

Varazdin Development and Entrepreneurship Agency
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10th International Scientific Conference on Economic and Social Development



Editors:

Dinko Primorac, Igor Pihir, Kristina Detelj

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WHICH WAY IS PRODUCT PLACEMENT GOING? 11 EXPECTED TRENDS

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ABSTRACT

In a certain sense, product placement is the TV commercial of the 2010s. While traditional advertising, and, especially, 30-second TV spots face increasing difficulties, product placement is thriving. Most people grab their remote controls and switch to other channels during commercial breaks, so it seems logical that advertisers tend to place their products/brands in the film/programme itself.

But what about the future of this marketingcommunication genre? The following article discusses 11 predicted trends of product placement. However, we should not forget that the famous physicist Niels Bohr was right: "Prediction is very difficult, especially if it's about the future".

The 11 expected trends are:

- 1. Spending on product placement will increase*
- 2. Product placement experts will take part in the production of films, programmes and games*
- 3. New indicators of product placement effectiveness will continue to appear*
- 4. It will be increasingly important to make product placement a part of integrated marketing communication, not just a standalone feature*
- 5. More and more programmes will be sponsored by brands, but soap opera in the literal sense will not return*
- 6. The most dramatic increase will be experienced in computer games*
- 7. Post-production (digital) product placement will become increasingly widespread*
- 8. Product placement will be customized*
- 9. Product placement will become interactive*
- 10. More and more consumers will oppose product placement*
- 11. Product placement parodies will gain popularity*

Keywords: *branded entertainment, integrated marketing communication, product placement,*

1. INTRODUCTION

James Bond asks for a vodka martini "Shaken, not stirred." Lady Gaga rides a Vespa scooter. President Obama campaigns in the racing video game Burnout Paradise.

We can go to the movies with a bag of popcorn to see a Hollywood film, stare at a new reality show on TV, watch music videos on YouTube, or play with a game console with great enthusiasm, yet they all have something in common – they do not only provide entertaining content, but also display brands from time to time.

In a certain sense, product placement is the TV commercial of the 2010s. While traditional advertising, and, especially, 30-second TV spots face increasing difficulties, product placement is thriving. Most people grab their remote controls and switch to other channels during commercial breaks, so it seems logical that advertisers tend to place their products/brands in the film/programme itself.

This article discusses the expected trends of product placement. However, we should never forget that the famous physicist Niels Bohr was right: "Prediction is very difficult, especially if it's about the future". If we consider examples of movies set in the future, we may also see that they reflect a rather mixed picture.

When directing *2001: A Space Odyssey*, released in 1968, Stanley Kubrick was sure that mankind will establish a connection with alien intelligence in 2001 with the help of a PanAm spaceship. However though, not only there is no proof for it, but PanAm went bankrupt in the early nineties.

Or let us think about *Back to the Future Part II*, which suggested that we could fly with our cars in 2015. "Roads? Where we're going, we don't need roads." On the other hand, self-lacing Nike shoes did appear, although only 100 pairs were produced. Similarly, *Minority Report*, set in 2054, depicted a virtual computer programme which has mostly become reality by 2015.

All in all, it is not easy to predict the future of product placement. Still it is worth to define some theses that time may prove (or disprove).

2. SPENDING ON PRODUCT PLACEMENT WILL INCREASE

If we look at the numbers from past years, we may see that the tendency of advertisers requiring alternative placements besides traditional TV spots (or instead of them) can already be noticed. These alternative advertising forms include short sponsored spots that are just a few seconds long, prize games in connection with specific TV programmes, and product placement, among several others.

As for the international situation, data provided by PQ Media show that spending on all forms of product placement (including movies, TV programmes, and even videogames) is increasing, and this tendency will be further strengthened in the future.

Moreover, according to research conducted by the American Advertising Federation in 2011, 60% of advertisers incorporate branded entertainment in their advertising strategies (Castillo 2011).

At the same time, we must also consider the viewers when defining what percentage of a specific programme should be branded entertainment (that is, a commercial message), and what percentage should be edited content. The maximum ratio of the former must be one fourth, in order to avoid negative influence on the latter.

3. PRODUCT PLACEMENT EXPERTS WILL TAKE PART IN THE PRODUCTION OF FILMS, PROGRAMMES AND GAMES

There are heated debates about which player of product placement has the deepest understanding of this tool. For example, in the case of brand placement on television, is it the media owner, that is, the channel itself? Or is it the programme producer, who creates the specific programme, so he/she really knows what viewers want (but is not so much aware of the aspects of the brand)? Or is it the advertising agency hired by the advertiser, whose experts know all the creative options, but mostly focus on the 30 second commercial as product placement is a new genre? Or is it perhaps the media agency with its expertise in placing brands, but possessing little sense of creativity?

Of course this is not an easy question. As we can see from our experience, the best-case scenario is always cooperation – with meetings involving all concerned parties, and a joint decision regarding brand placement.

Moreover, agencies specialised in product placement have been created. In the work phase of creating film scripts or programme plans, these agencies find out which parts of the programme or film could involve support by products or brands, and contact them accordingly. Or it may be the other way round: they may have a list of potential placement partners having expressed what kind of placement they would be interested in. Of course, the role of the agency is usually more than just "match-making"; they may also be responsible for the creative plan of placements, that is, where and how the brand would be featured in the

scenes. This practice is already common in the United States. This model also help all concerned parties focus on their own specific tasks.

4. NEW INDICATORS OF PRODUCT PLACEMENT EFFECTIVENESS WILL CONTINUE TO APPEAR

The measurement of product placement effectiveness is still a weak point. Although there are indicators for this purpose (and there are several of them), advertisers are still looking for the most appropriate ones.

At the same time, according to research by the American Advertising Federation in 2011, 60% of advertisers would like to know more about the effectiveness of branded entertainment before investing into product placement (Castillo 2011).

As the majority of big company marketing professionals grew up in a world of television, they best know the indicators relevant to this medium. They consider GRP (gross rating point) as the most important aspect, and they wish to convert product placement into GRP. The greatest problem with this approach, however, is that a methodology developed for other purposes is adapted forcefully to measure the effectiveness of product placement. For example, in our case, GRP would tell how many people saw the specific product placement (at least, their TV set was switched on), but would not explain if the placement was active or passive, how it affected viewers, etc.

Therefore we may expect more (and more sophisticated) methodologies for the measurement of product placement in the future. Advertisers already understand that using a combination of product placement and TV commercials is more effective than spending all the budget on TV commercials.

5. IT WILL BE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT TO MAKE PRODUCT PLACEMENT A PART OF INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION, NOT JUST A STANDALONE FEATURE

As mentioned in the previous passage, several people fail to notice that product placement should not be regarded as a stand-alone tool. Actually it is just an item of the marketing communications mix, and it is not even the most important one.

As we can see in dozens of examples, product placement only works really well if it supports the communications strategy and the brand message. It is also important to involve additional activities strengthening the effect of brand placement as exemplified by the cooperation of the Reese's Pieces candy brand and the movie *E.T.* In this case Reese's Pieces did not pay specifically for a placement in the movie, but spent a million US dollars on a campaign to spread the word that E.T. was eating Reese's Pieces. These additional tools should not be limited to advertising, but also involve public relations (including online and social media).

6. MORE AND MORE PROGRAMMES WILL BE SPONSORED BY BRANDS, BUT SOAP OPERA IN THE LITERAL SENSE WILL NOT RETURN

In a report published in 2007, Deloitte, one of the "Big Four" consulting companies, went as far as to state that new channels fully financed through product placement will appear in addition to the two most popular models: free channels financed from advertising spots and pay television with no advertising, such as HBO (2007). It is a fact that the first pilot projects have already been introduced: "Freezone" created by Cox Media declared that its aim was to broadcast "long format advertisements, advertainment and sponsored TV contents". Examples included one-minute cooking tips by Kraft, and a Diet Coke series with 13 parts, 10 minutes each. Being a digital channel, they also measured the response rate of each programme to see how many people have clicked through. However, "Freezone" did not become as successful as they had hoped. (Multichannel News 2003, Phipps 2004)

The other case is when a brand supports a programme, and has behind-the-scene requests that affect programming to an exaggerated extent. If it goes public, the potential result is a huge media scandal. It is enough to think of the example of the quiz show "The \$64,000 Question". It was sponsored by Revlon cosmetics, and the scenery was also built by them. When it was revealed that the company even had a say in the contestants' chances of winning, viewers were outraged at the brand and the channel.

7. THE MOST DRAMATIC INCREASE WILL BE EXPERIENCED IN COMPUTER GAMES

The increasing significance of in-game advertising (also known as advergaming) is also an important trend in branded entertainment. Consumers are looking for more fun and involvement, and computer games require active consumer participation, therefore they provide more of these than movies or television.

Just to mention an example: *The Avengers 3D* was a hit in movies in 2012; it generated 300 million US dollars in ticket sales within 2 weeks, and became one of the most successful movies of all times. *Black Ops 2*, a new sequel of the *Call of Duty* computer game franchise was released the same week, and it made 300 million US dollars within 2 days.

Another reason for the emergence of computer games is that although the movie industry introduced several developments (Dolby Surround, 3D, IMAX, etc.), it lagged behind in a technological sense as game console manufacturers introduced new products such as Nintendo Wii or Microsoft Kinect. In the case of the latter we must actually run, jump, squat, hit, fence, dance, etc., and a family of four, or a group of friends can also play together.

Online gaming means that we may also find fellow gamers on another continent. We can compete against them, or cooperate with them in certain games with the help of online technology.

Video games are also competitors of television as we connect games consoles to the TV set instead of watching TV. Even if we watch it, we often use our computer, laptop or tablet simultaneously. And we often play with them looking at their own screen, instead of paying attention to the TV.

Last, but not least, we usually do not watch movies or TV programmes on our smartphones, but we do play mobile games with them. In addition, we may find more and more free content developed for smartphones sponsored sponsors or brands. In return for the game, consumers gladly accept brand placements. Of course we should be careful not to overdo the branding of mobile games, but we should not worry, either: one of the most popular applications is actually a "logo quiz" where players match logos with the corresponding companies.

8. POST-PRODUCTION (DIGITAL) PRODUCT PLACEMENT WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY WIDESPREAD

Post-production placement, or an exchange of brands after the movie has been completed, are not at all unthinkable. The movie *Demolition Man*, released in 1993, is an excellent example. The police officer (Sylvester Stallone) wakes up in 2032 after lying cryogenically frozen for decades. He must fight a career criminal (Wesley Snipes) also restored to life recently. In one of the scenes the character played by Stallone says to his fellow officer (Sandra Bullock), "...and where does he take me... Taco Bell. I mean, hey, I like Mexican but come on..." and her answer is "You do not realize Taco Bell was the only restaurant to survive the Franchise Wars". In the meanwhile, they park their car at a Taco Bell restaurant. However, while the brand is mostly popular in the USA, it is less known in other continents, therefore the scene was re-recorded for foreign markets including the Pizza Hut brand.

There are several similar examples. In the American version of *Spiderman 2*, the DrPepper brand by Cadbury Schweppes appeared, while the European version featured Pepsico's

Mirinda. In *Looney Tunes: Back in Action*, the logo of the mobile phone service provider was that of Sprint for the American market, while the European version included the Orange brand.

Digital technology also created several further opportunities – it is enough to think of the remastered versions of *Star Wars* episodes IV, V and VI. For example, the city of Mos Eisley is much more sophisticated and detailed, and Jabba could also appear in *Episode IV*, although he was originally impersonated by a large man.

And, if all of that is possible, then brands can also be placed in movies digitally. And they are often placed there that way. In a scene of the popular comedy series *How I Met Your Mother*, a shelf in the background originally featured a clock. When the series was aired again a few years later, a DVD of the movie *Zookeeper* (released that year) could be seen on the shelf instead. Fans of the series noticed the change, and it also had wide media coverage (Letstalkabout.tv 2011).

Live football game coverages also have a unique branding feature. At the beginning of the game the logos of the two teams are projected digitally on the lawn – at least this is the perception of TV viewers, while people in the stadium do not see anything. In the case of baseball games the live audience sees a blue board, but at the same time an advertisement appears in the TV broadcast using blue box technology. (RC Business 2011, Sport Marketing and Advertising 2012)

A short promotional film by the MirriAd digital product placement agency well represents how brands can be placed in scenes after a film has been released. For example, posters can be placed in the background without much ado, and pizza boxes can also be branded later on. Products may also appear in movies: milk cartons can be inserted on breakfast tables, SUV's can be placed in the parking lot, etc.

This may also mean that directors and editors can create movies with empty spaces for brands, and potential sponsors may see the specific spaces to be used for the placement of their brands. This way they can also find out the length of their placement (how many seconds), and the situations where the brand would appear. If the advertiser accepts the proposal (and pays the fees), their brand will be included in the film.

This also means that the advertising spaces of a movie may be sold not only once, but multiple times, or even continuously – the film may even be updated before each broadcast on TV. Digitalisation makes it possible to eliminate the preparation and production time of a product placement, or at least decrease it significantly.

The phenomenon may also lead to a sharp fall in prices: advertisers do not have to "invest" globally in a movie, and may use product placement as a cost-effective alternative. Product placement in a promising Hollywood movie used to cost between 500 thousand and 1 million US dollars, but significant changes are expected in the future. According to Marsha Levine, the chairwoman of A List Entertainment, a company specialised in product placement, "If you can replace a beer can in someone's hand with another, it opens up exciting new vistas for the advertisers of the movie industry." (Figyelő 2005) "In the age of digitalisation, a replacement like that can be implemented with a cost of a few thousand or a few hundred thousand dollars, therefore advertisers serving a smaller specific geographical area or target audience may also use product placement".

However though, we must not forget that this kind of product placement is regarded as passive product placement, that is, the integration of the product into a scene is not possible with this technology. Nevertheless, if we only consider technological aspects, any number of brands can be inserted into a movie as many times as possible, even after the movie has been released. But advertisers should still be careful. Consumers do not mind product placement, but only until it remains natural. (Geekosystem.com 2011)

9. PRODUCT PLACEMENT WILL BE CUSTOMIZED

It is conceivable that digital television and digital product placement shall enable advertisers to insert a certain product/brand in real time digitally, according to demographic data gained from the household, or the viewers' field of interest. For example, the main character of a Saturday evening movie would drink different beers on various TV screens in different countries/regions. In the meantime, billboards would appear in the background with customized advertisements based on the preferences of that specific household.

10. PRODUCT PLACEMENT WILL BECOME INTERACTIVE

Renowned futurist Faith Popcorn said in the early 2000s that "Someday in the not too distant future, television will be like this: 'I'm watching Ally Mcbeal. I like the dress she is wearing. I put my hand on the screen, she turns to me and asks: 'Hey, Faith, do you like my dress?' - 'Yeah, I love it', I say."

Then Ally says, "It's available in these colours" – and the colour scale appears. I say to her, 'I like marine blue and black.' 'No, Faith you have enough blue and black stuff in your wardrobe. Why don't you try red sometime?' Then I say, 'Okay, why not?' And the next day the red dress in my size is delivered to my place." (Ries – Ries 2004, p. 43)

Well, the idea has not been realized, especially not within five years as Popcorn predicted, but there have been a number of similar efforts. For example, one of the introduction videos of the Invisu agency proves that we can easily recognize the brands a woman is wearing if she is walking in a scene. Using a device similar to a mouse, you have to click on the right place to find out what clothes the woman is wearing, what make-up she has put on, and so on. Moreover, if you click on those items, you get to the corresponding website where you can order the item you have clicked on. This means that while product placement in its original sense is used for image building, and maybe awareness raising purposes, the development of technology even enables advertisers to achieve direct response.

By all means, digital technology does make it all possible. In the break of the Super Bowl in 2014, H&M published a commercial featuring David Beckham, which enabled viewers to order underwear advertised by the former football star directly with the help of their Samsung smart TV sets. Using this television commerce technology called t-commerce, a small pop-up menu appeared on the screens, and viewers could use it to place their orders. The solution even worked for people who did not watch the live broadcast (Mmonline.hu 2014).

It is likely that such e-commerce technologies will gain popularity among consumers and viewers in the future. This is also demonstrated by the fact that homo ludens digitalis has appeared in the terminology, which is more interactive and playful, and uses much more platforms than its predecessor, homo ludens televisiensis (Koltai 2012).

11. MORE AND MORE CONSUMERS WILL OPPOSE PRODUCT PLACEMENT

In addition, protests can take various forms:

- Consumers may protest against the great number of brand placements and their negative effect on creativity.
- They may raise the issue that in the case of a commercial it is clear that it is a kind of an advertisement, but in the case of a brand placed in a movie, programme, or game it is not so obvious.
- They may express concerns regarding programmes that have a certain content and age rating but include brand placements for older people, too.
- They can also say that we do not know much about the psychological aspects of product placement, and who knows what effect it may have on our subconscious.

Let us start with the first concern, that is, the consumers' protest against excessive product placement. One of the directors receiving a particular amount of criticism is Michael Bay. His

movies are often characterized as films that only include two things, "explosions and product placement". For example, we can see no less than 35 brands in his movie *The Island* (2005). Brands such as Puma, Speedo, Apple, Xbox, Budweiser, Reebok, Calvin Klein, Nokia and Adidas appeared in it among others.

Another movie by Michael Bay even exceeded this record as *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* (2009) already featured 47 brands including Mountain Dew, Air France, LG, Panasonic, Yahoo, Audi and Budweiser.

I, Robot (2004) by Alex Proyas is one of the movies that are criticized regularly. According to critics the movie is an example of too many and too straightforward brand appearances including Audi, Converse, Fedex, Ovaltine, Prudential, and XX.

Krisztián Simon, the chief editor the Hungarian professional magazine *Marketing & Média* raises a question regarding the James Bond movies (2012): "Is it possible that many Hollywood productions are actually well-camouflaged commercials?" And he goes on, "We are not even surprised if Hollywood film studios create scripts with a focus on companies that would be interested in product placement opportunities as today's brands are just as important characters in productions as James Bond himself."

Regarding Hungarian movies, *HVG* magazine published a noteworthy article on the topic (Hvg.hu 2006): "As it turns out from these disturbing actions, movie makers do not have a clue about how to incorporate a product in the storyline to make it appear realistically. The real aim of product placement would be exactly this – that is, to use and popularize a brand without making the viewers see they are watching an advertisement. In an ideal case the product can be noticed, but its use is still not forced."

As the second critical remark suggests, viewers know that they are going to watch advertisements during a commercial break, but this is not true for product placement. In Hungary, for example, a caption appears announcing that the programme includes product placement, but it does not say when and where it will appear within the programme. Moreover, channels in Hungary do not have to use such captions in the case of Hollywood movies.

There are rather extreme suggestions to resolve this issue, too. Robert Weissman, president of the Public Citizen consumer rights advocacy group thinks that it would be fair to display a pop-up bubble with a notice each time a brand appears in the scene. Some experts said that this would make the whole screen a total mess, but Weissmann's response was that news programmes already feature such elements: there are one or two lines of text running in the bottom of the screen, pop-up windows appear, and sometimes they even have a notice in the top right-hand and left-hand corners advertising the upcoming programmes, etc. (Spurlock 2011)

Advertisers and films are also regularly criticized regarding content rating and age restrictions. For example, the first episode of *Spider-Man* was criticized because the movie was classified as suitable for 12 years and over, but in one of the chase scenes the main character was jumping around for some seconds on the top of a truck carrying Carlsberg beer. Consumer rights advocacy groups also have a problem with the talent show *American Idol* regarding age classification (12 years). They say that this is a family show that is watched by children, too, but Coca-Cola had previously announced that it would not promote its product for children under the age of 12, because sugar consumption at this age may easily lead to obesity. However, Coca-Cola argued that only 8% of American Idol viewers are under 12 according to statistics by Nielsen (Adweek.com 2011).

Last, but not least, there is a fourth aspect: we still know little about the psychological effects of product placement. Most critics are especially concerned about subconscious, so-called subliminal placements. To justify their argument they usually mention a famous experiment conducted by James Vicary in 1957, which took place in a New Jersey cinema with 45

thousand participants. During the experiment the sentences "Eat popcorn" and "Drink Coca-Cola" were displayed for three-thousandth of a second during the showings of the movie *Picnic*. The result was an almost 58% increase in the consumption of Coca-Cola, and an almost 18% increase in the sales of popcorn. At least that was what Vicary said at the time. The experiment was never repeated, and in 1962 Vicary finally admitted that the whole story was just a trick. (Robinson 2001)

Despite all of this, subliminal advertising has been prohibited in many states, and viewers still have concerns regarding it. One of the most peculiar examples is that whenever *Circus* (1928) by Charlie Chaplin is broadcast on television, several complaints arrive from viewers – they claim that a woman is using a mobile phone in one of the scenes, and wonder who the 'moron' inventing this post-production product placement was. The truth is that the woman passing by in the scene is actually holding something close to her ear, and this was already included in the original version in 1928...

12. PRODUCT PLACEMENT PARODIES WILL GAIN POPULARITY

And why do we discuss product placement parodies, a seemingly irrelevant point at the end of this study? Because the maturity of a genre is always justified by regular consumer and media attention. We can see the impact of a specific advertisement from the number of consumer remakes or parodies.

Product placement has also become a popular theme for cartoonists. In a caricature by Mark Parisi we can see the Tin Man of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* wearing a Pepsi can in the television. The comment of the viewer in the cartoon is "This product placement stuff is officially out of hand..."

In a cartoon by Cartoon Stock, a staff member is sitting in the chair with the word "BrandX". His colleague steps up and says, "Before product placement, that chair belonged to Brando" referring to Marlon Brando.

Another famous cartoon by Mark Anderson suggests that in old times it was enough to say "Lights, camera, actors, and... action!" before recording a scene, but today it is more like "Lights, camera, actors, product placement, DVD extras, merchandising tie-ins... and...action!"

Parodies of product placement also appear in commercials. Samsung produced spots titled *The Greatest Product Placement Movie of All Time* in cooperation with Sprint, a cell phone service provider. In the commercial an arrestee asks the detectives: "Can I make a call?" The policemen ask, "Why just one call? Why don't you send an email, or a text message, or update your Facebook status? Why don't you make a video and send it home to you mum?" He says, puzzled: "I just want to call my lawyer".

In another commercial we see a filming session, a scene with two guys fencing. All of a sudden a window cleaning product appears, and the director says, "Stop! What the hell is this?" The production manager replies, "Product placement, sir! Each time we show the product, we get free packs of it for free." The director's face lightens, and in the upcoming scenes we see the Bud Light beer brand appearing everywhere: in a rose window that is broken, as a lamp over the tables, in paintings, and even in the left hand of the main character while he is fencing with the other hand. At the end we even see a truck with Bud Light on it, entering the fencing scene...

A somewhat different example was when Mercedes asked renowned director Michael Mann to direct a trailer-like advertisement for a fictional feature movie with the Mercedes brand and the SL500 model in focus. A 2½ minute trailer starring Benicio del Toro was produced and aired in cinemas in 2002, but the full movie titled *Lucky Star* was never released.

But let's get back to parodies of product placement. Some movies use this tool as well. One of the first examples was *Return of the Killer Tomatoes!* (1988) starring George Clooney and

others. In one of the scenes the movie makers realize that they have run out of money. They decide to get sponsors to finish the movie. In the next scene brands such as Pepsi, Nestlé Crunch, Mosehead and Fosters beers, Crest toothpaste, and Kellogg's cornflakes appear prominently, both in a visual and auditive sense.

There is an even more famous example for product placement parodies. In one of the scenes of *Wayne's World* (1992), Wayne's manager warns him to be more attentive to sponsors, and his answer is:

"Contract or no, I will not bow to any sponsor." – and he opens a Pizza Hut box. Then he continues: "Maybe I'm wrong on this one, but for me, the beast doesn't include selling out." – and he is seen holding a bag of Doritos chips.

"It's like people only do these things because they can get paid. And that's just really sad.", says his companion Garth, wearing Reebok from head to toe.

Wayne replies, "I can't talk about it anymore; it's giving me a headache."

Garth says, "Here, take two of these!" (and dumps two Nuprin pills into Wayne's hand)

Wayne: "Ah, Nuprin. Little. Yellow. Different."

Then the manager says, "Look, you can stay here in the big leagues and play by the rules, or you can go back to the farm club in Aurora. It's your choice."

"Yes, and it's the choice of a new generation" says Wayne, holding a can of Pepsi. (At the time Pepsi's slogan was "The choice of a new generation.")

In the movie titled *Truman Show*, the main character called Truman (Jim Carrey) is the only person who does not know that he is taking part in a reality show, and is wondering why all his acquaintances mention brands in their conversations, or push him towards a citylight advertisement each and every day.

Another movie titled *The Joneses* (2009) may be an even more exciting example for product placement. There is an expression in English, "to keep up with the Joneses", which refers to comparing ourselves with our neighbours, trying to keep pace with them. In the story an ideal family moves to the garden city, and ask a neighbour passing by to use their new HTC phone to make a video of them so that they could send it to the grandma. When they give him the phone, we can see that he only has to push a button, the phone is easy to handle, and the picture could be forwarded immediately to the family members. Besides HTC. prominent brands such as Audi cars, Dell laptops and MBT shoes (to be exact, anti-shoes) appear. In addition, we do not only see most of these products, but the characters of the movie tell how much they like them. Everyone wants to keep up with the perfect family, so all the neighbours start to buy products they use, but the truth is that the Joneses are a sales team, whose task is to boost sales in the neighbourhood. Therefore the movie demonstrates how people become promoters or evangelists of brands – we could also say that they serve as a medium of product placement.

13. CONCLUSION

Can we imagine a full movie about brands? Yes, we can. There is *Logorama*, a 16-minute long French animated movie that won the Oscar in 2010. In the storyline we can see more than 2500 brands (or their logos), although their appearance is not official as they did not pay for their placement. The text of the exciting movie poster said "Spectacular car chases, an intense hostage crisis, wild animals rampaging through the city". We meet a Pringles truck driver courting an Esso waitress, and Michelin Man policemen chasing Ronald McDonald. When Los Angeles, and, actually, the whole world is destroyed, Ronald McDonald smiles in the camera once again.

We must also mention two other exciting movies about the topic: documentarist Morgan Spurlock created *Super Size Me* (2004) to target McDonalds, but in *The Greatest Movie Ever Sold*, released in 2011, he does this to the whole marketing and advertising industry.

His aim is to make a movie about product placement using product placement as a tool, that is, cover the 1.5 million dollar expense of his documentary from sponsorship money. In return he offers to describe each brand as the best of its category: "Brand X – the best shoes you have ever worn", "Brand Y – the best car you have ever driven", "Brand Z – the best drink you have ever had".

Spurlock's experiment was successful: he found 12 sponsors such as Jet Blue (airline), Mini Cooper (car), POM (pomegranate juice), Merrell (shoes), Sheetz (petrol stations), Hyatt (hotels), Amy's Pizza, or Old Navy (clothes). In addition, these brands sponsored the promotion of the movie, therefore we can say that cross promotion was complete.

A feature film about product placement? *The Greatest Movie Ever Sold* is an excellent example of fully functioning product placement. I wish you great branded entertainment for the upcoming years!

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