

Marketing Blunders

Parker Pen came up with a strange slogan, when they marketed a ball-point pen in Mexico. It was supposed to have read, "It won't leak in your pocket and embarrass you." But the company thought that the word "embarazar" (to impregnate) meant to embarrass, so the ad read: "It won't leak in your pocket and make you pregnant."

Coors put its slogan, "Turn it loose," into Spanish, where it was read as "Suffer from diarrhea".

Clairol introduced the "Mist Stick", a curling iron, into Germany only to find out that "mist" is slang for manure. Not too many people had use for the "manure stick".

Scandinavian vacuum manufacturer Electrolux had a successful marketing campaign in Europe, using the catchy rhyming phrase "nothing sucks like an Electrolux". Unfortunately they failed to take into consideration the fact that "sucks" had become a derogatory word in the States.

In Chinese, the Kentucky

You thought translating was difficult? Even big companies make embarrassing mistakes when it comes to selling into different countries.

Fried Chicken slogan "finger-lickin' good" came out as "eat your fingers off".

The American slogan for Salem cigarettes, "Salem-Feeling Free", was translated into the Japanese market as "When smoking Salem, you will feel so refreshed that your mind seems to be free and empty".

When Gerber started selling baby food in Africa, they used the same packaging as in the US, with the beautiful Caucasian baby on the label. Later they learned that in Africa, companies routinely put pictures on the label of what's inside, since most people can't read English.

Colgate introduced a toothpaste in France called Cue, the name of a notorious porno magazine.

An American T-shirt maker in Miami printed shirts for the Spanish market which promoted

the Pope's visit. Instead of "I saw the Pope" (el Papa), the shirts read "I saw the potato" (la papa).

In Italy, a campaign for Schweppes Tonic Water translated the name into "Schweppes Toilet Water".

Pepsi's "Come alive with the Pepsi Generation" translated into "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave", in Chinese.

We all know about GM's Chevy Nova meaning "it won't go" in Spanish markets, but did you know that Ford had a similar problem in Brazil with the Pinto? Pinto was Brazilian slang for "tiny male genitals". Ford renamed the automobile Corcel, meaning "horse".

Hunt-Wesson introduced Big John products in French Canada as Gros Jos. Later they found out that in slang it means "big breasts".

Frank Perdue's chicken slogan, "it takes a strong man to make a tender chicken" was translated into Spanish as "it takes an aroused man to make a chicken affectionate".

The famous Coca-Cola marketing blunder is a little more complex. When they first started to ship the drink to China in the 1920's, the company attempted to group Chinese characters together that, when pronounced, would make the sound "Coca-Cola." The problem was that the "la" sound meant "wax," and when the Chinese letters were put together, the name translated into Chinese became "bite the wax tadpole", "female horse stuffed with wax" or "wax-flattened mare", none of which were to Coke's liking. Coke were then forced to research more than 40,000 Chinese characters to find a usable phonetic equivalent and even started a contest to come up with the best translation. Finally, they found a combination that worked, and the new trademarked name in China loosely translates to "happiness in the mouth."

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pictures, or that he had escaped there.

"We all thought he'd got out of his cage and was lost in the house."



Hamish - Popped out for popcorn and a Diet-Coke

Igor Geyer, duty manager at the Showcase Cinema, said: "I'm glad we were able to reunite him with his owners."

MP3 Player Mistaken for Gun

A British mechanic was arrested at gunpoint by armed police after his MP3 player was mistaken for a gun.

Darren Nixon, 28, was tailed by three police cars as he travelled home from work by bus, reports the Daily Telegraph.

Officers finally confronted him in the street - 150 metres from his home - brandishing guns and telling him to hold his hands in the air.

A member of the public had raised the alarm after watching Mr Nixon change tracks on his MP3 player, thinking it was a gun. Police tracked a completely unaware Mr Nixon on CCTV and followed him home.

Mr Nixon said: "It was only when I saw the traffic slowing down and people watching me that I turned and saw four cops with dogs and semi-automatics.

"I was shocked and had no idea what was going on. That was when I took my earphones out and they were shouting at me not to make any sudden movements.

"I dread to think what might have happened if I'd put my hand in my pocket. My legs turned to jelly as they handcuffed me and read me my rights."

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