

# Understanding Creativity With Reference to Some Selected Successful Advertising Campaigns

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**Abstract** - The paper examines different successful advertisements and the themes associated with them. The paper highlights the different dimensions of creativity. There is no doubt of the fact that there are tons of advertisements that we watch or read daily but few of them are able to leave a lasting impact on our mind and still fewer have the power to be recalled and recognized. This created a necessity and the ability to understand the reasons that leads to an advertisement being remembered and recalled and get translated into brand recognition and greater profits. A number of success stories in different product categories are included in this research paper to understand the different dimensions of creativity.

**Keywords:** creativity, dimensions, successful campaigns, audience preferences, advertisement campaigns

## I. INTRODUCTION

Advertisement is a promotional tool that is widely used by every profit driven organization due to its effectiveness and vast reach. It is a paid form of communicating with target audience about the product, service, or an idea through different mediums of communications such as television, newspaper, publicity, online media, etc.

To make an impact on the minds of the audience the advertisement must be creative; it should be creative enough to hold on the viewer's attention and should generate the audience focus to remember the advertisement for a longer period of time. Creativity is the act of turning new, innovative and imaginative ideas into reality. Creativity is characterized by the ability to perceive the world in new ways, to find hidden patterns, to make connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena and to generate solutions. Creativity brings in something new or modifies the old in better way. An advertisement is said to be creative when it conveys the meaning, utility, attributes, objectives and other features of the product or an idea in such a way that the viewer would love to see it till end or remember it for long time.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

[1] *Belch E.M. et al (2012)* stated, Advertising is the soul of the marketing and there are different ways to execute the advertisements on various platforms in the form of straight sell or factual message, Scientific /technical evidence, demonstration, comparison, testimonial, slice of life, animation, personality symbol, imagery, dramatization, humor, combinations. Some guidelines must be kept in

mind while presenting the commercials on any medium like the message should not over emphasize the creativity and the primary purpose of the message should be communicated, the type of viewers and their preferences for the content of an advertisement must be known properly, the advertisement should be trustful and tasteful, the generational trends must be known, message should be convincing for the target audience and customers should be able to give the feedback to the advertisers.

[2] According to *Smith et al. (2004)* creativity works as an interface between divergence and relevance in an advertisement. The combination of factors of divergence and relevance give birth to an effective creative advertisement. Determinants of a divergent advertisement can be emphatic perspective, provocative questions, future orientation, fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration and resistance to premature closure, unusual perspective, synthesis, humor, richness and colorfulness of imagery, fantasy, expression of emotion. The relevance of advertisement includes meaningfulness. Creative advertisements can also be used to educate general public about important societal issues such as result of drink and driving, smoking, etc. Also, the culture of the region should be kept in mind while delivering the message.

[3] *Young et al. (2014)* recognize some of the characteristics of the creative advertisements as originality, attractiveness, persuasiveness, and effective strategies. Advertising is not as easy as it used to be because people are more aware they want to know the strategy behind the advertisements they are watching and demand that what advertisers are showing should be true and clear but often this customer awareness becomes a barrier in advertising

and there are limited effects of advertising, a creative advertisement cannot force the customers to buy the products and the purchasing power of customers is also limited.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology adopted for this paper is based on secondary literature. Various research papers, newspaper, magazines were referred. A number a websites and channels were also visited to collect the relevant information.

### IV. FINDINGS

Creativity is limitless. We have tried to explore dimensions of creativity in selected advertisement campaigns in order to understand the reasons why they stood out of the crowd and made a lasting impact that was seen on the views and response that these advertisements generated.

- Uniqueness: Advertisements should include the USP or unique selling proportion of the product, service or company which can convince them to switch brands.
- Novelty: Sometimes even creative advertisement but with the same old story would fail to grab the attention until it has some newness in it so to differentiate between many advertisements the content should be new in comparison to existing advertisements.
- Amusement: The advertisement which provokes a feeling of laughter, smile or shock are said to be amusing.

[11] Flipkart an Indian e-commerce company came with advertisements made by “Happy Creative Services” an advertising agency featuring kids dressed as adults was found to be very amusing. In this noteworthy campaign kids acted, but the voiceover was of adult. Flipkart has produced more than 20 such short videos of around 10 to 30 seconds. All such advertisements use amusement theme to catch their viewers’ attention. In one such video two girls are secretly talking about what is trendy when one tells other that *‘if it is trendy it is on flipkart’* which is also a tagline of flipkart. The advertisement not just entertains audience it states its objective clearly that all fashionable accessories are available on flipkart and due to its short duration people don’t generally skip the advertisement. The YouTube videos of flipkart advertisements have generated more than 3 million views as on 2020 across different channels and audience find this new way of communication very interesting and engaging. Some other creative themes are:

- Attraction: the advertisement should be able to catch the attention of audience, it can due to creative designing, famous celebrity or powerful headline, that can grab the attention of customers

as people read the headline fast and if the headline is catchy, they read or watch the entire advertisement. As David Ogilvy said “on average, five times as many people read the headline as read the body copy. When you have written your headline, you have spent eighty cents out of your dollar.”

- Sympathy& Emotional Touch: Deliver what is expected by the customers and add a touch of emotions which can be related to the product, this helps the company to make personal relation with the customers so they will return again to services and products with which they are emotionally connected.
- Memorable: The purpose of advertisement is to instill a feeling in the audience which they never forget referencing an emotion that already exists.
- Truthful and Tasteful: People have a lot of concern about products so it is important to build a relationship of trust which can be done by showing past results of customer satisfaction or mentioning your corporate ratings.
- Humor: Marketers can include humor or something witty to be able to provoke laughter but humor requires a research of the target audience because it should be used carefully without hurting anybody’s sentiments. According to a study published by journal of marketing in 1933, “when the humorous images and audio are included with advertisement, they are more likely to secure audience attention, increase memorability, overcome sales resistance, and enhance message persuasiveness”.
- Solution of day to day problems: This kind of advertisement is used to influence the psyche of customers and make them realize that the product is instantly needed in their life and it can solve a long persisting problem.
- Visual elements: The visual element of the advertisement generally dominates as compared to other parts of advertisement. Color, fonts, composition, imagery are parts of visual elements of an advertisement. One of the aspects of visual element is featuring any famous personality. The advantage of celebrity endorsement is people quickly recognize them and their social status enhance the credibility of the product.
- Graphics & Animation: Exciting graphics and animation can be added to give a special visualization. There can be 2D, 3D animation, jingles, music, illustration style, voiceover, cartoons etc.
- Originality: When people see that you have something original to offer them, they will have a difficult time resisting it. Customers are more

aware and demand original product as well as commitment in advertisement.

- Fantasy: Fantasy typically means something which is not true, that is only imaginable. Some advertisements trigger the desire of the audience give a hope to fulfill it and catch their attention.

[10] Most of the advertisements of AXE use fantasy as a theme for their products. In one such advertisement of AXE Dark Temptation a body spray product of Unilever PLC, it is shown that after spraying chocolate-smelling deo the person became 'chocolate boy' and women are following him everywhere while some even took bite from his body. The advertisement was found to be vulgar, indecent and repulsive by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) of India which resulted in eventually pulling it off the air. This example gives an important lesson that though the advertisement may not be found indecent by general public but there are other factors too such as culture and government regulations which need to be kept in mind while executing any promotional campaign in a particular country.

- Future orientation: The advertisements which ensure future benefits are often accepted by the customers easily. Future orientation is shown mostly in insurance products advertisements, automobile advertisements and also in hair care and body care products.
- Social responsiveness: Advertisements showing moral concerns, awareness and welfare of society at large are usually concern over wasting of resources. Such advertisements are able to penetrate easily in the minds of audience.
- Provocative questions: There can be some provocative questions in advertisements which leave the audience to think over or take action.

[4] One of the popular initiative for water conservation "Start a LittleGood" by Hindustan Unilever shows a shower in a village when people saw it they started quenching their thirst instead of taking bath, it kept running even when half of the village drink from it, then a voiceover tells that it is the same amount of water a city dweller took shower that half of the village could quench its thirst. The purpose of the advertisement is to question the audience that are they in any way concerned about the water that they are wasting or the people who are facing severe scarcity of this essential need. The short film created by Ogilvy Mumbai on water problem, generated 79 million views as on 2020 on YouTube. Some more dimensions of creativity are:

- Convincing: The positioning of advertisements should be strong enough to move the masses in order to attract new customers as well as retain existing ones.
- Relatability: An advertisement should list out all the benefits that the customers can get after using

the product or service and they should be able to relate the story present in the advertisement.

- Happiness Quotient: Advertisements should focus on providing best experience to the audience. The advertisements should be capable of making the customers happy about the idea they are watching or reading.

[7] Fevicol an adhesive brand, "Pidilite" started 'Sofa' campaign on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2019 which depicts 60 years of the brands existence in India. The film draws parallel with the changing paradigms of social and cultural scenario in India highlighting the journey of a sofa over 60 years in typical families of India changing its ownership and dealing with adverse situations such as storm, rain with passing years but the sofa remains strong as ever. The story closure shows that Fevicol is integral in making any furniture. Fevicol is not just an adhesive but a cultural product existing in India for more than 60 years and one of the most trustable adhesives. The background voice which use vernacular language makes people happy about their local dialect. The small advertisement has a collection of culture, bonding, diversity, unity which leaves a deep impact on audience.

- Fun element: Advertisement with entertaining images, audio or video, challenge their audience to get grin and chuckles. It not only connects them with audiences, but also get them talking, sharing, and thinking positively about a brand.

[6] Advertisements by Make MyTrip an Indian online travel company started a campaign in 2017#think International, think make my trip! The 45 seconds video featured Ranveer Singh, Diana and Alia Bhatt. Alia and Diana wanted to know where does Sam (Ranveer) belongs to, so they asked him if he booked hotel for Paris trip and show him some good deals offered by MMT and the same happened Ranveer in a fit of rage and blurred some words in Delhi style which led the duo to conclude that Sam is from Delhi which made audience laugh out loud. The YouTube video generated outstanding 55mn views as on 2020. This series MMT produced many humorous videos featuring the couple, the audience was very delighted with those funny clips and it was found to have huge brand recognition through celebrity endorsement.

- Vagueness or Abstractedness: some advertisements are not directly related to the main idea of product they are somehow weird stories but there are evidences that in some cases audience may like them. They are vague or abstract to grab the attraction of the audience by amusing them with unusual content.
- Comparison: when a company is offering similar to the competitor so it ultimately depend upon t the company and how well the USP is featured in the



advertisement without naming or demeaning the competitors' product.

- Artistic: Advertisement should be short and crisp with effective communication. To make the advertisement artistic the culture, general habits, perception could be associated with the life of audience.
- Call-to-action: The purpose of the advertisement is not just to plant the seed of inquisitiveness in the minds of customers but to move forward and do something about the offer. There should be a sense of urgency and let the customers know that the right time to purchase the product is now.

The field of advertisement is not solely confined to the communication of company's objectives or product information; it can be used to spread awareness, promotion of health and fitness, social cause, charity, managing customer relationship, appeals. This all can be clubbed in to social awareness advertisement. Powerful music, well-worded text, images can be used to evoke feelings in viewers to promote societal changes. Such advertisement builds retention among viewers and also reaches to masses easily.

Some of the successful social advertisement campaigns:

[5]Hindustan Unilever limited a subsidiary of Unilever PLC which is a British-Dutch multinational company introduced a social campaign named "chamki: the story of an unborn child" for its product Lifebuoy. Bollywood celebrity Kajol who was the brand ambassador of P&G launched this campaign. The advertisement was designed to encourage hand-wash practice and the whole advertisement is in a form of a story told by an unborn child-chamki who want nothing but to live up to 5 years. In India statistics shows that around 6 million children, one in every 20, die every year before they reach the age of 5. 44% of these deaths occur in their first 28 days of life while the half of the deaths are the result of diseases like diarrhea and pneumonia which can be simply prevented by a simple practice of hand washing and using safe drinking water. After the campaign was launched people were excited to share their views on this advertisement and hence the company was able to follow 6500 conversations on twitter. It was honored with Grand Prix at International award for innovation in media. The YouTube video of chamki generated over 15 million views making it the most watched video of 2015 on you tube. The PR reached to whopping 180 million people of India. The advertisement catches attention of people towards a common practice of hand washing which can eradicate serious problem like diarrhea and pneumonia in children. The advertisement made an emotional touch with to-be-mothers and encourages them to adopt healthy practices.

[8]One of the social campaigns "Touch the Pickle" by P&G (Procter and Gamble) was for the product Whisper which

makes sure that the women do not need to fear their femininity. There are a lot of taboos and superstitions related to menstruation in India. As the girl hits the age of puberty there are a lot of restrictions imposed on them like not touching the drinking water, not entering temple and not touching the pickle is one among them because it is an assumed belief that the pickle will be spoilt, so P&G started a campaign to challenge such misunderstandings and encourage them to talk about the challenges they face during their menstruation. The short film of about 30 seconds shows a girl touching the pickle, participating in sports, wearing white clothes and some elder women cheering her thus it shows that this is a normal process. The result of advertisement campaign is that it has bagged India's second ever Glass Lion Grand Prix at the Cannes International festival of creativity. The YouTube video generated 2 million views as on 2020 on the official channel whisper India. The video was so popular that after it many such video was made by P&G bursting taboos of menstruation. After this campaign P&G encouraged thousands of women to share their stories of taboos during their menstrual period on their official Face book page and reward the best stories and also invite celebrities for open discussion and burst taboos with scientific evidences hence established an emotional relation with target audiences.

[9]Another successful campaign by P&G is "Touch of Care" for its product Vicks. The story begins with some emotional moments shared between a mother and her daughter, who was adopted by her mother after her biological mother died, the daughter wanted to be a lawyer because she felt that her mother did not get the 'basic human rights' as it is revealed later in the advertisement that her mother was a transgender. The campaign was a social awareness program launched to make people realize that transgender are also humans and they can be mother too, motherhood is a behavior which can be followed by anyone. The films also touched the topic of adoption. The lady who played the role of mother is Gauri Sawant an activist for the rights of LGBTQ community and a transgender and a mother herself. The campaign was welcomed with so much of positive responses that P&G made more stories in this series under the name of 'touch of care'. As a result of this campaign the YouTube video of advertisement generated 10 million views in the year 2020.

## V. CONCLUSION

A good advertisement should make you think, laugh, talk about it, or at least make you look at it twice. It is an accepted fact that there is a huge number of advertisements aired through a large number of media vehicles and not all advertisements can be a big hit or create the same effect on audience. It takes a lot of effort, time, money to make a single advertisement so the risk of failure of an advertisement should be minimised and this can be done by making advertisements different and creative. Creativity is

uniqueness and differentiation in the advertisement that the audience is able to relate and remember. The different dimensions of creativity like fun, fantasy, social responsiveness, futuristic orientation, pictorial use of graphics, animation and other visual elements are explained in relation of the successful advertisement campaigns. There is no doubt of the fact that people value the content and designing of the advertisement, they interpret the meaning in the message and thus advertisers should ignore weird or incomplete stories. When a meaningful message is thrown to the audience, they love to feel fun or be emotional about it. Without creativity advertisement is not effective because there is no attention seeking part left while creativity using technology can create a long-lasting effect on audience. Creativity in an advertisement can spark excitement and generate the much needed relevance for the customer, which increases the likeliness for the prospective customer to get engaged. By giving a number of successful examples from the world of advertising, this research paper re establishes the fact that there is immense scope of creativity or out of box thinking in the realm of advertising.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Marketers and advertisers should keep on exploring and incorporating creativity in advertisements and other promotional campaigns to help customers identify the right product by relating to the theme adopted in the campaigns. Creativity creates brand recognition and creates a brand image in the minds of audience for a long period of time. Creativity is a personalised approach wherein advertisements are made taking care of preferences of customers they should be designed in such a way that appeal to the audience to pay attention, initiate an enquiry about the product or take action and buy the product or service. Creative message can be in various forms like storytelling, showing fun elements, running social awareness campaign, challenge to general public thinking, linking the advertisement with culture or may be featuring customers and showing their stories about the product usage.

### Limitations and Scope of future studies

The study collects various themes and examples from the world of advertising using secondary literature and draws insights to highlight the dimensions of creativity in some successful advertising campaigns. The same dimensions can be used to conduct future studies.

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