



# International Journal of Advertising

## The Review of Marketing Communications

ISSN: 0265-0487 (Print) 1759-3948 (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rina20>

## Leveraged brand evaluations in branded entertainment: Effects of alliance exclusivity and presentation style

Hyejin Bang, Dongwon Choi, Tae Hyun Baek, Sang Do Oh & Yeonshin Kim

To cite this article: Hyejin Bang, Dongwon Choi, Tae Hyun Baek, Sang Do Oh & Yeonshin Kim (2019): Leveraged brand evaluations in branded entertainment: Effects of alliance exclusivity and presentation style, International Journal of Advertising, DOI: [10.1080/02650487.2019.1672328](https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1672328)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1672328>



Published online: 21 Oct 2019.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 16



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



## Leveraged brand evaluations in branded entertainment: Effects of alliance exclusivity and presentation style

Hyejin Bang<sup>a</sup>, Dongwon Choi<sup>b</sup>, Tae Hyun Baek<sup>c</sup> , Sang Do Oh<sup>d</sup> and Yeonshin Kim<sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup>School of Journalism and Mass Communication, The University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, USA;

<sup>b</sup>Department of Advertising and Public Relations, College of Social Sciences, Kookmin University, Seoul, Korea; <sup>c</sup>Department of Integrated Strategic Communication, College of Communication and Information, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, USA; <sup>d</sup>Management Division, Maeji School of Business, Yonsei University, Wonju, Korea; <sup>e</sup>Department of Business Administration, College of Business, Myongji University, Seoul, Korea

### ABSTRACT

The authors study how marketers can best leverage brand alliances in branded entertainment. The study shows that alliance exclusivity and presentation style influence how consumers make brand-to-brand associations and ultimately evaluate a focal brand. When an unfamiliar focal brand is paired with a single well-known ally brand, consumers tend to evaluate the focal brand more favorably when the two brands are simultaneously presented (i.e., massed presentation). On the other hand, when the focal brand is paired with multiple ally brands, the spaced presentation evokes a more favorable evaluation of the focal brand. Brand credibility plays a mediating role underlying the interactions. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 10 December 2018  
Accepted 17 September 2019

### KEYWORDS

branded entertainment;  
co-branding; leveraged  
marketing communications

## Introduction

The past decade has seen rapid growth in various forms of leveraged marketing communications (LMC), which are brand-building strategies for pairing individual brands with other entities and causing audiences to form favorable associations (Bergkvist and Taylor 2016). Leveraged entities include celebrities (McCracken 1989), sports events (Olson 2010), nonprofit organizations (Varadarajan and Menon 1988), and well-established brands (Cunha, Forehand, and Angle 2015). Cross-category brand alliance, a brand-pairing strategy in which advertisers link two or more brands from different categories (Smarandescu, Rose and Wedell 2013), has been widely adopted in brand extension (Aaker and Keller 1990; Dacin and Smith 1994), bundling (Harlam et al. 1995), and marketing communications (Smarandescu et al. 2013). For instance, in 2004, the athletic brand Nike and the tech company Apple synced the Apple iPod and Nike + and enabled users to track fitness activities. Such co-brandings and brand alliances tend to generate positive brand evaluations (Simonin and Ruth 1998).

**CONTACT** Yeonshin Kim  [yeonshin67@mju.ac.kr](mailto:yeonshin67@mju.ac.kr)  Department of Business Administration, College of Business, Myongji University, 50-3 Namgajwadong, Seoul 120-728, Korea

With the development of digital media, branded entertainment has grown twice as fast as traditional advertising to provide new opportunities for brand alliances (Haberman 2018). As marketers gain more control over content production and distribution, brand alliances between two or more brands have rapidly moved beyond mere product integration to include content co-creation (Bernazzani 2018). For instance, the energy drink Red Bull and the tech company GoPro have collaborated in creating a series of high-flying videos such as “Stratos,” a video of Felix Baumgartner’s 2012 sound-breaking freefall from space. The video has garnered more than 40 million YouTube views, and has created synergy for both brands (Griner 2014). Also, Dodo, a digital media brand for animal lovers, partnered with Samsung to create emotional videos encouraging pet adoptions (Grimm 2017).

Such cross-category brand alliances are typically established when (a) a relatively new brand pay well-established brands to form LMC alliances or (b) both parties expect to benefit from the alliance. Relatively new brands are particularly challenged to overcome many obstacles preventing them from generating awareness and establishing brand credibility. They often use LMC strategies to jumpstart founding their new brand (Cunha, Forehand, and Angle 2015). Thus, we examine how LMC generates consumer perceptions about relatively new or unfamiliar “focal” brands that have formed partnerships with one or more well-established “object” brands in branded entertainment ventures (Bergkvist and Taylor 2016). In this study, we refer to a brand leveraged by another LMC object as a “focal brand” and a brand that already has strong associations and is thus used to leverage a relatively new brand as an “object brand” (Bergkvist and Taylor 2016).

Do LMC partnerships always have positive outcomes? Consumers have been shown to positively evaluate brands that are allied with known brands, and to negatively evaluate the same unknown brands if they lack ally support (Gammoh, Voss, and Fang 2010; Ruckert and Rao 1994; Rao, Qu, and Ruckert 1999), but LMC can be risky. For instance, when an object brand has both positive and negative associations, consumers are more likely to transfer their negative rather than positive associations to the focal brand (Campbell and Warren 2012). Situational factors such as brand/product category characteristics, marketing context, perceived fit, and consumer/cultural characteristics are known to moderate brand alliance success (e.g., Bluemelhuber, Carter and Lambe 2007; Gammoh, Voss, and Chakraborty 2006; Ruckert and Rao 1994; Simonin and Ruth 1998), but we lack research regarding the impact of executional strategies. In this study, we examined how two executional factors—alliance exclusivity and presentation style—interact to enhance or inhibit the effect of brand alliance in a branded entertainment venture.

Among many factors, alliance exclusivity (i.e., the number of object brands allied) might directly impact consumer ability to pair brands. Although numerous brand associations might benefit focal brands by increasing the number of brand associations, consumers might encounter difficulty in trying to remember the pairing because consumers have limited cognitive processing ability and memory; they cannot process too much information at once (Petty and Cacioppo 1986). Thus consumers exposed to multiple associative information may be unable to process it all, and each individual brand association is weakened (Weisberg and Reeves 2013). For instance, Feeding

America, a charitable organization, partners with more than 150 companies and organizations. All involved should gain enhanced status and credibility from so many alliances, but actually the links between so many partners are so extreme that they may be weakened. Thus, we postulate that the number of ally brands (i.e., alliance exclusivity) in branded entertainment content would influence how consumers respond to an unfamiliar focal brand by modulating the amount of associative information.

Presentation style is another executional factor that might influence consumer ability to process and integrate branded entertainment content. Massed presentation occurs when unfamiliar focal brands are simultaneously paired with familiar object brand(s). Indeed, simultaneous presentation of multiple cues in one scene tends to facilitate comparison, category acquisition, and generalization (Gentner et al. 2009; Oakes and Ribar 2005). In contrast, separately spaced presentations give viewers time to consolidate the concepts that were presented first and then make stronger connections with concepts presented after the interval (Bjork and Allen 1970; Dempster 1996). Therefore, a time interval between the presentation of a focal brand and one or more object brands might enhance or inhibit consumer ability to transfer meanings from one brand to another. We suggest that massing and spacing presentation styles are boundary conditions that determine the effectiveness of alliance exclusivity in branded entertainment content. In particular, we expect that massing presentation would increase the effectiveness of brand alliance with a single object brand as it enhances category generalization and association processes so that consumers can better associate two brands. In contrast, we expect spacing to allow a more successful meaning transfer by giving consumers time to connect cues between multiple associations.

Furthermore, we examine brand credibility as a mediator underlying the interactive effect. Signaling theory explains that successful brand alliances can make consumers perceive that unknown brands are similar to well-reputed brands in having quality and credibility (Gammoh et al. 2006). To extend the discussion of signaling theory in the context of cross-category brand alliance, we examine how the match between brand alliance exclusivity and presentation style can heighten the credibility of an unfamiliar brand and ultimately yield more favorable brand evaluations (Baek, Kim and Yu 2010).

## Literature review and hypotheses

### *Co-created branded entertainment content as a form of LMC*

LMC strategies include celebrity endorsements (Kang and Herr 2006; Rice, Kelting and Lutz 2012), sponsorships (Gwinner and Eaton 1999), product placements (Brennan, Dubas and Babin 1999), cause-related marketing (Lafferty and Goldsmith 2005), and co-branding (Simonin and Ruth 1998; Smarandescu et al. 2013). Branded entertainment is known to build strong consumer–brand relationships and to increase ROI (Riess 2018) by incorporating products or brand messages into audience-pleasing blogs, video clips, infographics, and news articles (e.g., Chen and Lee 2014; Hudson and Hudson 2006). Branded entertainment gives marketers more control over production and distribution of advertising content that blurs the line between entertainment

and marketing communication (Boerman, Van Reijmersdal, and Neijens 2014; Choi et al. 2018; IAB 2018). Consequently, branded entertainment has become a promising venue for brand partnerships (Riess 2018; Lundqvist et al. 2013).

The direct affect transfer model explains that consumers tend to directly transfer emotional states evoked from stimuli in evaluating a subsequent situation or object (Allen and Madden, 1985). Branded entertainment differs from LMC strategies such as co-branding or co-production (Mitchell 2014) in that both partnering brands are placed into the entertainment content and both benefit in that consumers can easily associate their positive emotions with brand evaluations. Consequently, the partnering of two brands potentially maximizes direct affect transfer. Furthermore, brand alliances through branded entertainment could have a more expansive reach because people tend to share positive emotional experiences (Phelps et al. 2004; Walsh, Gwinner, and Swanson 2004). An example of using branded entertainment to powerfully amplify LMC effects is the previously mentioned exclusive content partnership between Red Bull and Go Pro for producing highly popular cutting-edge videos about extreme sports such as mountain biking, water skiing, and skydiving (Griner 2014).

Branded entertainment partnerships are rapidly increasing, but scholarly focus has been limited to how situational factors such as brand prominence, placement, and sponsorship disclosure relate to persuasion, knowledge, referral decisions, and content enjoyment (Boerman, Van Reijmersdal, and Neijens 2012; Choi et al. 2018; Matthes and Naderer 2016). Among diverse possibilities for investigating how brand alliances in the context of branded entertainment affect evaluations of focal brands, we focused on how alliance exclusivity and presentation style, two executional factors, affect consumer evaluations of an unfamiliar focal brand.

### ***Signaling theory and brand alliance***

Signaling theory is often used to show how new brands signal product quality by leveraging the positive reputations of respected brands through exclusive alliances, rather than forming alliances with other new or unfamiliar brands (Gammoh et al. 2006; Ruckert and Rao 1994; Rao et al. 1999). Companies know more than consumers know about the inherent quality of products or brands; instead, customers have asymmetric information and uncertainty about product quality (Baek and King 2011; Spence 1973).

To decrease consumer uncertainty, sellers often use signals that transmit credible information “about unobservable product quality” (Rao et al. 1999, 259) through marketing elements such as advertising, prices, and warranties. Some companies have well-established credibility reputations associated with their brand names (Erdem, Swait and Valenzuela 2006). Consequently, unknown brands often try to signal credibility by forming alliances with reputable brands (Gammoh et al. 2006; Ruckert and Rao 1994; Washburn, Till and Priluck 2004). The theoretical explanation aligns with the meaning transfer model, which states that cultural meanings are transferred from brand to brand, from brand to celebrity, and from brand to consumer (McCracken 1989).

Applying signaling theory, scholars have shown that LMC strategies tend to improve brand evaluation (Batra and Homer 2004; Gwinner and Eaton 1999; Lafferty and Goldsmith 2005; Simonin and Ruth 1998). Relatively new or unfamiliar brands particularly need to reduce consumer uncertainty and establish strong brand equity or images by partnering with brands that have already established positive associations or values (Aaker and Keller 1990; Boush and Loken 1991; Broniarczyk and Alba 1994). Indeed, studies have shown that unknown brands can enhance their credibility by pairing with well-known, reputable brands (Fang and Mishra 2002) and that brands with a high degree of product fit can co-brand and improve consumer evaluations of both brands (Simonin and Ruth 1998).

However, situational factors may affect whether brand alliances send positive signals (Campbell and Warren 2012; Farquhar 1994; Janiszewski and van Osselaer 2000). For instance, brand order in brand partnerships could signal the relative power of partnering brands and determine whether the object brand has strong signaling power. That is, co-branding efforts are likely to send stronger signals by placing the well-established brand first (Li and He 2013). Also, if a focal brand partners with an object brand that evokes both positive and negative associations, the focal brand could suffer from spillover negative signals as negative signals are more easily transferred (Campbell and Warren 2012). Such findings call for in-depth research investigating contextual factors that could amplify signaling effects in brand alliances. In particular, we expect that signal effectiveness may depend on whether the focal brand partners with one or multiple partner brands, and on how they present the brand alliances.

### ***Alliance exclusivity: Effects of alliances with single versus multiple brands***

Single or multiple partnerships may have varying effects on brand evaluations (Kang and Herr 2006; Kirmani and Shiv 1998; Rice et al. 2012). In highly exclusive partnerships, the focal brand associates with the unique attributes of only one object brand. In less exclusive brand alliances, the focal brand is associated with valued attributes of multiple object brands (Rodrigue and Biswas 2004). In general, alliances with one or only a few brands have been shown to evoke stable and consistent images (Tripp, Jensen and Carlson 1994), while alliances with many partners are more likely to evoke inconsistent associations, unclear positioning, and uncertainty (Keller 1993; Simmons and Becker-Olsen 2006). Thus, brands that have few rather than many LMC partners might gain fewer but stronger associations.

In low involvement situations, however, consumers tend to be “cognitive misers” (Burnkrant 1976). Indeed, for low involvement situation, study participants formed more favorable brand attitudes and stronger purchase intentions in response to an ad featuring multiple rather than single celebrity endorsers (Rice et al. 2012; Saleem 2007). For high involvement situation, however, single and multiple celebrity endorsers evoked equally favorable brand attitudes and purchase intentions. Thus, numerous brand associations might provide heuristic cues for forming brand attitudes in low involvement conditions (Rice et al. 2012).

Furthermore, multiple brand alliances were shown to be better than no alliances for evoking favorable brand evaluations, but single and multiple alliances were shown to have equal effects (Voss and Gammoh 2004). Thus, findings are mixed regarding whether single or multiple partner brand alliances are superior. We propose that alliance presentation style is a contextual moderator that may determine the effects of focal and object brand partnerships.

### ***Presentation style: Spacing versus massing as moderator***

Conventional wisdom holds that partnerships between unknown brands and well-known brands will positively impact the former because, having yet to establish a strong image, they are blank slates ready to benefit from an association with a well-established brand (Aaker and Keller 1990; Broniarczyk and Alba 1994; Levin and Levin 2000). Two lines of research suggest that the presentation of different concepts can influence one's ability to integrate them.

In simultaneous presentation, or massing, multiple cues or objects are presented at once; in spacing, cues or objects are presented separately across time intervals (Gentner et al. 2009; Oakes and Ribar 2005). A considerable number of findings provide support for the massing effect. Massing enables viewers to compare, categorize, and generalize (Gentner et al. 2009; Oakes and Ribar 2005) while spacing may prevent them from retaining and integrating information cues because succeeding cues disperse their recall (Gagné 1950). Supporting this view, previous findings show that when consumers observed co-appearing brands, they made associational transfers without in-depth deliberation (Dimofte and Yalch 2011; Galli and Gorn 2011; Perkins and Forehand 2012).

However, spacing has also been shown to have robust effects (Cepeda et al. 2006). Consumers tend to learn better and have longer recall when time or space separate their exposure to information (Dempster 1996; Glenberg 1979). Spaced presentation gives time to form an abstract mental representations regarding unified, central features rather than the surface characteristics of individual concepts (Vlach, Sandhofer and Kornell 2008). In other words, spacing provides more time to consolidate given information, strengthening the integration of concepts (Bjork and Allen 1970).

In branded entertainment contexts, consumers may be able to make easier associations when unfamiliar focal brands are allied with well-known, single object brands (Aaker and Keller 1990; Boush and Loken 1991). When the two brand allies are simultaneously massed rather than spaced, consumers may create stronger associations through stronger meaning transfer. That is, consumers can easily create vivid and strong links between both brands that are presented adjacently (Gentner et al. 2009; Oakes and Ribar 2005). Thus, for single-brand alliances, we propose that massing rather than spacing presentation causes more successful affect transfer and more favorable focal brand evaluation.

In contrast, consumers may form more favorable evaluations of focal brands allied with multiple object brands if the presentation is spaced. Although multiple sponsoring or endorsing object brands may positively affect focal brand evaluations in low involvement situations (Rice et al. 2012; Saleem 2007), we must consider the possibility

of cue competition, or competitive interference (Cunha, Forehand, and Angle 2015; Kumar 2000; Kumar and Krishnan 2004), occurring when consumers are exposed to too much information, overly complicated information, or information from similar object categories, which hinders information processing and the ability to recall additional, related information (Burke and Srull 1988; Kelting and Rice 2013; Kent and Allen 1994; Kumar 2000; Kumar and Krishnan 2004). For example, when multiple products of an unfamiliar focal brand and a well-known partner brand were presented simultaneously, the cue competition effect occurred and damaged evaluation of the unfamiliar brand; but when a time interval separated the two sets of information, the co-branding improved subsequent evaluation (Cunha, Forehand, and Angle 2015). Similarly, we expect that when a focal brand and multiple object brands are presented simultaneously, cue competition would nullify the leveraging effect, but spacing should allow consumers to process multiple object brands as a unitary representation and process the focal brand as a separate entity, leaving two sets of information to be paired (Vlach et al. 2008).

We suggest that massing versus spacing presentation styles determine whether alliance exclusivity is effective in branded entertainment. A meta-analysis suggested that learning a simple task is easiest when information is massed or presented at very brief time intervals, while learning a complex task is easiest when information is introduced over long intervals (Donovan and Radosevich 1999). That rationale motivated our predictions that brand alliance is more effective when an unfamiliar focal brand is massed with a single object brand or spaced with multiple object brands.

Taken together, we expect that massed or spaced presentation moderates the effect of alliance exclusivity on leveraged brand evaluations, and hypothesize:

**H1:** In single brand alliances, massed presentation will allow the focal brand to acquire more favorable (a) attitudes and (b) credibility.

**H2:** In multiple brand alliances, spaced presentation will allow the focal brand to acquire more favorable (a) attitudes and (b) credibility.

### ***Mechanism underlying the interaction***

We also expected perceived credibility to mediate the interaction effect between alliance exclusivity and presentation styles on focal brand evaluations. Signaling theory (Gammoh et al. 2006; Rao et al. 1999) explains that when unfamiliar brands are allied with one or more reputable brands, the positive attributes and perceived value of reputable brands serve as a cue for inferring the quality of the unfamiliar brands. Consequently, unfamiliar brands and products can use their associations with well-established brands to gain credibility (Fang and Mishra 2002) and increase consumer certainty (Gammoh et al. 2006; Ruckert and Rao 1994).

Signaling theory suggests that a fundamental element of any brand signal is brand credibility indicating that brands are willing and able to meet their promises (Tirole 1988). Marketing communication strategies are designed to build cumulative brand credibility, reduce consumer uncertainty, and create salient brand associations (Baek and King 2011). Thus marketers use alliances to establish strong brand associations

that will enhance brand credibility and lead to more favorable product evaluations (Hillyer and Tikoo 1995). Consistent with the signaling perspective (Spence 1973), brand credibility mediates the relationship between endorser credibility and consumer-based brand equity (Spry, Pappu and Cornwell 2011).

Brand alliance will have signaling value depending on how effectively consumers integrate cues and successfully associate the focal brand with the object brand (Geylani et al. 2008; Walchli 2007). When alliance exclusivity is matched with presentation style, the credibility of the object brand(s) should successfully transfer to the focal brand.

Perceptions of brand credibility should also increase perceptions regarding product quality and should decrease perceptions that an unknown brand is risky to purchase, use, or consume (Baek et al. 2010). Thus, brand credibility is likely to enhance brand evaluation (Baek et al. 2010; Erdem and Swait 1998).

We hypothesize that when brand alliance exclusivity is matched with presentation style, brand credibility is heightened, and the focal brand will have more favorable evaluations:

**H3:** Alliance exclusivity will interact with presentation style to affect focal brand evaluation, mediated by perceived credibility of the focal brand (interaction  $\rightarrow$  perceived credibility of the focal brand  $\rightarrow$  attitude toward the focal brand).

## Methods

We designed a lab experiment to examine the overall effect of a cross-category brand alliance in branded entertainment content and to investigate how alliance exclusivity and presentation style jointly interact to influence the effectiveness of the brand alliance strategy. We used a 2 (alliance exclusivity: alliance with a single brand vs. alliance with multiple brands)  $\times$  2 (presentation style: massing vs. spacing) between-subjects design.

### Pretest

Before we conducted our main experiment, we conducted a series of pretests (1) to select a product category that would have a high level of perceived fit with milk, our focal product category; (2) to choose an unfamiliar focal milk brand; (3) to check the brand familiarity of the object brands that we would embed in the branded entertainment content

For the first pretest, we recruited 56 students (60.7% women;  $M_{\text{age}} = 19.4$ ) enrolled in undergraduate courses at a large southeastern university to participate in exchange for extra course credit. The co-branding literature has shown that consumers tend to evaluate alliances more positively when they perceive that the allied brands fit together (Simonin and Ruth 1998). Thus, we controlled for a high level of perceived fit by using two brands from well-matched product categories. Based on GfK Mediamark and Research Intelligence, we chose milk, a product frequently purchased by consumers 18–24 years-old (index = 109). On a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree), participants indicated perceived fit between “milk” and ten other

product categories such as cereal, yogurt, and waffles. The results indicate that “milk-cereal” was the best product pair ( $M_{\text{product\_fit}} = 5.67$ ).

Aligned with our objective to examine how brand partnership between a well-established object brand and an unfamiliar focal brand will leverage attitudes toward the unfamiliar brand, we conducted the second pretest to choose an unfamiliar milk brand for our focal brand and to choose several well-known cereals as object brands. We recruited 59 undergraduates (52.5% men;  $M_{\text{age}} = 19.8$ ) who indicated their familiarity with five milk brands and twelve cereal brands (i.e., “I am familiar with [brand name].”). Based on the pretest, we chose our focal brand to be Kapiti, an unfamiliar foreign milk brand ( $M_{\text{familiarity}} = 2.67$ ), and chose five well-known cereal brands to be our object brands: Kellogg’s ( $M_{\text{familiarity}} = 5.91$ ), Cheerios ( $M_{\text{familiarity}} = 5.81$ ), General Mills ( $M_{\text{familiarity}} = 5.60$ ), Post ( $M_{\text{familiarity}} = 5.42$ ), and 365 Everyday Value ( $M_{\text{familiarity}} = 4.47$ ). Since participants’ attitudes or associations toward object brands can influence the meanings they transfer to focal brands (Campbell and Warren 2012), we measured participants’ existing attitudes toward each of the cereal brands to confirm participants have favorable attitudes toward the brands. Participants showed relatively favorable attitudes toward the five chosen cereal brands: Kellogg’s ( $M_{\text{Ab}} = 5.32$ ), Cheerios ( $M_{\text{Ab}} = 5.34$ ), General Mills ( $M_{\text{Ab}} = 5.20$ ), Post ( $M_{\text{Ab}} = 4.86$ ), and 365 Everyday Value ( $M_{\text{Ab}} = 4.46$ ).

### ***Stimulus and manipulation***

Based on the pretest results, we created four versions of branded entertainment content co-sponsored by the unfamiliar focal milk brand, Kapiti, and the familiar cereal brands. We designed the content to be entertaining and to elicit favorable emotions that might transfer to the focal brand. We chose a popular, general online magazine platform for the presentation (Dool 2018). Participants clicked through pages featuring images of nine types of cereal and to complete a quiz titled “Can You Identify Cereals Just by Looking at Them”? The final screen provided information for each cereal brand (Appendix).

We manipulated alliance exclusivity by presenting Kapiti, the focal brand, with either one or five cereal brands. The pretest indicated that Kellogg’s scored highest on brand familiarity, so we used Kellogg’s for the single alliance condition, and used all five cereal brands for the multiple brands alliance condition. Finally, we manipulated presentation style by including or excluding spacing between exposures to the focal and object brands. In the massing condition, we presented the focal brand simultaneously with the object brand(s) on the second page of the online magazine. In the spacing condition, we presented the focal brand on the first page and the object brand(s) on the second page (Cunha, Forehand, and Angle 2015). Participants could proceed to the second page 15 seconds after landing on the first page.

### ***Participants and procedure***

A total of 132 students (53% women;  $M_{\text{age}} = 19.8$ ) enrolled in undergraduate courses at either a large southeastern university or a large northeastern university participated

in exchange for extra course credit. We conducted the experiment in a controlled laboratory setting in individual 15-minute lab sessions in which participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions in a 2 (alliance exclusivity: alliance with a single brand vs. alliance with multiple brands)  $\times$  2 (presentation style: massing vs. spacing) between-subjects experimental design. We asked participants to imagine entertaining themselves by browsing an online magazine and then randomly showed them one of the four branded entertainment content stimuli. We asked them to browse the content as they would in real life before indicating their attitude toward the focal brand and their perceptions of its brand credibility.

## Measures

Dependent measures included attitude toward the focal brand ( $A_b$ ) and brand credibility. We measured  $A_b$  using four 7-point semantic-differential scale items: unfavorable/favorable, bad/good, negative/positive, and dislikable/likable (Lee and Aaker 2004). We averaged the four items to form an index for  $A_b$  ( $\alpha = .95$ ,  $M = 4.09$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ). We measured brand credibility using three 7-point Likert scale items adopted from Mackenzie and Lutz (1989) (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree): "I found this brand credible/believable/convincing." ( $\alpha = .89$ ,  $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = .95$ ).

## Results

### Tests of hypotheses

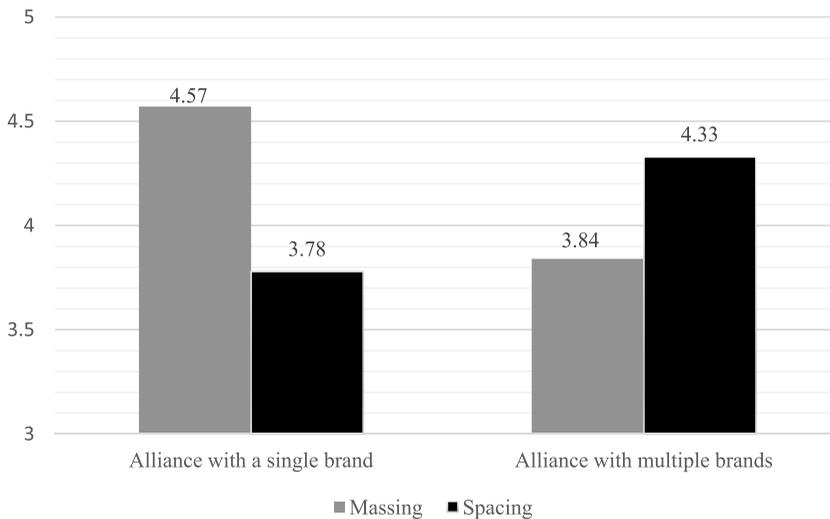
To test how alliance exclusivity and presentation style impacted the effect of brand alliance in the branded entertainment context, we performed a 2 (alliance exclusivity: alliance with a single brand vs. alliance with multiple brands)  $\times$  2 (presentation style: massing vs. spacing) MANOVA on  $A_b$  and perceived credibility of the focal brand. Following Hair et al. (1998), we checked the assumptions of MANOVA. First, Box's M test revealed that homogeneity of the variance and covariance matrices were met (Box's  $M = 9.35$ ,  $p = .43$ ). Second, Bartlett's test of sphericity revealed significant inter-correlation between the dependent variables ( $r = .61$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Thus, MANOVA assumptions were met.

As predicted, a significant two-way interaction effect on  $A_b$  ( $F(1, 128) = 15.13$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and perceived credibility ( $F(1, 128) = 11.84$ ,  $p < .001$ ) emerged (Wilks'  $\lambda = .89$ ,  $F(1, 127) = 8.26$ ,  $p < .001$ ). However, alliance exclusivity (Wilks'  $\lambda = .98$ ,  $F(1, 127) = 1.58$ ,  $p = .21$ ) and presentation style had nonsignificant main effects on combined DVs (Wilks'  $\lambda = .99$ ,  $F(1, 127) = .53$ ,  $p = .59$ ) (Table 1).

To better understand the two-way interaction, we ran subsequent contrast tests. Figure 1 shows that when the focal brand was paired with a single object brand, participants showed more favorable  $A_b$  when the focal brand and object brand were presented simultaneously (i.e., massing) rather than spaced ( $M_{\text{massing}} = 4.57$  vs.  $M_{\text{spacing}} = 3.78$ ;  $t(64) = -3.38$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Similarly, participants perceived higher brand credibility when the focal brand and object brand were presented simultaneously rather than spaced ( $M_{\text{massing}} = 4.44$  vs.  $M_{\text{spacing}} = 3.86$ ;  $t(64) = -2.51$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Thus, H1 was supported.

**Table 1.** MANOVA Results.

Source	Dependent Variable	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>Corrected Model</b>	Ab	3	4.84	5.37	.002
	Perceived Credibility	3	3.59	4.033	.01
<b>Intercept</b>	Ab	1	2248.50	2496.36	.001
	Perceived Credibility	1	2354.32	2836.86	.001
<b>Presentation Style</b>	Ab	1	.72	.80	.37
	Perceived Credibility	1	.03	.03	.86
<b>Alliance Exclusivity</b>	Ab	1	.28	.31	.58
	Perceived Credibility	1	.74	.90	.35
<b>Interaction</b>	Ab	1	13.63	15.13	.001
	Perceived Credibility	1	9.83	11.84	.001
<b>Error</b>	Ab	128	.90		
	Perceived Credibility	128	.83		
<b>Total</b>	Ab	132			
	Perceived Credibility	132			
<b>Corrected Total</b>	Ab	131			
	Perceived Credibility	131			

**Figure 1.** Attitude toward the Less-known Brand (7-point scale).

In contrast, when the focal brand was paired with multiple familiar object brands, participants showed more favorable  $A_b$  under spaced rather than simultaneous presentation ( $M_{\text{massing}} = 3.84$  vs.  $M_{\text{spacing}} = 4.33$ ;  $t(64) = 2.12$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The same pattern emerged for brand credibility ( $M_{\text{massing}} = 4.04$  vs.  $M_{\text{spacing}} = 4.56$ ;  $t(64) = 2.36$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Thus, H2 was also supported (Figure 2).

### ***Mechanism underlying the interactive effect***

To investigate how alliance exclusivity and presentation style influenced attitudes toward the focal brand, we used the PROCESS Macro with 5,000 bootstrap samples (Model 8, Hayes, 2013) to perform a moderated mediation analysis with perceived credibility as the mediator. Bootstrapping procedures generated a bias-corrected 95% confidence interval [CI] of the indirect effect.

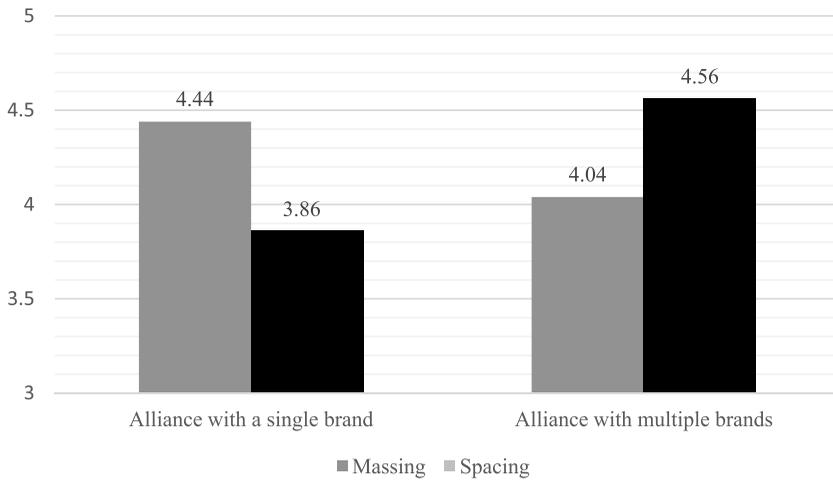


Figure 2. Brand Credibility of the Less-known Brand (7-point scale).

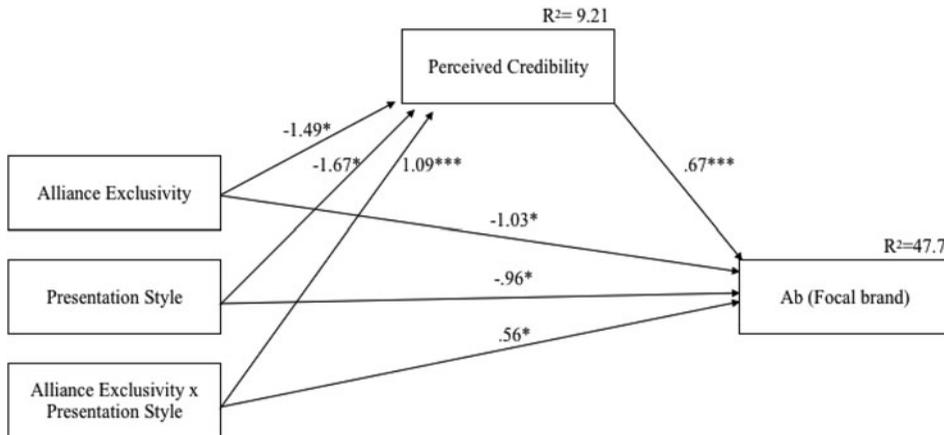


Figure 3. Mediation Model.

Figure 3 shows that mediation analyses indicated that the model explained 9.21% of the variance in the focal brand’s perceived credibility. All three variables included as potential predictors yielded significant coefficients: alliance exclusivity ( $b = -1.49$ ,  $t = -2.94$ ,  $p < .05$ ), presentation style ( $b = -1.67$ ,  $t = -3.32$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and the interaction term ( $b = 1.09$ ,  $t = 3.44$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Also, the model explained 47.7% of the variance in attitude toward the focal brand. A significant direct effect of alliance exclusivity ( $b = -1.03$ ,  $t = -2.45$ ,  $p < .05$ ), presentation style ( $b = -.96$ ,  $t = -2.30$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and the interaction term on  $A_b$  emerged ( $b = .56$ ,  $t = 2.09$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Furthermore, perceived credibility positively influenced  $A_b$  ( $b = .67$ ,  $t = 9.43$ ,  $p < .001$ ), confirming the significant indirect effect through perceived credibility to attitude toward the focal brand (95% CI from  $.28$  to  $1.26$ ). Following Baron and Kenny’s procedures (Baron and Kenny 1986), as the independent variables had significant direct effects on attitude toward the focal brand, the result confirms that perceived credibility was a partial mediator, supporting H3.

## Discussion

### *Theoretical and managerial implications*

Brand partnership in the context of branded entertainment is a new and promising LMC strategy, but we lack understandings regarding boundary conditions that may boost or damage focal brand evaluations. Consequently, we conducted this study to examine whether the executional factors of alliance exclusivity and presentation style determine whether partnerships are successful in branded content. In particular, we show that when focal brands ally with single object brands, consumers can easily transfer their stored brand images or attitudes to the focal brand, without cue interference (Kelting and Rice 2013). Consequently, we suggest that massing strategies are more efficient for transferring meaning. However, in one-to-multiple brand partnerships, we confirm that spacing better counters cue competition (Burke and Srull 1988; Kent and Allen 1994). Similar to Cunha, Forehand, and Angle (2015), we show that when focal brands are presented simultaneously with multiple object brands, cue competition or overload can inhibit LMC. However, if focal brands and multiple object brands are presented separately, participants have time to generalize, form abstract associations, and more efficiently transfer the associations to the focal brand. Furthermore, brand credibility is a partial mediator in the interaction. The results are consistent with signaling theory in confirming that object brand credibility indeed signals the values or quality of focal brands by eliminating uncertainty about unfamiliar focal brands (Gammoh et al. 2006; Ruckert and Rao 1994).

Our findings show that even when the object brands were relatively well-established, merely increasing their number did not always increase positive meaning transfer to the focal brand. The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) explains that people can change their attitudes through central or peripheral cognitive routes. People who are highly involved, highly able, or highly motivated tend to use central, deliberative, cognitive processing routes. In contrast, people who lack motivation and ability tend to use peripheral routes involving the use of heuristic principles, such as simple cues present in the information (Petty and Cacioppo 1986). ELM indicates that consumers who have low involvement and low motivation will base their brand attitudes on peripheral cues, such as the number of object brands in a co-branding context (Rice et al. 2012). Indeed, an experiment showed that consumers who had low involvement were favorably impressed by the number of endorsing celebrities, but the experimenters used three different celebrities in three sequential ads rather than having all three celebrities in a single ad for the multiple endorsement condition (Rice et al. 2012). Thus the stimulus exemplified a spaced rather than a massed presentation. Although the study did not consider presentation style, the experimental procedure indicates that presentation style played a potential role. The findings strongly indicate that the mere co-appearance of focal and object brands in branded entertainment cannot guarantee a leveraging effect, even when product categories have a good fit. Instead, object-related executional factors (e.g., length, duration, format, and size of brand logo presentation) may be possible moderators of LMC effectiveness (Bergkvist and Taylor 2016).

Furthermore, we found that brand credibility partially mediated the interaction effect. Consistent with signaling theory, we confirm that brand credibility eliminates

uncertainty by signaling that unfamiliar brands have value and quality (Gammoh et al. 2006; Ruckert and Rao 1994). Our findings invite further discussion about how brand alliance strategy impacts brand credibility, an important consumer-based brand equity that affects perceived benefits and purchase intentions (Baek et al. 2010). Thus we show that marketers should strive to build strong brand credibility.

Our findings make three contributions to the advertising and marketing literature. We examined the effect of a cross-category brand alliance in the context of branded entertainment, which has been overlooked in the previous studies. Extending previous findings on LMC, we confirm that brand alliance in branded entertainment content can favorably impact evaluations of focal brands. Second, although LMC studies have paid little attention to executional factors (Bergkvist and Taylor 2016), we filled the gap by examining the interactive effect of alliance exclusivity and presentation style. Furthermore, alliance research has generally used only one focal brand and one object brand (Ruckert and Rao 1994; Rao et al. 1999; Simonin and Ruth 1998), although alliances have involved multiple brands for a long time. Accordingly, we investigated how alliance exclusivity and presentation style, which are executional factors that marketers can easily control, shape the strength and direction of brand alliances.

Our findings have practical implications for marketers. Relatively unfamiliar brand(s) or start-up companies encounter difficulty in establishing their brands, especially in industries that have high market entry barriers. For marketers of new or relatively unfamiliar brand(s), however, our findings show that brand alliances with well-established brand(s) and co-branding strategies can be powerful in branded entertainment. Thus, marketers of new brand(s) should go beyond integration of actual products or brand extensions by investing in co-created branded entertainment. They must be careful, however, about placement when associating new brands with multiple established brand partners or multiple celebrities. Brief delays can change the impact of cues, from competition to facilitation (Cunha, Forehand, and Angle 2015). Thus, new brands might be placed at the beginning of the content, and the familiar partnering brand(s) or famous endorsers might be placed at the end to maximize leveraging effects. In contrast, if marketers are integrating an unfamiliar focal brand with a single established brand partner, they should present the two brands simultaneously, so that viewers develop stronger associations between the two. Marketers can directly control branded entertainment content, so they might maximize the efficiency of brand alliance by controlling presentation style. Although we conducted our study in the online magazine context, marketers could effectively use the presentation style guidelines for designing online video content as well.

Previous researchers have primarily examined the effect of co-branding on overall *attitudes* toward focal or object brand(s) (Lafferty 2009; Simonin and Ruth 1998). However, we delved into a cognitive mechanism underlying effects of co-branding, which has been overlooked in prior studies, by investigating the mediating role of brand credibility. Brands establish credibility by presenting clear brand information in a mix of marketing strategies over time and by fulfilling the promises they made to consumers (Erdem and Swait 1998), but marketers of relatively new brands struggle to establish brand equity. We suggest that brand partnerships in branded entertainment are a powerful way to enhance credibility and subsequently build reputable brands.

### Limitations and future research

Although our study has significant theoretical and practical implications, it also has several limitations that future research could address. First, we focused on the interaction between alliance exclusivity and presentation style for enhanced evaluations of an unfamiliar focal brand, but brand alliances might actually undermine the value of well-known brands (Janiszewski and van Osselaer 2000; Simonin and Ruth 1998). Thus, future research should examine how LMC strategies might boost or damage reputations of well-established object brands. Second, our experiment measured brand familiarity and brand attitudes regarding the well-established object brand(s), but we did not measure other brand perceptions or associations. However, negative associations with familiar brands could damage leveraging effects (Campbell and Warren 2012). Thus, future research should measure and control for more diverse dimensions of object brands, such as brand image(s), reputation, attractiveness, and credibility. Third, in the spaced presentation condition, we presented the focal brand first and the object brand(s) later. Although research has paid scant attention to the effect of brand order in brand alliances, previous findings on the co-branding suggested that brand order could indicate relative powers among brands and subsequently moderate evaluations of partnering or ally brands (Li and He 2013). Thus, future research should examine how presentation order affects brand alliances in branded entertainment. Finally, our study aligns with most studies about cross-category brand alliances in focusing on brand alliances between unfamiliar and well-established brands (Cunha, Forehand, and Angle 2015), but scholars should investigate the effect of brand alliances between two or more well-established brands to possibly replicate our results.

### Funding

This work was supported by the National Research Foundation of Korea Grant funded by the Korean Government (NRF-2017S1A2A2041723).

### ORCID

Tae Hyun Baek  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2000-698X>

### References

- Aaker, D.A., and K.L. Keller. 1990. Consumer evaluations of Brand extensions. *Journal of Marketing* 54, no. 1: 27–41.
- Grimm, J. 2017. The 10 best branded content partnerships of 2017. *Adage*, <https://adage.com/article/agency-viewpoint/10-branded-content-partnerships-2017/311725/>
- Riess, D. 2018. New study reveals the emotional impact of branded content increase ROI. *Adage*, <https://adage.com/article/turner-ignite/biometric-research-proves-purchase-power-branded-content-ad-age-turner-ignite/315635/>
- Griner, D. 2014. GoPro's super bowl ad looks a lot like red bull, Circa 2012. *AdWeek*, <https://www.adweek.com/creativity/gopros-super-bowl-ad-looks-lot-red-bull-circa-2012-155386/>
- Allen, C.T., and T.J. Madden. 1985. A closer look at classical conditioning. *Journal of Consumer Research* 12, no. 3: 301–15.
- Baek, T.H., J. Kim, and J.H. Yu. 2010. The differential roles of Brand credibility and Brand prestige in consumer Brand choice. *Psychology & Marketing* 27, no. 7: 662–78.

- Baek, T.H., and K.W. King. 2011. Exploring the consequences of Brand credibility in services. *Journal of Services Marketing* 25, no. 4: 260–72.
- Baron, R.M., and D.A. Kenny. 1986. The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 51, no. 6: 1173–82.
- Batra, R., and P.M. Homer. 2004. The situational impact of Brand image beliefs. *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 14, no. 3: 318–30.
- Bergkvist, L., and C.R. Taylor. 2016. Leveraged marketing communications: a framework for explaining the effects of secondary Brand associations. *AMS Review* 6, no. 3–4: 157–75.
- Bernazzani, S. 2018. 13 examples of successful co-branding partnerships. *HubSpot*, <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-cobranding-partnerships>.
- Bjork, R.A., and T.W. Allen. 1970. The spacing effect: Consolidation or differential encoding? *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior* 9, no. 5: 567–72.
- Bluemelhuber, C., L.L. Carter, and C.J. Lambe. 2007. Extending the view of Brand alliance effects. *International Marketing Review* 24, no. 4: 427–43.
- Boerman, S.C., E.A. Van Reijmersdal, and P.C. Neijens. 2012. Sponsorship disclosure: Effects of duration on persuasion knowledge and Brand responses. *Journal of Communication* 62, no. 6: 1047–64.
- Boerman, S.C., E.A. Van Reijmersdal, and P.C. Neijens. 2014. Effects of sponsorship disclosure timing on the processing of sponsored content: a study on the effectiveness of European disclosure regulations. *Psychology & Marketing* 31, no. 3: 214–24.
- Boush, D.M., and B. Loken. 1991. A process-tracing study of Brand extension evaluation. *Journal of Marketing Research* 28, no. 1: 16–28.
- Brennan, I., K.M. Dubas, and L.A. Babin. 1999. The influence of product-placement type & exposure time on product-placement recognition. *International Journal of Advertising* 18, no. 3: 323–37.
- Broniarczyk, S.M., and J.W. Alba. 1994. The importance of the Brand in Brand extension. *Journal of Marketing Research* 31, no. 2: 214–28.
- Burke, R.R., and T.K. Srull. 1988. Competitive interference and consumer memory for advertising. *Journal of Consumer Research* 15, no. 1: 55–68.
- Burnkrant, R.E. 1976. A motivational model of information processing intensity. *Journal of Consumer Research* 3, no. 1: 21–30.
- Campbell, M.C., and C. Warren. 2012. A risk of meaning transfer: Are negative associations more likely to transfer than positive associations? *Social Influence* 7, no. 3: 172–92.
- Cepeda, N.J., H. Pashler, E. Vul, J.T. Wixted, and D. Rohrer. 2006. Distributed practice in verbal recall tasks: a review and quantitative synthesis. *Psychological Bulletin* 132, no. 3: 354–80.
- Chen, T., and H. Lee. 2014. Why do we share? the impact of viral videos dramatized to sell: How microfilm advertising works. *Journal of Advertising Research* 54, no. 3: 292–303.
- Choi, D., H. Bang, B.W. Wojdyski, Y. Lee, and K.M. Keib. 2018. How Brand disclosure timing and Brand prominence influence consumer’s intention to share branded entertainment content. *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 42: 18–31.
- Cunha, M., M.R. Forehand Jr, and J.W. Angle. 2015. Riding coattails: When co-branding helps versus hurts less-known brands. *Journal of Consumer Research* 41, no. 5: 1284–300.
- Dacin, P.A., and D.C. Smith. 1994. The effect of Brand portfolio characteristics on consumer evaluations of Brand extensions. *Journal of Marketing Research* 31, no. 2: 229–42.
- Dempster, F.N. 1996. Distributing and managing the conditions of encoding and practice. In *Memory*. 317–344. Boston: Academic Press.
- Dimofte, C.V., and R.F. Yalch. 2011. The mere association effect and Brand evaluations. *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 21, no. 1: 24–37.
- Donovan, J.J., and D.J. Radosevich. 1999. A Meta-analytic review of the distribution of practice effect: Now you see it, now you don’t. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 84, no. 5: 795–805.
- Erdem, T., and J. Swait. 1998. Brand equity as a signaling phenomenon. *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 7, no. 2: 131–57.

- Erdem, T., J. Swait, and A. Valenzuela. 2006. Brands as signals: a cross-country validation study. *Journal of Marketing* 70, no. 1: 34–49.
- Farquhar, P.H. 1994. Strategic challenges for branding. *Marketing Management* 3, no. 2: 8–15.
- Fang, X., and S. Mishra. 2002. The effect of Brand alliance portfolio on the perceived quality of an unknown Brand. *Advances in Consumer Research* 29: 519–20.
- Dool, G. 2018. As branded content moves to the forefront, trust and accountability remain key. *Folio*. <https://www.foliomag.com/hearstus-weekly-branded-content/>
- Gagné, R.M. 1950. The effect of sequence of presentation of similar items on the learning of paired associates. *Journal of Experimental Psychology* 40, no. 1: 61–73.
- Galli, M., and G. Gorn. 2011. Unconscious transfer of meaning to brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 21, no. 3: 215–25.
- Gammoh, B.S., K.E. Voss, and G. Chakraborty. 2006. Consumer evaluation of Brand alliance signals. *Psychology and Marketing* 23, no. 6: 465–86.
- Gammoh, B.S., K.E. Voss, and X. Fang. 2010. Multiple Brand alliances: a portfolio diversification perspective. *Journal of Product & Brand Management* 19, no. 1: 27–33.
- Gentner, D., J. Loewenstein, L. Thompson, and K.D. Forbus. 2009. Reviving inert knowledge: Analogical abstraction supports relational retrieval of past events. *Cognitive Science* 33, no. 8: 1343–82.
- Glenberg, A.M. 1979. Component-levels theory of the effects of spacing of repetitions on recall and recognition. *Memory & Cognition* 7, no. 2: 95–112.
- Geylani, T., J.J. Inman, and F.T. Hofstede. 2008. Image reinforcement or impairment: the effects of co-branding on attribute uncertainty. *Marketing Science* 27, no. 4: 730–44.
- Gwinner, K.P., and J. Eaton. 1999. Building Brand image through event sponsorship: the role of image transfer. *Journal of Advertising* 28, no. 4: 47–57.
- Haberman, R. 2018. Branded entertainment growing branded entertainment growing twice as fast as advertising spend, study finds. *Skyword*. <https://www.skyword.com/contentstandard/creativity/branded-entertainment-growing-twice-as-fast-as-advertising-spend-study-finds/>
- Hair, J. F., W. C. Black, B. J. Babin, and R. E. Anderson. 1998. *Multivariate data analysis*. London: Pearson.
- Harlam, B.A., A. Krishna, D.R. Lehmann, and C. Mela. 1995. Impact of bundle type, price framing and familiarity on purchase intention for the bundle. *Journal of Business Research* 33, no. 1: 57–66.
- Hayes, A.F. 2013. *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Hillyer, C., and S. Tikoo. 1995. Effect of cobranding on consumer product evaluations. *Advances in Consumer Research* 22, no. 1: 123–7.
- Hudson, S., and D. Hudson. 2006. Branded entertainment: a new advertising technique or product placement in disguise? *Journal of Marketing Management* 22, no. 5–6: 489–504. no.
- IAB. 2018. Branded Content Creation & Distribution Guide Steps for Success. [https://www.iab.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/IAB\\_Branded\\_Content\\_Creation\\_and\\_Distribution\\_Guide\\_2018-04\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.iab.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/IAB_Branded_Content_Creation_and_Distribution_Guide_2018-04_FINAL.pdf)
- Janiszewski, C., and S.M. Van Osselaer. 2000. A connectionist model of Brand–quality associations. *Journal of Marketing Research* 37, no. 3: 331–50.
- Kang, Y., and P.M. Herr. 2006. Beauty and the beholder: toward an integrative model of communication source effects. *Journal of Consumer Research* 33, no. 1: 123–30.
- Keller, K.L. 1993. Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based Brand equity. *Journal of Marketing* 57, no. 1: 1–22.
- Kelting, K., and D.H. Rice. 2013. Should we hire David Beckham to endorse our Brand? Contextual interference and consumer memory for brands in a celebrity's endorsement portfolio. *Psychology & Marketing* 30, no. 7: 602–13.
- Kent, R.J., and C.T. Allen. 1994. Competitive interference effects in consumer memory for advertising: the role of Brand familiarity. *Journal of Marketing* 58, no. 3: 97–105.
- Kirmani, A., and B. Shiv. 1998. Effects of source congruity on Brand attitudes and beliefs: the moderating role of issue-relevant elaboration. *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 7, no. 1: 25–47.

- Kumar, A. 2000. Interference effects of contextual cues in advertisements on memory for ad content. *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 9, no. 3: 155–66.
- Kumar, A., and S. Krishnan. 2004. Memory interference in advertising: a replication and extension. *Journal of Consumer Research* 30, no.4: 602–11.
- Lafferty, B.A. 2009. Selecting the right cause partners for the right reasons: the role of importance and fit in cause–Brand alliances. *Psychology and Marketing* 26, no. 4: 359–82.
- Lafferty, B.A., and R.E. Goldsmith. 2005. Cause–Brand alliances: does the cause help the Brand or does the Brand help the cause? *Journal of Business Research* 58, no. 4: 423–9. no.
- Lee, A.Y., and J.L. Aaker. 2004. Bringing the frame into focus: the influence of regulatory fit on processing fluency and persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 86, no. 2: 205–18.
- Levin, I.P., and A.M. Levin. 2000. Modeling the role of Brand alliances in the assimilation of product evaluations. *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 9, no. 1: 43–52.
- Li, Y., and H. He. 2013. Evaluation of international Brand alliances: Brand order and consumer ethnocentrism. *Journal of Business Research* 66, no. 1: 89–97.
- Lundqvist, A., V. Liljander, J. Gummerus, and A.V. Riel. 2013. The impact of storytelling on the consumer Brand experience: the case of a firm-originated story. *Journal of Brand Management* 20, no. 4: 283–97.
- MacKenzie, S.B., and R.J. Lutz. 1989. An empirical examination of the structural antecedents of attitude toward the ad in an advertising pretesting context. *Journal of Marketing* 53, no. 2: 48–65.
- Matthes, J., and B. Naderer. 2016. Product placement disclosures: Exploring the moderating effect of placement frequency on Brand responses via persuasion knowledge. *International Journal of Advertising* 35, no. 2: 185–99.
- McCracken, G. 1989. Who is the celebrity endorser? cultural foundations of the endorsement process. *Journal of Consumer Research* 16, no. 3: 310–21.
- Mitchell, T. 2014. Branded entertainment in emotional scenes: excitation transfer or direct affect transfer? PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Oakes, L.M., and R.J. Ribar. 2005. A comparison of infants' categorization in paired and successive presentation familiarization tasks. *Infancy* 7, no. 1: 85–98.
- Olson, E.L. 2010. Does sponsorship work in the same way in different sponsorship contexts? *European Journal of Marketing* 44, no.1/2: 180–99.
- Perkins, A.W., and M.R. Forehand. 2012. Implicit self-referencing: the effect of nonvolitional self-association on Brand and product attitude. *Journal of Consumer Research* 39, no. 1: 142–56.
- Petty, R.E., and J.T. Cacioppo. 1986. The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. In *Communication and persuasion*, 1–24. New York: Springer.
- Phelps, J.E., R. Lewis, L. Mobilio, D. Perry, and N. Raman. 2004. Viral marketing or electronic word-of-mouth advertising: Examining consumer responses and motivations to pass along email. *Journal of Advertising Research* 44, no. 4: 333–48.
- Ruekert, R.W., and A. Rao. 1994. Brand alliances as signals of product quality. *Sloan Management Review* 36, no. 1: 87–97.
- Rao, A.R., L. Qu, and R.W. Ruekert. 1999. Signaling unobservable product quality through a Brand ally. *Journal of Marketing Research* 36, no. 2: 258–68.
- Rice, D.H., K. Kelting, and R.J. Lutz. 2012. Multiple endorsers and multiple endorsements: the influence of message repetition, source congruence and involvement on Brand attitudes. *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 22, no. 2: 249–59.
- Rodrigue, C.S., and A. Biswas. 2004. Brand alliance dependency and exclusivity: an empirical investigation. *Journal of Product & Brand Management* 13, no. 7: 477–87.
- Saleem, F. 2007. Effect of single celebrity and multiple celebrity endorsement on low involvement and high involvement product advertisements. *European Journal of Social Sciences* 5, no. 3: 125–32.
- Simmons, C.J., and K.L. Becker-Olsen. 2006. Achieving marketing objectives through social sponsorships. *Journal of Marketing* 70, no. 4: 154–69.

- Simonin, B.L., and J.A. Ruth. 1998. Is a company known by the company it keeps? assessing the spillover effects of Brand alliances on consumer Brand attitudes. *Journal of Marketing Research* 35, no. 1: 30–42.
- Smarandescu, L., R. Rose, and D.H. Wedell. 2013. Priming a cross-category Brand alliance: the moderating role of attribute knowledge and need for cognition. *Psychology & Marketing* 30, no. 2: 133–47.
- Spence, M. 1973. Job market signaling. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 87, no. 3: 355–74.
- Spry, A., R. Pappu, and T.B. Cornwell. 2011. Celebrity endorsement, Brand credibility and Brand equity. *European Journal of Marketing* 45, no. 6: 882–909.
- Washburn, J.H., B.D. Till, and R. Priluck. 2004. Brand alliance and customer-based Brand-equity effects. *Psychology and Marketing* 21, no. 7: 487–508.
- Tirole, J. 1988. *The theory of industrial organization*. Cambridge: MIT press.
- Tripp, C., T.D. Jensen, and L. Carlson. 1994. The effects of multiple product endorsements by celebrities on consumers' attitudes and intentions. *Journal of Consumer Research* 20, no. 4: 535–47.
- Varadarajan, P.R., and A. Menon. 1988. Cause-related marketing: a coalignment of marketing strategy and corporate philanthropy. *Journal of Marketing* 52, no. 3: 58–74.
- Vlach, H.A., C.M. Sandhofer, and N. Kornell. 2008. The spacing effect in children's memory and category induction. *Cognition* 109, no. 1: 163–7.
- Voss, K.E., and B.S. Gammoh. 2004. Building brands through Brand alliances: does a second ally help? *Marketing Letters* 15, no. 2/3: 147–59. no.
- Walchli, S.B. 2007. The effects of between-partner congruity on consumer evaluation of co-branded products. *Psychology & Marketing* 24, no. 11: 947–73.
- Walsh, G., K.P. Gwinner, and S.R. Swanson. 2004. What makes mavens tick? exploring the motives of market mavens' initiation of information diffusion. *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 21, no. 2: 109–22.
- Weisberg, R.W., and L.M. Reeves. 2013. *Cognition: from memory to creativity*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

## Appendix

Sample Stimuli (Single Object Brand & Massed Presentation Condition)

(Page 1)

**Can you Identify Cereals Just By Looking at it ?**

**Results**  
 1-3 Cereal Newbie  
 4-6 Cereal Buddy  
 7-8 Cereal lover  
 9!!! Cereal Killer



(Page 2)

**Can you Identify Cereals Just By Looking at it ?**

**KAPITI**  
 Have Breakfast with No.1 Milk




*Hellogg's* Frosted Flakes    *Hellogg's* Fruit Loops    *Hellogg's* Corn Pops  
*Hellogg's* Donut Shop    *Hellogg's* Raisin Bran    *Hellogg's* Apple Jack  
*Hellogg's* Cocoa Balls    *Hellogg's* Rice Krispies    *Hellogg's* Mini Wheats

Sample Stimuli (Multi Object Brands & Spaced Presentation Condition)

(Page 1)

**Can you Identify Cereals Just By Looking at it ?**

**KAPITI**  
 Have Breakfast with No.1 Milk




(Page 2)

**Can you Identify Cereals Just By Looking at it ?**

**Results**  
 1-3 Cereal Newbie  
 4-6 Cereal Buddy  
 7-8 Cereal lover  
 9!!! Cereal Killer



*Post* Fruit Pebbles    *Hellogg's* Rice Krispies    *365* Peanut Butter & Cocoa Balls  
*Post* Dreo O's    *Hellogg's* Fruit Loops    *Cheerios* Whole Grain  
*Hellogg's* Cocoa Balls    *General Mills* Tiny Toast    *Post* Nutter Butter