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SURPRISE FACTOR

Some small brands have got many more fans on Facebook than many biggies. How are they doing it?



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SPECIAL REPORT



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MARKETING TO THE AFFLUENT

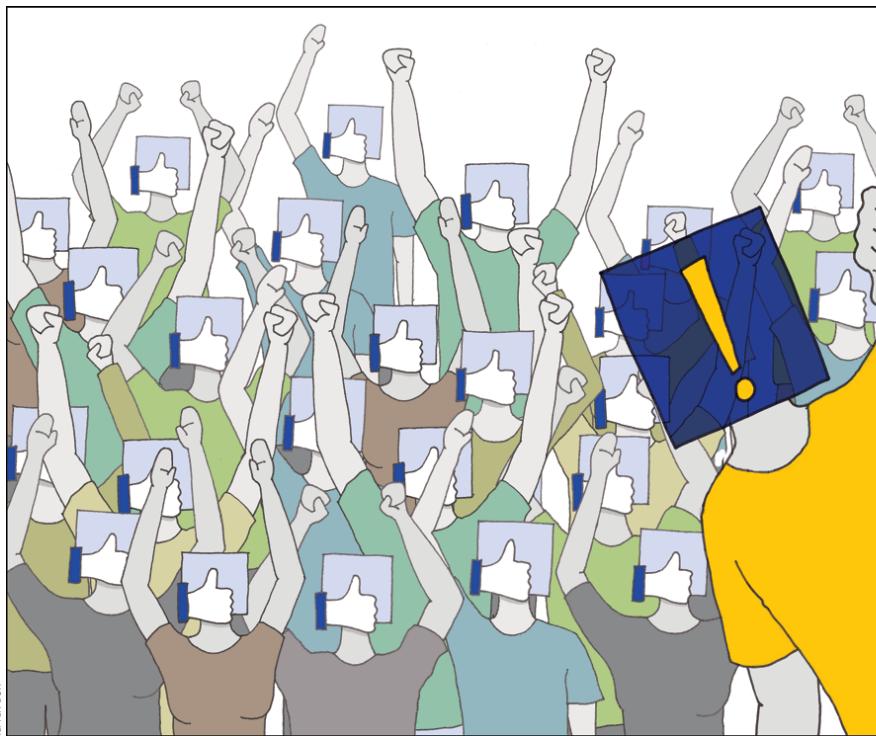
Brands are leaving no stone unturned in their quest to attract this consumer group. An analysis.



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SOCIAL MARKETING

SURPRISE FACTOR



TIFFIN BOX

Domino's Pizza (facebook.com/Dominospizzaindia - 12,000 fans) and KFC India (7,416).

Cocoberry (facebook.com/cocoberry-frozenyogurt - 45,797 fans), runs 14 retail outlets that sell frozen yoghurt, tea, coffee and smoothies.

Booster Juice (facebook.com/Boosterjuice.India, 39,576 fans), is a Canada-based smoothie and juice bar chain. Interestingly both established their first outlets in India in 2009. "We launched our first retail outlet and Facebook brand page on the same day," says, G S Bhalla, managing director, Cocoberry.

Mad Over Donuts, a confectionery brand, is liked by 37,225 fans. Khan Chacha, a restaurant at Khan Market in New Delhi with 26,949 followers (facebook.com/khanchacha) has also gained a significant base of fans on Facebook. Poptates, a restaurant brand based in Mumbai is pretty close to Domino's, when it comes to number of fans (10,000). There is no remarkable difference between the number of fans for Chennai-based apparel brand Basics Life (facebook.com/BasicsLifeIndia) and Wills Lifestyle (facebook.com/Willslifestyleonline). Basics Life is liked by 20,415 Facebook users, while Wills Lifestyle is followed by 23,571 users.

Dentzz Dental Care, which runs two dental clinics at prime locations of Mumbai, has 20,312 fans on Facebook. Dentzz is not doing badly at all, if we compare it with the Facebook page of Happydent chewing gum (facebook.com/happydentgum, liked by 28,553 users), which is spending significant money on traditional advertising.

ELEPHANTS CAN'T DANCE?

Shockingly - because it is so hard to believe, especially since they are considered 'youth' - snacks brands Parle Agro Hippo and ITC Bingo and telecom brand Virgin Mobile which have huge potential to go viral are rather less-liked.

Hippo has just 612 people following its fortunes, Bingo attracted 852 users and Virgin Mobile 2,274 users (facebook.com/virginmobilein). Surprisingly, both Hippo and Bingo are inactive on their Facebook brand pages. Hippo hasn't seen a single update or message posted in the last four months, despite its website (Hippofightthunger.com) having a dedicated link to route visitors to Hippo fan page on Facebook. The last status update done by the Bingo team on its Facebook brand page was on July 19.

However, this syndrome of inactiveness is not just restricted to big brands. Delhi-based restaurant The Big Chill Cafe has not updated its status since June 22, even after having a significant followership of 39,047 Facebook users.

Some big brands, which are pretty active in the traditional marketing space, still have to gain significant traction on their Facebook pages. For

Some **small brands** have turned out to be **great crowd-pullers** on Facebook. What sets them apart from the **big boys**? By Kapil Ohri



Dear Big Brand Manager,

I am a social media enthusiast.

I know that you 'Like' the art of building brands and generating sales leads via advertising. Reach, frequency and ROI are the few keywords that are there on your mind. But I don't quite 'Like' the way you are trying to replicate your traditional advertising tricks here, too.

I am writing this letter to 'Share' a surprise with you. I have observed that some of your friends in other companies (small brands), whom you sometimes refer to as 'Lala' brands, know social networking better. They have decoded the way social networking can help them build connections. Why don't you try and learn some new age marketing tricks from them?

Waiting for your comments.

Sincerely,
A social media enthusiast

This fictitious letter does not intend to question the seriousness of either big or small brands who are indulging in social media marketing. It wants to reveal a peculiar reality about various brands active on Facebook through brand pages.

afaqs! Reporter discovered (after visiting more than 75 Facebook brand pages of Indian brands) that various small brands are utilising their Facebook presence more effectively and intelligently than many big brands. Despite their size and marketing muscle, many big brands fall behind when it comes to 'number of fans' and 'interactivity' on their Facebook brand pages.

SMALL IS BIG

Going by the parameter - 'number of fans'- set by the marketing industry itself to measure the strength of a Facebook brand page, Bengaluru-based adventure equipment and outdoor gear brand Wildcraft (Facebook.com/Wildcraft, 2.1 lakh fans) is stronger and bigger than big brands like Reebok (95,474 fans), Idea Cellular (89,455) and Tata Photon (64,207).

In the food and beverage sector, brands like Cocoberry and Jus Booster Juice are more than three times bigger than established brands like

instance, Airtel (facebook.com/Airtel) has 15,168 fans, Chevrolet India (facebook.com/chevroletindia 5,070), Ford Figo (facebook.com/FordFigo, 4,366) and Tata Photon (facebook.com/TataPhoton, 64,207). And the less said about Lenovo India's Facebook brand page (liked by 111 users), the better.

NUMBERS DON'T LIE

It will be unjustified to state that some small brands have become big on Facebook, without talking about the level of interaction that they have with their fans. Take the case of Cocoberry's Facebook brand page. It receives more than 15,000 updates or posts every month. Says Bhalla of Cocoberry, "Though we have a dedicated in-house team, which monitors the page on hourly basis, I check the page about five times in a day on my own. In case of any negative feedback, we immediately take the conversation offline and contact the user to sort out the issue."

Every post on Wildcraft Facebook page receives 400 comments on an average. About 500 photographs have been uploaded by followers on the page so far, reveals, Gaurav Dublisch, director, Wildcraft.

Faheem Ahmed, chief executive officer, BYT India, Chennai-based digital agency which handles Basics Life's social media presence, claims that more than 1,500 interactions took place on Basics Life's brand page between the brand and followers, and 4,500 members liked various posts in the month of July. About 250 photos were uploaded by fans in the past few days.

Other than numbers, there are numerous posts and comments available on brand pages of all the small brands mentioned. This clearly reveals that small brands are not using Facebook just for self promotion or a one-way communication. In fact, the followers of these small brands seem more interested in the interaction with the brands as brands are themselves.

Astonishingly, it is the followers, who have started conversations with brands in many cases. For instance, Astha Katiyar, a Facebook user and a fan of Booster Juice, posted on the Facebook page of the brand on August 9, "We need more outlets in south delhi!!!" to which the brand replied "@Astha: We are looking at outlets both in South Delhi as well as in Gurgaon soon."

Similarly, a Basics Life fan named Prem Kumar questioned the brand on Facebook, "Are hoodie tees available for sale in the site? im unable to find it in the site." Basics Life answered, "Hi prem, no stock available as of now. :("

BIG ON IDEAS

Many small brands have also demonstrated that they are ready to experiment and not use Facebook in a usual way.

For instance, a Mumbai-based finance firm named Sushil Finance has opted to use its Facebook brand page differently. Instead of just using Facebook for interacting with its followers, the company has employed Facebook for generating leads for its newsletter subscription. Whenever a user reaches its brand page (facebook.com/SushilFinance), he gets to see a landing page where they can feed their e-mail ids to subscribe for 'investment tips' newsletter of the company.

"The company has already received more than 100 subscriptions through Facebook only," claims GoZoop.com, the digital agency which monitors the Sushil Finance Facebook page. Facebook.com/SushilFinance is followed by 3,799 users.

Similarly, apparel brand Guerrilla Clothing (facebook.com/GuerrillaClothing, liked by 3,295 users) has utilised its Facebook brand page to collect e-mail ids of users who are interested to get details about new T-shirts launched by the brand.

Cocoberry has employed Facebook for hiring people, while South Delhi-based restaurant Gunpowder uses it for booking reservations at its outlet in Hauz Khas village.

On August 7, Cocoberry posted this on its page: "Earn while you Learn! Cocoberry is now offering part time positions for students. You can apply at hr@cocoberry.co.in."

On the same day, a Gunpowder fan, Rajeev Dharavath, posted on the Gunpowder Facebook page, "hi..we are MCRC group..want a booking for Saturday dinner (aug 14) for like 15pax..will it be possible?" Gunpowder replied, "sorry. 15 people for saturday currently is not possible. However, do call 26535700 sometime end of the week to see if space has opened up." Satish Warrior, owner, Gunpowder, says, "We receive about 10 booking orders every week through our Facebook brand page." More than 2,400 users like Gunpowder Facebook page.

It's not as if all big brands have ignored - or not understood - how marketing on Facebook will work for them. Vodafone, FastTrack, Nike, Pepsi, Tata Docomo, Axe and Ching's Secret have thousands of fans cheering for them. However, there are some lessons that any brand can pick up by observing how these small brands have garnered fans and their support. ■

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WILDCRAFT

Fans: 2.1 lakh
(Facebook.com/Wildcraft)

Strategy

1. Crowdsourcing:

- Through ideas related to design and colours to develop new products through suggestions by fans.
- Want fans to share or contribute content related to their expeditions and outdoor adventures with each other.

2. Education: Spread information and educate fans about outdoor adventures and equipment.

Learning:

- Modulate content posted on the brand page in a way so that both old and new fans remain engaged. Contests and quizzes keep new fans active. While sharing information facilitated to hold old fans or adventure professional stay on the page.
- Expansion in number of outlets is directly proportional to number of followers on Facebook

Page manager: Wildcraft's in-house marketing team.

Promotion: Promote Facebook page through its retail outlets in cities like Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Noida and Hyderabad.



BASICS LIFE

Fans: 20,415
(Facebook.com/
BasicsLifeIndia)

Strategy

1. Engage: Involve fans

in a 'Model Hunt' contest, in which fans were asked to upload their photographs on the page. About 150 photographs were uploaded by fans. A fan was shortlisted, trained by experts and was asked to participate in Basics Life fashion show conducted in Chennai on August 7.

2. Listen: Basics Life opened an online store, after gauging the interest its fans - who kept inquiring about Basics Life retail outlets in their city through its Facebook page - across various parts of India.

3. Feedback: Upload print ads, brochures and product catalogues and make changes based on the feedback it gets through its community.

Learning:

Facebook helped them think of consumers they couldn't see.

Page manager: BYT India (Digital agency)

Promotion: Print Facebook page link on print ads.



Cocoberry

Fans: 45,797 (Facebook.com/Cocoberryfrozenyogurt)

Strategy

Inform: Apart from interacting with fans, Cocoberry uses Facebook to announce news about new flavours, store openings and share media coverage.

Feedback: Uses Facebook to get feedback or vote for location, where they would like to have Cocoberry outlets in a particular city. Re-launch old flavours based on demand.

Hire: Company posts job openings on Facebook page.

Learning: More the number of outlets, more will be the fan-base on Facebook.

Page manager: In-house team.

Promotion: Used Facebook social ads initially. Plans to promote page through its outlets.



Dentzz

Fans: 20,312 (Facebook.dentzz.com)

Strategy

Sales: Dentzz created a special landing page where Facebook users can arrive and submit their contact details, if they want it to contact them for a check-up.

Educate: Shares dental tips and facts with fans on Facebook.

Learning: Many a times, Facebook brand pages indulge in self promotion. Dentzz tries not to since the fan base may not be interested in day-to-day activities.

Page manager: GoZoop (digital agency).

Promotion: Quality of engaging posts is important. Many activities running on the fanpage which makes the user come back to the page.

