

EFFECTIVENESS OF ENDORSEMENT ON ADVERTISEMENT: A CUSTOMER PRESPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Consumers who are particularly knowledgeable about a product or service or have strongly established attitudes may be less influenced by a celebrity than those with little knowledge or neutral attitudes. For example one study found that college-age students were more likely to have positive feelings toward a product endorsed by a celebrity than were older consumers. Tellis (1998) discussed financial risks as a risk associated with celebrity endorsements. Celebrity endorsements have become a part of many advertisers' promotional strategy and companies pay millions of dollars each year for the endorsements of their products by athletes.²¹ It is important for advertisers to consider if the celebrity endorser is worth the investment. For example, the costs associated with using celebrities as endorsers are rising. Some celebrities endorse several products, sometimes even switching their endorsements to rival brands; the negative publicity generated by some celebrities has added the potential risk of negative impact which can result in decreased sales.

Key words; knowledgeable, product, service, attitudes, influenced.

INTRODUCTION

Marketers recognize that people are more likely to be influenced by a message coming from someone with whom they feel a sense of similarity. If the communicator and receiver have similar needs, goals, interests, and lifestyles, the position advocated by the source is better understood and received. This statement explains why so many commercials choose as their protagonists someone who is "from the target group". An example could be the stereotypical housewife in an advertising film whose aim is to persuade the segment described as "housewife" about the virtues of a washing powder. However, such similarity is not always desired or indeed attractive or appropriate. Hence the recognition of the value of celebrities when designing advertising campaign. Marketers think that a popular definition of celebrity can be expanded to include the following.

1. Celebrity Performers (including: actors, musicians, comedians, athletes, hosts, news anchors, politicians etc.)
2. Celebrity Characters (including James Bond, Batman etc)
3. Synthetic Celebrities: These are also characters but in less human form. Examples include animated action hero Lara Croft from Tomb Raider video games.

In all three cases, celebrities appear to be quite similar to product brands. They are designed and managed to communicate a core set of values with the goal of creating long term relationships. In addition, consumers interact with celebrity products derived from all three types of celebrities in identical ways.

Celebrity will favorably influence consumers' feelings, attitudes, and purchase behavior.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Endorsement Defined: An endorsement is a vote of approval for something. Therefore, marketers actively seek the public or visible endorsements of their products and services from various bodies and people. Endorsements can include approvals that may be affixed to packaging or celebrity endorsements perhaps by featuring in advertisements for the firm.

Celebrity Defined: Globalization and power that modern media hold over the consumers societies have contributed to the popularity of various celebrities. Since information and news programs, as well half truths and celebrity rumors and all sorts of celebrity gossip are being transferred and disseminated with the speed of light, there is incredible pressure on the media to bring into focus any celebrities that the international audience are interested in.

Probably most famous definition comes from the cultural theorist Daniel Boorstin in his 1961 book, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, he cynically describes celebrities as people well known for their "well-knownness". He asserts that celebrities are neither heroes nor leaders, but instead are characters living scripted and directed lives. He describes celebrities as products of Hollywood, deceiving consumers into thinking they are "real" people.

Target Audiences' Receptivity

Consumers who are particularly knowledgeable about a product or service or have strongly established attitudes may be less influenced by a celebrity than those with little knowledge or neutral attitudes. For example one study found that college-age students were more likely to have positive feelings toward a product endorsed by a celebrity than were older consumers.

Several entertainers and athletes have been involved in activities that could embarrass the companies whose products they endorsed.² Negative information about celebrity endorsers can have a negative impact on the consumers' perception of the celebrity as well as the endorsed

product.¹³ If a celebrity who is strongly associated with a brand gets negative publicity then the occurrence of the negative information about the celebrity will also activate in memory, to some degree, the endorsed brand. The association between brand and celebrity generates the possibility that one's evaluation of the celebrity may be transferred to the brand. Therefore, it is always a risk that negative publicity about a celebrity can tarnish the endorsed brand.

To protect themselves against these kinds of problems companies often research a celebrity's personal life and background. Often companies put a moral clause in the endorsement contracts that allows the company to break the contract if controversy arises. However, the marketers should remember that adding moral clauses to their endorsement contracts only gets them out of trouble; it does not prevent them.²

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Some advertisers use many different celebrities to endorse a particular product or brand. Using a mix of celebrity endorsers for one product can be valuable for appealing to various audiences which the product is aimed at. It has been indicated that a product / brand might have wide range of consumers and that multiple endorsements can help to cover the whole target audience. However, it is also cautioned that using several different celebrities can cause confusion amongst consumers about the brand's identity. Advertisers should make sure that every celebrity possesses compatible meanings that are sought for the brand.

EXTINCTION

The positive association that has occurred between the celebrity endorser and the brand may weaken over time, particularly if the brand receives a lot of attention without association with the celebrity. Although it is not expected that every time a consumer encounters a brand that the celebrity endorser image has to be present, marketers should integrate the celebrity into the brand's marketing mix. When it comes to athlete endorser it is not unusual that the athlete is more successful in the beginning of the contractual term, but then become less successful or lose his or her fame. The athlete could for example get injured or just not perform as well as he or she used to. This could result in the fact that the athlete might not be the endorser, the company is looking for.

Celebrities can be very effective in the endorsements of products; however, they can also be dangerous. The advantages of using a celebrity are that they can increase attention to and memorability of an advertisement and product, enhance credibility of the message, and imbue a product with positive characteristics. The disadvantage or danger is that if a celebrity suffers a negative image at some later stage, it can be passed on to the product being endorsed.