

Islamic Branding and Marketing

Creating a Global Islamic Business

Dr Paul Temporal

Dr Paul Temporal has over 30 years experience with brands. As part of his work at Oxford University, Dr Temporal directs a research and education project on Islamic branding and marketing.

Very little has been written on how islamic branding and marketing differs from traditional branding, based on western corporate development.

Around 23 % of the world's population is islamic, with varying degrees of affiliation and implementation of the religion.

When I use the phrase Islamic branding, I am not referring to brands that originate from Islamic countries, buy any brands that seek to address the needs of muslim markets.

Islamic audiences love western brands, but there are three reasons why they wish to have their own brands :

1. Western brands are not fully compliant with islamic values

2. Islamic countries want to create their own global brands(Emirates,Ethihad)and 3. The growth of the educated middle class in islamic countries has created the need for development of products and services aimed at them.

The question of segmenting markets based on religion is a thorny one. The brand managers I speak to say they are not selling to a religion but tailoring the offer to meet their needs.

The muslim market is huge and disparate- in the case of majority muslim countries, there is no one homogeneous islamic or muslim market.

Islam has a huge following, as befits a religion that is around 14 centuries old. Islam is based on a belief in one God, Allah. The word Muslim means ‘those who accept and submit to the will of god.’

Marketers need to bear in mind that islam is a way of life and the values and principles of islam are taken much more seriously in terms of influencing the every day life.

The five pillars of islam consist of :1. Shahadah- a declaration of faith that there is no god but god, 2. Salat- an obligation to perform ritual prayers five times a day, 3.Zakat – a regular(annual) contribution to the poor in society, 4. Sawn – fasting in the holy month and 5. Hajj – visit mecca at least once in a persons lifetime.

The Islamic system of governance is based on shariah or islamic law. Shariah deals with legal aspects of day to day life, including politics, economics, banking, business, contracts, family law and social issues.

Several developments made islam and the muslin world the defining force in international trade over 600 years (between AD 640 to 1260) pushing islamic civilization to the front of the world's economic stage. The were

1.The establishment of the commercial law

2.The expansion of property rights for women

3.Clear standards of weights and measures

4. the prohibition of fraud and

5. The uncompromising defense of property rights.

Could there be an Islamic Economic union stretching across the middle east, Africa and Asia , as early as 2020? It would cover 77 countries and would control a strategic resource – Oil. The guiding principle of this bloc could be ‘stewardship’ or ‘khalifa’ as prescribed in the Quran.

In a world of parity the true differentiator is brand image. That's why people pay a 1000 times more than a casio for a rolex.

Similarities across global islamic markets

- Common faith, values and identity of muslims
- Similar halal dietary requirements
- Similar lifestyle requirements(finance, education, entertainment)
- Strong sense of community and welfare.

Differences across global islamic markets

- Diverse locations
- Multiple languages and dialects
- Various cultural and lifestyle differences
- Varying degrees of islamic adherence
- Varying degrees of education, affluence and marketing sophistication.

**The JWT muslim market
segmentation looks at four
things : self view and
mindset/practices/world
view/relationships**

Noor global brand index

This index is a primary exploration of the consumer perception of the halal status and shariah compliance or relative muslim friendliness of certain global brands across the world today.

Noor Global Index 2010

Lipton	131	Loreal	90
Nestle	130	Axe	88
Nescafe	122	Emirates	85
Nido	118	Red Bull	78
Kraft	117	Ethihad	77
Maggi	117	Singapore airlines	63
Mirinda	110	Cathay pacific	62
Pringles	110	Citibank	59

The rational and emotional sides of a brand

Rational

- Do I need it?
- What does it do?
- What does it cost?
- How does it compare to?

Emotional

- I want it
- It looks cool !
- I'm going to get it
- I only want this one

A summary of some of the most notable Muslim values : Pure, Wholesome, Honest, Consistent, fair, Kind, True, Modest, Considerate, Trusted, responsible, Credible, Intelligent, Wise, Communicative, respectful, peaceful, Authentic.

Muslim brands will be easier and faster to create in a digital world, ie news , ie digital value chain etc.

The 6 challenges for Muslim brands

- 1. Awareness**
- 2. Accessibility**
- 3. Acceptability**
- 4. Adequacy**
- 5. Affinity**
- 6. Attack**

‘Fulla’ is the alternative to ‘Barbie’. The creators are New boy design studio in Damascus, Syria. The major change is that Fulla wears the hijab with a long flowing gown or abaya. Fulla comes with her own prayer rug.

Beurger King Muslim (BKM) is a fast food restaurant launched in July 2005 in Paris. It is American food with halal acceptability. Beur means arab and is often used to describe second generation muslims living in paris from North Africa.

In 1997, Nike was forced to recall a range of shoes that carried a logo that offended Muslims in America. The issue arose when Nike used a logo that was meant to look like flames on a line of basketball shoes. Some Muslims claimed that the logo resembled the word Allah written in Arabic script.

The lesson here is never to underestimate how a market might react.

Local nuances and sentiments are important. GM launched NOVA in Spain and that meant literally 'won't go'. Coca Cola had to change its transliteration in China which initially translated to 'bite the wax tadpole'

For more information, see
www.sbs.oxford.edu/islamicmarketing

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