

PRODUCT PLACEMENT

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Annotation. General information about product placement, its types, and ways to use it in movies are contained in this thesis. Some examples of product placement, its advantages and disadvantages are also included as well as research on the effectiveness of product placement.

Keywords. Product placement, embedded marketing, advertisement, brand, TV.

Whenever watching movies, video clips, or even commercials on TV, we can notice familiar logos: 'Apple', 'Mercedes', 'Adidas', 'Nike', 'Starbucks', and many others. It is easy enough to understand that they are present there on purpose. Such a phenomenon is called product placement. Product placement is the display or mention of a specific item, brand in a movie, TV series, or video, in the picture, on an Instagram post, in games, etc. In 2006, Media Company 'Broadcasting & Cable' presented statistics that showed that more than half of all advertisers use product placement.

Today there are the following types of product placement [1]:

Verbal (the characters of a film orally discuss a brand or focus the audience's attention on a particular product);

Visual (a certain product is shown close-up, marked with a trademark, which helps you to identify the manufacturer);

Mixed (contains elements of verbal and visual product placement).

Product placement is a modern merchandising strategy for brands to reach their target audiences without using overt traditional advertising. Embedded marketing is another term for product placement since the product is embedded in another form of media. Product placement, like any other type of advertising, has its advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages of product placement:

Helps to reach a wider audience.

Non-annoying product promotion;

Creates a specific image in the mass consciousness;

Disadvantages of product placement:

There is no opportunity to analyze efficiency and impact clearly;

As a result, there is no guarantee that users notice the product;

High cost;

Sometimes the ad isn't shown to the target audience.

However, it is considered that product placement is much more effective than simple advertising on TV. People do not believe TV ads anymore or take them seriously because they are too explicit and direct. Product placement is perceived more successfully and creates a better image of the product [2].

To find out the impact of product placement on our society I researched 50 students of BSUIR. Only 50% of the respondents know what the term product placement means, but 96 % regularly face it in their lives. What is more product placement has a great impact on people while they are watching movies. The demand for the products mentioned in the film increases immediately after its release.

According to the research, 70 % notice advertising during films, but it does not distract them from watching TV. We can see the research result in Figure 1 below.

Do hidden ads annoy you?

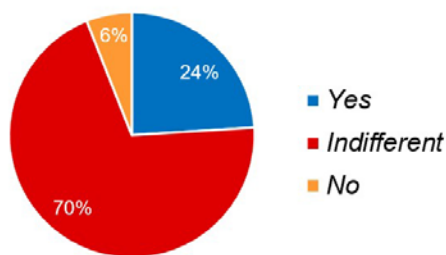


Figure 1 – The impact of hidden advertising

This is an example of successful product placement. Apple Corporation is considered the leader in the number of well-hidden ads. Their products are recognizable so that sometimes the branded apple is not even required. It is enough just to show something similar to an iPhone to induce association with Apple Corporation [2]. For example, in one episode of 'The Simpsons' animated series, a pear similar to the Apple logo appeared in the background. According to the research, 88 % of students noticed the ad in this scene.

To create successful product placement in a particular film, it is not enough just to demonstrate the product or logo on the screen, characters of the film should use it constantly.

For the success of hidden advertising in a particular film, it is necessary not just to demonstrate the product or logo on the screen, but its active use by the characters of the film, the participation of the advertised product in the storyline. Advertised products must be a part of the storyline [1]. For example, in the film "Forrest Gump", the character got Nike sneakers as a gift, and only 60 % of respondents noticed an advertisement in this scene, but almost all respondents remembered these sneakers as a part of the storyline.

Hidden advertisement has an impact on people's mind. Moreover, after watching a movie at the cinema visitors buy those drinks that they could see in the movie that they just watched. 75 % of students bought items of a particular brand after watching films and TV series. In addition, many people want to be similar to their favorite characters so they buy things that have been used in the film. There is a clear dependence between using certain brands in films and increasing in sales of products advertised this way. An example of an effective ad is the movie called 'Top Gun'. After its release demand for Ray-Ban Aviator glasses increased by 40 %. Tom Cruise, the main character of the film, often appeared in these glasses. Another good example of product placement is all the films about James Bond. Hidden advertisement is used there constantly, but in many cases, it is considered as a part of a storyline. Thanks to this, most people know everything about the habits and tastes of agent 007. James Bond drives Aston Martin, wears Omega and Rolex watches and Persol glasses, and uses Sony Ericsson phones. Demand for all these products increased 4 times after film release. According to research, James Bond is associated with the brands shown in Chart 1.

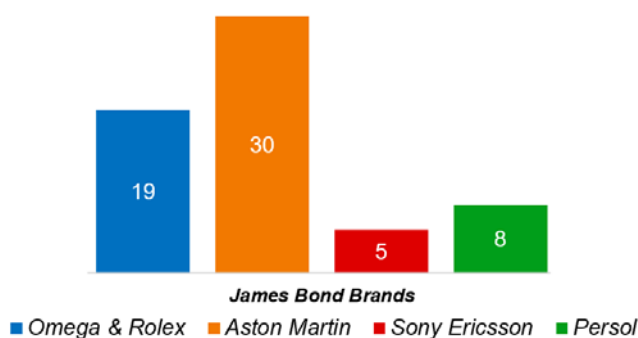


Chart 1 – The most famous James Bond brands

Obsession and openness are features of poor product placement. When marketers fill a movie or TV series with a large amount of hidden advertising, it ceases to be hidden at all. According to the research, an excessive amount of advertising distracts from watching the movie and 70 % of students do not even finish such watching.

However, product placement is not always planned. In May 2019, in the last season of the TV series Game of Thrones, a paper cup with the Starbucks logo suddenly appeared in the background. This picture immediately spread across all social networks and almost instantly became popular. Even those who did not watch the TV series knew about this accident (according to the results of the research, 52 % of the

respondents have heard about this situation, but 70 % of them have not watched the series). According to marketers, the popularity of the scene with this cup brought Starbucks \$2.3 billion in profit.

In this thesis we considered the term product placement and its types. The information obtained as a result of research indicates the effectiveness of well-hidden advertisement. Furthermore, product placement is one of the most popular types of advertisement that is used in more than 80 % of all movies.

References:

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2. Segrave, K. Product Placement in Hollywood Films: A History – McFarland, 2014. – 250 p.