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Editor Speaks

“A lamb in the land of Lions”

After intensive training in marketing research and sales, the students set out in the industry to test their knowledge and skills. The students were on their very first stint, the Sales stint. They were recruited by prestigious companies for a period of twenty-one days, challenging their knowledge, passion, skills and dexterity to cope with several undertakings.

Many students had little or no experience in sales and this stint was the knowledge ground where they tried out new and innovative ideas, not forgetting, the mistakes made and the valuable lessons learnt from them. Three weeks of industry exposure may have seemed short but for a batch of determined and ambitious students those three weeks were enough to grasp a lifetime of learning! Away from their friends at Northpoint, and some from their families too, they applied every bit of the classroom knowledge gained in the weeks spent at the campus; from time-management to qualitative and quantitative research techniques, all of it was put to the optimum use while at the stint.

To share a little on my very own experience - week one was certainly a little difficult with tons to be understood and grasped: from learning about the structure of the organisation to understanding the product and finally making a sale. After three weeks of intense and gruelling sales exposure, I can conclude that selling a product wasn't a piece of cake - extensive research, the right target audience at the right time, involvement of all to avoid wastage or mistakes, etc. was absolutely imperative. One would need to put in their heart and soul into what they did, which in turn would also be an assessment of the student's will and intellect.

The students returned to Northpoint on September 5, 2010, where a test paper awaited them, to finally analyze their theoretical knowledge in Marketing and Sales. To conclude, one thing was for sure that every time the students returned to Northpoint, they would have an unusual aspect added to their already colourful personalities and a brand new perception towards any task undertaken, thus enabling them to give more than a hundred percent to every venture.

- Prathamesh Haldankar



All That Jazz

The Sports and Arts Club of Northpoint Centre of Learning strives to serve as a refreshing change from the hectic and busy academic schedule. We aim to organize events that not only serve as stress busters but also impart learning.

On the 10th of October, 2010 we organized a football match for the boys and a carom tournament for the girls. Playing football in the parking lot was something of a new experience for the regulars and the carom tournament had the ambience of the poolside. Like cricket, for many of the boys of PGPAMMC football is a religion. Inspired by the demigods of football, the boys entered the field with great enthusiasm. Needless to say, the event was a huge success with an exciting finale with the score line 5-0 an unexpected shining star, Nikhil Singani. And we were left asking for more!

The girls were equally enthusiastic about the carom tournament and each team fought tooth and nail to win the match. The match ended on a high suspense note with all the teams playing like pros and fighting for the much coveted Queen.

The event concluded with an awesome and relaxing swim!

On the 15th October 2010, on the auspicious occasion of “Navratri”, we conducted a “Garba” workshop hosted by our very own, Ms. Sneha Negandhi. While many girls from the batch participate annually in Garba celebrations conducted either in their society or on local grounds in their area, we thought of organizing a Garba workshop for all where we could learn and have fun.

All in all, the month of October was exciting and with activities at regular intervals for the students to relax from their daily hectic schedules.



Dialogue

A few excerpts from an interview with Mr. Neeraj Bassi, Planning Director, Ogilvy.

1. Is there any business that can succeed without advertising?

There is an old saying, 'Doing business without advertising is like winking at a girl in the dark. You know what you are doing, but nobody else does'. So, if your business requires mass awareness, it would be difficult to succeed without advertising.

Let me explain this with an example. If you are a local *kirana* store, that is most ideally located and has a significant clientele from neighborhood visiting you, you may decide to continue operations without advertising. But a large retail chain that relies heavily on footfalls, would find it difficult to have successful operations without the support of advertising.

2. What makes an effective advertisement?

Effectiveness of communication needs to be measured against the objective for which it was created. All communication is done towards an objective – either to address a problem or to leverage an opportunity. So, the effectiveness of a communication = how successful it was in meeting its objective.

In order to have a better clarity, usually benchmarks are set before the campaign goes on air. For example, for a new brand launch, the objective of the campaign could be to create awareness and generate trials for the brand. And we can set benchmarks for effectiveness basis our past experience with launches. For example, an awareness build up of 60% and trial rate of 20%. In case the post launch measures indicate that the brand achieved those score, the campaign would be seen as effective.

3. Advertising seems to be very freebie-oriented today. How can one break out of this trap?

Freebie or promotions have been a part of advertising since a long long time. I remember asking my mom to buy products because I liked the freebie that came along with them! So, we need to see them as a part of the overall business plan.

The problem occurs when the brand gets strongly associated with the freebies and ends up being seen as a 'discount' brand. I remember Peter England going through a difficult time many years ago, with a problem on similar lines. But today, the brand is back on track. So, consistent effort towards brand building can help the brand shake out of the 'freebie trap'

4. The closest brand for you has been Cadbury's Dairy Milk. What are your thoughts about handling such a strong brand?

I have been fortunate to be associated with a great brand like Cadbury Dairy Milk. I remember trying to dance like the cricket commercial girl during my MICA days! The brand has a terrific historical, with a number of great hits to its credit and it continues to grow from strength to strength. Many people eagerly await the next communication from CDM – what will they show next! So, it is not only a strong brand in terms of market share, but also strong in terms of mind share. Consumers have a strong emotional involvement with the brand that goes way beyond the product...

So, I just feel lucky to have been a part of a phenomena called CDM. It is an experience that I would never forget...

5. Got something to say to the entrepreneurial community?

I have a deep respect for the entrepreneurial community – they are the guys who have the strength to put money behind what they believe in. It takes a lot of courage to follow a dream and a lot of perseverance to actually make it happen. So, my message to them would be to *keep the faith*...



Cognizance

Twitter was created in 2006 by Jack Dorsey and has gained notability and popularity worldwide ever-since. The website currently has more than 100 million users worldwide and, by virtue of its nature, is described as the 'SMS of the internet', creating a buzz far greater than the proportion of its membership as compared to other social networking websites. Great global brands, celebrities alike, have used twitter to their advantage to heighten awareness with respect to their brands. India has given twitter over 2.5 million users, though brands (celebrities included) at present are still striving to leverage the medium effectively. Among these are media brands (MTV India, Channel V and The Times of India), multiplex chain PVR Cinemas, retail brands (Big Bazaar and Shoppers Stop), coffee chain (Café Coffee Day) and celebrities (Sachin Tendulkar, Shahrukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan etc.).

The Buzz machine

Twitter generates more powerful a buzz than traditional blogs, which contain relatively lengthier posts and are hard updated on the move. Twitter's short format messaging service and capability to update through various touch points such as mobile phones (GPRS and SMS services), desktop applications (Seesmic and Tweetdeck) and in-browser applications without constantly visiting the actual website; makes it more user-friendly and accessible. All this leads to a higher frequency of usage which in turn amplifies the impact of buzz generated by brands. It is easier to use Twitter to write and publish immediate reactions, instead of doing the same on blog which consumes more time. In comparison to the social-networking website Facebook, where members require authorization for friendship, Twitter boasts an open interface where any member can 'follow' another or view another's update in case of non-members as well. This vast perspective in itself implies that the reach of a Twitter message is multi-fold.

Global Tweeting Score:

Twitter had 400,000 tweets posted per quarter in 2007, growing to a 100 million tweets per quarter in 2008 and by the end of 2009, it reached 2 billion. In February 2010 the website recorded that users were sending 50 million tweets per day. In the first quarter of 2010, 4 billion tweets were posted. By June 2010, about 65 million tweets are posted each day, equalling about 750 tweets sent each second, according to Twitter.

Instant availability of an audience on Twitter makes it a good tool for market research. With the micro-blogging platform gaining more prominence, it will be interesting to witness how different brands exploit this conversation-led platform to their benefit.

Frequently used terms:

DM OR DIRECT MESSAGE: sending a DM means only the recipient will get it. But the sender and recipient have to be connected.

HANDLE: your username on twitter

HASH TAG: a hash tag is used to categorise a 'tweet'

LISTED: users can organise other users into groups or 'lists' and add them.

RETWEET (RT): to repost something already published by another user.

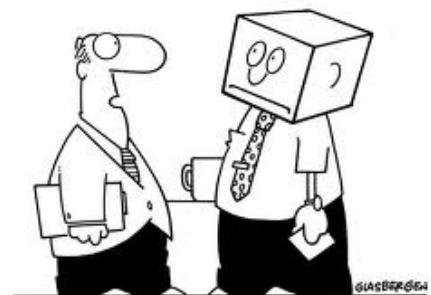
TWEEPLE: twitter users

TWEET(ing): the act of posting to twitter

TWEET BACK: bringing an older tweet back into the conversation

TWITOSPHERE: community of tweeters

TWEETUP: an offline get-together of twitter users- a twitter meet up



"Thinking outside of the box is difficult for some people. Keep trying."



Creativo

To say or not to say...

What's in a Name? Almost everything! Shakespeare was definitely not counting on the audacious, funny, witty and zany world of unorthodox names. You pick up a word that has a certain twang to it, twist it around to make it sound hip and cool, add a bit of borrowed humour and pun it a little - you have an amazing new, trendy name, which will be a treat to the intellect.

There are many things that we would throw away if we were not afraid that others might pick them up... is a one-liner that was put up at a stock-clearance sale at Dublin, Ireland to mark the Birth Anniversary of the legendary wit, Oscar Wilde. Needless to say, it made grand business.

Wouldn't it be boring to eat at a place called "canteen", "cafeteria" or "food court"? Most certainly! Northpoint has done away with the clichés with cleverly named corners, which certainly pique your curiosity. If the eating hub is named Rice Bowl or Gossip, then the class rooms are cleverly christened as Discuss and Discover. Some board rooms are even called Debate, Dialogue and so on!

Moreover, the students' accommodation is called Red Ant, Beehive and Deanstalk. These names speak volumes about the institute which not only gives its students the required creative stimulus but also pushes them to think beyond the obvious.

Unconventional names are imperishable, which is their main advantage. Moreover, these names are catchy, self-explanatory, without sounding mundane and are fresh and funny. So bring out those bizarre thoughts and let your imagination run Wild(e).

- Abhimanyu Jadhavrao



Bookworm

Book Review

Guerrilla Marketing

By Jay Conrad Levinson

"In order to sell a product or a service, a company must establish a relationship with the customer. It must build trust and support. It must understand the customer's needs, and it must provide a product that delivers the promised benefits."

Jay Conrad Levinson is the author of a popular 1984 book "Guerrilla marketing". The first to use the term "Guerrilla Marketing" reciting 'unconventional' marketing tools used in cases when financial or other resources are limited or non-existent. Guerrilla Marketing is the best known marketing brand in history, named one of the 100 best business books ever written, with over 21 million sold. His guerrilla concepts have influenced marketing so much that his books appear in 62 languages and are required reading in MBA programs worldwide.

Jay Conrad Levinson is a former advertising executive who worked at the J. Walter Thompson agency. He decided to have his own business helping entrepreneurs market their businesses successfully. *Guerrilla Marketing* is a worthwhile book to study for any businessperson to learn many different ways of effectively marketing his or her product or service.

Levinson's books include hundreds of "guerrilla marketing weapons", but they also encourage guerrilla marketers to be creative and devise their own unconventional methods of promotion. Guerrilla marketers use all of their contacts, both professional and personal, and examine their company and its products, looking for sources of publicity. Many forms of publicity can be very inexpensive, while others are free.

The first mistake of many small businesspersons is that they do not understand the vital role of marketing in building a successful business. No business can be successful without 'customers'.

Another mistake is, not knowing what marketing initiatives have the best results, and what marketing initiatives have no results at all. Since not all businesspersons are good marketers, their idea of advertising might not be the correct one.

A third mistake is not making a sufficient financial commitment to marketing. The business that is able and willing to spend significantly more for marketing than its competitors has a significant advantage.

Levinson explains how the demographics of the marketplace are changing, creating opportunities for businesspersons who design their businesses to satisfy the needs of growing customer niches.

An informative and eye opening book for those who always believed only in the traditional way of marketing, this book is a great help.

- Vedangi Dandwate



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Archives

by Deepti Vora

