



Influence of Technology on Out-of-Home Advertising Media

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ABSTRACT

Can you imagine two people with drums walking down the streets of Mohenjo-Daro, the city of the Indus Valley Civilization you read about in your history lesson in previous classes, shouting their own and other's messages? People would stop and listen. Just as you do now when you stop to read an advertisement on the road, or watch an advertisement on television. The new techniques and innovations of advertising are discussed in this research paper. The write up makes us aware about the new and fresh media of advertising used by the advertisers with the unbelievable innovations and technology used in it. The success of LED billboards, mobile billboards and other innovative media are briefly discussed.

KEYWORDS

Advertising media, innovations in advertising, trends in advertising.

Introduction

With changing customer lifestyles, growing clutter and escalating prices of television and print media, along with market fragmentation, consumers are increasingly staying out of their homes. Advertising seems to be the need of the hour. With media explosion reverberating all around and increasing competition amongst the brand marketers beginning to be eye-catching media planners are now opting for the new technological developments available with advertising, in contrast to the traditional modes with limited options. With the growing Indian economy, people are getting better employment prospects and, thus, have more disposable incomes. Therefore, people are consuming and purchasing more. This requires the brand marketers to reach out to the audience through every possible means. This has led to increased ad spend on advertising media. Novel methods and newer concepts of advertising using humans, buildings, vehicles, and sky space LED displays, mobile vans, Internet; TV commercials etc have developed innovatively in the recent years. With innovations in advertising media better spend and awareness, it can be seen as the medium of the future for not only attracting attention or creating interest, but also for convincingly influencing the buying behavior of the customer.

Advertising

Advertising is an announcement to the public of a product, service or idea through the medium to which the public has access. The communication is usually unsaid, in one direction from advertiser and to the public. The members are free to respond to it in their own way; the response is at an individual or family level. There is little or no dialogue with the public; advertising forces itself upon the public.

Advertising aims at drawing attention to a product. It seeks to create awareness about the existence of advertised product. It passes on information about the product in such a way that interest is created in the minds of the prospective consumer about the product. Then there is a growing desire to possess the product. There are convincing arguments in favor of the product. This leads to a buying inclination.

Evolution of Technology in Advertising

Technology came into play with advertising during the Industrial Revolution with the invention of Printing press. With printing press, one of the most popular advertising media was introduced i.e. Newspaper. Soon other print media like Poster, Books and Magazines were introduced followed by radio, Television and the great machine of all, The Computer. The computer technology changed the world forever and with it changed the advertising industry. There was development on all forefronts of the existing advertising media as well as intro-

duction of new OOH media like website, information kiosks, digital signage, ambient media etc. Digital printing has come a long way in just over a decade. The huge digital inkjet printers' cores of rupees have paved way to cost effective printers using the same technology, but requiring less investment and skill to operate. This result of globalization impacted the outdoor advertising industry as well and demands on the industry are increasing. New innovations like flat bed printing, eco- solvent inks and high resolution printers are increasingly occupying a service provider's factories. But poster remains the only medium that is seen, potentially, by everyone. Good posters have the power to capture the nation's attention, which is why perhaps the political parties still rely so heavily on them.

The main trends that we see in the outdoor industry are technological developments- LED Display, Scrolling Display, Digital media in malls and multiplexes, building wraps in outdoor media. Due to technological innovations, many video screens hold ill-designed content for the large screen format, and could display better visuals, culturally specific advertisements and occasionally, fund a public art piece. Street marketing campaigns are a lot less expensive than traditional rollouts and more successful as well. Due to technological developments more and more screens arrive in airports, museums, schools, daycares, restaurants and bars, retail stores, shopping malls, conference centers, company lobbies, grocery stores, medical facilities, hotels and motels, theatres and showcase artworks. Brands are constantly in need of buzz-worthy, press and re-branding themselves to grab more of youth cultures spending money. Because of technological influence, proper management of an electronic billboard allows six to eight different advertising messages to share the same sign face, increasing multiple advertising awareness without the labor of continually replacing vinyl sign faces. In term of earnings potential, subjective evidence has portrayed electronic billboards with its multiple advertising messages on a single sign face as being able to "out earn" their print counterparts.

The influence of the technology is also seen on digital printing in just over a decade. The huge digital inkjet printers costing corers of rupees have paved way to cost effective printers using the same technology, but requiring less investment and skill to operate. Because of technology there was an increase in more machines; more suppliers for printing media, ink and consumables resulted. Mushrooming of subsidiary equipments like seaming machine (an equipment which uses hot air to weld the PVC material to fabricate huge prints) sellers, services, component dealers, small contractors, agencies and service providers resulted, all the while superior painting and related activities. Technology has also led to further improvement in increasing the resolution of the printing ink which is spread

through the print heads.

Emerging trends in Advertising media

New billboard technologies are driving the growth of OOH media. In India, for example, many of OOH media advertisers introduced Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) billboards in airport business lounges. These are digital posters that provide information for business-class passengers, with eye-catching advertisements. Another innovation is the Light-emitting Diode (LED) billboards in malls and multiplexes, building wraps in outdoor media. Let us see some of the latest innovations that technology has boost:



Digital Billboards

New billboards are being produced that are entirely digital (using LED and similar techniques), allowing static advertisements to rotate in series. Even holographic billboards are in use in some places. In the spring of 2004 in Times Square in New York City, a Yahoo! Autos promotion displayed on an LED billboard allowed one to call a phone number with a cell phone and play a two-person racing game where the cars appeared on the billboard.



Mobile Billboards Billboards can also be made mobile, either by mounting a traditional billboard onto a trailer or flatbed truck, or by covering an entire vehicle in a "wrap" image. This is sometimes used in bus advertising, though it is more common to mount smaller "boards" on those vehicles.

Currently Developed Outdoor media



Video on Glass

This media is largely used in airports and other such places. The impact that it creates on the passerby is very powerful. The technology used here is Seven Degrees is a 'One stop solution' provider for most of the innovative products available in India. Their new media format popularly called, "Video on

Glass" reflects modern age advertising. The projection technology creates a video of any size, shape or color on a glass, converting a conviction glass into a video screen.

EL Slim-lite

Eye Candy Visuals manufactures Animated Posters, Billboards and POP Systems using the latest EL Lighting Micro-chip technology with high quality printing. A little creativity coupled with EL Slimlites technology, can create a story out of your static prints. Application of voltage through a controller across the electrodes generates a changing electric field which causes the phosphor to emit light. This entire source is less than 0.4mm thick. This animated advertisement creates lot of interest among the onlookers and thus making the outdoor very powerful. Especially because of the emitting light that to from the hoarding will attract anyone attention out of amusement and thus attracts a lot of attention. Thus this animated hoarding has left a good impact and thus making the influence of technology on the OOH media more evident.



DigiScrollers

With its brushless motor and a scroll speed of 0.5 m/s, that is two and half times faster than the prevailing ones, it just takes 6 seconds for the image to change to another. The box is made up of proprietary aluminum profiles and has a hinged door with glass facilitating maintenance from the front of the unit. Easy changing of graphics makes the unit more user friendly apart from other host of features the scroller has.



Flying Screen

Flying Screen's sheer size and innovativeness dazzles! It is a 17' branded balloon with a Projector inside for beaming live television or TV spots. It can broadcast presentations, live television feed or pictures. Balloon can be branded on rest of the areas (sides and back) If filled with Helium Balloon floats at your desired height. It can be placed on the ground, or floating in the air. This technological innovation on a simple balloon makes it grab a lot of attention and thus proving a boon to the OOH. It can be put to any height and thus overcoming all heights and thus this OOH media has the capability to be visible from a long distance.



► MUPI Signs

Multi-Photon Ionization (MUPI) Signs are the outdoor adverts you see usually in the middle bank between two roads. It is noticed they're replacing the old bad looking ones with the newer and the cooler looking black versions. This should help both the ads and the roads look better. It's a type of outdoor poster that you usually find on the street beside a bus stop. Mupi signs could be usually seen on divider platforms between one-way roads and roadsides. This is an excellent way for retailers and other marketers to keep their brand name in public memory for a long time.



► Ad mirror

An innovative & exciting new medium which essentially looks like a backlit static branding unit but changes into a mirror if a person moves in front of it. Highly interactive & engaging medium. This media is very interactive as it engages the onlooker to be a part of the advertisement himself.



► Flogos

Francisco Guerra, a former magician and co-founder of Snow masters Inc. is the man behind Flogos. He developed Flogos at his small factory in Lexington, Alabama, which he says is the perfect place for research and development, partly because there aren't many people around to ask questions about the foam shapes that float above the building on test days. Flogos are created out of specially formulated white foam that is forced upward through a stencil, maintaining accuracy of shape. The bubbles that the Flogos machine produces are filled with air and a little helium. Flogos sizes can vary between 24, 36 or 48 inches long. A single Flogos can travel as far as 30 miles and a high as 20,000 feet. The machine can produce one every 15 seconds. The beauty of Flogos is in the fact that they have no limitations when it comes to shape, thus giving brands the scope to explore more creative forms of communicating with their consumers.



► Ad Bike

Through this medium, indirect marketing can be transformed into direct advertising; advertising bike drivers can be dressed in outfits that convey a brand's corporate image, and be given product samples or information leaflets for distribution. The ad bikes have proved effective for recruitment drives, film premiers and PR opportunities, sporting events and concerts, conferences or trade shows, in front of malls and supermarkets when there are special offers or product launch.

Conclusion

With changing customer lifestyles, growing clutter and escalating prices of television and print media, along with market fragmentation, consumers are increasingly staying out of their homes. Due to the growing competition between the products or services, advertising seems to be the need of the hour. This need have resulted into new and innovative changes in advertising media. With the help of technology, advertising have found their way to creating newer trends in its medias. The influence of technology in advertising industry is very evident. Slowly and steadily electronic LED Billboards, mobile displays, roll ups, vehicle wraps, gantries, unipoles, skywalks, trivision, building wraps, flyover panels etc are changing the trends in Indian advertising in a big way.

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