

How do Brands Utilise Real Life Incidents for their Advantage?

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Abstract: *This study is an attempt to identify the impact of actions of celebrities on the minds of consumers. A small incident like the Euro 2020 one involving Cristiano Ronaldo created a lot of havoc in the market where the market value of the company came down. Also, this brought about new avenues of promotion for other companies who tried to encash this opportunity. The paper gives a glimpse of the incident and poses a series of research questions for future research. These are interesting viewpoints which can give a lot of discussion points for the researchers as well as new areas of focus for companies. It is imperative for all stakeholders to analyse these details so that new concepts of brand endorsements can be developed. This will also give a direction for companies to manage their social media campaigns as these have now become paramount for market penetration and sustainability.*

Keywords: Celebrity, Influence of celebrity, Brand endorsements.

1. Introduction

The study uses literature review and inputs from them to analyse the incident and pose research questions. These reviews are taken from different articles from internet sources, and they are presented and discussed.

Can brands be affected by the celebrities and incidents involving them? The answer is yes. Endorsing This was reflected by the Cristiano Ronaldo incident when he removed coca cola bottle from his sight. Ronaldo is one of the best players in the world and he is widely regarded as the best player in the world. He removed the bottles and asked everyone to drink water after Portugal thrashed Hungary 3-0. He has associated himself with brands like KFC (fried chicken), Nike (accused of not giving good working conditions for labourers) and Sagres (beer). These associations indicated that he had associated with brands which are not nature friendly or being friendly with society. Suddenly he decided to drink water and remove Coca-Cola bottles which were placed in front of him. He drank CR7 instead of Coca-Cola and This was found to be a surprising move and there were a lot of discussions on this.

This paper is an attempt to discuss how brands utilised this opportunity to come out with innovative campaigns. Of course, Coca-Cola registered a loss of 4 billion US dollars. They lost share value by more than 1% which was a shock for them. The company defended the move by Ronaldo saying that each person is entitled to his action. Also, Coca-Cola defended the action saying that CR7 was a product from the company. Anyway, the move was surprising as it contributed to a loss for the company. But at the same time other players like Andriy Yarmolenko did not remove Coca-Cola bottle in front of him. In fact, Lukaku of Belgium went a step ahead and wanted the company to contact agency which deals with his brand endorsement for possible collaboration. Even cricketer Virat Kohli who is an ardent fan of Ronaldo also did not remove Coca-Cola bottles from his sight during his press conference in England which also became news, and his fans questioned the move.

This whole incident was utilized by some companies for their innovative campaigns. Fevicol came out with an advertisement "Na bottle hategi, na valuation ghatagi" indicating the use of fevicol as well as taking a jibe at the whole incident. Business conglomerate Ikea utilized this opportunity and came out with reusable bottle for water named "Cristiano". Mineral water giant Evian came out with an advertisement saying "Couldn't have said it better ourselves! #stayhydrated #drinktrue #CR7". Even world health organization took this opportunity to highlight importance of water and drawbacks of carbonated drinks by mentioning the importance of cutting down sugar from the diet. Dabur used the opportunity to project Its premium rose water by coming out with an advertisement "The only kind of AQUA for your skin" for its brand Gulabari premium rose water. (They simulated the advertisement using the press conference). Comedy central India used the same situation with an advertisement "Laughing is good for you and so is Drinking Water" for its comedy program. Kamasutra India came out with "He shouldn't have been so Hard on Cola. Don't you think?" slogan for its condoms. Similarly, Vectus India promoted its water tanks by promoting using the campaign "The drink even football legends promote-Always choose water over sugary drinks". Another example where the experiment did not work out is Pierce Brosnan endorsing Pan (which can cause cancer) as people did not associate James Bond with an unhealthy product.

All these developments after the incident highlight the way companies have used the opportunity for their advantage. The list is not exhaustive, and more examples are there to show the importance of taking advantage of even small developments. The real question is whether these brands can utilize the opportunity for leveraging the potential for market expansion. This could pose series of research questions in front of avid researchers. They can be.

- 1) Is the snubbing by Ronaldo planned as he is in the twilight of his career?
- 2) Can a brand ambassador jeopardise his/her positioning as they will have avid followers?

- 3) Are the advertisements that followed effective in catching the attention of the people?
- 4) Can brands be built on the popularity of endorsers?
- 5) How much is the importance of innovation in advertisement story board creation?
- 6) How much is the importance of attention to detail in advertisement creation?
- 7) Celebrity endorsers vs Influencers in advertisement creation

All these questions are very valid questions posed by the controversy and subsequent developments. The incident caused a stir in the social media where most fans lauded the initiative from Ronaldo. But it created a loss for the company. But this created a lot of subsequent incidents where companies tried to cash in and create their own impressions in the minds of consumers. These efforts are indications that companies are ready to encash any opportunity to leverage their brands. But the success of these efforts in the long run are not yet measured but in the short run companies like Fevicol were able to create a stir in the minds of consumers. The paper poses a series of questions mentioned above which research questions and answers to these are could help companies to structure their advertisements in future.

2. Discussion

The study is an effort to identify how an incident can create ripple effect in the social media and how companies tried to cash in the opportunity. The paper is an effort to pose different questions in front of researchers and companies. Future research efforts in this area can give valuable insights for campaign creations for different brands. This paper also can help future research for the comparison of celebrities and influencers with respect to advertising different brands and finally creating a strong brand image. There is a need for collecting primary data to substantiate this in future and also more examples might be required to give more insights into the phenomenon of brand endorsement.

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