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Branding in the chemical industry: Mission slogan and image campaign. Ethics or pragmatics?

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Key-words - mission slogan, environmentalist branding, chemical industry, image campaign, work in progress, corporate slogan , company motto

Abstract

This article, which represents current work in progress at Antwerp University, will focus on mission slogans and some recent advertising and image campaigns of major players in the chemical industry. It will analyze the strategy behind these slogans and campaigns and whether the said strategies are consistent or not. These strategies aim at increasing public acceptance and approval of a negatively perceived industry and often do so by focusing on positive aspects in order to counteract environmental issues. Perception of “sustainable development” and “corporate citizenship” consequently play an important role in these strategies.

The question will be raised whether (environmentalist) image campaigns could pay off in terms of turnover and whether they are ethically or pragmatically inspired. Comparison will have to be made between the B2B and end-consumer orientated nature of the companies or of their divisions.

Focus is on BASF and BAYER, undisputedly the world’s biggest chemical companies and on other important players such as DEGUSSA, LANXESS and DUPONT.

1 - Introduction

The mission slogan¹ is a short phrase or group of words, often overblown, which accompanies the company name or brand and its logo. It is widely spread among all kinds of large companies. Together with the brand name or the company name and the logo, the mission slogan makes up an extremely important part of the perceived identity of a brand or company and figures prominently in every possible relation with the outside world. Often designed along with the logo, in a fixed lay-out, it is the front-end of corporate identity.

The mission slogan expresses how a company wants itself, a brand or product to be perceived by its customers. Because of its prominent position and its recurrent use, mission slogans, like many advertising slogans can become part of collective memory of consumers.

A company or brand name often has a long tradition. It can be an acronym (Degussa, BASF, BP)² an eponymous name, (Bayer, DuPont), a neologism (Lanxess³) or a group of nouns, for example with both a geographical and industry indication (Tessengerlo Chemie).

Changing a brand or company name is a very expensive and difficult procedure and moreover quite risky. Therefore the mission slogan can prove quite useful since it is able to add meaningful contents to a possible meaningless or worn-out brand or a company name. And even more: it is a powerful instrument of corporate branding, which functions alongside the existing brand or company name, carries a lot of content and associative and connotative potential, and can quite easily be altered or even disposed of. Therefore large companies use the mission slogan when they feel the need for a change.

2 - Corpus of this analysis

This presentation focuses on the major players in the (petro)chemical industry. This sector mainly produces raw materials or parts, chemicals, plastics and agricultural products, most of which will be used by other companies to build consumer products, however some of their chemicals and agricultural products can be used by both businesses as consumers. Furthermore some companies like BAYER also have a large healthcare division - which we will conveniently disregard because of legal restrictions on advertising and because of its almost exclusively end-consumer-orientated nature. The American company DUPONT has an even bigger range of

¹ synonyms: corporate slogan / corporate motto

² DEGUSSA: Deutsche Gold- & Silber-Scheide-Anstalt, BASF: Badische Anilin- und Soda Fabrik AG, BP: British Petroleum.

³ Combined from the French verb "lancer" meaning to thrust forward and the English noun "success", LANXESS represents a new beginning coupled with the will to succeed. (source: corporate website www.lanxess.de).

products and is much more orientated towards its end consumers, therefore it will only be used to support some of our findings.

The specific nature of the aforementioned companies poses a challenge to their image strategy. On the one hand the (petro)chemical sector is - next to the weapon industry - generally a highly negatively conceived industry. Looked at from the perspective of pollution and environmental issues, they are often judged with one-sided arguments. Add the fact that they are working most of the time on a B2B-level and that their contribution to a vast variety of consumer products thus remains unveiled, they seldom earn consumer appreciation. Confronted with this negative image and the lack of a sense of personal benefit or utility among the general public these companies are challenged to create goodwill by image-building.

Most multinationals contribute to charity, often in the vicinity of their plants, thus improving approval rates of the local population and anticipating and discouraging possible (environmental) protests. All mentioned companies do implement the idea of “sustainable development” and there is “Responsible Care”⁴, a worldwide initiative promoted by the chemicals industry.

The best strategy to detract attention from negative issues is stressing the positive aspects of a company and its product. Here the mission slogan and the image campaign enters the picture. Mission slogans figure prominently in many instances of contact with the general public and can add carefully selected values to our collective memory and ensure that the company name or brand has a positive connotation.

In this article we will look at how the mainly B2B chemical companies try to create a feeling of personal benefit with the end consumer in order to create a positive image.. Whether the thus created images are true ones, is not our task to decide.

3 - Analysis of the mission slogans of chemical companies

3.1 – BASF: The Chemical Company

In March 2004 BASF changed its corporate design in order to stress their new corporate identity.⁵ This change boasted new vivid colors, new design elements and a logo that consists of two matching squares “representing partnership and collaboration to ensure mutual success”, as illustrated in Figure 1.

⁴ <http://www.responsiblecare.org>

⁵ <http://www.agro.basf.com/p02/AP->

[Internet/en_GB/function/conversions:/publish/content/PressReleases_Folder/news_release_2003-12-10_2_en.pdf](http://www.agro.basf.com/p02/AP-Internet/en_GB/function/conversions:/publish/content/PressReleases_Folder/news_release_2003-12-10_2_en.pdf)

BASF's mission slogan, they call it a “claim”, expresses the self-assurance of the world's leading chemical company. The definite article is stressed, as to show that they are the “TOP OF MIND”-one, the biggest and the one to do business with.

But the most interesting fact is the use of the adjective “chemical”, with its negative associations. Being the most important player and proud of it, BASF sees no need to hide its identity.

A quick look at BASF's vision statement shows that as the market leader they aim high. “As the world's leading chemical company, we want to create assets that benefit all: our customers, our shareholders, our employees, our Company, as well as the countries in which we operate.”⁶

Fig. 1 - BASF European and North-American logo



3.2 – BAYER: Science For A Better Life

The strategy of BAYER's mission slogan, launched in November 2004, sharply contrasts with that of BASF. It consists of two nouns, a preposition, an indefinite article and an adjective, as can be seen from Figure 2. BAYER deliberately avoids using the negative noun or adjective “chemistry” or “chemical” and replaced it by the noun “science” thus benefiting from all its positive associations. Furthermore the mission slogan really is about what BAYER does, not about what they are, like BASF.

BAYER's mission slogan claims that their activity, which they conveniently summarize by its prerequisite “science”, improves life or the quality of life. BAYER claims that their industrial activity has a positive impact on our lives - though one must stress that the adjective “better” can be interpreted in many ways, which is what BAYER wants.

The slogan presents BAYER as a “leading inventor company” that develops new technologies in a way that the general public can benefit from them and is closely linked with BAYER's mission statement.⁷

⁶ www.basf.com

⁷ http://www.bayer.com/annualreport_2004_id0109/include/download/en_bayer_news_highlights.pdf

Fig. 2 - BAYER logo



3.3 – DEGUSSA: Creating Essentials

Looking at DEGUSSA (Figure 3) we notice a similar strategy. In 2003 DEGUSSA, which is an umbrella brand, set out a new branding strategy. The mission slogan puts across the key message of “innovative ability, excellence and reliability”, which are the hallmarks of the mission statement. Before adopting the new slogan, DEGUSSA conducted a wide-scale survey of customers and employees to establish the best-rated alternative. Their mission slogan figures as a promise to the stakeholders. Parallel to BAYER it focuses on their “role as an originator of fascinating new developments”.⁸ The mission slogan consists of a gerund or verbal noun and a noun. The use of a verb makes the mission slogan more dynamic. Though DEGUSSA does not claim to make life better, they are not being modest since they create “essentials”, things we cannot do without. Of course they mean the raw materials or components they build for their clients and which then are used in a vast variety of products. The strategy of the mission slogan is derived from the vision that “Everybody benefits from a Degussa product – every day and everywhere”⁹.

However, like BAYER Degussa is not keen on mentioning their industry, at least not in their mission slogan.

Fig. 3 - DEGUSSA logo



⁸ http://www.degussa.com/NR/rdonlyres/3D9ED5FA-83DA-4560-A47B-46C8F87FB03B/0/Annual_Report_2003_Degussa_AG.pdf

⁹ www.degussa.com

3.4 – LANXESS: *Energizing Chemistry*

In 2004 BAYER bundled a great part of their purely chemical operations and some one third of its polymer activities in the newly created LANXESS. LANXESS, like DEGUSSA, focuses on the core specialty chemicals business and is therefore B2B-oriented.

LANXESS' name, a combination of the French verb “lancer” and the English noun “success”, is just as its mission slogan clearly the result of image consultants. Like DEGUSSA the mission slogan is a dynamic one (see Figure 4), consisting out of a gerund or verbal noun and a noun, but LANXESS is not afraid to hint at their industry. Although this mission slogan is a functional one, aiming at showing what they do, the focus is on what they want to achieve in comparison with their competitors (mainly BASF) rather than on what they produce. The verbal noun “energizing” hints new innovative production processes or views of the new player. Not being an established well-known name yet, one could imagine that they are keen on hinting at their activity since the company name gives no clues.

And of course there is a second meaning of the word “chemistry”: what you need to fall in love, which makes it a witty mission slogan.

LANXESS' short mission statement is completely analogous with its slogan: LANXESS IS EXPERT, ENTERPRISING AND ENERGETIC; OUR GOAL IS TO BE THE PACESETTER OF CHANGE. When one takes into consideration that the self-assured BASF is their main competitor, this strategy makes sense. The aggressive logo completes the picture. Altogether LANXESS efforts result in poor English.

Fig. 4 - LANXESS logo



3.5 – DUPONT: *The Miracles Of Science*

The mission slogan of DUPONT, a very large American corporation but lesser known in Europe, resembles that of BAYER. As illustrated in Figure 5, it can be seen that it boasts two nouns, both with positive associations. “Science” of course represents its activity, chemistry and stresses their

role as inventor whereas the “miracles” are what they achieve with their inventions, an even higher claim than the “better life” of BAYER.

DUPONT’s former mission slogan was developed in the forties and went “*BETTER THINGS FOR BETTER LIVING ... THROUGH CHEMISTRY*” - the tag line was removed from advertising in the 1980s. The resemblance with the current BAYER slogan is unmistakable. Change chemistry into science and one has the BAYER mission slogan. When DUPONT underwent a new transformation in 1999 – adding biology to chemistry as a core science platform – its new corporate brand identity, “The miracles of science®”, was revealed. In their own words “it describes the essence of DuPont, including the company’s promise for the future. DuPont has a rich history of bringing science to the marketplace in ways that change the way people live. In their own words, “The miracles of science®” embodies the company’s ability to make leaps that deliver science-based solutions for a better world.”¹⁰ One of the unmentioned reasons for the change probably lies in the too narrow meaning of the word chemistry and its possible negative associations.

Fig. 5 - DUPONT logo



3.6 - Summary

Comparing the 5 mission slogans (Figure 6) we notice two recurrent strategies, namely the questions “who are we” and “what do we do”. The difference between the B2B- or end-consumer oriented nature of the companies influences the mission slogan’s answer to these questions.

Fig. 6 – Identity statement in mission slogan

CHEMICAL		SCIENCE
CHEMISTRY	_____	
BASF		BAYER
LANXESS		DUPONT

¹⁰ <http://heritage.dupont.com/>

The first question focuses on the identity and type of activity of the chemical companies. All of the abovementioned companies are chemical companies but some are more chemical than others. Basically this question is about modeling the mission slogan. For our corpus the range of stated identity consists out of chemistry, chemical and science. Aspects such as product-range, umbrella branding, image-building, self-assurance and the B2B or more end-consumers oriented nature play a role. We notice that two of the three B2B oriented companies, BASF and LANXEISS are not afraid to state their industry, DEGUSSA being an exception since they do not address this theme in their mission slogan. BAYER and DUPONT, both of which have important end-consumer products avoid the naming of their industry and elegantly summarize their activity as science.

The second question relates to the outcome, the effect or product of the activity (Figure 7). The will to motivate and praise the effect of the company’s activity to the general public hints a somewhat defensive attitude of the companies, as it is in essence explaining their raison d’etre. LANXEISS is preoccupied too much with defining itself against its competitors and stresses the positive change they could bring to chemical processes, rather than their products. European BASF does not seem to care much either about this. The North-American logo however boasts the extra slogan stressing their positive contribution to products. BAYER and DUPONT, having important end-consumer products, do their very best with their claim to provide a “better life” bring “miracles”. B2B oriented DEGUSSA has the same tactics, but Is a bit more modest with the claim to create “essentials”. With the sole exception of LANXEISS and European BASF all companies do care to show the general public their contribution to mankind. In the next chapter we will see how European BASF makes up for this through advertising.

Fig. 7 - Claim in mission slogan

BETTER PRODUCTS	-	ESSENTIALS	-	BETTER LIFE	-	MIRACLES
BASF USA		DEGUSSA		BAYER		DUPONT

4 - Mission slogan and advertising: do strategies match?

In this chapter we will have a look at how the strategies of the advertising campaigns of the companies complement their mission slogans. We will do this by looking at the examples of BASF and BAYER, since they are the biggest players and the only one with a very large-scale image campaign in 2005/2006. LANXEISS and DEGUSSA, currently have no advertising or image campaigns running on a comparable scale, though DEGUSSA does show which essentials they are creating through various - quite technical - product stories on their website and does advertise in magazines for professionals as well, using similar strategies for the ads as in their

mission slogan. DUPONT is conveniently neglected because of its complex structure, its various semi-independent brands and since it is not prominently present on the European market.

4.1 - BASF image campaign

The BASF-campaign aims at showing their diverse but substantial contribution to a vast range of consumer products. The starting point is the fact that the end-consumer is not aware of the role BASF played in the production process. Consequently, BASF calls it an image campaign since BASF does not own the various brands and other companies sell the products! The guideline in the European campaign is the slogan: **Invisible contribution. Visible success** as illustrated by Figure 8. The approach for the United States campaign is almost identical but a bit more aggressive: **We don't make a lot of the products you buy. We make a lot of the products you buy better.**® Though both campaigns originate from the same strategy, there are some slight differences in tone.

BASF's European image campaign is ambitious. It brings one message - their invisible contribution which leads to a visible success - in ten different fields in which BASF is active. The advertising motifs are designed in a consistent recognizable manner. The name BASF serves as recognizable umbrella for materials or components that are not branded specifically or under barely known technical names. A picture visualizes the hidden contribution of BASF to a specific product ranging from bridges to clothes, thus really drawing the public's attention to it. Each ad features a quite interesting product- or procedure description. Comparing all themes, one notices the recurrent and prominent use of such words as "together", "partners" and "customers" "behind the scene", "improve processes", used to stress the invisible cooperation between BASF and the manufacturers. In fact BASF Europe makes up for the lack of a claim in their mission slogan.

Fig. 8 - Current themes of the European BASF " Invisible contribution. Visible success."-image campaign

1 Visible success in sports and leisure sector

Together with our customers we are working on innovative plastics well suited for applications involving high dynamic loads in sports and leisure

2 Visible success in Road Construction

BASF is working with its customers to develop asphalt additives which make our streets more weatherproof, more robust and particularly long-lived

3 Visible success for fuel

Together with its customers, BASF is developing fuel additives that will allow engines to become cleaner, more efficient and more economical, thereby making an important contribution to reducing fuel consumption and harmful emissions.

4 Visible success in Agricultural Products

With innovative solutions we help our partners in the farming industry to improve yields and quality of agricultural products

5 Visible success in the area of extreme sports

Together with our customers we are working on innovative solutions for our high-performance materials. They provide the highest level of safety and therefore create new possibilities in the area of extreme sports

6 Visible success in the automotive industry

BASF is one of the automotive sector's major system partners. Together with our customers we are working to develop increasingly innovative solutions combining cost-effectiveness, environmental protection, safety, comfort and design

7 Visible success in outdoor clothing

BASF is working with its partners to develop high-quality textile coatings for outdoor clothing that will withstand the toughest of conditions, guaranteeing key functions such as protection from moisture and breathability.

8 Visible success with sports and leisure equipment

Together with its partners, BASF is constantly developing increasingly innovative plastics that have become indispensable to a wide range of sports articles and are opening up new leisure possibilities

9 Visible success in bridge construction

BASF develops high-quality raw materials and, together with its customers, produces tailored solutions in order to increase the load-bearing capacity of valuable construction materials and protect them from environmentally induced damage.

10 Visible success in sun protection

A partner to numerous well-known sunscreen manufacturers in the cosmetics industry, BASF produces highly effective UV filters that ensure even greater protection for sunbathers.

In the United States, BASF adds another mission slogan to the discussed one: “Helping make products better”. This slogan figures above the company name. Whereas the reason for this extra slogan is obvious, it is remarkable that they apply it only for their American markets. In the light of this slogan, the North-American image campaign is the perfect extension of this slogan.

The strategy of the North-American advertising campaign is revealed in the following quote: “The fact is, we don't make many finished products. Virtually all of the 6,000-plus products that we manufacture are ingredients that enhance the finished products consumers buy daily. There are countless uses of BASF materials, from products that add comfort and convenience to your home, to those that bring brilliant color to your car, to those that keep you healthy.”¹¹ Though the North-American campaign originates from an identical strategy as its European counterpart, its claims are much more explicit than those of their European counterpart, maybe more fit to the American taste.

Fig. 9 - Current themes of North-American BASF “We don't make a lot of the products you buy. We make a lot of the products you buy better.®”-advertising campaign

1 We don't make the computer screen. We make it sharper.

Paliocolor® liquid crystals from BASF substantially improve the viewing angle and contrast for flat screens. In contrast to other highly developed liquid crystals on the market, Paliocolor can be applied in a coat only micrometers thick and polymerized into a hard film that provides high contrast and sharp images at wide angles.

2 We don't make the sandboard. We make it lighter.

BASF manufactures Terluran® acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) plastics that are often used as the core of sandboards, snowboards and other sporting goods. Plastic materials are well-known for providing

¹¹ www.basf.com/corporate/index.html

lightweight performance in comparison to other materials.

3 We don't make the dress. We make it brighter.

BASF manufactures Ultraphor® optical brighteners for finishers of polyester/cellulosic blend fabrics. In addition, the company manufactures dispersion dyes such as Bafixan® that are well-suited to polyester, and are used in microfiber and sports clothing.

4 We don't make the motorcycle. We make it quicker.

BASF manufactures Ultramid® polyamide nylon, which is replacing metal in more and more automotive part applications. Because Ultramid provides high mechanical strength, rigidity and thermal stability, it performs as well as metals and is lighter in weight. Nylon's light weight helps make vehicles more fuel efficient and quicker. In addition, BASF manufactures polyisobutyleneamine (PIBA) which is a gasoline additive that provides superior intake valve detergency while controlling combustion chamber deposits, making for a cleaner burning, better performing engine.

5 We don't make the sunscreen. We make it stronger.

BASF's Z-COTE microfine zinc oxide and Uvinul ultraviolet light absorbers are used to make sunscreens that provide long-lasting protection from the sun's rays.

6 We don't make the helmet. We make it tougher.

BASF manufactures Ultramid® polyamide nylon...which provides hardness, rigidity, and abrasion resistance to end-use products.

7 We don't make the bridge. We make it more durable.

Styrofan 1186 emulsion latex from BASF is used as an additive to concrete to help roads cure faster and last longer. By improving concrete adherence, flexural strength and resistance to road salt, Styrofan 1186 can help to increase the useful life of concrete bridge decking overlays by up to 25 years, saving money for municipalities and reducing inconvenience to motorists.

8 We don't make the car. We make it more colorful. BASF manufactures Automotive OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) paints and coatings for new cars in a range of colors used by major car manufacturers around the globe. In addition, the company makes and markets Glasurit®, R-M®, and LIMCO® brand refinish automotive paints for repair work.

4.2 - BAYER image campaign

BAYER's current image campaign features the mission slogan "Bayer: Science For A Better Life". In their own words it "aims to show in a vivid and emotional way how Bayer, as a newly aligned inventor company, is enriching the lives of people all over the world with its innovative developments and products."¹² It is a large-scale campaign that "features 15 advertisements that will be published worldwide in the news and business magazines most important for BAYER and in national weekly and daily newspapers. The ads are backed up by TV commercials that will be shown mainly on news and business channels in prime-time slots."¹³

The campaign communicates the new structures of the BAYER-Group, the NEW BAYER as they call it, which consists of BAYER HEALTHCARE, CROPSCIENCE and MATERIALSCIENCE - notice the use of the word science. It aims at presenting BAYER as an innovative, progressive firm and an inventor of new technologies and it tries to strengthen the BAYER brand and to enhance its emotional appeal.¹⁴ Quote Heiner Springer, Head of

¹² www.scienceforabetterlife.bayer.com

¹³ idem

¹⁴ idem

Communications at Bayer AG, the “campaign is essentially the final stage in our program of communications activities surrounding the Group’s restructuring” and “It seeks to create awareness for the fascination of Bayer by evoking a positive atmosphere.”¹⁵

Kickoff of the image campaign was in Germany and the States. The campaign is now running in more than 10 countries. A common logo, with the traditional BAYER cross and the mission slogan figuring prominently and a varying ad slogan was used.

Fig. 10 - Example of European BASF advertising



BAYER is indeed quite open about its strategy: “Bayer is presented as an inventor company with a rich history that continues to set trends in research-intensive areas. The campaign features vivid examples from the three subgroups Bayer HealthCare, Bayer CropScience and Bayer MaterialScience (Figure 11). In each individual add a practical example of the mission slogan is elaborated. Still due to the repeated mission slogan and the uniform design, there is a lot of cohesion between the individual adds of the three subdivisions. The ads are complemented by

¹⁵ idem

images with a social theme to emphasize the Group's social responsibility.”¹⁶ Next to the individual motifs of the campaign, BAYER also made an image film, which summarizes all individual themes.

Looking at the individual motifs of the campaign, one notices that BAYER indeed is active in many fields. The new Bayer presents itself as a company that is looking for answers to questions as “How can we feed a growing population without damaging the environment? How to improve everyone's health and prevent diseases? How to develop new materials and to conserve resources?”

Fig. 11 Bayer's Image campaign: Exploring Life – Fulfilling Dreams

1 Fighting Cancer – Extending Life

BAYER is working to improve both diagnosis and therapy.

2 Improving Diagnosis – Fighting AIDS

BAYER develops diagnostic test to the resistance of the changing virus to certain drugs.

3 Enhancing Relationships – Renewing Love

Bayer has a treatment for Erectile Dysfunction

4 Controlling Diabetes – Fulfilling Dreams

Bayer develops quick and reliable test for measuring blood sugar.

5 Mastering Hemophilia – Winning Freedom

BAYER's biotechnological development has resulted in a highly effective medication so that many patients can live a normal life.

Bayer CropScience

6 Securing Harvests – Preserving Nature

BAYER provides better pesticides which don't harm the environment and have no negative long-term side-effects.

7 Fortifying Crops – Improving Nutrition

BAYER creates crops that can grow under harsher climate conditions and that are more nutritious.

Bayer MaterialScience

8 Optimizing Plastics – Increasing Safety

The extremely impact-resistant and break-proof plastic MAKROLON is used by leading manufacturers in bicycle helmets and sport-gear.

9 Developing Materials – Increasing Safety

BAYER's plastic and thus unbreakable car-glass makes life safer. Its special shock-absorbing polyurethane, used in bumpers, can reduce the risk of injury to both passengers and pedestrians in case of an accident.

10 Pioneering Plastics – Protecting Heroes

BAYER has developed a highly break-proof and shock-resistant plastic which is used in helmet visors.

The New Bayer

Three ads show that the company cares for society and is a corporate citizen. This can be seen in the field of education (science programs), sports (support of clubs – not least BAYER LEVERKUSEN) and protection of the environment (sensibilisation with regard to BAYER's vision of sustainable development).

11 Supporting Education – Promoting Talent

12 Protecting Nature – Motivating Young People

13 Sponsoring Sports – Sustaining Health

¹⁶ idem

Fig. 12 - Example of European BAYER advertising



4.3 - Summary

Both image campaigns clearly aim at increasing public approval by showing the impact the companies have on the life of the end-consumer. BASF's strategy is quite defensive. It shows varying products, which they contributed to in different fields. BAYER follows a similar pattern, but it clearly distinguishes its three divisions with specific individual motifs and makes higher claims.

But whereas both the North-American and European image campaign of BASF is limited at showing what the company makes or what it contributes to, BAYER also stresses its social and environmental concern with individual ads under the umbrella of the *NEW BAYER corporate citizenship*, which mainly comes down to the fact that BAYER wants to present itself as a company that cares for mankind. BAYER's approach is thus broader one. BAYER manages to present itself really as a global company with people from all continents figuring in the ads.

5 - Conclusion and outline of further research

Our analysis showed that the mission slogan is used as an important instrument of branding in the chemical industry, serving more or less identical purposes with the different companies. The

strategies of the mission slogans are inline with the general advertising strategy. Mission slogans like advertising do influence the way we perceive companies or products. We found that almost all chemical companies with exception of the European branches of BASF and LANXESS follow a more or less similar strategy which stresses the positive effects of their hidden products, components or procedures, thus trying to gain good-will and distracting attention from environmental concerns.

One could state that the strategies behind the mission slogans and the defensive image campaigns are possibly inspired more by pragmatics than ethics. Looking at BASF and BAYER, one could claim that the main reason would probably not be the desire to increase turnover.

Though BASF has quite a lot of trademarked products next to its vast range of raw materials and product components, consumers hardly know these semi-independant brands. The demand of the end-consumers is not directly related to the perception of BASF. From this point of view one would be tempted to claim that BASF should not take direct interest in the end-consumer. Yet they invest heaps of money in their image campaign.

For BAYER with its three divisions the situation is somewhat different. As a brand, BAYER is stronger and its image campaign could pay off in terms of turnover, since it is possible that the HealthCare-division, for which according to strict legislation it is difficult to make publicity and the products of the CropScience-division which will be known to each gardener, will benefit from the strengthened brand image. Apart from the fact whether it is possible or not, it seems that both companies do not aim at increasing the demand of end-consumers. Their image campaigns seem to be an investment in goodwill and public approval of the general public and society. Since all chemical companies are very often criticized by environmentalist groups, these defensive campaigns stressing public benefit, sustainable development are a clear case of preventive image-risk management and the basis of future damage-control in case of environmental or medical complications. Further research in this matter will focus on this aspect.