Cover Story
Global Design for Indian Fashion

Mr. Farokh Balsara
Partner at Ernst & Young

Mr. John Hauser
Professor of Marketing
MIT Sloan School of Management
Dear Readers,

As we sit down to pen this editorial, we are at a loss of words to describe what we feel. The feeling of being at the helm of one of the country’s most reverberating marketing magazine is yet to sink in to each of us here at Team Markathon. This being the first edition by team 2011-2013, it is very close to our hearts. Working under the 2010-2012 team we have helped the magazine scale new heights. We have associated with some of the most eminent personalities in the field of marketing and have seen a phenomenal increase in our readership base.

Taking the culture of Markathon forward, our cover story for this month “A global design for Indian fashion” analyses the Indian fashion industry. The cover story examines the present scenario of the Indian Designer segment Industry through various examples. It identifies the various challenges faced and highlights the amount of untapped potential this industry has to provide for the future. The cover story also gives strategies that could be employed to catapult this nascent industry to a global stature.

Our Vartalaap for this month features an eminent personality from the Media and Entertainment world, Mr. Farokh Balsara, Partner at Ernst & Young, one of the big four Consulting firms. He has been E&Y’s media and entertainment practices leader in the country for over a decade and currently drives the segment throughout Europe, Middle East, India and Africa. He talks to us about the growing media and Entertainment business and some of its intricacies in the Indian context.

From the academic world, we have John Hauser, Professor of Marketing at the MIT Sloan School of Management. He has expertise in marketing and product development areas, including the design and marketing of new products, customer satisfaction incentives and new product forecasting models. The proposer of the world famous Voice of the Customer methods, talks about the intricacies of marketing on wide range of topics from marketing science to virtual customer methods.

We also have a special section where we would like to bid farewell to 2010-2012 Team Markathon, who have guided us at each step and have been very critical to make Markathon what it is today.

This edition is not only special to us members, but marks a significant change in leadership for Markathon. We have certain changes lined up for you over the next few editions. We will constantly strive to make Markathon “Bigger, better and Stronger” (And you thought only Kanye West could do that)

We would like to thank our readers who’ve constantly sent in their feedback and suggestions to improve the magazine. As always, we will try to improvise and ascertain that together we will learn and together we will grow.

Do send in your feedback/suggestions to markathon.iims@gmail.com

Sit back and wear your seatbelts, because this is going to be a ride you will remember.

Happy Reading

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"The heart has its reasons which reason knows nothing of... We know the truth not only by the reason, but by the heart."

- Blaise Pascal

This quote elicits the challenges faced by the marketers everyday in such a simple way.

When they try to peek into the minds of their customers, to get an idea of what is it that will attract them to a certain product or a promotion, what is it that can leave them helpless with no choice but to give in to their temptations, hand holding a credit card, stretched at the counter. On the other hand what is the reason that even after spending millions of dollars on advertisements, events and promotions, the sales of some companies just doesn’t go up? Even if people like the campaigns, they are not motivated enough to buy the product and in some cases they even miss the name of the brand.

A woman in a mall, looking at a shoe collection, what must be going through her head? “Oh these black ones are nice, and they are of the latest fashion, but I don’t like the material they are made up with, I want something shiny, which adds to my glamour quotient. And last week I saw on the TV, a model was wearing light brown colored heels. If I find something like that in this design & shiny, within my price range, then I might buy it”.

Clearly as our heart has many reasons which cannot be rationalized, our mind as well is a complex neural processor, which keeps firing thoughts, from the past memories, present state of mind and future desires making it very difficult for anyone to place the ‘Buy Button’ inside our head.

In this pursuit, the marketers ganged up with the scientists to use Electro Encephalography (EEG) scans or functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (FMRI) to get a hard copy of our brain activities while our various senses are exploded with several advertisements, logos, fragrances and sounds.

They plug several electrodes to our head and notice the spikes and dips in various parts of our brain to assess attention, emotional engagement and likely memory for the items on test. Scary as it sounds, they have found some eye opening insights about our thought processes and tendencies which can completely change the face of marketing.

Remember the time when you went to college, listening to an mp3 player or radio on your phone and you saw a guy/girl walking down the road with white colored...
earphones plugged in, looking much cooler than your run-of-the-mill plain black ones. And just then they take it out, small, sleek and super stylish portable music player ‘The IPOD’, and your mind said “wow!! I’ve got to have this”. Or take the example of the time when all fashion conscious people started wearing jeans with flared bottom, guys and girls both and it became the In-thing and then, they just disappeared and were replaced by the skinny jeans. Now everyone goes around in skinny jeans, and flared jeans have completely lost its appeal.

Do you see what is happening here? Now the same people find the same old style totally unattractive. Well marketers call this the trick of mirror neurons. By the scans performed they have found the inferior frontal cortex and superior parietal lobe to contain mirror neurons which fire up when we observe or even read about another person performing an action.

These same neurons fire up when we cry and feel helpless while watching the attack at Pearl Harbor or the drowning Titanic. Or when we read about the union of two lovers after years of tyranny in a book and our heart fills with multiple emotions. And the same neurons make us humans mimic each other’s buying behaviors as well. They work along with dopamine which is the brain’s pleasure chemical which explains for the euphoria we feel after wearing the same shoes which we see every other girl wearing and hence claim to the be in tandem with the latest fashion.

In short:  (Trend + Mirror Neurons + Dopamine = More Spending + Exhilaration)

Now that the marketers know about our tendencies, they just need to create a buzz about how if you do not have a product, you are so out of fashion and let the buzz catch fire to make people run to the stores & now that you know about mirror neurons you can stand by and watch other people run from trend to trend emptying their wallets and try not to get caught in it.

Now let’s take it to another level. Have you ever thought why a certain restaurant plays hip hop music or soft rock, some play piano, and some ghazals? When you just come in the vicinity of Mad Over Doughnuts, the smell of freshly baked doughnuts rushes to your head and you imagine oozing chocolate along with it, same goes for McDonald’s or Dominoes. The desire has been aroused, the bait has been laid, and it’s quite difficult to ignore all that aroma and attraction. This is something called Sensory Branding.

By a series of experiments using FMRI it was found that visual images are far more desirable and memorable, when they are combined with other senses like sound or smell. And if a visual image is coupled with an incongruous smell, then no matter how good the product is, it is doomed. So do not think that those smells and sounds coming from the far end of the road, is a co-incidence. Restaurants and showrooms use special scent oozing machines which have formulized smells to attract you. Interestingly for all of our other
senses, we think before we respond, but with scent, your brain responds before you think.

Sex. Sex. Sex.

Does this catch your attention? Well the one of the most debatable and interesting topics in advertising is ‘Sex In Advertising’. So the marketers plugged the electrodes to the heads of the people while they watched some advertisements and print ads which had subtle or strong sexual insinuations and what they found was pretty eye-opening.

Sex in advertising has been subtly pushed since as long as 1960s in the US, and has also lead to many controversies due to opposition against it from bodies like The American Family Association. Calvin Klein, Wild stone, Axe, Levis Unbutton, Adidas, Burger King, Guess are some of the brands who have used that angle.

By the experiment, it was found that sex mostly doesn’t sell anything other than itself. It does something known as ‘The Vampire Effect’, as the titillating content sucks the attention of the viewer from what the ad is trying to convey and sometimes people don’t even remember the name of the brand or the logo or any other text in the advertisement at the end of it.

All these and many more startling revelations have been possible with the help of FMRI and EEG scans. Picture 25 years down the line, a revolution in the field of FMRI leads to the production of a very small device which can be stuck to anyone’s head and there mental activity can be monitored. We can use this for solving age old mysteries like, ‘How to crack an Interview?’ by checking what appeals or what dampens the interest of the panelists in a candidate. We can maybe, know ‘What women want?’ by studying the patterns of their brainwaves in different situations.

It might be fun and very interesting in the beginning, but later it will get boring. There will not be much left for man to explore and learn through experiences, to appreciate the beauty in diversity and fun in mysteries.

The breath taking positioning or promotions done by marketers would be the culmination of data crunching of huge sets of EEG scans. Instead of challenging the likes and dislikes of the human mind, we would be trying to decode it and using that code to produce something or modify our behavior with respect to what appeals to others. It will definitely help companies save a lot of money from the marketing budget they spend on activities which do not add to their sales or might affect negatively, & help them know what they are doing wrong? But what freaks me out is that if every company knows the tricks, and plays an amazing game using all the deep dark secrets of our minds which they will get to know via neuroimaging, they will drive us crazy with all the attractions pulling us in so many directions and no savings in the bank, after all humans need to meditate for years to develop a will power which can resist this tease. I guess that will be another level for human evolution, where we will become totally immune to beauty and sex and fragrances and smiles in order to protect ourselves from this invasion of ‘Neuromarketing’.
Is HUL on the Path of Tata Nano?

Mohit Saxena | IIFT Delhi

Ratan Tata has repeatedly said that his inspiration for the Nano came from seeing an entire family -- father, mother and two kids -- perched on a two-wheeler, navigating crowded and dangerous city roads because they couldn't afford anything better. In his view, the Nano is a family car.

But when that family was given a choice to possess this “family car”, it simply rejected the whole idea. The rejection was such strong that at one point of time Tata Motors could only sell 500 Nano in a month.

What went wrong in such a noble thought? One major reason was the positioning. Nano was positioned as a “Lakhtakia” – a car that has the lowest price.

It was found that people did not want to associate themselves with such kind of imagery. One has to realize that customers in the rural markets are as aspirational as their urban counterparts. All that one needs to know is how to sell to them.

Now, Nano has changed its positioning and is projecting itself as an aspirational car which has ample features and is full value for money. It is now infusing a feeling of satisfaction in the minds of Nano owners.

So what connection does HUL has with this story?

Recently, HUL has launched low price soup variants under its umbrella brand – Knorr. The obvious reason is to increase sales as “Soup” as a category has not been very popular in India – prime reason being the concept of soup is more associated with the Western cuisines.

This increase in sales can be achieved in three ways –

1. Increase penetration in the low-end of the urban markets and the rural markets.

2. Increase the existing customer up the value chain and create more occasions of consumption.

3. Increase sales by the combination of the above two.

According to Euromonitor, branded packaged soup market in India was in the range of Rs 100-125 crores in 2010. This segment of packaged food has been
relatively under penetrated in India but with urbanization and rise in organized retail, rise in income and changing lifestyles, the segment has experienced growth rates of more than 20% year on year in last 5 years.

HUL has tried option 2 successfully in the recent past where it has targeted children and positioned its range of soups as 7 pm snacks, thereby has created more occasions of consumption and thus has tried to fill the creneau.

In its strategy, till now, its TG was middle and upper middle class with its soup in the range of Rs 35. People perceived both soup and Knorr as premium and HUL enjoy majority of market share. But now it wants to increase its sales further as there exists huge untapped market.

The basic perception of soups in India is of something which is healthy while instant noodles are perceived as something which is tasty. We have witnessed the repositioning strategy of Maggi noodles when several other big brands entered into the instant noodles category. Maggi was quick enough to sense the consumer sentiments and started “Taste Bhi Health Bhi” campaign with the launch of fortified variants like Atta Maggi. They went one step ahead and cashed on the strong emotional connect they had with their customers and launched “Me aur meri Maggi” to reemphasise the fact that Maggi is more than mere noodles in the psyche of their customers.

For the past 20 months, HUL has done the hard work of positioning itself as a 7 pm snack which is not only healthy but also equally tasty. Knorr soups are quite popular in the upper and middle segment of the society and they perceive it as a premium product.

Now if HUL goes for option 3 and tries to target mass market by cutting prices through its launch of “Cup-a-soup” range of soups, it is taking a big risk of losing its whole value proposition. To its customers, Knorr is a premium soup with highest quality standards, great taste and health benefits.

If modern life wasn’t already confusing enough, brands are trying to complicate matters further by creating multiple identities. And if HUL wants to continue with its existing positioning and also launch cheaper variants then it is on the same track. It is trying to sell something similar which Tata Motors did. And we have seen that in the past also HUL failed to increase its penetration with smaller SKU of Knorr which was priced at Rs 5. It had to ultimately withdraw that smaller SKU.

**Conclusion**

If HUL really want to tap onto the huge opportunity existing in the rural India then it has to go for option 1 and 2 separately. It needs to launch a totally separate brand of soups which have health benefits like fortified with iron and which complete the nutritional intake of the rural customer.

This new brand of soup should target rural India and thus should be positioned as a healthy way to keep children in rural India free from iron, calcium and vitamins deficiencies. Separate communication mix should be developed particularly in rural India and regional brand ambassadors should be chosen. Kajol should remain the brand ambassador of premium Knorr soups only.

This strategy may involve the cost of launching a new sub-brand or a completely new brand but looking at the future prospects of growth in branded packaged soup category it will eventually turn out to be a good investment as this way HUL will get the first mover advantage in rural India while it will be able to maintain Knorr as a premium brand and thus will be able to retain and expand in the urban markets also.
An Interview with Mr John Hauser

Professor, MIT Sloan School of Management

John Hauser is the Kirin Professor of Marketing and a Professor of Marketing at the MIT Sloan School of Management. His expertise lies in a wide range of marketing and product development areas, including the new product development and forecasting models, voice-of-the-customer methods, customer satisfaction incentives, market research methods, competitive marketing strategy and metrics to manage product development. He talks about the intricacies of marketing on topics ranging from marketing science to virtual customer methods.
**Markathon:** You have had a long association with MIT, can you share with us some of your experiences and learnings as a student at MIT?

**Mr. Hauser:** I began at MIT in Electrical Engineering, studying both traditional electric engineering (circuits, fields, etc.) and related fields such as probability theory and optimization. I realized I was more interested in probability and optimization and I began working with faculty in transportation engineering. My Master’s thesis is about algorithms to optimize bus routes. One day I was asked to do a market research survey to understand why consumers were not responding as expected to our algorithms. We quickly found the reason, changed the algorithm, and ridership increased dramatically. There was something to this marketing. I then sought out faculty who were working in both marketing and operations research and found a home. The problems were interesting and I found I had a skill set that was valuable.

**Markathon:** How was your transition from a student at MIT to a teacher at MIT? What inspired you to take up teaching as a career option?

**Mr. Hauser:** Upon graduating from MIT I went to teach at Northwestern University in Evanston Illinois. Although I had a joint appointment in transportation engineering and marketing, I found marketing problems more interesting. Northwestern has a strong marketing group with strengths in a variety of areas – managerial, behavioral, and quantitative. I learned much and found new problems. After earning tenure at Northwestern, MIT made me an offer to return. Both are excellent schools. It was a hard choice. But being risk prone I decided to move. MIT has been an excellent place to learn new things and find new problems. Our motto is Mens et Manus, the mind and the hand. This means that theory enlightens practice and practice enlightens theory. MIT continues to provide new challenges and new methods.

**Markathon:** Your work on the Voice of the Customer gives an elaborate structured method for conducting consumer survey and revolutionised need identification. How would the article look, if you’d written it now, any changes to incorporate the major shift in consumer attitudes over the past decade?

**Mr. Hauser:** At the time the VOC was written, US firms were beginning to adopt total quality management. They had begun to understand that products succeed if they were based on the voice of the customer. But the VOC was more craft than science. We set out to provide a scientific basis and a systematic set of methods. Many of these methods are still in place. Listening to the customer continues to be critical to the design of successful products. However, there are new directions. Natural language processing applied to user-generated content is one new frontier. Adaptive questioning is another. Both of these are made possible by the confluence of the Internet, increased computing power, and advanced optimization and statistical methods.

**Markathon:** Your work has contributed significantly towards taking marketing beyond arts to a more scientific approach. Can you share some of the scientific methods you have seen being put to use in the corporate world successfully?

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**Much of my recent virtual customer research has focused on cognitive simplicity. Prior models assumed that consumers make sophisticated tradeoffs when choosing among products. That is true in many situations, but not all. Often, especially when confronted with many options, consumers simplify their decisions with heuristic rules. Although the rules are simpler, the inference problem is more difficult. We’ve published about a half-dozen papers on cognitively-simple rules and the methods are diffusing.**
Mr. Hauser: We are currently working on applying morphing to a variety of problems. Morphing is the concept that a website can change its look and feel or advertising can be targeted dynamically based on the cognitive styles (and other decision variables) of consumers. We infer consumers’ cognitive styles from their clickstream. In 2009 we published a paper projecting a 20% sales lift from morphing a BT group website. A new paper tests banner morphing with demonstrated lifts of approximately 100% on high-traffic websites. Morphing is still nascent. There are many good, publishable papers still to be written.

Markathon: We would be delighted to hear something about your latest work in the field of Virtual Customer.

Mr. Hauser: Much of my recent virtual customer research has focused on cognitive simplicity. Prior models assumed that consumers make sophisticated tradeoffs when choosing among products. That is true in many situations, but not all. Often, especially when confronted with many options, consumers simplify their decisions with heuristic rules. Although the rules are simpler, the inference problem is more difficult. We’ve published about a half-dozen papers on cognitively-simple rules and the methods are diffusing.

Markathon: Do you think Marketing Science has the potential to form the basis for the next generation marketing? How appropriate would it be to remove the whole lot of subjectivity that currently is a part of Marketing as a field?

Mr. Hauser: Marketing science, defined broadly, is the application of the scientific method to marketing. Marketing will always combine art with science, but science has the potential to solve many important problems.

Markathon: What would be your advice to our magazine readers, comprising of budding marketers?

Mr. Hauser: There are lots of interesting problems out there. Follow your interests.
The Indian fashion industry has carved a niche for itself across the world with its designers and the numerous fashion training institutes across the country. It’s also growing at a very fast pace. According to a 2012 Assocham report the Indian designer wear industry is touted to cross Rs 11,000 crore by 2020, with a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 40%. The domestic designer wear industry is currently valued at about Rs 720 crore. Several reasons attribute to this rise, such as higher disposable incomes, evolving sense of style, emergence of the mall culture, dressing and developing fashion consciousness among urban Indians.

History and Strengths

The movement towards equal status of women was perhaps the greatest influencers on the dress code in the early times. Because of this, we saw the emergence of a class of business-oriented women who made demands regarding their dresses.

Pre-Independence India was a confusing time for fashion as it was a tempestuous period of conflicting ideologies. It was the time when India was trying to politically express the consciousness of its national identity and the struggle for Independence was gaining momentum. Thus, the fashion trends among the higher society (read the royalty), was intensely influenced by the British, where western clothes were treated as status symbols. Then kicked in the idea of socialism, communism and fascism turning women’s fashion more and more feminine, eventually aligning to conservative ideology.

After Independence, fashion had mainly become an exclusive enterprise and a pursuit of wealth. The lower sections of the society settled for mostly family, handmade or “stitched-at-home” garments. With time, large number of individual neighborhood tailors started, evolving into retail history and the success followed by boutique selling. Today, garments are laser cut by computer and sourced from all around the world.

Since thousands of years, India has witnessed a rich heritage of textile with each region of the country having its own unique attire and traditional couture. From the dazzling silhouettes of Gujarat to the ‘checks of madras’ utilized to make the universal ‘Lungi’, fabrics from all over the country have found their own utility in almost everything fabric can be associated with.

The strength of India lies in the strong material availability throughout the country. We are one of the largest producers of jute, second largest producer of silk, third largest producer of cotton and also among the top in producing manmade fibers in the world. The standings don’t stop here. To add to the strengths, we have a large chunk of cheap skilled labor easily available in India. But then, what stops us from becoming a fashion trailblazer is an important question to be scrutinized.

Present Scenario

Indian fashion designers have been making their mark in the international arena receiving rave reviews from the global community for their exceptional knowledge and sense of fashion. The Indian Fashion industry has become a growing industry with international events such as the India Fashion Week and annual shows by fashion designers being held across the major cities of the country. The industry is largely unorganized and functions in a “cottage-industry” style. Fashion designers such as Ritu Beri, Ritu Kumar, Rohit Bal, Satya Paul, Rina Dhaka, Muzaffar Ali, Abraham and Thakore, JJ Valaya, Rocky S, Tarun Tahiliani and Manish Malhotra are some of the well-known fashion designers in India. The implications of this unorganized set-up are twofold. Firstly, it means that there is a requirement of skilled craftsmen and
tailors at the backend, and the number of pieces to be produced is smaller in comparison to the west.

India is slowly moving up the ladder of fashion value chain besides countersigning the expansion of domestic as well as global brands. There are a large number of prominent global fashion brands such as Louis Vuitton, Tommy Hilfiger, Esprit, Gucci, Nautica, Christian Dior, Chanel, FCUK, etc which are already present in India, while many other leading companies are planning to enter the nascent Indian market soon.

Factors making Indian Fashion Industry lag behind:

Dearth of established brands: In India, around 75% of the apparel market is unbranded and commoditized. Moreover, very few brands who enter the foreign markets survive, say Pantaloons to give an example. When it comes to designer wear, the count is almost nil.

Designer clothes far-fetched from normal wear: Indian consumers find the designer clothes barely appropriate to be worn normally. Furthermore, the designers also fail to please the demands and expectations of the common man.

Designer’s inability to raise finance: Since a major part of the designers’ products constitute their design talent and brand, it’s difficult to value their yields in terms of money and hence they are incompetent to tap finances from organized institutions.

Budding designers do not get due credit: Most of the budding individuals have limitations of finance; hence they are normally bound to work under bigger names. This ultimately restricts the beginners to come up to the forefront and display their talent.

Fashion Literature in India: In India, we have around 50 titles penned down by domestic writers on Indian textile and handicraft techniques and hardly 10 books and magazines on fashion, showing the big dearth of literature on this subject. Books by Ritu Kumar “Costumes and Textiles of Royal India” and Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla’s “A celebration of Style” are some of the famous ones. However, the publishers are optimistic and believe that the industry will grow manifolds in the coming few years due to media boom and improved visibility of foreign brands.

Mindset of Models and Designers

Some people (especially the models associated with the industry a since a long time) feel that the Indian fashion industry lacks professionalism and needs to go a long way to match the international standards. The practices involve right from the delay in payments to the way new models are reputed within the industry. Also, some of the famous designers suggest that, a robust regulatory and statutory body if brought in place can bring in more novelty and discipline within the industry. This will also serve to the need of uniting the industry against plagiarism and other illegal practices prevailing.

Exploring other side of the coin: However, a British jewelry designer, Cornelis Van Andel, who shifted to India 20 years back, feels that Indian Fashion Industry has a soul and flamboyance in it. She quotes “India is known for its embroideries and techniques, so why not promote such things abroad rather than taking inspiration from the west.”

Marketing the Right Things:

Indian Designers going global: Many leading Indian designers like Tarun Tahiliani, Ritu Beri, Ritu Kumar, Manish Malhotra, Rina Dhaka etc. have opened up doors for domestic fashion to go global while displaying their creativities in contemporary and ethnic designs. Works by Ritu Kumar is known for bridging in the gap between the traditionalism and modernism, while Ritu Beri has become the first designer to present her collection in the Fashion Capital of the world, Paris. Another famous designer, Rohit Bal, was accredited with the title of “India’s Master Fabric & Fantasy” by Time Magazine, who has had famous international
personalities like Noami Campbell, Cindy Crawford etc. as his clientele. Furthermore, he had been asked by the British Airways to design the dress of their South Asian crew. All these examples clearly show how Indian designers are leaving their mark on the global shores.

Boost due to Beauty Pageants: Indian fashion industry gets a major boost with the number of victories of Indian beauties in International Pageants such as Miss World and Miss Universe, since these events are recognized worldwide. Famous designer Ritu Kumar has designed wardrobes for 3 Miss Indias participating in these International pageants.

Role of Bollywood and other famous personalities: There have been occasions wherein Indian actresses like Aishwarya Rai and Deepika Padukone have flaunted their Indian wear on a foreign platform like Cannes film festival. The move definitely promotes the Indian traditional couture and grabs foreign attention.

Changing dynamics of Designer Wear in the Indian Fashion Arena

A recent article in a renowned newspaper cites that “In the Rs 720-crore domestic designer market - 0.32% of global designer wear industry - not one Indian designer brand is worth Rs 100 crore”. This is really a dismal number for a country whose growing appetite for fashion is far from satiated. Although a number of good designers are present currently in the country and many more are coming up thanks to institutes such as NIFT, the reach of these designer wear is very restricted and the niche category is in fact very miniscule. So is there something that can be done to increase the worth of a brand of Indian origin to something more substantial in this 720 crore segment? Here are some strategies we propose that could be taken by the fashionistas to improve penetration without diluting the image of the brand.

Big Fat Indian Weddings

One area for revenue generation for Indian Designers is high-priced “couture” for weddings. Indian weddings boast of expensive jewelry, decorations, gifts and most importantly wedding apparel for the bride and groom. The term “Big Fat Indian Wedding” is apt to describe these ceremonies.

Genesis Luxury Fashion, established in 2008, markets and distributes international luxury labels by India’s leading fashion gurus such as Satya Paul under its fashion house Genesis Colors.
These expensive wedding outfits were not affordable for all and sundry and hence targeted the upper class. Yet the middle and upper middle classes also aspire for such designer wear. Hence a few designers provide an option of renting them for a much lower price charged on a per-hour or per-day basis at the end of which they have to be returned. A lot of designers today hold exhibitions in prominent locales to showcase bridal/groom wear. Such exhibitions draw a lot of shoppers and helps bring awareness and WOM popularity of the designer. That said, this is a strategy that can boost revenue but not sales.

Couture to Pret-Porter

A financial express article reports that industry experts attribute the rising popularity of events like the Lakme India Fashion Week, to a trend of gradual transition of the domestic designer wear industry from couture (upscale, occasion-based fashion wear) to pret-a-porter (ready-to-wear).

Trends indicate that a lot of scope is available in the pret (ready to eat segment). Why can’t daily-wear clothes be designer wear? The best example in this regard is clothes for the workplace. Khadi is a material unique to India and Khadi Kurtas are a new rage everywhere. Given the abundance in raw materials such as cotton in India, production is not a problem. The problem however is that the apparel being produced is not reaching the customer, or rather the right customer. Say, an expensive Rohit Bal outfit fit for a grand occasion is placed at a chic retail outlet in a mall that attracts a lot of young crowd. An analogy here is that of a customer of Alto who would check out a Merc or Audi but not buy one because he is not a customer of that car!

As per the survey findings of a study conducted by ASSOCHAM, close to 35% of male and 50% of females in urban India prefers shopping at one-stop destinations. Also, nearly 40% of double income homes, i.e. where both parents are earning, prefer to buy designer wear for their kids too! These findings indicate the potential of introducing of “retail space for designer wear”. Although one may argue that this would defeat the exclusivity of designer labels, it actually enhances their reach; helps get more customers and if clubbed with good retail brands actually significant improve the bottom line of the industry rather than just the hemline!

Corporatization of Designer Wear

Ritu Kumar and Satya Paul are among the corporatized designer labels in the country today. Faced with the challenge of scale-up in terms of procurement, processes, people and capital, many designers are seeking strategic tie-ups with corporates.

A case in point is that of Raymond, whose strategy of corporatization emphasizes 3 A’s viz. Accessibility, Affordability and Acceptability. Not only does it offer quality suits which are designed to suit the changing fashion trends, it is also easily accessible, acceptable for the occasion and despite these qualities, priced at a relatively moderate rate. This is made possible by the corporatization of the brand.
Although the proposition that corporatization puts forth is that the marketing, factory creation, hiring workers and trade regulations will be taken up by an outside body aids designers to focus on their competencies, it still means putting designer labels on the same page as any other company. This move would bring the whole industry together, ensure organized labor laws and help the fragmented industry penetrate deeper.

**Education**

Another way of improving reach is through increased number of designer labels. One key area of focus is education, especially entrepreneurial education. Majority of the entrepreneurial education in India is concerned with raising awareness of entrepreneurship which revolves around the roles and functions of the entrepreneurs in the economy and society. What is required is a paradigm shift whereby we need to concentrate on the entrepreneurial education tailored to non-conventional disciplines. Although the standing of Indian Fashion industry with respect to global figures is not significant, it is estimated to grow by 1.7% by 2020. An ASSOCHAM report sees the 150 dedicated fashion institutes across the country, playing a pivotal role in this regard through an increased number of fashion entrepreneurs. In this context, suggestions have been made to the Government to initiate an exchange program with international fashion institutes. They have also called for a removal of various infrastructural bottlenecks in the system that can encourage more students to take up fashion as not just a job but a career.

Concluding with a final stitch

Fashion is clearly the buzzword today and designers have positioned their wares as instruments of self-expression. It is no longer about wearing something that looks good but about wearing your attitude and your identity. The designer industry is still in a nascent stage in India, but a lot of avenues are yet to be explored. Given the vast ocean of opportunities and initiatives that can be taken in this arena, the need of the hour is a re-look at our strengths and opportunities and scaling up would no longer be a cause of worry. The time has come for the world of fashion to be painted Saffron, White and Green...
AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. FAROKH BALSARA
Partner at Ernst & Young

Mr. Farokh Balsara is a Partner at Ernst & Young and is leading its Media & Entertainment industry segment for Europe, India, Middle East and Africa. Recognized as a thought leader in the M&E industry, Mr. Balsara has been associated with various industry bodies. He was one of the founding members of Ficci- Frames and authored the Ficci- Frames report since its inception in 1999 for five years and has also been the national president of the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce. With over 25 years of experience, Mr. Balsara shares with us his insights on the Media & Entertainment industry.
Markathon: Working in the Risk Advisory space with tough competition from the other three big players, what is it that E&Y does differently to get clients?

Mr. Balsara: We provide quality in everything we do and that is our biggest differentiator. We also think of the client’s interest before anything else and give our best on every job. That coupled with our biggest asset – ‘our people’ helps us serve our clients better.

Markathon: With young recruits joining in from varied fields, how do you train and develop them to be able to market E&Y well to get businesses?

Mr. Balsara: We place a lot of emphasis on training – on the job as well as off the job. We have our residential induction programs – RIPPLE, which is for fresh graduates and PI Immersion, which is for post graduates which induct the young recruits in our business. Apart from this, we also have compulsory trainings, which further help new recruits.

Markathon: What are the emerging trends in the M&E industry that you believe are going to tread a long way in shaping the future of the industry?

Mr. Balsara: Technology is changing at a very rapid pace and this is changing the way we consume media. This I believe will shape the industry in the coming years. Media consumption is becoming increasingly personal in nature with the increased usage of smart phones, tablets, PCs, etc. Another significant trend is the shift in consumer preference towards niche content which is largely driven by the personal nature of media consumption. M&E companies now have no choice but to change the way content is being created and distributed to provide more touch points to consumers.

Markathon: What distinguishes Indian M&E Industry from its counterparts abroad?

Mr. Balsara: Indian M&E companies have to yet face the ‘digital disruption’ that has substantially transformed the business models of its global counterparts. Internet penetration in India is still at only 7% which is very low compared to its peers. The recent launch of 3G and the imminent launch of 4G is expected to bring a late surge in wireless-based broadband adoption.

Also, India is unique since it has diverse content markets. The bulk of the country’s urban consumption comes from the tier 2 and tier 3 cities and comprises regional markets with distinct cultures, languages and content preferences. This creates the phenomenon of ‘markets within markets’ which provides companies with a variety of opportunities to deliver localized content.
“WILL FLASHMOBS BE AN EFFECTIVE MARKETING TOOL IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT?”

The Flash mob is a relatively nascent concept in India, the most prominent being the one that hit CST, Mumbai, on 28th Nov 2011. It became a huge phenomenon as the hapless audience, stunned by choreographed dancing by a random group of people, began spreading the word. But what enabled it to become a rage was the internet, the medium. India has an internet penetration rate of around 9% and a population of 1.215 billion. The spread in sheer numbers is very high; with around 85% of the users belonging to the age group 19-40.

The objective of a flash mob is to sensationalise a particular concept / product. Its success, thus, is measured by the reach it has had. With flash mobs usually targeting youngsters, whose internet activity is huge, both in numbers and time spent, will certainly make the impact if executed in the right place and the right time. Added to that, in the context of India, where even a small commotion in a public place would evoke curious eyes and questions, something as huge as a flash mob would only add to the WOM publicity, besides the internet popularity.

As long as the concept does not become predictable and wide spread, Flash mobs will certainly be a relevant tool of promotion in India.

Flash-mobs is a coordinated mass activity wherein people assemble at a particular location to do a specific task. It is a very powerful marketing tool and has been successfully used in the west for marketing and promotion of brands and products. The trend is catching up in India with few such campaigns in Mumbai, Chennai and in Delhi. In the context of India, with varied and different brands trying to grab eyeballs through different print and media campaigns, flash-mob marketing breathes a fresh life in the routine promotional campaigns. With its unique and creative proposition, it involves masses and gives them an experience. This has a higher recall value and captures the heart-share and mindshare of the people. With the buzz it creates and the TRP it gathers in the media adds to its reach and effectiveness. However, people in India are not as open minded as the western society and have lot of inhibitions and might show squirmish behavior. Additionally flash-mobs call for a great degree of professionalism and coordination to be carried out effectively. Secrecy has to be maintained for this; otherwise it would result in a dud as seen in the Delhi’s flash-mob case. There police cancelled the event citing lack of permission and had to disperse the large crowd of shopkeepers, media and the curious onlookers. Thus it is for time to tell the relevance of flash-mobs in India which is still a relatively newer concept here.

Topic for the next issue’s Eye to Eye: “Is Cricket still the USP for the IPL?”

Your opinion (view/counterview) is invited. Word limit is 250-300. Last date of sending entries is 15th April 2012. Include your picture (JPEG format) with the entry.
LAST MONTH’S RESULTS
Theme: “Lays Baked”

WINNER: VIDHIT MUNJAL | Welingkar, MUMBAI
Congratulations!!! Vidhit receives a cash prize of Rs 500!

HONORARY MENTION

Pritam Mittal | Welingkar, Mumbai

NEXT THEME FOR SILENT VOICE: “IPL Season 5”

LAST DATE OF SENDING THE PRINT AD: 15th April, 2012
EMAIL ID: markathon.iims@gmail.com

Send your entry in JPEG format named as SilentVoice_<Your Name>_ <Institute> only.
BRAND STORY: PARACHUTE

SWATI NIDIGANTI | IIM S

“Badhti hu main roz thoda thoda” – the new tag line of Parachute clearly reflects its journey over a period of two decades since its inception. The flagship brand of Marico and the first branded coconut oil in the Indian market, with a more than 50 per cent market share, has ruled the hair oil segment for quite some time now.

Parachute coconut oil manufactured by Bombay Oil Mills was acquired by its sister concern - Marico in 1990’s and since then it has grown through innovation and extensive brand building. Today it has become a household name not just in India but many places abroad. Before liberalization, the Indian government classified vegetable oils, including coconut oil, as an essential commodity and hence ineligible for export to prevent local supply shortages. In the late 1990s Marico made its first serious entry into foreign markets by setting up a manufacturing plant in Bangladesh. Within ten years, it acquired a 70 per cent market share and became one of the most recognized and trusted brands.

Parachute brand stands for “purity” and “coconut oil”. Yet in 1996, it was found to be losing relevance among the younger audience for its sticky nature. Marico went for extensive rebranding of the hair oil where it tried to de link the “oil” element from the brand which symbolizes stickiness and continued to own the “coconut” element which stands for nourishment. This gave birth to the ‘Coconut Dream’ values and Parachute emerged in a new avatar with new communication and contemporary packaging. An R&D Centre called Coconut Dream Centre was formed which worked on possible extensions for the Parachute brand. This gave birth to several value-added variants like Parachute Lite, Parachute Nutri sheen, Parachute Active Herbs, Parachute Sampoorna. Regional variants like Parachute Uttam were also launched in the eastern market to compete with the Shalimar brand. While many of these sub brands failed to strike a chord with the larger consumer base that did not deter Marico to continue on its innovation led approach.

While Parachute has stood for “years of quality and years of purity”, the brand has been extended to Parachute Advansed with the added proposition of “nourishment and care, for stronger healthier hair”. With a range of products like Parachute Advansed Jasmine, Ayurvedi hot oil, scalp therapie, cooling oil, it is made to shift focus from the emotional to the rational needs of the consumers.

Leading the innovation in packaging in hair oil segment, Parachute has tried to address two major needs of the consumers – better aesthetics and improved functionalities. The different packaging variants which became a hit included wide mouth jars, easy jars with a combination of wide mouth and an easy pour cap and flip top pack with a tamper proof seal, needless to forget the hot Champi bottle. Parachute’s strength remains in the fact that it enjoys enormous loyalty in urban, semi-urban as well as the rural sector. To target the rural and the loose oil consumer segment, Parachute also came up with 20 ml, 50 ml packs at attractive MRPs.

Parachute has also diversified into other product categories with the launch of Parachute After shower hair cream, Natural shampoo and more recently Body Lotion. But considering the detachment with coconut in these products, their success is reasonably questioned by many experts.

Parachute coconut oil today stands for purity and quality. It has built an emotional connect with the consumers through its branding exercise, emphasizing on Caring and Mother - Daughter relationship. With a reach of more than 18 million households today, this blue bottle has managed to stand the test of time and is still growing unfettered, substantiating its statement of “Khubsurat hai Badhna”!
PRODUCT #1: TATA Teleservices

TARGET AUDIENCE: Indian masses specially women

AD AGENCY: Ogilvy India

CONCEPT: The TV Commercial opens with the scene of a very interesting “Relocation” buffer that goes on indicating the very crux of the advertisement. It is followed by a lady unpacking the stuff after shifting to a new place where her husband enters teasing her to forget the tiff they had also because she does not have anybody here to rely on, neither the Ramu kaka nor her Papa. Above all if she does not reconcile soon who would fix up her TATA Sky connection, but here enters the TATA employee informing her about her TATA Sky connection set up well.

VERDICT: Catch

The TVC is a catch as it captures the very motive of the company to emphasise on the fact that wherever you go and “Relocate” TATA Sky follows you and provides a full-fledged service of continuous connectivity with the network through “at your door” convenient service. The commercial is very well thought out in terms of the generally faced problem by the recently shifted and that too by the home maker whose most of the time is spent with the TV back at home.

Link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Th7y5cPZOQ

PRODUCT #2: Bournvita Li’l Champs

TARGET AUDIENCE: Children especially in the age group of 2-5 years

AD AGENCY: Ogilvy India

CONCEPT: The TVC opens with a slightly obese man pulling a little boy’s cheeks and making gibberish baby noises. The man sits down and asks his mother to get him paranthas with extra butter. Then the man’s brother enters and does the exact same thing. The boy is miffed and he asks “Do you know Hindi?” Both the men reply in the affirmative. The boy then replies “Even I know Hindi”. Both the men are embarrassed for making those baby noises while pulling his cheeks. Then the boy’s mother enters and gives him a glass of Bournvita Li’l Champs and says that kids grow older before you know it and Bournvita Li’l Champs is specially made for kids in the age group of 2-5 years

VERDICT: Catch

To me a TVC is successful if it makes you smile. All of us have this natural tendency to make gibberish baby noises when we meet a little kid. The actor who plays the child is brilliant with his expressions. However I think it would have been better if there were two ladies instead of the two men for obvious reasons. Unlike other health drink Ads which talk about all the nutrient mumbo-jumbo that goes into it or how their health drink helps kids cope up with peer pressure, this Ad is simple and witty. “A health drink for kids between 2-5 years because 90% of the human brain develops in this phase”

LINK: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26W_seEWd7w
BRAND LAUNCH

Audio book brand ‘Reado’ launched by Think Ink Media

Ahead of the world book fair 2012, Think Ink Media, the only audio book company in India officially launched its website and audio book brand. The company is in growth spree with 100 plus downloadable audio books. ‘Reado’ will retail its books through both online store like Flipkart and offline through stores like Crossword, Landmark, and Media Mart etc. With the belief that the future of reading is listening, the company is trying to provide ease and convenience through direct digital downloads.

Danone launches Lassi in India

To capture the taste of Indian masses, after foraying in to many dairy products like Yoghurt, Smoothies and Dahi, the French food giant Danone has launched Lassi. To compete with the already existing offerings, company is wooing through 165 ml pack priced at Rs 15 in variants like sweet, mango and masala. With consumers preference shifting towards more health benefitting food the company is aligning its product portfolio with it and going in mass market through its low price offering. The company is planning to introduce Lassi in Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad and Bengaluru.

Caterpillar launches unique ‘construction grade’ smart phones

The company known for its presence in earthmoving equipment and clothing is launching smartphone which fits well in to its portfolio. Uniquely addressing the needs of people in construction business to use smart phones where the environment and working conditions doesn’t allow secure usage, the company is offering the smart phone with robust body and a protective rubber covering. Caterpillar also aims to target consumers who have nothing to do with the construction business as such to increase the product reach. The phone will be priced at around 25,000 INR and will be available worldwide in the month of May.

Piaggio to launch ‘Aprilia RS4’ Superbike in India

With the change in focus of rich youth in India shifting towards high power super Bikes and Sports Bikes, Piaggio is planning to launch a 200cc Aprilia model of the sports motor cycle which will aim to compete with KTM Duke 200 and Yamaha R15 version 2.0 launched in 2011. Piaggio is already well set to re-launch its once successful Vespa brand which had already captured the Indian roads for long through the Vespa LX 125 model.

BRAND WATCH

Bata India registers a growth of 49% in the net profit for 2011

Footwear manufacturer and retailer strategy to expand extensively has resulted in excellent results of the company due to higher sales and profitability. The company created new product line to suit the needs of young customers. Bata has continued improving its shoe designs through research, trend analysis and customer feedback. Bata India will retail through 1250 outlets located in over 500 cities India.

Reliance Brands forms a joint venture with US-based Iconix Brand Group

Reliance brands a subsidy of Reliance industries group have recently formed a joint venture with Iconix brand to sell the fashion and home brands like ocean pacific, Ed hardy, Mossimo and London Frog. The company will follow the similar business as Iconix in North America. Both the companies hope to be in win-win situation where Iconix will
utilise the dominant presence of Reliance in India and reliance will be exposed to interesting business model as well as exciting portfolio of brands.

**Bharti Walmart to open store in Karnataka**

After the road show event in New Delhi by Karnataka chief minister seeking investment for forthcoming Global Investors Meet, Bharti Walmart PVT LTD has decided to explore expansion options in southern India. Bharti Walmart is planning to open 10-12 stores in 2012 whereas currently it operates with 17 stores in India.

**Hero cycles to be sold worldwide through Walmart**

To challenge the near monopoly of Chinese bicycle manufacturers worldwide, Hero cycles has signed an agreement with Walmart to supply bicycles across the world priced at about $200 apiece. Pankaj Munjal promoted Hero cycles is planning to leverage on Walmart’s network to expand overseas. The US major was sourcing nearly all its cycles from Chinese manufacturers and Hero will be first Indian supplier for Walmart.

**Ad Watch**

**Twitter acquires Posterous**

Posterous, founded in 2008, which has about 15 million users at present, has been acquired by Twitter for an undisclosed amount. Posterous is happy to share their expertise to make innovation in making sharing across the web and mobile devices easier with Twitter, which has a reach of hundreds of millions of users across the globe.

**Yahoo files lawsuit against Facebook**

The global internet company yahoo takes on the biggest online social networking company Facebook by filing a lawsuit for the case of infringement of its 10 patents. The jolt came before the expected record breaking Initial Public offer of $ 5 billion from Facebook. The patents include advertising, social networking and privacy control issues.

**Shell to lookout for creative agency**

After engagement with JWT which came out with a TV and press ad campaign named “Let’s go”, which captured the attention of many consumers, Shell is in hunt for an additional advertising agency to work parallel for its long standing global projects. Shell global creative business is valued at £150.

**New Chief Information Officer appointed for New York Times Co.**

Former Chief Technology officer of digital operations at Times Media Group, Marc Frons, has been appointed as Chief Information Officer at New York Times. Mr. Frons started his career as journalist, has started a financial website SmartMoney.com and had received National Magazine Award for interactive design in 2001.

**MEDIA**

**Britannia launched Marie Gold doubles**

After Parle came out with the combination of orange and chocolate in its ‘Hide and Seek’ biscuits, Britannia has come out with the country wide launch of its new ‘Marie Gold Doubles’ with three layered marie with a layer of chocolate embedded between two layers of orange. In the TVC, simple and beautiful girls were spotted munching the biscuits. Instead of promoting it as supporting snacks with tea, the background soothing song focused on forgetting the tea over the taste of these biscuits.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmUpNwwyt7w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmUpNwwyt7w)
Fevicol Launches a new fast-setting adhesive – Speedx

Fevicol, which once came up with very famous advertisement in which an over loaded passenger truck was shown going with a Fevicol advertisement board at the back, has come up with another innovative advertisement for its new launch, Speedx – a fast setting adhesive. The TVC starts with the phone conversation where the furniture manufacturer was taking order with some specification details from the customer. The shopkeeper after getting the order delivered the furniture even before the same phone line was cut which showcased the fast setting adhesion property of this new adhesive. The company had hired Oglivy and Mather for creating this TVC.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llbu0P0cyIk

Idea comes up with new idea to promote its 3G services

Lowe Lintas yet again comes up with a thought provoking advertisement for Idea cellular targeting the common men. The ad showcased highly influential publicity by sharing the video which created many witnesses from common public for a case hearing. The ad sense was fantastic and innovative wherein they come with a solution to the existing problem in common men’s life.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_3HDOkMivo

KFC targets college students

KFC expanded its streetwise food range by offering at a starting range of Rs. 25. After opening many outlets in college campuses, KFC is projecting itself as an “Adda” which will serve as an eating and gathering place as a substitute to canteen. The company hopes to increase the share of youths in its consumer base through its street wise range offerings.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQZ5SmqbJio

ARTICLES ARE INVITED

“Best Article”: PRIYANKA AGARWAL | NITIE, MUMBAI
He/She receives a cash prize of Rs.1000 & a letter of appreciation

We are inviting articles from all the B-schools of India. The articles can be specific to the regular sections of Markathon which includes:

- Perspective: Articles related to development of latest trends in marketing arena.
- Productolysis: Analysis of a product from the point of view of marketing.
- Strategic Analysis: A complete analysis of the marketing strategy of any company or an event.

Apart from above, out of the box views related to marketing are also welcome. The best entry will receive a letter of appreciation and a cash prize of Rs 1000/-. The format of the file should be MS Word doc/docx.

We’re inviting photographs of interesting promotional events/advertisements/hoardings/banners etc. you might have come across in your daily life for our new section “The 4th P”.
Send your self-clicked photographs in JPEG format only.

The last date of receiving all entries is 15th April 2011. Please send your entries marked as <ARTICLE NAME>_<SENDERS’ NAMES>_<INSTITUTE> to markathon.iims@gmail.com.
For those who took it FORWARD....
Rightly called as Jikipedia, our chief editor’s knowledge has no bounds be it marketing, business or varied topics from politics, mythology, sports to movies. His excellent analytical skills combined with his unmatched marketing expertise put life into “Radical Thoughts” and into every part of Markathon. This dynamic marketer is sure to reach great heights, we wish him loads of luck!

The epitome of sincerity and a passionate marketer, Sria has been one of the most pivotal members of the club. Be it her balanced book reviews or her insightful opinions, she puts her heart in everything she does. Behind her charming smile and the efficacy of her work, is a wonderful person one can always depend upon. You will be missed. Here is wishing you a wonderful future!

The man behind all the creativity and hard work which has given Markathon the form it is in today. The perfection he puts in all of his designs and the way he manages his time to release Markathon on time is admirable. He sets an example for us by his unmatched patience, sincerity and dedication towards work. Best of luck!

A hard-working and a passionate person. The brain behind the Ad-dicted column of Markathon, always brings something new to the table. His all-time high enthusiasm, wit and energy shall surely be missed. May success always be with you!
Ritika rightly substantiates the saying “Big things come in small packages”. The backend mind of marketing club, her considerate and caring nature makes working with her very easy and a lot of fun. Her warmth and cheerfulness always glows up the marketing club meetings. You will truly be missed. All the best for the times ahead!

A person very well balanced who knows how to live life vivaciously and is also equally sincere and hard working at the same time. His love for reading about new things and the way he analyses things and comes out with innovative and practical solutions to various problems is really admirable. We wish him success and a great future ahead!

The calm and composed member of the Marketing club. The elegant design of the magazine is indicative of the elegance that Sana includes in everything she does. The sincerity with which this knowledgeable marketer does her work without losing her temper has made working with her always fun. Here’s wishing you a wonderful career!

The best example to show that one can keep calm & laugh during all kinds of phases in life. Fun with friends and work with sincerity is his simple motto in life he has always garnered help and support to the junior marketing team. We foresee for him a bright future and a wonderful life ahead.
Please send in your comments/feedback to:
markathon.iims@gmail.com
Visit: www.iims-markathon.in

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