

Surrogate Advertising Strategies: as an effective promotional tool for Beverage companies

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ABSTRACT

These days there are several advertisements on T.V. Channels, newspapers and OOH media in India, creating awareness and persuasion of beverage companies, especially IMFL (Indian made foreign liquor). there are in the phase of mineral water, Soda water, etc. Some IMFL companies sponsor various awards and sports events to push their wares.

Key words: Surrogate, advertising, media, beverage.

I - INTRODUCTION

The term 'surrogate' is defined a 'substitute' i.e. anything which takes position of another. It can be a person, human, product, etc. In case of surrogate advertising, a product is used to push a certain different product. Especially products (for which direct advertising on mass media is prohibited by the laws of land of most states) are advertised with use of substitutes like mineral water, soda, Mega cricket team clubs, friendliest clubs or music CDs.

Why Surrogate advertising is needed

Advertising takes various shapes with the level of surrogate advertisements varying from country to country, people to people and product to product. In certain parts of the world, open advertisements of these products are allowed while some counterparts imposing strict restrictions on them. The basic purpose of these types of ads is mainly to popularize the brand and create a slot of consideration in the potential consumer's minds. Permit us now read the dynamics of it.

II - SUCCESSFUL SURROGATE ADVERTISING STRATEGIES

1. Target Consumers should receive information about surrogate advertisements.

This is the most important consideration to be restrained in mind while planning for surrogate advertisements. The impingement of these types of advertisements is only effective and judged when it arrives at the target set in the way it is said to be. TV audience should not just regard it as an ad for a mineral water or soda and should have the power and the skills to run behind that artificial layer to ensure the real product otherwise advertisement will lose its shock. Some of the examples where viewers need to regard beyond the shown picture area-

a) Beverage companies advertise in the form of surrogates of music CDs. They are actually advertising for their beverages.

b) They also use substitutes like soda and packages drinking water to advertize. It is actually promoting its beverage brands to the consumers.

It is important to notice the literacy and general sense of consumers to travel that mile behind the silver cover. Mostly it is seen (also in India) that target customer base has an adequate knowledge on the dynamics of surrogate advertising and are able to place the hidden products. This point stands as a start advantage for the companies.

2. Surrogate advertisement will receive a part in consumer purchasing decision.

Generally advertisements which showcase the merchandise in a different prospective and highlight the attributes as never been seen before retain the customer part of intellect. Only there is catchy in the example of surrogate advertisements.

Here the product is prohibited to be shown- its attributes or characteristics to be portrayed is near to impossible. Their role in impacting the consumer buying decision should be subsequently limited, but surprisingly, it is found that they have a higher role in impacting consumer purchase decisions as compared to general products' advertisement owing largely to viewer's interest and sense of capturing the message. This fact is likewise corroborated by members. It is ensured that company investing heavily in surrogate advertisements is witnessing more sales rates as compared to those investing none or comparatively less. You will be surprised to know the ad budget of beverage companies stretches in the ranges of hundreds of millions of bucks per annum. The only reason understood of investing such high sums is the fact of the recovery through this in the coming future. After all, it's a 60000 core plus revenue generating market.

3. Respondent consumers should accept a reasonable idea of the leading brands of these wares
 Maybe this factor does not seem so significant, but gives a sort of a comparative push to the merchandise. Marketers of some not so well known brands or new brands use this proficiency. They get the advertisements having a comparable creativity and a message delivery element as the leading brand in that category. Consumers immediately identify and refer to it as the top notch aspiration brand to face forward for next purchase and that is what alters the scenario of the perception of these brands which leads to subsequent sales. Equally there is no actual product shown, just the message component and the creativity factor gives it that equality appeal.

III - MAINSTREAM LIMELIGHT ON SURROGATE ADVERTISEMENTS

Over the decade, there has been a detectable transformation in the creation and display of ads. It has more come into the area of identification and acknowledgment by the collaboration of great

names (celebrities) with these adverts. There have been instances of association of big names like M.S. Dhoni (cricketer), Shahrukh Khan (actor) etc. with these brands, giving them a quick glare. Also, these advertisements are displayed with an element of discipline, manhood, power, character, etc. embedded in them, which makes them stand apart and changes the negative perception of people regarding these products. It is because of this that now these beverages are considered more of a social drink rather than drinks for the "bad" men. Also the mediums on which these types of advertisements are active are quite striking.

E.g.

1. Television – This is the most common mode of advertisement. As we have discussed earlier in the article, substitutes are used to portray the concerned product. Advertisements of beverages are significant example of these.

2. Online advertising- This has become one of the widest medium for use after the boom of technology and internet globally. Companies can find easy audiences here, which fall in the potential target segments. This medium also has advantages of lower prices and more target customer's effective reach. Beverage Companies promote their products extensively through this medium be it social networking platforms or community forums.

3. Billboard Advertising- In the outdoor world far from the silver screen of moving images and sound, billboards are used for these type of advertisements. For the brand to choose this path, they need to make a strong brand recognition among consumers. More often than not the name of the brand along with the icon from the TVC or the message are used which creates the immediate recall among the consumers of the brand products if they are exposed to it earlier in one shape or the other.

4. Sponsorship of live events/shows/fiestas-Companies partner with music concerts, live appearances, college feasts, etc. for sponsorship to give their brands the much needed visibility. Generally beverage is perceived as a youth oriented product with that group forming a big portion of its client base. These types of shows, concerts, etc. are a good deal more attractive to youth and are created keeping their interests in judgment. Knocking on that component, companies sync their name with these types of programs to give them the benefit of popularity or fame of the product it associates with.

It is not that surrogate marketing is a tough means of marketing or illegal selling. It is simply the most creative way, if marketing that shows the product even without disclosing it. As potential marketers or even viewers, we necessitate to be conversant with this land as we are exposed to it as part of our everyday life. Instead of dismissing it and counting it as “not our business”, we can create opportunities not just for us, but also for many others in this zone of concern as it is most vulnerable to development. Opportunities are hidden everywhere just like the products in surrogate advertisements. If we are able to understand and tap those, we are the ultimate victors.

Examples of such advertising are,

1. Bagpiper: The advertisement of Bagpiper Club Soda is shown in the place of whisky.
2. Royal Stag: Royal Stag instead of advertising whisky shows Music CD and Mega Cricket in the advertisement with theme “Make it Large”.
3. McDowell's No.1 Platinum: Indian Cricket Team skipper MS Dhoni advertises for the surrogate product soda and asserts it as “The No. 1 Spirit of Leadership”.
4. Hayward's 5000: The brand is advertised through soda and packaged drinking water. It is well known that Hayward's 5000 & 10000 are whisky and beer brands respectively due to wide availability in market.

5. Imperial Blue: This whisky is advertised by showing music cd's in the advertising. I.e., Imperial Blue Music CD's. This advertisements assert in a story line that “Men will be Men”. It symbolizes Imperial Blue as for masculinity.

6. Royal Challenge: The leading cricketers are shown in advertisements, at the same time music is played. It also advertised with the brand of mineral water.

7. Officer's Choice: The brand is advertised by showing mineral water and soda. It is shown that 'OC' is the brand choice of officers and dynamic people.

(Suryawanshi SA, 2013)

IV - CONCLUSIONS

Surrogate advertising is just the more creative way of marketing that shows the product even without disclosing it. It can be applied effectively to push and promote products which are not granted to advertise by law under the umbrella of other products which are allowed to advertise by law. You cannot ignore the beverages market because it's a 60000 core revenue generating market. Surrogate advertisers should ensure that the target Consumers should receive information about surrogate advertisements and respondent consumers should throw a reasonable idea of the leading brands of these wares. The government wants to ban such advertising for selling of liquor and tobacco. More creativity is required so that, the message shall be delivered without violation of norms

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AUTHOR BRIEF



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