

# CASE STUDY: MARKETING OF THE BRAND BOLLYWOOD

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**Abstract:** Movie Marketing is reaching to a pinnacle. However every time it reaches the peak it seems to have just reached the bottom of another peak and there begins another challenge to face. Marketing of movies is an age-old practice but with change in time and audience preferences and advancements in technology marketing of movies today is transforming into a multiple faceted medium of creativity. Lo...Behold!! Movies are changing and marketing of the same is changing even faster.

**Key Words:** Marketing, Branding, Bollywood, Entertainment Industry, Services

“There is no formula for success. You cannot play safe by mixing two parts sex, two parts of violence, a few tears and two dozen laughs. Even when a film is finished and acclaimed by critics it is impossible to predict its success at the box office.”

**Otto Preminger, An Autobiography, Doubleday, New York, 1977.**

Marketing creates ‘Magic’! Ever since organizations understood the importance and relevance of marketing and its influence on generating revenues, it’s the play word used day-in and day-out for all purposes. Marketing was always related to products and services.

"Marketing" is an instructive business domain that serves to inform and educate target markets about the value and competitive advantage of a company and its products. All the products or services from soap to church require marketing to promote and woo customers.

**Movies in India**

If you are an Indian, irrespective of whether you are a movie buff or not there is some amount of Bollywood in you! That’s the charm of Bollywood. ‘Bollywood’ the Indian name for the Hindi/national language movies is mostly used as synonym for movies in India. No clear history can be traced for the emergence of the term ‘Bollywood’ or as to who coined the term, but Amit Khanna emphasizes to be the foremost person to have made use of the phrase in a news story published in seventies. Today even Oxford English Dictionary recognizes the word ‘Bollywood’ as an idiomatic expression of popular film industry of India based in Mumbai.

The Indian movie industry has also been undergoing a sea change owing to the corresponding changes in the market and customers. Bollywood, one of the largest industries in India and one of the largest film producer in the world, was till recently not considered or was not given the status of an industry due to its unorganized structure. With the turn of century bollywood has come of age and is being recognized by the world theatre

and audience across globe. In India too it has been given the status of an industry.

The industry which used to shy away from announcing big budgets and profits for the fear of attracting Income Tax officials is now more or less striving to be organized and come clear of costs and profits and is more regular in payment of taxes. In fact from an earlier cash payment to all concerned scenario the industry is now moving towards check payments bringing in more transparency into the system. Zee Telefilms was one of the first production house which made the entire film payments of the movie 'Gadar – Ek Prem Katha' (including the payment to film hero and other main personalities) by cheques which is unique for this industry. This movie is also considered as bollywood's first corporate film since Zee Telefilms Ltd. is a listed in Bombay Stock Exchange. Thus began the journey of corporate films that is now is slowly being followed.



[http://www.domain-b.com/companies/companies\\_z/Zee/2001630\\_zee\\_gadar.html](http://www.domain-b.com/companies/companies_z/Zee/2001630_zee_gadar.html)

### **Changes in the 'Moviedom'**

A quick look at the current movie world will give the readers an up to date of the current developments and the changes that have taken over a period of time. Film Marketing has gone through

various stages right from the silent movies era to the current jazzy, metropolis movies era. Multiplexes are mushrooming everywhere be it metros or tier-one or tier-two cities and towns. They are slowly changing the way movies are viewed and are bringing in revenues. Cash registers never seem to stop ringing here and would say only one thing to producer/marketers.... big bucks!

The concepts of marketing are being grappled up as never before. The four P's of marketing at times seem to be the most important in marketing a movie and at many times due to the nature of the product, does not make any sense. Today with every new movie we see an innovation in marketing. The concept of 'Movie Marketing' is being effectively used as the mode of promoting films in world over. India today, is slowly rising to this concept and is adapting it rapidly.

### **Movies and Marketing**

Marketing of movies in the earlier era was mainly through hand-painted billboards and posters. In fact billboard and poster painting was a source of income to many artists. M.F.Hussain, the famous artist, too was a poster painter during the early phase of his career. Human labor was cheaper then than the printing and circulation of publicity material of a film. In the present day computer-printed vinyl is the cheapest and most used form of publicity material. The hoardings, billboards, ads on buses or trains and many other medium use the computer-printed vinyl. This is easy to create, print and paste and is cheaper than the earlier versions of publicity used. The old hand painted billboards or posters which were once

thought as ephemera are today considered as collectables or as folk art. These days the facets of movie marketing have changed drastically and marketing has more method than earlier.

Marketing in film industry falls basically into two categories – ‘marketing of films’ as products and marketing of other brands in films. The second category is also known as ‘In-film marketing’ and is a high revenue generator to the producers, sometimes generating revenues equivalent to or more than the cost of the film. This actually secures the producer even if the film is a failure at box office. Subhash Ghai directed & produced ‘Yaadein’ is an example of the same. The film did not live up to the expectations of the audience but was a profitable venture for Mukta Arts as the revenues crossed the production and marketing costs, thanks to in-film branding. A successful in-film marketing was seen in ‘Krrish’ (the film too was a huge box office hit) where every ninth minute a brand was visible on the screen and around forty brands were visible in the movie. This novel method of marketing is a medium of study itself and provides innovative and interesting marketing practices and increased visibility for numerous brands. However, this article focuses on the first category of marketing of films as products and not on in-film marketing.

New movies like any new product need to be advertised or promoted to inform people about its existence and persuade them to go to the theatres to see it. The objective of marketing is to enhance the audience for the film and in turn boost the earnings of the film. The way in which a movie is promoted would have

an enormous effect on its success or failure at box office.

### **Marketing concepts in use -**

Theoretically speaking Bollywood is a part of entertainment industry and falls into the category of pure services. Cinema is a product and also a medium of communication. It is a remarkable medium of entertainment. Though the perception is that cinema or movies are relatively easy to promote, it is not so. All the promotions for the film no matter however well planned (scientifically or otherwise) are all till the first Friday, which becomes either the boom or doom day. Cinema is a purely perishable product that has a shelf life till it is released.

Loyalty Branding that is possible in other forms of product and services is highly impossible in Moviedom. Majority of movie tickets are one time purchases. Purchase of a movie ticket is not similar to purchase of a soap or soft drink, where for the later customers repeatedly go back to buy the brand. Purchase of a movie ticket is based on the marketing or promotions that the customer is exposed to and all the marketing that can be done is exclusive for one film at a time. Again all the marketing and promotion can be done only till the movie is released. There is no collective branding (of many films together) in this industry even if the same production house is coming with many films at the same time.

No amount of customer profiling or creating films exclusively for a segment of customers will sustain customer’s interest for lifetime. The span of customers interest is for a very short

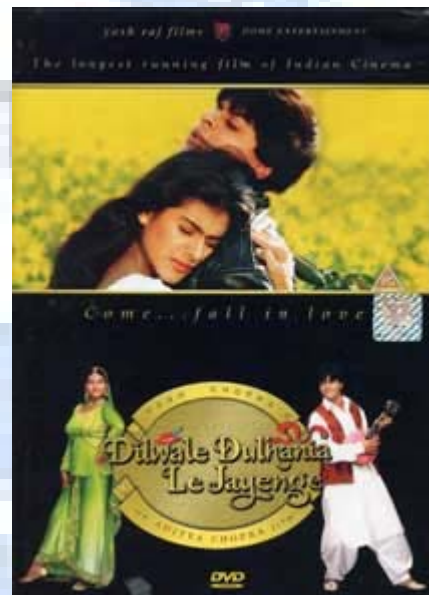
time and loyalty is as long as the movie works and changes swiftly with every passing Friday. Of course the loyalty can be extended to the brand as long as it lasts where customers may buy other film merchandise like – CDs, DVDs, t-shirts, books etc. With every new movie, the producer or the production house has to start with the scratch and create a new brand and in turn new marketing and promotion campaigns. The marketing of a movie is altogether about establishing an instantaneous brand identity.

One of the concepts of attempting to extend brand loyalty in west, the famous Hollywood, is by trying to produce sequels where all movies then more or less fall into the same brand category and are comfortable to market as the audience has already been exposed to the same successful brand earlier. The series of Spiderman, Superman, Star Wars, Batman, Mission Impossible and many others are only using the basic marketing philosophy of brand extension. To some extent this was attempted by the Indian counterpart, but with very few success stories. 'Krrish' which was a sequel of 'Koi Mil Gaya' and 'Munnabhai' series are two recent success stories. There are again frequent attempts to reproduce earlier box office hits but, except for a few like 'Don' most of them have been failures and bombed very badly at the box office. Brand extensions are still an alluring concept in bollywood.

### **Perishability of films**

Since films fall into pure services category they are highly perishable products. Films also have a limited distribution period and hence have a short shelf life. They may play in the theatres for a week, few weeks or as

long as six months. There are times when they don't even run for a week and turn out to be disasters, all the money poured in production and marketing are then down the drain. Today if a film has completed 50-day run it is great and if it has achieved a 100-day mark it is a magnificent. Very few examples like 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge' (DDLJ) are there where the film is running for more than a decade. Out of the thousand odd films that get produced in bollywood every year one comes across a film like DDLJ probably once in a decade. DDLJ is a film in exception where it has earned many accolades and still is a constant source of revenue for the production house of Yash Raj Films.



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dilwale\\_Dulhania\\_Le\\_Jayenge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dilwale_Dulhania_Le_Jayenge)

A marketing campaign built for this perishable product has to take place at the right time and to the right audience to draw in as many targeted audience as possible. It is also interesting to note that the marketing campaign may perhaps be created for as long as it gets to make a

movie, but once the movie has been released majority of the campaign comes to an end. Nowadays the merchandise related to movie is further extending the campaign but this is significantly less when compared to the entire movie marketing. Interestingly increasing the shelf life of the movie is again possible with the help of these merchandise which are released at frequent intervals and is well planned exercise generating reasonable amount of revenues to the production house. There is also an increasing attempt to release the movie globally to capture a larger audience generating more revenues.

### **Promotional Tools**

Branding and Marketing the films include a plethora of tools to woo customers toward buying the products, in this case tickets or other movie related items. Marketing analysts describe these as various delivery platforms. These include –

#### **Television**

Arguably the largest driver of entertainment in the future is television. It has the potential to churn revenues over a long period of time and is being eyed by many film producers too. Television is presently available in most of the Indian homes, thanks to ‘Direct To Home’ (DTH), ‘Direct Satellite’ and ‘Terrestrial Channels’. The monopoly of Doordarshan was finally destroyed with the arrival of private channels. The numbers of channels now are more than two hundred and most of these channels depend on the content of Bollywood to glue customers to TV sets.

Till recently bollywood movies were promoted on the television through promotional videos or trailers or more popularly through interviews with stars of the film. But now we see many of these about-to-be-released movie stars, producers, directors or any known and interesting personality getting involved with various talent shows on television, probably as judges or just performing songs from their forthcoming movie or giving a special appearance on any shows. We also find them performing at various award ceremonies which are again showcased on television, live or recorded, and add extra viewership and promotion for the film. Many a times we do find these film stars/ directors / producers anchoring a show on television thereby increasing the visibility and direct or indirect promotion of the film. Also interesting is to note that characters in many of the soaps on television either emulate the movie stars or use the movie merchandise or the dress styles of stars adding additional promotion to the movie. Channels today vie for the rights to showcase the ‘Making of the Movie’ which is another promotional tool for the movie. Television and movies are interdependent and appear in a win-win situation. Marketing of bollywood on television is here to stay.

#### **Radio**

Similar to television the monopoly of All India Radio (AIR) was broken down by the private radio (FM) stations and the upcoming satellite and community radios. Though FM stations are not that great success stories like television channels they continue to maintain their popularity among youth and other segments of customers and this medium

of marketing cannot be overlooked. Like television the content of the radio stations too are largely based on movies. All the formats of radio adopt movie marketing to generate revenues in the form of advertising or show content. The normal promotional tools on radio include exclusive shows on the upcoming movies, interviews with stars or team members, games or quizzes based on movie content and/or free movie tickets for callers. This design of promotions works wonderfully in cities like Mumbai, where commuting to

college or work takes time and radio is the best form of entertainment then.

'Love Story 2050' tied up with BIG 92.7 FM for the movie promotions and had various programs where the main actors of the movie were interacting with the listeners live. Though the movie bombed at box office in spite of being promoted heavily, the production house however did not loose much thanks to the other promotional avenues for generating revenues.



[http://www.bollywood-newz.blogspot.com/2008\\_06\\_01\\_archive.html](http://www.bollywood-newz.blogspot.com/2008_06_01_archive.html)

### Home Video

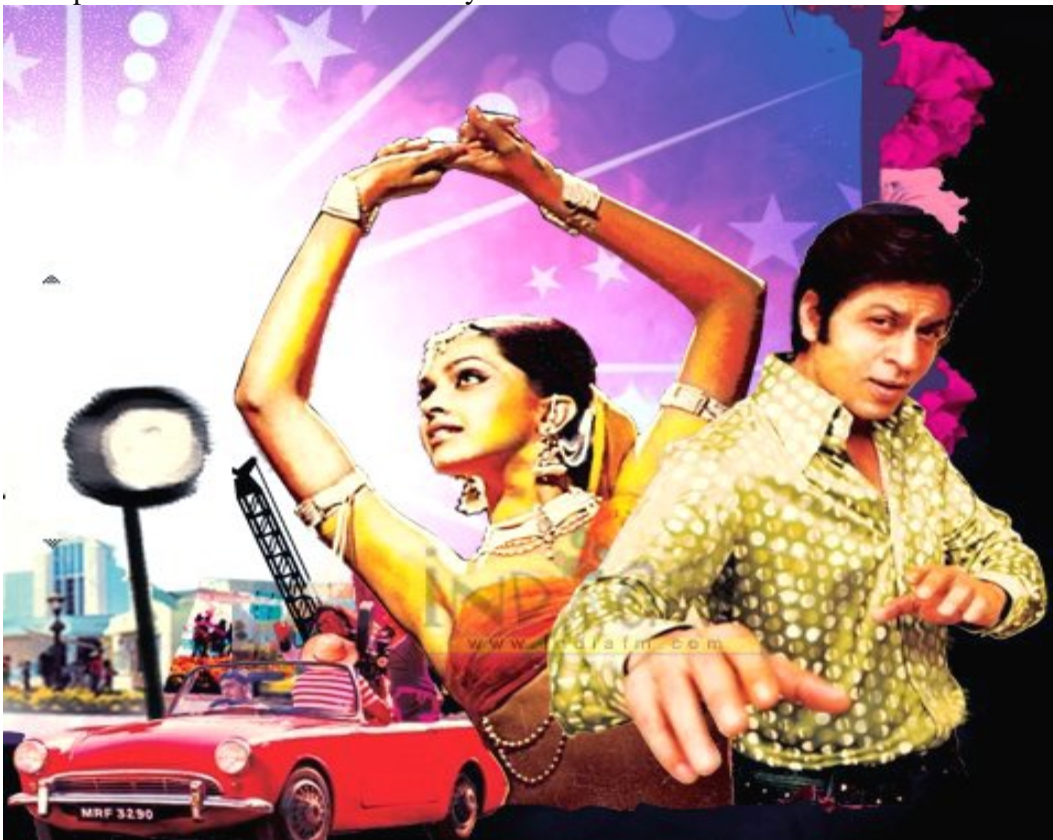
VCD and DVD systems have been there for quite sometime now are the most convenient alternatives to viewing the latest releases. The home theatre system is on a continuous growth and would be

preferential mode of movie viewing to many segments of customers. This is a revenue generator as well as a huge threat to the film industry as customers who come to theatre provide more revenue and the constant threat of pirated VCD and DVD that are flooding

the industry is huge. Through many measures are being taken to stop the piracy this still is a foremost threat to the industry as a whole. Also the pirated VCDs and DVDs now are of much better quality and cheaper than the original so customers too prefer to buy them since the usage is limited. Many producers prefer to release the VCDs and DVDs of the film sometime after the movie release since it would not affect the revenues generated by theatre going customers.

The DVD of 'Om Shanti Om' (OSO) for example was released after 100 days of

its box office run and that too it was a limited edition. The DVD sales were also spruced by the fact that there were some exclusives like – an autographed poster of Shah Rukh Khan (SRK), the making of the movie, a colorful booklet about the journey of the movie, deleted scenes, visual effects used, events of OSO, various promos and trailers, interviews of SRK and Farah Khan, OSO trivia game and the DVD was packaged in a special eye-catching cardboard case. The DVD like the movie created a landmark and was a huge success.



<http://www.bollywoodhungama.com/movies/mstills/12950/still22145.html>

### Mobile Phones

With the total number of wireless (mobile) connections at around 300 million India today is on the advent of

mobile marketing and service providers are raring to go market their offerings. Again with an anticipated growth of fifty million connections a year, mobile telephony is viewed as the most

powerful driver of marketing after television for movie marketing. Gaming, puzzles, SMS, MMS and news alerts on movies are easier to market and comfortable modes of earning revenues. Till 2008 the most prominent mode of earnings from mobiles was marketing of movie tunes or dialogues, ringtones and wall papers. This still continues to be the foremost method of movie marketing, however with the arrival of higher technology (or newer generation handset models) and future advancements in technology will allow the marketing to go beyond SMS, MMS, ringtones and wall papers.

Yash Chopra for his movie 'Veer Zarra' had automated the voices of the lead stars of the movie and the voices were answering calls made on a specific phone number. This resulted in an

unbelievable 400,000 hits a day and turned out to be an innovative promotion for the movie. Other formats of mobile marketing like SMS of questions based on movie and prizes for best answer etc were conducted too. Ashutosh Gowariker's movie 'Swades' is a case in example where on an average 200,000 SMSs were sent to customers with a question 'What do you want to do for your country?' and respondents with best answer were rewarded. Concepts like mobile ticketing, mobile auctions also have slowly picked up the momentum. Bollywood is now looking forward for the technology which will allow mobile users to see movies on handsets. This format of movie marketing though popularly catching up in developed economies is yet very nascent in India.



<http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/technology/spice-movie-phone-1.jpg>



[www.wirelessmoment.com/.../indian\\_cellular.html](http://www.wirelessmoment.com/.../indian_cellular.html)

### **Internet / Online Movie Marketing**

Of late it is rare to not find a movie that opens in theatres without a website promoting it. For the past decade websites are being used to promote movies and increasingly happen to be a part of movie marketing. The cost of creating these websites is insignificant when compared to the cost involved in other promotional activities. In comparison to newspaper or television ads which are here-today-gone-tomorrow websites provide a continual promotion for the movie even after other promotional tools have been stopped. Today with increasing awareness and internet usage there is a strong correlation between internet users and moviegoers. This gives an opportunity for targeting internet audience and also creating awareness for the film and its merchandise.

There are exclusive event management companies which help in creating an exceptional online marketing for a movie. World over online movie marketing may include – movie website development, online Public relations and generating buzz for the movie, search engine optimization (where the specific movie would come first in the search engine when ever a search is initiated), pay per click keyword marketing, social media marketing (in online media channels like Facebook) viral and email marketing, creating and conducting various online contests, providing website analytics and reporting of the same.



<http://marketingchitchat.wordpress.com/2008/07/03/bollywood-promotions-%E2%80%93-93-other-interesting-examples/>

Watch Hindi movie online at Bollygrounds.com  
[http://images-cdn01.associatedcontent.com/image/A9011/90113/300\\_90113.jpg](http://images-cdn01.associatedcontent.com/image/A9011/90113/300_90113.jpg)

As internet usage increases bollywood too is turning towards web to create more buzz for its movies. Indian film marketers too have realized that the young and technology oriented customers with high disposable income are more likely to use online options to discover movies and see them in theatres. They are also the most coveted segment that purchases online movie tickets and other high-end movie merchandise. Individual websites for films have now become more common and traffic on these websites is high before and during the release of the movie.

The above example has been seen on msn India's home page. As soon as readers log on to the home page you suddenly see 'Imran Khan' (the hero of the film 'Jane Tu...' who pops up from the small screen displayed on the home page as a promotional tool) walking every part of the screen and going back to the 'Jane Tu' box. The idea and staging of the promotion on a platform, which has become fairly common of late, is unique and quite eye catching.

### Animation and Gaming

Yet another technology-driven segment where entertainment is based on movies is animation and gaming. This can be anything from console gaming, internet gaming, mobile gaming from movies or television. Animation is being used a lot in Hollywood with them being a part of movie or a complete movie of animation. In India, bollywood has been able to exploit its cost advantage in the use of animation in special effects and titling of films. With the result India is

today the global centre for outsourcing. Most recent and effective use of animation was done in the movie 'Hum Tum' by animating the main characters of the movie. The 'Hum Tum' cartoon strip has also seen a promotional run in the prominent daily and received good response.



<http://im.rediff.com/movies/2007/feb/22/anim2.jpg>

Movie gaming is still nascent in India, and we have very few cases where a successful film has been converted into gaming option. But this practice is widely followed in Hollywood. However future holds good revenues for bollywood producers if they can encourage downloads of movie related games on mobile phones or create exclusive games based on movies or characters of movies.

### Movie Music

Music of a film offers itself a broad spectrum of activities – starting with cutting of albums, audio recordings for CDs, cassettes, MP3 downloads, iPods, television, public and private radio broadcasts, internet, DVDs and VCDs and mobile ring-tones. The music of a movie is also one of the largest revenue generator for any producer. There are times when the music rights of the film itself were sold for the cost of the entire

film production! Today Indian Film Industry has grown substantially and generates a lot of revenue at one hand and is desperately fighting the widespread piracy. In spite of many efforts to foil piracy the piracy market is thriving and eating up the revenues of the music industry.



[http://www.alhome.net/blog\\_photos/ist2-1047449-ringtone.jpg](http://www.alhome.net/blog_photos/ist2-1047449-ringtone.jpg)

### **360 degree marketing**

This concept is gaining momentum in India and is spreading quite infectiously. It involves viewership segmentation by identifying target groups and devising promotional strategies exclusively for each segment. The concept provides an all-round perspective on various forms of communication which not only include television and radio but also focus on public relations, word-of-mouth promotions, sponsorships, ambush marketing, product placements and internet promotions. The concept has worked wonders for the movie 'Om Shanti Om' and has benefited everyone associated with the film. But at the same time it created a huge hype for the movie 'Saawariya' which failed to catch the interest of audience and was wiped out of theatres at the earliest.

## Conclusion

As the gamut of marketing practices for movies is amplifying it is fascinating to note that the field has become increasingly interesting, innovative and challenging. Film merchandize so far is marginally successful in India, but like a Systematic Investment Plan marketers need to put in time, resources and novel methods of marketing. With the new emerging model of global entertainment it is an advantage to India where the numbers of movies produced per year are unmatched, mass appeal is mind blowing, huge talent pool, and increasing technical finesse, not to forget our song and dance tradition and the unmistakable religion of bollywood. This industry will increase the penchant for new movies and newer marketing practices. Bollywood and marketing go hand-in-hand and would reach newer avenues and create many milestones in creativity. The digital age is changing the traditional model of marketing and distribution for independent films. For every opportunity it presents there's yet another challenge. Its time now for everyone in bollywood to sit up and take marketing more seriously as marketing creates magic!

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