



Prominent and Subtle Product Placement impact on Brand Recall and Purchase Intention

Ms Maria Boaler¹

Assistant Professor
Mount Carmel College
Bengaluru-52

Ms Anto Juliet Mary²

Assistant Professor
Mount Carmel College
Bengaluru-52

ABSTRACT

In today's dynamic environment, the market is saturated with brands. Brand and product managers are constantly trying to get an edge over the competitors. Globally many organizations are spending large sums to integrate their brands into all forms of media from television to movies. Marketers devise incredible strategies to integrate brands within the media. In this context, Product placement has been an emerging marketing strategy, which is used as an alternative approach to communicate with their target population. Product placement is defined as a paid product message aimed to influence movie or TV audiences via the planned and unobtrusive entry of a branded product into the movie or TV program. Researchers have examined the impact of Products placement with respect to attitude, brand awareness, consumer perception and brand preference however very little literature review on Prominent and Subtle product placement. This paper seeks to understand the impact of Prominent and subtle product placements in movies on consumers brand recall and intention to purchase. This study applied a Survey to collect the data and will use quantitative analysis to test the hypotheses.

KEY WORDS

INTRODUCTION

The journal of management and marketing research (JMMR) estimates that total spending on product placements in entertainment reached about \$7.55 billion in 2010, having compounded annually at 27.9% over the preceding five years. Meanwhile, the estimated value of those placements, in terms of audience reach, was nearly \$14 billion, having grown at 18.4% on average. No medium is safe. Movies account for a relatively small slice of the product placement market. Television attracts close to 71.4% of all paid placements, and about 75% of all broadcast-network shows feature placements of some kind.

Product placements have been big business for the bond franchise which throughout the 50 year history, has been a trailblazer in the field. Research states that some product placements have been unsubtly influencing for example Heineken's US division paid a reported \$45 million for a product placement in 2012's *Skyfall*. Some fans of the franchise found the placement in poor taste. Brands have been unsubtly influencing Bond's choices in apparel, motor vehicles, watches, and laptops for decades – but surely messing with the shaken martini is a step too far. That's the equivalent of swapping out Superman's "S" for a Penzoil logo, or replacing the Batmobile with a more sensible Hyundai Elantra.

Some product placements seem absurd when out of context, however product placements are all about context. When products are inserted within story lines they can be more effective than traditional ads. They grab attention and are cost effective with a major advantage of being influential. When they are used to generate positive impressions of a brand or to change the perception about the product.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

This section synthesizes relevant literature on product placement, both Prominent and Subtle and its impact on the brand recall and purchase intention .This paper will begin with discussion on product placements and its implications .Next a theoretical framework is posted, testable propositions are developed in order to guide future research initiatives.

Regardless of age or movie going frequency, it was found that the informants were active participants in the viewing experience and actively interpreted brands encountered in movies. However, to the older moviegoers brands in movies symbolized social change whereas to the younger informants, they symbolized belonging and security Delorme & Reid, 1999; Gould, Gupta, & Grabner-Krauter, 2000 .

Researchers have examined the effectiveness of product placement with respect to brand recall and recognition Gupta and Gould (2007). Though product placements is legitimate and frequently used marketing technique .In a study conducted by La Ferle and Edwards (2006), it was revealed that, over the course of 105 hours of prime-time television, product placements were regularly featured, representing 49.5% of brand appearances. However, product placement is a complex concept, and extensive consideration must be given to several factors if it is to be effectively implemented.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section presents the framework of factors that influence the overall effectiveness of product placement The literature regarding Prominent and Subtle product placements in which a theoretical model is presented.

With increased competition, globalization and need of differentiation with clutter and chaos of communication messages there is arising the problem about effectiveness and efficiency of product placement .Product placement is a very old strategy as television and movies are older communication channels .Product placements is one of the important differentiation strategy is a response to break the advertising clutter in a way enhancing the brand image of the product (Wilson & Till, 2011)

Product placement has several research subjects, product placement effect on consumer behavior (Patton,2014) ,customer attitude and intentions (Kozary & Baxter) Perceptions of consumer (Craig-Lees, Scott & Wong, 2008). According to Reijmersdal (2009) brand placement has a positive effect on brand memory, but it can affect attitudes and behavior without memory of the placement. It means that brand placement has implicit effects on consumers (Reijmersdal, 2009). Research study on assessing product placement efforts clearly states the characteristics of placement as amount of time on screen ,Size and visibility (foreground or background) ,Modality of presentation (visual versus audio) ,Level of plot connection: Interaction between product and actors , Product usage by character/star, Implied or direct endorsement ,Creative quality .(Russell & Belch, 2005).

Prominent and Subtle placement

According to them in assessing product placement value there is three main variables has to be noticed: Placement characteristics, context characteristics and audience characteristics.

Among different types of product placements, two types Prominent and subtle product placements have found to be important techniques impacting product placement. Some product placements are very obvious whereas others are more subtle and are usually only noticed by the consumers who already use the products (Lehu, 2007). According to Lehu (2007), advertisers' best scenario of product placement is when the products are 'seen' by the consumers, but not obviously 'noticed'. Ultimately, the main goal of product placement is to increase awareness of the products among media consumers. As a secondary goal, advertisers aim to have the increased exposure result in increased sales profits.

Types of Product Placement

Prominent (PRO): Placements that are in the foreground of a scene, easy to notice and sometimes the only thing that appears in the screen (Ferraro & Avery, 2000). Refers to how a brand is placed noticeable in the screen or is being mentioned clearly.

Subtle (SUB): Are placements that are in the background of the scene, they are not always so easy to see (Wilson & Till, 2011). Refers to how a brand is placed discreetly in the screen or being mentioned discreetly. (Homer, 2009; Lehu, 2007)

Consumers connect the film world to their own, mapping their aspirations onto the products placed in the film, which in turn influences attitudes and consumption norms (DeLorme *et al.*, 1999).

BRAND RECALL

Many movie product placement studies have been performed in the past twenty years. Research has demonstrated that viewers have recalled brands and has also enhanced brand recognition.

Baker and Crawford (1996) used a self-completion survey combined with oral questions after participants viewed a movie containing several brands. The study found high levels of aided and unaided recall of product placement. Sixteen percent of the sample reported preference for featured products. There was generally a neutral attitude towards product placement, though viewers recognized it as a type of promotion. While we investigate consumer's behavior towards brand placement, one study showed the level acceptance by consumers towards use of brand placement in media.

Survey conducted on 32,662 exposures to brand placements in DVD movies showed that prominent and plot connected placements lead to better brand recall than prominent placements that are not connected placements that are not prominent. It is a way of evaluating brand placements in research when consumers can describe the features of brands seen in films without additional descriptions, or can be known as spontaneous recall. (Lehu & Bessoud, 2009). Brand memory or recall increases when brands are placed prominently or were mentioned and shown by the actor (Reijmersdal *et al.*, 2009). Brand recall in terms of different types of product placement such as prominent /subtlety and 'audio-only/visual-only' presentations indicated products featured prominently yielded higher consumer recall when compared to television commercials and more-subtle product appearances. Furthermore, consumers could better recall products referenced in audio messages than those seen in visual appearances.

PURCHASE INTENTION

Purchase intentions is the willingness of a customer to buy a certain product or a certain service is known as **purchase intention**. **Purchase intention** is a dependent variable that depends on several external and internal factors

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

In this section, we describe the research framework, Fig 1 Indicates the relationship between product placement – Prominent Placement and Subtle placement on Placement acceptance, brand recall and purchase intention. Therefore the following propositions and hypotheses emerge.

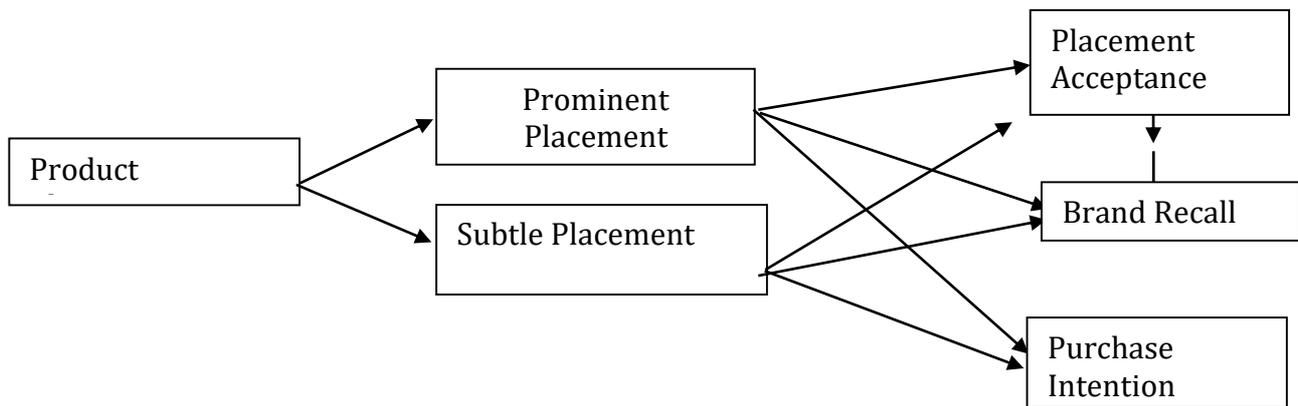


Fig 1 The Impact of Prominent and subtle placement on Placement acceptance ,brand recall and purchase intention

Our research propositions are 1.Students accept Product placement 2. Implied placements and direct placements have a different effect on product placement, brand recall and purchase intention.3.How Placement acceptance and Brand recall have an impact on purchase intention.

- 1) H1a : Prominent placement positively influences brand recall
- 2) H1b: Prominent placement positively influences placement acceptance.
- 3) H1c: Prominent placement positively influences consumer purchase intention
- 4) H2a: Subtle placement positively influences brand recall
- 5) H2b: : Subtle placement positively influences placement acceptance
- 6) H2c : Subtle placement positively influences Purchase Intention
- 7) H3: Brand placement acceptance positively influences purchase intention
- 8) H4: Brand recall positively influences purchase intention

Samples of undergraduate students representing the population of young adults in a premier institution are collected. The questionnaire was administered to a convenient sample of 200 students .The students were asked to complete the survey .The sample included girls with the average age of 20 years. The research was administered through a structured questionnaire .The respondents were asked to convey their reaction to Prominent and Subtle placement and general acceptance of Product Placements in movies. Five point likert scale was used with (1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5=Strongly Agree).There are four parts to the questionnaire Part (A) examines the general perception of product placements .Part (B) questions the customers perception on Prominent and Subtle product placements Part [c] examines the factors related to Brand Recall and Part [d] examines the factors related to purchase intention

Table 2: The relationship between Prominent , Subtle brand placement, brand recall, and purchase intention

Dependent variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Placement Acceptance		(Brand recall)		(Purchase intention)	
	t	P-value	t	P-value	t	P-value
(Constant)	0.000	0.000	-.257	0.798	4.325	0.000
Prominent placement	0.000	0.000	5.483	0.000	-.461	0.646
Subtle placement	1.000	0.000	1.021	0.321	-.214	0.831
F	0.000		32.760		0.330	
R Square	1.000		0.535		0.011	
Adjusted R Square	1.000		0.518		-.023	
Sig	***p<0.05,					

THE FINDINGS

Table 2 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis used to evaluate the strength of the proposed relationship. Model 1, revealed that H1a and H1b were found to be significant in the prediction model, which provides support for those hypotheses that is, the relationship between Prominent placement (t=0.000; p<0.05), and Subtle placement on brand placement (t=0.000; p<0.005) is significant.

In model 2, H1b, were found to be significant in the prediction model, which does provide support for hypotheses H1b the relationship between prominent placement (t=-5.483; p<0.05), and brand recall is significant whereas subtle placement (t=1.021; p<0.005), were found to be insignificant and doesn't support the hypothesis H2b that is, subtle placement does not have a significant relationship with brand recall.

In model 3 in which purchase intention was considered as a dependent variable, all independent variables were found to be insignificant in the prediction model, which doesn't provide support for hypotheses , H1c the relationship between prominent placement and purchase intention(t=0.646; p>0.05),H2c, the relationship between subtle placement and purchase intention (t=0.831; p>0.05), are found to be insignificant.

Table 3: The relationship between Brand placement, Brand recall and Purchase intention.

Model 4 (Dependent variable: Purchase Intention)		
	T	P-value
(Constant)	4.274	0.000
Brand placement	-.740	.462
Brand Recall	.329	.743
F	.277	
R	0.10	
Adjusted R square	-.025	

Table 3 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis used to examine the relationship between Placement acceptance, Brand recall and Purchase intention. The model revealed that placement acceptance and brand recall were found to be insignificant in the prediction model, that is, there is no significant relationship between brand placement (t= -0.740; p>.05), and brand recall on purchase intention (t=0.329; p>0.05). Thus, H3 and H4 were not supported.

CONCLUSION:

The study shows the impact of placement acceptance and brand recall on purchase intention. The antecedents to placement acceptance and brand recall being Prominent and Subtle placement. The results indicate that Prominent and Subtle both have a significant relationship with placement acceptance. In case of brand recall, Prominent placement has a significant relationship compared to Subtle placement. But in case of purchase intention both Prominent and subtle do not have any significant relationship. In our study it was also proved that, **there is no significant relationship between product placement acceptance and brand recall on purchase intention**. The theoretical model clearly indicates a weak causal link between brand recall, product placement acceptance and purchase intention. Hence Prominent and subtle both achieve awareness and recall however cause a weak influence on the purchase intention. It is therefore suggested that future research could dwell on the whether it is worthwhile promotional strategy in lieu of traditional media being saturated. Brand recall does gain emphasis with the placement acceptance however does not necessarily translate to purchase intention. Purchase intention is merely not confined with placement acceptance and brand recall but extends to the consumer experience that goes beyond credibility or accuracy of the product placed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

D'Astous, A & Berrada, C. (2011). Communication Strategies to Enhance the Effectiveness of Product Placement in Movies: The Case of Comparative Appeal. *Market Research*, 14 (1), 45-55

Denise E. Delorme & Leonard N. Reid *Journal of Advertising* Vol. 28 , Iss. 2,1999

DeLorme, Denise E., Leonard N. Reid. " Moviegoers' Experiences and Interpretations of Brands in Films Revisited" *Journal of Advertising* 28,2 (1999): 71-95

Homer, P. M. (2009). Product placements; The impact of placement type and repetition on attitude. *Journal of Advertising*. 38(3), 21-31.

Gupta, P. B., & Lord, K. R. (1998). Product placement in movies: The effect of prominence and mode on audience recall. *Journal of current issues and research in advertising*, 20 (1), 47-59.

La Ferle, C., Edwards, S. M., 2006. Product placement: How brands appear on television. *Journal of Advertising*, 35(4), 65-86.

Lehu, J. (2007). *Branded Entertainment: Product placement & brand strategy in the entertainment business*. London: Kogan Page.

Lehu, J.-M., & Bressoud, E. (2009). Recall of brand placement in movies: Interactions between prominence and plot connection in real conditions of exposure. *Recherche et applications en marketing*, 24 (1), 7-26.

Russell, C.A. & Belch, M. (2005). A Managerial Investigation into the Product Placement Industry. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 45 (1),73-92

Wilson, R.T. & Till, B.D. (2011). Product Placements in Movies and on Broadway. *International Journal of Advertising*, 30 (3), 373,398