



Watch it, Repeat, Share it - Music Video and Social Networking Sites as Behavior Influencers

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► To cite this version:

Boris Chapoton. Watch it, Repeat, Share it - Music Video and Social Networking Sites as Behavior Influencers. The Faces and Stakes of Brand Insertion, Vernon Press, 2022, 978-1-62273-795-6. <hal-04717056>

HAL Id: hal-04717056

<https://hal.science/hal-04717056v1>

Submitted on 1 Oct 2024

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The Faces and Stakes of Brand Insertion

Chapter xx

Watch it, repeat, share it – music video and social networks sites as behaviour influencers.

Boris Chapoton

When thinking about sodas, would you consider yourself as a Coca-Cola drinker or as a Pepsi-Cola person? Likewise, when we talk about technology, are you an Apple or a Samsung user? However, most importantly did an answer come directly to mind when reading the above questions? Generally, most people would have a preference towards a particular type of brand and would remain loyal to that particular brand; this is of great importance to the marketing world. Many techniques are utilised by companies in relation to influencing the consumer's environment with an aim to make their brands attractive to the individual.

When new tobacco laws restrict the visual elements of a tobacco packet to a plain design with no marketing material it is for reasons of public health. Removing the marketing associated to the packet (its colour, design, special edition...) and making it harder for the consumer to distinguish the brands aim to dissociate the product from emotions and from values that people would associate to its use. As a consequence, plain packets of tobacco are expected to be less attractive to the youngest and the non-smokers without any main visual elements and distinctive brands to look at. Indeed, in a more or less consciously and voluntary way, people associate product and brands to certain values and to the person who is using that product. Once these values are integrated by the consumer, they are hard to change.

From a commercial perspective such associations between the brand, the values and the person could be beneficial: when a celebrity endorses a distinctive brand, the image of the brand is associated to the celebrity and vice-versa resulting in promoting one and/or another towards the public. It is common for companies to develop partnerships with artists and other celebrities in order to promote their product. It allows them to reach the consumers through a different platform rather than the traditional method such as billboards, TV, etc. Over the years, consumers have learned to ignore such methods of advertisement by skipping them or using technology to block them and installing ad blocking software. This makes it harder for marketing teams to ensure their brands reach their target audience. As such, companies have developed new strategies to deliver their brand to their selected audience by other means. One such method could be product placement within selected media.

Through this chapter, we will look at particular brands inserted within music video clips which aim to reach a specific audience: the teenagers who are an incredible spending force for companies. We will discuss and take examples starting with media such as music videos all the way to social network sites where substantial brand endorsement occurs from more or less famous people.

Teenagers as a target to reach for companies

During the 80's and the 90's, research has been pushing the value of teenagers as the main subject to consider when looking at the family purchasing power. Indeed, teenagers impact the market at three levels: when their parents are shopping - *either the teenagers tell the parents what to buy, either the parents consider their children's preference when shopping*; when they buy products with their own pocket money; and when teenagers give their preference to a brand which will last for a long time making the teenager buying more products of the brand in the future (Derbaix & Leheut, 2008). Looking at the amount of money spent by U.S. teenagers, the amount was about \$122 billion in 1997, which increased to \$159 billion in 2005 (Prah, 2006) to reach \$183 billion in 2015 (XF World, 2017).

To understand why teenagers are a particularly interesting targets for companies, we have to have a look at how people and youth in particular process their surrounding world. Based on our perceptions and as an automatic cognitive process, we categorise the information we get from the surrounding world; we classify them within general broad categories (physical appearance, use, etc.) which allow us to get to know our environment and evolve within it. From a psycho-sociological perspective, Edith Salès-Wuillemin (2006) explains that this psychological process applied to people allows us to simplify the reality by assigning attributes to people. As such, when meeting someone we would look at their general physical appearance (ethnicity, gender, age, ...) and at their personal attributes (job, hair style, clothes, ...). It helps us to categorised this person as belonging to the same group as oneself or as being different from us to a certain extent. In this perspective, the objects a person is being seen with (clothes, mobile, car, ...) could provide information about this person. Marketers have well understood the impact of such associations: if advertised well, a person (*the consumer*) could associate a specific value to a brand. If a person is seen with this brand which is defining a certain value, the person would be categorized into a certain group such as "I own so I am". Teenagers, in a search for identity and learning from peers and celebrity idols are extremely sensitive to such characteristics (Noguti & Russell, 2013).

The teenage years is a time for people when they experience different changes: not only are they learning to live with a body that is experiencing transformations but their brain and in particular the use of their prefrontal cortex and their amygdala is also changing, impacting on their behaviour and their ability to take decisions, essentially based on emotions or impulses during this period (Patton & Viner, 2007). Derbaix & Leheut (2008) explain that adolescence is a perfect time for brands to reach teenagers who want to assert themselves and who will count on the others' approval to do so. Teenagers need to learn to master the image they are projecting and to develop a particular relation with products and brands to help them go through this phase in search of an identity. Derbaix & Leheut (2008) sum up this process with different references underlying that the product bought could be used as a way to reach an "ideal ego which will bring respect from the others and inspire love for itself. [...] What brands offer to teenagers is between differentiation and integration, personalisation and group adhesion, individual and social; [...] brands play a role in the social identity construct through a permanent tension between a will for assimilation and a will for differentiation. [...] Thus, brands are the symbol allowing a way to communicate between the individual and its referents".

Although within our modern society it could be considered as easy to reach teenagers, back in the 80's, this young audience was hard to reach. The creation of MTV was providing a way to penetrate the 12-34 years old market through music video, extremely popular among youth (Cranwell et al., 2015).

Music Video as a promotional media

Music video to sell a song and an artist

Music is the entertainment media most used by teenagers and watching music videos is their first online practice ahead of watching series and movies (Opinionway – Hadopi, 2015; Cranwell et al. 2015). The passion teenagers have for music is not recent and was already existing in the 80's when the Music Television (MTV) channel has been created.

The creation of MTV occurred at a time when the music industry was struggling to sell the songs from its artists. Using video clips, record labels found a new way to promote and maximise the sale of songs and tickets to concerts. In his article *I want my AD-TV*, John K. Hartman (1987) reports comments from professionals associated to the music videos channel, explaining that “the service was formulated based on extensive marketing research to appeal to the 12-to-34-year-old audience” which was not being reached with “print ads”. Broadcasting music videos on the channel was reaching millions of viewers in comparison to a concert tour that was reaching far less numbers of people and was consequently more cost efficient.

At the edge of the new millennium, the shifts from physical to digital media occurred. McIntosh (2015) describes this era and its impact on the media industry: the music content was no longer accessible through records or cassettes only and was neither no longer played on the radio and music television channels only. The development of technology allowed music to be available on digital media such as CDs and internet platforms, facilitating its use and share by the greatest number of people, all over the world, anytime, anywhere. Whereas this situation could have been experienced as alarming for the media industry (and actually was with the number of illegal copy shared and downloaded), they also realised that users were actually more engaged towards the videos by liking, sharing, commenting and/or adding them directly to their own playlists. The music industry also took this opportunity as another way of evaluating the song and the artist's popularity by looking at the number of views the music videos got online (McIntosh, 2015). The development of such platforms gave the opportunity to any artists to be heard and seen, increasing their numbers, however, as a consequence their struggle to exist and remain within this industry and to make a living of their production. To do so, artists had to develop their ingenuity to attract the audience through their music videos and to be able to make a living of “their art”.

Vernallis (2018) would define modern music videos as a mix of advertisement and art which could be sometimes confusing. She illustrates her point with the two Beyoncé's visual albums *Beyoncé* (2013) and *Lemonade* (2016) that she considers as possible change makers within the music video and the audio-visual industry. This consideration is emphasized with a quote from a *New York Times* journalist who qualified the first album as “probably one of the biggest pop events of all time” (Vernallis, 2018). The first album *Beyoncé* was released in December 2013 on the iTunes digital music platforms owned by Apple Inc. . Each of the 17 songs of the album was associated to a music video that could be linked to each other. The release of the album, which was unexpected from the fans, was considered as a major event causing the iTunes platform to bug and temporarily shut down because of the number of connections. This event allowed the album to break two records: the fastest selling album ever on the platform's record with 828,773 downloads in three days and the first week album sales' record with 617,213 sold (Ramsay, 2013). The second album released in April 2016 was also categorized as a high-concept visual album mixing music and narratives. *Lemonade* was considered as more personal and more engaged being qualified as a “revolutionary work of black feminism” (Bale, 2016). This album was first released on the artist's co-owned streaming service *Tidal* before being available on the other platforms the following days. *Lemonade* became to be the

world's best-selling album in 2016. According to Forbes, during the following year of each albums' release, the artist Beyoncé has been ranked first in the top-earning woman in the music business with \$115 million in 2014 (O'Malley Greenburg, 2014) and \$105 million in 2017 (O'Malley Greenburg, 2017). Whereas approximatively 10% of the total revenue of the artist is estimated to be linked to her actual music, a major part of her income is provided by her shows (Wang, 2017).

Another source of income that has ranked Beyoncé first as the top-earning woman in the music industry is mainly linked to her endorsement deals (Wang, 2017). The way music videos were captivating the attention of the young generation has been considered by advertisers as new format to sell goods and services: creating a short, dynamic and entertaining way to make people wanting to watch commercials and hold the audience's interest. Artists that made themselves famous because of their songs or music videos were of interest by companies to represent their brand. As for example, the artist Madonna contracted a deal with the cola company Pepsi in 1989 to shoot a music video dedicated to the beverage using her new song to be *Like a Prayer*. At the time, in an interview for *the New York Times*, the conceptual mix between advertisement and art mentioned by Vernallis (2018) was already used by the artist Madonna who said "What I do is total commercialism, but it's also art... I like the challenge of doing both, of somehow making art that is accessible and making commerce something artistic" (Holden, 1989).

Music videos to sell a brand

The commercials of the coke sodas Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola which have been inspired by the music videos' industry are a perfect illustration of such dynamics. Whereas in 1971 Coca-Cola wanted to "Buy the World a Coke" with its song *Hilltop* performed by anonymous; the 80s have seen the emergence of commercial music videos made in collaboration with popular artists. Michael Jackson, one of the most popular artist at the time sang for Pepsi and mixed his hit *Billie Jean* to the "New Generation" campaign through a \$5million partnership deal – a record for a celebrity endorsement deal back in 1983 (Herrera, 2009). The partnership between the brand and the artist has not only been embodied through a video clip that linked the two entities for life (and more) because of many rumours surrounding its making off, but it has also allowed Pepsi to associate its image of a "new generation" to the music industry. As reported by Herrera (2009) for Brian J. Murphy, the executive Vice-president of branded entertainment at TBA Global, an international live event marketing and production agency; this partnership was "definitely game-changing [...] you couldn't separate the tour from the endorsement from the licensing of the music, and then the integration of the music into the Pepsi fabric. If you pulled any one of those pieces apart, it really took away from what the campaign was all about".

At the time, the Pepsi sales increased its market share in disfavour of Coca-Cola, the leader of the soda market, making Pepsi to develop its collaboration with many others celebrities linked to the music industry over time. For example, after its collaboration with Michael Jackson singing about a new generation or Madonna associating her *Like a Prayer* hit song to a new music video *Make a Wish* advertising for a "generation ahead" with Pepsi; the company has endorsed other partnership with major celebrities as a spokesperson such as Ray Charles singing in the 90's, "You got the right one" with the Diet Pepsi or such as Britney Spears singing about the "Joy of Pepsi" in 2001.

Far from the \$5 million contract signed with Michael Jackson in the 80's, the artist Beyoncé has endorsed a contract with the soda brand estimated at \$50 million in the 2010's. Not only was the artist singing about being a "grown woman" with Pepsi in 2013, she was also stating in a *New York Times* article that "Pepsi embraces creativity and understands that artists evolve" allowing her "to work with a lifestyle brand with no compromise and without sacrificing [her] creativity" (Sisario,

2012). In this same article, the president of the cola brand, Brad Jakeman, talked about the way the Pepsi company deals with artists as “a mutually beneficial collaboration” created to target the consumers that “are seeking a much greater authenticity in marketing from the brands they love” (Sisario, 2012). Indeed, because of the consumers’ profiles and habits which are changing over time, the companies have to adapt their strategies in order to maintain their products appealing towards their targeted consumers.

The insertion of product placement within music videos

As previously stated, music videos allowed music companies to promote their artists in order to sell the songs recorded and to sell tickets to their concert. The impact of music videos on teenagers was such that marketers and producers made an easy link between the music video’s popularity among youth and the spending force of these young consumers. Whereas music videos were advertising the music itself, it was also a way to communicate about commercial brands through the product placement technique in particular.

At a time where traditional mass media advertisements were reaching their limits to impact audiences, using music videos as a promotional media allowed not only marketers to communicate their brands but they also allowed the record labels to reduce the cost of the music video production and to make profit out of it. Thus, new advertising supports used by consumers were considered by marketers to make the consumers aware of a brand and wanting to own it. Pop, rap and RnB’s music videos were particularly used to target teenagers. Music videos as a medium to communicate about a brand gave the opportunity to companies to reach a wide range of teenagers worldwide in a growing manner: musical channels on television were indeed not the only mean of accessing such videos anymore, but the use of smartphones in addition to the YouTube, Dailymotion and other internet platforms have multiplied the way for teenagers to access videos anytime, anywhere (Omarjee & Chilya, 2014).

The value of product placement within music videos

According to the Hollywood Branded company, including a product within a music video is sold as an opportunity to advertise a product in an unguarded way: the insertion of the brand within a music video has been shown to be accepted instantly by the costumer, to increase awareness, to be integrated in a seamless way and to build brand recognition (Hollywood branded(a), n.d.). Moreover, although if the average 3 minutes’ length of music videos are more likely to be watched more times than a movie lasting about 90 minutes, individuals listening to the song only without the video could still depict the video’s content within their imagination, lasting the hypothetic impact of it.

However, it could be hard to associate an increase in brand sales purely based on product placement (Pringle and Binet, 2005). If any impact, is it the consequence of the music video itself, the song, the artist, a particular occasion, a mix of everything? To be noticed by the viewer, should the product placement within a music video be inserted in the foreground, background or within a mixed-setting of the video? In an ironic way, the journalist Rae suggests that the music video *Live it Up* performed by Jennifer Lopez and Pitbull should be renamed “Buy More Stuff” because of the inadequate multi advertisement that were occurring within the video (Rae, 2017). According to Ephron in regard to product placement “If you notice, it’s bad. But if you don’t, it’s worthless” (2006, 85). In most of the research on the impact of product placement within television shows, brand placement is associated to “brand attitude, purchase intentions and brand selection – all of which

may be linked to a consumer's memory (recall or recognition) of the placement" as resumed by Burkhalter and Thornton (2014, 368). As such, a product placement would be considered as being perfectly integrated within a music video when its place makes sense, or at least does not appear inadequate, and is indeed perceived by the viewer in a more or less conscious way.

The question regarding whether product placement works or not had no bearing on decisions made by the co-founders of the company Beats Electronics the rapper Dr Dre, the chairman of the company Interscope-Geffen-A&M Records Jimmy Iovine, the artist Will.i.am and the NBA star James LeBron. The brand "Beats by Dr. Dre" which primarily sold headphones and speakers, advertised their product through an "aggressive marketing strategy" pursued by Iovine who "pushed the headphones on every single famous person he came into contact with [...] in order to market them to the public" (Rae, 2017). The products specifications put apart, the quantity of product placements which was perceived as too much for some, seems to have impacted the audience, making the brand highly recognizable. Even if hundreds of music videos produced by Iovine were featuring the brand, some music videos linked to particular artists were targeted as it was the case from the ones linked to Lady Gaga, Justin Bieber, Britney Spears, Will.i.am, Miley Cyrus and Nicki Minaj. In addition to these brand insertions within their music videos, Nicki Minaj, Justin Bieber and Lady Gaga also got the opportunity to develop their own headphone lines with respectively Pink Pill, JustBeats and Gaga's HeartBeats (O'Malley Greenburg, 2018). According to the music analyst Mark Mulligan who talked about Beats being present within Nicki Minaj's music video *Anaconda*, brand placement within a music video is a long-term investment: the video will still be watched by numerous people in the future who will face the product and will still want to buy it as a consequence (Hobbs, 2015).

This strategy of considering that product placement would impact on the sales has worked if we consider the revenue of the brand. Beats accounted for nearly one-third of the market with a revenue of \$180 million in 2009, about \$500 million in 2011, \$860 million in 2012 (from which \$57 million were clear in profit) and about \$1.2 billion by the year 2013. The investment in the brand was considered that strong that in 2016, Apple Inc. bought Beats for \$2.6 billion in cash and about \$400 million in stock (O'Malley Greenburg, 2018). Speaking with *Fortune* after the official announcement of the acquisition of the brand by the company, and as a way to perhaps justify such a price, when asked about what is the culture of Beats, Will.i.am said "It's lifestyle, it's street, but sophisticated street. It's athletics. It's music and club and youth. It's cool. It makes no sense. You cannot logically explain big headphones on your head, other than it's just what you want to wear. [...] Jimmy [Iovine, *nb*] and Beats: culture play. This is culture. They are forming a culture club. Because the only place to go right now is not how fast the chip is, because everybody's going to have that ability, anyone can do that. The point is that the dominant power play at this point in time is culture, and the marriage of culture and tech. He or she who gets it right is king or queen. For a while." (Roberts, 2014). More than any logic, the success of Beats seems to be based on values and emotions that the owners have managed to create through their marketing strategy.

Away from the particular example of Beats, the Hollywood Branded company reckons that, depending on the artist popularity, a brand can be placed within a music video for between \$15,000 and \$150,000 without taking into account the agency fees that are built in. Sometimes, the placement could be up to \$250,000 for a brand endorsement deal but the company's advice is to make sure that the artist will have a valuable impact on the product rather than sharing a 3 seconds logo through his or her music video (Hollywood Branded(b), n.d.).

The artist as a way to advertise a brand

As previously mentioned, endorsement deals are signed between celebrities and brands. More than appearing in the artists' music videos, some brands want a celebrity to carry their message. Such endorsement could have a valuable impact and could lead to immediate and long-term increase in profitability (Pringle and Binet, 2005). Bragg et al. (2016) are talking about multi-million-dollar endorsement deals contracted with famous celebrities to impact consumers. To justify such investment, they cite the Latino rapper Pitbull who advertised for the cola brand Dr Pepper. This partnership created in 2011 is being credited by 4.6 million advertising impressions (number of views) and an increase of the sales among Latinos by 1,7%.

The singer Shakira has contracted an endorsement deal with a cola brand as well, Pepsi, however this endorsement certainly not had the same impact as the one contracted with Activia, a brand of the yoghurt's company Danone. Not only has the artist taken part in the brand's traditional advertisings through TV and printed adds, she has also endorsed the brand name within her music video *Dare (la la la)* in 2014 during the FIFA World Cup. More than an endorsement within the music video, the video was made in collaboration with the brand and the singer. Vernallis (2018) describes this video as being not only a music video but also a call for funding and an advertisement. The video (2014) starts with a first sequence mentioning "Shakira & Activia together", the "together" word fading to "supporting World Food Programme" in a second sequence with the Shakira & Activia remaining, to give place to a third sequence mentioning "providing school meals for children I need".

The music video has been watched more than a billion times ranking the video among the "top videos" of the music video and entertainment service company Vevo on the platform YouTube. At the time of its released, the video was shared more than 5.3 million of times, making the advertisement the most viral one of all time, leading Volkswagen which held the position since February 2011 (Waterhouse, 2014). Sara Wood, co-founder and COO at Unruly, the company which undertook these analyses, explains that "Music videos are by far the most shared type of content, so it's no surprise that brands are now blurring the lines between traditional ads and music videos in order to get themselves seen and heard on social [...] Activia's success with Shakira exemplifies a fundamental change in the way brands are now approaching video advertising" (Waterhouse, 2014).

We can bet that the fact that the artist performed the official 2010 FIFA World Cup which became known worldwide and her popularity on the social network site Facebook which was reaching more than 100 million fans provided a little help as well for this endorsement deal. However, according to Jeffrey Rothman, vice-president of marketing at the Dannon Company – Danone's American subsidiary, and cited by Bold (2014), the artist was chosen by Danone because "Like no one else in the world, Shakira's performance illustrates how feeling good on the inside can help you feel wonderful overall", "this new campaign demonstrates the connection between how you feel when your digestive system is working well and your overall well-being".

The artist and the brand as a way to advertise authenticity

Sometimes celebrities endorse a brand without official agreement from the company which would leave the celebrity promoting for "free" their product. It was the case for the singer Rihanna singing about the whisky Jameson in her song *Cheers* (Webb, 2014). This free endorsement got valuable for the whisky brand which enjoyed the help from the artist in advertising its product "becoming the whiskey of choice among American drinkers in their 20's and early 30's" (Flanagan, 2014). In the same way, the artists Busta Rhymes and P.Diddy released a song about the Cognac brand Courvoisier, rising for 20% the sales of the brand whereas no agreement was made for this placement (Schemer et al. 2008).

On the opposite, sometimes, such endorsement could be problematic as for the good maker Louis Vuitton which prosecuted Sony BMG and MTV online for advertising without its consent its brand. In this situation, a Vuitton-upholstered dashboard was showcased in the Britney Spears' music video *Do Something* without the approbation of Louis Vuitton company. The good maker evaluated that the association of the brand to the artist and its music video was constituting an "attack" on the luxury image of the brand (Billboard, 2007).

Meier (2011) wrote about the close link between music and brands, underlying the importance of the emotion within this "relation" transcribed through common values that could be shared by of both the celebrity as a "consumer role model" (2011, 401) and by the brand. The author reports comments from a brand communication agency who say that "we live in a chaotic marketplace where brands' ideas and products fight for people's attention. A place where brands no longer compete on a product level, but on building a brand that people connect to emotionally" (2011, 403). Although a company could ask an artist to endorse its brand to associate the artist's image to it, some artists would also use brands within their music video either to lend verisimilitude to the video, or to appropriate the value of the brand. This strategy allows the artist to connect with the viewer who could have developed a history with the brand, by already owning it or having constructed an opinion about it. Moreover, placing a real brand or product within a video could be used to create realism about the story (Omarjee and Chiliya, 2014). Viewers would be more incline to immerge themselves within a music video if they feel connected to the artist or to the world transposed through the video. As such, in a transportation perspective (Green and Brock, 2000) a "real" brand could help the viewer to get connected to the artist or the song, as much that an artist from which the viewer feels already connected to, and could also help viewers see themselves using the brand.

As quoted from marketing and music professionals by Meier (2011) "it is an (il)logic that has penetrated the marketing world, where "authenticity" has surfaced as a trendy watchword" adding "Authentic music is exactly that – it's authentic, and a lot of bands, brands need to connect with fans in order to grow their tribe or to solidify their tribe and say "Hey, we know what you're all about, because we're all about that, too." (2011, 409).

If "Music video commercials have been successful because rock stars have replaced movie stars as trend-setters and icons of the 1980s" (Demkowych, cited by Hartman 1987, 20), the development of the internet and the social networks sites (SNS) have also changed the rules. These new media platforms that gave the opportunity for individuals to share their life with people as an authentic share, made the influencers replace rock stars not only has a trend-setters and icons in the 2010's, but as a successful entrepreneur being able to make a living from their endorsement deals.

Social Network Sites as a valuable form of authenticity to brands

The confusing mix between music videos and advertisements has led to the development of new business models for musicians, where artists are directly sharing (either themselves or through their labels) their videos through platforms on the internet and connecting with their fans through other Social Network Sites (SNS) such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and others. No matter how famous the artist's is, having an official account on these sites seems mandatory to keep remaining on the front of the scene, whether to truly connect with fans or to spam them with "uninspired marketing" (Morris 2013, 274).

Defined as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a

connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system” (Boyd and Ellison 2007, 2011), SNS are mostly used because of their features that allow people to share photos and videos of them or of their subject of interest.

The internet platforms to share and sell

In a 2017 article, Claudia Gerhards has analysed the link between advertisers and the video-sharing website YouTube. She talks about the evolution of the website which primarily was used to host videos from amateurs who were sharing content in an altruism way without commercial motivation. Step by step, the platform’s advertising spaces were opened to the market which has had enormous growth and has generated the creation and submission of more and more videos, either from music artists to people sharing their passions in life (e.g. video games, fashion ...). The platform allowed people to get access to music videos but also to other sources of entertainment that were submitted by the viewers (e.g. like/dislike), comments or other feedbacks in written form or shot as a video. What was at the start a regular platform of videos shared by amateurs became a powerful popular industry that has generated \$3.36 billion in net US video advertisement revenue for 2018 (eMarketer, 2018). Companies started to develop their own YouTube channels in order to communicate directly towards the users while also continuing to advert their brand through regular adds inserted within the YouTube internet pages or even within the videos posted by the users (as a product placement, as the form of a link appearing while the video runs or within the description of the video).

Because of the development of the platform and the growing interest from private companies to advertise their products through popular videos, more and more amateurs made a business out of their videos and their channels. Gerhards explains that “because of their amateur origin, YouTube creators were considered to be particularly credible. From the perspective of marketers, this made them outstanding advocates of brands. Yet, YouTube stars are not just popular, they are genuinely influential persons towards their young fans.” (2017, 4). The author mentions a survey carried out looking at U.S. teenagers which underlines that YouTube creators were the new celebrities and were even more influential than the classical celebrities because they remain “close” to the audience.

Whereas traditional advertisements were using celebrities as familiar faces to sell their brand within a context specially created for the occasion, the YouTube platform gave the opportunity to the audience to see “real people” sharing content they cared about or sharing their “real” experience of it. Beyond the YouTube’s internet platform which is counting more than 1.5 billion users each month worldwide (Mohamed, 2017), different types of SNS emerged, allowing individuals to stay in contact with other people, to share their everyday life and to face more digital advertising either presented within a video, an image, or inserted within a comment.

The growing force of SNS

Whether brands create partnership with celebrities to make them communicate about their product or whether they do it on their own through their official profile and page, a major part of the companies budget is dedicated to promote their products through SNS. In 2016, \$40 billion was spent on SNS advertising (Mohamed, 2017). SNS are indeed a massive opportunity for brands to reach people: it is estimated that 3.03 billion people were using SNS actively in 2017, representing about 40% of the population worldwide (Mohamed, 2017). In front of the YouTube’s video platform that is not considered as a traditional SNS *per se* (Smith and Anderson, 2018), stands the most popular SNS, Facebook, reuniting 2.072 billion users in 2017, or approximatively 27% of the population worldwide (Mohamed, 2017).

Karpińska-Kraskowiak highlighted some interesting numbers associated to brands on Facebook and to the number of followers for the largest groups on the site. In a one-year period between 2012 and 2013, the number of brands having created their profile on the SNS has more than doubled, going from 25,000 to 58,150 brands. At the start of 2014 the largest number of fans for a brand was associated to Coca-Cola with 80,500,000 fans followed by Red Bull (43,000,000 fans), PlayStation and Starbucks (over 36,000,000 fans each) (2016, 204). Since then, these numbers have kept growing daily.

Indeed, as of December 2018, these numbers could seem to be rather small when looking at the amount of fans in general the most popular Facebook fan pages were accumulating: Facebook itself ranked first with more than 213,6 million fans, followed by Samsung (159,77 million of fans), Cristiano Ronaldo (122,54 million of fans), Real Madrid CF (109,47 million of fans), Coca-Cola (107,54 millions of fans), FC Barcelona (102,69 million of fans) and Shakira (101,91 million of fans) (Statista, n.d.). As for the possibility to advertise a brand, a product, a service or other, Facebook was counting more than 80 million Facebook Business pages in 2018 (Smith, 2018).

As we see through these numbers, millions of people are reunited on the internet around a subject of matter, making an incredible opportunity for marketers to reach a large audience. Yet, even if brands can communicate towards consumers directly through their dedicated fan pages, it is estimated that 96% of the people that discuss brands online, do not follow the brands actual own profile (Mohamed, 2017). Thus, it is important for companies to still go through a third party to endorse their image towards the audience: it is estimated that “celebrities” on SNS are used as social influencers by 75% of marketers (Veirman et al., 2017). Still, when it comes to promote a brand towards the audience, companies are not looking at regular celebrities anymore but at “influencers”. We mentioned the importance for brands to reach teenagers as one of their favourite target audiences. Yet, over the time, youth got to develop their opinions and attitudes towards traditional advertisement (Cheyne et al. 2014), making it harder for marketers to reach them. Thus, companies had to adapt themselves and to develop new strategies to reach this audience; they cannot simply ask a famous celebrity to present their product anymore, they have to find a celebrity that consumers can relate to and who can embody their brand in a natural ways to allow the consumer to “connect” with it.

Advertising realness

The success of SNS and the attractiveness people have towards the content shared online by other people could be explained in part by the social nature of humans who are continually learning from their peers while seeking for their approbation as well. This quest for social approval is intrinsically linked to teenagers in particular who are the most active users on SNS, using at least 3 different SNS and more (Smith and Anderson, 2018). Although, 51% of youth still declare to use Facebook as a SNS, teenagers aged 13 to 17 are mainly using YouTube (85%) before Instagram (72%) and Snapchat (69%). Snapchat and YouTube being the online platforms used the most for respectively 35% and 32% of these teenagers (Anderson and Jiang, 2018).

Through SNS, individuals got the opportunity to allow other people to enter their life, sharing their everyday rituals but also their thoughts whether being personal and linked to their private life, whether being related to a particular situation, an experience with a brand or other. Whereas people used to feel connected to classic celebrities (actors, singers...) because of the imaginary they were developing while watching their series, movies, music videos or reading about the celebrities’ life in magazines, they weren’t as connected to them as they can be with the “celebrities 2.0” who share their life with their fans directly through their own SNS. These “new celebrities” allowed people to

develop the illusion of being part of their life, by for example sharing different aspect of their life, their habits and by giving their fans the opportunity to react to the media posted on their personal page and/or to comment on them. Sometimes, the celebrity could even reply to the comments posted by a fan/follower or even just acknowledge it by attributing a “like” to it which could mean the world to a fan. Doing so, these personalities are believed to be accessible and trustful as they remain close to their fans (Veirman et al. 2017). In an entertaining industry world within which new singers or more generally new artists emerged every day, such exchange between the audience and the “real” celebrity could be of importance for this celebrity in order to remain at the front of the scene and to make a living out of it through brand endorsement. Indeed, as previously stated with the examples of the singers and their endorsement deals, a major part of the income of these public figures are through partnerships contracted with brands. Thus, remaining popular among specific audiences can allow celebrities to contract deals with brands that want to remain close to their consumers so that these costumers will be influenced to purchase the brands’ products.

Reviewing different pieces of researches, Karpińska-Krakowiak points out the relationship that people create with brands and that brands want to maintain: “many brand relationships consist of primarily affect-based feelings (e.g., love and passion), brand–consumer connection (the degree to which brand becomes a part of consumer’s life), interdependence (interactions between consumer and brand), commitment (dedication to maintain stability of a relationship), intimacy, and quality of brands as a partner (in terms of its reliability and trustworthiness)” (2016, 205). Thus, in order to impact consumers in a favourable way towards a brand promoted, a brand that would contract a deal with a celebrity would have to pay attention to the way this promotion would be done. As previously pointed out, to increase the impact of its appearance, more than a simple “3 seconds logo appearance” within the media on which the celebrity appears (music video, blog, video tutorial, ...), the celebrity will have to embody the commercial towards the followers, making the products his or hers and justifying as such the possible high price that the brand would have paid depending on the importance of the celebrity and their connexion with their fans (Hollywood branded(b), n.d.).

The relationship between the brands and the attraction for consumers to realness is such that being a celebrity because of one’s art “only” (singing, acting, ...) is not even necessary the first choice for companies to represent their brands. More than a famous singer, actor or other public personality, brands are looking for someone who will have an impact on her or his fans and who will be qualified as an influencer. If someone manages to build up a community that gather around the content she/he is producing, this person will gain in celebrity and will perhaps engage her/his community to adopt trends she/he puts forward, influencing on the community’s behaviours.

The value of brands placement within SNS

Research found positive correlations between celebrities and brands regarding consumers’ attitudes towards the brand when being endorsed by a celebrity they like (Veirman et al. 2017). Thus, it is of interest for brands to invest in influencers when these are highly appreciated by people as it is the case for the singer Selena Gomez or for the soccer player Cristian Ronaldo. The singer who used to be the most-followed person on the SNS Instagram with more than 149 million of followers at the start of January 2019 has been ranked 2nd after being overtaken by the soccer player (already in the top 3 of the most popular Facebook fan pages) who gathered more than 151 million followers on the site. In July 2018, it was estimated that sponsored post were enabling these two celebrities to earn between \$750,000 and \$800,000 per post (Hopper, n.d.). Yet, the artist and the sport player are not the highest paid celebrities on the SNS platform compared to Kylie Jenner. The influencer, known from the reality television program of her family *Keeping Up with the Kardashians*, accumulates less followers than Selena Gomez and Cristian Ronaldo with approximatively 123 million followers in

January 2019. Nevertheless, she is estimated to be paid \$1 million per sponsored post on Instagram (Hopper, n.d.).

As being highlighted by the Hollywood Branded company “reality stars often have a higher kinship and ability to be relatable to a brand’s core demographic as their lifestyle appears more attainable than blockbuster A-list celebrity with the perfect life and style” (Hollywood branded company(c), n.d., 18). Knowing that studies show user-generated content is trusted 50% more than any other source, the impressive amounts of money that brands are willing to pay to communicate about their products could be worth the spend. Still, brands have to pay attention to targeting the right influencer: most of the people consider sponsored advertising posts as an invasion to their digital space. Conversely, if the promotion is made through a celebrity that individuals choose to follow and that this promotion is part of the celebrity life, engaging the followers towards the brand becomes possible. Such an endorsement could be very effective for the brands, the community of the influencers being made of enthusiastic consumers who are likely to engage and interact with the product promoted by the influencers (Hollywood branded company(c), n.d.).

The influence of brand within SNS

In a similar logic, Veirman et al. (2017) analysed the influence SNS have on consumers’ behaviour by explaining that popular sources impact individuals’ reasoning in a bandwagon heuristic: if people follow or like something, it must be true. Although brands would be likely to consider a potential brand advocate when having a minimum of 10.000 followers, other criteria would have to be considered since the number of followers do not justify influence. The authors mention the credibility of the source that “is driven by perceived expertise and trustworthiness of the communicator”, and the attractiveness of the source which “refers to the endorser’s physical appeal and may positively affect brand evaluations” which even goes beyond physical appearance as “other aspects such as perceived familiarity, similarity and likeability may impact the endorser’s persuasiveness” (2017, 814).

More than “following the flow”, Sung et al. (2017) stress that SNS gives users who wants to build an opinion an essential sources of information based on real experience, where they can learn about new products and built their decision before making a purchase. To do so, people can look at brand-selfies which engaged users in a new form of word-of-mouth (WOM) communication. By taking a picture or sharing another type of media of oneself with a brand, individuals reinforce their attachment to the brand and integrate it to their personality towards the community that they are sharing the media with. This engagement towards the brand could be shared by people towards their own community as well, involving in return the engagement of these people towards the brand. Such behaviour is quite relevant for companies as it shows the identification and the trust people have for their brands, so as the communities’ commitment and membership intention towards them (Kim, Sung and Kang, 2014). As such “marketers seek to engage consumers in this new type of eWOM by facilitating their consumer-generated content and exchange” (Sung et al. 2017, 10).

Whereas people started to learn to avoid advertisement by skipping commercials or installing ad blocking software, they also got to understand that advertisement was providing revenue to artists and other people that were entertaining them. As they are willing to accept advertisements in order to have access to free content, they would even encourage “regular people” that they are following and express their happiness when these people would develop a partnership with brands, whether being an official endorsement, whether receiving products for free. As an example, Gerhards (2017) report comments made by the fans/followers of the YouTube makeup artist Wayne Goss who presented the items he has received from the brand Urban Decay that he used to present.

The author cites 3 users in particular commenting “So glad you got recognized by such a wonderful brand (...). I hope you get loads more goodies because you deserve to be rewarded”; “I’m so happy they sent you stuff! You work so hard and you deserve everything that comes your way” or “Normally I highly despise sponsored videos but you have raved about Urban Decay before and shown us all of these products in other videos, and I know you deserve something from the companies you rave about, so I am okay with it.” (2017, 5).

Celebrity endorsement, Music videos and SNS brand placement, an investment difficult to measure

Whereas the difficulties to differentiate music videos from advertising rose for some specialist, we have been able to see that the development of the media sphere brought more confusion within the entertaining world and the marketing industry in general. Yet, integration of brands and advertisement to their entertaining content made consumers adapt to a different relationship with them in comparison to the one they had with traditional marketing techniques, being aware of their presence, their use and accepting them in certain contexts.

Yet, although such placement within entertainment content could be generally accepted by people, its direct impact on the brands’ sales could be hard to justify for some marketers when talking about return on investment. The rise of the media as a communication tool through the television and the internet has multiplied the advertisement forms and the “noises” that could surround the message that marketers want to send. Going from one media to another and having different possibilities has made advertisements hard to shine in a context considered as saturated (Berthelot-Guiet et al. 2013). Although some researches tend to show that using a celebrity to endorse a brand will not guarantee a bigger impact than using traditional techniques, others stress its particular use when it comes to reach teenage consumers (Pringle and Binet, 2005).

When advertisers realised the impact music videos were making on the target audience that were the teenagers, they developed quick cuts, highly stylized sets and vibrant music in order to impact consumers through their emotion. As Robert Pittman, operationalizer on MTV in the 80’s once said “If you can get their emotions going (and make them forget logic), you’ve got them” (Hartman 1987, 21). Colour, movement and sound that were seen in music videos and got viewers to reach a brief state of bliss (Vernallis, 2018) were then applied to SNS media and associated to the social sphere. Although used in an entertaining way, these forms of communication and shared knowledge that impact viewers’ emotions are participating into the characterization that teenagers are making of the world. Teenagers, who use both music videos and other SNS contents several times a day are relating to the images and the messages spread within these. Even if adolescents are more and more critical towards advertisement strategies, frequent interactions with peers may coincide with high levels of materialism and powerful social motivations to consume (Derbaix and Leheut, 2018).

Yet and even if being aware of brands’ strategies, when Will.i.am can’t explain the impact of Beats other than justifying it as “This is culture” he is right: we are in a culture of consumption that can be found anywhere and on any media. This is exactly what makes music videos, SNS, brands and youth working all together: we can’t explain it rather than a mix of cultural consequences that is happening at a moment in people’s life and during adolescence in particular, when individuals are searching for social approbation and conformity by trying to look the same as the ones they admire (Auty and Elliott, 2001).

To bring this chapter to a conclusion, we can see that our modern society has reduced the gap between different industries and has blurred the lines between entertainment, marketing and reality. Advertisement is not without consequences on the consumers' influence to buy a product, almost when this consumer is in a search for social approbation and vulnerable to marketing practices. Although some governments are trying to regulate marketing practice within audio-visual and digital media when it comes to product placement (e.g. The German regulatory institution *Die medienanstalten*, or the Committee of Advertising Practices in the UK However cited by Gerhards, 2017), the limits of countries' regulations through the internet practice could question the usefulness of such practices. Beyond countries legislation, the influence of one's behaviour in general towards a particular brand in particular could be questioned almost when influence is at play: if adolescents see one of their favourite influencers sharing regular content within which tobacco is present but they do not see the brand, we can hardly doubt that it would refrain them from associating the smoking practice to the influencer and as a consequences to certain values, encouraging adolescents to adopt the same behaviour. As such, more than looking at brands impact on consumers' behaviour, we could question the responsibility of influencers within such behaviours: as doctors have to agree to take on some duties before endorsing the title and being able to be paid for their services, shouldn't influencers endorse some responsibilities towards their followers as well?

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