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# From Desire to Development? How Advertising Affects Sociocultural Evolution in Kampala, Uganda

Emily Saxe  
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# **From Desire to Development?**

## **How Advertising Affects Sociocultural Evolution in Kampala, Uganda**

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Wavah Broadcasting Station  
and  
School for International Training: Uganda  
Development Studies Program

Spring 2014

*Dedicated to*

Zach, Matt P, Isy, Matt K, Margaret, Jack, Cole, Ally, and Skye

*for their friendship and support on this grand adventure of ours.*

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**Abstract:**

My objectives for this report were to find out how advertisements affect sociocultural evolution (the enhancement or diminishing of development) in Kampala, Uganda. I also wanted to find out whether multinational corporations influence the aspirations of the urban population by promoting a Western lifestyle within their advertisements. To gather the information for this report, I interned at the WBS television network in Kampala for five weeks, and conducted interviews with employees there and at advertising agencies in the city. I found that companies that advertise on television affect Kampalan society in ways that are not always obvious. They contribute a huge amount of funding to networks via advertising, giving them leverage in what can and cannot be aired on the network. Advertisements can influence the desires, aspirations, and values of the public by promoting certain lifestyles over others. However, it is not usually to a company's benefit to impose a Western lifestyle on Kampalans through advertisements. Advertisements need to speak directly to the target audience, which only sometimes entails promoting Western values. Companies that put effort into conducting research on the target audience, and position their advertisements within appropriate contexts, tend to gain more consumers. Additionally, people who aspire to lead a life similar to the one portrayed in an advertisement may work harder to earn more income, in effect contributing to a capitalistic society. This is only effective, however, if the lifestyle seems realistically achievable for the target audience. Future research on this topic includes studying the effects of multinational corporations on capitalism, the extent to which companies are able to influence network programming and content, and how advertising research could be applied to other fields of development.

## Introduction:

*The impact of advertising on culture is difficult to measure. Generally, however, the media promotes a consumer-oriented lifestyle exhibited in its most advanced form in the industrialized capitalist world. The control of the media by multinationals prevents nations from preserving and reinforcing their own cultures (Lowe, 2010).*

Advertisements are inescapable in any major city, and that includes Kampala, Uganda's capital. Advertisements are everywhere: on billboards, in the newspapers, and on the radio. But advertisements even follow Kampalans into their own homes, at the dinner table, and during family time – on television. However, advertisements do not simply encourage people to buy a product. They also bear a message, promote a lifestyle (a way of living day-to-day), or otherwise incite the viewers to change their ways and improve their lives. Usually, the undertone is that by purchasing the product, one's lifestyle will be improved. But multinational corporations (MNCs) globally dominate the world of advertising, and have been known to push Western lifestyles through the promotion of their products. As advertisements are inescapable in the city and can alter people's desires, aspirations, and values, the types of lifestyles being portrayed through advertisements is a key question for development.

Advertisements have the potential to affect cultures either positively or negatively. They can enhance a culture, or ultimately change it based on the messages and images shown to the public. That is why this report focuses more on how advertisements affect the sociocultural evolution of Kampala, rather than development, as a central theme. The definition of "sociocultural evolution" is as follows:

Whereas sociocultural development traces processes that tend to increase the complexity of a society or culture, sociocultural evolution also considers

process that can lead to decreases in complexity (degeneration) or that can produce variation or proliferation without any seemingly significant changes in complexity (cladogenesis) Sociocultural evolution can be defined as "the process by which structural reorganization is affected through time, eventually producing a form or structure which is qualitatively different from the ancestral form ("sociocultural evolution").

"Global marketing" is defined as "[t]he process of conceptualizing and then conveying a final product or service worldwide with the hopes of reaching the international marketing community" ("global marketing"). Wafula (2012) explained in his article that global marketing is widely carried out by MNCs, which helps spread globalization. But Wafula cited Graeme Pitt, who stated "it is important for corporate decision makers to understand [local] consumer behavior and media consumption habits before they spend on media". According to Pitt, some MNCs have much larger advertising budgets, however, they may decide to use some to research the local culture before creating or airing an advertisement in that specific region. If they do not, they run the risk of wasting funds on an advertisement that is unappealing or simply not relevant to the lives of the would-be consumers (Wafula, 2012). In the end, it may not be in the best interest of MNCs to promote a Western lifestyle through their advertisements.

Therefore, advertisers conduct research on the Ugandan market in order to communicate effectively to Ugandans specifically, rather than assuming all that all audiences will respond to a globalized message. Patience Kiconco, head of the Marketing Department from the Wavah Broadcasting Station (WBS) television network in Kampala, explained that if the viewers cannot relate to or understand an advertisement, then it will

not yield positive results for the company. At the same time, advertisements need to incite a feeling in viewers that their lives will change for the better if they purchase the product. Therefore, a delicate balance must be struck: communicating with the viewers at their level both culturally and socio-economically, but also inspiring them to move up in society via consumption. Sometimes, this means promoting Western ideals in order to make a product seem foreign or trendy, not necessarily to instill the need to live a Western life (Kiconco, personal interview, April 17, 2014). This report explains the compromise that advertisers form between Western and Ugandan cultures in creating television advertisements to attract residents of Kampala to a product, the influence of advertisements in society, and how this affects sociocultural evolution in the city.

This report focuses on advertisements for products only. Infomercials and PSAs have been left out because the nature of these advertisements is mostly information based. Advertisements for products have more leeway for entertaining audiences and inciting a consumer culture that can be seen around the globe, plus, both local and international companies that create these advertisements tend to be more competitive in gaining a consumer base. I am looking at how these companies push their messages harder to be heard over all the others, thus affecting the lives of those exposed to them. I also do not delve into the question of whether or not MNCs drive out local businesses from the market. I focus more on the messages within the advertisements and how these could potentially affect the social or cultural development of Kampalans.

## Background

*“What is needed for successful international advertising is a global commitment to local vision” (Kanso, 1992, 13).*

Although the most widely used form of mass media in Uganda is the radio, reaching 97% of the population, television is a close second at 85% penetration. In third, 65% of Ugandans read newspapers (“Uganda”, 2013). According to Fakhar Naveed (2014), it is easier for a company to reach its target demographic more directly and exclusively via television advertisements, rather than via print or radio (Naveed, 2014). A target demographic is a certain group within a population that companies wish to attract with their advertisements. For instance, a company that sells high-heeled shoes might want to target businesswomen with its advertisements. Whereas people from all walks of life may read the same newspapers or listen to the same radio station, programs and networks that already target a certain demographic are more likely to attract a larger, more concentrated portion of a company’s target demographic (Naveed, 2014).

Television has the benefit of combining visual and audio components in advertisement, which is not possible for radio or newspaper advertisements. According to Pitt, as cited by Wafula, one of the benefits of advertising on television is the entertainment factor. For instance, a video of somebody enjoying and interacting with a product, perhaps with a catchy tune in the background, which Pitt said can be much more attractive than a print advertisement in a newspaper (Wafula 2012). And radio advertisements can be only heard, not seen. The benefit of a visual is that a person does not need to speak a certain language to understand the message or to recognize a product or brand name, or to understand how the product will improve his or her life (Lowe,

2010). A child who only speaks Luganda and sees an English advertisement on television may still be able to recognize the tune and the brand name of a product.

Aside from attracting potential consumers, companies that advertise also attract television networks. An article by AfriMAP, OSIEA, and OSMP (2010) spelled out the history of public broadcasting in Uganda, which begins when the British established the first broadcasting network, the Uganda Broadcasting Service, in 1954. The colonial government used this network solely to promote its own views and to communicate its policies and programs to the public. Therefore, the messages and images on advertisements and programs were very one-sided. Then, in 1963, a year after Uganda became independent, multiple networks were able to join the television service. Although commercial advertisements were aired from the beginning, most networks' funding still came from the government. This meant that networks were still pressured to relay government information in a positive light, for fear of losing an important source of income. So viewers still were deprived of news through a critical lens. As stated in the article, it is currently companies that advertise that provide most network funding, giving them a greater say in what can or cannot be aired. For instance, major advertisers such as "mobile phone service providers, banks, and soft drinks and beer companies, generally manage to have their corporate promotions as dominant features of the news" (p. 48). Television networks are somewhat beholden to those who fund them, whether it is the government or the advertisers (AfriMAP, 2010).

The AfriMAP article continued that network viewership is likely to increase when networks air entertaining shows, rather than controversial material that might cause a negative reaction in the audience. Advertisers want to reach the greatest number of

people with each advertisement, so they are more likely to advertise on networks with higher viewership. Similarly, a network that airs material speaking negatively of businesses or the government might cause advertisers to pull out from that network. For these reasons, networks are less likely to run controversial material and instead choose to air entertaining shows that will attract viewers and advertisers – and thus funding – alike (AfriMAP, 2010).

This puts power into the hands of the companies that advertise, as they influence the messages that are either shown to or hidden from the public on television. Thus, one must question the validity of a statement made by Francisco Pinto Balsemao, the Former Prime Minister of Portugal: “[a]dvertising is an integral part of the freedom of expression. It is impossible in a democracy to separate the freedom of publishing or broadcasting news, opinions or entertainment, from the freedom of advertising” (“Advertising is the lifeblood”, 2008). In fact, the freedom of advertising essentially places a certain restraint on networks. Although regulations may state that there is to be freedom in advertising and freedom in broadcasting, in reality, the two are mutually exclusive.

According to Dr. John Khamalwa’s (2006) research, a network will not air a program or message that might jeopardize its chances of retaining an advertising client. If a network wants to relay information to the public, but knows that their advertising clients would react negatively to it, the information would ultimately not be aired. Business strategies will always come into play when making broadcasting decisions. The only truly independent network, one that aired any information it chose to, would be that which was free of advertisements, and thus funding from advertisers. But this is sacrifice

that many networks are unable to make. Thus, not even private networks have complete freedom of expression when it comes to broadcasting to the public (Khamalwa, 2006). Due to advertisements, it is possible that more critical, serious news could be aired less frequently, depriving audiences of receiving important information. In addition, the advertisements themselves are shown uncritically, which can further influence the viewers.

Why do MNCs choose to advertise in Uganda specifically? Of key significance is the rapidly growing population and scale of urbanization (“Uganda”, 2013). The young adults of Uganda, ages 15-24, make up 21.2% of the country’s population, while children, age 0-14, make up 48.7% of the country’s population (“People and Society”, 2014). Young people in general tend to be more willing to try new products, and the youth in Uganda tend to watch more television than the older population (“Uganda: Age”, 2010). Both of these combined make television an excellent medium for advertisers in Uganda to reach out to and target new, potentially lifetime consumers.

The “Uganda” article elaborated that increasing urbanization creates space for more products in the market, making Uganda a good destination for MNCs to introduce their products. But advertisers need to be wise as to how they market to the Ugandan population, as it is extremely diverse socio-economically. For instance, while 34% of Ugandans are considered to be affluent and trend seeking, 41% have only enough money to live near the subsistence level. While most Ugandans tend to shop at small, family-owned shops, those who can afford it occasionally go to supermarkets or malls for more expensive goods and to improve their status in society via conspicuous consumption (“Uganda”, 2013). However, regardless of socio-economic class, people in general wish

to buy goods that will improve their lives (Kiconco, 2014). In the “Uganda” article it is claimed that, “affordability, availability, familiarity and recommendation are vital determinants of purchase. Companies that work with these realities will realize Uganda’s hidden potential” (“Uganda, 2013). With so many people from various walks in life in one country, companies have plenty of target demographics to reach out to if they strategize and communicate their messages effectively.

In fact, the current market in Uganda lends itself to competitive advertising, especially for commodities. 27% of Ugandan household expenditure is spent on Consumer Packaged Goods, driven mainly by beverages such as sodas and personal care products such as toothbrushes and toothpastes, plus, “[a]s compared to the African average, Ugandans are more inclined to consume beverages, dairy products and snacks” (“Uganda”, 2013). The market is already in place, and people are already consuming these products, meaning companies do not need to create demand. All a company has to do is convince the audience that their brand name is better than the others. The way in which they do this, i.e., the messages they pushed via the advertisements to gain consumers, is what makes advertising a factor in the sociocultural evolution of Kampala.

### Literature Review

*“The marketers realize a fact we often repress: it is precisely value that is bought and sold, that has a price, that is quantifiable, that is reduced relative to the status of trinkets” (Kavanaugh, J. F., SJ, Fr. 1986, as cited by “Idols of the Market Place”).*

In an article entitled “Advertising and Development”, it was argued that advertising and capitalism go hand in hand. Because advertising stemmed from capitalism, it also helps perpetuate that economic system. One of the purposes of

advertising is to convert those who are outside the market into consumers of new products, enforcing capitalism. To do that, “people have to be informed, motivated, and persuaded” by advertisements in order to create a “psychic desire” to consume. This means that markets must be expanded so that new consumers can partake, and thus more goods and services must be added to the market. The expansion of markets can increase competition between companies, which in turn creates “new markets, new wants and even new lifestyles”. As stated in the article, “[w]hen discussing advertising and development, the focus naturally is primarily on the process of the expansion of wants. This is integrated with the process of growth, expansion and diversification of the economy of a country” (“Advertising and Development”). This can be seen as development within a capitalistic framework.

This heightened desire to consume may also cause a person to put more effort into bettering herself. She will want to work harder to increase her income so she can buy those products that promise her an improved lifestyle. If all persons in a society have this same individual aim of the maximization of profits, and thus increase their labor output in order to achieve it, the capitalistic economy will thrive (“Advertising and Development”). The “work and spend cycle” is a term used by Benhabib and Bisin (2002) to describe the phenomenon that occurs when people work harder in order to increase their consumption. This is a fundamental aspect of capitalism, as people inadvertently contribute to the economy in an effort to improve their own lots in life (Benhabib & Bisin, 2002, 2).

As stated in the “Advertising and Development” article, brand names are becoming more and more important in markets the world over. As capital flows between countries on a global scale, both domestic and international companies produce and

market similar products for local consumers. Since the products essentially serve the same purpose and could probably offer the consumer the same level of satisfaction, “[i]t is the success of advertising that determines the choice” a person makes when selecting a brand. So although the consumer still has a choice, he will more likely choose the brand he has heard the most about or trusts the most. Thus advertisers have the task of persuading consumers to buy their specific brand to ensure sales above their competitors. The article even claimed that advertising has gotten to the point of being manipulative for the sake of promoting a brand name (“Advertising and Development”). Competition between companies is a key factor in capitalism, where each company and person works towards his own self-interest.

However, Ivan Byamukama (2013) from the *Daily Monitor*, a national Ugandan newspaper, feels that capitalism has been a detriment to the country. According to him, capitalistic competition between people for the same resources is “unhealthy”, as they try to manipulate society to their own benefit (Byamukama, 2013). This is interesting in light of the previous finding that it is the advertisers who try to manipulate people in society. If both these statements are true, then advertisers manipulate people into thinking they need to consume more, then those same people manipulate each other in order to achieve this goal. In this case, everyone seeks his own personal gain: the advertisers seek consumers, and the consumers seek higher quality goods and status. Byamukama feels that capitalism has caused Ugandans to turn against their own families in order to move up in society (Byamukama, 2013).

In general, advertisers are in the business to maximize their own profits, not necessarily to fill the most immediate needs of the community. In fact, Benhabib and Bisin argued that:

The only objective of advertising is to influence preferences: the purpose of advertising is not to provide consumers with information about the commodities in the market. Consumers passively accept advertising and by no means are they able to limit its influence on their preferences (Benhabib & Bisin, 2002, p. 3).

Similarly, the “Advertising and Development” article stated that “[e]ven when really aimed at creating profits for the manufacturers, such advertisements help change ways of living and even human relations in society and value systems” (“Advertising and Development”). Although advertisers often do not know their consumers on an individual level, they still strive to portray the ideal lifestyle to those consumers. The viewer has no say in the lifestyle or value system being promoted within the advertisement, yet she receives the message anyway just by being exposed to it (“Advertising and Development”). In addition, the public has virtually no control over the number of advertisements they are exposed to each day (Benhabib & Bisin, 2002). Ahiakpor (1992) argued that regardless of the efforts made by advertisers to persuade people in one direction or another, people should be trusted to make the decisions right for them. Consumers should be trusted and respected to make their own consumption choices, and to improve their own lives given the available options (Ahiakpor, 1992). However, advertisements must in turn provide accurate information to the viewers, enabling them to make the best decisions out of all the available options.

As stated in the “Advertising and Development” article, although advertisements imply that by purchasing a product a person’s lifestyle will improve, this is not always actually the case (“Advertising and Development”). Similarly, James (2000) said that advertisements could instill the mindset that consumption will improve a person’s position in society, even when increased consumption is simply not feasible. In many cases, MNCs advertise more fiercely for their products than local businesses in developing countries, making their products more highly sought after. However, these products also tend to be more expensive and thus are only accessible to those who already enjoy a higher socio-economic status. This barrier in accessibility to brand name products can cause frustration for those seeking a better lifestyle, and who believe that that can be achieved via consumption, which they simply cannot afford (James, 2000).

### Statement of Objectives

I have six main questions in mind for this study:

- 1) Which products are being advertised and from which companies?
- 2) How much does each advertisement cost, and can small, domestic companies compete for television airtime against wealthier companies such as MNCs?
- 3) Which elements of an advertisement make it the most effective in communicating a message or being persuasive?
- 4) How much research is done in order to advertise effectively to a specific demographic? (I.e., do MNCs stress a more globalized lifestyle in their advertisements or is research conducted to portray a more local lifestyle, even when selling international products?)
- 5) Which population demographics do companies target?
- 6) How do advertisements affect sociocultural evolution in Kampala?

## Justification for Study and Placement

I decided to study televised advertising and its effects on sociocultural evolution in Kampala because I noticed that my host family and the host families of my fellow study abroad peers seemed to watch television all evening: right after work, through dinner, and up until bedtime. Many of the programs I saw were imported from abroad and translated into English, Luganda, or both. Similarly, many of the products being advertised during these programs were from MNCs. These companies advertise in my home country, the United States, as well, however the design of the advertisements is different in order cater to the local culture. I began wondering whether Western companies advertising in Uganda had an impact on Kampala's sociocultural dynamic, and if people wanted to emulate the lifestyles portrayed through these advertisements, Western or not.

In order to conduct my research, I interned for the Wavah Broadcasting Station (WBS) television network, located at WBS House, Plot 13 Naguru Summit View Road, Kampala, Uganda. I was fortunate enough to be able to work with the WBS Marketing Department, headed by Ms. Patience Kiconco. From her and the rest of the staff members, as well as employees from advertising agencies, I was able to learn about the process of both obtaining advertisements and ensuring the messages are appropriate for the general WBS audience.

This report could help benefit WBS, other television networks, and advertising agencies by analyzing advertising from a different perspective. Advertising is indeed a very competitive, strategic, and influential business, but how can it be used towards bettering society? How are the viewers directly affected as a result of advertisements,

aside from being persuaded to buy a product? I hope this report sheds some light on how important advertising is in shaping individuals' aspirations, how it influences people's interactions with each other and in the market, and what this means for Kampala now and in the future.

### Methods and Ethics Statement

My methods for gathering information included analyzing advertisement data and one-on-one interviews with WBS employees, as well as others from advertising agencies. I asked questions such as how advertising affects development and whether Western or Ugandan lifestyles are usually promoted through advertisements. I asked many questions to the network employees concerning how the network operates and about the relationships it has with companies for which it advertises. However, I did not press anyone for information that they felt unwilling to share with me for this report. Therefore, there was minimal risk involved while conducting this research. I asked each person interviewed if I could use the information they gave to me for this report, as well as their permission to use their full name. I ensured that my notes of interviews were non-traceable and that they were fully destroyed at the completion of the report.

## Section 1: A Brief Overview of Advertising in Kampala

### How Advertisements get Aired on WBS

*"Advertising should say, 'Here's what we've got. Here's what it will do for you. Here's how to get it'" (Burnett, as cited by "famous quotes").*

WBS is a private television network owned by Professor Gordon Wavamunno. The network receives no government subsidies, aside from government advertisements, which are treated just like any other advertisement. All of WBS's income is generated via advertisements and corporate sponsored talk shows and documentaries placed on air (Onyango, April 17, 2014, personal interview). Its programs cater to an audience that is fast paced and ambitious, usually corporate business people. The mission of the WBS network is to promote media that brings three elements to the viewers: education, entertainment, and information. WBS wants to be of value to its viewers and wants its viewers to aspire to be better people by watching the content network, including the advertisements (Kiconco, 2014). Because advertisements provide a major source of WBS's funding, the Marketing Department team needs to be very apt at amassing advertisements for the network to thrive. This usually involves a process called "pitching".

Pitching is a very important skill to have in the advertising world. Pitching is when one party appeals to another party, explaining how its service could benefit the other. It is also a two-way street: either a company will pitch to WBS requesting advertisement airtime in return for network funding, or WBS will pitch to the company explaining how advertising with the network would increase the company's sales

(Kiconco, 2014). However, before it can air, an advertisement must be created, which is a detailed process, but one that Muheereza Kyamutetera, the General Manager of fireworks Advertising, explained quite well. Using his general step-by-step process, let us use our own example of a laundry detergent company to simulate the process:

Suppose the laundry detergent company wants to advertise a new product specifically for urban, stay-at-home moms, who hand-wash clothes for their families once a week. The company does not necessarily know the best way to market to communicate with this demographic. Thus, the company hires an advertising agency to assist in the creation of the advertising campaign. The advertising agency in turn hires a market research company to go out and conduct surveys or focus groups of stay-at-home moms in Kampala. The questions listed on the survey might be about the daily activities of the moms or what the moms like the most about laundry detergent (i.e., the smell, the color, the speed of stain removal, etc).

Once the results from the research are back, the advertising agency reviews the data collected to determine which aspects about laundry detergent should be emphasized in the advertisement, so that the message can clearly state how the product will meet the mom's wants and needs. The research also reveals the best ways to communicate to the target demographic, i.e., what the moms will respond positively to in an advertisement. The advertising agency then collaborates and strategizes with the laundry detergent company to create the best campaign possible. Ultimately, though, the laundry detergent company has the final say in the outcome of the advertisement, since it is paying for the service and it wants to promote a certain image with its brand name (Kyamutetera, personal interview, April 11, 2014).

Leah Alupo Onyango, Sales Administrator from the WBS Marketing Department, explained the next steps. Once the advertisement is ready for airing, the advertising agency will bring it to the network that the target demographic is most likely to watch on a regular basis. For instance, if most stay-at-home moms in Kampala tend to watch a certain soap opera in the mornings on WBS, they would be more likely to see an advertisement during the breaks in that program than on any other program, at any other time, on any other network. The advertising agency brings the completed advertisement to WBS and pitches it to the Marketing Department. It then gives WBS a “time order” stating the preferred date and time that the advertisement should air. In return, the agency offers the amount of money set aside by the laundry detergent company to air the advertisement (Onyango, 2014). WBS always has staff members view the advertisement before it is approved for airing, to ensure sound and image quality, as well as to check that message that does not contradict the missions of the network (Kiconco, 2014). Once the advertisement is accepted and both parties have signed for it, other staff members as well as the Managing Director of WBS must approve it; then it is aired at the designated time (Onyango, 2014).

## Differences in Television Networks

*“Mass communication’s particular function was to ‘focus the attention of millions of diverse individuals upon the same object at the same time’ and thus create a ‘climate for development in any given society’”(D. Lerner, as quoted by Schech & Haggis, 2000).*

Kiconco explained that in the past, when the only television network was government owned, the only messages people were receiving were government propaganda. However, when television opened for other media and advertising, people were able to easily access different kinds of information. Plus, since each network had (and still has) its own agenda, different messages and viewpoints are pushed on each network (Kiconco, 2014). This allows networks to work towards their own best interest, to fill programs with interesting content, and allows for viewers to choose networks based on their own best interests.

Each network in Uganda caters to different demographic already via programming content. Therefore, each network has a viewer base of people who are similar in their tastes and lifestyles. One of the best ways for a company to reach its target demographic is by choosing the appropriate television network to air their advertisements on. Regardless of whether it is an MNC or a local company, it is important for the company to know who is watching which network so that they can market their products accordingly. Since advertisements need to be understood by the audience, a company could even create multiple advertisements to show on different television networks for different audiences (Kiconco, 2014).

**Table 1: Ugandan Television Networks and Target Demographics**

Network	Target Demographic	Demographic Lifestyle	Example Advertisements
WBS	Corporate business individuals	Fast paced, ambitious	Mobile money, mobile internet
Bukedde	Lower income individuals	Modest	Mobile phone airtime for 500 UGX
UBC	Individuals 35-years-old and above	Not much motivation to improve	500 ml bottles of beer
NTV	Trend-setters	Never satisfied, always looking to improve	High-speed internet, luxury cars

\*Information provided by Patience Kiconco

## Competition

*Advertising's presence is everywhere. It shapes social change and affects people's views of the world. As a major channel between producers and consumers, world advertising is dominated by a few multinational agencies who spend the most money and structure the industry... (Lowe, 2010).*

Kyamutetera emphasized that advertising is a fiercely competitive industry, and no companies are more competitive than those involved in telecommunications. Telecoms need to be especially competitive because there are so many in Uganda fighting for the same clientele. Thus, each one tries to create the most appealing and entertaining advertisements that will attract the greatest number of customers to their particular company and service. This also goes for beverage companies, which sell similar products to one another, and so must fight to promote their own brand names over the others (Kyamutetera, 2014). The harder a company has to push to gain clientele, the harder their messages will be pushed to the public. Whichever lifestyles are being

promoted within these advertisements are the ones that viewers will be exposed to most frequently, and with the most fervor.

Janet Nakkazi from MAAD Advertising claimed that the better the advertising campaign, the more consumers will likely purchase the product. All companies want to have the best advertising campaigns, and advertising agencies are key players in their creation (Nakkazi, April 24, 2014, personal interview). In other words, advertising agencies can be thought of as the brains behind which lifestyles should be promoted to the public. Thus, it is not only the companies that push a certain message onto the public through advertisements. Companies get help from advertising agencies, and if these agencies are culturally aware and sensitive, they can help to promote a product in an appropriate, yet still competitive, manner.

Another way to be a competitive advertiser is to get the best “spots” of airtime. Onyango explained that a spot of airtime is 30 seconds long, and in one day it is possible to air 960 advertisements on WBS alone (Onyango, 2014). Winnie Nakacwa from WBS pointed out that while there are virtually no advertisements in the morning, WBS is saturated with them from 5pm onwards. This is because WBS viewers are more likely to tune in after returning from work, while eating dinner or relaxing with their families. Companies are aware of this and want to capitalize on the fact by purchasing airtime during the evening hours. This allows them to reach the greatest number of people with each advertisement aired (Nakacwa, April 14, 2014, personal communication).

According to Onyango, it is difficult to get these spots of airtime when so many companies are vying for the same dates and times, especially during the more popular shows such as prime time news and soap operas. One way companies get around this is to

book airtime for six months at a time, which is expensive, but ensures that they have the best spots to reach their target demographic for half a year. Another way is to forgo advertising during commercial breaks and instead choose more the economic options of a logo, mention, or squeeze back (Onyango, 2014).

A logo is simply the brand logo placed in the corner of the screen during a program. A mention is a banner of text across the bottom of the screen promoting a company or product. The most expensive of the three is the squeeze back, which actually pinches the program into a smaller section of the screen while the advertisement is placed alongside it (Onyango, 2014). All three of these options occur concurrently with the program, increasing the likelihood of the viewer seeing the message. Since people tend to get up or stop paying attention during commercial break advertisements, these options have the advantage of airing alongside a program. Squeeze backs are the largest and most noticeable and are therefore reserved only for the sponsors of a particular program or time frame (Kiconco, 2014). Those that pay to sponsor a show are thus rewarded with having their message displayed to viewers during the program, in a sense forcing viewers to see the advertisement. The disadvantages are that these spots are not as long, have no audio, and generally only display text or pictures, not moving images, and so are less attention grabbing than advertisements during commercial breaks.

It is important to note, however, that no specific spot of airtime has a set price. Two different companies would pay two different prices for the same spot of airtime; it really depends on which one claims it first. WBS tailors packages to fit the needs of both the network and the company in question. So if the company has a large budget to spend on advertising, it would be asked to pay more for a spot of airtime than a company with a

smaller budget. Although the company with a smaller budget might not get as many spots of airtime, it is still able to get some advertisements on air due to the flexible pricing of spots (Kiconco, 2014).

But just because an advertisement is aired on television does not necessarily mean it has been paid for. There are three bases for airing an advertisement on WBS: cash basis, swap basis, and complimentary basis. A cash-based advertisement is one that has been paid for. However, no cash is exchanged for swap-based and complimentary-based ads. For a swap-based advertisement, WBS trades network airtime for another service, usually publicity. In many cases, the services offered to WBS by a company in exchange for airtime would be posters, banners, and frequent audio mentions of the WBS network at a WBS sponsored event hosted by that company. Complimentary-based ads are aired on the network free of charge. This service is reserved for those organizations that need to communicate an important message but simply cannot afford to do so. These organizations typically include churches and schools, and the only approval needed is from the owner of WBS, Professor Gordon Wavamunno (Onyango, 2014).

If the pricing of airtime spots is flexible, and advertisements can be traded for other services, or can even be aired free of charge, then companies of all sizes and advertising budgets have a chance of advertising on WBS. This helps to neutralize competition between companies vying for airtime, and ensures that messages can be shown from companies besides the biggest and the wealthiest. Since the relationships between WBS and its advertising clients are not all purely based on profit, smaller companies are able to reach the public as well. Although the wealthier companies may be at an advantage in terms of number of advertisements aired, they cannot monopolize all

airtime on WBS. Thus a variety of messages and lifestyles can be seen on WBS via its advertisements, meaning that no singular lifestyle is portrayed as the ideal.



Example of a Logo

Image from "Cable TV Ad".



Example of a Mention

Image from Katzmaier, 2012.



Example of a Squeeze Back

Image from "Case Study".

## Section 2: Early Western Influence on Ugandan Ideals

*The worldwide influence of advertising cannot be overlooked. The power of advertising comes not only from the creation of a market for products but also from the promotion of a consumer-oriented lifestyle which converts people whose values and lifestyles are different (Lowe, 2010).*

Gertrude Nakku, Business Account Executive for the WBS Marketing Department, told me in passing that Americans had a great influence on Ugandans' ideal lifestyle, and that many Ugandans aspire to lead a Western lifestyle because of it. I asked her if she thought that was good or bad, and she said, "it's not good or bad, it's just the way it is". Nakku attributed the value placed on a Western lifestyle to Uganda's colonization, when the British tried to instill the belief that British products were better than the similar, local, Ugandan ones. She said that Ugandans were trained to copy their colonizers in everything – style of clothing, education, and language. This goes for brand name products as well, such as cars and petroleum jelly. This line of thinking has persisted into the present day; without even trying it out, Ugandans tend to buy a US or UK product over the Ugandan version, even if it is more expensive. Media that portrays a Western lifestyle as ideal helps to perpetuate this behavior (Nakku, May 5, 2014, personal conversation).

Nakku described to me the interesting case of Western influence on herbalists, the traditional healers who use herbs and plants as remedies for ailments. Nakku said that herbal medicine is very effective, because it is made from all natural, local, raw materials, and is studied and prepared by people who do research all over the world. But during colonization, the British convinced the public that the herbal medicines were not good enough, and instead told them to use foreign medicines (Nakku, 2014). In fact, as

Kiconco told me at an earlier date, the Uganda Media Owners Association (UMOA) regulates all advertising business across all television networks in the country. One of its most stringent rules is that no network shall air advertisements from herbalists. The Ugandan government has decided that it is not ethical to promote that kind of business to the public, and so no advertisements are to be aired promoting herbal medicines (Kiconco, 2014).

On the one hand, this could be viewed development by someone who does not believe in the effectiveness of herbal medicine. One might say that banning these advertisements protects the public from being exposed to potential health risks or scams. However, if the local remedies are indeed effective, yet the public is not informed of where or how to obtain them, then this helps no one except for the foreign drug companies that are able to advertise. By banning herbalists the realm of advertising, the government is hindering their business opportunities. Without advertisements, do herbalists have a fair chance in staying in business, and do the people have a truly informed choice in which medicines to choose? Not only can the residual effects of Uganda's colonization can be seen in advertisements via the messages and lifestyles portrayed, but also in the regulations that the Ugandan government places on what the public can be exposed to. This goes to show that while advertisers can influence the program content on networks, the government can also influence what can and cannot be advertised.

## Section 3: Advertising and Sociocultural Evolution in Kampala

### Multinational Corporations and Cash-Based Advertising

*“Transnational advertising is one of the major reasons both for the spread of transnational culture and the breakdown of traditional cultures” (Janus, 2010).*

**Table 2: Amount Spent on Advertising on WBS in March 2014**

Company Name Type	Country of Origin	Number of Advertisements	UGX	USD
<b>Colgate</b> Toothpaste	United States	320	116,408,000	46,563.20
<b>Airtel</b> Telecom	India	89	63,900,000	25,560
<b>Orange</b> Telecom	United Kingdom	109	51,942,000	20,776.80
<b>Mirinda</b> Beverage	Spain	86	36,670,000	14,668
<b>Mountain Dew</b> Beverage	United States	116	30,522,000	12,208.80
<b>Samona</b> Soap	Uganda	47	24,895,000	9,958
<b>MTN</b> Telecom	South Africa	49	14,985,000	5,994
<b>OMO</b> Soap	United Kingdom/The Netherlands	22	9,520,000	3,808
<b>Power Horse</b> Beverage	Austria	20	4,755,000	1,902

\*Note: This table includes only those companies that requested an Ipsos Synovate™ report on advertisements aired on WBS during the month of March 2014. The “Number of Advertisements” section includes advertisements during program breaks as well as company sponsored programs, captions, DJ mentions, and promotions. Information provided by Patience Kiconco, obtained from the Ipsos Synovate™ Uganda: WBS online report.

This table represents the nine companies that spent the most on advertising on the WBS network during March 2014, according to the Ipsos Synovate™ report for that month. Kiconco explained that this report is compiled by a team that records the network, date, and time that advertisements are aired each month in Uganda. This report is necessary because sometimes there is a mistake on a network and an advertisement airs at the incorrect time or does not at all. Companies that spend a great amount on advertisements have an incentive to know whether or not the advertisements they pay for are actually being aired at the right times, and so they pay Ipsos Synovate™ for these services. For each advertisement that is aired incorrectly, WBS airs one free of charge at a later date (Kiconco, 2014). Notice that three of the top-spending companies are telecoms and three are beverage companies. This is indicative of the fact that telecoms and beverage companies must compete fiercely in the market, and so they must be sure that their advertisements are reaching their target audiences.

Seeing as only one of the companies listed in the table is based in Uganda, it seems as though MNCs are dominating the advertising scene on WBS. But it is not only the wealthiest or largest companies that are able to advertise on the network. Keep in mind that as long as a company is willing to advertise and can afford to do so, WBS will air the advertisement, and that different companies are offered different airtime packages depending on what they can pay (Kiconco, 2014). MNCs may pay the most for advertising each month, but they are also required to pay more per spot of airtime than companies with smaller budgets. Plus, competitive companies are also the ones that request reports such as this, meaning the number of advertisements from less competitive companies are not included in the data.

## Advertising and Capitalism

*“To industrial capitalism and advertising the human being is primarily a consumer. In the market place there is no difference, in essence, among human beings in social or economic terms. They are all consumers” (“Advertising and Development”).*

According to Kiconco, Ugandan urban dwellers are considered to be “adopters”, in that they immediately pick up what they see in the media. This is because urban dwellers generally aspire to follow new trends. As part of the media, advertisements provide people with information about new products and can help define the ways in which people can improve their lifestyles and be trendy (Kiconco, 2014). The two can go hand in hand, when the message being pushed is that by purchasing a product, a person’s lifestyle will improve.

Advertisers have discovered that the most effective advertisements are those that are positioned within a certain lifestyle. This is because a person needs to be able to relate to the advertisement in order to be interested in the product being promoted. If the viewer relates to the lifestyle, agrees with the message, and aspires to be like the people in the advertisement, she will be more likely to purchase the product (Kiconco, 2014). Thus, advertising can help set the stage for how people go about trying to better themselves, and by shaping individuals, advertisements are also shaping society. Advertisements for commodities push the culture of consumption, the idea that by purchasing a certain product, a person will be happier and lead a better life. If people believe this and consume more in order to pursue their own best interests, it contributes to a capitalistic economy and society.

To that extent, Kiconco continued, advertising is essential to development because it provides the public with information about what is available in the market. Goods and services must be made visible in order for people to consume them, and advertisements can help consumers make informed decisions about choosing those products that would best meet their needs. As Kiconco put it, humans throughout the world over wish to better themselves and to improve their own lifestyles, and sometimes making purchases is the way they choose to do so. In some cases, this can mean purchasing international products rather than local ones. Since international brand names are recognized and trusted around the globe, people may be more inclined to trust those companies to deliver high-quality goods that they believe will indeed improve their lives (Kiconco, 2014).

Thus, advertising has the potential to create a consumer-based, capitalistic society by promoting the idea that if a person's consumption increases, then her happiness will increase, too. This message, if adopted by society, means that people will buy more products, but only from those brand names that they have come to trust with their happiness. Each individual differs in his idea of what a happy life means, though, and advertisers need to cater to their target demographics accordingly. Some demographics may want to live a Western lifestyle while others prefer a Ugandan lifestyle. Companies need to be aware of these preferences and advertise accordingly, yet they must also make their products look the most attractive out of all the available options. This creates competition in the marketplace as companies attempt to win over customers against their competitors. This competition may be good for consumers indirectly, in that the competing companies must strive to create high-quality, affordable goods that will

ultimately benefit the consumers. For the companies, however, it means having the best strategies in order to outcompete the others in similar businesses.

### Advertising Strategies and Effects

*“Sometimes, the advertising is better than the product. Nothing kills a bad product faster than good advertising. Everyone tries the thing and never buys it again” (Jerry Della Famina, as cited by “famous quotes”).*

In Uganda, brand names are particularly important, because “[a]s compared to the African average Ugandans are more accustomed to buying the same brand” (“Uganda”, 2013). But according to Nakkazi, the message portrayed within an advertisement is more essential than the brand name in convincing an audience to purchase a product. If a brand is known for its high-quality products, consumers need to be informed of this via the advertisement. The message gives the brand name its status and influences consumers’ choice to purchase the product in the first place. But Nakkazi also noted that advertisers can abuse the medium of television, misleading audiences about brands or products. If an advertisement makes a false claim about the quality of a product, and a consumer purchases the product and becomes disappointed, he would be resentful and begin to distrust the brand name. However, if the consumer finds the promise made by the advertisement to be true, he will remain loyal to that brand (Nakkazi, 2014). Thus advertisers have the incentive not only to portray their products in the best light possible, but also to be truthful in their advertisements. That way, they can attract and keep the consumers who truly want or need that product most, creating a repeat-consumer base. Still, aside from providing correct information, an advertisement needs to capture the audience’s attention to be successful.

According to Kyamutetera, the most successful advertisements are those that people can recall. This means that a person can remember the advertisement, its message, and the product after seeing it once or many times. The reason this is effective is that when faced with a choice between two or more similar products, a person will look at the brand names to choose from, recall that he saw one particular brand name in an advertisement, and probably choose that brand over the others. Really good advertisements can stick in someone's memory for years. Have you ever had an advertising jingle stuck in your head? That is exactly the strategy advertisers use to help people remember their brand names. Generally, the easiest advertisements to recall are those that are entertaining and attention grabbing. However, companies have to be careful, for it is easy to focus too much on the entertainment factor and forget to include the actual message to be communicated, leaving the viewer without any real knowledge about the product at all. The best advertisements strike a delicate balance between entertainment and information about a product (Kyamutetera, 2014).

### Advertising Effectively to the Target Demographic

*"Advertising nourishes the consuming power of men. It sets up before a man the goal of a better home, better clothing, better food for himself and his family. It spurs individual exertion and greater production" (Sir Winston Churchill, as cited by "famous quotes").*

Advertisements generally do not only sell a product to viewers; they also sell a way of life. Advertising is meant to show viewers a lifestyle that seems ideal to them, and to hint that by purchasing a certain product, a person can attain that lifestyle. Therefore, advertising can promote some lifestyles as being more ideal than others. When asked whether WBS airs advertisements that portray more Ugandan or more Western lifestyles,

Kiconco said that the answer is not so simple. The lifestyle portrayed in an advertisement has to sync with both the lifestyle and the social class of the target demographic. While lifestyle has more to do with how a person lives his life day-to-day, social class is based on how much disposable income a person has. Both of these factors are important to keep in mind when designing an advertisement (Kiconco, 2014).

Kiconco points out that even if an advertiser knows the average income level of the target demographic, and thus the social class, he would still need to find out how the members of this demographic live their daily lives, or, what their lifestyles are like. People who earn the same amount of money or who have the same amount of disposable income do not necessarily make the same day-to-day decisions in life. Some are more concerned with conspicuous consumption, and some may be more frugal. Thus, advertisers are better able to communicate a message based on a demographic lifestyle rather than a social class. A person's lifestyle determines what she desires and purchases given her available income. For example, one advertiser may wish to attract a person that speaks both English and Luganda, eats at a nice restaurant more than once per week, and spends on entertainment and alcohol. Another advertiser may wish to attract a person that watches three hours of television after work, prefers to cook at home, and takes public transportation to work each day. Even if these two people earn the same amount of income, the way they choose to live their lives is very different, so advertisers are wise to market their products in a way that fits with their consumers' lifestyles. Remember that each network caters to a different demographic already. A company could market different products on different networks, all in a way that appeals and relates to the lifestyles of the different target demographics (Kiconco, 2014).

But Kiconco also noted that advertisers need to strike a careful balance between being relatable to the audience and seeming modern. While companies do not want to market themselves as “the brand next door”, they also do not want to appear to be too foreign or out of reach of the target demographic. Either of these messages will drive away, rather than attract, customers. Advertisements have to be sophisticated, but also speak directly to the consumer as an individual. For instance, if the target demographic speaks mainly Luganda on a daily basis, then that is most appropriate language to use in the advertisement, but to make the product seem hip and cool, the advertisement could use Luganda slang. People need to feel that advertisements are speaking directly to them in their current position in life, but also that they could enhance their lives by purchasing the product. The lifestyle portrayed in an advertisement should seem like an achievable goal for the target demographic, not so far out of reach that the lifestyle, and thus the product, seems impossible to obtain (Kiconco, 2014).

This is why research is so important in creating an advertisement for the Ugandan market. Without proper research or a good understanding of the target demographic, the message and lifestyle being portrayed in an advertisement might not seem realistic for the viewers. This is especially true for members of a lower socioeconomic class. Janus (2010) drew from several previous studies done on the effects of advertising and came to this, “tentative” conclusion:

The poor are more likely to associate consumption with happiness and feel that industrialized products are better than the locally made ones. But at the same time they are painfully aware that only the rich have access to the lifestyle portrayed (Janus, 2010).

Thus, while advertisers may want to market a product as being luxurious, they must be sensitive to the fact that this lifestyle is either not desirable or is simply unrealistic for some members of society. Advertisers in Uganda realize this, and put effort into learning the best way to communicate in a culturally and socioeconomically appropriate manner. Research allows companies to identify not only the wants and needs of their target demographics, but also the amount they are willing and able to spend to meet them. Once the companies understand how their target audiences live, how they aspire to live, and what is realistically attainable for them, they can work on creating an advertisement that will be appropriate and that will yield them a positive response.

Research is a difficult process, however, especially given the extremely diverse and complicated Ugandan market. Nakkazi explained that there is no one-size-fits-all remedy for international companies to communicate effectively to Ugandans. The strategies vary immensely depending on the target demographic and the types of products being offered. Hence, the Ugandan market has to be studied very well before a company should begin creating an advertising campaign. Just one small mistake can mean the end of a product in the Ugandan market. Nakkazi said that this comes from the fact that the Ugandan market is so “dynamic”, and explains that Ugandans tend to change their minds frequently, so they may try a product because of its novelty but then choose never to purchase it again. Ugandans know what they want in a product, so if they try a product and it does not work for them, they will simply make a different choice next time. There are also many brands to choose from in the Ugandan market, and the citizens are aware that they have choices when it comes to making a purchase. Ugandans remain loyal only to those brands that meet their wants and needs best (Nakkazi, 2014).

Thus advertisers can influence Ugandans' consumption choices to an extent, but in the end the consumers remain loyal to the brands they have tried and have come to trust. As stated earlier, Ugandans tend to buy the same brand over and over again, so the key for advertisers is to attract Ugandan consumers to their brand name from the beginning to ensure a repeat-consumer base. A product that is marketed well, that delivers on the promises made of it, and that is truly in sync with the lifestyle of the target demographic will fare the best in the dynamic Ugandan market. Advertising can help people decide which products to purchase, however, eventually it is the consumers who decide which products truly work best for them. From a capitalistic perspective, if each person buys only what is in his or her own best interest, then the economy and society will develop in a way that benefits both consumers and suppliers.

## Case Studies

### Movit™

Kiconco illustrated how companies can change advertising strategies, using the specific example of a brand called Movit™, a cosmetics and hair products company based in Uganda. About ten years ago, Movit™ was a brand that marketed strictly to those in a lower socio-economic class. The advertisements were produced only in the local language, Luganda, and portrayed only locals dressed in traditional Ugandan gomesi. But then Movit™ decided to market the brand differently. It began by tweaking the logo to give the company a new, fresh look. Movit™ then introduced a new line of products, endorsed in their advertisements by some of Uganda's top female musicians. This completely changed the both lifestyle the company was promoting and the demographic it was targeting. The hope was that viewers who already looked up to these

celebrities would buy the products in an attempt to be more like them. In some cases, this meant working harder to earn more disposable income to purchase the products. Kiconco says that this could be labeled as development through media, as the consumers now had more aspirations and desires to better themselves and to move up in society based on an advertisement they had seen. Interestingly, though, Movit™ still creates and markets its original products for the lower classes, but only on local radio stations (Kiconco, 2014). This is so that the original target demographic members remain loyal consumers.

This last point raises an important question: if Movit™ as a company was truly attempting to motivate its consumers to work hard, maximize profits, and thus partake in a capitalistic society, why would it stop putting so much effort into targeting those of lower socio-economic status? It would seem that these are the very people who should be inspired to raise themselves up in society and to aspire to increase their incomes and improve their lifestyles. On second thought, how realistic is it that these same people are willing to work hard simply to buy a high-end hair product? If they were to earn extra disposable income, chances are that pricey cosmetics might not be the first item on their list to buy.

From that point of view, it makes sense for Movit™ to continue to make the lower-end products and target those in a lower socioeconomic class. This ensures that people in various positions in society will purchase Movit™ products, increasing the company's sales and retaining the original consumer base. If a product seems unattainable to a certain demographic, the members may feel as though the advertisement or product is not meant for them at all, and may even feel that the product comes with a status that they simply cannot afford. That is why context and lifestyle are both so

important to keep in mind when creating an advertisement: people's wants and needs may be fundamentally the same, but realistically they are met in different ways. What inspires one person may push someone else away from the product. By marketing two different products to two different demographics, Movit™ was able to increase its consumer base and send the most appropriate messages to both.

### National ID Cards

Kiconco also explained that up until recently, the Ugandan government had no nationally issued identification cards for its citizens. When the cards were first being distributed, there were advertisements on television informing viewers of the benefits of obtaining an ID card. For instance, the new laws mandate that a citizen must have a national ID card in order to access a loan, or purchase land or a passport. Kiconco feels that this leads to development because when viewers see that they can improve their lifestyles by obtaining an ID card, they will work harder so that they can obtain one. As noted in the Table 1, each television network targets a different demographic. Therefore, the advertisements had to be positioned within the particular lifestyle of the average viewer for each network. Essentially, though, the end result was the same: networks aired a message depicting a way to improve viewers lives by being both entertaining and informative, which got an important, standardized, and national message across to the Ugandan citizens who watch television (Kiconco, 2014).

The government of Uganda wanted its citizens to develop via obtaining national identification cards, and needed a way to get the message out to the public. However, with such a diverse population in terms of social class and lifestyle, one advertisement would not have appealed to the entire population. The government and the television

networks both realize the effect advertisements can have on the public, but only when they are presented to the right audience, with the right message, in the right context, and at the right time.

## Conclusions

*“If we look at development as the overall transformation of society and not merely as the statistical growth of the economy, or the gross domestic product, or the per capita income, then all advertising is socially relevant” (“Advertising and Development”).*

Prior to Uganda’s independence, there was only one, government owned television network in the country. This enabled the colonial government to promote itself free of criticism. Nowadays, there are multiple networks, each with a different agenda. Each network caters to a different demographic, and Ugandans have multiple sources of information and media to choose from because of it. However, because advertisements provide a major source of network funding, companies are highly influential in what can and cannot be aired on television, and their messages are shown free of criticism. But the government still has some say over what can and cannot be advertised, via such organizations as the Uganda Media Owners Association. The regulations are there, but some of the regulations, such as the ban on advertisements from herbalists, may still have some colonial history behind it. Thus, Western influence on advertising exists today both as part of a modern, globalized world, and as a significant outcome of past events far more powerful than a single advertisement might seem at face value.

In fact, I began writing this report under the assumption that MNCs dominated advertising on Ugandan television, and that they pushed Western ideals on Kampalans through their advertisements. However, both of these assumptions were put into serious

question throughout the course of my data collection and interviews, and I soon realized that advertising is quite a complicated subject, especially as it relates to Kampala's sociocultural evolution.

First of all, it is not as if only a few big brand name companies are willing or able to buy every spot of available airtime on all networks. That would be hugely expensive and would be a waste of money, as their target audiences tend to watch television at specific times. Plus, since each company is offered a different package from television networks, even companies with smaller advertising budgets are able to get their messages out to the public. Therefore, many different kinds of messages, images, and lifestyles are portrayed or promoted through advertisements on Ugandan networks.

Secondly, MNCs realize that to be effective, they need to create advertisements that their target audiences can relate to. In many cases, portraying a purely Western lifestyle to a Kampalan audience would not yield the best effects. Since companies must compete with each other to gain consumers, they put a great amount of money and effort into researching their target demographics. So while they may promote some form of Westernization, they also need to communicate effectively to their Ugandan audience, i.e., create a message that can be understood and is culturally or socially valuable to the audience. This might mean including some elements of Western ideals, if that is how the target demographic aspires to live. However, this is not always the case, and advertisers are aware that a product marketed out of context of the target demographic lifestyle will not improve their consumer base.

Also, Ugandans have many choices in the market in terms of products and brand names, and will only stay loyal to those that best meet their wants and needs. Although

advertisements can influence people's decisions to an extent, it is ultimately the consumer who decides which brands to choose. When companies are true to their guarantees and can capture an audience's attention, they set themselves up to receive a larger, repeat-consumer base. If they make false claims, consumers will likely try the product and never buy it again because of the disappointment they experience. Honest advertising can be beneficial to society because it provides correct information to the public and allows for free choice within the market, so that each person makes informed decisions about which products will benefit him or her personally.

Advertisements that sync with a particular lifestyle and emphasize that a better life is achievable have the potential to incite people to better themselves. It is possible that the desire to consume more or better products can cause a person to work harder and increase her income. If each person in society feels the same way, then in an effort to maximize one's own profits, the people end up contributing to a growing, capitalistic economy. However, the ideal lifestyle portrayed in an advertisement should not be so far out of the target audience's reach that it seems unrealistic. Instead of working harder, the viewer may feel that the ideal lifestyle is simply unattainable. The goal, and ultimately the product, needs to be within the target's reach. If the messages within advertisements are appropriate for the target audiences and can cause people in all social classes and lifestyles to want to improve themselves, then advertising is certainly a key factor in development.

### Recommendations for Future Research

Future researchers could look deeper into capitalism in Kampala, and whether or not this is helping or hindering development. Particularly, how do individuals participate in capitalism as a direct result of the advertisements they are exposed to? Also, how do MNCs in Kampala affect the local companies that sell similar products? Is the demand for foreign products so great that local companies cannot compete, and if so, what role does advertising play in creating and sustaining this demand? Do Kampalans truly feel happier or more fulfilled when they purchase either more products or products from particular brands?

It would also be interesting to know the extent to which advertisers influence the program content on various networks. Which companies make the most demands about what can or cannot be aired? Are these demands usually about the promotion of competing companies or about certain events or news? Additionally, how often do networks adhere to these requests and what is does the entire process look like?

The research conducted for creating an advertising campaign might also be used for other developmental purposes. Advertising researchers learn about the wants, needs, and lifestyles of many different people throughout all of Uganda, and this information could potentially be used for other purposes than creating an appealing advertisement. How could this research be applied to other areas of development? Could companies partner with NGOs or government organizations to share the information and contribute to cultural, social, or economic development in Kampala? How could this research be used to promote an understanding of the complexity of the city and its residents?

## Definitions

**Consumer base:** “[T]he group of people who buy or use a company’s products or services” (“consumer base”).

**Global marketing:** “The process of conceptualizing and then conveying a final product or service worldwide with the hopes of reaching the international marketing community” (“global marketing definition”).

**Globalization:** “Process by which the experience of everyday life, marked by the diffusion of commodities and ideas, is becoming standardized around the world. Factors that have contributed to globalization include increasingly sophisticated communications and [...] a level of economic activity that has outgrown national markets through industrial combinations and commercial groupings that cross national frontiers, and international agreements that reduce the cost of doing business in foreign countries. Globalization offers huge potential profits to companies and nations but has been complicated by widely differing expectations, standards of living, cultures and values, and legal systems as well as unexpected global cause-and-effect linkages” (“globalization”).

**Sociocultural Evolution:** “the process by which structural reorganization is affected through time, eventually producing a form or structure which is qualitatively different from the ancestral form” (“sociocultural evolution”).

**Westernization:** “assimilation of Western culture; the social process of becoming familiar with or converting to the customs and practices of Western civilization” (“westernization”).

## Appendix (Interview Schedules)

1. fireworks Advertising Agency: Questions asked to the General Manager, Mr. Muheereza Kyamutetera, April 11, 2014.

1. What does the company do?
2. Are most of the ads you make for billboards, television, newspapers or other?
3. Do your ads only run in Kampala?
4. How do you pick your clients? Do they come to you?
5. Are most of your clients Ugandan companies or multinationals?
6. How much do you collaborate with your clients?
7. What are your rates?
8. How much time goes into making one advertisement campaign?
9. How do you conduct research and who is involved?
10. How can you measure the effect of your advertisements?
11. What have you found to be your most successful types of advertisements?
12. What are your biggest challenges?
13. What has been your biggest success?
14. Do you think advertising can be linked to development? If so, how?
15. Would you say that ads portraying a more Western lifestyle or a more Ugandan lifestyle are more relevant for promoting development?

2. WBS: Questions asked to the Head of the Marketing Department, Ms. Patience Kiconco, April 17, 2014.

1. Do you always watch the ads before deciding whether or not to run them?
2. If yes, what are you checking for?
3. Have you ever turned an ad down?
4. Do you usually run ads from Ugandan companies or from multinational corporations?
5. Would you say that advertisers have an influence on the TV station itself? Why or why not?
6. How do you think advertisements affect your viewers, if at all?
7. Advertisements sell not only a product, but also promote a certain lifestyle. Would you say that most of the advertisements run on this network promote an improved Ugandan lifestyle or a more Western lifestyle?
8. Do you think that advertisements add value to your network? I.e., do your viewers enjoy the advertisements or would they watch more TV if there were no advertisements?
9. Which ads are usually the highest rated or most entertaining?
10. What do you know about the research that goes into each advertisement in order to make it attractive to the Ugandan public?

3. MAAD Advertising Agency: Questions asked to Ms. Janet Nakkazi on April 24, 2014.

1. What would you say is the main purpose of televised advertising?
2. What do viewers gain from watching advertisements? What are the benefits?
3. Do you think viewers lose anything from watching advertisements?
4. Would you say that the brand name or the message within the advertisement is more important to consumers?
5. Do you think that advertising affects development, particularly in urban areas such as Kampala? (Economically, culturally, or socially)
6. Do you think that advertisements that promote the local culture or a more globalized culture are better at creating development?
7. Do you think that the research conducted in order to communicate effectively to the target demographic is used in a way that promotes development?
8. Do you agree that by watching an advertisement, a viewer may be inspired to work harder so that he can improve his lifestyle?
9. Would you say that televised advertisements in Uganda promote a capitalistic economy? Why or why not?
10. What have you found to be one of the best strategies for an international company to communicate effectively with the Ugandan public?

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