

The Symphony of Music in Contemporary Indian Digital Advertising



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Abstract

Music is an essential tool for advertisers to have in their arsenal due to its ability to arouse emotions, reaffirm brand identification, connect with particular audiences, and adjust to shifting cultural norms. It is a powerful tool for brands to tap into each of these areas to reach their consumers. This paper aims to analyze the role of music in Indian digital advertising and its contribution to shaping social trends in India. Through a comprehensive literature review and case studies, this research investigates how music influences consumer perception, attitude, and behavior, and how advertisers can leverage music to create effective and memorable advertisements. The data is collected from various sources like- Academic journals, Reputable online resources, Google Scholar, and News papers articles. The findings suggest that music significantly enhances consumer engagement, fosters emotional connections, and contributes to the creation of new popular culture and social trends in India. The study also highlights the importance of music in shaping brand identity, creating brand loyalty, and increasing brand recall. Furthermore, the research emphasizes the need for advertisers to stay abreast with technological advancements, such as podcasting and voice-activated devices, to harness the full potential of the available resources for the success in advertising. The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on the role of music in advertising and provides valuable insights for marketers, advertisers, and scholars in the field.

Key words: Digital, Music, Music and Influence, Advertising, Trends, Technology

Research Paper

Introduction

In India, even in early infancy, tales, anecdotes, and songs influence people's thinking most of the time. In a country like India where we have rich oral tradition, music plays a more impactful role. Music has the ability to alter human emotions. Research has shown that music has a powerful effect on our moods and produces corresponding changes in our behaviour. Music can create emotional engagement: Martin Lindstrom said, "Once such emotion engagement has been created - demand will always follow - yet one could say the 'side product of your effort is demand' the primary purpose is to create love." Music is a great way to create love (Pamnani).

Advertisements without music are dull and unattractive. Advertisers are working harder on every aspect of their

ads to make them stand out from the competition and get the attention of their intended target market as the rivalry becomes more fierce. According to the study by Stout and Leckenby (1988) on the relationship of emotional and cognitive viewer response to specific musical variables, they found out that music in advertisement can actually influence the information retrieved by consumers and also, the purchase intention of the consumers was higher with the advertisement with music in it.

Advertisers' core job is to connect customers with brands. Just as advertiser value the role of images, words, and the whole composition, they also have to appreciate the role of music. The way that music is employed in advertisements has changed significantly in the digital era. The use of more independent and niche music has replaced popular songs as a result of the growth of

social media and streaming services. This strategy not only makes advertisements stand out, but it also satisfies the increasing need from customers for personalization and originality. Furthermore, businesses and artists are increasingly working together to produce unique music for advertising campaigns, which blurs the boundaries between commercial and artistic material.

Research Problem

- Highlight the need to explore the impact of music on consumer behavior and brand communication in the digital landscape.
- Analyzing the role of music in Indian digital advertising and its contribution to shaping social trends in India.
- Deduce how brands are taking advantage of music to reach their target audiences.

Objectives of the Study

- Explore the influence of music on consumer engagement in digital advertising campaigns.
- Understand the effectiveness of music in influencing popular culture and social trends through Indian digital advertising.

Hypothesis

- **Hypothesis 1:** The strategic integration of music in digital advertising influences consumer perception and engagement positively.
- **Hypothesis 2:** Music-based digital advertising campaigns contribute to new popular culture and social trends in India.

Relevance of the Study

- Role of music in Indian digital advertising

Digital mediums are the underlying factor giving a boost to the Indian music ecosystem as more Indians consume content online through mobile or OTT platforms on the go, or on multiple screen. This presents a vital opportunity for advertisers to go beyond and build consumer engagement using Music as a advertising tool on various platforms. Kumar Taurani, Chairman and Managing Director of Tips Music Industries, says “India’s streaming market is on the cusp of a digital boom with unprecedented opportunity” (Stassen)

The five basic ways are identified in which music can contribute to an effective advertisement. i) Entertainment-Music can make an advertisement more effective merely by making it more attractive.

ii). Structure/Continuity- Music plays a role in tying together a series of dramatic episodes or a sequence of visual images, narrative voice-overs, or a list of product appeals. iii) Memorability-The use of rhythmic in the ad points to increase the memorability of a product or the product's name is important function for music because Some melodies have the power to infect human consciousness more than photographs or visual representations. iv) Lyrical language is the fourth technique of musical enhancement. Vocal music permits the conveyance of a verbal message in a non spoken way very effectively. v) Targeting-Music can be a powerful tool for advertisers to target their preferred audience. The efficacy of targeting and engagement tactics can be greatly increased by the cultural relevance of the music used in advertisements. It can resonate with specific demographic groups, based on factors like age, ethnicity, or lifestyle (Sinha et al. 125).

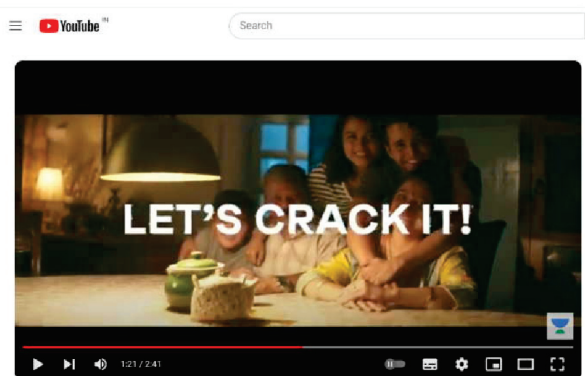
- How marketers and advertisers can take a leverage
An important function of music in advertising is to evoke emotions. Research in psychology has repeatedly demonstrated that listening to music may evoke a variety of emotions, from joy and enthusiasm to calmness and nostalgia (Marino). Advertisers harness this emotive power to establish an association between their product and the desired feeling. For instance, a lively, upbeat tune can infuse an ad with energy and joy, making a product seems more appealing and fun. On the other hand, businesses that want to come off as reassuring and comforting can benefit from using a gentle, melodic music to inspire trust and comfort.

Music helps to persuade the consumer to get further information about the product or even to purchase the product. Music was used to target on the right consumer. One of the main concerns when considering music to be used in an advertisement is the target market’s music preference. By using the right music that is consistent with their music taste, it can effectively affect on the attitude and buying behavior of the target market.

Advertisements can really aid in fostering familiarity by utilizing catchy background music and jingles. Consumers can remember advertising message better with the help of music in the advertisement. Some people will directly

recognize a brand when they listen to the jingle of it. Consistent use of music in the advertisements of the same brand and frequent exposure to the same advertisement by the consumers can make them remember the advertisement, the product, and also the brand well. By fulfilling these criteria, it would definitely influence the attitudes and buying behavior of the consumers.

- Music is capable of affecting popular cultures which can help marketers and advertisers create more culturally resonant campaigns.



Let's Crack It! Anthem Lyrics | Unacademy | Naezy | Dub Sharma

David Ogilvy once said, "Try and inject into every commercial you make a touch of singularity; a bird that will hook on to the consumers mind." Music can be a powerful tool taking advantage of and promoting popular culture & trends like- when Unacademy launched an anthem 'Let's Crack It.' Taking advantage of rap culture. The anthem was sung by Naezy, an emerging rap artist from the Gully Boy team. The anthem highlights the numerous problems with the Indian educational system and the pressures placed on students, positioning Unacademy as an anomaly that would enable students to realize their potential.

Rohit Pillai, associate director of marketing, says home-grown craft beer brand Bira 91 wants to be seen as a "big promoter" of the genre. FreeFlow is an experiential campaign that Bira 91 has been doing since 2017. It promotes hip-hop and various subcultures in India. With rap and b-boying alongside fashion and graffiti, the company aims to transform hip-hop into a "lifestyle." Pillai and his team are also scouting new talent. After being "discovered," the artists will be provided with a platform to develop and polish their talents. Bira 91 facilitated a tour with UK-based rapper Lady Leshurr for Delhi-based rapper Prabh Deep, who

is regarded as one of the nation's most recognized underground MCs (Nair).

Research Methodology

The research design involves two primary components:

1. **Literature Review:** To gather and synthesize existing knowledge on the impact of music in Indian digital advertising.
2. **Case Studies:** To examine specific instances of digital advertising campaigns in India that utilizes music.

The data is collected from numerous sources like-Academic journals, Reputable online resources, Google Scholar, and News papers articles. By combining a thorough literature review with targeted case studies, the study aims to offer valuable insights and practical implications for marketers, advertisers, and scholars in the field.

Results

Hypothesis 1: The integration of music in digital advertising is a strategic tool employed by advertisers to positively enhance consumer perception and engagement is proven right. By leveraging the emotional and mnemonic power of music, advertisers can create more impactful and memorable advertisements that resonate with their target audience and fostering deeper connections with consumers and achieving greater engagement outcomes.

Hypothesis 2: Music-based digital advertising campaigns contribute significantly to the creation and propagation of new popular culture and social trends in India is proven right. With the example of hip-hop culture embraced by the movie gully boy and how different brands took advantage of it, we can say that advertisers can create campaigns that resonate deeply with audiences, taking advantage of trends and fostering the adoption of new cultural elements and behaviors.

Music is utilized to influence consumer attitude and behavior

In an era where voice assistants and smart speakers are becoming household staples, the opportunities for interactive advertising through sound are expanding rapidly. In the past few years, companies who offer either services or tangible products have realized how important social media is to their business. Commercial advertising uses music as an influencing tactic. According to experiential study on media effect,

music applies an alluring influence through emotional and cognitive processes when paired with other content features (such as narrative structure, visual imagery, and language).

Study pointed out that majority of the ads can't do without music. Music is universal and can instantly trigger an emotional response, and establishing an emotional connection with an audience is so critical for a brand. When used correctly, music not only creates loyalty, but true advocacy (Rodrigues et al. 127). Brands have been increasingly leveraging the new sounds of India like rap & hip hop in their campaigns to appeal to younger Indians. For instance, United Breweries' Kingfisher changed up its two-decade-old jingle, 'Oo La La La Le O' with hip-hop beats. Around the time "Gully Boy" was released, companies including Zomato, Practo, Durex, Cadbury Dairy Milk Silk, Myntra, Ola, and fbb leveraged social media to capitalize on the hip-hop trend. Pepsi and Mahindra Cars used desi rap-king Badshah in their campaigns (Nair).



Figure 2: Pepsi Summer Anthem - Check My Fizz (YouTube)

Music cultivates a brand's identity in viewers minds.

Brand identity is shaped and reinforced by music in a major way. In today's interactive brand experience, companies are realizing that "ear-points" are just as crucial as touch-points in giving customers a multisensory brand experience. The music a brand chooses for its advertisements can inform just as much about it as the visual components. Consider Apple's well-known advertisements, which frequently include contemporary indie music. This musical selection upholds Apple's reputation as a creative and avant-garde company while also appealing to their intended audience. Likewise, a high-end automobile company may play classical music to project an air of sophistication and exclusivity (Marino). The secret is

consistency; utilizing a certain musical style or genre in all of your advertising can assist build and preserve your brand's identity among viewers.

Jingles were prevalent in advertising and are often so memorable that when they start to play in one's head, it is difficult to get out. When it comes to jingles, it doesn't matter if you like the jingle or not; it will play in your head. Even though we have not heard the jingle in years, we tend to recall them still with the product it promotes. Today's version of a jingle is a two-to-three second sonic logo; a melodic signature a brand uses consistently to sign off on all of their messaging (Keegan). "We rarely see clients who want a traditional jingle with a song singing the product name like the good old McDonalds 'I'm lovin' it'. The classic jingle was primarily made for TV and radio, but today, consumers are shifting to other platforms," says Sonic Minds CEO and audio branding expert Karsten Kjems (Keegan). The jingle has evolved to become more of a signature sound, adaptable to a range of media and platforms enabling flexible application across several brand touchpoints.

Music affects the consumer engagement metrics in digital advertising

Advertising with popular music is proved to be more effective stimulus of attention and memory than advertising without popular music (Allan 2008). According to a study if a soundtrack fits the overall style, plot and visuals of a brand video, then more Social Media users are willing to share the video in social networks and consequently improve its virality (Karpasitis).

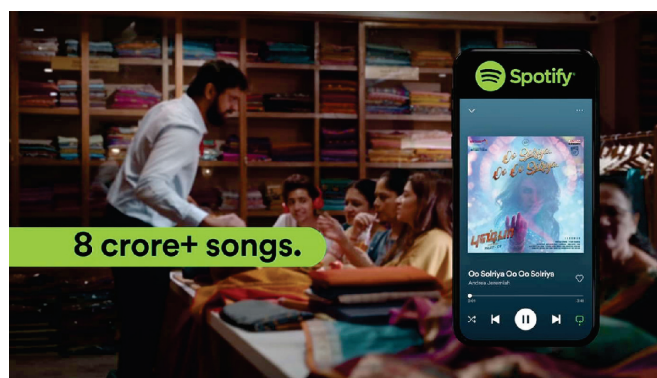


Figure 3: Spotify has rolled out a 15 films campaign for IPL 2022 (Adobo Magazine)

As William Paisley once stated, "Communication is the fuel that keeps the fire of your relationship burning, without it, your relationship goes cold." Music has

the power to preserve consumer and brand connection outside of company walls. In today's era, with radio coming back as an active advertising medium, podcasts gaining traction, platforms like Spotify emerging, audio is becoming more and more crucial. Brands are taking advantage of it like Coca Cola started Coke Studio, which features live studio-recorded music performances by various artists. Another example is the establishment of The Red Bull Music Academy by Red Bull, which serves as a workshop and lecture series for budding musicians. In addition, the brand runs Red Bull Records, a record label that collaborates with up-and-coming, independent musicians, along with Red Bull Radio, a radio station.

Music is capable of making an advertisement engaging and fun like "Spotify India's campaign makes life better with music". Spotify India released a multi-lingual 15 film campaign which was aired in phases throughout Indian Premier League 2022. The 15 film campaign was filmed in Tamil for the Tamil Nadu market, Telugu for the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana market, and Hindi for the Hindi-speaking regions. Leo Burnett India developed and conceptualized the campaign. The films were set in 3 scenarios. In one of the films, a shopkeeper and his customers were conversing through the lyrics of 'O Antava'. Just as the audience was becoming perplexed by this peculiar situation, the protagonist took off his headphones, and we learned that he was interpreting their conversation in light of what he was listening to. This campaign literally allows one to see situations through the filter of music, making humour apparent even in a situation where one is stuck. Each film introduces audiences to fun and how music is helping people to get through different situations. With a impactful message that No matter what the situation, Spotify has the right music solution. Spotify 'Sunte Ja'.

Stay abreast with the technology to be relevant

Podcasting: A Dynamic Tool for Enhancing Brand Voice and Reach

Embracing podcasting as part of a brand's communication strategy offers a unique opportunity to deepen connections with existing audiences while reaching new ones. This medium allows for the creation of rich, engaging content that can showcase a brand's personality, values, and expertise in a way that is both intimate and scalable. With podcasts, brands can effectively tell their story, share insights, and establish thought leadership, leveraging the power of voice to create a memorable impact.

Podcasts provide a platform for brands to interact directly and personally with their users, building trust and loyalty. Furthermore, podcasts offer excellent opportunities for segmentation and targeting, as they often cater to niche interests, enabling advertisers to target particular demographics with their messaging.

Today technology is at the intersection of music, the popularity of playlists stem from the algorithm and Machine Learning data tracking usage. Even so, advertisers have access to a lot more technological tools to help them decide what kind of content to curate for a certain group of consumers, what music to play in a store which will boost sales or immersive experiences that can be created to satisfy consumers through music.

Discussion

Recent research shows that sound favorably enhances video viewing experience (George). The carefully curated musical environments can remarkably enhance the customer experience, making it more captivating and engaging. Given that digital audio and video streaming provides personalisation, discovery and engagement, brands have a chance to tap into each of these areas to reach their consumers. "If music can map the mood of the brand and is topical to the mood of the consumer, there is a confluence point between the consumer and the brand that can add a lot of value. Thus brands need to go beyond making very product-centric music to music which caters to consumer tastes, and which also includes the brand attributes," says Tarun Katial, CEO, ZEE5 India (Menezes).

In advertising, music serves as more than just a background element—it's a tactical weapon that has the power to make or break a campaign. It is an essential weapon for advertisers to have in their arsenal due to its capacity to arouse emotions, reaffirm brand identification, connect with particular audiences, and adjust to shifting cultural norms. The use of music in advertising will change along with the industry, impacting customer experiences and brand narratives in meaningful and long-lasting ways.

Limitations and Future Research

- There are few problems and limitation existed like- Can we generalize that music have a positive impact on consumer perception and engagement of Indian digital advertising campaigns or there are few segments who might have a negative outlook towards it?

- What potential does music hold in the future of much more personalized advertising?

For future research one can delve into the rise of voice-activated devices and platforms, advertising & branding based on audios offers a unique opportunity to engage with consumers in a hands-free, screenless environment. However, this also presents a challenge: ensuring that the brand's audio elements are optimized for various devices and contexts without losing their core identity. A study could be done to understand the adaptable approach to fully harness its potential.

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