

Indian film industry

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



Churning out nearly 1, 000 films a year, the Indian film industry is the largest in the world. Now, aided by technological advancements, the industry is set to take a further leap – across production, exhibition and marketing. In such a scenario, product placement in mainstream films deserves a renewed focus because as a marketing communication tool, it is fast emerging as the medium with maximum potential to capture and covert audiences to potential consumers. This is especially relevant in a world where traditional media vehicles are increasingly failing to reach the consumers for various reasons.

Brand/product placement is a promotional tactic used by marketers in which a real commercial product is used in fictional media, and the presence of the product is the result of an economic exchange, it is an advertising technique in which the companies pay a fee or provide service in exchange for a prominent display of their product. Product placement occurs in plays, films, television series, music videos, video-games and books. The objective of such brand communication is to expose the audience to a brand, whereby the effect can be maximized in terms of increased awareness and higher recall, so that the customer will buy the brand which has maximum recall; and to satisfy the customer to optimum level.

This research paper looks at the rationality of brand placement, the possible congruity that can be built in the story, as indicators of success of effective brand placement in films and if so, as variables in bringing desired change in consumer's attitude. The paper highlights the basic reasons for placing products and brands in Mainstream Hindi films and the effectiveness of these placements as a tool for enhancing the recall value of brands in long run

brands in the films. This paper also gives insight as to how audiences react to product placement, do they think it as an effective alternative media, if it has any impact on them and if they find it ethical.

The research incorporated case studies of four mainstream Hindi films, selected on basis of their box office fate and the amount of brand placement. These films are then analysed in terms of effectiveness of the variety of placements in bringing the desired recall and recognition values. The four films selected include – Om Shanti Om, Goal, Chak De! India, and Lage Raho Munna Bhai. The research concludes with suggestions regarding areas for future research.

Product placement has come as a blessing in disguise for both, the brand and the filmmaker. Through it, the brand managers get the clutter breaking opportunity to look beyond the 30 sec TV commercial and the filmmaker gets to earn huge revenues by just showing the brand being used by protagonist or let it exist in the background. The deal is just perfect for both of them. But the most important person in the deal is the consumer who is vigilant and smart enough to notice what's served to him and has reservations against in your face placements. Surely he does not want more intrusion in his life.

Hence, product placement has arrived and here to stay. But a word of caution is to be always kept in mind, by both the brand and the filmmaker- if as communication purveyors they are looking for better and innovative means of reaching the consumer, the consumer himself is already bombarded with marketing tactics from all over and in the three hours of movie, he would want to forget about all these intrusions, including

advertising. Thus overdose of brand placement will only drive away the consumers from the cinema halls, resulting in a flop film and a failed marketing endeavor.

Contents

A product placement is the inclusion of a product, package, signage, a brand name or the name of the firm in a movie or in a television programme for increasing memorability of the brand and instant recognition at the point of purchase. Placements can be in form of verbal mentions in dialogue, actual use by character, visual displays such as corporate logo on a vehicle or billboard, brands used as set decorations, or even snatches of actual radio or television commercials.

The objective of this communication strategy is to expose audience to a brand, whereby the effect can be maximized in terms of increased brand awareness and higher recall, so that the customer will buy the brand which has the highest recall; and to satisfy the customer to optimal level. Because of proliferation of advertisements and the consequent difficulty in getting commercial messages to reach and influence potential customers, product placement appears as an interesting alternative to traditional marketing communication tools.

Basically, there are three ways product placement can occur:

Sometimes product placement just happens. A set dresser, producer, director, or even an actor might come across something he thinks will enhance the project. Usually this has to do with boosting the level of

credibility or realism of the story being told. Example can be use of ' Tata Indigo' car in movie Aaja Nachle. The car has been used to as mode of transport for the lead actress both when she arrives from abroad and when she goes back. Interestingly the vehicle is widely used as commercial luxury vehicle in many Indian towns. So use of this car added a touch of realism in the movie. However, when contacted, the representatives of the car company denied being approached about the use of their product.

Arranged product placement deals fall into two categories:

The most common type of deal is a simple exchange of the product for the placement. Example, let's say the production team wants lead actor to display a quirky affinity for a particular type of beverage. This will come across rather strongly over the course of the program — which means the chosen product could get a lot of air time. It turns out that someone on the crew knows someone who works for that beverage. The production people approach the beverage company folks with a proposal and a deal is made; in exchange for the airtime, the cast and crew are provided with an ample supply of the beverage at work. Example: the movie Krish where the lead actor drinks a lot of Bournvita.

Sometimes, a gift of the product isn't an appropriate form of compensation, so money powers the deal. Imagine that the marketing team at Tag Heuer has heard about this project and feels that, given the star power of the actor playing lead, this project would be a great vehicle for showcasing its product. Someone from Tag Heuer approaches the set dresser with a financially

lucrative proposal. Eventually, they come to an agreement and the wristwatch casually appears in several scenes.

Before product placement really saw a surge in the mid 1990s, it was pretty much a do it yourself effort. Now there are specific corporate positions and entire agencies that can handle the job. Some larger corporations will dedicate personnel to scout out opportunities for product integration or placement within films, television shows and even games and music. Good example would be Madison's specialized division for in-film branding, MATES.

Every frame in a movie has an opportunity for branding. With that intent, a number of marketers are now using movies to project the core values of their brands. In-film advertising, in its most effective form, is about a brand being a part of cinema's content. Many global brands are now turning to this medium for the sheer impact that a movie can make on its audiences.

Product placement in movies has gained momentum all over the world. The practice of using branded products in Hollywood movies started as casual process since 1940's. The earliest example would be 1945 movie Mildred Pierce with film star Joan Crawford drinking Jack Daniels bourbon whiskey. The current Hollywood movies feature a plethora of products ranging from telecommunications (Motorola, Nokia), automobile (Audi, BMW, Chrysler, Jeep, Lada and Mercedes) to other products like FMCG goods, Tobacco etc. Good examples are James Bond movies.

Indian mainstream Hindi films, popularly known as Bollywood the world over, caught up with the trend in 1970's with Raj Kapoor using ' Rajdoot' in his

movie Bobby. Popularity of movies as medium for product placement grew because of the increasing difficulty of using television as an effective medium to target audiences. The film medium provides an excellent message reach and message life and an effective method of popularizing and immortalizing brands.

One of the key drivers for movies becoming a popular medium for product placement has been the increasing difficulty of using television as an effective medium to target audiences. The advent of cable and satellite television has meant that audiences have become more fragmented and tend to demonstrate a greater level of ad avoidance. By contrast, the film medium provides an excellent message reach and message life and an effective method of popularizing and immortalizing brands. The movie-goers vicariously experience the brand as they make a connection between the film, the actor, the product and its consumption, and argue that product placement acts as a perceptual clue which directs behavior to purchase a product to satisfy a need or reinforce a social status. Movie product placement is viewed as a cheaper and more effective alternative to traditional marketing communications, despite its inflexibility, but as a result of the establishment of specialist placement agencies, and through increased brand exposure through cable, satellite, video and DVD, a typical movie with international distribution can reach over one hundred million consumers from box office to TV.

There seem to be three reasons why marketers consider product placement in movies as interesting communication strategy. First watching a movie is

high attention and involving activity. The particular exposure context associated with movies in theatres (lights off, minimal noise and distraction possibilities, large screen, difficulty in moving around, no zapping) is bound to lead to a high level of consumer attention as opposed to, say, listening to television. In addition, movie goers expend some significant effort (choosing a movie, driving to the theatre, finding a parking space, staying in line, finding a seat) and money (transportation, parking, tickets) in order to go to a movie and therefore quite involved during the show.

Second, successful movie attract large audiences. A blockbuster movie like Om Shanti Om for instance has been seen by millions of people, and this does not include video purchases and rentals, and eventual television broadcast. Therefore from a strict cost per viewer point of view, a product placement in a movie is a real bargain.

Finally product placement represents a natural, non aggressive, non persuasive way of promoting brand or a firm. Hence it may lead to less counter arguing and ‘ internal’ zapping from consumers.

Such success stories firmly establish the importance of product placement.

The use of feature films as a strategy for introducing new products has grown increasingly sophisticated. Savvy marketers now build elaborate marketing communication plans cross-promoting films and brands. For example, Audi used 2004’s Babul, a film by Ravi Chopra, as an integrated element for introducing a new model, the Audi A6. It was judged the most successful promotion of 2004.

Subhash Ghai was one of the early filmmakers to do product placement on a real large scale. Bollywood insiders say Ghai recovered production cost from Coke and other products even before the release of films like Yaadein and Taal. In future 40% of a film's revenue will accrue from streams like TV, online rights, product placements and digital downloads. Video-on-demand, IPTV and DTH are already fetching handsome returns. Then, of course, there is the overseas market, which is expanding fast. In 2007 alone, at least a dozen Hindi Mainstream films have crossed a US \$ 1 million mark in the UK and US.

As successful marketing efforts incorporating motion pictures continue to mount, the casual use of brands as props will diminish. While current practice does not require filmmakers to identify brands placed in films, viewers can reasonably assume that prominently featured brands have offered some compensation or other consideration in exchange for the appearance.

In films, product placement can be divided into three broad categories:

The celebrities endorse product and brands with commercial reasons, which normally come in the breaks in television programmes or in cinema halls. The phenomenon of zipping and change in television usage behavior due to surfing during the commercial breaks has reduced effectiveness of television commercials. Similarly commercials of cinema hall are found to be of low involvement as audience takes them as blocks between the reasons of visiting the cinema hall and the time available to them for entertainment. So the brand communication and the entertainment product are viewed

differently from the audience of both media. Brand placement provides an opportunity where the involved audience gets exposure to the brands and products during the natural process of narration of movie or television commercial.

Of late there have been attempts by Indian producers and brand managers to come together and place the brand in a situation where the audience is captive and more prone to show high level of retention. Many consumers and researchers are of the view that this method is excessive commercialization of media and intrusion in life of viewer.

The viewer does not necessarily go there to see the brands; rather he is going to the cinema hall to escape from the realities of life. Brand managers are using different type of placements to make the brand look obvious at the point of emergence. They are also integrating the brand presence with the plot of the cinema, so that the audience does not feel the brand to be out of context. The brand should also be reflective of the class of user or character in the film. If the plot connection is missing and the brand is not reflective of the character's class of usage, then probably the whole brand placement exercise will be futile. The success of Indian movies is not based on sound fundamentals which is evident from the number of feature films flopping every year. So if the vehicle in which the brand is placed does not have the required viewership, then the tariff charged to bring brand at some point of the story will also go in drain.

Films are selected as context of research for various reasons as explained below. Compared to television, movie viewing has higher involvement.

While watching a television programme, the viewer can do multifarious work at home setting, which may affect the attention degree span of the audience and hence, reduce the overall effectiveness of the medium for enhancing brand retention. In opposition to this argument, is the movie going behavior where the viewer makes a voluntary choice for viewing (exposure) a specific film (product) at a cost (time, financial, opportunity cost) for the purpose of wholesome entertainment. So he is more receptive to brand communication provided to him in the movie hall while watching the movie of his choice.

It has been observed from research that brand recall for commercials shown during the television programmes with higher level of TRPs are very poor due to the channel switching behavior. High level of media clutter, similarity of programming across channels, channel switching behavior are the factors responsible to generate sufficient level of research interest in researchers at the practice of brand placement in movies.

Brand placements are used to increase the level of brand knowledge among consumers as in every advertising medium. The uniqueness of the medium is found in the process of exposure and congruity of brand in the story. There is no competitive exposure in the same medium at the same time, unlike television or newspapers. This is significant as it may increase the level of brand knowledge. Brand knowledge is conceptualized as brand node in memory to which a variety of associations are linked. So it is important to identify the properties of the brand node and brand association.

The factors important for product placement include the level of abstraction and qualitative nature of the brand memory effect and the congruity among

brand associations affects the favorability, strength and uniqueness of the brand associations.

The factors being:

Brand awareness: It is the strength of brand node or trace in the memory as reflected by consumer's ability to identify the brand under different conditions.

Brand image: It is the set of perceptions, held in the consumer's memory, as reflected by brand associations. Are the other informational nodes linked to the brand node in memory and contain the meaning of the brand for the consumers?

Brand Attitudes: they are the overall evaluation of the brand by the consumers. They often form the basis of consumer's choice.

Favorability of Brand Associations: Associations differ according to how favorably they are evaluated. The success of a marketing program largely depends on the ability of the marketing program in creating the trust among consumers that the attributes and associations benefits are there in the brand talked about in communications.

The Strength of Brand Association: It depends on how the information enters consumer's memory (encoding) and how it is retained as part of brand image (storage). Strength is a function of both the amount or quality of processing information received at encoding (how much the person thinks about the

information) and the nature or quality of the information at the encoding end (the manner in which the person thinks about the information).

Congruence of a Brand: the congruence of the brand with the story of the film and presentation in the film is another measure. Congruence is defined as the extent to which the brand association shares the content and meaning with other brand associations. This explains how easily one existing brand association can be recalled and how additional associations can be linked to the brand node in memory.

Brand Leverage: Compares the characteristics of the secondary associations with those of primary brand associations. The secondary associations are derived out of the usage of the brand by the character in the film. Example in the film *Taal*, the hero uses the bottle of Coke as a symbol of exchange of love and this contextual placement increases the strength of association of the brand.

Earlier researches have shown the importance of a strong link between the brand and the film. The stronger the link, the greater is the impact between the brand's image and the attitude towards the brand sponsor.

Increase in product placements and institutionalization of the industry indicate that advertisers are using the technique to sway consumer's brand attitudes. The type of placements should look natural to the narration, as consumption symbols are often used to enrich the plot, theme and characters of popular culture texts.

Some consumers may feel that the use of brand names in popular culture simply reflects the increased commercial content of a culture or the producer's efforts to enhance the realism of their film. However, in case where the brand takes a major role in the story of the film as in the movie Friends, or where its presence in the movie might look suspect as in the movie Yaadein, the audience may realize that it was placed there to affect their judgments and they may counter argue them just as they do to the traditional advertising messages.

Advertising gurus claim that in-film advertising is a very shaky business and most marketers have a tendency and temptation to go overboard with the result that the film would end up becoming a long advertising commercial. Others say that since marketers always tried to stretch their advertising rupee in order to obtain the maximum bang for their buck with the result that brand suffered. However, most advertising professionals vouch for the fact that films, by virtue of being quite engaging, are one of the cost-effective and effective mediums for advertising. ' If a consumer watches a particular scene and the advertisement is well embedded into that, it will remain,' they say. This can be referred to the fact that the girls beating the boys fighting sequence in ' Chak De' has been referred to as the McDonald's fight scene merely because it takes place in one of the outlets. Again, there is no mention of McDonald's in the entire film as it has been seamlessly embedded.

Film content of any kind can be used to build brands. The last one year has been rather active in terms of in-film placements and branding through films.

However, the placement of brands such as Ultra Tech poses a big challenge especially considering that there is no obvious benefit in sticking to stereotypes and force-fitting the Brand in film's theme or storyline,' he said

Literature survey in the Indian context was more disheartening despite the fact that brand placement is used more and more in Indian films these days. There are hardly any evidences of work carried out on brand placement in Indian Movies. The Indian Hindi film industry is the largest in the world in terms of number of movie produced. Yet the success rate of the movies in Indian film industry is very less. If a proper research on brand placement can be done, it can guide the producers, brand managers and academicians to develop an effective brand placement strategy in which the risk of the film making and failure will come down substantially in the Indian market. The producers can charge a price for the brand placement and cover a production cost; the brand managers will find a platform to communicate with the audience about their brands in a more effective manner than conventional television advertising.

PROMINENT EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL PRODUCT PLACEMENTS IN SOME MAINSTREAM FILMS

(In Recent Times)

&

SOME FAILURES TOO

SUCSESSES

Bollywood has finally discovered branding. In 2007, according to industry estimates, brand cameos earned around Rs 200 crore, and as a result, even small-and medium-budget movies as well as animated films are hoping to cash in on this new and lucrative revenue stream. Indeed, media analysts and industry watchers expect that figure to climb to Rs 800 crore by 2010.

Some of the select successful instances of brand placement in recent times are cited below:

Rang De Basanti: Rakesh Omprakash Mehra's Rang De Basanti was probably the most successful Bollywood branding in 2006 with its limited edition RDB Coca-Cola bottle, and cameos of Airtel, LG, Berger and Provogue in the film. Coke, in a first of its kind attempt, launched Coca-Cola bottles branded with the RDB title and Amir's picture and produced a movie trailer that was a montage of shots from the film and Coke's 'Piyo Sar Uthake' campaign. Just the right kind of media partners, the film's marketing ensured good and effective publicity and both the brands and the movie generated a lot of mileage from each other.

Krrish: Rakesh Roshan's Krrish, now a case study of Indian Institute of Management, Indore, prominently featured Singapore Tourism Board, Sony, John Players, Bournvita, Tide, Hero Honda, Boro Plus, Lifebuoy, HP Power, Acron Rangeela, Hansaplast and Lays chips, followed by merchandising of Krrish masks, lunch boxes, water bottles. Its merchandising sold like hot cakes among children. Krrish made 12 crores out of product placement.

Don: Farhan Akhtar's Don promoted Tag Heuer watches, Motorola, Garnier, Citibank and, of course, Oakley sunglasses as well as Louis Philippe outfits. The placement ensured that the viewer noticed don's phone, his laptop, his watch, his sunglasses and the brand names were the focus of the camera work. But it was still done in a subtle way and did not come across as being imposed on viewer.

Dhoom 2: Sanjay Gandhi's Dhoom 2 promoted Coke, Pennzoil, Pepe, Sony, Disney channel, Sugar Free, McDonald's, Speed, and Suzuki Zeus. The movie was quite an opportunity for Coke, for both the brand ambassadors of Coke were starring in the movie together for the first time. The cool couple drinking the always coolest drink, perfect for Coke! The cola company had a special campaign for Dhoom 2 where Hrithik Roshan encouraged youngsters to take a swig and "go dhoom".

Main Hoon Naa: Farah Khan's first movie Main Hoon Naa featured the following brands- Reebok, Café coffee day, Frito Lays, Levis, LML. MHN was an example of optimum utilization of branding in a film. The story of the film revolved around youth hence it gave us the scope of using lifestyle and youth centric brands. The brands that were involved were the ones keeping the modern day college goers in mind, for which using brands is just a way of life. The brands were woven into the screenplay in a manner where it looked like a modern day college going youth was using the product – natural yet conspicuous.

Baghban: One of the clear cases of effective placement in recent times was BR film's family drama Baghban. The movie creatively integrated five brands

in it. The brands included were ICICI Bank, Tata Tea, Archies, Ford and Tide. Baghban truly depicted the craft of product placement.

And these are not mere stating of the brands featured. These placements result in stupendous impact in consumers as delineated by the sales figures of the featured brands, before and after product placement. After Bournvita featured in Krrish, it reported a increase in sales by 15% and intention to use brand by 9%*.

Domios registered greater footfall in its outlets after its placement in Phir Hera Pheri. Garnier recorded a product recall of 46% after it got featured in the movie Chup Chup Ke. Lays got an additional endorsement from Priyanka Chopra after she was shown munching on the snack in Krrish, thus re-establishing Lays as ‘cool snack’. After Reebok featured in key scenes in Viruddh, the brand boasted of having got verbal endorsement of Amitabh Bacchan, and extensive reach through multiple showcasing of the film on multiple vehicles. Tanishq recorded a average minimum revenue of 1. 45 crore from its Paheli collection. And as if that was not all, they recorded a increase in purchase intent by 13% and favorability of the brand by 10%!!!

That says a lot about the success of brand placements.

There is always the other side of the coin!

Academicians from Universities say that currently, embedded advertising still needs to grow in India. ‘It is like a deranged marriage, the brand most often does not fit into the film the way in which it should. The reason is that most filmmakers still do not think of it as a revenue stream,’ they say.

So apart from the huge successes, there were some bad failures as well. Few of them are:

Ta Ra Rum Pum: After you see drivers and cars layered by brands of their sponsors, Ta Ra Rum Pum a film on racing cars would seem like the perfect avenue to showcase such similar branding. After all seeing these brands is what we've come to expect, but corporate honchos didn't seem happy just with 'being there'. So they must've insisted on special close-ups and zooms for their brands. As a result we get a good dose of Castrol, Goodyear and Chevrolet periodically through this film.

Salaam E Ishq: Salaam E Ishq was another product-friendly movie. With such an extensive star cast and lavish set designs the director must've felt the need for corporations to cover up costs. Of the many placements there was one that stood there screaming for attention. John Abraham and Vidya Balan play a couple in love so on the day of their anniversary John decides to gift his lady love with a diamond set. For those curious about the brand, it was Ira Jewellery and the makers give more than a glimmer to those who wonder. To make things worse, the camera decides to zoom more on the brand than the jewels.

Victoria 203: If you're one of the few people that watched the remake of Victoria 203, you'd probably be gripped by the urge to buy diamonds, more specifically Gitanjali Diamonds. That's because Gitanjali has been constantly mentioned throughout the first half an hour. The makers go to the extent of giving the viewers an unwanted history lesson about the Choksi family that owns the company and their legacy.

Virruddh...Family Comes First: In terms of product placements, Virruddh went to the extent of shoving their branded products down audiences' throats. What made this blatant promotion unbearable was that Virruddh was made as a serious film about a grieving family and their dead son. Obvious instances were where Sanjay Dutt posed with a can of Elf Oil in his garage and John Abraham praised how great ' the services of Western Union money transfer' were.

Koi Mil Gaya: The product placements in Koi Mil Gaya weren't as awkward as Yaadein but they were definitely obvious. You can definitely tell why the mother (played by Rekha) insists that her overgrown, mentally handicapped son (played by Hrithik Roshan) drink his glass of Bournvita milk. Not to mention another scene where the dimwitted son magically transforms into a promoter for Bournvita when his drink preference is asked. Coffee, tea, Bournvita or me? Other instances include where Hrithik sips Coke with his classmates and rides off into the sunset with Preity Zinta on his Hero Honda Bike in the end.

Yaadein: Few films have been universally panned like the way Yaadein has. Ironically, the film's message was to shun the materialistic life all the while promoting brands. Coca Cola had a large presence throughout the entire film. It even went to the extent of having the Coke logo branded on Jackie Shroff's key chain! The blatant praise for Pass Pass the mouth freshener by the film leads also made audiences groan in their seats. The film sank at the box-office, but since Subhash Ghai leaned heavily towards placements it's likely he covered part of his production costs.

The purpose of this project was to investigate whether the strategies followed for brand placements within Mainstream films affect the memory for the brands and the attitude towards those brands. The opinion of advertising and branding professionals was also taken into account to arrive at a classification for the purpose of research, and the brand placement was grouped as:

A. Implicit: where brand is shown without verbal reference to brand name or benefits (no auditory support).

B. Used in Scene: where brand is used in a scene without verbal reference to name or benefits (no auditory support but with high plot connection due to character usage shown on screen).

C. Integrated Explicit Brand Placement: Where benefits/attributes of the brand/product are mentioned by a main star, along with hands-on use (both auditor and visual mode of presentation with plot connection).

The objective of the study includes consumer's evaluation of the brand placement, as a strategy for providing brand communication and the reactions to the level of ethicality involved in brand placement which talks about commercialization of entertainment products and intrusion in the life of consumers.

Different variables are used in research for establishing the relationship between the level of information processing through exposure and elements of brand choice in the selected markets. Any exposure to the brand communication affects consumer response, which can be measured by

analyzing variables like brand awareness in terms of recall and recognition, favorability, strength and uniqueness of the brand associations in the consumer memory.

The study evaluates the effectiveness of brand placements within Mainstream films on basis of recall, recognition and opinion about brand placement. Four Mainstream films were selected as case studies and hence part of consumer survey.

The films were selected on basis of two criteria:

The films selected: Om Shanti Om (November, 2007); Goal (December, 2007);

Chak de! India (August, 2007); Lage Raho Munnabhai (September, 2006)

Considering that brand awareness is primary goal of advertisers in brand placement, memory based awareness measures such as recognition or recall is appropriate. Short term and long term memory as well as consumer's evaluation of product placement are tested.

The respondents were approached randomly and verbal consent was sought before administering the survey. Once agreed, they were offered a structured questionnaire (Annexure) and requested to answer it. The interviewer cue was only provided in the questions where it was mentioned to provide 'hint' and the study objective was not mentioned in advance. A

total of 50 responses (30 male and 20 female) were obtained. The average duration of the survey was 15 minutes.

Target Segment: The cine goers-

* Teens within the age group of 15-19.

-10 male and 8 female

-all students

* Adults within the age group of 20-35.

-20 male and 12 female

-12 students and 20 working professionals

These are the major target audience for the advertisers and the brands.

Geographical location: Bangalore

Research Instrument: Questionnaire

(2007)

Brands featured in the movie: Nokia, Maybelline, Shopper's Stop, Tag Heuer,

Om Shanti Om was the biggest hit in the year 2007. Trade analysts have even gone ahead and claimed that it is the biggest grosser in the history of Bollywood. With its stupendous success, it was one film which enabled the brand managers of the brands featured in the film go laughing to the bank.

The film featured some top brands of their category and needless to say, its super success benefited these brands immensely.

The most visible brand of the movie is Nokia. In the film, the lead character Om (Shahrukh Khan) not only uses cellular devices by Nokia, but also mentions them in his dialogues. Further there are significant close-ups of different Nokia devices in some very important scenes. Another interesting observation is that the Nokia devices used are all of different segments. While the character Om, who's a superstar uses a high end mobile and Bluetooth set, Dolly, a wannabe actress, uses a middle segment cell phone and Pappu, a one time junior artist, uses a low end cell. Thus with one shot, Nokia manages to address its target audience who are spread across these wide segments.

Apart from having their product feature in the film, Nokia also tied up with the film for its promotion. Nokia offered exclusive videos, behind the scenes, ringtones and wallpapers of the movie to its customers. They also ran a contest where if one buys certain specific models like 6300, 5700, 5300, 6233 M, 3000 classic etc, they get a chance to enter a luck draw wherein the winner gets to meet superstar Shahrukh Khan for an exclusive dinner. They also introduced Crazy Mobisodes, which were animated versions of the characters of the film in different formats.

Apart from Nokia other key brands featured were Maybelline, Shopper's Stop and Tag Heuer. Debutant Deepika Padukone is the brand ambassador of the cosmetic giant Maybelline and hence it provided a perfect platform for the

brand to be featured in the film. The brand also boasts of close-ups of its various products and brand name in vital scenes.

Shopper's Stop majorly had its role in promotion where it launched an exclusive line of clothes and merchandise styled on the movie. It also displayed large banners and roof hangers of the film in its exclusive stores.

The brand placements in the film were divided according to the earlier mentioned criteria. The classification of brand placement in Om Shanti Om is as provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Type of Product Placement

2. Goal

(2007)

This much talked about movie proved to be a box office dud. Audiences seem not too impressed by either the story or the chemistry between the lead actors, John and Bipasha. According to critics, the movie failed to deliver on its promise of being a high voltage football drama and ended up being a boring discussion of racial tension in Britain.

However what was interesting in the film was its association with sports brand Reebok. Apparently Reebok played a master stroke by being associated with the movie. Since the film is sports based, it provided ample opportunity for any sporting brand for maximum visibility. And that became true for Reebok. Since in majority of the film the actors are shown wearing football gear, on field or off it, Reebok, which provided the merchandise for

the entire team boasts of visibility in almost 70% of the frames. Reebok also is visible in terms of their stores, their soccer kit being used by the team and their advertisements during the crucial matches featured in the film.

Apart from their humungous presence in the film, Reebok was also associated with the film for its promotion. Almost all Reebok Stores, both exclusive and multi brand, carried Goal inspired merchandise. They had huge displays of the movie posters in their stores and major malls, featuring Reebok logo prominently in them. They also used the mode of floor stickers in malls leading either to Reebok stores or the multiplex where the movie was running.

Apart from Reebok the brands which got associated with the film were Western Union Money Transfer, Gillette, ESPN Star sports. Western Union has prominent presence in the movie with not only it having an exclusive shot at its outlet but also the characters mentioning it in their dialogues as they discuss when they will be able to earn enough to be able to send money to their families in Asian countries.

Gillette is used by the lead characters for their shaving habits and in one scene the lead actress is seen shaving off the hero's beard using a Gillette razor.

ESPN Star Sports have been used as official broadcasters of the matches shown in the film. Apart from that, the channel participated in the film's promotional activities by having John and Bipasha feature in their channel promoting English Premier League.

A major brand which indirectly got promoted through the film without having any tie up with the movie is English Premiership, the Football League of England. The movie features the sporting, specially the soccer season in England in its totality, starting from the passion for the game to the ambience, the effort, the significance, the madness and the big money riding in it. Further John and Bipasha's appearance in ESPN strengthened its positioning in India.

Surprisingly, Goal proving a dud in box office did not affect Reebok adversely as many may think it has. Reebok provided a style statement to the team and the merchandise sold in Reebok stores attracted people more because of association with a established style icon like John Abraham and due to their individual novelty factor. Reebok stores, by record, have registered more footfall than they had before and after they were offering special Goal collection.

The brand placements in the film were divided according to the earlier mentioned criteria. The classification of brand placement in Goal is as provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Type of Product Placement

Brands featured in the movie: Ultra tech cement, Puma, Mac Donalds, Bisleri, Aaj Tak, Times of India, Sports Brands Rakshak and Vijayanti.

Chak De! India is revered for its role in reviving Hockey in India. An unprecedented hit, this movie is the story of one man rising against the system to win back both his and national pride. And he does this through the

medium of hockey. The fact that hockey formed the core of the film, provided ample opportunity for advertisers to lap it up and go for featuring their brands. The film provided various avenues wherein brands/products could gain visibility. The film featured Women's National Hockey team. The brands could feature in as official sponsor of the team, as merchandise sponsor, sports equipment sponsor, hoardings and billboards during the matches, event sponsors, etc.

Ultra tech cement lapped up this unique opportunity and is the most featured brand shown in the movie. It is the main sponsor of the Women's Hockey team and features prominently as sponsor logo in the front of the team's official uniform. By getting such prominent placement, it has ensured that it is seen in almost every frame a match is played by the team, thus gaining maximum and crucial airtime.

What's unique in this brand placement is that it's a first time by any cement brand to be associated in in-film branding, and by doing so Ultra tech cement has scored a perfect ten. Even though there is no product relevance or synergy, the in-film placement initiative has been conducted quite uniquely without a single reference to the brand in the film and without being too obvious or blatant or in-the-face.

Ultra Tech Cement Ltd chief marketing officer O P Puranmalka stated, " Since our brand is virtually seen in almost every frame when the World Cup matches are played, it has helped us reinforce the brand attributes such as ' global winner', ' modern & youthful', ' tech-savvy', and yet ' intrinsically Indian' amongst our core target groups across India."

Another brand which caught a lot of eyeball was sporting brand Puma. Puma provides merchandise to the team before their final match. It had a perfect placement as it was associated with the success of the team. Puma won brownie points when its logo was prominently seen in the team uniform throughout the final match.

What was very interesting was placement of Aaj Tak and Times of India. Both of them were shown as the media generating and spreading negative news about the lead character. Its surprising to think why both the brands agreed to collaborate in such form when the situation does more bad than good to their brands. Both are seen as media houses who germinate and support wrong perceptions about the sportsmanship a player shows when he is on the losing side.

The brand placements in the film were divided according to the earlier mentioned criteria. The classification of brand placement in Chak de! India is as provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Type of Product Placement

4. Lage Raho Munna Bhai

(2006)

Brands featured in the Movie: Worldspace Satellite Radio, IOCL, Go Air, MSN, Goodday, Kurkure, Bright Outdoor and Reliance Communication.

After the successful prequel, this film came with lot of expectations, and not to mention the amazing brand placements. And true to its series, Lage Raho

Munna Bhai rocked the box office with its stupendous success. Not only was it a super hit, it became a phenomenon by claiming the onus of re-launching father of nation. So it wasn't surprising to see ' Gandigiri' flourish all round.

This was thus an ideal platform for hoards of brands to get their target audience in a big way. Lage Raho however carried a lot of brands as an extension of its prequel, Munna Bhai MBBS. These apart, some new brands too got associated with the movie and rode to success.

In the centre of the plot is the radio programme which ' Munna Bhai' never misses as he is in love with the voice of the Radio Jockey, played by Vidya Balan. Over the course of the film, Munna Bhai too is invited to host show on the radio and he goes on to solve people's problems through the show, and ultimately gets reunited to his sweetheart via that media itself. Clearly this was a perfect opportunity for Worldspace Radio for brand placement.

Nothing could be better than the fact that radio was the centre of the story. This was a guarantee for making the consumers notice its presence and also be ensured of future brand recalls whenever there is a mention of the movie or a broadcast of it subsequently in TV or DVD modes.

Kurkure re-established it self as a no excuse snack, and Goodday as premium biscuits.

However, the movie is now almost a year n half old and this time lag has resulted in a lot of memory loss on behalf of the consumers. Worldspace however still commands a substantial recall by virtue of it being integrated in

the story itself. A clear example of winning strategy by Worldspace brand managers!

The brand placements in the film were divided according to the earlier mentioned criteria. The classification of brand placement in Lage Raho Munna Bhai is as provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Type of Product Placement

RESULTS

Recall scores of Brands placed in the selected case studies:

2. Goal

3. Chak de! India

4. Lage Raho Munna Bhai

From Product Placement Recall Exercise:

Issue 1- Do you think Brand placement in movies is a good alternative to traditional advertising?

Issue 2- Do you think real brands should be used extensively in movies to make a scene more believable?

Issue 3- Does the way a brand is used in movies affect your feelings about the brand?

Issue 4- Does product placement in movies affect your buying decisions?

2. INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this essay is to know about the industry insights regarding:

And many more such issues.

1. The Process of Product Placement

In-film branding today is the biggest source of revenue after the revenues from film showing. This, together with music and satellite rights has opened up newer avenues for the industry to cover the production cost. He said that, any major film today generates Rs. 6-10 crore worth publicity through promotional tie-ups. Each effective tie-up involves hectic negotiations of around 3-6 months. Sometimes the brands approach the production houses, in other times it's the production houses which approach the brands for such tie ups. This system depends upon the demand of the occasion.

There is no fixed formula but the factors that are taken into consideration during the negotiation stage are:

If the product is not clashing with the theme of the film, I see no harm in having it in the film. It helps in increasing the realism of the film and help audience connects to the film on a more personal level, as the film characters seem real, not from any far away land. Based on the content of the film and its story line, both, the film maker and the brand managers, can sketch a profile of viewers who would flock to see the movie. Depending on

this, a 360 degrees plan is formulated for cross promotion during various stages of film making.

Payments are based on exposure, including the number of times the product is shown or mentioned, the duration of that exposure, and the degree of inclusion of the product in the story line. However sometimes product usage is negotiated rather than paid for. Some placements provide productions with below-the-line savings, with products such as props, clothes and cars being loaned for the production's use, thereby saving them purchase or rental fees.

2. Role of Advertising Agencies and Their Importance

Recognizing the growing significance of branded entertainment concept in India, advertising majors are beefing up the operations in their respective entertainment wings. Major advertising agencies have created special wing to catch business. They are:

Apart from these there are some specialized agencies coming up, only dealing with in-film branding. Media e2e is one such agency.

These agencies fix up the deal between a producer and the brand for placement. And today almost all movies have product placement in some amount or other. However some brands go for tie-ups without the help of these agencies. Nokia had a direct tie-up in Om Shanti Om. On the other hand, Ultra tech Cement took the assistance of P9 Integrated for its crucial placement in Chak De.

3. How is product placement measured?

The ITVX tool offered by Media e2e is a product placement valuation metric service for media professionals in the branded entertainment industry. The system hinges on Q-Ratio. The quantitative metric known as a Q-Ratio reflects the quality of product placement or branded entertainment exposure. It is based on the simultaneous calculation of 50 variables. The tool will help advertisers, media planners, content producers & TV stations with valuation & quality of product placements & other forms of Branded Entertainment. The summary output at the end of a product placement is Q Ratio, a single metric that represents the quality of the product placement. This ratio can be applied in a number of ways to privity costs the client typically uses for media measurement to guide prognosis or diagnosis of what clients got for their money.

WHAT IS Q-RATIO? “ Q” ratio is a global measure for quality of product placements. It is measured as a % of a 30 sec ad i. e. –

It creates placement standards & parameters for broadcasters, agencies & advertisers. It also hedges the risk in product placement deals.

1. A psychological dimension, with 3 parts (and multiple levels) that simultaneously interact with each other.

2. A perpetual dimension e. g.: signal attributes

In-film branding was present from a long time but it was caught our fancy in recent times. And it is a welcome phenomenon. Before year 2000, most of

the money coming for funding of movies was from mafia and other illegal means. And if not them, there were a handful of financiers who controlled the entire movie business. In the year 2000 Bollywood formally got the tag of industry. And this was possible thanks to increasing number of corporate wanting to have stake our movies either as plain financiers or through in-film advertising of their products, brands, companies.

This a big boon to the industry because now with lesser sweat about acquiring finances, we can actually concentrate and experiment with better and relevant themes in our movies. It no longer needs to bend to the pressures of mafia or financier to cut out some parts of the story because it either does not match the views of mafia or is too heavy on the financier's pocket. The brands coming in have given fresh air to our creative freedom."

In-film branding is the latest way of earning revenues, legally! Its the matter of money coming in via these in-film advertising. With increasingly ambitious budgets, it's important to get these endorsements as they pay heavy money for the brands to be feature. And at the end of the day, money matters."

Both, Nokia and Ultra Tech cement managers talked about the theme of the film matching their image. In case of Nokia they identified with the versatility of SRK, the mood of second part of OSO being projected as both up-market (SRK as superstar) and humble (Pappu as lower income group representative), tech savvy, stylish, vibrant, being the in thing. Ultra tech cement identified with the integrity, the mental toughness, the determination, the zeal, the trust, being global winner, modern and youthful, tech savvy yet intrinsically Indian image of the film characters. Ultra tech

pulled a coup of a sort by its placement in the movie Chak de as its unprecedented by any cement company. And they managed to be seen in virtually every frame the team was playing in its official gear, as it was the official sponsor.

There is also a fear in many corporate that if they associate with a film and it flops in box office, it may affect their brand adversely. So investing in in-film advertising is seen as having a risk factor of 50-50. Many thus refrain from such activities. Some however have no issues in promotional activities. They can mostly profitable and does not have that strong an association with the movie to be affected by its commercial success and failure.

The current research provides a foundation for increased understanding about the concept of product placement and its effectiveness in Mainstream films. The paper has highlighted a number of key issues within this research area. It is fairly evident that Bollywood movies have distinct nature and format which distinguishes them from western cinema, in particular Hollywood movies, so there needs to be a research agenda which focuses more extensively upon understanding specific placement strategies, which would then be able to link more closely with specific film themes and structures.

Future research could examine the attitude and interests of audience towards brands and branded goods, to understand individual's propensity to get influenced by brand image. It can also identify additional variables to further segment the market on basis of behavioral intentions in accepting brand placements.

Future studies can also measure relative scores of product categories (FMCG goods versus consumer goods) and well known versus lesser known brands. The increasing use of brand placement in other media like television, books, regional language and art films, and computer games can also be studied.

Product Placement in Mainstream films is emerging as the most reliable and viable medium from brands today. If there is in-film branding in a movie, the 15, 000 audience sitting in the theatre are going to look at it unlike a TV channel where they can browse through different channels. Hence its here that the brands catch and can hold on to consumers' undivided attention. The power of celebrities, many with iconic and idol status, give greater credibility to brands and reinforce or establish positive associations

The study indicates that brand placement in Hindi films are effective. The high recall, recognition and positive attitude scores suggest that brand managers are seriously looking at product placements in movies as a new vehicle for reaching to consumers.

However, several issues need to be kept in mind. Relevance of products to the situation needs to be created- this is possible by incorporating the placement planning at a script level, as practiced in Hollywood. The brand managers also need to guard against the clutter in the scenes- other competing products of product category should not be incorporated. They need to look in the future where use of comparative brand placement will be a reality. The research suggests that explicit placement is more successful than implicit placement. The brand managers however, should pretest the placement to determine the exact level at which viewer irritation sets in. As

success of brand placement is dependent on the success of the movie and consequently, its reach, it is not possible to evaluate placements from a sales generation perspective.

As the Indian economy develops a global perspective, Bollywood needs to follow suit. More importantly, as Indian audiences become fragmented into class specific segments, marketers are faced with the more difficult task of communicating their brand messages. Effective and well thought of product placement appears to be some solution.