

# Bus 310: Global Research Proposal

Can you smell it? Your nose is an inch away from the oven door, eyes popping out about to explode from the yummy sight. Your heart is racing because the timer is ticking down to the last second.... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Beep beep! As you open the oven door, a whiff of cheesy, crispy, seasoned tater tots fill your nose with a mouth watering smell. Yum.

Ore-Ida Potato Products, Inc. was formed in 1952. Ore-Ida got its name by having their first and largest potato-processing facility located in Oregon, right near the border of Idaho. Ore-Ida was founded by F. Nephi Grigg and he decided to combine Oregon and Idaho together using the first three letters of the state's names to make the present brand Ore-Ida. One of Ore-Ida's most notable slogan's was "When it says Ore-Ida, it's All Righta," which was used for over ten years. (Ore-Ida)

In 1953, Tater Tots were born! The Grigg's brothers were eager to find new ways to form potatoes, so they created bite-sized treats from shredded potatoes. 50 years later, the Ore-Ida brand is owned by Heinz (which is now KraftHeinz). Now, the company makes a variety of branded potatoes (See Appendix A) after the Tater Tots including: Golden Fries, Golden Crinkles, Extra Crispy, Easy Fries, Zesties!, Crispers!, Onion Ringers, Steak Fries, Hash Browns, Twice Baked, and Mashed Potatoes. On each Ore-Ida package, color coded banners are placed in the middle to distinguish between all of the different brands. (Ore-Ida)

Today, the Ore-Ida Brand is the nation's leading brand of frozen potatoes. (Ore-Ida)

Japan is going to be the country being researched. See Appendix B to see a map of Japan. Ore-Ida products are already found in Japan. The brand also has a website designated for Japan, specifically in the Japanese language. See Appendix C for statistics on internet users in Japan. Japan is a sovereign island country in East Asia. An increase in Japan's consumption tax to 10% is going to occur in April of this year. Last time the tax increased, Japan fell into an economic recession and was left in a financial crisis. It will be interesting to see how this increased tax will affect Ore-Ida's products in the near future.

Unfortunately, Japan has very little land to grow crops. See Appendix D for agriculture statistics. About 12.5% of Japan's total land is suitable for agriculture. The rest of Japan's land is either too cold in the mountains, or covered in forests. This means Japan's imports are more abundant than their exports, which is probably why Japan is the number one country in debt. See Appendix E & F for economic statistics. With very little land to grow crops, the service industry is where the majority of jobs are found. See Appendix G.

Keeping all of this in mind, this proposal will assess the need for better advertising for mainly Ore-Ida and some Kraft Heinz products. Advertising is key for a brand/company because creative designs and messages can help increase brand awareness, increase the consumer base, and increase revenue. Ore-Ida is lacking in new creative advertising techniques. The brand is active on their social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), but could come up with some new ideas for traditional and modern media tactics. Some of Kraft Heinz lesser known brands like Honig, Complian, Orlando, Maxwell House, and Tassimo could also use a marketing boost to create more brand awareness.

## **Country/Market Overview**

Geographical, Economic, Social, and Political factors all help determine facts for international research and local research of a company or brand. These are important to assess because they can determine opportunities and threats for the company. In order to know if Ore-Ida should expand or pull out of Japan, GESP factors will help the brand make its decision.

### **Geographic Factors**

Japan is already a small island, which leaves less space for agriculture. Meaning, less space to grow potatoes. Not only is Japan smaller than the United States, but the West side of Japan is too cold and mountainous where no one lives. That cuts out almost half of Japan's size already. The eastern side of Japan is mainly where all of the inhabitants live because that climate is more habitable. Only about 15% of Japan's land mass is suitable for agriculture. That is not a lot. So most of the potatoes from Ore-Ida would have to be grown and shipped from the United States. This can cause more money from Japan to buy these frozen potatoes, or eventually a long-run shortage of potatoes in the United States, if they're the only potato grower for other countries. (Contemporary Japan)

According to Steve Strelsin from Axiom Consulting Partners, he says that in order to conduct research it is important to figure out the issue and then make a hypothesis. This could be considered for Japan's agricultural state. If Japan could figure out a way to expand their agricultural land, more crops could be grown and fed, increasing their food exports. This would then help grow more potatoes that Ore Ida Japan could produce into french fries.

With this in mind, an advertising team for Ore-Ida could create infographics about some of the potato statistics. This would attract the farmers to gain more knowledge of the potato production. With more knowledge of the potato industry in a more creative format, this could encourage the farmers to create more enticing packaging to sell their potatoes to its customers.

### **Economic Factors**

With the increased consumption tax in Japan arriving in April 2017, it is possible Japan could return to an economic recession again. The last time they raised their consumption tax, the

economic environment plummeted and Japan was in a financial crisis. Kraft-Heinz and Ore-Ida should highly consider pulling out of Japan if this should happen so they can lose as little revenue as possible. Japan also has the highest public debt for a developed country according to GDP percentages. Japan has nontariff barriers that are raising domestic prices which in turn, hurts the overall efficiency of the economy. (Economic Freedom)

“Many international marketing efforts fail because a problem audit is not conducted prior to entering the foreign market” according to the Essentials of Marketing Research book. Therefore, it’s good to assess the economy and food markets of Japan currently to know what could potentially happen if Japan would go into another economic recession. Market research is all about defining the problem and figuring out how to solve it. (Malhotra)

In order for Ore-Ida to stay on top of profits, advertising the potatoes a lot will help the market. Potatoes can be cooked in so many dishes. If Japan would go into a recession again, advertising that potatoes can go a long way in the family household could attract the Japanese.

### **Social Factors**

After Japan’s economic recession in the 1990s, unemployment skyrocketed. Financial institutions had to cut back or close all together. Japan’s lifetime job security was no longer a thing. If this should happen again in 2017 after the consumption tax increase to 10%, Ore-Ida is really going to struggle with consumers. The younger generations in Japan are finding it hard to find jobs as well because there is not enough need in the companies or they can’t afford to pay another employee. Crime against property has increased despite Japan being one of the safest countries in the world. A long-term social problem is the status of women. Japan seems to still live in a very patriarchal society. Japan laws forbid sexism, but the attitudes still remain the same and that women should stay home and cook. See Appendix E to see Japanese women. (Countries Quest)

Market research could include focus groups and personal interviews to determine more social factors of Japan. Focus groups of only females could help determine how women feel about Japanese society and how they can overcome the patriarchal norms. Strelnin says that focus groups give a more in-depth view of people’s opinions compared to surveys. Personal interviews could also further these focus groups to really determine how Japanese women feel. It would allow them to open up completely without the fear of being judged by the other females.

Since new creative strategies need to be made for Ore-Ida, opening up positions for women could help the economy, gender barriers, and the brand all together. New advertising techniques could also open up a whole new field for Japan.

### **Political Factors**

Japan's judiciary is independent and fair. It provides secure protection of the inhabitant's property. It's rare to see the exchange of cash for favors from government officials. The rigging of bids on government public projects could cause corruption. The top personal income tax is 40.8%. The top corporate tax rate is 23.9%. The overall tax is 30.3% of total domestic income. Government spending has amounted to 39.9% of total GDP. Public debt is 248.1% of GDP. A lot of Japan's agricultural imports are restricted. If potatoes are under this restriction, then Ore-Ida is really going to struggle continuing business in Japan. Japan somewhat values foreign trade, but they also want to keep some of their private sectors away from foreign investments. (Economic Freedom)

"An analysis of social media data can also be useful in developing an approach to the problem" states the Essentials of Marketing Research book. A lot of political figures are on Twitter. A good way to know and respond to top politicians in Japan could be used through social media. Suggestion boxes could be placed on their social media pages. That way the politicians could see what problems their people are facing.

Since a lot of politicians are already on social media, Ore-Ida could come in contact with some of the politicians and try to get their endorsements for the brand. They could also have popular politicians create their own recipes with Ore-Ida potatoes to get the word out to more Japanese people.

## **Research Methods**

The use of surveys, focus groups, and in-depth interviews will be the best research methods to expand Ore-Ida awareness in Japan. These three methods will be able to define the problem, gain resourceful knowledge of a consumer's perspective on a product, and figure out how to improve the product or brand to increase brand awareness, revenue, and consumer base.

Japan is the third largest economy in the world, thus this country is a destination for tons of companies and market researchers. Unfortunately, Japanese is one of the most expensive languages to translate because there are three different alphabets, so creating a survey in Japan does take some time. The Japanese people like to be in groups rather than praise the individual. Being polite when distributing the survey is key. There was a data breach back in the early 2000s where personal information was stolen from 4.52 million users. These hacks have caused Japanese to be skeptical about giving out personal information. The Japanese are also very hard workers who work long hours in a day. The survey has to be less than 20-30 minutes otherwise the Japanese respondents could develop "respondent fatigue" which could cause skewed data by incomplete surveys. (Quirks Media) According to Professor Tuttle, it is important to have the survey read over by multiple advisors, to ensure the translation is correct, the survey questions are understandable, and that no questions are offensive to the designated country since culture is different.

When conducting focus group in Japan, the discussion should be no more than two hours long. The Japanese easily tire so any longer than this could cause skewed data as well. The recommended amount of respondents is six, and no more than eight. The larger the group, the harder it is for the Japanese to share their own different opinion. On weekdays, the Japanese are usually done working at 6pm with a one-hour train commute. The focus group will go from 7 to 9pm. The Japanese culture is strongly based around a system of seniority, so the focus group respondents should all be within ten years of each other (i.e. 20-29 year olds, 50-59 year olds). Since the Japanese have a group mentality, the respondents should write down their answers so they aren't swayed by other respondents. (Japan Market Research)

Interviews aren't very common in Japan. The only time interviews happen are when seniors in college are about to graduate. The HR teams of company's interview handfuls of recent college graduates for the company as a whole, not for certain positions. Then all of them are hired at once. After that, the interview process is done, and those recent graduates basically have a lifetime of employment. So many Japanese have a lack of familiarity with the interview process. Knowing the different of certain small talk questions like marital status and where you were born is important to know what's acceptable to talk about in different countries. As far as language goes, if the interview is conducted in English, it will take the Japanese a lot longer to answer the questions. In the United States, in an interview, you're supposed to tell how great you are. In Japan, modesty is big, so that could be an issue as well. (Japan Intercultural)

The most beneficial research method for Kraft Heinz and Ore-Ida would be focus groups conducted in Japan. Short surveys could be handed out in the focus groups. Consumers attitudes and behaviors could be defined quickly in focus groups, with more in depth discussion, rather than short survey answers. It'll be important to conduct the focus groups at appropriate times during the day so that the Japanese won't be too tired, as well as keeping the groups small to deter participant bias.

## **Research Procedures**

Advertising in Japan is very different than in the United States. In America, we promote the product to the certain target audience for 30 seconds to one minute. In Japan, the commercials are less about the product and more about the memories of the commercial. The advertisements are usually interesting and almost bizarre, so when you see the product later on, you pick it up because it's memorable. Japan's advertisements aren't necessarily effective revenue wise, but the brand awareness is definitely there. Being in a Japanese commercial is a huge thing in Japan. While in America, well-known celebrities in advertisements is decreasing, in Japan it is still relevant. Traditional media is huge in Japan. Outdoor advertisements account for 24.5% of total advertising spending in 2015. The United States is about 4.6% in outdoor advertisement spending. Poster and banners are put up everywhere on subways and trains. While people are on the move, people's eyes move to the celebrities on the banners, which is crucial for these certain products. Having familiar celebrities in these Japanese advertisements brings an importance and trust to the product, even if they don't know what the product is.

Laughter is also key in Japanese commercials. (Freshtrax) See Appendix H for current Kraft Heinz advertisements.

**Problem Statement: The problem of this study is to compare the effect of American advertising techniques on Kraft Heinz products among the Japanese people.**

The objectives of this proposal include: 1) Create new marketing strategies concentrating more on the product, rather than bizarre advertisements. 2) Conduct surveys and focus groups to see how effective advertising products instead of celebrities impacts the Japanese people. 3) Make new creative designs and commercials of Kraft Heinz products and see how well the Japanese react to the advertisements. See Appendix K for Kraft Heinz products.

The target market will be the same target market, as well as people who are more inclined to be persuaded by Western culture. Kraft Heinz customers attract a wide range of people, of different ages, tastes, and personalities. For example, Kraft Mac and Cheese attracts kids and young adults ages 3-25 years old. This could go for other brands like Lunchables, Capri Sun, Kool-Aid, Ore-Ida, and Bagel Bites. Target markets for other products such as A1, Classico, Gevalia Kaffe, Athenos, Crystal Light, Velveeta, and Stove Top reach more of a young adult to elderly consumer base. Kraft Heinz reaches a huge audience. It's important to know which audience each brand targets to figure out types of fonts to use and the choice of colors as well. Surprisingly, these two factors can be a huge factor for selling a product. For example, Kraft Mac n' Cheese will have cartoon characters and big bubble letters on the packaging, but Athenos yogurt will have a simpler, elegant font, attracting more women.

New commercials, billboards, posters, YouTube videos, and social media posts will be created. Traditional media seems to really work well in Japan compared to the United States so that should be kept. However, social media advertisements could be increased since Japan is very tech savvy.

A survey distributed in focus groups can be seen in Appendix I. The survey questions are just to gain knowledge about the consumer's perception of Kraft Heinz and if they buy the company's products. The focus group discussion would then proceed asking more in depth questions. See Appendix J for focus group questions.

Sampling is the process of selecting subjects from a population of interest so that by studying the sample, a researcher can generalize the results. (Social Research Methods) SSI, a premier global provider of data solutions could be a helpful company to work with when conducting surveys because they know how to target certain samples in different countries. (SSI) In this proposal, the samples would be from two different groups. One sampling study would be from only Japanese people with backgrounds in marketing and advertising. This would enable the researchers to learn more legitimate opinions from experienced professionals in these fields. Getting feedback from people working in the marketing and advertising fields can create new ideas that normal people might not see or understand from Kraft Heinz's current advertisements. This is very important because having the combination of many new suggested

ideas from hundreds or marketing people's backgrounds, could add increased brand awareness and new creative strategies for Kraft Heinz.

The second sample group would be an even number (5,000) of men and women of all ages, kid to young adult to adult to elderly, of the common consumer. This would get the perspective of Kraft Heinz from its target audience. Researchers would know right away if the consumer doesn't understand any of the company's advertisements, if they don't like the taste of the product, and how Kraft Heinz could improve its products or advertisements. Sampling methods are classified as either probability or nonprobability. Probability methods include random sampling and stratified sampling. In nonprobability sampling, prospects are chosen from a population in a nonrandom manner. This includes convenience sampling and judgement sampling. The advantage of probability sampling is that the sampling error can be calculated. (StatPac) The second sample is random sampling. Stratified sampling could be representative of sample group one.

Examples of new Americanized commercials in Japan for Kraft Heinz could include well-known celebrities like Justin Bieber, Beyonce, Jeff Corden (Comedian), Will Ferrell, and a lot more. However, the new change in the commercials is that the celebrities would be focusing all on the Kraft Heinz product. There wouldn't be random creatures, music, and/or trippy background designs occurring in these advertisement anymore. The advertisement would be totally focused on the product, highlighting its tastiness and appearance. All of the commercials would be very positive and look modern. New advertisements would roll off of the commercials where celebrities would be seen holding and eating the certain Kraft Heinz products. The product, say Capri Sun would be bright, bold, and big on the posters and digital designs. Then the Japanese would eventually associate certain celebrities with certain Kraft Heinz products, producing a memory and happy feeling whenever seeing the celebrity or product.

With surveys, focus groups, and personal research, Kraft Heinz could attract a wider audience in Japan using Western advertising techniques. They're newer, more creative, and something different that the Japanese aren't used to, which would cause a double look at the screen or poster.

## **Results**

### **Recommended Actions**

Kraft Heinz and Ore-Ida are doing pretty well in advertising their products in the United States, however, in Japan, the company could do a better job. Increasing new advertising techniques will help the company raise their revenue and brand awareness.

1. Create commercials for Kraft Heinz/Ore-Ida in Japan in the Japanese language. Make sure the translations are all correct. The focus of the commercials will be on the product itself, still keeping a memorable and funny story, but have the story relate more to the product.

Celebrities can still be put into the commercials to help gain trust for the Japanese, but the product will still stand out more than the celebrity.

2. Conduct surveys and focus groups to figure out if advertisements focused on the product and not the bizarre creations will still attract the Japanese to watch the commercials. To also figure out how well-known the Kraft Heinz company and its brands are. The research methods will also determine if the new commercials will increase sales for any of the Kraft Heinz products.

3. Create new advertisement designs for traditional media and social media posts. Finding new celebrities and placing them on posters and billboards. For social media, having the Kraft Heinz team be more responsive to comments any consumers may make. For a new launch of advertising, create campaigns for Kraft Heinz products with coupons, BOGOS, and other great deals to create traffic on the updated social media pages.

4. Communicate with the Japanese people in marketing and advertising fields to understand their valued opinion on Kraft Heinz advertising. Getting a Japanese perspective on advertising in their own country could help the American advertising team for Kraft Heinz understand how advertising in Japan works. This is important because culture is different in every country. Advertisements in the United States could be appealing in some countries, but possibly not in other ones.

5. After coming up with new advertisement strategies and designs for Japan, a well-developed country, conduct research in more developing countries. Possibly do some pro bono work in those countries donating food, but in return, get great feedback from the inhabitants of these countries on their views of Kraft Heinz as well as how they understand advertising. It's important for Kraft Heinz to target developing countries because they can provide more jobs to those people, creating a better economy and more revenue.

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**Appendix:** visuals related to experiment procedures, company research

A. Infographic of Kraft Heinz Company.  
<http://www.kraftheinzcompany.com/company.html>



B. Japan Map  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ja.html>



C. Internet Usage

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ja.html>

**Internet users:**

**total:** 118.453 million

**percent of population:** 93.3% (July 2015 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 5

D. Japan Agriculture Land Statistics

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ja.html>

**Land use:**

**agricultural land:** 12.5%

arable land 11.7%; permanent crops 0.8%; permanent pasture 0%

**forest:** 68.5%

**other:** 19% (2011 est.)

E. Japan Economic Assessment

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ja.html>

Scarce in many natural resources, Japan has long been dependent on imported raw materials. Since the complete shutdown of Japan's nuclear reactors after the earthquake and tsunami disaster in 2011, Japan's industrial sector has become even more dependent than before on imported fossil fuels. A small agricultural sector is highly subsidized and protected, with crop yields among the highest in the world. While self-sufficient in rice production, Japan imports about 60% of its food on a caloric basis.

F. Most in Debt

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ja.html>

**Public debt:**

234.7% of GDP (2016 est.)

230% of GDP (2015 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 1

G. Labor Force Percentages

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ja.html>

### Labor force - by occupation:

**agriculture:** 2.9%

**industry:** 26.2%

**services:** 70.9% (February 2015 est)

H. Kraft Heinz Advertisements.

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# It's changed. But it hasn't.

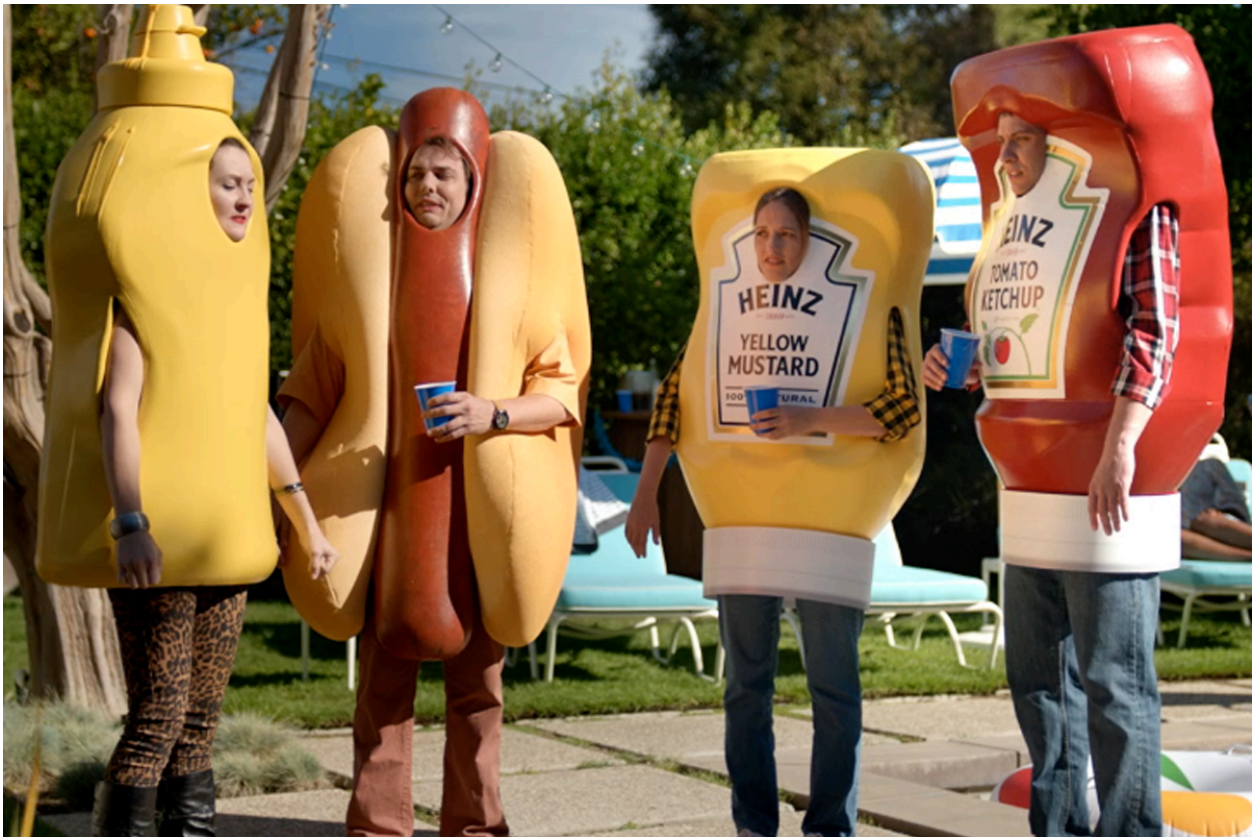


Good news, Kraft Macaroni & Cheese now has no artificial flavors, preservatives or dyes. But do you want to hear something even better? This Kraft Mac & Cheese still tastes like the Kraft Mac & Cheese you know and love. So now you can enjoy each bite even more. Or just like you always have.



Macaroni you know.





I. Sample Short Survey Questions

A. Gender    M\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_

B. Age            10-20 \_\_\_ 21-31 \_\_\_ 32-50 \_\_\_

C. Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

D. Have you heard of the company Kraft Heinz? (Circle One)            Yes            No

E. Do you buy Kraft Heinz products? (Circle One)            Yes            No

J. Sample Focus Group Questions

A. Why do you buy Kraft Heinz Products?

B. Are Kraft Heinz products more affordable than other brands? If no, why do you prefer to buy Kraft Heinz products over cheaper brands?

C. Tell me your thoughts on Kraft Heinz advertisements? Do the ads persuade you to buy more of the products, or is it just entertainment?

D. Are Kraft Heinz products convenient to find in grocery stores? If they weren't convenient to find, would you still buy the products and why?

E. What are some suggested improvements regarding Kraft Heinz products and advertising that would increase your chances of staying a loyal customer to the company?

K. Kraft Heinz Products

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