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Telling a Charming Story

Meet the adman who directed *Badhai Ho* – the first feature film from an ad-focused production house to breach the ₹100 crore mark.

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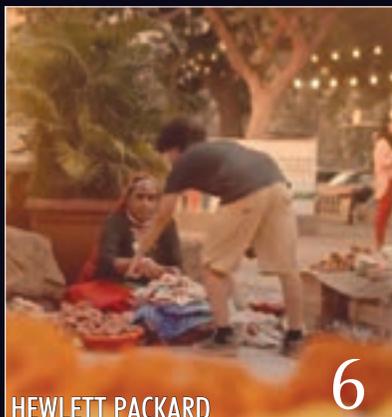


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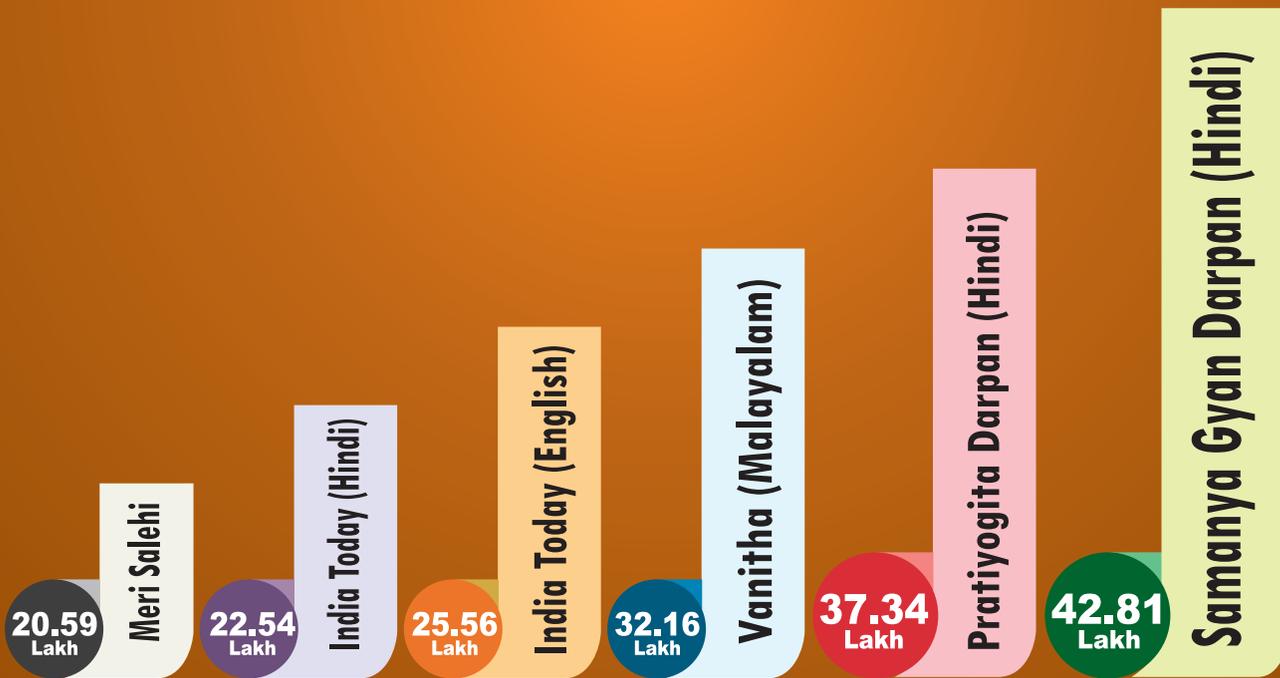
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प्रतियोगिता दर्पण समूह की पत्रिकाएँ



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This fortnight...



A lot of actors say they learnt the basics of their craft from theatre, a medium they explored before coming to cinema... and one they sometimes go back to when they need to brush up on the basics. In the world of feature film making, I'm beginning to theorise, professionals who come from an advertising background tend to be like actors who come from theatre. They have a certain rigour and approach that's common to their kind and hard to miss. Not to say that those who don't come from advertising don't have their own kind of rigour, but those who do, can certainly be called a type.

Film director Abhinay Deo - who also comes from 'the advertising school' - once told us that when ad film makers direct feature films, they tend to be extremely detail oriented. Makes sense. If you have just 30 seconds to tell someone the lady on the screen is a housewife, or that the man in the frame is a delivery boy, you'll use every possible creative shorthand and symbolism to convey that as quickly as possible. That's also why we spot so many clichés in ads; not every stay at home mom wears a saree and bindi, and not every delivery boy, a cap. Which is why, when you give an ad film maker three hours to tell a story, it's open season.

When I interviewed Ashwini Iyer Tiwari, art director turned feature film director (Nil Battey Sannata, Bareilly Ki Barfi) few years back, she said, about the process of filming, "Each scene is like an ad film for me..." Copywriter turned feature film director and script writer Nitesh Tiwari (director of Dangal) said to me, "Advertising has brought discipline to my film writing..."

Badhai Ho is ad film director Amit Sharma's most successful directorial venture in Bollywood so far. We spoke to him about his journey - and the process of shooting it.

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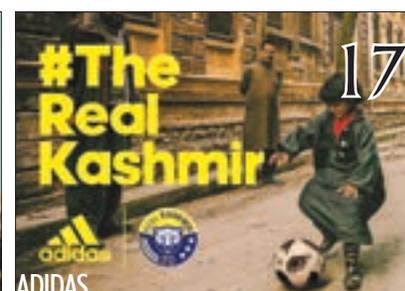


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Playing the 'Cause' Card Again
Dignity of Labour takes centrestage in this ad.



BISLERI The Name Matters

Bisleri does not mean any packaged water, says this ad.



ADIDAS The Sporting Spirit

Brand Adidas takes up the Kashmir issue on the pitch.



BY INVITATION Copy That

Ananda Ray, Rediffusion's creative head on long copy.

BISLERI

The Name Matters

For years Bisleri has been synonymous with its segment. However, 'Bisleri means Bisleri' not any packaged water, is the message in the brand's new spot. By Abid Hussain Barlaskar

What happens when a brand becomes so well known that an entire category is identified by its name? The common perception - the brand benefits - but that's not always accurate. Not in the case of Bisleri, a bottled drinking water brand which lent an eponymous identity to the entire bottled drinking water space. Such equity brought about negative progress when the brand's rivals started riding on the 'Bisleri' identity.

For example, a thirsty customer seeks a bottle of 'Bisleri' and the shopkeeper hands out a bottle of 'XYZ' packaged drinking water. The customer accepts it as is and quenches his thirst. Thus Bisleri, despite having top-of-the-mind recall, loses out when it comes to the brand's moment of truth. It's the same for companies such as - Xerox, Surf, Sintex, Mobil Oil and many more.

Bisleri's latest campaign - Samajhdaar Jaante Hain Har Paani Ki Bottle Bisleri Nahin - featuring a couple of camels, asks consumers to insist on a bottle of Bisleri, even if the shopkeeper offers another brand. Of course, this way it's the shopkeeper who would need to be corrected.

Also, this problem, for Bisleri, has persisted for quite some time; so why did the brand take so long to address it?

Bisleri has planned to invest approximately ₹7-8 crore for the entire setup.

Anjana Ghosh, director - Marketing and Business Development, Bisleri International, says that the brand has been 'dabbling' with the problem for a while, trying to solve it at the seller/shopkeeper's end. "It is a problem of retailers depriving consumers of their brand of choice because they want a higher profit margin. Earlier, we thought that we'd be able to solve it via awareness and loyalty programmes, but we soon realised that it's the profit margins that influence retailer behaviour," Ghosh shares.

"While some consumers specifically want Bisleri, most just want a bottle of water when asking for Bisleri. With this campaign, we are closer to the latter and are asking them to get a Bisleri bottle when they



ask for it. That way, the retailer will also have to sell Bisleri instead of pushing another brand. Moreover, the consumer is paying equally for all brands in the category," she adds.

Ghosh maintains that in the ad film, the setup of a small shop/outlet in the middle of a desert stands for an extreme situation, "It is set to denote a dire situation with limited options. Even a consumer, like the thirsty camel in a desert, walks up to the outlet and does not compromise on its choice. And despite being tired and thirsty, the consumer still insists on Bisleri and takes it.

"Water is an impulse purchase; when you want it... you want it," says Ghosh.

She admits that the problem exists

everywhere - cities, towns and rural areas. "The campaign is based on many observations. I faced the problem too, while in Delhi. Shopkeepers would lure consumers with Bisleri but offer some other brand instead. And if customers insisted, they would come up with an excuse that the Bisleri bottles were not cold," Ghosh elaborates.

"We are the only brand in the category that advertises. And since it's a low involvement category and consumers have the brand name on their minds, doing just another ad would affect all brands. Our study suggested that despite the top-of-the-mind option being Bisleri, consumers would settle for another brand. Thus, we decided that it's high time we address the consumer and say 'Hey!



"This is the initial burst and there are two other films in the pipeline featuring the camels."
ANJANA GHOSH

You are the one who has to make a choice'," explains Ghosh adding that the brand wants to run the campaign for about 6-8 months. "This is the initial burst and there are two other films in the pipeline featuring the camels. One of the upcoming ads also addresses the similar problem with Bisleri's 20-litre offering," she says.

Further down our conversation, Ghosh reveals that Bisleri is already on an innovation spree, mostly aimed at involving the consumer more. "We have seen cases where retailers tell consumers that there is no delivery or supply for Bisleri. For that, we are setting up a toll-free number for consumers to contact the brand directly along with a dedicated website and mobile app where consumers can order online. Consumers will no

longer need to depend on retailers for their brand of water," she adds.

Bisleri has planned to invest approximately ₹7-8 crore for the entire setup. The campaign is crafted by Soho Square and is slated to be of the 360-degree integrated variety.

Sumanto Chattopadhyay, chairman and chief creative officer, Soho Square, says, "We took a creative approach that is really fresh, with the idea of using camels, our very own water experts. The challenge was the idea of changing the age-old way people have been using the brand name; it was both a challenge and a creative opportunity."

OVER TO EXPERTS

Jagdeep Kapoor, CMD, Samsika Marketing Consultants says, "The idea that 'every bottled water is not Bisleri' adds authenticity while the camels bring memorability and the thirst background with the ship of the desert brings relevance. The brand will benefit by repositioning other brands and positioning itself in a pure branded manner rather than the on-going generic image which allows others to pass Bisleri's goodwill."

About the timing, Kapoor says that although it's late, it's better than never.

"By persisting with the campaign with various executions and not changing the theme or platform, it is different, but the strategy meets the objective of being a brand rather than being seen as a commodity. It has to be a brand and not the category. Sometimes being the first mover may not be an advantage. It has strategically moved towards the right path of being a pure brand rather than a category plus brand," Kapoor adds.

MG Parameswaran, founder, Brand-Building, finds it to be a disruptive piece of communication. He says, "Since you are dealing with a low involvement category like bottled water, the brand has taken the humorous route. In one sense it drives home the point that all bottled water is not Bisleri. Who better to endorse the brand than an animal who lives in the desert. They had attempted a Loch Ness monster-based film a few years ago; this one seems better executed." ■

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HEWLETT PACKARD

Old Wine in a New Bottle

The brand's Surf Excel-esque Diwali ad traces a familiar narrative, with warmth. By Deepashree Banerjee

The three-minute-long ad film, crafted by Autumn Worldwide, shows a woman selling diyas on the street - a familiar sight for everyone in the days leading up to Diwali. How a young boy helps her sell all her wares before Diwali forms the crux of this short ad film titled 'Umeed ka Diya' or the 'Light of hope'.

In such times when the viewer's dwindling attention span is seemingly a major concern for marketers and advertisers, throwing some light on the process of having woven the product angle into the story, Sahil Trehan, vice president at Autumn Worldwide, says, "We started this brief where we wanted to do an authentic and honest attempt to the cause. We always wanted the brand to play the part of an enabler, but here, we managed to do more. The brand and its products empower the story without being pushed at all."

Interestingly, the new spot shares a some similarity with the 2016 Surf Excel campaign titled '#MadadEkIbadat' (Helping is an act of faith) where a little boy helps an old 'samosa-wala' sell his Iftar savouries and while doing so, stains his clothes ("*Daag*, after all, *Achhe Hai*" - rings a bell?).

While the two films appear to be similar Trehan feels they are two entirely different stories stating, "The '#MadadEkIbadat' film, is a beautifully woven story, but it talks about a generic insight and action of doing good, whereas '#UmeedKaDiya' is all about the insight and specifically related to Diwali, how we, as a society, have become so modern that we have an indifferent attitude towards a particular section of society. '#UmeedKaDiya' brings out their plight, pain and struggle."

"Also, in this film, the product is an enabler, it helps with the kid's mission, it takes the film forward and is an integral part of the film. Remove the printer and you won't have the same film. But, that's not the case with '#MadadEkIbadat'; their product is just a placement," Trehan explains.

While doing their background research, the agency analysed films and conversations around Diwali from the last three years in order to build on a fresh insight that could



create a real and positive impact on viewers. That's when they stumbled upon information regarding modernisation and how street vendors are losing their business because of it. It's what got them hooked.

"We met a few street vendors to validate this and get an authentic point of view. That's what we have tried to show in the film," Trehan shares.

The digital spot was shot in multiple locations in Gurgaon as the agency wanted to capture the contrast of modern shops and local street vendors. Trehan shares an interesting anecdote regarding the shoot, "Our key focus was to get as authentic as possible. When shooting for the scene where we show people walking away and not buying from 'Amma', we took real shots of people walking by her. So, you see real

In this film, the product is an enabler, takes the film forward and is an integral part of the film.

reactions from people."

He elaborates, "For the next shot, where people begin to buy from her after the kid puts those posters on the street, we went up to people and told them that we are doing this film to support street vendors; we got an amazing response from people who wanted to actually buy those diyas (the money went to a local street vendor from whom we had rented the stuff). We saw more people joining in and begin to purchase diyas without realising they were on camera (which we disclosed later). It gave us the confidence that a small act can trigger a movement which is what we are seeing now, after the film is on air."

The video was released on HP's

various digital platforms in India and has gone viral with over 2.3 million views and more than 60 thousand shares on the brand's social platforms alone, in just 2 days.

DOES THE 'GO LOCAL' TAG STRIKE A CHORD?

And does such heart-warming storytelling remind us that the five-second story isn't the only route to the share button? Over to the experts

In a fast-paced, fast-changing world where traditional customs and values have given way to glitz and plastic, Rajesh Lalwani, CEO, Scenario Consulting decodes how and why HP's 'Umeed ka Diya' resonates on many counts. He says, "For one, it's the coming together of old world artisanal craft and technology, where on one hand the brand seamlessly plays enabler and on the other, the young protagonist uses the advantage

of 'virality' of the digital medium to propagate the message. So, the film succeeds in evoking nostalgia and leverages that to stoke the inherent goodness in people, to do good this festive season."

Lalwani affirms that in its rich insight that 'Back to Basics' is a silent movement in the making, 'Go local' is the new global.

With regard to perhaps, over-speculating the resemblance to the Surf Excel ad, he adds, "All I can say is that it's a great thing that more than one brand is embracing the task of propagating our values to the next generation. The more the merrier."

Given the very fact that festivals have traditionally been about values of doing good and sharing, which



"We always wanted the brand to play the part of an enabler, but here, we managed to do more. The brand and its products empower the story without being pushed at all."

SAHIL TREHAN

are fast getting lost in commerce and self-indulgence, more than one brand is seen riding that wave this year.

Shekhar Mhaskar, EVP Isobar saw the video as a WhatsApp forward even without knowing it was by HP. "The fact that it is already going viral this way proves the strength of the story. The product has been seamlessly integrated into the story by giving subtle emphasis on the boy printing and pasting the posters everywhere. Even without reaching the last frame, one can gather that it's a film by a printer brand and needless to say, the top-of-mind brand would be HP," he says, sounding impressed with the ad.

Mhaskar is also of the opinion that there is a resemblance between the two ads and explains, "... it's alright. Don't we all get that fuzzy feeling when there's a beautiful emotion so nicely painted in front of you? It's how one choreographs the scenes around the music of emotions thereby striking an emotional chord with the audience; that makes all the difference." ■

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GHADI DETERGENT

Playing the 'Cause' Card Again

The brand takes up dignity of labour as its 'cause' in its latest communication. By Abid Hussain Barlaskar

The August cover story for afaqs! Reporter asked a crucial question that's looming over the ad world - does every brand really need a higher purpose? And, the cover image featured a powdered-detergent connection. Most of the major players in the space have taken a cause-led approach, amalgamating the brand's message with a cause with creative folk working at the anvil.

RSPL's (Rohit Surfactants Private Limited) latest ad for brand Ghadi Detergent, takes up dignity of labour as its 'cause' and flushes out preconceived notions about day-to-day jobs such as cleaning, doing dishes and washing clothes being of a 'lower grade'. Ghadi has been using similar cause-led communication specifically during festivals as part of its campaign '#SaareMaeldhoDaalo'. The brand has done it on the occasion of Eid, Holi and previous Diwalis.

The ad has been conceptualised by ADK Fortune and features a pre-Diwali setting when household cleaning is in full swing. In the three-minute-long film, the son, who looks down on the domestic help, is taken to task by his mother. The mother then gets him to help with the cleaning, which is when he realises that the work is actually tough and deserves respect, just like any other. The brand builds its connect with Diwali cleaning and the idea of removing dirt from one's mind.

It's interesting that almost all the players in this segment are playing the 'cause' card (Ariel's #ShareTheLoad or Surf Excel's #DaagAchheHai) instead of going the traditional route of better/best-brighter-easier-whiter cleaning.

So, can too many causes in this limited space create clutter? And is it necessary to take up a cause? If so, why? And what if the cause steals the limelight, leaving little for the brand and the creative?

We took this opportunity to raise those queries with Ashish Makhija, GM marketing - Fabric Care, RSPL, who is of the opinion that in advertising, although highlighting functional benefits of the brand plays a very important role, it will continue to do so only if there's new news.

"It came to a point where all brands were claiming brighter and whiter clothes and thus came cause-



vertising to influence purchase decisions based on affinity towards a brand. The right balance of functional communication and cause-vertising is the need of the hour," Makhija says.

About creating clutter, he says, "I think this depends on the message a brand is trying to get through and obviously, its creative representation. It is critical to find a correct fitment for the brand, so much so that it doesn't seem like a force fit. This is something brands need to work on while drafting their strategy. So far, this campaign is setting new benchmarks for us in terms of engagement levels and hence, we've clearly managed to break through the clutter."

But what does a detergent brand have to do with festivals? And does the segment see seasonal spikes in advertising?

Makhija says that consumption patterns are mostly consistent throughout the year and so is advertising with no such specific time of the year or season. "The plot of the film is around pre-Diwali preparation where traditionally, we clean and decorate our homes. It reflects on our ignorance towards dignity of labour and I am sure a lot of people will relate to it," Makhija adds.

Akashneel Dasgupta, NCD, ADK Fortune says, "Good brand recall doesn't necessarily need the name to appear six times. It is about how well the purpose and the promise of the brand are integrated within the plot. This is our fifth film under the '#SaareMaeldhoDaalo' series and in each, the brand name appears only in the end and viewers have never missed it. Yes, there are many brands

clichés like lit up homes, picture-perfect people etc. For us, Diwali is just the context for highlighting another aspect of 'cleansing' to instil dignity of labour," Dasgupta adds about the ad's connection with the festival.

About that brand riding on the purpose wave and clearly off traditional hard-selling, Dasgupta states, "Both will go hand-in-hand. The traditional product-led messages will also continue to be aired. It depends on the objective of the communication. When we have in hand a task to inform/demonstrate a new addition to the product or its delivery, we would also do the traditional form of messaging."

OVER TO EXPERTS

We asked industry experts about the ad and the overall situation.

Anish Varghese, NCD - Isobar India points out that the segment lends itself easily to purpose-led messaging because it's a low involvement category. He says, "It's a challenge to build brand passion in this category. So, brands need to focus on what purpose they are into and convert consumers by using beautiful storytelling, which is relatable."

"To have a strong connection with the brand we need to make sure the purpose-led message is intrinsic to the brand proposition; a direct correlation. This Diwali they have a strong message to share," Varghese shares about the clutter and the ad's position in the crowd.

However, about brands ditching the traditional hard-sell, he adds, "Hard-selling today is a bad idea. People are not expecting it any more, especially in an interactive medium, which has a strong connection in our daily routine."

Creative consultant Pradyumna Chauhan says that there is a lot of saturation in the detergent segment with brands running out of propositions for standing out. "Since the cause-led wave is in, brands can still get a takeaway even if they don't get the top spot. They can still get some traction with the fifth or maybe the tenth spot. For Ghadi Detergent, this ad is almost a necessity, given the current scenario of advertising," Chauhan states. ■

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"This campaign is setting new benchmarks for us in terms of engagement levels and hence, we've clearly managed to break through the clutter."
ASHISH MAKHIJA

doing cause-based advertising, but it depends on the power of the creative to stand out. This piece for Ghadi has already gone viral across multiple platforms so there's no question of getting lost in the clutter."

When asked about the pre-Diwali advertising rush, Dasgupta says, "In my experience, I have always had a peaceful Diwali, but a crazy Dussehra. All the Diwali frenzy actually affects the fortnight before, as everything is already out by Diwali."

"The creative for Ghadi does not have a single element of Diwali. The story is devoid of the usual Diwali

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GUEST ARTICLE

Copy That!

Or, my opinions on (long) copy. By Ananda Ray



Over the last three years, I have had the opportunity to write two long copy campaigns. They turned out well and, of course, I enjoyed writing them as well. Nevertheless, I don't have any special desire to write long copy. Blasphemy?

Let's pull back a little bit.

Little kid. Mom wakes her up for school. Kid, in no mood to rise from her cosy bed, announces she has a fever. Mom, with a knowing grin and arms outstretched, says, "Really? Shall I check with the thermometer or the tickle monster?" The kid giggles; glee trumps glum.

Same kid. Another day. Returns from the playground wailing; she's hurt her knee. Mother sits her down, washes the wound and applies salve, soothing her with the best balm - her voice. Twenty-five minutes later, the crying subsides. The kid is sniffing, but is also telling her mom how she wants two huge scoops of her favourite jam in the comfort sandwich that she is now craving.

The above capture some of the principles I myself apply to the work I've been doing for the last two decades or so. I am having conversations with real human beings - not target audiences - on behalf of brands that also have very human personalities. Each situation is different. Each brand is different. Each person is different. Each task is different. Each tactic is different.

Going back to the parenting examples, it's doubtful the Mom felt that she enjoyed 25 minute conversations and so, no matter what the circumstance, that is how long she would take to sort out every situation

she faced with respect to her kid.

Which is why, I have never understood the deification of long copy by copywriters. After all, I have never heard an art director complain that he or she would stick to, say, water colours, if only the powers that be let it be possible.

There used to be times when people would look at an ad and comment on how it looks like so-and-so art directed it and read like so-and-so wrote it. I used to take exception to that. In my mind, every ad should reflect the brand personality, regardless of who wrote or art directed it.

My job is to present a case in the language of the brand to the people who may find it of interest in an interesting, engaging and compelling way so that it draws their attention - and keeps it. To me, that's what great copy is about. It's not just about one's command over a language or about felicity with words. And it's definitely not about length. It's as much about choosing that perfect and precise word to craft that powerful, evocative and, ultimately, effective one word headline (think Volkswagen's 'Lemon'), which is just as difficult to do.

Long copy, in my mind, is nothing but one of my tools. I will employ it only when I am certain that it is exactly what is required in order to be most effective. And if I am any good at it, I will keep the reader reading. With every sentence (each, technically, short copy). No superfluous words, no lull in interest, each sentence carrying the previous sentence's thought forward, while triggering anticipation for what is

to follow in the next. Each sentence complete, but, like ball bearings, keeping the reader's mind in motion. Each building on the previous one, leading the reader by the heart and mind so effortlessly that even his or her pace quickens without any conscious realisation of it. Setting up, building and penny-dropping the case the brand wishes to put forward in that instance. In other words, long copy (indeed, any copy) should not be about me wanting to write it, but about making the reader want to read it.

Scroll through Instagram (there's a reason I mention it). It's filled with people showing off the books they're reading. Also, it's filled with both short and long form poets and writers. In other words, people are still interested in reading reams of text. Obviously, though, their choice of reading material is decided by what they wish to read, not by what advertisers want them to. This is a universal truth that has been true since time immemorial. The moment any piece of advertising finds a way to be of interest to the consumer, it gets absorbed - or opens that door.

One might argue that Instagram is not something to bring into evidence when discussing the merits of long copy. Yet, in how Instagram presents itself lie the unsung and unexpected heroes of long copy. The art director.

Instagram breaks long copy posts into bite-sized morsels. How it functions is designed to tempt the viewer to slide for more before he or she reaches a point of fatigue. It also helps trigger curiosity about what is

to come on the next slide. Further, the viewer knows it's not going to be 'too' long an engagement - after all, it is, maximum, a ten-morsel meal. It's user-friendly, it's not a challenge and it's not daunting. Finally, so many of these writers employ their particular presentation styles. Always a certain kind of background, a definite kind of font, certain set of props and so on. It's exactly what brands do - or should be doing.

The input art directors bring to long copy is invaluable. In some ways, not taking anything away from the writers who write and rewrite endlessly to achieve the perfect final draft, it's tougher for them. The art directors have so little to play with and, yet, how it is laid out can make all the difference between whether the ad is read or not. How does it contain the personality of the brand? How does it not feel like a challenge? How does he or she provide visual relief? How does he or she make it not appear daunting? How does it catch the eye? And, finally, make it irresistible to read?

Which brings me, oddly, back to Lemon. It's primarily a copy ad, but the artistic decisions told the story. And that brings me to my final point.

I don't care much about long or short copy. There have been ads I have been involved in that have had no words at all and they fill me with as much joy as have my long copy ones. Why? Because our jobs aren't even about copy or art, in the first place.

They're about ideas. ■

(The author is Creative Head, Rediffusion)

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COCA-COLA

Festive Strategy

Coke extends Ayushmann Khurrana's on-screen Delhi image to a Diwali spot. **By Sunit Roy**

Coca-Cola, known for releasing memorable Diwali-centric marketing communications, has rolled out a new TVC. With the theme - 'Iss Diwali, Har Dil Bola Tere Naam Ki Coca-Cola' - the campaign inspires consumers to make the festival of lights special for someone. Conceptualised by McCann Worldgroup, the ad film has been produced by Curious Films and directed by Vivek Kakkad.

Titled 'Share a Coke this Diwali!' the TVC has been created on the core message of connecting cultures and features Ayushmann Khurrana and Anupriya Goenka in the lead roles. This ad film seems like a rub off of a Hindi masala movie where Ayushmann (the protagonist) depicts a boy from Delhi living in southern India. The actor plays the role of a tenant away from his home on Diwali. His neighbour (Anupriya) hears him on the phone with his mother saying that he misses Delhi's Diwali. So, she and her family take it upon themselves to make the festival of lights a brighter one for Ayushmann. There also seems to be a subtle romance between the two characters as well.

Speaking about the insight on which the campaign is based, Prasoon Joshi, chairman - Asia Pacific, CEO and CCO India, McCann Worldgroup, says, "India is a beautifully diverse country especially when it comes to festivals; we have a lot to celebrate and share. This campaign is trying to make a suggestion of getting to know each other's festivals better and celebrating them together for a more united and connected world."

Coca-Cola has altered its jingle - Har Dil Bola, Tere Naam ki Coca-Cola. The music for the background score, created by Abhishek Arora, only enhances the viewability of the TVC.

The multi-faceted campaign includes a number of consumer touchpoints including multi-city social media marketing activations like '#ShareAWish', where consumers can share their customised Diwali wishes on Coca-Cola India's social media channels and journey in their own languages through greetings, GIFs and voice messages. These messages will also be displayed



"This campaign is trying to make a suggestion of getting to know each other's festivals better and celebrating them together for a more united and connected world."
PRASOON JOSHI

through outdoor marketing along with the name of the well-wishers.

Shrenik Dasani, vice president - sparkling category, Coca-Cola India, says, "Coca-Cola's Diwali campaign brings to audiences a message of sharing and celebrating moments of joyful human connection. It gives a festive call to taking that small step and making someone's Diwali more special so that they are among 'their own' people no matter where they happen to be!"

Coke, as a brand, doesn't advertise as frequently as its rivals. One can expect an ad campaign from Coca-

Cola either in summer or during peak festive seasons. Over the years, the brand has released some memorable campaigns around Diwali. Last year, the brand launched a campaign celebrating 'Sibling Love with Coca-Cola'. In that campaign, a younger brother is shown bullying his elder sister, but when he sees her looking tired after doing all the preparations for Diwali at home, he pours her a glass of Coke and wishes her a Happy Diwali. In 2016, the brand launched five TVCs under the 'Coke Nawaazi' campaign. The TVCs, conceptualised by McCann India, focused on the 'desi' insights of how a 'mehmaan' (guest) reacts after being offered something to drink.

Among the most memorable initiatives by Coca-Cola, the brand's 2010 Diwali campaign was the most impressive. The brand took its TVC beyond television sets. The thought in the TVC - to celebrate togetherness - was extended to OOH properties across 20 towns in five states. The idea behind the OOH campaign was to celebrate homecoming for Diwali, with Coke. Animated Warli characters appeared on the Coke creatives, performing actions that symbolised celebrating Diwali at one's home, with one's family.

OVER TO EXPERTS...

Earlier, if Coke would rope in a celebrity - Aamir Khan, Hrithik Roshan et al - they would stay for a while or a few years. Now, it's a lot less. We asked the experts how the life-cycle/longevity of a brand ambassador has changed over the years.

According to Naresh Gupta - chief strategy officer and managing partner, Bang in the Middle, more

and more brands are looking at standing out of the clutter every day and one way to do that is to keep the brand fresh. He says, "Using an ambassador for a prolonged period is one way, using those who are in the news topical, is another. Brands need to tell stories that are consistent and there is no reason to stick to one formula."

Gupta adds, "Ayushmann is popular right now; he is performing much better than most of his contemporaries. It is a good way to leverage his goodwill at this time. Also, Diwali in southern India is very different from the north and this is a good way to leverage the festive feel across geography."

Samit Sinha, managing partner, Alchemist Brand Consulting, says, "This particular campaign was obviously created to coincide with Diwali to keep the brand salient during festivities that typically involve indulgence in food and drink. Rather than rely purely on celebrity appeal, the choice of Ayushmann and Anupriya seems to suggest that Coke's intention is to use their everyman/ everywoman, boy/girl-next-door image to create greater emotional empathy towards the brand amongst India's middle classes. It is perhaps a bit skewed towards North India since the celebration of Diwali also tends to be. Of course, Ayushmann's recent box-office success, as an indication of his increasing popularity, could also have tipped the decision in his favour."

WELL EXECUTED?

Rohit Raj, creative chief and co-founder, The Glitch, opines that earlier Coke films had a certain style which made it instantly recognisable. "Here, I assumed this to be an ad for Cadbury, till the product showed up. In the clutter of emotional ads, especially in the food and beverages segment, this becomes another similar ad for me."

Gupta says, "Cold beverages broke the seasonal barrier long ago; they are now all-weather brands, and for Coke to be present during festival time is good. The product is neatly integrated. Coke and Diwali have been a very good combo for many years anyway." ■

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Are Voice Assistants the Next Big Thing?

Four creative professionals debate the issue. And does it open up new opportunities for brands?

By Deepashree Banerjee

AMIT SHANKAR

national creative director,
Publicis India



ANY NEW MEDIUM OPENS UP NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT WITH THE CONSUMER. IT IS THE

same story with Voice Assistants. As an advertising professional, it is a challenge and a blessing because we have an opportunity to set the benchmark and define a category.

To say voice-based technology is a powerful way to 'talk' to consumers would be an understatement. It opens up new territories for brands. And brands who grab this opportunity with both hands will surely rule the roost. But the seed of any great idea was, is, and always will be - 'great stories'.

So, it shouldn't be just about a TVC or a print ad or the latest buzz/activation idea, but what problem we have identified and what we are solving. Privacy concerns might act as a roadblock, but it shouldn't stop brands from taking a big leap.

PRAVEEN SUTAR

ECD,
Dentsu Webchutney



VOICE ASSISTANTS ARE SURELY GOING TO BE THE NEXT BIG THING! AS ADVERTISERS, WE

play a major role in making this process both easy and rewarding for the consumer. The rule of thumb remains the same: at the centre of it all is the idea - an idea that allows the brand to talk to the consumer as fluidly and naturally as possible. Utility and convenience meet engagement, as brands can now make it easy for consumers to talk to them.

Voice assistants give brands another touchpoint; so, instead of changing strategies completely, it's advisable for brands to adapt and mould their current strategies to include this new advertising touchpoint which works like a solution-provider for the consumer's ease.

With the technology constantly improving and consumers being increasingly interested in its possibilities, the future doesn't just seem bright but also audible.

ASHISH PHATAK

executive creative director,
DDB Mudra Group



I BELIEVE COMPANIES ARE MINDFUL THAT MOST POTENTIAL CONSUMERS AREN'T EXTREMELY TECH

savvy. Most of the campaigns are almost product demos, but the challenge is to make the most engaging and entertaining product demo.

Another important thing with this category is breaking down the communication into pieces that highlight individual features. This also helps in having more interesting stories around that one single feature. A series of such executions, each highlighting a different feature, would help consumers to understand the product better.

VIKAS MEHTA

CEO,
PointNine Lintas



AS A CREATIVE PROFESSIONAL, YOU START WITH A PREMISE THAT NEW THINGS HAVE NO

rules, no baggage and very few proven experts. It allows you to look for white spaces and think of new ways to go about it.

Voice assistants are significant because they will forever change the way people search. For example, retail brands today talk about their store locations. When searches move from 'locate a store' to 'find a store near me', the entire content architecture will change.

Voice assistants are making human-machine interactions a lot more interactive. I feel this enhanced level of interaction will be a fertile ground for creativity opening up new opportunities for brands to engage with their audiences.

UDAY SODHI

A New Partnership Begins

SonyLIV, the over-the-top (OTT) platform from Sony Pictures Networks India has announced a multi-year strategic content deal with American entertainment giant, Lionsgate. The new assortment of shows will be available for viewing under SonyLIV Premium which has ₹99 a month, ₹299 for six months and ₹499 a year plans.

Lionsgate Play will be bundled within SonyLIV's current slate of programming and will roll out with over 500 hours of Lionsgate premium original series including hits such as *Power*, *Vida*, *Sweetbitter*, *The White Queen*, *The White Princess* and the eagerly-anticipated *The Spanish Princess*. These will be in addition to popular Lionsgate library titles such as *Crash*, *Manhattan*, *Wildfire*, *Are We There Yet?* and *Chasing Life*.

In a press conference held by SonyLIV, Uday Sodhi, business head - digital, Sony Pictures Networks India spoke to afaqs! Reporter about the deal with Lionsgate and on SonyLIV's content. Edited Excerpts

There is content available from content maker Arré on SonyLIV. How different is the content going to be from Lionsgate?

The idea is to strengthen our fiction product. What we currently have on our app is centred around TV shows, some of our originals and sports, and a large set of movies. We are seeing subscription, as a category, grow and high-quality international shows becoming available in India. The awareness for these shows has expanded significantly. The ability in the desire to binge-watch has gone up. About six months ago, we launched a set of international shows on SonyLIV and some of them were very big shows. That experiment worked for us.

We have been working closely with Lionsgate to see if we can offer a large catalogue of their shows. Lionsgate is probably one of the largest producers of movies and TV series across the world and Lionsgate Play becomes a part of our subscription product. So, for now, more than 500 hours of original content by Lionsgate, primarily TV series, will mostly be exclusively available on SonyLIV Premium. The focus is to create a large subscription category and build it along with Lionsgate.

Is the English genre on OTT seeing better growth than TV?

Absolutely! English content has grown significantly because of two or three things. One reason is we are seeing a significant penetration, in the last couple of years, of smart TVs. Smart TVs make it that much easier to binge-watch long shows. The availability of these shows is becoming easier. People are connected on social media and know which show is getting released in the rest of the world. *Power* is a show we are launching and already, people on social media are talking so much about it. This is naturally becoming a part of our habit.



“I think most hybrid boxes going into the market will have the SonyLIV app. Most smart TVs that are launching in the market will have the SonyLIV app.”
UDAY SODHI

Will SonyLIV subscribers also get access to movies made by Lionsgate?

We think TV series are very exciting. But 'movies' is also an interesting category. At this point in time, what we at SonyLIV and Lionsgate have thought is that, TV and web series are exciting things to go after. For one, mentally we are far more tuned to watch series. The good part of digital is that we can hear immediately from consumers. We will see the viewing pattern and figure out quickly that this is what works. As a partnership, we can go back and try out a few more things and expand this moving forward.

Will there be a repeat of shows on SonyLIV that are seen on other OTT platforms?

It's possible. Some of the content might get repeated. *Anger Management* is one of the shows that is available on other platforms as well. But a lot of shows will be seen for the first time in India, exclusively on SonyLIV.

You say India is a binge-friendly market. Does that put additional pressure on you to deliver?

Actually, there is no pressure. People are enjoying watching long shows. As platform and content developers, it is an exciting space

for us. We are seeing the metrics grow at a very fast pace. So, as data costs come down, fibre is going to be available for everybody at home. This movement is happening towards the easy accessibility of data and content. All these fall into place for us beautifully. This means we can give better quality shows, the output can be better and we can invest more in the content. And plenty of content coming from Lionsgate is absolutely phenomenal and that would be seen from the quality of the shows. If the experience is phenomenal, they will binge and spend more time and that's what content/platform owners want.

How far are we from seeing an original from StudioNEXT for SonyLIV?

Not too far. I think StudioNEXT is just starting off its operations. You will see a lot coming out of there, but it is still very early days.

Are you planning to have tie-ups with broadband players?

Absolutely! I think most hybrid boxes going into the market will have the SonyLIV app. Most smart TVs that are launching in the market will have the SonyLIV app. Whether it is a smart TV, set-top box or even digital streaming devices, the whole ecosystem is making it easy to consume content.

How much growth are you expecting, in terms of subscriptions?

I think subscription is an exciting space for us. It is the key focus for us going forward. We will see a significant amount of investment being made in content behind subscription. With our partners, Lionsgate, we will see more and more content coming in and we are also looking at other exciting regional content in 2019. We are looking at a full pipeline for doing Marathi shows, South Indian shows and Hindi shows. So, yes subscription will be a key focus and growth area for us.

How are advertisers looking at SonyLIV?

Advertisers are the biggest swing I have seen in 2018. What we are seeing in 2018 going on 2019, are that most advertisers, while planning any campaign, put OTT in their media spend. Today, a brand doesn't go into the market without OTT as part of its media plan which, I think, is a huge change from 2016-2017. Look at the number of advertisers that participated in *Fifa Worldcup*. We had 36 sponsors and we have never heard of that before for a digital property. In *Diwali* too, we are seeing most of the big brands consistently advertising on OTT. So, OTT is now mainstream for an advertiser. You have to put your money on OTT as an advertiser, going forward.

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INTERVIEW

AMIT SHARMA
CO-FOUNDER & DIRECTOR
CHROME PICTURES



Telling a Charming Story

Meet the adman who directed *Badhai Ho* – the first feature film from an ad-focused production house to breach the ₹100 crore mark. **By Shweta Mulki**

When asked to recall moments in his life and career – say, how he surprised his mother back home in Delhi after a long work schedule in Mumbai, how he pretended to tie his shoelaces when touching the ground after landing in Mumbai on his first flight ever, or when he saw filmmaker Pradeep Sarkar using a hair strand to get a sticker off the ground for a shot

– Amit Sharma visits his memories frame by frame, narrating each instance like a script.

“Acute observation is a trait that compensates for the lack of others,” says the 37-year-old seasoned ad filmmaker – 1,800-odd films till date – whose journey has hit a high with the recent success of his latest feature film *Badhai Ho*, a simple story about a middle aged, middle class couple in Delhi that deals with an unexpected pregnancy – and the

family’s reactions to it. *Badhai Ho* is produced by Jungle Pictures and Chrome Pictures, which Sharma co-owns with his wife Aleya SenSharma and Hemant Bhandari.

The first feature film Sharma directed was *Tevar*, produced by Boney Kapoor (2015). “I’d been thinking about making a film for many years. Boneyji saw all my ads and asked me to make *Tevar*. Initially I didn’t want to, as it was a re-make but he convinced me,” he says. *Tevar* was appreciated for its stylised treatment but didn’t have much box office impact. *Badhai Ho*’s fate is delightfully different – it has made Chrome the first ad-focused production house to make a ‘100 crore film’.

Was this a surprise for Sharma and team? “One really can’t predict what

will be liked. I felt people would like this film but didn’t imagine this level (of success)...” fields Sharma, adding, “I’m an ad guy and I like making idea-driven films. This film is based on a big idea. I didn’t think about audience reaction or who would be acting in it. I like working on relatable characters and exploring the equations between family members.” While *Badhai Ho* is centered on a 51-year-old lady getting pregnant, it was more about the intimacy between the couple, he insists.

How was the idea born? Akshat Ghildial, one of the writers in the film, a former McCann Delhi hand, had written this for one of his clients in 2012. Somehow, it was never presented; the client, we learn, had already green-lighted something else. “Then in 2015, I heard it as a one-line idea,” shares Sharma, “We both felt it was feature film idea. Akshat and Shantanu Srivastava started writing it soon after.”

For many, *Badhai Ho* is a comedy and a drama in equal measure. When the process began, Sharma didn’t have any particular genre in mind for the film. “I just wanted it to be funny and sensitive. Films are impactful when they make you cry or laugh hard. This was really just about telling a

good story. The characters need to have their own back-stories too – that is, their reasons for behaving the way they do. I do that in ad films as well,” he says, underscoring the importance of the director’s involvement in the story from scratch, as opposed to stepping in only at the filming stage.

About the shoot, he tells us, “The simpler the film, the tougher it is... big scale movies use massive, wide shots, but those are not difficult. In action films there can be engrossing action sequences where it doesn’t matter if the audience remembers what happened before it. But when it comes to creating a family, you really want the audience to become a part of their world, to be engaged with their highs and lows,” likening the process to creating a symphony wherein each character and each scene has to be in sync, with no room for a false note.

“Because one would’ve met such characters in real life, it was even more important to depict them well. Also, all our actors understood the tone of the film well...” he says.

Veteran actor Surekha Sikhari (cast in Badhai Ho) has said that Sharma is an “aesthetically alive” director with a strong eye for detailing.

Be it Google’s famous ‘Reunion’ (2013), Big Cinemas’ ‘Silent Anthem’ (2011), or Jammu and Kashmir Tourism’s ‘Warmest Place on Earth’ (2017), Sharma’s films are able to evoke emotions even on repeat viewing – a mark of a well-told story.

“Friends and relatives used to say, ‘Yeh ad director karta kya hai? Film toh start hote hi khatam ho jaati hain!’ My mother would end up showing them shoot-time photos of me instructing my cast,” Sharma recalls.

DELHI TO MUMBAI VIA PRADEEP SARKAR

“I come from a family of government servants and ‘did theatre’ since I was a kid, but never imagined I’d be a filmmaker. My father was concerned about me, but my mother had faith that I would ‘do something’,” he reminisces.

When his mother (who worked in Doordarshan’s engineering department) once asked him if he’d model, he felt he could be a



“I don’t read scripts; I hear them out loud to connect and visualise. If you see it in a certain way, your conviction can make others see it too.”

‘hero’. Through someone in Contract Advertising he got through to filmmaker Pradeep Sarkar. “I used to call him persistently; finally his production manager asked me to come with a friend for a

Limca scratch film (around the late ‘90s). I thought I was the lead, but ended up among the kids in the background,” he jokes. Soon Sharma got another call from Sarkar’s crew for a shoot in Manali for Oracle, a logistics brand. “It was my first time facing the camera. Also, in those ‘no-effects’ days, I was mesmerised by dada’s filming tricks. I wanted to work with him, but he told me to complete twelfth grade first!” he says. Sharma’s father even tried to make him take typing lessons, though there were computers then. Incidentally, he now adds his father Ravindernath’s name to his, in movie

credits. “He’s a discerning film buff who never misses a release, and can rightly predict the fate of a film,” he says of him.

Meanwhile Sarkar left Contract to start his own company (FatMan Films, later re-named Apocalypso) in Delhi, and Sharma was his first employee. “It was gruelling. He told me if I survived for a year, I would do this for a lifetime... if not, I’d be a grocery shop owner or a property dealer,” laughs Sharma. He worked across departments – costumes, props, wake-up calls, shoot, as well as pre- and post-production. “It was only three years later that I understood that I was an AD (Assistant Director),” he jokes.

Eventually, Sarkar’s production house shifted to Mumbai; this was the 18-year-old Sharma’s first time away from home. Those early

emotional reunions with his folks are the inspiration for some of his work, he feels. His mother wanted to see him direct Amitabh Bachchan one day, but passed away before he did the KBC promos.

Sharma who grew up in a refugee colony in Jungpura Extension, Delhi, filmed parts of Badhai Ho at his own school (Balvantray Mehta Vidya Bhawan). “The dadi, and the parents’ characters were based on my own. We lived in a joint family – the dynamics and banter have made it to my work. Moreover, the basic plot may seem unusual to a Millennial, but was not unusual in the past; “my grandmother and my grandmother’s mother were pregnant at the same time...”

“My grandmother had handed over all her valuables to her best friend – a Muslim girl called Rajjo – before escaping from Pakistan,” he adds. The ‘Google Reunion’ film, a landmark one for him, gave him an opportunity to tap into these stories.

IT ALL BEGAN WITH...

At 21, when Sharma made a short film called ‘Free Falling’ on a Hi8 camera, he felt he could direct ads. Two years later, Sarkar gave him a 10-second buy-one-get-one promo for Usha Fans to direct, and another for Marbel Candies (with Josy Paul).

So, Sharma and team come from the ‘Pradeep Sarkar school of emotional stories’. In the early days, the concern was they’d limit themselves to that type. “Aleya had faith we would crack the ‘style’ ones too,” he says, highlighting the need to defy slotting films into – humour, emotions, hair, beauty, brand specific.

In 2005, Aleya Sen (who worked with Sarkar too) and he decided to move on and start Chrome Pictures. “Aleya’s father (Niloy Sen) was with JWT so she was familiar with the ecosystem, and encouraged me to become a director. Hemant Bhandari, my childhood friend who worked with Shoojit Sircar, also joined us.”

For folks used to toiling day and night, the sudden lull was unnerving. “In the beginning, we got 10-15-seconders for Horlicks, Maltova and Boost. When Horlicks’



Memorable clips (from left): Google’s Reunion ad; Makemytrip.com’s Hotel ad and Havell’s ‘Wires that don’t catch fire’ ad film

famous 'Evang Gopang Japang' ad (directed by Sarkar) was to release in Burma, we needed to show a Burmese mother at the end – which JWT asked us to shoot. We requested them to give us an extra film for no charge (Haynes undergarments). The client liked it and paid production costs - the 'Kachchewali film' as it was known became our first popular one!" he laughs. Post Haynes, scripts started rolling in at Chrome. Kellogg's, Sonata Watches, Fastrack (with John Abraham) and Idea were among the earlier brands the firm made films for.

THE DIRECTORIAL PROCESS

"I don't read scripts; I hear them out loud to connect and visualise. If you see it in a certain way, your conviction can make others see it too," says Sharma about his process, going on to reveal that he doesn't rely on storyboards much. "The AD does make them, but then people bury their heads in printouts. I like to narrate. Before a shoot, I don't plan much, or write down shots. I simply ask for the set, camera and actors and they leave it to me," he explains.

Most of his ads are set to some exceptional music. He says, "I play some relevant music when I shoot, emotional films especially. But I don't give any music references to clients."

The emotional scenes in Google's 'Reunion' ad were filmed to Piyush Mishra's songs from Coke Studio, for instance. "Sukesh (Nayak) had Neelesh Jain from O&M write the final song. I wanted it to be nostalgic; the brand was a bit hesitant... finally, we got Mishra to sing it," he says.

Another memorable emotional film was Big Cinemas' 'Silent Anthem'. The use of slow motion and black-and-white imagery made it quite compelling. Is slow motion a common go-to for emotive ads? "Not always. In 'Reunion' nothing is in slo-mo, not even when they first face each other... except that last shot in the rain. In Badhai Ho, I shot the climax in high speed (to enable slo-mo) but when I was editing it I took it back to normal. The drama was already there; it would've become overtly melodramatic..." he says.

THE CHARACTER ARTISTE: GAJRAJ RAO

The puppy-eyed gent who plays 'the father' in Badhai Ho is adman Gajraj Rao. A career ad film director, Rao debuted as an actor with Bandit Queen and has since featured in films like Black Friday, Dil Se, Aamir and Talvar. Among younger audiences, Rao is known as the tech-challenged 'TVF dad'.

Back in the day, Rao, like Amit Sharma, worked with Pradeep Sarkar and eventually started production house Code Red Films with Subrat Ray. He was part of theatre group ACT 1 in Delhi, with Manoj Bajpai, Ashish Vidyarthi and Shoojit Sircar. While this is the first time he's being directed by Sharma, he has acted in numerous ads made by Praseon Pandey (of Corcoise Films) in the past. "It was a paid workshop for me on direction; I learnt what not to do on my set," recalls Rao.

While acting, Rao says he leaves the director in him at home, and shuts out the actor in him while directing. "I realised long ago that you shouldn't be both at the same time," he says.

Sharma and his partner at Chrome Hemant Bhandari had to convince Rao to take up this part, one that matched the lead in screen-time. "A month was a long time to be away from advertising. Also, I can't run or dance due to spondylitis, and this was a big role," he says, "but they had faith and reminded me that I do 12-hour shifts while directing. For Hyundai (Atul Kulkarni plays an army man in this ad), in fact, we shot for 18 hours nonstop at Rohtang." Other memorable ads from Rao's recent kitty include those



for Flipkart (including the 'Dolly Mashi' spot) and IndusInd Bank (with Boman Irani).

Did he have any other apprehensions during the filming of Badhai Ho? "Actors fear looking stupid; if it's a comedy it shouldn't be buffoonery and the emotional bits shouldn't be hammy. Cinema is a director's medium, and if the director is unsure, then I need to keep checking the monitor," he answers.

Rao says about the filming process, "On Day One of the shoot, I saw Amit's depth; there was substance in his narration. He ruled the set and his was the last word," adding, "While Mani Ratnam doesn't talk or explain much and Anurag Kashyap will have a whole thesis for your dialogue, Amit gives you the exact reason behind every scene." Rao knew Sharma as the 18-year-old AD working for Sarkar. "I remembered him as a flamboyant Delhi boy; I watched him

do great work as an ad filmmaker over the years. My perception changed completely while shooting. He knew exactly how a writer would react to various situations; his nuanced understanding was a revelation."

In Badhai Ho, he learnt how to create pauses in sequence: "It's difficult for ad filmmakers who are used to creating stories in 30 seconds - they're economical with pauses. When people lack confidence in their craft, they make it pacy."

'Character roles', that were commonplace in the '60s and '70s, have made a comeback thanks to the new universe of content created by Amazon and Netflix, Rao believes.

He prefers story-driven films to graphics-based projects. For instance, "shampoo ads are all about the hair going 'swish-swoosh' and flying this way and that - I can't tell stories there." He avoids such briefs even if the cost is losing the project.

How spontaneous a director is Sharma? "I do take hygiene shots but if something amazing and impactful happens on set, I use it. Spontaneity is crucial," he asserts, "Most films born out of research just die..."

But don't budgets limit the scope for spontaneity? "There may be client pressure but you can show them your way. It depends on the rapport. For SBI Life, I was shooting for Piyush (Pandey) Sir, with a couple in a car.

I needed 45 seconds to play out the song; there were constraints but Sir allowed it," he says.

Underscoring the fact that directors have to think on their feet, he says, "In the same film, we had to show rain on a running car. And the guy didn't know how to drive - (he fibbed in auditions!) - so we got the car on a low-loader and added water drums as we needed a constantly wet windscreen..."

DIRECTION IN THE ERA OF CONTENT

Isn't the advent of digital open season for directors looking to showcase their skills? Turns out, digital enables better showcase, but, counter-intuitively, the usual constraints persist. "Cutting painstakingly taken shots applies to digital too. The 'Reunion' film is five minutes long, but I was told people don't click when they see '5.0'. 'Make



(from left): Lifebuoy's Gondappa ad; Saregama Carvaan and J&K Tourism promo

continued on page 19 >>

ADIDAS

The Sporting Spirit

Conceptualised by Cheil WW India, this film is part of a campaign called **#TheRealKashmir**. By Sunit Roy

Adidas has been using cricket in its communication since 1998. However, of late, the brand has started exploring other sports (especially non-cricketing varieties) to create communications such as '#FanTheFire', featuring Nishchay Luthra, an Indian figure-skater. Once again, the global sportswear marketer has launched a digital film titled '#TheRealKashmir', paying tribute to the Real Kashmir Football Club (RKFC), the first team from the valley to play in the I-League. The campaign celebrates the passion behind forming the RKFC and making Kashmir the new football destination.

Through this campaign, brand Adidas takes up the Kashmir issue (the turmoil that has been prevalent in the valley for more than three decades) and explores the 'cultural bonhomie' - hopefully resurrecting in the region. Conceptualised by Cheil WW India, the film has been produced by Amir Uzefaa of DZU Films and directed by Daniel Upputuru.

'#TheRealKashmir' is a narrative shot from the point of view of Umar Mir - an octogenarian Kashmiri who has seen the beauty of the valley taken over by the unrest. The old man is an ardent football fan and has lived in Kashmir for the past 85 years. The film captures the essence of football and formation of the Real Kashmir FC in the valley.

Despite being visually impaired, the protagonist feels the change happening in the Kashmir valley through the game. It opens with a Kashmiri folk song - 'Neroo haa naujawano' - that inspires the youth in Jammu & Kashmir to strive to better their lives and reach for the skies. The film forces the viewer to question - if a visually impaired man can see what Kashmir is all about, why can't the rest of world.

Speaking about the insight on which the campaign is based on, Aneesh Jaisinghani - executive creative director, Cheil WW India, says, "Kashmir, is a big story, a football club from Kashmir is an even bigger story. A football club from Kashmir that qualified for the I-League (within two years of its formation) is a gigantic story. You don't ask for much more than this in advertising, to crack a campaign. We want this campaign to make a real difference and coax people into seeing 'The Real Kashmir'."



"The partnership with Adidas happened because of our common belief in changing lives through sports/football."
SHAMIM MERAJ

A NEW PARTNERSHIP

RKFC is just a two-year-old club and has been trading very cautiously. The team wants to be cathartic to the strife-torn valley. "Amidst all gloom, Kashmir needs a reason to smile and unite. The experience has been great. We have had our ups and downs. Basically, we built this club for the people. We want the people to cherish and we want the RKFC to be the heartbeat of Kashmir," says Shamim Meraj, president, RKFC and the editor of Kashmir Monitor, a local newspaper.

He adds, "The partnership with Adidas happened because of our common belief in changing lives through sports/football. We want to bring a positive change through football."



The digital film is the second leg of the month-long initiative to reinforce the story of Real Kashmir and effectuate positive change in the valley through sports. The traditional OOH was augmented with an over two-minute long digital film released on YouTube.

"The campaign includes the transformation of 'The Kashmir Monitor' that has brought the sports page to its front page and a series of pictures shot by renowned photographer Prashant Godbole. Godbole's photos show Kashmir through the lens of sports. These photographs will later be exhibited across many cities in India as a part of the campaign," informs Jaisinghani.

Speaking about the most challenging part of this media agnostic campaign, Jaisinghani says, "To ensure that various legs of the campaign came to life, the creative and the planning team did extensive research in the valley and met and spent a lot of time with the RKFC team to dig out insights about the impact of sports in the valley and how it can make a difference."

A CUT ABOVE THE REST?

Of late, there has been a flood of Kashmir-related imagery in Indian

ads - such as 'Kashmir: The Warmest Place on Earth', released by the Jammu & Kashmir Tourism Board, and 'Vaadi-e-Kashmir' - produced by water purifier brand KENT RO Systems. afaqs! Reporter asked the experts if the '#TheRealKashmir' campaign may involve the risk of becoming a blind spot for the consumer. This is what they had to say.

Nima D.T. Namchu, chief creative officer, Havas India, says, "While it is a story set in Kashmir, unlike other commercials, this one is going

beyond just waxing eloquent about its physical beauty and how warm and hospitable the people are. I loved the way it addresses the elephant in the room while celebrating the power of soccer to get people together."

While Namchu maintains that the idea of a sport bringing people together may not be a new one, he adds, "The context of Kashmir makes this a very powerful spot. They (Adidas and RKFC) have reiterated the unifying power of a sport and in doing so, made sure the brand has a role to play. Hopefully, this will inspire the powers-that-be. Remember how Nelson Mandela used rugby to bring the people of South Africa together..."

Sudhir Nair, founder and director, 21N78E Creative Labs, finds the campaign to be well executed. He says, "Of late, everything we have been hearing about Kashmir is all negative. Even in terms of advertising, my last good memory of Kashmir was the tourism ads in the mid-1980s - 'If there is a heaven on earth, it's here'. Millennials would have very limited knowledge of Kashmir in its prime and things that make the place unique. The film captures that essence and it surely makes you want to know more about this club." ■

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ONEPLUS

Infiltrating Consumer Minds

OnePlus' Diwali spot resembles **an ad for a networking app**. By Abid Hussain Barlaskar

Smartphone brand OnePlus' latest Diwali commercial leverages its fan-base and community following to infiltrate consumer minds. Usually, phone brands emphasise a classy feature with an in-your-face sort of message or build a story around it. However, OnePlus' latest ad doesn't talk about features and lacks a decent visual of the phone itself.

The ad, instead, rides on an idea of cohesion within the brand's user community which cuts across international boundaries. Members of the community have a OnePlus 'thing' in common which attracts others. The community, framed in the ad, delivers homely Diwali love to a lonely young Indian living abroad. The boy is invited to a meet up which is set up by his sister from India via her OnePlus friends.

Other players in the segment have also been mapping users - Xiaomi routes fan-meets via online forums while Apple keeps users stacked on various pretexts like FaceTime.

The ad, despite being a Diwali special, lacks high-voltage Diwali visuals - lights, new clothes, mounds of sweets and, of course, firecrackers.

We also glanced through communications from other brands who also released Diwali-special ads around the same time:

Alia Bhat clicked a selfie with her Nokia, Kiara Advani praised the fast-charging feature of her Oppo, and Vivo subtly praised its camera in a emotional story. Vivo also played the bringing-people-together card, in a different context though. And Huawei's Honor went ahead with a family 'groufie'.

With regard to the OnePlus community, bringing strangers closer seems like a thing for social media or online dating/get-together platforms like Tinder, for example, is a location-based social and dating app which helps people find love or other like-minded people and communities.

The communication in the smartphone category has mostly been occupied by features with each brand having a flagship model or a 'flagship-killer' of its own.

So why did OnePlus leverage its meetups and not the phone?

Vikas Agarwal, general manager,



OnePlus India, defines the OnePlus meetups as informal community events organised for users, mostly by the fans. Sometimes the brand also organises these, officially.

"These are organised by users who are core community members and have been with us for some time. Our idea is to understand users better. While most of our business happens online, we are conscious of having an offline identity as well. This helps us with end-user feedback," he explains.

Speaking about the communication being less about the brand and the phone, Agarwal says, "Brands concentrate on the product or the sales aspect. We did neither. Sales were never our priority in communication. It's mostly about promoting the product and educating users. We don't excessively talk about sales. In a way, we stay away from such communication. The entire idea of the ad itself came from community members."

"We are digital and our sales are largely done on a pull basis. Our

listen to its tech-savvy and demanding users and then concentrates on satisfying their needs.

Ameya Lokhande, VP, Happy mcgarrybowen, the agency that crafted the film, says, "During Diwali, most brands speak about celebration and homecoming. But there are people who have moved to different cities or countries and only a few can come home. We wanted to capture their emotions and how the brand can play a role in making their Diwali special too. After a couple of brainstorming session with the OnePlus team, we heard stories of community members who are abroad for work and are joining the meetups there. We realised this is something that truly stands out."

TURNING TO THE EXPERTS

Communications consultant Karthik Srinivasan is of the opinion that although most of the OnePlus films look like PowerPoint presentations turned into video and that the brand literally uses a press release from Counterpoint Research

The ad rides on an idea of cohesion within the brand's user community.

users buy the phone because of a recommendation, a review or digital visibility unlike brands that depend on omnichannel communication for top of the mind recall and offline presence. When we started out in 2014, we sold only through invitations. Each phone would come with three invitations which the user could share with others. Word of mouth is integral to our journey. That's why we concentrate so much on the community aspect," he adds.

In Agarwal's words, OnePlus

in the name of print advertising, this is perhaps the most emotive and expressive self of the brand.

"Most smartphones have now reached saturation levels when it comes to features - 3700 mAh becomes 4000 mAh, three cameras become four etc. Given all this, it makes sense that OnePlus is talking about its users and while doing so, showing what a closely-knit community they are across the globe," Srinivasan says.

"I own a OnePlus 5T and am



"Sales were never our priority in communication. It's mostly about promoting the product and educating users."

VIKAS AGARWAL

happy with the phone. The phone is not the absolute/incredible best in any one way but does everything on an above-average level. So, since there's nothing unique to shout from the rooftop, it seems obvious that they keep the branding subtle and focus on people using the phone and show how they have a thing in common - trust in a phone brand that is wonderfully satisfying. The selling point of the ad is the fact that so many people across the world have put their faith in a smartphone brand and like meeting up or discussing that brand trait," Srinivasan adds.

Ajay Gahlaut (ex-deputy CCO, Ogilvy India), says, "It is less of a hard sell sort of ad and more of what we today call 'content'. In this case, what works, in the end, is the product itself i.e. the phone. The good feature-price ratio is working for the brand."

"The ad in itself is just another story which others are telling too. It has its own emotional layering and it doesn't work too much. The only connect is the 'one community' idea and it aids other activities that the brand is carrying out. As a stand-alone ad it wouldn't do much, but it would lend support in conjunction with the other activities," Gahlaut adds. ■

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THE COLLECTIVE

Plan to Fight Sexual Harassment

Here's a copy of the **body's letter of intent**. By News bureau

In October 2018, afaqs! carried an article about an initiative called The Collective, essentially a group created by a few senior women in the Indian advertising, media and design industry, with an objective of fighting sexual harassment at the workplace.

Recently, Tista Sen, regional creative director, JWT, and founding member of The Collective, reached out to us with an update about this group. The letter of intent, as they term it, reads as follows:

The Collective

We are a group of women who love this business and have given it our all, for decades now and we will help create a safe work culture for women and men in advertising, digital and design agencies around the country. Reaching independent agencies is part of this initiative and we are looking forward to their co-operation, to make this a success.

We are not representing our offices as we embark on this journey. We are, in our individual capacities, representing each one of you out there who has borne the brunt of harassment. We now have diversity and legal representatives as a part of our team, to help us walk the path from intent to action.

So, what can you expect from us?

Let us start from the beginning. Let us talk about the problem.

What constitutes inappropriate

behaviour? What qualifies as harassment?

What are the current laws regarding the subject?

We will collaborate with agencies and industry bodies to raise awareness about sexual harassment through workshops in offices, and sessions at industry events. We will work with organisations to train their existing ICCs, so that the teams are fully equipped to deal with problems when they arise.

Last, but certainly not the least, we will take these awareness programmes to educational institutes as well. So that the next crop of youngsters walking through our doors are armed with the knowledge of what is acceptable and what is not.

Let's move on to the solution, then.

Whom should you reach out to, when faced with harassment?

Write to us at **hello@collective.in** and someone will reach out to you and help.

Our website, **www.thecollective.co.in**, is currently under construction.

Going forward, it will serve as a database of POSH committees from advertising, digital and design agencies around India.

So no matter where you work, you can contact the right people, quickly and confidentially.

The website will also provide a guide to facilitate writing a complaint that captures relevant information in a



clear manner. We know it is easier said than done, but you should know you're not alone. And that silence is not an option.

If you are an organisation, work with us, join hands with us, be a part of the solution. We are all on the same side here.

This cause needs your participation and support as much as it does ours.

That is why we call it The Collective.

Signed:

Tista Sen, regional creative director, JWT, Kainaz Karmakar, chief creative officer, Ogilvy West, Swati Bhattacharya, chief creative officer, FCB Ulka, Deepa Geethakrishnan, national creative director, Lowe Lintas, Delna Sethna, chief creative officer, Law & Kenneth Saatchi & Saatchi, Ashwini Deshpande, co-founder director, Elephant Design, Malvika Mehra, founder and creative director, Tomorrow Creative Lab, Alpana Parida, managing director, DY Works, Preeti Vyas, chairwoman & chief creative officer, Vyas Giannetti Creative, Shagun Seda, executive creative director, DDB Mudra, Pallavi Chakravarti, executive creative director, Taproot Dentsu, Lulu Raghavan, managing director, Landor, Aazmeen Kasad, advocate and professor of Law, Deepa Shankar, diversity and inclusion consultant.

- Facilitators: Pallavi Nayak, Sakshi Choudhary ■

feedback@afaqs.com

clear manner.

Your ICC or POSH committee remains your first port of call when faced with harassment.

They are bound by law to investigate the matter fairly and promptly.

However, if for any reason whatsoever, you find yourself unable to approach your internal committee or you feel that your genuine complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily, write to us.

What can we expect from you?

If you feel you have been wronged,

<< continued from page 16

Weaving a...

it say 1.59 or 2.59', I was told. The 'Jammu and Kashmir' film came to be known by its song 'Sahibo', written by a Kashmiri IAS officer. I was told to make it in two minutes, but the song took it to five..." explains Sharma.

Framing, art, costumes, sets, actors' expressions - one deep dives into the details in ad films. "I've learnt everything from advertising, specifically precision, detailing and the technical aspects," he says. In advertising, films are usually shot in linear format unlike in feature films, where all scenes that go with a particular set are shot in one go.

Advertising also hones you well on the casting front. "I usually never get anyone till the last moment. And I love it when actors break my own first impressions," he reveals, adding that people from theatre tend to be fearless and malleable.

Speaking about his experience with marketers over the years, Sharma is of the view that they really do believe in "the value added by the director" today. Interestingly, marketers' involvement in the film making process and "ownership" of the ad film is higher today. They're also more accommodating of the director's vision.

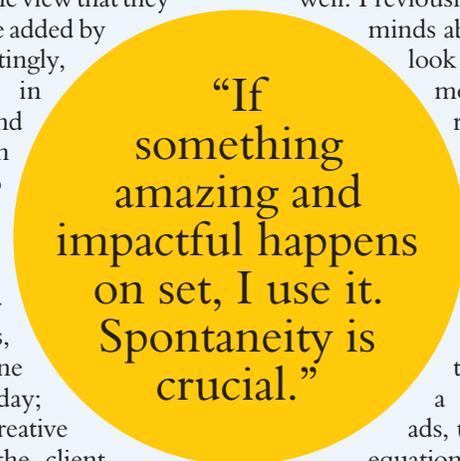
Recalling the final film for Amazon's Chonkpur Cheetah campaign, he says, "I wanted to change someone in the cast on shoot day; O&M Bangalore's Azaz (creative lead Azazul Haque) and the client Sumit Kapoor (brand marketing head at Amazon) agreed..." Nowadays, servicing folks also understand the value of a shot, the 'extra 5 seconds', the music, etc. and gun for the director's demands to be met.

Today, the audience landscape has changed as well. Previously, people would make up their minds about giving a film a shot by the look of the trailer; today, "word of mouth is crucial; the audience really has to watch a film and like it first. This is true not just for small films but for big starrers too..."

Of course we asked Sharma to compare the process of directing an ad film with a feature film: "In films, the director and writer have a husband-wife relationship. In ads, the two have a one-night stand equation."

What's next for Sharma? He's already back to directing ads. He's also busy prepping for his next feature film, a football biopic produced by Boney Kapoor. ■

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ARROW

Celebrating 25 years of being shirt makers, Arrow (a part of Arvind Fashions) released a digital film - The Best Is Yet To Come.

Creative Agency: What's Your Problem Brand Solutions



LIFEBUOY

Lifebuoy's latest campaign focuses on the importance of hand hygiene, with the backdrop for the pitch being festivals celebrated by a vast number of people.

Creative Agency: Lowe Lintas



COCA-COLA

Coca-Cola has rolled out its Diwali campaign featuring Anupriya Goenka and Ayushmann Khurrana. The ad urges people to make Diwali special for someone.

Creative Agency: McCann Worldgroup



ONEPLUS

Smartphone brand OnePlus' latest Diwali commercial leverages its fan-base and community following to infiltrate consumer minds.

Creative Agency: Happy mcgarrybowen



VICKS

Vicks' latest ad is the second edition of the '#TouchOfCare' campaign. This tale brings to light the real story of a girl named Nisha who's suffering from Ichthyosi.

Creative Agency: Publicis Singapore



ADIDAS

The global sportswear marketer has launched a digital film titled '#TheRealKashmir', paying tribute to the Real Kashmir Football Club (RKFC).

Creative Agency: Cheil WW India



TITAN

Titan Octane's new campaign - titled '#BeASport' - is a light-hearted take on masculinity, and aims at busting the macho myth.

Creative Agency: Ogilvy – Bangalore



IXIGO

Travel and hotel booking aggregator ixigo's latest campaign, for its loyalty programme 'ixigo money', comes as a relief to all those travellers who book their tickets online.

Creative Agency: Hakuodo India



OPPO F9 PRO

This Diwali, #OPPOF9Pro Starry Purple takes you on a heart-warming discovery of a family's unconditional love for their adopted daughter. It further asks 'What is your #BestDiwaliGift this year.'



GHADI DETERGENT

In its latest communication, Ghadi Detergent takes up dignity of labour as its 'cause' and flushes out preconceived notions about day-to-day jobs being of a 'lower grade'.

Creative Agency: ADK Fortune



VODAFONE

The brand's latest ad under its '#LookUp' campaign urges viewers to celebrate Diwali with each other rather than with devices.

Creative Agency: Ogilvy



VIVO

Have you ever come across a photo that floods you with emotions? One such photo became a miracle in the life of a father and daughter in Vivo's '#PhotoOfYourLife' campaign released on this Diwali.



BAJAJ ELECTRICALS

The consumer durables' latest campaign '#GiftAFestival' pays an ode to the 'mother' who cooks all year, and urges consumers to give her Bajaj Kitchen Appliances this festive season.



HONDA ACTIVA

The brand's latest campaign 'Sau mein se sava sau' aims to promote new class leading features of Activa 125 while leveraging on trust and legacy of brand Activa.

Creative Agency: Dentsu One



HONOR

The cellphone brand's latest campaign hits all the right emotional notes and shows you that Diwali is the time for not only untangling lights, but also relationships.



MAGIC MOMENTS

Magic Moments' latest campaign features the brand's new faces - Jacqueline Fernandez and Kartik Aaryan - targeting aspiring millennials who want to live each moment to the fullest.

Got some great campaign that has been published recently? Upload it on afaqs! for the world to see. Visit: www.afaqs.com/advertising/creative_showcase

JOB SWITCH.in



Post: Junior Visualiser
Company: MX Advertising Pvt Ltd
Profile: If you are bursting with great ideas, and are looking for an opportunity to release them, then you are at the right place. We are looking for people who think fresh, keep a close watch on the latest trends in advertising. You will have a ball at work! To join our on-site team for one of our prestigious client in the hospitality and leisure space, based out of Worli.
Exp: 2 to 3 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: hr@mxadvertising.com

Post: Junior Copywriter
Company: GM Modular Pvt Ltd
Profile: GM AD is looking for a copywriter who can conceive upon an idea to graciously execute in form of digital or print design, also working with their passion for writing to expand and improve. Should be able to use creative instincts to develop engaging concepts. The role will involve extensive thinking, being creative and writing exceptional content for advertising
Exp: 2 to 4 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: careers@gmmodular.com

Post: HTML Developer
Company: Thoughttrains Designs Pvt Ltd
Profile: A web designer/developer is responsible for understanding design shared to them in PSD format, later HTML coding of the website. S/he should be involved with the technical and graphical aspects of the website
Exp: 4 to 6 years
Location: Mumbai and Navi Mumbai
Email: hr@thoughttrains.com

Post: Account Manager (Client Servicing)
Company: Quotient Communications Pvt Ltd
Profile: Sales driven strategising, day-to-day interaction with Clients, understanding briefs and

executing them in the most creative, yet solutions-oriented manner possible. Alongwith ensuring client satisfaction, you will also be expected to ensure continued and increased billings on your accounts. The ability to pitch for and develop new clients will be a huge plus.
Exp: 5 to 9 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: team@quotientcomm.com

Post: Digital Visualiser/ Sr. Visualiser
Company: Eggfirst Advertising and Design Pvt Ltd
Profile: Ideate and conceptualise creative advertising ideas that are clear, persuasive, and original. Work to raise the bar on the quality of creative output for brands/ deliver high quality creative work. Brainstorm ideas and concepts with other team members.
Exp: 1 to 2 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: hr@eggfirst.com

Post: Copy Writer – Hindi
Company: Moving Pixels Pvt Ltd
Profile: Be responsible for taking a client's advertising brief and generating original copy ideas that grab the attention of the target audience. This can include creating straplines, slogans, body copy, jingles and scripts.
Exp: 5 to 12 years
Location: Ahmedabad
Email: hr@movingpixels.in

Post: Business Development Manager
Company: Greysell Marketing Promotions Pvt Ltd
Profile: Planning and execution of business strategies, generating database, making calls, converting that into meeting followed by pitch and conversion.
Exp: 3 to 5 years
Location: Andheri, Mumbai
Email: hr@greysell.in

Post: Media Manager-Digital
Company: Vermillion

Communication Pvt Ltd
Profile: Experience of search, programmatic and social marketing. Reached advertiser goals through the media planning, buying, optimisation and analysis. Proficiency on variety of tools including Google AdWords, Google Analytics, DBM, DCM, TTD, Mediamath, TURN, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Omniture, Monitors.
Exp: 1 to 2 years
Location: Gurgaon
Email: hr@vermillion.net.in

Post: Copywriter/Senior Copywriter
Company: Imagic Communications Pvt Ltd
Profile: Conceive, develop and execute with good ideation. Thinker with ideas/concepts.
Exp: 3 to 5 years
Location: New Delhi
Email: mail@imagic.in

Post: Branch Head - Delhi
Company: Tek Advertising and Management Pvt Ltd
Profile: Operation and Business Development under BTL and Event Management category within Delhi NCR, Punjab, Haryana, West UP, etc.
Exp: 5 to 8 years
Location: New Delhi
Email: contact@tekadvertising.com, gaurishankar@tekadvertising.com

Post: Branch Head (Advertising and Media) - Pune
Company: Tempest Advertising Pvt Ltd
Profile: Be responsible for overall operations and profitability of the branch. Revenue generation through new account development and key account management. Developing relevant business proposals. Monitor market intelligence within the industry in terms of newcustomers, new projects, and competitive activity.
Exp: 2 to 4 years
Location: Pune
Email: careers@tempestadvertising.com

Post: Group Sales & Business Development
Company: Coconut Media Box LLP
Profile: Generate revenue sales through sponsorship and event sales to various corporates and clients. Sale plays/shows/events/artists and other services to various corporates, social group, Premium Clubs, Event Management Companies, etc. Facilitating the entire sales process; lead generation, closing sales
Exp: 0 to 4 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: payal@coconutmediabox.in

Post: Content Writer
Company: IdeateLabs
Profile: Research, write and edit content for marketing communications including but not limited to domain monetisation and online articles, newsletters, videos, webinars, infographics, blog posts, web site content and more. Collaborate with design, digital, search and other teams to develop compelling, often unexpected, content plans.
Exp: 1 to 3 years
Location: Mumbai
Email: careers@ideate.email



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 Email: shubham.garg@afaqs.com
Aakash Bhatia
 Ph: 09650544122
 Email: aakash.bhatia@afaqs.com
 jobswitb@afaqs.com

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>> MOVEMENTS/APPOINTMENTS <<

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

MARKETING

Apple

Apple has appointed Nokia's Ashish Chowdhary as country manager for India. The news was confirmed to afaqs! Reporter by an Apple spokesperson. Previously, Chowdhary was chief customer operations officer (CCOO) at Nokia. He had joined Nokia in 2003 and has handled various international roles ever since. He was also Nokia Networks' country head - India, from 2003 to 2007. Chowdhary will take charge at Apple in mid-January 2019.

Dabur India

Dabur India has appointed Kapil Ohri as head, digital marketing. Previously, Ohri worked with Arvind Lifestyle Brands as head digital marketing (digital COE). Before working with Arvind Lifestyle Brands, Ohri worked with GroupM as partner and head - digital of GSK India for Mindshare. Prior to that, he worked with OgilvyOne Worldwide as senior planning director (digital marketing).

Havmor Ice Cream

Havmor Ice Cream, a wholly-owned subsidiary of South Korean conglomerate, Lotte Confectionery, has appointed Anindya Dutta as its new managing director. Dutta will be the first MD after Lotte acquired Havmor in Dec 2017. Dutta will be taking forward Lotte's vision of expanding its business footprint in India. His mission will be to leverage the legacy, the category expertise and brand equity that Havmor enjoys in the ice cream category. He will also aim to rapidly

scale up the business towards a national leadership position and to evaluate and build synergistic expansion into adjacent categories.

Maspar Industries

Kamal K Mishra, former associate vice president and head of marketing, Greenply Industries has rejoined as chief operating officer at Maspar Industries. He is presently based out of New Delhi. Prior to Greenply, Mishra was working at Merino Group as general manager and head of marketing. He has worked with companies such as Crescent Communications and Ideas Creative Services in the past.

Nestle

Akash Deep Batra has quit as head of brand communication, Corporate Brand and NHW at Nestle. An alumnus of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore, Batra started off as a software engineer at tech giant Infosys.

Havas Life Sorento

Havas Group India has appointed Delon Mascarenhas as senior vice president (VP) of Havas Life Sorento - the group's health and wellness division. In his new role, Mascarenhas will drive business and client service strategy leveraging Havas Group's integrated capabilities. Mascarenhas' appointment is effective immediately, and he will be based in Mumbai. Mascarenhas has more than 17 years of experience and joins Havas Life Sorento from BBH India, where he held the position business director.

MEDIA

Network18

Network18 Digital (N18D), the digital arm of Network18, has announced the elevation of Ranadeep Chakravarty to marketing head of Firstpost, News18 and in.com. In his new role, he will lead all marketing, communications and strategic partnerships for Firstpost, News18 (English) and in.com. He will also oversee the public relations and trade communication activities for the three brands.

The Q India

QYOU Media recently announced that it has appointed Krishna Menon as chief revenue officer of The Q India (aka: The Q). Based in Mumbai, Menon will drive the advertising and sponsorship revenue

in one of QYOU Media's fastest-growing markets. Menon has nearly two decades of sales and marketing experience in the Indian media and entertainment industry. Prior to joining The Q India, he served as chief marketing officer at Sakal Media Group and general manager at Network 18 Media.

Amagi

Cloud-managed broadcast services and advertising solutions company Amagi announced the appointment of Stephanie Lee as head of sales - APAC, to expand its footprint in the region. Lee has over 15 years of experience in managing regional sales functions for technology services companies in the digital content and media space.

DIGITAL

Flipkart

Binny Bansal has announced his resignation as chief executive officer of Flipkart Group, effective immediately. He has been an important part of Flipkart since co-founding the company, but recent events risked becoming a distraction and Bansal has made a decision to step down. His decision follows an independent investigation done on behalf of Flipkart and Walmart into an allegation of serious personal misconduct. He strongly denies the allegation.

Twitter

Rahul Pushkarna has joined Twitter as head of content partnership, APAC. Pushkarna announced his appointment on Twitter. Previously, Pushkarna worked with Sony Pictures Entertainment as director, sales development, Asia. Prior to that, he worked with 21st Century Fox as head, digital distribution and licensing, India and Southeast Asia. In the past, Pushkarna has also worked with Microsoft, NBC Universal Media and HSBC.

Matrimony.com

Matrimony.com, the online matchmaking and marriage services, recently announced the appointment of Sankara Narayanan as chief operating officer to spearhead the match-making business of the company. Narayanan has rich experience in general management, leadership, finance, technology and change management. A business leader, he brings over 30 years of rich and varied experience leading large teams across telecom and finance domains.

Adobe

Arati Bam, former marketing head, Adobe Digital Media Solutions has recently quit the company and joined Apple India as marketing lead, education. She is presently based out of Bangalore. Bam carries 16 years of marketing experience in the hi-tech industry which covers areas such as digital and on-ground engagement to build awareness, run media and analyst relations, pipeline creation, joint marketing with partners and executive engagement.

ADVERTISING

Leo Burnett India

Leo Burnett has announced the promotion of Rakesh Hinduja to chief operating officer, West. He will continue reporting to Dheeraj Sinha, managing director, India and chief strategy officer, South Asia and RajDeepak Das, managing director, India and chief creative officer, South Asia. Hinduja has been leading Leo Burnett's head office - Mumbai's - operations as the executive director and branch head.

Digitas and SapientRazorfish

Himani Kapadia, chief executive officer of Digitas and SapientRazorfish, has recently stepped down to pursue other interests. Kapadia brings 22 years of diverse experience across business, finance, strategy, technology and media. She was instrumental in setting up DigitasLBI in India, and served as its managing director before moving on to other global roles within DigitasLBI. Prior to Digitas, she was working as an assistant VP at Reliance

Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group.

Publicis India

Publicis India has appointed Neeraj Bassi as managing partner and chief strategy officer. He will be based in New Delhi. Along with Srijia Chatterjee - MD, Publicis Worldwide, India and Bobby Pawar - MD & CCO, Publicis Worldwide, India - Bassi will help in fostering collaboration and delivering on the Power of One synergies across the Groupe.

YAAP

Rainmaker Ventures backed YAAP has appointed Deepak Singh as their chief creative officer. Singh will be based out of the Mumbai office and overseeing all creative functions across the YAAP network in Mumbai, Gurugram, Hyderabad, Shillong, Dubai, Singapore and Jakarta. He will report directly to the board of directors at YAAP. For the past three consecutive years, Singh has led a young team from The Social Street, which has gone on to give an exhilarating performance.

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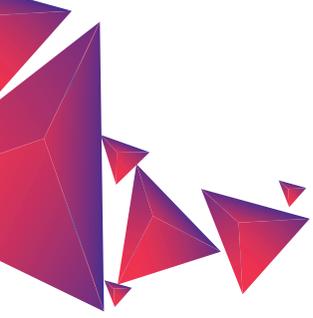


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*Representative agenda subject to change.

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