

# Changing Trends of Creativity in Indian Advertising

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**Abstract –** This paper highlights upon the changing approach of visualisation and concepts adopted for persuasion and appeal in advertising. It also explores and scrutinizes the various components of modern advertising such as multimedia, internet, online advertising, digital advertising, mobile advertising, and social networking. The study also attempted to evaluate the advertising campaigns of few assorted brands to understand the application and relevance of cartoons and caricatures in modern Indian advertising, its creative approaches, different visual elements and effective use of various modern age advertising tools and innovations in recent advertisements. Advertising is about striking the right note of the many marketing chords that informs and persuades the consumers to buy a product, service or an idea. Advertising in India is also thriving with the traditional advertising trend with the latest innovative advertising strategies. In a small span of time, Indian advertising has occupied a niche for itself to place it on the global map of advertising which started with the need to sell by town criers and hawkers, was the oldest mode to advertise. As marketers look for ways to keep pace with technology and media, advertising trend have changed dramatically. Newer technology has shifted the focus from mass promotions to target audiences. The Indian advertising industry is witnessing a sea change from the very time of its inception into the Indian society and culture. The age old advertising trends in India had made a parallel practice with print advertising and other innovative trends like television commercials, outdoor, radio, internet, online advertising etc. The mode of advertising had shifted its focus from traditional media with the advent of new mediums of digital advertising. The new media has altered the trend of one way flow of information to interactive sessions, where the consumers have also become a part of the process. So instead of being force fed advertisement, users are now getting empowered to choose from a diversified set of new brands.

**Keywords:** Creativity, Indian Advertising, Multimedia, Internet, Online Advertising, Digital Advertising, Mobile Advertising, Social Networking Consumers, etc.

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## INTRODUCTION

The growth of this particular media attracts the attention of the advertisers as more productive source to bring in customer. With the vast accessibility and reach it has become one of the important parts of our daily life. Various online business magazines has come up in recent time to keep a close look at the changing trend of our lifestyle, consumer needs, fashion, food habit etc. Advertising viewed or consumed on mobile phones or tablets is increasingly an inherent component of online advertising today. The new age advertising has opened up new communication options for personalized customers. More prospective customers are going online every day and they are spending more on internet rather than traditional media.

Modern advertising that flourishes with development of technology and research had led to increased sophistication in advertising in recent time. Digital

enhancements of visual images were now possible with the help of various tools. The advent of digital advertising with internet and websites opened up new possibilities for the consumers as well as the advertiser. A new means of shaping the brand image is now possible with the introduction of digital media, where every page of the website is filled up with advertisements. A synonym for internet advertising, new media advertising has brought a revolution in the field of advertising and initiated a new dawn in branding and promotion purposes. It is a powerful medium of advertising in today's highly competitive world targeting a huge online audience.

Online media advertising is one of the upcoming and growing segments in Indian advertising sector. It is a form of promotion that uses the internet for the purpose of delivering the messages. It may also be defines as a form of marketing communication on the internet intended to persuade the internet users. It is one such. Medium which is accessible by anyone to

everyone, that too in any part of the world (Chunawala, 2011). It is very interactive compared to the traditional means of advertising, since the consumers can pick and choose the information, sales message and buying modes that fit their individual needs. With the advent of technology, the internet has positioned itself as one of the very few media alternatives that can be used for almost all advertising purposes across all possible market segments. It has become a major medium for communication and entertainment and is equally important when compared with the traditional media such as print and electronic media. It has revolutionized the advertising scenario as well, by introducing international brands and made them more acceptable, especially in urban India (D'Souza, 2009. Desai, 2012. Gupta, 2012). It is one of the cost effective way to advertise a product which made easy accessibility for an advertiser to reach the consumers with a click of a mouse. With increasing number of channels and websites, advertising tends to keep track of the consumer's need and changing buying patterns.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

From the hand painted hoardings to digital advertising, creativity in Indian advertising made a spectacular transition from its early stage to recent time. With innovative and creative execution of the advertising message, irrespective of theme, advertising appeal, visual elements, and execution style, a complete makeover is evident with widespread usage of various technique and rendition in recent time. Better techniques of visual representations were utilised to create positive appeal about the product. Line drawings were replaced by digitally enhanced visuals to make advertisements more lively and attractive. Fascinating presentation of visual elements such as photographs, illustrations, drawings, visual dramatization of the advertising message etc. arouse interest about the product and establish positive association with the consumers (Gupta, 2012. Halve and Sarkar, 2012. Halve, 2012). Since print advertising in India had always remain to be the most widely used advertising medium for its consistency and effectiveness, different other mediums such as outdoor, transit advertising also implemented and utilised the flexibility of various creative concepts in printed format. As print advertisements in newspapers and magazines began to cater both local and national audiences with general and customized products, stirs the interest of the urban readers with various forms of advertisements that began to channelize a new sensibility for new concepts in advertising in India.

Advertising scenario in India has altered in many ways with the changing trend of technical and conceptual changes. The shifting mode of creativity and visualisation in advertising is well evident with the changing concepts and visual elements such as illustrations, photographs, colour and typographical application, that were adopted in various advertising campaigns throughout the different phases of the development of advertising in India. For example the

print advertisement of Limca, a soft drink brand shows the changing trend of visual revision. In its early advertisements, it has utilised the USP (Unique Selling Proposition) of the product with the aid of caricatures of human figures to support the visual with simple rendering of the typography and visuals in both halftone and colour. But in recent time, the visual elements and execution technique adopted by the brand experienced a complete makeover of the overall presentation of the advertising message in terms of conceptual and technical approach of the selling proposition. The print advertisements now features photographs of live model, enhanced typographic design with an appropriate headline and unique typeface against a refreshing colour scheme with new elements surrounding the model (Figure-1).

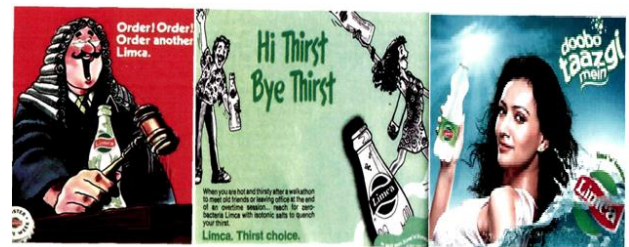


Figure 1: Print advertisements of Limca

The transitions from manual lustrations and painted advertisements to the adoption of actual photographic representation of the products and models also impelled a new set of response and appeal among the Indian consumers. Striking dramatization of visuals and pictures in multi-colour began to appeal the customers in a different mood. For example, the print advertisement of Prestige Pressure Cooker, made a complete visual transition from its early set of advertisements with simple execution of visuals and texts to create immediate impact about the USP of the product with effective execution style and innovative concepts to cater the changing Indian lifestyle. (Figure 2).





**Figure 2: Print advertisements of Prestige Kitchen appliances**

Widespread usage of rich technology and new tool of advertising also began to generate challenging concepts and innovative ideas in Indian advertising. Today, graphical manipulation of images and artwork opened up new possibilities in promoting a product, service and idea using different design software and visual effects tools. All forms of print advertisements, outdoor and transit campaigns were now viewed with latest visualisation style and techniques with the advent of multi-colour printing technology (Kapoor, 2011. Naqvi, 2012. Pinto and Sippy, 2008). The shifting tendency of creativity in Indian advertising is also evident with the changing trend of advertising appeal and response of the consumers towards the product. Different direct and indirect approach of visuals, themes, creative appeals and conceptualization techniques were utilised by advertisers to attract the attention of the consumers. Combination of captivating graphics with imaginative and thematic contents created surreal environment for the consumers to establish an image that distinguishes them from their competitors. Many more brands have translated their marketing proposition into verbal and visual devices with creative ideas, which is an extremely challenging task to meet the objectives of advertising in recent time (Poonia, 2010).

The advent of computer technology and introduction of graphic software for image manipulation has created new facade for Indian advertising. The advertising message is now communicated with new innovative

ideas, visual effects and rendition to instill humorous proposition. For example, the print advertisements of Happydent Wave Gum (Figure 3), has creatively crafted the symbolic idea of liquid filled quality of the gum with the bizarre appearance of human gesture to create quick response about the quality of the gum. It advocates to humorous appeal of the product with catchy graphical manipulation to express the idea for brand (Shah, 2009).



**Figure 3: Print advertising campaign of Happydent Wave**

Since the study focuses on the background of the importance and application of humour in advertising, there are many creative Indian advertisements envisaged in recent time which made a direct entry into the mind of the consumers with humorous proposition. Nonspecific images were notably replaced by digitally enhanced photographs and pictures using multimedia, showing specific real people and subjects from real life situation. Conceptual ideas of interesting and entertaining storylines were now used in the advertising campaigns, uses images and visuals associated with the USP (Unique Selling Proposition) of the product. They distracts the audiences from the stereotyped representation of illustrative images to a more intense, indirect and exciting visualisation. Such entertaining situation is well depicted in various print advertisements and TVC with memorable slogans and advertising jingles. The print advertisement of Colgate Toothpaste and Happydent White (Figure 4), presents a perfect example of using an interesting and indirect approach of visualisation, other than unadventurous visuals to tell the consumers about the selling proposition of the product. The immediacy of the visuals bestows brand image with fun and excitement and help the brand to attain its selling proposition. Such unusual depiction of the advertising message makes the advertisement interesting and memorable, which had transcended the stereotyped visual depiction of humour.





**Figure 4: Print advertisements showing humorous suggestion**

But it is also interesting to note that the changing trend of using such creative approaches sometimes disgrace our social norms with unethical advertising also, which contradicts the acceptance of such visuals for selling a product. Distorted images and inappropriate visualisation to establish humorous appeal sometime creates abusive impression in the mind of the consumers. Even though the humorous representation of the advertising idea encourages visual indulgence about the product with the consumers, it sometimes becomes disapproval and insulting to accept the contents of such messages.

The inappropriate caricature and mockery become insulting and deplorable for both the brand and the product which might get rejected by the consumers. Humour in advertising does not always enhance the visual appeal of the consumers. The exaggeration claims of the advertising message also brings offensive and repulsive attitude towards the product. The caricatures and cartoons used in the advertisements were sometime discourteous for the viewers and make unexpected condition for the consumers to violate the norms of social values. An inappropriate visual element distorts the brand image of the product and makes the product unsuitable for consumption. In a recent case, teaser campaign used to promote the Ford Figo car in India causes controversy among the people and the Ford Motor Co has apologized for making such exaggerated claims about the car's USP (Unique Selling Proposition) by using caricatures of celebrities. The trio advertisement showcased three different situations using celebrities from different professional fields (Figure 5).



**Figure 5: Print advertising campaign of Ford Figo**

**Cartoons and Caricatures in Modern Indian Advertising:** Cartoons and caricature had made a new dimension for visual gratification and appeal in modern Indian advertising. With technological and conceptual changes, new innovations in the field of advertising had prompted new target audiences. Fictitious characters, puppets, animated mascots, anthropomorphic animals, are some of the few visual components that had used the animation technique in recent time to make better visual impression on the mind of the consumers about the product with humorous appeal (Article, 2011). The vast domain of modern Indian advertising is offering an immense potential for the growth of animation programming with computer generated image in both 2D and 3D animation. It provides two main areas of work: designing animated characters and adding special effects to advertisements. With special effects and animated humour in commercials, the audience is automatically glued to watching the same programme instead of flipping channels between breaks.

Television commercial made a tremendous entry into the Indian advertising arena with motion pictures, animated films and advertising jingles. The application of animation technique used in television commercials made a narrative approach of putting the message across the audience with animated images, had explored a new genre of advertising in India through storyboard illustrations. For example, the television commercial of Clinic plus Shampoo, featured a mischievous and playful animated character of a girl named Chulbuli, who propagates hygiene through clean and healthy hair in the Indian television commercial in the early days of its inception in a subtle flat 2D treatment of animation technique (figure 6). But in recent time, a more profound and realistic approach of animation is established with multimedia and 3D animated film with better visual reliability about the presentation of the advertising commercials (Advertising Effectiveness, 2012). The new set of animation is well evident in the TVC of Perfetti Van Melle confectionery product Mentos Mint. The product attract the consumers with its tagline 'Dimaag ki Batti Jala De', which had triggered the evolution of mankind from monkey to man. Caricatures of three characters - a monkey, a man and a donkey were used in animated film format to convey the idea of the changing intelligent quotient of human kind, enlightened by Mentos Mint.



**Figure 6: Animated character Chulbuli of Clinic Plus Shampoo**

The unlimited scope of accommodating creative talent and the capability for experimentation in the advertising world has created a niche space for animation. The concept of animation in brand endorsements gives room to creative experimentation and the flexibility to make the character in both 2D and 3D formats to do things that are beyond the reach of humans. The impact and success, however, depends on how effectively it conveys the brand values and the ideals that consumers would associate with. Animation provides an important identity to the brand and helps fixing it firmly in the imagination of the targeted consumers. The developments and application of animation had challenged the monotony of the static characteristic of the presentation in recent time and have provided a new domain for creative advertising in India. For example, Fevicol has re-invented the humour appeal of the brand image from the static 2D logo in its recent animated TVC with the playful gesture of the 3D images of the two elephants, celebrating the power of bond, ushered a new trend of humour Indian advertising. With emerging competition, application of cartoons and other fictitious characters in advertising through social media platform propels greater brand association and loyalty for a product. The current trend of conveying the advertising message and brand attributes through various online innovations such as interactive games, blogs, viral and many more to come has rendered a new forum for branding a product.

## CONCLUSION:

The study had established the facts, that the conceptual and technological development has brought the consumer and the product to a position of invisible reliability. Advertising had succeeded to persuade and motivate the consumers with better visual relish of the advertising messages. It is evident from the study that brand mascots and different cartoon characters play an important role in creating brand image with its humorous appeal and execution. It is been observed in the study that sophistication of advertising appeals and application of high quality graphic images had changed the perception of humour in advertising. Direct and indirect approaches of humorous representation made a new genre of creative persuasion which was limited to print advertisements with minimal visual appeal in early phase of the development of advertising in India. The changing mode of visualisation is noticeable from the study of various advertising campaigns which had explored the advent of computer generated image and multimedia, that had surpass the changing trend of creativity from the traditional two dimensional presentation using caricature, cartoons, illustration and photographs to 2D and 3D animation. It is also pertinent in the study that use of cartoons and caricatures in the form of animation in Indian television commercials and digital advertising in recent time had showcased a parallel attribute with hand drawn

cartoon characters, which we can see with the outstanding advertising campaigns of the brand Amul, which had explored the outdoor advertising campaign since the time of its inception to the new media of advertising in recent time with digitally enhanced animated image of the brand mascot to disseminate the information in humorous means with positive attributes for the products. It is been observed from the study that the accessibility of new age techniques such as multimedia, animation and computer generated images had not overstated the traditional media of advertising, but had helped retain their individual characteristics to embody humour appeal.

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