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Changing Scenario of Indian Advertising and its Impact on Consumer Behavior

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Introduction

Advertisements are considered as an effective tool of marketing communication to build up a 'Voice of a Company' and its brands and are a means to establish a dialogue and relationship with the consumer. Advertisements not only provide information regarding the company and its brand but also influence the consumer to opt for a particular brand instead of the competitors. They are an important means of developing a liking towards the product and help in building customer loyalty towards it.

Advertisement plays a major and vital role in establishing effective communications. It is the primary communication vehicle in reaching consumers which is accompanied by other promotional tools like contests, special packages, direct selling, and public relations activities.

In both business-to-business and consumer promotions, the key to using advertising effectively is to see it as one of the spokes in the 'Wheel' of the promotional effort with the remaining 'Spokes' being the other components of the integrated marketing communication (IMC) approach.

The Indian Media and entertainment industry has witnessed a tremendous change in the past ten years. The advent of new technology and new media has proved as a boom to the advertising industry. Films have become an important platform for product placement. Blockbuster movies like 'Chennai Express', 'Ghajini', 'Shaadi Ke side effects', 'Queen' and many more have promoted various products like 'Nokia Lumia', 'Van Hussen', 'Samsung', 'Facebook'. In film advertisements helps the brand to appear in the story plot and can be done through visuals where the product, logo, or sign is shown; auditory where the product is mentioned and the third way where the product is used in the film. According to experts the in-film advertisements is catching up in India as media spend has increased from a mere Rs. 8 crore to Rs72 Crore per annum within a decade. According to Stacy Vollmer, product placement is intentional and compensated inclusion of a product or a service (product, package, logo, trademark, verbal mentioning or an advertisement of a product) in an entertainment production. The purpose is to achieve prominent audience exposure, visibility, attention and interest; increasing brand awareness; increasing consumer memory and recall. It creates instant recognition in the media channel, the place of purchase and helps in changing consumer's attitudes and overall valuation of the brand leading to the change in audience purchase behavior and creating favorable purchase condition for the product.

It has been observed that not only product placement is done in films; films too are promoted through product advertisements. There are many films that are promoted through product advertisement. For example '2 States' is being promoted by 'Sunsilk' and 'Shaadi.Com'. Bhoothnath is using 'WeChat' as a promotional tool. Earlier 'Ragini MMS' was promoted by 'WeChat' and 'Manforce Condoms'.

Films are also promoted through television serials. According to experts Television generate maximum mileage to the films makers to reach millions of target audience geographically and demographically. Film stars promote their movies through reality shows, daily soaps, music shows, chat shows etc. While promoting 'Ek thi Dayaaan', film producer Ekta Kapoor in collaboration with Life Ok channel produced a series 'Ek Thi Naayaka' based on paranormal forces. The star caste of the movie did cameo in the serials as well. For promoting 'Ragini MMS' the producers started a reality short TV series on MTV. The main reason for using television as medium of promotion is that it reaches a wide audience in minimum time.

Another emerging trend in advertising is through online mediums which has become popular. It is considered to be inexpensive than the traditional forms of advertisement. Printed materials like brochures, flyers, pamphlets, hoardings etc are replaced by – newsletters, online flyers, fan pages, pop-ups etc. Online advertising includes display advertising, affiliate marketing, search engine marketing (SEM) and mobile advertising. These modes of advertisement has helped marketers to explore new marketing opportunities as well as study the behavioral pattern of the consumers. Today marketers prefer to advertise on social networking sites as it is fast and can reach both the existing and potential customers. The new media has opened ways for two-way flow of information between the clients and its customers. The marketers can get instant feedback about their products and services. The customers can get detailed information about the things they want to by just a click of the mouse. From marketers point of view these online sites provide a platform to determine consumer's attitude, brand perception and purchasing ways. The internet advertisement has moved a step ahead with the advent of 2 G and 3 G connections. Mobile advertising is generally carried out via text messages and various mobile applications. The mobile advertisement is proving to be effective since the Smartphone's, androids apps remain with the consumer throughout. The anytime, anywhere delivery of message is possible through mobile advertisements.

Mobile Applications and Gaming have

also become an important source of advertisements. Close-up has recently developed mobile gaming application to check the compatibility test among couples. Close-up has always positioned itself as a product for youths. Most of the young mass are equipped with Smartphone and android applications in their mobile phones this strategy will help them to capture the young minds. The marketing companies like Olx, Flipkart have designed various mobile apps like Olx.in and flipkart.in which the mobile users can download and can shop through their mobile phones. The most recent advertisement of OLX focuses on women consumers who can sell through the cell phones and emphasis that they should use the mobile phones as 'Sell -phone' instead of 'Cell phone'. Mr. Amarjit Singh Batra, CEO, OLX India opines that this app advertisements has helped them in targeting the female consumers who use this app and sell their old households. The feedback they receive from the women consumers in indeed appreciating as they can post their experiences through the apps, he further added.

According to Shriram Ayer, Creative Director, Love Lintas India, the ad focuses on female audiences who are important decision makers in the family and can better understand the needs of the family members. So they have used the strategy to attract females specially the homemaker who are not earning and depends on the male members for their financial support. This message has helped them to take their own decisions, become independent and feel empowered.

Marketers are attracting their target market by sponsoring events, programs, and shows etc which are liked by these audiences. Sponsorship can be regarded as the provision of assistance either financial or in kind to an activity by a commercial organization for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives. Sponsorships not only enhance the image and shape customers attitudes but have proved to be the driving force behind increasing sales. Positive publicity and higher visibility of the firm is possible through sponsorship. Brands like 'Cadbury', 'Idea', 'Filmfare', 'Pepsi' have been sponsoring programs like 'Cadbury Bournvita Quiz Contest', 'Idea film fare awards', 'Pepsi Cricket tournaments' etc which

are targeted to different consumer segments. This sponsorship helps marketers to reach a large target segment who can be the potential consumers of the product.

The content of advertisement has also changed. Today, the creative writers are focusing on important issues in advertisements. In order to create awareness about the importance of casting vote among youths, Hero motors has created a new campaign "Heor Ek Ride Desh Ke Naam", "Hero Rock The Vote" which emphasis that all youths should caste their votes after carefully judging the candidate rather than on regional basis. Dabur Amla focuses on the importance of child education and in their advertisement the jingle used is in educational format. Stayfree Secure in the advertisement tells about the symptoms of Anemia and lays stress on taking care of the girl child during her menstruation cycle.

The influence of advertising can be studied through the consumer behavior (Ajzen 2002). According to Smith et al, 2002 consumer buying behavior is mostly influenced by the liking and disliking of consumers towards the advertisement of the product advertised. The consumer behavior towards a product without any assessment of the quality is dependent on the advertisement of the product, Gorn opines.

However, according to some experts advertising has negative impact also. Schudson in 1984 said that advertising has strong potential on changing the social values as well as influencing our cultural values also. According to Goldberg and Gom, advertising may lead a consumer to prefer material objects over more morally and social oriented alternative; it may potentially increase conflict and lead to an unhappier and more disappointed person of the society.

Barbara J.P in the Journal of Business Ethics had written an article on "In defense of Advertising: A social perspective" opines that the major aim of advertising is to give something new, creative and useful to get long term benefits of brand loyalty and image building of the product and company by establishing an emotional relationship and persuasion for buying that product. Advertising affects the beliefs and collective attitudes of the consumers with respect to the buying behavior,

Barber further adds,

Conclusion

Advertising as a marketing tool is used to create awareness about the product and services. It not only gives information regarding the product attributes rather helps in shaping the consumer behavior.

It is assumed by advertisers that advertising is a powerful medium and what is said ' gets through and strongly achieves the intended and persuasive objective as ' the early bullet or "hypodermic needle" models of communication which has given rise to the earliest concept of communication effect,' who says, what to whom through which medium with what effect'.

Advertisements today are not confined to the traditional forms that included print advertisement in newspapers, magazines, electronic advertisements in radio, television, pamphlets distribution and direct marketing. Marketers and advertisers are trying to explore new mediums of advertisements so that they can reach the target audience with maximum effectively. In this era of information age where the consumer is well informed about its needs and has wide range of choices of products and brands, the marketers are leaving no scope to reach the consumer. They are finding new ways to reach the customer and make him aware about the company, its products and services and finally create the brand identity.

According to Hussiny et al, no company can become a market leader unless they invest in promotional purposes. Romaniuk and Sharp have said that the major impact of advertising is on buying behavior; however this impact about brand is changed and strengthened frequently by people's memories. Memories about the brand consist of those associations that are related to brand name in consumer mind. These brand cognitions influence consideration, evaluation and finally purchase. Thus when a consumer is exposed to various messages through various media, they directly or indirectly form an association with the brand attributes by recalling the brand's data about the brand is retrieved again as and when required, thus enabling the consumer to form a brand association.

Advertising not only helps in building brand image of the product and helps in

increasing the market share which is the main aim of the marketer. The advertisers should keep in mind that the quality of advertisement should be good and impressive. Over exaggeration and glamour does not impress the consumer rather the content and way of presentation attracts the attention of the consumer.

Marketers today are leaving no room for the consumer to escape from the information about the product and its attributes. They are developing new and modern methods to reach the target audience. Their primary aim is not only to reach them but also to get instant feedback and reaction which has become possible through these modern methods. These methods are highly interactive and user friendly which are easily understood by a layman. Advertisers are using both Above the Line and Below the Line advertising methods and developed Through the Line advertising methods which are visible, highly interactive and gives instant feedback, thus help them to reconsider their strategy and change them as per the needs of their target audience and consumer.

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