

Metros!!! Does it matter when it comes to advertising? Are they losing sheen?

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Abstract

The quality of life in tier-two towns affects consumption to a larger extent. Let me put it this way. How long will you run away from the absolute size of the present metropolitan cities? I do agree that the large metros are still very big, however they seem to be losing sheen. Happy hours are building the consumption pattern. The rising quality of life people having in tier-two town's influences consumption is outsized. More stores in tier-two towns are growing. Festivals are celebrated on a smaller scale in the metros than in smaller towns. People often visit their relatives than their urban counterparts. That, in turn, increases gifting, which is definitely bigger in smaller towns. In the large cities it's all about regaining freedom. In smaller towns the need of freedom was never a matter of concern to begin with. The fact of the matter is that cities are polarizing people. Around every suburb you will find atleast one slum pocket. It's observed that there is a served class and a serving class and is highly disproportionate. From a consumption and marketing state, this disproportion comes in the way of undulation. In tier-two cities there is a disparity between the served and the serving class. However, it is not as large to affect the spending. This article deals with the question whether non-metros can propel the growth of Indian advertising?

Keywords: Social media, Consumer behavior, Indian advertising, Digital marketing, Content marketing, Facebook, Technology

Introduction

Today, small towns spell a huge growth for opportunity as they witness more brands emerging. Now the question that arises - "Will non-metros propel the growth of Indian advertising?"

In smaller towns, you have numerous consumers and there is also a lot more development experienced out there. This gives humungous opportunity for bigger modern trade as rentals are lower. There are also many brands coming out of smaller towns and a lot of newer advertisers as well. This is narrated across categories. All of this is generating more and more opportunities for all sides.

There are a lot of initiatives from the media as well. They invest in smaller town editions, bring out special editions, and come out with content that speaks the dialect of those towns. All of these are generating avenues for consumption in those markets. This entirely adds up to an exhilarating demand-and-supply situation. This drives the advertising budgets for not just local brands but also for national brands getting aggressive in these areas.

In the case of retail chains as well as jewellery showrooms, they may have originated in one small place in a tier-2 town or tier-3 town. But they tend to open more branches. Some of these players even enter the big cities. There is also competition in the local markets. In case of advertising in the print medium, a lot of regional players rather than mainstream English publications will gain from this platform. In television, it's always the content that is nationally accepted, like cricket. Government spending on advertising is likely to grow in 2015. So, there is huge appetite for national advertising, feeding into the local media. In addition there is this local advertiser that will go on to become a national advertiser.

Large advertising agency groups are conventionally focused on the big metros. For the last few years, agencies have been working on this development and trying to penetrate the smaller markets. It's observed that there is a consistent progress in this trend. Smaller brands entail a lot more services and hand-holding. Despite these agencies not being a large player, there is a huge potential to move in that direction. They have to be clearly focus on penetration.

In print media there are some segments that are in a state of decline. The question here is "Will smaller towns give them a new lease of life"?

It's about how these tier-2 markets are treated. The moment products are created that engage the audience, there will be newer avenues of growth. It also remains to be seen how resourcefully a business model can be created from that context.

Are towns and cities mutually exclusive? It looks like one holding a bit of the other.

It's the season to seek predictions and spot various trends for the year to come. 2014 seemed to be relatively the same on many aspects of marketing, consumer behavior and branding. Social media can be conveniently replaced with digital media, if the difference is not that clear. However social media is the next big thing to revolutionize communication and marketing. Content being the king will be the game changer.' Tier 2 and tier 3 towns will grow with high level of aggression. Mobile as a marketing and communication platform is set to change the entire landscape. MNC brands will dictate consumer behavior and consumption. It looks bullish the way the Indian e-commerce sector is growing and it's expected to grow further at 70 per cent in 2015 and cross \$6 billion to become one of the fastest-growing e-commerce markets in the Asia-Pacific region. That pace that the current market is moving, E-commerce will take over retail marketing.

Let us take few trends which many don't seem to see.

UrbanVs Tier-2 and Tier-3

The changes in the recent past are so obvious that the line distinguishing them is becoming thinner day by day. It's quite evident that the differences are only based on geography and not much on the need, taste and appeal. With the arrival of the satellite television, disclosure to social media and internet connectivity, communication with the end consumers has become democratic, equalizing the reach and touch points.

The exposure levels to products, newer trends and lifestyles are exactly the same and in concurrence. The responses, denunciations, approbation and celebration of any brand/brands are transparent and live across metros/ big cities and tier 2 or tier3 cities.

The only disparity would be in the ever-changing cultural and value systems that would determine the reaction time and the adaptation time to a marketing stimulus or to a brand idea.

What many of us don't realize is that there will always be a significant tier 2/3 market existing in a metro/big city. There will always be a Trichy in Chennai, a Guntur in Andhra Pradesh, a Trichur in Kerala. There are consumers with a tier 2 or tier 3 town mindset with beliefs and fears rooted in their cultural and value systems and with related tastes and appeal, as people drift from smaller towns. It is also an attention-grabbing to examine how many of these differences are usually seen through the big city boy's lenses.

The wave created by the digital and social arena

Digital marketing seems to be the new song for many however the industry is skeptical of how many in reality comprehended this ostensible game changer. Furthermore, I believe, none wants to miss out on this new trend and hence the inquisitiveness and indulgence. For many, social media is more than equal to Facebook, YouTube and maybe Twitter at the most. Mobile marketing is about applications and downloads or a medium to communicate through the World Wide Web. Digital agency is all about setting up a web page, creating a Twitter handle and a Facebook page with recurrent postings to boost the search engine optimization and likes. The variation between marketing in a digital world and digital marketing will be realized momentarily in 2015. It's time for us to get below the surge and get drizzly.

Let's look at the next trick.

Various communication approaches and techniques have certainly been put to test these days. Some have banked on their time-tested formulations and many have attempted to research with long-duration formats, micro-duration formats, numerous interactive styles, road-block interruptions and so. It was said many years ago that content is the king, and they still continue to say this with even greater enthusiasm. Despite having no change in this, there seems to be a highly valued prerequisite to personalize communication. I always believed that all of us will soon be abhorrent with this over-personalized communication where every message will appear invasive and impassive, how considerable the content is made to look and sound emotional. We will soon be realizing it is some technology attempting to form a relationship with us as individuals. In 2015, I am certain that customization will be in the communication appeal rather than in personalized messages.

A store for all needs.

When high street shopping leaped, the neighborhood shops stood up and watched keenly. When the malls sprung up, the high street shops held their breath, and now with the new-fangled trusted e-tail business is booming, the malls are left guessing with what next? The consumer appears to be ever moving and falling for the next shopping zest.

Opinion suggest that business sizes could be getting re-jigged but the motive to buy or at least stopover each of these setups are not shifting. The prime reasons to shop will in general continue the same. Welcoming neighborhood shops for awareness and expediency. The high streets for window shopping and the malls to hang out with friends or families as an outing and e-tail for the convenience, widest collection and great prices. The trick here is to decipher the reason to shop at a specific format and work on the perception rather than try to substitute or assume a change in behavior.

Is it the screen of your choice?

It appears to be that the television screen paved way to the desktop screen. However the laptop took over, only to lose it to the mobile screen. Excepting the size of the screen and the technology behind it and, the apparent recompenses in their particular formats, the usage mostly appeared to continue the same like contacts, messaging, mailing, banking ,entertainment, business docs, education assistances and various other tools. It lastly boils down to what everybody is doing or which screen everyone wants to use. In contrast to the shopping setups, the screen sizes and the technology behind them will define what will rule the market. The big transformation here is the migration to newer formats and not essentially a case for co-existence. All formats of shopping happen and will remain to exist. However all formats of technology may not. Have you heard of floppy disks and the dial-up modems? You never know, soon we all may be asking about the so called CDs, DVDs and Java phones.

Conclusion.

The emerging cities are quite different from their urban counterparts. Metros witness high media penetration, the rapid espousal of technology, wide reach of the internet and mobile platforms and rapidly growing consumer behavior and consumption patterns. However, tier 2 and tier 3 cities are developing as an attractive markets owing to their keen affluence and a salable viewpoint.

The industry per se will have to link with the consumer in these markets by creating strong relationships through local content, quality service, advanced business models and bringing ease of awareness. If the industry pedals to spread its market reach, these cities could certainly play the pivotal part in the economy.

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