Does Brand Placement Practices Predict Brand Recall?

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Abstract

Brand placement is one of the most preferred strategies that companies use to advertise. Although there are too many studies on brand placement, there are not enough studies on its effects on brand recall. From this point this study aims to investigate, a) Is there any relationship between the type of product placement and brand recall?; b) Is there any relationship between the type of association with the brand and brand recall?; c) Is there any relationship between time on screen and brand recall?; d) Is there any differences in brand recall among gender? To find an answer to these research questions mixed methodology was adapted and both qualitative and quantitative study is conducted. One of the most brand-included movie "Devil Wears Prada" is chosen for this study. In the first step by using categories, the authors conducted the content analysis. In the second step, the movies were watched by 209 participants, and they filled out a survey. Valid scales are used for designing the survey. The findings indicated that using visual brand placement and the recall rates are showing a parallel output. Although the first remembered brands are having a higher duration in the movie, Prada only appeared for 8 seconds but was remembered by the participants, whereas Motorolla and Lincoln appeared more but were remembered less. So the personal experience with the brand might affect brand recall too. In addition, fashion-related brands are recognized more in the female sample.

Keywords: Brand placement, Brand recall, Advertising, Movie, Product placement

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INTRODUCTION

The 19th century has left us with two vital machines, invented around the same time and spread across continents. The first is the airplane, which fulfilled the most unbelievable dream man has had since they looked to the sky: to fly. The second is the cinematograph, an equally miraculous machine recording reality of the earth. While the airplane is used to get away from the Earth, the cinematograph reflects the realities on Earth. But before long, the roles of these two machines have interchanged. The sky became civilized, nationalized, and the airplane became a useful means of transportation and commerce. While the airplane took its place among the ordinary machines of the world (Morin, 2005: 3-27), the cinematograph detached itself from its technical and scientific purposes and became a tool to escape from everyday life, a source that creates dreams and "realities". In other words, cinema disappears in reality and reality disappears in cinema (Diken & Lausten, 2010: 21). Because of cinemas' power to eliminate the difference between reality and fiction, it became essential to disseminate ideologies and images of organizations (states, government agencies, brands, and non-governmental organizations). Those who understand the importance of cinema in influencing people and producing ideology have seized cinema in certain historical periods and benefited from it (Dorsay, 2003: 24). Movies are also an important tool for brands to raise awareness about their brands, create a positive image and increase sales.

In Top Gun, the highest-grossing film of 1986, Tom Cruise played the role of Maverick, who is a successful, cool US Navy Pilot competing for the Top Gun honor award. Maveric wore the sunglasses Ray-Ban Aviator and sales of the Aviator model increased by 40% in the seven months following the film's release (Segrave, 2004: 181). In Cast Away (2000), a FedEx cargo plane crashed and a character played by Tom Hank, who is a FedEx employee, was stranded on a South Pacific Island. The FedEx brand was placed in the film and the dialogues. FedEx's Global Brand Manager Gayle Christensen said that the film increased brand awareness, especially in Asia and Europe.[3] Brands use product

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[3] https://emildb19.wordpress.com/2015/11/03/good-product-placement/

placement in movies to increase awareness about the brand since the beginning of the film industry.

Worldwide product placement spend by brands in 2019 was $20.57 billion and the total value of product placements across all media grew by 14.5%[4]. Many studies showed the positive effect of product placement techniques on sales (Gupta and Lord, 1998; Karrh et.al., 2003), purchase intention (Barnhardt et. al., 2016; Muzellec et.al, 2013; Kristanto & Brahmana, 2016), and brand recall (Tessitore & Geuens, 2013; Gibson, et.al., 2014). From this point the main purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between the type of product placement and brand recall; the relationship between the type of association with the brand and brand recall?; the relationship between time on screen and brand recall?; the differences in brand recall among gender; and the differences in brand recall and previous watching experience of the movie.

Product Placement in Movies

Product placement is used as an important public relations and marketing tool for brands. Ginosar and Levi-Faur (2010) define product placement as "the purposeful incorporation of commercial content into noncommercial settings, that is, a product plug generated via the fusion of advertising and entertainment". Lehu (2007), says that product placement and brand placement are interchangeable concepts, and "it essentially describes the location or, the integration of a product or brand into a film or televised series". Product placement is a technique that can be used in many areas, from television to movies, from computer games to social media content.

The history of product placement in movies is as old as the invention of the cinematograph. As early as one year after the introduction of the cinematograph by the Lumiere brothers, product placement was used in films. In the short film *Sunlight* (1896), Lumiere Brothers advertised a soap by showing its brand (Lever), due to Lumiere Brothers' business relationship with the owner Francois-Henri Lavancy-Clarke. After that, the use of product placement continued in Edison films (Newell et.al, 2006: 579).

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[4] https://www.pqmedia.com/press/

Although product placement is one of the most effective public relations and marketing techniques, it was not an organized business until the late 1970s. Before the 1970s, product placement is a by-product of public relations because brands did not pay money to the filmmaker but just lent the product for the film (Balasubramanian, 1994: 33). After Reese's sales increased by 65% following the release of E.T (1982), interest in product placement increased (Gupta & Lord, 1998: 47).

It can be said that the potency of product placement is increased due to media fragmentation, media proliferation, and decreasing advertising effectiveness (Williams et.al, 2012: 2). Product placement has some advantages over traditional advertising, such as a more attentive audience and a less cluttered environment. It also spread because of the new communication technologies that allow people to make digital recordings on multiple channels and watch these recordings without the advertisement. Moreover, as editing tools became more efficient, it became easier for filmmakers to insert virtual product placements during the post-production process (Redondo & Bernal, 2016: 773). In product placement, companies have the opportunity to show their product in a storyline. There are different ways for product placement in movies. According to Russel (1998), two different types of product placement are used in films: Visual and verbal or auditory. In the visual type, the brand or product is placed in the background of a show. For example, it can be placed with outdoor advertisements in street scenes or placed on the movie set itself. In the verbal or auditory placement, the brand or product is mentioned in dialogue. Some researchers (Zimmer & DeLorme, 1997; Brennan et al., 1999; d'Astous & Chartier, 2000) showed that different product placement types have different effects on the audience.

Product Placement and Brand Recall

Movies are effective forms of storytelling, and stories have a huge impact on memory. According to Lundqvist et. al (2013), stories are remembered because people store stories factually, visually, and emotionally. When people watch a story, it stimulates episodic memory which is "consciously recalled memories related to personally experienced events" (Ploran & Wheeler, 2009). There is also a scientific explanation as

to why stories are rememberable. It is found that when someone listens to or watches a story, he or she releases some chemicals such as cortisol, dopamine, and oxytocin. Oxytocin creates deeper emotions and empathy, dopamine regulates emotional responses and keeps them engaged, and cortisol assists in formulating memories (Peterson, 2017). In other words, stories are tools to increase awareness, build understanding, and form stronger connections (Woodside et al., 2008). Therefore, the inclusion of the product or brand in a story such as a film has a positive effect on the recall of the brand or product.

Product placements have a remarkable effect on advertising recall (Panda, 2004). Many studies show the relationship between product placement and recall and recognition (Bressoud et. al., 2010, Pokrywczynski, 2005; Romaniuk, 2009). The time the product is on screen, the type of product placement, the integration of the product into the plot, the association of the brand with the characters in the film, the appearance of the brand, and the theatrical context of the product all have an impact on brand recall and recognition. Products or brands' time on the screen is an effective variable for brand recall.

The type of product placement, whether visual or auditory or both, also influences brand recall. People remember products that are placed both visually and auidotically more than products that are placed only visually and auidotically (Law & Braun, 2000; Brennan et al.,1999). Gupta & Lord (1998) found that explicit mention of a product led to better recall than subtle visual placement. Law & Braun (2000) found that audiovisual placements were better remembered than audio-only or visual-only placements.

RQ1: Is there any relationship between the type of product placement and brand recall?

RQ2: Is there any relationship between the type of association with the brand and brand recall?

Brand appearance is also important for recall. The brand can appear in the foreground or background of the scene. In addition, whether there is a close-up camera shot of the brand or not (Ferraro & Avery, 2000: 4) can also be effective for brand recall. Plot connection "refers to the degree to which the brand is integrated into the plot of the story" (Russel, 1998: 307). is an essential element for brand recall. The product can take a major place in the story or it may form the persona of a character, which is called high-intensity

placement. Or the product can make a brief appearance in the film, which is called Low-Intensity Product Placement (Russel, 1998). Parengkuan et. al. (2020) analyzed the influence of product placement in movies and television shows on Millennials' brand recall and found that plot connections partially have a positive relationship and significant influence on brand recall. Patel and Patel (2015) investigated the influence of product placement type on brand recall of 137 MBA students and found that plot connection has a significant effect. In addition, product placement is also about "contact with one of the main characters in the film" (Lehu and Bressaud, 2008: 9). Plot connection influences memory, memory improves when there is a high intensity of product placement (Russel, 1998; Lehu & Bressoud, 2008). Many studies (Bressoud et. al, 2010; Auty and Lewis, 2004; Babin & Carder, 1996; Gupta & Lord, 1998; Lehu, 2007; Russell, 1998) found a positive relationship between time on screen and brand recall.

RQ3: Is there any relationship between time on screen and brand recall?

In brand placement literature some studies (Bressoud et al., 2010, Gupta & Gould, 1997) have found that gender is a variable that determines attitudes toward product placement. They showed that male and female responses to product placement can differ. However, it is seen that there are mixed results in the studies examining the relationship between brand recall and gender in the product placement literature. Natarjan et. al. (2018) found a significant difference among genders for brand recall. They stated that female respondents tend to identify and subsequently recall brands more than men. However, in Patel and Patel's (2015) research on Hindi Movies, they found no significant difference in the brand recall by gender. Similarly, Chan (2020) made a research on disclosure of product placement, brand recall, and attitude and he found there isn't any significant difference between female and male respondents' brand recall. From the overall literature the first hypothesis of the current study is;

RQ4: Is there any differences in brand recall among gender?

Method

Study 1: Brand Placement Practices in Devil Wears Prada Movie

To explore the type of brand placement practices in the Devil Wears Prada movie, content analysis was conducted. Content analysis is a scientific tool that helps researchers to understand a particular phenomenon (Krippendorff, 2013: 24). To collect the data categories were adapted from previous studies.

Coding Categories

The brands are coded both under the main categories and on their own. Only the brands that appeared on a screen for more than two seconds were counted. Length of appearance was defined as the total time that the brand logo appears on the screen. Only existing commercial brands were analyzed (Chan, 2016). To explore the brand appearance, the brand that appeared on the screen for more than two seconds was coded as "verbal, visual, audiovisual" and used (Avery & Ferraro, 2000; Chan, 2016). If the logo of the brand was seen in the scene it was coded as visual, when the movie characters verbally mentioned the name of a brand it was coded as audio, both the name spelled by a character and the logo appeared on the screen, it was coded as audiovisual, if the characters used the product with the logo on it, they are coded as used.

Integration into the storyline was also coded. If a brand was integrated into the story, and if the audience could only observe that brand in one scene it was coded as "Brand was integrated into the story", but if there is more than one brand, and many other brands could be observable in one scene, that was coded as "Brand was used as one of the many brands".

Association of the character with the brand is also coded for this study. These categories are namely; "with a star", "with a non-star" and "with none of the characters".

Reliability

To ensure consistency, coders encode the same text independently, and then consistency is checked. For this purpose, intercoder reliability is measured with a statistical coefficient (Neuman, 2014). Krippendorff (2013: 267) states that reliability occurs when the same

response is given to the same phenomenon in research. The Krippendorf alpha was calculated as $\alpha \geq .850$ for this study.

Study 2

Semi-experimental research was undertaken to explore the relationship between brand recall and brand placement. "The Devil Wears Prada" movie was watched by Management Faculty students. A total of 209 students participated in this study. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. In the first part, demographic characteristics of the participants (e.g., age, gender, income, and the year at school) and interest areas were included. The second part of the questionnaire includes was brand recognition test and brand likeness level.

Scales

Brand Recognition and Attitude Test: The participants' attitudes toward the brands were measured by using 11-point scales ranging from 0 (dislike) to 10 (like). The list of 25 items that were used for the recognition test was presented for measuring attitude toward the brands. To measure brand recognition, the participants indicated whether they recognized the brand names shown in the movie by circling a "Yes" or "No" response.

Procedure and Participants

Ethical approval was obtained from the Atilim University Ethics Committee. The questionnaires were filled face-to-face. An informed consent form was signed by the student. All of the participants watched the "Devil Wears Prada" movie in the class, and then each of them filled out the survey. All students were recruited, voluntarily. They acknowledged that they are free to quit anytime. Filling out the questionnaire approximately takes 20 minutes. The data was collected between March 2021-May 2021.

In total 209 participants were included in this study. Among these, 57,9% were female (n=121) and %57,9 were male (n= 88). 32,5 % of the participants were first year (n=68), 33,5% were second year (n=70), 21,5% were third year (n=45), 11,5% were fourth year students (n=24).

Table 1

Demographic information of the participants

Gender	*n*	*%*
Male	88	42,1
Female	121	57,9
Total	209	100
Grade	*n*	*%*
1st year	68	32,5
2nd year	70	33,5
3rd year	45	21,5
4th year	24	11,5
Graduate	2	1
Total	209	100

FINDINGS

RQ1 is about the relationship between the type of product placement and brand recall. As could be seen from Table 3, the analysis showed that the highly remembered brands are; Starbucks (%94,7), Calvin Klein (%82,3), Apple (%78,9), Channel (%78), and Prada (%74). The type of product placements according to the brands are shown in Table 4. From the table it is seen that Starbucks used three different types of placement strategies (VIS:3, AUD: 2 USED:2), Apple used two (VIS:4, USED: 2), Channel used three (VIS:1, AV: 1, USED:4), and Calvin Klein used two strategies (VIS:1, AUD:3). When two different data are interpreted it is possible to say that using visual brand placement and the recall rates are showing a parallel output.

Table 2

The most recalled brands

Brand	*n*	*%*
Starbucks	198	94,7
Calvin Klein	172	82,3
Apple	165	78,9
Channel	163	78,0
Prada	155	74,2
Mercedes	131	62,7
Dolce Gabanna	127	60,8
Hermes	85	40,7
Motorolla	72	34,4
Lincoln	46	22

RQ2 is about the relationship between association with the brand and brand recall. Starbucks associated all brand placements with a star in the movie (N=7), Apple associated mainly with a star (n=4), and Calvin Klein also associated the majority of the brand placements with a star in the movie (n=5). The results obtained from the survey (Table 2) showed that Starbucks, Calvin Klein, and Apple are the most remembered brands, and also in the movie, all these brands are associated with their brands with a star.

Table 3

Type of brand placement and association with the brand

	Type of Brand Placement						Association with the brand			
	VIS	AUD	AV	USED	Total		With a star	With a non-star	With none of the characters	Total
	n	*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*		*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*
Starbucks	3	2	0	2	7	Starbucks	7	0	0	7
Apple	4	0	0	3	7	Apple	4	1	2	7
Channel	1	0	1	4	6	Channel	5	0	1	6
Calvin Kelin	1	3	0	0	4	Calvin Kelin	0	1	3	4
Sanpellegrino	3	0	0	0	3	Sanpellegrino	0	0	3	3
Dolce&Gabbana	0	0	1	1	2	Dolce&Gabbana	1	1	0	2
Mercedes	2	0	0	0	2	Mercedes	1	0	1	2
Motorolla	1	0	0	1	2	Motorolla	1	1	0	2
Blahnik	0	1	1	0	2	Blahnik	1	0	1	2
Hermes	0	1	1	0	2	Hermes	2	0	0	2
Prada	1	0	0	1	2	Prada	1	0	1	2
Clinique	0	0	1	0	1	Clinique	0	1	0	1
Lincoln	1	0	0	0	1	Lincoln	0	0	1	1
	17	7	5	12	41		21	5	15	41

The RQ3 is about the relationship between time on screen and brand recall. The content analysis findings showed that there is 59 brand placement in the Devil Wears Prada movie. As could be seen in Table 3, the top 10 brand placement practices are; Apple, Starbucks, Channel, Calvin Klein, Sanpellegrino, Prada, Heres, Blahnik, Motorola, Mercedes, and Dolce Gabanna. The most recalled brands are Starbucks (%94,7), Calvin Klein (%82,3), Apple (%78,9), Channel (%78), and Prada (%74). Although the first remembered brands are having a higher duration in the movie, Prada only appeared for 8 seconds but was remembered by the participants, whereas Motorolla and Lincoln appeared more but were remembered less.

Table 4

Top 10 brand placement

Brand Name	*Total Duration*
Apple	60 seconds
Starbucks	35 seconds
Channel	27 seconds
Motorolla	18 seconds
Lincoln	15 seconds
Sanpellegrino	13 seconds
Calvin Klein	12 seconds
Mercedes	9 seconds
Hermes	8 Seconds
Prada	8 Seconds
Dolce&Gabbana	8 Seconds

RQ4 is about the differences in brand recall among gender. The analysis showed that brand recall and gender showed a significant difference only for Apple (p<.001), Prada (p<.001), Dolce Gabanna (p<.050), and Channel (p<.001). Fashion-related brands are recognized more in the female sample

Table 5

Brand recall among gender

	Gender	N	Mean	sd	p
Apple	Male	87	1,1149	,32080	,000*
	Female	121	1,2810	,45135	
Prada	Male	87	1,3908	,49076	,000*
	Female	121	1,1570	,36534	
Dolce&Gabanna	Male	87	1,4828	,50260	,019*
	Female	121	1,3223	,46931	
Channel	Male	87	1,4138	,49537	,000*
	Female	121	1,0744	,26348	
Motorolla	Male	87	1,7241	,44954	,071
	Female	121	1,6033	,49125	
Starbucks	Male	86	1,0814	,27505	,062
	Female	121	1,0248	,15614	
Calvin Klein	Male	87	1,2069	,40743	,218
	Female	120	1,1417	,35017	
Hermes	Male	87	1,6322	,48501	,312
	Female	121	1,5620	,49821	
Mercedes	Male	87	1,3103	,46532	,103
	Female	121	1,4215	,49585	
Lincoln	Male	87	1,8161	,38966	,275

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the relationship between brand placement practices on brand recall. When two different data are interpreted it is possible to say that using visual brand placement and the recall rates are showing a parallel output. Previous studies on the type of product placement and brand recall reveal different results. Some researches indicate that brand recall is enhanced when brands reinforce visual brand placements with audio (Law & Braun, 2000; Brennan et al., 1999; Saberwahl et. al, 1994, Van der Waldt, et.al, 2008). Some of the researchers compared the effect of visual with audio product

placements on brand recall find that audio placements have higher scores on brand recall (Russell, 2002; Gupta and Lord, 1998). Unlike previous studies, this study found that visual product placement had a greater effect on brand recall than other product placement types.

The results obtained from the survey (Table 2) showed that Starbucks, Calvin Klein, and Apple are the most remembered brands, and also in the movie, all these brands are mainly associated their brands with a star. It is advocated that using the product by association with a star has a higher impact than just a visual display of the product in a movie (Panda, 2004). When determining product placement strategies, brands need to show their products with a star. Kahrr and colleagues (2003) conveyed a survey of the members of the Entertainment Resources and Marketing Association to understand the beliefs of practitioners about product placement. And they found that practitioners believe being able to associate the product with a star is a powerful strategy. However, the research made by Wiles & Daielova (2009) showed association with a star does not affect product placement worth. While there are few studies examining the relationship between star association and placement worth, there is no research examining the relationship between star association and brand recall. In this research, it is seen that there is a positive relationship between star association and brand recall. It shows the need for further studies.

Although the first remembered brands are having a higher duration in the movie, Prada only appeared for 8 seconds but was remembered by the participants, whereas Motorolla and Lincoln appeared more but were remembered less. It is seen that this result is similar to the previous studies. Some studies investigated placement-frequency on brand recall (Yang et.al, 2007; Balasubramanian et.al, 2006), and some examined time on screen on brand recall (Bressoud et. al, 2010; Auty & Lewis, 2004; Babin & Carder, 1996; Gupta & Lord, 1998; Lehu, 2007; Russell, 1998). All of them found a positive relationship. Although Prada's duration is shorter than other brands in the movie, it can be said that the high recall is due to the "Prada" in the name of the movie. The brand used in the title of the movie frames the perception of the audience for the recall.

In product placement literature there are mixed results in the studies examining gender as a variable in brand recall. Some studies (Bressoud et al., 2010, Gupta & Gould, 1997) have found that there is a difference in response and attitude to product placement, while others (Patel & Patel, 2015; Chan, 2020) have found no such difference. In this research, it is found that fashion-related brands are recognized more in the female sample. It can be thought that it is because women are more interested in fashion and are more familiar with these brands.

As conclusion, it is possible to say that brand placement is still one of the effective ways to communicate with the target audiences. But when it comes to brand recall how these brands are placed within the movie becomes important. Therefore the advertisers should pay attention to their brand placement strategies. This study found that visual product placement had a greater effect on brand recall than other product placement types. Also, gender was another important factor that predicts brand recall. Therefore the target audience also should be analyzed strategically.

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