Research on the Fit between the Co-Branding Approach and the Content of Advertisements

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Abstract:

The rise of co-branded products has led many brands to collaborate with other brands, intellectual properties (IPs), and celebrities to launch innovative products. Effective publicity is crucial to achieving successful co-branding. Co-branding advertisements have emerged as a key strategy for promoting these products. This study examines the content of co-branded advertisements in the contexts of brand-to-brand and brand-to-IP collaborations. It identifies two primary advertisement content presentation methods: feature type and story type. For brand and IP co-branding, story-type advertisements tend to be more engaging for audiences with diverse interests, as they provide a narrative that resonates on a deeper level. In contrast, for brand-celebrity collaborations, two distinct methods are highlighted: advertisements featuring direct celebrity appearances and those utilizing suspenseful content. Each approach can yield different results, offering brands the flexibility to choose based on their specific objectives. Interviews and surveys conducted in this study reveal that story-driven advertisements are particularly effective for brand-to-brand and brand-to-IP co-branding. Meanwhile, suspenseful advertisements and those featuring celebrities directly can achieve varying outcomes, making them suitable for different campaign goals. By selecting the appropriate advertisement type, brands can maximize the impact of their co-branding efforts, ensuring they reach and engage their target audiences effectively.

Keywords: Co-Branding Advertisements; Advertisement Content; Feature Type; Story Type

1. Introduction

Nowadays, many brands are no longer satisfied with promoting themselves by placing their own brand advertisements or inviting famous celebrities to endorse them, and brand co-branding is a new marketing method. Today, there are three main types of co-branding: brand-to-brand co-branding, brand-to-IP co-branding, and brand-to-celebrity co-branding.

Each of the three types of co-branding has a different focus and, therefore, requires a different way of presenting advertising content to emphasize their features. Brand-to-brand co-branding is intended to increase sales and awareness of both brands' products, and the co-branded products will be designed according to the elements and features of both brands, as well as the preferences of both consumers. Co-branding between brands and IPs focuses more on the promotion of culture, and the brands also want to use it to build their image and promote a good reputation. The brand and celebrity co-branding should highlight the characteristics of the celebrity itself and combine with the brand's products to reflect the product for the celebrity's customized and exclusive attributes [1].

Advertising content of an advertisement is one of the important factors that affect consumers. David MacKenzie Ogilvy believes that advertising content that is unique and meanwhile focuses on the advantages of a product can make a product competitive in the market [2]. Meanwhile, he believes that advertising is a science. Advertisement content can decide the willingness of people to buy products, so excellent advertisement content will compulsively introduce the product to consumers [3]. He also believes that good or bad advertisement content is a kind of manifestation of the interests of the consumers, so he also cares about the details of advertisement content [4]. The presentation of advertising content can help a brand to achieve the purpose of selling co-branded products.

In the study on the selection of co-branded objects and advertising narrative strategy, it is shown that co-branding should grasp the "timing" and "harmony". The so-called "timing" means that the timing of the launch of the co-branded product should serve its characteristics in order to attract more consumers. The study also mentions that co-branded products introduce the story and concept of the brand or IP to consumers during the process [1]. Therefore, these two features should be emphasized in the

production of advertisements promoting co-branded products. The points mentioned in this study correspond to the types of co-branded advertisements. The author thinks it can be summarized as highlighting features and storytelling, with highlighting features referring to the fact that the brand directly puts out the features of the co-branded IP or brand in the advertisement and informs the consumer about what the co-branded model will contain directly. The story type refers to the integration of brand concepts and stories into the co-branded IP and other brands, combining the stories of both sides. This kind of advertisement is also more likely to resonate with consumers. Moreover, the content of the story-based advertisement will have plot conflict and drama [5]. So it appeals to people more easily. At the same time, it is also a means of retaining existing customers through a story to extend their patience for the brand and once again generate a sense of freshness [6]. These two methods can be used for both brand-to-brand and brand-to-IP co-branding, but which one will bring more attention to the co-branded product and increase sales still needs to be studied.

The method of association between brands and celebrities This method uses the celebrity effect, and the brand hopes to convert the celebrity's followers into consumers [7]. The use of celebrities in society has a high degree of discussion and credibility, and this is the demonstration function of celebrities. Coupled with people's herd mentality, celebrity ads can attract consumers [8]. Therefore, in the production of this type of co-branding ad, the focus is on the combination of the characteristics of the celebrity and the brand. The content of the advertisement can be divided into the celebrity appearing directly in the advertisement or the suspense type, which refers to the celebrity utilizing their reputation with a series of action designs or directly introducing the co-branded product in the advertisements, and the suspense type refers to the celebrity indirectly announcing his/her information, and not announcing the product details, which allows consumers to guess and become confused with curiosity in the early stage. and the interest will be generated [9]. Later, when the confusion is resolved, the consumer will have a deeper impression of the advertisement, and the advertisement itself will receive more attention because of its high degree of attraction, so the advertisement will be more effective after being publicized through the media. [10] These two methods should prove that one can better publicize the brand's products co-branded with celebrities.

2. Research Methodology

This study adopts the interview survey method because the question under investigation requires participants to watch four advertisements, so utilizing the interview survey method allows for better interaction with participants and a more intuitive understanding of participants' thoughts on the question. Also, in order to collect the thoughts of different types of people on the content of the joint advertisements in a broader and more comprehensive way, the interview survey method can achieve this more easily. The respondents chose the two categories of people who were interested and uninterested in the subject of the advertisement. This study chose to represent so that this study could study the type of advertisement that was more appealing, and the data was more representative.

For the two types of advertisement content presentations, the feature highlighting type and storytelling type, which are suitable for brands and IPs and brands and brands, the author chose two advertisements that fit these two forms of advertisements for the promotion of the joint product of LEGO and Harry Potter, and the participants were asked to write down whether they were interested in the joint product (interested in the two IPs and brands, Harry Potter and LEGO), and the length of time they had watched the advertisement and the desire to buy the product. (Scale of 1-5). This will allow us to see what kind of content will be more successful in attracting consumers and increasing buzz and sales for the co-branded product.

Regarding the two ways of publicizing the brand and celebrity co-branded products, whether to directly let the celebrity appear in the advertisement or to set up suspense first, this study chose the co-branded products of Nike and GD, and the respondents were also asked to write down whether they were interested in the co-branded products (interested in GD and Nike) and then to record down the length of the time they watched the advertisements and their desire to buy them (scored from 1 to 5). However, for the suspenseful advertisement, this study chose the picture form of the advertisement, so the respondents needed to record whether or not they were happy to look at this picture more than twice when they watched this type of advertisement. Based on the results, we can determine which method will maximize the celebrity effect and get consumers interested in purchasing the product.

3. Research Data Visualization and Analysis

3.1 Research 1

Figure 1 depicts the length of time that people interested in Harry Potter and Lego viewed the salient features ads versus the storytelling ads, while Figure 2, on the contrary, is a study of people who were not interested in the storytelling ads. In the case of the story ads, those who could watch 80% or more of the total duration of the ad

were higher than those who could watch the other ad in both Figure 1 and Figure 2 and the majority of those who watched the salient ads could not watch more than 80% of the ad. The trend is the same, although there is a difference in numbers between the two sides due to interest. So, regardless of whether they are interested in the co-branded product or not, they would be more willing to watch the story-based ads to learn more about the story behind these two brands and IPs.
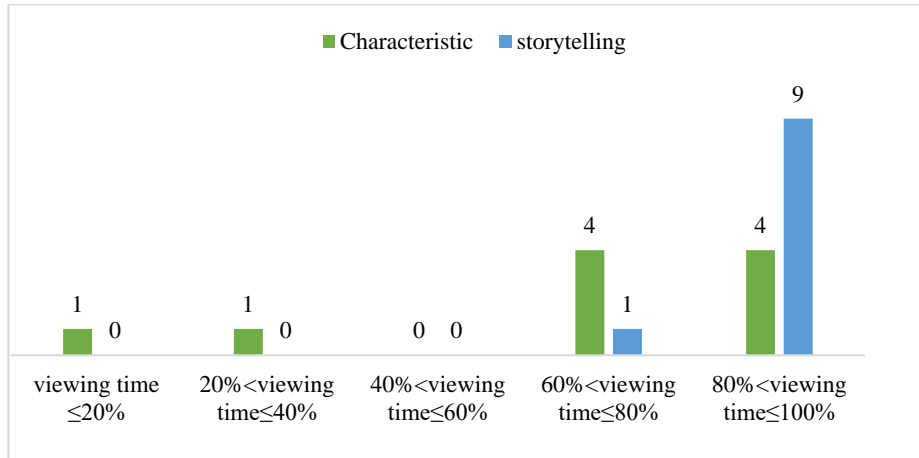
Fig. 1 Length of time viewed by people interested in Harry Potter and Lego for feature-based ads and story-based ads, respectively (Photo Credit: Origin)
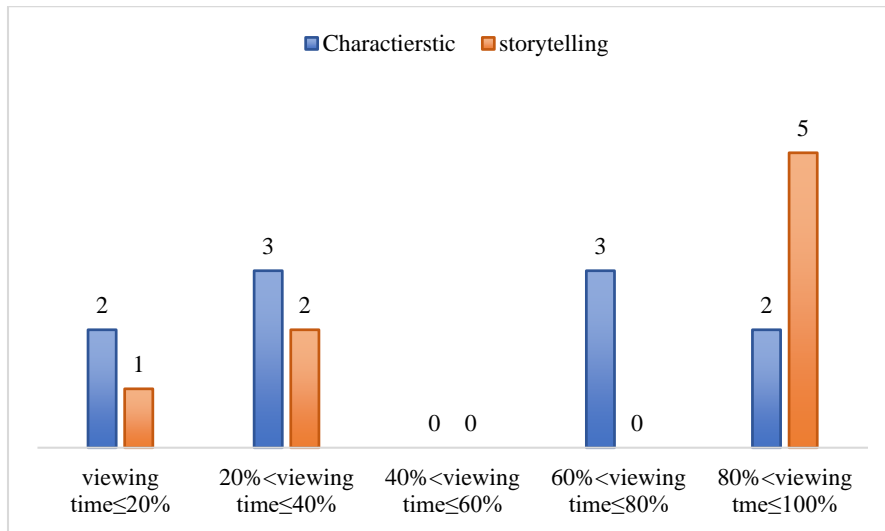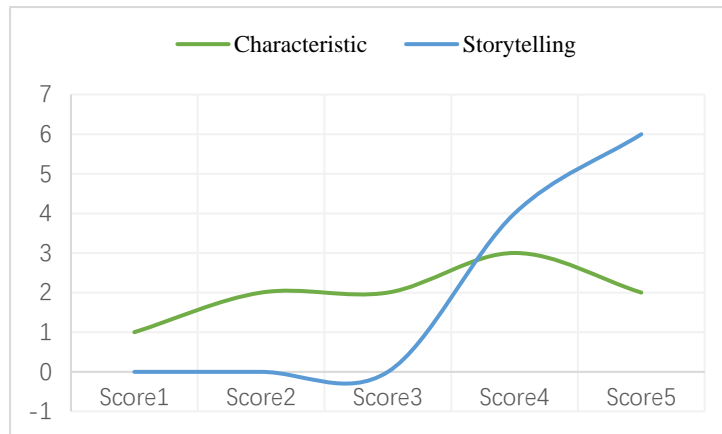

Fig. 2 Duration of feature-based ads vs. story-based ads for people who are not interested in Harry Potter and Lego (Photo Credit: Origin)

Figure 3 shows the extent to which people interested in these two brands/IPs would like to buy after watching the two types of ads (on a scale of 1-5). From Figure 3, it is clear that the extent to which people interested in this brand and IP would like to buy after watching the salient features type of ads is more even, with more people scoring 4. The curve is relatively smooth, while 0 people rated the degree of wanting to buy after watching the story-based ads as 1-3, and the majority of people rated 4-5. The curve is upward from a score of 3, in marked contrast to the other curve. Figure 4 depicts the purchase inten-

tion of people who are not interested in the brand after watching it. Both curves are decreasing because no one has a very strong intention to buy due to interest, but the location of the highest point of the curve is different, and the highest point of the story type will be more backward. It can be seen that the number of people who are not interested in the brand or IP who scored 1-3 points after watching the prominent features type of advertisement is significantly higher than the number of people who watched the story type advertisement and the number of people who scored 4 points after watching the story type adver-

tisement is higher than the number of people who watched the other type of advertisement. From this, combined with the results of the survey on the length of viewing, consumers will be attracted by story-based ads and generate more purchase intention, regardless of whether they are interested or not. Therefore, it is more important to produce story-based ads when brands co-brand with brands and brands co-brand with IPs to publicize co-branded products.

Fig. 3 The extent to which people interested in Harry Potter and Lego want to buy after viewing featured ads vs. story-based ads (Photo Credit: Origin)
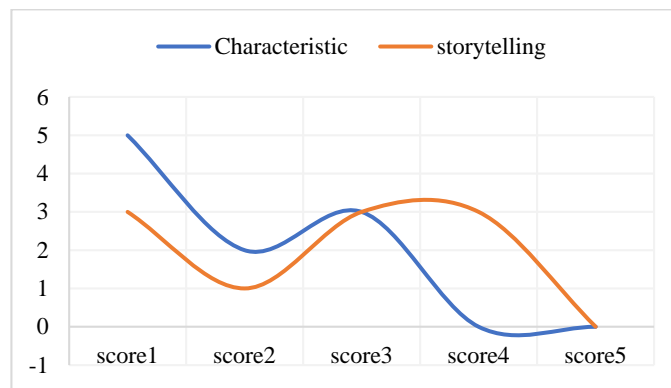

Fig. 4 The extent to which those who are not interested in Harry Potter and Lego want to buy after viewing feature-based ads and story-based ads (Photo Credit: Origin)

3.2 Research 2

Figure 5 shows the length of time that people interested in GD and Nike watch ads with celebrities directly appearing and whether or not they are willing to watch suspenseful ads (in the form of pictures) more than twice. Figure 6 shows the length and frequency of viewing for those who are not interested. From the above figure, it can be seen that interest has little effect on the viewing time of celebri-ty ads, and most people are willing to watch 65% or more of the total time of the ads regardless of whether they are interested in the subject matter or not. The opposite is true for the number of times a suspenseful ad is viewed, with 78% of those who are interested willing to view that type of ad, while 78% of those who are not interested are unwilling to do so. The interest factor is highly influential.
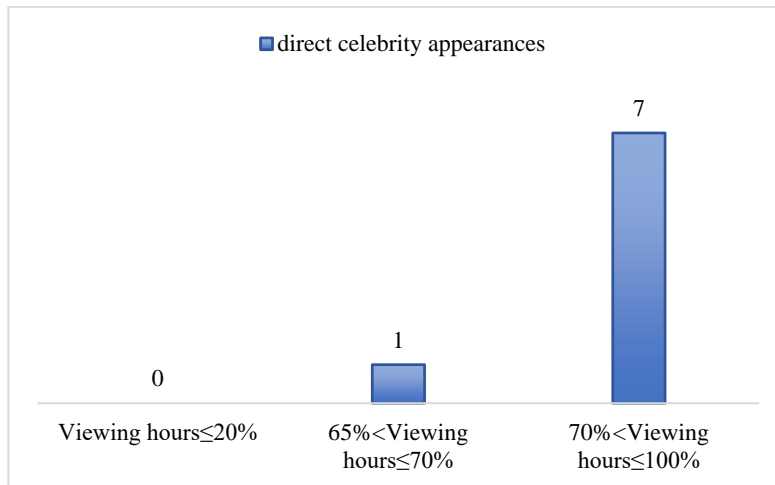
Fig. 5 Viewing hours to watch suspenseful ads (in the form of pictures) more than twice for ads with direct celebrity appearances for the group interested in Nike and GD (Photo Credit: Origin)

Figure 6 depicts the degree to which people who are interested in the brand and the celebrity want to buy after watching the two types of ads (on a scale of 1-5), while Figure 8, on the contrary, shows the data for people who are not interested. The two blue lines in both graphs go down and then up, while the orange line follows a different trend. However, although the maximum value of each score is affected by whether or not they are interested, combining the two graphs shows that the difference between the two lines is greatest at a score of 4. So, independent of interest, most people will have a higher degree of wanting to buy compared to their own group after watching a suspenseful advertisement.
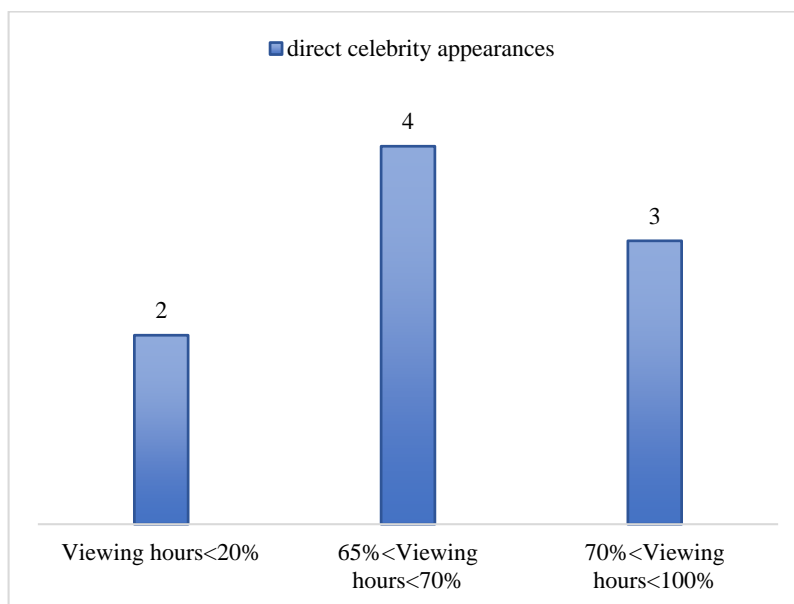
Fig. 6 The extent to which those interested in Nike and GD want to buy after viewing featured ads and storytelling ads (Photo Credit: Origin)
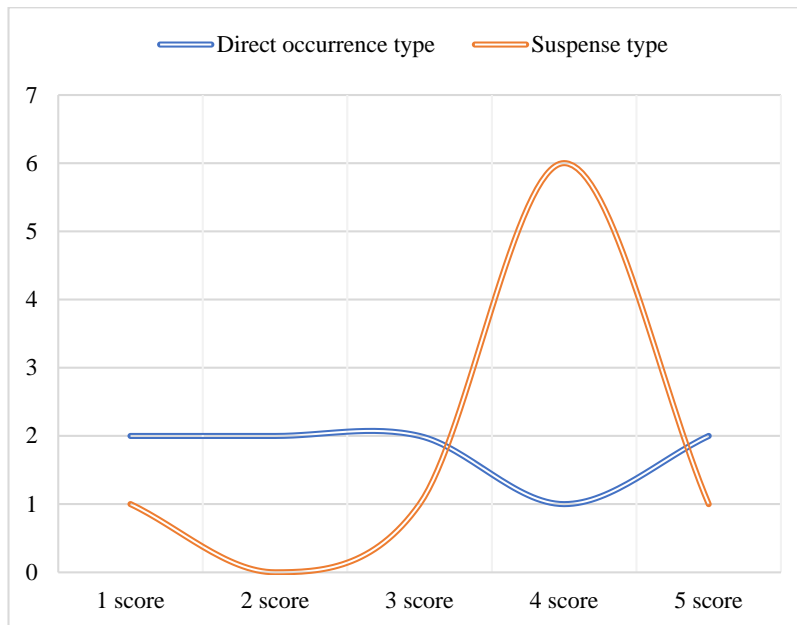
Fig. 7 Degree of wanting to buy after viewing featured ads and storytelling ads for those who are not interested in Nike and GD (Photo Credit: Origin)

4. Conclusion

Study 1 found that storytelling is preferred for brand-to-brand and brand-to-IP co-branding ads. Consumers are attracted by the story and concept behind the brand or IP, and are more likely to watch an elaborate animated or live-action short film-like ad rather than a full-length ad that describes the features of the co-branded product. Study 2 found that when a brand is co-branded with a celebrity, suspenseful ads are more appealing to those who are interested in the celebrity and the brand, while those who are not interested are less likely to watch suspenseful ads, and ads in which the celebrity is directly featured are more appealing to a variety of consumers. However, a study of consumers' willingness to purchase the co-branded product after viewing both types of ads shows that suspenseful ads are more likely to be purchased by people regardless of whether they are interested in the product or not. Therefore, brands should choose to target both types of ads to different consumers depending on the purpose they want to achieve.

This study can provide better suggestions for the creation of advertisements for different types of co-branded products, which will be beneficial to both sides of the co-branding process to achieve a win-win situation and benefit from it, as well as to achieve the desired goals. The rise of co-branding has led many brands to launch collaborative products with other brands, IPs or celebrities, but not every product has been well received. Some of the product failures may be due to lack of publicity, and

advertisements are one of the ways in which many brands choose to publicize their products. Some of the co-branding between well-known brands/IPs/celebrities may only require simple publicity due to the fact that the products have a fixed number of consumers and sufficient operating funds. Some famous brands/IP/celebrity co-branding can bring heat to the co-branded products with simple publicity because they have regular consumers and sufficient operating funds, while for some co-branding between niche brands, in the case of insufficient funds for publicity, the co-branding needs to promote the co-branded products with half the effort by designing advertisements that directly attract consumers and make them interested in the advertisements. However, this study only focuses on four types of advertising content, namely, featured, story, celebrity direct appearance, and suspense, and does not cover other methods. There are still other ways to publicize these different types of co-branded products, and more varied types of co-branding have begun to appear, but only three are mentioned in this study.

This study adopted the interview survey method, and the data collected was not comprehensive enough. People may not answer the questions truthfully due to the influence of emotions or environment during the interview. This study only selected four advertisements, which may have different qualities due to the different behind-the-scenes filming and also affect the interviewees' judgment of the answers. This study also only counts the viewing time or number of times and the number of purchases made after viewing the advertisements, and only three types of co-branded

products are mentioned in this study. This study also only counts the number of times the four advertisements were watched and the purchase intention generated after watching them to determine the fit between the advertisements and the co-branded products, so the experimental design is not comprehensive, and subsequent studies can make up for the shortcomings.

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