

Review Article

# Ethical and Tactical Changes in Advertising Policy of Indian Enterprises: A survival Strategy in the wake of Pandemic

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**Abstract** - The concept of entrepreneurship is no more a naïve concept, but it urges something new all the time. The conventional business ethics of a successful enterprise is simply noticeable nowadays. The new-age entrepreneurs are aggressive in nature, intelligent in using recourses, and brisk in filling the need gap. Today entrepreneurship focuses more on need-based demand rather than value-based demand. No doubt, innovation is key to all success, but understanding consumer psychology is vital. Entrepreneurs today use different tools to understand and read the consumers behaviour. Products are now utilized not only to fulfil the need but also to make the consumers feel proud of the slogan behind it. Entrepreneurs are changing their business ethics and tactics by mixing consumers emotions, spiritualism, patriotism etc. This paper attempts to bring some light on the changing tactics and ethics of Indian entrepreneurs to become successful.

**Keywords** - Ethical and Tactical, Survival Strategy.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The definition of entrepreneurship has changed with time, place, people and need. With the advancement of science, shapes, sizes and quality goods and services are changed for the Entrepreneur. The entrepreneurs put their efforts to bring new products to mankind to fill the need gap and to earn profit as well. The last few decades have witnessed the rapid increase in world population vis a vis the needs for different goods and services. At the same time, entrepreneurs have tried to adopt millions of tactics and brought some new ethics to sell their products to a different category of consumers. At times, needs are created, or sometimes needs are pushed forward to the mind of the consumers in exploring different tangents of the same need. From an economic lens, needs are classified as necessity, comfort and luxury. However, year after year, needs have

changed their places and pushed backwards. Yesterday's luxury is today's comfort, and today's comfort was once our necessity. Entrepreneurs, consumers, living conditions, innovations etc., are to a major extent responsible for it.

## II. AIM OF STUDY

The aim of the study evolves on the tactics and ethics adopted by Indian enterprises as a survival strategy. The study throws some light on entrepreneurs approach towards achieving success through exploiting consumers' mentality. It also tries to unveil the Entrepreneur's ethics towards his business in respect of consumer's behaviour in India. As defined by Black's Law Dictionary, "Entrepreneur is a business adventurer; a business explorer. Takes advantage of an opportunity, real or perceived. As the decision-maker, decides what, how, and how much of a good or service will be produced. Someone who exercises initiative by organizing into a business, or enterprise" and entrepreneurship is defined as the professional application of knowledge, skills and competencies and/or of monetizing a new idea by an individual or a set of people by launching an enterprise *de novo* or diversifying from an existing or (distinct from seeking self-employment as in a profession or trade), thus, to pursue growth while generating wealth, employment and social good (NKC 2008:!) But after all, the charm of becoming an entrepreneur lies in the desire to accumulate wealth by adopting different business tactics and ethics.

### A. Changing face of Business Ethics

In a general sense, ethics is a branch of philosophy that involves systematizing, defending and recommending concepts of right and wrong conduct. On the other hand, business ethics is a form of applied ethics or professional ethics that examines ethical principles and moral or ethical problems that arise in a business environment. It applies to all aspects of business conduct and its relevance to the



conduct of the individual and entire organization. (Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy, <https://mediam.com>). However, in the last few years, business ethics has focused on many unusual and uncommon areas. We may call it the need for an hour or new tactics for sustainability or survival strategy. With the progression of science and technology, the intensity of competition among business houses has sharpened. Though quality remains key to success in all businesses, however the way they pushed their products into the basket of consumers is a matter of discussion. If observed closely, they play very intelligently with the emotions of consumers by pushing patriotism, spiritualism, social concepts in the advertisement as well as playing with the emotion of the consumers very cleverly. Big enterprises are wisely and carefully entering our drawing rooms through TV, mobile, magazines, newspapers, etc. and capturing our decision-making process.

#### a) *Patriotism*

Let us discuss the advisements used via patriotism to sell a product. Patriotism is defined as "strong feelings of attachment and loyalty to one's own country, but without corresponding hostility towards other nations" (Balabanis et al., 2001). Because of love and devotion to their country, patriotic people tend to favour their own country's artefacts and products (Jain & Jain 2013). *"Amul's Desh Ka Dudh, Tata's Desh Ki Namak, Hero's Desh Ki Dhadkan, Bank Of Baroda: India's International Bank, Patanjali apnaye, deshkoarthica azadilaye"*, *Videocon's Indian Multinational, Voltas: India ka Dil. India ka AC., Myntra - India's largest online fashion store* are few bright examples of using the name of country and patriotism as a medium. Most of the indigenous business houses are taking advantage of these kinds of punch lines as their business tactics. It has no harm to use these punch lines for their products, but is it also crucial to gauge the changing face of Indian business houses as more and more business entities are adapting these tactics to attract customers.

#### b) *Spiritualism*

Spiritualism is a part absorbed within every Indian and cannot be defined categorically in its meaning properly from a dictionary. Rather, it is a culture or philosophy or part of our religious belief and thought that every Indian inculcate from childhood through their family, society and religion. There is a strong belief behind it. Anything coming under the preview of spiritualism is granted with respect and accepted heartily. That is the reason why business houses are gradually realizing the importance of tapping this as an opportunity in Indian consumers. It is observed that few business houses are selling their products by mixing the concept of spiritualism. Patanjali and Sri Ayurveda are bright examples of it. Customers have immense faith in the products of these business houses as they have respect towards the founder. Patanjali is one of the fastest-growing FMCG companies in India now.

#### c) *Emotion*

Emotions are multidimensional feelings that reflect information about consumers' relationship to their social and physical surroundings as well as their interpretations regarding these relationships (Najaf Babayev, 2018). Emotional appeal plays an important role in buying behaviour of the consumer. Business houses are very tactfully trying to control our emotions, for example, "Asian Paints: HarGhar Kuch Kahtahein, HDFC StdLife: Jiyosaruthake, LIC: Zindagikesathbhi Zindagikebaadbhi, Bajaj: Hamara Bajaj. The comparatively new enterprises are more aggressive in this context. We can take the examples of Snapdeal - Dilki Deal, Make my trip - Diltah roaming hai, Yatra.com - Ehsaan mat lo, discount lo, Practo - your health app, Shaadi.com - Love, Arranged by Shaadi.com, Ola - Chalo Niklo".

#### B. *Balancing the Ethical Marketing*

There has consistently been a missing viewpoint in the advertising process of sellers; for example, the desire of customers comes after production and sales. Concentrating completely on purchaser needs was insufficient on the grounds that society and customers could endure because of bogus promoting and the assembling of downgraded items or services. Therefore the move towards social and moral promoting, which contemplates each party, to be specific the producers, customers, society, and the world, is continuously taking place. Advertising ethics is a region of applied morals that incorporates the ethical standards behind showcasing and guidelines. In certain territories of advertising ethics, i.e., publicizing the ethics and its promotion, media morals overlap. Advertising ethics tends to standards and guidelines characterizing adequate and acceptable market conduct. It alludes to the procedure by which companies market their merchandise and services to concentrate not just on the benefit of customers by their items yet additionally on the social and environmental advantages of their items.

Organizations concentrated on the ethical assessment of marketing their choices from a business perspective (for example, regardless of whether the ideal return is accomplished through a particular promoting activity) and from an ethical perspective (for example, regardless of whether a choice is right or ethically solid). However, the genuine trial of how your clients respond to your promotions and what they accept about your business is, despite the fact that it is respectable to have internal convictions that drive their own practices. So what is portrayed as deceptive by the advertising scene? Morals are clearly open to discussion; it is not a matter of science but rather of reasoning, so it is not the privilege coherent, inalienable moral position. To put it along these lines, this does not come out as a tactic; it is a way of thinking. It incorporates everything from guaranteeing that advertising is straightforward and reliable through a lot of shared qualities to building a solid relationship with clients. The advertisers now and again face

the challenge of amazing the public with the stunning response with their advertisements as they look to break through present-day life's interchanges clutter. The normal Indian today is presented each day with an enormous number of advertising messages. To draw the attention of people in general, advertisers may resort to sketchy taste advances and strategies. It is not astonishing that over half of Indians accept that the present promotion is wild and out of control. Social pundits point to promoting as one of our purchaser economy's most questionable viewpoints.

Ads today spread at an alarmingly fast rate with web advancement and the appearance of online networking and social data. With a straightforward post on Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram, a company occupied with unscrupulous practices can be pulverized. They may lose all validity and blacklist their items by individuals. Any open public goodwill they might have enjoyed may be lost. On the other hand, a company that is unethical and is straightforward and shows that it thinks about its clients can utilize a similar technique to appreciate a quick increment in its reputation.

### **C. Pillars of Ethical Marketing**

**a) Trustworthiness:** Be direct in dealings and offer value and honesty.

**b) Responsibility:** Accept the ramifications of promoting practices and serving the requirements of a wide range of clients while being acceptable ecological stewards.

**c) Fair:** Fairly adjusting purchaser and seller needs and maintaining a strategic distance from control in all structures while securing clients' data.

**d) Regards:** Recognize the basic human respect of the considerable number of individuals required through endeavours to impart, comprehend and address others' issues and acknowledge others' commitments.

**e) Straightforwardness:** Create a feeling of transparency through correspondence, helpful analysis, activity, what's more, exposure to advertising practices.

**f) Citizenship:** Complete all lawful, financial, charitable and social duties to all partners and offer back to the community and secure the environment.

### **D. Commonly Observed Unethical Marketing Practices**

**a) Making claims that are bogus, misrepresented or unchecked:**

Some advertisers utilize bogus articulations, overstated advantages, or make unverifiable cases about their offers as a desperate offer to propel potential and existing clients to buy their items or services. This is basic in the weight reduction industry, where potential purchasers are persuaded by advertisers that a specific item can assist them with

shedding pounds without exercise or diet inside about fourteen days, for instance, Kellogg's extraordinary K Challenge.

### **b) Fact distortion to delude or deceive potential buyers:**

This is another normal advertising practice that is unethical and exploitative. A run of the mill model is the point at which a portion of food was preparing organization guarantees that when it contains sugar or calories, its items are sans sugar or without calories. Such an organization is just endeavouring to misdirect possible purchasers as they are probably not going to purchase the items if they are made known to contain sugar or calories.

### **c) Obscure the side effects of goods or services:**

Dark, dim sides or symptoms of merchandise or administrations: This deceptive marketing practice is across the board in the natural remedies and cures segment, where most makers misdirect potential purchasers that their items have no reactions since they are "produced using natural products." But as a general rule, it has been discovered that the greater part of these items has side effects, particularly when utilized for quite a while. Indeed, without reactions, there is no item - it is essential that the side effects might be obscure. It is smarter to state, "No known reactions" than to state, "No symptoms do exist."

### **e) Use Fear strategies:**

This is another yet common unethical advertising practice. We tend to hear them say: "This price is a time-restricted offer. In the event that you do not accept now, you may need to pay much more to get it later in light of the fact that the offer will wind up in two days' time, and the cost will go up." The main explanation for these announcements is to incite the possible purchaser to settle on a spot choice. Also, that is erroneous.

### **f) Spamming:**

Spamming is when sending unsolicited emails to potential customers to encourage them to purchase their products or services. This is the most common unethical online marketing practice. It doesn't matter how long you send such emails. Whether it is sent once or as a regular practice, the seller shall remain a spammer.

### **E. Advertising Regulatory in India**

#### **a) Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI):**

Founded in 1985, it is focused on the cause for self-guideline in advertising and promoting, guaranteeing that clients' interests are secured. ASCI was framed with the help of all the four advertising related sectors advertisers, media (counting supporters and the press), advertising agencies and other sectors, for example, PR organizations and statistical surveying firms.

**b) Consumer Complaints Council (CCC):**

Is the central core of ASCI. It is the committed work that this department of prominent individuals has placed in, which has given a huge driving force to ASCI's work and publicizing self-regulation. The objectives of ACSI includes administering, monitoring, and advancing advertising measures in India with a view to:

- Ensure the honesty and trustworthiness of advertising portrayals and claims and defend against deluding advertising.
- Ensure that advertising does not offend the public standards and principles, stereotyping women.
- Protection against the indiscriminate use of advertising to advance items or services that are commonly viewed as destructive to society or to people or that are not satisfactory to society in general.
- Ensuring fairness and reasonableness amongst market players and the canons competition.

**F. Strategy at Pandemic like scenario**

**a) Creating Demand:**

Market demand is directly proportionate to the situational requirement, and a Pandemic situation can alter the requirements altogether. Three factors that largely drives demand in such scenarios: 1. Specific requirements, 2. Outmoded consumption, 3. Conservative approach.

**b) Specific requirements, Outmoded consumption:**

While a specific requirement can create or increase demand for certain commodities owing to lifestyle changes and enforcements, the outmoded consumption threats market demand for altered consumption of some other commodities. Both these functions will have medium to long term effect on the demand, whereas a typically conservative approach drives the market demand during the pandemic time, which remain contained in the short term. The conservative demand approach often witnesses a pull function leading to lower demand in the market. It is pertinent to mention that the approach some enterprises have taken at this time is commendable. Companies like Wildcraft, who generally manufacture bags and shoes, have started venturing into manufacturing face masks, revolutionizing the concept of branding a product that remained disposable in the mind of the general public for many years. Quick realigning and innovation is the key to success in the marketing strategy that accelerates demand for the commodity.

**c) The conservative approach:**

While advertising is necessary to create the brand imprint, conservative spending on advertisements ought to happen in a pandemic situation. For instance, one online rental home booking organization reported that it would suspend all advertising exercises in 2020 so as to spare countless income. 45 per cent of worldwide shoppers are given more opportunities to internet based life, online video

streaming has expanded by 26 percent, web-based gaming traffic has expanded exponentially on one telecommunication's servers, and the quantity of customers utilizing online food delivery has risen dramatically. Subsequently, numerous brands may hope to upgrade their advertising strategies to all the more optimizing new trends of practices which is digital based and reflect an increase in online capitalization.

**d) Accelerating Demand:**

The advertising departments need to focus on challenges thoroughly, considering inventive and creative advertising tactics that will explore the business through this new ordinary. For brands, this implies managing market modification as a result of the economic effect on all industries and varied sectors, confronting expanded competition-driven consumers. No time is risky. Even a pandemic like situation has its own opportunities but need the right marketing strategy.

A blog published in paper lite suggests the following six-fold marketing strategy for a pandemic like situation:

**e) Pause. Assess. Restart:**

As the market is changing rapidly, it is time to put a pause on some of your ongoing marketing campaigns. What you decided a couple of weeks back isn't necessarily appropriate today.

**f) Compassion on your Creativity:**

In the spirit of the timeline and the reassessment of your content marketing strategy, perhaps the imagery and language need some scrutiny as well. From tone and visual, from colours to keywords, the context and sensitivity require a wee bit of change.

**g) Passive, But, Informed:**

Keep your customers informed on the situation at hand. Brands do need to communicate to their customers in response to the crisis. You should let them know about the proactive measures you're taking. Be responsible, and it could be store closures or policy updates. Although these messages might be redundant, they do add value to customer relationships because they are informed.

**h) Serious. But, Positive:**

No need to carry a grim brand tone to reflect the current situation. Lean into your positive side, let your instincts set the mood. It is vital to be personable. Don't make your brand emotionless. Using images of people smiling need not be offensive - it can be refreshing to recall a normal life and be hopeful for the future.

**i) Tailor it for the need:**

There may be some of the deals that are nearing closure and some that will be decided a few weeks down the line - keep the prospects engaged about your brand and the

product or service but don't overwhelm them with unrelated marketing content.

**j) Reach out and announce:**

If there has ever been a time for us to help one another, this is it. Every brand exists to provide value, and the product or service that help during this stressful time deserve the attention of those who can benefit from them. A personal touch can create space for your brand and preserve it in the customer mind for a long.

### III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

'Survival of the fittest is the mantra for all those enterprises who want to stay in the market. Today's market is not only customer-driven but also technology-driven. The competition shall be multifold, among the competitors as well as with their own technology. India is an emerging powerhouse of the future. Multinational companies are looking with more soft policies than ever with a hope to open their business in India. Under such circumstances, whatever tactics and ethics are applied by Indian companies are welcome for their sustainability. Advertising has made considerable progress from a little industry to a huge scope industry, but it has been confronting criticisms on ongoing occasions as the practices of advertising have not generally been ethical. The ethical part of Indian advertisement is critical for the reclamation of our Indian culture and legacy, especially at the sensitive time like the wake of a pandemic situation. The god-fearing, feel protective mindset need to be taken care of while designing the advertisement strategy. Go the digital way should be the mantra to effectively reach people while managing costs. A prospective approach

showing a path of fearless life might be adopted. Commonality and community approach might extend the peace of mind while developing reliance on the product.

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