

Building emotional equity: How storytelling and local culture elevate FMCG Brands

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Abstract

This article explores how storytelling and cultural insights foster emotional equity for fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) brands, particularly within CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) and GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) regions. Through qualitative analysis and illustrative case studies, the research highlights how global and regional FMCG companies successfully integrate local flavors, rituals, packaging, and culturally resonant narratives to deepen consumer connections and build brand loyalty. Examples from Nestlé, Coca-Cola, Pepsi, and regional brands underscore the strategic importance of cultural customization. The findings suggest that culturally tailored branding and storytelling significantly enhance emotional engagement, loyalty, and market differentiation. Implications for marketers emphasize the critical role of cultural intelligence in global brand strategy.

Keywords: Emotional Equity; FMCG; Brand Storytelling; Cultural Insights; Consumer Connection; Brand Loyalty.

1. Introduction

Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies increasingly recognize that brand differentiation goes beyond product features – it requires forging emotional connections with consumers. Emotional equity refers to the intangible value a brand earns by resonating with consumers' feelings, values, and cultural identity. In today's competitive markets, brand storytelling and cultural relevance have emerged as powerful tools for fostering these deeper ties [1]. When brands tell authentic stories that reflect local traditions or shared experiences, they humanize the brand and evoke emotions such as trust, joy, or nostalgia, which in turn foster customer loyalty [1]. This approach is especially crucial in regions like the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), where rich local cultures and traditions significantly shape consumer preferences. Brands operating in these markets have learned that "one size fits all" marketing can fall flat; instead, adapting to local culture – speaking the local language (sometimes literally), honoring traditions, and reflecting community values – builds authenticity and trust. According to industry experts, when done right, cultural adaptation "builds emotional relevance in new markets," demonstrates respect for local values, and ultimately enhances brand perception and loyalty.

This article examines how FMCG brands in the CIS and GCC regions leverage cultural insights – from local flavors and rituals to packaging design and regional storytelling – to build emotional equity and stand out in the market. Through case studies of both global brands and homegrown favorites, we highlight strategies that have successfully aligned brand messaging with cultural norms, values, and aspirations. We analyze how brands have tailored products and narratives to local tastes and traditions, creating an emotional bond with consumers that translates into loyalty and competitive advantage. Finally, we provide a brief discussion on the scientific and marketing implications of these practices, supported by current research and credible references.

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2. Emotional Equity and Cultural Storytelling in FMCG Marketing

Cultivating emotional equity means making a brand meaningful in consumers' lives beyond its functional utility. Academic and industry research underscores that brand storytelling is a key driver of emotional equity because it enables deeper engagement on a personal level [1] Figure 1. Rather than just touting product features, brands weave narratives that convey their values, purpose, and identity, often invoking local cultural elements that consumers find relatable. By sharing authentic, meaningful stories – for example about the brand's origins, its role in the community, or customers' own experiences – companies can create a sense of community and belonging around the brand. These emotional connections influence purchasing decisions: consumers are more likely to support brands that resonate with their beliefs, values, and experiences. In essence, effective storytelling humanizes a brand and transforms it from a mere product into a "relatable entity" that people feel emotionally attached to. Over time, this emotional bond leads to stronger brand loyalty, advocacy, and positive word-of-mouth, all critical for sustained success.



Figure 1 The components of cultural storytelling in branding [2]

Cultural narratives are a particularly potent form of brand storytelling in multicultural markets. They provide a bridge between brands and their target audiences by invoking shared histories, values, or aspirations. Recent consumer insights indicate that people increasingly favor brands that reflect their culture and values. For instance, a 2024 Harris Poll found that 80% of consumers prefer to purchase from brands whose values align with their own, and nearly two-thirds globally make an effort to support companies that champion causes important to them [3]. In the commercial context, this means that brands attuned to local cultural norms can achieve higher engagement and loyalty. Cultural storytelling works as a form of inclusivity – it signals to consumers that the brand “gets” their world. In practice, this might involve incorporating local idioms and symbols in brand messaging, celebrating local holidays, or depicting familiar social scenarios in advertising. By doing so, brands embed themselves in the cultural fabric of consumers' lives, turning transactions into relationships.

In the global world with multidimensional influence on consumer behavior Figure 2, it is crucial that adapting to local culture is not seen as compromising global brand identity, but rather as a globalization strategy that enhances relevance. Brand experts note that the most successful international brands blend into local markets without losing their core essence. This balancing act – maintaining a consistent brand identity while flexing to respect local customs – yields multiple benefits. It “sparks emotional connections” by showing consumers that the brand speaks their “language” and values. It also signals respect, which builds trust: for example, using the local language on packaging or in ads demonstrates acknowledgment of cultural identity. Indeed, even subtle tweaks like color schemes or imagery that echo local cultural symbols can foster stronger emotional connections [4]. Psychologically, consumers respond positively to such cues of cultural respect and familiarity. They see the brand as one of their own, rather than an outside entity, which strengthens brand attachment and loyalty.

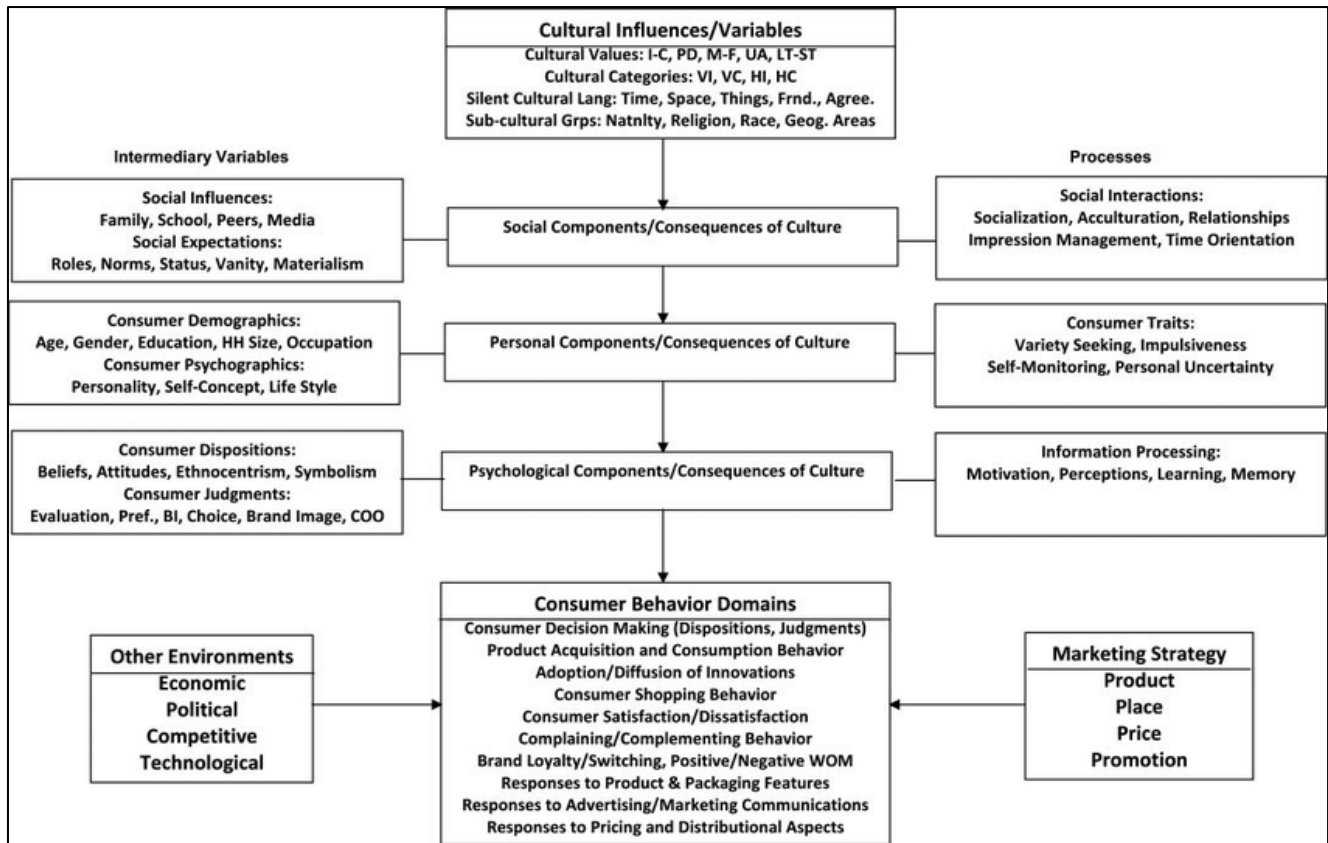


Figure 2 Effect of Culture on Consumer Behavior: A Conceptual Model Incorporating the Influence of Globalization [5]

Moreover, in both CIS and GCC regions, cultural authenticity is a key dimension of brand equity. Consumers in these markets often exhibit what could be called “ethnocentric” preferences – a tendency to favor brands that feel native or culturally authentic. In Russia, for example, local foods and beverages are often preferred because consumers believe domestic products are more “authentic” [6]. (Paradoxically, Russian consumers simultaneously worry about local product quality, creating an interesting challenge: a foreign brand that manages to appear culturally authentic while also signaling high quality can really win hearts in that market.) In the GCC, authenticity is likewise prized, albeit manifested through different cultural lenses – such as aligning with Islamic values, Arab traditions of hospitality, or family-centric messaging. The following sections delve into how FMCG brands have navigated these cultural landscapes. We first look at the CIS region, highlighting strategies like localized flavors, nostalgic branding, and adaptation to regional rituals. We then explore the GCC region, focusing on integration of local tastes, religious and social customs (e.g. Ramadan), and narrative marketing that taps into cultural values. Each case underlines how building emotional equity through local culture is not only possible but indeed a recipe for brand elevation in these markets.

3. Cultural Tailoring in the CIS Region

The CIS region comprises diverse markets – from Russia’s large consumer base to the Central Asian republics – each with its own cultural nuances. However, a common thread across these post-Soviet societies is the importance of tradition and local identity in consumer behavior. Brands that succeed here tend to respect local languages, flavors, and historical sensibilities. This often means adapting products and marketing to align with local tastes and nostalgia. Global FMCG companies have learned to “think globally, act locally” in the CIS, while homegrown brands leverage cultural heritage to deepen emotional bonds with consumers.

Local Flavors and Preferences: One straightforward way FMCG brands localize is by developing flavors that reflect regional palates. A salient example is PepsiCo’s adaptation of its snack products in Russia. When launching its Lay’s Stax potato crisps in the Russian market, PepsiCo chose flavors “popular in Russia” – such as sour cream & onion, salted potato, green onion, and even crab flavor – based on a study of local taste preferences [7]. These flavors resonate with Russian consumers’ familiar food experiences (for instance, dill, onion, and crab are common in local cuisine and snacks), making the product feel attuned to local cravings. The effort paid off in differentiation: by incorporating local

tastes, Lay's Stax could better compete with entrenched local snack options and signal to consumers that this global brand "speaks their taste language." The same strategy is seen across CIS markets – global beverage companies introduced region-specific variants like berry-infused sodas or extra-fermented dairy drinks to match local traditions. This customization of flavor goes beyond novelty; it creates an emotional connection by invoking the comfort of local food culture. Consumers feel seen when an international brand offers their favorite childhood soup flavor as a chip, or a soda reminiscent of a traditional drink, fostering a sense of loyalty rooted in cultural pride.

Packaging Design and Language: In the CIS, language and imagery are powerful cultural markers, so brands often tailor packaging to local aesthetics. One form this takes is using local languages or scripts on labels, which can significantly boost a brand's approachability. Coca-Cola, for instance, ensures its global logo and messaging adapt to local scripts where appropriate. In Georgia (part of the CIS cultural sphere), Coke is branded in the Georgian script as "Koka-Kola," demonstrating how translations maintain brand identity while ensuring local recognition [8]. Even subtle script changes like this can make a big difference – the product literally speaks to consumers in their mother tongue, which can subconsciously increase trust and familiarity. Beyond text, packaging often incorporates local symbols or commemorative designs. In many CIS countries, it's common to see limited-edition FMCG packaging for national holidays or cultural events. For example, brands release special New Year's editions with Ded Moroz (Father Frost) imagery or use patriotic colors for Independence Day promotions. These design elements tap into collective sentiments. A striking case of culturally resonant packaging is the iconic Russian chocolate "Alyonka" bar. Its wrapper, unchanged since the Soviet 1960s, features a drawing of a rosy-cheeked baby girl in a traditional headscarf – an image that has become a symbol of childhood and nostalgia for many Russians. The enduring popularity of Alyonka chocolate owes much to this emotional branding: the retro packaging evokes memories of earlier generations, creating a warm, sentimental attachment. By literally wrapping its product in cultural nostalgia, the brand differentiates itself from modern competitors and enjoys enduring loyalty. The Alyonka example illustrates how cultural nostalgia can be a brand asset in CIS markets – many consumers respond to reminders of the Soviet era or national heritage with positive emotion. FMCG brands have leveraged this by reviving Soviet-era brand names, using vintage design motifs, or citing "since 19xx" heritage in their marketing, all to reinforce authenticity and trust through continuity with the past.

Storytelling and Local Values: Successful brand messaging in the CIS often weaves local cultural values or narratives. Advertising and storytelling are tailored to reflect things that resonate with CIS consumers, such as community unity, resilience, or hospitality – sometimes informed by Russian literature, folklore, or simply everyday life. One notable pattern is the use of family and communal themes. Many commercials for foods and beverages in Russia, for example, depict extended families gathering around a table for a holiday or friends having a hearty meal at the "dacha" (country home) – scenarios that mirror real life and elicit an emotional response of familiarity. Global brands entering the region have found that partnering with local celebrities or referencing popular culture can make their storytelling more compelling. An example is how some international beer and snack brands sponsor local football (soccer) teams or events, tapping into the strong community around sports. This creates a narrative of the brand being part of local passions. Another facet is the adaptation to local rituals. In predominantly Orthodox Christian countries like Russia or Belarus, brands sometimes acknowledge traditional festivals (e.g. Easter or Maslenitsa pancake week) through seasonal products or ads. Meanwhile, in CIS countries with significant Muslim populations (Central Asia, Azerbaijan), global food brands have tailored their messaging around Ramadan or Nowruz, ensuring respect for those traditions in both product offerings (e.g. halal-certified items, special sweets for Eid) and marketing campaigns. Such adaptations signal cultural sensitivity and endear brands to consumers. The overarching effect of these practices is that consumers begin to see the brand as "one of us." Research on the Russian market observed that Russians show loyalty to companies they perceive as genuinely integrating into local culture [6]. By blending into local life through language, flavor, design, and narrative, FMCG brands in the CIS differentiate themselves not by being the exotic foreign brand, but by becoming an honorary local brand in the eyes of consumers. This emotional equity – the feeling that the brand respects and celebrates local culture – often translates into a competitive edge in market share.

4. Cultural Tailoring in the GCC Region

The GCC region (which includes countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, and Bahrain) presents a different cultural canvas – one characterized by deep-rooted traditions, religious influence (primarily Islam), and a blend of modern aspirations with heritage pride. Consumers in the Gulf value brands that honor local customs and social values like hospitality, family solidarity, and respect for religious practices. Moreover, the GCC's youthful population (with a large under-30 demographic) has embraced global trends but still expects localization – they want international brands to fit into the Gulf lifestyle and ethos. FMCG brands have responded by tailoring products, messaging, and design in creative ways that build an emotional bridge to Gulf consumers.

Adapting to Rituals and Traditions: One of the most important cultural touchstones in GCC markets is the holy month of Ramadan. Ramadan observance (fasting from dawn to sunset, followed by iftar meals to break the fast) dominates the social calendar each year, culminating in the festive Eid al-Fitr. FMCG brands operating in the Middle East have learned to synchronize their marketing with this period, not only out of respect but also because it is a time of heightened family gatherings, food consumption, and gift-giving. A textbook example is Coca-Cola's Ramadan campaigns. Each year, Coca-Cola creates special edition packaging and advertisements specifically for Ramadan, tapping into the month's spirit of generosity and unity. In Middle Eastern markets, Coca-Cola has released special packaging during Ramadan featuring Arabic calligraphy and festive motifs [8]. For instance, Coke cans may be adorned with celebratory Arabic script wishing "Ramadan Kareem," instantly signaling that the brand is joining in the cultural celebration. Pepsi has done similarly – launching Ramadan-themed designs on its cans in the region, as timed promotions that connect with local traditions [8]. This kind of seasonal cultural alignment generates goodwill and an emotional response; consumers often collect or share these beautifully designed packages, associating the brand with the positive emotions of the holiday. Beyond packaging, storytelling through Ramadan ads has been especially impactful. In 2024, Coca-Cola collaborated with a regional creative agency to produce an animated ad that "celebrates the holy month of Ramadan" [9] by depicting heartwarming scenes of iftar gatherings, acts of charity, and togetherness. The ad portrays diverse characters making room at the dinner table for others, symbolizing inclusivity and hospitality – key values of Ramadan [9]. By highlighting universal themes of connection, unity and joy against the backdrop of Ramadan traditions, Coca-Cola's campaign resonated deeply with GCC audiences. Viewers see their own experiences and values reflected in the narrative, creating an emotional bond with the brand. Such campaigns not only boost short-term engagement during the festive season, but also reinforce the brand's image as culturally aware and caring. The emotional equity built – a sense that "Coke understands what Ramadan means to us" – can translate into year-round loyalty.

Another tradition-bound aspect of GCC culture is the emphasis on hospitality and local flavors in daily life. A salient cultural icon is "Gahwa" – Arabic coffee, often brewed with cardamom and served as a gesture of welcome. Recognizing the emotional resonance of this ritual, Nestlé introduced a product tailored specifically for the GCC: NESCAFÉ Arabiana, an instant Arabic coffee with cardamom. This product was designed to deliver the authentic taste of traditional Arabic coffee from the Gulf region in seconds [10]. By doing so, Nestlé effectively married convenience with heritage. The product description explicitly frames Arabic coffee as "a symbol of hospitality and generosity", stressing that the brand maintains "the history and authenticity of Arabic coffee" while making it easier to prepare. The introduction of NESCAFÉ Arabiana (including variants like cardamom and even saffron flavor) met with positive consumer response because it acknowledged a beloved local taste in a modern format. In essence, it told Gulf consumers: we know how important coffee tradition is, and we're innovating to honor it in your busy lives. The emotional connection here arises from cultural flattery – consumers feel valued that a global brand has tailored a product just for their culture. Similarly, the confectionery giant KitKat (Nestlé) launched a KitKat Arabic Coffee flavor in MENA markets, blending milk chocolate with roasted coffee and cardamom. This limited-edition bar was timed for Ramadan, explicitly to accompany consumers' post-iftar coffee breaks [11]. Nestlé's Middle East executive noted they "understand the cultural value of coffee time in the region," and aimed to meet local demand for a flavor inspired by gahwa. The KitKat Arabic Coffee edition thus served up nostalgia (the aroma of cardamom coffee evoking traditional majlis gatherings) wrapped in a familiar chocolate format – a fusion of old and new that struck an emotional chord. Case studies like NESCAFÉ Arabiana and KitKat's gahwa flavor illustrate how local flavors and rituals can be leveraged to differentiate FMCG brands. By embracing regional taste profiles (spices like cardamom, unique ingredients like dates or hibiscus, etc.), brands create products that aren't just consumables, but cultural experiences. Consumers often respond with loyalty to these culturally adapted offerings, as the products become part of local rituals (e.g. a certain biscuit becoming the go-to companion for Ramadan iftar, or a soft drink associated with national day celebrations).

Language and Visual Identity: Just as in the CIS, language customization in branding is vital in the GCC. Arabic is the lingua franca across the Gulf, and although English is widely understood in business and on modern packaging, the emotional impact of Arabic branding is significant. Many FMCG brands ensure bilingual packaging (Arabic-English) by law, but the tone and style of Arabic text can also convey respect. For example, Coca-Cola's famous "Share a Coke" campaign was localized by printing popular Arabic names on Coke bottles in Arabic script, which delighted consumers and spurred social media sharing across the Middle East [12]. This simple act of printing an Arab consumer's first name (in their own script) on a global brand's product created a personal and emotional connection – it was as if Coke was speaking directly to individuals, in their language. Visual design in GCC-focused branding often draws on regional aesthetics. We see Arabic calligraphy, geometric patterns, and traditional color palettes (deep greens, golds, etc.) used in limited-edition packaging or store displays around cultural holidays. These design choices are not merely decorative; they signal cultural appreciation. Brands that incorporate, say, Islamic geometric motifs on a candy box for Eid are subtly aligning themselves with the joy and decorum of that occasion. The emotional payoff is that consumers feel a sense of cultural pride when purchasing these items – the brand becomes woven into the fabric of celebration.

Localized Storytelling and Values: Branding in the GCC often revolves around themes that resonate with regional values such as family unity, aspiration balanced with tradition, and community development. A prime example is the marketing of Almarai, the Saudi-based FMCG giant and one of the region's most trusted dairy brands. Almarai has built its brand not just on product quality but on emotional storytelling that reflects Gulf lifestyles. Its campaigns frequently feature heartwarming family narratives and scenes of everyday life in Middle Eastern households. Almarai commercials often depict multi-generational families at home, a mother packing lunches, or children coming home from school to enjoy milk and treats – idealized images that mirror consumers' own lives. According to marketing case studies, Almarai's campaigns often use emotional storytelling to create a deeper connection, sharing stories of local farmers, the company's history, and customer testimonials [13]. One memorable Almarai ad followed the story of a young boy who grew up drinking Almarai milk and later gives it to his own children – a narrative arc that spans generations and evokes nostalgia and trust. By highlighting local dairy farmers and emphasizing community (e.g. how Almarai supports local agriculture, or how its products are part of family traditions), the brand positions itself as an integral part of the national story. This strategy has clearly paid off in emotional equity: Almarai is often cited as one of the Middle East's most beloved brands, seen as homegrown and caring, despite its massive scale.

Global brands, too, incorporate GCC cultural values in their storytelling. For instance, luxury personal care brands in the GCC have adapted their messaging to emphasize modesty and family-safe humor in advertising, aligning with the region's social norms. Fast-food and beverage brands sponsor large community events during festive periods (like free iftar tents or sports tournaments) and highlight these acts in their narratives to showcase values of generosity and community support. Another interesting dynamic in GCC marketing is aligning with the region's aspirational ethos – many Gulf consumers, especially youth, are forward-looking and proud of their rapidly modernizing societies, but they also cherish tradition. Brands like Pepsi and Coca-Cola often walk this line by producing edgy, youth-oriented content (music videos, influencer campaigns) that still nod to cultural norms (ensuring content is family-friendly, occasionally featuring traditional dress or settings mixed with modern music).

Differentiation and Loyalty through Localization: The net effect of all these culturally tailored efforts in the GCC is a significant competitive advantage. Brands that show cultural intelligence differentiate themselves from competitors (especially those that take a more standard, globalized approach). As one marketing commentator put it, customers expect authenticity – brands to understand them, speak their language, and show cultural awareness; if you get it right, you "build trust, spark emotional connections, and create a brand that feels personal, even on a global scale." In the GCC's saturated FMCG sector, being seen as the most culturally connected brand in a category often correlates with market leadership. Consumers develop brand loyalty not just because of product satisfaction, but because of a sense of shared identity with the brand. For example, a KSA shopper might choose the local juice brand Rani over an import because Rani's marketing has always depicted joyful scenes of Arab family life and local festivals, making it feel like "our brand," whereas the import feels distant. This emotional loyalty also insulates brands in tough times; even if a rival comes with a similar product, consumers emotionally invested in a culturally resonant brand are less swayed by pure price or convenience factors. In summary, storytelling and local culture in GCC FMCG branding create a virtuous cycle: cultural adaptation leads to emotional equity, which leads to stronger loyalty and brand equity, prompting brands to further invest in cultural alignment.

5. Discussion: Bridging Global Brand Strategy and Local Insight

The case studies and practices observed in the CIS and GCC underline a broader lesson in global marketing strategy: cultural relevance is a powerful differentiator in building emotional brand equity. While functional quality and innovation remain important, it's the emotional resonance that often turns customers into brand advocates. For marketing professionals and brand managers, the implication is clear – investing in cultural research and local creative adaptation is not a cosmetic exercise, but a strategic imperative. As Del Valle (2025) notes in a LinkedIn analysis, customization of product attributes (flavors, packaging, sensory experience) to align with regional tastes can "cultivate stronger consumer attachment and brand loyalty," provided it's done based on real consumer insights and not stereotypes [4]. This requires a nuanced understanding of target audiences: their emotional drivers, cultural references, and aspirations. The examples from CIS and GCC show multiple entry points for such insights – from leveraging nostalgia (past-oriented emotion) to aligning with festivals and family values (present communal emotion) to embodying aspirations (future-oriented emotion, e.g. modernity blended with heritage).

It is also evident that global brands can achieve local soul without diluting their core identity. The key is finding aspects of the brand's global story that can be retold in local dialect, so to speak. Coca-Cola's global message might be about happiness and togetherness; in Russia that togetherness can be a New Year's family dinner; in Saudi Arabia, it can be an iftar gathering – the context shifts, but the emotional gist remains consistent with the brand. This reflects a principle supported by brand storytelling research: a strong brand narrative has multiple layers of meaning, allowing it to be

contextually adapted while maintaining a unified brand essence. For instance, the value of “celebration” is universal, but a savvy brand will celebrate Diwali in India, Christmas in Europe, Nowruz in Kazakhstan, and Eid in the Gulf – each time showing up in a culturally resonant way. By doing so, brands not only avoid appearing tone-deaf, but actively demonstrate respect, which itself triggers positive emotional response.

From a scientific viewpoint, these marketing practices underscore theories of consumer culture and brand identity. The concept of local consumer culture positioning (LCCP) in marketing literature suggests that brands positioned as symbols of local culture can command preference in certain segments. The CIS and GCC experiences show LCCP in action: brands like Almarai or Alyonka thrive as symbols of local tradition and quality. Conversely, global brands employing a global consumer culture positioning (GCCP) must still localize enough to not seem disconnected. The interplay of global and local influences confirms the idea that consumers in developing markets navigate both a global consumer culture (love for international products, modern lifestyles) and a local consumer culture (desire for cultural anchoring) [6]. Brands that can integrate into both spheres – a global brand with a local face – tend to maximize emotional appeal.

It is also worth noting the role of modern technology and data in facilitating cultural customization. Many of the cited campaigns emerged from careful social media listening and consumer feedback. KitKat’s decision to launch an Arabic Coffee flavor came after noticing numerous social media comments from Middle Eastern consumers who love having chocolate with their coffee [11]. Likewise, PepsiCo’s localization of Lay’s flavors likely drew on market research into local snack habits. Today’s marketing analytics allow brands to identify which cultural touchpoints resonate most with consumers (be it a certain flavor, a beloved local figure, or a nostalgic era) and tailor their offerings accordingly. This data-driven approach, combined with creative cultural storytelling, forms a robust strategy for building emotional equity.

6. Conclusion

In both CIS and GCC markets, the convergence of storytelling and local culture has proven to be a potent strategy for elevating FMCG brands. By infusing products and campaigns with local flavors, rituals, design aesthetics, and narratives, brands create more than just customer satisfaction – they create emotional equity. This emotional bond differentiates them in crowded marketplaces, as consumers feel a deeper affinity and loyalty towards brands that echo their own culture and values. The case studies from global giants like Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Nestlé, and regional leaders like Almarai demonstrate that cultural adaptation can take many forms: a special edition flavor that tastes like home, packaging that speaks the local language, advertising that brings local traditions to life, or a brand story that champions community values. Each of these forms, when executed authentically, transforms brand interactions from transactions into meaningful experiences.

For marketing professionals and brand managers, the lesson is to approach new markets (or even diverse segments of existing markets) not with a blank uniform slate, but with a rich palette of cultural insights. Whether it’s the nostalgia of a Soviet-era candy wrapper or the joy of an Arabic greeting on a cola can, these details matter. They signal to consumers that the brand sees them and values what they value – a message which, in turn, yields value for the brand in the form of loyalty and advocacy. Building emotional equity through local culture is a reminder that even in an age of global brands and digital connectivity, marketing remains, at its heart, a deeply human endeavor. It succeeds when it speaks to the heart – in whatever language or flavor that heart understands.

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