

Identities for Sale: How the Tobacco Industry Construed Asians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders

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Previous research has substantiated the targeting of various demographic subgroups by the tobacco industry through marketing practices. However, relatively little research has examined targeting of Asians and Pacific Islanders. Based on prior tobacco document research citing the use of identity-based marketing strategies, a content analytic scheme was developed to assess if these strategies were applied to the Asian and AAPI populations. The study was grounded in social identity theory and optimal distinctiveness theory paradigms in order to develop a coherent analytic framework. Keyword searches of documents were conducted and a random sample of the documents of interest was drawn. These data suggest that the tobacco industry targeted Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States and abroad via interpersonal and commercial communication tactics. These strategies were carefully orchestrated and employed as a result of sophisticated analyses of the social identities and value systems of the source culture populations. Barriers to reaching this culturally and linguistically heterogeneous market were overcome via the construct of collectivism. At the same time, more Westernized Asians were targeted via advertisements that blended a hybrid Western style identity. For both source and immigrant cultures, the industry attempted to facilitate identity construction and maintenance through smoking.

Keywords: Tobacco Marketing; Corporate Documents; Asian Immigrants; Asian Americans; Pacific Islanders; Acculturation; Social Identity; Optimal Distinctiveness Theory; Ethnic Advertising

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Cigarette smoking is a learned behavior (Everett, Schnuth, & Tribble, 1998; Wetterer & von Troschke, 1986). Despite extensive research linking smoking to a variety of disparate health conditions (e.g., chronic sinusitis, heart disease, lung cancer), individuals continue to smoke (Ezzati & Lopez, 2003; Garrett et al., 2004; Hall, Madden, & Lynskey, 2002). Regrettably, once initiated, the habit remains consistent across time (Thrush, Fife-Schaw, & Breakwell, 1999). Such consistency is often attributed to the chemical dependency associated with nicotine. However, the addictive properties are not limited to physiology, but rather manifest in psychological and psychosocial forms as well (Baer, Kamarck, Lichtenstein, & Ransom, 1989; Booth-Butterfield, 2003). Thus, smoking may become engrained in an individual's sense of identity (Falomir & Invernizzi, 1999). Through this identity integration, smoking evolves (in smoker's minds) as somehow integral to who they are, and constitutive of the groups to which they belong.

While a causal relationship between induction of new smokers and industry social influence activities may not be established, it is noteworthy that cigarettes are one of the most heavily advertised products in the US (*Advertising Age*, 2005). Yearly advertising expenditures range from \$8.2 to \$12.7 billion (Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, 2004; Feighery, Ribisl, Clark, & Haladjian, 2003; Siegel, 2002), which equates to \$34.2 million per day. Marketing strategies attach symbolic meaning to products through both packaging and promotion (Lambert, Sargent, Glantz, & Ling, 2004; Mekemson & Glantz, 2002; Wakefield, Morley, Horan, & Cummings, 2002; Wayne & Connolly, 2002). Basil, Basil, & Schooler (2000) suggest that advertising is most effective when it taps into existing needs (physiological, psychological, or psychosocial) within consumers. Because cigarettes appear to impact individuals to varying degrees in each of these areas, it is plausible that marketing and advertising strategies would be tailored accordingly in order to maximize persuasive impact. Prior research suggests the tobacco industry referred to this compilation of needs as identity or smoker motivation, and conducted extensive research on how cigarettes fulfilled these needs. This research was extended to explore the subsequent integration of smoking into individuals' self concept (Lê Cook, Wayne, Keithly, & Connolly, 2003; Muggli, Pollay, Lew, & Joseph, 2002; Pritchard & Kay, 1993; Spielberger, 1986).

Tobacco control researchers are only now beginning to address issues of smoking and identity (Falomir, Mugny, & Perez, 2000; Falomir & Tomei, 2001; Falmoir-Pichastor, Invernizzi, Mugny, Munoz-Rojas, & Quiamzade, 2002; Freeman, Hennessy, & Marzullo, 2001). Most such research focuses on individual identity, that is, how smoking insinuates itself into one's sense of personal style and values (e.g., Falomir & Invernizzi, 1999). It is also possible, however, that certain cultural identities might put individuals at increased risk of tobacco use and addiction (e.g., Native American Indians and Alaskan Natives; Guba & McDonald, 1993; Kerby, Brand, & John, 2003). In contrast, other culturally associated risks for tobacco use may be the direct result of the tobacco industry deliberately exploiting cultural orientations as a means of increasing sales among certain demographic segments. One of the most egregious, documented cases of ethnic targeting by tobacco

companies was the aborted campaign for Uptown brand cigarettes (Wallack, Dorfman, Jernigan, & Themba-Nixon, 1993; Yerger & Malone, 2002). In that 1989–1990 case, advertising efforts were devised on the basis of exhaustive marketing research concerning values held by young, urban, African Americans. The planned Uptown campaign was designed to foster the sense that using this brand of cigarette would enhance smokers' identification with their co-culture.

Less well documented, though, is its targeting of East Asian and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI; refers specifically to immigrants) populations (Acevedo-Garcia, Barbeau, Bishop, Pan, & Emmons, 2004; Ma, Shive, Tan, & Toubbeh, 2002; Mackay, 2004; Muggli et al., 2002). Although some research does address responses of Asians and AAPIs mainly to mainstream (i.e., *not* ethnically targeted) campaigns (Kim & Kang, 2001), little scholarship has addressed advertising campaigns specifically targeted to Asian or AAPI consumers (cf. Cohen, 1992). American tobacco manufacturers have devoted considerable marketing resources to selling tobacco to Asian markets, and the impact of those marketing efforts has been documented (Goldberg, 2003; Kim, 2002; Lopez, 1998). The present study aims to ascertain the conceptualization and role cultural identity played in the development of marketing and advertising campaigns targeted at Asian and AAPI consumers.

The Intersection of Identity and Smoking

Identity was conceptualized in the psychological literature in the 1940s and evolved in the 1960s–1970s into a socially constructed phenomenon (Lloyd, Lucas, & Holland, 1998). The notion of identity is defined in various ways in the literature (e.g., Breakwell, 1986; Collier, 2001; Mokros, 2003; Stryker, 1987; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Ting-Toomey, 1993). Ting-Toomey (1993) defines identity as the experience and engagement of self, while Breakwell (1983) describes it as an evolving entity composed of multiple intrapersonal processes that may predict behavior. Identity may be viewed as a fixed social categorization; others suggest it is a fluid characteristic embedded in the historical and geographic contexts within which the individual resides (Mokros, 2003). In this latter respect, identity may be thought of as reflecting the individual's environment, highlighting the core influence that background factors have on identity construction and subsequent behavioral enactment (Brewer, 1999).

When exploring the context of smoking, the role of group membership in identity construction and maintenance is important to consider. Social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) suggests that once individuals discern ingroups versus outgroups, behavior and values of the preferred ingroup are adhered to, thus reinforcing ethnocentrism and providing support for both group membership and a sense of well being for individual group members (Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002; Tarrant, 2002; Wong, 2002). When SIT is viewed in a cultural perspective, individuals may prefer to align themselves with the expectations of their cultural

ingroup (i.e., other Asians) or with other group identities that may be preferred (i.e., a host culture's).

The impact of culture of origin on identity is by no means homogenous. Some individuals quickly shed as much of their native culture as possible, while others labor mightily to maintain their's in the face of social and economic pressures to assimilate (Kim, 2002). Within these identity considerations, individuals may struggle with the integration of specific ingroups while maintaining their sense of individualism. Optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT; Brewer, 1991) refines SIT by suggesting that individuals have an innate drive to find equilibrium between the desire for assimilation with ingroups and individuation from them. Further, Brewer (1999) suggests that multiple identities may be working simultaneously in order to facilitate balance between the two opposing identity tensions. And in certain conditions or contexts, identities may be forged to produce a unique identity representative of the individuated parts (Brewer, 1999). Finally, ODT predicts group identity ties are stronger within minority groups, and that balancing of opposing identity tensions are more likely to occur (van Hiel & Mervielde, 2002).

Generalizations regarding Asian and AAPI populations may be made within the framework of SIT. While acknowledging the extensive variation both within and between Asian nationalities, and mindful of avoiding the trap of cultural essentialism, value orientations associated with of Asian, Confucian-influenced group identities have been well explicated (see, for example, Yum, 1988). These values include respect for elderly and other sources of authority, conflict avoidance, ego-effacement, high concern for others' face, familism, acceptance of hierarchical status relations, and willingness to work hard for the common good. In the broadest of strokes, Asian and AAPI cultures may thus be categorized as collectivist (Gudykunst, 2001). Collectivist cultures reinforce the ingroup versus outgroup distinction that is central to social identity theory (Gudykunst, Yoon, & Nishida, 1987). Individuals within a collectivist culture tend to belong to fewer ingroups, and those group affiliations ultimately constitute the primary source of values and motivation.

From a persuasion standpoint, this clear association of Asians and AAPIs with collectivism is an attractive feature, in that it may be presumed that strong ethnic identification could be a powerful, unifying marketing ploy. However, such a broad-based approach may not be the most desirable because collectivism manifests differently among different Asian nationalities (Gudykunst & Lee, 2002). For example, Japanese often consider the work ingroup to be the ultimate source of identity, while members of other Asian cultures consider family to be the most important.

An alternative approach considers the premise of ODT. Asians and AAPIs may have the desire to engender an identity that is separate from the source culture identity. With respect to cigarette advertising and promotion, the portrayal of a hybrid Western-style identity to this population may be quite desirable. Key Western constructs include notions of hedonism, individualism, and choice. Aspiration and/or integration of this identity varies for AAPIs, like other ethnic groups with immigrant roots. The key influence is the varying degrees of acculturation to

North American host culture values and practices (Kim, 2002). While immersed in their source or heritage culture ingroup, expectations associated with the cultural identity are clear (per SIT), but when surrounded by the outgroup, the expectations (for immigrants and their offspring) may engender identity conflicts (per ODT). Both the definition and dependence of identity thus lies within the cultural context (Cross & Gore, 2002). In the case of ethnic or national minorities, the struggle may be intense between maintaining the cultural identity from the land/heritage of origin versus adopting the culture of the majority (Peirce, 1995). Typically, an individual's level of cultural identity is gauged by the enactment of culturally ascribed behavior such as consuming ethnic foods or speaking native language (Phinney, 1992). Attitudes toward tobacco use are sometimes another such element of culture. For instance, in Vietnamese culture smoking is ingrained as a sociable behavior that extends good will and kinship, particularly among males (Brugge et al., 2002).

Tobacco Industry Targeting of Asian Populations

Information regarding the relation between acculturated as opposed to source culture identity and smoking behavior is quite naturally of key importance to the communicative strategies employed through identity-based marketing strategies. If smoking is viewed as an American trait, then marketing efforts should emphasize Western-associated images. On the other hand, if smoking is more of a heritage/culture of origin trait, then marketing strategies targeting East Asians and AAPIs would be well served to tap into core values (e.g., collectivism) that are strongly associated with those source cultures.

The manner and degree to which AAPI attitudes and behavior toward tobacco are in fact impacted by acculturation as compared with source culture influences is somewhat obscure, however. One large-scale survey indicates slightly higher overall smoking prevalence for US-born versus Asian-born AAPIs (15.5% vs. 11.8%; Baluja, Park, & Myers, 2003). This overall rate masks a large differential for female AAPIs though, as only 5% of foreign-born Asian women smoke, whereas 12.2% of US-born Asian women smoke. This suggests that acculturated AAPI women are 2.5 times more likely to smoke than are less acculturated Asian female immigrants. Further confounding these data is the considerable variance among the Asian nationalities. For example, among Korean-Americans, smoking is reported almost exclusively among men, with those residing in the US fewer than 10 years 12.5 times more likely to smoke than their more acculturated compatriots (Kim et al., 2000). Yet another study, utilizing Chinese language household interviews, found that highly acculturated Chinese Americans were more likely never to have smoked than their less acculturated peers, but smoking cessation (for those who had initiated smoking in either group) was unrelated to measured acculturation (Shelley et al., 2004).

Previous cigarette campaigns have had focused targets that represented lucrative market opportunities (Albright, Altman, Slater, & Maccoby, 1988; Botvin, Goldberg, Botvin, & Dusenbury, 1993; Sivulka, 1998). Among ethnic minorities that are

susceptible to demographically targeted tobacco marketing, Asian and Pacific Islander immigrants to the US offer marketers the most rapidly growing group of minority culture smokers (Acevedo-Garcia et al., 2004; Lew & Tanjasiri, 2003; Ma et al., 2002).

Despite the alarming magnitude of smoking prevalence among East Asians and AAPIs, data regarding specific smoking behavior within this population are not readily available. Difficulty in collecting such data may be attributed to the inherent heterogeneity of the group categorized as “East Asian” or “AAPI” (i.e., 50 different ethnic or national groups). However, available data do warrant some generalizations regarding smoking in this population. For instance, the onset of smoking occurs at a later age among East Asians and AAPIs as opposed to other racial groups, and there is a much higher occurrence of smoking among males than females (Ma et al., 2002). Further, geographic locale differentiates smoking rates within this population, with Southeast Asian males significantly more likely to smoke than other Asian populations (Ma et al., 2002). Lew and Tanjasiri (2003) note that, in spite of this finding, data specific to Southeast Asian and Pacific Islanders remains sparse (cf. Jenkins et al., 1997).

Of course empirically known demographic patterns of smoking prevalence among Asians and AAPIs may or may not influence tobacco industry strategists. It is quite another question to ask how those marketers construe the relation between American cultural values and attraction to smoking. Similarly, the degree to which tobacco industry marketers are aware of, and seek to exploit, core Asian values and practices is an open question. In the past, industry marketers were not likely to divulge their promotional strategies and rationales. However, in recent years, it has become quite possible to determine how the industry construes and uses cultural identity in marketing by directly examining what industry operatives have said about their Asian-targeted marketing. Indeed, a considerable body of discourse regarding East Asian and AAPI tobacco marketing is available in previously confidential internal tobacco industry documents, now disclosed due to anti-tobacco litigation (Acevedo-Garcia et al., 2004; Muggli et al., 2002).

Prior tobacco document research suggests that Asians and AAPIs were specifically identified and targeted as ripe market opportunities by the tobacco industry. Based on prior research of tobacco industry documents, it appears that identity (as it relates to smoking behavior) is a well-established research agenda (see Lê Cook et al., 2005; Muggli et al., 2002; Pritchard & Kay, 1992, 1993; Spielberg, 1986). The current paper extends this research by assessing the application of identity related research in a cultural context. Based on the identity framework of SIT and ODT, the following research questions are posed:

- RQ1: Did the tobacco industry target East Asians and AAPIs in cigarette marketing efforts?
- RQ2: Did the tobacco industry use identity-specific strategies consistent with social identity theory and optimal distinctiveness theory to target East Asian and AAPI populations?
- RQ3: If these identity-specific strategies were used, were specific themes identified relative to the source culture, host culture, or both?

Method

In accordance outcomes of the 1996 Minnesota Blue Cross trial and with the subsequent 1998 Master Settlement Agreement (MSA; Givel & Glantz, 2004) between 42 state attorneys general and seven tobacco industry entities, approximately 32 million pages of internal documents from the tobacco companies were acquired and placed in a repository in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Muggli et al., 2002). Additional documents continue to be added to the collections as a result of ongoing litigation in the US and document acquisition at a similar British repository. These document collections are quite comprehensive, ranging from luncheon receipts and technical research reports to legislative lobbying strategies and focus group transcripts. Sets of the document collections have also been made available online, both at industry-maintained sites and sites maintained by several tobacco control groups. The approximately seven million documents presently available online are predominantly indexed according to document title, type, author, and a number of other criteria (MacKenzie, Collin, & Lee, 2001). These index terms are searchable. Each document is assigned a unique identification number, known as a "Bates number."

Search Methodology and Document Acquisition

Using searchable online archives maintained by the Legacy Foundation (<http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu>) and Tobacco Documents Online (<http://www.tobaccodocuments.org>), searches of indices were designed to yield a systematic and encompassing sample of all industry documents addressing issues relating to AAPIs. Keyword "hits" could be any term included in each document's index entry, including document title, topic, author, or audience. Search terms used in the current study include those utilized in previous Asian American tobacco document research (Muggli et al., 2002) as well as additional terms suggested by the content matter: "Asian," "Asian-American," "immigrant," "non-native," "collectivist," "Chinese," "Vietnamese," "Japanese," "Korean," "Filipino," "Pacific Islander," "oriental," "API," "SE 555" (a popular brand of Asian cigarette), "special markets," "Western perspective," "Asian focus groups," and "American values."

To ensure that we were identifying and acquiring a comprehensive and representative set of documents on this topic, we devised a stratified random sampling plan. For each keyword, a maximum of 500 Bates numbers (documents) were pulled from the composite of seven individual tobacco companies or trade organizations. From each of these initial keyword-specific sets of up to 500 "hits," a total of 20 documents were then randomly selected using a random numbers table. Certain document types were deliberately excluded during the sampling procedure. These included lists that contained no prose, sales reports with figures only, invitations, brochures from events attended, and other documents produced by outside agencies or organizations that found their way into tobacco industry files but did not pertain to culturally driven marketing strategy development. When such documents appeared in the selection pool, they were replaced by the next randomly

selected document. This procedure resulted in a final sample of 120 documents of varying lengths pertaining to Asian or AAPI marketing issues.

Data Analysis

Each of the 120 sampled documents was coded using an emergent thematic analysis coding scheme. First, for each document, four overarching elements were coded: (1) document type (e.g., marketing plan, demographic research), (2) cultural locus (AAPI immigrant culture vs. Asian source culture), (3) identity construction (active efforts to develop a new, inclusive smoker identity vs. reinforcement of traditional source culture values and identity), and (4) the cultural identity component addressed. These criteria were developed in order to allow the researchers to categorize and organize the documents on four broad levels.

Next, the aforementioned fourth category was expanded through constant comparison content analysis (see, for example, Stamp, 1999) in order to represent the various components the tobacco industry associated with the construct of cultural identity attributed by the tobacco industry to the AAPI or East Asian target market reflected in these documents. These included: (1) traditional personal style, (2) modern personal style, (3) individualistic culture, (4) collectivist culture, (5) brand choice, (6) brand community, (7) economics, (8) family values, (9) education, (10) lifestyle, (11) personality traits, (12) language, (13) hedonism, (14) American attributes, (15) identity/cultural balancing, (16) maintain interpersonal relationships, (17) sex, and (18) age. Documents attained through the random selection process that did not fit within the aforementioned categories were coded as “other;” 13% of the documents received an “other” code.

Each document (in its entirety) represented a datum. The specific unit of analysis was the overall theme conveyed by a phrase or body of prose related to the category. In this design scheme, a document could have multiple codes. We used this methodology because we were interested in the components that reflected the tobacco industry’s conceptualization of identity as it applied to the East Asian and AAPI markets. For instance, a particular document might refer to both family values and hedonism, and would be coded accordingly. On the other hand, because documents were not subdivided into units in any way, no attempt was made to count the number of references to a particular value or cultural identity component category within a document. Thus, a document that referred four times to an economic attainment cultural identity component was coded the same as one that referred to economic attainment just once. The figures in Tables 1, 2, and 3 represent the number of documents in which each particular cultural identity component was expressed, but the total exceeds the 120 units sampled because each document could receive multiple codes. Two investigators independently coded a randomly selected reliability sample of 10%. Disagreement over 10 of 160 coding decisions occurred, representing an intercoder reliability (percentage of agreement) of 93.75%. In the instance of coding disagreements, the coding decisions of the first author prevailed.

Table 1 Type and Industry Source of Documents Sampled.

Document type	American Tobacco Company		Brown & Williamson		Lorrillard		Philip Morris		R. J. Reynolds		Tobacco Institute/CTR	
	No.	% row total	No.	% row total	No.	% row total	No.	% row total	No.	% row total	No.	% row total
Advertising development	3	25.00	1	8.33	2	16.67	6	46.16	-	-	-	-
Anti-smoking efforts tracking	-	-	1	20.00	-	-	1	20.00	1	20.00	2	40.00
Demographic Research	2	9.52	2	9.52	1	4.76	11	52.64	4	19.05	1	4.76
Focus group data	-	-	2	20.00	-	-	6	60.00	2	20.00	-	-
Focus group development	-	-	1	10.00	2	20.00	7	70.00	-	-	-	-
Internal notes/minutes	-	-	2	66.67	-	-	1	33.33	-	-	-	-
Market share	-	-	3	30.00	-	-	6	60.00	1	10.00	-	-
Marketing strategy development and/or implementation	2	6.45	3	9.68	1	3.23	17	54.84	7	22.58	1	3.23
Public relations	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	100.00	-	-	-	-
Research and development	2	20.00	-	-	-	-	8	80.00	-	-	-	-
Sponsorship/lobbying	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	83.33	1	16.67	-	-
Total	9	7.50	15	12.50	6	5.00	70	58.33	16	11.66	4	1.66

*Percentages are row percentages.

Table 2 Development and Reinforcement Strategies Employed Based on Specific Cultural Orientation.

Cultural orientation	Source culture						Immigrant culture					
	Development			Reinforcement			Development			Reinforcement		
	No.	% of category total	No.	% of category total	No.	% of category total	No.	% of category total	No.	% of category total	Total	% of total codes
Asian	15	60.00	9	36.00	-	-	1	4.00	25	10.12		
Chinese	22	61.11	3	8.33	9	25.00	2	5.56	36	14.57		
Japanese	18	42.86	4	9.52	18	42.86	2	4.76	42	17.00		
Vietnamese	16	66.67	3	12.50	3	12.50	2	8.33	24	9.72		
Taiwanese	4	44.44	0	0.00	4	44.44	1	11.11	9	3.64		
Korean	19	57.58	7	21.21	7	21.21	-	-	33	13.36		
Pacific Islander	9	69.23	2	15.38	2	15.38	-	-	13	5.26		
Filipino	19	79.17	3	12.50	1	4.17	1	4.17	24	9.72		
Thai	4	57.14	1	14.29	1	14.29	1	14.29	7	2.83		
Laotian	6	100.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	2.43		
Cambodian	5	100.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	2.02		
Pakistani	-	-	-	-	2	66.67	1	33.33	3	1.21		
Asian Indian	14	70.00	2	10.00	3	15.00	1	5.00	20	8.10		
Total	151	61.13	34	13.77	50	20.24	12	4.86	247	100.00		

Table 3 Tobacco Document Analysis Coding Categories Discriminated by Cultural Development or Reinforcement Strategies.

Coding categories	Source culture				Immigrant culture				Total	
	Development		Reinforcement		Development		Reinforcement		No.	% of total codes
	No.	% of category total	No.	% of category total	No.	% of category total	No.	% of category total		
Traditional personal style	3	37.50	-	-	4	50.00	1	12.50	8	2.06
Modern personal style	1	7.14	2	14.29	9	64.29	2	14.29	14	3.60
Individualistic culture	1	25.00	-	-	3	75.00	-	-	4	1.03
Collectivist culture	10	32.26	12	38.71	7	22.58	2	6.45	31	7.97
Brand choice	11	25.00	4	9.09	24	54.55	5	11.36	44	11.31
Brand community	2	40.00	1	20.00	2	40.00	-	-	5	1.29
Economics	14	38.89	1	2.78	19	52.78	2	5.56	36	9.25
Family values	7	43.75	2	12.50	7	43.75	-	-	16	4.11
Education	8	57.14	-	-	6	42.86	-	-	14	3.60
Lifestyle	11	31.43	5	14.29	13	37.14	6	17.14	35	9.00
Personality traits	4	30.77	1	7.69	6	46.15	2	15.38	13	3.34
Language	10	47.62	6	28.57	3	14.29	2	9.52	21	5.40
Hedonism	2	13.33	-	-	10	66.67	3	20.00	15	3.86
American attributes	11	44.00	1	4.00	11	44.00	2	8.00	25	6.43
Identity/cultural balancing	6	75.00	-	-	2	25.00	-	-	8	2.06
Maintain interpersonal relationships	2	33.33	1	16.67	3	50.00	-	-	6	1.54
Sex	10	23.81	5	11.90	27	64.29	-	-	42	10.80
Age	16	31.37	2	3.92	31	60.78	2	3.92	51	13.11
Totals	129	33.25	43	11.08	187	48.20	29	7.47	388	100.00

Note: Each individual document was considered the unit of analysis. As such, each document could be coded as having verbiage consistent with one or more categories. For this reason, the percentage of category total codes and the percentage of the total codes overall are provided. The percentage of category totals were derived from the total number of codes in a given category. Each overall category total was then compared with the total number of codes in the data set for comparative purposes.

Results

Table 1 characterizes the sample of documents by cross-tabulating industry source (e.g., American Tobacco Company, Center for Tobacco Research) with type of document (e.g., advertising development, marketing strategy, research and development). While Table 1 might be taken to suggest that Phillip Morris was the most aggressive industry source in pursuing the AAPI market (Acevedo-Garcia et al., 2004, also report a particular abundance of Philip Morris documents in their similar document search), this impression may be an artifact of Phillip Morris' higher output of documents in the entire universe of tobacco industry documents, relative to the other tobacco producers (see Lambert et al., 2004). Table 1 does suggest that within this sample of documents pertaining to the Asian and AAPI markets, quite naturally marketing plans were the most common type of document, followed by demographic studies.

Table 2 illustrates the frequency with which each Asian nationality was mentioned in the document sample, cross tabulated with the locus of that nationality (source culture or immigrant culture) and the underlying identity strategy (reinforcing traditional cultural values or cultural identity components consistent with smoking or developing new Western-style smoker identity). Table 2 reveals that the three East Asian cultures of greatest interest to the tobacco industry during the period covered by the documents were Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. The extent of the global marketing ambitions of these US tobacco companies—or perhaps the immaturity of their efforts to reach immigrant AAPI consumers within the US—was reflected in the loci of the markets discussed. About 76% of the documents discussed markets located abroad in source cultures, and only one-quarter mentioned AAPI immigrant markets. Within the documents sampled here, serious attention to the AAPI domestic immigrant market in the US was low as late as the mid-1980s. In 1986, for example, Philip Morris was not sure about the breadth of opportunity of this market.

In our view, SALEM's business potential among Asian-Americans would have to be described as low to very low...Asian-Americans have a very low smoking incidence (9%) which may in part trace to the fact that they are the best educated group in the country (including white Americans). (Bellis, 1986, 505729443)

By 1990, however, R. J. Reynolds demonstrated interest in this market because of population patterns evident in the 1980 census:

For the first time, the growth rate among Americans with an Asian heritage was greater than that of all other ethnic/racial groups. This growth, coupled with a high level of cultural/ethnic identification, has caused increasing interest in the viability of developing specialized campaigns to target the Asian American market. (Prospectus, 1990, 507388183)

Finally, Table 3 indicates that development (i.e., research for culturally driven smoker identity construction) represented 81.45% of total documents; reinforcement

(i.e., active strategy implementation) represented 18.55%. Examples of each are provided respectively:

These three values/beliefs are important to Asian Americans because they believe they will ultimately result in the achievement of their main objective—to effectively assimilate into U.S. culture/lifestyles. This desire to assimilate leads, in turn, to a high level of identification with those products and symbols that they view as “American.” Importantly, this identification leads to brand name purchasing patterns and a highly developed sense of brand loyalty. (Prospectus, 1990, 507388187)

Recent alternative concepts have tended to show that “Oriental” cultural associations would not be as effective as Western symbols. More development work needs to be done in this area and in close conjunction with local creative personnel. (*China market plan 1985/86*, 1985, MNAT00315744)

Table 3 collapses across the specific Asian nationalities and focuses instead on the cultural identity components addressed in each of the documents. It cross tabulates each of the 18 cultural identity component categories emerging from the document sample with locus of culture (Asian source culture or AAPI immigrant culture) and with underlying identity strategy (reinforcing traditional source culture identities or developing new Western-style smoker identity). It indicates that the most frequently invoked identity elements were those relating to age, sex, economics (i.e., financial resources, level of income), and brand choice (i.e., certain brands are purported to be more *élite*).

Brand Loyalty and Community Building

The manner in which industry marketers assessed the meaning and determinants of brand choice illustrates well their conceptualization and reliance on analyses of Asian identity patterns. Brand loyalty is always an important consideration for marketers. Industry documents indicate that marketers regarded Asians and AAPI immigrants to the US as particularly desirable consumers because of their perceived level of brand loyalty.

Keeping in mind the high degree of brand loyalty shown by this market segment, if this target group were deemed an opportunity, actions should be taken to ensure that RJR is the first tobacco company to specifically target this group. (Prospectus, 1990, 507388183–507388187)

Many newcomers have yet to form brand awareness and brand loyalties, and this presents good opportunities for many product and service categories. (Asian Marketing Communication Research, 1993, 2063725158)

In developing brand loyalty, marketers were patently mindful of adapting the Americanized brand images of the tobacco products to traditional cultural identities.

With branding, a crucial element of the marketing mix for cigarettes, it is important, especially in a relatively mature market like Hong Kong, to understand underlying how cultural belief systems and values impact on the market’s



Asian American Decision Map

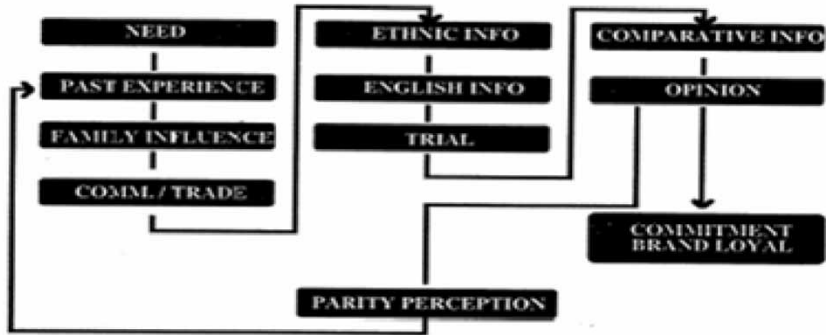


Figure 1 Asian American decision map (Kang, 1996, 522416377).

interpretation of these brand images. (Research International Asia, 1993, 2504019843)

Customer loyalty was recognized as a premium. In order to enhance brand image cultivation efforts, culture-specific psycho demographic profiles were developed. These profiles scrutinized the Asian and AAPI consumers' motivations to use a particular brand. For example, Chinese-Americans were contrasted with Korean-Americans as: "Price-conscious" (Kang, 1996, 522416358) and "Prefer name brands to lower price" (Kang, 1996, 522416361).

Figure 1 depicts one model for brand commitment choices by AAPI smokers. It differs from more generic models of brand loyalty since it acknowledges the role of Asian source culture factors such as "family influence" and "English info" on this consumer behavior.

Inadequacy of Income and Education Profiling

Just as tobacco marketers found that Asian cultures forced them to rethink the standard objective of building brand loyalty, so did the Asian marketplace require rethinking of standard demographic profiling. Fourteen documents (11.66% of the sample) focused on the level of education and thirty-six documents (43.2% of the sample) referenced economic considerations such as income. Further, education and economics represented 3.60% and 9.25% of total identity codes, respectively. Industry documents make much of demographic breakdowns indicating, for example, that although comprising only 2% of the US population, Asian Americans represented 18% of recent years' Westinghouse Science Talent Search

Finalists, 10% of the Julliard School's enrollment, and 11% of Harvard's Freshmen class (Prospectus, 1990, 507388185).

However, the Asian-American population could not readily be segmented by income and education as usually construed by marketers.

Third, correlations that often exist between demographic traits in other market segments do not exist in the Asian American market. For example, the Asian American population contains a large number of well-educated professions who are not licensed in the U.S. As a result, they are forced to work in menial jobs at low pay. Because of this circumstance, the correlation between education/income that exists among most market segments does not necessarily exist in the Asian market. (Prospectus, 1990, 507388186)

As a result of the resistance of Asian and AAPI markets to standard marketing analysis, tobacco industry analysts recognized that they would need to explore more profound identity factors regarding these groups if they were to obtain the sort of information needed to design effective campaigns.

Language Barriers and Opportunities

US tobacco manufacturers, with their English language-based branding, were naturally concerned about the impact of language differences on developing Asian and AAPI markets.

'First generation' Asians are important because they represent potential new smokers. However, they are the most difficult to reach due to language and cultural factors. (Frasersmith, 1988a, 2044733664)

As indicated in Table 3, nearly 6% of the total identity components addressed in the document set—occurring in 19% of the documents—pertained to language identity. A large component of the marketers' concerns pertained not only to consumers' comprehension of English language packaging and advertising, but the value afforded source culture languages.

[I]t was generally agreed that Chinese [language] advertising was necessary because many of the Chinese do not read English nor pay attention to English advertising. (Asian Perspective, Inc., 1994, 502012468)

In order to assess the impact of language identity on this market, numerous focus group studies were conducted. The focus group research eventually supported the view that reinforcing source culture language allegiances was going to be an effective means of capturing Asian as well as immigrant US AAPI markets:

Chinese-Americans were very positive about the use of the Chinese language and Chinese models. They felt they contributed to more arresting advertising and were certain to give more attention browsing newspapers and magazines. (Lominchay Advertising, 1992, 8287737)

As part of its continuing effort to obtain a fuller understanding of Japanese smokers' mentality, PHILIP MORRIS has commissioned ASI MARKET

RESEARCH to prepare a lexicon of Japanese consumer language related to smoking. (Asi Market Research Japan, 1983, 2504018069)

The language issue was particularly problematic to advertisers since these Asian markets were so linguistically diverse.

The majority of the respondents, both Chinese and Vietnamese, expressed that advertising in their own language made them feel that there were being shown respect, and that mainstream society was putting more emphasis on them. (Asian Perspective, Inc., 1994, 502012468)

We believe a unique and relevant marketing message transcends cultural barriers, but it works better if it is “in-culture” and “in-language.” (Kang, 1996, 522416372)

Reinforcing Source Culture Values

Consistent with the documents addressing source culture language identities, the overall thrust of the marketing research reflected in the document sample indicated that the path to successful marketing lay with ascertaining and reinforcing source culture values and identities.

These comments tend to suggest that either within a global cross-cultural system or on their own, there is a distinct set of Chinese or Asian values. (*Development of a Yams value system*, 1993, 2504025981)

The Vietnamese retained and appreciated much of their own culture, values and traditions. (Asian Perspective, Inc., 1994, 50212465)

The implications of this strong cultural identification led quite directly to marketing strategies that exploited distinctively Asian resources:

At a presentation earlier this week of the results of the Asian community focus groups several points came out strongly and most especially, that good corporate behavior involves showing the community that we know they exist. To that end, they identified 4 specific examples of how this could be done:

1. Ads in ethnic papers
2. Donate \$ to community groups
3. Sponsor college scholarships
4. Sponsor ethnic festivals. (Marden, 1999)

Collectivism and Family Orientations as Unifying Identity Elements

Heterogeneity among Asian cultures was sometimes reported as a barrier to expanding marketing efforts.

While the dramatic growth and apparently strong smoker incidence among Asian-Americans appear to provide an attractive prospect for Philip Morris, we do not recommend any specific marketing program at this time. Given the, as yet, relatively small size of this group and the fact that there is no common language or culture among them, no single effort, such as our Black and Hispanic programs, would be adequate. (Massler, 1991, 2041821642)

the prominence accorded to source culture values often associated with collectivism, for example, “filial piety,” family orientation, and avoidance of conflict (Gudykunst, 2001).

Related to collectivism, references to a strong sense of family values (16 documents, representing 19.20% of the total data), constituted 7.97% of total identity codes applied. Based on this cohesiveness, marketers saw a niche to focus on in order to most efficiently reach the market.

Asian-Americans have demonstrated a strong commitment to family. They consider family to be an economic and social support system. (Cohen, 1993, 2045652294)

Asians share a strong family orientation value security and often place over quality over price when shopping. (*Asian American Market Parliament Charcoal 100's*, 1991, 2500131312)

Identity Negotiation and Balancing

While the dominant conclusion of the industry marketing research reported in the documents supported reinforcement of source culture identities, the documents nonetheless are cognizant of cross-cultural currents that were impinging on those source cultures and thus might have bearing on the globalization of US tobacco sales. Indeed, eight (9.60%) documents were coded for references to negotiation and/or balancing of both Asian and Western identities, representing approximately 2.06% of identity constructs coded. Some of these documents pertained to AAPI immigrant communities, which naturally experienced the pressures of identity negotiation inherent in acculturation.

Understanding the changing balance of being Asian and being American among the target audience. (Kang, 1996, 522416372)

The drive to increase participation in Western commerce was one factor fomenting cultural change for Asian markets and consumers.

Hong Kong YAMS retain many traditional Chinese values while also influenced by the success of Hong Kong and the “money culture” (Research International Asia, 1994, 2504053226)

[A]ll these factors incorporated in the project naturally impact on consumer behaviour. In Hong Kong, this is especially important as brand perceptions drive “conspicuous consumption” in many categories ranging from paper tissues to beer to cigarettes, being inextricably linked to images of success, good fortune and face. (Research International Asia, 1993, 2504019844)

Such Western-inspired currents of change were seen to militate against even the powerful force of collectivist identification.

Modernization influences the development of a more individualistic character: (Research International Asia, 1994, 2504053225)

The tobacco industry ultimately evolved extremely sophisticated models of identity negotiation, of the ongoing tension between Asian source culture identities and Western identities.

Chinese respondents generally feel complex feeling towards of [sic] their self identity. It can be generalized into two dimension [sic]. On one hand, they had a very strong sensitivity of being a Chinese person, which they regarded as being very different from mainstream Americans. Complete integration seemed very unlikely for them. They retained much of their Chinese values and traditions. On the other hand, they admired certain aspects of the American life, such as freedom, individualism, liberty, greater opportunity, materialism and the quality of life. At the same time, however, they expressed a strong emotion of inferiority of, being second class citizens. (Asian Perspective, Inc., 1994, 502012461)

To some younger Vietnamese, using/buying American products and picking up habits Americans were considered strong indicators that they had integrated into the society, and become “Americanized”. To them, it appeared that “to be integrated” was to be able to adapt to the society, while the Chinese considered “integration” to be totally accepted by the Americans and to adopt American values and traditions. (Asian Perspective, Inc., 1994, 502012462–502012463)

Developing Western Hedonist Identities

Those documents that pursued the notion that Western-style smoker identities could be developed among Asians and AAPIs examined the appeal of themes related to American values such as freedom and independence. American attributes in general were mentioned in 25 of the documents and comprised 6.43% of the total identity constructs. For example, many young Asian male smokers (YAMS) were indeed found to respond favorably to the image of independence cultivated by the Marlboro brand.

In the YAMS segment, the brand appeals to many as is evident by its market share, with many smokers attracted by the “man in control” and related “cowboy” factor images such as those noted above. (Research International Asia, 1993, 2504019849)

Part of the appeal of this most Westernized of cigarette images may have lain in the fact that Asians were able to find a thread to at least some source culture values:

Moreover the brand is also seen as successful and powerful, (*‘a brand that does not make you lose face’* as one respondent put it) . . . (Research International Asia, 1993, 2504019851)

One quintessential Western value that was extensively explored as a possible marketing theme for the Asian and AAPI markets was labeled “hedonism.” Fifteen documents contained references to hedonist identities, a category that corresponded to 3.68% of identity constructs codes.

Tactical promotions play a very important role in keeping Marlboro’s young and energetic personality. Next year we will be creating more noise in the area of sports sponsorships. (Research International Asia, 1993, 2504053084)

What we need to do now is to find a platform to make the promotion not just another sales promotion, we have to find something and make the sale promotion

a logical extension of the activities. For the *Marlboro Adventure Team*, the activity is the adventure tour; for *Marlboro Lights Leather Collection*, we need something that can fall within the Marlboro imagery. (Research International Asia, 1993, 2504053085)

Focus group respondents demonstrated ample evidence of the powerful appeal of hedonism among Asians:

CAMEL, JOE

- Smokers admire Joe's cool/masculine/rebellious image.
- Joe is seen as popular, one of the guys/just like me.
- Joe does what every guy is into:
- Fun, gambling, sex, socializing. (YAMS segmentation study, 1991, 2045171143)

... Tough/Strong/Macho Image ... US/Cowboy Factor = Independence.
(Competitive Brand Advertising, 1994, 2504033436)

Cultivating Asian Retailers

The tobacco industry has long been characterized by a strong reliance on retailers for promoting the product. For example, point-of-sale advertising by retailers plays an increasingly central role in tobacco marketing as traditional advertising venues are closed down for tobacco industries (Feighery et al., 2003; Feighery, Ribisl, Schleicher, Lee, & Halvorson, 2001; Slater, Chaloupka, & Wakefield, 2001). Parallel to programs for targeting Asian and AAPI consumers, marketing programs directed to Asian retailers were also established. Components of this retailer targeting included (1) the value of establishing interpersonal relationships with retailers, coupled with (2) the need to inculcate those retailers with American business strategies. To this end, Philip Morris suggested a specific cultural sensitivity training program for sales representatives working with this market.

Sensitivity programs for key Philip Morris sales personnel to provide an understanding of Asian culture and an appreciation for how to build relationship with them. (Frasersmith, 1988a, 2044733684)

Philip Morris and other major manufacturers do not have an understanding of the Asia culture and, therefore, lack sensitivity needed to build complete relationships with these retailers. (Frasersmith, 1988b, 2044744012)

To further promote this retailer-based strategy, Philip Morris suggested developing special point-of-purchase materials targeted to Asian customers, while enhancing the retailer relationship.

Special retail selling materials tailored to provide Asians with a better understanding of the importance of increased distribution and merchandising of Philip Morris products. (Frasersmith, 1988a, 2044733684)

Discussion

Conducting in-depth motivational research of demographic segments is a standard practice in marketing. Most commonly, segments are defined in terms of components such as sex, age, and level of education. While ethnic marketing to African Americans has been commonplace, implementation of psychosocial, lifestyle, and attitudinal research according to national and immigrant cultures constituted uncharted territory for the tobacco industry (Assunta & Chapman, 2004). The first research question asked if East Asian and AAPI populations were targeted by the tobacco industry. The current data demonstrate that ample resources were dedicated to exploring avenues for tapping these markets' potential. While some industry marketers were skeptical about the efficiencies of attempting to target such a diverse segment, extensive research enabled the tobacco industry to develop a more complete view of Asian and AAPI identities. Once the foundation was established, the current data suggest that persuasive attempts would be most successful by conveying two alternative identity approaches: traditional and hybrid-Western. The traditional approach is consistent with social identity theory, and provided the industry with a means of tapping into a general construct (i.e., collectivism) that appeared to unite the heterogeneous market of Asian and AAPIs. On the other hand, the hybrid identity is consistent with optimal distinctiveness theory. The tobacco industry appeared to recognize the identity struggle (faced by members of these groups) between the desirability of traditional and Western identity attributes. By providing components of both traditional and Western attributes in their communication ploys, cigarettes were positioned as a means by which individuals could attain equilibrium between identity tensions.

Psychosocial research, conducted by the tobacco industry, has identified varying mindsets or psychological motivators that fuel an individual's desire to smoke that were subsequently applied to advertising and marketing efforts (Lê Cook et al., 2003). Research question two questioned if this identity strategy was applied to East Asian and AAPI markets. These data suggest the tobacco industry employed identity research and extended it to the role of cultural identity as a vehicle to unite and reach the market efficiently. Our findings indicate that industry marketers were quite sophisticated in conducting analyses of cultural identity. In particular, they were sensitive to the potency of source culture language and collectivist orientations as existing needs within these individuals that could be exploited via multiple communication channels and portrayals. The importance of interpersonal relationships, communalism, and strong family values were discussed at great length and subsequent recommendations were made. Armed with this information, tobacco they established cultural sensitivity programs for their sales representatives, encouraged one-on-one relationship development with Asian retailers, and joined Asian business associations. Tobacco companies sponsored East Asian and AAPI community festivals, advertised in magazines in East Asian native tongues, and conveyed concern about the needs of individual businesses. Consistent with optimal distinctiveness

predictions, the tobacco industry manipulated public relations by providing Asian consumers and retailers with the precise identity hooks they seemed to want.

Although the preponderant strategy seemed to be to exploit such source culture values for Asian markets as well as for AAPI immigrant communities in the US, tobacco industry researchers keenly observed the tensions between traditional and more acculturated Asian identities. Even within Asian source culture markets such as Hong Kong and Japan, marketers noted a rising Western commercialism that mitigated traditional Confucian values, especially for young adults (see also Knight & Chapman, 2004). Within immigrants to the US, tobacco marketers were cognizant of the value of cultivating AAPI retailers as entrées to their communities, and they were well aware of the interpersonal strategies needed to cement bonds with those retailers.

Research question three asked if specific identity themes were associated with the source culture, host culture, or both. In the current data, what was initially perceived as the primary obstacle to accessing the market (i.e., heterogeneity) was overcome through the onslaught of strategies that revolved around a perceived unifying construct—collectivism. The utility of the source culture (traditional value) collectivism construct was clear. First, it readily translated into sales campaign strategies, strategies centering on building community, loyal interpersonal relations, familial devotion, and positive face or status. Next, collectivism provided a powerful identity platform as specified by social identity theory because collectivist ideation sharpens ingroup/outgroup boundaries (Triandis, 1995). Associating cigarette smoking with ingroup expectations and behavior thus constitutes a profound motivation to adopt the behavior thus depicted.

At the same time, industry marketers were hedging their bets, so as not to lose segments of the East Asian and AAPI populations who manifested more Westernized or assimilated values (Knight & Chapman, 2004). These more assimilated individuals still retained East Asian ingroup identities, the tobacco industry recognized simply bombarding them with American advertising replete with Euro-American imagery was not an effective persuasive strategy. Rather, in this context, they portrayed a new, desirable ingroup identity—a hybrid Western identity that appeared to reach East Asian/AAPI hedonists, as it were. Such synthetic identity construction may constitute a step toward fulfilling for some East Asians and AAPIs the drive, observed among Westerners and described by ODT, for balance between identity assimilation and individuation (Brewer, 1991, 1999).

Implications

Prior to the availability of the tobacco documents, researchers were limited in their assessment of persuasive strategies (e.g., interpersonal, advertising, marketing strategies). This limitation has, in turn, hampered cessation efforts. Clearly cigarette advertising was successful, but the precise reasons why remained illusive. Results of the current study extend findings of emergent tobacco document research and

provide another perspective on deconstructing the tobacco industry's success. There are two specific benefits from the current study that may be realized.

First, these data suggest identity is a viable construct for scholars to consider on the intra- and interpersonal levels. Individuals' identity needs appear to be met through both observation of mass media and through interpersonal channels. From a communication standpoint, focus on this construct (both as an individual and group phenomenon) warrants attention. Future studies should explore the role of identity in intercultural situations as a factor that may inhibit or engender communication. Further, scrutiny of individuals' adopting specific behavior perceived to be related to acquisition of benefits associated with a particular identity warrant further scrutiny.

The second implication is the direct application of these findings in the assessment of current and the development of new cessation and antismoking campaigns targeted to minority groups. In this area, specific Asian and AAPI focused groups (e.g., APPEAL—Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership; see <http://www.appealforcommunities.org>) are conducting targeted counterefforts to smoking advertisements. Based on the themes that emerged from the current study, future research should explore the effectiveness of identity specific themes in their cessation and antismoking materials. It will be interesting to assess the role of identity (as it pertains to cessation and/or not smoking) as it compares with tobacco advertising. Specifically, can a desirable nonsmoker identity be developed that embodies either the traditional or hybrid Western identity proposed by the tobacco industry?

Limitations

The primary limitation of the present study is the inability to link the marketing documents identified here with actual marketing campaigns undertaken by the industry. Some of the strategic plans explicated in these documents may never have seen the light of day. Future studies of the tobacco documents should examine the correlation between the proposed marketing efforts and how these manifested in actual advertisements, point of purchase promotions, and other coordinated efforts.

Another limitation is the inability to identify the trigger that ignited the interest in the Asian market. In the current data sampled, initial interest was shown in 1980; however, the majority of marketing research and plan development appears in the 1990s. This may reflect the number of documents from the different decades within the current data sampling, and may be addressed by future researchers by employing a different sampling method. Further, it is notable that the various tobacco companies appeared to fuel interest at the same time. Future research may be fortified by focusing on one specific tobacco company to chart the evolution of marketing and public relations efforts coupled with advertising strategies employed and how those plans ultimately compared with market share acquisition and overall smoking rate within the targeted population.

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