How can International Companies adapt their customer communication tools to the cultures of Greece, Lithuania and The Nederlands?

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Executive Summary

The globalization led international companies to expand in all the continents and to operate in many countries with different cultures and etiquette. In every different culture with its own traditions, values and behavior, an international company has the need, in order to be successful, to modify their management planning, the expansion strategies and of course the customer communication tools concerning the products and the clients.

Many companies have a big variety of products and when it comes to promote them in different cultures, they need to plan a whole new publicity campaign and a new advertisement planning. Or do they?

We aim to answer our research question which is How can International Companies adapt their customer communication tools to the cultures of Greece, Lithuania and The Nederlands, by examining theory which concludes Cross-Cultural Theory, Communication and Hofstede’s study, and also the empirical study from the countries we chose to focus our research: Greece, Lithuania and The Nederlands.

The different cultures of a South-European country, and Eastern-European country and a Western-European country, is a quite representative combination to compare and conclude finally how can international companies adapt their customer communication tools.

When it comes to the advertisement and the communication tools, we are referring mostly to television spots and video clips, printed material, promotion products with the brand on them, and many others. Our goal is to find the difference between them in the specific countries we chose, and how an international company modifies them, in what point and what does it take into account. With our short but important research journey we are going to answer the research question and contribute to the academic and business community by reaching our goal.
Acknowledgements

First of all, we want to thank those how helped us to complete our thesis and support us with any mean they were able to:

- To our professor Anders Hytter, who have been next to us in every step of completing our thesis and leading us with his tutoring to improve it.
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- To our families for their inexhaustible power of supporting us in our studies.

Our thesis, though, is dedicated to Captain Christian Weeks, our common friend, ex captain of the boat Nemesis in Amsterdam that we met and inspired and motivated us to many fields of our lives. To the captain!

Växjö, May 31st of 2013

Pavlos Sakoglou Sandra Stalaučinskaitė Danny Ubas
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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Background

"'Globalization has changed us into a company that searches the world, not just to sell or to source, but to find intellectual capital - the world's best talents and greatest ideas.'" - Jack Welch

The point that Jack Welch made with his saying is the main motive for us to search about this intellectual capital, the communication tools of the international companies that through the changes of the economic world evolved to be today a vital part of every multinational firm.

The advertisements, world wide web, publications and print material, public service broadcasts and videos, media relations, interviews from spokespersons and official company events like special days, awards, exhibitions and seminars are the most common customer communication tools that we are about to examine and analyze within the different cultures a multinational company has to deal with.

In addition, the cross-culture theory is the second object of our research about an international company that expanded in several countries and used this particular theory in order to compete to the new and different markets and finally to succeed. The theoretical background of the cross-cultural approach of a company to new markets around the globe combined with the company’s communication tools is the main idea that gave us the motive to start up our research of how actually an international company can adapt its customer communication tools to different cultures. To make our research more specific we chose to take the Unilever case.

More specific, an international company, let say Unilever, realizes the need to examine the social environment (social analysis), the behavior of the potential consumers (consumer behavior), the potential of the product to the new market (product analysis) and many other factors that affect company’s successful stabilization to a new and, clearly, different country. That means that the external environment (cross cultural theory - how people from different counties communicate in the terms of the same product of any company) and the internal environment (the communication tools any company chooses to approach clients) can give an answer to our research question: “how can international company adapt their customer communication tools to the cultures of Greece, Lithuania and The Netherlands?”
1.2. Problemising

We are exchange students from 3 different countries (Greece, Lithuania, The Netherlands) and that gives us the advantage to examine spherical a problem as the cross-cultural approach of an international company to different cultures. The same company in The Netherlands with the same product has to modify the whole advertisement planning and the publicity campaign when it comes to deal with the South-European culture of Greeks and the Eastern-European culture of the Lithuanians. The same product has to be promoted, our example, in 3 different ways which means triple effort of the company. Is it though any alternative to keep the cost low and the sales rising? Is there any common characteristic that successfully can persuade the consumers regardless their cultures? And how a company can actually recognize these characteristics, that point actually until which their tools apply to everyone? Where a company aims to each market? After all, the same product a Dutch has in his kitchen and his house, so does a Greek, a Lithuanian and so on.

This is the question that is to be answer after our research. We are going to examine the external environment (cross-culture communications) and the communication tools international companies use with specific examples from different counties so to conclude at the end to a result and answer questions as we set before.

We are also made a small table showing our research dimensions (1x3):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer Communication Tools</th>
<th>Greece</th>
<th>Lithuania</th>
<th>The Nederlands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unilever (IC)</td>
<td>![Greek Flag]</td>
<td>![Lithuanian Flag]</td>
<td>![Dutch Flag]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dimensions of our research are 1x3, making our study both deep and widen. The problem, therefore, shall be the analysis of cross-cultural management of Unilever to these 3 countries in a customer communication tools basis with several examples on products, cultural differences and their combination.
1.2.1. **Definition of the concept of Cross-Cultural Communication**

Defining cross cultural communication, we know that it is a combination of scientific fields such as anthropology, cultural studies, psychology and communication. The term “cross-cultural communication” is usually used in comparative contexts, where scholars attempt to compare broad patterns of communication in one culture with another one. Moreover, all communication is in a sense intercultural; all forms of communication are about negotiating differences between human beings. Furthermore, the term cross cultural communications refers, by word, to the communication between different cultures (cross-cultural: different cultures) and in a business context it refers to the management (dealing with employees with different culture), the customer communication tools, to the aimed audience’s culture and how to approach them.

*the figure is an empirical explanation of what is cross cultural communication: a field of study that looks at how people from different culture backgrounds communicate.*

1.3. **Objectives**

With this thesis we want to find out if and how an international company adapts their customer communication tools in different countries cultures, and more specific, the cultures of Greece, Lithuania and The Nederlands.

To reach our main goal we formed these sub questions:

- How can cross-culture theory be described?
  - How can “culture” be defined and what are its main factors?
  - What is a definition of cross-culture theory and how it is important to management?
1.4. Limitations

In order to increase the reliability of our research and give a more clear picture as a result, we specified our research to a random international company called ‘Unilever’ which applies to many countries around the Europe and making it even more clear, we also narrowed our research to 3 European countries, Greece, Lithuania and The Netherlands, as we already explained to previous section.

Unilever is a multinational business club from The Netherlands with many different products, several and different communication tools, many multicultural advertisements and also successful marketing plans to every country is applying. This is the main reason for choosing this company and we strongly believe that is a quite representative sample of what we are about to analyze.

We are also going to analyze a few products and how they differentiate in each country, we will examine the reason this is happening and try to give an answer to our research question by also using theoretical background.

1.5. Theoretical and practical relevance

1.5.1. The theoretical relevance

The field of Cross-Cultural Communication may is well updated, even though with our research we aim to widen it even more by specifying and giving examples of different countries and their cultures with a single component an international company: Unilever. Furthermore, our research may be of interest of many potential managers who are planning to work with an international company and want to enrich their knowledge with valid cases and examples. With our study we aim to contribute to this field of research which, of course, belongs to the Cross-Cultural Theory.
1.5.2. The practical relevance

In a practical view, our research question refers to any international company that deals with the problem of different cultures and tries to be competitive in several environments at the same time. The rapid evolution of the technology today affects the customer communication tools with a fast pace and this is one of the reasons making our thesis valuable for we are examining how an international company adapt their customer communication tools to the cultures of 3 different countries with different level of technological evolution.
Chapter 2. Methodology

2.1 Research approach

2.1.1 Inductive vs. Deductive Research

In deductive reasoning, if something is true of a class of things in general, it is also true for all members of that class. For example, "All men are mortal. Harold is a man. Therefore, Harold is mortal." For deductive reasoning to be sound, the hypothesis must be correct. It is assumed that the premises, "All men are mortal" and "Harold is a man" are true. Therefore, the conclusion is logical and true.

Inductive reasoning is the opposite of deductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning makes broad generalizations from specific observations. Even if all of the premises are true in a statement, inductive reasoning allows for the conclusion to be false. Here’s an example: "Harold is a grandfather. Harold is bald. Therefore, all grandfathers are bald." The conclusion does not follow logically from the statements.

For this research we are going for a deductive reasoning. The image below this text explains why. We are starting from the theory (Hofstede study) which lead us into a hypothesis which we are going to observe by looking at the country’s (Greece, the Netherlands and Lithuania) what will lead into a conclusion (confirmation).

*Deductive top-down approach*
2.1.2 Qualitative vs. Quantitative

As Dabbs (1982) remarks, “Qualitative and quantitative are not distinct.” Yet in many social sciences, quantitative orientations are often given more respect. This may reflect the tendency of the general public to regard science as relating to numbers and implying precision.

In his attempt to differentiate between quantitative and qualitative approaches, Dabbs (1982, p. 32) indicates that the notion of quality is essential to the nature of things. On the other hand, quantity is elementally an amount of something. Quality refers to the what, how, when and where of a thing—its essence and ambience. Qualitative research, thus, refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things. In contrast, quantitative research refers to counts and measures of things.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative data</th>
<th>Quantitative data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overview:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Overview:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Deals with descriptions.</td>
<td>• Deals with numbers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Data can be observed but not measured.</td>
<td>• Data which can be measured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Colors, textures, smells, tastes, appearance, beauty, etc.</td>
<td>• Length, height, area, volume, weight, speed, time, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Qualitative $\rightarrow$ Quality</td>
<td>• Quantitative $\rightarrow$ quantity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this thesis we are researching the following question: “How can international company adapt their costumer communications (tools) to different cultures in the Netherlands, Greece and Lithuania?” To decide if we should use a qualitative or quantitative approach we should define our question. There are two main parts in the question that is the customer communication (tools) and the cultural adaption.

Customer communication tools such as worldwide web, advertisements, commercials etc. are measurable. They have it or they don’t have it, for example the website, it is in the local language or only in English. While the cultural adaption is more a feeling, a well-known definition of culture according to Kluckohn is as following:

Culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values. (Kluckhohn, 1951, p. 86, n. 5).

So the cultural adaption would lead us more to a qualitative research. Therefore we use a mixture between qualitative and quantitative data collection. We lean more to the quantitative side but then with a taste of a qualitative research.
2.2. Research design

A research design is the framework or plan for a study used as a guide in collecting and analyzing data. There are three basic types of research design: exploratory, descriptive, and causal.

*Relationships among Research Designs

**Exploratory research**
Design in which the major emphasis is on gaining ideas and insights.

**Descriptive research**
Research design in which the major emphasis is on determining the frequency with which something occurs or the extent to which two variables covary.

**Causal research**
Research design in which the major emphasis is on determining cause-and-effect relationships.

We are going for Descriptive research. Descriptive research is very common in business and other aspects of life: it is used in a lot of researches. With a descriptive research design we are usually trying to describe some group of people or other entities. Descriptive research is used for the following purposes:

- To describe the characteristics of certain Groups
- To determine the proportion of people who behave in a certain way
- To make specific predictions
- To determine relationships between variables
Descriptive research exists out of 2 types of studies: longitudinal and Cross-Sectional.

*Classification of Descriptive studies*

In this research we use the Cross-sectional study. Cross-Sectional study: involves drawing a sample of elements from the population of interest. Characteristics of the elements, or sample members, are measured only once.

2.3 Data sources

**Primary data**
Data that has been collected from first-hand-experience is known as primary data. Primary data has not been published yet and is more reliable, authentic and objective. Primary data has not been changed or altered by human beings; therefore its validity is greater than secondary data.

**Secondary data**
Data collected from a source that has already been published in any form is called as secondary data. The review of literature in nay research is based on secondary data. Mostly from books, journals and periodicals.

It is easier to use secondary data and it will also save time but there is no research yet about our topic, at least not about the comparison. The secondary data we can use is from the Hofstede study.

The main data source is going be the same as with qualitative and quantitative data, a mixture of primary and secondary. For the communication tools we will use primary data: worldwide web, advertisements, questionnaires, commercials, etc. and for the cultural adaption we will also use secondary data like the Hofstede model.
2.4 Research strategy

When to use which method? There are three conditions to decide what strategy to use, (1) the type of research question posed, (2) the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioral events, and (3) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events. The figure below displays these three conditions and shows how each is related to the five major research methods: experiments, surveys, archival analysis, histories, and case studies. The importance of each condition, in distinguishing among the five methods, is as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>(1) Form of Research Question</th>
<th>(2) Requires Control of Behavioral Events?</th>
<th>(3) Focuses on Contemporary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>how, why?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>who, what, where, how many, how much?</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival/Analysis</td>
<td>who, what, where, how many, how much?</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes/no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>how, why?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>how, why?</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Relevant Situations for Different Research Methods (Yin, 2009)*

By answering these questions you get your strategy. At the first question it is the question if it’s not only how and why. In our research question this is not the case. It is also where, the three countries, how many and how much as well, how many differences are there? So there are two methods left; Survey and Archival Analysis. These are the two methods we used for this thesis.

The survey is to find out if the outcomes of the archival/analyses are right.
2.5 Data collection Method

The data collection is the foundation of a thesis, therefore the reliability and the way to collect is very important. The quality of the thesis depends on it. For this thesis we used two kinds of data collection, theoretical and empirical data collection.

For the theoretical part, we used different sources: lectures, books, internet, researches, and articles. First we had to collect all the theory about the subject before we could start doing the empirical research. We looked for studies that were already done for our subject. We found one useful study: Hofstede study. They gave an insight on the cultural impact in different countries. Besides these major information sources we found the library from Växjö University very useful, to collect references, also to find useful information about the subject. Not only that we also used Google on the internet to find articles. This gave us an insight from different perspectives.

The empirical perspective appears at least as important as the theoretical one because it allows the confrontation between theories and reality. According to Yin, there are six different sources of evidence which are critical in the practical data collection: “documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observation and physical artifacts” (Yin, 2003:85). In our thesis, we principally used the studies (Hofstede), books, articles, internet and the questionnaires.

The studies were very useful to build a ground base, a first layer of insight in the subject, studies already done in our subject, a lot of information that we used for our thesis. Also very needed since it is hard to find a lot of people from three different countries (Greece, Lithuania and the Netherlands).

The Library of the Linnaeus University supplied us with useful books about our subject to create good doses of references, also to support the ground base of our thesis. Same counts for Articles that we found on the internet (Google Scholar).

Since we are writing our thesis about culture adaptance it is also important to get information from consumers from the three countries (Greece, Lithuania and the Netherlands). To find out the opinion, feeling and experiences of/with Unilever. The questionnaires are taken in Greece, Lithuania and the Netherlands. Also the Hofstede studies are very useful; we compare and analyze them with the results of our survey.
2.5.1 Questionnaire

The Questionnaire will have the general form as it is below with a few modifications concerning the products in the market of Greece, Lithuania and The Netherlands. The questionnaire used for every country will also be displaced in the empirical study chapter in order to be more specific and clarified.

We want to point which of the most popular products are more popular and most commonly used so to have focus on them in analysis part. The questionnaire will be sent to approximately 100 families and active consumers in every country so to have a small representative portion of the market in our research.

The questionnaire:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What of the following products you are more familiar with?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Cif" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Hellmann's" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image11" alt="Becel" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What of the following products do you use more?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Cif" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Hellmann's" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.6 Data analysis method

Since in our research we are going to use both quantitative and qualitative research approaches, it is important to describe what kind of data analysis methods we chose for these approaches. For qualitative data, we plan to use reduction and pattern matching approach. As far as quantitative data is concerned, we are going to use descriptive statistics.

Data reduction can be described as a change, transformation of data, information (numerical or alphabetical) that is got during the studies into simplified, corrected information. In other words, it means that information that is got during the research is reduced so the most important, valuable parts are left.

Pattern matching approach involves evaluation and matching of theoretical pattern as well as a practical part that is observed. If theoretical part is valid, it is bigger chance that conclusions are going to be valid too. Pattern matches in program evaluation can be divided into two types: process pattern matches which assess the construct validity of the program, participants, or measures, and outcome pattern matches which assess the causal hypothesis and address the traditional concerns of internal and external validity.

Descriptive statistics helps to define the main features of the quantitative data in a simplified way. It helps to simply describe how what is on the research data and what it shows and to simply large amounts of data in a sensible way.

2.7 Quality criteria

2.7.1 Content validity

Validity refers to the legitimacy of findings. Content validity is one of the measurement validation types. Measurement validity estimates how well an instrument measures what it purports to measure in terms of its match with the entire definition of construct (Bala H., Brown S.A., Venkatesh V., 2013: 32). Content validity shows what has been done to make sure that face validity (extent which shows if used tools are subjectively chosen, are they covering everything it is needed to be measured) is maximize.

To make sure that we maximize our content validity, we discussed our thesis structure, theories we are going to use for analysis, questionnaires we made with our tutor A. Hytter.
2.7.2 Construct validity

H. Bala and others (2013: 33) explains construct validity as a degree to which inferences can legitimately be made from the operationalization in a study to the theoretical constructs on which inferences can legitimately be made from the operationalization is based. In other words, we can say that construct validity means assurance of conclusions, results we display by using right information resources, measurement tools.

In our thesis, in order to have valid conclusions, inferences, we use books, publications, internet as our information sources. So we could have diversity of information resources. In addition, talking about data, we are using as well primary and secondary data for the thesis (as we have mentioned before). And concerning questionnaires, we are going to do it in three different countries, which will help us to show, what kind of differences those cultures have, and come to the results we are trying to reach.

2.7.3. External validity

External validity shows to which extent results of a study can be generalized to other situations and to other people.

The main aim of our research is to find out how international companies adjust to differences of cultures when it concerns customer communication tools. But since we are going to do analysis just on one international company (Unilever) and its customer communication in three countries (Greece, the Netherlands and Lithuania), it limits our generalization extent.

2.7.4. Reliability

Reliability can be explained as quality which indicates that information, data, research is trustworthy, that it can be measured and using same measure types researchers can come to same results, conclusions. The term reliability means repeatability or consistency. A measure is considered to be reliable if it produces the same result over and over again (Bala H., Brown S.A., Venkatesh V., 2013: 33).

Our research reliability is assessed and proved by analysis, and data collected from the questionnaires. Moreover, since we are going to use theoretical models of cross-culture
studies (Hofstede’s five dimension model), reliability means that researcher who would use the same models methods as we did will come to same or similar conclusions as we did.

Chapter 3. Theory

3.1 Background theory

In order to be able understand differences between cultures, its influence on international companies’ behavior, and on organizations’ choses of customer communication tools, it is important to define and explain terms itself of “culture” and “communication”. Furthermore, to know what kind analysis, study is suitable for this (for us it is relevant to explain what is cross-culture studies).

3.2 How can be defined culture?

Culture is a very important part of every country, society, group, which has considerable influence on attitudes formation and how members understand everything that is and is happening around us. There are a lot of definitions of “culture”. However, it is noticeable that most of the time the main idea is the same.

One of the well-known definitions is written by anthropologist and social theorist C.Kluchohn, who claims:

“Culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values.”

Geert Hofstede (whose studies we are going to use in this research) treats culture as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another (2001: 9). Here “category” can refer to nations, regions within or across nations, ethnicities, religions, occupations, organizations, or the genders. Moreover, G. Hofstede presents culture definition on his official website (http://www.geerthofstede.nl/culture):

“The word "culture" stems from a Latin root that means the tilling of the soil, like in agriculture. In many modern languages the word is used in a figurative sense, with two meanings:

1. The first, most common, meaning is "civilization", including education, manners, arts and crafts and their products. It is the domain of a "ministry of culture".
2. The second meaning derives from social anthropology, but in the past decades it has entered common parlance. It refers to the way people think, feel, and act.

According to Michael R. Czinkota and Ilkka A. Ronkainen (2007), culture can be defined as an integrated system of learned behavior patterns that are distinguishing characteristics of members of any given society. It includes everything that a group thinks, says, does, and makes – its customs, language, material artifacts, and shared systems of attitudes and feelings.

Defining culture we can imply that:

• A culture is particular to one group and not others;
• It influences the behavior of group members in uniform and predictable ways;
• It is learned, and is not innate. It is passed down from one generation to the next;
• Culture includes systems of values (Mead R., 2000: 4).

First point means that different social groups have different cultures and they may respond to similar situations in different ways. Influence of the behavior of group and members in uniform and predictable ways may be explained as an opportunity which lets you to the extent understand the other culture and predict the behavior of its members in routine situations. However, this understanding and predictability has their limitations. Values can be defined as assumptions about how group ought or should do things. Moreover, values are related with beliefs (which indicate how person thinks that things should be done) which influence culture too.

Elements of culture: language (verbal, nonverbal), religion, values and attitudes, manners and customs, material elements, aesthetics, education, social institutions. This observation suggests that elements are both material (such as tools) and abstract (such as attitudes). The sensitivity and adaptation to these elements by international firm depends on the firm’s level of involvement in the market – for example, licensing versus direct investment – and the product or service marketed. Naturally, some products and services or management practices require very little adjustment, whereas others have to be adapted dramatically (Czinkota M.R, Ronkainen I.A., 2007: 57).

Culture can be divided into three levels: level of basic assumption and meaning; level of values, beliefs, preferences; level of behavior.
Basic assumptions are the least noticeable and most hard to change. This layer is most solid compared to others and it deals with deeply rooted models of understanding, meanings and causal relationships that have been shaped by history and transmitted through the educational process to children, pupils and students. Values, beliefs and preferences are based on assumptions. This level of culture helps to form a set of codes or norms that provide some sort of ethical and normative governance mechanisms for social groups, and it might be changed to some extent by new information and new situations. Behavior can be modified through education as well as through some forms of ‘conditioning’. Behavioral change does not have influence on beliefs and assumptions.

Moreover, according to P. Lassare (2012: 312), in the management field that, by nature, is concerned with economic achievement of social groups (companies), culture will be manifest in four key dimensions:

1. **Corporate culture**: the accumulated assumptions, values, beliefs and behavioral norms resulting from the history of the company (good and bad experiences), its existing and past leadership imprint (the legacy of charismatic CEOs) its ownership structure (family-owned, publicly listed, private, government-owned) and its size (big or small).

2. **Industry culture**: any rules derived from the professional norms of a particular industry: heavy manufacturing, services, oil and gas, etc.

3. **Professional culture**: derived from the training and professional norms/constraints of different functions within corporations: accountants, researchers, production personnel, sales and marketing people, etc. Professional orientation introduces a large amount of differentiation within organizations.
4. National or ethnic culture: derived from national, religious or ethnic origin of citizens or social groups.

3.3 What is cross-culture?

In general, cross-cultural theory, studies can be described as a comparison of different cultures’ tendencies in various fields. For us the most important field is management.

Cross-cultural management lies in the on-growing co-operation between companies different countries where difficulties may arise because of the different cultural background (Kawar T.I., 2012: 106). Table 1 shows five types of cross-cultural management: domestic, replication, indigenous, comparative, international and intercultural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cultural Assumptions</th>
<th>Research question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Management studies in a single country</td>
<td>Culture is ignored, or universality of theory is assumed.</td>
<td>How can we explain and predict behavior of people in organization?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replication</td>
<td>Management study repeated in another country</td>
<td>Universality is questioned; there is no theory available to predict the effect of culture.</td>
<td>Does this theory that applies in culture A also apply in culture B?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>Individual management studies conceived and executed in one or many cultures.</td>
<td>Cultural differences are assumed to exist, indigenous theory is needed to explain behavior.</td>
<td>How can we explain and predict the behavior of people in organizations in country X?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative</td>
<td>Management study conducted in two or more countries.</td>
<td>Similarities and differences exist; there may or may not be a theory available to predict the effect of culture.</td>
<td>What similarities and differences exist in the behavior of people in organization? Is this theory universal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>Studies of multinational organizations.</td>
<td>Similarities and differences exist, or culture is ignored.</td>
<td>How do organizations that operate in multiple countries function?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural</td>
<td>Studies of intercultural interactions in organization.</td>
<td>Specific aspects of culture are part of theoretical framework underlying the study.</td>
<td>How is this theory influenced by cultural differences, and how is it universal?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Types of cross-cultural management studies (Thomas D.C., 2008: 19)*
For our research most important are comparative and international researches. Comparative studies seek to find both the similarities and the differences that exist across cultures regarding a particular management issue. International research recognizes that both similarities and differences exist across cultures, the cultural context does not figure prominently in the conceptualization or execution of the study. These studies are not concerned with comparing the cultural context of each country in which the firm operates, except as it applies to the organization as a whole.

We can say that all communication is in one way or another intercultural. All forms of communication include negotiating differences between human beings. The term “cross-cultural communication” is usually used in comparative contexts, where scholars attempt to compare broad patterns of communication in one culture with another one (Cheney G., Christensen L.T., Zorn T.E., Ganesh S., 2004: 396).

According to Halsberger (2005: 86), cross-cultural adaptation is a complex process in which a person becomes capable of functioning effectively in a culture other than the one he or she was originally socialized. Cross-cultural adaptation can be measured from an external point of view. It might be done by members of the local culture or by researchers; and the most important and most obvious aspect of novelty in cross-cultural adaptation is the distance between home and host cultures.

3.4 Why it is important to have cross-cultural skills?

Why it is important for manager to have cross-cultural skills? If managers have those skills, they can:

• Understand the nature of culture, and it influence to behavior in the workplace, outside of it;

• Learn about specific cultures – the other, and one’s own (cross-cultural management should always entail learning one’s own values, without which no comparisons are possible);

• Recognizing and acknowledging differences between cultures;

• Recognizing which and how cultural factors influences the expression of business structures, systems, priorities;

• Implementing the structures of the other culture;

• Recognizing how far structures of one’s culture can be implemented within the other culture; and vice versa; and making the implementations (Mead R., 2000: 17).
Furthermore, cross-cultural skills include such management skills as: communication with members of the other culture, management in structures, motivation and reward, resolution of disputes, and negotiation. Cross-cultural studies also include communication and adaption. And these fields are very relevant for international companies and their managers, since they have to know how differently cultures communicate and they could adjust to those differences.

3.5 What is the definition of communication?

According to F.W. Gilbert, R. McLeod, Jr., W.G. Zikmund (2003: 93), communication is the process of exchanging information with and conveying meaning to others. The traditional communication process is generally thought to be an organization-initiated process. To achieve an effective exchange of meaning, the organization must consider the intended message, channel (medium), and receiver characteristics.

Also there might be customer-initiated communication process, in which the traditional receiver, that is the customer, communication begins the process by searching for information. Receiver of the message is actually the one who start this type of communication process.

There are two kinds of communication types: one-way and two-way communication.

One-way communication model implies that the its process is linear. The activities of deciding to communicate, formulating the message, transmitting (etc.), occur within the sequence each time the process is followed, and must be completed before the next begins. Since it is one way communication, there is no need to wait for response. On the other hand, two-way communication involves the addressee and response is needed. It might be as well verbal communication or written communication.

All cultures carry stereotypes about the ideal mode of communication. Communicative difficulties arise when members of a culture expect their ideals to be equally understood in other cultures, and refuse to make concessions when either producing or interpreting messages (Mead R., 2000: 144). That is why it is important to know how communication process goes and how it is different in separate countries, cultures.

3.6 Frame of references

In our background of theory we describe what is culture, cross-culture, communication process, their most important traits, and why it is relevant for our studies, what are the reasons for managers of international company to know these things. In the second part of our theory chapter we will try to define how and what kind of cross-cultural studies we are going to use
for analyzing varieties, dissimilarities in different countries, cultures and what kind of communication tools might be used by international companies.

In our research we are going to apply Hofstede’s model (cross-cultural study that includes five dimensions defining cultures in separate levels). After looking through our collected literature, and information, we can describe Hofstede’s model and it’s five dimensions.

3.7 General description of Hofstede’s cross-cultural model

Hofstede’s model allow researchers to compare cultures, cultural differences using five dimensions: power distance (the distance between individuals at different levels of a hierarchy), uncertainty avoidance (more or less need to avoid uncertainty about the future), individualism versus collectivism (the relations between the individual and his/her fellows), masculinity versus femininity (the division of roles and values in society), and long-term versus short-term orientation.

Hofstede’s model classifies countries based on where they fall on the binary scale in consideration of people’s acceptance of power inequalities, tolerance to uncertainty, the extent to which they are integrated into groups, the acceptance of male competitiveness and assertiveness, and the persistence to personal stability and respect for traditions. Through his conceptualization of culture as an independent variable and his construction of scaled indices in each of his five dimensions, he presented a view of culture as an attribute which the nation ‘has’ (Moulettes A., 2009: 14-15).

Moreover, as G.Hofstede and G.J.Hofstede claims (2005: 23), this model reveals common problems, but with solutions differing from country to country, in the following areas: social inequality, including the relationship with authority; the relationship between individual and the group; concepts of masculinity and femininity (the social and emotional implications of having been born as a boy or a girl); ways of dealing of dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity, which turned out to be related to the control of aggression and the expression emotions.

Further we will define all five dimensions of this model.

3.7.1 Power distance

Power Distance can be defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. In organizations, it is related to the degree of hierarchy or level of involvement in decision (Lu L., 2012: 110). This dimension deals with culture adaptation to inequalities among its members (desirability/ undesirability of inequality, dependence versus
interdependence within culture) and shows how far the culture tolerates and fosters pecking orders, and how actively members try to reduce them.

There might be low or high power distance countries, cultures. Usually, low power distance countries are valued more positively than high power distance.

Where power distances are low, students value independence rather than conformity. Hierarchies are seen as convenience arrangements rather than as having existential justification. Managers see themselves as practical and systematic, and they admit a need for support. They are likely to consult subordinates before making decisions. Subordinates dislike close supervision and prefer a participative superior, and relatively unafraid of disagreeing with him/her. They find it easier to cooperate with each other, and interdependence is emphasized. In the wealthier lower power distance cultures, technical education is used to acquire expert power rather that to signal social status (Mead R., 2000: 36).

Countries that have low power distance index may be defined as more technological, legal, modern, urban, educated, literate, wealthy, democratic, fair, equal and less imperialistic, centralized, less questioning of authority than high power distance cultures. Also, it might be characterized by more social mobility, better wealth distribution, bigger political power in low power distance countries.

According to G.Hofstede and G.J. Hofstede, in high or large power distance countries it is more noticeable inequalities among people, and their acceptance of it, people dependence to authority, hierarchy in organizations that reflects inequality between higher and lower levels, centralization. Furthermore, managers rely more on superiors and formal rules, subordinates expect to be told what to do.

### 3.7.2 Uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance dimension can be described as a dimension which shows how different cultures accept uncertain, ambiguous situations, how their members tolerate when future is uncertain, not clear, and shows culture preference of planned or unstructured situations within itself.

Again there might be low and high uncertainty avoidance cultures:

- Members of high uncertainty avoidance cultures appear anxiety prone and devote more energy to “beating the future”. In higher uncertainty avoidance countries innovations are more difficult to bring about (Moulettes A., 2009: 100). These societies are described as obedient, subjected to strong rules and social control, not open-minded. Firms in high uncertainty avoidance cultures are characterized by a strong need for rules and regulations; greater structuring of organizational activities; member of staff preference for unambiguous instructions and prejudice toward unexpected ideas and behaviors within companies (Lu L., 2012: 111).
• Low uncertainty culture leads to lower anxiety and job stress, a greater readiness to take risks, and less emotional resistance to change (Mead R., 2000: 37). Expatriate managers from low uncertainty cultures would not build bureaucratic structures that make it hard to react to unfolding events with risk (Lu L., 2012: 111). This type of culture is more open to innovations, more open-minded.

3.7.3 Individualism versus collectivism

Individualism versus collectivism describes the relationship between the individual and the group to which he/she belongs. Individualist cultures stress individual achievements and rights and expect the individual to focus on satisfying his/her own needs. Individual decisions are valued over and above group decisions, and the individual has a right to thoughts and opinions which differ from those held by the majority (Mead R., 2000: 38). On the other hand, in collectivist cultures, the distinction made between in- and out-groups means that altruism may be restricted to members of one’s group, and a relevant part plays group values, its loyalty, and loyalty is valued above efficiency.

Individualism refers to the culture that focuses on the individual over the group. In this case the individual is supposed to be more self-reliant and there is less need to resort to the group and there is no difference between in-groups and out-groups. Collectivism refers to the shared values of the group where in the interests of the group overweigh the interests of the individual. Individualism and collectivism are two opposite concepts (Kawar T.I., 2012: 109).

This dimension usually is linked with modernity and to a state’s level of economic development. High individualism index is associated with more economic development, more wealth, greater social mobility and stronger development of a middle class, a more modern and more urban society, a lower birth rate, a more universal education system and individualistic thinking (Mouettes A., 2009: 102). A collectivistic country is described contrary to this; it supposed to be in lower level of economic development, have less social mobility, weak middle class and its development, an extended, tribal family structure, a traditional education system, collective thinking.

Individualism refers to the relationship between individuals and the collectivities, which prevails in a given society. On the hand, individuals in these societies can enjoy a large amount of freedom because the binds between people are not tied up. Hence, they tend to take care themselves and focus on their own interest (Lu L., 2012: 110).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individualist Culture</th>
<th>Collective Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- Transaction oriented (focus on results).</td>
<td>1- Relationship oriented (focus on process).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Short-term gains.</td>
<td>2- Long-term growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Emphasis on content (facts, numbers, ratios, statistics).</td>
<td>3- Emphasis on context (experience, intuition, the relationship).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Independent.</td>
<td>4- Interdependent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- Competitive, decision driven.</td>
<td>5- Collaborative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- Direct, explicit communication.</td>
<td>6- Indirect, circuitous communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- Personal accountability.</td>
<td>7- Protection of face.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- Private offices.</td>
<td>8- Open office plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9- Linear time, impatient.</td>
<td>9- Flexible time, patient.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A summary of individualist and collective cultures (Kawar T.I., 2012: 110)*

Table above shows main traits of individualist culture and collective culture, also it shows their dissimilarities.

### 3.7.4 Masculinity versus feminity

Masculinity/Femininity dimension Hofstede proceeds from presumption that the duality of the sexes is fundamental fact with which different societies cope in different ways. The concept refers to the dominant sex roles pattern in the vast majority of both traditional and modern societies; that of male competitiveness and assertiveness and female modesty and nurturance (Moulettes A., 2009: 104).

This dimensions is strongly associated with importance attached to the following work goal items (Hofstede G., Hofstede G.J., 2005: 118-119):

**For the masculine pole**

1. Earnings: have an opportunity for high earnings.
2. Recognition: get the recognition you deserve when you do a good job.
3. Advancement: have an opportunity for advancement to higher-level jobs.
4. Challenge: have challenging work to do – work from which you can get a personal sense of accomplishment.

**For the opposite, feminine, pole**

5. Manager: have a good working relationship with your direct superior.
6. Cooperation: work with people who cooperate well with one another.
7. Living area: live in an area desirable to you and your family.
8. Employment security: have the security that you will be able to work for your company as long as you want.

In “masculine” cultures sex roles are sharply differentiated, and values associated with achievement (defined in terms of recognition and wealth) and the effective exercise of power determine cultural ideals. Managers are less attracted by a service ideal, group decisions are respected more, men are expected to be assertive and competitive than women. In “feminine” cultures sex roles are less sharply distinguished, it is harder to notice inequalities between genders, also, men and women have more or less equal access to the same jobs.

Masculinity relates to the degree to which “masculine” values like boldness, performance and competition triumph over “feminine” values such as quality of life, maintaining warm personal relationship and harmony. In a company, it is related to the task-orientation as opposed to the person-orientation of management. Masculine cultures express different roles for men and women. People in such societies have need to be aggressive, on the other hand, the female cultures stress quality of life and environment over money-oriented life (Lu L., 2012: 111).

3.7.5 Long-term orientation

This is fifth dimension of Hofstede’s model which was added later on in the studies.

Hofstede seems to consider the setting-up of this fifth dimension as partly answering the need for local, culturally fitting theories of management and organization in non-Western areas of world – in this case Asia. He claims that the relationship between certain Confucian values as opposed to other equally Confucian values – and economic growth over these decades is a surprising, even sensational, finding. (Mouettes A., 2009: 105).

Confucian dynamism (long-term orientation) refers to time-orientated norms which consist of two contrasting poles: long-term orientation and short-term orientation. Long-term orientation refers to the positive pole reflecting future-oriented beliefs such as persistence and thrift, whereas short-term orientation refers to the negative pole reflecting personal steadiness and reciprocation of favors. (Weiling Z., 2013:54).

Long- versus short-term orientation is the extent to which a society exhibits a pragmatic future-orientated perspective rather than a conventional historic or short-term point of view. Values included in long-term orientation are perseverance, ordering relationships by status, thrift, and having a sense of shame. The opposite is short-term orientation, which includes personal steadiness and stability, and respect for tradition. Focus is on pursuit of happiness rather than on pursuit of peace of mind. Long-term orientation implies investment in the future.
3.8 Communication tools and main traits, differences of customer communication in Hofstede’s five dimension model

In order to be able to talk about variety of customer communication tools in different cultures that are described in Hofstede’s five dimension model, we need to know what kind of communication tools international company can apply so it could reach its wanted customer group.

We already said that there is traditional and customer-initiated communication existing between company and consumer. But this also may be shown in the figures below.


By choosing communication type, company decides what kind of communication tools they are going to use and by making this decision they choose, also, how it wants to influence inside and outside environments, so it could create conditions for stable and profitable business activity.
In addition, before talking communication tools, it is relevant to know that its content depends on the following factors: the product’s or policy relatives; compatibility with established behavioral patterns; complexity, or the degree to which the product or process is perceived as difficult to understand and use; trialability, or the degree to which it may be experimented with and not incur major risk; and observability, which is the extent to which the consequences of the innovation are visible (Czinkota M.R, Ronkainen I.A., 2007: 73-74).

According to O. Ottosen (2001: 43) all conceivable types of communication that can occur between company and buyers may be grouped into one of four main categories which can help choose customer and organization interaction tools. Those categories are: impersonal mass communication, personal mass communication, impersonal individual communication, and personal individual communication. Mass communication can be described as a process which includes communicative episodes in which it tries to reach more than one person with the same communication symbols. In individual communication, unlike mass, only one person is exposed and in this case the choice of communication tools can be adapted to each buyer’s characteristics. Personal communication (face-to-face talks, telephone conversations) gives room for dialogue, and in impersonal communication (television commercials, newspaper advertisements) is not possible to get immediate feedback.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mass communication</th>
<th>Individual communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal</strong></td>
<td><strong>Impersonal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting (face-to-face)</td>
<td>Newspapers Magazines Trade press Periodicals …. Sponsoring media in connection with sporting and cultural events etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone conference</td>
<td>Telephone directories/ yellow pages Cinema commercials Cinema slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video conference</td>
<td>Television commercials Radio commercials In-store-media Billboards The Internet Addressed and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


When company knows, what kind of type, category of communication it is going to choose, it has to decide on tools it is using to reach and keep communication with customers.

Communication tools can be subdivided into two main categories: media, and communication symbols.

1. Media
   Developing a media strategy involves deciding:
   a) Which media to use, b) to what extent, c) in which order, and d) when.

2. Content symbolization
   Developing a content symbolization strategy involves making decisions regarding choice of symbol structures to use in the various media in order to convey the selected communication content elements effectively.

   Notes:
   1) At the seller’s or the buyer’s premises in the form of such events as ordinary meetings, demonstrations, seminars or conferences.
   2) For example leaflets, commercials in rented videos, illuminated advertising media such as neon signs, and commercial gifts.
   3) For example brochures handed out at a store or a bank.
   4) At the seller’s or buyer’s premises, e.g. in an office, a conference room, in the shop premises, etc.
   5) Including stationary and mobile telephones, direct lines, answering machines, automatic order telephones, bleepers, and services such as green numbers (which a buyer can use free of charge in order to contact the company).
   6) Letters, brochures etc.
   7) Where the facilities required are available.

The term “media” signifies any channel which buyers and/ or sellers may use to expose the other part to communication symbols in order to initiate a communication process in the market (Ottosen, 2001: 43). From this we can say that there might be impersonal and personal mass media, and impersonal, personal individual media.
The use of communication symbols involves conceptions of and possible feelings that buyers may have and that are related to the offering, further, decisions making regarding specific symbols structures (that refer to a specific, mutually independent set of symbols that are related to each other in a unique way in time and/or space) in the form of such things as advertisements, letters, films, spoken messages, etc. (usually examples of this type of communication tools are pictures, spoken/printed words). Why it this type of tools involves customer feelings related to product? The interpretation of content depends on the part of the buyer, and different consumers may understand, interpret the same symbol structure, message in different ways.

Nowadays, talking about communication tools it is really important to talk about internet and social media, networks as one of the communication tools. During last decades social media and networks got more and more popular, in this way forming new digital environment and together changing our understanding about communication, moreover, widening communication tools variety by including virtual, electronic tools.

In general, social networks can be defined as a virtual societies, which creates comfortable, with no limits communication atmosphere zones, and in which persons can get whenever and from wherever they want. Also, social networks are internet societies, which are really perspective group of consumers because they have one common trait, which is loyalty to services or products. Moreover, this kind of societies are easily divided into groups of customers that are interested in same kind of products and lets easily communicate with them. Usually, social networks are used to reach global environment, however, it is noticeable that companies tend to adapt their communication type to different cultures.

### 3.9 Differences of communication with customer in Hofstede’s five dimension model

M. De Mooij and G. Hofstede (2010: 88) claims that, in large power distance cultures, everyone has his or her rightful place in a social hierarchy and the this place is important for understanding the role of global brands. In large power distance cultures, one’s social status must be clear so that others can show proper respect. Global brands serve that purpose. Luxury articles, some alcoholic beverages and fashion items typically appeal to social status needs.

Talking about individualistic versus collectivistic dimension, individualistic cultures can be defined as a low-context communication culture and collectivistic cultures are high-context communication cultures (in high context cultures context is at least as important as what is actually said and in low context culture most of the information is contained explicitly in the words). So “messages” that companies are trying to send to customers in individualistic cultures should get straight to the point, and in collectivistic first they should have a relation
and get their trust. In other words, they have to have different roles of communication approach to consumers: persuasion versus creating trust.

According Hofstede and Mooij (2010: 103), in content of analysis of advertising, the picture of a family is assumed to be a reflection of collectivism, but paradoxically it can also be a reflection of individualism where people are afraid that family values are disappearing. In collectivistic cultures advertisers may even feel a lesser need to depict families because the family is part of one’s identity; it is not desirable.

The masculinity/ femininity dimension underline values differences between masculine and feminine societies. Masculine cultures values performance, achievement and success. Therefore, communication tools should show those traits, so status brands or products demonstrate their success. Also, it is important to know the importance of role differentiation (high role importance in masculine cultures and low in feminine) (Hofstede G., Mooij M.D., 2010: 89).

How it was mentioned before, cultures that have high uncertainty avoidance level has a need for rules and formality to structure life. This can be translated into the search for truth and a belief in experts. People of high uncertainty avoidance are less open to change and innovation than people of low uncertainty avoidance cultures, which explains differences in the adoption of innovations. Moreover, personal appearance is important. Relating to this, we can say that consumer in high uncertainty avoidance cultures are more conservative, and in lower more open-minded.

From the perspective of customers, the most noticeable cultural differences between long-term oriented country and short-term oriented may influence consumers’ motivations for maintaining relationships with services providers. In other words, for dedicated-based, long-term relationship, consumers are satisfied with the provided services and they desire to continue this relationship, and usually all of them are more likely to involve positive activities for the service providers such as communication, participation, and word-of-mouth. However, consumers from short-term oriented countries expect quick results and lower patience to tolerate imperfect relationship(Weiling Z., 2013: 55). In this case, consumers more often show lower levels of any forms of affective or continuance or normative commitments with the current service providers. It is more likely that customers from short-term orientation cultures may go to look for alternatives for their wanted service, product.

3.10 Limitations

Some authors claim that Hofstede’s model is not suitable and might be criticized. In order to use this model, we have to acknowledge this criticism as part of limitations.

First of all, there are concerns about data, it might be time-worn. Moreover, severe criticism has been raised towards the essentialistic conception of national culture, which instead of recognizing nations as ‘imagined communities’ depict them as historically. Furthermore, they
say that Hofstede’s model concerns perceptions of values and behavior that are observed within the context of the national cultures as basis for comparison, and culture is studied through organizational view (they say that it reveals organizational members values, attitudes, behavior).

However, we can argue to this criticism. First of all, organization and its members are part of culture so their cultural believes, actions are formed in the same, in other words, culture inside of organization is formed, affected by culture that is existing outside of organization. In addition, Hofstede explains that ‘any kind of change would affect all countries in the same way’ – leading thus to a status quo (Moulettes A., 2009: 92).
Chapter 4. Empirical Study

4.1 Greece

4.1.1 Greek Culture and behavior

Amongst many Mediterranean and South European Countries, Greek culture is quite similar with the south culture in general. The southern people are in general extrovert, open-hearted, and they like to live in simplicity. The climate is mostly temperate and sunny, making the life of the people more convenient all the year. The economy of Greece is mostly based on agriculture, livestock, ores, fishery, tourism and of course on exportation of local Greek delicacies. Unfortunately, the past few years with the economic crisis striking hard the Greek economy, there was a change in many factors that can affect the shopping behavior and the data of the market as they used to be in Greece.

First of all, many Small and Medium Enterprises bankrupt, the inflation climbed to the highs, and the remaining companies forced to raise the prices of the products in every field of the market due to taxation and to other consequences of the economic collapse. That led people prefer to do their shopping in Multinational Companies, such as enormous super markets or shopping malls so to benefit from the low and fixed prices which slightly have been raised.

A multinational company that operates in Greece, in order to survive to this new, even for Greeks, environment, needs to follow the change, examine it, foresee it and finally adapt it. And the most important thing to do when it comes with the consumers is to give a new updated form to their communication tools and adapt to the culture of the country you are operating, even if the culture remains the same, even if the culture changes in the meantime, even if the culture have been changed completely. In the case of Greece, it is relatively easy to adapt the culture for many reasons. The European style of living and the continuously promotion of the western lifestyle and habits are changing the traditional Greek family, are evolving the values of the people and leading them to a modern country with the globalization element really intense.

On the other hand, the first priority to the majority of the Greeks is the price of the product and not the quality. Greek people the past decade used to live up in the society with their image, the brands they used as a representative part of their character and their elegance, today though, with the financial limitations and the taxation going harder and harder, what matters is the ability to provide basic needs like housing, security and food. As a result, a crucial factor international companies have to keep in mind is to keep the cost low and provide the best deals in the market.
4.1.2 Unilever in Greece

British-Dutch company with more than 400 popular brands in 170 countries worldwide, with 1800 product numbers and the biggest supplier in retail, 6th biggest company in Greece with total revenue 598 million Euros in 2009, ΕΛΑΙΣ-Unilever Hellas A.E. concerning mostly food varieties, home and personal care products in more than 35 different spots in supermarkets.

Located in the suburb-central area in Athens, Unilever is one of the most active companies in Greece with many activities in several fields such as investments, social development, charity and environmental projects, trading activities and expansion plans, describes its vision of working hard for a brighter future, focusing on daily products so to help people and their environment feel and look better so to enjoy life to the fullest, inspiring people doing small and good daily deeds for a general improvement and evolving the economy with investments and expansion programs in Greece.

In the annual report, Unilever presented to the crowd analytical information about their actions and their products, their upcoming plans and their core of values as a company, their vision, and their goals and so on. According to the document, the past 3 years (2009-2012) their investment planning came up to 280 million Euros, their total contribution to the society came up to 73,5 million Euros of which 28,6 millions spend on salaries, 14,6 millions to the shareholders, 22,2 millions on taxes, 7,8 millions personal investment for Unilever and 0,3 million for charity to several foundations across Greece. Another admirable thing is that Unilever also compromised itself in reducing to 50% their product’s affection to the environment until 2020 and also to assist around 2 billion people again until 2020.

All these facts make the company even more reliable and representative for our research. It is an international company, active in several fields, organizing business information events, offering jobs and careers, improving the social and the economic environment and offers several daily products for physical care and development. The image of the company is well stated and attentive, apparently with a professional marketing and design team, and according to their annual report once more, ΕΛΑΙΣ-Unilever Hellas A.E.’ personnel seems to focus on the development of their products.

It is also worth to say that ΕΛΑΙΣ-Unilever Hellas A.E. have bought many Greek companies over the years without changing their already popular brand for many reasons, some of them probably for nationalist reasons and high cost of ripping off the brands and wave back all over again. Even though, ΕΛΑΙΣ-Unilever Hellas A.E. keeps a low profile as a company but is popular for its products with many advertisement in popular television channels, brochures, promotions and many other customer communication tools.
4.1.3 Popular products of Unilever in Greece

As I wrote above, Unilever has more than 400 popular brands worldwide; some of them are presented below. We through a survey asking what of these products you are most familiar with and which of these products do you use more (questionnaire) in order to have a more representative sample to our research.

The following questionnaire is the one I used to a certain network of active consumers and families:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What of the following products you are more familiar with? Choose top 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellmann's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What of the following products do you use more? Choose top 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellmann's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We inducted the results to a table so to give a simpler and easier picture to the readers.

The results are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Algida</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Axe</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Dove</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Knorr</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Rexona</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Lipton</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Ben and Jerrys</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Kleenex</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Hellmann’s</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Lux</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Becel</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Skip</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Vaseline</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Cif</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Persil</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Algida</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Axe</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Dove</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Knorr</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Rexona</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Lipton</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Ben and Jerrys</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Kleenex</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Hellmann’s</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Lux</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Becel</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Skip</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Vaseline</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Cif</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Persil</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After my research in the Greek market I concluded that the most popular products I am going to focus on are the brands: Algida, Axe, Dove, Knorr, Rexona, Lipton. The fact that many consumers chose these specific products it is not random. The advertisement on these products in Greece is a daily phenomenon and it occurs many times a day in the most popular channels in the television, in strategic hours when their target group is supposed to watch them. In this point it is important to comment briefly on these particular products and give a
small description, according to the corporate webpage. Afterwards, I am going to highlight on the communication tools ΕΛΑΙΣ-Unilever Hellas A.E. uses and how it adapted them, by taking every product individually and to give a better picture of the reality.

4.1.4 Product Description and Communication Tools

Algida

Algida is the synonym of ‘good ice-cream’ in Greece and also in the rest of the world. Company’s mission is to add vitality to our daily life with well-known products such as Magic, the Carte D’Or and Cornetto.

Algida in Greece is famous of their ice-creams. The prices are reasonable compare to the other products even though the company succeeded to establish the quality of their product to consumer’s mind. Especially in the summer, due to the hot weather and the preference of people to consume ice-cream more than other seasons, Algida starts its campaign at early spring and lasts to mid-autumn. This campaign includes mostly short spots on television, usually showing something pleasant and exotic, daring and enjoyable, trying to focus on someone’s desires, mostly referring to men, and of course depending on the specific product. Another communication tool Algida uses is the sign labels in the kiosks. It is very common in Greece for people to buy snacks, cigarettes and refreshments from small kiosks in the corner, in the square and several places in the city. Algida succeeds to establish its own advertising freezer with ice-creams to many kiosks around the country and by this, to benefit for the consumption everyone does when he buys an ice-cream. It is working like a monopoly to each kiosk. And last but not least, mini flags hanging to mini-markets and small shops, accessories in refreshment areas and promotions are mainly the reason Algida is commonly known, one of the most popular ice-cream brand in Greece.

Axe

Cool, adventurous and designed to bring men one step ahead in the game of flirtation, the AXE is one of the most prevalent and successful brands in the male grooming world.

The deodorant AXE is a men’s product with many advertisement in popular television channels, online advertisement, many promotion campaigns mostly next to shopping centers and shopping malls but also in main city squares. According to my small survey, it is the second most popular product amongst Unilever’s variety. As it refers to men, the advertisements usually include the female element in intense colors and sensitive moves so to attract male’s attention according to their nature and their instincts. It is also remarkable to include that AXE advertisements, except from showing attractive ladies, they also try to get your attention, mostly by using special effects like explosions and other action scenes. Smart
advertisements and well planned to refer to men, mostly showed in strategic hours such as soccer games at night, before or after the news at the noon or night.

Dove

*The Dove is designed to broaden the term "beauty" for women because we believe that true beauty is found in all ages and all body types. To help you discover your own 'concept' of beauty, Dove series consists of several separate products for cleaning and personal care products that make a difference, both as sensation and as a condition of the skin and hair.*

Dove is a female series including products such as cream and bar soaps, deodorants, shampoos, moisture creams and many other personal daily care products women use to keep their form in perfection and the main idea they promote is that the consumer to be untouchable from the microorganisms living in the environment and could wear down the bright of the skin. Even though Dove is quite popular amongst the consumers, the promotion they make is quite limited. It occurs mostly in female shopping centers with cosmetics and accessories with huge posters and banners, simple in the design, just focusing in the sensitivity and the tranquility, which is actually their main purpose to transfer to the audience. The main color that describes Dove is white, mostly because it is the absolute color that expresses tranquility and peace and by any means, sensitivity. A few advertisements in television, in strategic hours of course, referring to women of all ages, with the same element everywhere and a unique message: beauty and sensitivity. It is also obvious for most of Dove advertisements show exotic islands with white sand and crystal seas and beautiful models in white long dresses to try exotic fruits or to relax. Only the image is persuasive enough and wanted, presented as a dream.

Knorr

*Knorr believes that good food should be both enjoyable. Adds great pleasure in our lives and daily meals can be the same individual with banquets. This is the belief behind the success of Knorr.*

Even though Knorr is not the first brand that comes into your mind when you think about food, it is the dominant brand and cooking ingredient in almost every house in Greece. The past decade, Knorr made really smart and short video clips in television and succeeded to establish in the mind of the housewife as the simplest way to make everything tastier. The series of Knorr products include mostly flavor sauces and vegetable cubes but also quick soups, pasta and noodles, and generally, many in-a-minute foods. In the advertisements, Knorr is focusing in the quality of their products and the effectiveness. They present them as a sure way of successful and easy cooking, usually showing a cook preparing a meal and suddenly realizes that Knorr products will make the difference instantly, so he uses them and after he tries the food he licks his fingers, a symbolic move and a characteristic of the Mediterranean people when it comes to describe something tasty. Last but not least, in order
to compete with other brands and the crisis there is in Greece, Knorr promotes many times its products in special offers and family packages so to balance the price and become more friendly and approachable to almost every house regardless their income.

**Rexona**

*Daily unexpected events occur, increasing the adrenaline and the sweat running. But now, thanks to its unique composition, Rexona meet the needs of the body, providing extra protection when you need it. So you know that your deodorant will never let you down and you can have the confidence that Rexona is made to fully cover the needs of women through all the distinct product lines.*

Rexona is another brand of Unilever with limited serial products, mostly known for the deodorants and the shampoos. The advertisements are limited in television and the promotion small. It is popular mostly because of the low prices and their promising results. As a brand, the main characteristic they want the audience to focus is the sensitivity of the skin after the use of the product. The video clips playing in television mostly concern the ability of a woman to attract a man more effective when using the products of Rexona, with the main idea that the power of the body after the use has increased. In Greek reality, as I referred previously, the most important thing in an economic collapse period is the prices of the products and the promotion they do. Rexona continues to be popular and competitive due to the low prices even if the publicity campaign for this brand is poor.

**Lipton**

*Lipton gave his name to the eponymous brand is now the most famous tea in the world. Lipton pioneered the international market offering hot and cold tea, instant tea powder and different varieties of teas.*

Lipton is the most popular ice tea refreshment in the Greek market. The company’s planning for promotion was really successful because, first of all, in every café or refreshment kiosk you go to enjoy the nature or to swim in the sea next to a resort, there are almost everywhere advertisements-suggestions to prefer Lipton’s Ice Tea, their most popular product. Flags, sign-labels, tables and chairs for the garden, glasses, television spots and many other tools are daily viewed from a big audience. It is a summer product as well and as a result the publicity campaign start at early spring to mid-autumn, the same with Algida. Smart television spots show hot places around the world like a really warm sand next to a beach or even a desert with a resort dreamlike for everyone how would like to refresh himself with all this heat around, and of course the main drink served to please and bring joy to the consumer is the famous Ice Tea.
The customer communication tools of its brand of Unilever in Greece, it is important to say, that depending the product, are not much different from those in the rest of the world. Not all of them are translated, and of course there is no need to translate all of them mostly because not all of them have talking messages but only pictures. In the culture of Greece, these products are successful for many reasons but mostly because of the customer communication tools. We are going to give the analysis in the next chapter, but first we also need to consider the results and the characteristics of the cultures of Lithuania and The Nederlands.

4.1.5 Hofstede’s model applied to Greece

With Hofstede’s 5-D model we can have a good image and comparison to the world’s different cultures and a specific culture. In the table below we can see the data for Greece.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power distance</th>
<th>Uncertainty avoidance</th>
<th>Individualism</th>
<th>Masculinity vs. Femininity</th>
<th>Long-term vs. Short-term orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hofstede</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Power Distance**

This dimension refers to the fact that there is inequality between the members of the society. In Greek reality, 60 belongs to the higher side of PD, which actually supports that inequality and the hierarchy between all individuals, and also that it is acceptable. For example, in Greece there is the value of respect the elders, the kids take care of their parents, in business world usually there is a dominant boss that takes care of everything, and as a unity, Greeks believe that all of the Western civilization is based and affected from ancient Greek culture.

**Uncertainty avoidance**

Uncertainty avoidance is about the philosophical question if we are able to control our future or we just have to let it happen. Greece in this dimension has a high score of 112, which means that Greek people have a high uncertainty for the future. The fact that the bureaucracy in Greece and the laws are really important to follow in order citizens have an easier life without problems, supports that statement. And if we look back to the early explanations Greek mythology gives, there was only Chaos at first place and then Cronos (Time) came to organize life and make it easier to manage.
Individualism

The definition subscribes individualism as the degree in which people care about themselves as individuals and how much they care about close environment. The first phenomenon is called individualism and the second collectivism. Greece, with the score of 35 is considered as a collectivist society, in which the family-core is of great importance to every part of the family, including all extended family members such as uncles/aunts, cousins, grandparents. Another phenomenon in business is that usually close family members support their own nephews, cousins and so on, by helping them find a job, promote them or even employ them to their own business. It is also a characteristic of Greek business etiquette to do long and general conversations before the actual business talk in order to get to know each other.

Masculinity vs. Femininity

Masculinity and Femininity is the rate in which society is whether man-core or female-core. For example, in a masculinity society it is expected of men to prevail in the majority of the fields, like in business, in family, in social strength generally with an admirable and respectful image. And the opposite happens in a feminine society. Greece, with 57 is considered a medium masculinity society and that means that men are raised with values like protecting the family and being the main provider and ensure their biological and security needs. Many great and successful Greek men are still referring to new generations as paradigms to follow.

Long-term vs. Short-term orientation

This dimension refers to the future perspectives of a society for virtue, according to Confucius. Greece has not rated in this dimension.

4.2 Lithuania

4.2.1 Lithuania culture and behavior

In general, Lithuanian culture is closely related with Eastern European culture; also it is one of the Baltic countries which affect how state’s culture is valued, considered outside of it. It is well-known that Lithuania has long history and has been influenced by several cultures. First of all, we can say that Lithuanian culture was strongly affected by Russian culture, since it has been part of Soviet Union until 1990. However, the Soviet oppression lasting for several centuries formed an aversion towards the Communism system resulting in rejection of Russian cultural values and attitudes. For instance, the inhabitants of the Baltic States are more self-determined, more open-minded and much more hard-working than their Eastern neighbors (Ruževičius J., Ruževičiūtė R., 2011: 295). Also, state’s culture was affected by
Poland which lead to the religious believes formation (Lithuania is a Christian country, almost 80 per cent of society are Roman Catholics), and it has cultural commonalities Germany too, which is famous for its orderliness. This fact allows for an assumption that Lithuanians are more disciplined and devoted that their neighbors.

Talking about Lithuanian society from customer point of view, we can call it a consumer society. According to Lithuanian Consumer Institute, costumers in Lithuania can be described as irrational and sometimes unreasonable. It is so because they do not care that much about their rights (they start to get information about just then when they confront problems related with consumer rights), price and quality ratio, further, they are easily affected by and quickly responds sales, discounts. They are open to commercials, advertisements too. In other words, it is quite simple to use communications tools for companies in Lithuania if they want to increase their sells. Even thought, Lithuanian society is concerned to be consumer society, it also puts quality in the first place (it was shown by the research done by Lithuanian Consumer Institute), and price in the second. Looks of products are valued; however, it is not that important compared to other two factors. It is quite clear, that customer satisfaction leads to customer loyalty, and Lithuanian consumers relate loyalty with price fairness.

4.2.2 Unilever Lithuania

Name of Unilever is not so well-known in Lithuania. It is more noted of the company’s brands names, and subsidiary existing inside of country rather than the company itself. However, this organization’s office is located in Lithuania’s capital (Vilnius) too, and is established under the name of “Unilever Lietuva” (Unilever Lithuania). It has 18 employees. Brands like Knorr, Lipton, Rama, Hellmann’s, Carte D’or, Algida, Rexona, Delma, Domestos, Cif and Dove are working under the name of this company. Moreover, in Lithuania exists another company with the name of Unilever (Uniliver Lithuania distributions, it has113 employees), which is basically related with the storing and distribution of ice-cream (Algida, and other brands that produced by subsidiary about which we are going to talk later).

It is important to notice that brands like Knorr, Lipton, Rama, Hellmann’s and Carte D’or actually exist under another Unilever brand - Unilever Food Solutions. And even more important, ice-cream brand Algida is produced by the subsidiary of Unilever which is called “Ingman ledai”. However, Rexona, Delma, Domestos, Cif and Dove are sold in Lithuania, but not produced.

There is not much to say about motivation of subordinates in the company’s office in Lithuania, since there are only 18 of them. Furthermore, there are no resources that could show this kind of information, and not only about motivation but also about office itself. The only information that is presented about the company’s branch in the country is just the address, phone number, number of employees, specialization, juristic information (company’s code, social insurance number, etc.), and contacts. In general, they reveal information that has
to be open to the society by the laws of the state. Also, interesting fact is that there is no internet page of the Lithuanian branch; however, they show the global page of Unilever but Lithuania is not shown as a part of Unilever countries (the web page can only be read in other languages).

In addition, talking about the branch itself, there is not much information about career opportunities in Lithuania too. The only information you can get, and is open to the public, is global. In other words, people who are looking for career chances in this company’s branch in Lithuania, can find it on the global Unilever web page. There is information for graduates, students and professionals about opportunities and current vacancies in all the countries that Unilever has activities. But, even thought, we can connect this to one of the ways to find job opportunities in the company, it is clear that is not specialized for one country, society, and there is no adjusting to the cultural differences at this point (Lithuania is taken under the estimation as a part of the globe). However, this can be explained, since the number of employees is small in the branch of Lithuania.

The same thing can be said about one of the subsidiaries (Uniliver Lithuania distributions). The information that can be found is only contact, public (that kind of that has to open to everybody) information, also, references about the specialization of organization. There is no special data about career chances in this subsidiary.

However, there is a lot more information about other company’s subsidiary (ice-cream company “Ingman ledai”). Originally, “Ingman ledai” belong to Finnish company “Ingman group” which was founded in 1929. During the year 1992 new branch of company Ingman Vega was established in Lithuania, and ice-cream production started the following year. In 2006, company demerged into two companies and one of them was “Ingman ledai” (originally named Ingman Vega). In 2011 this company was sold to Unilever and became one of its subsidiaries in the Lithuania. At that time “Ingman ledai” was the leader of ice-cream market in Lithuania, and it was the best way to enter the market. And now Unilever’s ice-cream brand is produced and promoted by this subsidiary. However, this company is all the ways controlled by the Unilever Lithuania.

It is important to say that this subsidiary not only produce ice-cream but also sells frozen products like vegetables, berries, potatoes and dumplings.

“Ingman ledai” has four sale branches in Lithuania (in cities Vilnius, Kaunas, Palanga and Mazeikiai) and it has more than to 200 employees. So there are more career opportunities in this subsidiary. Information about work chances in this company can be found in the official web page (www.ingman.lt), where candidates can ask questions, or get contact information of the person who is responsible for the vacancies. Furthermore, there is always an opportunity to do outside sale during the summer (in this case, person has to contact corresponding sale branch in the country).
### 4.2.3 Popular products of Unilever in Lithuania

As was mentioned before, Unilever is not that well-known in Lithuania, but is more known for its brands that are active in the country. We did a survey asking what of these products you are most familiar with and which of these products do you use more so we could know what brands are most popular in the country.

The following survey was applied to Lithuanian customer (some brands were changed since different brands are active in the country).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What of the following products you are more familiar with? Choose top 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HELLMAN’S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rama</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What of the following products do you use more? Choose top 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HELLMAN’S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rama</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of the questionnaire are shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Brand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rexona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lipton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td>Algida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td>Knorr</td>
</tr>
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<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hellmann’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>Domestos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kleenex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vaseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Axe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ben&amp;Jerry’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Brand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rexona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lipton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td>Algida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Knorr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hellmann’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persil</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>Domestos</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cif</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lux</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kleenex</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vaseline</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Axe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ben&amp;Jerry’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the end, it is clear that the most five popular brands in Lithuania are: Rexona, Lipton, Dove, Algida and Knorr.

*Rexona* is one the most well-known deodorants and antiperspirants brand for men and women in Lithuania. Even thought, it is not produced in Lithuania, but Lithuanian branch is still responsible for its distribution.

*Dove* provides skin care, hair care, body lotions, hand creams, body wash, bar soap and deodorant for women and men as well in Lithuania. However, there is no specified information for Lithuanian costumers on the internet.
Algida is still kind of a new brand in Lithuania (it entered an ice-cream market here just in 2011). Under this brand Lithuanian subsidiary (Ingman) produces ice-creams like Big Milk, Magnus, Carte D’or, Max, Cornetto Italiano, and Romero.

Knorr motto in Lithuania says “Suteik gyvenimui skonio” which means give live a taste. In Lithuania consumers can find these products: bouillons (Knorr Buljonete), soups (instant (Cup a Soup), cooking (Premium Soups Menu)), fast made pasta, fast made snack in the cup, and pre-made mixture for dishes (Knorr Menu).

Lipton motto says “Lipton drink positive”, and it is important to notice that this motto is also used in English in Lithuania too. You can buy this types of Lipton brand product in Lithuania: Lipton yellow label tea, Lipton Earl Grey, Lipton green tea, Lipton black tea with fruits, Lipton fruity tea, Lipton green and white teas.

4.2.4 Communication tools used by Unilever brands in Lithuania

One of the most popular brands of Unilever in Lithuania is Rexona. To promote this brand and reach customers it used both traditional and customer-initiated communication. Traditional communication type is applied by using mass impersonal communication (ads in magazines, television commercials, brochures in stores), to encourage customer-initiated communication brand uses social network, to be more direct, Facebook account for Rexona customers in Lithuania (Rexona LT, it shows information about products, and lotteries that are going on for a moment, for instance). Advertisements in magazines, brochures are more aimed to the feminine side of society in Lithuania. Usually it shows information about new products, or lottery going on. TV commercials for women shows successful, independent and usual career woman, and ads for men are trying to indicate brands relation with strength, victory and authority. However, this brands communication tools are more directed to aimed feminine side.

Even thought, Dove is one of the most well-known brands in Lithuania, Unilever does not apply so many communication tools for Lithuanian consumers. They use only traditional communication type, which involves television commercials and ads in magazines. Moreover, they focus only on the feminine customers. Usually, TV commercials shows group of women, and they try to highlight the simplicity and natural beauty.

As was mentioned before, Algida is a new brand in Lithuania. So it is important to choose right communication tools for this. Algide uses both traditional and customer-initiated communication types. Traditional communication tools are ads in newspaper and magazines, and for customer-initiated are social network Facebook account of brand, and web page of Unilever subsidiary “Ingman ledai”. In both types of communication tools they show families, children.

After doing research on Knorr’s brand’s communication tools in Lithuania, we can say that for this brand Unilever uses more customer-initiated communication type rather than traditional. This brand has web page for Lithuanian consumers, in which they display information about products, recipes, news about brand and event that might be happening in the future. It is impersonal mass media communication tools. As far as traditional
communication is concerned, brand uses also ads in the newspapers, magazines, and brochures, but no TV commercial.

Lipton communication tools are quite similar to Knorr’s in Lithuania. Again, they use both traditional and customer-initiated communication types, impersonal mass media communication tools (press (magazines, newspapers), internet, television). Like Knorr, Lipton has web page for Lithuanian customers, but they also show TV commercials.

4.2.5 Hofstede’s model applied to Lithuania

Although Lithuania is not included in the original Hofstede’s five dimensions research, there was done couple of studies on Lithuania applying this model by Mockaitis (in 2001) and Huettinger (in 2008). Both scholars base their research on Hofstede’s cultural dimension theory, which seeks to evaluate cultural differences in five core dimensions, namely, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, power distance and long-term orientation, rating countries according to a 120 point scale (Ruževičius J., Ruževičiūtė R., 2011: 295).

The table below shows the results of those researches.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Power distance</th>
<th>Uncertainty avoidance</th>
<th>Individualism</th>
<th>Masculinity vs. Femininity</th>
<th>Long-term vs. Short-term orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Huettinger</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mockaitis</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Lithuania’s points in the Hofstede’s five dimension model*

Lithuanian respondents, who responded to this study, scored low-moderate in power distance, which shows that hierarchy level in the country is low. However, it still shows that bosses and subordinates do not think about as equal. Moreover, they tolerate inequality (in this way it shown higher power distance level), and this could be a sign for the spreading belief in hierarchy and centralism. Further, this ratio of this dimension could be an indicator of the Lithuanian circumspectness and indirectness of speech.

Lithuania scores moderately-high for uncertainty avoidance, and shares the belief that the manager is a manager, because he knows everything and is able to lead. Senior persons have to dominate meetings and it is not the task of employees to contribute. Lithuanians do not perceive their superior as one of their team, but is his task to lead and give directions. Also it shows that it might lead to tension in organizations and society itself. Also, country has moderate-strong individualism level.
Mockaitis study showed Lithuania as a masculine society (65 points), while Huettinger’s estimation defined it as a strongly feminine one with just 9 points on the masculinity scale. This can be explained by the growing trend of feminism in Lithuania during the period from 2001 to 2008. This may allow us to assume that Huettinger’s evaluation linked of masculinity index could reflect reality more.

Talking about long-term vs. short-term orientation dimension, Mockaitis did not estimate Lithuania with this index. However, according to Huettinger, country has understanding, values of more short-term rather than long-term orientation culture.

According to De Mooij and Hofstede, in order to ensure efficiency all cultural dimensions should be taken into consideration while planning the advertisement style. Lithuanians are willing to expose more to the advertisements appeals which are directed towards individualism (for instance, like success, independence, task orientation, pleasure, etc.). However, these motives should be considered with caution, since Lithuania, according to Huesttinger, is also a feminine country. On the contrary, the countries that score low on masculinity focus on relations and the quality of life, rather than personal achievements. However, this discrepancy could be effectively employed in order to achieve the value paradox which, according to De Mooij, could reflect inner personal, rather than cultural, values.

The low-power distance and high-uncertainty avoidance nature of Lithuanian culture suggest that advertising appeals should not refer to hierarchy, status or instability. Advertisements should rather be more direct and explicit or verbal, since Lithuanians appreciate low-context communication. It is worthwhile pointing out that explicitness in marketing communications is also an advantage due to a higher uncertainty avoidance level that requires more detailed information about a service or a product. An advertisement in Lithuania would work most effectively if one of the following forms was applied: all variations of announcements and lessons, association transfer with a focus on lifestyle and metaphor or drama that would be directed towards problem solution. However, other forms, such as imagination or special effects, could work as well due to their universal applicability.
4.3 The Nederlands

4.3.1 Dutch culture and behavior

Although the culture keeps changing there are still some points that are determinative for the Dutch culture. The Netherlands is a tolerant country, doesn’t matter where you are from or what you are man, women, hetero, gay, catholic, Muslim, Chinese etc., everybody is equal and get the same chances, same rights but also same duties.

Like a lot of other countries The Netherlands has a democracy. The people are really modern of view, and a lot is possible, for example coffee shops where you can buy a joint or an open area with prostitutes. The people are really open to other people and hospitable. Also it is a good organized country, good roads, and good and save airports and airport companies, good defense against the biggest nature threat water.

Like mentioned before, everybody get the same chances. Even if you no money, if you do your best you can always have a good future, the government and other institutions support you in a lot of ways to get you a good education.

Of course the Netherlands has also problems with the crisis, but not as bad as many other countries. They cannot really complain if you look at purchasing power, they are number 9 of the World and number 2 in Europe of countries with the highest purchasing power.

The Netherlands is a prosperous country with an open economy and the foreign trade is very important. The economy is characterized by stable relationships, relatively low inflation, healthy financial policies and an important role as a European transport artery. Food processing, chemicals, oil refining and the manufacture of electrical appliances are the main industrial activities.

Only 4% of the Dutch population works in the intensive, mechanized agriculture, but there are huge amounts of food for the food processing industry and the output produced by the sector. After the United States and France, the Netherlands is the third exporting country in the field of agricultural and horticultural products. The Dutch economy is about the fifteenth to twentieth economy in the world.
4.3.2 Unilever in the Netherlands

Unilever is a multinational company in the field of food, personal care and cleaning products. Unilever has a dual corporate structure with its headquarters (Corporate Centre) at two locations, one in Rotterdam (Unilever NV) and in London (Unilever PLC).

Unilever partly started in the Netherlands and in England, it started on the 1 of January 1930, by two Dutch margarine competitors and an English wholesaler of groceries. And is now a company with 400 brands in their portfolio.

Unilever had two directors for years; the CEO of the Dutch company had the position of vice president in the Netherlands and vice versa. Since 2005 both companies have one board. The Dutchman Paul Polman was appointed CEO. In 2007, the Swede Michael Treschow became the new chairman of Unilever.

Until 2008 Unilever had six factories in the Netherlands.

*Margarine factory in Rotterdam with the Dutch office of Unilver on top

However, the group has offices in Delft (Calve peanut butter), Loosdrecht (Knorr, Conimex) and Vlaardingen (detergents) closed in 2008, this made 474 jobs disappear. The production has largely moved to large production facilities mainly in low-wage countries such as Poland (meal packages, spice mixes, cleaning products and personal care items), Spain (saucers), Czech Republic (mayonnaise), Italy, France, Switzerland, Germany and Hungary. On the evening of October 10, 2007 the employees of the factories of Unilever stopped working, 1300 production workers were in a 40 hour strike for job security and a better collective agreement. The unions expected that some of the other 2900 employees would join the strike, which also happened. Eventually there came an agreement on November 6, 2007, however, that was not signed by Unilever, so the strikes continued.
Unilever still has four factories left in the Netherlands:
1. Unox in Oss, a factory for production of soups, sauces and sausage
2. Ben and Jerry's to Hellendoorn, a factory for production of ice cream
3. Blue Band and Calve in Rotterdam, a factory for the production of margarine and peanut butter
4. Prodent and Zendium in Amersfoort, a factory for production of toothpaste.

4.3.3 Popular products of Unilever in the Netherlands

Unilever is a well-known company in the Netherlands; with 400 brands in their portfolio it’s almost not possible not to have any product of Unilever. We did a survey in the Netherlands to find out what products they are most familiar with and which of these products they used most, so we know what brands are most popular in the Netherlands.

The following survey was applied to the Dutch customers (some brands were changed since different brands are active in the country).

| What of the following products you are more familiar with? Choose top 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cif | OLA | AXE | Dove | Ben & Jerry's |
| Hellmann's | Lipton | Rexona | Unox | Knorr |
| Becel | Kleenex | Persil | Vaseline | Calve |

| What of the following products do you use more? Choose top 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cif | OLA | AXE | Dove | Ben & Jerry's |
| Hellmann's | Lipton | Rexona | Unox | Knorr |
The results of the survey are as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Brand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>Calvé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>Knorr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Unox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Ben&amp;Jerry’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Ola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Axe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rexona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Cif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Persil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Becel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Kleenex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Vaseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Lipton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Hellmann’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Brand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>Calvé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Unox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>Knorr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Ben&amp;Jerry’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Dove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Lipton</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Rexona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Cif</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Persil</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Becel</td>
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<td>12.</td>
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<td>Kleenex</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Vaseline</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Axe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Hellmann’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the tables there are a few really famous brands in the Netherlands. The most famous brands are: Calvé, Unox, Knorr, Ben & Jerry’s and Ola.
Calvé
According to the survey Calvé is the most well-known brand in the Netherlands; Calvé is a brand that makes several sauces. Also they are famous for their Pindakaas (peanut butter). Their motto:
“\textit{It is every day feast with the sauces of Calvé. With Calve your meal is just a bit tastier. Whether it is a daily meal with potatoes, meat and vegetables or a party, barbeque, gourmet or fondue. And then there is also the Calve peanut butter. How big do you want to be?}”

Calvé started with salad oil, which they brought on the market with big commercial actions. With posters from a famous Dutch painter, he used a particular style the “jugendstil” later this style got famous as the salad oil style.

The factory of Calvé was in the Delft, the Netherlands till 2008 after 2008 the production got transferred to Rotterdam, the Netherlands and some other countries. The factory in Delft had even a role in World War 2; at the beginning of the war they bought some antiaircraft canons and employees of the factory could volunteer to be an anti-aircraft gunner.

Unox
According to the survey Unox is the second most well-known brand in the Netherlands; Unox is a brand that mostly makes smoked sausages and soups, they also make frankfurters and winter stew dishes. They describe themselves as follow:
“A brand that is associated with cold Dutch winter, pea soup with sausage and kale and typically Dutch traditions like skating on natural ice and the Nieuwjaarsduik (diving in the sea at the first day of the year). That makes Unox the most Dutch brand in the Netherlands!”

Unox started in 1937 in Oss, the Netherlands. Where they still are, they still got a big factory in Oss.

Unox karts can be found on a lot of places in the Netherlands, mostly on festivals where they sell their famous smoked sausages. They sponsor ice skating games and also the championships, also the Nieuwjaarsduik (diving in the sea at the first day of the year) in Scheveningen, the Netherlands. They give the traditional pea soup to the people who went in to the sea and give them Unox-hats and gloves.

Knorr
According to the survey Knorr is the 3th most well-known brand in the Netherlands; Knorr is a brand that makes all different kinds of food, mostly products which you can add together to get a complete meal. It is also the biggest individual brand of Unilever; it is sold in more than 100 countries. They describe themselves as follow:
“In Knorr it’s all about the passion for taste: good ingredients and the knowledge of the Knorr, Knorr chefs to make delicious products.”

Knorr started in 1838 in Heilbronn, Germany. The range has expanded over the years more and more. In the beginning Knorr was known only from the various food products, such as
soup mixes, bouillon tablets, and sauces. In 1987 they added the Knorr-world cuisine to the range.

**Ben & Jerry’s**
The number 4 on the list; Ben & Jerry’s is a brand that makes different kinds of ice. It started as an American company which got sold in 2000 to Unilever. They describe themselves as follow:

“A special brand in our portfolio, different than others. Ben & Jerry's make delicious ice for almost 35 years and are active in a progressive way in the field of social entrepreneurship.”

They started in America, 1978 and since 1996 also available in the Netherlands. In 2000 Uniliver bought the company and started to produce it in Helledoorn, the Netherlands for Europe. Unilever uses two of their other brands; Ola and Hertog to make the Ben & Jerry’s.

In the Netherlands, various outlets such as cinemas and video stores are supplied by the Ben & Jerry's ices express. There are regular sales promotions in which consumers receive gift items when buying a tub of Ben & Jerry's ice cream.

**Ola**
The number 5 on the list; Ola is a brand that makes different kinds of ice-creams. It started in 1960 and is famous in the Netherlands for its ice-screams: Cornetto, Magnum and Raket. They describe themselves as follow:

“People need more fun things, like enjoying together and have fun. OLA would like to contribute here. OLA is part of the Heartbrand, the most famous ice logo in the world.”

Ola is a special brand; it’s different than the rest of Unilver brands. It is sold all over the world and uses the same logo everywhere but have another brand name in a lot of countries. They got 26 different names.

**4.3.4 Communication tools used by Unilever brands in the Netherlands**

One of the most popular brands of Unilever in the Netherlands is Calvé. To promote this brand and reach customers it used both traditional and customer-initiated communication. Traditional communication type is applied by using mass impersonal communication (ads in magazines and television commercials) the first advertising message was in 1894, to encourage customer-initiated communication brand uses social network, to be more direct, they made Facebook pages for every different kind of product, like Calvé Pindakaas (peanut butter), they are not that active with posting on Facebook but what they are active on is reacting on messages of other people that said something about their product. They made a lot of television commercials over the years. For their sauces like mayonnaise, ketchup, barbeque etc. they promote themselves as a party sauce, a must have at a big barbeque with your friends. For Calvé Pindakaas (peanut butter) they make commercials aimed at a younger group, mostly for kids. They say that if you want to be big and strong you should eat a lot of
peanut butter. Calvé is famous for its television commercials in the Netherlands they won the audience price for best commercial three times.

Unox at the other-hand is different. Unilever mostly promotes this brand in seasons when it’s cold like in the winter. They use traditional communication to promote their brand. By making a lot of television commercials in the winter for when it is cold and you could use a warm soup to get warm. They also use a more personal approach (face-to-face) to give their brand more recognition. For example at the nieuwjaarsduik (dive in the sea at the first day of the year) they give away Unox-hats and gloves to everybody and they hand out free traditional pea soup. Mostly the commercials are aimed at traditional Dutch meals.

Knorr uses the traditional communication tools but as well a more modern one. The traditional ways they use is advertisements in magazines and television commercials. Also they made books with recipes and the way how to make an all-round dinner. This they also do in a more modern way, they have a Facebook page and a YouTube account. On both they give inspiration, tips, tricks and recipes to make it a bit easier for people to make a good dinner.

Ben & Jerry’s one of Unilver its brands wherefore they make the most advertisement, not as much traditional but more modern ways of advertisements, they have some advertisements in magazines and made some television commercials, but that’s not the main communication tool they use. They have a lot of actions for example now they are looking for young, sustainable entrepreneur, they have a special day once a year where they give a lot of free ice to one big or small local hero in every province in the Netherlands. They use many of these actions to get more brand awareness.

Like Unox, Ola does the same, they mostly make commercials season based, they use traditional communication to promote their brand by making lots of television commercials, ads in magazines, but instead of the colder days like Unox, Ola makes the advertising in the hotter days like the summer. The most sold ice-cream of Ola in the Netherlands is the “Raket” this ice-cream is sold in a lot of places even in clubs, on festivals they also promote the “Raket”. In the Netherlands there is a festival season in the summer, mostly outdoor dance festivals. Their Ola uses a more personal approach, they hand out free “Raketjes” and also on some festivals they have their own stand where they do little competitions to win prices. To encourage customer-initiated communication Ola uses social network, to be more direct, they have a Facebook page where they promote their promotions.
4.3.5 Hofstede’s model applied to the Netherlands

With Hofstede’s 5-D model we can have a good image and comparison to the world’s different cultures and a specific culture. In the table below we can see the data for The Netherlands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Power distance</th>
<th>Uncertainty avoidance</th>
<th>Individualism</th>
<th>Masculinity vs. Femininity</th>
<th>Long-term vs. Short-term orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hofstede</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Netherlands points in the Hofstede’s five dimension model

**Power distance**

This dimension relates to the fact that all individuals in society are not equal - it expresses the attitude of the culture of these inequalities among us. Power distance is defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of a country's institutions and organizations expect and accept the unequal distribution of power. The Netherlands scores 38 points which is low; this is because the Dutch are independent, hierarchical convenient, equal rights, superior access, coaching leaders, easy management, and authorization. In a company employees expect their manager to consult them and the way how they communicate is informal. The way the Dutch people communicate is direct and participative.

**Individualism**

This dimension refers to the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members. It is about how people see them self and different societies like an Individualist society where people only look after them self and direct family or a Collectivist society where people look more after each other. The Netherlands scores 80 points which means it is an individualistic society. The Dutch people look more after themselves and its direct family over other people.

**Masculinity / Femininity**

In this dimension a high score means that it is a masculine society; driven by competition, achievement and success. A low score means that it is a feminine society; care for others and care about how good life is. The fundamental issue here is what motivates people, wanting to be the best (masculine) or liking what you do (feminine). The Netherlands scores 14 on this dimension and is therefore a feminine society. This means that an effective manager is supportive to his/her people, and discussions with a manager are a normal thing. They also find the quality of life very important.
Uncertainty avoidance

This dimension relates to the way a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known: should we try to control the future or just let it happen? The Netherlands scores 53 on this dimension and thus exhibits a preference for avoiding uncertainty. The Dutch people have the need for rules and are busy and hard workers. Also they want to be on time and everything has to be right. Innovation is not always supported because the secure feeling is an important thing to the Dutch people.

Long term orientation

This dimension is related to the teachings of Confucius a lower score is a more short term orientation and a high score more a long term orientation culture. The Netherlands score a 44 in this dimension which make it a short term orientation culture. They like and respect their traditions, want to achieve everything as fast as possible, which is a typical Western culture.
Chapter 5. Analysis

In order to find out if Unilever takes under consideration different country’s cultural factors, it is important to do comparative analysis of Hofstede’s five dimension model between the Netherlands, Greece and Lithuania. Furthermore, to see if and what different communication tools are applied in countries, and if Unilever regard culture differences when they use those communication tools, we have to compare how different communication tools are, and their traits match features that might be suggested by applying Hofstede’s model.

5.1 Comparison of Hofstede’s five dimension model between Greece, Lithuania and the Netherlands

After collection of empirical data, it is already clear that countries on which we are doing our research have different cultural factors (especially Greece compared to the Netherlands and Greece).

Figure below shows what every country scores in Hofstede’s five dimension model (for Lithuania we are using Huettinger’s results since he includes long-term vs. short-term orientation dimension in his study and since is more recent than Mockaitis).

*Countries’ scores in Hofstede’s model (PDI – power distance, IDV – individualism vs. collectivism, MAS – masculinity vs. femininity, UAI – uncertainty avoidance, LTO – long-term orientation vs. short-term)

Comparing scores of power distance dimension, it is clear that Greece has the highest rate compared to other two countries. Greece scores 60 points which leads to conclusion that society accepts hierarchy, inequality between society levels, it values opinions of authoritative persons, has the perspective that bosses are responsible for everything. Lithuania and the Netherlands are more close to each other (Lithuania scores moderate low PDI (42), the
Netherlands low PDI (38)). However, even thought, hierarchy is low in Lithuania which is similarity with Netherlands), bosses are not accepted as equal to other team members, and there might be a spread of centralization (in this way Lithuania and Greece are similar). But the Netherlands do not have any similarities with Greece; its score shows that the society values independency, equality, bosses are taken as a part of the team. Moreover, Greece and Lithuania use more indirect communication, when the Netherlands uses direct speech.

Talking about individualism vs. collectivism dimension, there is again big difference between Greece and the Netherlands. The Netherlands stand out as strongly individualistic society. Again they highlight the value of independency, and relation are based on mutual advantage. To comparison, Greece (as a collectivistic country) feels loyalty of the group and values lasting relation in the business (which usually might not be based on mutual benefits). In this case Lithuania is more related with the Netherlands (Lithuania is thought as moderate individualistic culture), but there might be signs of collectivism, especially in the older generation.

Greece is masculine country, when the Netherlands and Lithuania has feminine cultures. It means that Greek society accepts men’s authority more than women’s, men has to take care of the family and people are more related with the group. But in Lithuania and the Netherlands, men and women are more equal; they try to keep balance between work and life outside of it.

As it was said in the theory chapter, uncertainty avoidance shows the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations and have created beliefs and institutions that try to avoid them. In this dimension Greece stands out the most. It has the highest score, which means that it is tense and stressed society which needs bureaucracy, laws and rules to make community feel safe. But the Netherlands and Lithuania tend to avoid uncertainty, they don’t need rules and don’t have need to feel safe. However, since Lithuania has moderate high uncertainty avoidance, it means that from time to time there might be a tension in society.

Since Greece is not included in the fifth dimension (long-term vs. short-term orientation), we are going to compare only the Netherlands and Lithuania. The results show, that both countries are similar at this point. They are both short-term orientated which means that both countries do not have need to look and save for the future, they might be describe as impatient. However, both countries respect traditions and values their ancestor achievements.

All in all, it is apparent that Greek culture and Dutch culture are really different, but Lithuanian society’s has common cultural factors with both of them.
5.2 Comparison of Unilever communication tools used in Greece, Lithuania and the Netherlands

In this chapter we compare the different kinds of communication tools the countries use, is there difference or do they use the same communication tools?

First what is a communication tool and what different kind of communication tools are there. A communication tool is an information carrier to communicate. A distinction can be made based on the technique used (print, electronic), the shape of the sensory information (auditory, visual), or to the range (mass communication).

There are different kinds of communication tools; traditional communication tools (magazines, television commercials, newspapers etc.) and modern communication tools (World Wide Web).

The three countries have two brands in common that are well-known in the three countries; Knorr and Ola/Algida. It is interesting to see how they promote these products in the countries. For Knorr the communication tools are quite similar to each other. In all three countries they present themselves with recipes and ways to make your complete dinner. The only difference between the communication tools is that in Greek they only use traditional communication tools like television commercials; the way they show their commercials is the same as in the Netherlands and Lithuania though. While in the Netherlands and Lithuania Knorr also uses more modern communication tools and customer initiated communication as Facebook. They have their own Facebook page where they add their tips, tricks, recipes etc.

Unilever approach with Ola/Algida is a bit different, for starters the name. In the Netherlands they use Ola while in Greece and Lithuania they use Algida. The logo is the same though; the real name behind it is Heartbrand, Heartbrand has 26 different names all over the world. The way Heartbrand promotes itself is the same in every country, as a happy brand with most promotions in the summer, when most people would eat an ice-cream.

The three countries use different methods, where Greece and the Netherlands are more different than each other and Lithuania is a bit similar to both. Unilever uses more traditional ways in Greece to promote its products like television commercials and advertisements in magazines. Also they play with the crisis, promotional actions with the crisis in mind. While in the Netherlands Unilever uses more modern ways to promote its products. The World Wide Web is used a lot, especially Facebook. Also a more direct way for example the promotional activities on festivals of Ola, giving ice-creams on festivals or Unox handing out soup, hats and gloves on the Nieuwjaarsduik (dive in the on the first day of the year). And in Lithuania Unilever uses both traditional and modern ways to promote its brands, for most brands they use television commercials ads in magazines and also a lot of promotional activities on Facebook.
5.3 Comparison of Unilever communication tool traits in Greece, Lithuania and the Netherlands with Hofstede’s model suggested features of communication

After applying Hofstede’s model to Lithuania, it was come to conclusion that communication tools in this country should address these factors:

- Independency, individualism, success, pleasure since it is more individualistic society.
- Balance of work and life outside of it (feminine society).
- Indirect communication (however, since power distance is not that high, we might refer Lithuania as a low content communication country).
- Show quality.
- Should not refer to hierarchy, centralization.
- Present as much detailed information that is possible.

Empirical data about Unilever communication tools have shown that they have these traits:

- Aiming to feminine side of society rather than masculine.
- Indicates success, freedom, independence.
- Might be related with authority, strength, victory (especially, communication tools that are directed to men).
- Orientated in group.
- Show families, children.
- Use more indirect communication (Lipton, Knorr).
- Gives information about products.

Comparison of Hofstede’s model suggested factors and traits that can be find in Unilever Lithuania communication tools, lets us come to conclusion that company take into account Lithuanian cultural traits. Unilever address success, independency, shows career people and families, children (which we might relate with balance of work and life), also uses indirect speech. Moreover, company tries to provoke customer-initiated communication by giving a lot of information about products on the internet. All these factors are highlighted by Hofstede’s study. However, Unilever also address Lithuanian consumers as a part of masculine (authority), collectivistic (orientation in to group) society. But this can be explained by the fact that Lithuanian culture has signs of collectivism.

According to Hofstede’s model, communication tools in the Netherlands should involve these traits:

- Equality and independence.
- No signs of hierarchy and social status.
- Low-context, direct communication.
- Communication approach – persuasion.
- Family values; traditions of culture.
- Low role importance; not necessary to highlight the importance of the brand.
- Creativity, originality, liberty (no need of rules).
• Simplicity, chance to make life easier.

We can find these factors in Unilever the Netherlands communication tools:

• Detailed information about production.
• Importance of traditions and making new traditions.
• Creativity, attempt to inspire.
• Simplicity, attempt to make everything easier.
• Addressing young generation (an effort to motivate work/ career spirit).
• Local hero importance.
• Direct communication.

All in all, it is quite clear that Unilever the Netherlands adjust to the country’s cultural features. As Hofstede’s model suggests, Unilever uses direct communication, emphasize the importance of traditions, creativity, indicates simplicity and ways how to make life easier for customer communication tools in the Netherlands. Furthermore, company use persuasion as their communication approach in this country (personal communication tools, originality, creating new things, original advertising). Even though we might argue that local hero importance should not be highlighted in the communication tools, but this can be clarified since it can be related with the respect of traditions.

As far as Greek culture is concerned, Hofstede’s five dimension model implies that communication tools should have this kind of traits:

• Show the importance of brand (global), social status.
• The value and relevance of luxury.
• High content, indirect communication.
• The importance of trust and relation.
• Customer communication approach – creating trust.
• Family picture and values (group orientation).
• Brand should indicate success, achievement, performance.
• High role importance (domination of men).
• Traditions are more important than innovations.
• Personal appearance.

Empirical data shows that Unilever Greece communication tools have these traits:

• Orientation to men audience.
• Features of pleasure, desire, and passion.
• Bravery, daring actions.
• Orientation on the group.
• Image of beauty (usually women), and power of man.
• The difference between men and women.
• Family values.
• Quality and effectiveness.
- Domination of men.
- The importance of attractiveness (appearance).
- Indirect communication.

After comparing these traits, it is noticeable that Unilever again takes into consideration cultural factors. All of the Unilever Greece communication tools’ feature can be related with the traits that might be suggested after applying Hofstede’s study. First of all, the value and relevance of luxury can be related to pleasure, desire and passion. Secondly, family role are shown by orientation on the group and indicated family values in the communication. Moreover, we can relate quality and effectiveness with performance and achievement, and orientation to man, power, domination of men, the difference between men and women relates to high role importance, masculine society. Also, the importance of attractiveness is on the same level with importance of personal appearance.

In conclusion, after doing comparative analysis separately on every country between Unilever communication tools’ features and Hofstede’s model suggested communication traits, we can come to conclusion that in every country Unilever pays attention to its cultural feature. In other words, in the end, it is clear that international company Unilever adjusts, adapts its communication tools to the different cultures (Lithuanian, Dutch, Greek).
Chapter 6. Conclusion

6.1 Discussion and conclusion

If we examine our work we will come with the conclusion that depending the culture an
international company is operating in, the management team needs to consider the cultural
characteristics of the shopping audience it is referring, their values and the traditions of the
society and their importance to the citizens, and of course to make a social analysis so to
know other cultural details such as the role of men and women in the society, how intense is
the social hierarchy between the members, what it is important to avoid and what it is
important to provoke.

In our research we focused on the cultural analysis of Greece, Lithuania and The Nederlands.
With Hofstede’s study and research we wrote the main characteristics of each culture and we
came with the result that Greece is dissimilar with both Lithuania and The Nederlands, while
the other 2 countries have small cultural differences, another fact that also supports the
difference between the South, the East and the West culture in Europe.

About Unilever and its products, in the empirical study using the questionnaire, we came up
with the most popular products for every one of the 3 countries, and we noticed that some of
them are in common popular regardless the differentiation of the culture. Then, we briefly
commented on these products, whilst we subscribed some of their advertisements so to have a
picture of the communication tools the company uses. As a result, we noticed that in every
country the communication tools are similar and not against of any value the particular
society supports. For example, in the masculine society of Greece, in deodorant television
advertisement, the video spot focuses on the desires and the dominance of men over women,
something that would never be promoted in the feminine cultures of The Netherlands or
Lithuania.

In the empirical study chapter we also mentioned brief information about the image and the
action of Unilever, and it is proven that is one of the most representative international
companies we could choose for our research. With hundreds of thousands employees
worldwide and a huge revenue in total, Unilever is one of the top companies in the planet, and
more specifically, in every one the 3 countries in our research again is considered as a
paradigm company with excellent planning in every corporate field like expansion strategies,
investments for the future, creating values for the society, environmental and charity
programs and of course social growth and improvement.

In the theoretical part, we mentioned to the background theories we used through our research
such as cross-cultural theory and study, Hofstede’s study and empirical results a briefly Globe
study. With figures and diagrams we gave a specific picture of theory, great importance for
the rest of our study, so to make the readership but also ourselves able to understand and
analyze properly the data we collected and the value of them.
6.2 The research question and the answer

By start writing our thesis and doing our research on how can international companies adapt their customer communication tools in the countries of Greece, Lithuania and The Netherlands, we set this question at the beginning with almost little knowledge on the subject and no personal experience at all. During though our research journey, using all the available and relevant theory and with the empirical study as well, we ended up with several results and assessments.

First of all, an international company that operates in any country, it is of great importance to collect data about the society, such as the values and traditions, the role of men and women in the society, the social hierarchy, the perspectives for the future, the need of laws and rules, the individualism or collectivism rate of the society. When the first step is done, it follows the analysis of all the data collected with empirical surveys and questionnaires, and then the planning of the advertisement campaign. An international company can adapt its customer communication tools by searching deeply the social character of the particular culture that operates in, and once it is comprehended, it is really easy afterwards to organize a successful campaign using several communication tools.

In the culture of Greece, that as we already described is masculine and collectivist, an international company can adapt its customer communication tools by assimilating the Greek social character and the characteristics of Greek people, their values and traditions and so on. That means that the planning must be made according to Greek data and in any case to come opposite to any of these characteristics. People are more willing to accept something similar to their way of living than something that clearly provokes it and comes against it. In a few words, once the international company recognizes their limits inside those can do the planning, their customer communication tools can be considered as well adapted.

In the culture of Lithuania, that according to our research it is less hierarchical culture and a feminine one, an international company in order to adapt its customer communication tools needs to take into account the Lithuanian way of living, the individualist spirit and remember to avoid any references to the status or instabilities of the people, that clearly shows dominance, which in not that usual amongst the Lithuanians.

Last but not least, in the individualist and feminine Dutch culture, an international company should consider, as it is written above, the social character of the Dutch, which according to our research and Hofstede’s study is supporting mutual advantage relationships, no hierarchical levels between the members and equally rights between the members even in the business world. In a few words, the customer communication tools should be adapted according to the Dutch culture and everything that is concluded. In our specific example, Unilever as a Dutch company comprehends the Dutch culture even better and that is why the Dutch advertisements and the communication tools are even smarter and rich than in the other countries.
6.3 Suggestions for further research

The field of cross-culture communication is interesting for research and due to the high evolution of technology, the globalization and the dominance of the international companies around the globe, it becomes easier and easier to have access to many data and complete a successful research survey or a thesis. As we wrote in the introduction we aim with our research to enrich the field and help potentially academics and managers to understand the depth of the differentiation of the cultures and how a small and unnoticeable detail in an advertisement is crucial for the company’s successful establishment in the particular aimed market.

We strongly recommend to our readership that is interested of doing a research to consider customer communication tools and cross-culture as a potential research in similar matters for as we mentioned above, the globalization and the rapid evolution of the technology forces international companies to compete more and more with the different cultures around the planet, and a study about this changes and the international companies’ need to compete and to successfully enter a market would be of great value.
References


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Official Hofstede Center website [interactive]: <http://www.geerthofstede.nl/culture>.


