

Emotional Advertising Impact on masses : A case study of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) years

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Abstract

It is an essential part of any study to undergo research to understand the application of theoretical theories in practical situations. In this report, the first part adheres to the general overview of Emotional Advertising, (and its effect on masses) how it's different from rational advertising. After the general introduction, there is a literature review on Emotional Advertising. In the next chapter, there is a case study of LIC and its ads in lieu of their emotional impact over the years and how they have helped build the brand image and also the loyalty from the customers. Television Commercials taken from Life Insurance Corporation's archive are used for the study. The same Television Commercials have been categorised with respect to the emotional appeal they portray, and how they resonate with the brand's message. In the case study we analyse the change in the emotional appeal of the print ads, radio ads, as well as television commercials in the recent few years. The study has the limitations of a secondary research, with the information not being precisely reliable or out of date. In conclusion, a shift in the stratosphere of media channels is seen in Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) advertising, with emotional appeal being a constant pillar for the same. There is a scope for further study as the advertising world goes digital. However, emotions are going to be an integral part of the future as well.

INTRODUCTION

The term "advertising" derives from the Latin word "advertere," which means "to direct people's attention."

What are the benefits of advertising for both businesses and consumers?

The prime aim of a company is to make money by selling goods and services. Advertising assists a company in making money by allowing more customers to learn about its goods and services, resulting in increased revenue. On the other hand, if goods and services are not sold, customers will never learn about them. Advertisements assist customers in deciding which goods or services to purchase. A buyer gets the best available choices with the aid of commercials.

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Emotional Advertising - Origin

It is not a modern idea to use empathy to convince people. It's been done since Aristotle's day, and maybe even before. In reality, the great Greek philosopher described emotion as one of the three methods for persuading and appealing to an audience. The three methods are shown in the Figure 1 below.

The first is logos, which is a method of persuading your viewers using statistics and numbers, while ethos is the use of power or credibility. Finally, pathos speaks to the senses. It's a technique for persuading people by eliciting an emotional reaction or stimulus. It elicits emotions in the viewer such as joy, rage, or shame. Businesses are now capitalising on human emotion in a variety of ways to achieve diverse goals—brand recognition, more sales, and consumer satisfaction, among other things—due to its effectiveness as a persuasive technique. After all, convincing is at the heart of marketing.

What is Emotional Advertising?

Emotion is a powerful force. It has a lot of impact because it can affect people's decisions and motivate them to take action. As a result, it has proven to be an important campaign tool for motivating individuals to take concrete steps and achieve company goals. Emotional advertising is the intentional use of

motivational signals that tap into emotional emotion in order to form a deep bond with the viewer and achieve the desired outcome. It frequently appeals to a particular emotion. Fear, rage, joy, or some other human emotion powerful enough to affect decision-making or compel behaviour is what it is.

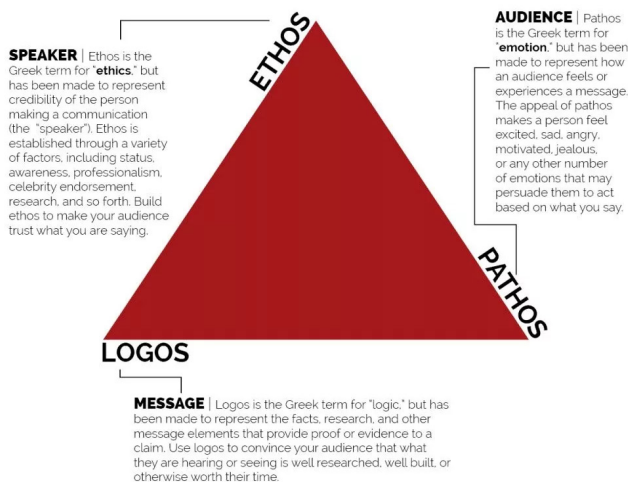
Overview

A story needs to be emotionally powerful in order to have a long lasting effect on the audience. Even in advertising, emotions play a crucial role and can undeniably make or break a brand's image. The current atmosphere in advertising clearly portrays the relatability factor that is associated with the brand to connect with the consumers on a human level. Brands like Amul, Havells, Cadbury strive on emotional branding to emboss their product as reliable in the long run. In a country like India, where people tend to make decisions based on emotions more than rationality, it is essential for brands to tap the same and use it to market their product. If an ad is able to provide a cathartic experience to even 10% of its target audience, it can be deemed as a successful campaign. Through advertising, different types of products are associated with different set of emotions, which in turn get different sets of emotional responses from the consumers. If an ad of Pan Masala can generate a feeling of royalty, and that of a shoe can sow the seeds of trust, it is evident that the weight of emotions supersedes that of rationality.

Piyush Pandey, chairman, Ogilvy India, states: "Ninety nine per cent of the decisions in life are not rational. Besides, liking something is an emotional statement anyway. So, one needs to make the communication for any product or service work towards establishing a connection with the audience." However, is there really a dire need to attach emotions to a product like cement or a fan? According to Dan Hill in *Emotionomics: Leveraging Emotions for Business Success*, "Emotions process sensory input in only one-fifth the time our conscious, cognitive brain takes to assimilate that same input." Even though all of mankind has an emotional quotient, it is the cultures, values and beliefs that adjudge the potency of an ad on different sections

THE RHETORICAL TRIANGLE

AN OVERVIEW OF THE THREE RHETORICAL APPEALS



TheVisualCommunicationGuy.com

Figure 1: The rhetorical triangle

1 Piyush Pandey on Emotional Advertising

of the society. An advertisement that is loved by one person, might offend someone else, which is why it can be tricky to hit the sweet spot when it comes to emotional branding. Novartis, a pharmaceutical company, made news for a heart disease commercial that featured a man in a wheelchair, unaware as water flooded his room. The ad was slammed for low-key threatening the patients of what could be their state, which on ethical grounds, isn't the right way to sell your product. Sadness and fear are viable emotions to build an ad campaign around, but it is crucial for them to have a subconscious effect on the consumer. If they are curated well, emotional ads can also lead to higher conversion rates. A study by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising found that an advertisement that was purely focused on 'emotional content' vis-a-vis 'rational content' was nearly twice as effective (31 per cent to 16 per cent). This depicts the scenario of the Indian market and how an advertisement that has a stronger emotional appeal leaves a greater impression on human minds in lieu of rational thought. Having said that, emotional quotient in advertising is one of the key ingredients that ultimately sells the product, by psychologically affecting the consumers' buying decisions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Objective

The aim of this chapter is to study the writings and papers of different authors on emotional quotient being targeted through the medium of advertising and how it works.

Emotions have thus been suggested as a strong indicator of advertisement effectiveness since the turn of the century (Poels and Dewitte, 2006), with a known significant influence even on the cognitive process (Hamelin *et al.*, 2017). Furthermore, since emotions are closely linked to focus, decision-making, and memory, they have been shown to be essential for human activity (Le Blanc *et al.*, 2014).

Emotions have also been shown to have a significant effect on a person's reaction to receiving a message (Mai and Schoeller, 2009; Lewinski *et al.*, 2014). Similarly, using an emotional appeal in advertising boosts the viewer's attention to the

commercial, thus enhancing the product's appeal and increasing brand recall. Indeed, sentimental messages are often more memorable than those conveying facts (Page *et al.*, 1990).

Kotler claimed that advertising imagination entails the author's inability to predict the outcome and a keen interest in the commercial. Advertisements for products with emotional and rational qualities and messages are more likely to be associated with customers. Emotional and logical appeals work together to create a clear brand cue and promote category-based processing. Advertisers use a variety of appeals in their ads to elicit emotional responses from viewers, leading to a desire to buy the product. (Kotler, 2010)

In the aftermath of the pandemic, these patterns in emotional ads and ad preferences have been reinforced in 2020. Consumers respond favourably to advertisements that acknowledge the crisis if they offer tangible assistance; however, when brands refer to the crisis in generalities without taking meaningful action, they receive a negative response. Consumers still react well to "business as usual" and entertaining advertisements, rather than pandemic material, in the majority of cases. Advertisers are getting better at arousing emotional reactions from users, both pleasant and unpleasant, with a shift toward more sadness and polarised emotions. This trend has been seen in a lot of advertisements this year about the COVID-19 pandemic. (Otamendi F., Sutil Martín, Dolores Lucia, The Emotional Effectiveness of Advertisement, 2020)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research paper, a case study on LIC and its most famous advertisements has been done with critical analysis of the same in lieu of their emotional appeal.

LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION (LIC) - A CASE STUDY

Introduction

Insurance Advertising

Any advertisement intended to encourage persons or companies to buy insurance. It can be





Figure 2: Print Ads of LIC

accomplished by directly marketing insurance products (for example over the Television), by encouraging potential customers to become more willing to receive sales calls (through direct mailers) or any number of other methods.

LIC - The journey of Advertising

A LIC printed vintage 1970's shows a young lad's face laughing as two hands defend him from the metaphoric risks of life. It reads: "Let him feel the warmth of your protection."²

From the 21st century: A girl is crying when in a crowded market place she loses sight of her dad. Her dad is almost as distraught when he looks for his daughter frighteningly until she is eventually in a

corner store. 'Zindagi Ke Saath Bhi, Zindagi Ke Baad Bhi' is now published (In Life and After Life). The old hands are now being replaced by a close embrace acting as a safeguard. This change over the decades revolves around the same underlying notion of the print ad from the 70's.³

In the last four decades, LIC advertisement has seen a total reversal, which also ironically sums up its path to a life insurer struggling for its position in a hyper-competitive sector from a lone reaper in a state-controlled industry.

'Using People's Money for the welfare of people' – themed commercials were then made to provide a response.

LIC changed by the 1980s. It woke up to the audiovisual media and tried to impress the idea that life insurance has no solution. "The effort was to convey the message to us that insurance means LIC and LIC means life insurance," says N-C Sharma, former MD at LIC.

In the 80s, LIC firmly transmitted the message on Doordarshan in its famous 'Roti, Kapda, Makan aur Jeevan Bima' ad series. LIC also relied to spread the message with print advertisements, external and word of mouth. RKSwamy / BBDO, Senior Partner of the LIC advertising account for the past 20 years and continues to be one of the biggest outdoor customers.

Almost every Indian city has many LIC offices in its respective areas – an advertisement form, say LIC officials.

But when LIC opened its doors to private players in 1999, it was a major jump. "The 90s are when the LIC really came on its own," Nair of RK Swamy/BBDO says. It started to concentrate more actively on brand creation. The initiative has been more structured though product ads have always been there." Apart from corporate advertising such as 'Na Chinta, Na Fikar' RKSwamy/BBDO made many commercials for brands such as Jeevan Saral and Jeevan Anand (No Doubts, No Fear). The ad agency has also produced a famous TV series – Why Go Somewhere Else? – seven years ago to catch what LIC investors think. The label "Zindagi Ke Saath Bhi Zindagi Ke Baad Bhi" (In Life and after Life) conceived in 1999 from another agency, Mudras,

2 LIC print ad from 1970s, Google.

3 A still from LIC's TVC 2010, Youtube.

came as LIC's Eureka moment when its testimonials continue to fly.

Mudra made an advertisement showing a woman named Mrs. Sharma, a widow with the duty to raise her children by herself. Via her as she describes how her late husband has ensured his family's future through LIC investment.

This thinking reached the next level a decade later (2010) by JWT, another LIC roster organisation, with a campaign which placed LIC as a stress-buster and solution provider. One of his series was the lost-girl commercial.

Other LIC advertising agencies include Ulka-FCB, Prachar, Crayons, and Y&R Release. Just six months after the last three were empanelled. For a decade, FCB-Ulka has been concerned with LIC's change in logo and advertising five years ago.

"The corporate logo was 'Life Insurance Corporation of India'," says Nitin Karkare, COO, FCB-Ulka, Mumbai. All referred to the firm, though, by its initials LIC. The logo should represent this, we thought. LIC also allowed us to create all of the branding features, so it conveyed the name of the firm by telegraph." It also served further to show off the use of yellow in the LIC Blue."

Some famous LIC Ads based on Emotional Appeal

1. Nostalgia, Empathetic Pain

LIC Jeevan Beema (31/10/2006)

Hindi
40 secs

The most famous and iconic LIC Jeevan Beema ad revolves around the absence of Mr. Sharma, where it is made evident that even after his demise, his life insurance has covered all the necessary expenses of the family, be it the education of his children or his daughters' marriage. Known for its emotional appeal, this ads imbibes the importance of family and that of a life insurance in protecting the future generations.

2. Craving, excitement, joy, satisfaction

LIC Jeevan Tarang (26/11/2008)

Whole life plan
30 seconds

Another famous LIC Jeevan Tarang ad, which shows in a rather subtle and elated way, how the income from the policy doesn't stop, even if the premiums do. In the TVC, a kid is seen being rewarded with tons of chocolates, representing the regular income from the Jeevan Tarang Policy.

3. Awe, Appreciation, Admiration

LIC Children's Plan (1/12/2008)

Hindi
30 Secs

In this Children's fund plan ad of LIC, a father wins a game of basketball against his son, which makes him upset initially but later on the son uses the same trick to win the game for his team. The ad showcased the bond between the father-son and how important Children's fund is to support your child's future. "Zindagi bhar jeet ka vaada" is the ideology behind the film.

4. Fear, Anxiety,

LIC (31/08/2010)

Hindi
45 seconds

In the above ad, the feeling of fear of losing a loved one is propagated, where a father gets separated from his daughter on a crowded street. The message of how important you are for your family and what can happen to them when you're not there is presented in a way that makes one realise the value of life insurance. "Zindagi ke saath bhi, Zindagi ke baad bhi" can be heard as the film ends, which is also the tagline of LIC.

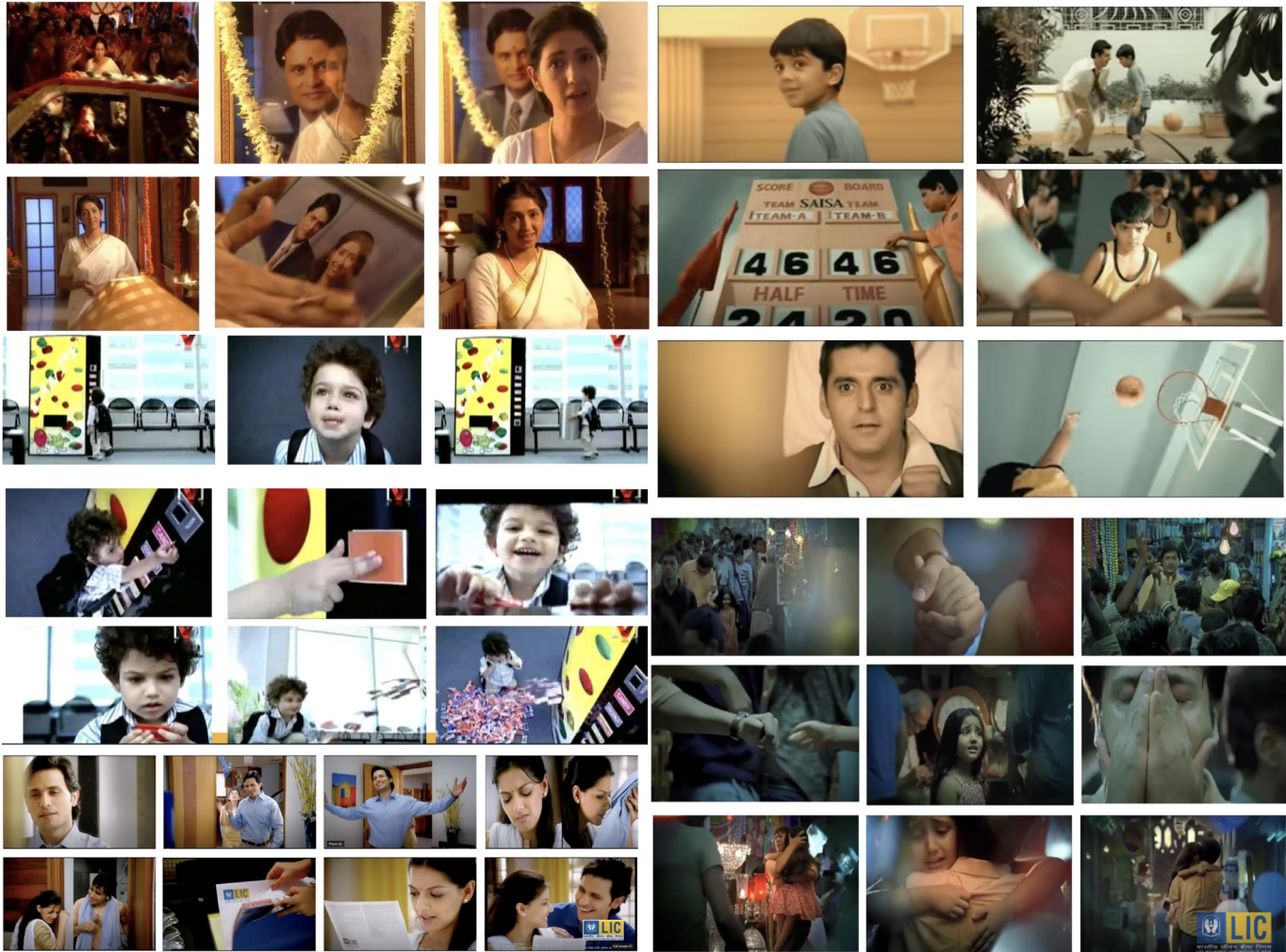
5. Amusement, romance, excitement

LIC JEEVAN ANAND (23/02/11)

HINDI
30 Seconds

In the Jeevan Anand ad of LIC, a man is seen coming home in a great mood, which makes his wife suspicious and rather curious. She looks for hints and finds a file with LIC Jeevan Anand policy. The couple is then seen happy as the husband continues teasing his wife. The film has an overall fun, quirky and mischievous vibe to it and is directed towards the young generation.





CONCLUSION

Emotional storytelling is an integral component that sets apart a specific brand from its competition while also ensuring brand loyalty from the consumers, who get attached to the brand and also to the core values it stands for. Toying with emotions does not always have a positive or funny undertone to it, which is where 'sadvertising' comes into place. Using sadness or nostalgia to move the consumers, both emotionally and also towards the brand is a technique that's been used quite often. The art of making someone cry, while also being able to successfully sell your product or service by arousing a positive emotional response, is not easy to master. Emotional branding has also been used to inculcate a feeling of fear to drive the consumers towards a product. LIC has mastered the art of emotional storytelling by radiating with their ads,

the right emotions be it fear of losing a loved one, or happiness and contentment around securing your child's future. From the case study, we can see that LIC has always hit the sweet spot with their advertising campaigns, giving us the nostalgia that it comes with as well.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY

As the advertising industry is dynamic, the patterns or trends which work keep on changing from time to time. Be it emotional storytelling or rational, to-the-point precise marketing that sells a product, both are needed in a mix to achieve the best results. Experts from the industry say, the best of both worlds is the way to go about it. The new age advertising norms have been tweaked as per the aforementioned patterns, which are also subjugated to the variation in tastes, cultures, beliefs, gender

roles, etc. Therefore, it is safe to say that even if there is a shift in strata, emotional advertising is one of the pillars that brands in today's times stand on, and will continue to in the decades to follow. LIC has also low-key changed its way of communicating the importance of life insurance over the years, as the world goes digital, but still strives on maintaining their brand identity as "Zindagi ke saath bhi, Zindagi ke baad bhi".

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