Brand placement in bollywood movies

Do the Consumers get Sensitized towards the Brands by the Brand Placement in Bollywood Movies?

Abstract

The practice of product placement is seen everywhere in media across the world and is now ubiquitous. The same practice of Product placement in Bollywood is not new and the practice of placing the products in the bollywood movies is seen from the time of early 1970s. The movies produced in last ten years are seen with a lot of product placement and the practice of strategically planned product placement has grown to a major extent in Indian movies (bollywood). The practical implication of the methods of product placement is evidenced in the Indian Cinema but there is hardly any substantial evidence present for the product placement and its strategies in Bollywood. The research presents an overview of the strategies adopted by Hollywood for the product placement and consolidates the technique of product placement with the practical brand placement done in bollywood by assessment of a recently released bollywood movie ' Blue'. The brands placed in this movie are classified on the basis of the methods of classification derived from the theories which are drawn from the literature based on Hollywood. The main objective of this research is to find out whether or not the consumers are sensitized by the practice of brand placement in bollywood, and if yes then which is the method which scores most number of recalls of brands shown in bollywood movies.

The findings of this study indicate that the Indian consumers do get aware from the brands shown in the bollywood movies. The findings are based on the empirical study derived from three main methods which are used in this

dissertation for the collection of data, those three methods are; Case study, semi-structured interview and questionnaire. The investigation led to the other findings as well which were indicating that the format of bollywood is very different than the format of Hollywood and brand placement can be experimented much more freely as there is another dimension of music in the bollywood movies; brand placement in the bollywood movie ' Blue' investigated as a case study provided a 100% recall on the brand ' Kylie Minogue' who was placed in a song; recalls from such placement are assumed to be long lasting as the songs are shown on satellite television generating frequent encounter. No theories or methods are found on this kind of placement as the methods are derived from Hollywood format of which is different and does not includes songs. Dissertation concludes with providing the limitations of the research and directions for future researches.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION
1. 0 Synopsis
This chapter provides with the introduction of the subject of the research and also looks at the background of the topic in brief. This chapter throws light on why I have chosen to work on this topic and what are the aims and objectives of the research made. This chapter takes into account the summary of chapters in the content which are to be followed further down in the dissertation.

1. 1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND
Indian Film Industry also popularly known as " Bollywood" is one of the biggest film making industries in the world and is the only other film making

industry which can stand against Hollywood. Mishra in his work says " the massive size of Indian cinema is obvious from its statistics; eight hundred films a year shown in more than thirteen thousand predominantly urban cinemas, viewed by an average of eleven million people each day and exported to more than hundred countries." Mishra (2002, pp. 1) having considered this data which has grown to even much bigger numbers in year 2009, Indian Films have become one of the biggest instruments of mass communication. The commercial breaks on the satellite television are now avoided by the viewers as the number of channel on television have increased to huge extent which gives liberty to the viewer to flip to a channel which is more interesting and avoid the advertisement, the technology give the viewer the privilege of recording the programs without commercial breaks as well, factors like these has open portals for movies to become a new carrier for brand promotion. Being a mass media of this enormous magnitude, Bollywood has a lot of potential and a significant number of opportunities for In-Film planned brand placement also known as brand entertainment or brand integration (Glaiseter, 2005) and these opportunities are being well grabbed by the advertisers and marketers in the Indian market.

In recent years a lot of research is done on Brand/Product placement in Bollywood films by marketers and advertisers so as to understand the concept and strategies of brand placement in movies. Although not many academic researches can be seen in the field of product placement in Bollywood, the practical usage of the practice of Brand Placement has grown significantly. Lehu in his work defines, " The expression ' Product Placement'

or, ' Brand Placement' essentially describes the location, or more accurately, the integration of a product or a brand into a film or televised series." Lehu (2007, pp. 1) it can be understood from the work of other scholars like Kalish (1988), Gupta and (Gould 1997) Balasubramanian (1994) that brand placement is planned consolidation of brand with the elements of a feature film in return for money, service, barter, or any other kind of consideration. The research also focuses on the strategies of brand placement in Hollywood as no substantial academic can be found on classification of brands in the Indian cinema. The literature looks and analyzes the Tripartite typology of product placement by Russell (1998) , two dimensional approach to classify brand placement by Gupta and Lord (1998), Classification on the basic on Integration and explicitness by d'Austos and Seguin (1999) and finally Shapiro's (1993) classification of brand placement.

1. 2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim at which the research focuses is to answer the question -" Do the consumers get sensitized towards the brands by the brands placement in bollywood moives?" Following are the main objective for this research

* To know, does the Indian audience get aware of the brands shown in the movie through in-film brand placement?

* Which method of brand placement leads to maximum number of recalls of brands by analyzing the data collected after conducting surveys and unstructured interviews?

1. 3 KEY REASONS FOR RESEARCH

The key reasons for research in this field are, not much research has been made on this field and it is a very interesting and challenging task and the field has a lot of potential for growth in future and substantial findings might prove to be an insight for marketeers and will be useful for the adoption of correct method of brand placement in future projects in Bollywood.

1. 4 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The dissertation is divided into five different chapters; Chapter one is introduction which describes in brief the research background, aims and objectives of the research, why I have chosen this research and the structure of the dissertation. Chapter two reviews the literature and most of it is drawn from Hollywood. It begins with the definitions of Branding and Brand placement; it also draws the methods in which brand placement can be done and its classification. Chapter three of this dissertation depicts the methods used for the collection of data and also draws out the limitations of this research with other issues in detail. The fourth chapter will portray the research findings from survey and unstructured interviews. Chapter five of this dissertation is the final chapter which begins with consolidation of the research objectives with the literature review and concludes the dissertation with recommendation for future researches.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 0 Synopsis:

This part of the dissertation focuses on defining the two most important terms for this dissertation which are branding and brand placement. This

chapter also reviews the existing literature on brand placement and the strategies for its classification. The chapter is divided as follows; the first section of this chapter defines Branding after understanding of which the section second of the chapter looks at one of the methods of Branding or brand promotion which is Brand placement. Section three of this chapter begins with describing the strategies for brand placement and critically analyzes work from different scholars with their classification techniques in the subsections of section three. Section four and final section of this chapter portrays the instances of successful brand placement in Bollywood. As there is hardly any literature available on Indian film industry and brand placement the theories and literature retrieved for this chapter is majorly captured from American film industry.

2. 1 Branding

The word so commonly used, yet not correctly interpreted by a lot of people. For the establishment of brands, companies around the world spend millions of dollars and formulate new strategies and techniques to market their product, this is what the common notion and understanding of brands for a lot of people is. (Levine, 2003) in his work says that the brand is not necessarily associated with a product or an organization or a title but anything that can be identified. One of the most popular footballers David Beckham is a brand and so is Mercedes Benz. De Chernatony and McDonald in their work define Brand as " A successful brand is an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique, sustainable added values, which match their need most likely." De Chernatony and McDonald (2003, pp. 25) Taking this

definition into consideration it can be said that consumers identify a product/services with its distinct feature, an attribute which associates product with some quality which are distinguished from the rest in one way or the other. This unique association encourages the consumers to buy the brand and give the brand an edge over the other products in the market. Thus, it can be said that a brand is a product/service with some attributes or features that helps the product/service to stand out in the market for having such distinguished attributes. A few examples of most commonly known brands all over the world can be: Coca Cola, Pepsi, Nike, Adidas, Ferrari, Mercedes Benz, Michael Schumacher, David Beckham, Omega, Rolex, etc. It took a lot for the marketers and brand promoter to first establish these brands and a huge amount of money is spent for the promotion of these brands by using different strategies and techniques. One of such techniques is Brand Placement.

2. 2 Brand Placement

Also commonly known as Product Placement, the term Brand Placement has been defined by many scholars like (Steortz, 1987), (Balasubramanian, 1994), (Karrh, 1998), etc. This part of the dissertation highlights the definitions of brand placement by these scholars.

(Steortz , 1987) defines Brand Placement as " the inclusion of a brand name, product, package, signage, or other trademark merchandize in a motion picture, television show or a music video", another definition of Brand Placement is contributed by (Balasubramanian, 1994) who in his work said, " a paid product message aimed at influencing movie (or television) audience via planned and unobtrusive entry of branded product into a movie (or

television program)", the definition by Balasubramanian covers the concept of integrating brands as done in the definition by (Steortz, 1987), but it also considers the aspect of paid inclusion which is ignored by Steortz. (Karrh, 1998) defines the brand placement by covering almost all the dimensions associated with it, he defines Brand Placement as " the paid inclusion of branded products or brand identifiers, through audio and/or visual means, within mass media programming", he further explains that the brand placement can also be obtrusive and is done to compliment the character's image and help in setting and filling up the elements in background.

The purpose of brand placement is to promote the brand but the ways in which it is done also generates a hybrid message, it merges the major features of advertising, it give the sponsors privilege of retaining the control over the content and format but also increases the credibility by not identifying the sponsors directly. (Cohen, 1988) With the definitions above it can be drawn that the Brand Placement in movies is that technique of advertising in which the Brand or the owner pays a compensation for its integration in the movie for the exchange of marketable benefit that the brands enjoy after being noticed by the audience, however, these placements are sometimes done just because the plot of the movie requires them to be placed there, this way brand placement can also be of non commercial nature.

2. 3 Strategies of Placing the Brands

The practice of brand placement has been there for decades, the placement of brands in american feature films can be seen since the time of late 1940s and early 1950s (DeLorme and Ried 1999) One example of such placement

is legendary actor Joan Crawford sipping Jack Daniels whiskey in the film " Mildered Pierce" in year 1948. (Nebenzahl and Secunda 1993) The evidence of brand placement in Hollywood can been seen in feature films produced in late 1940s but one of the earliest evidence of product placement in Indian cinema was seen in early 1970s when Rajdhoot motorcycles brand was placed in movie Bobby featuring one of legendary Indian actor Raj Kapoor. Brand placement in feature films caught the attention of marketers and companies when the sales of Reese's Pieces candy increased by 65% in three months after the successful placement of the brand in the American film " E. T". (Reed, 1989)

The strategies that help brand placement the most in regards to its impact and effectiveness are elaborated by Russell (1998) and Gupta and Lord (1998) further on, this research looks at classification of brand placement by d'Austos and Seguin (1999) and Shapiro (1993).

Russell's argument for techniques of brand placement is three dimensional and focuses on modality of Visual, auditory and plot connection, whereas Gupta and Lord emphasizes on two broad categories Audio-Visual and the level of prominence. The studies from both the scholars are discussed below.

2. 3. 1 Tripartite Typology of Product Placement

According to (Russell 1998) product placement can be classified on the basis of three dimensions visual, auditory and plot connection. Visual dimension enables the placement of the brand in such a way that the product is seen on the screen and these placements on the screen can also be further classified on the basis of their appearance. The auditory dimension or the

verbal dimension refers to the mention of a brand in a dialogue these placements are also called as ' script' placements and the degree of such placements varies depending on the number of times the brands were mentioned, what was the tonality in which the brands were mentioned and in what context the brand was mentioned. The Plot connection dimension indicates the magnitude of integration of brand with the plot of the story. The dissertation will now look at the literature/the findings from previous researches, which point towards the combinations or particular method amongst the three methods stated above that might get the maximum recalls. Russell in his work says product placement modality and its effect is now expanded to a new dimension of elaboration, the difference between visual and auditory presented information can now be distinguished by exploring the audio-visual context of product placement. The screen placement and the script placement, or the visual and the auditory type of brand placement differ from one another especially in the terms of conveying a meaning. Visual placement of brands act as props in television and movies so as to make them more real and close to the practicality and visual channel leads to the creation of context in which the story is set whereas the audio channel is the medium through which the television program is scripted, narrated and is made audible, this makes the information received through this channel more meaningful. (Russell, 2002) The reception and processing of auditory information also happens when a person is not looking and the auditory modality conveys semantic information through speech. (Rolandelli et al., 1991) The reception and processing of such information which is audible is higher as it also posses the basic characteristics of intrinsic alerting and intrusiveness which also are the

basic characteristics of auditory modality. (Posner et al. 1976) Using brands for representation in any of the modalities brings a relativity of the same to the story and brings more meaning to the presentation and gets deeply integrated to a person's cognitive structure. (Lehnert, 1981) Such stimulus generates deeper meaning and leads to greater recalls of brands. (Craik and Lockhart, 1972) The third dimension of brand placement also called as dimension of meaning is that of Plot Connection. The magnitude of such placement depends upon the integration of brand with the plot, the higher the connection of the brand with the story, the more significant the placement of brands is. The plot connection connects the brands with the macro structure of the story, with which are associated important information, hence increasing the significance and role of placement. (Russell 1998) The different combinations in plot connection and modality can also be of great significance. There can only be two situations in which the combination of modality and plot connections can be established; Match and Mismatch. The combination can said to be a ' match' when the auditory method of placement is higher in use than the visual and the brand names are audible in narration and is deeply linked with the story whereas the combination can said to be a ' mismatch' when the visual method of placement of brands is higher in application than auditory in plot connection. (Russell, 2002) A good example of a matched plot connection can be the movie " Cast Away" featuring Tom Hanks who by an accident gets left alone on an abandoned island. The two brands that were integrated well with the plot were one of the biggest courier companies " Fed Ex" and another was sports goods brand " Wilson" which was integrated well in the narrative structure. A good example of a mismatched plot connection can be seen in

the movie Transformers and its sequel Transformers Revenge of the Fallen in which the car which is major attraction of the movie and transforms itself into a robot is manufactured by Chevrolet, here more of Visual placement is seen and the brand is hardly mentioned in the narrative structure. Mandler in his work says lesser exposed information which is less congruent in nature is more memorable as it grabs the attention of the person by provoking his/her mind to elaborate the information. (Mandler, 1982) Modality of placement is thus a very significant factor in categorizing the recalls as it persuades and influences people and also shows the significance of stimulus.

2. 3. 2 Two Dimensional – Approach

After studying Russell's approach of Tripartite Typology of Product Placement this part of the dissertation will look at Gupta and Lord's Two Dimensional Approach. Gupta and Lord (1998) distinguish the product placement on two major categories Mode of Presentation and Level of Prominence. Mode of presentation further classified by (Karrh et al., 2003) as: Visual only, audio only and combined audio-visual. Visual only: this kind of presentation involves visibility of signage, hallmark, billboards, logos, or any other kind of presentation that is represents the brand. The presentation or the placement is only visual with no presence of audio or gestures. One example of ' Visual-only' placement can be seen in the movie Top Gun where the lead actor Tom Cruise wears aviator model of Ray-Ban sunglasses. Although, this method has comparatively low recall rate visual-only form of product placement is one of the most common methods for brand placements and can be seen in a lot of movies. ' Audio-only' technique of brand placement represents the brand by transmitting the message in only auditory way. (Gupta et al., 2000)

The name of the brand or a tune or even a jingle closely associated with it can be added to the script and also be a part of the narration. One example of such placement can be from the movie " The Aviator" in which the lead mentions the brand " Sears" in his dialogue delivery. ' Audio-Visual' method of brand presentation represents the brand by both, the presence of brand's logo, billboard, signage, product, etc. on the screen with the mention of it in the narrative of the script. One example of such can be from the movie " James Bond-Die another day" in which, with the presence of Aston Martin, the narrative include the product name which was mentioned as Aston Martin Vanquish. This method of brand placement produce more recalls as compared to both ' Visual-only' and ' Audio-only' methods of brand placement. The other major segment drawn out by Gupta and Lord (1998) for classification of brand placement is on the basis of level of prominence. The differentiation in this segment was on the basis of prominent placement of brand from the subtle placement of brand, wherein in prominent placement of brand the product or the brand is kept in foreground and is in the prime focus, the field in which the brand is placed is not shared and the visibility of brand is prominent, example of such brand placement can be seen in the Tom Hanks starrer movie terminal, when he is in office of immigration officer while he explains him the situation of his country he refers to a bag of chips, the bag of chips shown for over 30 seconds was " Lays". On the other hand the subtle placement of brand is normally not prominent and does not catch attention, the visual field is shared with other brands and the products are placed in the background. Subtle case of brand placement can be seen in the movie ' Hangover' which shows billboard of

brand ' Riviera' in background while the actors are driving in a police car in Las Vegas.

Although the strategy which used prominent visual brand placement with properly exposed information and auditory mention of brand's name and its attributes is said to have more effectiveness than just the visual placement, but it is not clear as the results from different academics do not coincide. (Law and Barun, 2000; Sabherwal et. al,. 1994; Galician, 2004: 188-190)

2. 3. 3 Brand Placement on the basis of Integration and Explicitness

The brand placement methods defined by Russell were three dimensional, as by Lord and Gupta were bifurcated into two major segments based on audio-visual as mode of presentation and level of prominence. d'Austos and Seguin (1999) in their work classify brand placement in three different ways.

1. Implicit product placement: The placement in which the presence of product, brand or firm is a part of the program and is placed there to fulfill the requirement of the context and plays a passive role and can be seen on the screen but the product name is not formally mentioning or demonstrating the product benefits, etc.

2. Integrated Explicit product placement: An integrated brand placement is the one in which the brand, firm, product placed plays an active role, the brand is formally mentioned and the attributes of the brand are clearly demonstrated.

3. Non-Integrated Explicit product placement: In this type of placement the brand, firm or the product is not related to the contents of program and no

integration can be seen, but the name of the brand is formally expressed. Such placement is often seen in the title of the movie or in the beginning or in the end of the movie and it is seen that the brands placed in this kind of placement are often sponsors. (d'Austos and Seguin 1999)

The classification of brand placement by d'Austos and Seguin classifies brands on the basis of their integration and explicitness whereas there can be seen similarities in the classification made by Gupta and Lord (1998) and Russell (1998) as they classify the placement using similar grounds of mode of placements which are audio and visual, though the approach of Gupta and Lord's classification is simpler as the modes are clearly distinguished, the difference arise when Russell base the placement with the connection to the plot and Gupta and Lord ground their classification on prominence of brands.

2. 3. 4 Shapiro's Method

Shapiro (1993) relegates product placement in four different categories which were modified to three as practitioners agreed this classification to be the most suitable compilation for conducting the research at the initial most stage as it covers the spectrum of brand placement. The classification is grouped as:

1. Implicit: In this kind of placement the brand is visible on the screen, it might be foreground or background, etc. but brand name or benefits is given no verbal reference.

2. Used in a scene: In this kind of placement, the brand is visible and is used in the scene, but no verbal reference is given to the brand. Instance of such brand placements can be seen in movies when the characters are driving in

a car or using a cell phone and the logo or name or identification of car is clear.

3. Integrated Explicit product placement: This kind of placement shows the lead actor or main characters of the movie using a product while mentioning and describing the benefits or attributes of the brands or the product.

The brand placement method enunciated by d'Austos and Seguin were quite similar to that of Shapiro's classification as both the practitioners focused at the integration and explicitness of brand to major extent but the classification from d'Austos and Seguin cover the dimension in which brand is place in the beginning or in end of the movie which he calls as Non-Integrated Explicit brand placement which is not discussed by any other scholar. The classification by d'Austos and Seguin is very simple and can be used to sort and categorize the placement of brands in a broader way as it covers the major aspect of placement in a well defined manner. I adopt the usage of the classification techniques of brand placement portrayed by d'Austos and Seguin (1999) as it will help me to create a clear distinction in the placement of brands and will be an optimum method to put into application for my research question.

2. 4 Brand Placement and Bollywood

The technique of brand placement in Indian film industry also called as Bollywood is not new, one of the earliest example of the same was seen in the film Bobby in year 1973 when the lead actor Raj Kapoor was seen riding on a bike which was ' Rajdhoot' Since that time a lot of brand placement can be seen for aerated soft drinks in a lot of Indian movies, brand like ThumsUp,

Gold Spot, etc were commonly visible in movies in early 1990s, also the visibility of high ended cars during that time were prominent on the screen. Branded liquor with bottles was a common sight in many movies during this phase and the most common brands placed were Black Dog, VAT69 and Black Label. Latest examples can be seen in movies like Om Shanti Om (2007) with brands placed like Tag Heuer (Implicit), Nokia (Integrated explicit), Shoppers Stop (Implicit), etc, another instance can be seen in the movie Goal (2007) with integrated explicit brand placement of Reebok and Western Union Money Transfer. More than 54% of Indian audience is under the age of 25 which comes under the target audience slab and of most of movie makers and the advertisement companies aiming of brand placement, and according to (FICCI and Ernst & Young, 2003) this generation has more propensity and access to wide range of media and entertainment than the previous generation hence creating a lot of opportunities and scope for brand placement in the Indian Film industry from both Indian film industry and brand promoters point of view. Not only the access to modes of entertainment but also because the Indian middle class has grown more flexible and receptive towards international outlook because of the risen standard of living through increase in purchasing power (Varma, 1998) which is also another factor of supporting the growth. There are not many studies done on Brand placement in Bollywood and no substantial research can be seen focusing on the recalls towards the brands from the brand placement shown in the bollywood movies.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3. 0 Synopsis

This chapter focuses on the importance of research methodology and explains in brief why it is necessary to draw a frame work of the research before bringing it into practical application. This chapter clearly states the aims and objectives of the research and defines the research approach undertaken. Also this chapter looks at the research methods used for this research and explains in brief the reason for their implementation as well. As almost every other research this research also is encountered with some limitations which are stated in the end of this chapter.

3. 1 Research Methodology

Research literally means the search for knowledge, a systematic and scientific search for relevant information and answers on a specific topic, searching new facts in any new branch of knowledge through inquiry, search and careful investigation. (Kothari, 2009) It is of very importance to detail out the research approach and the methods used, as it helps the reader to understand the research in a much convenient manner. Research plan includes the instruments of research which will lead to investigation of data (quantitative or qualitative) keeping the research question as prime consideration so as to be ascertain of the information gathered is fitting in with the requirement of the research. (Chisnall 1997) The following chapter includes all the activities concerned with the research conducted for this particular academic work and also tends to draw out research method which sets up an appropriate frame so as to fulfill the objectives and aims of the research further stated. The structure of this chapter is as follows

* Aims and Objectives

* Research philosophy

* Approach

* Data collection techniques

* Data Analysis

* Research Limitations

3. 2 Aims and Objectives

The main purpose of this research is to work on the concept of " awareness" or " consciousness" of brands as people watch movies. The critical issue that the research focuses at is; do the consumers get sensitized towards brands after watching Bollywood movies. The main objectives of this research are;

* To know is Indian audience/Bollywood's Viewers are getting aware of brands shown in the movies through in-film brand/product placement?

* If yes, then which is the most effective method of in-film Brand/product placement by analyzing the recalls?

3. 3 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy helps the researcher to find out the ways in which his/her research will comprehend the development of researcher's knowledge. (Crossan 2003) Three of the major reasons for which the research philosophy must be taken into consideration are; a) it helps the researcher to figure out the methods he can use to design and conduct the

research and to chalk down a strategy, b) it helps the researcher to evaluate

the limitations of the research by putting different methodologies to test, c)

it helps the researcher to explore different methods beyond his knowledge or

experience. Thus researcher's perception towards the development