

Abstract

While traditional advertising has been compromised and discredited by consumers, product placement is becoming an important tool used by marketers and communicators. This technique is seductive for practitioners and generally gets consumers' affection. Most previous researches have left aside consumers' behaviour toward this technique in order to measure its effectiveness and how far it will be accepted, which is the aim of this dissertation. It is helped by a deeper understanding of its ability to create brand awareness, brand recall but also factors that trigger purchase intention.

Introduction

The major contributions are focused on the effectiveness of product placements by understanding consumers' behaviour. In addition, the researcher aimed at fulfilling gaps observed in previous literature review. The researcher chose to focus on product placements in blockbuster films.

Do product placements in blockbuster films have a real impact on consumers' behaviour (French citizens) toward brands and are they as effective as traditional advertising in terms of return on investment for brands?

Objectives:

- 1 To investigate the general attitude of consumers toward advertising
- 2 To investigate the general understanding of product placements in films by consumers
- 3 To investigate product placements in films on brand awareness.
- 4 To investigate product placements in films on brand recall
- 5 To investigate product placements in films on brand attitude
- 6 To investigate product placements in films on purchase intention.

Methodology

Research Philosophy: **Interpretivism.** Empathetic stance to understand differences between humans as social actors.

Research Approach: **Inductive.** The research is concerned with the context in which such events were taking place.

Research Strategy: **Survey.** Research technique in which data are collected through a questionnaire or/and an interview based on a representative sample of individuals.

Methodological Choices: **Mixed methods research.** It is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques.

Time Horizon: **Cross-sectional study.** Also called snapshot time horizon, it is used when the study is conducted on a specific time and phenomenon.

Population Sample: **Non-probability technique.** This research used volunteers from the French filmgoers

Research Findings

"If you notice it, it's bad. But if you don't notice, it's worthless."

The paradox evoked by Ephron (2003) was verified by the researcher. Subtlety is a necessity when using this technique in order not to make viewers uncomfortable and not to create rejection. Besides, Homer (2009) identified a general acceptance of product placement. Nonetheless, the researcher discovered that, instead of acceptance, the trend was indifference. Viewers do not expect promotion in their entertainment and refuse to think about it as they cannot avoid it. In addition, the model of the consumer decision journey demonstrated the degree of effectiveness of product placement in each level, particularly in awareness, to confirm the previous statement of Wiles and Danielova (2009), and consideration. Russel and Stern (2006) demonstrate an existing connection between characters, actors and viewers which enhance efficiency of product placements. Therefore, the researcher investigated and discovered the influence of this relationship on brand recall and purchase intention.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The researcher was able to fulfil some gaps identified in the previous literature especially regarding consumers' behaviour. Indeed, the single use of product placements does not have an impact as strong as traditional advertising can have. This last faces a loss of credibility from consumers. Nonetheless, product placement faces a huge issue to induce purchase intention, as consumers think they are present to enhance the plot and not to make them buy. They mostly declare, as a reason, the lack of information in product placements and the need to inform by another media. Therefore, product placement is seen as a complement to another type of advertising. Nonetheless, the cinema industry and its environment is powerful to generate emotions and attachment which are an undeniable and strong factors in the use of product placements and its effectiveness, but not enough to generate strong purchase intentions. One of the recommendations made by the researcher for further academic research is the interest in developing the emotional connection between the viewers, the characters and the actors in order to understand how →

Conclusions & Recommendations (continued)

brands can become more effective without encroaching on their entertainment. Moreover, factors and reasons of the low purchase intentions have been explored in this research and solutions are suggested. However, practitioners mainly see prominence as a solution and forget its negative impact. Instead, they could explore new techniques that could make product placements more efficient. Finally, as every technology, product placement is called to evolve. The researcher advises future research to anticipate and be focused on its possibilities of evolution.

References

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