

Global brand essay



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The theory behind the use of celebrities is that featuring stars in advertising has special cultural significance, borne from the unique way that they have constructed an image through various forms of media in the culture.

In associating the star with the product, these special meanings are passed on to the products or brands. Celebrities have particular configurations of meanings that cannot be found elsewhere. Celebrities are believed to possess dynamic qualities – attraction, sexiness and likeability, which can be transferred to products. For example, the Peugeot 406 acquired some of its ‘ attractive and sexy’ attributes from Kim Basinger’s appearance in its advertisements. Because they are famous, celebrities can attract and maintain attention by their presence in ads, and also achieve high recall results.

Even though research findings are equivocal about the ability of celebrities to stimulate actual purchase behaviour, the positive impact of celebrity endorsers is well documented. When Michael Jordan returned to the NBA for his old team the Chicago Bulls in 1995, his return was calculated to be worth around \$1 billion on the combined market values of the five companies he endorsed. Even though Pepsico has had bad experiences with celebrities, Michael Jackson and the Spice Girls were attributed with gains in share of 8% and 2% respectively in 1984 and 1997. Celebrities can easily affect company or product image makeovers, as well as reposition an old brand or introduce a new brand. An example is Lucozade, which was able to achieve a new athletic and energetic image through association with well-known sports stars such as Daley Thompson, John Barnes and Linford Christie. Celebrities

with worldwide popularity can help global marketing communications, especially in advertising.

Though Michael Jackson eventually turned into a disaster for Pepsi, the first year of the contract with Jackson saw an 8% gain in sales in a market where 1% is equivalent to millions of dollars. Some global celebrities choose to endorse products only in other countries to protect their image at home. For example, Mel Gibson and Woody Allen endorse products only in Japan. Pizza Hut increased market share by using global celebrities such as supermodels Cindy Crawford and Linda Evangelista, and Baywatch star Pamela Anderson for pan-European campaigns.

However, some companies have been embarrassed when their celebrity has become embroiled in scandal or controversy, for instance, Hertz (O. J. Simpson) and Pepsico (Michael Jackson). Most companies are smart enough to include clauses in their celebrity contracts for termination due to moral turpitude, and can purchase ‘death, disablement and disgrace’ insurance. They may still lose out on their investment and damage their image.

A celebrity may disappear from the limelight before the end of a contractual term. This can be avoided, to an extent, by careful examination of the life-cycle stage of the celebrity: they should, ideally, be signed during the growth stage of their career, and terminated prior to decline – but this is not always easy to achieve. A celebrity may become spokesperson for many products and become over-exposed. The spread of links over too many brands is likely to dilute the impact for any one of them. Possible examples are the Spice Girls (Walkers Crisps, Pepsi, Chupa Chups). Celebrities can be restricted by

contract from working for competitors, or even any other brand, but this can be very expensive.

It is unusual for a celebrity's image to change suddenly, but this can be a total disaster for a campaign. For example, French footballer David Ginola endorses L'Oréal's Elvive shampoo both because he is popular and because of his 'clean, shiny and controllable' hair. If he suddenly decided to shave his hair off, the campaign would be in ruins. A real-life example is Yardley's experience with Helena Bonham-Carter, who admitted in her first brand interview that she rarely used make-up. It can be necessary to explain very thoroughly to a celebrity exactly what their role and responsibilities for the brand are. One researcher, Michael Kamins, employed marketing research techniques in order to explore the uses of celebrities in advertising more scientifically.

Kamins states that three processes of social influence determine whether an individual will adopt the attitude an advertiser is trying to convey: compliance, identification and internalisation. Although the first of these factors is not relevant to Kamins's study, the last two hold considerable implications for celebrity advertising. Identification, whereby individuals try to imitate another person because they want to be like that person, is the most important factor determining a celebrity's influence in an advertisement. Internalisation occurs when individuals imitate another because they perceive the other person to be sincere and to have values similar to their own. Kamins inferred that if both identification and internalisation could be achieved, the effectiveness of advertising would be increased.

Therefore, he studied whether celebrities could increase the effectiveness of advertising through the identification component, and whether so-called truth in advertising (operationalised as two-sided advertising, or advertising that included both positive and negative aspects about a product) could increase effectiveness through internalisation. Furthermore, he wondered whether combining these two approaches resulted in even greater effectiveness. In order to research this, a 2 × 2 factorial design was adopted. Sidedness (one-sided versus two-sided) and type of spokesperson (celebrity versus non-celebrity) were the two factors.

Seventy-seven executives enrolled in an executive MBA programme were randomly assigned to four groups: one-sided/non-celebrity, one-sided/celebrity, two-sided/non-celebrity and two-sided/celebrity. Four advertisements corresponding to these criteria were made up, and each member of each group evaluated the appropriate advertisement on the basis of four variables: 1. Expectancy-value brand attitude (A). 2. Global brand attitude (B). 3.

Global attitude towards the advertisement (C). 4. Purchase intention (D). Expectancy-value brand attitude represented the degree to which the respondent believed the product possessed an attribute the advertisement claimed it had.

Global brand attitude was a measure of how appealing the respondents found the product in the advertisement to be. Global attitude towards the advertisement was an evaluation of the advertisement's effectiveness. Purchase intention indicated how likely a respondent was to purchase the

product when an opportunity to do so came about. Table 1 shows the mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (sd) values, along with the number of respondents (n), for each variable across each of the groups in Kamins's study. Note that the results from related groups can be combined to yield information on each of the four group characteristics (one-sided, two-sided, non-celebrity and celebrity) separately.

Table 2 contains the ANOVA results for the effect of the independent variables of sidedness (E) and type of spokesperson (S). These results provide valuable information about the effectiveness of celebrity spokespersons in advertisements. Although the above research results are useful, they are also very specific. Celebrity advertising can be researched in other ways.

For example, dead celebrities have been shown to be hip, hot and safe. Although they are not cheap (advertisers do have to pay licensing fees to the celebrities' estates), they are safe, because they can't do anything unpredictable that might jeopardise a product's image or embarrass the sponsor. Abbott and Costello have been used to sell bran cereal, Humphrey Bogart to lend flair to cellular phones and Diet Coke, and Charlie Chaplin to push IBM personal computers. This just goes to show that while the celebrities themselves may be dead, their use as advertising spokespersons has a long life.