

Effectiveness of Promotional Techniques in Increasing Awareness: A reference to Nagpur Rural Market Domain Area –Media Studies

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ABSTRACT

Day by day rural consumers are exposed to thousands of voices and images in magazines, newspapers, websites, radio and television. Every brand attempts to steal at least a fraction of a person's time to inform about attributes of their product. Companies work hard to make their promotional / advertisement campaign unique, striking and successful. Innovation and creativity is essential for successful promotion of product. The common belief in promotion is that it enhances the effectiveness of marketing strategy. It is also believed that attractive promotions are able to connect fast to the target people, ultimately making the customers more likely to choose the product giving it a competitive edge. If companies do not have much to brag about their product then also in promotions turns out to be an effective strategy.. Still, it is quite an interesting approach to awareness building.

This paper is based on primary data collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to more than 300 respondents. The respondents were exposed to most popular commercials of last two years and their recall was investigated.

KEY WORDS: *Promotion, Awareness, Recall value.*

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I. INTRODUCTION:

On a daily basis consumers are exposed to thousands of voices and images in magazines, newspapers, websites, radio and television. Every brand attempts to steal at least a fraction of a person's time to inform about attributes of their product. TV commercials is an effective way to convey the message to the audience. Companies work hard to make their promotional / advertisement campaign unique, striking and successful. Innovation and creativity is essential for successful promotion of product. The basic marketing-mix tools remain the same both in rural and urban markets, but it is the challenges of the 2 A's that compel the marketer to revisit the marketing tools when he ventures into rural markets

Census of India 2011 defines 'Rural' as:

"Revenue village with clear surveyed boundaries not having a Municipality Corporation or Board, density of population not more than 400 per square kilometer and where at least 75% of male working population is engaged in agriculture and allied activities".

Reserve Bank of India (RBI):

Location with population up to 10,000 will be considered as rural and 10,000 to 1,00,000 as semi urban.

Promotion:

Promotion is the process of marketing communication to inform, persuade, remind and influence consumers or users in favor of your product or service and has three specific objectives:

- (a) It communicates marketing information to consumers, users and sellers.
- (b) Promotion persuades and convinces the buyer and influences his behavior to take desired action.
- (c) It stimulates demand, capture demand from competition and maintain demand for the company's products even in a competitive market situation.

Essentially promotion is persuasive communication to inform potential customers of the existence of products, to persuade and convince them that those products have want satisfying capabilities. Of course it is

assumed that the product has the capacity to fulfill the wants and desires of consumers. The promotion mix includes four ingredients.

1) **Advertising** is a paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods and services by an identified sponsor and is a method of mass communication. **Example:** Regional TV channels, radio, cinema, regional newspapers and magazines are being used by marketers to pass on the message about products and services to rural audience.

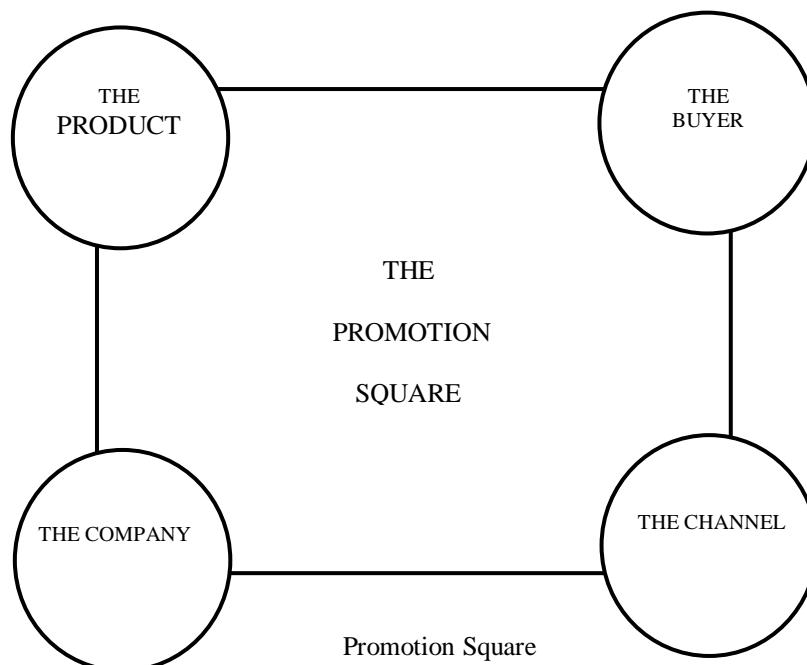
2) **Publicity** involves stimulating demand for a product or service by placing commercially significant news about it in a publication or obtaining favorable opinion through radio, television or stage without making payment by the sponsor. **Example:** Many local newspapers and magazines carry reports of the field activities conducted by companies, creating awareness about the products among the villagers.

3) **Personal selling:** It is one of the most effective methods of promotion and involves face-to-face communication with the prospect for the purpose of making sale. **Example:** Personal selling plays a major role in selling high involvement products such as tractors, two wheelers, pesticides, insurance policies etc.

4) **Sales promotion** covers those activities other than advertising, publicity and personal selling that stimulate consumer purchasing and dealer effectiveness. **Example:** Many marketers offer gifts and attractive payment scheme to promote the sale of television in rural markets during post-harvest season and festivals.

Promotion strategy lays down the broad principles by which a company hopes to secure an advantage over competition, exhibit attractiveness to buyers and lead to full use of company's resources.

When marketers resort to promotion in market place, v/e has a kind of promotion square. It has four sides of equal importance i.e. the product, the buyer, the company and the channel.

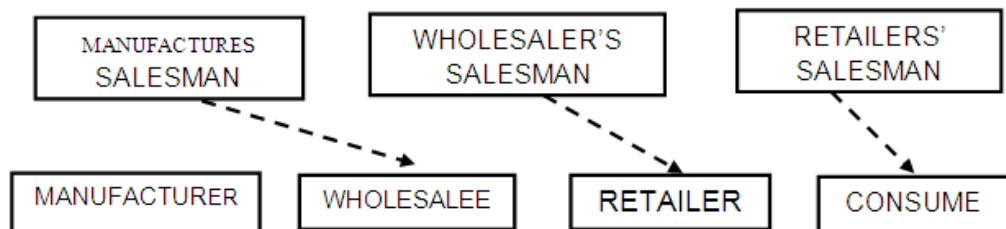


The promotion strategy will depend upon the nature of the products, the characteristic of the buyers, reputation, reliability and image of the company and the marketing channel through which products of the firm flow to consumers.

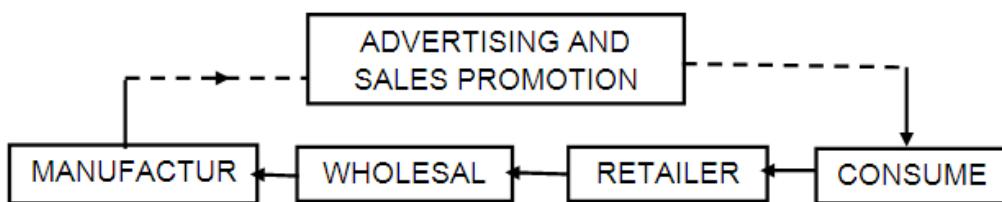
Pull and push strategies in Creating Awareness: :

In a pull strategy, the product is pulled through the channel by creating end-user demand. Consumer demand forces the retailer to stock the promoted products. In turn, retailer demands the product from wholesalers and wholesalers are forced to stock those products by placing orders with the manufacturer. The firms having well-known brands can exercise control over channels through pull promotion strategies. Retailer margins are relatively low in pull promotion. Extensive and heavy use of advertising and sales promotion would be required to generate consumer demand. Under push strategy, the manufacturer, direct all promotional

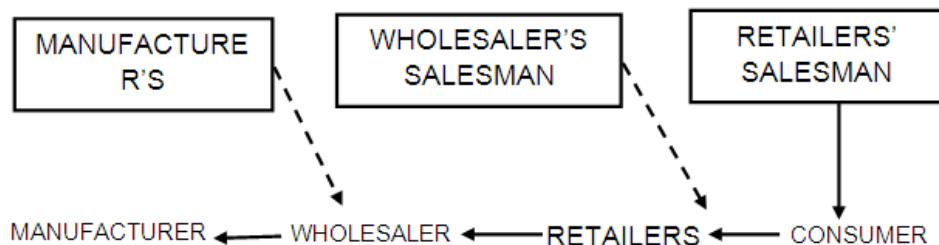
A. PUSH STRATEGY



B. PULL STRATEGY



C. PUSH AND PULL STRATEGY



"Pull and Push Strategies in promotion"

efforts mainly on distributors, wholesalers, and retailers. Product is pushed through the channel by offering financial incentives to middle men. In rural markets, most consumer goods and agribusiness companies generally employ a pull and push strategy to sell their products. The ratio of pull to push may differ according to market requirements. The sales persons are used to push the goods through marketing channel. Advertising and sales promotion supports personal selling to increase sales. Thus, all the tools of promotion work together.

Though the rural markets offer big attractions to the marketers, one of the most important questions frequently asked is "How do we reach the large rural population through different media and methods?"

There are three major factors to be kept in mind while selecting the media:

- 1) The market to be reached.
- 2) The pros and cons of a particular medium.
- 3) The most appropriate media to reach the particular market.

Any medium chosen must be able to attain at least three aims:

- a) It is to reach the maximum number of prospects.
- b) It must attract the attention of such prospects.
- c) It should lead the consumers from unawareness to action as per AICDA method of communication i.e.

Awareness--> Interest --> Conviction -->Desire -->Action.

THE PROMOTION MEDIA:

Media that Attract Attention

Some of the media like wall paintings are very effective in capturing the attention of consumers. The concept of wall paintings was successfully utilized by HLL to promote its brands such as Lifebuoy and Wheel. This concept was also utilized by sellers of construction material such as cement and asbestos sheets. In most of rural areas in India there are some people as a mukhiya whose ideas and opinions are looked upon by the villagers. In such a case, direct mail to those people may lead to the attention of the general consumers through the opinion leaders.

Media that Arouse Interest

In rural India, particularly in the North, puppet shows are very popular. The idea of promoting a product through puppet shows was taken up by BASF to make rural consumers aware about its fertilizers. Giant cutouts of particular products may be able to create the interest of the consumers, provided it is placed in a proper place. HLL used a giant cutout of a Lifebuoy during the boat race in Kerla which is held as a part of Onam festival. Messages on moving objects create interest in the people because of their dynamic nature. When Castrol entered in rural West Bengal, it painted the Castrol Logo on both the sides of motorized launches which used to ferry people across the distributaries of the Ganges Khaitan fans used the shades of bullock and horse carts to advertise their products.

Media that Create a Desire

Tableaus are an effective media to reach the rural people. Philips used to have parades of people dressed up as electric bulbs or batteries in rural areas. HLL went with its famous "Vim Bar Challenge" in the rural districts where the salespeople demonstrated how efficient Vim Bar is in cleaning utensils. Audio Visual Vans are an upcoming non-conventional media. An audio-visual van is a motorized van equipped with banners, festoons, loud speakers and equipment for a video projection show. Colgate-Palmolive utilized audio-visual vans to promote Colgate toothpaste in rural areas. Point of purchase demonstrations are also an upcoming concept where some hubs are located in the rural areas and are equipped with audio visual aids to show advertisements and demonstrations of products.

Media that Generate Action

Lastly, there are some media which can be effectively used to generate on spot action, i.e., purchase. These are the haats and melas. Haats are temporary markets which are held periodically (mostly once in week) in a place which is accessible to a large number of villages. Thus, haats act as a meeting point of people from a large number of villages. Many companies have tried to utilize the haat as a place for live. In the satiation of the benefits of a product. Because of the high-level of interaction with the consumers, haats can be a very effective media for rural advertising Melas are similar to haats but they are held less frequently and generally have a theme. A mela also has a larger number of visitors than haat. FMCG Companies have effectively utilized Melas and haats to reach out to rural consumers.

The promotion media could be broadly classified into Formal and Informal/Rural specific media.

MEDIA REACH IN RURAL HOUSE HOLDS IN NAGPUR

	Press (%)	T.V. (%)	Satellite (%)	Radio (%)	Cinema (%)
Nagpur Rural	14	36	05	18	16
Male Readers	21	39	05	22	22
Female Readers	07	32	05	13	10

Source : Indian Readership Survey,2019

1) Newspapers and magazines: Press reach is low in rural areas 14% .English newspapers and magazines have negligible circulation in rural areas. However, local language newspapers and magazines are becoming popular among educated families.

Examples: Newspapers such as Lokmat, Maharashtra Times are popular in rural areas.

2) Television: Television has made a great impact and large audience has been exposed to this medium. However, rural reach differs from area to area. Regional TV channels have become very popular especially in rural areas.

Examples: Star Majha, ABP News Marathi (Maharashtra).

3) Radio: Radio is a cost effective medium to reach rural people. However, the progress has been slow due to restrictive policies of the Government. Now that private operators have been given licenses, radio, as a medium

is bound to become more popular with rural audience.

Example: Colgate, Jyoti Labs, Zandu Balm, Zuari Industries are some of the companies using radio communication program, There are specific programs for farmers like Farm and Home/Krishi Darshan in regional languages..

4) Cinema: It attracts large audience especially in rural areas. In cities its popularity has come down due to TV.. About 65% of the earnings from cinema are from rural markets. Village theatres do roaring business during festivals by having four shows per day. The monthly charge for showing an ad film is about Rs. 50/- . Local distributor or dealer who has good contacts with cinema houses in villages can easily monitor this activity.

5) Outdoor advertisements: This form of media which includes signboards, wall painting, hoardings, tree boards, bus boards, dealer boards, product display boards etc., are cost effective in rural areas. Symbols, pictures and colors should be used in outdoor advertisements so that the consumers can easily identify the products. Generally, rural people prefer bright colors and the marketer should utilize such cues.

6) Point of purchase: Display of hangings, festoons and product packs in the shops will catch the attention of prospective buyers. However a clutter of such POP materials of competing companies will not have the desired effect and is to be avoided.

Examples:

- a) Tata salt highlights features such as high purity, iodized and vacuum evaporation through POP.
- b) HUL has been promoting lifebuoy soap at the point of consumption by putting stickers, posters, tin boards on the walls of wells, tanks and trees near rivers.

(B) INFORMAL MEDIA:—

The rural consumer participates in local fairs, Melas, haats, social gatherings such as card sessions etc. The need for unconventional media arises as the mass media is too glamorous and impersonal for a rural consumer. The traditional media with its powerful input and personalized communication has an effective reach in rural areas. Companies are using a variety of such media effectively and some of the more important media and methods are given below. While formal media develop awareness and interest among consumers, rural specific media and methods such as demonstrations, farm to farm visits could persuade the consumers to buy the product.

1) Farm-to-Farm/House-to-House visit: Rural people prefer face-to-face communication and farm visits facilitate two-way communication. The advantage is that the sales person can understand the needs and wants of the rural customer by directly discussing with him and answer his queries on products and services. Potential customers in the village are identified and the company's representative/distributor's representative makes farm-to-farm visits and highlights the benefits of the products. The person carries with him literature in local language and also samples of products. The person does not sell the product but only promotes the use of the product..

2) Group meeting: Group meeting of rural consumers is an important part of interpersonal media. The company is able to pass on the message regarding benefits of the products to a large number of consumers through such meetings. The sales person should focus on the following for successful conductance of farmers' meetings:

- 1) Potential village and the group of consumers to be identified.
 - 2) The date, time and place of meeting to be informed to the farmers.
 - 3) The sales person should have good knowledge of the products, needs and wants of the customers and also be fluent in the local language. He should explain in simple language using local idioms and proverbs.
 - 4) Question and answer session will make the program very interactive.
- 3) Opinion leaders:** Villagers place more emphasis on the opinion of others who have used a product/brand to make purchase decision. Such opinion leaders could be big landlords, bank official, Panchayat president, teachers, extension workers etc.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Previous research on this issues reveals that promotions helps in superior purchase intentions (Atkin & Block 2013). According to Seno & Lukas (2017), celebrities are very much helpful than other type of endorsers such as the company manager, distinctive consumer and the qualified expert etc

. Kamins (2019) defined promotions recognizes by the rural public .Previous several researches reveal that rural consumer find protion as a toll is more striking and powerful..

According to Melissa ST. James, a doctorate fellow and marketing instructor at the George Washington University, "Studies show that using attractive promotional tools can boost consumer's awareness.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives will guide the study in this topic:

- 1) To identify the sources of knowledge of the rural customer about the brands in various product categories.
- 2) To assess the advertising media mix used by the reports of rural people of different segments for various product categories

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Geographical Area:

Nagpur rural 150 villages, with a population of 302195

The researchers have used both primary and. secondary data for the study. In order to collect primary data, self-administered questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was administered to about three hundred and fifty people and out of which three hundred and five responded correctly and completely. The respondents included 268 males and 37 females. Convenience sampling approach was adopted in order to collect the primary data, however questionnaire was administered diligently to avoid any possible bias. The individuals targeted for the collection of data for this research were undergraduate, graduate and post graduate students in NCR.

Source of awareness of the rural customers about the Brands (All products combined)

Source of Knowledge	West Nagpur Rural	East Nagpur Rural	North Nagpur Rural	South Nagpur Rural
Reference Groups	110(34.5)	167(36.8)	114(29.8)	136(33.3)
Mass Media	118(37.0)	146(32.2)	101(26.4)	126(30.9)
Stickers & Posters	42(13.2)	61(13.4)	92(24.0)	75(18.4)
Retailers	38(11.9)	74(16.3)	57(14.9)	62(15.2)
Hawkers	11(3.4)	6(1.3)	19(4.9)	9(2.2)
Total	319(100)	454(100)	383(100)	404(100)

Note: Figures given in the parentheses show the percentages.

It was observed that reference group has been the major source of awareness for eastern fringe, mass marketing for western fringe and so on.

Promotional Recall value by Rural Customers-Brand-wise

No. of Respondents Recalling in different segments							
	Products & Brand	W NR	C NR	E NR	N NR	S NR	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Soaps and detergents							
1.	Rin	29	32	75	33	44	213
2.	Sunlight	1	1	6	8	10	26
3.	Double	1	4	3	2	1	11
4.	Det	2	1	3	2	2	10
5.	Others	5	6	3	20	8	42
6.	Local	28	12	14	14	18	86
Toilet soaps							
1.	Lifebuoy	36	21	48	16	22	143
2.	Lux	12	9	29	23	21	94
3.	Hamam	4	9	7	1	14	35
4.	Liril	9	6	11	15	13	54
5.	Rexona	4	6	1	12	5	28
6.	Others	5	8	7	11	9	40
Hair Oils							

1.	Dabur Amla	18	26	42	18	24	128
2.	Tata coconut	8	8	9	12	11	48
3.	Keo-Karpin	0	5	12	17	11	45
4.	Others	10	5	27	18	27	87
5.	Local	2	3	1	4	0	10
Toothpastes/Toothpowders							
1.	Colgate	14	16	36	14	28	108
2.	Bandar Chhap	14	17	21	12	7	71
3.	Vaidyanath	1	0	10	5	11	27
4.	Dabur	0	0	9	9	10	28
5.	Binaca	3	5	4	7	8	27
6.	Others	10	10	9	10	7	46
7.	Local	11	0	4	8	4	27
Face Creams							
1.	Boroline	3	25	29	9	9	75
2.	Afghan	21	11	16	7	*	61
3.	Nivea	4	2	14	25	14	59
4.	Ponds	8	1	3	9	3	24
5.	Emami	1	4	4	3	5	17
6.	Fair & lovely	1	1	2	5	17	26
7.	Others	20	6	11	11	10	58
Total		3773	355	596	487	490	2301

Note: Figures given in the parentheses show the percentages.

Advertisement Recalled by Rural Customers-product Category-wise

Product Category	No. of Respondents Recalling in different segments					
	W NR	C NR	E NR	N NR	S NR	Total
Soaps & Detergents	66(17.7)	56(15.8)	104(17.4)	79(16.2)	83(16.9)	388(16.9)
Toilet Soaps	70(18.8)	59(16.6)	103(17.3)	78(16.0)	84(17.1)	394(17.1)
Hair Oils	38(10.2)	47(13.2)	91(15.3)	69(14.2)	73(14.9)	318(13.8)
Toothpastes/ Toothpowders	53(14.2)	48(13.5)	93(15.3)	65(13.4)	75(15.3)	334(14.5)
Perfumes	35(9.4)	44(12.4)	53(8.9)	62(12.7)	63(12.9)	257(11.2)
Face powders	53(14.2)	51(14.4)	73(12.2)	65(12.2)	48(9.8)	290(12.6)
Face Creams	58(15.5)	50(14.1)	79(13.3)	69(14.2)	64(13.1)	320(13.9)
Total	373(100)	355(100)	596(100)	487(100)	490(100)	2301(100)

Note: Figures given in the parentheses show the percentages.

It has been observed that South fringes have better recall value for soaps and detergents, eastern fringe have for toilet soaps and so on.

The Usage of Advertising Media Reported-Product-wise

Ad. Media	No. of respondents Reporting the Usage for different products							
	Soaps & Detergent	Toilet Soaps	Hair Oils	Toothpastes/ Toothpowders	Perfumes	Face powders	Face creams	Total
News paper	49(12.4)	38(9.6)	44(11.6)	39(10.6)	47(18.3)	42(14.5)	51(15.9)	310(12.9)
Radio	120(30.5)	98(24.8)	87(22.9)	90(24.5)	37(14.4)	105(36.2)	118(36.8)	655(27.2)
Magazine	137(34.8)	72(18.2)	85(22.4)	82(22.3)	32(12.5)	89(30.7)	108(33.6)	605(25.2)
Hoarding	15(3.8)	52(13.1)	21(5.5)	18(4.9)	6(2.3)	12(4.1)	10(3.1)	134(5.6)
Wall-writing	40(10.1)	80(20.2)	49(12.9)	52(14.2)	30(11.7)	17(5.9)	11(3.4)	279(11.6)
Posters	29(7.4)	42(10.6)	65(17.1)	44(12.0)	69(26.8)	19(6.5)	17(5.3)	285(11.8)
Announcement	4(1.0)	14(3.5)	29(7.6)	42(11.5)	36(14.0)	6(2.1)	6(1.9)	137(5.7)
Total	394(100)	396(100)	380(100)	367(100)	257(100)	290(100)	321(100)	2405(100)

Note: Figures given in the parentheses show the percentages

It have been observed that for soap and detergents radio and newspapers are the most used method ,for toilet soaps hoarding is the most used method and so on.

IV. CONCLUSION

In today's media landscape where it is very difficult to shape consumers attitude and intentions and move them to next level of buying process, promoters find it even more difficult and challenging to break through the clutter of competing Promotion strategies. The promotional industry has experienced dynamic changes over the last several decades. The changes have been good in terms of Technology advancement, Medium and more methods to attract consumers and on creativity. The instrument of promotion -When it comes to top-of-mind recall, advertisements have a better recall value.

. These advertisements had higher brand recall among respondents.. The attractive advertising campaign and product tag lines and captions have a major influence on the customers recall.

Creative advertising needs to intelligent, sharp, imaginative to the point and extremely catchy. It must motive people to purchase advertisement product. The message and appeal made should be able to make positive impact on the consumers. There is great hunger from consumer's side they wanted to see things differently and its advertiser's responsibility to attract and engaged the consumers, they remember and memorize the creative ads than the product. Marketers need to understand the various dimension of advertising creativity such as originality, flexibility, elaboration, artistic value and humor.

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