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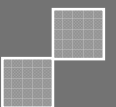
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Role of Celebrity endorsement in contemporary Advertising strategy

Dr. Snehal H Mistry *

ABSTRACT

With competition increasing like speed jet, therefore companies want to sell their products has to focus on how well they capture the mind of consumers and in doing so, how they formulate the marketing strategy to meet such ask. With changing in lifestyle and increase in popularity of celebrities from different streams, it is now very handy tool for advertiser to make use of celebrity endorsement for their product, where company wants to take the benefits of celebrities popularity, likeness and followers by blending into their communication mode. This paper discusses how the celebrity endorsement plays an important role in influence consumer buying behavior.

Key words: celebrity endorsement, multiple brand endorsement, affiliation, credibility.

INTRODUCTION

It is tested formula to successfully market product through celebrity endorsement. Customers are amused of celebrity lifestyle or rather want to follow their lifestyles. Therefore many marketers are using celebrities to market their products. Customers relate celebrities with quality, assurance while watching communication or purchasing products. According to Solomon (2002), the reasons for using celebrity endorsement involves its potential to create awareness, positive feelings towards their advertising and brand. Celebrity endorsement can have an impact on the consumer's attention, recall, evaluations and purchase intentions.

Celebrity endorsement is used to influence consumer buying behavior, especially purchase intention that is directly linked to revenue of the company. In advertising and branding, Celebrity endorsement is done because it is assumed that celebrities have a powerful effect on the affluence of the brands they endorse. Therefore celebrities are used in advertisements to have a positive influence on the credibility, message recall, memory and likeability of the advertisements and finally on purchase intentions. Companies invest large sums of money to align their brands and themselves with celebrity endorsers. Another benefits of celebrity

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endorsers are that it can increase attention, polish the image of the brand, especially when a brand will be introduced in the market or a repositioning of a brand will take place. Consumers prefer to own a brand that has a good reputation, and when someone like a famous film star or a sport star is associated with that particular brand, it is obvious that the consumers will get attracted to it, because the consumer wants to feel the shared status or joy by consuming such products.

Who is a celebrity?

Celebrities are people who enjoy public attention and love by a large share of a certain group of people whereas attributes like attractiveness, extraordinary lifestyle, different skill sets, etc can be seen from them. According to McCracken's (1989) definition, a celebrity endorser is an individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement (marketing communication). Celebrity endorsement influences the feelings of the consumers and can also influence the attitude consumers have towards the advertisement and attitude towards the brands, which can increase the purchase intentions and, consequently, increase sales.

Use of Celebrity As:

Testimonial:

If the celebrity has personally used a product or service and is in a position to attest its quality, then he or she may give a testimonial citing its benefits. For instance Salman Khan endorses Revital tablets by declaring that he himself used it and testifying the quality of the product as it forms a part of his consumption.

Endorsement:

Celebrities often lend their names to ads for product or a service for which they may or may not be the experts For instance Actress Karina Kapoor has been endorsing the Colgate Salt tooth paste.

Actor:

A Celebrity may be asked to present a product or service as a part of character enactment rather than personal testimonial or endorsement. For instance Shahrukh khan enacts as a villager with dark skin for Emami's Fairness cream ad campaign. It has nothing to do with his on screen or off-screen image, in fact he just enacts the character.

Spokesperson:

A celebrity who represents a brand or company over extended periods of time often in print and TV ads as well as in personal appearances is usually called a company's spokesperson. Compared to other endorsers, types, famous people achieve a higher degree of attention and recall. They increase awareness of a company's advertising create positive feelings towards brands and are perceived by consumers as more entertaining (Solomon, 2002) Using a celebrity in advertising is therefore likely to positively affect consumer's brand attitude and purchase intentions. For Example Amitabh Bachchan coming in advertisement of Kalyan Jewellers quoting various new aspects while purchasing Gold.

Need of Celebrity Endorsement

Consumers seek value while buying any product of service; such value addition can be done via celebrity endorsement. Celebrity helps to draw Attention to your product brand.

They help people's focus towards the product. Celebrity is important and effective when establishing a connection between themselves and the product being advertised. Celebrity can be used to

reposition the existing brand. Celebrity can bring a new image and Advertising approach to an existing brand. Celebrity can be beneficial in breakdown cultural blocks that may prevent (or) hinder the success of a product in a foreign market, celebrity help improve sales of the product they promote.

Problems with Celebrity Endorsers

If the celebrity becomes controversial can engages in behavior that warrant negative media attention. This can be embarrassing for the company and their product. Highly associated Celebrity with product could create problems to the company the diminishing popularity and over exposure of celebrity can also have an effect a perception's of the product. Celebrities who endorse multiple products are seen as less credible endorser's than those who only endorse one product. Negative information of the celebrity also affects the product endorsed by the celebrity.

Role Celebrity Endorsers play in advertising

Major aim of advertising is the persuasion of customers, i.e., the active attempt to change or modify consumers' attitude towards brands (Solomon 2002). In this respect, the credibility of

an advertisement plays an important role in convincing the target audience. Pursuing a celebrity endorsement strategy enables advertisers to project a credible image in terms of expertise, persuasiveness, trustworthiness, and objectiveness (Till and Shimp 1998). Source attractiveness refers to the endorser's physical appearance, personality, likeability, and similarity to the receiver, thus to the perceived social value of the source (Solomon 2002). The use of attractive people is common practice in television and print advertising, with physically attractive communicators having proved to be more successful in influencing customers' attitudes and beliefs than unattractive spokespersons (Ohanian 1991). Source attractiveness refers to the endorser's physical approach like personality, likeability, and similarity to the receiver, thus to the perceived social values of the source (Solomon, 2002). Some authors suggest that physically attractive celebrities are a predictor of advertising effectiveness (Till & Busler 2000). Certainly, physically attractive celebrities are generally viewed more favourably on various personality traits than their less attractive counterparts (Kahle & Homer 1985; Eagly et al. 1991). Baker and Churchill (1977) have revealed that attractive communicators in general

can generate more positive stereotypes and greater purchase intention in their study using attractiveness or unattractiveness models paired with coffee or cologne. In the study of Kamins (1990), it indicated that attractive person provides a particularly good fit when endorsing a product that is supposed to enhance attractiveness of the consumers.

Expertise of an endorser means that the ability of an endorser to provide accurate information comes from knowledge, experience, training or skills the endorser possesses (Erdogan, Baker & Tagg, 2001). O'Mahony and Meenaghan (1998) found that source expertise could significantly affect a consumer purchase intention that is the more expert the consumers believed the endorser to be; the more likely the consumers would purchase the product. For example Sanjiv Kapoor's message in terms of Corn oil, regarding low on fat and good on health.

Multiple Brand and Celebrity Endorsement

Studying TV and print advertisements, one will realize that either some celebrities are endorsing several brands or a specific brand is endorsed by different spokespersons. These concepts are called multiple brand endorsement and multiple celebrity endorsement

respectively. For instance, Amitabh Bachhan is enacting Parker, Hajmola, Navrattan Oil, Cadbury dairy milk and many more. On the other hand, Coke has been endorsed by Hritik Roshan, Aishwarya Rai, Aamir Khan, Virendra Sehwaq and many more in the category. Tripp et al. (1994) states that advertising firms might “share” certain spokesperson, thus celebrities end up promoting for more than one brand. Research done by Redenbach (2005) shows that endorsement of four different brands/products does in fact influence the celebrity’s trustworthiness, expertise and likeability. This is because the celebrity instead of focusing on one brand, it endorses multiple brands and eventually lacks distinctiveness (Redenbach, 2005). It also so happens that because of the celebrity being associated with so many different brands, the people just remember the star while not recollecting the brand/product being advertised (Hsu and McDonald, 2002).

Celebrity Endorsement and its impact on Consumer Behavior

Daniella et al (2002) further explain that the celebrities have great influence on the decision making of the consumers and it is believe that when a celebrity engage him/herself in the promotion of certain brand of the sportswear, the reputation,

name and fame of the celebrity is linked with that particular brand and people are convince to look at that particular product brand based on the appealing and admirable qualities of the celebrities the product is supported and promoted among the general public.

Daneshvary et al (2000) explains that many of the celebrities are playing the roles of the brand ambassadors of different brands and it shows the increase in the trend of celebrity endorsement for the marketing purpose. The celebrities now days not only just act as a model to promote a certain product but they adopt well planned strategy so that they can work to maximize the popularity of the product and in this way they also rise their own popularity as well as brand equity because the successful endorsement of a celebrity in the marketing of a product pave new ways for the celebrity in terms of new agreements and deals. Tripp et al (1994) pointed out that the companies and the marketers now see the celebrities as a vehicle that allows them to easily reach and influence their target consumers. People use to associate the product with certain personality and in this situation the companies are well aware that they must build up an emotional connection of the brand with the consumers and the

personalities of the celebrities help the marketers in doing so.

Effectiveness of Celebrity Endorser:

Quick Saliency: It gets cut through because of the star and his attention getting value. Goodluck Nerolac has ensured high saliency for its brand with the inclusion of Shahrukh Khan in its advertising.

Quick Connect: There needs to be no insight but the communication connects because the star connects. Dhoni , Ranbir Kapoor and their ilk's ensure an easy connect for Pepsi with the youth.

Quick Shorthand for Brand Values: The right star can actually telegraph a brand message fast without elaborate story telling. Kapil Dev and Sachin Tendulkar seem to have done that successfully for Boost in the early '90s and helped to differentiate it in the malted beverages market.

Quick Means of Brand Differentiation: In a category where no brand is using a celebrity, the first that picks one up could use it to differentiate itself in the market. Binani Cement did it with Amitabh Bachchan in Cement category.

In general celebrity endorsements are impelled by virtue of the following motives:

- Instant Brand Awareness and Recall.
- Celebrity values define, and refresh the brand image.
- Celebrities add new dimensions to the brand image.
- Instant credibility or aspiration PR coverage.
- Lack of ideas.
- Convincing clients.

An appropriately used celebrity can prove to be a massively powerful tool that magnifies the effects of a campaign. But the aura of cautiousness should always be there. The fact to be emphasized is that celebrities alone do not guarantee success, as consumers nowadays understand advertising. They know what advertising is and how it works. People realize that celebrities are being paid a lot of money for endorsements and this knowledge makes them cynical about celebrity endorsements.

CONCLUSION

In such a hyper competitive market to meet the challenges, if celebrity endorsement and advertising strategies are correctly blended in terms of marrying the strengths of the brands with the celebrity's quality indeed justify the high cost associated with this form of advertising. However, advertising needs to be aware of the complex processing underlying celebrity processing endorsement by gaining clarity on described concepts of celebrity source creditability and attractiveness, match-up hypothesis, multiple product endorsement etc. Advertisers agree that celebrity endorsement does not itself guarantee sales. It can create a buzz and make a consumer feel better about the product, which in turn helps firms to increase sales potential. And if the celebrity endorser and product characteristics matches up then it will result in unprecented success for firm in advertising.

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