ROSELLINA FERRARO, AMNA KIRMANI, and TED MATHERLY*

Conspicuous brand usage, defined as attention-getting use of a brand, causes brand dilution under certain conditions. This research examines changes in observers' attitudes toward a brand after seeing a brand user engaged in conspicuous use of the brand. The authors propose that observers infer that a consumer engaged in conspicuous brand usage is driven by an ulterior motive of impression management. When observers have low self-brand connection, they exhibit less favorable attitudes toward both the brand user and the brand. In contrast, observers with high self-brand connection maintain their favorable view of the brand in the face of a conspicuous brand user. Three studies demonstrate the brand dilution effect of conspicuous brand usage.

Keywords: brand dilution, flaunting, impression management, self-brand connection, social influence

Look at Me! Look at Me! Conspicuous Brand Usage, Self-Brand Connection, and Dilution

Companies spend millions of dollars to enhance or maintain their brand image. Researchers have examined marketing actions that may hurt brand image, including brand extensions (Loken and John 1993), line extensions (Kirmani, Sood, and Bridges 1999; Swaminathan, Page, and Gürhan-Canli 2007), negative publicity (Ahluwalia, Burnkrant, and Unnava 2000), and trademark violations (Pullig, Simmons, and Netemeyer 2006). Prior research has emphasized how the firm's own marketing actions or the actions of external entities (e.g., competition, channel partners, the media) can dilute the brand (for a review, see Loken and John 2010). We propose that brand image may also be diluted by the actions of brand users. Specifically, we argue that when consumers see others engaging in conspicuous brand usage, they may form a negative impression of the brand, resulting in brand dilution. However, this effect is dependent on how connected the observer is to the brand.

We define conspicuous brand use as attention-getting behavior with regard to the brand, such as flaunting or name-dropping. We argue that consumers who use the brand in an attention-getting manner are perceived as doing so for ulterior motives, such as to manage impressions or gain social approval. These "showing off" behaviors are viewed as inappropriate and may ultimately reflect poorly on the brand itself. For example, when a person wears Gucci sunglasses indoors, his or her behavior will be perceived negatively and may hurt observers' attitudes toward Gucci.

We propose that the relationship between conspicuous brand use and brand dilution depends on the self-brand connection of the person observing the behavior. Self-brand connection refers to the extent of overlap between the brand and the self (Escalas 2004; Escalas and Bettman 2003). Observers with high self-brand connection will maintain their favorable view of the brand because their strong bond with the brand insulates them against negative behavior on the part of individual brand users. In contrast, those with low self-brand connection are prone to dislike the brand user, leading to less favorable brand attitudes when they see someone using the brand conspicuously. Thus, conspicuous brand usage hurts the brand among observers who lack a strong bond with the brand. An implication is that future

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attempts to sell the brand to these consumers may be unsuccessful. Thus, conspicuous brand usage may slow brand adoption by new users.

Our work differs from prior research on brand conspicuousness (e.g., Berger and Ward 2010; Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010; Wilcox, Kim, and Sen 2009) in several important ways. First, prior work has examined consumers' choice of conspicuous or nonconspicuous brands. In contrast, our work considers the inferences that observers draw from the brand user's behavior rather than from the brand itself. As such, our research applies to more than just luxury brands, because any brand can be used in a conspicuous manner as long as people perceive the behavior to confer social benefits. Moreover, examining observers' perceptions enables us both to identify situations in which observers may make negative inferences about consumers' conspicuous behavior and to assess brand dilution, neither of which has been undertaken in prior research. Finally, we investigate conspicuousness in the context of real brands rather than counterfeits (Wilcox, Kim, and Sen 2009). In our studies, the issue is how consumers use the brand and not whether they actually own the brand.

In the next section, we discuss the effects of conspicuous brand usage on brand dilution. We then describe three studies that test the propositions and conclude with a discussion of the current research's contribution to both marketing theory and practice.

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Conspicuous brand usage refers to situations in which a consumer blatantly draws attention to the brand, such as by flaunting or name-dropping. For example, the woman who looks around to make sure she is seen while playing on her iPad or the young man who posts a picture of himself striking a pose with a brand on Facebook are both behaving conspicuously. We suggest that because conspicuous usage violates social norms of modesty (Godfrey, Jones, and Lord 1986), it is likely to lead observers to think about the brand user's motives. This is consistent with attribution theory, which states that novel or unexpected behavior leads to thoughts about the underlying causes (Kelley 1973). In particular, blatant brand-related behavior is likely to increase the accessibility of ulterior motives (Campbell and Kirmani 2000) because the observer thinks that the consumer may be using the brand to impress others and to gain social approval rather than for dispositional reasons (Fein 1996). Conspicuous behavior contradicts the notion that consumers use a brand because they like it or find it useful. In contrast, when brand usage is not conspicuous, the consumer's actions do not lead to attributional thinking, and the behavior is taken at face value (Marchand and Vonk 2005). In other words, inconspicuous behavior leads the observer to perceive the brand user as using the brand because he or she inherently likes it or finds it useful.

We propose that the effect of conspicuousness on brand attitudes depends on the observer's self-brand connection. Self-brand connection refers to the extent to which a consumer has incorporated a brand into his or her self-concept (Escalas 2004; Escalas and Bettman 2003). A strong self-brand connection is more likely to form when the consumer's image is closely tied to the image of the brand. When self-brand connection is high, consumers see aspects of themselves mirrored in their brands and are likely to have higher levels of brand attachment (Park et al. 2010). They are likely to both care about the brand and know what it represents. In contrast, those low in self-brand connection do not view the brand as a reflection of themselves, are less likely to be attached to the brand, and may have more malleable views of the brand. For these people, brand attitude will be a function of their attitudes toward the conspicuous brand user. Research suggests that attitudes toward a person will be less favorable if that person is perceived as having ulterior (i.e., impression management) motives (Godfrey, Jones, and Lord 1986; Schlenker and Leary 1982). For example, Vonk (1998) shows that employees whose behavior was viewed as attempting to curry their bosses' favor were liked less than employees whose behavior was not viewed as such. Similarly, people dislike others who show off or engage in self-presentation (Godfrey, Jones, and Lord 1986). Thus, those with low self-brand connection will dislike the conspicuous user, and this negative impression of a salient brand user will transfer to the brand.

In contrast, observers with a high self-brand connection tie their sense of self to the brand; therefore, they have an incentive to maintain the image of the brand to protect their own self-concept (Fournier 1998), suggesting a buffering process. Swaminathan, Page, and Gürhan-Canli (2007) show that consumers with a strong link between self-identity and the brand tend to discount and counterargue negative information. Alternatively, Cheng, White, and Chaplin (2012) suggest a self-affirmation process whereby a brand failure is akin to a personal failure for those who have a strong self-brand connection. The brand failure leads to lower self-esteem, which must be boosted by favorable attitude toward the brand (and, thus, oneself). In Cheng, White, and Chaplin's studies, brand failure occurs when a brand has a low performance rating. Conspicuous brand usage may be akin to brand failure, albeit not controlled by the firm.

This prior research suggests that consumers with high self-brand connection will maintain their positive view of the brand in the face of a conspicuous user, who may represent negative information about the brand. To protect their own self-image, they may engage in coping behaviors such as rejecting the brand user or reinterpreting the conspicuous behavior (Carver and Scheier 1990).

In summary, we suggest that consumers with low self-brand connection will dislike the conspicuous brand user, which will lead to less favorable brand attitudes. However, the brand attitudes of consumers with high self-brand connection will remain favorable. More formally, we test the following hypotheses:

H_1: Compared with nonconspicuous usage, conspicuous brand usage leads to less favorable brand attitudes for observers with low self-brand connection but not for observers with high self-brand connection.

H_2: Attitude toward the brand user mediates the effects of conspicuousness on brand attitude for those with low self-brand connection but not for those with high self-brand connection.

OVERVIEW OF STUDIES

We test the hypotheses in three studies that involve either a video (Study 1) or photos (Studies 2 and 3) of a person

using the brand in an everyday situation. We manipulate conspicuous brand use in three distinct ways across the studies. Study 1 finds support for the hypotheses, with Apple as the focal brand, in an extended encounter with the brand user. Study 2 shows that the effect of conspicuousness on brand attitude is attenuated when observers do not view conspicuous behavior as being driven by ulterior motives. Study 3 replicates the results with a different brand, Tiffany & Co. ("Tiffany," hereinafter), and a different manipulation of conspicuousness, and it rules out alternative explanations for the effects.

We initially selected the brands (i.e., Apple and Tiffany) used in the studies on the basis of our prior knowledge of their impression management potential and positive brand image. We ran a pretest to confirm the viability of these brands for the main studies. Participants were 50 undergraduate students who received course credit in exchange for participation. Participants rated the brands on a variety of items. The item we used to assess the social benefit of using the brand (i.e., impression management) asked, "To what extent do people use the following brand to convey something about themselves to others?" (1 = "not at all," and 7 = "very much"). Participants perceived both Tiffany and Apple as able to convey something to others, with each brand differing significantly from the midpoint of the scale ($M_{Tiffany} = 6.26$; $t(49) = 16.21$, $p < .0001$; $M_{Apple} = 6.12$; $t(49) = 11.50$, $p < .0001$), in support of our use of these brands. We also measured attitude toward the brand, which was composed of three items ("dislike/like," "unfavorable/favorable," and "bad/good"; each measured on seven-point scales). Participants viewed both brands favorably. For Tiffany, there was a gender effect on attitude; women liked Tiffany significantly more than did men ($M_{men} = 3.56$, $M_{women} = 5.30$; $t(48) = –4.89$, $p < .0001$). Given women's more positive attitudes toward Tiffany, we used only female participants in Study 3. There was no gender effect on attitude toward Apple ($M_{men} = 6.00$, $M_{women} = 5.92$; $t(48) = .22$, no significant difference [n.s.d.]); however, we account for any potential gender preferences in the two studies using Apple by including gender as a control variable. We also included age as a covariate in the analyses to account for any age-related preferences for the brand.

To account for owner-related preferences for the brand not captured by self-brand connection, we use product ownership as a covariate in all analyses as well. Although owners of a brand are likely to have a stronger self-brand connection than nonowners, not all owners will exhibit high self-brand connection. Owners of a brand may have a low or high self-brand connection depending on what the brand means to them. For some owners, the brand may be purely functional and is not tied to their self-concept. Similarly, some nonowners will exhibit high self-brand connection if their aspirational group values the brand (Escalas and Bettman 2003).

STUDY 1

In Study 1, we show that conspicuous brand use negatively affects attitudes toward the user and the brand only for observers low in self-brand connection. We demonstrate the effects of conspicuousness with a video of a person using the brand. The video was designed to reflect how people encounter consumers using brands in everyday environments.

Method

The study had one manipulated between-subjects factor (conspicuousness: low vs. high) and one measured variable (self-brand connection). One hundred fifty-four participants drawn from an online panel completed the study in exchange for a small cash payment (58.4% female, mean age 28.6 years).

Procedure. Participants read that they would see a video of a person named Stephanie (i.e., the target) and respond to questions about her. The video lasted 45 seconds. We manipulated conspicuous brand usage by the way Stephanie interacted with her Apple iPad.

In both conditions, the target is shown walking toward a table (ostensibly in a coffee shop), sitting down, and placing a cup of coffee on the table. She then pulls an Apple iPad from her purse and begins using it. In the low conspicuousness condition, the target holds the iPad and uses it for approximately 15 seconds (for still shots from the video showing the target with the iPad, see the Appendix; for the complete stimuli and measures, see Web Appendix A at www.marketingpower.com/jmr_webappendix). Next, she places the iPad flat on the table and sips from the coffee cup. She again uses the iPad while it lies flat on the table for approximately five seconds and then leans back in her chair. In the high conspicuousness condition, the target pulls out an iPad stand and places it on the table before taking out the iPad itself. As in the low conspicuousness condition, she holds the iPad in her hands and uses it for approximately 15 seconds. In contrast to the low conspicuousness condition, she then places the iPad in the stand so that the iPad is upright. In addition, she glances around the room while sipping the coffee. She then uses the iPad again while it is in the stand for approximately five seconds before leaning back in her chair, during which time she continues to glance around the room.

We expected that the target's placing the iPad in the stand and glancing around the room would make salient that she was trying to get attention from others with her brand usage. A pretest of the video using different participants from the same population demonstrated that perceptions of ulterior motives differed for the two video conditions. Perception about the target's ulterior motives was measured using three items: "Stephanie uses the iPad to… (1) impress other people, (2) show off, (3) gain the approval of others" (1 = "not at all," and 7 = "very much"; $\alpha = .93$). The results showed that participants perceived the target as having greater ulterior motives when using the iPad in a conspicuous manner ($M = 4.80$) than when using it less conspicuously ($M = 4.21$; $F(1, 115) = 5.75$, $p < .05$).

Measures. After viewing the video, participants responded to a series of questions capturing attitude toward Apple, attitude toward the target, and control variables. We measured self-brand connection to Apple after an unrelated filler task.

We measured attitude toward the Apple brand with three items ("Please rate your attitude toward Apple": "dislike/like," "unfavorable/favorable," and "bad/good," on seven-point scales; $\alpha = .97$). We measured attitude toward the target using the same items after the question "What is your impression of Stephanie?" ($\alpha = .96$). We assessed familiarity with the Apple brand on a seven-point scale (1 = "not at all familiar," and 7 = "very familiar") and determined

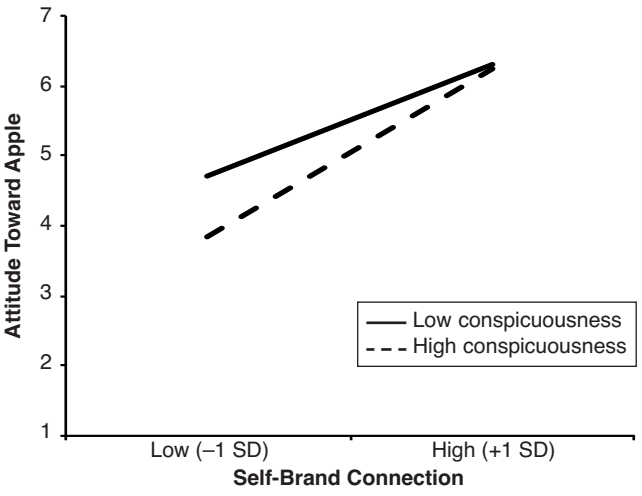
ownership using a yes/no question for whether participants owned an iPad as well as a yes/no question for whether they owned an iPhone, given the similarity of the iPad and iPhone. In total, 31.2% of participants owned an iPad or iPhone. Finally, we measured self-brand connection for Apple using the Escalas and Bettman (2003) scale adapted to the Apple brand (e.g., "Apple reflects who I am"; "I can identify with Apple"; $\alpha = .95$). Conspicuousness did not affect self-brand connection for Apple ($F(1, 149) = .31$, n.s.d.).

Results

We conducted the analyses using regression, with self-brand connection mean-centered. The independent variables in the regression equations were the covariates (i.e., age, gender, and ownership), conspicuousness, self-brand connection, and the conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction.

The regression on brand attitude showed significant effects of ownership ($\beta = .60$, $t(147) = 2.85$, $p < .01$), conspicuousness ($\beta = -.46$, $t(147) = -2.53$, $p < .05$), self-brand connection ($\beta = .50$, $t(147) = 5.47$, $p < .0001$), and the conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction ($\beta = .25$, $t(147) = 2.19$, $p < .05$). Using the regression beta coefficient estimates, Figure 1 displays brand attitude by conspicuousness at low (–1 SD) and high (+1 SD) levels of self-brand connection. A spotlight analysis (Irwin and McClelland 2001) showed that participants with low self-brand connection to Apple (–1 SD) had less favorable brand attitudes when the target was engaged in conspicuous brand use (M = 3.84) than when she was not using the brand in a conspicuous manner (M = 4.71; $\beta = -.87$, $t(147) = -3.33$, $p < .01$). In contrast, participants with high self-brand connection to Apple (+1 SD) had an equally positive attitude toward the brand whether the target used the brand conspicuously (M = 6.25) or not (M = 6.31; $\beta = -.05$, $t(147) = -.21$, n.s.d.). We used the Johnson–Neyman technique to determine the value of self-brand connection at which brand attitude is no longer significantly different across the level of conspicuousness (Johnson and Fay 1950). This occurs when (mean-centered) self-brand connection is equal to .45, which is approximately a medium level of self-brand connection. In other words, the target's conspicuous use of the brand negatively influenced brand attitudes at values of self-brand connection below .45 but had no effect above .45. Thus, H_1 is supported.

Figure 1
STUDY 1: ATTITUDE TOWARD APPLE BY CONSPICUOUSNESS AND SELF-BRAND CONNECTION

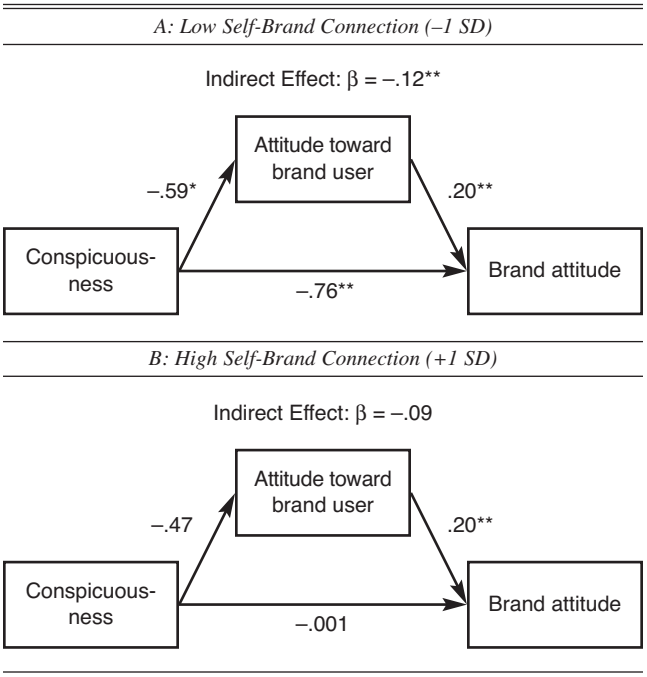


H_2 predicts that attitude toward the brand user mediates the effect of conspicuousness on brand attitude for observers with low self-brand connection to Apple but not for observers with high self-brand connection to Apple. First, we ran a regression on attitude toward the brand user, which showed only a significant effect of conspicuousness ($\beta = -.53$, $t(147) = -2.48$, $p < .05$). This result indicates that, irrespective of self-brand connection, participants had less favorable attitudes toward the target when she was engaged in conspicuous brand use (M = 4.71) than when she was not using the brand in a conspicuous manner (M = 5.24).

Because H_2 represents a conditional process model (Hayes and Preacher 2013), we tested the prediction using the PROCESS SPSS application provided by Hayes (2013). This application enables the estimation of the indirect effect of conspicuousness on brand attitude through attitude toward the brand user, conditioned on self-brand connection, using a bootstrapping procedure that addresses potential concerns with nonnormality of the distribution of the indirect effect (MacKinnon, Lockwood, and Williams 2004). We estimated the conditional process model using 10,000 bootstrap samples.

Figure 2 displays the outcome of the analysis. The conditional indirect effect of conspicuousness was significant at low self-brand connection to Apple (–1 SD), because the

Figure 2
STUDY 1: CONDITIONAL INDIRECT EFFECT OF CONSPICUOUSNESS ON BRAND ATTITUDE AT LOW AND HIGH SELF-BRAND CONNECTION



*$p < .10$.
**$p < .05$.

95% confidence interval (CI) around the estimate excludes zero (B = –.12, SE = .08, 95% bootstrap CI: –.34 to –.002). In contrast, the conditional indirect effect of conspicuousness was not significant at high self-brand connection to Apple (+1 SD), because the 95% CI around the estimate includes zero (B = –.09, SE = .07, 95% bootstrap CI: –.28 to .01). These results indicate that high conspicuousness affected brand attitude through its effect on attitude toward the brand user only for observers low on self-brand connection. No change in brand attitude and, therefore, no mediation occurred for those observers high in self-brand connection. In addition to the indirect effect of conspicuousness on brand attitude, there was also a direct effect of conspicuousness on brand attitude (B = –.76, SE = .26, t(146) = –2.90, $p < .01$) for those low in self-brand connection. This direct effect may be due to the perception that the brand and its users are pretentious or snobbish, making brand attitude less favorable.

Discussion

The results of this study support the central hypothesis that conspicuous brand usage leads to less favorable brand attitudes among observers with low self-brand connection but not among observers with high self-brand connection. This is consistent with our conceptual model that even if people view a brand user as having ulterior motives, his or her behavior does not affect the brand attitudes of those who are highly connected with the brand.

Although we controlled for the effects of ownership, it is possible that brand knowledge may differ by self-brand connection. Thus, differential brand knowledge rather than self-brand connection may account for these effects. To address this concern, we reran the analysis and included brand familiarity, which we use as a proxy for brand knowledge, as a covariate. Familiarity did not have a significant effect on either brand attitude or attitude toward the brand user. Furthermore, the other results did not change with the inclusion of familiarity, suggesting that brand knowledge is not a driver of the effects. We report the results from the models with and without familiarity in Web Appendix B (www.marketingpower.com/jmr_webappendix).

In the next study, we use a different manipulation of conspicuousness and examine a boundary condition of the conspicuousness effect when self-brand connection is low. Previously, we suggested that the negative attitude toward the user was based on the inference that the user was trying to show off. This implies that, for observers with low self-brand connection, the effect of conspicuousness would be attenuated if the conspicuous behavior were attributed to a motive other than impression management. For example, if the observer thinks that the conspicuous behavior is meant in jest, an impression management motive will not be inferred. Thus, discounting the ulterior motive for the conspicuous behavior should attenuate the negative effects of conspicuous brand usage for low self-brand connection observers. Because observers with high self-brand connection do not experience the dilution effect, the discounted motive will not affect them. More formally, we test the following hypothesis:

H_3: When self-brand connection is low, conspicuous brand use results in more favorable brand attitudes when the conspicuous behavior is not attributed to ulterior motives than when it is attributed to ulterior motives.

STUDY 2

Method

The objective of Study 2 was to test the three hypotheses. We used a different manipulation of conspicuousness and a different context: the social media website Facebook. The study had one manipulated between-subjects factor (conspicuousness: low, high, and discounted) and one measured variable (self-brand connection). One hundred three participants from an undergraduate subject pool (in exchange for course credit) and an online panel (in exchange for a small cash payment) completed the study. We included gender and age as covariates in the analyses (46.6% female, mean age 25.7 years). As in Study 1, the focal product used in this study is the Apple iPad, and we included ownership as a covariate (43.7% Apple iPad/iPhone owners).

Procedure. Participants read that they would see either a post or a photo from a person's Facebook page and then respond to questions about the person. We manipulated conspicuousness by the photo and/or post (for the post and photos, see the Appendix; for the complete stimuli, see Web Appendix C at www.marketingpower.com/jmr_webappendix). In the low conspicuousness condition, participants saw a post by a student named Mark that said, "Off to class, love my new iPad." In the high conspicuousness condition, participants saw the same post and a photo of Mark putting his iPad into a pocket in the front of a T-shirt specifically designed to carry an iPad. The shirt prominently displays the iPad for others to see, and thus, wearing it would be perceived as flaunting. In the discounted conspicuousness condition, the same photo was used, but a reason for wearing the shirt was provided. The post stated, "Off to class, love my new iPad. Lost a bet, have to wear this shirt … lol." In this condition, the conspicuous behavior should not be attributed to an impression management motive. To ensure that participants looked at the photo and/or post, it was displayed for five seconds before they were able to advance to the questions. A pretest measuring perceptions of ulterior motives for each of these conditions was conducted using a different sample from the same population. The same three items measuring ulterior motives as in the Study 1 pretest were used. The target was perceived as having greater ulterior motives in the high conspicuousness condition (M = 5.72) than in the low (M = 4.92; F(1, 139) = 10.00, $p < .01$) or discounted (M = 5.08; F(1, 139) = 6.27, $p < .05$) conspicuousness conditions. Perceptions of ulterior motives did not differ between the low and discounted conspicuousness conditions (F(1, 139) = .44, n.s.d.). These results indicate that the explanation that the target was wearing the shirt because he lost a bet led to discounting of the ulterior motive.

Measures. Participants responded to a series of questions capturing attitude toward Apple, attitude toward the target, ulterior motives, and control variables. We measured self-brand connection to Apple after a filler task. We measured attitude toward Apple ($\alpha = .97$), attitude toward the target ($\alpha = .97$), Apple brand familiarity, and self-brand connection for Apple ($\alpha = .96$) as before. We observed no effects of conspicuousness on self-brand connection (F(2, 97) = .59, n.s.d.). We used the same three items measuring ulterior motives as in the pretest ($\alpha = .92$).

Results

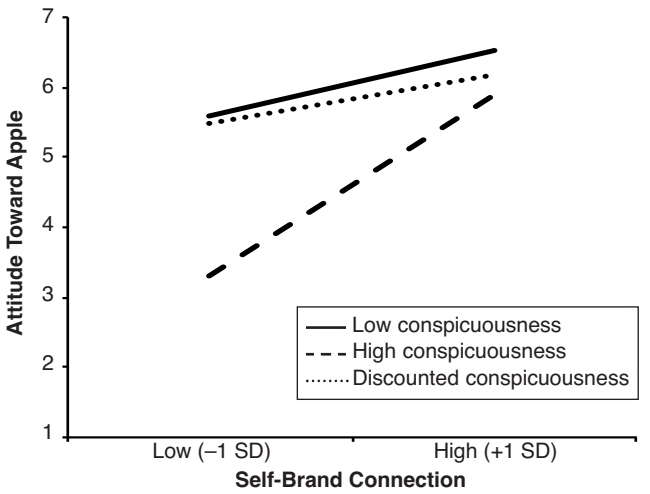
We conducted the analyses using regression, with self-brand connection mean-centered. Given that conspicuousness has three levels (low, high, and discounted), we created two dummy variables, with high conspicuousness serving as the comparison condition. Thus, the independent variables in the regression equations were the covariates (i.e., age, gender, and ownership), low conspicuousness, discounted conspicuousness, self-brand connection, the low conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction, and the discounted conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction.

Manipulation check. A regression on ulterior motives revealed significant effects of gender ($\beta = -.85$, $t(94) = -2.92$, $p < .01$), low conspicuousness ($\beta = -.95$, $t(94) = -2.25$, $p < .05$), and the discounted conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction ($\beta = .69$, $t(94) = 2.16$, $p < .05$). The effect of low conspicuousness replicates the pretest result and indicates that participants perceived the target to have greater ulterior motives in the high conspicuousness condition (M = 5.76) than in the low conspicuousness condition (M = 4.81), irrespective of self-brand connection. The interaction effect of discounted conspicuousness × self-brand connection was unexpectedly significant. Delving deeper using the spotlight analysis, participants with low self-brand connection to Apple (–1 SD) perceived the target as having greater ulterior motives in the high conspicuousness condition (M = 6.12) than in the discounted conspicuousness condition (M = 4.79; $\beta = -1.32$, $t(94) = -2.48$, $p < .05$), but participants with high self-brand connection to Apple (+1 SD) had equal perceptions of ulterior motives whether the target used the brand conspicuously (M = 5.41) or used the brand conspicuously but with a reason (M = 5.46; $\beta = .05$, $t(94) = .10$; n.s.d.). This perception of ulterior motives among those with high self-brand connection may be because the brand user was trying to be funny rather than using the brand because he likes it. Although unexpected, this finding should not affect the predicted outcome for brand attitude, because those with high self-brand connection are hypothesized to be unaffected by the conspicuousness manipulation.

Tests of H_1 and H_2. A regression on brand attitude revealed significant effects of low conspicuousness ($\beta = 1.46$, $t(94) = 3.92$, $p < .001$), discounted conspicuousness ($\beta = 1.23$, $t(94) = 3.43$, $p < .001$), self-brand connection ($\beta = 1.31$, $t(94) = 6.37$, $p < .0001$), the low conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction ($\beta = -.84$, $t(94) = -2.77$, $p < .01$), and the discounted conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction ($\beta = -.95$, $t(94) = -3.39$, $p < .001$). Figure 3 displays brand attitude for each condition at low (–1 SD) and high (+1 SD) levels of self-brand connection.

Consistent with H_1, participants with low self-brand connection to Apple (–1 SD) had a less favorable brand attitude when the target was engaged in conspicuous brand use (M = 3.29) than when he was not using the brand conspicuously (M = 5.59; $\beta = 2.30$, $t(94) = 4.72$, $p < .0001$). In contrast, participants with high self-brand connection to Apple (+1 SD) had an equally positive attitude toward the brand whether the target used the brand conspicuously (M = 5.89) or not (M = 6.53; $\beta = .63$, $t(94) = 1.34$, n.s.d.). The Johnson–Neyman technique indicates that the difference in brand attitude across the low and high conspicuousness conditions is no longer significant when self-brand connection is greater than .72. As with Study 1, a regression with brand familiarity included as a covariate produced similar results (see Web Appendix B at www.marketingpower.com/jmr_webappendix).

Figure 3
STUDY 2: ATTITUDE TOWARD APPLE BY CONSPICUOUSNESS AND SELF-BRAND CONNECTION



H_3 predicted the same pattern of effects between high and discounted conspicuousness as between high and low conspicuousness for observers with low self-brand connection; that is, observers who were given an alternative reason for the target's behavior would have more favorable attitudes toward the brand compared with those who attributed an ulterior motive to it. Consistent with H_3, participants with low Apple self-brand connection had a less favorable brand attitude when the target was engaged in conspicuous brand use (M = 3.29) than when the conspicuous behavior was discounted (M = 5.47; $\beta = 2.18$, $t(94) = 4.64$, $p < .0001$). In contrast, participants with high Apple self-brand connection had an equally positive attitude toward the brand whether the target used the brand conspicuously (M = 5.89) or the conspicuous behavior was discounted (M = 6.18; $\beta = .28$, $t(94) = .64$, n.s.d.). The Johnson–Neyman technique indicates that the difference in brand attitude across the discounted and high conspicuousness conditions is no longer significant when self-brand connection is greater than .49.

For completeness, we ran a model with low conspicuousness as the comparison group to test for differences between the low and the discounted conspicuousness conditions. As we expected, the regression showed no significant effects of discounted conspicuousness or the discounted conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction (*p*s > .43).

As previously, we tested for the mediating effect of attitude toward the target for observers low in self-brand connection. The regression on attitude toward the target showed significant effects of age ($\beta = .05$, $t(94) = 3.19$, $p < .01$), gender ($\beta = .59$, $t(94) = 2.04$, $p < .05$), low conspicuousness ($\beta = 1.31$, $t(94) = 3.09$, $p < .01$), self-brand connection ($\beta = .50$, $t(94) = 2.14$, $p < .05$), and the discounted conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction ($\beta = -.77$, $t(94) =$

–2.42, $p < .05$). The effect of low conspicuousness indicates that, irrespective of self-brand connection, participants had a less favorable attitude toward the target when he was engaged in conspicuous brand use (M = 3.27) than when he was not (M = 4.58). As with ulterior motives, there was an interaction effect of discounted conspicuousness × self-brand connection such that the high and discounted conspicuousness conditions differed at low levels (–1 SD) of self-brand connection (M_{high} = 2.77 vs. $M_{discounted}$ = 4.12; β = 1.35, t(94) = 2.54, $p < .05$) but not at high levels (+1 SD) of self-brand connection (M_{high} = 3.76 vs. $M_{discounted}$ = 3.58; β = –.18, t(94) = –.37, n.s.d.).

Again, we used the PROCESS application provided by Hayes (2013) to estimate the conditional indirect effects of low conspicuousness on brand attitude through attitude toward the brand user at low and high levels of self-brand connection, using 10,000 bootstrap samples. The conditional indirect effect of low conspicuousness was significant at low self-brand connection to Apple (–1 SD), because the 95% CI around the estimate excludes zero (B = .42, SE = .27, 95% bootstrap CI: .03 to 1.10). In contrast, the conditional indirect effect of low conspicuousness was not significant at high self-brand connection to Apple (+1 SD), as the 95% CI around the estimate includes zero (B = .20, SE = .18, 95% bootstrap CI: –.02 to .75). There was also a direct effect of conspicuousness on brand attitude for those low in self-brand connection (B = 1.87, SE = .50, t(93) = 3.77, $p < .001$). This analysis replicates Study 1's results that high conspicuousness affects brand attitude through its effect on attitude toward the brand user for those observers low in self-brand connection.

The discounted conspicuousness condition should mirror the low conspicuousness condition with regard to mediation. The conditional indirect effect of discounted conspicuousness was significant at low self-brand connection to Apple (–1 SD), as the 95% CI around the estimate excludes zero (B = .32, SE = .22, 95% bootstrap CI: .03 to .95). In contrast, the indirect effect of discounted conspicuousness was not significant at high self-brand connection to Apple (+1 SD), as the 95% CI around the estimate includes zero (B = –.04, SE = .15, 95% bootstrap CI: –.40 to .21). There was also a direct effect of discounted conspicuousness on brand attitude for those low in self-brand connection (B = 1.85, SE = .47, t(93) = 3.94, $p < .001$). This analysis shows a similar pattern of effects between low and discounted conspicuousness.

Discussion

The results of this study replicate and extend the findings of Study 1 in a different context: a person's posts on Facebook. Consistent with H_1, conspicuous brand usage through a Facebook post and photo led to less favorable brand attitudes for those with low Apple self-brand connection but not for those with high Apple self-brand connection. However, the negative effect for those with low self-brand connection was mitigated when the ulterior motive was discounted, as we predicted in H_3. As expected, there were no differences in brand attitude across conditions when observers had high self-brand connection. Finally, in support of H_2, attitude toward the brand user affected brand attitudes for those low in self-brand connection but not for those high in self-brand connection.

We consider two additional issues in the next study. First, it is possible that the results are related to participants' general dislike of someone who flaunts, regardless of whether this flaunting is related to a brand. In other words, because conspicuous behavior is socially unacceptable, engaging in conspicuous behavior with one brand might also lead to unfavorable attitudes toward other brands. In the next study, we address this issue by measuring attitude toward the flaunted brand as well as toward another brand used by the flaunter. If brand-related conspicuousness is driving the results, as we argue, then attitude toward the flaunting brand should be affected, whereas attitude toward a different brand that is also used by the target should not be affected.

Second, we rule out envy as an explanation of the effects. Sundie et al. (2009) find that viewing someone flaunting a brand leads to feelings of envy, and this envy can generate hostility. When the target of envy experiences a product failure, the observer experiences schadenfreude (i.e., joy at the downfall of the brand user), leading to lower brand attitude. Although Sundie et al. (2009) examine a context in which the product fails, their results suggest a possible alternative explanation: seeing conspicuous brand use generates envy, which generates hostility, which then leads to brand dilution. To assess the role of envy, we measure it in the next study.

STUDY 3

Tiffany serves as the focal brand, and Starbucks is the nonfocal brand. We manipulated whether the Tiffany brand user is described as being a Starbucks user. We expected attitude toward Starbucks to be unaffected by conspicuousness, because the flaunting is associated with Tiffany and not Starbucks. This would indicate that the negative effects of conspicuous brand use do not carry over to other brands, regardless of whether they are associated with the target. Moreover, attitude toward Tiffany should be unaffected by whether the Tiffany user drinks Starbucks coffee. In line with the pretest, we limited the study to female participants only. One hundred seventy-six female participants (average age 33.4 years) drawn from an online panel completed the study in exchange for a small cash payment.

Procedure. The study had two manipulated between-subjects factors, conspicuousness (low vs. high) and presence of the nonfocal brand (absent vs. present), and one measured variable (self-brand connection). Participants read that they would see a photo and brief description of a person named Lauren. In the nonfocal brand absent condition, the description read: "Lauren is in her 20s and lives in the Northeast. She is a college graduate and works for a large company. She goes to the gym several days a week. On the weekends, she likes to go to the movies." In the nonfocal brand present condition, we inserted the sentence "She frequently stops at Starbucks on her way to work" into the description. Participants were then instructed to look at the photo and to be prepared to answer some questions about Lauren. To ensure participants looked at the photo, it was displayed for five seconds before they were able to advance to the questions.

In the photo, the target is seated in a public space holding a Tiffany shopping bag. We manipulated conspicuousness by varying her pose and facial expression (for the photos, see the Appendix; for the complete stimuli, see Web Appendix D at www.marketingpower.com/jmr_webappendix). In the

low conspicuousness condition, the target had a neutral pose and facial expression. In the high conspicuousness condition, the target flaunted the brand by smirking and holding the bag in a show-off pose. A pretest of the photos using different women from the same population demonstrated that they perceived the target as having greater ulterior motives when conspicuousness was high (M = 5.87) than when conspicuousness was low (M = 4.92; F(1, 84) = 11.91, $p < .001$).

Measures. After viewing the photo, participants responded to a series of questions capturing attitudes toward Tiffany (α = .95), attitudes toward Starbucks (α = .97), feelings of envy, attitudes toward the target (α = .97), perceptions of ulterior motives (α = .93), and control variables. We measured envy on seven-point scales with the same two items used by Sundie et al. (2009; envious, jealous: r = .72). As a control variable, we measured Tiffany ownership using a yes/no item; 16.5% of participants owned a Tiffany item. We measured familiarity with both Tiffany and Starbucks with the same seven-point scale as in the prior studies. As a manipulation check for the presence of the nonfocal brand, participants responded to a question about how often the target goes to Starbucks (1 = "never," and 7 = "every day"). We measured self-brand connection to Tiffany after a filler task, using the same measure as in the prior studies but adapted for the Tiffany brand; α = .96). There was no effect of either conspicuousness (F(1, 171) = 1.28, n.s.d.) or presence of the nonfocal brand (F(1, 171) = .04, n.s.d.) on self-brand connection. We also measured self-brand connection to the Starbucks brand.

Results

We conducted the analyses using regression, with self-brand connection mean-centered. The independent variables in the regression equations were the covariates (i.e., age and ownership), conspicuousness, self-brand connection, the conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction, presence of the nonfocal brand, and the presence of the nonfocal brand × conspicuousness interaction.

Manipulation checks. A regression on ulterior motives revealed only a significant effect of conspicuousness (β = .69, t(168) = 1.93, p = .05). Replicating the pretest, this result indicates that participants perceived the target as having greater ulterior motives in the high conspicuousness condition (M = 5.23) than in the low conspicuousness condition (M = 4.54), irrespective of self-brand connection.

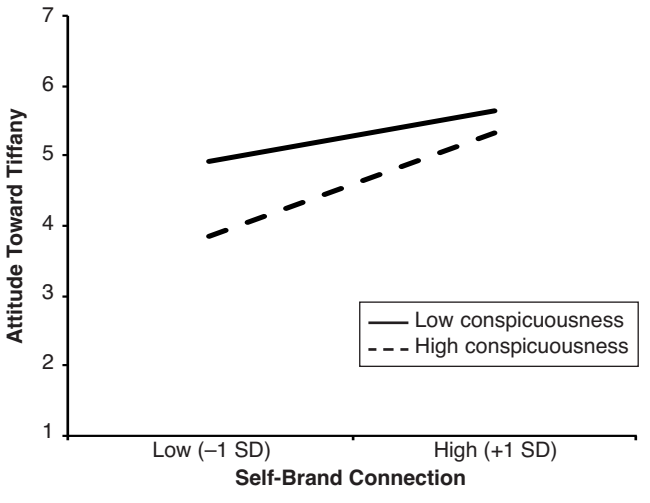
A regression on how often the target goes to Starbucks revealed no effect of the conspicuousness manipulation (β = –.16, t(168) = –.61, n.s.d.) but a significant effect of the presence of Starbucks manipulation (M_{absent} = 5.00 vs. $M_{present}$ = 5.91; β = .92, t(168) = 3.62, $p < .001$), suggesting that participants were paying attention to the information about the nonfocal brand. Thus, participants recognized that the target was a frequent Starbucks customer in the nonfocal brand present condition.

Tests of H_1 and H_2. The regression on attitude toward Tiffany showed significant effects of owner (β = .53, t(168) = 2.16, $p < .05$), age (β = .02, t(168) = 2.88, $p < .01$), conspicuousness (β = –.69, t(168) = –2.61, $p < .01$), self-brand connection (β = .24, t(168) = 2.67, $p < .01$), and the conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction (β = .26, t(168) = 2.12, $p < .05$). There were no significant effects of whether the nonfocal brand was present or absent. Participants with low self-brand connection to Tiffany (–1 SD) had a less favorable brand attitude when the target was engaged in conspicuous brand use (M = 3.85) than when the target was not using the brand conspicuously (M = 4.91; β = –1.07, t(168) = –3.37, $p < .001$; see Figure 4). In contrast, participants with high self-brand connection to Tiffany (+1 SD) had an equally positive attitude toward the brand whether the target used the brand conspicuously (M = 5.33) or not (M = 5.64; β = –.31, t(168) = –.97, n.s.d.). The Johnson–Neyman technique indicates that the difference in brand attitude across the low and high conspicuousness conditions is no longer significant when self-brand connection is equal to .55. Thus, H_1 is again supported. As with Studies 1 and 2, a regression with brand familiarity included as a covariate produced similar results (see Web Appendix B at www.marketingpower.com/jmr_webappendix).

The regression on attitude toward the target showed significant effects of conspicuousness (β = –1.07, t(168) = –3.49, $p < .001$) and the conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction (β = .42, t(168) = 3.00, $p < .01$). Participants with low self-brand connection to Tiffany (–1 SD) had less favorable attitudes toward the target when she was engaged in conspicuous brand use (M = 3.22) than when she was not using the brand conspicuously (M = 4.91; β = –1.68, t(168) = –4.60, $p < .0001$). In contrast, participants with high self-brand connection to Tiffany (+1 SD) held equal attitudes toward the target whether she used the brand conspicuously (M = 4.59) or not (M = 5.04; β = –.45, t(168) = –1.21, n.s.d.). Although this pattern is different from that of Studies 1 and 2, in which there was only a main effect of conspicuousness, the mediation analysis described subsequently again shows that attitude toward the brand user does not mediate the effect of conspicuousness on brand attitude at high levels of self-brand connection.

Analysis of the conditional process model indicated that the conditional indirect effect of conspicuousness was significant at low self-brand connection to Tiffany (–1 SD), because the 95% CI around the estimate excludes zero (B = –.54, SE = .19, 95% bootstrap CI: –1.00 to –.24). In con-

Figure 4
STUDY 3: ATTITUDE TOWARD TIFFANY BY CONSPICUOUSNESS AND SELF-BRAND CONNECTION



trast, the conditional indirect effect of conspicuousness was not significant at high self-brand connection to Tiffany (+1 SD), because the 95% CI around the estimate includes zero (B = –.14, SE = .15, 95% bootstrap CI: –.46 to .12). There was also a marginally significant direct effect of conspicuousness on brand attitude for those low in self-brand connection (B = –.52, SE = .31, t(167) = –1.68, $p < .10$). These results indicate that high conspicuousness affected brand attitude through its effect on attitude toward the brand user for those with low self-brand connection to Tiffany.

Alternative explanations. To show that the negative effect of conspicuous brand use on brand attitude is specific to the focal brand, we ran the regression with attitude toward Starbucks as the dependent variable. There was only a significant effect of self-brand connection ($\beta = .27$, t(168) = 2.12, $p < .05$). Attitude toward Starbucks was more favorable for those participants with higher Tiffany self-brand connection, perhaps because participants view the two brands as connected. However, the insignificant effects of the presence of the nonfocal brand suggest that it does not matter whether the target uses the nonfocal brand. This result, in addition to the lack of effects of conspicuousness or the conspicuousness × self-brand connection interaction, suggests that the negative effects of conspicuousness are limited to the flaunted brand and that there is no "halo" negative effect on the other brands the person uses. As an additional check, we reran the regression on attitude toward Starbucks using self-brand connection toward Starbucks in place of self-brand connection toward Tiffany. Even here, there was only an effect of self-brand connection to Starbucks ($\beta = .72$, t(168) = 8.07, $p < .0001$). This provides further evidence that the dilution effect of flaunting a brand is specific to the brand being flaunted.

To examine the envy alternative explanation, we ran the regression analysis with envy as the dependent variable. There were significant effects of age ($\beta = –.02$, t(168) = –2.19, $p < .05$), conspicuousness ($\beta = –.83$, t(168) = –2.52, $p < .05$), and self-brand connection ($\beta = .26$, t(168) = 2.28, $p < .05$). Participants in the high conspicuousness condition (M = 1.85) actually felt less envy than did participants in the low conspicuousness condition (M = 2.68). This result, in addition to the nonsignificant interaction effect of conspicuousness × self-brand connection, rules out envy as the cause of brand dilution.

Discussion

In support of the conceptual model, conspicuousness resulted in brand dilution when observers had low self-brand connection with Tiffany but not when observers had high self-brand connection with Tiffany. As in Studies 1 and 2, the results indicate that observers with high self-brand connection did not alter their views of the brand on the basis of the flaunting behavior. Flaunting resulted in brand dilution only when the observer did not have a strong connection to the brand, in support of H_1. Attitude toward the brand user mediated the effect of conspicuousness on brand attitude for observers low on self-brand connection, in support of H_2. Moreover, conspicuousness did not affect attitude toward the brand for those with a strong brand connection to Tiffany. This result is consistent with our proposition that these observers are motivated to protect the brand and that diluting the brand would have negative implications for their own identity. This study also ruled out generalized dislike and envy of the target as alternative explanations.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The objective of this research was to investigate the effects of conspicuous brand use on brand dilution. We demonstrated that seeing someone use a brand in a conspicuous manner leads observers to infer that the brand usage is motivated by ulterior reasons (e.g., impression management) rather than by intrinsic liking or utilitarian reasons. Among observers for whom the flaunted brand is not connected to the self, attitude toward the user decreases, leading to a decrease in brand attitude. In contrast, observers with high self-brand connection protect the brand from the actions of a conspicuous user. Regardless of how they feel about the user, their brand attitude remains the same. Thus, brand dilution occurs among observers with low self-brand connection but not among those with high self-brand connection.

Importantly, conspicuous brand usage does not always lead to lower brand attitude among observers with low self-brand connection. For brand dilution to occur, observers must attribute the conspicuous behavior to ulterior motives. In Study 2, brand attitude was unaffected when participants attributed the conspicuous behavior to humor rather than to ulterior motives. This suggests that seeing people flaunt the brand at sports events (e.g., by wearing different types of brand-related clothing) will not hurt the brand, nor will seeing others display brand knowledge or brand memorabilia at brand community events. In these situations, people are likely to attribute the conspicuous brand usage to the user's attachment to the brand rather than to ulterior motives. These users are likely to be perceived as using the brand in a way that is consistent with their self-aspect and beliefs rather than being opportunistic.

The brand dilution effect was robust across two brands and three manipulations of conspicuousness. In Study 3, we demonstrated that the dilution was brand specific; it affected attitude toward the flaunted brand but not toward another brand associated with the user. We also ruled out envy of the flaunter as an alternative explanation. The effect of conspicuousness on envy did not vary by self-brand connection. Indeed, flaunting led to lower envy of the target, which is inconsistent with envy as an alternative mechanism.

Notably, the effects of self-brand connection were different from those of either brand ownership or brand familiarity. The brand dilution effect among those low in self-brand connection occurred even after controlling for ownership and familiarity. Park et al. (2010) show a similar distinction between self-brand connection and attitude strength. It is the connection of the brand to the self rather than familiarity with the brand that makes consumers protect the brand from negative behavior. By protecting the brand, they protect themselves. We next discuss the potential process for the protection mechanism along with the contributions and implications of our framework.

Underlying Protection Mechanism

Our studies show that the self-protection process of people with high self-brand connection is robust, indicating that their brand attitudes are not easily dislodged. One limitation of the current research is that it does not provide direct evidence for the self-protection process. We suggested previ-

ously and now discuss further two possibilities for this outcome: discounting and self-affirmation. The results from our studies are consistent with both these processes.

First, people with high self-brand connection may be discounting the actions of the brand user (Swaminathan, Page, and Gürhan-Canli 2007); for example, they may be classifying the user as a poseur or considering the flaunting a one-off usage situation. By classifying the flaunter as a poseur, people with high self-brand connection would perceive the flaunter as someone who does not truly believe in or understand the meaning of the brand. Whereas people with high self-brand connection will discount the actions of a poseur, those with low self-brand connection may not care whether the user believes in or understands the brand meaning and therefore will not be motivated to discount the behavior. This suggests that highlighting that a flaunter is a representative of the brand would make it difficult for those with high self-brand connection to discount the information and protect the brand. We tested this possibility in a study in which we crossed the high flaunt condition of Study 3 with discounting information (for stimuli, see Web Appendix E at www.marketingpower.com/jmr_webappendix). The flaunter was described as a Tiffany customer who was selected to be featured on the Tiffany website; the idea was that people with high self-brand connection would not be able to doubt that the conspicuous brand user represents the brand. Contrary to prediction, however, those with high self-brand connection maintained their positive brand attitude despite this information. Once again, this finding suggests the robustness of the protection mechanism for people with high self-brand connection. Because the observed lack of effects may be due to an inadequate manipulation or some other idiosyncrasy of the study, further research is needed in this regard. Future studies could also test whether discounting occurs because observers with high self-brand connection perceive this conspicuous behavior as a one-time event. Repeated exposure to multiple conspicuous users might hurt the brand image because it shifts the meaning of the brand.

The second possibility for the robust resistance of negative brand information is that people with high self-brand connection are threatened by brand failure, leading them to maintain a favorable brand evaluation. According to Cheng, White, and Chaplin (2012), people with high self-brand connection view a failure of the brand as a threat to their self-esteem, because their selves are so closely tied to the brand. To protect the self, they protect the brand. Although their context is different, a flaunting brand user may be considered a "brand failure" because showing off reflects poorly on the brand. This suggests that giving those with high self-brand connection the opportunity to boost their self-esteem would change brand evaluations. Because they would no longer need the brand for self-affirmation, their brand evaluations would be similar to those with low self-brand connection. Moreover, people with low self-brand connection would be unaffected by the opportunity for self-affirmation because the brand and self are not connected. Further research is needed to examine this possible mechanism in more depth.

Conspicuousness and Brand Dilution

This article contributes to the branding literature by identifying conspicuous brand use as a potential source of brand dilution. The brand dilution literature has tended to focus on marketing actions taken either by the firm or by outside parties (Loken and John 2010). In contrast, we focus on how the behavior of everyday consumers can dilute brand image. The finding that brand dilution may occur among those with low self-brand connection should be troublesome to companies. Although these consumers do not currently have a bond with the brand, they could have been future adopters of the brand (as their life circumstances or preferences changed) or, if they are users, they could have developed a deeper connection over time. Associating the brand's users with ulterior motives is likely to make future adoption or bonding less likely. This suggests that marketing managers should reinforce use that does not convey ulterior motives. An example of such an action involves the BMW brand. BMW offers a high-performance driving school that teaches BMW owners how to drive their automobiles in extreme conditions. In these classes, instructors emphasize the need to keep this type of driving "on the track," discouraging behavior that may not only be unsafe but also be considered obnoxious or flaunting use of the brand in other settings. Other efforts could be in the form of advertising that conveys what is and is not a "show-off" brand user or brand usage.

Furthermore, in the age of social media, brand users become brand ambassadors whose use or misuse of the brand can be communicated easily through postings on social media, as evidenced with the Facebook stimuli used in Study 2. As managers attempt to use social media to build awareness for their brands, they must be mindful of the potential for the behavior of these ambassadors to have an impact on how the brand is perceived. For new customers, whose connection to the brand could be low, seeing a brand ambassador engaging in conspicuous behavior would negatively affect their attitudes and likely their purchase intentions as well. Brands may be able to temper these outcomes by using their online presence to create communities around the brand and help new customers build their connections to the brands.

Further Research

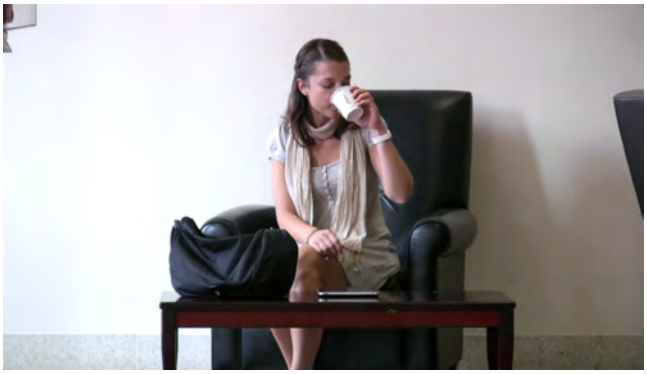
Beyond examining the mechanism behind the buffering effect, further research could investigate boundary conditions. Our framework is premised on the notion that people perceive conspicuousness negatively. Further research may examine situations in which people perceive conspicuousness positively. For example, an expert using the brand conspicuously may be perceived favorably because of his or her credibility. When a sports figure places a cap with a brand logo directly in front of him when giving a press interview or a celebrity poses for paparazzi photos with her Louis Vuitton handbag, flaunting may be perceived positively. Another possibility is when the conspicuous behavior results from self-expression motives. This requires, however, that observers are able to distinguish such situations. This is particularly interesting in light of research by Wilcox, Kim, and Sen (2009), which indicates that consumers are more likely to use counterfeit luxury goods when motivated by impression management than by self-expression. Whereas those high in self-brand connection may be more likely to forgive brand-related behavior that has an ulterior motive with authentic goods, the conspicuous use of a counterfeit would be unlikely to elicit the same

kind of protection. Finally, we suggest that any brand can be used in a conspicuous manner as long as the behavior is perceived to confer social benefits. This suggests that the brand must have a distinct image that consumers find valuable to convey. Further research can investigate whether brands that have an image that is either not well-defined or known or an image that has limited information value will result in similar effects.

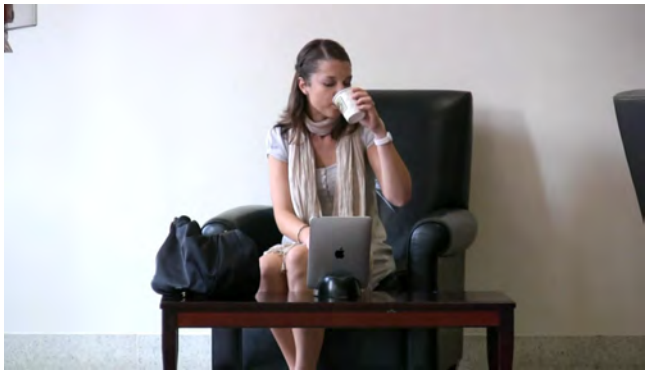
Appendix

STIMULI USED IN STUDIES 1–3

A: Study 1: Still Images from Video



Low Conspicuousness



High Conspicuousness

B: Study 2: Facebook Post Stimuli

Low Conspicuousness

High Conspicuousness

Discounted Conspicuousness

C: Study 3: Photo Stimuli

Low Conspicuousness

High Conspicuousness

Notes: Photograph in Panel B was created from two photos taken from http://iclothing.com.au/1_3_iTee.html.
Source: Panel B: iClothing.com.au.

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