
Miscellaneous

Blanca Miguélez-Juan

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8834-7644>

blanca.miguel@ehu.es

Universidad del País Vasco (UPV/EHU)

Sara Rebollo-Bueno

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8179-6562>

srebollo@uloyola.es

Universidad Loyola Andalucía

Submitted

June 4th, 2024

Approved

February 13th, 2025

© 2025

Communication & Society

ISSN 0214-0039

E ISSN 2386-7876

www.communication-society.com

2025 – Vol. 38 (2)

pp. 81-97

How to cite this article:

Miguélez-Juan, B., & Rebollo-Bueno, S. (2025). Symphony of Brands: Brand Placement in the Lyrics and Music Videos of Billboard Global 200 Hits (2023-2024), *Communication & Society*, 38(2), 81-97. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.38.2.006>

Symphony of Brands: Brand Placement in the Lyrics and Music Videos of Billboard Global 200 Hits (2023-2024)

Abstract

Musical brand placement is gaining strength as an advertising tool, as it allows brands to integrate non-intrusively into entertainment content. Song lyrics and music videos become an ideal advertising medium, where the artists themselves act as endorsers, connecting these brands with their vast fan communities and the general public.

In this context, the main objective of this study is to analyze how the advertising strategies aligns with current consumption trends and the preferences of new generations. It examines how brands are incorporated into music videos and the lyrics of the Billboard Global 200 hits. This ranking features the songs with the highest number of streams, digital sales, and physical sales globally across more than 200 territories in 2023 and 2024.

To achieve this, a hybrid methodology was employed, combining content analysis and an examination of advertising messages, specifically, the study of resemantization. The operationalisation of variables through the first research technique stands out as the innovative aspect of this study. This approach offers a quantitative tool for analysing brand presence in entertainment products, enabling broader application.

The findings highlight how brands are seamlessly integrated into the music video landscape and how, in turn, brands serve as channels for the artist to convey the image they wish to project through their song and/or video. One of the main conclusions is the mutual transfer of values between the brand and the artist, underscoring the importance of musical brand placement in contemporary advertising strategies.

Keywords

Branding; brand placement; advertising; music video; music; Billboard Global 200; lyrics; YouTube; Vevo.

1. Introduction

The impact of globalization and the pivotal role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) (Santos Millán, 2019) have fostered a hyperconnected generation with a strong inclination towards relationship technologies (Gallego Pérez, 2009, p.68), known as the “app generation” (Gardner & Davis, 2014; Gonzales Sulla, 2021). To stand out in a sea of advertising messages and a product-saturated market, brands are adopting innovative advertising techniques and strategies to connect with an audience like the app generation, which has developed distinctive traits as consumers.

At the intersection of marketing and pop culture, brand placement in music videos has emerged as a powerful advertising strategy and a cost-effective marketing technique (Pînzaru, Săvulescu, & Mitan, 2013). In this way, the popularity and reach of musical hits can be harnessed to promote brands and products (Castelló-Martínez, Del Pino Romero, & Tur-Viñes, 2016; Castelló-Martínez & Barrilero-Carpio, 2021; Bonales-Daimiel & Miguélez-Juan, 2022).

The perfectly coordinated synergy of brand messages integrated into the visual and auditory narrative of music videos is garnering a positive global audience response. The effort of advertising agencies and marketing professionals to integrate brands more organically and subtly is being well-received among new generations, as they aim to capture their attention within entertainment content. Recent studies suggest that consumer engagement increases with the use of entertainment (i.e., Riskos *et al.*, 2024), fostering favourable attitudes towards the brand (Youn, Shah & Dodoo, 2024).

While music acts as a catalyst for product promotion (Burkhalter *et al.*, 2017), it is not the only medium transforming the advertising landscape. Other platforms, new media, etc., are also helping to implement and valorize other innovative advertising strategies, which share a common characteristic: delving into entertainment content (Fitó-Carreras, Méndiz-Noguero, & Vidal-Maestre, 2024). As music videos continue to be a primary vehicle for musical expression, their role as an advertising platform has gained increasing importance, particularly on the Billboard Global 200, which represents the pinnacle of popular music worldwide (Balasubramanian, Karrh, & Patwardhan, 2006).

This paradigm shift has also led brands to increasingly trust the power of musical artists as brand ambassadors, highlighting their ability to attract young audiences and, consequently, creating a more organic and effective connection with them (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019; Sawaftah, Aljarah, & Lahuerta-Otero, 2021). All this entails the need for the music industry itself to adapt and evolve. Examples of this are platforms like Spotify or YouTube, which combine musical and technological trends.

Thus, in a context marked by the rise of such trends, this study aims to show how brands want to be (and are) part of this new scenario. Therefore, the goal is to analyze how the advertising approach aligns with current consumption trends and the preferences of new generations, studying how brands integrate into music videos and the lyrics of hits on the Billboard Global 200. This ranking collects songs with the highest number of streams, digital sales, and physical sales globally across more than 200 territories in the years 2023 and 2024.

Therefore, the study determines the presence of brands in music videos and in the lyrics of the songs to which they provide audiovisual support. In this way, the research yields results on which brands and product categories participate more in this musical showcase or have a better positioning. In addition, it aims to deepen the understanding of the transfer of values between the brand and the artist. The following is a review of the

literature that supports the objectives of the study, in order to build the methodology for extracting the results to the questions posed. It is precisely this methodology that provides an innovative coding sheet for the quantitative analysis of brand presence in entertainment products, which operationalizes ideas that were already in the literature.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Strategic Harmony: How Music Amplifies the Brand-Consumer Connection

The relationship between music and advertising has evolved and intensified, notably affecting how brands connect with their audience. Initially, music videos primarily promoted songs and artists, but over time, their nature and use have diversified. Throughout many decades of the 20th century, numerous renowned brands solidified their position in popular culture by using jingles. These brief, easily memorable melodies have left a lasting impression on consumers' minds even into the 21st century, serving both to establish brand identity and enhance advertisement effectiveness.

Music acts as a critical element that evokes emotions and reinforces brand messages. Hence, various studies have focused on music. These have ranged from analyzing the influence of music on the credibility of the speaker and advertising effectiveness on the radio (Martín-Santana, Reinares-Lara, & Muela-Molina, 2015), to describing what sensory marketing is and how it affects consumers' perceptions and evaluations of advertising (Krishna, Cian, & Sokolova, 2016). This also includes the effectiveness of the music-advertising relationship focusing on purchase intent, attitude towards the brand, and affective response (Oakes, 2007).

Recent research shows how music enhances perceptions towards the advertisement and the product, strengthening both purchase intent and recall among consumers (Herget, Breves, and Schramm, 2020). Furthermore, other studies support that familiarity with the brand increases the likelihood of its recall after viewing a music video (Piazzolla, García Medina, & Navarro-Beltrán, 2021). Additionally, Müllensiefen (2021) emphasizes the importance of meticulously assessing the emotional fit of music with the brand to maximize advertising effectiveness, employing tools and methodologies that transcend conventional approaches. In summary, the relationship between music and advertising is undeniable, a fact that is amplified by new digital platforms.

2.2. The Power of Brand Placement: From Observation to Action

The duality of music videos as artistic works and marketing tools is particularly interesting for the advertising industry and the advertisers who view them as advertising media. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) sheds light on how individuals learn and imitate behaviours observed in others, especially among younger consumers who may adopt certain attitudes or behaviours towards brands introduced by musical artists who act as role models. These artists serve as endorsers, potentially leading to a more favourable predisposition towards the featured brands (Thornton and Burkhalter, 2015) due to their influence on purchasing decisions and brand loyalty.

At the same time, this directly impacts the identity formation and socialization of younger individuals (Monedero Morales, 2020). Examples include various studies on the effectiveness of product placements in music videos (Omarjee & Chilya, 2014) and the frequency required to achieve optimal advertising impact through brand placement (Davtyan, Cunningham, & Tashchian, 2020).

This is not an isolated phenomenon but a reality in which the interest of numerous brands looking to integrate their codes and messages through brand placement in music videos is on the rise (Sedeño-Valdellos & Schubert, 2020). Indeed, this reality is partly responsible for blurring the lines between entertainment and advertising (Wang et al., 2018). Thus, musical artists are the perfect hook for capturing a young and global audience, establishing, and developing a better relationship between music and advertising, and deepening the brand-consumer dialogue.

In this context, music videos have become easy-to-share advertising media, acting as catalysts for consumption through the inclusion of brands in their visual and lyrical narratives; this avoids the sense of intrusion typical of traditional advertisements. They are short audiovisual pieces that achieve great popularity and a high number of views on platforms such as YouTube or Vevo. They have sparked increasing interest from sectors as diverse and significant in terms of turnover as automotive, technology, fashion and accessories, and alcoholic beverages (Sánchez-Olmos, Segarra-Saavedra & Hidalgo-Mari, 2019; Sedeño-Valdellos & Schubert, 2020; Miguélez-Juan & Goirizelaia, 2022).

Research by Hudders et al. (2016) demonstrates that brand visibility is not decisive in the effectiveness of brand placement in a music video, but rather the emotional relationship between the fan and the artist. The stronger the connection between the follower and their idol, the more favourable it is for the brand.

An example is trap music, which stands out as a genre where artists showcase their works with a careful staging that reflects their artistic and creative identity. Its specific visual and narrative aesthetic are intended to be establishing a direct and authentic link between their creation and their followers (Miguélez-Juan & Goirizelaia, 2022). The urban genre in particular has shown great capacity in recent years to reflect the aspirations, experiences, and concerns of urban communities. Its uncensored lyrics and rhythms have allowed it to become a cultural phenomenon for a massive young audience (Miguélez-Juan & Goirizelaia, 2022).

In conclusion, music videos are conceived as useful tools for introducing brands, with the goal of displaying, modifying, or reinforcing brand awareness and, more importantly, building loyalty towards them (Burkhalter et al., 2017). This explains the growing interest of advertisers and advertising agencies in using innovative and integrated marketing strategies (Luxton, Reid, & Mavondo, 2015) that perpetuate music videos as effective and profitable advertising media. In fact, Mandolfo, Di Dalmazi and Lamberti's (2024) study demonstrates how the inclusion of the brand in music videos improves brand recall and attitude towards the brand.

2.3. Globalization of Hits: The Reach of Billboard and the Billboard Global 200 Method

Billboard magazine began publishing music-related content in 1894 and has since become a benchmark source for the music industry. In addition to news related to this sector and analyses of music and entertainment, it publishes over twenty different charts for songs, albums, artists, and musical genres, based on sales, streaming plays, and radio airplay. Among the most popular and frequently consulted rankings are the Billboard Hot 100, Billboard 200, Billboard Artist 100, and Top Album Sales, among others. These charts, which are updated weekly, are key references in the music industry for determining the popularity and commercial success of artists and their works.

In addition to the aforementioned lists, Billboard also publishes the Billboard Global 200. This song ranking was launched in September 2020 to list the most popular songs with

the highest number of physical and digital sales, as well as official streams in more than 200 territories worldwide, including the U.S. (Billboard, n.d.).

Through a unique methodology that sets it apart from other rankings published by the magazine, and using a weighted formula, this chart has become part of the magazine's strategy to showcase global music consumption. It follows a weekly cycle and is published on Tuesdays on the Billboard website (<https://www.billboard.com/>). The first edition of the Billboard Global 200 was topped by *WAP* by Cardi B featuring Megan Thee Stallion (Billboard, 2020).

As a global reference in the music field, Billboard has been the subject of various research studies. Its different rankings spark interest from various analytical perspectives. For instance, Cosimato *et al.* (2019) attempted to predict the position of an album on the Billboard 200 using monthly data from Billboard's Top 200. Other studies have focused on the turnover of charts and sales in the recorded music industry before and during the rise of the Internet (Klein & Slonaker, 2010).

Askin and Mauskapf (2017) conclude that in addition to an artist's familiarity, genre affiliation, and institutional support, the perceived proximity of a song to its peers significantly influences its chart position. Research by Spanish authors has primarily focused on the study of brand placement in music videos from the Billboard Hot 100 during various periods of this century (e.g., Sánchez-Olmos, Segarra-Saavedra, & Hidalgo-Mari, 2019; Sánchez-Olmos & Castelló-Martínez, 2020).

Continuing this line of research is particularly interesting if the list analysed is the Billboard Global 200, as this ranking reflects current global music consumption trends. This ranking provides valuable insights into the popularity of certain genres and artists that brands leverage through brand placement to reach specific targets, utilizing their cultural influence and the engagement these artists generate. Therefore, this study aims to identify the integration of brands in the top 100 music videos and lyrics of the most successful songs globally, as listed in the Billboard Global 200 for 2023 and 2024.

In addition, the following two specific objectives have been set, which arise from the above literature review: OE1. Specify which brands and product categories are part of these musical formats.

OE2. Determine the brand placement strategy followed by the brands or artists, defining the relationship between them through the transfer of values.

3. Methodology

To achieve the set objectives, a hybrid methodology has been applied, which includes quantitative analysis of the advertising message and qualitative discourse analysis of the advertisement. This methodological approach has been applied to the top 50 songs and music videos listed in the Billboard Global 200 for January 2023 and for January 2024. This means that an analysis of 100 songs and music videos was conducted, accounting for a total analysis corpus of 253.55 minutes of viewing and listening time (184.51 minutes from the 2023 ranking and 169.04 from the 2024 ranking). Specifically, the samples were collected on January 15, 2023, and January 15, 2024, respectively.

The choice of content analysis as part of the methodology is due to the thoroughness and systematic nature that characterizes this research technique (Bardin, 1996; Krippendorff, 1997). For this purpose, a coding sheet was created following Krippendorff (1997), specifically starting from what the author considers thematic units, which allows us to delve into aspects such as product categories, musical genres, etc., without the limitation of the classic recording unit (the word).

It's important to note that each mention of a brand will be understood as an analytical unit, meaning that the same music video can contain several units. This determination was made to understand the conditions under which each brand is framed within the same song and/or music video. The first part of the sheet covers generic issues: (1) brand mentioned; (2) whether it's mentioned in the lyrics, appears in the music video, or both; (3) song; (4) artist; (5) position in the ranking; and (6) number of views.

Moreover, to build the part of the analysis concerning the brand within the song lyrics or music video, other research that has studied advertising in such cultural products, whether musical and/or audiovisual, was consulted. The variables and categories that make up this sheet are presented next; each includes three extra categories, which are common: none of the above, undetermined, and other (the latter being an open field).

(7) Musical genre (open field, classified following the usage by the Billboard Global 200 platform).

(8) Brand exposure time (open variable).

(9) Type of product/service. The categories making up this variable—following Harrison (1989), Percy and Rosenbaum-Elliott (2009), and Hernández-Santaolalla, Fernández-Gómez, and Rubio-Hernández (2022)—are: (9.1) everyday product, (9.2) impulse purchase items, (9.3) high-end items, and (9.4) conspicuous consumption products.

(10) Sector to which the product/service belongs. For this, the Nice Classification, established by the Nice Agreement (1957), is taken as a reference. This is an international classification of products and services applied for brand registration, which is updated every five years, and the current version covers 45 categories (Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, 2022). Given this breadth, those sectors most relevant to the advertising field have been selected, while still maintaining the “other” category to not limit the record. The categories making up this variable are: (10.1) cosmetics, (10.2) hygiene, (10.3) medicine, (10.4) vehicles, (10.5) firearms, (10.6) precious metals, (10.7) musical instruments, (10.8) articles made from animal skins, (10.9) furniture, (10.10) fashion, (10.11) luxury fashion, (10.12) accessories (e.g., bags, belts, caps, etc.), (10.13) jewellery, (10.14) sportswear, (10.15) games and toys, (10.16) food, (10.17) alcoholic beverages, (10.18) non-alcoholic beverages, (10.19) tobacco or substitutes, (10.20) financial services, (10.21) transport, (10.22) culture, and (10.23) hospitality.

(11) Valuation. In this case, it's recorded whether the presence and, above all, the mention of the brand is positive, negative, or neutral.

(12) Placement. This variable is solely for music videos, as it captures the brand's position within the visual output of the audiovisual. Following Sánchez Olmos, Segarra Saavedra, and Hidalgo Marí (2018), the categories are: (12.1) blatant placement, (12.2) obvious placement, (12.3) subtle placement, (12.4) background placement, and (12.5) discreet placement.

(13) Usage of the product/service. This variable is also for music videos, attempting to determine how the brand appears in the image: (13.1) the product/service is being used by the main artist, (13.2) the product/service is used by a secondary singer/dancer, (13.3) the brand is simply carried, (13.4) it appears in the image (still life), and (13.5) it appears in the credits.

Following the application of this sheet and thus detecting the lyrics and music videos in which brands appear, an analysis of the advertising message was conducted. Specifically, this analysis was based on resemantization, which was chosen as suitable for studying the transfer of values between artists (and their music) and the brands they use; ultimately, this analysis implies that advertisements alter the meaning of culturally established signs (Pineda, 2018, p. 76). In fact, resemantization directly refers to the need to create

associations, i.e., links between the brand and ideas, concepts, symbols, etc., since objects are not enough; they must be validated, through association with social and personal meanings (Williams, 1980, p. 185).

Precisely, and given the need to study brand placement, resemantization addresses the inclusion of brands in songs as a bidirectional attempt at association: (1) by the artist and (2) by the brand. To apply this type of analysis, the steps of analysis by Pineda (2018) is followed: (1) values with which the brand identifies; (2) the idea that the artist wants to convey about themselves (e.g., values); and (3) the existing transfer of how both the artist (and their product) and the brand are affected.

However, it will be understood that the final decision of including brands comes from the artist, as there are insufficient resources to know if there is a convenience on the part of the brand. Therefore, in the resemantization process, the second and third sections will be addressed. Given the number of brands found, and since this is a qualitative technique with which numerical extension is not compatible, we have chosen to analyze the video clips (and/or lyrics) that mention the most brands, both from 2023 and 2024. This decision is based on knowing how the mention and presence of different brands can operate in the same audiovisual piece.

4. Results

The results obtained following the application of the methodology are presented below. Initially, the data derived from the content analysis is shown, providing information on the frequencies found and the significant relationships between the variables, thanks to the application of the Pearson chi-square test (χ^2). Secondly, the results of the resemantization are outlined, as the application of the first technique was necessary to define the sample for this subsequent analysis.

4.1. Content Analysis

As shown in Table 1, the presence of brands in the analysed music videos and songs is noteworthy, particularly in the videos, as nearly half of them can identify at least one brand. Although it is true that the occurrence of brands both in the lyrics and in the visuals is more complex and the coincidence of what is spoken and shown is almost non-existent. In 2023, this only occurs once with the brand iPhone in the song *OMG* by NewJeans (NewJeans, 2022).

Similarly, in 2024, the same happens with Balenciaga in *La Diabla* by Xavi (Gutiérrez, 2023). There are also several instances where more than one brand appears in the same video or lyrics. This results in 37 mentions in music videos and 22 in song lyrics in 2023; and in 2024, there are 35 and 24, respectively. Although the data comparison is very balanced, it is true that in 2023 the mentions are more concentrated, while in 2024 the brands are more dispersed across different videos and lyrics.

Table 1. Summary of Brand Presence.

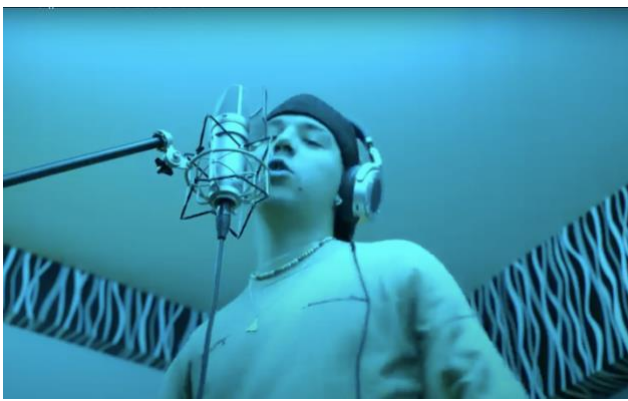
	Brand presence in the lyrics	Brand presence in music videos	Brand presence in both formats
Billboard 2023	24,0%	42,0%	14,0%
Billboard 2024	30,0%	44,0%	12,0%

Source: own creation.

Furthermore, the preferred musical genre for the analysed brands is pop (32.20%), followed by hip-hop/rap (23.73%), and reggaeton (22.03%) in 2023. However, in the following year, pop still predominates (22.03%), but more musical styles come into play, such as regional Mexican (22.03%), followed by electronic music (13.56%), and hip-hop/rap (11.86%).

Continuing with the order of the coding sheet, the average exposure time of brands in music videos is 20.7 seconds, though there is a standard deviation of 49.08. This is because generally, the exposure lasts between two to five seconds, but there are cases where this extends to 120 seconds, such as in *Blinding Lights* by The Weeknd (The Weeknd, 2020) with the Mercedes brand. In the case of *Music Sessions 52* by Quevedo and Bizarrap, the singer consistently wore an Off-White hoodie visible throughout the 4:26 minutes duration of the music video (see image 1).

Image 1. A frame from the music video *Music Sessions #52* by Bizarrap and Quevedo.



Source: Bizarrap (2022).

Regarding the types of products featured, conspicuous consumption goods are the most prevalent, accounting for 37.29% of the instances. Notable examples include Chanel in *Let Go* by Central Cee (Central Cee, 2022). Followed by everyday products, which make up 33.90% of the mentions, such as Durex in *Unholy* by Smith and Petras (Smith & Petras, 2022) or Nike in *Rich Flex* by Raptrax (Raptrax, 2022). High-end items are less frequent, constituting 23.73% of the occurrences, like Xbox in *Die for You* by The Weeknd (The Weeknd, 2016).

However, focusing solely on the data regarding product types in music videos, i.e., with visual support, everyday products dominate with 43.24%. An example of this is the frame featuring Pam's, a pasta sauce, in the music video *Kill Bill* by SZA (SZA, 2022). They are followed by conspicuous consumption items (32.43%), like Mercedes in *Sweater Weather* by The Neighbourhood (The Neighbourhood, 2013), as shown in image 2.

It should be noted that in 2024, the first and second positions in the overall data are reversed, with everyday products having the most presence (42.37%). Followed by conspicuous consumption items (33.90%), and lastly, high-end items (23.73%). In no case is there a representation of impulse purchase products.

This distinction in product types across different formats highlights the strategic choices made by brands when integrating into music videos and lyrics. The prevalence of everyday products in visual formats suggests that brands aim to normalize their presence in daily life scenes, reinforcing familiarity and regular usage among viewers. Meanwhile, the high visibility of conspicuous consumption goods in music lyrics may aim to leverage

the aspirational qualities associated with such brands, enhancing their desirability through association with popular music artists and the lifestyles they depict.

Image 2. A frame from the music video *Sweater Weather* by The Neighbourhood.



Source: The Neighbourhood (2013).

When analysing brand presence specifically within song lyrics, conspicuous consumption products dominate, representing 45.45% of occurrences in 2023. This prominence is particularly notable in two songs that list multiple luxury brands, reflecting the characteristics of conspicuous consumption products. Notably, both songs are classified within the pop genre. One prominent example is the song *Unholy* by Sam Smith and Kim Petras, which features lyrics that highlight luxury brands and their associated lifestyles.

[...] Give me love, give me Fendi, my Balenciaga daddy
You gon' need to bag it up, 'cause I'm spending on Rodeo.
You can watch me back it up, I'll be gone in the a.m.
And he, he get me Prada, get me Miu Miu like Rihanna [...] (Smith y Petras, 2022)

En segundo lugar, la otra lírica que destaca por esto es *Made You Look* de Meghan Trainor, pues su letra dice:

[...] I could have my **Gucci** on (**Gucci** on)
I could wear my **Louis Vuitton** [...]
Yeah, I look Good in my **Versace** [...] (Trainor, 2022, s.p.).

The analysis of the sectors to which the brands belong in the 2023 ranking highlights vehicles (22.03%) as the most prominent, featuring brands like Kia, Mercedes, Porsche, and Toyota. This is followed by fashion and luxury fashion, each with 18.64%, including brands such as Nike, Martine Rose, Adidas, Rinaldi, or Guess. Although the “other” category is notable (16.95%), it lacks consistency, encompassing varied mentions like music festivals, theme parks, or gaming consoles, rendering it less significant as a uniform group.

When focusing solely on the data collected from music videos, fashion takes the lead (27.02%), with brands like Gucci or Givenchy, followed by vehicles (24.32%) featuring Audi, MINI, or BMW, among others. In lyrics, luxury fashion is most prominent (27.27%), with high-end brands such as Prada, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, etc.

This sector is followed by vehicles (18.18%) and accessories (13.64%), with an example being the mention of Cartier in the song *Superhero* by Metro Boomin, Future & Chris Brown (Boomin, Future, & Brown, 2022). In the 2024 ranking, vehicles (18.64%) and luxury fashion

(15.25%) again stand out, maintaining the same dynamic as the previous year, albeit with more diversified results.

The brand valuation predominantly remains neutral (67.80% in 2023; 69.49% in 2024), although there are instances where it is positive (30.51% in both 2023 and 2024). However, there is a single case where the valuation is negative in 2023, specifically for the brand Kia in the song *Hey Mor* by Ozuna, which states: “*Uno no cambia un Mercede’ por un Kia*”¹ (Ozuna, 2022: s.p.).

In music videos, 96.12% of the brand placements are neutral in 2023 and 88.23% in 2024. Yet, in the lyrical component of 2023, positive valuations dominate (63.64%), as observed in the previously mentioned cases. This resulted in a significant association found between the presence of the brand in the lyrics and the valuation of that brand ($\chi^2(2) = 19.014$; $p < 0.001$), a dynamic also present in 2024, though with a decrease in positive valuations in lyrics to 56%.

Regarding the variables exclusively for music videos, the type of placement that stands out is blatant (45.95% in 2023 and 38.24% in 2024), as seen with Pam’s. In the first ranking, blatant placement is followed by obvious placement (32.43%), occurring with brands such as Nike, iPhone, or The North Face, among others (see example in image 3). In 2024, not only does obvious placement continue (26.47%), but it is matched by subtle placement (26.47%). Regarding how the brand appears, in 2023, the main artist uses the brand in 40.54% of cases (this rises to 55.88% in 2024), as seen with iPhone, Off-White, or Toyota, among others (see example in image 4).

Similarly, in 2023, a secondary dancer, singer, or actor carries the product in 32.43% of cases (this drops to 23.53% in 2024), with brands like Gucci, Guess, or Adidas. Lastly, in 27.03% of cases, the product is part of a still life, such as BMW, Audi, Gulf, etc. To conclude, concerning whether the product is simply carried or used in the first analysed ranking, 40.54% of the time the product is merely carried, for example, in the case of The North Face, as shown in image 3.

Also, the product is used and appears in the image in 29.73% of cases respectively. In 2024, using the product predominates (44.12%), followed by “simply carried” at 35.29%.

Image 3. A frame from the music video *Rich Flex* by Drake ft. 21 Savage.



Source: Raptrax (2022)

¹ Translation: “One does not trade a Mercedes for a Kia”.

Image 4. A frame from the music video *Me porto bonito* by Bad Bunny and Checho Corleone.



Source: Bunny (2022).

4.2. Resemantization

As outlined in the methodology, we selected the musical and audiovisual pieces that had the most brand mentions in both rankings. In 2023, this position was held by *Rich Flex* by Drake and 21 Savage, while in 2024, it was *Prada* by Cassö and Raye. Here are the results:

4.2.1. *Rich Flex*, Drake & 21 Savage (2023 ranking)

The music video for *Rich Flex* prominently showcases a lavish lifestyle, including yachts, large houses, concerts, and club parties. Both lead and background performers are seen displaying luxury cars and flashy gold accessories. This directly relates to the first point of analysis (the idea the artist wants to transmit about themselves). The brands featured are mainly conspicuous consumption items, such as Lamborghini or Gucci.

However, it also includes everyday products like Nike shirts or The North Face coats, referring to another aspect of the artist's identity—suggesting they are ordinary people from less privileged backgrounds. This is visually represented in the video, where characters are seen in neighbourhoods that might be classified as low to middle income, and even dangerous. The lyrics discuss themes like the capability to commit violence, normalizing the aforementioned narrative. Hence, the presence of everyday brands serves a narrative purpose.

Moreover, this ties into the broader narrative of rap music itself. Originating from marginalized suburbs, rap was a medium for expressing the frustration and anger of those living in violent environments (Camargo Fernández, 2007). It has historically been a voice for communities excluded from institutional support, often using coarse language to convey these themes, such as in lines like “[...] All y'all hoes need to remember who y'all talkin’ to [...] If I’m busy, then fuck no [...]” (Shéyaa Bin, 2022).

The portrayal of “murder gangs” also reflects the dynamics of such neighbourhoods. This setting helps understand the transfer of brand identity to the artist. The brands help the artist connect with their roots and simultaneously display their success and lifestyle to the public, merging everyday brands with conspicuous and high-end brands.

4.2.2. *Prada*, Cassö & Raye (ranking 2024)

In *Prada*, the brand presence is mostly in the lyrics, though the video also displays two high-end brands. The video features iPhone and PlayStation, considered high-end products, while the lyrics use conspicuous consumption products such as Ritz, Christian Dior, Fendi, and Prada.

The lyrical component is key to understanding the image the artist wants to project. The lyrics narrate a high economic status with lines like “[...] I might take her to The Shard, I might take her to The Ritz [...]” or “[...] I want Christian, I want Fendi, I want Prada [...]” (Cassö, 2023). These brands not only signify a high economic level but also spend more time on screen than the other two high-end brands, which are normalized as everyday items in the video narrative.

For example, the iPhone is used for sending photos and messages for only a few seconds, after which the focus shifts to the messages themselves without showing the brand. Similarly, PlayStation appears briefly as several people play a car racing game featuring models of conspicuous consumption, recognized by the car shapes rather than visible branding. This portrayal normalizes these products as everyday items.

This genre of music typically revolves around recreational activities, especially for upper-middle to high-class youth (Ospina Martínez, 2004). The prioritization of leisure leads to associations with drug use, particularly ecstasy, which extends the duration of electronic music parties, allowing for prolonged enjoyment (Camarotti, 2008). This emphasis on enjoyment is directly linked to the economic status conveyed in the song and video's narrative and even the brands mentioned.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The interplay between music and advertising is a communicative reality that has historically taken various forms and formats, culminating in brand placement within music videos today. As explained by Pînzaru, Săvulescu, and Mita (2013), this advertising strategy is deemed both powerful and profitable, particularly effective in reaching younger consumer generations. This study sheds light on which brands and types of products are most prevalent in the top-played music videos and songs from the Billboard Global 200 chart. Brand usage in music videos influences how young people use and enjoy these products and services, with music acting as a significant catalyst for consumption (Burkhalter et al., 2017). It should not be overlooked that this type of consumption fosters more organic and effective connections (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019; Sawaftah, Aljarah, & Lahuerta-Otero, 2021).

Specifically, conspicuous consumption goods appear most frequently in these musical pieces, followed by everyday products, indicating that regardless of the product or service type, there is a place for it within the current musical variety. Furthermore, the automotive and luxury fashion sectors are prominently represented in both the audiovisual narratives and lyrical compositions. This becomes of interest when we recall that authors such as Miguélez-Juan and Goirizelaia (2022) have explored how artists, and consequently, the presence of brands, are significant for audience identification with them. Thus, the issue of identity becomes relevant. In this instance, luxury assumes a prominent presence, as the results indicate.

This alignment corroborates the findings of scholars such as Sánchez-Olmos, Segarra-Saavedra & Hidalgo-Marí (2019), Sedeño-Valdelloso & Schubert (2020), and Miguélez-Juan & Goirizelaia (2022), who have discussed the evolution of brand placement within music videos. These findings address our first objective, identifying which brands and product categories are prevalent in these musical formats.

The presence of brands in the lyrics and visual aspects of music videos represents a deliberate communicative strategy. This strategy, whether initiated by the artist or the brand itself, aims to foster—and sometimes succeeds in fostering—a favourable disposition towards the products, services, or the brands in general among younger audiences (Thornton & Burkhalter, 2015).

This trend signifies a deeper shift in advertising formats and strategies that brands employ to interact with entertainment content (i.e., Riskos et al., 2024). This alignment caters to the

consumption preferences and habits of new generations. These consumers are notably hyper-connected and show a marked aversion to traditional advertising methods (Gardner & Davis, 2014; Gonzales Sulla, 2021). In fact, this interaction with entertainment in new formats engenders brand-friendly attitudes, as demonstrated by Shah and Dodoo (2024).

Additionally, we must focus on our second objective, determining the brand placement strategy pursued by brands or artists by defining the relationship between them through the transfer of values. Although it is complex to ascertain the brand's active involvement in the strategy, we can confirm that there is indeed a transfer of value. This transfer occurs between the brand and the artist, and more specifically, with the cultural product—namely, the song and its accompanying music video.

As seen in the results, the use of certain brands as part of the props supports the artists' narratives, helping to craft an aspirational overlay of high-class products for characters from underprivileged or troubled areas. These artists assist in attracting a young audience and establishing organic and effective connections with them.

The engagement is facilitated through processes of socialization and identity construction (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019; Sawaftah, Aljarah & Lahuerta-Otero, 2021; Monedero Morales, 2020). So much so that, at times, brand placement has been used to shape characters in cinema, crafting their image through the inclusion of brands. An example of this can be found in the filmography of Quentin Tarantino (Gutiérrez-Aragón *et al.*, 2024). Admittedly, this study has not concentrated on reception and, consequently, on demonstrating these issues. However, examination of previous studies reveals how these strategies—the ones analysed here—would be integral to that process.

In summary, despite uncertainties regarding the future of this format, the music video reaffirms its dominance as an advertising medium. It offers unique opportunities for brand promotion by forging strong emotional and cognitive associations with audiences. Brands aim to reach their target audience directly and with guaranteed success, backed by influencers with millions of global followers. It's crucial to address ethical considerations and responsibilities concerning the increasing presence of brand placement in music videos. Its impact, particularly when targeting young, global audiences, could lead not only to saturation, as seen with traditional media like TV and commercials, but also to ethical considerations.

Although there is no specific regulation as with social media, this lack of formal oversight does not deter advertisers, advertising agencies, and the music industry from their efforts to understand and respect consumers. In fact, the empirical studies already mentioned (e.g., Mandolfo, Di Dalmazi and Lamberti, 2024) emphasise how this kind of connection between brand and music videos leads to higher recall and a more positive attitude towards the brand, making instrumentalisation an issue that appears to be on the rise. However, a balance must be maintained between the artistic integrity of the artists and commercial interests, focusing primarily on the preferences and needs of the new generations who seek a genuine and meaningful connection with their idols.

Ultimately, the quantitative methodology provided has proven useful for quantifying the presence of the brands and their characteristics, while operationalising previous theoretical concepts. Moreover, it is replicable, as it meets the necessary statistical standards. However, as limitations of the study, its quantitative nature and, in qualitative terms, its focus on resemantization seems to detract from a critical analysis of the discourse, which would be of interest in relation to the ethical issues mentioned in these lines. In addition, it would be interesting to explore further the transfer of values between artist and brand, which would require a more long-term study of the branding strategy. Likewise, it is suggested to the

scientific community that they delve deeper into entertainment content that contributes to the transfer of values, meanings, and symbols. Thus, it could be enriching to construct characters (i.e. in series or films) through what they wear. In turn, brands could benefit from what appears to be brand placement, but which actually involves a connection with certain narrative characters and their characteristics.

References

- Askin, N., & Mauskapf, M. (2017). What Makes Popular Culture Popular? Product Features and Optimal Differentiation in Music. *American Sociological Review*, 82(5), 910-944. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122417728662>
- Balasubramanian, S. K., Karrh, J. A., & Patwardhan, H. (2006). Audience response to product placements: An integrative framework and future research agenda. *Journal of Advertising*, 35(3), 115-141. <https://doi.org/10.2753/JOA0091-3367350308>
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Prentice Hall.
- Bardin, L. (1996). *Análisis de contenido*. Madrid: Akal.
- Billboard. (2020). Cardi B's 'WAP' & Maluma's 'Hawai' Rule Inaugural Billboard Global 200 & Global Excl. U.S. Charts. Disponible en: <https://web.archive.org/web/20200924141125/https://www.billboard.com/articles/business/chart-beat/9448316/cardi-b-wap-maluma-hawai-rule-first-billboard-global-charts>
- Billboard. (s.f.). Billboard Magazine. <https://www.billboard.com/charts/>
- Bizarrap. [Bizarrap] (2022). *QUEVEDO || BZR Music Sessions #52* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_g3lMcWVyo
- Bonales-Daimiel, G., & Miguélez-Juan, M. (2022). Estrategias de comunicación de marca en Instagram: Análisis de contenido de las publicaciones de las marcas de moda. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 78, 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2022-1534>
- Boomin, M.; Future & Brown, C. (2022). Superhero [Canción]. En *Heroes & Villains*.
- Bunny, B. [Bad Bunny] (2022). Bad Bunny (ft. Chencho Corleone) – *Me Porto Bonito (Video Oficial) | Un Verano Sin Tí* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saGYMhApaH8>
- Burkhalter, J., Curasi, C., Thornton, C., & Donthu, N. (2017). Music and its multitude of meanings: Exploring what makes brand placements in music videos authentic. *Journal of Brand Management*, 24, 140-160. <https://doi.org/10.1057/S41262-017-0029-5>
- Camargo Fernández, L. (2007). De la rpotesta a la cesta: resistencias y mercantilización en la escena del rap. *Viento Sur*, 91, 50-58.
- Camarotti, A. C. (2008). Música electrónica, escenarios y consumo de éxtasis. *Encrucijadas*, 44, 1-4.
- Cande Sánchez-Olmos & Araceli Castelló-Martínez (2020) Brand Placement in Music Videos: Artists, Brands and Products Appearances in the Billboard Hot 100 from 2003 to 2016, *Journal of Promotion Management*, 26:6, 874-892. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2020.1745986>
- Cassö [Cassö] (2023). *Cassö x Raye x D Block Europe – Prada (Official Video)* [Video]. YouTube. Cassö x Raye x D Block Europe - Prada (Official Video) (youtube.com)
- Castelló-Martínez, A., Del Pino Romero, C., & Tur-Viñes, V. (2016). Branded content: análisis de casos de éxito en España. *El profesional de la información*, 25(3), 467-473. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2016.may.16>
- Castelló-Martínez, A., & Barrilero-Carpio, C. (2021). Estrategias de branded content y transmedia storytelling en marcas de moda. *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación*, 12(2), 123-135. <https://doi.org/10.14198/MEDCOM.17458>
- Central Cee (2022). Let Go [Canción]. En *Let Go*.
- Cosimato, A., De Prisco, R., Guarino, A., Malandrino, D., Lettieri, N., Sorrentino, G., & Zaccagnino, R. (2019). The Conundrum of Success in Music: Playing it or Talking About it? *IEEE Access*, 7, 123289-123298. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2019.2937743>

- Cuenca, J. (2016). Los jóvenes que viven en barrios populares producen más cultura de la violencia. *Revista Colombiana de Psicología*, 25(1), 141-154.
- Davtyan, D., Cunningham, I. C. M., & Tashchian, A. (2020). Effectiveness of brand placements in music videos on viewers' brand memory, brand attitude and behavioral intentions. *European Journal of Marketing*, 55(2), 420-443. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ejm-08-2019-0670>
- Fitó-Carreras, M., Méndiz-Noguero, A., & Vidal-Maestre, M. (2024). Propuesta de clasificación de *branded* pódcast basada en la presencia de marcas en la narrativa: de la naturaleza *brand free* a la persuasiva. *Communication & Society*, 37(3), 161-176. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.37.3.161-176>
- Gallego Pérez, O. I. (2009). Tecnologías de la relación: Nuevas tecnologías y sociedad. *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, (32), 66-75. <https://doi.org/10.7440/res32.2009.05>
- Gardner, H., & Davis, K. (2014). *The app generation: How today's youth navigate identity, intimacy, and imagination in a digital world*. Yale University Press.
- Gonzales Sullá, T. (2021). Los nativos digitales y su comportamiento como consumidores online. *Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 27(1), 206-218. <https://doi.org/10.31876/rccs.v27i1.35401>
- Gutiérrez, J. X. [Xavier] (2023). *Xavi – La Diabla (Official Video)* [Video]. YouTube. Xavi – La Diabla (Official Video) (youtube.com)
- Gutiérrez-Aragón, Ó., Fondevilla-Gascón, J. F., Gassiot-Melian, A., Hidalgo-Naharro, M. (2024). Utilización del *brand placement* en la filmografía de Quentin Tarantino. *Mediterranean Journal of Communication*, 15(1), 217-234. <https://www.doi.org/10.14198/MEDCOM.25388>
- Harrison, T. (1989). *A Handbook of Advertising Techniques*. Kogan page.
- Herget, A.-K., Breves, P., & Schramm, H. (2020). The influence of different levels of musical fit on the efficiency of audio-visual advertising. *Musicae Scientiae*, 26(1), 3-23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1029864920904095>
- Hernández-Santaolalla, V.; Fernández-Gómez, J. D. & Rubio-Hernández, M. M. (2022). Audiovisual Narrative Genres as a Tool for Advertising Research. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, 28(3), 661-676.
- Hollebeek, L., & Macky, K. (2019). Digital Content Marketing's Role in Fostering Consumer Engagement, Trust, and Value: Framework, Fundamental Propositions, and Implications. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 45, 27-41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2018.07.003>
- Hudders, L., Cauberghe, V., Faseur, T., & Panic, K. (2016). How to Pass the Courvoisier? An Experimental Study on the Effectiveness of Brand Placements in Music Videos. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-78560-313-620151017>
- Klein, C. C., & Slonaker, S. W. (2010). Chart Turnover and Sales in the Recorded Music Industry: 1990-2005. *Review of Industrial Organization*, 36(4), 351-372. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11151-010-9250-Z>
- Krippendorff, K. (1997). Metodología de análisis de contenido. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Krishna, A., Cian, L., & Sokolova, T. S. (2016). The power of sensory marketing in advertising. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 10, 142-147. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.COPSYC.2016.01.007>
- Luxton, S., Reid, M., & Mavondo, F. (2015). Integrated Marketing Communication Capability and Brand Performance. *Journal of Advertising*, 44(1), 37-46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2014.934938>
- Mandolfo, M., Di Dalmazi, M. & Lamberti, L. (2024). Now you see me. Evaluating visual and auditory brand placement disclosures in music videos. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 30(5), 553-575. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2022.2152475>
- Martín-Santana, J., Reinares-Lara, E., & Muela-Molina, C. (2015). Music in radio advertising: Effects on radio spokesperson credibility and advertising effectiveness. *Psychology of Music*, 43(6), 763-778. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735614567701>

- Miguélez-Juan, B., & Goirizelaia, M. (2022). Brand placement en las letras y en los vídeos musicales de los seis mayores exponentes de la música trap española. En Basilio Cantalapiedra Nieto, Eglée Andreina Ortega Fernández y Manuel Blanco Pérez (coords.) *Comunicación, pantallas y ficción* (pp. 447-460). Thomson Reuters. Aranzadi.
- Ministerio de Industria, Comercio y Turismo (2022) *Clasificación Niza - 11 Edición 2022, OEPM Clinmar* <https://consultas2.oepm.es/clinmar/inicio.action> (Consulta 15 de noviembre de 2022).
- Monedero Morales, J. (2020). *The Impact of Visual Content on Young Consumers' Preferences and Consumption Decisions*. *Journal of Digital Marketing*, 34(2), 567-591.
- Müllensiefen, D. (2021). Methods for testing the emotional effects of music in advertising and brand communication. In *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Advertising*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/OXFORDHB/9780190691240.013.34>
- NewJeans (2022). *OMG* [Canción]. En *OMG*. Dittor.
- Oakes, S. (2007). Evaluating Empirical Research into Music in Advertising: A Congruity Perspective. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 47(1), 38-50. <https://doi.org/10.2501/S0021849907070055>
- Omarjee, L., & Chilya, N. (2014). The effectiveness of product placement in music videos: A study on the promotion strategies for brands and products to target the Y generation in Johannesburg. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(20), 2095. <https://doi.org/10.5901/MJSS.2014.V5N20P2095>
- Ospina Martínez, M. A. (2004). Ágapes urbanos. Una mirada sobre el vínculo entre la música electrónica y communitas en la ciudad de Bogotá. *Tabula Rasa*, (2), 189-212.
- Ozuna, J. C. (2022). *Hey Mor* [Canción]. En *Ozutochi*.
- Percy, L. y Rosenbaum-Elliot, R. (2009). *Strategic Advertising Management*. Osxford Uniersity Press.
- Piazzolla, S., García Medina, I., & Navarro-Beltrán, M. (2021). Brand Placement in Music Videos: Effectiveness in UK, Spain, and Italy. *Index Communication*. <https://doi.org/10.33732/IXC/11/02BRANDP>
- Pineda, A. (2018). *Análisis del mensaje publicitario*. Sevilla: Advook.
- Pînzaru, F., Săvulescu, R., & Mitan, A. (2013). New practices in marketing to generation Y. Product placement in Romanian pop music videos. *International Journal of Approximate Reasoning*, 5(4), 320-326.
- Raptrax. [RAPTRAX]. (2022). *Drake ft. 21 Savage "Rich Flex" (Music video)* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOvNACDVXzI>
- Riskos, K.; Dekoulou, P.; Hatzithomas, L. & Papisolomou, I. (2024). Hedonic and eudaimonic entertainment as facilitators of consumer brand engagement: a multiple mediation model for Netflix. *EuroMed Journal of Business*, (ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/EMJB-05-2023-0141>
- Sánchez-Olmos, C., Segarra-Saavedra, J., & Hidalgo-Marí, T. (2019). 'Brand Placement' en los videoclips del Billboard Hot 100: ¿integración o imposición de marcas? *Trípodos*, 44: 63-81.
- Santos Millán, M. (2019). *Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación y Sociedad*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13398-014-0173-7.2>.
- Sawaftah, D., Aljarah, A., & Lahuerta-Otero, E. (2021). Power Brand Defense Up, My Friend! Stimulating Brand Defense through Digital Content Marketing. *Sustainability*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su131810266>
- Sedeño-Valdillos, A. & Schubert, H. (2020). Product placement en el videoclip musical mainstream: análisis de los casos más visualizados en YouTube de 2015 a 2019. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico* 26 (4), 1599-1610. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5209/esmp.69212>
- Shéyaa Bin, A. J. [21 Savage] (2022). *Drake, 21 Savage – Rich Flex (Music Video)* [Video]. YouTube. *Drake & 21 Savage "Rich Flex" (Music Video)* (youtube.com)
- Smith, S. y Petras, K. (2022). *Unholy* [Canción]. En *Gloria*.

- SZA (2022). Kill Bill [Canción]. En *SOS*.
- The Neighbourhood [The Neighbourhood] (2013). *The Neighbourhood - Sweater Weather (oficial video)* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCdwKhTtNNw>
- The Weeknd (2016). Die For You [Canción]. En *Starboy*.
- The Weeknd (2020). Blinding Lights [Canción]. En *After Hours*.
- Thornton, C., & Burkhalter, J. (2015). Must be the music: Examining the placement effects of character-brand association and brand prestige on consumer brand interest within the music video context. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 21, 126-141.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2014.971212>
- Trainor, M. (2022). Made You Look [Canción]. En *Takin' It Back*.
- Wang, R. W. Y., Chen, Y.-C., Liu, I.-N., & Chuang, S.-W. (2018). Temporal and spectral EEG dynamics can be indicators of stealth placement. *Scientific Reports*, 8.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-018-27294-4>
- Williams, R. (1980). Advertising: the Magic System. En *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (pp. 170-195). London: Verso Editions and NLB.
- Youn, S., Shah, P. & Dadoo, N. A. (2024). Engaging with branded content on short-video sharing apps: How motivations affect attitude towards branded content, brand experience, and relationship quality. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 24(3), 215-237.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2024.2325410>