



KAN KHAJURA TESAN LOUD AND CLEAR

An insight into HUL's stunning mobile marketing initiative that has taken rural Bihar and Jharkhand by storm.

By Ashwini Gangal



That's the number Hindustan Unilever (HUL) uses to inject a dose of entertainment into the lives of millions of rural Indians and up its business in these areas. 'Missed call lagao, muft manoranjan pao' is the tagline of HUL's eight-month-old Kan Khajura Tesan (or KKT), an on-demand, entertainment channel on the mobile platform.

KKT is a 'mobile radio', that provides free entertainment to people who live in the 'media dark' regions of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Jharkhand, India's Hindi- and Bhojpuri-speaking belt. The content is interspersed with ads for HUL's brands.

KKT claims to have over 12 million users (source: Ozonetel Systems, HUL's cloud telephony platform for KKT). And the rate of growth has been rapid. In a presentation created for the Cannes Lions jury, KKT claimed eight million subscribers in six months. New users are being added at a staggering rate of 45,000-50,000 people a day, which is roughly over 1,800 new users every hour and 8-10 lakh unique consumers every three weeks. The campaign won four Lions (three Gold, one Bronze).

WHEEL OF TIME

Though KKT was piloted in Bihar in 2013, the idea has its roots in a 'missed call' campaign HUL conducted for Wheel, in 2012.

Executed across the country, but focused on the 'media dark' central India belt, this campaign used All India Radio (AIR) to invite people to call a certain number and hang up, only to be called back and fed jokes in the romantic, 'husband-wife' space, one that Wheel operates in.

The content was customised for each state. called 'Missed Call Dijiye, Muskurate Rahiye', the

pilot phase fetched good response. In just four weeks, the brand got a total of 3.2 lakh missed calls from 28,000 unique numbers. Wheel's 'mobile activation' was promoted across other media channels including direct call-ins, SMS, print, radio and points of sale in rural regions. After three months of launching the campaign in UP and Bihar, over five million missed calls were received from 7.7 lakh unique numbers.



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PRIYA NAIR

Vice President, HUL (detergents business)



The idea for KKT has its roots in a 'missed call' campaign HUL conducted for Wheel, back in 2012.

Talking about how the Wheel campaign was HUL's inadvertent foundation for KKT, Priya Nair, vice president, Hindustan Unilever (detergents business), says, "Rural consumers have fewer entertainment choices compared to entertainment-rich urban consumers, so they find something like this quite interesting and are quite happy to listen to such content. We have done many other communication-led campaigns on the mobile phone, and used it as a push medium. But using it as a medium for content integration was something that started with the Wheel campaign."

The team that worked on the Wheel campaign realised that consumers, especially in rural India, were really starting to use the mobile phone as a means of entertainment. Nair shares her personal experience. "I remember when I went to Bihar



How do we make sure people refer their friends and ask them to tune in?

CSN MURTHY

Founder and Director, Ozonetel Systems

and met this young girl who told me how she had around 100 songs downloaded on her phone by going to the nearest mobile recharge shop. So people from these regions were willing to pay for entertainment. The idea for KKT sort of kept building from there," she says.

Avinash Jhangiani, senior vice president and national head, digital and mobility, Omnicom Group, the media agency on KKT, admits, "The Wheel campaign taught us that it's not just about getting people to make the call, it's about increasing the listening time. That can happen only by getting the content right. That's how we decided to bring in the celebrity angle into KKT."

And sure enough, celebrity based content is lapped up by KKT's listeners. Content that involves Salman Khan in some way (a promotion of his upcoming film), it is learnt, is a big hit with KKT's listeners. CSN Murthy, founder-director, Ozonetel Systems, HUL's cloud telephony platform for KKT, shares, "We know that content around new movie releases leads to a burst of traffic." The system's bandwidth, at present, can support 10,000 concurrent calls. This figure is scalable. As it should be - when **afaqs! Reporter** called this number repeatedly from Patna, we received a busy tone each time. Traffic is soaring.

About the name 'Kan Khajura', Anaheeta Goenka, executive director, Lowe Lintas+ Partners, the creative agency on this campaign, says, "We dug into the local lives of these people for culturally relevant things that would make for stickiness. When we first heard the name from the creative teams, our response was - 'An insect'? But then we went ahead with it since it's a harmless creature that sticks in your ear."

TARGET TRACKING

At present, HUL is able to see, on a 'live dashboard' or graphical chart, the geographies (districts) that yield maximum traffic. Moreover, HUL has access to other useful information such as the frequency of the calls, the time of day the calls come in, the numbers from which repeat calls are made, and perhaps most importantly, the exact point during the capsule at which the caller decides to hang up. The dashboard also shows the number of ad impressions for, say, a Lux versus a Lifebuoy. So far, KKT has fetched over 100 million ad impressions, according to Ozonetel.

Says Nair, "We know when the calls are emanating and what kind of content is popular. We have our own research data to give us a profile of the people calling." For instance, conversations with the target group reveal that the women typically keep their phone on speaker mode and enjoy KKT while going about their daily chores.

Though most of the brands being promoted on HUL have a feminine skew, most of the callers are male. HUL's Nair explains why this is not a problem as such. "That's the nature of the rural consumer in India today," she says, adding, "Across conventional or un-conventional mediums, there is a male skew. Also, in rural India, decision-making regarding the purchase of consumer goods tends to involve both men and women." Interestingly, HUL displayed the KKT number on its product packs and promoted it through on-ground activation efforts.

A new feedback system was introduced recently. At the end of the capsule, there's a quick survey that helps gain insight into the profile of the caller. The survey reveals the gender ('If you are male press 1, if you are female press 2), age ('If you are below 15 years, press 1', and so on) and economic status ('If you own a cycle, press X') of the caller. The messages are in Hindi, of course, and



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JYOTI BANSAL

Managing Director, PHD India

participation in the survey is incentivised (with, for instance, a free top-up recharge).

Jyoti Bansal, managing director, PHD India, an Omnicom agency, says, "Looking at the entire mass of data, we are tweaking content at a general level. For instance, we find that jokes work better in some markets while *sher-o-shairis* work better in others. Eventually, we will get into personalisation of content."

However, these are just baby steps. As Omnicom's Jhangiani puts it, "We're still not in the 'big data' phase. We have enough data to re-confirm our gut-feel about what the content can be. However, we're not at a stage yet where we can leave everything to data."

THREATS, OPPORTUNITY...

Once radio penetration deepens, presumably after the next round of auctions, won't the playground for KKT shrink substantially? KKT is more nuanced than conventional radio and might just be able to differentiate itself in the days ahead. For one, radio is a one-to-many medium. KKT aims to get into the one-to-one space, with segmentation and personalisation of content.

HUL's Nair is not perturbed. "KKT will be quite self-selecting," she insists, adding, "Consumers with access to multiple screens aren't going to listen to a mobile radio. Unlike 'entertainment-deprived' consumers, 'entertainment-rich' consumers, who have entertainment choices aren't going to find this kind of media interesting or relevant. We will focus on building KKT in the media dark regions of India. It will continue to augment our media reach in areas where currently we have no media option."

...PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

HUL plans to take KKT to more states in the days ahead. Presumably, selection will depend on a combination of factors such as level of traditional media penetration, mobile phone penetration, and awareness of HUL's brands. Predicts Lowe's Goenka, "In a year's time, we hope to reach 50 million+ consumers."

Mindful of the challenges that lay ahead, the team is poised to expand this innovation across India. Says HUL's Nair, "The next phase of KKT will be about trying to serve content that consumers like. Even the tonality of that content is important. Another challenge is technology. The kind of devices used currently are low-end devices so the quality of sound is a big challenge to work around, in the days ahead."

For Ozonetel's Murthy, the immediate challenge is to create a viral effect. "Someone may be a KKT listener but how do we make sure he refers his friends and asks them to tune in too?" he questions, adding, "For that, we need to incentivise referrals. A referrer could be given free top-up recharge of, say, ₹50 for every five people she refers. Or, through SMS, we could send a code to the caller and ask him to forward it to, say, five



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SIDDHARTHA ROY

COO, Consumer and Allied Businesses, Hungama Digital

friends. If those friends tune into KKT within 10 minutes, the original caller is rewarded."

MULTILINGUAL TEST

So far, KKT's sphere of influence has reached many Hindi speaking states, including Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Punjab and Chhattisgarh. Going forward, it will be promoted across other states too.

To Omnicom's Jhangiani, being able to deliver engaging content in different regional languages is the biggest challenge. "In Bihar and Jharkhand you know that content around Bollywood will be well received," he says, "But this may or may not work in a Bengal or in the South. So, while scaling up KKT across India, that regional aspect is going to become very important. And the whole idea is to keep trying and experimenting."

Siddhartha Roy, COO, consumer and allied businesses, Hungama Digital Media Entertainment, the content provider and programmer, is confident. "We can generate infotainment capsules for any Indian state in the days ahead." To paraphrase a speech from a Shakespearean play, KKT could soon be saying, "Friends, Indians, countrymen, lend me your ears" in many more languages. ■

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HOW KAN KHAJURA TESAN WORKS

All a person has to do is give a 'missed call' to the KKT number. HUL calls back and starts playing entertainment content comprising Bollywood music, RJ talk, jokes, *sher-o-shairi*, educative content (for example, *ShabdKosh* teaches the listener English words) and timely information (content to spread awareness regarding voting around election time, for instance). Hungama is the official content provider and programmer.

Currently, the brands HUL is promoting on KKT include Wheel, Surf, Lifebuoy, Lux, Dove Soaps, Clinic Plus, Sunsilk, Fair & Lovely, Pond's White Beauty and Vim. HUL's research - telephonic interviews with the TG before and after their exposure to this medium - shows that spontaneous awareness for these brands has soared.

If a caller hangs up after say five minutes of listening, the next time he/she, well, 'tunes in', the entertainment will literally pick up where it left off the previous time - content will start flowing from the sixth minute. Every week, a caller has access to an 18 minute capsule of entertainment. Once exhausted, a fresh capsule can be availed of in the following week. The caller is also given the option of listening to the previous week's capsule once again.

After sampling the content, if a caller fails to tune in again, HUL places a 'reminder call'. On being answered, KKT starts playing the content from where the caller left off. Users are given these reminder calls twice a week, for five weeks. If incoming calls from KKT go unanswered 10 times, HUL puts that number on a 'DND' list.