A STUDY ON THE PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES USED BY RED CHILLIES ENTERTAINMENT PVT. LTD. WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RA.ONE, CHENNAI EXPRESS, HAPPY NEW YEAR AND DILWALE

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ABSTRACT

The research article talks about promotion as a way of ensuring the economic success of a movie. It deals with the various promotional strategies that a movie adopts to get as many viewers possible to ensure the success of their movies. The given article talks about one such production company- Red Chillies Entertainment Pvt. Ltd. and the various strategies that the production house has adopted for their movies. Red Chillies entertainment Pvt. Ltd has adopted various conventional and unconventional strategies to place the positives of the movie in the minds of the viewer and influence him to watch the movie. This article is written with specific reference to four such movies where we saw promotional strategies being used extensively by the production house- Ra.One, Chennai Express, Happy New Year and Dilwale. The article gives an idea on how the entertainment company used various promotional strategies to lure the audiences and advertise their product i.e. movies. From using direct marketing for the masses to using customized twitter handles to attract the youth, the article presents itself with these strategies that resulted in the phenomenal success of their movies though they were criticized by the critics for their poor storyline and performance. By using Red Chillies as an example, the main objective of the article is to show the effectiveness and importance of promotion of a product which in this case is movies. Also a point that can be noted in the article is the importance of the customer for the success of the company and the product as all the promotional strategies used in the entertainment industry is used only to influence the customer i.e. the viewer and hence, in the article all the major promotional strategies used to promote the four movies are highlighted and an effort is made to show the strategies are pulling the customer towards the product i.e. movie

Keywords: Promotion; Conventional and Unconventional Strategies; Advertise; Direct Marketing; Influence
INTRODUCTION
Promotion is the process of creating a pull for the customer and to influencing into believing that a particular need is unsatisfied and can only be satisfied with the product being promoted. Companies now realize that the era of Caveat Emptor or let the buyer beware have passed and it is an era of Caveat Venditor or let the seller beware. Firms now realize that the consumer cannot be taken for granted and that they now have to put in efforts to make the consumer be loyal to the company. Thus promotion of the product has now become a necessity for the companies to ensure their survival in the long run. A similar principle applies in the entertainment industry where the consumer is the epicentre of the success of the product which in this case are the movies.

The research article talks about Red Chillies entertainment pvt. Ltd. and the promotional strategies that the company has used to promote its movies. This article talks about the strategies in specific to four of the movies that it produced – Ra. One, Chennai Express, Happy New Year and Dilwale. The reason for choosing the above movies are the extensive strategies used to promote them. All the movies mentioned though received poor to average ratings from the critics, the movies were high grossers and were even able to enter the 100 crore club though the negative ratings of the critics. The reason for this were the promotional strategies used by the company that helped the movies become one of the highest grossers of Bollywood and these strategies are being discussed in relation to the four movies.

OBJECTIVES
1. To determine the level of influence that promotion has on the success of a movie
2. To understand the promotional strategies of Red Chillies Entertainment pvt. Ltd.
3. To determine the impact and influence of unconventional strategies of promotion to that of promotional strategies
4. To establish a relation between the promotion and the economic success of a movie

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1. Does promotion play a part in the success of a movie?
2. How are these strategies used to tap the subconscious mind of the consumer and create a need to watch the movie?
3. Can a movie become economic successfully solely because of its promotion?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Ra. One
Ra. One was one of the most anticipated movies of 2011. With a glittering star cast which included Sharukh Khan, Kareena Kapoor and the International singing sensation Akon created hype among the people. The movie being one of the costliest in history of Bollywood with about Rs. 120 crores of budget, more than 40 crores were spent on just marketing of the movie. Further the promotion of movie started in December 2010, months back which was very early compared to any other movie in Bollywood. This was done so that people could know about every character of the movie and develop an interest in the movie. Further all the VFX effects of the movie was made in Mumbai and because it was not outsourced for the effects, people became very curious about the quality of the effects that they would get in the movie but to their surprise, the effects were the best that Indian movies ever saw resulting in widespread praise of the movie and its visual effects. The promotion of the movie was done in slabs, targeting a larger audience every time. The release of 2 teasers during 2011 World cup, the launch of trailer 3 months following that, the launch of a fan wall 3600 ft. long which had feedback from fans from 36 cities worldwide. The launch of a website for the movie and SRK talking to his fans directly on google live chat were a few of the things that were never done before in Bollywood and
had taken marketing in Indian movie industry to a new level. These type of strategies were followed in Hollywood earlier but were adopted for the first time in Bollywood.

The grand promotion that were done included placing more than 1700 billboards, Using up the potential of social media sites like You Tube, Google+ and Facebook, Ra.One created a hype among people about the movie. Further the company had 25 enormous name partners like Western Union, Ducati, Tag Huer, Sony Communications, Videocon, McDonalds etc. were made partner having a win-win situation for both Ra.One and firms as they can influence bigger Indian market with SRK being the USP of the movie.

Children were targeted by partnering for making merchandises G-Balls, Stationary wrist band and many others. A game named Ra.One was launched by partnering with Sony in PlayStation format and a mobile game too. Secondly the online magazine UTV India games made people interested about the character and movie. Other than this partnering with McDonalds for toys for children, having posters at all its partners outlet gave a lot of push to the movie among all age group of people and helped in gaining a momentum and curiosity about the movie in public.

Chennai Express

Chennai Express was one of the most heavily marketed movies in Bollywood where a mix of both conventional and unconventional strategies was used to promote the film among the masses. A lot of money was invested in hoardings, posters etc. This strategy was done to create buzz among the masses about the movie. Then there were city tours done in Mumbai, Bhopal, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Chennai, Jalandhar and Delhi. More than 25 Fan Clubs of Shah Rukh Khan around the world came together to promote the movie in their respective areas.

But the novelty here is that a lot of promotion was done in Chennai as the movie is based in Tamil Nadu. This was new because this is one of the few times that a Bollywood movie promoted themselves heavily in the South Markets likes Chennai, Kochi etc.

Red Chillies Entertainment had invested heavily on outdoor advertising. As the film was being released in the overseas market through cities like London, Dubai, Berlin a novel strategy was put in place wherein the posters of the movie was translated into several regional languages like Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada etc. and in foreign languages like German, Mexican, Arabic, Spanish, French etc.

This was done to create a sense of belongingness in these markets where Hindi films were relatively alien to the people there. And at the same time it generated the buzz needed to make the movie a success. This was one of the best forms of target marketing where the untapped markets were the main focus of attention of these strategies as the spread of Hindi movies are less.

The promoters of 'Chennai Express' have launched games based on the film. It is a move which tapped the youth who were regular users of cyber games. The game is available on both Android & IOs platforms.

It is a perfect example of sales promotion tactic where the game is the incentive for users to create a positive appeal about the movie and inform potential movie watchers about the various features of the movie ( here it is dance, music, entertainment and action)

The producers focused on shows with high television ratings which includes soaps like Diya Aur Baati Hum, Madhubala - Ek Ishq Ek Junoon etc. This was done to target housewives among whom these television soaps were relatively popular.

They dedicated some of their advertising time on reality shows like Jhalak Dikhlaa Jaa & Indian Idol where the focus of the producers was to target the family audience. Then they appeared on Comedy nights with Kapil to target the family audience and the youth. Shah Rukh Khan also appeared on various prime time news shows to promote the film.
Chennai Express had set new trends in terms of social media marketing. They had done marketing campaigns in platforms like Facebook, Twitter & Instagram. They were able to generate such a huge buzz in the Twitter platform that Chennai Express related tweets generated over 1 billion cumulative impressions and the total number of tweets across all hashtags was over 750 thousand over the 90-day campaign period. It was the first Indian film in Twitter history to trend at Worldwide No.1 with 2 separate hashtags #ChennaiExpress & #ChennaiExpressWeekend.

They were also the first film to use twitter in a manner which engages the users in such an interactive manner. A twitter platform was created where the users were required to tweet about the movie which would move a train over a virtual rail line from Mumbai to Rameshwaram. As soon as the train reached the destination, the trailer was launched to sustain the growing buzz around the film. They were more focused on engaging the users by providing an incentive for the same. The official Chennai Express website had around 7 – 8 games which were featured in mobiles and social media websites as well. It helped in creating high brand recognition for Chennai Express.

The success of their social media campaign was that they were able to maintain that initial buzz till the launch of the movie. Using games like Rahul Meets Meena on Facebook generated the attention needed to sustain the buzz in Facebook.

Use of innovative hashtags and campaigns to promote the movie in Twitter helped sustain the excitement of the movie.

The cast of Chennai Express launched a saree line that had designs similar to Deepika Padukone's sarees in the film. This was done in partnership with Palam Sarees, a Chennai based company. This created a lot of buzz for both the movie and the company.

But one of the most innovative ways to really create the mass appeal for the movie was the creation of the song Lungi Dance which was composed for the promotion of Chennai Express. This song was done in collaboration with Yo Yo Honey Singh the song became a blockbuster in the music charts creating a huge buzz and positive impact for the film.

It was wise to bring in Yo Yo Honey Singh to create the song to really attract the youth. But at the same time the song had a mix of both Punjabi & Tamil flavors creating a Pan India appeal. But the novel approach was to use the name of Rajnikanth in the song. As the actor is very popular in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka & parts of Andhra Pradesh, the song generated the positive buzz in these regions and in the process was able to tap these markets.

Shah Rukh Khan & Deepika Padukone promoted the movie in a Manish Malhotra fashion show held in Chennai specifically organized for movie promotions. This was a novel tactic done to attract the upper classes which benefitted both Manish Malhotra as well as the movie as the star cast was able to promote the theme of the movie as well as his designs to the audience and fans alike.

The producers has also integrated product placement strategies into the movie. In the movie there is a good example of embedded market strategy when the protagonist Khan goes on to extensively praise the features and price of the Nokia Lumia 920 in detail in the movie. The in brand associations were with Mahindra & Mahindra, Wildcraft & Palam Silks.

The movie has over 18 brand associations which include Western Union, fast foods major McDonald's, electronics chain Reliance Digital, FMCG company Emami, Lux Soaps among others.

Happy New Year

Red Chillies Entertainment released the film on Diwali, 24 October 2014 in three languages: Hindi, Tamil and Telugu in around 5000 screens in India. It was one of the biggest releases for a Hindi film in India ever.

The movie was marketed extensively with the cast promoting the movie in various cities in India and also travelling to the US, UK & Canada for promotional events.
The trailer, songs and additional content was promoted through media platforms like TV & Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter & WhatsApp.

The Happy New Year team toured US, Canada and UK in a new promotional tactic for the film SLAM! The Tour conducted live concerts in cities like Houston, Chicago, New Jersey etc.

It was through the collaboration of Cineyug and Red Chillies Entertainment, where the actors were able to perform abroad and promote the movie at the same time.

It marketed the movie to Shah Rukh Khan’s huge overseas fan base generating vital attention and buzz for the movie as data shows that overseas box office gross contributes heavily to the net collection of his movies.

A dance-reality TV show titled Dil Se Naachein Indiawaale was launched along with Zee TV. The format of the show was that the cast of the film judged participants from cities like Delhi, Indore, and Ahmedabad & Mumbai. The objective was to get the message of the movie across: how losers can become winners. Here the focus was on ordinary people who were given the chance to dance in front of the cast and the TV audience.

It was done to attract the large number of people from the middle class and rural areas who look upon the TV as a major source of entertainment in India. As social media has not penetrated to these areas in the same way as the TV or radio, it was a very innovative advertising campaign to create the mass appeal of the movie in these areas.

An official game based on the movie, Happy New Year-The Game was released on the Android and iOS platforms. It was jointly made with Red Chillies Entertainment and Gameshastra India and Hungama Digital Ltd the holder of the gaming and application rights. The focus of the campaign was on the tech savvy youth in the urban and semi urban areas in the country.

The cast of the movie promoted the movie through their personal accounts in social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

It has the various characteristics of a direct marketing as well as public relations campaign from the perspective of the actors where the focus of the campaign is on attracting the individual fan bases of the actors involved to the movie. There was also accounts dedicated solely for Happy New Year in these platforms where trailers, songs and promotional content was posted to attract the fans and potential movie watchers to the movie.

The Happy New Year team was one of the first movies ever to actually promote themselves through WhatsApp one of the most popular social media platforms used in India with over 50 million active users in India. The Happy New Year Team made the trailer available to fans who would give a missed call or send a message through the number 9819020202.

They had also brought in an innovative marketing campaign through Twitter using customized twitter handles where all the six actors of the film added their character name from HNY alongside their personal ones including @juniorbachchan, @iamsrk, @TheVivaanShah, @deepikapadukone @SonuSood and @BomanIrani. Shah Rukh Khan had changed his name to Charlie, Abhishek Bachchan to Nandu, Sonu Sood to Jag, Boman Irani to Tammy, Vivaan Shah to Rohan and Deepika Padukone to Mohini.

This maintained the buzz generated among the fans and kept them in anticipation for the movie showing traces of public relations and advertising. Red Chillies Entertainment associated themselves with brands like PNB MetLife, Western Union, Cadbury Dairy Milk, Nokia, Lux Soap, BEST rice and amazon.com being their official online merchandise partner.

Donut brand Mad over Donuts associated themselves with the film and had created an IndiaWaale Donut for the promotion of the movie. Mad over Donuts promoted the specially created donuts across 54 stores in the country.
This was an innovative direct marketing campaign where the focus of the campaign was directly on the youth in the urban cities like Bengaluru, New Delhi etc.

They have also used embedded marketing strategies tying up with brands like Nokia, Lenovo & WD. This strategy is out of the leaf of Hollywood movies where notable brands would pay the producers of a movie to use their products in the movie so that it creates a brand recognition and association in the minds of the customers as a belief is created that when the actor uses the product, it creates a positive image in the minds of the customers with regards to both the movie as well as the brands.

Here it benefits both the HNY Team & the brands as they draw on their existing goodwill and brand appeal to promote their respective products, in this case the movie and the products from these brands.

**Dilwale**

Dilwale being a movie waited for long by people. With the big star cast and the lead pair of Sharukh Khan and Kajol, the cast which include Varun Dhawan and Kriti Sanon and being titled as A Rohit Shetty film made people excited about the movie.

Unlike other SRK’s movies, this movie made the grand promotion just before days before launch. Small promotions were done before but the main promotions started before the launch.

Rohit Shetty announced that he is going to do a project with Sharukh Khan after Chennai Express. Under the direction of Rohit Shetty, USP of Dilwale being the pair of Srk and Kajol who had done 7 hit movies with each other like Dil Wale Dulhaniya le Jayenge, My name is Khan, Kuch kuch hota hai and kabhi khushi kabhi gham. This made all Srk-Kajol fans eager for the movie and go and watch it.

Launched on 18th December, the movie had a clash with Bajirao Mastani with the same releasing date. Bajirao too being a movie with a big star cast which includes Ranveer Singh, Deepika Padukone and Priyanka Chopra, only thing which gave movie a good start was good promotion which gave Dilwale advantage over Bajirao at the start.

With a high expenditure on marketing of about 30 crores, Srk wanted to make sure through the promotion he make sure that people know what exactly is there in the movie. The campaign was divided in 20 days promotion full of comedy, drama and romance. With this thing also, the promotion didn’t let out the surprise of the movie.

The movie promotion with the launch of songs showing the cast created a hype among the audience, especially for the Srk kajol fan. The launch of trailer got the highest view on YouTube took over media attention towards the movie. Further the launch of Gerua, which shows the beautiful chemistry of the lead pair was a hit and attracted people towards the movie. Later the release of “Manma Emotion jaage” which had Varun Dhawan and Kriti targeted the youngster. Even the performance on this song on Mithibai College and other places targeted young audience. Later the release of Janam Janam made people remember the 90’s couple and they were targeted here.

With that the Rohit Shetty style of flying vehicles in air was visible and made people come to the movie.

Along with this the appearance on TV shows like Sath Nibhana Sathiya which targeted the Indian houses and big boss 9 which is a very popular TV show in Indian TV industry and got the highest TRP rating in the country. Even in southern Indian television, the star cast appeared on Mazavil Manorama. This way Red Chillies targeted the south Indian market of Kerala which is very less tapped by the Hindi movie industry. Further the partnership with PVR, which has a strong hold in Kerala metros gave a good hype to the movie.

The main thing being, the movie was not just promoted in Indian market but too in International market too.
METHODOLOGY OF DATA COLLECTION

Our research methodology requires gathering relevant data from the specified documents and compiling databases in order to analyze the material and arrive at a more complete understanding of the role promotion plays in the success of a product with reference to the entertainment industry. The data was primarily collected from secondary sources and various online portals and journals were used. We hope to shed some light on the relevance of promotion with reference to entertainment industry.

CONCLUSION

Bollywood too is now realizing the impact of promotion for the success of the movies. It has now realized that a movie might have a good story, performance and appeal but cannot be successful if the target market i.e. the audience do not view them and also that people of today are not attracted by the usual promotional strategies, hence in order to attract them innovation needs to be brought into the picture and use it to make a positive impression on the market to be successful in selling their products that in this case are the movies. The article talked about one such company- Red Chillies entertainment pvt. Ltd. owned by Shah Rukh Khan and its various conventional and unconventional strategies that were used to promote three of its movies- Ra.One, Happy New Year and Chennai Express. The article also talks about the strategies in relation to various concepts of promotion in the market like direct marketing and sales promotion that if effectively used could be turned into successful opportunities of establishing a brand. Also one other thing to learn from this was the fact that the success rate of the movie depended on the number of viewers of the movie and the many strategies have been used in the movie was to impress the market. We could understand the importance of customers in the success of a product and the important role that promotion plays in influencing the market.

Clearly, the result of the promotional strategies has been evident in leading to the phenomenal success of Red Chillies entertainment pvt. Ltd. Also one is able to clearly identify the impact of promotional activities and link it to the success of the movies released.

REFERENCES


