

# The cross cultural communication

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



## **Introduction**

Communication involves the sending and receiving of messages. There are two major types of communication that are registered more often in the day-to-day activities: face-to-face communication and communication through a medium. In the business setting, these two communication types are used simultaneously or exclusively to maintain good customer relations, enable an organization to thrive successfully by dispensing its mission to both the corporate world and its target market. The application of face-to-face communication is necessary for business personnel to appeal to one another in order to close business deals (Hutchinson, 2010). This is important for organizations that maintain a high profile organizational culture. On the other hand, communication through the media or channels of communication is mostly used in the business setting to save time while at the same time to maintain a cost effective approach of doing business. Communication of either type has to obey the cultural differences that may exist between a message sender and a message recipient (Hutchinson, 2010). In this case, organizations that communicate with various clients worldwide customize their communication approaches to suit the cultural diversities of their target customers.

Organizations like Apple Inc. and Boeing are examples of companies which operations and business goals involve the sale of products and provision of services to a wide range of customers. In their efforts to maintain a close relationship with their customers, these organizations have incorporated cross cultural communication through the inclusion of culture-sensitive

aspects of doing business. For Apple, the management has employed a multi-lingual online support mechanism that covers the needs of various target customers. In addition, the organization has masterminded an approach of designing quality and outstanding products that serve the personal needs of customers around the globe. Other aspects include Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the marketing of its products through its logo (Segall, 2013). Boeing on the other hand, provides a multi-lingual approach to handling customer queries while at the same time offering personal assistance based on routes taken and services needed. The organization understands and offers services that reflect the cultural needs of the customers (Uwagwuna, 2011). This service rendering is made possible through the creation of robust communication sensitive to personal customer needs.

## Literature Review

### APPLE: Multi-Lingual Platform

The official Apple website is a domain that links the gap between the organization and its customers all around the world. Taking into account different languages that customers around the globe speak, the organization's website is engineered in a manner that addresses the language barriers that may exist if only English or Chinese languages were exclusively used (Kutz, 2012). Created through a mechanism that dictate location-based queries and customer demands, Apple's official website is one of the communication channels that enable cross cultural communication. The purpose of the website to the organization is to provide instant

information regarding products and services rendered to customers all around the world. In addition, since customers drive the financial strength of the organization, the organization's website provides options to customers that help the organization to keep close analysis of their trends, demands, and cultures. Providing assistance to customers through weekly and monthly newsletters, Apple's website serves as a medium for the organization to offer products and services that provide customers with relevance to their cultural diversity.

The Apple's website provides services like assistance to queries and direction to the nearest Apple Store in any country that has a branch. This connection between the organization and its customers maintains a close relationship that fosters understanding for personalized cultural needs. Through communication between the organization and its customers, Apple is able to understand the factors that drive market share development in Asia and those that may not. Understanding the customer is the main goal the cross-cultural communication capability of the Apple website serves – as it helps the organization to plan, organize, and implement culture-sensitive business activities (Haghirian, 2010).

### Products' Design

The design of Apple products is based on a concept that was engineered and developed by the former founder and CEO of the organization, Steve Jobs. The concept of simplicity and sleek design is used by Apple to create and lure the market into buying its products. The concept is relevant to the business needs and objectives of the organization in that it helps in easy

identification of the organization's products (Segall, 2013). In addition to being different from other alternative products made and traded by other organizations, the design of the products attracts customers from all around the world because it stands out in both form and functionality factor. The design of Apple products is not a communication method applied by the organization however, it is a method of mobilizing customers around the globe to easily identify an Apple product from a range of other alternative products by other vendors. In addition, while identification of the products has been influenced by design, capabilities of the products provide personalized user experience that various other competing products do not offer. Among these capabilities there is the ability to switch from various languages and settings to suit one's personal requirements. These features attract corporate personnel from around the world to use such products for communication and their daily corporate needs (Segall, 2013).

With consideration of the cross cultural communication, Apple's design for both virtual customer service and physical products creates easy, cost effective, and efficient user experience. This reaches to all customers regardless of their cultures, personal preferences and tastes, and user experience intended. In addition, while a cluster of products which stand out as close alternatives and/or substitutes to Apple products, the design concept of sleek and simplicity accentuates its market drive of originality, hence, distinguishing its products out from the cluster (Segall, 2013).

Logo

Critics and fans of Apple have designed technology-related humor aimed to hurt or compliment Apple products. From a fans' perspective, an example of humor is directed to its logo. As a corporate joke, one wonders who bit the missing part of the apple used as Apple's logo. While such jokes may have different meanings to different people, one cannot ignore the aspect of observation and keen interest to the logo. Many Apple devices and services offered through the Apple website do not bear the terms Apple Inc. However, the organization's logo acts as a universal factor that customers identify the organization with. The use of the logo defines the company's name without the need to translate from one language to another. In addition, the term apple may mean different things to different cultures through pronunciation; hence, the logo cuts the stakes that may be involved.

Cross cultural communication through the logo is made possible which means that customers, especially those suffering from language incapability, do not need to read. In addition, cultural settings that may find the pronunciation of the term apple insulting or rather meaningless can depend on the logo to identify an Apple product. With regards to the organization's business goals and performance appraisals, it is clear that Apple has been influential in setting trends in the computer and smartphone fields for a long time. This factor has garnered positive publicity for the organization, hence, attracting a large market share. To serve this market share, Apple Stores have been set up in various cities around the world. Customers from a wide range of cultural backgrounds have been able to single out stores marked with the organization's logo, as opposed to other unrelated businesses that have the word apple inscribed on the storefronts (Haghirian, 2010).

## BOEING: Multi-Lingual Platform

Boeing is one of the most recognized aviation organizations in the world that offers both cargo and passenger flights to a considerable number of destinations. The aviation industry faces a stiff competition from both public and private companies who compete for the same market. For Boeing to sustain growth and development, it had been diversifying its flight services for a long time to include a wide scope of worldwide destinations. While the geographical diversity is aimed at attracting or reaching a large market, the organization has also incorporated cross cultural communication as a way of reaching its customers in more personalized manner. Cross cultural communication in the case of Boeing has been achieved through the multi-lingual approach in service rendering. While flights to and from the Asian continent travel to and from Europe, the USA, Brazil, and South Africa, an obvious language barrier between flight attendants and customers is eminent. This means that, based on destination, Boeing has tried to meet the least expectations of customers by employing a workforce that is conversant with the languages spoken by passengers of certain routes (Bhattacharyya, 2010). In addition, while customers are not limited in terms of their destinations and routes, multi-lingual passenger guideline booklets are offered within the flights to enable ease of comprehension, and limit reliance on flight attendant help.

Most users of flight services are first-timers who may not understand a number of safety precautions. Flying is a high stake business that involves and requires observation of safety precautions. Addressing this factor Boeing

uses comprehensible safety symbols and signs. The aviation industry differs from other industries in terms of safety due to the high stakes involved. Hence, customers from around the globe require reassurance that safety precautions are well outlined within the flights. Such requirements call for universal language that is understood by a majority of culturally diverse customers and service users (Bhattacharyya, 010). Boeing has been able to attract a large number of customers through its emphasis on providing a robust cultural sensitivity to its clients through the use of multi-lingual customer guides and brochures, linguistically sophisticated workforce, and comprehensible safety signs and symbols (Uwagwuna, 2011).

#### International Service Rendering

Boeing's connection with clients and users of its services is not only provided through comprehensible services, but also through culturally diverse personal assistance. Boeing serves customers internationally and has been able to customize its services to reflect their cultural requirements. The aviation industry attracts customers through the provision of quality personalized service. Boeing has achieved this through communication with culturally diverse clientele. Cross cultural communication in this case depends not only on language but also on the specific factors surrounding specific cultures. For example, customer care service at the booking offices is personalized in a manner that connects culturally diverse customers to customer care personnel that can provide the desired help. In addition, comfort during flights has been used to propagate the diverse culture-oriented service provision of the organization, hence, acting as a



communication factor. Comfort within the flights involves the provision of drinks, snacks, and food onboard. The understanding of various cultures has developed Boeing to be one of the most stable airline organizations in the world in terms of maintaining consistent growth and sustainability while some organizations like American Airlines continue to cut back on expenditure through layoffs (Haghirian, 2010).

### Personalized Experience

The Chinese purchase their food from food stores while it is still alive. This is the case in most instances that involves on-the-ground purchase of living food stuffs. For example, the Chinese culture requires that they consume freshly slaughtered animal or sea foods like turtles, fish, and crabs. What can Boeing do about this cultural element? While flights may be long and tiring, in most Boeing booking offices and waiting centers, culturally diverse restaurants are set up to provide food prepared with respect to the customer needs. During flights, flight attendants serve clients with regards to their personal preferences based on their culture, beliefs, and customs. As a cross cultural means of communicating its personalized services, Boeing incorporates a communication-oriented training and development program that is aimed at educating the workforce on how to attend to cultural diversity of target markets (Uwagwuna, 2011). This reflexes the workforce to understand the means of communicating with customers from specific cultures while at the same time observing time.

E-business solutions enable people from all around the world to book for Boeing flights through its virtual handle or website. Regarding the language

spoken and service preferred, the virtual handles are easy to understand and customize, thus, reflecting a customer's personal preference. Booking and customer care requests through the virtual handles are responded to with respect to a language a customer is able to decode (Uwagwuna, 2011).

## Conclusion

Providing assistance to customers through weekly and monthly newsletters, Apple's website serves as a medium for the organization to offer products and services that provide customers with relevance to their cultural diversity. The Apple's website provides services like assistance to queries and directions to the nearest Apple Store in any country that has a branch.

The concept of simplicity and sleek design is used by Apple to create and lure the market into buying its products. The products' capabilities include the ability to switch from various languages and settings to suit one's personal requirement. Cross cultural communication is also made possible through the logo, which means that the customers, especially those suffering from language incapability, do not need to read. Customers from a wide range of cultural backgrounds have been able to single out stores marked with the organization's logo, as opposed to other unrelated businesses that have the word apple inscribed on the storefronts (Haghirian, 2010).

Cross cultural communication in the case of Boeing has been achieved through the multi-lingual approach in service rendering. While flights to and from the Asian continent travel to and from Europe, the USA, Brazil, and South Africa, an obvious language barrier between flight attendants and

customers is eminent. Boeing has been able to attract a large number of customers through its emphasis on providing a robust cultural sensitivity to its customers through the use of multi-lingual customer guides and brochures, linguistically sophisticated workforce, and comprehensible safety signs and symbols (Uwagwuna, 2011). As a cross cultural means of communicating its personalized services, Boeing incorporates a communication-oriented training and development program that is aimed at educating the workforce on how to attend to cultural diversity of target markets (Uwagwuna, 2011). Booking and customer care requests through the virtual handles are responded to with respect to a language a customer is able to decode.