

AN ATTEMPT AT THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FOREIGN AND RUSSIAN STYLE OF ADVERTIZING TRAVEL SERVICES

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Abstract: *In this paper, the specifics of advertizing travel services are analyzed, as it is represented in different countries. The authors refer to advertisements offered by the most recognized travel agencies of Europe (Portugal, Italy and the United Kingdom), Asia (represented by Thailand), North (the USA and Canada) and South America (Brazil), and of Russia, as well. We have defined the specifics of advertizing, aimed at European, Asian, American and Russian consumers. Some problematic points have been detected in the advertizing messages, designed by Russian travel agencies. We give the analysis of the advertizing messages employed in the Russian advertizing of travel services, using particular examples, created by a travel agency and placed in the social network “Vkont kte”.*

Keywords: Advertizing, symbols, psychological influence, images. **1. Introduction** The problem of a proper use of psychological tools in creating advertisements has been represented in a number of researches (Batra 2001, Berkowitz 1997, Hermogenova 1994, Deyan 1993, Doob 1935, Carter 1991, Lucas 1950, Mokshantsev 2011, Pronina 2000, Romat 2001, Wells 2008, Felser 2009, Feofanov 2000, Tsenyov 2007). The relevance of such researches arises from an obvious need in effective advertizing messages that would address the consumers of the promoted services directly. At the same time, examining the issue, we come across a lack of works, focused on the specifics of travel services advertizing, offered in different countries. At present, the foreign style of advertizing travel services is far more imposing than the Russian one.

It has to do with the fact that foreign firms address the subconscious of the consumer, using a variety of symbols in their messages and maximally reducing the verbal part, while the messages of Russian travel agencies are 10 Mira St., 68/19, Naberezhnye Chelny, 423812, Russia 11 in the Volga Region, Kremlyovskaya St., 18, Kazan, 420000, Russia Volume VI, Issue 2(12), Winter 2015 393 overloaded by curt sentences and are perceived very aggressively (Durovich 2014, Kirillov & Maslova 2002, Shumilova 2011). Still, in order to reveal all advantages and faults of such advertisements, we should analyze the typical advertizing messages in different countries. The advertizing concepts of the most recognized travel agencies were chosen for analysis, those of Europe (Portugal, Italy, the United Kingdom), Asia (Thailand), North (the USA, Canada) and South America (Brazil), and, also, Russian ones. Let us consider the examples of advertising, used by such companies as “Turnet Turismo”, “VS”, “Elegant Resorts”, “Terra Travel”, “Air Asia”, “Cruise Ship Centers”, “Century Travel”, “AGM Global Travel”, „Express-tour”, “ITAR-TOUR”, “Alecta-tour”. The domestic advertizing messages were also examined, by means of analysis of social nets. Social nets have become very popular in the Russian community. Initially perceived as a purely entertainment project (giving an opportunity to listen to music, play in various applications, exchange letters with old friends), they now present one of the most effective instruments for the advertizing business. It is mostly due to the fact that the popularity of the traditional means of mass media (television, newspapers) is decreasing, while social nets are attracting more and more people. Moreover, social nets have turned into the habitual environment of entire target audiences, who is, in addition, easy to interact with, as users themselves give sufficient information about themselves. Let's have a look at the social net “Vkontakte”, where the advertizing messages, that we have analyzed, were placed. The “Vkontakte” net is the most popular net in the territory of Russia and the CIS countries, and, also, it is in the top five popular social nets in the world. Its audience currently amounts over 90 million people, the daily traffic alone amounts 40 million people (Durovych 2014).

The structure of a social net allows placing practically any information about yourself, or about your site, and it will be available for viewing to all the other users. In the “Vkontakte” net, three types of advertizing are used: targeted, contextual (or advertizing in communities), and advertizing in applications. Targeted ads, unlike simple banners, aim only at a qualitative target audience that will react loyally at the messages (Grandifer 2012). Such advertisements look like two small pictures and a short text near them, positioned on the left side, just below the menu of the site's functions. The advantages of such advertizing are obvious – if you know your target audience well, it is enough to enter its main parameters (the geographic position, the age, the sex, whether or not they have children, and so on). Among the disadvantages, one could single out its expensiveness and the option of blocking advertisements by browsing programs for the consumers. Hence, this type of

advertising in the “Vkontakte” is expensive, but effective. The second type of advertizing, found in the “Vkontakte”, is contextual advertizing, or advertizing in communities. To use this type of advertizing, one needs to find community that corresponds to the target audience, or create his/her own community. There are two kinds of communities: a public webpage and a group. For little-known or narrow specialized brands, a group is more preferable, because it is not represented on the page. On one hand, it is a disadvantage, since the “avatar” of your community will not be seen to the visitors of the page of your subscriber, but, on the other hand, it is, also, a more reliable way of communicating with the subscriber: there is a tendency to remove precisely public pages from a personal page. As for placement of an advertisement in another popular community, the key factor will here, again, is the target audience. The price for such placement depends on how popular the community itself is and on the position of the advertisement on the page. The types of advertizing records in the “Vkontakte” communities can be divided by their method and by the position of placement. An advertizing message can be placed into the news line, having reposted it into your group. The advantage here lies in the fact that such reposts are not regarded as advertising, from the point of view of the owner of the site. The community's moderators willingly place such records, mirroring the theme and the target audience, and for very low prices. From the commercial point of view, from the position of a buyer of advertizing, this method has a low “click-through rate”, as compared with other methods of placement – the ratio of the number of clicks on the advertizing message to the number of displays; it is measured in percentage. (Grandifer 2012) A more effective kind of advertizing is using wiki-links in a post. The advantages of such a link, as compared to a repost, are obvious. Firstly, almost any phrase can be used as an anchor.

This anchor should be something that will make the user to follow the link – some appeal to take action, apparent or hidden. Secondly, such links affect the user's curiosity. He/she begins reading and grasps the subject, he/she becomes interested, but the article is suddenly interrupted, without uncovering the most interesting. Volume VI, Issue 2(12), Winter 2015 394 Wiki-links also gave birth to false links. False links mean that you ask a question in your advertizing post, and give several links to a public (one and the same or different publics) as different variants of an answer. As a result, the reader automatically goes to another webpage. However, both false links and wiki-links can fail to achieve the intended goal, because the subscriber will feel deceived. Therefore, we can draw a conclusion that the method of placement does not play a significant role, since each method has a serious drawback – the lack of trust on the side of the subscriber. Emphasizing the position of an advertisement is far more important. There are several variants of positioning an advertisement. The most expensive one is positioning the link to your community or site in the monthly block of links. It is an expensive, but highly effective variant. The second variant is positioning the advertisement in the basic description. In this

case, a repost is made, and the record will be fixed on the most conspicuous place. Anyone, who visits the public, will be, prior to everything, seeing your message. You can buy here a daily, hourly placement, etc., depending on your budget. However, the most popular position of placement is a record in the news line. Hence, we can see that the most expensive position of placement is in the block of monthly links, and then follows a post, fixed in the description, then – placing a record or a repost, placing a video. The most effective positioning is – in the description of a community, but the effectiveness of other positions and methods of placement depends on the content of the advertisement. As we have mentioned, a separate community can be created for advertizing your product – there will be fewer subscribers than with the informative-entertaining ones, but then, they all will be your potential customers, with a loyal attitude to the brand. If a correct strategy will be chosen for managing the community, the advertized product will always be on the consumer's mind, and they will form a positive opinion about it. The most important factor in the strategy of advertizing management in your own community is the content. The content should be made as little “advertizing” as possible: it should be neither importunate, nor irritating. Advertizing should be constantly diluted by extraneous entertaining or informative content that will correspond to your theme.

The viral content should be singled out here, which is distributed further by the users themselves exponentially. This kind of content is characterized by establishing feedback from the users. That means that they not only look it through, but actively react at it. In social nets such activity is expressed in the number of “likes”, reposts, and other means to share with friends. Besides, the time of posting also matters. The lunch break and the time around midday are supposed to be the period, when the user is most perceptive to commercial advertizing. The period of “active online” (from 1600 to 2100) is convenient for advertizing entertaining/educational and other non-commercial content. Therefore, if you manage a community of your own, it is important to vary commercial and entertaining content, and, also, to choose the most proper time for it. The third type of advertizing in the “Vkontakte” net is applications. By their means, the interactive promotion of a site or a brand is achieved. Millions of users start various applications daily, to have fun, send a greeting card or set an original avatar to their page. Only banner advertizing of games and other applications are acceptable in applications. However, advertizing in applications allows to purposefully choosing that part of the users, whom this advertizing is addressed to, those ones, who will most likely be interested by the advertized game.

The most effective way of advertizing in applications is integrating the brand into the application. Branding an application means its decoration in the style of the trademark, adding contests from the brand and branded elements (Grandifer 2012). It should be noted that, at present, the amount of users of applications has decreased;

therefore, the effectiveness of such kind of advertising is arguable. However, children and teenagers still continue to be the active users of applications, which mean that this type of advertizing will be the most effective for them.

2. The methodology On the basis of the psychotechnic analysis by E.E. Pronina (Pronina 2000), we have examined the advertizing examples by one of the travel agencies, published in the “Vkontakte” net (Figure 1). This method diagnoses affective conflicts, caused by an advertizing image. The method is based on telling a projective story. Unlike similar projective methods (e.g., the analysis of projective judgments, pictures, stories), this method is aimed at expert evaluation of advertizing material, not at diagnosing personal characteristics. That is why, when processing and interpreting the data, a system of categories is applied, compiled in accordance with “the psychotechnic matrix of advertizing influence”. The participants in a research Volume VI, Issue 2(12), Winter 2015 395 are offered to write a story, associated with the advertising illustrations, based on which, their affective reaction at the examples of advertizing is defined. The random sample was represented by men and women of 22-28 years of age. The analysis of the results of the research showed a lack of positive attitude from the respondents to the examples, demonstrated to them. At the same time, the tested showed an ambivalent (20%), negative (60%) and controversial attitude (20%) to this advertizing message. These results mean that the respondents do not know how to feel about the suggested examples of advertizing. We have also not revealed such forms of affective attitude, as full acknowledgement or an affective shock. Therefore, the examples of the travel agency's advertizing examined are psychologically secure, but they do not create, however, a positive and memorable image. *Note:* The text goes: “The travel agency “The Golden Globe”, “buy-in-the-last-minute” tours”, “air and railway tickets”, the address and the telephone number”. Figure 1. An example of advertizing by a Russian travel agency in the social net On the basis of the computer program (system) “VAAL” by V.I. Shalak, we conducted a phonosemantic evaluation of a text of an advertisement (Figure 2). This program gives an opportunity to carry out a deepened content-analysis of texts and to forecast the effect of the subconscious impact of texts on mass audiences. *Note:* The text goes: “The Golden Globe”; Celebrate the NEW YEAR in the UAE!!! The departure on December 27, 2013 from Kazan for 7 nights; board – breakfasts; Golden Tulip Khatt Spring – Resort&Spa 5* – 27000 r./pers., Citymax Hotel sharjah 3* – 27100 r./pers., Royalton 2* – 28500 r./pers.; additionally priced are the visa and a gala-dinner; the number of places is limited; the phone number”.

Figure 2. An example of advertizing by a Russian travel agency in a social net The phonosemantic analysis of the advertizing message, taken from the “Vkontakte” social net, revealed that the text in question possesses such positive, and strongly expressed characteristics as “merry, fast, dynamic, simple, jubilant, bright, light, majestic, and active”. At the same time, the text also possesses such

negative, and strongly expressed, characteristics as “rough, sickly, evil, and quiet”. The following positive characteristics are weakly expressed: handsome, good, secure, strong. The following negative characteristics are weakly expressed: angular, cowardly, small. Judging from the results of the phonosemantic assessment by the “VAAL”, we can conclude on the second example that the text is, on the whole, perceived positively, but still has some essential negative characteristics that could influence the intentions of the potential consumers. Volume VI, Issue 2(12), Winter 2015 396 Therefore, the advertizing examples by the travel agency “The Golden Globe” are psychologically secure, but, in general, are perceived by the respondents negatively. The respondents did not feel interest to the content of the advertisement. It has to do with the absence of symbols, the structure of the composition, and the weakness of the text. The intention, as the response to the advertizing appeal, was manifested weakly – the respondents were not going to follow the advertisement's appeal.

3. Results and discussion Let us, first of all, examine the specifics of travel advertizing in different countries. The advertizing of travel services in European countries is characterized by minimalism; the attention is entirely focused on the fable of the composition. Light colors are predominant. Speaking of the textual component, only the slogan of the advertizing campaign and the name of the organization are used. Thus, the entire attention of the viewer concentrates on images and symbols. Additionally, the image is not overloaded by excessive details – the simpler the advertisement is, the easier it is to remember it. For instance, in the advertizing message of the Portuguese company “Turnet Turismo”, only one sentence is used, promising that “... *this holiday will make you forget everything, even what day it is today*” (Figure 3). At the same time, the advertisement uses plenty of symbols that are subconsciously interpreted as ease and pleasure. A butterfly, for example, according to D. Tressider, is a metaphor for light-mindedness and entertainment, a flower is a symbol of beauty, pleasure and joy (Tressider 1999). Consequently, the advertizing message uses only the images that are more or less connected with the theme of a holiday by the sea. Figure 3. The examples of advertizing by the Portuguese company “Turnet Turismo” The Italian travel agency “VS” uses the images of stone statues in their advertizing that symbolize the countries, where they are located (Figure 4). Even though stone symbolizes unfriendliness and coldness, the chosen images demonstrate the contrary effect and evoke the sympathy of the clients. It has to do with how the statues are represented – they are waving a kerchief to their clients (Tressider 1999). Besides, the advertizing messages, again, are minimalistic – there is only the slogan and the name of the tour company. Figure 4. The examples of advertizing by the Italian travel agency “VS” The British travel agency “Elegant Resorts”, which specializes only in luxury getaways, demonstrates a glamorous advertizing concept. Their advertizing messages directly demonstrate the basic task of a holiday – that is, to look beautiful

astride a daring horse, or when playing tennis (Figure 5). Apart from the standard images that are widely used in tourism advertising (the sea and a girl), this concept uses a symbol that stresses that the tour operator is only for the chosen ones. The symbol of a mirror in the Western art is an attribute of such qualities as pride, vanity, lust, that is, the company offers to its clients to please their self-Volume VI, Issue 2(12), Winter 2015 397 esteem, and offers to do it immediately, too. A horse is namely a metaphor of an unleashed impulse here. (Selchenok 1994) Figure 5. An example of advertising by the English travel agency “Elegant Resorts” This analysis shows that, for the European advertising of travel services, the following features are characteristic: minimalism, a lapidary statement, the prevalence of light colors, and powerful symbolism. The main accent falls on the emotional component of an advertisement, with the European agencies. For the travel advertising in Asian countries, it is characteristic to allude to the history and to the historically appeared images of the country.

As compared with the European advertisements, more depressive colors are used. There is also more text, and it occupies a prominent position, or is somehow emphasized. However, it is also typical to use symbols here, when making an advertising message. The advertisement of travel services, created by the “Tourism Authority of Thailand”, for example, attracts the consumer's attention to the fact that this country has a history of its own – “700 years ago we invented our own alphabet, and a market ready for global warming” (Figure 6). This advertisement is characterized by the predominant black color, which is associated in the Asian countries with the darkness of motherly womb. Other images, such as a boat, and water, also relate to the basic idea – birth, and the dismissal from care and negative thoughts, relate to peace (Selchenok 1994). Meanwhile, with the representatives of European cultures, this variant of an advertising message can have the contrary effect, since the black water (depicted in the advertisement) is subconsciously associated with something negative to them. Figure 6. An example of advertising by the “Tourism Authority of Thailand” Another example of Asian style of advertising travel services is given by the leading air-company in the sphere of budget air-transportation in the Asian region, “AirAsia” (see Figure 7). In their advertising concept, the company uses a statistically average room and images of the Great Britain, created from the materials at hand. Cold grey colors are used, that are not too pleasant for perception, but are needed to stress the country's specific atmosphere. The most important symbols used are an armchair, as a symbol of warmth and coziness, and a dog – a symbol of protection and vigilance. In both illustrations, there is a window, which is a metaphor for opportunity and a perspective. (Selchenok 1994) Figure 7. The examples of advertising by an Asian airline “AirAsia” Volume VI, Issue 2(12), Winter 2015 398 The conducted analysis shows that the Asian advertising alludes to the historic images of a country. The prevalence of depressive colors has to do with the specifics of the world perception

in Asian countries, or with the specifics of the climate of an advertized country. In general, the advertizing uses persuasive symbols. In American countries, the travel advertizing characteristically presents a new looks at ordinary things. Routine and the narrowness of outlook are accented. The colors used are pleasant to the eye, at the same time; an advertisement does not look gaudy. The American advertizing, just like the European, is intentionally minimalistic. Text is used, but it is unobtrusive, scattered in the corners of the print. The number of symbols is reduced to the minimum. For example, the Brazilian company “Terra Travel” showed that, even when dreaming of a change of scene, one shouldn't dream of changing it for a long time (Figure 8). The slogan is aggressive, but the picture itself, where the main dramatis personae are cartoon characters, is done in pastel colors, which softens the general impression. Figure 8. An example of advertizing by the Brazilian travel agency “Terra Travel” The Canadian travel agency “Cruise Ship Center” took an original approach to advertizing cruises. They used items of domestic utensils that, from a certain perspective, remind of travelling – like an iron, sliding on the blue silk, like a ship on the surface of water, or the Leaning Tower of Pisa, constructed from liquor glasses (Figure 9).

Analyzing the symbols, we see that the use of domestic utensils reflects ordinary everyday life and necessity (Tressider 1999). Therefore, the symbols chosen support the general advertizing concept of abandoning the everyday life, of the desire to have a change of a scene. The advertizing also takes into account both male and female preferences – an iron is mostly used by women, while liquor glasses – by men. Figure 9. The examples of advertizing by the Canadian agency “Cruise Ship Center” The travel company “Century Travel” from the USA published a series of posters that disapprove of all the lazy and uncurious people in an original way. In the advertizing messages of the series, the authors ask a question: Where does your world end?, thus hinting at the narrowness of our thinking, and immediately give variants of their answers (see Figure 10). The posters are associated with apocalypses, because of the picture itself and because of dark pale colors. Psychologically, it is a rather scary advertisement, because abrupt precipices symbolize infinity and destruction. Volume VI, Issue 2(12), Winter 2015 399 Figure 10. The examples of advertizing by the American travel agency “Century Travel” Hence, the American style of travel advertizing also adheres to minimalism, a short text message is characteristic for it. But it tends to be aggressive in symbols, or in the slogan, which can shock the consumer, although, will, of course, attract his/her attention and will get ingrained in the memory. An advertisement either uses one symbol or does not use any symbols at all. The variety of color palettes is also noticeable: from pastel shades to saturated colors, from light to depressive ones. The most important thing for the American advertizing is to astound the viewer and to get ingrained in his/her memory. The Russian advertizing of travel services has significant differences from the similar type of advertizing in other countries. The

first significant difference is the showiness of the advertisement (Figure 11). A multitude of bright colors is used, probably, in order to fully stress the celebration character of holidays; however, if there are more than three saturated colors in one and the same illustration, this distracts attention from the advertised product itself, irritates, and, also, looks cheap and tasteless. Besides, such showiness does not single out the firm among its rivals, but, on the contrary, levels it with them and makes it one in a series. Figure 11. Examples of advertizing by Russian travel agencies Another specific feature of the Russian travel agencies' advertizing is being highly informative. On one hand, it is good – the consumer can learn all the information that might interest him/her immediately, as he/she is looking through the advertisement (the bet is here made on the information component, not on the emotional one, as we have seen in the advertisements of the European countries). However, this information too often consists of commonplace phrases that definitely create an overload. Additionally, the text, which occupies a large area of the illustration, interferes with the perception of the images. Another characteristic feature of the Russian advertizing is using the standard sets of symbols, or the total lack of them. Most often, the images of tanned girls are found, of romantic couples, children, families, and so on. These symbols combine with the idea of travel services advertizing: a girl represents a temptress, emotions, inconsistency, romantic couples – liveliness, a promise, quiet joy, etc. (Selchenok, 1994). Still, these images appear in advertisements too often, which erases the individuality of tour firms and the advertizing becomes too uniform and does not ingrain in the memory. Thus, the Russian advertizing of travel services has a number of essential drawbacks, as compared with the foreign analogs. The most essential problems of the Russian advertizing are: emphasizing information instead of emotions; stereotypic images; being overloaded by text; the use of a multitude of loud colors that do not combine. At the same time, the use of the world experience gives an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of the perception of the Russian advertisements, by simplifying the picture in general (using only Volume VI, Issue 2(12), Winter 2015 400 a few, compatible colors and less text) and by using non-standard symbols, influencing the emotions of the consumer.

Conclusion The results of the analysis of the travel services advertizing allows to draw the following conclusions: □ The European advertizing of travel services appeals to the emotions of the consumers and is characterized by minimalism, a lapidary message, by the prevalence of light colors, and rich symbolism.

The Asian advertizing of travel services alludes to the historical images of a country and is characterized by the prevalence of dark colors, which has to do with the specifics of the perception of the world in Asian countries. □ The American advertizing of travel services aims at shocking the consumer. For it, these features are characteristic: a lapidary text, its aggressiveness, and a variety of color palettes

– from pastel colors to depressive ones. □ The Russian advertizing of travel services is aimed at information, not emotions, and is characterized by the use of stereotypic images, by being overloaded by text, and by using a lot of loud colors that do not combine. The conducted analysis allows singling out the characteristic features of the Russian style of advertizing of travel services and demonstrates the vectors of its higher efficiency. At the same time, the mechanisms of transferring the foreign experience to the domestic market, in the sphere of designing advertizing products for travel services, remain unexamined – taking into account the specific cultural features of its main consumers. We see this issue as the most prioritized in further research.

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