

EXECUTION OF ADVERTISING AND CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

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ABSTRACT:

The article focuses on the topic of celebrity endorsement in TV commercials in terms of their perception by Generation Y. For the purposes of the study effectiveness of advertising was reduced on recall of commercials – in the sense of one's ability to correctly link the celebrity to promoted brand/product. The aim of the text is to verify the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement concepts both on the basis of particular attributes and qualities of the endorser and on the execution of commercials. This approach allows operative assessment of validity of some established theories regarding the celebrity endorsement. In the pre-research phase we applied a hybrid post-testing methodology, namely the recall method, to select two groups of celebrity endorsers: successful and unsuccessful ones. In the following research we employed a method of polarity profile on selected celebrity endorsers, while five adjective groups were chosen. These groups represented the examined dimensions of attractiveness, credibility, expertise, and the attitude towards the advertisement. Results of the study confirm little evidence which would support ability to recall linkage of the celebrity with the promoted product/brand. However, the research approves presence of some irritating elements related to the perception of commercials, which were identified as applicable to effective celebrity endorsement. These findings emphasise the relevance of proper execution of commercials which, in the context of celebrity endorsement, could be thought of as a relatively marginalised issue.

KEY WORDS:

celebrity endorsement, commercials, properties of celebrity endorsers, execution of commercials

Introduction

Celebrity endorsement¹ is an established form of brand and product communication today. Probably the most known and acknowledged definition of this phenomenon of contemporary advertising is the one proposed by McCracken: celebrity endorser is a person who “*enjoys a public fame and such a fame is used in a way*

¹ Celebrities are integral parts of contemporary culture and their impact is obvious in many aspects of social life, e.g. they function as important role models for young people. (For more information, see: SOLÍK, M., VRABEC, N., PETRANOVÁ, D.: New Role Models for Slovak Youth in the Context of Media Communication. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2014, Vol. 10, No. 4. p. 143-153).

that he/she appears in advertisements for a promoted product.”² A fundamental, but sometimes neglected part of the celebrity endorsement process in advertising, is the execution of a commercial. Besides the role a celebrity plays in commercial, the final execution as a part of advertising creative strategy can be considered as one of the most important determinant of effective advertising communication.³ From this point of view, it is not just important how the celebrity is perceived by the audience, but the aggregate perception of the commercial should be considered as well. A great deal of attention is paid to celebrity selection in the present literature,⁴ but less significance is given to the analysis of the commercial execution. Even though in the traditional celebrity endorsement models (Source Attractiveness Theory, Source Credibility Theory and Meaning Transfer Model) some recommendations about expected celebrity qualities are described (both in relation to brand/product and to the target group), the selected criteria of celebrity qualities are understood as predetermined. However, it is possible to take an opposite point of view and consider how to work with a celebrity in advertising so that not only the pre-associated meanings linked to the celebrity are used and recycled, but also how to enrich the meanings of creative output. Appropriate execution of a commercial offers a unique opportunity to use the celebrity endorsement potential at its best. It is obvious that the quality of execution in comparison to other TV commercial aspects (in our case especially celebrity presence), is at least an equal component of the persuasive influence an advertising spot has on the recipients.

An explanation of the absence of any such reflection of the execution of a TV commercial could link us to the rather simplified concept: that the execution of the commercial is not so important and its persuasive ability depends mostly on appropriate celebrity selection. This explanation could lead to placing uncritical emphasis on content (celebrity) over form (implementation of celebrity into the advertising text). However, traditional celebrity endorsement models more or less correspond with this idea. A creative execution and originality of an advertising spot is not a luxury, but in reality originality of execution could be more influential factor of commercial success.⁵ This point of view has been confirmed through research,⁶ claiming that only the juxtaposition of celebrity is important, and that the brand/product itself cannot be a sufficient factor for fulfilling the need of advertising communication efficiency.

The ways and means of creative execution of commercials – including celebrity endorsement format – are immense. A wide spectrum of celebrity endorsement formats can be found in advertising execution: from appearing for a few seconds to the full focus on the celebrity as a dominant component. A similarly wide spectrum of opportunities is observed in relation to the technical demands related to the execution of an advertising spot: from technically (formally) flawless commercials reminiscent of movie scenes, to intentionally or unintentionally unconvincing commercials.

Scope of Research and Methodology

The aim of the present research was to verify theoretical concepts dealing with the effectiveness of TV commercial celebrity endorsement in a Central European country – in our case Slovakia. We focused on examining factors that could explain which practices associated with celebrity endorsement format could be marked as the most important in sense of how the particular age cohort of Generation Y recalls the commercials.⁷

The construction of the research was based on the assumption that recall of a commercial is one of most recognised factors of its effectiveness, and therefore could be analogically used in case of celebrity endorsement commercials format. Together with commercial processing we consider its recall as one of the most significant part of related cognitive processes. Next to the fact that the ability to save and keep a commercial in memory represents an important phase of its cognitive processing, it can be also considered as one of the key component of advertising effectiveness.⁸ In such a semantically structured field, we will partially use interchangeably advertising effectiveness and its recall while keeping in mind the limits of such a research, which can result from this mutual terminological confusion. Along with the issue of examining the effectiveness of commercials which use celebrity endorsement format through the recall category, the research also considers the affective level of perception. Therefore, the respondents’ attitudes towards the evaluated commercials were examined too. However, the behavioural issue was not taken into account in the research scope. The empirical part of the research project was carried out in two phases – pre-research and research. The pre-research phase was carried out from 6th May to 10th May 2013; the main research was conducted from 23rd May to 14th June 2013.

During the pre-research, we applied a hybrid post-testing methodology to test the respondent recognition of the celebrities which had appeared in the commercials while in general, we were inspired by the advertising impact post-tests,⁹ or post-hoc ad testing,¹⁰ particularly by the recall method. The used method was unaided recall, which means a recall without any memory support. We asked the respondents a series of open-ended questions in the pre-research phase. Its primary aim was to find out their general knowledge about celebrity endorsers. Secondly, we were interested to see whether respondents could link the celebrities they mentioned to the media which presented the advert. We were also curious if at all and how many celebrities involved in the advertising effort could the respondents name. The most important output from the pre-research was the data that allowed us to select six celebrity endorsers suitable for the main research.

On the base of pre-research findings we decided to apply a polarity profile on selected celebrity endorsers in the main phase. A polarity profile helps researchers learn about the brand, society, political party, etc. Its purpose lies in quantification of respondents’ notions onto a scale that can be effectively processed further on. Four adjective groups were chosen that represented the following examined dimensions: (1) attractiveness, (2) credibility, (3) expertise, and (4) attitude towards the advertisement. We based our adjective selection primarily on the categories determined by Ohanian,¹¹ who suggested adjectives that are evenly distributed between expertise, credibility and attractiveness of celebrity endorsers. In accordance with Ohanian’s recommendation, the adjectives of: attractive/unattractive, classy/not classy, beautiful/ugly and sexy/not sexy into the celebrity attractiveness dimension;¹² the adjectives: dependable/undependable, honest/dishonest, sincere/insincere and trustworthy/untrustworthy into the credibility dimension;¹³ and the adjectives: is an expert/not an expert, experienced/inexperienced, knowledgeable/not knowledgeable, qualified/unqualified and skilled/unskilled into the celebrity expertise dimension were included. The construction of the fourth examined dimension was inspired by Mitchell and Olson¹⁴ (attitude towards the advertisement), who took into consideration four adjectives: good/bad, like/dislike, not irritating/irritating and interesting/uninteresting. The questionnaire therefore contained six sheets for six celebrities/commercials. The sheets were identical with the exception of the section ‘celebrity expertise’, where the subject focused particularly on the area denoted by the commercial while the adjectives were congruent. Before each sheet was completed, the tested adver-

2 McCracken, G.: Who is the Celebrity Endorser? Cultural Foundation of the Endorsement Process. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1989, Vol. 16, No. 1, p. 310.

3 SVĚTLÍK, J.: *O podstatě reklamy*. Bratislava : Eurokódex, 2012, p. 146-149; BELCH, G. E., BELCH, M. A.: *Advertising and Promotion – An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective*. New York : McGraw-Hill Education, 2003, p. 175-176.

4 SHIMP, T. A.: *Advertising, Promotion, and Other Aspects of Integrated Marketing Communications*. Mason : Thompson, 2007, p. 306.

5 About the importance of wow effect, creativity and execution of advertising for contemporary advertising agencies in Slovakia, see: MENDELOVÁ, D., ZAUŠKOVÁ, A.: Innovation in the Slovak Advertising Environment. In *Communication Today*, 2015, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 50-53. There are numerous studies reasoning the importance of the creativity and originality of advertising. For example, see: FICHNOVÁ, K., WOJCIECHOWSKI, L. P., SZABO, P.: Originalita plagiátu – plagiátorstvo originality (poznámky k prvku kampane SNS). In *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis : Studia Linguistica VII. Dialog z tradycją*, 2012, Vol. 115, No. 7, p. 106-115.

6 PRINGLE, H.: *Celebrity Sells*. New York : John Wiley & Sons, 2004, p. 95, p. 153.

7 There are several authors dealing with the perception of celebrity endorsement, among others especially work of Roobina Ohanian has been inspirational for the presented research. See: OHANIAN, R.: The Impact of Celebrity Spokespersons’ Perceived Image on Customers’ Intention to Purchase. In *Journal of Advertising Research*, 1991, Vol. 31, No. 1, p. 46-54.

8 MEHTA, A., PURVIS, S. C.: Reconsidering Recall and Emotion in Advertising. In *Journal of Advertising Research*, 2006, Vol. 46, No. 1, p. 49-50.

9 HU, Y., LODISH, L. M., KRIEGER, A. M.: An Analysis of Real World TV Advertising. Tests: A 15-Year Update. In *Journal of Advertising Research*, 2007, Vol. 47, No. 3, p. 341-353.

10 DE PELSMACKER, P., GEUEMS, M., VAN DEN BERGH, J.: *Marketingová komunikace*. Praha : Grada Publishing, a.s., 2003, p. 282-284.

11 OHANIAN, R.: The Impact of Celebrity Spokespersons’ Perceived Image on Customers’ Intention to Purchase. In *Journal of Advertising Research*, 1991, Vol. 31, No. 1, p. 46-54.

12 Adjectives elegant/plain were not included because of the overall scale of the questionnaire (remark added by P. M. and J. S.).

13 Adjectives reliable/unreliable were not included because of the overall scale of the questionnaire (remark added by P. M. and J. S.).

14 MITCHELL, A. A., OLSON, J. C.: Are Product a Beliefs the Only Mediator of Advertising Effects on Brand Attitude. In *Journal of Marketing Research*, 1981, Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 318-332.

tising spot was displayed to the respondents. Consequently, the respondents had 6-7 minutes to fill in the particular sheet. The procedure was carried out identically for each particular commercial. To obtain the results of the best possible quality, we opted for questionnaire variation. The stated procedure aimed at minimising the consequences of serial position effect, thus neutralising the impact the order of the particular advertising spots seen could have on the results. The research was evaluated by using descriptive and inferential statistical methods, especially via non-parametric mathematical statistics methods – Wilcoxon and Mann-Whitney test. When examining polarity profiles, we applied the traditional tools for semantic differential analysis, D statistics and Q correlation. The D statistics represents a linear distance between two concepts, where the lower the value, the lower the distance between the two concepts. Q statistics, a modification of multiple correlation coefficient, gains values from the interval of <-1,1> and is interpreted similarly as Pearson correlation coefficient. Value 1 relates to complete agreement in the perception of the two concepts (i.e. similarity between two evaluated profiles), value -1 means a completely contradictory perception of the two concepts, and null value signifies an absence of similarity in the understanding of the two concepts. Higher absolute values in Q statistics also reveal higher dependency (direct or indirect) in the perception of the two concepts. The calculations were done with the SPSS.

Research Sample

The research file contained a group of university and secondary school students who represented the lower age spectrum of Generation Y in Slovakia. This age cohort was consensually limited by birth years 1977-1994.¹⁵ 380 respondents filled and handed in correctly the research sheets (maximal error 5.03 %). 255 respondents (67.1 %) live in a town, 125 in the countryside (32.9 %), that in general corresponds with demography of inhabitants in Slovakia (54.5 % towns, 45.6 % countryside).¹⁶ Respondent age range was 18 to 27 years of age, the average respondent was 21.19 years old; standard deviation in respondents' age was 1.88 years; and median 21 years. Part of the respondents (approximately 30-40) participated in both phases of the research. 275 females (72.37 %) and 105 males (27.63 %) participated in the research.

The research material selection was subject to two level processes that, on a postmodern basis, reflects a methodological triangulation and interconnects quantitative and qualitative research procedures. Based on the pre-research we obtained in the first selection phase a set of celebrity endorsers that we subsequently reduced in the second phase using a deliberate selection. There was a primary requirement for celebrities to appear in commercials broadcasted in Slovakia by Slovak televisions (Slovak public broadcaster RTVS, commercial broadcasters TV Markíza and TV Joj), and thus each respondent who would participate in the main research would have an equal chance to be familiar with the selected advertising spots. Whether the commercials were designed for a target group of Generation Y, was actually not the subject of our research. Its essence was not an issue of application of celebrity endorsement format, but mainly general presentation of the concept of celebrities in advertising. Based on the pre-research data, we decided for a deliberate choice of three celebrities that we considered (with regard to respondent perception) as successful ones and three celebrities that we considered unsuccessful (see table 1). When deciding if a celebrity appearing in a commercial can be described as successful or not, we used the following criteria:

- a. quantitative number of recalls,
- b. level of factual correctness in matching a celebrity with the promoted product,
- c. time distance from the broadcasting of the commercial up to the present,
- d. variability of celebrities' professional backgrounds and roles in which they appeared in the commercials.

15 MORTON, L. P.: Targeting Generation Y (Segmenting Publics). In *Public Relations Quarterly*, 2002, Vol. 47, No. 2, p. 16; WILLIAMS, K. C., PAGE, R. A.: Marketing to the Generations. In *Journal of Behavioral Studies in Business*, 2011, Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 1-17; NOBLE, S. M., HAYTKO, D. L., PHILLIPS, J.: What Drives College-age Generation Y Consumers? In *Journal of Business Research*, 2009, Vol. 62, No. 6, p. 617-628.

16 For more information, see: KATUŠA et al.: *Vývoj obyvateľstva v Slovenskej republike a krajoch v roku 2013*. Bratislava: Štatistický úrad Slovenskej republiky, 2014.

The stated criteria served us primarily to get acquainted with the subject, and the final choice was adopted according to our aspiration for having a wide selection of various sectors the celebrities come from (sports, culture, etc.). Research material became even more specific when we opted for only home (Slovak and Czech) celebrities. This was the way to avoid potential interference with the appearances of foreign celebrities on foreign TV stations that could have significantly influenced the results because of the innovative, impulsive as well as fragmented communication behaviour in the examined cohort.¹⁷ We also considered a temporal distance of commercials broadcast. From this perspective, we included not only current advertising, but also some older commercials, that have demonstrated sufficient knowledge on the part of recipients. For better orientation, we designed four time zones, depending on the distance of commercials broadcast in comparison with the present time (implementation of the pilot study), large (6 months or more), medium (3-6 months), small (0-3 months) and current (commercial was broadcast at the time of the preliminary research).¹⁸

Table 1: Specification of selected celebrity endorsers

Name of celebrity	Eva Máziková	Peter Sagan	Jan Kraus	Dominika Cibulková	Marek Vašut	Jozef "Jopo" Poláček
Brand/product	Telekom/Happy plan	Citroën/ C3	Mattoni/ Mattoni	Tipos/ Keno 10	Lidl/ Collection of French wines	UPC/ UPC Digital
Product category	Telecommunications	Automobile	Beverage	Betting	Retail	Digital services
Professional background	Singer /TV / guest of shows	Sport	TV/host	Sport	Actor	TV/host/guest of shows
Footage (in seconds)	0:41	0:30	0:15	0:30	0:30	0:34
Total recalls	46	16	5	4	3	1
Link to brand/product	44	6	5	2	2	0
Temporal distance	Large	Current	Large	Large	Medium	Medium
	Successful endorsers			Unsuccessful endorsers		

Source: own processing

Hypotheses Formulation

Hypothesis was based on following research question: Is it possible to statistically confirm the significance of particular celebrity endorser's qualities (or qualities of a commercial) in case of recall of the relation between a celebrity endorser and a promoted brand/product?

H1: We assumed that celebrities identified in the pre-research phase as successful, will be also perceived by the respondents as more credible (H1a), more attractive (H1b) and more expertised (H1c) in comparison to the celebrities identified as unsuccessful.

Credibility, attractiveness and expertise are qualities of celebrity endorsers which, according to some authors mentioned above, represent the most important endorser attributes of effectiveness of this advertising format in the form of recall of advertising message and celebrity itself. Therefore it is being expected that the higher perceived degree of the qualities by the recipients leads to the higher effectiveness of such a form of commercial.

17 LEMMON, N.: *Understanding the New Age Wave: Gen Y. Marketing Info and Ideas*. [online]. [2015-11-23]. Available at: <http://www.lemmontree.com/PDF/Understanding_New_Age_Wave_Gen_Y.pdf>.

18 In determining of time distance, we addressed the relevant media agencies with a request to provide necessary data. Unfortunately, for reasons of commercial confidentiality, our request was not accepted. Secondary option was the use of other available sources, especially weblogs, professional articles (medialne.sk, omediach.com, etc.), popular articles (sme.sk, pravda.sk, etc.), uploaded videos on YouTube, information from magazines such as Trend and Stratégie (remark added by P. M. and J. S.).

H2: We anticipate that the respondents will have more positive attitude towards the advertising (aad) in which the celebrity endorsement format was used.

The attitude towards the advertising (aad) constitutes particular facet of advertising evaluation that is universal and goes beyond the scope of celebrity endorsement.¹⁹ Some authors²⁰ agree with the concept, claiming that the target audience has to create a positive attitude to the advertisement in order to be effective. Based on this premise, we can expect that the focused age cohort will rate more positively those commercials that use successful celebrities and vice versa, the commercials which make use of less successful celebrities will be rated less positively than the first ones.

Results

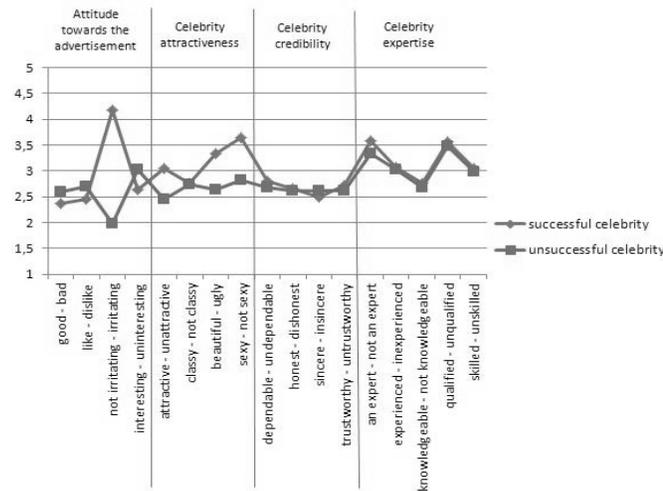


Figure 1: Perception of successful and unsuccessful celebrity endorses (overall results)

Source: own processing

In the **celebrity attractiveness** dimension, the celebrities who fall into the concept of 'successful' were in all criteria (with the exception of the adjective 'exclusive') evaluated more positively. They were also evaluated as significantly more attractive ($Z=-11.18$, $p=0.000$), more beautiful ($Z=-13.749$, $p=0.000$), and particularly more sexy ($Z=-13.142$, $p=0.000$). However, in the absolute numbers one can see difference as a result of the negative evaluation of attractiveness of celebrities in case of adjectives 'beautiful' and even more 'sexy'. The evaluation of attractiveness of unsuccessful celebrities only slightly overlaps into the positive range, which means over the level of 3. We have also noted very balanced results in the dimension of **celebrity credibility**. The results related to both successful and unsuccessful celebrities are very similar. In both cases the credibility evaluation appears in a neutral to positive range (level 3 to 2.5). Especially balanced results were also noted in the 'celebrity expertise' dimension; the respondents' evaluation of 'unsuccessful' celebrities was even slightly more positive, but statistically insignificant here. The evaluation of expertise oscillated around the neutral band with a rather big fluctuation in particular adjective cases.

19 BELCH, G. E., BELCH, M. A.: *Advertising and Promotion - An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective*. New York : McGraw-Hill Education, 2003, p. 277.

20 LUTZ, R. J., MACKENZIE, S. B., BELCH, G. E.: Attitude Toward the Ad As a Mediator of Advertising Effectiveness: Determinants and Consequences. In *Advances in Consumer Research*, 1983, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 532-539.

When constructing the H2 hypothesis, we focused on the dimension of recipients' **attitude towards the advertisement (aad)**. We also presumed that the commercials featuring successful celebrities were perceived more positively than the commercials with unsuccessful celebrities. We identified a significantly more positive perception of the commercials with successful celebrities in case of three adjectives (good, likeable, interesting). The commercials including successful celebrities were perceived as 'better ones' by the respondents ($Z=-4.771$, $p=0.000$), more likeable ($Z=-4.896$, $p=0.000$) and more interesting ($Z=-7.384$, $p=0.000$).

Another important finding states that there is a big gap in case of the adjective 'intrusive' which was significantly higher in association with unsuccessful celebrities ($Z=-16.681$, $p=0.000$). The evaluation of adjective 'intrusive' thus came to a great surprise. The respondents perceive more positively, meaning less intrusively, the commercials with unsuccessful celebrities; and vice versa, the commercials with successful celebrities are perceived as very intrusive.

Table 2: Elaboration of results with D and Q statistics

	D	Q
Whole space	2,838	0,3246
dim A - attitude towards the ad	2,262	-0,99
dim B - attractiveness of endorser	1,229	0,076
dim C - credibility of endorser	0,193	-0,129
dim F - expertness of endorser	0,132	0,995

Source: own processing

The results were furthermore confirmed using D statistics and Q correlation (table 2). Based on the overall results (Figure 1) we found a high positive Q correlation in the dimension of 'celebrity expertise' ($D=0.132$, $Q=0.995$) that results in a consistent perception of successful and unsuccessful celebrities in those cases.

This means that the various dimensions do not differentiate between successful and unsuccessful commercials. However, a high negative correlation Q was observed in the dimension 'attitude to advertising' ($D=2.626$, $Q=-0.99$), which indicates a significantly contradictory perception of successful and unsuccessful celebrities engaged in advertising.

A very low Q correlation in the 'attractiveness' dimension ($D=1.229$, $Q=0.076$) and 'celebrity credibility' ($D=0.193$, $Q=-0.129$) signifies a null similarity in the perception of successful and unsuccessful celebrities in those dimensions. Thus, it was also confirmed by the D and Q statistics that the dimension representing the most obvious difference in the perception of successful and unsuccessful celebrity concept is the perception of an advertising spot.

In summary, H1 was not confirmed, as none of theoretical approaches to celebrity endorsement effectiveness were significantly confirmed as the most important. H2 approved some evidence that attitude towards the ad (aad) was the most possible factor of endorsement effectiveness from ad recall point of view.

The relevance of the findings is compounded by the compactness of individual celebrities' results in the dimension of the 'attitude towards the ad' (aad), particularly in the adjective 'not irritating/irritating', which is, in terms of this study, the most important element. As can be seen by looking at Figure 2, unsuccessful celebrity ads got almost the same rating as irritating ones, while successful celebrity ads (Figure 3) got practically the same rating as irritating.

These results minimise the possibility that the results were influenced by the dominant perception of individual celebrity, but point out the importance of irritating ad in connection with celebrity endorsement.

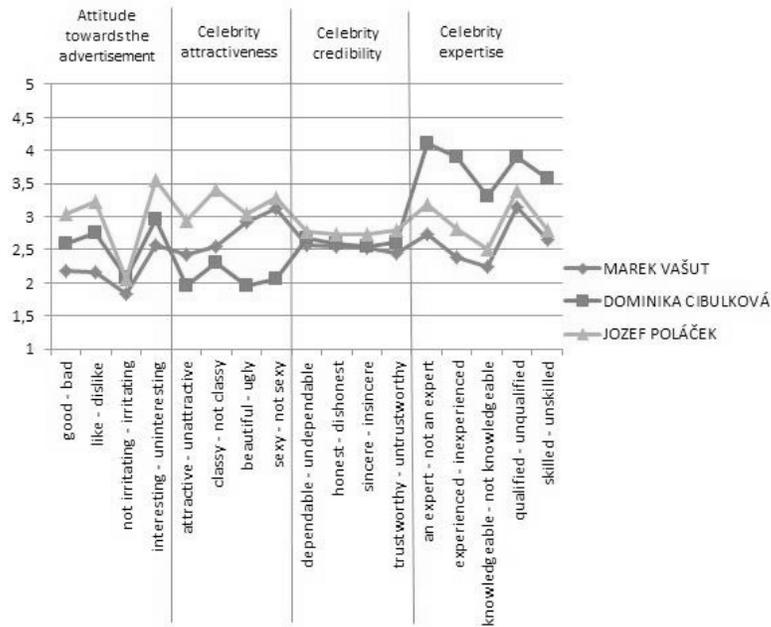


Figure 2: Perception of unsuccessful celebrity endorsers (individual results)

Source: own processing

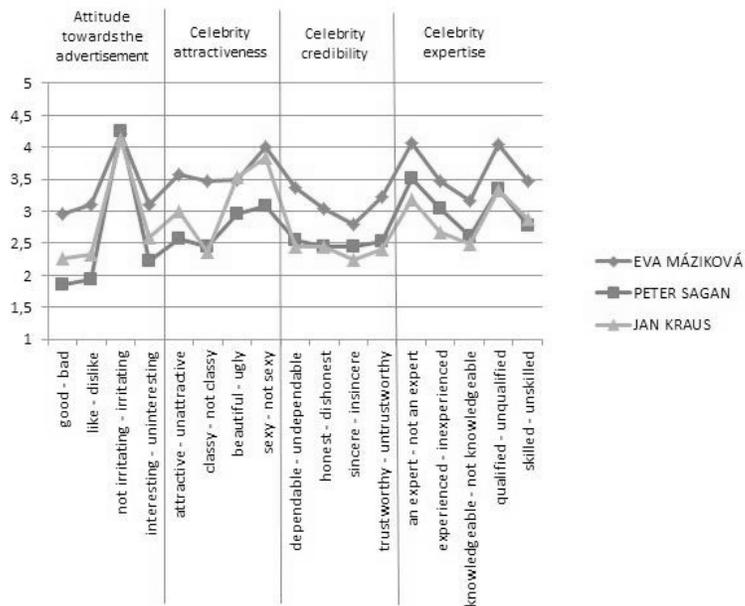


Figure 3: Perception of successful celebrity endorsers (individual results)

Source: own processing

Discussion

Data from the pre-research offer some base for understanding how celebrity endorsement format is perceived by age cohort of Generation Y in Slovakia. The research confirmed that the 'expertise' and 'credibility' dimensions are perceived nearly identically in cases of both successful and unsuccessful celebrities. In comparison to 'attractiveness', these are more abstract and physically less evident dimensions, providing us with a hint for better understanding respondents' behaviour. The evaluation of the two dimensions signals that the respondents were not very willing to opt for the threshold choice; neutral to slightly positive answers were preferred. The source of this could stem from feeling they have very limited information about both dimensions as provided by the TV spot as well as about anticipated media celebrity presentation in the future. Other explanation could be related to cultural specifics due to high uncertainty avoidance of Slovak population. Such slightly positive 'credibility' evaluation may suggest that this dimension does not fit into celebrity concept as understood by the research participants. Therefore, from this point of view a celebrity is someone who can be recognised as s/he has raised enough media attention, but 'credibility' is his/her secondary layer that is ostentatiously pushed away.

The key to better understanding of the effective celebrity endorsement process could be found in the fourth evaluated dimension (respondents' attitude towards the commercial). A fundamental finding resulting from our research is a perception of the adjective 'irritating' (commercial). While in case of other dimensions, the differences in the results between two compared celebrity endorsers and commercials groups are rather dull, the perception of adjective 'irritating' proved to be an unambiguous element distinguishing the perception of the two groups. The commercials featuring successful celebrity endorsers are perceived as very irritating whereas the recipients see the commercials of the unsuccessful ones just on the contrary – as completely non-irritating. Totally different perception is evident from the average results in both celebrity endorsers groups but, what is more important, a consistent evaluation has been noted also on the level of evaluation of particular celebrities: the commercials of the unsuccessful celebrities were, taking into consideration the deviation of 0.2 %, altogether perceived as non-irritating while the commercials of the successful ones as irritating with the deviation of only 0.1 %.

The fact that 'irritating' dimension plays a particularly important role as a commercial recall criterion is surprising, although just at first sight; as we try to point out in the text below, the result is not irrational and comes from the perception of TV commercials per se. The proof that a television commercial can be irritating is documented in a number of studies²¹ which deal with its perception in comparison to advertising in other media. Another proof is the very technological progress that provides viewers with an option to switch off a TV commercial (digital television services) and as hinted by further research,²² television audiences welcome such an option and often apply it. TV commercials belong to irritating forms of advertising especially because they have a temporal quality and thus force a viewer to spend his/her time watching what he/she is not interested in, what is forced upon him/her and thus pushes him/her to watch something he/she does not want to watch. Commercials on TV are generally perceived as irritating; in many surveys they even tend to be evaluated as the most intrusive of all media products. Television commercial stereotype as an irritating form of communication manifests itself through rather tangible causes resulting from the qualities and also frequent usage of the media for commercial reasons. We can thus believe that in our research this kind of stereotype related to TV advertising as such, was analogically transposed to TV commercials which the viewers had been aware of beforehand. At the same time, it means that the TV commercials left a very strong trace in the viewers' memory. However, on the other hand, the TV commercials featuring unsuccessful celebrities were perceived more neutrally, even as non-irritating; this fact, however, suggests that they passed through the respondents' attention threshold without leaving a lasting memory trace.

21 LI, H., EDWARDS, S. M., LEE, J. H.: Measuring the Intrusiveness of Advertisements: Scale Development and Validation. In *Journal of Advertising*, 2002, Vol. 31, No. 2, p. 47; SAIGANESH, S., PARAMESWARAN, R.: Avoidance Behaviour of Audience Towards Television Advertisements. In *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing & Management Review*, 2012, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 92-99.

22 DEERY, J.: Reality TV as Advertainment. In *Popular Communication*, 2004, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 1-19.

The irritation by a commercial related to the advertising perception of Generation Y thus becomes the main issue in the context of our research as the primary aim of advertising is to strengthen brand image or to motivate a purchase. This should happen primarily via communication that is perceived positively by the target audience and thus is (besides other attributes) non-irritating. In the sense, when dealing with celebrities, marketing executives find themselves in a paradoxical situation: either to create a TV spot that teases and is therefore perceived as intrusive but it will – thanks to celebrity appearance in it – come with a high probability that the audience will remember the ad, or the advertisers will create a more neutral spot that will include less recallable celebrity endorsers but will be perceived more positively. We emphasise that in both cases, the recall of a commercial can be motivated by other components than celebrities alone.

Regarding the related financial costs and nature of commercials that highly focus the audience's attention on a celebrity, the possibilities for such motivation are rather marginal. To put it differently – a celebrity is, in case of sufficient target audience awareness, a strong advertising communication element that attracts most of recipients' attention; however it can at the time also damage the promoted brand. Spot length also plays its part in this process. In the case of our research material, spot length oscillated between 15 to 41 seconds, which represents triple difference.

Besides considering the inner textual character of a commercial with a celebrity endorser, it is necessary to take into account its complete surroundings. Without any doubt, the frequency in which a commercial is broadcasted on TV influences whether a viewer finds the commercial irritating or not, yet other influential factors include how long does the campaign last or the time span from its termination as compared with the presence. If the campaign is 'overexposed', and a viewer observes the commercial too frequently, it is very likely that it leads to evaluating the commercial as irritating one.

Conclusions

Presented research is based on similar research conducted abroad, as we have mentioned earlier, but the final form of its design has been adapted to domestic conditions and possibilities of practical implementation. This research article has brought several interesting findings revealing the mechanisms of celebrity endorsement from the viewpoint of its perception by the younger members of the Generation Y. These findings have been analysed and put into the wider context of media and marketing communication. We have identified only weak, i.e. statistically insignificant differences in the perception of successful and unsuccessful celebrity endorsers, with the exception of the adjective 'irritating'.

The most significant difference between the two groups of celebrity endorsers was based on the execution of the commercials, and only secondarily related to the perceived celebrity itself. Due to the research findings offered above, we suggest that attention should be focused precisely on the issue of audiences being irritated by celebrity endorsing advertising in the future.

Based on the results of the research, we can shape the following image of recallable and therefore potentially successful celebrity endorsers for the younger part of Generation Y: Physical attractiveness of the celebrity does not play a role, not even when the celebrity is perceived as plain and without sex appeal. Furthermore, it is not important if the recipients believe in him/her, even though he/she should appear frankly. The celebrity does not have to be likeable or even agreeable, but has to be perceived as unique, successful, relaxed and daring. It does not matter if he/she really understands what is being endorsed and if he/she is perceived as an expert in the area.

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