

AMBUSH MARKETING – A CREATIVE MARKETING STRATEGY WITH A LIMITED BUDGET, BUT EXPONENTIAL GROWTH

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ABSTRACT:

Ground-breaking, artistic marketing strategies are the main modules of modern era. It's absolutely a benefit to the companies in order to grab the market attention with little creative effort. Ambush marketing is a kind of contemporary marketing strategy that elevates awareness of a certain brand with huge popularity. Ambush marketing is a having a strategy that, a company/ product absorb the significant publicity in a major event without having official sponsorship. The main objective of present article is to study the Ambush marketing practices and its strategies. In addition we focus on conceptual investigation of ambush marketing, study the nature and progress of ambush marketing, and its advantages. In recent era ambush marketing be likely to be artistic and courageous, teeter on the edge of ethics, even though there are lot of follow the law.

Keywords: Ambush Marketing, strategies, and Advantages of Ambush Marketing.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ambush means sudden attack from the hidden places; it's not a new concept. In Second World War soldiers are using this technique on the opponents. After many decades the word Ambush reformed and used in the marketing practices. In 1984 Los Angeles Olympics first used this strategy and after it becomes very popular in sports related events. Simply it can be can be recognize as a creative marketing strategy in which the advertisers associate themselves with the particular event and therefore take advantage on it without offering any sponsorship. Ambush marketing strategy is kind of promotional movement and advertises their product or brand in innovative way, and the end result is confusion for the buying audience as to which company really holds official sponsorship rights. In recent days, companies are putting lot of budget on sponsoring the events starting from Olympics to very small events. This Marketing strategy is more associated with big events like Olympics but the presence has been felt in lot of sectors. Ambush marketing strategy is new innovative, most significant, astonishing strategy. In fact, all successful examples of this type of marketing feature unexpected placement, timing, or messaging.

Ambush marketing is essentially depends on the conceptual conversation of sponsorship. Marketers are showing interest to do sponsoring because of getting unique platform to promote their brands widely across the event. But Ambush marketing strategy thus arose when companies that were formerly able to associate themselves with certain high-profile events became excluded from official sponsorship deals, either by way of increased costs or category exclusivities. This study theoretically examines the sponsorship of an event and its differentiation from advertisement, growth and advantages of Ambush marketing, tactics to avert ambush marketing.

2.0 AMBUSH MARKETING

The word "ambushes" means "a surprise attack from a hidden place. The concept "ambush marketing" was introduced by marketing strategist Jerry Welsh, while he was working as a manager of global marketing efforts for the American Express Company in the 1980s. Based on McCarthy words, ambush marketing strategy is a type of promotional activity by a company that is not an official sponsor of an event but advertise themselves in the event to induce customers to pay attention to the advertisement. From a conceptual perspective, ambush marketing is a company's effort to take advantage of on the goodwill, reputation, and popularity of a particular event by creating an association with it without the official sponsorship or the consent of the necessary parties.

Ambush Marketing can usually be explained as a practice marketing where as a company creates an innovative way promotion that interrupts the public concentration nearby an event thereby turn aside the attention towards itself the company and away from the official sponsor. The outcome of ambush marketing can be measured from the psychological response of the audience (Meenaghan, 1994) and hence it is hypothesized that customer psychological response can also be used to help recognized the vital elements of ambush marketing.

According to Séguin B Gemeindera, and Preussa, (2008), the fundamental principles of ambush marketing are

- Getting advantage from the representation of being an official sponsor without being an official sponsor.
- Show-casing as a counter partners in the Olympic place of market competitors.
- to encounter the 'misleading' campaigns of sponsors,
- getting tremendous advantages from the big events if sponsorship rights are too costly
- Spend more budgets on creating innovative advertisements rather than the sponsoring.

In general Ambush marketing strategy formed in two ways, like ambush marketing with the association and ambush marketing by interruption. According to the first form, this strategy misleads the audience to imagine that they are the official sponsor or contributor connected with the particular event. In second form, explains that the company does not associate with the event but it's gives own brand name or other insignia experience with the help of publicity pull towards the event without the consent of the official event organizer. In both forms, the

marketer has a clear objective of using the event as a platform to advertise their brand, product or service without paying the financial and other obligations of a sponsor.

3.0 STRATEGIES IN AMBUSH MARKETING

Apart from the sponsoring the event the most frequently used ambush marketing strategies are

3.1 Media Coverage sponsoring of an Event

There are many ways to sponsor the event, in recent days official event sponsorship does not include connected media coverage rights. This is an advantage to the other market players get hold on broadcasting rights.

In 1984 Olympics Kodak grab the ABC broadcast rights, but the official sponsor of the event is Fuji. According to Mr. Payne, an IOC representative, felt the Ambush marketers are thieves Kodak's behavior with concern as he considered it attacked Fuji's rights as an official IOC intentionally take hold of branding that does not belong to them. Later he described ambush marketing violate the fundamental principles of business activity like genuineness in advertising and business communications. Because of official sponsor Fuji had exclusive category rights on the event; Mr. Payne thought that they had a legitimate right to publicize their brand at the event. Kodak broke this right when it grabs the broadcasting sponsorship rights; thereby it associated with the event and access to its audience.

Jerry C. Welsh, a famous marketing administrator in American Express, mentioned that real competitors might take advantage, whenever there is a possibility to prove them. Similarly in Welsh's point of view, the concept of exclusive official sponsorship rights for 1984 Olympics is damaging the similar competitor opportunities, because the Games covers a massive group of audience. Kodak simply decides to take advantage of on an ancillary promotional opportunity that was legitimately available for purchase.

3.2 Sub-Category sponsorship of an Event

It is another category to Ambush your brand in the mega event that is not having the official sponsorship. Naturally reactions are common for actions, in 1988, Kodak buys the legitimate sponsorship for the 1988 Olympic Games, while Fuji secured the sub-sponsorship rights of the U.S. swimming team, which it promoted aggressively.

3.3 Sponsorship Contribution to a Players' Pool

As well as purchasing of broadcasting sponsorship rights, sponsor the teams or individuals who are playing in the competing within specific events is also called Ambush marketing strategy. Examples of this form Ambush marketing is Adidas promoted itself with the help of Ian Thorpe when Nike was the official outfits sponsor for the Australian Olympic team. Ian Thorpe covers the Nike logo with his towel at a medal presentation ceremony, a gesture they suggest was necessary to protect his personal contract with Adidas.

3.4 Telecast Advertisements that coincide with a Sponsored Event

Aggressively purchasing the normal advertising time and space during the Olympic is also viewed as another type of ambush marketing. Massive international sporting events, such as the Olympic Games, Football, cricket World Cups drew very large audiences, at least some of whom will see or hear advertising that screens during interval periods. Official sponsors have expressed even more concern about themed advertising that features competitors from sponsored events.

4.0 VARIETIES OF AMBUSH MARKETING

The concept of Ambush Marketing can be understood under the following ways -

4.1 Direct Ambush Marketing:

In this type, company moves with destructive promotional approach and establish itself directly without having legitimate rights. In 1996 Olympic, Nike fixed gigantic hoardings outside the sports ground in the backdrop of Atlanta. Audience around the stadium was misguided that Nike was the official sponsor for 1996 Olympic Games, but it was not. Based on the nature of approach, direct Ambush marketing considered in different types like Predatory Ambushing, Coattail Ambushing, *Property Infringement*, *Self-Ambushing*.

4.2 Indirect ambush marketing

In this case, companies are indulging themselves indirectly to several other ad campaigns. The ultimate objective of such indirect approach is to acquire massive exposure for its company; it includes the usage of photos, brand names, logos, symbols etc. to mislead people. The core distinction between both of these approaches is that indirect is not destructive like direct ambush marketing, and it also unable to grab the focal attention of the audience. It works indirectly, without stealing the game and expands more awareness for its brand. It is also represented in different types based on the approaches *like* Ambushing by association, Distractive Ambushing, Values Ambushing, Insurgent Ambushing, And Parallel Property Ambushing

5.0 IS AMBUSH MARKETING ETHICAL?

Ambush marketing being unethical or just a creative business communication practice is hypothetical question, because still it is controversial domain of practice. In business world there are strict laws and code of ethics to run any business. In the presence of healthy competition companies can attempt any activity without disturbing the code of ethics. In absence of legislative provisions or precedents, the aspect of morality is often highlighted. In Critics point of view, ambush marketing is a parasitic marketing claiming that companies are intentionally looking for ways to take advantages on their competitors' official sponsorship of mega events even though protests from sponsors and event organizers. In ambush marketing campaign, the ultimate question is about ethics. Is ambush marketing is really an ethical business practice? Is it really as damaging as is suspected? In common way, ambusher gives that an impression of participation in games without having official sponsorship is

just serving its own brand name and in doing so engages in behaviour that is harmful to the greater good of sport. Ambush marketing considered that, branding is always branding whether it may be from positive way or negative way, similarly the ambush marketing activities activate them in big events massive resources. Very big International brands like Audi, BMW, Pepsi Co., Coke, Nike, P&G, HUL, who are aggressively used this strategy and equal in competition race, it is occasionally that ambush marketing is deemed as a final strategy to use when no other types of competition or strategy are available.

6.0 INDIAN RECENT AMBUSHERS

In recent era, we have observed many ambush marketing strategies from different companies. We have listed few of them for keen understanding of Ambush marketing.

- Former Indian cricket Captain M.S Dhoni strategically involved in ambush marketing in 2011 ICC world cup. Where he was the brand ambassador for Aircel and Sony who are not legitimate official sponsors for ICC-2011. ICC has warned M.S. Dhoni and offers him to stop promoting the above brands during the world cup.
- **“We’ve changed”**, The caption used by Jet airways came in their ad-campaign. King Fisher encountered it with **“We’ve made”** them change, which was further ambushed by Go-Airways campaign **“We have not changed”**. We are still in the Smart way to fly. These hoarding’s are placed vertically in major cities of India.
- Similarly Pantene came with a slogan called **“Mystery Shampoo”**. To encounter the above Dove came with **“There is no mystery”** – Dove is the No.1 shampoo.

As per the market people are enjoying the fuss and hopefully this will bring very good brand image in the market.

7.0 BENEFITS OF AMBUSH MARKETING

Ambushing marketing is aggressive, attractive and relatively cost effective choice to communicate them in the market place. However the advantages of ambush marketing to the company should be quite clear, as it is very clear that majority of the consumers have been manipulated by these campaigns. The benefits of ambush marketing to the company are noticeable, more business. Some of the advantages of ambush marketing are as follows:

- Creates massive brand awareness through advertising campaign, based on the exposure repetition and length.
- Ambush marketers can gain a good share through the influenced ads
- Impressing their brands in the minds of audience
- Competition become healthy
- Ambush marketing creates supplementary competition between companies
- To Jump-start the business
- . Increased purchase intent as a result of the aims detailed above.

- Weakened link between the sponsors and the event by creating confusion about sponsor's identity. However this benefit is very small when compared to ambush marketing cost.

8.0 CONCLUSION

Ambush marketing can be a cheap way to disrupt a competitors marketing sponsorship deal. Any company wishing to engage in ambush marketing will need to think imaginatively. As the significance of mega sporting, creative events and cultural has increased, so it has a possibility of sponsoring the event to increase consumers' attention. Linked to the development of sponsorship has been the growth of ambush marketing.

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