

**When Subtle is the most effective.  
An analysis of Product Placement effectiveness in multitasking  
environments**

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## ***Attestation of Authorship***

I hereby declare that the submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), no material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of the university or other institution of higher learning.

Thuthi Gunawardena

Signature:

Date: September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013

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## ***Ethics Approval***

*This research was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013, AUTEK Reference number 13/95*

## ***Abstract***

Product placement is seen by marketers as the proverbial “golden goose,” it can do no wrong and if left alone it will prosper. Unfortunately, this is not true today as the typical consumer has access to a vast array of entertainment options, all of which can be conveniently accessed from home. This viewing environment presents a unique dilemma for marketers because when at home consumers engage in other activities while watching television such as cooking, cleaning and responding to emails. The attempt to complete each activity efficiently activates a consumer’s task-directed behaviour, which will lead to selective attention. This research aims to research is to investigate the role of task-directed behaviour plays in affecting the effectiveness of product placements.

Existing literature on multitasking and its effect on television product placement are still in its early development. This study seeks to bridge a gap in current knowledge by conducting an empirical study on the effect of cognitive load and task directed behaviour on the level of brand recall, recognition and behavioural intention within both prominent and subtle placements.

The findings of this study indicate decreasing rates of recall, recognition and behavioural intentions for prominent brands more than for subtle brands, when visual tasks are present. It is expected that results would be significant if unfamiliar brands were used. However, further research is needed to see if result can be replicated.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

*Imagine two consumers, Caleb and Barbara, returning home after a long day at the office, they turn on the television to watch the new episode of *How I Met Your Mother*. Tonight's episode featured an integrated placement for Subway restaurants to showcase the new Teriyaki Chicken sandwich. Barbara is watching the episode from the kitchen while cooking dinner. Although in front of the television, Caleb is responding to work emails and checking the latest cricket scores on his smartphone. Both Caleb and Barbara would be considered fans, however tonight Barbara is more consumed with reading the latest news as it streams across the bottom of the screen. As a result of Barbara focusing her attention on reading the news, and Caleb responding to emails, the episode and its content, both entertainment and commercial, are distracting them from their goals*

### **1.1 The Research Problem**

What I have just described is a typical situation that occurs frequently across households around the world. Consumers engaging in multitasking have become the norm. Findings from Nielsen Wire (2009) estimate that 57% of television viewers are simultaneously using the internet at least once a month. As a result of multitasking behaviour, consumers are accomplishing a myriad of tasks, by frequently diverting their focus. This act of frequently shifting attention while watching television poses a unique dilemma to marketers. As described in the example, above, both Caleb and Barbara, fans of the series *How I Met Your Mother*, wanted to watch the episode but as a result of engaging in other tasks found that the act of watching television distracted them from completing their respective tasks: responding to emails, reading the news and cooking dinner.

Product placement rose to popularity as a tool that allowed marketers to reach users and non-users; due to media fragmentation, declining advertising effectiveness, and media proliferation (Mackay *et al.* 2009). An estimated two-thirds of television viewers avoid commercial breaks by: channel surfing, muting the television, or disregarding them altogether because they are annoying or irrelevant (Kiley, 2006). It is easy to understand why brand placement and brand integrated programs are considered by industry experts as the future of television advertising (Smit *et al.*, 2009).

By blurring the lines between entertainment and persuasion, product placement provides marketers with a new direction for transforming how a product or service is perceived. Product placement is the practice of incorporating a product or a service in a setting such as a movie, television program, or other types of medium for money or marketing considerations (Gupta & Gould, 1997).

Recently, increased attention has been focused on product placement, also known as product integration, in-program sponsoring and branded entertainment. From past research, clearly defined levels of product placement, referred to as prominence or proximity, have been obtained.

Prominence in this instance refers to prominent and subtle placements. Prominent placements typically include both pivotal dialogue and a central visual representation while characteristics of subtle placements are typically expressed by smaller or peripherally located brand cues or background verbal mentions of the brand. For the purpose of this research the term-product placement (PPL) and brand placement will be used interchangeably.

With the consumer practice of, multitasking while watching television is on the rise, it raises the question of the effectiveness of product placement as a marketing tool. Effectiveness in terms of PPL has been historically measured in terms of: recall, recognition, and changes in

brand attitudes (Balasubramanian, Karrah & Patwardhan, 2006). There is, at present, limited literature on multitasking behaviour and selective attention and its effect on product placement. The present research seeks to investigate if selective attention affects the effectiveness of product placement.

## **1.2 Direction of Dissertation**

This dissertation seeks to address the following research question: *How does distractor devaluation, resulting from selective attention, moderate the effectiveness of product placement?* The first chapter provides a brief explanation for the relevance and importance for this line of research.

Chapter two introduces and defines the topic of product placement. It also provides a historical review of the evolution of its practice. In addition chapter two will highlight gaps in the existing literature, which this dissertation seeks to bridge.

The third chapter provides the theoretical background for this research. It begins by providing an explanation of relevant theories, a clear explanation of the characteristics of prominence, the effect distractor devaluation has on cognition and its effect on placements. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the hypotheses for this study.

In chapter four the methodology and analysis techniques used to best answer the hypotheses are presented. The chapter will go into greater detail regarding the experimental design and procedure including questionnaire design and distribution, coding and methods used for statistical analysis. The chapter will conclude by revealing the findings of this research to address if the suggested hypotheses are supported or unsupported.

Lastly, chapter five outlines a general discussion providing practical and theoretical implications from the research. The chapter concludes by highlighting areas for future research.

## ***Chapter 2: The Rise of Product Placement***

This chapter explains the origins of product placement, as well as provides a brief overview of the research conducted to determine if product placement is an effective marketing tool. A thorough review of existing literature has identified gaps in current knowledge which this research seeks to bridge.

### **2.1. The History of Product Placement**

Product placement has become an increasingly popular tool with brand managers, since sales of Hershey's 'Reese's Pieces' increased by more than 65% after its appearance in *E.T* (Reed & Dutka, 1989). However, it is important to note that product placement is not a newly developed marketing tool; the origins of product placement can be traced back to Unilever's deliberate inclusion of Sunlight soap into Lumiere films in the late 1890's (Newell, Salmon & Chang, 2006). However, not much planning and consideration went into placements until the 1990s. Until then, the practice was largely based on intuition (Karrah, Mckee & Pardun, 2003), and it has only been in the last 25 years that product placement has received the attention it deserves from practitioners and researchers.

There are many reasons behind this recent rise in popularity of product placements as a marketing tool. The Motion Picture Association of America (2007) attributes this rise in popularity to its use as a cost saving technique for studios due to the restricted ability of viewers to avoid watching, and the potential for extended audience exposure. Matthes, Wirth, Schemer & Kissling (2011) believe that the surge of popularity for placements can be attributed to technological advances that allow viewers to skip traditional forms of advertising. While Stephen & Coote (2005) suggest that the use of placements in a mass media vehicle allows marketers to create organic audience exposure for brands within a natural setting by a large portion of the target market. Jeong and Fishbein (2007) suggested

that it creates a perfect opportunity for a brand to connect on an emotional level with viewers, all the while highlighting key functions or benefits of the product.

Balasubramanin (1994) referred to product placement as a hybrid message that combined publicity and advertisement. As noted by Balasubranmanian (1994), since the hybridised message does not seem like a commercial it is not processed in the same way as traditionally recognised commercial content. This new breed of transformational advertising attempts to form an emotional connection with consumers to obtain greater product acceptance (Cutler, Thomas & Rao, 2000). An ideal situation can even be created by associating certain products with a desired lifestyle (Soloman & Englis, 1994). Thus, from a practical point of view, although multiple sources exist supporting the benefits of product placement (Karrh, 1998), this complex area is under-researched.

## **2.2 Prior Research of Product Placement Effectiveness**

Most of the previous, limited product placement research concentrated on general attitudes toward product placements, (Nebenzahl & Secunda 1993, Gupta & Gould 1997, Gupta & Balasubramanian 2000, d'Astous & Senguin 1999) recall of placements (e.g. Russel 2002, Gupta & Lord 1999, d'Astous & Chartier 2000, Lee & Farber 2007) and images or attitudes towards the embedded brands (e.g. van Reijmersdal & Neijens 2007). A newer stream of research is dealing with more critical evaluations of placements, showing that if people recognise and memorise brands this can negatively impact brand attitudes (Cowely & Barron 2008, van Reijmersdal 2009). All these studies took several factors into account like placement proximity (d'Astous and Chartier, 2000), processing issues, the plot connection, congruence or integration levels (Russell, 2002) and how it can affect recall of the embedded brands (for detailed overview also see Balasubramanian et al. 2006). However Balasubramanian et al. (2006) set up a framework of propositions which are still not covered and researched. The propositions point out that product placement influences the viewer on a

cognitive, affective and behavioural level and that there is a clear lack in what we know about how PPL affects attitudes. Moreover, with few exceptions, (see e.g.: Redondo 2012) the behavioural impact has not been investigated thus far. Therefore, this research will focus on investigating two questions in conjunction with product placement. First: *How does product placement impact viewers' behavioural intentions and attitudes?*

To investigate this research question it is important to first understand how product placements impact cognition, attitudes and behavioural intentions. Most research so far suggests that if the entertainment format provides a pleasurable feeling, showing a product or brand engages the customer to build positive associations with the shown brand. This is in line with classic conditioning techniques that stress the emotion-eliciting factors of the stimulus (Staats 1996). Staats established that the pairing of positive word associations with a person would create a positive affective transfer resulting in a greater degree of perceived favourability. Thus, the attitude held after exposure to positive stimulus is more favourable than the pre-viewing attitude. For example, going back to the original scenario of fans watching the *How I Met Your Mother* episode depicting the main characters enjoying the new Teriyaki Chicken sandwich from Subway, the fans are already in a good mood as they are enjoying their favourite show. This positive mood spills over allowing for greater positive feelings for the Subway brand after watching the television episode than before.

With regard to behavioural intentions, the present research on product placement does not feature empirical data on whether or not PPL has the ability to alter behaviour. Providing experimental data to bridge this gap will be a key contribution of this research. Currently the MODE model is used to explain if attitudes exert any influence on an individual's behaviour. The MODE model posits there are two types of attitude-behaviour processes: spontaneous and deliberate.

Spontaneous processing is typically activated by an environmental trigger, and requires an immediate behavioural response from the individual. The resulting behaviour will vary as a result of the individual's observations and sensitivities in the given situation (Fazio & Towles-Schwen, 1999 pg. 98)

In the case of deliberate processing, an individual's intended behavioural actions are carefully scrutinised, and more centrally-processed, as variety of costs and benefits need to be considered before an ultimate behavioural outcome is decided upon (Fazio & Towles-Schwen, 1999 pg. 99).

At present the most directly applicable research studying behaviour has been conducted by Feinburg (1986); his research using credit card logos showed that donations increased in the presence of credit card logos. Thus, only the presence of trigger stimuli is needed to engage certain behaviour. This type of behaviour could be considered as spontaneous: the presence of the credit card logo being the environmental trigger and since owning a credit card and anticipating its next use has a strong positive correlation (Hirschman 1979; Wise, Brown and Cox, 1977) this could be considered as the situation needing an immediate response. The study illustrates it is possible to direct consumer behaviour subconsciously by enhancing consumer spending in a typically mundane restaurant situation.

An important consideration when studying the findings of Feinburg's (1986) research is that participants were not aware they were being persuaded by the presence of credit card logos. Relating Feinburg's (1986) research to product placements principles shows that if a trigger (a conditioned stimuli, like a brand which is conditioned with various associations and benefits) is added, it can influence intentions and behaviour even if it is not consciously processed. This is in line with the MODE model (Fazio & Towles-Schwen 1999 pg. 99),

assumptions that a brand appearance in a movie or TV show can positively influence behaviour.

However in today's society consumers are constantly being bombarded by branded content designed to persuade, so it is important for practitioners of product placement to understand the coping behaviours expressed by consumers in the face of persuasive attempts, and how consumers adjust product attitudes and attitudes towards marketers (Friestad & Wright, 1994). The behaviour that will typically result from deliberate persuasion will be similarly deliberate behaviour, as individuals will need to carefully consider their options of action. Existing frameworks such as The Persuasion Knowledge Model have received more attention in the last decade, and the model has been expanded to explain the process activated in the consumers mind when they realize they are being influenced. Greater detail regarding this process will be provided in Chapter Three.

As a result of limited research, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the attitudinal behaviour effects experienced post product placement viewing. Hence, changes in attitude and behaviour resulting from watching a program containing intriguing PPL is a complex and multifaceted area that requires a variety of key components in order to be considered 'effective.'

As Balasubramanian et al. (2006) proposed there are several personal factors which moderate the effectiveness of product placements. The component of attention in most studies was just manipulated by the placement proximity. Thus, recall is related to whether the placement happens in the background or in the central part of the entertainment (e.g. Lee and Farber 2007). Given that many things are happening in movies and attention patterns are different among consumers (Duff & Farber 2011, Lang et al. 2012), it is important to know how attention affects the effectiveness of product placements, since focused behaviour is rare

outside of controlled environments. Thus, this research will further investigate the second research question: *How does task focused attention moderate the effectiveness of product placement?*

At present there exists no research on the impact of visual and audio distractions and its effect on processing embedded brands. However, from the prevailing marketing literature we do know that not all advertisements are given active attention by consumers (Duff & Faber, 2011). Thus, it becomes important to ask how much attention will be given to product placement in television. Further research is needed to understand if brand cognition takes place consciously or unconsciously.

If not all placements are given active attention, then in the case of advertising avoidance, previous research has failed to consider the outcomes of goal-achieving, advertising-ignoring behaviour (Duff & Faber, 2011). For the purposes of this research this type of behaviour will be referred to as selective attention – distraction avoiding behaviour. Speck & Elliot (1997) identified that a focused search is a predictor for ad avoidance behaviour in all media. This type of goal-directed looking has also been called top-down looking, and does create an impact. Although the exact nature of this impact is unknown, it is believed that the sensory input reaches brain receptors, but it is not fully processed so conscious awareness is never achieved (Duff & Faber, 2011). Despite not reaching conscious awareness this type of effect can still be considered positive exposure according to the mere exposure effect theory (MEE) which predicts that pre-attentive or preconscious level of exposure can result in an enhanced attitude toward the stimulus object (Zanjonc, 2001). Mere exposure effect theory has been used to justify advertising expenditure, for mediums that cannot be explicitly processed, brand placements and internet banner advertisements (Matthes, Schemer & Wirth, 2007). In order to understand the effects viewing patterns play on advertising recall, greater research into viewing habits need to be undertaken. Thus, a new direction of product placement

research that includes consumer viewing patterns and the presence of task oriented behaviour are needed to bridge the gaps in the existing placement literature.

### ***Chapter 3: Theoretical Research Framework***

In order for this dissertation to provide a significant contribution to the marketing literature, a more detailed examination of the factors affecting the effectiveness of PPL, which directly relates to this topic, will be conducted. So far the majority of research concentrates on placement characteristics – namely, how prominent a brand or product is embedded in the entertainment format (Gupta & Lord 1998).

#### **3.1 Proximity of Placements: Subtle vs. Prominent**

It was Russell (1998) and, simultaneously, Gupta and Lord (1998), who provided a distinction between the three dimensions of product placement characteristics: visual, auditory and a combination of both auditory and visual. Subsequent research referred to these dimensions as prominent and subtle. The modality of placements, which refers to the visual and auditory mentions of a brand have been frequently studied (e.g., Brennan & Babin 2004; Gupta & Lord 1998; Russell 2002). For the purposes of this research the terms proximity and prominence will be used interchangeably, as the both refer to the characteristics designed to attract the audience (Gupta & Lord, 1998)

##### **3.1.1 Explanation of Prominence in Placements.**

The use and range of any of these three modes can vary in the case of visual representation of a product. The following factors: size, duration, positioning within the scene, and the length of time the product featured on screen affect the effectiveness of the placement. While in the case of auditory mentions, repetition within character conversations and tone provide the range associated with this mode of placement (Dens, De Pelsmacker, Wouters &

Purnawirawan, 2012). It is when these three different modes merge that prominence is achieved; Gupta and Lord (1998) define prominence as the degree to which a placed product or brand has the ability to attract the audiences' attention. There, of course, exists levels of prominence and the degree of prominence a brand can achieve in a movie can be categorized into two components: low or high prominence.

Low prominence, also referred to as subtle placement (Gupta and Lord, 1998), is when visual representations of a brand are small in size and located in the background or when verbal brand cues are not mentioned prominently.

High prominence, or prominent placement (Gupta and Lord, 1998), occurs when dialogue referring to the placement is emphasized and repeated and can also include a centrally placed visual component.

Since the concept of prominence can be a complex concept to grasp, distinguishing between high and low prominence may seem intricate. The following examples have been provided in order to aid in distinguishing between the subtle and prominent placements. The examples provided are actual brand placements for SUBWAY restaurants.

***Figure 1- Examples of Subtle and Prominent Placements on Television***



The integration of the brand Subway, into an episode of Chuck, was done using a prominent brand placement.

As shown the featured character Morgan is clearly and proudly displaying his Subway meal.

*Still frame from the television show CHUCK, the visual brand cues are further strengthened by a main character Morgan*

*depicted in the green shirt saying the line below in the scene.*

***Morgan: I had an extra chicken teriyaki foot-long and I thought someone would be interested (Sings \$5 Foot-long)***



The integration of the brand Subway, into the episode of Necessary Roughness, was done subtly.

As shown the brand logo appears only in the background as part of a branded backdrop.

*Still frame from the television show Necessary Roughness in this scene no verbal mention of the brand is used.*

With the aid of examples provided above, distinguishing between prominent and subtle brands may become clearer.

Research has already been conducted on the effectiveness of each mode of product placement. In Russell's (2002) study of the role modality on the effectiveness of product placement, it was reported that sound had a greater effect over visual cues on brand memory. For this reason information presented through audio and verbal communication is essentially more significant than information represented visually. The meaningful stimuli are processed more actively within an individual's cognitive structure. Further support for Russell's (2002) findings can be drawn from existing models and frameworks: mere exposure effect, the limited capacity model and the persuasion knowledge model which have been explained in great detail later in the chapter.

### **3.1.2 Psychological Processing of Prominence**

For the purpose of my research, more focus will be given to the information-processing model that relates to how many consumers process television messages. This model developed by Lang (2000), is an amalgamation of over 30 years of information-processing models (Lang, 2000). According to the limited capacity model of attention, the higher order limitation on processing is crucial to sensory modality (Kahneman 1973), and with visual and auditory stimuli competing for attention resources (Eimer 1999) attention resourcing needs to take place over all sensory channels, in order to ensure audio placements have a better chance of getting attention than visual placements.

The limited capacity information processing approach to mediated communication assumes that individuals are capable of processing information to a limited capacity. The role of information processing occurs continuously in three levels of sub-processing: encoding, storage and retrieval (Lang, 2000).

In this process a message is extracted from its environment (i.e. the television screen) to a mental representation. In order for this conversion to take place, the message must engage sensory receptors (Eysenck, 1993). This information is then stored for periods ranging from 300 milliseconds for a visual image (Coltheart, 1975) to four to five seconds for auditory mentions (Crowder, 1976). If further processing of the information within the sensory stores is required, it moves into short-term memory. If no further processing occurs, the existing information gets written-over by new information (Lang, 2000). Since one of the primary tasks of a consumer being exposed to a multitude of branded content and imagery is to be able to cope, with interpreting and filtering useful and relevant information through the clutter is paramount.

The process of extracting a message from its environment happens frequently and consumers eventually develop knowledge and familiarity about marketing and sales tactics. It is this knowledge that aids them in identifying marketers' attempts to persuade. The Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) presumes that when a communication is identified as an attempt to persuade it will be processed differently than messages perceived to be unconvincing in nature (Cowley & Baron 2008; Friestad & Wright 1994). The message identified as a persuasion attempt will interrupt and distract from the television viewing experience causing irritation (Cowley & Baron; Edwards, Li and Lee 2002).

However, since not all brand placements are the same or equal, it is vital a clear distinction be made about forms of product placement that shape the levels of brand prominence.

### **3.1.3 The Effects of Prominence on Recognition, Attitude and Behavioural Intentions.**

Based on the findings of previous research (d'Astous & Chartier 2000; Law and Braun 2000; Lehu & Bressoud 2008) brand recognition is more likely for brands placed prominently than subtly placed brands. These findings provide the backbone of product placement knowledge, which is that placements can trigger existing brand imagery, or can enhance brand awareness (Matthes, Schemer, Wirth, 2007). The visual stimulation from a placement in the form of a brand name or logo increases the likelihood that information is accessed from memory (Crowley & Barron, 2008). Brands placed in integral plot positions are more likely to attract viewer attention, making them more likely to access information from memory than their subtly placed counterparts according to the findings of Gupta and Lord (1998). Thus, by increasing the size of the placement in an advertisement, marketers can increase the likelihood that consumer's attention can be drawn to the brand (Finn, 1988). Prior research

in the field of adver gaming, also found that player's memory of placed brands was positively affected by the prominence of the placement (Cauberghe & De Pelsmacker, 2010).

Although the appeal and the benefits associated with increasing the size, and the integral positioning of a placement, are clear to marketers, few studies have shown that this practice can also have negative consequences. The findings from Law and Braun's (2000) research indicate consumer attitudes and choice can be negatively impacted. The occurrence of this negative consequence of product placement can be explained by using the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) (Freistad & Wright, 1994) which posits that when consumers recognise a message as an attempt at persuasion, the message is then processed differently than when no connection is established between message and an attempt at persuasion. This postulation is further strengthened by findings from Campbell (1995), which showed that the increased cognition that accompanies a prominent placement leads the audience to question the motives and the appropriateness behind the placement.

It seems the more prominent the brand placement the more likely it is to trigger the cognition process associated with persuasion attempts, which in turn causes the viewer to question the suitability of the placement, the intrusive nature of the placement (Crowley & Barron, 2008) and stimulate counter arguing (Friestad & Wright, 1994). The resulting counter arguing and irritation is accepted to cause an adverse change in brand attitude (Crowley & Baron, 2008). Since this negative consequence is more likely to occur in the case of prominent placements, subtle placements are less likely to create an adverse shift in brand attitude.

Further support can be found in the cognitive psychology literature. The mere exposure effect, states that repeated exposure to a brand or product results in positive feelings towards the brand or product (Zajonc, 1968). Since the mere exposure effect involves implicit knowledge, it can occur without conscious awareness (Bornstein & D'Agostino 1992 p. 545).

According to Bornstein (1989) the optimum conditions for mere exposure effect are low-attention situations and brief viewing times. These two conditions can be readily found outside a controlled laboratory setting, by television viewers.

However, in today's television viewing environment a variety of multimedia tools and entertainment options are available. Consumers are no longer solely deriving entertainment from television sets when at home. According to Nielsen wire (2009), 57% of television viewers use the internet simultaneously at least once a month. These findings are further supported by Jeong & Fishbein's (2007) study which stated that 69% of online users, 68% of television viewers, 69% of radio listeners and 40% of newspaper and magazine readers often perform other tasks while interacting with their chosen medium. As the evidence has shown, today's typical consumer is a multitasker and with the rampant increase in new technologies this trend will surely become more prevalent and consumers will practice selectivity in terms of attention.

### **3.2. Task Directed Behaviour in the Viewing Environment**

With a majority of the research in advertising focusing on the effects after intentional advertising exposure, only limited research has examined what happens to consumers when advertising is ignored in order to achieve or complete another goal. This situation frequently arises as a result of viewers actively seeking specific non-commercialised content from its embedded medium or exposure avoidance as a result of selective attention directed towards objects (Duff & Faber, 2011). This distinction between inattention and avoidance is important as it moderates the effects of advertising exposure. In a typical day consumers are bombarded with brands and brand imagery but only a few brands are identified for further processing because of restrictions of attention and cognitive capacity (Kahneman 1973; Lang 2000). This type of behaviour could be considered passive and unconscious if the viewer has no specific goal, while being exposed to advertisements. However, at the opposite spectrum

active avoidance occurs when commercial content is present and the viewer has a specific goal e.g. reading the news (Duff & Faber, 2011).

In order to provide greater clarity on task directed behaviour, a screen shot of an episode of *How I Met Your Mother* and an example is provided below.

## Figure 2. Example of Visual Task Behaviour on Television



*An example of a news alert on How I Met Your Mother*

As depicted in *Figure 2*, live and breaking news is streaming at the bottom of the screen during an episode of *How I Met Your Mother*. Going back to the initial scenario, Barbara is reading the news alerts and is not focusing on the entertainment content of the programme because she is driven and focused solely on reading the news. In this case Barbara is utilising conscious avoidance, one of the two distinct types of cognitive processing the other being unconscious. The distinction between the two is important as they both affect the effectiveness of product placement in different ways. In order to understand the impact each

cognitive process has on product placement, it must be examined from an individual consumer's standpoint.

### **3.2.1. Psychological Process of Distractor Devaluation**

In order to facilitate a greater understanding of the cognitive process in the consumers' mind, and for the purposes of this research, more attention will be focused on conscious processing than unconscious processing as it pertains to goal directed behaviour.

One of the fundamental assumptions of contemporary psychology is the ability of the cognitive system to acquire information unconsciously (Lewicki, Hill & Czyzewska, 1992). The term *unconsciousness* as defined by Krishnan and Trappey (1999) refers to when a subject is unaware of the presence of stimuli or its effects during a task. Unconscious processing is a fast and automatic response generated involuntarily whenever the stimuli visual or verbal are present, this process exists outside the constraints of cognitive limitations (Velmans, 1991).

On the opposite spectrum research suggests that when consumers are engaged in conscious processing, in order to complete a task objects that interfere with, or distract, will experience negative affective ratings (Duff & Faber, 2011). This is referred to as the distractor devaluation effect. The distractor devaluation centres around a key task of the visual system which is to rapidly locate and focus attention on the object of interest (Raymond, Fenske, Westoby, 2005). Once the visual search is completed, items that are deemed irrelevant to the individual or to the present task are mentally labelled 'negative', to prevent further cognitive processing (Duff & Faber, 2011). This process of mentally labelling an object as 'negative' is done to avoid re-searching irrelevant areas (Duff & Faber, 2011)

If during the visual search an object of interest has been located it will be evaluated in terms of immediate and long-term goals to determine if approach or avoidance behaviour is the appropriate response (Raymond, Fenske, Westoby, 2005).

It is important to note that visual searchers are only activated in order to complete a task, during other times consumers remain in a passive or unconscious state. However once this process is activated, what effect does it have on PPL?

### **3.2.2. The Effects of Distractor Devaluation on Product Placement**

Recent research by Raymond, Fenske, and Tavassoli (2003), found that ignored objects were given lower ratings than either the 'interesting/target' object or the novel objects. When considering these findings and applying them in terms of PPL it is believed that commercial content that interferes with completion of a goal will be labelled 'negative.'

However, findings from Raymond, Fenske, and Westoby (2005) showed a positive correlation between target-distractor proximity. This correlation suggests that not all distractors are classified under a single uniform response of 'negative' but rather have the ability to generate an individual response that is modulated by target proximity. The findings that "near distractors" are more devalued than distractors which appear further away provide another factor that can affect the effectiveness of PPL. More research is needed in the field of distractor devaluation in order to understand this phenomenon, as the existing literature is relatively recent. This research aims to provide additional empirical data regarding the role distractor devaluation plays in affecting the effectiveness of PPL.

### **3.3 The Moderating Role of Brand Familiarity**

Another factor that can contribute to the overall effectiveness of a placement is familiarity. A recent study regarding audience familiarity with brands in video games by Nelson (2002) showed brands that were personally relevant to players had higher rates of recall even when compared to larger multi-national brands.

The issue of brand familiarity is an important factor when researching brand memory, as it influences the recall of brands placed (Balasubramanian, 1994).

Brand familiarity as defined by Alba & Hutchinson (1987) is the extent of the consumer's direct and indirect experience with a brand, this level of familiarity depends on the associations a brand can generate within the consumers mind (Campbell & Keller 2003). The ability to generate brand associations (e.g. *Tide* laundry powder) after frequent and loyal product use means the visual search for *Tide* becomes automatic, and happens unconsciously (Alba & Hutchinson 1987). It is these brand associations that facilitate effective communications by allowing viewers to quickly breakdown program content (McCrackens 1989). Thus it stands to reason if a brand is unfamiliar viewers may have difficulty processing the meaning of a particular scene.

### **3.4 Research Question & Hypotheses**

Based on the literature review conducted in Chapter Two and the examination of relevant theory in Chapter Three, the following hypotheses and research questions have been developed to bridge the existing gaps in television based product placement.

Product placement and the at-home viewing environment is undergoing complex changes with the findings from Nielsen Wire (2009) showing that 57% of television viewers use the

internet simultaneously. This shift in viewer attention has been minimally researched in terms of its effect on consumer's ability to process a programs commercial content. Applying limited cognitive capacity such a multi-tasking behaviour or task specific focus limits the cognitive processing capacities. Thus, in the condition that people are distracted by another task generally the level of recollection of placements will decrease. However this effect interacts with placement prominence as it is assumed that specifically prominent placed brands will suffer, as attention is diverted away. While subtle placements should experience little to no effect, brand recall will be low in any condition.

Based on the findings of existing literature it is known that prominent brands have higher levels of recall and recognition compared with subtly placed brands, however when task directed behaviour is activated it is predicted that:

*Hypothesis 1: Subtly placed brands will experience lower levels of (a) recall and (b) recognition compared to prominently placed brands. However, if the visual task is in the area where the subtle brands are placed they will show no significant differences between the visual task condition compared to the non-task condition, while the recall and recognition rates for prominent placed brands should decrease.*

Investigating the impact on attitude and intentions assumes that prominent placements will result in a better attitude and intention rating (Dens et al. 2012), but the distractor devaluation effect will lower recollection. Raymond, Fenske and Westoby (2005) showed that placement proximity to the intended target resulted in lower levels of devaluation if the distractor is further away compared to closer to the target. However, this study used equal strength distraction and target. In terms of applying it to entertainment formats like television shows

where the main storyline even if it is furthest from the visual target task will more likely distract the viewers from the task compared. If a brand is prominently placed in this strong distraction it might get devalued compared to subtle placed brands which theoretically are nearer (peripherally placed) to the target but not as intrusive as the prominent placed brands. Therefore it is predicted that:

*Hypothesis 2: If participants are challenged with another task that will subsequently lead to a lower level of: (a) attitudes and (b) behavioural intentions, for both subtle as well as prominent placed brands. While it is expected that for prominent placed brands this devaluation effect is even stronger*

If this outcome is true, then it would present a unique issue for marketers, as consumer viewing patterns are subject to great change and variation. With growth and spend in brand placement surpassing traditional advertising (PQ Media 2010) issues regarding brand familiarity should not be ignored, as the brand exposure effect may be minimised through distance. This phenomenon, which is under-researched, could pose a paradox for brand managers; however, more research is needed to understand the effect of distance on product placement. Changing existing attitudes is a long term task, thus more familiar brands will be, to a certain extent, immune (Machleit & Wilson 1989) from devaluation effects and might also result in higher recall rates as familiar graphs are easier recognised. Thus, it is an interesting question to see whether non-familiar brands are more likely to be affected by the proposed effects.

*RQ: Does brand familiarity moderate the effectiveness of product placement?*

## ***Chapter 4: Study***

To test the above suggested hypotheses an empirical investigation was carried out. This chapter explains the process and the methods employed to address the proposed research hypotheses. A justification for the experiment used will be provided, along with a detailed description regarding the procedure of the experiments which will include the following: design, sample size, procedure and results.

### **4.1.1 Design**

In order to investigate the proposed hypotheses, quantitative research was undertaken. To investigate the proposed research questions, a two between-subject factor (no visual task vs. visual task) by two within-subject (subtle vs. prominent placement) mixed experimental design was conducted. This method was specifically selected as it helps to distinguish the effect consumer behaviour has on the recall of different types of placements also experimental studies help to understand causal relationships.

The between-subject factor task will be achieved by instructing the participants to pay attention to numbers that appear outside of the actual movie's frame. The participants selected for the focussed condition were asked to sum up the numbers series of six one-digit numbers that appear around the frame of the movie clip. This activity served to place participants in cognitive load and stimulate visual task directed behaviour that results in distractor devaluation. Only one condition, per class, was applied.

The within factor "placement proximity" is manipulated by the movie clip from the movie "Step Up 3D". Besides some framing scenes about dancing, a scene for subtle placements will feature a car ride over Time Square, New York where 24 brands are subtly-placed. The prominent placements occurred in two other scenes. First, one of the main characters arrives

at loft apartment that holds a vast assortment of limited edition Nike sneakers. In the second scene, two other leading actors consume an ICEE drink in a playful central position. Both placements are integrated to the plot by either an attention grabbing interaction or verbal reference(see attached Appendix 2).

### Figure 3 – Storyboard of Movie Clip

#### Step Up 3D: Storyline and Placements

**Plot Summary From IMDB:** Moose attends NYU, to become an engineering student, he intends to quit dancing, after an accidental collision with Luke, he finds himself drawn into an impromptu dance battle. After seeing his winning dance moves Luke befriends Moose and introduces him to other misfit dancers and the vault (a community building where the dancers live and train).



Intro Scene: Length of clip 2:40 – 6:00

Explanation: The clip will start on Moose’s university orientation tour, will on the tour he bumps into Luke and gets drawn into a dance battle



Length on clip: 8:52 – 9:25

Explanation: Luke rescues Moose after the dance battle ends badly, and takes him to his house



Length of Clip: 22:44 – 23:40



Length of Clip: 42:18 - 43:39

Explanation: Luke spending time with another dancer

## 4.2 Sample

A total of 139 undergraduate students from the Business and Law Faculty at Auckland University of Technology participated in this research. Undergraduate students were specifically used as they represent a homogenised group which is needed to support experiment validity. Although a total 139 people were surveyed, only 138 answered the questions of gender, of those 52.5% are male (n=73) and 46.8% are women (n=65). The average age for participants is 21.

## 4.3 Measures

For this study, it was important to assess recall, recognition, attitudes, and behavioural purchase intentions for products. The first set of questions (See Appendix 4 for Questionnaire) asked basic demographic information from participants such as age and gender. The second set of questions was used to determine the participants liking of the movie, and how well they believed the movie fit with the teenagers (Step Up – 3D) on a seven point Likert scale (1=Strongly dislike/disagree, 7=Strongly like/agree).

**Table 1 – Results from Analysis of Movie Liking and Fit.**

Questions	Number of Participants	Mean	Std. Deviation
How Much Did you like the Movie Clip?	137	4.303	1.526
Do Feel that the Movie Fits with a Teenage audience?	139	5.237	1.365

With 137 participants responding to how much they liked the movie a mean score= 4.30 was reported. As for the question regarding the movie fit with teenagers, a mean score of 5.23 (N=139) was reported. The findings suggest that selected movie clip was viewed as

favourable by participants, as a strong feeling either positive or negative could basis the responses to embedded brands.

Respondents were then asked to recall as many brands as possible in an opened end question. Responses were coded as 1(correct-brand appeared), 0 (incorrect-brand did not appear) or blank (if no response was provided). Based on the recall we identified that the participants recalled two other brands which were not included in our recognition list (NYU and NYC) which were added to the prominent placed brands. After completing this question, participants were asked to mark which brands they recognised from the movie. A list featuring brands that appeared in the movie, mixed with filler brands and brands in the same product category was furnished to respondents. Through aided recall, brand recognition was measured, which was coded as 0 (not recognised) or 1(recognised). This direction of obtaining recognition measures is in line with questions proposed by Singh & Rothschild (1983).

The next set of questions was used to determine brand attitudes and behavioural intention. Again, a list of brands that appear in the movie along with filler brands in the same product category was furnished to respondents. This scale for obtaining behavioural intentions was used by Fishbien & Ajzen (1975) a 3 item, seven–point scale ranging from -3 to 3 (not appealing/appealing, unpleasant/pleasant, dislike/like).

**Table 2 – Analysis of Behavioural Purchase Intentions**

Do You Intent to Purchase?	Number of Participants	Mean	Std. Deviation
Corona	139	0.941	1.798
ICEE	139	0.079	1.326
Samsung	139	1.25	1.603
Coke	139	1.65	1.453
Panasonic	139	0.531	1.371
Nike	139	2.157	1.240
Pepsi	139	0.43	1.677
Heineken	139	0.817	1.772
Adidas	139	1.629	1.373
Dell	139	0.07	1.521

Table two looks at the intent to purchase brands. Based on the findings, only four brand experienced a slightly positive indication of intention to purchase. Nike, with a mean = 2.16, shows the highest level of intention to purchase. Brand attitude was measured by means of a 3 item, seven- point scale (not appealing/appealing, unpleasant/pleasant, dislike/like).The three items were mean scored and checked for reliability, which yielded a solid Cronbach’s Alpha score above .800.

The last set of questions asked participants how familiar they were with brands, again brands that appeared in the movie and filler brand in similar product categories were used, a three point scale was used (0=never heard of, 1=heard of but not used 2=used).

**Table 3 – Analysis of Brand Familiarity**

Have you heard of, used, consumed or owned	Number of Participants	Mean	Std. Deviation
Dell	137	1.336	0.532
Adidas	139	1.856	0.372
Heineken	139	1.834	0.392
Pepsi	97	1.917	0.312
Nike	138	1.920	0.297
Panasonic	135	1.704	0.474
Corona	139	1.676	0.628
ICEE	136	0.471	0.688
Samsung	136	1.728	0.463
Coke	138	1.971	0.168

As shown in Table 3, the prominent placement ICEE is not available in New Zealand and as a result a mean =.471, was reported.

### **4.3 Procedure**

After the approval of the AUT Ethics committee (See Appendix 1 for AUT Ethics approval) was obtained, questionnaires were handed-out to a convenience sample of undergraduate students from the Business and Law Faculty. Before the research they were all given a participants' information sheet (See Appendix 4 – for example of participant information sheet).

The information sheet was provided to inform them that participation is entirely voluntary and optional. While the information sheet explained the details of the research (such as no uniquely identifiable individual, demographic or personal information will be collected) participants were advised that they will not be exposed to any risk of privacy through loss of confidential information. Other details included in the information sheet explain that no discomfort should be involved with this study. However, participants retain the right to stop at any time if they feel uncomfortable. It is important to note that title and description of true nature of the experiment was not provided at this time to participants, as it this would prime the participant's response by having them seek out and focus more on embedded brands.

The questionnaire was designed to measure recall, recognition, brand attitudes, behavioural intentions and familiarity in two scenarios - unfocused viewing and task focused viewing. All students were shown the same seven-minute clip of the movie Step Up – 3D. However, groups that were randomly selected for the task focused condition were provided with additional instructions directing them to pay attention to the numbers that will appear off-frame. A series of six, one-digit numbers appeared at varied times and positions throughout the clip. This resulted in one group of participants being given a task specific goal that

visually distracted them and also increased cognitive load as they had to recall numbers that to sum up at a later time. Participants were then asked to sum up the total of all the numbers that appeared.

The data obtained through the experiment will be analysed using SPSS version 20, and multiple regression ANOVA tests. Before analysis began responses were checked for sufficiency and few missing values (max. missing was eight cases) were completed using the EM algorithm.

#### **4.5 Results**

First it was tested whether movie liking was different between the two conditions which yielded in no significant differences; also there was no effect of gender on the dependent variables observed.

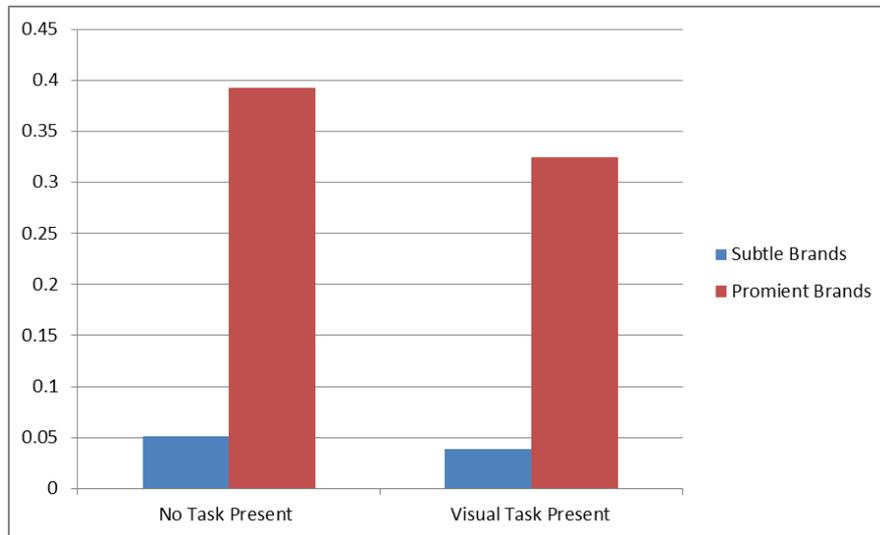
##### *Hypothesis 1:*

Subtly placed brands will experience lower levels of (a) recall and (b) recognition compared to prominently placed brands. However if the visual task is in the area where the subtly placed brands appear they will show no significant differences between the visual task condition compared to the non-task condition, while the recall and recognition rates for prominently placed brands should decrease.

In testing Hypothesis 1 it was assumed that recall and recognition between subtle and prominently placed brands will be moderated by the visual task. This was tested by calculating two repeated measures ANOVA. The within-factor was the percentage of correctly recalled prominent vs. subtle placed brands, the between-factor was the visual task

condition (no visual task vs. visual task in the surroundings of the movie). The ANOVA for recall revealed significant main effects as well as a significant interaction effect.

**Graph 1. Depicts the Changes in Recall in terms of Percentages of Subtle and Prominent Brands when task behavior is activated**



As expected, subtly placed brands were less recalled compared to prominently placed brands ( $RECALL_{subtle}=0.045$ ,  $RECALL_{prominent}=0.355$ ,  $F(1,137)=796.517$ ,  $p=.000$ ). The main effect of the visual task was also significant, indicating that that the participants' ability to recall brands correctly in a visual task condition was reduced ( $RECALL_{visualtask}=0.182$ ,  $RECALL_{novisualtask}=0.222$ ,  $F(1,137)=9.912$ ,  $p=.002$ ). Finally a significant interaction effect was observed ( $F(1,137)=6.219$ ,  $p=.014$ ). Single comparisons showed that for subtle placed brands no significant differences for the condition of visual task vs. no visual task was observed ( $RECALL_{visualtask}=0.039$ ,  $RECALL_{novisualtask}=0.051$ ,  $t(1,137)=1.430$ ,  $p=.155$ ). However as expected in H1(a) for the prominent placed brands suffered from the visual task ( $RECALL_{visualtask}=0.325$ ,  $RECALL_{novisualtask}=0.393$ ,  $t(1,105.37)=2.933$ ,  $p=.003$ ). Thus H1(a) is confirmed by the experimental data.

Testing H1(b) the repeated measures ANOVA showed significant main effects for the prominence of the placement as well as for the visual task condition. In line with the expectations the subtle placed brand were less remembered compared to the prominent ones ( $RECOG_{\text{subtle}}=.101$ ,  $RECOG_{\text{prominent}}=.518$ ,  $F(1,137)=622.634$ ,  $p=.000$ ). The visual task as expected leads to a reduction of recognition ( $RECOG_{\text{visualtask}}=.287$ ,  $RECOG_{\text{novisualtask}}=.332$ ,  $F(1,137)=5.911$ ,  $p=.016$ ).

The interaction effect was unexpectedly not supported by the data ( $F(1,137)=.055$ ,  $p=.815$ ). Thus H1 (b) is only partly supported. This could be due to the fact that one of the prominent brands was very familiar (Nike) while the other one (ICEE) was unfamiliar for this audience. This will be researched in the following analyses.

### *Hypothesis 2*

If participants are challenged with another task, it will subsequently lead to a lower level of: (a) attitudes and (b) behavioural intentions, for both subtle as well as prominently placed brands. It is expected that for prominent placed brands this devaluation effect is even stronger. Hypothesis 2(a) and (b) address the influence of placement prominence and the visual task on (a) attitudes towards the brand as well as (b) behavioral intentions to use the brand. The repeated measures ANOVA found no significant differences between subtle and prominent placed brands in terms of the overall attitude ( $F(1,137)=2.535$ ,  $p=.114$ ). As discussed earlier the visual task yielded a significant main effect.

Participants in the visual task condition rated the brands significantly lower on the attitude scales compared to participants who were not exposed to a visual task. ( $ATT_{\text{visualtask}}=1.108$ ,  $ATT_{\text{novisualtask}}=1.430$ ,  $F(1,137)=7.513$ ,  $p=.007$ ). The interaction effect although in the

hypothesised direction was not significant ( $F(1,137)=1.266$ ,  $p=.263$ ). However considering that Nike had a far superior brand attitude and was very familiar with the participants, a single comparison for just ICEE was performed. As expected for the unfamiliar and prominent placed brand ICEE, the visual task lead to a significant decrease in the brand attitudes ( $ICEE_{\text{visualtask}}=-.196$ ,  $ICEE_{\text{novisualtask}}=.367$ ,  $t(1,137)=2.891$ ,  $p=.004$ ). Thus the results indicate the theorised effect at least for an unfamiliar brand.

The repeated measures ANOVA found no significant differences between subtle and prominent placed brands in terms of the overall attitude ( $F(1,137)=2.535$ ,  $p=.114$ ). As discussed earlier the visual task yielded a significant main effect.

The results for H2 (b) were similar participants in the visual task condition rated the brands lower on intention to purchase scales compared to participants who were not exposed to a visual task. ( $BI_{\text{subtle}}=1.20$ ), ( $BI_{\text{promient}}=1.12$ ),  $F(1,137)=.712$ ,  $p=.40$ ). The interaction effect although in the hypothesized direction was not significant ( $F(1,137)=.712$ ,  $p=.54$ ). As expected the both subtly and prominently placed brands had lower levels of behavioral intentions when the visual task was presented however, these levels were not significantly lower. However considering that Nike had a far superior brand attitude and was very familiar with the participants, a single comparison for just ICEE was performed. As expected for the unfamiliar and prominent placed brand ICEE, the visual task lead to a slight decrease in brand familiarity  $ICEE\_FAM_{\text{visualtask}}=.504$ ,  $ICEE\_FAM_{\text{novisualtask}}=.4133$ ,  $t(1,134)=-1.07$ ,  $p=.283$ ).

## ***Chapter 5: Discussion***

This chapter discusses the final conclusions, which will elaborate on the findings from Chapter 4. In addition to expanding on these findings, this chapter will also provide: limitations of this study, managerial implications for the research and highlight areas for future research.

### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

This study examines the effectiveness of product placement in terms of recall, recognition and behavior intentions when task direct behavior is present. A total of 139 undergraduate students were randomly assigned to one of the two groups: visual task and no visual task.

The research initially predicted that both levels of recall and recognition would be lower for prominent placements when task behavior is activated. However the results showed that only the lower level of recall was significant. Thus, only H1 (a) subtle brand will experience lower levels of recall than prominent brands, but no change will occur if task behavior is activated.

The second hypothesis predicted that both (a) attitudes and (b) behavioral intentions would be lowered when task directed behavior was activated, and that the lowering would be more pronounced for prominent brands than subtle brands. However, neither H2 (a) or (b) was able to be proven significant, but it is theorized that H2 (a) could prove significant for unfamiliar brands.

**Table 4: Findings for Hypothesis**

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Supported</b>
<p>H1(a): Subtly placed brands will experience lower levels of recall compared to prominently placed brands. However, if the visual task is in the area where the subtle brands are placed they will show no significant differences between the visual task condition compared to the non-task condition, while recall rates for prominent placed brands should decrease.</p>	<p>Supported</p>
<p>H1(b) Subtly placed brands will experience lower levels of recognition compared to prominently placed brands. However, if the visual task is in the area where the subtle brands are placed they will show no significant differences between the visual task condition compared to the non-task condition, while recognition rates for prominent placed brands should decrease.</p>	<p>Partially Supported</p>
<p>H2 (a) If participants are challenged with another task that will subsequently lead to a lower level of: attitudes, for both subtle as well as prominent placed brands. While it is expected that for prominent placed brands this devaluation effect is even stronger</p>	<p>Partially Supported</p>
<p>H2 (b) If participants are challenged with another task that will subsequently lead to a lower level of: behavioral intentions, for both subtle as well as prominent placed brands. While it is expected that for prominent placed brands this devaluation effect is even stronger</p>	<p>Partially Supported</p>

Overall, only one the proposed four hypotheses were proven to be supported.

## 5.2 Discussion

This research was conducted to investigate if selective attention as a result of task oriented behaviour affected the effectiveness of product placement. It specifically studied the role that cognitive load and distractor devaluation play in the process of PPL effectiveness.

The literature review conducted in chapter two highlighted the differences in effectiveness of the two types of placements: subtle and prominent each comprising of audio and visual components. Based on these studies, it was predicted in H1 that prominent placements having both an audio and visual component would experience higher rates of recall and recognition resulting in higher brand attitudes when compared to subtly placed brands. However, when a task was introduced to viewers, the rates of recall and recognition would decrease for prominent placements only - the rates for recall and recognition of subtly placed brands would remain relatively consistent. The findings for the study showed that even though both recall and recognition measures were lower with the visual task, only the findings for recall were significant. Although H1 (b) was not proven significant, it showed that a downward effect in recognition would occur in the presence of a visual task.

With regard to the findings for H2 (a) although attitudes towards prominent placements declined in the presence of active task behaviour, the use of the popular brand Nike within the movie was so well recalled by participants it greatly influenced the findings. Thus, if analysing the findings using only ICEE as our prominent brand, it can be theorised that a significant lowering of brand attitudes will occur for unfamiliar brands when task behaviour is activated.

It is important to note that during the planning of this experiment only the presence of two prominently placed brands: Nike & ICEE were taken into account. However, upon evaluating the participants' responses: New York University and New York City were included as prominent brands.

The effect that task directed behaviour proved accurate when unknown brands were used thus H2 (a) & H2 (b), were partly confirmed.

### **5.3 Limitations**

Some limitations of this research results from using a student sample in an artificial laboratory setting. Dens, De Pelsmacker, Wouters & Purnawirawan (2012) highlighted key problems that arise from experiments designed to “force exposure” (1) participants are typically suspicious of the true intention of the experiment, which in turn compromises the results; (2) participants are more focused and attentive in a controlled laboratory settings than they would be in a typical home setting; (3) time constraints from participants and laboratory facilities resulted in the utilization of a shortened clip that provided brand placements in an inorganic and artificial manner.

### **5.4 Managerial Implications**

The main implication of this research for marketing managers is that placement prominence is not the key factor in making a message effective. Advertisers and media buyers should instead focus on providing tailored branded content for appropriately positioned in media vehicles that are primarily utilized in the home environment. Based on the finding of this study, brands or products located near the ‘goal’ will experience greater devaluation, as it greatly interferes with task completion. If a program airs on a channel with live streaming

news at the bottom of the screen, marketers should avoid positioning brands at the bottom of the frame.

This research has shown that the viewing patterns of consumers are different in a home environment. With multi-tasking behavior, stimulating selective attention and competing for consumer attention is on the rise and this should be a key consideration for advertisers to focus more on buying and positioning of embedded brands.

### **5.5 Future Research.**

The study mentioned the need to investigate the role of brand familiarity as a moderating factor of PPL effectiveness, as Gould, Gupta and Grabner-Krauter (2000) argue, considering brand placement effectiveness in different countries is important from a marketing point of view in terms of the issue of standardization versus adaptation.

It is hoped that this study provides sufficiently intriguing results to motivate research into the effectiveness of unfamiliar brands, because product placement cannot simply be used as the first alternative to traditional forms of advertising. More consideration and research is needed to not just to understand the effects of PPL, but how consumers are engaging with and connecting to media vehicle, for as this research has highlighted that the viewing environment cannot be underestimated.

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## Appendix List

### Appendix 1 – AUT Ethics Approval Letter



23 May 2013

Martin Waiguny  
Faculty of Business and Law

Dear Martin

Re Ethics Application: **13/95 Are product placements effective? The moderating role of viewing distraction.**  
Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the AUT University Ethics Committee (AUTECS).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 22 May 2016.

As part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTECS:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 22 May 2016;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 22 May 2016 or on completion of the project.

It is a condition of approval that AUTECS is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTECS approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

AUTECS grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to obtain this. If your research is undertaken within a jurisdiction outside New Zealand, you will need to make the arrangements necessary to meet the legal and ethical requirements that apply there.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, please use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz).

All the very best with your research,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Madeline Banda', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Madeline Banda  
Acting Executive Secretary  
**Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee**

Cc: Thuthi Gunawardena [thuthi\\_g@yahoo.com](mailto:thuthi_g@yahoo.com)

## Appendix 2 - Clip Timing Screen Shots

### Step Up 3D: Storyline and Placements

**Plot Summary From IMDB:** Moose attends NYU, to become an engineering student, he intends to quit dancing, after an accidental collision with Luke, he finds himself drawn into an impromptu dance battle. After seeing his winning dance moves Luke befriends Moose and introduces him to other misfit dancers and the vault (a community building where the dancers live and train).



Intro Scene: Length of clip 2:40 – 6:00



Explanation: The clip will start on Moose's university orientation tour, will on the tour he bumps into Luke and gets drawn into an dance battle



Length on clip: 8:52 – 9:25



Length of Clip: 22:44 – 23:40

Explanation: Luke rescues Moose after the dance battle ends badly, and takes him to his house



Length of Clip: 42:18 - 43:39

Explanation: Luke spending time with another dancer

## Appendix 3 – Questionnaire

### ***Viewing Patterns, how do they influence recollection of movie content?***

The aim of this research is to investigate how different viewing patterns influence the recall of movie content.

We will be asking you a few simple questions; please answer them as openly and honestly as possible. There is no right or wrong answer. Please indicate your feelings and/or recall. All the data of the survey will be kept and analysed anonymously. Please do not provide your name on the questionnaire. To thank you for your time and participation in a draw for 5 x \$ 50 Westfield vouchers. A competition entry form will be handed to you after you have completed the survey. The data from the survey and the entry in the draw are not related to each other. The winners of the draw will be notified by email after the data collection process is conducted. Before completing the questionnaire, please make sure that you agree with the following points:

- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw before completion of data collection, I understand that all relevant information, including complete surveys, will be destroyed.
- By completing this survey, I agree to be a part of the research.

By filling out this questionnaire and returning it to me, you indicate your consent to participate in this research project. Please *fill out the questionnaire independently, without consulting anyone.*

# Questionnaire

*Please follow the instructions to answer the questions mentioned in italics under the single questions.*

**1. What Is your gender ?**

*Please check the box that applies.*

Male	Female
------	--------

**2. How old are you?**

*Please write your response in years in the box*

**3. What is the sum of the numbers showed around the movie clip?**

***This question will only be included in the distracted condition***

**4. How much did you like the movie clip from Step Up 3D?**

*Please circle the your degree of liking*

Strongly dislike						Strongly like
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>

**5. Did you know the movie Step Up 3D existed?**

*Please check the box that applies to you.*

I did not know the movie at all.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I heard about the movie but did not watch it.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes, I have already watched the movie	<input type="checkbox"/>

**6. This movie is targeting teenagers do you feel it's a good fit?**

*Please circle the your degree of your agreement*

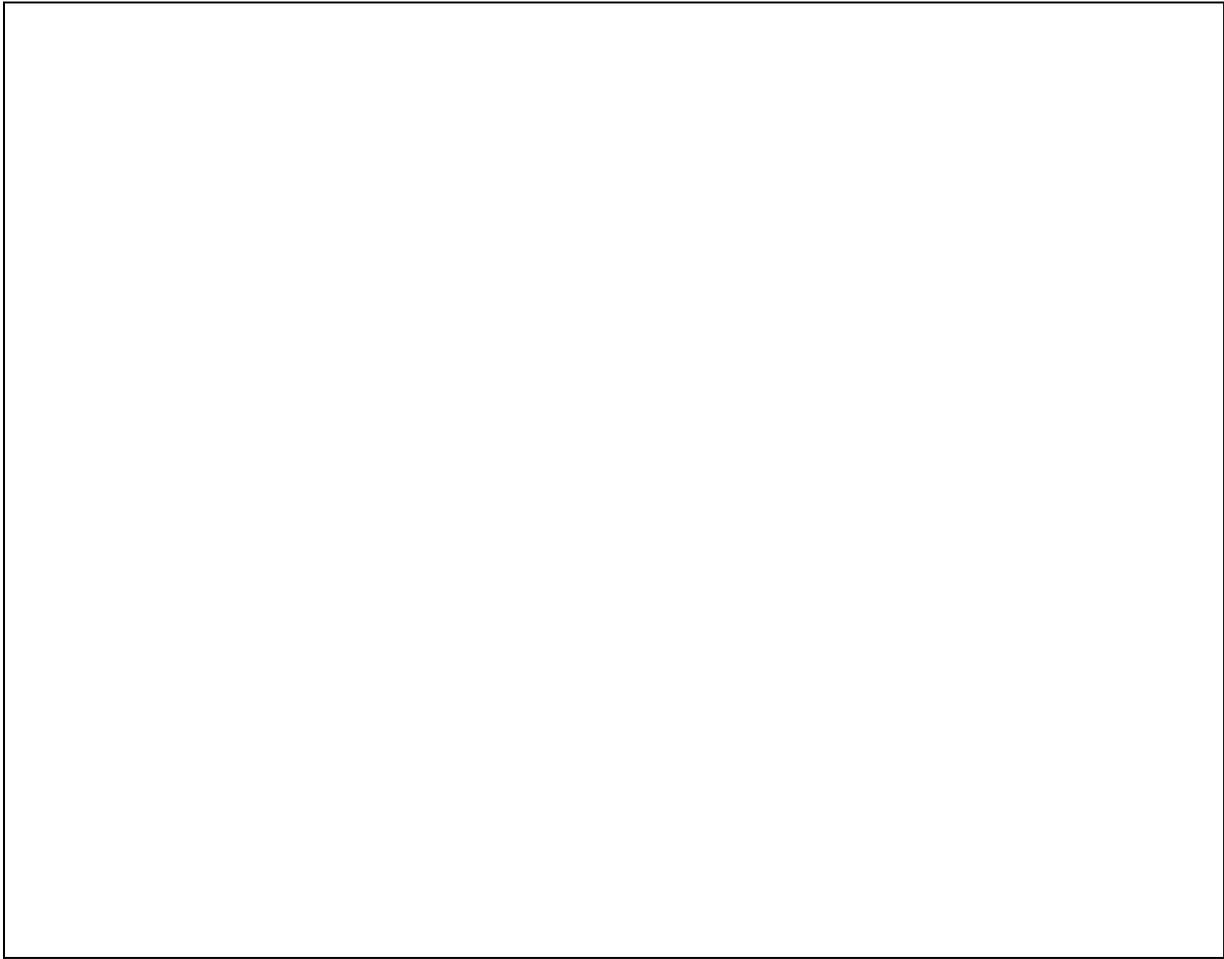
Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>

**7. What do you remember most of the showed movie clip?**

*Please fill in what comes first in your mind if you think of the content of the movie clip.*

**8. Are you aware of any brands or product placements within the clip?**

*Please list the brands and products below, recall as many as came into your mind. Please do not add any brands after finishing this question.*



**9. Given the list below, which brands can you remember appearing in the movie clip?**

*Please tick the brands you can remember from the movie clip, choose as many you like.*

<input type="checkbox"/> Pepsi Cola	<input type="checkbox"/> IBM
<input type="checkbox"/> Burger King	<input type="checkbox"/> SLURPEE
<input type="checkbox"/> Target	<input type="checkbox"/> Vodafone
<input type="checkbox"/> AT&T	<input type="checkbox"/> Izod
<input type="checkbox"/> HP	<input type="checkbox"/> Hershey's
<input type="checkbox"/> HSCB	<input type="checkbox"/> Samsung
<input type="checkbox"/> Budweiser	<input type="checkbox"/> Coca Cola
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank of America	<input type="checkbox"/> Victoria Secret
<input type="checkbox"/> Sephora	<input type="checkbox"/> Chevrolet
<input type="checkbox"/> Miller Light	<input type="checkbox"/> SLUSHIE
<input type="checkbox"/> CVS	<input type="checkbox"/> Sony
<input type="checkbox"/> ICEE	<input type="checkbox"/> McDonalds
<input type="checkbox"/> JVC	<input type="checkbox"/> Hollister
<input type="checkbox"/> Panasonic	<input type="checkbox"/> Starbucks
<input type="checkbox"/> Ford	<input type="checkbox"/> Wendy's
<input type="checkbox"/> Lincoln	<input type="checkbox"/> BMW
<input type="checkbox"/> Facebook	<input type="checkbox"/> Reese's
<input type="checkbox"/> Dell	<input type="checkbox"/> Corona
<input type="checkbox"/> Microsoft	<input type="checkbox"/> Yahoo

<input type="checkbox"/> Nike	<input type="checkbox"/> Google
<input type="checkbox"/> Adidas	<input type="checkbox"/> Puma
<input type="checkbox"/> Disney	<input type="checkbox"/> Heineken

**10. Considering follow brands, how would you rate them?**

*Please indicate for each of the brands how much you agree to one of the points of the continuum.*

**Corona**

Not appealing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Appealing
Unpleasant	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	pleasant
Dislike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Like
Would not like to try/buy	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Would like to try/buy

**Icee**

Not appealing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Appealing
Unpleasant	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	pleasant
Dislike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Like
Would not like to try/buy	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Would like to try/buy

**Samsung**

not appealing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Appealing
unpleasant	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	pleasant
Dislike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Like
would not like to try/buy	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	would like to try/buy

**Coca Cola**

Not appealing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Appealing
Unpleasant	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	pleasant
Dislike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Like
Would not like to try/buy	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Would like to try/buy

**Panasonic**

Not appealing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Appealing
Unpleasant	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	pleasant
Dislike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Like
Would not like to try/buy	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Would like to try/buy

**Nike**

Not appealing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Appealing
Unpleasant	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	pleasant
Dislike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Like
Would not like to try/buy	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Would like to try/buy

**Pepsi Cola**

Not appealing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Appealing
Unpleasant	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	pleasant
Dislike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Like
Would not like to try/buy	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Would like to try/buy

**Heineken**

Not appealing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Appealing
Unpleasant	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	pleasant
Dislike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Like

Would not like to try/buy	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Would like to try/buy
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**Adidas**

Not appealing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Appealing
Unpleasant	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	pleasant
Dislike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Like
Would not like to try/buy	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Would like to try/buy

**Dell**

Not appealing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Appealing
Unpleasant	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	pleasant
Dislike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Like
Would not like to try/buy	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Would like to try/buy

**11. Which of the brands mentioned in the latter question have you already consumed/owned or heard of?**

*Please tick the appropriate boxes.*

Brand	Did not know it at all	Have heard about it, but never bought/consumed it.	I already bought/consumed it once.
Corona	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Icee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Samsung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coca Cola	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Panasonic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nike	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pepsi Cola			
Heineken	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adidas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dell	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Thank you again for your participation!**

# Participant Information Sheet



***Date Information Sheet Produced:***

April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012

***Project Title***

***Viewing Patterns: How do they influence recollection of movie contents***

***An Invitation***

My name is Thuthi Gunawardena and I am a Master of Business student at AUT University. I am conducting research on the the impact watching behaviour has on memory recollection of movie content. I would like to invite you to participate in this research. Data collected will be used only for the stated purpose. All information collected will be kept confidential. You may withdraw your participation at any point during completing the experiment and the completion questionnaire without any effect to your rights.

***What is the purpose of this research?***

I am conducting this research for my Master of Business disseration, in order to understand how different watching behaviours affect the recollection of movie content.

***How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?***

You were identified, as you are an undergraduate student in Auckland, New Zealand.

***What will happen in this research?***

All participants will be asked to view a short movie clip and complete a questionnaire. You will not be asked to provide identifying information. The questionnaire is anonymous. The completion of the entire process viewing the music video and completing the questionnaire should take approximately 10 minutes. All data gathered will used for the sole purpose of completing my research.

***What are the discomforts and risks?***

It is extremely unlikely that any participant should feel or experience discomfort of any kind. If you encounter any discomfort you may withdraw at any time.

***What are the benefits?***

The research outcomes will be of benefit to academics debating the moderating factors that affect the recollection of content of entertainment formats like movies. Your participation in this research will allow me to complete my Master of Business dissertation

You will not be paid for participating in the research; however as a gesture of appreciation for time you have the option of entering the draw for 1 of 5 \$50 Westfield vouchers. The winners will be randomly chosen among the interested participants of the research. To participate in the draw please complete the separate provided entry form and submit it to the indicated box. The overall number of participants target is 80 individuals thus, the chances to win one of the vouchers is 1:16.

***How will my privacy be protected?***

All survey participants will be anonymous please do not indicate any personal data which allows to identify you on the survey forms. The survey will be collected in a separate box in front/at the exit, of the classroom. If you wish to participate in the draw you will need to provide some basic contact information i.e. email or phone number. This information will never be disclosed and the entry forms will be destroyed after the winners are drawn. The research report will provide summary percentages mean scores and total numbers of responses (not pointing out any individuals). All data will be stored with the primary supervisor in a locked cupboard.

***What are the costs of participating in this research?***

There are no costs to you other than about 10 minutes needed to watch the movie clip and fill out the questionnaire.

***What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?***

*You can take a few minutes to consider your participation in the research. You do have the choice to return at a later day if the timing is inconvenient.*

***How do I agree to participate in this research?***

By completing the consent form as well as the questionnaire you have consented to partake in the research.

***Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?***

A synopsis of the results will be available at the following free-access link once the data is analysed: <https://www.dropbox.com/>. You can further choose to provide an email address on the consent form to be notified when the report is ready.

***What do I do if I have concerns about this research?***

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor Dr. Martin Waiguny: Email – [martin.waiguny@aut.ac.nz](mailto:martin.waiguny@aut.ac.nz) (64) 09 921 9999 ext 2069

***Whom do I contact for further information about this research?***

**Researcher Contact Details:** *Thuthi Gunawardena* Email: [thuthi\\_g@yahoo.com](mailto:thuthi_g@yahoo.com)

**Project Supervisor Contact Details:** Dr. Martin Waiguny: Email – [martin.waiguny@aut.ac.nz](mailto:martin.waiguny@aut.ac.nz)

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013*,  
AUTEK Reference number *13/95*.**