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SPONSORSHIP IN CULTURAL AFFAIRS: A NEW ARENA

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ABSTRACT

Sponsorship is considered a qualitative medium in today's context. Sponsoring an event turned to be a trend and an easy access to propaganda. To sponsor something is to support an event, activity, financially or through the provision of products or services. A sponsor is the individual or group that provides the support, similar to a benefactor. Behind the rostrum, it is mutual benefit that propels both the parties to come to an agreement. It not only supports the cultural programs but generates social bond among people. A large number of events these days use sponsorship support to offer more exciting programs and to help defray the rising costs. Sponsorship allows a reach specifically targeted niche markets without any waste. It is a powerful complement to other marketing programs, in addition to having a dramatic influence on customer relations. Sponsorship provides a great means of broadening the competitive edge by improving company's image, prestige and credibility by supporting events that is the target market finds attractive. In recent years, corporate sponsorship has become the fastest growing type of marketing in India. . Previously, only large businesses could afford to sponsor led marketing but a number of small and medium-sized businesses are also going sponsorship. Now smaller companies are sponsoring everything from local volleyball and softball teams to fairs, festivals etc as an effective method of boosting their visibility in their community. Most of these sponsorships help these companies enhance their public profile relatively cheaply. Irrespective of the size of the company, However, a broad spectrum of benefits that can be attained by sponsorship beside from enhancing visibility and image, such as differentiating the company from competitors, helping to grow closer and better and long lasting relationships with customers, both existing and potential ones. Issues like why the organizers seek for sponsorship and on the other hand, why the sponsors agree to sponsor the event have been engaging the attention of social scientists. It is obvious that both of the participants have different motives. So this article strives to show the different perspectives of Sponsorship.

KEYWORDS

Sponsorship, positive publicity, perspective, motive, advertisement.

INTRODUCTION

The Industrial Revaluation of 17th century ushered epoch changes in society that led the century to widely different phases in business world. That was succeeded by Production era, Product era, Sales era and Marketing era. Each tenure took several years for the business houses to realize market and to understand consumers. Gone are the days when companies used to believe that success of business only depends on outselling of products. The dynamism of the society has changed this concept and business concerns at large started to think of the consumers and related concepts. After liberalization, privatization and globalization, staunch competition in the market led the producer of goods and services to think of product promotion, advertising,, distribution, customer orientation, providing better goods and services, and of comprehensive customer satisfaction. Business concerns have realized that consumers and society are not different. Therefore whatever the companies produce and distribute to the customers have a direct bearing on the society. So always there is an urge in the mind of the business people to make a healthy camaraderie and good relationship with society and its activities. The concept of societal marketing received a new height with this time evolution. The very concept of Sponsorship emerged as a new paradigm to marketing.

RATIONALE

This research paper is rationale to focus in many respects. This will show the nexus between marketing with advertising, an enterprise can be benefited by following a few issues pertain to Sponsorship. Such as:

Image building / Shaping Consumer Attitudes

Often companies are looking to improve how they are perceived by their target audience. Sponsoring events that appeal to their market are likely to shape buying attitudes and help generate a positive reaction.

Driving Sales

Sponsorship geared to driving sales can be an extremely potent promotional tool. This objective allows sponsors to showcase their product attributes.

Heightening visibility

Various media covering the event may include sponsors names and/or photos. In addition, the kind of media coverage renders the enterprise an added advantage of being in front of people.

OBJECTIVES

The general objectives behind this research work:

- To show the interrelation between Sponsorship, Marketing, Advertisement and other social issues: This paper will corroborate the internal relation among Marketing and its various aspects and with Adertisements with Sponsorship and widen their scopes to prosper.
- To focus light on the different motives behind the selection of Sponsors: This paper will identify new motives and intentions behind selection of Sponsors as well as the concerned farms.
- Easy propaganda of services and products: The paper will work out to identify the means of propagation of services and products to a wide mass of people.
- Affecting psychology: this paper will show how the activities involved in Sponsorship will affect the psychology of the viewers and their activities.

METHODOLOGY

For this research paper a survey method is conducted and Observation method is applied. Relevant information is gathered from primary data. For the purpose of collection of information, a detailed and well designed questionarie is prepared and distributed among the sponsors and other people involved in cultural affairs. Various data collection techniques like interview technique, telephonic conversation etc are used for gathering relevant information.

DISCUSSION

With a view to develop social bonding, healthy camaraderie among people, different socio cultural as well as educational institutions organize various cultural activities with expenses ever going higher and higher up when these activities are organized, the idea of sponsorship pops up and the event organizers look for sponsorship. But in this juncture, there are a few several factors which work behind the relationship between event or program and the sponsor.

Issues like why the organizers seek for sponsorship and on the other hand, why the sponsors agree to sponsor the event have been engaging the attention of social scientists. It is obvious that both of the participants have different motives. Let's focus from two different perspectives:-

EVENT MANAGER'S PERSPECTIVE

Cost Saving

The prime motive that propels the organizers to seek out sponsors is cost saving. This approach is based on 'give and take' policy. The organizers allow the danglers, banners, festoons and stands of the sponsor to be displayed in the venue of the program. This is done in exchange of pecuniary aid from the sponsors. Sometimes a single sponsor sponsors the entire program and in that case the business concern has to bear a considerable share of expenditure of the program. Along with this, the organizers sometimes publish program brochures where the names of the donors as well as the sponsors are displayed and this renders the sponsors an easy propaganda. Cost saving motive can be reckoned as the major and primary reason for sponsorship.

Status Motive

Invariably the event organizers prefer such companies or business concerns that have an elite status and an equal or quasi equal standard of business activities. Indeed, this issue status is purely based on psychology of the event organizers. They will not move out to any Tom Dick and Harry for attaining sponsorship.

Value Addition

The institutions which are organizing social events always desire to add value to the program as well to the organizations. So in selecting sponsorship they always try to be selective, because in such programs the banners, festoons, stand, signboard of the sponsors will be displayed and the companies which are popular and renowned in the market may create a positive impression for the organizers.

Sponsor's perspective

The reason which hinges upon sponsorship is primarily due to advertisement. The sponsors do agree to the event organizers of cultural events for reasons that are here under-

Advertisement Motive

Every business concern, large or small, desires to advertise for the concern. And sponsoring is an easy means to advertising in public. At the venue of the cultural program, various types of banners, signboards, festoons, posters, screens are displayed consisting of the advertisement of the sponsors. In such cultural programs a large number of people visit and these companies can easily convey the message to them. As it is proven that the thing which stays in front of our eyes, grab our attention and the impact lingers in our mind for a long period.

Place and Audience

Every business concern who do agree with the program or event organizers for sponsorship, look for the place where the program is going to be held, and most importantly, what demographic category of audience would be there. It has been found that if they think their goods and services cater to those viewers, then only they come to make a deal of sponsoring. Moreover, the sponsors do review the place and think whether their purpose can be served in such place. Along with this they also judge the viewers as their customers or prospects. So sponsorship by and large hinges on the place and audience.

New entrants

When any new business concern enters in the market, it desires to get acquainted with the people. These new entrants seek various means of advertisement. When an event organizer makes a deal with them, these new entrants grab the opportunity. So this can also be a reason for sponsorship. The new entrants may consider even the organizers as their prospective clientele.

Fortify Faith

Apparently this seems to be a very simple question that why does a business concern promote its business identity, albeit people have prior knowledge about the company? By serving to the customers, satisfying them, these business houses want to be in the mind of the customers which will fortify their faith for these companies. So when the event manager or program organizers come for sponsorship, they make a deal. When it is believed that the festoons, signboards, banners, containing the advertisement of the companies create a positive and lasting impression in the mind of the customers. Repeated presence of them in front of the sight is also believed to generate a sense of faith and fortify it.

Enhancing Image/Shaping Consumer Behavior

Generally most of the companies try to occupy in the minds of the customers and in such approach they try to look numerous means to be familiar with. They try to concentrate on how they are perceived by their target audience.

By sponsoring cultural events that appeal to the target market segment that lead to shape buying behavior of the consumers and help generate a positive reaction. This can be through regularly supporting cultural events which can influence the consumer opinions.

Driving Sales

Sponsorship in cultural areas can be considered as an important and potent promotional tool. That ultimately leads to increasing in sales volume. This objective allows sponsors to showcase their product attributes.

Creating positive publicity

Sponsor generally remains in the quest of wide exposure in both electronic as well as print media. To maximize this objective, it is important for the sponsoring company to have a comprehensive media campaign to augment the media coverage promoted by the organizers. Sponsoring cultural activities in different occasions may create positive publicity.

Differentiating from competitors

The time has gone where companies used to be monopolistic in nature. Today's world is very dynamic. A cut throat competition prevails in the market in each industry. The act of sponsoring an event is a significant way to create competitor differentiation. This is helpful to combat a competitor with a larger ad budget. Sponsorship allows smaller companies to compete with their industry giants.

FINDINGS

After analyzing the responses from the respondents it is found that there are various factors that are behind the rostrum of Sponsorship. Issues like why the organizers seek for sponsorship and on the other hand, why the sponsors agree to sponsor the event have been engaging the attention of social scientists. It is obvious that both of the participants have different motives. These perspective can be highlighted as (From the event organizer perspective) Cost Saving, Status Motive, Value Addition, and (Form Sponsors' Perspective) Advertisement Motive, Place and Audience, New entrants, Fortify Faith, Differentiating from competitors ETC. It is observed that Sponsorship of events in particular can be especially effective as a marketing tool because it can be a means of accessing a wide range of audiences such as decision makers in business, government entities, and of course customers. It turned beneficial for companies that take part in international trade, because sponsorship transcends cultural and language barriers.

CONCLUSION

Owing to the propensity of consumers to associate sponsors with the event they promote, it is important for companies to select events that are appropriate with their product or service they produce. In the field of tout a broad spectrum of shaping the consumers attitude, selecting cultural affairs are of having a great importance. On the other hand, organizing companies of the cultural affairs are also need to consider the issue where they are looking for a sponsoring company. Because these issues are pertaining to the image of the organizing companies. Therefore, while selecting a company for sponsorship by organizing companies and choosing a cultural program by the sponsoring company is very crucial in nature, sufficient concerns have to be considered before their approach.

Thus it is comprehended that there are several factors which work behind the rostrum from both perspectives. Another factor also may be at work behind substantial sponsorship; sponsorship is advertisement and advertisement expenses are partly exempt of taxes.

With progress of time, social domains are overlapping. There is hardly anything like exclusive domain; therefore, cooking spices may join the organizers of classical music and renowned shoe makes may prominently appear in a "meditation Congregation".

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