

Ni0c Barnett

International Marketing Final Exam

As stated in the course syllabus, international marketing is about using a fundamental understanding of humans and culture to better implement marketing actions in unfamiliar countries and cultures. By understanding how to assess markets in different cultures with diverse economies, firms can identify actions which will act in concert with the countries culture and then allow the firm to understand the best way to turn a market or population onto their products. To better understand how to market to diverse cultures and people, the marketer has to understand how the human is actually put together due to evolution.

Humans as a species have evolved from apes and have a primate based genome and disposition. Humans have basic needs that are demonstrated through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. These needs start with basic needs such as safety, food, sex, shelter and clothing. These needs then translate up a scale to where they translate to needs of finding a fulfilling career, finding a mate and feeling accomplished as a human being. The basic needs of safety, food, sex, shelter and clothing form the base of nearly every major product marketed across the world. Shelter turns into a marketing exercise to sell homes, condominiums and apartments to different markets by drawing in people who realize by their intrinsic nature that they need shelter but then move up the scale through the need for status and also sex to buy upscale condos in a fashionable part of town where potential mates would be impressed. For sex, humans form groups and pair off to mate. Humans are made up of males and females who have different evolutionary characteristics. Males are competitive and seek to win the attention of mates. Females can be competitive but are also structured to seek security with a mate who can provide the security she desires and also the resources that she desires which also translate into status. Men are driven to

secure those resources and also provide the status to get a relationship driven by the base desire of sex. The basic need for food moves up to grocery stores who provide the necessities but also to fast food and finer dining who move people closer to the image of self-actualization and who they want to be the principles of who they want to be. These can be examined through the cases of the diamond industry, fast food industry and fine dining industry.

The first example of a understanding a culture and how to market it to that culture is the way that diamonds are marketed to the United States. By branding diamonds as status symbols, a foreign firm used the psychology of the United States to brand something that is actually in great supply as scarce and valuable at the same time. Diamonds were actually given to those people who were perceived as elite and trendsetters, Hollywood stars, to further drive this image as a scarce, valuable good that will set the buyer or their mate apart as someone of high status. At the same time, diamonds were used to appeal to the 1950's paradigm of the nuclear family by being introduced as a prerequisite for a person to ask another person to marry them. By inserting the diamond as a key element in United States courtship, the diamond industry created constant demand because of the booming generation who were in their early adult years and continuously pairing off and marrying. The diamond industry understood that the United States consumers were at that stage of the United States experience conditioned by protestant religion to pair up and marry at a young age. Men returning from World War II were seeking a family centered lifestyle and created a near endless market when matched with women who were seeking a mate who could offer them a lifestyle with many, many resources. Diamond suppliers created a market out of a non scarce mineral with no real market value at that time for any other applications. By going into the United States first, they captured the culture which other countries tend to want to follow and created a multi-billion dollar industry which still uses the

same types of tactics and analysis to market to even more diverse pool of people mating that has now expanded to the gay and lesbian community as demonstrated in recent marketing campaigns for Jared Jewelers and Kay Jewelers. The same base principles of cultural analysis that were used in the 1950's are yielding new results in an ever growing cultural United States market where people are still using the diamond as a symbol of commitment in a permanent relationship.

The example of the diamond is just one principle that demonstrates that a basic understanding of the human needs such as food, water, sex and security is required to understand how to drive a product in a culturally diverse market. As stated before, the first thing that drives any human is a basic need. In the example of the diamond industry, the basic physiological need that is appealed to is the need to mate and sexually reproduce. By understanding that the biology of any human is driven by this desire, a branding and marketing campaign was developed that convinced men they needed to acquire the resources necessary to purchase a "scarce" diamond to win the right to mate with a woman who they found attractive. Women were convinced that a diamond or the ability to purchase one goes hand in hand with being a suitable mate who is worthy of her attention for possible marriage and reproduction in her life. The ultimate key to producing this mindset in women was creating the diamond, which was really not scarce or valuable, as a precious status symbol that they saw on the hands or around the necks of female Hollywood movie stars who represented all these females desired to be at that time.

The principle of using basic human needs to drive multi-billion or multi-trillion dollar industries worldwide also can be demonstrated by the food service industry. Every human needs to eat and drink to stay alive. Given that people have to eat, it stands to reason that most humans will seek food and some times seek it where they are willing to pay others to prepare it for them as a matter of convenience. Using this data, it is easy to see that fast food is an industry which

can be marketed in any country using the basic knowledge of human needs while adapting to the cultural norms for food and cuisine in a given country. McDonalds has adapted to worldwide markets using these elements since the 1950's. By adjusting to different cultures, the company has created a market for their hamburgers and chicken nuggets in every open economy in the world. Companies use the knowledge of their markets coupled with human needs to drive branding of their products. In the McDonalds example, the company was started in the 1950's in the United States and aimed at the same families from the diamond example. The company went out of its way to market to a culture of a strong father providing for a wife and children. The company created family friendly hamburger stands inhabited by a colorful clown and other characters that the family could visit while eating a low-cost meal that was prepared and served quickly. By using the paradigm of the nuclear family who wanted a quick meal served in a wholesome environment, the company created an international powerhouse with a model that could be adjusted for differences such as family makeup and food preferences in nearly every country in the world.

The evolutionary understanding of human nature can even combine human needs to create a more specific marketing campaign for targets. In the example of the food service industry, the same elements applied to the diamond industry, sex and status, can be coupled with the need to eat to go after a market for upscale dining such as Ruth's Chris steakhouse or any other high end dining establishment. The marketing campaigns for these dining locations uses the sex and status needs to show a well-off couple eating a romantic dinner in a dining room with an amazingly posh atmosphere. The couple is shown eating amazing food and drinking high end wine. They are dressed in the latest fashion and shown laughing and smiling as they enjoy each other's company in a luxurious setting. For the man, it is ingrained in him that this is the type of

experience he needs to provide to be able to attract a beautiful lady for fun, sex and potentially marriage. For women, this is the experience that a woman of high status such as the celebrity mentioned in the diamond example would have frequently and therefore should be what she wants.

These examples are just a few of how basic needs and evolution drive marketing in both international and the United States market. Other factors also influence international marketing including the changing cultures of countries as they evolve politically and socially. A recent example of political evolution that may change a country and how companies would market to it is the new government in Colombia. The Colombians recently elected a more socialist form of government that believes in redistribution of wealth. If they government succeeds in the redistribution of wealth, Colombia would evolve from a country with a small middle class to one with a larger middle class which would change the entire marketing strategy for this country. It remains to be seen how this will change.