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CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON BRAND EQUITY

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ABSTRACT

Today, the use of celebrity endorsement has increased drastically. It has become an integral part of almost every brand's promotional campaign and a big marketing trend. TV channels are flooded with advertisements most of them being celebrity advertisements. Celebrities are seen endorsing almost every product meant for selling. Due to high channel surfing, it is very difficult to keep the viewers' attention for a long time and to focus in a productive way. Perhaps, the advertisement with a celebrity is more likely to keep a TV remote control from changing the channel vis-à-vis a commercial with an unknown artist. While studying the rationale behind the increasing trend of celebrity endorsements across the globe, researchers explore several dimensions of the 'celebrity endorsement' technique. They summarize that celebrity endorsements are worthwhile investments in advertising considering their several benefits. Instant and better recall is one of the most important benefits. Celebrities can bring quick memorability, recall and recognition, and direct client connection with the audience.

The aim of this seminar paper is to research relevant issues linked to the impact of celebrity endorsement on the equity of a brand, as far as the customer is concerned and to understand its effectiveness in marketing communications.

KEYWORDS: Advertisements, Celebrity endorsements, Brand Equity. Integrated Marketing Communications.

1. INTRODUCTION

A celebrity endorser is defined as any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement. To be truly effective, celebrities chosen as endorsers should be knowledgeable, experienced and qualified in order to be perceived as an expert in the category. (Carroll 2008). From a marketing communications perspective, it is vital that firms design strategies that help underpin competitive differential advantage for a firm's products or services. Accordingly, marketing communications activities back up other elements in the marketing mix such as product design, branding, packaging, pricing, and place decisions (distribution channels and physical distribution) in order to attempt to create positive effects in the minds of consumers. In helping achieve this, use of celebrity endorsers is a widely used strategy. (Erdogan 1999)

Companies invest large sums of money to align their brands and themselves with endorsers. Such endorsers are seen as dynamic with both attractive and likeable qualities and companies plan that these qualities are transferred to products via activities. Furthermore, because of their fame, celebrities serve not only to create and maintain attention, but also to achieve high recall rates for marketing communications messages in today's highly cluttered environments. Initially, this strategy seems a no-risk/all-gain situation, but, as with any dynamic marketing communication strategy, there are potential hazards. (Erdogan 1999)

Individuals can change, and endorsement relations can sour. In a sense, celebrity endorsement strategy can be a two-edged sword, which makes selecting a celebrity endorser from innumerable alternatives in the presence of potential pitfalls very challenging. (Erdogan 1999)

The benefits of using celebrity endorsement to support a brand strategy can include increased attention, image polishing, brand introduction, brand repositioning and the potential to underpin global campaigns. Overall research points to accumulated positive influence over the audience's recall and purchase intentions, with celebrities deemed more effective than using a typical consumer or expert. Successful celebrity / brand partnerships have resulted in significant gains in income for brand owners. In addition, he argues that macro factors such as the need for interactivity, the degree of control exercised by consumers over messages received and increasing media fragmentation render celebrity endorsement a valid strategy. (Carroll 2008)

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

Based on literature from past research, the theoretical perspective developed in this study is that celebrity product endorsement is a form of co-branding (also known as 'brand bundling' or 'brand alliance'). The meaning attributed to celebrities moves from the celebrity endorser to the product when the two are paired in an advertisement. (McCracken, 1989). The essence of co-branding is a public relationship between independent brands which reaches beyond a mere transaction (where money is exchanged for an image transfer), to become a mutually beneficial partnership between the involved parties (Motion et al. 2003).

Co-branding is defined as- each participating party has awareness, and generates an image, in the consumer minds. (Keller 1998). This then suggests that, meanings associated with the celebrity become associated with the product in the mind of the consumer. This mutually beneficial relationship takes the form of a continuing exchange, or flow, of strategically desirable image attributes, or 'meaning', between the co-branding parties that can be managed in an exclusive and dynamic process. (Keller 1998). The outcome of this process is that the co-branded product is positioned in a way that is difficult to imitate by the competitors. The issue of brand equity has emerged as one of the most critical areas for marketers. Consumers' brand associations are a key element in brand equity formation and management. Research on brand equity suggests that a creation of positive brand image and attitude should enhance its development.

It is important for brand equity research to not focus on the construct exclusively as an aggregated financial performance outcome, but rather to develop enlightened management of the independent constructs that create the equity in the first place. (Faircloth et al. 2001). Brand equity arises from a more favourable differential response to the firm's marketing efforts. This differential response referred to by Keller is said to result from the consumer's brand knowledge memory structure, which consists of brand image and brand awareness. Brand images are viewed as perceptual associations, which are frequently seen as the basis for an overall evaluation of, or attitude towards, the brand. (Keller 1993)

In essence, there are two aspects involved in celebrity endorsement: (i) co-branding or association between the endorser and the brand; and (ii) impact of endorsement on brand image and brand equity. Given this context, the main question that arises is- how does co-branding between celebrity endorser and the endorsed brand influence brand equity?

2.1 RESEARCH ISSUES

This paper focuses on understanding, how consumer based brand equity is influenced through celebrity endorsements within the framework of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). The paper addresses the following research issues:

- a) Celebrity endorsement influences brand image through co-branding and meaning transfer. Brand image in turn influences brand equity.
- b) Repeated pairing through celebrity endorsements leads to association between celebrity's image and brand image. Brand image in turn influences brand equity.

This paper also tries to answer a number of related questions regarding the influence of celebrity endorsements on brand image. For example:

- a) Which celebrity endorsement factors influence brand image?
- b) If there is an image association between celebrity and the brand, what factors moderate (strengthen or weaken) this relationship?
- c) How do celebrity and brand image as 'co-brands' affect consumer-based brand equity?

2.2 CULTURAL MEANING AND THE CELEBRITY ENDORSER

The effectiveness of the endorser depends, in part, upon the meanings he or she brings to the endorsement process. The number and variety of the meanings contained in celebrities are very large. Distinctions of status, class, gender, and age, as well as personality and lifestyle types, are represented in the pool of available celebrities, putting an extraordinarily various and subtle pallet of meanings at the disposal of the marketing system. (McCracken 1989)

Cultural categories of gender and age are also represented in the celebrity endorser. These age categories are subject to change. However we should tend not to oversimplify celebrity meanings. Even the most heavily stereotyped celebrity represents not a single meaning, but an interconnected set of meanings. An exact assessment of these meanings awaits empirical study and theoretical development. But enough has been said to indicate that the celebrity world is something richer and more complicated than a collection of merely credible or attractive individuals. It is precisely the meanings of the celebrity that makes him or her so useful to the endorsement process. This is because an endorsement succeeds, when an association is fashioned between the cultural meanings of the celebrity world, on the one hand, and the endorsed product, on the other. Not all endorsements succeed in this transfer. Indeed, some are too unsophisticated even to undertake it. But the best endorsements take their power and their efficacy precisely from the successful transfer of meaning. (McCracken 1989)

2.3 CELEBRITY VS. NON-CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

Companies have a great controlling power over created spokespersons since they develop these characters. They can build characters which are congruent with their brands and target audiences, and ensure that these characters are endorsing only one particular product. On the other hand, in the case of celebrity endorsers, companies have limited control over the celebrity's persona as they have created their public persona over the years. Indeed results proved that created endorsers were more effective in creating a link to the product than celebrity endorsers. They attributed these results for single utilisation of created endorsers with the brand over a long time period and their specific persona representing the brand characteristics. The authors based their findings on the classical conditioning paradigm.

According to this paradigm, in marketing communications context, consumers learn the association between an unconditional stimulus (endorser) and a conditional stimulus (product) through repeated exposure. The association is much stronger with original material (created spokesperson) than with popular material since the popular material (celebrity endorser) is not just linked to a promoted product but with many other things. In other words, the linkage is strong in created spokespersons, as it is unique, whereas the linkage is weak in the case of celebrity endorsers because of other associations. (Erdogan 1999)

Researchers also found that there were no statistically significant differences in attitudes towards advertising, brand and intentions to purchase endorsed brand between celebrity and non-celebrity endorsement situations, but differences were found in cognitive responses generated by receivers. In the non-celebrity conditions, receivers focused more on the brand and its features whereas in the celebrity condition receivers concentrated on the celebrity in advertising. On the

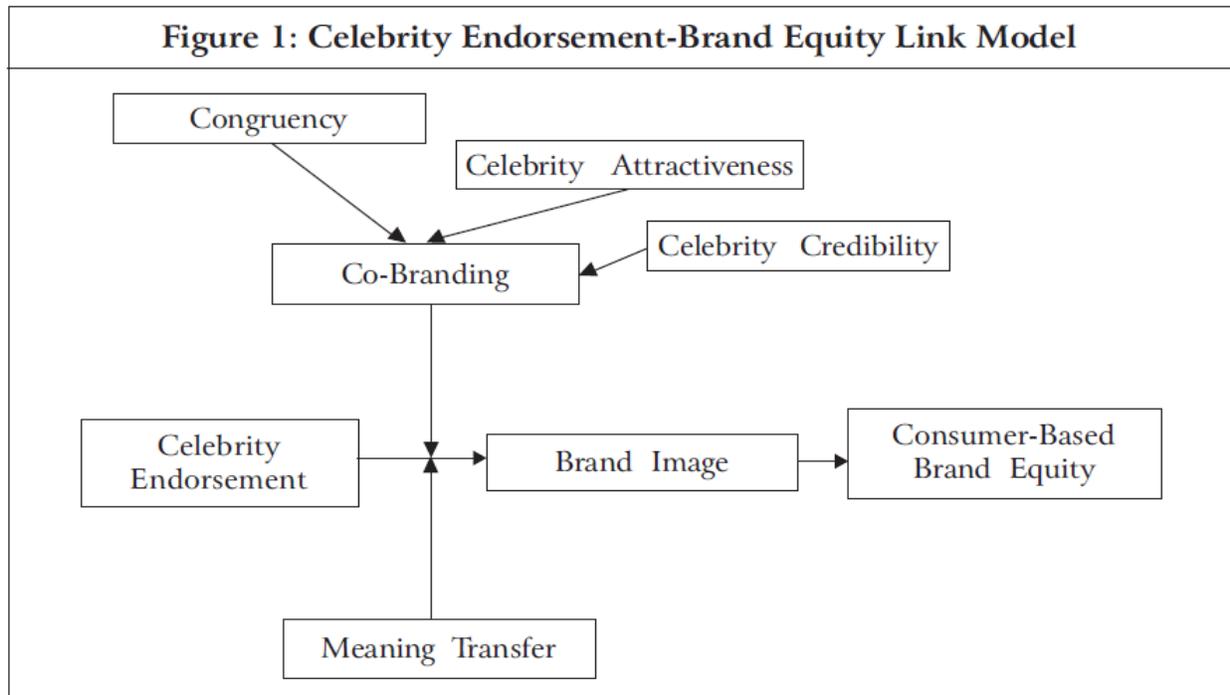
contrary, some studies found that celebrity endorsers produced more positive attitudes towards advertising and greater purchase intentions than a non-celebrity endorser. (Erdogan 1999)

Some studies (Speck, Schumann & Thompson 1988) however have found that expert cues consistently failed to enhance the effectiveness of celebrities who were already considered to be experts, and typical user cues improved effectiveness only when (1) the expert celebrity was not already considered multidimensional (expert and normal person) or (2) an irrelevant celebrity is capable of being thought of as normal. Furthermore, the use of irrelevant celebrities (when they produce strong incongruity effects) can be as beneficial as the use of product-relevant celebrities (which produce endorser effects). This indicated that in a sizeable number of cases, people were able to relate more with non-celebrity endorsers as well.

In the light of academic findings and company reports, it is safe to argue that celebrity endorsers are more effective than non-celebrity endorsers in generating all desirable outcomes (attitudes towards advertising and endorsed brand, intentions to purchase, and in fact actual sales) when companies utilise celebrities whose public persona match with the products and target audiences and who have not endorsed products previously. (Erdogan 1999)

3. ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH ISSUES

The proposed celebrity endorsement brand equity link model in Figure 1 explains the relationship between celebrity endorsements and brand equity. Past research on endorsements indicate that a celebrity has the potential to affect the consumer-based brand equity of the endorsed product through augmenting the product's brand image (Keller 1998). Based on this context, it can be mentioned that the relationship between a celebrity and the endorsed product's brand equity is mediated by the brand's image, which has a positive effect on brand equity.



A) CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT INFLUENCES BRAND IMAGE THROUGH CO-BRANDING AND MEANING TRANSFER. BRAND IMAGE IN TURN INFLUENCES BRAND EQUITY

This issue can be addressed from a ‘congruence’ and ‘meaning transfer’ perspective by examining various factors in relation to brand equity.

3.1 CO-BRANDING AND ITS IMPACT ON BRAND EQUITY

Brand alliances are most effective when they are used to improve and enhance signals of product quality that a brand is trying to make to the market. When a brand is strategically planned to convey a positive image to the intended market, the repeated pairings of the celebrity endorser and the brand facilitate the celebrity and the brand becoming part of each other’s association set (Till and Shimp 1998). For example, the association set for Michael Jordan might consist of ‘Chicago Bulls’, ‘basketball’, ‘baseball’, ‘Nike’, ‘Dream Team’, ‘Gatorade’, and so on.

The principle of brand alliance is that “because brand names are valuable assets, they may be combined with other brand names to form a synergistic alliance in which the sum is greater than the parts” (Rao and Ruekert, 1994). The conditions for a successful alliance leverage strategy would appear to be stronger when the brands used demonstrate similarity in personality traits (for example, Michael Jordan and Nike). Where there is evidence of a match between personalities of the brands in an alliance, then there would be a stronger compatibility or a fit.

Research into brand extensions or co-branding has consistently highlighted the significance of ‘fit’ in dictating extension success. Fit’s function in brand alliances is noteworthy because it has been found that the transfer of perceived quality is enhanced when the brands fit together.

Considering past research on co-branding, the proposed conceptual framework suggests three major determinants of co-branding that have an indirect impact on the consumer's brand equity: congruency, celebrity attractiveness and celebrity credibility.

3.2 DETERMINANTS OF CO-BRANDING WHICH INFLUENCE CONSUMER BASED BRAND EQUITY

3.2.1 CONGRUENCY

Celebrity-product congruency is the consistency between the characteristics of a celebrity endorser and the attributes of the product that he/she endorses. (Misra and Beatty 1990). Experts on celebrity endorsement insist that the celebrity's image, reputation, values and appearance must be relevant to the product or service endorsed. Overall personal attractiveness includes not only instant name and face recognition, but also likability, friendliness, physique, and social and occupational affiliations.

Several studies have relied on congruency effects to explain outcomes such as spokesperson credibility, attitude towards the advertisement, perceptions of higher believability of the spokesperson, product attitudes and brand recall and affect towards the brand (Misra and Beatty 1990).

These outcomes appear to benefit from a fit between the product and the celebrity, where there is a 'match-up' between the characteristics of the product and the celebrity. Thus, it could be inferred that celebrity-product congruence is positively related to brand image. On this basis, brand image is related positively to brand equity. Hence, celebrity-product congruence has an indirect and positive effect on brand equity

3.2.2 CELEBRITY ATTRACTIVENESS

Past research has shown that a physically attractive celebrity facilitates attitude change towards a brand. Researchers investigating physical attractiveness have mentioned that physically attractive celebrities have a positive effect on the products and brands with which they are associated. As cited by scholars, (Kamins et. al., 1990), an attractive celebrity is likely to be an especially potent source of brand image because of the dual benefit of celebrity status and attractiveness.

A comprehensive review of the literature indicates that physically attractive celebrities have a positive effect on evaluations and opinions of a product. It can be mentioned that the celebrity's attractiveness can enhance the recall of brand promises and the likability of a brand. It can be mentioned that the use of an attractive spokesperson has a positive effect on consumers' attitude towards a brand. Studies have found that using physically attractive celebrities in advertising led to more favourable attitudes towards the advertisement and stronger purchase intentions.

One of the several explanations for these findings is that attractive celebrities tend to get more attention than less attractive celebrities and, therefore, from a co-branding perspective they are able to convey meaning to the partner brand more effectively. Hence, drawing on these findings, it can be concluded that the more attractive the celebrity, the more is the endorsed product's brand image from endorsement by that celebrity.

3.2.3 CELEBRITY CREDIBILITY

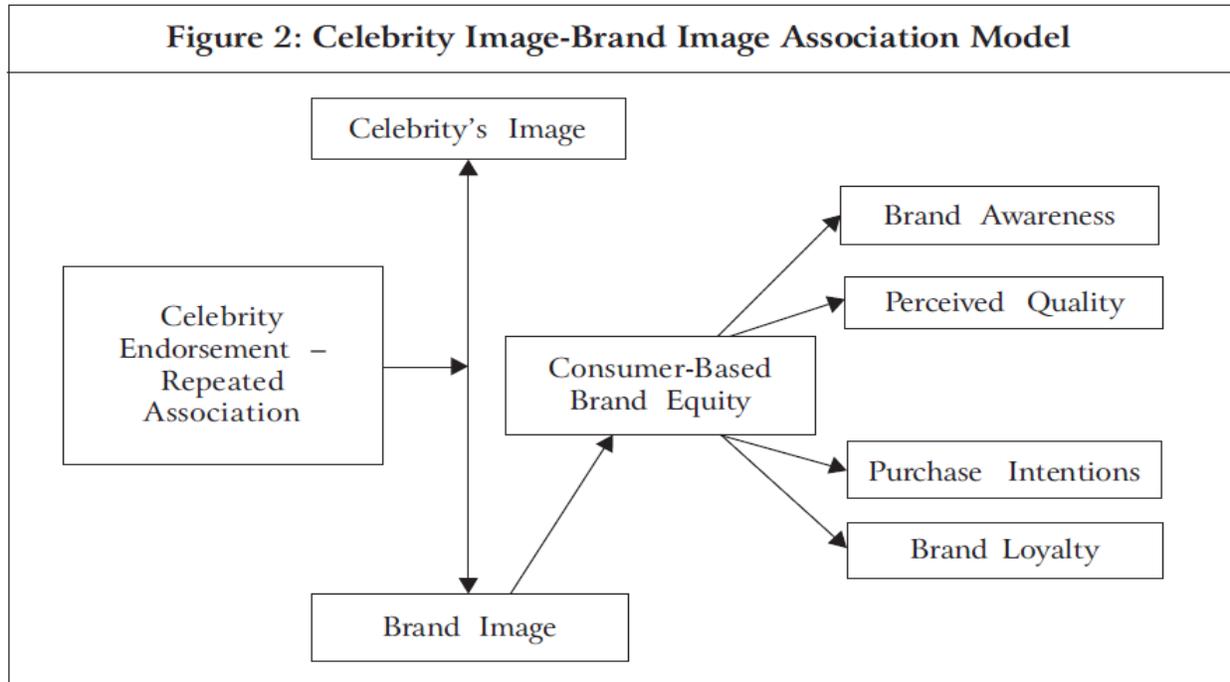
The last determinant that has an impact on brand equity is celebrity credibility. It is used to imply celebrities' positive characteristics that affect the receiver's acceptance of a message. Celebrity credibility can be defined as the extent to which a celebrity is "perceived as possessing expertise relevant to the communication topic and can be trusted to give an objective opinion on the subject" (Goldsmith et al. 2000).

As per studies conducted with various advertisement agencies and companies, celebrity credibility is identified as a prime reason for selecting a celebrity. (Miciak and Shanklin 1994). Hence, it can be inferred that the important dimensions of credibility are expertise and trustworthiness. When consumers evaluate the expertise and trustworthiness of a celebrity, they reflect on the validity of the assertions made by the celebrity (expertise) and their confidence in the celebrity's intent to represent the most valid assertions (trustworthiness). Therefore, it can be said that a source's perceived credibility has a positive impact, in terms of persuading consumers and influencing consumer attitudes on the products with which the source is associated.

Thus results indicate that when a celebrity spokesperson is congruent with the brand, a transfer of effect takes place. But when the spokesperson is incongruent, or irrelevant, the transfer of effect does not appear to take place. Hence, a celebrity's image will transfer to an endorsed brand's image. To complete the meaning transfer process, consumers must acquire the meaning in the product through consumption and repeated purchase (Gwinner 1997).

B) REPEATED PAIRING THROUGH CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS LEADS TO ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE CELEBRITIES'S IMAGE AND THE BRAND IMAGE. BRAND IMAGE IN TURN INFLUENCES BRAND EQUITY

The proposed model in Figure 2 is an alternative for an amended form of that proposed in Figure 1 and is based on additional insights obtained from further research on the subject of celebrity endorsement.



Repeated pairings of the celebrity endorser with the brand should facilitate the celebrity and brand becoming part of each other's association set. (Till & Shimp 1998). This pairing is represented in Figure 2 by a two-sided arrow connecting the celebrity image and the brand image. In effect, celebrity product endorsement is an interactive process between brands.

Furthermore, marketing researchers have suggested that brand image is a vital element of brand equity. Past research literature on celebrity endorsements, has indicated, that a positive brand image enhances the brand equity measures of purchase intentions and therefore a willingness to pay premium prices for brands which are well known among consumers.

Additionally, premium prices and higher brand equity are related to brands with higher image ratings. Studies say, however that the consumers form an image through a synthesis of all the signals emitted by the brand. Brand image results from the consumer decoding, extracting, and interpreting the brand signals. (Kapferer 1992). Thus, this shows that the image in turn can be linked to brand equity. The most widely recognized link is the existence of a positive relation between the brand image and the brand equity. Hence, considering the evidence from past research, it can be concluded that celebrities have the potential to affect brand equity of the endorsed product through augmenting the product's brand image.

“Despite the popularity of celebrity pitchmen (and women), many commercials that use celebrity endorsers do not live up to the advertisers' expectations (Miciak and Shanklin, 1994). However, used appropriately, celebrity endorsers can serve a valuable role in developing brand equity and enhancing a brand's competitive position”. (Till and Shimp 1998). Although there is great potential for using endorsers to enhance brand equity, there has not yet been much empirical research on this aspect of the endorsement process (Walker et al., 1992).

An effective way to achieve unconditional consumer brand equity is, by maximizing the effects of co-branding, a branding strategy that has seen a dramatic increase over the past decade. Co-branding involves combining two or more well-known brands into a single product. When it works well, co-branding has the potential to achieve a ‘best of all worlds’ synergy that capitalizes on the unique strengths of each contributing brand. For instance, Michael Jordan endorsed Nike’s brand for a very long time. This consistent use of Michael Jordan as Nike’s endorser results in consumers thinking of Michael Jordan when thinking of any Nike product and vice versa. Hence, in this case it can be said that, both the brand and the endorser have become a part of each other’s association set in the minds of the consumer.

Furthermore, research on co-branding has consistently highlighted the significance of ‘fit’ in dictating brand alliance success. Fit’s function in brand alliances is noteworthy because it has been found that the transfer of perceived quality is enhanced when the brands fit together.

Higher the cohesiveness between the endorsed brand and the endorser, higher will be the synergistic effect on brand equity in a consumers mind. Previous studies on celebrity endorsements have examined the association between endorser credibility/attractiveness and whether the celebrity is an effective mass-media salesperson. However, as past evidence suggests, many of the celebrity endorser studies have indicated that a celebrity can have a positive impact on the consumers’ attitude towards the brand and/or the advertisement.

It is important for brand equity research not just to focus on the financial performance outcome, but rather to develop enlightened management constructs that create brand equity in the consumers’ mind in the first place. Celebrity endorsements, when integrated with other communication tools, are the most effective way of inducing brand loyalty and enhancing a positive attitude towards the brand. Hence, from a managerial perspective, it is very important to understand and identify how celebrity endorsements can provide optimum leverage to a firm’s marketing activities.

4. Pros and Cons of Celebrity Endorsement

Although the potential benefits of utilising celebrity endorsers are significant, so are the costs and risks. The potential advantages, the concurrent hazards and the corresponding preventive measures are highlighted below:

| Potential Advantages | Potential Hazards | Preventive Tactics |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Increased attention | Overshadow the brand | Pre-testing and careful planning |
| Image polishing | Public controversy | Buying insurance and putting provision clauses in contracts |
| Brand introduction | Image change and overexposure | Explaining what is their role and putting clause to restrict endorsements for other brands |

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Brand repositioning | Image change and loss of public recognition | Examining what life-cycle stage the celebrity is in and how long this stage is likely to continue |
| Underpin global campaigns | Expensive | Selecting celebrities who are appropriate for global target audience, not because they are 'hot' in all market audiences. |

Increasing competition for consumer consciousness and new product proliferation have encouraged marketers to use attention creating media stars to assist product marketing. Moreover, recent technological innovations such as remote control television, video control systems, and cable and satellite diffusion have served to increase consumer power over programmed advertisements. This increased control or power makes advertising more challenging. Usage of celebrity endorsement strategy may ease this threat by helping create and maintain consumer attention to advertisements. (Erdogan 1999)

Celebrities also help advertisements stand out from surrounding clutter, therefore improving communicative ability by cutting through excess noise in a communication process. If a company image has been tarnished, hiring a popular celebrity is one potential solution. At times a celebrity is chosen and a new product designed around the person since this strategy can pay huge dividends by giving products instant personality and appeal. Some of the initial positioning strategies for products fail to draw expected interest from consumers. Companies can hire celebrities who have necessary meanings to establish new positioning for existing products. Some of the most difficult aspects of global marketing to grasp are host countries' cultural 'roadblocks' such as time, space, language, relationships, power, risk and many others. (Erdogan 1999)

Celebrity endorsements are a powerful device by which to enter foreign markets. Celebrities with world-wide popularity can help companies break through many such roadblocks. Pizza Hut International increased its global market share by utilising global celebrities such as supermodels Cindy Crawford and Linda Evangelista, and Baywatch star Pamela Anderson.

Despite the preceding potential benefits, there are still many potential hazards in utilising celebrities as part of a marketing communications campaign. Benefits of using celebrities can reverse markedly if they, for example, suddenly change image, drop in popularity, get into a situation of moral turpitude, lose credibility by over-endorsing, or overshadow endorsed products. It has been found that negative information about a celebrity endorser not only influences consumers' perception of the celebrity, but also the endorsed product. While a celebrity can effectively draw attention to an advertisement his or her impact on other variables-

brand awareness, recall of copy points and message arguments, brand attitudes, and purchase intentions must also be considered. A common concern is that consumers will focus their attention on the celebrity and fail to notice the brand being promoted. (Erdogan 1999)

Recent studies indicate the effectiveness in use of a two-sided as opposed to one-sided celebrity spokesperson appeal across three distinct levels. First, ad-related variables such as credibility and effectiveness were significantly enhanced. Significant results for credibility is rare in research of this type, and the findings evident here are consistent with the interpretation that sidedness enhances credibility through the identification process of social influence. Moreover, the sponsor received significantly higher ratings on overall quality of service and subjects' revealed a significantly greater intention to use the company to tackle consulting problems. However future research should investigate this issue in greater depth through consideration of other variables such as product type (i.e., a service vs. a product and/or high vs. low involvement product classes); status of endorser (i.e., expert, company president, typical consumer and celebrity); and the variation in importance and number of attributes disclaimed. (Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, Moe 1989)

Finally, advertisers today seem to be keenly attuned to the attributional processes through which subjects infer a spokesperson's reason and rationale for advertising a product. The recent use of celebrities in advertising who make the claim that they have never served as a spokesperson before is a direct attempt by advertisers to influence consumers' attributional processes. That is, it is hoped that consumers will attribute the celebrity's involvement in the product to his/her firm belief in product quality and service (or other similar attributes) rather than just the monetary reward. Hence, this strategy and the use of a two- sided communication both have a goal of increasing advertiser credibility. In future research, it would be useful to study the interaction between these two strategies as well as the attributional processes which underlie their effectiveness. (Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, Moe 1989)

Sometimes embarrassments have occurred for some companies when their spokesperson or celebrity has become embroiled in controversy (Hertz Corporation and OJ. Simpson). Celebrities may disappear out of the media flashlights before the end of a contractual term as was the case in Schick Inc's relation with Mark Spitz, winner of seven Olympic gold medals. It is not usual for celebrities to alter their image, but when this occurs it can spell failure for a campaign.

Another important issue is that of celebrity' greed and subsequent overexposure when a celebrity becomes an endorser for many diverse products (e.g. the Spice Girls in 1997). If a celebrity's image ties in with many brands, impact and identity with each product may lessen since the relationship between the celebrity and a particular brand is not distinctive.

This can not only compromise the value of the celebrity in the eyes of star's fans, but also can make consumers overtly aware of the true nature of endorsement which has less to do with brand/product attributes, and more to do with generous compensation for the celebrity, leading consumers to overt cynicism about their motives. Because of these facts, companies and celebrities alike must be careful not to kill the goose that may potentially lay golden eggs in case they become rotten. (Erdogan 1999)

5. CONCLUSION

Notably, effectiveness of celebrity endorsers is found to be moderated by several factors: celebrity attractiveness and credibility, product-celebrity match, message and product type, level of involvement number of endorsements by celebrities, target receiver characteristics, and overall meanings (e.g. personality; values, standards) attached to celebrities. Besides these factors, economic visibility of endorsers, regulative issues, compatibility with overall marketing strategy, and potential risks must be simultaneously also considered.

In sum, celebrity endorsement strategy can be an effective competitive weapon in mature and saturated markets in order to differentiate products from competitors' since there is a heavy advertising clutter and almost no room for actual product differentiation in markets, as long as the 'right' celebrity is found.

In light of the growing utilisation and the large sums of money spent on celebrity endorsement answers are needed to help determine formulae which potentially maximise effectiveness of celebrity endorsers. Even though scholars have tried to provide criteria for practitioners on which to base their choices of celebrity endorsers, there is little agreement on what dimension or dimensions are legitimate. There is furthermore a paucity of understanding as to how practitioners make celebrity endorser selection decisions. Thus, it is evident that further research with companies (either clients or senior agency personnel) is needed in order to determine how practitioners select celebrity endorsers.

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