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The radio serves principally local rather than national or large regional markets.

Many small advertisers use the radio. So do some large organisation. When TV became a factor in the advertising scheme, some industry observers felt that radio advertising might become insignificant or even disappear.

This has not been so, for radio operators have responded to the challenge by offering programmes that feature music, etc., which appeal to local audiences. Consumers have responded very favourably to this approach. The advantages of radio advertising are immediacy, low cost, flexibility, practicality, low-cost audience selection, and mobility. The radio is an extremely mobile broadcast medium.

It reaches virtually everyone, either in their homes, cars, or elsewhere (because of portable receivers, such as transistor radios), providing a means of reaching a mass market. It is selective enough to provide opportunities for reaching market segments, and many stations focus on particular interest groups. The marketer may achieve selectivity by choosing particular hours of the day and days of the week that are the best for his commercials. The radio is an inexpensive medium for many organisations. Marketers may purchase commercial time. It is, moreover, a very flexible medium, and it has the latest deadlines for the submission of commercial material.

Others, such as magazines, often require that advertisers submit their messages months before they are to be presented to the public. The disadvantages of the radio include fragmentation, the unavailability of the advertising message for future reference, and less research information. A

message on the radio lasts only for a short effect of the commercial is lost. Moreover, the radio appeals only to the sense of hearing. The medium cannot take advantage of the visual means of communication, as TV and the print media do. It is extremely difficult to estimate the audience for an individual radio commercial. The radio is a mass medium, but no single station or programme reaches more than a small fraction of the total audience. In fact, it is a very selective medium.

Different stations aim their programmes at different audiences. Radio messages may be prepared or changed on short notices. The advertisers therefore have great flexibility in the timing of radio advertising.

b.

Television:

Of late in India, a growing class of advertising media has been the TV. In our country commercial advertising on TV is severely limited because broadcast timings are only in the evenings. The TV is a unique combination of sight and sound and achieves a deeper impact than the other media do. This is particularly advantageous for advertisers whose products require demonstration.

TV advertising offers advantages of impact, mass coverage, repetition, flexibility and prestige. In our country, not everyone has a TV set; therefore it does not reach everyone. Moreover, in rural India where 80 percent of our population lives, there are hardly any TV sets, except at the community centres, and that, too, at the places where electricity is available. Moreover,

TV programmes in our country do not offer much selectivity. The transmission is limited, and many centres do not have TV towers.

TV appeals to both the senses of sound and of sight. As a result, it combines the two to produce high-impact commercials. Finally, the fact that a product or service is promoted on TV may build a prestigious image of the product and its sponsor. The pleasure derived from watching TV is at least potentially transferable to the advertising messages delivered through the medium. The disadvantage include relinquishing control of the advertising message to the telecaster (who can influence its impact), high cost, high mortality rates for commercials, some evidence of public distrust and lack of selectivity. Only a limited message is possible because of the limitations on time. It is not as selective as some of the other media.

Consumers may easily ignore commercials by leaving the room where the set is located to attend to other matters. TV time is expensive, and it is not easy to get prime time. Quite apart from the cost of TV time, the cost of producing commercials is very high.

Production costs include the fee for such items as talent and filming, which must be borne by the advertiser. Commercial TV announcements are, however, in their infancy in our country, though they are fast catching up. 2. Print media: The print media carry their messages entirely through the visual mode. These media consist of newspapers, magazines and direct mail.

a. Newspapers:

A sizable share of the total advertising budget is spent on advertising in newspapers.

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Newspapers in our country virtually reach most of the homes in the cities: and many members of the family read them. Their messages can be longer than those on the radio and TV; and the message may therefore be more complex and lengthy. Since newspapers are local marketers can easily use them to reach particular markets. This selectivity is easily available. The closing times for ads in newspapers are not rigorous. Some are in the twelve-hour range. From the viewpoint of the advertiser, newspapers offer several advantages they are local in content and appeal, and provide opportunities for direct communication between a product and its local dealers or distributors.

Because newspapers supply news, they offer an atmosphere of factual information and of currency that may be favourable for some advertising situations. Advertisers can reach a very broad audience through newspapers, which offer great flexibility. The advertiser may choose the specific areas to be covered, and the advertisement can be placed in newspapers at very short notice as compared with other media. Much of the advertising carried by newspapers is local promotion by retail stores, cinemas and other local organisations. A disadvantage of using newspapers is that the cost of reaching a national or large regional market may turn out to be high. In addition, the printed copy does not reproduce the ad as finely as a magazine does.

Further, consumers do not keep the issue for long periods of time; not do they pass it on to others, as they often do with a magazine. Finally, in the eyes of consumers, newspapers do not have the prestige of TV and some magazines.

b.

Magazines:

Magazines are a means of reaching different markets, both regional and national, and of general and specific interest. An organisation may approach national markets through such publications as the India Today, the Business Week, Famina, Sports Week, and Filmfare. Regional magazines are available for those marketers who do not want a national coverage. Some marketers divide their markets on the basis of such variables as age, educational level and interests.

They are likely to be concerned with special interest magazines. Magazines are divided into those that serve business, industrial consumers, ladies, sports, etc. The diversity of magazines is tremendous. Some offer news or other “ general interest” content to huge audiences. Others are highly specialised, technical or even exotic. In general, magazines offer advertisers the opportunity to reach highly selective audience. The primary advantages of magazine advertising are: selectivity of market targets; quality reproduction; long life; the prestige associated with some magazines; and the extra services offered by many publications.

The quality of magazine reproduction is usually high. Consumers sometimes keep individual copies for long periods of time, reread them, or pass them on to others. Some magazines have prestige value. The marketer can cover national or large regional markets at a low cost per contact (per individual reached). Magazines generally offer high-quality printing for advertisements. The paper used and the presses employed in magazine printing make

possible the reproduction of the right colour, sharp details, etc. Another feature of potential interest to the advertiser is the mood or atmosphere created by some magazines.

Advertisements may be read more carefully and with greater depth of interest in a magazine than elsewhere, both because magazines tend to be kept longer and sometimes read repeatedly, and because of the specialised character of their contents. The primary disadvantage is that magazines lack the flexibility of newspapers, radio and TV. Another disadvantage is the high cost. Because of the high cost factor, many small advertisers do not employ this medium. Another problem is waste circulation, that is, individuals who are not target consumers are exposed to the advertising. Finally, magazines have long closing periods, sometimes as long as a month. Business publications, popularly called trade journals or trade magazines, are also used for advertising. Business publications may be classified as general or specialised.

Generally, they are specialised and have specialised appeals. Advertisers hope that their advertisements will be more carefully and thoroughly read than those in consumer magazines. Additionally, the nature of many business publications is such that their editorial content is often relevant or related to the advertisements that are carried. On occasion, editorial comment may be directly devoted to the specific products that have been advertised, especially to new products or processes.

The advertising rates of business publications are generally low; but their smaller circulation indicates that the cost per reader is high. From the

advertiser's viewpoint, however, the latter is offset by the fact that these journals are meant for very specific audience groups such as doctors, engineers, etc. 3. Outdoor and transit media: These reach consumers at points other than in their homes.

a. Outdoor Advertising:

Outdoor advertising involves the use of signs and billboards, posters or displays (such as those that appear on a building's wall), and electric spectacles (large, illuminated, sometimes animated signs and displays). The marketers may purchase billboards on the basis of showings.

A showing indicates the percentage of the total population of a particular geographic area that will be exposed to it during a one month period. The highest showing is 100. Here, the number of billboards is as would attract approximately 90 per cent of the local population about 20 times during a month. Signs are usually smaller than billboards and are erected and maintained by the marketer rather than by the advertising media. This form of advertising has the advantages of communications quick and simple ideas, of repetition, and of the ability to promote products that are available for sales. Outdoor advertising is particularly effective in metropolitan and other high-traffic areas.

Another advantage of outdoor advertising is that the advertiser can use this medium to bring the product to the attention of consumers; or to remind them of the product, while they are on shopping trips or are disposed toward shopping. Consumers see the billboards or signs many times. Advertisers may utilise this medium to economically reach a large mass of people or

small-local markets. The medium is “disadvantaged” by the brevity of its message and by the public concern over aesthetics. Usually, the message is short, not over eight words; otherwise those who drive by would not have time to read it. Also, the future of the industry is subjected to some doubt. The public’s adverse reaction to what it considers to be the clutter of signs and billboards is fairly strong. Finally, auto-drivers and passengers are confronted with numerous distractions, including other car; scooters, scenery, other billboards, and conversation inside the vehicle.

Thus, many consumers do not perceive the advertisements clearly. Signs are common that specify the name and nature of the business and that promote merchandise (window signs), especially at the retail level. Some are distinctive and are useful in generating interest in the establishment and in aiding consumers in locating it. Marketers should design signs that can be easily seen by passerby and that stand out from other signs. The sign should be easily visible from a block away and contrast nicely with other nearby signs that are in different colour.

Window signs are a possible means of generating consumer interest in particular items. The products that are on sale or that are new lend themselves to special promotion efforts. Signs indicating that a new product is available, or that some products are on sale, or that additions to the stock have been made might be of special interest to consumers.

b. Transport Advertising:

Transport advertising appears on the inside or outside of taxis, buses, railways, streetcars, and other modes of passenger transportation. Marketers

may use transit advertising to attain high exposure to particular group-commuters on their way to and from work, and tourists. Repeat exposure in possible, for a majority of the people in our country use public transport on a recurring basis.

Transport advertising is useful reaching consumers at an advantageous point in time—while they are embarking on a shopping trip. This medium is a low cost medium. A disadvantage of transit advertising is that the message conveyed must be short. The marketer, who has a longhand complex set of communications to transit, should seek another medium. Transport advertising reaches only that segment of the population who are passengers or in the vicinity of the vehicles as they move by (where the message appears outside the vehicle). Finally, only a limited amount of advertising space is available. The would-be sponsor may well find that adequate space cannot be had. From the advertiser's standpoint, outdoor advertising is often viewed as supporting his advertisements in other media.

Billboards can reach large numbers of people at relatively little cost, and they serve as reminders, a means of emphasising ideas, or as prompters of impulse purchases. Messages communicated via outdoor advertising are obviously restricted to a brief and easily understood content. The most familiar types of advertising are car cards, displays, and posters found in or on buses and other means of transportation. Transportation advertising is sold by specialised firms, and the rates are generally based on the number of vehicles on which, or the other locations in which, the advertising is to be shown.

Transportation advertising is often co-ordinated with outdoor advertising, making use of the same or similar pictures and messages. 4. Specialty advertising: It involves placing the sponsor's name and, often, a short message on novel or useful articles. These include calendars, pens, pencils, desk pads, paper weights, ash trays, drinking glasses, diaries, personalised business gifts of a modest value, shopping bags, memo pads, balloons, yardsticks, key rings, and hundreds of other items. Ordinarily marketers use specialty articles to reinforce messages carried by other media, they do not employ them as the prime thrust of their advertising programmes. This medium is low in cost. It provides the advertisers with an opportunity to remind target consumers of the products offered by him. Consumers are exposed to the message quite frequently (every time that they pick up their pens or look at their calendars).

Finally, the marketer can be selective in directing speciality articles to specific target consumers. Waste circulation can be kept to the minimum; sales persons may be instructed to pass out speciality items only to those prospects who are likely to become good consumers. 5. Direct mail: It is one of the most important classes of advertising media. The concerns that employ direct mail brochures, sales letters, postcards, leaflets, folders, booklets, catalogues and house organs, etc.

In a sense, the advertisers act as their own media. The direct mail offers the advertisers a maximum of selectivity and flexibility. They do not generally advertising media, such as TV or magazines. Direct-mail advertising is generally much more expensive than advertising in other media, because of

the high costs of delivering messages individually. It also suffers from a lack of prestige-unhappiness with junk mail is widespread.

Some prospects consider direct mail materials to be a nuisance and simply deposit them in a waste paper basket without reading the contents.

Marketers often experience difficulty and incur high costs in obtaining a list of good prospects and in updating the list as new prospects appear and old prospects disappear. Further, the cost per contact can be high in relation to other media. The advantages of direct mail include selectivity, intensive coverage, speed, format flexibility, complete information and the personalisation of each mailing piece.

Direct mail purchasers also tend to be consistent buyers by mail. There is minimal waste circulation, for the mailing list consists only of those who are likely prospects for the product or service in question. The marketer can keep down the cost of a direct mail campaign by using a mailing list of limited size (although the cost per contact is then high). There are no media closing dates. The only restriction as regards time is the time needed to obtain the mailing list, design and reproduce the direct mail pieces and forward them to the prospects.

Moreover, direct mail is free from many of the distractions, such as editorial material and other advertisements that appear in the media. Finally, marketers can tailor the quality of the production work to their exact needs. The quality may range from fliers printed on inexpensive paper to impressive brochures and personalised letters. These cost time. The effectiveness consideration makes direct mail an ideal medium. A disadvantage of direct

mail is its high cost per reader. Direct mail advertising is, moreover, dependent on the quality of the mailing list.