What's in a Name? Analyzing the Influence of Brand Names on Entertainment Product Success: An Abstract

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Abstract Research on motion picture success has considered a multitude of different factors that influence the success of a movie. Nevertheless, one of the most prominent characteristics of a movie has been widely ignored: its title. As movie titles, which are considered equivalent to brand names, can give consumers an idea of how a movie will look or feel like, it could be used as a first reference point to inform consumers' purchase decisions. Although managers reportedly have the feeling that a brand name alone can influence sales, empirical evidence for this influence is limited. In this research, we apply a unique two-step procedure to investigate the influence of movie titles on motion picture success. First, we introduce a consumer-level model to analyze the role of the movie title in the consumer decision-making process. Second, we extend the consumer-level model to the market level, incorporating behavioral data on actual product sales. We thereby shed light on the question whether a title influences the generation of sales when other information cues such as advertising and existing brands are available.

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