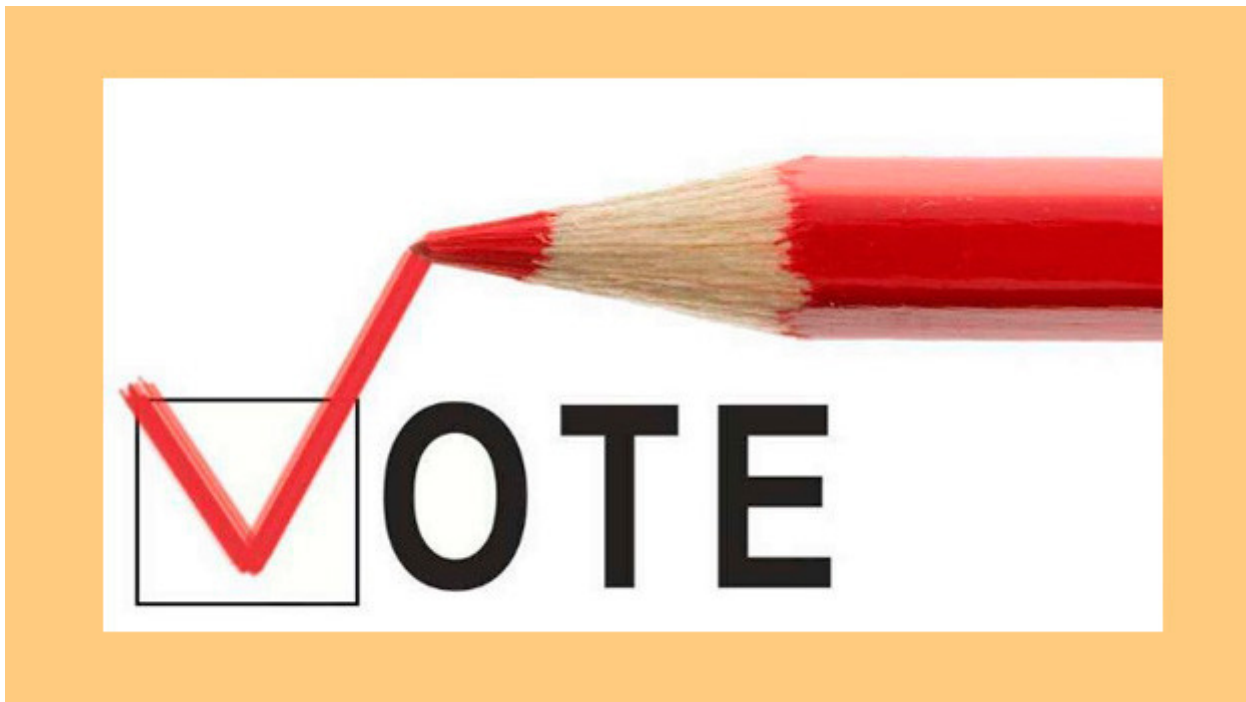


# How brands are encouraging consumers to come out and vote

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Shradha Mishra Mumbai, April 23, 2019 16 Shares Share Tweet Share Share

**With political engagement at its peak, brands are pitching in to create awareness among voters and also to increase their visibility. Several leading brands are running multimedia campaigns. BestMediaInfo.com speaks to brand heads to understand the purpose behind election-based campaigns**



Brands are latching on to the election bandwagon to reach out to consumers through cause-based marketing strategies. Several leading brands are running multimedia campaigns to create awareness among citizens to come out and vote.

Leading marketers told BestMediaInfo.com that such strategies help them to meet twin objectives of coming across as a responsible brand by promoting the 'cast your vote' cause and also maximise the brand reach because of high political engagement in the country.

Mayuri Saikia

Speaking on their branding exercises in election season, Mayuri Saikia, Marketing Head, Roca Bathroom Products Pvt. Ltd., said, "The brand always wants to connect with the masses and drive engagement, thinking more of a people's perspective. The brand feels itself to be responsible enough to tell people that they really need to step out of the house and vote. Another part



is that we need brand visibility; if some brand says that they are not seeking visibility, that's completely an untrue statement. Brand visibility at this particular point of time is very high. We decide event-based campaigns because we are responsible enough and we want to pass on the communication.”

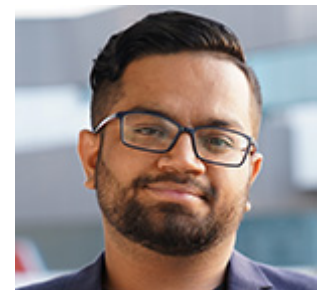
Jai Krishnan

Jai Krishnan, CEO, Samsonite South Asia, said, “For brands, elections are the biggest event this season and why should not brands be a part of it. As a responsible brand, we want to be part of the big celebration. Elections are one big celebration that every Indian is a part of, irrespective of religion and caste. Brands during this time get to connect emotionally with consumers of all types.”



Snehil Khanor

Snehil Khanor, Co-Founder and CEO of TrulyMadly, said, “I think, during election season, people are very much engaged on the screen, whether it is TV or phone, and it becomes important to get some share voice in the overall pie.”



Hitesh Dhingra

Hitesh Dhingra, Founder and CEO, The Man Company, said, “It's not about riding the political wave. As a brand, we believe in saying something or becoming part of a conversation when we have something worthwhile to say or when the occasion demands a brand dialogue. We are a brand for the modern gentleman and the topics that come under its purview are important to us and it is our responsibility to have a view on it.”



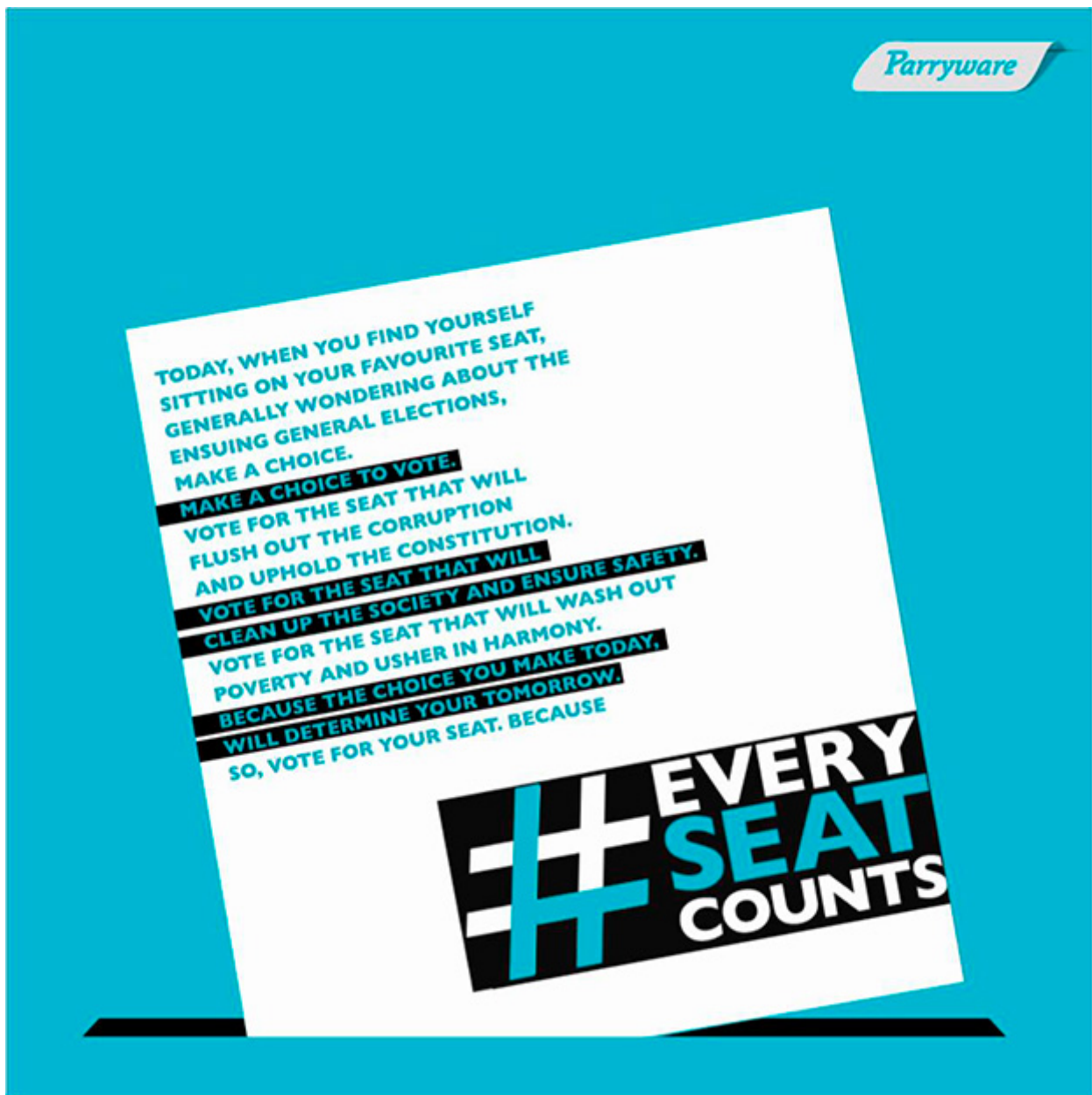
Apuarv Sethi

Apuarv Sethi, Director, Brand Marketing at Flipkart, said, “We want to connect with customers on issues that matter to them. Through this campaign, we are able to link ongoing conversations with what the Flipkart brand stands for. We felt it was important to bring to the front the idea that the single vote is the biggest equaliser that we as the world's largest democracy have. This is an idea we felt would resonate with the Flipkart customer base, and one that is in line with our ethos as a brand.”



According to Saikia, a lot of dos and don'ts were kept in mind while creating the election campaign, #EverySeatCounts. “One very important note was to not to be in favour of any political party. It is very essential to not promote any political party, be it directly or indirectly. Our focus was on the voter to turn around for the betterment of the nation.

Second thing was to flash out the ideas in our campaigns that we have planned. In our campaigns, we made sure of not using any colour that gives indication of favouring any political party,” Saikia said.



“We kept in mind to not be biased towards any political ideology and should just create a campaign to encourage voting rather than influencing whom to vote,” Khanor pointed out.

Speaking on the same, Krishnan said, “One thing we were very clear about that we will not get into any political scenario of the election, our duty is to the country. This year’s election is the huge competition between the parties and we didn’t want to get into it. We just want to remind our population about their responsibility towards the nation.”

“It’s important to keep things simple. During elections, the most important thing to tell people is to go out and vote and that’s exactly what we did. Our customers are intelligent and aware to make a decision by themselves on whom to vote; we are just a catalyst, a nudge if you may call it,” Dhingra added.

“India is such a diverse country, with so many traditions and viewpoints. We wanted an idea that was ‘people’ led. Through the Flipkart Equals Day campaign, we believe we have brought alive the very notion of democracy and equality,” Sethi added.

### **Marketing objectives behind election campaigns**

Most brands admit that the marketing objective of such election campaigns is equally divided in a 50-50 ratio. The ratio of spreading social awareness and brand visibility.

According to Saikia, the objective was to make the brand visible and Parryware’s communication to be relevant to the consumer. “The election campaign is the huge opportunity for the brand to connect with the consumers and build brand imagery. Our election campaign is not like topical campaigns we launch throughout the year, when we talk about a topical campaign we don’t put much research efforts, such campaigns are very generic ones just to drive sales and visibility. The #EverySeatCounts campaign is launched after a lot of ground research. Our team has done case studies on the issues of rural and urban India after which we showcased the constant and the emerging issues in our campaign.”

However, Krishnan of Samsonite differs, “We don’t do advertising for the sake of visibility, rather we try to maintain a connection with our consumers through advertising. To strengthen the brand and increase product sales, there are multiple ways. There is a very subtle link that we have kept of the product in the campaign. With our election campaign, we are reminding people of their basic duty to vote. To connect our brand with the fundamental right and duty, we decided that ‘travel to go’ should be the concept, later we came up with the tagline #EkDinKiChutti. Our objective behind this campaign is more social than marketing.”



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/BPBjH9FUZSE>

“The right to cast vote is just not the legal right of citizens but a responsibility too. So as a brand we wanted to urge our customers to go out there and exercise their right. Any other topical campaign is done either to create awareness of the brand or for sales, but elections are a very important subject for us and the country. And as young brand it is our responsibility to play a part in the world’s greatest democracy. Every vote counts and if we have a voice why not use it for all the right reasons,” said Dhingra.

“We do a lot of topical campaigns, but this is more than that. The primary objective here is to encourage youth to go out and cast their vote, secondary is brand visibility. It's our constitutional right and duty but still we see low turnout every time. We being a youth-centric organisation are trying to encourage youngsters, especially the first-time voters, by offering them heavy discounts if they show us their inked finger,” added Khanor.

“As a homegrown company, Flipkart's emotional connect with our customers is crucial to us. It is important for us to connect with the consumers on issues and topics that matter to them and this, the world’s largest democratic exercise, is one of those topics,” Sethi pointed out.

### **Marketing spend on campaigns**

The brands majorly spent on the digital medium for this campaign as they believed the purpose was mainly to drive the message to step out and vote this election rather than a brand recall. Besides brands also find the medium to be very cost-effective and engaging.

"We wanted this campaign to be very engaging; for that we chose digital medium as it's cost-effective and dynamic. As of now Rs 1 crore is the budget, which we have equally subdivided between digital and TV. Our campaign will be present on TV only on the election result day, May 23. If we talk about the engagement part, it is mainly driven by digital media and that's why we are focusing a lot there. TV because there is more visibility. Being a brand, it is equally important to have visibility among the masses. We did not focus on other traditional formats because we wanted this campaign to be more engaging and rather than only informative,” said Saikia.

“The kind of viral effect we received from this campaign was beyond spends we did. However, the spends were quite less and it was mainly on digital and not on TV. Our budget was Rs 1 crore but we spent Rs 70 lakh on this campaign,” added Krishnan.

Dhingra said their campaign was brainstormed and thought through in-house and executed by the creative team. “The expenses were quite less,” he said.

There should always be some relation between the message being sent out through the campaign and the brand philosophy, otherwise it is a waste of effort. How do the brands intend to relate their election campaign message to the brand?

Saikia, said, “Roca has multiple brands in the country and among them, Parryware is the most mass consuming. Parryware accounts for 75% of the total business every year. Our objective behind launching this campaign was to be present when there are lot of discussions during election time. We wanted to send the message across the country

about the importance of casting a vote to get a better government and a better growth of our nation. We have highlighted multi state-specific issues so that the consumers make an informed choice while exercising the fundamental right to vote. We believe in sensitising individuals about issues and topics that are pertinent of our times and #EverySeatCounts is one such initiative through which we are urging voters to vote for issues that are crucial to them.”

“Our values are the principal of responsibility and its integrity towards the company and that’s what we have linked in our election campaign – principal of responsibility towards the betterment of the country. Inside the company, we have announced that we will provide them ‘*Ek din ki chutti*’ (a day off) to whoever wants to go to their home towns or cities to cast their vote,” Krishnan pointed out.

According to Dhingra, the campaign and the message being sent across resonates with the ideology of The Man Company. “The brand stands for the modern gentlemen of today, who act responsibly and are aware of significant events like ‘The General Elections’. Hence, we came up with the hashtag #VoteLikeAGentleman,” he said.

“The message we are sending is simple. Just go out and exercise your constitutional right and duty. TrulyMadly being hugely popular among youth, we consider it as our responsibility to encourage the youth to do what is one of the most important things they do for their own future,” Khanor added.

“We wanted to cut through the standard narrative of appealing to Indians to vote and look at what happens after the vote, what does it mean? We wanted to showcase both the progressive vision Flipkart has for our country and how much India and its people mean to us,” said Sethi.

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