



The Rise of Emotional Branding in Service Sector in Indian Market

Dr. Sanjay Kumar Padhy, Shyam Sunder T²

¹Associate Professor, Aurora's PG College, Hyderabad

²Assistant Professor, Aurora's PG College, Hyderabad

ABSTRACT

Indian service sector has witnessed a foremost boom and is one of the major contributors to both employment and national income in recent times. The entry of foreign players in fields like banking, insurance, health care, tourism, consulting, etc have also increased the competition for the national players. This paper attempts to study the paradigm shift in the Indian service industry and the role of Emotional Branding, as it is on the raise day by day. This paper throws light on the Indian Service sector that is hit by the new wave of emotional brands. It explains the concept of emotional loyalty and the reasons of its growing popularity. It discusses the power of emotions over rationality. Emotional branding in Indian scenario is also illustrated by discussing the recent emotional advertisements.

Keywords: Emotional Branding, Indian Service Sector, Power of Emotions, Emotional Appeal, Emotional Brands.

INTRODUCTION

Service sector istoday the largest and fastest growing and globally contributing more to the global output and employing more people than any other sector. It is the lifeline for the socio economic growth of a country. The rationale for the growth of the service sector is due to the increase in urbanization, privatization and more demand for intermediate and final consumer services. Availability of quality services is vital for the well being of the economy.

Emotional Branding is a way of communicating ideas and thoughts regarding a product or service to the customers which will strike a chord immediately owing to the fundamental and value based content. This is a way to connect with people by making them feel good about themselves, making them hopeful about better living, showing them the miracles of the world, and making them realize the true worth of own self .

Indian Service Sector

The economy of India is the twelfth largest economy in the world by nominal value and the fourth largest by purchasing power parity (PPP). In the 1990s, following economic reform from the socialistinspired economy of post-independence India, the country began to experience rapid economic growth, as markets opened for international competition and investment. In the 21st century, India is an emerging economic power with vast human and natural resources, and a huge knowledge base.

In alignment with the global trends, Indian service sector has witnessed a major boom and is one of the major contributors to both employment and national income in recent times. The activities under the purview of the service sector are quite diverse. The cores of this sector are banking, insurance, education, health care, tourism and consulting. They are vital for the country's economic stability. A robust healthcare system helps to create a strong and diligent human capital, who in turn can contribute productively to the nation's growth.

Destination India for MNCs

There are a number of reasons why the multinational companies are coming down to India. India has got a huge market. Besides, the policy of the government towards FDI has also played a major role in attracting the multinational companies in India.

For quite a long time, India had a restrictive policy in terms of foreign direct investment. As a result, there was lesser number of companies that showed interest in investing in Indian market. However, the scenario changed during the financial liberalization of the country, especially after 1991. Government, nowadays, makes continuous efforts to attract foreign investments by relaxing many of its policies. As a result, a number of multinational companies have shown interest in Indian market.

Growing Competition in the Market

The robust growth of the service sector and the entry of multinationals in the market increased the competition. The Indian firms started competing with world giants. This also brought a lot of changes in the market. The local firms began to increase their quality and quantity of service to the international Level. Though the Indian banks and Insurance companies faced some problems in the beginning they fought well and established themselves after some years.

Today's consumers face more choices than ever, yet they devote less time to product comparisons. To compound the matter, brands in many industries have become increasingly similar in quality, price and delivery. This typically culminates in a price war. One of the best ways to avoid this is to develop a lasting connection with your consumers on an emotional level. When customers feel an emotional pull towards a specific brand, they spend less time reasoning through differences in pricing and other factors before buying.

Changing Market factors and Customer Preferences

Business is changing because the customers are changing. The buying decisions and shopping habits are changing. Fundamental changes are taking place in their preferences and behaviour. The customers expect and demand a personalized and one-to-one communication in the market.

More than that, customers expect an unprecedented level of emotional commitment and honesty from the brands they trust, support and buy. Customer loyalty is weakening, because they constantly move on to new products and new brands entering the marketplace. They are thinking more with their hearts than with their heads.

Emotional Vs. Intellectual Decisions

For any company to be successful in this new emotional economy they need to create and build emotional loyalty. Companies will have to build and strengthen customer relationships – connecting on an emotional level. And many questions need to be answered:

1. How to get a product or service to stand out in crowded marketplace?
2. How to keep discriminating customers coming back for more?
3. How do successful firms use emotional branding to capture their customers' attention?
4. How to foster long term brand loyalty?
5. How to connect brands to customers' hearts for a lifetime?

Customers often claim they purchase rationally. But studies indicate that the factors influencing purchases are 80% emotional and 20% intellectual, even for business-to-business customers. Features and benefits may be used to justify decisions, but the initial motivation is almost always emotional. Emotion is required to maintain a relationship after purchase.

Reasons and emotions differ in that reason generates conclusions but not necessarily actions, while emotions more frequently lead to actions. We can educate consumers on the product's features, but without an emotional involvement of some kind, consumers may not attach values to those facts at least not the values we want them to attach. It's important to understand the difference between what a brand provides to customers in terms of logical, functional benefits and what it provides in terms of intangible, emotional benefits.

Linking Brands to Customer's Emotions

Nowadays more brand-building efforts are converging with direct and interactive marketing. Direct and interactive marketers have for many years not only talked about the power of emotional marketing through the use of effective database marketing and segmentation, but also implemented very successful measurable strategies across various industries, products and services. Smart marketers have now identified the true value of measurable marketing by segmenting and managing their customer databases. They have recognised that marketing is an experience directly linking their customer's emotions to their brands.

By identifying their customers' needs, wants and aspirations, they can create buying experiences, which create frequent buying patterns, buying relationships and loyalty. And as experience tells us, loyalty is directly linked to sales and profitability. In today's highly competitive markets, smart companies are focusing more and more on emotional branding to differentiate their product in the minds--and hearts--of consumers.



The Paradigm Shift in Branding

What makes customers buy? Obviously, —"need" acts as a strong purchasing motivator but — "needs" are poor indicators of how purchasing desires are directed. To understand purchasing motivators, we must look beyond basic needs and examine underlying goals as the market scenario is rapidly shifting from production to consumption.

Those companies that have moved from being product-focused to customer-focused are the cornerstone worldwide. Those who have moved (or are moving) from traditional branding to emotional branding and from using traditional communication methods to emotional communication methods will win the hearts and wallets of their customers. The marketer influences both how people experience the brand and the resultant emotional memories; and how people experience the advertising and the resultant emotional memories. Brand marketing involves the management of the emotional memories of both the brand and all its communication.

The Power of Emotions

Emotion is one of the defining forces in our lives. It lies at the very heart of many of our most important experiences and memories. Not surprisingly, the worlds of business and marketing have long drawn on the power of emotion to influence consumer impulses and brand loyalty. The primordial force behind motivation and persuasion, emotions enter into all decisions involving tradeoffs and are thus especially relevant to consumer decision-making. The Marketing Power of Emotion traces the manner in which companies rely on emotion to connect with consumers, develop new products, improve their strategic position, and increase brand recognition. The Power of Emotion is the most authoritative statement yet on this critically important aspect of business strategy.

Most customers weigh both emotions and logic when making a purchase, but the extent of influence each factor has on their decision can vary greatly. We need to explore the emotional concerns of our target market through market research. Understand the emotional appeal of a brand, and communicate it to the market and also see that the emotions are appealing to our potential customers. The emotional attitudes of consumers toward the same product can vary greatly by age group, gender, culture, socioeconomic status, etc so that must also be kept in mind. For example a sports car, which may convey thrills to a teenager but danger to an elderly adult.

Birth of Emotional Branding

Emotional Branding is a virtual movement. It began in 2001, when a profoundly different brand design strategy was developed from the creation of Marc Gobé's bestselling book. The Emotional Branding strategy marked a simple but revolutionary shift in thinking: placing the consumer, not the product, at the forefront of a brand's strategy. Marketing in the 21st century had deviated from this basic principle, adopting a guerrilla-warfare, by the marketers against the consumers mentality. Emotional Branding has opened the pathway to an entirely new kind of thinking, which explores how brands can connect with people in a more sensitive and humanistic way and touch people profoundly at the level of the senses and emotions.

The Core of Emotional Branding

One of the most amazing discoveries of Emotional Branding has been that by empowering consumers, brands are ultimately empowered themselves. Emotional Branding allows a brand to own a unique and compelling strategic, visual, tactical and verbal vocabulary—creating a rich personality that enables the brand to stand out completely from the competition and win people's hearts.

Following are some ways to strengthen the "emotional quotient" of a brand and reap the benefits of emotional branding.

1. Focus on the Customer

Customers respond well to brands that establish partnerships based on mutual respect. Organizations should respect customers' boundaries and respond to their needs.

2. Fulfil the Customer's Desires

Try to associate your product or service with a customer's desires rather than needs. For example, a customer needs a car to get from point A to point B. However, they may desire a car that will make them feel different, flattered or important. To be more successful, fulfil your customers' desires.

3. Be Trustworthy

Deliver on your brand promise: Be what you say, and say what you mean. This builds trust and trust drives uptake.

4. Build a Relationship

Customers like to feel that those they are dealing with care and respond to their needs and desires – both stated and unstated. Emotional branding is a powerful and useful tool. When applied correctly, it can boost uptake of your products and services and help you establish a stronger bond with your customers.

Commandments of Emotional Branding

Some brands create emotional connections with consumers, while others leave people cold. There are functional brands and there are emotional brands, such as Vodafone, Bank of India, Airtel, Parker etc. that galvanize loyalty. The difference is the personal connection these brands have with consumers through the strength of their culture and the uniqueness of their brand imagery. Emotional Branding creates strong, flexible brand personalities that closely match the aspirations of their customers. These brand characters are less about rationality than they are about desire and cultural connection.

The following —Ten Commandments of Emotional Branding illustrate the difference between traditional concepts of brand awareness and Emotional Branding.

1. From consumers to people, consumers buy, people live.
2. From product to experience, products fulfil needs, experiences fulfil desires.
3. From honesty to trust, honesty is expected. Trust is engaging and intimate.
4. From quality to preference, quality for the right price is a given today. Preference creates the sale.
5. From notoriety to aspiration, being known does not mean that you are also loved!
6. From identity to personality, identity is recognition. Personality is about character and charisma.
7. From function to feel, the functionality of a product is about practical or superficial qualities only. Sensorial design is about experiences.
8. From ubiquity to presence, ubiquity is seen. Emotional presence is felt.
9. From communication to dialogue, communication is telling. Dialogue is sharing.
10. From service to relationship, service is selling. Relationship is acknowledgment.

Emotional Brands in India

1. Amul – Butterly Girl

The Amul hits featuring the Utterly Butterly girl, is clearly the longest running, most impressive and most successful Indian promotional campaign. Almost 44 odd years over, still makes head turn.

2. Vodafone – Zoozoo

Vodafone Zoozoo's were launched during the IPL season 2 by Ogilvy & Mather, India which had also created the famous Vodafone (formerly Hutch pug). 25 zoozoo commercials released each day till the end of IPL season 2.

3. Airtel – Friends Campaign

Airtel launched ad campaign is an extension to its last ad campaign which revolved around friendship. Earlier communication was all about friendship while as the latest one speaks about its attributes that is sharing among friends or friendship is all about sharing.

4. Cadbury Dairy Milk - Shubh Aarambh & Kiss me, close your eyes

Cadbury India launched a new campaign, —Shubh Aarambh in July 2010. This campaign is based on the concept of the Indian tradition of having something sweet before every auspicious occasion, with the belief that it leads to a favourable outcome.



5. Bank of India – The boy with Piggy Bank

Bank of India's advertisement where a Cute Boy with piggy bank goes to bank to put it in safe box, O&M has tried to capture the bond customers share with the bank, rather than talk about better monetary transactions and services.

6. Master Card – Priceless campaign

Developed by McCann-Erickson, they are not selling MasterCard credit cards but the love of a son on his parents. In other words, they don't sell a product; they sell a quality, an experience or convenience that we can all relate to as desirable and invaluable, or "priceless."

7. Hero MotoCorp Ltd - Official Theme Song by A R Rehman

The music composition of Rehman has been touching million hearts across the globe. The music is not only endorsing product of hero group but also motivating people over various challenges.

8. Surf excel - 'Surf Excel Hai Na', 'Daag Ache Hain' (Dirt is Good)

Surf Excel's 'Daag Ache Hai' campaign has brought forward interesting concepts about the benefits of children getting their clothes stained. The cute acting of kids endorsing the detergent is the effective way to reach the millions of viewers.

CONCLUSION

Consumer democracy is becoming more and more of an issue. Indeed, brands do not belong to corporate anymore, but to people! Branding is not only about ubiquity, visibility and functions; it is about bonding emotionally with people in their daily life. Only when a product or service kindles an emotional dialogue with the consumer, can this product or service qualify to be a brand. Emotional Branding is all about the 'why,' the feelings and emotions underneath a product or service. The emotional branding is the language of the heart. It is a winning trend in the current market. Even in the days to come there will certainly be more innovations in this field and the market will see more idea driven and emotionally appealing solutions. A marketer should always remember heart share is equally important as market share.

REFERENCES

Books

- [1]. Jean & Noel Kapferer - Strategic Brand Management – Heavenly Publishers
- [2]. Philip Kotler - Principles of marketing - Pearson
- [3]. John Philip Jones - Behind Powerful Brands – Tata McGraw Hill
- [4]. Harsh V Verma - Brand Management – Excel Books
- [5]. Positioning: A battle for mind - Jack Trout and Al Ries

Websites

- [1]. www.brandchannel.com
- [2]. www.indiaonestop.com
- [3]. www.academia.edu
- [4]. www.entrepreneur.com