



TALKING BRAND

'Caravan Talkies brings brands to rural audience'

IMRB International has found in its study that 'movie-on-wheels' is a great business opportunity for advertisers as it operates in villages that lack regular sources of entertainment like mobile, internet and television and where there are no possibilities of big screen entertainment. Working on similar lines, **Siddharth Bhardwaj**, chief marketing officer and national sales head – Enterprise Business, UFO Moviez, tells Ashish K Tiwari about how 'Caravan Talkies' concept has empowered rural advertisement by creating high brand and activation recall.

■ **What is Caravan Talkies all about?**

Caravan Talkies is a movie-on-wheels concept wherein cinema is taken deep into the Indian heartland, in the areas which does not have easy access to entertainment, and popular movies are shown 'free of cost' in the open air. It provides 360-degree activation and brand experience solutions along with customer research to advertisers.

■ **So it's basically another tool for marketers and advertisers for rural targeting?**

Audio visual advertisements in a 'non-ticketed movie exhibition' after sunset, coupled with day time



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brand activations forms the crux of the concept. Overall, it presents itself as ideal mix of traditional media tools and experiential marketing. Through Caravan Talkies, rural audience gets a big screen experience and brands promote themselves in media-dark regions through in-cinema advertisement and brand-activation campaigns.

Most advertisers struggle to reach out to consumers in media-dark rural India and

our concept delivers guaranteed media reach in these markets. Besides, it also leverages on the movie passion and ensures aggregation of consumers at the time of sunset movie screening. This gives an opportunity for brands to interact with the consumers using customised on-ground activation tools.

■ **How has the market responded? What's the spread like?**

It has been received very well and that's evident from

the high percentage of repeat business we get from clients. We started with 24 vans in 2014 and have scaled it up to 114 vans in the span of two years. Till date, it has serviced most fast moving consumer good (FMCG) majors in addition to other category of clients. Over 50 brands have leveraged the Caravan Talkies offerings to reach out to their target audience.

Our network has the capacity to reach out to more than 1,400 villages every month. We are currently operational across 14 states viz. Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu. We are also open to explore other markets as and when the marketer would want to reach out to those markets. In fact, it has tremendous opportunity to grow especially in non-south area of India given the substantial deficiency of screens.

■ **What are the various aspects associated with setting up a Caravan Talkies unit? How much does each unit cost?**

The van equipment set-up consists of a projector, a big screen, a sound system, server and a genset to provide

power backup, among other essentials. A typical day involves setting up of the van at the designated location around afternoon, followed by consumer interactions and eventually, screening of the movie. The investment per Caravan van is in the range of Rs 14 to Rs 15 lakh. Caravan Talkies on operational vans is breaking even.

■ **What's the occupancy rate like at your film screenings?**

The average headcount per show per van is 226. Besides, each film show witnesses between 250 and 1,100 footfalls. Day time brand activations fetch anything between 500 and 1,500 footfalls.

■ **How profitable is this venture for the company?**

Caravan Talkies has been able to more than double its per van yield over the last three quarter compared to last year and this revenue stream has huge revenue generation potential. On a van level, Caravan Talkies is breaking even and as the utilisation of the vans will increase, Caravan Talkies has the potential to generate healthy profits.

■ **How is competition shaping up in this space?**

Caravan Talkies enjoys monopoly in its space. The uniqueness of the platform with measurable results has carved itself a niche.