

3.5 International marketing and culture

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

KEY WORDS culture 文化 • standardisation 标准化 • adaptation 本地化调整
• localisation 本地化

Objective

Use customer research to decide what an international marketing plan should keep the same or adapt.

You must be able to:

- distinguish standardisation from adaptation
- explain localisation beyond direct translation
- justify a marketing decision using local customer evidence

1 Worked examples

■ Keep the promise; adapt the route

A safety-light company keeps the same tested safety standard in every market. This is **standardisation** 标准化. It changes instructions into clear local language and accepts a local payment method. This is **adaptation** 本地化调整.

It pilots the advert with local cyclists. Research is better evidence than an assumption about a whole culture.

2 Practice

2.1 Define adaptation in international marketing. [1]

2.2 State one item, other than words, that may need localisation. [1]

2.3 Explain one benefit of testing an advert with local customers before a wide launch.[2]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 A sports-drink company wants to use the same advert in a new country. Explain one benefit and one drawback of standardisation. [4]

3.2 Recommend one adaptation for the company's launch and justify it using customer needs. [4]

Solutions

2.1

- Changing an offer or marketing approach for local needs.

2.2

- Images, colours, dates, symbols, payment methods, packaging, or promotion channels.

2.3

- It can find a confusing or unsuitable message early.
- The business can change it before it harms trust or wastes a large campaign budget.

3.1

- Standardisation can keep a consistent brand and reduce design costs.
- However, the advert may not match local language, values, or customer habits.
- This may reduce interest or make the message ineffective.

3.2

- Adapt the advert's language and imagery after testing it with the target customer segment.
- Customers can understand the benefit more naturally.
- Local feedback provides evidence about what works rather than relying on stereotypes.
- This makes the launch more relevant while the core product promise can remain the same.