

**TRANSCREATION STRATEGIES IN ADAPTING INTERNATIONAL
BRAND NAMES AND SLOGANS FOR THE UZBEK MARKET**

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Abstract: As international companies increasingly enter the growing market of Uzbekistan, standard marketing strategies face significant linguistic and cultural barriers. This paper explores the critical role of transcreation—the process of creatively adapting messages from one language to another while maintaining their original intent, style, and tone—in modifying global brand names and slogans for Uzbek consumers. Traditional word-for-word translation frequently fails to capture the cultural nuances, traditional idioms, and emotional depth required to influence local buyers. By analyzing local market dynamics, linguistic script challenges, and cultural dimensions such as collectivism, this study highlights how successful brands build meaningful consumer connections. The findings indicate that balancing a global identity with local values, such as hospitality and family solidarity, is essential. Ultimately, this research offers a practical framework for international marketers to communicate authentically within Uzbekistan's unique linguistic and sociocultural landscape.

Keywords: Transcreation, brand adaptation, slogans, Uzbek market, cultural dimensions, marketing localization.

Introduction. The modern Uzbek consumer market is changing rapidly due to recent economic reforms and a significant increase in foreign investment. As international companies enter Uzbekistan, market competition is growing, which means global brands must focus on building strong, genuine connections with local consumers rather than just distributing products. However, the biggest challenge for these companies is their reliance on word-for-word, literal translation in advertising. Standard translation usually fails to capture local cultural nuances, traditional idioms, and the emotional connection needed to influence Uzbek buyers, often resulting in awkward or unnatural messages. To solve this problem, businesses need to move beyond basic translation or technical localization and instead use transcreation. This creative approach completely rebuilds the marketing concept in the target language to keep the original emotional impact and intent. Therefore, this study aims to explore how global brands can strategically use transcreation to align with Uzbek cultural values and consumer psychology, offering a practical framework for successful local branding.



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Main body. To understand how global marketing succeeds in Uzbekistan, we need to look at three main areas: translation purpose, cultural differences, and the local language environment. The first key concept is Skopos Theory, which was developed by Hans Vermeer. This theory argues that the most important part of any translation is its “Skopos”—a Greek word meaning the goal or purpose of the text. In traditional translation, people try to keep the exact words the same. However, in international advertising, the main goal is to persuade consumers and create a positive emotional reaction. Because of this, advertisers must prioritize the function of the message over literal equivalence. If a global slogan needs to be completely rewritten to achieve the same emotional effect on Uzbek buyers, Skopos Theory states that this creative change is fully justified. Culture also plays a massive role in how people view advertising, which we can analyze using Geert Hofstede’s Cultural Dimension Theory. Central Asian societies, including Uzbekistan, generally have high levels of collectivism and power distance. In a collectivist culture, consumers value family, community harmony, and shared traditions much more than individual success or independence. Therefore, foreign slogans that promote pure individualism might fail or feel disconnected in Uzbekistan. Marketing messages should instead focus on mutual respect, family connections, and community celebrations like *Navruz* or *Ramadan*. Additionally, because of a high power distance, Uzbek consumers respect established authority, professional expertise, and high-quality status symbols, which should be reflected in the brand's tone of voice. Finally, international brands must adapt to the unique linguistic landscape of Uzbekistan. Urban advertising in the country is deeply affected by the simultaneous use of both the Uzbek and Russian languages. Moreover, the Uzbek language itself involves ongoing transitions between the Latin and Cyrillic scripts, depending on the target audience and media platform. For example, older demographics might respond better to Cyrillic text, while younger consumers prefer Latin script on digital platforms. Copywriters must carefully balance these linguistic dynamics and select the right words and scripts to ensure that the transcreated brand names look professional and feel natural to local consumers.

When introducing an international brand to Uzbekistan, companies must deploy specific linguistic strategies to ensure their names fit naturally into the local tongue. The first step involves phonetic adaptation, which balances transliteration (matching the spelling) and transcription (matching the pronunciation). Foreign brand names can sometimes sound awkward, be difficult to pronounce, or accidentally carry negative meanings in the Uzbek language. To prevent this, marketers must thoroughly test how a brand name sounds to the Uzbek ear, adjusting vowels or consonants to create a smooth, easily memorable sound that maintains positive associations. Beyond pure sound, semantic adaptation is often required when a literal brand name carries



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no emotional weight or relevance for local consumers. Instead of keeping an abstract foreign word, transcreation experts may recreate the core meaning of the brand using Uzbek linguistic roots or familiar cultural symbols. This method helps the brand feel less alien and more like a local product that understands the community's lifestyle. It changes the consumer's perception from *"this is a foreign company selling to me"* to *"this is a brand that speaks my language."* Furthermore, navigating the dual-script environment of Uzbekistan presents a unique orthographic challenge. While the official script for education and public administration is the Latin alphabet, the Cyrillic script remains widely used in everyday life, print media, and certain digital spaces. Brand managers must carefully decide whether to display their names in Latin, Cyrillic, or both, depending on their target audience and the media platform, while strictly following the script and advertising laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Finally, marketers must consider morphological integration in their advertising copy. Uzbek is an agglutinative language, which means suffixes are attached to the end of nouns to show grammatical relationships, such as *-ga* (to), *-da* (in/at), or *-ni* (object marker). If a foreign brand name does not blend smoothly with these Uzbek suffixes, slogans can sound grammatically broken or forced. Successful transcreation ensures that foreign names are flexible enough to accept local grammar rules naturally in everyday marketing communication.

Adapting global slogans for Uzbekistan requires deep sociocultural awareness alongside linguistic changes. International brands must move away from Western, individualistic slogans and instead use localized metaphors and emotional appeals. This process involves incorporating core Uzbek values like *mehr* (kindness), *oqibat* (mutual loyalty), and *mehmondorchilik* (hospitality) into marketing messages. Furthermore, creative copywriters must carefully navigate local etiquette and religious nuances, ensuring advertisements show respect for elders (*hurmat*) and emphasize family harmony over pure individualism. Looking at real-world examples in Uzbekistan shows how these theoretical ideas work in practice. In the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, global giants like Coca-Cola and Pepsi successfully adapt their campaigns during family-centered holidays such as Navruz and Ramadan. Instead of focusing only on refreshment, their transcreated slogans emphasize sharing a table (*dasturxon*) with loved ones and celebrating community bonds. These brands understand that connecting their product to shared traditional meals makes them feel much more relevant to local consumers. In contrast, the technology and automotive sectors, represented by brands like Samsung and BYD, take a slightly different path. While they keep their global English slogans on high-tech digital devices to look modern and international, their local video ads and social media campaigns use Uzbek. These localized ads regularly show technology bringing family members together across distances,



which directly appeals to the collectivist mindset of Uzbek society. International and domestic fast-food chains like KFC and Evos highlight an important grammatical and cultural choice: the *Siz* (formal you) versus *Sen* (informal you) dilemma. Western advertising often uses an informal, direct tone to sound friendly. However, using *Sen* in Uzbekistan can easily sound disrespectful to older target audiences. Therefore, successful brands generally choose the polite *Siz* to build trust and show respect for the consumer. On the other hand, brands that use literal translations or ignore these cultural boundaries risk creating confusing or corporate-sounding messages that fail to build a strong consumer connection.

To execute a successful transcreation strategy in Uzbekistan, international marketing agencies must establish a structured workflow that empowers native Uzbek copywriters. Rather than treating local creatives as simple translators, brands should include them from the very beginning of the creative process, providing clear briefs that explain the emotional goals of the campaign. A critical element of this workflow is the use of back-translation, where the newly adapted Uzbek slogan is translated back into English by a separate linguist. This step allows global brand managers to verify that the core message remains accurate and safe, without losing its original meaning. Furthermore, testing these transcreated slogans through regional focus groups is vital. Consumer preferences and language styles can vary across Uzbekistan; for instance, the urban, multilingual environment of Tashkent often reacts differently to certain words compared to the more traditional and culturally dense regions like the Fergana Valley or Samarkand. Testing ads in these different areas helps brands find a perfect balance between maintaining their global brand identity and establishing genuine local relevance. Ultimately, the goal is to protect the core “*Brand DNA*” while speaking to Uzbek consumers in a way that feels natural, respectful, and locally authentic.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the successful entry and long-term growth of international brands in Uzbekistan heavily depend on their ability to communicate authentically with the local audience. As this study has shown, relying on literal, word-for-word translation in marketing campaigns is no longer effective. It often results in unnatural phrasing, missed emotional connections, or awkward cultural misunderstandings. To overcome these challenges, global businesses must actively shift from standard translation toward transcreation. This creative approach allows brands to rebuild their core messages using local cultural symbols, traditional metaphors, and appropriate grammatical suffixation that resonate deeply with the Uzbek lifestyle. Furthermore, adapting slogans requires a strong understanding of Uzbekistan's social values, particularly its collectivist culture, respect for family structures, and regional linguistic dynamics. Marketers must carefully balance their global brand identity with local relevance by involving native copywriters early in the



process and testing campaigns across different provinces, from Tashkent to the Fergana Valley. While technology and high-tech sectors can successfully retain parts of their international image, everyday consumer goods must speak directly to the hearts and traditions of local buyers. Ultimately, transcreation serves as the vital bridge that transforms a foreign corporate entity into a trusted, familiar brand within the rapidly evolving Uzbek consumer marketplace.

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