

Application of Film Marketing Tools in Kannada Film Industry: An Empirical Analysis

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Abstract: Film marketing process has been enriched by the revolutionary changes in the field of communication science and technology. The article is based on empirical study of application of film marketing tools in Kannada film industry. The Kannada film industry has achieved commendable progress during the last eight decades. The film marketing strategies have undergone revolutionary changes consequent on several media campaigns, fairs and festivals in India. The review of literature clearly indicates that not even a single scientific investigation has been carried out on film marketing with special reference to Kannada film industry. The present investigation was carried out on the basis of systematic survey research method. Several advanced film marketing tools have been used by the various stakeholders in Kannada film industry according to the present investigation. The study envisages that Kannada film industry should get rid of the age old formula which glorifies sex, romance, violence, music and dance. The Kannada film marketing strategies should be based on meaningful corporate tie-ups and merchandising in the present times. The stakeholders of Kannada film industry are required to inculcate innovative and creative film marketing strategies which would boost Kannada film industry in the new millennium.

I. PREAMBLE

Movie marketing has become an important aspect of film management in the new millennium. Revolutionary changes in the field of communication science and technology have added new dimensions to movie marketing all over the globe. Indian films and regional films rely mainly on movie marketing both in domestic and international circuits. The subject of movie marketing assumes great significance from research, management and development points of view. The application of film marketing tools in Kannada film industry was examined by the researcher in the present investigation.

A. Kannada Film Industry

Kannada film industry had produced about 16 talkie films before independence. About 24 films were made in Kannada after independence which is known as the growth period of Kannada film industry. The Government of Karnataka also promoted Kannada film industry through subsidy, awards, construction of studio and other measures. About 138 Kannada films were produced during the decade of 1970s. The decade of 1980s witnessed the production of a large number of commercial Kannada films. Kannada film industry also attracted huge investment because of the new consciousness of the people. There were remarkable economic changes and modifications during 1991 – 2000 in the entire world. The Kannada film industry had shined during the age of globalization (Modaliyar, 2009:25). Most of the Kannada films were commercial films based on the technique of re-make. In the new millennium, Kannada film industry has grown

remarkably. About 80 to 100 films were made every year in Kannada.

Kannada film industry is marching towards progress despite competition from other films, challenges of other film personalities, video piracy, dubbing of films, inadequate film theatres and other drawbacks. Kannada film industry is recognized at various levels for the rare accomplishments. There is a significant rise in the number of films (Banakar, 2016:03). Kannada film industry has grown confidently both in terms of number and quality. It has the capacity for the attainment of greater progress in future. The stakeholders of Kannada film industry are required to work together for the realization of the goal of integrated development of Kannada film industry.

B. Film Marketing in India

The process of value creation cannot be seen as being a contract between the film maker, marketer and the consumer, but takes place in the circuit of cultural consumption, observe du Gay (2000:11). The film marketing landscape has changed significantly in the age of globalization. The academic research on film marketing has followed these changes. Film marketing is a process of shifting from traditional new product development to new forms of engagement with consumers. The film marketers are influenced by box office economics. They embrace the power of the crowd, both in funding and developing film in modern times.

It is observed as theatrical promotions create most conversions towards the decision of watching the films. The print media publicity and advertisements are also effective tools of film marketing. The creative banners, posters, wall writings and other channels are useful tools of film marketing (Wallia, 2002:35). Film marketing strategies have undergone revolutionary changes. Earlier, distributors employed marketing teams to create press books which would carry information about the cast and the production crew, plot synopses, stories about the making of the film, background information, still photographs from the film and from behind the camera, and details of the availability of posters or other promotional aids such as lobby cards or 'standees'. The marketing strategies changed later with the evolution of media mainly radio and TV and launch of film festivals and award ceremonies in India.

Movie marketing has become more scientific and innovative, finds Campaign India. Ubiquitous is how one can describe brand 'Ghajini'. One can find its presence across all mediums, be it TV, print, outdoor, Internet, mall activation, cinema activation and even in the advertisements of other brands! Movie marketing in India has evolved and is becoming more innovative and scientific in its approach. Film marketing has become important for a film to recover money with a good beginning. But one has to remember that marketing ensures trial. This is similar to product advertising which ensures that the consumer tries the product. If the product is good, there will be repeat trials and if the product is not good, marketing and

advertising can't do much for the brand (Khandelwal, 2009:21)".

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature clearly indicates that adequate studies are conducted on various aspects of film making in India and abroad. Prominent studies conducted by the past researchers relating to the topic include - Goldberg (1991:17), Surmanek (1996:34), Lukk (1997:22), Albert (1998:01), Bagella (1999:02), Durie et. al. (2000:12), du Gay (2000:11), Canterbury and Marvasti (2001:07), Collins and Snell (2002:09), Walia (2002:35), Elberse and Eliashberg (2003:14), Squire (2004:32), Marich (2005:23), Bose (2005:05), Stafford (2006:33), Basuroy et. al. (2006:04), Elberse and Anand (2007:13), Elliot and Simmons (2008:15), Modaliyar (2009:25), Khandelwal (2009:21), Sangkil et. al. (2010:31),

Brubaker (2011:06), Natu (2011:26), Chand (2011:08), Ernst and Young (2012:16), Norris et. al. (2012:27), Robbins (2013:30), Mazumder (2014:24), Grove (2015:18), Guru et. al. (2015:19), Prakash (2016:28), Hediger and De Rosa (2016:20), Richeri (2016:29) and DaSilva (2016:10). There are also limited studies which are carried out by the past researchers on film marketing in India and abroad. Surprisingly, not even a single scientific investigation has been carried out on film marketing with special reference to Karnataka.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was carried out on the basis of systematic survey research method. A structured and pre-tested interview schedule was administered to the stakeholders of Kannada film marketing in Karnataka state.

A. Distribution of Study Area and Sample

Sl. No.	Revenue Divisions	Film Producers	Film Distributors	Film Exhibitors	Film Audiences	Total
1	BKT (Bengaluru, Kolar & Tumkur)	16	12	27	79	134
2	MMCH (Mysuru, Mandya, Hassan & Coorg)	10	08	20	55	93
3	Mumbai Karnataka (Hubli-Dharwad, Gadag, & Belgaum)	04	04	18	35	61
4	Hyderabad Karnataka (Gulbarga, Raichur, Bellary & Bidar)	06	04	16	36	62
Total		36	28	81	205	350

Primary data were collected through structured, organized and standardized interview schedules which were administered to about 350 representatives of film producers, film distributors, film exhibitors and film audiences. In addition to interview, informal discussions were also held with the persons who are associated with Kannada film marketing management.

IV. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

A. Demographic Features

- A majority of the study sample represent male respondents (70.29%), PUC/Diploma/ graduation categories (86.29%), film audience (58.57%) and Bangalore/ Mysore regions (64.86%) respectively.

B. Application of Film Marketing Tools

- Festivals screening is used as a tool of film marketing (57.14%).
- Street marketing is used as a tool of film marketing (56.0%).
- Online marketing is not used as a tool of film marketing (66.29%).
- Film posters and hoardings are used as a tool of film marketing (91.43%).
- Film trailers are used as a tool of film marketing (88.0%).
- Games and competitions are not used as a tool of film marketing (81.14%).
- Mobile games are not used as a tool of film marketing (77.71%).
- Mobile apps are not used as a tool of film marketing (81.14%).

- Television commercial is used as a tool of film marketing (85.14%).
- Radio commercials are used as a tool of film marketing (85.14%).
- Movie portals are used as a tool of film marketing (77.71%).
- Visual merchandising is used as a tool of film marketing (68.57%).
- Celebrities/ stars are used as a tool of film marketing (79.43%).
- Television reality and talk shows are used as a tool of film marketing (84.57%).
- Radio talk shows are used as a tool of film marketing (65.71%).
- Mall activation is not used as a tool of film marketing (63.43%).
- Partnership with food chains is used as a tool of film marketing (58.86%).
- Product placement tie-ins are not used as a tool of film marketing (60.0%).
- Websites are not used as a tool of film marketing (58.86%).
- Press conference is used as a tool of film marketing (61.71%).
- Press junkets are used as a tool of film marketing (60.0%).
- Film premiers are used as a tool of film marketing (60.57%).
- E-mail marketing is not used as a tool of film marketing (60.57%).
- Social media platforms are used as a tool of film marketing (69.71%).
- Print media advertisements are used as a tool of film

marketing (84.57%).

- Paid news is used as a tool of film marketing (79.43%).
- Market research is used as a tool of film marketing (82.29%).
- Word of mouth and buzz marketing is used as a tool of film marketing (80.0%).

C. Testing of Hypotheses

H: Advanced tools of film marketing are not applied by the stakeholders of Kannada film marketing in Karnataka state.

The data which are presented in the article clearly reveal that the stakeholders of film marketing have applied the major tools of film marketing in the study areas. Hence, the above hypothesis stands disproved according to the data analysis.

D. Implications of the Study

Kannada film industry has passed through several testing times during the last eight decades. In the new millennium, the hopes of rejuvenating Kannada film industry have been kindled with young talents marking new trends through their innovative films. The following implications are listed under this heading with a view to promote Kannada film industry and Kannada film marketing in future.

E. Implications for Kannada Film Industry

- Film making involves artistic temperament, professional commitment and sound technical expertise in order to cope with the emerging challenges.
- Kannada film industry is dominated by the businessmen, politicians, real estate tycoons and other vested interests that produce mindless films with inexperienced hands. The quality of Kannada films should grow along with the numbers.
- Factors like glamour, fame and opportunity to turn black money white should not be the basis for Kannada film making. The professional film makers should not be pushed to the side lines by the new comers.
- Kannada film industry needs proper infrastructure and distribution systems which should be managed by the creative minds and seasoned professionals.
- The taste of the film audience differs from time to time. It is high time that Kannada film makers deviate from the tired old plots and focus on quality and content driven films.
- The contents and merits of Kannada film industry should eventually emerge victorious in this age of competitive film making.
- There is shrinkage in the number of Kannada cinema halls and Kannada films are not adequately supported by the multiplexes. Quick measures have to be taken to curb film piracy and resolve theatre issues.
- The government should provide subsidized financial assistance to build 'Janata Chitramandiras' (peoples' film viewing centers) at taluk level in the entire state of Karnataka to encourage regular screening of Kannada films.
- There is a dearth of original film makers in this age of commercialization film industry. Kannada film industry should get rid of the age old formula which glorifies sex, romance, violence, music and dance. This formula has become obsolete in the new millennium since

young generation of audience think differently due to several factors including social mobility.

F. Implications for Kannada Film Marketing

- There is no proper synchronization between production and marketing in Kannada film industry. The film makers should analyze the market conditions and challenges and plan their marketing strategies accordingly.
- Proper planning and budgeting are critical in both film making and marketing processes. It is not just the money that matters, but the mindset of the film makers and producers should also change in accordance with the changing film environment.
- Kannada film marketing strategies should be based on meaningful corporate tie-ups and merchandising in the present times.
- New opportunities have emerged in film marketing with the advent of social media and digital technologies. It is important for the Kannada film makers to adopt 360 degree approach to film marketing.
- Kannada film publicity and advertising campaigns should be based on generating positive publicity and leveraging positive emotions and feelings.
- Apart from using the conventional film promotion channels, Kannada film makers should also use popular social media and mobile platform for better film marketing.
- Medianet and other agencies have institutionalized the phenomenon of paid news which involves paying newspapers and broadcasters for positive coverage of Kannada films. Such endeavors should be encouraged to promote Kannada film marketing.
- Kannada film marketing strategies and activities cannot be the same for every other film. The film marketing strategies should be unique based on the film and the focus should be widened from traditional methods.
- Effective management of funds and optimum utilization of new opportunities including the mobile platforms should be ensured to strengthen Kannada film marketing.
- Kannada film makers should enlist the active participation of media professionals and communication specialists in the film promotion and marketing strategy making activities.

CONCLUSION

Kannada film industry has also incorporated advanced film production technologies and strategies in terms of film production, film distribution, film marketing and film exhibition. The Kannada film management is complemented by systematic film marketing tools and strategies which are tested and tried by nature. The investigation reveals that Kannada film industry needs to be rejuvenated and enriched in terms of advanced film marketing concepts, tools, techniques and strategies. The stakeholders of Kannada film industry are required to inculcate innovative and creative film marketing strategies which would boost Kannada film industry in the new millennium.

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