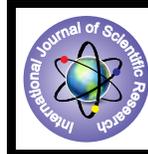


How the Customers are Deceived by Product Labeling



Fine Arts

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Sana Mahmoud Abbasi

Director of the Fashion Design Program (College of Fine Arts & Design)
American University in the Emirates, Dubai

ABSTRACT

Customers are often driven by trade-marks, labels, and are often impressed by the Designer beautiful hang tags, and they trust big names blindly to the point that they sometimes never read the labels. A good example is the IKEA Meatballs that is the favorite of all especially children. They are labeled as Sweden made, so everyone who comes into IKEA store has to have a taste of these specially Sweden flavored meat balls. To our surprise, we discover that a batch of meatballs were found to not only to contain equine DNA from horse meat, but they are made in China and not Sweden. In this study, a look into laws of labeling and the controversy and Jurisdiction of misleading the consumer, and how food producers lack the sensitivity of consumer's religions, like Muslims who believe that Pork meat is forbidden, but what about horse meat?

Introduction:

Customers are often driven by trade-marks, labels, and are impressed by the Designer beautiful hang tags, and they trust big names blindly and they sometimes never read the labels. A good example is the IKEA Meatballs that is the favorite of all especially children. They are labeled as Sweden made, so everyone who comes into IKEA store has to have a taste of these specially Sweden flavored meat balls. To our surprise, we discover that a batch of meatballs were found to not only to contain equine DNA from horse meat, but because they are made in China and not Sweden. The company said it sold an average 60,000 portions a week at its UK and Irish restaurants and 13,850 packs a week from its Swedish food market in the two countries. IKEA was told of the horsemeat discovery by authorities in the Czech Republic and re-filled its UK shelves with new stock, although the country's state veterinary administration announced that it had found evidence of horse meat during DNA tests on 1kg packs labeled as beef and pork meatballs from IKEA in Brno. The consignment had not been distributed to consumers, the government body said. IKEA has withdrawn all meatballs from sale in stores in the UK and more than 20 other European countries after tests by authorities in the Czech Republic found traces of horsemeat

About IKEA:

IKEA, the world's leading home furnishings company, was founded in 1943 in Sweden. Since then, IKEA, the Life Improvement store has offered home furnishings and accessories of great design and quality with functional living solutions at everyday low prices. Currently there are more than 298 IKEA Group stores in 26 countries, including 50 in North America (11 in Canada; 38 in the US; 1 in the Dominican Republic). In the Middle Eastern countries, IKEA is located in Egypt, Qatar, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates (Dubai & Abu Dhabi). IKEA has six distribution centers in North America. The IKEA Group employs 131,000 coworkers and had 655 million visitors in FY 11. IKEA incorporates environmentally friendly efforts into day-to-day business and continuously supports initiatives that benefit causes such as children and the environment including UNICEF, Save the Children and American Forests. IKEA is big on environmental and social responsibility actions and programs. IKEA has classical products that are always there throughout the year, and products that are changeable. IKEA Meatballs are one of the most popular food products in the store. An estimated 150 million of which are consumed around the world. IKEA relies on food sales for 5% of its €27 billion (\$35.6 billion) in revenue.

IKEA Meatball Scandal in China:

China Real Time feels compelled to update readers on the latest flare-up in the global meat contamination scandal from the Chinese point of view. According to a report in the State-run China Daily on Wednesday Feb, 27, 2013, the Swedish meatballs that furniture retailer IKEA sells in China have stirred a controversy- not because they were found to contain equine DNA like some of the company's meatballs in Europe, but because it turns out they're made in China. It also not known what quality of DNA was found. Consumers felt deceived when they found out that this amazingly wanted Swedish product is actu-

ally Chinese. IKEA's spokeswoman did not respond to requests for comments. China Daily said that the meatballs at IKEA's China outlets do not contain horsemeat, as the company gets its meatballs, made with beef and pork, from a manufacturer based in China's coastal Fujian province. News of horsemeat turning up in beef products sourced in Europe has spread across the globe in recent weeks, hurting the reputations of some of Europe's biggest food producers. The Wall Street Journal reported on Monday that IKEA has removed meatballs from many of its cafeterias after traces of horsemeat were found in a batch in the Czech Republic. Hong Kong, where consumers are typically willing to eat just about anything but, the idea of eating horse-tainted Bolognese was just a bit too hard to swallow. On the other hand, Europeans thought that it is only "Horse meat not Poison". But this European scandal erupted last month when tests in Ireland revealed some beef products contained horsemeat, triggering recalls of ready-made meals in several countries and damaging confidence in Europe's vast and complex food industry. Bags of frozen meatballs in the grocery section near the checkout lanes had been cleared out, and meatballs made of chicken meat only are available. Many people thought that disclosure of horse meat was "horrifying."

IKEA scandal in America & Asia:

Horse meat that was found in IKEA meatballs has caused a problem affecting product sales in Dominican Republic, Hong Kong, and Thailand. It seems that meatball lovers are waiting to hear a declaration from IKEA store that the meatballs are not containing meatballs anymore. "Familjen Dafgaard, the Swedish producer has also found traces of horsemeat in another three batches of frozen meatballs, which have also been withdrawn from the market. Dafgaard said its main focus now is to continue tests to find the source of the meat. Sweden's TT news agency earlier today said the tests at Dafgaard indicated that there were between 1.5 percent to 10 percent horse-meat in some of the samples, and that the products were meatballs. Such a reading implies that horsemeat has been mixed with the meat in the product, and that it's not just a case of contamination in handling, TT reported." Meanwhile, IKEA insists that US and Canada meatball content is only beef and pork products, and are safe for consumption. IKEA confirms that all meatballs sold in US IKEA stores are from a US supplier. When this scandal first came to light in Europe, IKEA mapped the sources of the meat, and based on the results of the mapping, a confirmation came that the contents of the meatballs follow the IKEA recipe and contain only beef and pork from animals raised in the US and Canada. All beef and pork from the US and Canada must comply with USDA guidelines." Farm ministers agreed to send information produced from national investigations into the horse-meat scandal to Europol, the police-coordinating body in The Hague that supports multinational criminal investigations. "It's quite clear we're faced with a Europe-wide criminal activity," said British farm Minister Owen Paterson.

The jurisdiction of misleading the customers, and mislabeling:

According to the EU agriculture ministers in Brussels, the crisis that they now acknowledged is considered criminal in nature.

"In terms of preventing fraud, we will have to mainstream in some way across the EU the use of DNA testing to establish and to confirm for consumers that what they think they are eating is actually what they are eating," said Simon Coveney, agriculture minister for Ireland, who chaired the meeting. "It is frustrating to see new stories breaking almost on a daily basis – certainly on a weekly basis – new companies involved, big brands, big names that consumers trust. And so we're all anxious to get to the bottom of this," he said. The meat in the meatballs was originally sourced from countries within the EU, primarily Sweden, Germany and Ireland, where the horsemeat scandal kicked off back in January after the Irish Food Safety Authority found traces of horse DNA in some beef burgers. Unaffected meatballs are still on sale across the continent, however. "We are not stopping sales of meatballs full stop. IKEA told the Financial Times that the customers can still go to IKEA and purchase meatballs and that they are only testing the one batch that contained horse meat". Supermarkets have announced an array of costly DNA Testing Measures, with Tesco promising to spend between £1m and £2m on testing.

Islamic Views on Eating Horse Meat:

The majority of scholars agree that it is permissible to eat horses, because of the sound Ahaadeeth that have been narrated concerning this issue. It was narrated from Jaabir ibn 'Abd-Allaah (May Allah is pleased with him) that he said: On the day of Khaybar, the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade eating the flesh of domestic donkeys, but he granted a concession with regard to horses. Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 3982; Muslim, 1941. It was narrated that Asma' bint Abi Bakr (May Allaah is pleased with her) said: At the time of the Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) we slaughtered a horse and ate it. Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 5191; Muslim, 1942. It was also narrated that Jaabir (May Allah is pleased with him) said: We traveled with the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and we used to eat the flesh of horses and drink their milk, narrated by al-Daraqutni and al-Bayhaqi. Nawawi said: with a Saheeh Isnaad. Other scholars – including Abu Haneefah and his two companions – are of the view that it is Makrooh (Detestable) to eat horse meat. They quoted a verse from the Qur'an and Ahaadeeth as evidence for that. This is like the verse in which Allah says (Interpretation of the meaning): "Forbidden to you (For food) are: Al-Maietah (The dead animals — cattle — beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine" [al-Maa'idah 5:3]. Here flesh is mentioned because that is what is usually eaten in most cases. The Muslims are unanimously agreed that the fat, blood and all other parts of the pig are also forbidden, and they said: hence Allah does not mention carrying load on horses, although He says with regard to "An'aam" animals (Camels etc), "And they carry your loads" [al-Nahl 16:7]. This does not imply that it is forbidden to carry loads on horses. End quote from al-Majmoo'. In contrary, The Mâlikî School of law is the only school from among the four Canonical schools of law that prohibits horsemeat. Interestingly, in most issues, that Mâlikî School is generally the most liberal of the four schools of law in its approach. However, it is worth saying that Mâlik's opinion on this issue is a weak one, since it is related in Sahih Muslim that Ibn 'Abbâs said: "The Prophet (Peace be upon him) forbade eating the flesh of fanged predatory animals and birds of prey". In spite of this liberality, Mâlik regarded horsemeat as unlawful. This opinion of his is likewise a weak one. The correct ruling is the one advanced by the majority of jurists that horsemeat is permissible to eat. The proof for this is the hadîth in Sahih al-Bukhârî where 'A'ishah relates: "We slaughtered a horse during the time of Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) and we ate it." Therefore, permission was given to eat the flesh of horses."

Laws of product labeling: What is a Law Label?

The purpose of the law label is to inform the consumer of the hidden contents, or "filling materials" inside bedding & furniture products. The law label was born in the early 1900s to prevent these articles from being further manufactured with contents such as horse hair, corn husks and whatever else a manufacturer could find to use that the consumer would never see. It's similar to food labeling. Law Labels must describe the

fiber contents and the filling materials of the article as a percentage of those filling materials by weight. Example: 80% Polyurethane Foam, 20% Polyester Fibers, as some consumers may suffer from allergic reaction to some fibers. In USA currently 31 states require law labels. The products requiring law labels in each State vary so does the labeling requirements. Uniform law labels can be produced to satisfy the different requirements of each state. Law Labels are governed on a state-by-state basis by various departments. Examples of these departments are: Department of Health, Weights & Measures, and Bureau of Home Furnishings, as well as the Dept. of Agriculture: Division of Industrial Compliance.

What is a Uniform Registry Number (URN)?

A Uniform Registry Number (URN) is issued to any manufacturer registered in the States. This URN must then be registered in the other states requiring registration so that only one URN is needed. This URN identifies the company as the manufacturer of the products and must be printed on the law labels attached to the products. Only a manufacturer can be issued a URN. A single manufacturing company that has multiple plants must have a different URN for each location. U.S. companies that import and/or distribute foreign products must ensure that the foreign manufacturer has proper registration where required in the U.S. The registration number must be on the products, whether the manufacturer produces or imports the products, to avoid fines and products from being removed from sale.

Food labels:

Food labels provide to the consumers with information about the products so that they know exactly what they are buying. They also provide instructions for safe storage, and preparation. Food labels enable the consumer to make dietary choices, and allow them to compare food products for value for money. Most food products must, by law, include the following information, though some products may be exempt from one or more of these conditions: The product name, an ingredients list (in descending order of weight), shelf-life (use-by or best-before date), storage instructions, the name and address of either the manufacturer, packer or EC seller, the country of origin, the weight, and instructions for use. Food labels carry date codes to ensure that the safety and quality of the food is maintained and to prevent food poisoning. Date codes refer to the product before it is opened. Listing ingredients on the label is very important to also avoid allergies. Allergic reactions to peanut and tree nuts are relatively common, estimated to occur currently in around 1/40 infants and around 1/150. Death has been caused by allergic reaction to food. For example, on September 2nd, 2011 There have been two reports of deaths related to food allergies - the victims were 15 and 20 years old. The U.S. Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA) defines food 'labeling' as all labels and other written, printed, or graphic matter upon any article or any of its containers or wrappers, or accompanying such article. The term 'accompanying' is interpreted liberally to mean more than physical association with the food product. It extends to posters, tags, pamphlets, circulars, booklets, brochures, instructions, websites, etc. The Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA), which amended the FFDCA requires most foods to bear specific nutrition and ingredient labeling and requires food, beverage, and dietary supplement labels that bear nutrient content claims and certain health messages to comply with specific requirements. Furthermore, the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) amended the FFDCA, in part, by defining "dietary supplements," adding specific labeling requirements for dietary supplements, and providing for optional labeling statements. The fee for a Product, Labeling, Ingredient, and Graphic Design for Food and Beverages is US\$ 1,495. Registrar Corp helps companies comply with U.S. FDA's extensive food labeling requirements. A detailed report (typically 40-50 pages) prepared by our team of Regulatory Specialists who scrutinize every element of your food labeling.

Conclusion:

Consumers trust important brand names, big department stores, and companies' names, and do not always read the labels. They are also ignorant on the laws that must be on the la-

bels, like fiber content for clothing and furnishing, and county of origin on all products including food products. IKEA store is the world's leading home furnishings company, founded in 1943 in Sweden. It expanded in 26 countries in the world including the Middle East in Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates. Consumers go to visit IKEA store to enjoy the diversity of the Swedish products such as the most popular food item "Meat Balls". To the consumer's surprise it was revealed recently that the Meatballs were found to contain equine DNA, with traces of horse meat, and that they originated from China. Consumers were disappointed that they have trusted that IKEA is selling Sweden products not Chinese, and having horse meat in the meatballs was not easy to swallow to most people. This incident

was investigated, and it is considered a criminal act, as the country of origin, and the ingredients must be stated on the label by Law, also to avoid allergic reactions that may cause death. It is also the right of the consumers to know what they are eating, and in respect to consumer's religions, as many types of foods are forbidden for certain ethnic groups, such as Muslims, who don't eat pork because it is forbidden. Even though, the Muslim Mâlikî school of thought prohibits eating horse meat, and some scholars think that it is detestable, most scholars agree that the flesh horse meat For Muslims is considered lawful and is permissible to eat. But whether to eat horse meat or not to eat it should be the consumer decision and not to be forced on the consumer by the manufacturer, without a prior warning.

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