

Consumer behavior in Russia

The analysis of influence of advertising on consumer behavior in Russia based on brand tracking
studies

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Introduction:

People, who live in the 21st century, couldn't imagine their lives without means of transport, communication, and modern technologies. To have an idea of what connects modern journals, designed for teenagers; newspapers, whose target is mainly middle aged people; old buses, sensory billboards, TV, and social networking sites it is enough to remember an excerpt from a daily life, and the right answer, which is advertising, will be found. Advertising seems to be all around. It figures in lives of each of us. But what is meant by advertising? According to William Weilbacher: "Advertising consists of media messages paid for and signed by a business firm or institution that wishes to increase the probability that those reached by these messages will behave or believe as the advertiser wishes them to act or believe"¹. Thus, advertising has an inevitable impact on person's way of thinking, attitude towards the product and decision making.

To understand why advertising is considered to be an effective way to support person's interest in a specific commodity, and to ensure the promotion of a product in the marketplace, it is necessary to disassemble its multi-layered structure. One of the constituent parts of advertisement basis is a message. A message is an informational content which establishes contact between a receiver and a sender. However, not every message can be considered as an advertising message. Our daily conversations, or media content, for example, are not from that category- they refer to the type of messages that are called life support or environmental. A life-support/environmental message is an accessible information that people perceive with their subconscious mind once they direct their attention to that particular information (Weilbacher, 1984). Compared to it, the aim of adver-

¹ Weilbacher, W. M. (1984). *Advertising: Second Edition*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 256-397

tising messages is to shape people's behavior, attitudes, and preferences by stimulating conscious impressions².

Advertising does a lot of virtuous deeds. Hence, it has a value. Advertising helps people not only to process information about different products and services that they find in their culture but also to figure out their relation to them (Weilbacher, 1884). Advertising, also, helps consumers to identify and recognize the brand product, thus increasing its chance of success in the market. Analyzing the target audience on which advertising is oriented, it is important to mention that it involves not only ordinary working class people, or whom we call 'consumers,' but also businessmen (Weilbacher, 1984). For them, advertising is a tool to success. With the help of advertising a lot of companies owned by businessman make consumers aware of their products and their brands. As a result, this can not only increase their sales but also build the reputation of their company, which is an essential factor for any potential buyer.

Advertising raises awareness about the brand product. Hence, its role is very crucial, as awareness is considered to be the first stage of consumers' decision journey that customers follow before purchasing. Other stages that follow in turn are familiarity and consideration. The third stage, namely consideration, can be one of the critical stages, as people not always rely only on their intuitive/natural instincts to make a decision but also use additional sources to enlarge their consumer knowledge and to form an opinion (Weilbacher, 1984). The most common are word of mouth and magazines, which include critiques. Word of mouth can be considered as one of the

² For the first time the term 'impressions management', which involves both conscious and unconscious processes, was used by a Canadian-American sociologist, Erving Goffman (1959), who examined the impact of impression management on social interaction. Goffman believes that people themselves create certain situations in order to express the symbolic values of certain things, which allow them to make a good impression on others. This concept is called the dramaturgical approach. Hoffman deals with social situations as dramatic performances in miniature: people act like actors on a stage, using the "scenery" and "surroundings" to create certain impressions.

most reliable sources as it operates on the principle of diffusion (Weilbacher, 1984). People start to share their experiences, knowledge within small groups of people (it can be friends, relatives) but then the experiences they shared began to spread among larger groups of people. In addition to this, before purchasing, consumers search for reports in such journals, magazines as 'Consumer Reports,' where they can find all the relative information about the product they are familiar with but not quite sure whether or not it is worth of paying. Consumers have a weapon which is the more potent- even if advertising didn't meet their expectations, and they became very disappointed with the product, they have an option not to repurchase it (Weilbacher, 1984). Hence, the study of consumer behavior is crucial and worthy of research in order to understand, which criteria are important for consumers, what are their needs, and how the marketing strategies used by manufacturers succeed or fail in using these factors for the implementation of brand's goals.

Consumer behavior is an area of knowledge that goes beyond a purely marketing scope. It is relevant to everyone who strives to successfully reach the market and retain competitive advantage in it, using all the tricks and methods of consumer behavior management. Thus, it is a fundamental concept in modern marketing. Managers of any company need to know how to operate and develop their marketing strategy based on the understanding of consumer behavior (Weilbacher, 1984). With the development of market relations and increased competition in Russia, working with the customer is becoming increasingly important for all participants of market relations. Through trial and error method, a young Russian business is gradually developing the axiom of the market economy: the effective results of companies' work in the market are noticed in the process of interaction with the consumer. However, it is not easy to understand and control the behavior of customers, not so easy is to find a buyer. Consumers often say, think about one thing, but in practice, they buy something entirely else. The buyer simply doesn't realize that motives regarding his/her purchases can change in his/her mind at the last minute. Therefore, the capstone project will focus on the study of behavior patterns of consumers, their needs, preferences, the per-

ception of the product, and will go deep into a subject by analyzing which marketing strategies better reach consumers as well as sustain their loyalty and trust towards the brand.

Literature review: The study of consumer behavior is one of the most popular studies, as all in all, it's the consumers who generate revenue for the company, by acquiring its products. It is no wonder that the customer is the focus of any successful company, regardless of its size. The company will be able to meet the needs of its customers better than competitors and offer consumers exactly what they need by studying their buying motives, preferences, and desires. The primary objective of the study of consumers is to identify the factors that influence consumer behavior. But this is not enough. To successfully compete in the market, it is necessary to anticipate changes in consumer preferences, to make appropriate improvements to the product, to optimise the channels of promotion and advertising infrastructure (note that one of the important components of advertising infrastructure is advertising strategy), that is to adjust all the components of the marketing mix. In addition, it is essential to find out 5 w's and 1 how: who, how, when, where, what and why is buying (note that this is important for understanding of consumer intentions), as well as the degree of importance of various criteria of goods at various stages of the process of making purchasing decisions. Moreover, the information on the behavior of different categories of consumers during and after the purchase is useful for the accurate interpretation of sales data and evaluation of product positioning results.

The purpose of this project is to conduct tracking study on Russian consumers' preferences for milk products as well as to generate information to broaden the understanding of their consumer behavior. The selection of milk products was not random. In her journal article *Regional features of formation of consumer society in Russia: motives for food choice*, Vtorushina (2011) analyses both the quantitative and the qualitative composition of food in different countries and compares the

results with Russia. Vtorushina (2011) argues that although the qualitative composition of products consumed in Russia is identical to the West but inferior to it in a number of quantitative indicators, the product specificity of Russian goods is noticed in the consumption of such products as potato, tea and dairy products (253). She states that, regarding milk and dairy products, the distinctive features are characterized by continuing traditions and habits in food consumption and insufficient level of Russia's involvement in the "Western" world of food consumption with its heterogeneous structure (254-255). Vtorushina (2011) continues that milk consumption is an essential part of Russian culture. It is necessary not only for the diet but also for cultural food practices, which involve preparation of such traditional milk-based dishes as oatmeal, casserole, pancakes etc. Milk is also connected with the religious symbolism. After Russians had adopted Christianity, milk was linked to the image of Nursing Madonna and represented the symbol of motherhood. And as Vtorushina (2011) claims, nowadays, in many Russian advertisings of milk, the symbol of motherhood and family ties is still used to introduce truly Christian Russian culture, in which strong family relations are appreciated, and great importance is given to the nutrition and health. Hence, Russian advertising of milk is creating bonds with consumers through advertising messages, which express the cultural features of Russia and demonstrate how well the product fits in the lives of Russian consumers. Therefore, each buyer can relate him/herself to the product. Thus, as Vtorushina (2011) claims, milk products are being represented with the help of symbols, which are more meaningful than the symbolization of the indicators of the prestigious consumption, such as cars.

To reveal the features of the country with a rich and centuries-old culture and to study the behavior of Russian consumer society, the tracking study needs to be carried out. The research will be conducted specifically in the city of Moscow. To explain why Moscow has been chosen as a target location, it is necessary to refer to the research, presented in the project of Vtorushina (2011), which aims to find out the regional features of the consumer society in Russia. The results of the research showed that there are at least two regions, characterized by high-level consumption: these are the central and southern regions. Moscow is the country that fits most for the analysis as it is the

most populous city, located in the central federal district in Russia. Moreover, in addition to high level of consumption, Moscow has a multiethnic population that involves people, who gathered from all corners of the earth and who have different preferences and needs. Thus, the precise image of Russian consumers will be best demonstrated exactly in this region.

To understand the preferences of Russians for milk and dairy products, it is necessary to analyze external factors that influence on strategic objectives of manufacturers as well as behavior and buying motives of Russian consumers. In their journal article of *Analysis of change of cost of food in the Russian Federation*, Minchenko and Galitsky (2015) argue that Russia faced economic instability, occurred as a consequence of the sanctions, imposed by the US and EU countries, and the subsequent devaluation of the ruble, which affected the economic well-being of the whole population. And taking into account the fact that economic well-being is deeply connected with consumers' buying decisions; they become more rational and careful with their money when it comes to the purchasing stage. To support the argument of interconnection between the consumers' buying motives and the criterion of food price, authors analyze changes in the prices of food in connection with the imposition of economic sanctions by the US and EU countries and examine different aspects of the socio-economic sphere of Russia and its influence on consumer behavior. Minchenko and Galitsky (2015) state that domestic manufacturers didn't establish high prices for milk and dairy products, even after being restricted in economic relations. There are two reasons for that. First of all, the research that the authors carried out in 2013 (note that during that year Russians didn't experience the period of crisis) showed that the consumer demand fall as a result of the establishment of high prices by local producers (146-147). Consumers didn't purchase as much dairy products as before, and, as a result, manufacturers were worse off. Thus, it is the bargaining power of Russian consumers that restricts the increase in a price for products. The bargaining power of buyers (note that it is one of the elements of Porter's forces model), is the ability of consumers to voice their grievances: consumers can pressurize businesses until they establish reasonable prices; provide products of high-quality etc. The second reason is that, according to Minchenko and

Galitsky (2015), with the help of governmental support, Russian manufacturers started to produce more dairy products by offering multiple product options and they established consumer friendly prices for the dairy products. Hence, the market of milk products involves a wider choice of products with reasonable prices, and the latter is the important criterion for every consumer, who doesn't want to pay more for products because he/she just 'regained consciousness' after the crisis.

Russian manufacturers with the help of governmental sponsorship create such conditions for the consumers, where the needs of every 'economical' and 'rational' buyer are satisfied. In their journal article *Russian Federation: Milk and dairy products market*, Karlova and Serova (2010) argue that the Russian government contributes to the development of dairy product market and is actively engaged in improvement of the quality of locally produced milk and dairy products by implementing product safety management programs, assisting the budding companies as well as lending to start-ups (173). The purpose of the governmental support is not to be dependent on the power of international manufacturers and to sustain consumer loyalty towards locally produced products. Serova and Karlova (2010) argue that the governmental interventions are beneficial to the economy of the country and based on the analysis of the results of the study, conducted by them, they recorded the effectiveness of the state support in the industry and noticed an increase in the production of milk and dairy products in 2009-2012. The effectiveness of governmental support is based on the following factors: it stimulates production growth, which increases the income level and decreases the level of unemployment and stimulates manufacturers to produce more, as the government will help them to cover the expenses.

In their journal article Serova and Karlova (2010) state that a high level of production implies that manufacturers couldn't just satisfy consumers with homogeneous products, thus they provide multi-optional products oriented to different target markets with different preferences and needs. Besides, a wider choice of goods implies a large variety of prices that can vary from product to product. As Minchenko and Galitsky (2015) mention in their journal article *Analysis of change of cost of food in the Russian Federation*, Russians refer to the type of consumers, who are rational

and economical (148). Thus, the variety of prices allows the representatives of different social classes to choose among the multicity of products the product that meets their needs and the product that they can afford to them. In addition, the variety of products is a crucial factor for consumers, as in the market, where there are introduced different types of domestic goods, the consumers don't notice the absence of foreign goods (152). Hence, as Karlova and Serova state (2010), Russian manufacturers know what their consumers need and what their preferences are. And this factor guarantees them a competitive advantage compared to non-local producers, who face barriers to entry, to be precise difficulties in entering a particular market, having access to channels of distribution, and reaching the target audience. One of the reasons why foreign manufacturers face such problems is that products of local production can be more profitable and attractive for consumers for some criteria. This condition well describes Russian market of dairy products, where consumers prefer their domestic food products more than the imported ones because of consumer-friendly prices and naturalness of goods.

The research on *Consumption patterns and food demand in Russia*, conducted by the Nielsen company in April, 2016, which is a global marketing research firm, justifies the idea that Russian's level of consumption of meat (note that it was found out that 80% of Russians give preference to domestic meat) and milk (note that 81% of Russian prefer domestic milk) of local production prevails in the food category. Thus, Russians prefer milk products produced by local manufacturers more than the imported ones. In the article *Confrontation of manufacturers: on whose side is Russia?*, Marina Lepenkova, who is a Global Client Partner of Nielsen Russian and the member of the research team, argues on which factors stimulate such high demand for local products. She states that the fact that Russian consumers when buying foodstuffs prefer goods produced by domestic manufacturers, can be justified by more favorable prices, and the desire to buy fresh and natural products grown or produced locally and not brought from far away.

In their journal article *General problems of transportation logistics of dairy products*, Khanin and Ryabov (2015) argue that Russian consumers opt for domestic dairy products, not im-

ported ones. The authors state that the products of domestic production are more attractive for Russian consumers because of shorter shelf life and 'freshness.' They state that importation takes time, thus when manufacturers import products, a longer time is being passed since the date of production. Hence, consumers doubt the fact of that product being fresh. Especially, if it comes to the question of why imported goods have a longer shelf life than products of local origin, consumers get more judicious. Consumers take into account the fact that since the dairy goods refer to the type of products with a short shelf life, a lot of producers use chemical additives to sustain and support long shelf life, because after completing the transportation phase, goods still need to be sold, and for this reason the products are placed on the shelves of supermarkets for 3-4 more days (note that the storage life of dairy products is maximum 5 days). In addition to this, transportation costs money. Thus the price for imported dairy products is higher compared to the price of domestic products.

Timofeeva (2014) argues in her journal article *The analysis of the influence of socio-economic factors on the development of dairy products market in Russia*, milk and dairy goods refer to the category of products of first necessity. Thus the demand for them is always stable. However, after the crisis knocked the doors of Russians, the situation in the market has changed. Russian consumers became more conscious of their purchasing decision and increase in price became an important criterion for them to finalise their decisions regarding the purchase (128-130). Timofeeva (2014) argues that after the crisis had hit the pocket of the whole population, consumers became prudent with their finances, and their preferences are oriented on the selection of a product that corresponds to such criteria as 'economical product' and 'the product of local production' (129-130). Hence, Khanin and Ryabov (2015) state that since the criterion of price is crucial for Russians to reach the stage of making purchasing decision, and given the fact that the price of imported products is higher than the price of domestic products, this factor discourages consumers from buying imported goods as their local goods are providing better quality with lower price. Therefore, Russians inclined to trust the dairy products of local production more, because of its naturalness and freshness, and tend to buy products with lower price. This condition doesn't satisfy foreign produc-

ers as they face difficulties in involving Russian ‘rational’ buyers in their ‘club of loyal consumers’. However, it creates a win-win situation for the local producers, who easily reach their target market and retain a competitive advantage.

In his journal article *Withholding of Competitive Advantage Dairy Enterprises at the Local Level*, Andreev (2014) highlights the ability of Russian domestic manufacturers of dairy products to retain competitive advantage, competing with different international opponents in power (542). According to him, competitive advantage gives manufacturers an absolute power, as it helps them to easily reach the target market and earn the trust of consumers towards the brand (note that earning the trust of consumers is very important for the producers, as if the consumer liked the product when he/she used it for the first time, the positive consumer experience and brand name will guarantee him/her that whenever he/she repurchases the product - it will be with the same characteristics). To justify his claim, the author introduces the concept of ‘effect of double access,’ which depends on access to the raw material base and target market. The concept describes a combination of competitive strategies that manufacturers use to sustain their competitive advantage and consumer loyalty towards their brand. Andreev (2014) continues to describe the nature of competitive advantage and states that it is a temporary phenomenon. It means that if the manufacturer is able to retain competitive advantage in a particular country, which in most cases, is the country of the origin, this doesn’t necessarily imply that the power of the manufacturer will work in the same way in other countries as well. The reason for this is that consumers’ needs and preferences vary from country to country. Thus, to retain competitive advantage, it is not enough to have good raw material base, which is one of the criteria that describes ‘effect of double access’, the manufacturer should also be aware of features of consumers and cultural practices of the target country, in order to understand which marketing strategies to choose in order to satisfy the needs and preferences of consumers and accomplish the brand’s goals. Hence, as Andreev (2014) argues, Russian domestic manufacturers of dairy products successfully overcome and win competitive race and satisfy the needs of their consumers, as the marketing strategies of manufacturers aim at using features of cul-

tural food practices and satisfying the changing needs of Russian consumers, occurred as a result of post-crisis period (542-543).

The capstone project is building upon the researches that have been carried out by Serova & Karlova (2010), Andreev (2014), Minchenko & Galitsky (2015), and Khanin & Ryabov (2015) on the ability of Russian manufacturers to retain competitive advantage and to satisfy consumers' demand and needs in the Russian dairy industry. However, instead of panel type of research, used by these authors, the method of tracking studies has been chosen to measure consumer preferences for dairy and milk products. Tracking refers to the type of longitudinal studies that are carried out with a minimum duration of three months, while the length of panel research, a longitudinal study, in which a sample involves the same group of the respondents over the study period, is 1-1, 5 months. Compared to panel study, tracking allows noticing the hidden effects to which consumers are being exposed. One of those effects is called 'carryover', which Weilbacher (1984) describes in his book of *Advertising* as the 'time-lag' when a consumer was exposed to the advertising of the specific product for the first time, and, when he/she made a purchasing decision regarding that product. Weilbacher (1984) argues that one of the signs of the 'carryover effect' is when the consumer tries to expand his/her consumer knowledge of the brand or product by gathering information about different people's experiences with the product and spending days on reading online consumer reports regarding the purchase. This happens because 'carryover effect' prevents customers from impulse buying and, as a result, they become fixated on the correct choice. Thus, a certain period should pass from the time of the first advertising exposure to reach the purchasing stage (545). According to Weilbacher (1984), the duration of this time-lag is three months. Therefore, during panel studies 'carryover effect' cannot be noticed.

Weilbacher (1984) continues by saying that 'carryover effect' is a phenomenon, which well describes the country that suffers economic instability, and whose citizens are careful with their money. It is known, that now Russia is in a period of post-crisis, and, therefore Russian consumers differ with their prudence and reasonableness. Thus, Russians don't just buy the product spontane-

ously because of the advertising they liked, but rather consult with their friends, read consumer reports about experiences of people with the product. The research on *Consumption patterns and food demand in Russia*, conducted by the Nielson Company in April 2016 justifies the idea that Russian consumers refer to the type of consumers who take into account the opinions of others before making a choice. It was found out that among all the sources of information about goods and services, Russians trust more the recommendation of their friends (note that 77% trust the opinion of their friends) and consumer reviews, published online (note that 62% trust online review). Thus, it can be said that Russia and Russian consumers best apt Weilbacher's descriptions. Ivanov (2010) in his journal article *Methods and techniques of tracking studies* argues that instability in the economy of Russia affected both the well-being of the country and the population. After the US and EU imposed sanctions on Russia and after the devaluation of the ruble, consumers started to spend less on impulse purchases. Hence, Russians don't refer to the customers who are guided by instinctive buying decisions. Thus, a certain period should pass so that Russians make a decision to buy a product. Therefore, tracking studies are the most appropriate methodology to understand features of Russian consumers, their changing and fickle needs in the period of post-crisis and to examine their behavior (255).

Tracking studies are the specialization of private research agencies. Thus, the lack of governmental sponsorship results in limited research in the field of advertising and proper analysis of consumer behavior. Especially in regard to consumer food buying/shopping behavior, tracking studies on consumers' preferences for milk and dairy products hasn't been carried out in Russia yet. However, it is important to conduct this type of research in this field to understand how needs and preferences of consumers have changed with the fast-paced processes, occurred in the economy of the country that happened as a result of the sanctions, and the subsequent devaluation of the ruble. Although research agencies have analyzed milk and dairy products market has been analyzed by research agencies and the latter was described by different scholars, the information and materials provided are limited. The reason for this is that tracking studies have been carried out in Russia on-

ly for ten years (note that for example in America tracking studies are carried out for 40 years) and time has not ripened for the efficient application of this method. Thus, the goal of the capstone project will be the analysis of behavior and buying motives of consumers oriented on consumption of milk and dairy products based on tracking studies. In addition, attempts will be made to fill in the gaps in the analysis of milk and dairy products market, which were observed during critical analysis of the literature.

During the analysis of the literature on the competitive advantage of Russian manufacturers in the country of origin concerning milk and dairy market, I, as a reader, didn't get enough information on what makes competitive strategies of Russian manufacturers successful and victorious in sustaining consumer loyalty over marketing strategies used by foreign producers. Thus, my thesis will examine which marketing strategies, used by local manufacturers, help them to successfully reach the target audience and earn consumer trust and loyalty towards milk and dairy products of local origin. This area has been surprisingly neglected until recently, as the aim of the most of the researches on milk products preferences that have been carried out so far was to find out which manufacturers are in a high demand among the consumers. Thus, the researchers didn't even go into the details on what makes one or another producer hold the leading position. In the journal article *Withholding of Competitive Advantage Dairy Enterprises at the Local Level*, Andreev (2014) brings the statistics and mentions the fact of local manufacturers being able to retain competitive advantage. However, the information on the process of how the competitive advantage is used and sustained in the market segments, in which the manufacturer can compete effectively, is absent. To fulfil this gap in information, the tracking study on the behavior of Russian consumers will be carried out with the aim to find out the features of Russian culture and buying motives of consumers living in that culture. The study will help to make an analysis on what are the needs of consumers, which criteria are the most important for them in making purchasing decisions and how producers, taking into account these factors, come up with strategies that will be successful in implementing

their brand's goals. In addition, the analysis of buying motives of consumers will provide information on which locally produced goods have higher demand.

The development of the necessary strategy is crucial, as this set of management decisions is oriented on the allocation of enterprise resources (note that this factor is critical for the understanding of whether the resources were wasted or they helped to achieve the desired effect) and achievement of long-term competitive advantage in the target markets. Therefore, the strategy sets the direction of the company: on what specific products and markets the company should spend money and labor, as well as exactly how it will be done, that is how the work on the formation of consumer preferences in these areas will be organized. Such course of action develops within a certain system of circumstances that determine place (where), time (when), reason (why), manner (how) and goals (for what). For the first time in the last ten years, the businesses in Russia encountered a problem of strategic planning during the economic crisis. It is in these circumstances (note that these circumstances refer to the crisis) that all the weaknesses of some businesses and the strengths of others are clearly visible, as the competition escalates to the limit, the winner of which becomes the one who has more competitive advantages. However, it is not about advantages over competitors, but advantages regarding consumers. Thus, the project will focus mainly on identification of critical success factors in the consumer goods industry, specifically milk and dairy products market and analysis of how competitive advantages ensure the uniqueness of the brand and meet the needs of the particular group of consumers.

Research questions:

The main objective of my capstone project is to find out features of consumer behavior of Russians regarding milk products based on tracking studies. The research was done based on Russian advertisements of the food category, specifically milk, and involved Russian respondents living in the capital of Russia, Moscow, and aged 25-60. The importance and difficulty of getting results

were that it was necessary to develop an approach that would allow obtaining reliable and objective information when assessing the model of the brand tracking studies.

The primary research question, which was formulated based on the capstone project's objective, is what are the features of Russian consumers' behavior, and how advertising influences on buying decisions of Russian population?

In many pieces of research that have analyzed the market of milk and dairy products, there was an absence of information on which strategies help a certain manufacturer to sustain competitive advantage in the market. This is because the goal of most of them was just to find out which brands are in a high demand among the consumers. However, an answer to the question 'why' was veiled in secrecy. Thus, the second research question in my project will be which marketing strategies, used by local manufacturers, help them to successfully reach the target audience and earn consumer trust and loyalty towards milk and dairy products of local origin?

As it was discussed in the literature review the imposition of sanctions and the subsequent devaluation of ruble were not the decisive factors contributing to the emergence of high consumer loyalty towards local milk products. Even though the choice of Russian consumers was limited to the use of local products mostly, Russian consumers remained loyal to dairy products of local production before the imposition of the sanctions because of high quality of dairy goods and consumer friendly prices.

Research Hypothesis:

Hence, high level of loyalty towards local products implies high competition among different brands in the sector of milk and dairy products. Thus, I predict that if there is a high competition among Russian brands of milk, the competitive advantage of most of them is sustained thanks to the successful implementation of advertising strategies, because this is the best way to focus the attention of consumers on the brand product. To prove the truthfulness of this hypothesis, it is necessary

to reveal whether advertising contributes to the commercial success of brands in the market and makes them hold the leading positions in the top chart of milk and dairy products.

Methodology:

Detailed analysis of the target audience: The goal of my capstone project is to get the sampling of Russian consumer preferences for milk products. Thus, the information to broaden the understanding of features of Russian consumers' behavior is generated to examine their buying motives. The research was conducted in the capital of Russia, Moscow, as it is the most populous central federal district in Russia that has the highest level of consumption, and the population of which consists of the representatives of different cultures, ethnicities, and nationalities. Thus, the results of evaluation of responses on milk products preferences of different people, whose needs and consumer decisions vary from each other (note that one of the differences can be cultural food practices that limit or prohibit the consumption of certain products), will provide diverse information ideal for comparative analysis and construction of more precise image of population needs in whole. The target audience that I was analyzing consists, in the overwhelming majority, of women between 25 and 60 years, who are guided by their own experience and their personal evaluation of quality characteristics of milk products and may also be oriented to the tastes of their children / grandchildren. When purchasing dairy products, consumers of this target group are influenced by many different factors such as price, quality, package design, shelf life, the absence of preservatives, etc.

Another criterion important for the target consumers is the factor of 'regionality.' Thus, buyers want to be sure that these milk products were produced at local factories by domestic manufacturers. This suggests that these consumers want to eat fresh products, received directly from the factory by a distribution network. Therefore, local producers of milk and dairy products have a priori advantage over foreign competitors, who came from other cities.

Tracking study: For my capstone project, I conducted the tracking study on preferences of milk products, which involved a personal approach to conduct face-to-face structured interviews, distributed in person to large groups. The difference between simple face-to-face interviews and tracking studies is that tracking studies are being conducted once a month within a minimum period of 3 months. Tracking studies clearly show not only how well the current situation is being traced, but also a clear downward (when the situation is getting worse) or the opposite upward trend in brand knowledge. Tracking is a longitudinal, repetitive study each time performed using the same samples, which implies that it allows examining the changing views of the same people over a period of time. Thus, tracking is a very useful method, because if researchers involve in polling the specific group of people only once it will be difficult to construct a general image of the population with the changing needs (note that changing needs occurred as a result of imposition sanctions by the US and EU countries, and the subsequent devaluation of ruble), views and behavior based on the limited amount of responses that are not enough for comparative analysis. However, tracking study gives the interviewer confidence that shifts in consumer sentiment reflect actual changes in his/her behavior, as the researcher is asking the same questions to the same people at different periods of times. My tracking study was conducted with duration of 3 months: from December, 2016 to February, 2017. The selection of this period was not random. Tracking allows noticing the hidden effect of ‘carryover’ to which most Russians are being exposed because of their ‘rational’ consumer nature. However, to notice this effect with the help of tracking a certain period of time should pass. The duration of this time-lag is 3 months. Thus, I interviewed my respondents during 3 months to notice the features of their behavior in relation to milk products and their exposure to such hidden effect as ‘carryover’. I collected and analyzed the results of respondents every time I finished the interview. Then I compared the results of responses to demonstrate the changes in their consumer performance. The qualitative results describe and summarize features of a collection of information on milk products preferences of Russian consumers, while quantitative results are followed by

analysis of circle graphs that are proportional to how many percent of the target group gave a certain answer.

Thus, to explain why tracking study was carried out by using a personal approach of face-to-face interviews over online surveys, it is necessary to classify the advantaged of the former. The method of personal interviews is used in many areas of research that require statistically significant results. A personal interview allows one to get answers to the questions of high complexity because the interviewer has an opportunity to provide further clarification to the text of the question. During a personal interview the interviewer may gain the interest of the respondent by establishing with him a qualitative contact, and as a result reducing the likelihood of non-response. The interviewer conducts himself the questionnaire survey, which eliminates confusion, missing of questions because of a misunderstanding of their meaning. In the process of conducting a personal interview, the interviewer can receive a large amount of information. Personal interviews can be conducted at home of the respondent. In this case, the respondent will be more frank with the researcher, because he/she is in a familiar, comfortable and safe environment. In regard to my project, I have conducted face-to-face structured interviews involving the combination of open-ended and close-ended questions at respondents' home.

Post-testing method for the tracking study

There are two stages, during which the researcher can carry out the tracking study, namely pre-testing and post-testing.

Pre-testing is carried out before release of advertising. The goal of pre-testing is to give a preliminary assessment of the quality of advertising and its ability to perform tasks (Chand, n.d.). While post-testing is carried out during the advertising campaign or after its completion, when the advertising message has already been issued to the market and a certain time has passed, sufficient for the target audience to familiarize with the advertising (Chand, n.d.). The purpose of post-testing is to bring an interim or final result.

In regard to pro-testing and post-testing, the second type has been carried out, since as it was already discussed in the literature review section, Russian consumers are exposed to ‘carryover effect’, and a certain period of time should pass in order to form an opinion about the product and achieve the stage of purchase. Taking into account the features of Russian consumer, the questionnaire was composed based on the advertisings of the brands that have been broadcasted on TV for a certain time.

Post-testing is based on four main criteria (Chand, n.d):

- Recognition of the message;
- Memorability of the message;
- The attractiveness of the advertising;
- The power of advertising to make consumers desire the product

Brands that were chosen for the tracking/ History of advertising campaigns:

According to the research, conducted by FDF group (Market research agency in Russia) in 2013 «The most popular Russian brands of milk», in the top 5 of the most popular brands of milk in Russian, the brands «Домик в Деревне», «Простоквашино», «Агуша» hold the leading position. Thus, for the tracking study, I have chosen these three leading Russian brands of milk, which achieved great popularity during the last three-four years thanks to successful advertising campaigns and the brand «Веселый молочник» of high quality and consumer-friendly price, which

was very popular, starting from 2000s, but then yield ground after it stopped any promotional activities two year ago. In regard to «Веселый молочник», I have chosen this brand in order to show that despite its high quality, the product can be 'ignored' by consumers because of absence of any promotional activities. Hence by tracking the preferences of consumers regarding these brands, I will reveal how advertising influences their buying motives and as a result makes them form an opinion about particular brand.

1. The brand «Простоквашино» exists from 2002. It belongs to the company «Danone». The slogan of «Простоквашино» is «Fresh milk is only a stone's throw away». One of the reasons why the brand is so successful is that it is built around the characters of Eduard Uspenskiy's book "Uncle Fyodor, dog and cat» and the eponymous cartoon film, on which several generations of children grew up. One of the characters of the famous cartoon, namely, the cat Matroskin became the face of the brand, because according to the plot of the cartoon, it was he, who put forward an initiative to buy a cow and produce milk. In 2008, the company made changes in brand performance. Now the package is decorated mainly with blue and white colors because they represent the cat Matroskin.



2. The brand «Домик в деревне», which exists from 1997, belongs to the company Wimm-Bill-Dann and considers being the company's most successful dairy brand. While «Простоквашино» makes an emphasis on the freshness of products, «Домик в деревне» underlines naturalness of its products. The main message, which the brand transfers to the target audience, is that «Домик в деревне» offers those, who live in the cities, a high-quality natural product, which they can find only in the village at the grandmother's home. The packaging depicts green meadows, cows, wooden house, the birch is a symbol of Russia. In addition, once can notice the depiction of grandmother on the packaging: good memories of village vacations, delicious food, and warm summer are associated exactly with her. Grandmother is the central element of the brand's advertising campaigns.



Retrieved from: http://rastudent.ru/study/student_work/personazh_mamleeva.php

3. The history of the brand «Веселый молочник» begins in Siberia, in early 2000. This brand belongs to the company Wimm-Bill-Dann. The slogan of the brand is: «Веселый Молочник» gives joy. The brand makes emphasis on the fact that even ordinary products can raise the mood and change everything for the better, if they are from the «Happy Milkman». Thus, compared to the brands «Простоквашино» and «Домик в деревне», the main messages of «Веселый молочник» are joy and carefree life. The face of the brand is a milkman in a hood, apron and a red checkered shirt. He's kind, sweetheart and his face is always decorated with a smile.



Retrieved from: <http://company.unipack.ru/16694/>

4. The brand «Агуша», found in 2001, also belongs to the company Wimm-Bill-Dann. The slogan of the brand is «Agusha» is for your baby's health». In Russian, the slogan involves rhyme «Для здоровья малыша- Агуша» and it catches the attention. The brand emphasizes the importance of children health. In its advertisings, «Агуша» concentrates the attention of parents on why its product is good for their children. Based on the various studies conducted among parents and pediatricians, there were identified six most important components of the child's health and development: proper growth, strong immunity, lack of allergy, easy digestion, development of the organs of vision, development of the brain (Wimm-Bill-Dann, 2016). «Агуша» uses these components, which became the basis for creating a new packaging design, where a functionally styled ball symbolizes the six sides of caring for the baby.



Retrieved from: http://www.rwr.ru/news/market/market_2855.html

Since the full information about the economic effectiveness of brands, namely sales volume before and after the advertising campaign, is available only to the company's workers and it is anonymous, I focused my attention at the communicative component of advertising and measure its effectiveness. In addition, I decided to look at the communicative component, since there have not been carried out any researches with the aim to find out the communicative efficiency. The only aim of researches that have been carried out so far by private research organizations in regard to the sector of milk and dairy product was to create top charts of leading milk brands based on the revenue and net/pure profit of the largest producers of dairy products.

As it is known Russian local milk differs from the imported ones with its naturalness and consumer-friendly prices. According to the statistics provided by Russian website *Tsenomer* (2016), which provides information about prices in Russian market: Milk prices, established by the major supermarkets in Moscow, in December 2016 were the following: 1) the price of milk of brand 'Простоквашино' in the supermarket 'Пятерочка' is 65.55 rubles, the price of milk of the same brand in «Ашан» is 66.12 rubles; 2) the price of milk of brand 'Домик в деревне отборное' in the supermarket «Перекресток» is 69.9 rubles, the price of the milk of the same brand in the supermarket «Седьмой Континент» is 65 rubles. There is a difference in price of milk, produced by local manufacturers, but it is not so significant in comparison to the prices of imported products, especially for the target group analyzed in this project. Women from age category 25-56 form their decisions not only based on the factor of price but also quality, their own experience. For them, milk is a family product, which is consumed also by children. Thus another marketing factors, such as packaging, composition of the product, availability of the product, and etc. can influence their decisions. The more unique is the offer of products from the point of view of consumers, the more freedom marketers have in setting prices higher than those of the competing products. Based on the research 'What kind of milk is consumed in the capital of Russia? What brand is more credible? And the product of which brand consumers will never buy?' done by the marketing agency FDF group in 2013-2014, there are three milk brands that are popular among consumers, namely

«Домик в Деревне», «Простоквашино», «Агуша» and there is a milk brand «Весёлый Молочник», which consumers characterize as of high-quality but which they don't actually consume so much. Even though in 2000s «Весёлый Молочник» was one of the most successful brands, now it lacks consumer loyalty. While brands «Домик в Деревне», «Простоквашино», «Агуша» held the leading positions in milk top charts despite the fact that they provide the same quality with higher price. According to the results of the research provided by FDF (2013) the brand «Домик в Деревне» has set the higher price in comparison to the competitor brands. However, it leads in the number of purchases (31%). It was also found that «Домик в Деревне» has the highest percentage of consumers (36%) knowing the brand advertising. And the more people were aware about the brand and the more were exposed to its advertising, the higher was the percentage of purchases. Hence, it can be assumed that effective communication of brand advertising can be a stimulant for 'awakening' buying motives of consumers. To understand, whether advertising influences the decision of consumers and can stimulate buying motives the tracking study was carried out. The thematic analysis of tracking study allows revealing how help successful advertising helps brands to earn consumer trust and recall good association about the product and its quality.

Communicative component of the effectiveness of advertising (CEA)

As it was mentioned above full information about the economic effectiveness of brands is available only to the company's workers and it is anonymous, that is why the project is based on the measurement of communicative component of advertising and its effectiveness.

CEA is determined by the efficiency of contact with consumer segment by means of selling emotional connections. This indicator of efficiency is being constantly checked and calculated

throughout the production process, because it has an impact on economic efficiency, the objective of which is a profit. Economic efficiency occurs during the contact between the consumer and the product at the point of sales, when the consumer has reached the purchasing stage and is ready to pay for the product (Kretter & Kadekova, 2011). While communicative efficiency occurs as a result of evaluation of the advertising campaign in its relationship with the target consumers, when the latter assess how much advertising is oriented to their needs and whether it reached their emotional territory or not (Kretter & Kadekova, 2011). Depending on the means of circulation of advertising, target consumers are classified into specific categories such as viewers, readers, pedestrians, drivers, shoppers in stores, and so on, in order to compose effective advertising messages around their attributes. This component of the effectiveness of advertising messages depends on the professionalism and creativity of employees of advertising agencies, which deal with media planning and advertising production process.

There are different key performance indicators, which demonstrate how effective the advertising is: OTS (opportunity to see) (number of people who were exposed to the ad's message), CUME (or in other words reach) (the number of listeners or viewers for a certain period of time), etc. (Estevez & Fabricio, 2014). The higher is their value, the more effective is the advertising campaign. It is important to track the right key performance indicators in order to accurately evaluate the effectiveness of the use of certain advertising strategies in order to achieve the brand goals. For this capstone four performance indicators have been tracked, namely recognition, memorability, attractiveness and impact.

Recognition of advertising allows evaluating the individual elements of an advertising appeal (logo, company name, trade mark) as well as advertising in general. The indicator of memorability is based on the advertising theory that the consumer will choose the product, about which he remembers more information/details (Estevez & Fabricio, 2014). In some cases, knowledge of the brand product is quite sufficient to strengthen confidence in the good quality of the product in comparison to the completely unknown brand. Attractiveness of the advertising is determined by the emotional

mood, with which it was created (Estevez & Fabricio, 2014). And if such mood/attitude will be in resonance with the feelings of the target consumer, his/her sensations/emotions from the advertising will be transferred to the advertised product and that certain product will become «mine» for the consumer. The impact makes consumer carry out the actions necessary to the advertiser - namely, the purchase of its goods. This option, in turn, is defined by four characteristics: the plausibility and uniqueness of the advertising message, subjective importance and integrity of advertising (Estevez & Fabricio, 2014). It is clear that the higher the communicative components of the effectiveness of advertising, the more significant are the results of its economic component.

Communicative efficiency of advertising

As a matter of fact, the goal of advertising is to increase confidence/trust in brand products and services, create an attractive image of the company and distinguish it from the competitors, to strengthen trust towards the brand and etc. However, not every advertising is remembered by its target audience and is able to achieve the goals mentioned earlier. There is also another assumption that the effect of advertising can be only positive. However, this not true, and advertising can cause negative emotions and associations as well.

In addition, some advertisers prefer to rely only on the economic efficiency, not taking into account one important fact: there are no economic indicators that can clearly capture the connection between promotional activities and commercial success, which was achieved due to the ability of advertising to create strong communicative bonds with the consumers (Krettor & Kadekova, 2011) . The share of advertising is no more than one-eighth among other equally important elements, which guarantee the success of the product in the market such as: the quality of the goods (services), price, season, and market conditions, etc. (Krettor & Kadekova, 2011). Hence, if the company doesn't achieve its objective, which is to make a profit, it is wrong to assume that this is the fault of 'unsatisfactory' advertising campaign. Contrariwise, the advertising could have motivated consumers to

buy the product; because the brand name of the product guaranteed them that if they buy this product it will be with the same promising characteristics as in the advertising. However, while using the product, the consumers might have realized that the product doesn't match the criteria mentioned on TV and they stopped using it. Thus, proceeding from the above, it is reasonable to divide the evaluation of the effectiveness of advertising into two components: economic and communicative.

Since the research for the capstone project has been carried out in Russia, Moscow, where after the sanctions, imposed by the USA and Europe, and the subsequent devaluation of ruble, there are placed mostly the products of local production in the market, the competition among domestic producers has increased. As it has been already mentioned above, the success of the particular brand in the market depends not only on the good advertising but also on other important factors. However, Russian companies pay a lot of attention to the advertising, since the first impression about the product creates exactly advertising. Exactly advertising can recall good associations and motivate people to reach the stage of purchase, or, on the contrary, to recall bad associations and demotivate people to purchase that specific good. Moreover, most of domestic milk products in Russia are of high quality, because of freshness and short shelf life, which guarantees naturalness of the product, in comparison to the products with long shelf life, which contain a lot of chemical additives. Thus the main differences are in packaging, price and etc. Hence, advertising helps to attract attention of consumers to the brand product and influence their decision by establishing communicative bonds. To understand whether these communicative bonds are effective or not, the researcher need to measure Communicative advertising efficiency (CAE) based on the combination of three factors:

- 1) The impact of advertising on change in knowledge about the company, its products and services;
- 2) Advertising influence on the formation of a positive attitude towards it;

3) The impact of advertising on the formation of intention to make contact with the company, to buy its goods.

Advertising campaigns:

The analysis of recent activities of brands «Домик в Деревне», «Простоквашино», «Агуша», will provide justification that one of the reasons why these brands sustain their commercial success is because they always ‘refresh’ the memory of consumers and remind them that their products are oriented to their needs. In addition, they participate in the organisation of important national festivals, and this, in its turn, is a good chance to spread awareness about the brand among thousands of people. Hence, the probability that more people will become aware of the brand and its product increases, as well as increases the trust of loyal consumers towards the brand. «Весёлый Молочник» stays out of the picture, and even if it has a very high quality of products in comparison to these three brands, people will doubt the fact of its brand product being good. Hence, consumers will probably think that if the brand doesn’t launch any advertising campaigns, there is no demand in this product. Thus, it cannot be good. In addition, they will lose interest in the products of «Весёлый Молочник», because advertisings of other brands will gain their attention by introducing profitable offers.

The brands «Домик в Деревне», «Простоквашино», «Агуша» constantly launch new advertising campaigns, especially during the important Russian holidays and festivals, which allows them to create stronger bonds with the consumers and spread awareness about the brand products. These campaign are very successful, because their aim is also to gain a foothold in the minds of consumers and always to remind them about the brand and its products.

Moreover, if the campaigns were not effective and couldn't benefit goals of the brand in spreading awareness and strengthening trust and loyalty towards it, the companies wouldn't have spent a lot of money on launching competitions, during which they hand out expensive prizes, and wouldn't have organized charity festivals in honor of national holidays. Thus, it means that the efforts bear fruit, and the advertising campaigns achieve their brand goals and sustain high consumer demand in the brand products.

Advertising campaigns of the brand «Домик в Деревне»:

1. Competition: "Your culinary talent"

From August 12 to September 11, 2015

Link to the website: <http://www.domik-v-derevne.com/smetana>

The Contest "Your culinary talent" is conducted by "Wimm-Bill-Dann" in order to attract the attention of consumers to the product under the trade name «Домик в Деревне.»

What was the purpose of the contest?

The purpose of the contest was to create unique online collage of favorite foods, using the main ingredient, which is a sour cream of the brand «Домик в Деревне.» The contest was designed in such a way that everyone, who has reached the age of 18, and who wanted to participate in the contest,

could easily do it, since it didn't require special knowledge or skills: all the participant needed was creativity and desire to demonstrate and share his/her talent with others.

Who can vote for the collages?

All registered users could give their voice for the collages they liked. In addition, if someone wanted to increase the number of votes and drew attention to his/her meal, he/she could share his/her culinary collage on the social websites, by selecting the appropriate icons: Fb, Ok, Vk.

It can be said that the voting process was a part of a good advertising strategy. A lot of people wanted to win, and for this reason, they shared their collages on the websites. By doing this, they raise people's awareness about the brand and its products. Moreover, those who click on the link of the website to support the participants, they might also have a desire to become a part of this contest. One of the reasons can be the attracting gifts, which were mentioned on the website. The participants had a chance to compete for 5 certificates for the cooking master-class (the price of the certificate is about 5 000 rubles) and the main prize - a refrigerator Bosch KGN39LW10R.

2. Special offer: «Домик в Деревне» gives gifts!

From August 10 to August 22, 2015

Prizes:

Cups - 5000 pcs.;

Potholders - 500 pcs.;

Towels - 700 pcs.;

Forms for baking - 1000 pcs.;

Beaters for shipping- 5000 pcs.;

Milk jugs - 6000 pcs.

Participation in the action:

To get a gift, it was necessary to buy any 3 products of the brand «Домик в Деревне" in the supermarkets of «Dixy» from December 01 to December 27, 2015, to save the check and come to the special centers. The office hours and the location of the centers were listed on the official website of «Домик в Деревне» as well as in the official page of «Домик в Деревне» in Vkontakte.

Link to the VK page: https://vk.com/domik_v_derevne?w=wall-64614537_3364

The placement of the advertisement in Vkontakte was a very rational decision, since in Russia it is very popular, and a lot of Russians do online shopping or learn about the product in social in social networks, because they spend most of their time there.

In her article «The most popular social networks in Russia», Ekaterina Frolova stated that according to the report of Mail.ru Group, a monthly audience of the social network VKontakte is 87 million

people. And in January 2016, only during a month, the site had been visited by a record number of users - 90 million (2016, July)³.

To understand how influential Vk is for Russian social network users, it is necessary to look at the graph, where there are listed countries in which Vkontakte is used. The graph includes the total number of registered accounts in each country, the country's population (according to 2013-2015), the proportion of coverage of the social network (in percentage terms)⁴.

Country	Number of Users	Population	Proportion of coverage of the social network (%)
Russia	90,7 mln	143,5 mln	63%
Ukraine	24,8 mln	45,5 mln	54%
Belarus	4,7 mln	9,46 mln	49%
Kazakhstan	8,6 mln	17,04 mln	50%
Azerbaijan	0,83 mln	9,41 mln	8%
Armenia	0,55 mln	2,97 mln	18%
Georgia	0,4 mln	4,47 mln	9%
Israel	0,23 mln	7,64 mln	3%

³ Frolova, E. (2016, July). The most popular social websites in Russia

⁴ Ibid., pp. 2-3

USA	1,9 mln	318,9 mln	0,5%
Germany	0,53 mln	80,62 mln	0,6%
Kyrgyzstan	0,45 mln	5,72 mln	7,8%
Latvia	0,32 mln	1,97 mln	16,2%
Lithuania	0,14 mln	2,95 mln	4,7%
Estonia	0,2 mln	1,28 mln	15,6%
Moldova	0,75 mln	3,55 mln	21,1%
Tajikistan	0,31 mln	8,16 mln	3,7%
Turkmenistan	0,2 mln	5 mln	4%
Uzbekistan	0,61 mln	30,2 mln	2%
Turkey	1,2 mln	74,93 mln	1,6%

It can be seen that in Russia, more than half of the population is using VK, thus there is a high probability that the advertisement will reach its potential consumers, who will share and spread the information to others, especially if there are about 60 000 users following the official page of «Домик в Деревне» in Vkontakte.

3. Special offer: «Try the real taste of Maslenitsa» («Maslenitsa» is a Russian traditional Festival, which comes from pagan times. Russian sing songs, dance, eat pancakes and see off winter)

From February 22 to April 16, 2016

Prizes:

Certificate in Internet shop OZON 500 rubles. - 400 pcs .;

Certificates Internet shop OZON 3000 rubles. - 5 pieces.;

Certificates Internet shop OZON 1000 rubles. - 10 pieces.

4. «Maslenitsa comes and brings gifts! Get a chance to win a trip to Sochi»

From February 24 to March 22, 2016

Another good marketing strategy introduced by the brand «Домик в Деревне» was the celebration of one of the favorite national holidays of Russians, which is «Maslenitsa» together with the people. Funny contests, games, workshops and, of course, hot tasty pancakes with sour cream- all these was available during the Festival, organized by «Домик в Деревне», which took place on 12-13 March in the central parks of Moscow, St. Petersburg and other major Russian cities .

Prizes:

The consumers had a chance to win a tourist certificate for 100 000 rubles for an unforgettable vacation in Sochi (total amount of certificates is 28). All they need is just to save their checks and register them on the website:

<http://www.domik-v-derevne.com/magnit>

5. Special offer: Ribbon of gifts from «Домик в Деревне»

From September 1 to October 15, 2016

Prizes:

The main prizes:

Car (Nissan Almera) - 1.;

Toaster - 1 pcs .;

Double boiler- 1 pcs.

Guaranteed prizes:

Cream, 480gr, 10% - 2000 pcs .;

Salad bowl with the logo «Домик в Деревне" - 2000 pcs .;

Dish for sour cream with the logo «Домик в Деревне" - 1380 pcs .;

Electric whisk with the logo «Домик в Деревне" - 1456 pcs .;

Form for baking - 150 pcs .;

Toaster - 35 pcs .;

Mixer - 35 pcs.

It is important to mention that the name of the brand written on the prizes not only gains attention of the consumers who win it as they constantly see the logo while using the specific thing , but also those who, for example, notice those prizes at someone's home. Thus, by using this strategy the brand «Домик в Деревне» succeeded in spreading awareness about itself and its brand products among wider audience.

Advertising campaigns of the brand «Простоквашино»

1. A famous Russian artist Nikolai Baskov and the company «Danone» launched a show, which was broadcasted on one of the Russian leading TV channels «STS»

Date: December, 2015

On the eve of the New Year the company Danone together with Havas Media agency and Havas Sports & Entertainment launched a project for the brand «Простоквашино» (Danone-Unimilk, 2015). During the month, as a part of the promotional campaign "Million from Простоквашино», Nikolai Baskov was giving away prizes to people.

Everyone had an opportunity to be the part of that campaign. Those who wanted to participate could register a promo code from dairy products of "Простоквашино" on the official website of «Простоквашино» and wait for the call from Baskov. During the life show on «STS» Nikolai Baskov was randomly calling to the lucky ones who have been selected among the participants who had registered codes, and offering them to participate in the lottery. The winners had an opportunity to win 50 000 rubles, 1 000 000 rubles or a car.

Link to the website:

<http://prostokvashino.ru/win-million/>

2. Special offer: Christmas tree with «Простоквашино»

From October 4 to December 18, 2016

Prizes:

Participants had a chance to win the tickets to the Christmas fairy show "Masha and the Bear + Three heroes" in CROCUS CITY HALL in Moscow. There were around 15 000 tickets.

Guaranteed gifts:

- 5 children's audio books available for download on the website litres.ru.
- One-time opportunity to visit an amusement park of "Простоквашино" in shopping centre "Crocus Expo»

Link to the website: <https://prostokvashino.ru/elka/>

3. Special offer: «Наше Простоквашино»

From December 2016 to February 2017

Link to the website: <http://prostokvashino.ru>

Advertising campaigns of the brand «Агуша»

1. Special offer «Агуша»: "New Year's gifts ship"

From December 15, 2015 to January 15, 2016

Prizes:

The main prize - a certificate for the journey (200 000 rubles);

Shopping Certificate in the shop "Кораблик" for 2000 rubles .;

100 rubles on the phone

Link to the website: <http://www.korablik.agulife.ru/#/>

2. Special offer: «Gifts to everyone»

From April 1 to June 30, 2016

Main prize - Tablet PC for children (10 tablets)

Guaranteed prizes:

For 50 codes - Toy piano;

30 codes - Toy phone;

Link to the website: <http://proactions.ru/actions/detskij-mir/agusha/priz-kazhdomu.html>

3. "Good prizes for joyful winter"

From 20 September to 31 October, 2016

Prizes:

The main prize: Certificate for the journey to Lapland;

Weekly prizes: Certificate for 3,000 rubles in «Спортмастер» (total number of certificates is 30);

Daily prizes: Certificate for 1500 rubles in "Спортмастер" (total number of certificates is 20)

Link to the website: <http://proactions.ru/actions/detskij-mir/agusha/agusha-poleznye-prizy-dlya-radostnoj-zimy.html>

4. Only pluses from «Агуша»

From September 15 to December 15, 2016

Main prizes:

Set of bags for Moms;

Developing game "World on a palm»

Guaranteed prizes:

70 codes - Combs for hair;

100 codes - Towels;

70 codes- Knee pads for crawling;

70 codes- Wooden maze;

100 codes - Toy piano;

70 codes - Children's cutlery set;

100 codes - Children's backpack.

Link to the website: <http://proactions.ru/actions/detskij-mir/agusha/kopi-kody-i-poluchaj-podarki.html>

It is necessary to mention that almost all advertising campaigns of «Агуша» involved distribution of guaranteed prizes for the participants.

5. Contest «Агуша»: "Sweet dreams"

From January 2 to February 5, 2017

To participate in the contest, the fathers and mothers needed to upload the photo of their sleeping baby in a funny position and then chose a beautiful frame for the photo with the logo of «Агуша». The most interesting about this campaign was that a lot of mothers shared photos with their babies in their websites, and this, in its turn, spread awareness among other people about the brand, the existence of this kind of campaign and opportunity to participate in it.

Prizes:

Certificate for 2 000 rubles in the shop «Кораблик».

Link to the website: <https://agulife.ru/contests/sweetdreams>

Research Findings and Analysis:

Tracking study analysis. First month results:

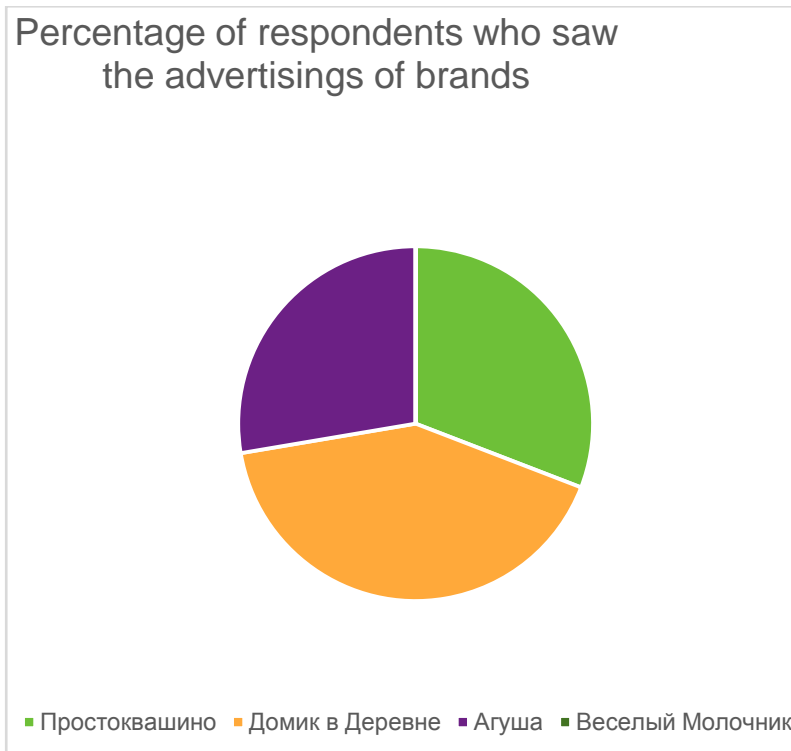


Table 1.

During the tracking study, the respondents were asked the question about advertisings of which brands of milk product they have seen during the last month. The answers of respondents were the following (see Table 1.): 97,5 % (39 out of 40) of respondents answered that they have seen the advertising of «Домик в Деревне» during the last month, 72,5% of them (29 out of 40) answered that they have also seen the advertising of «Простоквашино», 65% (26 out of 40 respondents) of them have seen the advertising of the brand «Агуша», and none of the respondents has seen the advertising of the brand «Веселый Молочник».

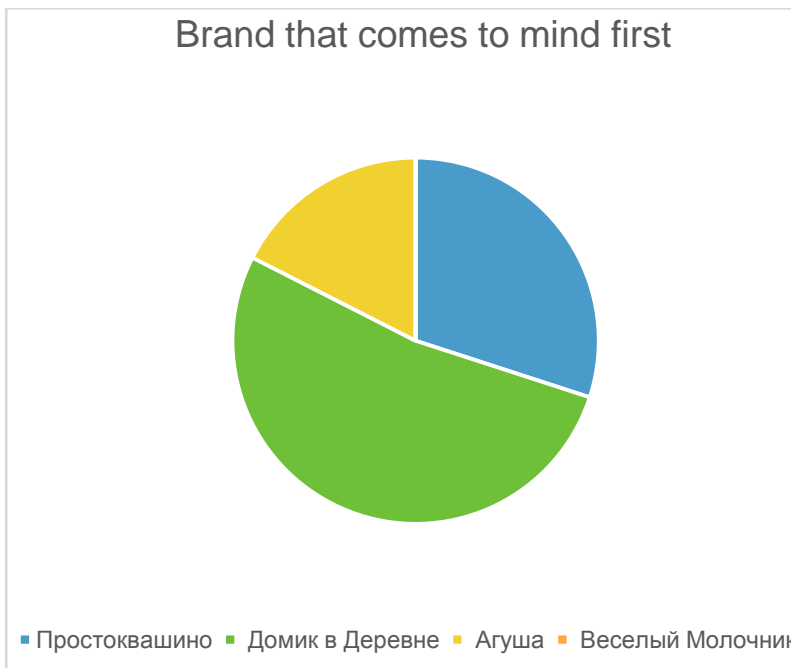


Table 2.

Another question that was asked to respondents in order to reveal the power of communicative efficiency of the brand advertising was: which brand comes to their mind first when people talk about brands? From the Table 2, one can see that more than half (52,5 %) of the respondents named the brand «Домик в Деревне», which shows that the brand succeeded in creating strong communicative bonds with its potential consumers and succeeded in understanding the emotional territory of target consumers. On the second place was «Простоквашино» - 30% of respondents named this brand, on the third place was «Агуша» with 17,5 % of responses. And again, the brand «Веселый Молочник» didn't recall any associations among consumers - 0% of respondents have chosen it.



Table 3.

In order to understand whether advertising awakens consumers' emotions and recall their association, which then can stimulate them to action, there were asked two correlated questions. The first question was: advertisement of which brand products made a good impression on consumers and cause to learn more about the product. If the consumer has a desire to learn more about the brand product, it means that he/she is getting closer to the purchasing stage, which is the main goal of advertising. While analyzing the results, I noticed a very interesting connection. The respondents who claimed that they remember the advertisings of particular brands product and they made a good impression on them also said that these advertisings caused them to gather more learn more that product. Hence, from this one can conclude that consumer are inclined to remember and learn more about the good which thanks to the successful advertisement recalled good associations and emotions. On the Table 3 one can see the results, which are the same for the two question, mentioned above. The results were the following: 38 out of out of 40 respondents (95%) answered that they remembered the advertising of «Домик в Деревне», which made good impression on them, and as a result of this they decided to enlarge their consumer knowledge about the product and learn more about it. Hence, in this case advertising was able to reach the emotional territory of target consumers by understating their needs and selling proper emotional connections. In regard to other brand, 30 respondents (75%) have also chosen «Простоквашино» as a brand that recalls good associa-

tions and stimulates action, and 27 respondents (67,5%) have also chosen «Агуша». Again, «Веселый Молочник» stays out of the picture. None of the respondents have reacted to this brand.

From the answers that the respondents have given, one can clearly see that «Домик в Деревне» occupies the leading position, and «Простоквашино» and «Агуша» remain a little bit back. Thus, to understand why certain brands, achieve commercial success and why others yield, this tracking study was carried out. The best way to find out what makes brands successful, is to measure the communicative efficiency of advertising.

To understand how much advertising is effective, the questions about the plot were asked. One of the questions was which symbols used in the commercials of the brands «Простоквашино» / «Домик в Деревне»/ «Веселый Молочник»/ «Агуша» helped consumer to remember the plot of the advertising? The respondents were give four options: symbol of motherhood, symbol of childhood, symbol of family ties and cartoon heroes. However, the answers of respondents regarding the same brand were different based on their individual perception of the main message of the advertising. In regard to the brand «Простоквашино», it was possible to divide the respondents into two groups: the consumers who recalled the symbol of childhood and the ones who recalled memories connected with the heroes of their favorite Soviet cartoon «Простоквашино». The highest number of respondents – 21 out of 40 respondents claimed that the symbol of childhood helped them to remember the plot of the advertising, while 9 respondents remembered the plot of the advertising thanks to the heroes of the cartoon. The remaining 10 respondents didn't give answers, regarding «Простоквашино», since they didn't remember the advertising of the brand product. It can be said that the both groups of respondents understood the main idea of the advertising, which is to promote the product by awakening memories from an early childhood. This is a very effective advertising tool, since a lot of people, be they Russian or non-Russian, have seen this cartoon, and they will not mind to plunge for few minutes into an atmosphere of childhood. Thus, Moreover, the target audience of this advertising are not only women, but also children, who probably will enjoy seeing famous characters from the cartoon more than just seeing grass and villages- typical 'mise-en-scene'

in milk advertisings. In regard to «Домик в Деревне», 38 out of 40 respondents (95%) answered that the symbol of family ties made them remember the plot of the advertising. Only two respondents didn't gave answers regarding «Домик в Деревне». From this, it can be concluded that the advertising clearly presented the necessary information about the product in a very accessible way and made it more tended towards the audience. In regard to «Агуша», 20 respondents (50%) claimed that they recall symbol of motherhood and 7 respondents (17, 5 %) said that the symbol of family ties made them remember the plot of the advertising. It can be said that that the respondents get the actual message of the advertising: since this brand product is designed specifically for mother, who have children aged 3-7, they usually wake up in the night to feed their children, give them milk, and sometimes even their husband wake up to help feed the child. And in this situation, «Агуша» makes easier this process of feeding a baby, so that even fathers themselves can do that themselves. Thus, «Агуша» is also a family product, which helps both parents to take care of their children and to sustain cozy atmosphere within their family.

During the analysis of the results of the tracking studies there was found another correlation between effective frequency and familiarity with the product. The respondents were asked question about how often they come across the advertising of the brands «Простоквашино» / «Домик в Деревне»/ «Веселый Молочник»/ «Агуша».

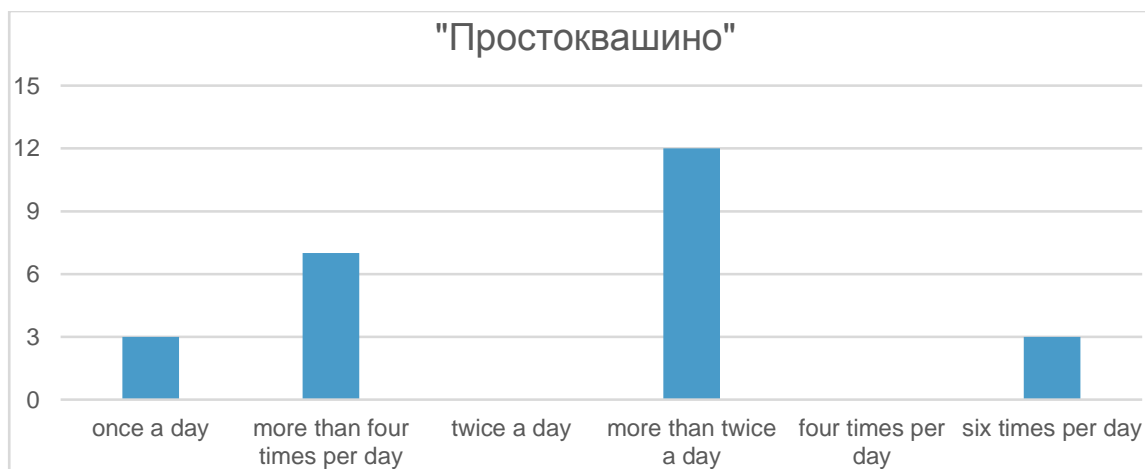
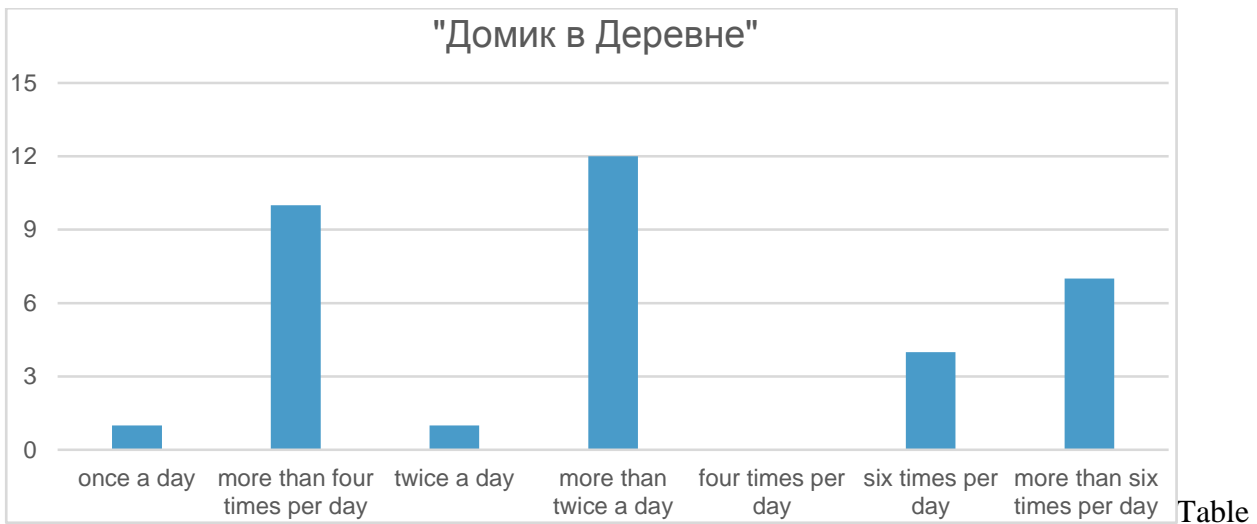


Table 4a.



4b.

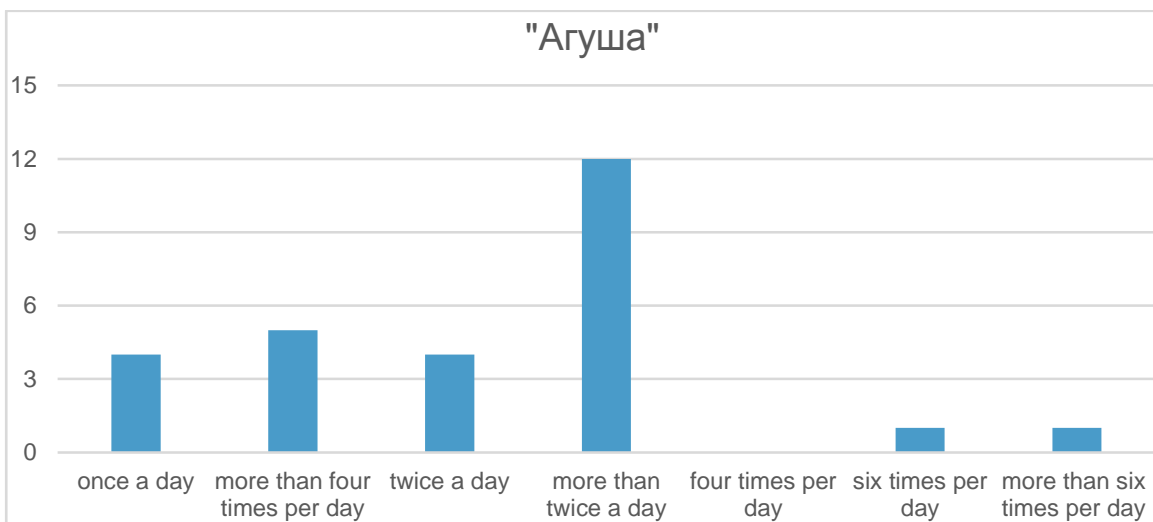


Table 4c.

While comparing the results of «effective frequency» based on the analysis of the graphs illustrated on the Table 4a, Table 4b and Table 4c, one can notice that consumers were exposed to the advertising of the brand «Домик в Деревне» more frequently than to the advertisements of the brands «Простоквашино» and «Агуша». Only two respondents answered that they came across the advertising of «Домик в Деревне» once a day, and the other two answered that they were exposed to it twice a day. However, the majority of the respondents were exposed to the brand advertising often enough to capture all the necessary information and details about the brand. Twelve respondents

answered that they are exposed to the advertising more than twice a day, while ten of them answered that they are exposed more than four times per day. The answers of the remaining part of participants were promising: four of them answered that they are exposed to the ad of «Домик в Деревне» six times per day and seven respondents answered that they are exposed to the ad more than six times per day. In comparison to «Домик в Деревне», the rate of 'effective frequency' of «Простоквашино» is lower: twelve respondents answered that they are being exposed to the brand advertising more than twice of them, seven of them answered that they are exposed more than four times per day. Three respondents answered that they are being exposed to the ad once a day, which is not an effective result. Compared to «Домик в Деревне», the 'high frequency' of exposure is lower: only three of respondents answered that they are being exposed to the ad for three times per day and the other three answered that they are being exposed more than six times per day. In regard to «Агуша», it gives way to the brands mentioned above. The rates of 'low frequency' of exposure are higher and the rates of 'high frequency' of exposure are lower: four participants answered that they are being exposed to the advertising of «Агуша» once a day, the other four answered that they are being exposed to the brand advertising twice a day; only one respondent answered that she is being exposed to the ad six times per day and another participant's (1 respondent) answer was 'more than six times per day'.

As a matter of fact, if consumers are exposed to the advertising only once- this will rarely give tangible results. Exposure to the advertising twice is unproductive. A man often ignores what appears to him once. The event may be taken as accidental, not worthy of attention. However, if something happens repeatedly, it goes into the category of systematic or frequent that is something worth thinking about. During repetitions occurs the process of accumulation of information which can trigger a reaction at a certain point. This is called a cumulative effect of advertising. According to Weilbacher (1984), the consumer perceives the advertising quality only after the third exposure. To achieve memorization, advertisers are sure to use repetitions, since all the new information is gradually replacing the old one. People forget advertising as long as they see it again. Obviously,

the more often target audience is exposed to the advertising, the longer the product is imprinted in the memory. Accordingly, the chances that a consumer will purchase the familiar product once he/she meets it are high. Thus, it can be said that the reason why the major part of the respondents claimed that they remembered the plot of the advertising of «Домик в Деревне», which made a good impression on them, and as a result they decided to learn more about it, can be the high frequency of exposure, which is an important factor for sustaining commercial success. Advertising often has to be repeated in order to withstand the advertising of competitors. If the advertiser does not place the announcement, the buyers will respond to the offer of another company- a good example is «Веселый Молочник», which stopped its promotional activities and as a result lost most of its potential consumers.

To achieve the brand's goal and succeed in selling the product, it is important for the advertiser to be sure that its offer has reached the consumer as soon as possible in order to motivate him/her to make a decision in favor of its brand product. Some people come to a decision today, some- tomorrow, others the day after tomorrow and so on. Therefore, the advertising must be repeated again and again, so that the probability that target consumers come across the advertising will be high.

As it was mentioned above there was a found correlation between the familiarity with the brand and the 'effective frequency'. During the tracking study the respondents were asked the question of how well they are familiar with the following four brands. The participants had 4 options of answers: 'I consume it every day', 'I just have a general information about the brand', 'I don't use this brand product', 'I used it for several times'. During the thematic analysis it was found out that the brand «Домик в Деревне» has higher frequency of exposure compared to the other brands, and when the consumers were asked the question about the familiarity with this brand it was found out that 62,5% (25 out of 40 respondents) of participants consume the product of the brand «Домик в Деревне» every day, and 35% (14 respondents) used it for several times, and only 1 respondent said that she doesn't use it. One can see that the brand has increased consumer loyalty, since more than half of the respondents consume it regularly. Hence, it can be said that frequency of exposure

is one of the factors that can influence the decision of consumers. In regard to «Простоквашино», it has lower frequency rate compared to «Домик в Деревне», and the level of familiarity is also lower: 37,5% of respondents (15 people) claimed that they use the brand product every day, 47,5% of them (19 people) said that they used it for several times, while 12,5% of the respondents (5 respondents) claimed that they don't use this brand product at all. In regard to «Агуша», the results are also lower than in comparison to «Домик в Деревне»: 45% (18 out of 40 participants) of respondents said that they also consume this brand product every day, 42,5% (17 people) claimed that they used it for several times, while 10% (4 people) claimed that they don't use it at all. The brand «Веселый Молочник» is a vivid example of how the lack of advertising exposure can affect consumers' buying motives: 80% (32 out of 40) of the respondents claimed that they don't use this brand product at all, while 20 % (8 respondents) claimed that they have just general information about the brand. Thus, it is true that each consumer pays a lot of attention to the quality of the product but if there is no any promotional activity that can gain the interest of the consumers they doubt the fact of this product being demanded and good enough, because it doesn't achieve a commercial success in the market. Consumers prefer buying the products, the quality of which does not cause any doubts. Often, such a guarantee for the buyer is a brand name, which is familiar to them thanks to the successful advertising campaign.

Another answer that was received during the tracking is how consumers characterize the advertisements of the brand products with only one word. This allows distinguishing, which associations the brand recalls among consumers. In regard to the advertising of «Простоквашино», 11 participants (27,5 %) characterized it as creative, 8 of them (20%) of described it as entertaining and the remaining three respondents characterized it as funny (2,5%), exciting (2,5%) and unique (2,5%). It can be concluded that target group of «Простоквашино» mostly associates the brand with creativity and entertainment. This is because the advertising differs from the standard advertising of milk, in which there are being presented cows, villages, families and etc.: it uses 'humorous approach' and involves the heroes from the famous Soviet cartoon, which a lot of people, especially children

and adults, recognize, associate themselves with them and even love. In regard to «Домик в Деревне», 26 respondents (65%) described the ad as emotional, 6 of them (15%) as pleasant and 5 (12,5%) of them as meaningful. It can be seen that the advertiser used an ‘emotional method’ of influence to affect the hidden corners of our soul and recall the sense of belonging to the family. And this happens because one can find care, presence of natural products in the ad of «Домик в Деревне», because ‘mise-en-scene’ illustrates grandmother’s home, which is far from the noisy city, which lacks healthy and organic food. In regard to the advertising of the brand «Агуша»: 17 participants (42,5%) claimed that they found the ad of the brand sincere and 10 of them (25%) described the ad as meaningful. «Агуша» is designed specifically for children, and the advertising could have been only about the importance of choosing natural product for children, but participants described it as meaningful and sincere, because «Агуша» features in the ad not only mothers but also fathers, which strengthens the importance of participation of both parents in the life of a child, especially in his feeding. In this advertising, it is also used an ‘emotional method’ of influence on consumers. It can be seen that the brands use different approaches to implement their brand goals, and these different approaches allow consumer to form individual opinion about the brand and distinguish him among others. For example, a ‘mise-en-scene’ in advertisings of both brands «Домик в Деревне» and «Простоквашино» is the same, to be precise the events take place in the village. However, «Простоквашино» involves heroes from the cartoon, and «Домик в Деревне» draws a link between the village and the city to concentrate attention of consumers on the fact that «in the city we can also feel rural naturalness and grandmother's care». «Домик в Деревне» uses the image of ‘grandmother’ a symbol of care that is transferred from generation to generation. While analyzing the results one interesting question can appear in the mind: if the events in the advertisings of two brands, namely «Домик в Деревне» and «Простоквашино», occur in the same geographical location, to be precise in a village home, why the majority of consumers give preference to «Домик в Деревне» and «Простоквашино» gives way to it? The answer can be that while using a creative approach to promote a product, and using famous heroes from the cartoon, the advertiser can divert

attention from the brand to the heroes. The cartoon already has a specific plot, and while watching the brand advertising we can concentrate our attention on remembering the cartoon and associating the heroes with it, and forgetting what actually was happening in the ad and what is special about the product. When the consumers were asked the question advertising of which milk brand they like most of all and what is special about the advertisings of that particular brand, the answers of participants, who named «Домик в Деревне», were because of naturalness of the product (this was the answer of 10 respondents) and the use of symbols of family ties and care (answer of 11 respondent), while the respondents, who have chosen «Простоквашино», said they liked the ad mostly because it featured the cartoon heroes (answer of 11 participants) and it was creative (the answer of one participant). The brand «Домик в Деревне» held the first place and 21 respondents out of 40 claimed that they liked the advertising of this brand, on the second place was «Простоквашино»- 12 respondents have chosen it, and on the third place was «Агуша» with 7 responses. One can see that the respondents who have chosen «Простоквашино» said nothing about how advertising revealed the characteristics of the product: its quality, naturalness, their choice was simply based on the factor of creativity. While the respondents, who have chosen «Домик в Деревне», did so because of the way advertising introduced the quality of the product and its importance for consumers.

Another interesting point, which is necessary to discuss based on the tracking study is why the brand «Веселый Молочник» yields another brands. To prove the hypothesis that absence of advertising can affect the decision of consumers and make them doubt the fact of the brand product being good, the respondents were asked to comment on what like/dislike more in milk product if competitor brands compared to the products of the brand «Домик в Деревне», «Простоквашино», «Веселый Молочник» and «Агуша», and 14 respondents (35%) claimed that they don't notice the ads of the brand «Веселый Молочник». They say that now a lot of people are not aware of this brand but if we go back to 2000s it was one of the most popular brands that achieved commercial success; now people don't use this brand product even though it has a good quality and this hap-

pened because of lack of trust towards the brand, which is a result of absence of any promotional activities.

In order to understand the level of communicative efficiency of brands and measure level of consumer loyalty towards the brands, the participants were asked if the following question: «If the brand «Домик в Деревне», «Простоквашино», «Веселый Молочник» or «Агуша» is going to launch a new product, what is the likelihood that you will choose its product instead of the products of the competitors». In regard to «Домик в Деревне», 11 respondents answered that probability that they will choose the product launch by this brand is 100%, 13 respondents answered that the probability that they will buy another product of this brand is 60-99%, another 13 respondents answer was 40-59%, and 3 respondents answered that the probability that they will chose that new product of the same brand is 1-9%. In regard to «Простоквашино», the results were the following: 4 responders answered that they will choose that new product for 100%, 7 of them answered that the probability is 60-99%, the answer of 21 participants was 40-59% , 7 participants claimed that the probability of them choosing new product is 1-9%. In regard to «Агуша», only 3 respondents claimed that they will buy that new product for 100%, while 13 respondents claimed that the probability that they will choose the new product launched by «Агуша» is 1-9%, the answer of 4 respondents was 60-99%, 12 respondents answered that the probability of them choosing the new product is 40-59%, the answer of remaining 8 respondents was 10-39%. In regard to «Веселый Молочник», the answers of all respondents were similar: 40 out of 40 respondents claimed that the probability of them choosing a new product launched by «Веселый Молочник» is 1-9%. Thus, based on the results of the respondents it can be said that the level of consumer loyalty towards the brand «Домик в Деревне» is higher in comparison to the other brands, since the majority of consumers claimed that the advertising of this brand made a good impression on them, and as a result they want to learn more about it, also the level of familiarity with the brand is also high (62,5% claimed that they use this brand product ‘every day’), and, in addition to this, the probability that

the consumers will buy a new product launch by this brand is significantly higher (only 3 participants answered that the probability of them choosing new product launch by this brand is 1-9%, the average result of the remaining respondents was 60%). The success of the brand «Домик в Деревне» depends on the fact that it won rational preference of consumers by stimulating high degree of satisfaction and delight from the product, as well as strengthened emotional attachment to the brand, which is an important factor for sustaining consumer loyalty. The failure of the brand «Веселый Молочник» can be explained by the fact that it lacks any promotional activity that can earn the trust of consumers and form a positive attitude towards the brand.

Tracking study analysis. Second month results.

The second wave of the study was conducted a month after the first wave of the study. The same group of respondents was involved in the survey, namely women aged 25-56.

To detect the shifts in perception of consumers, the participants were given the same paper-based questionnaire. In order to reveal *whether they started to pay more attention to the brands, which seemed unfamiliar before*, the participants were asked to write down the names of the brands of milk products, the advertisings of which they have seen during the last month. The answers of the respondents were the following: 100% of respondents answered that they have seen the advertising of the brand «Домик в Деревне» during the last month, 90% of respondents (36 out of 40 participants) answered that they have also seen the ad of «Простоквашино» and 72,5% of them (29 out of 40) answered that they have seen the ad of «Агуша». In regard to «Веселый Молочник», none of the respondents have the ad of this product brand during the last month. Compared to the results of the first month, the respondents are doing rather very well: the results of «Домик в

«Деревне» increased by 2,5%, the results of «Простоквашино» by 18,5% and the results of «Агуша» increased by 7,5%.

To find out how well the respondents remember the ads of the brand they saw, the question about the plot of the advertisings was asked. On the question if the consumers remember the plot of the commercials of the brands «Простоквашино», «Домик в Деревне», «Агуша» and «Веселый Молочник», 40 respondents answered that they remembered the plot of the advertising of «Домик в Деревне», 36 of them answered that they also remember the plot of the ad of «Простоквашино» and 29 respondents answered that they remember the plot of the ad of «Агуша». The results in regard to «Веселый Молочник» didn't change- again 0% of respondents answered that they remember the plot of the ad of this brand product.

In order to understand *whether the advertisings, to which consumers started to pay attention awaken their emotions and recalled associations, which in its turn can provoke actions*, the participants were asked two correlated questions about whether advertising made a good impression on them and whether it made them learn more about particular brand product. As it was already mentioned above, the impressions, which consumers have from the advertisings of the brand products, stimulate potential clients to enlarge their consumer knowledge, since they become interested in whatever reaches their 'emotional territory'. Thus, if the ad is imprinted in the memory of the consumer, the probability that he/she will want to get acquainted with the product more is high. From the results of the respondents that were the same for two questions, one can see that 100% of respondents claimed that they remembered the advertising of «Домик в Деревне», which made a good impression on them, and as result they decided to gather more information about that brand product. In regard to «Простоквашино», 36 of them said that the ad of this brand also made them want to learn more about the product of «Простоквашино», since it made a good impression on them. In regard to «Агуша», 29 participants claimed that the advertising of this product brand made

them to enlarge consumer knowledge. It is interesting to notice that «Веселый Молочник» is again staying out of the picture. Respondents doesn't feel any emotional connection with «Веселый Молочник», and as a result they lose desire to learn and get more information about the brand product.

One can clearly see that consumers started to pay attention and notice the ads of the brands they didn't see before, and this means that there is a probability that *they can fulfil with desire to try the products of those brands*. To check whether this assumption is true or not, another question that was asked to participants in order to reveal the changes in their perception was the question about the familiarity with the brand product. The importance of asking of this question is that it is necessary to understand *whether consumers started to consume the products, which they actually didn't use before*. The results were quite interesting, because some of the respondents who claimed that they used the certain brand product all in all for several times during the first month of study, now claim that they start to consume it. During the first wave of the study, 14 respondents claimed that they just tried the product of the brand «Домик в Деревне» for several times, but now five of them started to consume this brand product, and the number of people who are consuming «Домик в Деревне», be it regular consumption or consumers just started to trying the product, increased. In regard to «Простоквашино», 19 respondents claimed that just used the product of this brand for several time but now 8 of them started to consume it. Thus, the number of consumers who started to consume «Простоквашино» regularly or who just begin to frequently consume it increased. It is important to notice, that compared to the first month of the study, the level of consumer loyalty of each of brands didn't decrease- the number of consumers who consumed their favorite brand products every day remained the same. However, *if before consumers limited their consumption to particular brand, now they begin to consider other brands as possible options and consume also them*.

Thus, based on the answers above one question can arise in mind: if more people start to notice the advertisings of the brands which before were unfamiliar, if now people started to consume products of brands, which before they tried just several times, *can we assume that they can shift their choice from one product to another?* To find an answer, consumers were asked a number of questions to check their consumer loyalty. One of these questions was: «When I talk about brands, which brand comes to your mind first? ». The answers of consumers were similar to the answers they have given during the first month of the tracking study: still more than half -52,5% of respondents claimed that «Домик в Деревне» comes to their mind first, 30% of respondents named «Простоквашино» and 17,5% of respondents named «Агуша». One can see that despite the fact that the consumer started to pay more attention to the advertisings of the brands they didn't notice before, they still give preference to the brands they have been loyal to.

Another question that helps to reveal whether or not consumers stayed loyal to their favorite brands was *'advertising of which milk brand consumers like most of all'*. Compared to the first month, the results of the respondents were also similar: 19 out of 40 respondents claimed that they like advertising of the brand «Домик в Деревне», 15 respondents claimed that they like the ad of «Простоквашино», and the remaining 6 respondents claimed that they like the ads of «Агуша» most of all. Since the answers of the consumers didn't change this means that stayed loyal to the products they regularly consume. However, *there are still noticed some changes in percentage of possible future purchases and shifts in the level of awareness.* The respondents were asked the question: if the brand «Домик в Деревне»/ «Простоквашино»/«Агуша» /«Веселый Молочник» is going to launch a new product, what is the likelihood that they will choose its product instead of the products of its competitors? In regard to «Домик в Деревне», 15 respondents claimed that the probability that they will choose the new product launched by this brand is 100%, 14 respondents claimed that the probability of them choosing the new product of «Домик в Деревне» is 60-99%, the answer of remaining 11 respondents was- 40-59%, and none of the respondents claimed that the probability of them choosing the new product of «Домик в Деревне» can be lower than 40%,

which is a very good result, especially compared to the first month, when 3 respondents claimed that the probability that they will choose the new product of this brand is 1-9%. In regard to «Простоквашино», the results are rather promising: the number of respondents, who claimed that the probability of them using the new product of «Простоквашино» is 1-9%, decreased nearly twice (instead of 7 respondents, now such result was given by 3 respondents), while the number of respondents, who claimed that the probability that they will use that new product is more than 50%, increased: the answer, given by 7 respondents was- 100%, 15 respondents answered that the probability that they will use that new brand product is 60-99%, and the answer, given by 14 respondents was 40-59%. In regard to «Агуша» and «Веселый Молочник», the overall 'picture' remained the same, since the results of the second month didn't differ so much from the results of the first month.

Another change was noticed in the level of awareness among the consumers. The results of 'effective frequency' of both brands, namely «Домик в Деревне» and «Простоквашино» significantly increased. As it was already mentioned during the first month of the tracking study, exposure to the advertising once or twice is unproductive; the consumer perceives the advertising quality only after the third exposure. Thus while analyzing the results of the second month, I paid attention to the results of respondents who have come across the advertising of the brands more than twice. In regard to «Домик в Деревне», the results were very promising. During the first months 10 respondents claimed that they come across the advertising of «Домик в Деревне» more than four times but now their number increased to 14; if during the first month, none of the respondents answered that they were exposed to the ad for 4 times per day, now their number is 5; during the second wave of the study number of respondents, who come across the ad of «Домик в Деревне» six times per day increased from 4 to 8. In regard to «Простоквашино», the number of respondents who come across the advertising of this brand product more than four times per day increased from 7 to 12 in comparison to the first wave of the study; if during the first wave of the study the number of respondents, who claimed that they come across the advertising of «Простоквашино» more than twice was 0, now their number is 5; the number of respondents who come across the brand advertis-

ing six times per day increased from 3 to 5 in comparison to the first month, the number of those exposed to the ad more than 6 times per day increased from 3 to 4. In regard to «Агуша» and «Веселый Молочник», there were no significant changes in perception of consumers.

While analyzing the results of the second wave of the tracking study, I took into account the fact that during the second wave of the research, answers to the questions about commercials, plots of the advertisements are better, as many participants in my tracking study started paying more attention to the advertisings of various brands, which before they even didn't notice. Thus, while analyzing the results, I considered the fact that if my respondents do significantly better while recognizing the advertising of various brands they didn't know before, it can be the consequence of my observation that affected the results (note that this phenomenon is called 'observer effect) and stimulated increased brand recognition and not the effect of a successful advertising only.

Thus, the analysis of tracking results during the first month helped me to figure out whether the advertising of particular brand was effective and highly influential for Russian consumers or not. In regard to the second wave of the study, the results, which showed that my respondents are doing better when recognizing the advertisings of different brands, provided justification for my thesis that Russian consumers are exposed to 'carryover effect', and some time should pass so that pay attention to particular brands and consider them as possible options for consumption, and only one, or two exposures to advertising are not enough for this. Thus, while answering on the questions of my study, they start to pay more attention to the advertisings, then they ask their friends about the brand products that were advertised in the commercials, read online consumer reports, and, by doing this they increase their consumer knowledge about advertisings and product brands, and only after this they decide whether they want to buy or not.

Tracking study analysis. Third month results.

The second wave of the study was conducted a month after the second wave of the study. The same group of respondents was involved in the survey, namely women aged 25-56. The participants were given the same paper-based questionnaire. The third wave of the study was conducted in order not only to track changes in consumers' perception but also to prove the argument that Russian consumers are exposed to 'carryover effect' and a certain period of time should pass to understand their behavior and buying motives.

In order to detect changes in brand awareness, respondents were asked the same question about the advertisements of milk that they have seen during the last month. The answers of the respondents were the following: 90% of respondents answered that they have seen the advertising of milk of «Простоквашино», 100% of them have seen the advertising of «Домик в Деревне», while 92, 5% of women have also seen the advertising of «Агуша». It is important to mention that compared to the second month of the study, the results of «Домик в Деревне» and «Простоквашино» remained the same, while the results of «Агуша» have increased by 20%, which are very promising results for «Агуша», because during the first month of the study the advertising of this brand product have seen 65% of respondents, during the second month -72, 5 % and now the results have also increased to 90%. In regard to «Веселый Молочник»- again 0% of respondents can remember to see the advertising of this brand product. During the tracking study, the consumers were answering on the same questions about 4 brands, and it is clear that after the study they began to pay more attention to those brands and probably even gather information about them. After the tracking study the awareness of those respondents who haven't seen the ad of «Агуша» (one of the reasons can be that they didn't actually pay attention to the advertising, since «Агуша» is oriented to specific target audience-women who have children.) increased. Hence, to track whether or not an increased level of awareness influenced other results, the respondents were asked the question about the plot of the advertisements. In regard to «Простоквашино», 36 respondents answered that they remember the plot of the advertising of the brand product, 40 of them remembered the advertising of «Домик

в Деревне», while 35 women also remembered the plot of the advertising of «Агуша». None of the respondents recalled the advertising of «Агуша». The results of «Домик в Деревне», compared to the first and second months of the study, remained nearly the same: during the first month only 2 participants couldn't remember the plot of the brand advertising but during the second third waves all of respondents recalled the advertising of «Домик в Деревне». In regard to «Простоквашино», the results have significantly increased, compared to the first month. During the first wave of the study- 30 respondents answered that they remember the plot of the ad of «Простоквашино», while during the second and third waves of the study their number increased to 36. In regard to «Агуша», the level of advertising recognition has also increased: during the first month 27 respondents answered that they remember the advertising of the this brand product, during the second wave of the study 29 women recalled the advertising of «Агуша», while during the third month their number increased to 35 women.

As one can see during the third wave of the study the number of respondents, who became more aware of the brand products, which before seemed to be unfamiliar to them, increased and they started to pay more attention to those brand products. In order to understand *whether the advertisements, which often appear in consumers' field of view, awaken consumers' emotions and recall good associations, which in turn can stimulate actions*, the participants were asked two correlated questions about whether advertising made a good impression on them and whether it made them learn more about particular brand product. As it was already mentioned, the impression that consumer has from the advertisings of the brand product can be a powerful stimulant for customers to enlarge their consumer knowledge, since they become interested in the advertising that establishes strong 'emotional and meaningful connections' with them. Thus, if the ad is imprinted in the memory of the consumer, the probability that he/she will want to learn more about the product increases. The results that the respondents have given are the same for two questions: 100% of respondents, 40 out of 40 participants, claimed that they remembered the advertising of «Домик в Деревне», which made a good impression on them, and as result they decided to learn more about

that brand product (the results remained the same, compared to the second month of the tracking study). In regard to «Простоквашино», 36 respondents claimed that the ad of this brand also made them want to learn more about the product of «Простоквашино», since it made a good impression on them (the results remained the same, compared to the second month of the tracking study). In regard to «Агуша», the results have significantly changed: the number of participants, who claimed that the advertising of this product brand made them to enlarge consumer knowledge, increased during the second month from 27 to 29 and during the third month from 29 to 37. One can see that after two month, respondents' attitude towards «Агуша» has changes and they become more predisposed in its favor. In regard to «Веселый Молочник», the respondents didn't give any answer. The reason for this can be that «Веселый Молочник» doesn't reach the emotional territory of consumers and doesn't succeed in establishing strong communicative bonds with them. As a result consumers lose desire to enlarge their knowledge about this brand product.

As one can notice the level of brand awareness of respondents has increased in comparison to the first and second months of the study, and participants started to notice the advertisings of the brands they didn't see before. Thus, what is the probability that the buyers will want to try to consume the brand products, which are familiar to them? To check the veracity of this assumption, the participants were asked the question about the familiarity with the brand product. The results will help to track whether consumers achieved the purchasing stage and tried the products, which before they even wouldn't have considered. In regard to brands «Домик в Деревне» , «Простоквашино» and «Агуша»: the only change was in the number of respondents, who claimed that they started to consume the brand product, about which before they just had a general info: the number of people who started to consume «Домик в Деревне» increased from 5 to 6, the number of respondents who started to consume «Простоквашино» increased from 8 to 8, and the number of respondents, who started to consume «Агуша» increased from 1 to 2. However, there is a change in the results of the respondents in regard to «Веселый Молочник»: if before during the two months the respondents were ignorant towards this brand product, and all of them answered that they don't use it, now 27 of

them claimed that they have general information about the brand product. This means that the tracking study affected their consumer curiosity and they probably decided to get acquainted with «Веселый Молочник» from other sources rather than advertising. Hence, one can notice change in the behavior of Russian consumers: while filling out the survey, most of the respondents didn't know much information about certain brands, except of the ones they regularly consume, thus they decided to get some basic information about the brand in order to fill the gap in their consumer knowledge. Thus, one may assume that even though the respondents weren't exposed to the advertising, they were constantly seeing the brand name while filling out the survey, and this *visual memory can be a good stimulant for awakening consumer curiosity, because it is also a way to spread awareness about the existence of brand and its products*. And if «Веселый Молочник» have launched good advertising campaigns, it could have earned the trust of consumer and compete on a par with other brands.

Since increased brand recognition can be a reason for shifting from one brand to another, the respondents were asked number of questions to measure their loyalty. One of the questions was: «When I talk about brands, which brand comes to your mind first? ». The answers of consumers remained similar as during the first and second months of the tracking study: 52, 5% of respondents claimed that «Домик в Деревне» comes to their mind first, 30% of respondents named «Простоквашино» and 17,5% of respondents named «Агуша». Thus, even though consumers started to notice advertisings, which before seemed to be unfamiliar, One can see that despite the fact that the consumer started to pay more attention to the advertisings of the brand products they didn't notice before and even some started to consume those products, they still give preference to the brands they have been loyal to. To prove that consumers stayed loyal to their favorite brands, the consumers were asked another question: '*advertising of which milk brand consumers like most of all*'. The results of the respondents are similar to the results of the first and second months: 19 respondents claimed that they prefer the advertising of the brand «Домик в Деревне», 15 of them claimed that they like the ad of «Простоквашино», and the remaining 6 respondents claimed that

they like the ads of «Агуша» most of all. Since the answers consumers have given remained similar, this means that they stayed loyal to the products they regularly consume.

However, *some changes in percentage of possible future purchases and shifts in the level of awareness are noticed.* The respondents were asked the question: if the brand «Домик в Деревне»/ «Простоквашино»/«Агуша» /«Веселый Молочник» is going to launch a new product, what is the likelihood that they will choose its product instead of the products of its competitors? In regard to «Домик в Деревне», the number of respondents, who claimed that the probability of them choosing the new product launched by this brand is 100%, increased from 15 to 19 in comparison to the the second wave of the study. The number of respondents who will choose the new product of «Домик в Деревне» for 60-99% increased from 14 to 18, and the number of respondents who will choose that new brand product for 40-59% decreased from 11 to 3, which is a good result in this case, because most of the consumers became more confident in their decisions and now the probability that they will choose exactly «Домик в Деревне» increased more in comparison to other brand products. None of the respondents claimed that the probability of them choosing the new product launched by this brand can be lower than 40%. Thus, «Домик в Деревне» didn't lose its loyal consumers. In regard to «Простоквашино», the results are also very promising: the number of respondents, who claimed that the probability of them choosing the new product launched by this brand is 1-9%, didn't increase, while the number of participants, who said that the probability of them choosing the new brand product is 100%, increased from 7 to 12. In regard to «Агуша», there noticed significant changes in the answers of respondents: the number of women, who claimed that the probability that they will choose a new product launched by «Агуша» is 40-59, increased from 14 to 26, while the number of those, who claimed that the probability that they will use this new brand product is 1-9%, decreased from 10 to 3. Hence, it can be said that during the tracking study consumers were often exposed to the brand name and that probably made them enlarge their consumer knowledge, which in its turn strengthened their consumer trust. In regard to «Веселый

Молочник», the overall ‘picture’ remained the same, however some change can be noticed: if before all the respondents claimed that the probability of them choosing a new product launched by «Веселый Молочник» is 1-9% (the results were the same for the first and second months), during the third month 6 respondents said that they will choose that brand product for 10-39%.

Another change was noticed in the level of awareness among the consumers. The results of ‘effective frequency’ of both brands, namely «Домик в Деревне» and «Простоквашино» significantly increased. As exposure to the advertising once or twice is unproductive, because the consumer perceives the advertising quality only after the third exposure. While analyzing the results of the tracking study, I paid attention to the answers of respondents who have come across the advertising of the brands more than twice (see Table 5a, Table 5b, Table 5c).

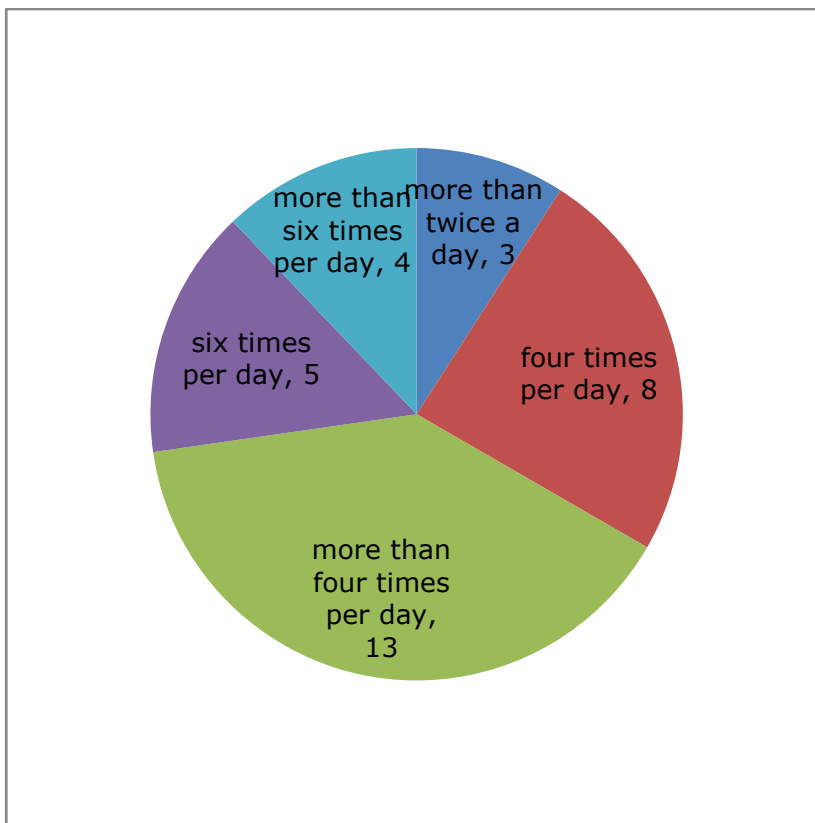


Table 5a.

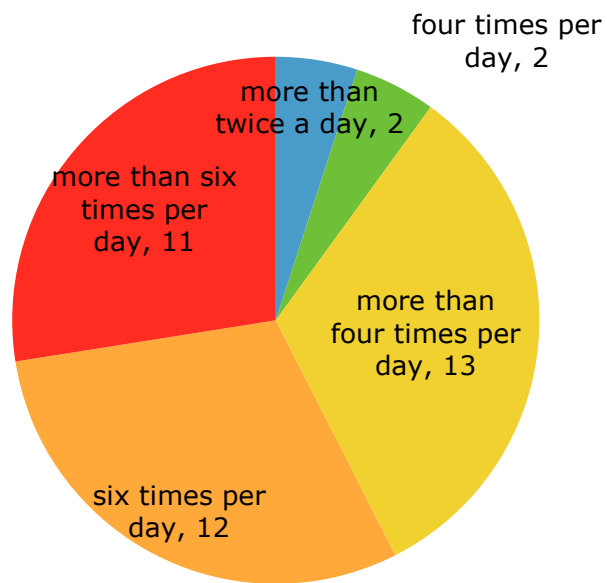


Table 5b.

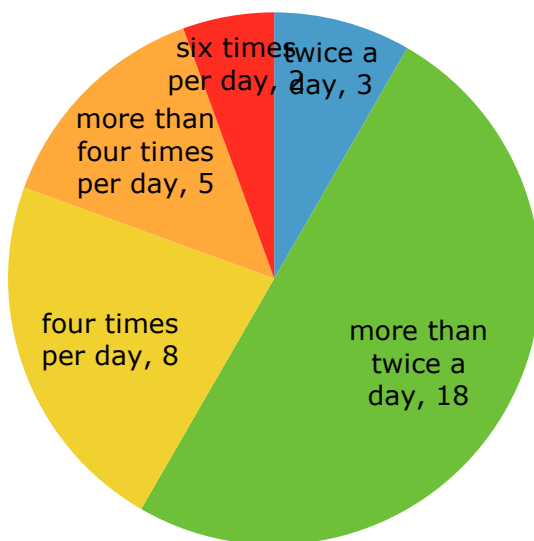


Table 5c.

In regard to «Домик в Деревне» (see Table 5b) , the number of respondents , who answered that they are exposed to the brand advertising more than six times per day, increased from 7 to 11, compared to the second month; number of those, who come across the ad six times per day, increased from 8 to 12; number of those, who come across the brand advertising more than four times, the other results of exposure remained the same as during the second month. One can see, that the level of ‘effective frequency’ of the brand advertising of «Домик в Деревне», and this is one of the reasons why the majority of the respondents give preference to it. In regard to «Простоквашино» (see Table 5a) , the overall picture remained the same, the only change was in the number of respondents, who come across the advertising of this brand product more than four times per day, which increased from 12 to 13. In regard to «Агуша», there were no significant changes in perception of consumers except of the number of respondents, whom claimed that they are exposed to the advertising of «Агуша» more than twice a day, which increased from 12 to 18.

Thus, one can see the results of the respondents show progress in recognition and purchase of brands: during the second wave of the study, the respondents started to recognize more the brands, which seemed unfamiliar for them during the first wave of the study. Moreover, during the third wave of the study, they started to consumer the brands, which they used just for several times in their lives. These shifts in behavior of Russian consumers can be explained by the following factors: as it was discussed earlier Russian consumers are exposed to the ‘carryover effect’ and they need time to consider unfamiliar brands for consumption. And as the analysis of the tracking study shows that the assumption about the rational attitude of Russian consumers towards purchasing, which underlines the fact that Russians don't refer to the type of consumers, who form their decisions spontaneously: after two month consumers enlarged their consumer knowledge of brands, started to consider most of the previously unknown brand products as a possible option for consumption. In addition, they started to recognize brand advertisings and notice more them on TV. Hence, if before even if they saw the advertising of the brand they didn't pay detailed attention to and, as a result, they didn't remember the plot and didn't consider it effective. However, after the

tracking study consumers started to notice the advertising and one of the reasons can be curiosity and desire to fulfil gaps in consumer knowledge. This provides justification for my thesis that Russian consumers are exposed to 'carryover effect', and some time should pass after they reach the purchasing effect, and only one, or two exposures to advertising are not enough for this.

In addition, the reason why my respondents did significantly better while recognizing the advertising of various brand product they didn't know before, can be the consequence of my observation that affected the results (note that this phenomenon is called 'observer effect) and stimulated increased brand recognition. The frequent exposure of respondents to the brand names of milk products made consumers imprint them in memory and, as a result, they started to identify these four brands. Moreover, while watching advertising on TV they unconsciously started to react to the advertising of the brand product, which has become familiar to them during the study. Thus, while answering the questions of my study, they started to pay more attention to the advertisings, then they asked their friends about the brand products that were advertised in the commercials, read online consumer reports, and, by doing this they increased their consumer knowledge about advertisings and product brands, and only after this they decided whether to buy or not. This justifies the idea that advertisers need to always refresh consumers' memory of brands and remind them of the brand products, so that they step over awareness stage and achieve purchasing stage. While analyzing the results, it was noticed that Russians are very loyal consumers and their level of consumer loyalty was increasing with each month, and this is because the brands such as «Домик в Деревне» and «Простоквашино», «Агуша» often launch advertising campaigns that attract consumers and sell emotional connections to them, which helps to establish good communicative relations. One can see that the more frequent participants were exposed to the advertisings the more they were inclined to buy that product. While, the example of «Веселый Молочник» shows how absence of advertising campaigns' lays the wall' between consumers and product and discourages consumers to consider this brand product. However, based on the comments of respondents, if the brand «Веселый Молочник» launches advertising campaigns and carries out any other promotional ac-

tivities, it can actually earn the love of consumers because of its quality, which, according to consumers, by no aspects concedes to the brands-competitors. Hence, as one can see even though the quality of «Веселый Молочник» is good, the absence of any activities makes consumers to give preferences to the brand products, whose offer is more beneficial to them. This provides justification for my thesis that the competitive advantage of most of them is sustained thanks to the successful implementation of advertising strategies, because this is the best way to focus the attention of consumers on the brand product.

Limitations and Avenues for Future Researches:

The main goal of this capstone project was to fulfil gaps of the previous researches conducted in regard to milk and dairy products sector and reveal the role of advertising in implementing the brand's goals by influencing consumers' buying motives and involving them into the club of 'loyal consumers'. It was found out that Russian consumers are very rational and they don't refer to the type of consumers who make spontaneous buying decisions. However, the tracking study showed that after a certain period of time shifts in consumer behavior were noticed, to be precise most consumers started to enlarge their consumer knowledge about brands, which before were unfamiliar to them and even started to consume them. This is because of frequent exposure to advertisings, which can be the result of 'observer effect' discussed earlier. Even though the correlation between effective frequency and the desire to buy product was found, it is still necessary to measure whether or not the level of loyalty of consumer decreases with the consumption of new products, which before were 'ignored' by them. For this, three month will be not enough and the researchers who want to create more precise image of Russian consumers and understand all possible shifts in their behavior, they need to carry out longitudinal study with a minimum period of 3 month, because exactly during the third month more changes in consumer behavior were noticed during my research.

In addition, during the tracking study there were involved 40 respondents, because it is difficult to find people who will participate in the research, which has a duration of three months. Hence, the researches will have a chance to involve in the research more women-respondents and classify them into groups: those who have children, husbands and those who are single. This will also allow noticing how the factor of 'having a family' influences on choosing the milk product. This is important since the needs of different target group vary. Thus, the research will help to notice differences in behavior of consumers that relate to different target groups and also to understand how different brands taking into account these differences come up with the strategies that will allow them to gain the interest and trust of these consumers.

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Appendices:

The sample of the questionnaire:

1. Advertisings of which brands of milk/dairy products have you seen during the last month?
2. When I talk about milk brands, which brand comes to your mind first?
3. How well are you familiar with milk products of the brand 1. «Простоквашино» / 2. «Домик в Деревне»/ 3. «Веселый Молочник»/ 4. «Агуша»?
 - a. I used it for several times, b. I consume it every day, c. I have just general info about the brand, d. I used it for several times
4. Do you remember the plot of the commercial of the brand 1. «Простоквашино» / 2. «Домик в Деревне»/ 3. «Веселый Молочник»/ 4. «Агуша»?
 - a. I used it for several times, b. I consume it every day, c. I have just general info about the brand, d. I used it for several times
5. Which of the following words is most associated with advertising of the brand 1. «Простоквашино» / 2. «Домик в Деревне»/ 3. «Веселый Молочник»/ 4. «Агуша»?
 - a. Creative, b. Emotional, c. Entertaining, d. Sincere, e. Meaningful, f. Attractive
6. Has the advertisement of milk of the brand «Простоквашино» / «Домик в Деревне»/ «Веселый Молочник»/ «Агуша» made a good impression on you?
7. Which symbols used in the commercials of the brand «Простоквашино» / «Домик в Деревне»/ «Веселый Молочник»/ «Агуша» helped you to remember the plot of the advertising?
 - a. Symbol of motherhood, b. Symbol of family ties, c. Symbol of childhood, d. Cartoon heroes
8. How often do you come across the advertising of milk of the brand «Простоквашино» / «Домик в Деревне»/ «Веселый Молочник»/ «Агуша»?
 - a. once a day, b. more than once a day, c. twice a day, d. more than twice a day, e. four times per day, f. more than four times per day, g. six times per day, h. more than six times per day
9. Was the main message of the advertising clear for you?
10. Did the advertising cause you to learn more about the milk product of the brand «Простоквашино» / «Домик в Деревне»/ «Веселый Молочник»/ «Агуша» and buy it? If yes, explain why?

11. Comments on what you like/dislike more in milk products of the competitor brands compared to the products of the brand «Простоквашино» / «Домик в Деревне»/ «Веселый Молочник»/ «Агуша»
12. Advertising of which milk brand do you like most of all?
13. What is more effective about the advertising of the brand mentioned earlier?
14. If the brand «Простоквашино» / «Домик в Деревне»/ «Веселый Молочник»/ «Агуша» is going to launch a new product, what is the likelihood that you will choose its product instead of the products of its competitors?
15. Age/Sex?