

Suggested answers

1. Is the Levi's Legacy marketing campaign effective in communicating the intended message of inspiration and positive change in terms of its repositioning? Discuss.

No, the Legacy advertisement is not wholly effective in communicating the intended message to its new target audience. There is a certain level of ambiguity in the marketing campaign, particularly in the print advertisements: that is, the message is never clearly stated and must be extrapolated from somewhat abstract and metaphorical imagery and scripting. The message has not been properly encoded and has led to the misinterpretation of the underlying message as promoting anarchy and social revolt rather than advocating positive social change while repositioning within the target market. The added effect of 'noise' in the form of the visual imagery in the public press in relation to the London riots also added to the confusion of the real message by changing the context in which some individuals viewed the advertisement, particularly in the USA.

2. Are the Legacy marketing campaign and advertisements effective in targeting their intended market segment (the younger generations)? Discuss the elements that contribute to your conclusion.

Yes, the Legacy marketing campaign and advertisements are effective in targeting the newly identified younger generation audience. They primarily achieve this through the use of high impact imagery and scripts designed to instigate a strong emotive response by focusing on factors that capture the imagination of the youth market in which the brand is repositioned. The use of elements such as revolution, romanticism, excitement, passion and freedom are extremely effective in inspiring and motivating the newly targeted younger generation. While the message itself is somewhat ambiguous, the campaign is still very successful in creating these powerful emotions. However, problems lie in the ability of the marketing campaign to clearly direct emotions in the right path through a clearly stated message.

3. In what way could Levi's improve the Legacy marketing campaign to more effectively communicate its intended message?

The emotions raised by the Levi marketing campaign Legacy suggest that the print advertisements have been highly effective. The greatest source of improvement would be to more clearly state the intended message Levi's wishes to convey. This could be achieved by explicitly directing potential consumers to the Go Forth website or Facebook page, both of which clearly progress the message and effectively direct users to potential sources of social improvement such as providing clean water or AIDS education and treatment to African citizens living in poverty. Essentially this would equate to improving the encoding of the intended message. Further to this, efforts could have been made to reduce the impact of 'noise' related to the London riots on its advertising campaign, perhaps through finding alternative images to replace those small sections within the advertisement.

4. Considering cultural differences, is a standardised marketing campaign for Levi's repositioning appropriate on a global scale? If not, what options may be more appropriate or effective?

Generally speaking, a standardised advertisement is not appropriate for a global audience. This is due to the fact that each country has a unique culture that defines the way in which individuals interact with the world. This essentially means that what may be considered to be appropriate marketing campaign in one culture may be highly offensive in another. In the case of a potentially controversial marketing strategy such as Levi's Legacy campaign, a standard global advertisement should be approached with caution as any unexpected backlash will negatively affect the established brand image, and make repositioning much more difficult. The only real alternative is to implement a locally responsive framework where advertisements are tailored to each respective culture. This avoids cultural misinterpretations and the airing of overtly culturally offensive material.

5. Discuss, in terms of Levi's advertising campaign, both sides of the argument (pro and con) for using neuroscience in communication research.

Neuroscience—or more particularly, a brain scan imaging technique that maps physiological reactions within the mind—has chiefly been applied in the medical field. Now, marketers have discovered that there are also applications in brand communication. In preparation for the marketing and advertising campaign Levi could have conducted research by mapping viewers' physiological reactions to ads and brands, prior to their release across the various global markets. Scientists can help marketers to better understand consumers' behaviours and assist them in the development of more effective marketing strategies by developing a better understanding of how potential consumers will react to the pictures within the campaign prior to launch. For marketers, the use of neuroscience allows them to more effectively design ads and recognise the impact that brands have on consumers. Advertisers claim that this will allow them to create more effective advertising, break through the clutter of bland communication, and ultimately have a positive effect on businesses as well as benefiting consumers by giving them what they want, not what advertisers think they want. Boring and tedious advertising, for example, will be reduced or eliminated, based on more effective research than the traditional methods previously employed. Traditional methods, marketers argue, are obsolete and do not directly benefit the advertiser or the consumer. Just like everything else, they say, 'you can't stop progress'.

Opponents of the use of neurosciences have a different perspective. Calling the technique 'Orwellian', they contend that probing our minds is an unfair invasion of privacy. While some argue that the technique does not work, and that the results are being blown out of proportion, others are concerned that they work too well. If so, there is a potential that advertising could become too effective, and that consumers could be manipulated—a similar argument to those provided by opponents of subliminal advertising usage. At particular risk, they say, are unsuspecting children, although increased consumption of alcohol, cigarettes and gambling may also result. They see this type of communication research contributing to the social ills of societies, through the manipulation of people through effective marketing strategies. From the perspective

of Levi's first global advertising campaign, they would need to take extra precautions in terms of the confidentiality and ethical issues relating to this type of market research.