



Cultural Adaptation of Websites: A Comparative Study of Portuguese and Dutch Corporate Websites

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Master Thesis

Master's Degree in Digital Marketing

Porto – 2015

**INSTITUTO SUPERIOR DE CONTABILIDADE E ADMINISTRAÇÃO DO PORTO
INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DO PORTO**



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**Presented at Instituto de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto for
obtaining the Master's degree in Digital Marketing under the
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Resumo

O crescimento global da internet tornou-se um meio acessível de comunicação que apresenta novos desafios para as empresas multinacionais, dado que têm de adaptar os seus websites às diferenças culturais. Neste aspeto, a adaptação cultural tornou-se uma estratégia crucial para as empresas que pretendem ter sucesso internacionalmente.

O objetivo deste estudo foi o de investigar a adaptação dos websites a diferentes culturas. Com essa intenção fez-se uso das estruturas de análise de Hofstede e Hall, de modo a analisar em que medida a adaptação cultural dos websites Portugueses e Holandeses das empresas multinacionais listadas na revista americana Fortune existe ou não. Por recurso à metodologia da análise de conteúdo foram analisados vinte websites de empresas multinacionais, confrontando-se as principais categorias destes sites com as hipóteses formuladas anteriormente.

Os resultados mostram que existem diferenças significativas na adaptação cultural das empresas multinacionais com sites em Portugal e na Holanda. Na dimensão individualismo – coletivismo, os websites portugueses e holandeses evidenciam valores elevados em individualismo, particularmente no caso holandês nas categorias de relações com a comunidade, clubes de conversação e chat rooms, newsletters, programas de fidelização e links para websites locais, enquanto os Portugueses valorizam sobretudo os temas familiares.

As hipóteses aversão à incerteza e distância hierárquica não foram confirmadas pela investigação quando consideradas globalmente. No entanto, este teste global não significa que categorias como o serviço ao consumidor ou uso de terminologia local não sejam importantes para adaptação pelos profissionais de marketing holandeses ou navegação guiada e lojas locais pelos profissionais Portugueses. O mesmo se aplica, aliás, à dimensão distância hierárquica, onde os valores da distância ao poder estão mais

destacados nos websites Portugueses. Na dimensão masculinidade, os websites Portugueses e Holandeses claramente exibem os valores femininos, como jogos e concursos e os papéis atribuídos a ambos os géneros.

Os websites Portugueses e Holandeses mostram um grau baixo e alto, respetivamente, na dimensão de elevado contexto, mas sem significância estatística em ambos os casos. O contrário (valores altos e baixos, respetivamente) acontece na dimensão baixo contexto, onde quer os websites Portugueses quer os Holandeses estão adaptados de acordo com as hipóteses formuladas no estudo.

Palavras chave: Websites Empresariais, Adaptação Cultural, Dimensões de Hofstede e Hall; Análise de Conteúdo, Empresas Portuguesas e Holandesas.

Abstract

The rise of the internet as a globally accessible communication medium presents new challenges for multinational companies given that they may need to adjust their websites to cultural differences. In this respect, cultural adaptation has become a vital strategy for companies that desire to succeed beyond borders.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the cultural adaptation of websites to different cultures. To do this we used Hofstede's and Hall's values dimensions framework to analyze the extent of cultural adaptation of Portuguese and Dutch websites from Fortune 500 multinational companies. Using the methodology of content analyses to the analyses of twenty websites of multinationals companies and confronting the observed categories with the previously formulated hypothesis it was possible to attain the following results.

There are significant differences in the depiction of cultural values between Portuguese and Dutch websites of multinational companies. On the dimension individualism – collectivism Portuguese and Dutch websites scores high on individualism, specifically in the Dutch case in the categories community relations, clubs or chat rooms, newsletters, loyalty programs and links to local websites, and in the case of Portugal family themes.

The uncertainty-avoidance and power distance dimensions hypothesis are not confirmed when considered globally. However, this test does not means that variables such as customer service or local terminology were not important for Dutch marketers, or guided navigation and local stores for Portuguese marketers. The same applies for the power distance dimension, where in Portugal the power distance values are more detached in Portuguese websites. For the masculinity dimension, Portuguese and Dutch websites prominently exhibited feminine values, such as quizzes and games and clear gender roles. The Portuguese and Dutch websites scored low and high, respectively, on high-context dimension, but with no statistical significance. The contrary (high and low values,

respectively) happens in the low-context dimension, with both Portuguese and Dutch websites performing according to the formulated hypothesis.

Key words: : Corporate Websites, Cultural Adaptation, Hofstede and Hall dimensions; Content analysis, Portuguese and Dutch Companies.

To my dear and loving husband, Behdad

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Chapter I: Introduction

1 Introduction

The World Wide Web is evolving to be the new frontier in international business, as it provides unprecedented advantages to companies attempting to tap the global market. In the past, size and the financial strength of a company were critical competitive advantages in reaching global consumers. Today, the Web allows companies of all sizes instant global reach and the immediate ability to interact with customers all over the world. This is possible because the Internet provides unique efficiencies for companies attempting to conduct international business: it reduces advertising and communication costs in serving global market segments, allows for direct and easy access to customers and customer feedback, and reduces the need for intermediaries. However, these advantages often come with a price: a likely flood of competitors, all exploiting the same advantages, focusing on the same target markets. For customers, this means the availability of a wide choice of alternatives and unprecedented access to product information, enabling better-informed purchase decisions. For companies, this means pressure on prices and profit margins. More specifically, companies are likely to find revenue and profit growth challenging because low entry barriers on the Internet encourage the proliferation of competitors, adversely impacting customer-drawing power, and pricing power as well as repeat buying, and customer loyalty. This is true regardless of whether the website is a stand-alone entity or the online presence of an existing brand. In either case, unless a concerted effort is made to build a website to stop these market forces and foster customer trust and loyalty, the site will be doomed to mediocrity at best or failure at worst.

Recent years have seen increased interest in the influence of culture on consumer behavior as well as increased research. In this thesis, we review studies of the influence of culture that are relevant to international marketing. We discuss the various areas of research following the components of human behavior as structured in the Theory of Planned

Behavior (TPB). In this framework we structure the cultural components of the person in terms of consumer attributes and processes, and the cultural components of behavior in terms of consumer behavior domains. Much research on cross-cultural consumer behavior has used the Hofstede dimensional model of national culture (Hofstede, 1984). Although the country scores originally were produced in the early 1970s, many replications of Hofstede's study on different samples have proved that the country ranking in his data is still valid.

1.1 Research Goals

The number of internet users grows every day and global e-Commerce sales reached \$1.4 trillion in 2014¹. US will account for less than 33% of total global online sales, while global internet population is more than 3 billion users². On the other hand, the number of non-English users is increasing every day and till now 73% of global internet users are non-English speakers³.

In this work, we target the global online consumers that speaks in their languages and have a different cultures rather than US. Cultural customization is not only about translation, it is about Perception, Symbolism, Behavior and the biggest problem is to ignore the importance of culture in communications.

The aim of this study is to investigate the preference of local consumers to use culturally adapted websites or standard websites. We selected corporate websites from Portugal and Netherlands for this research. The selection of these two countries is based on the fact that they belong to the same region (Western Europe) but are associated with different cultures and languages.

¹ <http://www.retailcustomerexperience.com/news/worldwide-e-commerce-sales-to-increase-nearly-20-percent-in-2014/>

² <http://www.internetworldstats.com>

³ <http://ec.europa.eu>

Regarding the main goal of this research, we will investigate the degree of cultural adaptation of multinationals websites ranked on Fortune 500 that have digital presence in Portugal and Netherlands.

1.2 Organizational overview

This thesis is organized in the following manner. Chapter 2 presents the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) in detail and chapter 3 reviews the literature on Hofstede's and Hall's models and developed the hypothesis to be tested. The research context is described on chapter 4. The methodology used in the website content analysis is explained in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6, websites of selected companies are evaluated and the results of the empirical research are discussed. Finally, in Chapter 7, we conclude this thesis by providing a summary and indicating future research lines. The outline of this research is presented in Figure 1.

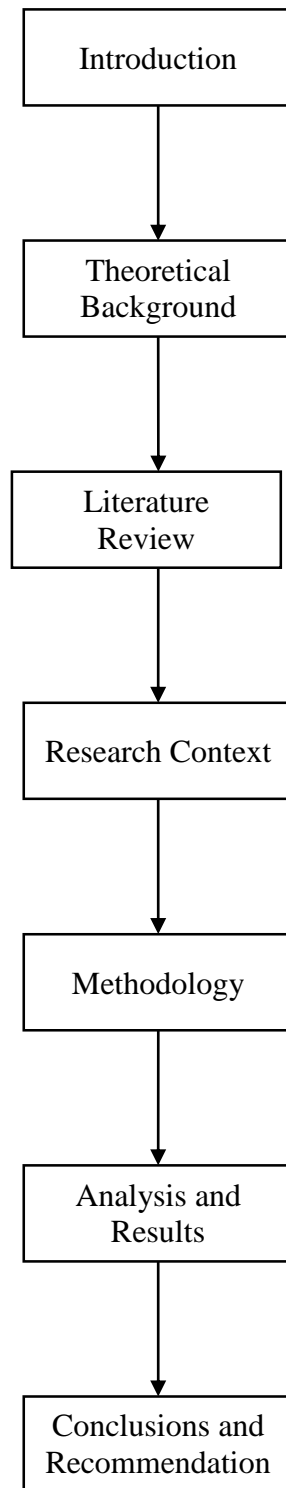


Figure 1-1: Structure of the thesis

Chapter II: Theoretical Background

2 Theoretical Background

To understand the importance to the consumers of cultural adapted websites, we must rely on the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991).

2.1 Theory of Planned Behavior

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extension of the theory of reasoned action (TRA), made necessary by the latter model's inability to deal with behaviors over which individuals have incomplete volitional control. According to TPB, an individual's performance of a certain behavior is determined by his or her intent to perform that behavior as shown in Figure 2-1.

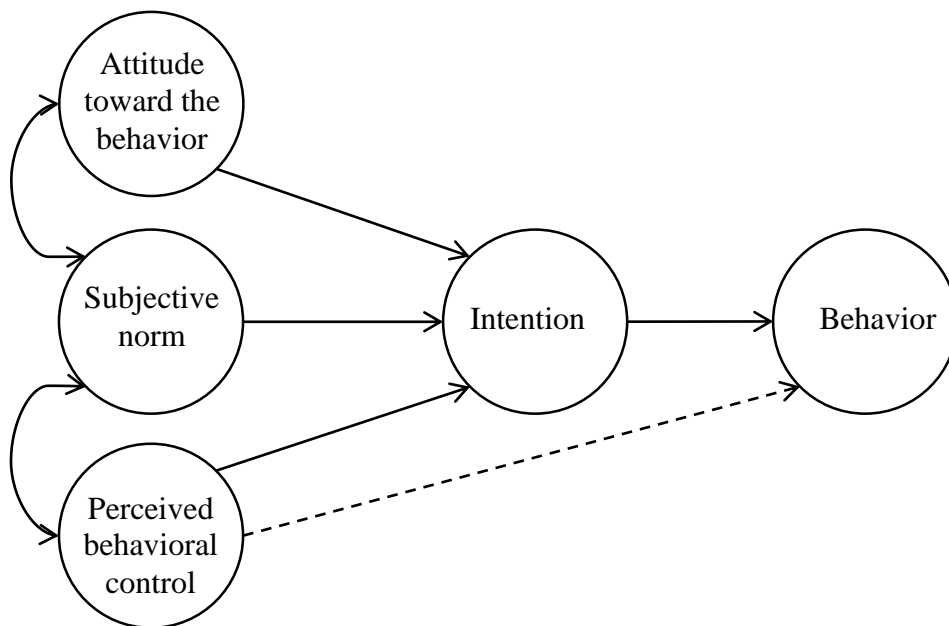


Figure 2-1: Theory of planned behavior

For TPB, attitude towards the target behavior, subjective norms about engaging in the behavior, and perceived behavior control are thought to influence intention and internet purchasing behavior. An attitude toward a behavior is a positive or negative evaluation of performing that behavior. As a general theory, TPB does not specify the particular beliefs

that are associated with any particular behavior, so determining those beliefs is left to the researcher's preference. TPB provides a robust theoretical basis for testing such a premise, along with a framework for testing whether attitudes are indeed related to intent to engage in a particular behavior, which itself should be related to the actual behavior. Based on the theory, beliefs about how important referent others feel about internet purchasing the views of important others, should also influence intent to make internet purchases. Finally, perceived behavioral control is informed by beliefs about the individual's possession of the opportunities and resources needed to engage in the behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

2.2 Analysis of the variables of the model

The theory of planned behavior explains how subjective norms, attitudes, and perceived behavioral control influence behavioral perceptions and subsequent actual behavior. In this model beliefs are seen as an antecedent to attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control. Similar to (Singh, 2006), we defined four hypotheses as followings:

2.2.1 Attitude

Attitudes are informed by beliefs needed to engage in the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). It is define as individual's positive or negative feeling associated with performing a specific behavior. An individual will hold a favorable attitude toward a given behavior if he/she believes that the performance of the behavior will lead to mostly positive outcomes.

Studies have shown that culture determines attitudinal preferences and that the attitude behavior link is driven by the cultural assumptions of a society. It has also been shown that the power distance structure in a society affects people's attitudes toward service encounters. Thus, people's attitudes are guided by the cultural values of a society. These cultural values serve as a directive force, or a standard according to which people formed

their opinions and attitudes toward products or services. Therefore, websites that are adapted to local cultural values of a society will be viewed more favorably, and consumers will have better attitudes toward these sites.

2.2.2 Subjective norm

Subjective norm is the perceived social pressure to engage or not to engage in a behavior. It is assumed that subjective norm is determined by the total set of accessible normative belief concerning the expectations of important referents (Ajzen, 1991). It refers to beliefs and expectations shared by a society and the willingness of an individual to comply with them. These shared beliefs and expectations represent the salient values of a society. When these values transcend specific actions and situations and are used to distinguish between cultures, they are referred to as cultural values. Thus, the subjective norms and beliefs that people have are structured and influenced by the salient cultural values of a society, and it can be proposed that websites depicting local values and norms will be seen as more culturally congruent than websites not depicting the local values and norms.

2.2.3 Perceived behavioral control

Perceived behavioral control refers to people's perceptions of their ability to perform a given behavior. Perceived behavioral control is the perceived confidence in one's ability to perform a task or a behavior (Ajzen, 1985). This perceived behavioral control is moderated by the facilitating conditions that provide the resources to engage in a behavior. There is a significant amount of research showing that cultures high on uncertainty avoidance exhibit slow rates of technology (Internet) adoption, as they rely on interpersonal information sources to guide their behavior and subsequently feel more perceived behavioral control (Mooij, 1998). Culturally congruent web content decreases the cognitive effort to process information and navigate the site. It represents an environment where demands are clearer, leading to higher perceived control over the

navigation experience. A website that is easy to navigate and presents information in a socially consistent manner, will enhance the ease of use online, leading to higher perceived control over online interactions.

2.2.4 Behavioral intention

Marketing efforts are successful when they are able to generate a desired behavioral outcome, but how people behave and what motivates them to act in a particular manner is largely determined by their cultural value orientation (Mooij, 2010). Culture not only determines how we apprehend and assimilate the surrounding information, but also guides our behavior and actions. Culture not only affects the attitudes and structures of the subjective norms, but also serves as a motivational force guiding our product choices and purchase decisions. Therefore, it can be proposed that culturally congruent web content will activate culturally shared schemas or knowledge leading to favorable behavioral intention toward a website.

Chapter III: Literature Review

3 Literature review

In this chapter, the literature review is organized in two different sections: the first section introduces the Hofstede's framework and the second provides the empirical evidence about the cultural adaptation of websites.

3.1 The Hofstede's Framework

3.1.1 Individualism-Collectivism

The individualism-collectivism value is one of the important values in the Cultural Values Framework which is the behavioral component of culture. The associated cultural values is unique for each country, so for cultural localization it is necessary to include the suitable values. It should be considered that perception and symbolism are the most critical components for cultural customizing the websites as mentioned by Singh, Zhao, and Hu (2003) and Singh and Matsuo (2004). By emphasizing these features in a website, the site will be more localized to the cultural values of individualism or collectivism.

The individualism-collectivism is a bipolar value which is investigated in different cross-cultural studies (Gudykunst 1998; Hofstede 1980, 1991, Triandis 1982). The focus of this cultural dimension is on relationship of an individual with society or other individuals. In individualist communities the personal freedom is highly valued and the decisions will be made individually without interfering from others. The personal successes are highly encouraged; therefore, in individualist cultures people value self-reliance, achievement, independence, and freedom (Gudykunst 1998; Hofstede 1980).

United States, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Italy are highly individualistic countries include the. The study by Hofstede's on these countries are validated by research that show advertising in these cultures emphasizes the individual theme in the form of independence, competition, and non-conformity (Albers-

Miller and Gelb 1996; Cho et al. 1999; Cheng and Schweitzer 1996; Zandpour et al. 1994). Guatemala, Ecuador, Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and China are highly collectivism countries, where individuals are connected with strong societal bonds, groups, and this is important make a group decision.

Studies shows that in collectivist societies, people are willing to sacrifice for a greater value of the social unit or the society (Yau 1988). On the other hand, the collectivist societies are putting a lot of emphasize on in-group obligations, extending family structures (Cho et al. 1999; Han and Shavitt 1994; Gudykunst 1998). Researches indicated that in these countries the advertisement should put a lot of efforts on group-consensus appeals, family security, and family ties (Han and Shavitt 1994; Lin 2001).

3.1.2 Uncertainty avoidance

The uncertainty avoidance features have been highly investigated and validated (Singh and Baack 2004; Singh and Matsuo 2004; Singh, Zhao, and Hu 2003). A country with a higher score of uncertainty avoidance has more related and important features in the websites. Otherwise, for a country with low end of uncertainty avoidance, the website properties are not priorities. By emphasizing the related features in a website, the site will be more accurately customized to the cultural value of uncertainty avoidance. It worth mentioning that these features also can be present in sites without any intention for localization. On the other hand, the only presence of these features in website is not enough, the degree of emphasizing is more important factor.

Hofstede proposed that the uncertainty avoidance dimension measures the amount of uncertainty and ambiguity that cultures can tolerate.

While uncertainty is an integral part of our lives, individuals differ in their attitudes and their responses to it. In the cultures where have high uncertainty avoidance are mostly

less risk takers, and they avoid unclear states, and they see the conflict and competition as threats, and value security too much and they avoid adventure and risk (Hofstede 1980). On the other hand, cultures that has low score on uncertainty avoidance have a greater acceptance of unclear and risky situations.

It is necessary to provide clear rules, structure, directions, and codes of conduct for individuals in high uncertainty avoidance cultures. In countries such as, Germany with high score on uncertainty avoidance, people like to structure their lives around a set of rules (Mooij 2003).

People uses electronic media less in high uncertainty avoidance cultures since these type of media is not desirable for them and this reduces the uncertainty (Straub et al. 1997). In the study by Lynch, Kent, and Srinivasan (2001) study on global Internet use, they indicate that Asian consumers feel less secure when they are shopping online.

The reason lay on the fact that in the most major Asian countries such as Japan and Taiwan, the uncertainty avoidance score is very high. Internet is one of the new and technological medium with a reasonable amount of uncertainty and for this reason people from high uncertainty avoidance cultures need more insurance and uncertainty reduction features to encourage them use online transactions.

3.1.3 Power distance

Singh, Zhao, and Hu (2003) and Singh and Matsuo (2004) provided a list of features. In the countries with higher score of power distance, website features are more relevant and important. Otherwise, in the countries with low end of power distance, these website properties are not priorities. By emphasizing related features in a website, the site will be more accurately customized to the cultural value of power distance. It must be noted that these features also can be presented in websites without any intention on customization.

The acceptance of social hierarchy, social inequalities, and authority in the social system is measured by power distance dimension (Hofstede 1980). The countries with higher power distance score, have a more hierarchical social structure, emphasize status and referent power, and value authority and legitimacy.

Furthermore, countries with lower power distance scores have the intention to be more egalitarian, accept less social hierarchy, and value equal rights for all. In the societies with high power distance, people tend to be very sensitive with regard to respect and obedience to the elderly and authority figures. In China for example, people are highly influenced by opinion of leaders and authority figures for their purchase decisions (Ji and McNeal, 2001). In Japan, advertisements use extensively status request (Mueller, 1987). Also in high power distance societies, such as Japan and India, the greeting, interactions, and addressing a person is determined based on the person's social status (Mooij 2003).

Individuals in the societies with high score of power distance show deference to power by refraining from using media that do not allow them face-to-face contact (Straub et al. 1997). So these reasons, to effectively target consumers in high power distance societies, companies it is necessary to find methods to inform customers about the status of the people or company, the conditions related to the product or services, and the admiration of the company is in the target country.

3.1.4 Masculinity-Femininity

In the study by Hofstede (1980), the masculinity-femininity dimension is explained by the gender roles in different societies and also the importance of values based on achievement, assertiveness, mastery, harmony, and caring. Societies with high score on masculinity have more intention on assertiveness, ambition, success, and performance. In such cultures, big and fast are admired, the masochism ideal is acceptable, and clear

gender roles are the norm. Masculinity is commonly expressed in the form of success-orientation, admiration for strength, and clear gender role differentiation.

On the other hand, cultures with high score on femininity have more intention on beauty, nature, nurturance, and blurred gender roles. In these countries, harmony, service-orientation, consensus, and modesty is very important. Japan, Austria, Mexico, Germany, India, Australia, United Kingdom, and the United States have higher score in masculinity dimension, while most of the Nordic countries, Denmark, and the Netherlands have high score on femininity.

Masculine cultures are direct, decisive with intention on mastery over nature (Hofstede 1980); otherwise feminine cultures, they are less inclined toward fantasy, imagery, and oneness with nature. The intention in high score of masculinity is to clearly communicate distinct gender roles for men and women and to show men more in positions of control or power and women in secondary roles. In additions, marketers in masculine countries tend to portray a masculine image for products targeted to men (Singh and Matsuo 2004; Singh, Zhao, and Hu 2003).

3.1.5 High-Low Context

Individuals act and communicate within a context where the context is provided by the tools attached to words, symbols, values, acts, and other elements of the contextual environment. In the study by Hall (1976), all the act or communication is done through the medium of culture. The context is provided by the culture, which has deep meaning, values, symbols, and nonverbal elements that are difficult to understand and found out for a person with a different culture. The research by Hall (1976) investigated the context dimension to facilitate the understanding people in different cultures communicate in their daily lives. It is necessary to find the context level in order to communicate effectively across cultures. In the societies with high score of context, the connections between group

members are very close. For these reasons, in these societies, most of the information is fundamentally known, and there is a small fraction of information which is explicit, or spread as part of the message. High context cultures usually use more symbols and nonverbal cues to communicate and most of the meanings are embedded in the situational context and emphasis is more on symbols and clues in the environment (Singh, Zhao, and Hu 2003).

According to Cho et al. (1999), high context cultures advertisement should put a lot of intention on harmony, beauty, and oneness with nature (Cho et al. 1999). Advertisements in high context cultures are characterized by indirect verbal expressions and are implicit, indirect, polite, modest, and even ambiguous (Mooij 1998; Mueller 1987).

Low context cultures are societies that are logical, linear, and action- oriented, and the mass of the information is explicit and formalized. These cultures takes place in a rational, verbal, and explicit way to convey concrete meanings through rationality and language. In these cultures, people use exact words to transfer meanings, and the message is often received literally, with less reliance on nonverbal clues. For these reason, the use of direct, explicit, and confrontational appeals in the form of advertising and promotions, as well as aggressive selling, is common in such cultures (Cutler and Javalgi 1992). In the study by Mueller (1987), it has been shown that low context cultures such as the United States make explicit mention of competitor products and emphasize a hard-sell orientation. Low context cultures has intention on clear communication and rely less on the unspoken context (Singh and Matsuo 2004).

3.2 Cross-cultural analysis of websites

A framework to measure cultural values embedded in corporate websites has been developed by Nitish and Mastsuo (2004) to analyze the content of U.S. and Japanese company websites. The results provide evidence that country-specific websites reflect national cultural values. Another study (Nitish and Baack, 2004) showed how cultural values are reflected in American and Mexican websites indicating that there are significant differences in the depiction of local cultural values on the web.

In 2005, Nitish et al. obtained results indicating that local websites of India, China, Japan and US not only reflect cultural values of the country of origin, but also seem to differ significantly from each other on cultural dimensions. Later, Nitish et al. (2006) based on the theory of planned behavior, analyzed whether local consumers prefer culturally adapted websites or standardized websites. This study provides empirical evidence by showing that consumers from Germany, China, and India prefer websites adapted to their local culture, and that culture influences consumer beliefs, attitudes, and purchase intention on the web.

Another author (Cyr, 2004) explores the issues associated with user interface design and experience, including culturally preferred design elements. The study based on Germany, Japan, and the United States (30 municipal sites in each country) sites indicated that design elements, such as symbols and graphics, color preferences, site features (links, maps, search functions, and page layout), language, and content, present significant differences in each of the categories.

Karacay-Aydin et al. (2009) investigate the level of differentiation of web communication on cultural grounds. For this purpose, US based Fortune 500 companies' websites and their Turkish counterparts were culturally examined. Through a content analysis of 88 selected websites and using the Hofstede's and Hall's cultural dimensions framework,

Karacay-Aydin et al. (2009) found significant differences in the depiction of cultural values on the websites examined. The results of this study provide implications for global companies in their attempts to culturally adapt their websites to local markets, in particular to Turkey.

The study by Jones (2012) focused on the information that can be found online encouraging support and donations to Dutch and American museums. Four English language websites, two American and two Dutch, are analyzed and compared to identify possible issues that potential American donors might have when visiting Dutch museum sites. The expert-evaluation technique and heuristics are used to locate potential problems in content presentation, audience awareness, tone, style and credibility. In an effort to model the effects of culture on web design, Hofstede's cultural dimensions are used as the theoretical basis for comparing the content presented. It was found that the information on the Dutch web pages concerning online fundraising could be improved significantly by including various features that would appeal more to an American audience.

Yalcin et al. (2011) explore how the perennial debate on standardization and localization is being shaped on the Web. More specifically, the study explores the depiction of cultural values on the web. In an attempt to broaden the empirical evidence from different cultural settings (Russia and Turkey) and to provide a regional perspective, they examined through both qualitative and quantitative analyses the international (Russian and Turkish) websites. The results provided support for depiction of local cultural values; however, the multinationals utilize a multi-focus in their web communication strategies that include cultural (domestic and foreign) and marketing strategy elements.

3.3 Hypotheses

In this section we make hypotheses based on Hofstede's study. The following table shows the scores reported by Hofstede (2001).

Table 3-1: Country scores on Hofstede's cultural values.

Country	Individualism-collectivism	Uncertainty avoidance	Power distance	Masculinity-femininity
Portugal	27	104	63	31
Netherlands	80	53	38	14

3.3.1 Individualism-Collectivism Hypothesis

Individualism-collectivism is the degree to which individuals in a particular country tend to act on their own or as group members; in other words, it is the degree to which a person seeks his own interests, and individual expression is referred to as individualism. People in individualistic societies are independent and care about only themselves whereas people in collectivistic cultures care about the group and society to which they belong and therefore they retain close relationships with others, and accept this as a social fact (Hofstede, 1980, 2001).

Based on Hofsted's findings, Portugal (27) score low and Netherlands (80) score very high on individualism. Based on these scores, we hypothesize that:

*H1: The Dutch websites of multinationals will depict **higher** levels of the Individualism-oriented values than Portuguese websites*

3.3.2 Uncertainty Avoidance Hypothesis

This is the extent to which individuals accept uncertainty of future events, rules, measures, or guidelines to lessen the nervousness or danger of uncertainty. Cultures high on uncertainty avoidance will formulate firm rules to reduce the uncertainty whereas

cultures low in uncertainty avoidance will assume less controlled way of life (Hofstede, 1980, 2001).

Based on Hofstede's findings, Portugal (104) scores very high, while Netherlands (53) scores medium on uncertainty avoidance. Therefore we hypothesize that:

*H2: The Portuguese websites of multinationals will depict **higher** levels of the uncertainty avoidance-oriented values than Dutch websites*

3.3.3 Power Distance Hypothesis

Power distance refers to the extent to which members of a particular society accept unequal power distributions. This dimension is related to a society's willingness to accept differences in power over other members of the society. Societies high on power distance are likely to accept differences in the distribution of power among members of the society whereas societies low on power distance will welcome equal distribution of power [Hofstede, 1980, 2001].

Based on Hofstede's findings, Portugal scores high (63) on power distance whereas Netherlands scores low (38). Therefore we hypothesize that:

*H3: The Portuguese websites of multinationals will depict **higher** levels of the power distance-oriented values than Dutch websites*

3.3.4 Masculinity-Femininity Dimension Hypothesis

The masculinity-femininity dimension is related to the degree to which individuals compete, value achievement, and resolve conflicts. Masculine societies stress on assertiveness and achievement while feminine cultures accentuate harmony and caring (Hofstede, 1980, 2001). Hofstede's masculinity/femininity dimension functions as a guide to envisage gender roles cross-culturally. Masculine societies are more likely to accept women and men role separation, which will lead to greater gender role differences.

Based on Hofstede's work, both Portugal (31) and Netherlands (14) score low on masculinity. Therefore we hypothesize that:

*H4: The Portuguese and Dutch websites of multinationals will depict **lower** levels of the masculinity-oriented values*

3.3.5 High and Low-Context Hypothesis

Hall's (1976) cultural framework consists of a bi-polar construct of high-context and low-context cultures. In high-context cultures, less information is included in the verbal part of communication; instead, much information is implicit and derived from the context of the communication. Language and communication are hidden and indirect. In low-context cultures, communication and message are direct and explicit. Much of the ideas to be communicated are worded.

Based on Hall's study, Portugal is high-context culture and Netherlands is low-context society. For this reason, we hypothesize that:

*H5: The Portuguese websites of multinationals will depict **lower** levels of the low-context-oriented values than Dutch websites*

*H6: The Portuguese websites of multinationals will depict **higher** levels of the high-context-oriented values than Dutch websites*

Chapter IV: Research Context

4 Research Context

4.1 Some data about e-commerce in the world

Business-to-consumer e-commerce sales worldwide will reach \$1.47 trillion in 2014, according to new figures from eMarketer¹, increasing nearly 20 percent over 2013. As Internet use continues to mature across the world, e-commerce growth will slow over time, settling around 10 percent by the end of the forecast period. However, with sales reaching \$2.356 trillion in 2018, a 10 percent growth rate would still represent more than \$200 billion new dollars that year.

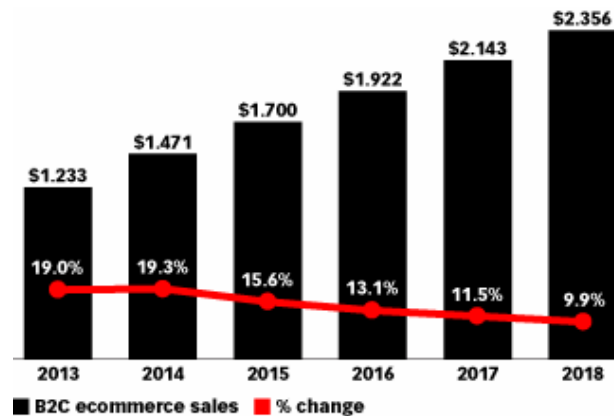


Figure 4-1: B2C Ecommerce sales worldwide, 2013-2018².

eMarketer's definition for B2C e-commerce sales includes products and services such as leisure and unmanaged business travel, ordered or booked via the Internet on any device. On a regional basis, North America, which includes only the U.S. and Canada, will remain the leader in B2C e-commerce market share in 2014, accounting for one-third of the dollars spent on digital purchases worldwide. Previously, eMarketer had forecast that Asia-Pacific would surpass North America this year, but full year data from 2013 as well as Q1 2014 data showed China's B2C e-commerce growth slowing sooner than expected.

¹ <http://www.emarketer.com/>

² <http://www.emarketer.com/Article/Worldwide-Ecommerce-Sales-Increase-Nearly-20-2014/1011039>

According to the new forecast, Asia-Pacific is now expected to become the leading region for e-commerce sales in 2015, representing a 33.4 percent share next year, compared to 31.7 percent in North America and 24.6 percent Western Europe. These three regions will continue to take more than 90 percent of the global e-commerce market throughout the forecast period.

Table 4-1: B2C Ecommerce sales share worldwide by region 2013-2018.

% of total	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
North America	34.9%	32.9%	31.7%	31.1%	30.7%	30.6%
Asia-Pacific	28.3%	31.2%	33.4%	35.1%	36.4%	37.4%
Western Europe	26.4%	25.4%	24.6%	23.9%	23.3%	22.7%
Latin America	4.2%	4.3%	4.2%	4.1%	3.9%	3.7%
Central & Eastern Europe	4.1%	4.0%	3.8%	3.5%	3.3%	3.2%
Middle East & Africa	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%	2.4%	2.4%	2.5%

The increase of e-commerce sales in the Asia-Pacific region is tied to a growing base of digital buyers, and as more new buyers come online, naturally sales will rise. However, by the end of the forecast period, nearly 70 percent of Internet users will be purchasing items on digital devices in Western Europe and North America vs. just more than 50 percent in Asia-Pacific.

Table 4-2: Digital buyer penetration worldwide by region 2013-2018.

% of internet users	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Western Europe	64.0%	65.2%	66.3%	67.3%	68.2%	69.0%
North America	63.2%	64.4%	65.5%	66.7%	67.8%	68.8%
Asia-Pacific	42.1%	44.1%	46.8%	48.9%	50.4%	50.9%
Central & Eastern Europe	41.6%	43.4%	44.3%	44.4%	44.6%	44.6%
Middle East & Africa	31.3%	33.1%	34.0%	35.0%	36.0%	37.0%
Latin America	28.2%	29.9%	30.9%	31.8%	32.7%	33.7%
Worldwide	41.3%	42.7%	44.3%	45.4%	46.4%	47.3%

Buyer penetration in Asia-Pacific translates to the largest number of consumers, but the region is far more fragmented than North America and Western Europe. In the latter two regions, e-commerce continues to grow at double digit rates, and will do so for several more years. In these mature markets, this points to the fact that individual buyers are making purchases more frequently and with higher order values. In addition, consumer behaviors are relatively consistent across countries in both regions.

Conversely, disparate consumer behaviors across Asia-Pacific countries make the region more difficult to compare as a single unit. First and foremost, China alone will make up more than half of all the region's B2C e-commerce sales this year, and by 2018, its share will be approximately 70 percent. Further, while Australia and Japan rival markets such as the U.S., U.K. and Western Europe in buyer penetration, the two differ greatly in terms of total buyers and commercial infrastructure. In markets such as India and Indonesia, there are large absolute numbers of digital buyers, but many are new to the market. Instead of buying high ticket items, new digital buyers tend to wet their feet with less costly purchases, due to product availability or income constraints.

4.2 E-commerce in Europe: a general overview

As we can see in the following figures, a large share of ecommerce belongs to Western Europe (25.40%). For this matter we selected 2 countries from Western Europe with significant difference and growth in ecommerce and then a comparison between the local adaptations of websites in these two case studies is done.

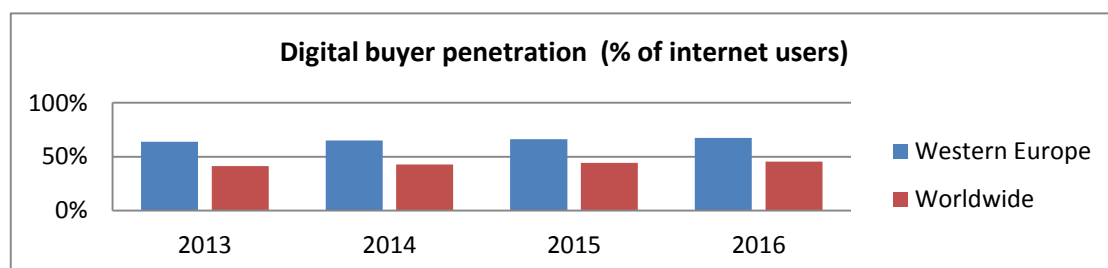


Figure 4-2: Comparison of digital buyer penetration in Western Europe and Worldwide.

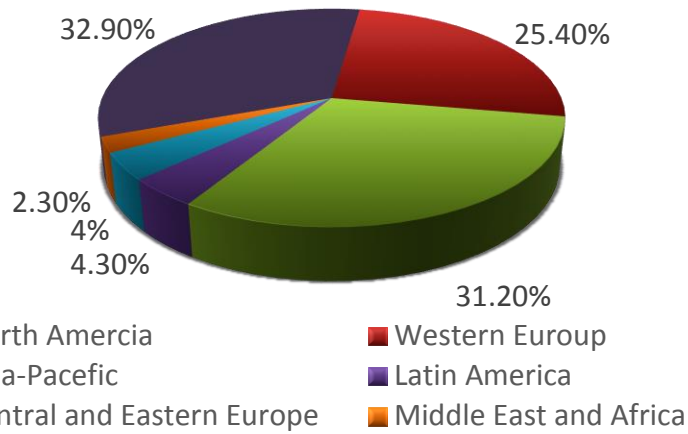


Figure 4-3: Ecommerce sales share worldwide by region, 2014.

As it is shown in the following figure, there is a huge difference between the percentage of online shopping in Portugal and Netherland. The percentage of online shopping in Portugal is less than 20% while for Netherlands it is around 70%. For this reason it is worth to investigate whether the website localization is the factor for this difference or not. In the following, we will compare some of statistical information about Portugal and Netherlands.

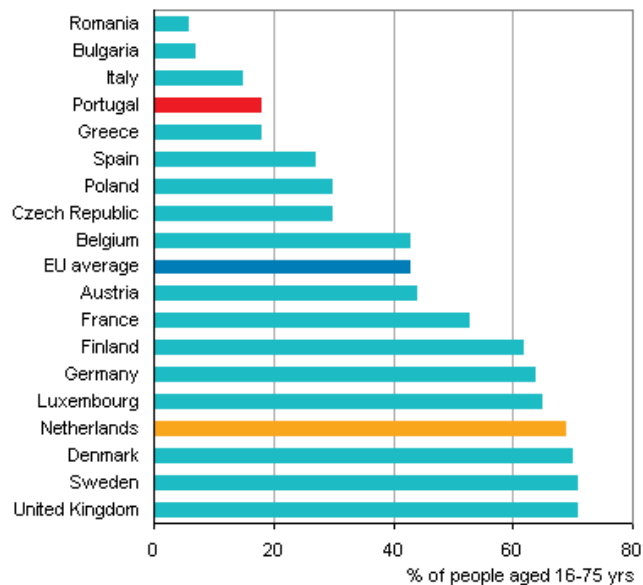


Figure 4-4: Online shopping in EU countries¹.

¹ <http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/dossiers/eu/publicaties/archief/2012/2012-3625-wm.htm>

Table 4-3: comparison between Portugal and Netherlands¹.

COUNTRY	PORTUGAL	THE NETHERLANDS
Population	10.8 million people	16.8 million people
- % internet users	64.9%	95.7%
Online sales	€2.6 billion (2013)	€10.6 billion (2013)
Online stores worth mentioning:	Worten, Wook, Continente	Bol.com, Wehkamp, Coolblue

Portugal is a Southern European country, with Spain as its only direct neighbor. It is considered a developed country and has an advanced economy and high living standards. Portugal's economy was growing harder than the EU average in the 1990s, but later on its growth rate slowed. In May 2011, Portugal became the third Eurozone country to be bailed out of a sovereign debt crisis. It's estimated that more than 10.8 million people live in Portugal, of which 42.4% is between 25 and 54 years old. According to data from 2014 about 7 million Portuguese inhabitants (68%) have access to the internet.

The Netherlands is a small country, but it always tries to play a significant role, whether it be economically, political or in sports. The Netherlands participated in the introduction of the euro and was also a founding member of NATO and what's now called the European Union. It's also famous for its highly open economy which is leaning strongly towards international trade.

4.3 The Portuguese case

Portugal is a country with a lot of e-cheque payments. Payshop is a Portuguese payment solution that allows consumers to pay online by visiting a Payshop agent (such as petrol stations or supermarket) equipped with an invoice of a reference. MBNet from MultiBanco is another often used payment solution. It allows making online transactions

¹ <http://www.internetworldstats.com/>

with a credit card without having to give away any credit card information to the online merchant.

One in ten Portuguese inhabitants between 16 to 74 years old had ordered something online in the three months preceding a survey from Statistics Portugal in 2011.

According to data from ecommerce solution Ekos Global, the ecommerce market in Portugal amounted 951 million euros in 2011. And although things in Portugal aren't going that well economically, the ecommerce industry saw its sales increase with 64% during the first quarter of 2013. One in ten Portuguese sites recorded a 100% growth in the number of customers, according to data from the Quarterly Barometer ACEPI / Netsonda.

When ranked by unique visitors per months, Zalando is the biggest B2C ecommerce site in Portugal, followed by Amazon, Euronics, IBS and BonPrix. Another very popular ecommerce site is Yoox.

This statistic shows the connected device usage rate in Portugal as of March 2014. During the survey period it was found that 44 percent of Portuguese consumers were smartphone users.

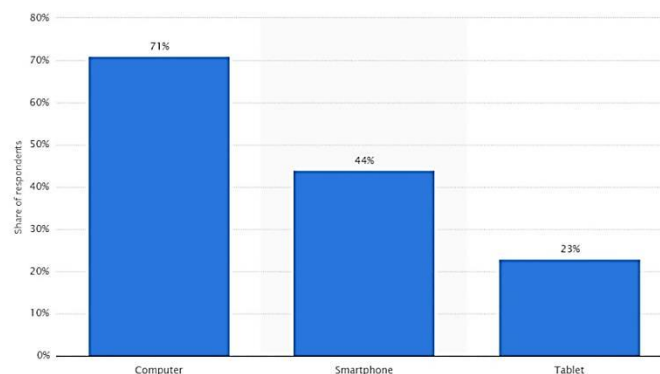


Figure 4-5: Connected device usage rate in Portugal in 2014, by device¹.

¹ <http://www.statista.com/statistics/347175/connected-device-usage-portugal/>

This statistic shows the most popular online shopping categories according to online consumers in Portugal as of March 2014. During the survey period it was found that 66 percent of respondents' last purchase of flight tickets had been online.

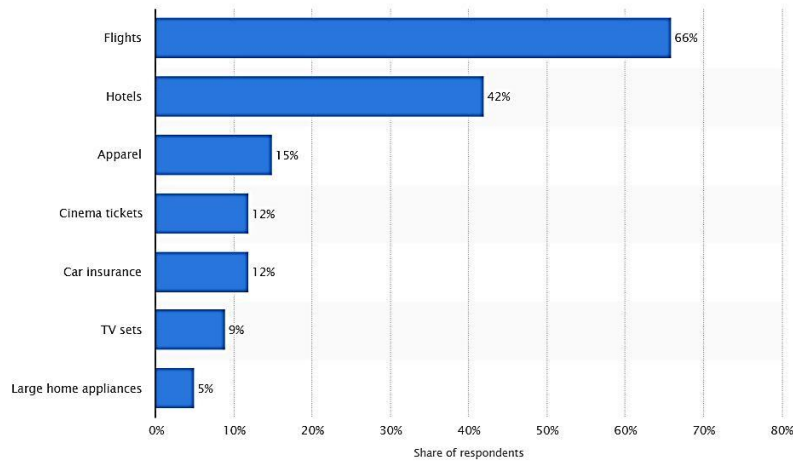


Figure 4-6: Most recently online purchased product categories in Portugal in 2014¹.

This statistic shows the most common internet research activities carried out prior to a purchase decision in Portugal as of March 2014. During the survey period it was found that 10 percent of internet users went online for early inspiration before making a purchase.

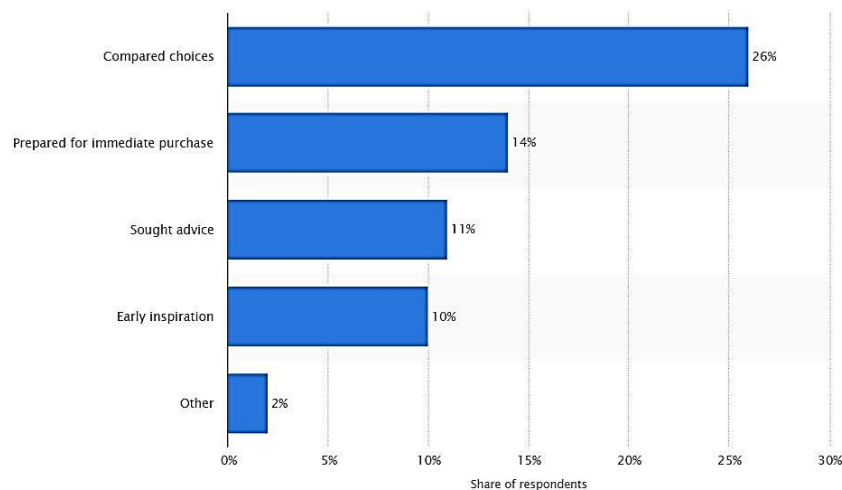


Figure 4-7: Online research activities performed prior to purchases in Portugal in 2014².

¹ <http://www.statista.com/statistics/348921/popular-online-purchases-categories-portugal/>

² <http://www.statista.com/statistics/360401/online-research-prior-to-purchase-portugal/>

4.4 The Dutch case

The number of people in the Netherlands buying goods and services online continues to increase. In 2013, 10.3 million people aged 12 to 74 years said they purchase goods or services online. Holidays and clothing are the most popular items.

In 2013, 83 percent of 12 to 74 year-old internet users reported they shopped online. This is the equivalent of 10.3 million people, 0.4 million more than in 2012. The share of frequent online shoppers rose from 57 to 60 percent, the share of those shopping online less frequently remained the same: 22 percent. These percentages are around equal for urban and rural areas.

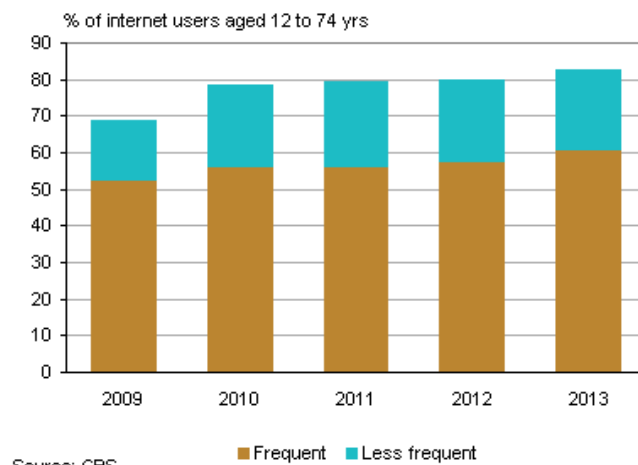


Figure 4-8: Online shopping in Netherlands¹.

Frequent shoppers mostly ordered clothing and booked holidays online in 2013. On average six out of ten internet shoppers purchased these items. There are differences between age groups: clothing is mainly popular among 12 to 24 year-olds (69 percent); only 32 percent of online shoppers older than 65 bought clothes online. Younger people on the other hand booked fewer holiday online than older age groups, but did buy more

¹ <http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/vrije-tijd-cultuur/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2014/2014-4076-wm.htm>

study items, games and electronics. For over-65s, e-books, and digital magazines and newspapers were the second most popular category of purchases.

Nearly 70 percent of frequent online shoppers bought only new goods via the internet in 2013. Just over a quarter bought both new and used products, and 4 percent purchased only used items. Four in ten shoppers spent between 100 and 500 euros on new items, the same share spent less than 100 euros. Although shoppers spend less on used products, one third spent at least 100 euros on this category. The following timeline shows the online retail sales figures in the Netherlands from 2012 to 2017, in million euros. Online retail sales in the Netherlands totaled 4.63 billion euros in 2012 and are expected to grow to 7.12 billion euros in 2017.

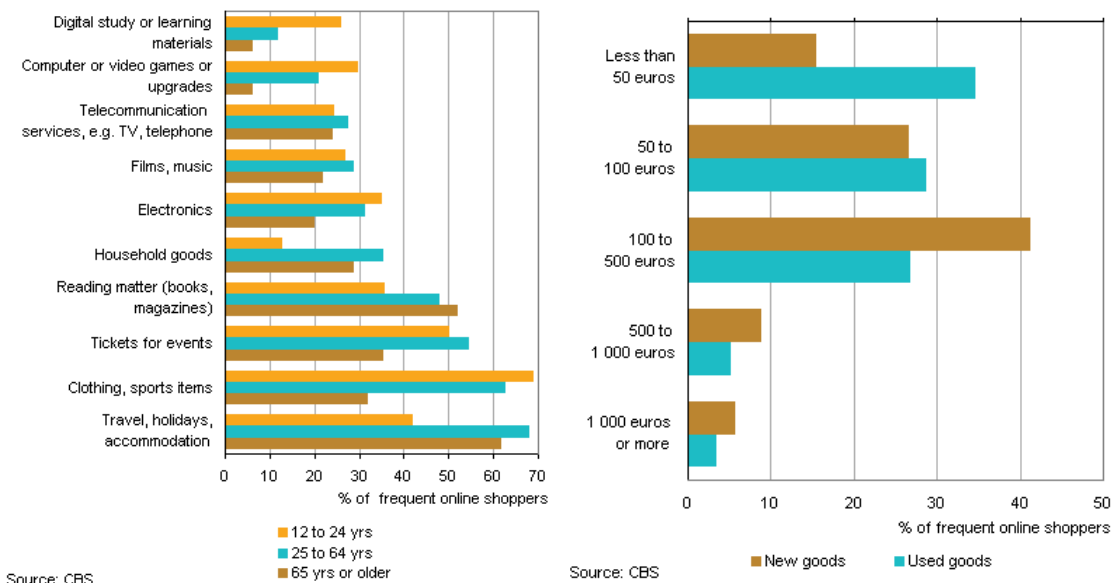


Figure 4-9: Online purchases by category and age group in Netherlands (2013) and spending on online purchases in Netherlands.

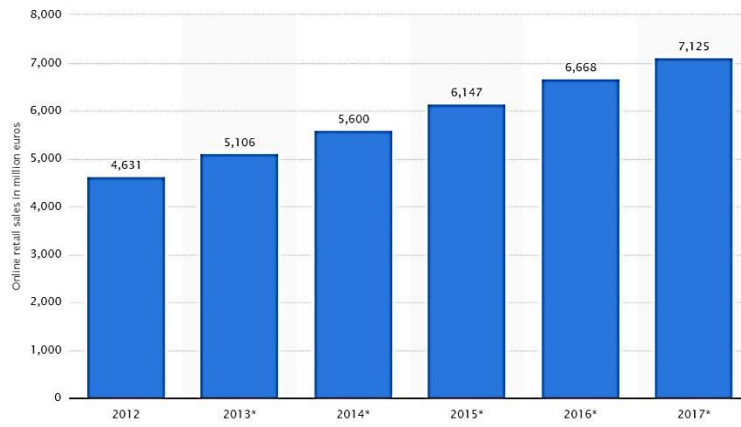


Figure 4-10: Forecast of online retail sales in the Netherlands 2012-2017¹ .

¹ <http://www.statista.com/statistics/260257/forecast-of-online-retail-sales-in-the-netherlands/>

Chapter V: Methodology

5 Methodology

5.1 Sample selection

In this study, we will use content analysis methodology to investigate cultural values depicted on Portuguese and Dutch websites. More specifically, the unit of analysis is the Portuguese and Dutch websites of selected US companies. These websites are analyzed for the presence or absence of the 31 predefined criteria. The degree of depiction of each cultural value category is evaluated on a five-point scale: one (not depicted), two (slightly depicted), three (depicted), four (nicely depicted), and five (prominently depicted).

For this investigation we will use the sample generated from the list of 500 Fortune largest multinational companies, ranked by revenues shattered all sorts of performance records in 2014¹. Of these 500 companies, the ones with a country specific website for Portugal and Netherlands will be selected. Finally, we will choose 20 Portuguese and Dutch websites randomly. The list of selected websites is shown in Table 5-1. In the Figure A-1 till Figure A-6 in Appendix A, we can see the screenshots of selected websites both for Netherlands and Portuguese homepages.

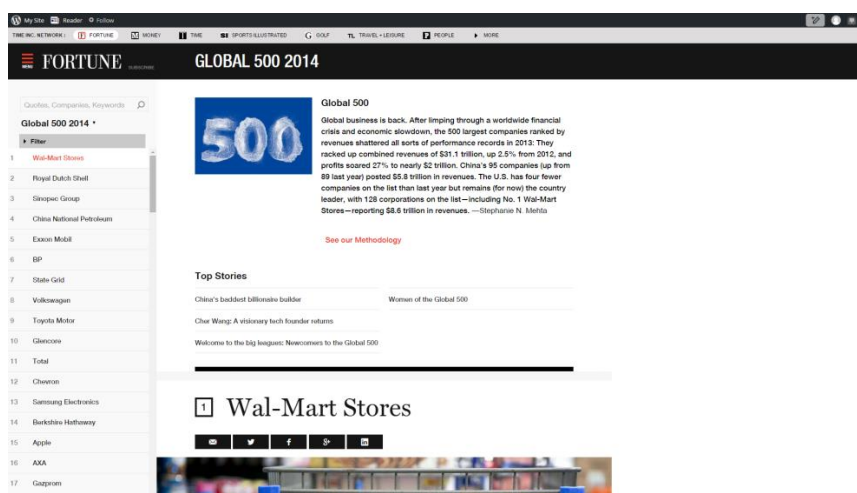


Figure 5-1: Screenshot from Fortune website.

¹ <http://fortune.com/global500/>

Table 5-1: List of selected companies for website content analysis.

Number	Name of company	Country		About
1	BP	NL	PT	Energy, oil
2	Total	NL	PT	Petrol
3	Samsung	NL	PT	Electronics
4	Apple	NL	PT	Electronics
5	General Electric	NL	PT	Electronics
6	Petrobras	NL	PT	Petrol
7	Allianz	NL	PT	Insurance
8	HP	NL	PT	Electronics
9	Siemens	NL	PT	Powerhouse and Electronics
10	NESTLE	NL	PT	Food
11	HITACHI	NL	PT	Health Care and power system company
12	Hyundai motor	NL	PT	Cars
13	Microsoft	NL	PT	Software
14	Sony	NL	PT	Electronics
15	Panasonic	NL	PT	Electronics
16	BNP Paribas	NL	PT	Bank
17	Coca-Cola	NL	PT	Beverage
18	ABB	NL	PT	power and automation technologies
19	Accenture	NL	PT	Business and technology
20	NEC	NL	PT	Sales of Communications systems

5.2 Websites content analysis

The content analysis of the selected websites follows various steps. First, the cultural content in the sampled websites was evaluated. Then, the degree of depiction of each of the 31 value items in the Cultural Value Framework was evaluated as “Not Depicted” to “Prominently Depicted” on a five-point type Likert scale for the two countries.

The degree of depiction for each cultural dimension is shown in the Table B-1 till Table B-5 in the Appendix B. The rates in these tables are obtained by observing and investigating each website carefully. The task has been done one time on the Dutch version and another time on Portuguese version.

One-way ANOVA and descriptive statistics were used to test the postulated hypotheses about country-wise differences in the depiction of cultural values.

5.3 ANOVA test

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to determine whether there are any significant differences between the means of two or more independent (unrelated) groups. Also, it is important to realize that the one-way ANOVA is an omnibus test statistic and cannot tell which specific groups were significantly different from each other; it only tells you that at least two groups were different.

For ANOVA analysis, we used the “ANOVA” package in Mathematica 10.0, as it is shown in Figure 5-2.

```

Needs["ANOVA`"];
d = 0;
results = ConstantArray[0, {8, 9}];
Do[
  d = d + 1;

  data =
  Transpose@Import["C:\\My thesis\\Web features and Cultural value-v4-13-06-2015-mathematica.xlsx",
    {"Data", 3, Range[1, i + 1], Range[4, 23]}];
  fttest = ANOVA[data];
  fddata = fttest[[1, 2]][[1, 1]];
  results[[d, All]] =
  Join[{Mean[data[All, 1]], StandardDeviation[data[All, 1]], Mean[data[All, 2]],
    StandardDeviation[data[All, 2]]}, fddata];

, {i, 4, 18, 2}]
final = TableForm[results];
Print[final]
Export["C:\\My thesis\\results.xlsx", final]

```

4.1	0.718185	3.95	0.604805	2	3.8	1.9	10.254	0.00119886
2.55	1.05006	2.55	0.933302	3	6.75	2.25	3.67347	0.0346672
4.25	0.638666	4.05	0.604805	2	2.61234	1.30617	5.11909	0.0131928
3.85	0.67082	4.	0.648886	2	4.5	2.25	10.9286	0.000887797
3.3	0.571241	3.25	0.55012	2	1.11905	0.559524	2.05398	0.158862
4.	0.725476	3.95	0.759155	2	6.55	3.425	14.2012	0.000236397
3.9	0.713185	3.55	0.812729	3	6.96026	2.32009	6.64098	0.00491611
3.76429	0.412675	3.7	0.409081	10	2.55884	0.255884	3.70997	0.0306166

Figure 5-2: ANOVA package in Mathematica 10.1.

For each feature of the cultural dimension, the averages and standard deviations are obtained from the following equations:

$$m(f) = \frac{1}{20} \sum_{i=1}^{20} f_i(i)$$

$$SD(f) = \sqrt{\frac{1}{20} \sum_{i=1}^{20} (f(i) - m(f))^2}$$

where the $f(i)$ is the obtained scale for each feature and for each website.

5.4 Variables used in the study

To see the impact of culture on user perception of adapted versus standardized (home country) websites, it was necessary to first measure cultural adaptation on Portuguese and Dutch websites of American companies, and then classify the websites-based on the degree of cultural adaptation they depicted.

The study uses content analysis to analyze the cultural content on Portuguese and Dutch websites of American companies.

To develop the cultural categories for web cultural analysis, an extensive review of major cultural typologies in the business literature was done. The works of (Hall, 1976) and (Hofstede, 1984) were used to generate a list of cultural typologies, and relevant literature was reviewed to identify cultural value dimensions (Singh and Matsuo, 2004), (Singh, 2006). Each cultural typology was translated to the context of web communication, and its applicability to studying web communications was explored through content analysis of websites. Thus, consistent with the literature, four cultural value dimensions proposed by Hofstede (1984) (individualism–collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity–femininity), and the high- and low-context cultural dimension proposed by Hall (1976) were used in the study. To generate operational cultural value categories reflective of web content, the first step was to create a list of all major interactive or multimedia features commonly present on the websites (clubs, newsletters, FAQs, security policy, privacy policy, free stuff, downloads, graphics, hyperlinks, and others) and evaluate which features would be preferred more in which cultures.. Based on Singh (2004), categories were developed for Hofstede’s four cultural dimensions and Hall’s high and low-context cultural dimension. The categories are presented in the Table 5-2 for 6 cultural dimensions and 31 cultural features.

Table 5-2: Cultural categories for website.

Cultural Dimensions	Features
Individualism-Collectivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community relations • Clubs or chat rooms • Newsletter • Family theme • Symbols and pictures of national identity • Loyalty programs • Links to local websites
Uncertainty avoidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer service • Guided navigation • Tradition theme • Local stores • Local terminology • Free trials or downloads • Toll-free numbers
Power distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company hierarchy information • Pictures of CEOs • Quality assurance and awards • Vision statement • Pride of ownership appeal • Proper titles
Masculinity- Femininity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quizzes and games • Realism theme • Product effectiveness • Clear gender roles
High-context culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politeness and indirectness • Soft-sell approach • Aesthetics
Low-context culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard-sell approach • Use of superlatives • Rank or prestige of the company • Terms and condition of purchase

5.4.1 Individualism–Collectivism variables

This cultural dimension focuses on an individual’s relationship with society or other individuals. In individualist societies, ties between individuals are loose, personal freedom is valued, and individual decision-making is encouraged. On the contrary, in collectivist societies, in-group ties are strong, following societal norms is valued, and group decision-making is encouraged (Hofstede, 1984). Portugal rank high on collectivism and Netherlands present more individualistic values.

- **Community relations**

Presence or absence of community policy, giving back to community, social responsibility policy.

- **Clubs or chat rooms**

Presence or absence of members club, product-based clubs, chat with company people, chat with interest groups, message boards, discussion groups, and live talks.

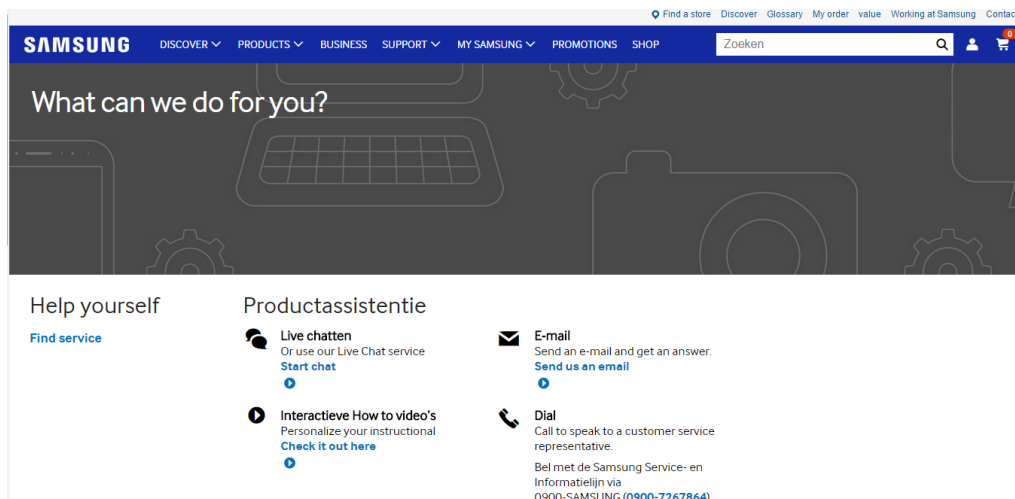


Figure 5-3: Clubs or chat rooms of SAMSUNG website.

- **Newsletter**

Online subscriptions, magazines, and newsletters.

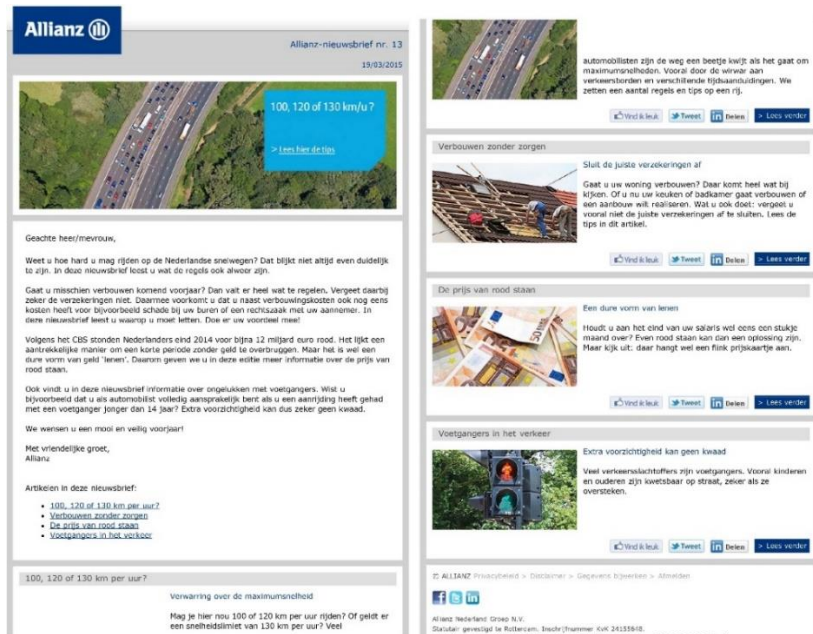


Figure 5-4: Newsletter of ALLIANZ website.

- **Family theme**

Pictures of family, pictures of teams of employees, mention of employee teams and emphasis on team and collective work responsibility in vision statement or elsewhere on the web site, and emphasis on customers as a family.



Figure 5-5: Family theme of NESTLE website.

- **Symbols and pictures of national identity**

Flags, pictures of historic monuments, pictures reflecting uniqueness of the country, country specific symbols in the form of icons, and indexes.

- **Loyalty programs**

Frequent miles programs, customer loyalty programs, and company credit cards for specific country, special membership programs.

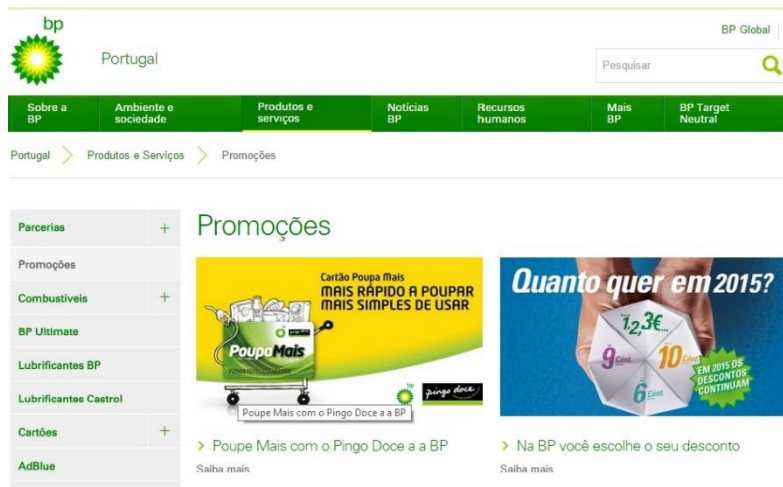


Figure 5-6: Loyalty program of BP website.

- **Links to local websites**

Links to country locations, related country specific companies, and other local websites from a particular country.

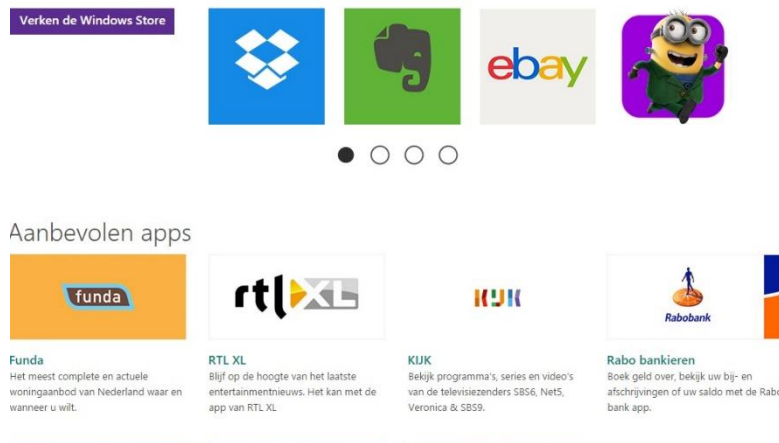


Figure 5-7: Links to local websites in Microsoft website.

5.4.2 Uncertainty avoidance variables

According to Hofstede (1984), the degree to which societies can tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity differs among cultures. Some cultures are high on the avoidance of uncertainty, in that they value security and low-risk situations, while other cultures are low on the avoidance of uncertainty and have a greater tolerance for ambiguity and risky situations. Portugal rank high on uncertainty avoidance, while Netherlands have been found to have a greater tolerance for uncertainty.

- **Customer service**

FAQ's, customer service option, customer contact or customer service e-mails.

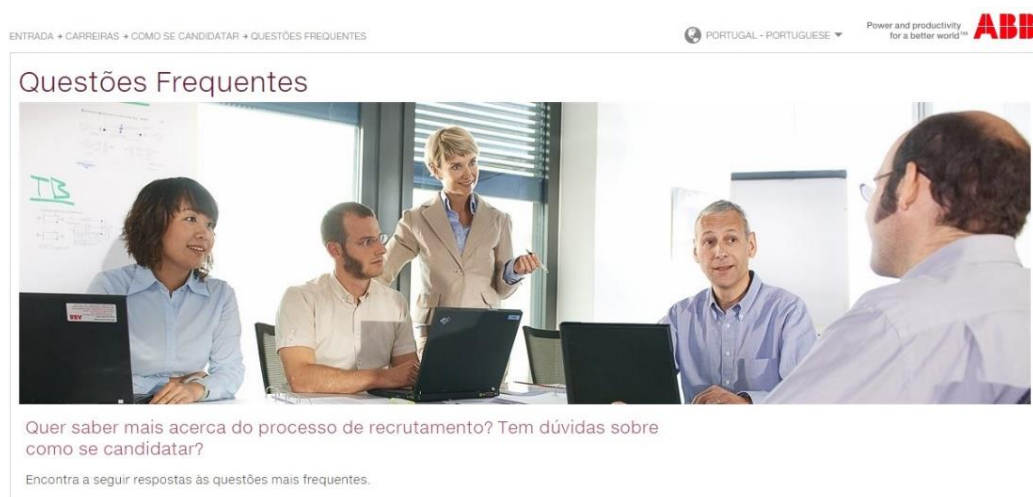


Figure 5-8: Customer service of ABB website.

- **Guided navigation**

Site maps, well-displayed links, links in the form of pictures or buttons, forward, backward up and down navigation buttons.

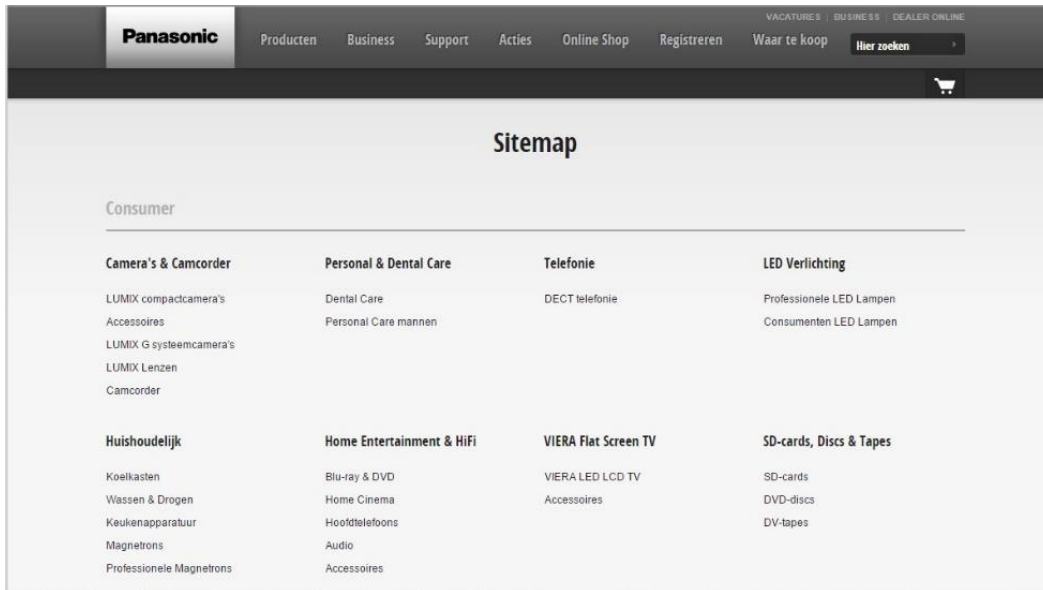


Figure 5-9: Guided navigation of PANASONIC website.

- **Tradition theme**

Emphasis on history and ties of a particular company with a nation, emphasis on respect, veneration of elderly and the culture, phrases like "most respected company", "keeping the tradition alive", "for generations", "company legacy".

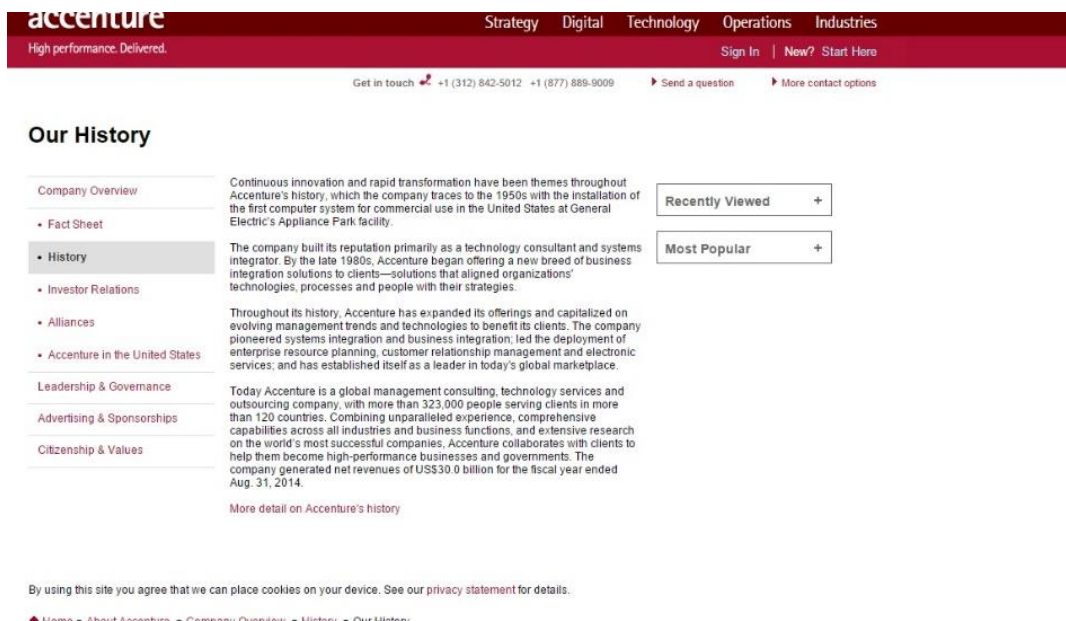


Figure 5-10: Tradition theme of ACCENTURE website.

- **Local stores**

Mention of contact information for local offices, dealers, and shops.

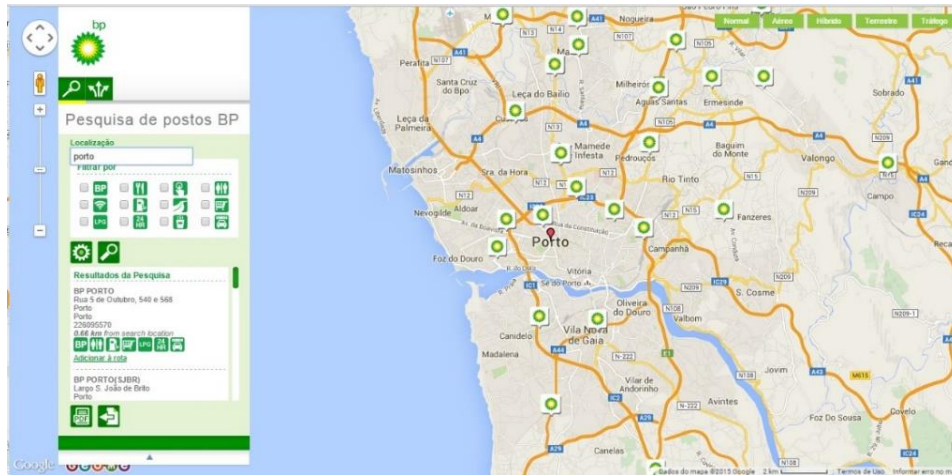


Figure 5-11: Local store of BP website.

- **Local terminology**

Like use of country specific metaphors, names of festivals, puns, and a general local touch in the vocabulary of the web page not just mere translation.

- **Free trials or downloads**

Free stuff, free downloads, free screen savers, free product trails, free coupons to try the products or services, free memberships, or free service information.

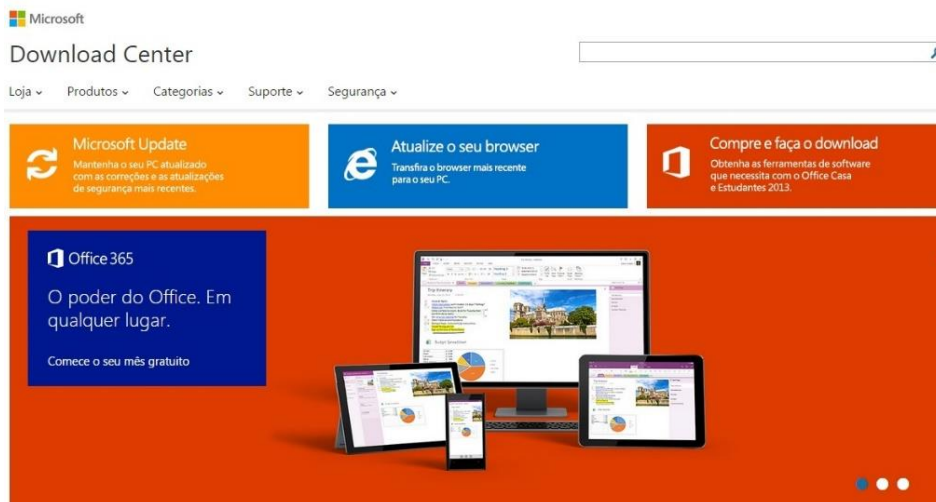


Figure 5-12: Free trials or downloads of MICROSOFT website.

- **Toll-free numbers**

To call at any time around the clock.

5.4.3 Power distance variables

According to Hofstede (1984), the bipolar power distance dimension explains how different societies treat inequalities in social structure. Societies like Portugal that are high on power distance accept power and hierarchy in the society and do not exhibit egalitarianism. The emphasis in high-power distance societies is on status, referent power, authority, and legitimacy. In contrast, countries like Netherlands that are low on this dimension are more egalitarian, respect equal rights, and discourage status symbols.

- **Company hierarchy information**

Information about the ranks of company personnel, information about organizational chart, and information about country managers.

- **Pictures of CEOs**

Pictures of executives, important people in the industry or celebrities.



The image shows a screenshot of the HP website's Executive Team page. At the top, there is a blue navigation bar with the HP logo on the left and the text "For Home For Work Support" on the right. Below the navigation bar, the heading "Executive Team" is displayed in bold black text. Underneath the heading is a portrait of Meg Whitman, a woman with blonde hair, smiling. To the right of the portrait, her name "Meg Whitman" is written in bold, followed by her title "Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer". Below the portrait and title, there is a detailed biography of Meg Whitman, mentioning her role as Chairman of the Board since July 2014, her previous roles as President and Chief Executive Officer of eBay Inc. from 1998 to 2008, and her experience at various other companies like Hasbro Inc., FTD, Inc., The Stride Rite Corporation, The Walt Disney Company, and Bain & Company. At the bottom of the biography, there is a "Download photo:" link with a "Low resolution JPG" option.

Figure 5-13: Picture of CEO of HP website.

- **Quality assurance and awards**

Mention of awards won, mention of quality assurance information and quality certification by international and local agencies.

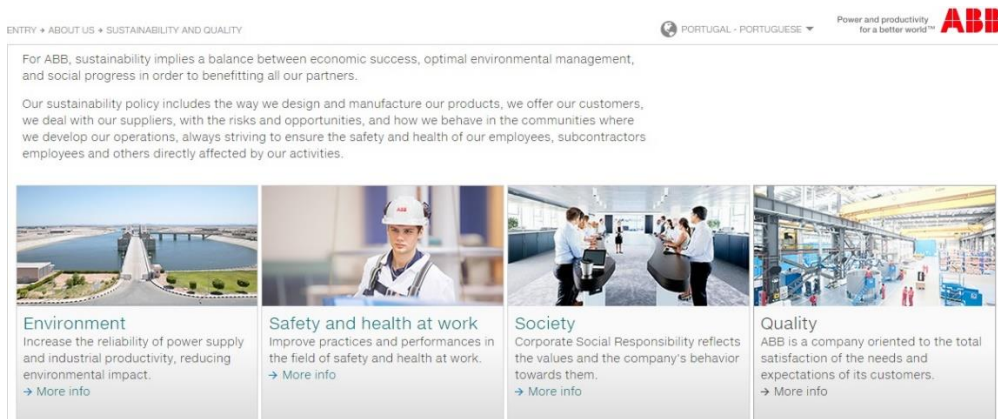


Figure 5-14: Quality assurance and awards of ABB website.

- **Vision statement**

The vision for the company as stated by the CEO or top management.

- **Pride of ownership appeal**

Websites depict satisfied customers, fashion statement for the use of product, and the use of reference groups to portray pride.



Figure 5-15: Pride of ownership appeal of SAMSUNG website.

- **Proper titles**

Titles of the important people in the company, titles of the people in the contact information, and titles of people on the organizational charts.

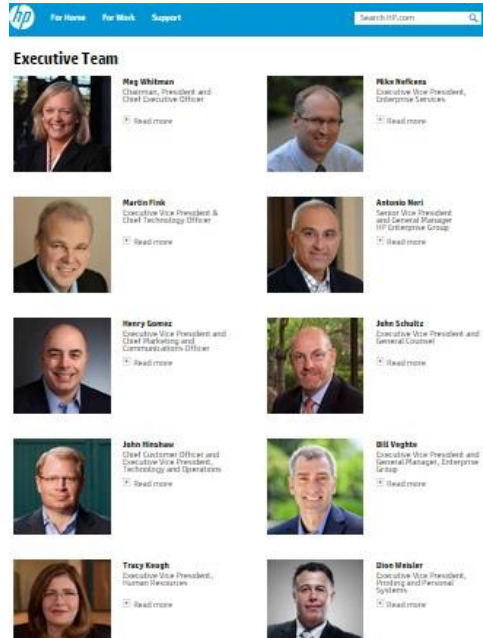


Figure 5-16: Proper title of HP website.

5.4.4 Masculinity–femininity variables

The masculinity–femininity dimension proposed by Hofstede (1984) explains how gender roles are allocated in different cultures. “Masculine” cultures value assertiveness, ambition, success, and performance. To such cultures, “big and fast” is beautiful, machismo ideal is acceptable, and emphasis is on clear gender roles. On the contrary, “feminine” cultures value, beauty, nature and nurturance, and gender roles are blurred. Countries like Netherlands and Portugal are examples of feminine cultures.

- **Quizzes and games**

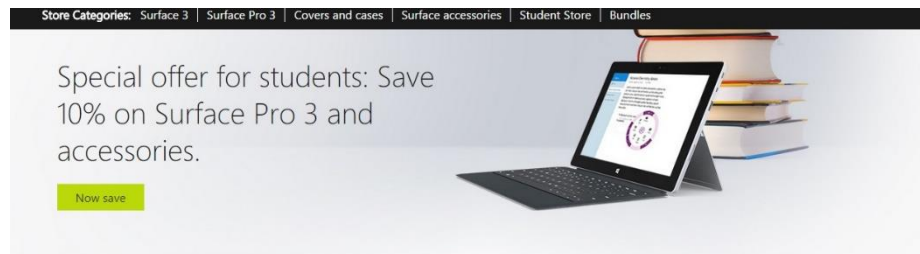
Games, quizzes, fun stuff to do on the web site, tips and tricks, recipes, and other fun information. Realism

- **Realism theme**

Less fantasy and imagery on the web site, to-the-point information.

- **Product effectiveness**

Durability information, quality information, product attribute information, and product robustness information.



[1] Tests conducted in March 2015 by Microsoft with units of 128 and 64GB with 4GB of RAM. Testing consisted of full battery discharge while playing video. All settings were default except wifi which was linked to a network and Auto Brightness was turned off. The life of batteries varies considerably with the settings, use, and other factors.
 [2] Available for Surface 3 with Windows 8.1 purchased before December 31, 2015. While stock lasts. Office activation is required within 6 months of the date on which Windows is activated.
 [3] Free upgrade to Windows 10 for eligible Windows 8.1 devices receiving the upgrade in the first year after introduction. More info and conditions of the offer will be available in the coming months.
 [4] The battery lasts for up to 9 hours with video playback. In another use varies battery life.

Figure 5-17: Product effectiveness in Microsoft website.

- **Clear gender roles**

Separate pages for men and women, depiction of women in nurturance roles, depiction of women in positions of telephone operators, models, wives, and mothers; depiction of men as macho, strong, and in positions of power.

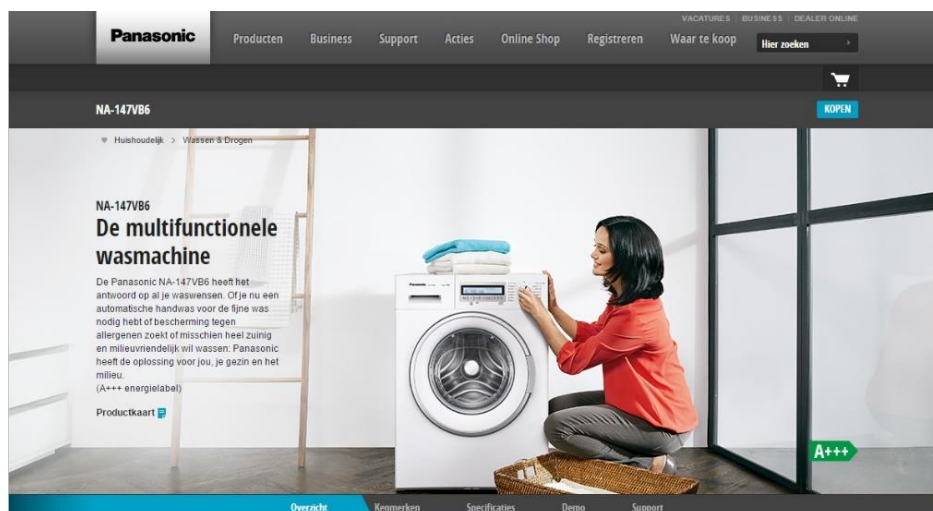


Figure 5-18: Clear gender roles of PANASONIC website.

5.4.5 High- and low-context cultures variables

According to Hall (1976), a high context communication or message is one in which most of the information is already in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. A low-context communication is just the opposite; i.e., the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code. Thus, while communication in high-context cultures is implicit, indirect, and deeply embedded in the context, the communication in low-context cultures is more direct, less implicit, and more informative. Portugal could be considered a high-context culture, while Netherlands a low-context country.

- **Politeness and indirectness**

Greetings from the company, images and pictures reflecting politeness, flowery language, use of indirect expressions like "perhaps", "probably" and "somewhat". Overall humbleness in company philosophy and corporate information.

- **Soft-sell approach**

Use of affective and subjective impressions of intangible aspects of a product or service, and more entertainment theme to promote the product.

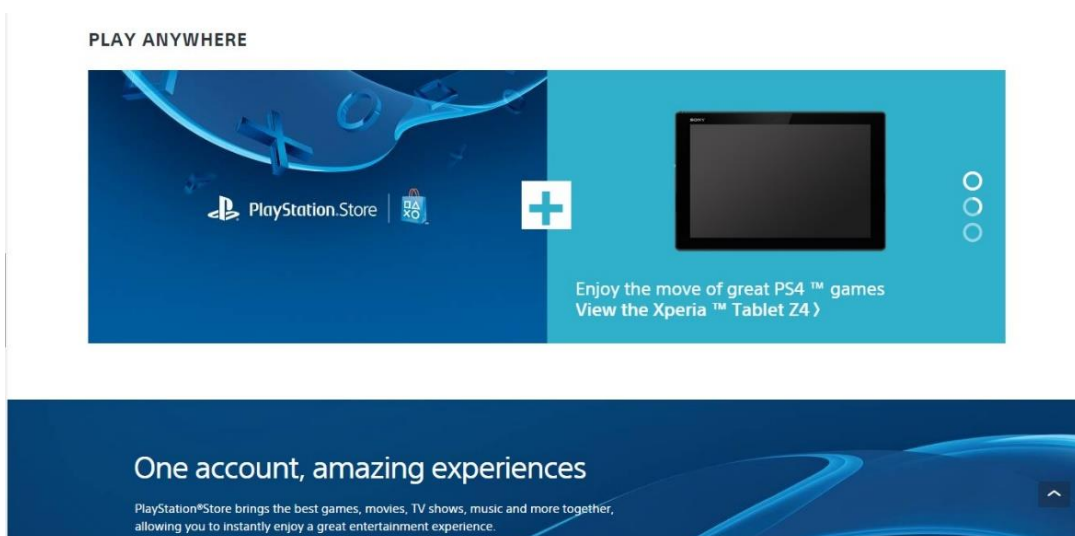


Figure 5-19: Soft-sell approach in Microsoft website.

- **Aesthetics**

Attention to esthetic details, liberal use of colors, high bold colors, emphasis on images and context, and use of love and harmony appeal.



Figure 5-20: Aesthetics of COCACOLA website.

- **Hard-sell approach**

Discounts, promotions, coupons, and emphasis on product advantages using explicit comparison. Explicit Comparisons: Comparison of the company to others.

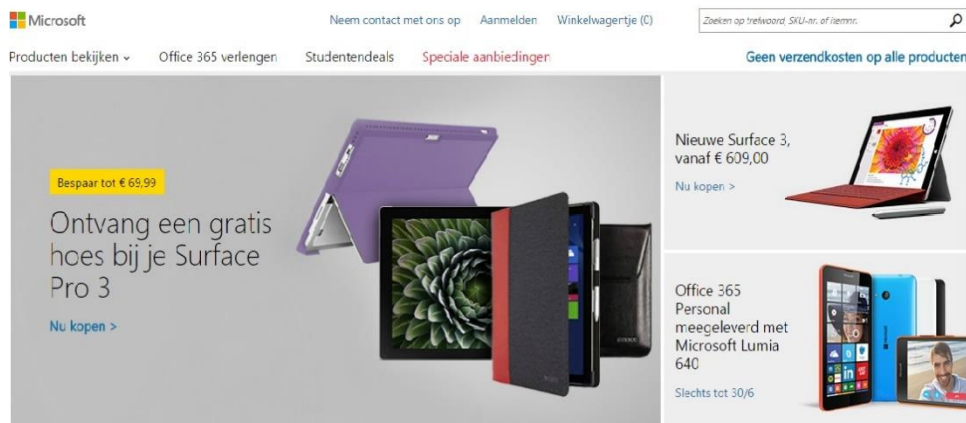


Figure 5-21: Hard-sell approach of MICROSOFT website.

- **Use of superlatives**

Use of superlative words and sentences: like "We are the number one", "The top company", "The leader", and "World's largest".

Hyundai Quality	
Events	Hyundai, the strength of quality and reliability Hyundai is one of the largest and most successful automobile manufacturers in the world. Hyundai offers what buyers consider important: fully equipped and affordable quality. Safety, reliability and stylish appearance are understood. Not for nothing that Hyundai for many years at the top in the Netherlands.
Hyundai Motor Netherlands BV	
Hyundai worldwide	
Hyundai vacancies	For the motorist from now Hyundai is working hard on the road. Through extensive investments in technological research and new models Hyundai has developed a modern generation of cars that are closely tailored to the taste and style of the discerning driver now.
Hyundai quality	
Universal Dealerships	
Hyundai Sustainability	High reliability, low running costs The combination of top quality, a strong design and attractive price is unique. Hyundai offers all these benefits. In the development of our cars is high-quality materials first. Thoughtful constructions refine the production process with the result that during the manufacture of any Hyundai high quality always comes in the first place. As a result, Hyundai provides safe vehicles with high reliability and low cost per kilometer. This reliability is illustrated by the extended warranty where all Hyundai drivers will benefit. The designers also Hyundai's European Design Center provide a dynamic, sympathetic and contemporary styling that will appeal. And thanks to an efficient production prices are very competitive: so you pay less for quality and design.
	Various models The model range of Hyundai is extensive. All cars are equipped with high-tech and fuel-efficient gasoline and diesel engines that can optionally be coupled to an automatic transmission. Which preference and what budget you also; There is always plenty of choice. This explains the success of our brand globally and in the Netherlands, where Hyundai for years one of the ten most successful and best-selling brands.

Figure 5-22: Use of superlatives of HYUNDAI website.

- **Rank or prestige of the company**

Features like company rank in the industry, listing in Forbes or Fortune, and numbers showing the growth and importance of the company.

In the millennium transition stood out relevant facts of the BP route in Portugal, opened a new concept of retail Desk, the fourth level of the worldwide network of 25 000, both in terms of range of products and services, whether conservation energy and environmental protection; quality certification ISO 9002 was renewed and extended to new areas of activity; the launch in Lisbon, under the global program "cleanest cities" of the first gasoline Low sulfur content marketed in Portugal with significant reductions in pollutant emissions.

At the turn of the century, BP presented its new brand image, the Helios, and laid the foundations for an ambitious rebranding program worldwide, which changed the face of the company, in line with the Group's values policy aimed to obtain results that enable sustained growth, in financial terms, security, respect for the environment and customer satisfaction, employees and other partners. After several name changes as Portuguese Company of Petroleum BP and BP Portuguesa, it is in 2003 that BP adopts the name by which it is now known - BP Portugal, SA.

The company was also a pioneer in the marketing of two types of diesel - Road and Ultra Diesel - and introduced in the country in 2004, the new generation of lighter gas cylinders and easier to handle. Also in the early twenty-first century, BP launches in Portugal the 2nd and 3rd generation fuels, consolidating a conquered path with dedication and innovative spirit. The launch of Invigorate in 2011 - an absolutely innovative formula that resulted from five years of research in the Global Fuel Technology Center in Bochum, Germany - made of Portugal the first country in the world to market the Invigorate in its range of fuels BP.

The company's involvement with the community through the development and participation in partnership on several projects in the area of social and corporate responsibility, is a trademark of BP Portugal images. BP was one of the founders of the GRACE entities in 2000, becoming a pioneer in our country, together with five other companies in the business world's awareness of Corporate Citizenship. BP was also present in the ranking of the 20 best companies to work for in the country, having occupied 3rd place in 2001 to 10th place in 2002 to 1st place in 2004, this list compiled by Exame magazine and the Great Place to Work Institute Portugal.

Today, like yesterday, we look forward with more energy and ambition to continue to be part of your world.

Figure 5-23: Rank in BP website.

- **Terms and condition of purchase**

Product return policy, warranty, and other conditions.

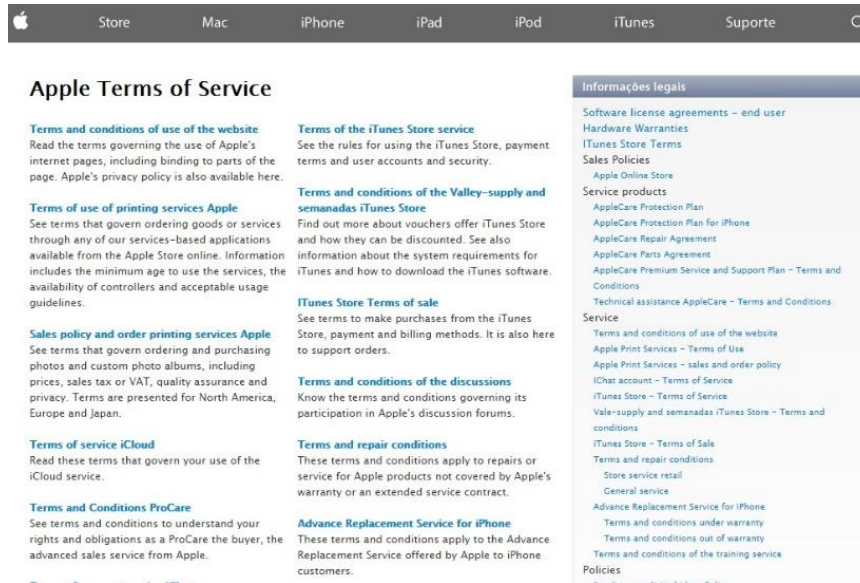


Figure 5-24: Terms and condition of purchase of APPLE website.

Chapter VI: Results and Analysis

6 Results and analysis

The objective of the study is to analyze whether the corporate websites of multinationals listed on Fortune 500 depict cultural values regarding its digital presence on Portugal and Netherlands. In other words, this work shows the extent to which multinationals firms take into account Portuguese and Dutch cultural values in their website communication strategy. To attain this end, we examined the Portuguese and Dutch websites of multinationals within the cultural values framework that comprises the cultural typologies of Hofstede (1980; 2001) and Hall (1976) as described in Chapter 5.

An one-way ANOVA was conducted on all the cultural categories (Table 6-1, Table 6-2, Table 6-3, Table 6-4, Table 6-5. and Table 6-6) to study the cultural differences of Portuguese and Dutch websites. A detailed cultural category level analysis clearly shows how the websites of the two countries differ on each cultural category item used in the Hofstede's and Hall's frameworks.

6.1 Analysis of the collectivistic dimension of websites

The findings suggest that under the collectivistic dimension (Table 6-1), Dutch websites scored higher than Portuguese websites on depiction of features like community relations, clubs or chat rooms, newsletters, national symbols and pictures, loyalty programs and links to local websites. The only exception is “Family theme”, where Portuguese websites score higher than Dutch websites. It worth mentioning that for “National symbols and pictures” category, there is no statistical significance between Dutch and Portuguese websites ($F = 2.05, P < 0.1589$).

Table 6-1: Descriptive statistics and ANOVA for cultural category of Individualism – Collectivism.

Categories	NL websites		PT websites		SS	MS	F-value	P-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Community relations	4.10	0.72	3.95	0.60	3.80	1.90	10.25	0.0012**
Clubs or chat rooms	2.95	1.05	2.85	0.93	6.75	2.25	3.67	0.0347**
Newsletter	4.25	0.64	4.05	0.60	2.61	1.31	5.12	0.0182**
Family theme	3.85	0.67	4.00	0.65	4.50	2.25	10.93	0.0009***
National symbols and pictures	3.30	0.57	3.25	0.55	1.12	0.56	2.05	0.1589
Loyalty programs	4.00	0.73	3.95	0.76	6.85	3.43	14.20	0.0002***
Links to Local web sites	3.90	0.72	3.85	0.81	6.96	2.32	6.64	0.0040**

SD: Standard Deviation, SS: Sum of Squares , MS: Mean Squares

* $P < 0.1$, ** $P < 0.05$, *** $P < 0.01$

6.2 Analysis of the uncertainty avoidance dimension of websites

In the dimension of uncertainty avoidance (Table 6-3), the Portuguese websites depict very high levels of the uncertainty avoidance-oriented values on features such as guided navigation, tradition theme, local stores, and toll-free numbers; while Dutch websites have higher score of uncertainty on customer service. There is no statistical significance difference for “Toll-free numbers” category between Dutch and Portuguese websites ($F = 2.23, P < 0.1246$).

Table 6-2: Descriptive statistics and ANOVA for cultural category of Uncertainty avoidance.

Categories	NL websites		PT websites		SS	MS	F-value	P-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Customer service	4.55	0.51	4.40	0.50	1.37	1.37	7.16	0.0154**
Guided navigation	4.60	0.68	4.75	0.44	1.29	0.64	4.43	0.0282**
Tradition theme	4.05	0.83	4.25	0.91	7.39	3.70	7.52	0.0046***
Local stores	4.25	0.85	4.40	0.75	7.50	3.75	19.32	0.0000***
Local terminology	3.45	0.76	3.45	0.60	2.48	0.83	2.96	0.0638*
Free trials or downloads	4.00	0.79	3.90	0.64	2.30	0.77	2.23	0.1246
Toll-free numbers	3.80	0.62	3.90	0.55	2.20	0.73	3.26	0.0491**

SD: Standard Deviation, SS: Sun of Squares , MS: Mean Squares

* $P < 0.1$, ** $P < 0.05$, *** $P < 0.01$

6.3 Analysis of the power distance dimension of websites

Under power distance dimensions (Table 6-4) Portuguese websites scored higher on all categories than Dutch websites. Portuguese websites score higher on company hierarchy information, pictures of CEOs, pride of ownership appeal and proper titles. Quality assurance and awards and vision statement are categories with no statistical significance.

Table 6-3: Descriptive statistics and ANOVA for cultural category of Power distance.

Categories	NL websites		PT websites		SS	MS	F-value	P-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Company hierarchy information	3.80	0.89	3.90	0.85	10.62	5.31	28.35	0.0000***
Pictures of CEOs	3.60	1.05	4.05	1.00	8.05	2.68	3.94	0.0279**
Quality assurance and awards	4.05	0.76	4.25	0.72	0.56	0.28	0.52	0.6042
Vision statement	3.90	0.85	3.65	0.81	2.34	1.17	1.95	0.1728
Pride of ownership appeal	3.35	0.75	3.40	0.75	4.49	1.50	3.79	0.0315**
Proper titles	3.70	0.80	3.85	0.88	12.32	6.16	46.88	0.0000***

SD: Standard Deviation, SS: Sun of Squares , MS: Mean Squares

* $P < 0.1$, ** $P < 0.05$, *** $P < 0.01$

6.4 Analysis of the masculinity dimension of websites

On the masculinity dimension, both Portuguese and Dutch websites performed significantly low on the depiction of clear gender roles, which is shown in Table 6-4. The category “quizzes and games” are below 3, while “product effectiveness” and “realism theme” are above that value.

Table 6-4: Descriptive statistics and ANOVA for cultural category of Masculinity – Femininity.

Categories	NL websites		PT websites		SS	MS	F-value	P-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Quizzes and games	2.45	0.76	2.45	0.69	5.90	2.95	16.46	0.0001***
Realism theme	3.15	0.75	3.10	0.55	2.20	1.10	5.18	0.0175**
Product effectiveness	4.20	0.52	4.25	0.64	4.82	2.41	13.99	0.0003***
Clear gender roles	1.40	0.99	1.45	0.89	5.89	2.95	5.53	0.0141**

SD: Standard Deviation, SS: Sun of Squares , MS: Mean Squares

* $P < 0.1$, ** $P < 0.05$, *** $P < 0.01$

6.5 Analysis of the high/low context dimensions of websites

As we can see in Table 6-5, on high-context category, Portuguese websites have higher score on politeness and indirectness and soft-sell approach, but with no significant difference ($F = 1.2, P < 0.3033$; $F = 2.57, P < 0.1062$, respectively), while Dutch websites score higher on aesthetics.

Table 6-5: Descriptive statistics and ANOVA for cultural category of High-context culture.

	NL websites		PT websites		SS	MS	F-value	P-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Politeness and indirectness	2.55	0.51	2.65	0.49	0.27	0.27	1.12	0.3033
Soft-sell approach	2.70	0.66	2.55	0.69	2.08	1.04	2.57	0.1062
Aesthetics	3.45	1.00	3.25	1.02	14.86	3.72	11.40	0.0002***

SD: Standard Deviation, SS: Sun of Squares , MS: Mean Squares

* $P < 0.1$, ** $P < 0.05$, *** $P < 0.01$

On the other hand as it is shown in Table 6-6, in the category of low-context, Dutch websites have higher score on use of superlatives, rank or prestige of the company in contrast with Portuguese websites that are higher on the feature “Hard-sell approach”.

Table 6-6: Descriptive statistics and ANOVA for cultural category of Low-context culture.

Categories	NL websites		PT websites		SS	MS	F-value	P-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Hard-sell approach	3.65	0.75	3.70	0.73	6.44	2.15	9.15	0.0009***
Use of superlatives	4.30	0.66	4.05	0.76	2.85	1.43	2.99	0.0771*
Rank or prestige of the company	3.75	0.72	3.55	0.83	7.85	3.93	13.10	0.0004***
Terms and condition of purchase	4.00	0.79	3.95	0.89	10.12	5.06	17.79	0.0001

SD: Standard Deviation, SS: Sun of Squares , MS: Mean Squares

* $P < 0.1$, ** $P < 0.05$, *** $P < 0.01$

6.6 Hypotheses testing

The global content analysis for Portuguese and Dutch websites is shown in Table 6-7.

Since the cultural values were rated from one (lowest-not depicted) to five (highest-

prominently depicted), we took 3 as the point distinguishing high and low levels; values below 3 are low level of depictions whereas those 3 and higher are high level of depictions. Similarly, we took 60 as the point distinguishing low and high levels in the Hofstede’s framework. Table 6-7 below shows the results of hypotheses testing.

Table 6-7: Descriptive statistics and ANOVA results Dimensions.

	NL websites		PT websites		SS	MS	F-value	P-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Individualism - Collectivism	3.76	0.41	3.70	0.41	2.56	0.26	3.71	0.0306**
Uncertainty avoidance	4.10	0.28	4.15	0.33	0.98	0.16	2.03	0.1340
Power distance	3.73	0.56	3.85	0.52	3.36	0.37	2.21	0.1159
Masculinity - Femininity	2.80	0.30	2.81	0.23	0.56	0.14	4.85	0.0103**
High-context culture	2.90	0.47	2.82	0.44	2.57	0.51	6.58	0.0024**
Low-context culture	3.93	0.45	3.81	0.58	4.09	0.68	3.91	0.0188**

SD: Standard Deviation, SS: Sun of Squares , MS: Mean Squares

* $P < 0.1$, ** $P < 0.05$, *** $P < 0.01$

Based on the list of hypothesis defined in section 3.3 and further investigations on Table 6-8, our analysis do not supported the hypotheses H2 (uncertainty avoidance) ($F=2.03$, $P<0.134$) and H3 (power distance) ($F=2.21$, $P<0.1159$). Regarding hypotheses H1 (individualism – collectivism), H4 (masculinity – femininity), H5 and H6 (high/low-context) the differences are statistical significant ($P<0.05$).

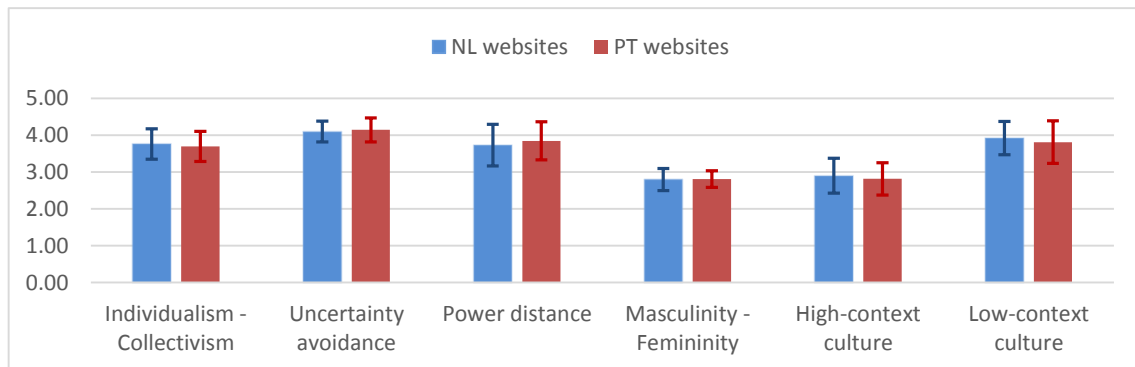


Figure 6-1: Average and standard deviation of scores for different dimensions.

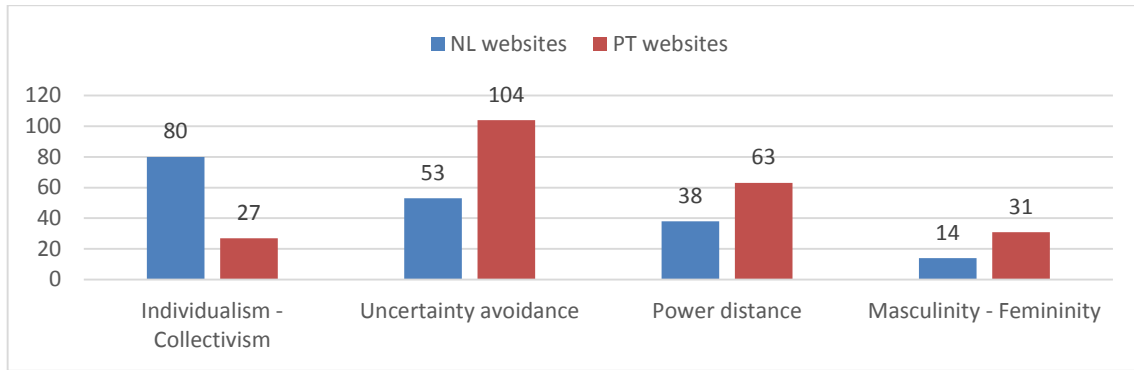


Figure 6-2: Scores reported by Hofstede, 2001.

Table 6-8: Hypotheses testing results.

	Hypotheses		Website analysis		Hypotheses test results
H1: Individualism - Collectivism	NL: High PT: Low	NL > PT	NL: High PT: High	NL > PT	Yes
H2: Uncertainty avoidance	NL: Low PT: High	NL < PT	NL: High PT: High	NL < PT	x
H3: Power distance	NL: Low PT: High	NL < PT	NL: High PT: High	NL < PT	x
H4: Masculinity	NL: Low PT: Low	NL < PT	NL: Low PT: Low	NL < PT	Yes
H5: Low context culture	NL: High PT: Low	NL > PT	NL: High PT: High	NL > PT	Yes
H6: High context culture	NL: Low PT: High	NL < PT	NL: Low PT: Low	NL > PT	No

Notes: (x) Hypothesis not supported; Yes = Supported; No = Not Supported

With respect to the dimension individualism - collectivism, the mean value in the Dutch sample is 3.76 and 3.70 for Portuguese websites and both with statistical significance. This means that H1 is supported. Thus, Dutch and Portuguese websites performed higher on individualistic values. Portuguese websites detached mostly family themes, while Dutch websites offer newsletters, clubs or chat rooms, community relations, loyalty programs and links to local websites.

The hypotheses H2 and H3 are both not statistical significant, meaning that both uncertainty avoidance and power distance are not variables considered important to adaptation by the marketers of multinational companies. Indeed, categories such as customer service and local terminology seems to be important to Dutch administrators,

whereas Portuguese site administrators are more oriented to guided navigation, tradition themes, local stores and tool-free numbers. However, if we consider the global uncertainty avoidance dimension (H2) it is not statistically significant. The same happens with the dimension power distance (H3) where, contrary to Dutch websites, the company hierarchy information, the pictures of CEO's, the pride of ownership appeal and the proper use of titles are detached in Portuguese websites.

With respect to the masculinity-femininity dimension, the mean value in the Dutch sample is 2.80 which is lower than the central value 3. The same applies for Portuguese websites, where the low mean value of 2.81 is obtained. Thus, H4 is supported meaning that the management of site facilities such as quizzes and games, realism themes, product effectiveness and clear gender roles are important for both Portuguese and Dutch digital marketers.

In the low-context culture dimension, the mean value in the Dutch sample is 3.93, whereas for the Portuguese website is 3.81. The H5 is supported, meaning that low-context values are displayed in the communication of multinational companies. Hard-sell approach is most used by Portuguese digital marketers, while Dutch marketers focused more on the use of superlatives and rank or prestige of the company.

Finally, in the high-context culture dimension, the mean value in the Dutch sample is 2.90, whereas for the Portuguese website is 2.82. The H6 is not supported, meaning that high-context values are not displayed in the communication of multinational companies. Most prominent category on this dimension seems to be the aesthetics (colors, etc.) more evident on Dutch websites.

Chapter VII: Conclusions

7 Conclusions

This study attempted to empirically demonstrate that there are significant cultural differences between Portuguese and Dutch websites from multinational companies listed on Fortune 500. Based on the results, we can conclude that Dutch websites differ from the Portuguese website for several of the cultural category items analyzed, but differences are not very high.

Portuguese society has been viewed as collectivistic and group-oriented (Hofstede, 1980), but based on the analysis of Portuguese and Dutch websites it scores high on individualism, not supporting the formulated hypothesis for Portuguese websites. The uncertainty-avoidance and power distance dimensions hypothesis are not confirmed, because of no statistical significance in both cases. For the masculinity dimension, Portuguese websites prominently exhibited feminine values depicted in clear gender roles and product effectiveness. In Dutch websites the hypothesis is also confirmed.

The Portuguese and Dutch websites scored low and high, respectively, on Hall's (1976) high-context dimension, but with no statistical significance in both cases. In the low-context dimension, both Portuguese and Dutch websites performed well regarding the formulated hypothesis.

Cultural models have been developed and explain differences that could help develop strategies that target consumers across cultures more effectively. This research demonstrated that Hofstede's and Hall's models could be used to manage cross-cultural differences between websites available to consumers in different countries.

The results found in this study can benefit digital marketers in four important ways. First, these results show that there are significant differences in the depiction of cultural values between different cultures. Thus, digital marketers need to be more aware that the website is not a culturally neutral medium; instead, it is impregnated with the cultural values of

the local websites. On the other hand, this study presents a cultural value framework that can be used by digital marketers to design culturally congruent, country-specific websites. Furthermore, this work also outlines the cultural categories and their explanation, which can be of use for analyzing country-specific websites for cultural values. Finally, by studying cultural content on websites, it can give us insights into cultural characteristics of a particular national culture when marketing globally on the web.

This research can serve as a good starting point for further work on the cultural analysis of websites and can open up an avenue for future research that can further validate and strengthen the proposed cultural value framework.

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Official website of BP, <http://www.bp.com/>

Official website of Total, <http://www.total.com>

Official website of Samsung Electronics, <http://www.samsung.com/>

Official website of Apple, <http://www.apple.com/>

Official website of General Electric, <http://www.ge.com/>

Official website of Petrobras, <http://www.petrobras.com/>

Official website of Allianz, <https://www.allianz.com/>

Official website of HP, <http://www8.hp.com/>

Official website of Siemens, <http://www.siemens.com/>

Official website of NESTLE, <http://www.nestle.com>

Official website of HITACHI, <http://www.hitachi.com>

Official website of Hyundai motor, <http://www.hyundai.com>

Official website of Microsoft, <http://www.microsoft.com/>

Official website of Sony, <http://www.sony.com>

Official website of Panasonic, <http://www.panasonic.com>

Official website of BNP Paribas, <http://www.bnpparibas.com>

Official website of Coca-Cola, <http://www.cocacola.com>

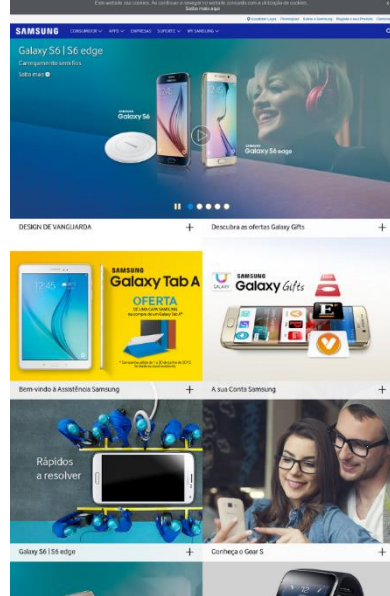
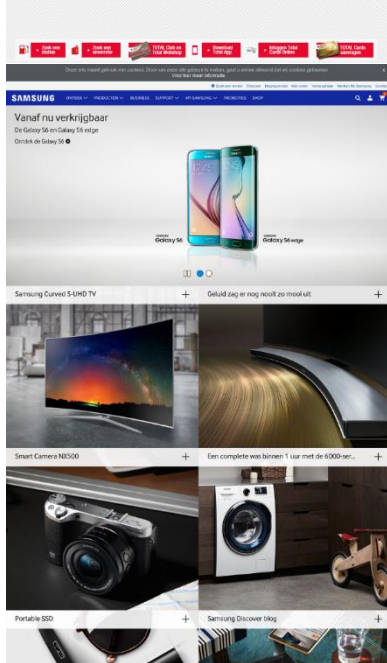
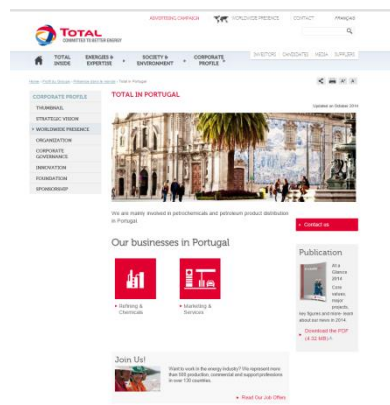
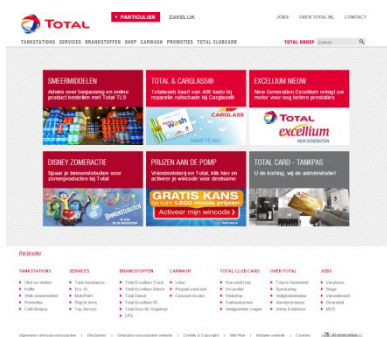
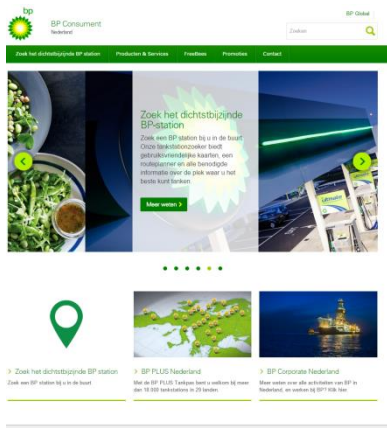
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Official website of Accenture, <http://www.accenture.com/>

Official website of NEC, <http://www.nec.com/>

Appendix A

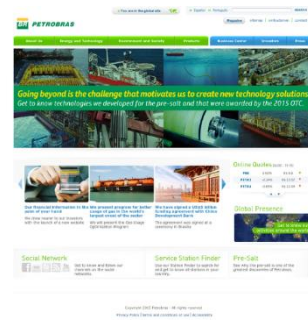
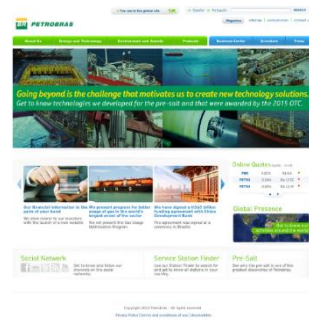
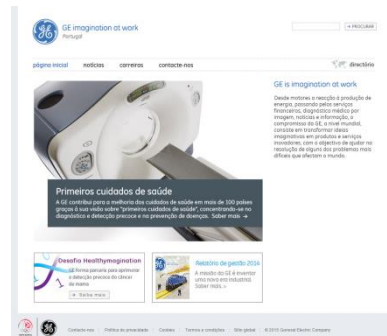
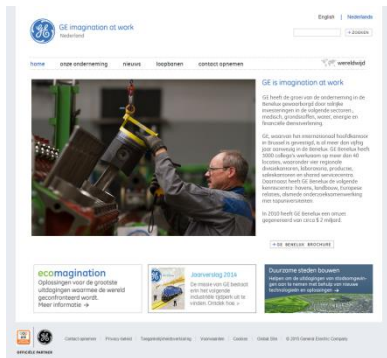
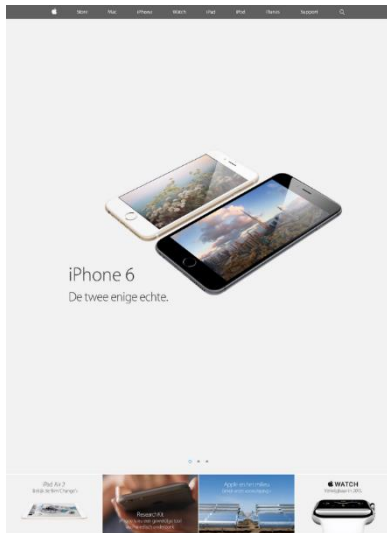
A. Appendix – Screenshots from home page of selected websites



Netherlands homepage

Portugal homepage

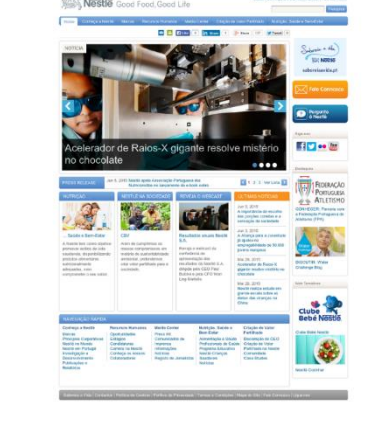
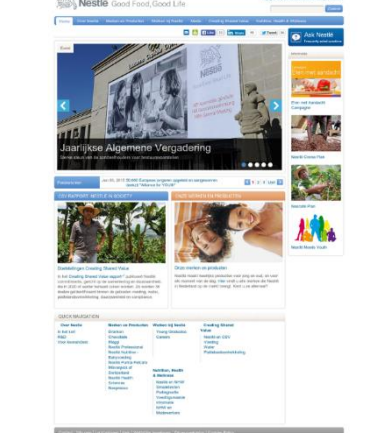
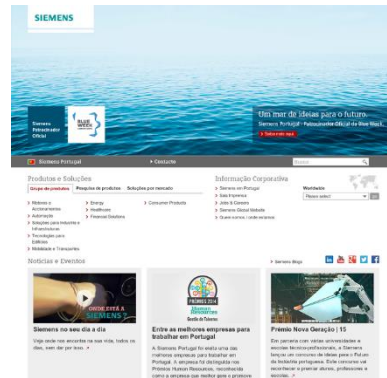
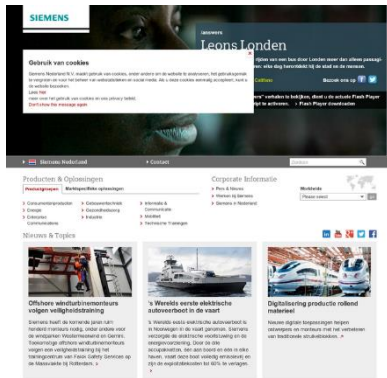
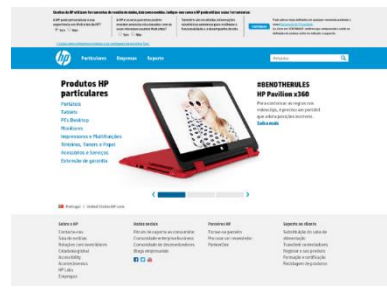
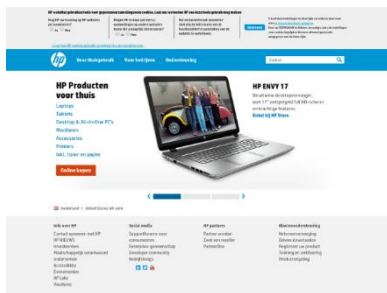
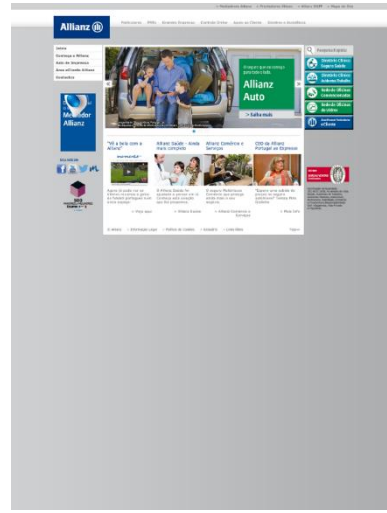
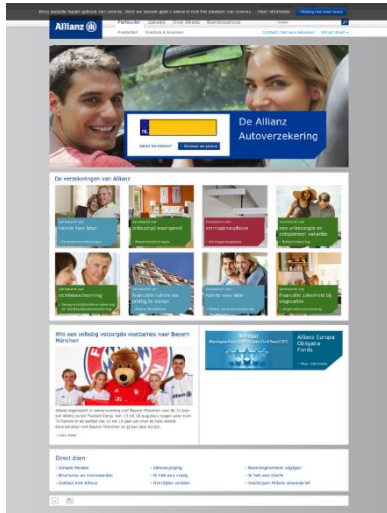
Figure A-1: Screenshots from homepages of BP, Total and Samsung Companies



Netherlands homepage

Portugal homepage

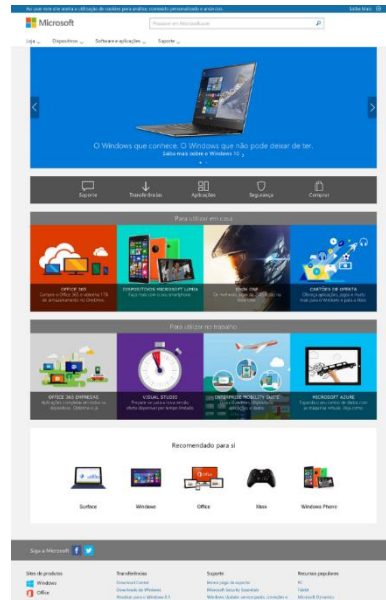
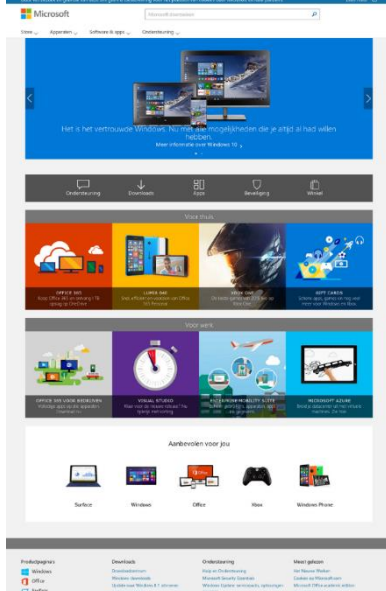
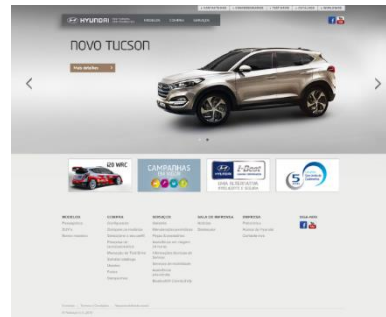
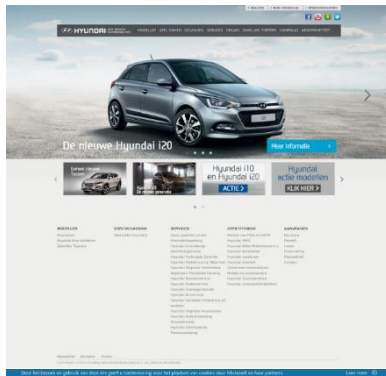
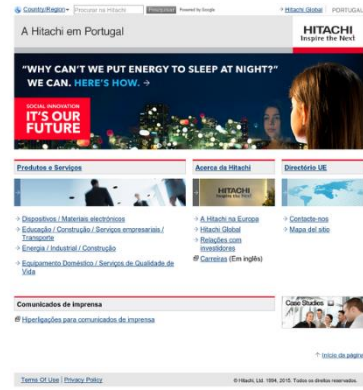
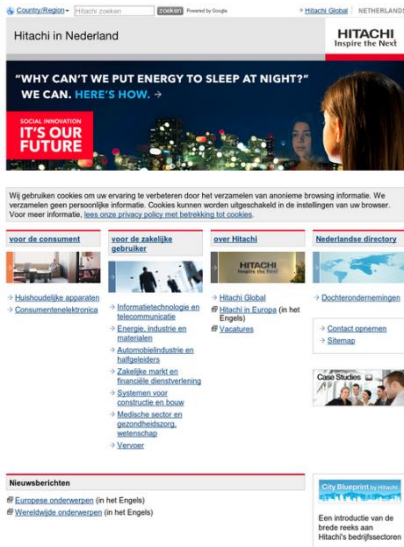
Figure A-2: Screenshots from homepages of Apple, General Electrics and Petrobras Companies



Netherlands homepage

Portugal homepage

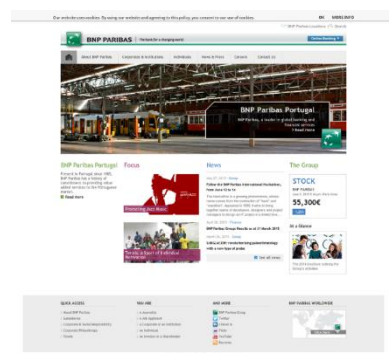
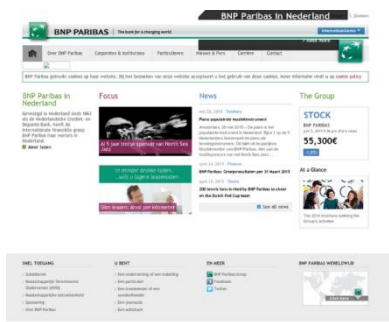
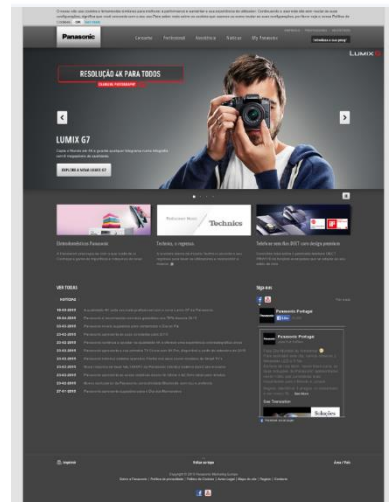
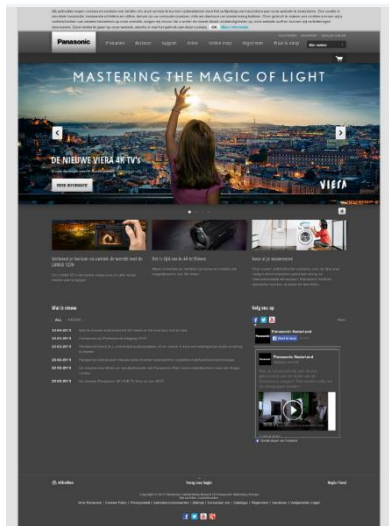
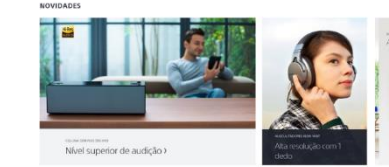
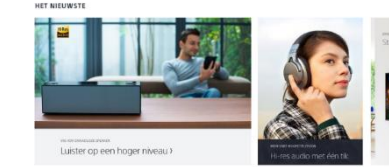
Figure A-3: Screenshots from homepages of Allianz, HP, Siemens and Nestle Companies



Netherlands homepage

Portugal homepage

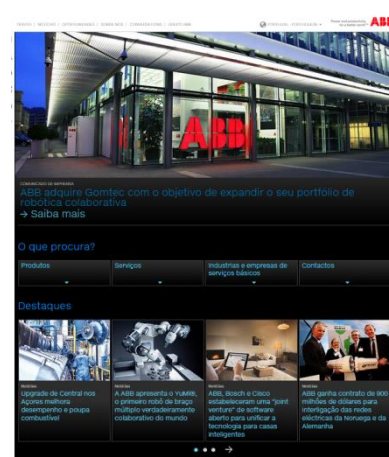
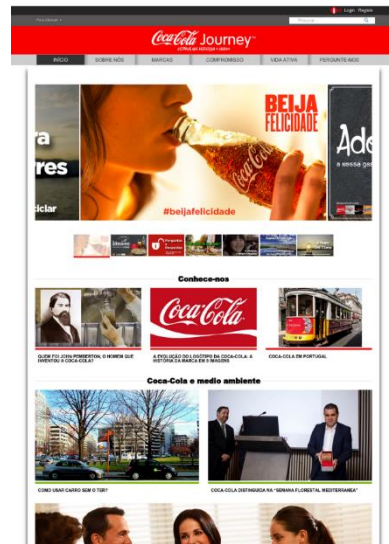
Figure A-4: Screenshots from homepages of Hitachi, Hyundai and Microsoft Companies



Netherlands homepage

Portugal homepage

Figure A-5: Screenshots from homepages of Sony, Panasonic and BNP Companies



Netherlands homepage

Portugal homepage

Figure A-6: Screenshots from homepages of Coca Cola, ABB, Accenture and NEC Companies

Appendix B

B. Appendix – Content Analysis sheets

Table B-1: The degree of depiction for each cultural dimensions: Individualism-Collectivism.

N	Name of company	Individualism-Collectivism													
		Community relations		Clubs or chat rooms		Newsletter		Family theme		Symbols and pictures		Loyalty programs		Links to Local websites	
		NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT
1	BP	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	5
2	Total	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5
3	Samsung Electronics	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	2	2
4	Apple	4	4	3	3	4	4	5	5	3	3	5	5	3	3
5	General Electric	4	4	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4
6	Petrobras	3	3	2	3	4	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	4
7	Allianz	4	3	2	2	5	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	5
8	HP	4	4	2	2	5	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4
9	Siemens	4	4	2	2	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
10	NESTLE	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	5	3	3	3	3	3	3
11	HITACHI	4	4	2	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
12	Hyundai motor	4	4	2	3	5	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4
13	Microsoft	4	4	5	3	5	4	3	4	4	3	5	4	4	5
14	Sony	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	5	4	4
15	Panasonic	3	3	2	3	4	4	4	4	3	2	4	4	4	4
16	BNP Paribas	4	4	3	2	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	4	4	3
17	Coca-Cola	5	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	5	4
18	ABB	3	4	3	4	5	4	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	4
19	Accenture	5	4	3	2	5	5	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	3
20	NEC	5	4	2	1	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	4

Table B-2: The degree of depiction for each cultural dimensions: Uncertainty avoidance.

N	Name of company	Uncertainty avoidance													
		Customer service		Guided navigation		Tradition theme		Local stores		Local terminology		Free trials or downloads		Toll-free numbers	
		NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT
1	BP	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	3	5	5	4	4
2	Total	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
3	Samsung Electronics	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4
4	Apple	5	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4
5	General Electric	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4
6	Petrobras	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	4	3	4	4	4	2	3
7	Allianz	5	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	3	4	3	4	4
8	HP	4	4	4	4	5	5	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	2
9	Siemens	4	4	3	5	5	5	5	5	2	3	2	3	5	4
10	NESTLE	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	3	4	3	4	4	4
11	HITACHI	4	4	5	5	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	4
12	Hyundai motor	4	4	3	5	3	3	3	4	5	4	5	3	3	4
13	Microsoft	5	5	4	5	3	3	5	5	3	3	5	5	4	5
14	Sony	5	4	5	4	3	3	5	5	3	3	4	3	4	4
15	Panasonic	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	4
16	BNP Paribas	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	3	4	4	4
17	Coca-Cola	5	4	5	4	4	5	3	3	5	4	3	3	4	4
18	ABB	4	4	5	5	3	5	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	4
19	Accenture	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	3	3	5	4	4	4
20	NEC	4	4	5	5	3	4	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	4

Table B-3: The degree of depiction for each cultural dimensions: Power distance.

N	Name of company	Power distance											
		Company hierarchy information		Pictures of CEOs		Quality assurance and awards		Vision statement		Pride of ownership appeal		Proper titles	
		NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT
1	BP	4	4	3	3	4	4	5	5	3	4	4	4
2	Total	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4
3	Samsung Electronics	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
4	Apple	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	4	4	5	5
5	General Electric	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	3	2	2	4	4
6	Petrobras	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
7	Allianz	3	4	2	5	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3
8	HP	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	3	3	5	5
9	Siemens	5	5	3	5	3	5	3	5	3	3	4	5
10	NESTLE	4	5	3	5	3	5	5	3	4	4	4	5
11	HITACHI	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
12	Hyundai motor	3	3	3	5	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	3
13	Microsoft	3	3	3	3	4	5	5	4	3	4	3	3
14	Sony	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3
15	Panasonic	4	4	5	5	3	4	3	3	2	3	4	4
16	BNP Paribas	3	4	3	3	5	5	4	3	3	4	3	4
17	Coca-Cola	3	3	2	3	4	4	5	3	4	4	3	3
18	ABB	3	3	3	3	4	5	3	3	3	3	3	3
19	Accenture	5	4	5	5	3	3	4	3	4	3	5	5
20	NEC	3	3	3	3	5	5	3	3	4	3	3	3

Table B-4: The degree of depiction for each cultural dimensions: Masculinity- femininity.

N	Name of company	Masculinity- femininity							
		Quizzes and games		Realism theme		Product effectiveness		Clear gender roles	
		NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT
1	BP	2	2	4	4	4	5	1	1
2	Total	2	2	4	4	5	5	1	1
3	Samsung Electronics	2	2	3	3	5	5	1	1
4	Apple	3	3	3	3	4	4	1	1
5	General Electric	2	2	4	4	4	4	1	1
6	Petrobras	2	3	2	3	4	4	1	1
7	Allianz	2	2	3	3	4	3	3	2
8	HP	2	2	3	4	4	4	1	1
9	Siemens	2	2	4	3	3	5	1	1
10	NESTLE	2	2	3	3	5	5	1	1
11	HITACHI	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	3
12	Hyundai motor	2	2	2	2	5	5	1	1
13	Microsoft	4	3	3	3	5	5	1	1
14	Sony	4	4	2	2	4	4	1	1
15	Panasonic	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	3
16	BNP Paribas	4	4	4	3	4	4	1	2
17	Coca-Cola	3	3	2	3	4	4	1	1
18	ABB	2	2	3	3	4	4	1	1
19	Accenture	3	2	4	3	4	3	1	4
20	NEC	2	2	4	3	4	4	1	1

Table B-5: The degree of depiction for each cultural dimensions: High-context culture and Low-context culture.

N	Name of company	Low-High context													
		Politeness and indirectness		Soft-sell approach		Aesthetics		Hard-sell approach		Use of superlatives		Rank or prestige of the company		Terms and condition of purchase	
		NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT	NL	PT
1	BP	3	3	2	2	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4
2	Total	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	4
3	Samsung Electronics	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
4	Apple	2	3	3	2	4	4	5	5	4	4	3	3	5	5
5	General Electric	2	2	2	2	1	1	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4
6	Petrobras	3	2	3	2	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3
7	Allianz	2	3	2	3	2	1	3	3	4	2	4	2	3	2
8	HP	3	2	3	2	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	5	5
9	Siemens	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	3	5	3	3	3	4
10	NESTLE	2	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	4	3	3	3
11	HITACHI	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3
12	Hyundai motor	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	4	3	5	5
13	Microsoft	2	3	3	2	5	5	4	5	4	4	3	3	4	4
14	Sony	3	3	2	3	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	5	5
15	Panasonic	2	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	5	4
16	BNP Paribas	3	2	4	4	3	2	4	4	5	4	4	3	4	3
17	Coca-Cola	2	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	5	4	4	4	3	3
18	ABB	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	5
19	Accenture	3	2	3	2	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4
20	NEC	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	5	4	5	5	4	4

