

The Impacts Of Celebrity Endorsement In Ads On Consumers Purchasing Intention: A Case Of Facebook

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Abstract: The thesis will be focused on the study of celebrity endorsement and how it affects consumer purchase intention on Facebook. It is obvious that celebrity endorsement nowadays is considered as a powerful advertising instrument which does contribute to measure all elements of a marketing campaign. Also, celebrity endorsement is one of the most effective strategies that make products to be different in the competitive market. The main goal of the study is identifying the influence of celebrity endorsement advertising on consumer purchase decision on social media like Facebook. The research is also conducted for the purpose of supporting organizations, businesses and media to understand the importance of advertising as well as the best tool to use in developing messages for advertisements to reach their target audience through social media, especially Facebook

Index Terms: impact, celebrity, endorsements, advertising, consumers, purchasing intentions, social media, Facebook

1. INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of celebrity endorsement on customer purchase intention on social media, especially a case of Facebook in Vietnam. Celebrity endorsement advertising helps all of company to deliver messages to target audiences or introduce the new marketing campaign of the products and services to customers. Until now, celebrity endorsement has become one of the most popular forms of advertising (Choi & Rifon, 2007). There are many Social media channel as Facebook that it may provide information and models that can changes positive or negative in behavior of consumers and the consumer purchase intention. Basing on the statistic of Facebook users in Vietnam, there are more than 30 million people using Facebook and it becomes the dominant social network within 94% of Vietnamese internet users have a Facebook account (BDG Asia, www.bdg-asia.com/vietnams-top-social-media-sites-2014) and 20 million of Facebook users actively every day; more than 2.5 hours/ day (Vietnam Television News, 2015). Social media platform as Facebook is more developing in the next few years. In Vietnam today, especially young generation from 18- 34 years old, they are using Facebook as a channel for advertising or find some information about products; they believed celebrity endorsers that will effect on consumer purchasing intention.

2. Literature Review

This part will provide the definitions and main concepts which are used in this research such as celebrity endorsement, consumer purchase intention, social media as Facebook and the model that apply along this thesis. Celebrity Endorsement is one of the effective marketing tools. Christina and Schlecht defines that celebrity endorsement is *“Celebrities are people who enjoy public recognition by a large share of a certain group of people whereas attributes like attractiveness, extraordinary lifestyle are just examples and specific common characteristics cannot be observed though it can be said that within a corresponding social group celebrities generally differ from the social norm and enjoy a high degree of public awareness.”*

(Schlecht, 2003), Anonymous, Business Standard, Dec, 2003). On the other hands, this is true for some form of celebrities as not only models (e.g. Cindy Crawford, Heidi Klum), singers (e.g. Taylor Swift), or actors (e.g. Brad Pitt, Leonardo DiCaprio), athletes (e.g. Lionel Messi); but also to businessmen (e.g. Steve Jobs) and politicians as President of USA Barack Obama. Celebrities appear in public in different ways such as events, special performance, magazines and mass media channels as Facebook, they will “tell a story” about the brand to promote products and services. Besides that, “Endorsement is a channel of communication where celebrities can act as spokesperson of the brand and by extending their popularity and personality they certify the brand’s claim and position” (Kotler, 2009). Celebrity endorsement is still commonly used by marketers because consumers still pay attention, believe in famous people and widely recognizable person attracts greater attention than non-celebrity endorser (Ohanian, 1991; Atkin and Block, 1983). The reason why companies using celebrity endorsement as a spokesperson is that their huge influences; it can make consumers pay attention and recall of the brand or services. Customers can increase awareness of a company’s advertising that create positive feelings toward brands and are perceived by consumers as more entertaining (Solomon, 2002). Nowadays, using celebrity endorsement in advertising is likely to positively affect consumer’s brand attitude, consumer attention and purchasing intentions. The celebrity endorsement has positive impact on consumer purchasing intention. Purchase intention is defined as a plan to buy a product by consumer in the future (Spears and Singh, 2004) and may influence by consumer’s attitude to endorser’s performance (Atkin and Block, 1983). Nowadays, celebrities are turning to website like Facebook to promote their brands and connect with fans (MacMillan, 2009). A researcher stated that purchase intention is one of the effectiveness tools use to predict purchasing process (Ghosh, 1990). Consumer’s purchase intention was easily influenced by many external factors during the buying decision process. For example, consumers will affect by other customers such as word-of-mouth and word-of-mouse communication in the stage of searching information about products or brands. Their purchase intention will be affected by the price, product attributes, endorser performance during the purchase process (Sheu, 2010). All of firms have invested large sums of money to align their brands and corporate images with ‘celebrity endorsers’ qualities such as attractiveness, likeability, and

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trustworthiness (Atkin and Block, 1983). On the other hand, according to Ohanian (1990), the credibility of celebrity is considered to consist of three constructs: attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise.

2.1 Trustworthiness

"Trustworthiness is the trust paradigm in communication is the listener's degree of confidence in and level of acceptance of, the speaker and the message" (Sallam, 2012). More specifically, another researcher concluded that trustworthiness can be also defined as "the honesty, integrity and believability the endorser possesses" (Van der Waladt, 2009). Ohanian (1990) said that it is the degree of confidence consumers place in a communicator's intent to convey the assertions she/he considers most valid. More importantly, the trustworthy communicator was persuasive, whether an expert or not. Much of the literature supports the positive effect of trustworthiness on purchase intention. Therefore, companies try to find endorsers who are widely seen as trustful and who are seen as honest, believable and dependable (Shimp, 2002). There is also ample evidence that TV advertising, including celebrity endorsement, plays a dominant role in shaping product preference. Ross et al. (1984) showed how using celebrities to endorse a product could increase preference for that product and their belief that the celebrity was an expert on its subject. Because of the developing of digital and information technology, Facebook is become an effective tool of "celebrity endorser" using to attract consumers; based on their comment and feedback or a status about every brand products.

2.2 Expertise

According to many researchers, expertise is "the degree to which the endorser is perceived to have the adequate knowledge, experience or skills to promote the product" (Van der Waladt, 2009). On the other hand, Erdogan (1999) mentioned that expertise in endorser credibility refers to knowledge, experience, and skills with regard to the advertised brand and the expertise of the endorser is not vitally important unless consumers perceive it to be so. Expertise is role of consumer decision making process to receive increasing research attention lately. Expertise consists of two types of knowledge. Firstly, it is the type deals with how knowledge is structured and processed, and includes the related functions of cognition, encoding, retrieval, and information usage in the performance of a choice task. The second type deals with the content relating to the decision problem, i.e. knowledge about the different alternatives available for choice (Brucks 1986; Dacin and Mitchell 1986). Finally, expertise seems to be essential in the real life situations when consumers buy a valuable products or services. For example; when buying house, customers require the sellers that they have to answer any related question about these products. It means that the seller have to be an expert in their products or services.

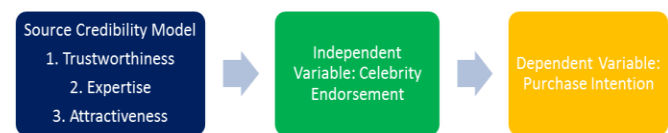
2.3 Attractiveness

Attractiveness is an important component of source credibility. The attractiveness scale consists of the semantic differentials of unattractive – attractive, not classy – classy, ugly – beautiful, plain – elegant, sexy – not sexy. Attractiveness is the stereotype of positive associations to a person and not only entails physical attractiveness but also other characteristics such as personality and athletic ability (Erdogan, 1999). The

attractiveness also creates a positive attitude related to the consumers' purchase intention (Clow, 2006). It is convinced that attractiveness has a closely relationship with the willingness to buy. A study showed that consumers were more likely paying attention on products endorsed by celebrities compared to non famous endorsers (Till B. D., 2000).

3. Methodology

In this research, the main objective was to examine if source credibility of celebrity endorsers had any effects on consumers' purchase intention. A conceptual framework was developed, which was presented in Figure. On the other hand of the framework, it illustrated the three dimensions of source credibility model, which were 'Trustworthiness', 'Expertise' and 'Attractiveness'. This research was conducted with a view to study the impact of celebrities' endorsement on Facebook advertising on the buying behavior of citizens in Vietnam. To achieve this objective, the following hypotheses were framed:



H0: Celebrity endorsement positively affects Vietnamese consumers' purchase intention of brand or products on Facebook.

H1: Attractiveness will have more impact on Facebook purchase intention of Vietnamese consumers.

4. Data Analysis

The questionnaire is consisted 2 parts in order to collect adequate information from the respondents. These sections include consumers' purchase intention under the concept of celebrity endorsement, source credibility model. The first part mainly focuses on using components of source credibility model to determine the consumers' purchase intention. All of the questions will be constructed under like scale which includes 6 answers from strongly disagrees to strongly agree. On the other part, there will be question related to source credibility model. The question aims to determine the most credible source among the three dimensions (trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness). The study will be conducted with a sample of 60 participants in Binh Duong Province. Participants are as students, officers and others. Convenience sampling was utilized in this study in order to meet the targets because of flexible time and budget constraints. There are two kinds of survey including online and offline surveys to collect the needed information. Online survey mainly focused on young respondents in Binh Duong Province, by using social media network as Facebook. Offline survey is all about older people who are really hard to reach to only using the internet. The questionnaire includes 20 questions was given to 60 participants both online and offline. The online survey mainly focuses on young participants who highly access the internet. The offline survey was conducted in supermarkets, public areas, and university in Binh Duong Province. This survey is more suitable for those who are older and difficult to approach through the internet. All the attributes related to "Trustworthiness" were subjected to the reliability test. The Cronbach's alpha of the test was 0.82 that is considered as acceptable. In addition, the value was lower than 0.4 which means these items were not related to the scale as a whole.

Therefore, the “Trustworthy” was removed in order to have the reliable result for the study because it had the low value in the corrected item-total correction. The study revealed that, young age citizen (in urban and rural area) were attracted towards film stars characters as they like them and was considered as the most important attribute in attractiveness dimension with the highest mean of 4.6. While “Beautiful or Handsome” attribute accounted for the lowest mean (2.6) among the respondents, that means this attribute have the least effect on the consumers’ purchase intention. In details, elegant celebrities had the most effect on those aged higher than 35 years old with the mean of 4.9. It revealed that when buying products, these people were affected by celebrities who had elegant attribute. By contrast, beautiful or handsome celebrities did not affect the purchase intention of people aged higher than 35 years old because of the lowest mean (1.79). Consumers prefer reliable celebrities to be an endorser for products or services because these celebrities are easier to catch the attention from these consumers. While sincere celebrities seem to be not really matter to trigger the purchase intention of Vietnamese consumers and the number of Consumers using Facebook. To be more specific, the result shows that reliable celebrities affect greatly the purchase intention of respondents aged from 18 to 25 years old and 25 to 35 years old. By contract, in the sincere attribute, younger respondents aged less than 24 years old were not affected by this attribute but some older respondents said their attentions affected by sincere attribute.

5. Conclusion

The number of people using Facebook in Vietnam is one of the effectiveness marketing campaign that companies using to attract customers. Vietnamese consumers were affected by “Expertise” and “Attractiveness” more than “Trustworthiness” when they see products on Facebook by comparing means of these dimensions. In details, “Trustworthiness” is considered as an important factor triggering purchase intention of those who was higher than 35 years old; while younger people aged less than 25 years old did not consider this dimension when buying cosmetic products. “Expertise” and “Attractiveness” seems to be vitally important to those aged higher than 35 years old and from 18 years old to 25 years old. This research helps companies to develop new marketing plan for products and services by focusing on target audiences. Besides that, using social media as Facebook, celebrities can connect and reach their fans or give some feedback about products or services and building brand awareness of products. On the other hand, it is not only for marketing campaign, but also for social responsibility as charity or some special events. As the results of this research, companies will easily to avoid wasted marketing budget to select the wrong person for their brand due to some different perceptions towards celebrity endorsement; the research is considered as guidance for them to know what they should do and not to do in marketing field and choose the right person for new campaign.

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