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Find it in Football: An International Marketing Plan for Young Women

A Capstone Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements of the Renée Crown University Honors Program at
Syracuse University

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and Renée Crown University Honors
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Honors Capstone Project in Advertising

Capstone Project Advisor: _____
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Capstone Project Reader: _____
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Date: 6 May 2014

Abstract

What follows are multiple components of a creative advertising project. While this work relies heavily on research, it was a very creative process. The premise of this work is an integrated marketing campaign that utilizes my two majors: international relations and advertising, combined with my love for sports. Using primary and secondary research, I found that the benefits that sports have on child development are huge (Humphrey, 2003). I narrowed my sport choice down to soccer and my target down to young women. I wanted to focus on Islamic states because, at least by American standards, Muslim women are often seen as voiceless in their society and sports can be used as a means to “empower” them. Of course, after researching feminist theory, I now understand that empowerment is an abstract concept. It is both impossible and irresponsible to label any group of women as empowered or disempowered. Using more primary research, however, I was able to establish that women in Islamic countries do face many struggles that can be alleviated by playing sports.

Advertising is a team sport. “Find it in Football” is a campaign I created with a team of four others to create excitement about the sport of football in preparation for the World Cup in Qatar. This case was presented to the Supreme Committee of Qatar, in Qatar, where it was well received and will be considered as a means of promoting the World Cup in 2022. Going to Qatar was an amazing opportunity to utilize a real life test market for the campaign. It also allowed me to do more primary research in person. After returning from Qatar, I went back to the drawing board, and interviewed women from Pakistan. I distributed perception surveys in order to better understand Pakistani culture, and to progress the initiative. The final portion of the project focuses on the possible collaboration with a global brand and how one would go about getting corporate sponsorship for this program. The purpose of this project is to show girls across the globe that there is opportunity for them to grow as individuals and to find their voice in sports like soccer. I encourage all young women to *Find it in Football*.

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Executive Summary

This project is a creative project in the fields of advertising and international relations. Find it in Football is a sports initiative that I created for young women in Islamic states. The project has several deliverables. The main deliverable is a “deck.” A deck in advertising is essentially a well-designed and uniquely created PDF book. The bulk of the deck is an integrated marketing campaign for a soccer (or football) initiative in Qatar. An integrated marketing campaign or IMC is the roadmap for implementing a live campaign. An IMC is extremely detailed and contains from start to finish, background and research all the way up to the media plan. The media plan details when and where the creative executions will be placed. The IMC for Qatar was created with a team of four others and was presented to the Supreme Committee in Qatar. I created the pitch presentation used in Qatar, complete with animations. The pitch is also included with this project. In advertising the pitch can be more valuable than any written material as it often decides who wins the client.

Qatar acted as the test market or template for a similar initiative to take place in Pakistan. The considerations and changes for the Pakistan campaign follow the Qatar portion of the deck. There were very few creative changes for Pakistan, but the way the initiative should be implemented proved to be very different. That is why the last component is for a pitch to Nike. Using this deck to pitch to Nike is something I would love the opportunity to do in the future, and

my advisors have gotten me in touch with the right people in order for me to have a chance to achieve this goal.

The members of the team for the Qatar portion were Bryan Chou, Kaitlyn Froboese, Marie Strycharz, and Gabriella Fernandez. The advisor who oversaw this project was Associate Professor Edward Russell and the reader of this project was Dr. Carla Lloyd. The project is called Find it in Football.

The methods used in this campaign were primary and secondary research as well as design implementation. The primary research included original questionnaires designed in Qualtrics and sent to former members of a Pakistani swim team who are now students in the United States at various colleges. Interviews were done in addition to the questionnaires via email. Other primary research included interviews of American soccer players and a phone interview of a businessman who worked in Qatar. When in Qatar, conversations with several Qataris took place as a means of feedback on the IMC. The secondary research included exhausting databases such as Mintel, MRI plus and Simmons OneView. These databases are all used for marketing. Mintel is similar to consumer reports. Simmons and MRI are used to create crosstabs of media consumption information, demographics, and lifestyle statements. The design for this project was done in Adobe InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop. These adobe programs were used for logos, creative mockups, and designs for the layout of the deck. Kaitlyn Froboese art directed the Qatar portion of the deck. I art directed the remainder of the deck and I designed the pitch animation found on the flash drive using GoAnimate software and using PowerPoint.

This project explores a human truth. The human truth is that parents want the best for their kids, cross-culturally. Sports have endless opportunities for young women. This project details the benefits of playing sports, football in particular. Football is a particularly generous sport that does not discriminate. There are very few prerequisites to playing football. If you are tall you may be good at defense, but if you are small you may be a great forward. Being skilled is useful and so is being fast, but neither is required to get started. Even if you are not very good with your feet, perhaps goalkeeper is the position for you. The point is that it is an especially unique sport, and that is why I chose to begin my initiative with football. It is also the world's most popular sport.

The project is significant because it utilized a sweet spot between women's rights, local Islamic governments, and Nike. The use of sport to empower women is a creative idea that I was able to back up with plenty of research. It works in Islamic countries despite some perceived barriers to entry. In reality, there is nothing stopping women from playing soccer or football other than misconceptions about culture and religion in Qatar, and lack of funding in Pakistan. The focus in both countries is on the professional athlete, but this program works to create better programs for the recreational athlete.

This campaign is near and dear to my heart. I feel as if I have been to South Asia having interacted with people from Pakistan and researched so much about it. This project brought me physically to Qatar in an unforgettable experience. It is one thing to design a campaign that pushes products or even one that combats a domestic issue. Exploring a global issue that means so much to me

made this project very fun and worthwhile. Even though I am turning in this project on May 6th, there is still so much I plan to do with it. The Future of Find it in Football is just beginning.

Acknowledgements

A large portion of this project was done with a team of four colleagues. Kaitlyn Froboese did the art direction for the Qatar “test market” deck. Marie Stryarchz did the copywriting for the Qatar creative executions. Gabriela Fernandez and Bryan Chou both helped manage the Qatar portion of the project. Professor Russell and Professor Lloyd were both extremely helpful in this project as well. All subjects interviewed and surveyed deserve to be acknowledged as well. Their first names (some are not their real names due to privacy concerns) can be found in the appendix.

Advice to Future Honors Students

My biggest piece of advice is for those who are using any type of survey method or personal interviewing method. It can be very difficult to find people to participate in your primary research, especially if you are looking for a specific type of person (Pakistani women who have played sports for example). Incentives are your friend. Once I started offering amazon gift cards, and entering people's names in drawings, I was able to get a lot of referrals from friends all over the country. The snowball method and the Internet are your friends as well.

My second piece of advice is to avoid radio silence. I went silent on my reader for a period of time, which caused a huge miscommunication between my advisors. It is very important to update your advisors constantly even if you have not made significant moves forward in your project. When I was interviewing people some of them took a long time to get back to me, and instead of telling my advisors, I just let them wait. This was a poor judgment call on my end.

Reflection

The Journey

For my capstone project I wanted to create an integrated marketing campaign that utilized my two majors, international relations and advertising, combined with my love for sports. Using primary and secondary research, I found that the benefits sports have on child development are huge (Humphrey, 2003). Sports specifically can benefit young women. I narrowed my sport choice down to soccer and my target down to young women. I wanted to focus on Islamic states because, at least by American standards, Islamic women are often seen as voiceless in their society and sports can be used as a means to “empower” them. Of course, after researching feminist theory, empowerment is a difficult thing to define. It is both impossible and irresponsible to label any group of women as empowered or disempowered. Using more primary research, however, I was able to establish that women in Islamic states do face many struggles that could be alleviated with sports. What follows, “Find it in Football” is a campaign I created with a team of four others (who were in charge of executing the creative, and strategizing my research to create excitement about the sport of football in preparation for the World Cup in Qatar). This case was presented to the Supreme Committee of Qatar, in Qatar where it was received very well and will be considered as a means of promoting the World Cup in Qatar in 2022.

Before I continue on about the actual project, I would like to briefly discuss how my topic changed over the course of two years. It has been quite the journey, and it has taken me to places I never imagined I would be. Originally, I wanted to create and advertise for existing sports programs in Europe. I thought this would be the simplest way to express my creativity without being burdened with doing too much research. Lucky for me, my advisor advised against this. He knew something that I would learn later on. Doing something for a greater purpose than convenience makes all the difference. This was when I looked to countries that may need the help more than just the ones I knew the most about. Professor Russell suggested Pakistan. I immediately went forward with this idea. I realized that I was very interested in Pakistan. There were several hurdles I would have to jump over in order to properly advertise to people I knew nothing about, but I was prepared to rise to the challenge. I made this my capstone project on the initial paperwork. A few meetings later I decided to target women, because I realized that in Pakistan they were the ones who could use it most. I also narrowed it down to one sport because creating a business model for a bigger sports program was not feasible. It was not until months later that I would realize there was opportunity for this project outside of honors jurisdiction.

Professor Russell oversees TNH, the advertising agency run by students in Newhouse. He told me to get in touch with them because there was a competition that my work could really help. All I expected was to maybe help some people out. Within a few days, they asked me to join their team and I became a leading force for the competition because of my yearlong research venture on Pakistanis

and sports (thanks to honors!). I read several books on Muslims and sports, most notably a book called *Muslim Women and Sports* by Mohammad Radzi. This information I brought to the table got the ball rolling for a project that would transcend far beyond where I thought my honors capstone would take me. The competition was for a different Muslim state, Qatar. The coincidences between what the organization was asking for and what my project was on were unbelievable. The prompt was nearly identical to the challenge I presented for myself.

The major difference between my original idea and what Qatar was asking from me, had to do with the fact that the World Cup will be taking place in Qatar in 2022. They were trying to create equality between girls and boys in sports because they were about to be on the world stage. They also wanted to create buzz about football in preparation for the event. This actually helped me envision my initiative a lot better. Having a real client brief with real goals on it helped me to materialize my ideas for a business plan.

The aforementioned book along with other books about child development and sports, branding and sports, and successful American case studies were the main sources that gave me my jumpstart on the project. These were basic books from as early as the 90's, but they proved to be invaluable to my project. The case studies that proved to be most useful were Nike's "If you let me Play," which inspired the campaign creatively, and AYSO's business model which inspired the campaign strategically.

We worked really hard, and they particularly led the way with art direction, copywriting, and just overall helping me tackling my ideas on to paper. We worked very well together and were ecstatic when we got chosen to travel all the way to Doha, Qatar. It was in Doha that I was able to further my research in ways I never imagined. I got to interview Qatari women and see what their lives were actually like first hand. I visited soccer academies for boys and learned of the future developments for girls. I also presented our marketing pitch to over fifty people and three judges and we won first place in the competition! What a journey!

While in Qatar, I continued my research. I spoke with one delightful woman who helped show us around Qatar. I watched her use her phone and listen to music along with the rest of us. Even though I had learned that Qatari women do not like to have their picture taken in my secondary research, she was taking Snap Chats with us! She also told me a story about how she was tanning in her backyard and her mother threw water on her from the balcony because she did not think she should be worried about being tan. All of her stories resonated with me deeply. She was just like me in so many ways. And just like me, there was a generation gap between her and her parents. While her cultural roots are still very much alive, her people are progressing just as rapidly as we are in America. This really changed my perspective. In some ways, I would learn this was not the case in Pakistan. In other instances, Pakistan proved to be progressing more than Qatar. This is all detailed in my deck, but if it had not been for the conversations I

had with this young women in Qatar, I would have never thought about Islamic states in this way.

I provide the anecdote above because it has been my experience that advertising can sometimes be professional typecasting. While it is important to segment society in order to target individuals properly, people are still unique individuals. There is still a spectrum that ranges from liberal to conservative in Islamic states just as there is in the United States. Understanding a group of Muslim woman is important, but recognizing that they are all individuals with different moral compasses, spiritual focuses, and even Snap Chatting preferences, was vital to my future as an advertising professional.

After this exciting part, it was back to work. Professor Russell helped me to apply the template we made for Qatar to Pakistan. I interviewed many young Pakistani athletes, experts, and even got some perspective from parents. Combining this with my project was very important to me because it challenged me to incorporate my original ideas with what transpired in Qatar. It also allowed me to expand my project to be even bigger than it was. The components of my project are many, but I have had two years to work on this, and so I wanted to include everything I could to help this project come to life.

The campaign that follows is based on a human truth. Football is an opportunity for young girls to learn skills and traits that go far beyond the field. I chose to target the parents, the decision makers. Another human truth was discovered. This is that parents want the best for their children. I addressed the barriers to entry for women in Qatar and I discussed the misconception that Islam

and football cannot coexist. This campaign is based on successful case studies from football in America because it applies to humanity and not just to the young American or young Qatari or young Pakistani girl.

As mentioned, after returning from Qatar in January of this year, I saw the potential for this campaign to be expanded into other Islamic countries as I had originally planned. As mentioned, from the start, a country of interest for me was Pakistan. Qataris ranging from coaches to parents to government officials evaluated my campaign. They saw it as a success. I wanted to find out what other potential my campaign had. I decided to go back and continue to interview people of Pakistani origin to understand how effective this template would be for them.

There are many differences between Qatar and Pakistan. There is a whole section in my deck comparing the two. The most obvious is that Qatar is a wealthy state in the Middle East, and Pakistan is a much poorer state in Asia. Another difference between the countries is that Qatar was tasked with hosting a world event. That being said, at first glance, it appeared they were way more open to taking a liberal approach to women and sports. This is why I used Qatar as a template to set an example, but I understood that it would translate differently in Pakistan. The biggest similarity between the two is that they are both Islamic countries, which is the purpose of my project. Bringing sport, specifically football at this time, to young women of the Islamic world is my goal.

After interviewing Pakistani women I found that there were only minor creative changes that needed to be made to the existing deck. Components ranging from different music on the website to depicting women without a burqa

were suggested. While these were by no means trivial, a much more important revelation was revealed. No Google search or database sweep was able to inform me about the existing sports programs in Pakistan. In fact, without my primary research, this campaign would have gone in the entirely wrong direction.

Unlike Qatar, where they needed to develop a sports program for women from ground zero, Pakistan has several existing sports programs for women. They are not where they need to be because of some cultural barriers, but mostly because of the lack of funding for the programs. This was eye opening. After sharing this news with my advisor, I redirected the campaign to be focused on sponsorship.

I have always dreamed of working with Nike, and when I began this campaign I had them in mind. After working with Qataris however, it was clear that a government initiative best suited this project. When I understood Pakistan's economic plight, I knew it was time to reintroduce Nike into the project. Selling anything to Nike is a difficult task. As a leading global company, my new target would be the most challenging, or so I thought. What I soon realized was that after selling to Qataris and Pakistanis, people I knew nothing about going into this, selling to Nike would be easy. Likewise, having worked on this initiative for two years, it was really something I believed in. I learned a valuable lesson; it is really about working on campaigns you believe in. This is a somewhat scary revelation considering that working in an ad agency you do not have creative control over what products you are given. I can imagine it would be really hard for me to work on a campaign for Marlboro for example. That being said, I really

enjoyed the final component of my campaign. It is also the shortest part of my project because it was so easy for me to do.

For the Nike component I hammered on the importance of CSR in a leading company. The brand positioning of Nike as a global ambassador is vital to selling the idea to them. As I explain in the book, there are bad perceptions about Nike in the non-western world. This is a great opportunity for them to help their own brand image.

The biggest challenge for me with this project was understanding my strengths and weaknesses. Two years ago, when I started, I wanted to make commercials. That is what I assumed I would be turning in, a campaign consisting of commercials similar to the Nike spot that inspired me. I never imagined that I would turn in 70 pages of writing, research, and graphic design. I had no idea that I would be someone who would be really good at research and even better at presenting that research creatively.

After two years I have found what I love about advertising and that is understanding people. It may sound like anthropology, or psychology, and I think at its essence it's both. I think a lot of advertising is about understanding consumers in order to push products in a creative way. I enjoyed most talking with Qataris and better understanding how they live. I also enjoyed talking to Pakistani girls even though I only "e-met" them. I think a lot of people have the perception that advertising is just manipulation. While I think it can be, I think my project is a great example of how it can also be a really great thing. It can be used for good and can also be used to better understand different cultures, ethnicities,

and religions. Sharing that knowledge with even one or two people can really change the playing field for minorities or people who feel there are barriers to practicing their culture.

All and all I learned a lot about myself when working on this project. As someone who has played sports her whole life, I never realized just how important that was to my self worth. All of the opportunities I got through sports were amazing. Even the seemingly worthless years of sports I did in college that never culminated in trophies or captainship were still very important to my discipline, intelligence, time management, and most importantly how I am as a woman. I never realized how my relationships with men, women, and everyone around me were grounded in the teamwork I achieved from sports. It has been integral to my successes, but even more integral to helping me combat my failures. All of the sports clichés about getting up when you are knocked down really rein true, and have reigned true in my life especially in college.

At the end of all of this I realized that sports are important for women in America as well. Of course empowerment is in the eyes of the beholder, but when I asked Pakistani students who have lived the college portion of their lives in America, they had a lot to say about how women were treated in America. Perhaps the original campaign that inspired this campaign: Nike's "If you let me Play", should be revamped and brought back. I suppose, in essence, that is my proposition. I am very excited about the work I have done and I know it will take me even more places in my life. The journey for me continues.

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Appendices
See Deck & Flash Drive