



## IN - FILM ADVERTISING - AN EMERGING MARKETING STRATEGY IN TAMIL FILM INDUSTRY

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### **Abstract**

Marketers often state that there are two religions in the country- Cricket and Film. The advertisers often connect and match up this two through their communication strategies, but it's the cinema which seems to have come to the forefront than the cricket. At the same time, more and more marketers are going beyond these conventional strategies and are adopting innovative techniques in film industry. In the recent time, the corporate houses are also splashes on the emerging marketing strategies including co-promotion, in-film advertising and etc. for their brand placement in the Tamil cinemas. Marketers point out this strategy as a win-win for both the brand and the movie. Conventional movie marketing is restricted to specific time slots and need to be synchronizing with the brand and movie for the strategy to work. But the new marketing strategy does not need to depend on use of clippings, popular actors and not restricted to the reserved time slot.

**Keywords: Advertisement; Tamil Cinema; Film Promotion; Brand.**

### **1.1. Introduction**

Films are a prominent medium of entertainment in India. Impact of films is evident from the fact that film stars have iconic status in India. Since 1940s and 50s they have been successful in promoting styles, trends and propagating ideology. The reach of this medium has high emotional value and effective psychological impact. In the Indian entertainment industry, films occupied 28%, second after television, which occupies a major chunk of 65% in the recent year. With the Indian economy booming due to sustainable growth, the purchasing power parity of consumers is also increasing.

### **1.2. Objective**

The main objective of the article is to examine the following study in Film promotion, they are;

- To identify the Growth of Film Publicity.
- To analysis the content of In-film Advertisement in Tamil cinema.
- To analysis the Effectiveness of In-film Advertisement in Tamil cinema.

### **1.3. Methodology**

The methodology is based on the analysis of Tamil cinema released with In-film advertisement to promote both the product and the film for period of 2010 to present date, where the Tamil cinema is highly influenced due to globalization.

- Analysis of easily quantifiable data, for example: number of films released with In-film advertisements.
- Analysis of qualitative data, for example: the effectiveness of In-film advertisement in success of the film.

### **1.4. Growth of Film Publicity**

The film industry did not advertise its movies directly to the general public until around 1913. When films first emerged as novelties in the late nineteenth century, pioneering companies like Edison, Biograph, Lumiere's and Pathe were initially more interested in selling machines than advertising their movies.

The emergence of the nickelodeon around 1905 fundamentally changed the film industry and introduced the new advertising strategies into film industry. The exhibitors started advertising to overcome the competitions, but at the same time, they did not advertised largely in the press as it was too expensive. Following the nickelodeon boom around 1908, the exhibitors produced their own weekly or monthly bulletins, listing forthcoming attractions, providing information about their theatres, films and promotions, focusing more on plots, sets and performers. The bulletins pages can even be used as posters, which can be purchased at the theatres.

Newspaper and Magazine advertising were also introduced in 1913, pioneered by Mutual and Universal studios. They formed advertising departments staffed with major New York executives to promote their films directly to the public for the first time. In November 1913 full page advertisement for "Our Mutual Girl" in 1014, in the 'Saturday Evening Post' was the first of its kind to be targeted towards the American public. Other major studios quickly followed the suit and provided newspapers with press releases and carefully- drafted promotional stories about their stars and new releases. Studios encouraged exhibitors to organize beauty contests, competitions, parades in the lobby, where audience waited between the shows, to support their films.



In 1930's, the Hollywood established a close relationship with Radio. Stations promoted films by playing their theme songs and presenting abridged movies or full scenes from current releases. After the arrival of Radio, newspaper no longer attracted the film industry but promoted its stars, studios and new releases.

Advertising for each individual film was another important component of studio publicity. Each film's advertising campaign was distilled into a press book, which was sent out to exhibitors with the film itself. Throughout the classical period, the press-book was twelve to thirty pages long, filled with fake newspaper stories, photos, fashion displays, ideas for stunts and free black and white posters. Newspapers also received press-books and were encouraged to reprint their featured articles, stories, reviews and photographs. Most have been aimed at women and children. Apart from that the film companies also use to submit sketches to garment manufacturers, before the release of the pictures to ensure hats and dresses are at stores when the movies are released.

Film trailers also were appeared very early around 1912, which did not became standard for several years. More than any other publicity device, trailers were used to create anticipation and stimulate ticket sales. Generally trailers consists of a male voice- over narrating clips from the film, which relied more on the voice- over than on the visuals from the film. By 1960's, the trailers were highly stylized and emphasizing mood over story. But by 1980's and afterwards, the trailers were emphasizing on stars, action and narrative.

### **1.5. In-film Advertising**

In-film advertising is all about building a connection. As brands evolve, they need to look beyond the conventional print, TV and outdoor media. The classic example of in-film advertising is a brand using the medium of cinema to promote its message. In other word, the in-film advertising is about a brand being a part of the cinema's content. It gets with the script so well that we don't realize we are watching a commercial secret in the script.

Earlier, the advertising in film was merely brand placements. The brand was just a part of the scene as a prop, an accessory or at the most as the backdrop. In return, the advertiser sponsored the movie's publicity and promotions. However, advertisers are now looking at in-film advertising for more than just presence. They expect the brand to naturally weave in with the story. Just being there in the film is not good enough, there has to be thematic connect. The brand's message has to be crafted into the most subtle way possible.

Recent studies have pointed out that cinema advertising is six times more effective than television advertising. The communication is effective as a filtered audience comes to a multiplex. In addition, a coke study has found that consumers spend about 15 per cent of their time at cinemas not watching the movie.

### **1.6. Brand as Part of Story**

However, advertisers are now looking at in-film advertising for more than just presence. They expect the brand to naturally weave in with the story. In-film, however, is not about a brand entering the screen at every possible opportunity. The visualization of the scene should be such that the audience does not get the feeling that the brand is an intruder and has made an appearance only because the brand has paid some money to the film-maker. Marketers also expect a brand to be associated only with a story which is relevant to the value that the brand portrays.

In fact in last few years, although the In-film advertising business appeared to become more organized, several corporate entities and brand marketers seemed to be shying away to avoid deliberate In-film advertisement that ticked off their target customers. However, the film 'Chak De' has been a successful experiment in the art of embedded advertising. Consumer brands such as McDonalds, Puma, Bisleri and even a cement brand such as UltraTech Cement were involved in subtle, seamless and integrated In-film brand placement in Shah Rukh Khan's blockbuster hit, 'Chak De India'.

A number of marketers are now using movies to project the core values of their brands. In- film advertising in its most effective form, is about a brand being a part of the cinema's content. Many global brands are now tuning to this medium for the sheer impact that a movie can make on its audiences.

### **1.7. In-Film Advertisement in Tamil Cinema**

The new trends in Kollywood (Tamil film industry) includes corporatization; enhanced production values due to higher production costs; Tamil film making an impact on the international arena; increased investments in promotions and marketing entertainment properties and more brands jumping onto the entertainment bandwagon. In-film advertising in Tamil film industry is getting popular day by day and advertisers are coming out with interesting promotional strategy which is



mutually beneficial for the brands as well as the movie- brands get the right kind of visibility and registration in the minds of consumers whereas producers get to make some good money to cover up their cost of production.

In-film advertising has been gaining momentum in Kollywood. The sole reason is that while the products get visibility at a premium price, serving the purpose of their advertisers, filmmakers and also earn handsome revenues by letting the brands get space in movies. According to reports, In-film advertisements are currently raking in anything between 5 lakhs to 5 crores. The advertising agencies have realized that brand placements in movies starring Tamil film top stars bring the brands instant visibility and it is much cheaper than hiring individual stars to endorse them.

One of the biggest such deals in the Tamil film industry, Tata Indicom associated itself with the Rajinikanth's blockbuster 'Chandramukhi' and reportedly spent over 2 crores in the joint campaigns through hoardings, showroom promotions and offer of ringtone downloads and video clips. The co-promotion fever is picking up in the Tamil film, which brings together corporate brands and film producers and ensures co-ordination between the two.

### **1.8. Effectiveness of In-film Advertisement**

The new trend of content-driven films with attractive packaging and essential commercial ingredients shows that Tamil films have come of age. This is the only industry with products which can be consumed more than once; a good film can be seen several times and this creates tremendous revenue potential.

The brand should be integrated in the script of the film, whether part of the entire theme or a particular situation. This means there is a natural flow, leading to the brand communication getting easily accepted. In the film 'Jillunu Oru Kaadhal', the theme and script gave a natural flow for Maruti 'Swift' to be highlighted and it came across well. That is, if the brand is integrated within the script it would have greater effectiveness.

While brand communication can be brought in to a film, it should be used in a selective and judicious manner and there should not be an overdose of the brand and its communication; otherwise, it would become boring, moving to a point of ridicules and forced. It should be used like a pinch of salt and not a fist full of it.

Under no circumstance should the relevance of the brand be compromised. In fact, if it is a beverage, it should be used in the context of people drinking or serving it, and not as being chucked or thrown. Relevance of the brand to its product and service category to the characters and to the script definitely increases effectiveness.

While dividing the choice of film for finalizing in-film branding, the track record of the film producer and the director as well as the story line, and choose films which have a greater probability of being a hit rather than being a flop. If the brand is associated with a hit film it increases its reputation, image and effectiveness. On the other hand, a flop film makes even a good brand look bad.

The brand should try to be sensitive to the feelings and attitudes of filmgoers and viewers, so that a wrong context should not adversely affect the fortunes of the brand. Finally, the credibility of the brand should be enhanced after in-film branding, so that the audience gets the brand's core values reinforced and the trust and faith in the brand reaffirmed.

### **1.9. Conclusion**

A movie theater may be the only place where it's considered rude to talk over commercials. Businesses have tried to take advantage of movie theater audiences for as long as the industry has been around. However for as many advantages as cinema advertising can bring to a business or organization, there are also drawbacks.

The expansive screen and large audio systems of cinemas can be tremendous production assets when creating your cinema-based advertisement. Given their longer time frame, cinema advertisements can also take a more narrative approach and allow creators to take plot risks that conventional television spots don't allow. If done properly, the result can potentially be a visually appealing ad that audiences will remember long after the film is over.

Cinema advertising also allows businesses and organizations to directly marketing to their target audiences. While television demographics can be flighty and often difficult to pin down with precision, movie audiences are generally easy to determine. Another advantage is that unlike home viewers or those surfing the Internet, cinema-goers can't change the channel or opt out of viewing. Advertisers who take advantage of a captive audience of this magnitude have tremendous opportunity to send home a forceful message about a product or service.



According to a study by the academic marketing journal Marketing Bulletin, the timing and length of featured advertisements that are shown prior to films is predictable by audiences and easily avoidable. Their research indicates a significant number of audience members stay outside the theater for the duration of ads, including those purchasing refreshments or arriving late. This preemptive evasion of advertisements has the potential to lump cinema advertising in with the multitude of ads seen and heard every day by consumers, thereby minimizing its effect.

According to the National Business Review, elevated competition amongst theaters creates a substantial lack of cooperation from theater to theater. This can make it difficult for both businesses and advertising firms to get the same ad to show at a variety of regional theaters at once, thereby detracting from one of cinema advertising's major draws - precise demographic targeting. There is always the possibility that a particular film an advertiser wants to showcase with is playing a theater that does business with one of their client's competitors.