

## **Think Outside the Package: Context Congruence and Product Placement on Packaging**

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of context congruence on attitudes towards product placement on packaging. It is proposed that congruence-/incongruence between the context (packaging) and the (product featured as a) product placement has an effect on the attitude towards the (product featured as a) product placement. The hypotheses were tested through Man-Witney U tests on a total of 238 respondents. The results show that a congruent context and an incongruent context impact attitudes towards a product placement differently. A congruent context does not influence attitudes towards a product placement, while an incongruent context influences attitudes towards a product placement negatively. Managers may want to consider using a congruent product package context rather than an incongruent one when placing a product.*

**Keywords:** product placement, package, congruence, incongruence, attitudes

### **1. Introduction**

The practice of product placement is booming (Gregorio & Sung, 2010; Russell & Belch, 2005; Soba & Aydin, 2013) as marketers seek to create positive attitudes towards their offerings (Evans, Jamal, & Foxall, 2008; Wiles & Danielova, 2009). Marketers spent an estimated \$8.25 billion on product placement worldwide in 2012 and they are forecasted to spend nearly twice that in 2016 (PQ Media, 2012). Increased spending on product placement can be traced to its presumed cost-benefit ratio relative to ever-increasing traditional advertising costs (Gregorio & Sung, 2010). Moreover, increasing attention from practitioners has been accompanied by increasing attention from researchers (Chang, Newell, & Salmon, 2009). Product placements have targeted consumer as well as organizational markets (Lord & Gupta, 2010). However, product placement has been particularly visible in the soap opera genre which, as a concept, testifies to the blending of advertising of soap products and television shows (Russell & Belch, 2005). Prior research has examined product placement in familiar media or settings such as movies, TV scripts (Galician, 2004), radio programs (Russell & Belch, 2005), blogs, novels (Balasubramanian, Karrah, & Patwardhan, 2006), and the World Wide Web (Hudson & Hudson, 2006) (cf. Bressoud, Lehu, & Russell, 2010).

Traditionally, product placement has entailed advertising in the form of products placed together with or in an entertainment setting in order to capitalise on an audience. But the definitions of product placement have changed over time. A general definition by the Association of National Advertisers implies the integration of a product within an appropriate setting (Hudson & Hudson, 2006). Certainly, brands and products placed in games, movies, and television shows are sometimes completely integrated into an entertainment experience. Likewise, games, movies and television shows have been shown to be favourable settings for positive and effective impact on consumers (Redondo, 2012). While product placements have been studied in typical media settings such as those mentioned above, studies focusing on product placement on packaging appear virtually non-existent. This lack of

research is troublesome as packaging is certainly more than a container; it promotes products (Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014), it has a key role in enticing shoppers attention (Gelici-Zeko, Lutters, ten Klooster, & Weijzen, 2013), and its strategic character should not be underestimated (Azzi, Battini, Persona, & Sgarbossa, 2012). Moreover, businesses are often looking for ways to attain more shelf space (Hurley, Galvarino, Thackston, Ouzts, & Pham, 2013) and product placement on packages may be a very fruitful approach to explore.

Product placement can be deployed to influence consumers' attitudes (Panda, 2003; Russell, 2002) (cf. e.g. Balasubramanian et al., 2006; Hudson & Hudson, 2006). But some product placements are more persuasive than others. One explanation for this is the degree of congruence-/incongruence between the product placement and its context (Russell, 2002). For example, Moorman, Neijens and Smit (2002) observe how respondents are more likely to recognize (i.e. brand recognition) (cf. Gillespie, Joireman, & Muehling, 2012) an advertisement when it is put in a congruent context than in an incongruent context. Similarly, Lee and Faber (2007) note how a good match between new information and the pre-existing *schemata* - the structure or pattern that helps consumers to organize the numerous impressions they receive from the environment - implies that the new information can easily be assimilated into the existing schema. However, despite such evidence in favour of congruent contexts, other studies have found evidence supporting the notion of more persuasive product placements as a result of incongruent contexts (Lee & Faber, 2007). For example, Heckler and Childers (1992) report that information that is somehow incongruent with prior expectations results in more effortful processing of the information by respondents. Indeed, it has been argued that the novelty of the incongruent information will likely capture greater attention (Lee & Faber, 2007), but it may also result in more positive attitudes (e.g. Campbell & Goodstein, 2001; Lewis & Porter, 2010; Meyers-Levy & Tybout, 1989). Such conflicting results may in part be due to the variety of settings (media) in which the studies were performed as well as a result of inconsistent operationalization of congruent-/incongruent contexts (cf. Lee & Faber, 2007). Importantly, however, conflicting results imply that our knowledge regarding the cause effect relationships at work are incomplete. Such knowledge is vital to both practitioners (through promoting efficient deployment of product placement) and consumers (through promoting a pleasant consumer experience). Accordingly, the present study examines the effect of context congruence on attitudes towards product placements on packaging.

## 2. Theory and Hypotheses

An individual develops either sympathy or antipathy towards an object on the basis of what is learned about that object (Evans et al., 2008). Nancarrow, Wright and Brace (1998) consider the attitude as formed when the information by, in their case, an advertisement has been granted a clear negative or positive evaluation. Findings show that product placement can have positive effects on attitudes towards both brands and products (Dens, De Pelsmacker, Wouters, & Purnawirawan, 2012; Hudson & Hudson, 2006; Lord & Gupta, 2010). Product placement can also lead to increased awareness, brand loyalty (Hudson & Hudson, 2006), assist consumer's in their decision-making process, boost purchase intention (Lord & Gupta, 2010), as well as increase sales (Balasubramanian et al., 2006). It has also been shown how prominently displayed product placements can lead to increased recall among consumers (Belch & Belch, 2003). However, contradicting results include no changes at all in evaluations of placed brands (i.e. Balasubramanian et al., 2006), and even that product placement have negative effects on attitudes towards brands or products (Homer, 2009).

A placement's positive influence on recall may sometimes be offset when the consumer perceives the placement's commercial or selling purpose (Lord & Gupta, 2010). Advertising pressure may produce a backlash, which can influence the customer to react adversely towards the advertisement. The perception of pressure could produce a decline in the effectiveness of the placement. When the person is being pressured to follow a certain opinion or behaviour or perceives that his or her freedom is threatened, a negative emotional response can be elicited (Redondo, 2012). Scepticism towards advertising can increase if the audience acquires increased insight into marketers' persuasive intents and tactics. Scepticism can in this sense be seen as a defence mechanism that is triggered if an audience is presented with information that strains credibility. In general, such scepticism hurts attitudes towards the product placement (Balasubramanian et al., 2006).

One major explanation for positive or negative effects of product placement includes the congruence-/incongruence of the context. *Congruence* can be defined as the extent to which a brand association shares the content and meaning with other brand associations (Panda, 2003). Congruent-/incongruent information can be classified according to two dimensions or thematic relationships: expectancy and relevancy. The classification of

the information refers to its relationship with the advertisement theme. *Expectancy* refers to the degree to which a piece of information evoked by an advertisement falls into a predetermined, expected structure or pattern. *Relevancy* refers to the degree to which a piece of information contributes to the identification of the primary message communicated by the advertisement, that is, whether or not an ad component contributes to the main message and contains information that is useful to support the ad theme. Expected and relevant information is deemed congruent, whereas unexpected and relevant information is deemed incongruent (irrelevant information is considered uninformative) (Lee & Mason, 1999) (cf. Heckler & Childers, 1992). The important point is that the nature of congruence-/incongruence of any advertising information is determined by its relationship with the advertising theme (Lee & Mason, 1999). Certainly, congruence of a brand with information and the story of the context is a measure of the extent to which the brand association shares the content and meaning with other brand associations.

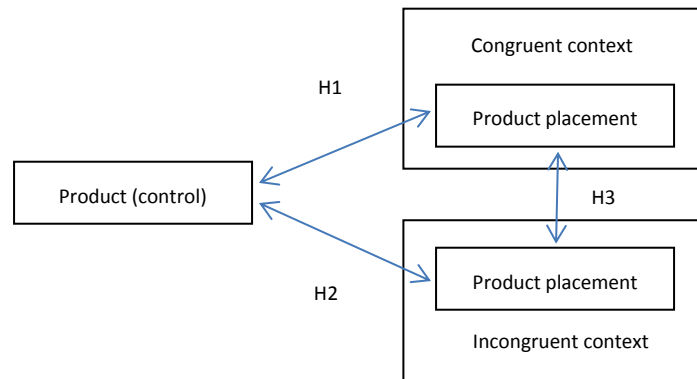
Research has, on the one hand, shown the importance of a strong link between a brand and the context. In the case of television, it concerns the link between the sponsor (brand) and the sponsored object or event. The stronger the link, the stronger the positive impact on the customers' attitudes towards the sponsor (brand) (Panda, 2003). In fact, depending on how congruent the information is with consumers' existing ideas, or schema, consumers either process or ignore the information (Lewis & Porter, 2010). A strong brand placement in a movie implies that the brand should be related to the content of the movie. Moreover, it appears that the congruity between the brand and the *type* of media vehicle, for example, movie vis-à-vis book may influence the (amount of) response in consumers (Panda, 2003). However, on the other hand, marketers have deployed incongruent combinations in hope of increasing the amount of attention received by advertisements (Heckler & Childers, 1992; Lee & Mason, 1999). Such practice may allow an advertisement to rise above the advertising clutter, mirroring the competition for (limited) consumer attention (Lee & Mason, 1999), resulting in more engaged, effortful, or elaborative processing by the consumers (Heckler & Childers, 1992), in turn resulting in better recall. But it has been noted (e.g. Hudson & Hudson, 2006; Lee & Faber, 2007; Lord & Gupta, 2010; Russell, 2002) that maximising recall does not necessarily maximise persuasion. While incongruence enhances recall, congruence enhances persuasion. Sometimes visual placements are remembered only when they are incongruent with the context, but incongruent placements have been found to adversely affect brand attitudes because such placements appear unnatural (Russell, 2002).

In sum, previous research into congruence and its effect has produced conflicting results (Lee & Faber, 2007) (cf. Dens et al., 2012; Hudson & Hudson, 2006; Lord & Gupta, 2010; Moorman et al., 2002). Conflicting results may in part be due to the wide variety of ways in which congruity has been conceptualized (Lee & Faber, 2007). Indeed, congruence can be conceptualized in a number of ways. It could, for example, be the fit between one particular message and the receiver's existing schema, the fit between various advertisement elements, or the fit between an advertisement and the medium in which it is placed (Söderlund & Dahlén, 2010). While it has, for example, in practice often been assumed that congruent sponsorship is more effective than incongruent sponsorship, research has produced inconsistent findings (Rodgers, 2003). Moreover, studies focusing on congruity between games and products - product placements in the context of games, or adver gaming - indicate that incongruent brands, in general, are better recalled than congruent brands (Chen & Deterding, 2013; Lee & Faber, 2007) while game players show a less favourable attitudes towards highly incongruent brands (Chen & Deterding, 2013). But in contrast, Lewis and Porter (2010) note that moderately incongruent events inspire processing and elaboration and evoke more positive evaluations. Put differently, the conflicting results imply that both congruent and incongruent contexts have an effect on consumer attitudes (Figure I summarizes the relationships proposed); therefore:

**Hypothesis 1:** A congruent context influences attitudes towards a product featured as a product placement.

**Hypothesis 2:** An incongruent context influences attitudes towards a product featured as a product placement.

**Hypothesis 3:** A congruent context and an incongruent context influences attitudes towards a product featured as a product placement differently.

**Figure I. Conceptualization of Hypotheses**

### 3. Measurements

Three different questionnaires were developed to mirror three different conditions: no context, congruent context, and incongruent context. The questions on each questionnaire were devised to measure the attitude towards the product placement (product) under each condition. To assess preliminary versions of the questionnaires, they were distributed to an expert in scale development as well as to a limited number of respondents and amended accordingly. A sample of 232 usable responses was collected at two Swedish state authorities. Each respondent was administered and asked to complete one of the three versions of the instruments.

#### Product Placement

The product being placed (acting as a product placement) was a pen, specifically a picture of a pen together with the text "Try also the X pen" (X stands for the brand name of the pen).

#### Contexts

The *congruent* context consisted of a package of sticky notes of a commonly known brand name. Specifically, this context consisted of a picture of a package of sticky notes on which the product placement (the pen) took place. The *incongruent* context was a tube of moisturizing cream. Specifically this context consisted of a picture of a package of a tube of moisturizing cream on which the product placement (the pen) took place. A focus group (see below) was deployed to assess the validity of the congruent and incongruent contexts respectively, and they were both deemed appropriate. The *control* context (or "no" context) simply consisted of the product placement (the pen) on its own, i.e. not placed on any product package.

#### Attitude

Attitude was assessed in accordance with the Fishbein (e.g. Zhang, 2010) model. According to the Fishbein model, people form attitudes towards objects based on their beliefs (perceptions and knowledge) about these objects (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Wu, 2003). The overall attitude score (A) is obtained by multiplying a consumer's rating of each attribute for all the products/brands considered by the importance rating of that attribute (Wu, 2003) (cf. Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Ryan & Bonfield, 1975). To generate a selection of attributes considered important with regard to pens and the same attributes' relative importance (weights), a focus group was deployed: A convenience sample of six participants was selected at a Swedish state authority. A picture of a pen (the same picture used in the control context) was administered to the focus group, and the group was instructed to identify important attributes of the pen. Next the respondents were instructed to individually weigh the previously identified attributes of importance of the pen on a five-point Likert scale. A low number was associated with a low ranking, and a high number was associated with a high ranking. The procedure resulted in the following attributes and weights: *Quality* (4,43); *Function* (4,43); *Reliability* (4,29); *Feeling (ergonomics)* (4,14); *Durability* (3,86); *Aesthetic appeal* (3,57); *Value for money* (3,43); *Brand* (2,29); *Status* (2,00); *Environmental friendliness* (2,00).

The attributes formed the basis for the questionnaires. In each of the three versions of the instruments, seven-point Likert scales (with the endpoints "very bad/very low" respective "very good/very high") were devised to assess how the placed product was rated on each attribute in its respective context (un-weighted scores). The ratings

were then multiplied with the weights acquired from the focus group. The resulting scores were summarized into the overall weighted score for the product placement in each context.

### Additional Measures

The theory of reasoned action is a well-known standard model of the attitude-behaviour relation (Terry & Hogg, 2000). Reasoned action entails that people consider the implications of their actions before they decide to engage or not to engage in a given behaviour. In accordance with this view, the simplest and probably most efficient approach to studying consumer behaviour is to simply ask the respondent whether he or she intends to perform the behaviour in question (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) (cf. Ryan & Bonfield, 1975). Accordingly, two additional items were included in the instruments: "How likely is it that you would buy such a pen?" and "How likely is it that you would recommend such a pen to others?". Each item in each of the three versions of the questionnaires was assessed on a seven point Likert scale (with the endpoints "not at all likely" respective "very likely"). See the instrument in Appendix A.

## 4. Results

### Descriptive Statistics

The normality of the distributions (Cronbach's alpha for overall attitude at 0,883) was assessed based on skewness and kurtosis as well as on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and the Shapiro-Wilk tests. The  $z$  values for skewness and kurtosis for attitude was within  $\pm 2,58$  for all three conditions; for the control, congruent, and incongruent groups respectively, the skewness and kurtosis were 1,1258 and 1,444 (congruent), 0,949 and -0,565 (incongruent), and 0,263 and -0,498 (control) (see Table I). The coefficients for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and the Shapiro-Wilk tests for all the groups fell within 0,200 and 0,695. Thus (cf. e.g. Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006), as the distributions were considered normally distributed and as the dependent variable was considered interval, a t-test for independent samples was deployed as a pre-test using the un-weighted attitude scores.

**Table I: Descriptive Statistics**

Attitude and Condition:	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std.	Skewness			Kurtosis		
						Statistic	Std. error	z	Statistic	Std. error	z
<b>Total</b>	219	1,00	5,83	3,132	0,9727	0,105	0,164	0,640	-0,070	0,327	-0,214
<b>Control</b>	69	1,25	5,83	3,262	0,9541	0,76	0,289	0,263	-0,284	0,570	-0,498
<b>Congruent</b>	74	1,33	5,75	3,271	0,8309	0,351	0,279	1,258	0,797	0,552	1,444
<b>Incongruent</b>	76	1,00	5,75	2,878	1,0737	0,262	0,276	0,949	-0,308	0,545	-0,565

### Pre-test

*Control compared to congruent* - Comparing the attitude towards the pen (un-weighted) under the control condition to under the congruent condition: *The result rejects  $H_1$  as the  $t$  value is -0,062 and  $\alpha \geq 0,05$ .* *Control compared to incongruent* - Comparing the attitude towards the pen (un-weighted) under the control condition to under the incongruent condition: *The result rejects  $H_0$  as the  $t$  value is 2,266 and  $\alpha \leq 0,05$ .* *Congruent compared to incongruent* - Comparing the attitude towards the pen (un-weighted) under the congruent condition to under the incongruent condition: *The result rejects  $H_0$  as the  $t$  value is 2,503 and  $\alpha \leq 0,05$ .* See Table II.

**Table II: Pre-Test Un-Weighted Scores**

Condition	Levene's test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Control compared to congr.	2,998	0,086	-0,062	141	0,950	-0,00932	0,14936
Control compared to incongr.	0,647	0,423	2,266	143	0,025	0,38379	0,16938
Congr. compared to incongr.	5,932	0,016	2,503	148	0,013	0,39311	0,15705

### Hypotheses

As the un-weighted scores were multiplied with their respective weights, the products (Cronbach's alpha at 0,878) were considered ordinal and consequently Mann-Witney U tests were deployed to test the hypotheses (cf. Howitt & Cramer, 2005; Nolan & Heinzen, 2008; Pagano, 1994).

#### *Hypothesis 1: Control compared to congruent*

According to Hypothesis 1: A congruent context influences attitudes towards a product featured as a product placement. *The result rejects  $H_1$  as  $\alpha \geq 0,05$  (Table III and VI).*

**Table III: Ranks Hypothesis 1**

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Congruent	74	70,16	5192,00
Control	69	73,97	5104,00
Total	143		

#### *Hypothesis 2: Control compared to incongruent*

According to Hypothesis 2: An incongruent context influences attitudes towards a product featured as a product placement. *The result rejects  $H_0$  as  $\alpha \leq 0,05$  (Tables IV and VI).*

**Table IV: Ranks Hypothesis 2**

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Incongruent	76	64,62	4911,00
Control	69	82,23	5674,00
Total	145		

#### *Hypothesis 3: Congruent compared to incongruent*

According to Hypothesis 3: A congruent context and an incongruent context influence attitudes towards a product featured as a product placement differently. *The result rejects  $H_0$  as  $\alpha \leq 0,05$  (Tables V and VI).*

**Table V: Ranks Hypothesis 3**

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Congruent	74	84,36	6243,00
Incongruent	76	66,87	5082,00
Total	150		

**Table VI: Test Statistics Hypotheses 1-3**

	<i>Hypothesis 1</i>	<i>Hypothesis 2</i>	<i>Hypothesis 3</i>
<b>Mann-Whitney U</b>	2417,000	1985,000	2156,000
<b>Wilcoxon W</b>	5192,000	4911,000	5082,000
<b>Z</b>	-0,549	-2,522	-2,466
<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	0,583	0,012	0,014

### Additional Results

The normality of the distribution for the two additional measures concerning the likeliness to act was assessed based on skewness and kurtosis as well as on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Some  $z$  values for skewness and kurtosis fell outside  $\pm 2,58$  (Hair et al., 2006), and the coefficients for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and the Shapiro-Wilk test fell below 0,05. Consequently, the distributions were considered non-normal; thus Mann-Witney U tests were deployed to compare the three conditions (Howitt & Cramer, 2005; Nolan & Heinzen, 2008; Pagano, 1994). No statistically significant difference was found between the congruent and control conditions ( $\alpha = 0,279$  and  $0,722$  for likeliness to 'buy' and to 'recommend' respectively) or between incongruent and control conditions ( $\alpha = 0,059$  and  $0,217$  respectively). Likewise, between the congruent and the incongruent conditions, no statistically significant difference was found with regard to likeliness to 'recommend' ( $\alpha = 0,107$ ); however, a statistically significant difference was found with regard to likeliness to 'purchase' ( $\alpha = 0,02$ ) (see Tables VII and VIII below). Mean ranks for likeliness to 'purchase' were 90,41 and 68,86 respectively for congruent compared to incongruent; 80,15 and 72,25 for congruent compared to control; and 71,29 and 84,21 for incongruent compared to control.

**Table VII: Rank Order**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean rank</b>	<b>Sum of Ranks</b>
<b>Incongruent</b>	78	90,41	7052,00
<b>Control</b>	80	68,86	5509,00
<b>Total</b>	158		

**Table VIII: Test Statistics**

<b>Mann-Whitney U</b>	2269,000
<b>Wilcoxon W</b>	5509,000
<b>Z</b>	-3,079
<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	0,02

### 5. Conclusions

The study has examined the effect of congruent-/incongruent contexts on attitudes towards a product placement on packaging. The results show that a congruent context does not influence attitudes towards a product featured as a product placement (Hypothesis 1). However, the results show that an incongruent context negatively influences attitudes towards a product featured as a product placement (Hypothesis 2). Indeed, a congruent context and an incongruent context influence attitudes towards a product featured as a product placement differently (Hypothesis 3), as an incongruent context negatively influences attitudes. The same pattern was observed with the un-weighted scores in the pre-study. In terms of the additional results, a statistically significant difference was found with regard to likeliness to 'purchase' when comparing the congruent and the incongruent conditions. Specifically, the results concerning likeliness to 'purchase' suggest an order of likeliness to 'purchase' where the congruent condition promotes the 'purchase' the most, followed by the control and in turn followed by the incongruent condition. No statistically significant difference was found with regard to likeliness to 'recommend'.

### 6. Discussion

The result of this study is a step towards more complete knowledge concerning product placements on product packages and the influence of incongruent-/congruent contexts. This is important as the level of congruence

between the product package and the (product featured as a) product placement affect consumer attitudes as well as consumer decisions. It is evident from the present study that the attitude respondents formed towards the product acting as placement was influenced by the package (context) at hand.

In essence, the results show that compared to a control context, a congruent context does not affect attitudes towards a product (placement) significantly. In this sense, and rather surprisingly, there appear to be no apparent attitudinal gains from deploying a product placement in a congruent context. It appears, however, that there are attitudinal losses to be suffered from deploying in an incongruent context. Thus, it seems that any assumed attitudinal gains from product placements (in a congruent context) are not due to the characteristics of the context but rather to the mere exposure of the product (which in itself may, of course, over time promote positive attitudes regardless if the context is congruent or control). Similarly, the higher likeliness to purchase under the congruent condition compared to under the incongruent condition comes together with the observation that there is no statistically significant difference with regard to likeliness to purchase when compared to the control context. Again, and rather surprisingly, there appear to be no apparent gains in terms of increased reported likeliness to purchase from deploying a product placement in a congruent context (vis-à-vis control). It appears, however, that there is decreased reported likeliness to purchase to be suffered from deploying in an incongruent context, at least when compared to a congruent context (and even the comparison to the control is close to statistically significant). Hence, again, it appears that any assumed gains in likeliness to purchase from product placement (in a congruent context) are not due to the characteristics of the context but rather to the mere exposure of the product. In sum, practitioners may want to consider using a congruent product package context rather than an incongruent one when placing a product. However, the degree of incongruence-/congruence may be critical and has not been taken into account in this study beyond the contexts at hand.

As the information carried by the product placement may be seen as relevant and useful for the customer in relation to the context and advertising theme (e.g. Lee & Mason, 1999), the product placement on an incongruent product package may be perceived as more unexpected information by the customer. As the product package often plays the role of a silent salesman informing the consumer (Ampuero & Vila, 2006), the incongruent product package may muddle this information transfer, resulting in the more adverse consumer attitude. Thus, while prior empirical research has produced conflicting results (cf. e.g. Balasubramanian et al., 2006; Rodgers, 2003), the current findings are consistent with prior research concerning congruency and the relevancy of information (cf. Heckler & Childers, 1992; Hudson & Hudson, 2006; Lee & Mason, 1999; Lewis & Porter, 2010; Lord & Gupta, 2010).

While it has been reported that results on incongruent research demonstrate that when information is somehow incongruent with prior expectations, individuals will engage in more effortful processing of the information (e.g. Heckler & Childers, 1992), it is not possible to draw any such conclusions in the present study. Similarly, it is difficult to draw any conclusions concerning why there is a decreased reported likeliness to purchase associated with deploying in an incongruent context (vis-à-vis congruent). But one possible interpretation is that respondents experience the incongruent product placement as what Redondo (2012) calls 'advertising pressure', resulting in scepticism, which can hurt the attitude towards the product placement (Balasubramanian et al., 2006). Such perception of pressure can, according to Redondo (2012), produce a decline in the effectiveness of the placement.

While empirical evidence for attitudes towards product placements on congruent and incongruent product packages has been found, longitudinal research may provide additional insight, for example, concerning what happens after several exposures. Such studies may also be undertaken to study recall and recognition (cf. e.g. Balasubramanian et al., 2006) of product placements on congruent and incongruent product packages. In addition, further research should take into account the potential effect of the product placement on (attitudes towards) the context. Another interesting avenue for further research may be different forms of incongruence. That is, it should be possible to classify congruence in terms of the way (or the degree to which) the context and product placement are (un)related. The present study is limited to the products and brands deployed in the study as well as to the respondents taking part. Certainly, further quantitative research on different products, brands, and different samples should be performed to clarify the relationships further.



**Appendix A – Scale (Congruent group) in English****Assume that you are Considering Buying the Pen in the Picture**

By marking the number that best corresponds to your opinion, please indicate how the pen appears with regard to the following criteria:

1. Quality
2. Feeling (ergonomics)
3. Function
4. Value for money
5. Durability
6. Reliability
7. Aesthetic appeal
8. Status
9. Environmental friendliness
10. Brand

(With Likert scales 1-7 were 1 as “Very bad/Very low” and 7 as “Very good/Very high”)

11. How likely is it that you would buy such a pen?
12. How likely is it that you would recommend such a pen to others?

(With Likert scales 1-7 were 1 as “Not at all likely” and 7 as “Very likely”)

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