Implicit and Explicit Effects of Music on Brand Perception in TV ads

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Music Works!

Music ...
- is used in 40-50% of national TV ads (Stewart & Furse, 1986; Stewart & Koslow, 1989) and 90% of internationally used TV ads (Applebaum & Haliburton, 1993)
- is unifying bracket that can convey brand meaning / image across national cultures
- enables ‘bonding with brands through emotional register’ (Charpentier, 2007, J Adv Res)
- creates bridges between personal experiences of viewers and brand/product (Allan, 2006, J Adv Res)
- can be become inseparable from brand: 93% think that music is most appealing part of BA marketing message
- helps gain attention, create mood, change pace, facilitates brand and message recall, etc. (Admap, 2003, ‘Music in advertising – best practice’)
- appreciation is linked to ad effectiveness (Young, Ameritest 2008, Millward Brown Knowledge Base, 2008)
- …
Music Works!

Why?

Answers from psychology:

- Means of social delineation and identification of target group (social psychology)
- Effects on mood, emotions, and quality of life (clinical and occupational psychology)
- Pleasurable and rewarding stimulus for the brain (neuropsychology)
- Effective component in priming process (cognitive and perceptual psychology)
Music Priming and Advertising

- Music priming is very reliable in lab (Bharucha & Stoeckig, 1986, 1987; Tillmann, 2004)

- Music effective prime because of
  - emotional associations
  - non-attentional (subconscious) processing (Heath, 2012)

- In TV ads: Music is effective prime if it corresponds to consumers subjective perceptions of product/brand (MacInnis & Park, 1991; North et al., 2004; North & Hargreaves, 2008)

- Facilitates brand/product recognition, memory, and brand empathy?
Music can be a very powerful vehicle in advertising – But how to choose the right music?
The traditional way: Music Briefs
(Inskip, 2009)

"I'll know when I hear it"

"Not too modern but not too old."

"Can we get Cold Play to do a demo?"

"Quirky, yet traditional"

"You know the sort of feeling you get when you are coming up on a pill...well I want the music to be like that!"

"Upbeat with a crescendo"

Motivating & aspirational

Premium
Quantifying the distance between music and brand profiles

How to find identify the track that matches a brand profile closely?
Joint research project together with ...
Matching Brands and Music: A Quantitative Approach

Idea: Have brand rated on semantic differential and compare it to ratings of several music tracks in same semantic space

The Semantic Differential:
- Method to determine and quantify affective responses towards music stimulus (Asmus, 1985)
- 39 adjectives loading onto three dimensions (vibrant, morose, serene)
- Each adjective rated according to how well it fitted with the track
# The Semantic Differential

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Extremely well</th>
<th>Quite well</th>
<th>Somewhat well</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat badly</th>
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Experiment 1

Method:
- Rating brand: 6 advertising planners
- Rating music tracks: 185 online participants
- 16 tracks:
  - original tracks from 4 juice brand ads, 4 vibrant songs, 4 serene, 4 morose
  - all tracks from same style, artists etc.
- Computation of Euclidean distance between brand and all 16 songs
Average Brand Profile
Comparison with music tracks
Identifying the best (i.e. closest) tracks

Original songs: 4, 8, 12, 16
Vibrant songs: 1, 5, 9, 13
Semantic differential is a simple yet informative tool. It measures the closeness between the brand's tone/profile and a particular soundtrack. It is unaffected by musical background nor gender, making it widely applicable. It is helpful to determine what a brand is and is not. It is also helpful to match or deliberately mismatch music to a brand.
Experiment 2: Does music increase ad effectiveness?

Evaluating the effects of congruent / incongruent music with two different methodologies

1. Explicit opinions (generic ad pre-testing questionnaire)
2. Implicit reaction time task (*Implicit Attitude Test*)
Experiment 2

Method:
- 4 TV ads x 3 music conditions (congruent, incongruent, no music)
- 259 online participants

Procedure:

1. IAT
2. Watch Ad
3. IAT
4. Questionnaire
Results: Ad pre-testing questionnaire

- Ads with congruent music significantly more effective than no-music ads
- Congruent music makes ad 16% more effective
- No difference between congruent and incongruent music
Results: Interaction with visuals

- Significant difference between congruent / incongruent music for ad 3
The Implicit Association Test (IAT)

Implicit Association Test (IAT; Greenwald et al. 1998):

- Measures speed with which one responds to pairings of concepts

- Rationale: Easier to make same response to related concepts than to unrelated concepts
The IAT Interface

Positive
or
water brand

Squeezed

Negative
or
juice brand
The IAT Interface

Positive
or
water brand

Negative
or
juice brand

Nasty
The IAT Interface

Positive
or
water brand

Negative
or
juice brand

Pleasure
IAT effect: Reaction times significantly shorter when juice brand paired with positive attributes

BUT: No significant change in RTs after watching ads, nor between music conditions
Summary

- Semantic Differential can be used effectively to measure brand-music fit (i.e. congruency)
- Adding congruent music makes ads significantly more effective (explicit measure)
- Congruent music makes certain ads more effective than incongruent music (explicit measure)
- The Implicit Association Test can be implemented to measure implicit attitudes towards a brand, but:
- No change in implicit brand attitude after single viewing
Next Steps

- Make current IAT implementation more efficient
- Explore different IAT variants (e.g. visual search paradigm)
- Track changes of implicit brand attitudes over time
- Test semantic differential in other application scenarios
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