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***EDITORIAL***

Previous studies have shown that psycho­logical contracts, or the promises and obliga­tions in a relationship as perceived by an indi­vidual, plays a key role when we seek to un­derstand the dynamics of business-to-business marketing relationships. The construct has previously been found to influence vital rela­tionship outcomes such as trust and relation­ship commitment, but has still received rela­tively little attention in previous business-to­business research. By investigating industrial marketing relationships between customers and suppliers, the study by Mikael Lovblad has indicated that the psychological contracts of individuals involved in a specific relation­ship can differ to a great extent from one an­other. This means for example that a supply­ing firm can face representatives of a customer firm which have very different perceptions of what the supplying firm has promised to de­liver, or to put it differently, they have differ­ent psychological contracts. While one repre­sentative expects the supplier to proactively suggest solutions and improvements, another representative will perceive the same behavior as intrusive. For both supplying and purchas­ing organizations, a good understanding of the counterpart is vital when seeking to build long term relationships. The psychological contract offers a tool for creating a structured under­standing of the individuals involved and is therefore practically useful. Marketing organi­zations can both understand and manage the perceived promises and obligations of cus­tomers by applying the psychological contract construct. It can also be used to develop mar­keting communication and offers when going into new markets, since individual markets often are attached with different perceptions of what a supplier should deliver. In a similar manner, purchasing organizations can use the psychological contract to understand the rela­tionship with suppliers based on their percep­tion of their role in the relationship. For both parties, the psychological contract offers an opportunity to create a structured, better un­derstanding of the counterpart, thus creating better chances of fruitful, long-term relation­ships.

Extant literature that investigated non-deceptive counterfeit product purchase moti­vations has not focused on three major varia­bles that may explain underlying causes of this buying behavior: (1) the influence of the na­ture of the point of sale, (2) the degree of simi­larity between the counterfeit and the real product, and (3) potential savings in compari­son to buying a genuine item. These motiva­tional factors can play an important role to understand why consumers buy counterfeits. By employing an experimental design and col­lecting empirical evidence from three coun­tries (the US, France and Turkey), the research by Ozcan et al. confirms that these variables are important purchase motivations of coun­terfeit buying. In general, Turkish participants displayed a better attitude toward counterfeit products and the greatest purchase intent. In contrast, French participants showed the low­est attitude toward the offer and purchase in­tent. Americans were found to be significantly influenced by the level of similarity between the genuine and the fake products.

Brand managers and public policy makers may find these results useful. Anti-counterfeiting communication and enforce­ment campaigns are increasingly designed and decided at cross-national levels, if not global. For example, the World Customs Organiza­tion regularly launches global programs (e.g. Global Hoax); the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has come up with an IP Day at the international level on which various manifestations and educative workshops are held; etc. Thus, they should find the present findings useful in that one cannot communi­cate either the same way or on the same topics to prospects of non-deceptive counterfeits, as they do not hold the same motivations and ex­pectations. No traditional brand in regular B2C business, even in the luxury industry, would develop standardized communication and operational marketing campaigns to ad­dress audiences with inconsistent consumption values. Besides, based on this study’s find­ings, it appears that prospects of non-deceptive counterfeits are not only different on their consumption values, but do not stand at the same stage in their decision-making process: while Turkish and French people ap­pear to stand at the conative stage of it, Amer­icans would be more at the cognitive one.

Product recalls have increased at an alarm­ing rate in recent years and have become one of the most important issues in marketing lit­erature. However, little research exists on product recalls, specifically research concen­trating on consequences of recalls, behavior of recalling firms and preventing them in the fu­ture is lacking. Product recalls can have a sig­nificant impact on a firm’s reputation, sales and financial value. However, the extent of losses faced by recalling companies differs according to the severity of the recall, reputa­tion of the firm, industry and even culture.

According to McDonald (2006) more cars are recalled than are sold in the automotive industry. Automotive recall incidents are re­garded as one of the biggest challenges that the automotive industry faces. Therefore, Toyota as one of the most discussed cases (9 million vehicles worldwide and 57.301 from Turkish market recalled) has been chosen as an example for a field study of the current re­search.

In the research by Buran and Okan, the re­lation between brand trust, reputation and pur­chase intention is analyzed in the context of a recall situation. As a summary, it can be con­cluded that high reputation can diminish the damaging impact of product recall on future purchase intention of the consumers towards a brand that has recalled its products from the market. Managers of high-reputation compa­nies should not be afraid of voluntary recalling harmful products.

The findings of this research are expected to guide marketing professionals especially in the automotive market where there is fierce competition among the brands. Thus, this re­search on Turkish automotive consumer is important not only for the Turkish automotive market but also for all companies who are in­terested in emerging markets.

Product packaging has been identified as one of the most significant factors during the consumer decision-making process. Earlier research indicates that packaging is of particu­lar relevance for purchasing decisions that are made at point of sale (Wells et al 2007). An important challenge for marketing practition­ers is, therefore, to design packaging elements that will have a positive impact on shoppers’ purchase decisions.

The research by Atwal et al examines how different packaging components such as graphical layout, packaging size, shape of packaging and information content impact customers' purchase decisions within a low involvement product category. The research, therefore, helps to ascertain the impact of product packaging components on consumers’ cognitive and affective processing of infor­mation when making purchase decisions.

Data collection was performed using a survey that examined the potential relation­ships between product packaging and con­sumers' purchase decisions. The survey ren­dered 324 responses (110 male and 124 fe­male) that was distributed to a sample of French adult consumers (18-45 years).

The testing of the propositions indicates two types of buying behavior in which the packaging elements are able to influence shoppers' decision-making. The first type of buying behavior is guided by affective deci­sion making, which is influenced by graphical packing elements. The second buyer behavior includes cognitive processing of information that supports the argument that information content on product packaging can reduce the perceived risk of making the wrong choice. Furthermore, the findings suggest that shop­pers who are making active and informed choices of products within what is traditional­ly seen as a low-involvement product category treat such products with rather high involve­ment prior to making purchase decisions.

The managerial implications suggest that marketing practitioners need to develop pack­aging strategies that fit consumers’ affective and cognitive information processing. Market­ing practitioners therefore need to consider how to incorporate packaging elements that communicate tangible and intangible brand attributes. Furthermore, it is of interest for marketers to explore the benefits of develop­ing and implementing experiential marketing strategies for brands that are categorized with­in the low-involvement category.

The European Union (EU) is considered the most important regional integration in the world and it has critical and immediate impli­cations for international marketing. The study by Dursun and Kilic aims to investigate the market structure of the EU and some other critical Non-European Union countries in terms of the level of economic development and the state of national culture, to identify possible market segments in Europe, and to provide directions or insights for the formula­tion of a proper marketing strategy for each distinct segment.

The research sample covers 32 member and candidate European Union countries. In order to determine homogenous groups of the countries in the sample, a set of cluster anal­yses were conducted utilizing Hofstede’s four cultural dimensions and the 2008 purchasing power parity index as segmentation bases. Four distinctive segments of countries were identified: (1) *Most Developed Individualists* (Austria, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Switzerland, and United King­dom), (2) *Developed/ Developing Risk-Avoiders* (Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain),

(3) *Developing Collectivists* (Bulgaria, Croa­tia, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, and Tur­key), and (4) *Developed Risk-Takers* (Den­mark, Finland, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden).

According to the results, in all of the coun­try clusters obtained, there is some degree of negotiation involved among family members or group members to reach a purchase deci­sion. An advertisement targeted to these clus­ters should contain an adequate amount of and credible information about the product in or­der to create a base for group members to start to negotiate their best possible deal.

The societies in Clusters 1, 2, and 3 with high uncertainty avoidance emphasize security and give priority to security needs. High mas­culinity in Cluster 1 implies an emphasis on performance or achievement. This segment is expected to respond positively to appeals em­phasizing speed, performance, functionality, or the enhancement of one’s achievement. However, the countries in Cluster 4 with low uncertainty avoidance are likely to consider social needs as the predominant motivator. Since this group is likely to be less risk­averse, it chooses to take risk and demon­strates a high interest in new, innovative and exciting products, cutting-edge fashions or the latest technologies or gadgets.

High economic development as reflected by high purchasing power in Clusters 1 and 4 suggests that consumers in these markets can afford to buy a wide range of products. Con­sumers are well-educated, sophisticated and demanding. Markets are generally well-developed, competitive and saturated. In these countries, a company should emphasize con­sumer relationships, product quality, product and price differentiation strategies to better off. However, the countries in Clusters 2 and 3 with relatively low or medium purchasing power might have somewhat less developed product markets which are not saturated; competition might be strong or weak in these markets. An emphasis on price competition can prove successful in these developing soci­eties. According to the results, a complete standardization approach does not seem to be a reasonable approach in the European market.

The apparent economic and cultural dif­ferences among the four country segments re­vealed by this study have important strategic implications for international marketers. Since cultural variables affect the needs and the pur­chase decision-making process of the consum­er and economic variables influence the inten­tion and power of the consumer to buy, the differences among these clusters are critical to note for international marketers in order to develop proper marketing mix strategies.

The recent economic turmoil, which is the deepest recession since the Great Depression of 1930, has affected consumer spending all over the world. The objective of the present study by Antonios Zairis is to examine the ef­fects that the economic crisis has on Greek consumers’ purchasing behavior. The existing literature on the worldwide consequences of the crisis is presented and evidence from Greece is analyzed. Results showed that Greek consumers try to conform to the country’s new financial structure and have adapted their con­sumption habits. They have made significant spending cuts on their household expenditures and are refocusing on covering their essential needs. In an attempt to maintain their previous habits they search for the retailer who pro­vides the same products at the lowest price. A significant shift to local products has been ob­served as well.

Enjoy reading the journal!

Erdener Kaynak

Editor-in-Chief