

ALLURING CONSUMERS- THE EMOTIONAL WAY

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Abstract

Today, customers are the critical for the success of any business organization because of fierce competition. They often attribute logic and reasoning to their purchase decision and try to reassure themselves that they have made rational purchases and emotion has not played any role in their decision making process. However, the reality is when a customer purchases a product; he is still influenced to an extent, by emotional considerations.

Carl W. Buechner had once quoted- "They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel."

Effective Emotional points of difference can drive greater distinctiveness for the brand because they create the brand personality and thus help in connecting with the consumers well. A variety of appeals are used to influence the consumer behavior which include rational appeals, moral appeals and emotional appeals. Among these, emotional appeals tend to arouse positive or negative emotions in the customers.

Consumers are human beings, often driven by emotions and feelings and hence they can be swayed by strong emotional appeals. This article explores and highlights on the Why? and How? Emotional appeals are being used by marketers to position themselves better in the mind of consumers.

Key Words: fierce competition; moral appeals; emotional appeals; brand personality; consumer behavior; rational appeals.

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Introduction

In a Sunday evening, I was having a bash with my family members when a cute little boy from one of our neighbours rushed into our house. We all got shocked with an assumption of something uncertain. This feeling of uncertainty turned into Laughter when he with a glow and smile on his face showed us his brand new watch and said, “Now I became smart and handsome”. This very statement of his arouse some questions in my mind like: Can a small watch enhance the personality and looks of a person? Does a design of a product reflect personality? Does emotional aspects of brands valued more than its features?

These questions and many more arouse interest to analyze the various strategies adopted by organizations for better positioning their brands using emotional appeals.

In today’s competitive world where every Tom, Dick and Harry is claiming to be the best. The million dollar question is how they can do so to create a competitive advantage, where today reaching the consumers may not be a matter of concern with the availability of a plethora of media mix but connecting with them is the biggest challenge of many organizations.

There are few questions which many marketers are striving hard to analyze like;

1. How can you get someone interested?
2. How do you get someone to consider a purchase?
3. How do you continually reinforce that their purchase decision was absolutely the right decision, the “winning” decision?
4. How do you create a loyal customer such that they want to continue to buy your product and/or are most receptive to cross selling and value add purchases?
5. How do you create a brand ritual so that your brand becomes part of your customer’s life?
6. How do you get your audience to be your cheerleader?

According to Brittan- ‘When you purchase any good, your enjoyment is reduced by the psychological cost of paying for it’. This reflects that people do get tuned by the emotional benefits derived from the brand.

A shade of emotion in marketing:

The word emotion has been derived from the latin word *movre*, which means to move. It thus not only drives behavior but also influence the information processing activity in relation to evaluation and judgment. Marketing folklore suggests that emotion can stimulate buying interest,

guide choices, arouse buying intentions and influence decisions. Emotions intensify wants and desires to get motivated.

There has been a metamorphosis from using rational appeals in advertisements to using emotional appeals for creating a better differentiation and for breaking the clutter to position them in the mind of the customers.

According to Marc Gobe- *Emotional Branding focuses on the most compelling aspect of the human character; the desire to transcend material satisfaction and experience emotional fulfillment*

Elster had once quoted the importance of emotions as follows:

'Emotions matter because if we did not have them nothing else would matter. Creatures without emotion would have no reason for living. Emotions are the most important bond or glue that links us to others. Objectively, emotions matter because many forms of human behavior would be unintelligible if we did not see them through the prism of emotions'

Further, Aaker and Bruzzone in 1981 had quoted that *'Emotional responses are central to consumer's perceptions and reactions to advertisements'*.

Need based emotional appeals:

(Stayman and Aaker,1988;Edell and Burke,1987;Burke and Edell,1989) quoted that *'Emotional responses can also directly impact brand attitudes and purchase intentions'*. And here needs and wants of consumers do play a vital role. A need can be defined as a felt state of deprivation of some basic satisfaction and wants are the forms of human needs that are shaped by culture, society, individual characteristics etc. Focusing and understanding these basic pillars, marketers have used various types of emotional appeals to induce the consumers.

Few are as stated below:

- Physiological Needs
 - Reliance Communications: *Food ,air, water and network*
 - Dominos: *Hungry kya*
 - Cadbury's Perk: *Thodi si pet pooja*
- Safety Needs
 - Aviva: *Kal par control*
 - Aquaguard: *Absolutely safe drinking water*
 - Sugar Free: *Freedom from calories*

- Social Needs
 - Dairy Milk: *A gift for someone you love*
 - Archies Card: *The most special way to say you care*
- Esteem and Self-Actualization Needs:
 - Raymonds: *The complete man*
 - Nike: *Just do it*
 - Apple iPod: *Think different*
 - Mercedes Benz: *The future of the Automobile*
 - Fair and Lovely: *Beauty that empowers a woman to change her destiny*
 - Tata Tea: *Har Subah sirf utho mat. Jaago Re*

Role of advertising in emotional appeals:

Emotional appeals used in advertising, which are based on culture and customs of consumers. These appeals are likely to be well understood and appreciated by them than the appeals based on alien culture. This is particularly true in the Indian context because an overwhelming majority of Indian population has respect and regard for their culture.

Creative execution elements are the message appeals, message structure, execution styles, tone and design that describe the look, feel and sound of a message in its finished form. Together they affect the relevance, originality and impact of an advertisement. Advertising appeals aim to influence the way consumers view themselves and how buying certain products can prove to be beneficial for them. The message conveyed through advertising appeals influence the purchasing decisions of consumers. The most basic of human needs is the need for food, clothing and shelter. Special need for these necessities cannot be created with advertising. However, there are certain other products that provide comfort in life and advertising aims to generate demand for these products. Advertising uses appeals as a way of persuading people to buy certain products

Advertising appeals are designed in a way so as to create a positive image of the individuals who use certain products and even reflecting to some social issues of interest pertaining in the society at large. Marketing is all about satisfying the consumer's needs, wants and demands at a profit and at the same time, protecting the larger and long term interests of the society. Through the use of variety of appeals, advertising attempts to communicate and influence the purchase and consumption behaviour of the existing and potential customers.

There are many types of appeals like rational appeals, emotional appeals and moral appeals. Here, the rational appeals focus on the audience's self interest and are directed at the decision making process. It attempts to show the benefit derived from the product and service. The ads using rational appeals focuses on quality, durability, resale value, ease of use, etc. The rational appeals are widely used in B2B and even sometimes to the end users for final use and consumption. Further, the emotional appeals are classified as positive emotional appeals and negative emotional appeals wherein the positive emotional appeals include love, affection, joy, pride, humour etc. and the negative emotional appeals cover fear, hatred, guilt, embarrassment etc. Moral appeals, on the other hand, attempts to draw the attention on the societal marketing aspects such as global warming, AIDS campaigns, pulse polio campaigns etc. Advertising has fifteen basic appeals (Jib Fowles- 1998); focusing on the need for sex, affiliation, nurture, guidance, aggress, achieve, dominate, prominence, attention, autonomy, aesthetic sensations, need to escape, feel safe and the various physiological needs.

It is for the advertisers to use any of the above appeals to lure the consumers. However, appeals which are emotionally linked are distinct and different from those of the other appeals and can have greater positive response from the target audience. It is here where the advertisers need to understand and use carefully the emotional appeals, through a perfect blend of various media vehicles, to positively influence the consumers' mind.

Humor used to lure consumers:

Advertisers are cleverly using and inculcating humor appeals by creating comic situations which are capable of bringing a smile on the face of the people and hence attracting them towards their brands.

One of the most memorable advertisements that have used a comedian has been Charlie Chaplin for Cherry Blossom shoe polish. Amul Butter has been doing this for several years by deploying very humorous ads based on the current topics. Here the strong creative idea is carefully blended with subtle humour. The powerful idea with humour helps in beating the clutter. Saint Goblin glass is another wonderful example of how humor has been used subtly. The restaurant advertisement (where the water is thrown) created by the company is so refreshing that one never gets bored of viewing it. Using the right type humor appeal in advertising will be determined by clearly defining the objectives and positioning of one's product. Usually, it is used in product which is low in investment and which has high impulse purchase.

(Candy, beer and mosquito repellents). Even, advertisements of Chloromint- Dobara mat poochna, Fevikwik- used as a bait for fish, Mountain Dew- *Cheetha bhi peetha hai*.

Further, Brands like Mentos have successfully used humor appeals in its ads with its '*Dimag ki Batti jalade*' campaigns. The advertisement of Dr. Morepen- '*Ab se Health Ke Liye Kuch Bhi Karega*'. (Kazmi and Batra). An example of exaggerated humor is the *Fevicol 'Pakde rehna, chodna nahin' ad*.

Emotional appeals based on Love, affection and Joy:

Many matrimonial ads are emphasizing on for a life partner. One of the ads by shaadi.com portrayed the happy couples thanking shaadi.com and stating it to be an example of love and affection. Airtel truly uses this type of emotional appeal. An advertisement of Airtel where a daughter asks her father who is in a remote area to make a diagram. The father then draws the figure by joining the stars through imaginary lines on the sky along with his daughter using the Airtel phone. Further, the latest rebranding done by airtel with a change in logo and tagline being '*dil jo chahe paas laye*' with an advertisement where a boy and a girl stay together always by being in touch through airtel even if they are separating- reflects love used by airtel.

Advertisements related to baby and child products, home or domestic products etc are sometimes based on this appeal. Even, advertisements relating to chocolates and gift items strongly use the love and affection appeals.

Another example is of Cadbury Dairy Milk new ad campaign under the broad umbrella of 'Kuch Meetha Ho Jaye'. The umbrella, initiated six years ago, has rolled out several sub-campaigns over the years - each with a separate message. What started off as a message that encouraged people to celebrate the small joys of life ('*Dil Ko Jab Khushi Chhoo Jaye, Kuch Meetha Ho Jaye*') and moved on to the celebrating overt occasions. The latest campaign being, '*Shubh Aarambh*'. Another TVC of TANISHQ also persuades for beautification through love and affection on wedding occasions.

High Self-Esteem and Bravery touching the Emotional chord of Consumers:

The feeling of being brave, which may be related to winning over opponents or even sometimes winning over difficult situations is an emotional positioning strategy adopted by marketers. Many advertisements relating to soft drinks, sports, Insurance, Bikes, and even the Lead and Teach India campaigns etc. had a reflection of this.

HDFC Standard Life wisely positioned its image in the target market with veer ras by saying in its ad 'Na Sar Jhuka Ke Jio'. Further, the advertisement of Akshay Kumar doing stunts to capture a bottle of cold drink, and recent ads of Thums Up showing 'AaJ Kuch Toofani Karte Hain' uses this aspect pretty well.

Another example is the ads of Mountain Dew. The film opens on a nervous guy telling himself: "Itna mat dar, beta Joy. Sunny ko dekh, kaisa chilled out sa baitha hai." Sunny on the other hand sits with his eyes closed praying: "Bhagwaan, aaj apne Sunny ko bacha lena. Main Anshul ki tarah stud nahin hoon." Anshul, a well-built, bare-chested guy thinks: "Kya faayda teri body ka Anshul? Sabse dara toh tu hi hai." Cut to a shot of rafts overturning. VO: "Boss, dar sabko lagta hai, gala sabka sookhta hai..." As the guys open bottles of Mountain Dew, the VO continues: "...Toh aaney do dar ko, kyunki dar ke aagey jeet hai." The next shot shows the guys doing rafting. The following shot shows the raft vanishing under water. As the cheerleaders worry for our guys, the raft comes out of the water winning the race. VO: "New stronger Mountain Dew.. The ad ends as we see the boys enjoying their winning moment. Its tagline being 'Darr ke aagey jeet hai'.

In the new ad as the TVC opens, we see two people talking. One of them worries for the other, as he is ready to skate dive 300 feet down the dam. The boy takes a sip of Mountain Dew and says, "Dew will kill fear". He takes his skateboard and without fear starts his descent. Water gushes from the dam behind him. Everyone worries. The boy jumps in the water as soon as the water is about to catch up with him. He comes to the surface, everyone cheers.

Further, the ads by Hunk and Pulsar are examples these types of appeals used by marketers for a unique positioning in the mind of the customers.

Fear appeals used to create awareness and attention towards a Product/Service:

There are many advertisements of Insurance, water purifiers, tyres etc which portray fear appeal. LIC's ad where the lady says that the 'Asli Jimedari Toh Sharmaji Puri Kar Gaye' is a bright example of shant ras. MediClaim policies have ads communicating about having enough funds for medical treatment portrays the importance of using fear as an effective emotional appeal to attract consumers to use the product. Some of the other examples are as follows;

An ad of Max New York Life Insurance is a perfect blend of bhay ras and then shant ras. The film opens with a woman hurriedly climbing up the stairs to her house On her way she asks the security guard, "sahab aaye?" to which he replies "haan memsahab". After entering the house,

she quickly starts her kitchen chores and calls out for Sanju, her husband. On getting no response, she calls on his mobile and starts looking for him all over the house. Adding to her suspicion, the call is not answered as she finds his phone carelessly lying under a pillow. Finally, she manages to find her husband at the terrace, but is startled to see him lying still on a rocking chair. Very nervously she moves him and shouts with mixed emotions of relief and fear to find him alright. Cut to a shot of an equally scared Sanju hugging his wife. The ad ends with a saying that *“Musibatein bata ke nahin aati, isliye Max New York Life ke life insurance plans. Life mein rahein hamesha taiyaar”*.

Jeevansathi.com in one of its ads used fear appeal by saying *‘Don’t marry the worst mistake of your life’*. Further, one of the most promising ads of HDFC Standard Life advertisement which says *‘How Much will your Family Need if You Leave For a Week and How Much for the rest of their Lives’*, with a tagline *‘Sar Utha Ke Jiyo’* relates to bhay ras and shant ras.

Marketers today are using fear in advertisements for welfare of the society, environment and people at large. Many ads pertaining to ‘do not drink and drive’, ‘do not use mobile phones while driving’, ‘use helmet while riding a bike’, do not smoke campaigns, causes of diseases due to unhealthy surrounding, do not cut trees, AIDS campaigns, pulse polio campaigns and many more are cleverly used by Government and corporates at large. Now a days cigarettes and guthka packages have visuals showing the harmful affects with a statutory warning of using fear appeal.

Other Emotional appeals used to connect with consumers:

Karunam in sanskrit is related to the feeling of being sad, pitiable etc. It includes feelings of disappointment or sympathy. Whereas, Rudram represents anger, irritation, furiousness etc and the Vibhatsyam shows unpleasantness or ugliness etc. These types of feelings are well communicated to the consumers giving a reason to them to get motivated to use the product.

Many of the ads by Bajaj XCD 125 DTS-Si has a combination of rudram and karunam. In one of its ads two men on their bikes come across each other on a red light signal. One of them strikes a conversation by asking the other, *“arey nayi gaadi?”* to which the other nods a yes. Further he asks, *“kitne cc?”* and the other reluctantly answers *“100 cc,”* proving himself a step ahead. At this the man says, *“hmmm, meri thodi zada hai, 125 cc.”* Then he compares the mileage of their bikes and again emerges a winner by proving that his bike's mileage is higher. Cut to a shot of him now willingly losing the argument and sarcastically telling the other that if not anything else the cost of his bike is surely higher than his. The clever man moves on as the signal goes green

leaving behind the other man zapped. "*Nayi Bajaj XCD 125 DTS-Si, ab sirf 5.25% interest aur 9,999 rupaiye ke downpayment par.*" The zapped man finally gets out of the shock with someone shouting at him to move on. This advertisement beautifully blends the karun ras and rudra ras.

Another advertisement which reflects these rasas including the Vibhatsyam or Vibhatsya ras is of Vaseline crack cream. In, one of its ads starts with a lady admires an expensive pair of sandals. The salesman takes a closer look at her cracked heels as they settle down to try it. The salesman shows a cheaper shoe but she insists on the red pair. "*Woh wala aapke budget mein nahi... ayga madam*", replies the man. MVO: "*Afsoos, pairon ki dararon se koi bhi aapke zindagi mein jaank sakta hai.*" *Pesh hai Vaseline ka aviskari ek do crack relief. Pehle liquid saakht chamri nikale phir cream dararon ko boar daale.* Now, even at the jewelers they don't refuse her.

The unpleasant feeling was portrayed through an advertisement of Rexona deodorant where a pretty girl is standing at a bus stop, waiting for a bus. Just then a blind man slowly walks down the road, eating a banana. He nears the girl as he finishes the banana. Wanting to discard the peel he sniffs the air for a trash can... and flicks the peel towards the girl. The girl awakes from her nightmare with a start. She gingerly sniffs the clothes she is wearing, anxiety on her face and thinks of Rexona Deodorant.

Even the advertisements of ItchGuard used agony appeal to portray the suffering caused by sweat itch causing irritation and unpleasant situation. There are many advertisements of cosmetics, public service, deodorants, apparel, fashion and lifestyle etc which are relating to these rasas. Further, these various rasas are blended creatively in advertisements by marketers to break the clutter and attract the audience. Further, many advertisements of Eno, Disprin, Zandu Balm, Iodex have inculcated the irritation feeling appeals of not using their brands and then highlighting their product benefits pertaining to various situations with solutions.

A Right Balance between Rational and Emotional appeal:

Now you must be wondering! Is it only emotions, essential enough in connecting with the consumers or a rational and logical touch is equally imperative?

The emotional appeals used by marketers depend upon the type of product and its positioning strategies. For example many organizations do use a combination of rational and emotional appeal to induce the consumers like;

The 'Shock Lagaa' commercials of Havells have used the humor in a creative manner. Keeping the concept and the premise intact and promoting on shock proof feature. Now days it is also positioning its brand on the basis of 'less consumption of electricity'.

Another example is of Ceat for its bike tyres. The campaigns run on the theme that '*Roads are full of idiots*' and be idiot-safe with Ceat Tyres". The ads are currently focusing on the 'better road grip' feature of Ceat bike tyres. Road grip is an important and relevant feature as far as tyres are concerned and Ceat has tried to own up that feature. Here it's trying to create a fear in the mind of consumers on unforeseen circumstances like facing an accident and then basing it on a logic of being saved because of its better grip. This is a well crafted combination of rational and emotional appeal.

Conclusion:

To achieve a sustainable competitive advantage it is imperative to tune the products and services according to the taste and preferences of customers. But in addition to this a unique mode of communication is also required. The concept of emotional marketing has helped marketers in understanding what attributes is to be added in their products and how it is to be communicated to the prospects. Consumer purchases products not because of only rational benefits attached but also to fulfill its emotional needs. Attaching emotional value to a product is about getting share in customers' heart.

Hence, companies engaged in aggressive competition have to take emotional marketing route as an opportunity to lure the consumers and increase their market share. As an effective deployment of emotional marketing and sometimes a balance between a rational logic and emotion can help an organization build a better brand equity in the long run and can also help to shift a market challenger or market follower to the position of market leader.

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