

Daughter sees Taylor Swift poster, begs mom to buy her a nearby pencil box

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Does your thirteen-year-old daughter rush headlong toward that Taylor Swift poster she sees in Target? Chances are, the thrill she feels at seeing the poster will carry over to the unrelated notebooks, protractors, and pencil boxes nearby, says a new study in the *Journal of Marketing Research*.

"Marketers typically don't consider that the emotions produced in one marketing message may be influencing more than just our feelings toward the targeted product," write authors Jonathan Hasford (Florida International University), David M. Hardesty (University of Kentucky), and Blair Kidwell (The Ohio State University). "Our study should encourage marketers to think about how the emotions we associate with one product may affect how we view the next product we encounter."

The authors conducted a series of studies to determine how the emotions called forth by the marketing effort for one product affected a consumer's feelings and attitudes toward another. The study first examined how a display of favorable (Taylor Swift) and unfavorable (Miley Cyrus) celebrity posters affected spending on school supplies. In a second study, participants watched a series of [ads](#) for a movie starring favorable (Will Smith) and unfavorable (Justin Bieber) celebrities, and then viewed an ad for a shoe company and evaluated the shoe brand.

The presence of an unrelated positive or negative celebrity poster led to an increase or decrease, respectively, in consumer spending on school supplies. Viewing a positive celebrity movie ad led participants to

evaluate the shoe ad more positively, and vice versa. Ads for emotion-laden fictitious brands influenced evaluations of unrelated products viewed next. If the fictitious brand was associated with positive emotions, evaluations of the unrelated product became more favorable.

"Whereas marketers often focus on price and prominence when purchasing ad space, this study stresses the importance of nearby ads and how they affect the primary message. In television, this would mean considering ads airing directly before the target ad. In magazine advertising, marketers should consider ads on nearby pages. No matter how carefully designed, advertisements are not evaluated in isolation, and the emotions in one message can absolutely affect a neighboring product," the authors conclude.

More information: Jonathan Hasford, David M. Hardesty, and Blair Kidwell. "More Than a Feeling: Emotional Contagion Effects in Persuasive Communication." Forthcoming in the *Journal of Marketing Research*.

Provided by American Marketing Association

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