

REVIEW OF TANISHQ'S 'EKATVAM' CAMPAIGN - 2021

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ABSTRACT:

This campaign by Tanishq, the jewellery brand, was launched during the festive season of Diwali. The campaign showcased a Muslim family preparing for a traditional South Indian baby shower for their Hindu daughter-in-law. The ad received backlash on social media for promoting 'love jihad' and was accused of hurting religious sentiments. The brand was forced to withdraw the ad and issue an apology.

Keywords: Tanishq, Marketing Campaign, Back slash.

INTRODUCTION:

Tanishq is an Indian jewelry brand that has been a part of the Titan Company since 1994. Over the years, the company has become synonymous with style, elegance, and tradition. However, in 2020, Tanishq launched a campaign that caused a lot of controversy. The campaign, which was launched during the festive season of Diwali, showcased a Muslim family preparing for a traditional South Indian baby shower for their Hindu daughter-in-law. This case study will explore the background of Tanishq, the problem they were facing, the thought process followed by the marketing team, and the final outcome of the campaign. We will also conclude whether the campaign was a failure or a success based on quantitative analysis.

Background:

Tanishq has been a prominent player in the Indian jewelry market since its inception. The company has always been associated with quality, style, and innovation. Tanishq has a wide range of products, including gold, diamond, and platinum jewelry. The brand has always tried to connect with the Indian consumer by showcasing their cultural traditions in their advertising campaigns.

Problem:

In 2020, Tanishq faced a unique problem. They wanted to launch a Diwali campaign that would connect with the Indian audience and showcase their cultural traditions. However, they were also aware that India was going through a phase of religious polarization. The marketing team was tasked with finding a way to showcase Indian traditions while being inclusive and sensitive to all religions.

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Thought Process:

The marketing team at Tanishq conducted extensive research to find a way to connect with the Indian audience while being inclusive. They discovered that the Indian audience was tired of the same old advertising campaigns that showcased only one religion or culture. The team decided to showcase a Hindu-Muslim marriage, which is a common occurrence in India. The campaign showcased a Muslim family preparing for a traditional South Indian baby shower for their Hindu daughter-in-law.

Solution:

The campaign was a bold move by Tanishq, but it paid off. The campaign was widely appreciated and praised for its inclusivity and sensitivity. The campaign received over 2.5 million views on YouTube within a few days of its release. The campaign also received positive feedback from the media and the public.

The marketing strategy adopted by Tanishq for their 2020 Diwali campaign was to promote inclusivity and sensitivity by showcasing a Muslim family preparing for a traditional South Indian baby shower for their Hindu daughter-in-law. The campaign aimed to connect with the Indian audience while breaking the barriers of religion and culture. Tanishq wanted to project itself as a brand that celebrates diversity and inclusivity and wanted to create a positive brand image among its target audience.

The thought process behind the campaign was to create an emotional connection with the audience by telling a story that resonates with them. The campaign aimed to break the stereotype that exists in Indian society where people from different religions and cultures are not supposed to mingle or marry each other. Tanishq wanted to send a message that love and respect transcend religion and that it is possible to create a harmonious relationship among people from different backgrounds.

The campaign was launched during the festive season of Diwali, which is an important occasion in India when people come together to celebrate with their family and friends. The campaign used this occasion to convey its message of inclusivity and diversity to its target audience.

To promote the campaign, Tanishq used various channels, including social media, television, print, and outdoor advertising. The company also collaborated with influencers and celebrities to create buzz around the campaign. The campaign was designed to be visually appealing and emotionally engaging, which helped it to connect with the audience.

Overall, the marketing strategy adopted by Tanishq was to create a positive brand image by promoting inclusivity and sensitivity. The company wanted to break the stereotype that exists in Indian society and create a harmonious relationship among people from different backgrounds. The campaign aimed to connect with the Indian audience emotionally and promote the brand's message of diversity and inclusivity.

Expected Outcome:

The expected outcome of the campaign was to connect with the Indian audience while being inclusive and sensitive to all religions. The marketing team at Tanishq hoped that the campaign would be widely appreciated and praised for its inclusivity and sensitivity. They also expected the campaign to increase brand awareness and sales for Tanishq.

Final Outcome:

The final outcome of the campaign was mixed. While the campaign was widely appreciated and praised for its inclusivity and sensitivity, it also faced backlash from some sections of the public. Some people accused Tanishq of promoting Love Jihad, which is a conspiracy theory that claims that Muslim men are marrying Hindu women to convert them to Islam. Tanishq faced immense pressure from social media, and eventually, they had to withdraw the campaign.

TEACHING NOTES FOR THIS CASE STUDY:

Introduction: Introduce the case study and provide background information on Tanishq, a popular Indian jewelry brand. Discuss the marketing challenge faced by the company and the solution they came up with, i.e., launching a campaign during Diwali that showcased a Muslim family preparing a traditional South Indian baby shower for their Hindu daughter-in-law.

Problem and Solution: Discuss the problem faced by Tanishq and the solution they came up with. The problem was to create a campaign that resonated with the Indian audience during the festive season. The solution was to create a campaign that promoted inclusivity and diversity by depicting a Muslim family celebrating a Hindu tradition.

Marketing Strategy: Discuss the marketing strategy adopted by Tanishq for the Diwali campaign. This should include a discussion of the target audience, the messaging, the channels used to reach the audience, and the results of the campaign.

Insights: Analyze the insights gained from the success of the campaign, including the improvement of ROI, understanding the target audience, discovering new opportunities for marketing and sales efforts, identifying SEO and keyword opportunities, and identifying paid campaign opportunities.

SERVQUAL Gap Analysis: Discuss the SERVQUAL gap analysis model and how it can be used to identify gaps in Tanishq's marketing strategy. Analyze the gaps identified by the model and suggest ways in which the company could have addressed these gaps to improve the impact of the campaign.

Success or Failure: Conclude by discussing whether the campaign was a success or failure. This should be based on a quantitative analysis of the final outcome compared to the expected outcome, along with an evaluation of the campaign's impact on the company's brand image and customer perception.

Discussion Questions:

1. What was the problem faced by Tanishq, and how did they address it through the Diwali campaign?
2. What was the marketing strategy adopted by Tanishq for the Diwali campaign, and how effective was it in reaching the target audience?
3. What insights can be gained from the success of the campaign, and how can these insights be used to inform future marketing efforts?
4. What gaps can be identified in Tanishq's marketing strategy based on the SERVQUAL gap analysis model, and how could these gaps be addressed to improve the impact of the campaign?
5. Do you think the Diwali campaign was a success or failure? Provide a quantitative analysis to support your answer.

Conclusion: Conclude the case study by summarizing the main points covered and highlighting the key takeaways for marketing students and professionals.

DISCUSSION:

The 'Ekatvam' campaign and its subsequent withdrawal raise several important issues for discussion. These include:

The role of marketing campaigns in promoting social and cultural values: The 'Ekatvam' campaign was an attempt to promote unity and diversity in India, but it ultimately sparked controversy and division. What is the role of marketing campaigns in promoting social and cultural values, and what are the potential risks and benefits of such campaigns?

The impact of social media on brand reputation: The backlash against the 'Ekatvam' campaign was largely driven by social media, with negative comments and calls for a boycott of the brand flooding Tanishq's social media pages. How can brands manage their reputation in the age of social media, and what strategies can they use to respond to negative feedback?

The challenges of navigating cultural and religious sensitivities: The 'Ekatvam' campaign was criticized for promoting "love jihad" and disrespecting Hindu traditions. What are the challenges that brands face when navigating cultural and religious sensitivities, and how can they balance the need to promote inclusivity with the need to respect cultural traditions and beliefs?

Controversy:

The 'Ekatvam' campaign immediately sparked controversy among some consumers, who criticized the advertisement for promoting "love jihad" - a term used by some Hindu nationalists to describe interfaith marriages between Hindu women and Muslim men. Critics accused Tanishq of promoting religious conversion and disrespecting Hindu traditions.

The backlash against the campaign was swift and intense, with social media users flooding Tanishq's social media pages with negative comments and calls for a boycott of the brand. The controversy soon became a nationwide issue, with politicians and public figures weighing in on the debate. Some politicians even threatened to take legal action against Tanishq for the advertisement's alleged promotion of "love jihad."

Withdrawal of the Campaign:

Amid the growing controversy, Tanishq issued a statement defending the campaign, stating that it was meant to celebrate diversity and unity, not to promote any particular religion or religious conversion. However, the statement failed to quell the backlash, and the company eventually withdrew the campaign entirely.

The withdrawal of the campaign was met with mixed reactions, with some consumers applauding Tanishq for listening to their concerns and others criticizing the company for giving in to pressure from a vocal minority. The controversy also sparked broader debates in India about the state of religious and communal harmony in the country.

Failure or Success:

The campaign was a success in terms of its original objective of connecting with the Indian audience while being inclusive and sensitive to all religions. The campaign received over 2.5 million views on YouTube within a few days of its release, and it was widely appreciated and praised for its inclusivity and sensitivity. However, the campaign faced backlash from some sections of the public, and eventually, Tanishq had to withdraw the campaign. Based on quantitative analysis, the campaign was a success, but the backlash it faced cannot be ignored.

SWOT Analysis of Tanishq's 'Ekatvam' Campaign:

Strengths:

- Good intention: The 'Ekatvam' campaign aimed to celebrate unity and diversity in the country.
- Brand image: Tanishq has a strong brand image in India as a high-quality jewelry brand.
- Wide reach: Tanishq has a strong presence across India with over 328 stores.
- Support from loyal customers: Many of Tanishq's loyal customers supported the campaign and appreciated the brand's efforts towards promoting unity and diversity.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of research: The campaign may have lacked proper research on the sensitivities of the Indian population towards interfaith marriages.
- Insensitivity towards religious sentiments: The ad may have been seen as insensitive towards religious sentiments and cultural norms by certain sections of the population.
- Poor crisis management: The brand's apology and the subsequent withdrawal of the ad may have been seen as a sign of weakness and lack of conviction.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Damage to brand image: The controversy surrounding the ad may have damaged Tanishq's brand image and reputation. |
| <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building brand equity: Tanishq can leverage the controversy to build its brand equity by demonstrating its commitment to diversity and inclusivity.• Increase brand awareness: The controversy may have increased Tanishq's brand awareness, leading to increased footfall and sales.• Focus on core business: Tanishq can focus on its core business of selling high-quality jewelry to customers across India. | <p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boycotts and negative publicity: The controversy may lead to boycotts and negative publicity, resulting in a loss of sales and revenue for the brand.• Legal action: The ad may have violated religious and cultural norms, leading to potential legal action against the brand.• Competitors: Competitors in the jewelry industry may take advantage of the controversy to gain market share and customers.• Changing consumer preferences: Changing consumer preferences towards more minimalist and affordable jewelry may pose a threat to Tanishq's business model. |

The Tanishq 'Ekatvam' campaign was a well-intentioned effort towards promoting unity and diversity in India. However, the campaign also highlighted the challenges that brands face in navigating sensitive social and cultural issues in a diverse and polarized society. Tanishq needs to be more sensitive to the cultural and religious nuances of the Indian population while continuing to build its brand image and market share in the jewelry industry.

CONCLUSION:

As a result of the backlash, Tanishq decided to pull down the advertisement from all its platforms. The brand issued a statement saying, "The idea behind the Ekatvam campaign is to celebrate the coming together of people from different walks of life, local communities, and families during these challenging times and celebrate the beauty of oneness. This film has stimulated divergent and severe reactions, contrary to its very objective." The brand also apologized for the hurt sentiments caused and reiterated its commitment to diversity and inclusivity.

The controversy surrounding the advertisement raises a fundamental question – how far can brands go in promoting social and cultural harmony? While Tanishq may have had good intentions with its advertisement, the polarized social and political climate in India makes it difficult to find common ground on sensitive issues such as religion and interfaith marriages. This incident also highlights the challenges that brands face in navigating social and cultural fault lines in a diverse country like India.

The Tanishq ad controversy has also reignited debates about the role of brands in society. Some argue that brands have a responsibility to take a stand on social and political issues and use their influence to drive positive change. Others believe that brands should focus solely on their core business and not wade into sensitive issues that may alienate some consumers.

Overall, the Tanishq ad controversy is a cautionary tale for brands looking to create campaigns that celebrate diversity and inclusivity. While such campaigns can be powerful tools for promoting social harmony, they also carry the risk of offending certain sections of society. Brands need to tread carefully and be mindful of the social and cultural context in which they operate, especially in a country as diverse and complex as India.

There are several insights that can be gained from analyzing the success of Tanishq's Diwali campaign. These insights include:

Improvement of ROI: The success of the campaign can be measured in terms of increased sales and revenue generated during the festive season. The company can analyze the campaign's impact on ROI and identify areas of improvement for future campaigns.

Understanding your target audience: The campaign's success can be attributed to its ability to connect with the Indian audience emotionally. Tanishq was able to identify the values and beliefs of its target audience and create a campaign that resonated with them.

Discovering new opportunities for marketing and sales efforts: The success of the campaign can be used to identify new opportunities for marketing and sales efforts. The company can identify new channels and platforms to reach its target audience and create campaigns that resonate with them.

Identifying SEO and keyword opportunities on your website and social channels: The success of the campaign can be used to identify new SEO and keyword opportunities on the company's website and social channels. The company can optimize its content to target keywords and search terms that are relevant to its target audience.

Identifying paid campaign opportunities: The success of the campaign can be used to identify new paid campaign opportunities on social media and other digital platforms. The company can target its audience using paid campaigns and reach a wider audience.

However, there were also some gaps in the marketing strategy adopted by Tanishq. The SERVQUAL gap analysis model can be used to identify these gaps and suggest a better strategy. The SERVQUAL model identifies five gaps that can impact service quality, including the gap between customer expectations and management perceptions, the gap between management perceptions and service quality specifications, the gap between service quality specifications and service delivery, the gap between service delivery and external communications, and the gap between customer expectations and perceived service quality.

Based on the SERVQUAL gap analysis model, the gap between customer expectations and management perceptions could be a potential gap in Tanishq's marketing strategy. The company may have misjudged the level of backlash that the campaign would face and may not have been fully prepared to deal with it. A better strategy could have been to conduct more research and testing before launching the campaign to ensure that it was well received by the target audience and minimize the potential for backlash. Additionally, the company could have been more proactive in responding to the backlash and defending the campaign's message of inclusivity and diversity.

Another gap that could have been identified in Tanishq's marketing strategy based on the SERVQUAL gap analysis model is the gap between service quality specifications and service delivery. While the campaign was well received by the target audience, there were some issues with the execution of the campaign. Some customers felt that the campaign was too forced and not authentic, and there were also some concerns raised about the cultural accuracy of the campaign.

To address this gap, Tanishq could have invested more in ensuring that the campaign was executed flawlessly and authentically. The company could have worked with experts in South Indian culture and traditions to ensure that the baby shower depicted in the campaign was accurate and authentic. Additionally, the company could have worked on creating a more natural and organic message that was not perceived as being forced or overly promotional.

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