TRESemmé and Devil Wears Prada 2 Are Rewriting the Sponsorship Playbook

The Devil Wears Prada 2 won’t hit theaters until May 1, but it’s already spawning a brand ecosystem.

TRESemmé, L’Oréal Paris, and Grey Goose all aired campaigns during the Oscars. Diet Coke is rolling out limited-edition cans across Europe. Cinemark has six collectibles.

TRESemmé is the most interesting one to me. It recently announced its status as the “signature hair brand” of the film. This word choice matters. It goes beyond being a sponsor, or a co-branding partner.

“Signature” is pro sports league territory. It’s how Infosys talks about its premium relationship with Madison Square Garden—where it has naming rights on a theater—or how Gatorade is the “official sports drink” of the NFL, MLB, WNBA, and multiple others. It doesn’t just mean your logo is on something. It means you’re structural, and are part of the game itself.

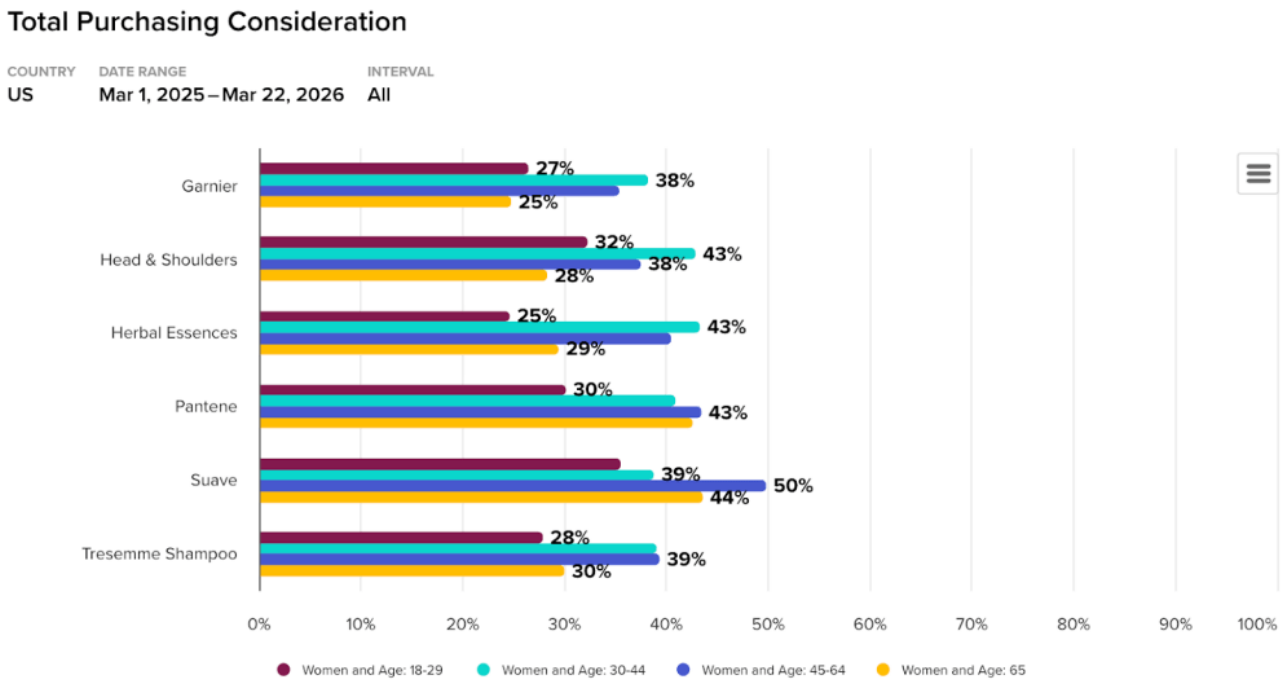
And that’s so important given the competitive landscape TRESemmé finds itself in, and the opportunity that Devil Wears Prada 2 provides.

TRESemmé has fallen behind in the race for purchase consideration

The Devil Wears Prada is a film about women’s ambition, choices, and power, against a backdrop of Chanel and Prada. Its protagonist is a woman trying to survive in that world, not own it.

That’s the audience TRESemmé is reaching with its Devil Wears Prada 2 alignment: women who aspire to the fantasy, but shop at Target.

And TRESemmé needs to solve a problem: it trails competitors like Suave and Pantene in purchase consideration across every female age group, according to data from Morning Consult. Over the past year, it has only a 28% consideration rate among women 18-29; 39% among women 30-44 as well as women 45-64; and a 30% consideration rate among women 65 and up.



Morning Consult

TRESemmé’s “signature” partnership—which feels more like Verizon’s deep relationship with the NFL than Dunkin’ making a limited edition Wicked-themed drink—is really a long-term growth strategy. It goes well beyond a themed bottle.

For a drugstore brand competing against Suave, Pantene, Garnier, and others for the same wallet, it signals that Miranda Priestly, the ultimate arbiter of taste, would reach for your product. No paid media buys that.

Devil Wears Prada fans are a crucial demographic

TRESemmé is also hitting this audience at a crucial time. The fans that made the original a phenomenon are now in their 40s and 50s, with real money and long memories.

Nearly 45% of women have already changed their spending behavior by avoiding brands or spending less because advertising didn’t feel made for them, Zappi research found. That disconnect hits hardest in their 30s and 40s, right when purchasing power peaks and brand loyalties calcify.

Once lost, brands rarely win those women back.

TRESemmé likely knows this. And its play to be the “signature hair brand” of The Devil Wears Prada 2, unlike a classic product placement gimmick, is meant to help consumers feel that they’re part of the film’s world, not just watching it through a screen.

Consumer attention has become exponentially harder to grab, and consumer packaged goods manufacturers need to elevate themselves beyond tried-and-true marketing tactics, because they are saturated with competitors and a constant stream of challenger brands.

The sponsorship playbook that TRESemmé is tapping was actually built by sports, and largely targeted men. Hollywood studios have also chased this model for properties whose fanbases typically skew male. The 2023 release of Barbie seems to have tipped the scales.

And now, Devil Wears Prada 2 is fully embracing it, and TRESemmé has fully bought in with an integration designed to help audiences extend the cinematic moment and carry it out of the theater, and—quite literally for the shampoo brand—into their lives.

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