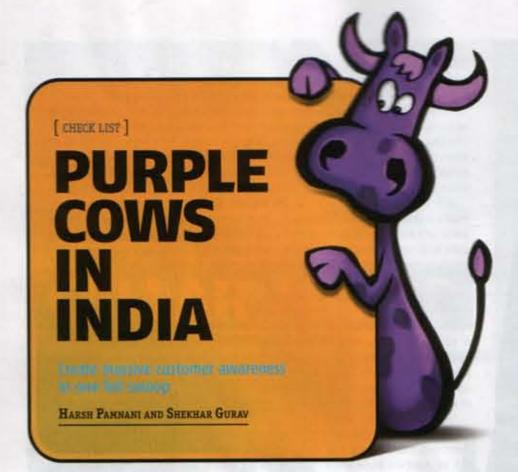
Richard Branson's tie-breaker Pg 18

Entrepreneur



he year was 2001. It was just another hot afternoon for most Mumbaikars carrying on with their busy lives. Well, that was until the concentration of thousands of pedestrians and traffic-stuck drivers was broken by giant elephants ambling at their own lethargic pace right in the middle of the road. Fach elephant carried a huge logo of Mouthshut.com painted in bright colors on flex mate rial on their bodies. And there were 20 of them across Mumbai! Soon, the media got interested in the spectacle. Thousands clicked pictures; millions probably watched it on TV or read about it in newspapers. In marketing lingo Mouthshut.com jost created the proverbial Purple Cow-massive customer awareness at one fell swoop.

So, what is a Purple Cow?

It's a term coined by Seth Godin to communicate something that is remarkable and noticeably different. Suppose you are traveling in the countryside and see many black, white and brown cows; but never actually notice them, and just then you notice a cow that's purple. It stands out among hundreds of cows. You click a picture and share it. You talk about it with your family, your friends and your neighbors.

Why? Because there was something remarkable about that cow. The same concept applies to your product or service. Today, every brand is fighting to capture the attention of its target consumers. And most of the generic market spaces are populated with thousands of brands and niche spaces with hundreds. How do you compete then? Or how do you compete successfully?

The strategy of buying millions worth of ads on TV and print doesn't guarantee success anymore. On top of all this, if you are a startup, you can never take an industry incumbent" head-on by buying traditional marketing mediayou'll soon run out of money. Purple Cow thinking can give you some useful perspectives. We will discuss three ways you can incorporate Purple Cow thinking in your product/service/brand development process.

Build something worth noticing

You can no longer afford to develop just a good product and expect it to be successful by spending a lot of money advertising it on TV/newspapers. For two reasons-one everyone is busy doing that and every consumer is too busy to notice all those bering ads; and two, because then you are not competing on the basis of your product but on the basis of your marketing budget. An incumber: can easily take you down

Instead, invest that masketing budget in your products' design or use it to built

a killer feature as part of your service This way you would build a marketing script right inside what you are selling and don't need a separate campaign market it; word-of-mouth market would work for you.

Venky, Founder of the Goli Vadapa chain, did just that. Vadapav is Indian equivalent of a burger and ating a chain of vadapav-selling storm on the basis of McDonald's is Venicon dream. In Mumbai, street vendors uadapau at almost every corner. Verilla spent his money and energy in coming clean shops (remarkable services selling hygienic vadapavs (remain able product). He created more 10 distinct variations of vadapas === struck a deal with Vista Inc (supplement of McDonald's). Goli Vadapav is keep for best-in-class products and service

When every other ice-cream ciasell standard flavors or allow flavors at most to be mashed, Home

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Illustration Chaitanya Dinesia San

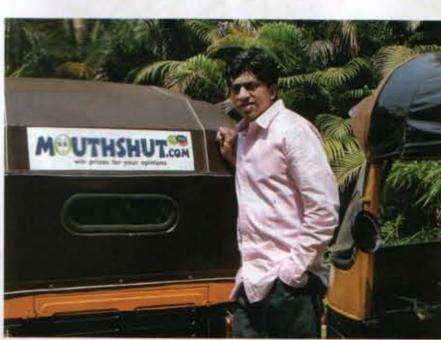
Pokey has created an experience for its consumers out of making an ice-cream. You visit a Hokey Pokey shop, go to the counter where you can choose from a number of flavors, then they chop and mix all those flavors, garnish with nuts and cookies-all in front of you. Voila! You are sold.

Ditch traditional media

Faisal Farooqui started Mouthshut.com around 2000. Marketing online would have been of no use since net penetration in India was very low. Faisal figured out the rates of billboards in different areas of Mumbai and found out a billboard costs ₹14-15 lakh per month at Mahim, and around ₹20 lakh per month at Marine Drive. Being a startup, he was not in a position to afford this cost. So Faisal convinced an autorickshaw driver, paid him \$200 and painted (Mouthshut.com at the back of his auto. This marketing strategy worked and within a few weeks, MouthShut.com's buzz was the talk of the town. Today there are rickshaws sporting MouthShut.com logos in all major cities of India. In Mumbai alone, on any given day, there are more than 10,000 rickshaws with MouthShut.com logos. Mouthshut.com gets about more than four million unique visitors per month. The medium used to get the word out itself was a Purple Cow.

Venky of Goli Vadapav latched on to the opportunity to serve his vadapavs at TiE Summit 2009. His stall was well-noticed. He offered his vadapavs to industry icons and also spoke about his Goli story in a session on desi jugaad. Media and investors noticed him. Influencers enjoyed his vadapavs and started talking about the product. Word spread very fast and soon Venky started giving talks at various forums and prestigious institutes such as the Indian School of Business (ISB) and soon Goli became a brand. Today, Goli Vadapav is India's largest ethnic fast food chain and has

140 stores in four states of India. How much money is required to make a song a super-duper hit? The answer would be 11 crore or 12 crore, but Sreekant Dass, Creative Strategist,



CREATIVE OPTIONS: Faisal Farooqui (above) and (right) Venky

Jack in the Box Worldwide, made this possible with zero money. He and his team didn't follow the traditional marketing medium to promote the song Kolaveri Di, rather they used social media, a Purple Cow strategy. People were viewing and sharing and more than 41 million views happened across 220 countries.

On November 21, 2011, Kolaveri Di became the 'most searched video' on YouTube. Around two million caller tones were downloaded and online buzz pushed TV and print media to talk about the song. Blogs, newspapers, news and radio channels covered and played Kolaveri Di. This Purple Cow earned more than 76.7 crore of media coverage with no money spent.

Find your script and tell it to the sneezers

A script is a story that goes alongwith your product or service. And it needs to be simple yet remarkable enough so that your sneezers can go and tell it to their friends.

Coca Cola came up with the slogan

Thanda matlab Coca Cola and Cadbury



came up with Kuch meetha ho jaye! These slogans are nothing but the scripts.

Worth the remarks

Today we live in an environment where customers have a gazillion choices for the same kind of products or services. Traditional media strategies don't work anymore as they are common and customers' interests are changing and attention span is reducing. The exceptional is required to achieve success. Unless you are able to stand out as a business, you will be lost in an ever increasing crowd of copycats. That's the premise of Purple Cow-the need to be remarkable.

SHEKHAR GURAV is Co-Founder of trait in. He is an alumnus of HM Bangalore. HARSH PAMNANI is a former senior manager at TiE Mumbai. Currently, he is studying MBA at XLRI, Jamshedpur