

ART OF ADVERTISING IS INFOTAINMENT

Pooja Jain

Department of Fine Arts, Manipal University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Received: 21 Jan 2018

Accepted: 29 Jan 2018

Published: 12 Feb 2018

ABSTRACT

When it comes to entertainment, it's a must have in Advertising. Any ad for that matter cannot be convincing if it only provides information. The information has to be manipulated in a way to make it appealing and entertaining. And this is why, we say Art of Advertising is all about infotainment. Advertising being a primary form of communication is also meant to sell and earn profit by persuading the consumers, and in order to add the little magic to persuade the consumers, they need to be entertained in a manner that the ad is being retained and registered in the minds for a long duration. From Mazaa's positioning of the thirst for Aam (mango) to Froth's youth connect, in terms of positioning each brand has struck a different note in recent years. One could view it as communication taking a mature form. Infotainment today is must, considering how quickly consumers are adapting to it and tend to develop a clean distinguished identity for any brand. Since the time advertising evolved came competition, and with competition comes the need to develop and carve a niche for your product which further gives birth to creativity. Creativity is the soul of entertainment and one has to be in constant touch with the invading newer ways to entice the audience. Today in this youth centric space, simple communication with a piece of information is not so cool. It is human nature to get enthralled with creativity, and this fascination of audience is what advertisers thrive for. Most of the times, Indian ads are 'over the top' and are not very realistic but the fact of the matter is that they stick in your brain. Thus, the brand recall based on the advertisements is very high. Entertainment is bliss if carried in a right manner and now this is a challenge for advertisers to make it blend well with apt information.

KEYWORDS: *Entertainment, Persuading, Communication, Niche, Creativity, Blend*

INTRODUCTION

The term infotainment came into inception as a result of a reflection of the increasingly intertwined connections between information and entertainment through advertisements. It refers to information that assimilates brand communications within the content of entertainment products. The intermingling of advertising with the entertainment quotient has created a slue of newly coined trends and consumer psychology. The concept of Advertainment is mainly due to the increasing drifts in advertising, escalating advertising economy, and the declining effectiveness of traditional advertising. Today the consumers are significantly exposed to varied commercial messages, although they are consistently trying to find alternate options to get rid of them. The influence of new technological advances is giving consumers more control over how they consume entertainment, and making it increasingly easy for them to avoid commercial messages. Although Advertainment is gaining popularity, it is not new and has a long history behind.

Advertisers have been blending their commercial ideas with the entertainment factor to gain consumer acceptance towards their products. Audiences now days often pay more attention to a humorous commercial than a factual or serious

one, opening them up to be influenced. The key to funny advertising is assuring the humor is appropriate to both product and customer. The best products to sell using humor tend to be those that consumers have to think the least about. Humor in advertising tends to improve brand recognition. Examination of broadcast and print advertising suggests that humor is a widely accepted form of commercial appeal. It is rightfully believed that humor improves advertising effectiveness. Humor's influence on message attention and comprehension is its role in shaping the listener's "reception environment" during advertising exposure. Humor may increase source liking and decrease skeptical towards the product.

- One of the most important things to keep in mind is relevance to the product.
- Another point to consider when using humor in advertising is that different things are funny to different people. The target market must always be considered.

Due to the fact that many marketers are rather saturated today, much of the advertising aims at the consumer's emotional attention than at presenting the features or advantages of a product. The entertainment factor is one such strategy with which an advertiser can evoke positive feelings. These positive feelings can potentially lead to cognitive process that motivates the recipient to buy a certain product. Today advertising is all about insightful, clutter bursting, out of the box, cutting through stuff designed to impact the consumer with a unique voice, presence, positioning statement and product position. This demands creativity that needs to resonate with the new age target base, that is young, irreverent, promiscuous sharp, demanding, low on patience and very high on the entertainment quotient. Advertising has to be hot and heavy not just cozy & cute. Never in the history of communications has advertising been called upon to play such a critical & insane role. This age of fierce competition and product creativity is the big differentiator alone that can take you to the Promised Land. There has to be an irrepressible sense of fun, excitement, audacity, mischief and irreverence in the ads with a one point programmed- TO SELL.

Advertisers now need to slipstream. Slipstreaming by definition means a vacuum of air created behind a fast moving vehicle. Advertisers should keep a lookout to top stories, essentially those that are very talked about and even gossiped about, thus entertaining everyone and making the brand popular and get it noticed above the regular advertising clutter. This is what has always been the strategy of brands like AMUL.



Figure 1: Popular Infotainment Ad Series by AMUL

Using typical themes, or working on with one liners like **The Economic Times** that link to your brand, to an event or to your story always help. It's like the shot in an arm, especially for a brand that needs to advertise regularly, but

has nothing new to sell to consumers. This is the easiest, quickest, cheapest way to beat the competition and the media clutter, allowing the brand to entertain to the core and draw the attention of the consumers properly.

In a layman's words, creativity can be understood as "Approaching the problems and identifying solutions for them in a different way." It is human nature to get enthralled by creativity and this fascination of an audience is what all advertisers strive for. Harnessing the immense pull of creativity can be the secret mantra of successful advertising. Creativity is a quality possessed by ad makers that enables them to generate novel approaches, generally reflected in new and improved solutions to problems. Creative advertisement is the order of the day. Today it is a necessity for existence rather than serving as a tool to give a competitive edge. This situation is developed because of fierce competition, increasing awareness among the audience and more choice available to the audience. Today's audiences are better informed. Gone are the days when customers forcefully watched uninteresting advertisements. A powerful tool to catch the eye of the audience and turn them to listen to the advertisers is creativity. Creative ads have forced the copywriters to turn to creativity to attract and interest the audience. This is easier said than done, because the audience is being bombarded with loud ad attractive messages from all directions. When we choose a particular brand it has more to do with sub conscious than the conscious. Consumers develop their own perception on the basis of advertising that gives an edge to the brands and the brand perception that influences purchase decisions. Thus, one has to be creative enough and yet simple & challenging.

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The entertainment factor used by the marketers to rope in an effective advertising campaign dates back to the use of branded products in so called motion pictures. It reflected a complaisant bonding between a media maker and a manufacturer, in which on-screen exposure of a product, off-screen endorsement by an actor, or a combination of those were traded for paid advertising and unpaid promotions by the manufacturer. These tie-in promotions resulted in multiple players stepping into the film making and distribution industry. In-theatre exposure for products was created to captivate audience and the chance for the product to be linked with eminent actors on- and off-screen. The marketing option to use footage or publicity stills from the movie in the company's promotional drive was also initiated.

INFOTAINMENT OBJECTIVES

As Infotainment gains mass acceptance, it is being treated less as a tactical tool and is increasingly integrated with other communications. Infotainment serves as the backbone of a public relations campaign, to generate an effective word of mouth or media coverage. It is also considered fruitful to communicate social messages and to educate audiences by introducing solutions to the existing social concerns and imbibing them to adopt preventive measures with open minded acceptance. Consumers today strive for the 'change' and Infotainment is quickly gaining ground as a strategy for that social change. Infotainment has grown mainly due to the increasing advertising clutter, escalating overall advertising costs, and the reduced effectiveness of traditional advertising messages. Consumers are exponentially open to commercial messages, but at the same time they are hesitant to witness it because of their preconceived notions. The impact of new technological advances is giving consumers more control over how they consume infotainment, and making it increasingly easy for them to avoid commercial messages which they earlier felt hesitant of.

Advertising till date has been known as a medium to provide information about the products desired or to be bought or as a message delivery medium. An obvious reason for advertising is simply informing people of the existence of products they might be interested in buying. No one will buy something that they don't know exists, no doubt about that. When more people know about a product, more of it will be sold. Most people embrace advertising as a welcome addition to their lives. However, advertising is obviously not a source of objective information. Advertising goes much further than being a limited form of information. The creativity in Indian advertising is one of the best across the globe. Most of the times, Indian ads are 'over the top' and not very realistic (fictional) but they still manage to stick to our brains. Thus the brand recall based on these advertisements is very high.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENTERTAINMENT

Establishment of Brand Image

Simply stated, your brand is how people feel towards and identify with it. The brand image is every customer's interaction with the company that creates an impression. Brand Image should communicate the difference between you and the competition-your reason for being. To stand out of the crowd, the advertising strategies have to be different. This is the prime reason ads are becoming more and more humorous and entertaining these days. Humor or perhaps anything light that takes our attention stays in the mind for longer time. Among a day full of tension when we see an ad that makes us smile, it grabs attention and that is where the brand name has done its work. This can be a joke, a celebrity, an emotion or an idea anything. People engaged in branding seek to develop or align the expectations behind the brand experience creating the impression that a brand associated with the product or service has certain qualities or characteristics that makes it special or unique. It is simply that the brand image that reflects the purchasing power of an individual, which is why the 'Infotainment' factor has become a bare necessity for any brand today.

Local Ads Going Global

Imagine yourself sitting, relaxing, watching TV in a hotel in Europe or any other country. Suddenly what catches to the corner of your eye on TV is one of the most popular faces of Bollywood or famous characters doing some tricks on screen, surely that can be the Alpenliebe ad with bubbly Kajol and the monkey (Image 3.1)

To set the tone on fire, Indian Ads are now being used dispassionately to lure International viewers to purchase products or services. Popularity, creativity and relevance are the three basic elements of an ad to earn accolades abroad and without a say Indian ads possess the elements. Definitely as India becomes the upcoming hub for advertising with some truly path breaking ad campaigns coming out of this country over the years, it is believed it's not just the creativity that creates demand to use these ads across geographies, but the efficacy of those ads as the clients understands it as the foremost strength.



Figure 2: A TVC of Alpenliebe

Consumer Behavior

Advertising in India has changed tremendously after the 90's. Today the Indian consumer is aware in every sense. Indian Advertisers have left no one unturned when it comes to brand strategy. On the contrary Indian consumers are also open to anything new and fresh that tends to explore the different facets of human emotions.

METHODOLOGY

This study provides new parameters of conceptual understanding on the level of entertainment in an ad relating to its attractiveness and persuasiveness in increasing intentions to purchase a specific product or perceiving an idea. For the said propose an individual-specific measure was used to identify whether the viewer associates the entertainment experienced in the ad with the brand. An Inductive & Qualitative research approach was adopted. To assess the impact of Advertisements as Infotainment on adolescents & youth and to study the ratio of information and entertainment prevalent in Indian advertisements; a Survey was conducted on twenty five Indian adolescents of age 13-19 and twenty five Indian youth of age group 20-28. For the survey, they were asked to answer the questionnaires related to earlier discussed factors of Infotainment in Indian advertisements. The survey also demonstrated heightened "awareness of the creative community as to its importance in shaping attitudes and behavior".

ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATIONS

Advertising has played a significant role in all aspects of life and has influenced all age groups, especially it has cast its magical effects on adolescence and youth. It is believed that the kids and youth tend to be more receptive towards the changing scenario of advertising and its changing trends. These human ages signify independence and self-identity wherein external appearance tends to increase in importance and desires for trying new things are aroused. The following interpretation and analysis of the survey came out.

Does an Advertisements Appeal without Entertainment?

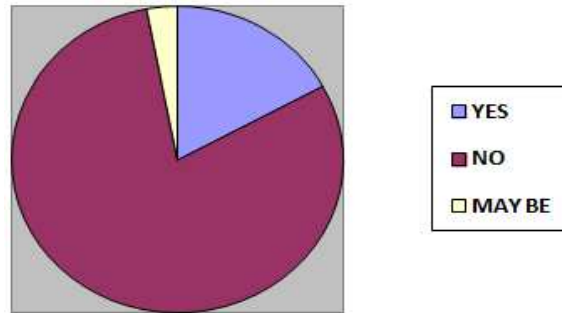


Figure 3: Advertisements without Entertainment

Does Infotainment Advertising Enhance Mass Acceptance and Promotes Purchase Behaviour?

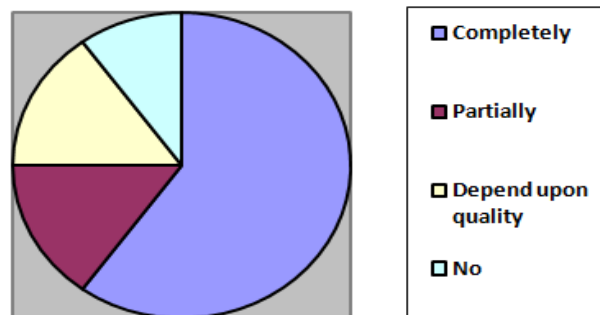


Figure 4: Advertisements to Mass Acceptance & Increasing Sales

Do you Feel that in Some Indian Advertisements Core Information is Lost Behind Entertainment?

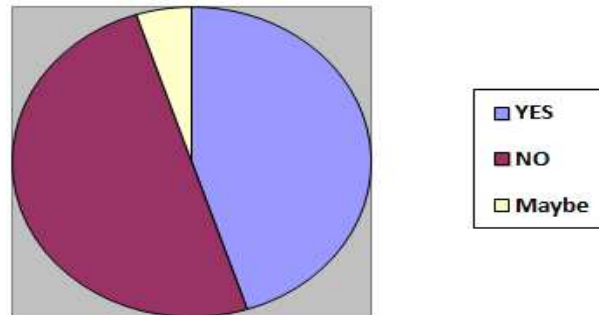


Figure 5: Effectiveness of Message Delivery in Indian Advertisements

Does Entertainment in Indian Advertisement Violate Public Standards?

Advertisements have significant influence on people's behavior, so the advertiser should be careful not to depict unsafe or dangerous practices. For example, the TVC of a soft drink shows a popular Bollywood celebrity making tough stunts showing that after drinking this soft drink you get the energy to do the unbelievable stunts without any safety measures. All these are accountable for violation of public standards.

To which 78% of the respondents are of the opinion that some Indian advertisements do violate public standards.

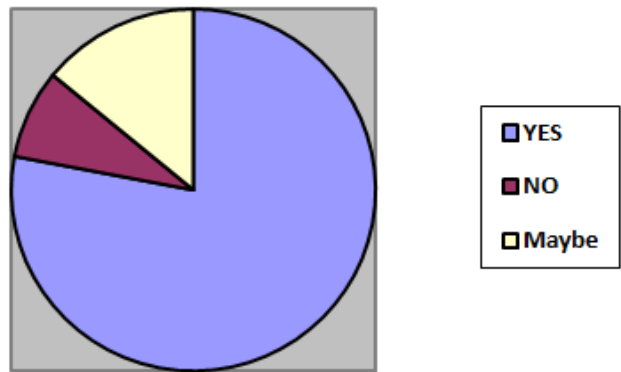


Figure 6: Violation of Public Standard

Does the Information Provided in the Advertisement Reliable?

It is evident that advertisements provide information about the product or service. But the major question is how far is it reliable? Of the respondents, a majority of 64% said that to a greater extent the product information given in the TV advertisement was reliable.

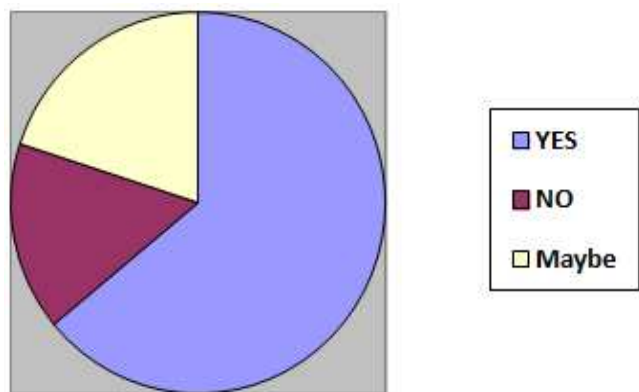


Figure 7: Advertisements Delivering Reliable Information

Which of the Indian Advertising you find Most Influencing as Infotainment?

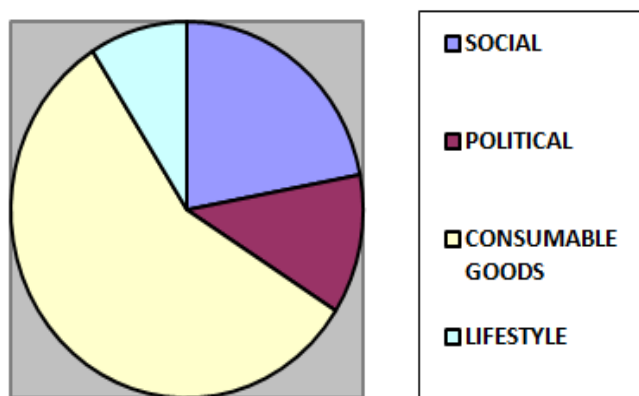


Figure 8: Most Influential Advertisements as Infotainment

RESULTS

Among our findings is that infotainment factor in Advertising lays a significant impact on the consumer purchase intentions directly through a strong persuasion mechanism and indirectly by receptive viewing interest through an advertisement's attractiveness. Thus the more entertainment in the ad, the more receptive it will be for information and for longer retention.

CONCLUSIONS

In today's challenging market economy, advertising has become a vital element of the modern society. Each company or brand is battling for consumer's mind space. It can be well concluded that advertising is invariably adapting to more and more ways of entertainment keeping in mind, the consumer behavior, the need to develop a niche for a brand that can be different from the competitors. The growth of Infotainment in advertising has led to much speculation and uncertainty over the future of the industry. It has gradually become such a popular tool that there is now talk about reverse strategy: brands have decided to make their debut in an entertainment vehicle and then be introduced to the real world. Therefore Entertainment and Information of the advertising age are not just intersecting, they have fused. Today advertisements are being watched with curiosity; people discuss them and don't mind watching them again and again. It's been over a decade, but no one has ever forgotten that beautiful girl who came dancing in the field eating a Dairy Milk when his boyfriend won the match, Lalita Ji, Fido Dido of 7 UP, Zoo Zoos of Vodafone et something never die and that's the magic of Infotainment.

REFERENCES

1. S. Baker, "Five Baselines for Justification in Persuasion," Manas Publication, New Delhi: 1999.
2. Berg F. Pres, "The History and Development of Advertising," Dobleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, NY: 1980.
3. Chaudhuri Arun, "Indian Advertising: 1780-1950," Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Limited, New Delhi: 2007.
4. Vasanthi Ajay, Perception of Indian Consumers towards Indian Advertisements, *IMPACT: International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature (IMPACT: IJRHAL)*, Volume 2, Issue 2, February 2014, pp. 89-114
5. Dr. G.M. Rege, "Advertising Art and Ideas," Career Polytechnic, Pune: 1973.
6. Dyer Gillian, "Advertising as Communication," Methuen & Co. Ltd, London: 2003.
7. Gupta Om, "Advertising in India – trends and Impact," Kalpaz Publications, Delhi: 2005.
8. Neha Mendjoge Katre, Kriti Srivastava, Siddhesh Owalekar, Soham Patel & Advait Marathe, Introduction to Online Advertisement and its Business Processes, *International Journal of Business and General Management (IJBGM)*, Volume 4, Issue 6, October-November 2015, pp. 57-62
9. S.S. Kaptan, "Advertising New Concepts," Sarup & Sons, New Delhi: 2002.