

# Marketing and heineken assignment

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a Heineken Case Study Questions Put yourself in the role of the Global VP of Marketing at Heineken. You have different marketing teams evaluating the Heineken's global brand positioning. Your objective is to recommend to the CEO how you should proceed with your global brand efforts. 1. What are Heineken's strengths and weaknesses? Is Heineken a global brand? Why or why not? What are the characteristics of a global brand? What competitive and cultural barriers does the Heineken brand face?

A global brand is one which customizes product features and selling techniques to local tastes so that consumers in different locations and under different socio-cultural constructs (or, in this case, also under different development cycles) can identify and relate. Heineken is a global brand. It might mean slightly different things to different cultures, but it is recognized across the globe as a premium beer ??? tastes and costs more (or is valued higher) than the average beer.

Some of Heineken's strengths were the already existing brand associations, especially outside the Netherlands, of " premium beer," " lighter and superior quality," and " attractive packaging. " The competitive barriers vary from market to market. In some cases, particularly in Africa and Eastern Europe, the problem (according to the case assumptions) is that they were in the embryonic stage of their development. It is difficult to break into a market in which beer consumption is already low.

The issues in Western Europe, however, were on the other extreme (namely overcapacity and minimal population growth,) which resulted in price competition and margin pressures, among other things. Also, in Germany,

the country with the highest beer consumption per capita, other domestic beers not only dominated, but Heineken was only available through imports. This significantly impacts sales/consumption. 2. Analyze and evaluate the research outlined in the case. Why did they field project Comet and project Mosa? In your opinion, were these good research efforts? In your opinion, are the conclusions of the research mutually consistent?

Are there any questions that are still outstanding in your mind? The 2 projects were fielded because the interest was in understanding global findings ??? in (a) the brand's communications and (b) expressions of taste and friendship I don't think these researches yielded any findings that were completely new or significantly different from the already existing perception of the brand. They also didn't measure brand equity; rather, they stayed relatively abstract and superficial. However, they were probably useful in that they confirmed the brand associations, feelings and identity as far as global consumers are concerned.

They were consistent, but we don't know (are not told via the case) whether they necessarily mutually beneficial or even useful. In other words, we don't know if project Mosa's findings were used when projecting global communications (project Comet. ) Some questions not touched upon were on a more quantitative note, the price elasticity of beer consumption in some of these key markets and, consequently, how much more a consumer in a given location would be willing to pay for that " premium beer. " 3. How can the Heineken brand be developed through marketing communications?

What are the stages of a brand's relationship (outlined in the case) with the consumer? How strong is the relationship between the Heineken brand and the consumer at each stage? The states are: embryonic, take-off, growing, mature and declining. The more "evolved" the beer consumption in a market, the stronger their awareness and relationship with the brand. Therefore, the branding communication needs to be adapted per market, from building to enrichment to confirmation to restoration, depending on the stage of the market and the specific goal of the Heineken brand there. 4.

What is Heineken's current brand personality and positioning? The current brand personality and positioning are based on friendship values that touch the heart of the consumer and taste opinions (head) ??? things like... trustworthy, friendly, respectful, special, premium, tradition, superiority, etc.

5. What should be the role of Heineken headquarters regarding the marketing of the brand worldwide? What's the balance of central or local control that makes the most sense? There should be some standardization of imagery, consistency of look & feel of media, and of brand feeling/personality in the overall message.

However, there should be local autonomy in customizing slogans, catchy phrases/print materials, promos etc. based on what makes sense to the local culture and at that phase of their "evolution." 6. What do you recommend to your CEO about standardizing the brand's global image? Do you have enough information? If not, what are you missing to provide a concrete recommendation? Contradictory enough, standardization of the brand's

global image needs to be accomplished via the localization / customization of the bigger & broader principal concept/image/feeling/personality.

Once established that Heineken stands for ABC (#4 above,) the way to get the message across in the different markets will differ. Consumers in the Netherlands respond differently to those in Germany, let alone to those in Africa. However, we're missing key info about each region's " valuation" of beer consumption as compared to other things/activities/likes-dislikes. Other than what stage Heineken believes that market falls into, there needs to be a better understanding of the behavior of that market, not only beer- or beverage-wise, but overall.

Is beer consumption in Argentina low? If so, why? Why are they in the embryonic vs. take-off stages of evolution? Perhaps because they are a country that drinks wine, not beer...??? Is there even a market to go after there? And if so, how? What does the local consumer go/do/read? Should promos or ads be running during soccer matches vs. other activities? In other words, how " scientific" was Heineken's conclusion of their objectives in the 8 countries at stake?