



Panache



Surrogate Marketing

The first in the series of latest Marketing Funde

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Surrogate Marketing 101

-Padmavathi Krishnamurthy, PGP-1

DID YOU KNOW!!

A lot of health advocates criticize companies selling sweets and other junk food to children by advertising during their cartoon slots.

This is why you will now see advertisements about 'healthy and calcium filled' Milkybar from Nestle.

Kids will of course, spot these products in their sugary sticky-sweetness in supermarkets immediately!!

Have you often wondered about the mystery behind the veil of Wills Gold Flake "T-shirts" or Smirnoff "Cassettes and CDs"? Welcome to the world of surrogate marketing-embedding a brand or product message inside an advertisement which is ostensibly for another brand or product. The brand name, colors, logo and everything except the product will be the same, often leaving consumers with an "eh, what?" expression!



So why would any company do this? Well, generally because the government has banned direct advertisements for a particular

class of products, something popularly seen with alcohol or cigarettes. By coming up with alternate products, companies achieve two benefits – a bunch of curious consumers who are familiar with the branding, and a satisfied junta who believes that the company has shown a high level of social responsibility! Quite like the halo above the devil's head!

So what's the legal verdict on surrogate advertising? In India its trouble only if anyone can prove that a company crossed a regulatory line. Advertising agencies are known to be innovative and clever, and they are likely find a way to get around this!

Common surrogate marketing strategies

-RoseAnn Varghese, PGP1

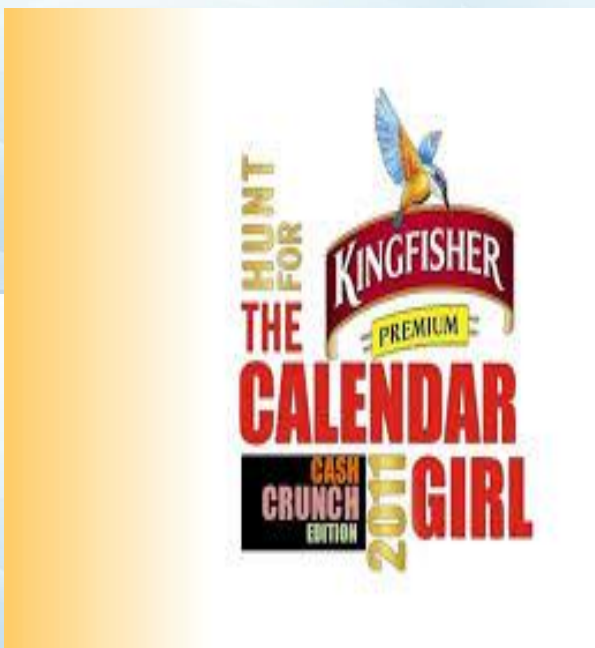
So how exactly do companies push their products while getting around a legal law or ban? Surrogate marketing at your service! Wills, a famous brand dealing with cigarettes, associates itself with Apparel retailing through the widely popular Wills Lifestyle chain of stores. Considering the much anticipated and highly attended Wills Lifestyle India Fashion Week, it would be impossible not to pick up on the brand's "subliminal" messaging!



Not surprisingly, the nobler the offering projected, the more positive is the perception towards the brand. The national bravery award sponsored by Godfrey Philips, a tobacco manufacturer, lends credence to this idea. Sometimes surrogate marketing veers to the ridiculous but amusing end of the advertising spectrum!

Consider a tobacco brand enthusiastically sponsoring a marathon event, dotting the course with posters screaming why running is good for your health! The overwhelming

irony, however serves the purpose of promoting the brand's intended product. It would hardly be surprising if the next step to surrogate advertising involved mobile marketing, given the larger and better reachability to target consumers.

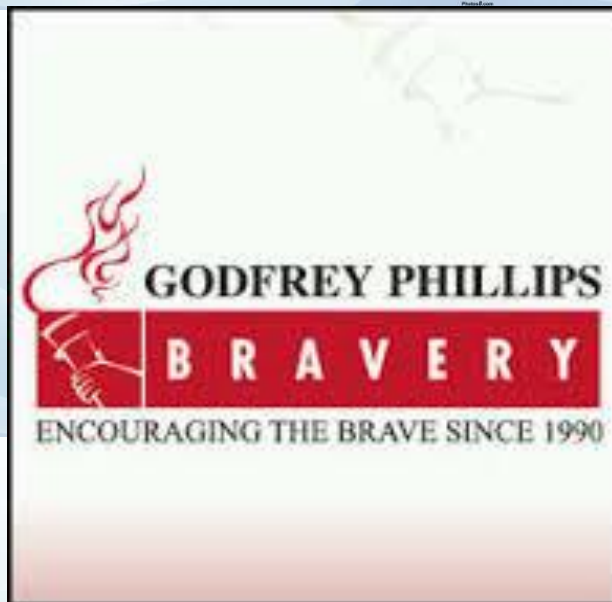


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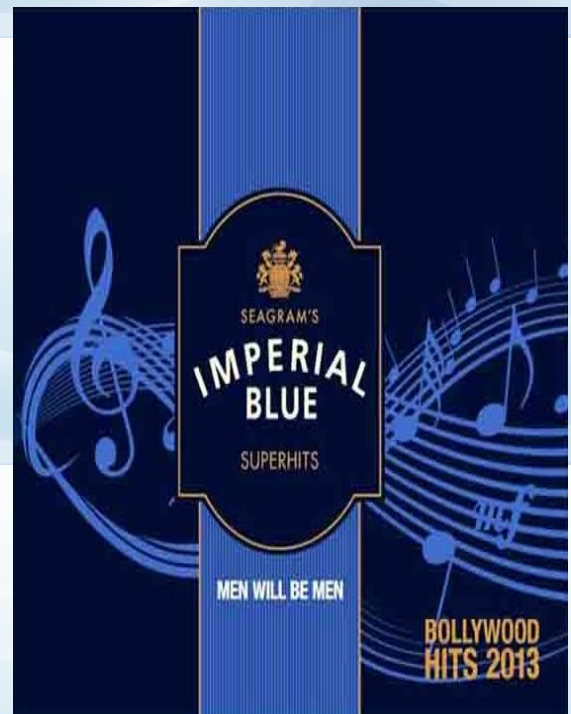
Different types of Surrogate Marketing

- Suryaansh Makked, PGP 1



TV commercials are often used by companies as a means of surrogate marketing, but most of them advertise a product directly. Some companies may be banned from doing this under a region's particular laws, so the company creates a commercial that highlights an item outside the brand's normal products. For example, a company known for making alcohol may make a commercial that highlights a new soft drink.

Another type of surrogate advertising is done through sponsorships, usually of events or sports teams, but it also could be for things such as scholarships, parks and foundations. In this type of advertising, the company is hardly advertising anything. All it does is leaves its logo somewhere, such as on a wall at an event or the jersey of the player, and this places the idea of the brand in the consumers' mind. Public service announcement (PSA) is a surrogate marketing method to advertise products related with health risks. For example, a PSA about the risks of smoking along with using the company's colors and logo informs consumers about the hazards of using the product but, at the same time, attracts consumers to a certain brand because the announcement subtly alludes to it.

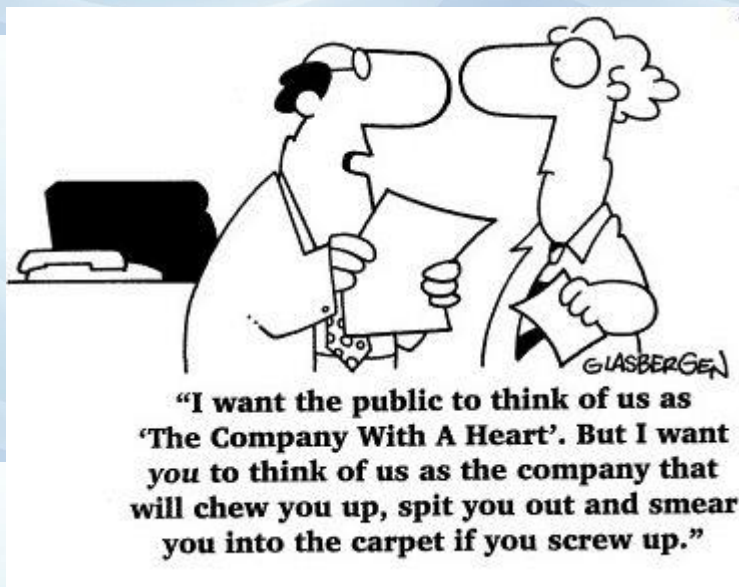


Ethical Dilemmas in Surrogate Marketing

-Harini Ragothaman, PGP1

The laws of the land may ban the advertisement of liquor, tobacco, baby products etc, but that does not stop the companies from promoting their brand through surrogate means. Wills cigarettes' tagline "Made for each other" originally meant the filter and the cigarette but it now shows a couple in love.

The primary motive behind banning the advertisement of these products is to remove them from the mind of the consumer since research shows that advertising has a significant influence on the consumption level. These surrogate marketing campaigns are not fooling anyone and are considered unethical by a vast majority. vv



However, defenders of surrogate marketing such as industry analyst Pushpinder Singh claim, "Surrogate advertising is a reflection of the hypocritical society that we live in. It's especially important since liquor and tobacco contribute to a huge part of the Government revenue." They question why the Government has not imposed a ban on the sale of items rather than just ban their advertisements.

This is an endless debate. While the Government will always criticize surrogate advertisements, it has its champions and protectors in the marketing fraternity. So, love it or hate it, Surrogate marketing is here to stay!

Fun fact - There are restrictions on marketing of pharmaceutical products as well! Surrogate advertising has to be used for prescription drugs.

Hope you enjoyed reading!

We'll be back with more in our next edition... Stay Tuned!!