

An Empirical study on concept marketing with special emphasis on “Aman ki Asha”

Payyavula Krishna Chaitanya, MBA

&

Prithwiraj Das, MBA, MA, MCom, (PhD.)

Abstract

The Times of India (TOI) and the Jang Group's (Jang) concept marketing project 'Aman Ki Asha: Destination Peace' is the subject of this case (AKA). The joint Indo-Pak peace campaign, which began on January 1, 2010, aims to promote peace and improve diplomatic and cultural relations between the two countries. The campaign was carried out throughout a large-scale multimedia platform that includes print, television, radio, the internet, and other on-the-ground events. A number of cross-border cultural meetings, business seminars, music and literary festivals, and citizen gatherings were held across the two nations as part of the campaign. The case examines how the campaign changed people perceptions of each other in both countries.

While the campaign won some of the industry's most prestigious advertising awards, experts were split on whether 'Aman Ki Asha' was a genuine attempt to continue a peace process between the two countries, or whether it was simply a marketing trick by the two media companies to improve their brand image. As part of the Marketing Communications/Marketing Management curriculum, this chapter is intended for MBA/MS students.

Keywords: *Marketing, Communication, India, Pakistan, Peace, Award.*

Date of Submission: 10-01-2022

Date of acceptance: 24-01-2022

Objectives:

- Understand the many problems and challenges that concept marketing might present.
- Analyze whether the 'Aman Ki Asha' project succeeded in reaching its goals.
- Understand how cause-related marketing can help to improve your brand's reputation.
- Look at ways to improve the campaign's effectiveness.

I. Introduction:

"The Times of India Group and the Jang Group have partnered to re-energize the peace process between our two nations. We believe this is an intervention that is long overdue. We acknowledge that there will be setbacks, but they should not derail the process. Before we aim higher, we'll need to reach out and select the low-hanging fruit."

South Asian newspapers are known around the world for their corporate social responsibility campaigns, which combine editorial stances with marketing and community relations campaigns to shape public opinion in profound ways. Publishers are especially good at fusing these campaigns with the newspaper's brand and making them campaigning points central to their marketing strategy. The Times of India and Jang Group campaign stands out among the world's best news industry marketing campaign's this year.

"Aman Ki Asha' 1 is a simple marketing mistake with the sinister goal of making a good ideology 'appear' good. However, this is now a cliché. This has sparked a lot of discussion and writing. This campaign is a flop because the majority of TOI readers are avoiding it."

At the 81st annual INMA3 World Congress in 2011, the Indo-Pak peace campaign 'Aman Ki Asha: Destination Peace' (AKA) won the 'Best of Show' award across all categories. The campaign's goal was to promote peace and establish greater diplomatic and cultural connections between India and Pakistan, and it was launched by India's two largest media organizations, the Times of India (TOI) and the Jang Group (Jang), respectively. On January 1, 2010, a social effort was launched with the goal of uniting Indian and Pakistani citizens.

The AKA campaign aimed to go beyond the two countries' sixty-year political rivalry "to find common ground through cultural exchange, dispute resolution, and business prospects." It addressed problems such as trade and business, investments, visa regimes, and sporting ties, among other things. Print, television, radio, online, and other on-the-ground initiatives were used to promote the campaign. A number of cross-border

cultural events, business seminars, music and cultural festivals, and citizen gatherings were held across the two countries as part of the campaign.

The AKA campaign apparently changed people's perceptions of each other in both countries and attracted global interest. It was praised as a wonderful example of a people-to-people effort designed to improve international ties. Some detractors, on the other hand, said that AKA was just a publicity stunt to get people's attention. According to them, it was a hidden marketing strategy known as cause-related marketing, in which news organizations used the concept of peace to promote their brand image. Experts believe that the current political and religious conflict is too high a mountain to climb for the two countries to have friendly relations. They believed that peace could only be accomplished if both governments were involved, and that individuals could only do so much on their own.

Anant Rang swami, editor of Campaign India, claims that "The basis of Aman Ki Asha is that peace between Pakistan and India is needed, and that increased people-to-people interaction will aid in achieving that elusive, far peace. I do not believe that customers agree with the premise in this case. The idea that people - individual citizens or groups of citizens - may play a role in bringing the two countries closer together would be optimistic at best and fantastical at worst."

Reasons behind Aman Ki Asha:

The most crucial conflict in south Asia i.e., IND – PAK. A series of battles between the two countries over the previous six decades had resulted in mutual mistrust. Pakistan's use of cross-border terrorism increased tensions. Both India and Pakistan paid a high price for this anger, which slowed foreign cooperation and damaged political relations. Mass media influence the citizen's impression and image of the other, even the enemy in question. To take the advantage of mass media, the researchers has selected peace journalism and started campaign through the largescale multimedia platform that included print, television, radio, online and other events. The campaign was launched by Times of India in India and The Jang Groups in Pakistan. These two leading media houses of the respective countries intends to create an enabling environment by facilitating dialogue between the two nations, encouraging people-to-people contact, there by contributing to peace between the two countries. Cricket matches between the India and Pakistan evoke strong emotions in both countries. For this, the campaign launched a concept of Opponents are Competitors not Enemies.

A series of cross-border cultural events, business seminars, music and literary festivals, and citizen gatherings were held across the two nations as part of the campaign. It was a form of covert marketing known as cause-related marketing, in which media companies used the concept of peace to improve their brand image.

After the Mumbai attacks, several observers believed the campaign had achieved a breakthrough in Indo-Pak relations.

II. Conclusion:

After its launch in 2010, within few years Aman Ki Asha emerged as one of the most successful peace initiatives between India and Pakistan but then suddenly in 2014 it became dormant when Jang group came under attack from the Pakistani military establishment and bilateral India-Pakistan relations worsened in India. While the campaign won some of the most prestigious advertising awards, experts remained divided in their opinion on whether 'Aman Ki Asha' was a genuine approach to initiate the peace process between the two countries, or whether it was just a marketing gimmick by the two media groups to enhance their brand image.