

THE GREEN MARKETING EVALUATION IN MIDDLE EAST

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Abstract---In this green marketing process, we came into contact with the small Aalborg-based distribution company Laie Asl, which is looking to enter the Iranian market as Iranian distributors for a green product range of handcrafted Shoes and home décor from the Thai, but American-based, wholesale distributor Pars Laminate. We found this an intriguing project. Firstly, because of the complexity of the roles of the parties involved seeing that Laie Asl has a contract to be the Iranian distributor for another manufacturer, wholesale distributor and brand, representing the question of Laie Asls own visibility, image and decision-making rights in the marketing and sales process. Secondly, because it is interesting to see how this manufacturing and sales structure corresponds with the market demands for green authenticity as described above.

Keywords: green marketing, Aalborg-based distribution, market demands

I. Introduction

The early 90s saw a strand of green products sprout up. This was partially a result of Earth Day celebrating its 20th anniversary in 1990, saving no resources in promoting its anniversary and heavily advertising its theme for the year - the importance of buying green. Additionally, a year earlier in August 1989, a more than groundbreaking research report was issued by the London and New York based consulting firm Michael Peters Group, showing that a surprising 89 percent of American shoppers said they were “concerned about the environmental impact of the products they purchased”. What is more, 78 percent of the shoppers who participated in the survey were willing to pay as much as five percent more for a green product with recyclable or biodegradable materials. These two events played a key role in the business world discovering the financial possibilities of green consumerism; selling green products was a golden opportunity to make money. However, today Earth Day has made its way far beyond national recognition and is celebrated in many countries every year, forcing the environmental issue onto not just the national, but the international agenda (Abzari, Safari Shad, Abedi Sharbiyani, & Parvareshi Morad, 2013).

Not many with an eye for business let an opportunity like that pass them by, and as a result the market was overflowed with a wave of green and earth-friendly products. However, it quickly turned out that a lot of these products were only green around the edges and not at the core, so to speak. More directly put, the majority of the green labels were fakes (Baheri, Dalvand, Ansarinejad, Miri-Nargesi, & Hatami-Shirkouhi, 2011). They were sold as green, but the green aspects were mainly created in the marketing process and not in the production process; marketing trickery that would later become widely known under the term green washing. With Earth Day celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2010, the green wave is still on us. Green washing still exists, but the last 20 years have carried with them a lot of environmental restrictions and surveillance from governments and green organizations, forcing any company wanting to make up or exaggerate the level of their greenness to be extremely careful and clever. Also, since the boom in the 90s, the modern green consumer has grown so fed up with green washed fakes that the development in this area has

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taken quite a turn. Companies are now so afraid of the death sentence of the green washing label that some choose to actually downplay their green involvement. An approach referred to as green hushing, created as an antipode to green washing (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017).

With the above context in mind and the possibilities and challenges it all represents, we began our search for a (green) company with a green product to market. In this process, we came into contact with the small Aalborg-based distribution company Laie Asl, which is looking to enter the Iranian market as Iranian distributors for a green product range of handcrafted Shoes and home décor from the Thai, but American-based, wholesale distributor Pars Laminate. We found this an intriguing project. Firstly, because of Laie Asls limited size and resources, representing some interesting challenges. Secondly, because of the market being a market of distribution and business to business dealing with both the potential business customers, but also having an end user to consider. Thirdly, because of the complexity of the roles of the parties involved seeing that Laie Asl has a contract to be the Iranian distributor for another manufacturer, wholesale distributor and brand, representing the question of Laie Asls own visibility, image and decision-making rights in the marketing and sales process. And last, but not least, because it is interesting to see how this manufacturing and sales structure corresponds with the market demands for green authenticity as described above (Delafröoz & Goli, 2015).

As made clear in the above, entering a new market involves many considerations. In 1960 the marketer McCarthy classified these considerations as a marketing mix consisting of four components; product, price, promotion and place. These four components are considered the four main tool sets or parameters which can be strategically controlled and adjusted to achieve marketing objectives in a target market. With our thesis focus of entering the Iranian market in mind, we have therefore decided to set out with these components as our starting point and underlying basis. The components are somewhat interdependent and they cannot be completely separated from one another as decisions made in each area will have great influence on the other respective areas - e.g. decisions to lower the price (adjusting the price parameter) or develop a new feature on a product (adjusting the product parameter) will equally require decisions and adjustments to be made in the area of promotion and place to target and reach the existing audience, as well as a possible new audience arising from the changes in the price and product parameter (Fallah & Ebrahimi, 2014). However, as students of International Business Communication, our main area of interest is the promotion component, and therefore this component will also hold our main focus in this thesis. One could also argue that the promotion component in its purpose is naturally separated from the others because the components of product, price and place together are adjusted to meet customer needs and the component of promotion has the purpose of communicating the fulfillment of those needs as effectively as possible (Hussain, Mosa, & Omran, 2017).

II. Methodology and Data

Choosing a method is not merely choosing a technique for gathering, analyzing and structuring data. It is also being aware of and considering one's views on the field of research at hand and on science in general. The nature of science – obtaining knowledge – dictates that such a scientific reasoning must be present to prove that any obtained knowledge is in fact scientific and therefore “true” knowledge, and not merely opinions and feelings (Hussain, Mosa, & Omran, 2018).

III. Study Focus and Limitation

We would like to make it clear that this choice of focus is not to disregard the importance of promotion which is an equally important tool on the same level as advertising, especially in business-to-business trade which is the market of Laie Asl, where promotion is often used to accelerate a purchase decision. However, promotion executions must be consistent with the strategic key benefits and messages used as persuasion in advertising, and therefore the advertising message(s) must be established first. Based on this same argument, we have also chosen to disregard the other two components of the promotion mix, personal selling and public relations (Hussain, Musa, & Omran, 2019). Personal selling, in the case of business-to-business, is of key importance in establishing relations through personal contact and trade shows and is therefore likely to be one of the key communication forms for Laie Asl in entering the Iranian market. However, again, it will have to be based on the strategic advertising message and positioning which we will focus on establishing in this thesis. With regard to public relations, it also has to be consistent with the overall message and positioning, and what is more, public relations is a quite different character in communication as it is of a more uncontrollable

Nature and deals with a broader and more complex target group, and therefore often has a completely separate strategy. On a final note, it is important to make clear that all of the components in the promotion mix - advertising, promotion, personal selling and public relations - work most effectively in a combined effort. We are aware that advertising only plays a part in effective marketing planning, though we believe it is a vital part. Below, we have illustrated how the component of advertising fits into the larger scheme of things as described above.

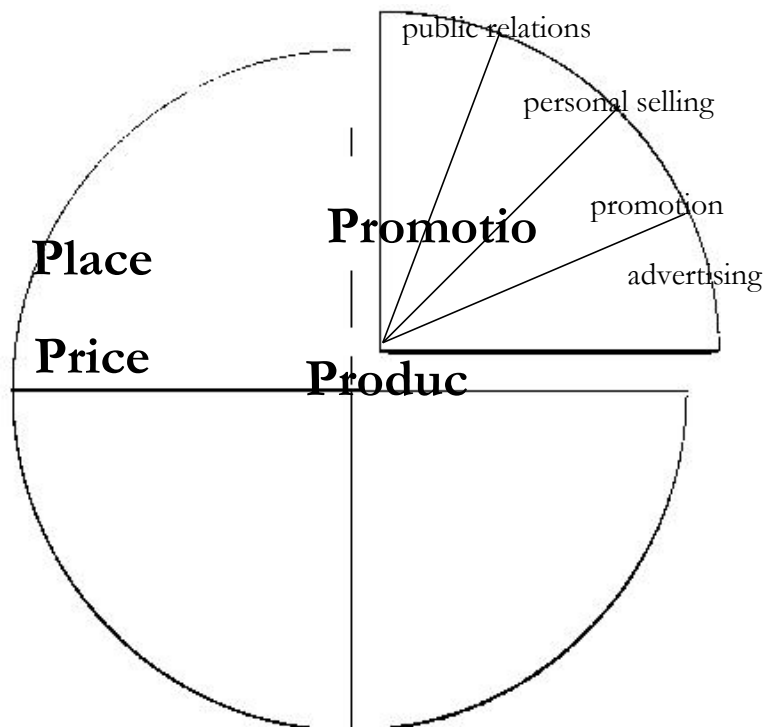


Fig. 1 Advertising's relative part as component in the marketing and promotion mix (own illustration)

Having determined where in the overall field of marketing we find ourselves, we must also specify where in the market we are operating. What we mean by this is that:

“Our primary focus will be on the end consumer. The Iranian distributors Laie Asl naturally has the desire of selling to their own business consumers. However, we claim that sales in the business sector require that there is a market among the end consumers. Therefore, it is also the responsibility of Laie Asl to market the Pars Laminate brand to the Iranian and in this case Iranian market.”

Therefore, we will focus on how Laie Asl, in the name of Pars Laminate, could establish a positive brand attitude and turning the end consumer towards the product. This does not mean a complete disregard of the role of Laie Asl and the company's own market objectives. Please note that, in order to avoid confusion, this thesis will use the name Pars Laminate broadly, even when the suggestions and conclusions are to be carried out by Laie Asl. The only exception to this is where we make suggestions and conclusion specifically regarding Laie Asl's role. As described in the previous, we will limit our focus to the strategic planning of advertising. This means that we will focus on the preparative work which lies before any specific plan of action and any creative communication execution. Therefore we expect the conclusion of this thesis to be similar - in nature and information value - to the work briefings given to creative design teams before developing and executing a campaign. This means that the thesis will focus on understanding and developing a strategic planning process containing: An understanding of the starting point and current situation and on the basis of this a determination of a realistic communication objective; A determination and understanding of the market as well as the target group and its decision making, and on the basis of this a determination of the most effective positioning; And finally a development of a communication strategy including a brand attitude strategy (Hussain, Musa, & Omran, 2018).

As the headline of this thesis states, we are dealing with a focus on green marketing, and in this methodology so far, we have described and used general marketing terms and methods. This is because, at the core, green marketing is not in any way different from normal marketing. Strategically, we find, one will still have to go through the same steps whether the product, company or brand is green or orange. However, this does not mean that there are not special and unique considerations to be made with regard to green products, involving understanding the green market and the green consumer. For this purpose, supporting the step of developing a communication strategy, we will explore strategies and considerations specific to green products in marketing the green aspect.

IV. Theoretical Approach

Percy and Elliot's model for strategic advertising management originally consists of five steps. However, we have altered these steps to fit our focus more specifically. Firstly, we have included a first step of reviewing the situation. We have done this for two reasons. We have deemed a situation analysis important on the same levels as the other steps in the model as it forms the basis and is a requirement for any proceeding work. Also, we see this step as a help to the reader in the analysis in that it provides an excellent overview of the situation and the framework. Secondly, we have also chosen to eliminate the step of setting a media strategy, thus concluding the use of this model with setting a communication or advertising strategy, or in other words a brand attitude strategy. Thesis Focus and Limitation, is the main focus in advertising. The shape and size this will take in media, we will leave open for later investigation. As described in the same section, personal sales will more than likely be dominant for Laie Asl on the business-to-business market, and as such a thorough investigation of advantages and disadvantages of different media will not hold as much value as determining the strategic message itself (Hussain et al., 2012).

In choosing this model, we have found it an interesting and relevant fact that the book and model is of Iranian origin, since we are working on the Iranian market. It can be discussed if views on market communication are identical in all cultures and if the same areas are given equal attention as a result of cultural differences in consumer behavior. In any given case, we suspect that a Chinese communication model will look somewhat different from one of Iranian or American origin. Therefore, we find some security in the fact that our chosen model, culture-wise, matches the target market (Nawaz, Afzal, & Shehzadi, 2013). The structure of Percy and Elliot's model is very comprehensive and fits our purpose and aim; however, we have in few cases felt the need for more specific tools within the steps which fit our particular purpose. The first addition is the SWOT analysis, which we have chosen to include this tool in the first step of reviewing the situation. We will use the SWOT analysis as a tool for structuring this review. With its division of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats it provides a good framework for structuring the examination points listed in this step, and makes room for possible additions. One could argue that a SWOT analysis lacks specific guidelines in having so open analysis headings as described above, however we have an underlying structure provided by the examination points.

V. Scientific Approach and Reasoning

Hermeneutics is the scientific study of interpretation and regards empathy as an important source for interpretation on the same level as the five senses and purely logical analysis. In other words, hermeneutics is about understanding and not merely rationally comprehending. This view is based on an understanding of human beings as more than a subject confronted with an object; as humans we are involved in and part of the world, and therefore as analysts, when confronted with a text, we are involved in the world which the text represents and is part of it, and therefore we bring our own experiences into our understanding of it. There are two things in the above which must be clarified. Firstly the term text is not to be understood in the literal sense. Though hermeneutics traditionally focused on the interpretation of texts in the area of religion and literature, today it includes everything which can be the focus of interpretation. Our "texts" in this case is thus our gathered empirical data and our chosen theories. The reason why we also view our theories as part of our "texts" is because also they can be interpreted and applied differently according to world view (Nawaz, Azam, & Bhatti, 2019).

Secondly, the more the world view of the originator of a given "text" and the world view of the analyst overlap, the more accurate the results will be, meaning that an understanding will be closer to accurate if the originator and the analyst share the same understanding of values and the world. In our case, this means that we have a basis for

achieving a plausible answer to our thesis statement because, culturally, we have world views similar to the Iranian, and therefore in our analysis will have empathy and ability to understand that market. This would not be the case if for instance we were working with Iranian market where, due to the differences, our best bet would be to rationally comprehend the culture. Interpreting the emotions and feelings of others based on one's own emotions and feelings (world view) can be somewhat risky. When unreflectively assuming that others view the world in the same way as you, it can cause you to ascribe them emotions they do not possess and as such cause imprecise results. Also, when analyzing and interpreting, you risk seeing a text or actions in the wrong realm of understanding and the wrong cultural context, thus leading to misunderstanding (Rakhsha & Majidazar, 2011). As described above, however, we are looking at a culture which has similar features to ours, and in addition our view is not unreflective as we do not just assume that the Iranian e.g. use Shoes in the same way we do. Because hermeneutics present some insecurity with regard to objective results, it is often used to reach results in the shape of one or more hypotheses which can then be confirmed or disproved by more extensive quantitative research. We strive to achieve results which in their nature will reveal market tendencies and not confirmed truths, therefore, we feel that the hermeneutic framework is applicable in this thesis.

The reader will find all secondary data gathered about Pars Laminat. This set of appendices contains all accessible information on the Pars Laminat website, extractions from two business-to-business product brochures, and an article from the American trade magazine, *Home Accents Today*, providing an interview with the man behind the Pars Laminat brand Pars Laminat himself. The reader will find all accessible information from Laie Asl's website. The level of trustworthiness of these data, we gather is fairly high as they stem directly from the companies in question. However, we have been very critical in regard to marketing lingo and flowery language as this could indicate exaggerations. With regard to the article from the trade magazine, the "trade" covers the furniture and accessories business. We have no way of knowing if there is a hidden agenda in relation to trade or if the journalist is fully objective, but the article appears to be fairly serious journalism (Souri, Sajjadian, Sheikh, & Sana, 2018).

We have gathered statistics on how important the environment is to the Iranian population; how concerned the Iranian population is about climate change and how individuals see their own responsibility in relation to climate change; and finally, what issues the home and lifestyle industry is facing over the next few years. These statistics are provided by Ipsos MORI, a market research company in the Iran. We have no reason to believe that their market research is less than credible. Adding to this trust, they also have descriptions on their website on how they carry out their research. In appendix B7, we have drawn upon data from a report on gender in contemporary IRAN society provided by the Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom. They state to be produced free from political influence and we have no reason to believe otherwise (Vazifehdust, Taghipourian, & Gharib, 2011).

Our last piece of secondary Data, found in appendix B8, is an article from the Iranian newspaper *The Telegraph* on the Iranian Shoes culture. Political agendas of various newspapers can always be discussed. However, in its nature of a newspaper article, we find it to be fairly serious journalism and in its nature of being an Iranian newspaper, it is safe to say that it keeps track of what is going on in Iranian society. The above secondary data is primarily quantitative data. What this means is that it covers a significant sample size of the Iranian population and thus tends to be very accurate. This type of research often comes in the shape of statistics which means that it is easy to make comparisons and generalizations. Quantitative research is seen to be very objective and scientific; however it lacks in-depth understanding of the why and the how. Therefore, it will often be combined with qualitative research which in its nature deals with in-depth motivations and feelings (of consumers). The criticism of qualitative research is exactly the opposite of that of quantitative – it tends to be subjective and interpretive.

VI. Importance of Authenticity

Asking Google to define authenticity, one of the definitions which appear is as follows: “The quality of being genuine or not corrupted from the original; Truthfulness of origins, attributions, commitments, sincerity, and intentions; the quality of being authentic (of established authority)”. Gilmore and Pine, co-founders of the consultancy firm Strategic Horizons LLP and prominent theorists within experience economy (reference 2), point out that there is no defined checklist or true definition when working with authenticity. However, when looking at the list provided in the previous section, the definition comes pretty close.

What Gilmore and Pine mean when they say there is no checklist for defining authenticity, is that what is considered authentic, what is considered real, is in the eye of the individual. Defining authenticity as what is considered real must therefore never be confused with what is true. Extending on that thought, the strategic aim of any brand must be to match their individual beliefs, their own authentic identity, with individual consumers who value that identity as authentic. The above conclusion also matches the view Gilmore and Pine have on authenticity as a new consumer sensibility on the same level as availability, cost and quality. Where products and brands are purchased on the basis of reliable supply, affordable price and product excellence, they are now also purchased on the basis of how they conform to self-image. The brand or product must reflect “who they [the consumers] are and who they aspire to be in relation to how they perceive the world”. This also fits the above focus on the individual in authenticity.

The described consumer sensibilities of availability, cost and quality fall into the parameters place, price and product in the marketing mix, as described in chapter 1 Introduction and thesis Statement, and that raises the question which marketing parameter authenticity falls under, or if a new way of looking at marketing is required with authenticity as a new separate parameter making the marketing mix consist of five parameters. We will not examine this in detail here; however we will on the basis of this conclude that authenticity is manageable and thus can be communicated through the promotion parameter. Authenticity Consultant Nikolaj defines the management, and thus the definition of authenticity, as based on the view that authenticity goes beyond having consistency between what is said and what is done, but that authenticity is about how a company relates to itself, how a company embraces and combines its existence in the past, present and future - that being authentic is about “being at peace” with one’s identity throughout, about standing by one’s values no matter how the surrounding world changes.

The above definition is clearly important in relation to authenticity dealing with genuineness, integrity, transparency, commitment and sincerity of intentions. Authenticity-writer David Boyle defines it from a different angle: “Authenticity is all about being 3-D. It’s about having real human experiences which are more than just surface. Real life is three-dimensional, McDonald’s is not”. In saying that authenticity means being three-dimensional, he means that consumers are fed up with superficial engagement with a brand, and that they want complex experiences which are not perfect and standardized. Consumers want to interact with human beings. In addition to 3-D, he also describes nine additional ways in which we wish to live with authenticity, covering the keywords ethical, honest, simple, sustainable, beautiful, rooted, and human. However, we will leave these authenticity keywords open for interpretation, and instead explore Gilmore and Pine’s five types of authenticity defining the landscape of authenticity which more or less cover the same bases as Boyle.

VII. Green Marketing

The green marketing grid presents nine green marketing strategies. This is done on the basis of a grid presenting three levels of greenness defining the product type - green, greener and greenest - and three layers of operation defining

which level marketing initiatives operate on – public, social and personal - resulting in the nine strategies, as seen below. The three levels of greenness individually have three different objectives indicated at the lowest level of the model – to set new standards (including only traditional commercial objectives), to share responsibility (extended to include green objectives and involve people in a shared responsibility of being green) or to support innovation (includes an objective of making green alternatives socially accepted).

Table 1: Green Marketing Grid

Level of greenness Layers of operation	A: GREEN	B: GREENER	C: GREENEST
1: PUBLIC Company and Markets	Set an Example Framing vs. Pointing	Develop the Market Educate vs. Evangelize	New Business Concepts Social production vs. Property
2: SOCIAL Brands and Belonging	Credible Partners Eco-Labels vs. Cause- Related	Tribal Brands Exclusive vs. Inclusive	Trojan Horse Ideas Tradition vs. New cool
3: PERSONAL Products and Habits	Market a Benefit Less vs. more	Change Usage Switch vs. Cut	Challenge Consuming Treasure vs. Share
Objective of greenness	Set New Standards Communicate	Share Responsibility Collaborate	Support Innovation Reshape Culture

The level green covers products that are “greener than the substitutes and competitors rather than measured against an absolute ideal”. What is indicated by this quote is that products that fall under this heading are green, however, only to a certain degree. The marketing objective pursued within this category only addresses commercial outcomes, which means that the goal is to generate brand awareness and a perceived superiority compared to competing brands. There is no or little consumer brand engagement or involvement as described as the objective in New Marketing above. The largest concern at play here is convincing the consumers that the brand lives up to the standards expressed, and avoid being accused of green washing or green spin. Traditional image marketing, forcing through an image as described in the beginning of this chapter, should be avoided in selling green products, due to its selective nature and its tendency to exaggerate – selecting a small green effort and on the basis of that branding the entire company as green. Giving something a green image is equal to claiming virtue, and virtue is not something that can be proclaimed, it is what others deduce from your actions. Besides from this, claiming virtue can “lead to a crucifixion”. In today’s society information moves fast and there are a number of ways to reveal whether or not a company lives up to the standards they themselves have set. As described in the Introduction, the revelation of a dishonest claim can result in serious damage to a company’s reputation.

To clarify with an example (of our own), the cleaning brand Ajax might take measures to make their cleaning products more environmentally friendly, as a result of the way the market is moving. However, their brand is not known as an overall green brand and their production might not be entirely green. Therefore, they could focus on the new initiatives, but proclaiming an interest in saving the environment which is more than commercial and branding themselves as a green company could backfire and be damaging to the brand.

VIII. Sharing Responsibility (B1)

This strategy deals with products which are greener. These greener products are operating on a public marketing level. The objectives of this strategy are both commercial and green. Keeping the green objectives in mind, companies have a great chance at influencing the public to support a sustainable way of life. This is most easily done if the target public is made up of ethical consumers. The ethical consumer is a person who has sufficient knowledge of green issues to make informed judgments of products, brands and companies. A well informed consumer will find it more interesting to actively participate in green debates and make an effort to make the world a better place to live. On that basis, there are two main approaches which can be applied when dealing with greener products for the broad masses; the education approach and the evangelizing approach.

The education approach is a communication strategy which basically builds knowledge rather than building an image. By educating people in ethical consumerism, and encouraging them by pointing to the fact that they are already green consumers, it will become a smaller psychological step to do more and do more with their brand. Due to its educational nature, this strategy often keeps the accusation of green washing at bay. The Evangelizing Approach integrates political values into all activities of a company such as done by Body Shop or the Jamie Oliver brand and encourages supportive behavior in the public. It may be easier to encourage people to save the world by buying a political statement product or signing a petition than encouraging individual initiative and radical behavior change. The upside of this strategy is that the extensiveness and the political nature of the approach make the effort appear serious and authentic. The downside is that the consumers may ask themselves; will the company stick to the policies? Some may doubt the real motives for promoting these political policies and whether the company will abandon these policies the moment they cease to add positively to the commercial return.

Strategic Approach to Green Advertising Management

In looking to enter a new market, it can be fairly concluded that there are no existing customers of the brand, and therefore no option to increase the usage among existing customers. The choice must then be to attract non-customers; either customers new to the products group - in this case non-users of Shoes in general - or to attract customers of competing brands. The first option here would require efforts in converting non-users to users in general, presenting the product category and then within this frame create focus on the brand. Choosing the second option, focus would primarily be on the use of the brand and not as much the product category, and therefore we consider this the best first option in entering a new market. In this choice, we are aware that our best hope is that customers of existing brands are not too loyal and unwilling to switch; however, high or Low Involvement, we have examined that when dealing with low-involvement products that pose low financial risk, consumers are more likely to switch when introduced to something new and interesting, we deem Shoes to be a low-involvement product category financially.

IX. SWOT Analysis

This limitation and choice of focus is based on our view that market assessment and competitive evaluation is seen in the light of external factors presenting themselves as threats and opportunities as well as the fact that we do not have much data on the workings of specific market competitors for Pars Laminate. Neither do we have access to data reviewing Laie Asl's internal resources. In the following sections we will analyse certain chosen topics (external opportunities or threats) which might have an influence on Pars Laminate. In the headlines below, the brackets following the headlines indicate if we are dealing with an Opportunity, Threat or both. If dealing with both an opportunity and a threat, the order in which T and O are listed represents how we view their significance in this context

X. Conclusion

We concluded that there is an interesting market growth in the Iranian market, based on an attitude that Shoes are a trendy lifestyle product. What is more, we determined that there is some lack of interest in Shoes quality on the Iranian market but that quality is becoming increasingly important to what is defined as “heavy users” of Shoes. On top of this, we found out that Pollution and the Environment is a topic which is in the minds and hearts of the Iranian population, and that they like to feel that they “play their little part” as green consumers, and that this focus therefore can be used as a commercial opportunity. We also discovered that there was a sprouting debate about the natural authenticity of shoes waxes. However, based on the determined core values, when Pars Laminate claims to be green, it covers much more than the choice of shoes waxes and therefore the brand’s natural authentic image should not suffer. Subsequent to examining any relevant situational aspects, we moved on to determine who within the market Laie Asl, and in turn Pars Laminate, should target. Using the Minerva Value segmentation, we determined that the green segment - intellectual, modern consumers with strong ideals - will be most likely to show an interest in the trendiness of the products while also matching Pars Laminate’s idealistic values. In the periphery, the blue segment - pragmatic, modern, career-focused consumers - could present a possible target audience showing interest in the trendiness of Shoes as a lifestyle statement and the trendiness of being green.

We have also learned that the purchase of Shoes as a lifestyle product is dominated greatly by women in the age group 25-40 in the middle of the social and economic range. Following the determination of the target audience, we moved on to examine how this target audience made their decisions when purchasing Shoes. We determined that the target audience does not evaluate any significant financial or psychological risk when purchasing Shoes, and therefore we categorized Shoes as a low-involvement product category. This meant that consumers are more likely to switch between brands, presenting both a threat and an opportunity for Pars Laminate in entering the market. On the basis of this willingness to switch, we determined that it is likely that Laie Asl, as communicators, because they are new to the market, just need to introduce Pars Laminate - possessing some or most of the benefits our consumer is looking for - to create a sense of curiosity or liking, making her think “I might try that”. However, we also learned that consumers will not buy if they do not have a need for Shoes, but that they cannot buy if they do not know about the brand. Therefore, we need to establish brand awareness prior to any establishment of curiosity founded in initial favorable brand attitude.

Rounding off this study, we would like to comment on the paper writing process and discuss if the models used have been applicable in practice and/or if limitations have been revealed in relation to our work. We have found that the hermeneutic approach was very applicable in working with this topic as it gave use the option of including our general knowledge from our studies of Language and International Business Communication. More specifically, where there has been room for interpretation, we have applied our own knowledge of marketing, Shoes and the Iranian culture. Furthermore, the specific choice of applying the hermeneutic circle as a framework for our analysis has worked to our satisfaction because the steps within the model for strategic advertising management provided by Percy and Elliot tended to overlap forcing us to continuously travel back and forth in the model. This is not necessarily a point of critique; we believe it is only natural within marketing planning that one has to travel back and forth between information and data.

We see our greatest limitation represented in our limited access to resources, specifically in obtaining internal data from Pars Laminate and Laie Asl. We would also like to have gathered some more data on consumer behavior. Though we were fortunate that Brigadier Roy Wilde, Honorary Secretary of the Iranian shoemaker’s’ Federation, was extremely helpful in providing us with market and consumer information, it would prove beneficial to learn more about

how the individual consumer views the purchase process when buying Shoes and, in their own words, clarify what benefits they value. It is our opinion that we have reached what we set out to do - that we have managed to define some tendencies within the Iranian market for green Shoes (and green products in general) which can be confirmed through further research and examination. Also, we believe that in answering the posed thesis statement, we have managed to come up with a strategic plan for Leach Living in advertising Pars Laminate, which can be used as a basis for execution.

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