

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 products 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?

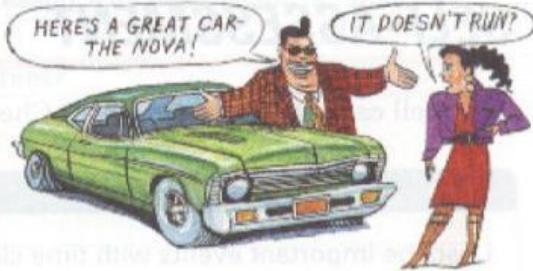
Sometimes the problem is the name. When General Motors introduced its Chevy Nova into Latin America, it overlooked the fact that *Nova* in Spanish means "It doesn't go." Sure enough, the Chevy Nova never went anywhere in Latin America.

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, 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 and religious factors – and pure coincidence – can be involved. Thom McAn shoes have a Thom McAn "signature" inside. To people in Bangladesh, this signature looked like Arabic script for the word Allah. In that country, feet are considered unclean, and Muslims felt the company was insulting God's name by having people walk on it.

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

	True	False	Not given
1. General Motors did extensive research before introducing the Chevy Nova.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The "Come alive with Pepsi!" campaign worked well in the United States.	<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. Thom McAn used the Arabic script for the word Allah in their shoes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The problem for Thom McAn was the company's name.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B Look at the marketing problems below. In each situation, was the problem the result of name (N) or translation (T)?

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

C **Group work** Think of two products from your country: one that would sell well around the world, and one that might not sell as well. Why would one sell well, but not the other? What changes could help the second product sell better?