



a Percept publication for our media fraternity



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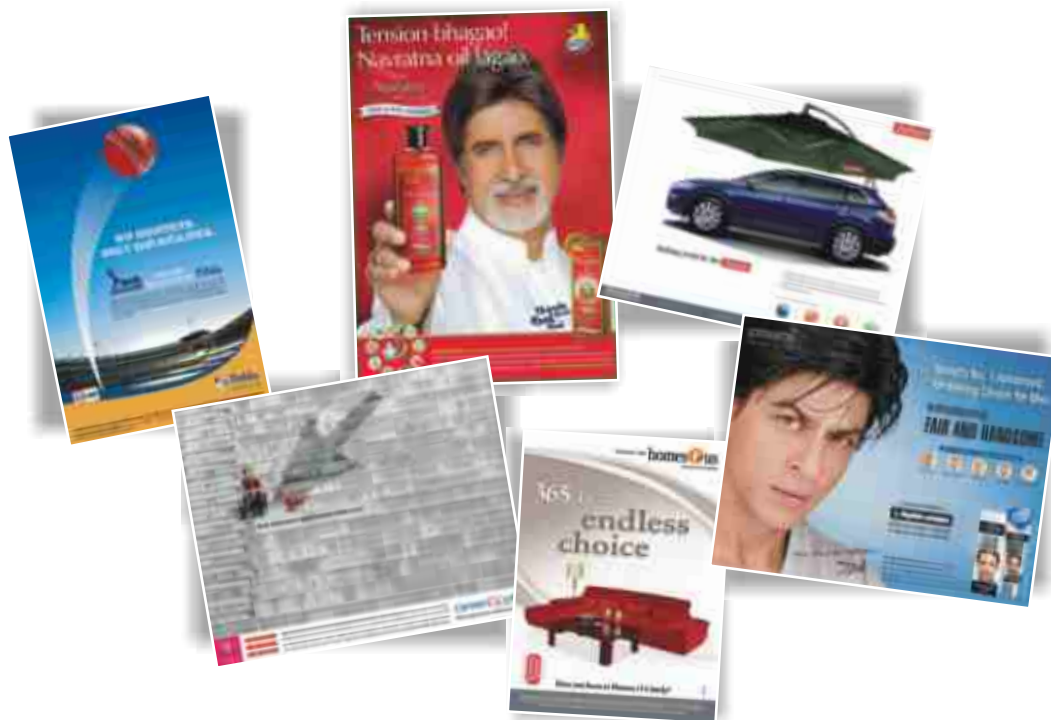


Percept Gulf on an account winning spree



Percept Gulf has recently bagged a plethora of prestigious accounts in their portfolio. The wins include Ziebart, Pehla, DULSCO, Emami, Navratna Oil and Homes R Us.

Ziebart is a one-stop-shop for consumers wishing to maintain their vehicles against daily wear n tear; **Pehla** is the only Asian Television Entertainment bouquet which provides channels & content originating from the Asian subcontinent; **DULSCO** (Dubai Labour Supply Company) recently diversified into the online medium with a dynamic job portal - Careertunity.com; Emami is all set to enter the lucrative GCC market to introduce its brand Fair and Handsome; **Navratna Oil** is a very successful therapeutic oil that helps in stress relief; and **Homes R Us** is the leading home furniture and furnishings brand in the Middle East catering to lifestyle needs of homemakers in the Middle East; with showrooms across the UAE and one each in Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain.



Percept Gulf and Percept Profile Gulf launch Country Club Hotel, Dubai



Percept Gulf and Percept Profile Gulf handled the press conference and the advertising & ATL activities for the launch of Country Club Hotel, Dubai (an acquisition of luxury hotel - Chelsea by CCI Ltd., India's largest leisure and Infrastructure Company).



Maruti Suzuki appoints Hakuhodo Percept as creative agency



Maruti Suzuki India Limited has appointed Hakuhodo Percept as the creative agency for its most awaited launch for the year 2008 - the A-Star. Maruti Suzuki India Limited had called for an extensive 7-way pitch that saw the likes of Hakuhodo Percept, Grey, Lowe, Capital, Dentsu, Euro RSCG and Publicis vying for this coveted account.

MAME secures the media representation rights for NDTV Imagine



Media Agency Middle East (MAME) has secured the advertisement sales representation rights for NDTV Imagine, the MENA region's first free-to-air family Hindi entertainment channel. NDTV Imagine will be available on all free-to-air platforms through NileSat as well as on pay bouquets like Pehla, e-vision and Du. The Media Agency Middle East (MAME) electronics division features the largest electronic media window in the region for the Asian channels, offering complete end-to-end television solutions.



Percept/H bags creative duties for Yardley and Finesse brands

Percept/H

Percept/H has been assigned the creative mandate for premium personal care brands, Yardley and Finesse, from the Lornamead Group. The win comes following a pitch involving four agencies and two qualifying rounds. The Lornamead Group is a leading marketer of quality home and personal care products. The Yardley portfolio will include soaps, deodorants, talc and shower cream, while Finesse will have shampoo and conditioners.



Percept Picture Company launches 'FIRAAQ'



Produced by PPC and directed by Nandita Das, 'Firaq' is a take-off on the infamous Godhra episode that rocked Gujarat in 2002. It is an ensemble film that takes place over a 24-hour period; a month after a horrific communal carnage. The film traces the emotional journeys of 'ordinary people'. 'Firaq' stars top-notch actors including Naseerudin Shah, Tisca Chopra, Paresh Rawal, Sanjay Suri and Deepti Naval.

PPC and Bhandarkar Entertainment in co-production for 'Jail'



A co-production of Percept Picture Company and Bhandarkar Entertainment, 'Jail', which is written by Manoj Tyagi (writer of Page 3, Corporate, Satta and Apaharan, and director of Mumbai Salsa), will go on floors shortly with a target release date of May 1, 2009. The film is from the point of view of an ordinary man who finds himself inside the four walls of a prison due to a series of unfortunate events and tells the stories of several other inmates and the cops in the prison.

PPC acquires rights for distribution of 'Ramchand Pakistani'

'Ramchand Pakistani' was recently screened at the ongoing Osian's-Cinefan film festival in Delhi and has been acquired by Percept Picture Company (PPC) for distribution in India. PPC has the distribution, music, and marketing & promotion rights for 'Ramchand Pakistani' for India. 'Ramchand Pakistani' is based on the true story of two members of a Pakistani Hindu Dalit family accidentally straying across the border. The film stars Rashid Farooqi, Fazal Hussain and Nandita Das.



PPC & Mirah Entertainment join hands for co-production and distribution of Feature Films



PPC and Mirah Entertainment have entered into a strategic alliance to produce a minimum of 5 films in Hindi, 3 films in Marathi and distribute multiple English language films in India with joint investments to the tune of INR 90 Crores.

The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor releasing on 1st August 2008 is the first jointly distributed film through this strategic alliance. Mirah Entertainment is part of the INR 300 crore Mirah Group which has diversified interests in Textile, Real Estate Development, Hospitality, and Travel amongst others.

Percept Retail to organize and promote health food category



Percept Retail's "Shop Healthy, Eat Healthy" program, aims to activate the "health food" category in 7,200 leading stand alone grocery and pharmacy stores in key markets across India, with the first phase scheduled for launch across Delhi markets.

A multi shelf category organizer 'gondola' will be placed in each store with an assortment of products, for greater visibility and access. Shelf space on the display will be sponsored by brands which are associated with words like 'healthy', 'low-calorie', 'diet', 'energy' etc." Percept Retail will collaborate with one of India's leading digital-screen network providers for screen media services.



Indian film scripts seen gaining from Hollywood ties

A recent string of joint ventures and investments is cementing ties between the world's most profitable movie makers, in Los Angeles, and the world's most prolific, in Mumbai.

Viacom Inc. has started a joint venture in India to do television and films, while Sony Pictures Entertainment this year released its first Hindi film. Indian incomes have been climbing, thanks to annual economic growth of close to 9%. The income gains have pushed up receipts from the domestic movie industry at an average clip of more than 15% a year. That is healthy growth compared with the US, where annual revenue from the business has been growing at less than 5% recently.

Much of the growth in India, however, is coming through smarter distribution. By using DVDs, cable television, the Internet and even mobile phones to reach moviegoers, Bollywood producers are able to generate more rupees out of each film.

Warner Bros to animate India's toon world



Warner Bros is venturing into the animation space in India for the first time with a film which will be directed by Jyotin Goel. Since the film is still in the nascent stage, Warner Bros isn't revealing much about it. The film is untitled, and any further announcement and publicity for the film will happen only six months later. Apart from financing and producing the venture, Warner Bros India will also globally distribute and market the film.

India among top 3 media, entertainment markets: PwC



India continues to be one of the top three markets for global collaborations in entertainment and media, because of a 'relatively friendly foreign investment regime,' an official of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) said. The country's media and entertainment market is expected to grow 18.5 percent a year to reach \$36 billion by 2012, while the Asian industry is likely to grow at 8.8 percent a year over the next five years to \$508 billion, PwC estimates.

Other emerging markets set for rapid growth include Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Turkey and Pakistan. Rapid economic growth and the freeing of entertainment and media markets will fuel expansion in India, which we expect will be the fastest-growing territory in Asia Pacific during the next five years, PwC said in a report.

Double digit annual growth is projected for every segment except recorded music, professional books and consumer and educational book publishing, according to PwC's Global Entertainment and Media Outlook 2008-2012.

UTV Motion Pictures makes it to US top 20 distributors



UTV Motion Pictures has emerged amongst the top 20 film distributors in North America, according to the US box-office performance in the first six months of 2008.

UTV releases grossed \$5.48 million in the first 28 weeks of the year, making it the leading Indian motion picture distributor in the US and the only foreign language movie distributor in the top 20.

The company managed all this with its three releases this year including Jodhaa Akbar, which grossed \$3.44 million, Race (\$1.37 million) and Jaane Tu... Ya Jaane Na (\$ 539,857). The box-office total was also supported by Aamir Khan's Taare Zameen Par, which was released in December 2007, but continued to run into 2008.



Manpower Study: Media, entertainment industry shines as positive potential employer



Manpower, the company which offers a range of services in the recruitment sector has thrown light on the net employment outlook, with the release of the Manpower Employment Outlook Survey (MEOS). For the very first time, the firm has released figures on the media and entertainment sector and the sector's recruitment requirements, beginning with India.

The respondents of the survey include human resource heads of top media buying houses, electronic media, publications and advertising agencies. The MEOS is calculated as a percentage of respondents who say that employment in the media and entertainment industry will increase, less percentage of respondents who anticipate a decrease.

The media and entertainment industry, according to 70 per cent respondents, will show an upward movement in hiring, only 20 per cent feel that there will be no change in the status of recruitment, in terms of numbers. None of the respondents anticipated a decrease in new hires. Ten per cent did not have an opinion on the same.

Talking about the media and entertainment industry as the strongest recruiters, the Northern region leads with an expected increase of 79 per cent. The South follows with 74.5 per cent. The East is third with 64.3 per cent. Surprisingly, at 60.4 per cent, the West has the lowest expectations. Around 14 per cent of the respondents in the North and a similar percentage in the South see no signs of change in the status of recruitment for the industry, and 21 per cent of the respondents in the East feel the same way. With 30 per cent of the respondents there expecting no change in the recruitment numbers, the West seems to feel most strongly about it.

Comparing the figures of the services sector across countries, India leads with 58 per cent; Singapore stands second, following a large gap (48 per cent). After that come Hong Kong (42 per cent), Japan (30 per cent), Australia (24 per cent), Taiwan (22 per cent), and New Zealand

AWARDS & ACCOLADES

Percept/H shines at the Graphis Advertising Annuals - International Awards

Percept/H

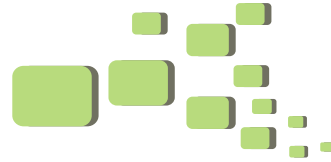
Percept/H won a prestigious Platinum award for the **Weikfield** (mushroom) campaign and another 5 Gold awards for **Peprico** (*Oven Mittens*) (*Bomb Squad*), **Visage Images** (Search), T-shirts and **Depot** (Dating) campaigns respectively, at the Graphis Advertising Annuals - International Awards.

Graphis - The International Journal of Visual Communication was first published in 1944 by Walter Herdeg in Zurich, Switzerland. Over the years, Graphis has upheld its reputation as the premier publication covering graphic communications worldwide, and has been revered for its artistic presentation, impeccable design and exemplary production qualities.





Ashok Ahuja
Director, Percept Picture Company



A man of few words, Ashok Ahuja, has stood tall in the business of Movie Distribution over the years. P2P caught up with one of the stalwarts, well-known and respected gentlemen from the Movie business for a brief tête-à-tête.

How has your journey been at Percept?

My family has been in the movie distribution business since decades, which meant that I automatically got into this business and lived and breathed this business. 4 years back, I joined Percept Pictures in the Distribution division and it has been a truly wonderful experience working with this big family - Percept. I don't think I could have asked for anything more.

You mentioned that you have been in the movie distribution business since decades. How did it all begin?

Just like an actor's child becomes an actor, a doctor's child becomes a doctor, the same way a film distributor's son became a film distributor around 30 years back. And if I look back, I don't regret it one bit.

How Does the Distribution business function?

Movie Distribution is like selling any consumer product. If we think a product is good, we package it, brand it and sell it to the consumers. That's how the movie business works. We go through a lot of movies day in and day out. And after having worked in this field for so many years you understand what the audience wants and what they seek. It's a bit of science, a bit of trend, bit of facts and a bit of gut feeling.

What are PPC's plans in Distribution going forward?

We have successfully procured and distributed various Hollywood / Bollywood movies and a Pakistani Film in the last couple of years Hancock, Die Hard, Spiderman-3, Khuda Kay Liye, Jannat to name a few. We will continue to explore various opportunities and movies that have the potential to make it big and ensure that we give our audiences entertaining movies.

Of all the movies distributed for PPC till date, which has been your most memorable one?

It has to be "Hanuman" (2005). It was India's first large scale animation film and we were launching India's own super-hero. Releasing live and star cast films is easy because you have saleable stars, but to get the crowds into the theatres for an animation film was a huge challenge and we successfully achieved what people felt were "impossible" at that point in time. We were instrumental in opening the animation genre for the film industry and cater to the children (audience) who have been neglected by the film-making industry.

Any dream movie that you would like to or would have liked to Distribute?

It would have to be Ramesh Sippy's "SHOLAY". There cannot be another 'Sholay' ever.

You featured in a movie as well?

Yes, I featured in a couple of frames or scenes in Madhur Bhandarkar's 'Corporate'. It didn't require me to do too much acting! No one else has approached me yet for a movie in the future!

Apart from the Movie Distribution business, any other interests?

I have been behind the camera as well and have assisted Ram Gopal Verma in "RGV ki Aag". Don't blame the non-performance of the film on me (smiles). But, yes, it was a good experience and probably, direction is something that I would like to do in the future.

Any message for our readers out there?

Every success has pain. Every pain has success. Accept the pain and get ready for success.





Prabhakar Mundkar
CEO,
Percept/H

Advertising as abstract art, anatomy of the scam world

While earlier discussions on the subject of advertising pondered philosophically over whether it is art or science, recent history may well relegate the profession to the realm of abstract art. Largely because of the raging discussion on whether advertising awards must be scam, or real advertising.

In my discussions with advertising people, I find that the industry is still divided. Some are trying to come out of the closet; others have emerged. I see three distinct groups in the advertising fraternity

Unscrupulous Scamster

He goes to any length to participate in the scam. Even to the extent of not seeking the permission of his client to release the ad. He may also have no inhibitions to copy ads done in the past. When accused he turns indignant. He has no qualms about doing an ad for the restaurant round the corner, which is often not even part of his client list.

Closeted Scamster

He is increasingly being forced to follow the 'Unscrupulous Scamster'. He stealthily enters the awards with scam ads, but his public demeanour is often righteous and he questions industry practice and behaviour. To justify his stance he does scam ads only for clients on his roster. He feels there is retribution from this kind of qualified sin.

Retrograde Rebel

Often incapable of winning awards either with a scam ad or a real ad, the only position he can take is to criticize the industry practice of creative awards. Fortunately for those whom it brings comfort, there are several parallels in other artistic endeavours, which are similar to creating scam ads for our juries. Take fashion and haute couture for example. A haute couture designer once had an exhibition called 'Twelve Un-wearable Dresses' made out of plastic, chain metal, ostrich feathers, plastic bottles, socks and door knobs. Parisian haute couture has dwindled to become merely a kind of abstract conceptual performance art that has almost nothing to do with what the vast majority of women wear on most occasions (this trend had its first early beginnings with Paul Poiret around 1909). As Pierre Cardin said in 2005: "Intelligent women work nowadays, they drive cars, and the cars are smaller and smaller. While the dresses at Dior are bigger and bigger. It's very beautiful, but it's not fashion." The analogy from haute couture is an important one for it provides comfort to our three groups. The 'Unscrupulous Scamster' can take refuge and say that the creative awards are a celebration of the craft. How does it matter that consumers of the product never saw the ad.

The client never saw the ad although he gave a fake permission letter. The agency never saw the ad until it was announced at the awards. And it met the hypocritical award criteria of having been seen in one of the cheaper newspapers that nobody reads. If the purpose of awards is to celebrate advertising as a craft, why bother to lay down all these hypocritical criteria for an ad to qualify? Have you noticed the stereophonic effect of audience applause at award shows? Sometimes the whistles are from the left, then suddenly they shift to the right and then they are mid centre. This is dependent on where the award-winning agency is seated. Often, no one else except the originators of the ad applaud since the others have never seen it before anyway.

The 'Closeted Scamster' is in a bit of jam. He has to take a mid position between the abstract nature of haute couture (scam ads) and the practicality of prêt porter (real advertising) to go back to the fashion analogy.

The 'Retrograde Rebel' is doomed. He may take recourse to trying to make an impression at the effectiveness of awards.

I remember in my old days at JWT, we had won 'campaign of the year' for a well-known campaign for VIP luggage called 'Kal bhi, Aaj Bhi'. It was a campaign that everyone had seen and it was well known. In today's environment that kind of campaign might be more appropriate for the effectiveness awards, if at all. Have the creative awards of yesteryears become today's effectiveness awards? I leave you to decide.

Unfortunately, we are where we are because a few creative directors the world over were in positions where they could mould opinions to make the award shows the scams they are today. Is a course correction possible? No, says one of my respected creative director friends.

According to him, we may have to completely dismantle the current system and start all over again with something new. Perhaps an award, which is nominated by consumers and shortlisted and crowned by professionals with a reputation for impeccable honesty!

So where does this all take us? Does advertising as a craft have to be celebrated outside the boundaries of advertising as a practice and a profession? This is a luxury not available to all arts. The architect for example cannot celebrate his craft by building an imaginary building. Nor can the filmmaker make an imaginary film.

Unfortunately, it costs a lot more to make a film or a building than releasing an ad in the hardly read suburban newspaper. On the other hand, the history of art tells us that money was always a problem and it always needed a sponsor to flourish and survive. Which brings me to my last philosophical question. The advertising industry will have to decide at some point of time the rhetorical question that poses itself to all art.

I refer to the aphorism posed first by Oscar Wilde. Does art imitate life or does life imitate art? Wilde says life imitates art far more. We may need to answer that with the woof of objectivity or the warp of subjectivity to use a euphemism.

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Corporate Communications, Percept Limited, P22, Raghuvanshi Estate, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai - 400013

Tel: +91 22 30448400, Fax: +91 22 24911281 Website: www.perceptholdings.com Email: corporate.communications@perceptholdings.com