

Surrogate marketing (advertising)

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



The makers of these brands were banned to advertise and they resorted to surrogate advertising. It is a sort of advertising where a cover product is promoted in order to promote the actual product that is banned. Surrogate marketing refers to intentionally utilizing a company, person or object to help convey the message of another party. The term has both positive and negative connotations.

On the positive side, surrogate marketing is somewhat akin to grassroots or viral marketing in which a marketing organization may actively recruit others to help spread the message or can also be likened to hiring a manufacturer's representative to sell your product. However, it is the negative side that seems to have drawn the most attention. A surrogate advertising campaign can be used to indirectly promote products or services deemed by some groups as being unhealthy, unethical, and immoral or, possibly, illegal through activities that are viewed as acceptable forms of promotion.

For instance, in some parts of the world where regulation exists that may ban promoting alcohol and tobacco, firms promote these brands by tying the brand names to more acceptable products. For instance, the same brand name used for selling cigarettes may also be the same brand name on a juice product. In this way the customer is not only aware of the acceptably advertised brand but also understands the connection to the regulated product. Surrogate advertisements took off not long ago in the UK, where British housewives protested strongly against liquor advertisements "luring" away their husbands.

The liquor industry found a way around the ban: Surrogate advertisements for cocktail mixers, fruit juices and soda water using the brand names of the popular liquors. In India, ministry of health has banned the advertising of liquor and tobacco. But many liquor brands (like McDowell's whisky) initiated other products like sodas in the same name which are then advertised. Another instance of surrogate advertising is 'Four Square Bravery Awards' in the name of Four Square cigarettes.

Surrogate marketing is used in two contexts: the first is when a company " farms out" the entire marketing function and the group providing the service is called a " surrogate marketing department. " I don't believe this is the context for which you are looking. The second is what is happening in India with respect to the ban on tobacco and alcohol advertising. Companies in banned industries are introducing brand extensions with products that are legal to advertise with the same brand name as the banned product. One liquor company introduced apple juice with the same brand name as the liquor.

The idea is the companies can advertise freely the extension - thus keeping their banned-from-the-media products in the minds of the customers. So the apple juice, for instance, is the surrogate for the liquor in the ads. The companies also don't care much about the sales of the surrogate products - for instance, it seems that the apple juice isn't even readily available to buy throughout the company. This loophole that the tobacco and liquor companies are exploiting is upsetting the legislature because every apple

juice ad that reminds the consumers of the liquor is a slap in the lawmakers' faces.

But, they also don't quite know what to do about it! In general, surrogate marketing is when you promote one product or service in the hopes of selling another. Why you would want to do that varies. The best reason is that you aren't able to legally. But other reasons might be because the two products sell better together - for instance, you may make a product and it requires service - which you don't provide. You can market a service provider - the surrogate - who will only use your product.