

Why Global Brands Change Meaning Across Markets

A new article from Human Centric Group explores how brands must adapt locally without losing identity.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- A new article published by [Human Centric Group](#) examines a challenge many international companies still underestimate: the same brand can mean completely different things in different markets.

Titled "[Lost in Translation: What 100 Flights a Year Taught Me About Brands](#)", the piece explores how global brands are often forced to adapt far beyond language when entering new countries. In many cases, they change their name, emotional positioning, retail role, or even the social meaning they carry for consumers.

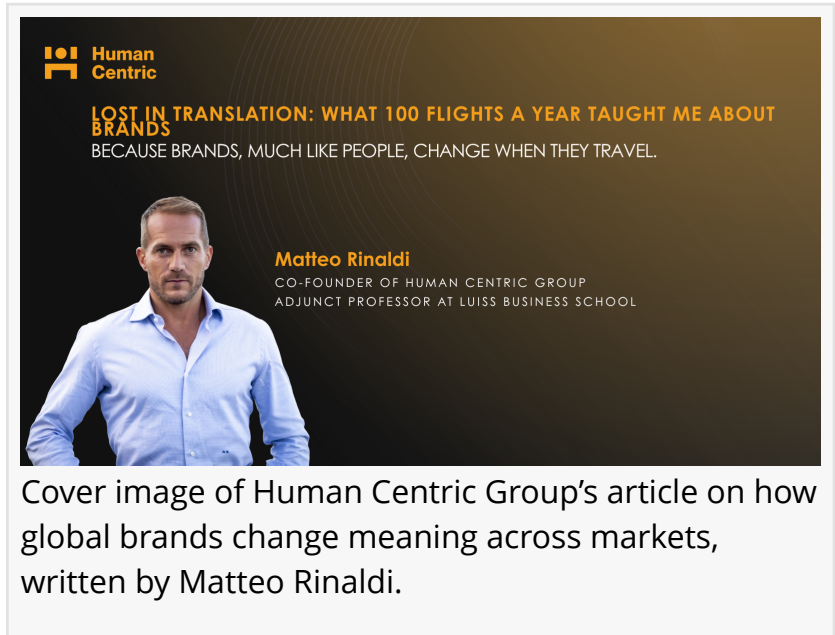
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Global growth does not come from copying what worked elsewhere. It comes from understanding what a brand means to people in each market.”

Matteo Rinaldi

The article draws on real examples from different markets to show how brand adaptation works in practice. Among them is Burger King operating as Hungry Jack's in Australia due to a naming conflict, Fila appearing as a more premium brand in Taipei than in Europe, and Müller positioning yogurt in Italy through indulgence and sensuality rather than health.

The article also highlights how product lines from the same company can vary significantly across countries. A high-protein dairy range, for instance, may appear under different names depending on the market, while the same product can be sold as functional nutrition in one country and as part of a broader lifestyle in another. Coca-Cola's Chinese name is presented as one of the clearest examples of adaptation done well: not a direct translation, but a version that creates local meaning while preserving brand recognizability.



Cover image of Human Centric Group's article on how global brands change meaning across markets, written by Matteo Rinaldi.

Beyond packaged goods, the article points out that the same principle applies to digital platforms, retail brands, and lifestyle products. What signals routine and practicality in one country may become aspirational or status-driven in another. The implication for marketers is clear: international growth is not simply about replicating a successful formula, but about understanding how culture, regulation, language, purchasing power, and social context reshape perception.

At the core of the article is a broader strategic message for business leaders and marketers. Brands do not succeed globally by being identical everywhere. They succeed by maintaining a recognizable identity while becoming locally relevant. Over-adapt, and the brand loses coherence. Under-adapt, and it risks becoming irrelevant.

The article argues that this tension is especially important in markets where consumers balance local values with global aspirations. In those environments, surface-level localization is rarely enough. What matters is understanding the motivations that drive behaviour in each context.

For companies expanding internationally, the piece offers a timely reminder that consumers do not simply buy products. They interpret symbols, rituals, status cues, and meanings through the lens of their own culture.

The full article is available on the Human Centric Group website.

Human Centric Group is a London-based boutique branding agency focused on [human-centric strategy](#). The company works with international brands to uncover the cultural and emotional



A selection of Coca-Cola products in China, illustrating how one of the world's most recognizable brands adapts naming, flavours, and formats to local market preferences.



Inside Fila's flagship store in Taipei, where the brand is presented with a more premium, fashion-forward feel than in many European markets.

drivers behind consumer behaviour, helping translate insight into brand growth across markets.

About the Author

Matteo Rinaldi is a Senior Marketing Strategy Consultant and Co-Founder of Human Centric Group, with global experience driving double-digit growth for brands like Danone, Carlsberg, Revlon, PepsiCo, and Visa. Having worked across multiple continents, he specializes in leveraging cultural insights for impactful brand strategies. A passionate educator, Matteo teaches marketing worldwide, shaping future industry leaders. Previously, he worked with L'Oréal and Coca-Cola HBC. He is also a best-selling author in marketing.

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