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## BUZZ MARKETING: ITS ROLE IN GLOBAL ARENA

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**Abstract:** *Strangely enough in this world of sophisticated communication technologies we still realize greatly upon the views heard from others rather than going by what is being promoted popularly. The demographic paradigm has witnessed a sea of change in terms of education and thereby has resulted in higher levels of awareness and value expectations.*

*In products like movies, organized retailing the above mentioned phenomenon is very evident wherein consumers rely greatly upon the feedback they receive from authentic sources for even testing the value delivery proposition. Therefore it has become imperative for a marketer to initiate value convincing promotions amongst the opinion creators.*

*Key Words: communication technologies, demographic paradigm, value expectations, authentic sources, value delivery proposition.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Strangely enough in this world of sophisticated communication technologies, we still realize greatly upon the views heard from others rather than going by what is being promoted popularly. The invention of cell phones greatly enhanced the talking capacity of the people. A lot of people talk and share information peer to peer and this phenomenon made a clear path for BUZZ marketing to flourish and like a virus mutates according to its environment, the buzz created by buzz marketing also change itself in order to meet challenges imposed by new environment . BUZZ marketing is a very effective technique of conveying a message which needs no money but only word of mouth communication. The volunteers are first gathered to try a new product then they send to the world to talk about what they have experienced with the people they come across in their daily routine. More the people see that product being used in the public or more they hear about that product from others whom they know very well and trust, the greater is the possibility of buying that product by them.

Due to globalization, the competition is on hike in each and every field and when it comes to marketing, it's even more difficult. Traditional marketing techniques like radio and television advertising are grown older as they are facing ignorance of the viewers. Thus a huge amount of money spent on such advertisements is being wasted where as creating a BUZZ around your product is far easier, cost effective and less time consuming. In such kind of marketing campaign, money doesn't play a prominent role rather it encourages a curiosity amongst people who then start talking about and finally spread it to others, all it needs is innovation and creativity.

In this hi-tech 21<sup>st</sup> century, along with the advancement of technologies, people also became advanced and smarter than before education played an important role in increasing the awareness and knowledge of people .today people are expecting a lot from what they buy. The soul of buzz marketing is the quality of the product. if it is not good then the company may not be able to create a positive buzz around it rather a negative buzz will be created, that will destroy the overall image of the product and people will reject it altogether. Lets take an example of a new product, let it be a flavored juice, that is going to be launched by a company after few months but before that they want to create a buzz around their product for which they started giving their juice for free to people, they go to



school and colleges and ask the students to try their product, they go to restaurants and motels and ask them to serve their flavored juice to their customers for free . Now two things can happen, people can either like it and a sense of curiosity will be generated among them for that juice. They will start passing the information about that extremely new drink that they have tasted just before any of their friends and will feel proud to be the first one who has the knowledge about a new thing which according to them is really very good. Though they are talking about that product but it happened just because of the taste and quality of that juice that makes them to spread positive information among others .the other possibility can be, they don't like it and started creating negative buzz that hampers the curiosity of the people and as the virus kills the host cells in the body it starts killing the prospective customers. So we can say that buzz marketing strongly depends upon the quality of the product.

We are talking about buzz marketing here, so it is necessary to talk about its major forms and these forms namely stealth marketing and viral marketing have played a major role in creating buzz around so many products all over the world. In 2002 Sony Ericsson used the technique of stealth marketing in which the marketing of a product is done in such a way that the customers don't even realize that a product is marketed to them .it makes them believe that the company is not marketing its product to them rather they came across it, discussed with their peer and made their choice. The company hired almost sixty actors in ten different cities of US in order to market their new camera phone among the people. they started approaching people walking on the streets ,asking them to take their pictures .the motive behind this was to make people engage in the benefits of their "new Sony Ericsson phone" and they succeeded to make people interact with their product by touching, feeling and using it in the natural environment . This "fake tourist"idea of Sony Ericsson was a huge success and stealth marketing gained an effective position in the marketing strategies of the company.

Other form of buzz marketing that is viral marketing is also very popular globally .it was successfully used by the burger king for promoting their tender crisp chicken sandwich .as this marketing is conducted through digital format or information and communication technologies such as e-mails ,mobile communication , web blogs etc so it is also known as word of mouse communication .the company started spreading the virus of their products



through internet, television and print campaigns .though all other forms enjoyed a huge success but the 'subservient chicken' website created an astonishing buzz for their product that gained a huge popularity in a very short span of time .the website contained a man, who dressed up as a chicken . Under this chicken was an input box where users can put a wide range of actions that they want by the chicken to perform. It was actually an awesome burger king mantra – "get chicken as you like it" that generated curiosity among the people for their tender crisp chicken sandwich. the people under the age group of 18 to 32 were actually got stuck by this website and started word of mouth communication with their peer and finally this campaign came out as one of the biggest buzz marketing campaigns.

There are certain basic elements which are required to include in making a strategy for buzz marketing:

- 1. Product value ability** – people are easily attracted towards the word 'free' and this is the word that holds a great importance in the vocabulary of a marketing person. There is no need to do anything else when the word 'free' comes along with your product. The people cannot resist themselves from its attractiveness .no doubt certain cheap and inexpensive things also draws attention of the consumer but the effect that the word 'free' generate cannot be done by any other thing .it will not profit in the starting but once it generates interest among the people then it will generate profits for the rest of the lives.
- 2. Effortless transferability** - the medium plays a major role in spreading a particular message it should be such that no effort will required to transfer it and it will replicate smoothly among the people. E-mails, graphics website etc they can serve as a major tool because through this the instant communication occurs much easier and faster. Secondly if the medium is not very smooth then people do not show interest in passing the information to others thirdly the message that has to be transferred should be clear and simple so that people will not find any difficulty in passing it to others.
- 3. Spread like a fire** – the method of transmission should be rapidly scalable from small to very large .it should spread the message like fire from very few people to world at large It should not die before spreading to large scale thus it should be that much



effective that people will love to spread it to others and from the very small scale to large scale.

4. **Striking the common human motives and behaviors** - Cleverness is required on the marketer side who will exploit the common motivations of the human. The hunger of being popular and greed and lust for something always drives people this makes them to communicate messages to others that would make them happy and proud in the heart of hearts.
5. **Existing communication networks should be utilized** – if we listen to the social scientists then according to them every person in the world loves to talk and has a network of near about 8 to 12 people either in the friends family or other social groups where as it can be as broad as to hundred or thousand depending upon the position he or she has in the society for example a shopkeeper may talk to so many people in a given week. And these human networks are strong enough to create a buzz around a particular product.
6. **The advantage of other sources should also be taken** – this is very creative idea to use other sources such as placing text or graphic links on the others website to get the word out the most common example is of those authors who give away their articles for free and seek to position their articles on other's webpage.

As it is a very effective technique, it has certain advantages over conventional marketing techniques:

1. The best part of buzz marketing is that it is trustworthy as people come to know about some product or service through those people whom they really trust and can follow their recommendations without any hesitations.
2. It is quite entertaining, people like to know the new exciting things and pass it to their peers this makes the core message a stronger one as the actual motive of the company is fulfilled by the creation of buzz around their product and making people curious about it.
3. It is very cost effective; in the times where the companies spend lots of money on their marketing campaigns. Buzz marketing provides a simple way of inexpensive marketing of the product with huge success.



4. It markets the product globally with great impressions that will insist the consumers to go and buy the product. The product becomes famous in very short span of time all around the world.
5. It is the easiest way of spreading the information about the product and services that will spread like a virus in fraction of seconds.

Buzz marketing had shown a great impact on the sales and promotion of various products in the past. In 1987 a new drink called red bull was formulated in the Australian market by Dietrich masteschitz but no bar was willing to stock it initially as they found it more a medical drink rather than a mixture however it was soon recognized by clubbers and snow boarders. Because the drink was giving them boost they started bringing it in the non alcoholic bars and pubs after that red bull adopted the technique of buzz marketing. They started distributing some goodies and their branded refrigerator to the clubs and bars so that they can start a word of mouth communication they refuse all other conventional establishments if they ask for red bull in order to retain the uniqueness and credibility of their community and clubbers and the only way to connect to this community was to attend a 2 week annual music festival which was organized by red bull. After that they started distributing it for free to all the people who need energy especially teenagers, college going guys' construction workers and athletes and finally a huge word of mouth spread through out the people and they started buying it. Coke and Pepsi created lots of energy drink and tried to capture the energy drink market with big marketing budget but still they are lagging behind to red bull which is king of the energy drink market with 65% of market share with the fraction of marketing budget spending.

This is the impact of buzz marketing that markets a product without spending huge amount of money. As Philip Kotler said the laziest way of marketing your product is advertising. But it is something to move your butts and come in to real action. However the buzz marketing is purely an engaging art of marketing. Basically, it's economical, unconventional and powerful method that captures the attention of media and consumers and makes them to talk and write about your brand who finds it entertaining, fascinating and newsworthy.

A buzz was also created by a car making company lotus around their new vehicle evora when they sent two masked faceless people in to a number of high profile events in London such as Wimbledon during summer months .all the top news channels and radio stations



discussed them and this became the most interesting story to discuss, people started making guesses, whether they were celebrities who were trying to avoid paparazzi? Or was it an anonymous protest group, who are known for its attacks on scientology? This story set the whole world at fire in few minutes and finally after creating a huge buzz all around the world, the company unveiled their new car evora at British motor show .they succeeded in creating a mystery about the launch of their product and generating the curiosity around their marketing campaign without falling foul of the new marketing regulations. Lotus wanted to emphasize on the fact that their new car was more mainstream than others from the brand as they had been making cars that were targeted towards petro heads. For this they used a different kind of marketing campaign that was more clever and innovative and not high budgeted .They gave certain clues about their brand on certain blog sites which led the internet users to a website faceless people .com that featured a countdown clock and a lotus logo.

All this generates an interest among the people who then try to find something out of it. They feel clever when they get to know that they have decoded something and become more curious as the countdown suggests there is something more to come.

Even now the companies like coca-cola and Kellogg who have the strong history of traditional media use are to experiment with buzz marketing .the Kellogg brand is making its first foray in to buzz marketing by introducing UK consumers to fruitabu, a bagged fruit snacks. Consumers can sign up to be sent samples and product information, with the intention that they will pass the information and recommend this product to their friends. If we analyze the global environment then we will find that the main force that would drive the impact of buzz marketing are teen agers and this force is more prominent in Asian countries as compared to US because in the coming years Asian countries would be having 50 to 60 % population of young people as compared to US where the percentage might resist to 30 to 40%. even though it is a high tech era , traditional phone calls the social lives of teens are still indulged in face to face interactions and traditional phone calls so we can say that they are the main drivers of buzz marketing .thus it is very important for a brand to get a space in the brain of a teen but tapping their social network is not very easy but still some companies like apple, coca-cola and Disney are trying to reach them through online social networks to create a virtual word of mouth communication.



The other important things about teens are they love to be initiators and volunteers and it is estimated that about \$175 billion are spend by them every year on product and services .they love to live ahead of friends on the latest trends and other newest ideas and information about the products which means a lot to a teenager like food, fashion entertainment and gaming. that is why most of the buzzing agencies prefer to recruit a teen as buzz agents because they are influential among their peers and do not afraid of doing something new and different they have a large social network of friends who believe in what they say and do .the success of using teens as buzz agents has already seen in case of various products right from the cars [Toyota matrix], cosmetics [cover girl], movies [my big fat Greek wedding] to motor oil [valvoline]

## CONCLUSION

Marketing the product by creating the buzz around it is not only cost effective but also has a great impact all over the world. As compared to conventional marketing techniques the products that are marketed according to this method gains more popularity that finally affects the sales of that particular product in a positive manner. Creative ideas, innovative thinking and quality of the product plays a major role in generating a buzz and due to the burden of budgets of huge marketing campaigns , the organizations are now opting this technique for marketing of their products. The fire of curiosity that is generated by this marketing method amongst the customers cannot be generated by any other marketing technique. Many big companies used this technique and gained the success globally so it cannot be ignored.

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