

PRODUCT PLACEMENT IN MOVIE

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Abstract:The concept of product placement itself is nothing new. The area is; however, experiencing a significant growth due to the difficulties of reaching the consumers with traditional advertising. The ongoing debate concerning product placement provides the foundation of the article. Based on this, the aim of this article is to gain a deeper understanding of this area. Also, the aim is to gain a deeper understanding specifically about the process of product placement and the criticism aimed towards product placement.

Keywords:product placement, advertising, to promote.

Product placement is a form of advertisement, where branded goods or services are placed in a context usually devoid of ads, such as movies, music videos, the story line of television shows, or news programs. Traditionally the product placement is not disclosed at the time that the good or service is featured.

Product placement is an investment for brands trying to reach a niche audience, and there are strong reasons for investors to expect that film product placement will increase consumer awareness of a particular brand. A big-budget feature film that has expectations of grossing millions may attract many commercial interests; however, the film studio must also analyze if a product fits with the image of the film. A high-profile star may draw more attention to a product, and therefore, in many cases, this becomes a separate point of negotiation within his or her contract.

Among the famous silent films to feature product placement was “Wings” (1927), the first film which win the Academy Award for Best Picture. It contained a plug for Hershey's chocolate.

Fritz Lang's film M (released in 1931) includes features of a prominent banner display on a staircase in one scene for Wrigley's PK Chewing Gum, which is right in the viewer's eye for approximately 20–30 seconds [1].

Another early example in a film occurs in Horse Feathers (1932), wherein Thelma Todd's character falls out of a canoe and into a river. She calls for a life saver and Groucho Marx's character tosses her a Life Savers candy.

The film “It's a Wonderful Life” (1946), directed by Frank Capra, depicts a young boy with aspirations to be an explorer, displaying a prominent copy of National Geographic.

In the film “Love Happy” (1949), Harpo Marx's character cavorts on a rooftop among various billboards and at one point escapes from the villains on the old Mobil logo, the "Flying Red Horse". Harrison's Reports severely criticized this scene in its film review and in a front-page editorial of the same issue.

In the film noir “Gun Crazy” (1949), the climactic crime is the payroll robbery of the Armour meat-packing plant, where a Bulova clock is prominently seen.

In 1982 E.T. was seen eating his favorite candy, Reese's Pieces. Sales of the yummy candies skyrocketed after that and moviemakers everywhere saw a new way to make big money [2].

But now there is time when advertising and product placement becomes too much. It's hard not to find a Starbucks coffee cup somewhere in the background of almost every movie.

Some recent movies such as Josie and the Pussycats, or Jim Carey's The Truman Show, have attempted to make fun of Hollywood's newfound love of product placement. But instead, both flicks went crazy with their own product placements. All the little pussycats were seen drinking their Evian water, scarfing down McDonald's and applying their Revlon make-up. They even had a McDonald's themed bathroom and Target circles for a carpet in their penthouse [1].

The cost of a movie is more and more expensive (competitors, investments, actors, team, postproduction, etc.), thus, product placement contracts can contribute at the financing of projects.

Contracts are not always paid. In partnership contracts, companies provide products required for a movie in exchange of the placement. This process reduces the cost of production. Sometimes the exchange is added by a promotion support during the launch of the movie. Sometimes, directors only ask for an authorization to introduce a product in their movies in order to make it credible, as a Chanel shop in Anastasia to illustrate a scene inParis. (Anastasia, dir. Don Bluth& Gary Goldman, 1997)[2].

The latest trend in advertising is to make it, well, less advertorial. The tendency is to move away from in-your-face ads, where the product is the star, to mini-movies – or quasi-documentary vignettes that feature "real-life scenarios" with the product(s) hovering in the background. Some would argue it's a sort of "art imitating life" scenario - where ads are imitating the practice of product placement.

This may seem a bit confusing, but really, it's quite simple. The majority of us are getting tired of ads. Today's consumer is inundated with advertising everywhere: television, radio, billboards, magazines, buses, newspapers, the Internet... And these are just the usual suspects. More and more ad-space is popping up every day. From people walking down the street wearing signs, to flyers on our cars and in our mailboxes, to ads on the ATM screen as we wait for it to dispense our cash -- we see ads all day, every day.

Even television networks that depend on advertising dollars to stay in business know that it can be useful to ditch the interruptions and present a show without ads from time to time. The ABC network did it for "Gideon's Crossing" in 2000 and for "Alias" in 2001. FOX did it for its hit series "24" in 2002[2].

So, when is an ad not an ad? When it's a product placement. Once mainly found only on the big screen, product placement has been making quite a few appearances on TV -- not to mention in video games and even books. In this article, we'll explain what product placement is and examine how it is used in movies, television shows and other media.

Product placement is an effective communication method, as during a projection the audience drops its "anti-advertisement attitude". It is accepted by the audience when the presence of products and brands is tolerable and well-justified. Product placement helps to target a part of the audience. If the target is refined, the audience will be more involved and its attention will be more important. The objective of a brand is different and determined upon the type of movie.

We understand why movies have product placement. How are studios supposed to make money? You know, other than from ticket sales and DVDs. And merchandising.

The point is, if they have to show a Pepsi label now and then so Will Smith can keep the heat on in his home, we're fine with that. But don't rewrite the damned movie to work the product into the plot. Movies that disastrously stepped over that line include:

- E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial: Loves Reese's Pieces!
- LittleNicky: Sell'nChizicken, FoRealz!
- The Thomas Crown Affair: I Fucking Love Pepsi One!
- Transformers: Robots in Disguise...
- Minority Report: Horrible Ads of the Future (Today!)

Broadcasters are not allowed to run product placement in children's programming, news and current affairs, religious and consumer advice shows such as Fifth Gear and The Gadget Show. There are also restrictions on undue prominence and editorial justification.

Because of restrictions there was the result of heavy lobbying by campaign groups, supported by politicians such as Burnham, over fears that the introduction of product placement to the UK market would be bad for viewers.

However, UK audiences are already used the product placement in foreign imports – particularly American TV shows and films. In the Nielsen Company reckons there were 541 brands and 2,029 "unique product integrations" in US shows that aired in the UK on just three networks – Channel 4, Channel 5 and Sky1 – in the past year[3].

In addition, there has been a long, flourishing industry of "prop provision" in British television. For instance, the Volvo SA80 that John Nettles's DCI Barnaby drove in Midsomer Murders didn't get there by accident. Producer Bentley approached placement company Seesaw Media to source a vehicle from its client Volvo that they felt fitted the show. Prop provision is a grey area differentiated from paid-for product placement, as Seesaw makes cash from the deal but neither production company nor broadcaster is meant to benefit other than by reducing production costs.

So? We can see? That product placement plays a great role nowadays. It has different and effective ways of reaching. It is a new way of advertising that will be more popular and take new forms. So I think that although the ads that appear in the commercials during the shows that we watch on TV are extremely annoying, because they always happen to be placed at the wrong time, I also think that the "somewhat subtle" product placement throughout our media isn't any better. But maybe it is a way that those annoying commercials might disappear from air at some time in the future? Oh, I'm hoping!

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