

# Ipod advertising analysis



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## **IPod Advertising Analysis**

### **— Evaluation of the effectiveness of Apple's iPod advertisements**

#### **1. Introduction**

##### **1.1 Background**

Released by Apple, iPod has led a new generation of portable music players for MP3-files. The product has had a profound impact on the market and it currently becomes a sought after artifact to music fans all over the world.

(Larsson, 2008)

A Study by Larsson (2008) demonstrates that among all the success factors behind its huge popularity, ' Apple's strong brand image of creativity, innovation and imagination' (2008: 2) is effectively transferred to the iPod through advertising. The concept of ' energy, joy and youth culture' (2008: 4) helps the product to acquire a wider association than merely being an MP3 player. Moreover, the tight connection with a pop-culture trend makes iPod become an iconic symbol of music consumption in the modern world. Notably, iPod's powerful advertisement has enhanced an effective image which contributes to increase their target consumers' awareness as well as arousing their interest in purchasing. (Larsson, 2008)

##### **1.2 Theory and Definitions**

###### **1.2.1 Market Segmentation**

Market segmentation is a widely used division of potential buyers according to various features such as demography and psychology. With the aim of designing and promoting needed goods or services, firms utilize market segmentation to meet the specific needs of their target groups. (Hall et al., 2008)

### **1. 2. 2 Market Mix**

Market Mix is a marketing strategy for meeting the needs of consumers. It consists of four factors: product, price, place and promote, which are known as the 4Ps. (Hall et al., 2008)

Promotion, one of the 4Ps, is the attempt to increase the sales of a product by attracting new markets as well as to ‘retain existing’ consumers. (Hall et al., 2008: 98) There are mainly two types of promotion methods: above and below the line promotion. Above-the-line promotion is also called advertising. A huge variety of advertising media can be chosen to reach their target audiences and even develop the brand image. (Hall et al., 2008)

### **1. 2. 3 Product Life Cycle**

Product life cycle is the different stages that a product goes through in each time period. A successful product may experience six stages including development, introduction, growth, maturity, saturation and decline. (Hall et al., 2008)

In the periods of introduction and growth, heavy advertising is of great essential, since new products may be unknown to most of the consumers. Businesses, therefore, need to spend a large amount of money on promotion to increase their target audiences’ awareness. (Hall et al., 2008)

### **1. 3 Aims**

The purpose of this report is firstly to investigate how the iPod advertising makes their target segment aware of the product and increases their interest of purchasing through advertising.

The second aim is to discover how advertisements help iPod to build its brand image and make iPod become a contemporary cultural icon.

### **3. Findings**

#### **3.1 Image**

iPod builds its image through advertising with the idea of using silhouettes, movements and colors. In the advertisements, dark silhouettes of dancing characters against monochrome background of diverse bright colors create an outstanding iPod brand image. Moreover, the black dancing silhouettes are often wearing an iPod with Apple's supplied earphones which appear in distinctive white. (Larsson, 2008) Moreover, in video advertisements, the silhouettes' movements and background colors change frequently depending on the background music, ' fuelling the silhouettes with energy and joy'. (Larsson, 2008: 28)

#### **3.2 Place**

A wide range of iPod advertisements can be seen everywhere in the target audiences' daily lives. The current research by Larsson (2008) states that, the iPod advertisements are constantly shown on the Apple homepage, on iPod packaging, on TV, on billboards and on magazines. Consequently the iPod advertisements have made a great impact on increasing consumers' awareness.

### **4. Discussion**

#### **4.1 Product Life Cycle**

In the time periods of iPod's introduction and growth, Apple advertised heavily on iPod to gain its market share. At the release of iPod, the product foundation consumers were mainly Macintosh users, however, Apple still

attempted to ‘break new ground’ (Larsson, 2008: 25) in the youth market. Hence, on the stage of introduction, iPod intended to gain its market position through heavy advertising. As a consequence, the heavy advertising had a significant impact on iPod’s target audiences and contributed to iPod’s rapid growth in selling on the following stage.

#### **4. 2 Market Segmentation**

Both demographic and psychographic segmentations are utilized by Apple to reach their consumers. Segmented demographically by age, iPod advertisements target on what is believed to be the most potential consumers—the youth (Larsson, 2008), who are at the age of fifteen to thirty. (Shiqing, 2009) Furthermore, psychographic segmentation is used in the iPod advertisements to meet young people’s attitudes toward their culture. For instance, the Hip-Hop culture, which has a trend-setting impact on adolescents, was utilized to its limit in the iPod advertisement. The dark silhouettes are listening to Hip-Hop music using a distinct white iPod and dancing in a random and dynamic style. As Levies (2007) suggested, ‘The stark images of the iPod dancers have really burned themselves into your brain.’ As a result, iPod image meets the specific psychological needs of their target, which enable Apple to have its penetration in the youth market.

#### **4. 3 Promotion**

With the objectives of reaching young audiences as well as increasing their interest, iPod utilized diverse types of media in advertising. Apple is well aware that promotion is of equal importance of the design and usability of a product and, any competitive merits which are not ‘well communicated to the public’ ‘virtually do not exist’ (Larsson, 2008: 27), since promotion

allows business to have better contact with its consumers as well as telling them the unique selling point of the product. Therefore, a wide range of advertising media, such as television, magazine, billboard and Internet, were chosen by Apple to arouse their target consumers' interest.

#### **4. 3. 1 Television Advertising**

Television is one of the promotion media which used by iPod to reach its target segments. The features of television allow iPod advertisements to convey a variety of messages with moving silhouettes, energetic background music and dynamic motion, which are more likely to deepen their target audiences' impression of the unique sell point of a product as well as increasing their interest of purchasing.

#### **4. 3. 2 Magazine Advertising**

While television advertisements attract audiences by means of producing dramatic visual effects, the objective of magazine advertising is more about building Apple's brand image. As is suggested in Allbusiness (n. d.), 'higher resolution images and better color options' are available in magazine printing, therefore, it may help Apple to build its image in a positive way.

Furthermore, magazine advertising allows iPod to better reach their market segment (Hall et al., 2008): the youth. Teenagers usually subscribe to particular kinds of magazines, such as music magazines and fashion magazines. As a result, these types of magazines may help iPod to better reach their consumers.

#### **4. 4 Cultural Icon**

Through advertising, iPod connected itself tightly with the pop music culture trend and became the icon of the music consumption pattern in modern world. The iPod advertisements utilized brightly background color and crazy movements of the silhouettes to express the unique selling point. The meanings of its selling point about ' freedom, personalities and fashion' (Larsson, 2008: 28) are well created by through iPod's advertisements. As Larsson (2008) points out, iPod is not only a part of the youth culture, but also an extraordinary culture of its own with special iPod meanings. Most importantly, the culture connection of iPod is associated with Apple's brand and, it is the psychological dominance that truly differentiates Apple from other rivals in the market.

#### **5. Conclusion**

As is indicated above in this paper, at the release of iPod, the initial hype around the product was merely created by Macintosh users; however, the community of loyal consumers then expanded through the advertising. iPod consequently has become popular music consumption among young people and gain its leadership in the youth market.

It is the unique brand image that enables iPod to be a cultural icon among the youth. In the advertisement, all-white iPod stands out in the dark silhouettes as a naturally wonderful object. Together with bright background color and dynamic movements, the concept of energy, joy, style and young culture was strongly connected with iPod as well as Apple's brand image. Consequently, Apple's brand associations, brand awareness and brand loyalty are reinforced. This is how advertising makes the product become an

icon of contemporary culture as well as a symbol for the new consumption pattern of music in modern society. Most importantly, it is the effective advertisements that contribute to the unique brand image of Apple and consequently increase the interest of their target segment.

## **6. Recommendation**

Despite using silhouettes, movements and colors to distinct the feature of iPod, there appears to be no slogan in the advertisement that appeal to the target audience. Based on the demerit above, it is recommended that a slogan should be created to attract and retain the iPod consumers as well as establishing a unique position in the market. Furthermore, a powerful slogan may contribute to Apple's brand image and enhance its competitive advantages.

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## **8. Appendices**

iPod Advertisements