

# UNIT 12

## READING

# The Wrong Stuff

Look at the picture and the first sentence of the article. Why is market research important to companies that want to sell their products internationally?

If a business wants to sell its product internationally, it had better do some market research first. This is a lesson that some large American corporations have learned the hard way.

### What's in a name?

Sometimes the problem is the name. When General Motors introduced its Chevy Nova into Latin America, it overlooked the fact that *No va* in Spanish means "It doesn't go." Sure enough, the Chevy Nova never went anywhere in Latin America.

### Translation problems

Sometimes it's the slogan that doesn't work. No company knows this better than Pepsi-Cola, with its "Come alive with Pepsi!" campaign. The campaign was so successful in the United States that Pepsi translated its slogan literally for its international campaign. As it turned out,

the translations weren't quite right. Pepsi was pleading with Germans to "Come out of the grave" and telling the Chinese that "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave."

### A picture's worth a thousand words

Other times, the problem involves packaging. A picture of a smiling, round-cheeked baby has helped sell countless jars of Gerber baby food. So when Gerber marketed its products in Africa, it kept the picture on the jar. What Gerber didn't realize was that in many African countries, the picture on the jar shows what the jar has in it.

### Twist of fate

Even cultural factors can be involved. The cosmetics company Revlon

made a costly mistake when they launched a new perfume in Brazil. The perfume smelled like Camellia flowers. It overlooked the fact that Camellia flowers are associated with funerals in Brazil. Unsurprisingly, the perfume failed. The entire Revlon brand suffered as many felt the company disrespected the culture.



**A** Read the article. Then for each statement, check (✓) True, False, or Not given.

	True	False	Not given
1. General Motors did a lot of research before naming the Chevy Nova.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The "Come alive with Pepsi!" campaign worked well in the U.S.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Pepsi still sold well in Germany and China.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Gerber changed its packaging after the problem in Africa.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The problem for Revlon was the name "Camellia."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Revlon no longer sells cosmetics in Brazil.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B** Look at the marketing problems below. In each situation, was the problem related to the product's name (N) or slogan (S)?

- ..... 1. The Ford Fiera didn't sell well in Spain, where *fiera* means "ugly old woman."  
 ..... 2. Braniff Airline's "Fly in leather" campaign was meant to promote its comfortable new seats. In Spanish, the company was telling passengers to "Fly with no clothes on."