

THE GLOBAL ADVERTISING OF A LOCAL BRAND IN TERMS OF ANALYZING THE VISUAL CONTENT: TURKISH AIRLINES GLOBALLY YOURS ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN*

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ABSTRACT

Globalization is a process where economic, political, social and cultural values and the build up of these values are spread beyond the national borders to the world. This way, differing social cultures and beliefs gain recognition and the relationships between countries become ubiquitous. (Mc Chesney&Wood&Foster 1999:7). During this globalization process, advertising brings together a product or a service with a cultural symbol and presents it to audiences. According to this definition then, airline transport, which is a modern, fast, and prestigious mode of transport, has been largely affected by globalization. As a result, the intensifying competitive environment has led airline companies to shift from a more local market to a more global one. Advertising is often used to create brand recognition and value and, along with this, sports marketing practices, which is a new terminology, when the cultural symbols they use meet with target audiences, a platform of communication is created. In this study, by taking sports marketing as a starting point, the communication strategies of Turkish Airlines, which has taken great steps in terms of brand recognition, and the visual and linguistic messages of their advertising campaign “Globally Yours” will be analyzed.

Keywords: Cultural symbols, global advertisement, brand communication, sports marketing, Turkish Airlines.

Introduction

For the first time in 1978, in the American magazine Advertising Age, the term “sports marketing” was adapted from the general marketing description to express the changes in products and services in order to satisfy the desires and needs of sports consumers. According to a modern description, sports marketing takes the basic marketing principles and markets products that are made to have a semblance to sports but are, in fact, products that have nothing to do with sports. (Argan and Katırcı 2008:20). According to this, sports marketing contains within itself industries outside of sports which it then reformulates so that sports fans can watch, listen or collect items relating to their favorite sports activities.

In this day and age, it is impossible to completely separate the description and the operation of sports marketing from general marketing. For example, according to the American Marketing Association, the definition of marketing is “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” This process is valid when we talk about sports marketing as well. However, when applied to the sports industry, the basic marketing principles are reviewed to fit the nature of sports.

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Another important detail that can be observed during the sports marketing process is that the marketing specialists of companies which are not associated with sports, but that use sports as a tool of communication, do not show the same mastery over sports products and activities as they do over consumer products or services for traditional marketing processes / communication models.

The demographic make-up, cultural values, sense of belonging and expectations of the target audience in sports marketing, along with factors such as the structure of the market, the competitive environment, the rivals in the market, the language used by the rivals when they make their promises, use of photographs, use of color, use of celebrity, slogans and symbols as well as other visual imagery are utilized according to the “supporters and viewers” values. Two elements stand out during this process: “the marketing of the sport, sports commodities and services – marketing of other commodities and services thanks to sports”. During their free time, individuals take up activities that have nothing to do with sports, but that utilize sportive designs and are marketed in such a way that it seems to be directly related to the relevant sport, thus creating a brand image in the mind of the target audience. With the rise of sponsorships and advertising campaigns starting in the 21st century, this has become a frequently employed method along with integrated marketing communication activities.

At the beginning, insurance, food and drink and the automotive sectors were interested in the sports market. Nowadays, other sectors such as communication, health and technology have shown interest in sports marketing, leading the market to grow significantly. With the commercialization of sports, there has been serious profit made in the sale of sports products. Especially in industrial communities, the number and variety of sporting activities has increased along with the division of labor and the development of specialization. The high level of individuals in stadiums and in front of their television sets and the increasing number of people reading the sports sections in newspapers are reasons to market yet another product for the sports.

The “passive participants” of sports game, which are basically the viewers, are a huge opportunity for sectors operating outside of the sports industry. This opportunity described by Pascal Boniface in his book *Football and Globalization* can best be summarized as follows: “football is the last stage of globalization. Football is the most globalized notion of our day. The football empire has no limits and recognizes no obstacles. It is the most celebrated empire by the population. The football ball has taken this empire’s sphere of influence and popularity outside of the football field.”(Boniface 2007:9).

It is true that in these mentioned industrial communities, on top of football, there has been a growing interest in team sports such as volleyball, basketball, athletics, swimming and rugby as well as independent sports such as golf and mountain climbing. Furthermore, motor sports such as NASCAR, Formula 1 and Moto GP have fans that follow their teams all around the world, leagues such as NBA, NFL, FIBA Euroleague, Premier League, Bundesliga, Sera A have become branded and are being watched at all times in every country. These reflect on the multiple layered relationship between “the individual and the corporations’ willing support based on prestige of the sportsman, club and events” and “globalization, sports and marketing”.

Aside from traditional mass media tools such as television, newspaper and radio, brands have the opportunity to appear in internet newspapers, blogs, fan pages, sports clubs and websites of their sub brands, sports channels, sports newspapers and magazines owned by the sports clubs, commercials broadcasted in movie theatres, open air commercials, television or radio programs in which sports men and commentators participate, betting sites, social media networks, and many sports organizations where their designs and services reach to millions;

in addition with the added monetary sources to the sports industry, the growth of the industry is imminent. Furthermore, in the daily lives of consumers, the budget and time that they put aside for sports products, services or events has increased along with the number of sectors and marketers interested in sports. In many sports, most notably basketball and football, ticket sales, match broadcasting rights, sportswear brand choices, sportswear commercials, base, virtual and strip advertising practices, along with star sportsmen chosen as the faces of brands, the marketing of computer games, sponsorship deals, activities programmed before, after and at game intermissions, and many more details give us an idea of the grandiosity of the sports industry. When we add the sectors and individuals that feed off the sports industry that are not obvious, it is not surprising then that the sports industry is one of the top ten biggest sectors in the world. Many brands have been making rooted changes to their communication strategies because of the postmodern marketing understanding and rapid globalization, where they now approach their consumers on an individual basis, developing and maintaining the relationship according to the needs and wishes of the consumers.

In a rapidly globalizing world and increasing competitive environment, airline companies, status symbol of rapid and prestigious transportation, are slowly moving away from localness and opening up to new markets. In airline transport, advertising is employed to create brand recognition. Sports marketing, which is a relatively new concept, uses cultural symbols, and serves as a communication platform for brands to meet with their target audience. (Odabasi 2004:11-15).

The rapid and unusual technological advancements recorded in the second half of the 20th century have also influenced the aviation sector. Political and social turmoil have also had their effects on the sector. After the September 11th attacks, the aviation industry received a serious blow and there have been only a handful of companies that have managed not only to not go bankrupt, but also manage a minimal profit. One of these companies was Turkey's national airline company Turkish Airlines.

Turkish Airlines was established in 1933 by the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The first flying unit which consisted of five planes started national flights in 1933; in 1947 the first international flight Ankara-Istanbul-Athens was realized. In the 70s and 80s, the company's reputation was jeopardized as it was associated with accidents and delays. Regardless, the company has managed to renew itself since the beginning of the 21st century by developing itself technologically, using its resources more productively and offering many flying alternatives. Thus, Turkish Airlines has become one of the most profitable airline company in the world.(Kozlu 2010: 18-21).

Now Turkish Airlines has a fleet of 137 planes; with the agreement it has made with Lufthansa in 2006, it has increased its flying locations from 131 to 231 and in April 2006, it became a member of the world's biggest airline association, Star Alliance. The same year, the company received the best airline award at the "Skytrax Southern Europe Airline Awards", which are considered the Oscars for airline companies. Turkish Airlines has a promising international voice, and is a leader in national flights with a 100 million passenger transport capacity.(Subaşı : 2008:.36-44).

Turkish Airlines, which is the fourth biggest airline company of Europe, signed a sponsorship deal with world famous football clubs FC Barcelona (Spain) and Manchester United FC (United Kingdom) in 2010. According to this sponsorship deal, Turkish Airlines became the official sponsor of Barcelona and Turkish Airlines logo and advertisements were to take place in all of Barcelona's channels, including their football stadium Nou Camp. Furthermore, Turkish Airlines was to film a commercial with the players of Barcelona and advertise their sponsorship all over the world. Turkish Airlines became Barcelona's official transporter, taking them to any football games they had outside of Spain. FC Barcelona closed the 2009-

2010 season with 6 cups, and is to fly with Turkish Airlines to all Champion's League and other official tournaments for the next three years.



Figure 1: Turkish Airlines Posters of Barcelona and Manchester United

Moreover, after FC Barcelona, Turkish Airlines became the sponsor of another world renowned club – Manchester United. According to the 3.5 year long sponsorship deal made in March 2010, Turkish Airlines was to fly Manchester players to all matches and tournaments abroad, as well as put up their logos and advertising boards around the Old Trafford Stadium.

Turkish Airlines also made a name of itself on the basketball courts. It has a sponsorship deal with Maroussi Basketball Club, which is one of Greece's oldest and most successful basketball clubs. According to the sponsorship deal, on all the sportswear the players have on during their Greece A1 League as well as Euroleague, will have the Turkish Airlines logo. Furthermore, on the boards in the court, during official press conferences, web site and interviews board, the Turkish Airlines logo will take a prominent position. Other than becoming the sponsor of two of the most respected football clubs worldwide, Turkish Airlines has also become the sponsor of a golf tournament in Bellek under the name "Turkish Airlines Challenge". Furthermore, the airline company has also signed a deal with Danish tennis player Caroline Wozniacki, choosing her as the face of their business class.

Turkish Airlines was the sponsor of Euroleague – Final Four Organization, which had brought together the top four basketball teams in May 2010. The games were watched in 185 countries by approximately 950 million viewers. Turkish Airlines will continue to be Euroleague's sponsor in 2011 and we can see that the company has made long term investment for sports sponsorships. In the analysis section of this study, we will take a look at an advertisement made for Turkish Airlines' Euroleague campaign. We will take a close look at what the advertisement says about the airlines' values.

Along with all of these important developments, Turkish Airlines has also struck a deal with legendary basketball player Kobe Bryant. Bryant, who was listed as number 14 on Forbes' list of 100 most valued celebrities, will be the airlines' global representative for the next 2 years where he will promote the company in order for it to be preferred globally.

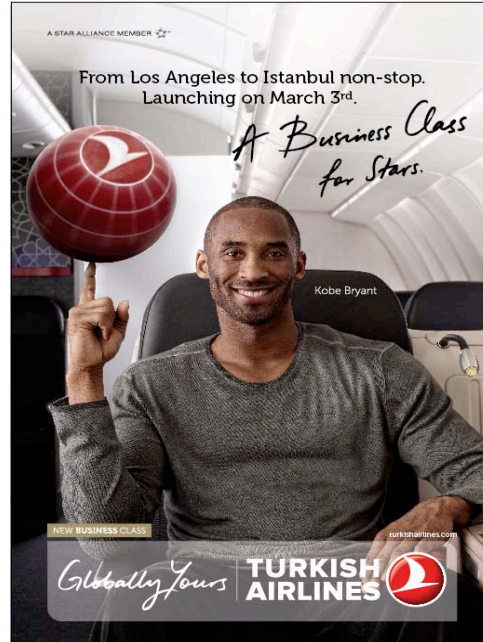


Figure 2: Turkish Airlines Posters of Kobe Bryant

Continuing its extensive publicity campaigns in the sports world, Turkish Airlines made another deal with FC Shaktar Donetsk, whose technical director Mircea Lucescu once worked with Beşiktaş and Galatasaray. The airlines' logo will feature on the Ukrainian team' players' sportswear, on the clubs website, the Donbass Arena stadium for the next 1.5 years. Moreover, Turkish Airlines will be the official airline of the team and will transport them to tournaments and camps abroad.

In this sense, the principles and values that Turkish Airlines has aimed to promote through their sponsorship services are reflected in their advertising campaigns. The most important and ongoing campaign is the "Globally Yours" campaign. This campaign reflects Turkish Airlines' "global" vision. Two advertisements from the campaign were chosen and analyzed with a semiological method.

Visual Analysis (1)



Figure 3: Turkish Airlines Posters of Globally Yours

Arrangement:

The billboard advertisement of Turkish Airlines is composed of a written text and an image. This advertisement is especially made to draw emphasis on Turkish Airlines' European flights. The written text is located on the right hand side of the ad, and the image on the left hand side. The image is the first thing that grabs the attention of the target audience. The image shows a part of the globe from a high angle with the logo of Turkish Airlines placed strategically at the center. The globe is colored red and the logo white. The meridians on the globe are also white, and extension of the logo, reflecting on the worldwide flights Turkish Airlines offers. Furthermore, key sites and symbols from world capitals are represented on top of the globe; Apollo's Temple symbolizing Greece, The Pisa Tower from Italy, the Eiffel Tower symbolizing France, The Big Ben of London, the Basilica of San Marco situated in Venice...

The textual section of the advertisement is composed of three parts: on the top is situated the slogan "discover all the beauties of Europe Fly Turkish Airlines", on the line below, the catch phrase "globally yours", and the signature logo of the Airlines. The Turkish Airlines logo is symmetrically placed on either side of the advertisement paralleling each other; "Turkish Airlines" is also repeated twice, emphasizing the name of the corporation. The repetitiveness is also important for brand recognition.

Frame:

The advertisement is closely framed in order to draw attention to the logo. Furthermore, the close-up concentrates the target audience's attention to the key elements in the advertisement and ensures the recollection of the logo and the name of the corporation.

Angle:

There are two angles employed in the advertisement that draws attention. Firstly, we can see the logo of Turkish Airlines placed on the globe from an upper angle. The symbols of the countries are pictured straight on. This directness creates a link between the advertisement and the target audience which will lead them to 'consume' the product.

Lighting:

There is a flat light coming onto the globe on the left hand side of the advertisement. This light alludes to Turkish Airlines' shining star lighting up the globe.

The Use of Color:

Red, white and dark blue are employed in the advertisement. On a dark blue font, the red and white logo of the Airlines stands out. The color red symbolizes energy, dynamism, and movement, as well as alludes to the Turkish flag. Blue, which is the color of the sky, calls out to the inner world of the individual as it also implies luxury and high quality. The color white points out the distinction and dignity of the brand.

The use of text:

The slogan of the corporation is written in bold and serif font style on the upper right hand side of the advertisement. However the word "Europe" which takes place in the slogan is written in a bolder font than the rest, as the goal is to clearly emphasize that the flights are to European countries. The use of serif font suggests that Turkish Airlines is a well rooted, trust worthy corporation. The catch phrase "globally yours" is written cursively and is slanted. This carries the air of an invitation sent to the privileged and the notable where the head of the corporation personally put down his signature, giving it personal warmth and sincerity. At the

bottom of the written text is the key signature of the corporation, which is smaller than the rest of the text, however bolder and straight. In this sense, the target audience reads it easily.

Linguistic Analysis

“Discover all the beauties of Europe – Fly Turkish Airlines”: we understand from the language of this sentence that the target audience of this advertisement is foreign and that only people who speak English in Turkey can understand what is being said. In this sense, this advertisement has an elitist approach. It is a sentence that underlines the flights made by Turkish Airlines to Europe. This sentence is directly linked to the symbols of European cities surrounding the globe. Hence the textual completes the visual. “All the beauties” suggests that Europe has a lot of beautiful things that needs to be discovered by the target audience, and the use of the verb “discover” invites the audience to go beyond dreaming and make everything in the imagination a reality with Turkish Airlines. “Globally yours”: the world ‘globally’ completes the visual globe that we see in the advertisement. Furthermore, it tells the target audience to put aside the “us” and “them” and to become one with the world. The “yours” part of the catch phrase directly links the corporation with its consumer, creating a sense of belonging.

Evaluation:

Turkish Airlines is a Turkish corporation which has flights to countries all around the world. This particular advertisement is directed to audiences interested in its European flights. The placement of the Turkish Airlines logo on the globe, which dominates the ad, is interesting. The globe has transformed into the colors of the Turkish flag and the logo: red and white. We can summarize the message being sent by the textual and visual aspects of this advertisement as follows:

- Through various different means – color, text, visuals – the same messages are given: “*trust*”, “*comfort*”, “*quality*”, “*excellence*”
- Certain contrasting elements can also be seen:
 - Localness (Turkish Airlines) / Globalization (European countries-the visual of the globe)
 - Distinction / Simplicity
 - Traditional (Turkish Airlines) / Innovative (opening up to the world)
 - Us / Them
 - An exciting, adventure filled life / a monotonous, routine life
 - Nature / culture
 - Privileged / Ordinary
- The words “Turkish Airlines” as well as its logo have been used twice in the advertisement, which ensures that they both create brand recognition in the mind of the audience.
- Other than declaring the fact that the Airlines has flights to Europe, the advertisement also inadvertently declares that it, in fact, flies everywhere (“globally yours” as well as the image of the globe lead us to think as such).
- The image of the globe also connotes meanings such as “our land”, “our home”, and “our shelter”.
- The horizontal meridians refer to dynamism and progress; the vertical shapes of the country symbols and the written text evoke a trust worthy feeling, and the round shapes (the logo and the globe) to sentiment, and perfection.

An example of a printed advertisement: a magazine advert

Visual Analysis (2)



Figure 4: Turkish Airlines Posters of Euroleague

Turkish Airlines was one of the sponsors of the Euroleague Basketball Championship. Hence the advertising campaign coerced the Airlines role as a sponsor with its flight services. In the center of the advertising at hand, there are seven basketball players from around the world, playing in different teams, wearing different sportswear. For example there is a player from the team Efes Pilsen coming from Turkey, a player from the Spanish team Barcelona, a player from the Italian team Montepaschi Siena, another player from Greece's Olympiakos team participating in the championship, and so on. All the players in the image are actual basketball players, each playing for a different team. However the image gives the impression that all seven of these players have united to become one team, all fighting for the same goal. With their united forces they come together propelling the globe with the Turkish Airlines logo high into the sky. The globe also evokes the championship trophy that all these players individually hope to reach, to win. The players come out of the clouds, reach out into the sky, in order to attain the peak point, which is the globe – the trophy. Furthermore, on the right hand side of the Turkish Airlines globe, a Turkish Airlines plane has lifted off; it seems, from the left hand side. The nose of the plane is pointed upwards, classically symbolizing progress, dynamism and advancement. The advertisement is composed so that a “Z” shaped reading can be done; the logo of the company is placed in three different locations on the ad, so that it leaves a clear mark in the mind of the audience. Furthermore, the repetitiveness adds to the brand recognition of the company. The page arrangement is symmetrical. If we were to divide the page into four, with one line going though it horizontally, and the other vertically; on the left hand side would be the written text “Euroleague Basketball” twice, and on the right hand side the written text “Turkish Airlines” twice, and its logo thrice.

Frame:

In the center of the advertisement are the basketball players, with their faces, jersey numbers, and even arm muscles clearly distinguished.

Because of the clouds, their bodies in their entirety are not well seen, creating a ‘border’ like effect.

Angle:

The sky and the clouds in the advertisement create a dream-like mysterious and mystic effect on the individual, with light coming in horizontally. Furthermore, the blue sky's color lightens up towards the bottom of the page, meaning that another light was used head on.

The Use of Color:

Like in other Turkish Airlines advertisements, there is a predominant use of the colors blue, white and red. The white clouds connote the imaginary, purity and cleanliness; the blue sky font symbolizes infinity, nobility and distinction. As for the color red, it most openly refers to the Turkish flag, but also to energy, speed and dynamism. Even the sportswear of the basketball players are these three colors, showing us that these colors have been purposefully opted for.

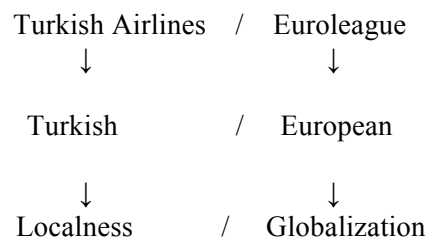
The use of Text:

In the advertisement, three different texts have been used in three different fonts. At the top left hand corner of the page, written in a 'feminine' color "Turkish Airlines proudly sponsors Euroleague Basketball" can be seen in bold and dark letters. On the bottom right hand side of the page, the signature logo of Turkish Airlines is written in blue text and bigger font. The words "Turkish Airlines and Euroleague" grab our attention because they have a smaller type size and are in brown.

Linguistic Analysis

"Turkish Airlines Proudly Sponsors Euroleague Basketball": to be able to compete in the European Basketball Championship is a question of prestige and pride for countries. To be able to support and sponsor such an organization is not only a source of prestige and pride for Turkish Airlines, but also for Turkey. According to this discourse then, Turkish Airlines has succeeded in trumping down its rivals and become the triumphant company.

"Globally Yours": the notion of globalization is visualized with the image of the globe in the advertisement. It tells its audience to go beyond their limits, to forget about "us" vs. "them" and to be one with the world around them. This message is further supported with the image of basketball players coming from different countries, speaking different languages, living different lifestyles. Being part of Europe is being part of the globe. If we were to make a chart out of this then the following could be concluded:



Evaluation:

Turkish Airlines has carriers that fly to countries all around the world; this advertisement specifically addresses flights made to Europe. The image of the basketball players reaching out to the globe in unison, from the clouds is dominant in the advertisement. Though all players are from different countries and different teams, the one thing that brings them all together is the sponsorship of Turkish Airlines. They are all part of the Euroleague, in competing teams; however they are unified thanks to the Airlines, giving support to the globe from under. From the visual and textual analysis, we can say that the following common messages are being sent to the audience:

- Whether is it with the use of color, text or images, the advertisement is giving the following messages: "trust", "comfort", "quality", "excellence", "success"
- Certain contrasting elements can also be seen:

- Localness (Turkish Airlines) / Globalization (European countries-the visual of the globe)
 - Distinction / Simplicity
 - Traditional (Turkish Airlines) / Innovative (opening up to the world)
 - Us / Them
 - An exciting, adventure filled life / a monotonous, routine life
 - Nature / Culture
- The Airlines' logo is used three times, hence creating brand recognition in the minds of the audience.

Findings

As a conclusion, in order to create a difference, and bring attention to itself in the airline transport sector, Turkish Airlines has strategically used sports marketing and with the "Globally Yours" advertising campaign, has aimed to reach out to the target audience through several mass media tools. The visual and textual icons of the advertisements will be analyzed, followed by a general evaluation of the meanings they conjure up. In both advertisements of the "Globally Yours" campaign, we can see the following:

- that Turkish Airlines was a "local" and "national" brand;
- that it is transforming into a "global" brand,
- through the use of the words "globally yours", that Turkish Airlines addresses all the people of all the countries it flies to,
- compared to other airlines, that Turkish Airlines is classier, preferential and select,
- that the airline company is traditional and attached to its past, but that it is also innovative and open to being discovered and discovering.

Turkish Airlines is one of the companies to have best applied sports marketing. Through the use of celebrities it has had headway in becoming a global brand, with sponsorship deals with sports teams and organizations meticulously chosen. The choice of teams from all corners of the world has allowed Turkish Airlines to increase the range of its consumers, using cultural symbols in the visual transfer of their campaigns.

Thus, for a "local" brand to become "global" and to be able to create a "notion of itself", in a "prestigious" manner, sustaining it both on a "local" and "global" scale, means that Turkish Airlines' sports marketing strategy in the form of sponsorship activities is "successful" and "effective".

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