

CULTURAL VALUES, EOMOTIONS AND INFORMATION: A COMPARISON OF WEBPAGES FROM TWO CULTURALLY DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

WANG YE

DOCTER SHELLY RODGERS, THESIS SUPERVISOR

ABSTRACT

The present study empirically tested Triandis and Gelfand's (1998) four dimensional cultural theory, and evaluate the usage of standardization advertising strategies. The method used was content analysis. Product-based corporate webpage of 200 car models were subjected to the analysis. By dividing the 200 webpages into four groups, namely domestic Chinese webpage, international webpage in the Chinese market, domestic American webpage, and international webpage in the US market, the present study access the standardization degree of international webpage against its respective domestic webpage.

The result shows that cultural differences moderately affect ad appeals to values and information content in online advertisement, to the direction as the four-dimensional cultural theory predicts. Chinese online advertisement uses more international appeals, and appeals to harmony and benevolence. American online advertisement is more informative than Chinese online advertisement. The effect of cultural difference on emotional appeals is not significant because of the universality of basic emotions. As predicted, since online advertisement is more cost-efficient than traditional media, American online advertisement is highly localized. The results also support the contingent standardization theory. A combination of standardized strategies and localized strategies are used in international online advertisement in the Chinese market.