

Co-Branding in Fashion Advertising : Promoting Effective Relation

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A recent advertisement opened with scenes from the movie Mission Impossible. Logically, the viewer assumes that this advertisement is a trailer for the film. Suddenly, the Apple Macintosh logo appears and the scenes from the movie are interspersed with images of the computer company's logo. The end of the ad is pure Macintosh with the logo proudly displayed and the tag line "After you see the movie, pick up the Book," which refers to the Macintosh Powerbook. The Macintosh ad is one example of a growing phenomenon in marketing known as co-branding. Co-branding occurs when two brands are deliberately paired with one another in a marketing context such as in advertisements, products, product placements and distribution outlets. A number of firms have recently entered into co-branding agreements including: MacDonald's ten-year contract to dispense Disney toys and Pepsi's deal with Lucasfilm to promote Star Wars films through the year 2000. Although co-branding in general products can be easily found, there are little cases in co-branding in fashion advertising. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to examine the principles of classical conditioning and how they may affect co-branding in advertising and to suggest the promoting strategies for co-branding in fashion advertising.

In the co-branding arena there are both success stories and dismal failures. For example, co-branding has been successful in the credit card industry and is believed to have helped Mastercard improve its position by teaming up with General Motors and AT&T to offer specialized cars. Though many firms are embarking on co-branding effort, caution is recommended when using the strategies and common sense suggests that theoretical research on association formulation may help marketers gain the maximum amount of benefit from such arrangements. Originally, classic conditioning was discovered as a method for creating physiological responses in animals. Research suggests that humans develop physiological responses to such stimuli as well. A phenomenon that is less commonly known is that humans can also be conditioned to develop favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward images or to develop understanding of the meanings of various stimuli, including products and brands. Similarly, one goal in co-branding is to create favorable attitudes toward a new product by

pairing it with a favorable existing product. Further, the advertise may intend to associate a certain meaning with a new product by pairing it with an existing brand. Understanding the mechanism behind association formulation should be beneficial in developing successful co-branding strategies in fashion advertisement.