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**ADVERTISING MESSAGES ON FOOD PRODUCTS. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF COLACAO AND NESQUIK**

**MENSAJES PUBLICITARIOS EN PRODUCTOS DE ALIMENTACIÓN. ANÁLISIS COMPARATIVO DE COLACAO Y NESQUIK**

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**ABSTRACT**

This research analyzes the transformation of the communication of the advertising message aimed at young people. A qualitative methodology based on the observation of the advertising phenomenon is established, which has been used as an examination tool, a content analysis model that has allowed the evaluation of the use of codes, the treatment of the strategy, and the compositional proposal of the messages in the media. The objects of study have been the brands Colacao and Nesquik. In the analysis, creative pieces were selected for pre-adolescents, aged between seven and twelve years, inclusive. It is a target of digital natives with valid skills to discriminate the message of the advertising content. The results show how brands make significant changes mainly related to content and the way of transmitting information and adapting the structure, objectives, and creative concepts to the interests of the recipient to increase the identification of the benefit with the interests of your audience.

**KEYWORDS:** Benefits - reason - attributes - message - advertising

**RESUMEN**

Esta investigación analiza la transformación de la comunicación del mensaje publicitario destinado jóvenes. Se establece una metodología cualitativa basada en la observación del fenómeno publicitario en la que se ha utilizado como herramienta de examen un modelo de análisis de contenido que ha permitido la valoración del uso de códigos, el tratamiento de la estrategia y la propuesta compositiva de los mensajes en los medios. El objeto de estudio han sido las marcas Colacao y Nesquik. En el análisis han sido seleccionadas piezas creativas destinadas a preadolescentes, de edades comprendidas entre siete y doce años. Se trata de un target de nativos digitales con habilidades válidas para discriminar el mensaje de los contenidos publicitarios. Los resultados muestran como las marcas realizan cambios significativos referidos principalmente al contenido y a la forma de transmitir la información, y adaptando la estructura, los objetivos y los conceptos creativos a los intereses del receptor con el propósito de incrementar la identificación del beneficio con los intereses de su público.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Beneficios - razón - atributos - mensaje - publicidad

**MENSAGENS PUBLICITÁRIAS EM PRODUTOS DE ALIMENTAÇÃO. ANÁLISE COMPARATIVA DE COLA CAO E NESQUIK**

**RESUMO:**

Esta pesquisa analisa a transformação da comunicação da mensagem publicitária destinada aos jovens. Se estabelece uma metodologia qualitativa baseada na observação do fenômeno publicitário onde se usou como ferramenta de teste um modelo de análise de conteúdo que permitiu a valorização do uso de códigos, o tratamento da estratégia e a proposta compositiva das mensagens nos meios. O objeto de estudo foram as marcas Cola Cao e Nesquik. Na análise foram selecionadas peças criativas destinadas a pré-adolescentes, de idades compreendidas entre sete e doze anos. Trata-se de um *target* de nativos digitais com habilidades válidas para discriminar a mensagem dos conteúdos publicitários. Os resultados mostram como as marcas fazem mudanças significativas principalmente no conteúdo e na forma de transmitir a informação, adaptando a estrutura, os objetivos e os conceitos criativos aos interesses do receptor com o propósito de incrementar a identificação do benefício com os interesses do seu público.

**PALAVRAS CHAVE:** Benefícios, razão, atributos, mensagem, publicidade

Translation by **Paula González** (Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, Venezuela)

**1. INTRODUCTION**

**1.1. Lifestyles, values, and behaviors**

Lifestyles are of interest to advertising and marketing. The messages reflect the needs of everyday life. The interest lies in knowing the consumer's wishes as much as possible and achieving a more receptive attitude towards brand messages. With their efforts, they try to find how the products fit into the lives of the consumers and that the products, and especially the brands, are the expression of the lifestyles.

In the sixties, lifestyles began to be studied that would allow classifying, from a qualitative point of view, individuals into groups based on their concerns, values, beliefs, thoughts, among others; reasons that influence the acts of purchase and consumption. Each piece is aimed at a type of consumer. In this analysis, it is observed how in the first advertisements of the sixties their communication was directed to the characteristics of the object, their messages being very descriptive and allowing them to show their qualities.

In the seventies, market research studies evolved (Kotler, Cámara, Grande, 1994). That is why, from the following decades, the diversity of products leads their communication to use differential values that allow their message to stand out in front of consumers.

We consume by affinity, by coincidence in tastes, and preferences. That is why we began to speak of social consumption (Mauss, 1979). This is where the brand communities emerge in which ColaCao and Nesquik find their niche. Brands are framed in a space of ways of living and being (Alonso, 2004). Furthermore, from individual psychology, Adler focuses his object of study on the lifestyles that mark their behaviors in order to achieve their goals.

Along these lines, people's values, attitudes, interests, etc. stand out, and that in turn explains the products that they consume (Dubois, Rovira, 1998), of special interest for advertising and marketing.

The methodology used in the research is based on the VALS (values and lifestyle) model that contemplates values and their application to consumer behavior, and which in turn determines the choice of products and brands (Mitchell, 1983). VALS highlighted three main values that determined lifestyles: the urge of the need, outward orientation, and self-orientation. The sample selected in this work is the one that allows documenting the information related to the recipient, their language, their way of living, and talking about a consumer culture fundamentally determined by the value oriented towards oneself and loved ones. Attitudes are the means of quantifying values that sometimes present some difficulty in being defined. They describe family relationships, beliefs, their culture, among others, that lead the consumer to behave in a certain way.

This research is a starting point for a deeper analysis between brands, lifestyles, and their values (Schwartz, 1994). In the analyzed advertisements, examples of recurring messages to lifestyles can be found in which significant differences are detected, aimed at adults or children.

**1.2. Colacao and Nesquik**

In 1946, the Colacao brand was launched on the Spanish market as a cocoa milk drink. It is introduced through sponsorship, specifically, a radio soap opera is used that has as its soundtrack the song "I am that black boy...". This brand of the Nutrexpa group finds its communication opportunity in Spain that was trying to overcome the consequences of the Civil War. The brand's advertising message begins to address the mothers of the children of war. For this reason, the slogan of the first campaign of this period was based on a fundamental value and duty, the health of children. Its slogan was "Mom, give your children this mixed with milk, it is good for health."

Advertising feeds on the situation. Thus, the concept of Colacao has evolved at the rate of changes in culture and society (Moliné, 2000). As mentioned, the message of the fifties presents the product as nutritious food, intended for mothers responsible for the care of the whole family; However, in the next few years, towards the seventies, the message of the product is redirected towards another recipient, the young people who see Colacao as nutritious food, quick to prepare, and delicious in its flavor. In these moments, in which the fundamental value of life is not so present, the brand is committed to a positioning based on a differential advantage focused on the concept of instantaneity. The concept of immediacy will be the object and concept of the Nesquik brand, becoming its direct competition.

The strategy developed by Colacao means that this product is considered an indispensable part of Spanish homes (Marinas, 2012). The cocoa brand has become a unique product that has accompanied families for many generations. Colacao is positioned in the minds of consumers through an unmistakable flavor and as a unique cocoa product, without any chemical treatment, and free of additives, that provides energy, nutrition, and is one of the favorite foods of children.

The sales pitch (Reeves, 1997) of Colacao is a rational value where physical energy, understood as a food supplement resulting from the mixture of sugar, soluble cocoa powder, wheat flour, and cola-malt, and emotional, a philosophy of life, in which those who consume it, receive besides the immediate reward as ephemeral pleasure, an attitude, a way of being of those who fight to achieve their goals.

The way of communicating and the perception of the Colacao brand have evolved and its target has also expanded. Its main target is the tweens, but the brand continues to speak to those responsible for the health and nutrition of the family. Furthermore, energy, pleasure, health, and "everything is possible" stand out as attributes of the brand. This last emotional value invites you to stop thinking about limits and start thinking about pleasure and enjoyment. To achieve its objective, there is a change in the way the message is disseminated. The brand opts for online communication and the use of social networks such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. Through more direct messages than in traditional media, it carries out more enveloping campaigns in which it interacts with the recipient and develops direct communication actions through shared messages, participation in giveaways, promotions, gifts, among others.

For its part, just two years after the launch of the Colacao brand, the first Nesquik cocoa was born, under the Quik brand. This food product composed of cocoa, sugar, cinnamon, soy, and salt, became the direct competitor of a so-far exclusive brand. In its positioning, a significant change in the communication strategy is observed, motivated by the entry into the commercialization of the product through Nestlé. The brand's strategy is based on the introduction of Quicky, a fun mascot that reinforces its brand value with the benchmark of instantaneity and aimed at children (Ponce-Blandón, 2017) with phrases such as “We want everything, we don't want to wait” until something more direct like “And you, are you one of us?”, although, at present, its message is directed again to their mothers.

All these aspects will be evaluated in the content analysis of the selected advertisements of both brands.

**2. OBJECTIVES**

The study aims to analyze the communication strategy developed by established brands in the non-alcoholic beverages sector.

The objective of the semiotic analysis of the advertising message is to identify the use of the communication codes of the competing brands. The brand's own communication and that of its direct competitor have been examined, adapted to the trends of society.

An analysis of the brand’s communication and its symbolic value for the consumer has been carried out. Brands become an object of desire for their consumer.

The observation is made on the three levels of analysis: axiological, narrative, and discursive, with a methodology measured in time and specific content in traditional media and adapted to an online broadcast platform.

To determine the effectiveness of the communication of the Colacao and Nesquik brands, communication has been analyzed at a deep level from the values that go beyond the changes in society imposed by fashions or market trends, which establish the symbolic value of their message.

On the other hand, from a narrative point of view, the form of their stories has been taken into account. From this, its essential values are shown, showing the qualities of the product in everyday situations.

Finally, the discursive level has allowed brands to associate the satisfaction of their arguments with the needs of the consumer.

**3. METHODOLOGY**

The research has applied a qualitative methodology in which the recovery and analysis of advertising pieces have been used. The content analysis model through the analysis sheet has made it possible to know the main values associated with audiovisual messages, the arguments or benefits, and the situations that contextualize the stories, allowing the messages of the analyzed ads to be placed.

Furthermore, to consider the image of both brands, a qualitative methodology based on observation (Bravo, 2007) has been applied to determine the possible messages, benefits, reasons, and attributes that build the existing messages in the face of the researched object.

For this, a self-made table has been made based on the content analysis model and taking as a reference the analysis sheet proposed by the Professor of Educational Technology of the Autonomous University of Barcelona Pere Marquès (Graells, 2000).

This model has been used to analyze the advertising message from the structures, procedures of transmission of meanings, and relations with its context. Moreover, with the content analysis model, different encoding protocols have been created, dispersing the messages and observing them from the issuer's codes.

To identify the advertising message, attention has been paid to the level of identity that allows its identification, the denotative plane in which the linguistic, iconic, and/or visual elements are studied through the descriptive analysis of the message and the connotation in which the receiver can have his own deductions, from the decoding of the messages, which make up the denotative level of the advertisement (Villafane, 2003).

Mainly, what interests this study is to decompose the advertisement into the minimum units applying advertising codes (Gómez, 2001) such as the chromatic, typographic, compositional, and photographic one, among others, and that allow deciphering the individual meaning to interpret the main idea.

**3.1. Sample description**

In the analysis, various audiovisual pieces by Colacao and Nesquik aimed at a young audience, aged between seven and twelve years old, have been selected. With the obtained results, a cross-sectional analysis was carried out for the observation.

The criteria that have determined the selection are the temporality of the brand and its relationship with the competitor, the form of the message, the target audience to which its communication is directed, and the memory. Seven pieces from Colacao have been analyzed, ranging from the sixties to 2015, and six from Nesquik that go from the eighties to 2016. All are published on social networks. The pieces rejected in the analyzed period were those that the message was far from the objective of reinforcing the brand immersed in comparative advertising.

The study shows three items as the main criteria that reflect significant and verifiable results regarding the object of study. They are the benefit, justification, and attributes directly related to the message. The results are treated in an audiovisual analysis template reflecting the contextual analysis, coding, and interpretive level.

**4. RESULTS**

The process of comparative analysis of the Colacao and Nesquik brands is based on the objective description of the fundamental characteristics presented by the pieces of each one of them; Data have been collected such as the year, the benefit for the advertiser and the consumer, the justification of the reason why they would choose the product, and the attributes understood as the differential value of the brand and its positioning.

From the collection of information, a cross-sectional analysis has been carried out, interpreting the results and giving meaning to each value.

**4.1. Colacao análisis**

***Table 1.*** *Cross-sectional analysis of**Colacao*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CODE** | **YEAR** | **BENEFIT** | **REASON** | **ATTRIBUTES** |
| Review  Those times of Colacao | 1960 | Complete food. Breakfast and snack | Ideal for athletes and food that refreshes | Pleasure. Complete food. Delicious taste. Youth food. Proteins, vitamins. Taste. Promotions/famous people. |
| Nadal | 2007 | Colacao Champion | Food of their future | Happiness of a mother, joy, love |
| Yahel | 2010 | Happiness | Make dreams come true.  Roll the wave | Freedom, love, fantasy, dreams |
| Yaidel | 2013 | Fun | Colacao gives you the possibility to go, energy | Fun, leisure, joy, emotional regressive |
| I like it lumpy | 2014 | You are the only one | I do it by myself | Independence, friendship, fun |
| Daniel Stix | 2014 | Sportsmanship | Thinking about enjoying, not thinking about limits, energy to enjoy | Risk, friendship, happiness, energy |

**Source:** Self-made.

In the first place, the analysis of the Colacao brand’s pieces has been done. The object of study is communication and the sample of seven selected audiovisual pieces from the 1960s to 2014.

The slogan used in the first pieces is "Complete food, breakfast, and snack". Regarding the used formats, genres, and styles, the cartoons combined with the use of the real image stand out. The same happens with the arguments in which rational and emotional messages are mixed. All the pieces coincide in the way the character is treated. All refer to certain arguments in which the main actor shares a leading role with the product.

For its part, even in the pieces with animated-image formats, the benefit is the solution to communication problems, such as food, vitality, fun, and even happiness.

The real characters are of different gender (male and female) with a minimum age of four years, white among which they do not share physical features such as the color of their hair, while they do share intangible values such as joy and vitality.

The stories in the ads, present situations with a predictably unhappy ending, but which, thanks to the product, their lives, and their perception, radically change.

In its making, the general shots in which all the characters and their environment are included predominate. It is not necessary to use generals to understand the context, it is enough with the sender, receiver, and medium, to understand the message. The endings are marked by a traditional style typical of the time, in which the close-ups of the product and the packshot predominate.

Regarding the special effects, background music is perceived that accompanies the story and that does not detract from the other elements.

At an interpretive level, it is observed that the Colacao brand’s advertisements are pieces associated with the pleasure value, which is not associated with the delicious taste of the drink but is a food of youth, full of life, which, on a rational level, is endowed with proteins, vitamins, etc. with a special flavor.

Among the actors and prescribers of the pieces, there are certain popular characters of the moment such as Jesulín de Ubrique, but mainly anonymous subjects, and mostly minors, are used.

***Table 2.*** *Content analysis of Colacao ads*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **AD** | **DESCRIPTION** | **SLOGAN** | **TARGET AUDIENCES** |
| 1. The authentic Colacao | The authentic Colacao. A black African boy sings about the qualities of Colacao. With a very famous jingle, Colacao presents the product for football players, cyclists, boxers. They claim that Children who take Colacao get stronger and happier. Furthermore, the brand addresses mothers who take care of children, asking them to explain to their children how a Colacao is prepared. | food for the young | Mothers |
| 2. Feed the future | The mother is presented as an observing witness of the success that her children can achieve. Mothers are invited to help their children be happy by rewarding them with a message based on the idea that the best reward for a mother is to see her children happy. In the ad, the mother says "If my son wins, I win too." | Feed their future | Mothers |
| 3. Feed your dreams | In this ad, the mother no longer appears. For the first time, the father figure appears. The father talking to the boy. In this ad, the child becomes the protagonist. The child walks alone on the beach, claims his independence, and, despite understanding that he is small, he recognizes that he can do great things by himself, saying I am small, but I can do great things! | As you like | Children |
| 4. Fun | Parents do not appear in this ad. Yaidel says: My father says I am too young. But I am not to do things by myself. I will achieve success by myself. | If you want there will be no barriers | The child is the protagonist, there are no parents, and the child even replies to what his parents say. |
| 5. The only one | They sing: “Colacao is the only one. I like it lumpy. I like it with a teaspoon. Mom, don't change it. Mom, my Colacao is the only one. Children tell parents what they want and they don't want their Colacao changed. | Colacao is the only one | The child |
| 6. Unlimited | The child and his friends. Friends talk to children and there are no parents. They say there are no limits. All they want is to have fun | The energy to have fun | The child |
| 7. Now | With the Batiminion you can prepare your own Colacao. The children, and not the mother as in the old days, explain how a good glass of Colacao is prepared. | The energy to have fun | The child |

**Source:** Self-made.

**4.2. Nesquik analysis**

***Table 3.*** *Cross-sectional analysis of Nesquik*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CODE/AD** | **YEAR** | **BENEFIT** | **REASON** | **ATTRIBUTES** |
| Make the good better every day | 1988 | Joy, make the good better every day | Energy to make the things in your life better | With all the flavor of Nestlé chocolate |
| Nesquik, all the flavor of Nestlé chocolate | 1994 | Fun, culture | Taste, play, learn through fun | Discover a fantasy world through Nestlé flavor |
| Be smart and change to Nesquik | 2005 | Intelligence, daring | Energy | The energy that has no limits while still being a child |
| Give it a rhythm | 2009 | Rhythm, magic, cool, and fun | Mysteries to solve, songs to compose, things to choose, etc. and all to the Nesquik rhythm | Instant with rhythm to fix |
| And you are one of us. Quick Generation | 2012 | Fun | Energy, vitality | Fun making dreams come true. Sense of belonging |
| Wake them up to a world of possibilities with Nesquik | 2016 | Everything is possible, the spark, open door to dreams | Energy with the new Opti-Start as a complement | Vitamins, minerals, doses of everything is possible |

**Source:** Self-made.

The following analysis corresponds to the Nesquik brand. For this, six ads from the eighties to 2015 have been collected. The reason why the selected ads begin and end a decade later is that the brand is introduced to the market later and its branded content, as well as Colacao's direct competition positioning, is not immediate.

The slogan with which it is positioned in the market is "make the good better every day." It uses cartoon and real-image format, reported with a narrator character who is a mascot named Quik.

In all the ads, the character who leads the brand speaks of a fast rabbit, which represents the instantaneity of the brand, the vital energy that transforms.

Compared to Colacao’s advertisements, Nesquik presents a positive message in which the product helps to ensure that "what goes well can go even better." The product is presented as vitality, enjoyment, making it clear that it is a supplement to food and all contextualized in real-life stories. The general characteristics of the main character are real, exclusive to the brand, and is represented by the Quick rabbit.

The actors are of both genders and with similar ages to their competition. They feature characters of different ethnicities with dark brown and light hair, redheads, and dark eyes. The images have a lot of rhythm and the characters smile, they are happy, full of vitality, the music directs the characters, and the whole story revolves around Nesquik.

In the same way as the advertisements of the competition, they are all joined by the value of vitality, pleasure, and energy provided by a large glass of milk with Nesquik.

The testimonies allow you to build your universe full of fantasy and energy without limits. Their messages target those who do not yet belong, what they are missing, and what they could do.

In all the ads, general shots predominate in which all the characters and their environment are included. It is not necessary to use generals to understand the context, it is enough with the sender, receiver, and medium, to understand the message.

Music shares the limelight with the brand, providing credibility to the rhythm. A catchy message is used that reinforces the reason for being part of the Nesquik generation.

It is observed that Nesquik's audience is younger than the Colacao recipient, communicating through rational arguments and showing a variety of products that positions the brand as a healthy product suitable for children three years and older.

Through their strategy, they get a product with a strong sense of belonging. It claims its positioning from the receiver, to say who he belongs to, if he is part of the Nesquik team or wants to lose his reality. The brand conveys improvement but from an optimistic point of view, where life is already going well but it could be better. In 2016, the product is well integrated into the lives of its consumers, it manages to make the team of winners, where play and fun share space, and collaborate in their attempt to achieve that world composed of moments of happiness.

***Table 4.*** *Content analysis of Nesquik ads*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **AD** | **DESCRIPTION** | **SLOGAN** | **TARGET AUDIENCES** |
| Ad 1. Making what is good, better, every day | With joy, making what is good, better, every day is what the Nesquik children like the most. With all the flavor of Nestlé chocolate, a lot of friends manage to set up a camping tent in the middle of the field, and even though the father tries to help them, they even push him, and although the dog dismantles the tent, they are happy because they are enjoying a large glass of the best Nestlé chocolate, a Nesquik. | Joy, making what is good better every day | Children and teenagers |
| Ad 2. Nesquik, all the flavor of Nestlé chocolate | Through Quik, the Nesquik constellation is introduced. In a treehouse, Quik with his friends talks about the Nestlé product and presents the Nesquik book and packaging | Nesquik, all the flavor of Nestlé chocolate | Children and teenagers |
| Ad 3. Be smart and change to Nesquik | Between real and animated images by Quik, it presents an adventure to find Nesquik before the stores close. After the success, enjoy a glass of Nesquik. | Be smart and change to Nesquik | Children |
| Ad 4. Add rhythm | In the middle of a garage, friends gathered playing music, they propose through an accelerated song that we add rhythm, wit, laughter, art, head, magic, add Nesquik to turn the routine around | Add rhythm, add Nesquik | Children and teenagers |
| Ad 5.  And you are one of us: quick generation | In the new ad, through very catchy music, the product speaks of a generation that wants the best and cannot wait, doing a thousand things at once, highlighting that there are many and will be more and more each time, the generation that wants to have fun and is unstoppable. | You are one of us | Preteen children |
| Ad 6. Wake them up to a world of possibilities with Nesquik | A voiceover tells the mother that if the day starts with that dose of everything is possible, it will help her children to awaken a world of possibilities. | Wake them up to a world of possibilities with Nesquik | Mothers |

**Source:** Self-made.

**5. DISCUSSION**

The communication of the Colacao brand in its beginnings had the objective of connecting with a target audience of mothers responsible for the family. It was based on messages designed to show the benefits of the product, clearly didactic; in its advertisements, it taught how to prepare it and emphasized its speech on the concern for the health and well-being of the children.

From 2010 there is a moment of transition. A change is detected in the recipient of its communication. Colacao changes its main audience and brings its message closer to the pre-teen, to the child who knows even better than his mother what he wants. The child is independent and, with full confidence in the energy that a glass of Colacao gives him, he knows well that with effort and with the help of a Colacao, he will be able to achieve his goals.

Nesquik displays a different communication strategy than its competitor. From the beginning, it began to communicate with children (Shor, 2006) and a few years later, it began to direct its message to mothers. Nesquik guides its new target on how they can help their children, it even creates the Quick channel on YouTube, in which Quick's pieces of advice appear, QuickMamis with messages such as "Wake them up to a world of possibilities with Nesquik" or phrases such as: Did you know that a glass of milk with Nesquik is more than just a simple breakfast? Because starting the day right, a child can go where he wants! Color their dreams.

During all these years, the product has remained in the market positioned as one of the brands preferred by children and their mothers. The instantaneity of a product soluble in different environments is installed as a differential value.

The brand has been able to adapt to the needs of consumers, regarding design and product varieties. Nesquik is the only one of these products that contain cereals, making it a product suitable for children over three years of age. It is even positioned as a complimentary drink that can even help you fall asleep. Furthermore, cocoa composed of chamomile, linden, and lemon balm is presented, and the variety of flavors among which is cocoa with strawberry or banana flavor.

After the analysis, an opportunity has been detected to research the association of the concept of spontaneous energy with certain brands with a large presence in the market. Moreover, the monitoring and analysis of the brand's chocolate milk strategy could be deepened, besides the communicative actions derived from the change in axis, different concept and message, perhaps justified by the change in communication objectives and the need for experiences and interaction with the public. But above all, the need to promote awareness of lifestyles and values that connect with the behavior towards brands is perceived.

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