

Influence of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumer Decision-Making

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Abstract:

This text illustrates a range of influencing factors leading by celebrity endorsers that motivate consumers to make consumption in endorsed brands. As the use of mobile phones and other digital devices had been spread among the people, the number of users of social media then grew rapidly throughout the past 20 years. Therefore, celebrity endorsement has then become one of the most commonly used promoting strategies nowadays. Not only due to the increasing uses of gadgets but also due to its usefulness in persuading people to consume goods and services. Nevertheless, the strength of the effectiveness had differed between different groups of individuals, such as followers and people who's not familiar with the endorsers. Additionally, other variables like the social phenomenon and the characteristics of the industry. After reviewing the work done previously, connections between the celebrity endorsement and consumer buying behavior are able to be seen. And it is important to figure out the key to the changes on the route of consumer decision-making journey once the idea of establishing an endorsement has come up.

Keywords: Celebrity endorsement; consumer buying decision; digital era.

1. Introduction

Advertising is a promoting strategy used by businesses to inform potential or existing consumers about the arrival of their goods or the establishment of a new brand [1].

While celebrity endorsement is one of the commonly used types of advertisements, and it's the use of celebrities' fame or popularity to promote the products and improve the brand image. Over the past few years, celebrity endorsement has brought more intense influences on consumer-buying behaviors.

For instance, the sales of skincare products could rise easily by adding an endorsement to it, because people tend to look the reviews from celebrities in order to make a consumption [2]. Previous research had illustrated a range of criteria for successful endorsement, and it had gone through a few categories, like particular types of products. Additionally, the contents were mainly focused on the analysis of trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, respect and similarity (TEARS) model [3]. While this essay investigates from the views of both buyers and sellers, it focuses on the analysis of celebrity endorsement, the bench-

marks for businesses selecting their desired endorsers and the factors inducing consumers to consume irrationally. The key intention of this summary is to construct a more comprehensive views for celebrity endorsements' effects and key driven factors of consumer decision-making journey, what's more, the improvements could be made for the reduction of risks in the choice of endorsers.

2. The Core Mechanism by Which Celebrity Endorsements Influence Consumer Decisions

2.1 Effective Factors of Celebrity Endorsement

Enabling, enticing and enriching (3E) benefits are the advantages offered by a business or a brand to retain their consumers and build up customer loyalty [4]. Additionally, 3E benefits are related to the human needs and wants in both physical and psychological perspectives, and these needs and wants are the factors that constructed the values, stimulations and objectives of an individual [4]. In the case, enabling benefits are basically the ability helping consumers to eliminate barriers and to solve problems, which allows consumers to be empowered and generating a greater sense of manipulation [4]. While enticing benefits involved engagement in senses such as splendid visual effects and support on sentiments that evoke their curiosity and joy [4]. Ultimately, enriching benefits create alignment between consumers and the brand, and that enables the individuals to develop a rigid relationship between the brand, since they reached a consensus on brand's image and concept, and even worldview [4].

Hence, the benefits of celebrity endorsement can also be analysed by the same framework [4]. Celebrity endorsers are able to exploit the enabling benefits when their characteristics match, but opposite effect arises when they mismatch. For instance, a movie star will not be suitable for advertising a sports brand that sells professional equipments for specialists, because consumers would often associate the endorser with the products sold by the brand, so they would doubt the expertise if inappropriate collaboration existed [4]. By talking about the other two benefits, they could be closely related to fan base and external factors, such as outlook, prominence and personal reputation, which 's more direct.

2.2 The Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Different Stages of Consumer Decision-Making Journey

Consumer decision-making journey is a dynamic process that involves spontaneous responses and variations, and the process is divided into a few stages that is discovering blanks, searching for recommendations, finding something

to fulfill the blank and then making a purchase, and lastly, utilize and share the product purchases [5]. Businesses are able to let consumers realize the blanks through celebrity endorsement, which the endorsers will become the person who creates blanks in consumer needs and wants, and induced them to step into next stage. Once consumers begin to search for more information about the blanks, they will view the contents involving celebrities' endorsement prior to viewing other posts. Since most of the celebrities have built up particular character setting, their posts would often been identified as more reliable and professional despite the fact might be contrary [6]. Additionally, as the contents related to famous celebrities have always been hyped, consumers may choose to buy endorsed products in order to shrink the time they spend on shopping.

3. Moderating Factors Affecting the Effect

3.1 Differences in Consumer Characteristics

Consumers can be divided into several groups based on factors like age, gender, career, etc, and they are all chasing for different needs and wants. Normally, fans act more irrationally than the other consumers, since they focus more on the endorsers rather than the product itself, and the followers of celebrities with large fan bases would often be more impulsive as their endorsement possesses higher credibility [7].

Apart from that, product involvement is also a factor that should be considered, and the term product involvement refers to relationship between consumers and the products [8]. The relationship would be defined by the type of products and markets. For instance, there is likely to exist a high product involvement for products such as appliances, because they are expensive [8]. Additionally, buyers made buying decisions based on their quality and function, which's the internal factors, and they will also spend more time comparing which's the best to buy. Thus, the effect of celebrities would be weakened in this situation as it's not useful guidelines. In contrast, for goods like beverages, which's cheap and consumers usually spend extremely short time choosing them, they would say to have low product involvement as there's less engagement involved in the buying process.

3.2 Different Forms of Advertising

Not only does the endorser matter when promoting through celebrity endorsement, but the way commercials can be inserted successfully to consumers' minds present equal importance. The forms of advertising can be divided into implicit and explicit. For instance, the brand logo hides in the picture's celebrities uploading on their social

media account would be seen as an implicit advertisement, as the information is vague and it motivates people to purchase in an indirect way. In contrast, content that involved significant emphasis on a brand or its products, especially new arrivals, would be explicit advertising, which transferred the messages directly to the consumers. In most of the time, implicit advertisements might be evaluated as effective. Implicit commercial creates a delusion that the celebrities are actually using the items, and that would motivate their followers to consume by not only passion, but also the trustworthiness they have on the celebrity [9].

Furthermore, explicit advertisements also have its pros, such as a provided source of buying channel and an interpretation of clear informations about the products. Moreover, specific messages may also turn out to be easier to memorize and more reliable as all the informations are made visible to the consumers [10].

3.3 Other Factors of Celebrity Endorsements that Influence Consumer Buying Decisiong

Bandwagon effect is a phenomenon that individuals make the same decision with others when they are affected by other people's opinion or decision, and it's often contagious [11]. Moreover, it's also a behavior caused by the culture and development of society nowadays, which individuals consume popular goods and services for a greater social acceptance [12]. With the development of e-commerce and superior marketing strategies, the phenomenon has permeated the whole society, since people are becoming more criticized about promotions and products, and that pushed them to follow other people's opinion and choice [12]. Hence, consumers would likely to be attracted to consumption of endorsed products simply due to a sense of trendiness and a higher social acceptance.

Celebrity endorsement in different industries or products would possibly lead to unlike effects, and that's based on different criteria and sensitivity of the topic. For industries like pharmaceutical industry, it's crucial for the business to balance their goal between profits maximization and ethical aims. In other words, the hospitals or private pharmaceutical businesses will have to choose endorser deliberately to avoid judgements on ethics and other severe consequences [13]. Further, inappropriate choices on endorsers would lead to damage on the brand's reputation and image. One of the usages of celebrity endorsers in the healthcare businesses is to build up parasocial relationships with the targeted consumers [13]. In this case, parasocial relationships refer to an unrequited connection between the celebrity endorsers and the patients, and the endorsers usually provide sentimental support and other move in order to enhance consumers' wellbeing [14]. However, faults occur when the promotion is being

exaggerated and lacks verification. Celebrity endorsers generate benefits through the phenomenon of parasocial relationships as consumers will persuade themselves to make buying decisions once they gained happiness from the endorsement [14].

4. Suggestions Made for Improvements

4.1 Enhancement of the Strategies Implemented by the Brand

Brands can implement three-dimensional evaluation system, and it would consist three dimensions: expertise, image stability and brand image matching.

Expertise, it would be concluded as more convincing and trustworthy when the endorsement is illustrated with sufficient knowledges and supported by valid statement and backgrounds [15]. For example, sports-related celebrities or athletes will be more influential when endorsing a sports brand, because consumer would deem that they are specialists in the field, therefore the products would be more persuasive and so as the commercials [16]. Apart from that, achievements and performances made by celebrities in particular fields would often be more recognizable in a wide range of the population than an endorsement [16]. Further, the celebrities who had attain a magnificent achievement or performances will also be more easily memorized by the audiences. Hence, brands can invite famous celebrities or influencers who specialize in certain fields in order to attract more consumers and viewers.

Reputation stability. This could involve the assessment of the ability of celebrities to maintain their personal image towards the public. Commonly, celebrities who retain a rigid characteristic and public perception stability will leave a stronger impression to individuals. In contrary, celebrities who's having a vague and shaking position would hardly be recognized. Thus, a valid personal image is required of being an effective endorser. Moreover, brands would definitely dislike a celebrity endorser who's considered to be risky, such as celebrity who may create a negative image to the consumers, or celebrity who's likely to be involved in a scandal. Endorsers who assessed it to be risky to the brand will possibly damage the brand's reputation and lead to a loss. Subsequently, businesses will end up searching for new endorsers and marketing expenses will be increased. The costs of operating rose, on the other hand, the workload had also been accumulated.

Brand image matching. Brand images refer to the subjective impression of a brand formed in consumers' minds. If the brand is able to invite the right endorsers to promote their products, a synergy, which means a sum of two events would be greater than if they act independently, is likely to occur, therefore effectiveness and efficiency

is said to be maximized. Thus, the brands may choose endorser who matches with their brand image superior to any other options, since they would like to work more efficient and also wanting their brands becoming more associated with the image formed in consumers' mind. In addition, stronger association between the brand and its consumers could lead to a deeper impression of the brand in consumers' minds, and that could enhance customer loyalty and also allow the brand to exploit any potential consumers. Further, a suitable endorsement also supports the brand to emphasize its uniqueness and concepts, which differentiated it with the other brands. As the brand is becoming more special and recognizable in the market, it may possess greater competitive advantage over its rival businesses.

4.2 Suggestion for Consumers Remain Rational

The first question arises would be whether the products fit the consumers' needs when making rational decisions, and a rational consumer would usually maximize their benefits while minimizing their costs. However, consumers make irrational decisions more often. In the case of celebrity endorsement, consumers may purchase the products as buying the endorsed products would increase their utility. But the consumption of the products doesn't satisfy any real needs of the consumers. Besides, celebrity endorsement could add additional value to the price rather than the true value of the products in particular cases, because celebrity endorsers also add star effect on the promoted products. In those situations, consumers are not suffering from buying an unwanted item only but also at a higher price. Thus, in order to act rationally and not buying unnecessary items, consumers have to wipe off the celebrity statue adding to the products or brands, and also avoid sentimental impulse to consume.

Apart from that, making rational decisions could require comparison between various perspectives, such as the time frame. For instance, the assessment of a brand can be categorized as long-run and short-run, which the long-run refers to brand's reputation while the short-run refers to the current promotions of the celebrity endorsement. In order to identify whether a brand is worth buying or not is not by looking up its current endorsement, instead, a review on the brand reputation the business accumulated overtime would be more useful and more worth considering. As the endorsement focuses on the celebrity endorser itself, the real value of the brand's products is ignored and that goes the same to the comments the previous consumers left.

5. Conclusion

The research has conducted the method of document analysis to illustrate the effects of celebrity endorsements and

the particular features of a reliable advertisement. Further, the essay has also listed a range of factors that allow the commercials to become more competent. And it has been concluded that endorsers would certainly have impacts on changing consumers' buying-decision as long as the brand and the endorsers have similar or even identical characteristics, moreover, social factors, such as the bandwagon effects and others, could also motivate individuals to buy endorsed brands for creating a sense of trendiness. The future development of this field or these types of research could be the innovation on risk-predicting system for a celebrity which aims to assess whether they worth to be invited for endorsing the brand or not. And it would be much related to psychology, for example, tests could be set up and proceeding by selecting samples of consumers.

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