

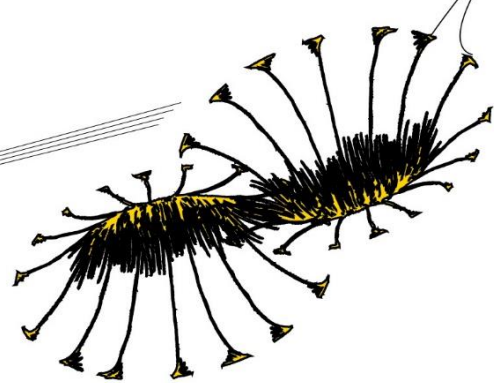



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DOUBLE DUTCH

CORPORATE REPUTATION AND THE EMPHASIZEMENT OF COUNTRY OF ORIGIN AT A DUTCH POSTAL COMPANY



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PREFACE

This case study at PostNL was performed to complete my master Communication Studies at the University of Twente. But, before I started to write my master thesis, I first wanted to experience the organisation by myself. I had the opportunity to do an internship at the Mediarelations & PR department from November 2014 till March 2015. By that time, the organisation was running at full speed. With 'Sinterklaas', Christmas and Valentine's day it was a very busy time at the company. I really enjoyed this time and learned a lot.

After my internship, I started writing my thesis about 'the Dutch feeling of PostNL' and the impact of that feeling on the corporate reputation of the company. I decided to match feelings of national pride with pride within the organisation, in several corporate advertisements. You might ask me, pride in an organisation with a lot of reorganisations and financial cuts? Well actually, yes, still a lot of pride is in there. During my focus groups, I got insight in the amount of pride employees had regarding to the company. Employees are especially showing their pride about the complexity of the daily processes of the organisation, the amount of colleagues they deal with every single day and their contact with people in their own neighbourhood. I had the opportunity to experience that form of pride very closely by spending a day with parcel delivery driver Ron. During that day, he told me everything about his job. He told me for example that he knew almost all of the local people and he said to me that he is very enthusiastic about his tasks, making people happy with their post and packages. It was really inspiring to see how thankful and proud he was to have this job at PostNL.

Now that my thesis is completed I want to thank a lot of people. First, I want to thank my supervisors, Jordy Gosselt and Thomas van Rompay, for their time, comments and feedback on my writings. I also want to thank them for their support, humour, patience, fruitful discussions and collaboration. Second, I want to thank my colleagues at PostNL for showing me around in their world. I really learned a lot about the organisation and their work as spokesmen. I also want to thank them for the opportunities they gave me, the enjoyable time, their advices, inexhaustible support and their trust in my abilities. Especially, I want to thank my colleague's Michelle Terpstra, Hanne Klück and Herbert Brinkman for being my voluntary career-, thesis- and mental coaches during this project. Furthermore, I want to thank my friends, roommates, Annemarie, Yolande, University of Happiness, Hillsong, the Schuhmachers and my family for their help and mental support during this, sometimes difficult, time period. I want to thank my parents and my big love; Michiel in particular, for the fact that they were always being around and because of the fact that they never stopped believing in me.

Last but not least, I want to thank my personal black dog, teaching me a lot about myself and making me a more grown up and richer person in a lot of ways.

Jennifer Bendsneijder
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ABSTRACT

This case study at PostNL was focused on the emphasis of 'the Dutch feeling of PostNL' also mentioned as; the country of origin (COO) of the company; the Netherlands. The goal of this research was to see if the communication strategy, making use of extra affective country of origin cues in communication expressions of the organisation, positively contributed to the corporate reputation of PostNL among consumers in the Netherlands. The research consisted of two studies, namely a focus group study among PostNL employees and an online questionnaire among Dutch consumers. In the focus group study, four focus groups with a diverse group of PostNL members took place. Based on these results; three corporate advertisements, containing extra affective COO cues were designed. These three corporate advertisements and one neutral corporate advertisement were examined by 246 respondents participating in the online questionnaire, measuring the effect of these advertisements towards corporate reputation. The effect of country image towards behavioural intentions, the moderating effect of national identification between the corporate advertisements and corporate reputation and the influence of corporate reputation on behavioural intentions were also taken in account. Results of the questionnaire showed that the advertisements containing extra affective COO cues, did not differ significantly from the neutral condition in the effect towards corporate reputation. This was also the case for the effect of country image towards behavioural intentions. What the results did show, was that national identification had a moderating effect and that corporate reputation had a positive effect on behavioural intentions. Therefore, it is concluded that making use of the positive country image of the Netherlands could be helpful in a communication strategy for PostNL. Further research should be done, to get to know how to emphasize this 'Dutch feeling' specifically.

Keywords: Country of Origin, Country Image Netherlands, Corporate Reputation, National Pride, Postal Company, Consumers.

INTRODUCTION

This case study is performed at a Dutch Postal company, PostNL. PostNL has been delivering mail in the Netherlands for over more than 200 years. For a long time, the organisation was the only postal company in the Netherlands (postnl.nl, 2015). But, with the global trend of liberalisation of formerly monopolistic mail delivery and privatising the national post offices (Eckert, 2009), the market position of PostNL changed. This change had to do with the adjustment of the Dutch law in 2009, when also the Dutch government decided to liberalise the postal market. From then, everyone in the country was able to start a company in mail delivery (rijksoverheid.nl, 2015). So, at the moment about 1198 registered mail transport services are active in the Netherlands (acm.nl, 2015). Of all those different companies, PostNL is still leading in mail and parcels in the Benelux. Within the organisation, that also is the first listed postal company in the entire world, a total of approximately 49,000 people are employed. The revenues of PostNL reached almost € 3.5 billion in 2015 (postnl.nl, 2016). The corporate reputation or 'the management of the corporate brand' of PostNL is, because of the increasing competition, getting more and more important in order to maintain this market position (Kitchen & Laurence, 2003).

From the glut of writings on the subject corporate reputation over the past few years, it is obvious that reputation became an issue of growing interest among academic, organisational and management practitioners (Cullen, 2005; Gotsi & Wilson, 2001). The fact that the concept is getting more and more attention, could be explained by its powerful influence on the mind-set of a variety of stakeholders, such as investors, employees and potential employees, customers and the press (Van den Bosch, De Jong and Elving (2005). These different stakeholder groups, have various relationships with an organisation. Therefore, they will base their reputation evaluations on different aspects. For example, employees focus on workplace features, investors on business and financial aspects and consumers on product and services. So, different stakeholder groups often have different thoughts about an organisation. Thus, also form their own specific evaluation (Dowling & Moran, 2012). Because it is the company's reputation with its consumers that is most salient (Caruana & Chircop, 2000), this research will focus on consumers.

In order to get a positive corporate reputation among consumers, several forms of corporate communication (publicizing statements of vision, mission, ethics, and values) could be used to position one's company (Dowling & Moran, 2012). Examples are; corporate advertising, corporate PR, corporate branding, storytelling and visual identification are used to tell the story about the organisation and to show who they are, in order to shape people's perceptions and evaluations (Balmer & Greyser, 2006; Dowling & Moran, 2012). Furthermore, characteristics of the company that could be used in communication expressions to positively position the company are for example the corporate philosophy, corporate history and the country of origin (Balmer & Greyser, 2006; Hasanbegovic, 2011; Verlegh, 2001). To use country of origin (COO) as an elementary component of the communication strategy, firms could connect their corporate- and national identity (Melewar, 2003).

The phenomenon of using COO as a positive trait, has been popular for decades (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015). Also in the past couple of years, this form of communication still seems to be a beloved way to express and emphasize a product- or corporate identity. It was shown in many research articles that it is a successful way to create goodwill, awareness and a positive buying and investment behaviour among consumers and other stakeholders (Hamilton, 2010). Everyone knows for example companies and products like; Italian Bertolli Olive Oil, Swiss Milka Chocolate, the Swedish company IKEA and French Boursin (Verlegh, 2001). Next to these examples, a lot of more companies and products worldwide can be mentioned that are using their country of origin in their communication strategy towards consumers. Supported by the fact that COO influences consumers' responses to advertising (Goldberg and Hartwick 1990) and a large number of scientific studies regarding to COO have found that consumers' product evaluations and buying intentions are related to the origins of the products (Al-Sulaiti and Baker 1998; Peterson and Jolibert 1995; Pharr 2005; Verlegh and Steenkamp 1999; Schooler, 1965; Dichter 1962).

The fact that this form of identity expression is still popular and successful, is also emphasized in an every year research of EURIB among consumers in the Netherlands, both 2014 and 2015, the most popular brands referred to the Dutch culture. In the list of the top 100 indispensable brands, specified by Dutch consumers, 69 of the brands had Dutch 'roots' (EURIB, 2014). Of all those 69 brands, the communication campaigns of products and companies that connected most with Dutch norms and values, generated the biggest amount of sympathy among this group of consumers (EURIB, 2014; EURIB, 2015). HEMA, UNOX, Calvé, Albert Heijn and Douwe Egberts; with slogans like; "Unox, het Hollandste merk van Nederland!" and 'Douwe Egberts; Gebrand voor Nederland!', are for example typical Dutch companies taking advantage of this kind of communication strategy (EURIB, 2011; Steenkamp, Batra & Alden, 2003, EURIB, 2011, Unox.nl, 2015; DE.nl, 2015).

But, how could this popularity and success of this communication strategy, referring to country of origin, be explained? First, according to Han (1989), Martin and Eroglu (1983), Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009), Magnusson and Westjohn (2011) the country image of a certain country is an important factor in the popularity and the success of a communication campaign. So, if a company is making use of a country, having a positive country image among consumers, it could be the case that sympathy and positive attitudes towards a product or corporate brand are generated among consumers (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015). Furthermore, products, services and companies originated and coming from the own home country, are getting more and more important for a lot of people in the last couple of years (Winit, Gregory, Cleveland & Verlegh, 2014). This upcoming trend is showing that people tend to have more need to identify with their own country. That could be explained by the home-country bias, which describes that people are more tempted to buy and use only national products and services instead of making use of foreign ones (Winit, Gregory, Cleveland & Verlegh, 2014). This bias is stirred up by the fact that there are a lot of wars and political fights these days between religions and countries and also a lot of terroristic attacks are taking place. In these uncertain circumstances, national identification often arises. So, obviously people around the world get more anxious and therefore, they are more inclined to fall back on their own local products that are committed to their own country (Özsomer, 2012; Hohman, Hogg & Bligh, 2010).

In the top 20 of the most reputed countries in the 2015 Country RepTrak®, the Netherlands ends up at the 9th place with a strong score of 73.7 (Reputation Institute, 2015). In this research, scores from 60 till 70 are labelled as moderate, scores from 70 till 80 are labelled as strong and scores from 80 till 100 are mentioned excellent. Also a research regarding the country self-image of the Netherlands, a couple of years ago, showed a strong mean score of 75.90 out of 100 (Apéria, 2009). Assuming that these figures are still applicable at the moment, there can be abided that a lot of international people and Dutch people have a positive view on their own country. Focusing on Dutch consumers, a trend of buying more local products and services is also present (Spaargaren, Oosterveer & Loeber, 2013). Therefore, a communication strategy that focusses on the emphasisment of the Netherlands, could be successful in order to gain a positive corporate reputation. Referring to the communication strategy of PostNL at the moment; the company is communicating its Dutch 'roots' through the use of 'NL' in the name (Kleppe, Iversen & Stensaker, 2002) and the national colour orange (Lakens, 2011) in its logo. A question regarding the use of COO in the communication strategy of PostNL, is how the 'Dutch feeling' could be more claimed in communication expressions, and if so, to what extent this should contribute to their corporate reputation in the Netherlands. In order to give advice to PostNL on this issue, more insight is needed about existing COO research.

The phenomenon, developing competitive advantage using a positive country image, is called the "country of origin effect" (Kleppe, Iversen & Stensaker, 2002; Al-Sulaiti & Baker, 1998). The country of origin effect (COO) is one of the most intensely studied topics in the field of international business, marketing and consumer behaviour literatures (Magnusson & Westjohn, 2011; Peterson & Jolibert, 1995). In the 60's, Schooler (1965) and Dichter (1962) started to study COO, so research to the constitution and effects of country images already has a long history (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015). Magnusson and Westjohn (2011) mention that, despite of the long history of COO research, when looking at the continuous growth of the number of publications over the past years, COO still remains an interesting topic, because of the continuous use of the strategy among companies and ongoing stream of research articles about this topic (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015).

In scientific literature, most COO studies are related to products (Berentzen, Backhaus, Michaelis, Blut & Ahlert, 2008). Looking at reviews of Peterson and Jolibert (1995), Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999) and Magnusson and Westjohn (2011), a lot of studies show that COO is an important factor to consumers evaluative judgments (attitude, quality, value) and buying decisions of products and product brands. These consumer evaluations were often related to differences in product evaluations and preferences, based on the notion of the country of origin of a product. In the last couple of years, more COO studies are taking in account the country image to see why consumers prefer products and brands from particular countries. But, emotions and feelings regarding a particular country, known as the affective component of country image, had been underexposed in COO research (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009). According to Brijs, Bloemer and Kasper (2011) pride belongs to one of the positive feelings related to country image. These feelings of pride may again promote positive thoughts (Tracy & Robins, 2007), so the affective component of country image, national pride, could be applied in communication expressions of PostNL. In order to claim the 'Dutch feeling' of the company and thus generate positive thoughts about the organisation regarding the corporate reputation. Yet, because COO has been studied mainly with reference to separate firm products and a little amount of research has taken the company view, the impact of COO on a firms "overall" reputation is, together with the affective component of country image, a gap in the COO literature (Newbury, 2012; Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009, Hamilton, 2010).

Thus, based on the insights of earlier COO research and to hopefully fill in some gaps in the literature, this case study is focused on the contribution of affective country of origin (COO) information in communication expressions to the corporate reputation of PostNL. The first goal of this case study is to get insight in what extra affective country of origin references could be communicated by PostNL. Therefore, the following research question is formulated: "*What messages, containing extra affective country of origin references, could be used in communication expressions of PostNL?*" Because the personnel of the organisation provides a bridge between the internal and external environment of the company and helps to build and maintain a corporate brand (Balmer, 2001, Harris & de Chernatony, 2001, Balmer & Greyser, 2006), a couple of PostNL employees were involved in the study. So, in order to get an answer to this research question focus groups with several types of employees PostNL are conducted.

The second goal of the case study is to measure the contribution of the extra affective country of origin references in communication expressions to the corporate reputation of the company. This leads to the main research question: "*To what extent will the use of extra affective country of origin references within communication expressions of PostNL contribute to the corporate reputation of PostNL in the Netherlands?*" To test this, an online questionnaire was spread among consumers.

This paper is divided in the following chapters: the theoretical background and the development of the hypotheses, a description of the two research designs, the data collection, the results and a general discussion. Based on this, in the last chapter research and managerial implications are described.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this part, the most important concepts of the research questions; corporate reputation and country of origin are defined. Furthermore, it is explained how these concepts possibly relate to each other. In this framework, also the hypotheses are formulated and the conceptual research model is shown.

Corporate Reputation

Due to the amount of written articles about the topic, the list containing definitions of corporate reputation could go on and on (Wartick, 2002). In this research the following definition for corporate reputation is used: *corporate reputation is a particular type of feedback, received by an organisation from its stakeholders, concerning to the credibility of the organisation's identity claims (Whetten & Mackey, 2002, p. 394 & 401)*. According to this view, it is assumed that in order to develop a positive corporate reputation, corporate identity should be taken in account (Fombrun & Rindova, 2000; Hasanbegovic, 2011). Factors of corporate identity like organisational activities, markets served, corporate ownership and structure, organisational type, corporate philosophy, country of origin and corporate history, contribute to the distinctiveness of a company (Balmer & Greyser, 2006; Hasanbegovic, 2011). The expression of corporate identity or, what the organisation wants their external stakeholders to understand what is most central, enduring, and distinctive about the company, is described as corporate image (Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Whetten & Mackey, 2002). Further, the beliefs and impressions people have about a company are constructed through the proposition of the corporate brand and corporate communications (Dowling & Moran, 2012). The combination of these two main components; corporate identity and corporate image, form corporate reputation (Chun, 2005; Bromley, 2000; Thomaz, 2010; Fombrun, 2012). Firms can use country of origin imagery for communicating their identities, by linking corporate identity and national identity through a country of origin concept (Melewar, 2003). Emphasizing the country of origin of a brand can be a successful communication strategy for substantial numbers of consumers, especially when using a positive country image (Herz & Diamantopoulos, 2013; Lee & Ganesh, 1999).

Country of origin

Country of origin (COO) refers to the home country of a company (Han & Terpstra, 1988) and can be used as a branding strategy, by communicating positively perceived COO information (Kleppe, Iversen & Stensaker, 2002; Berentzen, Backhaus, Michaelis, Blut & Ahlert, 2008). As mentioned earlier, a lot of COO studies are focussed on products and product brands. Corporate branding draws on the traditions of product branding in that it shares the same objective of creating differentiation and preference (Knox & Bickerton, 2003), so this study builds further on earlier COO research. In literature about COO, COO is often seen as an extrinsic product cue (Brijs, 2006). A cue can be defined as a characteristic, event, quality or object, external to a person, that can be encoded and used to categorise a stimulus object (Schellinck, 1983). It is assumed that a product containing several cues, which are divided in intrinsic cues (taste, design, materials, performance, etc.) and extrinsic information cues (price, brand name, warranty, etc.) where the country of origin phenomenon belongs to (Brijs, 2006). A review of Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999) stated that this country of origin effect is a complex phenomenon and that the use of the country of origin cue influences consumer product evaluations in various ways. They made a distinction in the processing of country of origin information and divided the effects in cognitive, affective and normative effects. In table 1, adapted from Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999, p. 524), typical examples of cognitive, affective and normative COO-effects are displayed.

Effect	Description	Major findings
Cognitive	COO is a cue for product quality	COO is used as a 'signal' for overall product quality and quality attributes, such as reliability and durability.
Affective	COO has symbolic and emotional value to consumers	COO is an image attribute that links the product to symbolic and emotional benefits, including social status and national pride.
Normative	Consumers hold social and personal norms related to COO	Purchasing domestic product may be regarded as the 'right way of conduct', because it supports the domestic economy. By the same token, consumers may refrain from buying goods from countries with objectionable activities or regimes.

Table 1. Examples of cognitive, affective and normative COO effects (adapted from, Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999:524 in Brijs, 2006).

In cognitive processing, consumers make rational use of a COO-cue. COO is then used to get information about product quality attributes (Bloemer, Brijs & Kasper, 2009). When moral reflections are generated by the COO-cue, a normative effect occurs (Bloemer, Brijs & Kasper, 2009). Normative effects of country of origin relate to the policies and practices of a country. For example, consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp & Sharma 1987; the opinion that purchasing imported products is wrong because it hurts the domestic economy) can be a reason to buy products from the home country (Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999). In affective processing, the country of origin has a symbolic and emotional value to consumers (Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999). With affective COO-effects, a COO-cue stimulates an emotional reaction in the mind of the consumer (Brijs, 2006; Bloemer, Brijs & Kasper, 2009). Consumers then relate country of origin to status, identity, national pride and past experiences with a country (Verlegh, 2001).

The studies above describe how the country of origin cue of a product is processed in the minds of consumers. But, the actual reason why certain products from a particular country are preferred, depends on the image of a particular country (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009).

Country Image

In this study, the focus relies on overall country image. This view describes that country image is the attitude towards a country, composed by attitudes toward a country's cultural identity, territory, its history and traditions, language, climate, people, its domestic economy, technological development, norms and values and its political organisation (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015; Brijs, Bloemer & Kasper, 2011). These associations can be formed for example through travel, personal contacts, education, and media reports (Verlegh, 2001). Within country image, cognitive and affective components can be distinguished (Verlegh, 2001; Elliot, Papadopoulos & Kim, 2010). The cognitive component refers to consumers informational beliefs about certain country and the affective component refers to the emotional value of a country to the consumer, capturing emotions and feelings (Diamantopoulos, Riefler & Roth, 2008). Enthusiasm, engagement, excitement, inspiration, pride and attentiveness are positive feelings related to country image (Brijs, Bloemer & Kasper, 2011). Next to the cognitive and affective country image part, the country image also has a conative part, also named as; the conative mechanism of the country image (Brijs, 2011; Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009; Magnusson & Westjohn, 2011). The Theory of Reasoned Action the fundamental idea in this conative part, because the conative part describes that country image can have an effect on human behaviour regarding to political support, travel, investment practices and the buying of products and services originated from a particular country (Buhmann, 2015; Bloemer, Brijs & Kasper, 2009). These conative tendencies, also mentioned as behavioural intentions, involve a person's intentions towards a product or company. To check if this is also the case for PostNL, the first hypothesis is formulated.

H1: *A positive view on the country image of the Netherlands will positively contribute to behavioural intentions of consumers towards PostNL.*

Emphasizing COO

In order for country image to have an effect on the information processing in the minds of consumers, the country of origin should be emphasized in communication expressions. In order to express COO, brand names, slogans, pictures of typical sceneries, colours, symbols and 'made in' labelling are text and visual references that could be used to trigger country associations in forms of communication (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2008; Leclerc, Schmitt & Dubé, 1994 ; Usunier, 2011). These references in communication expressions will then function as a stimulus for the COO cue (Brijs, 2006). In table 2 examples of references mentioned by Verlegh (2001) are displayed.

Marketing instrument	Type of reference
Advertising	Explicit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absolut: "Vodka from the country of Sweden" • Siemens: "from Germany with love"
	Implicit (through the use of language or visuals): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMW: "Freude am Fahren" (in US and Europe) • Audi: "Vorsprung durch Technik" (in UK) • Milka chocolate: use of alpine scenery
Branding/Labelling	Explicit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caf� de Colombia • American Express • Swissair / British Airways / Air France • Clearly Canadian
	Implicit (linguistic references or the use of flags/symbols) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kenwood vs. Mitsubishi (both Japanese) • Boursin: French-sounding (Unilever) • Buitoni, Raguletto: Italian-sounding (Nestle/Unilever) • Ikea: (".. of Sweden"): blue and yellow as corporate colors

Table 2. Examples of references to country of origin (Verlegh, 2001).

As one can see in table 2, Verlegh (2001) divided the examples of references towards country of origin in the marketing instruments branding and advertising, which may be used to implicitly and explicitly link to country of origin. Nowadays, PostNL already has an implicit and an explicit branding or labelling reference to the country of origin (Verlegh, 2001). Implicit, by using the Dutch national colour, orange, (Lakens, 2011) in its logo and explicit making use of 'NL' in the name of the company. In this case study, for the emphasisment of COO, corporate advertising is used. Corporate advertising, is a form of advertisement where the company, instead of its products or services, is underlined (Cornelissen, 2014).

Next to an information part in forms of communication, affect also plays an important role in the assessment of forming beliefs (Verlegh, 2001). For example, the motivation to process information is stimulated by affect (Hoffman, 1986) and it also determines which beliefs are established, how these beliefs are evaluated and how strongly these beliefs have an impact on the formation of preferences (Verlegh, 2001). This case study is focused on national pride, because pride belongs, together with joy and affection, to the variance of pleasant emotions.

National Pride

Rose (1985) defined national pride as being proud of one's people and country. National pride is an aspect that refers to emotional ties to the national community and can also be described as the sense of 'we-feeling'; the feeling being part of an achievement or an admirable quality (Bühlmann & Hänni, 2012; Evans & Kelley, 2002). National pride in specific domains contains people's perception of economic achievements, sport achievements, science and technology, arts and literature, cultural historical heritage, armed forces, the way democracy works, political influence, fair treatment of all groups, the social security system and international prestige of a country and national institutions (Smith & Jarkko, 1998; Hjerm, 1998; Evans & Kelley, 2002; Cutura, Cicic & Agic, 2014).

Referring specifically to national pride in the Netherlands, results from a study of Bühlmann and Hänni (2012) showed that 83.4% of the Dutch citizens, said that they were proud of the country. According to specific domains, Evans and Kelley (2002) showed that large majorities in 24 developed countries, including the Netherlands, derive feelings of national pride from their science and technology, their arts and literature, their sport and their history. Van Hilvoorde, Elling and Stokvis (2010); state that the Dutch derive their feelings of national pride from the following aspects: system of social security, economical performance, democracy and honest and equal treatment of all groups in society. So, these aspects are used in this case study.

Because pride is a positive emotional phenomenon and emotions can lead to stronger reactions than only cognitions (Zajonc & Markus, 1982; Johnson & Stewart, 2005), it is assumed that the use of extra affective country of origin will positively contribute to corporate reputation. Furthermore, it is the case that corporate reputation is closely associated with emotional reactions, containing; good feeling, trust, admiration and respect (Ponzi, Fombrun & Gardberg, 2011). Assuming that feelings of national pride may promote positive feelings and thoughts (Tracy & Robins, 2007), hypothesis 2 is formulated like this:

***H2:** The use of extra affective country of origin references within communication expressions of PostNL will positively contribute to corporate reputation of consumers in the Netherlands.*

National identification

National pride is the positive affect people feel towards their country as a result of their national identity (Smith & Jarkko, 1998; Smith & Kim, 2006). Being a member of a national state, can namely be seen as a part of someone's identity and can be stimulated by circumstances referring to a country; like professional sport events as the UEFA cup (Van Hilvoorde, Elling & Stokvis, 2010). According to the Social Identity Theory, people like to think positive about the groups to which they belong (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Referring to countries, this theory describes that the emotional and motivational aspects in being part of a nation differs from person to person and from moment to moment. This phenomenon is called national identification (Turner & Reynolds, 2001).

The extra affective country of origin references in communication expressions of PostNL are based on national pride, so it is assumed that the amount of national identification consumers have does play a role in the evaluation towards the corporate reputation of PostNL. The similarity-attraction theory (Berscheid & Walster, 1969; Byrne, 1971), which lies beneath this evaluation, describes that individuals are attracted to other individuals and groups that are similar to them. Companies, can also be seen as a social groups (Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994) and when consumers perceive overlap between the attributes of the company and their own attributes one speaks of consumer-company congruence (Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001). Marin and Ruiz (2007) stated that the more consumer-company congruence is present in the eyes of the consumer, the better the company will be evaluated.

So, in this case study, the amount of national identification consumers have with the Netherlands is probably moderating between the corporate advertisements containing extra affective COO references and the corporate reputation of PostNL. This assumption is formulated by hypothesis 3:

H3: The contribution of extra affective country of origin references within communication expressions of PostNL to the corporate reputation of consumers in the Netherlands will be moderated by the level of national identification among consumers.

Behavioural intentions

A positive evaluation regarding the corporate reputation affects the way how various stakeholders behave towards an organisation (Chun, 2005), both on monetary and behaviour-related constructs (Walsh & Beatty, 2007). Caruana and Chircop (2000) listed the following beneficial outputs; perceived product quality, attitude of buyers to salespersons and products in purchase situation, organisational identification by employees, inter organisational co-operation or citizenship behaviour and the attraction of quality personnel. Corporate reputation also leads to customer satisfaction and trust and is a predictor of customer loyalty and word of mouth (Walsh, Mitchell, Jackson & Beatty, 2009).

In short, the corporate reputation in the eyes of individuals and stakeholder groups influence their willingness to either provide or withhold for the company and the corporate reputation thus influences the strength of the competitive advantage (Balmer & Gray, 1999). When having a positive corporate reputation stakeholders are more likely to recommend, invest, purchase products and services, work for the company and give positive comments about the company as a whole (Fombrun, 2012). Therefore, hypothesis 4 is formulated:

H4: A positive view on corporate reputation of PostNL will positively contribute to behavioural intentions of consumers towards PostNL.

The hypotheses in this theoretical framework lead to the following conceptual model, displayed below in figure 1. In the next chapter is described how these hypotheses will be tested.

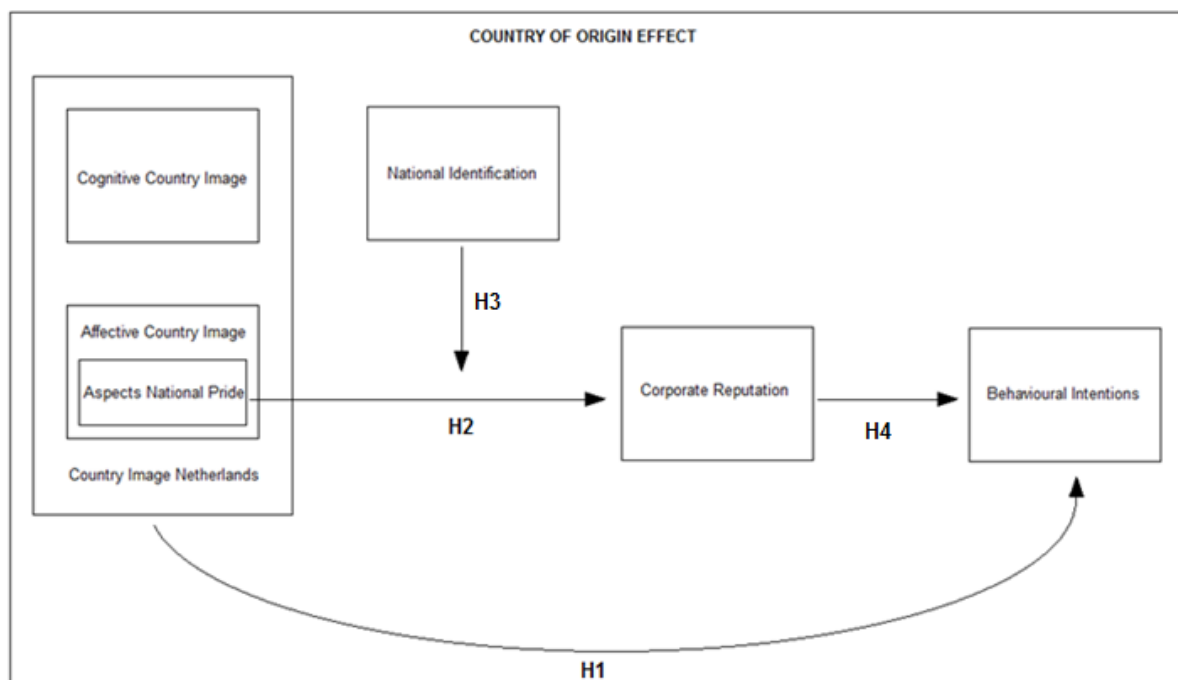


Fig. 1. Conceptual research model.

METHOD; OVERVIEW OF THE 2 STUDIES

In this chapter the methodology of this research is described. The research consist of two studies, a qualitative study and a quantitative study, using focus groups and an online questionnaire. The focus groups in the first study were used to answer the first research question: *“What messages, containing extra affective country of origin references, could be used in communication expressions of PostNL?”* The answer to this research question was used to get input for stimulus material in the second study. The second study, consist of an online questionnaire used to answer the main research question: *“To what extent will the use of extra affective country of origin references within communication expressions of PostNL contribute to the corporate reputation of PostNL in the Netherlands?”* It measured to what extent extra affective country of origin references in communication expressions contributed to corporate reputation. For both studies, the design, procedure, pre-tests, participants and the results will be discussed.

STUDY 1: FOCUS GROUPS

Research design

Corporate reputation starts with ‘identity’, which refers to mental associations about the organisation held by organisational members (Brown, Dacin, Pratt & Whetten, 2006). Because of that, four focus groups with employees of PostNL and one focus group with communication experts of PostNL were conducted to gain input for the communication strategy making use of extra affective country of origin references. The focus group method was chosen because of the ideal setting to explore group norms and values and to discuss opinions and ideas in an active enjoyable way (Colucci, 2007). The respondents in the four focus groups with employees of PostNL, were asked to link their organisational pride to Dutch national pride because the affective part of identification of employees regarding to the company they work for consists of; association to the organisation, sense of belonging to the organisation and pride to work for the organisation (Thomaz, 2010). So this study focused on creating ideas, that combined pride to work for the organisation PostNL and Dutch national pride.

Employee focus groups

Procedure

The focus group procedure consisted of four parts. First, the participants were welcomed. After a short introduction the focus group continued to part 1; label generation. In this activity, participants were asked to write down statements, words, descriptions or concepts (Bulmer, 1998) on post-it’s after the following question was asked; *‘I’m proud of working for PostNL because...?’* Participants kept writing on post-its until they recognized that there was nothing else to add (Colucci, 2007). The duration of this part was 20 minutes.

After the labelling part, the post-it’s were all collected at one spot (table or white board) and the procedure continued to part 2; pile sorting. Pile sorting is a card-sort task in which respondents sort cards (representing elements of a domain) in piles according to their similarity to and differences from each other (Colucci, 2007). Derived from a method from Krueger (1998), the participants received a big sheet of paper showing a box divided in quadrants. On there were aspects of national pride based on the research of Hilvoorde, Elling and Stokvis (2010); Evans and Kelley (2002). So, the following aspects were displayed: the development and performances in Dutch science and technology, the economic performance of the Netherlands, equal treatment of diverse groups in Dutch society, rich Dutch history and traditions, Dutch sport and sport performances, the Dutch system of social security, Dutch art and literature and the Dutch system of democracy.

Participants were asked to group all the similar elements written down on post-it’s in a same cell. After sorting, the results were discussed in the group and also additional and new ideas could be written down and added to the boxes. The participants got 20 minutes for this part of the focus group.

In the third part of the focus group, the group was divided in small mixed groups of two or three participants. The teams were asked to pick one category of Dutch national pride, that, in their opinion, had the best link with PostNL. They were asked to write down a possible communication expression for PostNL, making use of this link and their post-its. The duration of this part was 20 minutes. In the last part, after working in these groups, the participants presented their ideas on posters (Krueger, 1998). The rest of the group paid attention to give comments and feedback. After the presentations, the participants were thanked for their ideas and their partaking in the focus group. The last part took about 30 minutes. The total duration of the focus group was approximately 90 minutes.

Pre-test

To control if the procedure, time schedule and the combination of activity oriented questions would work out six interns of PostNL participated in a pre-test. Ages ranged from 21 to 27 (M=24). The time schedule and the results of the activity oriented questions turned out well. After the pre-test, just a few things were adjusted and added for the actual focus groups. First, two questions that were asked to start the labelling in part 1; *'What comes to mind when you think about things about you're work?'* and *'What comes to mind when you think about things about the organisation PostNL you are proud of?'* were reduced to one question; *'I am proud of working for PostNL because..?'* Second, in part 3, the explanation about the brainstorm assignment was, next to oral explanation, written on a poster to make the explanation even more clear.

Participants

To reach theoretical saturation, six to eight participants participated in every focus group (Breen, 2006). Therefore, four focus groups a total of thirty-four employees participated, consisting of seventeen men and eleven women. Ages ranged from 21 to 60 years old (M=32). The job types differed from postmen to marketer, from controller to manager. Participants were approached by the researcher, making use of an internal research pool of PostNL employees. Potential participants were called and e-mailed. Also, several employees outside of the research pool were approached. Both ways of collecting respondents created a snowball effect. In the establishment of the four focus groups there was aimed to create a mix of job types.

Results

The focus groups were recorded with a voice recorder. Based on these recordings, the post-its and the posters of the participants the outcomes were analysed. The participants in the four groups established twelve ideas for communication messages. In table 3, an overview of the twelve communication messages, composed by employees is shown. Most ideas focused on the development and performances in Dutch science and technology and no ideas were addressed to Dutch art and literature and the Dutch system of democracy.

12 communication messages	
The development and performances in Dutch science and technology	4
The economic performance of the Netherlands	2
Equal treatment of diverse groups in Dutch society	2
Rich Dutch history and traditions	2
Dutch sport and sport performances	1
The Dutch system of social security	1
Dutch art and literature	0
The Dutch system of democracy	0

Table 3. Overview of results focus groups, domains national pride composed by employees (Hilvoorde, Elling & Stokvis, 2010; Evans & Kelley, 2002).

Based on the outcomes of the focus groups, four possible communication messages with extra affective COO references were composed. Comments of employees during the focus group were also used as quotes in the establishment of these four messages. Ideas of messages that contained approximately the same information were combined. In table 4, some focus group quotations were displayed.

Focus group quotations	
The development and performances in Dutch science and technology	<p>"We were thinking about the management of water, the invention of the microscope, microchips"</p> <p>"Proud of the infrastructure and construction of dikes. We often don't realize that, typical Dutch soberness"</p> <p>"We are there for you, we deliver for you. While you are sleeping, the technical process continues"</p> <p>"We are PostNL and we deliver with the newest technique. Via a complex route mail and parcels travel through the Dutch landscape"</p>
Economic performance of the Netherlands	<p>"Despite of the changing market, PostNL uses its power and identity and knowledge, to develop products to help the Netherlands. For example with the delivery and the instalment of a washing machines and services for entrepreneurs"</p> <p>"PostNL creates employment of 56,000 people in the Netherlands"</p> <p>"PostNL is kind of an orange thread, the company plays an important role in the economy of the Netherlands"</p> <p>"VOC mentality, entrepreneurship"</p> <p>"In 24 hours, PostNL is there. Through weather and storm, from Christmas card to garden chair, the driving force behind the e-commerce"</p>
Equal treatment of diverse groups in Dutch society	<p>"PostNL, coloured by the diversity of its employees"</p> <p>"You are PostNL"</p> <p>"You know PostNL"</p> <p>"A lot of people and a lot of colours at PostNL, PostNL gives people colour"</p> <p>"We are an original Dutch company, the Netherlands is changing and we are changing"</p>
Rich Dutch history and traditions	<p>"PostNL is a familiar face on the street, the postman is a phenomenon and remains attention for people and post"</p> <p>"A lot of things are going faster and become unpersonal, but it is still the postmen, who is familiar in the neighbourhood."</p> <p>"The Netherlands are changing, the world changes, but we still remain the same, also in the future."</p> <p>"Past: train, bicycle, horses, mailbox, post offices. Present: Parcel lockers, busses, retail, extra @ home, Future:?"</p>
Dutch sport and sport performances	<p>"It is a possibility to compare the achievements of PostNL with the achievements of Dutch sportsmen. Daphne Schippers, runs 100 m in 11 seconds and PostNL travels a lot of kilometres in one day. PostNL, the number one in delivery!"</p>
The Dutch system of social security	<p>"PostNL connects the Netherlands"</p> <p>"Traditionally a social role in society"</p>

Table 4. Quotations focus groups, domains national pride (Hilvoorde, Elling & Stokvis, 2010; Evans & Kelley, 2002).

After the four focus groups took place, the obtained data were analysed. First, all of the overlapping quotes and ideas of employees, were put together in combined messages. Second, the remaining quotes were added to the messages they fitted best with. Then, the messages were composed in logical texts and in the end, four useful and complete messages remained. The four messages that were established by the quotes of the employees that participated in the focus groups are displayed below:

Message 1: The development and performances in Dutch science and technology

The Netherlands is a small country, big at innovations, infrastructure and water management. We have one of the biggest harbours of the world, were the inventors of the microchip and belonged to the best countries in logistics. As sober Dutch people, we do not always realize that we live beyond the NAP level and that our country is monitored by hundreds of dikes. What we don't realize either is that every day, a lot of technique, microchips (track & trace) sorting centres, busses, lorries, 56,000 people and retail locations are needed to deliver your package or letter within a day, everywhere in the Netherlands. While you are sleeping, your letters and packages are making a journey via different routes through the whole country. Via the fine-grained network of PostNL, which has a depot within 1,5 hour from every household, sorting post with the newest technique. Afterwards we transport fast through the Dutch infrastructure and then, your letter or package will arrive through different routes on your doormat.. PostNL is there for you, delivers from front door to front door, at 7 million households in the Netherlands.

Message 2: Rich Dutch history and traditions + The Dutch system of social security + Equal treatment of diverse groups in Dutch society

PostNL, you know us. Every day we are everywhere, in every street of the Netherlands. Our society becomes bigger, faster and more digital. The products and services of PostNL are changing, but one thing is not changed at all. With our traditionally social role, our employees will stay the human beacon in the digital storm. Our 56,000 employees, man, women, young, old, multicultural and diverse, are for 16.8 million Dutch people a familiar face. As one of the biggest employers of the Netherlands, we are a reflection of society and we are leading in diversity in a country where one has space for differences. With attention for humans and mail, PostNL connects the Netherlands and after 200 years, were are still a tradition in the Dutch streetscape. Our employers give colour to the Netherlands. In the past, now and in the future.

Message 3: Rich Dutch history and traditions + The economic performance of the Netherlands

The Netherlands is changing. Everything around us is getting faster and more digital. PostNL with its flexible Dutch VOC mentality, is changing for 200 years already together with the Dutch. In the past, we only delivered letters by bike. Now, we also have a lot of parcel busses and on every big train station in the Netherlands; we have a parcel vending machine. From our Dutch identity and logistic knowledge we innovate and expand our products and services. PostNL adapts to the needs of the Netherlands. Nowadays, we deliver from Christmas card to garden chair, install your washing machine, offer services for Dutch entrepreneurs and are able to deliver in 24 hours at every address in the Netherlands. PostNL is the biggest in the Dutch post and parcel market, the power behind the Dutch e-commerce. The delivery of your post and parcels is to us a habit like tapping water. We are there for you and deliver in all-weather circumstances. PostNL takes its responsibility and is an orange thread in the Dutch economy.

Message 4: Dutch sport and sport performances

The delivery of post and packages is comparable to Dutch professional sport. It has to be good, trustworthy and fast. With 56,000 employees it is, just like Dutch hockey one big team sport. In relay, we are found at both short and long distances. Just like cycle racing we work hard through all kinds of weather, to arrange everything smoothly. We have to be as flexible as Epke Zonderland to be able, just like with horse-riding, to jump across the highest bar and to keep everything under control. Were Daphne Schippers runs 100 meters in 11 seconds, PostNL travels a lot of kilometres in one day through the Netherlands. PostNL, the number one in delivery!

In appendix A, the complete elaborated focus groups are displayed.

Expert focus group

Procedure

In this focus group six communication experts were asked to criticize the four messages composed through the results of the employee focus groups. After the welcoming and an introduction the messages were discussed separately. First the participants were asked to read the message. Then, the message was criticized on the core values of the company, the Dutch feeling and the appeal to consumers. The core values are ought to function as a guideline for external communication messages of PostNL. The core values of the company are; 'connected, passionate, inventive'. The participants were also asked to give comments, adjustments and additions. The duration of the discussions per message differed from 10 to 15 minutes. The total duration of the focus group was approximately 60 minutes.

Participants

The six participants in the expert focus group, consisted of a man and five women, coming from different teams at the corporate communications department of PostNL. Their job types all referred to positions like communication advisor, coordinator internal communication and spokesmen. Ages ranged from 29 to 57 (M=41). Potential participants were approached by e-mail or face-to-face.

RESULTS STUDY 1

According to the experts, the messages should be more specific and the links with Dutch national pride and PostNL should be made less forced. Also, some parts of messages could be removed or used in another message. The first message was seen as the best message. In the second message, the link with diversity was criticized. Examples in the third message could be used in the first message, because this message contained, according to the experts, too much information. The message where the link with Dutch sport was made was seen as the least suitable message for PostNL. The message did not match with the core values and the policy of the company. In table 5, quotations of the expert focus group were displayed.

Expert focus group quotations	
Message 1 The development and performances in Dutch science and technology	"Try to process daily life in the message, for example; while you travel on your bike to your job" "We, Dutch people are always busy with new developments and achievements" "The message should be more concrete and more tangible"
Message 2 Rich Dutch history and traditions + The Dutch system of social security + Equal treatment of diverse groups in Dutch society	"I think that you should focus on history, that is the legacy" "You could focus on the role of the postmen in society" "The term the reflection of society, we don't want to use that" "It is not the case that we have the lead in diversity"
Message 3 Rich Dutch history and traditions + The economic performance of the Netherlands	"The VOC mentality makes me think of Balkenende, and that's not positive" "PostNL moves people" "You should focus on the contribution to the economy" "You should claim the crucial role in the economy and scratch out history" "The examples of parcel lockers, can be used in the first message about technology"
Message 4 Dutch sport and sport performances	"Sport is not really the DNA of PostNL" "The link with sport makes people think about sponsoring"

Table 5. Quotations expert focus group.

Based on the outcomes of the expert focus group, the communication messages were adjusted and were used as input for the stimulus material for study 2. Three of the four possible messages with extra affective COO references remained. The adjusted messages focused on the development and achievements in Dutch technology and science, Dutch history and social security and Dutch economy. For the development of COO neutral stimulus material an existing text, a boilerplate text, containing general information about PostNL was adjusted (PostNL, 2015).

Message 1: The development and performances in Dutch science and technology

The Netherlands is a small country, big at innovations, for example in infrastructure and water management. Also at PostNL, we are looking for innovative solutions. Your letters and parcels are making the fastest and smartest journey through the whole country, using the newest sorting techniques. With the PostNL-app and the parcel vending machines you decide where and when you want to receive your parcel. In the morning, when the Netherlands is cycling to school or work, our organisation is working at full speed to deliver your parcel or letter within 24 hours, everywhere in the Netherlands.

Message 2: Rich Dutch history and traditions + The Dutch system of social security

The Netherlands has a rich history. But, we are also moving forward. Everything around us, is going faster and is often getting more digital. Just like the Netherlands, also PostNL is changing. Our products and services are changing with through the years. But, it is one thing that is not changing. For 200 years already, PostNL is every day in every street of the Netherlands. With attention for humans and mail, we are an important part of society. Our mail-and parcel deliverers are for 16.8 million Dutch people the familiar face in the street. PostNL is a tradition in the Dutch streetscape. In the past, now and in the future.

Message 3: The economic performance of the Netherlands

The Dutch economy is always moving. PostNL plays a major role, as an employer of 56,000 employees and as a service organisation. PostNL is the biggest in the Dutch post-and parcel market and thus a driving force behind the Dutch e-commerce. Nowadays, we deliver from Christmas card till garden chair, within 24 hours on every address in the Netherlands. We install your washing machine or TV and we offer marketing campaigns to Dutch entrepreneurs. PostNL is adapting to the needs of the Netherlands and is an orange thread in the Dutch economy.

Message 4: COO neutral

We live in a world where digital features are getting a more and more important role in our daily life. These services are developing quickly. PostNL is an essential link between the physical and the online world. We have the biggest network for letters, packages and e-commerce in the Benelux. Through the combinations of smart networks and digital features we offer valuable solutions to our customers. We use our inventiveness by developing new ways to connect sender and receiver every time. We are PostNL and we got something for you.

In appendix A, the complete elaborated focus group of the experts is displayed.

STUDY 2: ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Research design

In this study, four conditions were used to examine the effects of affective COO references. Three conditions all had affective COO references. These conditions contained an affective COO text where PostNL was linked to an element of national pride, the logo of PostNL and a picture, both explicitly Dutch. The first condition referred to the Dutch economy, the second had components that referred to the Dutch history and social security and the third emphasized Dutch science and technology. The last and fourth condition had no affective COO references, but only showed a COO neutral text, the logo of PostNL and a picture, not explicitly Dutch. To ensure sufficient realism of the material, the conditions were based on existing print advertisements and existing photographs of PostNL (PostNL 2015, beeldbank). Photographs were selected based on the amount of Dutch characteristics and their fit with the message. The four different conditions are displayed below in figure 1 (see appendix B for a bigger view of the stimulus material). Each respondent was randomly assigned to one of the conditions and was asked to fill in the questionnaire.



Condition 1



Condition 3



Condition 2



Condition 4

Procedure

An online questionnaire was created with Survey Monkey, an online tool to create and distribute online questionnaires (surveymonkey.com, 2015). The questionnaire was distributed via snowball sampling. Respondents were approached through e-mail and social media, together with the link to the questionnaire and were asked to share this questionnaire link to their network.

First, each respondent had to read an introduction. In this introduction respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, had to give consent for their participation in the study and had to fill in a control question if they were actually living in the Netherlands. Secondly, respondents were instructed about the structure of the questionnaire, that consisted of five parts. During the first part of the questionnaire, Survey Monkey randomly assigned an advertisement to each participant. So, everyone that filled in the questionnaire was displayed to one of the four advertisements. Respondents were required to watch and read this advertisement carefully. After viewing and reading the advertisement the respondent had to answer several questions based on this advertisement in the second part. In this part respondents had to answer questions about the company PostNL, referring to the corporate reputation of PostNL, behavioural intentions towards the company and their familiarity with the organisation. In the third part, the participants had to fill in questions about the reputation of the Netherlands, their national pride on several categories, their national identification and their opinion about the match between PostNL and the Netherlands. After this part, the respondents had to indicate their opinion about the advertisement.

In the last part of the questionnaire participants were asked about their demographics and their consumer behaviour. To indicate their consumer behaviour, three different kind of consumer types were described. Participants had to select which consumer type described their habits with regard to sending cards, online behaviour and receiving parcels because of online shopping. Also, the respondents had the opportunity to ask questions about the research. Participants that had one or more questions, were requested to fill in their e-mail address so the researcher could answer to them personally. Lastly, the respondents were thanked for their participation in the study. The language used in the conditions and the questionnaire was Dutch. The duration of the questionnaire was approximately 10 minutes.

Pre-test

To test the stimulus material and the questionnaire, 12 women and 8 men participated in a pre-test (N=20). The education level of the respondents differed from a lower education level (VMBO) to a higher education level (WO) and ages ranged from 23 to 55 (M=30). Results of this pre-test provided insight in a couple of aspects. Based on these insights a few adjustments were made to the stimulus material and the questionnaire.

Regarding the stimulus material, the pre-test showed that the majority of the respondents was able to match the advertisement with the aimed subject mentioned and displayed in the advertisement. Also the credibility and intelligibility of the corporate advertisements were positively criticised. Furthermore, scores referring to the match between the picture and the advertisement text, and the logic ongoing construction of the text was ranked positively by all of the respondents. Last but not least, the results from the pre-test also indicated that the Dutch conditions obviously referred to the Netherlands. But, for the neutral condition, that should not be the case, so this condition was adjusted in a way that it seemed less 'Dutch'. Last but not least, comments on the advertisements described that the length of the texts in the advertisements were a bit too long. Therefore, the texts in the advertisements were shortened.

The questionnaire was judged by its intelligibility, length, difficulty and clarity. Based on the results of the pre-test, none of the questions were adjusted, because according to the respondents, there was no need for adjustment.

Respondents

Consumers from the age of 18, living in the Netherlands, were asked to fill in the questionnaire. A total of 251 respondents completed the questionnaire. After the data collection, the dataset was visually and statistically checked on outliers. Data of respondents (n=5) that showed monotone answers were removed from the dataset. So, data of 246 correct and completed questionnaires remained. These completed questionnaires were filled in by 108 men (43.9%) and 138 women (56.1%). Ages of the participants ranged from 19 to 83, with an average age of 34.72 (SD= 14.58). The biggest part of the participants had the Dutch nationality (n=240, 97.6%). The education level of the respondents was divided in three categories, namely; low (primary school, lower vocational education), middle (high school, intermediate vocational education) and high (higher vocational education and university). Most respondents were classified in the high education level and completed university (n=106, 43.1%). Furthermore, the majority of the respondents indicated that they identified themselves with consumer type 2 (n=131, 53.3%), which means that these participants like to send cards for important moments and regularly receive parcels at home, because of online shopping. In table 1 a more detailed overview is shown of the demographics, classified in groups based on the condition or advertisement that was exposed.

Randomisation check

Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions, therefore a randomisation check, using ANOVA, was performed to see if the demographic variables within the four different groups were approximately equally divided. The different groups were used as the factor in ANOVA and the demographics gender, age category, age average, nationality, education and consumer type were selected as the dependent variables. Looking at the homogeneity of variance on Welch's F, the demographic means do not differ significantly among the four groups. Based on these measurements, all different variables appear to be equally divided in the four different groups. Next to the demographics in table 1, Welch's F is also being displayed.

Demographic construct	Total n= 246	Neutral n= 58	COO Economy n= 68	COO History & Social security n= 66	COO Science & Technology n= 54	Welch's F
Gender						
Female	46.6 %	56.1 %	58.9 %	63.6 %	53.7 %	$p = .27$
Male	53.4 %	43.9 %	41.1 %	36.4 %	46.3 %	$F(3, 132) = 1.32$
Age categories						
18 – 25	50 %	42.3 %	39.7 %	33.3 %	48.2 %	$p = .89$
26 – 35	12.1 %	22.4 %	26.5 %	27.3 %	22.2 %	$F(3, 132) = .22$
36 – 45	6.9 %	10.2 %	8.8 %	16.7 %	7.4 %	
46 – 55	20.7 %	12.6 %	13.2 %	9.1 %	7.4 %	
55 – 65	8.6 %	9.8 %	7.4 %	12.1 %	11.1 %	
66 – 100	1.7 %	2.8 %	4.4 %	1.5 %	3.7 %	
Age average	34.7	34.7	34.8	35.3	33.9	
Nationality						
Dutch	99 %	97.6 %	98.5 %	97 %	99 %	$p = .77$
Other	1 %	3.4 %	1.5 %	3 %	1 %	$F(3, 131) = .37$
Education						
Low	10.3 %	6.5 %	4.4 %	7.6 %	3.7 %	$p = .29$
Middle	25.9 %	25.6 %	23.5 %	30.3 %	22.2 %	$F(3, 132) = 1.25$
High	63.8 %	67.9 %	72.1 %	62.1 %	74.1 %	
Consumer type						
1	17.2 %	19.9 %	25 %	18.2 %	18.5 %	$p = .68$
2	50 %	53.3 %	50 %	57.6 %	55.6 %	$F(3, 132) = 1.32$
3	32.8 %	26.8 %	25 %	24.2 %	25.9 %	

Table 6. Demographics of the 246 participants in the online questionnaire.

Research instrument

Survey Monkey randomly assigned one condition to a participant, so each respondent saw one condition. After the exposure to one of the four advertisements, 11 constructs (Corporate Reputation, Behavioural Intentions, Familiarity PostNL, Overall Country Image Netherlands, Advanced Economy, Appealing Environment, Effective Government, National Pride, National Identification, COO and Advertisement) were measured on 7-point Likert scales, where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree. See appendix C for the complete questionnaire (in Dutch). The constructs and their Cronbach's Alpha, mean and standard deviation are displayed in table 7 below. In this table only the items that were actually used for the actual measurements were used. Therefore, in the 'Familiarity PostNL' construct, only one item is showed because for this construct the Cronbach's Alpha was lower than 0.7, which is a low reliability. The two items 'I heard about PostNL' and 'I've seen an advertisement of PostNL in a magazine or at the TV' were removed.

Construct	N	A	M(SD)	Items	
Corporate Reputation	4	.83	5.05 (0.92)	1. I have a good feeling about the PostNL 2. I admire and respect the PostNL 3. I trust the PostNL 4. PostNL has a good overall reputation	Reputation institute (2015), Ponzi, Fombrun & Gardberg (2011)
Behavioural Intentions	6	.84	4.24(0.98)	1. I would say something positive about PostNL 2. If I had the opportunity, I would buy the products and services of PostNL 3. I would recommend the product and services of PostNL to friends and family 4. If I had the opportunity, I would invest in PostNL 5. If I had the opportunity I would work for PostNL 6. If PostNL was faced with a product or service problem, I would PostNL to do the right thing to fix the problem	Frombrun (2012), Vidaver-Cohen & Brønn (2013)
Familiarity PostNL	3	.41	6.33(0.66)	1. PostNL is a familiar company for me	Steenkamp, Batra & Alden (2003)
Overall Country Image Netherlands	4	.90	5.49(0.97)	1. I have a good feeling about the Netherlands 2. I admire and respect the Netherlands 3. I trust the Netherlands 4. The Netherlands has a good overall reputation	Gertner & Kotler, (2002), Ponzi, Fombrun & Gardberg (2011)
Advanced economy	6	.80	5.37(0.71)	1. The Netherlands produces high quality products and services 2. The Netherlands has many well-known brands 3. The Netherlands is technologically advanced 4. The Netherlands is well-educated and reliable workforce 5. The Netherlands is a reliable workforce 6. The Netherlands values education	
Appealing environment	4	.80	5.36(0.87)	1. The Netherlands is a beautiful country 2. The Netherlands is an enjoyable country 3. The Dutch have an appealing lifestyle 4. The Dutch are friendly and welcoming	
Effective government	5	.84	4.78(0.98)	1. The Netherlands offers a favourable environment for doing business	

2. The Netherlands is run by an effective government
3. The Netherlands has adopted progressive social and economic policies
4. The Netherlands is a safe place
5. The Netherlands operates efficiently

Total Image NL	15	.88			
National pride	8	.81	5.06 (0.80)	I am proud of... 1. The way the Dutch democracy works 2. The Dutch economic achievement 3. The Dutch social security system 4. The Dutch scientific and technological achievements 5. The Dutch achievements in sports 6. The Dutch achievement in the arts and literature 7. The Dutch history 8. The fair and equal treatment of all groups in Dutch society	Smith & Jarkko (2001)
National Identification	5	.81	5.30(0.94)	1. Being Dutch is not important to me (recoded) 2. I am proud to be Dutch 3. I don't feel any ties with The Netherlands (recoded) 4. Being Dutch means a lot to me 5. I don't like it when someone has a negative opinion about The Netherlands	Verlegh (2001)
COO	3	.81	3.83(1.22)	1. I associate PostNL with the Netherlands 2. To me PostNL represents what the Netherlands is all about 3. To me PostNL is a very good symbol of the Netherlands	Steenkamp, Batra & Alden (2003)
Advertisement	7	.87	4.25(0.95)	1. This ad is appealing 2. This ad is interesting 3. This ad is credible 4. This ad is convincing 5. The ad suits with PostNL 6. The ad makes me think about the Netherlands 7. Due to the ad, my view about PostNL has changed	Verlegh, Steenkamp & Meulenberg (2005) Mitchell & Olson (1981)

Table 7. Constructs: reliability scores, mean, standard deviation values and items.

RESULTS STUDY 2

In this part of the paper, the results of study 2 will be displayed. The major purpose of this study was to see if the extra affective country of origin references positively contributed to the corporate reputation of PostNL, if national identification was a moderator between the conditions and the corporate reputation, if the corporate reputation in this study positively contributed to behavioural intentions and if the country image directly influenced behavioural intentions. The results are shown below, starting with the results for hypothesis 1:

H1: *A positive view on the country image of the Netherlands will positively contribute to behavioural intentions of consumers towards PostNL.*

To see if this hypothesis could be confirmed, three ANCOVA's were conducted. First an ANCOVA was conducted to measure if the overall country image of the Netherlands had an influence on the behavioural intentions of consumers towards PostNL. The ANCOVA was needed to see also if the results of the four different corporate advertisements, the neutral advertisement and the three COO advertisements, showed a difference between each other.

So, based on the results of the first ANCOVA there could be seen that the country image positively contributed to the behavioural intentions of the consumers towards PostNL. After the preliminary checks (violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, homogeneity of variances, homogeneity of regression slopes and reliable measurement of the covariates), which were correct, these results of the first ANCOVA could be displayed; $[F(3,242)=.18, p=.91, \text{partial eta squared}=.002]$. In table 8, the results were displayed in a detailed way.

Condition group	Behavioural Intentions			Corrective action Overall Country Image	
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
COO neutral (constant)	58	4.25	1.00	4.30	0.13
COO Economy	68	4.26	0.99	4.24	0.12
COO History & Social Security	66	4.23	0.93	4.20	0.12
COO Science & Technology	54	4.21	1.00	4.20	0.13

Table 8. ANCOVA, behavioural Intentions corrected by the overall country image.

Therefore, it can be concluded that a weak positive relationship between the overall country image and the behavioural intentions towards PostNL exists.

Looking at the second ANCOVA, the affective part of country image, it is seen that the country image positively contributed to the behavioural intentions of the consumers towards PostNL. After the preliminary checks (violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, homogeneity of variances, homogeneity of regression slopes and reliable measurement of the covariates), which were correct, these results of the first ANCOVA could be displayed; $[F(3,242)=.08, p=.97, \text{partial eta squared}=.001]$. Measurements of the affective part of country image were are showed in table 9.

Condition group	Behavioural Intentions			Corrective action Affective Country Image	
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
COO neutral (constant)	58	4.25	1.00	4.24	0.13
COO Economy	68	4.26	0.99	4.27	0.12
COO History & Social Security	66	4.23	1.00	4.26	0.12
COO Science & Technology	54	4.21	0.93	4.20	0.13

Table 9. ANCOVA, behavioural Intentions corrected by the affective country image.

Therefore, it is concluded that a weak positive relationship between the affective country image and the behavioural intentions towards PostNL is measured.

The last ANCOVA, the cognitive part of country image, shows that the country image positively contributed to the behavioural intentions of the consumers towards PostNL. After the preliminary

checks (violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, homogeneity of variances, homogeneity of regression slopes and reliable measurement of the covariates), which were correct, these results of the first ANCOVA could be displayed; [$F(3,242)=.08$, $p=.18$, partial eta squared=.002].

Condition group	<i>Behavioural Intentions</i>			<i>Corrective action Cognitive Country Image</i>	
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
COO neutral (constant)	58	4.25	1.00	4.20	0.13
COO Economy	68	4.26	0.99	4.31	0.12
COO History & Social Security	66	4.23	1.00	4.24	0.12
COO Science & Technology	54	4.21	0.93	4.20	0.13

Table 10. ANCOVA, behavioural intentions corrected by the cognitive country image.

Therefore, it can be concluded that a weak relationship exists between the cognitive country image and the behavioural intentions towards PostNL.

So, based on these results there can be seen that the country image, overall and split in affective and cognitive, positively contributed to the behavioural intentions towards PostNL, but the results were not significant. So, hypothesis 1 could not be confirmed.

H2: *The use of extra affective country of origin references within communication expressions of PostNL will positively contribute to corporate reputation of consumers in the Netherlands.*

For the results for the second hypothesis, a one-way between-groups ANOVA was conducted. This measurement was conducted to explore the differences in the mean scores of the four different condition groups on corporate reputation, as measured by the RepTrak™ Pulse. The respondents were divided in four groups according to the condition they had seen during the online questionnaire (condition 1: Dutch economy, condition 2: Dutch history & social security, condition 3: Dutch science & technology, condition 4: neutral). And, there can be seen that no statistically significant difference is shown at the $p<.05$ level in scores on corporate reputation for the four groups [$F(3, 245)=1.23$, $p=.3$].

The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .02, which indicates that the effect of the conditions on the corporate reputation is small effect. When zoomed in to the results, there can be seen that the mean scores of the groups; condition 1 ($M=4.94$, $SD=1.04$), condition 2 ($M=5.06$, $SD=0.88$), condition 3 ($M=4.97$, $SD=0.88$) and condition 4 ($M=5.33$, $SD=0.84$), did not differ significantly from each other. This was shown in a Gabriel's post hoc test, because the sample sizes slightly differed (Field, 2009), were the harmonic mean sample size was 60.96. The results are shown in table 11.

Condition group	<i>Corporate Reputation</i>		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
COO Neutral (constant)	58	5.23	0.84
COO Economy	68	4.94	1.04
COO History & Social Security	66	5.06	0.88
COO Science & Technology	54	4.97	0.85

Table 11. Means and standard deviations of the corporate reputation measured in the four different condition groups.

In short, the mean scores on corporate reputation of the conditions with extra affective COO references did not differ significantly from the scores of the neutral condition.

Also, the three conditions were not predicting the outcomes on corporate reputation. Therefore, these findings reject H2.

To double check if the corporate advertisements containing extra affective origin cues actually influenced the opinion about the corporate reputation of PostNL, a control check question in the online questionnaire; *'Due to the ad, my view about PostNL has changed'*, measured if the view about PostNL among the respondents was changed, seeing one of the corporate advertisements. Using an ANCOVA, the means for the four different conditions were calculated. As showed in table 12, the scores on the changed view were not high enough and did not differ significantly from the neutral

condition to show that the consumer views were changed by the corporate advertisements containing COO references.

Condition group	<i>Changed view about PostNL</i>		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
COO Neutral (constant)	58	2.76	1.28
COO Economy	68	3.41	1.70
COO History & Social Security	66	2.88	1.31
COO Science & Technology	54	2.91	1.29

Table 12. Means and Standard Deviations on the measure of Corporate Reputation in the four different condition groups.

H3: *The contribution of extra affective country of origin references within communication expressions of PostNL to the corporate reputation of consumers in the Netherlands will be moderated by the level of national identification among consumers.*

To measure H3, a moderator analysis was conducted to explore the differences in the mean scores of the four different condition groups on corporate reputation (as measured by the RepTrak™ Pulse) controlled by the level of national identification of the respondents. Subjects were divided in four groups according to the condition they had seen during the online questionnaire (condition 1: Dutch economy, condition 2: Dutch history & social security, condition 3: Dutch science & technology, condition 4: neutral). Based on the results of the moderator measurement, a statistically significant difference is displayed at the $p < .05$ level in scores on corporate reputation for the four groups [$F(3, 5.862) = 7.546$ $p = .001$], showed in table 13. R square .086 $R = .292$.

Condition group	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>
(Constant)	5.05	.06	
	.25	.06	0.26
	.07	.05	0.09
	-.07	.05	-.08

Table 13. Moderator analysis national Identification on corporate reputation.

Based on these significant results, hypothesis 3 can be confirmed.

Also the relationship between country image and national identification was investigated using Pearson correlation coefficient. After preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity, there was measured a strong, positive correlation between the two variables [$r = .56$, $n = 246$, $p < .0005$], showing that high levels of country image associated with high levels of national identification.

H4: *A positive view on corporate reputation of PostNL will positively contribute to behavioural intentions of consumers towards PostNL.*

Here, a simple linear regression was conducted to see if the corporate reputation of PostNL, positively contributed to the behavioural intentions of the consumers towards the company. The results of these regression showed a strong significant effect ($F(1, 283) = p < .001$, 125.51), with an R^2 of .537. This means that this assumption is relevant for 53.70% of the variance. In table 14 these measurements were shown for each condition.

Condition group	<i>Behavioural Intentions</i>			<i>Corrective action Corporate Reputation</i>	
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
COO neutral (constant)	58	4.25	1.00	4.11	0.13
COO Economy	68	4.26	0.99	4.35	0.12
COO History & Social Security	66	4.23	1.00	4.22	0.12
COO Science & Technology	54	4.21	0.93	4.28	0.13

Table 14. ANCOVA, behavioural intentions corrected by the cognitive country image.

Based on these significant results hypothesis 4 is confirmed.

Also, to see what kind of consumers had the biggest amount of behavioural intentions towards the company, the means of the 3 consumer groups of PostNL regarding to the behavioural intentions were calculated. With a mean of 4.30, consumer group 2 had the most behavioural intentions.

DISCUSSION

The case study emphasized 'the Dutch feeling' of PostNL, using extra affective country of origin cues in communication expressions of the company. The first study, answering the research question; *"What messages, containing extra affective country of origin references, could be used in communication expressions of PostNL?"*, discovered that Dutch national pride and organisational pride within PostNL could be matched. These findings contributed to the development of three corporate advertisements, containing extra affective country of origin cues like; science and technology, history and social security and economy. The three advertisements containing extra COO references and one neutral corporate advertisement containing no extra COO references were used as stimulus material in the online questionnaire of study 2 to answer the main research question.

Based on the results of study 2, this main research question; *"To what extent will the use of extra affective country of origin references within communication expressions of PostNL contribute to the corporate reputation of PostNL in the Netherlands?"* could be answered. Derived from the results it seemed clear that the use of extra affective country of origin references did, in this case study, not contribute to the corporate reputation of PostNL. Using the control question in the online questionnaire; *'Due to the ad, my view about PostNL has changed'*, it was shown that for all of the respondents that their view was not changed because of the fact that they saw one of the corporate advertisements. Noticing these results, it could be the case that the country of origin references PostNL already uses in their communication expressions, are enough to emphasize the country of origin of the company and that emphasizing extra affective country of origin cues is not necessarily needed. The 'NL' in the company name Kleppe, Iversen and Stensaker (2002) mentioned and the use of the national colour 'Orange' in the logo Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2008) and Verlegh (2001) named in their research, could be enough to show the country of origin of the company.

Results referring to the effect of country image on behavioural intentions of consumers, showed that there was an effect. However, because of the fact that this effect was not significant, the results were not able to confirm the hypothesis. Although these effects were not significant, earlier literature showed that country image actually has an effect on behavioural intentions of consumers, mainly towards the purchase of products (Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999; Magnusson & Westjohn, 2011). Behavioural intentions towards a company contain, next to purchasing products and services of a company, also other monetary and behaviour-related constructs (Walsh & Beatty, 2007). Like; recommending products and services to others and investments in the company Frombrun (2012), Vidaver-Cohen & Brønn (2013). It could be the case that country image would have an effect on only a few concepts of behavioural intentions towards PostNL. This could obviously be the case, because in the past there was not a lot of research showing that country image also had a positive effect on behavioural intentions towards companies (Magnusson & Westjohn, 2011).

In this case study national identification is a moderator between the corporate advertisements and corporate reputation. This means that the bigger the amount of national identification people have when seeing a corporate advertisement of PostNL, containing extra affective country of origin cues, the higher the score on corporate reputation will be. Tajfel and Turner (1986) and Van Hilvoorde, Elling and Stokvis (2010); state that emotional and motivational aspects in being part of a nation differs from person to person and from moment to moment. Because national identification in this case study was also shown to correlate with country image it could be assumed that the circumstances for the use of country of origin were positive for the corporate reputation of the company. So, there can also be assumed that the better the country image of the Netherlands is, the higher the corporate reputation of PostNL will be. This was also mentioned in earlier research of Buhmann and Ingenhoff (2015), who stated that having a positive country image among consumers generates sympathy and positive attitudes towards a corporate brand. It also explains the effect of the home-country bias of the Netherlands, which is an important factor, because people prefer making use of local products and services nowadays (Winit, Gregory, Cleveland and Verlegh (2014), Özsomer (2012) (Hohman, Hogg & Bligh, 2010).

Last but not least, the results showed that the corporate reputation of PostNL had a positive influence on the behavioural intentions of consumers which is in line with earlier literature. According to Chun

(2005); positive evaluation regarding the corporate reputation affects the way how they behave towards an organisation, both on monetary and behaviour-related constructs (Walsh & Beatty, 2007). The corporate reputation influences the willingness of consumers to either provide or withhold for the company (Balmer & Gray, 1999) and, when having a positive corporate reputation consumers are more likely to show behaviour that is beneficial for the company (Fombrun, 2012).

Limitations

The following limitations in this study could be mentioned. First, the neutral condition referred to general information about the company. This information, referring to the core business of the company, is assumed to be information that is quite familiar among Dutch consumers. However, the information displayed in the three COO conditions where affective country of origin references were used, could be relatively new information to them. Especially in the conditions where economy and science and technology were emphasized, relatively new products of the company were described and displayed. So, it could be the case that the familiar information has a role in the assessment of corporate reputation. Furthermore, the brainstorm sessions appealed to the creativity of the respondents. However, A couple of participants indicated that to come up with an original idea for a communication message, with limited time, using this topic, was not the easiest task. As earlier said, ideas of messages that contained approximately the same information were combined and some ideas of participants were used just as an addition to another message. Also, when extra affective COO references are promoted in the corporate advertisements, consumers may use COO cues in connection with other information cues, such as the advertising execution format (Verlegh et al. 2005). For example, the likeability of the pictures could play a role.

Future research

To get more insight in the consumer perspectives on the Dutch affective country image, qualitative research should possibly offer more fruitful and in depth outcomes. For example, what kind of Dutch symbolism is found to be important to Dutch consumers that could be used in communication expressions of PostNL. It could for example be valuable to see what kind of effect national sports would have in communication expressions of the company during international sport events. This could be interesting because these circumstances like the UEFA cup and the Olympic Games, create a higher amount of national identification according to Van Hilvoorde, Elling and Stokvis (2010).

It would also be valuable to get more respondents and to get a more representative view of the opinion of consumers about the corporate reputation of PostNL in the Netherlands, interviewing or sending questionnaires to a bigger and more diverse group in for example education, age and place of residence. Future research could also focus on other stakeholder groups that were not covered in this case study. For example the B to B stakeholder group, could be interesting in the effects of COO on corporate reputation.

Furthermore, to get more insight in the effects of COO and the contribution to corporate reputation, a neutral measurement should be done. This should be accomplished to see more precisely what kind of factors do actually play a role in the contribution of the organisational reputation among consumers in the time period of the research. Lastly, future research could focus on Dutch companies that are not using country of origin references already. This research could add more specific insights to the literature about the effect of country of origin on corporate reputation. Because then, the difference between neutral communication expressions and COO communication expressions would probably be clearer.

Practical implications

A few practical implications for PostNL could be listed. First, PostNL should continue making use of the positive country image of the Netherlands. Through the amount of national identification among consumers and the effect of it on corporate reputation. It is shown that PostNL takes advantage of its national minded communication strategy. Second, PostNL should take in account the fact that the company is no longer an non-profit organisation but a listed company instead and the fact that they have a lot of new services and products in attendance. They should create more awareness, in order to get this kind of information more familiar among consumers in the Netherlands and to show what part PostNL has in Dutch society. Based on the results of both study 1, getting inspiration for the

conditions used in the online questionnaire, and the results of study 2 a script for a potential commercial is written for the company.

CONCLUSION

Country image is useful in the communication strategy of PostNL, because the amount of national identification consumers have in the Netherlands has an influence on the corporate reputation of PostNL. Future research should be done to get to know what kind of Dutch symbolism is important, to emphasize the country of origin of the company. Based on this case study a script for a commercial is written, which could be used for further research.

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APPENDIX B – STIMULUS MATERIAL



**De Nederlandse economie
is altijd in beweging**

PostNL levert daar een belangrijke bijdrage aan. Als werkgever van 56.000 medewerkers zijn wij een van de grootste dienstverleners in de Nederlandse post- en pakkettenmarkt. Van kaartje tot tuinstoel, binnen 24 uur kunnen we op ieder adres in Nederland bezorgen. Maar we bieden meer. Thuis sluiten we je wasmachine of tv aan en zakelijk helpen we je als ondernemer met je webwinkel of folderverspreiding. Zo spelen we in op de behoefte van iedere Nederlander.

Dat maakt PostNL de oranje draad in de Nederlandse economie.

✉ 📦 @ 



Nederland kent een rijke historie

Maar we staan niet stil. Alles om ons heen verandert en gaat steeds sneller. Net als Nederland verandert ook PostNL. Maar één ding blijft hetzelfde. Al 200 jaar lang komen wij vrijwel iedere dag in elke straat van Nederland. Met aandacht voor de mens en post spelen we een belangrijke rol in de maatschappij. Onze post- en pakketbezorgers zijn voor 16,8 miljoen Nederlanders het bekende gezicht.

PostNL is een traditie in het Nederlandse straatbeeld. Vroeger, nu en in de toekomst.





Nederland: een klein land, **groot in innovaties**

Bijvoorbeeld op het gebied van infrastructuur en watermanagement. Ook bij PostNL ontwikkelen we steeds nieuwe technologie om jouw pakket of brief te bezorgen. Door onze nieuwste sorteertechnieken maakt jouw post op de snelste en slimste manier een reis door Nederland. En met de innovatieve Mijn Pakket-app en de Pakketautomaten op ieder groot station in Nederland bepaal je zelf waar en wanneer jij jouw pakket wilt ontvangen.

PostNL is iedere dag op zoek naar vindingrijke oplossingen voor heel Nederland.

A photograph of three children sitting on a grey sofa, looking at a large, wrapped yellow gift box with a red ribbon bow. The box has a shipping label on it. The background shows a white wall with colorful paper decorations hanging from the top. The gift box is wrapped in yellow paper with faint text like 'Thanks', 'Merci', and 'Hartjes danken' visible. The children are looking with curiosity and excitement at the package.

**400.000 pakketten
en 10 miljoen brieven**

Dat bezorgt PostNL op een gemiddelde werkdag. Daarmee zijn we een onmisbare schakel tussen de fysieke en online wereld. We hebben het grootste netwerk voor brieven, pakketten en e-commerce. In het automatisch sorteren van brieven zijn wij experts. En ons pakkettennetwerk speelt optimaal in op de wensen van consumenten en webwinkeliers. Als geen ander kennen wij de weg tussen zender en ontvanger.

Wij zijn PostNL en we hebben iets voor je.

APPENDIX C – QUESTIONNAIRE (IN DUTCH)

Beste deelnemer,

Bedankt voor het meedoen aan dit onderzoek! Voor mijn afstudeeronderzoek aan de Universiteit Twente doe ik onderzoek naar PostNL aan de hand van een vragenlijst. Het invullen van deze vragenlijst duurt ongeveer 10 minuten.

Bij het invullen van de vragenlijst is het belangrijk dat u de vragen zo eerlijk en volledig mogelijk invult. Het gaat om uw mening, er bestaan geen goede of foute antwoorden. Uw deelname aan dit onderzoek is anoniem en al uw antwoorden worden vertrouwelijk behandeld.

Mocht u na het invullen nog vragen hebben over het onderzoek, dan kunt u deze stellen in het opmerkingenveld aan het einde van de vragenlijst.

Nogmaals hartelijk bedankt voor uw deelname!

Universiteit Twente, Jennifer Bendsneijder, masterstudent Communication Studies
j.bendsneijder@student.utwente.nl

-

Ik stem geheel vrijwillig in met deelname aan dit onderzoek. Ik behoud me daarbij het recht voor om op ieder moment, zonder opgaaf van redenen, mijn deelname aan dit onderzoek te kunnen beëindigen.

- ☐ Ik ga akkoord en ga verder naar het onderzoek
- ☐ Nee, ik wil niet deelnemen aan het onderzoek

Woont u in Nederland?

- ☐ Ja
- ☐ Nee, helaas kunt u dan niet deelnemen aan dit onderzoek

Deze vragenlijst bestaat uit 5 delen. In het eerste deel van krijgt u een advertentie te zien. U wordt gevraagd deze advertentie goed te bekijken en te lezen. In de daaropvolgende delen wordt u een aantal vragen gesteld over PostNL, een aantal vragen over Nederland en een aantal vragen over de advertentie. In het laatste deel wordt u gevraagd om wat achtergrondgegevens over uzelf in te vullen.

DEEL 1 - Advertentie

Bekijk en lees de advertentie zorgvuldig.

DEEL 2 - PostNL

De volgende stellingen gaan over het bedrijf PostNL. Wat zijn uw gedachten over PostNL **na het zien van de advertentie**?

Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen. U heeft 7 antwoordmogelijkheden; zeer mee oneens, mee oneens, enigszins mee oneens, neutraal, enigszins mee eens, mee eens, zeer mee eens. Per stelling kunt u 1 antwoord selecteren.

1. Ik heb een goed gevoel over PostNL
2. Ik vertrouw PostNL
3. Ik bewonder en respecteer PostNL
4. PostNL heeft in zijn geheel een goede reputatie
5. Ik zou iets positiefs zeggen over PostNL
6. Als ik de mogelijkheid had, zou ik de producten en diensten van PostNL kopen
7. Ik zou de producten en diensten van PostNL aanbevelen bij vrienden en familie
8. Als ik de mogelijkheid had, zou ik willen investeren in PostNL
9. Als ik de mogelijkheid had, zou ik willen werken voor PostNL
10. Als PostNL een probleem heeft met een product of dienst, dan vertrouw ik erop dat PostNL het juiste doet om dit op te lossen
11. PostNL is voor mij een bekend bedrijf
12. Ik heb wel eens gehoord van PostNL
13. Ik heb wel eens een advertentie van PostNL gezien in een tijdschrift of op TV

DEEL 3 – Nederland

Dit gedeelte gaat over uw mening over Nederland. Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen. Per stelling zijn er 7 antwoordmogelijkheden; zeer mee oneens, mee oneens, enigszins mee oneens, neutraal, enigszins mee eens, mee eens, zeer mee eens. Per stelling kunt u 1 antwoord selecteren.

14. Ik heb een goed gevoel over Nederland
15. Ik bewonder en respecteer Nederland
16. Ik vertrouw Nederland
17. Nederland heeft in zijn geheel een goede reputatie
18. Nederland produceert producten en diensten van hoge kwaliteit
19. Nederland heeft veel vooraanstaande merken
20. Nederland is vooruitstrevend in techniek
21. Nederland heeft een hoog opleidingsniveau
22. Nederland heeft voldoende werkgelegenheid
23. Nederland hecht waarde aan onderwijs
24. Nederland is een mooi land
25. Nederland is een leuk land
26. Nederlanders hebben een aantrekkelijke levensstijl
27. Nederlanders zijn vriendelijk en verwelkomend
28. Nederland biedt een goede omgeving voor ondernemers
29. Nederland heeft een goede regering
30. Nederland heeft een goed sociaal en economisch beleid
31. Nederland is veilig
32. Nederland werkt efficiënt
- Ik ben trots op...
33. De Nederlandse democratie
34. Het Nederlandse systeem van sociale zekerheid
35. De technische en wetenschappelijke prestaties van Nederland
36. De eerlijke en gelijke behandeling van alle groepen in de Nederlandse maatschappij
37. De Nederlandse sportprestaties
38. De Nederlandse kunst en literatuur
39. De Nederlandse historie
40. De economische prestatie van Nederland
41. Nederlands zijn is niet belangrijk voor me

- 42. Ik ben trots om Nederlander te zijn
- 43. Ik voel geen enkele band met Nederland
- 44. Nederlands zijn betekent veel voor me
- 45. Ik vind het niet leuk wanneer iemand een negatieve mening heeft over Nederland

- 46. Ik associeer PostNL met Nederland
- 47. PostNL vertegenwoordigt voor mij waar Nederland voor staat
- 48. PostNL staat symbool voor Nederland

Deel 4 – Advertentie PostNL

In dit gedeelte wordt u gevraagd naar uw mening over de advertentie. Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen. Per stelling zijn er 7 antwoordmogelijkheden; zeer mee oneens, mee oneens, enigszins mee oneens, neutraal, enigszins mee eens, mee eens, zeer mee eens. Per stelling kunt u 1 antwoord selecteren.

- 50. Ik vind de advertentie aantrekkelijk
- 51. Ik vind de advertentie interessant
- 52. Ik vind de advertentie geloofwaardig
- 53. Ik vind de advertentie overtuigend
- 54. De advertentie doet me denken aan Nederland
- 54. Ik vind de advertentie passen bij PostNL
- 55. Door de advertentie is mijn beeld van PostNL veranderd

- 56. U kunt hier 1 antwoord selecteren. In deze advertentie wordt de nadruk gelegd op:
 - o PostNL en de Nederlandse wetenschap en techniek
 - o PostNL en de Nederlandse economie
 - o PostNL en de Nederlandse historie en sociale zekerheid
 - o Algemene informatie over PostNL

DEEL 5 – Achtergrondgegevens

- 57. Wat is uw geslacht?
 - o Man
 - o Vrouw

- 58. Wat is uw leeftijd?
Ik ben..
Invulmogelijkheid

- 59. Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding waarvan u een diploma heeft?
 - o Basisschool
 - o VMBO (VBO, LBO, MAVO)
 - o HAVO
 - o VWO
 - o MBO (MTS)
 - o HBO
 - o WO
 - o Anders, namelijk..
 - o Kan/wil ik niet zeggen

- 60. Wat is uw nationaliteit?
 - o Nederlands
 - o Duits
 - o Belgisch
 - o Brits
 - o Marokkaans

- o Turks
- o Surinaams
- o Anders, namelijk...
- o Kan/wil ik niet zeggen

61. Hieronder worden drie verschillende consumenten beschreven, welke beschrijving past het best bij u?

o Ik stuur best veel kaarten aan familie en vrienden. Vooral met Kerst vind ik het erg leuk om zowel kaarten te versturen als om kaarten te ontvangen. Het sturen van een kaartje hoort erbij en een goede gewoonte moet je niet veranderen. Het sturen van digitale kaarten is misschien wel handig en goedkoop, maar vind ik toch wat onpersoonlijk. Af en toe bestel ik weleens iets online en ik vind het geen probleem om dit bij de burens op te halen als ik niet thuis ben.

o Ik stuur een kaartje vooral om te laten weten dat ik aan iemand denk op belangrijke momenten, en minder op de standaard momenten zoals kerst. Kaartjes via internet gemaakt en via post verstuurd vind ik handig, maar de kaartjes moeten wel persoonlijk zijn. Daarnaast gebruik ik ook sociale media om (zakelijke) contacten te onderhouden. Om tijd te besparen koop ik regelmatig online (bv. kleding, boeken en vliegtickets). Met enige regelmaat ontvang ik een pakketje thuis.

o Ik ben graag met iedereen in contact en gebruik daar voornamelijk digitale media zoals bijvoorbeeld Facebook, Instagram en Whatsapp voor. Het versturen van kaarten vind ik veel teveel gedoe en is veel te langzaam. Ik ben vrijwel altijd online, vooral via mijn smartphone; daarop heb ik lekker veel apps geïnstalleerd. Ik ontvang best vaak pakketjes thuis of op kantoor met zaken die ik online koop.

62. Wanneer u vragen heeft over het onderzoek, dan kunt u deze hieronder stellen.

63. Indien u één of meerdere vragen heeft gesteld, graag hieronder uw e-mailadres invullen.

Nogmaals hartelijk bedankt voor uw deelname!

APPENDIX D – COMMERCIAL (IN DUTCH)

PostNL, je kent ons wel. Vijf dagen in de week bezorgen wij dagelijks 10.000.000 brieven en 400.000 pakketjes door heel Nederland. Dit doen wij met onze postbezorgers, pakketbezorgers, brievenbussen, vrachtwagens, fietsen én busjes en zijn te herkennen aan... Juist onze mooie oranje kleur! Lekker Nederlands toch?!

Al 200 jaar lang zorgen wij voor jouw post en pakketten. Eerder noemden we onszelf de PTT post, KPN, TPG post en TNT post. Tsja, het was voor ons ook niet altijd makkelijk onthouden.. En het was voor ons ook éven wennen toen we van een overheidsbedrijf ineens een beursgenoteerd bedrijf werden. Maar, sinds 2011 gaan we door het leven als PostNL. En daar zijn we hartstikke trots op.

Niet alleen wij zijn veranderd in die 200 jaar, ook Nederland is een stukje anders dan een aantal jaren geleden. Er zijn minder brievenbussen nodig, omdat wij Nederlanders tegenwoordig ook e-mailen, Twitteren, Facebooken, LinkedInnen en WhatsAppen, naast het versturen van brieven. En, waar we meer van zijn gaan houden de afgelopen jaren, is lekker online shoppen. Dus, we versturen en ontvangen met z'n allen veel meer pakketjes dan vroeger!

Met onze 56.000 medewerkers werken wij daarom iedere dag hard, om bij iedereen zo snel, zo betaalbaar en zo groen mogelijk een brief of pakketje te kunnen bezorgen. We proberen van alles uit om post betaalbaar te houden en pakketjes zo snel en innovatief mogelijk te bezorgen. Onze postbezorgers bezorgen namelijk niet alleen je post, maar zijn ook nog eens een vertrouwd gezicht in de buurt. Dus, wie weet wat onze post en pakketbezorgers allemaal nog meer kunnen...

PostNL is er voor alle Nederlanders. Ik bedoel, PostNL, Nederlandser kan niet! Van jong tot oud, van rijk tot arm. Voor de hippe vogels en voor de mensen die liever bij het oude blijven. Voor de druktemakers die eigenlijk helemaal geen tijd hebben voor hun eigen pakketje en voor de mensen die graag wachten op de postbezorger op die ene brief. Wij zijn er voor de stadsmensen, de dorpsmensen én de Nederlanders die graag brieven en pakketjes naar verre familie sturen. Van het meest noordelijke puntje in Groningen, tot het meest zuidelijke puntje in Limburg. Ja, wij houden van bezorgen én van Nederland.

Post bezorgen, het lijkt allemaal zo makkelijk. Maar, met die 10.000.000 brieven en 400.000 pakketjes op een dag raakt er ook wel eens een brief of een pakketje kwijt. Of, kunnen we soms een postcode niet lezen. Dus wij, PostNL, zoeken iedere dag naar oplossingen zodat het kaartje van oma uit Enschede, toch nog bij jou in Den Haag bezorgt kan worden. En daar gaan we ver voor, heel ver. Wist je bijvoorbeeld dat onleesbare postcodes binnen 2 seconden naar Manilla gestuurd worden en terug om ontcijferd te worden?

Kortom, wij zijn er voor je wanneer het nodig is. Wij zorgen ervoor dat jij kan doen waar je goed in bent (ondernemen). We zorgen er ook voor dat je kan stemmen tijdens de verkiezingen én dat je weet wat je belastingteruggave wordt. We bezorgen je ziekenhuis post en je medicijnen. Wij zijn er voor de leuke momenten (Sinterklaas, kerstkaarten & cadeaus, geboortepost en trouwpost). En voor de minder leuke momenten (rouwkaarten). Wij zijn er voor je wanneer je wat extra steun (beterschapskaarten) of liefde nodig hebt (Valentijnsdag) en zorgen ervoor dat je geen enkel belangrijk moment of pakketje mist.

Nederland, wij zijn PostNL en we hebben iets voor je.