Product Placement: Developing Concepts, Constructs and Measures

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Product placement practice has grown in scope and volume, and expenditure now exceeds one billion dollars per annum. Publicity and public concern is also increasing. Placement research however has not kept pace with these trends. Effects-based research is minimal and findings across studies diverge. Most researchers have adopted traditional advertising effect measures, however placement is qualitatively different to interruptive advertising. Whilst theoretical discussion is ensuing, it remains minimal. Before viable research can emerge, sound concepts and constructs must be developed. This paper presents a discussion and resolution of conceptual issues.

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The respondent was told that each source recommends a different camera so they will have to make a decision based solely on the sources since they must buy the gift immediately.

Each source was then rated on their expertise, believability, trustworthiness and interest in helping them make the best choice on a nine-point scale. They were then asked which recommendation they would be most likely and least likely to take. For the latter, they were asked why they would be least likely to follow this recommendation.

Results

Respondents were 140 undergraduate students. The sample was 54.1% female and 90.1% spent four or more hours per week on the internet.

In terms of interest in helping the customer to make the best decision, the chatroom advisor was rated statistically significantly lower (mean=5.09) than all three other sources (Customer=6.63, Web Guide=6.01, Salesperson=6.04), confirming expectations that suspicion led to lower ratings than those with admitted self-interest. While the salesperson and chatroom advisor were described as having equivalent expertise experience, the chatroom advisor was rated statistically lower (mean=5.48) on expertise than the salesperson (mean=6.81), and was even statistically lower than the store customer (mean=5.90) or the Buying Guide (mean=6.47).

When asked whose recommendation they would most likely take, 31.4% said the website buying guide and 30.0% said the customer, while 25.7% said the electronics’ salesperson. In terms of the recommendation they would be least likely to take, 51.4% said the chatroom advisor. The verbatims for those respondents showed that 68% of the responses doubted the chatroom advisor’s credibility, some expressing the need to see advisors face-to-face to be able to judge their credibility. Another 11% suggested that the person probably worked for the manufacturer. Interestingly 12% saw the recommendation as part of a possible joke, prank or fraud.

This provides some limited support to Fein’s arguments about the effects of suspicion. Consumers seem to be suspicious of sources who may be concealing their true identity and therefore their self-interest, rating them lower than self-interested sources.

This study suggests that marketers should proceed with caution in using online forums. Consumers are becoming more sophisticated in these forums where identity is less verifiable, leading to suspicion. The very “hint” of deceit may be sufficient to elicit significant consumer backlash. The heyday of marketers being able to “masquerade” as consumers to gain greater influence and avoid coping strategies may be past. The suspicion in this study seemed to be limited to the online forums.

References


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The Effect of Perceived Brand Name–Logo Coherence on Brand Attitudes

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Extended Abstract

This research investigates how the perceived coherence between brand name and logo affects brand attitudes and how this relationship is influenced by consumer-level and marketer-controlled variables (Keller, 1993, 1998). The topic is an important one since brand names and logos are common means to communicate brand identity to consumers (Aaker 1996; Henderson and Cote 1998). However, if these brand elements are incoherent, incongruity may occur at the brand association level (Keller 1993). Therefore, the coherence between brand name and logo is crucial to the development of a strong brand identity. Even though the coherence between brand names and their logos has been recognized as an important research topic, little systematic research has investigated it yet (Henderson and Cote 1998; Henderson, Giese, and Cote 2003; Klink 2003).

The purpose of this research is to study a main effect (the impact of brand name-logo coherence on brand attitudes), its potential moderators and its boundary conditions. To do so, the primary theoretical frameworks we rely on are Keller’s (1993) consumer-based