A celebrity is an individual that is known by many people. Due to this fame, celebrities have several people who admire and look up to them. In this paper I review the role that celebrities play in advertising and how this role has been affected by social media. Then I go on to discuss some of the advantages and disadvantages of celebrity endorsements and review some possible ethical issues in using celebrities to promote brands.

Celebrities' role in Advertising

One of the most important roles celebrities play in advertising is shaping a brand's image by adding credibility to a brand that makes consumers who trust the celebrity to also trust the brand (Aziz, 2013). Therefore, a celebrity's credibility is very important in celebrity endorsements because it directly influences the effectiveness of the advertisement and how well the message is received.

Additionally, celebrities influence what their fans purchase by setting trends that their fans follow. This is a result of parasocial relationships that fans build with celebrities. A parasocial relationship is a one-sided relationship where a person becomes emotionally invested in a celebrity (Horton, 1956). Parasocial relationships make fans look up to celebrities and aspire to be like the celebrity. Therefore, if a celebrity claims to use a certain brand or promotes a particular product, their fans also want to use the same things as this connects them to the celebrity.

To add to this, celebrities' physical attractiveness may also play a role in how a brand they endorse is viewed. According to a study from the Chinese academy of sciences, people are more trusting of attractive individuals (Zhao, 2015), therefore, if an attractive celebrity makes claims about a product, people are more likely to trust and believe them.

Social Media Effect on Celebrity Endorsement

Social media enables a stronger development of parasocial relationships by allowing celebrities a more personal interaction with their fans. Studies have shown that the stronger the parasocial relationship is, the more trusting people are of the individual (Breves, 2021). This in turn increases the effect of the celebrity' endorsements and generates greater purchasing intentions.

Advantages And Disadvantages of Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrity endorsements are not suitable for all brands, it is therefore important to know the advantages and disadvantages of endorsement. One advantage of celebrity endorsement is that it makes consumers more attentive to the advertisement. Ad clutter makes advertisements less effective (Elliott, 1998), however when a celebrity endorses a product, the celebrities fans notice and are more attentive to the advertisement. This in a way makes the ads stand out

over the ad-clutter. In addition to this, people may begin to associate the brand with the celebrity, creating greater brand recall. (Zipporah, 2014)

On the other hand, if a celebrity's reputation gets tarnished this might reflect negatively on the brand that the celebrity endorses. Additionally, some cases may arise where the celebrity overshadows the brand, known as the vampire effect. This is where the public recalls the celebrity but not the brand that the celebrity was endorsing (Erfgen, 2015). This could be particularly detrimental to newer brands that people are less familiar with. To add to this, a celebrity partaking in numerous brand endorsements could be overexposed, leading to the loss of the novelty, making their endorsements less influential.

Ethical Issues of Celebrity Endorsements

The trust and credibility of a celebrity may be exploited to make false claims about products or endorse products that they do not use, as was the case with the tennis player Jeff Blake's, who endorsed Prince racquets, even though he used a different racquet brand (Kaplan, 2006). There is also a debate on whether it is right to pay celebrities to promote certain things, such as charitable causes or the modelling of good behaviour. As it was in the case of the Australian cricketer Shane Warne, who was paid to publicize his attempt to stop smoking. Chapman et al. (Chapman, 2001) observed that although the public shunned such activity, it might have helped to further the cause and helped people quit smoking.

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