

UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS, PRAGUE

FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

2018

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UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS, PRAGUE

FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SUCCESS FACTORS OF STANDARDIZED
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION
CAMPAIGNS

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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D e c l a r a t i o n

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this dissertation entitled: “Success factors of standardized international communication campaigns.” The used literature and sources are stated in the attached list of references.

Prague, 22.05.2018

Michael Bahles

Title of the Doctoral Thesis:**SUCCESS FACTORS OF STANDARDIZED INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS****Abstract:**

This thesis aims to identify the success factors of standardized international communication campaigns. The main research objective is to examine how standardized international communication campaigns can be developed successfully. For this, the subject of standardized international communication campaigns is holistically examined. In order to analyze the topic thoroughly and in-depth, mostly qualitative and explorative research methods are used as case studies, expert interviews and an in-depth psychological research. The thesis will provide a summary of factors of how standardized international communication campaigns can be successful and a prototypical development process of standardized international communication campaigns. The research showed that standardized international communication campaigns can be effective and therefore successful. The analyzed cases proved certain successful standardized international communication campaigns and identified general success factors. The expert interviews with international marketing experts indicated that for the development a clear process is needed and that international stakeholders should be involved in the process. The interviews with international diplomats helped to find ways how the collaboration can happen more successfully. Conducting research is very important in the development of standardized international communication campaigns: As fundamental research in order to identify an universal consumer insight as well as testing of different campaign development stages. For the practical application of the overall research results, an own psychological research was conducted in order to identify fundamental motives for owning a car in the young target group in several countries. In addition, an own case study was conducted about the development of the international launch campaign of the SKODA Octavia in 2013 in order to give a practical example of a successful development of a standardized international communication campaign.

Acknowledgement

I hereby wish to express my appreciation and gratitude to Prof. Ing. Hana Machková, CSc. – the instructor of my dissertation thesis for guidance and support.

I also want to thank my family, and especially my wife for encouraging and motivating me throughout the dissertation.

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INTRODUCTION

For the last several decades, there has been an ongoing discussion in the marketing literature of how to successfully develop and organize international marketing communications, and whether the approach should be standardized or differentiated (or localized) for local markets (Elinder, 1965; Fatt, 1967; Buzzel, 1968; Levitt, 1983; Jain, 1989; James and Hill, 1991; Agrawal, 1995; Ford et al., 2011; de Mooij, 2013). In the real world of international marketing, in practice, local managers often say that a standardized approach “won’t work” in “our market” (Bahles, 2014). Nevertheless, there are many very successful cases of international or global communication campaigns (Bahles and Cook, 2016).

GOAL OF THE THESIS

The thesis intends to show that international standardized communication campaigns can be successful and how they can be developed in the international marketing practice. “There are tow aspects of standardization, process and program” (Sorenson and Wiechmann, 1975; Jain, 1989). The thesis is not another review of whether an international communication campaigns should be standardized or differentiated. The thesis shall identify first, the success factors of standardized international communication campaigns and second, develop a potential process how to create standardized international communication campaigns successfully.

The central research question of the thesis and the conducted research is:

“How can standardized international communication campaigns be developed successfully?”

The premise is that the thesis and the research deal with standardized international communication campaigns and won’t be another discussion whether international communication shall be standardized or differentiated. The basic assumption is that

international communication campaigns should be “as standardized as possible and differentiated as necessary” (Herbst, 2008).

The thesis and the research should prove the following assumptions:

1. *Standardized international communication campaigns can be effective and therefore successful.*
2. *For successful standardized international communication campaigns marketing managers have to identify universal consumer motives and a key consumer insight.*
3. *Conducting research is crucial for the development process (fundamental research and testing).*
4. *Stakeholders, especially the international marketing colleagues have to be involved in the development process.*
5. *Diplomatic tactics can be useful in the alignment process with international stakeholders.*

The overall goal of the thesis is 1. to identify success factors of standardized international communication campaigns and 2. to develop a prototypical development process of standardized international communication campaigns.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The development of standardized international communication campaigns is a very complex challenge. To cover all the different aspects of this topic, a holistic research approach shall be conducted and the following methodologies will be used. The emphasize of the research will lie on a qualitative exploration in order to fully and thoroughly understand, how standardized international communication campaigns can be developed successfully. The aim of the thesis and its methodology is to identify the success factors and the procedures of the development of a standardized international communication campaign.

Literature review: In order to analyze the topic of successful standardized international communication campaigns, the concept and the term of “standardized international communication campaigns” will be described and defined in a first part and then analyzed in the following when and how standardized international communication campaigns can be successful by an overall literature review. “A literature review includes the current knowledge including substantive findings, as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic” (Lamb, 2014).

According to Bryman (2008) “the purpose of exploring the existing literature should be to identify the following issues.

- What is already known about this area?
- What concepts and theories are relevant to this area?
- What research methods and research strategies have been employed in studying this area?
- Are there any significant controversies?
- Are there any inconsistencies in findings relating to this area?
- Are there any unanswered research questions in this area?”

The thesis will especially focus on the so far undervalued aspect of how standardized international communication campaigns can be developed.

Case studies: To identify successful examples of standardized international communications campaigns and to generalize patterns and success factors, best-practice cases will be analyzed, especially published by the Effie Worldwide Inc. At the end of the thesis an own case study will be conducted, presenting the international campaign development process of the SKODA Octavia in 2013 as a practical example. “The basic case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case” (Bryman, 2008). The cases will be analyzed with the methodology of a “*structured content-analysis*” (Schreier, 2014) in order to identify the success factors and the development process of the best-practice examples.

Expert interviews: In order to obtain primary information about the general success factors of standardized international communication campaigns and the best way to develop them, the thesis will present results of qualitative expert interviews conducted with various professionals from multinational companies and international communication agencies. Additionally, to learn more about the most effective way to proceed in international collaboration and alignment, qualitative expert interviews are also conducted with international diplomats to learn more about tactics and procedures to be successful in international communication and working processes. “An expert interview is when the interviewee is an expert in his or her area of study. This type of interview can be one-on-one, or held by a large group. It can be formal or informal and held over the telephone, by email, or in person” (Bryman, 2008). Expert interviews were selected as a main research method of the thesis because they give a thorough insight about the topic and provide an actual and practical perspective. The expert interviews were analyzed with the methodology of the “*summarizing content-analysis*” according to Mayring (2010).

In-depth psychological research: Finally, to give an own practical and empirical example of how an international common communication approach can be developed, a qualitative / in-depth psychological research (*focus groups* and *one-on-one interviews*) were conducted with international students about their universal motives about cars. For this, the psychological concept of “*Morphology*” was used (Salber, 2013). “Morphology was developed in the 1960s by Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Salber at the University of Cologne in Germany. It was originally a therapeutic concept that was later applied to market and media research. Morphology has roots in Gestalt psychology and Psychoanalysis. Morphological market and media research provides the scientific framework to understand what drives consumer perceptions and behavior” (Rheingold Institute, 2017).

COMPOSITION OF THE THESIS

The thesis is organized into four major chapters: In the **first chapter** the *theoretical framework* will be established. With the help of an overall literature review the topic of “standardized international communication campaign” will be examined. The first chapter will describe the long-existing debate about standardization versus differentiation of international communication campaigns and will conclude how “standardized international communication campaign” can be defined and what premises are followed in the thesis. The first chapter will also identify the variables and possibilities for a standardized international communication campaign. The literature review will show that there is a lot of existing research about the question if international marketing communication should be whether standardized or differentiated as well as when standardization is possible but that there is research potential about *how* standardized international communication campaigns can be developed successfully.

Based on the conclusions about standardized international communication campaigns, the **second chapter** will present the main *research results* of the conducted research of the thesis. International best practice cases will prove if standardized international campaigns can be effective and therefore successful and how this was achieved. It will lead to a first summary of success factors of standardized international communication campaigns. In addition, with the help of qualitative expert interviews with international marketing managers and diplomats, the thesis wants to show further how a standardized international campaign can be developed and internationally aligned successfully. The chapter will present an overall development process of a standardized international communication campaign. In addition, the role of international research in the development process is shown and the implementation of a standardized international communication campaign in international media and its changing environment is described.

The **third chapter** is about the *practical application* of the research results of the thesis. For this, a fundamental international research was conducted about the motivations towards cars in the young international target group as the basis for an actual campaign development in the car industry. In addition, a case study is presented about the international communication campaign for the SKODA Octavia launch in 2013 to give an actual practical example of the development of a standardized international communication campaign.

Finally, in the **conclusion** the contents of the thesis are summarized. It is the summary of the overall research results and the examination of the research question. As the main result, the overall success factors of standardized international communication campaigns and a prototype of an overall campaign development process will be presented. In the conclusion, also the contribution of the thesis and the research will be discussed as well as its limitations and the possibilities for future research.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – STANDARDIZED INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

For decades, there has been an ongoing discussion whether international marketing communication should be standardized or differentiated (Elinder, 1965; Fatt, 1967; Buzzel, 1968; Levitt, 1983; Jain, 1989; James and Hill, 1991; Agrawal, 1995; Ford et al., 2011; de Mooij, 2013).

The following chapter describes the current status of the discussion about standardization versus differentiation and will then conclude how standardized international communication campaigns can be defined for the further analysis of the topic.

1.1. Ongoing discussion of standardization versus differentiation

The discussion whether international marketing and marketing communication should be standardized or differentiated is ongoing for many years in the international marketing literature. Many authors discussed if **international marketing should be either standardized or differentiated**. Already in the general marketing literature it is stated that there are two overall options in international marketing: Standardized international marketing that offers especially cost advantages or differentiated marketing to answer to local differences. In general, international marketers have to decide whether their marketing program is standardized, i.e. the same internationally or differentiated to local requirements. “Overall, international companies must decide how much to adapt their marketing strategy to local conditions. At one extreme is a **standardized marketing program** worldwide, which promises the lowest costs. At the other extreme is an **adopted marketing program** in which the company, consistent with the marketing concept, believes, consumer needs vary and tailors marketing to each target group” (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

In general, an internationally standardized marketing program is possible because of increasing **global similarities**: “The vast penetration of the Internet, the spread of cable and satellite TV, and the global linking of telecommunications networks have led to a convergence of lifestyles. Increasingly shared needs and wants have created global markets for more standardized products, particularly among the young middle class” (Kotler and Keller, 2016). But at the same time, consumers still vary in significant ways. “Consumer behavior may reflect cultural differences that can be pronounced across countries. Hofstede identifies four cultural dimensions that differentiate countries: 1. Individualism versus collectivism; 2. High versus low power distance; 3. Masculine versus feminine; 4. Weak versus strong uncertainty avoidance” (Kotler and Keller, 2016). In the recent time, Hofstede added the cultural dimensions of “long term versus short-term orientation” and “indulgence” (Hofstede, 2018).

Therefore, some certain **marketing adaptations** are necessary: “Because of all these differences, most products require at least some adaptation. A company should review the following elements and determine which add more revenue than costs if adapted: Advertising media, advertising themes, advertising execution” (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

But still there is a **tendency towards standardization**: “Nevertheless, standardization of advertising in the internationally developing Western European markets is bound to grow. Differences in advertising appeal, of course, will still remain, but largely due to differences in special demands, more than to naturalness of consumers for the organizational set-up of advertiser and advertising agency” (Buzzell, 1968).

Therefore, another definition of **standardized global marketing** is offered by Keegan and Green (2013): “Standardized global marketing is analogous to mass marketing in a single country. It involves creating the same marketing mix for a broad mass market of potential buyers. Standardized global marketing is based on the premise that a mass market exists around the world. In addition, that mass market is served with a marketing mix of standardized elements. Product adaptation is minimized, and a strategy of intensive distribution ensures that the product is available in the maximum number of

retail outlets. The appeal of standardized global marketing is clear: Lower production costs. The same is true for standardized global communication” (Keegan and Green, 2013).

Also Müller (2011) gives a description of the debate of **globalization versus localization of the international marketing mix**: “Experts disagree over the degree to which firms should globalize, or standardize, their marketing programs across markets. At one extreme are companies that support the use of a fully standardized approach. Marshall McLuhan coined the term “Global Village” to describe an emerging world tightly linked through telecommunications. Many marketers believe that these advances in telecommunications, along with cheaper air transportation and the resulting increase in international travel, have created increasingly international consumers, making the world ripe for global marketing – at least. This concept is not new. Debates regarding the viability of global marketing surfaced as far back to the late 1960s (Buzzell, 1968). However, the concept was popularized by Harvard marketing professor Theodor Levitt, who suggested that people everywhere want goods of the best quality and reliability at the lowest price; and that differences in cultural preferences, tastes, and standards are vestiges of the past, because the world is becoming increasingly homogenized (Levitt, 1983). Major benefits associated with such standardization include lower production, distribution, management, and promotion costs. Yet the number of firms with the potential to standardize the majority of their marketing mix elements are indeed few. One example is Gillette with its “*The Best a Man Can Get*” campaign” (Müller, 2011).

This means for **global communication strategy** in particular: “Changing marketing communications for each local market is a process called communication adaptation. Consider the message. The company can use one message everywhere, varying only the language and name. The second possibility is to use the same message and creative theme globally but adapt the execution. The third approach, which Coca-Cola has used, consists of developing a global pool of ads from which each country selects the most appropriate. Finally, some companies allow their country managers to create country specific ads – within guidelines, of course.” (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

This leads to **global communication adaptations**: “Companies that adapt their communications wrestle with a number of challenges. They first must ensure their communications are legally and culturally acceptable. Firms next must check their creative strategies and communication approaches for appropriateness. Comparative ads, though acceptable and even common in the United States and Canada, are less frequent in the United Kingdom, unacceptable in Japan, and illegal in India and Brazil. Companies also must be prepared to vary their messages’ appeal. When the brand is at an earlier stage of development in its new market, consumer education may need to accompany brand development efforts” (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

This means especially for the **globalization of advertising**: “An increasing number of advertising and marketing executives agree that the needs and desires of consumers around the world are growing ever more homogenized. These experts contend that the world is one large market and that regional, national, and even international differences are at best superficial. Not only may consumers around the globe be satisfied with similar products, but advertisers can potentially sell them with similar messages (Levitt, 1983). Narrowly defined, globalized advertising refers to messages that are used internationally with virtually no change in the theme, illustration, or copy – except, perhaps, for translation where needed” (Müller, 2011).

For **global advertising content** in particular there is an ongoing discussion about standardization versus adaptation: “Communication experts generally agree that the overall requirements of effective communication and persuasion are fixed and do not vary from country to country. The same is true of the components of the communication process: The marketer is the source of the message; the message must be encoded, conveyed via the appropriate channel(s), and decoded by a member of the target audience” (Keegan and Green, 2013).

“The key question for global marketers is whether the specific advertising message and media requirements must be changed from region to region or country to country because of environmental requirements. Proponents of the “one world, one voice” approach to global advertising believe that the era of the global village has arrived and

that tastes and preferences are converging worldwide. According to the standardization argument, people everywhere want the same products for the same reasons. This means that companies can achieve significant economies of scale by unifying advertising around the globe. Advertisers who prefer the localized approach are skeptical of the global village argument. Instead, they assert that consumers still differ from country to country and must be reached by advertising tailored to their respective countries. Proponents of localization point out that most blunders occur because advertisers have failed to understand – and adapt to – foreign cultures” (Keegan and Green, 2013).

“During the 1950s, the widespread opinion among advertising professionals was that effective international advertising required assigning responsibility for campaign preparation to a local agency. In the early 1960s this idea of local delegation was challenged repeatedly. For example, Eric Elinder, head of a Swedish advertising agency, wrote: “Why should three artists in three different countries sit drawing the same electronic iron? Elinder argued that consumer differences between countries were diminishing and that he would more effectively serve a client’s interest by putting top specialists to work devising a strong international campaign. The campaign would then be presented with insignificant modifications that mainly entailed translating the copy into language well suited for a particular country”. “The **standardized versus localized** debate picked up tremendous momentum after 1983 publication of Professor Theodor Levitt’s Harvard Business Review article, The Globalization of Markets” (Keegan and Green, 2013).

Therefore, the question is: “**Global or local?** The standardization-adaptation debate during the past five decades, academics have studied the behavior of firms in foreign markets to understand the factors that influence the choice between standardizing operations and adapting to local environments. The focus of these studies has varied from individual elements of the marketing mix (mostly product or advertising) to the entire marketing mix or a firm’s entire business strategy. The majority of these studies were conducted by U.S. academics, studying global strategies of U.S. firms. The debate is ongoing. On the one hand, standardizing processes and products across markets can yield economies of scale in marketing, production, and research and development

(R&D). On the other hand, firms need to appreciate the differences among foreign markets and adapt their practices and offerings to suit consumers' needs and wants. The question is where along this continuum lies the level of adaptation that delivers the maximum payoff" (de Mooij, 2013).

De Mooij also states: "**Proponents of standardization** rely on a strong belief in the universality of fundamental human needs as well as the assumption that advertising purposes are universal; thus, advertising can be the same everywhere. The idea was that a strong concept or buying proposal crosses borders; only the execution must be adapted. Frequently quoted authors proposing a standardization strategy are Erik Elinder and Theodore Levitt. Elinder, then chairman of the board of the Swedish Sales Institute, believed that the convergence of standards of living and improving technical means were facilitating standardization of advertising would justify identical advertising messages for all European countries. He believed in the emergence of one-language (English) television, in all-European media, and in increased travel that would lead to European consumers with similar habits. His criteria for convergence were mainly economical. According to Levitt, the driving forces for convergence of needs and desires are technology and modernity. "A powerful force drives the world toward a converging commonality, and that force is technology. It has proletarianized communication, transport, and travel. It has made isolated places and impoverished peoples eager for modernity's allurements. ... Even people who adhere to ancient religions and attitudes are in favor of modernity. The world's needs and desires have irrevocably homogenized" (de Mooij, 2013).

"Levitt's argument was that standardization enables a company to compete on the basis of appropriate value – the best combinations of price, quality, reliability, and delivery for products that are globally identical with respect to design, function, and even fashion. In the 1990s, the statement on universality became more modified. Standardization would only apply to some specific segments or to some marketing mix elements, such as packaging and advertising" (de Mooij, 2013).

“As with other marketing mix elements, advertising can be standardized (whereby the same advertising theme is employed for each foreign market) or specialized (whereby the messages are adapted for local markets). Advertising, according to the Definitions Committee of the American Marketing Association, “is any paid form of non-personal-presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor” (Journal of Marketing 1948). Agencies and advertisers alike are divided over the issue. While some agencies have jumped on the “globalization bandwagon”, others remain committed to localization. Both Saatchi&Saatchi and BBDO are believers in the global approach. Grey Advertising on the other hand, suggests that each world business challenge is unique and, as a result, espouses “global vision with local touch”. Views regarding the effectiveness and practicality of the global approach to marketing messages are mixed” (Müller, 2011).

“What Grey calls this position is “global advertising with local touch”, which signifies, in the words of Vale, “a world approach – the same strategy and execution, but with recognition of differences in the local markets” (Rutigliano, 1986).

To sum it up, there are three possible **approaches to marketing communication** across borders according to Král, Machková, Lhotáková and Cook: “In general companies can follow three strategic approaches to deal with the differences when communication with different markets – a global strategy, a differentiated (or localized strategy), or a combination of these – frequently referred to as a glocal strategy.

The **global communication strategy** basically ignores the cross-cultural differences and thus the company’s communication is almost the same all around the world. Companies following this strategy use the same ads and commercials all around the world with just the minimum necessary adjustments (such as the translation of the advertising claim into the local language); the same messages and claims are used as well as the same or similar channels. The main advantages of this approach are the lower costs for campaign production and for personnel and also higher control over the overall image of the brand on a global level. The main disadvantage is that the communication may not respond to the local needs of consumers and also the local

managers may not be truly motivated as their creativity and rights to make decisions are rather limited. The strategic decisions regarding communication are made at the company's headquarters and then communicated to local branches, which are responsible for translation and for booking of the space in media.

The differentiated or **localized communication strategy** respects the differences of the target markets and adjusts the communication accordingly. Companies using this approach for their communication strategy leave the final decision to local managers who are therefore, more motivated as they can use their creativity, experience and market knowledge to prepare a communication campaign that suits the target market. Localization means that ads and commercials are created locally – using the local language, local agencies and even local celebrities and also the decisions on communication channels are made in the local branches. The key advantage is that the campaign is adjusted to local needs and addresses the local customers in a way that reflects their specific needs and expectations. Also, the use of localized communication enables the company to react to communication campaigns of local competitors. On the other hand, this strategy is, in general, more costly than the global one as all ads and commercials have to be created specifically for each target market; in addition, the brand's positioning can be blurred because the brand is presented in a different way in different countries. Thus the global headquarters loses control over the perception of the company and its brands.

The combination of the two previously mentioned approaches is the **glocal strategy** which takes the best of both. The general communication strategy is formed in a company's headquarters but can be localized when necessary. For example, in case of TV advertising, the company's headquarters prepares several TV commercials and the local branches possess the right to choose (from among them) the one that best fits their local market needs. The local branches are also responsible for media planning, timing etc. In general, communication tools that are expensive to produce and which have a big impact on brand perception are decided at the global level while less costly decisions are made locally. That is why TV campaigns are usually standardized; the same is true also for the local websites and presence on social networks for which the global

headquarters sets the required layouts and standards, while printed ads, radio and outdoor advertising, or sales promotional activities are usually organized by locally respecting the standards set by the global headquarters.

This strategy brings significant benefits to the company. First of all, it enables the company to adjust the communication to local needs but still respects the global communication style of the brand and therefore enables more control over local activities than the localized strategy. Also, the local managers are more motivated as they can make decisions which influence the company's results. The brand's positioning and perception also remain consistent around the world. On the other hand, this strategy is obviously more expensive than the global one, because the production and personnel costs are just partly shared among the countries. Also the company has less control over its presentation in different markets" (Král, Machková, Lhotáková and Cook, 2016).

1.2. Conclusion about standardization and differentiation

So far, we have seen in the literature review that there is a long-lasting discussion whether international marketing communication shall be standardized or differentiated. Overall, there is a tendency towards standardizing because of cost savings and marketing efficiency. Certain studies in the marketing literature found out that standardized international marketing has advantages concerning effectiveness and efficiency: "The study findings provided support for standardization approaches with regards to marketing mix (e.g. product, price, distributions, promotion) and organizational factors" (Cheon, Cho, Sutherland, 2007). Also: "Given the continued importance of the globalization era, there is an ever-increasing interest in the correlation between marketing mix standardization and the firm's market performance" (Kustin, 2010). And: "Hence, businesses may be better off standardizing their strategic resource mix to capture the benefits supported to be associated with a standardized approach to serving multiple national markets." (Szymanski, Sundar, Bharadwaj, Varadarajan, 1993).

On the other hand it is stated: “Although previous research has established that standardization enhances performance outcomes, more recent theorizing supports that this may not always be the case” (Schilke, Reimann, Thomas, 2009).

And also that: “...their results indicate that the standardization-performance link is significant by stronger for large firms with homogeneous product offering, high levels of global market penetration, a cost leadership strategy, and strong coordination capabilities” (Schilke, Reimann, Thomas, 2009).

To conclude, following de Mooij: “Overall, for **global marketing and advertising**, the choice is between global and local. Examples, of effective globalized campaigns clearly do exist, just as do examples of ineffective ones. The pros and cons of both approaches to international advertising will continue to be debated. Numerous firms have adopted a globalized approach. L’Oréal provides an excellent example. The company has used a globalized approach to sell a wide variety of its products around the world. With standardized international communication a consistent international brand or company image can be achieved. An uniform image serves to reduce message confusion in areas where there is media overlap or a good deal of cross-border travel, as is the case in many European countries” (de Mooij, 2013).

Also Müller identified that “The majority of multinational companies today employ a **degree of standardization** – some elements of the message are standardized, while others are specialized” (Müller, 1990).

But as so often, the **truth and the best way lie in between**: “The best global brands are consistent in theme but reflect significant differences in consumer behavior, brand development, competitive forces, and legal or political environment. Oft-heard – and sometime modified – advice to marketers of global brands is to “Think global, Act Local.” (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

In other words: "... some aspects of advertising can be standardized in a campaign, but other details may need to be localized" (Duncan and Ramaprasad, 1995).

To sum it up: "Clearly, global marketing and the role of international advertising in selling products in foreign markets are complex issues. Marketers must decide whether to use a **centralized, decentralized, or combination approach** with regard to the coordination of promotional programs" (Müller, 2011). "The long-standing debate over international advertising approaches will probably continue for years to come. In the final analysis, the decision of whether to use a global or localized campaign depends on recognition by managers of the trade-offs involved. A **global campaign** will result in the substantial benefits of cost savings, increased control, and the potential creative leverage of a global appeal. It is also true that **localized campaigns** can focus on the most important attributes of a product or brand in each nation or culture (de Mooij, 2013).

Also Kenso and Nelson state that: "Other researchers have examined levels and types of standardization and localization. They found that neither complete standardization nor complete localization is actually implemented" (Kenso and Nelson, 2006).

Therefore, today, the solution to the **global-local dilemma** in global marketing is: "In both global branding and global advertising, the choice has to be made between standardization and adaptation or some variation in between, called the contingency approach" (de Mooij, 2013).

"The **contingency perspective** allows for various degrees of standardization which are contingent on the internal organizational characteristics (goals, resources, commitment, and international experience) and external environmental market demand, nature of product/industry, competitive pressure, government regulations, and technology)." (Zou, Andrus, Norvell, 1997).

Also according to a study of Grag Harris: "The findings indicate that standardization is a flexible and adaptive policy that can take many forms" (Harris, 1994).

Therefore, the recent international marketing discussion concludes: “Recently, global companies have embraced a technique known as **pattern advertising**. Representing a middle ground between 100 percent standardization and 100 percent adaptation, a pattern strategy calls for developing a basic pan-regional or global communication concept for which copy, artwork, or other elements can be adapted as required for individual country markets. Ad industry veteran Nick Brian and former CEO of Interpublic Group’s McCann Worldgroup global agency network observed that the local/global debate does not necessarily have to be framed as an “either/or” proposition: As the potency of traditional media declines on a daily basis, brand building locally becomes more costly and international brand building becomes more cost effective. The challenge for advertisers and agencies is finding ads that work in different countries and cultures. At the same time as this global tendency, there is a growing local tendency. It’s becoming increasingly important to understand the requirements of both” (Keegan and Green, 2013). Also Harris identified: “In particular, the data showed that pattern standardization, or variances in practices by market, was an important dimension to consider when seeking to describe or classify the international advertising practices of multinational companies“ (Harris, 1994).

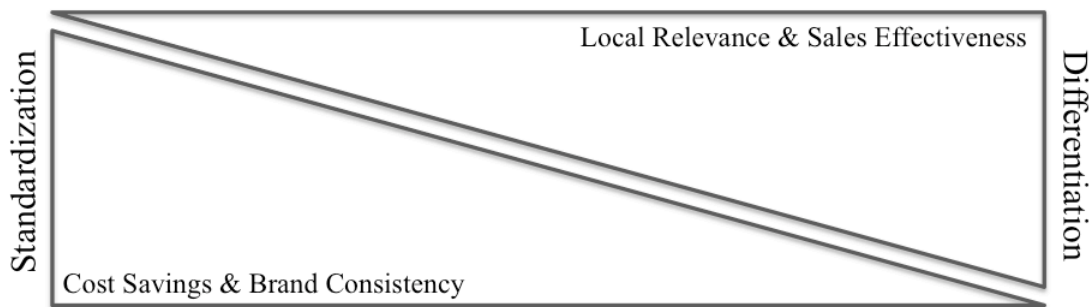
This means that: “The standardization decision is viewed as a continuum with complete standardization and complete customization as the two extremes” (Baalbaki and Malhotra, 1995).

This leads to a **globalization-localization continuum**: “Many companies have moved away from viewing globalization as an all-or-nothing phenomenon and instead have chosen to employ a modified approach – standardizing some elements of their promotional plan while customizing others. The question is, in fact, one of degree, with globalization and localization at opposite end of a continuum; and with many shades of adaptation between the two extremes” (Müller, 2011).

Figure 1 gives an overview of the continuum between 100% standardization and 100% differentiation, developed by the author. An international communication campaign is likely to lie in-between this continuum with an emphasize on standardization or

differentiation with the connected advantages. The advantages are cost savings and international brand consistency on the one hand and higher local relevance and with this a possible higher sales effect on the other hand.

Figure 1: Continuum of Standardization and Differentiation



Source: Author.

Also, Viswanathan and Dickson see it similarly: “...we define standardization is a continuum with adaptation of all aspects of marketing strategy at one end of the continuum and standardization of all marketing strategy at the other end of the continuum” (Viswanathan and Dickson, 2007).

Therefore, the task is that “international marketers must carefully evaluate where along the **globalization – localization continuum** a campaign should fall. Advertiser also must employ appeals suited to each culture and understand how cultural differences impact advertising content. Finally, advertisers must exercise caution in the use of both verbal and nonverbal messages. Translations must be conducted with care, and every aspect of the illustration or visual must be analyzed to ensure a proper cultural fit. And whatever the product, advertisers must select the best media” (Müller, 2011).

The thesis intends to help towards this decision and the development of standardized international communication campaigns. The decision for standardized international communication campaigns is also driven by the **necessity of control** in international brand management as well to save costs due to **limited communication budgets**. The question to answer is, when standardized international communication campaigns can be developed and in what way.

1.3. Variables and possibilities for standardization

As seen, standardization and differentiation of international marketing communication is not an either-or-decision: “Readers will find that the question to standardize or to differentiate international communication campaigns are not black-and-white issues. Instead, they can be viewed as a **continuum**. Some marketing and advertising decisions can be centralized while others may not be. Similarly, depending on the product to be advertised and the audience to be targeted, some elements of the marketing advertising mix may be standardized while others will be specialized” (Müller, 2011).

Also, following de Mooij: “The conditions under which standardization is appropriate were specified. It was possible for some types of consumers, similar segments; for some product attributes, such as novelty, international image, stage of life cycle; for industrial goods and for some consumer products. Products suitable for globalized advertising: “Globalization of advertising is viewed by many marketers as a challenging task. Clearly, however, some international marketers are successfully employing this approach. Progress has been made in understanding under what conditions globalized advertising works best and for which products such campaigns are particularly well suited (Fannin, 1984). Products for which audiences are essentially similar: Cross-border consumer segments. Products that can be promoted via image campaign: Image advertising has been used successfully around the world to promote a variety of services and products, including airlines, financial services, liquor, soft drinks, clothing, and perfumes. High-tech products: Globalized messages may be appropriate for products coming to the world market for the first time, because such good are generally not steeped in the cultural heritage of a particular country. And products with nationalistic flavor: If a country has a reputation for producing high-quality goods of a certain type or in a specific field, those goods may well be sold via global advertising messages” (de Mooij, 2013). This is often referred as the so-called “*Country-of-Origin effect*”.

“Agrawal reviewed the debate in international advertising from the perspective of the (U.S.) practitioner and academician. He also distinguished three schools of thought regarding international advertising: standardization, adaptation, and the contingency perspective. The later approach is based on the idea that the most effective advertising strategy varies, depending on the situation” (de Mooij, 2013).

Variables influencing the standardization-adaptation decision according to Agrawal (1995):

- The *product*, including product category and product life cycle.
- The *company*, its organizational culture, the culture of the country of origin of the company, and its export dependence.
- The *business environment*: the competition, economic development of markets, marketing infrastructure, environmental factors such as laws and government regulations, and media infrastructure.
- The *consumer*: spending power, and cultural and social variables including local tastes, habits, and conditions of use.

Also, “Jain (1989) developed a taxonomy of five different factors that impact standardization: target market factors, market position factors, nature of product related factors, environmental factors, and organizational factors” (Viswanathan, Dickson, 2007).

As well, Griffith, Chandra and Ryans found factors towards the decision: “Factors influencing promotion standardization/adaptation: Market similarity, process standardization, environmental similarity, and mode of entry.” (Griffith, Chandra, Ryans, 2003).

And also Katsikeas, Samiee and Theodosiou found out: “The results indicate that the degree of strategy standardization is significantly related to similarity between markets with respect to regulatory environments, technological intensity and velocity, customs and traditions, customer characteristics, a product's stage in its life cycle, and competitive intensity” (Katsikeas, Samiee, Theodosiou, 2006).

The main question is, when it is possible to standardize? Here, de Mooij describes **cultural universals**: “Much attention has been given to the differences between cultures. Some suggest focusing instead on the similarities between cultures” (de Mooij, 2013).

For instance, also Uhlings suggests: “Each country has its own history, its own preferences, its own ideals, its own fears and hardships. But if you are able to access genuine, deep and mostly unconscious motives using depth analysis you will also find that customers around the world have a lot in common.” (Uhlings, 2013).

“As mentioned, Theodore Levitt proposes that the “world is becoming a common market place in which people – no matter where they live – desire the same products and life-styles. Global companies must forget idiosyncratic differences between countries and cultures and instead concentrate on satisfying universal drives (Lynch, 1984). Cultural universals are defined as mode of behavior common to all cultures. Georg Murdock (1945) developed a list of cultural universals that includes athletics, bodily adornments. Proponents of globalization argue that, to the extent that some aspects of cultural environment may be perceived as universal as opposed to unique to each distinct society, it may be possible for international marketers and advertisers to standardize various aspects of the marketing mix. Granted, as human beings, we all share basic biological similarities. For example, all humans sense hunger, and the eating of food to ensure survival is a universal behavior. However, just how we respond to this biological drive – what we eat, as well as when, how, where, and with whom we eat – is shaped by culture. Beyond biological drives, humans are confronted with universal needs, as outlined by Maslow. But once again, the manner in which consumers in different markets address these needs can vary substantially” (Müller, 2011).

Therefore, according to Wendland you should **focus on commonalities**, not differences for international communication development: “After having spent time researching and analyzing each market, you will have found many differences between them. It is important to change your perspective now and focus on the commonalities between countries. This is the only way to identify a common theme.” (Wendland, 2011).

As well: “Gordon Link of McCann-Erickson says, down playing cultural differences and finding a common emotional hook is key to universal marketing” (Müller, 1990).

And: “Advertisers who use the standardized approach argue that because of faster communication, there is a convergence of art, media activity, living conditions, cultures and consequently advertising can and should follow suit. They hold that even when people are different their basic physiological and psychological needs remain the same” (Kanso and Nelson, 2006).

Also the international advertiser Sir John Hegarty notes: “You could create outstanding cross-border advertising if you focused on what unites people around the brand, rather what separates them. Focus on the opportunities, not on the problems” (Hegarty, 2011).

This means, to look for **common human needs and motivations**. “As mentioned before, how we live our lives, what symbols and rituals we use on a daily basis may be quite different, but what we need or strive for is quite similar. This is the chance for the global marketer - tapping into a basic human motivation that is really consistent across the globe. In marketing, people talk about "emotions" as the force behind a relevant global brand promise. What truly should matter to the marketer though are "motivations" - the driving forces that help us to reach certain emotional states” (Wendland, 2011).

“There is of course a ton of research on what motivates people. For the marketer, the question is often how to make sense of all of the body of research and combine it into a workable model. Steven Reiss has researched human motivations extensively and defined **16 basic motivations** that drive people around the world” (Wendland, 2011).

Figure 2.: 16 basic human desires

Basic Desire	End Goals
Power	Achievement, competence, leadership
Independence	Freedom, ego integrity
Curiosity	Knowledge, truth
Acceptance	Positive self-image, self-worth
Order	Cleanliness, stability, organization
Saving	Collection, property
Honor	Morality, character, loyalty
Idealism	Fairness, justice
Social contact	Friendship, justice
Family	Children
Status	Wealth, titles, attention, awards
Vengeance	Winning, aggression
Romance	Beauty, sex
Eating	Food, dining, hunting
Physical exercise	Fitness
Tranquility	Relaxation, safety

Source: Reiss, 2000.

“These motivations are a handy tool to the international marketer – which of these motivations is relevant to your product and could become the motivating force behind your brand? It is worth going through all of these, as in most cases, a good brand is not only built on a single motivation but on several. Also, it is not always the most obvious motivation that has the biggest impact. A good case is Axe, targeted at male teenagers. Normally, any deodorant brand is about (physical) cleanliness and a motivation for "order", but Axe chose to build the brand around "romance" by becoming an instigator of female desire” (Wendland, 2011).

“Other cultural universals are values and emotions, such as happiness, love and sadness, are assumed to be universal, but universals are always formulated in abstract terms. (Yet) textbooks on international marketing tend to mention the search for cultural universals as a valuable orientation, referring to, among others, Murdock’s list of cultural universals, modes of behavior existing in all cultures. Examples of universals are bodily adornment, cleanliness, training, and cooking and food taboos.

Indeed, a basic, universal need is eating. A universal need is to be healthy” (de Mooij, 2013).

“The following list of **universal themes and concepts** is adapted from de Mooij (1994): “Universal: New or improved products. Basic Everyday Themes. The Made-In Concept (= Country-of-Origin). Product Demonstration. Heroes (e.g. celebrities). Lifestyle Concepts” (de Mooij, 2013).

And also **emotions** in international advertising can be universal: “The concept of global (standardized) advertising as first introduced by the advertising agency Saatchi&Saatchi in the early 1980s was based on the assumed universality of basic emotions such as happiness or love” (de Mooij, 2013).

Another universal and internationally working aspect is, as mentioned, the “**Country-of-Origin Appeal**”: “An appeal that travels to a certain extent is the country-of-origin appeal (COO). The appeal is based on the combination of the product category and country of origin. Consumers are sensitive to the country of origin of the products and brands. Country of origin of products or brands or foreign-sounding brand names influence consumers perception. E.G. France: fashion; Germany: cars” (de Mooij, 2013).

On the other hand it is important for the following procedure and analysis, when standardized international communication is possible and what can be standardized in particular: “This paper suggests that recognition of the impact of competition, culture, education, marketing institution and consumer related determinants have increased in importance over the years, affecting decisions of advertising theme, creative expression and media mix. Of these, advertising theme is the easiest and most appropriately standardized theme, whereas, creative expression and media mix are most susceptible to adaptation as per the requirement of the MNEs. (Melewara, Picktonb, Gupta, Chigovanyika, 2009).

1.4. Standardization of communication strategy and communication execution

The question of standardization of international communication campaigns, is also about what is actually standardized? “Duncan and Ramaprasad (1995) note that the crux of the standardization debates used to be: “Should multinational advertising be standardized or localized?” Today the question is: “In what situation and to what extent should multinational advertising be standardized?” Duncan and Ramaprasad distinguished between **strategy** (the creative selling proposition) and **execution** (the actual elements and their structure in an ad). Charles Frazer offers a generally accepted definition of creative strategy: “a policy or guiding principle which specifies the general nature and character of messages to be designed. Strategy states the means selected to achieve the desired audience effect over the term of the campaign” (Frazer, 1983). If strategy refers to “what is said” in a campaign, then execution refers to “how it is said”. The advertising strategy adopted for a specific international campaign then guides the execution – the selection of advertising appeals as well as copy and illustrations (Kaynak, 1989)” (Müller, 2011).

When **creating global advertising** also Keegan and Green (2013) say: “The message is at the heart of advertising. The particular message and the way it is presented will depend on the advertiser’s objective. Is the ad designed to inform, entertain, remind, or persuade? Moreover, in a world characterized by information overload, ads must break through the clutter, grab the audience’s attention, and linger in their minds. This requires developing an original and effective **creative strategy**, which is simply a statement or concept of what a particular message or campaign will say. Advertising agencies can be thought of as “idea factories”; in industry parlance, the Holy Grail in creative strategy development is something known as the big idea. Legendary ad man John O’Toole defined the *big idea* as “that flash of insight that synthesizes the purpose of the strategy, joins the product benefit with consumer desire in a fresh, involving way, brings the subject to life, and makes the reader or audience stop, look and listen.” Some of the world’s most memorable advertising campaigns have achieved success because they originate from an idea that is so big that the campaign offers opportunities for a seemingly unlimited number of executions (e.g. Axe). Such a campaign is said to have

legs because it can be used for long periods of time (e.g. Absolut Vodka, MasterCard “There are some things in life, money can’t buy”, McDonalds “I’m loving it”))” (Keegan and Green, 2013).

Also Duncan and Ramaprasad identified with their research: “Advertising for multinational products uses standardization most often in strategy, less often in executions, and least often in language” (Duncan, Ramaprasad, 1995). „A separate sample of agency executives reinforced some of these findings, particularly the role of the successful, big idea...” (Duncan, Ramaprasad, 1995).

“Effective global advertising may also require developing different presentations of the product’s selling proposition. The **selling proposition** is the promise or claim that captures the reason for buying the product or the benefit that ownership confers. The way a proposition is presented is called the **creative execution**. In other words, there can be differences between *what* one says and *how* one says it. Ad agency personnel can choose from a variety of executions, including straight sell, scientific evidence, demonstration, comparison, testimonial, slice o life, animation, fantasy, and dramatization. The responsibility for deciding on the selling proposition, and the appropriate execution lies with *creatives*, a term that applies to art directors and copywriters” (Keegan and Green, 2013).

OVERALL CONCLUSION

Overall, there is a **tendency in international marketing communication towards standardization of international communication campaigns**, especially because of cost and consistency aspects and that standardization can increase the effectiveness and efficiency of international marketing.

“The results indicate there is increasing support for a strategy of standardizing marketing mix components and contributing to a firm’s profit performance” (Kustin, 2010).

But beyond the discussion of whether to standardize or to differentiate the focus could be more on the aspect of **how to achieve a successful standardized international communication campaign**.

Therefore, Kernan and Damzel suggest: “The focus should instead be on more managerial issues, such as what constitutes good practice. This is important because at the international level, just as at the national level, there will be good advertising and bad, and ultimately the success of standardized advertising will depend on the quality of the end product (Peebles 1988). In other words, more emphasis should be placed on “**how**” issues – such as what creative formats work best at the international level (Kernan and Damzel 1993), and the importance of agency selection (Blackwell, Ajami, and Stephan 1991) – and less on the “whether” decision” (Harris, 1994/1996).

This leads also to **suggestions for further research** in the marketing literature: “In-depth interviews with advertising executives of subsidiaries are highly recommended. This would further explain how advertising campaigns are executed” (Kanso and Nelson, 2006).

1.5. Premises and definition of standardized international communication campaigns

For the further analysis and research of the thesis this sub-chapter will define the premises of standardized international communication campaigns. It will also give an overall definition of standardized international communication campaigns, used for the further analysis of the thesis. As suggested in the literature review the further analysis will focus on the aspect of “**how**” to develop a standardized international communication campaign.

Premises of standardized international communication campaigns:

- Standardized international communication campaigns have to be used in several international markets and ideally also on several continents. According to the Global Effie Awards: At least 4 countries and 2 regions (Effie, 2015).
- Standardized international communication campaigns should be “as standardized as possible and local as necessary” (Herbst, 2008).
- Standardized international communication campaigns should be far as possible towards standardization on the standardization-differentiation continuum.
- Standardized international communication campaigns refer to the standardization degree of the *communication strategy* and second of the *communication execution*.
- Standardized international communication campaigns mean that they are developed centrally by the headquarters of an international corporation with the input and the involvement of the international subsidiaries.
- Standardized international communication campaigns achieve high cost savings due to efficiencies in the communication development and production.
- Standardized international communication campaigns achieve a high degree of consistency of the international marketing communication and brand perception.

Based on the literature review an own definition of standardized international communication campaigns is the following: Standardized international communication campaigns are centrally developed communication campaigns for several international markets by the companies headquarters with the input of local subsidiaries to achieve cost savings and a high degree of consistency of the international communication and brand perception, while local adjustments can be made due to local requirements.

2. RESEARCH RESULTS – DEVELOPMENT OF SUCCESSFUL STANDARDIZED INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

2.1. Introduction

The overall literature review concluded that international communication campaigns happen on a continuum of standardization and differentiation. There is an overall tendency towards standardization of international campaigns due to cost savings and the achievement of a more consistent international brand perception. The literature review identified that standardized international communication campaigns can be more effective and therefore successful. There are plenty of research articles about communication campaigns should be whether standardized or differentiated (localized) but indeed less or only limited about *how* standardized international campaigns can be actually developed. The following chapter and the conducted research is therefore focused on the research question, of how standardized international communication campaigns can be developed successfully. For this, the conducted research is of qualitative nature in order to explore this complex and challenging topic of developing a standardized international communication campaign. In the literature review it was stated that there is limited or almost no research about how standardized international communication campaigns can be developed. Therefore, the thesis intends to explore that aspect with its own primary (qualitative) research.

To do so, the first approach is to analyze actual and proven success cases (*case studies*); secondly, qualitative expert interviews were conducted (*one-on-one interviews*). Following the conclusion and the research suggestions of the literature review a qualitative, in-depth research was conducted (Harris, 1994; Kanso, 2006) in order to identify how successful standardized communication campaigns can be developed. The methodological procedures are described in the respective chapters. The research goals are to identify general *success factors* for effective standardized communication campaigns and to establish a *development process* of standardized international communication campaigns.

2.2. Learnings from success cases

As mentioned in the introduction, in order to identify successful examples of standardized international communications campaigns and to generalize patterns and success factors, best-practice cases should be analyzed.

2.2.1. Introduction

In order to identify general success factors and patterns of international communication campaigns, proven success cases were analyzed. Proven success cases of international communication campaigns are the internationally recognized Effie cases (Effie, 2015): “The Effie Awards are known by advertisers and agencies globally as the pre-eminent award in the industry, and recognize any and all forms of marketing communication that contribute to a brand's success. The Effie Awards were launched in 1968 by the New York American Marketing Association as an awards programs to honor the most effective advertising efforts. The award honors all forms of effective marketing communications and the companies and individuals creating effective work on six continents and in over forty countries. The Global Effie Awards honor the year’s most effective global marketing communications ideas – ideas that work in at least four countries and two or more regions worldwide” (Effie, 2015).

2.2.2. Methodology

In order to analyze the available case studies, the author followed a systematic approach of a *qualitative content analysis* (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005): “Content analysis is a widely used qualitative research technique”; “The goal of content analysis is to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The analysis was based on a “*structured content-analysis*” (Schreier, 2014). “Qualitative content-analysis is defined as a systematic and valid procedure with the goal of a summarizing description of the material. This description happens in the way that relevant meaningful contents are identified as categories and that then relevant parts of the material are sorted towards this category system” (Schreier, 2014). By this, it

utilized a systematic approach to structure the international communication success cases and to define the fundamental factors for their success.

The result of the analysis is a summary of the general factors responsible managers could take into account in order to develop a successful standardized international communication campaign.

For this reason, the author identified and defined certain *categories* to structure the analyzed case studies, based on the literature review and following the general development stages of international communication campaigns, also distinguishing in communication strategy and communication execution:

1. *Background and communication objectives*
2. *Communication strategy*
3. *Communication execution*
4. *Results*
5. *Conclusion and success factors*

The content of the cases was then analyzed according to the defined *categories*. For this, the content of the cases was summarized and sorted towards the *categories*. “The main aspect of the *structured content-analysis* is to identify certain aspects based on the material and to conceptualize it in order to analyze the material according to these aspects in a systematic way” (Schreier, 2014). By this, certain commonalities and patterns could be identified: Commonalities in the content of the analyzed cases and important aspects for the development of a successful standardized international communication campaigns. In order to do so, the cases were read and analyzed in several rounds that at the end the particular success factors could be identified and then summarized according to the defined *categories*. Finally, the success factors of the single cases were summarized in an overview of the overall success factors for developing a successful standardized international communication campaign.

The analyzed Effie cases are in chronicle order, and in order to have a homogenous selection, the cases are all from the FMCG (fast moving consumer goods) sector all depicted from the Effie Worldwide organization. Figure 3 gives an overview of the analyzed Global Effie cases.

Figure 3: Overview analyzed Global Effie Cases

Brand	Industry	Global Effie Award, year	Campaign name	Number of countries
Snickers	Snacks	Gold 2011	<i>„You are not you when you are hungry“</i>	40
Febreze	Air care	Silver 2012	<i>„Breathe Happy Global Campaign“</i>	17
Febreze	Air care	Silver 2013	<i>“Global Azerbaijani Olympic Campaign”</i>	First 11, then 35
Jim Beam	Spirits	Bronze 2013	<i>„Devil’s Cut Global Ad Campaign“</i>	4
Evian	Beverage	Bronze 2014	<i>“Evian Baby&Me”</i>	15

Source: Author.

2.2.3. Analysis of Global Effie winner cases

Snickers “You’re not you when you’re hungry”, Global Effie Gold 2011

1. Background and communication objectives:

In 2010 Snickers had the ambition to become a truly global brand and to achieve a consistent global campaign for the first time for more than 40 markets. To do so, one global campaign approach should be developed. The campaign objectives for the selected markets for the Effie case were for the USA, UK and Germany to reverse the declining sales of the brand and to grow penetration. For the developing markets like the Gulf countries (GCC) and Poland, the campaign’s objectives were significant growth in sales and penetration as well.

2. Communication strategy:

In order to develop a campaign concept that would work in all the different markets, the campaign had to connect consumers around an insight true to the brand and for the consumer. Extensive qualitative consumer research revealed a simple but universal and unique insight: *“When people are hungry they are weaker and not themselves”*. In this situation, the brand Snickers can be the perfect option to help. More in particular, the consumer research identified that when especially males (the main target group of Snickers) become hungry, they become less concentrated and moody. A condition that the peers of their male group do not appreciate and they would let their friend know. This universal and true insight led to the global communication platform of the campaign for the brand: *“When guys get hungry, they’re actually not themselves and their role in the male group is threatened. As a proper, nut-filled bar Snickers can sort out that hunger and restore your role in the pack.”*

3. Communication execution:

Based on that strong insight and the global communication platform, an international communication campaign was developed with TV commercials, print ads, Internet banners and social media buzz. For the validation of the campaign, regional market research was conducted. The launch of the campaign in the US was the first TV commercial based on the idea: *“You are not you, when you are hungry”* using the celebrity testimonial Betty White (known from the popular TV program “Golden Girls”) to dramatize the condition when a young man gets hungry during a football match. This commercial during the Super bowl commercial break was a huge success and was voted as the best commercial at this year Super Bowl. The campaign was then spread all over the world. For this, several and slightly different versions of the commercial were developed. The same commercials could be used in the US and Germany due to a similar popular culture. In the GCC the used celebrity testimonials would not connect with the local target group. Therefore, local celebrities were selected and the story was slightly modified, but it was still consistent and true to the universal insight and campaign idea: *“You are not you, when you’re hungry”*.

4. Results:

This global campaign achieved tremendous results in all the target markets. In the selected markets for the Effie case, the volume sales increased much more than intended. For example in the US after only three month of the campaign in the market, the brand not only reversed declining volume sales, but grew total Snickers volume sales by 8% and single sales by 13,4%. And in Germany following the introduction of the campaign the decline of the sales had been reversed to a 17% growth.

5. Conclusion and success factors:

The Global Effie gold case of Snickers shows perfectly that marketing managers have to identify a universal insight about the target consumers and the brand. This insight can be based on a human truth, valid for people in various countries – in this case, the change of condition and mood when people feel hungry. Crucial in order to find such a true but simple insight was in this case the conducting of qualitative research in several markets. Based on the insight, it is important to develop an international, i.e. global communication platform and campaign idea. If the insight is right, the overall communication platform and campaign idea can work for all the targeted markets. For the execution, on the other hand, it can be necessary to localize and to adapt elements of the campaign assets. This can be translation but also the selection of local popular celebrities as testimonials. That the found universal insight was right, also shows the fact that the campaign is still used by Snickers – for example, in the Super Bowl commercial break in 2014 – almost five years after the launch of this global campaign. And also until today, the global Snickers campaign based on the international concept “*You ‘re not you when you’re hungry*” is still used (YouTube 2017).

Overview of the success factors:

- One homogenous international target group (in this case: young males).
- Conducting of international research (in this case: qualitative research).
- Identification of a universal truth about the target consumers worldwide.
- Development of a global communication platform and idea.
- Conducting of regional campaign testing.
- If necessary, the adaptation of the international campaign with a local execution

(in this case: local popular celebrities).

Picture 1: Global Snickers campaign 2010



Source: https://www.effie.org/case_studies/case/2001

Febreze / Ambi Pur “Breathe Happy”, Global Effie Silver 2012

1. Background and communication objectives:

In 2011, Procter&Gamble conducted for its international brands Febreze and Ambi Pur – both in the air care category – a global campaign. The objectives in the selected market for the Effie case were refreshing the brand Febreze in the US and the UK, launching Febreze in Mexico and re-positioning the Ambi Pur brand in its domestic markets. Being a billion dollar power brand of Procter&Gamble, the overall brand objective of Febreze / Ambi Pur was to double its global revenues within five years. The aim was to conduct a global campaign that would work across different markets, different competitive landscapes, different market positions, different brand names, different cultures, different languages and different attitudes about the category. The single campaign objectives for the single markets were: reverse negative sales trend and generate buzz for the Febreze brand in the US. Also to generate buzz in UK as well as increase the value share. In Italy, the campaign’s objective was the successful launch of a new aerosol product by achieving a certain value share as well as certain advertising awareness, and in Mexico the launch of the Febreze brand overall with the development of a certain percentage of brand awareness and a certain share of the aerosol market within the first three months of the launch.

2 Communication strategy:

In order to develop a truly global campaign, one strong single idea was needed. For this, extensive international research was conducted with focus groups in major cities around the globe, household visits and shopping observations. This in-depth qualitative research led to this central insight and general human truth: *“That you can close your eyes but you can never turn off your nose.”* This means that the smell of your home has a very special role in people’s lives. For all of the international target groups, it was very important that the house, especially for guests, is pleasant and welcoming. But if your house smells, it can’t be clean and welcoming. This overall observation and universal international insight in the target group led to the main campaign idea, to involve real people in visceral experiences to prove Febreze / Ambi Pur makes even the filthiest places smell nice, no matter what they look like.

3. Communication execution:

Based on this international brand communication platform and idea, the campaign was executed by actually letting people experience the performance of Febreze / Ambi Pur. Random people were recruited from the street in New York to experience smelly places that were then prepared with Febreze / Ambi Pur. While blindfolded, they had to describe what they smell while sitting on a scruffy couch. This led to the central TV commercial launching the campaign. Additional executions were developed with input from local agencies in different parts of the world at an early stage of the creative development to ensure the executional nuances were locally relevant. Different experiences focused on the different spaces and situations in which the product could be used: from the living room to the bathroom, on sweaty sports kits or after cooking. In order to bring the campaign to life in a more tangible way, beyond TV and ensure the brand feels locally relevant and in touch with each market's audience, the TV spots were complimented with live experiences, which were developed on the local level – for example, the sponsoring of a yoga event in Times Square in New York or a truck road show containing a messy bedroom and a filthy kitchen in Mexico.

4. Results:

This global campaign combined with local efforts led to a significant success for the Febreze and Ambi Pur brand on the local level. US: After a continuous decline of the Febreze sales prior the campaign, the campaign achieved a huge turnaround in sales. In addition, the campaign generated an impressive social media buzz, increasing the fan base on Facebook from 235k fans to almost 600k fans within the four months of the campaign. UK: The campaign achieved a strong increase in the value market share and a strong buzz in social media, reaching 15,000 Facebook fans within just three months of the launch of the UK Facebook page. Italy: A successful launch of the new aerosol product by achieving a strong value share and volume share as well as an above average advertising awareness. Mexico: Achieved a much higher market share within the aerosol segment as well as a much higher brand awareness just in five weeks of the launch than planned.

5. Conclusion and success factors:

By identifying a striking consumer insight and human truth, a communication campaign could be developed that connected with consumers in overall 17 countries in five regions of the world. Through this campaign, great communication and sales results could be achieved as well as a strong social media involvement. One proof of the strength of the global campaign concept is that it could be prolonged by a follow-up campaign. (See the next Global Effie case).

Overview of the success factors:

- Conducting of different kinds of international qualitative research (in this case: focus groups, home-visits and shopping observations).
- Identification of a universal human truth (in this case: the role of smells, i.e. odors).
- Creating local experiences in order to locally adapt the central campaign concept and to create social media buzz.

Picture 2: Global Febreze / Ambi Pur campaign 2011



Source: <http://theinspirationroom.com/daily/2012/cannes-creative-effectiveness-lions-2012>

Febreze “Azerbaijan Olympics campaign”, Global Effie Silver 2013

1. Background and communication objectives:

In 2012 Procter&Gamble became one of the main sponsors of the Olympic Games. To utilize the sponsorship as a global marketing platform, Procter&Gamble decided to promote its international brand Febreze. Based on the big success of the global campaign for the brand, this success should be prolonged. The overall objective was that Febreze should become a real global brand and the no. 1 air care brand worldwide with the help of the Olympics. Therefore, they started an international campaign around the Olympic sponsorship in 11 countries. For the analysis for the Global Effie Awards, the following markets were selected: US, Canada, UK, France with the defined campaign objectives of sales growth and PR as well as social media buzz.

2. Communication strategy:

In order to compete with the other Olympic sponsors like Coca-Cola, Nike, McDonald's and Visa, Febreze had to develop a powerful idea. (Without the luxury of dedicated funding for each market to sponsor regional athletes, shoot multiple Olympic commercials or build individualized communications programs). In order to develop a campaign that would work for people from diverse markets who are interested in the Olympics, Febreze had to find a universal human truth and a unique insight that would resonate with its international target groups. Based on the insight the brand identified one year before for its brand, that “*you can close your eyes, but you can never turn off your nose*”; implying that your sense of smell is ever present and very powerful and to show the particular importance of this sense of smelling, the task was now to identify an insight more specific for the Olympic Games. This was found in the insight that one of the worst and strongest odors, and one odor that is particularly tough for active families, is the stink that comes from doing sports. Olympians are the highest-performing athletes in the world. Febreze set out to prove that if Febreze can eliminate the sport odor of Olympians, then it can certainly work on a family's sport odors.

3. Communication execution:

This insight was executed in the campaign idea to sponsor the Olympic Azerbaijani wrestling team to prove that Febreze can eliminate even their Olympic sized sport odors. Because this idea was truly universal, the creative assets (materials) remained the same during the global roll out. The regions only translated the work and added their appropriate packaging. The campaign was pre-seeded on Facebook and YouTube and started with the beginning of the Olympic Games with TV spots in USA, Canada, UK, France, Germany, Ireland, Russia, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary. The commercial showed real people – recruited from the street in London – entering blindfolded the training room of the Azerbaijani wrestling team and who described their smelled odors like “fresh cut flowers” or “a potpourri factory” proving the smell eliminating power of Febreze.

4. Results:

This global campaign for Febreze, using the Olympic Games as a communication platform, helped the brand on its way to become the no. 1 air care brand. In all the defined markets, the sales increased considerably and a huge buzz around the campaign was created on classical news media and on Facebook. In addition, this campaign won a bronze lion at the Festival of Creativity in Cannes (this is not so common in the category of “air care”).

5. Conclusion and success factors:

As a summary, it can be concluded again that an in-depth universal human insight led to a great campaign idea and platform that works in various markets. The truth about the target group’s (here: “Moms”) real life led to a concept that resonated with the target groups in different markets all over the world.

Overview of the success factors:

- Utilization of a global event (in this case: The Olympic Games).
- Definition of a clear international target group (in this case: Moms).
- Use of a humorous execution (in this case: The Azerbaijani wrestling team with their assistant responsible for the training atmosphere using Febreze).

- Engagement on social media platforms (in this case: YouTube and Facebook).

Picture 3: Global Febreze Olympic campaign 2012



Source: http://awardshome.com/span2012/page-view.php?page_id=186&cat=4

Jim Beam “Devils Cut” Global Effie, Bronze 2013

1. Background and communication objectives:

In 2012, Jim Beam launched a new bourbon whiskey called Devil’s Cut. Devil’s Cut is the expression of the whiskey that rests in the barrel while the whiskey is maturing. This special whiskey as a by-product tastes especially smooth and intense. Jim Beam wanted to launch this version as a premium bourbon and support it with an international campaign. Therefore, the overall objective of the launch and the communication campaign was re-energize the brand and reach new customers in the home market the US and in markets where Jim Beam is not that established to assert Jim Beam as an exciting, innovative, premium brand and the owner of The Bourbon. In addition to these brand objectives, ambitious sales objective were defined.

2. Communication strategy:

The product concept of Devil's Cut was very unique but had to be explained. And the circumstance that it is a "by-product" but with better quality had to be clarified with an international communication campaign. But this should not happen in a functional pure informative way. The challenge was how to communicate the strength of this unique product in an appropriately engaging way. In order to do so, focus group, conducted in 2011 identified an interesting parallel between the product and the audience: An analogy that could help to explain the functional USP in engaging, human terms that people could relate with. It was identified that as Jim Beam could unleash the spirit from deep inside the wood barrel, the campaign could inspire the audience to unleash the spirit within them, a spirit that often gets buried by everyday life. The qualitative research in 2011 proved this to be a really resonant insight for its target group. All over the world, 30-something-year-old-men are at a stage in their lives where they have more responsibilities, but still want to escape and have fun. By appealing to that universal desire, it was possible to bring the unique production process to life.

3. Communication execution:

Based on the identification of this universal desire, the overall campaign idea and communication platform was defined as: *"There's a devil in everyone – release yours"*. In the creative campaign, the tagline "Unleash your spirit" was used and expressed in a TV commercial, print ads and Internet banners. The concept of the combination of the product story and the audience insight was internationally used and supplemented by local promotions and brand experiences. For example, a sampling promotion where Devil's Cut girls intercept guys leaving the office, and tempt them to an underground bar, where they would sign a promise to unleash their spirit for a while. There were additional local promotions like events around Halloween and Mardi Gras in the US and a competition in Australia to win a trip to Las Vegas. And there was the use of social media to engage with the target group and to let them "cut a deal with the devil" and win prizes.

4. Results:

Due to the international campaign, the launch of the Jim Beam Devil's Cut was a great commercial success. In the US the sold cases extended the planned targets. Even more impressive were the sales developments in the non-US markets, making Devil's Cut the only bourbon in the world where non-US sales are bigger than in the home market. The campaign created a very high ad awareness according to an ad tracking by Millward Brown and overall for the brand, the international campaign achieved (indicated by a brand tracking) to bring new, cooler, younger, premium cues to the brand: "In the course of about a year, Beam Global has gone from the least innovative company in the industry to arguably the most innovative."

5. Conclusion and success factors:

The international campaign achieved to take a potentially complicated (and possibly even negative) product difference and turned it into a highly engaging brand idea. This was possible by identifying a clear, relevant insight of the international target group perfectly connected with the brand and the actual product story. This was the communication platform and creative springboard for an overall consistent communication campaign, supplemented by local activities that created engaging local experiences.

Overview of the success factors:

- Unique product that tells an authentic story (in this case: a special production process).
- Clear consumer insight based on a universal desire of the defined target group (in this case: male 30-year-somethings' wish for letting their more devilish side out).
- Connection of consumer and the product insight (in this case: to unleash the spirit).
- Local creativity and brand experiences.
- Creating buzz via social media.

Picture 4: Global Jim Beam campaign 2012



Source: <http://alcohol-blog.blogspot.de/2015/10/jim-beams-devils-share-other-side-of.html>

Evian “evian Baby&Me” Global Bronze, Effie 2014

1. Background and communication objectives:

In 2009, Evian already had a huge success with its international campaign “Rollerbabies”: A TV commercial and a viral film that achieved the world record in views on YouTube. In 2013, Evian again wanted to achieve such a success with an international campaign for its global iconic brand. The campaign objectives and defined KPIs were to reach an even higher social media buzz (views on YouTube and shares), the further development of the brand’s image in order to achieve proximity with the brand in such a commodity market like water and the increase of volume sales.

2. Communication strategy:

With the former campaigns Evian developed a global positioning of the brand around the universal benefit “youth” expressed by the metaphor of the “Evian babies” in a campaign from 1999: “Baby ballet”. This global concept was based on the brand heritage because Evian was originally sold for babies due to its utmost purity and mineral balance. This essence of the brand was connected with the universal and

strongly attractive desire for youth all over the world. In 2013, this benefit should again be communicated in an international campaign concept but this time it should be even more engaging and activating. This led to a campaign called “*Baby&Me*” dealing with the (universal) insight that there is an inner baby in all of us. Based on this customer insight, the campaign platform could be defined as: “*Encounter with your inner youth*”.

3. Communication execution:

The international communication platform was executed in three main different ways: An entertaining viral and TV commercial to dramatize the idea and to excite people to share it on various social media channels. An outdoor campaign where the viewers could experience the change from an adult to a baby. And in order to actually experience the inner baby by yourself, a mobile app that transferred the user into a baby and that could be shared on social media channels as well.

4. Results:

The concept “*Baby&Me*” exceeded the former social media records of Evian. The viral video of “*Baby&Me*” had 150 million views and was shared 6,4 million times within five months despite a low media budget and even in markets where the campaign was not supported by media investments. Market research identified that Evian was even more connected to the benefit “*youth*” and by this the sales could be increased in all markets.

5. Conclusion and success factors:

The Evian “*Baby&Me*” campaign shows that a consistent campaign, connecting the brand heritage with an international universal insight, can lead to a massive communication effect and brand success. It is most of all the originality of the brand’s positioning (about youth) and the communication campaign that expresses this brand benefit in a credible but also entertaining way. This led to the consumers in various countries being excited about the brand and the campaign and thus sharing their excitement worldwide. It is a true example of how you can achieve an international effect despite a low media budget using the power of social media.

Overview of the success factors:

- Connection between the brand heritage and essence with an international universal insight and desire (in this case: “youth”).
- Development of a consistent and engaging communication platform (in this case: “Encounter your inner youth”).
- Creation of a tremendous entertaining TV commercial, i.e. viral video that people feel like sharing.
- Seeding the campaign on social media channels (in this case: brand fans and bloggers).
- Combine the campaign with other innovative media in order to experience the campaign (in this case: interactive outdoor formats and an mobile app).

Picture 5: Global Evian campaign 2013



Source: <https://www.gunnreport.com/content/cases-for-creativity>

2.2.4. Conclusion and success factors

As shown, the analysis of the selected Global Effie cases led to the identification of certain success factors and patterns of successful international campaigns. These success factors could be summarized in the following for the future use of marketing managers in the development of international communication campaigns.

Success factors of international communication campaigns according to the analyzed success cases:

1. Define an international homogeneous target group (e.g. young males or “*Mums*”).
2. Look for fundamental similarities and commonalities in the markets.
3. Find and identify a human insight, truth, need or desire
(e.g. “*belonging*” or “*youth*”).
4. Conduct fundamental / in-depth research and local campaign testing.
5. Develop an international brand communication platform as the communication strategy that resonates and engages with the target group
(e.g. “*Encounter your inner youth*”).
6. Based on the communication strategy and platform, create a big campaign idea instead of a generic compromise.
7. Be true to the brand – achieve brand and communication consistency.
8. Have local adaptations and executions (e.g. casting).
9. Use local media and create local brand experiences.
10. Select international, i.e. global celebrities or create an international character
(e.g. the funny assistant of the Azerbaijani wrestling team).
11. Make use of a international / global event (e.g. the Olympics).
12. Utilize digital media, especially social media, to make a campaign internationally big – make also use of innovative digital media (e.g. interactive outdoor or mobile).

2.3. Results from expert interviews

As mentioned before, in order to obtain primary information about the general success factors of standardized international communication campaigns and the best way to develop them, the thesis will present results of qualitative expert interviews conducted with various professionals from multinational companies and international communication agencies as well as international diplomats.

2.3.1. Introduction

In the chapter before, proven success cases were analyzed in order to identify general patterns and overall success factors of standardized international communication campaigns. This chapter and the conducted research intend to look deeper into the development of standardized international communication campaigns by a primary research and exploration with international marketing experts.

“Every attempt has been made to provide a balance of theoretical and practical perspectives. For example, the issue of centralization versus decentralization and standardization versus localization are addressed as they apply to the **organization of international advertising programs**, development and execution of creative strategy, media planning and buying, and advertising research” (Müller, 2011).

“Process standardization refers to a firm's ability to employ similar marketing methods across geographies with diverse political, economic, and marketing infrastructures with a view toward maintaining seamless global operation (Jain 1989)” (Griffith, Chandra, Ryans, John, 2003).

Therefore, the emphasize of this chapter and the research results lie on the development process and international alignment. “Most research on standardization examines it in the context of the marketing mix. In contrast, research on standardization of management process/characteristics are rare” (Shoham, Brencic, Virant, Ruvio, 2008).

One main aspect in the development of standardized international communication campaigns is the alignment with international stakeholders, i.e. marketing colleagues from the international subsidiaries. Therefore, the general challenge of such a development process and the international alignment shall be analyzed in this chapter. For this, expert interviews were conducted with international marketing experts as well as with international diplomats as experts in international alignment processes. Overall, the challenge is to avoid the so-called “*not-invented-here-syndrome*” and the phenomena of “*ethnocentrism*”.

Here, international marketers are often confronted with the “*not-invented-here-syndrome*” and the phenomena called “*self-reference criterion*” and “*ethnocentrism*”: “When we examine other cultures, we tend to view them through “culturally tinted glasses”. James Lee terms this unconscious reference to one’s own culture the self-reference criterion (Lee 1966). Because of this unconscious reference to one’s own cultural values, marketers operating abroad may behave in culturally myopic fashion. Ethnocentrism poses another obstacle to understanding foreign cultures. Not surprisingly, this tendency toward an “us versus them” mentality is universal. People in all cultures, to some degree, display ethnocentric behaviors. Ethnocentrism limits our ability to accept cultural differences, which diminishes the chance of developing effective marketing programs. The best defense against ethnocentrism is an awareness of the tendency toward ethnocentrism” (Müller, 2011).

Therefore, the general challenges and procedures are: “The decision to centralize or decentralize the advertising of multinationals depends primarily on the degree of control exercised by the multinational's head office. The degree of head-office control has been operationalized through a linear combination of nine decision variables on international advertising: advertising objective, advertising budget, advertising theme, marketing research, copywriting, market test decisions, final decision, control of the advertising budget, and media selection. (Laroche, Kirpalani, Darmon, 1999).

The development of standardized international communication campaigns is a complex challenge and many international stakeholders are involved. “The problem of communicating to people in diverse cultures has been called one of the greatest challenges in marketing communications (Ricks, 1988). International marketers, if they are to be successful in their efforts, must become culturally sensitive” (Müller, 2011).

Also in the international marketing practice: “Egos and economics may play a role” (Duncan and Ramaprasad, 1995).

A study of Laroche, Kirpalani, Pons and Zhou deals with the relationship of the headquarters and its subsidiaries: “The article contributes to our understanding of the standardization decision making process by integrating two organizational factors – decision power of subsidiaries and familiarity with foreign markets at HQ, with two cultural-related factors similarity in market position and country environmental conditions” (Laroche, Kirpalani, Pons, Zhou, 2001). “The central role played by the degree of control indicates that headquarters may lack confidence in their subsidiaries for achieving their communication goals” (Laroche, Kirpalani, Pons,, Zhou, 2001).

Also, a study in the Czech Republic by Karlicek et al indicates: “In case of high parent control marketing managers involvement with strategic marketing activities tended to be limited. On the other hand regarding to the headquarters it was quite often mentioned as one of the most frequent activities of the marketing department” (Karlicek et al, 2000).

And: “...multinational companies often do recognize the importance of marketing, but are managed centrally. Local subsidiaries are then often controlled by multinational headquarters, where strategic marketing decisions are taken and communication campaigns prepared... In this case, continuous negotiation with the headquarters makes up a significant part of their job” (Karlicek et al, 2000).

Overall, international marketing managers can distinguish: “Globalization of international campaigns generally takes one of two routes. One option is to adopt a campaign deemed successful in the national or domestic market for a firm’s foreign market. Another option is a preplanned effort to develop a campaign for use in multinational markets. Advertisers and agencies alike perceive very real benefits associated with this approach. For one thing, coordination and control of marketing and promotional programs are greatly simplified, and, as a result, foreign campaigns can be implemented much more quickly. This simplification may assist in faster product roll outs. In addition, fewer marketing and advertising personnel are required at the local level to administer advertising campaigns developed at headquarters than are required to customize promotional efforts. Staff reductions lead to cost savings, and advertising production costs are reduced dramatically. It is certainly much less expensive to produce a single campaign for a number of markets than it is to produce a separate campaign for each specific market” (Müller, 2011).

According to Keegan and Green overall it is important to **create global brand leadership**: “Global brand leadership means using organizational structures, processes, and cultures to allocate brand-building resources globally, to create global synergies, and to develop a global brand strategy that coordinates and leverages country brand strategies.

The following six guidelines can assist marketing managers in their effort to establish global brand leadership:

1. Create a compelling value proposition for customers in every market entered, beginning with the home-country market. A global brand begins with this foundation of value.
2. Before taking a brand across borders, think about all elements of brand identity and select names, marks, and symbols that have the potential for globalization.
3. Develop a company-wide communication system to share and leverage knowledge and information about marketing programs and customers in different countries.
4. Develop a consistent planning process across markets and products. Make a process template available to all managers in all markets.

5. Assign specific responsibility for managing branding issues to ensure ensure that local brand managers accept global best practices. This can take a variety of forms, ranging from a business management team or a brand champion (led by senior executives) to a global brand manager or brand management team (led by middle managers).
6. Execute brand-building strategies that leverage global strengths and respond to relevant local differences.

Coke is arguably the quintessential global product and global brand. Coke relies on similar positioning and marketing in all countries; it projects a global image of fun, good times, and enjoyment. In 2009, Coke adopted the global advertising theme “Open Happiness”. The basic, underlying strategic principles that guide the management of the brand are the same worldwide” (Keegan and Green, 2013).

In general, there are certain different ways of **coordinating and controlling international advertising**: “Centralized versus decentralized control of international advertising: One of the first issues a company must address when it decides to communicate with consumers in the various markets in which it intends to do business is how to organize international promotional functions – including advertising, etc. A critical question relates to the focus of decision making – will it be highly centralized at company headquarters, or will a more decentralized, collaborative, and participatory approach to marketing communications be adopted? It should be noted that there is a close relationship between the decision on centralization and the extend of advertising standardization ultimately employed. In international advertising, Tai and Wong (1998) propose that marketers have four basic options: 1. Global approach (centralized decision process, standardized advertising approach), 2. Local approach (decentralized decision process, differentiated advertising approach), 3. “Regcal” approach (centralized decision process, regional advertising approach), and 4. “Glocal” approach (decentralized decision process, standardized advertising approach)” (Müller, 2011).

“Global Approach: Complete centralization of decision making related to international advertising implies a high level of head office control – advertising agency selection, campaign planning, creative strategy and message development, media strategy and selection, budgeting, and sales promotion efforts all are conducted in the country in which the firm’s headquarter is situated. One of the major advantages associated with centralization is that it affords the marketer complete control over all promotional efforts. This degree of control is essential if the marketer is planning to integrate marketing communications. In addition, it eases coordination efforts in multiple markets. A centralized approach is significantly more likely to be employed if the marketing environments of the message sender and receivers are highly similar. In particular, centralization is commonly used if there is little variation in both the media available for advertising and the regulation of advertising from one market to the next. Depending on the foreign market, the international marketer may not feel that local managers possess the management skills necessary to conduct effective research and to develop coherent advertising strategies. Further, subsidiaries may lack the financial resources to produce advertising executions with high production values. In many instances foreign managers are quite relieved to turn over responsibility for advertising decisions to headquarters. The centralized approach is highly correlated with the use of standardized advertising – employing virtually the same campaign in both domestic and foreign markets.

Local Approach: Complete decentralization of international advertising means that all, or nearly all, advertising decisions are made by local managers in the foreign markets. Nationals may be perceived as knowing the local market best and thus better equipped to make necessary modifications to advertising campaigns as a result of differences in the local media scene, political-legal environment, or culture. Local managers are likely to be more highly motivated when given responsibility for the promotional programs on their market. All advertising decisions are made jointly by headquarters and local distributors. But apart from the target segment, which is kept consistent, all other advertising elements differ from the home market (Tai and Wong, 1998).

Regcal Approach: The regcal approach is also referred as pattern advertising. Pattern advertising is the centralization of the “what” of an ad campaign and regionalization or localization of the “how” (Roth, 1982). Thus the basic advertising strategy, general creative, and even media approaches are provided to each subsidiary; however, local managers are then free to select their own media and modify copy, visuals, or other elements of the message to meet regional or local needs. This approach allows for local input and adaptation while still permitting a degree of uniformity in a firm’s international promotions. However, the regcal approach is not without problems. A critical question is how much country-to-country autonomy is practical.

Glocal Approach: Glocal is a combination of global and local approach. Here, the headquarters develop a global campaign, which local offices may or may not choose to follow, but most decisions are determined by local subsidiaries or distributors. For example McDonald’s: McDonald’s moved to give all of its previously disparate global advertising a consistent theme, even while allowing for local variations in the creative work. The first McDonald’s worldwide campaign ever produced outside the United States, “I’m lovin’ It” was the culmination of a competition of ideas held among McDonald’s top international advertising agencies to spark the new brand attitude and direction. Subsidiaries could opt to keep the English tagline, translate it exactly, or to adopt it to work for their local cultures. The overall approach described above – a single global campaign designed for local adaptations – is indicative of the McDonald’s philosophy of “think global, act local” (Müller, 2011).

To **organize international communication campaigns**, most of the international companies work with international agency networks, especially when they follow the centralized approach: “International firms leaning toward a centralized approach are three times more likely to employ an international agency or global network than they are to use a foreign agency (Kanso, 1991). It can safely be said that Saatchi&Saatchi was the first of the truly global agency. In an attempt to become the first advertising agency capable of meeting the needs of increasingly global clients. The advertising reflected the philosophy of global marketing outlined by Harvard Business School professor Theodore Levitt, who stated: The world’s needs and desires have been

irrevocably homogenized by technology. The global corporation accepts that technology drives consumers relentlessly towards the same common goals, i.e. the alleviation of life's burdens and the expansion of discretionary time and spending power. Successful global companies sell the same things the same way everywhere and different cultural preferences, national tastes and standards are vestiges of the past (Levitt 1983). The agency even offered rewards to employees creating successful international campaigns, a practice reflecting its recognition that major clients, such as Procter&Gamble look for advertising ideas that could run globally" (Müller, 2011).

Figure 4 shows an overview of the 5 biggest international communication agency networks, with their estimated worldwide revenues in 2014.

Figure 4: Biggest global communication agency networks

Rank	Agency name	Global revenue
1.	WPP Group, London	\$19.0 billion
2.	Omnicom Group, New York	\$15.3 billion
3.	Publicis Groupe, Paris	\$9.6 billion
4.	Interpublic Group, New York	\$7.5 billion
5.	Dentsu, Tokyo	\$6.0 billion

Source: Adage, 2014.

"Regarding the international advertising, we found that advertising agencies with more years of operation are more involved in international markets than agencies with less years of operation. This reflects the amount of knowledge and skills advertising agencies accumulate over the years. Also, it suggests that advertisers tend to assign a complicated task such as international campaigns to agencies with more years of operation" (Waller, Shaob, Baoc, 2010).

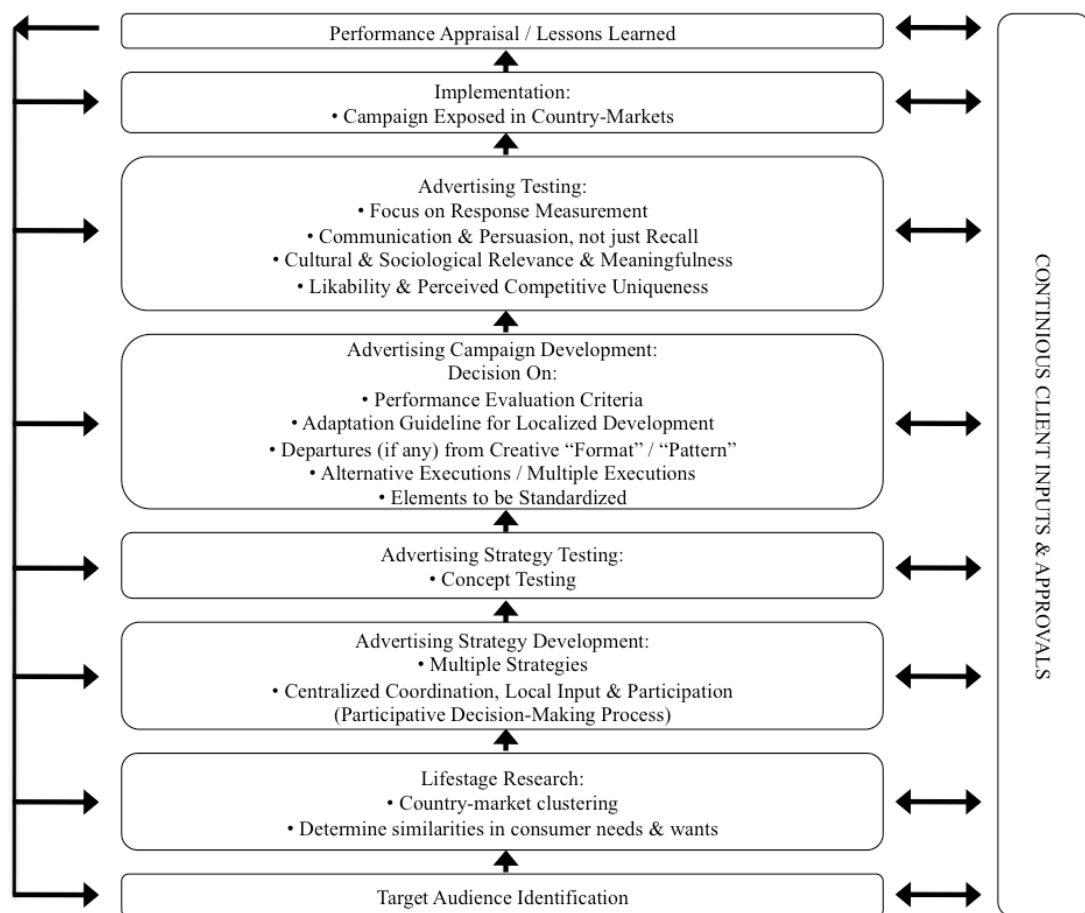
“The **development process** for multinational campaigns is complex, because it involves many stages and many people in many countries.

The advertising development process can have two ways:

1. Single-country development, subsequent testing and roll-out.
2. Multi-country development and exposure.

Figure 5 presents a generalized representation of the various stages in the multi-country campaign development process for mayor multinational brands” (Jones, 2000).

Figure 5: Multinational Advertising Development and Management – Banerjee’s Operational Process Framework



Source: Jones, 2000.

This general process shows the single stages of the development of an international communication campaign from the definition of the international target group, to the conduction of fundamental research for the campaign development, the development of the communication strategy, testing of the strategy, to the actual campaign development and the testing of the communication campaign according to different research dimensions and based on all these steps the implementation of the final international communication campaign. In a last step, the results are proved and lessons learned are identified for the upcoming development of an international communication campaign. The whole process is combined with stages of constant exchange with the international stakeholders and approvals of them are necessary.

Based on the overall considerations of developing a standardized international communication campaign an own primary research shall be conducted. For this, a qualitative and explorative research approach was selected. The research results were analyzed with the help of the “*summarizing content-analysis*” according to Mayring (2010). The output of the analysis is the identification of the general factors identified across the interviews as well as a prototypical development process of standardized international communication campaigns.

2.3.2. Learnings from international marketing experts

The intention of the chapter is to examine the **general patterns and procedures** used in the development of successful international communication campaigns. Specifically, the chapter focuses on identifying how to achieve an effective and successful international communication campaign. It is important to consider what elements contentwise (e.g. relevant messages, creative concepts, etc.) are significant, and also what factors one must consider in the multinational campaign’s development process itself (e.g. conducting research and international alignment). The chapter intends to analyze how international companies can develop an effective multinational communication campaign. The result of this examination is a summary of general factors that are important in the development of an international communication campaign as well as a prototypical process for the development.

“In order to attain such a high degree of standardization, some companies develop a prototype advertising campaign at headquarters and then disseminate it to subsidiaries. While subsidiaries are expected to adopt the basic advertising theme, they have a high degree of autonomy so as to vary the creative expression of that theme” (Sorenson and Wiechmann, 1975).

2.3.3. Methodology

As it is the intention of this chapter to analyze how international communication campaigns can be developed, the author was interested in the actual experiences of professionals in the field who are involved or responsible in the development of international campaigns. Therefore, qualitative **expert interviews** were conducted with various professionals from international companies and international communication agencies (advertising and media agencies), and then analyzed the results. The number of interviews was 10 and they were conducted between 2013-2016. (A list of the interviewed marketing experts is to find in the appendix). Figure 6 gives an overview of the conducted interviews.

Figure 6: Overview of the conducted interviews with international marketing experts

No.	Company type	Position	Date
1.	Automotive Manufacturer	Head of International Marketing	06.2013
2.	International Advertising Agency	Chief Creative Officer	09.2013
3.	Automotive Manufacturer	Managing Director, Czech Republic	06.2014
4.	International Media Agency	Head of Digital Media	06.2014
5.	Automotive Manufacturer	Head of International Marketing	07.2014
6.	International Advertising Agency	Chief International Officer	09.2014
7.	Automotive Manufacturer	Head of Advertising, Germany	09.2014

8.	International Advertising Agency	Managing Director	09.2015
9.	International Advertising Agency	Strategy Director	06.2016
10.	International Advertising Agency	Head of Global Strategy	07.2016

The expert interviews were conducted using the following *semi-standardized, open questions*:

1. What are the success factors in the development of international communication campaigns?
2. What are the common attributes and factors of successful international campaigns?
3. How can you develop an international successful communication campaign?
4. What aspects are important in the development process?

The interviews lasted on average around 45-60 minutes. Unfortunately, the interviews could not be recorded because the senior managers did not feel comfortable with it and did not allow it. Instead, during the interviews notes were taking for the whole time. These notes were then paraphrased right after the interview and analyzed with the method of the “*summarizing content-analysis*” according to Mayring (2010). “The summarization is introduced by Philipp Mayring (2010) as one of three basic forms of qualitative interpretation besides structuring and explication and is named as summarizing content-analysis. The procedure happens in four steps in that the material is first paraphrased and then successively and rule following reduced on the essential content and then summarized to the main conclusions” (Schreier, 2014). Based on this approach the interviews were read and analyzed in several steps, identifying certain patterns and commonalities that could be summarized as particular *categories* for the analysis of the research results.

In order to accomplish this, the author has identified certain *categories* with which to structure the analysis; they are as follows:

Categories:

1. *Challenges in the development of international communication campaigns*
2. *General success factors*
3. *Development procedures*

2.3.4. Results

The results of the expert interviews with international marketing professionals were analyzed according to the defined categories.

1. *Challenges in the development of international communication campaigns:*

According to the interviewed international marketing experts, developing international communication campaigns is a major challenge. **Many participants and international stakeholders are involved in the development process in order to achieve the best solution in all the related markets and meet the expectations of everybody involved.** “*Sometimes I feel like a diplomat.*” (International Marketing Manager). The difficulty is to develop an approach that fits the various market requirements and consumer demands, and to achieve – at the same time – consistency of the brand communication.

Therefore, the challenge is to develop a successful international communication campaign that works content-wise – and is relevant in the markets – and simultaneously, it should also work process-wise – so that all stakeholders of the company are satisfied with the international communication campaign.

2. General success factors:

It was stated that there are certain aspects to consider in the development of international communication campaigns. For instance, it is necessary to consider the **involvement of the international stakeholders** and marketing colleagues in order to achieve a so-called “*buy-in*” into the international campaign and thus avoid the so-called “*not-invented-here-syndrome*”. Otherwise the international marketers won’t be satisfied with the international campaign or motivated to use it in their market. This was summarized by the insight: “*They have to buy-in by heart. They have to invest their money into it.*” (Local Marketing Manager).

For this, it needs a **clear development process** that ideally involves the international stakeholders at an early stage. Interviewees commented, “*A clear process helps.*”; “*It is important to involve the international governors very early.*” (International Marketing Manager). On the other hand, there should not be too many stakeholders involved because “*Too many cooks spoil the broth.*” and “*The more people that are involved, the less honest the feedback is.*” (International Marketing Manager). The members of the development process should be selected according to the importance of the markets and how much they influence other countries and stakeholders. Also, it should be rather the decision makers that are included, i.e. personnel at the management level that can actually decide for their markets. Interviewees commented that, “*It is a privilege to participate.*” And “*We exchange today only with the marketing director level, because [it is] they [who] decide.*” (International Marketing Manager).

Building trust is also very important. Participants provided the following insights: “*You have to create a personal bond.*” and “*Finally, it is about creating trust.*” (International Marketing Manager). The development procedure needs an open and collaborative environment, and a constructive process. For this, a so-called “*working group*” can be built that will work together with the lead agency, in order to develop the international communication campaign together.

The results of such a common development should always be **documented and shared**. It is also important to see what you can do to accommodate the various markets. Their opinions should be taken into account. Interview participants commented that, “*It needs small concessions. You have to see what you can do for the countries’ requirements.*” (International Marketing Manager).

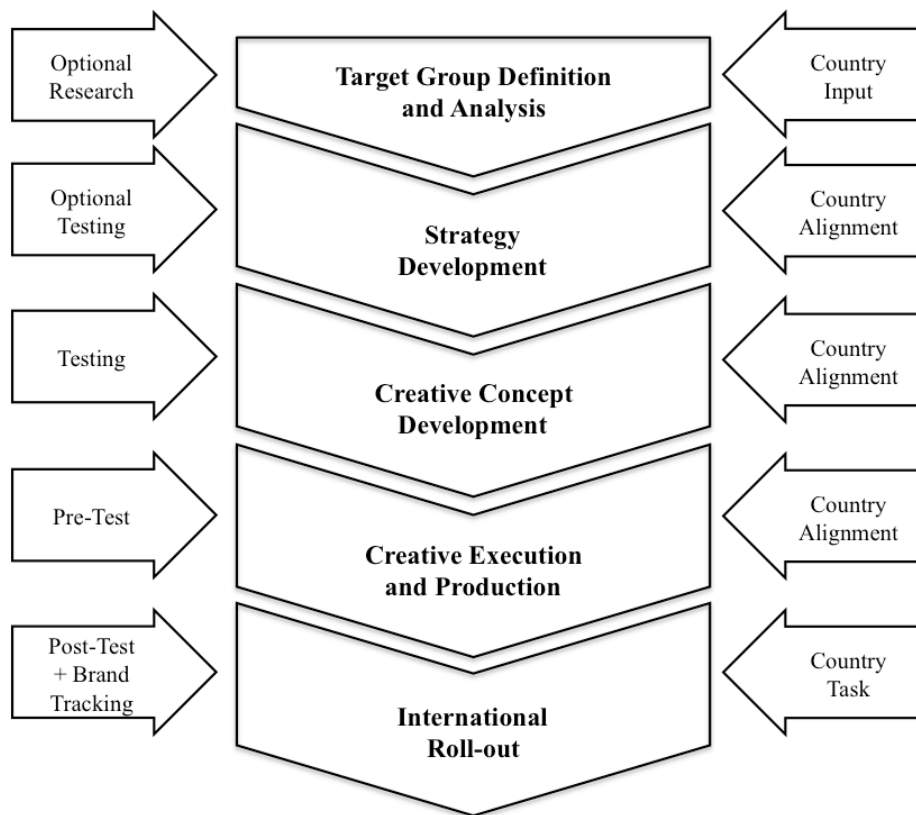
To assure that the developed campaign will work in various countries, **market research** plays an important role in order to create neutrality and objectivity in the development and decisions for the final international campaign. Participants explained that “*Neutral research is important for international alignment.*” (International Marketing Manager).

3. *Development procedures:*

All these aspects should be considered in an ideal and **prototypical development process**. In order to develop a successful standardized international communication campaign, it is important to involve the international stakeholders very early in the development process. As showed, some companies do this more (*decentralized organizations*), other companies do it less (*centralized organization*). However, to some extent, many international corporations do so in order to exchange knowledge about the markets and to achieve a “*buy-in*” from the local marketers of the different countries involved.

In order to accomplish this, organizations set up a procedure and a process for the common campaign development. An ideal prototypical process could look like the one in the following figure and description.

Figure 7: Prototypical development process of standardized international communication campaigns



Source: Author.

In the first stage, the headquarters defines a common international target group for the communication campaign. This is done together with input from marketing personnel in the most significant markets. This step is fundamentally necessary in order to find commonalities within the target group. Here, it should be mentioned that in some cases it won't be possible to find the same target group existing across all of the markets, or to find commonalities within the group in all markets. Therefore, organizations cluster the international markets into different regions. Often China and India resemble their own regions where you cannot find commonalities with the European markets due to different market situations (e.g. the establishment of the brand in the market and different consumer requirements). In this first stage of **defining and analyzing the target group**, it is a perfect occasion to involve the international marketing colleagues in order to gain market knowledge and to get initial buy-in into the common development.

This first involvement can happen via electronic information exchange or by building a so-called “*working group*” of the most important markets and to meet in person in a common workshop. This workshop has the goal of identifying the different objectives of the markets and to align them. As stated within the research framework, “*We conduct a strategy workshop with the international colleagues in the beginning of the process.*” (International Agency Manager).

Ideally, in this stage also fundamental market research is conducted to understand the demands of the consumer for the particular product. Based on the knowledge about the markets and the consumer demands, a **communication strategy is developed** in the second stage – mostly by the marketers at the company’s headquarters. Based on the gained consumer knowledge about the advertised product, for example a new car model, several strategic directions such as “*communication routes*” are developed. These strategic communication routes are presented in another meeting with the members of the involved countries. The country representatives give their opinions and most likely the international stakeholders align on 1-3 routes that should be further pursued. If there is more than one clear strategic route, they can be tested in an international concept test. This procedure gives objectivity and security to decision makers regarding which strategic routes would work best across the countries involved. With the input gained as a result of the research conducted, the most suitable strategy for the markets is found. Based on this strategic communication route, the actual creative campaign development starts as part of the third phase. At this point, the creative department of the involved communication agencies develops several **creative communication concepts**, based on the identified communication strategy. These concepts have to be once again aligned with the country markets involved. Ideally, this alignment happens in another in-person meeting of the involved market representatives, i.e. members of the “*working group*”. After the discussion and alignment of the most promising creative communication concepts, a subset of them goes for an international concept test, i.e. a so-called “*pre-test*” to assure that they resonate with the local consumers in different markets. This can be done by either qualitative or quantitative research, for example via an online-test.

After conducting of this research – one goal of which is to bring objectivity and neutrality to the selection and decision-making process, the actual **communication campaign execution and production** starts. This entails the development of particular communication material such as television commercials and other advertising material for offline and online media. The results of the actual communication production – which is called in advertising practice as “*execution*” – also has to be aligned with the country representatives. In other words, there is another meeting with the “*working group*”, or it may even be a bigger meeting with all of the involved countries. During this meeting, country representatives will be very eager to see the actual communication material and will have opinions and comments on it, and on how well (or not) it fits their market requirements; this is key because during this phase that adaptations can still be made. An example of this in practice might be the cutting of the sequences of a television commercial or a selection of print and online motives that best suit the specifics of the particular market.

In the last phase, it is the actual task of the countries to “*roll-out*” the campaign in the markets. For this, they use the internationally and commonly developed communication material, translate it into the local language, and place it in the local media. In this phase, the local marketers have to align the local communication material with the international headquarters so that it fits to the international communication concept and the international positioning of the brand. “*The lead and the decision making should happen at the headquarters; “Brand leadership is not democratic.”* (International Marketing Manager). In order to help and guide the international markets, oftentimes a “*campaign book*” is developed and it provides information on how the international communication material should be used in the local markets.

What the countries are most likely to do in this phase is to conduct ex post research (“*ex post-test*”) in order to check and validate whether the communication campaign finally and actually resonates with the local consumers. Based on these results, feedback is given to the international headquarters in order to learn for the next development process of an international communication campaign.

Therefore, for most companies, this ideal and prototypical process is a dynamic and changing system where experiences in the development are taken into account. In other words, this is an ongoing process of continual enhancement, “*It is a learning-system. We always improve the process.*” (International Marketing Manager).

What can be stated overall is that the role of research is increasing. To assure that international developed campaigns will work across markets, more and more research is conducted. This helps to reduce the level of risk for decision makers, “*There is less and less gut feeling. It shouldn’t be a lucky punch.*” (International Marketing Manager). Besides the actual campaign research as described, most international companies also conduct research on their overall brand, i.e. so-called “*brand tracking*” in order to continuously measure the development of the brand and the overall effects of the conducted international communication campaigns on the international brand.

2.3.5. Learnings from diplomacy

As stated before in this chapter, a main aspect in the development of standardized international communication campaigns is the **alignment with international stakeholders**, i.e. marketing colleagues from the international subsidiaries. “*Sometimes I feel like a diplomat*” (International Marketing Manager). The following sub-chapter describes how this often challenging alignment can happen better and therefore more efficient based on learnings from the **international diplomatic theory and practice**.

Due to the fact that international collaboration and alignment is about dealing with people from different international backgrounds and therefore about anticipating their personal contexts, situations and needs as well as cultural differences in order to achieve a common goal, strong similarities are observed between the international marketing practice and the procedures of international diplomacy and negotiations. “It is only negotiation that can produce the advantages obtainable from the cooperative pursuit of common interests” (Berridge, Keens-Soper and Otte, 2001).

2.3.6. Methodology

In this sub-chapter the concepts used in the area of diplomacy should be examined and considered for supporting the development of international marketing concepts. The objective of this chapter is to identify general procedures and outline general rules on how to act in international collaboration in order to succeed in finding a common solution or reaching “*consensus*” as it is called in international diplomacy.

In order to identify general procedures and concepts of international diplomacy and to adapt them for the international marketing practice, the basic literature about diplomacy was examined as well as recent and more practical publications in this field. In addition to this, the main source of information about diplomatic procedures and tactics was identified via **personal interviews** (*expert interviews*) conducted with international diplomats from Czech Republic and Germany (number of interviews: 6). (A list of the interviewed diplomats is to find in the appendix). Figure 8 gives an overview of the conducted interviews.

Figure 8: Overview of the conducted interviews with international diplomats

No.	Country	Institution	Date
1.	Czech Republic	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	05.2014
2.	Czech Republic	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	05.2014
3.	Germany	German embassy, Prague	04.2015
4.	Czech Republic	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	07.2016
5.	Czech Republic	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	07.2016
6.	Czech Republic	Ministry of Industry and Trade	07.2016

The personal interviews were conducted using the following *semi-standardized, open questions*:

1. What are the success-factors in international diplomacy?
2. How do you proceed in international diplomacy?
3. What role do cultural differences play in international diplomacy?
4. What are the “general rules” of international diplomacy

The interviews took place in person and lasted between 40-60 minutes. Unfortunately, the interviews could not be recorded because the international diplomats did not feel comfortable with it and did not allow it. Instead, during the interviews notes were taken for the whole time. These notes were then paraphrased right after the interview and analyzed with the method of the “*summarizing content-analysis*” according to Mayring (2010).

2.3.7. Results

Learnings from the world of diplomacy: Experiences, concepts and tactics of international diplomacy were examined in order to find ways that can be adapted to optimize the international collaboration in the development of international marketing, i.e. communication concepts.

Results from the literature review:

K. Hamilton and R. Langhorne describe in “*The Practice of Diplomacy*” (2011), the virtue of professional diplomacy: “...the professional diplomat’s experience of a wide variety of postings, his mastery of foreign languages or his intuitive grasp of circumstances – his *Fingerspitzengefühl*.”

Also the “*Satow’s Diplomatic Practice*” (Roberts, 2009) defines diplomacy as “the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent states, extending sometimes also to their relations with

dependent territories, and between governments and international institutions; or more briefly, the conduct of business between states by peaceful means.” That is to say that diplomacy is not only about using intelligence but also tactical manners for international negotiations. In this fundamental book is also some general advice for diplomats overall referring to Callières in his famous work “*De la manière de négocier avec les souverains*”: “A good negotiator should have enough self-control not to speak without having asked himself what he has to say. A man who displays self-possession and calmness under pressure has a great advantage in negotiation over a man who is lively and fiery. To succeed in this profession, you need to speak much less than to listen. A wise and capable negotiator needs to adjust himself to the habits and customs of the country where he lives without showing repugnance or contempt for them. He should know or learn the history of the country where he is resident and so recount the great deeds of the ancestors of the country’s leaders or indeed their own deeds which will incline them to look kindly on the negotiator. It’s more of an advantage for a negotiator to carry out his business orally. This way he has more opportunity to discover the feelings and aims of his interlocutors and to put over his own arguments more forcefully. One of the greatest secrets of negotiating is knowing how to distil drop by drop into the mind of interlocutors the matter of which one wants to persuade them.”

In other words a diplomat is successful when he or she is very sensitive to the context and the needs of the other side. They should prepare very much in advance also in order to understand local circumstances and even historical backgrounds. Personal communication is always better to get a holistic understanding of the communication and to avoid misinterpretations.

Very much similar the more recent book of the communication scientist Frank Naumann defines **20 laws for diplomatic communication** (Naumann, 2012). Actually, all of them are adaptable to the marketing practice when international marketers work in a group with international stakeholders and colleagues:

- “Law 1: Show resiliently in style, but be hard on the matter.*
- Law 2: Prove more patience than your counterpart.*
- Law 3: Instigate peace before the conflict escalates.*
- Law 4: Help all parties to “save face”.*
- Law 5: Collect and maintain information and contacts.*
- Law 6: Lead the conversation.*
- Law 7: Be honest, but you give only the information that is expected of you.*
- Law 8: Communicate suggestions instead of demands.*
- Law 9: Search even in the sharpest contrast for connecting similarities.*
- Law 10: Declare yourself an ally.*
- Law 11: If you get into the clinch, announce a temporary withdrawal.*
- Law 12: Offer alternatives, but give them before others come up with theirs.*
- Law 13: Motivate your partner by the prospect of fabulous profits.*
- Law 14: Don’t break up Gordian knots, but you put on salami tactics.*
- Law 15: Overcome mental barriers by a trial play through of alternative scenarios.*
- Law 16: Strive for creative agreement, not after the compromise halfway.*
- Law 17: Give your partner the authorship of your agreement.*
- Law 18: Congratulate your counterpart to a victory, even if you have the edge.*
- Law 19: Practice yourself in the art of small gestures.*
- Law 20: Maintain your reputation as a strong, understanding partner.”*
- (Naumann, 2012).

These laws are mainly about not following a straight and linear way; instead to find a smarter and more creative side way if you want to achieve your professional goal. Be a lot more empathetic for the other side and try to understand their perspectives and goals. Think like a strategic diplomat ahead and don’t let yourself led by the others. But don’t force the leadership; instead create it via reasonable and calm argumentation, trust and building a bridge between your intensions and the intensions of the international counterparts. Be more sensitive and open-minded about others in many conflictive international meetings and discussions.

Results from the conducted interviews:

This is also, what international diplomats stated in the conducted interviews: In diplomacy it is important to be always professional and polite but with a strong will and a clear intension: *“You should take the international counterpart always serious and have respect.”* (German diplomat). *“Diplomats are always very friendly and polite.”* (Czech diplomat) *“Be polite but strong.”* (Czech diplomat). One has to be flexible and adjust to the new developments. *“Diplomacy is the ability to adapt to different situations.”* (Czech diplomat). But one has to prepare well in advance. The more one knows about the topic and the counterpart the better. *“Know the issue. Be prepared.”* (German diplomat). *“You have to know the different parties involved.”* (Czech diplomat). Not only the official reunions are important. Sometimes even more important are the discussions and alignments before or afterwards. *“Parallel to the official meetings there are informal alliances and informal grouping.”* (Czech diplomat). It is important that the common results are defined and fixed. *“The protocol is very important. Everything is documented and written down.”* (Czech diplomat). On the other hand, a common solution and further proceeding can even take longer in international diplomacy. *“Nothing is agreed, until everything is agreed.”* (Czech diplomat). Also in international diplomacy it is often the case that not everybody can be satisfied at the end. *“A general rule: Nobody is satisfied but everybody can live with it. It is all about achieving a consensus.”* (Czech diplomat).

But never the less, it is important to work positively and constructive together. *“It is also important to create friendships with international colleagues.”* (Czech diplomat). *“Create a connection and relationships.”* (Czech diplomat). Like “Harold Nicolson proclaimed as the art of diplomacy: Its purpose is to create international trust” (Sallet, 1953).

In the discussions and debates be very much aware how one acts and communicates. Choose your words and arguments wisely. *“Think twice before you say something. It is important to understand what is the vision behind the others acting.”* (German diplomat) For this you have to be a great communicator. *“Have superior rhetoric*

skills.” (Czech diplomat). This is an advantage for the colleagues from the UK and the US because they are native in English. It is a natural advantage in the debate. Also, in this context know about the different communication styles of the international colleagues. *“Know about cultural differences and the local mentality of the people.”* (Czech diplomat). Overall, be flexible and creative in the solution finding but within the framework and the defined procedure. *“Be open minded and flexible but know the red lines of your country.”* (Czech diplomat).

At the end it needs a final decision about the main direction and final concept. After all the exchange and the debate there has to be made the decision – often on a higher level or with the support of neutral market research. *“But at the end it is also about leadership.”* *“At the end the ministers decide.”* (German diplomat).

Particular recommendations for international communication:

In order to give some country specific advice, there should be also presented some particular recommendations when communicating with certain international regions and cultures. Following the book of Frank L. Acuff *“How to negotiate with anyone anywhere around the world”* (Acuff, 2008) cultural differences should be taken into account in international negotiation:

In **Western Europe** is a quite direct style to negotiate though there are certain differences between the single countries, especially from the North to the South of Europe. Communication and negotiations are rather straight, issue oriented and start overall punctual. The countries in Western Europe are more individual oriented and therefore everybody makes his personal point in a discussion. The challenge in international collaboration in Western Europe is therefore to bring all different opinions and point of views together.

The communication style in **Eastern Europe** is quite direct; it is made clear if somebody disagrees. On the other hand nobody is criticized in front of a group. The decision-making is also group oriented and the decision process is quite formal and bureaucratic. Mostly everything has to be checked and finally decided by the higher authority, i.e. management level.

Similar to Eastern Europe and even more is the decision-making in **Asia** overall very group oriented. Meetings are regularly with a lot of participants and everybody is involved in the decision. Building trust is very important, therefore personal relations play a great role and the decision process takes longer. The communication is very polite; therefore it is difficult to identify the actual opinion and to plan the following steps within the process.

Communication and decision-making in **North America** is a lot more direct and straight to the point. The communication and the proceeding in the process shall be effective and efficient. North America's communication is friendly and polite but pretty clear and oriented towards the issue. Therefore, straight communication with reasonable arguments is most promising.

In **Latin America** the individuality of the person is very much valued. Therefore, the personal aspects are very important when working together. First you have to get to know each other, then the topics are discussed. The decision is made by the organization but people in Latin America are proud to communicate their personal point of view in a discussion. Meetings and discussions are less formal and strict than in other regions (e.g. Western Europe and Asia).

The **Arabic** way of communication is very polite, that is to say even "flourish" and emotional. Though this emotionality can lead in a disagreement to some extreme and louder reactions. This is the case for instance in bargaining that is a big tradition in the Arabic countries and is in a way also to find in the international collaboration discussing other issues like a marketing concept.

These short portraits of the communication and discussion style are only a general overview about the cultural differences when working together. In case of a particular project with colleagues from certain countries, it would be necessary to check for the single country profiles and descriptions in the book of Frank Acuff (2008).

As the examination shows, there are certain differences in international communication and collaboration. Intercultural differences in communication should be taken into consideration when working together. To handle the complex situation of international collaboration in international marketing practice, the experiences and concepts of diplomacy can be helpful.

The following is a summary of the main implications of international diplomacy as so to say the “*general rules*” of international collaboration in diplomacy and also marketing practice. These principles can work as general guidelines when working on international projects with colleagues from various countries.

12 general rules from diplomacy for international marketing alignment:

1. Take the international counterpart serious and have respect.
2. Involve the international stakeholders at an early stage, make them part of the development
3. Have a clear and formal process that everybody knows about.
4. Create trust and a personal bond with the international colleagues; also: be always friendly and polite but strong of will.
5. Be aware of “informal grouping” and take it into consideration.
6. Be transparent about the outcomes, have the results in a written form.
7. Have strong leadership but personal empathy to the context and the interests of the international representatives.
8. Anticipate what is important to local stakeholders – understand what is behind their argumentation.
9. Have patience and listen before you speak.
10. Be flexible and open but clear about your goal.

11. Be prepared for the possible outcomes and discussions (think ahead about different scenarios).
12. Create a (felt) win/win-situation as a “*consensus*”.

2.4. The role of research

The development of standardized international communication campaigns has to be based on a profound research. International research can happen in different ways, especially for the development of international communication campaigns. The following sub-chapter shall show in what ways international market research can be conducted to accompany the process of international communication campaign development.

“High level of effectiveness of monitoring the outcomes of marketing communications also contributes to efficiency of standardization. In other words, because there are no or minor differences in marketing communication strategy due to the use of standardization the same set of tools can be utilized to access the levels of effectiveness of marketing strategy” (Gwilliam and Pasztor, 2001).

Research in the international arena according to Müller (2011): “The role of research is equally important in domestic and international marketing and advertising. Its basic purpose is to assist advertising and marketing managers in making more informed, and therefore better decisions. When planning to sell goods to foreign consumers, each element of the marketing mix must be investigated. Advertising research may involve **lifestyle studies, concept testing, message pre- and post-testing** to determine reactions to different types of advertising appeals and executions, and determination of appropriate media vehicles. “The complexity of the international market place, the extreme differences from country to country, and the frequent lack of familiarity with foreign markets accentuate the importance of international market research” (Jeannet and Hennessey, 1988). Research can help to prevent a multitude of marketing blunders” (Müller, 2011).

“Despite the importance of undertaking such research, it is not as frequently employed internationally as it is domestically. Indeed, for many reasons, a significant number of both consumer and industrial goods firms conduct little or no research in most of the foreign markets in which their products are sold. The dominant reason is the high cost associated with conducting research, particularly if primary research is deemed essential. Coordinating research and data collection across a number of countries can prove quite challenging, and there is the associated difficulty of establishing comparability and equivalence. (Douglas and Craig, 1983). Finally, all too many marketers have rather limited appreciation for the significantly different character of foreign marketing environments. As a result, management relies on little more than casual observations or generalizations drawn from other markets rather than basing their marketing and advertising decisions on solid research” (Müller, 2011).

According to Müller there exist different ways and approaches to conduct research for the development of international communication campaigns: “In order to select concepts and position brands, international marketers may find it necessary to conduct **lifestyle research** to determine which patterns are similar across markets. For this, the researcher should begin by exploring **secondary data**. Also **quantitative surveys** can be conducted but there are challenges relating to data comparability.

Focus-group interviews and in-depth interviews: Researchers must be sensitive to cultural differences. Focus-group interviews and in-depth interviews help provide insights into underlying consumer motives and attitudes. They are effective in studying everything from product development to advertising strategies and execution.

Research relating to message design and placement: Message research can help marketers to avoid promotional blunders in the international arena. For instance, research allows the marketer to determine whether **creative strategies** should vary by country or whether a single strategy can be adapted for all markets in which the firm plans to operate. Message research must be conducted in each market, as findings do not necessarily cross borders. Just because a particular **advertisement tests** well in Austria does not ensure that it will be equally successful in Germany or Switzerland.

Some of the same tools employed in domestic markets are also used in international research” (Müller, 2011).

“Copy research is not extensively used. Although most of the respondents indicate they do some (mostly qualitative) copy research, the personal interviews suggested that good intensions are not always carried out because of client dictates, costs, lack of research suppliers and time, and workload in many small offices” (Duncan and Ramabradas, 1995).

“If advertisers wish to know whether foreign consumers understand the basic selling idea or product benefit highlighted and whether the message elicits the desired response, they may employ **concept testing**. The use of concept testing in international advertising research is growing rapidly because – although it employs qualitative methods such as focus-groups discussions or in-depth interviews – it can provide considerable insights quickly and relatively cheaply (Peebles and Ryans, 1984).

Ideally, concept testing should take place in the early stages of creative development. The logic behind this approach, explains Joseph Plummer is that “if the basic selling idea has little relevance or appeal in a significant number of the markets, there is no value to proceeding further by testing executions” (Plummer, 1986).

Once there is an agreement on the strategy, the international marketer must determine whether the **message execution** will be appropriate. **Pre-test research** focus on the potential effectiveness of an advertising execution prior to its full-scale use in a market or markets. The typical industry rationale for pre-testing “rough” or animatic commercials before they become a final film version can be summed up in five words: screen out bad ideas economically. Rough pre-testing has traditionally been used as a “/no go” early-warning system to minimize waste and limit the time and expense allocated to fully produce an execution. Consider the average cost of an animatic is roughly one-tenth the cost of a fully finished commercial, a pre-test can be a cost effective solution. The other important benefit working with rough commercials is the ability to use diagnostic information from the test in order to optimize the performance

of the final film. With regard to pre-testing, many in the industry suggest, the earlier, the better. This is not to say that researching a finished ad isn't valuable. But the earlier an idea can be explored, the less likely it is that the creative themes, or even final ads, will need to be changed, or tossed. An analysis of 70 ads submitted to Millward Brown for pre-testing proves the point about early-stage research. It showed that when an ad is researched at an early stage and the creative team given guidance, the final version is far more effective. It is estimated that pre-testing ads earlier made them 50 percent more efficient (White, 2007). Focus-groups and in-depth interviews are commonly employed techniques in pre-test research.

Post-test research, on the other hand is employed to determine whether the advertisement or campaign has achieved its objective – whether that be to build awareness, convey knowledge, generate liking, or create preference for the brand in each market. Not only is such research necessary in determining the success or failure of a campaign, but insights garnered through post-testing can suggest how the message might be modified or adapted in the future. While focus-group interviews may be employed here as well, telephone, mail and – increasingly – online surveys are more commonly conducted to measure recognition and recall as well as changes in attitude ascribed to the advertising.

International advertisers are increasingly employing **ad-tracking studies** – the continual monitoring of brand awareness, image, trials, and usage trends. With regards to message placement, marketers will require information relating to the availability of media for commercial purpose as well as data relating to advertising readership, listenership, and viewership and audience characteristics. As companies increase their involvement in foreign markets, they recognize the importance of conducting international marketing and advertising research.

Technological advances and research: The Internet has dramatically changed the way in which international marketing research is conducted, both in providing ready access to secondary data, and in providing a new means of collecting primary data. The **Internet** can also be used to collect primary data in a more systematic fashion. Subject

to the availability of suitable Internet sampling frames, questionnaires can be administered directly over the Internet. Questionnaires can be sent via e-mail to respondents, and responses are returned via e-mail. On the plus side, responses tend to be objective, as respondents are typing in their own feedback; the use of the Internet is unintrusive, because respondents typically complete surveys at their own pace; responses tend to be speedy; there are no international boundaries, and so questionnaires can be completed as easily on the opposite side of the world as at a more local address; and, because data is collected in predefined electronic format, there is no need to re-enter responses manually, making for considerable cost savings” (Müller, 2011).

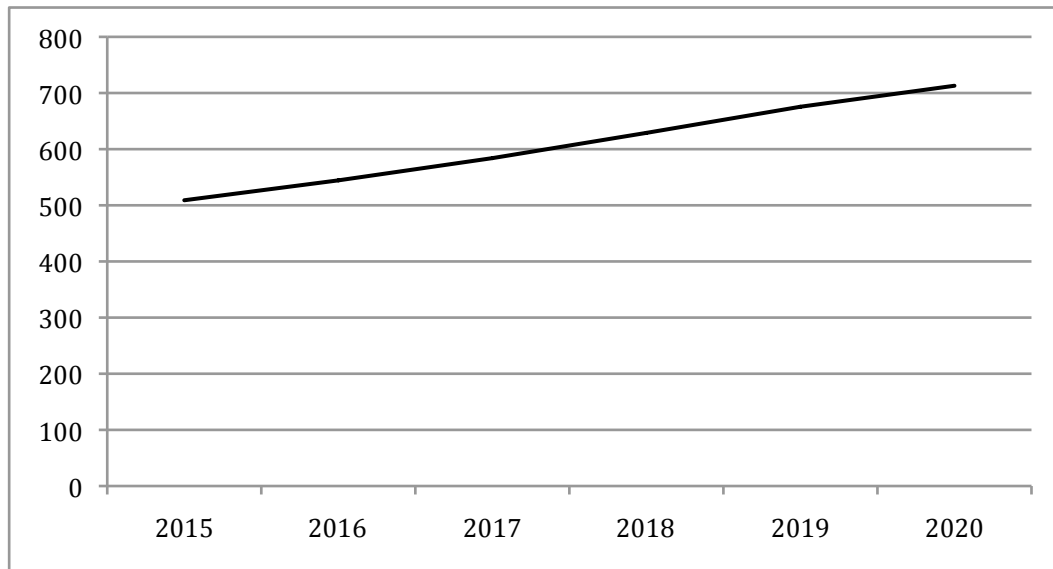
Also, according to Kotler, Keller (2012) online research has advantages and disadvantages. “Advantages: Online research is inexpensive. Online research is fast. People tend to be honest and thoughtful online. Online research is versatile. Disadvantages include: Samples can be small and skewed. Online panels and communities can suffer from excessive turnover. Online market research can suffer from technological problems and inconsistencies” (Kotler and Keller, 2012).

2.5. International Media

The **international media landscape** has changed tremendously in the recent years. Besides classical media more and more online media plays a crucial role, especially in international communication. The following chapter shows the role of classical media in international communication and the way it can be planned and managed within in an international communication campaign. In addition, the increasing role of online and especially social media shall be described. According to the Dentsu Aegis Network global ad spend hit \$563.4 billion in 2017 with digital driving growth (Dentsu Aegis, 2017).

Figure 9 indicates the total media ad spending worldwide, 2015-2020 in billion \$, including digital (desktop/laptop, mobile and other internet-connected devices), magazines, newspapers, out-of-home, radio and TV (eMarketer, 2017).

Figure 9: Overview global advertising spending in billion \$



Source: eMarketer, 2017.






CNBC predicts that half of all global advertising dollars will be spent online by 2020, matching the worldwide combined “offline” ad spend, such as TV, print ads and billboard posters, according to forecasts (CNBC, 2017).

“Many still assume that global media will mold consumers into one global consumer culture. This has been the discourse about the classic media, and it is repeated with respect to the Internet. However, although the technology may be universal, the content and people’s interpretation is not. Just as global marketers had too high expectations of the potential of global television to reach global markets, so many marketers are still excited about the Internet and the potential online ability to reach a global consumer market with one message and strategy because of its potential for global reach” (de Mooij, 2013).

This is also true for the **organization of international media planning**: “Countries vary with respect to their media landscapes, so media plans of the home country cannot be used in another country. Availability, cost, and effectiveness of media vary. With respect to international media planning, the choice between centralizing and decentralizing media planning is clear. Centralizing planning and implementation is possible only when media conditions are similar across markets, which is hypothetical.

Foreign subsidiaries and their agencies comprehend the conditions of their country best, so they are best equipped to select and plan media. International media planning needs specialists, and most of the large international media agencies have proprietary media effectiveness tools in place to measure a variety of means of communication per product category. These tools are based on quantitative and qualitative consumer research to evaluate consumer interaction with specific media” (de Mooij, 2013). Picture 6 gives an overview of the biggest international media agencies.

Picture 6: Overview biggest international media agencies

Top Media Agencies by billings in 2016				
#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
				
<i>OMD is the lead network within Omnicom, working closely but not exclusively with the BBDO, DDB and TBWA ad agencies. It is arguably the most innovative global network, and has topped the rankings of awards for media planning and media buying every year since 2004.</i>	<i>Mindshare is the biggest of the media networks within WPP, itself the world's biggest media planner and media buying group by billings. It was created originally from the combination of the inhouse media departments of WPP's JWT and Ogilvy & Mather advertising networks.</i>	<i>MediaCom sits just behind WPP stablemate Mindshare. Originally formed from the media department of Grey advertising, it is especially strong in Europe, and the two key markets of the UK and Germany. In the UK, it is still the only agency ever to have topped £1bn in annual billings.</i>	<i>Carat was for years the world's biggest media independent, with no direct ties to any of the major advertising networks. In 2012, it was acquired by Dentsu. Carat's strongest region is Europe. It is also the clear leader in Australia as a result of purchase of local unit Mitchell & Partners.</i>	<i>Starcom MediaVest was the world's biggest media agency in 2015 because of its dominant position in the US. The loss of several key clients caused parent Publicis to split off Mediavest and several of its clients and merge them into much smaller Spark, leaving Starcom as the main agency</i>

Source: Adbrands.net, 2017.

Therefore, “an increasing variety of media is available to contact consumers, in the developed world and in emerging economies. Both traditional and electronic media like the Internet and the mobile phone are available worldwide but are used by consumers in different ways. Yet they cannot be ignored as consumers worldwide are increasingly using these new media. A proper media plan has to be designed and executed either locally or with the help of local experts. In order to reach to reach the right people in the right place, at the right time, and at the right cost in different countries, first of all, consumer insight is needed in how the various media are used. The enormous variety of available media as well as the differences across cultures makes choice of media and an effective combination of media a challenge. Knowledge of how cultures influences media usage across countries is of great importance” (de Mooij, 2013).

What is important today is the approach called “**integrated marketing communications** (IMC) (Müller, 2011): “Although advertising is the major focus of international communication, an integrated marketing communications approach is critical to competing successfully in the international setting. In order to communicate effectively with the audiences around the globe, marketers must coordinate advertising, direct marketing, sales promotions, personal selling, and public relations efforts, but all other aspects of the marketing mix as well. Companies are moving toward integrated marketing communications. The American Association of Advertising Agencies defines integrated marketing communications (IMC) as: a concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of communication disciplines, e.g., general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relations – and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum impact (Duncan and Everet 1993). Despite the challenges associated with implementing a fully integrated marketing communications program, most marketers today consider themselves proponents of the approach, and the benefits of IMC are just as applicable when operating in the global marketplace as in the domestic marketplace. In *Communicating Global: An Integrated Marketing Approach*, authors Don Schulz and Philip Kitchen outline an eight-step integrated global marketing communication planning process: 1. Global Customer/Prospect Database, 2. Customer Prospect Evaluation, 3. Contact Points and Preferences, 4. Brand or Organization relationships, 5. Message and incentive Development and Delivery, 6. Estimate on Return on Customer Investment, 7. Investment and Allocation, 8. Marketplace Measurement” (Müller, 2011).

Implementing IMC: “In recent years, large ad agencies have substantially improved their integrated offerings. To facilitate one-stop shopping, these agencies have acquired promotion agencies, public relations firms, package design consultancies, Web site developers, and direct-mail houses. They are redefining themselves as communications companies that assist clients to improve their overall communications effectiveness by offering strategic and practical advice on many forms of communication. Many international clients such as IBM (Ogilvy), Colgate (Young & Rubicam), and GE (BBDO) have opted to put a substantial portion of their communications work through

one full-service agency. The result is integrated and more effective marketing communications at a much lower total communications cost” (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

2.5.1. Classic media

Classic media is still of big importance also in international marketing communication. But only a few classical media channels are actually international. There exist only a very few international TV channels for example. The same for print media. Only very few magazines are truly international or even global. Therefore, classical media is still mainly local. And international marketers have to buy the media space for their markets locally. As mentioned before, this happens most often with the help of international media agencies. In international marketing communication development they work with the headquarters of a company to develop general media guidelines based on the developed overall international communication strategy. Therefore, media planning is also part of the overall communication campaign development. Concerning media it is necessary to develop an overall international media strategy as a framework and guideline for the local media execution and purchase. The local entities buy the media space on local TV channels, local print magazine and local out-of-home media space. This has to happen in exchange and alignment with the international marketing of the headquarters. They check the appropriateness with the overall standardized international communication strategy and also approve the invested media budget. In this area the local marketers have the opportunity to add to the internationally developed campaign certain local communication activities. Usually, they are allowed to add to the international communication campaign material (so-called *communication assets*) local communication measurement and activities. One example is when SKODA Auto developed the international communication launch campaign for the Octavia in 2013. Skoda Germany could add to the international assets, based on the overall communication platform “*Amazing. Everyday.*”, special 3-D out-of-home media and also an augmented reality video board at the main station in Berlin in order to let the people experience some special “amazement” locally. (For the full description of the SKODA Octavia case see chapter 3.2.).

Picture 7: SKODA Octavia launch campaign Germany “3-D out-of-home media”



Source: Author.

Picture 8: SKODA Octavia launch campaign Germany “Augmented reality”



Source: Author.

2.5.2. Online and social media

Today, **online communication** and especially **social media** play a special role also in international communication. Overall, more and more communication campaigns are happening online, e.g. online banners, online websites, online specials as content marketing and social media communication. “Advertising on social networks can range from large-scale profile pages to banner ads bought from the social network site” (de Mooij, 2013). Social media can play a special role in international communication since it can spread internationally across borders. This phenomenon is also called Viral Marketing. “The terms viral marketing or buzz marketing refer to the idea that people will pass on and share striking and entertaining content, also called user generated content. These viral commercials often take the form of funny video clips, or interactive Flash games, images, or text. In order to go viral, content must be funny and entertaining, otherwise it is not sharable. E.g. Coke and Mentos: The viral advertising was watched worldwide” (de Mooij, 2013). The case study of Evian was an example when social media play a special role in international communication. The international commercial (“*Baby in you*”) was not primarily produced for classical television. Moreover, it was developed as an online video, especially for YouTube. Placed on YouTube and supported by social media seeding the online video was spread all over the world and achieved several million views with a rather small media budget (Effie, 2015). This shows that online media, especially social media communication can be a big chance in international communication. Since social media channels are per se international they can be a perfect platform for spreading international communication campaigns. Today, social media channels like Facebook, YouTube, etc. achieve an international media reach of approximately more than 3 billion people worldwide (We Are Social, 2017). But here, it is not only important to know the mechanics of online and social media communication. In a first step, it is more important to develop an internationally relevant communication idea that has the potential to resonate with the people in the relevant markets that they then share with each other. Another example, was concerning this social media phenomena a commercial of Volkswagen for the new Volkswagen Passat in the United States in 2011.

Foreseen, as a normal TV ad on the Super Bowl in 2011 it was already spread as an YouTube-video several million times and became the most seen YouTube-film at that time (Unruly, 2016). Therefore, social media platforms and especially YouTube can be of a promising use for international communication campaigns.

3. PRACTICAL APPLICATION – DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARDIZED INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN IN THE CAR INDUSTRY

The following part of the thesis shall present the application of the research results in order to show how the findings can be used and applied in the international marketing practice: How international universal motives can be found and how a standardized international campaign can be developed. Therefore, an own psychological research and the development of an own case were conducted as an example of the development of a standardized international communication campaign in the car industry.

3.1. Fundamental international research

According to the identified importance of international research and the role of international universal motives, an own research was conducted in order to identify universal motives for cars in the younger target group to use it for international communication development.

Background: The car industry is fundamentally changing. Therefore, the car industry is under great pressure to develop technologically further in the areas of e-mobility, autonomous driving and new mobility and car sharing concepts (Sprick, 2016). But this seems to be a rather general sentiment within the industry for the obligation to change rather than an evidential demand from consumers and the customers' side. Therefore, the purpose of the chapter is to identify the relevance of new developments within the automotive market, especially in the young generation. There is the hypothesis in several articles that the importance of cars for the younger target group is diminishing (Belgiawan et al, 2014) but there is only limited research, known to the author, focused on an in-depth understanding of the role of cars in the young target group and their holistic motivations towards cars. Therefore, the questions of the conducted research are: Are cars still relevant in the life of the young target group and if so, what are the fundamental motivations for having one? What aspects of a car are important and how can you use the identified motivations for international communication development?

3.1.1. Methodology

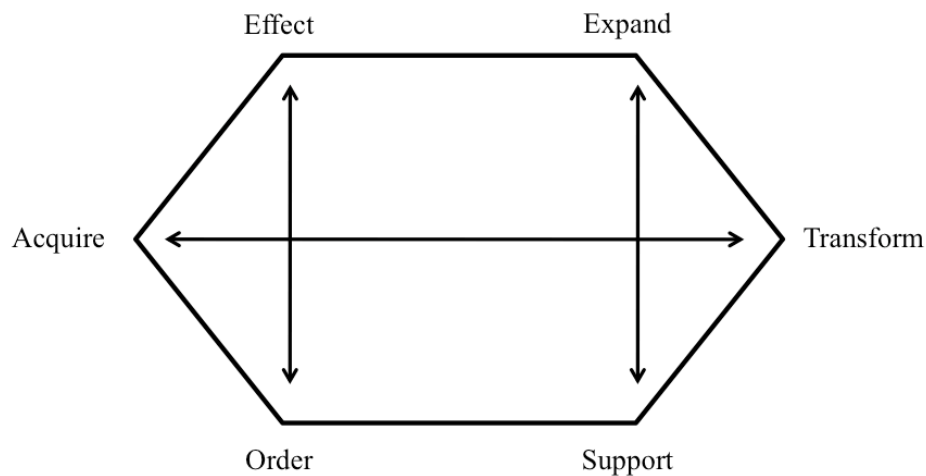
In order to identify and gain an in-depth understanding of the overall importance of cars in the younger target group and to find the fundamental motives for having a car, the author conducted an in-depth qualitative research. The author elected to utilize both *focus-groups* and *one-on-one interviews* as the research collection methods; the average length of each type of session was 1.5 hours in duration. The research was conducted between November 2013 and January 2017. Overall, eight focus groups and five one-on-one interviews were conducted (n = 50). The author elected to use university students enrolled in business-oriented bachelors and masters programs as they represent a subset of the millennial cohort that will soon be entering the workforce and thus acquiring the financial means to make a car purchase (in the near-term future). The research was conducted at the University of Economics, Prague. The age of the participants ranged from 19 to 26 years. The sample was equally female and male, and originated from both urban and suburban areas. The countries where the students came from are: Canada, China, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, India, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA, and Vietnam. The sample was thus very diverse in terms of nationality; however, it was homogenous in that participants are millennials currently enrolled in business-oriented bachelors and masters programs.

Figure 10: Overview of the research sample

Sample source	Age	Gender	Residence	Place of Origin
Bachelor and master degree students	19 - 26 years	50% male 50% female	70% urban 30% suburban	CA, CN, CZ, DE, FI, IN, IT, MX, NL, PE, PL, PT, RU, SK, SW, TK, TW, UA, UK, US, VN

The research concept behind this qualitative research was the psychological theory of “*morphology*”. This is a psychological concept founded at the University of Cologne in the tradition of in-depth psychology; it incorporates aspects of gestalt psychology, phenomenology and psychoanalysis (Ziems, 2008; Fitzek, 2008). The theory is based on psychological tensions that work together to influence and direct human experience and behavior (Black, 2017). These psychological tensions are uncovered through morphological intensive interviews (one-on-ones and focus groups), a unique qualitative methodology that encourages open and flexible discussions within the context of a closed conceptual framework (Lönneker, 2007; Dammer and Szymkowiak, 1998). The aim of this psychological approach is to go as deep as possible in the qualitative research in order to thoroughly understand the actual motivation concerning a certain topic, like a product or a brand, for example. This psychological approach is less about measuring (statistical representativeness) than understanding the researched topic thoroughly and in-depth (psychological representativeness), (Grünewald, 1998; Lönneker, 2007). Similar to other qualitative research methodologies, interpretative analysis involves an iterative process to distil data into a common set of psychological themes or tensions (Dammer and Szymkowiak, 1998). When combined, these psychological tensions provide a framework for systematically understanding fundamental human needs (Melchers, 1997). As a conceptual framework to summarize the research results, the morphological approach uses a so-called “hexagram” of six key dimensions that holistically describe the fundamental human needs. Within the conducted research, we used this model to show the psychological motivations for having a car in the young age group. (The author is trained to conduct this psychological research, having fulfilled a 2-years program at the Cologne Academy for Psychological Market and Media Research).

Figure 11: Fundamental psychological dimensions in the “hexagram”



Source: Black.

Black (2014) describes the six psychological dimensions as follows: *Acquire*: The human need for safety, continuity and the desire to hold on to what has been acquired. *Transform*: The human need for change, dynamics and the desire to abandon safety for movement. *Effect*: The human need for individual intent, personal preference and the desire to influence through action. *Order*: The human need for rules, regularity and the desire to adapt social expectations and structures. *Expand*: The human need for achievement, ideals and the desire to attain new levels of accomplishment. *Support*: The human need for skills, resources and understanding of our individual limits and limitations.

3.1.2. Results

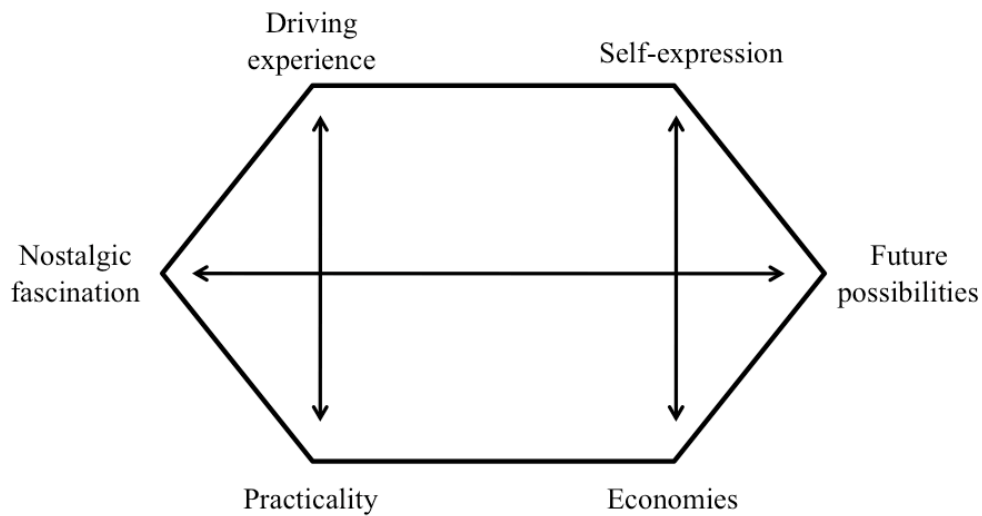
The following sub-chapter will describe the overall results of the conducted qualitative research about the general importance and role of cars in the young target group and the particular motives for having a car in this age group. An overview of the particular motivational dimensions for having a car will be provided using the conceptual model of the “hexagram” and they are then described in more detail.

Overall description of the research and the role of cars:

The atmosphere during the focus groups and interviews was very relaxed and harmonic. There was neither great excitement about the topic, nor a negative attitude or criticism. Everybody could easily participate in the topic, though the knowledge about cars differed. Thus, cars seem to be (still) an all-around and present topic, and have a reason to exist in the young target group (*"Cars still have a primary role society."*; *"Cars are still important for many people."*; *"I like my car a lot."*). But particular knowledge about cars was not very existent, i.e. it was less than one might think of young people normally knowing about recent technological developments and trends (*"I don't know much about cars."*). Most of the students had a driving license in all the 21 explored countries, but not everybody actually drives regularly, especially if they live in a bigger city (*"I have a driving license but I do not drive much. In the city, the public transport is sufficient."*). For most participants, a car no longer seems to be the most important product to have (*"I thought to buy a car but then I spent it [my money] on a trip to Australia to do Work & Travel."*). But there were certain international differences about the role and the importance of cars. In Northern Europe like Germany, the Netherlands and Scandinavia, cars now seem to be less important and fascinating (*"It's not a big deal for our generation."*; *"It's not so important like 10 to 20 years ago."*). In Italy, on the other hand, or other South European countries as well as Latin America and Central Eastern Europe, a car has still a great importance for practical reasons but also as one of the most important individual properties and status symbol. In these regions especially, a car represents one of the most important products you can own and is thus a social status symbol (*"In Italy a car is still very important. It shows what you have achieved."*; *"You can impress with a car."*).

After the identification of the overall relevance of cars in the young target group, the particular motives for having a car were explored and analyzed. The overall motivational dimensions can be summarized in the holistic research model of the hexagram:

Figure 12: Overall motivational dimensions for having a car



Source: Author.

Practicality: The interviews were dominated by a down-to-earth reasonability and pragmatism. Cars still have their certain practical role of being more independent and mobile but a great excitement and fascination is somehow missing. This was especially true in the Northern European countries like Germany and Scandinavia (*“I don’t need a car anymore”; “I have a driving license, but I don’t need a car right now”*). For that reason, a car seems to be more like a functional tool that helps you in everyday life (*“In Scandinavia you need a car, it is more like a tool to go from A to B.”*). Another apparently, relevant aspect in the young age group is the necessity that the cars are easy to drive and to park. Many stated that they feel insecure with driving and especially parking because of their lack of driving experience (*“A parking assistant would be good.”*).

Driving experience: Only if you ask openly about the general associations and images of a car that they have in mind, topics and aspects like “freedom, independence” and driving pleasure occur (*“I love to drive”, “Especially with my friends”*). That sentiment was consistent over all groups (over time, age groups and countries). The experience of driving itself gives a feeling of relaxation and enjoyment. For this, music in the car plays a crucial role (*“I listen to very loud music in the car.”; “We sing in the car.”*).

Driving is also an expression of personal freedom and independence. Many students were therefore looking forward to have their own car, especially in the emerging markets (*"I was desperate to drive."*).

Future possibilities: As mentioned above, the knowledge about recent new technology was not that deep. Everybody is aware of the future developments like e-mobility and autonomous driving (*"The Google car"*; *"the iCar of Apple"*) but there are no individual experiences or certain information about it. It was interesting to note that the interviewed even seemed to be quite hesitating towards new technologies; this is rather unexpected given such a young sample (*"There are still safety issues."*; *"I am not sure if it is safe."*; *"It's a bit scary."*). And they want to keep the pleasure of actual driving (*"I would not buy it, I want to enjoy driving by myself."*). What was very noticeable in the research are new ways of being mobile, such as new car sharing providers (like Uber, Bla Bla Car and other car sharing applications or providers on Facebook). These seem to be very relevant in their current life stage (*"Car sharing is a great idea."*; *"I use it a lot."*; *"My friends and I use Uber a lot when we go out late at night and public transport has already stopped or it is very infrequent. It can save us an hour or more and it's very cheap when we split it among us."*). Interestingly, also the topic of environmental aspects was not mentioned directly. If you come to talk about it, it is of course called an important aspect but apparently it is not top of mind in the young target group. All participants of the research were impressed by the car manufacturer and brand Tesla (*"What Tesla does is impressive."*). It can stand for the future concept of an attractive car: dynamic design, perceived as cool and electronic mobility. But for the moment, it is not accessible for the young group because of its price (*"At the moment they are too expensive."*; *"In China, rich people have more and more a Tesla."*). The future possibilities have also an impact to car marketing communications. Indeed, classical television is becoming less relevant in the young age group. It was stated that TV shows were mostly viewed online. Therefore, communication channels that can reach the target group for car marketing communications are online ads, also online video ads, for example on Youtube and on social media in general or car blogs in particular (*"I know car commercials mostly from Youtube."*; *"I check about products on comparison sites and blogs."*).

Nostalgic fascination: In contrast to the described future changes, there is still some certain fascination about cars and having “your own car” (“*My dream car is an Austin Martin.*”; “*A Lamborghini would be still a dream.*”). These kinds of cars impressed via their beautiful and classical design and their heritage (“*These are cars with a soul.*”; “*I like Mini and Landrover.*”). It was stated that having their own car would be rather the case when they have the personal income and budget for buying it by themselves. First, this was because many said that driving a car is great fun (especially with friends). And later in life, a car can (still) indicate what you have achieved (especially, in Central, Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America and also still in the US, Scandinavia and Germany but less). The known car brands give security and confidence in the decision for a car.

Self-expression: In this context, a car can also be an expression of yourself, also in order to impress. The car should represent you and your lifestyle (“*My car is an expression of my personality.*”; “*My car is a part of me.*”). The car should suit you and your style. Therefore, the look and the design of the car is very important (“*The design of the car is most important to me.*”; “*The car needs to have a great appearance.*”). In this context, the car should be as unique and individual as possible. Then, you can have an emotional bond with your car (“*I gave my car a name.*”). Concerning this dimension of self-expression, the role of brands has some certain importance. There are particular brands that are preferred and are seen as attractive: BMW, Audi, Mercedes, Volvo and Lexus. Overall, German cars seem to be of good reputation and country-of-origin of the car plays a certain role (“*German cars are very good.*”; “*People in my country like German cars.*”). These brands give a feeling of confidence in having made the right decision because, in many countries, it is important what others think and say about the car (“*If in China others say that you bought the wrong car, you become very depressed.*”).

Economies: However, right now, there are certain financial limitations (“*It’s too expensive to have a car.*”; “*My first association with cars is that they are expensive.*”). Therefore, current aspects concerning a car are economical ones like the absolute price for a car, fuel consumption/fuel efficiency and maintenance costs (“*Fuel consumption is*

very important!”; “*Gas is expensive.*”). A car needs to be durable and reliable for the young age group. Overall, they want and need the maximum value for the invested money. This also expresses again the pragmatic and down-to-earth attitude towards cars in the young age group.

3.1.3. Conclusion – Implications for international communication development

The conducted research identified certain motivational aspects and dimensions for cars in the young target group. These findings can offer possibilities to position a car brand internationally and emphasizing certain aspects in the development of an international communication campaign. The identified **motivational aspects can be used and emphasized in an international communication campaign** for cars in the young target group:

Driving experience: Concerning the identified motive of driving experience an international communication campaign can communicate and emphasize the pleasure and fun to drive a car, especially together with friends.

Practicality: Concerning the opposite motivational aspect of practicality an international communication campaign can communicate the practical role of having a car for daily-life. Functional aspects and practical arguments as well as certain useful features should be highlighted.

Self-expression: In the motivational field of self-expression, car brands should offer and communicate the possibilities of customization and individualization to create an unique and original style of your owns car. It can be showed how you can impress with a car the peer group or towards the other gender.

Economics: Also, the relevant aspect of economies could be highlighted or emphasized in an international communication campaign. For instance, it could be a campaign for a good price offer or about alternative ways of financing the car.

Nostalgic fascination: Young people are still fascinated by the nostalgia of classical cars and brands. This brand heritage can be communicated in an communication campaign dealing with the heritage of the car brand and for instance highlighting its retro design.

Future possibilities: In this motivational territory of future developments plenty of possibilities for communication exist. In an international communication campaign new technical developments can be shown and demonstrated as well as communicating new technical features and gadgets. Especially the connectivity of a car with the Internet and young peoples connected life is very important and relevant.

3.2. Case study: SKODA Octavia international launch campaign 2013

In order to show how a standardized international communication campaign is developed in practice, the author will describe in this chapter the development case, of the launch of the new SKODA Octavia in 2013 as an actual and real example.

3.2.1. Methodology

The source for the described development case is the personal experience of the author who participated in the campaign development and expert interviews with the involved marketing managers of SKODA and agency representatives. In addition, market information and data was used. The analysis of the case material and information was conducted in the form of a “*structured content-analysis*” (Schreier 2014), similar to the analysis of the Global Effie cases in chapter 2.1. Therefore, the identified categories for the systematic analysis were similar. Two particular categories were added in order to examine the presented “prototypical development process” and the “role of research” of standardized international communication campaigns and to show the implementation of the standardized international communication campaign in “international media”.

Categories for the analysis:

1. *Background and communication objectives*
2. *Development process and research*
3. *Communication strategy and execution*
4. *International media strategy*
5. *Results*
6. *Conclusion and success factors*

3.2.2. Background and communication objectives

In 2012 the new version of the successful car model Octavia of SKODA was developed and an international communication campaign should have developed for numerous international markets (West and Central, Eastern Europe, Russia and India). Due to the sales share of the Octavia model, the international launch campaign was of great importance. The communication campaign needed to be a save success due to the sales importance of the Octavia for SKODA overall. The launch of the new model was also of great importance for the perception of the brand overall. Therefore, the development process needed to assure that the campaign will work in all markets, that it will resonate with the consumers in the different countries and that it will by this have a strong sales effect as well.

3.2.3. Development process and research

In order to assure that the campaign will resonate in all markets, the international stakeholders and marketers of the major markets for the SKODA Octavia were involved. The SKODA headquarters defined a so-called “*working group*” with the intension to share market knowledge, align strategy and execution development. The goal was to use the knowledge of the local marketers as experts and also to assure the so-called “*buy-in*” of the markets into the developed campaign. Due to the fact that the local markets invest their media budget for the campaign, the local marketers needed to be motivated to use the developed international communication campaign and the particular campaign material for different media.

The campaign development started with the so-called “*product briefing*” with the involved marketers and agency partners in January 2012. After this kick-off the work of the involved participants and the international “*working group*” started. The international working group consisted of marketing managers of SKODA from Germany, United Kingdom, France, Russia and India. As the first step of the development, the SKODA headquarter and the leading communication agency developed the overall **communication strategy**, with the definition of the international

target group, the competitive landscape and the positioning of the SKODA Octavia in this context. Based on an international consumer insight about the target group the communication proposition was defined. The developed communication strategy needed to be aligned and approved by the other SKODA market representatives at a common international meeting.

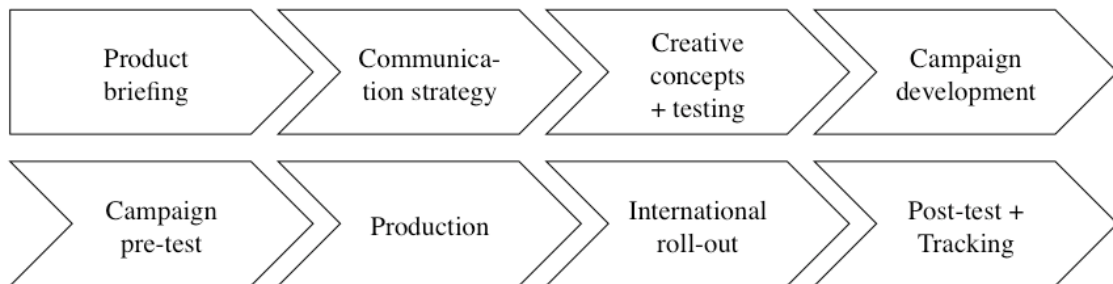
Based on the overall and approved communication strategy the so-called creatives of the leading communication agency developed 2 **creative concepts** as overall directions in that the final campaign could leading to. These creative concepts were **tested** to assure that the communication routes are going in the right directions and will resonate with the targeted customers in the different markets. These concept tests were conducted with the help of an online test in the defined markets: Germany, United Kingdom, France, Poland, Russia and India.

Based on the preferred creative concept the actual **campaign development** started. Here as well, the creatives developed several routes for the actual international communication campaign. At an international meeting of the headquarters with the international participants of the “*working group*” two campaigns were selected to proceed further. This also means, to test them in a so-called “*campaign pre-test*”. According to the international research, again in the defined most important markets (D, UK, F, PL, RUS, IND) in form of an online research, the final campaign with the name “Amazing. Everyday” was selected. In the next process stage, the actual communication campaign was then produced and executed.

The **campaign production** took place in Chile and it means the production of the main campaign materials like a TV commercial, fotos for print and online advertisements and other production material that was needed to use as the international campaign assets. After the campaign production, the international stakeholders had to be involved again. The final campaign material was aligned with the members of the international “*working group*” and additional international marketing managers of SKODA. After their approval of the campaign and the approval of the top management of SKODA (CMO and CEO), the campaign was then used by the international SKODA marketers

in an **international roll-out** for the launch of the new SKODA Octavia in their markets. After the usage of the international campaign for the new SKODA Octavia in the international markets, SKODA conducted a so-called “*campaign post-test*” with its **communication tracking** provided by the international research institute Millward Brown. It means, aside of checking about the achieved sales figures, the SKODA marketers also conducted a research about the communication parameters like recall and recognition of the campaign and its communication impact. Figure 13 gives an overview about the overall process stages of the development of the international SKODA Octavia launch campaign.

Figure 13: Overview campaign development process SKODA Octavia



Source: Author.

3.2.4. Campaign strategy and execution

As mentioned, the development of the international campaign for the launch of the SKODA Octavia started with the development of an overall communication strategy. For this, the international common target group needed to be defined as the fundament of the communication strategy development. The target group for the SKODA Octavia was defined as young family fathers that have just started to build their family. They are ambitious and progressive and have a decent job with a good salary. Since they have still a limited household budget, they want an attractive car but that is at the same time not too expensive. They have certain requirements for a car due to the fact that with a family the car also needs to be bigger and having certain practical attributes. Research conducted by SKODA showed that the target group considered before the SKODA Octavia but they decided against it because of its rather “old-fashioned” design and the

insufficient technical equipment. This led to the overall customer insight of the prospect target group of the SKODA Octavia: *“I’ve known SKODA for offering good, reliable and spacious cars, but so far I found them rather conservative and boring. Now, the new Octavia really surprises me with great design, real presence and equipment I had never expected.”* This insight and understanding about the target group led to the definition of the overall communication proposition as the main promise and main message of the communication campaign: *“Wow! Maybe now...”* The so-called “reason to believe” for this proposition and promise were: The new ŠKODA design language: dynamic, modern, fresh; the best in class roominess and very well equipped car with lots of simply clever ideas; the convincing in performance, excellent in quality, striking in comfort, reliable and safe and the great value for money of the new SKODA Octavia. This led to the overall communication campaign that the new SKODA Octavia will not only surprise you, you will be even amazed. The new SKODA Octavia is not as you have known SKODA so far, it is a lot more attractive and representative vehicle but practical and functional for family purposes as well. This led to the communication campaign and idea of **“Amazing. Everyday”**. It means that *“life is full of amazing moments and that the new ŠKODA Octavia enables us to experience those amazing moments – everyday. Discover the world with the new ŠKODA Octavia. You’ll be amazed.”*

This idea was then expressed in the execution of the campaign by a “play of perspectives” highlighting the amazing attributes of the new SKODA Octavia, e.g. a rainbow goes through the great panorama roof, a moon has space in the big car back or a whale comes out of the big trunk, etc. These motives were executed in a TV commercial and other communication materials as print ads and outdoor motives as well as online banners. The campaign material could then be used by the international markets and were translated in the local language and adapted to the requirements of the local media.

Picture 9: Screenshot international television commercial SKODA Octavia



Source: YouTube.

Picture 10: Example international print ad (Germany)

SIMPLY CLEVER

ŠKODA



Der neue ŠKODA Octavia.
Beeindruckend. Jeden Tag.



Das Spannendste an einer Erfolgsgeschichte ist ihre Fortsetzung.

Als meistverkauftes ŠKODA-Modell und mit unzähligen Auszeichnungen prämiert, bietet uns der Octavia die perfekte Voraussetzung, Ihnen jetzt die nächste Generation zu präsentieren: den besten Octavia aller Zeiten. Er ist nicht nur das größte Modell seiner Klasse, sondern übertrifft sämtliche Erwartungen: Dynamisch im Design, mit innovativen Sicherheits- und Komfortsystemen und einem Kofferraumvolumen von bis zu 1.580 Litern, lässt der Octavia bei anspruchsvollen Kunden keine Wünsche offen. Und das alles zu einem attraktiven Preis-Wert-Verhältnis. Lassen auch Sie sich beeindrucken und erleben Sie den neuen ŠKODA Octavia selbst bei einer Probefahrt. Weitere Informationen erhalten Sie bei Ihrem ŠKODA Partner, unter 0800/99 88 999 oder www.skoda-auto.de

Kraftstoffverbrauch in l/100 km, innerorts: 7,8–4,6; außerorts: 5,1–3,3; kombiniert: 6,1–3,8; CO₂-Emission kombiniert in g/km: 141–99 (gemäß VO (EG) Nr. 715/2007). Abbildung zeigt Sonderausstattung.

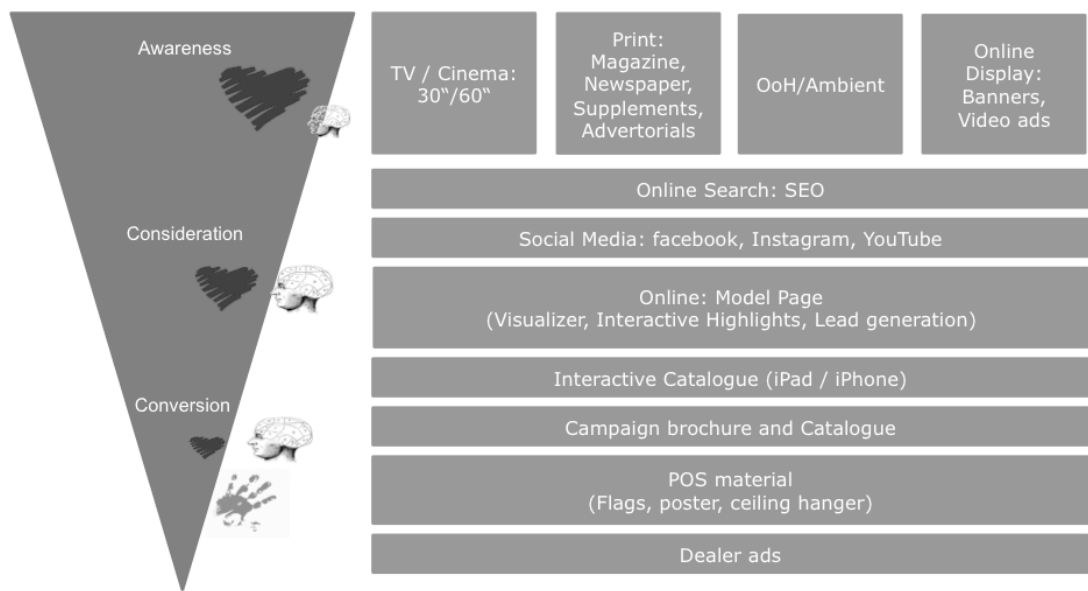
Source: ŠKODA.

3.2.5. International media strategy

Based on the developed communication strategy and the tested campaign “*Amazing. Everyday.*” also the international media guidelines were developed. These guidelines were shared with the local teams. At the same time the local SKODA marketers and their media agencies had the freedom to develop own media ideas based on the campaign platform “Amazing. Everyday.” These ideas were then aligned and approved by the international SKODA headquarters. As main media TV commercials, print ads, outdoor and ambient media as well as online media were defined in order to create awareness for the new SKODA Octavia. In order to increase engagement and the consideration of the new SKODA Octavia the campaign took also place in social media (on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube) and as well finally at the dealership where the customers could also find the campaign material showing amazing moments with the new SKODA Octavia.

Picture 8 gives an overview about the overall structure and elements of the SKODA Octavia media strategy.

Picture 11: Customer Media Touch Points & Campaign Architecture



Source: SKODA.

3.2.6. Results

The international launch campaign for the new SKODA Octavia in 2013 was a huge success. It achieved high sales in the local markets and exceeded the defined sales targets.

Especially, in Germany the launch campaign achieved very high sales of the SKODA Octavia. During the campaign period the sales of the SKODA Octavia increased from 2,858 units in January 2013 to 14,968 units until April 2013 (Kraftfahrt-Bundesamt, 2013).

Also in the communication parameters, the SKODA Octavia launch campaign achieved high results concerning “*enjoyment*” +6%, “*brand appeal*” +6% and especially “*activation*” +14% compared to the average results of all communication campaigns in the car segment (Millward Brown, ATP Advertising Tracking Germany, 2013).

Overall, SKODA Germany could increase its market share in the campaign period from 4.6% to 5.3% and made SKODA the biggest international car importer in Germany (Kraftfahrt-Bundesamt, 2013).

3.2.7. Conclusion and success factors

The SKODA Octavia campaign case can work as an example for the so far identified **success factors** and the **prototypical development** of a standardized international communication campaign. It shows the importance of **involving the international stakeholders**. They provided knowledge about their markets and the prospect customer. It was important to exchange with them and to let the main markets being part of the development of this important international campaign. With this procedure it was also a lot more likely that the markets “*buy into*” the developed internationally standardized campaign. The involvement made the alignment with the international stakeholders and marketers a lot easier and more likely to succeed. **Diplomatic skills** were needed in the whole alignment process, exchanging about the current development stages. The case

also shows the **role of research** in different development stages. To assure that the campaign will resonate with the target group in the different markets, the overall communication direction needed to be tested via a “*concept test*” in the main markets. Also, the actual campaign needed to be tested in a “*pre-test*” to assure that it will work in the different international markets. With the help of the exchange of the country representatives and the conducted research, a standardized international communication campaign could have been developed that resonated with the international target group. It combines the **fundamental motivational dimensions** of “*practicality*” (for family needs) and “*driving pleasure*” (with an “amazing” car with new “amazing” car features). This campaign was executed in **standardized international communication materials** (TV commercial, motives for print, outdoor and online) and an engaging social media campaign. In addition, the local SKODA marketers could execute the campaign “Amazing. Everyday.” in **locally specific and innovative media** but aligned and approved by the SKODA headquarters.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter all the results of the conducted research and the thesis will be summarized. First, the assumptions of the beginning of the thesis shall be examined by the results of the literature review, the analysis of the case studies and the conducted interviews with international marketing experts and international diplomats as well the conducted primary research about the motivational aspect of cars in the young target group. After this review, the identified overall success factors of international communication campaigns shall be summarized as a major result of the thesis. Afterwards, as a second main result of the thesis, an identified prototypical development process shall be presented.

With the help of the holistic analysis of the topic about the development of standardized international communication campaigns certain success factors could be identified. The objective of the thesis was as well to prove certain assumptions about the development of standardized international communication campaigns. These shall be examined in the following.

The assumptions the research should prove were the following:

1. *Standardized international communication campaigns can be effective and therefore successful.*

Several examples regarded in the thesis and especially the proven success cases of the Global Effies verified that internationally developed communication campaigns can be successful. For some years the Effie Worldwide Awards show and present several international communication campaigns that are demonstrably successful. Examples analyzed in the thesis were the Global Effie cases of Snickers 2011, Febreze 2012 & 2013, Jim Beam 2013, and evian 2014. Other examples considered in the thesis are Axe/Lynx, Coca-Cola and SKODA.

Also in the literature review there were proves to find for the effectiveness and the success of standardized international communication campaigns: “Results from a survey of Japanese and US subsidiaries operating in the European Union (EU) provide support for the model. They also suggest that standardized advertising does enhance a firm’s financial and strategic performance...” (Okazaki, Taylor, Zou, 2006).

“The study finds that on average, managers reported that standardized advertising is more effective across the European Union” ... “Our findings suggest that a more global standardized advertising strategy improves performance” (Okazaki, Taylor, Zou, 2006).

But “An additional limitation of the study is that it measured managerial perceptions of performance, as opposed to actual performance” (Okazaki, Taylor, Zou, 2006). That is the reason why the thesis analyzed the proven success cases of the Global Effie cases.

2. For successful standardized international communication campaigns marketing managers have to identify universal consumer motives and a key consumer insight.

The analysis of the regarded success cases verified the importance and need to find and identify an internationally universal insight within the target group. The success cases showed that only when the brands identified an internationally universal and true insight about the defined target group, an international communication campaign can resonate with the target group internationally and can be successful. Consistently, all regarded success cases were based on an internationally valid target group insight. Also, in the conducted interviews with international marketing experts, it was stated that the identification of an internationally valid consumer insight is the starting point for the development of an international communication campaign.

3. Conducting research is crucial for the development process (fundamental research and testing).

The literature review and the learnings from the regarded success cases as well as the results of the expert interviews emphasized the importance of conducting research for the development of international communication campaigns. In order to identify an internationally valid universal insight in the target group as well as testing of the different campaign development stages in the international markets are crucial for a successful standardized international communication campaign.

4. Stakeholders, especially the international subsidiaries, have to be involved in the development process.

Especially, the conducted expert interviews with international marketers verified that the success of an international communication campaign development is based on the participation and involvement of the international stakeholders. Only if the international stakeholders of the different markets, for whom the communication campaigns are actually developed, are informed about and involved in the development process they will “buy-in” in the development result and will use the developed international campaign for their markets. Only, if the international stakeholders are involved international marketing managers can avoid the so-called “not-invented-here-syndrome”.

5. Diplomatic tactics can be useful in the alignment process with international stakeholders.

The conducted interviews with international marketing experts as well as the interviews with international diplomats showed the importance of a more diplomatic way in the international alignment process and collaboration. Both groups described the challenging situation of working with international stakeholders and counterparts. If international marketing managers proceed in a more diplomatic way, the international development process is likely to be more successful. The conducted interviews led to

the summary of diplomatic patterns and “general rules” that can be used also for the international marketing alignment processes as the development of international communication campaigns.

Success factors of standardized international communication campaigns:

We have seen in the thesis many aspects influencing that a standardized international communication campaign can be successful. The analysis of the thesis and the conducted research identified factors that show what is important content-wise and also what is important in the development of a standardized international communication campaign. These success factors are summarized and described in the following paragraph.

First of all, it is important to have an **overall international, i.e. global perspective**. The objective should be to develop an international approach that can work for several markets and countries. For this, marketing managers have to find a common dominator or a common communication approach as an overall communication strategy that fits to the international target markets. This approach should be about a common topic or message that is relevant for the target group in various markets. Once, this common international topic and concept is found, it can be executed with **local adjustments**, e.g. translation of the language, adjustments in colors or a local casting of testimonials and taking local regulations into account. This approach follows the premise of “being as standardized as possible and differentiated as necessary.” For this approach marketers have to look for the similarities but take the local differences into account. It is about developing a standardized global communication strategy and with local executions. One example was the global Coca-Cola “Happiness” campaign (Weigel, 2014) that was based on a global communication strategy combined with local executions conducted by the international subsidiaries and their agencies.

In order to develop an international communication strategy an international company should define a **structured development process and a clear procedure**. Finding an international communication strategy should not be a trial-and-error approach based on subjective opinions. It should be a clear and ideally standardized procedure that international marketing managers can build on and should generally lead to successful international communication campaigns. The author of the thesis offers a prototypical process. This process can also be improved over the time, taking learning aspects into account.

Within such as development process the **important participants and stakeholders of the international campaign development should be involved** and this the earlier the better. With this comes an additional effort time wise and operational wise but at the end it can be a lot more efficient. The international stakeholders and marketing colleagues will be a lot more likely to “*buy into*” the developed communication strategy and campaign. This is crucial because at the end it is the market’s budget that goes into the campaign implementation. Therefore, you have to convince the markets of the international campaign and that happens the best when they are involved. With this procedure you can avoid the so-called “*not-invented-here-syndrome*”. For a successful **involvement of and collaboration with the international colleagues** the marketing headquarters should work with them on a respectful and serious basis. International marketing managers should make use of the knowledge of the international stakeholders and proceed with them on a honest and frank basis. They want to be taken serious and they can offer valuable input to the common development process. They should not make the mistake that you think that you know better. Often it is the local market representatives who you know their markets and target group the best.

To involve the international stakeholders and marketing colleagues will require more time for the development process. As learned from the research with international diplomats, good results need time and patience. This does not mean, not to have a clear objective and framework. A proper and thorough process that takes longer, can lead to a result everybody is fine with.

In order to secure a valid result of the development process international **market research** plays an important role. Ideally, market research is conducted on several stages with different functions within the overall development process. This means, a *fundamental and basic research* in the beginning of the development process in order to identify a fundamental knowledge about the target group and to identify a universal insight of the target group that is true and relevant in the different markets. This will be then the basis for the development of a communication strategy and later the actual creative campaign development. Here, research can also be conducted in the forms of *concept-tests* to test the communication strategy as well as the creative concepts. When the communication campaign is actually developed and executed it can be tested as well in beforehand with a *pre-test* to assure that it will work in the international markets. After the campaign has run in the markets, a so-called *post-test* can be conducted to prove if the campaign worked in the market and if the campaign was finally successful also in order to learn from it for the following campaign development process. In order to manage the international development of the brand a *brand tracking* should be also conducted to monitor continuously the communication performance and the overall development of the brand perception internationally.

As mentioned, in the beginning of the international communication campaign development, research should be conducted to learn more about the target group in the different international markets. It should be identified what the target group in the different markets has in common. What is important to them and how can it be connected with the brand? For this, you have to analyze the differences in the markets, but then especially the similarities of the target group in the different markets. It is crucial to find an international and **universal insight** as a truth about the target group in connection with the brand. The global campaign of Evian is an example for it. It identified the universal insight that the target group all over the world is “*striving for youth*” that Evian can offer since drinking water let you appear more youthful and the Evian brand stands for youth since the beginning of the brand (water sold at pharmacies for babies).

After having found and identified an universal insight and truth about the target group this can lead to a strong and **big campaign idea as an international communication platform**. This should be rather bold than a compromise for all the involved stakeholders. If such an insight and based on that campaign idea is strong and big, the international marketers involved will be convinced in the first instance and will be motivated to make use of the international campaign for their markets.

Based on a strong campaign idea, an international and universal campaign execution can be developed and then localized by the international markets. The markets will use the overall campaign concept and will do the necessary **local adjustments** and changes. This will increase the suitability for the local markets while achieving an overall international consistency of the communication and the brand at the same time.

Such internationally developed strong campaigns, based on a true insight inspiring to a strong communication campaign, can lead to an international if not global success. This development can be increased and enhanced by the **use of digital, especially social media**. With the help of the Internet the international target groups and markets are connected and an international campaign can spread all over the world. If a campaign touches the pulse of its target group and if it is executed in a special and exciting way, it will be shared by the target group via social media worldwide. This medial effect can be influenced via paid ads on social media, e.g. on Facebook or YouTube or seeded on other social media platforms and services. But never the less, the success of an international communication campaign either in offline or online media is based on the strength of its original idea based on a true target group insight.

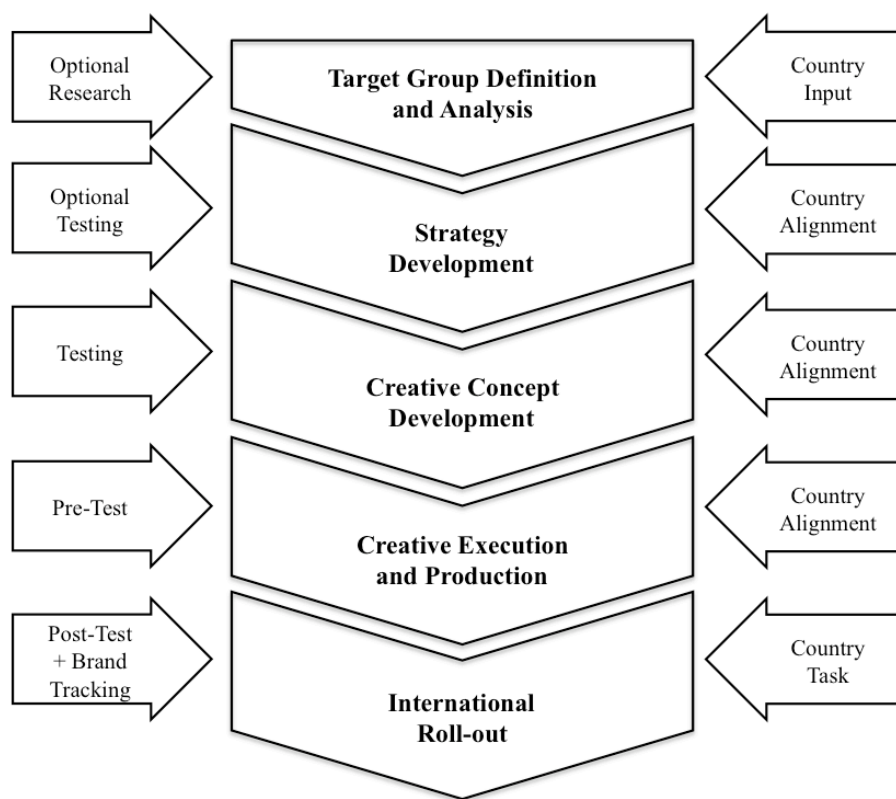
This leads to the overall success factors of successful standardized international communication campaigns.

Success factors of standardized international communication campaigns:

- 1. To develop an international communication concept with local adjustments**
- 2. To have a clear development process**
- 3. To involve the international stakeholders at an early stage**
- 4. To respect and collaborate with the international colleagues**
- 5. To be patient and flexible but having strong leadership**
- 6. To conduct market research on several development stages**
- 7. To find an universal consumer insight**
- 8. To develop a “big campaign idea” as an international communication platform**
- 9. To develop an universal execution with local adjustments**
- 10. To use the international potential of social media**

As another main result, the thesis should also offer a prototypical development process of standardized international communication campaigns. As described in the chapter 2 the prototypical development process is defined by certain development stages that are connected and combined with certain research activities and different ways of involving the international stakeholders of the international campaign development.

Figure 14: Prototypical development process of standardized international communication campaigns



Source: Author.

CONTRIBUTION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE THESIS

In the conclusion also the contribution of the thesis and the research should be discussed as well as its limitations and the possibilities for future research.

The thesis and the conducted research identified certain factors of successful standardized international communication campaigns. These are factors and aspects multinational companies and their communication agencies should take into account for the development of a standardized international communication campaign. These factors can function as an orientation for the development as well as guidelines for a potentially successful standardized international communication campaign. In addition to this, the thesis and the accompanying research created a prototypical development process of a standardized international communication campaign. This “ideal” process can help international marketing managers for accomplishing the complex and challenging task of developing a standardized international communication campaign. Especially, the expert interviews provided insights of how to develop an international campaign.

Of course, the thesis and the conducted research has its limitations and provides possibilities for future research. First, the limited number of best practice cases that were analyzed. In a future research the number of analyzed cases could be extended. For this, also more recent cases could be chosen as well as cases from different industries. As well, the number expert interviews were limited and they were focusing on international marketing experts from the automotive industries. As a further step and as an opportunity for future research, a quantitative research could be possible in order to validate the explored and identified success factors. Also, the single steps of the created prototypical development process can be validated in such a quantitative research. On the other hand, the process can be analyzed in more depth, identifying certain procedures and also tools for the single development steps. Here, also current developments of the digitalization of international marketing communication could be incorporated and researched.

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APPENDICES

Conducted interviews

International marketing experts:

Company representatives

- Christoph Hohmann, former Head of International Marketing SKODA Auto (11.06.13)
- Thanh Vu Tran, Head of International Marketing SKODA Auto (17.07.2014)
- Stefan Beuschlein, Head of Advertising SKODA Deutschland (09.09.2014)
- Hans-Erik Jonscher, Managing Director Mercedes-Benz Czech Republic (19.06.2014)

Agency representatives

- Michael Conrad, former Chief Creative Officer Leoburnet Worldwide (15.09.2013)
- David Martinek, Head o Digital Media SKODA, Mediacom Prague (20.06.2014)
- Dr. Percy Smend, Chief International Officer Opel Scholz&Friends Hamburg (01.09.2014)
- Corinna Thüs, Managing Director Young&Rubicam Hamburg/Prague (09.09.2015)
- Andreas Butterbrodt, Strategy Director Renault, Publicis Pixelpark Hamburg (28.06.2016)
- Steve Plesker, Head of Global Strategy Volkswagen, DDB Berlin (08.07.2016)

International diplomats:

- Ladislav Škerik, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Czech Republic (12.05.2014)
- Pavla Havrliková, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Czech Republic (12.05.2014)
- Dr. Robert Klinke, German Embassy Prague (24.04.2015)
- Martin Tapla, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Czech Republic (04.07.2016)
- Petr Kypr, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Czech Republic (04.07.2016)
- Richard Hlavaty, Ministry of Industry and Trade (04.07.2016)

Thematic questionnaires

Interviews with international marketing experts:

1. What are the success factors in the development of international communication campaigns?
2. What are the common attributes and factors of successful international campaigns?
3. How can you develop an international successful communication campaign?
4. What aspects are important in the development process?

Interviews with international diplomats:

1. What are the success factors in international diplomacy?
2. How do you proceed in international diplomacy?
3. What role do cultural differences play in international diplomacy?
4. What are the “general rules” of international diplomacy?

Focus groups and one-on-one interviews with international students:

Usage of cars

- Do you have a car? Why? Which one? What do you use it for? If not: Why not?

Associations with cars

- What aspects come to your mind thinking of cars?
- What pictures do you have in mind?

Role of cars

- How important is a car to you?
- Are there alternatives to cars?
- Has the importance of cars changed today?
- What role does a car have for the people?
- What does a car mean to people in your country?
- Could you describe a car by a metaphor (e.g. a “tool” or a “animal”)?
- How do you feel in a car?

Attributes of a car

- What is important to you when choosing a car?
- What attributes does a car have to offer?
- What are relevant features of a car?
- How do you evaluate a car?
- What do you know about new car technologies?
- What do you know about car connectivity? How important is it to you?
- What do you know about electronic cars? How important is e-mobility for you?
- How could or should be the “car of the future”?

Car brands

- How important is the brand of the car?
- What are your favorite car brands?
- What are the favorite car brands in your country? Which ones for your age group?
- Which brand do you consider for yourself?
- Is it important from what country the car comes from?

Media and communication

- How do you inform yourself about cars?
- Which media channels do you use?
- When and where do you notice car communication?
- What car communication, i.e. advertising do you remember?
- What was great car communication/advertising? And why?
- What role do new media and digital channels play
(e.g. YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat)?

