

Creativity in advertising

[Media](#), [Advertising](#)



“ Creativity is seeing something new when you look at something old; it is all heart of civilization and is the driving force of revolution.” - David Ogilvy.

It is an accepted fact that there should be an element of creativity in an advertisement. This creativity is something new, unique, extreme attractive and appealing to the consumers. In fact, advertising itself is a creative process. It is the outcome of long term planning and hard work on the part of the copy writer or artist who prepares the final copy of the advertisement. This is natural as creative ideas do not come over night. They are required to be developed through systematic thinking process.

Creative advertising needs to be imaginative, intelligent, sharp, to the point, and extremely catchy. It must motivate people to purchase the advertised product. The message and appeal made should be able to make positive impact on the consumers. According to Albert Wesley, “ Creativity is the ability to develop new useful ideas that produce desired results.”

Creativity should focus the attention of the reader on the product and he must feel the urge to have that product for the same benefit. This suggests that creative advertising should be able to create demand for the product when it is introduced for the first time.

Emotions and Brand Value

Emotional advertising improves a brand's impression, personality and value by instilling feelings in the advertisement. Here are some examples in the Indian scenario. The ' Josh' machine campaign gave a young-at-heart image for a high brand recall to Ford Ikon. ' Youthful Individuality' is the soul of the

Levi's brand which defines universal values like originality, self-confidence, and integrity. Titan has launched a range of watches most suited to the individual's personality and attitude. For example: Fastrack, Timex, Raga, etc. In a Titan advertisement a father and his younger daughter gift a Titan watch to the elder daughter on the occasion of her marriage. Raymond is uniquely positioned as a brand that addresses the innate need of men to look good and at the same time possess strength of character. This emphasis on human values creates a warm emotional link with consumers- the essence of 'The Complete Man'.

The ICICI Prudential Advertisement brings out the emotional appeal of the husband and wife and therefore is able to move consumers into considering the Brand seriously.

Such emotions help an advertiser to create brands. Brands are built in the minds and hearts of the customers and it is important to understand that consumers like the consumer brands rationally as well as emotionally.

In countries like India, emotions are definitely a critical factor for consumers, in accepting and loving brands. Promotions like small offers & reduction in prices or buy & win offers leave a short term impact on customer's mind where as emotional appeal helps an advertiser to create a long lasting impact.

Marketing emotions a must to woo customers

Indians are very emotional. The Bollywood movies only prove this point. There may also be a lot of demand for the " K serials". But do we need a

forced dosage of emotions in the ads too? On TV the viewers (much to the advantage of the advertisers) do not have much choice. One might just not be in the same mood, as being expressed by the advertisement, worse still, nowhere close. Imagine one watching Monday night laughs & then see the emotional ad of HDFC.

The advertising campaigns of things like life insurance, beauty products, baby products, retirement solutions, healthcare products, tour operators & social messages can never separate themselves from the emotional content. A viewer even expects an emotional connect. What, however, is not easily conceivable is why some companies practice emotional advertising even though there is no need for it? In particular, advertisements of products like electrical switches, salt, telecom companies, hawai chappals, newspaper & paint to name a few.

One cannot forget surf's “ daag ache hain” campaign. It is not only connected to the mother's desires & their plight of keeping the clothes white, but also with those of the kids, who despite all the efforts not to dirty their clothes, just do it! The “ Chintamani” campaign for ICICI bank was a good break from the boring ads of the other banks. It was an innovative way to convey the emotional connect and with “ short term Chintamani” coming in the second part of the ad, they assured a special mention for their efforts.

A few advertisements from the automobile sector. The “ Make your own road” campaign with the racy music, and the rustic and adventurous imagery captures the inherent desire for an SUV amongst men. “ The josh

machine” campaign did very well to sell the Ford Ikon. With the sport variant coming into the market the tag line fitted perfectly with the youth connect.

In another category, thinking about ads for milk products like chocolates, butter, condensed milk, two brands occupy most mind space-Amul and Cadbury’s. Both “ shamelessly” attempt to make us indulge in “ sinful pleasures”. The splashing milk, melting butter on parathas, condensed milk on sweets, the low cholesterol oils survive on an emotional connect.

Emotional Advertising as a Point Of Difference for a Brand

Emotional advertising can become a Point Of Difference (POD) for a brand as today the competition is very fierce so emotional advertising can make a lot of difference in creating a unique image. These days product features can very easily be copied by competitors.

Many companies these days use emotional advertising to appeal to the customers. For example when Apple launched iPod it tried to portray an image that possessing an iPod is really something cool rather than just focusing on the product features. Emotional advertising is especially used by jewellery companies to showcase emotions. For example De Beers ad which shows “ heera hai sadaa ke liye”. It shows that a diamond is forever.

Similarly with many luxury/status goods like Mercedes car or Cartier watches emotional advertising helps in attracting a wider audience. These are basically high end items and people take feelings or emotions into consideration before buying these goods.

Techniques used in emotional advertisements

Advertisers strive to engage consumers through their choice of message tone. Some of the most common emotional appeals focus on fear, humor and self-idealization. The use of fear as a motivation in advertising places emphasis on the severity of the threat. Zeitlin and Westwood (1986) found that fear appeals range in intensity from mild to severe. Their research suggests that in order to be most effective (not just attention getting), fear-based messages should present a mild to moderate threat and provide a doable solution. If the fear instilled is either too severe or not followed up with a reasonable solution, the viewer will not be able to surmount his/her sense of dread and process the advertising message.

In a similar vein, negative ads (ads in which the viewer is exposed to annoying or unpleasant creative content) can also be effective if the negative technique is used to promote a product benefit. This situation is often referred to as the "love that product, hate that ad" syndrome (Zeitlin and Westwood, 1986) and has been used to describe Charmin's Mr. Whipple and Wisk's Ring around the Collar campaigns.

Humor is another frequently used emotional technique which must be employed with caution. Some advertisers view humor as a can't lose method for enticing viewers into paying attention to the message. However, it is important that the humorous creative technique does not result in a loss of product message. Research by Kover, Goldberg and James (1995) indicates that in most cases, humor has little on viewers' interpretations of advertising effectiveness.

Innovation in advertising

In AXN the show “ 30 seconds of fame” which is the reality show of America where the amateur performer got the stage for 30 seconds to performs what they wanted. The half hour program was an endless and almost uninterrupted series of 30 second, solo and group performance ranging from dance to singing to any activity. They have to show all their possible creativity to impress the audiences; otherwise they are out of the show. The voting right is given to the audience for selecting or rejecting them.

This is similar to today’s day to day advertisements, which also have limited time to impress their target consumers and their success or failure is in the hands of the customers. Therefore to attract the customers towards the product it is necessary that the advertisement should be creative.

Today advertising is not restricted to heavy television campaigns alone. Notice how spaces from taxis to school bags, painted trains, sweat-shirts, glasses at bars, lunch-boxes, credit card bills, cutlery, back-lit vans etc are being decorated with colorful advertising messages these days? Venues like malls, multiplexes, campuses, railways stations, restaurants, etc. are also offering a host of creative advertising hang-outs.

This is the rapid world of innovative media vehicles, which is long on imagination and sure to grab eyeballs. Take motor-bike brand Royal Enfield. It cornered elevators on the public places and flanked each lift with pictures of rival bikes. As people leave the lift, they see larger than life Royal Enfield

cut-out before them. The message conveyed is that the ‘ Roadside Romeos’ should make way for the divine one.

It is just a part of the innovative media vehicles. For example, the Fa Fresh Zone which targeted multiplexes. Fa dispensers let scented air flow through the air-conditioning pipe in the “ cooling areas.” Meanwhile, a rival Rexona has put up painted people on sliding doors move, we get the illusion that people are actually turning away from us, thanks to the body odour. The trick to building a fun brand is to devise fun ways of speaking to the consumer. The Rexona deodorant sliding doors innovation was a truly creative exercise.

Cellular operator Airtel has branded charging booths in metros, where people can go and charge their handsets. Smirnoff brands itself around glasses at bars, while Lipton took up its own special place on credit card bills. When everyone’s at it, why should Pepsi or Coke be far behind? Both the brands offer plenty of free merchandise like sweat shirts, bags, wristbands, etc. at their sponsored events, concerts, and certain fast food outlets where they also brand everything from foot mats to tablemats.

We can call these advertising vehicles fantastic or imaginative. Point is everyone is doing it. More and more marketing budgets are being moved from mass media to targeted, direct response media such as creativity in advertising or interactive marketing. The more integrated the customers get, the more integrated the brands need to become. Also, media fragmentation makes it more and more difficult to effectively deliver mass message, so brands have no other logical choice than to get interactive.

Nerolac had run the “ touch and feel” counter at various malls and multiplexes, which also gave free Nerolac merchandise like mugs, bags and cutlery. McDonald’s advertising on the attractive and branded glasses, with a string attached, “ For home delivery ... call the McDonald’s number.” Interestingly, so-called staid categories like bank can also get some zing with innovative branding. Shoe boxes branded with SBI logos and the pitch line: “ Car loans from SBI- No more battered shoes”.

Creativity in advertising generates activity and results quickly. Ads can be hung on trees or in rural setting too. Idea cellular has been branding dhabas on the Delhi-Agra and Delhi-Chandigarh highways and allowing passerby to charge their mobile phones via charging outlets. The brand has also imprinted its logo on articles such as diaries, bags, coffee mugs, cutlery, trolleys and key-chains. Besides this logic is that the consumers reach a point, where they get tired of regular every day advertising, something that’s cliché and predictable.

Conventional media starts getting on their nerves. Again, expect mirrors in market places where people can catch their reflection..... courtesy Asahi mirrors. These efforts come at a soft price, but add a lot of life and fizz to the brand. Ultimately all of advertising and brand building is about passion and it should fall in unique ways and it can be shown in the following cases:

Kit Kat “ The Laugh-o-meter”

Increasingly, advertisers are looking for alternate ways to create saliency for their brands apart from the regular 30 second television commercials they

put on air. One clear reason for this is the increasing fragmentation of the audience and with that the compounding challenges of getting the brand target audience to notice your brand. This is why there is a perpetual quest for platforms that will not augment the brand communication but be in synergy with the brand essence.

They were sure that most of the people watch the programme-The Great Indian Laughter Challenge. There were comedians, judges and the audience who also gives its judgment. Depending on how successful the participants have been in tickling the funny bone, the audience evaluates the laughter quotient of the participants on a laughter meter named as Laugh- o-meter.

Kit Kat appropriates the laugh-o-meter properly. And when the winner is announced, the happy moment is captured with Kitkat's tag line, ' Happy ho ja' on screen. Thus, in the process, making Kitkat the indication of good times. Most importantly, the brand integration happens within the programming content when the audience attention is focused on the screen.

Hence, the branding of Laugh-o-meter on laughter challenge on STAR One looked the most appropriate forum to reinforce the ' Happy ho ja' proposition with Kitkat and that too in the most conducive environment, the Laughter Challenge. Kitkat was associated with ' moments to cherish' in the programme.

Secondly, there was a complete value for money for the client through the integration. Introducing Kitkat at an integral moment in the programme, the exposure time for the brand totals to 1500 seconds, only on the original

episode. The programme got repeated four times in a week on STAR One and each time Kitkat enjoyed additional exposure.

If they had to advertise during the commercial break of The Great Indian Laughter Challenge show, they would have managed, as sponsors, just about 60-secs of airtime and the cost of one 10-second spoof for the show is Rs 1. 2 lakh. If we calculate money for the exposure time for 1, 500 seconds, the cost would be exorbitant.

Therefore, Kitkat in The Great Indian Laughter Challenge not only reinforces the brand proposition in the perfect environment but also cost effective.

Airtel Plays Street Smart

A busy crowd going about its daily business in a provincial town. Suddenly, someone on the mobile phone goes ... “ hallo aloo ka aloo ka ...is laaloo ka nahin aaloo ka daam kya hai... idhar ka bhav? Kya paav...yeh signal bakwaas hai.”

Now, someone else from the crowd begins to talk to his girlfriend about his marriage. Loud enough for others to hear. Another call the doctors for help. Then these people start to walk to an unspecified spot and make a circle.

When the group gets together, and each enacts its part, the chorus concludes the play with a song about the benefit of a having an Airtel mobile. This play was organized by Airtel in three rural towns situated close to hugli, lucknow and pune. Though VSNL is already popular with the rural elite, Airtel has exposed the weakness of the competitor and its benefit.

Art Of Placing Customer Thrill Over Product

Bajaj Auto test-marketed its pro-biking centre in Pune last year. Neoteric infomatique has launched Xplore, the first digital experience lounge in the country. It does not sell products but only lets consumer's experience product of its clients.

Hey, monster! Leave the kids alone

Creating a connect between Pepsodent and hygiene among kids, Mudra's Kidstuff Promo & Events held a school-contact programme for the Hindustan Lever's toothpaste brand, Pepsodent. Germs were referred to as bhoot (monster). The promo was organized across 25 cities and 1565 school in the country.

Eras of washing powder advertisements

Now, seeing how the washing powder advertising has changed from the previous to the current period. A signal of washing powder ads was flashed when the Surf Lalitaji campaign was started and it was too famous. It built a real, middle-class housewife figure, who was price sensitive but also conscious of value for money when it came to choosing Surf over Nirma. Nirma at that time was giving a simple ad with the symbol of the girl, who is happy with her colorful & neat dress. But in the Surf campaign, Lalitaji was street smart, as she understood the difference between "buying cheap" and "buying value". Lalitaji was perhaps India's first advertising, created icon reflecting the real consumer.

Real emotions soon became the stock-in-trade. Rin built on envy as a real human emotion with “ Bhala uski kameez mere kameez se safed kaise?” theme which connected with consumers in the early 1980s to create an iconic brand. Wheel detergent built on this theme by re-positioning Nirma and its type as destroyers with “ door ho ja meri najaron se; mien ne maangi safai aur tu ne di haathon ki jalan!” Then Nirma had come with jingle advertising, which creates a boom in sale of the product. Surf also started to give its product a different name, Surf excel, with a new punch line “ Surf excel hain na”. A range of new products in this category was present in the market like Sasa, Ghadi, Eco-friendly Ariel etc. but because of lack of competitive advertising they failed to succeed in the market.

Introduction of Tide in the advertising market created a fear for all other detergents. Nirma had also renewed its advertising but with the same jingle. Surf tried to compare its product with Tide but failed. Tide had used ‘ Shekhar Suman’ for endorsing because of his popularity at that time because of his TV show ‘ Movers and Shakers’ which had high TRP ratings at that time. The campaign of ‘ door to door challenge’ proved successful.

Thereafter Surf Excel used the Indian psyche in the ads with punch lines ‘ sirf do bucket paani’, ‘ paani ki bachat’, etc. Tide then used the interactive medium of film, e. g. Baghban, Prem (south Indian film), etc.

Now Surf excel and Rin are using kids in their advertising, and are also successful. Tide is using bets formula in the advertising. These modes are gaining popularity because of the flexibility & innovation aspects.