

# Cultural differences in marketing and advertising assignment

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BUSTER**

Cultural Differences in Marketing and Advertising In class, we were asked to think about how marketing and advertising is affected by cultural differences. Firstly I would like to outline what I think marketing is; to me marketing is the act of doing a series of actions to make a product look attractive to one or more targeted audiences so that they will go out and purchase the product. This being said, it is clear that different audiences will be appealed by different things, especially if these audiences happen to be in different countries.

Having only lived in Belgium and France, I can't really speak from experience and say that I've seen how cultural differences affect marketing and advertising seeing as these two countries are very close to each other geographically as well as culturally. However I can speak more broadly about this topic. The first thing which I believe affects marketing and advertising is language. Language is one of the main things you notice when you go to a foreign place.

For example in Belgium once you cross a certain geographical point, all the advertisements that you see are no longer in French but in Flemish. This may not be a major point because there are other ways of getting a message across then by using words, however the fact still remains that language can sometimes not only act as a barrier but also be misinterpreted because one word in a certain language could mean something entirely different in another. Secondly, something which also changes across cultures is beliefs.

Some countries believe that the number 13 is unlucky; others like Japan think it's the number 4. The same thing applies to symbols, in Hinduism (and

other religions such as Buddhism) the swastika is considered a symbol of peace or prosperity, where as most people now consider the swastika to be a Nazi symbol and thus stand for something quite different. Another thing which is different among cultures is the degree of liberalness or conservativeness. Europe has a reputation for being more liberal than other countries such as the USA.

So in Europe seeing a picture of a woman naked or in a bikini would seem perfectly normal where as in the United States or the Middle East especially it would be seen as highly offensive. Therefore because every culture is different, if marketers want to be effective they must make sure that they really look at whichever culture they are targeting and consider not only what factors will be considered offensive but also what factors will be alluring to this culture.