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Use of brand placement in the filmography of Quentin Tarantino

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Abstract

The use of brand placement as a communication and advertising tool in the audiovisual media has increased over the last two decades while the use of other more traditional forms has been in decline due to increased rejection by audiences. This study analyses in depth the use of brand placement in Quentin Tarantino's filmography, seeking to determine the number of cases, the types of products and brands that appear, the total time allocated to it per film, the type of placement, as well as other technical aspects related to this topic. The methodology used is quantitative, based on the content analysis of the data collected from the tabulation of all the cases of brand placement that appear in the director's films. The results reveal the presence of fictional brand placement and, hence, its coexistence with actual brand placement, as well as a preference for communicating the brand placement visually. It is concluded that Tarantino uses this type of advertising throughout his filmography, with an average of 41.7 cases per film, as an intentional way of setting the scene and adding realism to the scenes.

Keywords

Brand placement; product placement; Quentin Tarantino; cinema; communication; advertising

Resumen

La utilización del brand placement como herramienta de comunicación y publicidad en los medios audiovisuales se ha ido incrementando en las últimas dos décadas al tiempo que iba decayendo el empleo de otras formas más tradicionales debido a un aumento de su rechazo por parte del público. Este estudio tiene como objetivo analizar en profundidad el uso del brand placement en la filmografía de Quentin Tarantino, tratando de determinar el número de casos, los tipos de productos y marcas que más aparecen, el tiempo total por película que se destina a ello, el tipo de emplazamiento, así como otros aspectos técnicos relacionados con el mismo. La metodología empleada es de tipo cuantitativo a partir del análisis de contenido de los datos resultantes de la tabulación de todos los casos de brand placement que aparecen en las películas del director. Los resultados de la investigación evidenciaron la presencia de brand placement ficticio y, por lo tanto, su coexistencia con el brand placement real, así como la preferencia por comunicar el emplazamiento de manera visual. Se concluye que Tarantino utiliza este tipo de publicidad en toda su filmografía, con un promedio de 41.7 casos por película, en su mayor parte de una forma intencionada para ambientar y aportar realismo en las escenas.

Palabras clave

Brand placement; emplazamiento de producto; Quentin Tarantino; cine; comunicación, publicidad

1. Introduction

In a constantly changing society, forms of advertising and commercial communication are evolving and adapting to the requirements of an increasingly demanding audience. One of these forms is brand placement, a persuasive communication technique which consists of the insertion of, or intentional reference to, a brand (or a product, business, institution or person), integrated into the narration or plot of a film, series or any other audiovisual product. It is done in a way that is sufficiently identifiable to generate positive effects in terms of viewers' brand preferences and, in this way, is able to generate a financial contribution from the advertiser to help finance the film (Del-Pino and Olivares, 2007; Baños-González and Rodríguez-García, 2012; Castelló-Martínez, 2020; Egger, Florack and Hübel, 2022). Brand placement was originally presented as an innovative format, far removed from other much more traditional methods of commercial communication, being characterised by the less intrusive nature of whatever is being advertised on the audiovisual medium used. This communication technique, fully integrated into the current advertising system, has not stopped evolving since its origin, even successfully adapting to the new digital strategies (Martín-García and Victoria-Mas, 2019; Álvarez-Rodríguez, 2020).

In this context, the main objective of the present study consists of analysing, in depth, the use of brand placement and its evolution throughout the filmography of Quentin Tarantino. From this first framework objective, other specific objectives have been established such as: to identify the number of cases of brand placement that appear in this filmography; determine the brand, products and business sectors that appear most often; to quantify the number of on-screen appearances of brand placement cases and the total time designated to them; specify how the advertising is placed (type of brand placement perceived, type of communication used, existence of interaction, etc.); and to analyse the technical aspects of the detected brand placement (type of shot, camera angle, presence of music, etc.). The decision to choose Tarantino films to carry out this study is based on the fact that, due to his way of telling a story and his personal and distinctive film-making style, the director uses this communication tool on a regular basis, as another way of setting the scene.

Under these conditions, the following research questions are established:

- RQ1. What are the purposes of the use of brand placement in Quentin Tarantino's filmography? Are they more for commercial reasons or are they intended to bring realism to a scene?
- RQ2: How is real and fictional brand placement used throughout Quentin Tarantino's filmography?
- RQ3: What is the trend in the use of brand placement throughout Quentin Tarantino's filmography?
- RQ4: Is there a referential universe of fictitious brand placement invented by the director that appears in his different films?
- RQ5: What is the specific use of brand placement (real or fictional) in films set in historical periods?
- RQ6: How is the type of shot, the camera angle or the interaction of characters used in cases of brand placement in the filmography of Quentin Tarantino?

To achieve the aforementioned objectives and to be able to respond to the research questions, the present study has been structured into six parts: firstly, we have this brief introduction, then we present a review of the academic literature on the subject under study, an explanation of the methodology applied, the results, the discussion and conclusions of the research and finally, the bibliography used.

2. Theoretical framework

Brand placement and product placement, in their various forms, always intend to insert a brand or product into an entertainment context, thus forming part of the consumer experience (Eagle and Dahl, 2018; Gistri and Corciolani, 2020). The consumer public's increasing rejection of more traditional forms of advertising in audiovisual media has prompted the exploration of alternative media, such as brand placement, that could be used effectively to persuade their audiences (Gillespie, Muehling and Kareklas, 2018; Fondevila-Gascón et al., 2023). However, although the use of brand placement has increased rapidly and continuously in recent years, it is necessary to consider that the excessive exposure to a brand or product can have a negative impact on the image and trust of the brand in the eyes of the potential consumer, which could lead to the suppression of a potential intention to make a purchase (Vashisht and Royne, 2016; Ribeiro-Cardoso, Vieira and Serra-da-Fonseca, 2019; Huang and Deng, 2022; Neale and Corkindale, 2022). In this sense, the widespread and popular formula of including a company's product or a brand's logo in an audiovisual programme in a mass media outlet provides an interesting yet problematic paradox. If this type of brand placement is perceived with displeasure by viewers, it is not appropriate, but if it is not perceived at all, it becomes a practice with no commercial value (Van-Reijmersdal et al., 2017; Gillespie, Muehling and Kareklas, 2018). Therefore,

when using this technique, it is very important to be able to continuously evaluate the variables and indicators related to the credibility of the message, the attitude towards the brand and the purchase intention as a consumer response (Chernikova and Branco, 2019; Jin and Muqaddam, 2019).

On the other hand, despite the proven effectiveness of brand and product placement as a form of advertising, there are many ethical problems associated with the practical application of this technique which provoke criticism from consumer protection associations or those responsible for public policies related to consumption. They argue that it could be considered as a type of misleading communication as it tends to subtly conceal the advertising that is actually being shown (Cain, 2011; Audrezet, De-Kerviler and Moulard, 2020; Mothersbaugh, Hawkins and Kleiser, 2020). In fact, this is the reason why in many countries they have proposed stricter regulations on the use of product placement and brand placement, especially in those cases related to products such as alcohol or tobacco (Redondo, Russell and Bernal, 2018). Moreover, this practice can generate attitudes of rejection towards a brand by establishing a negative association between the placement of brands and products and variables such as the effective intention to buy, the degree of materialism of the recipients of the messages or the excess of advertising in any given medium (Song, Meyer and Ha, 2015; Chan, Lowe and Petrovici, 2016; Manyiwa and Brennan, 2016).

In the film industry, considering that cinema and consumer culture have been symbiotically enriching each other since their very inception, brand placement provides another opportunity to promote brands and products in films through a strategic use which attends to both the commercial aspect and the story line (Wing-Fai, 2015; Kumar, 2017; Gundle, 2020; Sharma and Bumb, 2022). The effectiveness of this technique is greater when the commercial dimension reaches the spectator in a way that is more integrated with the narrative discourse, as it participates in the story within the framework of the experience (Álvarez-Rodríguez, 2021). This blurring of the line between entertainment and brand persuasion is therefore often exploited commercially in cinema (Kretchmer, 2004; Zhu et al., 2022). Thus, in this medium, advertising and communication are routinely intertwined with creativity and ingenuity to achieve the on-screen presentation of brands and products that appear in the background as accessories to the story being told (Al-Kadi, 2013; Olszynko-Gryn, 2017; Sanderson, 2018). In this way, a greater stimulus for product promotion is achieved based on a higher potential recall capacity through the use of cinematic variables such as surprise, uncertainty, suspense or intentionality, even if it has been minimally visible in a specific scene (Redondo and Bernal, 2016; Rossolatos, 2017; Gundle, 2020).

In this sense, considering films as a medium to reach the consumer, the viewer's potential decision to buy will be based on the subtlety with which the products are integrated into the storyline, the capacity to achieve a positive persuasive effect and the ability to appeal to the more emotional side of the viewer (Kerrigan, 2017; Hong et al., 2020; Corkindale, Neale and Bellman, 2023). In this way, those forms of brand placement that are able to interact with the characters or that can increase the viewers' narrative enjoyment will be able to generate higher levels of brand recall than on those occasions when the audience is more aware of the persuasive intent of the placement (Gillespie and Joireman, 2016; Naderer, Matthes and Zeller, 2018; Kongmanon and Petison, 2022). Another variable which determines that brand placement is a practice repeated with some assiduity in cinema is the popular admiration for film stars, which creates natural associations between brand and celebrity with strong positive impacts on viewers, without affecting the personal credibility of the performers (Russell and Rasolofoarison, 2017; Audrezet, De-Kerviler and Moulard, 2020). This positive association is based on a parasocial relationship or connection, the supposed sense of intimacy and friendship between an individual and a public figure, which happens frequently in the world of cinema between the artists and the viewers (Naderer, Matthes and Zeller, 2018; Paravati et al., 2022).

Under this premise, Quentin Tarantino, like many other filmmakers and since his first films, has used the brand placement technique as another tool in the construction of his scenes, although, in his case, probably for artistic rather than commercial purposes (Caldwell, 2005; Štarchoň and Chorvátová, 2018; González-de-Dios and De-la-Cruz-Amorós, 2021). In this respect, we must consider that Tarantino's films, which are usually characterised by non-linear structures using unusual shots with explicit violence, aim to make the viewer participate in and reflect on the culture and history of cinema (Roche, 2018; Nathan, 2019). In fact, the way of understanding cinema, according to the director himself, is based on a series of fundamental commandments: not to enrol in a school or academy to learn the craft, the best film school is yourself, a preference for the circular movement in films, the theatricality achieved in filming long scenes by taking advantage of the tension in the script, the scope of the music (not of the musicians), the action as the most cinematographic aspect of a film, the importance of applying humour in scenes, previous film culture and blood as an essential, sensational and abundant element in his films (Tarantino, 2022). In this very personal and distinctive universe, the director makes extensive use of references and trademarks in his plots, while trying to circumvent the constraints of intellectual property in the creative process (Rivas, 2019; Nymoer and Schmitt, 2021).

Although it is certain that Tarantino's films have been accused, on occasions, of not being ethical, both for the excess of violence as well as for revisionism which rewrites and manipulates history to achieve an aesthetic effect, it is somewhat paradoxical that the use of brand placement in his films is not evaluated in a similar way, especially if we consider that he not only uses this tool not only with real brands and products but also fictitious ones (Black, 2019; Brescia-Zapata and Matamala, 2020; Clavel-Vázquez, 2020; Lopera-Mármol, Jiménez-Morales and Bourdaa, 2020). In fact, the director is openly committed not only to considering that brand placement is an agreement between companies and filmmakers that allows them to legally give visibility to products or brands in the films, but also to introducing, when required, his own fictional brands if he believes that real brand placement could divert the attention of the viewer away from the storyline (Holm, 2004; Sherman, 2015). In this way, by creating his own commercial brands, Tarantino takes total control over the content of his masterpieces, although this doesn't mean that the filmmaker refuses to use conventional brand placement when he sees it appropriate (Sanderson, 2018; Rivas, 2019).

In summary, the aesthetic frameworks proposed by Tarantino in his films, addressing the problems of each of his characters from a dialectic perspective, are very appropriate for the use of brand placement as a technique to bring realism to the story. Therefore, he actively supports it, despite the fact that it has, on occasion, caused problems with trademark infringement policy (Pagello, 2020; Murray, 2022). Precisely because of this versatility in the use of real or fictional brands according to what the storyline requires, it is equally possible that a character could go into a McDonald's and ask for a Big Mac in order to provide realism to the storyline (also serving to finance part of the film's budget), or that, in contrast, we are introduced to fictitious brands such as Big Kahuna Burgers, Red Apple Cigarettes, G.O Juice or Teriyaki Donut, if the aim is for the viewers to focus on the storyline and not on the extra elements in the scene (Sherman, 2015; Kerrigan, 2017).

3. Methodology

This study opts for the use of quantitative analysis methodology, as it is understood that it offers good results when the purpose of a study is the systematic and objective evaluation of communicative processes and messages (Gutiérrez-Aragón, Gassiot-Melian and Alabart-Algueró, 2021). This methodology is applied to Quentin Tarantino's nine films as screenwriter and director, fundamentally focusing on the identification and description of the types of brand placement detected in each of his films. Each of the films has been analysed individually and according to the chronological order of the filmography, starting with the first release in 1992 and ending with the most recent release in 2019. This facilitates a descriptive comparison of the items analysed from his initial film making to the present day. Based on the data collection, the aim is to detect possible evolutions and changes in the application and use of brand placement as a strategic tool, be it narrative, advertising or both, in his cinematographic work.

To carry out the quantitative analysis, a data collection form has been designed, consisting of a set of items needed to carry out the study, obtain the results and, consequently, reach conclusions (table 1). The data form has been shaped by previous academic studies on brand placement and product placement, their use in film and Tarantino's work in this area (Elsaesser, 1990; Benini, Canini and Leonardi, 2010; Bode, 2017; Rúa-Durán, 2021). There are twelve sections grouped into three series of data. The first group collects data on the characterisation of the product, referring to the type of product or brand being analysed, whether it appears visually and/or verbally, the number of insertions in the film and whether it includes fake brand placement (linked to the fictitious brands created by Tarantino himself). This last item is especially relevant when analysing the films of this director, as it is a very characteristic resource in his work. Although it is used in all his works, the film with the most cases in absolute numbers is *Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood* (2019), where this resource is used on 21 occasions, while in the percentage of the total number of cases, *Django Unchained* (2012) is in first place with 77.8%. In this sense, it was considered relevant for this study to determine the frequency of use of this tool and to try to assess whether the director has a greater preference for this type of brand placement than for that of real brands and products. The second group provides data relating to the functionality, importance and intention of the placement in the film, collecting references on the type of brand placement (passive or active), the moment at which the placement appears, its duration on screen and the type of character with whom it interacts (which will provide information on the importance that the product is given in the scene). Finally, the third group is relevant for specifying the intentionality and objectives of each placement, since, depending on variables such as the type of shot, the angle of the shot and the presence of music in the scene, this will be different if it is carried out for purely commercial purposes or if, on the contrary, it is essential in order to provide greater realism to a specific scene. The last item, related to the presence or lack of music in the scene in which the placement takes place, is closely related to what the director himself considers to be one of the nine essential commandments of cinema: the scope of music as an indispensable element or variable for constructing scenarios (Tarantino, 2022).

Table 1. Film *Once upon a time in... Hollywood*. Brand placement nº 11**Cases of brand placement in *Once upon a time in... Hollywood***

Brand placement nº 11	
Brand/Product	Mining Equipment
Type of product	Local shop
Brand placement's type of communication	Visual
Inserts per film	1
Inclusion of fictional brand placement	Yes
Type of brand placement	Passive
Moment in which it appears	0:09:34
Time on the screen	2 seconds
Type of character with which it interacts	No interaction
Type of shot	Background
Camera angle	Front angle
Presence of music	No

Source: own elaboration based on Elsaesser (1990), Benini, Canini and Leonardi (2010), Bode (2017), Rúa-Durán (2021) and Tarantino (2022)

This data collection model was applied to the ten films that Tarantino has directed up until the date of this study, in chronological order, to facilitate the identification of possible patterns of use as well as the evolution of use of brand placement in his filmography. For each case of brand placement in each of his films, a file has been created with all the data referring to it, to be able to subsequently analyse the director's films as a whole, both globally and comparatively, using descriptive statistical analysis after a process of categorisation, coding and numerical tabulation of all of them.

It is worth noting that the total number of brand placement cases detected in Tarantino's entire filmography, after viewing his films, finally amounted to 375:

- *Reservoir Dogs*, 1992: 25 cases of brand placement.
- *Pulp Fiction*, 1994: 32 cases.
- *Jackie Brown*, 1997: 37 cases.
- *Kill Bill: Volume 1*, 2003 and *Kill Bill: Volume 2*, 2004: 37 cases (Tarantino considers *Kill Bill: Volume 1* and *Kill Bill: Volume 2* as a single film divided into two parts and it was therefore considered appropriate to analyse the two films together).
- *Grindhouse: Death Proof*, 2007: 76 cases.
- *Inglourious Basterds*, 2009: 23 cases.
- *Django Unchained*, 2012: 9 cases.
- *The Hateful Eight*, 2015: 8 cases.
- *Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood*, 2019: 128 cases.

The aforementioned tabulation applied to the data collected from the files has allowed, by means of statistical techniques, the elaboration of various indicators and ratios that provide relevant information on how the director uses this communication tool in his films.

4. Results

Once the data on each of the cases of brand placement in these films had been collected, with the aim of being able to carry out quantitative statistical analyses of each of the variables, the data on the characterisation of brand placement (table 2), its functionality, importance and intention (table 3) and the intentionality and objectives of each placement (table 4) were categorised, coded and tabulated numerically. The films, in chronological order, to which the data refer are: *Reservoir Dogs* (film 1), *Pulp Fiction* (film 2), *Jackie Brown* (film 3), *Kill Bill: Volume 1 and Kill Bill: Volume 2* (film 4), *Grindhouse: Death Proof* (film 5), *Inglourious Basterds* (film 6), *Django Unchained* (film 7), *The Hateful Eight* (film 9) and *Once upon a time in... Hollywood* (film 9). The last column of the tables shows the average data for the total filmography for each of the items or variables under analysis.

Table 2. Categorisation, coding and tabulation of the results collected. Data on the characterisation of brand placement

ÍTEMS	FILM (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)									AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Number of cases of brand placement (brands or product)	25	32	37	37	76	23	9	8	128	41,7
Duration of the film (minutes)	99	153	152	247	114	146	165	167	165	156,4
Type of product										
Songs/Musical groups	8		1	6	3			1	5	2,7
Films/short films	2	3		3	21	8			34	7,9
Brand/radio programme	1	1			1				1	0,4
TV series/programme	1	2	1		4				13	2,3
Restaurant/bar/pub	1	6	7		4	2	1		6	3,0
Clothes, shoes or accessories brands	2	1	5	3	1		1		2	1,7
Drinks brands	2	4	3	7	17	2	2	1	9	5,2
Comics/comic book characters	6	1		3					3	1,4
Food brand	1	6		4					11	2,4
Sports person/teams	1		1			1			3	0,7
Tobacco brand		2		1	3			2	4	1,3
Brand/model of cars and motorbikes		3	3	1	2		1		2	1,3
Motel/haberdashery shop		1						1		0,2
Taxi company		1								0,1
Drugs/medicines		1			1				1	0,3
Airlines			1	1					1	0,3
Entertainment or leisure establishments (circus, shopping centres, cinemas)			2		1	4			5	1,3
Electronics company/brand and/or multimedia services			1		1				2	0,4
Books, magazines, newspapers			2	1	11	4			7	2,8
Supermarkets			1						1	0,2
Works of art			1							0,1
Technology			3		1					0,4

ÍTEMS	FILM (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)									AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Local businesses/shops			3		1		3		4	1,2
Cosmetic brand, beauty product, hairdressing and personal care			1						3	0,4
Big warehouse chains			1							0,1
Aluminium foil brand				2						0,2
Lubricant brand				1						0,1
Financial services company				3						0,3
Strip bar/club				1			1			0,2
Musical instrument brand					1			1		0,2
Organic compound company (petrol, hydrocarbon)					2					0,2
Film production company					1				3	0,4
Historical and cultural establishments/monuments						2		1		0,3
Government services company								1		0,1
TV channel									3	0,3
Parking company									1	0,1
Mechanical products brand									1	0,1
Sporting events (championships, establishments)									2	0,2
Cleaning products brand									1	0,1
Brand placement's type of communication										
Visual	28,0%	37,5%	70,3%	64,9%	67,1%	43,5%	66,7%	37,5%	68,0%	53,7%
Verbal	72,0%	46,9%	13,5%	32,4%	22,4%	52,2%	33,3%	37,5%	18,8%	36,5%
Both	0,0%	15,6%	16,2%	2,7%	10,5%	4,4%	0,0%	25,0%	13,3%	9,7%
Inserts per film	39	59	66	57	139	42	12	27	245	76
Inclusion of fictional brand placement	12,0%	37,5%	16,2%	18,9%	11,8%	26,1%	77,8%	37,5%	16,4%	28,3%

Source: Own elaboration

Table 3. Categorisation, coding and tabulation of the results collected. Data on the functionality, importance and intention of brand placement

ÍTEMS	FILM (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)									AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Type of brand placement										
Active	72,0%	50,0%	21,6%	32,4%	22,4%	52,2%	33,3%	37,5%	18,8%	37,8%
Active per citation	72,0%	46,9%	13,5%	32,4%	22,4%	52,2%	33,3%	37,5%	18,8%	36,5%
Active per action	0,0%	3,1%	8,1%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,8%	1,3%

ITEMS	FILM (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)									AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Passive	28,0%	37,5%	70,3%	64,9%	67,1%	43,5%	66,7%	37,5%	67,2%	53,7%
Both	0,0%	12,5%	8,1%	2,7%	10,5%	4,4%	0,0%	25,0%	13,3%	8,5%
Average time on screen (in seconds)	2,88	2,69	3,51	2,57	2,71	2,74	2,23	5,75	2,88	3,11
1 second	44,0%	43,8%	18,9%	32,4%	43,4%	43,5%	44,5%	25,0%	22,7%	35,3%
Between 2 and 5 seconds	12,0%	18,8%	24,3%	37,8%	18,4%	17,4%	33,3%	25,0%	40,6%	25,3%
More than 5 seconds	44,0%	37,5%	56,8%	29,7%	38,2%	39,1%	22,2%	50,0%	36,7%	39,4%
Total time on screen of all brand placements (minutes)	1,20	1,43	2,17	1,58	3,43	1,05	0,30	0,77	6,13	2,01
Type of character with which it interacts										
Protagonists	60,0%	43,8%	40,5%	24,3%	46,1%	8,7%	44,5%	37,5%	14,1%	35,5%
Non-protagonists	16,0%	18,8%	8,1%	48,7%	4,0%	47,8%	33,3%	37,5%	22,7%	26,3%
Both	4,0%	28,1%	2,7%	5,4%	1,3%	8,7%	0,0%	25,0%	7,0%	9,1%
No interaction	20,0%	9,4%	48,7%	21,6%	48,7%	34,8%	22,2%	0,0%	56,3%	29,1%

Source: Own elaboration

Table 4. Categorisation, coding and tabulation of the results collected. Data on the intentionality and the objectives of brand placement

ITEMS	FILM (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)									AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Type of shot										
Objective shot	35,9%	6,8%	9,1%	28,1%	19,4%	11,9%			9,0%	13,3%
Medium shot	18,0%	25,4%	19,7%	15,8%	15,1%	7,1%	33,3%	44,5%	18,4%	21,9%
Background shot	12,8%	3,4%	10,6%		11,5%	7,1%			10,6%	6,2%
Opening credits	10,3%									1,1%
Foreground	10,3%	27,1%	10,6%	3,5%	2,9%	4,8%			5,3%	7,2%
Point-of-view shot	5,1%	3,4%			2,2%	2,4%	16,7%	3,7%	1,6%	3,9%
Extreme close-up shot	2,6%	5,1%	7,6%	19,3%	18,0%	7,1%	16,7%	14,8%	23,3%	12,7%
Full body shot	2,6%	10,2%	4,5%	7,0%	9,4%	28,6%		11,1%	6,9%	8,9%
No shot	2,6%							3,7%		0,7%
Medium close-up shot		11,9%	10,6%	3,5%	9,4%	11,9%		7,4%	6,1%	6,8%
Wide shot		5,1%	18,2%	19,3%	10,1%	14,3%	25,0%	7,4%	12,7%	12,4%
American shot		1,7%	9,1%	3,5%	2,2%	4,8%	8,3%	7,4%	6,1%	4,8%
Camera angle										
Front angle	38,5%	79,7%	60,6%	58,8%	66,2%	50,0%	75,0%	44,5%	67,8%	60,1%
Over-the-shoulder angle	30,8%	1,7%	10,6%	15,8%	17,3%	19,1%		18,5%	9,4%	13,7%
Profile angle	18,0%	15,3%	18,2%	7,0%	13,7%	14,3%	8,3%	29,6%	17,1%	15,7%
No angle	12,8%							3,7%		1,8%

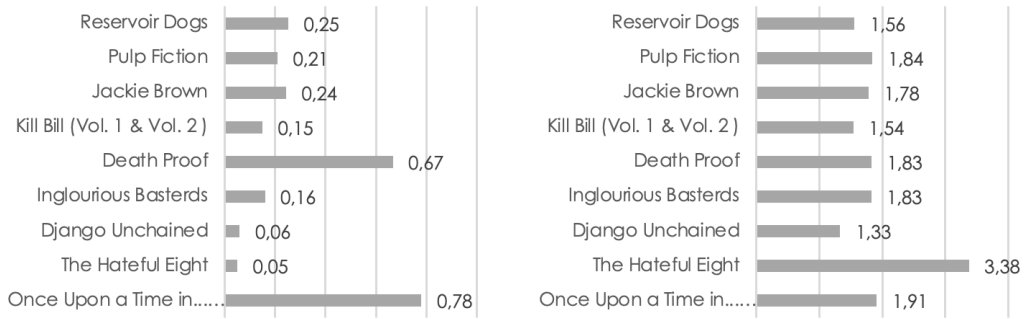
ÍTEM	FILM (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)									AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
High angle shot		1,7%		14,9%	2,9%	11,9%			3,3%	3,9%
Subjective angle		1,7%								0,2%
Low angle shot			10,6%	1,8%		4,8%	16,7%	3,7%	2,5%	4,4%
Extreme high angle shot				1,8%						0,2%
Presence of music										
Yes	8,0%	18,8%	35,1%	24,3%	19,7%	4,4%	22,2%	12,5%	31,3%	19,6%
No	92,0%	75,0%	56,8%	67,6%	76,3%	82,6%	77,8%	50,0%	52,3%	70,0%
Both	0,0%	6,3%	8,1%	8,1%	4,0%	13,0%	0,0%	37,5%	16,4%	10,4%

Source: Own elaboration

From the tabulation of the data collected, descriptive quantitative analysis techniques have been applied to interpret the results obtained by the research. Firstly, the ratio of brand placement per minute of film was calculated for each of the films studied. This indicator represents the number of cases of this type of communication which appear on the screen divided by the length of the film in minutes. Thus, it is possible to identify the frequency of this phenomenon in each of the films analysed (graph 1). The evolution of this ratio shows that in the first stage of Tarantino's career (*Reservoir Dogs*, *Pulp Fiction* and *Jackie Brown*) it remains practically unchanged, oscillating between 0.21 and 0.25 placements per minute, indicating a very regular use of brand placement as a communication alternative in this phase. However, from the fourth film it becomes a lot more irregular, probably due to a use of brand placement based essentially on a strict narrative necessity. It is very low in those films whose storylines are set in non-contemporary periods (19th century and the first part of the 20th century) or those based on concrete historical facts (*Inglourious Basterds*, *Django Unchained* and *The Hateful Eight*), with values of between 0.05 and 0.16 cases per minute. Meanwhile, it is much higher than normal in those films whose storyline takes place in times closer to the present day (*Grindhouse: Death Proof* and *Once upon a time in... Hollywood*), with values between 0.67 and 0.78. Naturally, for example, when a plot takes place in the years after the American Civil War (1861-1865), a time when advertising and business communication in general was not very well developed, showing a large number of instances of brand placement on screen does not make a great deal of narrative sense. In contrast, it is more convincing to use it in a much more profuse way in a film like *Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood*, which is set in 1969 Hollywood, a time and place where advertising was part of the everyday life of society.

On a similar line of thought, another interesting ratio is the number of inserts per case of brand placement in each film, as it indicates the average number of times the same brand placement is repeated on screen (graph 1). This indicator shows fairly stable values, with only one exception, oscillating in most cases between 1.33 and 1.91 (the average for the total filmography is 1.83 insertions per brand placement). The exception is the 3.38 insertions per placement for the film *The Hateful Eight*, which is mostly due to the low number of instances of brand placement for this film, which, nevertheless, appear repeatedly on screen. In this context, it should be considered that the repetition of the product placement is a strategy that aims to fix the brand or product in the viewer's mind, which tends to have better results if it appears on a greater number of occasions during the film.

Graph 1. Ratio of brand placement per minute / Ratio of the number of inserts per cases of brand placement



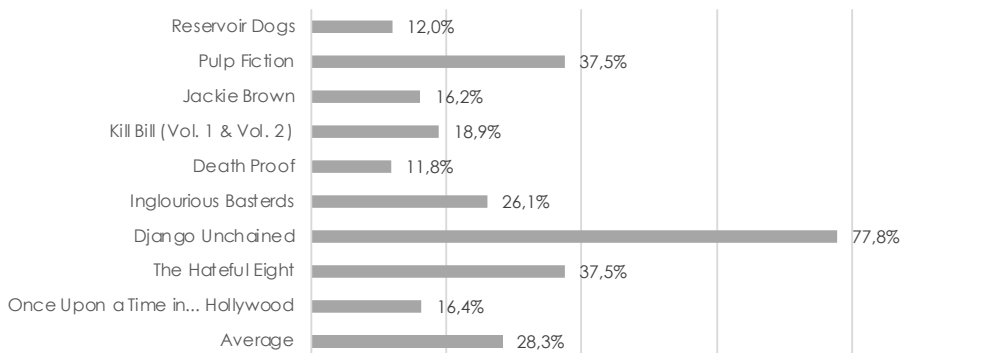
Source: Own elaboration

The results of the study reveal that the type of product most frequently placed by Tarantino in his filmography is the mention of films and short films (an average of 7.9 cases per film), followed by drinks brands (5.2 per film) and hospitality establishments (3 cases per film). In the fieldwork phase of the study, after viewing the films in their entirety, up to 39 different types of products or brands that the director has used for his placements have been detected, among which we highlight, in addition to those already mentioned, other books, magazines, music groups or songs, food brands, clothes brands, automotive brands, comics or tobacco (table 2).

With regards to the predominant type of communication used for the brand placement in Tarantino's films, we see a clear preference for the visual form (53.7% on average), followed by the exclusively verbal form (36.5%) and a combination of both (9.7%). However, in his first films (*Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction*), the predominant form was the verbal as opposed to the visual, which demonstrates the existence of a shift in the director's preferences as his film career progressed (with the exception of *Inglourious Basterds*) (table 2).

In terms of the use of fictional brand placement, measured as a percentage of the total number of product placement cases, the average in the director's total filmography is 28,3% of the cases. This is a sufficiently high enough figure to corroborate that Tarantino uses it as a tool to which he attributes a clear narrative use within film making (graph 2). We must highlight that the two highest values of this ratio appear in the two films whose storyline takes place in the 19th century (*Django Unchained* and *The Hateful Eight*), which is reasonably adjusted to the fact that this was a time when advertising was in its embryonic stages of development.

Graph 2. Percentage of fictitious brand placement over total cases



Source: Own elaboration

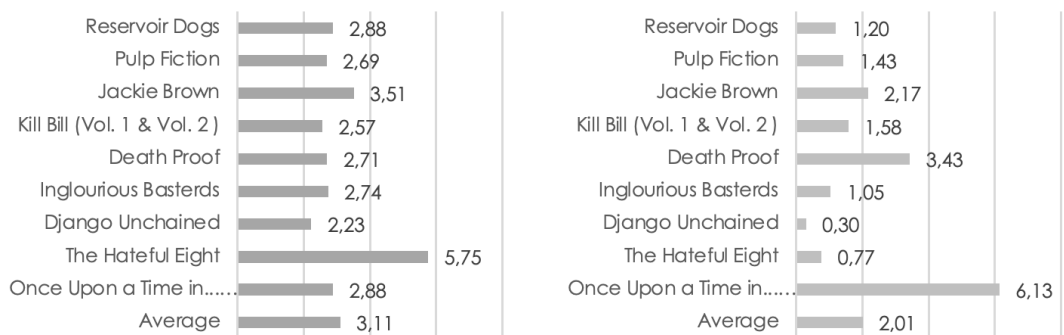
Secondly, we have analysed the functionality, importance and intention that Tarantino gives to brand placement in his films (table 3). These variables determine the importance that the director aims to give to the product in question in each of the scenes, depending on if he selects an active placement strategy, in which the product forms part of the action taking place, or passive, in which it only forms part of the decoration or scenery. The results show a preference for passive brand placement (an average of 53.7% out of the total number of cases in his filmography), followed by active brand placement

(37.8%) and those cases in which a combination of both is used (8.5%). Only in his first two films (*Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction*) was there a predominance of cases of active brand placement over passive brand placement, with the latter becoming predominant thereafter throughout his filmography (table 3). Within active brand placement, there are cases of active brand placement by action (1.3%), in which the product or brand is integrated into the narrative action of the film, with a key role in the scene, and active brand placement by mention (36.5%), consisting of alluding to a product or brand in a conversation or dialogue between the characters involved. The fact that there is a greater inclination towards the use of passive forms of placement, in which the product fulfils a function in the background but isn't indispensable in the scene, is a clear indication of the great importance Tarantino attaches to this technique in the narrative and in the construction of scenarios.

Another of the variables that determines the importance that the director attaches to the placement as a narrative and communication technique is the length of time the product remains on screen, since the longer it lasts, the more prominence it will have in the scene. The analysis of Tarantino's entire filmography shows an average screen time of 3.11 seconds per placement, a stable figure across his entire filmography, with the exception of *The Hateful Eight*, where the average screen time is almost double that of the rest of his films (graph 3). In 39.4% of cases of brand or product placement, the products are on screen for more than 5 seconds, in 25.3% of cases between 2 and 5 seconds and in 35.3% of cases for 1 second or less. The preference for placements of more than five seconds indicates the director's conscious use of this technique for both narrative and, if necessary, commercial purposes, as he wants the viewer to perceive the product or brand shown with greater certainty.

From this indicator, we deduce that he measures the total number of all the placements in each one of the films. The average for the whole of Tarantino's filmography is situated around 2.01 minutes per film, with the lowest figures recorded in the two films set in the 19th century, *Django Unchained* (0.30 minutes) and *The Hateful Eight* (0.77 minutes), and the highest in more recent films whose storyline takes place in more modern times, *Grindhouse: Death Proof* and *Once upon a time in... Hollywood*, with times of 3.43 and 6.13 minutes, respectively, in both cases for the same reasons previously mentioned (graph 3).

Graph 3. Average time on screen (in seconds) / Total time on screen of all the brand placements (in minutes)



Source: Own elaboration

From these data, we obtain the indicator that measures the percentage of time occupied by the placements over the total duration of each of the films. With an average value of 1.4% of the footage occupied by placements, as expected, this ratio is also lowest for the films with a historical setting, *Django Unchained* (0.2%) and *The Hateful Eight* (0.5%), and highest for the two films where an advertising environment is most relevant, *Grindhouse: Death Proof* (3%) and *Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood* (3.7%).

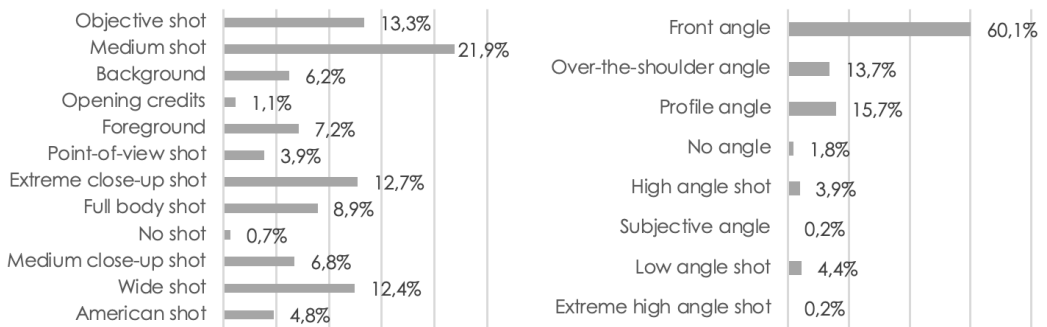
Regarding the interaction between the characters and the brand placement, the type of character who interacts with it most throughout Tarantino's filmography is the main character (35.5%). This data reveals the great value that the director attributes to placement, especially if we take into account that in 70.9% of the cases there is an intention to interact with some type of character (protagonist, 35.5%, non-protagonist, 26.3%, or both, 9.1%). In any case, it is worth noting that in Tarantino's work there is a chronological downward trend in the interaction between the main characters and the brand placement, from 60% of cases in *Pulp Fiction* to 14.1% in *Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood*, just as the cases of non-interaction increase (the average for his entire filmography is 29.1%).

Lastly, the study has tried to assess the intentionality and objectives of cases of brand placement in the filmography of Tarantino through the analysis of technical variables such as type of shot, camera angle

and presence of music in the scene, to determine whether this relationship has a purely commercial purpose or whether it concerns other aspects more connected with the contribution of realism to the narrative of the films. In this sense, the results obtained indicate that, although Tarantino uses a wide variety of shots and angles, the medium shot (21.9%), the objective shot (13.3%) and the extreme close-up shot (12.7%) predominate, as well as the use of the frontal angle (60.1%), followed by the profile angle (15.7%) and the over-the-shoulder angle (13.7%) (graph 4). The two predominant types of shots in product placements favour greater attention and involvement of the viewer in the plot, both the medium shot (from head to waist) by focusing attention on the hands, and the objective shot, in which the camera is invisible to the characters and each viewer follows the plot through it, thus unconsciously becoming involved in what is being narrated and therefore facilitating the effectiveness of brand placement. The use of the front angle, parallel to the ground and at eye level, is also the preferred formula for the placements, as it makes it easier for the spectator to identify or perceive them with greater precision and allows them to feel like an observer of reality or another element of the scene.

In terms of the use of music or not in the scenes in which cases of brand placement appear, in 70% of these cases, the placement is not accompanied by music and in 10.4%, the same product or brand appears sometimes with music and sometimes without it. This decision to not use music in these scenes varies between 50% in the cases in *The Hateful Eight* and 92% in *Once upon a time in... Hollywood* (table 4). Since music, cinematically, is an element that is often used to provoke tension or reinforce attention, it seems that Tarantino opts for a strategy of greater subtlety or discretion in this regard, letting most of the placements fit into the narrative as just another element of the scene.

Graph 4. Types of shot and camera angle used for brand placement



Source: Own elaboration

5. Discussion and conclusions

The main objective of this research was to carry out an in-depth analysis of the use of brand placement and its application as a communication tool in the complete filmography of Quentin Tarantino. To this end, a quantitative study was carried out using descriptive statistical tools applied to the research data.

The results of the present study reveal that Tarantino, as has been done in the film industry with some frequency for the last few decades, is strongly committed to the use of brand placement in his films, both for commercial purposes and to add realism to the plots, with an average of 41.7 instances per film (Wing-Fai, 2015; Kumar, 2017; Gundle, 2020; Pagello, 2020; Murray, 2022; Sharma and Bumb, 2022). Consequently, the first research question can be answered, as the director uses the placement for both purposes, in some cases as a business agreement that allows the promotional visibility of products or brands in a film and, in other cases, to provide realism to certain plots or scenes, appealing to the most emotional side of the viewer (Sherman, 2015; Kerrigan, 2017; Hong et al., 2020; Corkindale, Neale and Bellman, 2023).

The second research question was related to how brand placement is used throughout Tarantino's filmography. The use of this strategy has been found to be consistent. The director repeatedly uses placement of both real and fictitious brands and products in each of his films (Al-Kadi, 2013; Olszynko-Gryn, 2017; Sanderson, 2018). From the analysis of the data, the third research question can also be answered, as it has been observed that Tarantino increasingly uses brand placement in his work, with the reasonable exception of the three films set in the historical eras of the 19th century or the first half of the 20th century. In these periods, advertising itself was either at an embryonic stage or had a smaller scope than the contemporary situation (Vashisht and Royne, 2016; Huang and Deng, 2022; Neale and Corkindale, 2022). In this context, the fourth research question is answered, as Tarantino shapes a whole referential universe of fictional brand placement that extends throughout his filmography, allowing him

to enjoy greater control over the advertising or commercial content of his films (Sherman, 2015; Kerrigan, 2017; Rivas, 2019). Similarly, in reference to the fifth research question, we see that even in films set in historical times, Tarantino employs the technique of brand placement, although to a lesser extent by virtue of the narrative requirements of the plots.

Likewise, with reference to the sixth and last research question, it is observed that Tarantino takes great care in the staging of the brand/product placements, using specific types of shots and angles for each one of them, predominantly the medium shot and the front angle, which contributes to obtaining greater attention or involvement of the viewers, thus leading to more favourable brand responses (Redondo and Bernal, 2016; Rossolatos, 2017; Gundle, 2020). In this same way, the research results determine that the majority of the placements detected have some kind of interaction with the characters (protagonists, secondary characters or both), which usually results in greater commercial efficiency of the technique (Gillespie and Joireman, 2016; Naderer, Matthes and Zeller, 2018; Kongmanon and Petison, 2022).

The results of the study provide other interesting data for this area of research. For example, the types of product that most often appear in cases of brand placement in Tarantino's filmography are other cinematographic works (7.9 cases per film), followed by drinks brands (5.2 per film) and hospitality establishments (3 cases per film). The research has identified up to 39 different types of products or brands that the director has used for placements in his filmography. The ratio measuring the number of inserts per instance of brand placement in each film ranges from 1.33 to 1.91, with an average of 1.83 for the totality of his films.

Furthermore, the director tends to apply placements for a little more than 3 seconds on average, a figure which remains stable throughout his filmography, except for in the film *The Hateful Eight*, in which this indicator is practically double that of the others. The average total time of the sum of the placements in each of the films is 2.01 minutes per film, with the lowest figures for the two films set in the 19th century (when advertising was at a very embryonic stage) and the highest figures for those films set closer to the contemporary era (when advertising communication is fully consolidated). Similarly, the ratio of brand placement per minute of film is very low in films set in the 19th century and World War II, with values between 0.05 and 0.16 cases per minute, and much higher in films set closer to the present day, such as *Grindhouse: Death Proof* (0.67) and *Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood* (0.78). For similar reasons, the use of fictional brand placement, as a percentage of the total number of cases per film, whose average in Tarantino's filmography is 28.3%, has higher values in the two films whose plot is set in the 19th century (*Django Unchained* and *The Hateful Eight*).

The results have also determined that Tarantino's films are dominated by visual placements (53.7% on average), above those that are exclusively verbal (36.5%) and those that combine both forms (9.7%). The type of character with whom there is the most interaction throughout his filmography is the main character (35.5%). Moreover, in 70.9% of the cases, there is an intention of interaction with some type of character. Technically speaking, in the brand or product placements, the director opts for the use of the medium shot (21.9%), followed by objective shot (13.3%) and the extreme close-up shot (12.7%), as well as a predominant use of the front angle (60.1%). He also maintains a very clear propensity towards the use of placements without music accompaniment (70%).

As with all academic work, this study sought to contribute to clarifying many of the questions raised by the topic analysed, although, at the same time, it has also served to generate new lines of research that could be of interest for future academic studies. Among these new lines of research, some of which have already been considered during this research, we find quantitative studies, based on data obtained through surveying viewers of the films that have formed the object of this work, as well as other analyses that could provide a qualitative assessment of the placement technique, both by professionals from the world of cinema or television, as well as by marketing and communication experts. Furthermore, it could be interesting to carry out similar studies on the work or filmography of other prestigious directors, using the same methodology used in this study.

6. Specific contribution of each signatory

Contributions	Authors
Study conception and design	Author 1, 2, 3 and 4
Document search	Author 1, 2 and 4
Data collection	Author 1 and 4
Critical analysis and interpretation of the data	Author 1 and 3
Revision and approval of versions	Author 1 and 2

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9. Declaration of conflict of interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

10. Responsible declaration of the use of Artificial Intelligence

No Artificial Intelligence tools have been used in the elaboration of this study.

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