

## OUT-OF HOME ADVERTISING IN INDIA: A PRESENT TREND

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### **Abstract:**

*Out-of-Home (OOH) has revolutionized the way outdoor communication is being looked upon by marketers and, today, it has transcended the traditional outdoors, extending to communicate with the customer at various touch points. OOH as a medium has the greatest flexibility in terms of being able to transform ideas and imaginations into reality. Out-of-home advertising is used extensively in India – in both urban and rural areas, and includes a wide variety, right from road-side wall paintings and small handbills to large illuminated hoardings and electronic displays.*

*This article provides selected snapshots of out-of-home advertising in India.*

**Keywords:** *Outdoor Advertising, Advertisement, Media and Marketers*

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**Introduction:**

Out-of-Home (OOH) has revolutionized the way outdoor communication is being looked upon by marketers and, today, it has transcended the traditional outdoors, extending to communicate with the customer at various urban touch points (*Gambetti,2010*). However, out-of-home advertising is in fact one of the oldest form of advertising. The use of advertising signs dates back to the days of ancient Rome and Greece, when signs were used to make the locations of mercantile institutions. The modern out-of-home media include posters; classical bill-boards; hoardings; non-standardized signs such as road signs, highway advertising; transit advertising placed on public and private transit vehicles; and also advertising at rail, bus and air terminals. Out-of-home advertising accounts for around 5-10% of India's total advertisement business and the rate of growth are 15% per year. Industry experts estimate the possible market size of OOH advertising is Rs.3, 500 crore.

Previously, OOH advertising was considered as a supporting media to play the role of additional support service when the message was already communicated by the TV Commercials (TVCs) and print media; but now, the landscape for OOH is changing dramatically. Media planners and brand marketers no longer consider OOH to be the support media: instead it has become an essential instrument in the complete ad strategy of any successful branding exercise. OOH advertising along with internet advertising are used by the marketers in order to elicit consumer brand engagement.



**Fig-1** (General OOH advertising)

*Source:* [http://www.afaqs.com/advertising/creative\\_showcase/index.html?id=31726&media=OOH&type=Indian](http://www.afaqs.com/advertising/creative_showcase/index.html?id=31726&media=OOH&type=Indian)

### **Factors Driving the Growth of OOH Media:**

Among the key trends driving the rapid expansion of alternative out-of home (OOH) advertising are as follows:

1. The perception among advertisers that these media provide high engagement, targeting options, proximity to point-of-sale, measurable impact, and cost effectiveness;
2. It enhances brand identity and widening the scope of effective engagement of consumer at various urban touch points.
3. Increasing effective and efficient allocation of the advertising budgets.
4. Through OOH advertising information can be communicated effectively.
5. 24 hours presence.
6. Economic efficiency in terms of low production cost and low cost per thousand exposures.
7. Over the past few years, media penetration has increased phenomenally. Increasing penetration of media has led to increasing demand for a clutter free advertising. OOH media provides ample opportunity to advertisers for clutter free advertising.
8. New technology enables companies to launch digital advertising platforms that generate higher revenues than the conventional formats.
9. OOH media symbolizes creative freedom. There is no limit like 30 second time slots (as in TVCs) or column centimeters (as in print media). Here the only limitation is one's imagination. One can put ideas into execution without being bogged down by the limitation of size and time.
10. Another reason for the popularity of OOH media is the innovations that have happened in OOH advertising over the past decade. Today, OOH media is not just about plain hoardings trying to catch the attention of a disinterested crowd, but being innovative in terms of commercials used and display made.e.g. **Vehicle wrapping** is gaining popularity in recent OOH advertising field. According to industry experts, out of the total Rs.3,500 crore market size of out-of –home (OOH) advertising ,vehicle wraps, which is commonly known as **fleet** graphics amount to a Rs.50-Rs.100 crore.This substantiates that, there has been a phenomenal shift in the ways things are done today, than in the past. This makes it an ideal medium for advertisers to reach out to the target audience.

11. Exposure to and recall of these media is growing as individuals spend more time commuting to work, walking in urban areas, waiting in transit hubs, and shopping at retail outlets.
12. Majority of consumers view alternative out-of-home (OOH) media as favorable and educational.

### **Out-of-Home Advertising: Creating a new business agenda**

Outdoor advertising (OOH) is visible from all corners. It can be seen on city buses; bus stop hoardings, bill boards, gymnasiums, parks, cinema halls, railway stations, central courts and all other public places. Hence, it can view from everywhere.

1. Wide Coverage of Local Markets: With proper placement, a broad-based exposure is possible in local markets. Illuminated advertisements would attract attention during right times too.
2. Geographic flexibility for local advertisers.
3. Potential positioning of the advertisement close to the point of sale.
4. Short exposure to the advertisement.
5. It enhances brand identity and widening the scope of effective engagement of consumer at various urban touch points.
6. 24 hours presence.
7. Because outdoor advertising space is hired typically for 30-day periods, consumers are usually exposed to it a number of times, resulting in high levels of frequency.
8. Brand awareness.
9. High frequency of ad exposure to regular commuters.
10. High reach.
11. Innovativeness is the key mantra in OOH advertising. The only limitation today is human imagination. If you can think of it, you can do it with OOH media.
12. Easy accessibility. OOH media can reach anywhere; right from streets, to business lounges, airports, etc.

### Out-of-Home Advertising: some loopholes

Some of the major drawbacks of OOH advertising are as follows:

- 1] While out-of-home advertising can be focused on specific geographic markets, it could still lead to a lot of wasteful coverage. This is because people from diverse backgrounds pass before a bill-board, and not all of them may be the target customers.
- 2] Because of the speed with which most people pass by out-of-home ads, the exposure time is quite short. Therefore, messages are limited to a few words and/or an illustration. Lengthy appeals are not likely to be effective.
- 3] Because of the high frequency of exposures, out-of-home advertisements may lead to quick wear-out. People are likely to get tired of seeing the same ad enroute to their work every day.
- 4] One of the more difficult problems of out-of-home advertising lies in the accuracy of measuring reach, frequency and other effects.
- 5] Outdoor advertising can lead to blind sport effect, which is the term used to refer to the loss of impact of a campaign that is sustained for a long time. This can be overcome by continuously creating novelty in hoardings.e.g. *Amul's* hoardings (see-fig2) are renewed quite regularly with messages based on innovative topical appeals, which are presented in a humorous manner.

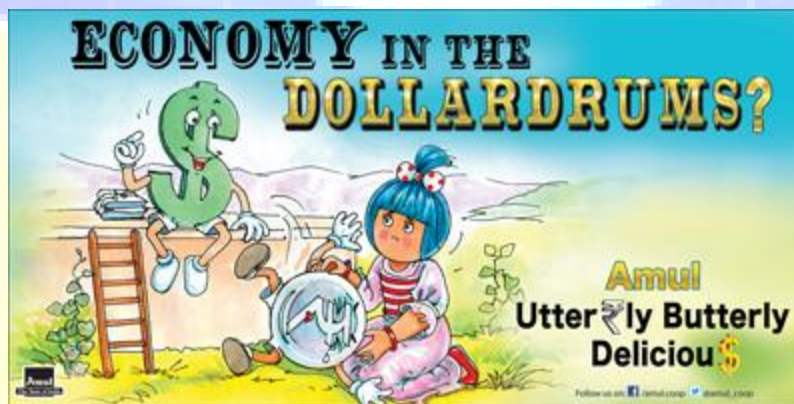


Fig-2 (Creative OOH advertising by Amul)

**Source:** <http://www.amul.com/m/amul-hits?s=2013>



6] Out-of-home advertisements are non-elective. In other words, the audiences who get exposed are people of all ages, sexes, educational and socioeconomic levels. There is no selectivity of a particular type of audience.

In this regards *Blasko (1985)* listed five main principles of effective billboard advertising: (1) short copy (eight or fewer words in copy), (2) simple background, (3) product identification (billboard clearly identifies product or advertiser), (4) simple message (single message communicated), and (5) creative (use of clever phrases and/or illustrations).

### Conclusion:

Today, the out-of-home (OOH) media are used across a very wide range of products, to advertise diverse items. In short, any advertisement campaign now looks incomplete without out-of-home support.

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