

## **BLENDING THE CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN MARKETING: A VALUE BASED STRATEGY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Innovations in marketing strategies always remain a challenge for marketing strategists. Over the last hundred years, the marketing techniques are kept on developing, and each time that evolved new horizons and extraordinary ideas. Sometimes these ideas went well and sometimes go wrong. Blending of Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) within marketing strategies is the new trend for businesses. In the past, CSR is assumed just as a philanthropy activity which is done only by big corporate houses. But the scenario has changed with time. As the effect of globalization, the societies are opening up, and are becoming more extroverts in discussing the issues which are considered a taboo few years back. So the marketing strategies are taking new routes to connect with their prospective customers. The present research paper aims to evaluate the impact on the business performance of blending CSR with marketing strategies. The paper evaluates some campaigns where the businesses blend CSR with promotional activities. The effect of these campaigns is studied through primary data. The primary data is collected through the questionnaire which is distributed to the various social groups to study the awareness of these campaigns of the businesses. The study concludes that there is a remarkable positive effect of this blended strategy and it helps in the right positioning of the products as well brands in the customer's mind. It is also aligned with the primary objective of companies' i.e. the shareholders' wealth maximization because CSR is again an important factor on the checklist of fundamental analysis. Henceforth, it is concluded that businesses must endeavor to blend CSR in their marketing activities to benefit society, customers, employees, the company, and shareholders. It is a win-win situation for all stakeholders of the businesses.*

**Keywords:** CSR, Marketing Strategy, Business Performance, Blended Strategy.

### **Introduction**

Marketing is an important aspect for the success of the businesses. Marketing can be defined as understanding the needs of perspective customers and converting them to profitable opportunities. It is true for both products as well as services. A true marketer uninterruptedly works on the day to day problems of people and then brings solutions in the form of services or products, which also help him to make profits. The successful process of marketing is that which results into quality products, loyal and satisfied customers & bigger profits. A good marketer must have certain set of skills like development of quality products as per the needs of customers, safe, attractive & environment friendly packaging, appropriate branding, innovative ways of advertising, sales promotion & management, publicity, brand promotion, supply chain management and much more.

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Blending the best practices of CSR within the marketing like environment safe packaging, organic & herbal products, welfare of employees & associates etc. are crucial to the success of businesses. There are lot many studies which shows the relationship between CSR & Marketing strategy with outcomes persuaded by the established economic prototype at a specific point of time. The influence of marketing activities in our business environment and its obligations towards society as it relates to CSR is widely recognized.

The idea of corporate social responsibility is based on the fact that marketing activities ought not to be profit driven, but they should also strengthen social & ethical values for the benefits of people. According to Kotler & Armstrong, CSR is promoted as business model to help companies to self-regulate, recognizing that their activities impact on assortment of employees, share holders, suppliers, customers and general public. CSR is sometimes described in terms of a pyramid, starting with economic as its base, then legal, ethical and philanthropic actions at the top. It is in the last two layers of the CSR pyramid-ethical and philanthropic- that socially responsible marketing opportunities appear the greatest. Meeting the first two layers, economic and legal, are necessary for a business to thrive in order to engage in the later two layers.



**Image Credits: The CSR Journal**

### Methodology

From the last decade, businesses are keen to blend the CSR activities with their marketing strategy. It is like killing two birds with one arrow. They want to show the social concern and to make emotional relationship with the customers. In the present paper, we will study the Nihar Shanti Amla Hair Oil, Prega News & Tata Tea Jaago Re social campaigns. All the three case studies have long (about a decade) proven records of social campaigns where they created brand awareness through the advertising and other promotional activities. We have researched their past and present campaigns online. Also, we use primary data to make the conclusion that these social campaigns strengthen the brand value of the products. The customers prefer to be loyal with the products which show social association with their marketing strategy.

### Case Studies

- **Case-1: Nihar Shanti Amla Campaigns**

Marico India launched Nihar Shanti Amla hair oil in the competition of Dabur Amla hair oil with a campaign named "To Ab Apna Tel Garv Se Badlo" (Change your hair oil with pride) featuring Bollywood star actress Vidya Balan. The tiny tots surrounding the actress in the advertisement not only added the cuteness but also represent the social responsibility of the company where 2% of the proceeds from the sale are being donated towards the education of underprivileged children. According to the websites of Marico India, Nihar Naturals Shanti Badam Amla is the largest hair oil in the country by volumes. The brand is an ally to progress, enabling women to become agents of change in their surroundings. Nihar

Naturals Shanti Badam Amla Hair Oil enables women to actively contribute to progress as part of the proceeds from the brand goes towards children's education. The brand has partnered with CRY sponsoring 19 projects across India and has provided education to more than 1,13,294 children in the first two years. The brand has in the past partnered with 3 organizations in the field of education. Sesame Workshop India (SWI) in UP, "Going to School" in Bihar & "Educate girls" in Rajasthan.

The campaign is launched in the year 2013, and now it is the largest hair oil brand in its category. In 2014, it launched the "NiharChote Kadam (Small Steps) Campaign. Even small deeds of kindness can bring changes in society. Customers are noticing the brand due to its social concern.

In the year 2016, a new campaign is launched which is conceptualized by BBH India "DikhoKhoobsurat, Karo Khoobsoorat" (look beautiful, do beautifully), and the proceeding of sales towards children's education is raised to 5%. The rise in contribution embarks the success of the brand in the past four years. With this advertisement commercial, the company is looking much more confident about its product as well as towards its contribution to corporate social responsibility by contributing to children's education.

In the year 2022, it launched Zidd- Khoobsurathai Badna where 5% proceeding of the sales is denoted towards the Girls' education.

It is clear from the above facts that since 2012, Marico India is blending CSR within its marketing strategy, it is not only achieved the market leader in its product category but has also contributed a significant amount towards the education of children. Since its inception, it motivates the customers to associate with the brand for the social cause. For the last ten years sticking to the same strategy for the product proves the success of the idea.

- **Case study-2: Prega News**

While at-home pregnancy test kits have been fairly popular for decades now, when Prega News first came to the market in 2007, most people in India weren't aware of the concept. Couples relied on doctors and clinical blood tests to find out if they were expecting and waited for the result in great anticipation. But that changed when Prega News was introduced as an accessible and inexpensive way to get results in just 5 minutes. The product was revolutionary, not because it was the first of its kind, but because of the way it was marketed that created awareness about the concept and the brand simultaneously.

One of the earliest challenges for the brand was to create awareness about its product and earn people's trust. With convenience, affordability, and accuracy as the three pillars of the brand, Prega News has rolled out several memorable advertising campaigns in the past decade that have not just enabled the brand to promote its offering, but also create a special bond with couples. Through associations with platforms such as Momspresso, Baby Destination, and She ThePeople, Prega News has been actively involved with the community of mothers and expecting mothers, providing support throughout the different stages of their journeys.

Apart from focusing on the product, the TVCs have shed a light on various issues faced by women as well, making the brand extremely relatable and easy to connect with. From emotional ads that have championed inclusivity, celebrated both fatherhood and motherhood, and started important conversations on social change, to memorable campaigns with some of India's biggest celebrities such as Shilpa Shetty, Kareena Kapoor Khan, and Anushka Sharma, Prega News connected with consumers all over India and captured a whopping 80 percent of the market share. Through its advertisement, it is not asking the customer directly to buy its test card, but it is promoting the brand by infatuating the brand name in the mind of viewers through issues related to motherhood.

#YourSecondHome delved into the periods of distress that a mother goes through before, during, and after pregnancy. With a series of long-format campaigns, the brand urged viewers to mold a comfortable environment during such phases for women around them, by turning each place into their home. With moving narratives, the campaigns described less talked about topics such as postpartum depression and urged viewers to alleviate the strains of working women. Prega News also took the #YourSecondHome initiative offline by partnering with SpiceJet, to make air travel comfortable for expecting mothers. Twitter users lauded the brand for its initiative with supportive messages.

#GoodNewsIsGenderFree campaign: Good news free of gender stereotypes is another undertaking of Prega News. They managed to stir conversations with their Mother's Day 2019 campaign – #GoodNewsIsGenderFree. The campaign created in association with ADK Fortune gained cheers on Twitter and has over 13 million views on YouTube to date.

#ImWithYellow is an initiative urging viewers to give up gender-defining colors and the mindset of expecting a specific gender. The campaign was led by a social experiment, the campaign mentioned hitherto featured Kareena Kapoor Khan, in collaboration with Tapsee Pannu & then released Thappad and influencer-integrated posts.

The latest campaign #ShelsImperfectlyPerfect on Mother's Day is to embrace the imperfection of a mother. The film breaks the stereotypical image of a mother who always forces herself to be perfect in everything. The campaign spreads the message to embrace the imperfection of a mother who is always on her toes to work the best for her child.

- **Case Study 3: Tata Tea Jaago Re Campaign**

Tata Global Beverages Limited launched the Tata Tea Jaago Re campaign in the year 2009 with the association of various NGOs. Till then most Indian tea brands used the "Refreshing & Re-energize" formula to advertise their brands. But in 2009, Tata Tea decided to go strategically different like blending CSR with marketing. The elections were around the corner and Tata Tea launched its campaign Jaago Re, where the brand awakened the people about their democratic duty of voting. According to AC Nielsen data, in June 2007, the monthly market share in the value of Tata Tea was 19.5 while HUL's was 22. But figures for March 2009 show that Tata Tea has closed the gap: Its value share was 22.3 compared to HUL's 23. In a market where it is very difficult to change user habits, even these seemingly small gains are considered significant.

- **Campaign-1: One Billion Votes (2009 – 2010)**

In the year 2007, 'Jaago Re' launched its very first campaign with an aim to 'awaken' the entire nation to the fact that they tend to hold the government accountable to various mishaps and encouraged them to participate in the functioning of the country's politics by voting.

To further establish this, 'Jaago Re' highlighted the ignorance of Indian citizens about facts like the credentials of the candidates that represent them in a hard hitting yet witty series of films. By launching a website, 'Jaago Re' facilitated voter registrations which enabled an extensive call out to the youth of the nation and encouraged them to vote.

- **Campaign-2: Khilana Bandh, PilanaShuru(2010-11)**

*Khilana Bandh* was primarily aimed at establishing the fact that corruption can be combated if the citizens of the country did not engage in bribery. 'Jaago Re' stimulated the citizens of the country to discourage bribery and not contribute to corruption. Through a website, users were encouraged to share Anti-Corruption messages, take pledges against paying or receiving a bribe, and confess if they had paid a bribe.

- **Campaign-3: SochBadlo (2011-12)**

'SochBadlo' was aimed at bringing to light the positive stories within the country. "Jaago Re" chiefly addressed the positive side to a country that was under a lot of stress through a series of commercials and encouraged people to add a more promising perspective to how they view the country. Jaago Re encouraged citizens to talk about the positive stories surrounding India and share a message of positivity with the rest of India.

- **Campaign-4: Simplify (2012-13)**

Jaago Re continued on a platform of positivity to "Simplify", where through partnerships with Subject Matter Experts, it would attempt to offer deeper insights on important matters in newspaper headlines.

Simplify was launched on in partnership with CHRI around the topic of "Know Your Police". Content was created on this platform to simplify and educate readers on their rights and obligations in dealing with the Indian Police, and to make readers aware of their legal rights and duties.

- **Campaign-5: ChotiShuruaat (2012-13)**

With Women's Rights and safety at the forefront of most Indians' minds and the Delhi Rape incident, JaagoRe shifted to a more women centric platform to launch "ChotiShuruaat". The objective of this campaign was to encourage individuals to make small gestures of change towards eliminating preconceived notions that cause Gender Stereotyping.

Jaago Re partnered with leading Indian actor, Shah Rukh Khan and director, R. Balki, to create a public service announcement broadcast on television. In this infomercial, Shah Rukh pledged that he would place names of actresses in his movies, before his own - a trend that was yet unseen in

conventional Bollywood cinema till date. As on date, ShahRukh has maintained this pledge with his new move, Chennai Express, carrying is name after that of the movies female lead, Deepika Padukone. In addition, JaagoRe launch a pledge drive in partnership with Breakthrough - an NGO credited for creating the Bell Bajao Campaign - driving individuals towards making pledges to eradicate gender stereotypes. Over 150,000 pledges have been created till date.

• **Campaign-6: Power of 49- (2013-till Now)**

The current Jaago Re campaign has centered on women's empowerment. The campaign aims to encourage women - who are 49% of the electorate - to vote as a block in the 2014 Indian General Election, increasing their ability to collectively demand attention and action from election candidates to make changes in their election manifestos towards more women's safety and welfare focused measures.

According the website jaagore.com, 1055355 people have signed the petition to make the gender sensitization compulsory in the school compulsory and 735080 people have signed the petition to make the sports a compulsory subject in the school education.

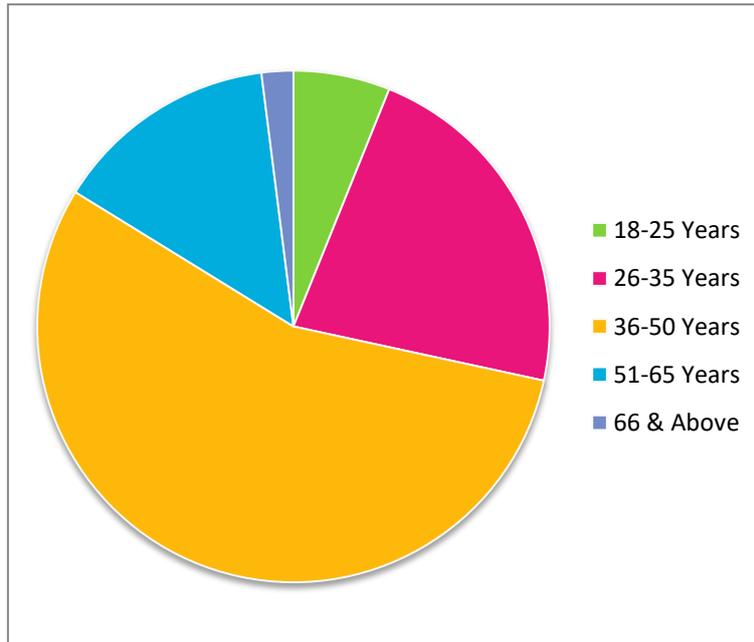
**Data Presentation & Analysis of Survey**

To study about the effects of blending the CSR with marketing strategy on the people we use primary data. The primary data is collected from the questionnaire distributed among the group of people of sample size 150.

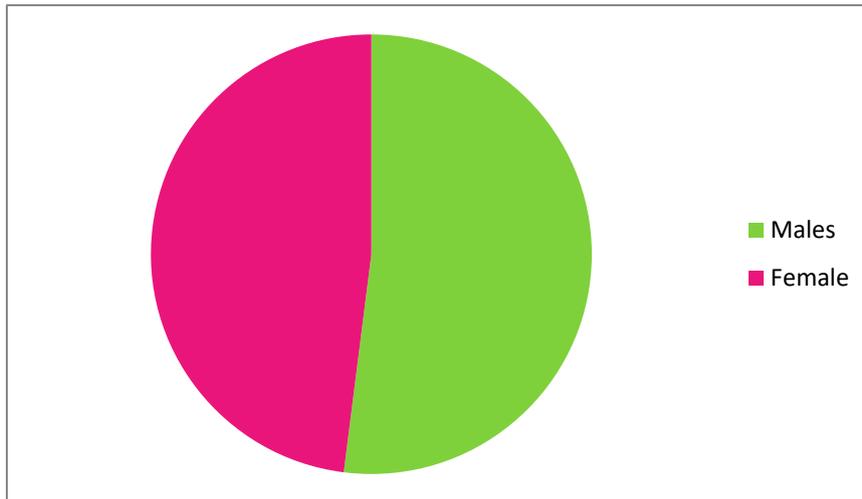
**Age Group & Gender of Sample Size**

**Demographics**

Age Groups	% Respondents
18-25 Years	6%
26-35 Years	22%
36-50 Years	56%
50-65 Years	14%
66 &Above	2%



Gender	% Respondents
Male	52%
Female	48%



As it is cleared from the above table that age group of our sample is majorly between 26-50 years i.e. 78%. The age group of sample size is fair enough because this age group is majorly earning members of the family and has an impact of the purchasing decisions of the family. They are also well versed with the technology and remain updated about the social activities.

Also, it is cleared from the 1.2 that our sample size has almost equal sharing of males & females which gives us an unbiased results of our survey.

#### Outcomes of Survey

- 81% people agreed to the fact that it is important for companies to take a stand on key social, environmental, and political issues.

18% Respondents are neutral about this fact. They have the belief that companies should focus on the products & profits. But as the results shows, majority of the people has the opinion that businesses should take a stand on social & environmental issues.

- 82% people agreed that they are concern with the values of companies while making the purchase.

Only 3.3% people didn't show any concern with value of companies, while 14.7% has neutral response towards this. Hence, majority people accepted the effect of companies' value on their purchase.

- When a company gives a social message through its advertisement (like prega News says "Periods are Normal" or "The good news is gender Free"), 84.7% of people says that it has impact on their mind while making a purchase of the product.

Majority people feel connection with the brands who embed social messages in their advertisement. Only 10% are neutral while 5.3% has neglected the impact. But the people majority customers accept the impact. It is a great numbers.

- 73.3% of people says that the companies which associate with social campaigns has more brand awareness among customers.

Again, it is with comparison to 4% which do not accept the association of social campaigns with brands while 22.7% has neutral reaction.

- 38.7% people think it is right to use emotions of the customers to sell the products.

I think this is the most controversial question of the questionnaire where we are not able to get a clear conclusion. 38.7% think it is right, while 40% says it is not correct while 21.3% has neutral response towards this question. So, majority people says that it is not good to use emotions of the customers to sell the products. But simultaneously, they agreed to have emotional connect with certain brands.

- 78% people think blending the marketing with social responsibility is a good idea for companies.

Comparative to 6% which do not support this idea while 16% remain neutral on this topic, we have majority votes to blend the two.

- 88.7% think giving social messages through advertisement has positive effect on society. Majority of the respondents accepts that there positive impact of the social messages. They accepted the society is changing and it imbibes the new thoughts through the social marketing.
- 62.7% respondents recalls the Tata Tea with jaago Re campaign  
9.72.7% respondents recall the education campaign of Nihar Shanti Amla hair Oil.
- 88.7% respondents recall the #shelsImprefectlyPerfect with Prega News

### Conclusion

This is the era of globalization. Economies are opening and the societies are in the mode of change. There are lot many social issues which are considered taboos some years earlier and we never liked to discuss these like Gender Equality, LGBT relations, Menstrual Periods, Live in relations etc. But now societies are opening up and we start discussing these issues with our families. Some corporate houses carry the flag on certain issues and blend the social messages within their marketing strategy. Due to massive reach of these campaigns through different TV channels, OTT platforms, Social media, these messages penetrate in the distant areas. People feel association with the brands and which unconsciously make an impact on the purchase. It is win-win strategy for the companies. Most of the companies have separate budget for the CSR activities. They fund different projects like children education, women empowerment, providing medical facilities and much more through the NGOs. But when they blend the CSR within the market strategy, the message is louder and clearer. Changing the thinking of society is again a great contribution in the society. For example. through Jaago Re campaign TATA motivate the people to vote. Participating in voting strengthen our democracy. In an another example of Prega News, where they say periods are normal, the family & friends accepts the fact and it helps in improve the hygiene and hence female health.

So, concluding all, the blending the CSR within the marketing process is a value-based strategy which add values to the brand as well as to the society.

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### For Survey

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