

## **Nielsen: Product Placement Boosts Brand Awareness by 20%**

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By Katy Bachman, *Mediaweek*

NEW YORK -- Product placement in TV content boosts brand recognition by 20%, according to the results of a study released Wednesday by Nielsen Media Research. The study found that 57.5% of viewers recognized a brand when viewing a product placement in combination with a commercial, compared to the 46.6% of viewers that recognized a brand exposed only to a commercial.

“This comprehensive study of the interaction of product placement and commercial messages demonstrates that product placement can represent a valuable enhancement to a media plan,” said David Poltrack, chief research officer for CBS and one of 14 charter subscribers that helped design and execute the study. “More importantly, it also confirms that not all product placements are successful and it provides valuable guidance for the development of an effective product-placement program.”

While brand recognition increases with product placement, it doesn't necessarily translate into sales. A little more than one third of all viewers expressed high interest in brands they were able to recognize. Brand awareness, attitude and purchase interest were also affected by the level of familiarity a viewer had with the brand, the program's genre, the viewer's loyalty to the program, and the exact nature of the product placement.

“Some [findings] did indeed confirm what we suspected was true. On the other hand, some findings were counter to what might have been expected,” said Mike Hess, director of global research and communication insights at OMD Worldwide, also a charter subscriber.

The study was conducted over nine months between October 2005 and June 2006 at Nielsen Entertainment's testing facilities in Las Vegas. More than 10,000 individuals participated in the screening of 50 programs, which featured product placements and commercials for nearly 200 consumer brands.

In addition to CBS and OMD, other charter subscribers included A & E, CourtTV, Discovery, Fox, Magna Global, Mediacom, PHD, Scripps Networks, Sprint, The Weather Channel, Twentieth Century TV and Zenith Media.