

WRAP ARTISTE

Encyclomedia uses ambient media like building wraps to create innovative campaigns



Mukesh Manik, founder, Encyclomedia

Photo: Bipreet Chahal

WHAT does one do when the advertising agency fails to deliver? The answer is very simple—hire another agency. That's not what Mukesh Manik did who started his career selling paper shredding machines. "The last agency I hired was not able to deliver and get me the expected sales results so I decided to come up with my own creative for the advertisement. Since a shredder is a low value, low volume product, I needed to come up with an advertisement that was catchy, effective and yet economical to release in newspapers. I created an ad that said 'Our models will strip for you'. It carried a picture of a paper shredder and released it in the classified section of the newspaper," says Manik.

The enquiries he received and the subsequent sales it generated surpassed his expectations and the ROI on the advertisement was 550%, he claims. "This led me to believe that I could do the same for other brands as well who are seeking results from their advertising campaigns and decided to start my own agency," says the 37-year-old Manik. Hence Encyclomedia Networks Pvt. Ltd, the ad agency, was formed in 2006. The agency was started with an investment of less than Rs 100,000.

Encyclomedia is known for ambient advertising, which includes outdoors, floor graphics and building wraps. According to Manik, the most interesting work done by them till date is for the launch of the Sprite Xpress campaign. "It was a benchmark in outdoor advertising as we used 23 different outdoor media formats like billboards, bus shelters, elevators, Volvo bus wraps, complete train wraps, LEDs at railway stations, and national highway boom barriers," he says.

The agency has licensed partners in different countries and they do the business development and client servicing and Encyclomedia provides the strategy, creative solution and supply the graphics from India. "We partner with companies who accept and believe in our business model and share our vision for the future. We are currently present in 15 countries and plan to expand to at least 10 more key markets this year. We have entered into a JV in Australia with MediaTag, part

of the Deasil Group of Companies," says Manik. The working relationship of the Encyclomedia-MediaTag joint venture is that the sales and account management team is based in Australia, while the creative and design team is based in India. With increasing popularity among clients Manik attracted more clients and now have names like Coca Cola India, HP, Shoppers Stop, Kwalty Walls, Airtel, Hyundai (Jordan), Samsung (Argentina) to name a few in his kitty.

Building wraps and other ambient media have a huge potential, feels Manik as these are numerous untapped media platforms. "The real challenge is the restrictions on the use of ambient media by the authorities. Many great ambient ideas are scuttled due to permissions not being available to execute them."

But are clients really buying the idea of investing in ambient media in the economic slowdown as there has been a slow down in the growth of new retail stores? "However, the potential within the existing network of stores is still untapped.

The slowdown has had a positive effect since marketers are investing more in the retail space, as the results are meas-

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urable," adds Manik.

The cost to acquire outdoor media has skyrocketed. On the other hand, the costs of production are now a fraction of what they used to be. Digitally printed billboards were Rs 400 a square foot when they were launched and now they are as low as Rs 9 a square foot. "We believe we can save clients a lot of money by having them buy less media space and invest those savings in our high impact creative executions of their campaigns," adds Manik. The total cost of the campaign can come down by 30% and the response to the campaign will be much more than earlier.

As consumers are spending more time out of home and at retail destinations, Out of Home advertising is gaining importance and being looked at as a serious message delivery mechanism. The entry of international companies and huge investments into this space confirms this shift. "Being specialists in the outdoor space, we have an increased demand for our products and services. We have added six more clients in the last two months and expect this trend to continue," adds Manik.

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