

THE

TFR REPORTS

The Dupe Drops

HOW "DUPE MARKETING" LETS CONSUMERS DO
YOUR PRODUCT'S TALKING



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#tiktokmademebuyit

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Summary



Bootlegs

A TRIP TO DUPE CITY

It's a holiday experience we've surely all had while perusing market stalls in Marrakech, Paris and Bangkok: those sneakers look exactly like Nike Air Jordans but the branding describes them as Nike "Air Juan" – and they're probably worth a punt for the comedy value alone. Might those cigarettes with the distinctive red livery actually smoke like full-fat Marlboros, despite the name on the packet being "Morley"? And if that Gucci belt looks like a genuine Gucci belt and feels like a genuine Gucci belt while being a hundredth of the price of a genuine Gucci belt, who really cares if the branding reads "Cucci"?



Dupe Marketing

GENUINELY UNGENUINE

Marketing has long struggled with the question of proving a product's genuine authenticity against an ingenious black market providing cheap counterfeits and knockoffs of whichever is the must-have item du jour, from scents and makeup to apparel and garms, and even FMCG goods.

As those holiday moments suggest, there's a consumer fascination with fake things that pretend to be their "real" counterparts, and more often today, a fascination with "real" products which borrow from and impersonate other "real" products. This is where the growing trend for "dupe marketing" comes in, in which a canny duplicate of an existing product, offered and marketed with a knowing twist, creates hype, intrigue, popularity and sales. Often we love the fake-real thing more than we love the real-real thing.

Consumers are now searching for the best dupes on the market and while dupe marketing sails close to the frontiers of copyright legality it also takes the fascination with what's real and what's fake (and everything in between) to a new space. Savvy marketers know that there are three key elements in this game: the dupe product itself, the intrigue it creates, but most importantly the people it involves – the consumers buying these products and posting about them on social. And oddly enough, it's a caterpillar which best illustrates how dupe marketing works.

