

The Evolution Of Romanian Advertising Agencies Seen By Professional

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Abstract: This paper aims to present the opinions of Romanian advertisers on the local industry from two viewpoints: the evolution of advertising after 1990 with regards to brand development, and the attempt of advertising agencies to balance change and stability during the economic crisis. Regarding the first aspect, the study emphasizes the way the Romanian market has developed in terms of local and global brands, revealing the most successful brands and campaigns delivered by the local industry and the significance of local brands to advertising professionals. On the ex-communist and new-democratic background, this paper seeks to reveal the way the Romanian identity has been conveyed in advertising in the last 20 years, based on professionals' experience. In this respect, this article focuses on Romanian brands history after 1990, considering that local economy and capitalism changed consumers' mentality and needs. It was a time of transition, but the best moment for developing old brands and branding local products, whose image did not even exist before. In terms of strategy, this research shows great interest for this process of surviving and saving domestic brands, not only by adjusting their values to the new-democratic world. The evolution of Romanian advertising is also deeply connected to its identity on the European market, especially to being recognized as a re-born industry after the Communist Era. Regarding the second issue of the present research, the study attempts to uncover whether the internal organization of advertising agencies progressively changed in order to more effectively cater to client needs.

Key words: advertising agency, consumer, communism, democracy, identity

1. Introduction

The evolution of Romanian advertising is also deeply connected to its identity on the European market, especially to being recognized as a re-born industry after the Communist Era. From another viewpoint, the present study attempts to reveal whether the departmental organization of advertising agencies visibly changed in order to more effectively meet clients' demands. We will analyze the extent to which market mobility and communication tools influence the factors involved in creating each campaign, i.e., clients, agencies, advertisers, brands, and products. Therefore, working in an advertising agency involves having a different perspective on brands and consumers compared to the external, non-professional one.

Analyzing both perspectives of this study, which deals with the internal development and the integration into the European family of consumers, on the one hand, and advertising agency evolution, on the other, this paper intends to reveal the way the gap between communism and democracy was recovered in only 24 years. We really believe that the Romanian advertising passed through similar stages as other East-European countries, given not only the common historical and political background, but also the synchronization of market changes. Additionally, most global brands still develop similar creative strategies, their campaigns being only adapted to the market, and this process of localization has just started for the past few years, along with the economic crisis, relying on professionals' maturity and consumers' demands.

The main questions in this study refer to the evolution of the Romanian advertising in Europe after 1990 as reflected both by brands

and by the professionals' perspective on their advertising agencies. In the first part of this study, the findings present the way Romania expresses its identity at European level through promoting local aspects and reviving old-surviving brands after 1990, all this information being described from the professionals' viewpoint. Furthermore, the concept of "local brand" is very important, considering that many local brands were managed or even bought by international companies. This is why it became more and more difficult to distinguish between local and global brands, especially at the moment when commercials' localization was replaced by standardized campaigns. The second part of this paper illustrates the organization of Romanian advertising agency and the relationships within it, in order to better explain the differences between European and local industry that could justify the heterogeneity or homogeneity of this type of work, despite the country's historical and political background. We chose to analyze both perspectives, the global one, regarding brands development in Europe and the local one, regarding work specificity within an agency, to highlight the professionals' awareness of their, otherwise, complex activity. In that respect, advertisers' view on Romanian campaigns includes the entire process of identifying a very good strategy to meet client's demand, on the one hand, and to be appreciated at the European level for their creative spirit, on the other.

2. Literature review on professional communication in the advertising industry

Brands always put the power of their message into the hands of people working in

advertising agencies based on their professionalism in communicating persuasively. Obviously, clients know what they want, and selling is the main purpose, but they do not have the ability to properly appeal to customers, especially because they do not make the right connection between the product/service and buyers' wishes. According to Percy, "advertising 'works' when the desired communication effect is achieved and this must always include creating brand awareness and a positive brand attitude".¹

As for professionalism in communication, many voices raised the problem of its quality, given that the clients do not only have specific requests, but also clear-cut budget, which imposes the directions on advertisers. Besides, it is almost impossible to control the success of their work, except for marketing results, and, sometimes, campaigns awarded at international advertising competitions or festivals. The conclusion, which arose from other scientific studies (Slater, 1989; Alvesson, 1994), points out the difficulty to assess the level of qualification in this field of communication. Therefore, according to Alvesson "advertising professionals often have difficulties in convincing customers about their 'know-how'".²

Each industry regardless of the country or cultural issues depends on what Wilson and Amine (2009) called RBV

(resource-based-view)³, which refers to three categories of capital, acquired and developed over time. These categories are the human, physical and organizational capital, each of them with a specific role in sustaining performance in terms of profitability, communication success, and market share. The human and organizational capitals are extremely important in terms of communication within an advertising agency. Certainly, the talent of individual employees and their marketing skills raise always the good name and standards of a profitable agency. In keeping with this view, agencies have been perceived for years as a nest for creativity, responsible for any campaign success, whereas nowadays, strategic analysis became more important. The same perspective was encouraged by Moriarty et al. by characterizing the involvement of an agency in the entire process of a well-conducted campaign in terms of creativity: "Ad agencies are hubs of creativity, buzzing with deadlines, excitement, new media, and new creative ideas".⁴ A deep understanding of local market conditions and history help professional be more specific and creative. Similarly, the organizational capital defines nothing more than an agency's personnel structure, undergoing outstanding changes, at least when it comes to global or local companies. The way people from different departments work together was called "chemistry", given that they invest their

¹ Percy, L. and R. H. Rosenbaum-Elliott, *Strategic Advertising Management*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, p.3.

² Alvesson, M., *Management of Knowledge-Intensive Companies*, Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1994, p. 543.

³ Wilson, R. and L. S. Amine, "Resource Endowments, Market Positioning, and Competition in Transitional Economies. Global and Local Advertising Agencies in Hungary", *International Marketing Review*, vol. 26, issue 1, 2009, p.65.

⁴ Moriarty, S., Mitchell, N. and Wells, W., *Advertising Principles & Practice*. 8th edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2009, p.348.

personal resources in reliability and quality work, as Waller states (2004).

Even if advertising agencies are based on professionals' competence and personal skills and talents, the context of their work has a strong impact on their success, and it is this, which makes the very difference from a society to another one. Alvesson calls this context *habitus*⁵ and creates a profile of the best advertising professional, mostly defined by freedom, style, good taste, and sensitivity. In our opinion, this *habitus* represents the level of advertising development in a country, the advertisers' experience, political and economical background, everything that could explain specific creative directions or strategies in an industry. In this respect, localized campaigns speak for themselves and convey brand message in a very particular way, according to consumers' mentality and expectations. Therefore, nowadays even global brands are concerned to be properly perceived by local consumers, whose experience and backdrop request familiar appeal. According to Mazarella "the global is constructed locally just as much as the local is constructed globally."⁶ Furthermore, a brand cannot identically transmit a "big idea", ignoring the cultural background, especially when it comes to Europe, where pan-continental campaigns are less successful, due to the countries' diversity that "makes it difficult

for the same message to remain efficient."⁷ Consequently, creativity broadly nourishes from developing ancient myths, fairy-tales, legends or historical scenes in order to give authenticity to each advertisement and to respect national identity.

Politics and history could be easy included in this *habitus*, as long as consumers are very attached to them or, on the contrary, detached from the past. In comparison with other European and post-Communist countries, Romania has rejected its national heritage in the last two decades and, yet, recently recovering its culture and tradition. As a result, the industry focused on building a false European identity, whose goal was to develop another choice of aspiring to globalization, instead of localization. Advertising was in the position to take the risk of denying national identity for the sake of consumerism. Kaneva and Popescu state in their study that Bulgaria and Romania lived almost the same experience in terms of associating the economic profit with a particular aspiration to capitalism, as commercials conveyed in a very standardized and artificial way: "What distinguishes the branding efforts of Romania, Bulgaria and other post-Communist nations from those of other countries, is the presence of an ontological aspiration beyond the profit motive."⁸ Therefore, the Romanian advertising can be divided into three categories after anti-Communist Revolution: the

⁵ Alvesson, M., *Management of Knowledge-Intensive Companies*, Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1994, p. 544.

⁶ Mazarella, W., *Shoveling Smoke*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2003, p.17.

⁷ Chalaby, J.K., "Advertising in the Global Age: Transnational Campaigns and pan-European Television Channels", *Global Media and Communications*, vol. 4, issue 2, 2008, p.148.

⁸ Kaneva, N., D. Popescu, "Nation Brand Identity Lite. Nation Branding in post-Communist Romania and Bulgaria", *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 14, issue 2, 2011, p. 195.

first one promoted very standardized campaigns till 2002, the second one recovered the traditional image from 2002 to 2009, and the last one has been using the Communism and national pride as a sign of identity. In 2010, Rom chocolate⁹ won the Golden Prix at Cannes International Festival of Creativity and this was the time of national redefinition, as Baker (2008) and Volcic (2008) noticed. In other words, Romania apparently gave up its ideological past identity, at the same time, trying to make the connection with the European one, which represented its aspirational world. Without completely supporting Verdery's opinion, who believed that it was "perpetuated a Romanian national ideology within an order claiming to be socialist"¹⁰, we have to admit that advertising preserved and developed several ideological aspects in commercials, by using parody, funny characters and local humour. On the one hand, this strategy aims to revive old-surviving brands and appealing to middle-aged consumers' experience; on the other, it helps Romanians accept their past and legitimates them in Europe.

As for advertising development in a particular national space, we strongly believe that the balance between social and professional background of people working in an agency exercises a strong influence on their success, to the same extent as the economic evolution of a country amplifies a campaign. Flexibility and team-collaboration vary from a national context to another one, and,

definitely, we may assert that there are different advertising cultures built up within national agencies. To get a picture of what this means, McLeod et al. conveys a few observations inspired by British advertising culture: "Finally, diversity-or the lack of it-within advertising agencies is likely to affect agency-client relationships and agency-consumer communications, but such issues have yet to be explored."¹¹

3. Methodology and research questions

The research method is a semi-structured interview applied to 15 professionals from prestigious advertising agencies, both global and local, having various responsibilities in a campaign. The interview questions were aimed at discovering Romanian advertising evolution in post-Communist Era, expressing its identity in Europe, finding proper definitions of the local brand, and understanding transformations requested in agencies to meet new demands. Professionals provided useful information during face-to-face interviews and data were collected between 2012 and 2013. Although interviews were semi-structured and focused on many items, several aspects stand out and deserve to be discussed extensively in this paper.

The 15 interviewees work in the biggest advertising agencies in Bucharest as agency directors, account managers, senior account managers, client services directors, account planners, head of planning department, copywriters, communication directors, creative directors, and Integrated Communication Director. One

⁹ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tt9NBtW4s-bA>, consulted on 1st February, 2013, 11.38.p.m.

¹⁰ Verdery, K., *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991, p.3.

¹¹ McLeod, C., S. O'Donohoe and B. Townley, "The Elephant in the Room? Class and Creative Careers in British Advertising Agencies", *Human Relations*, vol.62, issue 7, June 2009, p.1036.

of the respondents is the Executive Director of IAA Romania (International Advertising Association), with a comprehensive view on the entire advertising activity of the country. They belong to agencies such as: Leo Burnett, Graffiti BBDO, McCann Erickson, Arsenoie & Mătășel, Loco Branding and Communication, Tempo Advertising, Propaganda, D&D Research, Draft FCB Romania. Respondents' names are not revealed because they are well-known in this highly dynamic industry and some information is related to clients and, therefore, confidential. The most important aspect is that all respondents have been working in campaigns for local brands, attempting to make them successful. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Each transcript was analyzed using content analysis and an iterative, part-to-whole reading strategy.

The first part of our research focused on professionals' view on Romanian advertising development based on its history and identity at the European level. The questions deal with analyzing campaigns history of both types of Romanian brands: the ones surviving the Communist Era, as well as the new-born ones, which have recently built their history through interesting approaches. As for the second part of this study, interviewees offered substantial information about the way advertising agency underwent transformations in Romania, regarding organization and communication strategy. At the same time, agencies tried to adapt to local consumers who became European citizens, and, yet, more aware of their national pride. At the end of collecting both categories of results, we aim at comparing them in order to understand how specific Romanian advertising

agencies communicate from the professionals' view. Therefore, we will strive for answering two essential research questions to reach some conclusions of this paper:

- Does the backdrop of Romanian advertising influence the identity of local industry, in professionals' view?
- Does the structure of advertising agency justify the level of professionalism in Romanian industry?

4. Findings

4.1. Development of Romanian advertising after Communism Era

Analyzing professionals' perspective on the way Romanian advertising revived and developed after 1990, this paper is very interested in communicating local values, finding the national identity in European context and establishing a relationship between global and domestic brands. Advertisers described in interviews how brands communicate on a traditional market, by adjusting their message to a very inexperienced target. Therefore, this section of our research displays the qualitative analysis of the answers to the next questions, individually applied to our respondents.

How is the Romanian specificity conveyed in advertising?

The answers to this question were various and all of them were based on well-known campaigns and experience in advertising field. Respondents organized their opinions with regards to local context of campaign, industry evolution and, also, by comparing the global ads with the domestic ones. Consequently, we can display findings of this topic in the next chart:

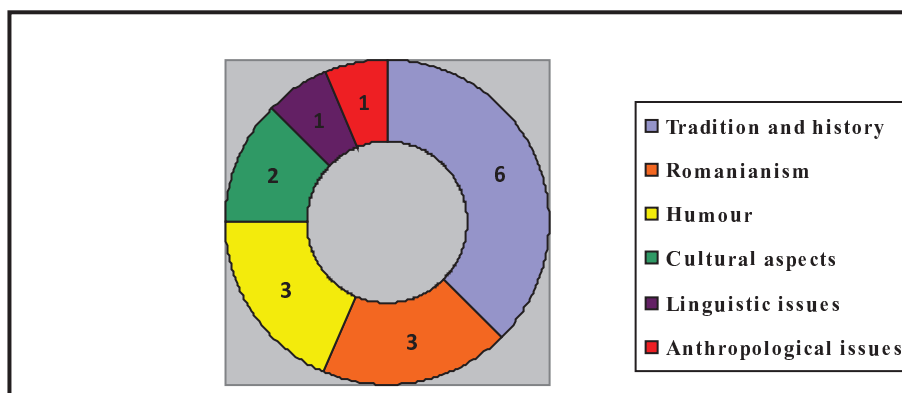


Fig.1. Specific aspects of Romanian advertising

The numbers specified within the chart above indicate how many advertising professionals underline one of the topics developed by Romanian commercials to better appeal to the local target. There is no wonder that interviewees identified tradition, past and history as the main strategic direction to highlight the specific features of the local advertising. Definitely, old brands rely on their past, while new brands use traditional image to come closer to day-to-day customs (i.e. bakery, dairy, beer, wine). Local brands cannot be aspirational yet, because they need to build their own history, whereas global brands are already successful. Humour and "Romanianism" (the national pride) are equally represented in our chart, because three respondents pointed them out individually. What is highly relevant is that they specified how important it is for the product category to have either humour or patriotism as "the big idea." For instance, humour properly corresponds to alcoholic drinks and electronics. For some reasons, both Romanianism and humour are very well connected, because topics like Communism and local rituals are described in a funny way.

Cultural references, however, do not represent a priority among the other features

of Romanian advertising, considering the small number of commercials of this type. One of the advertisers, from D&D Research considered that art and music are most representative for local consumers and can be easily related to mobile phone brands, wines, banks and chocolate. Sometimes, aspirational brands, which are global brands, localized their campaign by means of cultural issues.

As for the last two aspects, linguistic and anthropological issues, interviewees believe that they justified through the language richness and features of popular culture, referring to proverbs and local expressions. Legends and stories deserve more attention on the anthropological level, as long as they reveal the mythological roots of Romanian culture. This aspect could be often associated with tradition and religious behavior, especially around Christmas and Eastern.

Finally, respondents briefly summarize all commercial creative directions, based on the advertising evolution after 1990, and referring both to their personal activity, but to the market influences as well.

Do the Romanian brands create a history after 1990 based on their campaigns?

To our surprise, all respondents positively answered this question and differently motivated their answers, relying on their experience in advertising over the years. Certainly, they found various reasons to justify their choice and understood the concept of brand history with regards to the communication tools and the relationship between brand, consumer and market. Based on discussions around this topic, we came to the conclusion that brands built their history observing some criteria as follows: product category, communication channels, positioning and survival on the market. As for the first aspect, 3 of 15 advertisers mentioned how relevant products are to keep on consistently conveying the message, because, for instance, some consumers are very interested in alcoholic drinks (specifically beer, i.e. Timișoreana, Bergenbier). Campaigns are quite intense and frequent on the market, and, as long as products are often associated with events, consumers are engaged in. Bergenbier offers the best example in this case by creating Man's Day and Organization of Romanian Men, which yearly initiates celebrations and special experiential marketing. Communication channel represents another issue that could help build a brand history, as long as it is interested in diversifying the message for a better appeal to customers. Choosing a good slogan and preserving the same positioning and strategy historically individualize brands during their campaigns. In this way, brands coherently communicate and do not have to change the strategy from one campaign to another, even if market could change.

Last but not least, Romanian brands succeeded to create their post-Communist history in advertising while relying on their power to survive on the market and defend their image over the years. We face with two kinds of brands: the old and still surviving ones and the new-born local brands. In the first case, brands like Napolact, Eugenia, Dero, Murfatlar, Timișoreana, Rom, Romtelecom survived, first by referring to their past and history (that give them credibility) or, second, under the umbrella of international brands (that gives them authority). For new brands, the situation is a bit different, because they did not have enough time to build their own history or were directly overtaken by the global ones.

Which way did the local surviving brands develop after 1990?

This aspect keeps debating the former problem on the surviving brands, but it refers to the ways they saved them against global or new-born brands, in terms of finding solution to recover or preserve their identity. Almost all respondents, except for one, really believe in an evolution of local brands after 1990 when international ones practically invaded the market and consumers were very excited about them after so many years of prohibition. Organizing the respondents' answers, we conclude that local surviving brands used different strategies to stay on the market. Thus, four respondents stated that completely reinventing the brand, which means sometimes rebranding it, saved its image. The best example belongs to the Rom chocolate, which few years ago was just a chocolate with rum, with no special name. After the 1989 Revolution, the main ingredient

became the very name of the product, which so did not give up its heritage, by using old Communist memories in campaigns. In terms of communication, 6 respondents confirmed the fact that professionalism and consumers' modernization determined positive brands' evolution. Clients invest lots of money in communication, being very much preoccupied by consumer's needs and transformations. Therefore, some brands adjusted their message to a young target, and, sometimes, needed to change even the product to improve it, or, at least to work on packaging, as was the case of Eugenia sandwich-biscuits, a very old and traditional brand. Eugenia's message conveys an idea connecting the past with the present: Eugenia: sweet yesterday, delicious today. Three respondents were firmly convinced that foreign influences and multinational authority cause the development of local surviving brands, and they rely on the fact that they were rapidly overtaken and received a proper budget to invest in their communication.

One of the professionals persuasively stated that the most important thing is not only the product improvement, but the change of thinking from a producer mentality to a business one. This means giving up any connection with the past and giving the brand a new life.

What is a local brand according to Romanian advertisers?

Regarding this question, the professionals debated around defining the context in which a brand could locally manifest or communicate, as long as its history and connections with consumers are very strong. Therefore, they admitted that, often, some

brands generate confusion in consumers' mind due to their names or message. Interviews started by clarifying the concept of "local brand" from a professional perspective, as many campaigns erroneously display global sub-brands especially created for this market as genuinely Romanian. In the following lines, we summarize their perspectives on the concept, organized on three levels:

- Local brands are those which were born in Romania and built a history here. Meanwhile, they only communicate within the country's boundaries. Old and new brands alike belong to this category; however, they usually have a Romanian name and are strongly connected to national events or develop the idea of "Romanianism". For instance, one interviewee explained that premium beers such as Timișoreana (bearing the name of a very well-known Transylvanian city), Ursus (related to the biggest wild animal, i.e. the bear, called "urs" in Romanian language), and Bucegi (bearing the name of the highest mountains chains) convey patriotism and a feeling of belongingness to Romanian consumers. Nevertheless, most respondents agreed that local brands should not only have Romanian names, but be strategically positioned according to authenticity and time endurance.

- The second approach refers to production place and local technical support. Brands become "locally provided" if they are produced in a certain national space, even if they are later exported worldwide. Most renowned brands share this characteristic, as most were originally local (such as Coca-Cola) and only later became global. Murfatlar wine and Dacia cars have already crossed the borders, being regionalized and globalized, but merely extended the market as did other

local brands. What is more important is that they did not have to give up their roots.

- The last perspective belongs to only one advertiser, who considers that the concept of “brand” relies on properly appealing to the audience. In his opinion, a local brand is one required by Romanians’ market needs, which involves developing a communication platform according to consumer insight.

All former answers help us reach a simple conclusion that gather professionals’ ideas into one definition: a local brand is deeply rooted into the local context, bears a name connected to the national language, and creates its own history based on cultural and traditional specificity. Besides, the relationship between global and local aspect is part of a complex equation that should unify producers, brands, companies, and consumers. Sometimes, consumers get confused when they purchase something produced in Romania for a global brand. Given its ingredients and name, they wonder whether the brand was a local or a global one. Advertising professionals raised this question as well while working on a campaign; consequently, the most effective conclusion was to distinguish between their aforementioned opinions. In terms of strategic communication, surviving old brands remind consumers of their former values, while young brands carefully build capital based on the relationship between history and contemporary landmarks. Finally, understanding the way a local brand is perceived over the years helps advertisers better convey its message and anticipate consumers’ behaviour on domestic market.

Does Romanian advertising create an identity in Europe?

Discussing the way Romanian advertising and implicitly agencies communicate on European level reveal the local identity, on the one hand, and the professionals’ view on campaigns’ quality, on the other. The majority of interviewees (10) strongly believe that Romanian advertising found its own and stable place in the European industry, while four firmly rejected this idea; one opinion supports neither.

This first category of opinions points out the relevance of getting involved in advertising competitions on European and international levels. All professionals consider that Romanian advertising is a relevant example in Eastern Europe, even more so since Cannes 2011, when the McCann-Erickson agency was awarded with

nine trophies: Integrated Gold, Titanium, Grand Prix and Gold in „Promo & Activation,” Grand Prix and Gold in „Direct,” Silver in “Media” and two Bronze Lions in “PR.” The awarded brand was the same local chocolate bearing the name Rom, whose creative strategy relies on historical heritage. We often brought this brand under discussion in the present paper, because its creative strategy reflects the way the consumers’ attitude towards Communism and patriotism was changed. To be more explicit, we identified several of respondents’ keywords on local advertising that describe the Romanian identity: “effervescent spirit,” “creativity,” “competition,” and “ambition.” Mainly, the core idea of the award-winning campaign focused again on communist memories; actually, these represent just a small part of Romanian identity, and one that does not exactly render patriotic feelings. Two of ten optimistic

respondents consider that, in fact, the popularity of Romanian advertising was possible thanks to the professionals who were highly creative and developed strategic ideas greatly appreciated on the international level.

The idea of non-identity relies on the fact that the Romanian advertising does not bring something unique, nor does it create personalized commercials, even if some of them are really spectacular. Some professionals noticed a lack of traditional perspective and, additionally, distinguished similarities between the Romanian advertising and that of other Eastern and post-communist countries.

The undecided respondent believed local advertising is still in transition, looking for its identity, which seems quite reasonable on a young democratic market. To sum up, identity in Romanian advertising can be divided in two directions: the stage before Cannes 2011 and the one after Cannes, when local advertising finally emerged from anonymity.

4.2. Departmental Communication in an Advertising Agency

As for the second part of this paper, we investigated several aspects of an advertising agency that explain the transformations, which interfered in organizing an integrated communication campaign. The questions refer to departmental organization, relationship between agency divisions, job mobility or flexibility, and relationship between strategy and creativity within a campaign. The 15 respondents answer from their own different kind of experiences in advertising field, considering they work in different positions, and some of them have even a managerial

responsibility. Basically, we tried to find out whether the agency suffered major transformations because of economic crisis.

In the following lines, this research aims to present briefly advertisers' view on this topic, by following each question:

What is the typical departmental structure in an advertising agency nowadays?

According to the majority, a full-service agency still preserves the classic structure in departments supplemented with digital and online production. The departments are client-services, strategy, creation, media, production, traffic, BTL, marketing, and digital. There is a general opinion about the idea related to a very well divided work in an agency, on the one hand, but properly connected, on the other, considering that a campaign is usually integrated, when it comes to multinational companies and brands. One single opinion considered that digital created "a real chaos" first, and then it was perceived as another channel of disseminating the message. In case of small and local agencies, their structure cannot miss departments of client-services, creation and strategy, whereas media and production are externalized. Briefly, agency structure essentially depends on its clients and communication tools. Obviously, crisis compromised both small agencies and businesses (clients), therefore some brands partially convey the brand message, by using one single media channel, or promotions, instead of an integrated campaign.

From some other viewpoints, 3 of 15 advertisers shared a different opinion about the typical structure of an advertising agency, while explaining some transformations.

The creative director from DRAFT FCB noticed a “hybridization” phenomenon even in the organization of the advertising agency aforementioned. The director stated that creation division diversified, because digital and social media have become much important lately. The Director of Integrated Communication from Graffiti BBDO sincerely admitted that “agencies have been in a perpetual and wriggling reinvention”. One of the most well-known account planners of Romania, who owns and runs his planning agency, considers that adapting to our time pressure is the best solution to survive successfully on the nowadays market. Therefore, he deeply believes that “full-service is an old-fashioned discussion”, ideas being considered more important than media and production. Additionally, the triangle strategy-copy-art stands for the best equation to develop a campaign.

How do the intradepartmental and interdepartmental relationships develop in an advertising agency in Romania?

In terms of intradepartmental relationships, there are not so many words to describe them, as long as they have the same purpose. Basically, we have two kinds of relationship: the first refers to mentorship between juniors and seniors, and, the second describes the partnership within the teams of copywriter and art director, for instance.

As for interdepartmental relationships, all respondents agreed that a team working for too long time on the same account may not have always fresh ideas or interesting approach, which is quite dangerous in a very competitive world. Therefore, most advertisers recommended changing the brands

and campaigns to avoid limiting their communication. Half of professionals admitted the importance of client-services department in the relationship with the client and in coordinating the entire campaign. The director of Loco Branding agency pointed out a very unexpected issue, the fact that there is always a traditional war between client-services and creation, because of the different language used in both departments. The Communication Director from Graffiti BBDO Romania occurred the huge transformation that happened during a campaign development: earlier creation was the king, now client-services department has the last word. The relationship and partnership between strategy and creation deserve a special attention in our study, considering all respondents brought under discussion this matter in a very subjective way. The general opinion is that strategic work can be much difficult individualized in comparison with creation, but best campaigns definitely rely on it. The Head of Planning Department of Leo Burnett agency metaphorically appreciated that the best meaning of the relationship between strategy and creation is the “fight of good against good”.

As for the interdepartmental relationships, this aspect refers to the work flexibility, to the possibility of changing the position within the same company, based on new skills and experiences accumulated in time. 9 of 15 respondents believe in possibility of migration from the client services department to account planning, but rarely from creation to strategy. For the other 6 respondents, this mobility does not seem to be the easiest way to get performance, unless advertiser is still at the beginning of its work and needs to know him/herself better.

In the light of discussions with our respondents, it is very clear that responsibilities and job specificity are better described than few years ago. By contrast with Romanian professionals' opinions, Kawashima's study on Japan advertising agencies revealed that, for example, creative people and account planners do similar work in the Asian context and could always switch direction, while asserting: "While some of these people may well be equivalent to so-called account planners, sparking the creative to find an approach or perspective to come up with the big idea, many go further and undertake the core work of creative development."

One of interviewees explains that is quite possible to migrate from one agency to another, or even between industries and clients. All in all, advertising is a very competitive field, and there are two perspectives on mobility: first it means refreshing and developing the company, second it refers to the managerial and organizational culture inside the agency.

What are the differences between online and offline agencies while working on a specific account?

According to the respondents, there are a few aspects describing this relationship, based on their experiences, age, and position in the agency as follows:

- 5 of professionals believe in a distinction between digital and traditional agency, for different reasons. From the strategic view, online focuses more on the product, than offline strategy. As for the creative work, offline channel develops products quickly and more easily. Besides, online is quite dynamic and, sometimes, the effort is really consistent depending on campaign maintenance.

- 8 advertisers do not consider online department/agency so different from offline, due to the integrated communication. The majority analyzed digital only as another media channel that supposes to obey the same rules and steps to deliver a campaign, regardless of its specificity. Therefore, each of 8 interviewees evaluates an online product as a part of the campaign-mother with the same message, but different tools to be broadcast.

- One respondent completely disagreed with the digital independence and authority on the Romanian market, because people who are very keen on online, do not usually have experience in offline and the brand needs to be understood professionally.

- One single professional was very excited about digital future development, considering Romania is still a TV market now, but it makes progresses daily, so that there are clients who invest more in online than in offline. The New Business Director of a very important and creative agency stated, however, that creativity in online develops brand capital as much as the offline. This agency "bakes a site" for Boromir company, with products (Christmas cake, pretzel, croissants). Vodafone is another important brand which trusts online campaigns a lot, considering that these accomplish the offline messages and appeal to a different kind of consumer.

To conclude, the overall opinion regarding the digital revolution points out the campaign development on another channel, which is more dynamic and accessible, involving the consumer more in brand evolution.

5. Discussions

Former debates over the Romanian agencies do not reveal a specific structure of it, but a kind of flexibility determined by the number of clients or even by its online or offline profile, on the one hand, and by global or local management, on the other. Most interviewees do not consider that digital revolution does really change the specificity of their work, but it better differentiates channels and tools. In terms of professional quality and relevance, the relationship between planner-copywriter and art director, indeed, represents the key to a successful campaign.

As for the Romanian habitus in our industry according to Alvesson's opinion, professionals are quite aware of its implications in communicating an adequate message to the nowadays target. If at the very beginning of the 90's, local advertising was very preoccupied to come closer to global perspective, in the last few years commercials have been more concerned about specificity and authenticity in order to find its own place in the European landscape. Therefore, interviewees were excited to share their impressions on local brands history, perceiving them quite relevant for our identity. This word-play yesterday-today surely encourages consumers to trust domestic products and not to ignore them. Debating on the way old-surviving brands have recently gained power revealed the background of advertisers involved in this research, as well as the level of their implication. Most of them (7 of 15) are over 33 years old and have some memories as consumers in Communism, 5 of them over 45 and can easily compare old and new Romanian market, while only 3 interviewees indirectly collected their information. This means they have a strong knowledge about local mentality

and consumers' needs, as long as the majority passed through similar experience. We can advance the idea that their professional development progressively grew up with consumer's experience. Additionally, working in this area of communication, they have the chance to deal with different challenges and understand the main strategic directions at the international levels. Almost everybody confirmed the popularity of Romanian advertising at European level thanks to successful campaigns, but two of respondents highlighted the relevance of human capital, individually appreciated. There is no doubt that bold approaches of Romanian history and reality filled the campaigns with interests towards an authentic life-style in a small, but full of surprises country. Who else deserves to be mentioned and awarded in this case? Obviously, creative brains and committed professionals.

Considering this concern meant to recover the gap between international advertising and the Romanian industry, on the one hand, and rediscover or, sometimes, recreate the national identity, on the other, the second part of this study tried to find a connection between the human and the organizational capital. This could justify the advertising evolution after 1990 in Romania. At the first glance, the advertising structure is the same, at least when it comes to full-service agencies. From the viewpoint of interdepartmental and intradepartmental relationships in an agency, professionals firmly encourage flexibility and yet establish limits of it, in terms of specific skills. In that respect, they explain the relevance of understanding an entire campaign process by each and everyone engaged. The last issue under discussion refers to what extent the online and

offline campaigns share similar features, or, on the contrary, involve another view. Most interviewees do not consider digital advertising the highest level of success, but a very productive channel, which externalize local brands a lot.

6. Conclusion

To get the whole picture of this research, we should answer the research questions we raised at the beginning of this paper, taking into account both findings and their qualitative interpretation. In the first case, regarding the way the Romanian backdrop of advertising influences the identity of local industry, the answer is positive for many reasons. One of the most important arguments consists in consumers' attitude towards their own country, perceived for a while as space of prohibition with no support for national pride. Industry did not rely on specific features in the beginning of its new post-Communist history and had to re-build everything as it had never existed. Besides, local producers were not at all encouraged on the market in the early 90's and they have to be taught about branding their goods and having trust in advertising. Last but not least, professionals applied for jobs in advertising coming from different fields and overcoming their lack of experience through personal development and trainings in order to achieve the standards of international agencies. We could

say that Romanian advertising and its professionals grew up together in a very short time and achieved a high level of performance by personal creative and communication skills.

In terms of organizational capital, interviewees revealed a homogeneous structure of agencies, according to the requests of an integrated campaign. It is certain that the classic model of full-service agency still works in Romania, but small agencies found their own place in this professional landscape. Definitely, organizing the work within local agencies in a similar way to the global ones helps professionals improve their level of experience and knowledge by offering the chance of doing different kinds of jobs.

To conclude, this study presents the inside perception of Romanian professionals regarding local advertising in a specific context (*habitus*) that reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the industry. Further research should keep on analyzing the market and the industry to highlight changes and the complete process of recovering the national identity. Besides, a comparison with other industries relying on the same research questions would be most welcomed. Up to now, the perfect words to describe the contemporary advertising landscape in Romania are hybridization and creativity, but maybe, this profile could be more accurate in the future depending on the new generation of professionals and the local evolution of industry.

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