

The Wrong Stuff

If a business wants to sell its products internationally, it has better do some market reseach first. This is a lesson that some large American corporations- have learned the hard way. Sometimes the problem is the name. When General Motors introduced its Chevy Nova into latin America, it overlooked the fact that Nova in Spanish means "it doesn't go". Sure enough, the Chevy Nova never went anywhere in Latin America.

Sometimes it's the slogan that doesn't work. No company knows this better than Pepsi-Cola, with its "Come Alive with Pepsi!" campaign. The campaign was so successful in the United States, Pepsi translated its slogan literally for its international campaign. As it turned out, Pepsi was pleading with Germans to "Come out of the grave" and telling the Chinese that "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave."

Other times, the problem involves packaging. A picture of a smiling, round-cheeked baby has helped sell countless jars of Gerber baby food. So, when Gerber marketed its products in Africa, it kept the picture on the jar. What Gerber didn't realize was that in many African countries the picture on the jar shows what the jar has in it.

Even cultural and religious factors - and pure coincidence - can also be involved. Thom McAn shoes have a Thom McAn "signature" inside. To people in Bangladesh, this signature looked like Arabic script for the word Allah. In that country, feet are considered unclean and Muslims felt the company was insulting God's name by having people walk on it.

Source: Interchange 3

Vocabulary

overlooked - to fail to see or notice something

slogan - a short easily remembered phrase used to advertise an idea or product

pleading - asking for something that you want very much, in an emotional way

You can see the whole lesson from your teacher, please ask them to send it to you before the class.

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