

TO EVALUATE SCOPE OF PRODUCT PLACEMENT IN BOLLYWOOD MOVIES ON AUDIENCE

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ABSTRACT

Recognizable brand names appeared in movies from films earliest history before films were even narrative forms in the sense that they are recognized today. Product placement is an investment for brands trying to reach a niche audience as consumers to focus interest for particular products. A high-cost feature film that has expectations of grossing millions attract many products attention but the film studios have to analyze if a product fits with the image of the film, by keeping in the mind that film advertisements are subtle. Celebrities are both advertisings for movies and advertising for themselves. You may also be inclined to purchase fan type material like T-shirts or dolls or books about these people, who are also in themselves products for consumption in the entertainment industry. In many ways, a movie is like a long advertisement for a celebrity, in that if they are entertaining, a viewer will be more inclined to see other movies with this same person starring.

Keywords: Placement, Movies, Brand, Audience.

INTRODUCTION

Product placement refers to the practice of including a brand name product, package, signage or other trademark merchandise within a motion picture, television or other media vehicles for increasing the memorability of the brand and for instant recognition at the point of purchase. Product placements are commercial insertions within a particular media program intended to heighten the visibility of a brand, type of product or service. These insertions are not meant to

be commercial break ups rather an integral part of the medium so that the visibility of the brand increases. Attempts are made for the viewer to read the product or the brand as a quality of the characters using and approving it. Researchers have shown that viewers like product placements (unless there are too many) because they enhance realism, aid in character development, create historical subtext, and provide a sense of familiarity. For marketers, the availability of a captive audience with greater reach than traditional advertisements, and the advantage of showing brands in their natural environment motivate product placements (Turcotte, 1995). Brand placements are frequently used in Hollywood films (Fuller, 1997; Wasco, 1994) and have subtly, of late entered into Indian films.

Product placements are different than celebrity endorsement advertisements in many ways. The celebrities endorse products and brands with commercial reasons, which normally come in the breaks in television programs or cinema halls. The phenomenon of zipping and change in television usage behaviour due to surfing during commercial breaks have reduced the effectiveness of television commercials.

Similarly, the commercials on cinema halls are found to be of low involvement as the audience takes them as blocks between the reasons for visiting the cinema hall and the time available to them for entertainment. So the brand communication and entertainment products are viewed differently by the audience in both the media.

The brand placement provides an opportunity where the involved audience gets exposure to the brands and products during the natural process of narration of the movie or television commercial. It has been observed from research that brand recall for commercials shown during the television programs with a higher level of TRPs is very poor due to the channel switching behaviour (Fourier and Dolan 1997). High level of media clutter, the similarity of programming across channels, channel switching behaviour are the factors responsible to generate sufficient level of research interest among researchers at the practice of brand placements in movies. One of the popular methods of classifying the placements was a combination of the level of integration and explicitness (D' Astous and Seguin 1998).

Measuring Effectiveness:

Effectiveness can be defined in several different ways, depending on the overall goal of the Placement. This fact was noted by Law and Braun (2000) who state, "Little is known about its [product placement's] effectiveness nor even how to define and measure such effectiveness". Some researchers like Nelson (2002) claim that increasing awareness of a brand can be an

important goal of a marketing campaign and thereby justify their study using memory-based measures (recall and recognition). Others assert that different types of products can be placed effectively in different ways. For instance, Law and Braun-LaTour (2004) claim that recall is a good measurement when the customer is highly involved in the buying decision, Whereas implicit memory tests are more meaningful when the decision is spontaneous. Hence, there is no current standard agreement of the “right” measurement of effectiveness, since it depends on the overall goal. Thus, selecting one view at this point would exclude important research results, and we will therefore review the work done using each method separately, namely Recall, Recognition, Attitude Change and Observed Brand Preference.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarly definitions of product placement primarily focus on placing products in the broadcast media for money. Balasubramanian (1994) referred to it as a hybrid message – a paid message aimed at influencing movie (or television) audiences via the planned and unobtrusive entry of a branded product into a movie. Balasubramanian (1994) considered the success of product placement in a movie to be dependent on the relationship between a filmmaker, a specialized firm and a product sponsor. Gupta and Gould (1997) applied the ethical aspects to product groups and found that controversial products such as alcohol, cigarettes and guns were considered to be less acceptable to place in movies. Gupta and Gould (1997) also found that women were more negative toward placements of such controversial products than men. Gupta and Gould (1997) seemed to incorporate both the above-mentioned definition and defined product placements as a means of “incorporating brands in movies in return for money”. Product placements enhance realism and are an important tool of character development which aid in an enhanced sense of familiarity (Gupta and Gould, 1997). Research conducted by Kripalani (2006), Mishra (2002), and Thomas (2005) provided information on the emergence of Bollywood as well as the practice of product placement in Bollywood. Kripalani (2006) came to the same conclusion about Bollywood and the Indian movie audiences. He added that Bollywood movies have not only reflected the environment but also the customs and cultures of the audiences from different regions. According to Rajadhyksha (2004), the Hindi film industry is a reflection of the culture of India and the products and practices endorsed by Bollywood have a significant impact on the moviegoers. With the growth of the urban middle class, many multiplexes have also come up. So the number of captive audiences watching a movie has increased significantly. Brand managers have to use this information in a significant

manner. The best possible tool available to them is product placements or more precisely. (Panda, 2004; and Sood, 2010) Product placements can have a significant effect on message receptivity (Panda, 2004). The sponsor of product placements is likely to gain goodwill by associating itself with a popular program targeted to a specific audience. The more successful the program, the longer the shelf life of the product placement. According to Kureshi (2010) product placement research in traditional media like television and film is decreasing as product placements appear in newer media like the computer, video, digital, online, and simulation games.

PRODUCT PLACEMENT IN MOVIES: BOLLYWOOD EXPERIENCE

Films are a prominent medium of entertainment in India. Impact of films is evident from the fact that film stars have iconic status in India. The Indian film industry is 100 years old and the world's largest producer of films in volumes, producing around 1,000 films per annum and accounted for 1% of the global film industry revenue. In India, two types of films are produced-commercial films and art films. The other emerging genres are telefilms, special effect films and sequel of very successful commercial films. Film producers now make films which are for masses or specific target groups. Leveraging on the emotional value attached with a movie and diverse genre of films produced, corporates and advertisers have the opportunity to associate their brands with the right movies through "in-film advertisements". Advertising agencies thus play a crucial role between film producers and corporates who want to associate their brand with a movie. Product placement in Indian movies is not something new. A discernible trend as regards using the storyline of the film to advertise products has been noticed in the recent past. The products chosen for advertising through this medium have varied from automobiles to soft drinks, garments, gift items, services, pharmaceuticals to name a few. This industry was an unorganized sector, it was granted "industry status" only in the year 2000 by the Government of India. Thereafter began the journey towards its formation as an organized sector. Currently, there are 26 conglomerates in the film industry. Adlabs Films, Yash Raj Films, UTV, and Pritish Nandy Communications etc are a few companies which have led to vertical integration across the value chain between film producers, distributors, exhibitors, broadcasters and music companies. In this context, it will be interesting to cite some of the recent Indian movies in which products and services have been advertised. The early instances of a product promoted in a movie include the 1967 movie, "An Evening in Paris" where actress Sharmila Tagore was seen sipping delicately from a 200 ml bottle of Coke, struggling to make sure the logo was

visible. Raj Kapoor's 1973 "Bobby", starring Rishi Kapoor and Dimple Kapadia. The Rajdoot motorbike from Enfield Motors was launched in the movie. In the movie, "Awwal Number", the Dev Anand flick released in 1990 starring Aamir Khan, every time the hero hit a four, the ball bounced off a poster saying Garware! A lot of people unrelated to the storyline were shown carrying Benzer bags in the 1992 movie, "Prem Diwane" where an entire sequence with Madhuri Dixit was shot inside the famous Benzer stores of Bombay. In recent times, McDonald's India has been quite active in the product placement front. In "Love Ke Liye Kuch Bhi Karega", the hero strategically holds a ball with the Mac 'M' on it. Another direct reference is when the heroine declares she consumes nothing but Domino's Pizza and Diet Coke. A similar example is when Hritik Roshan flexes biceps etc and asks irritably, "McDonald's ka burger laaon kya?" in the movie, "Kaho Na Pyar Hai".

The first recognized product placement in Hindi film is "Coke" in Subhash Ghai's "Taal". To promote Stroh's Beer, actor Shahrukh Khan mentions its name in the movie "Dilwale Dulhania le Jayenge" for a 15-second slot. BR Chopra's "Baghban" is an instance where Amitabh Bachchan endorsed a multiplicity of brands, namely Ford Ikon, ICICI Bank and Tata Tea. As the motorcycle Rajdoot was launched through a film, similar product placement was done by Maruti Suzuki which launched its new model "Swift" in Abhishek Bachchan starrer, "Bunty Aur Babli". Automobiles are among the more favourite products for placement in films as is evident from the movie "Dhoom" starring actor John Abraham who promoted Suzuki in a scene. The Amitabh Bachchan starrer "Viruddh", has promoted Asian Paints and Calcium Sandoz tablets. Similarly, the pharmaceuticals are also being promoted through films like in the movie "Parineeta" in which the actress Vidya Balan promotes Saridon tablets. "Kuch Naa Kaho", starring Abhishek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai endorsed Coca-Cola. The trend of multi-brand advertising is fastly catching up which is evident in the film "Chalte-Chalte" starring Shahrukh Khan and Rani Mukherjee. The movie promotes Castrol engine oil, Santro and Versache. Coke and Pass Pass were endorsed through "Yaadein". In the movie "Waqt", Amitabh Bachchan is shown to be the owner of Archies gift shop. Fardeen Khan has also endorsed Archies in the film "Pyare Mohan". "Fiza" starring Hrithik Roshan and Neha shows the actors waltzing in front of a Close Up billboard. Continuing with the trend of promoting products through a storyline of films is the movie "Yaaran Naal Baharaan" which has promoted the bike Karizma. In "Koi Mil Gaya" starring Hritik Roshan and Preity Zinta, a Hero Cup was kept for a Basketball Match along with Karizmaa (bike promoted by actor Hritik Roshan) on display for a crowd of 100 odd in a small hill station. The Times of India group associated itself

with the movie “Hum Tum” and took care of its promotion also which even included a cartoon strip made especially for the film starring the characters of the film. Actor Tusshar Kapoor is shown using the Kinetic Honda’s Laser model in the movie “Gayab”. Famous actress Sharmila Tagore’s daughter Soha Ali Khan joined the Frankfinn Institute of Air Hostess Training in the movie “Dil Maange More” and is associated with the brand since. More recently, Zandu Balm pain reliever rub and BoroPlus anti-septic cream have been part of the superhit songs “Munni Badnaam Hui” of Dabangg. In Cocktail online shopping address myntra .com was effectively emphasised. Now in Dabangg 2, the product name fevicol features in a song. Another example is of “Duracell” brand placed in movie PK in which actor Amir Khan while going at his planet takes Duracell batteries as they are long-lasting.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Research Objectives:

- To measure the effectiveness of product placement in Bollywood movies on customers.
- To analyze the factors that are considered important and the effectiveness of product placement.

Research Design: Descriptive Research.

Research Methodology:

The research methodology broadly undertakes an extensive rigorous review of the literature with scholarly observations and investigation of other collected information through reliable secondary resources. Primary data is to be collected from the survey of 120 respondents through the questionnaire.

Sampling Size: A survey is to be conducted among a sample of 120 respondents with the help of a structured questionnaire.

Sampling technique: Non-probability Convenience sampling.

Research Instrument: Structured Questionnaire and Online survey.

DATA ANALYSIS

Awareness of Product Placement:

Out of 120 samples, 89 people revealed that they are aware of the practice of product placement. It is because nowadays many of the Bollywood movies are showing different products in their scenes. It means about 74% of the people are aware of the product placement and only 31 people i.e 24% of the people are not aware of the practice of product placement.

Frequency of watching a movie:

The response suggested that a greater number of people watch movies on an average at least once in a month i.e. about 67 out of 120 people watch the movie on an average once in a month. While 40 people watch on an average once in a week. Only 11% people i.e. 13 out of 120, watches a movie on an average two to five times a week. That looks a large number of people does not watch films regularly.

Type of product placement that is more effective:

As we all know that product placement has been practiced for many years in Bollywood. Directors use it in a different type of scenes, songs, etc. through different exposure techniques such as visual, audio or audio-visual. Audio-visual seems to be the most effective as 76% of people have responded.

Factors influence the most to remember and recall the products:

Influencing factor is one of the most important things for the one to remember and recall the product. It suggests that 50% i.e. 60 out of 120 people said “Form of placement” is the most influencing factor to remember and recall the products that people have seen in the movies. It includes Implicit, Integrated-explicit product placement, Non-integrated product placements. After that comes “Celebrity” with 29% by which also many people think that they get influenced by watching the celebrity who uses the product in a movie. Brand Salience and Type of exposure don't play many roles in influencing the people to remember and recall the products shown in a movie.

Number of Respondents have seen Movie Chennai Express:

Chennai Express is a 2013 Indian romantic action comedy film directed by Rohit Shetty and produced by Gauri Khan for Red Chillies Entertainment. The film features Shahrukh Khan and Deepika Padukone in lead roles; it is the second collaboration between Shahrukh Khan and Deepika Padukone after Om Shanti Om (2007). It broke several box office records in India and abroad, becoming the quickest film to collect 1 billion (US\$16 million) net domestically. It is noted that 105 out of 120 people have seen movie Chennai Express as it was one of the blockbuster movie of 2013 and which had earned huge box-office collections. Many brands like Nokia, ASUS, Nerolac, etc have been placed in between the movie scenes.

Awareness of brands associated with the movie Chennai Express:

It is known fact that Nokia had chosen Shahrukh Khan as their brand ambassador so since in his last two movies of 2013 “Chennai Express” where Shahrukh Khan enumerates the features of Nokia Lumia 920 in one of its scene and 2014 “Happy New year” release that Nokia has

been placed as a brand in between the movie scenes in both these movies. The response that awareness of Nokia is highest i.e. 104 votes among the other brands placed in the film Chennai Express. While Nerolac and ASUS seem to be comparatively equal with 39 and 38 responses respectively.

Number of Respondents have seen Movie Bodyguard:

Bodyguard is a 2011 Indian action-comedy film directed by Siddique. The film was produced by Atul Agnihotri featured Salman Khan and Kareena Kapoor in lead roles. As this movie had broken many records upon its release and people had appreciated it also. The response that 103 out of 120 people have seen this movie i.e. 86% of people have watched this movie out of 120 samples taken. While only 17 out of 120 have not gone for this movie which is very less compared to the people who have watched it.

Awareness of brand associated with movie Bodyguard:

Bodyguard is packed with prominent product placements, from high-end autos to mosquito repellent among them Audi, BlackBerry and Sony Vaio were placed in many scenes in the movie. Audi's Q7 lands plenty of screen time alongside the stars while not many scenes pass without a BlackBerry brand device showing up. This can be seen clearly in the graph that 89 people out of 120 had recognized BlackBerry highest among the other two brands. While Sony Vaio is least aware among the people with 47 votes as it was not used much in a movie.

Number of Respondents have seen Movie Krrish:

Krrish is a 2006 Indian science fiction superhero film directed, produced, and written by Rakesh Roshan, and starring Hrithik Roshan and Priyanka Chopra. Krrish was conceived to be a film of global significance and a trendsetter in Indian cinema, with visual effects on par with those from Hollywood. The film became the second highest-earning Indian film of 2006 and grossed a worldwide total of 1.17 billion (US\$18 million). It was given a "blockbuster" rating by Box Office India. The film won both the National and Filmfare awards for special effects, while actor Hrithik Roshan received praise and numerous best actor awards for his role. 97 out of 120 samples i.e. 81% people have seen this movie as it was a huge blockbuster of that time and had successfully positioned character 'Krrish' as a superhero among the kids domestically as well as abroad also.

Awareness of brand associated with movie Krrish:

There is one area in which this film does leave Hollywood behind, and that is in the blatancy of its product placement. Rakesh Roshan, director and producer of every instalment in the franchise, has long been a firm advocate of product placement in movies. They had placed

Bournvita as the ‘secret behind Krrish’s extraordinary strength, agility and fitness and intelligence’ and which was not only noticed by people but was also remembered by for a long time as one can see in the responses that 96 people out of 120 i.e 80% people are aware of the placement of Bournvita brand in the movie. After that Singapore Tourism Board comes which was also noticed by 52 people as the more than half of the movie was shooting in Singapore. While brands such as Sony and Hero Honda were much lesser aware compared to first two brands.

Purchase intention of Brands as and when placed in Films:

As have taken three cases of Bollywood Blockbuster movies prominent product placements i.e Chennai Express, Bodyguard and Krrish of which NOKIA was most aware brand among people while watching Chennai express. The responses suggested the Purchase Intention of Nokia Lumia 920 by the respondents after watching Chennai Express which shows that only 5% preferred to go for purchasing the placed brand while 55 people revealed that they feel ‘less likely’ to purchase that product. 40 people out of 120 gave Neutral response on their purchase intention of Nokia Lumia 920. Integrated explicit products placement more effective than implicit-products placement. While watching a movie a product or brand which is shown discreetly in background of movie scene without mentioning it is called as Implicit product placement while the products or brand which are shown and also mentioned the benefits, features, etc explicitly by the celebrity is called as Integrated explicit product placement.

Impact of Integrated Product placements:

1) In Chennai Express, Shahrukh Khan explicitly describes the features of Nokia Lumia 920 in one of its scene.

2) In Krrish, Hrithik Roshan says “Let’s go home. If you want to become like me, I will give you Bournvita” This scene establishes Bournvita as Krrish’s little secret and emphasizes that Bournvita is to Krrish as Spinach is to Popeye.

The responses show that 63 people out of 120 agrees that Integrated explicit product placement is more effective than Implicit which suggest that people remember & recall more when they had seen Integrated Product placement in a movie.

KEY FINDINGS

After going through the research found out the following things:

- Integrated product placement has the largest product recall and is the most effective placement than any other form.

- Products explicitly mentioned in the movie have more exposure and noticed by the audience rather than products shown discrete in the background.
- With films getting older the product recall diminishes. (ex Rang De Basanti)
- Well-known brands are more effective on a consumer's mind (ex Nokia, Tag Heur, Coca-cola). Thus brands familiar to consumer's life are recalled more.
- People seemed to have a positive attitude towards the practice of product placement in the movies and are much aware of it.
- More air time does not necessitate greater to remember the product in contrary the way it is placed .i.e. the Type of exposure and Form of placement determines the effectiveness of the product placement.
- Brand recall depends upon the top the Brand awareness, Brand identity and Brand Image in the mind of the consumer.
- Respondents with different gender have the same views regarding the concept of product placement as an innovative advertising form than traditional advertising.
- Respondents from different age groups have the same perception about explicitly naming a product.
- Female respondents found to be more influenced than male to buy the product shown in the movie by their favourite celebrity.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

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 audience sitting in the theatre are going to look at it, unlike a TV channel where they can browse through different channels. Hence it is 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 is 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. The brand managers' needs 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 the 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 the 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. 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.

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