

afags! Reporter

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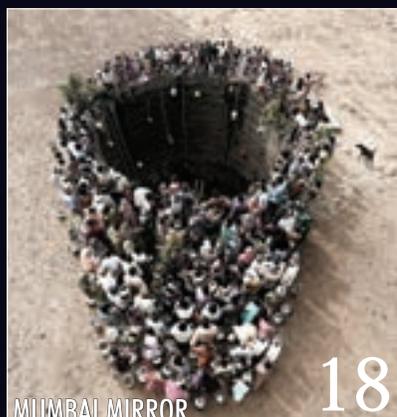


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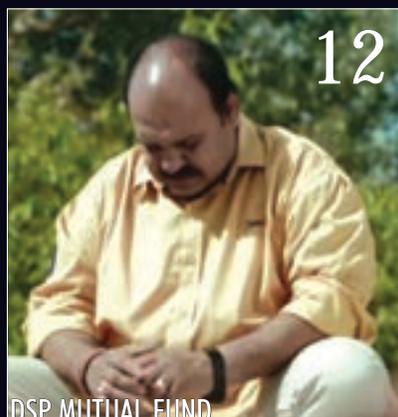


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“The future of content is, increasingly, a war for your attention, your time, your money, in that order...”

That’s a line from a 2017 TEDx talk by Sameer Nair, CEO of Applause Entertainment, a content and IP creation studio.

Nair started out wanting to become an astronaut, ended up studying hotel management, and somehow landed up in the Indian media and entertainment space, where he spent over three decades and created one of the deepest dents on the business, especially during his time at Star. Credited with making saas-bahu soaps a staple for viewers of Indian television and for bringing Kaun Banega Crorepati into our lives and vocabulary, Nair is now preoccupied with creating “premium drama” content for the modern day consumer. Premium cinematic television, as he calls it, is a genre of content that India, unlike the West, has skipped. That’s the gap he is looking to fill, online.

While Arianna Huffington routinely implores us, through her speeches and books, to sleep adequately and on time, Nair concedes that the content business is rivalled by not competing studios or platforms but “everything else”, like going to the theatre for a movie or to a restaurant for dinner, and... sleeping. One of the existential questions we face today is: Should I watch the next episode or go to bed? I recall author Chetan Bhagat saying something similar, years back, in the context of books and how they compete with anything that makes demands on a potential reader’s precious leisure time and finite attention.

For this interview, Nair welcomed our reporter into his spacious Pali Hill home at Bandra, Mumbai. Though he refused to wear a suit for the shoot - “I’ve never been a suit person, you know...” - he, with a lot of help from the missus, indulged the whims of our photographers, with a smile.

Pause the show you’re binge-ing, sit back and enjoy this detailed interview.

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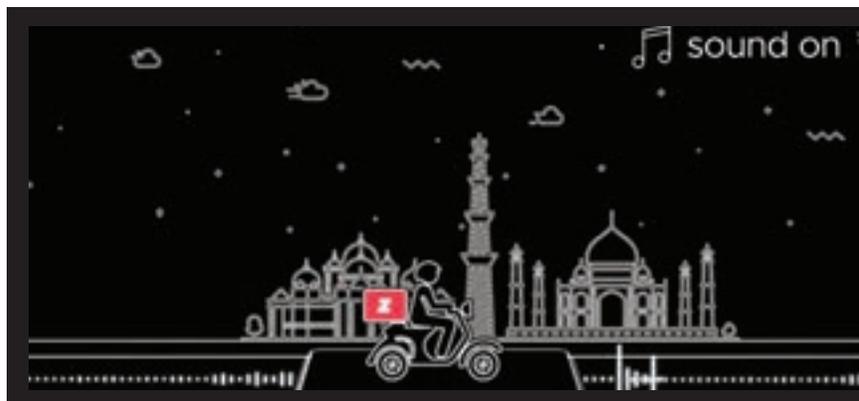
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OLX

Serving the Customers

Here's what Sapna Arora, CMO at OLX, is up to. By Aishwarya Ramesh

In a career spanning a little over two decades, Sapna Arora has worked with notable brands such as Procter & Gamble, Reckitt Benckiser and Nestle. She began her career with P&G in 1998 as an assistant brand manager before moving on to Reckitt Benckiser in 2001. In 2003, she joined the Toronto office of Nestle as the category manager. After a three-year stint at Nestle, she worked as the director of Matrix Atlantic Capital for almost eight years. In 2016, she had a brief six-month stint as VP of the Bennett Coleman Group, before rejoining Matrix Atlantic Capital. She worked with Matrix Atlantic for three years before joining OLX as CMO this March.

Talking about the online classifieds segment and the marketing challenges that plague it, Arora said over phone, "There's a certain stigma around pre-owned goods and the attempt is to normalise this concept." Recently, OLX released an ad campaign that focused on doing just that. All three ads in the campaign titled 'OLX Dekha Hai' have a casual tone and attempt to show consumers that the products they desire are not out of their reach.

Prior to this campaign, OLX released another one to mark its foray into offline stores — OLX CashMyCar. "We realised that our customers needed another touch point. Through offline outlets, we're helping (take) the online customers journey with us a little further. It's an extension of the classifieds for us and helps facilitate the consumer journey. The CashMyCar option is for consumers who are looking for convenience and help. It's an additional layer to our existing consumer offering," said Arora.

So, will this feature compete with offline used car dealers or with other online classifieds players, such as Quikr, click.in and so on? Arora replied, "I'd like to think of this as category expansion. A lot of car sales happen in the offline world and we're trying to expand that. Our platform facilitates organised players to come in and help customers with



the transactions involved in selling a car. The auto sector contributes to about 40 per cent of our total revenue. Other than mobiles, cars and auto is a strong focus area for us."

Arora mentioned that 60 per cent of users who list their cars on sale belong to Tier I cities and the

Smartphones and mobile phones are a favourite among the youth, whereas older audiences veer towards the furniture category.

remaining 40 per cent belong to Tier II and III cities. She also noted that about 62 per cent of the 20,000 cars listed on OLX everyday find buyers.

She believes that millennials will be the growth drivers in the coming years and are a core area of focus as well as strength. She made a reference to the latest campaign to make her point. The tone of these ads is intentionally casual, and the language is colloquial. "We've noticed that people upgrade

their phone, not because it's stopped working, but because they want the latest model — that's the prevalent category behaviour. We see younger people being able to upgrade their phones through OLX without spending a huge amount of money."

Arora said that OLX can help bring

products into your consideration that you normally might ignore because you thought you couldn't afford it. On the other hand, if there's something that you no longer require, then you can sell it on OLX as well. Among categories, smartphones and mobile phones are a favourite among younger audiences, whereas slightly older audiences veer towards the furniture category.

As a marketer, Arora pointed out



"I need to keep my ears to the ground and understand what the consumer wants as well as what's happening in the economy."
SAPNA ARORA

that one shouldn't consider anything as absolute or static — especially customer loyalty. "If I have an active user base on OLX, I cannot be pretentious and assume that they'll always be my consumers. A customer's needs or the environment he operates in could change. Our generation has seen companies that were highly valued five years ago. Now those companies are nowhere to be seen. The value proposition that those companies were offering has been completely wiped away. The thing about any product service company is that it needs to continuously evolve. I need to keep my ears to the ground and understand what the consumer wants as well as what's happening in general in the economy."

ARORA'S TOP 3 LEARNINGS AS A MARKETER

1. Be true to the consumer — don't think you know it all.
2. Be open to learning and understanding where things are going — this is very important in today's day and age.
3. You should always be happy doing what you're doing. The longer you stay in a career, the more jaded you become. This is something you should protect yourself against. ■

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MARUTI SUZUKI

Celebrating the Human Spirit

Find out what 'Be Limitless' is all about. By Ananya Pathak

For as long as one can remember, Maruti Suzuki has been wooing customers with the functional benefits that the brand offers. The brand made it a point to communicate on the same lines... be it 'Kitna deti hai' or 'Petrol khatam nahin hunda'. But this is an era when most brands are trying to weave in purpose into the fabric of their business. In such times, the automobile manufacturer's cause-heavy offering — #BeLimitless — naturally comes as no surprise.

The three-part video series for Maruti Suzuki Swift, each 180 seconds long, feature Olympic boxer Mary Kom, para-athlete Bhupender Sharma and corporate banker Vikas Dimri, who scaled Mt Everest.

Speaking about the campaign, Shashank Srivastava, executive director, sales and marketing, Maruti Suzuki India, shares that #BeLimitless honours those who are in the pursuit of new challenges and bettering themselves. "To increase brand salience and resonance with respect to performance, it is important to engage with the target group in a meaningful manner and drive conversations with them around performance. The celebrities



Impact, tells us that the brief for the campaign was to take the 'Be Limitless' philosophy beyond just the car. "We wanted to create content that would resonate with our target group more meaningfully. The ask was to build a higher brand repute by associating it with performance, but in an emotional way."

She further tells us that these three stories were selected because the brand felt they strongly connect with a consumer's 'nothing-is-impossible' attitude. "The limitless spirit celebrates individuals who keep challenging themselves. Mary Kom is someone who symbolises this attitude, and has gone beyond all conventional limits to make a name



"We are targeting someone who is active, social, tech-savvy, and challenges the status quo."

SHASHANK SRIVASTAVA

trap of claiming a 'purpose' too lofty. Purpose that is not built on brand values or product truths is simply fluff. And a waste of advertising money. "#Limitless or #BeLimitless is not connected to Maruti Suzuki or Swift. Neither has the brand done anything that can be seen as aspiring to be limitless nor has Swift stretched limits. If this 'purpose' had been backed by real action, like a Swift that could do 100 km per litre, then it would have been real and believable."

"For the public, the 'purpose' of Maruti Suzuki has been to always deliver better value. It had been brought alive by the 'Petrol khatam nahin hunda' campaign. Then later on by the 'Kitna deti hai?' campaign. #BeLimitless, backed without a real product offering, is likely to be the proverbial ship passing at night. Till then, if #BeLimitless is used, people will ascribe it to a brand such as The North Face or even Tesla. The stories of Mary Kom, Vikas Dimri and Bhupendra Sharma are inspiring and visually delightful, but it does nothing for the brand," Theeng adds.

Satbir Singh, founder and chief creative officer, Thinkstr, says, "It's good to see these inspiring stories brought alive. While Mary Kom is a household name, the others are everyday heroes that most of us haven't heard about. Purpose-based marketing should see seamless brand integration. One shouldn't have to think hard about the brand's role, at least in the communication. I feel in this case, it comes across as a bit of a title sponsor. It does, however, feel right for the mother brand Maruti, as the country's largest automaker, to have told these stories." ■

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The three-part video series, each 180 seconds long, feature Olympic boxer Mary Kom, para-athlete Bhupender Sharma and corporate banker Vikas Dimri, who scaled Mt Everest.

are in pursuit of new challenges to better themselves. They are as dynamic as brand Maruti Suzuki and fit perfectly with the relentless pursuit of high performance which the Swift stands for."

Maruti Suzuki's digital campaign, crafted by Dentsu Impact, a creative agency under the Dentsu Aegis Network, targets an audience that possesses a young, trendy and dynamic mindset. "We are targeting someone who is active, social, tech-savvy, but most importantly, is in the relentless pursuit of challenging the status quo," Srivastava specifies.

Anupama Ramaswamy, national creative director, Dentsu

for herself. And at age 36, she is not slowing down. But along with her story, we also wanted to bring the stories of ordinary men and women who never accept things as they are, and keep pushing past all limits to realise their dreams."

Under the 'Be Limitless' umbrella, during the Indian Super League, the brand ensured that hardcore football fans got a chance to watch the ISL Final live between Bengaluru FC and FC Goa without actually being present at the Mumbai stadium. The brand livestreamed selected ISL fans on the perimeter board in real-time and the fans enjoyed the match from the comfort of their homes.

The campaign, however, isn't the first time the brand — a subsidiary of Japanese car and motorcycle manufacturer Suzuki Motor Corporation — has taken up a cause-driven initiative. Inspired by the thought, 'If we know it's wrong, why do we still do it?', it released a series of eight videos three years ago to tackle commonly flouted traffic rules in the country as a part of its #SafeRoadsWithMaruti initiative.

EXPERTS SPEAK

Navin Theeng, executive creative director, Havas Gurgaon, says that just like potential Miss World contestants wanting to bring about world peace, many brands fall in the

HARI NALLAN

5 Creative Traps and How to Avoid Them



A lot of times, our frustration is the result of the traps we inadvertently get into.

The world of creativity is tremendously satisfying and yet, quite frustrating at times. A lot of times, our frustration is the result of the traps we inadvertently get into. Having spent 17 years in the field of design in various roles that allowed me to interface with several personas, here's the list of my 5 favourites:

THE NOVELTY TRAP

So, you're in the game of creating something new. Great! But are you always trying to do something new and in that attempt, losing sight of where you are actually headed? If yes, you may be headed towards the novelty trap. Creators very often get into this without keeping a tab on the actual problems they are solving. This calls for a lot of time, investment and powerful decisions followed by frustrations and threat of failure.

To avoid this trap, inculcate the habit of discipline, plan what you are going to accomplish, time your goals and run retrospect regularly to assess if you are headed in the right direction.

THE OVERTHINKING TRAP

So, you believe, 'God lies in the details'. Great! I believe it, too. But

are you getting into detail so much so that you've lost focus on the actual problem you are solving? Well, sometimes it's important to see things from the perspective of the people you are serving: Are they sensitive to the details you are sweating on or are they looking for something else?

Have you heard of the concept of 'Quick and Dirty'? To avoid getting into the overthinking trap, the 'Quick and Dirty' approach comes in handy. Through this, you kickstart something in the direction of your vision, but detail it just enough for others to take them further... details, leave it to the people, please!

THE INCREMENTALITY TRAP

This is in the opposite direction of #1 and excites people who like to improve things. To state the truth, everything in this world can be improved, but that's not the point. At some point (inflection point), which needs great vision to foresee, you need some breakthrough and improving things will suck you into the 'incrementality trap'. So, all you

do is, burn midnight oil solving the same problem insanely well, but you haven't realised that it is redundant in the current context.

To avoid this, visualise what happens when you actually make that incremental improvement and understand if the world is excited about it. If you are poor at visualising, prototyping your idea can come in handy to test waters.

THE "I KNOW MY MARKET" TRAP

Most times, those who disrupted established players are the ones who didn't know the market as well as the established ones did. If you are selling well, making an impact and have matured in your game, you're sure to fall in this trap without even realising it. You may have all the answers to tricky questions as your understanding of 'why' is deep rooted.

To avoid this trap, start answering 'why not'. Experimentation is the new game you are going to play and since most of those new players have nothing much to lose, they

are going to be really good in this game. In order to do the same, you need smaller groups within your organisation that are nimble and can experiment the way a start-up would.

THE EXPEDIENCY TRAP

So, your boss asked you to share a plan or an idea as of yesterday and you're trying hard to impress him. More often than not, you are going to fail because you have just sent something across without weighing it yourself. Let's say he is impressed at the first go, you're still going to revisit it many times because each of you are answerable to someone who is going to ask questions for which you haven't thought of any answers yet.

To avoid this trap, you will generate scenarios and alternatives, and more importantly, spend 'much needed time' that justifies your million-dollar investment. So, ask for more time... and don't over commit. Remember, it is important to impress those people who are going to buy that idea than the one sitting immediately above you. ■

Sometimes it's important to see things from the perspective of the people you are serving.

Hari Nallan is the founder and CEO of Think Design, which is part of the Havas Group.
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DSP MUTUAL FUND

'Dancing Uncle' is Back

In an ad for DSP Mutual Fund, **one can see him shaking a leg again.** By Aishwarya Ramesh

When Sanjeev Shrivastava stepped onto the stage to shake a leg at a wedding, little did he know that he was taking one giant step towards becoming famous. Popularly known as the 'Dancing Uncle', his moves left a lasting impact on audiences and advertisers alike. Though his five seconds of fame were back in 2018, Daboo uncle (as the new ad fondly refers to him as) has resurfaced.

In an ad for DSP Mutual Fund, one can see Daboo uncle shaking a leg again, but this time, one gets to zoom in and take a closer look at his life. One meets his family, his friends, and brother, who are all worried that he is acting out of character. Eventually, the audience comes to see that Daboo uncle starts dancing again when he figures out his finances with the help of DSP Mutual Fund's offering, DAAF.

Aditi Kothari Desai, director and head – sales and marketing, DSP Mutual Fund, said, "Dynamic Asset Allocation Funds are a good way for young investors to start investing for the long term and can be an equally strong addition to portfolios of experienced investors. While they invest in both equity & debt, they also dynamically



to blend a relatable YouTube personality – Dancing Uncle with a relevant investing proposition – DAAFs. The bizarre mockumentary format allowed us to play with characters and an 'is-it-really-true' underdog story, with Bhopal providing the right backdrop for the film to really come to life. Of course, there are many more campaign elements that will all come together to present DAAFs in a really offbeat manner."

DSP is not the first advertiser



easy for brands to create viral content with the right mix of media, PR and influencers, but at the end of the day, getting people to share this social content is difficult," she adds.

Varun Duggirala, co-founder and creative content head, The Glitch, a digital agency, agreed with Agarwal, saying that while it's been some time since Shrivastava's initial video went viral, he has been seen across television and other traditional media and could still be recognised. "It's an interesting case of leveraging

his popularity across all mediums, especially traditional. So while his virality was a while back, he still has enough recall value to generate interest in consumers. And it's great timing because if it had been six or so months more, it might not have as much impact as it is now," he said over e-mail.

"While we talk about riding the waves of consumer behaviour, a viral moment is the start of one such wave and leads to a cycle of everyone trying to get onto the bandwagon until that cycle dies out before the next viral sensation arises. This process has lasted over the ages, it just finds new mediums and methods to be reignited, but the essence is the same. I'd say anything we create is content. It doesn't have to be defined into a bucket/box, so keeping that in mind, any creative asset that consumers engage with is good content, which will hold on to attention spans even if it's long. That's the beauty of digital media. If leveraged right, it has no set template," he signed off. ■

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The ad sees Daboo uncle dancing again when he figures out his finances with the help of DSP Mutual Fund's offering, DAAF.

change the allocation between the two, to help people take advantage of changing market conditions. Our educational campaign, over the next few weeks, aims to talk to viewers about DAAFs in a really fun, youthful, unusual and modern way and we hope that our efforts would move the needle positively for this product category."

Abhik Sanyal, head - consumer marketing, DSP Mutual Fund, said, "Our DAAF video attempts

to use Daboo uncle to drive a point home. Google India recently uploaded a video of him dancing, and used it to highlight its 'search' feature, which (in this case) can help you find the right dance classes. The ads were part of a series by Google called #AlittleHelpFrom.

EXPERTS SPEAK

Shradha Agarwal, COO of Grapes Digital, a digital-first agency, said it's possible that the company picked Daboo uncle because of the specific TG it's targeting — viewers above 40. "The first thing they want to do

is drive awareness and relatability because he is easily recognisable with people. In this case, it was a real video that went viral. It wasn't something engineered by influencers," she pointed out, adding that he started his YouTube channel only after he went viral and was virtually unheard of, until then. Agarwal believes this will have a good impact as consumer segments are highly fragmented and Daboo uncle is universally recognised in that sense.

"Virality is not that easy to achieve, but social media tends to have a cascade effect. Nowadays, it is

ZOMATO

Sound On

Is the brand readying
for the 'voice' future?

By Abid Hussain
Barlaskar

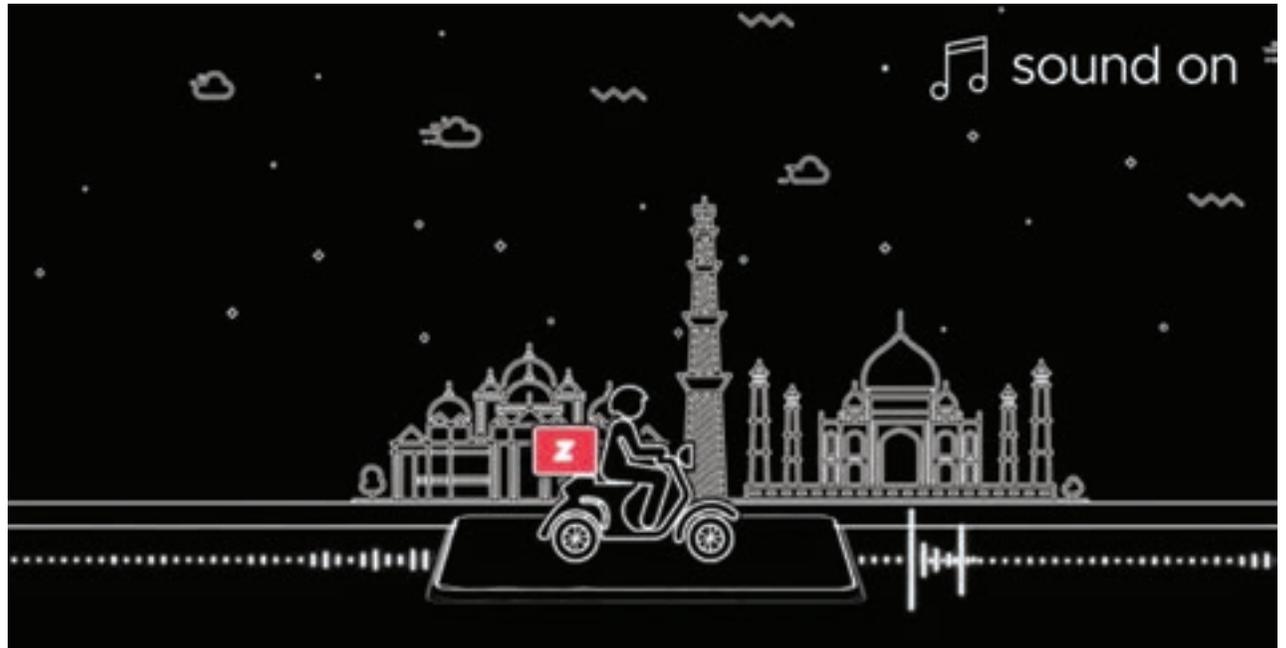
Foodtech platform Zomato was in the news recently for its new OTT service — Zomato Originals. Just as the buzz was dwindling, the brand made another major announcement, it unveiled its musical logo or a MOGO, a term popularised by the sonic branding agency BrandMusiq.

afaqs! Reporter spoke to Gaurav Verma, CMO, Branding, Zomato, about the initiative. Verma joined Zomato recently, after spending almost a decade at Pepsico. Prior to this, he had stints at TATA Tea, Lenovo and ITC. “We want the Zomato audio signature to be something that consumers instantly recognise, just like they would our logo and visual design.”

The sonic identity will be used across brand touch points, including advertising, in app and as notifications to partners — restaurants and riders. The MOGO is already a part of Zomato’s OTT videos. “Along with our latest app update, Zomato Originals was the perfect launchpad for Zomato’s audio signature,” Verma says. Zomato Originals comes in at a time when many non-video content brands like Flipkart, ixigo and fbb are launching video content series.

“We realised that a number of important transactions are occurring behind the screen, such as order acceptance, delivery valet reaching his destination; this allows for consumers to get updates without having to lift a finger. We believe this will make the consumer experience even better. For example, when the delivery valet has arrived, the distinct sound would notify you to be ready at the doorstep to collect the order without looking at your phone. We have to ensure that there is a balance to not be intrusive and we continuously work with consumers to get that right,” says Verma.

He reveals that with the MOGO, the brand is also readying for the ‘voice’ future. “We want to establish a distinct sound for Zomato, something that resonates with the overall Zomato experience, and



“We want to establish a distinct sound for Zomato, something that resonates with the overall Zomato experience... the future is going to be sonic.”

GAURAV VERMA

over time, build familiarity around it before voice traffic explodes. We believe that the future is increasingly going to be sonic.”

“Dipak Marwah and Rajeev Raja (from BrandMusiq) blended the craftsmanship of savant-esque musicians with the wisdom of grey-haired admen. After a month of literal fine-tuning and back and forth of

ideas, we were ready with Zomato’s signature track,” Verma discloses.

Rajeev Raja, founder and soundsmith, BrandMusiq, says, “The challenge was to create something that resonated with Zomato’s values and personality as brand. It’s not like composing music and is rather a branding process.”

Raja says that the process of making a MOGO takes at least six

begin composing the MOGO and the MOGO scape (extended play).”

EXPERTS SPEAK

Sharing his views on the initiative, communications consultant Karthik Srinivasan says, “The success of the MOGO depends entirely on how it is used. It also depends on the number of touch points, which, for Zomato, is really high. Everything

The sonic identity will be used across brand touch points, including advertising, in app and as notifications to partners — restaurants and riders.

weeks. But he reveals that creating a MOGO for Zomato was really quick and almost all of the work came through in four weeks. “The major decisions like approvals, etc., happened over only four weeks. The Zomato team was really clear of what their brand stood for and that was half the problem solved. That’s the advantage of working with very fast decision-making and clear feedback. Working with Deepinder Goyal (Zomato’s founder) was an amazing experience. It was a streamlined and surprisingly easy journey.”

He says that before getting into music and composition, there is a complete brand discussion. “First, we put on the hat of a brand strategist and dived deep into understanding the brand, its culture, the evolution, the founders, the team. Then, we

right from registering, searching for food, adding reviews, ordering food, booking a table, etc., is a touch point. Also, they have used it as the opening audio for the Zomato Originals almost like Coke Studio.”

“A recognisable sonic identity is testimony of a successful brand. Sonic identity has existed for ages. And some real memorable ones include the Intel chimes and McDonald’s I’m lovin’ it.” Nitin Naresh, MD, Magnon\TBWA, applauds the move. “It does take courage to introduce a sonic identity so, ‘Well done, Team Zomato’. In tune with the ethos of the business (fast delivery), I would have preferred a peppier tune, personally speaking. I am eager to see how Zomato makes it an unmistakable part of their brand identity.” ■

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**SAMEER NAIR**

The Storyteller

An interview with a television veteran, who now inhabits a content world. By Anirban Roy Choudhury

In 2005, Aditya Birla Group's film studio Applause Entertainment co-produced Amitabh Bachchan and Rani Mukherjee starrer 'Black', a Hindi feature film. While it did well, the Birlas decided to move away from the production business. In 2017, the group hired Sameer Nair and revived the studio. Since then, Applause Entertainment has played its part in growing the Indian digital video ecosystem.

Nair, CEO, Applause Entertainment, joined the studio with the ambition of creating premium dramas for Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hotstar and the like. So far, as many as four shows are streaming Hotstar, one Amazon Prime Video 'Mind The Malhotras', 'Hello Mini' on

MX Player and Tamil show 'Iru Dhuruvam' on SonyLIV. Within a span of two years, the studio has already managed to market around 10 shows which are at various stages of post-production, and has several more in the pipeline.

This business of making shows, for the small screen, and then selling them to video-on-demand (VOD) platforms is relatively new in India. Historically, television broadcasters like Star, Zee, Sony, commissioned shows to production houses like Balaji Telefilms, Swastik, etc. – the risk was undertaken by the broadcaster and, in return, the broadcaster owned the intellectual property forever. That's how the ecosystem was designed. However, studios like Applause create shows themselves – and with it, comes the risk

and the reward.

Before joining Applause, Nair was group CEO at Balaji Telefilms; it was during his tenure that the group launched its VOD platform ALTBalaji.

Nair started his broadcast journey with Star India in 1994 as its first programming head and is credited with shaping Indian television. At Star India, where he went on to become the CEO, he was closely involved with fortune-turning shows like 'Kaun Banega Crorepati' and the 'K' series – 'Kahani Ghar Ghar Ki', 'Kyunki Saans Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi', 'Kasauti Zindagi Kay'.

In 2006, he joined Prannoy Roy's NDTV to lead the then new general entertainment business; he was the CEO of NDTV Imagine, a

“In the early '90s, when the television business was being built, we were creating content but at the same time, we were also laying cables for distribution. In the OTT world, distribution is already in place - in fact, content is playing catch up to distribution.”



channel that never really found its stride.

Of late, Nair has pivoted towards making movies, documentaries and short-form fiction.

Edited excerpts:

When you joined Star TV, private television was in its early stages, just like digital is today – do you see similarities?

Yes, now there is a whole range of OTT platforms coming up, just like how satellite television was in the early 1990s and 2000s. There is a lot of interest in the market, lot of new players are getting in, there's competition, the market is growing, the audience is growing, there are many ideas... in entertainment, business models succeed and fail primarily basis audience appreciation.

In the early '90s, when the television business was being built; we were creating content, but at the same time, we were also laying cables for distribution. In the OTT world, distribution is already in place – of a billion homes, 400 million have got access to high speed internet, screens already exist. In fact, content is playing catch up to distribution.

YouTube has 300 million monthly active users, so the audience is already there. In the television business, there was no audience back then.

What about the big differences? Unlike TV, digital platforms don't share ratings - how do you know how your shows have fared?

There are three ways: social

chatter, the feedback we get from platforms, and the real litmus test – the opportunity to make a second season.

What drove you to the content business – art or commerce?

I've always been a storyteller, be it in advertising, television or in the studio business. There's the creative part of it and then there is commerce. It is not art for art's sake or art for commerce's sake; it's actually art for applause, appreciation and acclaim. Eventually, the result is some sort of commercial benefit for all stakeholders. There are producers investing in the shows, so it is important to not lose money. It is called showbiz or show business, after all.

Also, I am drawn to entrepreneurial ideas, building teams from scratch, and then creating the business brick by brick, I like doing it.

Has our industry warmed up to the concept of studios supplying content to platforms?

The model is new for the market. It's exciting. It's like a hybrid movie model. Historically, studios have been making films that have been financed in different ways - pre-sell, studio finance, raising money to make films and then selling different rights. It's a globally established model that we've brought to the drama series business. In a sense, we look at drama series as cinematic television.

We, at Applause, have produced 15 shows so far, of which 10 have been

licensed/sold. There are around nine more shows, at various stages of post-production.

Do you see trends in the Indian digital ecosystem following those in the Western market?

The West evolved differently, not just on the tech front... even content. In the West, there was a lot of premium drama on television. We, in India, missed that moment. The West always had their studios and production companies, and they have always created this kind of content. There, the audience simply moved from consuming it on linear television to digital. For them, a Netflix is not an invention of content as much it is an invention of distribution.

India never had that kind of premium cinematic television, because we got into daily soaps (editor's note: TV shows in India work on a 'bulk' basis and hence, while the quantity of content is huge, the quality is not good enough for OTT). That is the need gap we've spotted. No one can come here and buy a big library for this gap... it doesn't exist.

Tell us about the process of commissioning; do you speak with the platforms before making a show?

There is risk involved in what we do. So far, we have been commissioning shows on our own. We collaborate with content creators and talk to the platforms after the

show is made. For second seasons of shows, we collaborate with the creator and the platform.

Does your revenue depend on the viewership of the show?

Unfortunately, no. But that's fair... because platforms have a business to run. They have large overhead costs and operating expenses. So, if we are creating a show and licensing it to a platform, exclusively, for a certain period of time, there is a premium on that and then they monetise it.

When they monetise, it becomes a basket of programming for a basket of revenue. A consumer who buys a monthly subscription never buys a show; he/she buys the service. Some shows do well, some don't.

You have adapted a few international hits like 'Hostages', 'The Office' – was it just a 'launch strategy'? What about originals?

Many big TV shows are adaptations – 'KBC' is an adaptation, 'Bigg Boss' is a remake. The Americans do it all the time; the famous 'Homeland' is an adaptation of an Israeli show, 'The Office' is an adaptation of a British show. I don't think there is any other country where they get caught up in this 'Oh but why can't you do originals' thing. I think it's a very facile argument. Adapting something is extremely difficult... if you do it badly, or if you do not make your own, enough to resonate with your audience, it is not going to succeed.

Also, it is better to legitimately adopt than rip off, which so much of my community does all the time in any case. The American 'Office' is my favourite show and we are very proud that we could make the Indian version. When we made KBC (Star, 2000), we never messed around with it. I started the show 19-20 years ago and just a couple of days back, I saw a lady win a crore. It is still the same show.

This does not mean adaptations are an easier sell. Finally, you still have to tell a great story, you still have to cast it, and then adapt it so the whole process has to be repeated.

Right. Speaking of 'The Office', did you discuss it with Hotstar before you commissioned the BBC to make the Indian version?

No, we did not discuss 'The

Office' with Hotstar before it was made. It was a show that had to be made and we did it. And we can do in the future too.

There is a huge, hungry audience of about 500 million, as per our last count, and it is growing. Obviously television has fatigued... it is not dying, but is slowing down. This whole thing about binge viewing, new stories and new genres is catching up. It is a lot more individualistic, on-demand viewing. We will see all sorts of stories being thrown at this audience, both adaptations and originals.

What are your plans for regional content - do you see takers for premium dramas here?

We have done three Tamil shows, we are doing one Gujarati show and one Kannada-Dakhinish (Indo-Aryan language spoken in South India) show. If you are trying to build a big, robust subscription or advertising-supported market, you need to expand. That is how TV expanded as well... there were Hindi channels and just one Sun TV... now, everyone has expanded everywhere.

Our immediate expansion plans include expanding the scope of what we define as storytelling. Currently, we have been completely focussed on drama series, but we are also looking to build a movie business. We are planning to work on a whole range of middle to high budget movies – that's our focus point.

We are working on a few international collaborations, which means, we are working with international players to co-create series and movies for either the Indian market or international markets. We are getting into short-form fiction as well, which is about stories and not two people dancing... that, is TikTok. I believe short-form (under 20 minutes) fiction is going to be big in India.



What are your views on AVOD and do you see more of your content out there?

We have just done a show which is going to come on MX Player, an AVOD platform. We produced it as a single series and now they are inserting ads in it.

There are two types of digital content pipelines – subscription-led platforms like Netflix and Amazon, and free, ad-supported ones. When people watch subscription services for long periods of time, they're not exposed to advertising messages during that time. It would be

interesting to see the domino effect this has on advertising.

Excel Entertainment creates drama series for OTT platforms, Shah Rukh Khan's Red Chillies Entertainment just produced one, Dharma and Yash Raj are also doing it – how do you appraise competition in the studio business? Is there enough money in the market to fuel the growth of premium dramas in India?

Even with all of this, I think we are too few. In this content business, everything is competition. The biggest

“In this content business, everything is competition. The biggest competition for OTT platforms is something like TikTok. It's about fighting for peoples' time; the more time they spend on social media, the less time they have to consume a series.”

competition for OTT platforms is something like TikTok. It's about fighting for peoples' time; the more time they spend on social media, the less time they have to consume a series. But competition is welcome; it raises the bar, makes you feel alive.

While we keep talking about digital being young and nascent, the fact is that a lot of the players in the business are old and established, say, broadcasters, international players, or even e-commerce, technology companies and telcos. So, while it's a growing market, it's also a mature one. Everyone is trying to figure out how best to monetise. I don't think money is a problem as a lot of the players involved in this are deep-pocketed. India is a large market and we could reach 500 million paying customers.

The market is large enough to accommodate everyone. It's about economics. It is not about 'Should there be so many platforms?'. It's about 'Can so many platforms afford to exist?'. ■

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AMAZON

Selling a Sale

The e-commerce giant goes all guns blazing for the festive season. By Abid Hussain Barlaskar

The ‘Great Indian Festival’, Amazon’s festive season sale, began midnight on September 29, as India braces for the festive season. From October till late November, the country will celebrate Durga Puja, Navaratri, Dussehra, Diwali, among others.

Over the years, the festival has turned almost into an Amazon product, something like a sub-brand or may be an IP. The e-commerce giant goes all guns blazing for the festive season. It’s like selling a sale. However, Amazon shares the ‘sale’ space with rivals, such as Flipkart’s ‘Big Billion Days’.

Says Ravi Desai, director, mass and brand marketing, Amazon India, “It’s almost like we complete the previous Diwali around November and (then) by January, the following Diwali seems like it’s upon us. Preparation for Diwali starts as early as that. In the digital world, we have access to real-time data. Thus, once the sale actually kicks off, we’re able to do things literally by the hour and day, and performance trends are clearly visible. We can make a lot of changes, whether to the message or the media deployment in certain mediums on a real-time basis.”

Allowing a peek into the sale time ‘war room’, Desai says, “We organise ourselves so that we can first read the data we are picking up real-time, and keep some contingency plans ready. Say, if something is doing really well in a certain part of the country, we just message that more and we probably have picked up on a trend that might be coming alive.”

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So, where do agency partners fit in the ‘war room’? “In case of a creative agency, a lot of the work has already been done and that work can’t be redone real-time. In case of a media agency, we may, at times, have folks from the agency sitting in the Amazon offices working with us hand in hand so that there is no lapse of time or no loss in transmission situation. In such cases, you need to make decisions by the hour. We are



very finicky about the measurement, which is a large part of what we do. We would like to measure everything that is happening in real-time so that we are able to pick up the right trends and accordingly deploy inputs.”

Talking about the rivals, Desai says, “We don’t keep our rivals in mind at all. We want to be customer backwards. Over the course of seven Diwalis, we have seen that the purchase cycle of Diwali starts literally a month in advance and, hence, we use that as a signal and time our sale so that we are able to tap into our customers’ demand when they are looking for products.”

Amazon introduced a set of new features this time around, including scheduled delivery, unboxing prior to delivery (in 10 cities), instant installation (in six metros), i.e., products were installed and ready to

use immediately. “The installation part matters. You don’t want a box lying around instead of setting it up and enjoying the TV. That was a large delighter for us,” Desai says.

The brand’s ongoing campaigns build up on the conflicts that exist in the Indian family between the Diwali wishlist and the budget. Thus, the campaign, ‘India ke khushiyon ke beech budget nahi aayega’. “Amazon’s ‘Great Indian Festival’ is



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RAVI DESAI

almost like a product that will play a role in resolving the conflict that the family is going through,” Desai says.

On the media mix, he says, “We are choosing the media mix based on the target audience as well as the messages. A metro customer will probably see us across the following touch points – digital, TV, print on the day of the sale, a few articles

coming out before the sale through print tie ups, that would talk about some of the new features, OOH and radio. When it goes to Tier II/ III India, we are looking at relevant media such as TV, radio, free-to-air Doordarshan, vernacular print in a much bigger role, whereas, digital would play a slightly different role.”

Amazon has also enabled the entire site in Hindi and is betting on deeper reach in the Hindi speaking market segments.

A digital-first and tech-driven company, Amazon is a big digital advertiser. But despite its pros, the digital space is notorious for its cons such as viewability, fraud and brand safety. While Desai maintains that he has his bases covered with the experience of past campaigns and the company’s data-driven decision making processes, he accepts that once in a while, the team does get caught off guard.

Speaking on the key expectations from agency partners, Desai says, “Thinking customer-first and taking one idea and seeing how it can travel across media so that it doesn’t just remain in an independent TV spot, and digital ad has nothing to do with the TV spot, and the print ad is like some other person’s art coming alive. The idea needs to be large, thought through and backed with customer insights. It should be able to give space to all the business objectives and ideally travel across media such that, at the relevant time and the relevant touch point, the customer gets to interact with it.” ■

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MUMBAI MIRROR

From Bombay to Mumbai

A series of reflections was the brief given to **photographer Prashant Godbole**. By **Deepashree Banerjee**

Mumbai Mirror, the Times of India-owned English daily, recently launched a video series titled ‘Mumbai Mirrored’. The journey from Bombay to the commercial capital of India is narrated by five legends who have somewhat helped to shape it into its present form. The legendary tales of the city are told by Gerson da Cunha, a renowned theatre artist, actor and celebrated adman; Pushpa Bhawe, a fearless Dadar girl whose activist gene transformed her into the Iron Lady of Mumbai; Shirish Patel, who will forever be known as the architect of Navi Mumbai; JV Pawar, the founder of Dalit Panthers in the city; and Julio Ribeiro, the man responsible for the city’s law and order during turbulent times.

The fact that they have used the lesser-known residents (not all born here, mind you) to take one down memory lane through the journey of these individuals as Bombay became Mumbai, indeed, appears refreshing.

“The Seven Islands of Bombay/Mumbai were chosen from 10 images corresponding to the original map of the city that featured seven islands,” informs Senthil Kumar, chief creative officer, JWT, director of the video series.

These mirror images were shot by Prashant Godbole, an award-winning photographer, Kumar and art director Sandeep Bagga composited, along with images sourced from the BCCL (Bennett Coleman and Company) archives. Godbole is

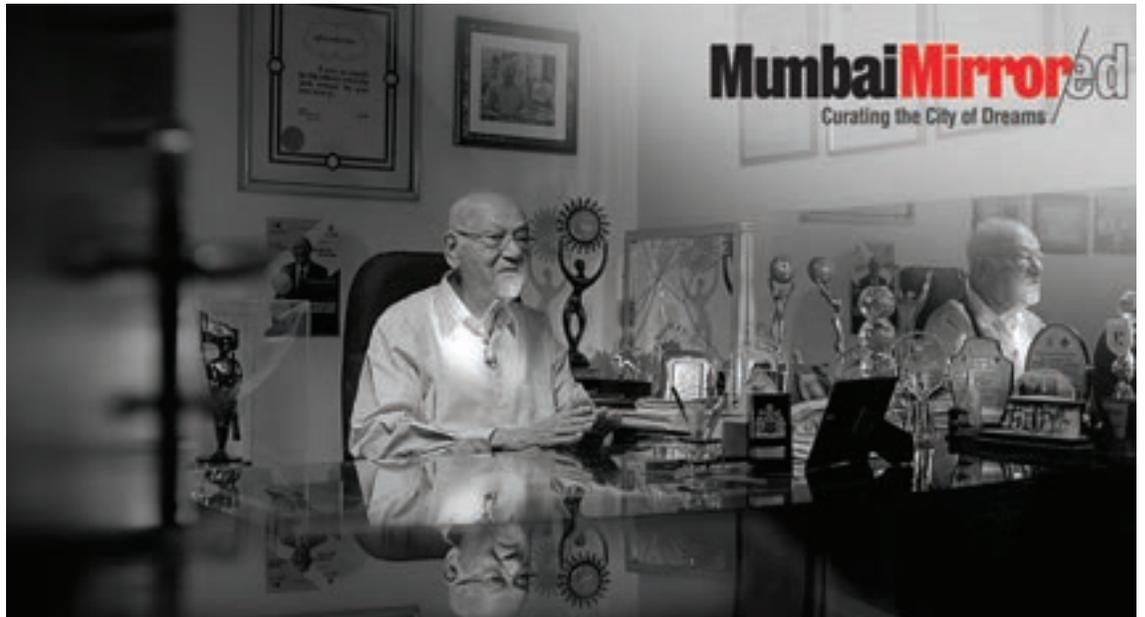
Visually, the campaign seems to leverage the old Bombay charm in black and white, apart from celebrating the glory of iconic structures of Mumbai.

the director of photography for all the black and white portraits of the five legends featured in the campaign, along with Srinivas Rao for the videos.

Visually, the campaign seems to leverage the old Bombay charm in black and white, apart from celebrating the glory of iconic structures of Mumbai, which in a way simply reflects the journey of Bombay into Mumbai.

Godbole’s journey began in an art school in Aurangabad, from where he eventually moved to Mumbai’s renowned Sir JJ School of Art. It was while in college that he developed a passion for the visual arts. Over his 25-year-long career, he has worked with many advertising agencies, before owning one (ideas@work). Some of his landmark works have been created for Indian Outdoor Association, Rin and Mumbai Mirror.

In a candid chat, the Mumbai-based



“The stories were what I was interested in, even more than the photography.”
PRASHANT GODBOLE

photographer recalls Kumar’s brief for the campaign: “A series of reflections. Five great visionaries, some are over 90. We are going to interview and unravel their stories, and their view of how the city shaped them.”

“The stories were what I was interested in, even more than the photography. I tagged along with the editor and the shooting crew. I sat in a corner listening to stories about Thackeray, Keny, Dawood, George Fernandes. And I was so immersed in the stories that every now and then I had to remind myself that I was there to take portraits. How many people get to hear such incredible stories in person, and take photographs of moments like these?” Godbole considers himself very lucky.

EXPERTS SPEAK

Shubhojit Sengupta, executive creative director, Enormous Brands, prefers the previous campaigns

run by Mumbai Mirror. “They were hard-hitting and raised relevant issues in a very creative way. My take on these videos would be that of a little comfort that you derive from watching a nice tele series. These somehow do not provoke me into having a fresh perspective on this great city. The mirror as a device could have been further exploited visually the way it was used in the press. The length of each videos could have been shorter even if there is a hankering after long formats.”

Shashank Lanjekar, head - strategic planning, Taproot Dentsu, feels the recent campaign is true to its purpose, engrossing and a charm to watch. “This also reflects the category in which Mumbai Mirror operates — that of a city-focused daily. Compared to the previous work done by Mumbai Mirror, the video series opens up another dimension of the brand and that’s what I like about this campaign. It expands the brand’s territory from being a courageous activist to a nostalgic, passionate Bombay fan.”

Anjali Malthankar, national strategy director, Tonic Worldwide, says the video series is a genuine attempt to take the brand to the millennials. Every interview emanates a sense of pride about the city. “Strategically, this series continues to throw light on who/how/what is Mumbai? Which has been the aim of the brand even for the ‘I am Mumbai’ campaign.” According to her, ‘Mirrored’ is a fascinating theme to peg more stories on. ■

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FBB TV

Another Addition to the Video Content Club

fbf TV has recently launched an interactive web series on Instagram. By News Bureau



Fbb, the fashion arm of Future Retail, has created #PujoPerfect Love Story, an Instagram web series narrating a tale of the budding love between a young couple. The 'interactive' web series can be watched on the brand's Instagram handle. With this, fbb has joined the club of brands which are turning to video content series as a marketing tool. The list of brands that have tried it out includes ixigo, Zomato, Flipkart, among others.

fbf TV's #PujoPerfect Love Story is an Instagram love story co-curated by fbb's social community and is hosted on the Instagram Stories of fbb's Instagram handle @fbfonline. Followers of the brand on Instagram get to decide the fate of the love story between the two protagonists.

In the five-day Insta web series, Instagrammers will solve dilemmas often faced by young couples: like who should make the first move, how to dress to impress, and more. Users have the opportunity to share tips and tricks with the protagonists, hence deciding what happens next.

Pawan Sarda, digital marketing head, Future Group, says, "fbf has always been an Insta-first fashion brand and, therefore, on the occasion of Durga pujo, we wanted to tap into a relevant millennial insight and create a disruptive experience for our audience. It's imperative we use platforms in their most native form. With



#PujoPerfect Love Story, we are proud to be the first ones in this space to empower the users to co-create the love story with us and add a beautiful fashion reason to exist."

Zomato recently introduced its Zomato Originals series, Flipkart launched Flipkart video, travel-based platform ixigo launched its original web series named 'Zindagi Express'. ■

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GOOGLE

A Good Insight

Great ads have to catch our attention, says Google's Kim Larson. By Abid Hussain Barlaskar



By 2025, millennials will account for 70 per cent of India's population, which will be slightly higher than the global average of 68 per cent. These are digital natives and fundamentally consume media differently and demand a different approach. So, what does it have to do with advertising," asked Kim Larson, MD, Global Creativity Services, Google, during a recent keynote for marketers at Google For India 2019.

"The job to be done is still the same. Great ads have to catch our attention and it's getting harder with each day. Then, they have to drive action to drive businesses. That's where the change comes in," she said, adding that the traditional recipe of advertising starts with a good insight that becomes a springboard to an idea. This idea goes through rigorous production and then goes on to the media.

"That's not how it works anymore. Using cloud computing, coupled with machine learning techniques, we can change the approach to insights, production and media. Today, insights fundamentally depend on the ability to access quality data and the ability to ask the right questions. Often times, we don't always know what we are looking for and there is a lot of inefficient data crunching that occurs. It can be more efficiently done by machines. Machines are good at finding patterns and figuring out trends and that's usually where a good idea is," Larson explained.

Addressing agencies, she stressed on the fact that ideas are important and technology can only amplify their effectiveness. She said machine learning can't replicate the emotional connection, can't take the germ of an idea, nor can it take a mental leap or be able to create a story arc and elements such as anticipation and surprise. ■

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HONDA AMAZE

The ad captures an emotional mother-son conversation about his first big move — the purchase of a 2nd Gen Honda Amaze.
Creative agency: Dentsu One



FEVIKWIK

The idea for 'Phenko Nahi, Jodo' stemmed from marrying the logic of 'smartness' and 'value of repair' insights with the magic of stellar storytelling and relatable humour.
Creative agency: Ogilvy



MAGICBRICKS

Magicbricks has rolled out a campaign featuring actors Ayushmann Khurrana and Kriti Sanon in which the duo engage in a playful banter as husband and wife.
Creative agency: BBDO



DEL MONTE

The campaign aims to showcase the unique flavours of the brand's authentic Italian products. One can't get more real and authentic than Del Monte as it sources its products from family-run producers in Italy.



OLX

The campaign features millennials as lead protagonists egging friends and family to upgrade their lives by making smart choices on OLX.
Creative agency: Enormous Brands



KEROVIT

The ad showcases Bollywood actress Anushka Sharma as a cop, breaking free, awestruck by Kerovit's beautiful bathroom fittings.
Creative agency: Crayons Advertising



GODREJ SECURITY SOLUTIONS

The campaign, featuring actor Ayushmann Khurrana, aims to drive awareness about adopting security solutions.
Creative agency: Wunderman



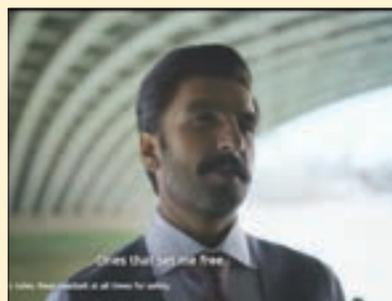
POLICYBAZAAR

Through its latest communication #LiveOnYourTerms, the brand is encouraging mothers to live on their own terms despite having all the responsibilities.
Creative agency: Enormous Brands



EDELWEISS TOKIO LIFE

The film captures the relationship between a mother and daughter. It takes the viewer through the daughter's determination to become a Pulikali performer, while her mother tries to persuade her otherwise.



NEXA

The campaign is based on a simple consumer insight that in India, people give buying a car a lot of thought. It highlights the comfort of XL6.
Creative agency: HakuHodo India



SHAZÉ LUXURY

The hosting collection by the brand heralds thoughtful design that creates moments of magic and mystery, brought to life with the expertise of London-based Seymourpowell.
Creative agency: Taproot Dentsu



BOURNVITA

The campaign gives out the message that today, childhood is more challenging than ever. So, prepare your child with Bournvita, whose inner strength formula gives strong bones, muscles and an active brain.



SAREGAMA CARVAAN

The campaign focuses particularly on the product and the moments it can create everyday with its music.
Creative agency: The Womb



AMAZON

The heartwarming campaign reassures that genuine support can always lead to breakthroughs, thereby communicating the value of relationships and trust.



BREAKTHROUGH INDIA

The film #TrustKarkeDekho brings forth the fact that girls have the same ability as boys to build a future for themselves and their families.
Creative agency: Ogilvy



TITAN

The campaign gives the message that life is lived in precious little moments made of all this and more. It's these very moments that have inspired 'our' clocks.

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JOB SWITCH.in



Post: Senior Social Media Executive
Company: Centum Advertising & Marketing Pvt Ltd
Profile: We are looking for a young social media strategist who can manage and solely supervise existing social media government client(s). The job role would involve social media content writing, monitoring, posting, analysis, reporting and daily client interaction.
Experience: 2 to 4 years
Location: New Delhi
Email: hr@centumad.com

Post: Graphic Designer
Company: STIR
Profile: We are looking to hire a graphic designer with 0-2 years of experience, loads of creative flair and an eye for detail. While here, you will have the chance to work on projects for leading global brands. The roster of opportunities extends across domains, ranging from advertising and digital to films and events.
Experience: 0 to 2 years
Location: Bangalore
Email: prakash@stironline.com

Post: Senior Accountant/Accountant
Company: Kautilya Multicreation Pvt Ltd
Profile: Graduate with a minimum experience of seven years will be considered. The candidates must have good working knowledge of latest version of Tally, Accounting Standard, Income Tax and GST rules.
Experience: 7 to 10 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: kautilyampl.info@gmail.com

Post: Senior Copywriter
Company: Quotient Communications Pvt Ltd
Profile: Simply put - thinking up great ideas and bringing them to life with the power of language. To give you a slightly more specific idea, there will be campaigns to conceptualise, headlines to be written, body copy to be crafted and presentations to be created.

All with that unique touch that makes the good, great.
Experience: 4 to 6 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: team@quotientcomm.com

Post: Social Media and Content Marketing Executive
Company: Vritti Solutions Ltd
Profile: We are looking for a content and social media marketing manager who can enhance brand and build strong online communities through our various social media platforms. The social media manager will be responsible for developing and administering social media content that is designed to engage users, and create an interactive relationship between consumers and the company. The successful candidate will also be required to collect and review social media data to develop more effective campaigns.
Experience: 2 to 4 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: priyanka.patel@vritti.co.in

Post: Senior Business Development Manager
Company: CupShup
Profile: Do you like the thrill of the chase? To get yourself heard and let your ideas do the talking? We look forward to developing something beyond business, we believe in long-term relationships, do you too? Let's build together at CupShup!
Experience: 4 to 8 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: HR@cupshup.co.in

Post: Digital Marketing Executive/Social Media Manager
Company: Thought Bubbles
Profile: Manage the strategy and setup of all paid campaigns. Thorough knowledge of digital campaigns with planning experience on Google AdWords, SEO, social media presentations, websites, ecommerce, etc. Manage social media community and facilitate ideas to build it.
Experience: 1 to 5 years
Location: Mumbai

Email: manoj.motiani@thoughtbubbles.in

Post: Account Manager (Client Servicing)
Company: MX Advertising Pvt Ltd
Profile: Responsible for managing brand responsibilities and client expectations on all aspects of 360 degree marketing. Coordinating with the agency's creative, media and technical teams in offline/digital/experiential. Ensure timely project delivery. Strong skills and proficiency in using Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint. Strong project management, good interpersonal and exceptional time management skills.
Experience: 4 to 5 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: hr@mxadvertising.com

Post: Client Servicing Executive
Company: Thoughttrains Designs Pvt Ltd
Profile: Excellence communications and interpersonal skills, good command and fluency in English, understanding the market trends, client's business and their brand. Analysing the client's briefs and delivering creative as per the timelines. Real estate knowledge and experience in an ad agency will be an added advantage.
Experience: 4 to 6 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: hr@thoughttrains.com

Post: Visualiser
Company: Greysell Marketing Promotions Pvt Ltd
Profile: Understand creative briefs and conceptualise design and campaign ideas. Work closely with the client and handling team to achieve brand goals on time. Manage tasks and projects responsibly to ensure on-time deliveries. Knowledge about typography design and layouts, colour theory and rules. Good knowledge in Photoshop, Illustrator, etc.
Experience: 2 to 3 years

Location: Mumbai
Email: hr@greysell.in

Post: Junior Graphic Designer
Company: India News Communications Ltd
Profile: Looking for a motivated graphic designer (Print and Digital) to join its ever-expanding squad. Self-starter who can work independently and with different teams. Be an integral part, from conceptualisation to client amends.
Experience: 1 to 2 years
Location: Noida
Email: info@inlgroup.com

Post: Business Development Head
Company: The Think Tank Entertainment
Profile: Continually developing your employer's brand and building increasing awareness in the marketplace. Generating and seeking out potential new opportunities. Developing and managing relationships with potential clients, influencers and key stakeholders.
Experience: 4 to 6 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: hr@tte.agency



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>> MOVEMENTS/APPOINTMENTS <<

A round up of some major people movements in the last fortnight

ADVERTISING

BBH Worldwide

Pelle Sjoenell, worldwide chief creative officer of BBH, is departing the agency to take up the role of CCO at Activision Blizzard, the global video game developer, publisher and distributor. Joakim Borgström, current CCO of BBH Singapore, has been announced as Sjoenell's successor. Borgström has worked in the industry for two decades and has spent the last five years at BBH. He started out as group creative director at BBH London in 2014, before moving to Singapore to take up the top creative role at the end of 2016. Under his tenure, the agency has produced standout, broad ranging examples of modern creativity such as 'Human Catalogue' for IKEA and 'Go BKK', 'Hypercourt' and 'Battle Force Live' for Nike.

WPP

WPP has appointed Keith Weed to its board as a non-executive director. Weed was named the world's most influential CMO by Forbes in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and global marketer of the year by the World Federation of Advertisers in 2017. He received The Drum's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018, and was inducted into the Marketing Hall of Fame in 2019. For the last nine years, he was chief marketing and communications officer at Unilever, a role that included leading the company's groundbreaking sustainability programme. He retired from Unilever in May 2019.

Leo Burnett

Leo Burnett has strengthened its creative team by bringing on board Mayuresh Dubhashi and Sonal Chhajerh as executive creative directors. Both will be based out of Mumbai. Leo Burnett India has also elevated and announced five new associate executive creative directors: Archit Gadiyar (Mumbai), Vikrant Yadav (Mumbai), Pradeep Kumar (Mumbai), Ashish Sharma (Bangalore), and Sudhir Das (Delhi).

Advertising Standards Council of India

Rohit Gupta, president, Sony Pictures Networks, has been unanimously elected as the chairman of the board of governors of The Advertising Standards Council of India. Gupta is an accomplished industry veteran, with over 30 years of experience, and has held key leadership positions across consumer, media and entertainment industries. Subhash Kamath, managing partner, BBH Communications India, was elected as the vice chairman, and Shashi Sinha, CEO, Media Brands, was re-appointed as the honorary treasurer.

82.5 Communications

82.5 Communications has appointed Rishabha Nayar as the national strategy lead. He will report to Kapil Arora, Co-Chairman & CEO. Nayar has over 20 years of experience in advertising, marketing and communications.

MARKETING

YES Bank

Jasneet Bachal has joined YES Bank as CMO. She has updated her LinkedIn profile to reflect the same. Sources have also confirmed that she has already started working at the new company. Bachal is based out of Mumbai. Earlier, Bachal worked as senior VP & head of marketing at Kotak Life for almost four years. She was responsible for brand management, customer experience & engagement, sales support, product development, corporate communication, CSR and e-insurance business. Bachal gained marketing experience when she worked at Kotak Mahindra Bank for nearly eight years. She has also worked at MTV and Star TV in the past.

Wonder Cement

Wonder Cement has appointed Sanjay Joshi as the executive director. He has over 17 years of experience and has led multiple businesses across categories like building materials, consumer goods (paints),

prior to joining the cement industry. A firm believer in leading by example, Joshi has consistently driven initiatives that have raised the bar of efficacy & accountability, beating the odds against rising costs. In his previous associations, be it at Everest Industries, where he was business head, or at Asian Paints, where he worked as a senior marketing leader for over 12 years; he single-handedly drove the fastest growing and most profitable business segments. He specially enjoys creating structure and alignment in new and unexplored areas.

Motorola Mobility

Lenovo Mobile Business Group has appointed Shivam Ranjan as the head of marketing for Motorola Mobility India. He will be responsible for the overall brand building, marketing and PR for Motorola. Ranjan has over 12 years of experience in marketing strategy, communication and brand management, and has been credited for catalysing growth at multiple organisations.

MEDIA

Indian Newspaper Society

Shailesh Gupta, director, Jagran Prakashan, has been elected as the president of the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) for 2019-20. Gupta succeeds Jayant Mammen Mathew of Malayala Manorama. L Adimoolam (Health and The Antiseptic) is the deputy president, DD Purkayastha (Ananda Bazar Patrika) is the VP, and Naresh Mohan (Sunday Statesman) is the honorary treasurer.

Star India

Star India has appointed Nitin Bawankule as the head of ad sales. He will be responsible for leading ad sales across both linear broadcast and OTT for Star TV network and Hotstar respectively. He will report to Sanjay Gupta, country manager, Star and Disney India. Previously, Bawankule worked with Google for

over eight years. In his last role, as the country director for Google Cloud India, he spearheaded the exponential growth of Cloud adoption in the country.

Audit Bureau of Circulations

Madhukar Kamath, representing DDB Mudra, has been unanimously elected as the chairman of the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) for 2019-20. Devendra V Darda, representing Lokmat Media, was unanimously elected as the deputy chairman. Kamath has more than four decades of experience in advertising and marketing services, and has spent over 25 years in (erstwhile Mudra) the DDB Mudra Group.

Indian Broadcasting Foundation

N.P. Singh, CEO, Sony Pictures

Network, has been re-elected as the president of The Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF).

Sony Pictures Networks

Sneha Rajani, head of Sony Pictures Networks film production division Sony Pictures Networks Productions, has decided to move on, after an illustrious career of 20 years with the organisation. Rajani was instrumental in launching Sony MAX, which is India's leading movie channel, revolutionising the content of Sony Entertainment Television. She has also led some of the industry's firsts like the iconic cricket wrap-around show 'Extraa Innings', with a female presenter for the first time ever, and created television history not only with the ratings, but how cricket began to be consumed in this country.

DIGITAL

Verizon Media

Verizon Media, home to consumer brands like Yahoo! News, HuffPost India, Yahoo! Cricket and Yahoo! Mail, has appointed Nikhil Rungta as country manager for Verizon Media's India business.

Rungta will now be responsible for the growth of Verizon Media's business in India. This includes driving the success of the company's leading consumer brands, advertising products and partnerships in the country. He will also oversee Verizon Media's Bangalore center, with teams representing key global operations and mission critical functions.

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