



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

TEMA Interactive Academy

Marketing Flops

December 2, 2004



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

The name Coca-Cola in China was first rendered as Ke-kou-ke-la. Unfortunately, the Coke company did not discover until after thousands of signs had been printed that the phrase means "bite the wax tadpole" or "female horse stuffed with wax" depending on the dialect. Coke then researched 40,000 Chinese characters and found a close phonetic equivalent, "ko-kou-ko-le," which can be loosely translated as "happiness in the mouth."



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

In Taiwan, the translation of the Pepsi slogan "Come alive with the Pepsi Generation" came out as "Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead."



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Also in Chinese, the Kentucky Fried Chicken slogan "finger-lickin' good" came out as "eat your fingers off."



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

When General Motors introduced the Chevy Nova in South America, it was apparently unaware that "no va" means "it won't go." After the company figured out why it wasn't selling any cars, it renamed the car in its Spanish markets to the Caribe.



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Ford had a similar problem in Brazil when the Pinto flopped. The company found out that Pinto was Brazilian slang for "tiny male genitals". Ford pried all the nameplates off and substituted Corcel, which means horse.



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

When Parker Pen marketed a ballpoint pen in Mexico, its ads were supposed to say "It won't leak in your pocket and embarrass you." However, the company's mistakenly thought the Spanish word "embarazar" meant embarrass. Instead the ads said that "It wont leak in your pocket and make you pregnant."



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

An American t-shirt maker in Miami printed shirts for the Spanish market which promoted the Pope's visit. Instead of the desired "I Saw the Pope" in Spanish, the shirts proclaimed "I Saw the Potato."



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Chicken-man Frank Perdue's slogan, "It takes a tough man to make a tender chicken," got terribly mangled in another Spanish translation. A photo of Perdue with one of his birds appeared on billboards all over Mexico with a caption that explained "It takes a hard man to make a chicken aroused."



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Hunt-Wesson introduced its Big John products in French Canada as Gros Jos before finding out that the phrase, in slang, means "big breasts." In this case, however, the name problem did not have a noticeable effect on sales.



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

In Italy, a campaign for Schweppes Tonic Water translated the name into Schweppes Toilet Water.



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Japan's second-largest tourist agency was mystified when it entered English-speaking markets and began receiving requests for unusual sex tours. Upon finding out why, the owners of Kinki Nippon Tourist Company changed its name.



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

In an effort to boost orange juice sales in predominantly continental breakfast eating England, a campaign was devised to extol the drink's eye-opening, pick-me-up qualities. Hence, the slogan, "Orange juice. It gets your pecker up."



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Bacardi, famous rum makers , made a fruity drink with the name 'Pavian' to suggest French chic, but 'Pavian' means 'baboon' in German.



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

When an American laundry detergent first started selling in the middle east the magazine ads had a 'before' picture of a dirty shirt on the left side of the page and an 'after' picture of a clean shirt on the right side. But Arabs read from right to left.



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

When Gerber Foods first started selling baby food in Africa, they used the same packaging as in the USA - the cute baby on the label. Later, when investigating lower than expected sales figures, they found out that it is common practice in Africa, where many people can't read, to put pictures of the inside contents on food package labels.



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Coors Beer slogan, "Turn it Loose," was translated into Spanish as "Suffer From Diarrhea."



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Puffs tissues had a bad name in Germany since "Puff" is a colloquial term for whorehouse.



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

All very funny but sadly all very true!

What constitutes a marketing flop?



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Case Study

McDonalds launched a new hamburger, the:

Arch-Deluxe-Burger with the slogan

The burger with an adult taste.

It flopped! Why?



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Case Study

Gerber (producer of baby food) came out with a new product Gerber Singles. These were ready made meals for single adults. To save money Gerber placed the food in the same baby jars.

It flopped! Why?



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Case Study

Ben-Gay is a well know US brand. Ben-Gay produces pain relief cream for muscle and back pain. Ultra Strength Ben-Gay pain relief was also produced. Both were a success.

Ben-Gay-Aspirin was also later produced.

It flopped! Why?



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Case Study

Colgate Ready Made Meals. Eat a Colgate ready made meal then brush your teeth with Colgate toothpaste.

It flopped! Why?



COMMUNICATIONS TO SUCCESS

Practical :

Detail a marketing flop you have encountered.