ROLE OF EMOTIONS AND RELATIONSHIP IN MARKETING: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Professional corporates recognise importance of emotion as a powerful management tool for positive response from stakeholders; including employees, business associates, clients and the consumers of the company’s produce. Marketing teams are occasionally bequeathed with the responsibility of winning confidence of all the stakeholders, to find ways to create loyalty among employees and to expand customer base, transform them as gratified customers and perpetual buyers of the company’s product. Proficient managers apply emotional tools among employees and the stakeholders for gaining their positive sentiments. While the significance of emotional implements in every arena of business is vital, this paper details author’s personal experiences of the impact made by emotional experiments in creation of a loyal team and gratified customers.

Key words: Emotions, Attachment, Kindle, Gratified, Loyalty, Brand Image, Relationship.

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1. EMOTIONAL EXPERIMENTATIONS WITH CLIENTS
Purchasers’ delight is the most significant and ultimate objective of a production company. The entire marketing set-up of a company works for expanding the market horizon, creating and enhancing brand image of company’s products, maximising sales, and seeking long term commitments of existing and the new customers.
Marketing efforts have to assimilate past experiences with current trends. The marketing teams have to remain alert and updated on market dynamics and purchasers’ psychology in the current market. Methods and strategies adopted to retain and enhance the company’s brand are many and often never tried in the past. Innovation in marketing and sales is the buzz word for long term sustenance and growth of the company, the brand image, company’s turnover and the profit. This article will cover only the innovative efforts by the author (first author) and his employer in expanding customer base and gaining market share of cement.

2. BACKGROUND
Most of us might have experienced that our decisions are largely driven by hearts (sentiments, feelings, joy, excitement etc.) than our brain (computations, analysis, judgement etc.). Many people say we live in a rational world but nothing could be further from the truth. Emotional acumen leads to emotional attachment and has potential to be effectively used as potent marketing tool. Emotion matters. Emotional marketing has been successfully experimented by leading market players. Many greeting card companies (e.g. Archies) have done roaring business by sparking sentimental attachments, the gold jewellery dealers have glorified the enhanced beauty when their ornaments are worn, a few car companies have advocated pleasure ride for the happy family, baby food producers have depicted proud mother with healthy child, tea companies have shown successful business deal on a cup of tea. We live in an emotional world. Charles Darwin (1913) described emotions, their significance, their adaptive value and their utility. Emotions drive us far more than rational thoughts.

3. ABOUT JAYPEE GROUP
Jaypee group is the 3rd largest cement producer in the country. The groups’ cement facilities are located in the Satna Cluster (M.P.), which has one of the highest cement production growth rates in India. Jaypee produces & markets both Portland Pozzolana Cement (PPC) & all grades of Ordinary Portland Cement (OPC). Jaypee Cement produces special blend of Portland Pozzolana Cement and markets it under the popular brand name ‘Jaypee Cement’ (PPC). Its unique design and blend, with high strength clinker and superior quality flyash has made it the popular cement for construction of large number of strong and durable structures. Use of superior quality flyash in Jaypee Cement (PPC) not only reduces the incidence of lime leaching from concrete and mortar but also results in refined pore structure, reduced permeability and long term strength gain. These attributes make the construction strong, compact, impermeable and resistant to chemical attacks. Jaypee Cement (PPC) surpasses the requirements laid down by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for flyash based PPC cement in IS: 1489 Part (I):1991.

Jaypee produces a wide variety of cements. All the brands, which the Company produces, are so evolved in their characteristics and properties that they will surpass BIS Standards. The state-of-the-art cement plants operated by the Jaypee Group are equipped with the most modern technology from the globally leading technology providers. Extensive Instrumentation & fully automatic and computerized process control system, custom designed Quality Control software in the Mines, Cross Belt Expert Analyser using the Prompt Gamma Neutron Activation Analysis - for the first time in India, X-Ray Fluorescence and X-Ray Diffraction analysers and optical microscope, enable production of cement of the highest quality consistently on a
sustained basis. Jaypee Rewa Plant Quality control laboratory is accredited laboratory from National Accreditation Board for Calibration & Testing Laboratories, for chemical and mechanical Cement testing.

Unmatched characteristics of Jaypee Cement (PPC) which form the basis of sound & durable construction include Better workability, Better pumpability, Great finish to the structure, Better integrity, Low heat of hydration, Reduced shrinkage and swelling, Better pore refinement, Reduced permeability, Better resistance to chloride and sulphate attack, Better resistance to alkali-silica reaction, Resistance to corrosive attack on steel reinforcement, Reduced lime leaching, High compressive strength and long term gain in compressive strength, and related properties like low creep & shrinkage, High modulus of elasticity especially at later ages, Improved bondage of concrete to steel and Long term strength gain etc..

Jaypee Cement (OPC-43 Grade) cement with characteristics surpassing those specified in IS: 8112 1989. OPC-53. The Chemical & Physical properties of Jaypee Cement (OPC-53 Grade) surpasses the properties defined in IS: 12269 – 1987 and Jaypee Cement (OPC-53 S Grade) surpasses the prescribed BIS Standards IS: 12269 – 1987. All brands are marketed in attractive HDPE bags and are identified with a conspicuous Jaypee Logo, which also over the years has come to be regarded as a “Hallmark” of quality.

The group undertakes a continual afforestation drive in Mines, Plants & Township areas to improve the overall environment as a safeguard against pollution. Nearly 6-12% of operational cost is incurred in environment protection measures. Well-equipped Air Lab, Water and waste water Lab, Microbiological lab support Jaypee Cement efforts of environment management.

The Group’s motto is ‘Work for Safe, Healthy, Clean & Green Environment’ and ‘Jaypee Cement’ is committed towards the safety and health of employees and the public. The manufacturing plant is based on dry cement manufacturing process so there is no effluent released from the plant; therefore the ‘zero discharge’, rain water harvesting and storage into mines reservoirs, reclamation and rehabilitation of mined areas, adopting large scale a forestation are some of the plethora of measures the group has implemented to carry out business with responsibility and ethics.

4. SUCCESS IN MARKETING EFFORT IS LINKED TO PLEASE CLIENTS

Marketing in a company is combination of entire gamut of effort to persuade the clients to purchase the company’s products. An effective way to reach close to clients’ preference for the company’s products is to meet their ‘needs’ as identified by Maslow’s in his famous theory of motivation. Maslow principles can be applied to link marketing to human psychology. Depending on our product to be marketed and the affluence of the target customers, the marketing team has to aim at appeal to one or more of the five motivational drivers identified by Maslow. This enables an effective psychological approach to marketing. When we are able to touch the hearts of our employees/customers/clients, they get emotionally attached to our company, our products and the brand.
The author has realised that success in our marketing efforts depend on our abilities of pleasing our own employees and all the other stake holders. The marketing gurus have mentioned that ‘no matter what your business is, if you are serving people, you need to be able to tap into their emotions’. Our marketing strategy must motivate clients, stimulate their vision and give them confident that while they choose to live with our products, they will achieve greater success with their customers. Our products should provide them with better skills and spring a sense of pride in them of having succeeded in their own endeavours. Marketing efforts, directed towards emotional gratification have better chance to attain results.

5. OUR EXPERIENCES WITH EMOTIONAL MARKETING

The author had joined the cement industry about 31 years ago and has been working for Jaypee Group for the past 22 years. There was not much competition then. Gradually the competition started increasing and our company started experimenting with various marketing techniques. Prominent modus operandi to enhance acceptability and market share was “relationship building”. It was during this experiment that the chord of emotion struck the author’s thoughts. All the field staff were called and carried a two day open house session with them and finally zeroed down on the very basic idea of incorporating the emotional touch in marketing activities.

By including customer/dealers’ family members in gambit of emotional endeavour, the results were expected to yield bonanza. As a first step was to gather a database by collecting the details like name, date of birth, marriage anniversary of the family members of our customers / dealers. The author’s team ensured that on all such special occasions, a personalized greeting card along with a gift was sent to their dealers and major customers. The idea was very simple and a basic one, yet it delivered startling results. The dealers not only started giving them adequate space at their counters, and many of them became our exclusive dealers, and also gave the company place in their heart. This is just one of the many examples where the author’s team reached closer to their customers with marketing efforts experimenting with Relationship building / Emotional gestures.
On similar grounds, the author’s team at Jaypee Group also started a loyalty program for top dealers. This included selection of top dealers who were qualifying certain parameters and gave them special status and honour by giving them a different set of certificates / gifts as a gesture of appreciation. They also occasionally arranged exclusive pleasure trips for these dealers with families within and outside India. Such outings gave an opportunity to the co-officers to develop a very close rapport with the dealer and their families. This closeness created a positive atmosphere. Involvement of Dealers family in such trips worked as a bonanza for the company as the dealers’ family started persuading the dealer to patronise Jaypee cement in order to get domestic and foreign trips or be entitled to better gifts next time. In the company the Jaypee officers were specially trained to attend and take care of the dealer and their families such that their hospitality leaves an indelible mark on them. Many cement companies were also entertaining their Dealer network by taking them on similar domestic and foreign tours but lack of personal touch by the officers of those companies, for which the Jaypee officers are trained for made all the difference. There were not one or two but many instances when dealers preferred to opt for the trip organised by Jaypee, the date of which accidentally coincided with the trip organised by the competitor brand.

The author’s team has successfully experimented in arousing sentimental values through participation in sports, primarily cricket. Cricket is known to create euphoria in our country. Jaypee Group has occasionally sponsored cricket matches there by associating the brand with cricket. Jaypee group thus became a part of jubilation among crowd in the stadium and also among millions who are far off and watching the matches on Television. The positive outcome of such sentimental attachments between the brand, sports and people is significant marketing gains over our contenders.

At Jaypee, when the management was initially planning to do the promotion of their cement, they decided to kindle the emotions of ultimate user and finally ended up finding most touchy line in Hindi which said “Jaypeaaplagayengesukhpotebhipaayenge”. (If you use Jaypee cement in construction of your house, even your grandchildren will reap its benefit). This was a very strong message conveying quality of cement. This was a persuasive advertisement, where an old man (grandfather) is holding his grand child in his lap owing to its emotional delight, has gladdened peoples’ emotions. Though this Advertisement has been replaced with another long time ago, people still remember this ‘Ad’.

There are many other companies in cement industry, such as Ultra tech Cement, ACC, L&T, HCC, etc. who too have advertised their products touching emotional chord of consumers. To say in short, ‘the emotions in marketing have taken top most importance among advertisers’.

Many companies like Joylukas, Airtel, Cadbury, Johnson & Johnson, etc. have successfully implemented the strategy of emotional marketing thru their advertisements and have made a special place in the hearts of customers.

6. EMOTIONAL EXPERIMENTATIONS WITH MARKETING AND SALES TEAMS
The author, for some years, has been trying to study and analyze the impact of emotions and relationship with colleagues by tracking their performance at work place and has found startling results. In today’s competitive era, the companies can...
Survive and business can flourish primarily through relationship marketing as brought out in above paras. Relationship can be developed effectively through front-line employees who visit the clients. It is these front line executives who create company’s image among dealers/ customers and therefore their behaviour and attitude towards customer assumes great significance. It is very important to understand and evaluate how much an employee is concerned in company’s growth, whether he/she is sufficiently motivated and whether he/she is willing to give his best service to the customer. The author has been associated with Jaypee Group for the past 22 years; and there are a lot many more employees, who too have been working with this group for a very long period. This is because of strong “Emotional Relationship” that has been established by our Executive Chairman with the employees. During any interaction / meeting / social gathering, he always makes it a point to enquire about the welfare and whereabouts of family members, be it a senior official or any lower cadre staff. When he recognises that the employees’ family members are in specific need of education, employment etc., he goes out of the way to support them. With this emotional gesture of the Executive Chairman, many employees are not only passionately committed to Jaypee Group but have also become the company’s goodwill ambassadors. This top down approach for displaying promises for employees’ family needs has created a positive impact on middle and lower level officers too, who imbibe similar acts of goodwill generation through their own relationship efforts among their peers and subordinates. The author is meeting very frequently with his peers in other companies and has often discussed with them on the issue of Employee retention in their organisation; he has experienced that Employee retention is the biggest issue before them. In today’s competitive world the companies have to depend upon the Human Resources most primarily and therefore the employees are also exploiting the opportunity of frequently changing the job for better remuneration.

This issue of frequent job changing is not observed so frequently in Jaypee group, not because that employees’ all demands, just or unjust are being met, but the management practice that is started and practised by the Group’s Chairman and sincerely followed by other senior executives, of handling the officers grievances on emotional chord has kept Jaypee group insulated from this menace.

“Different styles of management have been experimented by the author over his long career as marketing executive working at different levels. The author had to address each issue with a different approach, however the author always played the card of ‘Emotional touch’ with sentimental attachment and has succeeded in most of the situations. The author has personally tried to implement emotional strategies and got outstanding results’. In emotional endeavours too, he has experimented various approaches and have tried to imbibe some of those traits from successful executives/entrepreneurs, who have influenced me the most. Capturing minds is one thing; capturing hearts is quite another. The author has tried and helped his dealers/colleagues / business associates. When the author speaks well about the person in front of him, he makes his listeners sense how strongly he believes in what he is saying and how strongly he cares for them. Emotions drive our actions and behaviour. The author has achieved outstanding success in creating eternal bonds and everlasting relationship. His team bubbled with enthusiasm. His organisation gained with increased sales, improved services and satisfied customers”. Officers and staff turnover working under him during the last 22 years has been most negligible.
While we seek enhanced contribution from people for maximising our company’s profit, we should strive to be able to motivate them and provide emotional gratification for them. We have to please people to perform and enhance their productivity. The author has personally realised that one of the greatest and fulfilling experiences has been to be praised by superiors/seniors. Further receiving praise in open forums is highly smoothening to our ego and we instantaneously commit ourselves to the company’s agenda.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is obvious that a purchaser will evaluate advantages and disadvantages of a product, compliance to quality standards, will find out past performance of the brand under consideration, the technical service network and the cost advantage before taking purchase decision. However author’s experience advocates overriding influence of emotions in decision making for the brand purchased.

Employee satisfaction, customer loyalty, brand image schemes in Jaypee Group are sketched to creation and delivery of emotional value. In Jaypee Cement the author has thrived and maintained market leadership for decades. Marketing strategy in Jaypee Cement Group have multipronged approach. Company certainly maintains high quality in cement produced and its efficient transportation, maintains commitment and timeline. The company provides technical support to clients as per their needs. Company is conscious of environment and upholds the environment management principles in its actions and deeds. The company maintains its employees in high esteem and maintains resilient relationship with them. One of the significant elements in Jaypee group’s marketing approach is sparking of emotions. Emotional marketing tactics offer powerful competitive advantage. The company has engaged the buyers with abundance of emotional triggers and has succeeded at attracting them sentimentally to company’s produce. Having experienced that our actions and advertisements are effective if they are able to trigger strong emotional attachment among buyers/clients, the company has occasionally encouraged its marketing teams to go ahead with inclusion of emotional elements in its endeavour to enhance market share and in company’s advertisement campaigns.

Company’s emotional experiments have yielded bonanza; it has accomplished positive employee response, gratified dealers and contended customers.

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