aspect of advertising slogans. In a three staged model of evaluating advertising slogans which is presented with the purpose of making progress in tourism industry. The first step involves the qualitative assessment of particular association with an advertising slogan. The second step deals with recognition and recalling advertising slogans. The third step has to do with testing advertising slogans in commercial context, which is done with the purpose of obtaining the realistic measure of attitude toward brand and advertisements, brand awareness and brand image (Brown and Dacin and Patt, 2006) . The mass of studies run has manifested that advertising slogans can be effective

in positioning brands. Furthermore, positioning serves a crucial role in marketing strategies. In order to match with brand, advertising slogans require to be changed. Additionally, neither too confining to positioning, nor too careless and hazy positioning should be considered as the purposes of advertising slogans. Apparently, an advertising slogan calls for strict regulation of marketing mix elements and the strategic direction of brand (Hansman and Lokopolous,2009).

Basic principles in designing effective advertising slogans

Getting a load of literature about advertising slogans, it can be claimed that there is no article specifically devoted to the issue of outlining an approach to creating advertising slogans. To partially fill in this gap some suggestions are provided as guidelines for management practices which are adopted and compiled from the relevant literature (Kohli and Leuthesser and Suri, 2007).

1. Broaden your horizons: Brand strategy pertains to identifying where you are and where you are off to. It demands long-term vision and ignorance of other constraints that make a brand too tightly defined. Today's advertising slogans should be subject to coming business, so they can be changed if needed (Kohli and Leuthesser and Suri, 2007).
2. Each slogan is a tool for positioning a brand, so it should position the brand carefully and clearly: There are different methods for positioning a brand, which are mostly adopted according to the brands' characteristics or benefits; as an instance, Excedrin is recognized with its advertising slogan: "The Headache Medicine." In the developed markets, a brand is likely to be positioned against its competitors. Regarding the Avis's slogan: "Number Two — We Try Harder" (Dan Steinbock, 2010). It can be understood that positioning can be employed as a means for providing reassurance and boosting brand loyalty. A brand requires having an unclouded positioning in the marketplace and the slogan should heavily accentuate the brand's points of strength (Kohli and Leuthesser and Suri, 2007).
3. Yoke the brand with slogan: The degree of incorrect slogans' recalling is a matter of concern. Beside adaptable use of slogan in advertising, the advertising slogan should be stuck onto packages and even on the primary materials that are to be sent out. Every medium which is used to link the slogan to the brand should have a consistent image with brand and slogan as well (James and Gregory,2004).Managers should make certain that implemented advertising slogans can induce the brand name. Thereupon, to confirm it, market tests need to be done. If the commercial slogan reflects the name of rival company, it turns into a negative advertising in respect of all practical ends of a company. The evident way to increase correct brand recall is to incorporate the brand name into the advertising slogan. However, the large quantity of slogans doesn't bear the brand name. Although entering the brand name in the slogan may reduce its flexibility and creativity, the company can gain great advantages from the brand recall enhancement. This method possibly conforms to companies with limited advertising budgets and with audiences who are infrequently exposed to their advertising messages and advertising slogans as well as brands categorized under relatively similar products (Kohli and Leuthesser and Suri, 2007).
4. Repeat the advertising slogan: Despite that a majority of advertising campaigns include a variety of advertisements over a period; in order for the ad to be distinguished from other advertisements, it seems necessary to put creative ideas into practice. Most often it is only the advertising slogan

which remains consistent over the advertisements. Frequent use of an advertising slogan makes it to be committed to memory; consequently an enduring brand image can be built. Brands which make steady use of advertising slogans enjoy the highest rate of recall (Gordon and Pretorius, 2006).

5. Employing jingles. There are plenty of reasons for positive effect of jingles in improving the memorability of advertising slogans particularly in the short term. If enough time is allocated and slogans are constantly repeated, the recall rate for slogans with jingles may not exceed the rate for the slogans without it. In these cases employing concepts succinctly and consistently needs to be used for a long time. As an illustration, the slogan of Nike Company, “Just Do It”, plays the same role due to its omnipresence (Kohli and Leuthesser and Suri, 2007).
6. Use advertising slogans from the start of your business: Advertising slogans act as the basic elements of brand identity. Hence, the marketers who go wrong in applying advertising slogans lose a valuable tool of forming brand image. Investigations undertaken on the effect of priming indicate that the ideas emerged by encrypting a stimulus are instruments that have impact on memory. These studies also show that a brand image is initially created in its developmental stages in the marketplace. Practically speaking, marketers primarily utilize advertising slogans to highlight the unique and appealing features of a brand, and accordingly, build up a brand image (Kohli and Leuthesser and Suri, 2007).
7. To be creative is welcome: The golden rule of “keep it simple” doesn’t ring true for slogans. While making slogans simple for the sake of conciseness is common, body of evidence show that, slogans with modest degree of complexity in terms of syntax or semantics would enjoy deeper processing and easier recall compared to the simpler ones. The advertising slogans that cause consumers to process the received information more quickly and deeply would be more easily committed to and retrieved from memory, regarding the daily exposure of individual to the loads of commercial messages. Implementing this method prevents from fake recall, which is considered as a serious problem of slogans (Kohli and Leuthesser and Suri, 2007).

Conclusion

A brand name usually doesn’t include more than two words and cannot be interpreted literally. This is the case for logos as well. Unequivocally, brand identity elements can form a powerful image with the passage of the time and through brand association. But these elements are limited to provoking image for a product and don’t have the ability to provide more information about it. Advertising slogans can bridge the gap and impart information on product image. Hereupon, they can make it possible to establish relationship with whatever the brand is created for. Advertising slogans, as one of identity components, perform a key role in making brands affect customer’s mind. These advertising slogans are the subject to change component of brand identity (logos can also change, but the probability of their variation is much less than slogans) through which brand identity can be modified in line with the environmental changes, as the time goes by. Some basic principles should be considered in designing and creating advertising slogans. In this article we referred to some principles that should be employed in designing slogans. However, the number of factors that should be taken into account in designing these slogans is larger than this. Another point that deserves devoting more attention is that, producers and business managers, in our country, have only very brief acquaintance with the concept of advertising slogan and their effect on their awareness and mental image of brand. Moreover, few companies has taken this concept in their

promotional and advertising programs properly. One of the variables related to this issue can be attributed to the scarcity of information resources such as books, articles, theses/dissertations, and other research resources pertaining to advertising slogans. Therefore, we hope that the present article, as a small step, to initiate removing this constraint.

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