

Getting the message right



"If advertising people are mad, I'm proud to be mad," Sam Balsara, chairman and MD, Madison Group, expresses proudly. Take a good hard look at the figures and will explain itself. "10 years ago, the advertising sector was a Rs 1,000-crore industry, today it is Rs 10,000 crore. Unfortunately, advertising amounts to a mere 0.34 percent of the nation's GDP; It can only grow from here. The sessions kicked off in style as Praseon Joshi, regional creative director, McCann-Erickson , in all his vigour, took the audience by storm.

"Let me put misconception to rest. It indeed is a tough job to constantly source ideas. However, one must always draw to his realities and his experiences for thought starters," he began. Having stressed time and again on natural and real insights, Praseon explained his side with an array of examples. "Take Babool toothpaste for instance. We needed to create awareness of the product in the market. India is a nation that loves chewing 'paan' They do not emphasize on shiny white teeth. Yet morning traditions shows these small towners rinsing their mouths every morning. This is not to keep their teeth clean, but to ensure no bad breath from the night before. Taking this insight forward, Babool was positioned as a paste that ensured a fresh start to a new day"



“Sourcing Ideas is tough but one must always draw to his realities and experiences for thought starters ” **Prasoon Joshi**

We should consider ourselves lucky to live in a nation that is filled with ancient cultures and traditions that allow us to return to them for references and connections. Advertising in such an environment is set to flourish. Prasoon stressed that poor culture has given us various catch phrases and points of reference to turn to when in need of an insight. Speaking about connections, KV Sridhar (aka POPS) , national creative director, Leo Burnet had his set of views.

Advertising is all about making the connection with the consumers. It needs to speak in their language for them to understand what is trying to be communicated. However, it is not just about getting a message across but also how one sends the message out," he explained. He further went on to breaking good advertising sense down to two simple aspects. "The first part is that you need to use what you have learned in the first 15 years of your life, when innocence was still an important facet of being. The second is enthusiasm. One should necessarily still possess the extent of enthusiasm he possessed in the first 15 years of his life .”

A simple first was derived from here that advertising was the relationship between a brand and the consumer. Drawing from a comparison done for the Mc deal promo from McDonald's in India and abroad, he brought out the different instincts that works with different sets of audiences while trying to transmit the identical message. Prompted from here R. Balakrishnan (aka Balki), executive creature director, Lowe, began his argument.



"Audiences have shared different experiences and enjoy different things, but they are all alike" **R. Balakrishnan**

"I don't think audiences are different at all. They have possibly shared different experiences and enjoy different things but all audiences are alike." Pointing out a few differences in temperament within different viewing populous, Balki explained how India as a country was the prime suspect for tears! "We use so much humor in advertising, however I forecast a shift whereby people will use sorrow as an important medium to get their message across. The entire country sobs buckets when they are watching blockbuster films, advertising will be no different? he is certain. Balki equated insights with basic common sense and intelligence, making the process seem almost elementary

"I think we have made the business of advertising very scientific. I wish it was less sane than what it has been made to be. Somewhere I feel that researches and studies have killed the space of advertising" In a moment of passion and truth, Balki proclaimed, "Advertising should be about leading consumers, not following them. Instead of drawing from them we must learn to give something back to them" Bharat Dabholkar director, Publicis India had heard it all and was apprehensive to follow this discussion.

"Advertising has introduced us to a fantastic concept, "target groups". I believe that effective advertising is possible when you know exactly whom you are speaking to, and how you say it. Low production rates do not kill creativity; one must find the right method to communicate what they are attempting to say. It just needs to create the sufficient impact," he insisted. Exemplifying his point of view with examples from Amul and international sources, Bharat was able to get outstanding applause from the crowd on his brief yet hard hitting affirmations on advertising and creativity.

One thing is certain from the above then. "Advertising is like a homeopathy pill. It needs the medicine within and the added sugar coating with it," POPS rightfully quoted.