

Positioning Multi-country Brands: The Impact of Variation in Cultural Values and Competitive Set

**Rajeev Batra,
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor**

Date: 11.02.2016, Venue: P22 @ 2.30 PM

Abstract

Building on cultural values research, we identify specific image attributes on which multi-country brands should position themselves consistently across markets. Leveraging prior research, we identify three life values that are most equal in their cross-national importance (benevolence, universalism, and self-direction - "BUS") versus two that are not (power and hedonism - "PH"). We link specific brand image attributes (e.g., friendly, social, elite style, arrogant) to these life values through empirical data and semantic analysis. Using an extensive field dataset on consumer perceptions and preferences from 22 countries on over 1,700 brands, we then show that greater global consistency of a brand's image decreases overall brand attitudes if the specific image attribute is one of those that is not equally desired worldwide. The attitudinal impact of a multi-country brand's positioning consistency is also affected by the similarity of the set of competitors the brand faces across its markets: competitive set homogeneity increases the positive effect of cross-country standardization, more so for brands positioned consistently on BUS values. Implications are discussed for global brand management theory and practice.

Speaker Profile

<https://michiganross.umich.edu/faculty-research/faculty/rajeev-batra>