

Catalogue Essay

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Compare and contrast three fashion advertisements that use celebrity endorsements. To analyse and describe what differences and similarities there are in the visual message, sex appeal, celebrity and pose.

Introduction

Advertising is used to persuade the intended target audience to desire a certain product. This is done through a variety of ways ranging from photographing through to the moving image. This essay will explore celebrity fashion advertising campaigns through photography. It will study three advertising images using celebrity endorsements. It will also look at the practitioners behind the campaigns and explore their styles of photography. The essay will determine advertising techniques and how the fashion and celebrity endorsement can impact upon the sales of a product. It will look at the visual message and the representation of women.

It is important to analyse every aspect that relates to celebrity endorsement to get a clear understanding of how it affects the consumer. Fashion advertising has many techniques and areas that will be explored as well as the awareness of sex appeal and its intentions. Representation of women is a clear contributor to celebrity endorsement and it is vital throughout the essay to recognise this.

Fashion Advertising

Promoting fashion in advertising is much more difficult than it is to advertise food and beverages.

The things that people wear are much more associated with a specific image than the items that they eat or the beverages that they consume.

Online resource accessed December (2010) <http://www.fashionadvertising.org/>

This is due to the fact the consumer will be wearing the garment in day to day life; it has to fit into their lifestyle. A fashion advertisement educates the consumer into believing they will benefit from the product. This is key to a successful fashion advertising campaign.

Many fashion advertisements include promotions for shoes, garments, purses and perfumes. The fashion we consume in day to day life is determined by fashion editors, publishers and buyers in retailing. It is their job to anticipate the preferences of the consumers to create great fashion garments and advertising campaigns. Modernity is particularly important it has to keep up with the times and remain contemporary.

The feature of 'modernity' in fashion is especially significant. Fashion is always modern it always seeks to keep abreast of the times. It is sensitive to the movement of current developments as they take place in its own field, in adjacent fields, and in the larger social world.

Barnard, Malcolm. 2007. Fashion Theory. Routledge

There are different strategies used when promoting fashion to its certain target audience. For example when advertising to affluent consumers, advertisements tend to involve expensive accessories such as high class locations and beautiful models. Photography and advertisement is highly focused in portraying the right influence upon its certain consumer. Other types of fashion advertisements used are persuading the consumer to believe if they wear the certain garment they will achieve a sexy, modern and popular look. This aspect will be pushed to the extreme. It is important for an advertiser to create a certain look that will fit into the large social community. This contributes towards celebrity endorsement because celebrities have a big impact upon society and the consumer can relate to a figure. The personality comes through from the model and creates a story behind the campaign.

Another big factor associated to fashion advertising which and helps to draw attention and sell products is sex appeal.

Sex Appeal

In society we find sex appealing. When advertisers use this technique consumer's pay attention. Advertisements are everywhere and they are all desperately competing. Sex has been used to sell fashion for decades. Attractive men and women are used to inspire the consumer. Sex appeal is

known to increase the effectiveness of an advertising campaign. A woman wearing sexy lingerie exposing their body will grab a male's attention and also females as they will desire their look.

It is clear men and women's opinions differ when it comes to sex appeal in advertising. When female models are used it tends to appeal to both genders but in very different ways. A male consumer is more likely to be attracted to an advertisement that uses full nudity whereas a female is more likely to be attracted to an advertisement that involves love and romance. With such a great difference advertisers have to be careful not to be offensive as this can cause great controversy.

Misuse of sex appeal can be costly. Advertisers have to be careful not to stir controversy. It is important the advertiser realises the response the advert may create when releasing it to the public. It is true sex that sells but it has to be controlled in a way that is morally acceptable to the consumer to create the right attention.

Sex appeal in fashion advertising became more overt in the 1960s it was used to find ways to break through the media mess that had started to arise it became very popular in western countries for example the United States. It was seen to provoke emotion and increase persuasion. However it was discovered that this technique could distract from the product itself. It could also provoke an unwanted message behind the company and product.

Sex appeal is a real factor when celebrity endorsement is used it helps to sell products however it is clear that a certain type of celebrity is chosen we see young sexy actresses and artists being portrayed in advertising campaigns. We don't tend to see the fuller figure of older women this is due to the advertising world viewing this look as unconventional. In society today we are subjected to sex appeal concerning celebrities, a great example of this is the television show Strictly Come Dancing. The main icon of the 2010 programme is Ann Widdecombe she has decided herself to wear conservative clothing which covers her legs and arms. Her image would not sell fashion garments because women want the sexy and eye catching look, which appeals to them from a younger and sexier celebrity. Top fashion houses would tend to use Hollywood stars as they know they will generate the most attention and sales.

Choice of the celebrity, hence is of utmost importance and is usually done based on many different parameters- appeal, looks, popularity or even just a fantasy figure to endorse a brand.

Online resource accessed December (2010) <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/12162917/CELEBRITY-ENDORSEMENT>

Sex appeal has a great impact upon the representation of women in advertising which causes controversy and offence. This is a big issue advertisers have to contend with in this industry.

Representation of Women

Women have appeared as sexual objects in advertising campaigns throughout history. It appears however that in the last twenty years that women are becoming more recognised for being beautiful, smart and powerful sexual objects.

It seems that women are still conforming to the narrow standards of the female beauty even due to this change. This issue can have a great impact upon women in society. Advertisements are creating images that women feel they have to adhere to. This can push women into believing being their natural selves is not enough?

It has been stated that women have been projected as sexual objects in advertising. When using beautiful women in advertisements the work is almost done when considering attracting the consumer. It has been found that male models are in less demand even females are promoting male brands and products. The introduction of celebrity endorsement has also been huge in the last five years.

Celebrity Endorsement

Fashion advertising is highly competitive and there are so many techniques that have been used to get the product, brand or service noticed by the consumer. It has been proven that celebrity endorsement provides a company with great attention. It can make the company become more reputable. However using celebrities can put a company's image at stake.

Celebrates can convey to the target audience a certain personality and lifestyle that anonymous models can't. The model can also convey insight into social status, gender and age.

When choosing a celebrity for an advertising campaign it is important that they connect to the product. It is also vital the celebrity is well received by the public they need to be in high regard and familiarity. If a celebrity has done well in their career for example in a smash hit blockbuster film it is likely the company they advertise for will do extremely well in sales.

The fashion portrait contributes to the dynamics of celebrity culture at a sophisticated level. Actors (and more specifically actresses) and musicians have long endorsed fashion brands (Judy Garland and Joan Crawford were signed up by Max Factor in the 1930s and 1940s).

Bright, Susan. (2007) The Contemporary Fashion Portrait

Illustrations

The celebrity fashion advertising campaign featured below is photographed by Nick Knight. Captured is the actress Scarlett Johansson for Dolce & Gabbana.



Online resource accessed <http://www.popcrunch.com/scarlett-johansson-dolce-gabbana-makeup-ad-photo/>

This fashion advertisement is promoting a lipstick from a new makeup range for Dolce & Gabbana. Scarlett Johansson was chosen as the face for the campaign for her good looks and easy going personality something the designers highlighted was just what Dolce & Gabbana was. The advertisement is seductive yet vulnerable and shows classic femininity.

This Marilyn Monroe inspired advertisement is demonstrating great sex appeal to the target audience. Her pose is seductive and powerful, the celebrity is relaxed and confident. She has been styled like Marilyn Monroe due to Monroe being the ultimate sex symbol of her time.

The advertisement was shot by Nick Knight whose work is known for pushing boundaries. His creativity has brought him much respect. He has worked with some leading influential names in the

industry and is an icon himself. This advertisement will be even more credited due to his name being a part of it as his work is so well known.

The second celebrity fashion advertising campaign featured below is photographed by Vincent Peters. Captured is the singer Christina Aguilera for Stephen Webster Jewellery.



(2008) Online resource accessed December (2010) <http://www.fabsugar.com/Fab-Ad-Christina-Aguilera-Stephen-Webster-1096300>

The Alfred Hitchcock inspired advertisements visualises two Hitchcock films Rear Window and Dial M For Murder which starred Grace Kelly who was an icon in the fifties that many women aspired to follow. The advertisement campaign is promoting Stephen Webster Jewellery. It has been said that Aguilera was the inspiration behind the collection.

The advertisement is expressing great sex appeal, imaginative pose; bold makeup and seductive clothing which are all high fashion trends. They give the advertisement that eye catching status. The advertisements captured are telling a story they help the consumer to relate to the product and imagine

themselves in the story its self. Having the advertisements related to movies makes the celebrity and the images imaginative and this will intrigue the consumer. The advertising campaigns are very innovative.

The photographer Vincent Peters shot this campaign he works in a cinematic style which has been portrayed in these images. His knowledge of film is vast and always seems to be incorporated into his work. He has reportedly said "*I understand fashion people asking me to do something cinematic but I'm surprised by movie people asking me to do it*"

Online resource accessed November (2010)

<http://www.professionalphotographer.co.uk/Magazine/Photographer-Profiles/Fashion-photographer-vincent-peters>

The third celebrity fashion advertising campaign featured below is photographed by Mario Sorrenti. Captured is the actress Lindsey Lohan for Jill Stuart handbags.



(2010) Online resource accessed December (2010) http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/lifestyle/2007-05/24/content_879730.htm

The advertisement is promoting Jill Stuart's fashion of handbags and small leather goods. It has captured an Emelle tote in black patent leather. The photographer Mario Sorrenti has photographed Lindsey Lohan's beauty and sexual appeal. He has used black and white photography which adds allure and intrigue.

Lohan was chosen for the campaign due to her being sexy and smart. Something Jill Stuart feels her consumer embodies. This is the first time Stuart has used celebrity endorsement in her campaigns so this makes the advertisement even more iconic.

This advertisement shows celebrity endorsement and sex appeal working together the dramatic black and white photography creates a dynamic feel.

Fascinated by the artistic interpretation of the female form, Mario Sorrenti's work would not be out of place in a 19th century painting.

Online resource accessed online December (2010) <http://uk.ykone.com/photographers/bio/mario-sorrenti/>

Comparisons and Contrasts

When comparing these advertisements it is clear to see the comparisons they all envisage young, sexy influential celebrities from similar backgrounds. All three campaigns are emphasising sophistication and confidence. The first two advertisements from Dolce and Gabbana and Stephen Webster are very similar the celebrity's hair is styled in a 1950s look. They are also representing famous sexual icons Marilyn Monroe and Grace Kelly. The essence of cinematic photography comes through strongly and helps the campaign to generate a story. The two celebrities are looking away from the camera this indicates intrigue, suspicion and vulnerability. The third advertisement from Jill Stuart is captured in a different way the celebrity is looking straight on at the camera which indicates assurance. The image has been captured in black and white which creates great glamour it also doesn't distract from the fashion garment. The Dolce and Gabbana advertisement has been styled with neutral colours this is to emphasis the sharp and redness of the lipstick which is the product. Her pose is relaxed she is laid out upon silk sheets similar to the Jill Stuart campaign. Her finger is touching her lips this draws the attention straight towards the product. The Stephen Webster advertising campaign that envisages Christina Aguilera is posed very differently she is acting out scenes to show a movie styled image. She has located on her body many different jewellery items while holding the binoculars and telephone it is drawing the attention towards her body where the fashion garments are in place. When focusing upon the makeup styles the Jill Stuart and Dolce and Gabbana campaigns are very similar they have used subtle natural looks. This has been chosen to show a natural beauty in a natural environment. The Stephen Webster campaign uses much darker styles of makeup this has been chosen

to highlight seduction of the advertisement it generates great sex appeal and enhances the tones of the image.

Conclusion

To conclude I have analysed many aspects relating to the effect of celebrity endorsement I have mentioned fashion advertising, sex appeal, women representation, in depth celebrity endorsement and compared and contrasted three advertising campaigns.

It has become evident to me that celebrity endorsement is a big factor to the impact upon the sales of a product. Celebrities bring with them recognition and clarity it helps a consumer to determine if the product being advertised is lucrative. However it can bring negative impulses as well consumers today understand the notions of advertising. This makes the endorsement of celebrities much harder because the consumer knows they are there to heighten the product.

Advertisers have to be careful when choosing a celebrity they have to connect to the product and have a clear connection to the campaign to make the advertisement a success.

I personally feel celebrity endorsement benefits advertisements because if I see a celebrity of high status and worth I know the product is worthwhile. It generates much more of my attention and I am more likely to talk about the advertisement to others. However if a celebrity has had bad publicity I may reconsider the product they endorse, because if that celebrity has had bad reputation the product may of as well. There have been many cases where companies have had to drop celebrities. Famously Kate Moss was dropped from Rimmel London due to her cocaine habits becoming public.

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