

The Outdoor Advertising & Its Visual Aesthetics: A Study On Its Function And Structure

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Abstract:

Outdoor advertising reaches hundreds to thousands of mass transit, or car on daily basis and is usually very quick and impactful advertising medium. Various media are used to advertise the products or services including newspaper, television, direct marketing, radio and the variety of other media; but apart from these media outdoor advertising media is used to inform and persuade the audiences when they are out of their homes. This outdoor media is used to deliver relevant information/ messages to the mass/ targeted audience with ease and efficiency and it is very impactful. Outdoor advertising or Out Of home (OOH) advertising always tries to meet the audiences or customers in public places who are basically pedestrians, commuters, passengers, travelers or drivers. Earlier, outdoor advertising was known as Billboard advertising as it was the only traditional format of outdoor advertising communication at that time. But later on, with the invention of new technologies and creativities, the advertising world has witnessed various changes in the economic world which leads to significant growth in the outdoor advertising system. Now, not only Billboards, Hoardings or Posters are available in the OOH (Out of Home) world, Digital out of home (DOOH) has upgraded the advertising world very fast and now the advertisers have various options to reach its targeted audiences at different locations.

Keywords: Advertising, Advertising agency, Guwahati, Guwahati Municipal Corporation, Outdoor advertising.

1.1 Outdoor Advertising: OOH Overview

Outdoor advertising media ranges in various shapes, sizes, types, methods and techniques. From 6 sheet poster sites in shopping malls to the massive 96 sheet billboards, from busy roadside areas to traffic signal booth, outdoor billboard advertising is highly cost effective for local businesses or small businesses to interact with the targeted mass. In local areas, Unipole, phone boxes, wall writing, bus shelters, transit vehicle advertising including bus and auto rickshaw, train station platforms and outdoor billboard advertising at the roadside etc. so many outdoor advertising options are available for the consumers or audiences. Besides, these outdoor advertising media plays a great role in enhancing the city's beauty.

1.2 Visual Communication in advertising

Visual is the most important part in Advertising. In case of classified and display classified advertisements of print media, visuals are not used to convey any information. But, in case of display advertisement of print media, visuals are the core and heart of the advertisement as visual creates attention. Advertising is one field that relies heavily on images to convey information or ideas. Other fields including interior design, industrial design, and publication design – these are also based on visuals. Visual communication whether it be print based (such as for books or magazines), or based on new computer technology, is growing increasingly important in our fast-paced, image- oriented society. Outdoor advertisements are also displayed in the form of print media; but in a huge and large formats as compared to newspapers, magazines etc. Visuals or images are used in outdoor advertising to give the information properly as the viewer hardly get time to read the full text of an advertisement. So, advertisers of outdoor advertising use visuals or images with short message so that viewers can easily perceive the information at one glance to the visuals of the outdoor advertising device. To understand this, the advertiser has to create and use impactful and effective visuals in the advertisements so that viewers can receive and perceive the message of the advertisement quickly and this can be possible only through visual communication.

In visual communication, images are used while sending and receiving messages. Primarily two dimensional (2D) images are associated with visual communication including alphanumeric, art, signs and electronic resource. Basically visual communication is the communication of ideas through the visual display of information. In visual communication, 'eyes' are considered as the primary sense and therefore, for example, visual display of a website is important for the users understanding of the communication taking place. An active, curious mind remembers and uses visual images in thoughtful and innovative ways. Therefore, people can choose what they read and how they think about information by its appearance and organization (Mathur 2006).

Psychological processes are involved in recognizing and understanding pictographs. Interpretation of concrete symbols can supply resources involved in interpreting the real world. On the other hand, abstract symbols can appeal referents only at the conceptual level, whereas concrete ones invoke specific objects or model. Cultural experience and context play a role in understanding of symbols.

1.2.1 Visual Literacy in Visual Communication

In the book *Visual Communication: Beyond words*, the author Pratish K Mathur (2006) has described the concept of “visual literacy” and also explained its usefulness in the field of visual communication. The term “visual literacy” was first used by the writer John Debes in 1968. When an individual enables “to understand and use visual for intentionally communicating with others” is known as visual literacy. Basically visual literacy is what is seen with the eyes and what is ‘seen’ with the mind. To be visually literate, people should be able to interpret the content of visual images and examine the social impact of those images. Also visually literate person is able to visualize internally and communicate visually to comprehend and appreciate the visuals created by others, and visualize objects in their mind’s eye. Today, visual communications are becoming the largest form of communication across a range of media and formats. The ratio of visual image to text in media as well as in across the world is increasing. Charles Bumback, the chairman of the Newspaper Association of America said in 1995 that “we are heading to a culture of visual literacy”. He also said that “As newspaper presentation falls, competitors cut into newspaper ad share, and the culture itself moves from textual literacy to visual literacy” (Mathur, 2006).

1.2.2 Video visualization

A video is a piece of ordered sequential data which is a time-consuming and resource-consuming process. Video visualization is a computation process that extracts meaningful information from original video data sets and conveys extracted information to users in appropriate visual representations. Such visualization is not limited to a few statistical indicators or line graphs; it can convey much more information, especially spatial information. With carefully prepared visualizations, the human vision system is able to become accustomed to certain kinds of ‘normal’ visual patterns, and react to unusual levels or patterns of activities that need further investigation. In recent time, new computer built technologies lead to frequent transforming of communicative practices and communicative spaces. They enable new ways of communication by integrating text, static and moving images, sound and virtual presence within diverse electronic environments. The motivation of visual communication in new communicative spaces is to convey a sense of the richness and diversity of current approaches in the field by exploring visual ideology and the phenomenological analysis of interactive video (Mathur, 2006).

1.2.3 Meaning of Aesthetic

According to Oxford Living Dictionary, the definition of the adjective word ‘aesthetic’ in English is ‘Concerned with beauty or the appreciation of beauty’. Another definition from the same dictionary is ‘Giving or designed to give pleasure through beauty.’ Aesthetics refers to how human perceive and judge objects according to their attractiveness. Generally, the word ‘Aesthetic’ means the study or theory of beauty and of the psychological responses to it; the branch of philosophy dealing with art, its creative sources, its forms, and its effects.

Aesthetic word was originally derived from the Greek word ‘*aisthētikos*’ which means “relating to perceptions by the senses” in the late 18th century. The sense “concerned with beauty” was coined in German in the mid 18th century and adopted into English in the early 19th century. Visual aesthetic refers to the beauty or the pleasing appearance of things. Earlier this concept was limited to the paintings and sculpture with religious subject matter as well as on architecture designed for religious functions. But the concept of visual aesthetic is not limited to the sculpture, architecture or religious functions only, now a days, advertising media specifically the outdoor media is taking the concept of visually aesthetics to its creativity of advertisements. Not only creativity in case of campaigning, but also placing the advertisements in different locations and with pleasing appearance, OOH media is beautifying the City by its creative manner.

1.2.4 Visual Aesthetic Theory

In visual communication, aesthetic is the most important piece as it can affect the human regarding the nature of the beauty in a mysterious way. From ‘sun-set’ to the ‘half-opened rose’, nature is affecting the human so powerfully because of the essentially nonverbal nature of aesthetics and it is only “about” the nature of visual aesthetics. The aspects of visual aesthetics in communication are – i) visible, structural, and configurational in nature; ii) largely implicit in apprehension; iii) holistic in conveying meaning; and iv) cognitive in a generative sense, based on the unique type of visual logic (Smith Ken et.al, 2004).

Historically, three disciplines have been used to study about the issues related to visual aesthetics namely science, art and philosophy. Among these three aspects of aesthetics, visual arts propose the most complete and truly visible understanding. The scientific aspect of visual aesthetic can offer factual evidence on how aesthetics qualities play a foundational role in human communication (Smith Ken et.al, 2004). In the philosophic perspective, aesthetics can be defined as “the study and theory of beauty and of the psychological response to it” (Neufeldt et.al 1998). Philosophers

has described number of theories related to beauty, one of the theory was attempted by the great philosopher Plato is the theory of beauty. Plato has analyzed the beauty in mind, in body and in knowledge by describing the affective dimensions of the aesthetics response. Earlier his approach was abstract regarding the theory of beauty, but when his approach evolved as a Theory of Forms on the basis of what he determined to be properties that beautiful things have in common (Dickie, 1971). Aesthetics, being the branch of philosophy, is rich in discursive theory and interpretative speculation, but not totally helpful in understanding the role of aesthetic qualities that play in visual communication. Visual aesthetics are visual in foundation and holistic in understanding (Rewald, 1976). In the artistic perspective, artists are the makers of visual messages and they are infinitely connected to subtle aesthetic clues, their selection, manipulation and ultimate refinement. This knowledge of aesthetics relationships which are gained through visual performance definitely helps in making decision in a permanent visual record and establishing nonverbal aesthetic relationships (Smith Ken at. el, 2004). According to Dake (1993), ideas of artists are correlated to the findings from the sciences. There is a hope for more objective theory of visual aesthetic communication where science and art provide compatible perspective. In the scientific perspective of visual aesthetics, so much scientific research has been generated in the field of biological and social sciences. Regarding this, a promising perspective of knowledge based branch of scientific research is the experimental aesthetics which is known as psychology. "Collative properties" – a term created by Berlyne which defines stimulus qualities that depend on comparative comprehension with present or past stimuli. Collative variables such as complexity, ambiguity, incongruity, uncertainty, surprise, novelty and indistinctness etc. were shown to be critical in gaining and maintaining viewers' attention, critical to sustain the aesthetic experience (Berlyne, 1974). Visual communicators systematically study the capacities of the visual brain using a unique set of intuitive disciplinary tools. Dr. SemirZeki, of the International Institute of Neurasthenics, in his book *Inner Vision: An Exploration of Art and the Brain*, discusses the primary importance of a brain based disciplinary approach. According to Dr. Zeki, "All visual art is expressed through the brain and must therefore obey the laws of the brain. Whether in conception, execution or appreciation; no theory of aesthetics that is not substantially based on the activity of the brain I ever likely to be complete, let alone profound" (Zeki, 1999, p.1).

a) Aesthetics in Gantry Billboards

Advertising structure and contents shall complement each other in terms of visual communication. Only more artistic and simplistic designs with subtle colours and a minimum of copy (text) shall attract the attention of viewers. All Gantry Billboards shall be integrated into the urban landscape in the following way: The obtrusive character and unyielding lines of gantry structures shall be softened by making use of existing street trees minimize the etching of Gantry Billboards against urban skylines.

b) Aesthetics in large billboards

Due to the severe impact of Large Billboards on the visual environment preference should be given to artistically designed billboard structures.

c) Aesthetics in medium billboards

More attractive billboard structures are preferred providing a visual harmony between structure and landscape.

d) Aesthetics in small billboards

Since Small Billboards are allowed within urban road reserves it will form an integral part of the street furniture and streetscaping. The aesthetic design of both structures and advertising content shall therefore be of a high quality. The backsides of all single-sided Small Billboards shall have an acceptable aesthetic appearance.

1.3 Reasons why Outdoor Advertising is the best

General people spent one third of their day in sleeping and leisure, so advertisers get only a few time to connect with the audiences (or customers) through electronic and print media like Radio, Television, Magazine, Newspapers etc. which are available in their homes. But, advertisers can connect to (or find) its audiences outside the homes too. People knowingly or unknowingly notice the digital billboards or hoardings on daily basis. So, outdoor advertising is very accessible and effective that it can implant a message or an image or any information regarding the different product and services into the mind of a user.

The two benefits of outdoor advertising according to Dr. James M. Maskulka, PhD, are: Outdoor advertising offers a perfect creative canvas for companies to deliver their brand message. Secondly, outdoor advertising can fit into any transformational advertising strategy. Transformational advertising simply means implanting into the mind of a user, a message or an image regarding a differential product advantages.

The following points highlight the importance of OOH advertising:

- Cheapest Medium of Advertising
- Total reach; a large population at one time.
- Long Lasting Impression: the advertising message to be communicated 24 x 7 days a week.

- Target Audience: through OOH advertising, an advertiser can spread his advertising message to a wider audience.
- Continuous Awareness,
- Flexibility
- Creates long lasting Impact
- No limit to the size of the outdoor advertising.
- Immediate and Continuous Response,
- Unique and innovate
- Adaptability in terms of place and size,
- Faster in Speed
- Brevity
- Strategic Placements
- Directional showing the locations of one's business.
- Constant Reminder
- Increased OTS (Opportunity to See)
- Overcoming Fragmentation,
- Bridging the Gap between several mass media.

Though the above mentioned features describe the outdoor advertising as the best advertising medium, but few features can be seen in other advertising medium also. In Radio advertisements, listeners (target audiences) have to listen to advertisements carefully and they visualize the advertisements into their minds according to their perceptions. In television, visuals with a story telling scripts attracts the audience and plays a great role in persuading the audience, but someone has to sit on in front of TV without skipping or muting the advertisements. Same in case of newspaper also as all the readers hardly go through all the news or advertisements; but in outdoor advertising people knowingly or unknowingly go through the advertisements with 3 to 5 seconds of glance at the outdoor advertising devices into 24x7 days.

1.4 Advantages and Disadvantages of Outdoor Advertising

OOH advertisements follow its target audiences wherever they travel or move. Outdoor advertising is considered as very effective promotional tool for the products and services that the advertisers want to advertise, but like any other marketing medium, there are also some pros and cons in outdoor advertising medium also.

a) Advantages of Outdoor Advertising

Advertisers can market their products and services to its consumers within 5 seconds through outdoor advertising, especially through billboard advertising. These advertisements can make an impact in the subconscious mind of the pedestrians, commuters, drivers, passengers, and all the moving people where the billboard is located. Thus, the advertisers are able to connect to its prospective customers within short span of time.

Following are the some advantages of outdoor advertising:

1. One of the biggest advantages of outdoor advertising is that it is less expensive as compared to other advertising medium. The cost on CPM (Cost per Mille/ Thousand) is much lower in comparison to the other advertising mediums. In CPM, 'mille' means one thousand. CPM refers to the cost that an advertiser pays for one thousand views/impressions of an advertisement.
2. Outdoor advertisements are the best medium to inform the moving population who don't have time to access for TV, radio, newspapers or other advertising medium.
3. In outdoor advertising, the advantage is that the advertisers can choose the space, area or locations according to the product or services to be advertised. It can be displayed in a place where the best impact can be created.
4. Once an advertisement board or advertising panel is installed/ erected at a location/ place, it usually remains there for a fairly longer period. Thus, it creates a lasting impression on the minds of public/ target audience.
5. Another advantage in outdoor advertising is that the advertisers can select their target audience by demographic interest by creating flexibility.
6. For creating awareness in a society, outdoor advertisements are the greatest options. Erecting large size hoardings depicting large visuals and messages can be easily readable and visualize. So, it is the effective medium of awareness advertising to aware the mass.
7. Creative opportunities in the field of outdoor advertising are limitless with various shapes, sizes to colours.
8. Most of the outdoor advertisements are Huge and Eye catching which create great impacts among the consumers, even an illiterate can understand the message as visual is the most important part in outdoor advertising.
9. OOH advertisement always targets a large and diverse market
10. Information and messages through outdoor advertisements can be easily registered in the minds of consumers.
11. Outdoor advertising increases the frequency of consumer exposure as compared to the other advertising medium.

12. As outdoor advertisements have photographic information (Strong Visual effect), so they are useful for both literate and illiterate people.
13. OOH advertisements lead to quick rise in sales.
14. One positive factor of outdoor advertising is the guaranteed audience as the customers can find the advertisers easily.

b) Disadvantages of Outdoor Advertising

A huge space is used for outdoor advertisements, but it only gives a short message which must make a strong impact on prospective customers to stimulate sales, but these advertisers are not always successful in reaching its audience/ or customers.

Following are the some disadvantages of outdoor advertising:

1. Outdoor advertisement conveys limited information.
2. It can create only visual effects.
3. The effectiveness of outdoor advertisement cannot be easily measured as compared to TV, Radio, Newspaper or Magazine advertisements.
4. The advertisers cannot ascertain whether their outdoor advertisement has successfully drawn new customers or not.
5. Although outdoor advertising provides attention and memory values, it is doubtful whether it will provide action value or not.
6. OOH advertising is almost impossible to focus on a specific target market. It doesn't cater to a specific segment of the market.
7. OOH advertising costs are high for brief exposure.
8. Outdoor advertising is very easy to overlook.
9. *In outdoor advertising, there is a risk from vandalism as the billboards have to place several feet above the ground.*
10. *Weather conditions like harsh weather can damage the billboard. Sometimes, it seems that the site of the billboard is blocked by a tree or a branch which will create hinder to its visibility.*
11. *Visibility issue is also there in outdoor advertisements as sometimes billboards or hoardings or even posters may not be easily visible due to too small to be visible from far away of its placements.*
12. *Outdoor advertising is a short term advertising tool, as some advertisements are for only for short duration.*
13. *Drivers or passerby may be distracted by the billboards (especially the lit billboards or digital billboards) and get into traffic accidents.*
14. *Consumers will not be able to really grasp the message or information which the advertiser is trying to convey, unless they will be caught in traffic jam.*

1.5 Types of Outdoor Advertising

Billboard is considered as the traditional form of outdoor advertising. Therefore, in earlier days outdoor advertising was known as the billboard advertising. Though billboard is the traditional form of OOH media, but still in today's world billboard is the leading outdoor advertising tool. Other traditional ways of outdoor advertising media includes Bus Shelters, Community Branding or Brand Community, External Facades, Flyover Panels, Gantry, Hoardings, Pole Kiosk, Public Utility, Smart Bus Shelter, Social Advertising, Subway Panels, Traffic Media, Unipole, Poster etc.

In the modern world, technology as well as the creativity in the sector of outdoor advertising is so developing that it leads to more types of Out Of Home Media (OOHM) available now than ever before. The modern ways of outdoor advertising includes: Full motion video, Waste disposal bins advertising, Boat club advertising, Cinema advertising, Coffee culture advertising, Cyber café advertising, Fast-Food Chain / Restaurant Advertising, Golf Club Advertising, In-Store Advertising, Mall Advertising, Nightlife Advertising, Office Complex Advertising, Petrol Pump Advertising, Residential Building Advertising, Toll Booth Advertising, 3D Graphics, Balloon Advertising, Candy Bar Advertising, Dustbin Advertising, Elevator Advertising, Escalator Advertising, Food Court Advertisement, Lobby & Reception Advertisement, Mobile Charging Units Advertising, Seat Branding, Shoe Shine Advertising, Shopping Bag Advertising, Staircase Advertising, Ticket / Receipt/ Bill Advertising, Ticket Counter Advertisement, Washroom Advertising, Airline Advertising, Airport Advertising, Auto Rickshaw Advertising, Bus Advertising, Metro Advertising, Railway Advertising, Taxi Cab Advertising, Display Van, Aerial Advertising, LCD Advertising, Scroller Advertising, Trivision Advertising etc.

Both traditional and more innovative types of outdoor advertising ways are as follows:

1.5.1 Billboard advertising

Billboard advertising is oldest medium of Out of Home advertising media. These large posters came into common usage all the way back in the early 19th century, and have remained one of the most popular forms of outdoor advertising ever since. During the early 20th century the growing use of automobiles quickly led to companies making use of billboard advertising to publicize a wide range of products and services. These giant posters are displayed in popular locations to attract the large crowds. Therefore, Towns and Cities made use of billboard

advertising to tempt the traveler to stop long enough to see some of the local sights before moving on with the journey. Roadside restaurants made use of billboards to advertise hot meals for competitive prices. The effectiveness of these advertisements led to creating an entirely new branch of the advertising industry as clients demanded newer and more attractive ads that would catch the eye and entice the traveler to stop and spend money.

a) Various Formats of billboards

Billboards come in a variety of formats; with the definition of 'billboard' itself stating that they are 'a large outdoor board for displaying advertisements'. This is a fairly broad description, and as such, the types of billboards available include:

- i) **Static billboards:** These types of billboards typically seen on a roadside. The target audiences for static billboards are basically those who are in their vehicles; and they are targeted when they are waiting at the "Stop light" of traffic signal so that they can make their shopping or buying decisions.
- ii) **Mobile billboards:** Mobile billboards are becoming more powerful types of advertising as it is playful and cost effectiveness and popular type of outdoor advertising. These billboards are not directly in a printed form. The graphics and advertisement styles are transported on the back and side of a mobile vehicle such as a car, truck, bus, bicycle, van etc. Mobile billboards can capture the attention of anyone as long as they drive around different places, areas and locations.
- iii) **Digital billboards:** **The digital billboard can display hundreds of different advertisements.** In digital billboards, digitally animated advertisements are displayed through LED screens. **The digital advertising display panel is placed where very large numbers of people are gathered.**

b) Different types of Billboard Sign

- **Gantry Billboards:** A Gantry Billboard consists of a double-sided billboard panel positioned on a gantry structure that span the entire width or only part of the road and which are constructed for the sole purpose of displaying advertisements. Gantry Billboards may consist of two basic formats: **Portal gantries**, consisting of structures supported by poles or pillars on both sides of a road and which span the entire width of a road. **Cantilever gantries** consisting of structures supported by a single or double pole or pillar positioned on a road median and which may only span part of a road. All Gantry Billboards shall be displayed perpendicular to the direction of oncoming traffic.
- **Large Billboards:** As the name indicates these are quite large billboards ranging from 41msquare to 81m square. Shape of this type of billboard may have a rectangular or square shape. Any sign permitted by this class shall not exceed a maximum size of 81m² and a maximum overall height of 12 m. An advertisement consisting of a single board shall be displayed parallel to the road in order to hide the unattractive backside of the structure from public view
- **Medium Billboards:** Medium Billboards may also contain specialist character-cut-outs and three-dimensional presentations. Medium Billboards are a widely used outdoor medium with a variety of formats such as 6x4m and 3x12m.
- **Small Billboards:** This class consists of billboards between 9m² – 18 m². Small Billboards are a widely-used outdoor medium. It normally consists of a double-sided billboard panel with 3m x 6 m proving the most popular format (commonly known as 48 sheet signs). These billboards are vinyl posted with flexible reinforced vinyl.

c) Different Structure Categories of Billboards

Billboards are grouped into four structural categories based on the building materials used and the underlying support system. The four categories, or classifications, include:

- i) **Wood structure**
- ii) **Steel frame structure,**
- iii) **Multi-mast steel structure, and**
- iv) **Monopole structure.**

i) WOOD STRUCTURE

This class of billboards is constructed with wood posts or pole supports with dimensional lumber as the secondary support (A-frame) with a wood or metal catwalk and a single display panel. Supports may be imbedded in the ground. There may be a foundation of concrete or gravel. Lighting, if present, is either fluorescent or mercury vapor.

ii) STEEL A-FRAME

This class of billboards is constructed with angle iron or steel pole or I-beam or equivalent as primary supports with metal framing, catwalk, and a single display panel. Supports may be imbedded in the ground. There may be a foundation

of concrete gravel or equivalent. Either fluorescent or mercury vapor Lightings can be used. Platform or Catwalk, Panels, Apron and Lightings are included in the Base.

iii) MULTI-MAST STRUCTURE

The Multi- Mast Structure of billboards is constructed with steel poles, I-beam or equivalent as primary support, with a catwalk, and a single display panel. The Foundation is concrete gravel or equivalent. Platform (Catwalk), Panels, Apron and Lighting etc. are included in Base. Lighting is either fluorescent or mercury vapor. Additional panels are not used.

iv) MONOPOLE STRUCTURE

The Monopole structure of billboards is constructed with Tubular Steel Support (of various circumferences), tubular steel framing, metal catwalk and a single display panel. The foundation is concrete. Lighting is either fluorescent or mercury vapor. Catwalk, Panels, Apron, Lighting are included in the Base.

Within each of these sub-categories, there are countless individual options are available in billboard advertising. Billboards can come in almost any shape and size, can be hand-painted, printed graphically, or managed digitally, and they can be rented for varying amounts of time.

1.5.2 Point of sale advertising

This type of outdoor advertising is intended to attract the attention of a wide range of consumers. This type of advertising involves an advert or display positioned in proximity to a 'point of sale' such as the checkout section of a supermarket, or near the queue in a clothes store, with the intention of promoting a product to a consumer right as they are about to make a purchase. The point of sale 'POS' advertising is also known as or 'POP' – Point of Purchase.

Types of point of sale advertising

- Adverts above containers
- Branded display stands

1.5.3 Retail advertising

Another immensely popular and successful form of Out of Home media is retail advertising. It takes place specifically in or around retail environments, such as stores and shopping centers. Retail advertising often promotes businesses with an outlet in shopping centers or sometimes these advertisements are placed in an ample place of shopping malls so that it can easily reach its customers when they visit the premises. In recent years, improvements in printing technology have expanded the options that are available to marketers and advertisers, from simple printed adverts to more memorable displays that leave a lasting impression in the minds of the customers.

1.5.4 Vehicle advertising:

The main Purpose of vehicle advertisement is usually to increase brand awareness, but with the help of taxis or van by the printed graphic either placed on the side of the vehicle or as a vinyl wrap covering its body. These vehicles are a good way of impressing a brand in the minds of customers particularly if that vehicular is moving while delivering or shipping goods of that particular brand.

1.5.5 Construction advertising:

It seems that some advertisements placed specifically hoardings and external facades in multiple construction sites or buildings or areas in both urban and rural areas. The advertisements of this kind always keep the public aware about the brand or product and present a unique opportunity for the public by placing large size of advertisement hoarding into the building construction or sometimes it covers the whole building to promote the company or the brand. Alternatively, they can promote other local businesses who rent the available spaces.

1.5.6 Street Furniture

Street furniture advertising is another type of out-of-home (OOH) advertising which is affixed to the objects and pieces of equipment installed along streets and roads for various purposes. Street furniture using various displays often providing a public amenity and are positioned at close proximity to pedestrians for eye-level viewing or at a curbside to impact vehicular traffic.

1.5.7 Different types of Print outdoor advertising

Printed out of home advertisements refer to static media advertising that are distributed across physical spaces. These are:

- Poster
- Aerial advertising

- **Billboard bicycle**
- **Brochure Distribution**
- **Bus Advertising**
- **Commuter rail display**
- **ComPark advertising**
- **Inflatable billboard**
- **Lamppost banner advertising**
- **Premier panel**
- **Premier square**
- **Taxi advertising**
- **Wallscape**
- **Aircraft Advertising**

1.6 Digital Out Of Home (DOOH) Advertising

Out-of-home advertising (OOH) is any visual advertising media found outside of the home. This can include billboard and sign advertisements on street furniture like bus shelters or benches, in transit areas like airports or train stations, and place-based ad media which are available at a stadium or in the cinema. These various formats account for thousands of locations and millions of screens around the world.

The rise of digital media has added a new dimension to outdoor advertising. Digital displays were launched in the early Nineties, and have continued to grow rapidly ever since. Earlier before billboards had to be manually changed, digital displays offer the opportunity to switch displays within seconds. In 2003, digital displays made up only two percent of the outdoor advertising market; by 2010 it had grown to more than 10 percent and now accounts for an even higher percentage.

Another benefit of DOOH for advertisers is that it cannot be turned off, blocked or skipped like TV or online advertising; DOOH cannot be so easily avoided. In recent years, DOOH advertising has continued to evolve, with clever interactive billboards created from touch sensitive ink that plays audio when touched.

Motion DOOH advertisements can capture the attention of the outdoor audiences better than the static OOH advertisements. Digital out of Home displays are the sub-segment of electronic signage. Digital displays are used for Digital out of home services which use technologies such as LCD (Liquid Crystal Display), LED (Light Emitting Diode), projection and e-paper to display digital images, web pages, video, weather data, restaurant menus or text which can be found in public places, transportation systems, stadiums, retail stores, museums, corporate buildings, restaurants etc. to provide outdoor advertising.

1.6.1 Formats of Digital content signage

Digital content displayed on the signage is presented in one of the following formats:

- **Text** - Scrolling text. Either scrolling text, or text dynamically updated via external Newsfeed source.
- **Images** - Scrolling images, usually in the format of digital advertisement posters
- **Video** - many display control systems use canned graphics and video, however, custom video can be self-generated or contracted by many sources.
- **Interactive interfaces** - Integration of signage with a touch screen, beacons, sensors, RFID technologies, to allow for two-way communications with the users. Interactive digital signage helps to engage users and may also assist advertisers to gain insight into customer behavior.
- **Context-aware interfaces** - Integration of signage with cameras, sensors and software to monitor the ambient environment and audience, allowing signage to be updated according to the audience profile, weather conditions or some other relevant external factor.

1.7 Printing Methods of outdoor advertising

Modern advertising techniques use many ways to convey a message to its consumers. Print media, being the oldest form of advertising, still remains as the most popular form of advertising as it reaches a wide range of target audiences. The primary use of print media is to spread information about daily events and news as it is the fastest way to reach the public. Apart from that, it provides a lot of entertainment to the readers.

From woodblock printing to the digital printing, printing has definitely come a long way for the process of using ink on paper to show us images and text by using a printing press. Magazines, newspapers to the outdoor advertisements innovative printing processes are able to create a lot of interest in the minds of the public.

Banners as one of the most effective outdoor medium which can be seen at many places are made of clothes or papers and are used to inform about slogans, logos, or some messages. It is also used to publicize advertising brands in exhibitions, giving out the names of products, or services that are being provided. Like banners, posters also come under the same category for the same purpose. Posters are mostly hung at a height from the ground and are used to attract the attention of the passersby or the public. The primary use of posters can be seen in political campaigns. Both banners and

posters are customized and include text as well as graphics—that too in a huge size so that the message is seen from far. It is a self-made form of advertising.

Though most of the Billboards are now become digital, but they qualify under the category of print media as the advertisements are printed on the billboard. These include text and graphics, mostly as a combination which make it more appealing.

Billboards have fixed locations and are huge in size so that it can be seen and read from a long distance. The price rate of billboard advertising depends on the size, location of the billboard, and mostly on the duration of the advertisement. A flyer, a medium of outdoor advertising is also a part of print media. Some of the big companies may not use this type for advertising of targeting the market, but for small organizations, it can be very useful and can help in generating business. A flyer should always be crisp and eye-catching so that it attracts people's attention.

Flyers can be distributed in exhibitions, or can be put on walls of colleges and schools depending on the type of message or the kind of audience an organization is looking for. Printing of flyers is also inexpensive, and so it can be distributed in the neighborhood or at signals. They are commonly used for advertisements specifically for local events and parties.

1.7.1 Materials used for the printing of Outdoor Advertisements

a) Polyethylene (PE)

Polyethylene is a widely used plastic thermoplastic polymer consisting of long chains of monomer ethylene. It is used to make single sheet posters or other billboard substrates and is recyclable.

b) Polypropylene (PP)

Polypropylene is a widely used thermoplastic polymer with an intermediate level of crystallinity between that of low-density and high-density polyethylene. It is used to make single sheet posters or other billboard substrates and is recyclable.

c) Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC)

Polyvinyl Chloride is a thermoplastic polymer constructed of repeating vinyl groups or ethenyls having one of their hydrogens replaced with a chloride group. The vinyl is commonly used as an advertising substrate for bulletins and some poster products.

1.8 Innovation in outdoor advertising: Lenticular Billboard

Innovation can be defined as the application of new ideas to the products, processes, or other aspects of the activities of a firm that lead to increased “value.” This “value” is defined in a broad way to include higher value added for the firm and also benefits to consumers.

Recently, Rays 3D have created the world’s largest lenticular 3D hoarding through Power Point Presentation software for Mumbai’s Political Party- BhartiyeVidhyarthisenar . It proves to be a highly interactive and engaging medium in the outdoor advertising industry.

(Source: Encyclomedia Networks Pvt. Ltd. Outdoor Source: Rays 3D)

1.9 An Overview on Indian Outdoor Advertising

The **Indian Outdoor Advertising Association** has given a format of the Outdoor advertising media and structure which is applicable in India. The Indian Outdoor Advertising Association (IOAA) has given a definition of “Outdoor Advertising Media” as follows:

“Outdoor Advertising Media or OOH media is defined as, and includes in any manner such as announcement or direction by word, letter, model, image, or a combination thereof, a sign or message by means of posters, hoarding boards, kiosks, banners, temporary arches, illuminated signs or messages, name boards, direction boards, or banners mounted on mobile vehicles like buses, cars or trains, balloons or any other visible or audible media, displayed to promote a product or service in a commercial sense or in a sense of social or public service, located on any property owned privately or by the State.”

a) Format of Hoarding in India

According to Indian Outdoor Advertising Association, The format of hoarding shall be landscape or portrait with a minimum size of 9 Sq. m., parameters of space between adjacent hoardings, angle of placement with regard to direction of traffic, height of display from ground, display area for various zones, placement at road crossing or near specified public buildings shall all be strictly compliant with zoning laws of relevant municipality or state / central government body, for roads, within urban areas or on state/national highways, respectively. They shall not obscure or interfere with any road traffic light or sign. Illumination of billboards, including by use of neon lights, or use of dynamic messages on digital boards, shall be permitted provided such illumination or dynamic messaging complies with appropriate local regulations. The traffic flow should not be impeded during erection or servicing of a billboard on a public road unless prior permission has been obtained and the necessary safety precautions arranged.

b) Structure of Bus Shelters in India

A bus shelter may be a single structure with roof and place for commuter to wait or it may include a separate adjunct structure for display of advertisements located on one side of the main structure as a floor-mounted panel. Placement,

distance between adjacent shelters, design of structure and roof, design of adjunct structure shall in all cases comply strictly with all relevant rules and regulations, including designs, illumination and hygiene rules, of local municipality and/or transport company or relevant department of State / Central Government.

c) Exteriors of Moving Vehicles in India

All applications onto vehicles shall comply with all regulations, by-laws and rules governing this sector such as taxi associations and/or any other body that has control of the mobile media category being utilized. The media owner shall rectify any damage to a vehicle as a result of the application of the branding in reasonable time at the end of the campaign. All by-laws and regulations pertaining to such advertising shall be adhered to at all times.

d) Digital Displays in Outdoor Advertising Structure

Digital displays may by way of LED Boards, LCD panels or other digital displays, attached to hoardings, bus shelters, bridge panels, or any other structures. Digital displays shall be used in strict compliance with local rules governing display of animated pictures on roads and shall not be mounted in a way to be in line of sight with traffic lights.

1.9.1 Criteria for Indian Outdoor Advertising Signage

- Signs shall not obstruct vehicular or pedestrian traffic, signal lights and street signs/lights.
- Advertising signs and structures shall not obstruct, confuse or distract the view or interpretation of any public signs, traffic signs or devices and which may blind motorists.
- Signs shall be so structurally designed so as to conform to the standards set forth by the applicable local building and structural codes
- All display content shall conform to the standards set forth by the Advertising Standards Council of India.
- Signs shall be inspected regularly to maintain their structural integrity to ensure safety. Advertising structures which are vacant shall be installed with public service or company ads so as not to be eyesores.
- Sign structures which are no longer to be used shall be dismantled by the outdoor advertising firm which erected the said structures.
- Temporary signs, regardless of material and size, whose sole purpose is commercial in nature, i.e. to promote a product and/or service of private companies, shall not be strung or installed over or across any public thoroughfare or along islands or sidewalks or street lamp posts, unless otherwise permitted by law ordinance.

1.9.2 Criteria for Outdoor advertising Copy and Design in India

Outdoor/Hoarding materials are generally post-screened, except in the following cases where prescreening shall be required prior to posting:

- Materials for infant food formula.
- Materials that show partial or total nudity or skimpy attire or any visuals/copy/elements that suggest sexual stimulation or satisfaction or gratification
- Political Advertisements.
- Material relating to tobacco and liquor consumption.

All the above mentioned codes of practices and standards are given by Indian Outdoor Advertising Association (IOAA) which is implanted to all the media agencies of India.

According to Indian Outdoor Advertising Association 2014, "Billboards, neon signs, tri-vision displays, electronic displays and all other forms of outdoor displays should allow for at least one (1) meter distance from another, on all sides. Where advertising displays are installed in a common structure, they shall be separated by a distance of at least one (1) meter on all sides." Violating this may lead to cancellation of trade license.

1.10 Out-Of-Home Audience Measurement

Audience measurement means how many people are actually pertaining to a particular media or information. Usually in relation to radio listenership and television viewership, but also in relation to newspaper and magazine readership and, increasingly, web traffic on websites. The term audience research is used as pertaining to practices which help broadcasters and advertisers determine who is actually listening rather than just how many people are listening.

BARC (Broadcast Audience Research Council) India now measures and reports TV viewership that happens in social hot-spots like restaurants, pubs, and bars in select cities.

The OOH research in India is in its infancy. There is no industry currency and buying and selling primarily happens based on either the traffic and profile data provided by the vendor or the advertising agency.

Out of home media has a new audience measurement system that reports its true value is TAB (Traffic Audit Bureau) Out Of Home Ratings. The Traffic Audit Bureau (TAB) calculates weekly circulation using official (Government) traffic counts factors in visibility, and assigns demographic profiles to panel locations. This produces OOH ratings.

1.10.1 Methods of calculating outdoor advertising audience measurement

For over 75 years, Daily Effective Circulation (DEC) is measuring circulation, or the number of times people (18+ of age) passed an out of home display in a day. TAB (Traffic Audit Bureau) Out Of Home Ratings goes way beyond

DEC-based measurement, becoming the advertising industry's first media measurement system that reports audiences who actually see the outdoor advertisements. TAB Out Of Home Ratings represents the average number of persons who are likely to notice an ad viewed on an outdoor display, that include bulletins, posters, junior posters, and bus shelters. DEC also calculates audience measurement for pedestrians, bicycles, motorcycles, car weekdays, and holidays on a day and also for a week.

Methods:

- DEC calculates by considering 12 hours (from 6am to 6pm) in a day for non-illuminating outdoor advertising display device; and 18 hours (from 6am to 12am, midnight) per day for illuminating outdoor advertising device.
- DEC divides one day into four time zones of 3 hours each (total 12 hours), and measure for pedestrian, bicycle, motorcycle, car, weekday, holiday for 15 minutes in each time zone, $DEC = 15 \times 4 \times 1$ day. The average of the weekly DEC is calculated by 3×4 and DEC on weekdays $\times 5 +$ DEC on weekends $\times 2 \times 7$.

Out-of-home advertisements are different from other advertising media, because this type of advertisements are on a fixed panel and is only available to be seen by the individual if they come within range. It means that the primary element of the measurement of outdoor advertising can be established by the number of people who see a given panel in a specific time period.

Following are the elements that are required by the media researchers to accurately measure the out-of-home audience.

- A clear statement of the geographic area and population being surveyed
- An accurate list of the type, position and visibility of all display panels being measured
- A survey of individuals' behaviour who are exposed to the outdoor advertisements
- An estimate of number of people in the target audience passing through the every advertising panel
- An estimate of the numbers of people who has seen the panel
- Traffic count

Some related terms related to outdoor advertising audience measurement

- **Mobility**

Mobility word is used to mean any movement or journey which starts from outside the home whether on foot or on vehicle.

- **Opportunity to Contact (OTC)**

An OTC occurs when an individual passes an advertising panel and is able to see it. This is usually calculated by combining data from survey and/or mobility modelling with information about the type, positioning and illumination of advertising panels.

- **Opportunity to See (OTS)**

A basic measure of media exposure. OTS estimates are measures of media exposure (e.g. magazine readership or the TV program exposures) and not the advertising. OTS is today's standard for reporting ratings for all media types except OOH.

- **Visibility Adjusted Contact (VAC)**

Visibility adjusted contact (VAC) is the number of people who will look at a given poster on a site at least once, based on the characteristics of the site itself and the behaviour of the individual.

- **Traffic data**

Traffic data is the volume of vehicular or the pedestrian crosses in front of the advertising panel.

- **Permanent Panel**

Any display panel that is permanently fixed to an object, for example to a wall, a building, a bus, train, bus shelter etc. is known as permanent panel.

- **Visibility Adjustment**

Visibility adjustment is derived from the research of cognitive psychology which means when an individual has an Opportunity to Contact a panel by an individual who has a probability to look on the message of the advertising panel.

1.10.2 Principles of OOH Audience Measurement:

The audience measurement of outdoor advertising is based on the following principles which are generally, applicable to all media and specifically to OOH audience measurement:

1. Location

First of all, while measuring the outdoor advertising audience, an ideal location to be chosen to place the advertisements to target the chosen audience demographic with the right message and the message should have a strong CTA (call to action).

2. Study on the Marketplace:

To measure the out-of-home audience in a specific area or location, it is essential for the advertiser to undertake a thorough study of the whole market place of the country or the area in general and specifically the target audiences who may be get influenced by outdoor advertising so that it can fulfill the requirements and the needs of the target audiences.

3. Coordination:

There should be a complete coordination between the research companies and the out-of-home audiences on a regular basis. There should be an advisory body who is assigned the task of ensuring that a proper coordination exists between the research companies, the advertising media and the customers.

4. Information should be open for all

The information related to the procedure followed to measure the OOH audience along with its proof should be made available open to all. This information will not only help a user to understand the deficiencies of a market but to understand the target audiences also.

5. Scientific Method should be used:

The measurement methods should be scientific in nature. The system of measurement should be valid and reliable enough to measure what is actually required for outdoor advertising audience measurement.

6. Best Research Practices:

Data collection procedure as well as report analysis methods should be accurate for outdoor advertising audience measurement. Otherwise, data and information will be invalid. For best results, ideal research practices should be adopted which are available for the same. Besides, transparency should be maintained at each and every level.

7. Quality Control:

In order to maintain quality at each level, adequate quality control measures need to be observed in each and every step of the research i.e. in collection of data, classification, tabulation, editing and report writing. The out-of-home audience measurement procedures should comply with all the prescribed national and international codes of conduct.

8. Increasing Response:

In order to extract reliable and accurate information from the respondents, it should be ensured that the respondents are not overburdened. This will help to maximize the response rates and reduce the level of biasness. Also, the respondents would be made comfortable to maintain their confidential and private issues.

9. Observing Equality:

In order to ensure fairness in the measurement procedure, it is essential that all the audience groups are exposed to same conditions. Transparency should be adopted regarding the measurement procedures and systems followed. Because, fair dealing between the sellers and buyers of advertising space can lead to healthy relationship between the advertisers and the advertising agencies.

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