



Cross-Cultural Corporate Communication in the Digital Space: Evidence from Société Générale's Country-Specific Websites

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Abstract:

This study explores the manifestations of cross-cultural business communication within the digital environment. As it is a type of communication that focuses on weaving diverse and multifaceted relationships, it contributes to bridging distances and creating grounds for understanding and respect amidst the cultural diversity of various contexts, markets, and countries. Through a descriptive analysis of qualitative data from Société Générale's country-specific websites, accessed between April and May 2024 this research highlights how the bank adapts its digital communication strategies to align with the cultural particularities of each country. Despite its French origins, Société Générale demonstrates a localized approach in its online presence, customizing content and communication styles to align with the distinct cultural attributes of each market/society where it operates.

Keywords: société générale, digital communication, cross-cultural communication, corporate country-specific websites

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since the emergence of the internet, societies have seen significant changes and developments, most notably the transformations in contemporary life driven by modern communication technologies. These advancements have reshaped nearly every aspect of life, compelling societies to adapt and accept them as an inevitable reality. This shift has ushered humanity into a new phase of evolution (Abugre & Debrah, 2019, pp. 86-90). In business communications, corporate websites serve as powerful marketing tools for organizations, effectively reaching nearly 5.35 billion worldwide internet users, representing 66% of the global population (DataReportal, 2024). Naturally, achieving this level of consumer engagement is nearly impossible through traditional marketing techniques. This has led to the emergence of digital markets. However, simply having a website does not guarantee success. Thus, website design and content have become crucial aspects of digital marketing, now widely adopted by transnational corporations to market their products and improve their image and reputation (Zieita, 2022, p. 743).

The success of global and international companies in transnational contexts is a significant challenge, as it depends on cultural factors that must be considered when designing corporate websites for each country (Kashif et al., 2021, p. 1810). For businesses, cultural factors act as invisible barriers in cross-cultural communication (Frame, 2009, p. 10). We can explain these communication barriers using the concept of six stumbling blocks: language differences, nonverbal misinterpretations, assumption of similarity, preconceptions and stereotypes, tendency to evaluate and high anxiety (Gašpar et Al., 2023, p. 236). Accordingly, Cultural awareness, understanding cultural differences, and recognizing how businesses operate across cultures are vital for international business success. Cross-cultural communication refers to communication that occurs between individuals from different cultures. This means that a message produced in one culture may carry a different meaning and be interpreted differently in another culture (Nyemba, 2022, p. 82).

2. Literature review

Culture and how to communicate within it on an international level have long been central topics of research (corrected for grammar and flow) (Kashif et al., 2021, p. 1811). Singh and Matsou (2004) conducted one of earliest studies to focus on identifying cultural differences on corporations' websites, particularly the differences between American and Japanese websites. Their research was founded on three theoretical models: Hall's model (1976), Hofstede's model (1980-1991), and Trompenaars' model (1994) to assess the extent of cultural representation on websites. Their findings highlighted significant cultural differences in website design and content in the portrayal of cultural values on American and Japanese websites. In 2005, Singh et al., explored the depiction of cultural values on international websites, where they found that that



local web sites of India, China, Japan and US not only reflect cultural values of the country of their origin, but also seem to differ significantly from each other on cultural dimensions.

Building on this foundation, Wurtz (2006) explored cross-cultural communication by analyzing McDonald's country-specific websites from both high-context and low-context cultures. The study showed that websites in high-context cultures employed more implicit and visual communication styles, while those in low-context cultures relied on direct and explicit messaging. These results provided further evidence of cultural variations in corporate communication strategies across digital platforms.

Kashfi et al. (2021) expanded on these studies by examining cross-cultural communication through corporate websites. Employing content analysis, Hofstede's cultural dimensions model, and Hall's high- and low-context communication framework, their findings revealed that corporate websites not only reflect local cultural values but also mirror the national cultural stance through their design and content. This study emphasized the importance of tailoring digital communication to local cultural norms.

The main objective of this study is to explore how cross-cultural communication manifests in the digital space by analyzing the websites of Société Générale. This involves exploring the concept of cross-cultural corporate communication, identifying the communication strategies used across the various country-specific websites of Société Générale, examining the prominent cultural dimensions reflected on these country-specific websites, and understanding how cultural differences are leveraged in their design and content. Société Générale, as an international bank with many country-specific websites, aligns seamlessly with the focus of this study on cross-cultural corporate communication in the digital environment. Its active online presence, marked by diverse cultural, linguistic, and communication strategies, highlights the significance of studying its websites to understand cross-cultural differences. This revealed a rich display of cultural diversity and dimensions, inspiring further analysis of these elements.

While numerous studies have examined cross-cultural communication within multinational corporations, there is a lack of focused research on how a singular corporate culture is adapted and communicated differently across country-specific contexts due to local cultural differences that may drive unique expectations for local audiences. Existing literature often treats cross-cultural communication as a general phenomenon but does not dive deeply into how an international corporation, like Société Générale with a unified corporate identity, customizes its communication strategies across diverse cultural landscapes.

The significance of our study comes from emphasizing the dual challenge faced by multinational corporations: maintaining a consistent global brand identity while effectively adapting to local cultural nuances. By examining the cross-cultural communication practices of Société Générale's country-specific branches and websites, this research will provide actionable insights into how corporations can strategically balance global consistency with local relevance. This contribution will fill a critical gap in the literature by offering a nuanced understanding of the



interplay between corporate culture and local cultural influences in digital communication strategies.

The foundation of research on cross-cultural communication lies in understanding cultural dimensions and their impact on organizational practices and individuals' behavior and preferences. Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory (Hofstede et al., 2010) provides a framework for analyzing specific elements such as individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance, which influence communication styles. Based on Hofstede's model, we posed the following first research question:

RQ1. What cultural dimensions are evident on Société Générale's country-specific websites?

Similarly, Hall's (1976) model, which revolves around the concept of high-context and low-context cultures that emphasizes the role of implicit vs. explicit communication in shaping user expectations. Accordingly, the second research question was formulated as followed:

RQ2. What communication styles are employed on Société Générale's country-specific websites?

3. Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative research design, aiming to observe and interpret reality as it exists. The primary objective is to explore the cultural dimensions that underpin cross-cultural communication within the context of Société Générale, focusing specifically on the cultural differences reflected in its country-specific websites. The descriptive approach is demonstrated through the analysis of Société Générale's websites, accessed between April and May 2024, spanning various countries with diverse cultural contexts. This qualitative data analysis examines how these websites reflect and disseminate cultural diversity. Additionally, the study investigates the degrees of cultural variance between high-context and low-context countries, providing a comprehensive view of cross-cultural communication strategies in the digital space.

We selected six websites representing various branches of Société Générale in culturally diverse contexts: France, Algeria, Turkey, Cameroon, Malaysia, and Canada. In this selection we aimed to include countries from different continents: Turkey (Asia/Europe) and Canada (North America), which are characterized as low-context cultures. In these cultures, communication is explicit, direct, and relies heavily on the clarity of language to convey meaning (Ferany & Fikriasih, 2013).

On the other hand, high-context cultures such as Algeria and Cameroon (Africa), France (Europe), and Malaysia (Asia) were also included. While these countries share a high-context communication style, they exhibit significant cultural differences. For instance, Algeria and Cameroon, though both located in Africa, are culturally distinct. Algeria is a North African Arab-



Muslim country, whereas Cameroon is a Sub-Saharan African country with its own unique cultural identity (Stephen, 2012). This diversity provides a rich basis for analyzing cross-cultural communication as reflected in the websites of Société Générale's branches. Accordingly, our selection of these countries will help us understand how the culture of each context influences the development and design of websites belonging to the same mother company, Société Générale.

Based on the literature review on cross-cultural corporate communication, the model adopted in our study is a combination of two models: Hall's 1976 model, which examines the cultural context of societies after high and low cultural context, and Hofstede's 1980 model, which revolves around five cultural dimensions that distinguish societies: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity versus femininity, and long-term versus short-term orientation (Hofstede, 2011). To study how culture and its various dimensions affect the websites of multinational companies, this model methodologically helps us to identify the cultural dimensions and the cultural context adopted by Société Générale in its six culturally diverse branches' websites selected, each from a different continent and culture (France, Algeria, Turkey, Cameroon, Malaysia, and Canada).

4. Results and discussion

This section presents we analyze the content of Société Générale's country-specific websites, across its branches in Algeria, France, Canada, Turkey, Malaysia, and Cameroon. The analysis is based on the cultural differences between these countries, as outlined by Hall's model. Additionally, other factors such as power distance, individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity versus femininity, and long-term orientation, as proposed by Hofstede's model, are analyzed. The primary focus is on how successfully the bank's branches communicate across cultures using their websites.

4.1. Analysis of communication style differences in Société Générale's country-specific websites according to Hall's Model:

Through our analysis of the websites of Société Générale's various country-specific websites, we were able to identify differences in the communication used by the multinational corporation, which were observed due to the cultural context of the websites. This indicates that the bank's branches communicate differently due to differences in cultural values, as demonstrated by Hall's model. The theoretical aspects of this model have been detailed previously, and we present them in the table 1:

**Table 1. Analyzing communication style differences in different cultural contexts**

Société Générale Branch	Cultural Context	Connotations
Cameroon	High	Politeness, humility, soft-selling approach, aesthetics, linguistic diversity, high-quality images and videos
Algeria	High	Politeness, humility, community focus, linguistic diversity, soft-selling approach, high-quality images and videos
Turkey	Low	Company prestige, superlatives, hard-selling approach
France	High	Linguistic diversity, high-quality images and videos, soft-selling approach, aesthetics, politeness, humility
Malaysia	High	Linguistic diversity, soft-selling approach, aesthetics, high-quality images and videos
Canada	Low	Terms of service, superlatives, hard-selling approach

Source: The authors based on Hall's model

After identifying the communication style differences within the cultural context of each website as presented in the table 1, we were able to pinpoint both the cultural similarities and differences among the branches. Now, we will analyze these cultural differences, which we have summarized in Table 1, and how they have influenced the cultures of their respective societies:

Low-context culture.

Table 1, according to Hall (1976), indicates that Turkey and Canada have low-context cultures. Consequently, the Turkish and Canadian Société Générale's websites communicate with their customers considering the low cultural context of their societies. For instance, companies in these countries employ a hard-selling approach by focusing on the benefits and the quality of their services. Moreover, they establish partnerships with global companies and finance renewable energy projects to build trust with their customers and increase Société Générale's profits. Therefore, the hard-selling approach is based on the quality of services provided by corporations to their audience in order to win them over.

Regarding the element of company prestige, Société Générale's websites in Turkey and Canada, being in low-context cultures, maintain a strong and positive reputation. Individuals in low-context cultures typically gravitate towards status and prestige. Therefore, gaining a reputation in Canada and Turkey is crucial for business success. The bank uses terms such as 'the bank of the future' and 'the leading bank' to convey this prestige. Furthermore, due to the direct communication style prevalent in low-context cultures, the Turkish website, for example, includes



an entire page dedicated to showcasing the bank's project contracts, thus fostering customer loyalty. It is expected for low-context cultures tend to use a lot of superlatives. They typically communicate with detailed and clearly defined information. In the Canadian and Turkish websites, communication is characterized by a series of superlatives used by the brand. For instance, they use the slogan 'the leading company in providing advanced services'.

Moreover, in countries with low-context cultures like Canada and Turkey, there are strict laws and regulations that require corporations to present all information explicitly. For instance, the Société Générale's Turkish website provides employment terms and conditions set by the bank. Consequently, the direct, detailed, and specific communication style characteristic of these cultures, clearly reflected in the websites of the Turkish and Canadian branches, helps foster successful customer relationships.

High-Context Culture.

Table 1. shows that high-context cultures websites communicate differently compared to low-context cultures. According to Hall (1976), the analysis of high-quality websites from various countries reveals this difference. These websites feature a large number of images and videos to attract customers. This is because people in high-context cultures feel more comfortable with nonverbal communication and non-verbal messages. They rely on high context through existing literature and information that indicates the use of non-textual communication means. For instance, images on Malaysian, Algerian, French, and Cameroonian websites link to new pages with additional information. Images of employees, executives, and funded projects are commonly used on these sites.

Furthermore, unlike low-context cultures, high-context cultures use a soft-selling approach when communicating with their target audience (customers). This is because this indirect approach targets the emotions of customers to generate profits. For example, the use of images of children, families, and promotional offers in the Algerian, French, Cameroonian, and Malaysian websites. This means that regardless of the services provided by the bank, the indirect use of tangible aspects of the services is a crucial aspect of communication in high-context cultures.

Regarding politeness and humility in high-context countries, these cultures rely on politeness and humility on their websites to foster customer trust. For instance, they often include a greeting from the CEO as a fundamental part of the website, and use humble language such as 'we offer our services to a certain extent' or 'thank you for your trust' in the Cameroon website. These phrases exemplify this characteristic.

Additionally, high-context cultures value linguistic diversity. We observed that the websites of France, Cameroon, Malaysia, and Algeria use multiple languages. For example, the French website uses French, the local language, and English; the Malaysian website uses Japanese and



English; the Cameroonian website uses English and French; and the Algerian website uses Arabic and French. This is in contrast to low-context countries which typically use only the local language. High-context countries view linguistic diversity as a crucial element for multinational institutions. A multilingual website allows a company to reach a wider audience of customers, investors, and partners from around the world, and enables users to access information in their own language without the need for translation. Although some internet browsers now offer features that suggest the possibility of translating web pages, having a multilingual website provides a more seamless experience.

Furthermore, high-context cultures emphasize and focus on aesthetics. We noticed that websites from high-context countries often use a white background. White signifies peace, tranquility, and purity. These websites use white backgrounds to facilitate reading, interaction with content, and to deliver a clear and understandable message to a diverse audience. Additionally, they use warm colors such as red and black, which are associated with many positive values. These colors often convey enthusiasm, power, and superiority. High-context countries typically use these colors on their websites to attract and influence customers. Knowing that the black, red and white are the visual identity colors of Société Générale.

4.2. Analysis of Générale's country-specific websites content according to Hofstede's Model:

The analysis of Société Générale's country-specific websites abled us to identify the cultural characteristics on each website. This was done to understand the sources of cultural differences between countries, and to utilize Hofstede's model.

Table 2. Cultural Dimensions in Société Générale's Country-Specific Websites

country-specific websites	Power Distance	Individualism/Collectivism	Uncertainty Avoidance	Masculinity/Femininity	Time Orientation
Canada	-Distributed authority. - Employee information - Vision statement - Quality assurance and awards	- Personal freedom - Encouraging individual decision-making - Lack of links to local sites	- Directed navigation - Tradition topic - Tolerance and ambiguity	- Product efficiency. - Undefined gender roles - Imagination theme	- Future planning - Sustainable growth - Investment
Cameroon	- Hierarchical structure - Photos of important people - Quality attributes and awards	- Community relations. - Links to local sites - Family theme - Newsletter	- Directed navigation - Customer service - Innovation and creativity	- Realism topic - Defined gender roles	- Future planning - Investment

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			- Free numbers		
Turkey	- Distributed authority - Quality assurance and awards - Vision statement	- Privacy - Encouraging individual decision-making - Lack of links to local sites	- Simple customer service - Tolerance and ambiguity - Directed navigation	- Undefined gender roles - Product efficiency - Imagination	- Investment - Long-term financing
Algeria	- Photos of important people - Hierarchical structure - Titles and positions - Ownership	- Community relations - Consumer loyalty programs - Family topic - Links to social media	- Customer service - Directed navigation - Local terminology - toll-free numbers	- Realism topic - Product efficiency - Defined gender roles	- Sustainable growth - Future planning - Investments
Malaysia	- Quality attributes and awards - Photos of important people - Hierarchical structure	- Links to social media - Community relations - Family topic	- Directed navigation. - Customer service - Local terminology	- Realism topic - Undefined gender roles - Product efficiency	- Sustainable growth - Future planning - Investments
France	- Hierarchical structure - Titles and positions - Photos of important people	- Community relations - Family topic - Links to websites - Chat rooms - Newsletter	- Navigation - Customer service - Directed navigation - Free numbers	- Undefined gender roles - Imagination and images	- Sustainable development - Future planning - Customer financing

Source: The authors based on Hofstede's model

After identifying the key cultural characteristics of each country based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions outlined in the table above, we will analyze these cultural differences and how they influence the respective societies' cultures on Société Générale's country-specific websites:

Power Distance.

The data presented in Table 2 above indicate that Société Générale's websites in France, Malaysia, Algeria, Cameroon, Canada, and Turkey communicate differently. Regarding the cultural dimension of power distance, the analysis reveals that websites of the French, Malaysian, Algerian, and Cameroonian Société Générale's branches feature hierarchical information, images, and videos about the bank and its senior management. This is because these countries manifest high power distance. As a result, privileges in the bank are typically reserved for managers, which is considered normal. Decision-making authority is shared through hierarchical levels, where a



specific objective is divided among various levels according to job positions. Therefore, these branches rely on relatively long hierarchical structures.

The analyzed websites provide information, award certifications, and testimonials from satisfied customers, along with the implementation of a high-leadership approach focused on employee motivation. Additionally, these Société Générale's branches emphasize offering solutions to clients, such as financial B2B solutions that help develop and grow other companies. It is common to see recommendations from trusted individuals on the websites of Malaysia, Algeria, France and Cameroon. These recommendations are used to improve customer trust in their services and communication, as well as to build the brand's credibility and legitimacy. These elements help convey the values of management, which is considered crucial in the high-power distance cultures of these branches (Algeria, France, Cameroon, Malaysia).

In contrast, the websites of Société Générale in Canada and Turkey provide less information compared to those of France, Malaysia, Algeria, and Cameroon. Apart from hierarchical information, the websites of the four previously mentioned branches also publish their vision and mission statements. For instance, the French website shares a mission statement aiming to "Build a better future for our clients and a sustainable one by providing responsible and innovative financial solutions over the long term". On the other hand, the Canadian and Turkish websites, representing low power distance countries, do not display mission and vision statements. Endorsing such statements is not a part of the prevailing communication style in their cultures. The low power distance is characterized by the emphasis on ownership and efforts to achieve brand ownership due to its inherent low-context culture nature. Furthermore, these websites contain limited information. The Société Générale's Turkish website focuses on regulations, monitoring, and providing insufficient services, while the Canadian website highlights equal task distribution among employees. Moreover, the Canadian website reflects democratic values, indicating the low level of social differentiation within Canadian society.

Collectivism/Individualism Dimension.

In this cultural dimension, we analyzed the topics of family, community practices, the presence or absence of links to local social media sites, loyalty programs, and newsletters in the study of Société Générale's on its specific-country websites (France, Malaysia, Canada, Turkey, Cameroon, Algeria). Our analysis revealed that the websites of Algeria, Cameroon, France, and Malaysia reflect the collectivist culture of their companies, which is deeply rooted in their target societies/markets. These branches rely on family topics by using images of employees and their families working within the group, as well as frequent use of the pronoun "We" in their messages to the target audience. For instance, the French website often uses sentences like, "Together, we provide you with financial services and solutions", enabling clients to connect with their brand



through the family topic (collectivism).

In contrast, the websites of Canada and Turkey show a different scenario. Given the individualistic nature of these cultures, the findings indicate that the brand websites exhibit a non-collectivist culture, emphasizing personal freedom for employees, encouraging individual decision-making, and not providing links to local social media sites. On the other hand, the websites of Algeria, Cameroon, Malaysia and France provide these links. In collectivist societies, individuals heavily invest in their relationships with customers and the stakeholders as a whole. The presence of local site links demonstrates that Société Générale strives to maintain strong communication with its stakeholders.

Community relationships are another significant feature evident on the Société Générale's websites of collectivist cultures. By comparing the data collected from its different country-specific websites, we argue that Société Générale engages in various programs monitoring community practices, focusing on collaboration and solidarity, and supporting the social systems based on social responsibility. For example, brands offering local social media links, as previously mentioned, further highlight the findings that Malaysian, French, Algerian, and Cameroonian websites provide more links to local pages, unlike their Canadian and Turkish counterparts.

The existence of customer loyalty programs facilitates building long lasting relationships and fostering a sense of loyalty, which is crucial in collectivist cultures. Newsletters serve as a means of creating a sense of belonging and membership in collectivist communities, such as those of Algeria, France, Cameroon and Malaysia. On the other hand, Canadian and Turkish websites lack these features, focusing instead on catering to the individual (individualism). These findings align with the work of Singh and Matsuo (2004), as well as Hofstede's cultural dimensions framework.

Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension.

Regarding the dimension of uncertainty avoidance, we analyzed customer service, navigation tools, and the topic of tradition in the content of the observed websites. The results indicate that customer service is presented through customer care offerings for multiple services, as well as advice and solutions provided by experts in the field. This feature is available on the websites of Société Générale in Algeria, France, and Cameroon compared to those of Canada, Malaysia, and Turkey. This is because, in societies with high uncertainty avoidance like France, Algeria, and Cameroon, target audience is more likely to expect to receive comforting information resulting in detailed service columns and quick responses to emails and comments.

As for offering solutions to customers, these are more common on websites with low uncertainty avoidance, as societies with this trait are more tolerant of ambiguity and risky situations. They provide simpler customer services, such as not responding to emails or not



offering this service on the website. This was observed on the websites of Société Générale in Turkey, Malaysia and Canada.

Navigation tools are also an important feature in societies with high uncertainty avoidance, offering detailed instructions, clear rules, and direct navigation tools. These tools improve customer confidence and provide comfort while browsing. This quality was observed in Société Générale's Cameroon, France and Algeria websites, unlike those in Turkey, Canada and Malaysia websites, which offer numerous hyperlinks and sliding bars in multiple directions, making navigation more complex and ambiguous.

As for risk management and decision-making, countries with high uncertainty avoidance, such as Algeria, France and Cameroon, provide this feature on their websites. In contrast, Turkish, Malaysian, and Canadian websites, which show low uncertainty avoidance, do not offer this feature. They rely more on risk and ambiguity, as previously mentioned.

Finally, free trials, downloads, and toll-free numbers are present on the websites of countries with high uncertainty avoidance (Algeria, France, and Cameroon). These sites offer free services, such as the Cameroonian website, which provides current accounts with interest, caters to youth needs (e.g., students), and offers annual subscriptions under specific conditions (e.g., for individuals aged 18-29 planning to take their first steps into the professional world). They also provide toll-free numbers to contact bank staff at any time. Conversely, websites from countries with low uncertainty avoidance (Malaysia, Canada, Turkey) lack these features. These findings are supported by the work of Singh and Matsuo (2004), as well as Hofstede's cultural dimensions framework.

Masculinity/Femininity Dimension.

In this dimension, we analyzed the topics of realism, clearly defined gender roles and product effectiveness through the content of the analyzed websites. The results indicate that emphasis is placed on service attributes and the strength of service quality provided by the Société Générale on the websites of Algeria and Cameroon. This can be attributed to the fact that masculine societies focus on valuable and powerful elements. Conversely, countries like Canada and Turkey, which are predominantly feminine societies, value traits such as imagination, appreciation for nature, and nurturing.

As for countries reflecting a balance between masculine and feminine values—like Malaysia and France, which demonstrate moderate masculinity—they blend features from both high-masculinity and high-femininity societies.



Regarding the clearly defined gender roles, these are commonly observed on the websites of Cameroon and Algeria. For example, women are employed in roles such as telephone operators and customer service, while men occupy higher-value positions. On Algerian and Cameroonian sites, the majority executives or department heads are male. Accordingly, visuals suggest a masculine cultural orientation, emphasizing traditional gender roles and hierarchical structures. In contrast, websites from Canada, Turkey, France, and Malaysia exhibit more egalitarian practices. Roles are assigned based on expertise, regardless of gender. Visuals in these cultures often highlight women's leadership capabilities, reflecting the values of either highly feminine (low masculinity) or moderately masculine societies.

Long-Term Orientation Dimension.

In this dimension, we analyzed the websites of the Société Générale across six selected branches (France, Malaysia, Algeria, Canada, Turkey, Cameroon). We noticed that all the websites, without exception, emphasized sustainable development and a future-oriented vision. This was reflected through the use of the slogan "The Future is You", indicating that the bank, across all branches, focuses on future planning through investments and funding for new projects. The websites also contain information confirming that the bank operates under long-term contractual frameworks. Additionally, all the analyzed websites highlight the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) management, which, according to many scholars (Gamerschlag et al., 2011; Nam, 2011; Capron, 2003), is derived from the principles of sustainable development.

After identifying the characteristics of cross-cultural communication for the Société Générale's websites included in our study sample, we were able to understand the dynamics of cultural differences and similarities between these countries. The findings are summarized in the table 2:

Table 3. Cultural differences for each country

Cultural Dimensions	France	Malaysia	Turkey	Cameroon	Algeria	Canada
Power Distance	High Power	High Power	Low Power	High Power	High Power	Low Power
Collectivism/Individualism	Collective Values	Collective Values	Individual Values	Collective Values	Collective Values	Individual Values
Uncertainty Avoidance	High Certainty	Low Uncertainty	Low Uncertainty	High Certainty	High Certainty	Low Uncertainty
Masculinity/Femininity	Masculine to Feminine	Masculine to Feminine	Feminine Values	Masculine Values	Masculine Values	Feminine Values
Time Orientation	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term



Cultural Context	High Context	High Context	Low Context	High Context	High Context	Low Context
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Source: The authors based on Hofstede & Hall's cultural dimensions

5. Conclusion

Through our exploration of the cross-cultural communication strategies adopted by Société Générale's international branches, a rich tapestry of cultural diversity emerged. This study has illuminated how the bank's online communication styles and cultural dimensions mirror the unique social fabric of each country it operates in, providing valuable insights into the interplay between global consistency and local adaptation.

The analysis of the websites revealed a thoughtful approach to aligning with cultural contexts. Branches in high-context cultures, like Algeria, France, Malaysia, and Cameroon, leverage visual and non-verbal cues to foster a sense of connection and ease for their audiences. Meanwhile, branches in low-context cultures, such as Canada and Turkey, prioritize clarity and direct communication to meet the expectations of their respective users.

Cultural dimensions, as outlined by Hofstede, further showcased the bank's ability to navigate the nuances of power distance, individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity versus femininity. For example, branches in Algeria and Cameroon reflect high power distance and collectivist values, emphasizing teamwork and hierarchical structures. In contrast, Canada and Turkey champion individualism and gender equality, offering more egalitarian and autonomous user experiences.

The consistent long-term orientation across all branches' underscores Société Générale's commitment to sustainability and future-focused strategies, resonating with global values while honoring local customs through the implementation of specific CSR programs tailored to each branch's host country.

Ultimately, this study highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity in corporate communication. It demonstrates how a multinational institution like Société Générale can build bridges across cultures, fostering trust and engagement by respecting and embracing diversity. As organizations increasingly operate in a globalized world, this approach offers a blueprint for balancing the universal and the particular—a necessary art for meaningful, effective communication in today's interconnected landscape.



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