

Chapter 25

Entertainment Media: Times of Branded Content

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the hybridization of entertainment in media through the emergence of new advertising formats in radio, new forms of revenue and sponsoring for television shows, and the hybridization of press content, with monthly magazines portraying more promotional than editorial content. It is focused on media as entertainment industry to study marketing strategies developed by brands towards an approach to entertainment as part of branding strategies, focusing as well on innovative advertising formats. Thinking about these might affect the consumer perception of media and brands. This chapter relates media studies with technology and marketing studies rooted in the idea that lifestyle media may transform practices and routines with media as well as audiences' media relations.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary society, leisure time is a sort entertainment time, since people amuse themselves in their free time with a range of entertainment offers produced by a set of creative industries that comprise the entertainment industry, representing a capitalist system of production in which the media are a very important player.

Media consumption is part of everyday life and an important part of leisure time, shaping cultural identities in a global context of media culture in

which media are the primary disseminators of popular texts and thus, trends and consumption, using advertising and, currently, new advertising forms and formats that integrate editorial content, shaping media content hybridization, that we will further approach.

In this sense, the content being produced by media helps individuals to organize their leisure time, providing orientation and advice. We have long passed times of pure discussion of social uses and media functions: information and surveillance, setting the agenda and acting as a community fo-

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rum that gave way to subjection to the economic and political system, holding the society together through entertainment propositions. Although media still portray a very important role in society, framing social problems and cultural issues, these are today dependent on corporate agendas. We observe media dismissing themselves from accomplishing public interest, becoming representatives for finding constant new efficient ways to communicate corporate information without, however, letting audiences be aware of it, framing a supposed world of joy and consumption.

Borrowing theoretical contributions rooted in critical work of Theodor Adorno (1947) to question entertainment as an extension of work and an escape from thinking about automated manufacturing processes, we focus on other academic literature to enrich our proposal, relating media studies with technology and marketing. For instance, Kung-Shankelman (2000); Kung (2004); Albarran (1996, 2010); Napoli (2003); Caves (2000, 2005) and Beck (2003); Hendy (2000); Rifkin (2000) and Mitchel et al (2009); Jenkins (2006), about media audiences and media industry; Deuze (2007, 2010), for the cultural and technological convergence of media and creative industries, as well as Gauntlet's work (2000, 2004, 2007) relating everyday life, business and economics, enhancing, as well, creativity and community (Gauntlet, 2011). Communities are approached through research on online brand communities, following Cecília e Palazón (2008); Quinton e Harridge-March (2010); Ouwersloot e Odekerken-Schroder (2008); Wu e Sukoko (2010) as well as Schouten e McAlexander (1995); Muniz e O'Guinn (2001); McAlexander, Schouten e Koenig (2002); Kates (2004), research on branding from a consumer perspective.

Framed by uses and gratifications theorization, our approach to media content is inspired by this traditional approach to media consumption in relation to new genre and media formats, as well as lifestyle media. In our sense, lifestyle media offer users a personalized experience within a

social context for participation, using tools that allow us to manage devices, available web content and social network sites. Lifestyle media, combined with the potential of social networking sites may transform practices and routines with media, as well as audiences' media relations. But lifestyle can be also observed as a set of social behaviors, habits and conventions that relates us to society, framing social relations, consumption, entertainment and consumption. In this sense, approaching radio, television and printed press as lifestyle media "is to analyze its influence and contribution to people's lifestyle that include cultural, consumption and leisure options, and establish spatial and temporal references to help people organize life experiences and give them a predetermined meaning" (Cordeiro, 2011, p.117).

As for our objectives, we are, then, discussing hybridization of entertainment in media through the emergence of new advertising formats in radio; new forms of revenue and sponsoring for television shows, using product placement as the main example; and the hybridization of press content, with monthly magazines portraying more promotional than editorial content. Therefore, we approach changes in media entertainment, crossing media studies and marketing studies, using mixed methods of empirical research (qualitative and quantitative). We will, then, focus on media as entertainment industries, to study what kind of marketing strategies are being developed by brands, towards an approach to entertainment, regarding branding, and focusing on advertising formats as well as thinking about the way these might affect the consumer perception of media and brands. We will analyze radio, television and printed press to find this relation between the uses and gratifications of audiences with media and the importance of lifestyle and brands in contemporary media content.

Thus, we relate branding communities to media, according to a cross-over approach that relates scholarly tradition of social functions of media with more recent contributions in marketing

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