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DIVYA DIXIT

Senior VP and Head Marketing | ALTBalaji

What's the most interesting thing you've done outside of work in the last 12 months?

My daughter and I are both dog lovers, and we recently got associated with an animal protection centre for a two-month project. I was really appalled and saddened to see the way we treat animals; many people abandon their pets on the roads. Do we even think that this earth belongs equally to humans and animals? We just take away their habitats, sustenance and then expose them to such merciless behaviour... the animal protection program is my true calling, once I hang up my boots at the workplace.

Name a brand marketing executive or corporate personality - Indian or international - you admire. And tell us what about her/him is admirable.

I admire Elon Musk for his persona as a tech entrepreneur and his perseverance to stand against the odds. I love the way he can think ahead of time and come with up lateral solutions to impending issues. Tesla, his brainchild, is an example of his understanding of the global fuel crunch; it's an innovation that recently outsold Mercedes in US. His SpaceX program has gained worldwide attention for providing cheap transportation for the colonisation of Mars.

If your brand were an animal, what would it be - and why?

I am a Leo by birth and that makes me a lion - courageous, protective of loved ones and proud. On the flip side, this pride can cost us opportunities at times.

What was the biggest challenge you and your team faced in the last 6-12 months - and what did you learn from it?

It's been a steep learning curve. As a popular and evolving entertainment platform, the challenges have been quite a few. In the competitive OTT segment, where large international players are rallying with huge resource banks at their disposal, we are garnering a fair share of noise with much more constrained resources.

The trick is to take stock of the market scenario and competitive strategies, and to then adjust the push and pull of one's marketing accordingly, to ensure maximum ROI. The other challenge marketers face is an uncertainty about content consumption... while I strongly believe we have the best original Hindi content available on digital, the predictions on consumer consumption patterns keep evolving - that can be quite challenging.

Which outside forces or trends impact consumer behaviour in your category most? Give an example.

Pricing, unique concepts, content library, personal intent, user experience, and cashback offers are standard forces that impact this category. I strongly believe that the innovations that are currently trending, like voice search, AR/VR technology and interactive episodes (where a viewer can choose the path of the narrative), will add a certain element of choice. Ultimately, it's unique stories with great narratives that drive content/entertainment platforms.

Marketers across segments have fetishised the millennial. But hand on heart, which demographic will drive growth for your brand over the next 12 months?

Millennial, actually, is a misleading term. Millennials are those born between 1981 to the mid-1990s, on the cusp of the inception of the technology era. Gen Z is the era after 1997, when the population got exposed to mobile phones, laptops and the internet. So actually, it's the age group of 18-35 years (a combination of millennials and Gen Z) that comprises the largest growth drivers for us. It's a combination of natives and opt-overs.

Nowadays brands get trolled all too frequently on social media. As a marketer, have your views on trolling changed in the last couple of years?

Social media has been a spectacular force for brands, by allowing them to reach out to consumers directly. However, there is no denying that social media platforms are sometimes misutilised... and these conversations, if not managed well, can lead to inconsequential debates and attacks.

If you could advertise on only one medium for the next 6 months, what would that be - and why?

Given the pace at which the digital space is growing, with no signs of slowdown, it will be my first choice. It's where most of our target audience is and it's where I can measure the immediate returns on investment - be it performance or branding opportunities. Of late, many digital platforms are willing to co-partner and strategise on consumer reach and acquisition as well.

What do agency partners grumble about most, today?

When I started my career, creative and media partners had a free hand to experiment and recommend things to the client. Today, in the era of information overload, clients have access to multiple information channels, from social media listening to direct performance-oriented results. This leads to various conclusions at the client's end at the brief stage itself, and curtails the experiments that a creative or a media partner can do. This may lead to a bit of stagnation at the agency end.

Also, today, briefs need to be turned around much faster, so the client-agency relationship has to be strong, smart and aligned accordingly. ■