

Brand Regeneration through Previously Tested Narrative Units: A Movie Remake Perspective

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This research tries to examine movie remake as a brand regeneration strategy using original movies as a narrative unit. The research examines the effects of movie related antecedents on consumer's perception. Consumers' perceptions develop through certain criteria's, which are developed either through their personal experience or through word of mouth. The movie related antecedents are responsible for altering a consumer's perception in a sequential manner where certain factors are found to manipulate the perceptions thus further influencing the decision of consumption. Remakes are considered as narrative units with previous exposure and evaluation from the consumer. An experimental setup is used to derive a conclusion from the study where perceptions are manipulated by alterations in the factors and then these factors are tested on the subjects. Overall the study proves that the change in the consumer's decision takes place when the key factors are manipulated to alter the perceptions of consumers.

What is a Remake?

Remakes are motion picture made from a film story (plot) which has been produced and released earlier in a certain timeframe (Beaver, 2006). Remake usually are pure adaptations of the original ones but can have certain modifications with respect to the plot of the movie. Also, sometimes remakes will have altered features which will consist of characters, scenes, dialogues, location etc. Remakes are always subjected to strong comparison, especially when they remake from an original screen classic which has been successful during its release time.

Remakes are usually made in different types with the main purpose to test the anxiety and loyalty of consumers towards the brand. Having said that a remake is treated as a brand regeneration, a brand which is previously known for its popularity and success. Through brand regeneration any movie studio plans to regenerate the same success through the new make. But with an ease of knowledge comes the factor of risk, popular originals are treated as a datum for comparison with the new one and at many times the remake has to suffer

the consequences of satiation in spite of being a good fit to the original one. Satiation is a feeling produced when a consumer is fed with the same information during certain period of time because of which his way of understanding and processing information of the same type gets altered (Sood & Dreze, 2006).

Understanding the Make of a Remake

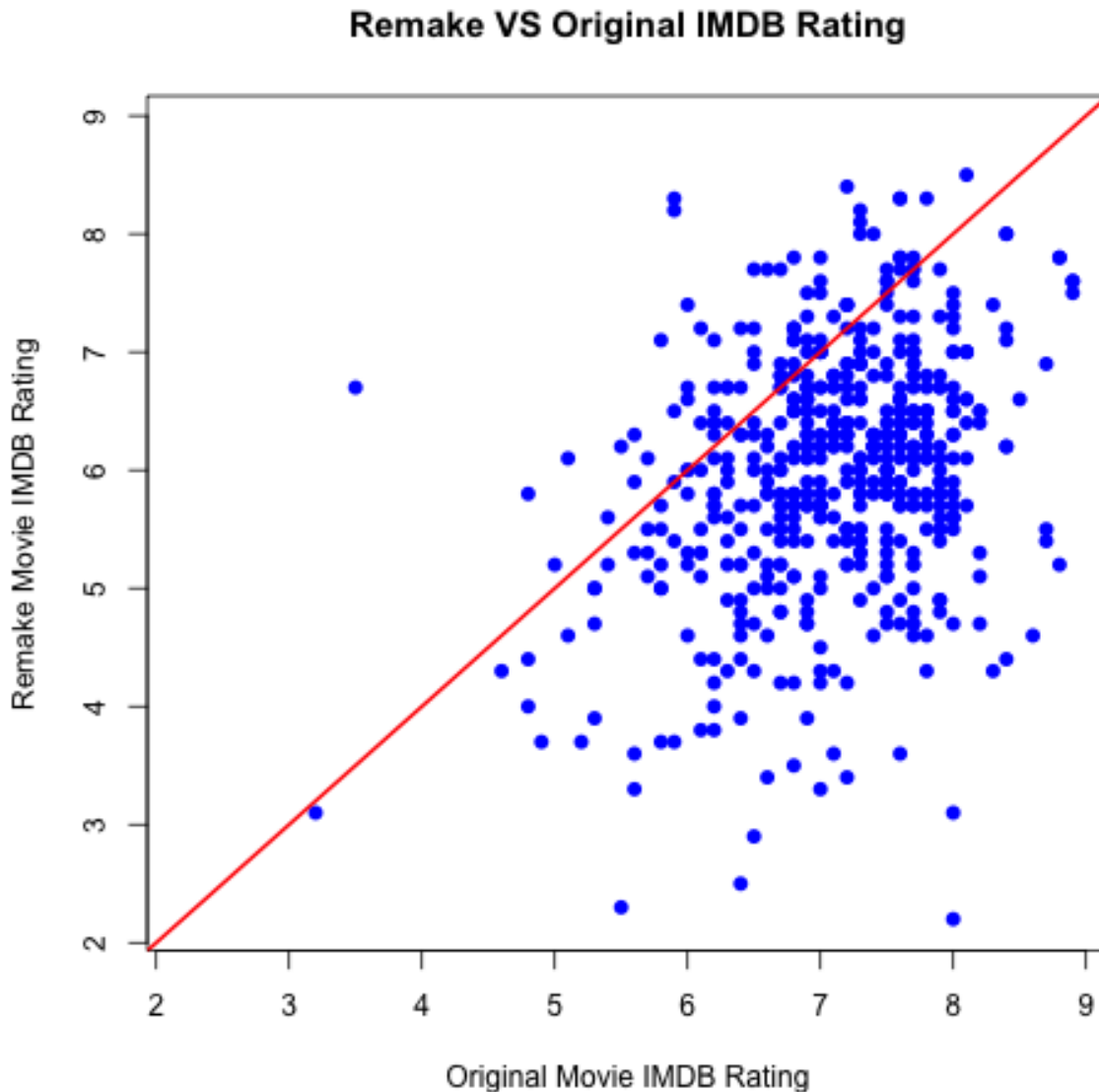
Remakes are usually of two type's shot to shot remakes and cross country remakes. Shot to shot are plot copy adaptations where the whole story line is copied from the original make (Sood & Dreze, 2006). Cross country remakes are plot adaptations of original screenplay where plots are adapted from completely different region of the world, for example *Departed* (USA) / *Infernal Affairs* (China), *Ring* (USA) / *Ringu* (Japan) etc. As familiarity with the subject increases comparison with the original make also increases, cross country remake having their original from different region and made in a different language face less criticism and scrutiny compared to a shot to shot remake.

Today movie remakes are also made as prequels to the original make one example of this type is *The Thing* (1982/2011). The other examples are *Prometheus* (2012)/ *Alien* (1979), *Rise of Planet of Apes* (2011)/ *Planet of Apes* (1968), *X-Men: First Class* (2011)/ *X-Men* (2000), *The Hobbit* (2012)/ *The Lord of the Rings* (2001) etc. The difference between *The Thing* and other prequels is the title of the movie. When looking at the title with similarities it is assumed that movies with the same title are shot to shot remake, while the change in the title brings in the feeling of anxiety and curiosity in the minds of consumers to understand the new make. The title plays an important role while marketing the film among consumers.

What to rely on?

Consumers strongly rely on factors like review and word of mouth rather than hands on experience. Strong preferences, go to well-known review agencies and blog sites like IMDB, rotten tomatoes etc. Most of the ratings are based on consumers' feedback rather than expert's knowledge. As the feedbacks are based on consumers' self and prior experience they tend to follow certain patterns for certain type of remark. It has been found in a study that the remake rating is seen to fall by 16% that of the original that is a remake rating would be 0.84 times the original movie rating (The Statisticator, 2013).

Figure 1: Scatter Plot

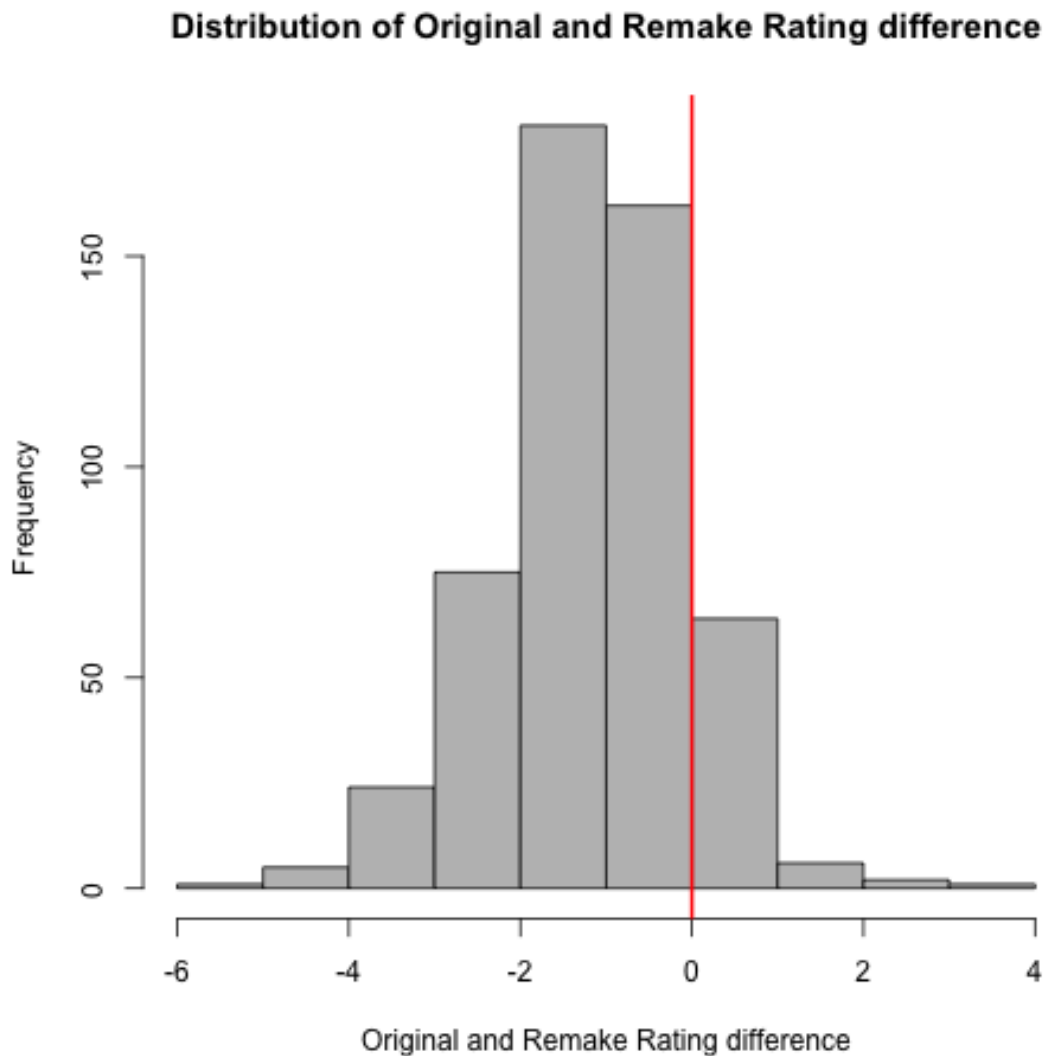


Courtesy: The Statisticator, 2013

As seen in the above diagram the red line indicates $X=Y$, while as the blue dots indicate the rating for movie remakes. The x axis is the original movie IMDB rating and the y axis is the remake movie IMDB rating (The Statisticator, 2013). When comparing the original rating to remake rating it can be concluded that very few remakes exceed the ratings' of their original

make, it is clear from the diagram that very few dots exist above the red line where both original and remake ratings are equal.

Figure 2: Histogram



Courtesy: The Statisticator, 2013

The histogram above indicates the distribution of the difference between the remake rating and original rating. The positive difference indicates that the rating of the remake is higher than that of the original while as the negative rating indicates vice versa

(The Statisticator, 2013). It can be concluded from the histogram that the very few remakes have higher ratings than that of their original makes.

Implications for Consumers

Consumers' feedback results from their perception towards a movie. Perceptions are built on their experience and word of mouth. There are many factors which influence the perception of a consumer. This study investigates those factors and tries to explain their influence on consumers' perception. This study uses multiple techniques including an experimental design to test the influence of title on perception.

This study concludes by proving that the factor of the title is the most influential factor that affects the perception of a consumer. Remakes with same title suffer a lot over remakes with modified or new title. Consumers relying a lot on third party rating systems have to consider other facts before taking the decision of watching the movie. Plot, characters, trailers, expert reviews etc. Are some other factors which can play an important role in the success of the movie.

Also, all remakes are not shot to shot copies of their original some of them are also prequels. Having the same title or modified title puts confusion in the minds of consumers regarding the make of the movie and they assume it to be a remake. It is preferred for consumers to study more about the plot and trailer before establishing any assumption about the movie.

References

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