

Unit 12

Other Forms of External Business Communication

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12.1 Introduction

In the previous unit, we studied the principles of writing business letters. We also studied types and format of a business letter. Letters are basically used for communicating with stakeholders, employees, customers, suppliers and media. However, when the organisations have to communicate with masses such as consumers, media, society, etc they use advertisements.

Pepe Jeans is the market leader in the international premium jeans wear segment with the highest market share of 25 per cent. In an interview Chetan Shah, Country Head, Pepe Jeans London was asked "How has your advertising and communication complemented the brand Pepe Jeans?"

He replied saying, "Pepe Jeans London has a global advertising campaign in all the countries, wherever it has presence. It believes in giving away a consistent brand message across the world wherein

localisation of advertising campaigns distorts the brand identity. All Pepe advertising campaigns portray the brand identity, represented by the youth who speak of an attitude that says 'I am what I am'. The visuals are strong and captivating, creating a deep impact on the target audience.

Pepe Jeans London has signed Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo who plays for Manchester United as the Pepe face for 2005. Ronaldo is paired with supermodel Jessica Miller. Ronaldo is dubbed as the next David Beckham. He is not only a sensational footballer, but also a youth icon. He is fashionable and handsome, and has a great physique. He carries a unique captivating style. Pepe Jeans saw an exciting opportunity in him. We all know that Jessica is setting the European ramp on fire. They perfectly gel well with Pepe's characteristic young attitude.

The advertising campaign featuring Cristiano Ronaldo and Jessica Miller rolled out globally including India from April 2005. Challenging, provocative and visually stimulating visuals of Pepe's advertisement campaign highlight skylines on billboards, and are also seen in print media across the country."

(Source: [http://www.exchange4media.com/brandspeak/brandspeak.asp ? brand_id=75](http://www.exchange4media.com/brandspeak/brandspeak.asp?brand_id=75))

This unit helps to answer the following questions:

What are the types of advertising?

How AIDA format is used in advertisement campaign?

In this unit, we will study the use of press release as a tool for business communication. We will also study significance of corporate and product advertisements in business communication.

Objectives:

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- define press release
- list the elements of a press release
- identify the types of corporate advertising
- explain AIDA format

12.2 Communication with Media through News Releases

Press releases are “brief, printed statements that outline the major facts of a news story in journalistic style”¹. Today, it is better known as a “news release”, as the story may be carried by other media also, such as television. A press or a news release is a form of “publicity”, which is part of public relations. Public relations involve maintaining goodwill and projecting a favourable image of the organisation among the public both internal for example, employees, stakeholders, etc and external for example, consumers, general public, competitors, etc.

A news release tends to be more credible than advertising, which is a paid form of communication (refer section 12.3 for more about advertising). News releases have great impact on public opinion, it is therefore important to write news releases carefully, making them as interesting and as newsworthy as possible.

The purpose of a news or press release is to announce new developments in your company to the media, which in turn carries the story for the benefit of the public at large. For example, new developments could be anything ranging from new products and services, to new appointments and promotions, new facilities, involvement in community projects, awards and achievements, joint ventures, seminars, mergers, takeovers, etc. As the news release communicates all this to the public at large, it must be accurate, timely and complete.

12.2.1 Format and guidelines for a press release

A news release must be made appealing to television producers and to the editors of magazine and newspaper.

The general format of a press release includes the following elements:

Dramatic opening sentence or paragraph

The first sentence or paragraph must highlight the new development as something unique, as a first time achievement or as a Unique Selling Proposition (USP). A USP is a unique feature specific to a particular company that the competitors do not have and which sets you apart.

¹ <http://www.answers.com/topic/press-release>

For example, the opening sentence or paragraph could start by saying “For the first time in history”. That is first talk about an innovative new technology introduced by the company, the company’s development in a backward area or the fact that a new entity has been created.

Answers to key questions

The press or news release must provide key information that answers questions such as ‘Where?’ (i.e. location), ‘When?’ (i.e., timing), ‘Why?’ (i.e., reason or justification) and ‘How?’ (i.e., strategy). This information must be provided right at the beginning.

For example, if a new factory is being opened, in the press release you can mention details such as ‘where it is located’, ‘why it is being opened’ and ‘when it is opened’.

If a new product is being launched, ‘when is it being launched’ and ‘why is it launched at the specified time’ and ‘how does the product perform compared to other products in the market’.

Benefits to the community

The press release must also explain whether the new development will have a positive or an adverse impact on certain sections of the community.

For examples, if the company is launching a car, it can mention the eco-friendliness i.e. high mileage, less carbon emission, etc., of the car in its press release.

Company credentials

The press release must emphasise the past credentials, reputation and proven strengths of the company, so that it enhances credibility.

For example, the fact that the company has launched similar products or embarked on similar projects in the past must be highlighted, as evidence of the company’s ability in that area.

Some specific guidelines that you can follow while writing a press release are as follows:

- If the matter must be released immediately, write “For immediate release” on top of the press release.

- When writing captions, the first letters of all the words in the caption must be all capital letters. The caption must gain the reader's attention. Hence, it is a good practice to write it in one sentence.
- The first paragraph of the press release must state the name of the city, state, month, day and year.
- The body of the press release must elaborate on the information contained in the introductory paragraph, answering the questions "where", "when", "why" and "how." The body must include more than one paragraph and the concluding paragraph must summarise the key points of the release.
- The release must also be made visually appealing, with proper use of spacing between paragraphs, appropriate font size, type face, etc. The text must be formatted attractively and the length must not exceed two double-spaced pages or approximately 400 words. It must also be proof read for typos, spellings and punctuation mistakes.

12.2.2 Sample press release

Table 12.1 depicts a press release sample.

Table 12.1: Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE	
Contact : Patricia Wells	Magic Moments (logo)
DY & R Public Relations	Mumbai – 560 046
(080) 2521 2777 Extn. 309	
NEWS RELEASE	
MAGIC MOMENTS GIFT GALLERY	
COMING TO BANGALORE	
Mumbai, March 2008. A Mumbai based retail chain that specialises in greeting cards, music, stationery and gift items, plans to enter Karnataka this summer, with at least ten stores, a majority of them being located in Bangalore city.	
Mr. Stanley Pinto, owner and president of Magic Moments Gift Gallery, announced this week that potential franchisees are looking at three sites in the North Bangalore area. Two other stores are expected to open in Mysore and Mangalore.	

“What we have done is to take four businesses that are traditionally found in separate store settings and to combine them under one roof”, says Pinto. He is of the opinion that the stores will attract heavy traffic, since customers find one-stop shopping very convenient.

Magic Moments specialises in 1) Greeting cards for all occasions and festivals; 2) Music audio cassettes and CDs of all types of music, including Indian and Western classical, rock, pop and jazz; 3) Stationery, including hand-made paper, wrapping paper, note books and note pads; and 4) Gift items such as curios, wall hangings, costume jewellery and scented candles.

Mr. Pinto, now 30, opened the first store in Mumbai at the age of 20. He began franchising three years later. Today, Magic Moments has 25 stores and 100 more are under development, through master franchise arrangements.

What makes these stores so successful? “Their unique range of products, special ambience, high profit margins, low overheads and focus on customer service have all contributed to the growth and popularity of the chain”, according to Pinto.

“While some local stores may have a few similar products, no other national chain can match us for the sheer breadth of merchandise and quality of service”, claims Pinto. “The gift business is booming and we have carved a niche for ourselves in this area that will be difficult to challenge”, he says.

The press release shown in table 12.1 includes the following:

- Criticality of the release that is mentioned at the top of release i.e., ‘FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE’.
- Name and telephone number of the person who can answer questions, on the top left corner.
- Date, venue and summary of the most important information in the opening paragraph.
- An emphasis on reader benefits, namely ‘shopping under one roof’.
- Important information placed in the beginning of the press release’s body.

Activity 1:

Identify any new development in an organisation of your choice and prepare a news/press release on the same, following the guidelines discussed in this unit.

(Refer section 12.2 for detailed guidelines.)

Self Assessment Questions

1. A press release comprises brief, printed statements that outline the _____ facts of a news story in _____ style. (Pick the right option)
 - a) Major, journalistic
 - b) Major, professional
 - c) Minute, journalistic
 - d) Minute, professional
2. The purpose of a news or press release is to announce new developments in your company to the _____.
3. The press release must also explain whether the new development will have a positive or an adverse impact on certain sections of the community. (True/False)
4. The _____ of the press release must elaborate on the information contained in the introductory paragraph.

12.3 Communication about the Organisation through Advertising

Advertisements in the mass media such as magazines, newspapers and television are used by organisations to communicate with prospective customers, both about the organisation, as well as its products. As depicted in figure 12.1, advertising may therefore be categorised into two broad types.



Fig. 12.1: Types of Advertising

Let us now discuss each of these two types of advertising briefly.

12.3.1 Corporate advertising

Corporate advertising can be defined as advertising that sells the organisation to its various public. In this case, the organisation is the product. Corporate advertising is more a public relations activity than a form of advertising, as it has no immediate commercial purpose. Its aim is merely to inform and build a positive image of the organisation in the society. While the overall objective of corporate advertising is to project a positive image of the organisation as a whole, some of the specific objectives are as follows:

- ***To create positive attitude towards the organisation*** – Sometimes, consumers may have negative perceptions towards an organisation, based on the belief that the organisation is not a responsible corporate citizen. For example, public may believe that the organisation is responsible for environmental pollution or destruction of forests and other natural resources. In such a situation, corporate advertising aims to create a more positive attitude towards the organisation, by correcting these beliefs.

For example, there was a negative perception among consumers that Nike was using child labour in some of its factories, to manufacture sports shoes. Nike made use of corporate advertising to overcome these perceptions.

- ***To project the personality, culture and values of an organisation*** – As India's leading industrial groups, the Tatas and the Birlas have been the oldest and the most frequent users of corporate advertising, to communicate about their entrepreneurial ability, culture and values. Even countries may use this form of advertising to achieve similar

objectives. For example, Dubai advertises to project an image of itself as “a land of investment, sports and investment opportunities”.

- ***To safeguard corporate reputation*** – This form of corporate advertising is done when the company is going through a crisis.

For example, during the pesticide controversy, Coke released advertisements featuring Hindi film actor, Aamir Khan going to the Coke factory and laboratory, along with the Managing Director, declaring that Coke was safe to drink and free of pesticides. This helped to an extent to restore their damaged reputation.

- ***To make an organisation better understood*** – Sometimes organisations go in for this form of corporate advertising, in order to make themselves more visible and to make consumers aware that they have a presence in several areas.

For example, the United Breweries (UB) Group ran a corporate advertisement to highlight the fact that UB was not only in breweries, but also had interests in healthcare (hospitals) and education.

The ITC Group also advertises to highlight their presence in areas as diverse as cigarettes, hotels and ready-to-eat foods.

- ***To project the organisation as socially responsible*** – This refers to corporate advertising for a social cause, highlighting the company's role in social development. The objective is to communicate the company's corporate social responsibility.

For example, the UB Group ran an advertisement with the message “Drinking and driving don't mix”, to educate public that drinking alcohol and driving is not safe.

12.3.2 Types of corporate advertising

Corporate advertising not only has different objectives, it has also become wider in scope, going beyond its traditional role of image building. Today, it encompasses many different types of advertising. Figure 12.2 depicts the various types of corporate advertising.

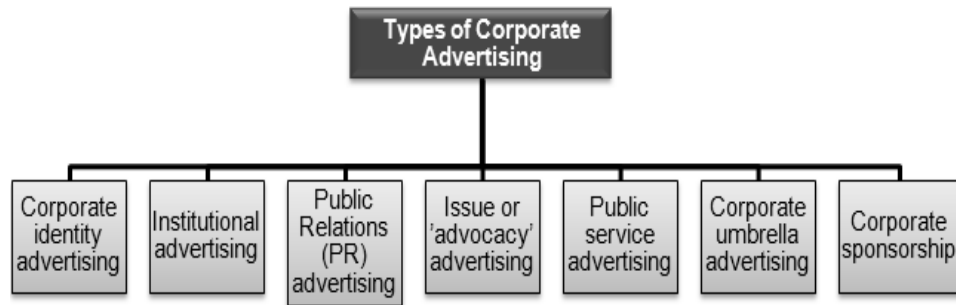


Fig. 12.2: Corporate Advertising Types

Let us now briefly discuss the types of corporate advertising depicted in figure 12.2.

1. Corporate identity advertising – This type of corporate advertising is done purely to communicate the organisation's corporate identity such as its name, logo for example, the Nike "swoosh", trademark or brand name and slogan. When the organisation's identity changes, this is communicated through corporate advertising.

For example, the American fast food outlet, "Kentucky Fried Chicken", changed its name to "KFC". This name change was communicated through corporate identity advertising.

2. Institutional advertising – This type of corporate advertising is aimed at special public such as the media, suppliers and dealers, to correct communication problems with them.

3. Public Relations (PR) advertising – This is the name given to corporate advertising that aims to change the negative attitudes of the public towards the company's products.

For example, the advertising done by Coke and Pepsi following the pesticide controversy and the advertising done by Cadbury's, which was found to have worms in its chocolates, to protect their reputation are examples of this type of corporate advertising.

4. Issue or 'advocacy' advertising – This type of corporate advertising projects a company's viewpoint or stance on a controversial issue like environmental pollution.

For example, when the pollution issue started affecting motorcycle companies, which were accused of emitting fumes from their vehicles, Hero Honda ran an advertising campaign, where they highlighted the fact that their vehicles were contributing to a pollution-free environment.

5. Public service advertising – This refers to corporate advertising to promote a social cause, such as awareness of AIDS, family planning or prevention of drunken driving.

6. Corporate umbrella advertising – This type of corporate advertising is aimed at consumers and tries to link a new or weak product to more established brands in the corporate 'umbrella' or with the company's well established range of products. The idea is to generate sales for the weak or new product.

For example, Richardson Vicks, better known for its 'Vicks' brand and prescription drugs, clubbed its beauty products such as 'Oil of Olay' with its prescription drugs, in a single advertising campaign. This helped to create awareness of the company's entire range of products and generated sales for 'Oil of Olay'.

7. Corporate sponsorship – This is also a form of corporate advertising, as a company pays to get itself linked with some sporting or other event, where it gets to display its logo and corporate message. This creates a lot of visibility for the company.

For examples, Pepsi sponsors World Cup Cricket and Kingfisher sponsors the Derby or the horse racing event. Their names are now automatically associated with these sporting events.

12.3.3 Guidelines for effective corporate advertising

As compared to product advertising, corporate advertising still accounts for only a small fraction of the total advertising budget in most organisations. However, the benefits derived by a company from corporate advertising are enormous. Effective corporate advertising creates visibility, promotes better understanding of the company, projects the company as a responsible citizen and improves consumer attitudes towards its products. The consumers' and investors' confidence on the company increases only when they have a positive opinion about the company. This is because consumers are more likely to try products from a company that they regard highly,

rather than from a faceless or nameless company. Investors are more likely to buy shares from a company of which they have a favourable image.

Given the benefits of corporate advertising, you have to prepare the advertisements carefully and make it as attractive as possible. Some points to be kept in mind when developing a corporate advertising campaign are:

- **Adequate budget** – Corporate advertising is expensive, as it has to be done in a sustained manner. For example, Birla, India's leading industrial house has been doing corporate advertising since it first started as a trading company. Corporate advertising is to be looked at as a long-term investment, because of the social and economical advantages a company can gain from it. Therefore, a substantial amount needs to be set aside as the advertising budget.
- **Specific messages** – The message of a corporate advertisement needs to have a hard focus and it must clearly highlight the company's objectives, vision and nature of business. However, product advertising on the other hand, may sometimes have a softer focus, through the use of "emotional" appeals.
- **Creative and memorable advertisements** – If corporate advertising is to create a positive image of the company over a long term, a high degree of creativity is needed, so that the advertisements are remembered for a long time to come.
- **Evaluation of effectiveness** – It is important to establish clear-cut objectives for corporate advertising such as image change or attitude change. This makes it easier to measure whether these objectives have been achieved or not, after the campaign has been run. Corporate advertisements must be evaluated for their effectiveness from time to time, so that the message can be fine tuned if needed.

Therefore, through corporate advertising an organisation can create a brand value for its wide range of products through a single advertisement campaign. This also helps to improve the publicity factor for the organisation.

Self Assessment Questions

5. Product advertising is more a public relations activity than a form of advertising. (True/False)
6. _____ is done purely to communicate the organisation's name and logo to public or consumers. (Pick the right option)
 - a) Institutional advertising
 - b) Advocacy advertising
 - c) Corporate identity advertising
 - d) Public Relations advertising
7. _____ tries to link a new or weak product with the company's well established range of products.
8. Corporate advertising is _____, as it has to be done in a _____ manner.

12.3.4 Product advertising

Product advertising aims to persuade prospective customers to buy the organisation's products or services. Its ultimate purpose is to sell the organisation's products.

In product advertising, the message must be persuasive enough to convince people to buy the product or at least try it out once. Apart from the message, the medium must also be chosen carefully. Sometimes, the medium itself 'is the message'. This means that the medium by itself can convey certain qualities about the product, without the need for a verbal message. Take the simple example of a perfume that is advertised in a glossy, colour magazine for high society women. The message conveyed, even without the use of words, is that it is a premium quality product, meant for the sophisticated and elite.

Like corporate advertising, effective product advertising can also build positive and lasting images over the long run.

For example, one of the best examples of this is the advertisement for "Marlboro" cigarettes, which features open spaces, an imaginary country and a rugged cowboy, with the caption "Come to Marlboro Country." The medium of advertising for this campaign is the 'billboard' or 'hoarding', as it is known in India. The visual of the cowboy and the open spaces create a very masculine and rugged image for the cigarette brand. Such was the

impact of this visual, that even non-smokers took to smoking after seeing the advertisement. This campaign is several decades old, but has been sustained over time, without any changes. It is displayed on billboards across the world and transcends cultural and geographical boundaries.

Therefore, product advertising, if creative enough, has the power to communicate and persuade without words or with minimum words and visual impact. Consider the following examples:

- An advertisement for 'Heineken', a famous brand of beer, features a visual of the product with a single line caption that says "When you make a great beer, you don't have to make a great fuss." The message conveyed that the product speaks for itself and that words are not required to describe its qualities.
- Another famous advertisement for 'Chivas Regal', a whisky brand, features a visual of broken pieces of the bottle, with liquid flowing and with the message "Have you ever seen a grown-up man cry?"
- The Indian oil company, ONGC carries out its advertisement campaign with the message, "Making Tomorrow Better". This helps to convey the vision of ONGC.
- One of India's leading TV manufactures, Onida marketed its TV products with a slogan "Neighbour's envy, owner's pride". This was used effectively to gain customer's attention.
- The leading milk and milk products manufacturer of India, Amul's advertisement slogan, "Amul, the taste of India" is one of the most popular advertisement slogans in the country. The advertisement slogan and campaign were able to create a unique and popular brand value for Amul.

12.3.5 Format for product advertising

All product advertising contains a persuasive message that follows a particular format, known as the 'AIDA' format. AIDA stands for Attention, Interest, Desire and Action. This means that persuasive messages must achieve the following:

1. Capture attention – As the average consumers are bombarded with several advertisements at the same time, they will only pay attention to those advertisements which stand out above the others. Therefore,

attention-getting techniques must be used to make the consumer notice the advertisement. Asking a question to arouse curiosity, having a bold headline, making a dramatic statement or mentioning startling facts, are some examples of attention-getting techniques.

For example, an advertisement for a home burglar alarm mentions some alarming statistics in the form of a dramatic question, right at the beginning. It says, “Are you aware that over 5% of Indian homes were burgled last year? How can we protect ourselves?”

2. Create interest – Once the reader or viewer has noticed the advertisement, it is important to create some interest in the product, by stressing the benefits to the consumer. One way of doing this is by selecting and stating a Unique Selling Proposition (USP). This is a unique feature that only your product has and which offers a specific benefit to the consumer.

For example, the USP of ‘Clinic’ a dandruff control shampoo is that it contains an ingredient that moisturises the scalp and prevents dandruff. Or, a car may include a safety device that other cars do not have. Thus, a USP creates interest by linking the product features to the consumer benefits.

3. Induce desire – After creating basic interest in the product, a persuasive advertisement must try to convince the consumer that the product is just right for them. This is achieved by overcoming any objections or problems that the consumer may have such as high price, difficulty in installation or functioning of the product.

For example, the home burglar alarm advertisement might try to convince the consumer by conveying the message, “Are you worried that a smart burglar might disconnect the electricity? Don’t worry; our alarm has built-in batteries that ensure that it operates in spite of power failures.”

4. Motivate action – This is the closing, where the consumer must be asked to do something. There are two types of closing – “hard-sell” and “soft-sell.” A ‘hard-sell’ closing asks the consumer to act immediately, which is usually in the form of buying the product.

For example, “Buy now, while stocks last” or “Buy now, before special offer ends.”

The advertisement must also encourage easy action, by providing an address or a toll-free number to call and order the product.

A “soft-sell” closing is more of a subtle call for action. Its purpose is to build loyalty to the brand and gently remind the consumer about the brand.

For examples, “Come test drive the Nano to experience the sheer thrill of driving the car, at any of our dealer outlets.” Or an advertisement line of a famous brand of paint says “Whenever you see colour, think of us”.

The AIDA format is also known as the “Hierarchy of Effects” model, as it takes the consumer through different mental stages in a particular sequence, ranging from unawareness of the product to learning more about it and then motivating to try or buy it.

Self Assessment Questions

9. In product advertising, the _____ must be persuasive enough to convince people to buy the product.
10. What aspect of AIDA format focuses on making an advertisement stand out above the others’ advertisements?
 - a) Capture attention
 - b) Motivate action
 - c) Create interest
 - d) Induce desire
11. The AIDA format is also known as the _____ model.

12.4 Summary

Let us recapitulate the important points discussed in this unit:

- Press release can be defined as a "brief, printed statements that outline the major facts of a news story in journalistic style".
- A press release format includes the following elements:
 - Dramatic opening sentence or paragraph
 - Answers to key questions
 - Benefits to the community
 - Company credentials
- Organisations communicate to the masses of public or customers with the help of advertising using the mass media.

- Advertising can be classified as corporate and product advertising.
- Corporate advertising is more a public relations, as it has no commercial purpose and its main aim is merely to inform and build a positive image of the organisation in the society.
- The various types of corporate advertising are:
 - Corporate identity advertising
 - Institutional advertising
 - Public Relations (PR) advertising
 - Issue or 'advocacy' advertising
 - Public service advertising
 - Corporate umbrella advertising
 - Corporate sponsorship
- Product advertising is carried out to persuade prospective customers to buy the products or services of an organisation.
- Organisations follow Attention, Interest, Desire and Action (AIDA) format for advertising their products.
- According to AIDA format, the advertisement must grab the attention of the consumer, later create interest in the customer for the product, induce desire for the product in the customer and at the end must motivate the customer to buy the product.
- Product advertising has the objective of persuading the consumer to buy or to try out a company's product.
- Product advertising can also be made highly effective and persuasive, through powerful visuals and minimum words.
- Product advertising follows AIDA format, which includes the following:
 1. Capturing attention through an attention-getting device.
 2. Creating interest through a Unique Selling Proposition.
 3. Inducing desire by convincing the consumer that the product is right for him/her.
 4. Motivating action to make the consumer buy the product.

12.5 Glossary

Credential: Testimonials showing that a person is entitled to credit, or has right to exercise official power.

Entrepreneurial: A business person willing to take risks in order to make a profit.

Installation: The act of installing or giving possession of an office, rank or order, with the usual rites or ceremonies.

Investors: An individual who commits money to investment products with the expectation of financial return.

12.6 Terminal Questions

1. List the elements of press release general format.
2. Write a note on the specific objectives of corporate advertising.
3. Explain the different types of corporate advertising.
4. Write a note on product advertising.
5. Explain AIDA format for product advertising.

12.7 Answers

Self Assessment Questions

1. a) Major, journalistic
2. Media
3. True
4. Body
5. False. Corporate advertising is more a public relations activity than a form of advertising.
6. c) Corporate identity advertising
7. Corporate umbrella advertising
8. Expensive, sustained
9. Message
10. a) Capture attention
11. Hierarchy of effects

Terminal Questions

1. The general format of a press release comprises a dramatic opening sentence, answers to key questions, benefits to the community and company credentials. For more details, refer sub-section 12.2.1.

2. Corporate advertising aims at creating positive attitudes towards organisation, projecting the personality, culture and values of an organisation, safeguarding corporate reputation, etc. For more details, refer sub-section 12.3.1.
3. The different types of corporate advertising are corporate identity advertising, institutional advertising, Public Relations (PR) advertising, advocacy advertising, public service advertising, corporate umbrella advertising and corporate sponsorship. For more details, refer sub-section 12.3.2.
4. Product advertising is carried out to gain the attention of the consumer to sell the product. For more details, refer sub-section 12.3.4.
5. Attention, Interest, Desire and Action format is followed for creating a persuasive message for a product advertisement. For more details, refer sub-section 12.3.5.

12.8 Case Study

Amul's Butter Advertisement Campaign

The Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) is one of India's largest food products marketing organisation. It successfully carried out the Amul butter campaign using billboards at strategic places in cities and towns. The campaign started in the year 1967 by introducing a cartoon character as its brand ambassador. The character was a round-eyed, chubby-cheeked girl, dressed in a polka-dotted frock winking her eye is one of the most popular advertisement characters of India.

Objective and challenge of the campaign

The Amul wanted to break its dull, boring image that it had built over the years through a new advertisement campaign. In India, food was something one couldn't afford to fool around with. It had been taken too seriously, for too long. Sylvester daCunha who took over the advertisement campaign for Amul, in 1966 decided to change it by bringing some humour to Amul's milk products advertisement campaign.

Also the main focus of Amul's advertisement campaign was to reach consumers mainly housewives and at the same time to compete with Polson's (Amul's competitor) mascot 'The Butter Girl'.

The main challenge of the campaign was to bring excitement to Amul butter advertisement with humour. At the same time campaign was also supposed to ensure that it did not offend the Indian mass.

Approach

Round-eyed, chubby-cheeked Amul girl character, dressed in a polka-dotted frock which was used posted on the billboards at major place in the city streets was a huge hit. The tag line “Utterly Butterly Delicious Amul” also added to the success of the advertisement campaign.

The use of humour was welcomed by the Indian consumers and the advertisement campaign became a huge success. This campaign helped Amul as one of the most established milk products companies of India.

During 1960s and 1970s Amul campaign reached new heights. The Amul girl becomes a social observer. She has a comment on everything like politics, sport, film, social awareness, etc. The message was conveyed with humour. This had an everlasting impression on Indian consumers as the advertisements were able to squeeze laughter from them.

Amul advertisement campaign from 1960s to 1990s is considered to be the most successful advertisement campaign in India.

Amul advertisement campaigns have not changed much over the years. The Amul girl is still used by Amul in its advertisements. Many characters that Amul has brought like the Amul Baby are used even today effectively in Amul’s advertisement campaigns. The Amul advertisements are one of the longest running ads based on a theme, now vying for the Guinness records for being the longest running ad campaign ever.

Conclusion

Even though the advertisement involved humour, it ensured that it did not offend the sentiments of Indian consumers. The campaign was a huge success and helped Amul to expand its business across India. The campaign introduced the strategy of gaining the consumer attention by using humour in advertisements first time ever in India. The use of billboards for the advertisement campaign during 1967 in the city of Bombay won the hearts of many consumers and enabled to establish Amul butter in the city. Many Indians have grown with the advertisement

campaign and cherish the memories that the campaign has given to them.

The character also enhanced the brand value and image of Amul milk product range. A direct result of campaign success is also reflected in the sales as the sales of Amul butter increased for less than one million rupees in 1967 to over five billion rupees in 2007.

The continuous innovation in the advertisement campaign and relating it to the current issues helped Amul to stand out among its competitors. Amul parlours are today present on campuses of Infosys, Wipro, IIM-A, IIT-B, Temples, Metro rail and railway stations in Gujarat.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the objective and challenge faced by Amul?
(Hint: Refer to section 'Objective and challenges of the campaign' in the Case Study)
2. Do you think the advertisement campaign of Amul was a success? Explain.
(Hint: Refer to section "Approach" and "Conclusion" in the Case Study)

(Source: http://bmsproject.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/3/5/2435652/amul-_marketing_assignment.pdf)

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