

# The Magazine As Mindset

Emerging Consumer Themes &  
Implications for Magazines

Chennai

23.02.2015

# A truly interesting time for media

- In the midst of some fundamental changes
- Many questions about the future unresolved
- Challenges in particular for print media?

# The radical reversal of power equation

- Democratisation of opinion
- Publishing as fundamental right?

# The centrality of media

- Pivotal role in society
- The construction of another reality
- From Samaj to Samay?

# The magazine today

- Significant challenges
- Possible to ask if the magazine as a form is as relevant as it once used to be?

# In India, a complex transition is taking place

- The pervasiveness of print
- The dominance of television
- The digital shift- a democratisation of voice

# The impact of dominant media forms on society

- Reorder priorities, alter implicit assumptions, make us see in a new way- 'alter the sense ratios' (McLuhan)

# Why is media so central?

Technologies that immortalise the mind and its output – make thoughts alive and imperishable

Allow for storage, transmission, re-circulation and multiplication of ideas



“We become what we behold. We shape our tools and then our tools shape us”-  
McLuhan

# The Print Era

- Print= Memory, Separation, Logic
- Operates by separating the senses
- Retrospective, logical, organised
- The Editor, importance over popularity, profession over business
- The role of magazines- expanding exposure, perspective building, deepening of analysis, sense making

# Television as mindset

- TV= Transience, Desire, Currency
- Flickering simulation of reality
- Synaptic= the eyeball as master, news as event management
- TRPs, what holds interest over what is significant, debate over understanding, news as perpetual trial
- Role of magazines- amplify the popular...

# The larger cultural imprint

- The primacy of the popular- cricket, cinema, political brands
- The flattening of currencies
  - TRPs, Chetan Bhagat, 200 crore films, eyeballs
- The collapse of discourse into noisy debate
  - Arnab, Arnab, Arnab
- Foregoing discrimination
  - Big weddings, IPL hoopla

# ‘Consumer’ as primary identity

- From a fixed past to a fluid present
- From a given to the constructed
- An incomplete and imperfect self seeking completion through consumption

# The emerging force: Digital

- The picking and choosing of content
- User in control
- Decentralising impulse
- Diversity of form
- Interaction, recirculation, multiplication

- Television creates desire, but flattens it
- Digital places the individual at the centre, and expands interests

# India: Between Mindsets

- A consumer in search for more
- Wanting to express herself, but lacking a vocabulary to do so
- Aspiration, desire, opinion, exploration, stimulation, self-improvement...



# A time for magazines?

- The individual as a sum total of passions
- Finding the many selves one wishes to be
- Not activity, but occupation
  - Foodie, Fashionista, Cinephile

# Twitter Bios

- Life Coach, Adventurer, Gear Reviewer, Cutlery Collector, Outdoors, Camping & Wildlife enthusiast, Fitness & Krav Maga student, Food Lover & Home Chef

# Twitter Bios

- Curious, Passionate, Creative, Spiritual, Lazy, Football fan, Movie buff, In search of Nirvana....
- Interested in all things worthwhile:  
Problem creator 'n' solver, impassionate introvert, social media novice, wannabe blogger , un-certified internet nerd

# Twitter Bios

- Entrepreneur. Behavior Architect-  
Explain&Influence behavior. Atheist.  
Arsenal & Apple fan. Love Travel. Born in  
a remote village, now in an overgrow...
- Brand Marketing | Budding Astrophysicist |  
Dancer | Romanticist | Music Enthusiast |  
Jazz Freak | Foodie

# The Magazine as Mindset

- Conceptually, this the is the era of magazines
- The rise of the deep generalist
- Wants to become and belong, not just know
- Echoed by brands- now defined by 'larger purpose', rather than 'benefit'

- Role of magazines today

- Develop new categories of consumption

- Educate on how to consume
- Create hierarchies, implant codes, show rules of discrimination



- Manufacture celebrities

- Multiply identity
- Convert interest into occupation

- Help imagine a better self/life- pursuing passions with purity, seeking elevation and refinement

- Build communities around interests
- Break out of the print mindset- own magazine 'titles' across media- Gurgaon Moms

- Slow down time

# A need to re-imagine the category

- A radically changed environment needs a new approach

- Define the consumer in a new way- the old definitions have no meaning
- Besides, social media is nothing but a giant on-going segmentation study for magazines

- Build communities in a real sense-  
Become a rallying point for those with  
similar passions/worldviews



- Consciously work at building new categories- only magazines can do this, no other medium has what it takes

- Build new celebrities, they will in turn build interest in what you have to say

- Brands today see themselves as magazines, or at least try to- great opportunity in brand storytelling

- Re-imagine distribution. Need to align distribution with the way in which the category fits into the consumer's life

- Invest in ‘content’ and those who create it. Power is shifting from managers to creators. Build a compelling ‘cast of characters’ who the readers can be excited by

- Imagination, not mere intelligence.

- Thank you.