

Cross-cultural Strategic PR Practices of Multinational Corporations in the Context of Globalization and The Effectiveness Evaluation

Yang Yu *

School of Management Science and Engineering, Shandong University of Finance Economics,
Jinan, China

* Corresponding author Email: 13508864053@163.com

Abstract. In the process of globalization, the operations and management of multinational corporations (MNCs) are increasingly affected by different cultural environments. The purpose of this article is to explore the key strategies employed by MNCs in implementing cross-cultural strategic PR practices and to provide an in-depth assessment of the effectiveness of these practices. The article will analyze the challenges faced by MNCs in formulating and implementing cross-cultural PR policies, including language barriers, value differences, adaptation of legal systems, and localization implementation. Through case studies of a number of internationally renowned multinational corporations, it will show how they have successfully implemented cross-cultural PR activities by building a diverse and inclusive corporate culture, customizing communication content to match local culture, and building effective multilateral communication mechanisms.

Keywords: Multinational Corporations; Cross-cultural Strategic PR; Effectiveness Evaluation.

1. Introduction

Cross-cultural strategic public relations plays a crucial role in today's era of globalization, and it is a key strategy for organizations or enterprises to build up their brand image and maintain their reputation in the international arena, as well as to communicate effectively with target groups from multicultural backgrounds [1]. With the rapid development of economic integration and information and communication technology, enterprises are no longer restricted to a single market, but are constantly expanding their global business, which requires PR activities to be cross-culturally sensitive and adaptable [2]. Cross-cultural strategic PR can help companies accurately understand and respect the unique social customs, values and consumer behavior patterns of different countries and regions. In the process of globalization, ignoring cultural differences may lead to misunderstanding, conflict and even business failure [3].

Effective cross-cultural PR can help shape and communicate a company's global image while taking into account local cultural characteristics [4]. PR campaigns should not only convey a consistent brand message, but should also be localized according to different cultural environments to ensure that the message is both universal and targeted, and to avoid the possible negative impact of a "one-size-fits-all" PR strategy [5]. Only with a deep understanding of public sentiment and the mechanisms of social opinion in each country can a practical crisis PR solution be formulated to minimize the impact of negative events on the overall brand reputation.

The importance of cross-cultural strategic PR lies in its ability to help companies achieve effective two-way communication in a complex and diverse global environment, enhance brand image and broaden market share, as well as strengthen their risk management capabilities to ensure a stable and positive social influence in global operations [6].

2. Strategies for Cross-Cultural PR Practices of Multinational Corporations

2.1. Cultural Sensitivity and Adaptation Strategies

When implementing cross-cultural public relations, the first task for multinational corporations is to develop a high degree of cultural sensitivity and adaptability. This means that companies need to thoroughly study and understand the cultural values, behavioral norms and social customs of their target markets and integrate these cultural elements into all aspects of their PR activities. For example, when designing PR messages, they should avoid symbols or expressions that may offend local cultures, and instead use language and visual elements that resonate with and respect local cultures. In addition, multinational corporations should establish a set of flexible and responsive PR mechanisms to cope with various challenges and opportunities that may arise from cultural differences.

2.2. The Embodiment of the Localization Strategy in Product, Service, Marketing and Human Resource Practices

At the practical level, the localization strategy of cross-cultural PR is embodied in multiple dimensions. In the product development stage, the company needs to customize its design to take into account the needs and preferences of consumers in different places; in terms of service, it provides service processes and standards that are in line with local cultural habits to enhance customer satisfaction. In marketing activities, it adopts promotional means in line with the characteristics of the local market, such as thematic promotions for specific festivals and brand endorsement using local opinion leaders. At the same time, human resource management should also focus on diversity and inclusiveness by recruiting and training employees with local cultural backgrounds to better interface with the local market.

2.3. Establish a Brand Communication Strategy that Combines Global Harmonization with Local Characteristics

MNCs should seek to find a balance between global brand image consistency and localized characteristics. On the one hand, strengthen the brand's international image and recognition through unified core brand values and concepts; on the other hand, implement differentiated communication in different markets to ensure that the brand story and message can touch the inner emotions of local consumers. For example, although the advertising theme and creativity can maintain a consistent brand tone, the content presentation and channel selection need to be adjusted according to the characteristics of each market in order to maximize the communication effect.

2.4. Utilizing Digital Technology to Achieve Cross-cultural Communication and Interaction

The advent of the digital era provides a more convenient and efficient way for cross-cultural PR. Multinational corporations can utilize digital tools such as social media, online video platforms, virtual reality, and big data analytics to cross geographical boundaries and monitor and respond to the needs and feedback of consumers in different countries and regions in real time. Through online interaction and community building, companies can promote cross-cultural two-way communication, deepen their understanding of audiences in different regions, and build a brand community that is a blend of globalization and localization, thus enhancing brand influence and loyalty in the international market.

3. Cross-cultural Strategic Public Relations Case Studies

3.1. The Coca-Cola Company's Cross-Cultural PR Practices when Entering the Chinese Market

As a global beverage giant, The Coca-Cola Company has deeply implemented the concept of cross-cultural PR in its China market strategy. In the Chinese market, Coca-Cola not only retained the consistency of the international brand, but also actively localized and innovated. For example, by cooperating with local celebrities, organizing marketing campaigns with Chinese characteristics, such as "Red Hot Spring Festival" and "Mid-Autumn Reunion", and incorporating Chinese elements into product packages, such as the twelve Chinese zodiac signs and the character for "lucky", Coca-Cola has successfully combined its brand image with traditional Chinese culture. At the same time, Coca-Cola fully utilizes social media to promote its brand image. At the same time, Coca-Cola made full use of social media platforms and adopted language and content strategies that were in line with Chinese consumers' habits, which enhanced brand affinity and in turn increased market share and brand influence.

3.2. BMW's Cross-cultural Integration Strategy in the Middle East Region

When expanding into the Middle East market, BMW has carefully designed a set of PR strategies that take into account globalization standards and the cultural characteristics of the Middle East region. In order to respect and adapt to the Islamic culture, BMW's advertising campaigns in the Middle East strictly follow the values and aesthetic preferences of Muslim societies, avoiding content that is not in line with the teachings. At the same time, BMW pays special attention to building a good corporate image in the local community, and actively participates in various public welfare activities, including educational support programs and environmental initiatives, which have won wide community recognition. In addition, in response to the demand of Middle Eastern consumers for luxury and customized services, BMW provides a specially tailored product line, and even configures certain models with Mecca-oriented GPS navigation to meet the needs of specific religious practices, all of these initiatives reflect BMW's excellent execution capabilities in cross-cultural integration public relations.

4. Construction of a Model for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Cross-cultural Strategic Public Relations

4.1. Combined Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment Index System

When building a cross-cultural strategic PR effectiveness evaluation model, the first task is to establish a comprehensive evaluation index system that includes both quantitative and qualitative aspects. In quantitative terms, easy-to-quantify data can be used as measurement criteria, such as changes in market share, sales growth, the extent of brand awareness in the target market, and the number of times the brand has been exposed through channels such as the Internet and social media. On the qualitative side, it is necessary to consider the impact of the PR campaign on brand image building, consumer emotional connection, corporate reputation and trust, which can be collected and evaluated through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, case studies, and content analysis methods.

4.2. Design of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Specifically on the design of KPIs, the cross-cultural PR effectiveness evaluation model should focus on the following core areas.

4.2.1. Market Share Improvement

Examine the change of product or service share in different cultural markets, and compare the market share data before and after the implementation of cross-cultural PR activities.

4.2.2. Brand Awareness

Quantitatively assess the growth of brand awareness in the target market after the cross-cultural PR campaign, utilizing market research data, including indicators such as brand recognition rate and unprompted first mention rate.

4.2.3. Consumer Satisfaction

Monitor and analyze consumers' actual response and satisfaction level to the brand and its cross-cultural PR activities through customer satisfaction questionnaires, user feedback systems and data from third-party evaluation platforms.

4.2.4. Media Influence

Statistics on the number of media reports, positive and negative news tendencies, social media buzz, and the scope of dissemination (e.g., the number of countries/regions covered, the number of people reached, etc.) are used to measure the influence and spreading effect of the PR campaign on various media channels.

4.3. Dynamic Evaluation and Feedback Mechanism for Long-term and Short-term Effects

In order to fully understand the effectiveness of strategic cross-cultural PR, the evaluation model should also incorporate a dynamic evaluation system of long-term and short-term goals. Short-term effects are usually reflected in the immediate response after campaign implementation and changes in short-term business indicators, such as the initial sales performance after the launch of a new product, the peak of public opinion attention triggered by a certain marketing campaign, and so on.

However, the value of cross-cultural PR lies not only in the momentary success, but also in whether it can bring sustainable brand value accumulation and market position stabilization. Therefore, the evaluation model must set up long-term tracking observation points, including the cultivation of brand loyalty, the integration of corporate culture, the deepening of community relations, and the formation of international word-of-mouth, which are more difficult to show quickly but are crucial to the company's long-term development. At the same time, based on the results of the regular evaluation, an effective feedback mechanism should be established to ensure that the company can adjust its PR strategy according to the market feedback, and realize the continuous optimization and upgrading of its cross-cultural communication ability.

5. Conclusion

The key to the success of multinational corporations in cross-cultural PR lies in their deep understanding of and high respect for their target markets. Companies such as Coca-Cola and Procter & Gamble have flexibly conveyed their core brand values through localized design of their products and localized integration of their PR activities, and strengthened their interaction with consumers all over the world through diversified communication channels. However, there have been cases of misunderstandings and conflicts caused by ignoring cultural differences, such as the controversy caused by some companies' marketing strategies touching on culturally sensitive points, which highlights the need to deeply understand and adapt to different cultures. Multinational corporations need to learn from past experiences, grasp the pulse of global cultural diversity, maintain brand consistency while focusing on personalized communication, and promote the innovative practice of cross-cultural strategic PR in a smarter and more inclusive way.

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