

We should brace ourselves for class 2 Rapids and not a roller coaster: Vikram Sakhuja – Madison Media & OOH

by Kalpana Ravi — April 28, 2021 in Exclusive, Featured 3 min read



Vikram Sakhuja,
Group CEO, Madison Media & OOH

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Madison Media, a unit of Madison World has created a record by winning 23 new accounts in a financial year. Amidst the nationwide lockdown and work-from-home, the new business wins amounted to billing of \$211 Million as per Convergence New Business Report published last month. The Agency also received a top score of A+ in the Comp Pitches Report for 2020 by Recma.

In 2020 also it was a fantastic year for Madison Media in terms of New Business, the agency won clients like Abbott Nutrition, RSPL Group, RSH Global – Joy Cosmetics, Welspun, Indira IVF, Licious, Weikfield, M3M India, Liebherr, Educational Testing Service (ETS), Aliens Group, Wonder Masala, Vijay Bhoomi, Practo, Gold Drop Oil, NextGen Software, McDonald's integrated & performance, Dhani Loans, Atomberg, Alchem Industries, Sunpure Oil, PAPA Brands, amongst others. The Agency continues its winning streak this year too.

In an exclusive chat with medianews4u Vikram Sakhuja, Group CEO, Madison Media & OOH speaks on the win, how 2021 will pan out for Advertising and brands, and much more...

Congratulations, winning 23 accounts is a huge thing in a year that was full of uncertainty, your thoughts on this?

We are delighted with a strong feeling of validation. We believe that marketing investment drives consumer demand. In fact, our planning framework is called Outcomes Planning. In a highly volatile uncertain environment, the Advertiser's need to link spends to outcomes became greater. And we tapped that need with some strong through the funnel storytelling. It worked.



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The agency was ranked as the most powerful media agency in 2019; you have been on a winning spree, Vikram, how does it feel?

To have both the international media rating agencies – RECMA and Convergence – place Madison at the top is a high. I have always believed the media is a local game. And to have Madison – the world's largest media independent by share, to now be the top Indian agency, ahead of the global networks on competitive pitches and qualitative ratings is a proud moment for all of us.



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How are you seeing 2021 panning out for the Advertising Industry on the whole?

It will be a volatile year. JFM was a very strong quarter for Media. April also has been strong. Wave 2 of Covid is battering us as we speak. Despite that, there seems to be a resolve to keep the economic activity going. I anticipate sectorial hiccups but unlike last April, May doesn't believe that the total economic machinery of the country will shut down. We should brace ourselves for class 2 Rapids and not a roller coaster.



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Digital business is soaring, more brands getting onto it; do you see a drop in brands spending less on traditional mediums?

The digital share will increase but in absolute terms spends on other mediums will also increase, especially on the lower base of 2020.

Are brands now more empathetic in their communications?

This is an interesting question. I presume you are referring to the overarching shadow of the pandemic we are all shrouded in. I can see a few brands that are acknowledging the mood of the nation in their advertising. But a majority seem to be advertising without this reference. And that is not necessarily bad or insensitive. It is refreshing to see funny, irreverent and “normal” advertising. During grim times getting your mind off the depressing stuff is also important.



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From an ADEX perspective, how has Print performed and will brands still look at ad spends on Print?

Print has definitely rebounded in the last 6 months. I am bullish on Print.



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