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WHAT IS SUNBURNITIS? SHOULD YOU BE WORRIED?

Researchers define Sunburnitis as 'a chronic case of happiness without any discernible stimuli'. Brain mapping has revealed that neurons start swaying to an imaginary beat causing the subjects to break out in a spontaneous dance, even at inopportune moments like funerals, dental examinations and court appearances. So should you be worried you might get happy? More on that later.

WHERE DID SUNBURNITIS BEGIN? AND HOW?

It is believed that Candolim Beach in Goa is Ground Zero where Sunburnitis originated. It was first noticed among participants at the Sunburn Music Festival held during the last week of December. Behavioral experts believe a heady cocktail of the balmy Goan air, powderly white beaches, the blue waters of the Arabian Sea and the presence of the world’s biggest DJs combined to create a fertile condition where the happiness virus grew. The experts were last seen entering a beach shack.

SUNBURNITIS. YOU CAN RUN BUT YOU CAN’T HIDE.

A kibbutz in Israel. Sheep farms in New Zealand. Frozen wastelands in Siberia. Golf courses in Japan. The truth is Sunburnitis has the potential to reach any place on earth (except Greece where people can’t afford to travel anywhere). Over 100,000 participants from 26 countries attended the Sunburn Music Festival. Each of them has the potential to transmit the virus to at least 100 friends via social media, who in turn... look, you can do the math yourself. The bottom line is actually at the bottom of this page.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU HAVE SUNBURNITIS.

1. Mild Sunburnitis usually disappears in a few days by subjecting patient to gradually decreasing doses of dance music.
2. Moderate Sunburnitis requires moderate treatment. Patients should be induced to watch cricket matches from the India-Australia series. Good humour quickly dissipates and frustration takes over, signifying a return to normalcy.
3. Acute Sunburnitis lasts forever. Such people will remain in a state of perpetual bliss. Smile back kindly at them and avoid their attempts to embrace you (or bump your leg).

HOW TO AVOID GETTING SUNBURNITIS.

1. Don’t leave home. Remember no place is completely free of contamination.
2. Resist the temptation to read the words ‘Sunburn Music Festival’. There, you just did.
3. If you find yourself near anyone affected by Sunburnitis, close your eyes, ears, nose and mouth tightly. Breathe occasionally, if necessary or possible.

THE SUNBURN MUSIC FESTIVAL IS MOVING ON TO BALL, PATTAYA AND COLOMBO... YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

It is Asia’s largest Electronic Dance Music Festival already. At the rate it’s growing, it will soon be the universe’s largest. That means more DJs. More people. More happiness. And more Sunburnitis.
With much promise, were the 784 entries made to the WOW Awards 2012 sent forth for judging last month. While jury members continue to ponder over the most deserving campaigns by the 244 applicants this year, they also prepare for the second stage of the judging process, which will take place in March.

Each year of the WOW Awards has seen a healthy inclusion of newer applicants and agencies. But this year, it can be safely said, the surge has been overwhelming. Most of this increase coming from brands directly entering their campaigns and properties for the awards.

Close to 397 brands’ campaigns will vie for top honours in 27 categories this year. The WOW Awards 2012 ceremony will in some way be the sum of all these experiences culminating, along with the custodians of these experiential platforms, to celebrate the best of the best.

And that’s not all we have to look forward to. The WOW Awards comes with an assurance of a celebration of the experiential marketing industry like no other. EVENTFAQS is taking every effort to strengthen its partnership with every stakeholder of the experiential marketing industry.

And what experience would be complete without its entertainment quotient? The WOW Awards 2012 will also mark the unveiling of the third edition of the ‘Entertainers Connect’ special handbook. An essential guide to some of the most unique and engaging entertainers across India, EC (as we like to call it), will also extend itself at the WOW Awards after party!

karishma@eventfaqs.com
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Maihar Cement initiates road show to promote Birla Gold

Maihar Cement has organised a road show to promote the Birla Gold brand as a superlative component for construction purposes. The creative responsibility was given to Ascent Brand Communications in Nov. 2011, as the campaign is a one and a half year activation, slated to roll out again in Feb., targeting Bihar, and central and eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Pradeep Yadav, Manager-Strategic Planning and Development, Ascent Brand Communications said: “The mandate is to project Birla Gold as the one for full house construction and let people know which major constructions in the public domain have used Birla Gold cement.”

Snapdeal.com partners Aurora Comms to connect with consumers

Snapdeal partnered with Aurora Comms for a campaign to connect the brand with consumers at consumer spend zones. Snapdeal took its Yum-Dude TVC to 35 Croma and 20 E-Zone stores in 12 prime markets across the country. This two-month campaign ended in the third week of Feb. A Comms set up a streaming communication on LCD television panels in electronic stores, thus creating an experiential zone.

Abhimanyu Rishi, Head Activations, Snapdeal.com said: “Our tie-up was a unique attempt to promote Snapdeal.com to the smart, upwardly mobile urban citizen. We wanted to drive home our messages innovatively, not intrusively.”

Toyota Kirloskar Motor kicks off EMR campaign

Toyota Kirloskar Motor kicked off an Etios Motor Racing (EMR) on-ground promotional activation campaign that began on Jan. 28 and 29 in Chandigarh and Mohali, and will continue until May. The EMR cars will be touring 14 cities and 24 dealerships. Dentsu is responsible for executing the activity. The activity aims to reach out to 25,000 people just by conducting dealership activations.

Sandeep Singh, Deputy MD, Marketing, Toyota Kirloskar Motor said: “The EMR activation will re-emphasize Toyota’s efforts to reach out to the younger target group through the Etios brand and more importantly, take motorsports closer to its customers and the youth of the country.”

Volkswagen positions itself as responsible brand with ‘Think Blue’

‘Think Blue’ is Volkswagen’s philosophy which has been designed to promote the brand’s corporate objective of sustainability and environmental protection. Mudra Max executed a campaign to promote the same in Mumbai and Delhi. The campaign, which began on Dec. 15, 2011, is still underway.

Bishwajeet Samal, Head of Marketing Communication, Volkswagen India said: “Our aim is to drive home the message of ‘Think Blue. Drive Blue’ with activations like the Beetle art piece constructed out of scrap, and creating a billboard in New Delhi from garbage collected in cleanliness drives. We look forward to taking up similar initiatives to further strengthen our ‘Think Blue.’ philosophy in India.”

Maaza comes out with new campaign

The new campaign for Coca-Cola’s mango-based drink, Maaza, focuses on the idea that the drink is available around the year and is the closest the country has to substitute the mango in the off-season. In addition to leveraging mass media advertising, the communication plan includes OOH media, point of sale merchandise and on-ground initiatives across all key markets.

“The mango has always been India’s favourite fruit, with people eagerly waiting to consume the fruit in its season. With Maaza, the delightful experience of tasting mangoes is an all season treat - and this proposition is brought alive with the campaign. We launched the campaign a few weeks ago and the response has been very encouraging,” said Andriy Avramenko, VP - Juice Business, Coca-Cola India.

Apollo Munich promotes insurance product with Snowfall in Chennai

To build a brand connect around the launch of Apollo Munich Health Insurance’s product, Optima Restore, the company conceptualised an activity called ‘Snowfall in Chennai’ at the Express Avenue Mall on Feb. 18 and 19. The activation was targeted towards the general public who are looking for a health insurance product and reached out to more than 1,00,000 people. Mudra Max was responsible for executing the event.

Vikram Basrao, Manager, Mudra Max-OOH said: “Chennai was chosen as an appropriate city as it is one of the most important markets to Apollo Munich. We might replicate this event in Delhi, but there are no immediate plans for now.”
**Yes Group to organize Health and Fitness Expo**

Yes Group will organize the Health and Fitness Expo 2012 at MMRDA Grounds in Bandra-Kurla Complex, Mumbai, on May 11, 12 and 13. The event expects a participation of 80 to 100 brands and a crowd of 40,000. Grey Media Worldwide will be marketing and promoting the expo on a pan India level.

Avi Rajawat, Director, Yes Group said: “I have lived abroad and seen health and fitness expos, which are a rage. India is not a developing economy anymore. The population is educated and there is a need for platforms to give people an opportunity to source the best for a healthy lifestyle.”

**IBF introduces Indian Television Fest 2012**

In celebration of the television broadcasting industry in India, the Indian Broadcasting Foundation, (IBF), the body which represents the television broadcasting industry, is presenting The Indian Television Fest 2012 on Nov. 2 and 3 in Goa. The fest will bring the entire Indian television under one roof to collaborate, exchange, ideate, view and review. This event will be managed by Seventy EMG.

Uday Shankar, President, IBF said: “The Indian Television Fest is for the industry, by the industry and of the industry. Set in the relaxing environs of Goa, it is the perfect opportunity for the industry to network, exchange ideas and interact with professionals, entrepreneurs and global experts from the entire value chain of television broadcasting.”

**IPBA organises 22nd annual meeting and conference**

The Inter-Pacific Bar Association is an international association of business and commercial lawyers who have an interest in the Asia-Pacific Region. The IPBA’s 22nd annual meeting and conference was held at Hotel Taj Palace, New Delhi from Feb. 29 to Mar. 3. ICE - Integrated Conference and Event Management was the conference organiser and DMC for the conference.

Naveen Rizvi, VP India and Business Head, ICE said: “This is an annual conference which takes place in different Asian countries. We were selected through a pitch process. ICE handled the congress secretariat arrangements, online and offsite registrations, social programs and gala dinners.”

**Impresario manages 70th edition of AIOC in Kochi**

The All India Ophthalmological Society organises the All India Ophthalmological Conference every year in Feb. The society organised the 70th edition of the All India Ophthalmological Conference at Le Meridian, Kochi. The conference, which took place from Feb. 2 to 5, was managed by Impresario Event Management. The event was attended by 5,000 delegates, with their families.

Harish Babu, MD, Impresario Event Management said: “Impresario put up the structure and plan, taking into consideration the suggestions of the committee. The conference was eco-friendly, creating a green concept with the use of plastics and flex boards kept to a minimum.”

**Coke organizes day to remember**

To ensure happier employees, Coca-Cola planned a family day event. ‘A Day To Remember’ was the theme for the Coke family day event that was managed by Green Network Events and Promotions. The event, held on Feb. 4 at Vedanta Farms in Ghaziabad, brought together 1,500 employees to celebrate and honour each other and their accomplishments. The goal of the event was to bring the employees and families of Coke together for a fun day.

“We got the event after a multi-agency pitch. Coke had used the same vendor for a while and was looking for someone different and innovative. It was a great experience working with the Coke team, and being able to do something different and not run of the mill added to the experience,” said a spokesperson from Green Network Event.

**IPHA hosts the 56th All India Annual Conference**

Executive Events managed the 56th All India Annual Conference for The Indian Public Health Association, which aims at the advancement of public health and allied sciences in India, and the protection and promotion of the health of the people. The conference was held at the IMA House, Kochi from Feb. 10 to 12. This conference witnessed more than 1,000 delegates attending the event.

Raju Kannampuzha, MD, Executive Events said: “We won the mandate based on our execution of the various medical conferences that we have organised in Kerala. This year, we had almost 25 per cent more delegates attending.”

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Baajaa Gaajaa showcases the diversity of Indian music

Baajaa Gaajaa is an annual music festival dedicated to the diversity of Indian music by musicians Shubha Mudgal and Aneesh Pradhan. The fourth edition of the festival took place on Feb. 10, 11 and 12 at Ishanya in Yerawada, Pune. The event saw 40 performances across three performance areas and engaged around 10,000 people. Baajaa Gaajaa was organized by Underscore Records and managed by Live Wire Events.

Aneesh Pradhan, Director, Underscore Records said: “This festival addresses the diversity of music and features all kinds of music. Each year, we try to feature music that we haven’t included earlier.”

Wassup! Andheri rescheduled

Wassup! Andheri, conceptualised by Ajay Modgil of F5 Advertainment, has now been rescheduled to take place from March 16 to 18 instead of Jan. This rescheduling is said to be in response to the inquiries received not only from Mumbai but also other parts of India and abroad. Thus, F5 Advertainment intends to rework their strategy, team and itinerary to scale up the magnitude accordingly.

Modgil said: “We began focusing on areas in and around Andheri, but we received a lot of inquiries from other parts of the country and even from outside. This made us rework our plans and now, we are back on a much larger scale and with incredible talent from all walks of life.”

OML brings DJ David Guetta to headline Eristoff Invasion

Only Much Louder (OML), in partnership with UKNY Music, is organising the second edition of the Eristoff Invasion in New Delhi on March 9; Pune on March 10; and Bangalore on March 11. This edition will bring DJ David Guetta to India. Around 10 to 15 per cent of OML’s marketing budget has been allocated to BTL activities to promote the event.

Arvind Krishnan, Director-Marketing, Bacardi India said: “Eristoff has always been a highly evolved and edgy brand globally, and encouraged people to live life more instinctively. Eristoff Invasion provides the ideal environment for them to do just that, especially with David Guetta on stage.”

Cobalt to organise cultural festival M.A.D.

Cobalt Experiential Marketing is organising a cultural festival called M.A.D. at the Fern Hills Royal Palace, Ooty from April 5 to 7. The music, arts and dance festival is an annual extravaganza that will promote India’s destinations and showcase an eclectic mix of traditional and contemporary music, arts, dance and other performing arts. The festival will unfold at a different destination, each year.

“We believe that music and the arts have the power to move people, to overcome any barrier and come together. Anybody who makes it to the festival will leave feeling refreshed and inspired,” said Kabir Ahmed, Artistic Director.

Seventh edition of ‘Live from the Console’ held in February

Sony Music’s Day1 and Oranjuice Entertainment collaborated to organise ‘Live from The Console at Rowson’s Reserve Smooth Spaces’ with an aim to provide a platform for former indie bands to showcase their talent. This was the seventh edition of the festival, which took place on Feb. 25 at Mehboob Studio in Bandra, Mumbai. Around 400 to 500 music-afficionados attended the event.

Owen Roncon, Partner, Oranjuice Entertainment said: “We have been active in executing a lot of music events and wanted to be more evolved by contributing towards a platform that was beneficial to both consumers and artists. Sony Music’s Day1 and Oranjuice wanted to do something related to Indie music and hence, ‘Live from the Console’.

Junoon celebrates 20th Anniversary by touring five cities in India

Diaspore - Live Media & Entertainment has been roped in by Junoon to produce and promote ‘Junoon Live in Concert - For Peace, Love and Passion’. The five-city tour is scheduled to begin in April. The concert plans to engage around 10,000 to 12,000 people in Pune and between 5,000 and 8,000 people in the other cities.

Darpan Trisal, Founder and CEO, Diaspore-Live Media & Entertainment said: “We’ve known the band for a long time and they approached us to execute the activity for them. Diaspore will initiate activations, meet and greet sessions, contests, road shows and mail activations to create more awareness about the concerts across the cities.”
The Mahindra Great Escape celebrates 87th year in Chandigarh

Conceptualized in 1996, the Mahindra Great Escape is considered one of India’s most popular off-road adventures. The 87th edition of the event took place in Chandigarh on Feb. 15, with more than 50 vehicles from the Mahindra stable traversing the challenging route. The rally saw participation from Mahindra customers in Chandigarh and neighbouring areas.

Vivek Nayer, Senior VP, Marketing, Automotive Sector, Mahindra & Mahindra said: “This event tested the limits of both man and machine to the extreme. Real time tweets and updates on social networking sites added to the overall excitement of the rally.”

Maruti Suzuki Desert Storm Rally flags off its tenth edition in Delhi

The 10th edition of the Maruti Suzuki Desert Storm Rally, flagged off in New Delhi on Feb. 20, saw motorsport enthusiasts competing to cover a distance of 3,500kms over the course of six days. Maruti Suzuki Desert Storm was organized in partnership with Northern Motorsport for the 10th year running. This edition of the rally recorded the highest ever participation, with over 280 participants.

Shashank Srivastava, Chief GM (Marketing), Maruti Suzuki said: “Every year, our effort is to enhance the excitement and thrill of these events. Motorsports events are also important to us from feedback perspective as these inputs form a basis for product improvements.”

DNA initiates ‘I Can’ Women’s Half Marathon

DNA has initiated the first edition of ‘I Can Women’s Half Marathon’, scheduled to take place on March 11 at Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai. The objective of this initiative is to support three social causes - education of the girl child, women’s safety in public places and awareness of cervical cancer. The marathon plans to engage around 5,000 participants in the age group of 20 to 35 years.

Gautam Dalal, VP Marketing, DNA said: “From the time we launched, we have ensured that every section of our paper remained conscious of the reader. DNA has a large number of working women as its readers. This prompted the launch of the first ever half marathon for women.”

Godrej Properties initiates golf tournament

On Feb. 4, Godrej Properties organised the inaugural edition of the Godrej Properties Golf Challenge at the Eagleton Golf Course, Bangalore. Managed by Professional Management Group, the event aimed at engaging corporations as a part of Godrej Properties’ networking initiatives. The event brought together around 93 golf enthusiasts of the corporate world, industrialists and sportsmen.

Melroy Dsouza, COO, Professional Management Group said: “We have been active in executing many sports initiatives and when Godrej Properties gave us a brief to execute something different, we chose golf as it is a sport which caters to a very niche audience. Godrej Properties plans to organise the same in Chennai and other cities.”

Idea launches Punjab Kabaddi tournament at village level

To harness Punjab’s sporting talent, Idea Cellular has announced a state Kabaddi tournament, the Idea Shaan-e-Punjab Kabaddi Cup, in association with the Punjab Sports Department. This will be a village level Kabaddi tournament involving the youth across Punjab. More than 300 teams from over 2,400 villages will get to participate in this tournament.

Anish Roy, COO-Punjab, Idea Cellular said: “Idea wishes to harness the talent base in this state by giving young athletes a platform to showcase their sporting talent. Idea is the first telecom brand to reach out to the youth in the state with such initiatives at the village, city, school and college level and we hope to build the property further.”

BBC World News and Ministry of Tourism hold Spirit of Golf 2012

BBC World News hosted the Spirit of Golf 2012 tournament on Feb. 11 at the Jaypee Greens in New Delhi, in association with the Ministry of Tourism, India, which has been involved in the tournament since its inception. In its seventh edition, the tournament saw participation from corporate and political leaders.

Anand Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India said: “There is huge scope for attracting Golf tourism in India and we are committed to promoting golf in India. BBC World News has been a long standing partner with us and we value the association.”

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Disney XD brings Kick Buttowski character to life

Disney XD is taking cartoons three dimensional with a first-of-its-kind remote controlled model of its lead character, Kick Buttowski-Suburban Daredevil. The life size model of Kick Buttowski on a skateboard, is making appearances at malls across 10 cities in the next few weeks.

Bikram Duggal, Director Marketing, WaltDisney Television International India said: “Interactive experiences that connect with kids and families have always been the center-piece of our marketing activities. This innovation complements our recently launched language feeds in Marathi and Bengali, which is a first for a kid’s channel.”

SAB TV celebrates success with the SAB family and viewers

In celebration of its philosophy of ‘Aasli Mazaa Sab Ke Saath Aata Hai’, SAB TV organised an event titled ‘Uthe SAB Ke Kadam’, which was telecast on SAB TV on Feb. 4. This event saw artists from the SAB family coming together for an evening of performances, comedy acts, spoofs and parodies.

Anooj Kapoor, Executive VP & Business Head, SAB TV said: “Going with the brand promise of our channel, we thought of a concept to create a fun filled, entertaining event that the entire family can enjoy and cherish. This event was to celebrate the success of our shows on SAB.”

BIG FM brings women back to the fore with BIG Memsaab 5

Riding on a successful four years in the Hindi heartland, the fifth edition of reality-based radio show and on-ground property ‘BIG Memsaab’ will be launched across 13 Indian states. Conceptualized by 92.7 BIG FM, this property is a platform for women to showcase their hidden talent and skills, which is deserving of recognition from society.

A company spokesperson said: “Given the success so far, we feel the time is right to take this woman-centric property to other parts of the country. We also feel obliged to spread the social message of women empowerment, and will use every resource to spread this socially relevant message.”

MY FM RJs shake a leg with listeners

94.3 MY FM recently caught its listeners by surprise with a series of flash mobs in 17 cities. The objective was to break the monotony with an activity that was synonymous with the spontaneity of ‘Jiyo Dil Se’ and the impulsive spirit of letting loose and living life to the fullest. The listeners were treated to the sight of their favourite RJs getting down with the masses on a special musical composition with the station jingle.

Vijay Balan implores people to help her find her husband

In order to promote Bollywood movie ‘Kahani’, scheduled to be released on March 9, Digit9.0 managed a promotional campaign for Viacom 18. People were deployed in malls and multiplexes and asked whether they had seen a missing character. To take it to the next level, Vidya Balan was seen interacting with people at Bandra station, Mumbai, asking people to help find her husband. Digit9.0 plans to execute similar innovative campaigns in other cities too.

Vivek Tiwari, CEO, Channel 9 said: “The essence of Bangladesh was showcased through the culturally rich acts of dance and music. The launch was a bold and first time initiative from an on-ground television show point of view.”

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Ratan Ginwalla, Director, Digit9.0 said: “While movies are usually with a male protagonist or are women-oriented, here is a story about a seven-month pregnant woman looking for her missing husband. To stand by the movie’s core, the strategy had to be unconventional and hard hitting.”
Goafest 2012 calls for pitch this year

The Goafest will be held at the Zuri White Sands in South Goa from April 19 to 21. This year, the Goafest Committee, along with the Advertising Agencies Association of India and Ad Club Bombay, called for a pitch among five agencies. The festival is themed ‘Magic of ideas’ this year, and will invite countries across South East Asia as delegates as well as award entrants.

Ogilvy India recovers mandate for Incredible India campaign

After an open multi-agency pitch among agencies across the country, Ogilvy Delhi emerged victorious, with the mandate for the Ministry of Tourism (Incredible India) business. Ogilvy’s mandate, over the period of three years, is to provide a strategy and creative vision that will align with and take Incredible India to the next level in domestic and international markets.

Star Dimensions and Static Lights enter into partnership

Star Dimension and Static Lights have entered into a strategic partnership which began with the Auto Expo and will expand to cover the whole of Asia. Static Light’s clientele have seen them deliver with uncompromising standards throughout the world through key strategic partnerships developed in key regions.

360 ARC and Channelplay join hands to initiate 360 Channelplay

360 ARC, a Dubai based events, activation and social media company, has entered into a joint venture partnership with Channelplay Ltd., a retail marketing agency, to establish 360 Channelplay. 360 Channelplay will be a global marketing and retail services organization focused on developing markets.

Sanjay Thapar, Group President - North & East, Wizcraft and Fountainhead Events. The mandate was eventually given to 70 EMG.” Speaking about bringing in a pitch process this time, Sharma said: “We wished to establish a long term relation with any agency without making them an internal agency.”

Andy Mama, Director, Static Lights said: “The concept behind our strategic partnership is to create an alliance with the mutual goal of capitalising on our two companies’ respective strengths. We share the same objectives and mutual goal of serving our industry with the highest quality equipment and support services, and we have established confidence in delivering what we believe in with passionate dedication.”

PepsiCo appoints EVP to oversee marketing of Cola category

PepsiCo India has announced the appointment of Homi Battiwalla as Executive VP - Colas, Hydration and Mango Based Beverages, taking charge of the marketing role for the Cola category along with his current responsibilities. Battiwalla takes over from Sandeep Singh Arora, who, after a successful stint of four years, has moved from his current assignment with the company to pursue other interests.

Deepika Warrier, Executive Director-Marketing, PepsiCo Beverages, India said: “Homi’s rich experience and understanding of the beverage industry positions him well to lead the marketing responsibilities for brand Pepsi as we look forward to continuing the brand’s winning performance. He has proven his leadership skills in successfully growing the juice and juice-based drinks category for PepsiCo.”

Industry Watch Developments

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Industry Watch

India gives boost to Swiss tourism

Judging by the number of visits to the country, Switzerland is emerging as a favoured destination for Indians. Swiss tourism has seen a 100 per cent growth in the last five years, with a consolidated total of 1.55 million nights spent by Indians. Enthused over this, Switzerland tourism has proposed an aggressive marketing campaign in tier II and tier III cities to draw more Indians to the country.

Michael Maeder, MD, Switzerland Tourism India said: “India is a very important market for us. Last year, realising the importance of Indian tourists, the Swiss government allocated an extra marketing budget for India. After observing the immense success of this campaign, a similar additional budget has been allocated this year as well.”

Tourism Ministry to open 12 ‘Incredible India’ representative offices abroad

With the intention of attracting more foreign tourists, the Ministry of Tourism is finalising its plan to open a dozen representative offices abroad as part of the ‘Incredible India’ campaign. “Our aim is to have more than 11 million foreign tourists in the next five years and for this, we are finalising plan to launch an aggressive campaign abroad. Basically, we will now be promoting India as a 12-month destination. We will also be focussing on new markets, like the Commonwealth of Independent States and African countries, to increase footfalls here by organising road shows, language campaign and promotional events,” said Subodh Kant Sahai, Union Minister for Tourism, Government of India.

Currently, India attracts about 5.6 million foreigners in a year and has tourism offices at 14 countries.

South Africa Tourism brings MICE to India for the eighth year

The South Africa Tourism Board organised the eighth edition of the South African Tourism Road Show across five cities, which commenced on Jan. 30 and culminated on Feb. 6. Pegasus Events was given the mandate to manage the logistics, printing and execution for the road show across all the five cities. The event witnessed the presence of over 65 companies who interacted with approximately 1,500 tour operators and discussed their plans.

Adnan Morbiwala, Business Development-Manager, Pegasus Events said: “Pegasus has been working closely with the South African Tourism Board for the past four to five months. Last year too, the event was managed by us and was held across three cities. This year, we expanded to five cities.”

Indian arrivals in Kenya grow by 24 per cent in 2011

For the calendar year 2011, Kenya has seen India become a primary source market in the Asian region, with 58,986 Indian arrivals, which is a 24 per cent growth. Recent years have also seen India placing within the top five markets in tourist arrivals for Kenya. The main tourism inflow is from India’s western region, followed by the northern region and then the rest of India. KTB anticipates a consistent forecast of a 10 to 15 per cent increase in Indian arrivals in the coming years.

Acknowledging this growth in tourism from India, the Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) organized its third consecutive road show in Mumbai, Bangalore and Kolkata. Jennifer Opondo, Head of Marketing, KTB, led the biggest delegation ever to India which included people from the KTB, Kenya Wildlife Services and private travel trade, who met over 500 Indian travel agents.

Mauritius out to woo Indian tourists

To enhance its business proposition in the Indian market, Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA) has announced India as its primary source market and by 2015, aims to double its annual tourist arrivals from India to 1,00,000. To consolidate its presence in India, Vijaye Haulder, Deputy Director, MTPA, led a travel business delegation of around 24 organizations from Mauritius, who interacted with the travel trade fraternity at SATTE in New Delhi from Feb. 10 to 12, followed by a road show in Mumbai on Feb. 13.

Haulder said: “With an increasing number of Indian tourists seeking activity-based indulgences, we are committed to greater visibility by enhancing the awareness quotient and positioning Mauritius as a must visit destination.”

Thailand looks to forge deeper connections with India in 2012

The Tourism Authority of Thailand has accorded India a vital market status within the ASEAN region. Suraphon Svetasreni, Governor, TAT, led a delegation to Mumbai and addressed the media and industry representatives at Taj Mahal Palace on Feb. 16. He discussed TAT’s marketing strategies, which include focusing on ecotourism, golf, health and wellness, and wedding and honeymoon. He said: “This focus is based on the global trend for more experiential tourism.”

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Tourism Ministry to open 12 ‘Incredible India’ representative offices abroad

With the intention of attracting more foreign tourists, the Ministry of Tourism is finalising its plan to open a dozen representative offices abroad as part of the ‘Incredible India’ campaign. “Our aim is to have more than 11 million foreign tourists in the next five years and for this, we are finalising plan to launch an aggressive campaign abroad. Basically, we will now be promoting India as a 12-month destination. We will also be focussing on new markets, like the Commonwealth of Independent States and African countries, to increase footfalls here by organising road shows, language campaign and promotional events,” said Subodh Kant Sahai, Union Minister for Tourism, Government of India.

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SATTE 2012 takes place with companion event

A B2B travel and tourism event, the 19th edition of SATTE took place from Feb. 10 to 12 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. SATTE 2012 was spread over 16,500 sqm. gross, making it India’s biggest travel and tourism event. This year, SATTE 2012 had a companion event in SATTE Mumbai West, which was held at The Leela Kempinski, Mumbai on Feb. 15 and 16.

SATTE 2012 saw over 50 foreign countries, 25 state governments, Indian and foreign hotel companies representing India and other travel and tourism products and services. It also featured over 600 exhibiting companies, meeting over 6,000 buyers from various segments.

In-Store Asia 2012 focuses on building shopper equity

In this year though, Indian brands and retailers are expected to focus on managing overall profitability, without significant scaling down of expansion plans. Building shopper equity was focused on at In-Store Asia 2012 from Feb. 16 to 18. In its seventh edition, the event continued with its focus on the in-store environment, but with a delivery strategy that ensured that all content needs across a range of formats and practices are addressed.

Sachin Jante, Chief Content Planner & Marketing Strategist, VJ Media Works said: “The transformation in approach was evident on various levels. At the primary level, existing modules were tweaked to enhance effectiveness. Then there was the addition of new modules and programs that enhanced and recognized the varied aspects of the in-store environment.”

Organisers reveal date and place for Spikes Asia 2012

The organisers of Spikes Asia, the regional APAC awards and festival for creative excellence in advertising and communications, have confirmed that the 2012 edition of the festival will take place from Sept. 16 to 18 at Suntec, Singapore. The event will see a programme featuring around 30 seminars and six workshops by industry leaders from around the world, as well as exhibitions of the best work from the region.

Myriam Coupard, Festival Director, Spikes Asia said: “Spikes Asia is a celebration of creativity in the region and provides the industry with a unique content programme, and unrivalled networking and learning opportunities. Every year, the festival is growing, and following last year’s record attendance and entries, we’re expecting a bigger turnout from across a wider region. We’re delighted to continue building the event to make 2012 the best yet.”

2012 PMAA Dragons open for entries

The 13th Promotion Marketing Awards of Asia is open for entries. Gold, Silver and Bronze Dragons will be handed out, along with a Blue Dragon for the Best by Country and Best in Asia categories. This year, the awards will see the introduction of the Dragons of Malaysia, in partnership with Marketing Magazine, which will be open to agencies and clients in Malaysia.

Japan roped in as partner country for FICCI FRAMES 2012

FICCI FRAMES 2012, deemed Asia’s largest convention for the business of entertainment, is set to take place in Mumbai at The Renaissance, Powai from March 14 to 16. FRAMES is a global convention covering the gamut of media and entertainment. Around 2,000 Indian and 800 foreign delegates, encompassing the media and entertainment universe are expected to attend. A highlight of this event is that Japan is the partner country.

This year, FRAMES will focus on ‘Embracing the digital world’, and will see panel discussions, day-long workshops, a roundtable with policy makers, one-on-one business meetings and networking events. It will also see the FICCI BAF Awards, the FICCI FRAMES Excellence Awards and initiatives such as the FICCI FRAMES Market and the European Film Co-production Lounge.
New Delhi’s Taj Palace deemed the world’s best business hotel 2011

The Taj Palace, New Delhi has been deemed to be among the world’s best international business hotels in 2011 by the Travel + Leisure Annual World’s Best Awards Survey 2011. The property has a convention center which spans 40,000 sq.ft. with state of the art amenities. There are also 13 meeting halls, including 11 indoor and two outdoor spaces.

Taljinder Singh, General Manager, Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi said: “We have worked hard at earning the repute of being a preferred hub for significant international and domestic events. Having endeavoured to innovate continuously to match the needs of the discerning global business traveller, to emerge a winner at this platform acknowledges our initiatives in offering the finest elements of a luxury business hotel experience.”

Royal Orchid Hotels Ltd. unveils Regenta Hotel & Convention Centre in Delhi

On Feb. 3, Royal Orchid Hotels Ltd (ROHL) opened the Regenta Hotel & Convention Centre in Delhi. The property, which covers six acres and is located alongside the Delhi Gurgaon Express Highway, features 50 deluxe rooms and two suites. The conference and banquet halls at range from 850 to 6,500 sq.ft. and will be able to accommodate up to 300 guests. It also has an extensive lawn that can host up to 1,000 guests.

Chender Baijee, Chairman and MD, ROHL said, “We see huge potential in Delhi and NCR for our newly launched property, which is our twentieth hotel. The region sees large numbers of corporate footfall, but has very few professionally managed convention centre-cum-hotels.”

Patna to receive new riverside international convention centre

The state government of Bihar has approved the plans to build a USD 55 million international convention centre. This riverside center, which will be constructed near the Gandhi Maidan, will reportedly have a seating capacity of 5,000, including three meeting halls each with a seating capacity of 50 to 300.

Other planned facilities will include a plenary hall, cultural and media centres, a VIP lounge, shopping areas and a food court. A completion date for the project has not been revealed, however.

Nitish Kumar, Chief Minister of Bihar said: “The government has given its in-principle approval to the project, which is intended to serve the purpose of being a world-class venue for recreational, cultural and other activities in the city.”

JW Marriott Marquis Dubai to be a landmark of the global business hub

In another highlighting of Dubai’s growing importance at the centre of the global business crossroads, the city will see the 1,608-room JW Marriott Marquis Dubai opening its doors in the fourth quarter this year. Besides the luxury business traveller, the hotel is targeting the increasingly important MICE market. The hotel will have two ballrooms, 24 meeting rooms and a 5,100 sq.m. of event space.

Rupprecht Queitsch, General Manager, JW Marriott Marquis Hotel said: “The hotel will fill a long identified gap in the market where groups, meetings and conventions of up to 1,000 people can meet, sleep and dine under one roof, in one location. There are businesses of this size choosing various cities around the world in which to meet, but until now, Dubai has not had a single location of this size to accommodate this type of group. In simple terms, we will establish Dubai on the global conference market landscape.”

AIME sees launch of a one of a kind convention and exhibition centre

A one of a kind convention centre, currently under construction at the RNA Showgrounds in Brisbane, was officially launched during the Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) in Melbourne. Jonathan Tunny, Chief Executive, RNA, and Annabel Sullivan, Director, Brisbane Convention Bureau unveiled the Royal International Convention Centre, which is scheduled to open in March 2013 and projected to attract more than 220 events and 30,000 visitors annually.

Across two levels, the centre will house 4,500 sq.m. of exhibition space which fronts 1,800 sq.m of flexible open space known as Ekka Plaza; three flexible halls totalling 3,210 sq.m. plus 1,500 sq.m. of foyer space; seven meeting rooms of flexible combination totalling 630 sq.m. plus two board rooms; a 1,200 sq.m. commercial kitchen; and around 140 car parks.
The events and experiential marketing industry is no longer in a nascent stage. Experiential marketing, as a tool, has matured to a stage where it is no longer taken for granted by its practitioners. And it is for this reason, that the challenges the industry faces can no longer be taken for granted. However, growth and progress never came without challenges and issues that need to be tackled.

Of the many challenges that the industry faces, the problem of music licenses has been perceived by a section of the industry as a prolonged thorn in the foot. The issue of music licenses recently resurfaced when the Banglore Fashion Week faced a legal injunction from Phonographic Performance Ltd. due to music licensing issues. ExM decided to take a closer look at the licensing issue and seek inputs from the relevant associations and industry players.

Meeting the In-Laws
The Phonographic Performance Ltd. (PPL) and the Indian Performing Right Society Ltd. (IPRS) are the two collecting societies licensing similar types of music users, representing work on behalf of different rights owners. PPL represents record companies, while IPRS represents lyric writers, composers, publishers and record companies.

PPL is the copyright society in respect of sound recordings and is registered with the Indian government. The association is mainly engaged in administering the broadcasting, communication to public and performance rights on behalf of over 260 music companies which are its members. Meanwhile, IPRS issues licences to users of music and collect royalties from them, for and on behalf of its members. The IPRS is a representative body of owners
of music, viz. the composers, lyricists and the publishers of music, and is also the sole authorised body to issue licences for usage of musical works and literary music within India by any person.

According to PPL’s website, all those who play or communicate pre-recorded music of its members in public places be it acoustic or visual, whether in the form of gramophone records, music cassette or CDs or radio or cable network or in any other technology, have to obtain a prior license from the association. The various licensing streams mentioned by PPL include television license, telecom related licenses, radio license, internet license, and public performance licenses for background music, events and storage.

Rationalizing the Irrational
Two common concerns raised by events industry members have been the lack of transparency and the irrational license charges.

Commenting on the issue of music licenses, EEMA President Brian Tellis said: “I believe that the challenge is to make the industry aware of these licenses and they need to get a better understanding of what to pay. I am very clear on the point that licenses should be paid, but there is a need to rationalise licenses.”

Talking to ExM about EEMA’s stance on rationalizing license fees, IPRS CEO Rakesh Nigam said: “We do know of certain issues the association has been having regarding music licenses. But the discussion as we believe is on with PPL. As far as we’re concerned, we haven’t had a discussion with EEMA face to face across the table, since if we had, we’d be able to explain everything quite clearly like we have to you.”

In defence of PPL’s costing of licenses, Sowmya Choudhary, Country Head, PPL, told ExM that PPL rates are decided upon by the management committee which is comprised of heads of music companies that are PPL members. The rates are clearly prescribed in a rate card that is published annually in newspapers and the gazette for public knowledge.

Commenting on EEMA’s stance on rationalizing license fees, Choudhary told ExM: “There are only a select number of EEMA member agencies that are violating PPL license fees, but the entire association including agencies that pay the fees regularly on an individual agency basis, seems to be in continuous discussion with PPL on the license fees. These discussions will continue, and I don’t have much to say about that. Only up to 2 per cent of PPL’s total license fees comes from EEMA member agencies. So it’s clear that there is a bigger universe out there of event organizers, beyond EEMA members, paying the PPL license.”

Talking about the defaults, Tellis told ExM: “There is no question about whether or not to pay the license fees, it’s a global standard, and we do understand the concept behind royalty towards music. However, the problem is in the rationalization of the rates and fees for various events.”

What’s the Price?
Choudhary further added: “Only the individuals who do not want to pay, claim the rates are not transparent. Agencies that pay the license fee regularly, all have the rate card with them, since it’s of interest to them. The PPL rate card is available for any event organizer at any of the PPL offices across the country. It’s only 5 to 10% of the total event organizers who default on the payment of the license fees. Why would 90% of them pay, if the rates were not transparent? The ones who default are likely to be the ones that default on many other legal requirements as well. They are chronic defaulters, and they seek excuses for doing this.”

While it may be a fact that PPL issues rate cards and publishes license fees in newspapers and the gazette, every year, the rate card is not available on PPL’s website. One would have to contact PPL’s office in order to get those details. The website of IPRS has a tab on the homepage that directly opens to the tariff list with pricing provided for all types of events and venues. (http://www.iprs.org/tarifflist.asp)

Talking about the calculation of the license fees, Choudhary said: “The rates are calculated basis the organizers declaration of the size of the audience expected at the
DynaMix Media is proud to announce the addition of the Sharp PN-V601 LCD video wall system to its rental fleet. The world's slimmest bezel in the 60" class, portrait & landscape capability, virtually seamless borders between neighboring monitors and a sub 1mm pixel pitch all translate into crisp high impact images that can be displayed in almost any size and format! Custom bracketery enable us to install the system in wall mounted, floor standing and truss flown configurations. Excited? Call Us!
event and the duration of the event. There are different rate brackets for different formats/types of events. A charitable event, an exhibition, a corporate event, an entertainment event, a sports event all fall into different sections and each of these have their own rates. There is an additional percentage charged over and above the calculation made basis audience size and event duration, in the case of a sponsored/ticketed event.”

Talking about the calculation of IPRS’ licensing fee, the association calculates the rates basis the capacity of the venue. The amount is calculated regardless of whether the event is ticketed or sponsored. However, if a high profile celebrity is performing there is a 40% premium charged on the amount. If a high profile celebrity is performing and the event is either sponsored or ticketed, there is a 60% premium charged on the amount. If the organizer applies for the license 10 days in advance of the event, a 30% discount is offered on the total amount.

Commenting on the calculation of licensing fee varying because of high profile performers or a sponsored / ticketed event, Tellis said: “Why must we pay extra for a sponsored event or one in which a celebrity is performing, when we’re playing the same music and entertaining the same number of people? There needs to be one fixed way of calculating the rate for these licenses basis what music is being played and the audience number.” He further added: “We have many service providers to each event, and all their charges do not fluctuate basis the presence of a celebrity at an event or if the event is ticketed/sponsored. Its like saying an audio solutions company will charge me a premium on the equipment if Shahrukh Khan’s sound will be played through it. It makes no sense. All we’re asking for is a simple, calculable rate which can be applied across all events.”

Giving a breakup of the royalties, Kunal Sarin, Senior General Manager – Licensing, IPRS, explained, “About 15% of all collection goes in admin fees, a major part of that goes in to costs related to legal matters. Of the remaining, 50% goes to the music company, 30% to the music director (s) and 20% to the author/lyricist of the song.”

This brings into question the music companies that are registered under both PPL and IPRS, that are potentially getting the benefit of both royalty collections.

Where’s the Value?
In terms of steepness of the PPL license fees, Choudhary told ExM that “expensive is a relative term. This is the price prescribed if you want to enjoy music of these music companies. Much like liquor tax, which is not contemplated but just paid in order to enjoy liquor at an event, so must license fees for music entertainment be paid.”

Representatives of IPRS shared Choudhary's sentiments regarding concerns of expensive license fees. Sarin said: "Event organisers complain that IPRS licenses are expensive, but compared to what international rights societies are charging, we are really charge a nominal amount.” Adding to this, Nigam, IPRS, said: “There are broadly two sources of entertainment at any event, liquor and music. The amount we’re asking for the price of playing music is a fraction of what liquor licenses need to be paid for that same event.”

Choudhary further added: “Event managers are not working for free. They do demand their fee from the client. Whether the client finds this expensive or not is not contemplated if they want the services of the agency. Besides, it’s not the event manager that has to pay PPL, it is the client, so why should the agencies complain about PPL being expensive. We’re not asking for a percentage of the event cost, but just a standard fee as prescribed depending on the nature of the event. I know of several cases where the event agency has taken the fees for PPL from the client but has still not acquired the requisite licenses.”

Commenting on clients bearing the cost of licensing fees, Tellis told ExM: “We’re custodians of our clients’ money, and have to ensure we are able to provide them the best value for this at every stage. As agencies we don’t pay for music licenses ourselves, but as part of our service to our client, we have to ensure we broker the best deal possible for various aspects of bringing an event together.”

Dealing with Royalty
When it comes to music licenses, there is a general misconception that PPL licenses are for playing of recorded music, while IPRS license is for live performances. However, the fact is that IPRS license is needed even when playing recorded music since members of IPRS include music companies as well, in inclusion of music composers, lyricists and authors.

This would mean that when recorded music is being played, there is a definite need for both PPL and IPRS licenses. And when there is a LIVE performance, IPRS is surely needed and PPL may not be needed, provided there is no
back up track (recorded music) being played as part of the performance.

With the growing number of international artists performing in India, there is also a need for clarification on the requirement of licenses for international performers. Choudhary said: “We have all the major music labels under us as members. This covers a maximum number of international music as well. So, even in the case of international music, PPL will in all likeliness be needed.”

Echoing a similar sentiment, Kunal Sarin told ExM that IPRS has a mutual tie up with most of the rights societies in various countries. “We collect royalties on behalf of these societies when international artistes perform in India, while they collect for us when Indian artistes play there,” said Sarin.

Sarin further added: “People will say that no royalty reaches the artistes and music companies. But as a matter of fact, recently we did a tour in the North of India to sign up newer artistes based there. And, they come back to us quite satisfied about receiving royalty now for music, they never expected to earn out of.”

Case in Point
This brings us to the recent issue of the Bangalore Fashion Week, the organizers of which have apparently locked legal horns with the music copyright associations.

Organizer says:
Feroz Khan, Director, Dream Merchants, told ExM that the Bangalore Fashion Week has been facing issues over licenses since a long time. PPL wanted to charge the Bangalore Fashion Week per designer segment, and for all designers participating. We were not happy about this and decided not to use PPL licensed music and instead go with music licensed by Novex Communications (representing certain labels that are not members of PPL or IPRS). PPL cannot force us to use their music. “We should not be forced to take blanket licenses. Why should we pay for those designer segments that are not using PPL licensed music? The licensing process needs to be user friendly and flexible,” said Khan.

He also raised issues regarding lack of transparency of license rates. “Why can’t they just put their prices on their website? There is a need for transparency toward licensing fees. One has to contact them for the prices of the licenses and they don’t even give you the gazette until you insist for it. They recently changed the gazette, making the charges unfair for fashion shows like the Bangalore Fashion Week. As per the new gazette, PPL is charging per designer rather than looking at it as licensed music being used for one single event,” said Khan.

Talking to ExM about Dream Merchants’ long running legal issue with PPL, Khan said: “Our music licensing issue with PPL has been a long running battle and the courts have supported us on several instances. This time, we had informed all PPL offices that we would not be using their licensed music. Despite this, PPL filed for injunction and the court had made it clear that we would not use PPL licensed music for the fashion show which is exactly what we had informed them about. Yet PPL went to court about this just to create bad PR for our company and the Bangalore Fashion Week. We even went to court to complain about PPL trying to defame Dream Merchants and the court had asked PPL to stop issuing press releases or talking to the media regarding this matter.”
PPL Says:
Commenting on the legal tussle between PPL and the Bangalore Fashion Week organizer Dream Merchants, Choudhary told ExM: “It is unfortunate to have to address this matter because it is a result of pure illiteracy on the part of the organizer. Please explain to me how a fashion week with various reputed designers playing music as part of their shows can avoid all music that is part of PPL members’ labels? The organizers themselves should ask this question and see if they can answer it.” He further added: “Besides, we have evidence in the form of recordings from the event that music was played that is a part of PPL members’ labels. There is no question of a default in payment in this case.”

Choudhary concluded: “Again this is a discussion about excuses made by a chronic defaulter. It seems that the organizer has little to lose and therefore could afford to neglect PPL license. Why do the more reputed fashion weeks never default on obtaining the license? It’s because they have big businesses that they need to safeguard their reputation.”

IPRS Says:
ExM approached IPRS as well on the issue of event organizers being forced to take licenses even when the music of registered members are not used, Sarin, IPRS, said: “That’s not the case. In fact we go a step further and ask organizers when applying for IPRS license, to list down the songs going to be performed so that we can allocate royalties to only the relevant people and companies. Now, because no one specifies, we have to distribute the fee to all our members.”

Commenting on the same lines, Nigam, IPRS, said: “I can comment only for IPRS, our license fees are quite nominal and therefore we feel that the result of confusion caused by other entities is misdirected toward IPRS for no apparent reason.” Talking about taking music licensed by entities other than PPL and IPRS, Nigam added: “As per the law, relevant to Copyright Act, only rights societies registered with the government or individuals can collect license, another agency is not allowed to extend their services to support individual companies to collect licenses.”

Summing it Up
To sum up some of the issues highlighted:

Transparency: Regulating bodies are disclosing publicly the rates of licenses through newspapers, tariff cards and gazettes. However, providing better access to rates cards on demand and simplifying the calculation of license fees, would put a considerable check on defaulters.

Irrational pricing: There is a need for all parties to reach a common agreement on the fees for licenses and how the calculation of license fees is done. The industry feels that they are being charged high fees, the regulating bodies view the charges to be nominal. There are also concerns about issuing blanket licenses and charging more because of a high profile performer / celebrity is performing.

Defaults: Paying licenses is crucial since it goes out as royalty to the creative minds behind the music and all those in between who helped to bring it before the world. The challenge as pointed out by Tellis, EEMA President, is to make the industry aware of these licenses and make them understand what they are paying for.

Buying licenses from other entities: According to the regulating bodies, PPL and IPRS are the only ones authorised by the government of India to charge for licenses to use the music of its members. Private music companies can charge for licenses to use their own music. However, no other societies, associations or entities are authorised to collect license fees for other music companies. This questions companies like Novex Communications and their authority and credibility to collect licenses.

Duplication and Multiplicity: Both IPRS and PPL represent music companies. There are admittedly common members between the two societies. And now with more than just the two societies collecting licenses, there is more reason to justify the confusion faced by organizers.

Music licenses, however complicated it may seem, still is only the tip of the iceberg as far as permissions, licenses and documentation required for an event goes. While the industry and its representing association is dealing with the multiple issues at various levels, the more apparent ones obviously have taken front seat. With the evolution of the industry, one hopes individuals have also matured to be able to conclude such issues in a fair and amicable manner.
What was your brand up

By Karan Iyer

For an occasion like Valentine’s Day, which is the season of color, togetherness and romance, we celebrated love the BIG way with 92.7 BIG FM! We wanted to make a BIG difference by making this Valentine’s Day a truly special one for all our listeners. The Mumbai, Hyderabad and Delhi stations had equally innovative promotions running. Additionally, an on-ground campaign was conducted that involved a Mobile BIG Booth which travelled across the city with an RJ performing LOVE METER tests on couples.

There is also the CLUB 927 which engaged house wives by organising a quick LOVE METER test on their husbands over the phone. This LOVE Meter was also available as a Facebook application.

Rabe T. Iyer
Business Head,
92.7 BIG FM

UTV Bindass celebrated Valentine’s Day with activities starting with the “Tata Nano 2012 presents UTV Bindass Love Bands”. Here, we made proposals interesting by giving viewers a chance to profess their love, with bands and artists. Apart from this, there was “Like Bindass har ROSE” where we distributed 5,000 roses across 10 colleges in Mumbai and Delhi. The idea behind this activity was to make love affordable.

UTV STARS hosted a Valentine Ball in association with the Bollywood film Ek Main aur Ekk Tu. Living up to its brand proposition of being the ultimate insiders of Bollywood, the ball was hosted by the star cast of the film, Imran Khan and Kareena Kapoor, to help find a Valentine for 30 lucky singles (15 boys and 15 girls). The on-ground event took place on Feb. 5 and culminated into a special episode on the channel on Feb. 10.

Kunal Mukherjee
Head of Marketing, Broadcasting, UTV Bindasas
to this Valentine’s Day?

We initiated “Love-a-thon”, wherein our sales managers travelled to 12 cities – Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Chandigarh, Pune, Gurgaon, Cochin, Indore and Surat. Customers visiting the stores were encouraged to download a contest application and answer some questions. The winners, who were announced on Feb. 11, won gift vouchers for prizes worth up to Rs. 8 lakhs.

The activity commenced on Jan. 16 and culminated on Feb. 12. To promote the initiative, we had a promotional video on social media websites and advertorials. In addition, we also promoted it on our Facebook fanpage which incorporates 500 members.

Colin Shah  
Senior Vice MD, Kama Schachter, Kama Jewellery

Loop Mobile has an interactive and engaging Facebook page with over 75,000 fans. We had created a contest linking our newly launched prepaid product called Member Get Member around Valentine’s Day on social media backed by an offline gratification. This contest allowed our fans, especially our subscribers, to gift an MGM card to their partners and win a memorable Valentine’s Day.

Three lucky couples got a chauffeur driven BMW pick-up, lunch at JW Marriot and Red Lounge seats to watch the movie ‘Ek Mein Aur Ekk Tu’ at Cinemax in Andheri. They were also given Fast Track watches, chocolates and flowers to gift their Valentine. Subscribers over four years with us were the chosen winners and they had an overwhelming experience.

Arif Ali  
Head-Brand & Communications, Loop Mobile (India) Ltd.
PUMA launched its PUMA Faas collection on the evening of Feb. 21 at the Olive Bar in Mahalaxmi, Mumbai. Managed by Cream Events Pvt. Ltd., the event saw a large number of celebrities participate in games especially created for the event.

In a brief provided to the agency, it was established that the event would have to achieve two objectives – introduce actor Chitrangada Singh as the brand’s ‘Running and Fitness’ Brand Ambassador and launch the new range of running shoes, PUMA Faas 300 collection. Rajiv Mehta, Managing Director – Southeast Asia, PUMA, said: “We wanted to tell people a few key messages about FAAS. a) Chitrangda was the new face of Puma Running and Fitness. b) FAAS is a lightweight shoe meant for running. c) FAAS is inspired from Jamaica and Usain Bolt. I think all three messages were very clearly conveyed!”

Greeting the Ambassador
Cream Events conceptualized the entire event, beginning with the media briefing session hosted by Cyrus Sahukar. At the brief, Mehta spoke about why Chitrangada was an appropriate brand ambassador for PUMA's fitness products. He remarked: “Running and fitness is an important category for us and we’re really excited to have Chitrangada Singh as our brand ambassador for the range. She comes from an army background, so sports were an integral part of her growing up days. We wish her all the best as she joins the PUMA family.”

Following Mehta’s address, Chitrangada spoke on her association with PUMA. Chitrangada commented: “I’m thrilled to be the ‘Fitness & Running’ Brand Ambassador for PUMA. PUMA is a very cool and vibrant brand, a perfect amalgamation of sport and style. It has set itself apart in the country through its unique designs, colours and approach. Fitness is gaining popularity in the country and PUMA’s ‘Faastest Indian’ will take it to the people in the country in their unique, uber cool style.”

The script and the pointers for the media brief were all put together by the agency. Harshad Chavan, Managing Director, Cream Events said, “We ensured that all communication with the media was crystal clear.”
Following the session with the media, a launch party was held, the guest list for which was drawn out by Cream Events with the aim of bringing together people from different walks of life, including various celebrities. A total of 300 people were engaged through this event. Chavan added, “We ensured that each person at the event was a brand influencer or a buzz marketer, and the right target audience for brand PUMA.”

Present at the event were VJs Juhi, Bani, and Manish; television hosts Mandira Bedi, Archana Vijaya, Shibani Dandekar, Yudi, and Ramona; members of the fashion fraternity including Rocky S, Narendra Kumar Ahmed, Candice Pinto, Kavita Kharayat, Simran Kaur Mundi, Aditi Govitrikar, Nishka Lulla, Prasad Naik, and Kunal Rawal; young Bollywood actors Arunoday Singh, Aditi Rao Hydari and Aamna Sharif; and musicians including Randolph of the Shaair & Func band, and Nikhil D’Souza.

Who’s Who

Get Set, Run Faas!

Cream Events conceptualized and managed all the activities at the launch. The agency went in for a carnival theme setup. In addition, a race-track was set up. All guests at the event had to run one lap while they were timed. The fastest guy and girl won a whole year’s free supply of PUMA products. In all, 219 guests ran and registered their scores, while sporting PUMA Faas 300. Chavan remarked: “The objective of the brand for this event was achieved as customers got a first-hand feel of the product.”

In addition to the race track, a table tennis table was set up with large table tennis bats and a large ball. Guests enthusiastically lined up to participate in this game. In another game, guests who had registered competed to drink beer the ‘Faastest’.

The final segment of the event was the Capoeira Act. Commenting on why Cream Events decided to go in for this act as part of the entertainment segment, Chavan said: “Instead of the boring, tried and tested DJ music or live band act, we had the Capoeira Act. The Capoeira world has something to offer to every person. One person might be amazed by high-flying acrobatics, while another might be attracted to the flexibility and control of slower, graceful movements. Someone else might be fascinated by Brazilian instruments and music, and others might love to explore the history and culture of Capoeira and Brazil.” The act was received with excitement by everyone who attended the event.
The objective of the brand for this event was achieved as customers got a first-hand feel of the product. We ensured that each person at the event was a brand influencer or a buzz marketer, and the right target audience for brand PUMA. Instead of the boring, tried and tested DJ music or live band act, we had the Capoeira Act.”

Harshad Chavan, Managing Director, Cream Events

The entire production was executed in-house. The biggest challenge faced by the agency was in getting RWITC to provide more space so that all activities could be effectively executed. Chavan said: “A large carnival set-up required more space, and we got it. This reinforces our belief that if you have a unique concept, clients/venues are willing to experiment.”

On getting celebrities to actively participate in the event, Chavan added: “Since everyone who attended the event was famous celebrities, we anticipated that getting them...
to run on the track would have some awkward moments. However, thanks to our relations with each one of them, there was no cribbing, just fun, fun, fun!”

Commenting on the event and the brand connect, Mehta said: “Experiential marketing is very important. We as a brand need to be in touch with our consumers. Such events are a way for us to invite the consumer to experience the brand in a different yet engaging way. It builds brand loyalty.”

The Search of the Faas
As part of the ‘Faastest Indian’ campaign, the Faas test will be conducted across 250 locations in seven key cities before September. This campaign involves a hunt for the ‘Faastest Man and Woman’ across India. Winners will get the chance to meet Usain Bolt, the world’s fastest man, at the IAAF Diamond League Race in Zurich this September. Hence, activities for PUMA Faas do not end with the launch event.

“That very day we also launched the FAASTest Indian contest. This is to find the fastest Indian man and woman, fly them to Zurich for the diamond league and get them to meet and train with Usain Bolt, the fastest man on earth! We will be going to eight cities across the country with the speed track in order to promote the same and also to find that man and woman!” Mehta told ExM.

Chavan remarked: “Cream Events usually manages activities for PUMA, and we share a strong relationship. The plan as of now is that the search for the Faastest guy and girl will soon be executed by the agency.”
784 Entries, 244 Entrants, 397 Brands in the running for WOW Awards 2012

Find out who WOW's the Jury... This April...
Headquartered in Gurgaon, BMW India is a 100 per cent subsidiary of the BMW Group. Along with its automotive concerns – BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce – BMW Group’s activities in India comprise of the marketing of motorcycles, as well as financial services for its premium clientele. The range of BMW activities in India include the establishment of a production plant in Chennai, a parts warehouse in Mumbai, and the development of a dealer organisation across major metropolitan centres of the country. BMW India currently has 25 outlets in the Indian market.

In a conversation with ExM, Dr. Andreas Schaaf, President, BMW Group India, discussed the value of BTL marketing to a brand like BMW, how successful it has been, and what the future holds for it.

As a major player in the automobile industry, how much importance does BMW place on BTL marketing?

BMW is No. 1 in the Indian luxury car segment. The reason we are No. 1 is because we have built a very strong brand. And, we have built this brand not only in Delhi and Mumbai but all across India.

BMW India is a pioneer in bringing luxurious dealerships to India and has set a decisive course by setting up BMW dealerships with international standards of service quality and customer care. The way we have built the brand is not through advertisements, but by ensuring a direct handshake with our customers through events at BMW dealerships.

For example, one of the first events we organised was an exclusive sit-down dinner at Krishna Motors in Chandigarh, where we invited elite customers. The guests had expected to be invited to a five-star hotel for the dinner, and called back to check if the venue address was printed correctly on the invitation.

We also organised a BMW brand experience for our customers where the entire BMW product range was available for test driving. We had more than 48 cars available for the customers so they could get to touch and feel the products and the brand.

What kind of result has BMW's on-ground activations and similar campaigns seen in the last year?

BMW India has carried out very successful campaigns for its new products in the Indian market. For example, the new BMW X1 has a youthful appeal and hence was launched at leading clubs in dealership cities. VIP evenings, organised at BMW dealerships, were attended by elite BMW clientele and the crème-de-la-crème of the city.

What have been some of your most successful campaigns?

BMW Xperience, a one-of-a kind driving event, was organised in Delhi, NCR at a large scale inviting customers from all over the country. The venue was constructed at a site that was excavated for the construction of a multi-storey building. A parcour with ten obstacles was created by a team of international experts and driver trainers. It provided the opportunity for BMW enthusiasts and the media to experience the BMW X range of cars firsthand. They did not have to go to the rough terrain of a desert or snowy mountains, but could still experience the same driving dynamism in the heart of a city. The investment was very high but the media attention and customer involvement in this experience enhanced the brand affinity in the minds of the target audience.

The design of the new BMW 6 Series is inspired from flowing water. The event was organised in the Lake city of Udaipur at one of the most exquisite locations in India. We conceptualized a fashion show with leading fashion designer Suneet Varma to showcase a line based on the flow of water. A select set of guests were invited for this event, but a very strong word-of-mouth was generated through this experience.
What prompted BMW to enter the sports arena in terms of sponsorship and participation?

BMW has been involved in athletics and golf, which reflect the brand’s philosophy and image. Sports are an engaging experience that touches the emotions of every BMW enthusiast. BMW India participated in the Mumbai Marathon, which moved millions of Indians with a sporting spirit and energy beyond the boundaries of everyday routine and saw the participation of the who’s who of Mumbai. The Mumbai Marathon provided the perfect opportunity for BMW enthusiasts to experience the joy of running, and was the right fit for the values that BMW cherishes.

BMW India also organises the BMW Golf Cup International every year across multiple cities in India, which presents us with a great opportunity to enhance our relationship with BMW enthusiasts in a joyous and relaxed environment.

Besides sports, what other sort of events does BMW have an inclination towards?

With our enhanced product portfolio, we have engaged with our customers and prospects in innovative dialogues through initiatives such as the BMW Art Cars exhibition held at the Jehangir Art Gallery in Mumbai, formal dining and wine tasting events at BMW dealerships across India, communication of the rich heritage of BMW eras through association with leading fashion designers and events such as the India Couture Week, and indulging our customers in lifestyle events such as culinary workshops and art exhibitions at the BMW Studio.

The BMW Studio is a unique multi-dimensional space and offers an exclusive BMW experience, coupled with excellent service and a perfect ambience. We have set up the BMW Studio in the heart of Delhi to enhance greater customer intimacy and to provide more opportunities to indulge in the brand. For example, a BMW customer from Kolkata coming to Delhi can pre-book the BMW Studio for business meetings. The BMW Studio is also Wi-Fi enabled for customer convenience. A BMW customer or prospect can also reserve the BMW Studio for hosting a party for an occasion like gifting a BMW to family and friends.

What strategy does BMW have to meet and challenge its competition?

The challenge is to ensure that the speed of innovation is faster than the speed of replication. The competition in the automobile industry is smart enough to copy successful ideas and replicate them even faster. At BMW India, we do not organize just events but create experiences where you can feel the joy that BMW is associated with.
For 13 years, the PMAA Dragons has been awarding the most successful work carried out by Agencies and Clients, across all Countries in Asia. Gold, Silver & Bronze Dragon Winners have gone on to compete in the MAA GLOBES, which recognises the Best of the Best in the World. Last October in Rio de Janeiro, PMAA Winners won 2 GLOBES, 3 Silver and 3 Bronze Awards.

The long term plans for the Dragons of Asia is to develop Country Awards, culminating in the Pan Asian Dragons of Asia Programme.

This year we have pleasure in announcing the Dragons of Malaysia, in Partnership with Marketing Magazine, open to Agencies and Clients in Malaysia.

This year the winners of the PMAA Dragons will be announced in an Awards Ceremony, planned for Kuala Lumpur in late July.

ONE ENTRY FEE COVERS THE PMAA DRAGONS OF ASIA AND MAA GLOBES, FOR GOLD, SILVER & BRONZE DRAGON WINNERS.
Mansion House brand to promote premium whiskey through sampling

Formerly known as The Maharashtra Sugar Mills Ltd., Tilaknagar Industries was promoted in 1933 by industrialist Shri Mahadev L. Dahanukar, popularly known as Babasaheb Dahanukar. At that time, the company manufactured sugar and its allied products.

Tilaknagar Distilleries & Industries Ltd. was promoted as a 100 per cent subsidiary of Maharashtra Sugar Mills. In 1973, Tilaknagar Industries diversified into the businesses of industrial alcohol, Indian made foreign liquor (IMFL) and sugar cubes. Both Maharashtra Sugar Mills and Tilaknagar Distilleries & Industries Ltd. were merged to form Tilaknagar Industries Ltd., with effect from Aug. 6, 1993.

With a manufacturing and bottling network of 34 units and a network of 71 distributors, Tilaknagar Industries distributes its products across the country, covering all market segments and geographies. Their primary markets are located in South India, and account for almost 90 per cent of the revenue, as of March 31, 2010. The company is now working on strengthening the distribution and growing its presence in North India with the introduction of high margin brands in these territories.

Lalit Sethi is the President and CFO at Tilaknagar Industries and oversees the financial functions of the company. In a conversation with ExM, Sethi sheds light on the company’s latest offering, Mansion House Whiskey, and what they have planned for the brand in future.

What led to the decision to enter the premium whiskey market? What kind of strategy has been developed to compete with existing brands?

Given the increasing disposable income, the growth and profits are in the premium segment. We are a premium IMFL company when it comes to the brandy segment, with one of the better NSR/CS (Net sales realisation per case) ratios. It is a genetic extension to move into other premium categories.

The Mansion House Whiskey will be positioned in the semi-premium segment with the tagline ‘Have Courage’, retailing at Rs. 600 per quart.

How will the Mansion House Whiskey be promoted on-ground?

The whiskey will be promoted through a combination of advertisements, trials and sampling. We believe that the spirits customer comes due to marketing, but stays for the quality. We are targeting trials. Our whiskey is the most superior in the category. It is made from the purest scotch malts, aged to perfection in oak casks and blended to perfection.

In South India, which consists of a population of 300 million people (larger than the United States), the name ‘Mansion House’ enjoys a cult identity and a loyal brand following. Our superstructures are strong and hence the quick drive-in. Simultaneously, we are launching it in markets in the east, the west and some parts of the north.

How much importance does Tilaknagar Industries place on BTL activities as a part of its marketing strategy?

BTL activities are very important. There are a very few liquor shops in India, as compared to FMCG shops. Point of sale communication and logistics is finite. BTL takes pre-eminence due to the fact that it’s commercially prohibitive in today’s economic situation and regulatory environment to advertise new names effectively.

Apart from on-ground activations, has the brand sponsored any events?

Mansion House is the spirits partner for the IPL team Chennai Super Kings. We also sponsor upcoming swimmers, some of whom we are confident are going to do very well in the national games.
Mahindra brings back the Blues

By Shachi Tapiawala

The blues music genre originated in African-American communities located in the south of the United States at the end of the 19th century. So, what does a multinational conglomerate operating in industries crucial to the economic growth, with a leadership position in tractors, utility vehicles, information technology and vacation ownership, have to do with this music genre?

Established 1945, the Mahindra Group has grown to make its presence felt in the automotive industry, agribusiness, aerospace, components, consulting services, defence, energy, financial services, industrial equipment, logistics, real estate, retail, steel and two wheelers. The Mahindra Group last year initiated the Mahindra Blues Festival with an aim to establish a wider reach in the US geographies where it deals its products and to promote the life and culture of the people living there.

“Our presence in various international markets helps us in transplanting local performing arts to other geographies thereby connecting communities around the world,” Anand Mahindra, Vice Chairman and Managing Director, Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd., commented about the festival. Produced and promoted by Oranjuice Entertainment, the second edition of the festival was held on Feb. 11 and 12 at Mehboob Studios in Bandra, Mumbai. Mahindra further added: “The Mahindra Blues Festival is now an annual event and in its second year, is one such endeavour that seeks to promote a genre that has yet to receive the recognition it deserves in India and around the world.”

In addition to a wide array of corporate social responsibility programmes, the Mahindra Group has been consistently supporting programs in arts and culture such as the Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) and the Mahindra Sanatkada Lucknow Festival. The Mahindra Blues Festival falls under the company’s CSR programme, under which they support arts and culture. Through this festival, Mahindra aims to give this genre of music an international platform.

This year, the festival witnessed the return of five-time Grammy winner Buddy Guy, a blues artist and a key influence on popular rock with special guest Robert Randolph, who figured on the Rolling Stone Magazine’s list of 100 greatest guitarists. Other artists performing at the festival included two-time Grammy nominee John Lee Hooker Jr.
Lee Hooker Jr. and award-winning Serbian blues guitarist and singer Ana Popović. The artist line-up also included Taj Mahal Trio, John Lee Hooker Jr., and Soulmate. The artists entertained audiences through their performances, workshops, and enlightening talks at the festival. The studio was designed specifically to create a blues-like atmosphere, with three separate stages so that it could hold multiple concerts and sessions with the artistes.

Commenting on the occasion, Owen Roncon, co-Founder, Oranjucce Entertainment, said: “Last year, the festival was much more bona fide and focused on music. In the second edition, we expanded our focus to include consumer experience. We have focused on the feedback that we received from the last edition and made some changes. We have improved the food and beverage area as well as created a viewing area for people to sit and watch the performances from afar. We also brought Buddy Guy to perform for the second time due to public demand.”

Roncon further added: “Blues music is the parent of a music fest. We have witnessed a growing passion for blues music in its original form and hence we decided to go back to basic and start from the roots.”

According to Oranjucce Entertainment, there were selection criteria in place for the artists based on the availability of the artist and also an opinion group which suggested the best of the artists who could be approached. The studio engaged around 3,000 people per day.

Mahindra Group views the choice of Mumbai as the venue for the Mahindra Blues Festival as a perfect fit, since it is not only where the company is headquartered, but also because it’s a truly international city. Shedding some light on the idea behind this concept, Jay Shah, General Manager, Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd. and Head – Cultural outreach programme said: “The festival made an instant connect with the citizens of Mumbai who experience exaggerated amounts of struggle, strife and success and take all this on with a smile on their face and a song on
Experience a city that needs no introductions

Beneath cooling fog or atop towering hills, our City by the Bay is one of few places in the world whose reputation precedes it. Already famous for our A-list shopping, dining and cultural scene, 2012 brings not-to-be-missed events like the Golden Gate Bridge 75th Anniversary, U.S. Open Golf Championship, and two America's Cup World Series races. Jump-start your adventure here: www.sanfrancisco.travel.
IN FOCUS

“...the festival made an instant connect with the citizens of Mumbai who experience exaggerated amounts of struggle, strife and success and take all this on with a smile on their face and a song on their lips. Our initiative is to sell our product which goes beyond our transactional relationship. We aim to build a deeper connect with our audience through the festival.”

Sponsors associated with this property were The Economic Times, VH1, Times Now, Rolling Stone Magazine and Rowson’s Reserve. Oranjuice claimed that the benefit sponsors got was multi-fold. Roncon added: “Today, the brand not only believes in shouting out loud and creating visibility but it is about brand and character building of the product and the brand. We used the traditional media budget and provided them visibility on all collaterals which not only benefited them through visibility but also helped them establish connect with their target group. A total of Rs. 60 lakhs was dedicated to marketing the entire festival.” The sound for the event was provided by Roger Dreggo.

Further commenting on a studio being selected as a venue for the festival, Shah added: “We don’t believe in confirming to the norms just for the sake of it. Blues music communicates with a variety of expressions and Mehboob Studio is a unique venue and appropriate for a festival as unique as this.”
An experience of almost 57 years has taught us the art of fulfilling stage lighting needs across India, even at the last moment when all else fail. From the Legend of Ram to the Commonwealth Games, we have done it all. So if you haven't had a chance to work with us, we're always keen on building new relationships.
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KGAF treats visitors to a mix of the old and new

By Ashlin Mathew

After nine days of visual and cultural delight, Mumbai bid adieu to the 14th edition of the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival with a musical bonanza on Feb. 12 and 70 EMG added another feather in its cap having now executed the festival for the eighth year in a row.

With more than 40,000 people from the city making a halt at the festival on the last day, the workshops and the food section witnessed a record turnout. Rampart Row, which has been declared a ‘silence zone’ since last year, had some interesting traditional street performances even on the finale day. The last day of the festival also marked its tribute to artist Jehangir Sabavala and poet Rabindranath Tagore. The film section screened movies on their lives. “The response was overwhelming, and we had discussions after every screening with the director and the audience,” said Deepa Gehlot, film section head, Kala Ghoda Association.

Since its birth in 1999, every year, the Kala Ghoda Association has hosted the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival to highlight the beauty of the Kala Ghoda precinct area. In its 14th year, the festival drew visitors in the thousands from the entire country and the rest of the world.

This year’s festival was a mix of the old and the new; an amalgamation of the legends of yesteryears with the best of today’s talent. From Feb. 4 to 12, the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival brought a kaleidoscope of music, dance, theatre, literature, street stalls, films, food, workshops, visual arts and heritage walks. 70 EMG played a crucial role in managing all the different verticals at the festival.

“This year, the complexity of the event was more or less the same, however the festival has grown year by year, by creating enthusiasm among the active audience. This year, the association has tried to expand in terms of the venue, like incorporating Cross Maidan for dance and music; in terms of verticals by highlighting celebrity chefs conducting food sessions etc. which had put in greater challenges, but 70 EMG managed to sail through it smoothly,” said Thanush Joseph, Marketing Director, 70 EMG.

With inspiring and experiential displays of art forming the backdrop of the festival, some of the displays included works by Reena Kallat, Brinda Miller, Krsna Mehta, Tobias Megerie, Mumbai Esplanade Project, Arzaan Khambatta, and EE Studio, among others. World renowned artist Tracy Lee Stum, in collaboration with the American Center of the US Consulate, created a live display of 3D images of the street festival as it happened.

As a new element in the festival, a section called ‘Food Art’ was added where in live demonstrations of Indian and international cuisines were made by recognised chefs and experts like Rahul Akerkar of ‘Indigo’ fame, Asian chef of the year Milind Sovani, Alex Sanchez from The Table,
Another new element was the introduction of a new venue, the recently renovated Cross Maidan Garden, for music and dance forms, with visual art installations forming the backdrop for the same. The festival opened with a performance of music, dance and acrobatics by the Guangdong Art Troupe from China, who were invited by the KGAF, in collaboration with ICCR and the Chinese Consulate.

Ranging from classical and contemporary dance forms to folk and international, visitors witnessed performances by artists and troupes like Margi Vijay Kumar, Alamel Valli, Sannidhi, Paravathy Baul, Susheela Raman, Agnya, Raga Boyz from Pakistan and Astad Deboo with his interpretation of ‘Remembering Tagore’. On Feb. 11 and 12, the Asiatic Steps were converted into a stage for the magic of sound and music by versatile sitarist Niladri Kumar, Raghu Dixit and Bollywood duo Vishal-Shekhar.

In the film section of the festival, national and international contemporary masters paid tribute to icons like Dev Anand, Shammi Kapoor, Jagjit Singh, Bhupen Hazarika, Satyadev Dubey, Tagore and Dickens, who have left an indelible mark on the landscape of art and culture for films. This year, the film section featured an interactive element in the form of a competition, ‘The 48 hour music video project’ featured Mumbai and the festival, which was judged by a panel.

On the theatrical front, the theatre section saw the Horniman Circle Garden, NGMA and Gallery Beyond serving as stages to over 25 plays from the best of Mumbai theatre such as Lillette Dubey, Dinesh Thakur, Rajit Kapur, and Divya Pałat. To nourish one’s mind and intellect, the literature section saw a host of activities, book launches

Nikhil Chib of Busaba, Asha Khatau, Pooja Dhingra of Le 15 Patisserie, Prashant from Le Pain Quodien and Mukhtar Quereshi of Neel.
and panel discussions with authors like Kiran Nagarkar, Deepti Naval, Bachi Karkaria, Naresh Fernandes, Arundatti Subramaniam, Loveleen Misra, and Pritish Nandy.

The famed beauty of the Kala Ghoda precinct lies in its heritage and architectural structures. To shed light on this beauty, the heritage walk section organized walks in and around the precinct, giving people the history behind the stained glass, the story of the performing arts history with NCPA, and a treasure hunt for kids in and around the structures.

“The property has definitely grown in terms of audience. KGAF 2012 had an average footfall of 5,000 people on weekdays and 10,000 on weekends approximately. When we talk about the exhibitors, there were a total of 95 stalls exhibiting various things related to art keeping the art culture alive,” said Joseph. “The number of participants in terms of exhibitors is not their motive of evolution. The association wants to have limited stalls every year and they actually shortlist the exhibitors as per their connection with art. Therefore running out of space is not the question.”

Commenting about the festival, Pallavi Ghosh, CEO, Kala Ghoda, said: “The festival is getting bigger. The scale of the festival was bigger this year than ever. We also added a new venue. In spite of the challenges, the festival went on really smoothly. We had to manage the crowd too, as we were near a silence zone. Next year it is going to be grander as it is going to be the 15th year. What began as a weekend festival has now moved to more than nine days with 400 programmes.”

In continued recognition of the importance of highlighting the beauty of Indian art and culture for children, the children section provided fun and experiential learning through dance, art, music, shadow puppetry, games, food, saving the environment, waste management and a host of other activities. Not to leave out the adults, the workshop section had sessions on topics like paper mache, know your art, paper sculptures, architecture, graphic design, the art of screenwriting, textiles, appreciation of teas, food, and water colours.

And last but not the least, as the heart of the festival, Rampart Row resounded every evening with street and folk artists from across the country performing at the amphitheatre, in collaboration with the West Zone Cultural Centre, entertaining visitors as they shopped at the stalls selling products encompassing traditional and contemporary art.
Striking the right note

Enter the star. He is in the car (the model and colour clearly specified in his contract), he is in the plane (first class wasn’t available on the sector so he gets two business class). Oops! He hasn’t even left the house!! Known for last minute ditches, he does it again! The setting has changed to the lobby of a five star. She is being checked in and the lobby manager proudly offers to escort her to the junior suite. Time stands still. Stop motion. The lobby manager’s lips move in slow motion, the words junior suite echo in the lobby. She is heading for the exit. Her retinue following.

Every event manager has a story to tell. The musician who as part of a fusion group wanted a ticket for his wife and when refused, switched off his mobile phone only to emerge 15 minutes before the show. The music duo that requests separate S class vehicles, and that too, not the same colour. The item dancer who asked for Evian cases for an outstation show as it may not be available at the hill station she was performing at. The emcee who gives his cue cards for print an hour before the show even when the script was sent a month in advance.

However, there is the other side. Event managers who will not pay the balance and so artistes want a 100% advance. Cars sent to airports that are dirty and broken down, a single room for all the performers, bad equipment and unnecessary demands. A star told me of a show where the morning after the event, the organizers, the venue had all disappeared. Raat gayi baat gayi.

The exercise to find a common meeting ground becomes a finger pointing one. The level of trust is deplorable. Those who have created relationships thrive, others struggle to survive.

But how has this impasse been reached? How have the poster children of pop culture become demanding divas or demons? Firstly, the market has opened to a set of private events. These functions come with a litany of demands and are mainly a fulfilment of someone’s childhood fantasy or a college playlist. As a quid pro quo here the client revels in the fulfilment of the demands. For them it is a story to boast of for their near and dear ones. And so they over indulge performers. Reflected glory is glory nonetheless for them. The aftermath is an attempt at proximity. Develop the personal relationship which the artiste wants to avoid at all cost.

Enter PLAYER 2...

To ward off these incessant personal requests, to avoid the cancelled shows and follow-up on payments with pesky event managers, to deflect the appearance calls from politicians with pester power, and the threats of extortion, artistes created the MANAGER. Often a family member, occasionally a work acquaintance, and sometimes a professional firm, a manager’s job has been to manage the situation, any situation. Over time, they become the shield and the go between for the artiste. The demand-supply equation comes in play and the manager who has the all-important access becomes a star in his/her own right. Some of the demands are not the artiste’s but the manager’s, who develop an ego bigger than the star. The shadow tends to become longer. Most managers are trying to squeeze you for a little bit more, the extra air ticket, the extra upgrade, the extra rupee. The attempt to manage the stars career, their PR, their contractual agreements is a recent one.

Discuss this with the manager and they cite examples of the event company or clients’ demands, the extra few songs, the photo with the family, the MD’s favourite number.

More often than not, the person left holding the turkey is the event manager. The buck stops with him. Most event managers grin and bear it. After all, their job is to manage, but can we not have a standard list of dos and don’ts that we can send artistes as an event association. We will allow this much and no more. Most senior agencies have developed a rider of their own. A document with what is permitted and what is not. If the top agencies decide to implement the same, things can only get better for both sides. Professionalism is the need of the hour and an understanding that in the performance arena we all are instruments who need to be in tune together to strike the right note.
The sixth edition of the Blenders Pride Bangalore Fashion Week (BFW), a Dream Merchants property, took place from Feb. 2 to 5 at the Crowne Plaza with a Summer/Showers theme. The BFW has been conceived and created with a vision to showcase the Indian fashion industry to the global fashion world.
Max Stardust Awards
The Max Stardust Awards was organised on Feb. 10 at Bhavans College, Andheri in Mumbai. Cineyug was given the mandate to manage the event. This was the 10th edition of the Indian movie award show. The set design was done by Omung Kumar, the lights by Jagmag Electronics, and the audio was by SOUND.COM.
Summer Storm Festival
Overture organised the second edition of the Summer Storm Festival on Feb. 5 at Palace Grounds, Bangalore, India, with its rapidly burgeoning metal following, saw Opeth performing as the headline act at the event. SuidArka from Germany and Nothnegal from Maldives were among the international supporting acts for the festival.

Vh1 MyFav Awards
The second edition of Vh1 MyFav Awards was held on Jan. 31 at blueFROG, Mumbai, which was held to recognise artists and felicitate them. The property claims to be the first awards platform that recognises DJs and, as of this edition, clubs too. The property was conceptualised by Vishal Shetty and Eddie Cruzet, 360 EDGE.
Second Annual PTC Punjabi Film Awards
The second edition of the annual PTC Punjabi Film Awards took place at Panchkula, Haryana on Feb. 18. The Punjabi film and music industry congregated to felicitate cinematic excellence in 2011, with technique as well as talent being awarded. Achievements of a lifetime were also recognised, immortalising the legends of yesteryears and inspiring the talent of today.
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SWAT
EMDI’s CSR initiative SWAT, a youth initiative against tobacco, took place on Feb. 3 and 4 in Mumbai. This was the eighth edition of the property. The target audience for this campaign was the educated youth between the age of 12 to 21 years, who may be tempted to smoke at school or college under peer pressure, and young professionals who may take up smoking as a stress buster. The event engaged around 1,000 people.

45th Statesman Vintage & Classic Car Rally
The 45th ‘Statesman Vintage & Classic Car Rally’ took place on Feb. 13. Managed by Brandsmith, this year’s rally had a total of 130 entries and the route the rally took fell between Delhi and Greater Noida, and back to Modern School, Barakhamba Road, where the prize distribution took place.
Sauza Cosmo Fun Fearless Awards 2012
Sauza hosted a glamorous red carpet evening at Grand Hyatt, Mumbai, celebrating the Fashion Awards 2012. Sauza Tequila, known for its ‘party with Sauza’ mantra, hosted a power packed red carpet with bigwigs from the bollywood, music and fashion industry.

Kabir Festival
The Kabir Festival is an annual festival that celebrates the poetry of Kabir and other saints who represent the ‘nirguni’ school of thought. The second edition of the festival was held in 15 different areas of Mumbai from Feb. 17 to 19. The festival was a voluntary effort by people from different walks of life and engaged more than 1,000 people.
Vodafone Corporate Cricket 7s
Conceived by Saran Sports, the tournament, which commenced on Jan, 28 at the Western Railway Ground in Mahalaxmi, Mumbai, is seeing over 100 teams participating. The matches are being played over the weekends in a league-cum-knockout basis. The 16th edition of this property is being co-sponsored by Alea International Consulting and Gulf Oil.

Tarun Tahiliani Bridal Couture Exposition
The third season of the Tarun Tahiliani Bridal Couture Exposition (TTBCE) is taking place over the months of July and August. In Mumbai, the event was held at the Four Seasons Hotel from July 23 to 25. This year, TTBCE went to New Delhi and Mumbai in July and will travel to Hyderabad and Kolkata in August.

Harley Rock Riders Season 2
Harley Rock Riders, a property conceptualised jointly by Harley Davidson motorcycles and Rolling Stone Magazine, is back with season two. The tour, from May 5 to October 1, will see the band, Half Step Down perform in four Indian cities along with other popular bands like Split, Thermal and a Quarter, and Parikrama.
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